

# Academic Writing Skills of Pakistani English Language Learners: A Case Study

**Shahbaz Haider**, M. Phil Student, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

**Prof. Dr. Muhammad Asim Mahmood**, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

**Dr. Samina Ali Asghar**, University of Education (Faisalabad Campus), Lahore, Pakistan

**Dr. Aleem Shakir**, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

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## Abstract

Writing an academic language cohesively and coherently is presumed to be a daunting task. It demands a higher-level lexical and grammatical complexity to advance argument and reasoning in a more reflective manner (Ryshina–Pankova, 2010). In this regard, ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) is highly recommended as a tool to achieve textual cohesion and coherence that are important parameters of argumentative writing. This study aimed at investigating the frequencies and syntactic variations of ideational grammatical metaphors, and their different roles in building cohesion and coherence in PELLs' argumentative essays. For this purpose, Liardet's IGM framework (2016) was selected and applied to 50 argumentative essays of undergraduate Pakistani English language learners (PELLs) retrieved from the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE). The findings revealed that most PELLs contained a limited understanding of the IGM linguistics resources to develop cohesion and coherence in their texts. Despite the minimal amount of IGMs, PELLs excessively utilized interactional conjunctions, attributive relative clauses, and pronominal clauses in their essays. It is reasonable to assume on the basis of findings that Pakistani English Language learners need systematic learning and practice of deployment of IGMs to improve cohesion and coherence in their argumentative written texts.

**Keywords:** Systemic Functional Linguistics, Argumentative Writing, Ideational Grammatical Metaphor, Nominalization

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## 1. Introduction

Academic argumentative essays in Second Language Writing (SLW) can safely be presumed to be the commonly practiced genre for undergraduate students, specifically in academic contexts of arts, humanities, and social sciences (Hirvela, 2017; Wingate, 2012). Despite the different nature of disciplines, sound argument development is probably the critical component of successful writing in all academic fields (Lea &

Street, 1998). The composition of an argumentative essay in academia, according to IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language), should contain a well-structured argument having an unambiguous stance regarding the topic supported by convincing claims and pieces of evidence from academically reliable resources (International English Language Testing System, 2020; Test of English as a

Foreign Language, 2020). Above all, it needs a specific shift in the register and mode from everyday informal interactions towards more specified academic written exchanges (Schleppegrell, 2001; Parkinson & Musgrave, 2014). Across the researches, IGM is persistently pointed out as an important tool for achieving academic features, e.g., condensation, depersonalization, encapsulation, and causality, etc. IGM, according to Halliday (1993, p. 79), helps transform “concrete, congruent interactions into abstract, incongruent forms”. IGM achieves such construction by a tension between the strata of lexico-grammar and the discourse semantics. It helps the writer to convey more than one meaning and extend the meaning potential of the language (Martin, 2008). This mode of writing construes happenings as “fixed, synoptic entities” for recording in the written text (Halliday, 1979, 1998, p. 32). This specific arrangement of knowledge allows information to be arranged “systematically, categorized, commented on and evaluated, promoting the flow of information”. It is an essential prerequisite for academic discourse. It also needs specific choices of lexical and grammatical resources to construct a cohesive and coherent argumentative essay (Martin, 1989). Cohesion and coherence are the two crucial factors in maintaining unity among the interlinked ideas in an argumentative essay. Text unity means enhancing the readability of well-formulated texts by integrating logically consistent ideas (Martin, 1989).

The present study investigates the discourse-level deployment of IGMs and their roles in Pakistani undergraduate argumentative academic essays to produce cohesion and coherence. According to Liardet (2016), IGM construed by nominalization can establish the interconnections inside the clauses and among clauses of the written text through elaborated nominal groups, anaphoric reconstructions, meaning accumulations, and cause-and-effect metaphorical networks.

Numerous previous researches (Halliday, 2004; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Humphrey, Droga, & Feez, 2012; Martin J. & Rose, 2008) have explored IGMs as a powerful linguistic resource to enhance the lexical density of the written text.

## 2. Literature Review

Argumentative essays require lexically dense authoritative stance and logical reasoning situated inside the clauses and between clauses to construct cause and effect networks (Hyland, 2009, P.7). Over the past three decades, SFL researchers have been investigating the impact of different advanced linguistic patterns on the learners’ ontogenetic development (Halliday & Martin, 1993, p. 18). Thus, regarding the cohesion and coherence in argumentative texts, various SFL researches (Biber D., 1991; Biber D., 2006; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Charles, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2008; Coffin et al., 2003; Gebhard, Chen, & Britton, 2014) have highlighted the essential role of IGM (, i.e., nominalization) in the disciplines of subject English, especially in an argumentative essay. Focusing on its various uses, it firstly changes the nature of meanings into specialized fields’ technicality in the academic discourse by using lexicalized and expanded noun phrases to project an authoritative stance. Next in the humanistic discourse, it transforms the abstract conception into “thingness” (by classifying, assuming, or describing the image) to “bury reasoning” (Martin, 1991, p. 332; 1993, p. 241). Primarily, this transformation shifts language from informal everyday spoken language characterized by dynamic actions to the static, synoptic entities with the specific arrangement of lexical, and grammatical resources. It enables writers to develop the comparison, contrast, and evaluation of the given issue.

Concerning cohesion and coherence, the following researches (Ryshina-Pankova, 2010; Ryshina-Pankova, 2015; To, Thomas, & Thomas, 2020; Thomas & To, 2016; Liardet, 2016;

Liardet, 2013) employed the Systemic Functional Linguistics concepts to explore ideational grammatical metaphor deployment in the writings of proficient learners, following their proficiency level from low to high. They found out that the proficient learners effectively utilized grammatical metaphors to achieve persuasiveness in their essays by maintaining the formality of text and social distance. The usage of grammatical metaphors coherently constituted abstractions, cause-and-effect relationships within and among the clauses of essays' stages to strengthen the arguments and make them more concise.

In summary, despite the larger corpora of texts, the former researches mostly analyzed IGMs in isolation rather than their effects on discourse construction. The present study differs from the past researches on account of two major reasons. First, this research has applied the textual impact model of grammatical metaphor (Liardet, 2016) rather than the stratal model (Halliday, 1985; Halliday, 1988; Halliday, 1998) and semantic model (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999) of grammatical metaphor. The reason is that the stratal and semantic models provide the technical explanation of IGMs, but Liardet's IGM model majorly focuses on analyzing the textual cohesion and coherence in the argumentative essays by developing the textual impact analysis (, i.e., logogenetic impact). Second, to address this gap and provide a comprehensive analysis, this research paper consisting of a larger sampling of fifty essays utilizes the IGMs to analyze the cohesion and coherence of Pakistani argumentative essays. Regarding the findings of this research, it is likely to infer that PELLs need to be aware of the vitality of coherence and cohesion in argumentative essays, and learn the utilization of IGM to accomplish coherence and cohesion in written texts.

## 2.1. Research Questions

Premised upon the IGM framework proposed by Liardet's (2016), the current research investigated the usage of coherence and cohesion through the following research questions:

Q: What was the frequency and variation of ideational grammatical metaphors (IGMs) in undergraduate Pakistani English Language Learners' argumentative essays (PELLs)?

Q: What was the role of IGMs in building cohesion and coherence in PELLs' argumentative essays?

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1. Sampling Method in the Present Research

This study used a corpus of fifty Pakistani Learners' argumentative essays having 500 to 1000 per essay word count. The researchers selected these essays from the International Corpus of Learners English (ICLE). They adopted a purposeful random sampling method to obtain the detailed information of the IGMs deployed by undergraduate PELLs in writing academic argumentative essays. The following three steps were taken to compute the frequency of ideational grammatical metaphors:

- i) Tagging the fifty essays for annotating nominalization by utilizing the corpus tool multidimensional tagger (MAT) (Biber, Conrad, Reppen, Byrd, & Helt, 2002).
- ii) Finding out the concordance of nominalizations through the AntConc corpus tool (Anthony, 2021)
- iii) After calculating the frequency of nominalizations, manually finding out the Ideational grammatical metaphor as per the parameters of IGMs (Christie & Derewianka, 2008).

### 3.2. Analytical Framework of Study

The Ideational Grammatical Metaphors (IGMs) are constructed by nominalizations whereby adjectives, verbs, or adverbs are converted into nouns (Ryshina-Pankova M., 2015, p. 53). Nominalizations in IGM not only transform the actions (verbs) into an entity

(nouns) but also turn the qualities realized by the adjective, circumstances realized by both adverbs and prepositions, and logical relational clauses realized by conjunctions into entities as mentioned in table No. 1:

**Table1**

*Congruent to Incongruent Realizations Through Nominalizations (Ryshina-Pankova, 2015, p. 54)*

Semantics	Congruent realization	Incongruent realization: GMs as nominalizations
Process	Verb (e.g., move)	Noun (e.g., motion)
Quality	Adjective (e.g., distant)	Noun (e.g., distance)
Logical relation	Conjunction (e.g., because)	Noun (e.g., reason)

Christie and Derewianka (2008) asserted that every nominalization cannot be an ideational grammatical metaphor unless it can be unpacked into the language's congruent form. For example, the word "development" in example (a) below cannot be unpacked into the congruent language. For instance, the noun "development" in example (a) is the verbal nominalization of the verb "develop.", but in example (b) below can be unpacked into the congruent language. It means that the word "development" in example (b) is the ideational grammatical metaphor.

- a) It is a great development.
- b) The rapid development in Pakistan leads to numerous job opportunities.
- c) Pakistan is developing rapidly, so we are getting many job opportunities.

The above examples (a, b, c) illustrate subtle differences between nominalization and ideational grammatical metaphor.

### 3.2.1. Textual Impact Model of Ideational Grammatical Metaphor

This analysis follows Liardet's grammatical metaphor analysis framework used for Chinese EFL learners' essays (2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2016) to describe the impact of IGM with four different tools. These tools are anaphoric reconstrual, elaborated nominal groups, cause and effect network, and meaning accumulation. The utilization of these patterns provides a

comprehensive framework to analyze how PELLs employed the IGMs to construct meanings in their essays, and evaluate how the meanings accomplished in the write-ups enabled to construct according to the standards of the argumentative academic genre.

**3.2.1.1. Anaphoric Reconstruals.** Anaphoric reconstrual (, i.e., identified as "chain of reasoning", Unsworth, 1997, p. 201; "retrospective labels", Charles, 2003, p. 313) employs the grammatical metaphor to convert the congruent wording into incongruent, and vice versa across the text. It produces cohesion through textual referencing. The information in the congruent form occurred in the text is repacked in its incongruent form, and then placed at the theme position of the subsequent clause to generate the Given-New parody (Halliday, 2004). For establishing cohesive links, in the following example, the congruent process "creates" is repacked into Thing "creation" to make a lexically dense nominal group (, e.g., **the creation of numerous job opportunities**) functioned as the Theme of the incoming clause, e.g.,

- 1) The rapid development in Pakistan creates many jobs opportunities for youngsters. **The creation of numerous job opportunities** brings about the peace and prosperity in the country.

In example 1, the bold rhetorical pattern, i.e., the conversion of previously stated congruent elements of clauses into them, “reconstructed metaphorical elements”, is the key factor in the building of cohesion that is also identified as the anaphoric reconstrual.

### 3.2.1.2. Elaborated Nominal Groups. The elaborated nominal group is used to condense

multiple co-occurring meanings into a nominal group for providing “an extended explanation of information” (Liardet, 2016, p. 111). For example, in the example below, the process, *create*, and participant *many job opportunities* are repacked into a single nominal group, i.e., *the creation of numerous job opportunities*. The condensation of the extensive information in a single nominal group as mentioned above creates the clear structure and the Given-New organization across the text (Martin, 2008)

### 3.2.1.3. Cause and Effect Metaphorical Network. The cause-and-effect metaphorical

network is a relation between experiential and logical grammatical metaphors (, i.e., relator as circumstance, e.g., *because* as *due to*, relator as a process; e.g., *because* as *leads to*, and relator as a participant; e.g., *because* as *the result of*) to formulate cause-and-effect relationships inside the clause. This pattern (, i.e., *bring about*) is exemplified in the second clause of the above example between the newly deployed

metaphorical nominal group, i.e., *the creation of numerous job opportunities*, and the metaphorical nominal group, i.e., *the peace and prosperity in the country*. These causal relationships help the writer build metaphorical cause-and-effect networks, and facilitates the construction of rationalized argument in the academic text to justify the writer’s assertion in an academically valued manner.

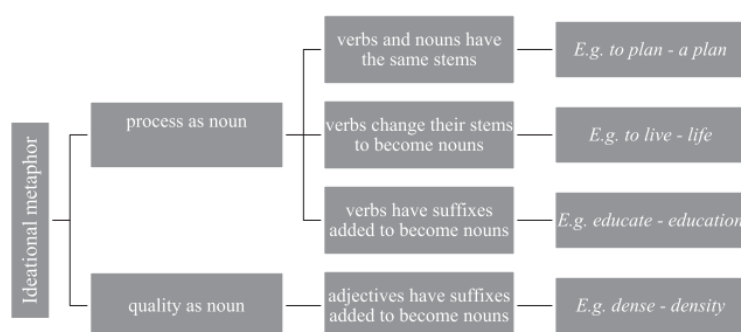
### 3.2.1.4. Meaning Accumulation. The fourth characteristic of textual impact referred to as

meaning accumulation is realized by the grammatical metaphor by restating or repeating certain meanings. Through repetition and restatement of meanings, the certain aspect of an argument is reinforced by cohesively linking the varied viewpoints on the given issue. For example, in the above-invented example, the process “creates” was metaphorically revisited, such as “creation”, to build cohesion between the supporting argument (, e.g., the rapid development.... for youngsters) and the conclusion (, e.g., **The creation of numerous...** prosperity in the country).

### 3.2.2. Types of Ideational Grammatical Metaphor

Ideational Grammatical metaphors have two types: *action as a noun* and *quality as a noun*. Figure 1 shows the kinds of grammatical metaphor:

Figure 1



Types of Ideational Grammatical Metaphor (To, Thomas, & Thomas, 2020, p. 8)



The first type of IGM (, i.e., process as a noun) either has the same stem or changes its stem, and the second type of IGM (, i.e., quality as a noun) consists of adjectival processes. The latter IGM takes a derivational suffix to an adjective to transform it into quality as a noun.

#### 4. Analysis and Discussion

This work analyzed fifty essays written by PELLs, utilizing Liardet's framework of textual impact analysis (2013, 2016). For a holistic description of PELLs' deployment of IGMs, firstly this study focused on all instances of IGM frequency and variations by analyzing the prevalence and variety of IGM use. It focused on four distinct patterns of nominalization quantitatively, for frequency and variation.

Secondly, it examined all IGMs instances qualitatively present in PELLs' essays to explore their textual impact.

#### 4.1. Quantitative Analysis of IGMs in PELLs

##### Essays

##### 4.1.1. PELLs' Essays IGMs Frequencies and Variations

After the analysis of PELLs' fifty essays, firstly, the researcher calculated the frequency of nominalization at the cumulative level. It was obtained by dividing the total number of nominalizations into 50 essays by the total number of words in 50 essays as tabulated in Table: 2

**Table 2**

*PELLs' IGM Frequency at Cumulative*

*Level*

Total Number of Words	<b>65295</b>
Total of nominalization	<b>703 (1%)</b>

Table 2 describes PELLs' use of nominalization in their essays at the cumulative level. Secondly, the researchers measured IGMs in each essay of the

total PELLs 50 essays. Table 3 depicted the frequency of nominalizations at the individual level:

**Table 3**

*PELLs' IGM Frequency at Individual Level*

ESSAY	Fre of Nomz	ESSAY	Fre of Nomz	ESSAY	Fre of Nomz	ESSAY	Fre of Nomz
PAAM1008	8	PAGF1058	50	PALW1025	4	PAGF1053	15
PAAO1004	19	PAGF1059	37	PALW1035	15	PALW1018	16
PAAM1002	6	PAGF1062	23	PALW1037	18	PAGF1052	34
PAAO1014	26	PAGF1092	3	PALW1041	12	PALW1010	10
PAAO1018	10	PAGJ1001	8	PALW1042	5	PAVL1021	16
PAAO1022	15	PAGJ1006	9	PALW1043	8	PAGF1042	26
PACJ1005	20	PAGM1003	13	PAMJ1001	5	PALW1008	6
PAGF1007	17	PAGM1004	32	PAMJ1005	6	PAVL1017	11
PAGF1011	17	PAGS1002	23	PARJ1001	3	PAGF1040	10
PAGF1017	11	PAGW1007	4	PARJ1007	4	PALW1006	10
PAGF1020	12	PAGW1008	4	PARJ1008	6	PAVL1006	19
PAGF1032	11	PAIJ1003	6	PASU1005	17		
PAGF1037	24	PALW1005	13	PAVL1002	6		

Key: Fre = Frequency, Nomz = Nominalization

Then, researchers calculated the average of each essay and found that the average number of nominalizations in each essay is 14. Next, out of these nominalizations from each essay, the researchers selected only those nominalizations that could be unpacked into congruent clauses (,

i.e., the usual way of expressing the wordings) to explore the textual impact of ideational grammatical metaphor. Table 4 presented the IGM realized by the incongruent nominalized (i.e., objectifying the processes and converting them into nominalized participants) forms:

**Table 4**

*Frequency of IGMs Patterns of Experiential Reconstrual of PELLs' Essays*

Types of Nominalization	Frequency	Percentage	Structure of Nominalization	Frequency	Percentage
Process as noun	194	0.3%	Nominalization post-modified with nominal group	274	0.4%
Quality as noun	104	0.2%	Nominalization post-modified with relative clause	24	0.04%
Total No.	298	0.5%		298	

Table 4 shows that PELLs utilized 0.3 % ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) of a process as a noun and 0.2 % IGM of quality as a

noun in their essays. Table 4 displayed examples of both types of IGM taken from PELLs essays and their congruent forms.

**Table 5**

*Syntactical Structures of IGMs: Transformation of Incongruent Language into Congruent Language*

Nominalization (Process as a noun)		Nominalization (Process as adjective)	
Incongruent form	Congruent form	Incongruent form	Congruent form
a well standard <b>authority</b> just because of a woman struggle (PAAO1014)	She is authorized, and she is well familiar because a woman struggles.	the <b>responsibility</b> she has been credited (PAAM1002)	She is responsible, so she has been credited.
the cause of nation's reverence (PAAO1014)	This causes that nation to revere her.	The real greatness of woman" (PAAO1018)	A woman is great.

In PELLs' essay analysis at the individual level, the researchers found that PELLs deployed IGMs relatively in a meager frequency, i.e., 0.01 per essay. This meager frequency was not sufficient to produce coherence (, i.e., the contextual expectancy of an argumentative essay in the discourse community) and cohesion (i.e., ties that bind the argumentative text) in PELLs' essays.

#### 4.2. Qualitative Analysis: Textual Impact Analysis of IGMs in PELLs' Essays

For analyzing the quality and impact of grammatical metaphor on the construction of argumentative writing, the four tools of Liardet's IGM framework (2013, 2016) were deployed: elaborated nominal group, cause-and-effect

metaphorical network, meaning accumulation, and anaphorical reconstrual.

#### 4.2.1. *Elaborated Nominal Groups in PELLs' Essays*

Depersonalization and condensation of text lead to the production of a persuasive text (To, Thomas, & Thomas, 2020, p. 113). However, PELLs neither realized elaborative nominal groups by removing human agent creating "high social distance" with the reader nor achieved the condensation by converting the multiple co-occurring meanings into the single nominal group as illustrated below:

- a) In our society, women (, i.e., human agent) play a vital role in this regard."  
(PAAO1014)
- b) Today she (, i.e., human agent) has become the cause of success for every man. (PAAO1014)

Examples a & b indicate that PELLs utilized the majority of human agents (, i.e., *women* and *she*) to narrate the role and the importance of "women" rather than converting the actions (e.g., *play* and *has become*) into the abstractions (e.g., *the significance of women* instead of *women plays a vital role* and *her personality* instead of *she*). The high usage of animated entities signified the explicit judgement deployed by PELLs for explaining the personality of women, resulting in the violation of the very primary characteristic of argumentative discourse, i.e., impartiality.

Moreover, not only the subjectivity in the PELLs' essays, the meagerness of IGMs also displayed PELLs' incompetence in encapsulating their discussion within a few words. Alternatively, the unwanted elaboration was mostly utilized for the description of points in the PELLs' essays as illustrated below:

- 2) Children have very sensitive personality.  
They need care and attention. This is the

age in which we can mold them to such a personality which we want (PAGF1037).

The above example from the essay PAGF1037 demonstrated that PELLs mostly preferred to use the uncondensed clauses (, e.g., *Children have very sensitive ... mold them to such a personality which we want*) rather than utilizing the ideational grammatical metaphors in the construction of lexically dense clauses (, e.g., *The sensitive personality of children needs care and attention to mold them according to the parents' desire.*). By observing table No. 4, the uncondensed clauses were chiefly constructed with nominal groups postmodified by relative clauses (0.04 %) and nominal groups (0.4%). The post-modification of nominalization in relative clauses (, e.g., *This is the age in which we can mold them to such a personality which we want*) increases the number of clauses in the texts, which results in high grammatical intricacy, and lower lexical density (i.e., lower number of content-carrying words). In this way, the average lexical density of essays is 38 %. It means that PELLs' average lexical density of essays correlates with the spoken text's lexical density, i.e., below 40% (Ventola, 1996).

#### 4.2.2. *Cause and Effect Metaphorical Network*

Constructing the rationality among the ideas through the deployment of the cause-and-effect relationships is one of the central features of grammatical metaphor as explained by Halliday and other leading scholars (Derewianka, 1995; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Halliday, 2004). The realization of causality inside the clauses through logical metaphors (, e.g., *contribute to*, *lead to*, *causes*, *account for* and *affect*, etc.) primarily strengthens the arguments and constitutes them more concise. Contrarily, rather than using the logical metaphors within the lexically dense nominal groups, PELLs preferred to link the discourse segments via excessive



employment of interaction conjunctions as mentioned underneath:

- 3) **If** we compare with very honestly that between man and women as a parent, I am very much exited **that** man's role is very clear **because** he is only the runner of the house and after earning the money gone their wife he is absolutely free in all aspects (PAGF1020)

From example 1, it can be observed that the adverbial conjunctions (*if* and *because*) among clauses were employed to enlarge the above-mentioned details instead of using the logical metaphors for constructing the hierarchy of arguments by building a chain of cause-and-effect relationships (e.g., *After the comparative analysis of the role of men and women, it is reasonable to assume that the sphere of responsibility of man is majorly restricted to mere financial domestic matters.*), as claimed by Liardet (2016). These clause combining strategies deployed by PELLs, as Schleppregrell (1996, pg. 280) mentioned, account for “the clause chaining character of ongoing speech where segmentation is expressed through prosody, and conjunction carry less semantic force than in the essay.” It means that the use of conjunctions in PELLs’ argumentative essays transforms the essays into the spoken texts representing the “informal and mundane communication” (Ryshina–Pankova, 2010, p. 181) because of using inappropriate and illogical clause combining choices. This finding has an affinity with various studies (Almaden, 2006; Jalilifar, 2010; Medve, V. B., & Takač, V. P., 2013; Gill & Jangua, 2020). Hence, it can be safely assumed that the PELLs’ heedlessness towards cause-and-effect-metaphorical networks within the clauses manifest their unawareness about the preferred written style, i.e., formality and impersonality, of argumentative essays, as mentioned by To, Thomas, and Thomas (2020).

#### 4.2.3. Accumulation Meaning

In addition to incorporating the causality within the clause, grammatical metaphors create cohesion in the text by functioning as the alternative lexico-grammatical choices instead of already deployed lexical items in the text. The incongruent reference utilized as a referencing tool in the place of other semantic elements in the preceding text generates a persuasive text by emphasizing the recurrent arguments. As far as PELLs’ essays are concerned, the utilization of repetitive lexico-grammatical choices transformed their essays less persuasive as exemplified below:

- 4) SOCIETY is a **set** of PEOPLE LIVING in it. it. In a SOCIETY bad and good PEOPLE are LIVING We are LIVING in a SOCIETY known by our deeds. We are LIVING in a SOCIETY with our PARENTS. PARENTS are the PERSON who make ourselves best to LIVE in a SOCIETY. Here the question rise that whether the man or woman are better PARENTS as both equally do effort for their children. (PAGW1007)

From the above text, it can be noted that the repetitive lexicons “Society”, “Living”, “Parents”, and “People” across the text minimized the persuasive power of the essay (Parson, 2011) on account of not substantiating the arguments through the different lexical forms of the same word (, e.g., *society*, *societal*, *social*, *socio-cultural*, *socio-economic*, etc.). The constant lexical reiteration did not build, as Liardet (2013, p. 168) argued, “field and cohesively link multiple perspectives on the same issue”. Thus. the lack of meaning accumulation chains in the Pakistani argumentative essays emanated the “static arguments” that led to redundancy, due to not achieving the cohesion between arguments (Chang & Lee, 2019, p. 88).

#### 4.2.4. Anaphorical Reconstrual

Constructing persuasive linkages among the clauses, the grammatical metaphor, as a powerful rhetorical device in the text, coherently integrates the information by moving the argument forward. The integration of arguments, according to Halliday (2004, p. 106), involves “a movement from Theme (, i.e., departure of clause) to Rheme (, i.e., the remainder of the clause)”. Theme “will typically pick up something that has gone before” and is enacted as the “résumé” of the preceding arguments. Halliday (2004, p. 107) asserts that “the only way to set a piece of argument” is to turn a clause into a nominal group”. In other words, the strategical usage of grammatical metaphors at the theme position (, i.e., the beginning of clause) can be utilized as anaphoric reconstruals to coherently link arguments in the proficient writers’ essays. PELLs unlikely used pronominal at the theme position to connect their points as mentioned below:

- 5) Women are different from men in their bodily form and constitution. **It** is her sacred duty to produce children and look after them. Not only has this but **she** had also to build a nation of morally sound people. **She** has to play the role of a teacher for her children. .. (PAAO1018).

The excessive usage of pronominals (, i.e., *she* ) at the theme position indicated PELLs’ limited understanding about the grammatical metaphors on account of not utilizing the grammatical metaphors as persuasive resources among the arguments at Themes of clauses which resume the information that has been described in the previous clauses (e.g., *Women’s body construction differs from the men’s. Her sacred duty is the production and caring of children. Apart from the child nourishment and upbringing, motherly duties also include building a morally*

*strong nation by playing the role of teacher for her children*). In this example, the information in the second clause (, i.e., *the production and caring of children*) was retained at the Theme position of the third clause (, i.e., *Apart from the child nourishment and upbringing*) to produce the cohesive connection between the sentences. Resultantly, the repetitive thematized pronominals in the PELLs essays revealed PELLs’ repetitive, static, and personalized writing style, (e.g., **It** *is her ...she had also to build ...She has to ...*). This finding has an affinity with Chang & Lee's (2019) study on ELLs.

#### 5. Conclusion

Realizing IGMs as a potentially significant indicator of advanced academic writings, the present piece of research examined the frequency of varied types of IGMs in PELLs’ essays and the textual impacts of IGMs on constructing cohesion and coherence. After analyzing the PELLs’ argumentative essays, the results reveal that IGMs were rarely used in PELLs’ essays; furthermore, the insufficient number of IGMs deployed in the essays was improperly arranged. The improper arrangement of IGMs produced incoherence by disrupting textual persuasiveness, cause-and-effect relationships, cohesive construction of arguments, and coherent integration of information used for unfolding the arguments across the PELLs’ texts. Despite the small-scale sampling, the likelihood is that the pedagogical implications of this study can be quite insightful for English Language Teachers (ELTs) to systematically teach PELLs the conscious usage of IGMs in writing argumentative essays coherently and cohesively, utilizing the findings as mentioned earlier.

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