Convergence of Sexual and Sacred in *Home Fire*: Analysis of Collocation Networks

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*Association measures,
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Donnean mode,
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Merging Sexual and
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Abstract

A striking aspect of the genre-specific aesthetic elements of Pakistani Anglophone writing, particularly in Shamsie (2017), is the blending of sensual and theologically laden vocabulary. This writing practice of merging erotic imagery in the context of the sacred is not new and was observed in sixteenth-century poet John Donne (Hackett, 2004). Merging these two lexical domains is unsettling and arresting for a Muslim reader. This article verifies the intermingling of the lexemes from the domain of sexual and sacred through GraphColl – a tool for exploring collocation networks. The novel Home Fire (2017) by Shamsie is chosen as a sample from the genre of Pakistani anglophone fiction. The theoretical insights are borrowed from Brezina (2018) based on the concept that collocation graphs and collocation networks show association and cross-association between words in language and discourse and can thus be used in a range of areas of linguistic and social research. The research also discusses the repercussions of the concurrent presence of sexual and sacred imagery in the text. This type of intermixing, shades the meanings of lexemes from one domain by lexemes from the other domain, eventually leading to trivializing the sacred and glorifying the sexual which is proved with the detailed analysis of concordance lines. The study concludes that Shamsie (2017) has crossed the line between erotic and sacred in a recognizable Donnean mode (Hackett, 2004).

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INTRODUCTION

The discourse of Pakistani Anglophonic fiction can be labeled as a distinct genre as it consists of thematically related semiotic and written tokens and sequential linguistic acts (Reisigl & Wodak, 2000). The definition of a genre by Reisigl (2010, p.231) tells us that the idiosyncratic characteristics of one piece of the genre can be linked to another piece of the same genre.

The article is divided into three distinct parts. The first part explains the ideological foundations of the study by discussing the evolution and recent critique of Anglophone literature and the phenomenon of merging the two semantic domains – sexual and sacred – in this context. The part following introduces the theoretical insights borrowed from Brezina (2018) and discusses the recent studies made through *GraphColl*. The last part consists of the analysis of the collocation networks and a discussion of their implications from a critical perspective. The last part consists of a discussion and conclusion.

Aims and objectives:

- To identify the merging of the domains of sexual and sacred in *Home Fire* by Shamsie (2017) through the use of collocation networks

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resurgence of Orientalism in Anglophone Literature

Before describing the theoretical and methodological details, a small historical remark contextualizing the research is required. Kalmar (2013) noted that the third phase of Orientalism started at the beginning of postmodern times. The first two stages are labeled as soft and hard versions of Orientalism by Kalmar (2013). The soft version ended around 1830 when the hard one started. Hyland (2013) suggested that in the past deconstructing colonial masters' writing was a significant "space-clearing gesture" (p. 229). The critique of anglophone literature by Huggan (2002) suggests that the "essentialist nature of the racist narratives produced in colonialism is replaced by the master narrative discourse of hybridity in the twenty-first century (p. 229). This post-colonial discourse was intended to uncover the terrorizing colonial history, but the writers

belonged to a generation raised in the contact zone of the East and the West. The third generation of post-colonial writers is raised and conditioned in the West. Therefore, the Anglophone literature produced after 2000 serves the function of maintaining Eurocentric dominance (Hyland, 2013). Hyland suggests that these novels must be read "beyond their *textuality* to rethink hybridity" (p. 17, 2013). Santesso (2013) opines that the Contemporary Anglophone novel is ironically self-conscious and strategically exotic. In her view, the anglophone writers have established a sardonically sophisticated reputation as Indo-Anglian novelists (p.31, 2013). Huggan (2001) was skeptical about the promotional role played by the Booker Company in the accreditation of the literature produced by longstanding British citizens like Naipaul, Rushdie, and Kureishi. He suggests that they "staged their marginality" and "dramatized their 'subordinate' status". In his views Booker McConnell has a chequered history shaded with a desire for metropolitan control and tainted with imperialist nostalgia. This resulted in the contemporary institutionalization of postcolonial theory at the higher education level. Moslund (2010) delineates a sketch of migration fiction favoring Frank's view (2008) that predominant themes in anglophone literature are "politics, history, and geography" (p.17–19). Typically, characters are shown coping with the displaced identities in the diaspora and this experience could be agonizing, fascinating, destructive, or productive depending on the personal experiences of the writer. This attribute is the reason for marketing this literature as 'autobiographical', especially for the Western reader (Huggan, 2015), and changing it into a generalized ethnographic report. The damage caused is that articulation of an individual's experiences and perceptions is universalized and alleviated to the level of better access to 'exotic' cultures (Huggan, 2015). Huggan is of the view that the "market reader is transformed into an anthropological tourist" (p.165, Huggan, 2001), and to create an 'authentic artifact' and "an illusion of transparency" the "authentic semiotic markers" are essential (p.131). The current research hypothesizes that the use of theologically charged terminology is one such semiotic marker to create the illusion of authenticity but at the same time mingling it with sexual serves the purpose of glorifying the sexual at the cost of trivializing the sacred. A whole set of state-managed projects provide patronage to portray this literature as true representatives of minorities' homeland culture and their ambiguous status is completely clouded. Emberley points out that the worst part of this game is that the literary efforts made in the homeland are silenced by making them invisible or denying access by the dominant publishing industry (p.126, Emberley, 1993). This becomes a discursive strategy of the neo-colonial silencing process in which the "wider

exotics representational mechanism creates the indigenous *other*, manipulated, and controlled by the dominant culture "(p.159, Huggan, 2001).

Merging the Domains of Sacred and Sexual

Hoey (2007) suggests that a discourse consists of a network of lexical associations, where each association activates many other associations and these multiple cross-associations produces social meaning by rendering the shades of meanings. These cross-associations or collocation networks are invisible to the naked eye and even very close reading cannot uncover them. The reader keeps a subconscious record of the context in which a word or a cluster of words is encountered. Whenever the reader re-encounters that word again, the accompanying co-text and context are remembered and at times replicated. This practice continued for years giving birth to many well-known collocations and accounts for several other linguistic phenomena. In this research, it is hypothesized that in the fictional discourse of *Home Fire* (2017) the author Shamsie has trivialized the sacred concepts of Islam by merging them with the sexual encounters of her two main protagonists, Aneeka and Eamonn. For the sake of this research, the concept of sacred is defined as an object, a motive, or a social practice connected with God or dedicated to a religious purpose and thus, deserving veneration. On the contrary, the sexual or erotic is considered relevant to or tending to arouse sexual desire or excitement. Any object, a motive, or a social practice described with the quality that causes sexual feelings, refers to sensuality, and portrays romantic love, is considered sexual or erotic in this research. This practice of mingling sacred imagery with the erotic one is not done by Shamsie (2017) for the first time in the history of English literature. A sixteenth-century poet has been creating poetic images which were unsettling and shocking for the reader (Hackett, 2004). His persistent and obsessive mingling of registers in elegies, as well as sonnets, has been termed troublingly unrestricted by some critics (Greenberg, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

The research borrows the theoretical foundations from collocation studies, mainly from Brezina (2018). With every passing day, the fruitfulness of collocation research is further highlighted by the variety and efficiency of applications generated from advancements in technology in this subject. Applied collocational analysis has yielded encouraging outcomes in numerous fields, including lexicography, teaching/learning of second languages, and among other things, Discourse

analysis.

Collocation networks are built on the idea that every text consists of organized lexical patterns that give clues about the meaning of the text and can be changed into visual networks. This idea was proposed by Phillips in 1983 and gave birth to an important theoretical understanding of the link between the words, the text, and finally to the mind of the discourse procedures. There are various approaches to constructing collocation networks that operationalize specific features. This study demonstrates the notion of using collocation networks generated by *GraphColl* for exploring the fictional discourse of *Home Fire* (2017). More specifically, this research investigates the merging of two completely distinct semantic domains by focusing on the choice of lexis by Shamsie, with the help of constructing a collocation network.

Phillips (1985) is credited with the concept of collocation networks and has been applied to research on terminology (Williams 1998), the historical/social development of language (McEnery 2006), and online conversation (Williams, 1998). Brezina (2016) Collocation networks, however, required a lot of physical labor to produce until recently. This task has been a lot easier and more accessible for academics with the development of #LancsBox (Brezina et al. 2015), which automatically detects collocations and creates collocation networks on the fly. The importance of collocations is being explored for more than fifty years now. Gries (2013) suggests that understanding the meaning of discourse with the help of collocations can be improved by focusing on four important criteria while identifying the collocations. These include (i) distance between two collocates and the node word, (ii) frequency of co-occurrence, (iii) exclusivity of the two words recurrently appearing together, and (iv) directionality. The first criterion distance between the node words and collocation is called the span. Louw's theory of semantic prosody (2016) along with the concept of sliding collocational windows are important in this context. The sliding collocation window can be of span from nine to nineteen words on either side of the node word depending on the criterion specified by the researcher according to the need of the research (Sinclair et al. 2004). For example, this distance can be set up to one word if the researcher wants to study the occurrence of adjectives preceding a noun in a text. The next criterion *frequency of co-occurrence* is also a significant indicator that shows word association. For instance, while analyzing the collocational errors, Ha (2013) suggests that the verb *make*s collocates very frequently with the nouns *friends* and *mistakes* and therefore the phrases *make friends* and *make mistakes* are considered important chunks in the English language. The third criterion – exclusivity

- is also explained by the same example that although these two phrases are important, the use of the verb *make*s is not exclusive to these two nouns, as it may also occur with *money* but the verb used for *mistake* is very frequently *made* and therefore, the noun *mistake* is strongly and exclusively associated with the verb *make* but the vice versa may not be true. This helps the researcher to conclude that the attraction between *make* and *mistake* is not symmetrical (Ha, 2013). The fourth criterion directionality refers to the positioning of the collocations to the node word. The ideal way to present connected collocations is in the form of a complicated collocation graph, which we refer to as a collocation network. Collocation connectivity cannot be efficiently and simply displayed in a tabular format.

The concept of collocation networks was proposed by Phillips (1983, 1985, 1989) but since then they have been used by Alonso et al. 2011; McEnery 2006a, 2006b and Baker 2005 for exploring specialized and general corpora in many studies. These linguists suggest that the collocation networks reveal many important lexical connections in discourse. McEnery 2006a, and Baker 2005 state that these collocation networks can only be analyzed systemically by using appropriate computational technology and by comparing large datasets. Phillips (1989) argued that the collocation networks and their visualizations can be used for exploring the psychological notion of the 'aboutness' of any discourse. In 1998, Williams proposed the concept of a Mutual Information (MI) score for exploring the working of collocation networks in plant biology. Brezina, McEnery, & Wattam, (2015) suggest that although William's work is replicable, some of the criteria such as span size and collocation window, sliding or otherwise, are not made clear by him. McEnery (2006a) used the association measure MI2, a cut-off point of 3, and the span around the node word was set as +/-5. The main reason behind this methodological choice is practical considerations and its availability in the *WordSmith Tools* (version 3, Scott 1999). Brezina, McEnery, & Wattam, (2015) elaborates on the importance of the clarity of association measures and (CPN) collocation parameters notation in systematizing the study of collocation networks. They suggest that the retrieval of collocation networks is a complex process and researchers cannot prescribe one single association measure that can capture all the aspects of collocation. They suggest that generally the statistical procedure which is used for the identification of collocates may involve two steps, first, based on expected frequencies a random co-occurrence of a baseline is established, and second, the observed frequencies are compared with this baseline.

Visual Representation of Collocation Networks

GraphColl helps us move beyond the first-order collocation to second-order collocations to explore connectivity between lexemes at different levels. Therefore, with the help of this tool, it is possible to retrieve empirical evidence about the connectedness of lexemes from different semantic domains. Despite this, it is to be kept in mind that while introducing *GraphColl*, Brezina, McEnery, & Wattam, (2015) suggest that the absence of a lexeme from the graphic representation of the collocation network in *GraphColl* does not mean its complete absence or lack of association between the lexemes because the graph displays only those collocations which are retrieved through a setting. It provides full control over the settings for advanced users, although the default settings are also provided for novice users. The combination of settings abbreviated as CPN (collocation parameter notations) makes it possible to analyze a range of collocates. Thus, the exploratory nature of graphs allows for experimentation by the researcher and does not give a single picture of the connectedness of two lexemes in any discourse. A researcher can set the following properties in *GraphColl* to generate a collocation network:

i. The span of the collocational window

ii. The association measure (MI Score)

iii. The minimum frequency of collocations

iv. Some other complex operations can also be performed by advanced users by altering the *boolean expressions* (Groovy scripting language) and other options about the corrected R1 value. These properties are set before beginning the construction of a graph and they cannot be altered for extracting the second-stage collocations.

The next section discusses the ideological foundations of the merging of two completely distinct semantic domains of sexual and sacred in *Home Fire* (2017).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In the critical analysis of discourse, a stage may be reached where socio-cultural background knowledge of discourse functions as common-sense knowledge (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). At this stage, the researcher must consider the historical background of that specific discourse. The linguistic structure of that discourse may not provide any help to identify the moral evaluations hidden in discourse. Therefore, in this section, we have explained some aspects of

Islamic cultural knowledge considered essential for understanding the importance of this merging process. Some knowledge of Islamic cultural knowledge is also important because of the opinion expressed by Van Leeuwen (2008) that the recognition of moral evaluations in a discourse is possible only when the common-sense values and socio-cultural knowledge of that setup are also known. In a Muslim society, the boundaries between erotic and sacred are strictly guarded. It is highly unconventional to use terms such as hijab/veil, prayer/prayer-mat, and God/*Allah*, in contexts where illegitimate sex is being discussed. These two human practices are considered inherently and morally contradictory in an Islamic context. In complete contrast to this concept, in the fictional discourse of *Home Fire* Shamsie has invoked these issues alarmingly by muddling up hijab with an open expression of Aneeka in favor of illegitimate sexual relations. The current research hypothesizes that by doing so, Islamic semiotic markers are portrayed in a fictively complicated way and this representation demands critically analyzing the practice of merging these two social practices - representation of hijab and/or other icons of Islamic identity, and representation of illegitimate sex in a Muslim community. An understanding of this phenomenon is gained by focusing on the concordance lines of the most frequent words from the domain of sacred such as *Hijab, God, and Prayer.* For the sake of brevity, we have focused only on the three most frequent words from the domain of sacred. The following three research questions guide this study:

1. What does the collocation network tell us about the merging of sexual and sacred in *Home Fire* (2017)?

The most frequent words from the lexical domain of sacred from the study corpus *Home Fire* (SCHF) are focused on in the current research (figure 01). Their collocational networks are generated with the help of the software *GraphColl.*
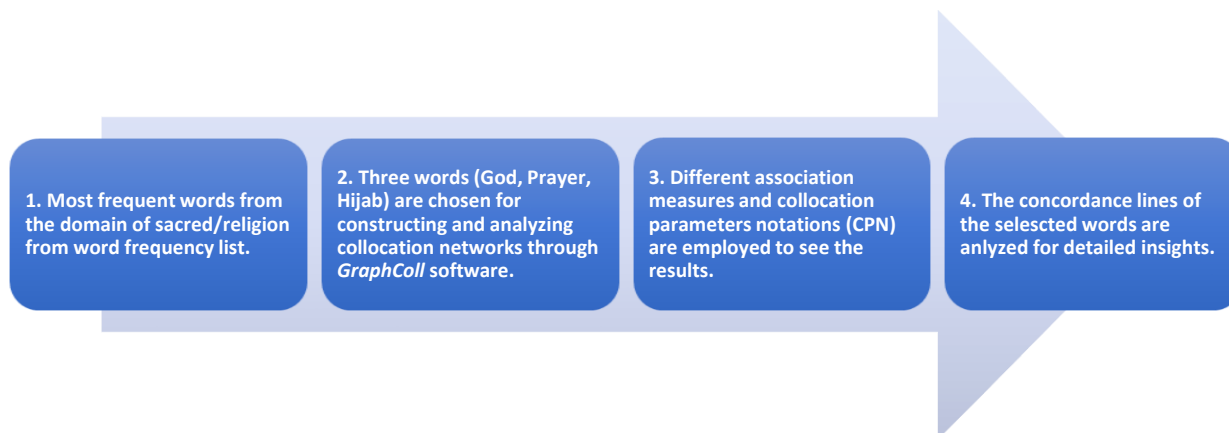
Figure 01 The Procedural Steps of the Current Research

Table 01 shows the frequency of the three most frequent words, *Hijab, Prayer*, and *God* in SCHF. The collocation network graphs of these three words (from figures 01 to 11) are analyzed to explore the merging of lexemes from the sacred and sexual domains.

Trivializing the Sacred and Glorifying the Sexual

Table 01 shows the frequency of the three most frequent words and their synonym used in SCHF from the domain of sacred/religious. These words are chosen manually through intuition by observing the frequency list of SCHF.

Table 01 The most frequent words from the domain of Sacred in SCHF

Most frequent words in the domain of sacred/religious	Freq.
Prayer/s	17/10
God/Allah	15/14
Hijab/ scarf/veil/dupatta	15/5/4

Investigating the Graphs of Collocation Network

A graph with several nodes is referred to as a collocation network. It shows shared connections and shared collocates, as well as their respective unique collocates. Simple collocation graphs and networks offer a lot of promise to not only summarize data efficiently but also, as is shown in this article, adds fresh perspectives to corpus-assisted discourse analysis.

The parameters used for generating the collocation network graphs are a span of 9 words on each side of the node; statistic threshold 3; minimum collocate frequency 2; and no minimum collocation cut-off point was set. The functional words are filtered out. The span of nine words is used following the nine-word sliding collocational window suggested by Louw & Chateau, (2010). To explore the usefulness of *GraphColl* collocation networks, we started constructing graphs of different levels of complexity with the word *prayer* - the most frequent word in the *Home Fire* from the domain of sacred. Figure 02 shows the collocation network of the word *prayer/s.*
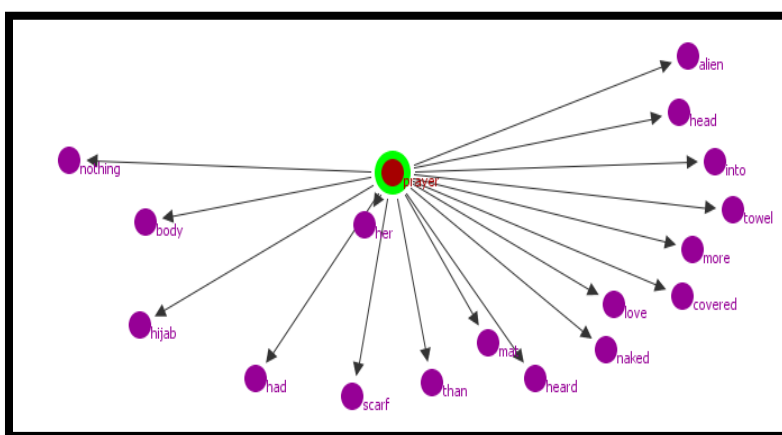

Figure 02. First-order Collocates of the Word *Prayer*

For the identification of collocates, the MI score is used as this association measure is commonly used by known corpus linguists and studies made with this setting can be replicated as it is implemented in a large number of corpus tools (Wordsmith, Sketch Engine, Ant Conc. Etc.). The default settings in the software tend to produce overpopulated graphs which are difficult to comprehend. Therefore, a filter is applied, and the function words are removed. The length of the arrow represents the strength of the association measure between the collocations and the node word but since we are using MI Score, it should be clear that it does not represent the direction of the collocational relation. Therefore, the tip of the arrow should not be inferred as (uni) directionality of the collocational relationship in the graphs created in this study. Directionality of the collocational relationship can be analyzed in a graph only if a directional measure such as Delta P has been set before generating the graph or the third-order collocates have been computed (in

which case both the node word and the collocates are colored red (see figure 04). Both conditions are not met in the graph in Fig 2. Three collocates of the word *prayer* are further explored because they did not seem to fit in the semantic domain of sacred. These words are *naked, body,* and *towel.* Figure 3 shows second-level collocates of prayer through one of its prominent collocates from the domain of sexual – *naked.*
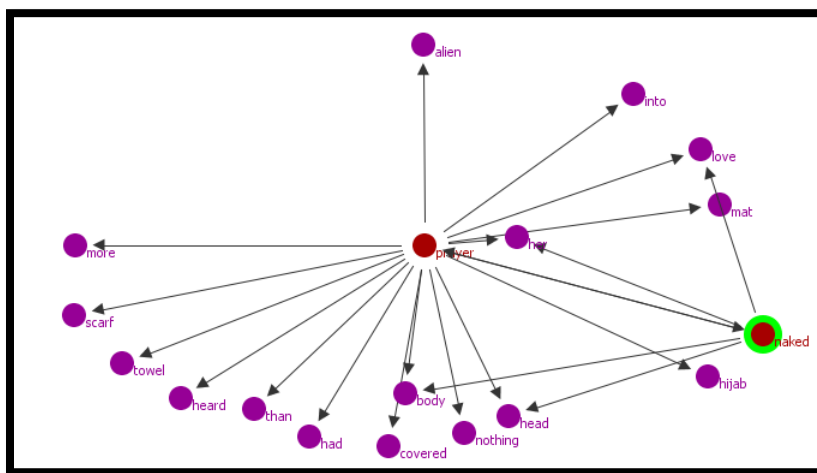

Figure 03 Second-order collocates of the word *Prayer*

The Collocation Network of the word *Prayer*

In cases such as Figures 3 and 4, we need to focus not only on the collocations but also on how immediate or distant associations are shown between the collocations. In figure 3, it can be observed that the word *body* appears closer to the word *prayer* as compared to all its collocations with an exception of *her.* The word *body* appears closer to the word prayer as compared to the word *naked* too (Figure 03). Words like *prayer* and *scarf* belong to the domain of sacred and their unusual positioning in the discourse of *Home Fire* evokes many questions. In the Muslim context, both these words along with the word *Hijab* give a narrow concept about a specific type of worshipping and a part of women's clothing respectively. It would not be a too general statement to say that *the Hijab* and *scarf* are considered icons of Muslim identity all over the world. Figure 04 gives a comparatively clearer picture of the positioning of the words *body* and *prayer.* The figure also shows that the word *her* is equally associated with both *body* and *prayer.*

Figure 04 Second-order collocations of the word prayer through the word *body*

The graph in figure 4 also shows that these words have common collocations carrying mixed connotations of sexual and sacred such as *a naked, head, scarf, covered, and love.* Figure 5 shows an interesting image of the interconnections of the words *covered, body, prayer,* and *naked.* It shows that the word *body* is not only connected to *prayer* directly but also through the word *her.* This intermixing of ideas has two important dimensions; firstly the act of prayer is positioned right before and after the illegitimate physical relation between Aneeka and Eamonn (lines 2, 4, 5, 6, and 10 in table 02), secondly, the word *prayer* is not used in its usual meaning and words from the domain of sacred gradually lose their original meaning by their repeated use in the metaphorical sense (See lines 1, 3 and 8 in table 02). Thus, this collocation network shows how the fictional discourse can be used; to modify and change the meanings of words, to merge the concepts considered poles apart, and to glorify the sexual by trivializing the sacred.

Figure 05 Collocation network of the words *prayer, body, covered,* and *naked*

The Collocation Network of the word *Hijab*

The representation of *the hijab* in the fictional discourse of *Home Fire* is very problematic. This word is found 15 times in SCHF as *hijab* and 2 times in the form of *Hojabi* with a mocking tone (line 16, Table 02). The concordance lines in table 02 show that the scarf/veil/hijab is portrayed as a controversial issue in SCHF. An aura of reluctance combined with hesitation surrounds it and is suggested by words like *reconsider, not stopped wearing it, persuaded out and alien.* Its collocations do not reflect favorable feelings (bold in Table 02). Baker (2013) stresses that in discourse analysis the real strength of corpus tools is utilized by shuttling back and forth from broader contexts in the form of concordance lines and the immediate collocations in the form of collocation graphs. The three collocates shown in the graph of *the Hijab* demanding attention are *alien, nothing,* and *mat* (Figure 04). The fourth word collocating with it is *her* and is explored to the second-order collocates because it is the strongest collocate of the *Hijab* as is evident because of its closest position to the node word *hijab* (figure 04). The second-order collocates show that the words *prayer* and *hijab* share many collocates; these include *her, mat, nothing,* and *towel.*
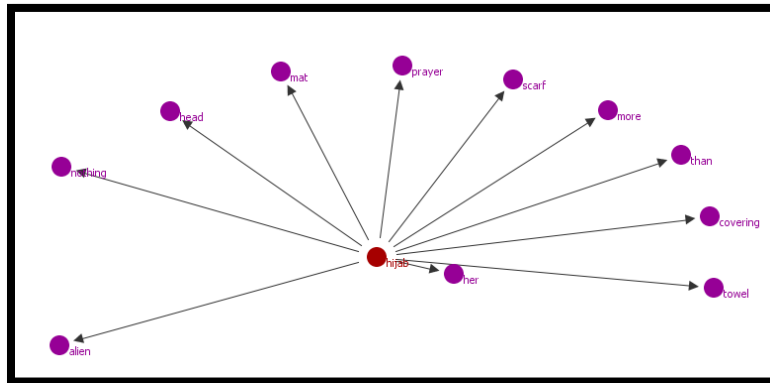

Figure 06 First-order collocates of *Hijab*

If we further explore the collocates of the word prayer to generate its collocations, we find that many words collocate both with *Hijab* and *Prayer.* One very closely related to both of these words are *her, just like prayer and body* (see figure 5). The immediate collocates of each node can be examined in a tabloid form in the left-hand panel by selecting it (See figure 06). The frequencies and association measure scores of the node words are also displayed in a searchable table. In *GraphColl the* provision is made to export the image of the collocation network and the associated

list for any node in different formats such as *GraphViz* dot format or an image file (Fig.07).

Figure 07 Screen Short of *GraphColl* - View of Graph and Associated List

The collocation network of *the body* includes many words from the domain of sacred for example *towel, naked, bed, love,* and at the same time, it has words from the domain of sacred, for example, *prayer, scarf, and hijab.* It would be helpful to explain that the graph is color-coded. The red color of the dot shows that the word has had a full collocation search computed for it. The purple color of the dots shows that these words are identified as collocates but their collocations are not derived yet. A graph such as figure 9 which has three red dots shows a complete view of all collocational relationships of the three words in the corpus.

Figure 08 Collocation Network showing the positioning of the *Hijab* and *Prayer*

A common collocate of *Hijab* and *Prayer* is selected for showing the complete collocation network in figure 09. This collocation network shows that many words collocate with all three of these words. The dots with these words are colored red which indicates that their collocations have been computed.
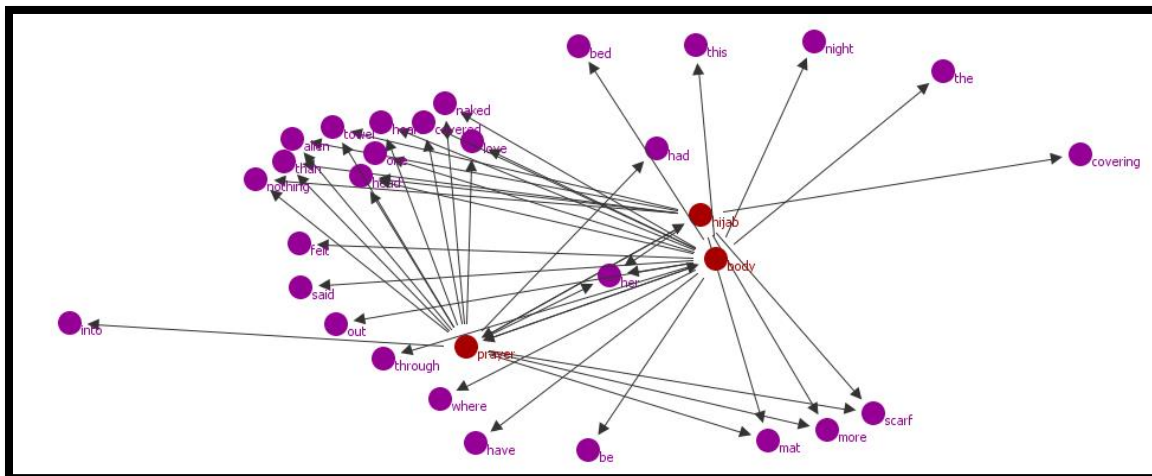

Figure 09 collocation network showing the positioning of *the Hijab, Body,* and *Prayer*

Figure 09 clearly shows that many words from the domain of sacred and sexual occur in close vicinity to each other. Some collocates are found before the node in the syntactic (linear) structure, while others take place after. For instance, various verb tenses always come before the node love to produce the statement fall in love, whereas affair always comes after love to form the expression love affair. If there is an overlap, this type of display results (as in Fig. 09). Numerous collocates occur at the same linear position. Figure 11 depicts the typical tendency of individual collocates to appear predominantly left or mostly right of the node by determining the proportion of occurrences that occur to the left/right out of all examples.

The Collocation Network of the word *God/Allah*

The second most frequent word from the domain of sacred is *God* (Table 01). The word *hijab* is explored before the word *God* because it appeared in the collocation of *Prayer*. When the collocation network of the word *God* is created, its first-order collocates did not show any intermixing of the two domains – sacred and sexual, although this can be seen in figure 10 that the word God did collocate with the word *her* and *woman*.

Figure 10. First-order collocates of the word *God*

When a second-order collocation network of the word *God* is created through the word *her* a highly populated collocation network is produced which is both difficult to read and interpret. Some of the collocations of the word *her* belong to the domain of sexuality and they have been encircled to highlight them. These include *kiss, naked, undress, tightly, body, love, sex,* and *embrace.* Some words from the domain of sacred have also been identified as the collocation of *her.* These include *prayer, hijab, praying,* and *scarf.*

Figure 11 Second-order collocates of the word *God* through the word *Her*

This led us to draw the equation that the word *God* collocates with the word *her* which collocates with words from the domain of both sexual and sacred, such as *kiss, naked, undress, tightly, body, love, sex,* and *embrace*

During the concordance analysis of the words in table 01, it becomes clear that many words from the domain of sacred are accompanied by words from the domain of sexual. This observation made us analyze the concordance lines of selected words from the domain of sacred based on their frequency in the novel *Home Fire.* The rule of the nine-word collocation window reveals anything (table 02). Focusing on the broader context of these three words revealed that in *Home Fire* a strange practice of combining religious concepts with sexual images, mainly in the sexual encounter of Aneeka and Eamonn. The state of sexual ecstasy is coupled with the spiritual fulfillment of Aneeka and is narrated as a concurring phenomenon. Aneeka's character is particularly created to suggest that the possibilities of spiritual gratification do exist within the experience of sexual union, which is quite shocking for a Muslim reader. The frequent mentioning of *hijab, prayers, relationship with God,* and *supplication* immediately before or after the sexual encounters seem an intentional attempt to baffle the reader's expectations. Some examples from *Home Fire* retrieved as the concordance lines of words from the domain of sacred (put in bold font) merged with the words from the domain of sexual (underlined and italicized) are grouped in table 02. Some of the words which are underlined and italicized may not appear to belong to the domain of sex in a superficial look but the broader context of the novel confirms so.

The collocation graphs, which are the same as collocation tables, must be counter-checked using other corpus linguistic methods, like concordance lines. Collocation graphs are an abstraction based on numerous instances of word co-occurrence, but these abstractions must be understood in the context of other cases. Thus in the next section, the inferences reached through the collocation network are rechecked with the help of concordance lines.

Table 02 Concordance Lines Showing Merged Domains of Sexual and Sacred in SCHF

1.	He stands in front of the mirror, touches the scratch on his shoulder as though it's a **holy relic**. Cups his hands and lifts them to _her face,_ breathing in. His personal act of **prayer**. To start with she'd been _hesitant, tentative._
2.	Eventually he swung himself out of _bed_ and walked into the living room to find her **praying,** a _towel_ as her **prayer** mat, the **hijab** nothing more alien than a **scarf** loosely covering her head without the elaborate pinning or the tightly fitted cap beneath. She made no sign of being aware of him except a slight adjustment of her shoulders, angling away from his _naked form_.
3.	He couldn't help watching this woman, this stranger, **prostrating herself to God** in the room where she'd been down on her knees _for a very different purpose_ just hours earlier.
4.	"What were you **praying** for?" he asked when she came back in and started to _unbutton her long-sleeved shirt,_ starting at the base of her _neck._ "**Prayer** isn't about transaction, Mr. Capitalist. It's about starting the day right."
5.	Played a video of Aneeka standing up from her **prayer mat** and walking into _his embrace, shedding her clothes_ along the way until _only the_ **hijab** _remained._
6.	in everything she did – _love_ and **prayer,** the **covered head** and the _naked body_. He heard
7.	"You had to put on a _bra_ for **God?"** he said, as she _unbuttoned further,_ needing her to _laugh with him about it._ "Did you think **He** might get distracted by your . . . _distractions?"_
8.	**Ayat al-Kursi** as a kind of reflex. "Is that a **prayer?"** "Yes. Ask your _girlfriend_ about it.
9.	To start with she'd been _hesitant, tentative._ During their _first kiss,_ she'd broken away and started to put her **hijab** back on, before _his entreaties_ convinced her to stay.

10	The video wouldn't reveal the things that were most striking about her in those moments: the _intensity of her concentration,_ how completely it could **swerve from her God** to him in the time she took those few footsteps, or her total lack of self-consciousness in everything she did — _love_ and **prayer,** the **covered head** and _the naked body._ He heard the door open—Aneeka entered and called out from the hallway to say she was taking a shower.
11	In retrospect, it was a mystery _they'd stayed together_ almost their entire second year of university. "You know the **Quran** tells us to enjoy _sex_ as one of **God's blessings**?" Hira said. "_Within marriage!_" "We all have our versions of selective reading when it comes to **the Holy Book.**"
12	Eamonn stood up, conscious of his greasy fingers and of the question of how he might use them to _unpin_ the **white hijab** that framed her face.
13	He watched as she continued to _undress until there was nothing left_ but the **white scarf covering her head**, one end of the soft fabric falling just _below her breast,_ the other thrown over _her shoulder._
14	his _body's reactions_ were answer enough as she _touched her nipple_ through the **white cotton, colors contrasting** (describing Hijab).
15	it was hard to know what to want of a _silent, beautiful woman_ in **a hijab** sipping coffee in your flat.
16	_HO-JABI!_ PERVY PASHA'S TWIN SISTER ENGINEERED _SEX TRYSTS_ WITH HOME SECRETARY'S SON
17	She has been abused for the _crime of daring to love_ while **covering her head,**
18	INSIDE: DAUGHTER AND SISTER OF **MUSLIM** TERRORISTS, WITH HISTORY OF _SECRET SEX LIFE_—THE EXCLUSIVE STORY OF "KNICKERS" PASHA

Having proved through the concordance lines of the most frequent words (in table 02) that domains of sacred and sexual are merged in *Home Fire – Prayer, God*, and *Hijab,* in the next section, the examples are discussed in their contexts. The discussion below thus demonstrates a typical process of counter-checking the interpretation and inferences made based on a collocation network.

Returning to our example of the words *Allah, God, prayer,* and *hijab*, the concordance lines show that all these words are employed predominantly in the immediate contexts where sensual imagery is being used. The scratch on Eamonn's shoulder is compared to a *holy relic* (line 01, Table 02). Cupping Aneeka's face in his hands is described as Eamonn's act of prayer (Line 03 Table 02). Aneeka's bathing towel is termed as the prayer mat ((Line 02 Table 02). Prostrating in front of God for prayers is mentioned regarding their sexual encounter a few hours back. (Line 03, Table 02). The purpose of prayer is deliberately asked while unbuttoning her shirt (Line 04, Table 02). While explaining the intimate scene between Aneeka and Eamonn, Shamsie does not forget to remind the reader that only the hijab remained on her body (Line 04, Table 02). This convergence of terms from the domain of sexual and sacred is shown in bold font in table 02 for ease of understanding.

Discussion on Organized lexical Patterning by Shamsie

The concept of discourse prosody has gained popularity in the paradigm of discourse analysis through corpus tools ever since Sinclair (as quoted in Baker, Francis, & Tognini-Bonelli, 1993) proposed the concept. It is made clear here that the linguistic phenomenon of merging the lexemes from two distinct semantic domains investigated by using *GraphColl* in this paper cannot be straightforwardly termed a case of semantic prosody, nevertheless, the evaluative dimension of discourse prosody can be very helpful in understanding its purpose. Louw (1993) has defined semantic prosody as a "consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by the collocates". The choice of lexemes is never accidental in any discourse let alone fictions which is meticulously produced. The lexical choice always reveals the author's attitude, viewpoint, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about (p.no 24, Stewart, 2010). Social scientists working in other areas such as the attitudinal stance (Conrad and Biber, 1999) and Appraisal theory (White, 2015) also reaffirm that the author's opinion is reflected in the choice of lexemes. According to Stubbs (2001), prosodies not only express the speaker's evaluative attitude, they often tell the reason for making the utterance. While analyzing the evaluative force of utterances, it is important to keep in mind that this type of evaluative function is more easily accounted for when the reader's expectations are overturned, and the prosody is reversed. (Stewart, 2010). Relating all this to the intermixing of sexual and sacred in SCHF, we would be justified in saying that Shamsie has added connotative and peripheral meaning to the central meaning through

this linguistic strategy. The practice of converging lexemes from two distinctly opposing discourses leads us to many troubling questions (Van Leeuwen, 2008). He has associated it with the intentions of the author who has used it to introduce a new form of morality. This new form of morality is founded on actions rather than beliefs. The question arises whether the writer has done this to devalue the belief system-based morality or the aim is to justify/glorify the personal choices related to sexual desires. In both these cases, the intricate interconnections built between the illegitimate sexual practices of characters in SCHF and the frequent mentioning of the discourse of sacred scriptures are used to legitimize the former, and this needs to be questioned. This type of obliquely grounded legitimation of deviant sexual actions of Aneeka by referring to Islamic sacred texts, acts of worship or Muslim women's dress code has a long historical background to the prevalent Islam-phobic concepts in the orientalist discourse. *Exoticizing* and eroticizing Islam has often been discussed by critics and is considered an outcome of imperial imagination (Santesso 2013). Ranasinha (2007) has also suggested that some part of the popularity of travel narratives in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries owed to the erotic representation of Muslim women as belly dancers and harem girls. Some of these travel narrations were nothing but sensationalist descriptions of Muslim women in Turkish baths with the main emphasis on the sensuality and concupiscence of Muslim Women (Bullock, 2002). In the context of the recent past, Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses (1988) and* Kureishi's *The Black Album* (1995) are considered Islam-phobic for equating Islam with lechery (Ranasinha, 2007). The reason for summarizing these critics here is to establish the ideological link between Shamsie's fiction and the tradition of orientalism and the recent threads of neo-orientalism in Anglophonic literature.

CONCLUSION

It is observed that Shamsie gives a new dimension to the Islamic semiotic marker hijab, the word *Allah* (the God worshipped by Muslims), and religious practices of Aneeka such as prayer. The shocking and baffling picturing of icons of Islam and the flaunting of a different Muslim women's identity by using religious terminology in erotic contexts reinforces the century-old orientalist themes. The unsettling mingling serves the purpose of glorifying the sexual and trivializing the sacred. Visual representation of collocation networks of SCHF demonstrated the complex association between words from two different domains. *GraphColl* also helped to identify the additional layers of meanings. The power of this type of analysis is demonstrated by

summarizing the collocation of all three important terms in a single image (Figure 12). The research concludes that the collocation networks show associations, cross-associations, and shared as well as unique collocates – the convergence of the words from different domains is not readily available from the traditional form of display

Recommendation for Future Researchers

Dispersion of the node word and the collocates is an important criterion described by Gries (2008). For future researchers, it can be an interesting insightful study to compare the intermixing of different semantic domains in fictional discourse and compare their concurrence with reference corpus. Taking Gries's (2013) concept of dispersion as the initiating point can provide a strong methodological foundation for any such research.

The collocation network approach is combined with concordance lines, as was demonstrated in this research. It is also made clear that collocation networks are just one method for examining collocations. For instance, the standard tabular format, which is the traditional form, may, in certain circumstances, offer more accurate information than a collocation network. Nevertheless, a collocation network can be more effective than a table at providing an overview because it shows various visual display characteristics. Future research may focus on interdisciplinary research using both observational and experimental methods, and triangulating the results. We may (and ought to) be enquiring into the degree to which the linguistic patterns (collocation graphs and networks) correspond with how language is processed by speakers, as well as how much these conform to the values and beliefs of various language-using groups.

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