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Comparative Analysis of Urdu and English Newspapers Headlines on Imran Khan's Arrest

Muhammad Mursaleen\* and Rao Athar Srosh

Department of English Literature, NUML University, Multan Campus-Pakistan

\*Corresponding author: [sroshrao008@gmail.com](mailto:sroshrao008@gmail.com)

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**Keywords**

Imran Khan's arrest  
Media representation  
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**Abstract**

This research article presents a comparative analysis of Urdu and English newspaper headlines reporting on the arrest of Imran Khan, a prominent political figure in Pakistan. The study aims to shed light on how linguistic and cultural factors influence news framing and shape public perception of a significant political event. A diverse sample of Urdu and English newspapers, both national and regional, were examined during a specific time frame following Imran Khan's arrest. The analysis focused on linguistic features, rhetorical strategies, and cultural influences in the headlines. The findings reveal noteworthy disparities in the linguistic characteristics of headlines in the two languages, including word choice, sentence structure, and the presence of emotive language. The study also highlights the influence of cultural norms and political context on the framing of this event, as well as the potential impact on readers' interpretation and understanding. The study has implications for media professionals, policymakers, and scholars seeking to comprehend the multifaceted relationship between language, media, and political discourse in a complex sociopolitical landscape. This research article not only underscores the vital role of media in shaping public perception but also highlights the impact of language and culture on news representation in Pakistan, emphasizing the need for further research in this area.

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**Introduction**

In the world of information sharing, news headlines play a crucial role in shaping how people see things and influencing the conversations we have. These short yet impactful snippets

not only give us the key details but also guide us in understanding and discussing unfolding events. Bell (1991) emphasizes this by stating that headlines serve as a key aspect of news rhetoric aimed at capturing the reader's interest.

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Similarly, Nir (1993) asserts that headlines are designed to not only grab the reader's attention but also stimulate their curiosity to delve into the entire article. Overall, the headline serves multiple purposes - it alerts the reader, provides information, and urges them to explore further. It acts as a bridge between the author's intention and the reader's reception, embodying both semantic and pragmatic functions that work in unison to enhance the reader's engagement with the news piece.

In a detailed examination of the semiotics of headlines, Iarovici and Amel (1989) elaborate on the dual function of headlines. They argue that headlines operate on two levels: a semantic function that relates to the content of the text and a pragmatic function that caters to the reader by guiding their understanding of the text. The authors highlight that the primary role of a headline is to inform the reader about the nature or essence of the accompanying text.

This research takes a closer look at how all of this unfolds, focusing on news media and conducting a side-by-side examination of Urdu and English newspaper headlines. The spotlight here is on a significant moment in Pakistan's political scene—the arrest of Imran Khan.

Imran Khan is a big deal in Pakistani politics and on the global stage, and the media has consistently followed his ups and downs. His recent arrest provides a unique opportunity to delve into how the media portrays the event, exploring the language used and how it shapes our view of this major political event. But it's not just about Imran Khan; this study broadens its scope to look at how the media represents things more generally, especially in a place like Pakistan with its diverse languages and cultures.

At the core of our investigation, we have a set of key terms: Imran Khan, news headlines, media representation, comparative analysis, Urdu newspapers, English newspapers, and language and media.

These are the building blocks of our research, guiding us as we navigate through the intricate dance of words in framing news events and understanding the cultural implications tangled up in them.

As we delve into the complex world of news headlines, our mission is to uncover the linguistic nuances, persuasive tactics, and cultural influences that come together in portraying Imran Khan's arrest within both Urdu and English press.

Through this side-by-side analysis, we aim to scrutinize and reveal differences and similarities in how this major event is reported in two distinct languages. Beyond just focusing on Imran Khan, our study provides valuable insights into the intricate interplay of language, culture, and media, shedding light on their combined impact on public opinion, political

discussions, and the broader socio-political landscape in Pakistan.

In the upcoming sections, we take a thorough journey through our research, delving into the intricate web of linguistic and cultural factors that shape the narrative surrounding Imran Khan's arrest. Our exploration acts as a reminder of the crucial roles that media, language, and culture play in today's world of news delivery and public conversation. It offers a nuanced perspective on how these elements work together, influencing our collective understanding of significant political events and shaping the way we engage in discussions about them.

#### **Research Objectives:**

- Examine the linguistic features employed in the headlines of selected English (The Dawn, Islamabad Post) and Urdu (Jang, The Express) newspapers.
- Investigate vocabulary richness, syntactic patterns, and other language choices to understand how the event is linguistically framed.
- Investigate how the language used in headlines influences public perception of the event.
- Explore the potential role of media in shaping public opinion through linguistic choices in news representation.

#### **Research Question**

1. How do linguistic choices in the headlines of English newspapers (The Dawn, Islamabad Post) contribute to shaping public opinion regarding Imran Khan's arrest?
2. What role do linguistic choices in the headlines of Urdu newspapers (Jang, The Express) play in influencing public opinion on the event?

#### **Significance of Research**

This research assumes significant importance by navigating the complex intersection of language, media representation, and political communication within the Pakistani context. Through a meticulous examination of linguistic features embedded in newspaper headlines from both English (The Dawn, Islamabad Post) and Urdu (Jang, The Express) outlets, the study exposes cultural and linguistic variations inherent in news reporting in the diverse landscape of Pakistan. The inquiry into elements such as vocabulary richness, syntactic patterns, and other language choices seeks to elucidate how these components contribute to the linguistic framing of significant political events, with a specific focus on the arrest of Imran Khan.

Beyond the confines of academia, this research extends its reach into the practical realm, probing the real-world impact of language in shaping public perception—an essential aspect of media influence. By exploring the potential role of media in molding public opinion through linguistic choices, the study not only addresses existing gaps in the literature but also

furnishes valuable insights for media practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. Furthermore, the application of critical discourse analysis in this research augments the methodological arsenal within media studies.

Ultimately, the findings of this research may not only enrich our comprehension of media dynamics but also carry implications for journalistic practices, fostering responsible reporting and contributing to a broader societal awareness of how language in media shapes the collective understanding of political events in Pakistan.

### **Research Methodology:**

The researcher is diving deep into the colorful tapestry of language, media stories, and political chatter in the lively context of Pakistan. Picture this: a meticulous examination of newspaper headlines, spotlighting the famous English players like *The Dawn* and *Islamabad Post*, alongside the influential Urdu stars—*Jang* and *The Express*. All eyes are on the arrest of Imran Khan, a game changer in the political scene.

This research adventure unfolds with a focus on the intricate dance between language, media portrayals, and political talk in Pakistan's dynamic setting. We're peeling back the layers, analyzing headlines from heavyweight English publications—*The Dawn* and *Islamabad Post*—and rocking Urdu newspapers—*Jang* and *The Express*. Imran Khan's arrest takes center stage, adding some high stakes drama.

Our researcher handpicks newspapers that have their stories heard by many, ensuring we get a sneak peek into the headlines during that special period after Imran Khan's arrest. We're not just glued to digital archives; we're turning physical pages, grabbing insights from both online and print editions.

The linguistic analysis is an in-depth endeavor, delving into the richness of words, the rhythmic cadence of sentences, and the carefully chosen language that adorns newspaper headlines. It's akin to embarking on a linguistic detective story. With the guidance of Critical Discourse Analysis, in collaboration with Fairclough's (1993) Critical Social Analysis (CSA), we navigate the intricate connections between words, practices, and the political discourse embedded in these headlines.

Adding a unique twist, our research unveils a linguistic dance-off between English and Urdu newspapers through a comparative analysis. Yet, we're not stopping there. Enter a cast of characters for focused group discussions—individuals with expertise in English Linguistics and diverse academic backgrounds. Their perspectives inject a touch of humanity, providing us with valuable insights into how the public perceives these headline stories.

Let's infuse a touch of humanity into this exploration of public perception. Envision this research as a journey into the minds of everyday people, deciphering the complex world of politics,

especially when someone like Imran Khan finds themselves in the spotlight. It's more than an academic pursuit; we're immersing ourselves in the experiences of regular folks to understand how the language in those headlines shapes our understanding of the political rollercoaster.

But we're not confined to the ivory towers of academia; we're diving into the real-world impact zone. Contemplate how the media's choice of words might influence how you and I perceive things. This isn't just for scholars; it's for media professionals, decision-makers, and curious minds like ours.

Our research isn't merely another book on the shelf; it's a catalyst in the methodological landscape of media studies. We employ Critical Discourse Analysis to intimately explore the language behind news stories. And to keep it grounded, we're not solely relying on lofty theories—we're engaging everyday individuals in conversations. Diverse backgrounds, diverse opinions, they provide us with the inside scoop on how the average person interprets those newspaper stories.

Visualize this research as a meticulously crafted exploration, lifting the veil on the language, media narratives, and political dialogue in Pakistan. We're not just toying with theories; we're delving into the intricacies, investigating how our study can transcend the confines of dusty bookshelves. It's about offering insights that resonate in the real world, perhaps challenging how we all perceive the headlines in our daily news scroll.

### **Theoretical Framework**

research is like putting on detective glasses to look at how language works in newspapers, especially when big political events happen, like Imran Khan getting arrested. We're using this cool approach called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with a guide called Fairclough's model.

CDA is like our super-tool it helps us see how language, power, and society are all connected. We're not just reading words; we're trying to find hidden ideas and power struggles in the way things are written.

Now, Fairclough's model (CSA) is like our roadmap for understanding how language in the media, especially in Pakistan, shapes our thoughts on political stuff. It's all about figuring out how language helps keep certain social groups in power and why some things sound more important or normal than others.

In our research, CSA helps us dig into words in newspaper headlines. We're figuring out how language choices help create the story about political events. It's like pulling back the curtain on how words are used to make certain ideas seem natural or right.

We're not just looking at English newspapers like *The Dawn* and *Islamabad Post*; we're also checking out Urdu ones like

Jang and The Express. This helps us see if there are differences in how the news is told in different languages.

Our detective work involves looking at how newspapers use language and tricks to shape the way we see politics. It's not just about understanding words; it's about seeing how they make us think and feel. By doing all this, we hope our research can help everyone see how language and media work together in shaping our views on political events like Imran Khan's arrest.

#### **Critical Discourse Analysis (Qualitative):**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to take a closer look at how the media talks. Specifically, we're focusing on newspaper headlines and using a framework by van Dijk from 1998 that looks at the social and cognitive aspects.

In simple terms, we're not just skimming headlines; we're really getting into the ones about Imran Khan's arrest. But here's the key—we're not treating them like just words on a page. We're considering the bigger picture, thinking about the politics, geography, and history behind what's being said.

Our big idea here is that when the media speak, it's not just giving us the facts. It's carrying the ideas of different groups, shaped by their culture, politics, and social context. Even if something as basic as a headline isn't just telling us what happened, it's loaded with deeper meanings. So, using CDA is like being detectives, peeling back the layers of these headlines to reveal hidden assumptions and ideas that shape how we see important political events. It's about understanding the not-so-obvious messages newspapers are sending our way.

#### **Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA):**

**Dawn (English Newspaper):** The headline "Crunch time for PTI as Imran held; as nation-wide riots erupt" strategically uses language to convey a sense of urgency and political tension. The metaphor "Crunch time" suggests a pivotal moment, framing Imran Khan's arrest as a critical event for the PTI party. The inclusion of "nation-wide riots erupt" not only reports on the immediate aftermath but also implies a significant societal impact, potentially shaping public perception by highlighting unrest on a national scale.

**Islamabad Post (English Newspaper):** "Imran Khan arrested in multi-billion-rupee corruption case" employs direct language, emphasizing the core reason for Imran Khan's arrest—the "multi-billion rupee corruption case." This headline succinctly communicates the primary focus, framing the event through the lens of alleged financial misconduct. The language used here positions corruption as the central narrative, contributing to the reader's interpretation of the arrest.

**Jang (Urdu Newspaper):** "Arbon ki corruption Imran Khan Giraftar hiraasat qanoni hay Islamabad high court" leverages Urdu to emphasize the financial magnitude of the alleged corruption with "Arbon ki corruption" (billion-dollar

corruption). Additionally, the phrase "hiraasat qanoni hay" (legally detained) introduces a legalistic perspective, framing Imran Khan's arrest as a result of a formal legal process. This combination of language choices provides a nuanced representation, intertwining legal and financial dimensions.

#### **The Express (Urdu Newspaper):**

"Imran Khan Al Qadir trust case main giraftar 7 arab rupay ki arazi alat karanay ka ilzam" focuses on a specific context, highlighting the "Al Qadir Trust case" and accusing Imran Khan of the "transfer of 7 billion rupees worth of land." This headline delves into the financial intricacies of the case, providing a detailed allegation. The language used contributes to framing the arrest within the context of a financial transaction, shaping the reader's understanding of the event.

In applying Fairclough's model, this analysis unveils how linguistic choices in the headlines contribute to the framing of Imran Khan's arrest. It delves into the subtle nuances, metaphorical expressions, and legalistic terms used by each newspaper, providing a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political narratives constructed through language.

#### **Quantitative data analysis using Dijk's (2006) model for the headlines provided:**

**Actor Description (Meaning):** In the Dawn's headline, Imran Khan is depicted negatively, linking his arrest to a critical situation for the PTI, creating a negative association. Islamabad Post employs a negative portrayal by connecting Imran Khan with a "multi-billion-rupee corruption case," emphasizing a potential wrong.

Jang's Urdu headline introduces a complex dynamic by describing Imran Khan's arrest in terms of "billion-dollar corruption" but also mentions the legal process, possibly neutralizing the negative portrayal. The Express's Urdu headline, however, takes a more neutral stance by narrowing the focus to the "Al Qadir Trust case" without explicitly portraying Imran Khan positively or negatively.

**Authority:** The Dawn and Islamabad Post's headlines do not explicitly mention authorities, leaving the source of information ambiguous. Jang's Urdu headline introduces the Islamabad High Court, bringing a legal authority into the narrative context, potentially shaping public perception. The Express's Urdu headline mentions the case but does not explicitly reference a specific authority, maintaining a neutral stance.

**Categorization:** Categorization in headlines frames the event thematically. The Dawn categorizes the situation as a "crunch time for PTI," suggesting a high-stakes scenario. Islamabad Post categorizes Imran Khan's arrest in connection with a "multi-billion-rupee corruption case," emphasizing the severity of the allegations.

Jang's Urdu headline categorizes the arrest as related to "billion-dollar corruption" and mentions the legal process, adding complexity. The Express's Urdu headline categorizes the arrest in the context of the "Al Qadir Trust case" and an accusation related to land transfer, providing specificity.

**Consensus:** The Dawn's headline implies a potentially

|                          | Actor Description | Authority | Categorization  | Consensus | Evidentiality | Hyperbole |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| The Dawn (English)       | Negative          | None      | PTI's Situation | Lack      | None          | Crunch    |
| Islamabad Post (English) | Negative          | None      | Corruption Case | None      | None          | None      |
| Jang (Urdu)              | Negative/Neutral  | IHC       | Corruption Case | Potential | Legal process | Billion   |
| The Express (Urdu)       | Neutral           | None      | Trust Case      | None      | Al Qadir case | None      |

negative situation for PTI, suggesting a lack of consensus within the party. Islamabad Post's headline does not explicitly indicate consensus, leaving room for diverse interpretations.

Jang's Urdu headline may suggest a legal consensus by mentioning the legal process, adding a layer of formality. The Express's Urdu headline doesn't explicitly indicate consensus, maintaining a more straightforward narrative.

**Evidentiality:** Evidentiality refers to the support of ideas or statements with facts. The Dawn's headline lacks explicit evidential support, potentially relying on the assumed knowledge of the readership.

Islamabad Post's headline also lacks explicit evidential support, leaving the allegations open-ended. Jang's Urdu headline supports the information by referencing the legal process, grounding the narrative in legal proceedings. The Express's Urdu headline supports the information with the mention of the "Al Qadir Trust case," providing context to the arrest.

**Hyperbole:** Hyperbole involves exaggeration for emphasis. The Dawn's headline uses the term "crunch time," potentially indicating a heightened situation, adding a dramatic element to the narrative.

Islamabad Post's headline avoids hyperbole, maintaining a more straightforward tone. Jang's Urdu headline uses the term "billion-dollar corruption," which could be seen as a form of hyperbole, emphasizing the scale of the alleged corruption. The Express's Urdu headline does not employ hyperbole, maintaining a measured tone.

In conclusion, this analysis provides a detailed examination of linguistic features in the headlines, shedding light on how different newspapers linguistically frame Imran Khan's arrest. The variations in portrayals contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the discourse surrounding this significant political event.

Below is a chart summarizing the quantitative content analysis results based on Dijk's (2006) model for the provided headlines:

**The Dawn (English):**

- **Actor Description:** Imran Khan is portrayed

negatively, associating his arrest with a critical situation for the PTI. **Authority:** The headline doesn't explicitly mention authorities, leaving the source of information ambiguous. **Categorization:** Imran Khan's arrest is categorized as a critical time for PTI, suggesting a high-stakes scenario. **Consensus:** Implied lack of consensus within PTI, suggesting a potentially negative situation. **Evidentiality:** Lacks explicit evidential support, potentially relying on assumed reader knowledge. **Hyperbole:** Uses the term "crunch time," indicating a heightened and dramatic situation.

**Islamabad Post (English):**

- **Actor Description:** Imran Khan is portrayed negatively by connecting him with a "multi-billion rupee corruption case." **Authority:** The headline doesn't explicitly mention authorities, leaving the source of information open-ended. **Categorization:** Imran Khan's arrest is categorized in connection with a severe corruption case, emphasizing the gravity of the allegations. **Consensus:** Does not explicitly indicate consensus, allowing for diverse interpretations. **Evidentiality:** Lacks explicit evidential support, keeping the allegations open-ended. **Hyperbole:** Maintains a more straightforward tone without employing hyperbole.

**Jang (Urdu):**

- **Actor Description:** Imran Khan is portrayed negatively/neutral, mentioning "billion-dollar corruption" but also emphasizing the legal process. **Authority:** Mentions the Islamabad High Court (IHC), introducing a legal authority in the narrative context. **Categorization:** Imran Khan's arrest is categorized as related to "billion-dollar corruption," adding complexity by mentioning the legal process. **Consensus:** May suggest a legal consensus by

mentioning the legal process, adding a layer of formality. **Evidentiality:** Supports the information by referencing the legal process, grounding the narrative in legal proceedings.

- **Hyperbole:** Uses the term "billion-dollar corruption," potentially exaggerating the scale of the alleged corruption.

### The Express (Urdu):

**Actor Description:** Imran Khan is portrayed neutrally, narrowing the focus to the "Al Qadir Trust case" without explicit positive or negative connotations. **Authority:** The headline doesn't explicitly mention authorities, maintaining a neutral stance. **Categorization:** Imran Khan's arrest is categorized in the context of the "Al Qadir Trust case" and an accusation related to land transfer, providing specificity. **Consensus:** Does not explicitly indicate consensus, maintaining a more straightforward narrative. **Evidentiality:** Supports the information with the mention of the "Al Qadir Trust case," providing context to the arrest. **Hyperbole:** Maintains a measured tone without employing hyperbole.

This chart and explanation highlight the diverse linguistic strategies employed by different newspapers, contributing to a nuanced understanding of how Imran Khan's arrest is framed in the media discourse.

### Findings:

As we dug into the language used in newspaper headlines after Imran Khan's arrest, we found some interesting twists in the storytelling, especially between the English outlets like The Dawn and Islamabad Post, and the Urdu ones, Jang and The Express.

The Dawn, in English, threw some shade, framing Imran Khan's arrest as a crucial moment for the PTI with a bit of a negative vibe. On the other hand, Islamabad Post went all-in on the corruption angle, putting a spotlight on a "multi-billion-rupee corruption case."

Switching over to Urdu, Jang took a legal turn, making it all about the legal process and slapping on the label of "billion-dollar corruption." Meanwhile, The Express, also in Urdu, played it cool, keeping things neutral and zeroing in on the "Al Qadir Trust case" without leaning too heavily on the positive or negative vibes.

So, it's like each newspaper decided to tell the story in its own way, with a touch of drama, others focusing on the legal nitty-gritty, and a few opting for the diplomatic route. It's fascinating how the same event can wear different hats depending on the language and the newspaper you're reading.

### Literature Review

Urdu journalism in Pakistan tends to focus on local and national news, whereas English journalism has a more global perspective. Urdu journalism is more widely read and accessible to a larger portion of the population as it is one of

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While covering the issue, even though English media is considered more responsible than Urdu media (Kamboh & Ittefaq, 2019). In addition, a study was published by Aleem, Ansari, and Habib (2020), who emphasized analyzing the coverage of blasphemy cases in Urdu and English newspapers of Pakistan. They focused on various blasphemy instances in the country, and Jang and Dawn were chosen to assess them. The research was conducted regarding framing theory and whether the newspaper coverage ignited the issue or tried to resolve it. A mixed methodology was adopted as both qualitative and quantitative analyses were performed. In terms of quantitative data, a survey was conducted, and 200 participants responded that English newspapers are neutral in approach, while Urdu newspapers present news sensationally. Further, for qualitative data, content analysis was used as it was revealed that Jang remained neutral while reporting on the people accused of blasphemy. Still, it also published prominent news stories regarding the accusers.

Meanwhile, *Dawn* reported from a liberal standpoint, as it presented the news content in a manner that implied support for the accused and did not put much emphasis on reporting the side of the accuser (Aleem, Ansari, & Habib, 2020).

Furthermore, another research study that was recently published implemented an almost similar approach to analyze the relations between the Pakistani government and the judiciary from the perspectives of Urdu and English newspapers. The study focused on the issue of NRO in 2012, which created rifts between the Pakistani government and the judiciary.

*Dawn* was selected as an English newspaper, while *Jang* for Urdu reporting, as content analysis was utilized as the research method to analyze these two dailies' approaches. The reporting on the whole issue was examined, and it was discovered that both dailies framed the NRO issue negatively. Still, *Dawn* negatively reported the role of the judiciary, and *Jang* was more inclined toward criticizing the role of the government in the whole fiasco (Durrani, Alam, & Rehman, 2020).

Similarly, a study in 2021 employed a similar approach to analyze coverage of environmental problems in Pakistan's Urdu and English dailies as it drew a comparison. Rauf, Ali, and Irfan (2021) studied the environmental awareness created by the press, as they chose English daily, Dawn and Urdu daily, and Aaj. The content analysis was performed to generate the results. They showed that Urdu newspapers gave more coverage to environmental issues and played a significant role through higher coverage in increasing environmental awareness. However, regarding the

government's position, Urdu newspapers focused more on the government's actions. In contrast, English newspapers emphasized public and non-governmental organizations' role in eradicating climate issues (Rauf, Ali, & Irfan, 2021).

Aurangzaib, Rana, Zeeshan, and Naqvi published a comparative study in 2021. They performed a critical discourse analysis on Pakistan's Urdu and English newspapers' headlines to analyze whether influential groups can influence the policies of media in society or not. The research was conducted regarding Panama Leaks, while English dailies Dawn and Daily Times were selected, and Urdu newspapers Jang and Daily Express were chosen for analysis. The study found that Dawn and Express gave significant coverage to the issue with prominent headlines. However, Daily Times and Jang did the opposite, as they did not make actual headlines to highlight the matter (Aurangzaib, Rana, Zeeshan, & Naqvi, 2021).

In terms of coverage given to natural disasters that occurred in Pakistan, Javed (2021) compared the reporting of Urdu and English dailies. For this purpose, he selected *Jang* and *Nawaiwaqt* as Urdu dailies, while *The News* and *The Nation* as English newspapers. Content analysis was adopted as a research method based on news content related to natural disasters from 2010 to 2017. Meanwhile, mainly two types of natural disasters were focused upon: floods and drought. The study's results revealed that Urdu newspapers were more eager to give coverage to natural disasters than English dailies. Moreover, these newspapers were more inclined to provide flood coverage rather than drought (Javed, 2021).

Another comparative study assessed the approaches of English and Urdu dailies in reporting issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was conducted by Aziz, Imtiaz, and Saeed Field (2022), as they applied content analysis in the context of framing theory to explore the matter. The study selected newspaper content from March and April 2020, which was the beginning of the pandemic in Pakistan.

The English daily Dawn and Urdu newspaper Jang were included in the research process for data collection. The findings revealed that both newspapers were at the solution end regarding Covid-19 as both dailies focused on raising awareness, informing about preventive measures, and advising the policymakers. However, Dawn gave almost double the coverage to Covid-19 relevant news compared to Jang (Aziz, Imtiaz, & Saeed, 2022)

### **Language in Media Representation**

The influence of language on media representation and framing has been a subject of significant academic inquiry. Scholars have explored how linguistic choices in media can impact the portrayal of events, individuals, and issues. For instance, Van Dijk (1998) has emphasized the role of language in constructing social and political realities,

highlighting the power of news discourse in shaping public understanding. The linguistic features used in media, including headlines, can convey implicit bias, stereotypes, and ideological perspectives. This is particularly relevant to the examination of news headlines in the context of high-profile political events, such as the arrest of political figures.

### **Comparative Analysis of News Headlines**

Comparative analyses of news headlines in different languages have been conducted in various contexts to understand linguistic variations and the cultural impact on news reporting. Smith (2015) examined English and French headlines in Canadian newspapers, revealing differences in linguistic features and rhetorical strategies. This research highlighted how the choice of language can influence the framing and presentation of news, leading to variations in public perception. Drawing inspiration from these comparative studies, our research seeks to apply similar methods to the specific case of Urdu and English newspaper headlines following the arrest of Imran Khan in Pakistan.

### **News Media and Public Perception**

The significance of news media in shaping public perception cannot be underestimated. Scholars like Mc Combs and Shaw (1972) have introduced the agenda-setting theory, which underscores the media's power to influence the public agenda by highlighting specific issues in news coverage. In the context of our research, this implies that the framing of Imran Khan's arrest in Urdu and English headlines can potentially shape how the public perceives this political event. The influence of language and culture on media representation is crucial to understanding the broader implications for public opinion and political discourse.

### **Media in Pakistan**

In Pakistan, the media landscape has experienced significant changes in recent years, with the growth of both Urdu and English-language news outlets. Researchers like Malik (2017) have explored the evolving role of media in Pakistan's democratic environment and its impact on the political landscape. Understanding the context of the media industry in Pakistan is essential for our research, as it informs the cultural and linguistic factors that may influence the framing of news headlines.

### **Media Framing and Agenda Setting**

The role of media in framing and setting the public agenda is a well-established concept in communication and media studies (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Media outlets, including newspapers, possess the ability to emphasize specific topics and issues, thus influencing the public's perception and priorities. The framing of news events through headlines, in particular, is crucial in this regard. By choosing which aspects of an event to highlight or downplay,

newspapers can guide public discourse and shape the collective understanding of a news story (Goffman, 1974).

### **Linguistic and Rhetorical Strategies in Headlines**

Analyzing linguistic and rhetorical strategies in news headlines has been a focal point of discourse analysis in media studies. This includes investigating techniques such as word choice, sentence structure, and the use of emotive language (Bell, 1991). By examining these features, researchers have unveiled how newspapers convey information and stimulate reader engagement through headlines (Bell, 1991; Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Understanding these strategies is pivotal for grasping the impact of language in media representation.

### **Cross-Linguistic Analysis in Media Studies**

The pursuit of cross-linguistic analysis in media studies has provided valuable insights into how language choices influence news representation. Researchers have conducted comparative studies in multilingual contexts to explore linguistic variations and cultural influences on media framing (Musolff, 2004). These studies often underscore the importance of considering cultural norms, linguistic nuances, and editorial decisions that come into play when newspapers serve diverse linguistic and cultural audiences (Musolff, 2004; Bassiouney, 2009).

### **Imran Khan and the Political Landscape in Pakistan**

Imran Khan, a prominent figure in Pakistan's political landscape, has been a subject of extensive media coverage over the years. His arrest, a momentous political event, provides a pertinent backdrop for examining the role of language and culture in media representation. Imran Khan's influence and the political dynamics in Pakistan make this research particularly salient in understanding the broader implications of news framing in the country (Shaheed, 2019; Rashid & Haider, 2018).

In light of this existing research and theoretical framework, our study aims to contribute to the discourse by scrutinizing the headlines from *The Dawn*, *Islamabad Post*, *Jang*, and *The Express*. We aim to dissect linguistic features, rhetorical strategies, and cultural influences in these headlines to gain deeper insights into how language and culture intersect in media representation. This approach promises to shed light on the multifaceted relationship between language, media, and political discourse in Pakistan, particularly in the context of Imran Khan's arrest.

The existing literature on language and media representation in the Pakistani context provides a thorough foundation, yet several notable research gaps emerge for investigation. Specifically, there is a paucity of studies that comprehensively examine the linguistic and cultural dimensions of newspaper headlines following the arrest of a political figure as significant as Imran Khan. While previous

research touches on political events, the arrest of Imran Khan is a unique and momentous occurrence requiring dedicated analysis.

Moreover, there's a notable scarcity of studies that directly compare how English and Urdu newspapers handle the framing and representation of political arrests. This presents a golden opportunity to delve into the linguistic and cultural nuances at play. What remains insufficiently explored is the impact of these variations on public opinion, revealing a gap in understanding how readers interpret and respond to differently framed headlines. Adding to this, the existing studies fall short in covering emerging issues like the Covid-19 pandemic, underscoring the necessity for research on how newspapers in various languages depict contemporary events.

Furthermore, while linguistic features are briefly acknowledged, there's a call for a more thorough analysis of specific language choices in headlines. This includes delving into aspects like vocabulary richness and syntactic patterns. Literature also neglects a deeper investigation into editorial perspectives and decision-making processes that contribute to how headlines are framed in a relatively unexplored area. Lastly, the role of English newspapers in shaping media narratives, especially concerning political events and arrests, is a fact that needs more comprehensive exploration. Addressing these research gaps wouldn't just enhance existing literature but would also significantly contribute to understanding the intricate dance between language, media, and political discourse in Pakistan.

In sum, the review pinpoints several key areas of concern: the lack of comprehensive studies on the linguistic and cultural dimensions of newspaper headlines post-significant political arrests, the absence of specific comparative analyses on how English and Urdu newspapers approach such events, and the limited exploration of how linguistic and cultural variations impact readers' interpretations and responses. Additionally, it emphasizes the need for research on contemporary events like the Covid-19 pandemic, calls for a more in-depth analysis of specific language choices, and highlights the importance of understanding editorial perspectives and the role of English newspapers in shaping media narratives during political events and arrests. Addressing these gaps would undoubtedly enhance our understanding of the complex interplay between language, media, and political discourse in Pakistan.

### **Findings:**

As we dug into the language used in newspaper headlines after Imran Khan's arrest, we found some interesting twists in the storytelling, especially between the English outlets like *The Dawn* and *Islamabad Post*, and the Urdu ones, *Jang* and *The Express*.

The Dawn, in English, threw some shade, framing Imran Khan's arrest as a crucial moment for the PTI with a bit of a negative vibe. On the other hand, Islamabad Post went all-in on the corruption angle, putting a spotlight on a "multi-billion-rupee corruption case."

Switching over to Urdu, Jang took a legal turn, making it all about the legal process and slapping on the label of "billion-dollar corruption." Meanwhile, The Express, also in Urdu, played it cool, keeping things neutral and zeroing in on the "Al Qadir Trust case" without leaning too heavily on the positive or negative vibes.

So, it's like each newspaper decided to tell the story in its own way, with a touch of drama, others focusing on the legal nitty-gritty, and a few opting for the diplomatic route. It's fascinating how the same event can wear different hats depending on the language and the newspaper you're reading.

#### Conclusion:

Our study shines a light on the complex interplay of language, media representation, and political communication in post-arrest Pakistan, with Imran Khan's case taking center stage. Using Dijk's (2006) model of Ideological Discourse Analysis, our comparative study uncovered differences in how actors are described, authority is attributed, categories are formed, consensus is portrayed, evidence is supported, and hyperbole is used. These findings highlight that linguistic framing isn't a one-size-fits-all deal across newspapers; it reveals a spectrum of ideological underpinnings and communication strategies.

The detailed way Imran Khan's arrest is portrayed in the headlines emphasizes how crucial language is in shaping public opinion and political conversations. Our research steps in to bridge gaps in the existing literature, giving us a better grasp of how media language choices influence our understanding of significant political events. The use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) within the Pakistani media scene, as showcased here, adds richness to the toolkit for studying media.

What we found sends a clear message to media professionals, policymakers, and researchers alike we need to critically examine language choices in news reporting because they pack a punch in shaping public sentiment. By acknowledging the linguistic variations in media discourse, everyone involved can strive for responsible reporting and a more nuanced understanding of political events. In essence, this research offers valuable insights into the intricate dance between language, media, and political discourse in Pakistan, setting the stage for future inquiries in this fascinating realm.

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