Should a Book Be Judged by its Back Cover? Some Written/Formal Features as Observed in Happily-Ever-After Women's Novel Blurbs

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ABSTRACT

This study examined written/formal register based on happily-ever-after women's fiction conventional blurbs. In particular, the 80 blurbs were equally divided into two types: the classic and mass-marketed. Biber et al. (2021) was used as the framework to extract features to respond to the two research questions: What were the top written/formal features among the classic and mass-marketed happily-ever-after women's novel blurbs? And, which blurb type displayed more resemblance to written/formal register? The functional framework comprised three main groups of features: The passives, adjectivals and adverbials. Results revealed that the first two showed a strong tendency towards written/formal register while the last seemed to show the opposite but was taken here to be in-between features, corresponding to fiction language. The top written/formal features based on the two types of blurbs were the passives (both the full and reduced forms) (26%), full relative clauses (23%), full adverbial clauses (20%) and attributives (13%). The blurb type that seemed inclined towards written/formal nature more was the classic, as substantiated by five salient features: the passives, attributives, *-en* adjectivals, *-ing* adverbials and *-en* adverbials. It is believed

that discourse analysts and ESL/EFL teachers can pay more attention to these useful syntactic features, particularly the full and reduced forms, as ways to compress information in formal writing.

Keywords: English discourse, syntactic modification, information packing, blurbs, novels in English

"Many speakers of English share the view that the language of academic writing is peculiar, not only different from everyday speech, but also different from most other registers of English. These perceived differences are not neutral. Rather, a common stereotype of academic prose is that it is deliberately complex, and more concerned with impressing readers than communicating ideas—all making it needlessly difficult to understand" (Biber & Gray, 2016, p. 1).

Introduction

Women's fiction, here referring to both classic and mass-marketed novels for women on requited love, is significant at least for three major reasons: Intellectual pursuit, escapism, and publishing revenues. On the one hand, the classics pertains to novels installed in the literary canon due to their high thematic content and language "merit and influence" (Cuddon & Habib, 2013, p. 102), thus frequently taught in academia and cited in journals. The classic themes usually embody "sex, property, money, marriage, social mobility, the nuclear family," intertwined with more critical social issues like women's oppression and inequality—but, almost always, with "romantic heroes and villains, wish-fulfillments and fairy-tale endings" (Eagleton, 2005, p. 2). Some of the classical authors include Austen, Allende, Balzac, Brontë, Eliot, Márquez, Morrison, Woolf, Tan, and Walker.

Mass-marketed novels, on the other hand, are mainly popular romantic comedies or "rom-coms" with essentially everyday language, dialogues and situations, except some occasional fairy-tale magic for escapist purposes. The popular happily-ever-after tropes include a love triangle, forbidden love, from rags to riches, friends/foes to lovers, secret billionaires, forced proximity, insincere relationships and a second chance (many seen in this study). Some of these rom-com writers include Ahern, Hoover, Keyes, Kinsella, Moyes, Roberts, Sparks, and Steel. These novels are fascinating as they present themes and tropes that echo the hearts of most women. And, finally, this women's fiction, especially the mass-marketed novels, is considered a big business in the U.S., a USD24 billion industry, or approximately 40 percent of adult popular fiction sold there due to the fact that women "tend to read more, and buy more books"

(https://www.universalclass.com/articles/writing/the-market-of-women-fiction.htm).

Written/formal register is mainly used in professional and academic domains: In law, science and technology, business and tertiary educational institution. The register can be observed in legal deeds, scientific papers, business contracts, feasibility reports and academic textbooks of various disciplines. In terms of ELT, academic English poses some big hurdles for ESL/EFL students, as well. Written/formal English is usually connected to Standard English more than spoken register (Mullany & Stockwell, 2015). It is mainly related to two aspects: grammar and vocabulary. While the former, the topic of this paper, includes features like passives, complex noun phrases and nominalizations, the latter is linked to Latinate lexis (Trousdale, 2010, p. 13), e.g. "assist," "commence," "deity," for "help," "begin," "god." Coxhead's academic vocabulary list of 2000 has been a source for research and practical use.

Blurbs are short pieces of writing at the back cover that partially describe the novels' plot and try to persuade readers to buy them (Bacić, 2021; Gea-Valor, 2005). A number of studies on blurbs have been conducted, especially in the last decade. This is probably due to four main reasons: Blurbs are short (normally not more than one page), structured with often-clear moves and steps (particularly with regards to academic textbooks), convenient (can be found off-line and online), and engagingly informative (with a short summary of the book). Data are typically taken from academic/non-fiction books in science and technology and the humanities, self-help manuals, dictionaries, and fiction. The research methods include manually counting the features and concordancing.

Unfortunately, it seems that blurb research has not been taken so seriously, as witnessed in the methodology flaws—like the use of inadequate data (occasionally less than 10 per study), or the "anything-goes approach" to research (i.e. using any books at hand). In terms of reporting the methodology, some studies did not reveal much at all, e.g. the books and publishers used. Most of the studies were on move structures with a little portion devoted to lexico-grammatical features or "linguistic realizations," e.g. popular parts of speech like (positive) adjectives, nouns and adverbs, ellipses, and high-frequency words, especially intensifiers. Not much appears to be done on syntactic structures found in blurbs, except the exemplary study by Bacić (2021).

This paper is a continuation of Pupipat et al.' s spoken/informal register article (2022). There, of the 14 features used to identify spoken/informal register, according to Biber et al. (2021) and other scholars, we found that the top three features across the two types of blurbs

were intensifiers (29.37%), present tenses (23.51%) and coordinating conjunctions (16.69%). Also, the mass-marketed blurbs showed more instances of these features, except past tenses and complex conjunctions, which were found more in the classic counterparts. We concluded that the mass-marketed blurbs seemed to show more tendency towards spoken/informal register. This was probably due to the fact that the publishers of the mass-market blurbs wanted to build rapport with the readers/potential customers.

Using the same data, this paper focuses on the opposite axis, written/formal register, along with the in-between, the adverbials, that concerns language of fiction as described in Biber et al. (2021)—to see the inclination of the classic blurbs towards such a register.

Literature Review

The two topics that will be reviewed here include written/formal register and blurbs which form the backbone of the research.

Written/formal Register

English discourse research mainly investigates speech and writing, and occasionally the mixed medium (Crystal, 2019). While spoken English is perceived to be more aural, impermanent, linearly accessible and informal, written English is more visual, durable, scannable and formal (Johnstone, 2018). Mixed medium English, a blend of both media, e.g. spoken English being formal or written English being informal, is observed in public speeches, scientific presentations, personal letter and email messages. In fact, more and more scholars are seeing the gap between speech and writing narrowing, mainly due to technology (Swan, 2016). However, it is still important that the two registers, along with the mixed medium, be studied.

Based on Baron (2000, p. 21), Leech et al. (2006, p. 150), Mullany & Stockwell (2015, p. 87) and Johnstone (2018, p. 224), the following table compares written and spoken registers, with their nature and linguistic features.

Table 1

Comparison between written & spoken registers, and their linguistic nature/features

Writing	Speech
1. Objective and formal ⇒ more passives and more difficult words	Interpersonal and informal ⇒ fewer passives and fewer difficult words

2. Abstract, decontextualized and monologue $\Rightarrow$ expository and argument-oriented	Concrete, contextualized and dialogue $\Rightarrow$ narrative and event-oriented
3. Well planned (to save space) $\Rightarrow$ more compact and dense $\Rightarrow$ highly structured and syntactically complex with more subordination, less repetition and repair	Spontaneous (not much focus on saving time & space) $\Rightarrow$ loosely structured and syntactically simple with more coordination, less compact, more words, repetitions and repair mechanism

Much research has been conducted on written/formal register as can be exemplified in the numerous studies on L1 and L2 writing (Hyland, 2016). They typically concentrate on three main strands: text, writer and reader orientations, with diverse topics, ranging from composition and rhetoric, genre studies, stance, and identity, power and ideology, to critical/creative thinking, literature, writing across the curriculum, and L1 vs. L2 writing processes, expert vs. novice writers and pedagogy.

Within the text-oriented paradigm that emphasizes "formal surface elements, the vocabulary and grammar, or their discourse structure" (Hyland, 2016, p. 3), Biber et al. (2021), among others, listed a number of features that reflect written/formal register. The passive and adjectivals are two prominent aspects. Adjectivals consist of complex adjective phrases (attributives and predicatives) and relative clauses (full, plus four reduced forms: Adjective phrase adjectivals, *-ing* adjectivals, *-en* adjectivals, and appositives). Another important set of modifiers is adverbials, employed to modify any unit in a sentence like an adverb. These non-noun modifiers can be divided into the full and three reduced forms: adjective phrase adverbials, *-ing* adverbials and *-en* adverbials. Biber et al. (2021) states that adverbials tend to be in the middle between the spoken/informal and written/formal dimensions, with a slight inclination towards the former. However, since they are said to appear most in fiction and least in academic prose, this study would consider them to belong to the in-between register.

In this paper, the three main aspects, with their sub-categories, are explored. These written/formal features are based on Biber et al. (2021), Carter & McCarthy (2006), Carter et al. (2011), Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia (2016), Leech et al. (2006), and McArthur et al. (2018). They are elaborated as follows:

1. **Passives**. The English voice, consisting of the active and passive, concerns "the roles of different participants (agent or recipient) in an event" (Carter & McCarthy, 2006, p. 929). To analyze the active statement "Jum makes some spaghetti somtam," semantically, we have "Jum" as the agent or the doer of the action, "makes" as the transitive verb, and "some spaghetti somtam" as the recipient or theme. In the passive statement, the original recipient "some spaghetti somtam" is made the agent—the subject of the

sentence—for emphasis. And, occasionally, when the original agent "Jum" is considered unimportant, it is dropped. These agentless passives are popular in academic writing. In terms of mood, the passive, especially the agentless passives, creates an impersonal tone (Swan, 2016).

2. **Adjectival** is a functional term that refers to a linguistic unit that modifies a noun (or noun phrase) or a pronoun. There are three main types: Attributives, predicatives, and post-nominal modification forms. The post-nominal modification, in turn, can be divided into four types: Full relative clauses, AdjP adjectivals, *-ing* adjectivals and *-en* adjectivals.

Adjective phrase (AdjP) is a group of words (within a clause) with an adjective as the head, being modified by single words, phrases and clauses, e.g.

-Single adjective   "glad"
-Pre-modifier + Adj.   "extremely glad"
-Adj. + post-modifier   "glad to see Jum"
-Pre-modifier + Adj. + post-modifier "extremely glad that Jum came"

The two basic types of AdjPs are attributives and predicatives. To elaborate:

2.1 **Attributives** are AdjPs that precede the head noun. "Complex" here means that at least three words (including determiners) are modifying the head noun. For example, in "Dent's endlessly charming *The Summer Job*, the head noun "*The Summer Job*" (taken as one unit) is being modified by the attributive "Dent's endlessly charming."

2.2 **Predicatives** are AdjPs that follow the head noun and are preceded by a linking verb, e.g. "be," "get," "feel," "become" or "seem." In *The Summer Job* is very romantic and humorous," we have "very romantic and humorous" as a predicative as it follows the "be" verb and it is complex since it consists of four modifiers. In a real blurb, we may see both attributives and predicatives put together to save space, e.g. "Dent's endlessly charming *The Summer Job* is very romantic and humorous."

2.3 **Post-nominal modification** follows the head N immediately—with no linking verb in between—and, together with the N, is considered a single noun phrase. Post-nominal Modification can be divided into four types:

2.3.1 *Full Relative Clauses*: "Birdy, who actually replaces her best friend sommelier Heather, is in love with a handsome chef."

2.3.2 *AdjP adjectivals*: "Birdy, friendly to the handsome chef and his co-workers, is not a real sommelier."

2.3.3 *-ing adjectivals*: "Birdy, working at the hotel, is actually replacing her friend Heather."

2.3.5 *Appositives*: "Birdy, a lovely ordinary woman, pretends to be a wine expert."

3. **Adverbials** (or **adjuncts**). To Biber et al. (2021), adverbials are diverse usually-optional linguistic units that can syntactically be realized in the several forms, ranging from a single adverb ("Jum composed two novels <u>quickly</u>."), to prepositional phrases ("Jum composed two novels quickly <u>in her Ubon cottage</u>.") and (dependent/subordinate) clauses ("Jum composed two novels quickly <u>because she needed some money and fame</u>."). In this study, we focus on full adverbial clauses and three reduced forms. Of the adverbial clauses, we focus on the circumstance that are of several types: Time ("<u>When Jum was relaxing on the balcony</u>, she saw the neighbor's dog stealing her somtam."), manner ("Jum sings <u>as if she were Maria Callas</u>."), reason ("<u>Because Jean-Claude loves Jum</u>, he decides to move to Ubon."), and condition ("<u>If Jum really loves Jean-Claude</u>, she should dump her old lazy boyfriend Somchai."). Finally, regarding the three reduced forms, we are concerned with AdjP adverbials ("<u>Desperate to get promoted</u>, Jum regularly makes the CEO some delicious somtam."), *-ing* adverbials ("<u>Making spicy somtam</u>, Jum always listens to some tranquil Baroque adagios.") and *-en* adverbials ("<u>Composed during her happy days</u>, Jum's rom-coms contained a lot of fun.").

Blurbs

As mentioned earlier, most blurb studies tended to focus on move structures and, to a much lesser extent, on linguistic features, especially syntactic structures, the focus of the present study. Despite the minimal analysis, at least three works shed some light. These studies are chronologically ordered.

Marčiulionienė (2006), analyzing 164 blurbs from fiction in English published from 1929 to 2004, discussed the "chains of adjectives" (p. 68), especially those like "great/greatest," "new," "complete," "brilliant," "exciting," to express attitude. An end note says, "language of blurbs of English fiction is highly adjectival" (p. 67).

Grossi & Bruti (2015), studying 50 electronic fiction bestseller blurbs from Amazon published between 2010 and 2015, investigated orality features (i.e. ellipsis, address form "you" and imperatives, and idioms and puns) and conciseness features. The last devices included pre-modification patterns ("<u>Stephen Chbosky's haunting debut</u> novel"), post-modification patterns ("the war novel <u>to end all the war novels</u>,"), and pre-modification and post-modification ("<u>the unmissable first novel from bestselling and award-winning</u> author <u>of *The Fault in Our Stars*</u>") (pp. 65-66). They also studied compounds ("<u>a small-life-big-dreams</u> weepie"), accumulation, a series of words mainly for intensification ("a profound, moving and enchanting look") (p. 86), and collocations.

Bacić (2021), the most relevant and informative study here, concerning linguistic features of fiction and linguistics academic book blurbs available, emphasized that both fiction and non-fiction (i.e. academic) blurbs tended to be concise. Two major ways to compress information were to omit or reduce words. Besides the S-V omission, she investigated reduction of dependent clauses in initial, post-modifying or final positions. Academic blurbs usually began with *-en* adverbials ("Written in an accessible style, this book provides….," p. 123) or detached predicative NP ("The first systematic analysis of the Windows Approach, it will be of interest to students…," p. 123), and *-ing* adverbials, both sentence-initial ("Drawing on findings from a broad range of disciplines …, Iris Berent explores these questions…," p. 124) and sentence-final ("The book assumes some non-technical knowledge…, making it a valuable resource," p. 124). Finally, she explored the passives ("The analysis is further extended to examine vagueness…," p. 126), saying that they "[contribute] to the impersonal tone of the texts" (p. 125), complex NPs ("the number one feel-good read of Christmas 2018," p. 126), and post-modifiers, in the form of prepositional phrase or finite/non-finite clauses, e.g. "harrowing terrain with deft sensitivity," p. 127). This serves as a means to compress information. Despite the virtues, this paper did not come up with frequency counts on any feature, rendering the data not fully adequate for this current study.

Taken all of the above issues into consideration, this paper focused on two research questions. They are as follows:

1. What were the top written/formal features among the CL and MM of happily-ever-after women's novel blurbs?
2. Which blurb type displayed more resemblance to the written/formal register?

Methodology

The data collection consisted of the following steps:
a. A set of 80 blurbs from women's happily-ever-after novels were carefully chosen: 40 for the Classics (CL) and another 40 for the mass-marketed (MM). All the novels were printed on paperbacks (not online) and had to have a woman (or women) as the main character(s), to end happily, and to be written or translated into English. The CL were published from any time up to 1999 and the MM from 2000 to 2022.
b. For the CL authors, either one or two books were selected, except Austen and Gaskell. And, for the MM writers, only one, except 12

more popular ones: Ahern, Bushnell, Cabot, Colgan, Hoover, Keyes, Kinsella, Moyes, Roberts, Sparks, Steel and Weiner.

c. To avoid data bias, especially for the CL which had fewer possibilities, the author and his team insured that as many publishers as possible were included, both the big and small ones.

d. The blurb descriptors included the book description, its history, the author's life and accomplishments, internal (often inserted in the author's life) and external praises. Other information was excluded: The publisher's name/logo and website, author's social media contacts and information on other novels, ISBN, and information on introductory notes, translator, cover page, e-book/audiobook/film(s) based on the book.

Table 2 describes the data pool:

Table 2

Number of words of each type of blurb

Novel type	No. of blurbs	No. of words	Longest blurb (words)	Shortest blurb (words)	Mean length of blurb
CL	40	6,132	292	74	153
MM	40	7,608	231	80	190
Total	80	13,740			

Regarding data analysis, the linguistic features listed above were counted for frequency and the two types of blurbs were compared in terms of written/formal features. The results were reported in percentages. And, to maintain accuracy, a grammar/syntax expert cross-checked the results on a weekly basis. Gaps were discussed and a consensus was reached.

Results and Discussion

To partially respond to Research Question 1 (What were the top written/formal features among the CL and MM?), Table 3 presents the overview of the major linguistic features, from the highest to lowest.

Table 3

Overview of major linguistic features

Feature	CL	MM	Total
1. Adjectivals	178 (55%)	143 (45%)	321 (54%)
2. Adverbials	100 (48%)	110 (52%)	210 (35%)
3. Passives	47 (73%)	17 (27%)	64 (11%)
			595 (100%)

The macro picture indicated a few points. First, among the three major linguistic features, the adjectivals led the pack (54%), followed by adverbials (35%) and passives (11%). Second, while the adjectivals and passives predominated in the CL, the adverbials prevailed, to some extent, in the MM. In particular, the ratio of the difference between the CL and MM was most salient in the passives with the former being 73% and the latter only a mere 27%—almost three times more, while the other two had little differences: 10% and 4% for the adjectivals and adverbials, respectively.

To discuss, since passives and adjectivals show a tendency towards the written/formal register, as indicated in Biber et al. (2021), and Carter & McCarthy (2006), it is probably safe to say that the CL, which is high in both features, has a strong tendency to be written/formal. (See below the percentage of the all passives when both the full and reduced forms are taken together.) In blurb research, Marčiulionienė (2006), among others, has mentioned the "chains of adjectives" (p. 68) and the fact that the "language of blurbs of English fiction is highly adjectival" (p. 67). In terms of tone, the two features, especially the passives, connote formality that can imply respect for authority and serious scholarship. Ironically, however, the opposite fact appears to be true of the adverbials here: There are more adverbials in the MM than the CL despite the small discrepancy (52% vs. 48%). There are two possibilities here. We may claim that the adverbials in the MM mirror the "spontaneous/loosely structured" language, as mentioned by Baron (2000) and Johnstone (2018). Or, to take the words of Biber et al. (2021), we may consider adverbials to reflect fiction writing, thus, as mentioned above, an in-between register. This study sides with the latter as it is corpus based and quite comprehensive, covering conversation and academic prose—and fiction, as well.

Table 4

Overview of 12 major & minor linguistic features

Feature	CL	MM	Total
1. Passives	47 (73%)	17 (27%)	64 (11%)
2. All adjectivals	178 (55%)	143 (45%)	321(54%)
2.1 Attributives	52 (68%)	24 (32%)	76 (13%)
2.2 Predicatives	13 (57%)	10 (43%)	23 (4%)
2.3 Post-nominal modification (full & reduced)	113 (51%)	109 (49%)	222 (37%)
2.3.1 Full relative clauses	64 (46%)	75 (54%)	139 (23%)
2.3.2 AdjP adjectivals	4 (57%)	3 (43%)	7 (1%)
2.3.3 *-Ing* adjectivals	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	12 (2%)
2.3.4 *-En* adjectivals	31 (70%)	13 (30%)	44 (7%)
2.3.5 Appositives	7 (35%)	13 (65%)	20 (3%)
3. All adverbials (full & reduced)	100 (48%)	110 (52%)	210 (35%)
3.1 Full adverbial clauses	38 (32%)	82 (68%)	120 (20%)
3.2 AdjP adverbials	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	11 (2%)
3.3 *-Ing* adverbials	24 (73%)	9 (27%)	33 (5%)
3.4 *-En* adverbials	32 (70%)	14 (30%)	46 (8%)
			595

Based on Table 4, the micro picture seems to be even more fascinating. In comparing the features of the CL and MM, despite some small differences, we can see two outstanding groups with one being doubled the size of the other. First, disregarding the passives above, four occurrences with the pendulum swaying towards the CL were noticed. In fact, the CL was double. These occurrences included the attributives (68% vs. 32%), *-en* adjectival (70% vs. 30%), *-ing* adverbial (73% vs. 27%), and *-en* adverbial (70% vs. 30%). Second, concerning the MM, excluding the full adverbial clauses mentioned above, one interesting phenomenon happened with the appositives with the MM's 65%, as opposed to the CL's 35%, another picture with one side weighing more than two times.

To discuss, with the four minor features inclining towards the CL, the picture tends to suggest that this blurb type is more written/formal in nature. It is interesting to see that the two sub-categories within the adverbials, i.e. *-ing* adverbials and *-en* adverbials, reflect this formal nature, in contrast to the full adverbial clauses that, as discussed above, are considered the in-between. A simple explanation would be that these features are reduced forms, used to save blurb space, concurring with blurb studies by Bacić (2021), and Grossi & Bruti (2015). Another argument shows that these features reflect the well-planned characteristic of written/formal register, aligning with Baron (2000)

and Johnstone (2018). Concerning the appositives being found more in the MM, it may be explained similarly that these features were employed there to save space in the first place, as other space-saving devices (i.e. attributives, -*en* adverbials, -*en* adjectivals and -*ing* adverbials) might already be exhausted, as it is obvious in these features' higher numbers of the CL. In fact, Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia (2016) mentioned that appositives are a reduction of relative clauses (which swayed towards the MM, as well), thus, probably reflecting the spoken/informal nature while simultaneously saving space. Also, interestingly, Biber et al. (2021) has stated that appositives are greatly found in fiction to briefly explain the character and place, e.g. "Ursule, his good-hearted, orphaned young ward," (CL38), "Bran Killian, a handsome Irishman" (MM21)[1]. (See more below.) Finally, the higher number of appositives in the MM may also imply that the characters in these new romance novels are new and need some introduction, compared with those found in the CL that most were already established in the literary canon.

From the evidence above, we can probably answer Research Question 2: Which blurb type displayed more resemblance to the written/formal register? The answer is the CL as can be observed mainly from the predominant use of the passives and adjectivals, especially the attributives and -*en* adjectivals, along with two minor features of the adverbials: -*ing* adverbials and -*en* adverbials.

Next, Table 5 describes the 12 individual features from highest frequency to lowest—to answer Research Question 2 more fully:

Table 5

The 12 features arranged from highest frequency to lowest

Feature	CL	MM	Total
1. Full relative clauses	64 (46%)	75 (54%)	139 (23%)
2. Full adverbial clauses	38 (32%)	82 (68%)	120 (20%)
3. Attributives	52 (68%)	24 (32%)	76 (13%)
4. Passives	47 (73%)	17 (27%)	64 (11%)
5. -*En* adverbials	32 (70%)	14 (30%)	46 (8%)
6. -*En* adjectivals	31 (70%)	13 (30%)	44 (7%)
7. -*Ing* adverbials	24 (73%)	9 (27%)	33 (5%)
8. Predicatives	13 (57%)	10 (43%)	23 (4%)
9. Appositives	7 (35%)	13 (65%)	20 (3%)
10. -*Ing* adjectivals	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	12 (2%)
11. AdjP adverbials	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	11 (2%)
12. AdjP adjectivals	4 (57%)	3 (43%)	7 (1%)

[1] "CL38" and "MM21" designate blurb no. 38 in the classic and no. 21 in the mass-marketed novel list, respectively. See the appendices.

Total			595

Of the 12 features, the top four over 10% are full relative clauses (23%), full adverbial clauses (20%), attributives (13%) and (full) passives (11%). However, to get an even more accurate picture, we can combine all the passives, the full and two reduced forms (i.e. *-en* adjectivals and *-en* adverbials), into one group, with 154 instances or 26% of the total 12 features, or about a fourth of all. making it the largest group now, as Table 6 illustrates:

Table 6

All passives and the other features

Feature	CL	MM	Total
1. All passives	110 (71%)	44 (29%)	154 (26%)
2. Full relative clauses	64 (46%)	75 (54%)	139 (23%)
3. Full adverbial clauses	38 (32%)	82 (68%)	120 (20%)
4. Attributives	52 (68%)	24 (32%)	76 (13%)
5. *-Ing* adverbials	24 (73%)	9 (27%)	33 (5%)
6. Predicatives	13 (57%)	10 (43%)	23 (4%)
7. Appositives	7 (35%)	13 (65%)	20 (3%)
8. *-Ing* adjectivals	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	12 (2%)
9. AdjP adverbials	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	11 (2%)
10. AdjP adjectivals	4 (57%)	3 (43%)	7 (1%)
Total			595

Now, we are ready to describe the features in more detail, in groups and individually, starting with all the passives, proceeding to full relative clauses, full adverbial clauses, and a comparison of the attributives and predicatives, and ending with the five lesser features.

All passives (full & reduced forms)

In the macro picture, we saw the full passives being discussed. Here, we should ponder on the extent of the full, combined with the reduced passives, i.e. *-en* adjectivals and *-en* adverbials, as stated in the next table.

Table 7

All passives

	Full	*-En* adjectivals	*-En* adverbials	Total
CL	47	31	32	110 (71%)
MM	17	13	14	44 (29%)
	64	44	46	154

As mentioned above, when all the passives, the full and reduced forms are combined, we derive 154 instances or 26% of the total 12 features, about a fourth of all, making it the largest group. In particular, between the two types, the figures come to 110 (71%) vs. 44 (29%) for the CL and MM, respectively, thus the CL's passives are about double the size of the MM's. To discuss, the passive here implies the CL's impersonal tone, thus some seriousness of intent, as mentioned in Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia (2016), Leech et al. (2006), and Swan (2016). Thus, it appears that the need to show respect to the authorities in the canon defeats the desire to build rapport with the reader/potential customer. In passing, we might note the zero occurrence of the informal *get*-passives in the data, probably pointing to the prevailing impersonal and objective tone (Leech, 2006).

Table 8 illustrates examples of all of the passives (full and reduced):

Table 8

Examples of all passives

Feature	CL	MM
1. Full passives	"Helen <u>is drawn</u> into a web of white lies and evasions..." (CL11); "The mystery and intrigue <u>are</u> further <u>deepened</u> by the ghostly appearances of a woman..." (CL37)	"Joshua <u>is clearly baffled</u> by Lucy's overly bright clothes, quirkiness, and Pollyanna attitude." (MM29); "Sophia <u>is torn</u> between a powerful attraction and a professional rivalry." (MM39)
2. *-En* adjectivals	"the inequality and hardship <u>generated by the Industrial Revolution in northern England</u>" (CL24); "One of the few English novels <u>written for grown-up people</u>" (CL21)	"Adam, <u>poised to jump</u>" (MM11); "Sydney finds herself <u>captivated by her mysterious and attractive neighbor, Ridge</u>" (MM16); "the exclusive London boutique <u>frequented by the rich, the famous and the stylish...</u>" (MM35)
3. *-En* adverbials	"<u>Spirited</u> and impulsive, Marianne Dashwood is the complete opposite to her controlled and sensible sister,	"<u>Heartbroken and publicly humiliated</u>, Nadia looks to her family for comfort and support..." (MM24); "<u>Written with the same emotional depth and keen insight that</u>

| Elinor." (CL30); "Filled with bitter poetry and suspense as taut as a rope, *Beloved* is a towering achievement by Nobel Prize laureate Toni Morrison."(CL4) | made Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us* and *Ugly Love Sunday Times* bestsellers, *All Your Perfects* is a powerfully moving story..." (MM2) |

Full relative clauses

The full relative clauses, a big portion of the adjectivals, the highest of the three major components, as seen in Table 3, are exemplified as follows: "*Pride and Prejudice*, which opens with one of the most famous sentences in English Literature, is an ironic novel of manners." (CL29); "This book that introduced the most memorable sisters in American literature—Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy." (CL16); "...for those whose place in the structure of things is taken for granted" (CL5); "a man who knows every humiliating detail about her" (MM5); "the book that inspired the hit Netflix series" (MM40); "The man Ø she has painted over and over again" (MM25).

Next, we look at a rough estimate of some prominent relative pronouns in the CL and MM:

Table 9

Relative pronouns used in CL and MM

Feature	"That"	"Who"	Ø (Zero relative)	"Whose"	"Which"	Prep + rel. pron.	"Whom"
CL	17	12	7	11	6	6 (+ "which")	2
MM	25	16	21	3	4	1 (+ "whom")	1
Total	42	28	28	14	10	7	3

From Table 9, the top four relative pronouns are "that" (42 occurrences), followed by "who" tying with "Ø" (or zero relative pronoun) (28 occurrences), and "whose" (14 occurrences). The pronouns "which," prep. + relative pronoun construction, and "whom" (all more formal, according to Biber et al, 2021) lag behind with 10, 7 and 3 occurrences, respectively. To discuss, first, it is not surprising to see all of the three relative pronouns "that," "who" and "whose" high in number since they all refer to people, the main topic of these women's novels, unlike "which," with a relatively-low number of occurrences, that relates to animals and things. Second, there is an interplay between informality and formality here, as

represented by the high-frequency (i.e. "that," "who" and zero relative pronouns) vs. low-frequency groups (i.e. "which," prep. + relative pronoun, and "whom"), with the pendulum swaying towards the informal features. This fact seems to suggest the publisher's desire to build rapport with the reader/potential customer as prevailing over the need to sound academic and respectful (as mentioned in Pupipat et al, 2022). Therefore, naturally, the three low-frequency features appear more in the CL, particularly with the prep. + relative pronoun construction, e.g. "Clarissa's life is contrasted with that of an intended but ill-fated party guest, Septimus Warren Smith, <u>for whom post-war life is a struggle</u>." (CL23).

Full adverbial clauses

As a quasi-counter-example of the written/formal register prone to the in-between fiction category, these full adverbial clauses show the tendency towards the MM, as mentioned by Biber et al. (2021). In fact, as can be seen in Table 4, the MM adverbial clauses were double. Examples are

> "<u>When Fermina's husband is killed trying to retrieve his pet parrot from a mango tree</u>, Florentino seizes his chance to declare his enduring love." (CL17); "Do you think, <u>because I am poor, obscure, plain and little</u>, I am soulless and heartless?" (CL12); "<u>When New Yorker Rachel Chu agrees to spend the summer in Singapore with her boyfriend, Nicholas Young</u>, she envisions..." (MM6); "...it always helps <u>if there's an angel watching over you</u>." (MM18); "<u>Even if she survives</u>…" (MM26); In fact, <u>the more she pretends to be the luckiest woman alive</u>, the more it feels like she might be. (MM38)

To extend the investigation, we may quickly look at the four types of adverbial clauses, along with their subordinator, i.e. "a word (etc.) which marks a clause as subordinate" (Matthews, 2014, p. 388). These adverbial clauses that emerged in the data included time, condition, reason and manner:

Table 10

Time adverbial clauses

Subordinator	When	As (time)	While	Until/ till	Before	Since (time)	After
CL	15	4	1	1	0	1	0
MM	28	19	8	7	3	1	0
Total	43	23	9	8	3	2	0

Table 11

Condition, reason and manner adverbial clauses

Subordinator	If (condition)	Because (reason)	As (reason)	Since (reason)	As if (Manner)
CL	8	1	0	0	1
MM	9	2	0	0	0
Total	17	3	0	0	1

Based on Tables 10 and 11, a look at the top types of adverbial clauses reveals four categories: Time (leading the pack with "when," followed by "as," "while" and "until"/"till"), followed by condition ("if") and, to a much lesser degree, reason/cause ("because"), and manner ("as if"). It is interesting to note that time adverbial clauses had a lot more subordinators than those of condition, reason and manner—each with only one. Within the time clauses, there seemed to be a few "before" but no "after" or "since." Within the reason clauses, there was no "as" or "since."

To discuss, time clauses, figured the most highly here, are one of the most popular types of adverbial clauses, concurring with Biber et al. (2021). This is probably due to the fact that our daily life, especially in the western world, is revolved around time (Jackson, 2014). Next, in our time clauses, the most commonly-found subordinators were "when," "as" and "while" followed not so closely by "until"/ "till," "before" and "since." Interestingly, Biber et al. (2021) also lists the same set of time words, plus "after," which we did not find any instance. For the condition, reason and manner clauses, practically similar subordinators are mentioned, as well, despite the fact that this study did not find any "as" (to show reason) or "since" (reason), probably because our data was relatively small and did not include real talks, academic prose and news columns. It is fascinating to find that Biber et al. (2021) has listed "when," "if," "because" and "as if/though" as the most popular subordinators of each type, probably implying that the blurb writers can write naturally.

Attributives vs. predicatives

Although most premodifiers of nouns are short simple attributives with adverb + adjective (e.g. "very sexy Jum"), in this study we focused on the more complex premodifiers, those with three or more words. The following table describes attributives in terms of the number of modifiers:

Table 12

Number of modifiers in CL and MM

Number of modifiers	CL	MM
Three	"<u>Margaret Mitchell's magnificent historical</u> epic" (CL9)	"<u>A delightfully dishy</u> novel..." (MM26)
Four	"<u>an absorbing, sometimes provocative</u>, tale of social and domestic life among the English aristocracy and gentry" (CL3)	"<u>a tender, funny, romantic</u> drama..." (MM11)
Five or more	"<u>One of the most spectacular</u> successes of the flourishing literary marketplace of eighteenth-century London" (CL27)	"<u>this thoughtfully researched and spellbinding</u> story of love..." (MM7); "<u>An absolute delight —charming, sexy, and equal</u> parts endearing and (very) steamy." (MM30)

Despite the general expert advice given not to pack too many words in attributives as it can be difficult for readers to process (Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia, 2016), Table 12 shows the opposite tendency of piling up three to even up to seven words there. Two explanations can be offered: First, the publisher's need to save blurb space prevails, concurring with Bacić (2021), and, second, readers, in fact, can process these complex structures without much challenge since writing is scannable, as Johnstone (2018) states, and other language features and with the context might help.

Predicatives, which, in general, are more wordy than attributives, thus being less syntactically sophisticated, seem to reflect natural speech more. They are exemplified as follows:

> "Amelia, however, is <u>sweet, quiet and passive</u>..." (CL39); Allende has created a masterpiece of historical fiction that is <u>passionate, adventurous, and brilliantly insightful … suspenseful and surprising</u>." (CL6); "Beth has grown <u>slender, pale, and more quiet than ever</u>, with beautiful eyes brimming with kindness." (CL10); "Ana is <u>startled to realize she</u>

wants this man" (MM27); "...ten days of bliss are worth having to assume the role of loving newlyweds..." (MM38); "Bran and Sasha seem destined to be together."(MM21).

Table 13

Attributives vs. predicatives in the blurbs

	CL	MM	Total
Attributives	52 (68%)	24 (32%)	76 (77%)
Predicatives	13 (57%)	10 (43%)	23 (23%)
			99

Based on Table 13, the attributives of both types are more pronounced than the predicatives: 77% vs. 23%, about three times. Also, more attributives can be found in the CL than the MM: 68% vs. 32%, about a double. To discuss, both types' inclination towards the attributives shows the desire to be concise, concurring with Bacić (2021) and Leech et al. (2006), who discuss compression and complex phrases and being economical, as a maxim in good writing. In fact, both works mention striking a balance between conciseness and clarity. The second fact shows that the CL has more attributives, reflecting the well-planned nature, resembling the written/formal register. This is in line with Baron (2000) and Johnstone (2018). A final note: The need to save space but, at the same time, to facilitate the reading process and sound natural, brings us to complex NPs with both an attributive and a predicative: "an absorbing, sometimes provocative, tale of social and domestic life among the English aristocracy and gentry" (CL3) and "this thoughtfully researched and spellbinding story of love that defies time" (MM7).

Other reduced forms

The remaining section in this paper describes the five reduced forms, the percentages of which were low (5% or below), as can be observed in Table 6: *-ing* adverbials, appositives, *-ing* adjectivals, AdjP adverbials and AdjP adjectivals. Examples of these space-saving devices include

Table 14

Five reduced forms

Feature	CL	MM
1.-*Ing* adverbials	"Having grown up in London and rural southern England, Margaret Hale moves with her father to the northern industrial city of Milton" (CL24); "As always, Brontë challenges convention, exploring the limitations of social justice whilst telling not one but two love stories." (CL31)	"Agreeing to a temporary truce, the pair head for Maui" (MM38); "But as her 30th birthday looms, Holly discovers that Gerry has left her a bundle of notes, gently guiding [her into] her new life without him, each signed 'PS, I Love You.'" (MM18)
2. Appositives	"Ursule, his good-hearted, orphaned young ward," (CL38); "the March household—home of the girls Jo, Amy, Beth and Meg" (CL10)	"Nina, the talented surfer and supermodel" (MM15); "to risk everything —her family, reputation and life" (MM28)
3. -*Ing* adjectivals	"the compelling story of a woman seeking her true nature and finding true love in the process" (CL7); "the religious hypocrite Bulstrode, hiding scandalous crimes from his past" (CL21)	"a man claiming to be his father" (MM7); "Holly finds herself laughing, crying, singing, dancing –and being braver than ever before." (MM18)
4. AdjP adverbials	"Spirited and impulsive, Marianne Dashwood is the complete opposite to her controlled and sensible sister, Elinor." (CL30); "The friends Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley leave Miss Pinkerton's school together, ready to forge their paths in the tawdry and cut-throat world of the early nineteenth century." (CL39)	"Erotic, amusing, and deeply moving, the Fifty Shades Trilogy is a tale that will obsess you, possess you, and stay with you forever." (MM27); "A brilliant and realistic portrayal of two people falling head over heels in love, complete with all the emotions and complications that accompany it." (MM16)
5. AdjP adjectivals	"an intriguing new stepsister, Cynthia, glamorous, sophisticated and irresistible to every man she meets" (CL40); "a feeling of abundance, an account so powerful and ingenious that it seems the story could go on forever" (CL35)	"the only thing more complicated than a hypothesis on love" (MM31); "the only thing worse than constant bad luck" (MM38)

A few points need to be addressed here. First, regarding the position in the sentence, these reduced forms can be sentence-front or sentence-final, concurring with Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia (2016). Second, in terms of the length, they can be long as possible, with a tendency for the MM to be

somewhat shorter, as can be observed in the use of appositives. Third, regarding punctuation, these shortened units can be separated from the main clause by the typical commas and occasionally by dashes, in line with Biber et al. (2021). To discuss, it seems that the interplay between conciseness and language sophistication (and clarity) is at hand here, as suggested in Leech et al. (2006). The publishers may be tempted to occasionally display the desire for stylish language at the expense of economy of words. Interestingly, this desire appears to arise in both the CL and MM. However, the CL still seems to show more respect to the literary authorities while the MM struggles to build the usual rapport with the reader/potential customer.

Conclusion, Research Implications & Pedagogical Implications

Conclusion

This research, drawn mainly on Biber et al. (2021), describes the written/formal features found in two types of happily-ever-after blurbs, the classic and mass-marketed, and attempts to answer two main questions:

1. What were the top written/formal features among the CL and MM of happily-ever-after women's novel blurbs?

2. Which blurb type displayed more resemblance to the written/formal register?

When considering the 12 written/formal features, the current study found the top ones with more than 10% occurrences between the two blurb types to be the predominant passives (both the full and reduced forms) (26%), full relative clauses (23%), full adverbial clauses (20%) and attributives (13%). The blurb type that resembled written/formal register more appeared to be the CL as it contained more passives, adjectivals, particularly the attributives and *-en* adjectivals, and two more minor features of adverbials, i.e. *ing* adverbials and *-en* adverbials. The adverbials that superficially showed inclination towards the spoken/informal were considered the in-between type, as Biber et al. (2021) stated that they were related to the fiction genre. Also, within this adverbial group, the lesser features, i.e. *-en* adjectivals, *-ing* adverbials and *-en* adverbials, were analyzed and found to be more written/formal.

The motivation that drove the whole written/formal vs. spoken/informal divide was thought to be the interplay between conciseness and clarity. While written/formal register may attempt to pack as much information in the blurb as possible to save blurb space, clarity and naturalness of speech might be lost. Another theme was the juxtaposition of academic seriousness and respect for literary authorities (as seen more in the

CL) and creating rapport with the reader/potential customer (found more in the MM).

Limitations and Research Implications

Three main constraints can be observed here: First, the number of blurbs and book genres used here may not be adequate. Second, the written/formal syntactic features employed, particularly the adverbials, might pose a problem in determining the nature of the blurb. Third, paperback or conventional blurbs were exclusively employed.

Thus, further research may need to address these main issues. First, more blurbs and more book topics may be increased in order to see more linguistic realizations more clearly. Next, more care needs to be showed in selecting the features. Also, other features can be employed, too, e.g. verbless clauses, infinitive phrases and prepositional phrases—as well as formal, academic vocabulary and vocabulary density. Finally, online blurbs may be added—as well.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the study, a few points can be made in terms of pedagogy. First, we ESL/EFL grammar teachers may want to focus more on function, less on form, as the former deals with communicative intent that can diversify into several forms. For example, in talking about linguistic units that modify a noun, we can talk not only about adjectives but adjectivals that include a host of nominal modifiers: single adjectives, complex attributives, prepositional phrases ("a rom-com to read"), predicatives, and relative clauses (both the full and reduced forms, the latter of which are appositives, -*ing* and -*en* adjectivals, and adjective phrase adjectivals). Two factors in deciding which forms to use are the space we need to save and the formality of tone we want to create which, in turn, comes from the audience/readers involved. Also, we can consider the clarity of the prose, and, occasionally, the natural flow of the language.

Second, we teachers may think about the sequence of delivering a lesson, e.g. in teaching relative clauses, which should come first in a lesson plan: the full or reduced form? The reduced form(s), despite being shorter, may pose a challenge for students. During a lesson on compressing information, students can be trained how to think and write concisely. Here, we may want to consult second language acquisition literature, e.g. Ellis (1997), and Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia (2016). Third, occasionally, the old-but-still-useful contrastive analysis, comparing the students' L1 with English to predict some grammatical and syntactic difficulties, may be used,

along with other communicative lessons. This effective method may yield some pitfalls that a Thai EFL learner may encounter, e.g. use of attributives and passives, since the Thai language does not typically permit pre-nominal modification and the use of the passive in Thai is still rather unclear. Finally, as a grammar lesson can generally be dull, blurbs (conventional or online) and/or other real-life materials may be utilized to enhance the enjoyment and authenticity of text.

Acknowledgments

About the Author

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Appendix A

List of Classic Novels

Title	Author	Original publication	Publisher
1. *Agnes Grey*	Brontë, Anne	1847	Arcturus Publishing
2. *A Room with a View*	Forster, E. M.	1908	Signet Classics
3. *Belinda*	Edgeworth, Maria	1801	Oxford World's Classics
4. *Beloved*	Morrison, Toni	1987	Vintage Books
5. *Cecilia*	Burney, Frances	1782	Oxford World's Classics
6. *Daughter of Fortune*	Allende, Isabel	1999	HarperVia
7. *Emma*	Austen, Jane	1815	Signet Classics
8. *Eugénie Grandet*	Balzac, Hororé de	1833	Oxford World's Classics
9. *Gone with the Wind*	Mitchell, Margaret	1939	Pan Books
10. *Good Wives*	Alcott, Louisa May	1869	Aegipan Press
11. *Helen*	Edgeworth, Maria	1834	Sort Of Books
12. *Jane Eyre*	Brontë, Charlotte	1847	Collins Classics
13. *Jezebel's Daughter*	Collins, Wilkie	1880	Oxford World's Classics
14. *Lady Chatterley's Lover*	Lawrence, David Herbert	1928	Bantam Classics
15. *Lady Oracle*	Atwood, Margaret	1976	Virago
16. *Little Women*	Alcott, Louisa May	1868	Signet Classics
17. *Love in the Time of Cholera*	Márquez, Gabriel García	1985	Penguin Books
18. *Mansfield Park*	Austen, Jane	1814	Arcturus Publishing
19. *Mary Barton*	Gaskell, Elizabeth	1848	Wordsworth Classics
20. *Meridian*	Walker, Alice	1976	Harcourt
21. *Middlemarch*	Eliot, George	1871	Penguin Classics
22. *Moll Flanders*	Defoe, Daniel	1722	Trans Atlantic Press
23. *Mrs. Dalloway*	Woolf, Virginia	1925	Collins Classics
24. *North and South*	Gaskell, Elizabeth	1855	Alma Classics
25. *Northanger Abbey*	Austen, Jane	1817	Wordsworth Classics
26. *Orlando*	Woolf, Virginia	1928	Alma Classics
27. *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*	Richardson, Samuel	1740	Oxford U Press
28. *Persuasion*	Austen, Jane	1817	Penguin Classics
29. *Pride and Prejudice*	Austen, Jane	1813	Wordsworth Classics
30. *Sense and Sensibility*	Austen, Jane	1811	Collins Classics
31. *Shirley*	Brontë, Charlotte	1849	Wordsworth Classics
32. *The Bell Jar*	Plath, Sylvia	1963	Faber and Faber (50th anniversary ed.)
33. *The Color Purple*	Walker, Alice	1983	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
34. *The House of the Spirits*	Allende, Isabel	1985	Vintage Classics
35. *The Hundred Secret Senses*	Tan, Amy	1996	Flamingo (HarperCollins)
36. *The Joy Luck Club*	Tan, Amy	1989	Vintage
37. *The Woman in White*	Collins, Wilkie	1860	Alma Classics
38. *Ursule Mirouët*	Balzac, Hororé de	1841	Penguin Classics

| 39. | *Vanity Fair* | Thackeray, William M. | 1848 | Alma Classics |
| 40. | *Wives and Daughters* | Gaskell, Elizabeth | 1866/1999 | Penguin Classics |

Appendix B
List of Mass-Marketed Novels

	Title	Author	Original publication	Publisher
1.	Against All Odds	Steel, Danielle	2017	Pan
2.	All your Perfects	Hoover, Colleen	2018	Simon & Schuster
3.	Angels	Keyes, Mariane	2002	Penguin
4.	Beach Read	Henry, Emily	2020	Berkley
5.	Can You Keep a Secret?	Kinsella, Sophie	2003	Black Swan
6.	Crazy Rich Asians	Kwan, Kevin	2013	Anchor Books
7.	Every Breath	Sparks, Nicholas	2018	Grand Central Publishing (Hachette Book)
8.	4 Blondes	Bushnell, Candace	2000	Grove Press
9.	Good in Bed	Weiner, Jennifer	2001	Washington Square Press (Atria)
10.	Grown Ups	Keyes, Mariane	2020	Penguin
11.	How to Fall in Love	Ahern, Cecilia	2013	HarperCollins
12.	I Heart Paris	Kelk, Lindsey	2010	Harper (HarperCollins)
13.	Love Her or Lose Her	Bailey, Tessa	2020	Avon Books
14.	Love to Hate You	Watson, Jo	2018	Headline Eternal
15.	Malibu Rising	Reid, Taylor Jenkins	2021	Ballantine Books (Penguin Random House)
16.	Maybe Someday	Hoover, Colleen	2014	Atria (Simon & Schuster)
17.	One Night on the Island	Silver, Josie	2022	Ballantine
18.	PS. I Love You	Ahern, Cecilia	2004	HarperCollins
19.	Safe Haven	Sparks, Nicholas	2010	Grand Central Publishing (Hachette Book)
20.	She Went All the Way	Cabot, Meg	2002	Avon
21.	Stars of Fortune	Roberts, Nora	2015	Piatkus
22.	Still Me	Moyes, Jojo	2018	Penguin
23.	That Summer	Weiner, Jennifer	2021	Piatkus
24.	The Affair	Steel, Danielle	2021	Pan
25.	The Bookshop on the Shore	Colgan, Jenny	2019	William Morrow
26.	The Devil Wears Prada	Weisberger, Lauren	2003	Broadway Books (Random House)
27.	The 50 Shades of Grey	James, E. L.	2012	Vintage Books (Random House)
28.	The Girl You Left Behind	Moyes, Jojo	2012	Penguin
29.	The Hating Game	Thorne, Sally	2016	William Morrow
30.	The Kiss Quotient	Hoang, Helen	2018	Corvus
31.	The Love Hypothesis	Hazelwood, Ali	2021	Sphere

32.	The Party Crasher	Kinsella, Sophie	2021	Bantom Press (Penguin/Random House)
33.	The Road Trip	O'Leary, Beth	2021	Quercus
34.	The Secret Diaries of Miranda Cheever	Quinn, Julia	2007	Piatkus
35.	The Stylist	Nixon, Rosie	2016	HarperCollins
36.	The Summer at Little Beach Street Bakery	Colgan, Jenny	2015	Sphere
37.	The Summer Job	Dent, Lizzy	2021	Penguin
38.	The Unhoneymooners	Lauren, Christina	2019	Gallery Books (Simon & Schuster)
39.	The Villa	Roberts, Nora	2001	Berkley
40.	Virgin River	Carr, Robyn	2020	Mira (Harlequin Books)