

# Our Words are Never Neutral

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## Abstract

The intended end of this study is to trace the connection between language and ideology and how these connections are advocated in the evaluation of spoken texts, in keeping with the Socio Cognitive Model (2002) of Van Dijk. This study is also intended to explain that the political talk shows telecast by various private TV channels are apparent and conducive devices of ideology and concealed contexts and meanings which are not always vivid for readers and the viewers. The researchers attempted to explore how the ideologies are portrayed in these shows through the analysis of a programme of a very popular talk show of a private television channel of Pakistan. It also suggests that these talk shows bewilder the agency of systems by using various tactics. In other words, critical text analyses reveal how these selections lead debaters to manipulate the relations of agency and power in the representation of action to create specific connotations which are not always vivid for all readers and the viewers.

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**Index terms**— TV channels, power, CDA (critical discourse analysis), socio cognitive model, ideology.

Introduction "...using a language involves something that goes beyond the acquisition of structures and the ability to make appropriate choices in the realizations of the particular language functions." ??Yalden, 1987) A salient feature of language phenomenon is that it has the capability to evaluate the type of utterances and expressions which are formed by others. In natural discourse utterances, like the oral discourses, utterances are always extempore. It means they are often found with wrong starts, pauses, un-ended remarks, etc. They are not correct grammatically, nor are they considered so by the grammarians. Whenever someone comes to know to the dialogues, specially the "recorded" ones, as they are usually in use of a critical analysis because the human mind is apt towards errors, the recordings would carry out many deductions and amongst them would be the commencement of the fact that, not a single piece of recording would be really Author ¥ § : Department of English University of Sargodha, Pakistan. E-mail : anayakhan35@yahoo.com making any sense. In other words, they are the deficient, incomplete sentences in grammar. In linked or joined discourse, the word "utterances" is commonly taken into consideration, what the people actually say take in terms of 'write'. This term does not confine to any kind of sentences, in fact, it covers all types of it, even, small sounds like "uh-huh", "hmm", etc. impart the whole meanings as they convey a complete sense.

"?there has been a widening of the field of research to include the external functioning of the verbal code as well, what people do with words. The emphasis in such an approach shifts from structure and grammar to function and communicative competence, from assembling structures to doing things with utterances, from sentence in isolation to the utterance in context. This, then, is the domain of discourse analysis ?? The description of process whereby we create and relate, organize and realize meaning." (Riley, 1985, It is important to note that Discourse analysis is not completed, without difficult structures just as coherence and cohesion which complete the whole procedure of analyzing the discourse in written form or in speech. The former implies to the idea of derivation of the given context with the involvement of text with the participant. Context matters a lot as it gives the knowledge to the reader about that particular relation, culture, intensions, etc. in which something was being written or said. Cohesion may refer to the linking devices, which add up to the meaning of coherences into the discourse or text.

## 1 II.

### 2 Aims of Discourse Analysis

It is one of the major complexities of language that it has so many concealed, functional and morphological meanings which are not obvious at times. Discourse analysis just helps us to reveal those hidden meanings, be it any position or in form of the text. One of its major purposes is to demonstrate how some specific linguistic items tend to enhance the skilfulness of language users in their communication. Discourses can be containing one or two words but it is nevertheless, full of secret meanings. Discourse analysis enables us to encode that very code which is embedded even in messages like, "PRAYER TIME" (It denotes that there will be a short interval on the score of offering prayer). language cannot be confined to a single phenomenon and its application has even broader span. The term "discourse" can be used in a wider sense. It connotes something spoken or written in routine practice of language. Denotative meanings are ever different from the contextual and real meanings and the purpose of discourse is to reveal how speech patterns are functioning in a specific frame work and how they are being practised in the public.

### 3 Global

### 4 G

### 5 Critical Discourse Analysis

The very name of this kind explains itself. It refers to the introduction of the idea where discourse analysis is observed critically in order to trace out the power control by which the discourse is affected.

"Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context." (van Dijk, 2001, p. 352) The facts are emphasised through Critical discourse analysis when it is evaluated critically. These facts and figures serve as a key role to reveal the ascendant powers which are either in the forms of organizations or are found on an individual level. Through CDA the manipulations or the texts which are being used otherwise in the political settings are magnified. All these manipulations are very much conducive in determining the sociological influence of a group of people over the society or on another group of people.

Van Dijk (1996), opines "one of the central tasks of CDA is to account for the relationships between discourse and social power" (p.84). According to Van Dijk (2000), "If there is one notion often related to ideology it is that of power" (p.25). Social power refers to the hold of one group, be it an organization or an institution, over another. Whatever we say, our each and every utterance has a particular knowledge hidden inside it. Dr. Gregor (2004) in his paper states that "our words are never neutral". Critical discourse analysis observations are conducted as to how different meanings in a society are conveyed through text or by the demonstration of power. This makes the fact even more vivid and clearer.

"CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) sees itself as politically involved research" (Titscher et al, 2000, p.147).

One of the aims of CDA is to help the analyst to decode the concealed boundaries and the ideologies which are prevalent in the society and have established their own school of thought. It is considered that attitudes influence the way we behave in a society. Media, as an instrument for reshaping attitudes, "are not simply vehicles for delivering information. They guide the ideological stance of the reader" (Reath 1998, p.50). Different media affect our understanding and knowledge of the world we live in, when they employ a specific language. In effect, the language of media is not authentic since it is determined and administered by dominant world-views or ideologies or as Fowler (1991, p.11) said, "The world of the press is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged" Furthermore, within a society the parties or the organizations have their own personal interests. In addition to this the ones in power are brought forth and are unmasked in terms of their agendas. Owing to this, the ones downtrodden and wronged are also given a chance to have their say and raise their voice publicly.

### 6 IV.

### 7 Application of cda

Basically the present research paper aims at critically analyzing the veiled objectives of politicians and the involvement of anchors via analyzing certain talk shows telecast on private television channels. In this study, as Fowler (1991) maintained, "I am not gunning for the (media)" but scrutinizing the structures of a selected political talk show of TV channel for the aim of making clear relationship between structure and meaning."

V.

## 8 Sample

Show: \* "Tonight with Jasmeen" Telecast on:

January 22, 2013. Samma T.V. Anchor: Jasmeen Manzoor Guests:

Mehreen Anwar Raja (PPP) Aabidshair Ali (PML, N) Umer Riaz Abbaasi (PAT) VI.

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## 9 Opening and Background

It is one of the most viewed shows in Pakistan and it aims at shedding lustre upon the "other side" of the political stage of the country. Use of "intended" pun, Derogatory remarks and playing with words is made use of in the said show, whereby CDA is applied and the power domination of certain parties shall be exposed via unmasking the concealed designs.

## 10 VII.

## 11 Topic under Discussion

The said show was telecasted on January 22, 2013 on Sama TV at 20.00 hrs in the wake of a whole new hot-issue, "Islamabad Long March Declaration, and Dr.Taahir-ul-Qadri's statements". This said issue at that time and perhaps still is, one of the most "hotly debated" causing a major unrest on the political scenario of our country. The topic of discussion may be, 'The difference in Dr. Taahir-ul-Qadri's sayings and Actions'. Dr.Qadri's statement;Text.

## 12 English translation:

Come to me and answer me. These robbers don't dare face Tahir-ul-Qadri. They and their false representatives speak sub-rosa on TV channels"

The number of guests participating in the show was three, all representing different and major political parties of Pakistan. Each one of them representing his/her party was defending his side and raising his Volume XIII Issue W III Version I views to overthrow the other specially Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri. In addition to these three, there was a representative of P A T {PAKISTAN AWAMI THEREEK MINHAAJ-UL-QURAN} named UmerRiazAbbasi. He was there to answer the question raised by the anchor and to defend Thereek-e-Minhaaj-ul-Quran as well as their leader Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri.

First of all the anchor showed some video clips of Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri's current statements on the political system and the political leaders of Pakistan. The anchor focussed on the guests one by one to reveal how the parties in opposition will react to the statements and also to the questions raised in the episode. Their expression, the selection of their words and their complete dominance over the subject matters and the hidden agendas is intended to be exposed in this section.

## VIII.

## 13 Analysis

Dr. Allama Tahir-ul-Qadri has been a cleric, a Religious scholar for a long time.

Dr. Allama Tahir-ul-Qadri is a Pakistani writer, religious scholar, political, scientist, poet, doctor, educationist, professor, social reformer and human rights activist. He is the founder of Pakistan Awami Tehreek and chairman of Minhaj-ul-Quran Movement International.

Pakistan Awami Tehreek is a unique political party of Pakistan having a network at the grass root level in all provinces of Pakistan and abroad as well. The workers and supporters of the Tehreek are contributing in social, religious as well as a political sector of Pakistan under the guidance of their leader.

Minhaj-ul-Quran Movement International has established its network in more than eighty countries around the globe, as a non-political, spectral movement or N G O.

Before his departure to Canada, Dr. Tahirul Qadri had been in Pakistan for a long time. He is in possession of a Canadian Nationality too. Recently he came to Pakistan and delivered a successful address at Minhaj-e-Pakistan Lahore on 23 rd Dec 2012 which definitely created a hustle and bustle in Pakistani Political scenario. He floated his famous slogan "I have come to save the state, not politics" and majority of the masses swallowed the bait.

Thus he seemed to emphasise on change and revolution. Dr Qadri landed in Pakistan at a critical juncture of our domestic politics. It raised a question in everybody's mind why he chose this very time??

Secondly, the most striking feature of his Islamabad Long March Declaration was the agreement between him and Govt.

This declaration was termed as a revolution. Thousands of people of the LONG MARCH who staged sit-in before parliament house included women and children and they bore the brunt of the extreme weather for several days.

The terms agreed to unanimously include a provision of 30 days for preclearance and security of nomination papers by election commission according to 62 63 of the commission.

The treasury will submit two names for the caretaker prime minister of Pakistan, who ought to be honest and impartial.

It was also agreed to implement electoral reforms as contained within the constitution and Supreme Court order of June 8, 2012.

Dr.Qadri asked President Zardari to send a delegation to hold talks over his demands or 'lose the last chance of saving peace'

It is also mentioned in his declaration that no criminal charges will be made against any member of the long march.

This was all the background of it. The most striking news in media at the time is:

1. The difference in Dr Qadri's statement is matter of religion too.

2. Long march was a very excellent start to resume his political career in the country.

3. The worth of his agreement.

The anchor then starts off by raising different issues and points from Dr Qadri's statements and his Islamabad Long March Declaration.

The anchor has also shown a video clip of Dr Qadri's giving a Fatwa some fifteen or twenty year ago.

She highlights his statements on long march warning the govt against its diffidence to negotiate with him.

She also highlights Dr Qadri's accusations against the govt with abusive language. He said that the rulers are robbers and rascals and have no courage to come before him to answers the allegations against them.

But suddenly Mr. Qadri's tone and attitude took a U-turn when the govt delegate came to negotiate with him. He offered them a warm welcome. They embraced one another. They also did not hesitate to praise one another who seemed to have a lot of bad blood a short while ago. After accusing and threatening them constantly for four days, his hugging them could not be rationalized by many if not all.

Then she highlights the fact that Minhaj-ul-Quran is registered as a capital N G O and its charter says that you cannot perform any political activity by raising the funds from public. She asks how Dr. Qadri can say that people even sold their gold and devote their passions. Thus she tries to bring out a stark contrast between his saying and actions.

The anchor refers to one of Dr Qadri's statements:

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This sort of phrases is helpful in detecting the hidden incentives through CDA. It is enough to warn others not to be taken in by this kind of joke.

This statement has its own critical value as he is praying to God and directly saying nothing to anyone. He is not supposed to answer to any one regarding this. However, sub-rosa and indirectly he means a lot when he terms govt of the time and president Asif Ali Zardari as ZALIM (CRUEL) and YAZEED respectively.

Thus his invoking to GOD to dethrone the Yazeed seems nothing more than a demagogue's slogan is replete with irony.

He was calling the president of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari Yazeed flagrantly sheer to fulfil his demands which were formed Islamabad Long March Declaration. He pretends that these demands are made for the welfare and benefit of the entire nation. On the other hand he calls all coalition parties corrupt and dishonest. After the settlement of the terms of Declaration he thus expresses his rapture: "Congratulate that Long March which saved the assemblies and also paved a way to the reforms..."

This statement of his can be driven out of two possibilities First, that this Long March has made the way to refine the corrupt electoral system and assemblies of Pakistan.

Secondly, he may be saying that he is succeeded to derail the PPP; the most corrupt party, because they are in govt and he has been accusing the govt body.

According to the terms of Declaration, the assemblies will be resolved any time before 16 th March 2013 And after that the Articles 62 and 63 will be implemented on electoral system. Consequently, according to the terms of Declaration the corrupt assemblies will come to an end. Now the anchor raises the issue of contrast in Dr Qadri's statements and shows her audience an old video clip of him, in which he is saying, "The Holy Prophet PBUH came to me in my dreams last night and he was so angry. He said to me that he was angry with all the Pakistanis. He PBUH said the religious leaders and religious scholars invited him but they did not host him well and that he was angry with Pakistan and was going back. At this, I implored the Holy Prophet PBUH and sought his forgiveness. Then he PBUH told me that he would stay if only I arranged his residence, food, travel and the air ticket to Madina."

Now the issue was raised what he wanted to convey by this statement and this FATWA. The question arises in every body's mind that:

Holy Prophet PBUH, says the anchor, is a light for the entire Muslim community irrespective of age and boundaries of the globe. We need Intercession of the Holy Prophet PBUH to seek forgiveness from Allah. We believe that he has angels at hands in his service. How ridiculous, how nonsense piece of fabrication is it! How he PBUH could ask demagogue for resident ticket and all that? How far is it possible? So this is a big contradiction in Dr Qadri's statements. On one hand, he has written hundreds of books in the love of the Holy Prophet PBUH but on the other hand what he is saying about him PBUH.

Abid Sher Ali from PML [N], one of the guests, commenting on that Says;

## 15 English translation

He is the one who stated in Denmark that the blasphemy law is merely implemented on Muslims and not on Non-Muslims. Then he stated after coming in Pakistan that blasphemy law is implemented on everyone. Can this be called the Love for Holy Prophet (PBUH)???? IX.

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## 16 Analysis

Now we can easily figure out two or three possibilities or meanings from this kind of comments and criticism.

First of all we cannot prove one wrong after looking on just the selective and cut short lines and video clips of someone, without studying the whole story.

They just include some of cut short lines of Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri just because of his entry in politics and his direct attack on present govt and laws.

They are politicians of the time. How can they all prove him wrong in one way or the other?

Secondly, Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri says that he was not consulted during the rule of General Zia-ul-Haq.

So according to this he is not involved in making decisions of blasphemy law. So his statements shown in the programme can be said to be contradictory.

The 3rd and the most important thing is why Dr Qadri is being so much criticised by govt, PPP, PML [N]?

Now point to be noted is that a well known great religious scholar having his NGOs offices in more than 80 countries of the world is all of a sudden being criticised badly, especially, by the politicians?

Is it on the basis of that only long march he has held in Islamabad ?

There are always other factors behind it i.e And according to another statement of Aabid Sher Ali PML [N] in the same show:

Dr Qadri had once worked for Mian Nawaz Sharif in his mosque and Mr. Sharif helped him to go to America for the medical check-up of his heart ailment. So now they have a reason to turn against him as he had been their supporter. But now he is going against his benefactors and even accusing them publicly and calling the govt corrupt and fulfilling his demands by using the poor and innocent public.

Mehreen Anwar Raja from PPP at this instant says that according to Dr Sahib this Long March was arranged from heavens, So if it was arranged by GOD and heavens, why GOD sent rain on his poor creature already bearing the freezing weather. Dr Qadri says: English translation X.

## 17 Analysis

This statement of him may have resulted out of the fact that he is assuring the leaders of the political parties to be disloyal un-courteous, robbers and much more.

And as if they have no courage to face the truth [Dr Qadri] and they cannot come before he costantly used giving warnings to come to him.

And when the delegation of so-called corrupt and dishonest people came to him, he embraced them and praised them and signed an agreement with them.

It offers a stark contrast between his own statements as he had been calling them "robbers, rascals, yazeeds erstwhile ago but now he is embracing them and exchanging smiles with the same people.

Another statement of Aabid Sher Ali in the same show comes:

Dr Qadri sent congratulations when Supreme Court ordered the arrest of prime minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and then Dr. Sahib went to the same prime minister for his signature to approve the agreement.

So the signature ought to be void for Dr Qadri and his party because they no longer wanted Raja Pervaiz Ashraf to be the P M of Pakistan and they became so happy at the Supreme Court order of arresting the PM.

So here comes the obvious contradiction between the words and the actions of Dr Qadri when he is seeking the PM signature for the approval of his Islamabad Long March Declaration.

## 18 XI. Discussion

All TV shows have got the use of different strategies to expose the hidden truth and to propagate them to the public. In both of these shows the ways adopted in order to project the manipulated truths differ from one another. In the first case the anchor starts off by engaging the representatives of different parties in a hot topic. On the other hand, the second show was anchor-based show because it had a great deal of anchor's own self involvement in order to dig out the truth from the online guest. From both these analyses, there are several things deducible. Firstly, the nature of these shows varies and one may see it very clearly. The show is perhaps limited to the anchor and the one-on-one communication; where only the anchor poses the questions for the one she is communicating on the telephone. On the other hand, the show had a completely different pattern because there the anchor was actively involved with three other guests, and there the host was deliberately offering a punch to the sentiments by giving the opposite party, or the one in power, the most beneficial position. Secondly, the use of telephonic conversation is there in both the shows. This kind of conversation has its own importance. Apart from the cross communications, it also tends to shed lustre on the fact that the one on telephone has no option to choose but dropping the line in order to escape the questions pelted on him/her.

## 19 XII. Influential Source of the Research

Many a model has been constructed on CDA till this present day and researchers will continue to do so in the future as well. In this research, van Dijk's model for political and media discourse is used. For he aims at the fact that in our daily lives, we tend to forget how important words such as "our" and "them" are, as their usage can give birth to certain debatable points which, when observed with a critical eye, have a greater chance of colouring it all otherwise. He thus opines:

”events and actions maybe described with a syntactic variation that are a function of the underlying involvement of the actors (e.g. their agency, responsibility and perspectives).”

We can therefore conclude that it is the very fact of the whole being of this paper as it determines the very hidden traits of individuals who are here analyzed and their possible outlook is magnified as to make a difference between what ”is” and what ”it actually was”.

## 20 XIII. Conclusion

This fact is to be acknowledged that each show or anchor and their respective agendas do serve as an epitome of a single public-dominated society. For gaining a social power and the favour of public, there are some tactics which should be adopted. Given the power of the written and spoken CDA aims at describing, ”Tumhary andar agar ikhlaaq he sach he, me ne tumko daavat di the tmaam syasi jamaaton k leader mery samny aakar bethain” \*By unmasking these truths CDA scholars’ aims to support the victims of such oppressions and encourage them to transform their lives. The objective of CDA is to unmask and uncover the social and ideological assumptions that are hidden in words or oral speech and CDA scholars are exercising power over the words.”



Figure 1: &

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