

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Left and Right Wing Ideologies in Pakistani English Newspaper Editorials

Mehnaz Tabassum

Department of English Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Sayed Kazim Shah

Lecturer, Department of English Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Email: kazimkazmi@gmail.com

Muhammad Bilal

Lecturer, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Email: mbilal787@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study basically analyzes the Left and Right Wing ideologies in Pakistani English newspapers regarding Osama Bin Laden's death and PNS Mehran base attack. The study conducts the content analysis of the editorials of two Pakistani English newspapers; the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation from 3rd May, 2011 to 3rd June, 2011. Editorials have the potential to shape opinion, create reality and convey ideologies. In order to investigate the issues this study explore the ideologies in the discourse through certain levels of analysis as social analysis, cognitive analysis and particularly discourse analysis which consists syntactic structure, lexicon, global and local semantics and rhetorical structures of the discourse by using van Dijk's model(1993) of critical discourse analysis. For this purpose both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used. Finally it brings the results that editorial writers construct reality, advance the ideologies of the in-group and are influenced by their own ideological leanings and those of the newspaper owner. The analysis of selected 20 editorials from both the dailies reveals that editorials cannot be treated as objective opinion pieces but as representative dominant ideologies.

Keywords: Osama Bin Laden, PNS Mehran attack, US, Pakistani defense, Intelligence failure, Military, Taliban, Newspaper editorials.

1. Introduction

Editorials perform a very important role in our societies. In the editorials the editor has the opportunity to organize seemingly disparate events in such a way that the reader can interpret them in a coherent framework. Incidents like Osama Bin Laden's Death and PNS Mehran Base Attack raised questions about current ideologies. In order to make sense of the two issues people turned to media for information and interpretation. In this study I have interpreted media's role in shaping ideologies as a result of the events of OBL's death and PNS Mehran Base Attack. I have focused on the newspaper editorials because it functions not only to report the news but also to interpret the news for the readers.

The analysis is centered on the editorials data gathered from the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation two Pakistani English newspapers representing Left Wing and Right Wing respectively. Left Wing generally refers to more liberal and progressive views based on the belief that people are basically good and the government has a responsibility to care for all of its citizens to some degree. Right Wing usually refers to more conservative or regressive views, the status quo and tradition, as in wanting things to stay the same or return to how they used to be (Anonyous, 2010). Right Wingers tend to be tougher on law and order than the Left. The specific focus will be the representation and evaluation of the social actors, the events themselves and the schematic structure of the editorials.

The print media continue to be integral to Pakistan's public life. Civil society organizations actively participate in the media discourse in Pakistan. The two types of players are, Left-Wing organizations devoted to the expansion of media freedoms, and the more conservative organizations working towards the protection of traditional values seen as deteriorating and belongs to Right Wing. These two wings, often at odds with one another are generally free to participate in the debate, but at times suffer setbacks induced by government concerns that might threaten their authority or political agenda. Pakistani media got notable freedom after 1999. The electronic and the print media developed themselves rapidly. It projected the feelings of the masses that were entirely contradictory to the policies of the Pakistani government. The perceptions about US among different nations are generally not positive and US is severely facing this problem especially in the Muslim world (Ashraf, 2010).

America has dominantly negative image in Pakistan. Whether Pakistan's English or Urdu Press, they did not favor American policies. The issues which are highly criticized by the media are the war on terror, nuclear issue, Palestine issue, relationships with Israel, America's anti Pakistan activities, United State's

involvement in Pakistan's internal policies. It is felt that Urdu press is more aggressive against US than English press. The Dawn sometimes adopted neutral or positive attitude towards America but The Nation is not willing to trust on the American's (ibid).

This study attempts to shed light on the Left Wing and Right Wing ideologies in Pakistani English newspaper editorials as represented by The Dawn & The Nation respectively.

2. Theoretical Background

A historical overview of the news media is important as newspapers has played an important role since its emergence in the world. It brings social ,economic and political change to societies because of its ability to send the same ideological message to many people at one time. News is defined by Reah as "information about recent events that are of interest to a sufficiently large group, or that may affect the lives of a sufficiently large group" (Reah, 2002, p.4).

Producers of the news are responsible for selecting what news they feel is newsworthy and constructing it from their perspective. Fowler points out that this means that the news is not a value-free representation of the facts because it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented via the language used to represent the world (Fowler, 1991). In this study this is particularly clear as opinions of the Osama Bin Laden's Death and PNS Mehran base attack represent the worldview of the editorial writer and the institutions they support. Discourse is an extremely powerful instrument used by those in dominant positions to disseminate their ideologies.

The establishment of media outlets in Pakistan was a response to a broad nationalistic project, where some of the most renowned figures in the movement for a politically independent Pakistan were also very close to, and sometimes part of the ownership structure of the first national newspapers. The concept of a non-aligned media was therefore completely missing in the pre-independence period. After independence, the nationalist project continued and it was gradually permeated by Islamic ideology as well (Sial, 2010).

The print media continue to be integral to Pakistan's public life. Civil society organizations actively participate in the media discourse in Pakistan. The two types of players are, Left-Wing organizations devoted to the expansion of media freedoms, and the more conservative organizations working towards the protection of traditional values seen as deteriorating and belongs to right wing. These two wings, often at odds with one another are generally free to participate in the debate, but at times suffer setbacks induced by government concerns that might threaten their authority or political agenda. Pakistani media got notable freedom after 1999. The electronic and the print media developed themselves rapidly. It projected the feelings of the masses that were entirely contradictory to the policies of the Pakistani government. The perceptions about US among different nations are generally not positive and US is severely facing this problem especially in the Muslim world (Ashraf, 2010).

The Dawn newspaper gives favorable coverage to the Pak – American issues and the developmental activities of United States in Pakistan. The Dawn news is also critical of American policies towards Pakistan and the Muslim world but to some extent it adopts neutral policy. As the neutral portrayal of United States image will be explicit in the analysis section of this research. While the Daily Nation does not spare America at any cost. The favorable portrayal of America in the daily Nation is quite low in percentage.

Studying editorials is of special significance when analyzing the ideological role of news media because editorials are expressions of "the broader ideological stance of the newspaper's owners and managers" (Henry, 2002, p. 55). An editorial can be defined as an article in a newspaper that gives the opinion of the editor or publisher on a topic or item of news (Sinclair, 1995, p.93).

The achievement of the ideological roles of editorials is a function of persuasive moves, of which semantic content is the most direct form (Dijk, 1995). According to van Dijk, other strategies include the use of polarized vocabulary to describe political actors and events and specific rhetorical structures of discourse. These rhetorical structures include imagery, overstatements, understatements, hyperbole (exaggeration), euphemism, and mitigation. These techniques are used to make information that is unfavorable to "Us" less prominent and to emphasize negative information about "Them."

3. The portrayal of Osama Bin Laden's death and PNS Mehran base attack in the media

The most recent scholarly studies concerning the media and both the events of OBL's death and PNS Mehran tragedy that sprung up fairly quickly after the events addressed two central issues of my own research namely, the division between "Us" and "Them"; and the social actors who played significant role in these happenings.

The broad patterns of violence in Pakistan have serious implications for Pakistan's future, for regional stability, and for core US interests. Pakistan remains a central node in global terrorism. Osama Bin Laden was killed deep inside Pakistan in an area that raises deep suspicion about what Pakistani intelligence officials, senior

military officers and government officials did and did not know about his presence – and the presence of other major terrorists and extremists like Mullah Omar and the Quetta Shura Taliban (Cordeman, 2011).

Other than that the challenges of internal violence, the challenges of external relations especially with the United States and India is discussed. Pakistan's current policies not only feed a major arms race with India, and tensions with Afghanistan and the US, they also waste critical resources in the name of security, to the extent that they have become a threat to the state and the future of the Pakistani people. In the aftermath of the event, the print media has analyzed the flaws in both civil government and military establishment which fell short of fulfilling its responsibility. The newspapers selected for my own study review this incident as The Nation is adamant on proving an external hand in the attack pointing towards India and USA, others have dismissed such claims. The Dawn in its editorial points out that Pakistan needs to come out of its denial mode and need to identify the enemies within itself (*State of Denial, May 27, 2011, The Dawn*).

The PNS Mehran attack serves as a wakeup call for the Pakistani establishment to come out of its deep slumber and introspect. The attack was a result of Pakistan's own flawed security policy premised upon portraying India as arch enemy and devising policies such as creating religious extremist militants to fight proxies in India, a Frankenstein's monster that has come back to it. It is time for Pakistan to take radical steps to curb such forms of violence which are based on religious extremism and which in future can have disastrous consequences for Pakistan and the whole world.

It is evident that the media is a powerful contributing force behind the creation of group identities. In an effort to understand the attacks the media has enhanced the division between "Us" and "Them" and, in the case of Pakistan, America and India, the media has used patriotism to further this divide. The analysis of my selected editorials will reveal the extent to which this division is exploited and how this makes the difference between both the dailies, the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation chosen for the analysis.

By encapsulating my review of the relevant literature, it is firstly evident that the newspaper, since its origin, has always, through the social and individual functions it performs, been a powerful disseminator of dominant ideological interests. The role of the owner, in particular, is highly significant in determining what ideological perspective the reader is exposed to. Secondly, the editorial as a genre has a unique role within the newspaper as it consists of providing opinions and evaluations on news events. Its production is influenced by the ideological interests and perspective of the writer and, depending on how critically active the reader is, the editorial has the potential to spread dominant ideologies. Thirdly, the editorial is considered to be a type of opinion discourse, and this is significant because it is through opinions that ideologies can be expressed. The ideologies in media discourse, like the editorial, are particularly powerful as such discourse is able to reach large populations at one time. After OBL's death and PNS Mehran base attack the media became a vital source of information and opinion and as my research focuses on the role of the editorial after the attacks concerning the portrayal of the selected events by the media. The portrayal of both the selected incidents in the media highlight the workings of ideological strategies in the media's representation of both the events, particularly in the exploitation of "Us" and "Them" and specifically by representing Left Wing and Right Wing ideologies in the selected newspapers.

4. Present Research

1. The present paper aims to investigate the Left Wing and Right Wing ideologies of Pakistani English newspapers by focusing on two representative English dailies, the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation. It studies that how the opposing ideologies of Left/Right Wing are reflected in the selected editorials. It also focuses on the ideological structures exhibited through in-group and out-group in the discourse of the two selected English newspapers dailies. The key questions of this study are as follows:
 - What types of Discourse Strategies have been adopted for the representation of Left and Right Wing ideologies?
 - Does the vocabulary of the selected editorials reflect the extremist choices of Right Wing and liberal mind set of Left Wing?
 - How media can educate the people especially in Pakistani context keeping in view the historical perspective of the chosen incidents?

5. Methodology

The focus of my research analysis is the first editorial response to the Osama Bin Laden's killing by the U.S. in Abbotabad and PNS Mehran attack in Karachi. The data collection for my research consisted of retrieving the first 5 days editorials after both the incidents from two Pakistani English newspapers dailies, the Daily Dawn and the Daily Nation. From a total of 40 editorials I selected 20 editorials for a close critical analysis. By making a corpus of the 20 editorials frequency of the words and concordance lines are checked through Antconc 3.2.4.

The approach I use for revealing the features of these editorials and their ideological assumptions is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA sees language as part of social practice and it aims to uncover power relations and associated ideologies in texts and how these are reflected by the socio-historical context of the text (Janks, 1997).

The analysis of a text, firstly, involves analyzing the structure of the text and the linguistic choices made by the writer. Secondly, the analysis includes examining the process of production of the text by the writer and the process of interpretation whereby the reader makes sense of what the text is about. Thirdly, the analysis considers the social conditions that possibly influence and possibly are influenced by the processes of production and interpretation of each of the editorials.

Not surprisingly, immediately after OBL's death and PNS Mehran attack a distinction between "Us" and "Them" was exploited by many editorial writers in order to reinforce group identity, for example the Pakistani identity. The emotions and behavior of social actors belonging to both "Us" and "Them" groups is evaluated either positively or negatively to create solidarity with the reader as also are the intertextual references included to compare and interpret the events for the reader.

Through the approach of CDA, I examine how language is used to construct reality and made distinctions for the Left Wing and Right Wing media ideologies. The findings of my research are presented in the following section.

6. Research Findings

Both the selected English newspapers' editorials define their particular ideologies in terms of the "Us" vs. "Them" theories. So one of the most striking ideological structures manifested in virtually all selected editorials in the Daily Nation and the Daily Dawn is blatant nationalism and ethnocentrism. US-THEM polarization characterizes, understandably, not only the opposition between US (Pakistani, Muslims, Eastern) and THEM (Americans, US Intelligence, Foreign Hand), but more generally Americans and the rest of the world. In-group, out-group distinction, differentiation and polarization, which by our definition of ideologies as basic self-group schemata of social cognition, are the central characteristic of all ideologies, are marked in discourse structure first of all by personal and possessive pronouns (we , they , us , them , our , their , etc.) but also by deictic, such as here and there. Examples from the editorials in **the Daily Nation** are as under:

Table 1. Terms used to differentiate between "us" and "them"

	Us	Them
1.	Stunning death toll in Pakistan	American intrusion
2.	Docile puppet in the hands of America	US military aggression
3.	Unilateral strikes against Pakistan	Main backer the USA
4.	Turbulent times for Pakistan	US is proving a treacherous friend
5.	Highest valued target Osama Bin Laden	Hostile forces and untrustworthy friends
6.	Blatant violation of our sovereignty	Delhi our sworn enemy
7.	This region is rich with energy sources	Obama's inadvisable policies of global concerns
8.	Grievous blow to our naval capability	Docile puppet in the hands of America

Members of the in-group are identified as victims of the Other and collectivized through generic terms into groups that share this fate, the choice of words for both the sections of in-group and out-group show the tendency of the newspaper editorial towards the Right Wing as it does not support the policies which are even slightly against the ideological stances of the nation.

Examples from **the Daily Dawn** are as follows:

Table 2. Terms used to differentiate between "us" and "them"

	Us	Them
1.	Top military academy	American interference in the Muslim world
2.	Deny Pakistani involvement in the operation	American invasion
	Killing of an unarmed man even if a criminal	American mistrust and negative perception

Self glorification does not mean that there is never any self critique. Ironically enough, however, even such critique often presupposes good characteristics. For our analysis, this suggests that one of the major ideological strategies of such discourse is, indeed, to focus on or emphasize "Their" violence and to de-emphasize or simply ignore or deny our own involvement in state terror abroad. That is the complement of positive self presentation. But examples from the Daily Dawn emphasize it as comparatively liberal and lexical choice is also not as a hardliner for the out-group.

The most repeated theme was US policies towards the out-group. That's why in order to define THEM in terms of Pakistan's out-group the social actors are defined as:

1. The group responsible for causing the attacks on Pakistani soil.

2. Constructed as an unknown, deviant, immoral group who do not support in-group ideology.
3. In the Daily Nation “They” specifically identifies America, India and militants and held responsible for the two sad incidents but does not emphasize ethnic or religious classifications.
4. Lastly, the representation of the Other in the Daily Dawn is also constructed as a group preying on the out-group, particularly as a result of America’s raid in Abbotabad episode.

By keeping in view the above points we can see some instances from the editorials as how the social actors are represented to emphasize the Right Wing ideology. In May 6, 2011 editorial “Threat to nuclear assets” India’s anti- Pakistan emotions are highlighted as.....*the India army chief threatens they would not hesitate to launch a surgical operation in Pakistan on the pattern of the Pentagons and boasts that their armed forces have the capability to do so.* In the May 26, 2011 editorial “Security concerns” it is recorded for the terrorist group that.....*in the meantime, terrorists have once again shown that they have an upper hand by launching an attack at a CID office....*

nfolding half a world away. They also stated that the CIA tracks where they are hitting us, they are bound to hit the US main disastrous operations where they are hitting us, they are bouelves. That would imply that they are unable to perform their orget the economic pressures they are under and Mr Obamas popu ts in a cavalier fashion, as they are wont to: recall Presiden hem, as to make it seem that they cannot protect themselves. T ime of their choosing or did they carry these weapons passing ty to intercept them before they could launch themselves into ing us of our nuclear assets they find extremely perturbing in themselves into action. Were they happily ensconced nearby to mericans, and the friendship they have acquired of India (for s have once again shown that they have an upper hand by launch grasp is that the demagogue they have brought into the Oval Of es imagination to know that they managed to carry heavy weapon identifiable objects or did they never step out of their home esponsible and demanded that they quit their offices. His posi efficiencies in security. Had they taken note of the series of acquired of India (for which they went to the extent of violat

- ❖ The Daily Dawn being in the Left Wing group emphasize over the need of recognizing a common enemy of Pakistan, US and other nations of the world i.e. Terrorists. In May 24, 2011 editorial “PNS Mehran attack” it is mentioned in result of militants’ attack on PNS Mehran base as.....*by breaching the defenses of a naval installation, as they did on Sunday with such ease, or of the GHQ in October 2009, the militants have wantonly displayed their power to attack and kill and destroy at will, wherever and whenever they wish.*

be backed up by deeds or if they are simply an attempt at dam
me other militant groups say they attack the Pakistani state
? If so, at what point? Were they consulted or simply informed
of a naval installation, as they did on Sunday with such ease
aren't only present in Fata; they exist in Karachi too, for Su
lse can eradicate the danger they face. As such it is encourag
thout early detection. Also, they fired on vehicles used to ev
ating under its umbrella. Do they have a soft corner for the T
ild on; on several occasions they have shared intelligence or
e Pakistan Military Academy. They killed Bin Laden, among othe
of the naval aviation base. They knew the location of their t
he base, which suggests that they may have known in advance of
rk about the strike because they might alert the targets. The
lited or simply informed? Did they play a role in the operation
ave in the armed forces when they see the defenders themselves
ought to make it clear where they stand in the fight against t
gence and the military. Were they taken into confidence? If so
t will wherever and whenever they wish. Or are the armed force

14 Overall Generic Structure of all selected Editorials

Through the construction of “Us” and “Them” groups, readers in all twenty editorials are positioned to align with the in-group in support of Pakistan being a victim of Other’s atrocities and to demonize the Other by highlighting the bad points of out group. The ideological interests of those in the in-group are articulated by the inclusion of other discourses which not only help to support the opinions surrounding the perception of reality created by the writer but also to explain local political and social issues. In other words, through comparison with other historical events, the writer explains the meaning of both the selected events and my analysis reveals that moving further from the site of the attacks, the editorials use the events to explain and try and change issues at the local and governmental level. The use of intertextuality includes a range of explicit and implicit alternative voices by which the writers support their arguments. An analysis of the use of intertextuality is not complete without examining the influence of those involved in the production of newspaper editorials and how social, political and institutional conditions promote dominant ideological interests.

Firstly, my analysis reveals that the power of the newspaper owner and the influence of the writer’s own ideologies have a significant effect on the construction of “Us” and “Them” groups and the choice of intertextual discourses used to explain the attacks in Pakistan. Thus it differentiates the Left Wing and Right Wing ideology through the selected representative newspapers.

Secondly, an examination of social conditions at the time of the attacks dictates, to a certain degree, the writers’ manipulation of the editorial discourse in the support of dominant interests, for example, America’s decision of withdrawing its forces from Afghanistan before the raid in Abbotabad to kill Osama Bin Laden. And PNS Mehran attack in Karachi by the terrorists to avenge the death of Osama Bin Laden.

The schematic structure of the editorial consists of a very brief introduction of the issue, an evaluation and a recommendation/pragmatic conclusion. Omission of a proper summary of events at the start of the editorial could possibly be a result of the enormity of the events being covered.

The paragraph given below, in fact, encapsulates the main conclusion of this study:

It is being analyzed through the study that some newspapers like The Daily Nation are adamant on proving an external hand in the attack pointing towards India and USA, others have dismissed such claims. While the Daily Dawn in its editorial points out that Pakistan needs to come out of its denial mode and need to identify the enemies within itself.

7. Conclusion

Newspaper editorials are traditionally seen as those articles that not only provide information but also aim to explain and interpret various, often contentious, issues from an objective, ‘expert’ point of view. My research, however, has revealed that this is not the case and despite the views in the editorial being attributed to one particular individual, these opinions and ideologies are influenced by a number of factors and are representative rather of the newspaper as an institution. They are also not ‘objective’, as editorials embody not only the beliefs of the writer, but also those of the owner and those on editorial boards of the particular newspapers. Powerful individuals who often own entire newspaper chains use their dominant positions to advance their ideological views and agendas. In addition, my interpretation and explanation of the situational

context of each of the editorials in my study reveals how local social and political issues affect the writer's construal of events in the interests of in-group ideology and dominant local interests.

However, in keeping with my suggestions for future research, I feel a structural analysis of this genre deserves much richer exploration, as research to date is limited. Lastly, based on the findings in my study, I believe that there is a need to raise the awareness of learners in Pakistani society about media discourse and the interests it promotes. It is only through such awareness and, particularly, through becoming critical readers that such learners can challenge media representations and what lies behind them, because as Fairclough explains, "power relations work increasingly at an implicit level through language, and given that language practices are increasingly targets for intervention and control, a critical awareness of language is a prerequisite for effective citizenship, and a democratic entitlement" (Fairclough, N., 1992,p.12).

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