

Discourse Analysis of News from DAWN (Pakistani) Newspaper

Samiya Taskeen¹, Nargis Saleem²

¹Department of Linguistics, University of Lahore, Pakistan

²Department of Linguistics Lahore Leads University, Pakistan

Abstract: To reveal the hidden and out of sight value of things analyst do discourse analysis. In The present study analysts tried to analyze news from a local Pakistani newspaper with the intentions to investigate the real nature of the incident and in doing so many hidden and back grounded aspects were found which were necessary to be foreground.

Keywords: Shia, suni, ashura, pindi, muharram, imambargh, masjid,

1. NEWS

Curfew imposed Ashura clashes turn pindi into ghost town

RAWALPINDI, Nov 16:

1

For the second year in a row, Muharram has brought death and destruction to Rawalpindi.

Last year, a suicide bomber struck a procession in the heart of Rawalpindi while this year the city's own residents were behind violent clashes on Friday between Deobandi activists and Shia mourners in Raja Bazaar that led to death of nine people and forced the government to impose curfew.

2

By Saturday morning the city had been sealed off from Islamabad by containers and the imposition of curfew had ensured that most streets and roads remained empty and quiet. Only military and police personnel roamed the ghost town.

3

All major roads within Rawalpindi were blocked by containers and markets remained closed.

The hapless people of the main Raja Bazaar, where the conflagration had begun on Friday, had remained confined to their houses for over 24 hours by Saturday evening.

4

Though the curfew was relaxed in the evening from 6pm to 6:30pm, shops were not opened so there was little opportunity for residents to replenish their stocks. The curfew was again relaxed in the night from 9pm to 12 midnight.

5

Commissioner Khalid Masood Chaudhry told Dawn that the government had not yet decided to lift the curfew or further extend it for another 24 hours. He said that the announcement would be made after a review of the situation.

Public transport also remained absent. A few but very few private vehicles were seen on the roads.

6

Intelligence sources and eyewitnesses said the crisis began in the afternoon when the mourning procession of Ashura reached Fawara Chowk where its participants heard the remarks of Maulana Shakirullah, a local Imam who was giving the Friday speech from the Mosque and Madressah Taleemul Quran (known as Maulvi Ghulamullah wali Masjid). A follower of the Deobandi school of thought, the imam made harsh and offensive comments against the Shia community.

7

It was unfortunate that though the City District Government Rawalpindi (CDGR) had banned the use of loudspeaker (except for giving Azan and the Friday sermon in Arabic), this ban was violated by the mosque administration despite the presence of police and local administration.

It is not clear what happened after this. While some eyewitnesses claim that the Shia participants of the procession (including about 100 youngsters from Parachinar and other parts of Kurram Agency) instigated the violence by pelting stones on the mosque, others claim that the students and people in the Madressah were the first to throw stones.

8

SITUATION WORSENS: Regardless of who cast the first stone, the clash soon intensified shortly after which gunfire was exchanged.

During the clash, the police tried to overpower the angry mob but they were outnumbered. Some of the young men snatched the policemen's rifles and emptied the weapons on their opponents, Abdul Waheed, an eyewitness, told Dawn.

He said that after the exchange of fire, the mob set fire to the mosque which was located above the Madina and Makkah Markets. The markets were located on the ground floor and sold fabric. Later they ransacked the market.

The mob set fire to two main fabric markets, including more than 100 shops, four private banks, and smashed windowpanes of buildings at an adjacent bazaar. It also attacked the police and three Imambargahs in different parts of the city.

9

The mob violence in the midst of gunfire was extreme enough to strike fear in the city's residents despite the ban on cellphone services, the news of the clash spread like wild fire (partly thanks to the electronic media) and added to the strength of the two clashing groups.

Some of the people inside the mosque managed to escape through back door, said a police official who was present on the spot.

10

The part of the procession that had already passed by the mosque and was ahead of the violence managed to reach Imambargah Qadeemi three kilometres away. However, those in the rear never made it to the destination.

The nine deaths took place at this location as well as the bulk of the injuries.

By the evening the army was called in. Rescue workers also turned up to shift the injured and dead to the nearby District Headquarters Hospital. The fire brigade vehicles battled the blaze in the cloth market as it was spreading towards other adjoining markets.

11

The clashes on the other hand spread to other areas of the city where Deobandi activists attacked Imambargah Haideria in Ratta Amral; Imambargah Col Maqbool on College Road, Imambargah Hifazat Ali Shah in Bohar Bazaar and Qadeemi Imambargah at the Jamia Masjid Road.

Three more people were injured during these attacks.

The army was deployed at these places but after failing to control the situation, it was decided by the government that curfew

would be imposed.

12

Regional Police Officer (RPO) Zaheen Iqbal Sheikh told Dawn that the curfew was imposed to avert further clash as the police and administration feared that when people gathered for the funeral of those killed on Friday the situation would lead to further violence.

The RPO did not provide any details about the investigations carried out by the police, nor did he say how many people had been arrested.



RAWALPINDI: A man looks at a market, neighbouring a seminary, after it was set on fire by a mob during sectarian clashes on Friday.—AP

2. FRAMEWORK APPLIED

Analyst utilized the following framework

1. Focus upon a social problem which has a semiotic aspect.
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
 - the network of practices it is located within
 - the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
 - the discourse (the semiosis itself)
 - structural analysis: the order of discourse
 - interactional analysis
 - interdiscursive analysis
 - linguistic and semiotic analysis.
3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense needs' the problem.
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1±4).

3. INTRODUCTION

Before moving on to Critical discourse analysis it should be explained to readers what Discourse is. Different people have defined Discourse in different ways Hence, it would not be wrong to say that language which is used for communicating purpose is called Discourse (cook 1989). Discourses are analyzed in different ways by different analysts with different intentions. Not only Interpretation and description of discourses in context are critically analyzed in CDA rather it also includes an explanation of “why and how discourses work” (Rogers 2004). CDA helps in understanding the discourse with the intentions to “reveal hidden and out of sight value” (Paltridge 2008). “CDA seeks to illuminate the relations between discourse, dominance, marginalization, social inequality, Ideology and hegemony” (wodak 1992).

3.1. Social Issue that has Semiotic Aspect

The problem that is being discussed here is the condition of the city Rawalpindi after the clashes between two religious groups, in the heart of the city. Many people became victim of the clash. In order to overcome the situation Government of Punjab imposed curfew.

3.2. Semiotic Aspects

- Genres (ways of acting)
- Discourses (ways of representing)
- Styles (ways of being)

4. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS(CDA) OF THE TITLE OF NEWS

The title of the news has beautifully summarized the whole incident. Title has revealed three different situations by using three words in a most précised manner.

Three words, Three situations

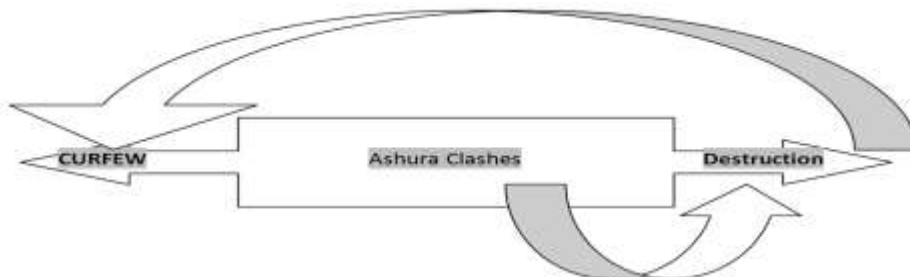
- “Curfew”
- “Ashura clashes”
- “Ghost town”

Use of the above mentioned words in the title of news revealing the incident in a summarized way. Author has used the word, curfew, which signals towards a situation which compels people to be at home.

The Use of “Ashura clashes” is enough here to reveal the cause of curfew. Instead of going into details to investigate the reason behind this curfew, readers can easily perceive it by going through the title.

Ashura clashes caused destruction and the author used the term “GHOST TOWN” which is pointing towards the worse situation of the city and destruction caused by the Ashura clashes.

Incident in the title has been defined in a sequenced way. The “**Curfew imposed**” tells the current situation of the city and that this imposition was due to Ashura clashes and these clashes brought destruction to the city as well.



Elements of exaggeration can be seen in title as “GHOST TOWN”. It gives the impression as if there has been destruction on a very large scale. The use of certain words most of the time horrifies readers. To attract readers and catch their attention and capture their thoughts media usually creates a situation like this.

5. DEOBANDI VERSUS SHIA CONFLICT

Basic conflict between shia and deobandi started regarding Caliphacy of Hazrat ALI (to be first caliph or fourth) It is being said that Hazrat ALI was being killed by Muayia (a sunni... deobandis are also sunni). No doubt Hazrat ali has been (and still is) an honourable leader for all Muslims. Later on Hazrat Imam Hussain who was a true practitioner of ISLAM being tortured and killed by yazid (son of muayia).

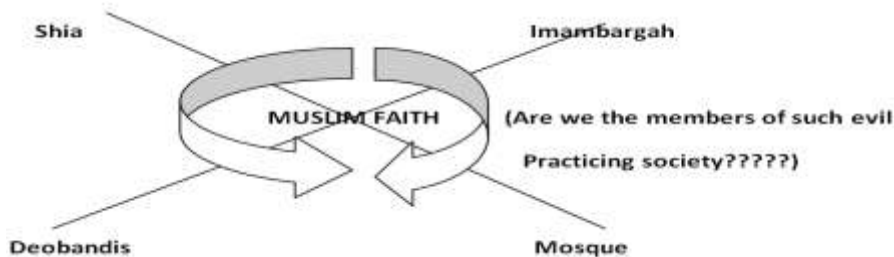


(Paragraph-8)

“the mob set fire to the mosque which was located above the Madina and Makkah Markets.”

(Paragraph-11)

“Deobandi activists attacked Imambargah Haideria in Ratta Amral; Imambargah Col Maqbool on College Road, Imambargah Hifazat Ali Shah in Bohar Bazaar and Qadeemi Imambargah at the Jamia Masjid Road.”



Shia and Deobandi both are considered Muslim groups but despite the fact Shia community targeted Mosque and Deobandi, attacked Imambargah

The question we have to ponder over is:

Is that an ethnic identity of a group is more preferable than that of MUSLIM faith?

6. IDEOLOGY BEHIND THE CONFLICT

Ideology behind shia sunni conflict has its roots in history. This conflict is not something new rather it started soon after the death of PROPHET PBUH: which split Muslims into groups. As after the death of PROPHET PBUH the issue regarding the suitable Muslim leader reached to its peak. Basic conflict between shia and deobandi,s started regarding the Caliphacy of Imam ALI R.A(to be first caliph or fourth). This was the major issue which created boundaries between Muslims and divided them into groups. At that time a group of people supported the view that Caliphacy should be confined to Prophet,s family while other group_started searching for a competent and suitable leader. The group which supported Imam Ali is known as “shia” community while others are known as “sunni”. Both have been rival to eachother. It is being said that imam Ali was killed by Mayia (a sunni.. Deobandis are also sunni). Hazrat Ali no doubt has been an honorable leader for all the Muslims but Shia community attributed few distinct traits to Hazrat Ali(concept of panjtan pak ect). Later on Imam Hussain who was known as a real practitioner of Islam was also killed by yazid (son of mayia). So conflict between SHIA and DEOBANDI, S is always there (Patheos.com).

7. PRESUPPOSITION

Presupposition is background belief or previous knowledge about anything. Preupposition is “Something that a speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance” (Yule 1996). Presupposition of Ashura conflict is SHIA and Deobandi are always against each other. War between these groups seems an unending war. God knows whether it’s a:

- War of Terror
 - War of Error
- OR
- War of Rumor

8. RESPONSIBLE FOR CLASH

Apparently; the Ashura conflict started between two religious groups because both were rival groups; but no one tried to investigate the reason behind this. Analyst would like to add the words of CONRAD author of Heart of Darkness:

“Power Corrupts Man”

No doubt this has justly been said.

(Paragraph-6)

“Intelligence sources and eyewitnesses said the crisis began in the afternoon when -----A follower of the Deobandi school of thought, the imam made harsh and offensive comments against the Shia community”

(paragraph-7)

“It was unfortunate that though the City District Government Rawalpindi (CDGR) had banned the use of loudspeaker (except for giving Azan and the Friday sermon in Arabic), this ban was violated by the mosque administration despite the presence of police and local administration”

Analyst found local Imam responsible for the clash this time. The credit of the destruction goes to local imam despite the fact whether he was DEOBANDI or SHIA.

9. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Use of loudspeaker was banned but

(Paragraph-6)

Imam violated rules → where is the Government?????

(Paragraph-7)

Pelting stones → where is the Government???

(Paragraph-8)

Gunfire was exchanged → Where is the Government???????

(Paragraph-11)

Imambargah targeted → where is the Government?????

(Paragraph-6)

Mosque targeted → where is the Government?????

(Paragraph-10)

People died \longrightarrow where is the Government?????

(Paragraph-11)

Curfew imposed \longrightarrow Here is the Government

10. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

- Metaphor
- Cohesive linkage
- Conjunction(and, between etc)
- Symbolism (ghost town)
- Poetic expression(A few, very few etc)
- Long narrative sentences

11. MULTIMODALITY

Visual discourse along with written discourse is utilized to make the discourse more authentic and catchy. Picture at the end of written discourse is used by the author to highlight the actual condition of the city with the intention to brought people “closer to the incident”(Paltridge 2008)

12. ROLE OF MEDIA

- Media played its role very well. EXAGGERATION can be seen on the part of media (i.e.ghost town) with the intentions of PUBLICITY.

(Paragraph-9)

“despite the ban on cellphone services, the news of the clash spread like wild fire (partly thanks to the electronic media) and added to the strength of the two clashing groups.”

REFERENCES

- [1] COOK, G (1989) Discourse oxford university press
- [2] <https://www.dawn.com/>
- [3] <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Shia-Islam.html>
- [4] http://www.discoveringislam.org/origins_of_shiism.htmRole of media
- [5] Paltridge,B.(2007,2008) Discourse Analysis: MPG books Ltd, Badmin, Cornwall.
- [6] Yule g (1996) pragmatics:oxford university press walton street.