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Critical Discourse Analysis of Dawn News Reporting "Forced Conversion and Marriage Case in Pakistan"

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Abstract: *This study is purely designed to investigate linguistically different ways in which systems of meaning are constructed in DAWN news to represent forced conversion and marriage cases in Pakistan. This study selected the qualitative method and Van Dijk's concept of text structure. The corpus involved online DAWN news reporting; published on June 15, 2021. The results indicate that discourse is the main instrument through which ideology is constructed in a Pakistani newspaper. The lexical choices refer to the dichotomy of US and THEM where Christians are considered out-group and associated with negative representation (religion & country). The macrostructure analysis refers to the theme of religious conflict between Muslims and Christians. The findings of the superstructure are that the order of news is systematically ordered in order to convey the message. Furthermore, linguistics structure shows that news texts used rhetoric strategies to influence the interpretation of the story among the readers.*

Key Words: DAWN News, Ideology, Critical Discourse Analysis, Media, Text, Meaning

Introduction

Discourse has no specific and clear definition in the field of DA. In fact, discourse is considered a notion which explained uniquely. All forms of semiotics e.g., linguistics, visuals and language can be studied under the term discourse (Fairclough, 2012). Descriptive explanation plays a vital role in the process of meaning construction. On the other hand, the critical form holds both the descriptive and evaluative components concerning the role of language. Considering the critical form of DA, it includes scientific and socio-political discourse and cannot be ideologically separated. It is also notable that scholarly discourses are socially structured and influenced social interaction (Van Dijk, 2001: 352). As a result, power and dominance are maintained and constructed by language.

The critical way of discourse analysis discovers how discourses work ideologically. Critical Discourse Studies are different in terms of approaches to language use (Hart, 2014). Critical discourse studies involve structures of discourse and content (Van Dijk, 1989). In addition, the main concern of CDS is to deal with the discursive dimension of dominance such as semantic forms and linguistic structures that express, legitimize and dominate (Wodak 2009).

Therefore, critical discourse analysis helps to investigate the role of language in the reproduction of social dominance and inequality. To conclude, this research involves Teun A. Dijk's theory, of critical discourse analysis to study the media discourse. As this research used CDA to see the linguistic structure of DAWN news regarding issues of minorities in

Pakistan and the role of ideology in the reproduction of the ideologies.

Research Objective

Linguistic analysis of Dawn News reporting about the issue of forced conversion and marriage of Christian minor-aged girls in Punjab, Pakistan.

Research Question

To study how the issue of forced conversion and marriages of minor Christian girls is ideologically constructed and presented in DAWN news reporting.

Theoretical Framework

This research used Van Dijk's theory of text analysis. Halliday and Hasan consider that a text involves a texture which means it is meant to be a text (Levison and Yule: 91). The elements of the text are generally used for written discourses (Jacob: 2009). Van Dijk focuses on the structure and text which construct each other. In a precise way, Van Dijk introduces three points related to the discourse elements. The names are macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure (Dijk:17). This research selected DAWN news reporting for textual elements about forced conversions and marriage cases in Punjab, Pakistan.

Text Analysis

Macrostructure (Thematic Analysis): In the textual structures of news discourse, macrostructure plays an essential role in the organization of the texts as it shows the theme (main idea) of the news discourse (Van Dijk, 1988: 31).

The purpose of thematic analysis is to study the opinion of the writer and how this opinion is linguistically structured. Themes indeed control the overall organization, relationships, and hierarchy of the texts and identify the meaning of the texts globally.

Superstructure (Schematic Analysis): The purpose of the superstructure is to provide an order of the news from the beginning to the end of the text. As news reports are a task of everyday routine, it contains a traditional way of news schema that

answers how the topic of a news discourse will order (Van Dijk, 1988:5).

News discourse has two kinds of schemas such as summary, which includes Headlines and Leads and News Story, which studies episodes that are further divided into two categories which are (a) main events and (b) background.

Microstructure (Linguistic Analysis): According to Van Dijk (2009a), when linguistics structures work as the social power of participants, they are based on contextual variation emphasizing and creating a difference of power among participants, which is known as ideological linguistics structures.

Semantic Forms: Van Dijk explained two types of semantics one is global and the other is local forms (Van Dijk, 1980, 1989). The global form of semantics deals with the topics of the texts, which convey crucial information about any talk or text (Ibid). On the other hand, local forms of semantics are explained with words and individual sentences. It usually reflects the overall meanings of the texts, including details and modality.

Stylistic Analysis: Diction is viewed as a style of writing which serves certain ideologies and attitudes. The style of the lexicon in news reports is of much importance because it indicates different meanings of words. The greater feature of stylistics is a variety of vocabulary and sensitive language usage. The lexical choices journalists use in news reports are designed ideologically to help the readers understand what is presented. The stylistic is influenced by the situation of the conversation which is social status and gender power.

Rhetoric Elements: This dimension of van Dijk's discourse analysis (1988) involves rhetorical elements that express the structural level of the news report. The graphic element involved bold letters of headline to persuade the readers attention (Dijk: 161). Another analysis of graphic elements is that the photo, representing any particular context, provides accurate image information of specific events to the readers. In addition, the caption is another feature of

graphical analysis to convey the meaning of the image.

The use of numbers is another strategy to present the truthfulness of a particular context in news discourse. Lastly, the use of metaphor is not related to the rhetoric element, but it is studied as stylistics also. The writer conveys the main concerns of the news report with the help of proverbs, religious advice, and so on.

Syntactic Level: Syntax constructs the words according to their relationship with other words (Chaer, 2012: 206). There are elements such as

sentence structure, coherence, and pronoun to manipulate a text in syntax analysis (van Dijk, 1988: 25). The other role of syntax is that texts sometimes manipulate content for readers. This study highlights textual syntax elements to give more understanding of the text.

Methodology

This study selected the qualitative research method and Van Dijk's textual approach. The corpus that this study analysis consists of DAWN news reporting about the issue of forced conversion and marriage cases in Punjab, Pakistan which is published on June 15, 2021.

Data Analysis

Table 1. DAWN News Reporting

Discourse Structure	Elements	News Information
Macro Structure (Thematic)	Theme	Explains the religious conflict between Christians and Muslims in Pakistan
	Headline	Gujranwala Christian man seeks justice for minor daughter allegedly converted and married
Superstructure	Lead	The father of a Christian girl who was allegedly kidnapped, converted to Islam and forcibly married to a middle-aged man in the Ferozewala area of Gujranwala is seeking justice for his family.
	New Story	Concerning the introduction, the writer explains a case of Christian forced conversion and marriage. The father of the victim seeks help from the court for his minor-aged girl who is allegedly kidnapped, converted and married the abductor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main event of the news is that Shahid Gill seeks justice for his minor girl under the Child Restraint Act (1929). To conclude, in this news the journalist ends the news report with negative other representation (Christians).
Micro Structure (Semantic)	Detail	In this news report, the journalist has expressed a detailed description of the event of forced conversions and marriages. It expresses the religious conflict between two groups due to religious beliefs
	Modality	The complainant alleged that his daughter was lured and converted and married against her will and that she might have done this under duress . However, the girls father, Gill, said his daughter is 13-and-a-half years old, and therefore the court should not have accepted her statement of converting and marrying willingly .
Micro Structure (Syntax)	Coherence	
Micro Structure (Stylistic)	Lexicon	fictitious, detractors, malign Reported Verb Quotation mark Square quotes
Micro Structure (Rhetoric)	Graphic Number	His 13-year A male who is under 18 .. and 16

Data Analysis (Macro Structure)

Thematic Analysis

Thematic organization of the text in news discourse is central because it expresses the text's overall theme, which writers want to deliver through text. Macrostructure indicates what the discourse topic is about (main idea) in news texts.

Therefore, the theme in DAWN news explains the religious conflict between Christians and Muslims in Pakistan. This happens in Shahid Gill's case as the court accepts the girl's free will to go with the purported husband. As a minority, the father of the victim requested the court to follow national law and provide justice to his daughter. This practice results in the court's reluctance and inability to rectify the victim's age under the national law 'The child Restraint Act' (1929) and proper investigation of the victim's free will and other legal documents and relevant parties involved in the trial of forced conversion and marriage.

Schematic Analysis

The schema structure explains the order of news. Schematic organization frames the news schema of forced conversions and marriages in DAWN news.

News reports involve a summary (headline & lead) and a news story (episodes & consequences).

Summary: (headline & lead)

The summary elements give information about forced conversions and marriages. The journalist in DAWN news conveys information about the religious conflict between Muslims and Christians in Pakistan. It involves a case study of Shahid Gill. He appealed to the court for justice as her daughter is allowed to go with the abductor in Gujranwala.

News Story: (Episodes)

Episodes and consequences make news stories as episodes examine the background and the main events of the news.

Background

DAWN news expresses present background: the case of a Christian victim who is allowed to go with her purported husband. The girl's father requested to

follow the Child Restraint Act to determine the victim's age and marriage decision. As mentioned in the report:

However, the girl's father, Gill, said his daughter is 13-and-a-half years old, and therefore the court should not have accepted her statement of converting and marrying willingly.

Main Event

Dawn News talks about the story of Shahid Gill, who seeks justice for his minor girl under the Child Restraint Act (1929), but the court follows the girl's statement and allows the victim to go with the abductor. The Court's decision without critically examining the process of ascertaining age, marriage certificate, free will, and profile of the party leave the father helpless to take her daughter back.

Microstructure (Linguistics Analysis)

Van Dijk states that when linguistic structures are indeed based on contextual variation which led to ideological linguistic structures (2009a).

These linguistic structures are described as ideological because they can authorize the social power of participants. They serve to stress the use of power among participants. Therefore, the textual analysis will help identify the ideological function of Dawn news depending on the social power of participants in reporting forced conversions and marriages.

Semantic Forms

Semantic forms involve two types of meanings: global and local forms. The text's global meaning consists of selecting the topics, while the local meaning of the text is presented through words and individual sentences.

Global Semantics Forms

This type of semantic form included the topic of the DAWN news report. The topic involved cognition depending on social power. As in Dawn news, the topic is based on a biased mental model about which discourse is. As it is stated:

Gujranwala Christian man seeks justice for minor daughter allegedly converted and married.

The topic involves an ideological strategy that shows negative consequences. As in DAWN news, the presented topic is biased, and it can ideologically influence how readers can understand that it does not confirm whether the minor-aged victim is forced to convert and get married or not.

Local Semantics Forms

As mentioned above, Local meanings of the text are presented with the help of individuals words and sentences. Therefore, the local semantic forms involve the following properties:

Details

The decision is ideologically motivated about how much information can be included (Van Dijk, 1998: 46). The journalist in Dawn news has given a brief description of the event of forced conversions and marriages. It involved the case of Shahid Gill. In the detailed element, Dawn news expresses the religious conflict between two groups due to religious beliefs as the concept of marriage differs in both religions. In Christianity, marriage with non-Muslims is not allowed; also, the idea of more than one marriage is prohibited. In the same way, marriage with non-Muslims in Islam is not permitted except for specific conditions. However, Islam allows men to marry four women at one time. This is another significant religious conflict in the cases of forced marriages and conversions as Shahid also informed the court about the abductor's previous marriage and requested NADRA to determine the victim's age. As it is stated in the report:

"He demanded the authorities confirm his daughter's age from the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) and provide them justice".

However, the violation of national law, the courts decision and the negative opinion of Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri about Christians imply to the reader that the DAWN news gives a biased and stereotyped explanation of the case study of Shahid Gill. The detailed element of DAWN news explains contradictory conditions, which helps to make readers question the issue of forced marriages and conversions in Pakistan and whether these issues are real or for international fame.

Modality

As mentioned earlier, the communicators' choice is to use high modality which uses for 'certainty' and low modality which use for 'probability'.

In DAWN news, the communicator has used low and high modalities to explain the probability and certainty of the case.

The complainant alleged that his daughter was lured and converted and married against her will and that she might have done this under duress.

However, the girls father, Gill, said his daughter is 13-and-a-half years old, and therefore the court should not have accepted her statement of converting and marrying willingly.

Stylistics

Stylistics is the writing style that involves lexical choice. The style involved in writing indicated the attitude and ideology of speakers based on the socio-cultural situation of the speech event. Polarization nature used to identify ideological discourses, whereas social actors and events are used for the dichotomy of US and THEM ((Van Dijk, 2013).

Lexical choices

The lexical choices used in DAWN news show positive self-representation and negative other representation. As it has been seen in DAWN News:

Following the report's publication..fictitious, politically motivated or based on the mala fide intention of our detractors to malign Pakistan in the international community"

According to the context, spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri speaks against the issue of forced conversions and marriages. The communicator used negative words such as *fictitious, detractors, malign* to address the Christian community. Also, Zahid Hafeez stated that minorities use tactics because they want to malign Pakistan at the international level, due to which they raise such issues as forced conversions and marriages. This clearly shows the negative representation of Christians among the reader that the issue of forced conversions and marriages is just a political agenda by the Christians to highlight Pakistan in the international community.

Reporting verb

Various kinds of reporting verbs were used in the articles analyzed. As in Dawn news says, states, tell and according to are used as neutral expressions.

However, not all verbs are not neutral. There are also evaluative verbs that convey a particular meaning that indicates the writer's attitude to the evidence reported and cannot be considered impartial.

Dawn News: He demanded the authorities to confirm his daughter's age from the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) and provide them justice.

Some evaluative reporting verbs are biased as they express the speakers statement positively or negatively. As it is stated in the DAWN news report:

The complainant alleged that his daughter was lured and converted and married against her will and that she might have done this under duress.

Furtherly, the use of this speech verb determines the fact that the truthfulness of the utterance is in doubt and biases the statement to the readers. The use of such a verb exhibits a case of Shahid Gill's bias. The daughter's father has claimed she is threatened to show her free will, and when his statement is represented negatively, it may sound biased to the readers.

Quotations and Reported Speech

Quotations and reported speech are essential parts of news stories because news is what somebody says. However, the selection of quotations does not have to be objective because reporters may report only those parts of speech that they deem significant and which serve their ideological aims (van Dijk 1988a, 56; Caldas-Coulthard 1994, 298, 303).

As in DAWN news, the precise words of Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez are written using quotation marks and indirect speech to show the authenticity of the news. As mentioned in the article:

He said that fictitious, politically motivated or based on the mala fide intention of our detractors to malign Pakistan in the international community".

Square Quote

Quotation marks can also be ideologically used to express specific words or expressions. Only individual words are enclosed in quotation marks in these cases.

DAWN News

Following the ."institutionalized" ..

In DAWN news, the use of a square quote on a particular word, institutionalized, stresses that forced conversions are not involved in any proper channel, e.g., forceful conversions and marriages in Pakistan.

Rhetorical is a particular method used in language style to encourage and strengthen the specific details in the text for readers and listeners. The author describes such aspects that would be emphasized to the public in textual analysis, usually in graphics, pictures, numbers, or captions to persuade a specific idea to the reader.

However, another striking feature of the rhetoric element that plays a crucial function is the representation of precise numbers to signal the truthfulness of the particular context in news discourse. The most apparent rhetorical feature of this article is the use of numbers as stated below:

DAWN News

His 13-year
A male who is under 18.. ... a female who is under 16
years of age.

Syntactic Analysis

Coherence

Coherence text (co-text) is considered identification of good coherence, which contains its structure in syntax and will also affect meaning in semantics. However, cohesive devices that DAWN news used are highlighted as follows:

Temporal —————> After, Finally

Adversative —————> however, as well as

Clausal —————> if, therefore, because

Findings and Discussion

The findings of the research indicate that discourse is the main instrument through which ideology is constructed in a Pakistani newspaper. In news articles, the lexical choice is the most prominent feature presented in a biased way. Also, the results of the findings show ideology has a direct influence on the discourse. In DAWN news, lexical choices refer to the dichotomy of US and THEM where Christians were considered out-group and were associated with negative representation (religion & country). Therefore, the selection of negative connotations constructed the negative representation of the Christian community. Concerning the macrostructure analysis, the theme of DAWN News explained the religious conflict between Muslims and Christians about the reporting of forced marriages and conversions. The findings of the superstructure, which analysis the schematic elements, are that the important information started systematically with the heading and first paragraph and led to the last paragraph in DAWN news. The lexical choices in DAWN news refer to the dichotomy of US and THEM where Christians were considered out-group and were associated with negative representations (religion & country). To add more, this news article also used biased evaluative verbs that challenge the truthfulness of the issue of forced conversion and marriage of marginalized communities in Pakistan. In addition, the DAWN news article used square quotes to emphasize ideological expressions. These square quotes are the third considerable features which raises bias in the DAWN news reporting. So, the use of this feature in news reporting creates doubt among the readers about the truthfulness of this religious

issue in Pakistan. Furthermore, the findings of the linguistics structure show that this news text used rhetorical strategies such as bold forms of headings, pictures, and numbers to encourage specific details. Lastly, the order of the information contains good coherence among the sentences and paragraphs to influence the interpretation of the story among the readers.

Limitations of the Study

Critical discourse research faced criticism for merely paying focus to negative discourse (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). This article merely deals with textual analysis of Christian forced marriages and conversions which is best suits to this criticism. The primary purpose of this research is to the way discourse is used to present Christian issues in Pakistan. Therefore, this research is limited to the textual analysis of Christian minor-aged girls from the Punjab province.

Future Implications

Critical phenomena are the main concern of this research. Studies which view a critical glance at the social issues of minorities in Pakistan are rare. As a result, the uniqueness of these studies led to an opportunity for the researchers to bring advancement to the existing field of research in Pakistan. This research also helps to uncover ideological perspectives which emerge in Pakistani media discourse. Through the help of such research, discrimination, inequality, and dominance can be controlled.

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