AN ANALYSIS OF URDU AND ENGLISH EDITORIAL COVERAGE OF THE 2007 EMERGENCY FROM PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a case study of Urdu and English Pakistani newspapers during the 2007 Emergency in Pakistan. Specifically, it looks at editorial discussion of former president Pervez Musharraf and his government. The 2007 Emergency marked one of the most difficult political periods of Musharraf’s nine-year tenure. In an effort to maintain both his positions as President and Chief of Army Staff, Musharraf suspended the constitution on November 3, 2007 and declared a State of Emergency. The Emergency affected several spheres of Pakistani society, including the media. To quell dissension, Musharraf implemented a law which held that TV stations and newspapers could not broadcast or publish material that defamed the government or army.

Through studying editorials, this thesis seeks to understand to what degree newspapers actually heeded the new media law. To analyze the editorials, I use an approach within sociolinguistics called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA posits that text and context mirror each other. A society’s socio-economics, political hierarchy, religion, values, and ideology will be apparent in the text through grammar, tone, lexicon, and style. Given the context of the Emergency, I wanted to understand how government attempts to censor would manifest in the text.

There are two questions that drive this research: How and to what degree do print media criticize the government; and is there a noticeable difference of opinion between Urdu and English newspapers? Previously, print media in Pakistan was heavily under state control because of its dependency on government funding. As such, editorial content was favorable of the government. Now, however, a number of factors, including globalization, market liberalization, journalistic professionalism, and a weak government have undermined the print media’s dependency on the government. These factors have also altered the English-Urdu divide. Historically, the English-Urdu divide paralleled an ideological divide: English papers were left of center in their opinions, while Urdu papers tended towards socio-political conservatism.
In order to understand the nexus between print, government, and language, I examine the editorials of four Pakistani newspapers, two in Urdu and two in English. The four papers selected are Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Dawn, and Daily Times. The editorials were collected daily from the newspapers’ websites from November 3 to December 15, 2007, the span of the Emergency. CDA is applied to the editorials, using a sub-approach called framing. Using framing, editorials are spliced into three categories: Definitions, Evaluations, and Recommendations. These three categories correlate to three functions in an editorial. The Definitions summarize an event; the Evaluations explain the background that lead up to the event; and the Recommendations provide advice to governing authorities on how to rectify a situation. Next, I look for the discursive strategies that dominate each category – such as lexicon, use of quotations, positioning, style, tone, etc. I then interpret these dominant strategies to understand what the print media is saying about the government, whether or not they openly critical, and what these strategies revealed about the government-press-language relationship in Pakistan.
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Introduction: What’s the Emergency?

Ladies and gentlemen, I have done what no previous government has dared to do. I have set the press free.

General-President Pervez Musharraf, 2006

The 2007 Emergency

On November 3, 2007, Pakistan once again made international headlines. General-President Pervez Musharraf had imposed a State of Emergency. In a televised address to the nation, he stated that the country had reached a critical point. The upsurge in militant activities as well as the increasing interference of the judiciary in executive matters did not bode well for Pakistan. Under the circumstances, Musharraf said he was forced to take drastic measures. It would be necessary, therefore, to suspend Pakistan’s constitution and replace it with a temporary Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO). The order was a blatantly unconstitutional document, but it nevertheless formally justified the president’s actions.

Why did Musharraf impose the Emergency? Nine years after becoming Pakistan’s fifth military leader, Musharraf’s popularity had plummeted. In October and
November 2007, a case had been brought against him in the Supreme Court that questioned his eligibility to be president. Musharraf was expecting an unfavorable decision, with reports indicating that most of the judges on the 11-member bench were likely to rule against him (Hussain, 2007a). Musharraf preempted the judiciary’s decision by declaring a state of emergency a few days before the justices were to announce their decision.

The Emergency adversely affected civil liberties. The Supreme Court Justices were dismissed. Civil and political activists were manhandled and arrested. Protests were stymied. Party leaders were put under house arrest. In particular, the Emergency affected the media. To quash criticism Musharraf ordered a black out on television stations and began monitoring newspapers. Since 2007 the media had become a thorn in the side of the government. The media were blamed for the deterioration of law and order and the proliferation of terrorism in the country: the media was sending out negative images by broadcasting militant footage of operations and scenes of dead bodies. Musharraf interpreted the media’s coverage as a “glorification of violence” (Newsline, 2007). Consequently, the government temporarily took all private and local TV channels off air. Material that defamed the administration or the army could not be published or broadcast. The government also began monitoring 21 national Urdu and English language newspapers to ensure that its new mandates on censorship were
being followed (*Daily Times*, 2007). The restrictions placed on the media became a clear indicator of both its influence in Pakistani society and its threat to the government.

**The Urdu-English Divide**

There is another angle besides the political lens through which to look at the government-press relationship during the Emergency: language. The government’s focus on Urdu and English news has historical roots. Though there were Sindhi, Pashtu and Punjabi papers, the Pakistan Government did not monitor them. Urdu and English are the most influential languages in Pakistan, though both are not indigenous to the country. History and politics have imbued both languages with a power that is disproportional to the linguistic map of the country. Prior to the division of the subcontinent in 1947, political groups used Urdu an emotive symbol to rally Muslim public opinion for a separate state that would later come to be called Pakistan. Urdu became a clarion call for Muslim nationalism. After Pakistan’s creation, various elements manipulated the use of Urdu in Pakistani society in order to achieve particular political objectives. Today, it is one of the two official languages of the country.
English has had a very different history. Unlike Urdu, it is only spoken by a slim percentage of the population. Spoken by the British who had colonized the subcontinent, English was a language of the power elites. It was essential, therefore, to Indians who desired upward mobility to learn the language. After the British left the subcontinent, it became the vernacular for the socio-economic dominant groups in the country. English is the other official language of Pakistan.

In the power hierarchy of Pakistan’s current socio-economic context, English trumps Urdu. The English-speakers - the military, civil bureaucracy, judiciary, some of the media, and the industrialist class – control a disproportionate amount of the country’s resources. Urdu-speakers today, like those during the colonial era, understand that socio-economic progress depends on learning English. Though these groups are not monolithic entities, there still remains a general understanding that the socio-economic divide of the languages parallels an ideological line as well. Many of the English-speaking class are westernized, left of center, and inclined towards socialism or liberalism. These leanings often stem from their educational background in western, elite, English-medium schools. In contrast, Urdu-speakers are generally characterized as more socio-politically conservative and religiously inclined. This phenomenon is partially the result of successive governments’ policies to emphasize
Urdu in public institutions in an attempt to unify the country by creating a common national identity.

The effects of Urduization continue today, and the language segmentation has heavily affected media. Media reflect the ideological lines drawn between English and Urdu speakers: English papers are usually left of center and liberal in their opinions, while Urdu papers are right of center or conservative. Government policies against the two language newspapers compound the differences even more. Historically, Urdu papers have often bore the brunt of censorship efforts because of their significantly higher circulations. Successive governments have always looked to the Urdu press as its ultimate friend or foe which has the power to harm or protect the image of the state.

This scenario still holds partially true today, but several factors have caused significant changes. These factors have altered both the government-press relationship as well as the ideological Urdu-English divide. One factor has been Musharraf’s media liberalization efforts (Crawley & Page, 2005). In 2003, he opened the market to private organizations. Many of these corporations jumped at the chance, seeing media as a lucrative business prospect. Paralleling this business momentum is the increasing professionalization of journalists who have sought more independence and assertiveness in their work, regardless of the government’s regulatory efforts (Akhtar, 2000: 88). Third, globalization has affected technology exponentially, allowing for a
discourse of information through cell phone text messages, Internet, and satellite that is increasingly difficult to censor and regulate.

These developments have helped facilitate a stronger public discourse about civil liberties and democracy. A recent Gallup poll in Pakistan concluded that more and more people, regardless of background, supported the notion of the rule of law (Gilani, 2007). Media are mirroring this transition. Therefore, while Urdu and English papers continue to diverge on several socio-political issues, there is simultaneously a merger between the two language-media on basic concepts such a freedom, civil liberties, democracy, and justice.

This research attempts to draw the two relationships just discussed - government-press and Urdu-English - into one narrative. The research will focus on the editorials in Pakistani newspapers covering the 2007 Emergency. In particular, I am interested in understanding two dimensions of this story. First, I am interested in the nature of the media in a country that is transitioning towards democracy. I ask, How and to what degree does print media criticize or support the government? Second, I am interested in the Urdu-English ideological divide. I ask, Do Urdu and English newspapers express differing opinions about the government?

My understanding of Pakistani media as well as the language divide leads me to assume two positions. First, I believe that newspapers will exhibit a fair amount of
freedom in expression about the government. Commercial interests, media liberalization, journalistic integrity, and media globalization have weakened the media’s traditional dependency on the government. These trends have buttressed the media’s ability to resist even the most stringent forms of censorship. Second, I believe that there will be a merger of perspectives between Urdu and English newspapers. This belief stems from the Gallup Poll findings that concluded that Pakistani society, irrespective of background, was transitioning towards a uniformity of opinion on certain political issues. As mirrors of public discourse, media will reflect this transition.

In the past, print media have come under tremendous pressure during electoral elections. These periods have become a litmus test of news sources’ editorial independence as well as their failure or success as defenders of public interest. Coming soon after the 2007 presidential elections Pakistan, this case study hopes to shed light on an interesting point in the country’s history. In order to give context to the two questions around which this work revolves, I have relied on previous work on Pakistani media and Critical Discourse Analysis which are highlighted in the next section.
Literature Review

Why study editorials? Editorials are arguably the most important element of a paper. They express the ideological outlook of a news organization, try to make sense of current events for their reading public, and advise state authorities. Editorials are also a form of public discourse which reproduce existent opinions, values, ideologies, and power structures (van Dijk, 1985: 232). To study media is to study society. However, media are not just passive agents; they also have an active role and shape perspectives, making them independent sources of opinion.

The late American New York Times journalist Harrison Salisbury wrote that op-eds in America were forums for the articulation of multiples ideas, promoting public debate on important issues (Salisbury, 1988: 317). In the current Pakistani context, editorials function in much the same way. Pakistani editorials can be defined as the space in which newspapers voice their opinions about the most pressing issues facing the country. Their role is to persuade Pakistanis and the government to not only understand a particular viewpoint, but to also make that view a reality. Frequently, there is an operable element to Pakistani editorials in which they clearly state a course of action that must to be taken. Additionally, editorials are written by an unnamed team of four to six subeditors. In spite of having multiple writers, the paper usually holds consistent views about particular topics. Therefore, the reader can expect the
newspaper’s stance on a variety of subjects such as terrorism, religion, or the government.

This definition of editorials assumes that there is no external interference in a news organization’s reporting and writing processes. Though this is somewhat true today, it has not been the case in Pakistan’s past. Historically, external forces have always been heavily involved in the press. Editorials willingly and unwillingly were forums that legitimized and supported the government and its actions. This was a natural outcome of state building. The emergence of newspapers in the subcontinent was by and large a part of the nationalism drive before the country’s independence in 1947. After the subcontinent gained independence, governments continued to use the media for their own objectives (Window on Pakistani Media, n.d.). Some newspapers were forced to comply through pressure when the government threatened to cease funding, imprison journalists, or shut down printing presses. Other papers willingly became subservient for political gain. The Pakistani journalist Ardeshir Cowasjee acknowledges that while they often had no choice but to comply with the authorities, the press should have shown more professionalism. He bemoans the fact that papers during the 1970s and 1980s never demonstrated unity when one paper was under attack for voicing subversive opinions. Alternately, papers exhibited political opportunism when the government favored their papers and used their position to buttress support
for oppressive leaders. Cowasjee asserts that even during the 1990s when democratically elected leader ruled the country, the nature of the press did not change:

The press has never protested with sufficient vehemence, or with solidarity, so as to prevail upon any ruler not to make a false or damaging move, not to undermine the morale of the country, not to decrease the meager democracy accorded to us. Most importantly, it failed utterly to prevent the enfeebling of the judiciary. What opposition was there from our press? (Cowasjee, 1999).

Cowasjee’s observations are supported by research carried out by Shakil Rai Akhtar. In his analysis of newspapers from 1970 to 1990, Akhtar (2000: 94) concludes that economic dependence on the government, fear of legal action, and harassment forced journalists to write material that was heavily skewed in favor of the ruling elite (Akhtar, 2000: 94). The effects of these pressures were most visible in the general elections of 1970, when present-day Bangladesh (East Pakistan) still comprised a part of Pakistan. Though an East Pakistan party had won a majority of the vote, the result was unacceptable to the leaders in West Pakistan. Rather than accede, the west wing’s military and political party, the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), tried to resist the shift in power. Mainstream print media in West Pakistan supported the military and PPP’s efforts.
One newspaper headlined and subheadlined the situation as:

PPP TRYING TO EVOLVE FORMULA
WORKABLE, DURABLE CONSTITUTION
ALL-OUT BID TO END CRISIS (cited in Akhtar, 2000: 107)

The headlines showed the bias of the newspapers. The PPP was portrayed as a positive actor trying to work for a legal (“constitutional”) solution (“formula”) to the situation. Rather than framing East Pakistan’s electoral win as a victory, the newspaper called the situation a “crisis.” The headline was characteristic of other newspaper headlines and editorials which expressed similar views in support of the West Pakistan government.

The late journalist Zamir Niazi further explicates the government-press relationship in his research of print media during the military regime of Zia ul-Haq (1977-1988), under whom the press faced one of its worst periods of censorship. In an attempt to strengthen his public image and legitimize his military leadership, Zia controlled the press and directed journalists to propagate the ideology of Pakistan, help establish peace, and cooperate the government curb “anti-social” elements (Niazi, 1994: 4). Content that criticized the president, prime minister, federal ministers, the
armed forces, or the government’s policies were heavily edited or simply cut out (Niazi, 1994: 87).

Niazi outlines three forms of censorship that took place during this period: precensorship, censorship, and self-censorship. In the first and second forms of censorship, newspapers were either banned or edited before being sent to the press. As a result, newspapers often showed large blank spaces which had previously contained a news item or editorial. When the government finally began to ease media restrictions in the mid-80s, the continued fear of the regime caused many journalists to practice self-censorship. Papers vied with one another to toe the official line and rally public opinion in favor of the regime. Not surprisingly, many newspapers lost credibility and circulation (Niazi, 1994: 54).

There were strands of resistance. When newspapers were forced to censor their content, they rebelled by intentionally leaving a blank space to show that the authorities were unjustly interfering in the editorial process. They also wrote in innuendo. A popular recourse to writing about the late populist leader Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto who had been executed by General Zia ul-Haq was to write instead about Martin Luther King, the American civil rights activist, who had coincidentally been killed on the same day.
Akhtar and Niazi’s works are of importance because they empirically document the government-press relationship through content analysis. Since their publications, one of the main challenges facing media research in Pakistan is the lacuna of academic material on the subject. While several developments have pushed the Pakistani press in a new direction, research has not kept up to par with these changes, making it difficult to fully understand the impact of the liberalization on the media. One of the few attempts to research media methodically has been undertaken by the Centre for Civic Education Pakistan (CCEP). The CCEP’s studies on print and broadcast media in Pakistan reveal interesting results about recent trends, namely that print media exhibits both criticism and self-censorship when writing about the government. In a study conducted in August 2005, which coincided with electoral campaigns in Pakistan, the CCEP observed four aspects of major Urdu and English newspapers: the front page, editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editor. Within these four categories, the study group analyzed the topics, frequency, and political position (i.e., critical of the government, supportive, or balanced). During this one-month period, the most cited topics of editorials in order of frequency were social issues, government personalities, local election campaign developments, and issues related the courts. Social issues were raised a total of 202 times. Specifically, five Urdu newspapers discussed social issues 103 times, while six English newspapers discussed them 99 times. Moreover, of the
total 202 editorials, the Pakistan Government was criticized 139 times and supported only 30 times. 55 times the editorials balanced the debate. The data indicate that social issues are a priority of newspapers, and that within this topic, there is a fair level of open criticism directed towards the government, particularly by the Urdu press.

There was a reversal in the second most frequent topic of editorial discussion, government personalities. Out of 186 times, the government was criticized 41 times and supported 93 times. 50 editorials avoided to take a position and tried to balance their views. Notably, of all the government figures, the president (Pervez Musharraf) was supported 44 times and criticized only one time. The biggest editorial support came from Jang, an Urdu newspaper, whereas the biggest criticism came from the Jang’s English edition, The Nation. The Watchdog Report paints a picture of a media which is complex and contradictory. On one hand, there appears to be a break from the tradition of self-censoring criticism of the government. As mentioned earlier, human rights issues are highly debated and there is a critical discussion of the government’s role. On the other hand, when it comes to directly criticizing a government personality, there appears to be a continuation of the media’s history of submission. The Watchdog Report is important not only because it sheds light on the changing nature of media expression, but also because it highlights that this change is pertinent to the language divide as well. The Urdu-English/conservative-liberal equation is no longer a simple
truisms. The change is significant, and in order to understand the import of this language development, it is necessary to tap into the sociolinguistic history of in the country.

In his work on language socialization and politics, Tariq Rahman notes that Urdu and English have had very different histories in Pakistan. Less than 8% of the population speaks Urdu and even less speaks English (Rahman, 1996: 1). However, Urdu and English are official languages. This circumstance has its roots in the context of pre-partitioned India, when the British still ruled the subcontinent. As Muslim nationalist aspirations grew in contradistinction to the British rulers and Hindu majority, Urdu became a symbol of Muslim identity. When the country became independent in 1947, Urdu continued to be vested with emotional symbolism (Torwali, 2007). Urdu was seen as a unifier for a very disparate population. People spoke Punjabi, Pashtu, Siraiki, Sindhi, and Balochi and they had stronger connections to their ethnicities and languages than to the nascent notion of a Pakistani identity. As a result, ethno-linguistic differences threatened to unravel the new state. In response, the ruling elites, mostly English speakers, tried to unify the population by emphasizing Islam and Urdu through language policies. Urdu became the official language of the country and the media and was taught in public schools. The elite, though, continued to prefer English for themselves. The government’s double standard had significant
repercussions. Language policies became a strategy for political survival. Rather than uniting the population, the politicization of Urdu and English created new fissures. Several factors caused Urdu to become identified with the religious right-wing, while English was associated with the westernized elites, who were inclined towards socialism or liberalism (Rahman, 1996: 239).

The journalist Khaled Ahmed takes Rahman’s notion of language as an embodiment of ideology and applies it to the press. He notes that following the 1947 partition of the subcontinent the new governments of India and Pakistan used the press as a means of disseminating state propaganda (Ahmed, 1998). The state propaganda was intended to imbue people with a sense of pride and national identity. Because of the deep hostility between the newly formed Pakistan and India, the press’ vocabulary was based on two opposed nationalisms, or distinction to the other: Pakistan vs. India, Islam vs. Hinduism, Urdu vs. Hindi. Ahmed notes that it was the vernacular languages of each country – Urdu and Hindi – which were best able to absorb the emotional appeals of the state’s ideology. Decades after independence, Ahmed asserts that the Urdu/Hindi-English divides continues:

The Urdu press of Pakistan and the Hindi press of north India are locked in a battle of two nationalism mythologies. The opinion expressed in the vernacular is close to state policy. Meanwhile, the state policy is molded by the vernacular press because the parliaments of both sides are influenced more by the language press than by the sophisticated English press…Nationalism is more
effectively expressed in vernacular idioms because these idioms express emotion far better than they express reason (Ahmed, 1998).

According to Ahmed, Urdu and English embody not just notions of identity, but cognitive psychological processes. Urdu is emotional; English is rational. This difference is attributed to the English press’ use of various sources of information, better third-party knowledge, opposition to dictatorship, and alternate views of the state and ideology (Ahmed, 1998). Ahmed explains the “rational” quality of English, stating:

Rational discourse in English and its capacity to carry fact and figures have equipped the Pakistani press with tools of persuasion that puncture the indoctrination at two levels: in the domain of internal policy and in the domain of foreign policy. The English press in Pakistan is frequently critical of the ideological transformation of Pakistan as well as its policy towards...India. Criticism of the [state ideology] is possible in English, though not as yet in Urdu (Ahmed, 1998).

Ahmed’s Urdu-English/emotional-rational divide is problematic because it assumes Western definitions of rationality as well as Western media standards of professional journalism. Held up to this standard, the English papers would easily succeed in appearing logical and objective to a Western readership; Urdu newspapers would appear illogical and highly emotional. Yet to an Urdu readership, socialized in a very different context, Urdu newspapers would be logical, while English papers would appear unrealistically ideal.
At the same time, it would be remiss to discount Ahmed’s argument. My casual observations of Urdu and English newspapers have shown that there are notable differences in their tones and styles. This observation has implications for this case study. In the event that Urdu and English papers do hold the same views about the 2007 Emergency, will it follow that those views will be argued for in the same manner? Or, despite the common viewpoints, will the argumentation style follow the emotional-rational divide that Ahmed posits?

Summary

This literature review has laid out a brief background of print media and sociolinguistics in Pakistan. The main issues that have been discussed are the Urdu-English divide and how this divide pertains to the press. Compounding this complexity is the government-press relationship which has historically been one of manipulation by the governing elite. Considering these backgrounds, I ask two questions about the nature of print media in Pakistan’s recent context, specifically the 2007 Emergency. I ask, How and to what degree does print media criticize or support the government? and Do Urdu and English newspapers express differing opinions?
To answer these questions, I will analyze the editorials of four newspapers during the Emergency. Before reaching the analysis section, background knowledge is needed. This background is provided for in the second and third chapters. The second chapter provides a brief political overview of 2007 Emergency. The third chapter “Methodology and Data” lays out a framework for analyzing Pakistani editorials as well as a brief description of the selected newspapers. The fourth chapter applies the framework to the editorials. The fifth chapter makes a comparative analysis between the four different newspapers. The chapter also analyzes the case study in the broader context of media in present-day Pakistan.
Chapter 1: History of the 2007 Emergency

In order to analyze the editorial response to the Emergency, it is necessary to understand the political situation that led to the crisis. President-General Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency on the evening of November 3, 2007. The root causes of the Emergency stemmed from the ongoing months of tension between the judiciary and executive (led by Musharraf and his political party). The strain between the two branches reached a critical point after the October 2007 presidential elections. Parliament and the provincial assemblies reelected Musharraf, but a retired Supreme Court justice challenged his presidency. The former justice contended that Musharraf could not legally run for president while simultaneously holding the position of Chief of Army Staff. In response to the petition, the Supreme Court allowed proceedings for the coming 2008 general elections to carry on but barred the election commission from officially declaring a presidential winner until the judges decided on the case. The decision was to be delivered in November 2007, with rumors hinting that the judges were leaning towards an unfavorable verdict for Musharraf. Before a final decision could be reached, Musharraf declared a state of emergency, which suspended the constitution and replaced it with a Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO). The text of the Emergency proclamation stated:
Whereas there is visible ascendency in the activities of extremists and incidents of terrorist attacks…posing a grave threat to the life and property of the citizens of Pakistan.

Whereas some members of the judiciary are working at cross purposes with the executive and legislature in the fight against terrorism and extremism, thereby weakening the government and the nation’s resolve and diluting the efficacy of its actions to control this menace;

Whereas some judges by overstepping the limits of judicial authority have taken over the executive and legislative functions;

Whereas a situation has thus arisen where the government of the country cannot be carried on it. Accordance with the constitution and as the constitution provides no solution for this situation, there is no way out except through emergent and extraordinary measures…I, General Pervez Musharraf, Chief of the Army Staff, proclaim emergency throughout Pakistan.

I hereby order and proclaim that the constitution of the Islamic republic of Pakistan shall remain in abeyance.

This Proclamation shall come into force at once (BBC, 2007).

Musharraf cited terrorism as the main cause for imposing the Emergency, but many observers believed that the real reason had less to do with religious extremism and more with the general’s desire to maintain power. He feared that an assertive judiciary would not endorse his reelection while still in uniform. This possibility provoked Musharraf to suspend the constitution on November 3, allowing him to take the necessary measures required to cement the existing political order to revolve around him. This reconfiguration required him to remove any obstacles facing his presidential
reelection. As a result, the constitution was changed, judges were dismissed and replaced with handpicked supporters from the legal community, and opposition political party leaders were detained.

The Emergency heavily impacted media as well. The unique feature of this Emergency was that unlike previous coups in which the military removed a corrupt, inept, or uncooperative civilian government, the two main opponents this time were the judiciary and the media. Musharraf blamed both institutions for the deterioration of law and order in the country as well as the proliferation of terrorism. The media, the general stated, glorified violence through their broadcast coverage of militant activities (Rehmat, 2007). A new set of guidelines created under the PCO forbade the media from broadcasting or publishing materials of suicide bombers, terrorists, bodies of victims, statements from militant leaders, and in general, any information deemed supportive of terrorism. Additionally, the media could not publish or broadcast “anything which defames or brings into ridicule the head of state, or members of the armed forces, or executive, legislative or judiciary organs of the state” (Rehmat, 2007). The latter amendment was a clear indication of the government’s attempt to stifle criticism and repair its image. While the initial targets focused on broadcast media, newspapers faced equal scrutiny.
More than its alleged role in abetting terrorism, two factors induced Musharraf to curb media freedoms. First, the media had served as a watchdog of past Pakistani governments’ shortcomings. With elections coming up, the ruling party feared that the media would highlight poll rigging in the coming January 2008 general elections, in which the people of Pakistan would vote in a new political party. Second, the media appeared to undermine any positive perceptions of the government. The Musharraf administration’s international support was based on its ability to fight militancy. However, the spike in terrorist activities proved that military operations were unsuccessful. The media’s coverage of the situation reinforced the government’s sense of failure. As criticism grew, Musharraf began to feel increasingly isolated, both internationally and domestically.

This sense of isolation was exacerbated during the months of tension between the judiciary and executive. In the lead up to the Emergency, Musharraf began to realize the depth of the media’s influence. A symbiotic relationship appeared to be growing between the media, government, and public. Throughout the months of conflict between Musharraf and the Supreme Court, the media became a major gainer in public opinion. The media was seen as providing a critical function for Pakistani society by illuminating the conflict between the executive and the judiciary and providing debate on the issue. Conversely, the government lost a significant amount of trust from
Pakistanis who believed that the government was simply accruing more power at the expense of the nation (Gilani, 2007). Successive Pakistani governments in the past had always looked to the media as its ultimate friend or foe. It possessed the power to create the image of the leader as a capable ruler or an inept dictator. In the eyes of the current administration, the media had decided to assume the latter role.

With the media, judiciary, and other venues of dissent under severe restrictions, Musharraf carried on with his centralization of power. The suspended Supreme Court justices were replaced with a new set of Musharraf loyalists. Not surprisingly, the new judiciary took up the case pending against Musharraf and decided in his favor. Upon hearing the court’s verdict, Musharraf stepped down as Chief of Army Staff on November 28. The next day he was confirmed as president and announced that the Emergency would end on December 16, 2007 (although it actually ended one day earlier on December 15). Within this 43-day period, the country was mired in deep political uncertainty. Some sectors of society kowtowed from the pressure. But there was also a sense of outrage and dissent. Students protested. Blogs and emails circulated information banned by the government. Political parties united in opposition.

This thesis tries to capture one of the many voices that emerged during the political crisis, that of newspapers. Though the media blackout primarily targeted television, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting equally scrutinized the press
and began to monitor 21 national daily papers (including the ones discussed later in the thesis) to ensure that they respected the censorship rules introduced in the new print media ordinance. Newspapers had always been an important, influential venue of disseminating information and continued to be so. Previously, newspapers had little choice but to comply with government restrictions because of their financial situation. However, several factors have altered this long-established relationship. By analyzing editorials during this period, it is possible to capture whether or not change is indeed existent. The next section lays out a framework for methodologically analyzing editorials to properly understand the nature of the government-press relationship.
Chapter 2: Methodology and Data

Methodology

Pakistan provides an interesting case study of media in politically transitioning countries. By examining the 43-day period of the emergency, it is possible to assess the degree to which newspapers are free to express criticism of their government during difficult periods. Measuring this factor sheds light on the broader issues of democratic reform in the country. Musharraf was a contradictory figure in this regard. On one hand, he was instrumental in strengthening democratic institutions in the country. On the other hand, he wanted to remain above and beyond their reach. The president, for example, liberalized the media but also sought to control it when it touched upon delicate political subjects that affected him.

Other issues complicate the nature of media. Previously the press depended on the government for financial aid to keep their papers running. However, globalization, technology, and business-media markets have loosened that dependent relationship. Additionally, the sense of journalistic responsibility is becoming stronger in Pakistan. While the press has to be mindful of government interests or face negative consequences, the media also risk losing the audience’s trust if they come across as
overly obsequious. Newspapers tread a fine line trying to resolve government pressure, business interests, public trust, and press ideals.

Pakistani papers have adopted different strategies in trying to achieve a balance between these competing factors. Understanding how these factors are reconciled within the text can be elucidated through the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a form of interpretation that seeks to understand the relationship between text and context (van Dijk, 1985). Specifically, the approach is concerned with analyzing structures of dominance, discrimination, power, and control (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 2). At the contextual level, several factors are looked at including a society’s ideology, socio-economics, political structure, culture, and values. These factors shape the text and are manifested through linguistics, vocabulary, style, argumentation, grammar, and tone.

Within the CDA approach, the best method to analyze editorials is through framing. Framing refers to the effects of presentation of judgment and choice (Iyengar, 1996: 61). The author selects and presents information in such a way that it first resonates with readers and then persuades them to reach specific opinions. The linguist George Lakoff adds to the definition of framing, stating that they are cognitive structures that allow human beings to understand their reality (Lakoff, 2007). For example, using word words such as “crimes against humanity” in America’s post-9/11
context will resonate with moral and political principles deep in the American readerships’ unconscious minds. These frames then shape how they experience political relationships to their own leaders and people in other countries. To understand framing, Lakoff explains that using a word such as “war”

…triggers fundamental moral and political principle frames that evoke an evil world in which we must look to an authoritarian President as commander-in-chief, whose orders we obey in order to protect our entire society from destruction by foreign enemies. With these frames dominating our thinking, we are more likely to tolerate giving up some of our civil liberties and dropping bombs that kill innocent civilians (Lakoff, 2007).

Determining the framing can follow a number of approaches. The critical discourse analyst Teun van Dijk has defined three elements in his schema for framing in editorials: Definition, Evaluation, and Recommendations (van Dijk, 1989: 231). These three categories are more than just descriptive; they simultaneously equate to three functions. Editorials not only express an opinion about a recent news event, but are also intended to persuade a reading public. As such, the text must contain argumentative structures. The three categories that van Dijk outlines collectively buttress the persuasive power of an editorial.

The first category, Definition, summarizes an event. It answers the question “What happened?” The information focuses on the present or very recent past. In order
to write an op-ed and evaluate an incident, it is sometimes necessary to review the events, select relevant dimensions of the story, and focus on specific actions or political actors. This summary takes place in the Definition. However, the Definition is not necessarily a straightforward, objective element. Rather, reviewing, selecting, and focusing presuppose ideologically framed opinions which are part of the editor’s cognitive model, or worldview, of the situation (van Dijk, 1989: 236).

Second, editorials contain Evaluations. Evaluations account for the causes of an event and answer the question “Why did it happen?” These events are often about the past and take up most of the editorial for they must back up the main position with credible arguments. The argumentation scheme may use a variety of strategies, such as using facts and figures. The scheme may also explain a situation through the lens of history, race, or culture. This method falls under a subcategory of argumentation which the critical discourse analyst Ruth Wodak calls “topoi” or “loci”. The topoi can be described as parts of an “argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises” (Wodak, 2001: 75). Wodak outlines several topoi, including the topos of humanitarianism, responsibility, justice, history and culture. These topoi often follow the structure “If/because X, then Y.” For example, the topos of history used in an Evaluation may follow as such: because history teaches that specific actions have
specific consequences, then one should perform or omit a comparable action in the current context (Wodak, 2001: 76).

The third element of an editorial is the Recommendations. They are the natural outcome or conclusion to the argumentation laid out in the Definition and Evaluation. This aspect of the editorial makes predictions and answers the question “What will happen?” Additionally, the Recommendations hold the strongest tone of morality, for they answer the question “What should be done?” The advice laid out in these sections is often targeted towards the ruling elites.

Together these categories form an argument, oftentimes through making the editorial’s position plausible and making other positions untenable. Part of the process of making other positions untenable rests upon creating a story in which the main political actors are placed into good and bad roles. The “us” position usually encompasses the perspective of the newspaper and is naturally viewed as correct, just, legal, good, moral, or right. Actors who are positioned outside this stance (“them”) are conversely seen as wrong, immoral, oppressive, or unjust.

Van Dijk’s framework is applied to this case study. Editorials are deconstructed into the Definition, Evaluation, and Recommendation categories. In addition to these categorizations, other factors are evaluated as well, including the selection and focus of actors, the language describing them, the tone of the editorial, and the political values
of the paper. This multidisciplinary approach helps answer the questions, “To what extent do Pakistani newspapers exhibit independence or censorship when speaking of the government?” and “To what extent are opinion in Urdu and English newspapers differ?” The answers to these questions are then interpreted within the larger context of Pakistan, taking into account the country’s current political situation, sociolinguistics, and history of print media.

**Data**

This research examines the editorials of four Pakistani newspapers, two in Urdu and two in English. The editorials were collected daily from the newspapers’ web version from November 3 to December 15, 2007, the span of the Emergency. The four papers selected were *Jang*, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, *Dawn*, and *Daily Times*. *Jang* and *Nawa-i-Waqt* are among the leading newspapers of the Urdu press, while *Dawn* is the leading English newspaper. All three have constituted part of the mainstream press since the creation of the country in 1947. *Daily Times* is a relatively new English daily that has quickly risen to popularity as an influential, liberal source. The sections below give a brief description of each newspaper.
Jang

Jang, which means “war” in Urdu, was first published in 1941 in New Delhi, India. It began as newssheet reporting on the latest developments of World War II. After the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, the paper’s founder Mir Khaliur Rahman moved to Karachi, Pakistan where his paper filled the country’s need for news sources. Today, Jang news and affiliated print and electronic media form the Jang Group. Under the guidance of Mir Khalilur Rahman’s sons, the group has evolved into the largest media business venture in Pakistan. Jang newspaper alone circulates the highest number of newspapers in the country, selling an estimated 800,000 copies per day. Part of the paper’s success is based on the group’s willingness to be creatively bold in its content. The paper was one of the early adopters in Pakistan’s print media to cater for diverse interests, such as entertainment, sports, housekeeping, women and youth issues, literature, gossip, and religion. In addition to its diversified content, the paper’s layout, with its color and glossy photos, also helped increase its appeal.

The paper’s relationship with the government is a second factor for its success. Because newspapers previously depended heavily on government advertisements for financial support, it was necessary for the paper to extend political support to whichever ruling party or regime was in power. This changing political stance required
that editorials dilute any strong, controversial, or inflexible opinions (Akhtar, 2000: xxvi). In the past, *Jang* took this diplomatic stance towards the government. Within recent years, though, some editors have broken from this tradition of support and increasingly express criticism of the government.

**Nawa-i-Waqt**

Hameed Nizami, a strong proponent of the Pakistan Movement, first published *Nawa-i-Waqt* (“Voice of the Time”) in 1940. The Pakistan Movement represented the voice of Muslims in British India who wished to create a separate homeland for fear of losing their liberties to a Hindu majority after the British left in 1947. Hameed Nizami became one the more articulate spokesmen for the movement, and his newspaper became an outlet for his political views - a commitment to Islam as Pakistan’s state ideology, a strong central government, and democratic norms (Akhtar, 2000: xxvi). The editorials often put the newspaper at odds with the country’s subsequent military regimes, which appear westernized, liberal, or un-Islamic to the editors. Except for brief periods when the religious Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was in power, *Nawa-i-Waqt* came to be known for its reputation as a newspaper of the opposition. This has become particularly true after 9/11, when the paper became highly critical of
Pakistan’s pro-U.S. policies. The paper today is known as a conservative, publication that is harshly critical of the U.S. and India and supports an Islamic ideology. Nawa-i-Waqt’s daily circulation is about 125,000.

*Dawn*

Pakistan’s founding father, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, started *Dawn* in 1941 as a paper to support his efforts in the creation of Pakistan. Today, *Dawn* is the most prestigious and widely read English newspaper, with a circulation of 138,000 per day. As an English publication, *Dawn* has an elitist readership and character and is not read by the common people (Akhtar, 2000: xviii). In the years after independence, the Pakistan Government often overlooked *Dawn*’s editorials because of its relatively low circulation (as compared to Urdu newspapers). This laxity allowed the paper to be somewhat more critical of the government. In the past two decades, however, successive governments under different rulers (specifically, President-General Pervez Musharraf and former prime minister Benazir Bhutto) took more notice of *Dawn*’s harsh editorials and even blocked government advertisements.
Daily Times

The Daily Times launched in 2002 as an outspoken and bold newspaper advocating liberal and secular viewpoints. The paper provides extensive coverage of militant activities in Pakistan and is a strong critic of Islamic fundamentalism. The paper sells an estimated 20,000 copies per day. It has gained popularity as well as notoriety not only because of its controversial editorials, but also because of its renowned editor, Najam Sethi. Both Sethi and the Daily Times have been in conflict with different leaders of the government on several occasions. In May 1999 Nawaz Sharif’s government imprisoned Sethi in an attempt to quell political dissent in the country. While he initially supported the military coup that ousted Sharif and brought the Musharraf to power, Sethi’s position shifted to become highly critical of the Musharraf government, particularly on Musharraf’s handling of terrorism in the country.

Summary

The “Methodology and Data” section have outlined the framework in which the English and Urdu editorials will be analyzed. This framework follows the approach of
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which looks at textual and contextual factors to understand issues of power. Within the CDA approach, a particular method has been selected, framing, which deconstructs the editorial into three categories: Definition, Evaluation, and Recommendation. Additionally, the chapter has provided a brief overview of each of the newspapers that will be analyzed. The next section turns to the analysis to understand how the four newspapers discuss the role of the government during the Emergency. A note should be made here that the translations of Urdu are mine. I have tried to my best to capture the meaning and intent of the author. However, as a non-native Urdu speaker there are bound to be imperfections and any mistakes are attributable to me alone.
Chapter 3: Data Analysis

This section analyzes editorials covering the 2007 Emergency. The chapter is divided into four sections, with each section discussing one newspaper (Daily Times, Dawn, Jang, and Nawa-i-Waqt). Each section is then divided into three subsections as outlined in van Dijk’s CDA approach: Definition, Evaluation, and Recommendation (van Dijk, 1989). Together, the three categories form a picture of Musharraf and his government as seen through the lens of the press.

The analysis is not a narrative of the Emergency. Rather, the discussion is a combination of interpretations of the editorials as well as an analysis of the dominant discursive strategies that newspapers use when talking about Pakistan’s political elite, including the use of quotations, lexicon, style, tone, grammar, positioning, etc. While there are several strategies that newspapers use, only the most dominant and elucidating one are discussed here. The discursive strategies are the real narrative. They uncover a political story about Pakistani newspaper perspectives. This narrative is equally interesting, if not more so, than the editorials’ discussion about the Emergency. From the narrative of discursive strategies, the reader discovers the deeper political psyche of a newspaper, and by extension, also discovers a slice of public opinion.
Guiding the analysis are the following questions: Are Pakistani editorials critical of the government even during a period of political suppression? If so, how do they express their opinions? How strongly does a newspaper’s ideology shape its portrayal of the political elite? It is hoped that the analysis will have answered the question that initially sparked this case study: Is there a salient opinion divide between Urdu and English newspapers? If there is a difference, the study will have demonstrated that languages in Pakistan constitute not just a means of speaking, but also embody a socialization process that yields vastly different socio-political worldviews. Keeping these questions in mind, the following section begins with an analysis of the critical discourse strategies used in the English newspaper Daily Times.

**Daily Times**

**Definition**

This section looks at the Daily Times’ Definitions, or how the paper summarized the events of the 2007 Emergency. The most notable characteristics of the summaries are the frequent use of quotations from elite political actors. Of the 33 editorials discussing the Emergency, 13 editorials begin with statements by Musharraf and high-level government officials. This discursive strategy appears to achieve two
objectives. First, quotations add an element of factuality to a highly subjective piece of writing. Second, quotations fit into an argumentation scheme that buttresses the newspaper’s viewpoint.

Before the function of quotations can be discussed, it is necessary to understand the assumptions that allow this strategy to work in the first place. The main assumption that the paper works upon is that its readership already knows a certain amount of information. The target audience must know, for example, of the tension between Musharraf and the judiciary that had been building up for months prior to November 2007. Similarly, the target audience must be aware that the Supreme Court was close to making a decision against Musharraf’s eligibility to be president, which consequently pushed him to impose a State of Emergency and dismiss the Supreme Court judges.

Working on these assumptions, *Daily Times* wrote an editorial on November 3, just hours before Musharraf’s public announcement. The editorial is titled simply, “Supreme Court and President Musharraf” (*Daily Times*, November 3). The title is not descriptive. It is stated matter-of-factly, without denoting any particular political bias. At the same time, mention of the Supreme Court and the president in the same sentence evokes a body of highly charged information about Pakistan’s recent history. Specifically, it recalls memories about political events in March 2007, which transformed the hostility between Musharraf and the judiciary from an internal
government incident into a national crisis. March 2007 became a turning point that pushed the Pakistani public to favor the Supreme Court and turn against the president (Hussain, 2007b). The political crisis colors the editorial title with new meaning and undermines its impartiality. The “and” in the title is no longer only a grammatical conjunction, but is synonymous to “vs.” for it triggers frames from the March 2007 crisis between the Supreme Court and Musharraf. On March 7, 2007 President Musharraf suspended the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Ifikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, on grounds of corruption. However, it was widely believed that the real reasons for the Chief Justice’s dismissal stemmed from the judge’s defiance to the ruling establishment. Chaudhry had ruled unfavorably in a number of cases that would have financially benefited the political elites and the army. In response, it was believed that Musharraf then concocted a corruption charge to justify a dismissal of the Chief Justice (Hussain, 2007b). The legal community was not the only group that was outraged at the dismissal; the public also agitated against Musharraf’s brazen authoritarian action, and there were countrywide protests as well as resignations by other judges. These frames, then, automatically position Musharraf in the reader’s mind in a confrontational position against the judiciary. By default, there is a secondary, unstated positioning, which includes the Pakistani public who stood supportively behind the judiciary (Hussain, 2007b).
The reader’s predetermined positioning takes on importance from the first sentence of the November 3 editorial. The positioning predisposes the reader favorably to the quotation that opens the piece by a Supreme Court justice. He states, “Statements about emergency or martial law by the cabinet ministers should not be taken seriously and no section should think it has taken the Supreme Court hostage” (*Daily Times*, November 3). The quotation carries an abundance of implicit information. On one level, the quotation fulfills the first strategy, factuality. Quotations help to buttress the credibility of the paper (Bell, 1991:190). Particularly because the content is based on unverified facts (the Emergency had not been declared during the writing of this editorial), elite actors speaking about possible events that have not yet occurred serves not only to increase the credibility of the rumors, but also the reliability of the *Daily Times*.

On another level, the statement is important because it carries out a second function of a quotation by assigning roles. These roles fit into a “good” vs. “bad” paradigm, where the government is designated to the negative role that threatens to use unjust power (i.e., taking the Supreme Court “hostage”), while the judiciary has the positive role that carries with it courage, indicated by the justice’s refusal to feel threatened. While it is possible that the *Daily Times* is simply using a quotation to define a situation and not denoting roles, the interpretation of the “good” vs. “bad”
paradigm is reinforced through the lexicon associated with the legal community in the November 3 editorial and subsequent ones as well. The courts are described as “honorable,” and the lawyers are a “respected” force that has “inspired” the people with a political strategy lauded as a “good move” (Daily Times, November 3 & December 7).

The paper’s positioning with the legal community is not always apparent. Over the 43-day period of the Emergency, the Daily Times shifts its focus from the judiciary to the opposition political parties. The paper writes about the latter a total of 18 times and the former only three. The strong focus on the opposition political parties indicates that they are now the major elite actor in Pakistan’s political arena. Yet the editorial framing of the two actors suggests that the paper has not necessarily allied itself with the parties. The Daily Times, for example, describes the Bar Association’s efforts to reconcile a split that had emerged between the lawyers and the political parties. Though both groups were opposed to Musharraf, the lawyers’ priority was to protest to the Emergency; the political parties were looking beyond November 3 and trying to figure out whether or not they would participate in the 2008 general elections. In its December 7 editorial, the Daily Times commends the lawyers for their conciliatory efforts:
[The Supreme Court Bar Association President, Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, has unveiled a strategy for “bringing the lawyers’ agenda in line with the emerging priorities of the political parties in case the elections are not boycotted”. This is a good move as it obviates a developing polarization between the communities which are still protesting the Emergency and the PCO and the political parties which want to move on to elections and parliamentary politics [emphasis added] (Daily Times, December 7).

The lawyers are applauded for being diplomatic and pragmatic. Compare this passage with the Definition of the political parties’ efforts.

Ms Bhutto [stated], “We are saying no to any more talks. We cannot work with anyone who has suspended the Constitution, imposed emergency rule, and oppressed the judiciary...”. Then she went all the way and asked General Musharraf to step down. There is a finality in the statement that is unmistakable. Is she ready to join Nawaz Sharif, Imran Khan and Qazi Hussain Ahmad in settling for nothing less than the ouster of General Pervez Musharraf?...More questions follow” [sic] (Daily Times, November 14).

The passage ends on a note of uncertainty. What type of discursive strategy does questioning effect? The questioning distances the newspaper from a particular position. In contrast to the lawyer’s agenda, the Daily Times is unsure about the motives of Ms. Bhutto. If the paper were more in agreement with her, it would have described the situation in positive terms as it has done with the lawyers.

Questioning has another function, which also overlaps with the second discursive strategy of using quotations: it buttresses an argument. This strategy is
evident in the *Daily Times* November 7 Definition. The paper begins the editorial with multiple quotations by elite actors from Musharraf’s government:

**Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz** said on Sunday that the government was committed to making sure that general elections were held and the democratic process flourished in Pakistan. But he was not sure when the elections would actually be held: “There could be some timing difference on the election schedule but we have not decided yet”. The minister of state for information was more forthcoming: “Elections will be held, but the dates may be adjusted because of emergency rule in the country”…A *senior presidential aide*, however, said that Gen Musharraf “wants the election on time but the ruling party wants it to be delayed”…

…But **Chaudhry Pervez Elahi**, the Punjab chief minister, has reiterated his desire for elections to be held as pledged. So one is not sure what the government is up to and why (*Daily Times*, November 6) [emphasis added].

There are four elite actors highlighted in these passages. There are also four different opinions. The piecing of these multiples opinions into a single narrative underpins the view that the government is disunited, incoherent, and inept. The quotations also serve to position the *Daily Times* against the government. The final sentence of the selection, “So one is not sure what the government is up to and why” suggests that the *Daily Times* is an outsider who cannot make logical sense of the government’s statements.

So far, the analysis has covered the discursive strategy that the dominated the Definition of the *Daily Times*, the use of quotations. The quotations highlighted the positioning of the newspaper (with the legal community and against the government)
and also set the stage for the negative portrayal of the government. The next section, the Evaluation, discusses the *Daily Times’* interpretation of events that led up to the Emergency.

**Evaluation**

This section analyzes the reasons and explanations behind the Emergency as viewed by the *Daily Times*. The paper posits three main causes for the Emergency: confrontationalist and unreasonable forces that politically isolate Musharraf; Musharraf’s own desire for power; and terrorism. The discursive strategy most apparent within these Evaluations is the lexicon.

Similar to the Definition, the *Daily Times* explains the reasons for the Emergency in negative terms. The first cause is the role of political and non-political actors, termed “confrontationists” or “transformationalists.” In their desire to drive Pakistan towards democracy, both groups criticized Musharraf’s policies and acted in ways that isolated him. Written soon after the start of the Emergency, the *Daily Times* comments on the role of these actors in its November 5 editorial:

There was a division between those who sought a “revolutionary” change in favor of democracy and those who thought a “transition” would be less painful as well as more realistic, given the challenge of terrorism in the country. Daily Times was of the opinion that confrontation, if taken too far, would actually delay the date of democracy in January 2008 by when
General Musharraf would have taken off his uniform and new general elections would have returned the peoples verdict [sic] *(Daily Times, November 5).*

There are two pieces of information that are of interest here. First is the paper’s positioning. Though it is not stated explicitly, *Daily Times* considers itself to be a “transitionist” – a group that believes in progressing Pakistan down the path of democracy, but in ways that are not belligerent to the ruling elite. The confrontationalists, as the passage describes also believe in democracy, but have no contention using confrontational methods to achieve their objective.

Who are these confrontationists? According to the editorial, there are several actors that fit into the category, one of whom is the judiciary. The editorial asserts that the judiciary has become increasingly “radical and extremist” in its efforts to transform Pakistan’s political structure *(Daily Times, November 5).* The judiciary’s turning point came in March 2007 when Musharraf dismissed the Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudhry, on grounds of corruption. Chaudhry had become a thorn in the side of Musharraf since his decision against the government in a privatization case. The case gained Chaudhry esteem in the eyes of the public who saw his verdict as a necessary check against an uncontrolled form of capitalism that only benefited the government and the wealthiest. Musharraf unwillingly reinstated the highly popular Chaudhry back into office in June 2007 because of public pressure. The return of the Chief Justice and a newfound
popularity with the people emboldened the judiciary against the executive. It became more brazen in its defiance of and independence from Musharraf’s government, who was not used to insubordination by one of the state’s main institutions (Daily Times, November 5).

This Evaluation illuminates an interesting tension within the paper. As discussed before in the Definition, Daily Times positions itself with the legal community. Now, it blames that very group for bringing about the Emergency. How is one to explain this contradiction? One possible explanation that reconciles the apparent discrepancy is that the legal community is not a monolithic entity. Within the legal community are two sub-groups: the confrontationalist and transitionists. From this viewpoint, the Evaluation does not reveal a contradiction, but rather a more specific type of positioning, which sides with those lawyers who believe in legal transitioning. A second explanation could simply be that the paper’s viewpoint of the judiciary has changed since the start of the conflict.

The legal community is not the only group the Daily Times holds responsible for the Emergency. To a lesser extent, the paper also blames the media. According to the paper, the media, though motivated by the noble intention of “subjecting the state to accountability” was flushed by a newfound freedom of expression. The combined forces of Musharraf’s media liberalization policies, globalization, and market forces
opened up Pakistani media in unprecedented ways. However, a negative consequence was a lack of journalistic professionalism. Journalists began saying “whatever they liked” (*Daily Times*, November 5). The media’s harshly critical stance of the government only added to Musharraf’s sense of isolation. Moreover, in the eyes of the government, the media appeared to be in collusion with the Supreme Court. When Musharraf dismissed Chaudhry in March 2007, the media covered the public protests, which cyclically increased public pressure against Musharraf. In the eyes of the government, media coverage equated with support for the Supreme Court and irreverence for the government (Khan, 2007: 24). While on one hand, the *Daily Times* viewed the media’s freedom of expression as a fundamental right, it nevertheless believed that its undiscriminating commentary played a central role in drawing negative attention to the “near-abusive confrontation” happening between the judiciary and executive (*Daily Times*, November 16). This attention served to polarize the two branches even further apart, making confrontation a more likely outcome.

The paper holds opposition political parties as third responsible element for the crisis. Specifically the paper highlights the role of Nawaz Sharif, former prime minister of Pakistan and leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN). As the leader of the second largest political party in Pakistan, Sharif stood at the head of the confrontationist camp. The Pakistani public initially lionized Sharif for not submitting
to the ignominy of making a deal with Musharraf and sharing power. In contrast to public opinion, the *Daily Times* portrays Sharif as opportunistic, rather than principled, claiming that his move is based on garnering more political support from other parties and the public (*Daily Times*, November 5). The paper adds that Sharif’s rejectionist stance only reinforces “the fatal politics of saying ‘no’” to everything that the government proposes. Such inflexibility threatens Musharraf by isolating him, indirectly leading to the state of emergency. Sharif’s inflexible stance also erodes the space for any negotiation, dialogue, or agreement with the government which would help end the crisis (*Daily Times*, November 15).

Above all these actors, the paper holds Musharraf responsible for the Emergency. The *Daily Times* portrays him as a categorically ineffective leader: of the 33 editorials covering the emergency, Musharraf is the main subject of discussion 17 times, of which all are highly critical of him. Language shows Musharraf to be an “isolated” and “alienated” individual, whose “singularly unsuccessful” actions have resulted only in “failures.” The paper described his “regime” as one of “coercion” and “oppression” (*Daily Times*, November 10). One editorial goes so far as to compare General Musharraf’s regime of oppression as equivalent to that of Al-Qaeda’s in Pakistan’s lawless Tribal Areas (*Daily Times*, November 10).
The lexicon of the editorials portrays Musharraf as a failure. But the lexicon is not enough to explain the reasons behind the Emergency. Why did Musharraf suspend the constitution? He being a failure is not sufficient explanation. The real evaluation, or explanation, is that Musharraf is power hungry. On television, the president’s raison d’être for his November 3 actions was terrorism and the interference of the judiciary. But the *Daily Times* does not accept this reasoning. The paper states that it is clear to many observers that Musharraf and his party have wanted to declare an Emergency for some time in order to hold onto power for another year (*Daily Times*, November 6). After enumerating all the political benefits Musharraf already possesses - including a ruling coalition with provincial governments in three of the four provinces as well as ongoing negotiations with Pakistan’s largest political party, the PPP – the editorial exasperatedly ask, “What more does he want?” (*Daily Times*, November 6). The next day, the editorial takes its criticism a step further. “The worst in this episode is too obvious even for the dim-witted,” the paper states condescendingly. “General Musharraf has never tired of proclaiming that he has the best interest of this country at heart” (*Daily Times*, November 7). The editorial then throws doubt on Musharraf’s “best interests” stating:

What are the essential parameters of a modern, progressive state? Answer: constitutional democracy. What is constitutional democracy if not the sanctity of a codified legal-normative framework…How does violating that
framework help move a country towards constitutional democracy…? And how can General Musharraf claim to move Pakistan in that direction by his November 3 action? (*Daily Times*, November 7).

Reviewing Musharraf’s nine years in power, there is no doubt that he took steps during his reign to strengthen Pakistan’s democratic foundations. At the same time, he also acted in highly anti-democratic ways and sought to remain above and beyond the checks and balances of power that democracy requires. The theme of the Musharraf’s personal agenda being the main motivation for his actions succinctly summarizes the *Daily Times’* Evaluations of the Emergency. So deep-rooted is this Evaluation that even when Musharraf relinquished power (or was forced to relinquish from national and international pressure), *Daily Times* is reluctant to shift its views about Pakistan’s leader. On November 29, Musharraf stepped down as Chief of Army Staff, giving up the most powerful position in the country. Though the move could be interpreted as a positive act of devolving power, the paper views Musharraf no better than before. Rather than prognosticating on the implications of the move, the paper instead gives an assessment of Musharraf’s nine years as leader. The overall assessment is negative. “[Musharraf’s] trajectory was no different from past military rulers in that he failed to do what he set out to do…He is perhaps the only general with more failures than successes to his name,” the editorial stated (*Daily Times*, November 28).
It should be stated that the same editorial also acknowledges the difficulty that Musharraf faced in his nine years as leader. Though not positive by any means, the assessment borders on praise. The paper notes that Musharraf’s decision after 9/11 to break from Pakistan’s long held policy of supporting terrorists to fighting against them was “act extreme daring” (*Daily Times*, November 28). “Those who say that thinking “out of the box” comes easy when you are facing stark choices…forget that none of his fellow generals would have found it easy to carry on…” (*Daily Times*, November 28).

The editorial, however, shies away from using positive lexicon (for example, using “extreme daring” instead of “courageous” or “brave”). It the first and only instance that a *Daily Times* editorial comes close to praising the general.

In addition to Musharraf’s desire for power, there is a second major theme in the Evaluations. Of the 33 editorials on the Emergency, 15 discuss terrorism. The high focus on the issue is logical – Musharraf cited terrorism as one of the two main reasons for imposing the Emergency in his address to the nation. His reasoning would naturally cause a flurry of analysis, debate, and discussion about its legitimacy in editorials. But the high focus on terrorism is also the result of the *Daily Times*’ own concern. In general, the paper constantly writes about terrorism afflicting the country. It is clear that it is a deep source of apprehension to the paper. The Emergency will have a direct bearing on this issue of great concern. But the president and the paper have conflicting
views. While the former sees the Emergency as a solution to terrorism, the latter sees it as exacerbating the situation. Time and again the paper warns that the Emergency will increase instability by closing off venues of support from moderate forces and the general public. The public is against terrorism and will support Musharraf in his fight, but if he alienates society by suspending the constitution and civil liberties, he will cut off the support needed to fight against religious extremism. In turn, this will allow terrorists to take advantage of the state’s isolated position and civil disturbances to create more havoc:

“[T]he state of Emergency is going to be the biggest hurdle in tackling the Al Qaeda challenge. There is no doubt that this is the job for the Pakistan army, but if the government is faced with near-insurgency in the rest of the country with people ranged behind their political parties to oppose President General Musharraf, the war against Al Qaeda is all but lost. Those who are now ready to come out on the streets to fight for their rights will hardly be in a mood to even allow the idea of war against Al Qaeda to cross their minds” (Daily Times, November 8).

The Daily Times’ negative analysis sets the stage for a future that cannot augur well for Pakistan. Accordingly, the paper’s Recommendations take on an urgent tone. As the next section will show, there can only be one solution to Pakistan’s current crisis: a strengthening of democratic norms.
Recommendations

This section looks at Daily Times advice, or its Recommendations, which are targeted towards the government. The paper believes that its Recommendations must be acted upon in order to remove the country from the political crisis. The main discursive strategies of the Recommendations are the tone and argumentation style. Throughout the Emergency, the Daily Times consistently makes the same Recommendations to Musharraf’s government. The paper states that whatever the circumstances may be, the general must move ahead with his original agenda for democracy. Repeatedly, the paper advises the government to hold free and fair elections, remove restrictions on the media, allow dissent, set up a caretaker government, and ensure that Musharraf steps down as Chief of Army Staff. The tone of the Recommendations is imbued with a sense of gravity. To impress the severity of the situation if its Recommendations are not heeded, the paper frequently uses the formulaic sentence “If this does/does not happen, then x will happen” (Wodak, 2001: 76). The following passage is one instance when this structure is used:

“…some ministers are saying that the general elections can be postponed in view of the deteriorating law and order situation posed by both the terrorists and confrontationists. But this should not happen. While he copes with Al Qaeda, he must be held to his pledge to hold free and fair elections as originally promised in January 2008. If they are postponed, the crisis will deepen. Meanwhile, the restrictions on the media must be removed and the
repressive measures undertake to stifle protest must be halted” (Daily Times, November 5).

In other editorials the consequences are direr. The paper warns that if its advice is not followed, the Emergency will only increase instability, cut short Musharraf’s term in office, cause anarchy and confrontation, and increase terrorism.

On November 29, Musharraf finally acted in accordance with a Daily Times’ Recommendation. He stepped down as Chief of Army Staff and held on to only position thereafter, the presidency. Although the general’s action resulted from multiple pressures that he was facing rather than a genuine desire to devolve power, it was still a positive move. As mentioned previously in the Evaluation, Daily Times is reluctant to give praise to the general. In an editorial titled simply, “General Musharraf steps down” the discussion analyzes Musharraf’s nine years as a military leader. The discussion acknowledged the difficult decisions that Musharraf had to make, but then concludes that his reign was more of a failure than a success (Daily Times, November 28). In fact, in that editorial’s concluding sentence, the Daily Times negatively focused on the implications of his legacy:

“Now we have a problem. As the political hurly-burly resumes in Pakistan, it has become perilous for our politicians to try to decide which part of [Musharraf’s] legacy should be rolled back…” (Daily Times, November 28).
If Recommendations focus on the future and ask the question “What will happen?” then the trend of the *Daily Times*’ indicates that it has an overall pessimistic vision of Pakistan’s future. Even in the few instances when the government has made a constructive move, the paper glosses over them and finds another problem. This type of attention suggests that the paper has little faith in the government regardless of its actions, positive or negative.

The next section turns to another major English paper, *Dawn*. Though the discussion is solely on *Dawn*, it is important to keep the *Daily Times*’ analysis in mind, for it highlights that while both papers have much in common – they are English papers, have overlapping readerships, and have similar opinions – the papers’ discursive strategies are highly different.

**Dawn**

**Definition**

This following section discusses *Dawn’s* Definitions, or its summary or the Emergency events. The analysis focuses on stylistic and content trends that appeared in *Dawn’s* Definition, namely its informal writing style and tone as well its use of quotations. From the first day, the most noticeable feature of *Dawn’s* editorials is its
style and tone. The editorials are short, informal, and conversational in style. Additionally they are strongly biased. Of the 34 editorials discussing the Emergency, only 2 balance criticism of Musharraf with mild praise. Furthermore, the Definitions do not follow a factual narrative style of describing events. They are highly biased and are void of many of the discreet strategies used by other papers to argue a point. *Dawn’s* unique style is apparent from its first editorial on the Emergency. The Definition begins:

> So we are back to square one. Back to October 12, 1999. All the gains over the years have gone down the drain. All this talk about forward thrust towards democracy, about the impending “third phase” of the political process and the lip service to the sanctity of the judiciary turned out to be one great deception. The people have been cheated. In a nutshell, one-man rule has been reinforced, and there is no light at the end of the tunnel (*Dawn*, November 4).

An outsider not familiar with Pakistani politics might be perplexed with this opening. It assumes much information. Who does “we” signify? What is the importance of October 12, 1999? What is the “third phase” of the political process? However, to the target audience, the common Pakistani person, the passage perfectly reflects its sentiment. The positioning is against the government. The political perspective is cynical. The situation is too well known for it to be explained with background
information. What is equally striking about this opening is its informality. The passage continues:

The reports about emergency rule were denied umpteen times by President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. The denials were bogus. From now on it would simply be a waste of newspaper space and channel time if ever a denial by this government is printed or aired (Dawn, November 4).

For the oldest, most well established English newspaper in Pakistan, Dawn’s style and lexicon do not reflect its place of prestige. Colloquial words and phrases such as “bogus”, “nutshell”, “back to square one” and “gone down the drain” express a sense of informality with the reader. The grammar is incorrect, denoting a conversational style. The words also strongly convey emotions of cynicism and disbelief, contradicting the popular held notion that English newspapers’ “rationality” somehow circumscribes them from being “emotional” as well.

While there are no in-depth studies about news style and audience design in Pakistan, it is still possible to infer some ideas about what the newspaper is intending to achieve through its choice of language. The lexicon may be indicative writer’s grasp of the English language. By using idioms and colloquial expressions, the writer is, perhaps unintentionally, highlighting the “elite” status of the paper by indicating the paper’s strong command of the language. Allan Bell, who has written extensively on
the language of news, believes that linguistic choices (vocabulary, word usage, tone, style, etc.) reflect the speaker or writer’s desire to respond to an audience. By doing so, the writer closes the gap between writer and reader, thereby making the message more persuasive (Bell, 1991: 125). From this point of view, Dawn’s informal, conversational style can be viewed as an argumentation device, which uses informality to create a sense of intimacy and persuade the reader.

This device continues in following editorials. The informality is further stressed by the absence of direct quotations by elite figures. The lack of quotations keeps the editorial conversational. Throughout the Emergency, there is only one direct quotation. When elite political actors’ words are used, the quotations usually encompass only one or two words. Usually, the single word quotations serve to mock the politicians who make the statements and portray them as lacking common sense. Dawn’s November 6, highlights the way in which this device is used. About the uncertainty of the 2008 general elections, the editorial writes:

[Prime Minister] Shaukat Aziz’s ‘disclosure’ in his Sunday’s press conference that general elections could be postponed by a year points to the uncertainty that marks the political scene. On second thought it seems, the prime minister announced on Monday that polls would be held on time. While the government makes up its mind, we may point out, as we have done before, the continuation of a state of ambiguity since March has served to put the nation in limbo (Dawn, November 6).
The paper singles out the word “disclosure,” to highlight the irony of the word (i.e., revealing inside information) with the public, conflicting messages the government is sending, showing the ruling elite to be incoherent and incapable. The quotation’s function is further strengthened by the passage’s language. Phrases such as “On second thought” and “While the government makes up its mind” reinforce the sense of the government’s confusion.

In a later editorial, the paper again uses one-word quotations when summarizing an interview of Musharraf. This time, however, the quotation is not intended to impress upon the reader a sense of the government’s ineptitude, but rather characterize Musharraf as power-hungry.

[I]n a recent interview with an American TV network, [President Musharraf] said that even after lifting the emergency, he would not “allow” any agitation politics; then he hinted that he did not “like” what he saw, he might just step down. The first was assertion of power by someone in control of the situation; the second an admission that he is losing it (Dawn, December 12).

Musharraf is shown here to be a controlling, dictatorial figure who will not “allow” policies that are not in agreement with him. He is also an obstinate, almost child-like figure, who will react if he sees something that he does not “like”.
Nowhere is the government’s portrayal in the Definition more negative than in an editorial quoting a senior police officer charged with controlling the protests against the Emergency:

According to a senior Islamabad police officer, “participation of people in such protests is increasing, which is a threat to peace”. Let’s stop here for a second. Who is entitled to define “peace” and “public” order? Musharraf and his baton-wielding enforces, or the citizens of Pakistan. Like “national interest” these concepts are open to interpretation and can be used and abused by the rulers as they see fit to further personal or instead of collective goals (Dawn, December 7).

The quotations here are used to emphasize that there are multiple interpretations of the words and that the paper and the government have two different understandings of them. There is a correct and incorrect interpretation of these words. The reader knows which interpretation is correct. These words are “abused” by rulers who seek to interpret them for their own benefit, rather than that of the people. Like the December 12 editorial about Musharraf, this passage shows the government to be oppressive.

The dominant discursive strategies used in Dawn’s Definitions are its style and use of quotations. Together these two devices persuade the reader to a position against the government. The next section looks at Dawn’s Evaluations and how the paper continues its efforts to discredit the government through its argumentation style.
Evaluation

This section explores *Dawn’s* reasoning and explanations of the political crisis. Importantly, the explanations are mainly a critique of the government’s reasoning for imposing the Emergency. The explanation is comprised of two parts, though these parts are not chronologically ordered in the editorials. In one part, the paper debunks the government’s assertion that it has imposed the Emergency to fight terrorism. In the second part, *Dawn* reveals what it believes to be the real intentions behind Musharraf’s actions, his desire for power.

*Dawn’s* discussion of terrorism does not begin with Musharraf’s November 3 announcement that extremism is undermining the country. Rather, the discussion begins with 9/11, a turning point in the country’s history. It was then that the United States pressured Pakistan to change its foreign policy supporting the Taleban in Afghanistan. After 9/11 and the U.S. war in Afghanistan, it became clear to Musharraf that the country’s interests now lay in supporting the U.S. Changing the foreign policy, however, was not an easy task. The government’s long held-policy of supporting the Taleban had become more than just a strategic decision. Some of the generals were wholehearted Islamists who believed in the Taleban’s religious and political goals. The reluctance to change foreign policy was compounded by their deep suspicion of
America. During the late 1990s, the U.S. put Pakistan under sanctions for carrying out nuclear tests. Why then, the generals wondered, should they change the status quo?

*Dawn* is well aware of the difficulties Musharraf faced when persuading his fellow generals to make a policy u-turn. On November 29, the paper states:

Perhaps the greatest challenge to Musharraf – the army chief – came post 9/11 when he had to swivel 180 degrees on Pakistan’s foreign policy cornerstone of support to the Taliban – a strategy largely authored and executed by the military. Quietly, he went from one garrison to another explaining to the men in khaki the dangers of ignoring the American demands of cooperation (*Dawn*, November 29).

While the passage acknowledges that Musharraf had a formidable task in front of him, it does not laud his efforts. The editorial continues, “But how successful he was in convincing every one of his soldiers was evident in the several attempts made to assassinate him which later turned out to be insiders’ jobs” (*Dawn*, November 29). The sentence is recalling the numerous assassination attempts on Musharraf after 9/11. It was widely believed that disgruntled officers helped plan the attacks against Musharraf in an effort to stop Pakistan’s change in foreign policy. Notably, though, the criticism in this passage is not targeted towards those individuals, but towards Musharraf. The criticism appears to be unduly harsh, and there is no evident explanation in the rest of the editorial to justify the paper’s strong stance. The reasoning is revealed in a
The passage is blatantly open in its criticism of Musharraf, and the reasoning behind the November 29 editorial’s harsh stance is now justified. *Dawn* believes that while Musharraf did fight against terrorism, he also allowed it to flourish. Had he completely rooted it out, his usefulness to the U.S. would have diminished, and by extension his influence. Therefore, to maintain power, Musharraf punctuated successes against militancy with tolerance in order for terrorism to remain enough of a threat. By doing so, he showed himself to be a “value[able]” force for international and national security.

*Dawn’s* Evaluations employ a second line of argument to discredit Musharraf: the topos of history. In this topos, Musharraf is compared to Pakistan’s previous leaders, who are divided into two groups of individuals – democratic leaders and
dictatorial, military leaders. The former individual is held up as the ideal, while the latter is maligned. Not surprisingly, Musharraf is categorized into the latter group.

The contrast of the two types of leaders in the Evaluations has a function. It is intended to show the tension between Pakistan’s ideal political situation and its reality. When describing the ideal, the paper harkens back to the founding father of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Jinnah is discussed twice in the Evaluation. Both times, the tone and lexicon associated with him are positive, but the passage is mixed with a deep sense of nostalgia as well for lost ideals. In its first mention of Jinnah, *Dawn* writes:

The result is that sixty years after it came into being, Quaid-i-Azam [The Great Leader] Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s dream of a democratic Pakistan where the rule of law, justice, equality, and tolerance prevail remains just that, a dream (*Dawn*, November 24).

These mixed sentiments are reiterated a few days later when once again the paper speaks of “the man who founded Pakistan” as a man who believed unwaveringly in the “universally accepted principles of democracy, constitutionalism, and rule of law” (*Dawn*, December 1). The final sentence of the passage changes topic suddenly, switching from a favorable description of Jinnah to a somber warning to Musharraf: “The transition to democracy will not be complete with the doffing of the uniform” (*Dawn*, December 1). The sentence admonishes Musharraf that the removal of his
military uniform is not enough to establish democracy. The Evaluation is thin and does not provide further explanation. However, to the reader the juxtaposition of the two leaders – Jinnah and Musharraf – provides ample explanation. Democracy is about deeper held values, which cannot be achieved by the single act of stepping down as Chief of Army Staff.

Within the topos of history, there is a second form of comparison. While the first type of comparison discredits Musharraf by contrasting him with Pakistan’s ideal leader, the second comparison reinforces Musharraf’s negative image by showing him as an equivalent to past military dictators. In particular, Musharraf’s reign is associated with General Zia-ul-Haq (1924-1988), one of Pakistan’s most detested leaders. In its November 4 editorial, the paper draws a series of parallels between the two military leaders – both came to power through a bloodless military coup, changed the constitution in order to accrue more power, and significantly altered foreign and domestic policies. The paper writes:

Just as Ziaul Haq assumed all power for himself twice – first in 1977 in what was a classical coup d’état and in 1988 by using powers under article 58-2b of the Constitution – Musharraf has followed suit with some difference. In his second coup, Zia sent Junejo packing; in this second Musharraf coup, the Constitution has been held in abeyance…his rule is now absolute, and civil society and democracy have received a blow [sic] (Dawn, November 4).
The passage ends on a note of despair, adding, “Already, the president enjoys all the power that a ruler could possibly hope to amass…What more power does he want?” (Dawn, November 4). The insight of editorial is retrospective: just as Zia ul-Haq’s reign adversely affected Pakistani society, the same was to be expected of Musharraf. Just as Zia-ul-Haq’s actions were undertaken to consolidate power, so, too are Musharraf’s actions.

This section has discussed Dawn’s Evaluations. In the Evaluations there are two dominant narratives or argument styles. First, the paper discredits Musharraf explanations for imposing the Emergency. Second, the paper provides its own reasoning for Musharraf’s actions, his desire for power. This negative image is further impressed upon the reader through comparisons to Pakistan’s previous leaders. Through the paper’s argumentation, the reader can only be left with one impression of Musharraf: a despotic ruler.

The next section turns to Dawn’s Recommendations. Despite the paper’s portrayal of him in the utmost negative way, it nevertheless calls on him to change his political course and affect positive change in the country.
Recommendations

This discussion on Recommendations will discuss Dawn’s advice to the government during the Emergency. There are two notable factors about Dawn’s Recommendations. The first is the repetition of the same list of advice targeted towards the same political actors. The paper consistently calls upon Musharraf and his government to rectify their actions. Even after opposition parties become a major political actor, Dawn continues to hold the onus of responsibility on Musharraf. These responsibilities include five basic demands: lift the Emergency and withdraw the PCO; remove restrictions on the media; restore civil liberties; install an impartial caretaker government; and hold free and transparent elections in 2008. Elements from this list are repeated 22 times in other editorials. The repetition signifies that Dawn believes that this list of conditions should constitute the basic socio-political norm in Pakistan. The repetition also indicates that the paper believes that the government has not met these conditions over the course of the Emergency.

In reality, though, the government had taken steps towards fulfilling some of the public’s demands. Domestic and international pressure forced Musharraf to step down as Chief of Army Staff, announce a date when the Emergency would be lifted, and give a timeline for the 2008 general elections. Notably, the Recommendations change only slightly in response to these developments, suggesting that the paper views the
government’s attempts to respond to public demands as negligible. A comparison of two editorials, one in the beginning and one at the end of the Emergency, demonstrates how little the Recommendations’ tone and style change over the course of the Emergency. In the beginning of the Emergency, Dawn writes:

[W]e demand that the emergency be lifted at the earliest, the government should give a deadline within which the purposes for which the emergency was proclaimed…and the general election will be held as originally planned – in January next [sic] (Dawn, November 6).

A month later the subject remains the elections. By now, the government had announced that elections would indeed be held, but there was doubt as to whether they would be conducted in a free and fair manner. This concern stemmed from the fact that the caretaker government, which was to oversee the elections, was not impartial, but rather comprised of Musharraf’s loyalists. The paper expresses these concerns in its December 5 editorial. The subject remains the general elections, but the sub-focus shifts from holding election to having fair elections:

It is clear that for the election to have any transparency the government will have to re-think the composition of the current caretaker setup and the rules governing the election commission… (Dawn, December 5).

The November 6 editorial highlights the second dominating feature of Dawn’s Recommendations, agency. The paper calls on Musharraf a total of 22 times to take
action, indicating that he is viewed as the main agent. Moreover, he is written about using active verbs. He is asked to “lift” the Emergency, “withdraw” curbs on the media, “stop” the crackdown on civil society, “install” an impartial caretaker government, and “listen” to civil society.

The November 6 Recommendation also refers to another, albeit secondary, agent, which is civil society. Here, civil society refers to the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations in Pakistan. These groups are vital for democracy and help build social capital, trust, and shared values which can be transferred to the political sphere (Putnam, 1993). Civil society is referred to 13 times in the Recommendations, making it the second most important actor after Musharraf. The relationship between Musharraf and civil society is dialectical. They both influence and are affected by one another. However, civil society is viewed as both an active and passive agent. In its November 8 editorial, the paper shows civil society as the active agent, stating that it legitimizes the mandate of the government:

[Hope] can be found in a new generation of conscientious members of civil society who are converging and discussing non-traditional forms of peaceful protest and creating awareness. There is a collective voice that can start a much needed movement for change recognizing humanitarian values (Dawn, November 8).
The paper then addresses civil society in its Recommendation saying, “The response of these sections of society should stress on the government that quashing peaceful forms of dissent serves no purpose” (Dawn, November 8). In this instance, civil society becomes an active agent, a positive source of dissent, and a conscience, which checks the government’s wrongdoings.

In most editorials, though, Dawn portrays civil society as a bystander. It is at the unfortunate receiving end of the government’s actions. Civil society’s passive position is indicated in the grammatical structure of the Recommendations’ sentences. Civil society is object of the verbs. They are the receivers of the action carried out by the main subject (the government). The government must stop the crackdown on civil society (Dawn, November 7), build institutions to benefit the people (Dawn, November 10), grasp the people’s political sentiments (Dawn, November 15), and return the people’s sovereignty (Dawn, November 27). Notably, of the 13 times civil society is mentioned in the Recommendations, it is the active agent only once. The grammatical structure mirrors structures of power. At the top end of the power structure are the actors possessing the most power, while those at the bottom of the power structure are viewed as victims, witnesses, or bystanders (Bell, 1991: 194). These grammar and news structure reveal the broader macrostructures, namely the hierarchical relationships between the government and the people (van Dijk, 1985: 72).
The next section turns to the Urdu editorials and analyzes the manner in which they portray Musharraf and the government during the 2007 emergency. The analysis begins with *Jang’s Definitions*.

### Jang

**Definition**

The following discussion looks at *Jang’s* description and summary of events during the Emergency, and in particular, the paper’s complex positioning. *Jang* writes about the Emergency 35 out of 43 days. Of these 35 editorials, the topic most frequently discussed is the role of opposition political parties (22 times). The next most discussed topics are the general elections (19 times), Musharraf (16 times), terrorism (13 times), response from foreign countries (9 times), and the Pakistan government (5 times). *Jang* shows complexity in its position to Musharraf and the government. Editorials express direct and indirect criticism, balance, optimism, and mild support in varying degrees.

*Prima facie, Jang’s* complexity is not apparent. The editorial titles from the early days of the crisis suggest that *Jang* is in complete opposition to the Emergency:
Extra-constitutional steps should not be taken (November 3)

Emergency, interim constitution should not continue for much longer (November 5)

Only by holding elections on time can we get out of the crisis (November 6)

General elections – the government should not delay the official plan (November 7)

Taleban, Emergency – both are crippling civil society (November 9)

Plans to proceed with the elections will get rid of tension (November 13)

Upon further examination, it is revealed that the paper’s opposition to the Emergency does not necessarily equate to opposition to government officials, and their comments towards the latter are less forthcoming. The paper’s November 5 editorial demonstrates this differentiation:

Whether or not the reasons were that serious, the bitter reality is that once more the constitution has been suspended…November 3 became a point when we could have gone down the path towards complete democracy or down the dark path of unconstitutionalism. But President Musharraf, in his address to the unfortunate people of Pakistan said that the country would not be allowed to go towards destruction, that the third phase of democracy would be carried out, that if this step was not taken then the country’s security would be in danger (Jang, November 5).

Editorials frequently adopt factual narrative forms in their political reporting when faced with government pressure (Lee & Lin, 2006: 334). The previous passage is
unique because it both breaks away from and adopts this discursive strategy. The paper breaks away from this strategy with its strong descriptive words. *Jang*’s tone is dismissive when it speaks about the reasons that prompted Musharraf to suspend the constitution (i.e., “whether or not the reasons were that serious”). It continues with the words “bitter” and “dark” to describe the unconstitutional situation in the country. The paper furthermore positions itself empathetically with the “unfortunate” people of Pakistan for having to live under such extraordinary conditions. However, once the Definition turns its focus on Musharraf, it becomes neutral. Musharraf’s words are simply summarized. There is no tone or adjectives to position the paper vis-à-vis the government.

The next day’s editorial position shifts slightly. A more positive tone is noticeable. The editorial begins, “[T]he prime minister’s assurance that once conditions become better, the Emergency will be lifted has somewhat lessened the sense of uncertainty” (*Jang*, November 6). What follows is a series of summarized quotations by government officials, and the paper returns to a factual narrative style. Each of the quotations expresses the sentiment that conditions are not as bad as they seem or that they will get better. The prime minister states, for example, that in spite of the Emergency, the “army was not used” at all, that the new constitutional amendments would foster “harmony between the institutions”, and that talks would soon be
underway about the media blackout. While it could be argued that these statements are meant only to convey information about the government’s stance or activities, another argument can be made that the selection of quotations is intentional. Collectively they reinforce a sense of optimism. The latter interpretation is given more weight when the entire editorial is taken into account and a similar optimistic tone is noticeable in the Evaluation and Recommendations.

The tone changes dramatically the next day. Similar to the previous editorial, the Definition contains a series of summarized quotations by political actors. This time the actors all belong to politicians from foreign countries who condemn Musharraf’s Emergency:

President George Bush has expressed disappointment over Musharraf’s actions. He urged [Musharraf] to restore civilian rule and to release individuals arrested under the Emergency immediately…The Foreign Office in Australia summoned Pakistan’s ambassador and expressed deep concern over the Emergency. Canada’s Minister of Defense strongly denounced Pakistan’s actions…Holland has stopped aid to Pakistan. Denmark’s government has stated that until Pakistan restores the constitution, its development funds would be stopped (Jang, November 7).

The next paragraph carries on with the Definition. The focus shifts from the international to the domestic scene. The paragraph states that lawyers have faced police baton charges for protesting, political leaders have been arrested, journalists harassed,
and the stock market has crashed. The words form an image of complete internal chaos. By painting a bleak picture, Jang is indirectly criticizing the situation. Though the reporting appears as factual, the selection of only negative events is more revealing of the paper’s perception than of the ground reality. While these unfortunate events did indeed happen, the paper chose not to cover the fact that conditions in many cities also remained peaceful. Very few civilians were out on the streets agitating against the Emergency even though there was widespread disapproval of it (Gilani, 2007).

What had happened since the previous day that brought about the dramatic reversal in tone? The general chaos of the situation may have significantly developed for the worse, forcing the paper to modify its positioning. Additionally, Jang may have begun to feel the brunt of the Emergency effects more intimately. Already, the Jang Corporation’s news channel had been blacked out and its paper monitored. To make matters worse, police had recently threatened one of Jang’s editors to stop printing a publication covering the Emergency or face shut down (Daily Times, November 6). Of all the news corporations, Jang faced the severest restrictions from the government.

The sense of oppression becomes starker with subsequent editorials. On November 9, Jang writes an openly critical editorial. The piece titled “Taleban, Emergency – both are crippling civil society”, describes the worrying situation of militancy. The Definition lays out a frightening scenario: “Worrying news is coming
from Swat that 70% of the district has been taken control of by elements that call themselves the local Taleban. Supporters of the [Taleban leader] Maulana Fazlullah took over government buildings…It is of utmost concern…that the police officers on duty had already left earlier…” (Jang, November 9).

Terrorism was not incidental to the Emergency. Over the past year, militants carried out numerous attacks against the Pakistani Army. Recently, they had taken control of significant parts in the tribal areas of the country. These developments were of great concern to many Pakistanis who feared that militancy would spread from the tribal areas to the cities unmitigated, as in this instance when security forces simply left the building without a fight. Musharraf’s stated reason for imposing the Emergency was to curb terrorist activities. But when violence continued even after November 3, people began to wonder about the effectiveness of his action. Jang reflects this sense of doubt in its November 9 editorial, stating:

On November 3 an Emergency was announced in the country. An interim constitution (PCO) was instated. The goal was to control the increasing terrorist activities of extremist elements…After the emergency was enforced, it was hoped that the state’s authority would be restored in different parts of the country and that effective steps would be taken so that people’s anxiety created by militants in the tribal areas would be removed. Yet a few days later, no such steps have been taken…If a major step such as an emergency need be been taken, then efforts to wipe out militancy should also have been undertaken (Jang, November 9).
This line of thinking continues in the November 11 editorial. On November 9 a suicide attacker detonated his explosive-strapped body in a minister’s home. There are at least two ways of viewing this attack. It could have been viewed as one incident in a long string of suicide attacks carried out by militants, or it could have been viewed within the larger context of the Emergency. Jang chooses to focus on the latter narrative: “[The attack] demonstrates that the Emergency’s main objective, which was to stop suicide attacks, was not achieved” (Jang, November 11).

The Emergency and growing incidents of terrorism had dampened the political optimism in the country. While Jang somewhat reflects this mood, the newspaper is not paralyzed in the prevailing cynicism. On November 29, 2007 Musharraf stepped down as Chief of Army Staff and retained only the position of President of Pakistan. His resignation signified a major change in the country’s power structure. Previously, Musharraf retained two titles. Since 2002 he was both the President of Pakistan and Chief of Army Staff. He had promised the nation to take off his uniform after the 2002 general elections in an effort to devolve power and push the nation towards democracy. Shortly thereafter he rescinded his word. His retraction was viewed as an attempt to accrue more power for himself. By 2007, Musharraf’s situation had changed dramatically, and he was becoming politically isolated. On the international level, Musharraf was perceived as a failure for his lack of success in the war on terror. On the
domestic level, the country was facing economic troubles. The November 29 decision
to step down as Chief of Army Staff resulted more from the pressure of his political
isolation than his desire to devolve power. The Jang newspaper both acknowledges
that Musharraf’s move was not altruistic, but also views him to be more than just a
megalomaniac:

Pervez Musharraf, who had always placed his interests above that of the
nation…has finally reached this point today…[T]he people hope that as
President of Pakistan, he will take his oath, and instead of a controversial
figure, become a most trustworthy one. He has helped the nation a lot. But
many of his actions have also created forces of opposition. Their allegations
and contentions against him are not all wrong (Jang, November 29).

This passage is of interest because it is one of the few times the paper directly criticizes
Musharraf. Though Jang criticizes the Pakistan Government in previous editorials, it
does not go so far as to single out specific individuals, as in this instance. Arguably,
through Musharraf’s relinquishing of power, the paper was emboldened in it criticism.

The criticism of Musharraf is atypical of the paper; frequently, the discussion on
government officials is either more discreet or complex. There are multiple tones
associated with government officials: neutral or balanced (Jang, November 5),
optimistic (Jang, November 6), and negative (Jang, November 7). Notably, when the
tone is negative, it is attributed to other actors, as in the case of the international
community condemning Musharraf’s actions (Jang, November 7). By such means, the paper avoids taking responsibility for criticizing the government.

If the tone is set in the Definition, it can be assumed that the Evaluation will speak in a similar voice. The next section looks at the Evaluation, or the paper’s explanation of the events, to assess if this reasoning holds true.

**Evaluation**

This section discusses Jang’s Evaluations, or explanations, for the causes that led to the Emergency. Considering that the paper is semi-supportive of the government in the Definition, it could be assumed that this positioning continues into the Evaluation as well. This happens to be the case. Though it is should be clear to the readership that any explanation of the Emergency should include a discussion of Musharraf, the Evaluations mitigate the government’s responsibility in two ways. First, rather than focusing on the role of the government, the paper instead discusses other related topics. More than discussions of the government, the two main topics in Jang’s Evaluations revolve around opposition political parties (21 times) and terrorism (16 times). Second, the paper’s semi-support of the government is revealed through its grammatical structures.
Terrorism dominates the Evaluations in the earlier period of the Emergency, before Musharraf stepped down as Chief of Army Staff. The title of Jang’s first editorial on the Emergency is “No extra-constitutional steps should be taken.” At first glance, the title is somewhat misleading; the real topic is the growing incidents of terrorism throughout the country. The editorial speaks about an 18-year-old suicide bomber who rammed his motorcycle into a Pakistan Army bus. The editorial then broadens the scenario and discusses the rise of terrorism in other parts of the country. Where is the discussion of the Emergency? Further into the editorial, it becomes clear the type of argument style the paper is trying to follow. After writing at length about the worrying situation of terrorism, the Evaluation then mentions the government, saying, “The government is not getting the type of support it should get for rooting out terrorism” (Jang, November 3). The Evaluation states that the people’s support is needed to fight against terrorism, and then finally mention is made of the Emergency. The article continues that the Emergency is detrimental to garnering public support and will instead erode the people’s confidence in the government. This line of argument is mentioned once again in the paper’s November 9 editorial. The Evaluation begins, “On November 3 an Emergency was announced” and the “objective of the Emergency was to control the growing incidents of terrorism.” The tone in the following sentences reveals the paper’s skepticism about the efficacy of the government’s actions, stating:
But even though some time has passed, no step has been taken to root out terrorism...If something as serious as an Emergency was undertaken, then a modus operandi to take care of the situation should have been implemented immediately, and someone should have been entrusted with informing the nation about it [emphasis added] (Jang, November 9).

Notably, there is no subject or specific actor in the passage. Instead the paper ambiguously states that “someone” should have been entrusted with the responsibility of informing the nation about the steps being taken to fight terrorism. The readership can assume that “someone” is referring to Musharraf, but by not stating specifics Jang avoids placing accountability on specific individuals.

The grammatical nuances are also apparent in the second most discussed topic of the Evaluations, opposition political parties. Opposition parties became a major contender in Pakistani politics after Musharraf removed his uniform on November 16. That date marked the beginning of the end of Musharraf’s eight-year reign. With his stepping down, a new power hierarchy took shape in Pakistan. The power hierarchy is reflected in Jang’s Evaluations through content and grammar. On the content level, the paper switches its focus from terrorism to the activities of the major political parties, the PPP and the PMLN. On a grammatical level, the subjects become both Musharraf and the leaders of the opposition political parties. On November 9, the paper writes:
The opposition parties are disagreeing…over the issue cooperation and partnership with President Pervez Musharraf. Nawaz Sharif clearly stated that under no circumstances would he work with Musharraf…while PPP chairperson Benazir Bhutto said that she would welcome the idea of working with a civilian president Musharraf” (Jang, November 9).

In this passage Bhutto and Sharif become the subjects who carry out the action. Musharraf becomes the object of the verb, or a passive actor. The change in grammar could be interpreted as a reflection of the power structures: the opposition political parties are now the main actors – both politically and grammatically. To highlight the significance of these structures, one can look back to the earlier days of the Emergency. On November 5 and 6, the paper still considers Musharraf and his government as the main political actors. The Evaluation’s grammar clearly puts Musharraf and his government as the main political actors stating, “Musharraf has imposed an Emergency in the nation” because of the increasing incidents of terrorism.

The next day, the paper discusses the situation of election, stating if the “Pakistan Government holds elections on time this will increase the people’s confidence in the government…and the country’s problems will also be solved” (Jang, November 6).

The change of focus from the Musharraf to the opposition political parties is not complete over the course of the Emergency. He still figures as a main actor even after he steps down as Chief of Army Staff and after the opposition parties become a
contending factor. The vacillating focus on political actors is reflective of *Jang’s* political perspective. The shifting focus may indicate that *Jang* is not resolute in taking sides as a new power hierarchy emerges, but rather sees both as integral to Pakistan’s political atmosphere. Alternatively, it may simply be an effort by the newspaper to maintain a middle and politically correct path. Both these notions are reinforced in the next section on Recommendations.

**Recommendations**

This section looks at the *Jang’s* Recommendations, or its advice on rectifying the political situation in Pakistan. The Recommendations are targeted to two main political groups: the current government (17 times) and the opposition political parties (17 times). In the early period of the Emergency, *Jang’s* Recommendations target Musharraf and his government. The advice reflects the general demands that many Pakistanis, civil rights activists, national and international leaders, and media organizations urged: lift the Emergency, remove restrictions on the media, hold free and fair elections, release political prisoners, and provide an impartial caretaker government to oversee the coming general elections. *Jang* expresses this advice in a unique manner compared to other groups calling for the same demands. As mentioned earlier in the discussion of *Jang’s* Definition, the paper holds a complex position vis-à-
vis the government. The challenge arising from this ambiguous positioning forces Jang to find ways to reconcile its own democratic ethos with its semi-support for Musharraf, who had carried out a series of highly undemocratic actions. To achieve this balance, the paper resorts to using different tones and argumentation styles. The major tones that dominate the editorials when advising Musharraf and his government are that of muted criticism and mild optimism. These two tones are apparent from the first day of the Emergency. On November 3, hours before Musharraf’s announcement, Jang had already published an editorial about the possibility of the government imposing an Emergency:

If any extra-constitutional steps are taken, the country will once again fall off track. History bears witness that such steps did not result in anything positive in the past, nor can it be expected that anything good will come of them in the future. For these reasons, it would be best to avoid such steps (Jang, November 3).

The lack of political agency in the passage indicates the paper’s ambiguous positioning. The political actor must be assumed by the readership, and there is only one possibility: Musharraf. But by not explicitly identifying Musharraf, the paper seeks to sever him from the negativity associated with the “extra-constitutional steps” and also de-emphasize the bad actions of the government (van Dijk, 2001: 104).
This passage employs a second discursive strategy to underscore the erroneousness of the Emergency. The logic begins that because history teaches that specific actions have led to specific consequences, one should either perform or omit a comparable action (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 76). In this case, the passage does not refer to a specific historical period or actor. To do so would malign Musharraf for it would equate him to past dictators who have acquired power through a military coup and have not been looked upon favorably.

Where does the paper place responsibility then? The end of the Recommendation appeals to several actors:

We appeal to all - to the president of the country, the prime minister, members of parliament, the opposition, judiciary, lawyers, and experts – to take their next steps, keeping in mind the needs of the time, constitutional principles, and world conditions, so that the people of Pakistan can take their place amongst the international community with pride” (Jang, November 3).

By appealing to several political agents, the paper mitigates the role of responsibility from a specific individual. Opposition political parties, the judiciary, lawyers, and experts are all given equal weight of liability, even though they were at the receiving end of the Emergency. This strategy is a diplomatic and politically correct, and in the
same vein, the Recommendation ends on a positive note. If these actors heed Jang’s advice, the country’s holds a chance of having a positive future.

The paper’s diplomatic tone continues even after the Emergency adversely affected the political atmosphere. On November 5, Jang wrote a mutedly critical as well as semi-supportive editorial on the Emergency. By this point, the government’s media blackout, crackdown on protestors, arrest of political leaders, and dismissal of the Supreme Court judges had created an acute political crisis. Yet the Recommendation’s remains hopeful: “We, too, hope that the imposition of the Emergency and the interim constitution are used for the limited objectives for which these steps were taken” (Jang, November 5). This sentence indicates a shift in the paper’s position. Whereas in the November 3 editorial, the paper advised that it would be best to avoid Emergency measures, two days later, Jang states that if it leads to democracy, then the government’s action are justified. The paper, however, makes this point hesitatingly and with caveats:

If, through the Emergency, the government can prove to people that it can overcome conflicts and proceed with the general elections – and if elections are held on time and are free and fair - then it is possible that the people will think of the Emergency as bitter medicine and drink it. If the situation [does not improve], then there is danger of opposition arising (Jang, November 5).
The passage reveals an ideological conflict over democracy. On the one hand, the paper calls for elections and the removal of the unconstitutional Emergency, but on the other hand it concedes that undemocratic steps may be necessary for the political process. How does the paper reconcile such a contradictory viewpoint? The paper strives to find reconciliation by drawing parameters. The paper emphasizes that the Emergency is only legitimate if it achieves specific, “limited objectives” (Jang, November 5, November 6, and November 12). This argumentation logic follows a conditional formula: because the state is responsible for a certain set of problems, they should act in order to find solution to these problems (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 75).

*Jang’s* Recommendations begins to shift its focus by the middle of November. By this point, the Emergency had considerably damaged Musharraf’s image and had politically isolated him. This strengthened the position of opposition political parties who now had the support of the Pakistani people and the international community. In spite of the changing power dynamics, *Jang* remains consistent in its semi-support for Musharraf. In its November 20 editorials the Recommendation began:

> President Pervez Musharraf and the caretaker government can…restore the trust of the people. They can make clear and transparent elections a reality. They can successfully lessen the effects of the extra-constitutional steps. For this to happen, the most important step will be for the government to establish an administration for impartial monitoring [of the elections] (*Jang*, November 20).
In the context of Musharraf’s low opinion ratings, the paper’s optimism in him seems naïve and misplaced. Yet the paper’s idealism does not blind it from discounting the opinions of the people. Over the past two years, the public opinion of the government had gone drastically down by 42% and the Emergency had most likely increased the percentage (Gilani, 2007). This lack of trust is referred to in the November 20 editorial when it calls for the government to “restore” the trust of the people.

Where exactly does Jang’s positioning lay – with the people or the government? The Recommendations do not clarify the paper’s political allegiance. While the paper seems to side with civil society, it also speaks disparagingly of those who criticize the government too much. Later in the November 20 editorial, the tone adopts a sense of indignation when speaking about elements that criticize the government unduly, such as the foreign press. The Recommendation ends stating that if free and fair elections are held, then “the foreign press will not…find an opportunity to write propaganda against the government” (Jang, November 20). The use of the word “propaganda” denigrates criticism leveled against the government to that of misinformation and half-truths. Moreover, it places the paper on the side of the government.
In conclusion, *Jang’s* Recommendations are unique in comparison to the Recommendations of other newspapers. While the paper calls on the government to rectify its actions, it does not go so far as to condemn or criticize the government. Rather, the content of its Recommendations, which are similar to several political and non-political actors, are mitigated by the paper’s diplomatic and optimistic tone.

The next section looks at another Urdu newspaper, *Nawa-i-Waqt*. The section assess whether or not the paper held a similar position to the other newspapers during the Emergency and which discursive strategies it used.

*Nawa-i-Waqt*

**Definition**

This section looks at *Nawa-i-Waqt’s* Definitions, or how the paper summarizes the events of the Emergency. The dominant discursive strategy of the paper is its use of quotations as an argumentation device. Unlike other papers in this study, *Nawa-i-Waqt* focuses exclusively on the Emergency during the 43-day period. A further breakdown of editorial content reveals that of the 43 editorials, 21 editorials discuss Musharraf and the government as the main actors. The Definition alone does not give the reader enough cues to assess the positioning of the newspaper vis-à-vis the
government. For example, on November 3, just hours before Musharraf announced the Emergency, Nawa-i-Waqt writes:

According to news reports, the federal government is considering taking extra-constitutional steps in order to improve security and find a solution to the constitutional crises. Under these steps, the Supreme Court judges would have to renew their oaths and, as an act of parliament, General Musharraf would keep both his posts for another six months (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 3).

These few sentences are stated in an informative, factual, and objective manner. There is no language, style, or tone evident in the passage that would shed light on the paper’s view of these current events. The November 3 editorial is characteristic of most of the paper’s Definitions. Within this brief space, it is difficult to assess more information about the paper’s political values. At first glance it appears that the editorial, contrary to its function, may be trying to avoid taking a position or having a strong opinions since its opening sentences are unbiased.

The structure that emphasizes the objective style of the Definition is the use of quotations from elite political actors. Of the 21 editorials discussing Musharraf and the government, quotations are used 15 times. What purpose does the paper have in relying on quotations? Quotations appear to fulfill two main objectives. As discussed in the Definition of Daily Times, quotations make the news item factual and news worthy.
(Bell, 1991:190). Additionally, quotations fit into an argumentation style. The scheme only becomes apparent in view of the entire editorial. *Nawa-i-Waqt* opens with quotations in its Definition, only to later critique those statements later in the editorial. For this reason, the Definition is weak in its positioning. The paper’s stance is only understood in conjunction to the Evaluation. The November 3 editorial, for example, states:

> Eight years ago, President General Pervez Musharraf, dismissed the elected government and took over power...he stated that after he completed his seven-point agenda he would step down from power...but after eight years, all democratic institutions have been made useless by one man” (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 3).

Only now does the paper’s positioning become clear. The tone changes from objective to oppositional. The logic of the editorial follows that the current situation is no different from the past. President Musharraf is taking extra-constitutional steps in order to accrue more power. Taking the Evaluation into account, it then becomes clear that the Definition is intended to provide a factual basis for the current events, only to be overturned in the Evaluation.

The next day’s Definition and Evaluation follow a similar trajectory only this time more political actors are involved:
The Prime minister said that rumors on marshal law, PCO, Emergency were baseless. He told the media that they should avoid such baseless rumors. While America’s Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said that America would be against a marshal law by Musharraf. She added that in the coming year, transparent elections should be held (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 4).

This Definition is intended to compare the conflicting statements of two power forces – the Pakistan Government and the U.S. Government. With whom does the paper side? Again, there is no lexicon or signifiers to indicate a preference. However, it is arguable that the juxtaposition of the two statements reveals a bias. Because power hierarchies can reflect a sense of authority or veracity, it can be assumed that the paper will take the word of the stronger power, America, above that of its own government (Bell). Once again, this assumption can only be confirmed in the Evaluation, which states:

Had Musharraf kept his word to the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal and to nation that he would take off his army uniform in 2004 and assumed only the presidency, then he would not have had to fear the Supreme Court’s decision and he would not have put the country into a new crisis just in order to save himself (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 4).

The Evaluation reveals the paper’s positioning. The paper is strongly critical of Musharraf and places itself with the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (United Action Front), a coalition of five Islamist parties. The positioning with the Islamists is important, for it
is one of the few times during the Emergency that the paper reveals its pro-Islamic/pro-Islamist tendencies which it has come to be known for over the past few decades.

Quotations by other political actors underline the paper’s oppositional stance to the government. On November 29, *Nawa-i-Waqt* writes about Benazir Bhutto, and opens with a quotation by her, stating that before November 3, her “talks with Musharraf were intended to restore democracy, but the Emergency put a stop to the negotiations” (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 14). Bhutto’s statement is then followed by a quotation from Musharraf who justifies that his decision to put Bhutto under house arrest was taken in order to protect her since death threats had been made against her (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 14). Her protection would bring about better and more peaceful conditions for the general elections to take place.

Whose statement will the paper support? The Evaluation is needed for elucidation. As can be expected, the explanation is not critical of Bhutto, but rather of Musharraf. When speaking of Bhutto and the opposition parties, the paper places its belief in them stating that they will be able to bring about positive change; when speaking of Musharraf, the paper states that his reasons for arresting Bhutto are just an “excuse” and that, contrary to his assertions, his actions are making conditions worse.

*Nawa-i-Waqt’s* Definitions give little information about the paper’s political viewpoints. Even though a dominant strategy is apparent, the use of quotations, they
must be read in conjunction with the Evaluation in order to be correctly interpreted. When looked at with the Evaluation, it becomes clear that the discursive strategy is intended to be part of a larger argumentation scheme in which the paper’s positioning (oppositional) and its argument are clarified.

The Definition has touched upon the Evaluation in order to give context. The next section further analyzes *Nawa-i-Waqt*’s explanation of the Emergency.

**Evaluation**

This section analyzes the reasons behind the Emergency. Like the other three newspapers, *Nawa-i-Waqt* is staunchly opposed to the Emergency. All 43 editorials express strong criticism of the government. Unlike the other newspapers, though, *Nawa-i-Waqt*’s opposition stems from the paper’s deep sense of nationalism and religious beliefs. These concepts are explained through the notions of self-interest and are apparent from the very first day. The November 3 editorial concludes that the Emergency is a result of “Musharraf’s pro-American policies” (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 4). In the eyes of the newspaper, American policies have only served American interests, not Pakistan’s. Furthermore, the editorial claims that had Musharraf kept his word in 2004 that he would take off his uniform, he would not have had to impose an Emergency in order to save himself (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 4).
Musharraf’s self-interest is the most recurring explanation of the Emergency throughout Evaluations:

[T]he real reason for the PCO is for Musharraf to remain president and Chief of Army Staff and prolong his rule (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 6).

President-General Pervez Musharraf intends to hold elections of his own liking so that the elected national assembly will justify his extra-constitutional steps…The opposition parties are now realizing that under the current conditions, the elections will only serve to extend Musharraf’s reign for another five years (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 21).

According to the Chief of Army Staff…the reason for the judiciary’s dismissal was terrorism. The real objective, however, was to prevent any obstacles in his ability to run for president (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 23).

The November 21 and 23 editorials discuss three separate issues: elections, opposition parties, and terrorism. All three issues are explained in relation to Musharraf and as a result, the Evaluations become simplified. The November 23 editorial, for example, touches upon the government’s justification for imposing the Emergency, which is terrorism, but this issue is sidestepped. The paper sees no reason to go into detail not because militancy is a non-issue, but because the real reason, Musharraf’s desire for power, is obvious enough; the paper does not need to logically argue what is evident.
The paper holds the same suspicion when discussing America, whom the paper views as a major actor during the Emergency. This view is not surprising, considering that Nawa-i-Waqt perceives Musharraf to be slavish to America. Both actors are portrayed as Machiavellian forces. On November 13, the paper writes that the Pakistan Government must act democratically, for Pakistan’s enemies – America and India – “will try to find some benefit for themselves out of this crisis” (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 13). This line of thinking continues a few days later. On November 19, the editorial discusses the American Government’s statements that the Emergency is not conducive to holding free, balanced, and transparent elections and urges Musharraf to end the Emergency. Though a strong ally of America, Musharraf rejected the demands. The paper questions Musharraf’s sudden recalcitrance when previously he acted upon American directives without hesitation.

American interference in internal matters kept increasing to the point that the Pakistan Government suddenly remembered that is a sovereign state and that it would not listen to anyone’s demands to end the Emergency (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 19).

What is the readership to draw from the paper’s suspicion of Musharraf and America? The Evaluations explain the Emergency primarily through the lens of forces who act in self-interest as opposed to the interests of the nation. This reason alone has caused the crisis. The issue of interest is a major point of contention to Nawa-i-Waqt to
the extent that, as the next section demonstrates, it continues to dominate in the Recommendations.

**Recommendations**

This section looks at *Nawa-i-Waqt’s* Recommendations, or its advice to elite actors. The Recommendations are dominated by the paper’s strong suspicion of the government and the West. On a content level, *Nawa-i-Waqt’s* Recommendations do not differ from other newspapers. The paper calls on the government to remove the Emergency, reinstate the former Supreme Court judges, lift restrictions on the media, hold free and fair elections, and ensure that Musharraf steps down as Chief of Army Staff. These Recommendations are consistently repeated over the 43-day period. Notably, the Recommendations follow an argumentation style also used by *Daily Times*, which follows the formulaic sentence, “If this does/does not happen, then X will happen.” The formula is intended to impress a sense of gravity upon the audience. The paper’s November 8 editorial uses this formula when talking about the government’s responsibility to hold elections. *Nawa-i-Waqt* warns the government that the Emergency is increasing public instability, which does not bode well for Pakistan:

In order to end the current disturbances and establish peaceful conditions, the PCO and Emergency must be rescinded and the pre-November 3
Supreme and High Courts judges must be restored so that there will be no protests against the elections. If this happens, then Pakistan will be saved from foreign pressure as well as domestic instability (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 8).

The paper is making two main Recommendations here: remove the Emergency and reinstate the judges. These two conditions are prerequisites for peaceful elections to take place. Conversely, the readership can assume that if this advice is not heeded, the government will be adversely affected and civil unrest will only increase.

The November 8 editorial is significant for another reason. Aside from this passage, discussion of the United States dominates the piece, as it does in other *Nawa-i-Waqt* editorials. Overall, the paper is strongly suspicious of the United States, and one editorial goes so far as to assert that the current crisis is a result of Musharraf’s “pro-American” policies (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 5). The suspicion stems not only from the country’s long-standing historical influence on Pakistani politics, but also from the paper’s nationalistic stance. In its November 19 editorial, the paper calls on the Pakistan Government to rescind its actions because it would be in the “interests” of the country:

[The government] should restore the judiciary, release all prisoners, hold transparent elections, and bring back the exiled leaders so that no party will think of boycotting the elections. This is in the interests of Pakistan. In this way the country can challenge international pressure. If
America adds military sanctions on to international pressure, then this will heavily cost general Musharraf (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 19).

The reader can interpret this passage in two ways. First, the Recommendation is calling on the government to act in a democratic manner because the paper’s ideology is consistent with those values. The reader can also interpret the emphasis on democracy as a form of self-preservation. *Nawa-i-Waqt* is calling on the government to act democratically because it will aver American sanctions.

The tone used in the November 19 editorial describing the West is mildly critical. The only signifier that indicates that the paper is against foreign influence is denoted in the word “challenge.” In other instances, however, the tone could be described as tolerant. *Nawa-i-Waqt*’s Recommendations merge with the voice of Western powers. Here arises and interesting tension. While the November 19 editorial advises the government to change its policies in order to avoid foreign reactions, signaling a suspicion towards the West, the paper also refers to these forces to add weight, legitimacy, and authority to the Recommendations as well increase the pressure against Musharraf. This strategy is used in the paper’s November 9 editorial:

America, Europe, Commonwealth countries, and the U.N. are putting pressure on our leaders to restore democracy by holding free, fair, and transparent elections immediately, removing restrictions on the judiciary and the press, and calling upon President Pervez Musharraf to
take off his uniform, and yet in this Pakistan that [was founded by Jinnah and Iqbal] moving down the path of democracy is becoming more and more difficult...In order for us to raise our heads with pride in front of the world, each one of us must fulfill our duty (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 9).

In this Recommendation there are no indications of hostility towards the West. In fact, the West’s Recommendations to Pakistan are implicitly viewed as good when compared to the unfortunate trajectory that Pakistan is going down.

The November 9 editorial does not overtly assign a role of culpability to a particular actor. Such an obvious designation is not needed – there is only one person who fits the role: Musharraf. Here arises a second dominant theme of the Recommendations, which is the emphasis on Musharraf’s interests above those of the nation. The November 9 Recommendations are targeted not towards the government, but towards the people. It calls on the people to “fulfill their duty” in order to save Pakistan. The paper’s lack of faith in the government is reasserted in a later editorial. The paper laments that contrary to his assertions Musharraf has not been a good leader over his tenure, but that

he should keep in mind the need for strengthening democracy and the country’s political administration. If he has indeed served the country well then he would not fear the return of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. Pakistan is based on an Islamic Republic not an individual’s personality (*Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 14).
These Recommendations put Musharraf into a bind. The paper is stating that he is not a good leader, yet it still calls on him to fulfill a good leader’s duty and strengthen democracy. This would entail him allowing the mainstream political party leaders, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, to return to the country and participate in elections. The return of these leaders would pose a great threat to Musharraf and possibly oust of him out of power. But his allowance for the return of political leaders would indicate that democratic values, not power, motivates his actions.

What exactly does the paper want of Musharraf? What becomes apparent from the Recommendations is that though the paper believes in the basic advice called for by all papers and civil society – the restoration of the constitution and judiciary, freeing the press, and holding free elections – it does not believe that Musharraf is capable of these tasks. This view is suggested in an earlier editorial. On November 4, the paper’s Recommendations reach out to the new emerging political forces – the mainstream parties – and ask them to not side with Musharraf (Nawa-i-Waqt, November 4). Musharraf, the paper asserts, is an individual who acts only for himself to such an extent that he has manipulated the country’s democratic foundations to suit himself. The paper adds gravely that any support for him would be futile since his days are numbered. To whom, then, are the Recommendations catering? Musharraf’s
government? The people? The international community? It should be noted that even though the paper is strongly in opposition to Musharraf, the Recommendations are still targeted for him, for though his reign is apparently coming to an end, at this point he still is the only actor with the ability to considerably alleviate the crisis.

Overall, the content of the Nawa-i-Waqt Recommendations do not differ significantly from those of other newspapers. This similarity reaffirms that even the most socio-politically conservative newspaper in Pakistan is in line with the rest of media and civil society. On a more subtle level, what these Recommendations demonstrate is that the paper holds slightly contradictory views of elite political actors. The paper is suspicious of the West, but also tolerant of its views; the paper calls on the Pakistan Government to make changes, but at the same time holds no faith in its capabilities. If a newspaper reflects power structures, then Nawa-i-Waqt’s tensions demonstrate that the country’s political hierarchy is in flux, and that the paper is trying to establish a sense of how the new emerging hierarchy will situate itself.

Summary

This chapter has given a broad overview of the discursive strategies used in major papers in Pakistan when describing the government during the Emergency. An
attempt has been made to show that while the basic components of the editorials – the Definition, Evaluation, and Recommendations – overlap, there are subtle yet significant differences in how these three elements are written. Ultimately, what this conclusion suggests is that the Emergency elicited similar reactions across Pakistan’s political spectrum, from liberal to conservative newspapers, regardless of language.
Chapter 6: Summary

Do the four newspapers collectively tell a story that is not apparent in their individual analyses? This chapter will make a comparative analysis between the newspapers, providing a larger picture about the situation of print media in present-day Pakistan. These conclusions will then be placed in the context of the country’s history of print media, showing whether or not there have been significant changes. In order to discuss these points, it is helpful to review the main discursive strategies used in each paper:
Table 1: Summary of salient characteristics and positions in the four newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Daily Times</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dawn</strong></th>
<th><strong>Jang</strong></th>
<th><strong>Nawa-i-Waqat</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>Factual; Informative; Positioning with the judiciary; Opposition to the government.</td>
<td>Short; Informal, Conversational; Emotional appeal.</td>
<td>Primary focus on opposition political parties; Complex positioning.</td>
<td>Factual; Informative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Musharraf’s desire for power.</td>
<td>Musharraf’s desire for power.</td>
<td>Multiple causes: terrorism, political parties; Direct and indirect criticism.</td>
<td>Musharraf’s desire for power; anti-American/anti-Indian; Pro-Islam slant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td>Directed towards Musharraf/government: Implement Democracy; Withdraw PCO; Reinstate judiciary; Hold elections; Remove media restrictions; Fight terrorism; Step down as Chief of Army Staff.</td>
<td>Directed towards Musharraf/government: Implement Democracy; Withdraw PCO; Reinstate judiciary; Hold elections; Remove media restrictions; Fight terrorism; Step down as Chief of Army Staff.</td>
<td>Directed towards multiple actors; Emergency justified if it brings democracy and fights terrorism; Diplomatic tone; Calls for the implementation of democracy.</td>
<td>Directed towards Musharraf/government: Implement democracy; Withdraw PCO; Reinstate judiciary; Hold elections; Remove media restrictions; Fight terrorism; Step down as Chief of Army Staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that there are both similarities and differences between the newspapers. To begin with, three of the four papers (Daily Times, Jang, and Nawa-i-Waqt) use the same Definition style, which is to summarize current events in a factual, narrative, and informative manner. The summaries are used in two different ways. In the first instance, the paper uses a narrative style Definition to support a larger argumentation scheme. The paper presents a situation, usually the actions or statements of elite actors, and then criticizes those very actions. Arguably, this strategy can be viewed as the papers’ attempts to make a "logical" argument. The papers are trying to demonstrate the inconsistencies and the irrationality of the elite actors by showing in their following paragraphs that the reality is otherwise. Both papers that use this style (Daily Times and Nawa-i-Waqt) stand unambiguously opposed to Musharraf, the government, and the Emergency. In the second instance, the factual summaries are used to mitigate the paper’s stance towards the Pakistan Government. Jang is the only paper to take a relatively more complex position. While for the most part the paper stands against the Emergency, there are moments when Jang believes that if the Emergency fulfills its stated objectives, then it is justified.

Jang’s Definitions are perhaps the most interesting of the four newspapers. In addition to its complexity, a second notable characteristic of the paper’s Definition is its focus. During the 43-day period of the Emergency, the most frequent topic of
discussion is the opposition political parties (22 times) followed by Musharraf (16 times). Why do other political actors overshadow Musharraf? There are several possible explanations. The focus on specific individuals usually reveals whom the paper thinks are the main political actors. Therefore, it could be said that Jang simply believes that the Emergency is a period of great political flux and that the hierarchy of actors is changing. No longer is Musharraf the only elite actor; a whole host of other individuals and political parties now share the space with him. Alternatively, the paper may be trying to cater to several groups’ interests by not taking an exclusive stance. Finally, it could also be argued that the paper is trying to mitigate criticism of the government by turning the focus away from Musharraf and towards the opposition parties. Most likely, this is the case since the Jang Corporation faced the harshest crackdown by the government during the Emergency.

These interpretations, however, remain inconclusive. The Definitions do not tell enough of a story about what papers think of Musharraf, the government, and the Emergency. The real story is told in the Evaluations and Recommendations. Here lies the crux of the argumentation, the strongest tones, and the clearest positionings. What story do these two framings reveal? The most striking aspect about the Evaluation is the criticism it levels against Musharraf. Three of the four papers (Daily Times, Dawn, and Nawa-i-Waqi) openly state that the only reason for the Emergency is none other
than Musharraf’s desire for power. Time and again, the three papers hold him responsible for Pakistan’s political crises. He is portrayed as "alienated", a sycophant to American policies, and interested only in maintaining his power at the expense of the nation. He is maligned and compared to the country’s previous dictators. There can be no more direct criticisms leveled against Musharraf than these assertions. Moreover, this perspective is consonant with many Pakistanis in general who have come to believe that the army’s and the government’s political objectives are directed towards self-aggrandizement even at the expense of national interest (Nawaz, 2008: xxxv). Not surprisingly, the only paper to take a less critical stance against Musharraf is Jang. The paper criticizes the Emergency and its outcomes, but is careful to attribute them solely to Musharraf. This stance is consistent with the Centre for Civic Education Pakistan’s media analysis which found that in its 2005 newspaper study the biggest editorial support came from Jang.

The divisions that are apparent in the Definitions and Evaluations are not so stark in the Recommendations. In the Recommendations, the newspapers’ voices merge. All papers, regardless of political ideology, call on the government to carry out the same set of actions: lift the PCO and Emergency, hold free and fair elections, allow freedom of expression and civil dissent, and allow free participation by opposition political parties. Here, though, Jang’s Recommendations differ slightly. Unlike the
other papers, it calls on all political actors, including Musharraf, the members of parliament, the opposition, judiciary, lawyers, and experts, to take action. This suggests that the paper does not place sole responsibility on Musharraf, but rather believes that multiple actors have the ability to effect political change.

What does this story tell us about the situation of print media in current day Pakistan? On one level, it shows that print media does indeed reflect public opinion. A poll conducted soon after November 3 revealed that 67% of Pakistanis opposed the Emergency (Gilani, 2007). Amongst the four newspapers, the opposition was stronger: 100% of the newspapers opposed the Emergency. What may account for the higher opposition amongst newspapers is that the political fallout of the Emergency had direct bearing upon the media more than civil society.

This case study sheds light on two current trends – the Urdu-English divide and the government-press relationship. The case study reveals that the traditional Urdu-English divide is no longer as stark as Tariq Rehman’s 2000 work on sociolinguistics in Pakistan suggests. In this instance, all papers came to the same conclusion. At the same time, there were some notable vestiges of the traditional divide. Jang was more diplomatic and supportive towards the government; Nawa-i-Waqt was very anti-US in its policies and mentioned Islamist parties as the moral right and Islam as the
justification for its stance; the English newspapers *Daily Times* and *Dawn* discussed religion but never made it part of their arguments.

In the current context, what these trends also reveal is that for a politically transitioning country, Pakistan’s media is quite lively and open to a significant degree. The press is able to voice its opinion even if those opinions oppose the government. This was not always the case in Pakistan. As mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, media in Pakistan was a tool of the state, and was often used to assist the government build a positive image. At times, the government was extraordinarily oppressive and censored newspapers when it deemed news content to be subversive. This trend continued well into the 1990s and well into Musharraf’s reign. The CCEP’s 2005 study on newspapers suggests that there were still vestiges of censorship, albeit self-censorship, that newspapers exhibited. The CCEP found that the newspapers were openly critical of the government on the most discussed topic, social issues. However, when it came to the second most discussed topic, government personalities, the criticism became muted. This phenomenon is not apparent in this case study. Newspapers discussed government personalities and directly criticized them. Does this shift indicate a new mentality in Pakistani media which is less inhibited to criticize the government and its actors? In short, the answer is yes. The case study reveals that
under extreme political stress, the newspapers were able to uphold the values of freedom of expression.

At the same time, it is difficult to assess the long-term impacts of the Emergency on media. There should be caution when making prognostications on the state of media based on this case study. The study covers an extraordinary moment in Pakistan’s history. Therefore the changes that were observed may be uncharacteristic. My intuitive guess about the change observed in the media during the Emergency is that though they are uncharacteristic, they are not ephemeral either. The factors that caused the noticeable change in media in November and December 2007 were in motion well before the Emergency. The unusual political circumstances simply highlighted the change.

What has accounted for these changes? Is it Musharraf’s media liberalization efforts? Globalization? The market? Or journalistic professionalism? Most likely, the change in media is a result of all these factors. These findings do not agree with other Pakistan media observers’ conclusions. Internews Network, an organization that seeks to improve access to news information, reported in its Annual State of Pakistan Media Report that 2007-2008 was the worst year ever for Pakistani media. Internews’ conclusion was based on the statistics that 15 journalists had been killed, 357 arrested or abducted, 123 assaulted, 154 threatened or harassed, and that there were 18 attacks
on media property (Internews, 2008). The report adds that of 375 journalists that were arrested or abducted, 40 were arrested by police or by intelligence agencies. This report provides an important angle to the case study. It shows that there is much intimidation by state authorities regarding the press. As such, it would logically follow that this factor should significantly affect the writing, production, and editing processes of the news organization. Ultimately, the change in the processes would be revealed in the editorials. Furthermore, it would be logical to conclude that under duress, newspapers express supportive viewpoints of the government. This is not the case during the Emergency. There has been a break from this cycle of government intimidation and its resultant obeisance by the media. Instead, what is observable is a defiance of this decades old relationship. The relationship is no longer as interdependent as it used to be, most likely due to the factors already mentioned. In this light, the Internews Report’s conclusions should be interpreted in terms of the journalistic conditions and not necessarily news content. There appears to be a disconnect in the news process. In other words, though the conditions for Pakistani journalists have increasingly become dangerous, they have not necessarily stopped the Pakistani press from printing politically risky material. If there is a final conclusion that can be made about the situation of media in Pakistan’s current context, it can be said that even under the most
trying political circumstances, media has the potential to uphold high journalistic ideals.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

I have been observing Pakistani media since 2003. The findings of this case study were both a surprise as well as expected. On one hand, I predicted that the divide between Urdu and English would be less apparent than before. Many news organizations have realized that by maintaining the Urdu-English divide, they are preaching to the choir. There have been a number of initiatives in which liberal news organizations have started publishing in Urdu to reach out to a different segment of society. Urdu sources are undertaking the same endeavors. Entertainment channels and stations are blurring the lines by producing programs that are in both languages.

A second point of fascination for me during this research was discovering the disconnect between outsiders’ perception of Pakistan and the reality. Part of my study of Pakistani media over the years has been intertwined with learning about outside media perceptions of the country. More often than not, the image is negative. Pakistan is known for being a dangerous country where gender discrimination, militancy, religious intolerance, and political authoritarianism prevail. These images go intuitively against the reality that Pakistani media exhibits more media freedoms than some other countries in democratically transitioning phases. The vibrancy of the Pakistani press is something to be hopeful about. It suggests that media, and by
extension Pakistani society, are going through some turbulent political changes. The country has not only been strengthened by these challenges but has also changed in beneficial ways. This change bodes well for Pakistan.
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