



RESEARCH PAPER

**The Portrayal of Jaranwala Incident in National and Regional Press:
A Discourse Analysis**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of the *Jaranwala* Incident in both national and regional press outlets. How are Muslims and Christians represented linguistically? Hundreds of Muslims armed with batons and sticks stormed churches in *Jaranwala* after the Holy Quran was allegedly desecrated. Videos on social media showed hundreds of people armed with batons and sticks setting fire to the Salvation Army Church and the Saint Paul Catholic Church, while another mob torched private homes and broke windows. The event was reported by the media, and the newspaper supplied factual information to the people. Discourse analysis is the methodology of the study. The word in the newspaper is the unit of analysis. Two main English, one Urdu, and one Sindhi newspapers are taken as a sample of study. The research findings indicated that daily Dawn remains neutral. During the research it was founded that The News has the Right Wing behavior. It declares Pakistan as the only place for the Muslims. The Daily *Intikhab* remained neutral and Sindhi Daily *The Kawish* remained impartial. It is concluded that Government should review its press policy. Non-seriousness of press leads dire consequences.

KEYWORDS Christians, Co-Existence, Discretion, Epistemic Stance, Jaranwala

Introduction

Under the dynamic leadership of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan was got independence from British on 14th August, 1947. The official name of it is an Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Islamabad is the capital of it. Total Area of Pakistan is 796,095 Sq. Km and it has four provinces. Sindh, Baluchistan, Punjab and Kyber Pakhtoonkhawa . Their respective capitals are Karachi, Quetta, Lahore and Peshawar. Besides these provinces, there are Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA). These are divided into the districts of Gilgit, Diامر, Skardu, Ghanche, Ghizer. Afghanistan, Iran, China and India are its neighbors.

Government Structure

Pakistan has a federal structure. Parliament consists of the Lower House (National Assembly) and the Upper House (Senate). National Assembly members are directly elected and term of office is five years. Lower House determines the important national and international policy issues and it also passes an annual budget and legislation. Lower House (National Assembly) elects the Prime Minister of Pakistan from their members. Cabinet is formed by the Prime Minister. Provinces have their own legislative assemblies and members of provincial assembly elect the Chief Ministers.

Pakistan came into being on the basis of Two Nation Theory. The leadership of the then time felt that there are two culture and are opposite to each other. Therefore,

both Muslim and Non-Muslim cannot survive together. Keeping in mind this formula, the separate homeland was came into being. Interestingly, after the independence, first Governor General of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhamamd Ali Jinnah in his presidential address to Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in Karachi on 11 August 1947 said “You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State....We are starting with this fundamental principle: that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State.....Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State”.

Jaranwala is a city and capital of Jaranwala Tehsil located in the Faisalabad District of Punjab Pakistan. It also one of the biggest tehsil by population in the province of Punjab in Pakistan.

The city is almost 400 years old. According to legends, a Banyan tree with long hanging roots was positioned at the bank of a pond near Chak No. 240 GB. Because of that Banyan tree, the place was later to be known as Jaranwala. The word Jaranwala has two parts: Jaran and Wala. Jaran means roots and wala means place. Combining both words formed the name Jaranwala, meaning, place of roots.

Literature Review

One of the most important things we do with words is take a stance (du Bois, 2007: 139). Stance is a writer’s or speaker’s personal opinions, feelings, and attitudes about a issue, person or proposition. And it is express through the lexico-grammatical choices he or she makes (Biber, 2006). Without shadow of any doubt ,particular indexes of stance can significantly influence the emotions and reactions of the audience as well as demonstrate the stance taker’s commitment to the mentioned proposition; furthermore, they can serve the purpose of aligning or misaligning the stance taker with another person or proposition or of reproducing and reinforcing a socially-situated ideology, thereby making stance an extremely powerful construct (Biber, 2006; du Bois, 2007; Martin and White,(2005). Semantically, stance adverbials can be divided into three groups - epistemic, attitude and style (Biber et al.’s 1999) characterization, Quirk et al. (1985) employ a different system. In this article only epistemic stance is used to judge the writer’s proposition.

Fowler (1986: p. 52) studied the headlines of some news reports in his book *Linguistics and Criticism* and points out that news discourse is never an objective description of reality, but a way to transmit ideology. Van Dijk (1991: p. 198) is the first one who addresses prejudice and racism in discourse and the author of several books on news analysis. In his book *Racism and Press*, he points out that “implications, suggestions, presuppositions and other implicit, indirect or vague means of expressing underlying meaning or opinions may be used to persuade readers to the point of view of the newspaper”. Fairclough mainly focuses on the hidden ideologies in news reports and in *Media Discourse*, he summarizes various approaches to media discourse, including linguistic, conversational, semiotic, and socio-cognitive analysis, etc. and introduces his sociocultural approach (Fairclough, 1995a). In his book *Critical Discourse Analysis*, he suggests that discourse representation in news media can be seen as an ideological process and may be tuned to social determinants and social effects (Fairclough, 1995b: p. 65).

Material and Methods

Corpus Linguistics

Corpus linguistics is 'the study of language based on examples of real life language use' (McEnery & Wilson, 1996: 1). However, unlike purely qualitative approaches to research, corpus linguistics utilizes bodies of electronically encoded text, implementing a more quantitative methodology, for example by using frequency information about occurrences of particular linguistic phenomena. As Biber (1998: 4) points out, corpus-based research actually depends on both quantitative and qualitative techniques: 'Association patterns represent quantitative relations, measuring the extent to which features and variants are associated with contextual factors. However functional (qualitative) interpretation is also an essential step in any corpus-based analysis.'

Sampling

Corpus of News relating to the coverage of Jaranwala had been taken. The size of corpus is three thousand words which had been published in English, Urdu and Sindh dailies. The news stories are different but relating to the affairs of the aforementioned events. The random sampling was selected. The sampling was retrieved by using the website, namely www.webcorpu.org.uk.

Procedure of Analysis

The concerned news stories of Urdu and Sindh newspapers were translated in English language. And sort out the data, the Simple Concordance Program (SCP) 4.0 software was used. All the corpora were put into software and then software examined the occurrences of words, like concordances, lemma, parse and Dijk ideological square like our and your etc.

Categories by which news items were retrieved

Celebrates, columns of writers published in the newspapers concerning the relations of two societies. Attacks on the churches, abduction of Non-Muslim for ransom, other conflict on the land, communities' disputes (where Muslim and Christians are neighbors of each other and have business partnership in *Jaranwala*).

Table 1
Evaluation parameters of epistemic stances

| # | Entity | Parameter |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. | Expressing Certainty | Actually, certainly, in fact, undoubtedly, obviously, assuredly, indeed, without doubt. |
| 2. | Expressing Likelihood/doubt | Apparently, perhaps, possibly, evidently, predictably, roughly, allegedly, perhaps, supposedly. |
| 3. | Expressing Likelihood/doubt | Might, May, Should, Could |

Discussion

Epistemic stance adverbials expressing certainty

The adverbials expressing certainty/degree of truth with 32 tokens found represent the considerable majority as far as the epistemic stance is concerned. Adverbials such as *no doubt*, *certainly* appeared very frequently. But on the contrary, *daily The News* used only 23 to express the certainty about the event. Those are some examples as found within the articles along with the comments to their use in the context (examples are italicized; the sources with the names of the articles are stated below them).

Government is *certainly* try to investigate the of the incident. (*The Dawn*) 28 August, 2023.

The Causes of the incidents will *certainly* be investigated. (*The News*) 28 August, 2023.

عبادت گاہوں کو پامال کرنا قضا ناقابل قبول ہے۔ (انتخاب) ۲ ستمبر ۲۰۲۳

عبادت گاہوں پر حملے کسی طور پر قابل قبول نہیں ہے۔ (انتخاب) ۳ ستمبر ۲۰۲۳

Government is *certainly* committed to protect lives and property of Christian Community. (*The Daily Kawish*). 03 September 2024.

Epistemic stance adverbials expressing doubt

The stance adverbials denoting certain degree of doubt represent the second largest group. At first, they may seem somewhat similar to adverbials of certainty, yet they indicate “belief in various levels of probability” (Biber et al., 1999, p.854). According to the findings of the analysis, there are 12 in Dawn and 16 in The News are examples of adverbials expressing such a concept. The following instances can exemplify how they were used within newspaper.

Violence stoked by rumors of alleged desecration of holy book, relayed through mosque announcements. (*The Dawn*) 27 August, 2023.

A violent mob of hundreds ransacked and torched five churches, attacked the residences of members of the Christian community and the office of the local assistant commissioner, following an alleged incident of blasphemy in Jaranwala town of Faisalabad district, on Wednesday (*The Dawn*) 27 August, 2023.

Law enforcers arrested over 100 suspects for their involvement in riots over alleged blasphemy in *Jaranwala* Tehsil of Faisalabad (*The News*). 28 August, 2023.

Also, religious scholars strongly condemned vandalizing of churches in response to an alleged blasphemy of the Holy Quran and Holy Prophet (SAW). (*The News*). 28 August, 2023

جڑانوالہ میں توہین قرآن کے الزامات کے بعد مسیح آبادیوں پر حملہ کیا گیا (انتخاب) ۲۷ اگست ۲۰۲۳۔

Muslim Community set on fire to many home of Christians on alleged desecration of a Holy Quran. (*The Kawish*). 27 August, 2023.

Conclusion

This work has attempted to investigate stance adverbials from a functional linguistic point of view with a firm focus on social and ideological aspects in different articles reporting *Jaranwala* incident. To summarize the theoretical part, language has been described as a mediating tool under the strong influence of certain social factors

that can be of economic or cultural origin. Language, then, through its structural properties, can be used to promote and maintain certain ideologies in forms of common sense assumptions. Media, including newspapers, due to their global impact on humans, present an ideal place to voice such ideas. There are different grammatical means to achieve that including adverbials. As those present quite a large concept, the focus of this article has been narrowed to stance adverbials. Stance adverbials denote stance, a conception that can be describes as expressing the speakers' or writers' judgment, values etc. and therefore may seem well suited to mark values and ideologies of institutions.

The result shows that daily Dawn is more certain in covering the Christians. The one aspect of it may be the impartial portrayal of events. And on the other, it could be speculated that is inculcates the secularism to pave the way for co-existence and free religion society. It also behaves irrespective of creed and color. On the contrary, daily The News seems uncertain on the Non-Muslims agenda. Despite this newspaper is consistently accused Christians and it is demonstrate from the aforementioned table. The regional Urdu Daily *Intikhab* is showing certainty in covering the event and it favors the Christians Community. Among three newspapers, Sindhi newspaper Daily *The Kawish* is more certain about the validity of incident that is done on the fake call by the Muslims.

As the adverbials of certainty ranked among the most frequent, they have been given particular attention and since they are semantically related to general assumptions, they could, to certain degree, play a key role as far as ideology and institutional values are concerned, especially when those appear in direct speeches. Yet, there has been found 12 certainty stance adverbials in 3 thousand words. It is 19 percent of all the words when compared to Biber et al.'s 1.00 percent (1999, p. 859)). Biber et al.'s findings however come from anything found in newspapers, while the articles used in this article also from the newspaper. Nevertheless, such relatively high occurrence might indicate that stance adverbials has probably have such an ideological impact as transitivity, nominalization etc. One of the possible reasons might be the overt semantic nature of adverbials while ideology is most effective when expressed covertly. Also, it should be taken into consideration that the corpus was not large enough to enable to come to a definite conclusion.

On the basis of this study it can be concluded Government should take necessary measure to keep check and balance for the equal representation of Pakistan nationals as Government consistently has been said that it values to citizens irrespective of creed and color.

Recommendations

Keeping in view the findings of this study, the following are recommendation by researcher:

1. While covering the any event relating to desecration events, media outlets should present reality in the coverage rather than religious partiality.
2. Media outlets should give due coverage to Non-Muslim's issues.
3. Government should formulate the strategy with regard to coverage of such events and prepare a code of conduct for Media outlets.

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