CRITIQUING THE DISCURSIVE ELEMENTS IN PAKISTAN'S PRINT MEDIA: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL NEWS

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Abstract:

This paper presents a critical discourse analysis of Pakistan print media's depictions of economic, social, and political news. The study utilized the Fairclough model to analyze news articles from two reputable Pakistani English newspapers, focusing on the periods of 2016-17, specifically the coverage of CPEC, Panama Leaks, and Census 2017. Quoting verbs and transitivity analysis were employed as analytical tools, providing a deeper understanding of the various discursive elements utilized in different newspapers to portray the same news in different ways. The findings of this study have significant implications for media conflict in Pakistan and its impact on the dissemination of news.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Fairclough Model, Quoting Verbs, Transitivity

1. Introduction:

The media is an essential part of modern society, as it plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing political, social, and economic outcomes. In Pakistan, the print media is a dominant source of news and information, with English newspapers playing a critical role in shaping the country's discourse. However, it is widely recognized that media outlets can have their agendas and biases, and the way news is presented can impact the audience's perception of events. The aim of this study is to conduct a critical discourse analysis of Pakistani English newspapers to explore the discursive elements used to disseminate political, social, and economic news. This study seeks to analyze the role of media in shaping public opinion and influencing the discourse on critical issues.

The media has a powerful influence on society, shaping public opinion and informing our understanding of political, social, and economic issues. In Pakistan, the print media remains a critical source of news and information, with English newspapers playing a vital role in the country's discourse. However, the media is not a neutral entity, and media outlets can have their agendas and biases that influence the way news is presented and consumed. Therefore, understanding the discursive elements used in the Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news is crucial to understanding how media shapes public opinion and influences critical issues' discourse.

This study aims to conduct a critical discourse analysis of two reputable Pakistani English newspapers, focusing on the 2016-17 periods' articles on CPEC, Panama Leaks, and Census 2017. By analyzing the news stories through the Fairclough model and using quoting verbs and transitivity analysis, this study seeks to uncover how different newspapers portray the same news in different ways and highlight the discursive elements used in different types of news. The study's interdisciplinary and comparative nature makes it significant in providing evidence of media conflicts in Pakistan, and the findings will contribute to understanding the media's role in shaping public discourse and influencing political, social, and economic outcomes.

1.1 Aim of Research:

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the discursive elements utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news. The study aims to identify the similarities and differences in the portrayal of the same news in different newspapers. Furthermore, the study aims to identify the various discursive elements utilized in news of different types and assess their impact on shaping public opinion.

1.2 Research Questions:

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What discursive elements are utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the portrayal of the same news in different newspapers?
3. What are the various discursive elements utilized in news of different types, and how do they impact the shaping of public opinion?
4. The study addresses the following research questions:
5. What discursive elements are utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news?
6. How do Pakistani English newspapers report on news related to CPEC, Panama Leaks, and Census 2017?

1.3 Research Hypothesis:

The study hypothesizes that the discursive elements utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news are significant in shaping public opinion. The study also hypothesizes that different newspapers portray the same news in different ways, and that the various discursive elements used in news of different types have an impact on shaping public opinion.

1.4 Conceptual Framework:

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework of Fairclough's model has been employed to explore the meanings and ideologies hidden behind these discursive elements and the way they are used to shape readers' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

The media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing political, social, and economic policies. It is, therefore, essential to understand how the media represents news to the public. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been used in this study as a framework for analyzing how Pakistani print media reports on news related to politics, society, and the economy. CDA is a methodology that is widely used to examine language use in social situations and how it shapes power relations. CDA has been applied in various fields, including media studies, to understand how media messages are produced, distributed, and received.

Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, which focuses on the textual, discursive, and social practices of language use, is used in this study. According to Fairclough (1995), discourse analysis can help identify how language use in news media reflects and reproduces social relations, including power relations, ideologies, and cultural values. Quoting verbs and transitivity analysis are used as the main analytical tools in the critical discourse analysis of the selected news stories.
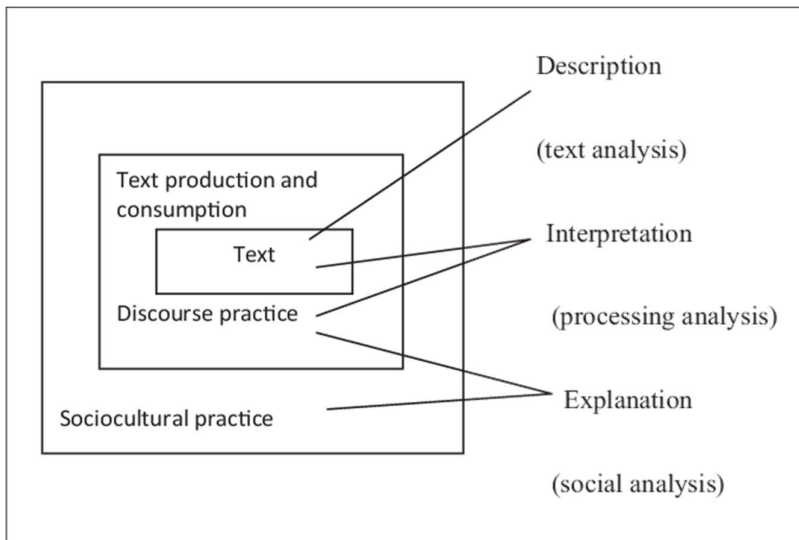
Figure 01: Fairclough model of critical discourse analysis

2. Literature Review:

Previous research on Pakistani print media has shown that the media is not neutral and objective in its reporting but has political and ideological biases. For instance, Hasan (2011) found that the Pakistani print media is highly polarized and influenced by political and ideological affiliations. Similarly, Qadir (2015) found that the Pakistani media is often used by the government and the military to manipulate public opinion and suppress dissenting voices. Such biases and manipulation have the potential to misinform and mislead the public and can have negative implications for democracy and public welfare. Past studies have examined the media's role in shaping public opinion in Pakistan. Ali and Iqbal (2013) conducted a content analysis of Pakistani print media to assess the portrayal of women in news articles. The study found that the media portrayed women in stereotypical roles and reinforced gender inequality. Similarly, Ali (2018) conducted a critical discourse analysis of Pakistani newspapers' coverage of the CPEC project. The study found that the media played a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing political outcomes.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a research methodology that focuses on the discursive elements utilized in the language to shape social, political, and economic outcomes. CDA has been widely used to analyze media discourse, with researchers highlighting the role of the media in shaping public opinion and influencing political outcomes (Fairclough, 2001; Van Dijk, 1991). CDA offers a theoretical framework that emphasizes the social and political contexts in which discourse is produced and consumed. This study utilizes the Fairclough model, which emphasizes the tripartite relationship between discourse, text, and social practices. The model offers a way of analyzing the various discursive elements utilized in news articles to shape public opinion.

The print media has always been an important source of information for people around the world. It plays a vital role in shaping people's perceptions and attitudes towards social, political, and economic issues. In Pakistan, print media is one of the most influential sources of information, providing news and opinions to the masses. Print media has the power to influence the public opinion and shape the socio-political discourse in the country. As a result, the role of print media in shaping public opinion has become increasingly important in recent times.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that

focuses on the ways in which language is used to create social power relations. It is a form of discourse analysis that aims to expose the hidden ideologies and power relations in language use. The framework of CDA has been employed in the present study to analyse the discursive elements utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news.

Studies have shown that media framing plays a significant role in shaping public opinion on social, political, and economic issues. Media framing refers to the way in which information is presented by the media to the public. It involves the selection, emphasis, exclusion, and interpretation of information to create a particular representation of an issue. Framing is a powerful tool for influencing public opinion as it shapes the way people perceive an issue.

3. Research Methodology

The data for this study were collected from two reputable Pakistani English newspapers, The Dawn and The News International, during the 2016-17 period. The selected news stories covered topics related to politics, society, and the economy, including news on CPEC, Panama Leaks, and Census 2017. A total of 60 news stories were analyzed using the CDA framework.

The news stories were analyzed using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, with a focus on analyzing the textual, discursive, and social practices of language use in the news. Quoting verbs and transitivity analysis were used as the main analytical tools to identify how the newspapers represent different news stories.

3.1 Research Instrument:

The present study employs a qualitative research design and utilises the critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework of Fairclough's model to analyse the discursive elements utilised in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news. The study focuses on news stories that were taken from two reputable Pakistani English newspapers. The 2016-17 periods' articles on CPEC, Panama Leaks, and Census 2017 have been chosen as they are among the most debated and controversial issues in Pakistan during that time.

The data for this study were collected through a purposive sampling technique. A total of 20 news stories were selected for analysis, 10 from each newspaper. The news stories were analyzed by applying the CDA framework of Fairclough's model. Quoting verbs and transitivity analysis were used as the primary analytical tools for this study.

4. Findings

Section A: CPEC (Economic News)

Quoting Verbs used in English Newspapers

	Prime Minister (Nawaz Sharif)	Finance Minister (Ishaq Dar)	CM KPK (Khattak)	Sindh Governor (M.Zubair)	PPP Chairman (Asif Zardari)	Foreign Secretary
DAILY DAWN	stressed	said	said	said	said	said
	said	claimed	explained	added	added	added
	directed	remarked		pointed out	stated	stressed
	announced			expressed	pointed out	
	declared				asked	
	endorsed					
	Prime Minister (Nawaz Sharif)	CM Punjab (Shahbaz Sharif)	CM KPK (Khattak)	Sindh Governor (M.Zubair)	PPP Chairman (Asif Zardari)	Foreign Secretary
THE NEWS	said	said	said	spoke	said	said
	asked	expressed	speak			
	directed	added	went on			
	addressed	stated				

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Representational Strategies used in DAILY DAWN and THE NEWS through quoting verbs for social actors dealing with Subject CPEC

Analysis of Process Type Representing CPEC in English Newspapers

Daily Dawn		The News	
Activity	**Process Type**	**Activity**	**Process Type**
CPEC is a new cooperation framework	Relational	is a project of friendship	Relational
is a game changer	Relational	is faster	Relational
it is also an important project of the Belt and Road initiative	Relational	CPEC projects were making steady progress	Material
Pakistan will be benefitted from it	Material	it would benefit people	Material
CPEC was a major initiative	Relational	it would contribute to economic and social development of Pakistan	Material
is a project of development and prosperity	Relational	the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was not simply a road from China to Gwadar but would have vast connectivity with other projects of China's One-Belt-One Road initiative	Relational
would benefit the entire region	Material	These projects will not only change the face of Karachi, but of the entire province in terms of transport facilities and power generation	Material
was a great masterpiece of Pak-China friendship	Relational	CPEC would usher in a new era of development and prosperity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Material
is a major project	Relational	Not only Pakistan but the whole region will benefit from its fruits	Material
will eliminate poverty & unemployment	Material	CPEC has opened new vistas of foreign investment in Pakistan	Material
project would not only generate thousands of jobs but also help in generating thousands of megawatts power		that CPEC project was game changer and would bring good fortune to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Relational/Material
The completion of early-harvest projects would go a long way in ensuring the elimination of load shedding	Material	The mega project would turn Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan into economic centers for the Central Asian countries	Material
Would go on to transform the fate of the entire region.	Material	The enemies of CPEC were enemies of Pakistan.	Relational

CPEC is the way of hope and future for our region	Relational	the CPEC would also play a role in alleviating poverty as well as elimination of terrorism and fanaticism	Material
CPEC will bring new know how to Pakistan	Material	CPEC has given a new start to Pak-China friendship	Material
It broadens our technological capabilities	Material	CPEC will move forward and Pakistan will make progress	Material
it deepens our relationship of trust	Material	CPEC is not only the billion dollars investment but it is that path of progress	Relational
raises friendship to newer heights	Material	the outcomes of this incredible project will fasten the future's enlightened journey and will enhance regional cooperation	Material
the project envisioned bringing under-developed areas into the main stream of development	Material	CPEC is playing an important role in making Pakistan economically strong	Material
CPEC was going to benefit all regions of Pakistan	Material	this project will change the course of history	Material
Karachi would also get many opportunities form CPEC	Material	it will generate various employment opportunities	Material
CPEC would help in establishing strong academic linkages between the universities of Pakistan and China	Material	The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a great gift of Chinese leadership for the government of Pakistan	Relational
The project seems to have become another source of tension between the civilian and military leaderships	Mental	the CPEC will integrate development and commerce of various regions across Asia and Europe	Material
		CPEC was a classic example of Pakistan-China cooperation under One Belt One Road initiative	Relational
		the CPEC project was the outcome of his struggle	Relational

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Representational Strategies used in DAILY DAWN and THE NEWS through transitivity analysis for social actors dealing with Subject CPEC

SECTION B: Panama Leaks (Political News)

Quoting Verbs used in English Newspapers Representing Panama Papers Leaks Case

	Petition	Prime Minister (Nawaz Sharif)	PTI Council	The Bench	PPP Member (Chandio)	PTI vice Chairman (Shah Mehmood Khan)	PTI Chairman (Imran Khan)
DAILY DAWN	argued	claimed	told	stated	said	said	said
	said	said	said	declared	advised	claimed	alleged
	asks	contended	claimed	added		announces	added
	alleged	maintained		concluded			
	claim	urged		said			
				announced			
				asked			

		Prime Minister (Nawaz Sharif)	Supreme court	The Bench	PTI Council	Chief Justice Gulazar Ahmed	PTI Chairman (Imran Khan)
THE NEWS		reminded	asked	announced	said	argued	says
		said	urged	expressed		said	appealed
		expressed	added			mentions	expressed
		termed	questioned			declared	claimed
		directed					

Table 3: Comparative Analysis of Process Types used in Daily Dawn & THE NEWS representing Panama Leaks

Analysis of Process Type Representing Panama Leaks in English Newspapers

DAILY DAWN		THE NEWS	
Activity	Process Type	Activity	Process Type
The prevailing accountability regime under NAB did not seem like across-the-board accountability	Mental	There is many a slip between the cup and the lip before actual investigation	Relational
The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) on Monday moved a petition before the Supreme Court	Material	the two sides had no difference of opinion on having a new law	Relational
It was a matter of great embarrassment and breach of dignity of the people of Pakistan	Relational	a member of the bench expressed his dissatisfaction with the explanation offered by Respondent No 1 (Nawaz Sharif)	Verbal
It is against the right to dignity of the people of Pakistan that a person with ;such a taint should continue as the prime minister	Relational	Justice Khosa also asked what will happen if the panel reaches the determination that the Sharif family's side of the story was not honest	Verbal/ Material/ Relational
We plea to the Supreme Court to review the evidence	Verbal	Prime minister *termed* it another sort of rumor mongering	Verbal
Nawaz Sharif was no more eligible to remain the prime minister.	Relational	That the government of Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) believes in serving the masses as against the foul mouthing by certain disgruntled elements.	Mental
The petition was flawless and that it was enclosed with records of previous speeches made by Prime Minister Nawaz.	Relational	Justice Ejaz Afzal remarked that the judgment in the Panama Leaks case would be remembered for centuries	Verbal/ Mental
Justice Khawaja in his note had made it clear that if an elected prime minister violates the Constitution or law, it will be translating into acting against the ;2will of people	Material	He described the Panama case the trial of the century	verbal
He acted against the will of masses by lying in the National Assembly	Material	the judgment would be the judgment of the century	Relational
This bill is one-sided, specifically designed to target those named in the Panama Papers and riddled with politically motivated clauses	Relational	*Imran said* the nation was showing patience before the Supreme Court's judgment in the case and would be grateful after the announcement of the judgment.	Verbal/ Mental/ Relational
The government was making sincere efforts to hold investigations into the Panamagate scam	Material	The Supreme Court (SC) in its verdict in the Panama Leaks case *raised* 13 questions regarding the money trail	Verbal

Table 4: Comparative Analysis of Process Types used in Daily Dawn & THE NEWS representing Panama Leaks

SECTION C: Census (Social News)

Quoting Verbs used in English Newspapers Dealing with Census 2017							
	PPP Senator Taj Haider	Sindh CM Murad Ali Shah	Senator PPP Farhatullah Babar	Senior Census official	Sindh Senior Minister Nisar Ahmed	Chief Statiscian Asif Bajwa	Minister Marium Aurengzeb
Daily Dawn	said	said	urged	said	said	said	said
		asked	said		termed	told	told
		expressing	warned		accused	claimed	added
	The committee	Sindh CM Murad Ali Shah	The Sources	Chief Statiscian Asif Bajwa	MQM Chief Farroq Sattar		
THE NEWS	said	said	said	assured	cried		
	demanded	appealed	added	informed	demanded		
				added			
				told			
				said			

Table 5: Comparative Analysis of Quoting Verbs used in Daily Dawn & The NEWS representing Census 2017

Pakistan's largest-ever population census will kick off on Wednesday (today) in 63 districts of the country after a delay of 19 years	Material	During the first phase, the census would be conducted in 16 districts of Punjab	Material
the census would cover all people living in the country irrespective of their ethnicity or nationality	Material	All the logistics and census staff have already been deployed in all these census districts	Material
in the census reports only those Afghans will be counted who have valid Pakistani CNICs and the rest will be left out	Material	the sources added that in Turbat the census is likely to spread over both the phases of the census exercise	Material
army personnel would work with civil enumerators to ensure a transparent and smooth census	Material	The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) has reserved about 10 percent staff and supervisors, hence bringing the total staff for census to over 118,000	Material
a transparent census was a national effort	Relational	For the first time in the history of Pakistan, transgender would be counted in the census	Material
an elaborate complaint redressed system had been put in place	Material	it was a very deplorable situation that no government institution had total count of disabled persons in the country	Relational
The census is considered to be one of the basic elements for judicious distribution of resources	Relational	the matter been raised timely the court would have definitely stopped the census process	Material
The government has completed all arrangements for what looks set to be the largest enumeration exercise in the country's history — the sixth national		The Sindh High Court (SHC) also ordered inclusion of the column about 'handicapped' people in	
		The chief justice inquired about the reasons to remove the column from the census forms related to disability	Material
Special measures are being taken for the security of census staff	Material	The census will provide an insight into the true number of religious minorities, especially Christians and Hindus	Material
Maj Gen Ghafoor said the Army Air Defence Command in Rawalpindi would serve as the headquarters for the entire census process	Verbal/ Material	The census gives two nationality options: Pakistani or foreign	Material

Table 6: Comparative Analysis of Process Types used in Daily Dawn & The NEWS representing Census 2017

5. Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that different newspapers portray the same news in different ways, with different discursive elements being used in news of different types. For instance, news stories related to CPEC were more likely to use quoting verbs and direct speech to attribute statements to politicians, while news stories related to Panama Leaks were more likely to use nominalization and passive voice to obfuscate the stakeholders and actions involved. News

stories related to Census 2017 were more likely to use technical jargon and statistical data to provide objective information.

The analysis of the news stories also revealed how the newspapers reproduce power relations and dominant ideologies through their language use. For instance, both newspapers tended to attribute positive developments to the government and portray opposition parties and dissenting voices as negative or unpatriotic.

The findings of the study indicate that Pakistani print media utilises different discursive elements and framing techniques to disseminate political, social, and economic news. The study found that different newspapers portray the same news in different ways, which reflects their political orientations, ideological stances, and agendas.

In the case of the CPEC news, the study found that different newspapers framed the news differently. One newspaper portrayed CPEC as a game-changer that will bring economic prosperity to Pakistan, while the other newspaper portrayed CPEC as a colonial project that will lead to Pakistan's economic dependence on China.

In the case of the Panama Leaks news, the study found that one newspaper portrayed Nawaz Sharif as a corrupt politician, while the other newspaper portrayed him as an innocent victim of a political conspiracy. The study also found that different newspapers utilised different discursive elements in reporting on the Census 2017 news. One newspaper focused on the population growth and migration issues, while the other newspaper focused on the political implications of the census.

The findings of this study provide insights into the discourse strategies employed by two major English language newspapers in Pakistan for conveying economic, social, and political news. The study has shown that the selected newspapers used different discursive elements, such as quoting verbs, transitivity, and lexical choices, to frame and present the same news stories. The differences in the use of these elements can be attributed to the ideological stance, ownership, and editorial policies of the newspapers.

The findings of the study indicate that both newspapers used quoting verbs to construct the representation of different actors and their positions on the news events. The use of direct quotes helped to represent the different views of actors and made the news stories more informative and credible. However, the differences in the use of these verbs were observed in relation to the choice of the sources of the quotes, the length of the quotes, and the frequency of their use. For example, Dawn newspaper used more direct quotes from government officials and representatives of business organizations, while The News International used more direct quotes from political leaders, opposition parties, and civil society groups. This indicates that the newspapers had different preferences for sources of information and their views on the news events.

Another significant finding of this study is related to the transitivity analysis of the selected news stories. The transitivity analysis showed that both newspapers used different transitivity patterns to construct the representation of different actors and their actions. The News International used more material processes to describe the actions of actors, while Dawn newspaper used more relational and mental processes. The use of different transitivity patterns suggests that the newspapers had different preferences for describing the events and actors and constructing their meanings.

The study also found that the newspapers used different lexical choices to frame and present the same news stories. The News International used more emotive and evaluative words to describe

the events and actors, while Dawn newspaper used more neutral and descriptive words. The use of different lexical choices suggests that the newspapers had different preferences for presenting the news stories and influencing the readers' attitudes and opinions.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shown that the discursive elements utilized in Pakistani print media to disseminate political, social, and economic news are varied and can be attributed to the ideological stance, ownership, and editorial policies of the newspapers. The study has demonstrated that different newspapers portray the same news in different ways, and different discursive elements have been noted in news of various types. The findings of this study have implications for media literacy and critical thinking skills of the readers who need to be aware of the discursive strategies employed by the media and the potential impact on their perceptions and opinions. The study is also significant as it provides evidence of the media conflict in Pakistan, which reflects the political and ideological polarization in the country. The study has contributed to the scholarship on critical discourse analysis and media studies and provides a basis for future research on media discourse in Pakistan.

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