
LINGUISTIC IDENTITY OF POLITICAL PARTIES: THE DISCOURSE OF SELECTED PAKISTANI ELECTION CAMPAIGN SONGS

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Abstract

Political songs are important ideological sites where ideologies are constructed, articulated, and disseminated. The current study attempts to explore how through highlighting positive qualities and mitigating negative qualities of self and through the projection of negative attributes of others and mitigating their positive traits, identities are constructed discursively in the political songs during elections in Pakistan. The sample for the study consists of lyrics of election campaign songs of the two main political parties in Pakistan, namely, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League (N), played during the general elections of 2018. The analysis of the data is undertaken with the analytical paradigm of critical discourse analysis and van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework (2004). The study has also taken insights from Social Identity Theory (Oktar, 2001). The analysis provides evidence that these election campaign songs at the textual level represent the political parties in the sociopolitical scenario in Pakistani Society. The findings further reveal that to achieve the prime objective of winning over people's favor these political parties seek legitimization by utilizing different ideological discourse structures and strategies. These ideological discourse structures could broadly be categorized under two main strategies: positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Through the ideological construction of self and others, such political discourses serve in-group social power interests of the supremacy of the political parties. The analysis also establishes that the political song lyrics, as political discourses, construct a unique identity of the political parties by positively evaluating the actions and behaviors of the in-group as against the negative evaluation of those of the out-group. Besides theoretical contributions, the findings of the study also have practical significance and expand readers' critical insight and assist in comprehending, interpreting, and producing language in a political domain in society.

Keywords: political parties, representation, identity construction, critical discourse analysis, election campaign songs

1. Introduction

In the political arena, the success of political figures and parties depends, to a great extent, on their ability to impress and influence their voters, hence winning the election. Therefore, one of the basic aims of political campaigns during the election is to persuade the voters. For this purpose, political parties and candidates utilize various persuasive techniques which include the use of political songs, advertisements, slogans, speeches, posters, etc.

Language is a site of ideological struggle and hence utilized as a main tool to win over public support. Teittinen (2000) asserts that during elections, language, words, terms, and symbolic expressions used by a political party determine its victory. For that reason, there is a great need for critical reading of such texts to understand the skillful use of language to see through the distorted reality. Such critical dissection of the political texts from the linguistic perspective assists in exploring the unrealized hidden meanings and grabbing the reality underneath different representations.

The current study investigates the representation of political parties in the discourse of election campaign songs from social and ideological perspectives. These songs are played on media, during party meetings, and election processions. In the lyrics of these election campaign songs, language is used to intensify the good qualities of political parties and their leaders while downplaying *others'* good traits via criticism. Thus, these lyrics go a long way in establishing a certain identity of political parties. Election campaign songs are usually interactive strategies between the persuaders and the persuaded. The lyrics of these songs are significant so far as their content and language are concerned. The lyrics are noteworthy as regards the given messages because of repetition, musicality, and the ability to convey multiple layers of meanings. As Larson (2013) mentions that songs have a substantial memorable effect on people. Coupled with strong slogans, songs are significant in influencing and persuading people.

The present study analyses the linguistic modalities of the representation of political parties in the lyrics of the election campaign songs through the socio-cognitive framework of *ideological square* propounded by van Dijk (2004). The sample for the study consists of two lyrics of election campaign songs of the two main political parties, namely, *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)* and *Pakistan Muslim League (N)*. Before elections, *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)* was the main party in opposition while *Pakistan Muslim League (N)* was in government. Utilizing the framework of

ideological square proposed by van Dijk(2004), the current research attempts to explore the strategies employed for *self* and *other* representation by the selected political parties in the election campaign songs. The selected election campaign songs are first transcribed and then translated into English language (Appendix A). In the analysis section of the current study, translation of the quoted examples is also provided in square brackets when mentioned for the first time.

1.2. Aims and Objectives

The current study aims to reveal the way political parties are represented in the lyrics of the selected election campaign songs, '*Tabdeeli*' [*change*] and '*Vote ko Izzat Dou*', [*pay respect to vote*] of the two main political parties in Pakistan: *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)*, *Pakistan Muslim League (N)*. The study particularly explores how *self* and *others*' identities are constructed through discursive strategies of highlighting positive qualities and mitigating negative qualities of *self* and through projecting negative attributes of *others* and mitigating their positive traits. Through the lens of van Dijk's (2004) approach, the current research attempts to scrutinize the way each party exploits the linguistic resources in the lyrics and, hence, tries to justify its stance and persuade the people to win their consensus during the general election in Pakistan in 2018. The specific objectives of the current study include:

- To find out different discourse strategies utilized by the selected political parties in their election campaign songs during the general election in Pakistan
- To explore how through the use of linguistic resources the political parties construct a certain image of *self* and *others* in the selected election campaign songs leading to the achievement of their ideological aims

1.3. Research Questions

1. What linguistic resources are exploited by the selected political parties in their election campaign songs in order to justify their stance and achieve their ideological aims during the general election in Pakistan?
2. How through the use of the different linguistic strategies the political parties construct a certain image of *self* and *others* for the achievement of the desired aims?

2. Methodology

2.1. Theoretical Framework and Research Design

Certain philosophical and intellectual perspectives steer and provide underpinning to research. Considering the nature of the present study, it is based on a qualitative research paradigm that is interpretative. The present study employs van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach as a basic framework for data analysis. It analyses media discourse from a multidisciplinary slant (van Dijk, 1995) and, hence, expounds the embedded ideologies. van Dijk's notion of '*ideological square*' is utilized as an overall guiding framework for data analysis which emphasizes the positive-self and negative-other presentation (van Dijk, 2004). The following are the main tenets of van Dijk's (2004) framework.

In-group/out-group polarized representations: Positive in-group representation
Negative out-group representation

1. Emphasizing our good properties/actions
2. Emphasizing their bad properties/actions
3. Mitigating our bad properties/actions
4. Mitigating their good properties/actions

van Dijk(2004) has proposed different discourse moves under the above-mentioned broad categories of *self* and *others* representations. Out of those strategies, the following moves have been adapted to analyze the selected data.

1. Actor description: The description of actors in a discourse in accordance with our ideologies either positively or negatively.
2. Hyperbole: A technique used for exaggeration
3. Implication: Part of discourse that is implicit and can be inferred by the recipient from shared knowledge and attitude.
4. Lexicalization: The use of specific lexical items to express underlying concepts and beliefs.
5. Polarization: Expression of polarized cognitions and the categorical division of people in in-group (us) and out-group (them).
6. Presupposition: Presuppositions are often used to assume the truth of some unestablished proposition.
7. Empathy: evoking feelings of sympathy
8. Compassion Move: evoking feelings of pity and love

2.2. Data and Data Sources

The sample for the study consists of lyrics of election campaign songs of the two main political parties, namely, *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)* and *Pakistan Muslim League (N)* in Pakistan. One song of each political party has been selected for analysis. These songs were played in the political meetings, rallies, and processions during the General Election of 2018 in Pakistan. The analysis focuses only on the textual dimension of the songs. The detail of the sample is as under.

1. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf “*Tabdeeli*”
2. Pakistan Muslim League “*Vote ko izzat Dou*”

The election campaign songs are downloaded from the official websites of the respective political parties. The songs are available in video format, however, since, the present study focuses only on the textual dimension of these songs, hence, for analysis, the songs have been transcribed and translated. (Appendix A)

2.3. Criteria and Justification of Sample Selection:

The sample for the current study is selected from the election campaign songs played during the general election 2018 in Pakistan. The election campaign songs of the two main political parties in Pakistan have been selected. PML(N) was in government before the election and PTI was in opposition and was also a rapidly emerging popular party. The selected PTI song ‘*Tabdeeli*’ is the most popular as is evident by its viewership on YouTube. It has more than 7.7 million viewers. The PML(N) song “*Vote Ko Izzat Dou*” is a party anthem and is also played frequently in party meetings and processions. The selected songs are not only available and shared on social media and YouTube etc. but also played frequently on TV, radio, party meetings, and rallies during the election.

3. Literature Review

Discourse analysis studies the way language is used in interaction in a social context and also examines the relationship between social context, ideas, language, and power. It conceptualizes language as a form of social practice (Richardson 2004; Fairclough, 2003). These discourses, besides, expressing the feelings and emotions of their producers also contribute significantly to the process of construction and negotiation of in-group and out-group identity (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2011).

Critical Discourse Analysis, an offshoot of discourse analysis, broadens the horizons of discourse analysis by extending its exploration to the ideological

dimensions of discourse. According to CDA, language use in a society is determined by ideological conditions, and the representation of the world is mediated by language (Fairclough 2003). These perspectives also referred to as ideologies are explicitly or implicitly formulated or communicated through discourses.

Ideology, a significant concept in the discourse, is defined by Machin and Mayr (2012) as an individual's beliefs about the working of the world. It defines for them what is common sense and natural. Ideology is defined by van Dijk (2006) as a shared cognition of a social group having the characteristics of the class, gender, and ethnicity which has social and cultural bonding. The structure of ideologies is defined by the specific position held by social groups. The identity and attitudes of a social group towards some issues are also defined by such ideologies. Whereas, Hall(1986) conceptualizes ideology consisting of language, mental images, and systems of representations. These frameworks, according to him, are used by different social groups to express and organize their identity, actions, and values. Discourse in the form of language is the medium through which these frameworks get expressed. The analysis of ideologies requires not only close linguistic scrutiny but also an understanding of social identity theory which focuses on positive *self* and negative *other* presentation and analysis of text from this perspective assists in exposing ideologically based contextual strategies.

Identity, as a concept, is multidimensional and multidisciplinary and has been studied in different domains in social sciences. According to Ievina (2014), identities are noteworthy because of their role in creating a secure environment in a society. In different social situations, identities help create systems that help explain behaviors and interactions. Social Identity Theory, initially propounded by Tajfel and Turner (1978,1979), posits that social groups define individual identities which in turn also reinforce their identity. Identities of different groups are created by categorizing 'in-groups' and 'out-groups and their members view the in-groups favorably as against the out-groups. The basic premise of Social identity theory is mentioned by Oktar (2001), as an inclination to favoritism of their group by in groups and ascription of negative traits to outgroups.

Tracing the historical development of CDA, van Dijk(2008) identifies its four closely related mainstream approaches. The first approach, Critical Linguistics, is developed by Fowler, Kress, Hodge, and Trew (1979) while the Sociocultural approach is introduced by Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995). The third approach, the

Discourse-Historical approach, is propounded by Wodak (1996, 2001) and the fourth one Sociocognitive approach is contributed by van Dijk (1998, 2002).

Critical Linguistics (CL) emerged from the pioneering works of Fowler, Kress, Hodge, and Trew in 1979. It approaches discourse analysis with linguistic orientation and mostly uses the methodology of Systemic-Functional Grammar proposed by Halliday. In Fowler's (1991) view, "critical linguistics simply means an inquiry into the relations between signs, meanings and the social and historical conditions which govern the semiotic structure of discourse, using a particular kind of linguistic analysis" (p. 90). The focus of Fowler (1991) was on the linguistic analysis of media representations. His studies, along with the works of Hodge and Kress (1993), examine the way media "mystifies" and obscures certain aspects of reality by employing certain features and resources of grammar, such as, transitivity, nominalization, and agentless passive. A critical analysis of such representations can reveal encoded ideology.

Fairclough's (1989) sociocultural approach also referred to as the Dialectical relational approach utilizes the analytical methodology of Critical Linguistics (systemic-function grammar of Halliday) and delves deeper into the connections among discourse, ideology, and power relations. According to Fairclough(1995), social realities are created and changed by the skillful use and manipulation of language. He lays bare the dialectal relationship between discourse and social structures and also the role of social structures in the production and interpretation of discourse. Both of these micro and macro structures determine and get determined by each other. His critical inquiry involves the scrutiny of the language of mass media.

Another contribution to CDA is Wodak's (1996, 2001) discourse-historical approach which specifically studies the impact of historical socio-political contextual factors since the 1980s. Wodak (2001) states that through discourse historical approach the scrutiny of historical and political texts requires the integration of available information about historical sources and background knowledge of the fields in which the discursive events are situated. Through the lens of the Discourse-historical approach historical aspect of discursive actions is analyzed diachronically.

Besides recognizing the significance of context to the text, another important dimension i.e. nonverbal (semiotic) aspect of texts also came to prominence with Van Leeuwen's (1996, p.32) framework to study the use of visual devices in media. The fourth approach to CDA is the socio-cognitive model proposed by van Dijk (1985) that

assumes that the relationship between society and discourse is mediated by cognition and that our perception and understanding of discursive practices in a social context is shaped and influenced by both long and short term memory as well as mental models. Over time, when these mental models become rigid and overgeneralized they lead to stereotypes and prejudices. Hence, this approach to CDA posits that any text along with conveying information also performs the function of constructing reality in accordance with the ideological perspective of an individual or organization. CDA helps dissect and identify the sources of dominance, biases, and inequality produced, reproduced, and maintained through the subtle use of discourse strategies in different situations. This approach introduced by van Dijk utilizes eclectic methodology grounded on argumentation and semantic theories.

van Dijk (2000) in his studies follows certain conceptual and theoretical concepts which include: Macro vs. Micropower as control; access and discourse control; context control; the control of text and talk and mind control. The micro-level analysis includes language, verbal interaction, discourse, etc. whereas the macro-level pertains to power relationships in society, such as dominance, and inequality. Both these levels, like in actual life, make a cohesive whole in the text as well. In this model, social power is viewed as a means through which the minds and actions of other individuals/groups are controlled. The inappropriate use of social power and its underlying ideology that causes inequality in society is a special concern of CDA.

van Dijk (2004) in his seminal work, *Politics, Ideology and Discourse* presents an analytical model for the analysis of political discourse which, according to him, is the most ideological. van Dijk (2004) argues that production and understanding of political discourses depend, to a great extent, on political ideologies. Ideologies are also expressed explicitly in discourses. van Dijk(2004) considers political discourse as consisting of both discourse structures and political context. The analytical framework propounded by van Dijk (2004) comprises two main discursive strategies namely, '*positive self-representation*' (semantic macro-strategy of in-group favoritism) and '*negative other-representation*' (semantic macro-strategy of derogation of out-group). These broad categories are realized through discursive moves such as 'actor description', glorification, negative lexicalization, irony, implication, empathy, etc.

In any discussion of political discourse the concept of politics holds significance and needs to be explicated. Chilton (2004) defines politics as a social activity or a scuffle for power between those who possess it and those who aspire for it. It can also be defined as cooperative strategies followed by social institutions to

resolve their conflicts (Chilton 2004). According to van Dijk, "discourse" refers to a description of all genres in politics or politicians' discourses, so in politics "discourse" is "a socially constituted set of such genres, associated with a social domain or field" (van Dijk 1998, p.196). Fairclough (1995) also argues that the analysis of political discourse is the examination of the reproduction of political power, power abuse, or dominance.

Political talk and text, utilizing different frameworks of CDA, have been studied thoroughly across the globe given their significant role in enacting, reproducing, and legitimizing domination and control. Wenden (2005) studied the political representation of *intifada* in the *Aljazeera English website* by exploring the language used to hold a specific political stance. The work concludes that language is made to serve an important function and as an instrument of politics. The study claims discourse as a focus of struggle through which power is gained by specific representations.

The scholars of discourse analysis take a keen interest in the ideological dimension of the role of media in society. A plethora of research conducted in this domain indicates the power of news media in discursively constructing the dominant ideologies and certain national identities (van Dijk, 1998). White (2006) asserts that contrary to the proclaimed objective stance of media, in fact, they always accomplish ideological functions through linguistic strategies. Through delicate and skillful use of language, particularly, news media endorse, perpetuate, and naturalize certain values, norms, and beliefs, hence, influence the perception of the masses about their socio-political world.

Ferrari (2007), examined George W. Bush's public speeches to the nation made during April 2001 and explored the use of persuasive techniques through the lens of metaphor-based critical analysis. The study focused on the persuasion strategies used to promote preventive war in Iraq. The findings revealed the relationship of conceptual metaphor and emotions which was found as a basic argumentative feature and a tool to persuade others. It was identified as an ideological root and an important persuasive strategy. Another similar study employing van Dijk's notion of the *ideological square* was conducted by Matu and Lubbe (2007), which examined the way different newspaper editorials represented political factions contesting the general elections 1997 in Kenya. The study highlighted the role of editorials in articulating conflicting ideological positions in election reporting.

Syed (2008) also demonstrated the way media in Pakistani society emphasizes Islamic identity and reinforces the dominant ideology despite its being a multicultural society. Rashidi and Souzandehfar (2010) also applied van Dijk's framework to examine the way a particular reality of the American war on Iraq is viewed and represented by different political factions in America. The study has pointed out different strategies in the transcripts of speeches of opposing political parties during presidential elections 2008. Poorebrahim and Zarei (2012) examined the way Islam and Muslims are represented in the mainstream newspapers: *The Independent*, *The New York Times*, *The Herald Tribune*, and *The Times*. Their study explored the relationship between language and ideology. The research concluded that Muslims are frequently represented negatively. Likewise, Ahmadi and Safaei Asl (2013), investigated the language used by English newspaper editorials in Iran to voice their political ideologies during the presidential election. The study found out the use of discourse strategies, such as metaphors, comparisons, euphemisms, hyperbole, to implicitly express the ideologies.

Another study conducted by Ahmadian and Farahani (2014) in Iran, through the application of van Dijk's framework of the *ideological square*, also examined the influence of the power of language on the formulation of opinion in terms of the ideological portrayal of Iran's nuclear program. The study exhibited the way the same issue is represented differently by the two editorials of *The Los Angeles Times* and *Teheran Times*. Hence, the reviewed studies reveal that language is a socially constructed practice and that CDA explains the complex relationship between structures of language and its function in a sociopolitical context.

4. Data Analysis

The focus of the current research is to explore the way political parties are represented in the discourse of election campaign songs from social and ideological perspectives. For this purpose, the theoretical framework of '*ideological square*' proposed by van Dijk (2004) and social identity theory (Oktar, 2001) have been utilized to explore the discursive construction of '*us*' and '*them*' in the lyrics of election campaign songs. The sample consists of two lyrics i.e. "*Tabdeeli*" and "*Vote ko Izzat Dou*" of election campaign songs of the two main political parties in Pakistan, namely, *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)* and *Pakistan Muslim League (N)* respectively.

4.1. Analysis of Text 1: “Tabdeeli” Election Campaign Song by PTI

4.1.1. Introduction to the Song

This song was first released on YouTube on August 28, 2017. It is one of the most popular election campaign songs of PTI and it has more than 7.7 million views. It is about change in the political landscape of Pakistan and expresses hope about its future. The following discourse strategies, presented in boldface, used for *self* and *others* representation have been identified in the text of this song. The transcribed lyrics of the song are attached in Appendix A.

4.1.2. Positive Self-Representation

The title of the song “*tabdeeli*” is highly ideologically driven with positive connotations. The lexis “*tabdeeli*” is a metaphor for positive change and revolution. The title of the song directs attention to a specific understanding and framing of the pre and post-election scenario. Scholars are of the view that in discourses most important topics are expressed in the titles (van Dijk, 2011).

Positive self-representation is realized through the discourse strategy of **actor description**. The term is used to describe the members of society. The description of actors in a given discourse depends, to a great extent, on the ideologies of the discourse producers.

Referring to PTI, the lyrics of “*Tabdeeli*” song mention: “*Tanzeem itehad eeman, reg reg main hei*” [*Discipline, unity, faith are in every part of our body*]. The qualities mentioned are possessed by PTI leadership and party workers. These traits echo the mottos of Quaid-e-Azam and represent PTI in line with the vision of the founder of Pakistan. The political rivals are blamed for all the ills of the country while PTI leadership is portrayed as a redeemer of the nation. PTI is depicted as a rule-abiding party and a guardian of national **norms and values**. PTI has been predominantly presented as “*leader*” and as an upholder of justice, democracy, and positive values.

The text of the “*Tabdeeli*” song utilizes the discourse strategy of **polarization** by using the personal pronoun “*mery*” [*my*] in the phrase, “*merey yaro*” [*my buddies*]. It expresses the idea of solidarity with the masses and addresses the audience as their allies through this strategy. Likewise, the use of the pronoun “*inn*” [*them*] in the phrase, “*inn ko pehchan lo*” [*recognize them*] warns the audience to beware of the hidden enemy. This strategy of **polarization** has been used to depict PTI and its leadership in a positive light by labeling them as “*rahnuma*” i.e. leaders. It is **implied**

that PTI will take the nation out of the dire situation through its insightful leadership. The strategy of polarization is, thus, used to create the identity of the two groups by juxtaposing them. Both the rival parties i.e. PTI and Pakistan Muslim League along with the rest of the political parties are presented poles apart from each other. These rival parties are the cause and harbinger of inflation, and misery “*pereeshani*” [worry] while the other group’s identity is constructed as a redeemer. The people can have a sigh of relief since, “*Rahnumai aa gei hei*” [Guidance is here.]. The strategy of polarization has been used by pitting “*us*” and “*them*” against each other discursively. PTI and its rival parties are presented in stark contrast with each other.

In the text of the selected lyric, sympathy for the people who are victimized is evoked by the use of the discourse strategy of **compassion move**. Through the use of this linguistic device, the cruelty of the political rivals is emphasized. This strategy is evident in the text, such as, “*Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko*” [Now, the poor would not be deprived of justice.]. This strategy is made to play the double action of not only portraying the miserable picture of the present but also evoking hope for the future as is also evident in this snatch, “*Bhooka na soey ga kbi doobara*” [No one will remain hungry again.]. By careful lexical choices, it is presupposed that there is no justice in the country and that people live a miserable life. The textual analysis reveals the use of **exaggeration and hyperbole** as well. The examples quoted above **imply** as if during the rule of the previous governments' poverty and injustice were the orders of the day.

The excerpt, “*Rouzgar bhi miley, ga srmaya bhi bharey ga*” [Everyone will get employment, the investment will rise.], on the one hand, highlights riddling unemployment in the country and, on the other hand, shows rosy prospects in case PTI comes to power. Through this discourse strategy, positive self and negative other images are portrayed. The political opponents are blamed for all the ills of the country and the image of PTI as a redeemer is constructed. More obviously, the text of the lyrics presents PTI positively when it claims, “*Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko*” and “*Bhooka na soey ga kbi doobara*”. In fact, by the use of **empathy**, first, the deplorable condition of the downtrodden sections of society is highlighted, and then hope for the future is given.

In the lyrics, the writer exhibits **empathy** for the poor sections of society who suffered during the reign of the previous governments: “*Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko*”. It **implies** that during the rule of their rival party i.e. PML(N), people had gone through the plagues of injustice and hunger. More obviously, PTI is presented in a

positive light as it claims to be the one, who more than others, can take the nation out of the quagmire, “*aa gei rahnumai*”.

4.1.3. Negative Other-Representation

The under analysis election campaign song “*Tabdeeli*”, makes use of certain discourse strategies to represent the political opponents in a negative light to tarnish their image in the eyes of people. Thus, the song aims to gather maximum support for the party by appealing to commonsense, hence, persuading people to support the cause of PTI by making them discredit their political rivals.

The discourse strategy of **actor description** is used in the text of the song for the political othering of the rival parties. The political opponents and rivals have been represented negatively by their particular constructions through careful lexical choices. This is accomplished by categorizing them as evil and labeling them with negative attributes. For instance, in the excerpt, “*Bohut ho chuki beyeeymani, bohut ho chuki manmani*” [*Have had enough of corruption and enough of domineering/obduracy*] the political rivals are presented in an unfavorable light by being labeled as “*beyeeman*” [*corrupt*] and “*manmaani kerney waley*” [*obdurate*]. By putting the political rivals in these categories, they are blamed for inflation in the country and also of its “*ruswai*” [*infamy*]. They are held accountable for the sorry state of affairs prevalent in the country.

By the use of **negative lexicalization**, one of the parties (out-group) is presented as the cause and harbinger of inflation, and misery “*pereeshani*” while the other group’s (in-group) identity is constructed as a liberator. The political rivals are also branded negatively as “*luterey*” [*plunderers*]. They have been blamed for plundering national wealth, hence, their negative identity is constructed in the lyrics. The masses are exhorted to be aware of such corrupt leaders. “*Foran sei in luteeron ko tum pehchan lo.*” [*Recognize these plunderers at once.*] These leaders are responsible for, “*Gas bijli aour pani ki pereeshani*” [*The shortage of gas, electricity, and water.*] and “*Bohut ho chuki mehngai, bohut ho chuki ruswai, ab aa gei rahnumai*” [*Have had enough of inflation, and enough of infamy, now guidance is here.*]. In fact, by using the above-mentioned lexical choices the text exposes the corruption, dishonesty, and lack of conscientiousness of the rival political parties.

Lexical and surface structures are manipulated and the connotative and denotative meaning of the lexicons in the lyrics present the preceding governments and the political rivals negatively which is evident from the use of words, such as,

“luteerey” “beyeeman” [plunderers, corrupt]. The text of the under analysis election song is replete with such biased words as paint the rivals and preceding governments in dismal hues in a highly negative manner. These words include *beyeemani*, *manmani*, *pereeshani*, *mehngai*, *ruswai*, *luterey*, etc. [corruption, obduracy, worry, inflation, infamy, plunderers, etc.]. These lexemes serve to construct the identity of “them” as corrupt, irresponsible, and incapable persons. The textual analysis of the “Tabdeeli” election song of PTI reveals a highly negative presentation of political ‘others’.

Compassion move is evident in the text, such as, “*Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko*” [Now the poor would not be deprived of justice.]. This line depicts the desperate plight of the poor who are looking for justice. The former political governments are held responsible for this deplorable condition of the masses. This move is meant to highlight the brutality of others and, thus, to gather the support of the downtrodden for the party. Through the lexical choices, a hopeful picture of the future is portrayed as, “*Bhooka na soey ga kbi doobara*” [No one would remain hungry again.] to persuade the people to reject the rival parties.

The negative side of political rivals is highlighted in the text of the song through the discourse strategy of **empathy**: “*Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko*”. [Now the poor would not be deprived of justice.]. It implies that during the government of their rival party i.e. PML(N), people had gone through the plagues of unemployment and hunger.

The identity of the previous government is constructed as an unjust and corrupt one. The poverty of the masses is **exaggerated**. The excerpt “*Rouzgar bhi miley ga, srmaya bhi bharey ga*” [People would get employment, investment would rise.], on the one hand, highlights riddling unemployment in the country and, on the other hand, shows rosy prospects in case PTI comes to power. The forgoing government, especially, that of the Pakistan Muslim League is represented as failed and corrupt one that has been unable to deliver justice and “*rouzgar*” [employment] to the people. This highly negative representation of the political opponents is inconsonant with the ideologies of the text.

4.2. Analysis of Text 2: "Vote Ko Izzat Dou" PML(N) Song Lyrics

4.2.1. Introduction to the Song:

During the election of 2018, Pakistan Muslim League (N) came up with a new slogan for its campaign “*Vote Ko Izzat Dou*” which was highlighted in its anthem. The

anthem underscores the way PML(N) was able to escape the shadow of PPP's government and put the nation back on the right track. It urges its voters to think carefully and vote for PML(N) so that it can carry out the impressive work they have put thus far. The critical analysis of the lyrics on the textual level unmasks certain ideologies embedded in the use of the following discourse strategies given in boldface.

4.2.2. Positive Self -Representation

The text of the PML(N) election campaign song utilizes the strategy of **actor description** to construct the identity of PML(N) as a harbinger of "*roshni*" [light] and "*khushhali*" [prosperity]. They are the ones who have served the country by delivering to it the best. The dedication and devotion of the party top leadership are depicted by referring to them as, "*Jis ko ho junoon, jo kam kerey*" [The one who has passion, the one who works.] On the textual level, PML(N) is also depicted as a truthful and honest party which is evident in this line: "*Jo haq pe hei, jo sach pe hei*" [The one who is on the right and true path.]. Thereby the identity of PML(N) is constructed as a true and honest party fighting for the cause of the poor.

The analysis further reveals the use of the discourse strategy of **polarization**. This strategy is employed by presenting the political rivals and other contesting parties as indulged in destructive activities and, hence, are held responsible for the regression of the country. The rival parties are depicted indulged in mudslinging activities as is evident in this line, "*Uss ko kerty badnam kiyon?*" [Why do they defame him?] Here in this phrase "*uss*" refers to the leadership of PML(N). The identity of "*them*" is constructed as a malignant one. The good name of PML(N) is denigrated by the rival parties who are busy with destructive activities.

The **metaphoric expressions** have been used to portray "*us*" in positive and "*them*" in negative light. The lyrics of the song are replete with such expressions as: "*insaf ka sooraj*" [the sun of justice], "*badhtey qadam*" [progressing steps], "*roshni*" [light], etc. These **metaphors** imply that only PML(N) can deliver justice and ensure progress in the country. "*Roshni*" [light], a recurrent metaphor in the lyrics, is indicative of progress, betterment, prosperity, and enlightenment. The use of **positive lexicalization**, such as *roshni, aman, taezeem, taqreem, khushhali, haq, sach*, etc. [light, peace, discipline, prosperity, right, truth, etc.] associate the party with positive **norms and values**. It paints a positive picture of PML(N) by showing its link with good and positive ethical standards. The people are exhorted not to ally with the political rivals who are bent on detracking the country from the path of peace and

progress: “*Jis waqat se nikley mushkil se uss wakat ko na dawat dou*” [Do not invite the time again from which we have escaped with difficulty]. The use of metaphors, for example, *roshni, sooraj, etc.* [light, sun, etc.] serve to associate the party with positivity, progress, and goodness.

Along with the use of metaphors, **rhetorical questions** have also been used to emphasize the consistent efforts of the party to uplift the masses, such as, “*Jo kam kerey, uss ko kertey badnam kiyon*”. [Why do they disparage the one who works?] Positive values of the PML(N) are accentuated through the apt use of **pronouns**. The use of pronoun “*meerey*” [my] in the snatch, “*Meerey haq ki na tazleel kero*”, [Do not deny me of my right.] is significant as it implies that the political rivals debar PML(N) from getting what is rightful by opposing them. Those who support the rival political parties are prone to do negative regressive acts. The use of such **lexicons** suggests the ideological position of the party. The identity of PML(N) is also constructed through the apt and contextual use of pronouns, such as, “*jo, uss main*” etc. [who, he, I, etc.] “*Uss ki aawaz hon, main bhe Nawaz hon.*” [I am his voice, I am also Nawaz]. In discourse production the use of collective pronouns, such as, “*we*” and “*us*” serve an ideological function. According to Wodak (1991), by the use of these pronouns “*we-group*” identity is created and expressed. Contrary to the political rival’s actors/participants in the discourse, the actions of PML(N) have been constructed positively throughout the discourse. PML(N) is presented as a progressive and dedicated party while their bad actions are *de-emphasized* in the selected text.

4.2.3. Negative Other Representation

The linguistic analysis of the selected PML(N) election song reveals the use of the strategy of **polarization** to present the political rivals and other contesting parties in a negative light. They are depicted as busy in destructive activities and are held responsible for the regression of the country. The good name of PML(N) is smeared by the rival parties who are shown indulging in mudslinging and destructive activities, such as “*Jo kam kerey, uss ko kertey badnam kiyon?*”, [Why do they disparage the one who works?]. Here in this phrase “*uss*” refers to the leaders of PML(N). The identity of “*them*” is constructed as a malignant one.

The lyrics make use of the strategy of **polarization** by addressing the unnamed enemy to let them tread on the way towards progress and prosperity. There is an **implication** of the presence of unknown mysterious forces who are trying to impede this progress in Pakistan achieved by PML(N). These unnamed agents are

considered others and are presented in contrast to PML(N). This polarization or juxtaposition is realized through lexical choices, such as, ‘*mery haq ki*’, ‘*main bhe Nawaz hon*’. [*Of my right, I am also Nawaz.*]

The **metaphoric** expressions have been used to portray “us” in positive and “them” in negative light. The people are exhorted not to an alley with the political rivals who are bent on detracking the country from the path of peace and progress: “*Jis waqat se nikley mushkil se uss wakat ko na dawat dou*”. [*Do not invite the time again from which we have escaped with difficulty.*] Along with the use of metaphors, **rhetorical questions** have also been used to emphasize the pointless and futile, destructive activities of the rival political parties. The line, ‘*Jis ko ho junoon, jo kam kerey, uss ko kerte badnam kiyon?*’ shows the negative activities of the rival parties. The use of the pronoun “my” in the line, “*Meerey haq ki na tazleel kero.*” is significant as it implies that the political rivals debar PML(N) from getting what is rightful by opposing them. Those who ally with the opposing forces are prone to do negative regressive acts. The identity of PML(N) and rival parties are also constructed through the apt and contextual use of pronouns, such as, “uss” and “meerey” in the line: ‘*uss ko kerte badnam kiyon*’, *meerey haq ki na tazleel kero*’. The actions of the rival political parties are depicted as mudslinging. The ideological stance of the political party is revealed through the analysis of the specific lexical choices in the lyrics. This consistent use of positive/negative lexical choice to present the group in a specific light cannot be without an ideological basis (van Dijk, 1983).

5. Findings and Conclusion

Different linguistic strategies have been used by the discourse producers to emphasize the positive qualities of “us” and negative qualities of “them” while de-emphasizing the negative qualities of “us” and positive qualities of “them” when two opposite groups are involved in ideologically-based discourse, which contributes to the construction of specific in-group and out-group identities (Chan, 2014).

Political discourses, such as, election campaign songs are instances of forceful interpretive frameworks through which ideologies are discursively produced, reproduced, and reified. As evident in the data analysis section, through the careful and subtle use of language, these political songs are made to (re)produce the sociocognitive characteristics of social groups and perform certain political, cultural, and ideological functions (van Dijk, 2004). Political discourse in ideological states like Pakistan offers a rich resource for such observations. The present study has explored

how these texts discursively construct party identities and the polarization of “us” versus “them”.

The analysis of the selected election campaign songs titled, “*Tabdeeli*” and “*Vote Ko Izzat Dou*” of the two main political parties i.e. PTI and PML(N) respectively revealed that to gather maximum public support for their parties language is skillfully manipulated. The text of each song has utilized different linguistic resources that collectively fall under two main discourse strategies: positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The political parties, as political representatives of people, have successfully legitimized their stance and justified themselves as is shown in the data analysis section.

The analysis of the selected text reveals that the discourse strategies most frequently employed by the discourse producers include, actor description, compassion move, metaphor, pronoun, negative lexicalization, empathy, and polarization. These discourse strategies and structures are utilized to enhance, mitigate, avoid or exacerbate their or rival parties’ image. The analysis of the lyrics of PTI *Tabdeeli* song reveals that certain linguistic and discourse strategies are employed to create a particular identity of the party and also that of the rival parties. The identity of PTI is constructed as a positive force that challenges the status quo. In the excerpt, “*Bohut ho chuki beyeemani, bohut ho chuki manmani*” the political rivals are presented in an unfavorable light by being labeled as “*corrupt*” and “*waywords*”. One group is cause and harbinger of inflation, and misery and the other group’s identity is constructed as a redeemer. The people can have a sigh of relief since, “*rahnumai aa gei hei*”.

In its election campaign song, PML(N) came up with a new slogan, “*Vote Ko Izzat Dou*” that was highlighted in the anthem. The *dedication* and *devotion* of the party top leadership are depicted by referring to them as, “*Jis ko ho junoon, jo kam kerey*”. The party is depicted as truthful and honest and its leadership is as, “*Jo haq pe hei, jo sach pe hei*”. Thereby, the identity of PML(N) is constructed as a true and honest party fighting for the cause of the poor. The identity of “*them*” is constructed as a malignant one. The use of metaphors, such as *roshni*, *sooraj*, etc. serves to associate the party with positivity, progress, and goodness. Through the use of these linguistic strategies the political parties, persuade the people to prefer them to their rival parties and, thus gather maximum support during election leading to their attainment of power. The main object of the political parties

The analysis of the political election campaign songs' lyrics of the two major political parties in Pakistan through van Dijk's (2004) framework reveals that each party wants to achieve power and control by winning the election. To justify and legitimize their stances, each political party employs subtle discourse strategies and portrays itself positively and to the rival political parties negatively, hence, it aims to gather maximum support for the party by appealing to commonsense. The preceding analysis exhibits that the dominant narratives in both the texts of election campaign songs are the "bad" of "them" and "good" of "us". "Their" bad actions have been mostly highlighted and "our" bad actions have not been reported. Through the subtle use of the powerful tool of language, the selected parties mystify the perception of the people making them perceive their positive image as against their rival political parties and influence their voting choice. The impact of such positive self and negative other representations on voters' behavior and party alliances could be gauged and taken up as an interesting area of inquiry by future researchers.

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Appendix A

“Tabdeeli” (PTI)

Change

Rouk sako tou rouk lo tabdeeli aei rey

Stop if you can, change is on the way

Meerey yaro, tabdeeli aa gei hei, yaro

My buddies, change is right here, my buddies

Apni qismat app sanwaro tabdeeli aa gei hei yaro

Shape your destiny yourself, change is on the way buddies

Bohut ho chuki beyeemani, bohut ho chuki manmani

Have had enough of corruption and enough of domineering

Gas, bijli aour pani ki pereeshani

The shortage of gas, electricity and water

Bohut ho chuki mehngai, bohut ho chuki ruswai, aa bhe gei rahnumai

Have had enough of inflation, enough of infamy, now guidance is here

Apni zimadarion ko tum jan lo

Let your responsibilities be known to you,

Foran sei in luteeron ko tum pehchan lo

Recognize these plunderers at once

In ko kursi se utaro; tabdeeli aa gei hei, yaro

Snatch power from them; guidance is here, buddies

Watan ki halat ko sudharo, tabdeeli aa gei hei yaro

Redress the condition of your country, guidance is here, buddies

Ab ghreeb na roey ga insaf ko

Now the poor would not be deprived of justice

Bhooka na soey ga kbi doobara

No one will remain hungry again

Rouzgar bhi miley ga srmaya bhi bharey ga

Everyone will get employment, the investment will rise

Tanzeem, itehad, eeman, reg reg main hei

Discipline, unity, faith is in every part of the body

Sub se aagey Pakistan

Pakistan - before anything else!

“Vote Ko Izzat Dou” PML(N)

‘Pay Respect to Vote’

Allah...

Taraqi ki in rahon per ab qadam hamaray chalney dou

Let us tread on the pathways of progress now

Adalo insaf key sooraj ko tum rouko mat nikalney dou

Do not impede the path of justice, let it rise

Jis waqat se nikley mushkil se, mushkil se, us waqat ko na phir daewat dou

Do not invite the time again from which we escape with difficulty

daewat dou, daewat dou, daewat dou

Invite it, invite it, invite it

taezeem, taqreem kero, mery haq ki na tazleel kero

Give reverence and honor, do not deny me of my right

vote ko izzat do, Vote ko izzat do, Vote ko izzat do,

Pay respect to vote, pay respect to vote, pay respect to vote

Jis ko ho junoon, jo kam kerey, us ko kertey badnam kiyon

The one who has passion and the one who works, why do you disparage him

Jo roshni , aman , khushhali dey, jo haq pe hei, jo sach pe hei

The one who brings light, peace, prosperity, the one who is on the right and true path

Uss ki aawaz hon, main bhe Nawaz hon

I am his voice, I am also Nawaz

Ab waqat hum se door nahin, badthey jain gey qadam sada,

The time is now not far from us, the progressing steps will go on forever

Hum wo manzar bhe dekhain gain jab nara adal ka goonjey ga

There will be a time when truth will prevail

Bus naam rehe ga Allah ka, aour raj kerey gi khalke khuda

The name of Allah would remain and the people will rule

Thazeem karo, takreem karo, merey haq ki na tazleel karo

Give respect and reverence, do not deprive me of my right

Ab meerey vote ko izat do, Ab meerey vote ko izzat do

Now pay respect to my vote, pay respect to the vote