

"LANGUAGE AND POWER"

- **LANGUAGE**
- "A systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures or marks having understood meaning"
- Simple and specific to the topic it is the tool of exercising the intension.
- **POWER:**
- "A chance that an individual in a social relationship can achieve his or her own will against the resistance of others"
(Weber, 1980, 20)
- Foucault believes power as an exercise of intension—but it is not individual intension.

LANGUAGE AND POWER

idea 2
power

- At least three different approaches to power can be distinguished:
 - Power as a result of specific resources of individual actors (e.g. French and Raven, 1959)
 - Power as a specific attribute of social exchange in each interaction (e.g. Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1962, 1975)
 - Power as systematic and constitutive element/characteristic of society (e.g. from very different angles, Foucault, 1975 and Giddens, 1984)

language is a social
→ how we
universals

Language and power

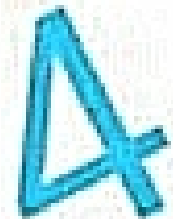
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- Power is about the relations of differences and particularly about the effects of differences in social structures. The constant unity of language and other social matters ensures that language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: language indexes and expresses power and is involved where there is a contention over and a challenge to power.
- Power does not necessarily derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distribution of power in the short and long term
- Language provides a finely articulated vehicle for differences in power in hierarchical social structures.

universities
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show me

- As always, when “power” is spoken of, the first association is that of the power of man over man, of power as suppression of the free will by “commands” and “obedience”. Power can easily appear in this connection as the root of all evil in human societies and as the opposite of freedom as such.

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- Yet the problem of power is in truth more complex. And especially in the case of the “power of language”, the problem is multi-layered. The “power of language” not only means language in the service of power; language can also undermine power. And above all, as language, it possesses itself power of a very special kind. The relation of language and power is ambivalent.

- The "power of language" and the "language of power" has been used in a similar way. What is here meant in general is that all power must finally use language, be conveyed through it and manifested in it, to command, that is, to speak, where others must only hear and obey.
- . In a more narrow sense, this understanding of the "power of language" is a matter of the instrumental role of language for the purpose of exercising power. The command of language itself becomes a means of power: as political rhetoric and demagoguery, as ideology and bedazzlement, as seduction through words, as "persuasion"
- This first interpretation of the "power of language" already shows two things. On the one hand, that language and speaking must be distinguished in the exercise of power. The possibilities of language from the way in which language is actually used in spoken words. On the other hand, the interpretation also gives a presentiment that the power which is exercised through language always already bears within itself the germ of its counter-power. For the language of political demagogues and tyrants can be seen through as language. And by means of language itself. So that language conveys the power of violence or domination and at the same time undermines it.

Power and discourse



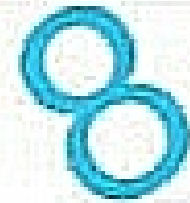
- Following Fairclough,
- Two aspects of language/power are emphasized, power in discourse and power behind discourse.
- **Power in discourse** is concerned with discourse as a place where relations of power are actually exercised and enacted.
- Such power includes;
 - power in face to face spoken discourse (teacher-student talk)
 - power in cross cultural discourse where participants belong to different ethnic groups (interviewer-interviewee talk)
- Hidden power of discourse of Mass Media



Hidden power of discourse of mass media

- Mass media, television, radio, films and newspapers are the growth area of language which includes the participants who are separated by time and place.
- Mass media discourse is interesting because power in such relations is not clear and reasons of such hidden relations of power are
- One sidedness (creating a sharp difference between producer and consumer)
- Media discourse is written for a mass audience and there is no way producer can even who is in the audience, let alone adapt to its diverse section and since all discourse producers should have an interpreter in their mind, what media producer do is that they assume an **Ideal Subject**.
- Then the common viewer have to negotiate with that **Ideal Subject**.

Hidden powers of discourse mass media

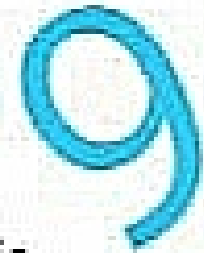


- While talking about the power relation in media discourse it can be said that producer exercise power over consumers in a way that they have soul producing rights and can therefore determine what is included and excluded and how events are represented.
- But who precisely are these producers? let us take an example;

PM defends

daughter,
challenges

Panama Papers (The News International, Panama leaks)



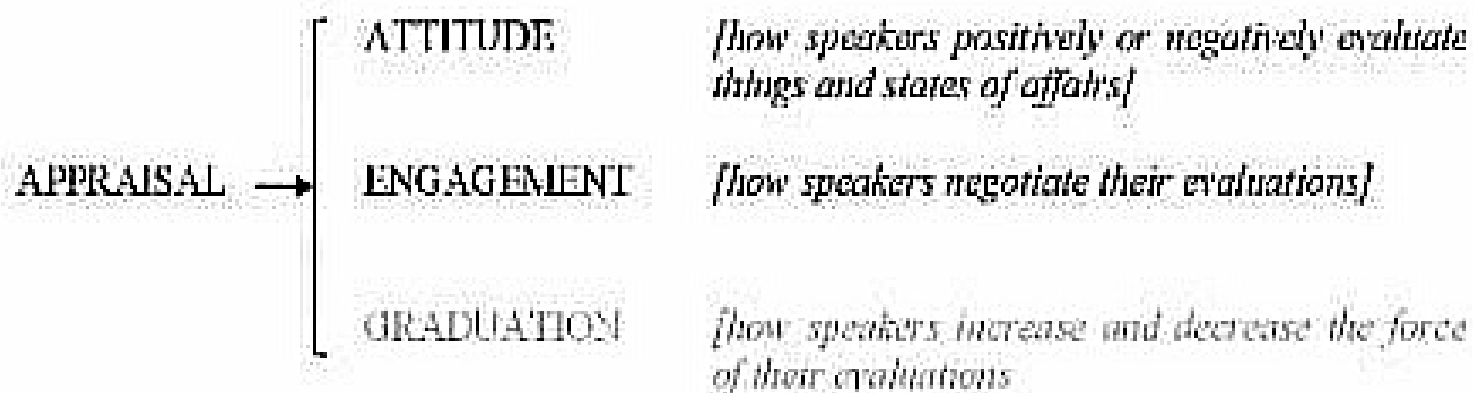
Hidden powers of discourse mass media

- Who is actually exercising under this news? perhaps it is the journalist who wrote this piece but it is well known that journalists works under editorial control,so perhaps it is the editor or rather more vaguely the news paper itself.
- But is the representation of the case is only the news paper's or is not the newspaper not representing someone else, and if so does that not give a specific power to that someone else.
- Keeping the newspaper's reports in the mind, it is obvious that the people and the organizations that the media use as a source in their media reports do not present equally all social groupings in the population.
- In Pakistani media, the balance of sources and perspectives and ideology is overwhelmingly in favour of existine power holders.

Contrastive News Reporting



The APPRAISAL model



Hidden power of discourse mass media



- However suggesting how happy people will become if they buy specific consumer products is also an exercise of power. (through commercial adds)





Instrumental vs. Influential

INSTRUMENTAL POWER

Instrumental power is explicit power imposed by the state/authoritative figure e.g. education, law, businesses, management.

Flouting instrumental power can result in some form of punishment, which (depending on the context) could be anything from being reprimanded to being arrested.

INFLUENTIAL POWER

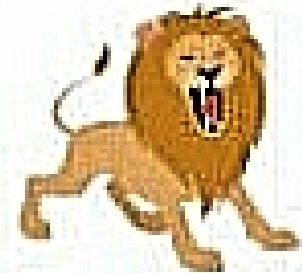
Influential power is not imposed but influences people to do a certain action (e.g. vote for a political party or wear certain clothes).

It can often be found in advertisements, politics and media as well as modern culture and social protocol.

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Persuasive devices used to impose INFLUENTIAL POWER



Metaphors & Similes

- *Simile*– A simile is saying something is like something else, or doing something that is characteristic of something else: **'Faheem was roaring like a Lion'**
Similes are often used as part of Political speeches, to create humour/ belittle an opponent, and therefore establishing a position of power.
- *Metaphor*– A metaphor is saying something is something. For example, as **Bilawal Bhutto** in one of his addresses said:
- **'Lion is not hunted with a cricket bat'**. He is showing his sympathies towards the political party mentioned as **Lion**.

Persuasive devices used to impose INFLUENTIAL POWER

- ***Antithetic Parallelism/Antithesis***- this is when the second section of the phrase contradicts the first. For example in Raheel Shareef's address to the Pakistan Army , he said:
'Do your worst - and we will do our best'

Redundant Questioning



Many politicians begin making a statement with a series of questions- however questioning is also a common feature in leaflets, directed at the reader's viewpoint: 'How can I get involved?' 'How can I make a difference?'

This is often a powerful technique used in political rhetoric.

Persuasive devices used to impose INFLUENTIAL POWER

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- **Repetition**

In language and power (and more specifically in political speeches), repetition is more often not a repetition of a single word, but of a key phrase or idea.

- **Alliteration**

Repetition of the initial consonant is a technique often used in speeches to make certain parts more memorable or perhaps give them more impact.

POWER IN SPOKEN DISCOURSE

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Constraints

- Ways in which powerful participants may block or control the contributions of less powerful participants, for example through controlling content or interruption

Formulation

- The re-wording of another's contribution by a powerful participant to impose a certain meaning or understanding

Agenda Setting

- The set of things that need to be covered by the powerful participant

CONCLUSION

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- We conclude that Language is power! Empower yourself!
- How language operates in social interactions is its relationship with power, both influential and instrumental