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### ANALYZING CARICATURES AS A MEDIUM OF REVEALING POLITICAL AGENDAS: A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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#### ABSTRACT

The trend of political caricatures has been recently prospered in Pakistan. Media has demonstrated the caricatures with sarcastic and humorous pictures to deride the political parties with an expectation of advancement. In any case, these cartoons are especially persuasive for individuals and a source of amusement. Caricatures are composed of metaphor, irony, satire and exaggeration. Their purpose is to let the viewers aware of various political agendas and happenings. The paper illustrates how political caricatures are used as a vehicle to reveal the political agendas in the Pakistani Newspapers using multimodal discourse analysis of Kress and Leeuwen (2006) under systemic functional perspective. Caricatures were selected from two mainstream newspapers "The Nation" and "The Daily Times". This paper has shown how caricatures are utilized to fulfill communicative tasks in Pakistani print media and how the caricatures are innovatively used to set political agenda in this way providing political interpretation and debate in humorous way through which political realities are mirrored in the nation's wider socio-political ground.

## INTRODUCTION

Caricature is an impressionistic illustration that overstates the physical qualities of big shots for hilarious impacts. It has likewise been said to draw out the subjects "inward nature". To the extent, a caricature is concerned about the physical characteristics of somebody and distorting them to look somewhat senseless. Fetsko (2001) stated that a caricature vary in purpose, regardless of the fact they entertain as like comic art, Also it makes life more tolerable as does the social caricature or bring order through governmental activity as does the fruitful political caricature.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the role of political cartoons in setting political agenda through highlighting topics and themes and to identify and explain the meaning and importance of images or visual illustrations to depict issues and events as well as social representations of political figures, and prominent public officers in political cartoons published in the Pakistani prominent newspapers "The Nation" and "The Daily Times". Similarly, understanding different modalities integrated together enables us to appreciate that how language is used for communicative purposes which include knowledge about economic, social, political and other related events that make up our social life in a society.

Furthermore, the paper exhibits how political caricatures are used to setting political agenda in Pakistani media discourse particularly newspaper paper caricatures. According to El Reface (2009), caricatures serve as communicative tools for society. Media is powerful in light of the fact that they select and plan information and after that pass it to the viewers the way they want to. They are extremely persuasive on the grounds that individuals trust whatever the media is portraying. Media discourse is critical in this regard. Media discourse is conditioned by those who manage it. Fundamentally, media is controlling the minds of individuals nowadays. Generally, the paper represents an advanced understanding of political caricatures in setting political agenda and furthermore exhibits how caricatures are utilized to build the reality of issues and speak to social portrayals of government officials and conspicuous people in a society.

The study involves qualitative framework under systematic functional multimodal analysis to break down the discourse event in the political caricatures which is obligated for proximate ideologies, cultural differences, and people's construction of meanings. A multimodal framework is a system which by one means or another includes numerous modalities. A modality is a method for communication in some physical medium, modality is characterized by its physical medium and its specific way of depiction. Multimodality is a theory of social semiotic and communication. Multimodality portrays communication practices in terms of the linguistics, literary, etymological, spatial, and visual assets or modes used to form messages (Murray & Jody, 2013)

According to Holliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1973) the possibility of attaining meanings in the multimodal scenario under meta functions of language i.e. Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual has provided a new insight

to analyse semiotic resources. But Later on, Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996 & 2006) take Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar as a theoretical base and proposed their own meta-functions of meanings, i.e. Representational meanings, Interactive meanings and Compositional meanings to analyse semiotic resources in multimodal perspective.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996 & 2006) were the pioneers in the applying Systemic-Functional Linguistics to visual pictures. In *Reading Images*, they lead in giving the efficient and extensive clarification to the linguistic use of a visual outline. By concentrating on the semiotic assets and structures of plan, shading, a point of view, confining and arrangement, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) inspected how picture expresses meanings and clarify the peculiarity and the equivalence between the sentence structure of language and that of a picture. As visual correspondence become gradually important in the realm of a language subjugated culture, *Reading Images* without a doubt gives an intense toolkit for picture reading. Various researches done on cartoons under systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis Holliday (1978 & 1994), O'Toole (1994), and Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) are major stakeholders.

Winston (2002) conducted a case study around Aids and Political Cartoons, the place he inspected the part of political cartoons in aid resistance for South Africa; Cahn (1984) considered political cartoons as an instruments for communication, Bivins (1984), Bormann, Koester, & Bennett (1978) focused basically on content examination of political cartoons. Benoit, Klyukovski, McHale, & Airne, (2001) analysed the role of correspondence for political cartoons. Morris, (1969) investigated those exceptional offers of political cartoons, Medhurst and DeSousa (1981) concentrated on the logical manifestation for political cartoons, Baldry and Thibault (2006) concentrated on political cartoons and general population representation, at the same time Handl, (1990) inspected political caricatures over Australian daily papers, he also recognized those national subjects which symbolize those ordinary Australian subjects and the political gatherings.

Edwards and Ware (2005) concentrated on how political cartoons speak to the general population in media. Additionally, Han (2006) centred ahead political satire, the place he analysed the Japanese cartoon reporting, furthermore its pictorial proclamations on Korea. Similarly, El Refaie (2009) led an exploration around multi-literacies and political cartoons translation. In many later studies, El Refaie and Hörschelmann, (2010) investigated junior peoples' reactions to political cartoons. Willems, (2011) inspected humorous delineations for Zimbabwean president to depict the political environmental of the particular nation. As far as portraying a specific ideological perspective Mazid (2008) investigated political, moreover ideological boundary representations over Bush and Bin Laden's cartoons delineations. Townsend, McDonald, and Esders, (2008) inspected how political cartoons illustrated Australia's work approaches on the policies of civil services. Najjar (2007) investigated political cartoons like fundamental sites for constructing Palestinian refugees identity from the perception of Africans, Eko (2007) investigated for how exactly African daily papers dehumanised four African

pioneers. Starting with Nigerian context, Udoaka (2003) investigated on the recognitions about gatherings of people in Nigeria political cartoons.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study of political caricatures is done under the Systemic-Functional perspective of multimodal discourse analysis. Selected political cartoons were observed carefully and analysed with the help of Systemic-Functional Grammar proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) in which they modified the three meta-functions of language previously used by Holliday (1998).

The study involves qualitative framework under Systemic-Functional Multimodal Analysis to break down the discourse event in the political caricatures to realize meanings. The cartoons or caricatures were analyzed with a multimodality perspective. The data of political caricatures is collected from mainstream national e-newspapers "The Nation" by the researcher for the intention of studying the political caricatures. The researcher used random sampling technique for the selection of data for this study in which the unit of analysis is a political caricature.

Total five caricatures are selected from the two Pakistani newspapers "The Daily Times" and "The Nation". To comprehend the political agenda of the caricatures, the researcher used Systemic-Functional Grammar proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). By taking Halliday Systemic Functional Grammar (2004) as a base Kress and Van Leeuwen proposed their multimodal framework. Their framework based on the three meta-functions of language mainly Representational, interactive and compositional meanings. The researcher used these three meta-functions to investigate the caricatures as a vehicle of setting political agendas. To guide the conduct of the study, the research is based on the question that How are political caricatures used to set political agenda in the Pakistani context?

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The interpretative and qualitative approach has been adopted for multimodal discourse study of political caricatures. By adopting the Systemic-Functional approach, the researcher explores the political caricatures regarding local political parties and their manifesto about 2018 general elections to be held in the country. The examination is done from the three meta-functions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) including the representational, interactive and the compositional meanings.

**Caricature 1:** The Nation by, Khalid Hussain 7/12/2016



### *Representational meanings*

This image is composed of two main represented participants, in the foreground the caricature is of chairperson of PPP Mr. Zardari. The man in the background is the chairman of PPP Mr. Bilawal Zardari son of Mr. Asif Zardari .The participants are not interacting with each other but they are directly in contact with the viewers (Non transactional process). The vector connects the participants and the viewer at the same time. The dialogue balloon “And Now my son will “serve” you, He has no charges on him yet...” is the most salient part and ultimately the focus of attention. Together with the dialogue balloon the viewers can see a thought balloon emanating from Mr Bilawal showing money, connecting him to his inner mental process.

### *Interactive meaning*

A direct contact is established between the viewers and the main represented participants. The participants looking directly to the viewers and demanding them to understand their motive and agenda (Contact and Demand). As far as social distance is concerned the participants are not common men the viewers meet every day they are the leaders there is social distance between them but they know them well and there is no sense of superiority or inferiority, but the participants are dominant to the viewer. The main participants have a frontal angel. Both of them are looking very high in spirit. The caricature presents a real life context in which PPP thoughts of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to be the next leader for whole country. Considering modality as;

**Table 1:** Representation of Modality

Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 1	1. Articulation of detail	Full representation of details	High	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	Full representation of background	High	
	3. Color saturation	Full color saturation	High	
	4. Color differentiation	Diversified colors	High	
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High	
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High	

### *Compositional meaning*

The overall detail of the caricatures is salient and thus the center of consideration. Mr Asif Ali Zardari can be seen with a wide smile on his face and two big bags full of money directly saying to the viewers that my son will serve you because he has no charge on yet. But the artist of this caricature has played with the text the verb serve in the quotation marks is symbolic the artist wants the viewers to grasp the irony behind the verb which is a source of humor for the viewers. The adverb “yet” is again interesting that as Bilawal is dreaming of money and his father is clarifying the public that he has no charges on him “YET” is ultimately an example of the fact that the innocent is the one who doesn’t find any opportunity. This caricature represents the dilemma of our political party’s motives behind their charge.

### **Caricature 2:** The Nation by Khalid Hussain 16/12/2016



### *Representational meanings*

This caricature represents four participants (main and secondary participants). Three main represented participants are on the foreground and by concentrating on the details of facial expressions the researcher termed that these caricatures are of Prime minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif. The man behind him is the caricature of Imran Khan the opposition party leader PTI, with the agenda of accountability and justice in the state. The man behind Imran Khan is the chairman of PPP, Bilawal Bhutto is looking confused and his board is blank which symbolizes that he represents no agendas. At the background of this caricature a lean man is looking with confused expressions to the other three and his ribs are visible as a symbol of poverty can be seen clearly by the viewers. His eye line creates a vector he is looking directly to the viewers and demands to show sympathy and to understand the situation. Secondly the eye line of Bilawal also creates a vector in a more amusing way he is also looking directly towards the viewers.

### *Interactive meanings*

As far as contact is concerned the caricature demands the viewers to enter into their world and understand the meanings of the caricature. Regarding Social distance, the three participants in the foreground represents the political leaders of the state known to the viewers and thus is superior. The participant at the background serves as a symbol for the Public in a deprived condition. The framing of this caricature drags the viewers automatically to the context of the situation.

The caricature is about the 2018 polls with the three main political parties in the line. Nawaz Shareef and Imran Khan have their clear agendas of making roads and struggle for accountability and justice but Bilawal Bhutto has no agenda and his board in the caricature is left blank. He is looking at the viewers to identify his situation and help him in this regard. The color is minimally signified in the caricature. As far as modality is concerned the researcher for comprehensive analysis takes foreground and background information.

**Table 2:** Representation of Modality in Caricature 2 focusing on Background and Foreground Information

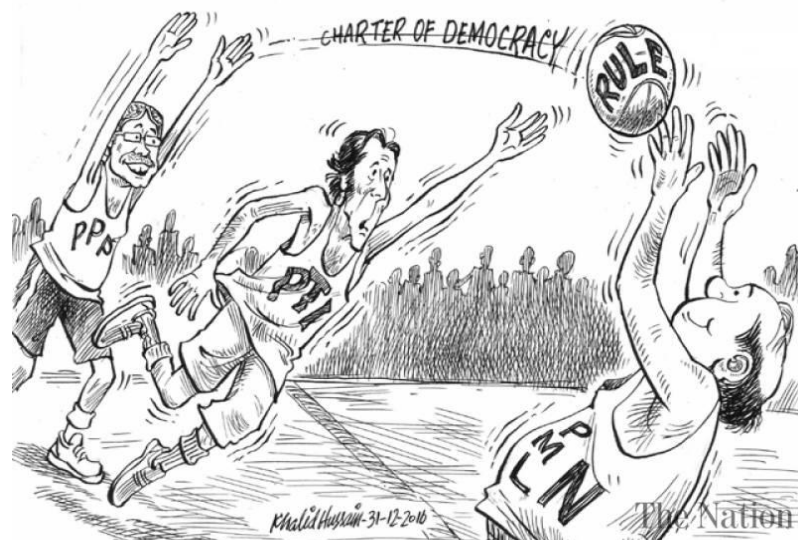
Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 2 Background information	1. Articulation of detail	Least representation of details	medium	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	least representation of background	Low	
	3. Color saturation	limited color saturation	Low	
	4. Color differentiation	undiversified colors	Low	
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High	
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High	
Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 2 Foreground information	1. Articulation of detail	Full representation of details	High	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	Full representation of background	High	

	3. Color saturation	Full color saturation	Low
	4. Color differentiation	Diversified colors	Low
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High

### *Compositional meanings*

In the background the thin man and his lethargic condition shows that all the leaders are busy empowering their agendas. This caricature is highly symbolic because the editor wants to pin point the main flaws. Everyone has their own agenda but not even a single leader of them all is thinking or worried about the condition of the Public which we can see at a background the editor mocks the condition of our politics and society in this caricature. As far as salience is concerned, the visual expressions of the participants with their agendas represented on boards are salient. The miserable condition of man standing at the background as the symbol poor public salient, Consider framing, there is no clear dividing line but the researcher assumes for the ease of analysis the front and back sections. The color is black and white and it is not signified.

### **Caricature 3:** The Nation by Khalid Hussain 31/12/2016



### *Representational meanings*

This caricature is composed of three main represented participants, Nawaz Shareef from PML(N) Imran khan from PTI and Asif Ali Zaradri fro (PPP). There is a bidirectional transactional process because the ball in the caricature



as a symbol of rule is termed as goal to which the other participants are focusing, their eye line forms a vector but it is directly pointing to the ball. The participants in the foreground are salient and the background serve as audience and a symbol of public as well. Two of the participants are seeing dominant while the third in the middle is struggling to get the ball. As far as representational meaning is concerned the expressions of the main participants, the ball are the focus of attention.

The ball which the Mr. Nawaz and Mr. Zardari are lofting towards one another and Imran Khan is struggling to get the ball. The ball is a symbolic figure. As far as the mental process is concerned, there is a vector formed by a thought balloon connecting a viewer to the main participants as well as to the context. This picture has symbolic attributes. The shaded background portion can be termed as audience watching the match is symbolic. It actually represents the public of Pakistan.

### *Interactive meaning*

An indirect contact is established as the main participants are not looking directly to the viewers but offering them to understand the cause of this caricature. Concerning social distance and size of frame, the main participants represented in the foreground are caricatures of renowned political leaders' shows a distance of public business interaction between the viewers and the represented participants. It is evident for the viewers that the participants of this caricature are not common men they may meet every day. They are somewhat dominant.

Considering the angle of image, this caricature has a frontal angle with the angle of the participants is different. Zardari is lofting the ball of rule as the charter of democracy towards Nawaz Shareef and Imran Khan is hovering around in a struggle to catch the ball. This caricature consists of some secondary participants which are in the background and are symbol of Public of Pakistan. Overall image is significant, representing the ideal real situation of Pakistani Politics.

The last dimension of interactive meaning is modality.

**Table 3:** Representation of Modality in Caricature 3

Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 3	1. Articulation of detail	Full representation of details	High	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	average representation of background	Medium	
	3. Color saturation	Full color saturation	Low	
	4. Color	Diversified	Low	

	differentiation	colors		
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High	
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High	

### *Compositional meaning*

This caricature represents the ideal real situation of our politics. The three main participants in the foreground representing our political leaders are obviously salient and focus of attention for the researcher. The Ball in the caricature is symbolic because it represents rule which is in the hands Zardari previously and now he has loft this ball and Nawaz Shareef has caught the ball of rule and the rule is in his hands where as Imran Khan is struggling to get the ball but he is unable to do so. This caricature shows the sad dilemma of our society and politics. The politicians are struggling to get the rule they have no worries about the public and public at the background is so relax that they are merely enjoying the ongoing game of their leaders and are blindly following them. Speaking of salience the three main participants representing our politics is salient, secondly the ball as the symbol of rule is salient, and thirdly the minimally signified audience as the public is also salient. The image is considered as a whole and the color is showing the minimal signification.

### **Caricature 4:** Daily Times by Tariq Afridi 6/12/2016



### *Representational meanings*

This caricature is composed of four main participants or reactors they are not man or woman but four hands representing three parties on the left side as PPP, PTI and PML-N and on the left side is a hand representing province Punjab. There is a transactional reaction which connects the reactors the

parties with the phenomenon the Punjab province. The picture is considered as a whole. The viewers can see a dialogue box as “I will be Pakistan’s PM in 2018” the dialogue is salient as well as the hands representing parties and Punjab Province are also salient. The whole picture is foregrounded. The caricature represents three renowned political parties that are waiting to collect Punjab’s vote to win the next election of 2018 for PM’s seat.

### *Interactive meaning*

As far as visual contact is concerned an indirect contact is established as there is no eye line directed towards the viewers. The picture is offering viewers to identify the situation and comprehend the meanings of this caricature. Concerning social distance the reactors and the phenomenon represented in the foreground of this caricature representing three renowned political parties and Punjab province, there is no sense of superiority or inferiority the three renowned political parties are in a line to collect vote from Punjab, Now it is up to Punjab that to whom it would vote and choose the next prime minister in 2018 elections. There is maximally deep perspective. The last dimension of interactive meaning is modality

**Table 4:** Representation of Modality in Caricature 4

Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 4	1. Articulation of detail	Full representation of details	High	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	Full representation of background	High	
	3. Color saturation	Full color saturation	Low	
	4. Color differentiation	Un Diversified colors	Low	
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High	
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High	

### *Compositional meaning*

This caricature represents a real context of our political situation mainly general elections. There are three participants on the left side representing three renowned political parties PPP, PTI, PML-N, the picture is foregrounded and the whole picture is salient and obviously the focus of attention. The caricature represents the general election scenario that who will be Pakistan’s PM in 2018 and to whom Punjab votes. The three political parties

are struggling from the past few years to achieve the seat and be in rule. But now the question is that in 2018 elections to whom Punjab will vote and who will be Pakistan's PM. The overall picture together with the three political parties Punjab province and the text balloon is salient in the caricature. The picture is not divided into any lines there is no partition and the picture is considered as a whole.

**Caricature 5:** Daily Times by Khalid Hussain 14/8/2016



**Representation meanings**

This caricature is composed of a represented participant, a man, which can be seen at a center of a frame from a special perspective. There is a vector constructed in the picture and all the narrative processes contribute to reveal the meaning of the caricature.

Concentrating on the features this caricature is of Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Shareef. Firstly, in the foreground, the man can be seen as a melting candle and the expressions of its end are evident from his facial expressions. Because of vector a non-transactional action process is constructed in which the man himself is the actor with no goal aimed at. Within a personal distance, this action process, which consists of nearly one half of the frame, is made significant to draw the viewers' attention to the image. The thought balloon in the background is emerging which says "My political career", with melting candle as a symbol for the man's career and he is looking too much anxious. In this non-transactional process, the actor is the man and his direct gaze at the viewers serves as a demand and thus involves the viewers to identify the situation. The dialogue box "I want immediate elections" connecting a person with his or her inner mental process, in this caricature, a conventional thought balloon is presented. In the projective structure, the man's feeling in the foreground like the content of the thought balloon is represented directly.

### *Interactive meanings*

In terms of visual contact, a direct contact is established as the man in the front section of the caricature is looking directly at the viewers. Image acts of demand are created through which the caricature want the viewers to identify him and understand his situation and help him. The image of gaze creates a visual form of direct address. In contrast, in the background two thought balloons are represented which shows the political career of the main represented participant as the melting candle and the other thought balloon says that “I want immediate elections” Which drags the viewers automatically to the main context of this caricature. Considering the angle of image, the represented participant has a frontal angle which indicates the involvement of the image producer and the viewers with the represented world.

The modality for this caricature is as under;

**Table 5:** Representation of Modality in caricature 5

Modalized composition	Modality markers	Expression of modality	Degree of modality	Coding orientation
Caricature 5	1. Articulation of detail	Full representation of details	High	commonsense naturalistic coding orientation
	2. Contextualization	Full representation of background	High	
	3. Color saturation	Full color saturation	High	
	4. Color differentiation	Diversified colors	High	
	5. Depth articulation	Maximally deep perspective	High	
	6. Illumination	Full representation of the play of light and shade	High	

### *Compositional meanings*

As far as this caricature is concerned, the visual composition is structured along a vertical axis, provide the image producers to present the situation of real life.

The whole image is divided into the front section and the back section. In the front section as the Real, a man is shown who is melting like a candle and two

thought balloons provide the information that the melting candle is represented as a symbol of man's career. He is very anxious and worried for his ending stages. Moreover the sweat, frightening facial expressions and another thought balloon is represented which says that "I want immediate elections" is ultimately the focus of attention. The man's appearance shows his identity as the prime minister of Pakistan and the background with thought balloons indicates the present situation of political career of Nawaz Shareef which is just like a melting candle.

All these visual elements are presented in high modality. All these details are designed to imply that he no longer own a strong government. Nawaz shareef is afraid of immediate elections and he is very much pressurized by the Opposition party because he fears to lose his position and the melting candle portrayed by the image producers is very much accurate to show the political career of Nawaz Shareef as melting candle. As far as salience is concerned, the image shows high modality because a real life political situation has been portrayed. The visual expressions of the man as melting candle are salient. Consider framing, there is no clear dividing line but the researcher assumes for the ease of analysis the front and back sections. The color is black and white and it is not signified.

## CONCLUSION

Through political caricatures, the media remark on current socio-political issues with a specific end goal to change individuals and keep them educated and side by side of topical issues that influence their lives. Furthermore, the caricatures represent how political agenda is set by concentrating on particular issues of interest at a specific moment through a repetitive and wide scope of such issues. Clearly, the part of media in setting agenda is much noteworthy in reorienting the individuals relating to significant issues that are so critical to the general population intrigue. Through agenda setting, the media influence what individuals are tremendously concerned and focus on. In this way the media connect importance to significance of issues through wide scope along these lines giving it popularity and constitute helpful verbal confrontations that shape people understanding over such issues as a step forward in tackling societal issues. The agenda setting theory has given helpful clarification on what shape the political agenda and the impact of political agenda on the general population.

This paper has shown that caricatures constitutes a considerable medium of correspondence through which the media set social agenda by joining relevance to significance of issues and occasions through intermittent coverage aimed at shaping general population's comprehension of the issues to acquire positive change in society. In this manner, Pakistani political caricatures serve as specialist of setting political agenda utilized by the media particularly to manufacture an open understanding, reorient individuals and start social and political reforms in Pakistan. A caricature is a multimodal genre. Therefore this article posits that caricatures are composed of linguistics and non linguistics devices and so needs theoretical basis to make it more comprehensible. This paper contributes to the scholarly research by providing

a theoretical basis in setting agenda to provide a better understanding of how caricatures are important to society.

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