

Constructing Urdu through Law and Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the 2015 Supreme Court Judgment and English Newspaper Coverage in Pakistan (2015–2023)

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ABSTRACT

This study has focused on how the 2015 Supreme Court judgment for the official status of Urdu in Pakistan was reported and discussed in the English language newspapers from the period 2015 to 2023. This research aimed to investigate how Urdu is made meaningful as a national and official language through legal orders and media discourses. The design of the research was qualitative and theoretical framework was Norman Fairclough's three dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA). Purposive sampling was used in collecting the data from media texts such as Supreme Court judgments and some reports, editorials and news articles appearing in Dawn, The News, Daily Pakistan, Business Recorder and The Express Tribune. These texts were analyzed across three dimensions of 3D model. The findings at textual level have indicated that the Supreme Court's judgment use strong modality, evaluative language, and sustain Urdu as a constitutional right. Early media reports of the court's discourse at the level of discursive practice reproduced court discourse as the factual truth, shifted through institutional or pragmatic lenses. In later coverage, evidencing changes in media practices and audience expectations. It provided the ground for Urdu in terms of national identity, decolonization, modernization and bureaucratic efficiency at the level of social practice, and language policy serves as a lens through which power structures in society are reflected and reproduced over time. Such shifts are part of a larger change in state and media priorities from the realm of symbolic language rights to policy narratives of modernization and bureaucracy.

The research is important to give an understanding of how media discourse in Pakistan relates language policy, power and postcolonial identity.

Keywords: Urdu, English, language policy, critical discourse analysis, Supreme Court, Pakistan, postcolonial identity, media discourse, Fairclough, ideology

INTRODUCTION

Language is much more than a means of communication but as an indicator of identity, culture and power in any society. Considering the first part, language issue has remained a sensitive question in Pakistan since independence because it is related to history, politics and class division (Siddiqui, 2011). According to the Article 251 of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973, Urdu was made the national language but much of the official work and higher education remained in English. Therefore this contradiction has divided the common citizens and the elite on jobs, legal right and government services (1997 Rahman). The issue of national identity, power and social inclusion has always been linked with the language policy in Pakistan. Past studies have pointed out that Urdu is a central object in the state discourse, as it is a symbol of national unity and a political and ideological contestation arena. Research has demonstrated that promotion of Urdu has had impact on the relations between national and regional identities, language hierarchy and power dynamics in the society (Fayyaz Hussain et al., 2024; Hashmi et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the policies for Urdu language have created various conflicts in multilingual contexts, including feelings of marginalization and resistance from regions (Butt et al., 2024). The study has also established that language acts as a linguistic capital which perpetuates social inequalities and power relations in the daily life (Zulfiqar et al, 2024). Taken together, these studies indicate that language policy is not only about communication, but also a policy that shapes and constructs identity, ideology, and authority in Pakistan. But little has been addressed on the interplay between legal institutions and the media in the construction of the current meanings of Urdu as an official language. To fill this lacuna, the present study aims to investigate Urdu and its depiction in the English language newspapers during the period 2015-2023 with the backdrop of the Supreme Court verdict of 2015. Employing Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis model, it examines the purpose of using the legal discourse to make Urdu an official language and the purpose of using the media discourse to

make Urdu an official language, as well as the purpose of using both genres in the construction of narratives of nationalism, post-colonial identity, modernization and power in Pakistan.

Till the 2015 Supreme Court decision which made it mandatory to adopt Urdu as the official language, implementation has been very slow indeed. English remained in most official matters in government departments. It is however a testimony of a more general problem in the language policy and planning in the country. Education documents or reports have been written by many language policies but they are not used properly while their practice (Shahzad et al., 2018). However, these policies mainly fail to consider that Pakistan alone possesses more than 70 local languages (Jabeen, 2023). As a result, regional and minority language speakers are made to feel unequal.

Some others explain how language is used for controlling power and the social mobility in Pakistan. From there on, Urdu and English are seen as markers of status and opportunity and mother tongues as ignored in schools and government institutions (Khan & Zaki, 2022). Some argue that the state has deprived other tongues with equal space, thereby engendering problems of national unity and access to justice (Abbas and Bidin, 2022). However, as of late there have been some efforts for reforming the curriculum and have promoted bilingual education, although challenges persist. However, the system is still lacking in planning an introducing Urdu into official spheres according to seriousness and on an introduction of digital tools and translation tools to promote Urdu in digital space (Garcia, 2011). Secondly, this study examines how the judgment of 2015 by Pakistani Supreme Court, concerning the implementation of Urdu as the official language is reported in Pakistani English newspapers. The language ideology, identity, and power relation are represented through media narratives. The method used is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This is essential because media plays a big part in moulding the public opinion and impactful in making policy decisions.

This research sparked on this issue, by (re) studying this issue on the language policy and practice gap using Fairclough's CDA model. Furthermore, it demonstrates how English language newspapers portray the role of Urdu in a hesitant, cautious or supportive symbolic fashion rather than an active promotion. It adds to the debate on linguistic justice, postcolonial identity and the necessity of a just and equal language policy in Pakistan.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study undermines the significance of ongoing language crisis in Pakistan particularly after the 2015 Supreme Court judgment directing Urdu should be implemented as the official language. Even as this clear legal direction exists, English continues to dominate the official, legal and educational spheres, denying majority of the population equality and the right to justice and governance. This is important in that it is a critical reflection on how English language newspapers have covered the implementation of this judgment. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used as a research methodology under which the narrative of media would be analyzed to reveal hidden ideologies, social meanings and power structures therein. Moreover, it shows the difference between the constitutional promises and the actual practices, in addition to giving an insight into the political and cultural factors impinging upon language planning in Pakistan. These findings may serve as a support for policy makers, educators, and linguists to understand the significance of language inclusive policies, as well as importance of a fair balance between Urdu, English and local languages in the creation of national identity, and social justice.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study seeks to address the continuing gap between Pakistan's constitutional provision to implement Urdu as the official language as upheld by the 2015 Supreme Court judgment and the persistence of English in the official, legal and media domains. As Article 251 of the Constitution and the said court ruling clearly dictates that the use of Urdu has to be exchanged for English in all government functions, but its implementation in reality is weak, inconsistent, and more or less symbolic. This situation causes confusion in language policy, it perpetuates colonial power forms, and hinders the general public's ability to access the state's communication. In addition, the issue of English language newspapers creating and moving public opinion and political discourse because of their role in reproducing elite narratives which either dilute or selectively relocate the urgency of the language shift further complicates the issue. As a result, there was a need to critically evaluate how the media has dealt with this judgment in terms of how it has acted as a supporter or a resister of the process of Urdu based linguistic decolonization and the construction of Pakistani national identity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does the 2015 Supreme Court judgment discursively construct the constitutional, ideological, and postcolonial significance of Urdu as the national and official language in Pakistan?
2. In what ways do English-language newspapers in Pakistan recontextualize, reinforce, or resist the ideological discourse of the Supreme Court regarding the enforcement of Urdu?
3. What broader sociopolitical ideologies and power relations are reflected in the shifting media discourses surrounding Urdu language policy from 2015 to 2023, particularly in relation to postcolonial identity, governance, and technological modernization?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language issue in Pakistan has long been a sensitive issue as language is related to one's identity, culture; it has had bearings over politics, and also social class. Numerous studies illustrate how the Urdu English cut off is not only a communication issue but also, in effect, a social issue. According to Cheema and Baloch (2021), though Urdu is a national language, English is very much prevalent in official matters. Their study on university students makes it clear that the youth is somehow confused with the two languages, and is out to have a policy in place that will give Urdu its worth. Urdu can be used as national and official language while English and regional languages can be as subjects. This way, everyone will have a sense of respect to his or her language and will not feel alienated.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1995,1992) model is used as the guiding study for this research as it is a very potent tool for examining the relationship between language, power and ideology in 2015 Supreme Court judgment on the matter on Urdu and its media representation. This study benefits from Fairclough's (1992, 2003) three-dimensional framework; textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice, because it allows for the multidimensional analysis of legal discourse and the mechanisms of recontextualizing it in English language newspapers. In this sense, the textual level allows making a description of linguistic features like modality, lexical choices and framing devices that news articles on both

sides use as well as the judgment articles. Through the dimension of the discursive practice, these texts are then treated as something which is a product of certain processes of production, consumption and circulation, which indexes institutional power and the distribution of voices in media reporting. The discourse itself is immersed horizontally to broader historical, cultural and ideological structures at the social practice level, which include colonial legacies, elite language control, and other struggles over national identity, etc.

Table 1: Fairclough’s Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis Example
1.Textual Analysis	Modality	Strong deontic modality: “must be,” “shall submit,” “mandatory” conveys obligation and legal power.
	Lexical Choices	Negative evaluation of English: “colonial language,” “wasteful,” “absurd,” “farcical” constructs English as elitist and ineffective.
	Passive Constructions	“Time thus spent is wasteful” obscures agency, generalizes dysfunction.
	Intertextuality	Frequent citation of Article 251 and Article 5 anchors verdict in constitutional legitimacy.
	Binary Opposition	Urdu national, moral, efficient; English colonial, elitist, impractical. ideological contrast framed as common sense.
2.Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by judiciary (elite legal institution) but reflects nationalist-populist discourse court becomes a vehicle for constitutional-linguistic nationalism.
	Distribution (Media)	English newspapers recontextualize the verdict ideological tension between pro-Urdu content and English medium.
	Consumption	Targets include government institutions (action-takers), public (ideological reinforcement), and media (discourse mediators).

3.Social Practice	Postcolonial Context	Frames English as a colonial residue and Urdu as a symbol of national identity reflects decolonial ideology in South Asian postcolonial states.
	Ideology & Power	Urdu policy discursively legitimized as fulfilling a national constitutional duty court uses language to discipline governance and shape national narrative.
	Erasure of Multilingualism	Verdict ignores regional languages despite constitutional space for them reinforces centralized national ideology at the expense of linguistic diversity.
	Institutional Role	Judiciary positioned as an enforcer of neglected constitutional ideals language becomes a tool of ideological state function and symbolic restoration of public order.

The selection of this framework as the language issue in Pakistan is inherently political and ideological. Previous studies (e.g., Siddiqui, 2011; Abbas & Bidin, 2022) have been able to demonstrate that the language policy created in Pakistan is never neutral, that it is reflective of power hierarchies as well as socio-economic divide. This study also makes use of CDA in order to analyze beyond the surface level of language and examine how language choices in legal and media texts are reflective or rejecting of dominant ideologies. Through applying Fairclough's model, the study looks into how the Supreme Court's demand for Urdu's official implementation is framed by the judiciary as either a constitutional duty, a nationalist agenda, or a bureaucratic challenge, and how these framings affect public perception and state action.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

National identity of Pakistan has always been Urdu. Ahmad (2022) demonstrates that people of different ethnicity are in agreement to the fact that Urdu plays a strong unifying role for the country. Even if the people do not have the same culture, mother tongue or religious beliefs, Urdu unites them. Mukhtar (2021) also builds on precisely this by explaining the historical overlap between Urdu and Pakistan Movement. As the Urdu language was more than a language during the struggle for independence, it was a symbol of the Muslim identity. He also

says, while Urdu has been placed on important position in the Constitution, but its usage during official flexes has often been ignored.

According to Omar et al. (2020) foreign Pakistanis are also focused on the perception related to the Urdu. According to them, the language will keep people from living abroad connected emotionally to their homeland and to their culture. On the other hand, this also points out that there is still a lot of work to do in promoting Urdu and especially through modern digital platforms. According to Khan et al. (2024), language policies at the primary school level are weak and English is dominant as poor planning, insufficient training, and insufficient support for Urdu and its regional languages was provided. Reforms of policy, as well as reforms to teacher support, are what they are saying.

Information and confusion characterize the language policies in Pakistan. Ammar et al. (2015) explain that over its use in education leads to identity loss for some, particularly those who cannot use English in English, and to a divide between those with elite and elite speakers of English. Like Nisa et al. (2023), Pakistani is also having poor management of his multilingual nature. While English has power, Urdu is not given equal footing or regional languages are pushed aside, they add. However, Siddiqui (2011) criticizes that language planning in Pakistan mostly does not take place in an effective way. Though policies mention Urdu, institutions do not pay attention to them.

Several researchers suggest that language policy failed. According to Kazmi (2023) and Abbas and Bidin (2022), the system also perpetuates the colonial practices because English is still kept dominant. Khaliq (2007) is much more powerful and has very apt metaphors to explain this: language of the powerful is English, emotional is Urdu and powerless is mother tongues. According to him, this setup would have a negative impact on citizen participation and would not aid social progress. Abbas and Shehzad (2017) also deem neglect of mother tongues an educational injustice and an assault to social unity.

To counter this imbalance, in 2015, the Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a 2015 judgment to make Urdu official in daily affairs. This judgment is discussed by Rafi and Anwar (2015) and by Jafar and Jun (2022), which is that the judgment is to fix the problem by ordering the use of Urdu in all government work. However, in reality, poor translation systems, the absence of trained staff and the resistance of some bureaucracies are still hindering progress. According

to Hameed-ur-Rehman and Sewani (2013), such court rulings will be ineffective, unless the education and the policy are reformed. Rashid and Iftikhar (2024) emphasize that the language of the official Urdu documents is complex to understand. However, they suggest making things easy for the public by using simpler Urdu and better translation tools.

Researchers concerns themselves with the questions of policy making. In view of the diversity of the country such as Pakistan, Ashraf et al. (2021) and Ahmad, Iqbal and Ullah (2020) opine that top down language planning has failed. Rather, they suggest, a top down approach to development which they are unaware of local needs and realities. They suggest that such usage of both Urdu and English be such that everybody benefits from and is also afforded fair opportunity to speakers of all languages.

In a nutshell, the literature that has been reviewed in this section reveals that Pakistan's language policy has always been filled with contradictions. Urdu is respected on paper but ignored in practice while English is still respected with dominance. However, it was tried to change this in the 2015 Supreme Court judgment, and its success was contingent on how well it was implemented. National identity, equal access, provides a language policy that speaks fair and balanced, for Pakistan's all of its languages (Rafi and Anwar, 2015; Ahmad, 2022; Mukhtar, 2021; Kazmi, 2023).

While studies have talked about the Urdu language as a national language, as well as the power relations of English but only little has been focused on how such judgments are present in the media, for example the judgment of 2015. It is especially absent as how these are portrayed in Pakistani English newspapers. Generally, the crucial facet of study only seeks after the historicity, education, or politics and still does not critically appraise the manner through which media molds the mind turns via discourse. As this is important, the way media report about language policies can seriously condition people's conceptions, adherence to, or rejection of them.

Furthermore, although Abbas and Bidin (2022) and Siddiqui (2011) clearly explain the difference between English and Urdu, there are other studies which only use Fairclough's (1990) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model to examine the discursive and social structures that lead English to become more powerful. The present study tries to fill in the gap.

This research fills gap by critically applying Norman Fairclough's three dimensional framework to examine the language and ideology embedded in the 2015 Supreme Court judgment (PLD 2015 SC 401), analyze English newspapers' recontextualization, support, dilution and resistance of the order, and to identify the relation between the language policy discourse in the media and judicial and language ideologies found in the court's opinion as laid down in the law. This study uses legal texts and media reports to reflect on constitutional mandates for Urdu language in English, how this is told, and what it tells us about Pakistan's ongoing battle with linguistic identity, power, and with the postcolonial consequences.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study included qualitative method, as an application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) according to Norman Fairclough's three dimensional framework. By critically examining both broadly, how the 2015 Supreme Court judgment that Urdu be the official language was represented in the Pakistani English language media, and how the representation constructed, reproduced or resisted ideology discourses about language, nationality, government, and post-colonial identity. The research used a combined judicial and media discourse analysis in order to trace the way institutional actors narrated both the delay and the implementation of Article 251 of the Constitution, and the way that power loaded ideologies about Urdu and English circulated across legal and journalistic fora. Besides, because Fairclough's model can treat textual features of discourse, the institutional context of production and consumption, and the wider sociopolitical contexts of language use and representation, it was adopted.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND SOURCES

Two major domains were the source for data collection legal documents and media texts. Two major judicial documents were selected from the legal domain, namely, (1) the Supreme Court judgment in District Bar Association, Rawalpindi v. First, the foundational legal discourse on the enforcement of Urdu under Article 251 of the Constitution of Pakistan in term of Federation of Pakistan (PLD 2015 SC 401) along with (2) Lahore High Court judgment in writ petition No. 26651 of 2023 authored by Justice Shahid Jamil Khan, which followed the decision made in 2015 and further stated the institutional responsibility of Urdu translation and public accessibility.

The articles used from the media domain were collected from the leading English Language newspapers in Pakistan including: Dawn, The News International, The Express Tribune, Daily Times, Business Recorder, Daily Pakistan. These articles started from September 2015 to May 2023 across various stages of reportage including initial response, follow up judicial reviews, compliance of government, policy developments and civil society petitions. Between the styles of discourses, the texts included news reports, editorial opinion and feature articles. The sources were chosen purposively, firstly because they were relevant to, secondly they circulated amongst, and in certain cases, were politically placed within, elite, policy orientation readerships. Following were the data sources:

1. The Supreme Court Judgment in District Bar Association, Rawalpindi v. Federation of Pakistan (PLD 2015 SC 401)
2. Writ Petition No. 26651 of 2023 (LHC Judgment by Justice Shahid Jamil Khan)
3. Dawn News article titled “Supreme Court orders govt to adopt Urdu as official language” (Published September 8, 2015) <https://www.dawn.com/news/1205686>
4. The Business Recorder article titled “SC asks governments to declare Urdu as official language” (Published September 9, 2015). <https://www.brecorder.com/news/4332232/sc-asks-governments-to-declare-urdu-as-official-language-201509091225259>
5. The Express Tribune article titled “SC directs govt to adopt Urdu as official language” published on September 9, 2015. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/953400/sc-directs-govt-to-adopt-urdu-as-official-language>
6. The Express Tribune opinion article titled “Handling the language issue” (Published October 6, 2015). <https://tribune.com.pk/story/967745/handling-the-language-issue>
7. The News International article titled “SC orders govt to make Urdu official language immediately” (Published September 9, 2015). <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/14522-sc-orders-govt-to-make-urdu-official-language-immediately>
8. Daily Pakistan article titled “SC seeks implementation report about enforcement of Urdu as official language” (Published January 28, 2016). <https://archive.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/01/28/sc-seeks-report-on-enforcement-of-urdu-as-official-language-2/>

9. The Express Tribune article titled “Urdu as official language: Top court calls for progress reports” (Published January 29, 2016). <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1036109/urdu-as-official-language-top-court-calls-for-progress-reports>
10. Daily Times report titled “SC moved to implement verdict about Urdu language” (Published September 8, 2017) <https://dailytimes.com.pk/117864/sc-moved-to-implement-verdict-about-urdu-language/>
11. The Dawn article titled “Govt directed to enforce SC verdict on Urdu language” (Published February 14, 2023) <https://www.dawn.com/news/1737000>
12. The Express Tribune article titled “Efforts afoot to implement Urdu as official language” (Published May 15, 2023). <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2416836/efforts-afoot-to-implement-urdu-as-official-language>

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Fairclough’s three dimensional model of CDA was applied to the data and analyzed according to three parts: textual analysis, discursive practice analysis, and social practice analysis. In each legal and media text, textual analysis was conducted, including modalities, lexical choice, intertextuality, phrasing to evaluate and framing of headline. For instance, the PLD 2015 SC 401 judgment constructs Urdu as a constitutional and moral imperative by using strong legal modality (e.g., Urdu ‘must be implemented’) and ideologically charged lexis (e.g., ‘colonial legacy’, ‘farcical outcomes’) and delegitimizes English as a colonial residue. For example, as was the case in the LHC 2023 judgment, it brought to attention digital transformation, institutional reform, and artificial intelligence tools that could facilitate Urdu’s integration thereof by weaving together legal discourse and technological futurism.

In the discursive practice dimension the study explored how each of the texts was produced, by who, for whom, and intertextuality with what. For the most part, judicial discourse in media reports, Dawn and The News International, was decontextualized and categorized verbatim, sharing common lines of analysis with state led nationalism, but opinion piece in The Express Tribune took a critical reevaluation, pointing towards the implementation difficulties, the historical grievances and the multilingual tensions deep rooted in the province of Sindh. Some

media texts were more the compliance trackers or fora for civic frustration and the legal documents were framed as authoritative and ideologically proactive.

In the social practice dimension analysis investigated how these discourses maintained or subverted some of the larger structures of power, identity, post colonialism and linguistic nationalism. Urdu was repeatedly claimed as a right of dignity, access and participation in accordance with Articles 251 and 19A of the constitution and the judiciary was cast in the role of agent of decolonial justice. Despite this, media discourse varied in time and space too: Some rewarded concretized nationalist importance of the Supreme Court mandate, whereas the others were first introduced as technocratic or depoliticized or procedural framings of Urdu as a tool for digital administration that could be done after a while as a bureaucratic task. The media texts also showed the weakness of Mayo assertion in dealing with institutional inertia that inescapably reduced the symbolic power of Article 251 over time and the resistance by the bureaucratic elites in full implementation.

Each text was manually coded into a thematic matrix based on its fit to CDA dimensions. The output represented comparative tables that organized these into ideological continuities and shifts between legal discourses (2015–2023) to media representations over the same period. Thus, the methodology offered a layered, interpretive understanding as to how three elements language policy, legal authority, and media framing — worked together to discourse constitutionally construct Urdu as an obligation and English as a legacy in contention in Pakistan's sociopolitical landscape.

DATA ANALYSIS

A critical discourse analysis of judicial and media texts which consider the implementation of Urdu as Pakistan's official language is proposed in this section, namely its 2015 Supreme Court judgment (PLD 2015 SC 401) and how it has been interpreted in later court decisions and in articles in English language newspapers in respect of its subsequent application. The analysis with help of various dimensions within Fairclough's 3D CDA framework, looks into how constitutional mandate, ideological narratives and postcolonial tensions are produced, reproduced and restructured in various discursive sites. The selected data was data of court judgments, writ petitions, and media articles from English language's prominent newspaper which include Dawn, The Express Tribune, The News International, Daily Times and Business

Recorder, all in between 2015 to 2023. The texts have been investigated both at the textual and discursive and at the social practice level to know how Urdu is presented as a legal obligation, as a sign of national identity, or as a bureaucratic task. It then discusses how the research questions are addressed by shifting institutional roles, symbolic versus practical framing of Urdu, and the sociopolitical ideology manifested in language policy discourse. Language, law, and power, in this Pakistani postcolonial, multilingual context are illustrated by examples drawn from each dataset.

Table 2: *Dawn News* article titled “Supreme Court orders govt to adopt Urdu as official language” (Published September 8, 2015)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Dawn News Report (2015)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses high obligation and assertive modality: “directed,” “ordered,” “shall submit,” “must be considered” reflects judicial authority and urgency for Urdu’s implementation.
	Lexical Choices	Loaded evaluative terms in direct quotes from the SC: “colonial language,” “wasteful,” “absurd,” “farcical outcomes” delegitimizes English, promotes Urdu as efficient and accessible.
	Intertextuality	Integrates constitutional discourse: frequent reference to Article 251 and Article 5 lends legal legitimacy and anchors decision in foundational legal framework.
	Evaluative Phrasing	The text borrows heavily from the judiciary’s critique of English emphasizes functionality of English in governance, aligning with the SC’s ideological framing.
	Headline Framing	“SC orders govt to adopt Urdu...” strong directive tone, places SC as the active agent,

		govt as passive recipient frames it as a legal command, not just a recommendation.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by Dawn, a highly influential English-language newspaper with a policy-oriented readership the article uses formal, objective news style with minimal commentary.
	Recontextualization	The court ruling is presented as fact without critique or reinterpretation Dawn reproduces the judgment's ideological stance, especially through lengthy quotations.
	Voice & Attribution	The judiciary's voice dominates repeated direct quotes from the SC ruling maintain the verbatim authority of legal language; government voice is absent, media voice is minimal.
	Audience Framing	Aimed at a literate, policy-informed readership; the article positions Urdu enforcement as constitutional duty rather than ideological debate neutral, yet respectful tone.
3.Social Practice	Postcolonial Framing	Frames English as a colonial remnant SC language like "colonial language not understood by public" positions Urdu as a postcolonial corrective and symbol of national inclusion.
	Ideological Alignment	Aligns with the court's constitutional nationalism: Urdu is depicted as a rightful national language, English as a barrier to governance and public access.
	Power Relations	Judiciary is portrayed as proactive and restorative; the government is shown as previously negligent, now being held

		accountable by court orders legal authority reasserts itself.
	Language Policy as Administrative Reform	Inclusion of short-term measures (translation of policies, signs, official forms) demonstrates a pragmatic focus Urdu is presented as administratively implementable.
	Symbolic and Practical Balance	The article maintains a balance between the symbolic power of Urdu (national unity) and its practical implementation (forms, signs, policies) reflecting dual role of language.

The ideological and legal stand of the Supreme Court are very close indicator of this judgment which is not controversial but a constitutional obligation as stated in Dawn article ‘Supreme Court orders govt to adopt Urdu as official language’ (2015). The author uses strong legal terms like ‘must be considered’ and ‘shall submit’ and emotionally charged language like ‘colonial language’, and ‘farcical outcomes’ to compare the elitist English heritage and the national Urdu value. The article constantly refers to Articles 251 and 5 that binds Urdu’s constitutional role (constitutionally). A moral narrative of judicial leadership and bureaucratic misconduct is reinforced by how the report takes that feature in order (the judiciary as the directive power and the implementing government as the lagging power). Dawn, an English language paper with a readership policy conscious, produced the article which skirts criticisms and is full of quotes as per the court’s instructions, thus following rather than analyzing. From the social practice view, the report engages in the postcolonial discourse by taking the position that the English is the colonial hangover and the Urdu a national fix. But at the same time this allows room for real life ones: translation of the signs and forms to show that the policy is not only symbolic for representation, but it can potentially be put into practice as well. The article proposes that the Supreme Court’s language directive is mostly legitimate because it lays down a national duty as well as a practical reform that falls within the boundaries of this study’s area of interest in institutional power, media framing and symbolic pragmatic elements of Pakistani Urdu policy.

Table 3: The Business Recorder article titled “*SC asks governments to declare Urdu as official language*” (Published September 9, 2015)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Business Recorder Report (2015)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Strong use of obligation markers: “shall be entitled,” “must be translated,” “are to take steps,” “should coordinate” reflects judiciary's assertive institutional authority.
	Lexical Choices	Recurrent terms: “colonial language,” “constitutional command,” “tangible loss,” “uniformity,” “compliance” formal, legalistic tone reinforcing institutional power and civic obligation.
	Evaluative Terms	Phrases like “absurd and farcical outcomes”, “wasteful exercise” express judicial judgment against English use in bureaucracy.
	Intertextuality	Cites multiple constitutional provisions: Articles 251, 5, 14, 25, 25A, 189 constitutional embedding of language rights with education, equality, and dignity.
	Concession Markers	“Not to denigrate English,” but attempts to balance global utility of English with nationalist ideological thrust for Urdu.
	Attribution	Mostly quotes court directly, without interpretive commentary. Media voice is minimal, suggesting high reliance on legal authority.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by Business Recorder (English-language business daily) reflects professional, institutional tone, largely reproducing court discourse.
	Recontextualization	News report transforms legal judgment into public information without changing ideological

		direction. Legal language is preserved, maintaining court's ideological framing.
	Headline Framing	“SC asks governments...” uses soft directive ("asks") instead of “orders” or “directs” seen in other reports, perhaps reducing perceived confrontational tone of judiciary.
	Audience Framing	Written for an elite, policy-aware, business-oriented audience emphasizes legal compliance and governance rather than populist or emotional appeal.
3. Social Practice	Postcolonial Power Context	English colonial residue; Urdu constitutional right. Frames language shift as a moral and political decolonization project.
	Ideology and Power	Strong reinforcement of judiciary's ideological role in restoring constitutional order. Aligns Urdu with dignity, access, and equality, and positions English as a barrier.
	Rights Discourse	Uniquely ties language to civil rights (dignity, equality, and education) makes language policy a human rights issue, not just a bureaucratic change.
	State Responsibility	The state is framed as negligent for over 27 years. Judiciary assumes moral authority to correct this historical lapse.
	Citizenship and Empowerment	Verdict gives citizens legal agency: they can demand compensation for loss due to English dominance shift from passive subjects to empowered legal actors.

The Business Recorder article “SC asks governments to declare Urdu as official language” (2015) offers a professional and restrained affirmation of a Supreme Court’s directive that the Urdu should be declared the official language of Pakistan, and invites to put it into practice as

a legal and constitutional duty, and not as a symbolic or emotional issue. The article is highly ideologically framed, e.g. by usage of private language of law (such as “must be translated,” “shall be entitled”) key words like “colonial language,” “constitutional command,” and “compliance;” and in making English sound “colonial” and Urdu a right stemming from Articles 251, 5, 14 and 25A. The concession markers such as “...not to denigrate English...” recognize the place of English in the world without being unpleasant about it in the national context. To accomplish this, the article quotes the court directly without an editorial voice and relays institutional seriousness to a policy savvy audience without media sensationalism. It does not converse Urdu as a language however as a civil right valid for equality, education and national dignity, and at the same time as citizens’ power to ask recompense for the problem of not getting services due to English. The questions that this study’s study asks point out that this article demonstrates how elite English language media subtly enter into judicial decolonial positions by transferring legal discourse into terms of governance at the behest of technocratic audiences, thus gauging that Urdu, too, is not the politics of identity but the responsibility of state which emanates from claims of legal justice and institutional reform.

Table 4: The Express Tribune article titled “*SC directs govt to adopt Urdu as official language*” published on *September 9, 2015*,

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Media Report (Express Tribune, 2015)
1.Textual Analysis	Modality	Strong legal modality is maintained from court language: “shall be submitted,” “is to be implemented,” “must be translated” shows institutional command and enforcement.
	Lexical Choices	The report mirrors judicial vocabulary: “colonial language,” “wasteful,” “absurd,” “denigrate,” “compliance,” “constitutional command” reflects alignment with judicial ideological framing.
	Intertextuality	Multiple references to Articles 251, 5, 25, and 189 integrates court language and constitutional

		intertextuality. Frames the court as constitutionally grounded and authoritative.
	Evidential Support	Cites UNESCO empirical studies on mother-tongue education adds external legitimacy to Urdu advocacy. Suggests alignment between global developmental norms and national policy.
	Concession Markers	“It is not at all the object of this judgment to denigrate the importance of English” acknowledges English’s role globally but maintains Urdu’s constitutional primacy.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	The article is produced by The Express Tribune, an English-language outlet. While neutral in tone, the article still repeats ideological markers from the judiciary.
	Recontextualization	Legal discourse is translated into journalistic narrative, retaining formal tone but simplifying legal detail. News values (timeliness, national interest, policy change) are emphasized.
	Headline Framing	Headline uses imperative frame: “SC directs govt...” positions the court as active authority, government as passive recipient.
	Voice & Attribution	Extensive direct quoting from court judgment, minimal editorial interpretation. This reflects a reproduction rather than critique of legal discourse.
3.Social Practice	Postcolonial Context	The repetition of “colonial language” constructs English as a symbol of foreign domination. Urdu is positioned as a national corrective to colonial legacy.

	Language Ideology	Article reproduces ideology that Urdu is the authentic language of governance and public interest. The government is framed as having failed its duty for decades (since 1988).
	Power and Institutional Alignment	Article implicitly supports the judiciary's moral and constitutional authority over the executive. It frames the court as a reformist actor and protector of citizen rights.
	Legal Activism and Civil Rights	The warning to public officials and empowerment of citizens to enforce civil rights shifts language from policy to activism, supporting judiciary-led transformation.
	Linguistic Nationalism vs. Neoliberal Utility	Article concedes to English's global relevance but maintains Urdu's legal and moral obligation — tension between symbolic nationalism and practical governance needs is visible.

The 2015 Express Tribune article recapitulates the Supreme Court's ideological framing of Urdu as a constitutional right as well as a postcolonial correct against the dominance of English. The article echoes the judiciary's moral and legal authority through assertive modality 'shall be submitted,' lexical choices 'colonial language,' 'constitutional command,' etc., and by presenting Urdu as integral to national justice. The article accomplishes this by reference to constitutional articles such as 251 and 5 and even a UNESCO report that pushes for mother tongue education. There is virtually no editorial commentary and a de facto transmission (via a lot of quoting of the verdict) of judicial ideology in the piece, rendering the essay much more an exposition of judicial ideology than conventional journalism, with the Supreme Court seen as the proactive reformer and the government as the passive implementer of the 'reform'. The case portrays English as elitist and exclusionary and Urdu as democratic inclusion but it also subtly makes it clear of English's global importance indicating a tension between symbolic nationalism and pragmatic governance. As a whole, this article represents a moment of legal activism in Pakistan wherein language policy was still thought of as a transformative

instrument of the national identity and the judiciary's decolonial agenda was amplified by early media discourse.

Table 5: The Express Tribune opinion article titled “Handling the language issue” (Published October 6, 2015)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Express Tribune Opinion Piece (2015)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Mixed modality: Uses speculative, cautious, and critical expressions like “there are going to be problems,” “may not be,” “seems to be,” “it remains to be seen” signals skepticism.
	Lexical Choices	Terms like “knee-jerk reaction,” “unease,” “fractious history,” “colonial legacy,” “inscrutable terms” convey critical tone, reflecting institutional doubt and ideological complexity.
	Evaluative Language	Strong cautionary tone on translation quality, government capacity, and regional sensitivities → emphasizes practical, historical, and political challenges, not just legal mandates.
	Intertextuality & Historical Analogies	Refers to Dhaka, Bengali movement, Sindh’s 1972 language riots, and ancient languages like Latin, Sanskrit, Persian places Urdu judgment in a deeply contested socio-historical context.
	Headline Framing	“Handling the language issue” neutral, soft framing suggests pragmatic concern, avoiding ideological rhetoric like “implementing Urdu” or “enforcing the constitution.”
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Opinion article by a seasoned columnist represents elite intellectual discourse engaging

		critically with both court verdicts and language policy ideology.
	Recontextualization	While referencing the SC verdict, it shifts focus to practicality, implementation challenges, and regional diversity, thus resisting a singular nationalist narrative.
	Voice & Attribution	Writer's voice dominates; judicial voice is reported and analyzed. The article decenters the court's authority, offering an alternate multifocal and contextual critique.
	Audience Framing	Written for a politically literate, policy-aware English-speaking audience invites readers to question simplistic nationalist framings and reflect on past failures in language policy.
3.Social Practice	Ideological Contestation	Challenges the binary of Urdu vs. English by reinterpreting English as a functional global language, not merely a colonial remnant reframes debate from identity to utility.
	Postcolonial Critique Reversed	Contrasts court's view of English as "colonial" with the author's portrayal of English as globally relevant, economically vital, and culturally productive a counter-hegemonic argument.
	Multilingual Tensions	Highlights regional resistance and identity politics, especially in Sindh presents language as a politically fragile issue requiring careful negotiation, not legal imposition.
	Practical vs. Symbolic Policy Tensions	Criticizes state-run Urdu institutions for poor terminology and alienation; suggests that media has organically succeeded where the state has

		failed contrasts natural language growth vs. imposed change.
	Governance Capacity Questioned	Asserts that the state lacks the infrastructural capacity to implement such sweeping changes in three months → aligns with institutional realism over constitutional idealism.

In “Handling the language issue” (The Express Tribune, October 6, 2015), an opinion article, handles the issue of language outlined in the Supreme Court’s 2015 Urdu verdict in a rare critical voice in the media landscape that falls in line with the concerned academia of the country, and challenges the celebratory tone that surrounds it. Unlike the judicial enthusiasm of endorsing the idea of 30 days of paid funeral leave, the article used words like “may not be” and “remains to be seen” to say that it is not feasible. The sheer audacity of invoking the Sindh 1972 language riots and Dhaka crisis as examples, and the use of words like ‘knee-jerk reaction’ serve to drive the point home about the dangers of linguistic imposition and the fact that the Urdu mandate in the Army is an extremely inflammable issue that could flare up ethnic tensions. Other reports about the court’s voice have taken precedence, but this piece puts the Urdu columnist’s analytical angle at the fore and places the implementation of Urdu not as a national success story, but as a governance challenge. It questions the timeline of implementation of the imperial Urdu within the context of the state’s inability to create accessible Urdu terminology and critiques the state’s inability to keep pace with the organic multilingualism of society. The article breaks from the postcolonial assumptions that are dominant in the other media by defending English as globally practical, and Urdu as institutionally underdeveloped, and furthermore, by arguing for realism, regional sensitivity, and gradual reform. In its contribution to the study’s focus on how legal language policies are contested in elite media, this counter hegemonic discourse lays bare complexities of the public’s capacity to engage with state driven linguistic nationalism.

Table 6: The News International article titled “SC orders govt to make Urdu official language immediately” (Published September 9, 2015)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of The News International Report (2015)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Strong deontic modality: “ordered,” “must be considered,” “shall take steps,” “must be translated” reflects urgency and judicial authority over constitutional enforcement.
	Lexical Choices	Highly formal, directive legal language: “directive,” “compliance,” “coordinate,” “uniformity,” “constitutional command” frames Urdu as a constitutional and administrative imperative.
	Evaluative Terms	Petitioner quotes include “historic decision,” “name will be written in books” language of national pride, reverence, and symbolic importance of the judgment.
	Enumerated Structure	Use of a nine-point guideline list provides clarity and authority reinforces verdict as an actionable, structured legal directive rather than symbolic declaration.
	Intertextuality	Extensive reference to Article 251 and associated clauses anchors judgment within constitutional discourse, legitimizing the court’s directive as not opinion but legal fulfillment.
	Headline Framing	“SC orders govt” strong performative framing; emphasizes judicial assertiveness and immediacy, reinforcing Urdu’s elevation from recommendation to legal obligation.

2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by The News International, a widely read English-language daily. Uses formal legal reporting style but includes symbolic-emotive language through petitioners' celebratory tone.
	Recontextualization	Translates Supreme Court ruling into a media-legal discourse that blends legal formalism with nationalist sentiment rare fusion of law and ideology.
	Audience Framing	Positions audience as witnesses to a historic legal correction not just readers, but members of a linguistically reoriented national project.
	Voice & Attribution	Judges' voices dominate the body, but petitioners' voices are highlighted at the end to frame the ruling as people-driven and emotionally significant.
3.Social Practice	Postcolonial Power Discourse	Urdu is framed as a constitutional right long denied, and English as a colonial residue needing urgent replacement. The court serves as a decolonial institution enforcing national will.
	Language Ideology	Urdu is constructed as a symbol of identity, legal justice, and equality; its delayed implementation is framed as a violation of citizen rights and the Constitution itself.
	Judiciary's Role	Judiciary is positioned as proactive, courageous, and nationally responsible particularly through Chief Justice Jawwad S. Khawaja's reading of the judgment in Urdu and symbolic leadership.
	Citizen Empowerment	The guideline (ix) gives citizens the right to enforce civil rights if state fails to comply

		judiciary promotes legal empowerment of the public through language policy enforcement.
	Nationalism and Historic Framing	Petitioners calling it “historic” ties the verdict to a long-postponed nationalist desire, suggesting judicial redemption of a neglected cultural obligation.

A suitable example of how legal discourse can be joined with nationalist sentiment to present Urdu implementation as a historic act of cultural restoration is found in the News International article SC orders govt to make Urdu official language immediately (September 9, 2015). The article conceives the Supreme Court verdict as an enforceable mandate based on constitutional obligation, not simply an appeal in nominalism, through strong deontic modality “must be translated,” “shall take steps” and legal phrases such as ‘constitutional command’ and ‘compliance.’ The addition of emotional petitioner quotes in this article such as “historic decision” and “name will be written in books” is what makes this article unique as it goes from a legal directive to a moment of national pride. The structured nine point guideline makes a clear policy roadmap of it and this is not just rhetoric. By including the voices of citizens at the end, while the article maintains formal judicial voice, one is given a feeling of being part of a collective national reawakening. In the way it builds English as an imperial burden and Urdu as a withheld justice, it also defines court, particularly through the reading of the Chief Justice’s Urdu, as a decolonial power. It also adds a bit of standing of citizen empowerment clauses, where we could all demand compliance of the language reform, in the civil rights sense. Thus, the article fits well with the research questions of the study, mainly in terms of power, ideology, and state discourse; and it is a rich locus where legality, identity and national memory meet to produce a compelling narrative of linguistic justice and postcolonial correction.

Table 7: Daily Pakistan article titled “*SC seeks implementation report about enforcement of Urdu as official language*” (Published January 28, 2016)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Daily Pakistan Report (2016)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses institutional and procedural modality: “sought report,” “ordered,” “was made effective,” “asked to ensure” signals formal compliance without emotional or ideological intensity.
	Lexical Choices	Bureaucratic and legal terms dominate: “enforcement,” “ordered,” “subjected to submit,” “implement,” “translate” highlights technical-legal framing over symbolic or nationalist tone.
	Evaluative Language	Neutral and factual tone; lacks strong adjectives like “farcical,” “absurd,” found in other reports suggests a toned-down ideological discourse focused more on administrative follow-up.
	Headline Framing	“SC seeks implementation report...” less assertive than “SC orders” or “SC directs” presents judiciary as monitor, not as activator or enforcer of language reform.
	Intertextuality	Cites Article 251 and refers back to September 8, 2015 judgment provides legal intertextual grounding, but avoids discursive elaboration or deeper ideological justification.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by Daily Pakistan, a mainstream national outlet report takes a summary tone, relying heavily on recounting court actions without editorial framing or in-depth policy analysis.
	Recontextualization	The 2015 SC verdict is repositioned from a constitutional landmark to a pending compliance issue, signaling a shift from ideology to procedure.

	Voice and Attribution	Dominated by institutional voice (SC, PM office) no citizen or petitioner perspective included, unlike in other reports where petitioners are quoted for symbolic validation.
	Audience Framing	Audience is treated as a neutral observer of a delayed legal process, not as a stakeholder in a national language movement depoliticized and bureaucratized discourse.
3. Social Practice	Institutional Dynamics	Judiciary is depicted as seeking compliance, not demanding it shows softened institutional stance, reflecting bureaucratic inertia more than constitutional urgency.
	Language Ideology	Urdu is mentioned as a constitutional duty, but no reference is made to its cultural, nationalist, or symbolic value reduced to a technical administrative task.
	Power Relations	Power of the judiciary appears weakened from issuing an urgent mandate (2015) to passively seeking updates. The government is framed as delayed but not actively resisting.
	Postcolonial Context	Completely omits framing English as a colonial language no ideological contrast between Urdu and English absence of postcolonial resistance discourse present in earlier reports.
	Legal-to-Policy Translation	Focus on submission of reports and translation of documents reflects a shift from rights discourse to compliance metrics, where Urdu's implementation is bureaucratized.

On January 28, 2016, the Daily Pakistan article 'SC seeks implementation report about enforcement of Urdu as official language' details significant changes in the media response

with regard to the Urdu implementation debate from the ideology filled response of earlier phases to adopting more bureaucratic and procedural stance. This article presents a neutral language compared to initial reports which echo with postcolonial critique of technocracy and nationalist pride, saying “sought,” “asked to ensure,” and “subjected to submit” which put an issue in a form of routine follow-up rather than constitutional urgency. The article’s lexical choices, such as ‘enforcement,’ ‘implement,’ and ‘translate’ frame change in inherently compliance terms, while expressing a headline ‘SC seeks...’ presents judiciary not as a reformist power, but as a passive administrator. English is not mentioned as a colonial relic, nor is there any ideological reference to Urdu as a symbolic assertive presaging the death of the cultural and political discourse that once infused the debate. Through the exclusion of public or petitioner voices and only depending on official institutional updates, the article alienates the reader from any civic or emotional participation to the discussion and makes it concentrated on legal issues. It fits well with the study’s larger argument that institutional enthusiasm to enforce the Urdu language declined over time as the language was treated on par with other constitutional mandates to be converted into administrative tasks. By doing so, the article shows how transformative nature of critical legal decisions get diminished in depersonalized bureaucratic discourse, lending support to the study of discursive shifts as well as the institutional barriers for language policy reform in Pakistan.

Table 8: The Express Tribune article titled “*Urdu as official language: Top court calls for progress reports*” (Published January 29, 2016)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Express Tribune Report (2016)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses institutional modality (e.g., “ordered,” “directed,” “asked,” “must submit”) reflects ongoing judicial authority, but not decisive enforcement.
	Lexical Choices	Legal-administrative terms: “progress reports,” “deadline,” “review petition,” “contempt,” “compliance,” “adjourned” bureaucratic tone; signals slow procedural pace.

	Evaluative Language	Moderate judgment: “expressing his annoyance,” “none complied,” “requested more time” reflects judicial frustration, but avoids strong emotional or ideological language.
	Attribution & Voice	Dominantly quotes judges and legal actors; petitioner is present but less central. Minimal editorial framing largely a courtroom summary.
	Headline Framing	“Calls for progress reports” is soft and procedural, not confrontational. Avoids strong verbs like “warns” or “condemns” neutral framing of state inaction.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by The Express Tribune, an English-language national paper written for an educated, policy-aware readership, using restrained legalistic language.
	Recontextualization	Translates court proceedings into news discourse. Focus shifts from language ideology (from 2015) to institutional compliance and procedural delay.
	Audience Framing	Audience positioned as observers of legal process, not as ideological participants. The discourse no longer celebrates Urdu, but tracks performance and non-compliance.
	Temporal Framing	Refers back to September 2015 verdict and contrasts it with current delays (January 2016) constructs a narrative of state inertia over time.
3.Social Practice	Power and Responsibility	Shift in focus: Judiciary is no longer proactive ideologue but reactive monitor. Governments are shown as slow-moving, resistant, or non-compliant, requesting extensions.

	Language Ideology	No ideological framing of Urdu as national or anti-colonial symbol (unlike 2015 verdict coverage). Ideological neutrality replaces symbolic nationalism.
	Implementation Gap Discourse	Emphasis on progress reports, review petitions, delays reflects a bureaucratic discourse of evasion, where institutions resist linguistic decolonization.
	Postcolonial Context	The decolonial urgency of the Urdu judgment is subdued. English remains functionally dominant, Urdu policy remains symbolically mandated but practically ignored.
	Judiciary's Role Evolution	Judiciary is now portrayed as struggling for compliance rather than leading reform. Judges' annoyance suggests waning enforcement power of symbolic language policy.

In 'Urdu as official language: Top court calls for progress reports,' an Express Tribune article from December 29, 2016, the moment of institutional enthusiasm over Urdu's official status humorously turns into a bureaucratic fatigue and pro forma procedure. Unlike earlier reports that had strong modality and emotive vocabulary framing Urdu enforcement as a national and postcolonial corrective, this article is written in a softer legal-administrative lexicon using terms such as 'progress report', 'compliance', and 'adjourned' which convey monitoring more than mobilization. "All the judicial expressions such as 'requested more time', 'expressing his annoyance', were mild disappointment without any ideological urgency." This discursive downgrade of shifting the Supreme Court from authoritative enforcer to procedural supervisor is recorded by the headline itself, which is "calls for progress reports." The audience for the production of the article is a policy literate audience, and it relies heavily on judicial voice, ignoring public or petitioner perspective which was once energizing the debate. The earlier moral weight of the verdict is given way to one on compliance tracking and institutional delay, and no mention is made of Urdu's postcolonial critique or symbolic value or of its enabling of citizens. The lack of English as a point of contention implies a re-normalization of English in

official functions and the nonexistence of implementation timelines or penalties shows a weakening powers of enforcement. Overall, this fits with the broader argument of the study, that legislated declarations without sustained political and administrative will degenerate into empty gestures. As such, the article functions as an empirical marker of how language reform at first filled with constitutional and ideological force became enfolded into institutional inertia, providing a critical instance of Pakistan's on going attempt to realize symbolic language policy into practical governance.

Table 9: Daily Times report titled “SC moved to implement verdict about Urdu language”
(Published September 8, 2017)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Daily Times Report (2017)
1. Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses past and reported modality rather than direct imperative (e.g., “the court had ruled,” “the court had directed”) reduced urgency, possibly softening the force of legal action.
	Lexical Choices	Neutral legal diction: “plea,” “pending,” “filed,” “tangible loss,” “declared,” “coordinate” lacks emotional loading, unlike prior reports that use “farcical,” “absurd.”
	Attribution & Voice	Voice is given to the petitioner (Kokab Iqbal) rather than the court e.g., “he said,” “he informed the court,” “he had also filed” shifts focus from judiciary’s authority to activism.
	Headline Framing	“SC moved to implement...” passive construction emphasizes court as being acted upon rather than acting contrasts with stronger headlines like “SC directs...” or “SC orders...”
	Tense & Temporality	Repetitive use of past perfect (“had ruled,” “had directed”) situates the original verdict as distant, possibly framing it as stalled or forgotten.

2. Discursive Practice	Production	Published by Daily Times (English-language centrist daily) written with a legal-news tone but highlights delayed implementation, thus questioning state responsiveness.
	Recontextualization	This article revisits the original 2015 verdict but focuses not on its content, but on lack of follow-up shifts discourse from law-making to implementation gap.
	Audience Positioning	Audience is positioned to see the petitioner as a lone activist pushing the state to fulfill its promises. Judiciary appears inactive, awaiting further appeal or procedural trigger.
	Intertextuality	Repeats Article 251 and references Article 189, but does not reinforce ideological vocabulary (e.g., “colonial language”) from earlier verdicts toned down ideological edge.
3.Social Practice	Ideological Implication	Shift from judicial nationalism to bureaucratic resistance institutions are portrayed as non-compliant, ignoring a constitutional order, maintaining status quo (English dominance).
	Power Relations	Courts passive; petitioner active citizen; government, negligent. Suggests bottom-up pressure rather than top-down enforcement.
	Language Ideology	Urdu still framed as the constitutional language, but implicitly undermined by the fact that institutions continue to use English (CSS, official correspondence, exams).
	Postcolonial Reflection	Unlike earlier coverage, this piece lacks emotional postcolonial framing (no reference to English as

		“colonial”). Language issue is reframed as administrative inefficiency, not ideology.
	Civic Frustration and Legal Inertia	Article builds narrative of repeated legal requests being ignored exposes gap between law and practice, and judiciary’s limited power in enforcing its own language policy orders.

An article published by the Daily Times on September 8, 2017, “SC moved to implement verdict about Urdu language” (Daily Times, September 8, 2017), shows a shift in discourse regarding the previously treated as celebrated Supreme Court judgment on Urdu: it is presented as a judgement that is now outdated and in administrative limbo. While contrasting from earlier reports which had treated the 2015 verdict as a decolonial milestone, this article chooses a retrospective character and uses constructions like the court had ruled and had ordered and so on to signify loss of immediacy and urgency. The article is lexically subdued, making use of neutral words like “pending” and “plea” which describe a technical rather than an ideological approach to the topic. The report is dominated by the voice of the petitioner, Kokab Iqbal, which hints toward a shift in favor of individual legal activism that faces the institutional apathy. The headline “SC moved” is in past voice thereby reducing the agency of the judiciary, and showing the judiciary as the receiver of action rather than the agent. When recontextualized, this reframes the way in which the discourse has changed from praising the constitutionally nationalist court to calling the government tragically inert. The article does not mention English as a colonial residue, Urdu as a unifying national symbol; instead, the issue is framed as an unresolved administrative task. The article reinforces the core concern of the study by focusing on the petitioner’s ongoing struggle and the state’s continued noncompliance. Also, we observe breakdown of institutional alignment: courts are able to issue transformative rulings but lack of sufficient mechanisms that should enforce court rulings against executive indifference. In the end, the article reinforces that the study’s point is that language policy in Pakistan is susceptible to dilution over time with bureaucratic delay and judicial fatigue swamping the postcolonial and constitutional mandates of it.

Table 10: The Dawn article titled “*Govt directed to enforce SC verdict on Urdu language*”
(Published February 14, 2023)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Dawn Report (2023)
1.Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses firm but institutional and procedural modality: “directed,” “submit a compliance report,” “supposed to implement” reflects judicial authority with restrained force.
	Lexical Choices	Legal-administrative language: “compliance report,” “disposed of petitions,” “contempt charges,” “enforce verdict” foregrounds legal obligation over ideological conviction.
	Temporal Framing	Highlights “lapse of eight years” emphasizes delayed compliance and diminishing urgency or seriousness of earlier court orders.
	Voice & Attribution	Petitioner voices present: “they said,” “they pointed out,” “they asked the court...” repositions civil society as active, government as negligent, and judiciary as intermediary.
	Headline Framing	“Govt directed...” similar to past headlines but now by High Court (LHC), not Supreme Court reflects localized judicial enforcement, not top-down national action.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by Dawn, a leading English-language paper with elite readership report is brief, factual, and minimally evaluative; presents a neutral bureaucratic tone.
	Recontextualization	SC’s 2015 verdict is recalled as legal precedent, not as a nationalist or decolonial turning point suggests symbolic policy turned dormant over time.

	Judiciary Framing	Judiciary is no longer ideologically leading language reform LHC is functioning reactively by enforcing an already ignored SC order.
	Citizen Framing	Petitioners frame the issue as chronic non-compliance; their call for contempt charges indicates growing public frustration with performative state behavior.
3.Social Practice	Power & Resistance	State is portrayed as having institutionally ignored Urdu enforcement for nearly a decade. Courts appear to have lost ideological momentum, now functioning only as enforcers.
	Language Ideology Shift	Urdu is no longer constructed as a symbol of identity or dignity only as a legal expectation being unmet. English remains default bureaucratic language.
	Postcolonial Reflection	No reference to “colonial language,” “national pride,” or “cultural justice” symbolic ideology of Urdu has faded, replaced by a compliance narrative.
	Judiciary–Executive Relationship	Judiciary is framed as administrative supervisor to executive, not ideological leader. The urgency and symbolic power of Article 251 has weakened over time.
	Civil Society Role	Petitioners’ demands for contempt suggest increased legal activism from below, indicating a bottom-up demand for state accountability on language policy.

A significant change in the Urdu policy discourse can be observed in the Dawn article “Govt directed to enforce SC verdict on Urdu language” (February 14, 2023) that has made the once

symbolic Supreme Court verdict into a bureaucratic and procedural issue. This article is written quite differently from the earlier representations of Urdu’s press corridor with socialism and ideological zeal, using a technical and detached tone, with terms such as “submit a compliance report” and “supposed to implement” which suggests that enforcing Urdu is no longer a national cause but just any other formal task. ‘Temporally,’ the emphasis on ‘eight years lapse’ underscores state’s inaction while ‘legalese’ words like ‘contempt charges’ and ‘disposed of petitions’ are transformed into compliancy narrative instead of asking the questions of linguistic justice. Here, the judiciary seems to be passive and exert just an enforcement of a delayed directive and the petitioner’s voice assumes centrality suggesting the pressure of a civil society driven push for accountability. Nowhere in the discourse is there mention of Urdu as a symbol of national unity or English as a colonial residue, but the discourse surrounding them is technocratic, depoliticized, and at times utopian. It confirms findings from the study that symbolic policies of symbolic language can be dangerous in terms of institutional decay, when not followed through actively. The article gives an example of how Urdu’s constitutional mandate, once a product of decolonial and nationalist milestone, is struggling to survive in with administrative inertia, fractured oversight and institutional breakdown. Further, it is consistent with the claim that civil society must become more involved in reviving the ideological adherence integral to the implementation of genuine programing.

Table 11: The Express Tribune article titled “*Efforts afoot to implement Urdu as official language*” (Published May 15, 2023)

Dimension	Focus Area	Analysis of Express Tribune Report (2023)
1.Textual Analysis	Modality	Uses positive and progressive modality: “efforts afoot,” “taking practical measures,” “expedite compliance,” “will enable” emphasizes action, development, and institutional initiative.
	Lexical Choices	Emphasis on technological terminology: “machine translation,” “optical character recognition,” “speech recognition,” “digital transformation” associates Urdu with modernity and innovation.

	Tone and Framing	Optimistic and future-oriented tone, with development discourse replacing legal or ideological emphasis. No urgency or critique rather, promotion of institutional achievements.
	Attribution & Voice	Dominated by institutional voices: Ministry, NLPD, Planning Minister civil society or judiciary voices are absent. This reframes the narrative around technocratic progress.
	Headline Framing	“Efforts afoot...” vague, non-committal phrase that suggests intent more than enforceable action. Contrast with earlier headlines that emphasized judicial directives.
2. Discursive Practice	Production	Produced by Express Tribune this time not reporting on court proceedings, but on a ministerial press release suggests media serving institutional promotion over critique.
	Recontextualization	The 2015 SC verdict is mentioned passively as background; now reframed under a development and digitalization project narrative, decoupling it from legal urgency or constitutional rights.
	Institutional Alignment	Strong alignment with Planning Ministry and NLPD uses bureaucratic language to demonstrate compliance through innovation, not through legal enforcement.
	Audience Framing	Readers are positioned as beneficiaries of digital access, not as citizens demanding linguistic justice or national identity affirmation.
3.Social Practice	Ideological Shift	Significant move from symbolic nationalist ideology (Urdu as identity, dignity, decolonization)

		to technocratic developmental ideology (Urdu as a tool for digital inclusion).
	Power and Institutional Role	Judiciary is absent; bureaucracy and technocrats now lead the discourse shows transformation of Urdu policy from judicial order to digital project management.
	Postcolonial Reflection	Completely lacks postcolonial framing. English is not criticized or delegitimized focus is on making Urdu technologically competitive, not ideologically dominant.
	National Language as Capital	Urdu is framed as digital capital that can be leveraged for commerce, online access, and cross-border communication, not as a constitutional duty or national symbol.
	State Modernization Agenda	NLP-Lab is embedded in a larger state modernization narrative (“shift from manual to digital processes,” “increase exports,” “national transformation”) Urdu policy absorbed by neoliberal goals.

This analysis from the Express Tribune article to illustrate how ‘efforts are afoot to implement Urdu as official [national] language’, which speaks of a linguistic policy discourse articulated to shift towards bureaucratic modernization from ideological commitment. This article, in contrast to earlier media reports that followed the postcolonial judiciary’s framing of Urdu as a symbol of national justice and identity, uses forward looking and promotional phrases like ‘take practical measures’ and ‘will allow’ to present the Urdu policy as a part of a technological development agenda. Instead these examples of Urdu’s integration into the country’s digital infrastructure not of Urdu’s status as a constitutional language – emphasize the practice of Urdu being a language of technology or communication in the market place and the workplace through the example of “machine translation,” “optical character recognition,” and “speech recognition.” Articles 251 or 19A are not mentioned; English is not referred to as colonial,

which shows complete lack of ideological tension running through the verdict as in 2015. There is silence from the judiciary, and the report relegates the judiciary in favor of ministries like NLPD and Planning Commission highlighting Urdu as 'digital capital' that can export the people's language for e governance. The position of the audience is not as politically engaged citizens but as waiting to benefit from service delivery improvements. The depoliticized framing of this study supports finding that the struggle over enforcement of Urdu has transitioned from rights-based struggle to technocratic process. The article thereby exemplifies how the symbolic momentum of 2015 dissipated into developmental pragmatism, which is evidence for the discursive and institutional dilution of the constitutional promise of Urdu.

DISCUSSION

This section of the discussion critically interprets the findings of the data analysis in relation to the central research questions of the study, theoretical framework, and the literature reviewed. This examines how the verdict of Supreme Court in 2015 and the subsequent representation of the verdict in the discourse of media has outlined the ideological, constitutional and practical narratives for Urdu as Pakistan's national and official language. Exploiting Fairclough's CDA methodology, the current discussion focuses on how the judiciary, bureaucracy, media and civil society adapt and play the roles of constructing, reinforcing or resisting language policy implementation. Discussing as well the more general sociopolitical ideologies upon which the discourses of postcolonial resistance, linguistic nationalism, and neoliberal modernization are based, it analyzes as well examples of these discourses in Thompson's rhetorical strategies. The analysis through a discussion of legal texts and news reports from 2015 to 2023, shows how Urdu's symbolic force as a tool of national identity and decolonialism has been gradually replaced by inertia in bureaucracy and technocracy. The final part of this section unites these discursive developments with previous academic studies and theoretical concepts as a way of coming to a greater understanding of the interdependence between language, power, and governance in Pakistan.

The reasoning reached in the 2015 Supreme Court judgment provides very strong support for making Urdu the national and official language of Pakistan. It includes words like 'must now be implemented' and shall be translated' in clear and strong legal language to conclude that the Constitution is giving Urdu the symbolic importance as well as legal obligation. In the second

part, using Article 251 which says that Urdu should be used in all official matters and then linking that directly with the Urdu language. It proves that the Constitution itself values Urdu as a work language along with a national identity.

The same judgment also attributes an ideological meaning to Urdu. English is described as a language of colonial legacy, oppression, and elitism, so it's seen as a language which still holds power in elites' hands. However, Urdu is portrayed as a language of the ordinary people, of equality, of national dignity. Urdu is referred to by the court as a more 'accessible' and 'constitutional' language and as the language that should be adopted by all Pakistanis. As a result, it has a moral signification that Urdu is not only the national language but it carries the meaning of justice, unity, and honour of nation.

The reasoning for English as a leftover, and still dominant, of the colonial ruler in important government, law, and education sites displays a postcolonial character. Therefore, the court is of opinion that the many citizens are kept away from their rights because they are unable to understand legal and official matters in English. Here, the judgment aims for decolonial shift by distancing itself from English in lieu of Urdu, which is the language of the people of Pakistan. It also doesn't just complain; rather, it offers practical solutions like translating court documents, uploading Urdu documents on the internet, and scrapping English in favor of Urdu, but making the shift slowly.

Thus, Urdu is depicted, in short, as a constitutional necessity, an indicator of national unity and a means of correcting colonial inequality. Drawing on public rights, fairness, and the democratic access to languages, it interprets the use of Urdu as a matter relating to words and also to power, justice, and national identity.

English language newspapers in Pakistan demonstrate different ways of reacting to the Supreme Court's ideological message to enforce Urdu. Others recontextualize the judgment by rewriting legal language into news stories that do not introduce their own opinion. Take for instance, Dawn and The News International reporting the Court's strong words, in duplicate, 'colonial language,' 'must be implemented,' and 'constitutional command', portraying the Court as a powerful agent. They made some of these newspapers important in the realization of constitutional duty and national identity and thus strengthened the view of the Supreme

Court. Moreover, they backed the idea that Urdu is not a language but it is also a medium of justice and unity.

Although, certain newspapers resisted the ideology by displaying proof and problems. Take for example, an opinion article that was published by The Express Tribune entitled, 'Handling the language issue,' which also used cautious words such as knee-jerk reaction, unease and it remains to be seen. Furthermore, this article raised the point of whether the government was capable of carrying out Urdu in the right way, and also reminded individuals of past language tensions such as in the Sindh and in East Pakistan. Rather than attacking the Court's decision directly, the government tried to change the subject to practical difficulties, regional sensitivities and the possible side effects of haste.

Late news items, such as Daily Pakistan and Dawn reports in 2023, turned the steps towards Urdu not as an ideological whip around, but merely the habit of bureaucracy taking place as it was 'supposed' to happen. Words like "delayed," "compliance report," and "no step forward" indicate that the issue began to center on government performance as opposed to decolonization, rather, or national identity. These reports showed the judiciary's weakened power and dissatisfied citizens, instead of the enthusiasm for Urdu.

On the other hand, some of the more recent reports such as the Express Tribune article from 2023 ("Efforts afoot to revive plans ..."), even changed the framing of the Urdu implementation, which was cast as a technological project, using terms such as 'digital transformation', 'machine translation' and 'speech recognition'. Urdu was not promoted here as part of a national symbol but rather as a tool for the digital development, moving the focus from ideology to innovation.

In short, English-language newspapers in Pakistan play different roles:

- They repeat legal language and Urdu as national duty to reinforce Supreme Court's ideological message.
- Moreover, some resist by pointing to challenges, historical problems, and incapacity on a state level.
- Some other recontextualize the decision through technical, bureaucratic, or other means which arguably derange the emotional or ideological force of the decision.

These responses indicate that, although the judiciary treated Urdu as symbol of unity and decolonization, the media's responses were mixed and evolving based on audience, time, and political situation.

The Urdu language policy is mediated through changing media discourses in English language papers in Pakistan from 2015 up to 2023, which in turn mirror deeper sociopolitical ideologies and power relations. They connect the language problem to the issue of postcolonial identity, state governance, and modernization.

The makeup of the Supreme Court judgment was celebrated in the media as a strong act of national identity and decolonization. 'Colonial language', 'historic decision' and 'constitutional command' was used by many newspapers to establish that Urdu was not only a national language but also a sign of cultural pride and a freedom from the domination of English language. This is a postcolonial ideology that imagined that enforcing Urdu would be tending to a historical injustice committed upon India by British colonial rule. It formed the judiciary as the protector of national dignity, on the other hand, it presented the government as weak or slow to fulfil its duties.

Yet, to an extent, over time, and particularly after 2016, the media changed to reflect changing power relations. The tone the reports moved from strong emotional support to more neutral and bureaucratic. The words were no longer emotional: they were 'compliance report,' 'progress update,' and 'delayed implementation.' Instead, this change indicates that the focus was on governance and institutional weakness. It was not in it the bit of an enforcer of a proud Urdu speaking state, instead it is portrayed as an inefficient and an entirely unconnected state sloughing towards its own constitutional promises. This change suggests that the ideological momentum is running out, and the gap between the theory of law and the practice of law is widening.

In the year of 2023, some newspapers like Express Tribune changed the definition of Urdu policy in a modern sense, and that is not in the postcolonial viewpoint but as a part of technological modernization. Urdu was also repackaged as a machine translation, speech recognition or digital transformation term. Accordingly, the judiciary's voice faded and it was technocrats, it was ministries that are now shown leading the change. This is a projection of a

neoliberal ideology whereby language is not anymore seen as a symbol, but rather as economic capital that can enable digital inclusion, effectiveness and growth of the export.

In conclusion, media discourse from 2015 to 2023 reveals the shifting ideological landscape of Pakistan's language policy. This was to be postcolonial resistance and national pride, failed governance and a generalized public response, and technocratic progress and digital modernization. All these power structures are being played out differently in each of the shifts: in the judiciary first, then again in the frustrated citizen and finally in the state bureaucracy and IT experts. These discourses explain to us that Urdu doesn't just play a historical or identity role in Pakistan; it is also a vital part of the country believing in itself in the field of global technology, in governance and future development.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

According to the study, the Supreme Court judgment of 2015 discursively constituted Urdu beyond being a national language. This was portrayed as an advancement of postcolonial justice, a symbol of a constitutional right, and a means by which to empower citizens. In strong legal and moral language, English was labeled as a "colonial legacy", while Urdu was referred to as a means of accessing and inclusion. First, the Court imbued the demand to force Urdu on all official domains to make use of constitution articles and past verdicts to create a powerful legal and ideological base.

However, the actions of the media reports were not the same over time. In 2015 too, the same legal and ideological terms were repeated by other newspapers in English such as Dawn, The News, and Business Recorder that supported the court. Urdu was framed as national duty and pointed out the delay of government as a serious issue. Some other opinion pieces like Express Tribune had raised practical criticism about the government's capacity to work its way out, disability of translation, and ignoring the regional language. However, these articles responded by calling upon the court to tone down its idealism and its 'Platonic' view towards policy planning, to be more realistic and inclusive.

Later, from 2016 until 2023, the tone of the media coverage changed. Bureaucratic delay, court reminders, and progress reports began to be the focus of news articles. Words such as technical and legal supplanted those emotional and ideological. Media discourse reduced the symbolic

power of Urdu and began to characterize the issue as another on the list of jobs in waiting. Urdu was no longer being discussed as a symbol of identity, but rather as a digital resource being used in translation and development, connected with technological modernization such as the above mentioned projects of NLP-Lab will be enforced in Pakistan by 2023.

Together, the findings indicate that while the Supreme Court presented Urdu as national identity and justice, Urdu became reframed, first through the media's ideological support for and questioning of Urdu, and ultimately to technocratic reframing in the media. From a debate in terms of postcolonial justice, the language policy moved on to performance reporting and digital goals. In addition, these power relations shift: from nationalist rhetoric based in the judiciary to bureaucratic management, and technological progress. Urdu as an official language is at best symbolically powerful and practically faces institutional delays, lack of will and shifting priorities of the system of governance.

This study's findings are altogether consistent with the concerns and themes of earlier research about language policy and ideological conflicts in Pakistan. The struggles present in the literature of conspiracy theory are mirrored in the tensions seen in the media and judicial discourses, many of which are found in other forms throughout the study.

Similarly, in accordance with Mukhtar's (2021) argument that Urdu has always been associated with the Pakistan Movement and national identity, the Supreme Court also argues that Urdu was a postcolonial, constitutional right not to be taken away. The idea of using Urdu as a tool to empower citizens, as emphasized in this judgment, is in sync with Ahmad (2022) finding that many people from the different ethnic Pakistani population support Urdu as the national unifying language.

A second reason for the judgment's support for Cheema and Baloch (2021) is the critique of English as a colonial and elitist language. The court also wanted a shift to Urdu for a better accessibility for the students whose study discovered that students are fettered over dual language system.

Additionally, the study conforms to institutional resistance and implementation failure as reported by Siddiqui (2011) and Abbas and Bidin (2022). However, these researchers argue that while language policies in Pakistan always intend to declare Urdu's high status, actual

implementation is weak because of bureaucratic inertia and resistance of the elite. Continuing on this pattern, this study also shows that it reflects in the pattern of media reports, especially post-2016 when the narrative changed from ideological enforcement to technical reporting and compliance updates.

The findings also support the notion by Nisa et al. (2023) that Pakistan's multilingual existence is for the most part, excluded from policies, excluding speakers of regional languages from mainstream society. Express Tribune's opinion article also saw the same when it criticized the court's all Urdu approach and asked for more inclusive planning which accounts for linguistic diversity.

Finally, the future oriented but ideologically diluted discourse which Kazmi (2023) observes for 2023 media has linked the Urdu implementation with technological modernization. This work asserts that, as such, the Urdu policy is presented less from the perspective of a postcolonial correction than it is a means to develop the state in the digital context; this finding is corroborated in this study by the NLP Lab project and further periodically reflected in later media texts in technocratic language.

Finally, this study reinforces currently existing research regarding the symbolic power and sociopolitical complexity that has long been invested in Urdu's place in Pakistan. By depicting the changes in the nature of language policy representation in the order of ideological alignment, bureaucratic routine, and technological framing, it enhances the value of representation of discourse for media discourse, showing how it has moved from ideological alignment to bureaucratic routine and from bureaucratic routine to technological framing.

This study's results are in accord with Norman Fairclough's three dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in selection of its theoretical framework of analysis of how language reflects, and orders, and frame power, ideologies, and social practices. The discourse around the Supreme Court's judgment of 2015 and its representations in media show the echo of Fairclough's model in three different levels; textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice.

The analysis at textual level showed that the forms of modality, evaluative language such as "colonial legacy" and formal structure employed by the Supreme Court's judgment and the

early media coverage helped it create Urdu as a national, constitutional, postcolonial imperative. It directly relates in support of Fairclough's opinions that language choices (lexically, grammatically, modally) are ideologically loaded and assist in legitimation of particular worldviews. For example, 'must be implemented', 'barrier to access' (and other frequent words reflect the urgency and moral authority of legal commands, and the extent to which legal texts inculcate ideological meaning in legal commands).

At the level of discursive practice, respectively, very clearly newspapers like Dawn and The News replicated the discourse and reproduced the ideological discourse of the court in 2015 by quoting the court's discourse directly and buy that as authoritative truths. At a later stage, although, media reports particularly opinion pieces, as well as post 2020 stories—reshaped the ruling by means of institutional, technological, and pragmatic lenses. However, there have been earlier media reports (pre 2020) that have interpreted the ruling from a variety of lenses. And the shift, which turns out to confirm Fairclough's second dimension that is how texts are produced, disseminated, and consumed. The same judgment was represented with different tones and voices by different outlets and at different times also exemplify the ways media discourses have changed in relation to different editorial practices, audience expectation and institutional alignment.

At the level of social practice, the study also reflects higher level power relations and ideological struggles in Pakistani society. In line with Fairclough's position that discourse is the reflection of and instrument to reproduce the social structure, the discursive construal of Urdu as a postcolonial correction and a symbol of national justice is noted. However, the weakening of ideological tone and the increase of narrative technocratic, and digital development discourse in media texts in the course of time shows the transformation of the social function of language policy from the national identity and the decolonization to the modernization and the bureaucratic compliance. This backs up Fairclough's view that discourses are produced by and in turn helping to produce social institutions and power structures.

In fine, the results demonstrate how Fairclough's approach can be applied to follow the discursive shape, reformulation, and opposition of policies concerning the Urdu language in postcolonial Pakistan. This verifies that language is merely form of communication but an

instrument of ideological battle, institutional control, as well as sociopolitical team: as Fairclough's theory points.

CONCLUSION

This thesis critically examined the discursive construction of the 2015 Supreme Court judgement to make Urdu the official language of Pakistan and its reinterpretation and resistance in terms of ideological, constitutional, and postcolonial significance in English language media in Pakistan from 2015 to 2023. By using Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis model, the study discovered how the court's decision initially acted as potent ideological intervention which conferred Urdu the legal status of Article 251 as the symbol of postcolonial justice, the vision of democratic inclusion and the image of national dignity. The judgment's textual features of modality, evaluative lexicon, intertextual references, and binary oppositions between Urdu and English show that the decision was embedded with nationalist and decolonial ideology, which have a clear articulation of reframing the linguistic justice as a constitutional right. In time, however, this powerful discursive framing began to change in media representations. Court was projected as authoritative and corrective institution that is accountable to state for the delay of decades in early reports especially Dawn and The news. These texts perpetuated the espousal of the court's ideology and reproduced much of its language verbatim. However, in the following years, the parameters which were utilized when discussing media also changed. Articles from later, especially from 2016 onward, demoralized the problem more and more, switching the ideological framing to technocratic modernization and from moral urgency to procedural compliance. Development stories (e.g. Express Tribune 2023) were most visibly transformed by this, as they emphasized artificial intelligence, digital translation tools, and institutional progress and thus, were largely devoid of linguistic justice, citizen empowerment, and postcolonial resistance.

The study is critical in that it illustrates a steady reduction of the ideological component in the Urdu language debate. Over time, however, from a high stakes constitutional and cultural correction anti-elitist, nationalist and postcolonial was gradually transformed into bureaucratic inaction, symbolic compliance and neoliberal developmentalism. The colonial remnant that English was made deguilitimized, reappeared quietly as the language of power, policy and institutional convenience ever persistent. It illustrates how, in the process of reframing itself,

the discourses of the identity and the justice can be strategically recontextualized onto the new political and institutional priorities, such as digital transformation and the administrative reform, leaving their deeper sociohistorical inequalities untouched. Thus the conclusion signals a vital paradox in Pakistan's language policy discourse of the symbolic affirmation of Urdu as a National and Official language coexisting with the consistent structural preference of English in law, governance and education. But the judgment failed to translate into systemic reform, and that points to wider institutional resistance and class-based linguistic hierarchies that permeate Pakistan's bureaucracy and to the enduring colonial legacy. Lastly, this paper demonstrates that linguistics policy cannot just be decreed legally; it takes strong ideological commitment, institutional restructuring, and a commitment to policy making involving participation and linguistic justice and social equity. To get Pakistan beyond declarative symbolism, it has to do so only then.

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