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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Pakistani Political Memes as a Language Game in the Digital Age

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Abstract

The research investigates into Van Leeuwen's Multimodal analysis of political memes in Pakistan studying how these political artifacts act as means of ideology and power in a specific country's political context. It is the use of language that does not reproduce meanings but constructs meanings (Halliday, 2014). Examining and analyzing the perspectives of the major political players through the memes, the study describes the ways these memes are employed to propagate ideologies by manipulating audience perception and establishing power dynamics. The research employed Van Leeuwen's Multimodal approach as a method for this research. The research seeks to look into this relationship through the analysis of several protest memes, their language, images, and messages. The results of the research prove that memes are not mere sources of laughter but are effective communication tools that can be used to alter the prevailing political opinions and advance certain ideologies. The study helps comprehend the ways of communication used in Pakistan's politics in the era of digitalization; it particularly explores the contributions of memes to the political processes today.

Keywords: Political Memes, Multimodal framework, recontextualization, Ideology

Background of the Study

In the age of globalization, everyone has access to and uses the internet, whether it is for communication, information research, or just for pleasure. The internet is used as the primary

source of social media in this global village. Memes on the internet spread faster than any other source in online communication, due to this reason, these images/texts are called 'memes'(Dancygier&Vandelanotte, 2017). Many social media platforms are designed to facilitate communication and sharing of ideas among users in a variety of ways. Social media is a podium most commonly used to spread evidence on political matters (Doris, 2014). However, social media serves more purposes than just connecting users. Users can share pictures, music, daily activities, and differing viewpoints on a range of topics.

Language is a powerful mechanism for the construction of reality. It simplifies the masses to build a meticulous revelation of that veracity. It is considered that the politician's language assumes a critical role for the public to acquire endorsement and favors. The realization and practices of a language rely on the individual's performance and how one shares ideas through the medium of language. Political discourse is influential and pervasive due to its strong power for public assessment at a large level in any country or most of the democratic countries. On the public perception, it exercises power due to the system's political support. they adopt the power as a representative of the public and their opinions. Campaigners of politics have employed the memes as a tool. They use the memes to engage with their online communities. Political parties run their dedicated media units separately to show their progress and they dynamically issue news updates, press releases, and memes associated with the political endeavors (Heiskanen, 2017).

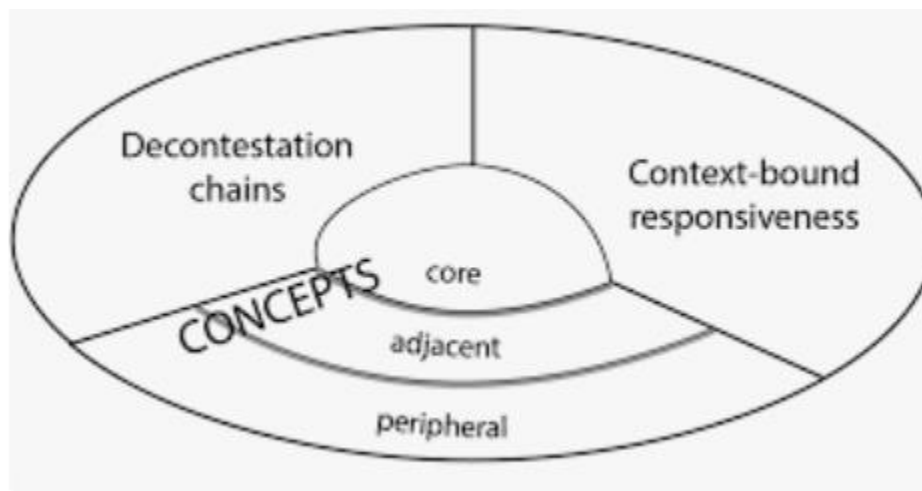


Fig1 A Multimodal Analysis of Political Meems

Social media plays a very critical role in the creation of political genres. It contains the speaker's mindset and ideology. In media discourse production, one of the greatest features is the role of the audience/participants. In social media, Facebook has become a popular source of accessing political memes and of all categories. Facebook is the platform where the user can upload their content in groups or on their profile to grab the attention of the users and convey their ideology. For example, an online community is ideally suited to upload political images in the form of memes that are loaded with different ideological realities. Many scholars have also acknowledged that linguistics and semiotic analysis are intertwined in the memes of the internet (Jewitt, 2014).

In American Heritage Dictionary "Meme" comes from the Greek word "mimema" which means "imitated" (Gill, 2016). Through memes, people can understand the concept of politicians' speeches and dialogues. Meme is a way to transfer something difficult into understandable words. Memes are a cultural unit, something that's easily shareable. Memes are originating online the term meme was coined offline by evolutionary biologist Richards Dawkins in the 1970s. He explained how ideas can promptly multiply on the same gene. Meme can also be called a unit of any cultural information that is extended overall by some intimations. The meme was generated in 1976 in "The Selfish Gene" by Richard Dawkins that's an attempt to explain how ideas mutate, replicate, or evolve. The idea of Internet memes was first projected in June 1993, by Mike Godwin in the issue of Wired. In this era, it is a new mode of communication of passive ideological exchange in politics. This approach's familiarity has facilitated and acquired a sense of indispensable conditioning among the users. From the native to the digital realm, internet memes have played an important role in formulating the opinions and ideas of the native people. The major role of the internet meme is related to the communication about forming attitudes for people, native to the digital realm, and it acts as a primary source of information too as they turn to read more of the news from the memes made on it (LiisiLainesk, 2016).

Today, memes are known for their production and existence on the internet. There is a wide-ranging spectrum of what a meme is. A Meme is a snapshot of a picture that has a caption on it, which is the proper name that has become the vernacular for this type of meme. The Meme that is being captioned is usually centered on an explicit development or central idea. When it comes to the relation of political memes on social media and their influences, no political party can

escape itself in this era of technology and the internet. They are just a click away from the public's opinion. Digital natives as well as digital Immigrants have shifted from traditional media to social media. Memes are not only positively politically oriented, but they also bring harassment, anger, and frustration elements to political parties. Memes work as a bridge between politicians and the public. Memes talk through their semantic and semiotic features. Memes are not only positively politically oriented, but they also bring harassment, anger, and frustration elements to political parties.

Objectives

This research has the following objectives,

- 1: To examine the representation of social actors through political memes.
- 2: Investigate how the memes linguistically recontextualize political parties' perceptions and shape public opinion.

Memes are commonly recognized by academics and the general public as anonymous pieces of shareable digital culture in this internet age. Meme creators can now be followed as they develop their own distinctive, recognizable creative authorial approaches. It could be the body of work produced by authors, painters, or even musicians. They utilize a range of digital platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and others. Internet meme creators present their social, cultural, and religious actors through memes. They can express the roles of the actors in the society. Most importantly, political memes can be a reflection of society and depict social phenomena through memes. The power of the language of political leaders in society can be reflected through political memes positively or negatively. Meme creators indistinguishably create a link to the unpredictable trends of any actor and they have acted as transcribers of public discourse (Giolo, & Berghman, 2023).

Facebook is a big source of information used by many people around the world. From audio morsels used in memes to ordinary images contrasted to one-liners on Facebook. Internet memes have become a popular source to highlight political narratives that would be easy to understand for the common public. On the other side of academic literature, political memes

have been framed as an approach to propaganda, warfare, critique, culture, speech, capital, folklore, and so on by scholars (Galip, 2024).

Through Facebook, political memes present all concepts, like irony, satire, or an attack on others socially or politically. It can be accessible for all forms of humor that would damage the targeted actor or the action politically or socially while canning possibly invasive content such as ‘just a joke’ (Billig, 2001).

Memes with far-right narratives, masked by humorous language and the power of a language with its perception, have significantly viewed the impact on a targeted personality or a character. Moreover, the representation of an ideology can be impacted through language. The increased flow of political memes sheds light on the societal issues and the characters of the politicians. The political memes imply that threatening types of far-right ideology and communication might be too exciting to be ‘successful’ unless they are mainstreamed by its powers. (Schmid, et al., 2024).

The conceptual framework for meme analysis stems from the source–message–channel–receiver (SMCR) communication model (Berlo, 1960) and the concept of communication, how memes convey the message involving the processes of encoding, decoding, response, feedback, and so on (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015).

Apart from, how a single meme’s features affect its reach, it’s significant to consider how many categorical and implied features of far-right ideology have been presented in the more attractive and viewed political memes. We establish a concern with the high prevalence of political speech, duplicity narratives, and anti-elitism, which have been echoes of previous research on “German Telegram messages through memes”, not only link with the politics but highlight the issues, concerned with the politics and the social settings (Schulze et al., 2022).

Memes are a helping tool to present an ideology of a society. Moreover, political memes are a representation of a political character and it has a reflection on the social issues and political outputs of any politician. Eventually, the investigation of dominant themes is presented through memes that countenance for clarifying and unpacking the main concept of “memeing back”: like first, the use of ironical view and humorous thoughts through a combination of memetic figures

and Farsi captions. Moreover, the (re-)appropriation of pop-cultural cartoonish political meme templates to organize a world-making political aesthetic intervention. Secondly, the emphasizing on state-sponsored-socioeconomic inequalities like in Iran, to uncover the illogicalities of political rhetoric and influences through memes that have been focused on the topics i.e. political gaps in state working and social issues (Khosravi-Ooryad, 2024).

Additionally, from the aspect of recontextualization, brands have used a unique strategy of humor in social media ads. A study found that brand-generated memes have vast usage of the affiliative flair of humor in political mems. As the affiliative style enlightens the state of someone else positively. Brands possibly incorporate it as they favor maintaining distance from negative events like political boycotts or cancel culture events, ambling, and controversies. Some political meme-creator brands believe in using positive memes to enhance their brand image, foster community engagement, and reinforce the optimistic brand image (Agrawal, et al. 2024).

Facebook is a bustling ground where both, meme creators and consumers engage in meme posting and its apparition. Brand-generated memes ingeniously intertwine foundations like political slogans, ideology, social impact, and language power with humor and creativity that deliver an inexplicable message while imperceptibly referencing values, effects, or social issues in a unique style. Thus establishing brand presence and visibility without directly promoting sales (Razzaq et al., 2023; Vardeman, 2024) whereas user or consumer-generated memes stereotypically contain candid criticism, feelings, and experiences from the memes and respond in the form of critique or satire, that may have an effect either positive or negative on the meme (Brubaker et al., 2018).

Mememes have become a powerful tool in contemporary political discourse, shaping public opinion and framing political narratives. Political mememes, particularly in the context of Pakistani politics, offer unique insights into how power relations, ideology, and social actors are represented. Critical Discourse Analysis provides a valuable framework for examining these visual and textual representations, focusing on how mememes construct political realities and reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies. In recent years, the internet has permitted the content to be from person to person. Creating a media habitat that is worthy of the formation of internet mememes (Borzsei, 2013).

If an exigence does not divulge itself as a publicly noticeable object before the intermediation of rhetorical actors, then the presence of an exigence should not be observed as separate from the constraint itself. Inside a durable social network, there would be a reliable assortment of political issues that are already measured as a salient feature that an actor can draw upon to grab the attention of a specific exigence. However, it can be an exclusive intense attention of the public on the political speakers through memes, the rhetorical actor must either manufacture attention or—additionally—coopt it (Mignano, 2022).

In a study examining the distribution of Internet memes during the 2018 boycott campaign against three major brands in Morocco, multimodal discourse analysis was utilized. The researchers argued that memes serve as strategies for promoting social justice and challenging dominant power structures. Researchers investigated the mems of the internet in the light of digital artifacts, that focus on the unambiguous memes related to education—a noteworthy and constant concern in Singapore—over the lens of theory—Kress and Leeuwen's social semiotic. The concerned analysis showed that the memes transport condensed semiotic meanings, integrating fundamentals of comics and progressive art to portray educational matters, tied to hegemonic and pedagogics (Moussa et al., 2020).

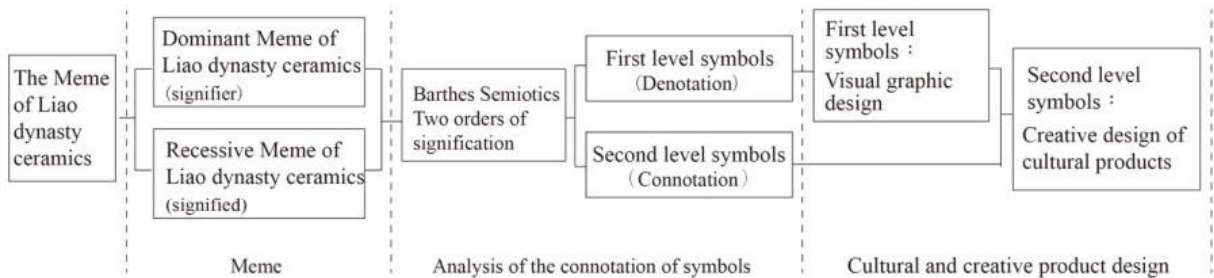


Figure.1 The Design Method of Cultural Products Based on the Meme

Van Leeuwen (2008) in discourse, focused on the importance of investigating the representation of social actors, highlighting how role allocation and inclusion or exclusion shape the insights of the actors. Pakistani politicians, in political memes, are often represented either as villains or heroes depending upon the conceptual stance of meme creators. Like, politicians such as Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan are depicted in distinctive roles one is being criticized and the other is praised. It's depending on the alignment of memes with political connections (Shifman, 2014).

This stance aligns with van Dijk's (1995) notion of ideological polarization where the creation of memes creates an "us vs. them" description, underpinning social divisions and supporting certain social and political ideologies.

Political memes re-contextualize frequently the complex issues of society and bring conversion into simplified, often represented exaggeratedly. Van Leeuwen (2008) advocates that re-contextualization assists in changing social practices into additional digestible systems that are often masked in the form of the complexity of political events or choices. In the context of Pakistani politics, memes have been found to abridge contentious concerns such as governance failures, economic challenges, and corruption (Zulfiqar & Shahbaz, 2021). The memes have been focused, not only in the form of satire but also help in shaping public perception by dipping multifaceted matters into humorous, straightforwardly shareable content and thus manipulating the shared ideas and understanding of these concerns (Shifman, 2014).

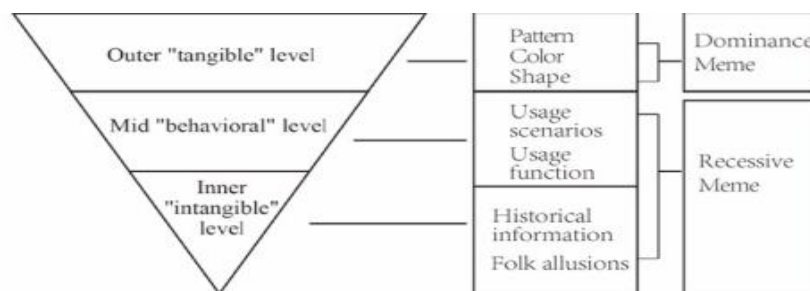


Figure.2 The spatial perspective of culture & Meme attribute

In political memes, satire is one of the prominent features, especially in Pakistani politics. Humor is used in Pakistan to criticize political actors and their parties. In CDA van Dijk (2008) explored the analysis of satire. How satire helps as a discursive strategy, exposes political failures, and also assists in demoralizing the authority. Memes in Pakistani politics frequently exaggerate the statements or actions of the politicians to point out their inability or hypocrisy. Satire not only diverts attention but also transfers the ideological critique, mostly challenging governing power structures and offering an unconventional discourse to conventional narratives of media (Shifman, 2014).

Another study found that the determined memes set by their creators would convey positive or negative stances. That research has been focused on the exposure of the deeper meanings.

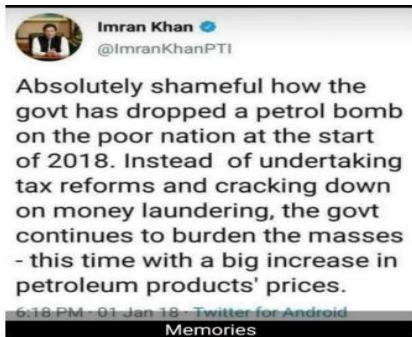
Furthermore, the purposes of memes have emphasized the functions that go beyond humor. By use of multimodal discourse analysis, with the combination of pragmatic style, the study selected randomly five popular memes from Facebook, including both visual texts. Results presented that political memes can be sarcastic, informative, and even applied in negative campaigns. Further, it can serve as a source for people to present their ideas online (Zubaidah & Ardelia, 2018).

In Pakistan, Political memes also perform the function of a tool for both, power and resistance. Van Dijk (2008) highlights that the discourse is a form of public power that can be resisted or dominated. In the context of Pakistani politics, memes created by opposition groups often serve as a means of resisting governmental authority, while pro-government memes attempt to reinforce the legitimacy of those in power. Memes provide a platform for marginalized voices to critique political elites and question the status quo, contributing to a broader resistance against dominant ideologies (Ali, 2022).

It is possible in upcoming years, the third decade of the twenty-first century may be realized as the twilight of social media. It is not only because of the giants like Facebook but in the days of social media but could be something that is more appealing and conveys novelty-packed dopamine. In response to Meta's announcement, in July 2022, Facebook will be transforming its newsfeed towards a recommendation algorithm related to its other properties like Instagram that is to participate in the key success. Political memes are also coined with the political genre and a prominent subject that would become the hegemonic approach of user-based media production for the foreseeable future (Roderick, 2023).

Data Analysis

Van Leeuwen's multimodal approach is used for data analysis. Van Leeuwen's multimodal provides a framework to analyze how memes used irony and humor to remark on political power and public discernment. The political critique, subtly questioning, the drives behind the political activities are imitated by the memes while underpinning societal narratives about political performance in Pakistan.



Meme No: 1

"Swinging on our courtyard swing, Ooh father, it's hard to leave."

This meme shows Nawaz Sharif, a former Prime Minister of Pakistan, edited onto the body of a person in traditional mourning attire, sitting on a swing, wearing a female traditional hijab dress, singing a famous Punjabi folk song traditionally sung by daughters leaving their parental home after marriage.

To analyze the meme, using Van Leeuwen's multimodal framework, several steps of the multimodal can be adopted step by step. Van Leeuwen's framework, representation as a social actor considered how language and visuals are used to represent social actors and how ideologies and power relations are portrayed through visuals and memes. Nawaz Sharif is the central figure in the meme, represented as a social actor visually involved in a feminized and traditionally specific character. The meme depicts him in the context of a socially recognized and expressively exciting moment which is linked with a daughter's departure from her father's home (an exercise deeply ingrained in South Asian societies during a wedding ceremony). This inclusion is a deliberate social actor role to moderate his political figure which is associated with characters traditionally and socially observed as non-masculine or feeble in the context of culture.

The meme excluded Nawaz Sharif's political achievements and his role as a previous Prime Minister. Meme omitting references to his political power and influence, only focused on the demonstrative and feminized representation, denudating away his supremacy and framing him as

weak. The depiction of the phrase, "Sada chairman da Chamba" is a reference to a famous folk song that represents that "We are like a delicate flower, oh father, we will wither away rapidly" The person or social actor depicts a passive role with no power and engaging in the activity, reinforces passivity. Generic sentiments of helplessness, represented in the meme show the genericization of political leaders at the same time.

Nawaz Sharif is represented as weak, sensitive, and emotional using feminine gender imagery to weaken his authority in the meme depiction. The usage of gendered imagery is noteworthy in this context. In South Asian notion, daughters are habitually realized as emotional and extremely attached to parental homes, that's why their leaving at the wedding is a flash of deep sentiments. By placing Nawaz Sharif in this character, the meme depicts these cultural associations to create a ridiculous role, signifying that behaving in a culturally inappropriate way for a male leader undermines his masculinity and his political power. The social actor in the image or meme is undoubtedly individualized and represented as a sole character. The iconic use of a face is a direct figure which makes the social actor personalized.

The meme re-contextualizes an old-style cultural exercise into a political satire and irony. The re-contextualization is influential because it takes a collectively familiar and emotionally important flash in South Asian culture and society and applies it to a political character, thus sketching an analogous between Nawaz Sharif's condition and a daughter hesitant to leave her home. This judgment is proposed to pretend Nawaz Sharif, signifying that his disinclination to surrender power is not an abundant political approach but out of an emotive, childlike, and feminized attachment. The meme practices humor and cultural orientations by framing social actors as emotionally powerless to accept their political fate. This interpretation destabilizes his legitimacy, suggesting to go again or depart to any other state. By applying Van Leeuwen's multimodal in this meme, the visual image and textual figures together generate a narrative that should be readable as critical or reflective in the landscape of a broader socio-political context.

Meme No:2:



"Feet should move carefully so that no one wakes up. Keep an eye on the airport so that no one runs away".

This meme shows the picture of a daughter with high emotion to her father. The text shows the power of the political leader. Nawaz Shareef came back to Pakistan after many years due to the political instability. The meme shows that he might go again to London if there is no political setup for him. The term "airport" in the title might be a reference to their previous legal difficulties or efforts to flee the nation, indicating avoidance or cowardice, resulting in a subtle critique.

The meme includes Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz as central figures, representing them in an emotional context. The name of the party and the character identification of the social actor are deliberately excluded and suppression is used. The meme assumes that the audience recognizes them instantly. It involves naming or not naming subjects to convey certain meanings or to assume shared knowledge among the audience. This choice not to name them explicitly suggests their well-known status and prominence in the public consciousness. By omitting their names, the meme relies on the audience's prior knowledge and the power of visual representation.

The inclusion of these actors in this specific pose may suggest vulnerability or a moment of weakness. Nawaz Sharif is portrayed as serious and concerned, whereas Maryam Nawaz seems

emotional, possibly insinuating a caring daughter-father affiliation. Furthermore, it observes how language is used to maintain, structure, or construct power relations and build ideologies.

The image of Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz is enough to convey the message, implying that their identities are so ingrained in the public's mind that further identification is unnecessary. It shows role allocation also in which the active participation of Maryam Nawaz and Nawaz Sharif represents socially reliable. A photograph or image might depict political leaders in a heroic pose, emphasizing their condition and low authority. The gesture, pose, and semiotic representation depict the social actors' miserable condition.

The caption's reference to "feet" and "airport" is a clever predictive strategy. These words are not randomly chosen; they are loaded with historical and political significance, related to Nawaz Sharif's past legal challenges and controversies surrounding his travel, regarding allegations or fears of fleeing the country.

The meme re-contextualizes a public event into a private, emotionally charged moment, adding a layer of humor through the caption. The visual of Maryam Nawaz holding Nawaz Sharif, coupled with the caption, shifts the focus from the public nature of their roles to a more personal, almost vulnerable scene. This re-contextualization adds a layer of humor by juxtaposing the seriousness of their political situation with a caption that trivializes or mocks their predicament. It plays with the audience's expectations, taking a public, serious image and turning it into a punchline.

The use of humor and sarcasm in the caption serves as a strategy to delegitimize the Sharif family's political stance or actions. The caption's tone and content suggest that the Sharif family's actions are not motivated by genuine leadership or confidence but by fear and an inclination to escape difficult situations.

For those already critical of the Sharif family, this meme reinforces existing biases, making it a powerful tool for shaping political narratives and public perceptions.

Meme No: 3



"I set out alone with black goggles, but blind people kept joining in, and it became a caravan".

The meme reflects the practice of starting a journey or endeavor in solitude or isolation. Primarily, the orator sets out alone with black goggles on their eyes, with no companions. However, over time, as others recognize the value of the journey or are inspired by the leader's vision, the blind people join in and then it becomes a caravan. It is a satirical approach used in this meme.

Van Leeuwen's multimodal is concerned with how social actors and their actions are represented in text discourse and social practices. It examines how linguistic and paralinguistic choices construct identities and roles and how social actors perform social actions by using these linguistic choices. It reveals how these figures attain power-linked ideologies by using these linguistic choices.

By applying Van Leeuwen's framework, to analyze the meme for the representation of social actors, one should follow the key stages for considering the description of the social actors, the narrative conveyed, and the underlying cultural traditions and ideologies. The image structures a renowned political character giving a speech or consultation, with associated text.

In this meme active participation of the main social actor is revealed. The social actor is in a standing position with the gesture of a raised hand. He is announcing or speaking into various mikes which indicates a position of power, control, leadership, and authority.

The phrase was as translated "I stand alone wearing black glasses but when I encouraged to take a step forward, a caravan of blind people was formed." It emphasizes the active role of leadership as an active social actor.

In the meme, Imran Khan is glaring as the central character. The emphasis is completely on him, which highlights his position and leadership and the political narrative that he has constructed. Imran Khan's pivotal role in the political movement and the absence of other specific entities' names or other social actor's passive roles represents that the meme having context "I Set out Alone" highlights Khan as a person with a remarkable image and vision who does not delay or wait for others to link him. This depicts the notion of personalization. This categorizes him as a figure of leaders who are determined by their inner opinions rather than by external approval.

The image shows a specification that depicts a famous political leader with the addition of a narrative layer. The meme represents a particular individual with a context and is not generic but emphasizes the metaphor of leadership and the idea of gathering followers which could apply to many leaders following the notion of genericization. Impersonalization is minimal in the meme because the image focuses on the individual role and experience but the statement of the text shows personalization in which the social actor is personalized with a clear expression of face, attire, and gesture to depict the journey of social leader.

The meme shows that in the background, some other entities are present which shows a supportive character behind the main social actor which inclusively depicts the idea of a "caravan". These figures are all men which highlights male dominancy and exclusion of other social groups, especially women.

The wearing of sunglasses symbolizes dominance and avoidance of public affairs and it shows the importance of the leader and others are on the backdrop. The meme depicts the confident leader's stance with a direct gaze representing the leader's confidence and authority. The wearing of black glasses and a black dress symbolizes dominance, formality, and power control. The meme conveys a strong ideology regarding leading and getting power and the capability to attract subordinates. The sunglasses symbolize a visionary approach and the quality to make followers.

By classifying Khan as an innovator, the meme indirectly places him as a challenger to the existing political structure. He is described as a celebrity who dislocates traditional power structures

The impression that he "became a caravan" recommends that his leadership role is not something he imposed upon others, but rather something that raised naturally out of his actions and ideals. This portrayal frames it as deserved and motivated, rather than opportunistic.

The transformation from "alone" to "caravan" can be understood as a journey, where the growth of the movement is depicted as a positive and organic process. The meme constructs a myth-like narrative around Imran Khan's political journey, transforming it into a story of transformation from solitude to collective action.

The use of humor, specified by the amused emoji, makes the political meme more relevant and less stern. This can be seen as a strategic move to engage a wider audience towards the political narratives.

The metaphor of a "caravan" is socially echoing, mainly in South Asian settings, where it denotes an expedition of collective struggle and common determination. This metaphor boosts the meme's notion, towards cultural values of unity, determination, and public success.

The meme has used a blend of symbolic figures and language, humor, and cultural and social references to build an influential narrative around Imran Khan's leadership but it depicts satire also. Van Leeuwen's model reveals how this visual image or meme is prudently created to legitimize and explain Khan's role, and highlights his grassroots plea and situation in his political journey.

Meme No: 4

Ye dunya ka wahid Politician ha jo
Elections k bad campaign shuru krta ha:)



"He is the only politician in the world who starts his campaign after the elections"

This meme denotes Asif Ali Zardari, a Pakistani politician, and former President of Pakistan. The meme creates an ironic comment, suggesting that Zardari, unlike other politicians, is constantly in campaign style, even after elections have concluded. The cheerful at the end increases a coating of irony and humor to the speech or text.

Van Leeuwen's model examines how participants in a social practice are represented within discourse. This comprises how individuals or clusters are portrayed, what parts they are allocated, and how their actions are highlighted or emphasized.

In the framework of the meme presenting Zardari, is the dominant or main social actor. The meme characterizes Zardari as a figure who is always politically active, even when it is not essential, such as preliminary a campaign exactly after the elections. This representation is noteworthy because it edges Zardari as a character who is continuously engaged and involved in political activities, signifying that he is involved in these campaigns. It represents a specification of a social figure.

By representing Zardari in this way, the meme highlights his central role in the social practice of politics. The focus is on his actions (starting a campaign after elections) underscores the idea that he is an exceptional or unusual figure in the political landscape, one who is always active and engaged, regardless of the circumstances.

The meme specifically represents a renowned political symbol, making it a highly definite depiction. The person's identity is vital to the message carried by the meme. Generalization shows in the expression "This is the world's only politician" signifying an exclusive characteristic that is unique or matchless.

The image of the politician smiling conveys a sense of confidence, calm, or even amusement. The formal attire and the presence of a security detail reinforce his status and power. The photograph is clear and focused, emphasizing the facial expression and, by extension, the political demeanor.

The text in Urdu adds a humorous or sarcastic layer to the image, suggesting that the politician is so dedicated or perhaps unconventional that he continues to campaign even after the elections have concluded. This adds a layer of critique or commentary on the political process.

The politician is not directly engaging with the viewer, which creates a sense of observation rather than interaction. The smile can be interpreted as self-assured or even smug, contributing to the image of a confident or unbothered leader. The colors are formal and muted (suit, tie), which align with the serious role of a politician, but the smile and text add a layer of irony or lightness. The composition places the politician front and center, making him the focal point of both the image and the accompanying narrative.

The politician is depicted in an active role, smiling and appearing confident. It refers to how actions are represented in discourse and who is given the power or agency to perform these actions. Van Leeuwen's model looks at how agency is assigned and how certain actions are emphasized or marginalized.

In the meme, Zardari's agency is depicted as unique or exceptional. The meme suggests that he is the only politician who would engage in such behavior by starting a campaign immediately after the elections. This representation of action and agency highlights Zardari's continuous and perhaps excessive involvement in political campaigns, portraying him as someone who does not rest or pause in his pursuit of political power. The image includes a background figure, likely a bodyguard or assistant, which indicates the politician's status and the presence of a security

detail. This inclusion adds to the portrayal of the politician as someone important and guarded. The image excludes other political figures or elements of the election context, focusing entirely on the single actor and his unique behavior.

Van Leeuwen's model refers to how social practices are justified, rationalized, or challenged in discourse. By presenting Zardari's behavior as something to be laughed at, the meme subtly questions the legitimacy of his approach to politics. It positions his actions as deviant or abnormal, thus challenging the validity of his continuous involvement in political campaigning.

The humorous modality also serves to reinforce the critique by making Zardari's behavior seem absurd. The light-hearted approach enables the meme to convey its message in a way that is accessible and relatable to the audience, while still challenging the legitimacy and rationality of Zardari's continuous political campaigning.

Findings and Discussion

The present study has explored the use of, power, satire, and ideology against political opponents by using the language of political memes. It investigates techniques that are used by makers to convey their point of view. By using a multimodal approach, the findings of the research analyzed how different political parties make satire on others and other political party is doing vice versa.

The political memes involving Pakistani politicians reveal the intricate ways in which these digital artifacts contribute to political discourse and public opinion. By applying Van Leeuwen's CDA model, the analysis uncovers the multifaceted roles that memes play in shaping, reflecting, and challenging the sociopolitical landscape in Pakistan.

The analysis demonstrates how political memes often reinforce existing power structures and ideologies. Memes are frequently used to depict politicians in ways that align with or oppose dominant political narratives, thereby influencing public cognition. The strategic use of humor, satire, and symbolism in these memes often masks deeper ideological battles, allowing for the subtle dissemination of political ideas and the reinforcement of social hierarchies.

The memes re-contextualize political events, creating simplified yet powerful narratives that resonate with the public. These representations not only shape perceptions of individual politicians but also influence broader political ideologies and affiliations.

The analysis underscores the cultural significance of political memes in Pakistan. Memes have become a popular medium for political expression, especially among younger demographics. They serve as a form of digital activism, allowing individuals to participate in political discourse in a more accessible and engaging manner. However, the study also reveals the potential risks associated with the oversimplification and spread of misinformation through memes, which can distort public understanding of complex political issues.

Conclusion

Overall, the analysis of political memes shows that these digital artifacts are not merely forms of entertainment but are potent vehicles for political communication. They contribute to the shaping of public opinion, and the perpetuation of political ideologies of political actors. As such, political memes are integral to contemporary political discourse in Pakistan, reflecting and shaping the nation's sociopolitical dynamics

The conclusion suggests that future research could further explore the impact of political memes on electoral outcomes, the role of memes in fostering political polarization, and the ethical implications of meme-based political discourse. Additionally, there is a need to investigate the role of memes in other cultural contexts, particularly in regions with different political and media landscapes.

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