

## Words Speak Louder than Actions: A Critical Analysis of Ideological Perspectives in Media Discourse

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### Abstract

*This paper critically analyses the discourses of a news report of one Pakistani and one British newspaper on the same incident. The analysis suggested that both newspapers, in line with van Dijk (1988) and Halmari & Ostmanb (2001), managed to fulfill the expectations of their primary audience and give their own interpretation of reality. The analysis indicated how social and cultural identities played a role in shaping these newspapers' ideologies regarding the incident. Though, Dijk (1988) hypothesized that the Third World Press essentially lacks freedom and independence because it is dominated by Western information and communication policies, the current analysis generally seems to suggest that despite the Pakistani newspapers sought the international (largely western) news agencies for the source of information, and despite the Pakistani government's policies on the issue in question were in alignment with the West, the Pakistani newspaper managed to maintain and reflect its ideological concerns in the news-report.*

**Key Words:** critical discourse analysis, ideology, identity, media discourse

### 1. Introduction

This paper analyses the two news reports on the issue of Saddam Hussein's execution (see Appendix 1 for complete text of both news reports). Both news reports were selected from *the Daily Nation* and *the Daily Sun*, published on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2006 and on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2006 respectively. Both newspapers can be viewed as diametrically opposite in the sense that they reflect two different perspectives on the journalistic issues catering to a completely different readership in two countries – Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The Sun, is a widely published British tabloid with a considerable readership whereas the Nation is one of the Pakistani newspapers, known to have tendency towards the right-wing. Both newspapers hold different circumstances in terms of their readership and political/ideological affiliations of newspapers as well as readership.

#### 1.1. Background of Both Newspapers

The Nation is a national newspaper in the serious press category in Pakistan with close affiliation with the movement of Pakistan which led to the partition of the sub-continent. It has always explicitly, though moderately, demonstrated its right-winged tendency in news reporting, editorials and articles. On the issue of Saddam Hussein's execution, the government of Pakistan, even though having close strategic relations with the US government, gave a diplomatic statement in order not to arouse resentment among public in Pakistan. Pakistan's then Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz "termed the execution of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as a sad incident and hoped the security situation in the country would not be further exacerbated" (Associated Press of Pakistan, 2006). However, contrary to a diplomatic stance of the government on the issue, reports of a Gallup Survey pointed out that "a majority of the Pakistani urban population was opposed to the death sentence given to former Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein (Gallup International, 2006). It is interesting to note that despite the fact that the Nation uses western news agencies as sources, and although the Pakistani government's official policies on Iraq were aligned with those of the West, the Nation encodes, albeit implicitly, its ideological concerns and those of its readership, in the discourse of the news report.

The Sun has the tenth-largest circulation of any daily newspaper in the United Kingdom (UK Press Gazett, 2013). The newspaper falls in the tabloid category, and therefore, is most likely to perceive issues in a sensational style. The paper has been reportedly referring to foreign leaders who it deemed hostile to the UK in unflattering terms (Wikipedia, 2013).

Most probably also for that reason, the Sun seems to be hostile towards Saddam Hussein in this news report. However, it is not the capacity of this paper to investigate if the Sun's hostility towards Saddam Hussein is also adherent to the governments' stance on the same issues where the British government was a close ally to the US forces in the Iraq region. Tony Blair, then prime minister, had to face severe criticism at national and international level on supporting the US government on the Iraq war. However, Saddam Hussein's arrest was taken as a symbol of victory by the NATO forces, and it played a decisive role in bringing Saddam Hussein's regime to an end. The sole rationale behind choosing two news reports from sharply contrasting press categories is to demonstrate how discourses embed and reflect respective ideologies, both explicitly and implicitly.

As to my role as analyst in relation to my personal biases and tendencies towards the issues in question, I, being a supporter of human rights, have always disapproved Saddam Hussein's regime for capturing the power, violating human rights of the Iraqis and ruling the country exclusively based on his personal vision. However, I also found it rather contradictory that the US and British governments – the major allies in the Iraq war – sentenced Saddam Hussein to death despite the fact that death penalty is void in these countries. I have also been a critic of the Sun's non-serious and sensational attitude towards exaggeratingly scandalizing people. On the other hand, I have never been a supporter of the Nation's inflexible attitude on certain issues. I feel that both newspapers, on the issue in question, assumed an imbalanced approach towards reporting the incident where one newspaper instigated severe hatred and the other portrayed him unnecessarily respectfully. I discuss my viewpoint regarding the role of media in society in the last section of this paper.

## **2. Media Discourse**

Discourse has taken a major role in socio-cultural reproduction and change in modern and late modern society (Fairclough, 1999). Every instance of language use, as Wodak (1996) asserts, makes its own contribution to reproducing or transforming culture and society, including power relations. In order to uncover these complex relations critical discourse analysis (CDA) works in three dimensions: text; discourse practice (interaction) and socio-cultural practices (context) (Fairclough: 1992 a; 1995; 1999, van Dijk: 1988; 1991; 1998). However, a realistic analysis cannot analyse the text artificially isolated from the analysis of institutional and discourse practices within which texts are embedded (Van Dijk: 1988; Fairclough: 1999), which implies that language is a part of society, and should be interpreted in the perspective of the interaction with the context.

Stamou (2001) also observes that research on the media coverage of various events is conducted on the assumption that news media does not mirror the real world, but constructs a version of reality. Thus, newspapers have the potential to affect their readership in one way or the other, and are likely to exploit the language use to propagate certain ideologies among their readership. It is important that readers are aware of such possible exploitation. In this regard, CDA may help common readers become critical readers, as Reah (2005: 11) suggests, to 'identify gaps and swings in the information' given to them. Morrison (1996) also emphasizes that CDA needs to probe into news media in which the interrelationships between verbal, visual and spoken discourses are complex.

van Dijk (1993) maintains that the applications of discourse analysis in media research are as varied as the very fields of discourse studies and mass communication themselves. He refers to various levels and dimensions of news discourse which can be revealed through discourse analysis. However, much of work done in the two decades of 90s has a linguistic orientation under the influence of critical linguistic approach or by Halliday's systemic grammar (van Dijk, 1993), for example, Fang (2001), Coulthard (1996), van Dijk (1988; 1991; 1993), Fowler (1991), Gruber (1992), Weizman (1984), Morrison (1996). On the other hand, more recent work on media discourse has used various perspectives at micro or macro level (see Lee & Robert, 1992; Halmari & Ostmanb, 2001; Kau & Nakamura, 2005; Bekalu, 2006; and Lee & Lin, 2006). However, there are not many examples of studies which consider the discourse analysis at both micro and macro level which Fairclough (1992 b) finds more desirable because such an analysis would be more interpretative and could not only decode the intentions of the text producer but would also give information on the nature of the orders of discourse. This paper looks at the discourses of two news reports on the same incident with both micro and macro approaches. The micro-structural analysis focused on the linguistic analysis whereas the macro-structural analysis considers the dialectical relation between text and society. It also analyses the relations of power and ideology as depicted in the texts, with a focus on wider changes in society and culture manifested in media discourse practices.

### 3. The Layout of Both News Reports

Both news-reports consist of the first reporting on the court verdict on Saddam Hussein's execution. Though both newspapers are accessible on the Internet, their immediate audiences are more likely to be local in the respective regions of both newspapers. Both texts for the analysis were taken from each newspapers' respective websites (both web pages are irretrievable now). The Sun displayed Saddam's two photographs. The first photograph (A) showed Saddam holding his forehead with the caption: *Shaken tyrant can't believe the verdict*. The second photograph (B) showed him holding his right hand in the air with his index finger pointing upward with the caption: *Defiant...Saddam tries to shout down the judge* (Picture 1).



A: Shaken tyrant can't believe the verdict (*The Sun*)

B: Defiant...Saddam tries to shout down the judge (*The Sun*)

Picture 1

The Sun used the Picture B to portray Saddam as defiant by linking the caption with his gestures. On the contrary, the Nation did not use any caption with the photograph (B). The Nation showed Saddam as a strong person by linking the posture in the picture B with the preview paragraph. In the Nation, the preview paragraph on the left of the photograph read: *A shaken but defiant Saddam Hussein was sentenced to death*. The Sun report is much briefer (335 words) than that of the Nation (956 words), but the Sun managed to compensate brief reporting by providing links to Saddam-related news. On the Nation's web page there was no link to the history of Saddam's case.

### 4. Linguistic Analysis

Linguistic analysis aims to view "text as built out of choices from within available systems of options in vocabulary, grammar and so forth" (Fairclough: 1995: 25). Fairclough claims that the linguistics choices made in texts carry ideological meanings. The "linguistic structure" of systemic theory is the "lexicogrammar," which combines syntax, lexicon, and morphology. Halliday (1985) believes that these three components must be described as one entity. The following section linguistically analyses both news reports from the same perspective.

#### 4.1. Text as Multifunctional

Register is important in systemic linguistics because it is seen as the linguistic consequence of interacting aspects of context, which Halliday (1994) calls field, tenor, and mode. The topics and actions which language used to communicate are called field. Field includes references to the subject matter (crime, religion, politics etc.), to the persons, places or things involved, to the qualities of the entities involved and to the circumstances of the activities involved such as time, location, manner etc. (Al-Gublan, 2008). Field determines the context of a text to decode the underlying meaning of the same.

The Sun	The Nation
Saddam Hussein	Saddam Hussein
The court	The court (judge, Iraqi High tribunal, Chief prosecutors, prosecutors, guards)
Iraqi Government	Iraqi Government (prime minister, army, US official)
Millions of people around the world	Iraqi people
Shi'as	Shi'as
Sunnis	Sunnis (The Baath Party officials, all pro-Saddam supporters)
Army officials	BBC correspondent
	Reporters
	Witness
	Lawyers

Table 1: Human Participants in both news reports

In the context of the two news reports, one aspect of field was human participants, who were made prominent by both newspapers but in different ways (Table 1). In the Sun they were referred as groups but in the Nation both as groups and individuals. Fairclough (1995) maintains that such locational designations blur the distinction between participants and circumstances. The Nation blurred these distinctions between 'the court' and 'the members of the court' (*judge, Iraqi High tribunal, Chief prosecutors, prosecutors*). The Nation reported:

*The Iraqi High Tribunal's chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Musawi told reporters at the courthouse after the verdict that Saddam's crimes "are civilian crimes and not military crimes. So he will be hanged."* (Appendix 1: Lines 61 – 63)

The nation substituted an individual official (*chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Musawi*) with the institution (*the Iraqi High Tribunal*) to report on the refusal of Saddam's appeal to be killed by firing squad. This technique affects the authenticity of the refusal to the appeal first because it was conveyed through an individual – the chief prosecutor and not by "the Iraqi High Tribunal" itself, hence it might be taken as the chief prosecutor's personal opinion, released "after the verdict"; secondly, this technique blurred the statement of the prosecutor by not showing explicitly who viewed Saddam's crimes as civilians – the Tribunal at large or the chief prosecutor in person; thirdly, the impact of the main verdict of hanging might be perceived with decreased value without an explicit reference to the tribunal that is responsible for the verdict. Though the statement by the chief prosecutor would be treated as the official statement of the tribunal in theory, the Nation has blurred this identification by eliminating the institution and assigning the statement to an individual. On the other hand, the Sun presents the tribunal as powerful and authoritative by eliminating the individual statements:

*The court threw out an earlier appeal from Saddam to be killed by military firing squad.* (11-12)

The Nation frequently blurred boundaries between the participants and the circumstances to benefit Saddam Hussein. For example, Saddam's actions of genocide were blurred by having been reported as *according to court documents* in the Nation report:

*According to court documents, the military, political and security apparatus in Iraq and Dujail killed, arrested, detained and tortured men, women and children in the town.* (83 – 85)

In this case, involvement of *military, political and security apparatus* in Saddam's crime reduces the gravity of his crime which, otherwise, was perceived as solely Saddam Hussein's action in his individual capacity as a ruler. Such a reference as made above could suggest that Saddam Hussein was only partially responsible in his role for ordering the genocide. The newspaper's message might be further interpreted as Saddam's only partial involvement in genocide and hence a death sentence for a partial act needs justification. The Nation made another reference to *kangaroo court* (line 99) to indicate the involvement of other factors i.e. *kangaroo court* (not Saddam Hussein in person) ordered the killing of Shi'as. The pattern of blurring among participants and/or circumstances to benefit Saddam did not exist in the Sun report.

Likewise, in representing the other powerful individual/groups (*prime minister, army and the US officials*), individual identities of all the participants involved were blurred in the Nation report by having them referred as alternative for each other. It also put four different groups (the court, the government, the army and the US officials) opposite to Saddam Hussein to indicate the limited capacity of an individual in front of government's four offices.

However, the Nation later referred to Saddam's supporters in groups (*Sunnis, the Baath Party officials, and pro-Saddam supporters*), to emphasize Saddam's popularity and support by groups even when the governmental institutions were against him.

The negative connotation of the word *Islam or Islamic* is most unlikely in any Muslim cultural context. It is interesting to note that the Nation referred to Saddam's supporters as *Islamic army* which reflected that the Nation, being a part of the Muslim media, aligned itself with the *Islamic army*. Likewise, *Iraqi army* in the Sun, became *US led occupational forces* in the Nation, establishing that the decision was influenced, or led by the US army, and consequently by the US government. The Sun did not refer to Saddam's lawyers, seemingly giving impression that nobody defended him whereas the Nation's repeated references to his lawyers indicated that a group of people was defending Saddam Hussein.

A glance at Table 2 shows how both newspapers differed in referring to the non-human participants. In Table 2 the phrase "*dock of Baghdad courtroom*" (the place in a criminal law court where the accused people stand during the trial) is used by the Sun as opposed to the Nation's use of a more general phrase "*the court room*".

The Sun	The Nation
Dock of Baghdad court room	Customary seat, Court room, court house
Town of Dujail	Village of Dujail
Celebratory gunfire	Machine guns and mortars
Capital	War-torn capital
Neighbourhoods	Shia suburbs
Prison	Black suit and white shirt
Noose	Holy Quran
	Orchards
	Homes
	Sadar city
	Sectarian battlefields of Diyala
	Saddam's home region of Salaheddin

Table 2: Non-human participants in both news reports

In the Sun, Saddam Hussein stood shaking in the dock, but is reported to have walked to his *customary seat* in the Nation. Lexical choices of the non-human participants indicate the level of sympathy of both newspapers with Saddam Hussein, and hence reflect their ideological ties. References to *Dujail, capital* and *gunfire* by both newspapers are noteworthy. The Nation called the *Town of Dujail* as *Village of Dujail* which seemingly reduces the gravity and size of allegations against Saddam, particularly in the context of the Nation's readership where a town is generally viewed as more urban as well as much greater in terms of size, importance and value as compared to the rural setting of a village. Likewise *the capital* in the Sun is a *war-torn capital* in the Nation, and *celebratory gunfire* of the Sun turned into the violence of *machine guns and mortars* which broke out as a protest to the verdict. Such lexical preferences reflect that both newspapers contextualised the situation from their own perspectives. The Sun highlighted Saddam's crimes through words that have negative connotation. For example, *dock of Baghdad* – i.e. a criminals' place, *prison* – i.e. a criminals' destination, and *noose* – i.e. a criminals' destiny. On the other hand the Nation's lexical choices throughout carried positive connotation for Saddam Hussein. For example, the *customary seat* – for a 'murderer'?; *black suit and white shirt* – well-dressed even at the most critical moment of his life; *Holy Quran* – a 'murderer' holding a book of his own choice; *war-torn capital* – the result of the war imposed by the US forces on Saddam and Iraq.

In term of adjectives used for Saddam and other human participants (see table 3) both reports reflected a sharp contrast to each other. To the Sun, Saddam was *tyrant and defiant* i.e. he was an oppressor, and at the same time rebellious who needed to be controlled. On the contrary, the Nation viewed him as *shaken but defiant* ignoring the tyrant side of his character. The use of interjection *but* denotes the opposite to the preceding adjective (i.e. Saddam Hussein is upset, yet strong enough to resist).

Individuals/ Groups	Attributes/adjectives (SUN)	Attributes/adjectives (NATION)
Saddam Hussein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tyrant, defiant</li> <li>• former Iraqi leader</li> <li>• 69-year old</li> <li>• one time leader</li> <li>• <i>Sunni Arab</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shaken but defiant</li> <li>• former Iraqi leader</li> <li>• former strongman</li> <li>• former leader</li> <li>• shocked but furious</li> </ul>
The court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judge Rauf Abdur Rehman</li> <li>• Judge Rehman</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judge Rauf</li> <li>• The judge</li> <li>• Iraqi High Tribunal</li> <li>• The court</li> <li>• Chief prosecutor</li> </ul>
Iraqi Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ali al Dabbagh – spokesman for Prime Minister</li> <li>• Prime Minister Noori al Maliki</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prime Minister Maliki</li> </ul>

**Table 3:** Attributes assigned to the human participants

It is noteworthy that the Sun presented Saddam *stood shaking* most probably because of the trauma which indicated his disturbed mental condition whereas the Nation mentioned him trembling only *after being forced to stand before the Iraqi High Tribunal* (54-55) – a result of physical struggle with the guards. In the Nation, Saddam was *shocked* but still *furious* at the decision makers. The Nation referred to him as *former Iraqi leader, former strongman, former leader* i.e. someone who was not in power but still was referred with respectable titles; but the Sun reported him as *one time leader* (but no more), *69-year old* (aged and hence weak), *Sunni Arab* (a *Sunni* who killed Shi'as, and an *Arab* – a race which has been generally referred as stubborn and ignorant in the Islamic history as well as in the Holy Quran (Al-Quran, 9: 97)<sup>1</sup>.

Both reports quoted the court and the court-officials for different purposes. While referring to the government the Sun supported the Iraqi government by quoting the statement of the Prime Minister's spokesman in negative connotation:

*Ali al-Dabbagh, spokesman for Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, said "This is the least Saddam deserved."* (15-16) However, the Nation showed its affiliation with Saddam by ignoring Ali al-Dabbagh's statement and quoting other statements which did not directly refer to, or show the gravity of Saddam's crimes:

*The Iraqi High Tribunal's chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Musawi told reporters at the courthouse after the verdict that Saddam's crimes "are civilian crimes and not military crimes. So he will be hanged."* (61-63)

*"It was as if he was thinking 'I've come here and done what I intended to do'," BBC correspondent said.* (64-65)  
*"I was among 12 defence lawyers who met Saddam Hussein for four hours on Saturday afternoon. His morale was very high, it was made of steel," Tunisian lawyer Ahmad Siddiq told AFP.* (104 -105)

#### 4.2. Transitivity

In functional grammar, transitivity has a more semantic approach unlike in traditional grammar where the latter has only a binary approach to identify transitive actions. By looking at language from a semantic perspective, the analyst aims to determine the degree of how one action has more influence on the object than the other. That is why Halliday (1985, 1994) asserts that transitivity identifies the representation beyond the "linguistic reality". Linguistic reality means the reality that is perceived merely through words, and not through linguistic and/or discourse analysis. Barker & Galasinski (2001:71) find that transitivity involves the process and the participants to locate the representation in "an implied extra linguistic text". They believe that the significance of processes represented in an utterance helps the readers to identify between what they say and what they actually mean. Looking at the text from the perspective of transitivity, all the material process related to Saddam in the Sun referred to desperation and dejection in this specific context e.g. *stood, tried, cover up, failed, oppressed, hang etc.*

The Nation included three types of material processes related to Saddam:

- i. Processes describing Saddam's independent actions: *Walked.*
- ii. Processes attributed to Saddam by other participants: *killed, arrested, tortured, detained, tried, ripped, dragged.*
- iii. Processes associated with Saddam: *was held, was pushed, was led away, was forced, was told, was driven.*

<sup>1</sup> Al-Quran, Part 9: 97

• Multilingual Quran, 3 versions of English translation by Shakir, Andullah Yusuf Ali and Pikhtal available on <http://quran.al-islam.org/> (retrieved 11/04/2013)

• Interpretation by Ibn-e-Kathir (Tafseer Ibn-Kaseer -Urdu Translation) 2003, Daar-ul-Furqan: Riyadh. Vol 2 p 603.

The first category shows him as an independent person; the second category contains negative words but only *According to court documents* (line 83) – the Nation did not take the responsibility of relating these processes to Saddam. It might be asserted that the phrase “*According to court documents*” also serves as an evidential device, namely as signaling the evidence for the crimes attributed to Saddam Hussein. However, such evidence might have a stronger case in the legal context only. In the perspective of linguistic analysis it is more likely to be perceived as to distance the reporter from the attribution of responsibility. The third category contains passive processes done to Saddam against his will, implying the weakness of the court that had to use force to make *the former strongman* obey.

The Nation projected Saddam’s voice more than the Sun did. The Nation showed Saddam more vocal by using verbal processes like *said, shout, declared, and denouncing* as compared to the Sun that used only one verbal process related to Saddam i.e. *shout*. The process *shout* is used in the Sun in a negative context whereas in the Nation the same process seemed to convey a positive connotation while portraying Saddam with a vigorous activity:

...*the one-time leader of the country tried to shout him (the judge) down with cries...* (The Sun: 5-6) (Saddam) *continued to shout, denouncing the court....* (The Nation: 57)

It might be argued that the Sun used fewer verbal processes because of its brevity in report. However, still the significant point is that the Sun used the verbal process ‘shout’ in a negative connotation as compared to that of the Nation where Saddam Hussein was portrayed as using his free will, in the court, to do whatever he wanted to.

**4.3. Illocutionary Forces of Metalinguistic Verbs**

Metalinguage introduces “the speaker’s point of view both on the expression itself and on aspects of “extra-linguistic reality” (Barker & Galasinski 2001: 77). Metalinguistic verbs are interpretative and are most likely to reflect the user’s opinion, in order to go beyond what the speaker says. A comparison of a few illocutionary forces assigned to Saddam in both news-reports further reflected their approach to the participants and the incident. In the Sun Saddam emerged as a weak person through illocutionary forces. On the contrary, the Nation portrayed him as a strong person. In the Sun Saddam *tried to shout* but in the Nation he (successfully) *continued to shout*. In the Sun he *tried* to shout down the judge whereas in the Nation he *denounced* the court and shouted at the guards.

Illocutionary forces (Saddam)	The Sun	The Nation
	can’t believe	declared
	tried to shout him (judge) down	continued to shout
	cover up	walked
	failed	carrying
		shouted
	Oppressed the....	denouncing

**Table 4:** Illocutionary forces assigned to Saddam Hussein

The examples in the table 4 show how differently both newspapers treated Saddam in terms of illocutionary forces. Unlike the Nation, the Sun used all illocutionary forces only in negative connotation. Both newspapers also treated the court differently through metalinguistic as shown in table 5.

Illocutionary forces	The Sun ( <i>the court</i> )	The Nation ( <i>the court</i> )
	handed down	got
	finally declaring	barked
	threw out	was obliged
		declared
		shout

**Table 5:** Illocutionary forces assigned to the court

The court was assertive in the Sun but appeared to be submissive in the Nation. The judge, who *handed down* the verdict, *declared* the penalty and *threw out* the appeal in the Sun, was *obliged* to *shout* in the Nation. Interestingly, what the Sun called *cries* of Saddam, were perceived as Saddam’s declarations by the Nation: (*Saddam*) *tried to shout him down with cries of "God is Greatest" and "Long Live Iraq!"* (The Sun: 5-6)

*“Long live Iraq. Long live the Iraqi people. God is greater than the occupier,” the former strongman declared...* (The Nation: 53-54)

Considering Saddam’s Islamic cultural background, it would be noteworthy that slogans such as *God is Greatest* are never used in despair, rather with vigour and excitement. Likewise the slogans such as *Long Live Iraq* are universally made in the same vigorous tone, rather than in the forms of cries.

### **5. The Dialectical Relationship between Text and Society (Macro-Structural Analysis)**

The dialectical relationship between text and society denotes that discourse is potentially capable of determining social and cultural changes within the society and be affected by both of these. Furthermore, it develops through the language use and simultaneously constitutes identities, relationships and representations. Being a widely published newspaper, the Sun reflected its social identity in the western and British background. The British government was one of the major US-allies in the Iraq-war. These social and political identities shaped the discourse of the Sun news-report. It maintained high power relation between Saddam and his opponents i.e. the USA and the UK. The same discourse constituted and/or expanded the already existing social identities and knowledge of the participants of the news-report within the western social stream.

Techniques discussed in the above sections supported how the Sun influenced the readers’ opinion with its own ideologies. Being a tabloid, the Sun majorly emphasized on the use of sensational language, which Widdowson (2004) believes is a characteristic of tabloids.

On the other hand, the Nation showed a great deal of tolerance towards Saddam partly because of its inclination towards the right wing and partly because of its major representational position of the Muslim readership in Pakistan. Being a serious national newspaper, the Nation shares ideological and social ties with its readership that is mainly Sunni Muslims, which shaped its ideologies and hence its discourse in the news report. This dialectical relationship is also socially constitutive in the sense that it disapproved the US-invasion in Iraq and supported as well as psychologically satisfied its readership because of the readership’s ideological and geographical affinity with Saddam.

As discussed above, both newspapers viewed Saddam Hussein in the perspective of their social representations. While focusing on the representation of groups, both newspapers had different attitudes towards the social and political institutions. The Sun viewed the institution of court as symbol of power which Saddam Hussein tried to shout down but failed. The Nation indirectly reflected doubts about the validity of the institution of court by using certain phrases such as:

- *The dramatic session (of the court) (34)*
- *Judge Rauf Rasheed Abdel Rahman was obliged to shout to make the sentence heard over Saddam’s protestations. (43-45) ... he (Saddam) was pushed into place to hear Abdel Rahman declare: “The highest penalty should be implemented.” ( 48-49)*
- *(Saddam) continued to shout, denouncing the court, the judge and the US-led occupation force in Iraq. (57-58)*
- *(The court session) was marked by outbursts and harangues from Hussein and his co-defendants, lawyer walkouts, much-criticised court actions, and complaints from lawyers about poor security. There were grave concerns about security for legal teams and their families; three defence lawyers were killed. (78-82)*
- *Witness testimony and prosecutors got their case across, however. (82-83)*

These examples reflected the way the Nation viewed the court and its validity. It is worth noting the use of word *dramatic*; the way the judge was *obliged to* shout; the way Saddam was forced in the courtroom and the disorder of the courtroom that seemed to suggest Saddam’s power and the court’s helplessness. The Nation indirectly suspected the validity of the court procedure because Western involvement and influence in the trial had already been questioned by Pakistan and many other countries, especially by the anti-US religious parties. On the other hand the Sun viewed the court as reliable and powerful because of the court’s closeness with the US government that was one of the major participants in the process of the trial. Both newspapers tried to meet the expectations of their readership in line with Halmari & Ostman’s (2001) claim that news-reports, at an implicit level, manage to fulfill the expectations of the local community.



As mentioned earlier that the Sun did not refer to Sunnis (Saddam's supporters) the way the Nation did. The Sun showed the Shi'as in vast majority who had been *oppressed* (line 18) by the *Sunni Arab* (line 19) – Saddam. The Sun referred to them first as *hundreds of innocent Iraqis* (lines 3-4) and later gave a more exact figure – *more than 148 shi'ite men* (line 10) – murdered by Saddam.

On the other hand, the Nation referred to Shi'as as *148 Shi'a villagers* (line 51). This reference was also meaningful along with the *Village of Dujail* (line 52) as compared to *the town of Dujail* (line 10) in the Sun. Both newspapers might have used this word because of different social definitions of the size of place. In the Pakistani context, village is commonly known as a place of least value in the civic perspective. Therefore, the use of the words *village* and *villagers* had signals of reduced value of the crime involved. On the contrary, both newspapers treated the Sunni groups in the opposite way. The Sun viewed all the Iraqi Sunnis as Saddam's people and called them *insurgents, gunmen and henchmen* (lines 22, 23 & 29 respectively), whereas the Nation viewed Sunnis as *military, political and security apparatus, , Saddam's supporters, Baath Party cadres, Saddam's armed forces, Sunni armed group, and Islamic army of Iraq* (lines 83-84, 90-91, 106 & 107 respectively). A comparison between *gunmen* and *Sunni armed group, henchmen* and *Saddam's supporters, insurgents* and *Islamic army of Iraq* showed how both newspapers de-emphasized the importance of the opposite group/s.

The Sun, having preference for the opponents of Saddam, referred to the Sunnis (Saddam's supporters) as *insurgents, gunmen and henchmen* – all negative reference. However, the Nation, on the contrary, called the same group with positive references as mentioned above. The Sun pointedly focused on the reaction of Shi'a majority on the verdict, who were particularly oppressed during Saddam Hussein's regime:

*There was sporadic celebratory gunfire in Baghdad, notably from areas where the long oppressed Shi'ite majority live. (17-18)*

*They poured onto the streets, dancing and yelling in joy that the Sunni Arab who oppressed them for three decades is now likely to be executed. (19-20)*

On the other hand, the Nation focused on the Sunni's reaction on the verdict:

*Immediately after the sentence, violence reportedly broke out in the mainly Sunni Azamiya district of Baghdad, with machine guns and mortars being fired. (72-73)*

It is interesting to note that since 1980s, Shia-Sunni conflict has been a major issue in the Sunni state of Pakistan. The Nation, though showing no explicit tendency to any of these Islamic sects, addresses to a readership of majority of population in Pakistan i.e. Sunni. It is obvious from the above examples how social, political and geographical ties influenced the ideologies and hence the language of both newspapers. This dialectical relation between the discourse and social practices affected each other by supporting the existing ideologies and deteriorating the opposite individuals, groups and institutions.

## 6. Conclusion

van Dijk (1988) observes that news agencies make their products standardised but they also tailor the information to the wishes of their best clients. However, this tailoring tendency in news might be debatable. It is reasonable to expect information from newspapers with maximum impartial approach, though it is difficult to enforce in practice from commercially competitive media environment. Common readers have no access to the original source of information and they have no choice but to rely on whatever is conveyed to them through newspaper. Considering the current media's heavy reliance on external funding, advertisements and capitalistic organisations, it sounds too ideal to have news media to be impartial in all possible ways. However, this reality does not justify depriving common the readership of their right to receive uncensored information. Editors and journalists are human being and naturally they can be impartial only to a certain human extent, this human limitation, however, should not be taken as licence to portray according to their vested interests. Such an attitude has already led to confuse the readership as well as the definition of certain values which have consequently become ambiguous.

In this context, the role of alternative media and critical media could be significant. Though alternative media has been criticised by Comedia (1984) for lack of resources, it could be the case with any new approach/project in the beginning. Also over more than two decades, the radicle advancement in the IT has provided a new form to access the public forums through the internet, enabling the alternative media with the internet news blog forum. Fuchs (2010) gives a comparison of potential dimensions of traditional media and critical media (Table 6) which explicitly elaborates how alternative media could be a better alternative to the current media practices.

Dimension	Capitalist mass media	Alternative media
Journalistic Production	Elite journalism	Citizens' journalism
Media Product Structures	Ideological form and content	Critical Form and content
Organizational media Structures	Hierarchical media organizations	Grassroots media organizations
Distribution structures	Marketing and public relations	Alternative distribution
Reception practices	Manipulative reception	Critical reception

Table 6: Potential dimensions of traditional and critical media (Fuchs, 2010)

Fuchs further advocates the model of critical media, according to which “Critical media product content shows suppressed possibilities of existence, describes antagonisms of reality and potentials for change, questions domination, expresses the standpoints of oppressed and dominated groups and individuals, and argues for the advancement of a co-operative society. Critical media product form aims at advancing imagination, it is dialectical because it involves dynamics, non-identity, rupture, and the unexpected” (Fuchs 2010: 189).

In the absence of strong challenges, the traditional media might be manipulating the uninformed readership by using language as a tool of power to misguide them, and by providing information that suits only one part of the world. Like any other individual, group or institution, media anywhere in the world should not be allowed to shape the opinion of its readership merely to serve political or economic benefits for certain group/s, and exploiting the “oppressed class”. In case of Saddam Hussein’s news report, two different parts of the world perceived and portrayed Saddam Hussein in two different roles. Such varied perspectives on the same issue lead to nothing but ambiguity. The media of the global village needs to ascertain unanimous policies, at least on global issues, in order to bridge the gap among religious, ethnical, racial and geographical groups.

Such a task is challenging and appears more utopian than practical. However, linguistic and critical discourse analyst could play a part by highlighting the possible use of language in order to exploit situation to advantage or disadvantage certain groups. This enhances the responsibility of CDA to perform consciously a more active role in shaping the discourses of society than being a passive tool in doing so. Discourse analyses drawn upon news media have vital importance in suggesting social changes for their potential strength to affect the social and political orders. As Wharton (2005) suggests that awareness is a tool for change, awareness to certain discourse dimensions is valuable to introduce a change in journalism, and consequently in society. Such analyses can potentially contribute to journalistic ethics to point out how language could be used more fairly, and can inform readers on how to become critical readers to filter the information.

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## Appendix

1. Saddam to hang for murders (The Sun)
2. TYRANT Saddam Hussein stood shaking in the dock of Baghdad court room today
3. as he was told that he would hang for the mass murders of hundreds of innocent
4. Iraqis.
5. As judge Abdul Rahman handed down the sentence, the one-time leader of the
6. country tried to shout him down with cries of "God is Greatest" and "Long Live
7. Iraq".
8. But Saddam's desperate attempts to cover-up the verdict failed with judge Rahman
9. finally declaring that the 69-years-old would face death penalty for the deaths of
10. more than 148 Shi'ite men from the town of Dujail in 1982.
11. The court threw out an earlier appeal from Saddam to be killed by military firing
12. squad rather than face the noose.
13. The verdict was welcomed by the new Iraqi government and by millions of people

14. around the world.
15. Ali al-Dabbagh, spokesman for Prime Minister Nuri-al-Maliki, said, “This is the
16. least Saddam deserved.
17. There was sporadic celebratory gunfire in Baghdad, notably from areas where the
18. long oppressed Shi’ite majority live.
19. They poured into streets, dancing and yelling in joy that the Sunni Arab who
20. oppressed them for three decades is now likely to be executed.
21. However, Army officials were braced for retaliatory attacks by pro-Saddam
22. insurgents and have cancelled all leave for military staff.
23. Minor clashes broke out between gunmen and US and Iraqi troops in two Sunni
24. Muslim neighbourhood of the capital.
25. Meanwhile, two other senior aides, including Saddam’s half-brother Barzan al-
26. Tiriki, will also hang if their automatic appeals fail.
27. His former vice-president was sentenced to life in prison and three minor Baath
28. Party officials received long sentences.
29. Saddam and his henchmen have the right to appeal. However, the former Iraqi
30. leader will face further genocide charges in a separate trial next week, making it
31. unlikely that today’s verdict will be overturned.
32. Saddam to hang (The Nation)
33. BAGHDAD (Agencies) – A shaken but defiant Saddam Hussein was sentenced to
34. death by hanging on Sunday as the dramatic session end to his trial drove another
35. wedge between the country’s already bitterly divided factions.
36. The dramatic court session lasted for 50 minutes. The former Iraqi leader was
37. convicted over the killing of 148 people in the mainly Shia town of Dujail
38. following an assassination attempt on him in 1982.
39. Saddam was, however, acquitted of one of the indictments in crimes against
40. humanity, a US official close to the court said. “He is acquitted of enforcing
41. disappearance of persons,” the official said.
42. Saddam Hussein, dressed in his usual dark suit and white shirt and carrying the
43. Holy Quran, walked to his customary seat and sat down. Judge Rauf Rasheed
44. Abdel Rahman was obliged to shout to make the sentence heard over Saddam’s
45. protestations.
46. “Make him stand,” barked the judge, as Saddam shouted at the guards, “Don’t
47. bend my Arms, Don’t bend my arms.”
48. A court official held Saddam’s hands as he was pushed into place to hear Abdel
49. Rahman declare: “the highest penalty should be implemented.”
50. Saddam, 69, was sentenced to death for “wilful killing”, part of his indictments for
51. crimes against humanity in his role in ordering the deaths of 148 Shia villagers in
52. the village of Dujail, north of Baghdad in 1982.
53. “Long live Iraq. Long live the Iraqi people. God is greater than the occupier,” the
54. former strongman declared as he was led away from the dock, trembling after
55. being forced to stand before the Iraqi High Tribunal.
56. The former leader looked shocked and furious as the sentence was passed, and
57. continued to shout, denouncing the court, the judge and the UD-led occupations
58. force in Iraq. But correspondents said that after his tirade, which was clearly
59. deliberate, Saddam Hussein seemed to have a small smile of triumph on his face as
60. he was led away from the courtroom.
61. The Iraqi High Tribunal’s chief prosecutor Jaafar al-Musawi told reporters at the
62. courthouse after the verdict that Saddam’s crimes “are civilian crimes and not
63. military crimes. So he will be hanged”.
64. “It was as if he was thinking ‘I’ve come here and done what I intended to do’,”
65. BBC correspondent said.
66. Saddam’s half-brother and intelligence chief Barzan al-Tikriti was also sentenced

67. to death, as was Awd Ahmaed al-Bandar, who was chairman of the so-called  
68. Revolutionary Court that ordered the Shias executed.  
69. The former vice-president Taha Yassin Ramdan received a life sentence, while  
70. three Baath party officials from Dujail received 15 years each and a fourth, more  
71. junior figure was cleared.  
72. Immediately after the sentencing, violence reportedly broke out in the mainly  
73. Sunni Azamiya district of Baghdad, with machine guns and mortars being fired. As  
74. the judge ordered him to take away, Saddam said, "Don't push me, boy". Bandar  
75. also shouted, "Allahu Akbar" as he was taken out of court.  
76. The Dujail trial, the first series of proceedings against the former regime officials,  
77. began in October 19, 2005, and ended July 27. It was a turbulent courtroom battle  
78. witnessed on TV across the globe. It was marked by outburst and harangues from  
79. Hussein and his co-defendants, lawyer walkouts, much-criticised court actions, and  
80. complaints from lawyers about poor security.  
81. There were grave concerns about security for legal teams and their families; three  
82. defence lawyers were killed. Witness testimony and prosecutors got their case  
83. across, however. According to court documents, the military, political and security  
84. apparatus in Iraq and Dujail killed, arrested, detained and tortured men, women  
85. and children in the town. Homes were demolished and orchards were razed.  
86. Saddam is also in the middle of another trial involving the 1988 Anfal campaign,  
87. the government offensive in the country's Kurdish region. Saddam is charged in  
88. that case with genocide.  
89. Sadr City, the main Shia suburb of eastern Baghdad was locked down by a strict  
90. curfew as security forces feared an angry reaction from Saddam's remaining  
91. supporters among Iraq's Sunni minority, who were favoured under his 24-year  
92. reign. Iraq's beleaguered military was on a war footing for the verdict and a curfew was  
93. in force in three flashpoint provinces – the war-torn capital, the sectarian  
94. battlefields of Diyala and Saddam's home reign of Salaheddin.  
95. The defendants were convicted of ordering the village of Dujail to suffer savage  
96. collection punishment after agents of current Prime Minister Maliki's Dawn party  
97. tried to kill Saddam there in 1982.  
98. The community's orchards were occupied up and 148 Shia civilians were dragged  
99. before a Bath party kangaroo court and sentenced to death. The Dujail incident  
100. still carries a potent political charge more than three and a half year after Saddam  
101. was driven from power by a US-led invasion, amid on-going sectarian bloodshed  
102. and effective occupation by US forces.  
103. "I was among 12 defence lawyers who met Saddam Hussein for four hours on  
104. Saturday afternoon. His morale was very high, it was made of steel," Tunisian  
105. lawyer Ahmad Siddiq told AFP.  
106. Sunni armed groups – including the Islamic Army of Iraq, which is made up of  
107. former Baath Party cadres and veterans of Saddam's armed forces – have been at  
108. the forefront of attacks on US and government forces. Whether they have  
109. reserves of fury yet to unleash may become evident in the aftermath of the  
110. verdict