

Gender Differences in the Use of Parts of Speech in Pakistani English Newspaper Columns: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This research is a critical discourse analysis of parts of speech used by two different genders, male and female in Pakistani English newspaper columns. A corpus has been compiled from four Pakistani English newspapers *i.e.* The Dawn, The News, The Nation and The Express Tribune. A sample size of 240 columns (120 both by male and female writers) has been compiled in this study. This research highlights the implicit function of parts of speech in Pakistani English newspapers. These parts of speech have been limited to nouns, pronouns, verbs and adjectives. It explores how male and female writings differ in the use of parts of speech in Pakistani English newspaper columns and to uncover the manipulation through its uses.

Keywords: CDA, POS, Corpus driven, English News Columns, Gender, Pakistan

1. Introduction

Critical discourse analysis is concerned with examination of how social and political inequalities with power relations are rooted and maintained in a discourse. It also studies how these social and political inequalities are formed, replicate or imitate and changed through discourse within specific social structures (Wooffitt, 2005). It is an approach which studies discourse that considers language as a social practice. It describes the social and political domination in talk and text. This approach produces from different disciplines in social sciences and humanities such as critical linguistics. CDA involves a diversity of approaches to discourse analysis at social level (Wodak and Meyer 2001; Pêcheux 1982; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997) which has difference in methodology, type of research problems and theory to which they give priority. The main objective of CDA is to make the opaque ideas apparent and to uncover the hidden ideologies in the written and spoken text. Critical discourse analysis is a gradually extending field of the study of language. It believes discourse as a social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258), and mainly focuses on the contextual use of language to be extremely important (Wodak, 2001). CDA helps in making the connections strong between the exercise of power and the use of language (Thompson, 2002). Stemming from Habermas's (1973) CDA intends to help the linguists to know societal issues made by the power relations and ideology, displayed in the written texts in our professional and daily lives. Critical discourse analysis is used to analyze a wide range of texts, for example: advertisements, politics, crimes, sexism, racism, fashion etc. Critical discourse analysts study such topics because usually they are politically motivated.

"Political Discourse analysis focuses on talk and text of political institutions like members of government, political parties or parliament, prime ministers and presidents at the international, national and local levels" (Van Dijk, 1993). Any text (usually articles, columns, news reports) can be analyzed using CDA and they can all have an impact on the ideology of the text portrays. For example a journalist constructing these texts keeps this in mind, what sort of terms has to be used, in what perspective text is used and who to take quotes from etc. The political process and political activity also include people as voters, demonstrators, citizens and members of question crowd and pressure, and so on (Verba et al., 1993).

Gender as according to Coates (1993, p. 3) is a term referring to socially constructed qualities or behaviors that are perfectly linked with or especially appropriate to woman and man. Aldrich and Tenenbaum (2006), says that girls may discuss emotions more than boys, and parents have more discussions about emotion with girls (p.776). Holm (2001) tells that boys learns to act on their feelings rather to talk about them while girls are encouraged to learn to express their feelings through facial expressions and words (p. 385). Gender is something and not something we have and we are born with (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Women are not born as women but they are entitled as women by the societies. The same case is true for men. When a baby is born in a society then he/she has given different nicknames and different social roles. Their names and roles totally depends on his/her sex. So people may say that "Gender is the perceived or projected component of human sexuality while sex is the biological or genetic component (Buttler, 1990). The findings of gender differences in language have ranged from the overall structure of women's and men's narratives (e.g., Herring, 1993; Tannen, 1990), down to the level of specific words (e.g., Biber et al., 1998; Danner, et al., 2001; Gleser et al., 1959; Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003; Mulac et al., 2001) and phrases (e.g., Thomas & Murachver, 2001; McMillan et al., 1977; Holmes, 1995).

However, this study examined how far CDA uncovers the hidden meanings of newspaper columns and find out gender differences in the use of linguistic features through CDA in Pakistani English newspaper

columns.

The present study aimed to examine the gender differences by analyzing parts of speech, used by both genders (male and female) through critical discourse analysis in Pakistani English newspaper columns. Corpora of both genders were collected from four Pakistani English newspapers for this purpose. A keyword list was prepared of both the corpora and Antconc (software) was used for frequency checking, concordance lines and colligation analysis of parts of speech while CDA will be done manually.

The main focus of this research is to extract the lexical features and to study the use of parts of speech in both the corpora. These parts of speech have been limited to nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs. Corpus driven methodology has been used to examine the corpora. Quantitative analysis has been done to measure the frequencies of selected parts of speech through ANTCONC. 3.2.1. The results are interpreted not only on the basis of frequency differences, but also on meanings that are conveyed via use of parts of speech gathered from the mix method approach.

2. Methodology

The present research is an exploratory study of Pakistani English newspaper columns to highlight the gender differences in the use of parts of speech in Pakistani English newspaper columns through critical discourse analysis. This study investigates four Pakistani English newspapers. Corpora of 240 columns, (120 male writers' columns and 120 female writers' columns) have been analyzed.

A corpus-driven methodology has been used for the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of newspaper columns. The corpus has been tagged through CLAWS Tagger C7 Tagset. Antconc software has been used to study the concordance lines and to extract parts of speech. A list of keywords of both corpora (male and female newspaper columns) has been prepared. The output text file extracted from Claws C7 tagger has been uploaded to antconc 3.2.1 to sort out the frequency of parts of speech in Pakistani English newspaper columns.

Data has been analyzed and tagged with MAT (multidimensional analysis tagger) which is replica of Douglas Biber's (1988) tagger. The tags of parts of speech given by Douglas have been placed in antconc 3.2.1 to get their frequencies. Then further four major parts of speech have been selected and word selection has been done on the basis of frequency differences and keyword list. Only those words has been selected which are present in both the corpora. These words have been analyzed manually by reading the left and right words to see the context and gender differences have been found out through CDA. An interpretation of the discussions has been made on the use of parts of speech in male newspaper columns and in female newspaper columns.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Nouns

Noun is an essential part of parts of speech. Nouns are the building blocks. The present study involves 'singular and plural' nouns to observe the male writers' columns and female writers' columns of a Pakistani English newspaper. In the analysis phase five nouns have been selected for analysis due to their frequency.

There is a lot of difference in the frequencies of noun used by male column writers and female column writers as shown in Table 1. According to concordance hits the total number of nouns used by male column writers is 19892 times and female column writers is 12962 times. Noun is the parts of speech which are used in greater frequency than any other parts of speech.

The study has examined that in male column writers and female column writers 'nouns' were found more frequently in keyword list. The occurrence of most of the nouns is higher in male column writers than female column writers which are the sign of confirmation that male column writers declares the full information and makes every issue reliable for people (Table 1). Present study proves that male newspaper column writers use more nouns than female newspaper column writers (Table 1). Simple vocabulary is used to show that common masses can easily read but these simple words have so many hidden meanings through which writers achieve their goals. Male column writers and female column writers use the nouns to deliver the information on similar and different trends about different issues as male column writers conveys the facts which apparently seem very significant but CDA uncovers those matters which are neglected and delivered in covert way.

On the other hand male newspaper column writers use long sentences and female column writers use short sentences. Columns are easy for common masses but it is difficult for them to read between the lines. Only CDA can generate the insight to study words having underlying meanings to manipulate the situation.

3.2 Pronouns

Pronouns are used instead of nouns. Present study involves pronouns to study them in the analysis phase that how male column writers and female column writers use them and for what purpose (Table 2). Five pronouns have been selected to study in detail.

Pronouns practice the power and solidarity through language as Horvarth (2000) describes that pronouns are used in speeches to inspire and to be empowered by showing the strength of past to the current

masses. Previous researches show different results. According to Koppel et al (2000) pronouns, (I, your, she, he) are strong female indicators, but when these features have been applied in the present research, both genders use 'I' as a pronoun for themselves. The occurrence and use of all the pronouns is higher in male column writers except 'she' pronoun. This pronoun 'she' has a higher occurrence in female column writers (Table 2). The present study has proved that other pronouns as 'we', 'our' and 'it' also convince and persuade the people (Table 2) and it verifies the conclusion of Ruijuan (2010) that use of simple language by politicians basically convince the people and 'we, you' pronoun reduces the distance between writer and masses.

CDA exposes the use of these pronouns at various stages where column writers use them and for what purposes. CDA investigates those all hidden meanings and ideologies which are taken into account by the writers.

3.3 Adjectives

Adjectives qualify the nouns by identifying, quantifying or describing, the words. The particular characteristics of nouns can be studied with the help of adjectives. This chapter also includes ten more frequent adjectives which are used in Pakistani male and female newspaper columns.

The meanings of nouns are enhanced and enriched by using adjectives with them to make the statement more expressive for audience. Present study has analyzed the use of 'general adjectives' in male column writers and female column writers that for what purpose both the corpora use 'adjectives' (Table 3) as Batluk (2011) says that the use of linguistic expressions by politicians create a speech which generates an agreement and cooperation between the speaker and the audience. Results have found out that occurrence of most of the 'general adjectives' is more in male column writers as compared to female column writers which is the indication that male column writers discuss the matter in more detail rather than female column writers which are not much consistent in discussing different matters (Table 3). Present study not only deals with combination of words but CDA discusses these words with their key characteristics in both the corpora (Table 3). This tool has proved very helpful in this regard it uncovered the hidden meanings of nouns which were mentioned with adjectives. This use of language empowers the writers to attain its objectives as Kolu (2009) suggests that it is important to be aware of how politicians use rhetorical strategies in order to convince audience and acquire the favor of people for party or themselves.

3.4 Verbs

3.4.1 Modal verbs

Results pointed out that both the corpora similarly use these selected modal verbs. The most striking point is that occurrence of each modal verb in male column writers is more than female column writers. Both the corpora use 'will for prediction and future', 'would for expectation', 'can and could for possibility', 'shall for estimation', 'should for suggestion', 'may for hypothetic condition' and 'must for obligation' (Table 4). The occurrence of 'shall' in both the corpora is the same that is 2 times. Both the corpora use 'shall' for the need of better government. The occurrence of 'will and would' is more in male column writers and both the corpora use it for almost same purposes. As 'will' is used for the future needs or prediction of something that will happen in future and 'would' is used for the expectation. In both the corpora 'would' is mostly used for the expectation from the government, although its occurrence is more in male column writers (Table 4).

Another modal verb should is also used more by male column writers than female column writers. Both the corpora use 'should' to mention different matters but CDA points out that all these matters are suggested as it is the role of this modal verb. In both the corpora the occurrence of 'may' is used for hypothetic condition and 'must' for obligation (Table 4). CDA exposes that the occurrence of 'may' and 'must' is more in male column writers as compared to female column writers.

Modal verbs have different communicative functions. All the above stated modal verbs cover the subjective attitude or statement of the speaker who presents his/her personal opinion in relation with reality. Columns are also subjective in nature and they are mostly opinion based. Modal verbs are connected with each other. Speakers use different modal verbs at different situations to perform various functions. CDA exposes that male column writers use more modal verbs to perform various functions in delivering the information.

3.4.2 Present and Past form of verbs

Analysis phase also contain 'present form of verbs' and 'past form of verbs'. These verbs have been selected on the basis of their importance and frequency. CDA enlightens that the above stated verbs fall in different categories. These categories have been decided with the help of in depth analysis of present form of verb and past verbs in male newspaper columns and female newspaper columns.

Male newspaper column writers use more verbs than female newspaper column writers. CDA exposes that why does the frequency of past lexical verbs higher in male newspaper column writers. The ratio of occurrence of past form of verbs is higher in male newspaper column writers than the occurrence of present form of verbs. The complete occurrence of present form of verbs in male newspaper column writers is 1099 and in female newspaper columns is 877 (Table 5). CDA points out that the occurrence of past form of verbs is more in

male newspaper column writers that is 1160 and in female newspaper column writers are 891 (Table 5).

The occurrence of past form of verbs is higher in male newspaper columns. CDA exposes that the reason of more use of past form of verbs in male column writers is that they talk more about past and on the basis of past they show the picture of future.

4. Conclusion

CDA uncovers the hidden meanings of newspaper columns of both genders and this framework has been proved a powerful tool to analyze the column discourse. In Pakistani English newspaper columns, the male gender have been found to use more nouns and long sentences than female writers while personal pronouns and verbs found to be used more by male gender than females. These differences between Pakistani English newspaper column male writers and female writers are associated with culture and society of Pakistan.

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Table No. 1 Selection of nouns and their frequencies from newspaper columns of male and female writers

Categories	CNAM	CNAF
Government	239	64
Peace	61	9
Author	4	32
Country	189	84
Language	10	50

Table No. 2 Selection of pronouns and their frequencies from newspaper columns of male and female writers

Pronouns	CNAM	CNAF
I	182	287
We	269	130
Our	190	88
He	334	218
She	20	126

Table No. 3 Selection of adjectives and their frequencies from newspaper columns of male and female writers

Adjectives	CNAM	CNAF
New	143	83
National	122	43
Political	225	125
Foreign	78	36
Economic	85	31

Table No. 4 Selection of modal verbs and their frequencies from newspaper columns of male and female writers

Modal Verbs	CNAM	CNAF
Will	415	197
Would	252	85
Can	187	151
Could	80	83
Shall	2	2
Should	143	63
May	128	85
Must	115	74

Table No. 5 Selection of present and past form of verbs with their frequencies from newspaper columns of male and female writers

Present and past form of verbs	CNAM	CNAF
Elected	27	13
Voted	17	8
Change	28	15
Communicate	1	7
Based	52	15
Need	39	16
Think	24	12

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