

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

NEWS MEDIA DISCOURSE OF IMRAN KHAN'S ARREST IN MAY 2023: DISCOURSE HISTORICAL APPROACH

Dr. Waqasia Naeem¹, Shazia Noureen², Tahira Munir³

¹Associate Professor School of English Faculty of Languages, Minhaj University Lahore

^{2,3} PhD scholar, School of English Faculty of Languages, Minhaj University Lahore

Email: ¹drwaqasia.eng@mul.edu.pk, ²shazianoureen654@gmail.com

³munir.tahira@gmail.com

Dr. Waqasia Naeem, Shazia Noureen, Tahira Munir. News Media Discourse Of Imran Khan's Arrest In May 2023: Discourse Historical Approach -- Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 20(2), 1736-1755. ISSN 1567-214x

Keywords: Discourse Historical Approach (Dha), Discursive Strategies, Imran Khan, News Media Discourse

ABSTRACT

This research paper studies the news media discourse surrounding Imran Khan's arrest, a prominent Pakistani politician, in May 2023. The study employs the Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) theoretical framework by Wodak (2015) to analyze the discursive strategies used in four selected editorials published in English newspapers from Pakistan and India from May 9th to 12th, 2023. The DHA attempts to understand the complexities of socio-political and historical contexts in shaping discourses and their potential for social change and identity politics. The research focuses on identifying the discursive strategies applied in the editorials and examining the similarities and differences in their representations of Imran Khan's arrest in the news editorials. The text uses referential strategies like direct references, metonymy, synecdoche, and membership categorization. Predication strategies are used with stereotypical and evaluative attributions, and implicit and explicit predicates. Deixis is employed in both argumentation and perspectivization. Also, topoi are applied in the argumentation strategies. In Indian editorials, perspectivation strategies show detachment of the writers, while in Pakistani editorials, low involvement of the writers is observed. Hyperbole is used for intensification to highlight the seriousness of the situation. Verbs like modals, WH-questions, and action verbs also emphasize the text's viewpoint. Euphemistic expressions are used as a mitigation strategy. In conclusion, the Pakistani editorials emphasize internal political situations in Pakistan, and the Indian editorials focus on the role of the Pakistani military and its impact on India. Future research can further explore the diversity of news media discourse and its impact on Pakistan's public opinion and political discourse.

INTRODUCTION

This study employs Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) as a theoretical framework to analyze news reports on the arrest of Pakistani political leader Imran Khan, examining the discursive strategies used and their implications for Pakistan's future. The news reports about the incident of Imran Khan's arrest (9th May 2023) have been analyzed by applying the Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) as a theoretical framework (Wodak, 2015). The DHA developed by Wodak (2015), attempts to combine a large quantity of existing knowledge about the historical contexts of the social and political fields in which discursive 'events' are embedded. The current study has employed this method to study the discursive strategies used to shape the explored socio-political discourse of the four selected editorials published in English newspapers. These strategies are referential/nomination, argumentations, predication, perspectivization, intensification, and mitigation.

Wodak (2015) states that CDA examines language practices beyond the sentence level, including other forms of meaning-making (visuals and sounds), perceiving them as complex elements in the (re)production of society. CDA is employed to analyze the role played by discourses in the (re)production of non-inclusive structures and challenges the social settings in which they are embedded. DHA concentrates on integrated complexities of socio-political and historical contexts to comprehend the possibilities of social change and identity politics. It has been proposed that the news media are perceived to be the influential sources of communication in conveying information to the general public about what is happening in the world, especially in cases where the general public remains ignorant due to the absence of direct access to the concerned sources about what is happening in reality. In such cases, they have to rely on the press and media. (Happer & Philo, 2013).

The political situations are changing rapidly around the globe, the same is true in South Asia, particularly in Pakistan. Consequently, public figures and their activities remain the centre of headlines, flashing intense discussions and strong reactions. One such incident that enchanted the public's attention was the arrest of the famous political leader and former prime minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, from 9th to 12th May 2023. On 9th May 2023, the former Pakistani prime minister and politician got in prison on charges of corruption in connection with the Al-Qadir Trust; Imran Khan possesses this trust together with his wife, Bushra Bibi (*NAB Summons PTI*, 2023). He got arrested from the premises of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) by National Accountability Bureau (Sophie & Taylor, 2023). On account of this arrest, Imran's party was called for a protest. The arrest was the consequence that came a day after the military had reacted undesirably through its media wing ISPR to Khan's allegations against a high-ranking official. The official was implicated in a killing attempt on his life the previous year. Army declared Khan's arrest legal, whereas the following day, the Supreme Court of Pakistan declared the arrest illegal and instructed Khan's immediate release. The next day on 12th May, IHC approved two weeks' bail for Khan. Just after his release, Khan accused the Army Chief, Asim Munir, of playing a part in his arrest. The same day as the arrest, protests broke out nationwide (*Imran gets bail*, 2023).

This article analyses the news reports about Imran Khan's arrest. DHA presents a comprehensive approach to studying the interaction of three components: language, power, and ideology embedded in a specific socio-political context. Through analysis of the representation of Imran Khan's arrest, valuable insight can be gained across the border narrative created about this event. Furthermore, the analysis can also unveil its implications for Pakistan's future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review aims to analyze and synthesize the findings of previous research studies related to the specific discursive strategies employed in spoken and written texts related to Imran Khan and their contribution to the construction and representation of Pakistan's ideologies about law and order in that context. Keffe states that media discourse refers to communication through a broadcast platform in which discourse is conveyed to a non-present audience. Since the audience is not the direct recipient so most of the time, they cannot give prompt reaction to the producer of the actual discourse. So, media discourse is not a private but a public discourse; it is a constructed form of interaction; it is not off the record, rather it is on-record interaction (2013). Since media discourse is constructed, it demands investigating how this has been done. This can be done by employing one of the most critical strands of discourse analysis, known as DHA.

Khalil, Islam, Chattha, and Qazalbash (2017) conducted a study analyzing the speech of Imran Khan delivered before the 2013 general elections in Pakistan. The researchers employed Fairclough's analytical framework and other tools to investigate linguistic strategies such as referential strategies, repetition, word choice, positive self-representation, and negative other representation. The findings suggest that political discourse is intentionally crafted to project-specific ideologies and that politicians utilize linguistic strategies to persuade people to follow hidden agendas.

Tehseem, Amjad, and Abbas (2020) focused on newspaper headlines during a no-confidence motion against Imran Khan as Prime Minister. They employed Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine linguistic choices and ideological perspectives presented in different newspapers. Their research highlighted how language usage influenced public viewpoints and shaped opinions, emphasizing the newspapers' impact in steering public opinion through dramatized language. Mahmood (2021) investigated the persuasive strategies employed by Imran Khan as Pakistan's prime minister in his speeches addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. The study utilized Wodak's discursive strategies and Aristotle's three forms of rhetoric, analyzing speeches and statements from national newspapers, YouTube, and official Twitter accounts. The research aimed to determine the effectiveness of these strategies in achieving control over the spread of the virus. The findings contribute to understanding persuasive discourse during a pandemic and its role in shaping public behavior.

Tehseem (2018) examined social media posts related to the PTI protest in 2014 against the elected government. Applying the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) of Wodak, the study explored (non)linguistic patterns employed on

social media to convey political stances. The researcher also analyzed users' feedback and assessed Imran Khan's political influence over the public. The findings indicated that Khan gained popularity and influenced Facebook users through his political stance.

Tahsin (2019) conducted a qualitative content analysis of Imran Khan's speeches during his official visits to Saudi Arabia, China, and Turkey. The study aimed to investigate discursive practices employed by Khan to construct a discourse of economic recovery for Pakistan. The research highlighted specific linguistic devices such as terminology, repetition, constructive self-impression, figurative expressions, active voice, cohesiveness, and allusions. The findings indicated that Khan successfully constructed a discourse of hope regarding Pakistan's economic recovery, targeting foreign investors and instilling hope among the Pakistani population.

Hussain, Aalia, and Zahid (2021) critically analyzed the speeches of Benazir Bhutto and Imran Khan concerning Pakistani women's representation. They employed Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1998) to identify the discursive techniques and dominant political ideologies used in the speeches. While both leaders attempted to represent women positively, the study found that Bhutto's rhetoric was more powerful in promoting women's roles. The research highlighted the political ideologies embedded in the speeches and their implications for women's representation.

A study by Anjum and Hussain looks at the language devices and covert objectives used in the political speeches of Imran Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (2023). Imran Khan's projection of authority has both political and religious overtones, whereas Bhutto's speech places a strong emphasis on self-determination. Both UN statements, which reflected prevailing political ideas and socio-economic conditions, were key events in Pakistani history. Language may create convincing arguments and convey crucial concepts without the use of words, demonstrating the intricate relationship between language, ideology, and society. The findings highlighted the use of religious and political implications, personal pronouns, and persuasive arguments to gain and show power.

Hussain and Yousafzi (2021) conducted a discourse analysis of Imran Khan's first parliamentary speech as Pakistan's Prime Minister. Using qualitative research methods and Speech Act Theory combined with the Persuasive Communication Model, the study examined the language used to describe political goals and the effect of Khan's discourse on the listeners. The analysis revealed various linguistic verbs for persuasion and identified speech functions such as commissive, representative, and evaluative. The findings demonstrated how Khan aimed to attract and persuade the audience through a particular perspective.

In conclusion, while the reviewed literature provides valuable insights into the discursive strategies employed in various texts related to Imran Khan, there is a gap in the research regarding the specific discursive strategies used in editorials discussing his arrest and the differences and similarities in their representations.

The existing studies focus on various contexts such as political speeches, social media posts, newspaper headlines, and speeches on various topics. These strategies involve linguistic devices, rhetorical devices, and ideology projection. However, there is a need for a focused analysis of the discursive strategies employed specifically in editorials concerning Imran Khan. Such an analysis would study discourse surrounding this significant event and its implications for Pakistan's ideologies about law and order.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research study adopts the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) as a theoretical framework within the broader field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). DHA, developed by Wodak (2015), provides a comprehensive approach for analyzing discourses about social and political issues, particularly racial, national, and ethical issues. This analysis has four layers, as charted out by Richardson and Wodak (2009). This framework analyses discourse on four levels: first, intertextual and interdiscursive relationships; second, extra-linguistic social variables; third, history and archaeology of texts and organizations; and lastly, institutional frames of the specific context of a situation.

The conceptual framework of the study revolves around the analysis of discursive strategies employed in the selected editorials discussing the arrest of Imran Khan. The framework draws upon the discursive strategies outlined by Wodak (2015). These strategies include referential/nomination (this strategy shows how individuals, objects, actions, and procedures are named and referred to), predication (it demystifies the characteristics and qualities attributed to the nominations), argumentation (it questions the established beliefs and opinions, and evaluates the justifications), perspectivization (this strategy describes the perspectives from which the above nominations, predications and arguments are expressed), intensification (it reveals how these above utterances are produced overtly or covertly), and mitigation (it pacifies the strong effect of an expression in utterance or writing). The discursive strategies used in the editorials, such as referential, argumentative, predication, perspectivization, intensification, and mitigation tactics, are identified using the discourse historical approach. Then, the parallels and discrepancies between how Imran Khan's arrest is portrayed in the editorials are analyzed and the results of the analysis in the context of DHA's theoretical framework are interpreted.

The study utilizes a qualitative research design, specifically Critical Discourse Analysis, to examine the selected editorials published between May 9, 2023, and May 12, 2023. The focus is on analyzing the discursive strategies employed in the selected editorials during this period. The data for the study is obtained from the official websites of selected English newspapers, namely Dawn, The News International, Times of India, and Hindustan Times. Four editorials are selected for analysis: 1a- 'What Next?' from the national newspaper, Dawn. (2023); 1b- 'Imran's Arrest' from the national newspaper, The News International (2023); 2a- 'Pakistan Army had it Coming' from the international newspaper, Hindustan Times. (2023); and 2b- 'Captain Vs Generals: Pak Army doesn't Want to Take Over Govt but It doesn't Know How Post-Imran-Arrest

Protest will Pan Out' from the international newspaper, Times of India. (2023). The following are the research questions of the study:

1. What discursive strategies are employed in the selected editorials?
2. How do these four editorials show differences and similarities in linguistic representation of the incidence of Imran Khan's arrest?

Analysis

The following analysis provides a discussion on the application of discursive strategies. Editorials 1a and 1b refer to editorials published in Pakistani newspapers, whereas editorials 2a and 2b are the analysis of editorials of Indian newspapers. The given editorials offer a critical analysis of thematization concerning the political situation in Pakistan. Editorial 1a focuses on the government's handling of Imran Khan's arrest, fundamental rights curtailment, involvement of unelected powers, and the need for a fair investigation. Editorial 1b centers around Khan's arrest and the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case, examining its implications for Pakistani politics. Editorial 2a critically portrays the Pakistani military as a powerful and corrupt institution undermining democracy. Editorial 2b highlights Khan's arrest, the military's role in politics, potential instability in Pakistan, and the impact on India, presenting a perspective favorable to India. Overall, the editorials express concerns about the political situation, the military's influence, and the potential consequences for Pakistan and its neighbors.

Discursive Strategies Employed in Editorial 1a:

Referential Strategies:

Editorial 1a explicitly mentions 'the state' by giving the direct reference as 'the state has Imran Khan in custody'. The text raises a rhetorical question, '*Does it have a plan for what comes next?*' This question involves the reader and invokes them to consider the possible outcomes of the state's actions and how they intend to deal with the anger among PTI's (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) supporters. The text refers to 'the state', 'PTI's leadership', 'the majority of the citizenry', and 'the powers that be' to denote the governing authorities, highlighting their responsibility and agency in the current situation. Also, it mentions 'Imran Khan' and 'PTI' to specify the individuals and parties involved, creating a sense of identification and accountability. The reference has been made towards these specific individuals, groups and events to make arguments and to provide context. The repetition in the phrase 'the powers that be' is repeated, pointing to the authority and influence of concerned powers. The statement, '*The PTI's vast support base- a majority of the citizenry, if recent polls are to be believed- is seething with rage*' is a kind of appeal to recent polls in the form of evidence to justify the claim about the raising aggression among Imran's followers.

In the text, the referential strategy is employed in phrases including 'PTI leadership', 'Mr. Khan's arrest', 'violence', 'major cities', 'Wednesday', 'needless injuries' and 'mounting death toll'. These references present the

context along with specific arguments to support the statement. Furthermore, 'picking up of 1000 protesters', 'section 144', 'nonoperational communication services', and 'the army had been requisitioned'- all these references are used to provide solid information about the prevailing situation and the police actions in response to these conditions seem to add credibility to the presented argument.

Predication Strategies:

Editorial 1a presents declarations and predicates about numerous subjects to provide information and express views for example it includes 'the state has Imran Khan in custody', 'the PTI's vast support base is seething with rage', and 'the powers that be plan to mollify this agitated lot'. It uses emotive language to evoke strong emotions and show the support's intense feelings. One prediction is that PTI leadership probably has 'distanced itself from the violence'. On the basis of this statement, it is further predicated that PTI leadership must condemn the violence to prevent further incidents. The use of 'Wednesday' pronounces the occurrence of fresh violence with its costs in the form of injuries and losses. It also supports the predication that it is due to PTI's so-called inaction that has led to adverse outcomes.

Editorial 1a employs evaluative language to make judgments about actions and events. For example, it describes the violence as 'needless' and criticizes the arrests of protesters and the curtailment of fundamental rights as regrettable and undemocratic. Additionally, it uses words such as 'seizing,' 'join hands,' and 'take out' to characterize the arrest of Imran Khan and highlight the perceived motives behind it. 1a employs metaphors to give opinions about the performed actions. For example, 'seething with rage', joining hands with unelected powers', 'heavy price', 'the ugliness', and 'the clash of egos'. Furthermore, it has made an explicit comparison by using language such as 'is this to be our new normal?' and 'little that is democratic'.

Argumentation Strategies:

Editorial 1a presents counterarguments to the government's actions, questioning the necessity of arresting Imran Khan and highlighting the negative consequences that resulted from it. The text also raises the question of how the powers have conceived to deal with such an agitated lot. The rhetorical question like '*Does it have a plan for what comes next after Imran Khan's arrest?*' express concerns about the anger of PTI's supporters by raising the question '*How do the powers that be plan to mollify this agitated lot?*'.

Secondly, the text argues that the government's actions have led to violence, curtailment of rights, and negative perceptions of the civilian government, suggesting that these consequences should be considered when evaluating their actions. Also, it emphasizes the need for fairness in treating Imran Khan and criticizes the ruling parties for treating him how they were treated in the past, appealing to the principle of fairness. The text argues a claim and supports it with evidence that it was not enough for PTI to keep itself at a distance from violence, so it used evidence of the occurrence of fresh violence to support the

statement. The text identifies a causal relationship between the PTI's leadership's so-called disaster to condemn the violence. The argumentation strategy is employed to convince the readers to agree with the formulated argument. To persuade the leaders, the text has employed emotive language like, needless injuries, violence, and mounting death toll.

The text employs the contrast strategy to raise the argument. It argues the causal relationship between the expected action of PTI to not condemn the violence in clear words and the actual outcome of the reoccurrence of violence. This causal relationship predicts the leadership's actions with negative consequences. The text expresses concern about freedom and civil rights, and highlights the potential motives for arrest, 'simply because they threaten their individual interests. It also makes the argument to encourage the investigation of wrongdoings and to urge the ruling party to justify their actions. The text asks a rhetorical question about the manner of arrest- '*Was arresting him the only way to ensure peace?*'. The text is an appeal to democratic values to show their moral responsibility and simultaneously address the government and political parties to act responsibly.

Perspectivization Strategies:

Low Involvement: According to Wodak (2015), perspectivization is the positioning of a speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance. Editorial 1a shows disapproval towards the arrest of Imran Khan and the handling of mass protesters. The text voices human rights and supports the citizens of Pakistan using noun phrases: '*a majority of the citizenry is seething with rage; how do powers plan to... mollify the agitated lot*'; and also arresting the protesters is condemned by referring to 'fundamental rights'. On the other hand, the actions of the government have been presented unfavorable using nouns, as the whole process of arresting Imran Khan is referred to as 'the ugliness' and 'the crackdown'. The metaphor of 'hounds' for the ruling parties is also used to show disapproval. The use of the first-person pronoun is missing in deixis; passive construction refers to the perspective in this instance: '*It is deeply regrettable that the PDM parties were aiding the crackdown*', the political parties, government and all-powerful institutions have been referred to as 'they', 'themselves', 'him' -third-person deixis- to show otherness. So, there is low involvement in the text to avoid explicit expression of personal opinion.

Intensification Strategies:

Hyperbole: Wodak (2015) has listed the devices that facilitate the function of intensification strategies. These include hyperbole, indirect speech acts, and verbs. Here in the text, '*The PTI's vast support base — a majority of the citizenry, if recent polls are to be believed — is seething with rage*', the anger of the supporters of PTI has been portrayed using hyperbole - 'seething with anger', 'majority of citizenry'.

Also, there is the use of indirect speech act of asking questions instead of assertions. For instance, while referring to the shutdown of communication services, the writer asks, '*Is this to be our new normal?*' By using

intensification, the seriousness of the situation and concern for the public has been achieved.

Mitigation Strategies:

Euphemism: The following sentence show euphemistic expression: *The former prime minister was seized by a paramilitary force that does not answer to civilian authorities for an alleged crime for which even government ministers dare not name the other party.* The euphemism in this sentence is 'seized'. In this context, it describes arresting the former prime minister Imran Khan. 'Seized' is a milder or less direct way of saying 'arrested.'

After critically presenting the situation, the editor used a mitigation strategy to indicate PDM's expected course of action by using modal verbs, *may, ought, and must.* The first statement is, *'The PTI leadership may have distanced itself from the violence following Mr Khan's arrest, but it ought to have condemned the same in clear words to discourage more people from taking the law into their hands.'* And the second statement is, *'The PDM would do well to remember that it had taken over the government to put an end to a long-running cycle of political persecution. It must not perpetuate it for another generation.'* Moreover,

Discursive Strategies Employed in Editorial 1b:

Referential Strategies:

Referential Strategies help to represent social actors through the construction of in and out groups. These constructions are done with the help of linguistic devices of membership categorization that are metaphors, metonymies and synecdoche (whole-part and part-whole relationship), and other strategies i.e., naturalizing and depersonalizing.

Membership Categories: Membership categorization includes the categorization of individuals and groups and associates them with their particular roles within the system or institution, political system or marriage institution. In this way, these categories represent the members and create their identities i.e., social, political and religious. The categories of membership to construct its discourse the editorial 1b includes are PTI chairman and leaders, former prime minister of Pakistan, force, NAB, political and legal minds, observers.

The sentence 'in the real Pakistan, the game may now be out of political hands' uses synecdoche, 'political hands' to represent the control of politicians. The part 'hands' refers to the whole group of authority and absolute power of politicians. Another instance of synecdoche is in the statement, 'Per political and legal minds, the Al-Qadir Trust case may indeed have strong merits'. Here the word 'minds' refers to all who are involved in the political and the legal system. In the statement, 'in the real Pakistan, the game may now be out of political hands', the metaphor, 'game' portrays the political situation as a game that is now out of control of the game players i.e., politicians. It also suggests

the upcoming and unpredictable change in the agents and actors. The statement, 'government officials say they have a super strong case' uses metonymy 'government officials' to group the collective system of the government and all the actors representing it.

Predication Strategies:

Stereotypical and Evaluative Attributions: 'Dramatic scenes unfolded on TV screens yesterday as the nation saw yet another prime minister being arrested in the 2023 iteration of an eerily familiar tale for Pakistan's politics.' The phrase, 'yet another' in the statement predicates the recurring pattern of unlawful acts. It's not the first time but has been the practice of the past to arrest prime ministers. It attaches negative attributes to Pakistan's politics. 'They are also accused of getting undue benefit in the form of over 458 kanals of land at Mouza Bakrala, Sohawa, to establish the Al Qadir University.' The statement is also a negative attribution on the character of Imran Khan and other leaders of his party that they got undue benefits by occupying the land for their own personal interests. The word 'accused' also implies that this negative attribution attached to them might be untrue. 'Observers fear that there may be consequences in Tuesday's happenings for both the PTI and Pakistan's democratic setup in the long term.' This statement also attributes negative and stereotypical traits to the incident that happened on Tuesday as the observers expect negative and long-term consequences of this event. The prediction of observers also highlights the stereotypical attribution of the political setup in Pakistan.

Implicit and Explicit Predicates: The following statement carries an implicit predicate that uncooperative attitude of Imran Khan towards the investigation is the reason of his arrest. This implicit predicate justifies his arrest. 'Questions of whether Imran should have been arrested or not have been answered by NAB which says that he was not cooperating in the investigation and thus had to be arrested.' The other statement, 'That Imran Khan, known for accusing his opponents of corruption, gave blanket permission for this money to be used for a court settlement in Pakistan when the money belonged to the national exchequer should be a damning indictment', explicitly predicates that Imran Khan's decision of giving his consent for national exchequer to be utilized for the settlement in court indicates his suspected involvement in the act of corruption.

Argumentation Strategies:

Use of Deixis: At the third stage of analysis, Wodak et al. (2009) suggest the investigation of linguistic means used for the discursive construction. Among all other linguistic means, Wodak et al. (2009) consider deixis (personal, spatial and temporal references) as the most important linguistic device to explore the representation of the individuals and events.

- i. Personal deixis (use of personal pronouns)
- ii. Spatial deixis (adverbs of place, 'proximal and distal distance' of the speaker or event')
- iii. Temporal deixis (tense, adverbs of time and preposition of time)

In the statement, ‘...government officials say they have a super strong case’, the personal reference, ‘they’ is used to represent government officials who compare themselves to the other party as in comparison with the other party, their case is strong. The statement ‘... right from within the Islamabad High Court’ includes the spatial deixis referring to the location where the incident of Imran Khan's arrest happened, focusing on the specific legal setting within the premises of a government institute. It emphasizes that the place that is meant to ensure security became the place of autonomy. That's why, the arrest within the court premises was unexpected.

The temporal references ‘yesterday’ and ‘Tuesday’ specify the previous day when the incident happened in the following statements: ‘*Dramatic scenes unfolded on TV screens yesterday as the nation saw yet another prime minister being arrested*’ and ‘*Tuesday's unfortunate political drama unfolding on TV screens...*’ These temporal references contribute to the timeline of events. It relates a specific time in past to the present moment when the news of his arrest was released. ‘... *Imran will be presented before an accountability court today*’. This temporal deixis, ‘today’ refers to a point in the present time when Imran Khan is supposed to present himself before the law and the temporal reference, ‘will’ indicates an event to be happened in the immediate future.

Use of Topoi: The editorial justifies the legal action against Imran Khan and his unexpected arrest in a corruption case by presenting the Al-Qadir corruption case with strong reasons. Moreover, there are no explicit topoi used to justify discrimination or preferential treatment. The focus of the passage is primarily on the arrest of Imran Khan and the corruption case against him.

Perspectivization Strategies:

Nominalization and Deixis: In this Pakistani editorial, a similar perspective is observed. The text shows low involvement towards the public, raising chaos in the country. It distances itself from any political agenda and condemns the actions of even the party members of PTI. The way Imran Khan's arrest has taken place is critically questioned as it has led to public outcry. It also reflects an insight into human rights: *While Tuesday's arrest has naturally been condemned by both the PTI as well as 'human rights defenders' who say this may have been an over-the-top approach to the arrest (they don't dispute the case, more the way he was arrested)*. By making use of noun phrases and deixis, the text holds the PTI leaders responsible for the ‘*violent protests*’ and remarks that ‘*they may find it tough to walk back their own statements*’. The perspective of the editor is also referred to using free indirect speech with noun phrases indicating support such as: ‘*the saner minds*’ wonder if the hamfisted way he was arrested will end up making his case or the government's.

Intensification Strategies:

Hyperbole: The text uses intensification strategies to signify the magnitude of the events. The device of hyperbole is used to intensify the impact of the actions like calling corruption ‘*the biggest scandal*’ in recent history. The incident of

arresting Imran Khan from the courtroom as a '*dramatic scene that unfolded on the tv screens*' is repeated in the ending paragraph as an '*unfortunate political drama unfolding on the tv screens ended up in the social media blackout*'. Moreover, in another instance, the phrase 'damning indictment' exaggerates the severity of the situation and its potential implications: '*Imran Khan, known for accusing his opponents of corruption... the money belonged to the national exchequer should be a damning indictment.*'

Mitigation Strategies:

Euphemism: The text primarily focuses on presenting events, discussing the legal aspects and emphasizing the current impact and future of such actions. There is euphemism in the following sentence: '*Imran Khan was unceremoniously taken into custody by the paramilitary force of the Rangers right from within the Islamabad High Court.*' The euphemism in this sentence is 'unceremoniously taken into custody.' It is used to describe Imran Khan's arrest in a manner that downplays or softens the fact that he was arrested. The word 'unceremoniously' suggests that the arrest was made rudely or disrespectfully, making it a euphemism for a straightforward term like 'arrested.'

Discursive Strategies Employed in Editorial 2a:

Referential Strategies:

Membership Categorization. Editorial 2a establishes the identities of Imran Khan, former Pakistan PM, PTI supporters, Shehbaz Sharif government, army chief Asim Munir, generals and popular movements. The members are categorized based on their role in politics, their influence and power and the major actors involved in the incident that happened on Tuesday.

In this editorial, synecdoche highlights different aspects of Pakistan's political situation, the role of various actors, and the implications for power dynamics and national identity. For example, 'Pakistan's polycrisis' represents the nation as a whole by referring only to the current situation of Pakistan. Metaphors help to frame and conceptualize the incident or individuals involved in the incident in certain ways. For example, 'crossed a red line', here the word red symbolizes the danger and the line refers to the boundary and limit which Imran Khan has crossed. It implies the limited power politicians bear. They can execute their power by remaining in the limit set by establishment.

Metonymy: In the editorial, metonymy is used to represent various aspects of power and national identity. For example, 'paramilitary Rangers' refers to a specific security force associated with the army. 'US backing' symbolizes support and assistance from the United States, which has implications for Pakistan's international relations and power dynamics. These metonymic expressions contribute to constructing power identity and shaping perceptions of national and international influence.

Naturalization and Depersonalization: The editorial also contains elements of naturalizing, and depersonalizing language that characterize the country and its situation. These devices can frame political and national identity by presenting certain conditions or challenges as inherent or natural, potentially depersonalizing responsibility. For example, 'Pakistan's salience in international politics has rapidly declined' portrays the decline as an inherent characteristic, while 'widespread general hardship' presents the hardship as a broad, impersonal condition affecting the population. These devices shape the perception of power dynamics and the overall national narrative.

Predication Strategies:

Stereotypical and Evaluative Attributions: 'Pakistan's polycrisis has not only deepened but morphed into a systemic question for that country.' This statement attaches a negative attribution to the country by representing it as a country with many crises. 'The manner of Khan's arrest... was meant to send out a clear message... that Khan had crossed a red line by repeatedly pointing fingers at Pakistan's military-security establishment.' This sentence attributes a negative trait to Imran Khan that he crossed the boundary by pointing fingers at the powerful institution of the country while it attaches positive attribution to military by using the word, 'security' with the military. 'But Khan has emerged as the most popular Pakistani leader in over a decade. And his refusal to play by the army's hybrid regime playbook has brought Pakistan to an inflection point.' This statement represents other side of the mirror by mentioning Imran Khan as a popular leader who stands up against the autocracy of the army.

Implicit and Explicit Predicates: The following statement implicitly predicates the reason why government wishes to delay the national polls as it will let them get more time to pile up more cases against Imran Khan who is a threat against their power. Delay in the election can also let them have time to decrease the influence of Imran Khan on the public. 'By all accounts, the Shehbaz Sharif government wants to delay national polls scheduled for later this year. It hopes this will take the wind out of Khan's political sails as cases pile up against him.' The word, 'later' also bears an implicit prediction that the time of scheduled national polls is not fixed. It suggests the confirmed delay in the election. Another statement, 'The generals have played the role of Pakistan's stabilizer for decades, notwithstanding messy outcomes.' The editorial implicitly predicates the future intervention of the army in forming the government. It also explicitly acknowledges the role of generals as the stabilizer of Pakistan. It explicitly predicates that the generals control the messy situation created by the politicians and stabilize the country's political situation.

Argumentation Strategies:

Use of Deixis: The statement 'He may even choose to allow the protests to continue till calls for more robust intervention arise' starts with personal deixis which refers to a specific person, General Munir. Here the use of personal deixis indicates the agency and autonomy of the subject. 'from the premises of Islamabad high court...' This editorial also uses spatial deixis to emphasize that

the incident of Imran Khan's arrest in the premises of the court is a symbol of security but failed to ensure the security of the x-prime minister.

The editorial also uses specific temporal deixis like 'on Tuesday...' to mention the day of occurrence. The editorial doesn't use the word yesterday as this word can refer to any previous day. It specifically highlights the day when Imran Khan unexpectedly and unpredictably was arrested. '...later this year', though this refers to something in present, a combination of the word, 'later' with 'this' indicates something imminent in future. Using this temporal deixis, the editorial throws light on the future implications of this event.

Use of Topoi: Topoi is 'used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment' (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). The editorial suggests that Imran Khan's arrest is a response to his repeatedly pointing fingers at Pakistan's military-security establishment, '*former Pakistan P had crossed a red line by repeatedly pointing fingers at Pakistan's military-security statement.*' This implies that criticizing or challenging the military can be seen as crossing a red line, justifying political exclusion or punishment. The editorial also highlights the potential risks of another military takeover in Pakistan, including the country's declining salience in international politics and the potential loss of IMF bailouts. '*And his refusal to play by the army's hybrid regime playbook has brought Pakistan to an inflection point.*' This implies that a military-led regime may face negative consequences, justifying a preference for sustaining the existing hybrid regime.

Perspectivization Strategies:

Distance/ Detachment: The perspective in the text is unsupportive of the army officers. It sets the context in which the military supported the act of arresting the politician, as the text states, '*Mr Khan was detained at a court complex in Islamabad with the help of a paramilitary force led by Pakistan Army officers, in connection with a corruption case.*' Further, this image building of the army continues in the text with the backing of how the Pakistani public reacted to the army by using noun phrases such as 'the dramatic operation', 'convulsed Pakistan', 'unprecedented scenes of anger', and 'the de facto power arbiter' mentioned in the following excerpt: '*The dramatic operation unleashed protests that convulsed Pakistan as hundreds of Mr. Khan's supporters broke into the compound of the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi and the corps commander's residence in Lahore. These unprecedented scenes of anger against the military underlined the differences between Mr Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the de facto power arbiter in the country...*' These sentences are ripe with strong disapproval of the Pakistani forces and show detachment from the incidents.

Intensification Strategies:

Hyperbole: There is an evident use of intensification strategies in the text, especially in the following statement, hyperbolic expressions 'dramatic operation,' and 'convulsed Pakistan intensifies the impact and significance of the events, emphasizing the level of unrest and upheaval caused by the

operation: *'The dramatic operation unleashed protests that convulsed Pakistan as hundreds of Mr Khan's supporters broke into the compound of the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi and the corps commander's residence in Lahore.'* In the above statement the verbs 'unleashed' and 'broke into' also maintain the same intensity. This use of hyperbole and verbs is carried in the other statement too: *'These unprecedented scenes of anger against the military underlined that differences between Mr Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the de facto power arbiter in the country have crossed the point of no return.'* The image created with expressions like 'scenes of anger' and 'crossed the point of no return' intensify the idea of unretrievable loss in history by emphasizing on the severity of the situation.

Mitigation Strategies:

Euphemism: 'Meddling in domestic politics' is a euphemism for interfering in the political process. The author of the text uses this euphemism because it is less direct and less offensive than the more accurate phrase. In addition to the euphemism 'meddling in domestic politics,' the text also contains other euphemisms, such as 'the fallout of the arrest' and 'the dramatic operation'. These euphemisms are used to soften the impact of the events that they describe. The phrase 'the fallout of the arrest' is used instead of the more direct phrase, the consequences of the arrest. This euphemism makes the events seem less severe and less impactful. The use of euphemisms in this text avoids offending the Pakistani military and softens the impact of the events being described. These euphemisms allow the author to discuss a sensitive topic in a way that is less likely to cause offence.

Discursive Strategies Employed in Editorial 2b:

Referential Strategies:

Editorial 2b refers to the military using several negative terms, such as 'meddling,' 'Pakistani military', 'country', 'Mr. Khan', 'coalition government,' and 'de facto power arbiter'. In Editorial 2a, the author uses referential strategies to identify Imran Khan as a 'popular leader', 'the sternest test for the hybrid regime' and the Pakistani military as a 'dictatorial' and 'authoritarian' institution by doing 'a dramatic arrest', 'cause of deep poly-crisis', and 'bringing Pakistan to an inflection point'.

Predication Strategies:

Editorial 2b predicates several negative characteristics of the military, such as 'destabilization', 'wary,' 'secretly hobnobbed,' and 'repeated public potshots', 'crossing the point of no return'. These characteristics serve to reinforce the negative image of the military that is constructed through referential strategies. In Editorial 2b, predication strategies are used to describe people, objects, and events. In the text, the author uses predication strategies to describe the situation in Pakistan as a 'polycrisis' and a 'systemic question.'

Argumentation Strategies:

Editorial 2b constructs a causal chain that links the Pakistani military's meddling in domestic politics to the arrest of Imran Khan and the subsequent protests. This causal chain is used to argue that the Pakistani military is responsible for the current crisis in Pakistan. Secondly, it quotes some sources, including Imran Khan and his supporters, to support its claims about the Pakistani military. These quotes are used to lend credibility to the editorial's claims. Also, it tells the story of the arrest of Imran Khan and the subsequent protests. This story is used to create a sense of urgency and to persuade the reader to agree with the editorial's claims. Editorial 2b presupposes that the Pakistani military is behind Khan's arrest. The editorial does not provide any evidence to support this claim, but it presents it as a fact. This strategy is used to make the reader more likely to believe the editorial's argument that the Pakistani military is a threat to Pakistan's democracy. Secondly, it uses euphemisms to describe the Pakistani military's role in Pakistani politics. The editorial refers to the Pakistani military as a 'hybrid regime' and a 'stabilizer.' These terms are used to make the Pakistani military seem more benign and less threatening than it is. Moreover, it uses fear to persuade the reader that Pakistan is a dangerous country and that instability in Pakistan is a threat to India. The editorial mentions the possibility of terrorism and nuclear proliferation, and it suggests that a military takeover in Pakistan could lead to a war between India and Pakistan. These threats are used to make the reader feel anxious and to make them more likely to agree with the editorial's argument that India should take action to destabilize the Pakistani military.

Perspectivization Strategies:

Distance/ Detachment: The perspective of the second Indian editorial also provides the same viewpoint as the previous one. Strong expressions -formed with noun phrases- are used for the army throughout the editorial. These noun phrases including *hybrid regime*, *military-security establishment*, *dramatic arrest*, and *army's pre-eminent position*, are embedded in the whole text to point at the military constantly highlighting the responsibility of the military in all the socio-political chaos. The noun phrases have built up such an obvious perspective of the army that the following deictic expression points at them. For instance, Even the viewpoint of the military has been elaborated in indirect speech, '*...a clear message to the former Pakistani PM: that he had crossed a red line by repeatedly pointing fingers at Pakistan's military-security establishment.*' The writer has shown complete detachment from advancements in socio-political incidents in Pakistan by showing disagreement.

Intensification Strategies:

Hyperbole: The last editorial also emphasizes the serious issue of social unrest due to some political moves. In the statement, '*Following Imran Khan's dramatic arrest on Tuesday, Pakistan's 'polycrisis' has not only deepened but also morphed into a systemic question for that country.*', the hyperbolic expressions like 'polycrisis', 'not only deepened but also morphed' and 'systemic question' accentuate the multifaceted consequences of the arrest.

Mitigation Strategies:

Euphemism: There are occurrences of euphemistic expressions in the editorial. The phrase 'dramatic arrest' is a euphemism for illegal detention. The author uses this euphemism to soften the arrest's impact and avoid making a direct accusation against the Pakistani military. The phrase 'hybrid regime' is a euphemism for military dictatorship. It is applied to avoid offending the Pakistani military and to make the situation seem less severe. Furthermore, the phrase 'malleable' is a euphemism for easily influenced, to describe the Pakistani military's willingness to work with the civilian government, but it also implies that the military is not truly independent.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Analyzing the selected editorials provides insights into the discursive strategies implemented in the news media discourse surrounding Imran Khan's arrest in Pakistan. The findings reveal that all four editorials utilized the discursive strategies presented by Wodak in the Discourse Historical Approach. The linguistic devices used for each strategy highlight how different expressions build a perspective and formulate an opinion-based text. The use of direct references, metonymy, synecdoche and membership categorization is apparent to apply referential strategies. Secondly, the predication strategies have been employed using stereotypical and evaluative attributions, and implicit and explicit predicates. Deixis have been used primarily in argumentation and perspectivation. Also, the use of topoi is evident in the construction of the argumentation strategies. On the other hand, other than deixis, perspectivation strategies are employed using the low involvement in Pakistani editorials and distance in Indian editorials. The use of hyperbole is evident in intensification to emphasize on the seriousness of the situation. Also, the use of verbs like modals, WH-questions, and action verbs have been used to present the text's viewpoint with emphasis. The mitigation strategy has been applied by using euphemistic expressions. The editorials expressed concerns about the political situation, the rights of protesters and civilians affected directly or indirectly due to these decisions, the role of the military, and the latent implications for Pakistan and its neighboring countries.

The Pakistani and Indian editorials differ in their focus. It is because Pakistani editorials focus on the internal political situation, and Indian editorials focus on the role of the Pakistani military in politics, potential instability, and its impact on India. While editorial 1a criticizes the government's handling of Imran Khan's arrest and the curtailment of fundamental rights, editorial 1b centers around Khan's arrest and the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case. Indian editorials take a critical perspective on the Pakistani military, portraying it as a powerful and corrupt institution that undermines democracy. In contrast, Indian editorials present a favorable perspective on India, highlighting the potential instability in Pakistan and the threat it poses to India. Despite their differences, all four editorials express concerns about the political situation in Pakistan and its implications for Pakistan and its neighbors. They use referential strategies to identify individuals, institutions, and events, employ evaluative language to make judgements, and employ argumentation strategies to support claims. Finally, intensification and mitigation strategies emphasize or downplay certain

aspects to convey the seriousness or emotional impact of the discussed situations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of selected editorials surrounding Imran Khan's arrest in Pakistan using the Discourse Historical Approach, as presented by Wodak, provides valuable insights into the discursive strategies employed by the news media. The findings reveal the extensive use of various linguistic devices to perspectives on the political situation. Both Pakistani and Indian editorials utilize referential, predication, perspectivization, and argumentation strategies, albeit with differing focuses. While Pakistani editorials center on internal political issues and the curtailment of fundamental rights, Indian editorials concentrate on the role of the Pakistani military and potential instability affecting India. The application of intensification and mitigation strategies further underscores the seriousness or emotional impact of the discussed situations.

The study has provided significant observations but it is important to acknowledge its limitations. First, the analysis focused solely on four editorials, which may not represent the entire news media discourse. Or a better understanding it is suitable to use a more textual resources could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the discursive landscape surrounding Imran Khan's arrest. Secondly, the study focused on English-language newspapers. As the other languages in which the editorials were written, have not been analyzed, there is a chance that the study may have limited the perspectives of local and international newspapers.

Based upon this study, several areas for future research can be suggested. A comparative analysis could examine the discursive strategies employed in editorials across different newspapers, languages, and regions in Pakistan. Such a study would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the diversity and dynamics of news media discourse in the country. Secondly, a longitudinal study could explore how the discursive strategies employed in news media evolve over time and in response to changing political contexts. By analyzing editorials published during different stages of Imran Khan's arrest and its aftermath, researchers can gain insights into the evolution of discursive narratives and the impact of changing political dynamics on media representations. Lastly, the impact of these discursive strategies on public opinion and political discourse in Pakistan could be explored too. Researchers can assess how these editorials influence perceptions, attitudes, and engagement with political issues by conducting surveys or interviews with readers. Such research would provide a better understanding of the relationship between media, discourse, and public opinion.

REFERENCES

- Anjum, S., & Hussain, M. S. (2023). Imran Khan and ZA Bhutto: A Comparative Analysis of Pakistani Political Speeches. *SJESR*, 6(2), 11-17.
- Captain Vs Generals: Pak army doesn't want to take over govt but it doesn't know how post-Imran-arrest pro.* (2023, May 11). Times of India.

- <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-editorials/captain-vs-generals-pak-army-doesnt-want-to-take-over-govt-but-it-doesnt-know-how-post-imran-arrest-protest-will-pan-out/>
- Happer, C., & Philo, G. (2013). The role of the media in the construction of public belief and social change. *Journal of social and political psychology*, 1(1), 321-336.
- Hussain, R., Aalia, M., & Zahid, M. S. (2021). Women's representation in political discourse: Discourse analysis of the speeches of Benazir Bhutto & Imran Khan. *Journal of ISOSS*, 7(4), 241-252.
- Hussain, M., & Yousafzi, F. U. (2021). Discourse analysis of first parliamentary speech of Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan. *Elementary Education Online*, 20(5), 7007-7007.
- Imran's arrest*. (2023, May 10). The News International. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1068712-imran-s-arrest>
- Imran gets bail in key cases, hits out at Pak army chief*. Hindustan Times. (2023, May 12). <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/former-pakistan-premier-imran-khan-slams-army-chief-for-maligning-military-after-court-grants-him-bail-in-graft-case-101683915225474.htm>
- Khalil, U., Islam, M., Chattha, S. A., & Qazalbash, F. (2017). Persuasion and political discourse: A critical discourse analysis of Imran Khan's election speech (2013). *Pakistan Vision*, 18(2), 193-210.
- Mahmood, S. (2021). Political discourse of Imran Khan speeches in COVID-19: Persuasive strategies. *Grassroots (17260396)*, 55(2).
- NAB summons PTI chief's wife Bushra Bibi in Al-Qadir Trust case on June 7*. (2023, June 2). Dawn News. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1757518>
- O'keeffe, A. (2013). Media and discourse analysis. In *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 441-454). Routledge.
- Pakistan Army had it coming*. (2023, May 10). Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/editorials/fallout-of-imran-khan-s-arrest-pakistan-army-s-meddling-in-politics-turns-unpopular-sparks-protests-unprecedented-anger-101683728178513.html>
- Richardson, J. E., & Wodak, R. (2009). The Impact of Visual Racism: Visual Arguments in Political Leaflets of Austrian and British Far-right Parties. *Controversia*, 6(2).
- Sophie, S., & Taylor, J. (2023, May 9). Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan arrested by paramilitary police. *CNN*. Retrieved June 30, 2023, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/09/asia/imran-khan-arrest-intl/index.html>
- Tahsin, M. (2019). Discourse analysis of PM Imran Khan's speeches during foreign visits for economic recovery of Pakistan. *Linguistics and Literature Review*.
- Tehseem, T. (2018). Investigating stance projection through social media: A Discourse-based study of PTI protest and sit-in. *Journal of Gender and Social Issues*, 17(2), 132-159.
- Tehseem, T., Amjad, W., & Abbas, M. (2022). Persuading through the print media: A discourse historical analysis of no-confidence resolution against IK in Pakistan. *Global Digital & Print Media Review*, 5(1), 131-143. 10.31703/gdpmr.2022(V-I).13
- What next?* (2023, May 11). Dawn News. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1752257>

Wodak, R. (2015). Critical discourse analysis, discourse historical approach. *The international encyclopedia of language and social interaction*, 1-14.