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Exploring the Intersection of Digital Platforms and Contemporary Poetry: A Multi-Modal Discourse Analysis of Noor Unnihar's Poetry

Saba Zeb^a, Nuzhat Nawaz^{*b}, Sheeba Sadaf^c

- a. BS Scholar, Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Mang, Haripur, Pakistan.
- b. Lecturer, Department of English and Modern Languages, Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Mang, Haripur, Pakistan.
- c. Assistant Professor, Department of English and Modern Languages, Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Mang, Haripur, Pakistan.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the relationship between digital platforms and contemporary poetry in the form of a multi-modal discourse analysis of Noor Unnihar's Instagram poetry. Instapoetry, verbal tropes, and general accounts of digital literature have significant value in Western modern literary circles. However, in Pakistan, very few digital poets combine verbal language with visual, spatial, typographic, and platform-specific resources for creating poetic meanings. This study seeks to fill the gap by investigating the multi-modal nature of Instagram as a medium not only for the distribution but also for the presentation and interpretation of poetry. The corpus includes 398 poetry posts published between January 2021 to June 2026, out of which 18 poems have been selected using criterion-based chronological sampling. Using Kress and Leeuwen's Visual Grammar model, the analysis demonstrates that Noor Unnihar's Instagram poetry spans the continuum from text-dominant compositions to integrated text-image constructions. Everyday objects, living beings, and material spaces frequently convey abstract experiences, alongside typography, white space, color, and spatial configuration. Everyday objects, living beings, and material spaces can frequently function as resources for conveying abstract experiences, typography, white space, colors, and spatial configuration. The findings show that Instagram poetry operates as a multi-modal literary practice as a multi-modal literary practice where meaning is created through the interplay of linguistic, non-linguistic, and digital resources.

1. Introduction

Poetry has been considered a highly collaborative activity, often depicting events and happenings in literary gatherings and routine community circles. To promote literary culture and keep pace with the rapidly evolving world, poets have also used several social media platforms to give vent to feelings and ideas. In this regard, Instagram has been used as a potent space to create and share poetry (De & Lu, 2024). Contemporary poets use this medium of communication not only to perform but also

* Correspondence to: Lecturer, Department of English and Modern Languages, Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Mang, Haripur, Pakistan.

E-mail address: Nuzhat.nawaz@paf-iast.edu.pk (N. Nawaz)



to connect with people. Salsbery (2021) emphasizes that Instagram serves as a bridge between poetry and people. Treating social media as a valid medium for poetry proves that the art form is truly inclusive, engaging, and accessible to anyone who wants to engage with it. Instapoetry is captivating and interesting, drawing in users' interest and involvement. These readers explore further on social media and gather data across various platforms (Brenes, 2024).

Salsbery (2021) affirms that social media holds immense power to foster academic growth and literary development. On Instagram, features like hashtags, comment sections, and direct messages enable young learners to explore interesting and relevant topics. By browsing comments, one can connect publicly or privately with peers who share ideas and feelings. They can then apply the literary analysis tools to poetry they learned in school. Ultimately, Instagram offers a dynamic space where audiences can engage with poetry beyond the traditional constraints of analyzing texts in a physical context.

Insta poets are dynamic and non-conventional as they make use of textual and visual representation of work in a unique manner. Being diverse artists of language, Insta poets balance personal identity, cultural influences, and genuine expression in their work (De & Lu, 2024). The present paper focuses on Noor Unnihar's poetry, which is also a combination of visual and textual flair. She is a modern Insta poet who has used social media to develop rapport with readers. Furthermore, this study offers valuable insights into Pakistan's emerging digital literary landscape by examining how contemporary Pakistani poetry intersects with digital media.

More specifically, the study answers the following questions:

- How does Noor Unnihar's Instagram poetry construct poetic meaning through verbal, visual, spatial, typographic, and material resources?
- How do representational, interactive, and compositional resources, including Instagram-specific features such as shape the presentation and interpretation of poetry?

2. Literature Review

Modernization and application of digital technologies have changed the process of creating, publishing, and reading poetry in a radical way, turning it from a purely print-driven genre into an interactive and multi-modal medium of communication. Digital platforms are no longer just alternative publication sites, but are the environments that influence the creation, engagement, and value of poetry. In recent years, scholars have reached a certain agreement about the fact that digital poetry is beyond the mere transfer of poems written for print media into electronic media. Instead, it may be regarded as some kind of transformation of poetic practice through various semiotic means. According to Andrews (2018), modern poetry can no longer be viewed from the linguistic angle only because sense arises from the interplay between textual, visual, spatial, and material aspects. Likewise, Tohar et al. (2026) argue that the application of digital technologies results in changing the idea of authorship because it involves the introduction of computational creativity in poetic practice.

In the contemporary digital sphere, when change is inevitable, Grubnic (2020) states that the evolution of Instagram has also affected the literature, as it has transformed the creation and publication of poems. In turn, developing this argument further, Tselenti (2023) demonstrates that digital space gives poets the opportunity to circumvent publishing mechanisms, thus showing that digital spaces have become literary institutions in their own right. However, there are certain significant differences in the focus of their discussions. Andrews (2018) focuses on digital poetics from the perspective of multimodality, while Grubnic (2020) and Tselenti (2023) study literature produced on certain social media platforms. The current paper also focuses on the creation of poetry through the lens of a multi-modal framework. Furthermore, integration of AI has been encouraged by literary circles, as the recent work by Tohar et al. (2026) broadens the scope of the discussion even further by addressing AI-generated poetry.

Instagram is one of the current platforms that is being used for poetic creation (Grubnic, 2020). The current study presents the use of visual and textual elements in creating a relationship between author and reader. Hence, the difference between Instagram poetry and traditional literature publications lies in the speed at which poems get published, the ability to build an audience without intermediaries, and the possibility of combining both visual and textual elements in one communication platform. Thus, Insta poetry has become a new literary genre defined by its conciseness, visual aspect, accessibility, and interactions with the audience (Grubnic, 2020).

The overwhelming majority of academic scholars agree that Instagram has democratized poetry because of the absence of institutional obstacles to publication (Tselenti, 2023; Kovalik and Curwood, 2019). As Instagram offers poets the opportunity to work on a self-publishing model where literary access is not dependent on publishing industries, poets do not feel dependent upon publishing companies to make space for their work (Tselenti, 2023). Furthermore, Instagram also assists new and famous poets in reaching a global audience and encourages new types of literacy. (Kovalik & Curwood, 2019).

Nonetheless, scholars differ in assessment of Instagram's literary value. As Paquet (2019) argues that Instagram poetry combines self-expression with multimodality, thus producing texts that are emotionally accessible for a wider range of global audiences. In contrast, some critics are afraid that the platform's excessive emphasis on visual appeal and rapid consumption may put at risk the literary qualities and complexity. However, the current study insists on the claim that the use of social media platforms is beneficial and helps in rapid communication. Grubnic (2020) addresses this debate by suggesting that Instagram poetry should not be evaluated according to traditional standards, as the platform fundamentally changes how poems are produced, disseminated, and interpreted. Recent research further expands this perspective by conceptualizing instapoetry as a multi-modal practice. In this context, highlighting the work of female poets, Korecka (2023) demonstrates how visual practices, visibility, and platform affordances shape feminist poetry, illustrating that poetic meaning emerges not only from written language but also from visuals and digital interactions. Similarly, Saeed (2026) highlights the importance of illustrations, spacing, page design, and symbols for meaning construction within instapoetry. Altogether, these studies establish Instagram as not merely a publishing platform but a platform that impacts the aesthetics of poetry as a unique creation.

The increasing use of visual, textual, auditory, and special resources makes multimodality an important concept in modern poetic studies. Social semiotic theory, particularly the work of Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006), underlies the conceptualization of interaction between various semiotic modes in meaning-making. These theories believe that communication extends beyond written language and images; colour, typography, layout, spatial organization, and visual composition are parts of communicative actions. Consequently, contemporary poetry analysis needs to include an ability to assess various modes rather than privileging linguistic content alone. Furthering this idea, Andrews (2018) believes that a multi-modal approach should be applied to poetry because it involves both verbal and visual elements, and these two interact to create meanings. Also, visual resources cannot be treated as mere decorations, but they are involved directly in poetic meaning-making. This theoretical position has influenced a growing body of empirical research investigating multi-modal literary practices in educational and digital contexts. Similar to this study, Hoglund (2022) demonstrates that use of video responses by students to poems employs music, images, movement, and narration that help in developing richer interpretations than just traditional analysis. However, despite the consistent positive role of multimodality in educational contexts that is mentioned by all these studies, prime focus lies on education rather than literature. Most of the studies pay attention to multi-modal practices in classrooms, while only a few of them analyze poems on digital platforms. Therefore, not much attention has been paid to the ways in which Instagram poets combine writing, symbolism, color, composition, and imagery for meaning creation. The theoretical background of multimodality is provided by Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006), while Hoglund (2022), Susanto et al. (2023), and Ahn & Minuk (2025) investigate multi-modal poems in educational contexts in previous researches.

Despite the rapid expansion of global studies on Instapoetry, research remains dominantly concerned with Western poets such as Rupi Kaur, an English-language instapoet. There have not been enough studies conducted on the digital literary production of South Asia, even though it is gaining more importance culturally. To fill this gap, Ishtiaq and Khan (2025) argue that Pakistani Instagram poetry becomes a significant area where one can explore indigenous literary identities within global digital settings. Through thematic analysis, Pakistani poets negotiate culture, belonging, and identity through social media, which highlights the growing international visibility of regional literary voices. However, research in the Pakistani context is limited in several aspects. Existing studies mostly employ thematic analysis while giving comparatively little attention to multi-modal discourse, visual elements, imagery, and platform-specific affordances. Moreover, existing literature rarely investigates how visual, symbolic, and digital resources operate at the same time to shape poetic meaning. This methodological gap takes on even greater significance when considering the multi-modal poetry of Noor Unnihar, whose poetry combines handwritten texts, illustrations, color symbolism, and spatial organization. Despite the popularity of Noor Unnihar within contemporary Pakistani literature, relatively little attention has been paid to it using an integrated mixed-methods framework.

Consequently, the present study addresses an important gap by combining multimodal discourse analysis with descriptive frequency coding to examine how Instagram both shapes and is shaped by Noor Unnihar's contemporary poetry. By situating Pakistani Instapoetry within broader discussions of multimodality, digital literature, and platform affordances, this study contributes to the understanding of contemporary poetry in the digital age.

3. Methodology

This study adopted qualitative-dominant multi-modal research design, supported by descriptive quantitative analysis. It focused on Noor Unnihar's Instagram poetry as a form of digital literary communication, focusing on how meaning is constructed through the interactions of typography, colors, visuals, spatial arrangement, material objects, platform-specific features, and, of course, language. Therefore, each poem was considered as a multi-modal composition rather than verbal poetry alone.

The data were collected from publicly available Instagram poetry posts of Noor Unnihar, with Instagram serving as a research site because it is the digital platform in which the poems are presented, discussed, and distributed. The study considered posts that were published between January 2021 and June 2026. The 398 eligible posts were identified through criterion-based

purposive sampling (126 in 2021, 56 in 2022, 25 in 2023, 34 in 2024, 92 in 2025, and 65 in January–June 2026). Within each year, posts were ordered chronologically and divided into early, middle, and late segments, and the median post of each segment was selected (the lower median in the case of ties), yielding three poems per year. 18 poems were selected as a sample for analysis from these 398 eligible posts. Posts were included that had a poem, whether in carousels or solo. Posts that contained personal pictures, advertisements, random pictures, or journal writing were not chosen. The final sample consisted of 18 poems that were not selected based on high engagement, image integration, or the author's liking, but were selected based on criterion-based chronological sampling. The analytical sample consisted of 18 poems, with three poems selected from each year between 2021 and 2026. This chronological representation enabled the study to examine different periods of the poet's available poems on Instagram and identify variation and continuity in multi-modal poetic practices across six years.

Ethically, the study examined only publicly available Instagram posts and did not involve private communication, personal information, or direct messages, beyond what was publicly available in the posts. The study therefore focused on the semiotic construction of meaning within published digital texts, rather than attempting to determine the author's intention.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The present research is conducted based on Kress & Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar, the social-semiotic theory aimed at studying the process of participation of visual elements in creating meanings. According to Thuy (2017), the book entitled Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design, based on the Hallidayan metafunctional model, states that images, like language, can have systematic meaning-making resources. Thus, the process of visual communication is not regarded only as a decorative one; decisions regarding objects, positioning, colors, perspectives, sizes, and spatial organization of objects may be meaningful (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, as cited in Thuy, 2017). Feng and O'Halloran (2013) apply the same theory to the analysis of visual meaning by using the three related structures: representational, interactive, and compositional meaning. Visual Grammar is based on three metafunctions, namely, representational, interactive, and compositional meanings. The term 'representational meaning' denotes what is represented in the image and how the participants, objects, actions, and circumstances are represented in the image. This metafunction consists of two categories: narrative structures representing the processes or actions and conceptual structures representing the participants in more stable, classificatory, or symbolic relationships (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, as cited in Thuy, 2017). In the current study, representational meaning is used to discuss the experiences, ideas, and poetic themes of visuals and imagery. Interactive meaning involves the way the relationship is formed between the represented visual world and its audience through such means as contact, social distance, perspective, and modality that make the audience active, distant, observer, or participant. As can be seen from the study by Feng and O'Halloran (2013), there are additional means such as camera position and composition that are used to form the interactive meaning of visual communication. In the current study, this dimension will be used to assess how the studied poems form intimacy, distance, involvement, or different views. Compositional meaning includes the way visual elements are composed into one whole with the help of such resources as information value, salience, and framing that show how the placement, prominence, contrast, size, color, and connection or separation are used to form hierarchy and direct attention (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, as cited in Thuy, 2017). This dimension will be especially helpful in analyzing Instagram poems. The relevance of Visual Grammar to modern digital communication can be seen from the study by Yong and Rao (2024), who apply this approach to analyze the representational, interactive, and compositional aspects of advertisements on the Internet. Thus, in this research, Visual Grammar will be used to investigate the topic of Instagram poetry through the lens of multi-modal meaning construction, which means that it is not just necessary to understand what the poem is about but also how the viewer is positioned in the process.

4. Results

Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) representational, interactive, and compositional aspects of visual grammar are applied to each post's poem slide in order to analyze the 18 chosen poems. The outcomes show an unusually sharp chronological trend and a more diverse multi-modal pattern than a single "illustrated versus text" binary would indicate. Table 1 showcases the distribution of visual objects and multi-modal features in Instagram poetry.

Table 1: Distribution of Visual Objects and Multi-Modal Features in Poetry (2021–2026)

Year	Visual poems	%	Primary visual features
2021	1	33.3	Typography, handwriting, and a townscape image in one poem too

2022	1	33.3	Typography, handwriting, and a line-drawn hand as an image in a poem
2023	0	0.0	Typography and handwriting
2024	2	66.7	Images depicting objects
2025	3	100.0	Food or organic objects combined with text
2026	3	100.0	Food or organic objects combined with text

4.1. Representational Meaning

Of the eighteen poems, eight (44.4%) are solely typographic, and ten (55.6%) have an independent pictorial element on the poetry slide itself. Past Selves (a sliced green apple), My Father Makes a List of Things That Will Go Out of Stock in a War (a fig), New Lives of Rage (a halved pomegranate), Eulogy for Light (a fried egg), After Their Divorce (a halved peach), Souvenir (a vase of flowers), *The Hospital Asks for My Family History* (a yellow quince), A Love Poem for a Friend's Breakup (a papaya paired with a small painted pendant), Threshold (a line-drawn hand and botanical forms), and The Suffering Is Already Looming (a fully illustrated townscape). Eight of these ten visual participants are organic or food-related, and they serve abstract rather than narrative purposes. The many visual representations used in the poems are explained. For example, the fig in My Father symbolizes the context of shortages during the war, while the peach in After Their Divorce communicates an idea related to the poem's subject matter. In addition, the papaya and painted charm in A Love Poem for a Friend's Breakup serve as visual elements that enrich the poem's main point. In broad terms, the images serve as representational resources that aid in conveying the concepts, feelings, and meanings communicated in the poems.

4.2. Interactional Meaning

Represented human participants are almost wholly absent, and direct gaze is therefore not a viable interactive strategy across the corpus; with one striking exception. In *Threshold*, a drawn hand reaches into the frame, introducing a partial human trace into an otherwise object- and text-centered sample. Because it depicts no face, it does not establish demand-type address, but its presence complicates any straightforward claim that the corpus avoids the human body altogether. Since only poem slides were analyzed, no photographic material appears anywhere in the sample: every pictorial element is painted or hand illustrated. Viewer positioning is instead constructed through two channels — observational access to objects (the ten pictorial poems) and typographic intimacy, where handwriting and close-set serif text place the viewer near the language itself. The unexpected interactive device is in *A List of Things That May Have Raised Me*, where one word in handwritten list is blacked out. Redaction functions here as a form of address in its own right: it visibly performs the act of withholding, drawing the viewer's attention precisely to what has been concealed. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) interactive meaning, the poems primarily present the reader as an observer rather than a participant who is explicitly addressed. The conventional demand association determined by direct gaze is unavailable throughout the analytical sample because of the absence of represented human participants. As a result, observational access, textual closeness, and visual techniques that spark the viewer's interest are used to create interest in the sample rather than a focused human gaze.

4.3. Compositional Meaning

Salience is seen throughout the graphical subgroup. The primary visual element is typically highlighted by its size, color, and placement in the center. The verbal text is organized around it as the primary compositional focus. For instance, the vase in "Souvenir" and the papaya in "A Love Poem for a Friend's Breakup" serve as major visual components. Salience is also produced by color. Specific objects stand out against light backgrounds when they are brightly colored. The yellow quince in "The Hospital Asks for My Family History", the red pomegranate in "New Lives of Rage", and the yellow yolk in "Eulogy for Light" are examples of this. These items have more visual significance because of their colors, which attract the viewer's attention straight away. The typographic diversity is more prominent in the text-only category. There are four distinct treatments. "Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style", "Strain With Love", and "Love Caramelized" all have simple typewritten serif text on a white background. The second is handwriting, which appears in "A List of Things That May Have Raised Me", "Come to Me with Your Wretched Memory", and "The Blame". The third is typed text, similar to "Ancestral Favor", placed on a textured, aged-paper background. The fourth can be found in "Notes on Suffering", where hand-drawn pink comment marks are mixed with written text. These consist of a strikethrough across the title, underlining, and a circled phrase. The poem looks more like an edited draft than a

completed work because of its layout. Because they alter how the written text is organized and interpreted, the annotations thereby become important visual elements from a compositional perspective.

5. Analysis and Discussion

Figure 1 depicts that the 18 selected Instagram poems were analyzed by applying Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) representational, interactive, and compositional dimensions of visual grammar to the poem slide of each post.

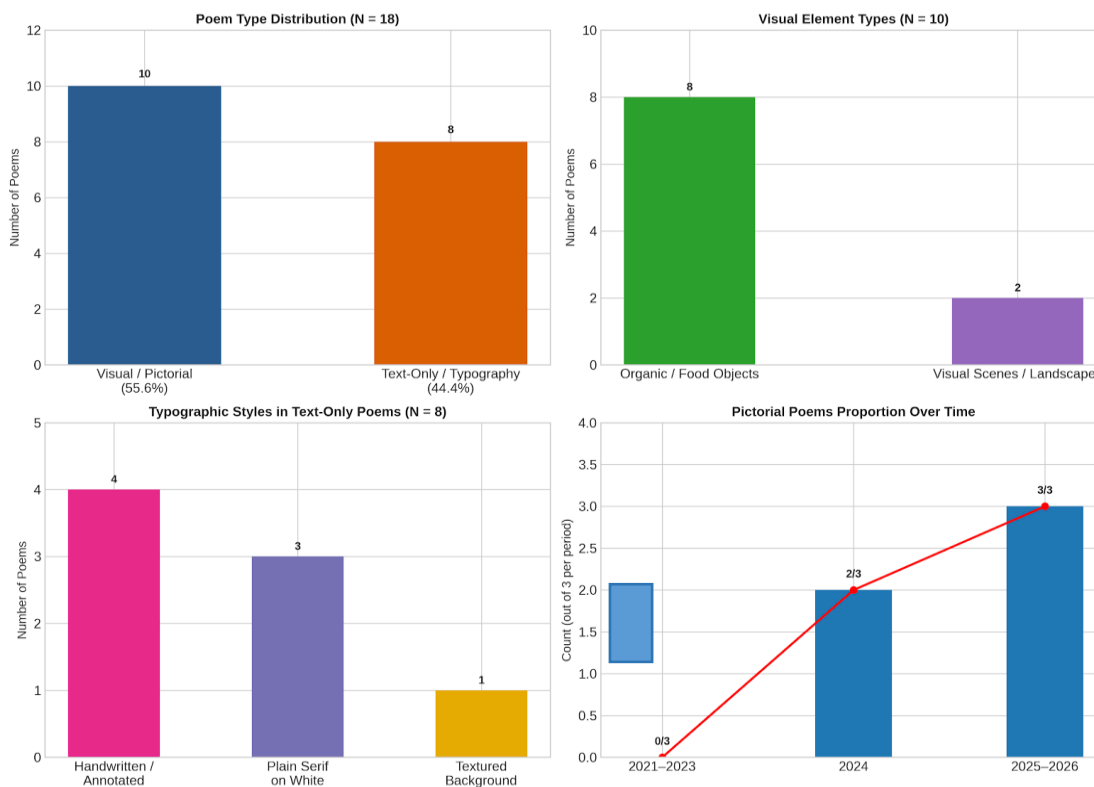


Figure 1

5.1. Representational Analysis

Of the eighteen poems, ten (55.6%) consist of an image or other visual element, and eight (44.4%) only utilize typography. Eight of the ten poems with illustrations take advantage of organic or food-related objects, which mainly serve as symbols rather than representing an action or narrative. A sliced green apple with a list of the speaker's ages shows up in "Past Selves"; the fruit's core symbolizes how the poem portrays different versions of the self. An encapsulated fig is placed next to a list of things that could become scarce during a conflict in "My Father Makes a List of Things That Will Go Out of Stock in a War". In a similar vein, "The Hospital Asks for My Family History" connects the poem's themes of familial inheritance with a yellow quince-like fruit that has justified text regarding inherited characteristics and aggression. A poem about ancestral wrath is placed alongside a halved pomegranate with its seeds exposed in "New Lives of Rage", tying the fruit to the idea that "rage runs in bloodlines." In "Eulogy for Light", a poem about light fading with age is positioned adjacent to a fried egg whose yolk looks like a circle of light. "After Their Divorce" links a poem to maternal debt with the idea of a womb which is "already a debt" by inserting a half-peach with its stone visible beside it. "Souvenir" connects love as "a souvenir of being alive" by displaying a poem about an aunt's temporary marriage next to a vase of red foliage. Pigeons and cages are used in "A Love Poem for a Friend's Breakup" to symbolize reluctant freedom, and a papaya is put together with a smaller charm to produce the only dual participant arrangement. Rather than using specific items, two poems employ visual scenes. "Threshold" introduces a partially human element to a poem about being "born from something delicate" by displaying a line-drawn hand with floral designs on pink. The concise poem is set over a dusk townscape in "The Suffering Is Already Looming Around". The eight aforementioned text-only poems highlight how typography can additionally provide multimodality. Ancestral Favor displays a textured, aged-paper background, while "Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style", "Strain With Love", and "Love, Caramelized" have plain typed serif text on white. One item in "A List of Things That May Have Raised Me" is blacked out and written in black handwritten capitals. "The Blame" is written in brown on white; however, "Come to Me with Your Wretched Memory" is written in magenta on ordinary graph paper. "Notes on Suffering" seems to be a marked-up draft by putting pink notes over typed text.

5.2. Interactive Analysis

Direct gaze and demand-type address are not accessible as engaging strategies in the rest of the sample because 17 of the 18 poem slides lack representation of human beings. “Threshold” is the only exception, with a line-drawn hand reaching diagonally across the frame to represent a fragment of a faceless human body. Even though it cannot generate interpersonal discourse because it does not make eye contact, its presence implies that the human figure is not eliminated from the corpus; instead, it is limited to gesture. The 10 pictorial poems view viewers as observers of an object rather than interlocutors despite the lack of represented participants; for instance, the pomegranate in “New Lives of Rage” is something to be studied and comprehended together with the text rather than a person speaking to the viewer. Viewer position is determined through illustrated proximity rather than camera perspective because the sample is limited to poetry slides and all pictorial content is painted or hand-illustrated; photographic material is not shown. In the absence of an object, typography is used to create a viewer connection. “The Blame”, “Come to Me with Your Wretched Memory”, and “A List of Things That May Have Raised Me” are examples of handwritten poetry that visually imitate a person's real act of writing, which minimizes the apparent distance between the poet and the reader. “Love, Caramelized”, “Strain With Love”, and “Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style” are examples of closely set serif poetry that achieve an equal proximity by intensity and restraint: the viewer is placed near the words because there is nothing else in the frame they can look at. The concealment in “A List of Things That May Have Raised Me” is the most notable interactive device in the sample, shaping the speaker's life or identity.

5.3. Compositional Analysis

The size, color, and central or central-right placement of the text encircling the object serve to generate salience in all 10 of the visual poems. The vibrant yellow quince in “The Hospital Asks for My Family History”, the deep red pomegranate in “New Lives of Rage”, and the yellow egg in “Eulogy for Light” all appear as the primary element of distinction against light backgrounds, showing the power of color. “Souvenir” and “A Love Poem for a Friend's Breakup” expand salience beyond the focal point by adding more color accents, such as the blue floral pattern on the vase or the small charm of the papaya. Additionally, text format varies irrespective of the object: “After Their Divorce” alternates flush-left and tented lines around the peach; “Eulogy for Light” pauses each line at a different indentation, which makes the echoing light “weaken[ing]” differently; “The Hospital Asks for My Family History” uses irregular text spacing that reflects its divided lineage theme. Instead of developing a single “text-dominant” category, the eight text-only poems are interpreted differently. White space is utilized as a compositional resource in plain typed serif (Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style, Strain With Love, Love, Caramelized). Instead, “Ancestral Favor” uses an aged-paper background with texture. Three poems—“The Blame”, “Come to Me with Your Wretched Memory” in marker, and “A List of Things That May Have Raised Me” with a visible concealment—use handwriting as a compositional technique. “Notes on Suffering” is unique because it uses pink annotations over written text, such as underlining, a circled line, and the use of strikethrough over the title, to bring a spotlight to the annotation rather than the typeface. Pictorial poems number 2/3 (2021–2022), 0/3 (2023), 2/3 (2024), and 3/3 (2025–2026) throughout the duration of the six samples. It's a nearly linear increase in contrast to a constant mixture kept throughout. When taken as a whole, the three metafunctions support each other: when an object is present, it gives compositional salience, interactive positioning, and representational content concurrently; when none is present, typography focuses on all three roles, resulting in a coordinated shift from typography-led to object-led meaning-making.

Typography and hand-drawn annotation function as separate material assets when no object exists, broadening meaning-making beyond language alone, while objects gain significance in relation by means of position beside the poem, transforming an abstract experience—memory, rage, inheritance, relational breakdown—without fixed symbolic value. In response to the second question, it is shown that representational, interactive, and compositional elements work together to form an interpretation rather than solely: the visible concealment indicates that concealment itself can address the viewer, while the near absence of represented people, softened only by a slightly drawn hand, means interpersonal meaning endures through typography rather than through gaze. The contrast between handwritten and serif further demonstrates how compositional choice affects poetic language both lexically and visually. However, because this analysis was limited to poem slides rather than complete carousel sequences, it is unable to discuss carousel sequencing as an interactive or compositional resource; within this more limited scope, the platform's contribution to meaning is carried by typography, color, and object choice on the single frame examined, rather than by sequencing across slides—a boundary that the second research question's own framing invites future research to directly test. Together, these results establish chronological sampling as a variable that can reflect developmental change rather than just a check for representativeness and extend visual grammar to a literary digital form characterized by the lack of photos and portrayed faces.

6. Conclusion

Through a multi-modal analysis of Noor Unnihar's Instagram poetry, this research was meant to explore how Instagram impacts the structured and thematic dimensions of contemporary poetry. Findings provide support for the idea that this poetry is a form of expression in which meaning is continually produced through a combination of language with objects such as font, color, and spatial arrangement rather than a traditional linguistic text simply moved to a digital space. Visual resources are functional rather than aesthetic in all 18 of the poems that have been carefully examined. In ten poems (55.6%), the verbal text is combined with a distinct pictorial element that conveys abstract concerns of memory, inheritance, and interpersonal experience. These components are mostly conceptual, non-narrative objects like fruit, eggs, and flowers; two of these expand into fully portrayed scenes rather than distinct items. Digital multimodality occurs along a spectrum rather than an obvious image/no-image distinction, as eight of the remaining poems (44.4%) demonstrate.

Typography, background texture, text editing, and hand-drawn annotation all function as visual resources in and of the poems. A distinctive kind of reader position is revealed by the interactive analysis. The corpus does not rely on gaze-based communication because depicted human players are almost entirely absent, with one partial exception, which is a drawn hand in Threshold. Instead, typographic closeness and observational engagement with items such as the unexpected technique of visible redaction, which addresses the viewer by staging concealment rather than disclosure, are used to build familiarity. The compositional analysis findings show that both visual density and visual restraint function as legitimate salience strategies, with colour and centrality defining the pictorial poems and white space, texture, and annotation distinguishing the text-only ones. Most significantly, the longitudinal findings reveal a near-linear chronological transition rather than stable interaction: pictorial composition is very less during the time period from 2021–2023 and becomes the default by 2025–2026, suggesting genuine development in the poet's multi-modal practice. Therefore, these findings suggest that Instagram functions as a semiotic framework in which poetic meaning is developed, not simply distributed. This study adds to Pakistani digital literary studies by extending Kress and Van Leeuwen's visual grammar to a literary genre, highlighted by the lack of standard images and represented faces. It captures a type of digitally native production that is overlooked in scholarly research that remains centered on print. Based on the present study, the Instagram poem is a text that can be read and viewed at the same time, with its meaning distributed over both verbal and visual modes rather than being captured primarily in words.

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