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Deciphering Half Moon: An Intertextual Study of Taufiq Rafat's Selected Poems



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Abstract

Taufiq Rafat, the foremost poet of English in Pakistan, also known as "Father of Pakistani Idiom". His poetry depicts Pakistani culture, identity and its construction in finest styles. This research aims to explore contextual understanding of culture and lexical representation in the collection of the poems by *Taufiq Rafat* in his book "Half Moon". By applying Hermeneutic theory (1960), this study will scrutinize the language structures used by the poet under the shade of intertextual structural approach. This study unravels the intricate layers of meaning, intertextuality, and ideological stance embedding in *Rafat's* poetry. This research is based on quantitative approach. A survey of 50 participants provides additional insights into readers' perception and interpretation of *Rafat's* work, showing a nuanced understanding of *Rafat's* impact on his audience. This quantitative data is analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to examine the relationship between language comprehension and culture interpretation in the selected text. This research develops literary understanding of poetry and gives new perspective to future researchers for in-depth study and application of linguistics methods on literary works.

Keywords; Hermeneutic, Poetry, Themes, Meanings, Etc

Introduction

Poetry, It is an art of emotions, expressing our thoughts and feelings. Poetry is not considered only a tool for communication or expressions but a canvas for our creativity and experiences of life. Poetry creates world of emotions around us, it transforms some ordinary words into extraordinary (Levis, 1978). Poetry has an ability to showcase depth of language and beautify or intensify every single thought. Poets depicts vivid images, powerful thoughts and complex ideas in the layered meanings. Poetry can be taken as source of therapy as it is a process of self-disclosure to convert your emotions. Poetry carries a power to fade in or out the colonial affects from the life and minds of a nation.

This research is based on selected poems of Pakistani English Poet, *Taufiq Rafat* who not only worked on any specific genre but touched every ground in poetry. He wrote about post colonialism, nostalgia, romanticism, partition, and cultural norms. His writing style includes critique to cultural practices and sufferings of his loved ones (Rana, 2022). *Rafat* is also famous for auto ethnographic poetry as in many poems he talked about life and death and added his own experiences of life.

Background

Taufiq Rafat, a renowned Pakistani poet who introduced Pakistani Idiom into English Poetry. He was born on October 25, 1927 in Sialkot. His family later on shifted to Dehradun, he completed his High School Education from there and after the partition, he studied in Aligarh and Government College, Lahore. At very young age, he started to write and adopted poetic style for his writings. His poetry reflects norms and customs of Pakistan, pre partition theme and nature love. For his love for homeland, he was known as a "Father of Pakistani Idiom". His poetry depicts Pakistani culture, identity and its construction in the finest styles. The Pakistan

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representation in Rafat's poem holds prime importance. Rafat wrote his poems in a freely manner not considering English language as superior one brought his own words into poems. Borrowing and code switching is highly seen in his poems to describe the situation according to the context (Rafique, 2021). He is considered to be a pre-eminent Pakistani English poet of 20th century.

M. Tahir beautifully comments on his poetry in his book;

"Taufiq Rafat, the foremost poet of English in Pakistan, has for five decades been bending words from foreign domain for the purpose of his province. By doing so he carried English to the new creative and imaginative terrain. Pakistani practitioners of poetry and prose in English, he has been the most consistent in his calling."
(Tahir, 2000)

His influence on the other Pakistani poets and writers has been remarkable as he introduced new idioms to put light upon local scenarios. The beautiful blending of words of English and Urdu has been his strong suit. Rafat always trusts the power of poetry so he struggled a lot to give a different outlook to his readers by introducing "Pakistani Idiom".

For poetry, Taufiq Rafat quotes;

*It is potent enough,
One yes can rekindle love,
Or start a war.*

His work and contributions

Taufiq Rafat emphasized on different ideas and themes in his poems. He writes about pre-post partition, homeland, life experiences and romanticism. The poetry written by him is both regional and contextual to Pakistani culture and norms. His work includes four books;

Bulley Shah: A collection (1982)

Qadir Yar: Puran Bhagat (1983)

Half Moon (1979-83)

Arrival of the Monsoon: Collected Poem (1947-78)

His work is considered remarkable as he was the one who translated Bulley Shah's Punjabi poetry into English and gave it another meaning. Half Moon and Arrival of the Monsoon includes collection of poems which focuses on different themes and idea. His literary work has been studied in different colleges and universities of different countries like UK, Australia and USA. Rafat launched a new edition to English, not following the grounds of British English but Pakistani English. His work remains the best in the representation of Pakistan English Literature. In his work, he has shed light on indigenous landscapes and nature by highlighting traditions of his culture.

Rafat stimulates a literary insight of the readers and uses indigenous words to draw associations among ideas which he delivers in his poems.

One of the pupils of Rafat, M.Tahir Athar says that;

"He was an inventive author and a genuine craftsman of nature." (LitPriest, 2018)

Rafat's claim to fame is his collection of Poetry *Arrival of the Monsoon* (1985). For many decades, Poems included in *Arrival of the Monsoon* remained dominated in literary world of Pakistani English Poetry. In his collection, he talked about several themes; nature, partition, family, friends, culture/traditions and love for his homeland

(Zia, 2021). His remarkable work has gained attention of many reviewers and critics in Pakistan and abroad. Rafat always stresses upon the importance of literature as he felt it is base for humanizing our people. He further added that "Literature of any country can show darker picture of their society in a very descriptive way which can help to bring change and improvement in the people or society." Rafat believes that by following *the literacies ancestors, people can be able to raise the slogans for new criterion*.

Literature Review

Poetry is not just written words but an emotional involvement. It expresses our feelings and give clear depiction to our imaginary thoughts. Taufiq Rafat is considered as a most important Pakistani English Poet as his work appears to be unique from others writers. He introduced new idiom to Pakistani writings. His way of depicting Pakistani culture remained skillful in the poetic history of Pakistan (Ahmed, 2013) Shares the stylistic analysis of his poem "*Wedding in the flood*" selected

from the book *Arrival of the Monsoon (1947-78)*, the linguistic Ingenuity taking place in the poem is highlighted such as lexical features, narration levels, proverbial alliterations, deviations and parallelism. Lexical features include all open-class words (meaningful words) and close-class words (determiners, prepositions), table is added in the article to show that distribution of open-class words like nouns in the poem carrying different semantic categories. Narration level describes tense used in poem as it is a mixture of present and past tense, poem covers 17 lines with each stanza showing direct or indirect narration. Words like *river* are used in whole poem to show the semantic deviation *for example; angry river, swollen river etc.* as it personifies different occasion occurring in poet's life. Being a Pakistani poet, Rafat uses proverbs related to the context of Pakistan in his poetry which gives a clear understanding to a reader. This shows that by using rich vocabulary and their implicit meanings the poet has drawn attention towards the customs and traditions of Pakistan All the poems included shows how Rafat celebrates the norms and traditions related to Pakistani culture. (Zia, 2021) Explores in her article about different poems of Rafat that highlights cultural ceremonies and fiestas of Pakistan like *Kite-flying, A Middle-class Drawing Room, Circumcision, Sacrifice, Python, etc.* Kite-flying poem is related to festival of *Basant* majorly belonging to sub-continent, this is celebrated on arrival of spring, other poem is about Middle-class drawing room, it negates the match making-culture of our society where groom's family visits brides house, the poet discusses typical Pakistani-setting in this poem and how two-family surveys each other by observing each other's actions. Sacrifice poem highlights the rituals of the people living in Pakistan as well as in other Asian countries that how they sacrifice animals (goats) to break the curses and get rid of any demonic power or evil eye and slaughtering goat for new beginnings disgusts the poet. Indigenous words used in his poems have given local flavor to the poetry. Edward Said added that literature played an important role to stabilize the lives of colonized regions as by presenting their rituals and ceremonies in writings, they felt alive and gained cultural importance again. Depiction of Pakistani culture in Rafat's Poems has always been unique. In his poetry he clearly states the evils of society, this research includes poetry of Rafat from new perspective, animal imagery highlighting two distinct themes in his poetry along with linguistic textual features existing in the poems by Taufiq Rafat.

(Munawar, 2016) Also added Structuralism, a term which is related to the literary movement. Ferdinand de Saussure put forward the explanation of the structuralism with the linguistic field developing the relation to a linguistic sign. He says that every spoken word is signifier and what those words brought concept in our mind is signified. In the article, structuralist approach is applied on the Rafat's Poem "The Stone Chat", the main theme of this poem is identity crisis and timely changes of relations of a man. The cultural insight is also added to provide better understanding. This discusses the poem in aspect of binary opposition by textual analysis of the poem. Dual concepts like immaturity to maturity, negative to positive gives dramatic touch to poem and by the names and words reader signifies the representation in his mind. Poet uses opposite sites from the reality, conditions in real are different and the idea encoded by the poet is depicting realities of life. Different shades of grey color are added to each stanza for referring towards old age (*blackish grey, smoky grey, whitish grey, etc.*). In this poem, the linear chain of signifiers is found and binary opposition gives it a power that makes this poem a masterpiece for structuralism theory analysis. Rafat mainly focuses on uniqueness and grammatical inconsistencies, (Jakhrani, 2023) in qualitative based study analyses Rafat's poems at lexical level. He selected some poems and applied Leech and short model on it where he identified language elements and discussed some new deviations and innovations, he found in his poetry which can be chose to work upon.

(Rasheed, 2022) Explores, Texts are constructed on the basis of existing texts which talks about literary aspects and traditions. Intertextuality performs various functions, this can reform or rewriting of the texts, as we can add parody, references, collage, imitations or paraphrasing techniques in it. Taufiq Rafat's poetry is considered as blend of all sub-continent, European and American writings. His poems do not carry only one or two specific genres but different ideas and concepts as he is also a pre-postcolonial writer. An article includes his four different poems from *Arrival of the Monsoon: Collected Poems (1947-78)* and *Half Moon (1979-83)*. These all four poems belong to different traditions of poetry; 1) Birds from Porlock (Meta poetic poem); 2) The Time to Love (romanticism); 3) At the Service Station (Childhood); 4) A Positive Region (Topographical). Different types of intertextualities have been used in these four poems; micro intertextuality, micro intertextuality, quotations usage and writing back intertextuality with relation to this literary aspect are highlighted that gives these poems a whole genre. This shows how Rafat explored multiple concepts in his poetry.

(Amin, 2018) Highlights Rafat's celebration about indigenous landscape with contrast to faunal images used in his poetry. In this research, she indicates how Rafat describes the Pakistani landscape with delicacy, diction chose by him purely do justice to the beauty of Pakistan. He discusses them with enthusiasm, liberty, ecstasy and harmony. The researcher presents a vivid image of Pakistani Landscape to readers. In his book, *Arrival of the Monsoon (1985)*- (*which is his most famous collection of poems*) Rafat shares about seasons, fragrance and beautiful cities of Pakistan by discussing shared culture and traditions.

For the theme of creativity in Rafat poems (Akhtar, 2023) sheds light on "reflections" where she highlights past poets and writers' revival of selfhood a primary source for creative consciousness. She believes, Rafat coined "*Pakistani Idiom*" to show a distinguished identity of Pakistan to literary world as well as dazzling culture and traditions of us. He sublimed Pakistani traditions in his influential works. However,

paper shows Rafat efforts to recover selfhood and add a different creative expression in his poems. It has been contrasted with Fanon's framework about selfhood and rejection of colonial powers. She also adds Rafat proved in his work that idea about images and metaphors of native culture are also powerful and influential. Rafat finds and compares his culture with the surrounding of other poets like *John Keats*, showing same effectiveness. In search of selfhood, Rafat remains clear with his ideas and represent his roots within his writings, words can shorten its effect but message is strongly delivered. She quotes for Rafat; "***Our actions keep us alive even after our departure from the world***". In her research, she highlights Rafat uses rich cultural symbols to elaborate every single idea. The comparison between logic and inspiration always shows his sensibility and how balanced his work is.

Methodological Approach

The methodology of this study is framed is quantitative approach: quantitative investigation of its influence. It is rooted in investigation of poetic text of Taufiq Rafat, exploring cultural richness and linguistic markers in his poetry.

To complement the Hermeneutic qualitative analysis of the Taufiq Rafat's poetry, a quantitative survey is designed to examine how linguistics and literature students perceive the cultural identity and linguistics elements in the poems of Taufiq Rafat. It aims to validate textual interpretations with audience centered data, thus showing literary Hermeneutics - real reader response.

Survey structure

It consists of different items;

Demographic information (*age, gender, undergrad level*)

Likert scale statements (*using a 5 point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree*)

Open-ended questions (*allows participants to elaborate on their views for Rafat's poetry and his usage of native idioms, cultural themes and emotional impact*).

Data Collection Procedure

Sampling and Population

The population includes two components;

Textual corpus (Selected poems of Taufiq Rafat)

Survey Respondents (studying literature and linguistics)

A purposive sampling technique has been used for selecting the poems, it ensures diversity in thematic density, intertextuality, style and cultural representations. The qualitative sample comprises of 10 poems from *Half Moon*. For quantitative components a survey was conducted among 50 students enrolled in Linguistics and literature programs of university, these students were selected through convenience sampling.

A survey was conducted among 50 students of linguistics and literature of Undergraduate programs.

Participants responded to a Google form (comprising of Likert scale questions- for quantifying readers' perceptions on Rafat's poems and open ended questions to give personal and elaborative answers/suggestions in it). The responses are later analyzed statistically by using SPSS and interpreted along to understand language choices adapted by Rafat in his poetry.

Poetic structural text & Language choice of Rafat's poetry through Survey based Research (Questionnaire)

This survey-based study highlights Rafat's choice of language, words he used to depict pakistaniness in his work. He introduces his culture proudly and sometimes criticizes them too, he also talks about sufferings of people at the times of partition by including theme of post colonialism and horrors of partition. However, under the theory of Hermeneutics and intertextuality approach; this study analyzes mindful responses of the people through a questionnaire. Later on, the software known as "Statistical Package for The Social Sciences (SPSS) is being used to analyze quantitatively the frequency level of the responses and bar charts for clear depiction of responses. For the sake of qualitative analysis, general interpretations on the basis of responses of the questionnaire are being done so, it could be found out what readers actually understands from his poetry and how they interpret it. Poems are given, then read by the respondents to fill out the questionnaire which later on is analyzed.

Table 1 General Properties from demographics till Question no.10

		Gender	Level	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Demographics

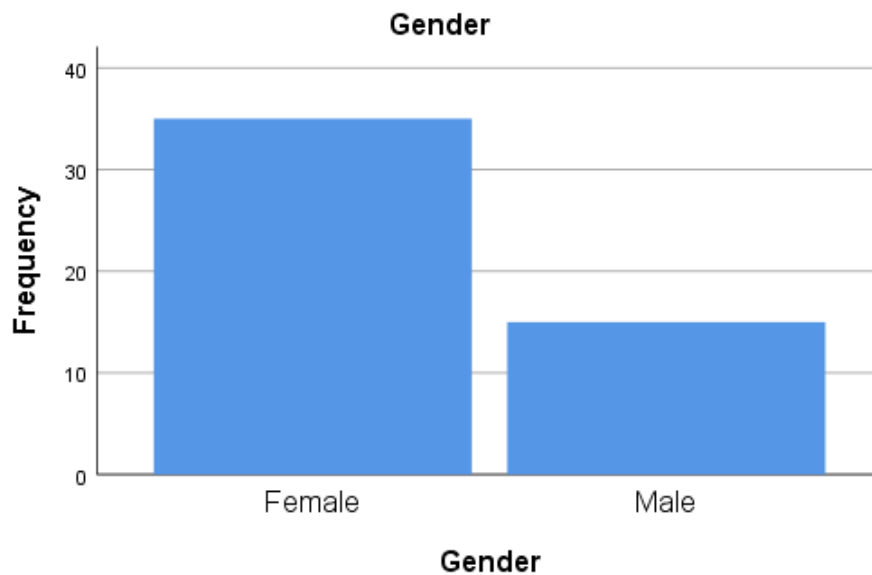
In the demographics, the first one was to counter the gender of the respondents. It could be interpreted according to the frequency of the responses that out of 50, 35 are female and 15 are male.

Table 2: Frequency of Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	35	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Male	15	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Figure illustrates number of respondents that are male and female.

Figure 1: Frequency Bar Chart of Gender



Note: Generated by SPSS

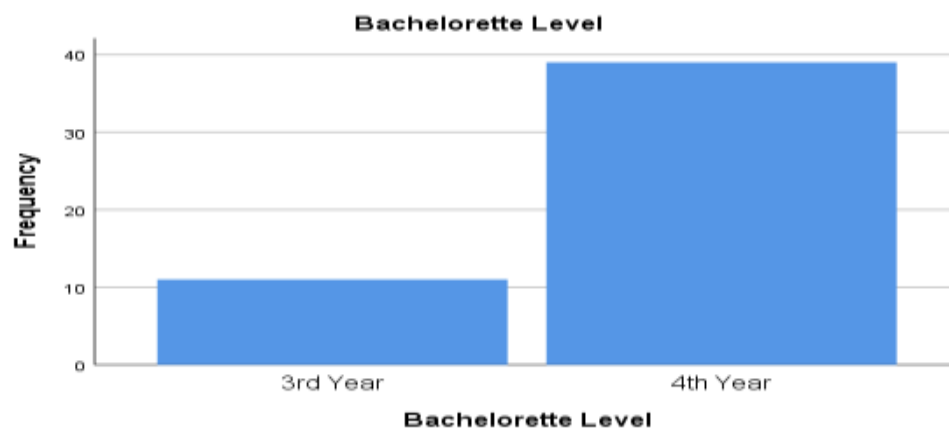
In the demographics, the second one was to counter the education or knowing the level of the respondents. It could be found out that mostly were of 3rd and 4th year of their BS. So, it could be said that 90% of the respondents were from this area of education.

**Table 3: Frequency of Level
Bachelorette Level**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3rd Year	11	22.0	22.0	22.0
	4th Year	39	78.0	78.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Figure describes the highest column of the respondents is of final year students.

Figure 2: Frequency Bar Chart of Level



Note: Generated by SPSS 1

Pakistani English Poetry

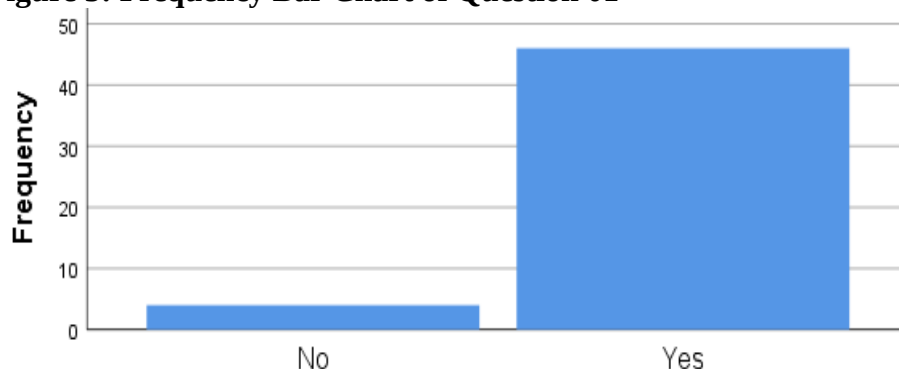
Question No. 1 of the questionnaire states, "Are you familiar with Pakistani poetry in English". This particular statement reflects the readers being engaged in reading English poetry but do they have come across Pakistani poets work in English who introduced new idiom into it. According to the responses, it can be interpreted that out of 50 responses there are 46 who said yes and others marked no. But it can be stated that maximum number of respondents are familiar to this.

Table 4: Frequency of Question 01
Are you familiar with Pakistani poetry in English?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	4	8.0	8.0	8.0
	Yes	46	92.0	92.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The bar chart depicts that frequency level is the highest of the column "Yes".

Figure 3: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 01



Note: Generated by SPSS

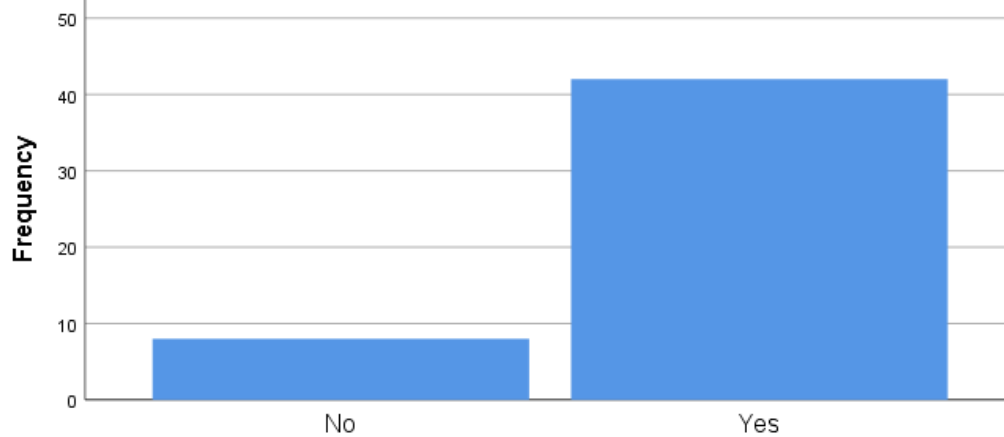
Question No. 02 of the questionnaire states, "Have you read Taufiq Rafat's poetry before". This statement is asked to know about the respondents' interest and if they have ever read about the poet to which this whole survey is based upon. According to the responses, it can be interpreted that out of 50 there are 42 participants who have read rafat's poetry before and 8 are new to it.

Table 5: Frequency of Question 02
Have you read Taufiq Rafat's poetry before?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	8	16.0	16.0	16.0
	Yes	42	84.0	84.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The bar chart depicts that frequency level is the highest of the column "Yes".

Figure 4: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 02



Note: Generated by SPSS

Pakistani Identity in Poetry

Question no.3 of the questionnaire states, "Does Taufiq Rafat use English, infused with local expressions, reflect Pakistani identity". Taufiq Rafat introduced new idiom to Pakistani English, his work puts light on his own identity. His work produced shows the culture and local language induced in it. According to the responses, it can be interpreted that out 50 there are 29 who agrees with, 16 strongly agree and 5 of them stayed neutral in this regard. But it can be stated that the maximum number of respondents agree to this.

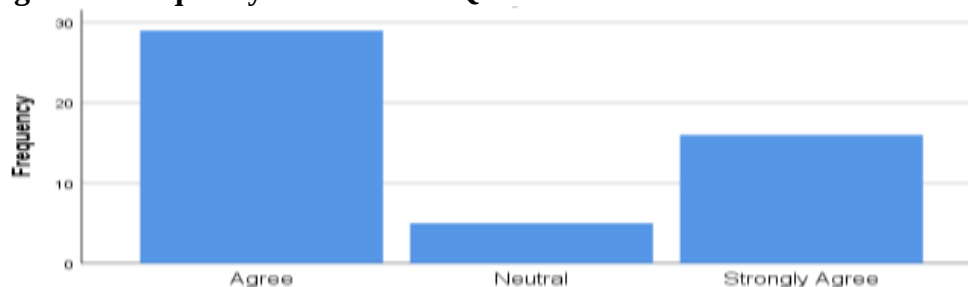
Table 6:Frequency of Question 03

Does Taufiq Rafat use English, infused with local expressions, reflect Pakistani identity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	29	58.0	58.0	58.0
	Neutral	5	10.0	10.0	68.0
	Strongly Agree	16	32.0	32.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are for the "agree option".

Figure 5: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 03



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question no. 04 of the questionnaire states, "Do you think his poetry captures the rhythms and sounds of indigenous languages like Punjabi or Urdu". This statement denotes the language choice and structural choice of the poem adopted by rafat working in other language. His work do includes words from these languages Punjabi and Urdu by discussing certain themes. According to the responses, it can be interpreted that out of 50 there are 16 who strongly agree, 18 agrees, 14 stayed neutral and 2 from them disagreed with it.

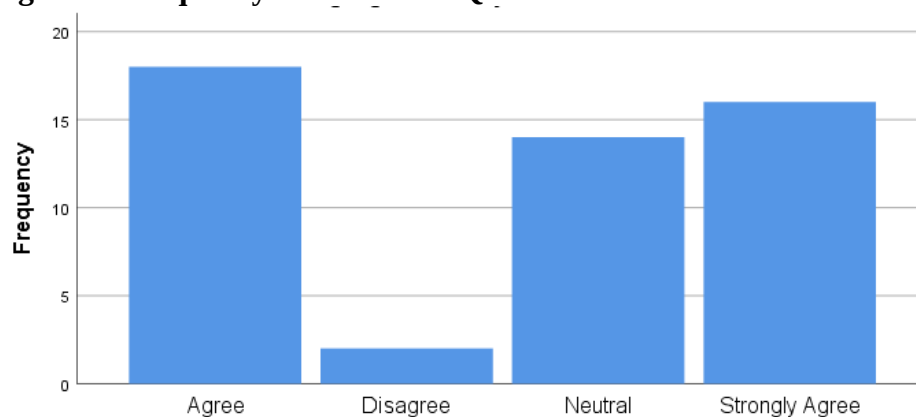
Table 7 Frequency of Question 04

Do you think his poetry captures the rhythms and sounds of indigenous languages like Punjabi or Urdu?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	18	36.0	36.0	36.0
	Disagree	2	4.0	4.0	40.0
	Neutral	14	28.0	28.0	68.0
	Strongly Agree	16	32.0	32.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree option".

Figure 6: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 04



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question No. 05 of the questionnaire states, "Have you found some specific words, phrases, or stylistic elements in his poetry that feel distinctly Pakistani to you". This statement denotes Rafat creating his own new medium to English poetry by borrowing cultural aspects, words from Urdu. Reader's response shows his work depicted phrases and events from Pakistan too much and he contrasts English and Pakistani English to make us understand it more clearly. According to response, out of 50 there are 24 who agrees with the statement, 22 who strongly agrees and 4 of them stayed neutral.

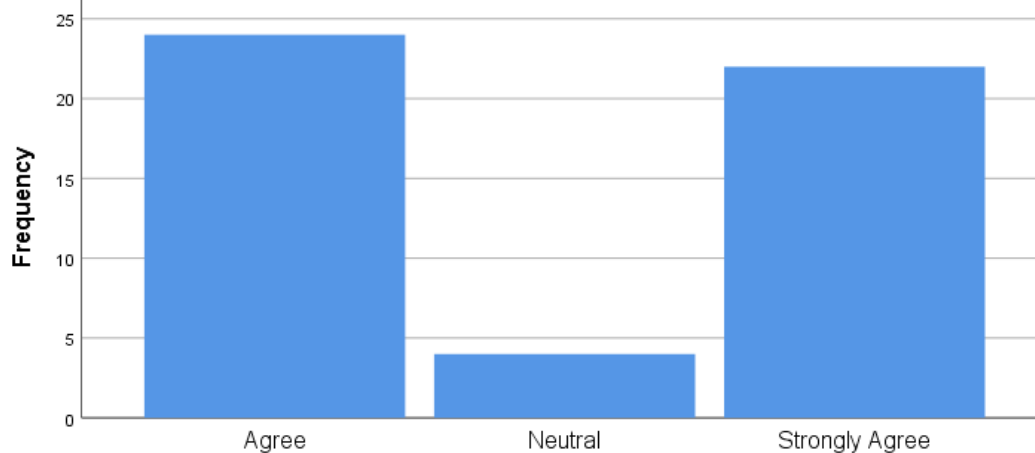
Table 8: Frequency of Question 05

Have you found some specific words, phrases, or stylistic elements in his poetry that feel distinctly Pakistani to you?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	24	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Neutral	4	8.0	8.0	56.0
	Strongly Agree	22	44.0	44.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree option".

Figure 7: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 05



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question No. 06 of the questionnaire states, "Language used in his poetry makes his poetry more relatable to a Pakistani audience". This statement denotes that words, phrases or sentences adopted from Urdu or Punjabi language makes us relate to the poem or not and do we get underlying meaning of it or not. According to response, 25 respondents agree with it, 19 strongly agrees, 4 are neutrals and 2 strongly disagrees with the statement.

Table 9: Frequency of Question 06

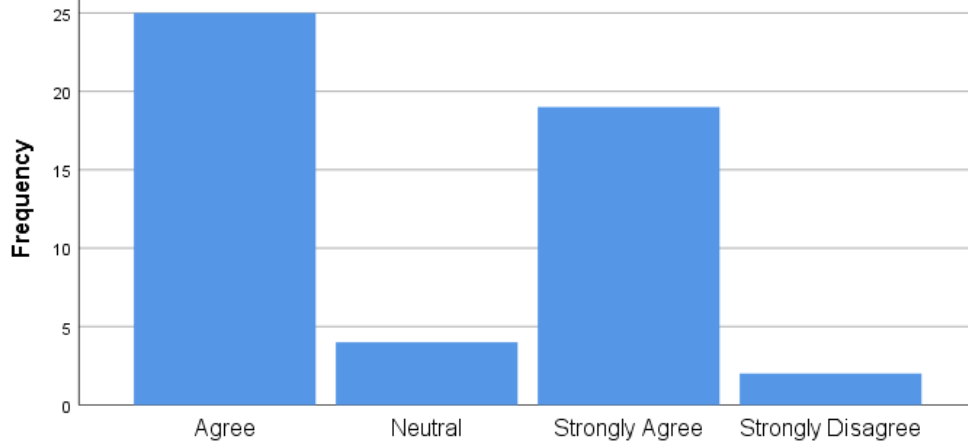
Language used in his poetry makes his poetry more relatable to a Pakistani audience.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	25	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Neutral	4	8.0	8.0	58.0
	Strongly Agree	19	38.0	38.0	96.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree

option".

Figure 8: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 06



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question no. 07 of the questionnaire states, "His poetry challenges or reinforces traditional Pakistani identity". The statement denotes knowing about Rafat's poetry. In his poems, he openly criticizes as well as beautify the Pakistani traditions and identity. Many of his poetry revolves around cities of Pakistan and specific locations and relating them with different scenarios and highlighting different genres in it. According to the response, out of 50 there are 23 in strongly agree and agree and 4 were neutral.

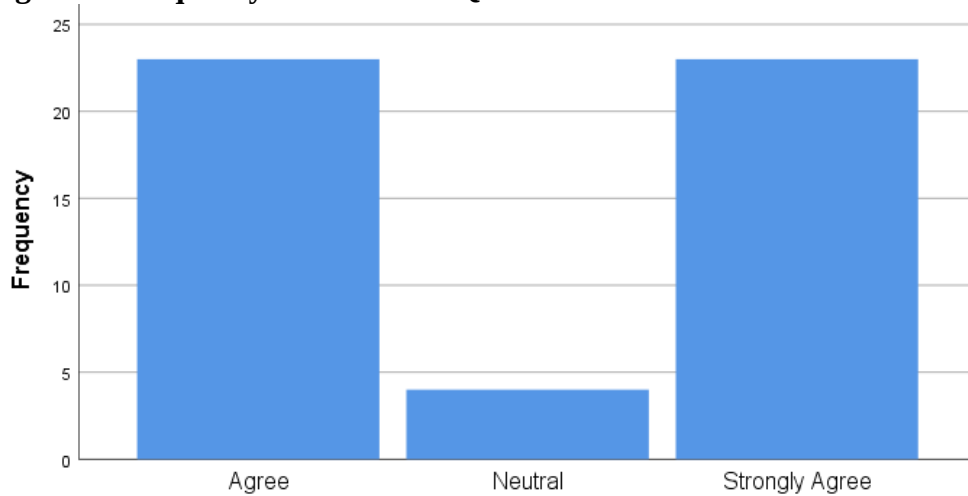
Table 10: Frequency of Question 07

His poetry challenges or reinforces traditional Pakistani identity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	23	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Neutral	4	8.0	8.0	54.0
	Strongly Agree	23	46.0	46.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "strongly agree & agree option".

Figure 9: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 07



Note: Generated by SPSS

Influence of Pakistani culture

Question no.8 of the questionnaire states, "Does his portrayal of local customs, traditions, and landscapes influence your understanding of Pakistani culture". According to responses, out of 50, 26 totally agrees with the statement whereas 10 stayed neutral and 14 strongly agrees with it.

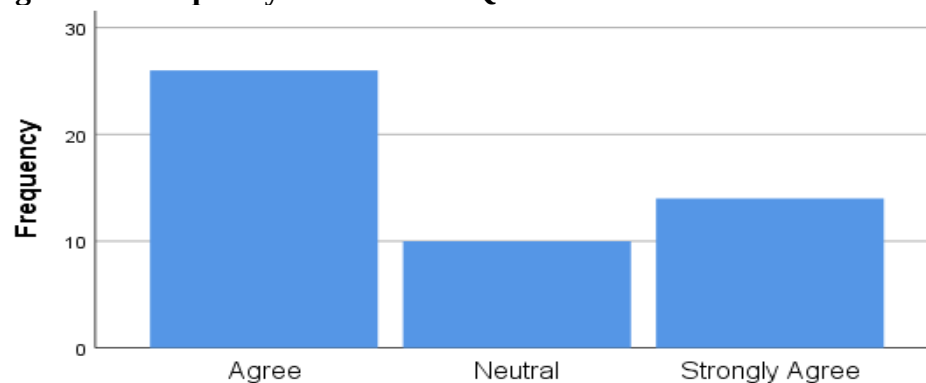
Table 11: Frequency of Question 08

Does his portrayal of local customs, traditions, and landscapes influence your understanding of Pakistani culture?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	26	52.0	52.0	52.0
	Neutral	10	20.0	20.0	72.0
	Strongly Agree	14	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree option".

Figure 10: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 08



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question no.9 of the questionnaire states, "Were there any metaphors or symbols in his poetry that strongly represent Pakistani heritage". This statement denotes respondents going through the selected poems of Rafat and look into figurative elements in it. Those figurative elements were adopted from local customs and symbols. Out of 50, 27 agrees with it so they found out those symbols and can relate to it.

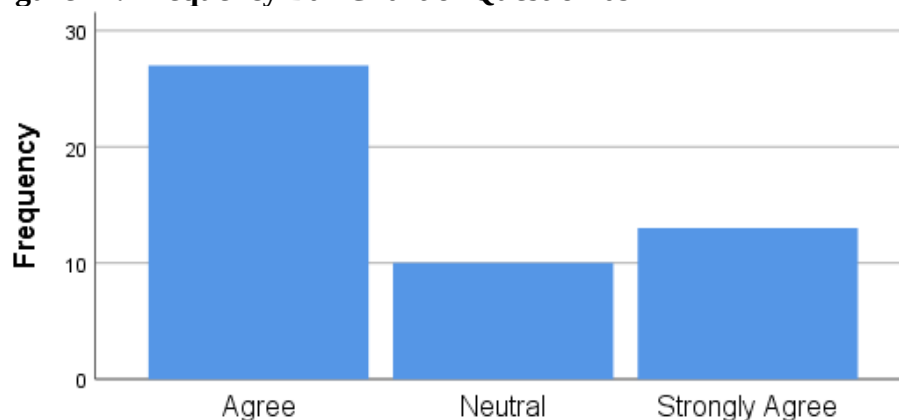
Table 12: Frequency of Question 09

Were there any metaphors or symbols in his poetry that strongly represent Pakistani heritage?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	27	54.0	54.0	54.0
	Neutral	10	20.0	20.0	74.0
	Strongly Agree	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree option".

Figure 11: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 09



Note: Generated by SPSS

Question no.10 of the questionnaire states, "Is Taufiq Rafat's poetry accessible to non-Pakistani readers". This statement is simple but responses vary as Taufiq Rafat is a Pakistani poet where do people believes his work is not accessible to other countries. According to respondents, 29 of them agrees, 3 disagrees and 3 strongly agree.

Table 13: Frequency of Question 10

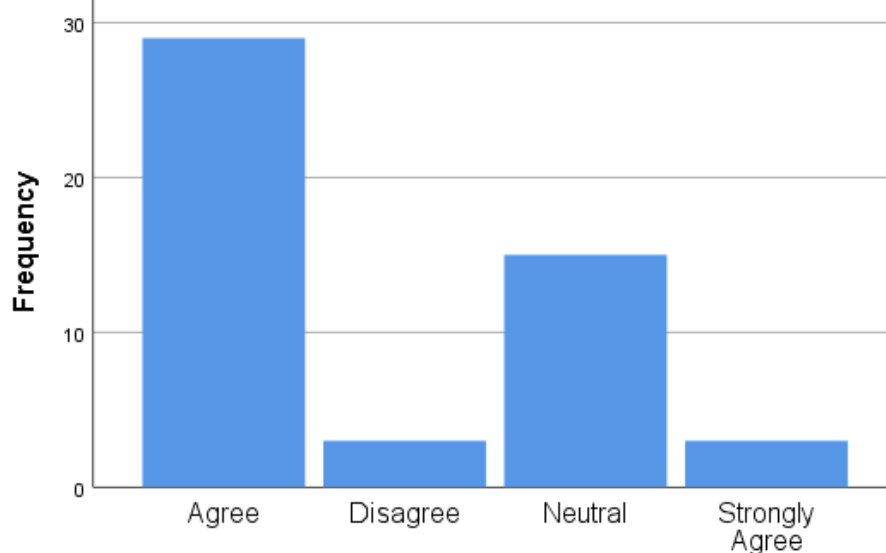
Is Taufiq Rafat's poetry accessible to non-Pakistani readers?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	29	58.0	58.0	58.0
	Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	64.0
	Neutral	15	30.0	30.0	94.0

Strongly Agree	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The following Bar chart reflects that highest number of responses are of the "agree option".

Figure 12: Frequency Bar Chart of Question 10



Note: Generated by SPSS

Last two questions (Question no.11 & 12) are open-ended questions which focuses on respondents' expression towards work of Rafat.

Question no.11:

How do you feel when reading his poetry, do you find a sense of belonging, nostalgia, or unfamiliarity in his descriptions of Pakistan?

A large majority of respondents expressed nostalgia and belonging, highlighting that Rafat's imagery of Pakistani culture, traditions, and landscapes strongly resonated with them. Words like "nostalgic," "patriotic," and "connected" appeared frequently. Some respondents mentioned that the poems reminded them of childhood experiences, family traditions, and old city life, showing that Rafat's descriptions trigger personal and cultural memory. A few participants described unfamiliarity, noting that while Rafat's poetry reflects Pakistan, some references were distant from their own lived experiences. This shows a generational or regional gap in cultural reception. Overall, the responses indicate that Rafat successfully captures a shared cultural identity, though not every reader relates equally.

Key Themes:

Nostalgia & belonging → Majority

Cultural pride & rootedness → Strongly present

Unfamiliarity → Minority but important

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Question no.12:

How do you think contemporary Pakistani poets can build upon Rafat's linguistic and cultural approach?

Many respondents emphasized the need to continue promoting Pakistani culture, traditions, and landscapes in poetry, just as Rafat did.

Suggestions included:

More research and deeper exploration of Pakistan's history and identity.

Balancing tradition with modern issues, such as globalization, technology, and urban life.

Using simple yet rich language, following Rafat's accessible but layered style.

Highlighting diversity within Pakistan regional languages, folklore, and multiple cultural perspectives.

A few respondents gave concise answers like "By doing more research" or "By promoting culture," while others wrote more detailed responses stressing the importance of ideological depth and cultural authenticity.

Key Themes:

Preserve & promote Pakistani culture and landscapes

Fuse tradition with modern concerns

Research & deepen cultural/linguistic representation

Maintain simplicity and accessibility in language

In short: Question no.11 shows readers mostly experience nostalgia and belonging, confirming Rafat's cultural resonance.

Question no.12 reveals readers want contemporary poets to expand Rafat's approach by blending tradition with modernity, ensuring that poetry remains culturally rooted but also forward-looking.

Discussion

The survey conducted among fifty participants, consisting primarily of literature and linguistics students, reflected extremely positive responses. All participants interacted with the poems meaningfully and appreciated Rafat's success in portraying cultural, emotional, and social facts. As the feedback was mostly positive, this tells us that Rafat's poetry still reaches out to people and is appreciated today. Most readers communicated that his poetry seemed familiar to their own experiences of Pakistani life, domestic traditions, and social environments. The positive result of the survey tells us that Rafat's approach of "indigenization" in English poetry makes readers feel both local and global simultaneously.

In comparing the survey results, a pattern was apparent: readers believed Rafat's poetry established a feeling of recognition. For instance, when asked whether the cultural aspects presented in the poems were authentic or not, nearly all responded with "yes" and cited examples like Eid morning descriptions, rural scenery, and family reunions. This indicates that Rafat effectively transmits Pakistani customs in a manner that resonates with readers from different generations. Another question enquired if the poems' language was simple enough to grasp but artistic, and once more answers were very positive. Readers pointed out that Rafat's employment of ordinary vocabulary combined with poetic imagery made the poems meaningful but accessible. This is the strength of his writing: simplicity without compromising depth.

Conclusion

The student survey among students of literature and linguistics provided further evidence. Readers reacted extremely well to the poems, with the language being clear and the images of culture familiar. They said Rafat's poetry was easy to comprehend but also profoundly significant. This indicates that the usage of plain vocabulary, along with figurative techniques such as similes and metaphors, effectively allows literary craftsmanship to meet with convenience. The survey also validated the fact that his poetry remains to stress Pakistani cultural identity for today's readers, making his writing not only significant historically but also contemporarily.

In general, the study indicates that Rafat's poetry is effective due to its capacity to reconcile simplicity with complexity, personal memory with collective heritage, and local identity with universal literary forms. His poems touch readers both emotionally and culturally, and the outcome of this study verifies his place as a figure of importance in Pakistani English literature.

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