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Ideological Framing in Front Page Headlines: A Stylistic Analysis of Dawn Newspaper's Pre-Election Coverage in Pakistan

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Shafqat Naseem
English Lecturer, Department of English, University of Jhang, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: shafqatijaz174@gmail.com
Muhammad Shahrugh Bukhari
PhD English Scholar, Department of English, ICBS Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: shahrughbukhari.gc@gmail.com
Ghania Khan
English Lecturer, Department of English, University of Jhang, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: ghania.khan08@gmail.com

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Abstract
This study investigates the ideological framing in front-page headlines of the Dawn Newspaper during the pre-election period from February 1 to February 7, 2024. Utilizing the Pragmatic Stylistics framework by Elizabeth Black (2006) and McQuire and Mick's (1996) Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices, the research aims to explore the stylistic features that guide readers' interpretations and contribute to ideological framing. The study employs a qualitative descriptive and interpretative analysis, examining purposively selected headlines through pragma-stylistic and rhetorical lenses. Key findings reveal that speech acts, implicatures, presuppositions, contextual framing, politeness strategies, figures of speech, figures of thought, and structural devices are strategically used to shape readers' perceptions. These features not only inform but also influence readers' engagement with political narratives, guiding interpretations and reinforcing specific ideological viewpoints. For instance, assertive speech acts provide reassurance about electoral stability, while implicatures suggest underlying political strategies. Presuppositions highlight political instability, and contextual framing emphasizes urgency and controversy. Politeness strategies manage reader relationships, and rhetorical devices like metaphors and irony enhance narrative impact. This research enhances theoretical understanding in media discourse, pragmatic stylistics, and linguistics, demonstrating how linguistic tools can be decoded to reveal underlying ideologies. The study's significance lies in its comprehensive approach, combining stylistic and pragmatic analyses to provide deeper insights into media's role in shaping socio-political discourse in Pakistan.

Keywords: Ideological Framing, Pragma-Stylistic Analysis, Rhetorical Devices, Dawn Newspaper, Pre-Election Coverage, Media Discourse, Pakistan.

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1. Introduction

The present study aims to delve into the stylistic features and rhetorical strategies used in the headlines of the Dawn Newspaper during the critical pre-election period from February 1 to February 7, 2024. By employing Elizabeth Black's Pragmatic Stylistics framework and McQuire and Mick's Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices, this research seeks to uncover the methods through which headlines influencereaders'interpretations and frame ideologies. This investigation not only enhances our theoretical understanding of media discourse and linguistic manipulation but also provides practical insights into how language can be wielded for ideological purposes. In a sociopolitical environment where many rely on the media for information and interpretation, this study is significant for its potential to reveal the underlying mechanisms of news production and the power dynamics at play.

Print media in Pakistan remains a trusted source of information for the public. As Riaz (2008) notes, linguists worldwide have long been intrigued by the media's ideological role and potential for manipulation. Recently, Pakistani researchers have also begun exploring this critical perspective. Despite the growing popularity of internet news, many people still read newspapers, underscoring their influence in shapingpublic opinion. Newspapers consistentlyimpart ideologies and perspectives to their readers, in addition to reporting current events. The language used in news has a significant role in shaping social reality, thus impacting readers and society in various ways. Duanprakhon (2012) analyzed newspaper front-page headlines, highlighting their crucial role. Headlines, written by copy editors rather than article authors, are positioned at the top of articles and serve to capture readers' attention, encouraging

them to read the entire piece. Effective headlines are essential as they draw in readers and increase newspaper sales; most people skim headlines before deciding whether to read the article or move on. This study emphasizes the importance of headlines in framing ideologies and their impact on readers.

Newspapers have the power to inform us about important political events and issues, shaping what we consider significant in politics and our country (Coleman & Banning, 2006). The public's perception of political importance is influenced by the agendas and narratives presented by newspapers. This makes media crucial for political communication. Newspapers are essential in promoting democratic values and raising awareness about various political viewpoints (Coleman & Banning, 2006). In established democracies, media facilitates political discussions and interactions, serving to inform and propagate (McNair, 2012). Political leaders use newspapers to communicate their messages on social and political matters, significantly influencing public opinion by emphasizing their agendas (Mushtaq & Mushtaq, 2018).

Newspapers are a prominent written media with high readership. Van Dijk (1986) notes that news is the most frequent written discourse for most citizens (p. 156). Headlines, a key feature, are often skimmed by readers and significantly aid in comprehending and processing news, capturing the essence of stories brieflyand attracting attention (Ungerer, 2000). Thus, headlines are effective for conveying specific perspectives and ideologies (Farrokhi et al., 2019). While headlines have been studied from various angles (Abba & Musa, 2015; Monsefi & Mahadi, 2017; Ismail, 2016; Ismajli, 2020), these studies often lack a comprehensive approach, focusingon either stylistic or pragmatic analysis separately. Recently, the integration of stylistics and pragmatics has given rise to pragmatic stylistics, a term coined by Hickey (1992), providing a useful framework for text analysis. Black (2006) developed a systematic framework for pragmatic stylistic analysis, utilizing

pragmatic theories to interpret literary and non-literary texts. For a more complete analysis, McQuire and Mick's (1996) taxonomy of rhetorical devices has been used to explain phenomena beyond the scope of pragmatic stylistics alone.

Newspapers are crucial in politics, often called the "fourth estate" or "fourth power." According to Voltmer (2006), theyserve a monitoringrole, protecting citizens' rights by overseeing government and political leaders, exposing wrongdoings, and identifying power abuses. Newspapers are essential in holding the three branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial—accountableto the public. Headlines are expected to reveal corruption and misconduct within these branches, promoting transparency and accountability. However, Nai (2019) notes that external pressures can restrict newspaper freedom. Social and political systems, along with government regulations, may affect print media content, limiting its critical perspective. Additionally, recent political news coverage trends, marked byincreased negativity and personalization, raise concerns about the print media's effectiveness (Lengauer et al., 2012; Nai, 2019). Newspapers are essential for providing citizens with news and current affairs. Serving as a public forum, newspapers allow the public to communicate with policymakers. McNair (2012) describes newspapers as influential platforms for public discourse. Citizens benefit from the diverse political information provided by the media, which increases their awareness of both national and international political events (Strömbäck & Van Aelst, 2013). Referred to as the "day-to-day parliament of the people," newspapers facilitate public debates on politics and government policies, acting as an opposition voice (Strömbäck & Van Aelst, 2013). Ismaeli (2015) argues that while newspapers traditionally convey political viewpoints to the public, they also have the responsibility to express public messages to strengthen democracy. Newspapers act as mediators between citizens and those in power. McNair (2011) highlights the newspaper's role in overseeing

the government by offering citizens a platform for debates, consensus-building, and effective communication with government leaders.

The aim of the present endeavor is to explore the strategies employed in the headlines by the newsmakers in order to influence a certain desired interpretation of the English newspaper headlines within the purview of the Pragmatic Stylistics framework propounded by Elizabeth Black (2006) and Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices proposed by McQuire and Mick (1996).

1.1. Research Questions

1) 1 Explore which stylistic features are manipulated to make the readers interpret the headlines of the Dawn in the desired direction?
2) Examine how and to what extent the identified stylistic features of Dawn Newspaper headlines contribute in framing ideologies?

1.2. Significance of the Study

This study is pioneering in its examination of newspaper headlines from this specific perspective, offering both practical and theoretical contributions. It enhances theoretical understanding in media discourse, pragmatic stylistics, and linguistics. Practically, it shows how linguistic tools can be used for ideological purposes and how these can be decoded. Consequently, the study reveals how discursive structures shape mindsets and how power is exerted through discourse to achieve ideological goals. In the context of Pakistan's sociopolitical environment, where many are semiliterate and rely on the opinions of the educated elite, critical analysis of newspaper language can illuminate the news production process. This analysis also exposes the ideological framing behind media groups' manipulation of linguistic resources.

2. Literature Review

The existing literature on pragma-stylistic analysis and discourse strategies in media offers a comprehensive understanding of how language is utilized to

influence and persuade audiences. Aziz and Asif (2018) examine ethnolinguistic ideologies in Saraiki newspaper editorials through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), revealing how stylistic features like repetition and metaphors construct and reinforce ethnolinguistic identities and grievances. Their research highlights the role of language in expressing and shaping community identities and ideologies. Similarly, Afzal (2017) compares the portrayal of the Arab Spring in Pakistani and Saudi newspapers, uncovering the use of rhetorical strategies such as metaphor and hyperbole to align readers with the protesters' cause and highlight the ideological stance of each publication.

Hamid, Ali, and Hanan (2020) explore linguistic deviations in print media advertisements, demonstrating how deviations in morphology, orthography, semantics, and syntax capture attention and enhance persuasive appeal. Their work illustrates the creative potential of linguistic deviation in advertising. Further buildingon this, Alam, Ali, and Khan (2022) analyzesocial media advertisements in Pakistan, employing speech acts theory and AIDA principles to reveal how linguistic devices such as sounds, rhymes, and graphology effectively engage and persuade consumers.

Mehreen (2021) investigates the pragmatic stylistic features in Dawn newspaper headlines, identifying techniques like present tense, omission, and metaphors that sway reader interpretations and align with editors' ideological aims. This study underscores the role of linguistic strategies in shaping public perception. Similarly, Sajid and Anwer (2021) examine the use of metaphors, ideological lexical items, and categorization in newspaper headlines to create emotional connections and reinforce ideological stances, particularly in the context of the Peshawar School Massacre. Their study utilizes a triangulated approach combining social, cognitive, and historical perspectives to analyze how linguistic devices manipulate ideologies.

Zaidi (2021) explores the rhetorical and evaluative resources in Pakistani English-language editorials, identifying stylistic features such as elliptical structures and multi-generic forms that position readers within a confrontational socio-political context. This study contributes to understanding how editorials use these features to support claims and influence perspectives. This is echoed by Siddique, Mahmood, and Qasim (2019), who investigate the use of attitude markers in Pakistani English newspaper editorials, highlighting how these markers establish a personal connection with readers and communicate writers' stances. Their corpus-based study, utilizing CDA, demonstrates the frequent use of attitude markers to engage readers and influence their perspectives.

Gulzar, Khan, and Imran (2020) extend this analysis to the Kashmir issue, showing how expressions of obligation, attitude, and negation in editorials from Dawn and The News shape readers' perceptions and opinions. Aurangzaib, Zeeshan, and Naqvi (2021) provide a comparative discourse analysis of Pakistani English and Urdu newspapers' headlines on the Panama Leaks, revealing how stylistic features like page layout, transitivity, and word choice are used to manipulate public opinion and reflect ideological stances. Additionally, Syed et al. (2023) investigate the representation of cybercrimes in Pakistani print media, demonstrating how specific lexical choices and rhetorical strategies serve ideological, cultural, religious, constitutional, and social purposes. The study employs van Dijk's CDA model to reveal the deliberate use of stylistic and rhetorical tactics in shaping readers' thoughts.

Sher and Saleem (2023) delve into the linguistic sexism in matrimonial advertisements, using Sara Mills's Feminist Stylistics to uncover how language reinforces gender biases and patriarchal norms, perpetuating stereotypes and marginalizing women. This study emphasizes the societal impact of sexist language in media. Similarly, Ahmad, Qureshi, and Akram (2022) examine

linguistic sexism in Dawn newspaper, revealing how naming strategies, generic pronouns, and adjectives perpetuate gender biases and societal stereotypes.

Ahsan, Seemab, and Zafar (2021) explore how Pakistani Urdu newspapers utilize lexical choices, metaphors, and implicatures to project ideologies regarding America, the West, and Islam post-9/11. Their findings reveal that such stylistic features influence readers' perceptions and reinforce particular biases. Afzal and Harun (2013) investigate rhetorical devices in editorials to teach English, highlighting the persuasive power of allusion, hyperbole, and antithesis in engaging readers. Shafqat, Memon, and Akhtar (2019) conduct a cross-cultural analysis of hedges in European and Pakistani English newspapers, demonstrating significant differences in the use of epistemic verbs and adjectives, which reflect cultural communication styles. Ahmed and Masroor (2018) analyze metadiscourse markers in letters to the editor, showing how interactive and interactional markers enhance argumentation and engagement, reflecting cultural and rhetorical conventions.

Abbas and Talaat (2019) use transitivity analysis to examine how headlines depicting crimes against women in Pakistani newspapers employ passive voice and lexical choices to manipulate readers' emotions and reinforce gender stereotypes. Shah and Saher (2019) apply CDA to beauty product advertisements, revealing the frequent use of hyperbole and alliteration to persuade consumers, alongside gender representations that reinforcecultural norms. Similarly, Tehseem and Talaat (2022) focus on obfuscating agency in Pakistani newspaper reporting, identifying the use of metonymic expressions, passive structures, and nominalizations to abstract actions and shield powerful actors from direct attribution. This manipulation impacts public opinion and maintains power relations.

Khan, Aslam, and Aadil (2018) explore how rhetorical devices like metonymy, hyperbole, and rhetorical questions are employed in Pakistani English newspaper editorials to persuade and impact public opinion, finding metonymy to be the most frequently used device. Mukhtar et al. (2023) extend this analysis to Pakistani print media advertisements, revealing that rhetorical devices such as metaphors, hyperbole, and antithesis are frequently used to engage audiences and createpersuasive messages. Siddiqueet al. (2018) examinethe useof boosters in Pakistani English newspaper editorials, demonstrating how certainty markers, repetition, and attribution enhance persuasion and credibility. Gulzar, Javed, and Asif (2023) analyze the use of boosters and hedges in climate change discourse, highlighting their role in expressing certainty or caution and influencing public perception. Batool, Majeed, and Zahra (2019) focus on hedges and boosters in Pakistani opinion articles, finding that these features help manage writers' stances and engage readers effectively. Tanveer, Arslan, and Mahmood (2023) investigate the useof boosters and self-mentions in opinion columns, showing how these elements enhance engagement and persuasiveness.

Finally, Jamil, Zehra, and Sajid (2022) analyze headlines from English and Urdu newspapers, demonstrating how linguistic and stylistic features like metaphors and lexicalization are employed to represent socialrealities and ideological shifts. Their findings reveal differingthematicpriorities between English and Urdu newspapers, with significant implications for readers' perceptions and the propagation of specific ideologies. Shabbir and Ahmed (2023) analyze jargon and metaphors in Pakistani news bulletins, illustrating how these stylistic features simplify complex issues and dramatize news to attract readership and reinforce ideological narratives.

Collectively, these studies provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between language, media, and societal norms, demonstrating the power

of linguistic strategies in shaping public discourse and perceptions. They underscore the significant impact of stylistic choices in media discourse on shaping readers' perceptions, reinforcing ideologies, and constructing social realities, providing a robust framework for analyzing pre-election coverage in Dawn newspaper.

Despite the wealth of research on media framing and stylistic analysis of newspaper headlines, a significant gap exists in the exploration of pragma-stylistic features and rhetorical devices in the context of pre-election coverage. My study aims to fill this gap by examining the front-page headlines of the Dawn Newspaper from February 1 to February 7, 2024, crucial pre-election days. This research is unique in its dual-framework approach, combining Elizabeth Black's (2006) Pragmatic Stylistics Framework with McQuire and Mick's Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices (1996). To date, no study has amalgamated these two frameworks, nor has there been an investigation into the pre-election 2024 coverage. By analyzing how Dawn's headlines frame ideologies, present political party viewpoints, and impact reader perceptions, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of media in shaping public opinion during critical political periods.

3. Methodology and Framework

The current study undertakes a descriptive and interpretative analysis of newspaper headlines, hence, it is qualitative in nature. It takes guidelines from the assumption that reality is socially constructed and the analysis of any text needs to be contextualized (Reeves & Hedberg, 2003). Thereferential equivalent method isemployed to examinethe data grounded in e.g. socio-political, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors. In this study, the data is organized under pragmatic stylistic features as suggested by Black (2006) taxonomy of rhetorical devices proposed by McQuire and Mick (1996).

The study comprises purposively chosen first-page headlines from the English newspaper The Daily Dawn. The data is collected randomly from the newspapers published from 1st February to 07th February 2024 (pre-election days). The rationale for selecting The Daily Dawn newspaper is its largest readership because of its being the oldest English newspaper in Pakistan. The Daily Dawn has been rated as the topmost read newspaper in Pakistan bypakwired.com (2014). The data was collected from the website of The Daily Dawn newspaper by accessing the archive section

The study adopts the Pragmatic Stylistics framework propounded by Elizabeth Black (2006) and Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices proposed by McQuire and Mick (1996) as it's framework. According to Black (2006), meaning-making is an interpretative process that varies from reader to reader and depends on non-grammatical and non-semantic aspects of language besides the linguistic features.

4. Analysis and Discussion:

The data employs several pragma-stylistic devices and rhetorical devices. The pragma-stylistic devices include Speech Acts, Implicature, Presupposition, Context, and Politeness Theory. The rhetorical devices used are Figures of Speech, Figures of Thought, and Structural Devices. Specifically, the speech acts involve illocutionary acts, assertive acts, commissive acts, directive acts, and expressive acts. Implicature and presupposition are used to suggest underlying meanings and assumptions. Contextual analysis highlights the situational backdrop of the headlines, while politeness theory includes bald on record, positive and negative politeness strategies. Rhetorical devices feature metaphors, euphemism, hyperbole, irony, antithesis, paradox, parallelism, quotation marks, inversion, and climax. These devices collectively shape the ideological framing and reader interpretation of the headlines in the Dawn Newspaper's pre-election coverage.

4.1. Pragmatic Stylistics framework propounded by Elizabeth Black (2006)

The following pragma-stylistic devices are employed.

4.1.1. Speech Acts

The speech acts in the Dawn Newspaper headlines reveals a variety of communicative functions that shape reader interpretation. Dawn-01 (1) ECP meeting today as unrest threatens polls performs the illocutionary act by informing the public about the ECP meeting and the threat to elections, emphasizing the role of democratic institutions in managing political unrest. Similarly, Dawn-02 (1) ECP leaves no ambiguity about Feb 8 elections asserts a fact about the ECP's clarity on the election date, conveying certainty and authority to reassure readers about the electoral process's stability. In Dawn-02 (2) PTI eyes 'proxies' to circumvent poll ban, the assertive speech act reports PTI's intention to use proxies, suggesting a calculated strategy and implying cunning and resourcefulness. The headline Dawn-02 (4) A whole new ball game for Kaptaan asserts significant changes and new challenges for Imran Khan, hinting at a major shift in his political circumstances. Meanwhile, Dawn-03 (2) Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for Faisalabad involves a commissive speech act, with Nawaz pledging to provide an Orange Line train, indicatingacommitment to futureaction and contrasting his promises with Imran's perceived failures. Dawn-04 (2) Guarded Nawaz not in the mood for a fight asserts Nawaz's cautious approach, suggesting a deliberate decision to avoid confrontation. The directive speech act in Dawn-04 (3) Bilawal wants workers not to leave without Form-45 on polling day urges workers to ensure they have Form-45, underscoring the importance of following proper electoral procedures. The expressive speech act in Dawn-05 (2) Wearing your political heart on your sleeve conveys the idea of openly displaying political beliefs, highlighting the emotional and personal aspect of political expression. Finally, Dawn-06 (2) Bilawal sells Karachi the PPP dream performs a commissive

speech act, indicating Bilawal's commitment to promoting the PPP's vision for Karachi, with "sells" implying a persuasive effort to convince the electorate. Through these varied speech acts, the headlines not onlyinform and assert but also commit, direct, and express, thereby shaping the readers' understanding and engagement with the political narratives.

4.1.2. Implicature

The implicature in the Dawn Newspaper headlines reveals subtle meanings and broader narratives that shape reader interpretation. Dawn-01 (1) ECP meeting today as unrest threatens polls implies that the meeting is being held due to severe unrest, framing an ideology of crisis management by suggesting a critical situation during the election that requires immediate action. Dawn-02 (2) PTI eyes ‘proxies’ to circumvent poll ban implies a negative connotation by using "proxies" and "circumvent" to suggest underhanded tactics, casting PTI's actions in a negative light. It highlights ethical and legal concerns regarding PTI's strategy. Dawn-03 (1) Imran claims receiving ‘offer’ as Iddat case verdict due today implies that Imran has been approached with a significant proposal and has accusations against political entities, suggesting manipulative and conspiratorial elements at play against him. Dawn-03 (2) Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for Faisalabad implies that Nawaz is more reliable and committed to progress compared to Imran, suggesting that Faisalabad needs the Orange Line train and highlighting Nawaz's proactive stance on development while pointing out Imran's alleged failures. Dawn-04 (1) Imran, Bushra convicted in Iddat case, too implies that despite legal challenges, Imran remains defiant and committed to his stance against deals with the military establishment, suggesting a narrative of resilience. The use of "too" implies that this conviction is part of a series of legal challenges faced by Imran and Bushra, suggesting broader legal scrutiny. Dawn-05 (1) It rains on PPP’s election parade implies an unforeseen difficulty or setback, with "rains on PPP’s

election parade" presupposing that there were planned activities that have now been negatively affected, setting up a narrative of initial success followed by an unexpected problem. Dawn-07 (2) Poll campaigns conclude after lacklustre run implies that the campaigns were uninspiring and did not generate much enthusiasm or momentum, suggesting disappointment with the overall performance and possibly a lack of strong leadership or compelling messages. Through these implicatures, the headlines convey underlying meanings and suggest broader narratives, shaping the readers' perception of the political and electoral landscape.

4.1.3. Presupposition

The presupposition reveals underlying assumptions and frames ideological perspectives within the headlines. Dawn-01 (1) ECP meeting today as unrest threatens polls presupposes that unrest exists and threatens the election process, thereby highlighting political instability and framing the ideology of political stability. Similarly, Dawn-02 (2) PTI eyes ‘proxies’ to circumvent poll ban presupposes that PTI is under a poll ban and implies that they are seeking ways to participate in the election despite this restriction. This presupposition suggests a contentious electoral strategy. In Dawn-04 (2) Guarded Nawaz not in the mood for a fight, the headline presupposes that Nawaz has been involved in conflicts or confrontations in the past, which he is now choosing to avoid, indicating a deliberate shift in his approach. Dawn-04 (3) Bilawal wants workers not to leavewithout Form-45 on polling daypresupposes that Form-45 is crucial forthe pollingprocess and implies potential issues or irregularities if workers do not have it, raising concerns about electoral integrity in Pakistan. Dawn-06 (1) Last steps to polls as campaigns end tonight presupposes that there have been ongoing election campaigns that are now concluding, indicating that the polls are imminent and underscoringa critical phase in the election process. Lastly, Dawn-07 (1) Swinging between the victor and the vanquished presupposes that swing constituencies exist

and are significant in the election, suggesting that these constituencies are subject to fluctuating support and have the potential to change the election outcome based on small shifts in voter preferences. Through these presuppositions, the headlines subtly convey deeper meanings and ideological stances, shaping the readers' understanding and perception of the political landscape during the pre-election period.

4.1.4. Context

The headlines draw on various situational contexts to frame their narratives. Dawn-01 (1) ECP meeting today as unrest threatens polls emphasizes the critical nature of maintaining order for elections during the pre-election period, thus framing an ideology of urgency and importance. In a similar vein, Dawn-01 (2) Another day, another sentence for Imran highlights the ongoing political and legal controversies, portraying continuous legal challenges for political figures and framing an ideology of continuous legal struggles. Meanwhile, Dawn-02 (1) ECP leaves no ambiguity about Feb 8 elections draws on the political context of the upcoming elections, suggesting stability and decisiveness from the ECP, thereby reassuring the public about the election process. Additionally, Dawn-02 (3) Ten bomb, grenade attacks rock Balochistan uses intertextuality to connect various incidents of violence, painting a picture of widespread unrest in Balochistan during the election period. Further, Dawn-03 (1) Imran claims receiving 'offer' as Iddat case verdict due today sets a context of political intrigue and manipulation by claiming that an offer was made to Imran and that there are plans to hijack the elections. This headline places Imran's statements within the ongoing political turmoil and legal proceedings, reflecting the contentious political atmosphere and power struggles leading up to the elections. Moreover, Dawn-03 (2) Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for Faisalabad situates Nawaz's pledge within the context of his political campaign and development agenda, contrasting his

promises with Imran's perceived failures and framing Nawaz as a more reliable leader. Similarly, Dawn-04 (1) Imran, Bushra convicted in Iddat case, too is situated within the broader context of ongoing legal challenges faced by Imran and Bushra, reflecting the political and judicial environment leading up to the elections. Finally, Dawn-06 (2) Bilawal sells Karachi the PPP dream places Bilawal's activities within the context of the PPP's campaign in Karachi, suggesting a focus on promotingthe party's vision and gainingsupport in akeyurban center, thus reflectingthe strategies and promises made during the election campaign. Through these varied contexts, the headlines frame the political and electoral landscape, shaping the readers' understanding and perception of the events leading up to the elections.

4.1.5. Politeness Theory

Politeness Theory is employed to convey various nuances in the headlines. Dawn-02 (1) ECP leaves no ambiguity about Feb 8 elections uses a bald on-record strategy, being direct and clear without any attempt to mitigate the impact of the statement, thereby aiming to convey certainty and authority. Conversely, Dawn-02 (2) PTI eyes 'proxies' to circumvent poll ban utilizes negative politeness by indirectly addressing PTI's controversial strategy. The terms "eyes" and "proxies" soften the impact of the statement. Meanwhile, Dawn-02 (4) A whole new ball game for Kaptaan uses positive politeness byreferringto Imran Khan with the familiar term "Kaptaan," indicatingasenseofcamaraderieand familiaritywith the audience. Similarly, Dawn-03 (1)Imran claims receiving 'offer' as Iddat case verdict due today employs negative politeness by presenting Imran's accusations and claims indirectly, while Dawn-03 (2) Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for Faisalabad uses positive politeness by highlighting Nawaz's promises and commitment to development. In another example, Dawn-04 (1) Imran, Bushra convicted in Iddat case, too employs negative politeness by presenting the

conviction as a fact without directly accusing or blaming, maintaining a level of formality and distance. On the other hand, Dawn-04 (2) Guarded Nawaz not in the mood for a fight uses positive politeness by framing Nawaz's cautious approach in a way that emphasizes his desire to avoid conflict and work harmoniously. Moreover, Dawn-05 (1) It rains on PPP's election parade employs negative politeness by using a metaphor to indirectly address the setback faced by PPP, while Dawn-05 (2) Wearing your political heart on your sleeve uses positive politeness by framing the open display of political beliefs in a positive light. Lastly, Dawn-06 (1) Last steps to polls as campaigns end tonight uses a bald on-record strategy by directly stating the end of the campaigns and the imminent polls, providing clear and straightforward information without any mitigation or indirectness. Through these various strategies, the headlines not only convey information but also manage interpersonal relationships and reader perceptions, thereby framing the political narratives effectively.

4.2. McQuire and Mick's Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices (1996)

The following rhetorical devices are employed.

4.2.1. Figures of Speech

The use of figures of speech serves to create vivid and impactful narratives. For instance, Dawn-01 (3) The 'kingmaker' of KP politics employs the metaphor "kingmaker" to describe Imran Khan, emphasizing his significant political influence and the concentration of power. Similarly, Dawn-02 (2) PTI eyes 'proxies' to circumvent poll ban uses the term "proxies" as a euphemism, softening the impact of potentially controversial tactics and making the message more palatable. The headline Dawn-02 (3) Ten bomb, grenade attacks rock Balochistan uses hyperbole with the word "rock" to dramatize the severe impact of the attacks, heightening the sense of urgency and chaos. In Dawn-02 (4) A whole new ball game for Kaptaan, the phrase "a whole new ball game" serves as a metaphor for

significant change or new challenges, creating a vivid image of transformation and uncertainty for Imran Khan. Dawn-05 (1) It rains on PPP's election parade uses ametaphorto indicateadisruption or setback in PPP's activities, with "rains"evokingastrong visual and emotional response. Themetaphor Dawn-05 (2)Wearing yourpolitical heart on your sleeve suggests openness and transparency in displaying political beliefs, emphasizing sincerity and emotional investment. Dawn-06 (1) Last steps to polls as campaigns end tonight creates a visual metaphor of a journey nearing its end, highlighting the proximity of the voting day. Dawn-06 (2) Bilawal sells Karachi the PPP dream uses a metaphor to suggest Bilawal's effort to promote and persuade the electorate to believe in the PPP's vision. Similarly, Dawn-07 (1) Swinging between the victor and the vanquished vividly describes the fluctuating nature of swing constituencies, emphasizing dramatic changes based on small voter shifts. Finally, Dawn-07 (2) Poll campaigns conclude after lacklustre run employs hyperbole with "lacklustre run" to stress the perceived underperformance and disappointment, creating a dramatic portrayal of the campaign period. These figures of speech enhance the emotional and visual impact of the headlines, making the political narratives more engaging and memorable for readers.

4.2.2. Figures of Thought

Figures of Thought play a crucial role in shaping the readers' perception of political events and personalities. Dawn-01 (3) The 'kingmaker' of KP politics employs irony by referring to Imran Khan as a "kingmaker," highlighting his significant influence without official authority. Similarly, Dawn-02 (2)PTI eyes 'proxies'to circumvent poll ban carries an element of irony, as it suggests that PTI, a political party, must resort to indirect methods to participate in the elections, thereby underscoring the discrepancy between lawful conduct and the reported strategy. The headline Dawn-02 (4) A whole new ball game for Kaptaan presents a paradox

by suggesting that despite Imran Khan's experience, he is entering an entirely unfamiliar situation. Dawn-03 (1) Imran claims receiving ‘offer’ as Iddat case verdict due today contains irony in the contrast between Imran's refusal of an alleged offer for a future political role and his current accusations against political entities, subtlyquestioning the integrity of political processes. Furthermore, Dawn-03 (2) Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for Faisalabad uses antithesis to contrast Nawaz's pledge with Imran's unfulfilled commitments, emphasizing Nawaz's reliability over Imran and including a sarcastic undertone when mentioning Nawaz's dig at Imran. The headline Dawn-04 (1) Imran, Bushra convicted in Iddat case, too employs irony byhighlightingthe continued convictions and Imran's defiance, suggesting a persistent struggle against perceived injustices and manipulation. Similarly, Dawn-05 (1) It rains on PPP’s election parade uses irony to contrast the expected celebratory atmosphere of an "election parade" with the negative impact of "rain." Dawn-06 (2) Bilawal sells Karachi thePPP dream carries an ironicundertone with the useof "sells,"implying that political promises are being marketed like products, subtly questioning their sincerity and practicality. Finally, Dawn-07 (1) Swinging between the victor and the vanquished creates an antithesis by highlighting the stark differences in outcomes that can result from small changes in swingconstituencies, emphasizingthe high stakes and volatilenatureof theseareas. Through these Figures of Thought, the headlines effectively convey complex ideas and perspectives, enhancing the readers' understanding of the political landscape.

4.2.3. Structural Devices

The use of structural devices enhances the effectiveness and impact of the headlines. Dawn-01 (2) Another day, another sentence for Imran employs parallelism in the repetition of "another," which emphasizes the continuityand ongoingissues faced bythepolitical figure. Similarly, Dawn-01 (3) The 'kingmaker'

of KP politics uses quotation marks around "kingmaker" to indicate a recognized but unofficial title, acknowledging the informal power held by Imran Khan. In Dawn-02 (4) A whole new ball game for Kaptaan, inversion is used to place "A whole new ball game" at the beginning, highlighting the dramatic change before identifying the subject, "Kaptaan." This structure emphasizes the significant shift in Imran Khan's circumstances. Moreover, Dawn-03 (1) Imran claims receiving 'offer' as Iddat case verdict due today builds towards the key information about the Iddat case verdict and the alleged offer, creating a climax that underscores the gravity of Imran's claims and the unfolding political drama. Similarly, Dawn-04 (1) Imran, Bushra convicted in Iddat case, too constructs a climax by gradually revealing the key information about the conviction and Imran's defiant stance, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation. Additionally, Dawn-07 (1) Swinging between the victor and the vanquished uses a parallel structure in the phrase "swinging between the victor and the vanquished," creating a rhythmicand balanced expression that enhances thereadabilityand impact of the headline, making the concept of swing constituencies more memorable. Through these structural devices, the headlines not only convey critical information but also create a compelling narrative that engages readers and highlights the nuances of the political landscape.

The headlines of the Dawn Newspaper from February 1 to February 7, 2024, employ a range of stylisticand rhetorical features to guide readers'interpretations in adesired direction and contribute significantly to framing ideologies. These features include speech acts, implicatures, presuppositions, contextual framing, politeness strategies, figures of speech, figures of thought, and structural devices. Speech acts, such as assertive acts ("ECP leaves no ambiguity about Feb 8 elections"), provide factual information to reassure readers about the electoral process's stability, while commissive acts ("Nawaz pledges Orange Line train for

Faisalabad") indicate political commitments, contrasting leaders' promises. These acts shape readers' perceptions of political reliability and credibility. Implicatures subtly convey broader narratives, such as suggesting unethical strategies by PTI through phrases like "eyes ‘proxies’ to circumvent poll ban," influencing readers' views on political integrity. Presuppositions embedded in headlines (e.g., unrest threatening polls) imply political instability, framing the political climate as fraught with tension and uncertainty.

Contextual framing situates headlines within the socio-political backdrop, emphasizing urgency or highlighting ongoing controversies, thereby shaping the readers' understanding of the political landscape. Politeness strategies, ranging from direct bald on-record statements to positive politeness terms like "Kaptaan," manage interpersonal relationships and reader perceptions, subtly guiding readers towards specific viewpoints.

Figures of speech, such as metaphors ("a whole new ball game for Kaptaan") and hyperbole ("Ten bomb, grenade attacks rock Balochistan"), create vivid and impactful narratives, enhancing the emotional engagement of readers. Figures of thought, including irony ("Imran claims receiving ‘offer’ as Iddat case verdict due today") and antithesis ("Swinging between the victor and the vanquished"), add complexityand nuance, prompting readers to critically evaluate the information presented. Structural devices, such as parallelism ("Another day, another sentence for Imran") and climax ("Imran claims receiving ‘offer’ as Iddat case verdict due today"), enhance the readability and impact of the headlines, making them more memorable and persuasive.

Through these pragma-stylistic and rhetorical features, the headlines not only inform but also influence readers' understanding and engagement with political narratives. They contribute significantly to framing ideologies by presenting political events and figures in a way that guides readers' interpretations and

perceptions, effectively shaping public opinion in specific ideological directions. This comprehensive useof stylisticfeatures ensures that the headlines serveaspowerful tools for ideological framing, reinforcing particular viewpoints and shaping the socio-political discourse.

5. Conclusion

This study reaffirms the crucial role of print media in shaping public opinion and political narratives, particularly during pre-election periods. The research, titled "Ideological Framing in Front Page Headlines: A Stylistic Analysis of Dawn Newspaper's Pre-Election Coverage in Pakistan," aimed to explore the stylistic and rhetorical strategies employed in the Dawn Newspaper's headlines from February 1 to February 7, 2024. The central research questions focused on identifying the stylistic features manipulated to influence readers' interpretations and examining how these features contribute to framing ideologies.

The principal findings reveal that the Dawn Newspaper employs a range of pragma-stylistic devices, including speech acts, implicatures, presuppositions, contextual framing, politeness strategies, figures of speech, figures of thought, and structural devices, to guide readers' interpretations in a desired direction. These features not only inform but also influence readers' engagement with political narratives, reinforcing specific ideological viewpoints. For instance, assertive speech acts provide reassurance about electoral stability, while implicatures suggest underlying political strategies. Presuppositions highlight political instability, and contextual framing emphasizes urgency and controversy. Politeness strategies manage reader relationships, and rhetorical devices like metaphors and irony enhance narrative impact.

Previous research has often focused on either stylistic or pragmatic analysis of media texts, lacking a comprehensive approach that integrates both perspectives. This studyfills this gap by combining the Pragmatic Stylistics

framework by Elizabeth Black (2006) and McQuire and Mick's (1996) Taxonomy of Rhetorical Devices, providing deeper insights into media's role in shaping socio-political discourse. By continuing this tradition of media analysis, this research contributes significantly to our theoretical understanding of media discourse, pragmatic stylistics, and linguistics. It demonstrates how linguistic tools can be decoded to reveal underlying ideologies and how discursive structures shape mindsets and exert power through discourse.

The structure of this article follows a systematic approach, starting with an introduction to the significance of print media in Pakistan and the importance of headlines in shaping public opinion. It then outlines the study's objectives, methodology, and theoretical frameworks. The analysis section details the pragma-stylistic and rhetorical devices identified in the headlines, followed by a discussion of the findings and their implications. The conclusion emphasizes the study's contributions and suggests directions for future research, highlighting the need for ongoing critical analysis of media language in different socio-political contexts.

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