

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF HOW PAKISTANI NATIONAL IDENTITY IS REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS AND DIGITAL JOURNALISM

Najeeb Ullah

inajeebkhan@gmail.com

BS Communication Studies Graduate, University of the Punjab, Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore

Dr Perveen Akhter Farhat

drparveen.eng@leads.edu.pk

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Lahore Leads University, Lahore

Noreen Asim

noreenasim319@gmail.com

BS Communication Studies Graduate, University of the Punjab, Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore

Abstract

This study critically examines how Pakistani national identity is discursively constructed in English-language newspapers and digital journalism. Employing the frameworks of Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model and van Dijk's (1998) Ideological Square, the research investigates linguistic and ideological strategies that shape representations of the nation in Dawn, The Express Tribune, and The News International from 2020 to 2025. Using a qualitative Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, 80 editorials and online commentaries were analyzed for patterns of lexical choice, transitivity, metaphor, and evaluative stance. Findings reveal four dominant discursive themes: Pakistan as a resilient and moral entity, as a victim of external forces, as a modernizing and reforming state, and as morally superior to its "others." These representations collectively construct a hybrid national identity proud and progressive yet burdened by historical victimhood. The study concludes that English journalism in Pakistan functions as an ideological apparatus that legitimizes nationalism, sustains elite narratives, and reproduces moral-political hierarchies through subtle linguistic choices. By highlighting how media discourse contributes to the ongoing negotiation of identity in postcolonial contexts, this research underscores the role of language in mediating national consciousness and ideological continuity.

Keywords:

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Pakistani English Media; National Identity; Ideology; Fairclough; van Dijk; Discourse and Power; Postcolonial Representation

Introduction

Background of the Study

Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is a powerful medium through which ideologies, identities, and social realities are constructed and contested. In the contemporary world, media particularly newspapers and digital journalism functions as one of the most influential platforms for shaping national consciousness. The ways in which the nation is described, celebrated, or problematized in media discourse reveal much about how people perceive themselves and others. In multilingual postcolonial societies such as Pakistan, where English functions as both an official and elite language, English-language journalism holds a unique socio-political position. It acts as a bridge between local narratives and global audiences while simultaneously reflecting internal ideological tensions. English newspapers such as *Dawn*, *The News International*, and *The Express Tribune* serve not only as sources of information but also as powerful instruments that construct national identity, define "us" and "them," and project images of the nation to the world. Since independence in 1947, Pakistan's national identity has been a site of negotiation, influenced by religion, colonial history, geopolitics, and modernization. English journalism, inherited from colonial institutions, became a medium through which the educated elite continued to engage in global discourse. Consequently, it often represents a hybrid identity simultaneously national and global, Islamic

and modern, traditional and progressive. These contradictions are linguistically manifested in how English newspapers frame national events, heroes, crises, and ideologies. With the rise of digital journalism, the representation of national identity has become even more dynamic. Online news platforms and social media-based journalism amplify diverse voices and ideologies, but they also reproduce existing power structures. The digital space blurs the boundaries between state discourse, journalistic objectivity, and public opinion. Analyzing such discursive constructions helps uncover how notions of *nationhood*, *patriotism*, and *belonging* are reproduced in contemporary Pakistan.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a rich framework to examine these issues. Through the work of Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1998), CDA focuses on how power, ideology, and social inequality are embedded in language. In the context of Pakistani media, CDA can reveal how English journalism legitimizes or challenges dominant narratives of national identity, and how linguistic choices reflect broader struggles over meaning, modernity, and representation.

Research Objectives

1. To identify and analyze the linguistic and discursive strategies used in English newspapers and digital journalism to construct Pakistani national identity.
2. To explore the ideological representations of “self” (Pakistan) and “other” (non-Pakistani actors, nations, or ideologies) in English-language media discourse.
3. To investigate how media institutions and journalistic practices contribute to sustaining or contesting dominant ideologies of nationhood in Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. How is Pakistani national identity discursively constructed in English-language newspapers and digital journalism?
2. What linguistic and ideological strategies are employed to represent Pakistan, its people, and its “others”?
3. In what ways do English media discourses reflect, reinforce, or challenge the socio-political power structures that shape national identity?

Problem Statement

While there has been considerable research on media discourse in Pakistan, most studies have focused on political bias, representation of terrorism, or gender issues. Comparatively little attention has been paid to how national identity is discursively constructed in English-language journalism particularly in digital media. This research seeks to fill that gap by critically examining how Pakistan and its people are represented, what ideologies underpin these portrayals, and how the English press constructs the idea of “the nation” through language and narrative framing.

Significance of the Study

The media plays a crucial role in constructing collective consciousness. This study helps readers critically understand how their sense of national pride, fear, or belonging is linguistically mediated. By exposing the ideological mechanisms of English journalism, it encourages media literacy and critical awareness among citizens, journalists, and policymakers. The research contributes to the field of Applied Linguistics and Media Studies by offering a model of interdisciplinary analysis that combines language, ideology, and culture. It can serve as a reference for future linguistic inquiries into postcolonial identity, discourse analysis, and media representation. For MPhil and PhD students, this study illustrates how linguistic theory can be grounded in real socio-political contexts.

Literature Review

The relationship between language, power, and ideology has been a central concern in modern linguistics and discourse studies. Media discourse, in particular, plays a vital role in constructing and circulating ideologies that define national identity. This chapter reviews the

key theoretical and empirical literature related to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), national identity, and the representation of Pakistan in English-language media. It situates the current study within these academic traditions and identifies the research gap addressed by this investigation.

National Identity and Its Discursive Construction

National identity is not an innate or fixed entity but a socially and linguistically constructed phenomenon (Anderson, 2006). Benedict Anderson's concept of the "imagined community" illustrates how nations are sustained through shared narratives and symbols communicated largely through language and media. Similarly, Hall (1996) argues that identity is continuously produced within discourse, shaped by historical and cultural contexts. In linguistic terms, national identity is created and maintained through discursive practices that highlight shared values, history, and opposition to "others" (Wodak et al., 2009). Wodak's *Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)* emphasizes that national identity is constructed through recurrent themes such as unity, heroism, and victimhood. These strategies are especially visible in media, where the press becomes a key site of ideological reproduction. In the Pakistani context, national identity has been historically tied to religion, postcolonial struggles, and regional geopolitics (Rahman, 2012). English-language media, positioned at the intersection of local and global audiences, negotiates these dimensions by constructing a complex national image simultaneously Islamic, democratic, and modern.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): Language, Power, and Ideology

Critical Discourse Analysis provides a methodological and theoretical framework for uncovering the ideological functions of language. Fairclough (1995) defines CDA as an approach that "sees discourse as a form of social practice" and argues that linguistic structures are never neutral but shaped by relations of power and ideology. Van Dijk (1998) extends this argument by proposing the *Ideological Square*, which explains how discourse constructs positive representations of the in-group ("us") and negative representations of the out-group ("them"). Through this mechanism, CDA uncovers how dominant groups maintain hegemony by controlling public discourse. In media discourse, lexical choices, metaphors, transitivity, and modality are key linguistic indicators of ideological stance (Richardson, 2007). For instance, the frequent use of metaphors like "*nation as family*" or "*nation as victim*" can naturalize certain political or moral positions. CDA thus allows scholars to connect micro-level linguistic features with macro-level socio-political structures (Fairclough, 2013). Media discourse has long been recognized as a crucial site for ideological construction. Fowler (1991) asserts that news is not a transparent reflection of reality but a selective representation shaped by institutional and ideological pressures. Similarly, Bell (1998) highlights that journalistic narratives are structured by assumptions about what constitutes the nation, morality, and progress. In South Asia, studies by Niazi (2019) and Siddiqui (2021) demonstrate that Pakistani English media often mirrors elite perspectives, framing national issues through Westernized or liberal lenses. Such representation both affirms and complicates Pakistan's national identity, which oscillates between postcolonial resistance and global integration. Shah (2020) found that in *Dawn* editorials, the nation is often portrayed as morally upright but politically victimized, reinforcing a sense of moral superiority over the "other" (typically India or Western powers). Similar discursive tendencies have been observed in *The Express Tribune* and *The News International*, where editorials employ lexical and syntactic strategies that sustain ideological positions aligned with modernist nationalism (Aslam & Mushtaq, 2020). The rise of digital journalism has significantly altered the landscape of identity construction. Online platforms allow a greater diversity of voices but also enable rapid reproduction of dominant ideologies (Gillmor, 2010). According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (2010), the convergence of digital and traditional media has transformed discourse practices by blurring the boundaries between

production and consumption. In Pakistan, digital journalism has become a powerful medium through which issues of national pride, crisis, and global reputation are debated (Haider & Yousaf, 2022). However, scholars note that online English platforms often continue the discursive patterns of traditional print media privileging elite narratives and Western frames of reference (Mahmood & Khan, 2021). These dynamics make digital journalism an ideal site for CDA-oriented analysis of identity and ideology.

Research Gap

While global scholarship on CDA and media discourse is extensive, studies specifically focusing on Pakistani English journalism and national identity remain limited. Existing research has explored political bias, gender representation, and terrorism narratives, but few have systematically analyzed how English newspapers and online journalism construct the *idea of Pakistan* linguistically. Moreover, most previous analyses predate the explosion of digital media and the hybrid journalistic ecosystem of the 2020s. This research therefore fills a crucial gap by combining Critical Discourse Analysis with the study of both print and digital journalism, examining how national identity is represented in the post-digital Pakistani media landscape. The study contributes theoretically to CDA by localizing its framework in a South Asian postcolonial context and empirically by providing contemporary linguistic evidence of ideological discourse in national media.

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted to explore how Pakistani national identity is discursively represented in English newspapers and digital journalism. The study employs a qualitative research design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly the models developed by Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1998). The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research paradigm, data sources, selection criteria, and analytical procedures used to interpret the linguistic and ideological construction of national identity in contemporary Pakistani English media.

Research Design

Given the interpretive nature of discourse studies, this research follows a qualitative and interpretive design. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative inquiry allows researchers to interpret meaning within social contexts, focusing on how participants or in this case, institutions construct and negotiate realities through language. The study is text-based, involving detailed linguistic and ideological analysis of selected newspaper articles and digital news reports. Quantitative measures (such as frequency counts) may be used secondarily to support qualitative interpretations, but the primary emphasis remains on meaning, ideology, and power relations embedded in discourse.

Theoretical Framework

The research draws upon two complementary CDA frameworks:

1. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1995)

- **Textual Analysis:** Examines the linguistic features of texts such as vocabulary, transitivity, modality, and metaphor.
- **Discursive Practice:** Focuses on how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed within journalistic contexts.
- **Social Practice:** Connects linguistic patterns to broader socio-political ideologies and power relations.

2. van Dijk's Ideological Square (1998)

- Highlights how discourse constructs **positive self-representation** and **negative other-representation** through strategies like lexical choice, polarization, and framing.

Together, these frameworks enable a multi-layered analysis of both the micro-level (linguistic structures) and macro-level (social ideologies) of national identity discourse.

Research Paradigm

This study is positioned within the Critical Paradigm, which views language as a site of ideological struggle and social transformation. The researcher acknowledges that discourse is not neutral; rather, it reflects and reproduces relations of dominance (Fairclough, 2013). Consequently, the researcher's role is interpretive and reflexive, aiming to uncover implicit ideologies and challenge taken-for-granted assumptions in media narratives.

Data Sources

To ensure representativeness and credibility, data were drawn from three leading English-language newspapers and their digital platforms in Pakistan:

Table 1

Source	Type	Website
<i>Dawn</i>	National English Daily	https://www.dawn.com
<i>The News International</i>	National English Daily	https://www.thenews.com.pk
<i>The Express Tribune</i>	English Daily & Digital News Portal	https://tribune.com.pk

Each of these outlets is widely recognized for its influence on national discourse and international readership. The study includes both print-based editorials and online commentaries, capturing traditional and digital journalistic practices.

Sampling and Data Collection

A **purposive sampling technique** was employed to select texts that directly discuss Pakistan's national image, identity, and representation.

Sampling Criteria

1. Editorials, opinion pieces, or feature articles published between January 2020 and June 2025.
2. Articles dealing with national events or themes such as Independence Day, regional conflicts, political reforms, international relations, or national development.
3. Texts that explicitly or implicitly invoke notions of "nation," "people," "Pakistan," or "identity."

A total of 80 texts were selected:

- 50 editorials (traditional print)
- 30 digital news commentaries or blogs (online journalism)

All data were collected manually from the official newspaper archives and stored as text documents for systematic coding and analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis followed the integrated framework of Fairclough and van Dijk in three analytical stages:

Stage 1: Textual Analysis

At this stage, linguistic features were examined at the micro level:

- **Lexical Choices:** adjectives, evaluative expressions, and naming strategies (e.g., *nation*, *homeland*, *people*).
- **Transitivity Analysis:** how agency and responsibility are assigned (e.g., *Pakistan achieved...*, *was targeted by...*).
- **Modality and Voice:** expressions of certainty, obligation, or authority.
- **Metaphor and Rhetoric:** recurring figurative representations (e.g., *Pakistan as a victim*, *family*, *or fortress*).
-

Stage 2: Discursive Practice Analysis

This stage examined:

- **Production and Distribution:** editorial conventions, institutional ideology, and the journalistic tone of each publication.
- **Intertextuality:** references to other national or international discourses, including quotations from political figures or global agencies.

Stage 3: Social Practice Analysis

The final stage linked textual and discursive findings to:

- **Ideological Functions:** how identity narratives support or resist dominant ideologies such as nationalism, religious unity, or modernization.
- **Power Relations:** how English journalism represents elite perspectives and aligns with state or global narratives.
- **Contextualization:** situating linguistic findings within Pakistan's socio-political context (postcolonial identity, global image, and media globalization).

Coding Framework

A codebook was developed to categorize ideological and linguistic themes. The coding process was guided by both *a priori* and *emergent* codes.

Tabel 2

Code	Description	Example
PR (Positive Representation)	Glorification of Pakistan, unity, progress	"Pakistan has emerged as a symbol of resilience."
NR (Negative Representation)	Self-critique or portrayal as victim	"Pakistan continues to suffer due to regional hostilities."
OR (Other Representation)	Portrayal of foreign nations or adversaries	"India's aggression threatens regional peace."
ID (Ideological Discourse)	Religious, national, or moral framing	"Our faith and sacrifice define who we are as a nation."

Coding was performed manually and verified through iterative reading to ensure inter-textual consistency and thematic coherence.

Validity and Reliability

To enhance validity, the study triangulated data from multiple sources (three newspapers and online platforms) and cross-checked findings against existing literature. Peer debriefing was conducted with two linguistics scholars to confirm the credibility of the interpretations. Since CDA involves subjective interpretation, reflexivity was maintained throughout the analysis. The researcher acknowledged personal biases and adhered to methodological transparency by documenting all analytical decisions.

Ethical Considerations

This study relied exclusively on publicly available media texts; therefore, no human participants were involved. Nevertheless, ethical standards were observed by:

- Properly citing all sources and respecting intellectual property.
- Avoiding any form of political bias or defamation.
- Ensuring accurate representation of original text meaning.

The research conforms to the ethical guidelines outlined by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan for linguistic and media research.

Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter presents a critical analysis of how Pakistani national identity is linguistically and ideologically represented in English newspapers and digital journalism. Following

Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model and van Dijk's (1998) Ideological Square, the analysis explores three levels of discourse:

1. **Textual features:** lexical choices, metaphors, modality, and transitivity;
2. **Discursive practices:** production and circulation of meanings within media institutions;
3. **Social practices:** ideological implications related to power, nationalism, and identity.

The corpus comprises 80 editorials and online articles published between 2020–2025 in *Dawn*, *The Express Tribune*, and *The News International*. Using thematic coding, four dominant patterns were identified:

1. *Nation as Resilient and Moral Entity*
2. *Nation as Victim and Struggler*
3. *Developmental Optimism and Modernity*
4. *The Othering of External Actors*

Each theme represents a discursive strategy contributing to the construction of Pakistani national identity.

Theme 1: The Nation as a Resilient and Moral Entity

Across newspapers, Pakistan is frequently framed as morally upright yet under strain, embodying perseverance, unity, and faith. Lexical choices such as “*resilient*,” “*steadfast*,” “*principled*,” and “*faith-driven*” dominate the discourse. This aligns with van Dijk's positive self-representation strategy, where media highlights moral superiority and endurance despite adversity.

Example Extract (Dawn, 14 August 2023):

“Despite political turmoil and external pressures, Pakistan stands as a resilient nation built on faith, unity, and sacrifice.”

Here, the transitivity structure (*Pakistan stands as...*) positions the nation as an active and agentive subject, constructing a sense of self-determination. Such patterns reinforce patriotic emotion and legitimization of the state as morally grounded.

Table 4.1

Feature	Example	Function
Lexical Choice	“resilient,” “steadfast,” “principled”	Constructs moral and emotional strength
Transitivity	“Pakistan stands as...”	Positions nation as active, self-reliant actor
Modality	“will continue to rise,” “must remain united”	Projects certainty and obligation
Ideological Effect	Glorifies perseverance, legitimizes nationalism	Reinforces moral superiority

This moral discourse functions as a unifying myth, echoing Wodak's (2009) claim that nations maintain identity through narratives of shared virtue and endurance.

Theme 2: The Nation as Victim and Struggler

A contrasting yet complementary discourse constructs Pakistan as a victim of historical injustice, terrorism, and global prejudice. Newspapers often adopt a defensive tone, attributing internal challenges to external conspiracies or geopolitical manipulation.

Example Extract (The News International, 5 March 2022):

“Pakistan continues to pay the price of others' wars, its people suffering the consequences of conflicts it never created.”

This structure exhibits passive agency, where Pakistan is positioned as the patient rather than the agent. The use of “*pay the price*,” “*suffering*,” and “*never created*” invokes empathy and moral legitimacy. According to Fairclough (2013), such grammatical constructions serve ideological purposes by absolving responsibility and reinforcing national solidarity through shared victimhood.

Table 4.2

Linguistic Strategy	Lexical Markers	Discursive Function
Passive voice	“is targeted,” “was ignored,” “has been misrepresented”	Depicts nation as object of external actions
Causal framing	“because of global politics,” “due to Western bias”	Transfers blame to external powers
Emotional appeal	“suffering,” “sacrifice,” “betrayal”	Generates collective sympathy and unity

This theme reflects what van Dijk (1998) describes as “ideological polarization,” where *self-victimization* enhances in-group cohesion. By highlighting injustice, media discursively constructs the nation’s moral legitimacy and resilience.

Interpretation of Themes 1 and 2

Together, these discourses reveal a dual identity construction: Pakistan as both *morally superior* and *historically victimized*. This duality sustains what Anderson (2006) termed the “imagined community,” where collective identity thrives on both pride and shared grievance. The press simultaneously glorifies endurance and externalizes failure, reflecting complex postcolonial tensions between agency and dependency.

Theme 3: Developmental Optimism and Modernity

A recurring feature in English-language media is the portrayal of Pakistan as a *modernizing, reforming, and progressive nation*. This discourse aligns with global neoliberal ideologies that equate modernization with national success. Phrases such as “*emerging economy*,” “*growing confidence*,” and “*digital transformation*” are repeatedly used to project optimism.

Example Extract (The Express Tribune, 10 January 2024):

“Pakistan is entering a new phase of economic vitality, driven by digital innovation and youthful ambition.”

This sentence constructs a positive self-image through nominalization (“economic vitality”) and metaphorical framing (“entering a new phase”). The article draws upon developmentalist rhetoric, where technological progress symbolizes national pride and global integration.

Table 4.3

Discursive Strategy	Lexical / Grammatical Feature	Ideological Function
Modernist Lexicon	“digital innovation,” “emerging economy,” “reform agenda”	Projects national progress and modernization
Metaphorical Framing	“entering a new phase,” “rising from challenges”	Constructs a rebirth narrative
Nominalization	“transformation,” “restructuring”	Depoliticizes agency, naturalizes reform
Interdiscursivity	Mixing global and local development discourses	Aligns Pakistan with international modernity

This linguistic pattern confirms Fairclough’s (2013) claim that discourses of modernization often conceal power relations by naturalizing capitalist and elite perspectives. The ideological

effect is to construct Pakistan as forward-looking, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of state-led economic narratives while marginalizing dissent or inequality. Digital media further amplifies this trend. Online news portals frequently highlight Pakistan's progress in technology, entrepreneurship, and gender empowerment, often borrowing Western evaluative frameworks ("startup boom," "digital Pakistan," "women in STEM"). These discourses reflect symbolic globalization, where national identity is reframed within neoliberal optimism rather than cultural authenticity.

Theme 4: The Othering of External Actors

Another dominant strategy is the linguistic othering of external nations, particularly India, Western countries, or global institutions perceived as unjust or hypocritical. This follows van Dijk's (1998) ideological polarization model, where "the self" is positively evaluated and "the other" is negatively represented.

Example Extract (Dawn, 28 February 2022):

"While Pakistan continues to seek peace, our neighbor thrives on hostility and misinformation."

Here, binary opposition structures the narrative Pakistan (peaceful, moral) versus "neighbor" (aggressive, deceitful). Lexical contrasts such as "*peace*" vs. "*hostility*" and "*truth*" vs. "*misinformation*" establish ideological boundaries.

Table 4.4

Representation Type	Linguistic Realization	Ideological Outcome
Binary Opposition	"peace vs hostility," "truth vs propaganda"	Establishes moral hierarchy
Pronoun Usage	"we," "our," "they," "their"	Reinforces collective in-group solidarity
Presupposition	"continues to seek peace" (assumes consistency)	Naturalizes Pakistan's moral position
Referential Avoidance	Using "neighbor" instead of "India"	Maintains diplomatic distance yet conveys critique

This "othering" discourse helps consolidate internal unity by positioning Pakistan as morally superior and victimized. It also resonates with Wodak et al.'s (2009) observation that media often use "discursive othering" to stabilize national cohesion in times of uncertainty.

Integrated Discussion

The combined analysis across all four themes reveals that Pakistani English journalism constructs a hybrid national identity simultaneously *moral and modern*, *victimized yet resilient*. This identity reflects Pakistan's postcolonial condition, oscillating between self-assertion and global dependency.

Table 4.5

Discursive Theme	Key Linguistic Strategies	Ideological Function
Nation as Moral Entity	Lexical valorization, modality	Builds unity, legitimizes nationalism
Nation as Victim	Passive agency, emotional framing	Generates empathy, deflects responsibility
Developmental Optimism	Modernist vocabulary, nominalization	Aligns nation with global neoliberal order
Othering of Actors	Binary opposition, pronouns	Reinforces self-other dichotomy and unity

From a **Faircloughian perspective**, these texts operate at three interrelated levels:

1. **Textually**, they deploy metaphor, modality, and transitivity to encode ideology.
2. **Discursively**, they reproduce institutional routines that favor elite worldviews.
3. **Socially**, they sustain national myths essential for ideological cohesion.

In van Dijk's cognitive model, these patterns manifest as *mental models of national identity* schemas that readers unconsciously adopt about who "we" are and who "they" are.

Overall, the discourse of Pakistani English media is ideologically ambivalent: it aspires to global respectability through modernization, yet retains defensive nationalism rooted in moral exceptionalism. This duality sustains emotional attachment to the nation while accommodating globalization's linguistic and ideological demands.

Conclusion

This study set out to critically examine how Pakistani national identity is represented in English-language newspapers and digital journalism through the frameworks of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Drawing on Fairclough's and van Dijk's models, the analysis revealed that media discourse plays a pivotal role in shaping collective perceptions of the nation, reinforcing both unity and ideological control. The findings show that Pakistani English journalism constructs a dual narrative of national identity one rooted in moral resilience and historical victimhood, and another oriented toward modernization and global progress. Newspapers consistently deploy linguistic strategies such as *positive self-representation*, *emotive framing*, and *binary opposition* to present Pakistan as both a victim of external forces and a nation striving toward reform and innovation. This ambivalence reflects the postcolonial struggle between authenticity and globalization a desire to be modern without losing moral and cultural distinctiveness. The study concludes that English media discourse functions not merely as information but as ideological storytelling, naturalizing dominant views of nationhood and subtly excluding alternative narratives. Recognizing these linguistic patterns is essential for developing critical media literacy and understanding how language perpetuates power relations within Pakistani society. Future research could expand this investigation by including Urdu and regional-language media, as well as audience reception studies, to provide a more comprehensive picture of how national identity is negotiated across linguistic and social boundaries.

References

- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Rev. ed.). Verso.
- Aslam, M., & Mushtaq, H. (2020). Representation of Pakistan's national image in English print media: A critical discourse analysis. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(2), 50–62. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n2p50>
- Bell, A. (1998). The discourse structure of news stories. In A. Bell & P. Garrett (Eds.), *Approaches to Media Discourse* (pp. 64–104). Blackwell.
- Chouliaraki, L., & Fairclough, N. (2010). Critical discourse analysis in organizational studies: Towards an integrationist methodology. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(6), 1213–1228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00883.x>
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Language and Power* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. Routledge.
- Gillmor, D. (2010). *Mediactive*. Lulu Press.
- Haider, M., & Yousaf, N. (2022). Digital media discourse and national identity in Pakistan: A qualitative analysis. *Pakistan Journal of Media Studies*, 8(1), 14–29.

- Hall, S. (1996). Who needs 'identity'? In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 1–17). Sage.
- Mahmood, S., & Khan, A. (2021). National identity and ideology in Pakistani digital journalism: A critical review. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 45(4), 320–335.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01968599211020642>
- Niazi, Z. (2019). Power and representation in Pakistani English newspapers: A CDA perspective. *Discourse & Communication*, 13(5), 567–584.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481319855280>
- Rahman, T. (2012). *From Hindi to Urdu: A Social and Political History*. Oxford University Press.
- Richardson, J. E. (2007). *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shah, F. (2020). Moral identity and nationhood in Pakistani editorials: A CDA study. *South Asian Journal of Linguistics*, 6(3), 211–230.
- Siddiqui, A. (2021). Constructing the nation: A CDA of English editorials in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Language Studies*, 15(2), 45–59.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*. Sage.
- Wodak, R., de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Liebhart, K. (2009). *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh University Press.