

Her Story and His: A Dynamic Journey Through British Literary Evolution

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Abstract

This study examined the lexico-grammatical patterns in British literature authored by men and women across four distinct historical periods: the Romantic era, the Post-Romantic and Victorian era, the early 20th century, and the 21st century. Biber's Multidimensional (MD) analysis has been employed in the present study to identify the linguistic features that characterise four periods. The analysis of the 200 text documents reveals many significant gender differences related to culture and historical expectations. These features are most distinctively exposed in post-Romanticism and Victorian periods; women writers emphasize the narrative discourse. On the other hand, male writers use informative discourse and direct language. These differences have been reduced in the 21st century, pointing to a change of literary context in the form of a change of gender roles and comparability of narratives. By presenting data and arguments to this research question, this study provides important findings to the discourses on gender and literature. The analysed material reveals male and female writers' contributions to the formation of literature and its evolution. MD provides a novel approach to considering gender differences in written communication with a focus on gender, written communication technologies, and history.

Keywords: British novelists, gender differences, historical literary periods, lexico-grammatical patterns, literary styles

1. Introduction

The study of gender and language in literature is one of the most important concepts and interesting issues in the academic sphere. Language has been an area of focus among scholars, who sought to understand how it is portrayed on the subject of gender identities and their effects. Previous works have tended to investigate the gender-specific language use of male and female writers independently, thus showing differences in the male/female writing style; there is, nevertheless a need to offer detailed cross-sections of various time periods. In literary studies, people are interested in how gender is represented through different themes and storytelling styles. Specifically, examining how male and female authors handle similar themes can show us important influences from society, history, and psychology. This paper intends to fill this gap by adopting a corpus-based technique to investigate the language use of male and female novelists in the selected works from the Romantic, Victorian, and twentieth-century periods.

This work aims to compare the works of British novelists of the Romantic age, the post-Romantic/Victorian age and the twentieth century using a contrastive approach based on gender. It explores the differences between male and female authors in linguistic and textual approaches throughout these periods. Based on the identified gap, the study sets out the following objectives and research questions: What differences exist between the use of linguistic and textual approaches of male and female novelists in the Romantic, Victorian, and twentieth-century literary periods? What different historical and social contexts have affected the times in which male and female authors wrote, their writing styles, and their narrative techniques? Thus, the study looks at these differences historically as a means of describing how men and women, in general, write.

Thus, the current study employs Biber's Multidimensional (MD) approach to examine the gender differences in writing in British novels. Thus, while Biber has applied his method in studies on the differences of language in various types of texts, the proposed kind of study has not yet been carried out for the comparison of the British male and female novels of different epochs. This paper employs Biber's method to analyze the selected British novels and identify the distinct features of how men and women authored their works during four significant periods in literature.

This study aims to investigate the social-psychological features of language employed by male and female writers in the novels they authored. The comparison is made between forty novels penned by male and female authors to know how gender affects word usage. In line with performing the qualitative analysis, the study will employ the use of language analysis and statistics to identify the rationales behind the tendencies that characterise the writing of both male as well as female authors belonging to British literature.

The purpose of this study will be to establish how gender influences the writing done by the authors. By reviewing the styles that the male and the female authors employ, one would realize how culture and society shape the books that are developed. This study intends to provide an integration of language theory and book analysis to develop a model that can be applied in future investigations.

This study is significant because it helps us understand how gender influences literary production. By examining works from different historical periods, this study shows how gender, storytelling, and writing styles have changed over time. It provides new insights for feminist literary criticism and gender studies.

2. Literature Review

There has been relatively increased interest in the analysis of gendered lexico-grammatical in British literature. In general, there is a vast amount of research done on the stylistic-sexual difference or the linguistic differentiation between male and female writers. The latest studies have investigated the various writing patterns that are characteristic of British female writers. For example, Fischer-Starcke (2009) compared personal pronoun usage and the narrative voice in the works of Jane Austen and concluded that such patterns involve the Romantic period discursive community. Recent works have also focused on female novelists, where researchers have identified the particularities of female usage of language using such markers as the rates of emotional and relational lexica. These works reveal that while British female authors' linguistic features changed over time, they were not uniform in each period. Aghabayli (2024) observed that Virginia Woolf, Doris Lessing and Angela Carter are writers who have criticized traditional gender roles by empowering women and criticizing patriarchal norms. This literature review focuses on understanding how gendered language in literature changes over time. It is divided into three main sections: first, the common word and sentence structures used; second, how writing styles related to gender have evolved; and third, the methods used in this study.

2.1 Lexical and Syntactic Patterns in Female and Male Writing

British male writers, too, have been reported to exhibit the same linguistic features similar to the findings presented in female writers. Research on hedges and boosters shows that while female writers have always used them more, male writers have started to use them too, which indicates a change towards a more sophisticated writing style (Yuvayapan & Peksoy, 2023). In 2020, Schneider worked on the texts of Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy and mentioned that the older texts contain a high level of description and syntactic complexity following the period of the Victorians. Slightly closer to the contemporary issues, Underwood (2019) looked at the linguistic resources of the male novelists of the 20th century and observed, for instance, the growth of technical and abstract vocabulary. Consequently, the analysis of language patterns in British male authors' novels confirms gender disparities in the most apparent form of a cultural product, namely linguistic practices.

2.2 Evolution of Gendered Writing Styles

When examining the patterns of language use related to gender, it is important to look at how these styles have changed over time. While British male and female writers' linguistic styles have been explored individually, their comparative analysis has not been investigated widely. As far as the relationship between male and female authors is concerned, little systematic research has been done where comparative analyses have been made for different time periods. Previous systematic reviews also primarily entail a comparison of recent literature and often do not consider historical considerations like Damrosch (2020). Female writers and politicians have started to adopt styles typically used by males, implying that the rules of gendered writing have shifted (Hargrave & Blumenau, 2022). Thus, the purpose of this study is to contribute to this understanding by comparing the patterns of male and female novelists in modern literature and going back to the Romantic Age, the Victorian period, and the twentieth century.

2.3 Multidimensional (MD) Analysis by Biber and Its Application

After discussing stylistic changes, this section will explain the framework used to analyze these language differences. The Multidimensional (MD) Analysis developed by Biber has been used as one of the core approaches to corpus linguistics. Biber's MD model offers a structured approach for how to explore the linguistic variation in co-occurrence of linguistic features, which allows us to identify text types characteristic of various genres and registers. It enables another analysis of linguistic variation across the different sorts of texts (Ali, 2024; Ali & Afzal, 2024; Ali & Ali, 2023; Ali & Thompson, 2022). However, there is still room for the further extension of this approach to the comparative analysis of gendered language in British novels. In their recent study, Biber and Egbert (2018) employed MD analysis to examine register variation online on the whole searchable web. Seoane & Biber (2021) used it to investigate linguistic characteristics in many spoken and written modes. Nevertheless, studies have not employed Biber's MD analysis to examine the differences in lexico-grammatical profiles between male and female British novelists throughout literary periods.

Biber's MD Analysis is particularly well-known for its ability to reveal linguistic variation through statistical techniques that functionally group linguistic features by dimension, where each dimension is theorized to reflect a different communicative function. Zhang (2023) observed that this approach creates a numerical basis upon which written texts can be compared, allowing researchers to investigate how the presence of various grammatical features overlaps and describes writing manners across different eras in literary history. According to Kizi (2024), MD analysis can also be extended to different types of inquiry in historical linguistics, genre classification and language variation studies, as MD analysis is very flexible and adaptable. Its usage in British literature may uncover unassuming but meaningful communicative discrepancies between men and women authors alike, potentially expanding the conversation regarding how gendered authorship has developed over the centuries.

Many of the known researchers employed MD analysis in linguistic contexts. For example, Sardinha and Pinto (2014) used MD analysis in studies of regional, register, diachronic variation and language learning, and methodology in linguistic analysis. Biber and Conrad (2019) demonstrated the application of a corpus approach to analyzing register variation across English, Korean, and Somali, thus the systematic patterns of variation. Abdulhaleem and Ali (2024) also carried a multidimensional analysis of the linguistics and literature dissertations written in the top ten universities of the UK. Still, these studies did not differentiate gender comparisons within the British literature. In addition, MD analysis has also been used to discuss some linguistic aspects when analyzing literature from different countries, as evidenced by Seoane and Biber (2021).

Although multiple works have focused on the public language of British male authors or British female authors separately, few have compared the two across historical periods. Furthermore, the proposed empirical study of gendered language use through the lens of Biber's Multidimensionality Analysis model to analyze British novels has not been attempted before. Consequently, this study seeks to chart a thorough quantitative analysis of gendered lexico-grammatical trends in British novels from the Romantic period to the present. This serves the purpose of enhancing the general knowledge of how gender impacts language use in literary texts and adding another dimension to the various changes that have taken place for the said patterns.

3. Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative research to look at how language varies by gender in the selected novels. The process included some steps for selecting novels, gathering data, and analyzing lexico-grammatic patterns. The study compiled a group of forty novels from four main literary periods and examined them using Biber's Multidimensional framework. The following steps explain the study's design, inclusion criteria, data collection, and analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The two chosen categories for the novel collection were social and psychological fiction, concerning their linguistic profiles. These genres give a way to understand the abilities of human relations and social organizations, and they offer a vast field for linguistic investigation (Nelson et al., 2002). The selected novels span four significant historical periods: the Romantic period (late 18th century), the Post-Romantic and Victorian period (early 19th century), the 20th century (1900-1945), and the 21st century (2000-present). This means that its selection was methodologically carried out based on the criteria of literary awards received, historical and cultural significance, and reader preferences.

3.2 Inclusion Criteria of the Novels

To increase the reliability of the novels selected for this study, the identified novels were checked with standard literary resources, including *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* edited by Greenblatt and Christ in 2012 and *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English* by Head in 2006. There are forty novels in all, five by a male author from each time period and five by a female author from each time period. This range allows for the coverage of linguistic markers and topical issues (Lettieri et al., 2023; Smith, 2017).

Author reputation, literary movement, and thematic focus were the factors used to balance the representation of literary styles and gender-based patterns of writing. When needed, multiple works by the same author would have been included because it helped to ensure consistency in stylistic patterns and linguistic markers (for more details, please refer to Appendix B). These were obtained from such reliable sites as Project Gutenberg, Google Books, and The Internet Archive.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Once the texts are collected, the study carefully preprocessed them, fully erasing metadata, and scanning for and addressing OCR difficulties. Since this preprocessing stage was essential to guarantee data accuracy and to eliminate possible biases generated by scanning errors or inconsistent formatting, it is necessary to describe how we performed it. For the linguistic analysis, it employed Biber's Multidimensional analysis, focusing on co-occurring linguistic features across five dimensions: Involved versus Informational Discourse; Narrative versus Non-narrative Concerns; Explicit versus Situation-Dependent Reference; Overt Expression of Persuasion; and Impersonal (Abstract) versus Non-impersonal (Non-Abstract) Style.

To validate the linguistic categorization, inter-rater reliability checks were conducted between independent coders to ensure the consistency of tagging for linguistic features. It was also cross validated with the existing linguistic corpora to improve the reliability of the results.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The study then categorized the novels into five text files, making 200 in total, that were tagged and processed with the aid of the MAT tagger. The results of the collected data were examined by performing analyses of variance and post hoc Tukey tests to compare the significant differences and linguistic features concerning the gender differences. Effect sizes were calculated in addition to significance testing to guarantee the robustness of the statistical analysis and to permit a more complete interpretation of the gender based linguistic variations.

4. Discussion and Analysis

This section looks at the main research question: What differences exist between the writing styles of male and female novelists in the Romantic, Victorian, and twentieth-century literary periods? The study shows that these differences are important and shaped by history. Male and female authors have unique preferences for types of storytelling, narrative styles, and levels of argument and abstract thinking.

These preferences change with different literary movements and social changes. Analyzing language features helps us compare these differences over time and between genders. Each aspect examined—from how involved authors are in their writing to their use of abstract language—helps us understand how gender and time influence literary expression. This section will go into detail about these five aspects.

4.1 Dimension 1

The comparison of Dimension 1, which opposes involved discourse to informative discourse, reveals clear distinctions between male and female authors. The descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and post hoc Tukey test give a clear insight into how the writing styles of British male and female authors. It is also clear that the identified difference between the male and female authors was prominent during the Romantic period. Female authors (Mean=0.50) are more involved in discourse, and their writing contains more features like private verbs, contractions, and first-person pronouns. On the other hand, male authors prefer an informational writing style (Mean = -2.16), which is stated by using more nouns, prepositions, and attributive adjectives, thus being more formal and less emotionally involved (see Table 3 in Appendix A for all features). This difference might be attributed to the general cultural gendered expectations of the female and male writers of the late 18th century, where women wrote about personal and home issues while men dealt with the public and philosophy (Mutter et al., 2024).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Period 1

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.50	5.13
Male	25	-2.16	3.26

In the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, male and female writers were seen as very different from each other in their discourse. Female authors were more involved in their writing than male authors (Mean = 6.03). New dramatic genres also appeared during this period: the novel was recognized as a leading genre, and women writers explored subtle aspects of the soul and the mind (Armstrong, 1987). The significant engagement with texts authored by women highlights an increasing appreciation for character development and the exploration of interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, male authors preferred to use a more informative writing style most likely due to the scientific and industrial advancements that were prevalent in literary themes and narratives (Mutter et al., 2024).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Period 2

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	6.03	3.53
Male	25	-1.34	5.96

At the beginning of the 20th century, people started moving towards an informational approach to communication. This is because there was a disillusionment and psychological impact after World War I. War stressed isolation and hopelessness (Ferriter, 2015). Towards the end of the first phase of the twentieth century and the onset of the Second World War literature started to depict apprehension by reflecting on totalism and emphasizing realism of the human existence (Beer et al., 2024). Male writers usually have a detached style, while female writers often include personal and relational aspects. This change supports a broader shift in writing.

Male authors preferred to adopt a more distanced and impersonal perspective (Mean=-3.82) and were more concerned with social and political aspects. On the other hand, female authors disclosed personal and relational perspectives (Mean=-0.59), which illustrate the effects of war and social transformation on people's lives. As much as the stories addressed large issues, women's writing remained very personal, emphasizing the effects of society.

The reason why informational discourse was dominant during this period is owed to the modernist writers. They were pushing for a more scientific, episodic, and detached approach that is best suited for the chaotic and turbulent period which prevailed then (Mutter et al., 2024). Male and female authors alike were specific about the relation between the private sufferings and the public revolutions, demonstrating to what extent the contexts influenced the styles of writing in literature (Onion, 2023). At this time, for authors, there was a conscious move away from the romantic movement as artists painted the human reality in a world that was changing so fast. This shift was equally influenced across genders by the historical context.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Period 3

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	-0.59	4.66
Male	25	-3.82	4.84

Female authors of the 21st century engage in more active discussions (Mean=1.90) than male authors (Mean=0.28), but the difference is not as striking as before. The modern literary world is not monotonous, and authors come up with different themes and techniques at their disposal. The slightly higher proportion of female authors opting for involved discourse indicates a continued concern with the self and society, and the fact that male authors have shifted even more towards involved discourse than in previous time periods may be attributed to the assimilation of affective and subjective aspects into writing.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Period 4

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	1.90	5.06
Male	25	0.28	8.29

The ANOVA results show significant differences between the groups for dimension 1 (see Table 5).

Table 5. ANOVA for Dimension 1

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1544.53	7	220.64	7.85	0.00
Within Groups	5393.49	192	28.09		
Total	6938.02	199			

In dimension 1, female authors seem to write more complex discourse than their male counterparts. This may be due to a culture that influences female writers to focus on personal and relationship topics, while male writers tend to cover broader and more objective subjects. Thus, there are definite trends of evolution of writing styles, which reflect certain gender differences most sharply in the Post-Romantic and Victorian ages. The clear demarcation of the two periods in writing might be a result of cultural and social differentiation that was prevalent during the given periods, in terms of gender that affected the thematic concern as well as the writing style of the authors. This paper argues that there is a gradual trend towards the convergence of male and female authors' writing styles in the 21st century (see Figure 1). This change may result from the evolving roles of men and women in society and the growing acceptance of different writing styles that allow both men and women writers to express themselves in various ways. The change of paradigm from the rhetorical mode at the beginning of the twentieth century is associated with the modernist movement, which preferred the mode of information, objectivity, and fragmentation. On the other hand, the continued presence of involved discourse in contemporary female authors' productions may be seen as a sign that personal and social storytelling is still valued.

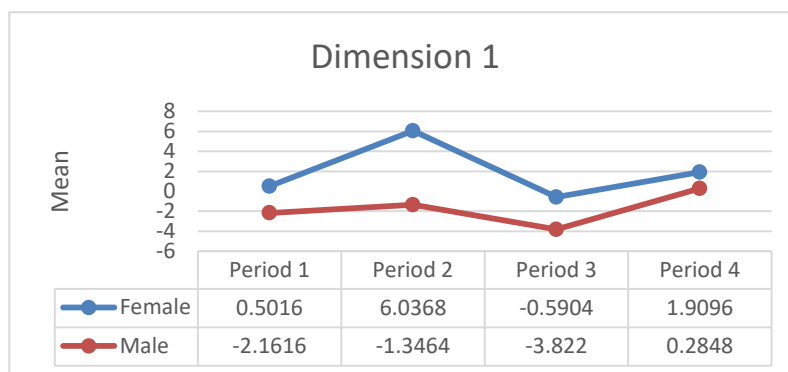


Figure 1. Mean difference across four periods on Dimension 1

The results of Dimension 1 focus on the dynamic nature of the literary styles and the influence of gender on writing processes. In this case, female authors have opted for the complex mode of discourse that targets individual, emotional as well as interpersonal aspects. On the other hand, male authors have largely written in informative mode, although this trend is changing in the contemporaneous period to a mixed mode. These patterns show how British literature has developed over time through the interdependence of society's transitions, literary movements, and gender roles. The obtained results are further supported by the statistical significance of these differences based on the ANOVA and post-hoc Tukey tests. These findings of Dimension 1 are significant for understanding how male and female authors dominate and shape the literary landscape, as well as for considering gendered writing modes throughout the historical periods.

4.2 Dimension 2

Dimension 2 of Biber's Multidimensional Analysis examines whether the text is narrative, meaning that it is concerned with telling a story, or non-narrative, meaning it is concerned with giving information, explanation or analysis. This dimension is useful in explaining the way authors write to tell a story or to pass information in what can be described as a news-like manner (Biber, 1991). The ANOVA test result shows that female authors of the Romantic period used narrative discourse more (Mean = 5.50) than male authors (Mean = 4.47). What this implies is that women writers were more involved in writing fiction and telling excellent stories that depicted Romanticism. Contrary to female authors, male authors included expository and descriptive features side by side with narrative as a response to philosophical questions of the period. This might have been because Romantic literature majorly embraced the idea of individualism and the freedom of the female soul or emotions, which were especially cramped by the many societal rules of the time (Vincent, 2024). That is why it is possible to assume that the focus on narrative is higher among female authors – the literature of this period explored personal feelings and nature in detail.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics for Period 1

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	5.50	0.94
Male	25	4.47	1.57

During the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, female authors with a mean score of 4.95 and male authors with a mean score of 5.14 produce nearly equal amounts of narrative concentration. The literature of this period was dominated by the novel, where plot telling was accompanied by social critique and word painting. The analysis and complication of the societal issues were done through character development and plot construction, while female authors sustained their narrative strengths. On the other hand, male authors maintained the parodic relation between narrative and non-narrative, which also corresponded to the changes in the intellect and culture. This means that both genders were motivated by the changing face of the Victorian age in forms of literature and society to analyze social issues and personal experiences in more detail (Rodensky, 2013).

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Period 2

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	4.95	1.08
Male	25	5.14	1.55

When female authors were compared to male authors, the result indicated that in the early twentieth-century female authors with a mean score of 6.58 had a significantly higher tendency towards narrative than male authors (Mean = 4.93). This has been due to the disappointment and post-traumatic effects of the world wars. Female authors use storytelling to share personal and social struggles. They provide detailed and passionate descriptions in their writing. The male authors also employ narrative discourse; however, the mean scores produced are lower than those of the women. Female authors may have been drawn toward narrative to describe the effects of the wars on individuals, as well as society, since women were both directly and indirectly involved (Smith, 2017). After worldwide wars, authors began to write about the psychological effects on people, highlighting feelings of existentialism and nihilism (Ferriter, 2015).

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics for Period 3

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	6.58	2.95
Male	25	4.93	1.64

Table 9 shows that in the 21st century, females with a mean score of 5.62 are more involved with narratorial voice than males (Mean = 3.90). This tendency shows that there has been a continued practice by female authors to write in ways that narrate social issues, or their experiences, and do so in story formats. Despite using different narrative features, male authors have started merging the expository and argumentative modes as different trends of literature emerged and the themes explored expanded diversely. Writers of the female gender may keep emphasizing the narrative focus due to their further participation in personal and relational processes. On the other hand, male authors treat societal issues in other aspects more correspondingly and critically (McErlean, 2018).

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Period 4

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	5.62	1.97
Male	25	3.90	1.90

These results show the shifts in the male and female British authors' narrative concerns on dimension 2. As a whole, female authors also exhibit interest in narrative as the main strategy and interest in the portrayal of emotion and social issues. Male authors often use storytelling as their main style. However, during important times of historical change, they also mix in elements that go beyond traditional narrative. (See Fig. 2). Structural features, literary mode, and the history of the narrative give a clear picture of stories in British literature (Smith, 2017).

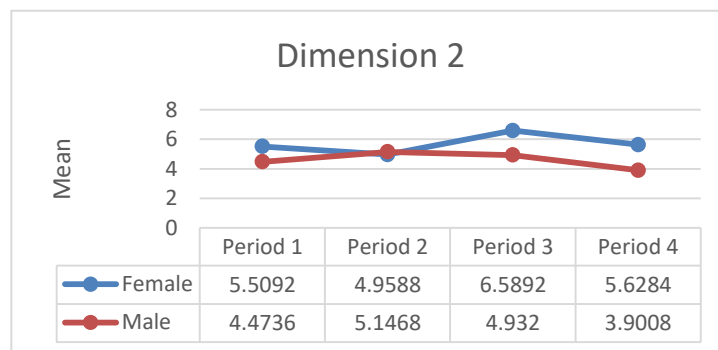


Figure 2. Mean difference across four periods on Dimension 2

4.3 Dimension 3

In Dimension 3, we decide whether discourse concerns detailed, clear, and precise information or is context-based and includes information, which can be inferable from the situational context. This dimension of analysis helps the author to reflect on how language is used to refer and to imply – predominantly by obeying the instructions of a given text's implicit or explicit genre, purpose, and reader (Biber, 1991). The analysis shows that male authors with a mean score of 2.54 produce more explicit discourse than female authors (Mean = 1.27). This implies that most of the male writers during the period of Romanticism offered more specific information than females, perhaps because Romantic literature was more philosophical and self-analytical. On the contrary, the priorities of female authors were embedded references to the text's context and the focus on narration to convey the messages (Vincent, 2024).

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics for Period 1

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	1.27	1.08
Male	25	2.54	1.66

During the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, female authors with a mean score of 0.70 employed a lower level of description than their male counterparts' higher descriptive details (Mean = 1.75). The themes and motifs of this period were social realism and very realistic descriptions of characters. Women wrote on more sensitive issues and practiced situational-specific language to ask for social change. Conversely, male authors used explicit language and thus responded to the changes in the sphere of knowledge and culture of the epoch (Rodensky, 2013).

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for Period 2

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.70	0.77
Male	25	1.75	1.97

In the early twentieth century, female authors with a mean score of 0.41 were less explicit in their writing while male authors maintained a moderate level of explicitness (Mean = 1.05). The disappointment and the trauma of the World Wars affected male and female authors. Female authors employed situation-oriented language to elaborate on the state of individual and social conflict using emotional narratives as the echo of existential and fragmented perception of the given period. Male authors employ explicit language in their work to explain the other social transformations and challenges they face (Smith, 2017).

Table 12. Descriptive Statistics for Period 3

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.41	1.51
Male	25	1.05	1.98

Female authors writing in the 21st century with a mean score of -0.24 have used less explicit language, indicating a solid reliance on context and shared knowledge. In the same manner, male authors with a mean score of -0.86 also had a lower explicit discourse. Female authors describe societal issues and personal experiences as the indication of their work's concern with complicated and subtle themes. Male authors, however, often use explicit discourse and situational signals and references, and they are thus identified as using both explicit and situational discourses to address the issues of society (McErlean, 2018).

Table 13. Descriptive Statistics for Period 4

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	-0.24	1.54
Male	25	-0.86	1.69

In Dimension 3, the analysis shows that British male and female authors employ explicit and situation-specific language from different historical periods. In this paper, male authors are found to use more direct language, which gives more detailed and accurate information than female authors. Female authors lean heavily on contextual and referential meaning (See Fig. 3). These trends show how gender, literary style, and historical period are connected. They provide clear insights into how writers express themselves in British literature.

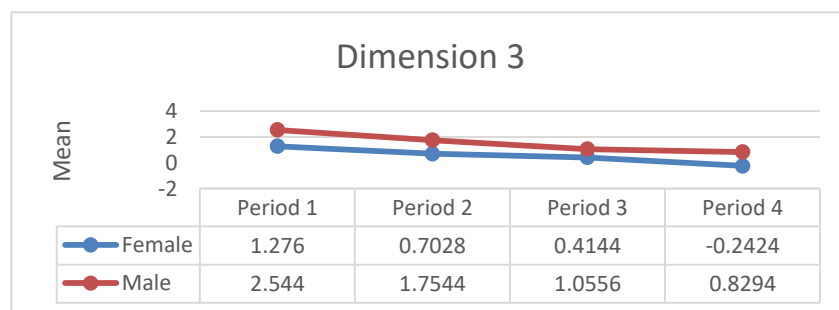


Figure 3. Mean difference across four periods on Dimension 3

4.4 Dimension 4

The dimension 4 of text analysis is to use explicit argumentation and persuasion. This dimension helps identify how authors build their texts to argue a case or to persuade, they employ modals, persuasive verbs, and subordinating conjunctions among other things (Biber, 1991). The overall results of this study for female authors are significantly higher (Mean = 3.24) for the overt expression of argumentation and persuasion than for male authors (Mean = 1.86). This means that female authors of this time were more likely to use language to convince or argue. Possibly because the era's focus was one of personal passion and feeling. The higher frequency of persuasive language among female authors might be explained by their focus on such issues as social change and individual liberty, familiar to readers of Romanticism (Vincent, 2024).

Table 14. Descriptive Statistics for Period 1

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	3.24	1.96
Male	25	1.86	1.41

Moreover, there is a slightly higher average score for female authors during the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods (Mean = 3.57) and a significantly lower average score for male authors (Mean = 0.1980). The literature of this period emphasized social problems and change. Female authors were still employing straightforward argumentation to appeal for change while male authors employed less persuasive language. This might suggest a shift towards more descriptive and expository writing to reflect the scientific and industrial advancements of the era (Rodensky, 2013).

Table 15. Descriptive Statistics for Period 2

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	3.57	1.59
Male	25	0.19	1.04

The mean score for female authors fell slightly to 0.44 in the early 20th century, whereas the male authors had a negative mean score (-1.53). During this period of disillusionment, people began to write more about existential topics and fragmentation, using less direct appeals in their writing. Female authors kept on incorporating some argumentation, illustrating social concerns and personal experiences. On the other hand, male authors often write in a fragmented and indirect way.

Table 16. Descriptive Statistics for Period 3

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.44	1.81
Male	25	-1.53	1.00

In the 21st century, the mean score for female authors was a little higher, 0.29, while for male authors, it remained a negative mean score of -0.70. Modern female authors use arguments and persuasion to address social issues and personal experiences. However, they do this less directly than authors from earlier times. Persuasive elements are used in different measures by the two genders, though male authors use fewer direct and more relative measures than female authors. This shows that literature covers a wider range of themes and different styles.

Table 17. Descriptive Statistics for Period 4

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.29	1.28
Male	25	-0.70	1.89

The results of Dimension 4 indicate that female writers are significantly more inclined to the explicit manifestation of argumentation and persuasion than male writers in various historical periods (See Fig. 4). The female authors ensure that their language convinces people to change their social status and handle personal and social problems. Persuasive elements are also used by male authors and context-sensitive strategies, typically in times of great societal change. These trends focus on how gender, the type of writing, and the historical context of the work are related.

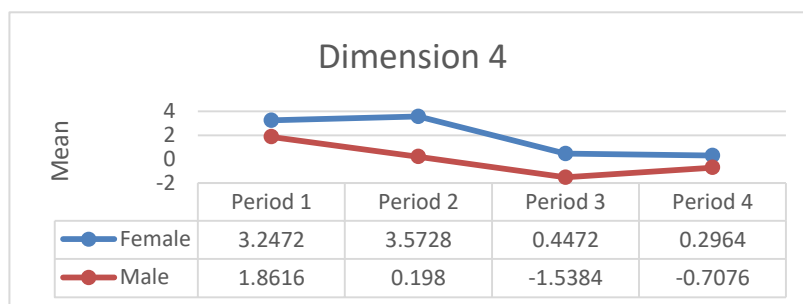


Figure 4. Mean difference across four periods on Dimension 4

4.5 Dimension 5

Dimension 5 deals with how far the texts being compared are formal and written in the third person vs. informal and the first or second person. This dimension is important in distinguishing how authors produce abstract or non-abstract discourse (Biber, 1991). Female writers in the Romantic period, with a mean score of 1.84, had a higher inclination toward an impersonal (abstract) style than male writers (Mean = 1.13). Female authors often used more abstract language, likely influenced by Romantic ideas about general feelings and passions. In contrast, male authors tended to use more concrete and personal language, even when they wrote abstractly.

Table 18. Descriptive Statistics for Period 1

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	1.84	0.71
Male	25	1.13	1.07

During the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, female and male authors changed their writing styles. Female authors reduced their use of impersonal (abstract) language more drastically (Mean = 0.08) than male authors who slightly increased their usage (Mean = 0.45). During this period, literature often focused on realistic social issues and in-depth character studies. It may be because of such a focus that female authors began to shift towards more concrete and personal styles. Male authors used some abstract language, but they also added more specific details to show the social and cultural complexities of their time.

Table 19. Descriptive Statistics for Period 2

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	0.08	0.71
Male	25	0.45	1.45

Males and females in the early 20th century had not yet adopted abstract writing as is used today. For female authors, the mean score was -0.76, and for male authors, the mean score was -0.62. During this time, males and females also wrote in more concrete and personal manners to represent the aspects of war and social change. The detailed analysis and ideas from earlier centuries were replaced by more personal and specific approaches, which characterized the feelings and experiences of that time. (Smith, 2017).

Table 20. Descriptive Statistics for Period 3

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	-0.76	0.66
Male	25	-0.62	0.89

In the twenty-first century, there is a tendency towards non-impersonal (non-abstract) discourse. Female authors have a mean score of -0.48, and male authors have a lower mean score of -1.09. Being realistic, female authors tend to discuss modern-day challenges and/or their life ordeal in a clear and literal manner. This is because they address more specific and concrete aspects, as the reader will observe as follows. Male authors, on the other hand, employ concrete styles but are more likely to employ abstract diction to treat more general social concerns. It shows that abstract and concrete features are used interchangeably in contemporary literature due to different thematic approaches and literary trends (McErlean, 2018).

Table 21. Descriptive Statistics for Period 4

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	25	-0.48	1.58
Male	25	-1.09	0.54

The analysis of Dimension 5 demonstrates how male and female British authors have employed the formal (abstract) and informal (non-abstract) styles of writing at different stages of historical development. First, it was shown that female authors preferred the use of abstract writing, particularly during the period of Romanticism, and then moved to concrete and individualistic writing. On the other hand, male authors used less abstract writing, as the graph shows, particularly during major historical transformations (Fig. 5). These trends help us understand how abstract and concrete language is used in British literature, particularly regarding gender, literary style, and context.

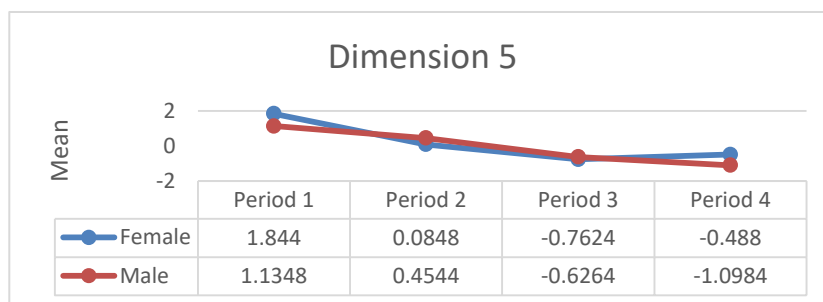


Figure 5. Mean difference across four periods on Dimension 5

In summary, the five dimensions show how gender, language, and history interact in British literature. Female authors typically use narrative and persuasive writing styles, focusing on relationships and emotions. Male authors, on the other hand, have often preferred clear and abstract writing, though this has changed over time. In the 21st century, writing styles from both genders have started to blend, reflecting changes in gender roles and culture. These dimensions demonstrate that gendered writing practices have developed together with societal changes, literary movements, and genre expectations.

5. Conclusion

In this study, Biber's Multidimensional (MD) analysis was employed to undertake a broad gender comparison of texts from British literature. The research examined differences in writing styles between male and female authors across four historical periods of literature: the Romantic, Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, the early twentieth century, and the current twenty-first century.

The investigation unveiled how writing has different trends concerning gender. As to the distinguishing features, female authors were found to prefer extensive use of involved discourse, narrative perspective, and argumentation. On the other hand, male authors opted for informational discourse, a balance of narrative and non-narrative elements, as well as explicit discourse. Such patterns regard the cultural and traditional practices that define male and female authors concerning the thematic and stylistic approaches.

During the Post-Romantic and Victorian periods, male and female writers showed clear differences in their writing styles. These differences were largely influenced by the gender roles defined by the culture and society of that time. Yet, in the present century, the differences in the style of male and female writers are not so distinct, which shows that the gender issues in literature are no longer as rigid as in earlier centuries. This change may be explained by raising the level of tolerance of diverse plot patterns and the expressive-intuitive aspects of the male and female characters in the sphere of literary practice. Using MD analysis in this study improves our understanding of gender and literature. Concerning the genders and historical periods' analysis of the linguistic features, this study provides important findings on the ways male and female authors reacted to and portrayed social transformations in their works.

More detailed studies can be conducted in line with the present research by extending the range of linguistic analysis features or by replicating the methodology within other cultural settings and types of literature. As more societies adopt new gender roles and new norms for male and female behavior, it becomes necessary to evaluate the connection between gender and literature. This paper looks at how different writing styles have changed over time, particularly regarding how gender differences affect writing. This work reveals that the integration of MD analysis alongside the historical approach gives rather rich insights into the linguistic shifts, advancing the discourse on gender and literature.

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Authors' contributions

Dr. Sadia Ali was responsible for data collection and drafting the manuscript. Dr. Tamim Aljasir was responsible for the study design and revising. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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No additional data are available.

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Appendix A

Dimension 1: Involved vs. Informational Discourse

Positive Feature

‘That’ deletion

Verb (uninflected present, imperative and third person) Second person pronoun/possessive Verb ‘do’

Demonstrative pronoun Adverb/qualifier-emphatic (e.g., just, really)

First-person pronoun/possessive Verb ‘be’ (uninflected present tense, verb, and auxiliary)

Sub-ordinating conjunction-causative Discourse particle Nominal pronoun Adverbial –hedge

Adverbial/qualifier-amplifier

Wh-question

Modals of Possibility

Co-ordinating conjunction-clausal connector

Wh-clause

Negative Features

Nouns (excluding gerund)

Preposition

Attributive adjective

Dimension 2: Narrative vs. Non-narrative Concerns

Positive Feature

Past-tense verb

Third-person pronoun (except ‘it’)

Verb-perfect Aspect

Negative Features

Present-tense verb

Place adverbial

That deletion

Pronoun ‘it’

Dimension 3: Explicit vs. Situation Dependent Discourse

Positive Feature

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-subject- position

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position

With prepositional fronting (pied-piping) Nominalisation

Coordinating conjunction –phrasal connector Singular noun-nominalisation

Negative Features

Adverb of time Adverb of place

Adverb other

Dimension 4: Overt Expression of Argumentation/Persuasion

Positive Features

Infinitive verb

Modal of prediction

Persuasive verb Subordinating conjunction-conditional

Modal of necessity

Adverb within auxiliary

Negative Features

Private verb

Public verb

Third-person pronoun

Hedges

Dimension 5: Impersonal (Abstract) vs. Non-impersonal (Non-Abstract Style)

Positive Features

Adverbial-conjuncts

Agentless passive verb Passive verb + 'by'

Passive post-nominal modifier Subordinating conjunction-other

Negative Features

(No negative features)

Appendix B

Table B1. List of chosen works

Period	Male Authors	Female Authors
Romantic Period (<1800)	"The Castle of Otranto" by Horace Walpole (1764)	"Evelina" by Frances Burney (1778)
	"The Vicar of Wakefield" by Oliver Goldsmith (1766)	"Cecilia" by Frances Burney (1782)
	"The Man of Feeling" by Henry Mackenzie (1771)	"The Romance of the Forest" by Ann Radcliffe (1791)
	"Caleb Williams" by William Godwin (1794)	"The Mysteries of Udolpho" by Ann Radcliffe (1794)
	"The Monk" by Matthew Lewis (1796)	"Emmeline, The Orphan of the Castle" by Charlotte Smith (1788)
Post-Romantic & Victorian (1800-1850)	"Ivanhoe" by Sir Walter Scott (1819)	"Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen (1813)
	"Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens (1837)	"North and South" by Elizabeth Gaskell (1854)
	"David Copperfield" by Charles Dickens (1869)	"Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Brontë (1847)
	"Sybil" by Benjamin Disraeli (1845)	"Emma" by Jane Austen (1815)
	"The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket" by Edgar Allan Poe (1838)	"Wuthering Heights" by Emily Brontë (1847)
The 20th Century (1900-1945)	"Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad (1899)	"To the Lighthouse" by Virginia Woolf (1927)
	"A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" by James Joyce (1916)	"Monday or Tuesday" by Virginia Woolf (1921)
	"Brave New World" by Aldous Huxley (1932)	"The Heat of the Day" by Elizabeth Bowen (1948)
	"1984" by George Orwell (1949)	"The Age of Innocence" by Edith Wharton (1920)
	"Sons and Lovers" by D. H. Lawrence (1913)	"Mrs Dalloway" by Virginia Woolf (1925)
The 21st Century (2000-Present)	"Atonement" by Ian McEwan (2001)	"The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox" by Maggie O'Farrell (2006)
	"White Teeth" by Zadie Smith (2000)	"Outline" by Rachel Cusk (2014)
	"Cloud Atlas" by David Mitchell (2004)	"Wolf Hall" by Hilary Mantel (2009)
	"Never Let Me Go" by Kazuo Ishiguro (2005)	"Girl, Woman, Other" by Bernardine Evaristo (2019)
	"The Road" by Cormac McCarthy (2006)	"The Outcast" by Sadie Jones (2008)

