CDA Of Facebook Postings In Urdu Language As Tool For Hate Speech -Pre-Election 2024 Pakistani Scenario

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Abstract:

This research aimed to analyze Facebook postings of the Urdu language as a tool for hate speech in light of Critical Discourse Analysis. Data is collected from the Facebook portfolio during the period of 9 May 2023 to 8 February 2024. This study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. Fairclough's CDA model Language and Power is adopted as a theoretical framework. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect the research material. The findings of the research revealed the proliferation of political hate speech was touching the climax. It is further noted that the supporters of certain political parties are using hate speech to threaten opposing political workers and leaders. Vulgar and unstandardized language, negatively stereotyped dehumanization, derogatory names, ironical utterances, and offensive metaphors are being used to cause the eruption of intolerance, bias, polarization, and provoking manipulation in Pakistani which might go to untoward situations.

Key Words: Facebook, Posts, Urdu Language, Hate Speech, CDA.

Introduction:

From the perspective of linguistics, one of the roles of a media text is to provide valuable data for the expression of propaganda, and in this aspect, disinformation also exploits certain resources of linguistics such as the language of evaluation e.g. hate speech. (Mažeikiene, 2022). Similarly, the enhancement of technological forums which is unavoidable to be banned, creates certain changes in the social and communication life of human be[1]ings. Social media is one of these platforms that are used for communication, broadcast of the news, and general expressions of liking and disliking, etc. (Sari, 2019). Political disliking is expressed in the structure of hate speech and the proliferation of hate speech encounters the media system and democratic health in contemporary societies. The spread of hate speech stems from the experience of fascists and Nazi regimes. It either rhetorically administers racism, xenophobia, and stereotypes or transforms the policies of any state into millions of victims. (Sori, & Vehovar, 2022).

Nowadays, the exponential growth of social media is a leading cause of popularity in hate speech and propaganda. Social media usage can motivate or demotivate affecting drastically and communication of leaders influence (Ramzan et al., 2023 ; Javaid et al., 2023).Malicious expressions or hate speech are used in offensive, violent, and aggressive language that has its affiliation and conduct with a particular group of people or group who share a common property such as ideology, beliefs, race, gender, or ethnicity. (Azman, & Zamri, 2022). Phooey, and Chi-Bin, (2020) have explained that hate speech or malicious language is utilized for the identification of communication that is in violation of standard legal rules and norms and incites a particular group discrimination, hostility, and hatred.

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Similarly, Kilvington (2020) has defined hate speech as disgust that promotes hatred, violence, and discrimination against groups or individuals regarding their protected natures such as politics, religion, sect, and ethnicity. The diffusion of online hate speech has turned into a serious issue (Azman, & Zamri, 2022) in the present era. Davidson et al. (2017) have elucidated that the language expression by using words of blame or offense is called hate speech and it is a jargon that exists with a short span of individual-dominated- territory in the scope of the legal world. The hate speech either creates tension among the masses of people or leaves very bad social impacts on the minds of communities or groups that have bad consequences. In this aspect, there is a danger to the users' lives so it is forbidden on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube portfolios (Azman, & Zamri, 2022).

Critical Discourse Analysis is an interdisciplinary approach that inquires the questions of how and why interaction in society is a cause to develop the textual structure. It is accessible in many ways to expose the power agenda of the society by keeping in view the ideologies and culture from societal contextual viewpoints. It is a strategy to highlight racial bias, hegemonic thoughts, and manipulative discursive language figures that are created in the text and talk of written and spoken discourse or semiotic ways for the exploitation of linguistics norms (Widuna,2018). Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analysis research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts" (van Dijk, 2004, p. 352). Critical Discourse Analysis is a methodology that is not only designed to interpret language but also penetrates the contextual scenario for power, hegemony, bias, and racial issues.

 Fairclough (2015) has explained that all linguistic phenomena are social but all social is in part linguistic. He further explains that language is a part of society that flourishes meanings with the help of social and contextual paradigms. Mahboob and Paltridge (2013) have claimed that CDA is a comprehension of the ways social actors do the treatments of opposed groups in crucial terms. CDA is a multidisciplinary discipline for the analysis of text in different methods (Hamuddin,2015). The social phenomenon is dissected clearly in multimethodological ways in the domain of CDA for social justice in the stretches of language (Wodak & Mayer,2009). Finally, it is confirmed by Van Dijk (2009) that CDA investigates the political context of how power is abused, maintained, and survived by using inequalities of social norms. Fairclough (1995) has assumed that the aim of CDA is the systematic exploration of opaque relations that oscillates between casualty and discursive practice in text, events, relation, process, and finally in social or cultural structures. So, the present research aims to evaluate Facebook Postings in the Urdu Language as a Tool for Hate Speech with the help of CDA in the Pre-Election 2024 Pakistani Scenario.

Literature Review:

This part is focused on the research in hate speech and critical discourse and in this aspect, Azman, N.F.& Zamri, N.A.K. (2022) conducted a study on conscious or unconscious: The Intention of Hate Speech in the Cyberworld and concluded that Malaysia was the sixth country in the world in cyberbullying rankings. The hate speech by internet users to national monitoring organizations in its ecosystem discursive elements and political discourse was evaluated by Šori, and Vasja (2022) and suggested that significant discursive features of selected statements are prognosis which called for violence and death and this communication is tagged as executive speech. Kapela Pregowska and Puceli (2023) researched on the freedom of expression and hate speech on the standard of human rights and their application in Poland and Slovenia and suggested adopting legislation as appropriate punishment for individuals who are the cause of hate speech spread. It also raised awareness and understanding of rhetoric in public discourse. Speech of Imran Khan influenced people and have depiction of psychological discursiveness (Ramzan et al., 2023).

Mažeikiene, (2022) studied the Kremlin disinformation discourse and media coverage of the plane hijack by Belarus and concluded that there is media disinformation that influences moral values and truthfulness. The research was done by Palazon-Fernandez (2023) on the identification of hate speech and attribution of responsibility by studying simulated WhatsApp conversations during COVID-19 and concluded the implementation of interventional strategies for the minimization of hate speech. He further explained that hate speech contributes to justifying violence, undermines rights, generates a prejudiced environment, enhances intolerance, and encourages discrimination. There was not any significant variation between political polarization, hate speech, and increased domestic terrorism in the USA (Piazza,2020). It is believed by Ziccardi (2020) that political discourse is permeating Europe with malicious hate and in Europe it has huge effects on electorates to train violence and intolerance.

Further, election violence was perpetuated by the hate speech in the Nigerian Election (Ezeibe,2021). It is argued by Castano-Pulgarin (2021) that unique features are utilized in political hate speech in the digital portfolio for the reticulation of political opponents which decorate echo-chamber effects to get the aid of like-minded community. Walther (2022) considered hate speech as illegitimate manipulation to harvest the support of manipulators. The mainstream of political hate speech is correlated positively with digital media and radicalization by Tornberg and Tornberg (2022). More than 2 million comments from Facebook data on toxic language are analyzed by Rashid (2022) in the Bangla language by identifying thematic categories of political hate speech. These hate speeches are useful to detect vitriolic language. Bilewicz and Soral (2022) have suggested that intolerance and threat of social cohesion are perpetuated in derogatory contents of language.Khan et al. (2017) have claimed that print media is a facilitator in the hands of capitalists. Ramzan and Khan (2019) have said that stereotyped ideological construction is the property of Nawabs and politicians. Ramzan et al. (2020, 2023) have elucidated that politicians are responsible for the manipulation and exploitation of the Pakistani public. Ramzan et al. (2021) have expressed that the use of speech acts in print media is ideologically oriented. Bhutto and Ramzan (2021) that pacifier and collusive stance in media are linked with power. Nawaz et (2021) have suggested that power always strives for positive us and negative them.

Haugen (2023) who is called the whistle-bowler of Facebook, explained how a space is provided for hate speech by big tech companies and it is called communal violence. The rise of online hate speech has been observed by Chekol et al. (2023) in Ethopia which is a way of triggering genocide and violence. It is also indicated by Rafi and Shafique (2023) that there is another brutal and unequivocal genocide of Palestinians in the Gaza Valley. Pointed out by different scholars that political hate speeches are consequence-oriented. There are flaws in hate speeches that cause undermined social cohesion and politically polarized scenarios in various countries of the world. There is hardly any research or existing literature linked to Urdu language critical discourse analysis for hate speech in any context such as CDA Of Facebook Postings in Urdu Language as Tool for Hate Speech - Pre-Election 2024 Pakistani Scenario. It is supported by Rafi and Shafique (2024) and confirmed by Guillen-Nieto (2023) that hate speech has not perceived any sufficient attraction as a scientific evaluation of languages except English. It is also confirmed by Ziccardi (2020).

Research Question:

What are the implications of Facebook postings regarding hate speech which can be analyzed with the help of Critical Discourse Analysis on selected data of Urdu language?

Methodology:

The present research i.e. CDA Of Facebook Postings in Urdu Language as Tool for Hate Speech -Pre-Election 2024 Pakistani Scenario, is a descriptive qualitative study. The data

obtained for this study is imported from the Facebook platform and selected by purposive sampling techniques. The data is collected by non-participants' observation with note-taking techniques. There are following procedures that are done by the researchers of this study. First of all, the data is collected empirically (Online), then proceeded for critical analysis in light of the proposed theory. The research is based on longitudinal data.

Theoretical Framework:

Fairclough's (2015) model of discourse analysis has opted as a theoretical framework that is an excellent contribution to the analysis of social and cultural paradigms by combining the traditions of textual analysis. Fairclough's model (2015) views language in close space in the contextual scenario of the wider community and further language is viewed by Fairclough (2015) as a source of the practice of power. This model is built by Fairclough (2015) to view discourse based on social settings, social change, linguistics, and politics so it is frequently referred to as a model of social change. Fairclough views language as a source of social practice rather than the thoughts or property of the person. Language as a social practice has various implications.

1. Fairclough says that discourse is an action that is used by someone who uses language in the shape of action in the society particularly representing a shape of language by viewing the world in the real form.
2. There are reciprocal affiliations between discourse and society. There are three dimensions in the model proposed by Fairclough (2015).
    a. Text
    b. Discourse Practice
    c. Social Practice

In the first dimension, the text is studied in linguistic paradigms by analyzing vocabulary, semantics, and sentence structure. To develop the appropriate understanding between words and sentences cohesion and coherence are also included. Fairclough further says that there are three main categories of participants in media i.e. Journalists, media audiences, and public participants.

3. The last and third part of the model given by Fairclough is known as discourse as the social practice that is a mixed cluster of power, hegemony, and ideology. It describes the consequences and functions of unequal power relations which are produced in text and talk. Electronic media such as social media is a cluster of information with multiple opinions and the rapid growth of the internet has made rapid access for everyone (Sari, 2019).

In short, the model introduced by Fairclough (2015) in Language Power is a valuable and interesting insight to highlight and evaluate the implications of Facebook postings regarding hate speech in the Urdu language pre-election 2024.

The Data:

It has been a common trend in Pakistani politics since the day of independence to date that politicians have been using hate agenda against their rivals and it is a strategy to govern the public discourse. The digital turn and flourishment of populism in Pakistan have increased the agenda of hate speech in politics (Rafi and Shafique,2024). But contrary to, now the situation is the opposite because since the day of Independence, in Pakistan the roots of democracy have not been properly based. The corruption of politicians and democracy has been hollowing out the roots of this poor nation since 14 August 1947 which are badly affected nowadays. In this technological age, the public is fully aware of the corruption and unscrupulousness of politicians. After the consequences of 9 May 2023, the local public started to express their anger against politicians on social media. It gives a very interesting portrait. Further, it is endorsed by Ziccardi (2020) that the shortcuts like hate speech, are the strategies of well-mannered politicians to tempt the consumers (voters) for their party.

They use such strategies to capitalize on their vote bank and maintain their ideology through the manipulation of hate discourse. In the 2024 election in Pakistan, this scenario was touching its climax before the start of riots at the arrest of Ex-PM Pakistan Imran Khan the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e- Insaf due to corruption charges on 9 May 2023. So, the period from 9 May 2023 to 8 Feb 2024 was very crucial and politicians both from the right and left wings had been lavishly using their hate speech against their opponents for the maintenance of their ideology and creation of manipulated discourse to maintain their power (Rafi and Shafique,2024). By getting the advantages of their leaders, the Pakistani community also started to play openly on social media platforms to show their affiliation with their party e.g. right or left wing. So, this situation incited the researchers to observe the data of the Facebook platform longitudinally for the completion of this research project i.e. CDA Of Facebook Postings in the Urdu Language as Tool for Hate Speech -Pre-Election 2024 Pakistani Scenario but due to the limitation of the research principles only few hate speech postings (chunks) presenting the renowned political leaders both from the right and left wing on Facebook are being presented and analyzed for the understanding o readers.

Data Analysis:

a. Vulgar and Unstandardized Language:

"Socially unaccepted discourse" is an umbrella term that circumferences hate speech which blends in itself vulgarity, negative stereotyped, insults, defamation, incivility, expressions of prejudice, and violent threat (Vehovar, & Dejan, 2021) while such speech is often uttered to intimidate, and humiliate particular group. It is reported by some researchers that all hate speeches are not uttered for humiliation but can also express religious beliefs, underestimated political values, and extreme ideological constructions Brown, (2017 & Rafi and Shafique,2024). Similarly, the agenda of Pakistani political discourse is visible in Facebook postings and a few convenient extracted examples are as under.

نواز شریف چور مجھے بھی ذلیل کروا رہا ہے-

پاکستان کو 74 سالوں میں اتنا 28 و زراۓء اعظم نے نہیں لوٹا جتنا ان تین گوگیوں نے 4 سال میں لوٹا ۔

بلے کا پروگرام وڑگیا

The above two mentioned statements advocate that there is vulgarity, negative stereotyped, and expression of prejudice visible. Fairclough (2015) has explained that all linguistic phenomena are social but social phenomena are in part linguistic. In the above quoted examples, it is visible socialization but this is distorting the social condition of Pakistan, especially in the political wing which seems highlighted in the language of social media. The sender of discourse i.e. a member of social media has some anger e.g. نواز شریف چور because he has not only directly addressed the Nawaz Shareef as a thief who is humiliating him but also, he has placed the symbol Nawaz Shareef's part i.e. lion in social media. Here in the above-given statements, Facebook discourse is created to defame and insult Nawaz Shareef in uncivilized prejudiced expression. In the second statement, there is extreme vulgarity, because Pakistan is an Islamic country and Islam gives high honor and respect to the ladies but in the above-given statement there is an opposite situation.

b. Negative Stereotyped and Dehumanization:

There is also the identification of negative stereotyped and dehumanization in the language use of social media against politicians from both the right and left wings in the selected period. For Example, there was developed the portrait of Mian Nawaz Shareef red dress and two horns were fixed on his head and he was symbolized with "دجال". In another post,

he is decorated in such a manner with jewelry and a red dress that he looks like a new bride, and the picture is uploaded on Facebook along with the following discourse.

دلہن رخصتی کے لئے تیار ہے -پتہ نہیں اگلے پانچ سال زندہ ہو گی کہ نہیں اللہ نصیب ا چھے کرے۔

کھوتا اکیلا ڈوڑ کر بھی ہار گیا تو

There is another example in the Facebook post -There is a picture of the worm which was uploaded along with the following clause.

ن لیگ کو سپو رٹ کر نے وا لوں کے اندر کا کیڑا

There is another chunk of discourse that is explicitly loaded with dehumanized nature and stereotyped ideological thoughts.

بھکا ری کبھی چنے نہیں جا سکتے

نواز شریف پر اتنے کیس ختم ہوئے کسی جج نے نہیں کہا معصوم ہے سب کو پتہ ہے پورا حرام دا-

c. Derogatory Names (Nominalization):

It is a very common practice of Facebook users to call the politicians with derogatory names. To address the politician with a derogatory name, cultural and religious support was sought by the users to ridicule the public and dehumanize the politicians. There are following few examples.

گنجا ،گو گیو ں، پٹواری، پا کستا نی سلطان تباہ ا لد ین، دجال ، بھکا ر ی، چورـکر پٹغل غا زی ،شولانا شلیل وشلوار شریف،رنگیلا گھڑی چور ، ملکہ الزیتھ قطری گیراجن ،لندن وال کھوتا ،استاد خیانت علی خان صا حب،سر ٹیفا ئیڈ چور ، گنجا فریبی

In the light of these derogatory names, it is stated by the researchers as said by Fairclough (2015) that language is uttered under the power behind it. So, the uttered epithets against renowned politicians might be the strategy of pessimistic influence to restrict their vote in favor of the opponents. In another way, this propaganda of name-calling might be serving the interest of foreign power. In the above given nominalized phrases, Nawaz Shareef, Maryam Nawaz, Bushra Bibi, Shery Rehman, supporters of the Muslim League(N), Imran Khan, Shahbaz Shareef, and Asif Zardari are frequently targeted for vitriolic names. Such names stand under the category of informal nouns.

d. Ironical Utterances:

After the detailed study of selected data, the researchers agree that Facebook users produce and post certain content that is ironically loaded. The irony used in political discourse works as an invitation for viewers/readers to reevaluate cultural values with active perception for the interpretation of discourse. Irony is a powerful tool for persuasion and manipulation. For the interpretation of irony, personalities, authors, and viewers of discourse are necessarily required to concentrate (Chudinov, & Solopova, 2015). The irony is subtle and demands skills for interpretation, especially in political discourse because misunderstanding can cause misinterpretation. There is something common between irony and politics as both work for manipulation, and irony is language manipulation inside the language and politics works for language manipulation. The irony is conveyed in language for the completion of the communicative intentions of the author, and politics is getting and withholding the power. The common strategy of "us" and "them" division also combined irony and politics. Examples of irony are here as under from the selected data.

ا یسی کا نپیں ر کھتے ہی نہیں جو ٹا نکیں-آصف زرداری

ووٹ کو عزت دو اور مجھے اب جا نے دو-نواز شریف

آج پا کستان ایک عظیم ملک ہوتا اگر تین بار میں نے اپنے بچوں کی تقدیر نہ بدلی ہوتی- نواز شریف

شیر کی اک دن کی زندگی جسٹس فائز عیسا کی 100 سالہ زندگی سے بہتر ہے

Offensive Metaphor:

A metaphor is a device through which one entity can be perceived in terms of another. There are following few examples of offensive metaphors that were being used by representatives of political parties as a discursive strategy. The storms of offensive metaphors are utilized at various times in the political discourse without using or calling the names of real individuals. These offensive metaphors either advocate sarcasm or collocate humor and hatred against corrupt politicians/ corrupt system of Pakistan.

سلطان فرار الدین کرپٹغل -آپکا تعلق لاہور کی مشہور کھاو قبیلے سے ہے

نک داکوکا پٹواریاں دا کھوتا -

ترکی کے سلطان علاالد ین کے بعد پیش خد مت ہے پا کستا نی سلطا ن تبا ہ الد ین

تیرہ دھوکے باز بمقابلہ اکیلا بلے باز

بھکا ری کبھی چنے نہیں جا سکتے

Finding and Discussion:

In this study, the researchers have done the CDA of Urdu language Facebook postings as hate speech which have involvement of top influential persons and organizations such as politicians and social media to find out discursive practice in discoursal strategies. The data segments advocate that the hateful language of Facebook users has transformed into rigid polarization. There are very prominent examples in the data that indicate the strong binary formation between positive us and negative them. There is also the scenario of extreme intolerance among the producers of hate speech discourse who are the supporters of three major political wings. This extreme intolerance indicates that in Pakistan political situation is not satisfactorily balanced that glimpses there might be the climax of political bias. The supporters of certain political parties are using hate speech to threaten opposing political workers and leaders. Vulgar and unstandardized language, negative stereotyped and dehumanization, derogatory names, ironical utterances, and offensive metaphors are language tools that decorate hate speech toward the fulfillment of certain agendas such as bias, polarization, and manipulation which is thought-provoking.

Implications of Hate Speech Facebook Postings:

Although there are various implications of hate speech Facebook postings, yet found in this study are bias, polarization, and manipulation.

Conclusion:

The data is analyzed in light of the proposed model. In the data analysis, the researchers are quite confident in expressing the opinion that the polarization in Pakistani politics is at its maximum. The users are uploading Facebook posts blended with criticism and accusations of their opposing political party. In the period of selected data, the main tussle for the production of hate speech circumference three major political parties i.e. Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) Pakistan People Party (Parliamentarian), and Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf. The data analysis shows that Facebook users charge their opponents with offensive allegations for their culpability. They create derogatory names for their opponents, offensive metaphors, cartoons, and dummy portraits loaded with humiliated manners for the opposition, humorous discourse, ironical language, and sarcasm to affiliate the socialization for their party and hate for their opponents. During the selected period, the details of hate speech commonly used discursive discourse and its applied techniques are explained in the following lines.

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