



LANGUAGE AND POWER: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL SCANDAL OF PAKISTAN

Humaira Sarvat, PhD Candidate, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
Dr. Aleem Shakir, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Abstract: This qualitative research critically analyses the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) scandal of Pakistan military published in the newspaper *The Nation* (2016) within the perspectives of colonial history and postcolonial politics of Pakistan. The study seeks to explore the strategic use of language in this financial scandal by focusing on the relationship between language and power in postcolonial financial discourse of Pakistan. History, politics, and society are deeply connected with the underlying concepts of ideology, power and language in financial scandals. CDA is the most appropriate critical theory for the present study because CD analysts take 'an explicit sociopolitical stance' (Dijk, 1993). The study aims to work within the theoretical framework of Wodak's 'discourse-historical' and 'critical hermeneutic approach' (2001, 2011). Data has been collected from the English newspaper *The Nation* (2016). The study expects to find the active colonial legacies of exploitation working strongly in postcolonial financial discourse of Pakistan.

Keywords: Colonial history, critical discourse analysis, postcolonial financial discourse, postcolonial politics, language, power and ideology.

I. INTRODUCTION

This qualitative research critically analyses the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) of Pakistan military, henceforth DefHA scandal, published in the English newspaper *The Nation* within the context of history and politics of Pakistan. Financial scandals are very common in Pakistan and they exert a considerable influence on the sociocultural and sociopolitical life of the people of Pakistan. The country has always experienced unequal power relations because of such wide rampant financial scandals. A CDA of these scandals can be helpful in bringing out the real motives of the power players behind these scandals because CD researchers particularly focus on how power relations are established and strengthened in discourse. They target the power elites who, they believe are the source of inequality and injustice in society. In this connection the study stresses that politics, history, society, and power are closely connected with each other in the postcolonial Pakistan's political discourse. Pakistan is a postcolonial country whose inhabitants have witnessed very long periods of colonial shackles. Politics, power, dominance, hegemony, ideology, society and discourse constitute the core terminology of CD studies; Dijk (1989, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2009), Fairclough (1989, 1995, 1999) and the politics of Pakistan, particularly its financial scandals are the best terrain to explore these concepts. Wodak (2001) gives a new dimension to CDA paradigms by including history as a crucial part of CD studies which the present study particularly aims to take into account. Any research on the present politics of Pakistan is incomplete without taking into account its colonial history. CDA also analyses social, cultural and political structures and how their respective practices, events and discourses are ideologically shaped. The study attempts to demonstrate how political structures and institutions are the potential sites to unmask the hidden motives behind the apparent working of the same. These hidden aims can be unmasked by analyzing the postcolonial discourses in the light of colonial history and postcolonial politics. These two aspects namely history and politics are closely connected with each other in postcolonial political discourses particularly financial discourses. Together they form the text and context of postcolonial studies.

II. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Colonial background of Pakistan's military administration.

Pakistan's military is the sixth largest in the world in terms of active military personnel and the largest among the Muslim countries. The national identity of armed forces is constructed as a sacred rescuer and liberator of Pakistan. 'Majority of the country believes that the only institution capable of leading Pakistan is the military' (Yousaf, 2017). In the early years of its existence Pakistan military in the new state of Pakistan, continued to work on British military traditions as it had no military system of its own. Even today their influence can be observed on Pakistan military's practices. After its creation in 1947 Pakistan got six armoured, eight artillery and eight infantry regiments as its colonial share from British India as a result of Indian division. So Pakistan got its military from British as a direct colonial legacy. Such an inheritance could not be loyal to the newly formed Pakistan. Alvi (1988) also pinpoints the unequal power relations between Pakistan's ruling class and its citizens in the context of Pakistan's political, military and elite society. The eventful shift from British to Pakistan only meant a change in nationality of the senior military officers. Most of the early military officials were English men who could not be loyal to the newly created state of Pakistan. e.g. Frank Messervy and Douglas Gracey, the early Commander in Chiefs (C-in-Cs) from 1947-1948 of Pakistan armed forces were English men who were promoted to the rank of generals under the influence of the country's former colonizers.

The role of media in postcolonial countries in highlighting financial scandals.

Financial scandals are very common in Pakistan. They continuously occupy media's attention. The year 2016 has particularly been very significant in the history of Pakistan as it witnessed two mega corruption scandals. Throughout the year Panama Paper Leaks and DefHA scandals remained the hottest public frenzies because the two top most institutions, civil and military of Pakistan had been found involved in them. The linguistic construction of such issues in a postcolonial country may carry the burden of colonial legacies in their respective discourses. Fairclough (2006) finds that media play an important role toward corruption because it has the ability to put corruption in the global context. Media is considered a neutral medium in exposing the issues related to corruption. It is also a source of exposing tensions between global construction of corruption and the local construction of the same.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions

1. How the language users hide their real aims in financial issues?
2. Which linguistic strategies are commonly used by civil-military administration to hide these aims?
3. Does military still retain a colonial stamp?

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CDA regards language as a social practice. It stemmed from critical theory of language which sees discourse as a social practice that carries meaning. The meaning within a discourse is always scattered beyond and across sentences. Discourse 'integrates a whole palette of meanings' (Titscher et al. 2000). It can be considered as 'data that is liable to empirical analysis' (Titscher et al. 2000). In discourse meaning is achieved by 'indexical realization' (Widdowson, 2004), that is to say extralinguistic factors are equally involved in the production of meaning.

Critical theories are the sets of 'thinking tools' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) which can be used to work with the 'practical problems and puzzles' of research (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). These thinking tools allow the researchers to focus on the specific question of 'what conceptual tools are relevant for this or that problem and for this or that context' (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). A theory then is a tool that helps a

researcher to deal with the issues and problems at hand. It is with the help of theory that a researcher is able to make sense of data from multiple perspectives. Since 1990s many critical theories, approaches and methods came to the foreground to critically analyse the role and impacts of discourse on society e.g. neo-Marxist discourse theory, poststructuralist theories of discourse analysis and critical linguistic approaches etc. However, *Language and Power* by Norman Fairclough (1989), *Language, Power and Ideology* by Ruth Wodak (1989), *Discourse and Society* (1990) by Van Dijk, are considered to form the real theoretical concerns of CDA.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of CD studies is particularly important in postcolonial countries because language and institutions in these countries are laden with colonial legacies and provide a fit linguistic terrain to analyse hidden agenda in them. CD scholars believe that discourse can be a potential site of dominance, but it can also challenge that dominance. According to them dominance is largely the exercise of power by strong social groups, political institutions and cultural authorities that normally results in the exploitation of one social group by the other. They openly take a sociopolitical stance. They mainly focus on political considerations in discourse. They believe that change can be brought through critical understanding of political discourse. While analyzing discourse they take the side of those social groups who suffer from exploitation and inequality at the hands of power elites. They do so by highlighting the linguistic strategies of those people and institutions which possess power. They believe that men in power have the ability to control not only the behaviors but also the thoughts of the people. Postcolonial discourse can be analyzed by taking into account colonial history, world politics and postcolonial political cultures of these countries. CD researches unmask the underlying ideologies and deconstruct the power and authority of world oligarchs and social institutions. In today's highly conflictual world where colonial history still shapes the lives of the many, where politics continues to exploit the common masses and where cultural assumptions are used for political authority, CDA is the necessary solution of the social problems.

Wodak (2016) critically analyses David Cameron's Bloomberg speech (BS) delivered on 23rd January, 2013 on the issue of Brexit by using her discourse-historical approach. From textual analysis Wodak moves to explore interdiscursive and intertextual relationship between various linguistic items and references to other speeches on the EU. Then she draws on extralinguistic reality for BS. Finally she presents socio-cultural and socio-political contexts in which BS is embedded in and related to.

Summary of Cameron's Bloomberg Speech: WWII was a battle for peace and liberty. Europe's shift from war to peace was not like a change in weather rather it was the commitment of generations never to push the continent into war again. The fall of Berlin Wall actually is a symbol that a great continent is coming together. Today the purpose of EU is not to win peace but to secure prosperity. The surging economies of the East and South are the great challenges before EU. British people have always contributed to Europe in maintaining peace and liberty by sacrificing their lives in times of war. UK believes in a flexible EU of free member states who are ready to co-operate with one another. It must promote European civilization and European values in the world. We must bring our shared interests to the open markets. Collectively we must build a strong economy. At present there is a gap between the EU and its citizens e.g. the lack of democratic accountability has acutely been felt by Britain. On the other hand we have the character of an island nation-independent, forthright, passionate in defence of our sovereignty. We have come to the EU with this frame of mind that is more practical than emotional. For us the EU is a means to prosperity, stability, freedom and democracy-not an end itself. The danger is that Europe will fail and British people will leave EU. I don't want that to happen. I want good relationship between Britain and EU.

Analysis. The most effective discourse strategy which Cameron uses is his frequent drawing on historical facts like WWII and Shakespeare's play Henry V. The knowledge of these shared memories helps him bring the audience on an all inclusive secure and supportive position. England has always played its unique role in abolishing tyranny and persecution from the continent. By employing such discourse strategies the speaker wants to remind the listeners how important his country has been for EU. But the Britons are first of all the British nationals and then the members of EU. They only have a relationship with each other.

Both of them are separate entities. Threats to EU and a strong sense of national pride go side by side in his speech. He reminds the audience that his countrymen are fully aware of their responsibility as members of the EU. Claims like 'We have the character of an island nation-independent, forthright, passionate in defence of our sovereignty' and 'we come to the European Union with a frame of mind that is more practical than emotional' (Wodak, 2016) work to threaten the EU and assert English national superiority over other nations. Though Cameron does not directly claim that English nation is superior to other nations, neither does he compare his nation with other nations of EU, yet by using subtle discourse strategies e.g. drawing on the great events from history e.g. the intertextual reference from Henry V 'The island of England breeds very valiant creatures' (emphasis in original) Act 3 Scene 7, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*, (Wodak, 2016), he successfully creates a difference in which the Britons stand superior to the other nations of the EU. The discursive construction of the us/other dichotomy in Cameron's speech presents the others-the EU as irrational who rely on intuition and impressions while the Us/Britons *feel, resent, and reject; they wonder and are surprised, they feel uncomfortable*' (emphasis in original) even if authorities have their say' (Wodak, 2016).

Another study by Wodak (2001) analyses *FPO petition 'Austria first' 1992-3* by using her discourse-historical approach. She explores different discursive strategies, linguistic and rhetorical means and argumentation schemes etc. to analyse the petition. For this purpose she explains in detail the historical background of the Austrian political party (FPO) which she believes, always retained a strong attachment with 'German cultural community' (Wodak, 2001).

The Petition 'Austria First' Subtitle: Through the creation of legal measures which permanently secure the right to a fatherland for all Austrian citizens and, from this standpoint, ensure a restrained immigration policy in Austria.

Analysis. Wodak believes that the very title of the petition 'Austria first' excludes the other alternatives like 'Austria next', or 'Austria last'. The pithy demand implies that Austria metonymically stands for 'the Austrians', so they need to be given priority over non-Austrians but the government is ignoring the interests of its countrymen. The analyst suggests that the strong national feelings expressed in an otherwise neutral phrase 'Austria first' actually is hiding hostility against the immigrants. The subtitle of the petition justifies the goals of the petition i.e. legal measures are needed to secure 'the right to a fatherland or home' (Wodak, 2001) for all the people of Austria. The notion of 'fatherland/home' (Heimat) implies emotional connotations. Such terms are more evocative and promote greater solidarity as compared to terms like nation or state.

V. METHODOLOGY

The present study applies Discourse-historical approach (Wodak, 2011) approach which integrates available knowledge and the background knowledge of the social and political practices to critically analyse the DefHA scandal. Discourse-historical approach is connected to three inter-related concepts. The first is concerned with the unfolding of inconsistencies, paradoxes and contradictions found in the text. The second step is concerned with the socio-dignostic analysis. On this stage the otherwise persuasive or manipulative character of the discursive practices is analysed. The analyst transcends the textual sphere and makes use of her/his background and contextual knowledge and puts the specific communicative event in the wider region of social and political structures. At this stage social and political theories play an important role in the analysis of texts. The third stage i.e. prognostic critique is concerned with the transformation and improvement in communication. Here the analysis provides proposals, suggestions and guidelines to remove language barriers. It means that the critical analysis of some discourse needs description and theorization of both social processes and social structures which produce text and within which human beings produce their meaning in their contact with the texts. Wodak's critical hermeneutic approach is an '*art* (emphasis in original) of explaining cultural manifestations, particularly texts' (2011). It particularly takes into account linguistic, rhetoric and pragmatic dimensions of discourse. Critical hermeneutics suggests that stable conventions can be potential sites of falsehood and persistent exploitation and CDA attempts to explore such false assumptions. The discourse-historical approach has four levels. The first one is descriptive i.e. the immediate text, while the other three levels are parts of CDA theories on context. The second level is

concerned with the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourse. The third level is related to extralinguistic social practices and the fourth level is related to socio-political and historical context in which the discursive practices are carried on. All these levels are the crucial steps in critically analyzing discourse. According to Wodak 'the historical context is always analysed and integrated into the interpretation of discourses and texts' (Wodak, 2001).

VI. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The DHA Scandal (Appendix)

"The DHA Scandal" (2016) is a newspaper commentary which reports on the corruption case related to the DefHA. It begins with a formal newspaper article style i.e. 'NAB has *implicated* Hamad Arshad and Kamran Kayani in what has been the subject of *armchair* discussion' (emphasis added) (Appendix). It means that DHA scandal was everywhere in public circles, it had become the subject of everyday discussion in everyday settings. Before becoming a topic of office chair discussion i.e. in responsible institutions like National Accountability Bureau (NAB) etc, it was exhausted in everyday armchair discussions. So the scandal had already worn out before it caught the attention of NAB, which could have handled it before its exhaustion in the public. The lexical choice of armchair discussion comments on the leisurely mood and slow performance of the NAB on the one hand and on the other this delay strategy is also a comment on the slow judicial system in the country. Whereas

'Hamad Arshad is already under physical remand...Kamran Kayani seems to have disappeared before NAB had him in his crosshairs which has led it to consider asking interpole to assist in locating him' (Appendix)

Both Hamad and Kamran are the prime accused in DHA scandal. The fact that Hamad is under physical remand and Kamran has disappeared from the crime scene creates suspicion on the performance of NAB. Though, both Hamad and Kamran are the prime accused, yet only Hamad is under physical remand. Why not Kamran? Had NAB deliberately delayed so that Kamran may disappear from the crime scene? These are some of the questions which need to be answered. Kamran is the brother of ex-army chief Ashfaq Pervez Kayani. Military is the most powerful institution in Pakistan. Its power abuse can be understood by the fact that no law could lay hand on the scandal involving the brother of army chief while he (army chief) was in service. It was only after his retirement that a corruption investigation was launched against the brother, Kamran Kayani.

'Ex-army chief and the rest of his brothers have distanced him from the scandal. They claim that he had nothing to do with the incident' (Appendix)

It has been quite easy for the powerful military brothers to distance their accused brother from the case. Many intertextual discourses which support the main discourse can be found in the present text. Besides unveiling military's corruption and power abuse, it also highlights that corruption is not limited to any one organizational structure in Pakistan, rather it has become a top trend in almost all the state structures of the country. Whereas Hamad is under physical remand, Kamran has disappeared because he has a powerful brother (army chief) who is capable of distancing an accused brother (Kamran) from the scandal with the snap of fingers as a very simple statement that 'he had nothing to do with the incident' suggests. This simple statement must be considered enough to prove his innocence, by everyone including the general public. It is notable that media have to struggle a lot to expose such high profile scandals before the public. In a country where people worship its military men and look at them as rescuers and liberator, it is certainly hard to expose them as criminals. Journalists know that people will not be ready to accept the hard facts that their heroes are involved in mal- practices, secondly the fear that they themselves can come under military's wrath stops them from openly stating the facts. The present text is built on number of doubts, contradictions and paradoxes whose underlying meanings indicate some wrong doings, but it does not clearly state that Kamran Kayani is involved in the scandal.

'It is too early to tell whether or not he was involved' but at the same time the writer informs that 'it is naïve to assume that the contracts....handed over to Globaco and Elsyium Holdings.....without the knowledge of someone from the army' (Appendix).

Two completely opposing information have been given in the above part of the article. The first information says that it is too early to tell whether Kamran is involved in the corruption scandal or not, but the very next revelation makes it clear that it is impossible that Kamran could get the contract without the help of his brother Ashfaq Pervez Kayani which explicitly informs that Kamran is an active player of this corruption scandal.

Elsyium Holdings is a company owned by Kamran Kayani which signed an agreement with the DefHA in 2009 for the development of plots to be sold to the families of martyred and war wounded soldiers. Kamran is the owner of Elsyium Holdings and it is found involved in Rs. 16 billion corruption case. Being the owner of the company Kamran cannot be detached from the fraud. An ideological contradiction occurs when the text unfolds that the army should be credited because it has stopped 'employing its...policy of publically intervening whenever a civilian institution dares challenge....its supreme authority' (Appendix). At the surface level the text reveals that from now onward army will not use its power if someone publically questions its authority. However it certainly threatens the public that army owns supreme power whose supremacy must not be publically challenged. By implication the statement threatens that to investigate Kamran in a corruption case of 16 billion means to challenge the supreme authority of Pakistan army. The phrase 'publically intervening' also explicitly suggests that army can intervene if the case is not publically exposed and is hidden from public eye.

'It must be remembered however, that ex-Army Chief Pervez Kayani has not been implicated in this case, and it would be ill-advised to accuse anyone purely on the basis of who they are related to' (Appendix)

It is the contrastive rhetoric within the same text which determines the theme of the overall discourse of the present text. In contrast to a previous remark in which Pervez Kayani and his brothers calmly distanced their brother Kamran from the DefHA scandal by simply saying that he had nothing to do with the scandal, the rhetorical force of the discourse here 'it must be remembered' occurs as warning to the readers that if they suspect Kamran, they must be aware of the supreme authority of army chief of Pakistan who has not been implicated in the case. However it is more than surprising that if Kamran had done nothing wrong, why his brothers distanced him from the scandal. If he has done nothing wrong, why has he disappeared instead of facing legal investigations. The statement that 'all links' must be 'unearthed'..... If it was not the ex-army chief then who was it?' (Appendix) indicates the possibility that there is a network of corruption. So it is obligatory to reach at the bottom of the case. Moreover the statement 'State institutions, from the executive to the legislative are inherently corrupt'-includes the other state institutions' (besides army) in corruption. Such a statement can work in favour of Kayani brothers. If all state institutions from the executive to the legislative are inherently corrupt then why to lay hand on military only, so Kayani brothers may have safe exits.

Text-a site of competing ideologies.Seen in the context of socio-political and socio-economic considerations, "The DHA Scandal" is a site of various competing ideologies. Though it starts with somewhat journalistic neutrality by simply reporting on a corruption scandal, yet it becomes deeply involved in the tension between institutions prevalent in postcolonial discourses of Pakistan. Postcolonial political discourses, first of all are the sites of colonial legacies in terms of hegemony, power abuse and forces of coercion. The text abounds in number of passive construction of sentences which are devised to hide active power players under the linguistic signs of discourse. The dominant discourse wavers between the practices of power abuse by the power players and the text's struggle to define these practices. In the very first passage, the readers come to know that '16 billion went missing without trace'. Some of the other examples of passive construction are

- 1).contracts just happened to be handed over to Globaco and Elsyium Holdings....
- 2)....investigation should continue....
- 3)....scam should be brought to justice

4)....if some of its (army) old leaders

5). It must be remembered that.....it would be ill advised to accuse anyone purely on the basis of who they are related to.

5).... Still more to be done...

6). Development schemes have been used to mint obscene amount of money ...

(Appendix)

All the responsible agents are actively absent from the text. However, the underlying instances of power abuse can be understood in the larger context of socio-political environment which the text is embedded in. Pakistan's armed forces are highly respected by the national institutions and people of Pakistan. It is customary to respect whatever army says or does. Consequently it is beyond the understanding of the people of Pakistan that the Pakistan military can do anything against the wellbeing of its people. If some cracks occur in the perception of general public regarding the army's high morale, the cracks are simply filled by the manipulative ideology of military's above board character. In this sense the language of newspaper articles is a crucial medium as it has to keep a balance between public perception and the exposition of hidden agenda. So it is a struggling medium to hide as well as expose ideologies.

VII. RESULTS

The present study highlights that the postcolonial political texts still reflect colonial strategies to legitimize the colonizer/colonized relationship with the result that colonialism is not coming to end, rather with the passage of time it is strengthening its roots in Pakistan. The texts produced on financial scandals particularly indicate a colonial desire to build vast business empires with the natives' bread. The results show that political discourses in postcolonial Pakistan contain multilayered ideologies. Language, particularly in these discourses works as a puppet, a toy for the military bureaucrats who manage to inculcate a sense of patriotism among their countrymen while they masquerade their own agenda. The Indian Muslims needed freedom from the colonial exploitation, particularly economic exploitation, but in the struggle they were doubly caught in the same snare.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The present study has analysed newspaper article The DefHA scandal published in 2016 The application of Ruth Wodak's theoretical perspectives on the language of financial scandals has demonstrated that the postcolonial financial discourses use different linguistic strategies to hide their real aims. An exploration of this discourse reflects the colonial desire to exploit the people of postcolonial Pakistan. The study has highlighted that Pakistan's military is one of the strongest institutions in Pakistan in terms of economic, financial and political powers. There has been no check and balance on Pakistan Military's unbridled powers and lust. The study also shows that language can successfully be used to show the real face behind the power players by unmasking the hidden ideologies.

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