

## LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF OFFENDER, VICTIM AND CRIME IN NEWS STORIES ON CHILD SEX ABUSE: A CRITICAL STYLISTICS ANALYSIS

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### Abstract

*The present study attempts to investigate the representation of ideologies in the news stories on crime in English newspaper of Pakistan which construct offender, victim and crime in child sex abuse cases. The study uses Jefferies' (2010) Critical Stylistics as a framework which provides a more developed and rigorous set of analytical tools (Tabbert, 2013) in form of a number of textual-conceptual functions. The results obtained through this framework are rigorous, objective and replicable. Child sex abuse (CSA) is becoming a worldwide burning issue and according to Sahil NGO report 2019, the number of CSA victims in Pakistan is increasing. The news stories concerning child sex abuse were collected and analyzed qualitatively. The results indicate that various linguistic devices were used to construct the offender which showed the construction was not neutral. He was termed as a criminal in the news stories before being tried in the court. However, the authoritative persons termed him as a suspect. The victim's construction influenced the offender's construction as well. The ideologies which construct the victim and crime are perpetuating stereotypes which ultimately arouse sympathies for the victim and aversion for the offender as the offender is constructed as an evil monster that does not have any qualms. The results also demonstrated that nouns naming crime had frequently been used. Crime naming nouns and verbs often occurred with offender naming nouns and victim naming nouns which demonstrated the close proximity among crime, the offender and the victim.*

**KEYWORDS:** Critical discourse analysis, critical stylistics, offender, victim, crime, child sex abuse

### Introduction

Cottle (2008) defines crime as a social phenomenon. The crime consists in the offender's biography which reflects his/her childhood experience upon which a reader draws conclusions about him/her. This is why when a reader reads criminal stories of Joseph Fritzl and Rosmary West; he/she makes an assumption of their past experiences. Kurtz and Hunter (2004) assert that serial killers' biographies disclose a dreadful history of their being abused in the past. We can draw conclusions after reading the biographies of serious criminals that these individuals fell a victim to their childhood trauma. However, childhood traumas are not the only factors which make these individuals criminals. Social causes also embolden an offender to commit crimes. When the phenomenon of crime is studied, the person should be detached from the crime he commits. Gregoriou (2011) states that media give an offender celebrity-like status and the offender resultantly join the ranks of famous. Mayr (2012) states that media accord a criminal a celebrity like treatment when they portray a crime as a source of amusement and as a thing which the community can eat up and enjoy themselves. The public takes interest in the wrongdoings of an offender merely because he/she is practicing a deviant behavior and a deviant behavior is a sought-after entity for media.

Discourse mirrors a social reality but media discourse does not merely portray a reality. Media discourse related to a crime mediate a reality. Crime news is also handled by police and courts

besides media. A reader can trace differences between the depiction of crime by authoritative agencies like courts, police and the media. But the public rarely discerns these subtle differences and usually looks towards media to gain knowledge on crime (Gregoriou, 2011). Media present a social reality in the form of unsophisticated stereotypes (Gregoriou, 2011) and it is a social convention that police or court of law should take up a crime but people do not receive true information on crime through these agencies (Cottle, 2008).

Durkheim (1938) states that such handling of crime exhibits traditions, conventions, taboos, norms and stereotypes of a society. Whatever crime is represented it is linguistically constructed in the form of a news. Greer (2003) considers crime news a prime news and Jewkes (2009) states that news becomes prime news because it offers glimpses of people's private life. Jewkes (2009) describes that phenomena like policing, forensic investigation and criminality are of prime importance to people. This is why news stories on crime in the print and electronic media has special significance for the readers and viewers (O' Hara, 2012). The news texts published in newspapers carry ideologies and these ideologies cannot be "read off" the text (Fairclough, 1992a). These ideologies produce a self-perpetuating set of information which influences and reshapes public point of view about crime. This study attempts to uncover the hidden ideologies on crime which construct offender, victim and crime in the news stories on crime published in English newspapers of Pakistan.

### **Research objective**

- To highlight linguistic choices that construct offender, victim and crime in news stories.

### **Research questions**

- How offender, victim and crime are linguistically constructed in news stories?

### **Critical language studies**

Linguistics as a discipline studies a language scientifically and critical language studies has not been dealt as a branch of language study. Instead, it has been settled as an orientation towards language. It is instilled with power relations and ideological processes of which people are not conscious (Fairclough, 1992c: 7). Fairclough (1992a) states that Michael Foucault's (a French philosopher) contribution to popularize the concept of discourse is significant and the method of discourse analysis can partly be attributed to his influence (P: 37). Foucault's impact on critical languages is quite visible. This is why; his concepts regarding critical language are being stated here. Fairclough (1992) quotes Foucault that character of power carries political connection in modern societies. Foucault (1997) presumes dualism between knowledge and power and elucidates that power progresses on the premise of knowledge and the method of accumulating knowledge employs power (P: 50). According to Fairclough (1992) the concept of discourse, language and power is of significant importance in modern societies (p: 50). Teo (2000) contends that language is a primary source to transmit, represent, and produce ideology (P: 11) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a powerful approach to investigate and uncover the hidden ideologies and Foucault's contribution to Critical Linguistics and CDA is very significant.

### **Critical Linguistics**

Fairclough (1992a) narrates that a group of renowned linguists like Hodge, Fowler and Kress from the University of East Anglia unfolded an approach to investigate language in 1970. This

approach integrates a method to conduct a linguistic analysis of a text with a social theory. Kress & Hodge (1979) state that the foundations of Critical Linguistics rest on Halliday's (1985) Functional approach. Fowler et al., (1979) invented this term in their seminal work "*Language and Control*." Fowler (1991) states that critical linguistics implies an investigation into the relationship of semantics, signs and social historical environment which uses a particular kind of linguistic analysis and controls the semiotic formation of discourse. He offers a set of tools-kit to carry out an analysis. These tools are often used to investigate representation of beliefs and values which appear in the text when the writer comments or reports on the world (Fowler, 1991: 88). The analytical set of tools consists of agentless passive voice, speech acts, transitivity modality, lexical structure and syntactic formation (Jeffries, 2007: 12). But Fowler himself admits that this analytical tools-kit is incomplete (Fowler, 1991: 89). However, it should be regarded a remarkable measure that proceeds to settle an analytical tools-kit (Jeffries, 2010: 12) meant to be utilized in Critical Language Studies. Van Leeuwen (1996) raises objection against this set of analytical tools. He points out that many relevant instances of agency may be disregarded when, once, the certain linguistic operations and categories are bound to the textual analysis. This criticism underlines the fact that the analytical apparatus of Critical Linguistics and Critical Language Studies develops from Linguistics and so far a general theory of language (within critical linguistics) has not been evolved (Jeffries, 2007: 13). Another point of critique is a connection between the list of tools of linguistics and Halliday's metafunctions. Fowler contests that speech acts and modality are personal elements (Jeffries, 2010a: 13). It implies that the remaining apparatus in the list are to be considered as ideational features of a language (Jeffries, 2010a: 13). She infers that it sounds there is a dearth of complete description of linguistic features in Fowler's list of analytical tools (Jeffries, 2010a: 13). So, Jeffries felt the need to develop a new framework *Critical Stylistics* which will be detailed later on.

### **Critical Stylistics-a Methodological Approach**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) finds its roots in Critical Linguistics. CDA is conventionally used to analyze ideologies in non-literary texts and Stylistics traditionally focuses on literary genres. Both analytical systems have their demerits and Critical Stylistics is a research method of analysis whose objective is to do away with the gap which exists between CDA and Stylistics.

Critical Stylistics aims at assembling the main function that a piece of text has to represent a reality (Jeffries, 2010: 14). In terms of methodology and theory Critical Stylistics may be regarded a developed form of CDA (Jeffries, 2007; 2010)). The main point of critique on CDA is that it lacks its own comprehensive tools-kit which a researcher can use to analyze a text. Critical Stylistics endeavors to counter this critique by presenting a systematic apparatus for analysis. Critical Stylistics incorporates analytical tools from critical linguistics and Stylistics so that it could reveal linguistic choices that a text producer uses and the possible ideological implications of these choices (Jeffries, 2007, 2010).

CDA appreciates a text, particularly a media text and creates and reflects ideologies for the reader (Weiss and Wodak, 2003: 3) because text triggers ideologies and ideologies cannot be read off the text (Fairclough, 2005). CDA investigates semiotic data (spoken, written, and visual) systematically and de-mystifies ideology, power and inequality dealt in a text (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3). The notion of power, ideology and discourse which are defined variously are essence of all CDA studies and a variety of methodological and theoretical approaches

characterize CDA (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). CDA has its roots in a broad group of disciplines which include philosophy, rhetoric, sociolinguistics, anthropology, cognitive science and applied linguistics (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 1). This is why there are a number of methodological and theoretical perspectives of multidisciplinary focus. CDA has a little concern with a detailed linguistic analysis because of its eclectic approach. CDA is politically and socially committed (Khosarvrik, 2009) and it approaches extensive social issues on the premise of philosophical and social theories. (Mayr, 2008) and Van Dijk (2011) calls CDA a social movement and it has political leanings and CDA focuses on political agenda and a great deal of research in CDA is carried from a political perspective whereas Critical Stylistics is not associated with any political outlook (Olaluwoye, 2015: 88). This results in as Jeffries points out in a random coverage of linguistic structures and lack of comprehensive tools-kit renders it difficult to apply it to analyze a text (2010: 6). CDA researches have therefore been criticized as subjective because the tools for analysis are chosen subjectively and findings are labeled as more of a political act or statement. CDA is also accused of lacking rigor, objectivity and replicability. As Critical Stylistics integrates tools of Stylistics and Critical Linguistics and is a method which aims at finding ideology in a text. This framework (Critical Stylistics) provides a more developed and rigorous set of analytical tools (Tabbert, 2013:77) which consist of a number of textual-conceptual functions. These functions negotiate meaning between linguistic structures and language in context. Jeffries claims that textual-conceptual functions of Critical Stylistics form a part of Halliday's ideational meta-functions of language. These meta-functions indicate the ways which employ language to form world-views (Jeffries, 2014). Ideologies are imbedded in a text and the textual-conceptual functions of Critical Stylistics help uncover them.

Jeffries (2010a) outlined the following tools of Critical Stylistics.

<b>Conceptual category /Textual function</b>	<b>List of analytical tools / Formal realization</b>
Naming and Describing	The choice of a noun to indicate a referent; nominalization; the construction of noun phrases with modifiers (in pre- and post-positions) to further determine the nature of the referent
Representing Actions/Events/States	The choice of a verb, transitivity (Simpson, 1993)
Equating and Contrasting	Antonymy, equivalence (parallel structure) and opposition (Jeffries, 2010b)
Exemplifying and Enumerating	Two, three or four-part lists indicating hyponymous and meronymous sense relations
Prioritizing	Transformation of grammatical constructions (e.g. active to passive voice); clefting.
Implying and Assuming	Implicature and presupposition



Negating	The creation of unrealized worlds (Nahajec, 2009)
Hypothesizing	Modality (Simpson, 1993)
Presenting other's speech and thoughts	Speech and Thought Presentation (Semino & Short, 2004; Short, 1996)
Representing time. space and society	Text World Theory (Werth, 1999), Deixis, choice of verb tense, Possible Worlds Theory (Ryan, 1991)

### Methodology

The present study is of qualitative nature. It uses Critical Stylistics whose textual-conceptual functions bring rigor, objectivity and replicability. Data consist of news stories related to child sex abuse and news stories particularly Zainab Case of Kasur has been chosen because this case has been much mediatized and had follow up stories as well. This case sparked protests and riots in the city which mobilized not only the police but also judiciary and parliamentarians. The news related to child sex abuse were collected from a renowned English newspapers of Pakistan namely The Nation, the News and the Express Tribune. The news concerning Zainab case and the news which obliquely have reference to Zainab case in 2018 and 2019 were selected for analysis. The news were retrieved from the archives of the newspapers. The Zainab incident took place in January 2018 and the offender was sentenced to death. This is a landmark case in the history of the country because it was decided in a short span of time. The data include other stories than Zainab case of Kasur as well. The nature of the other stories is also child sex abuse.

### Data analysis

The news stories consist of 218 sentences out of which 71 sentences are passive voice and 149 sentences are active voice. 103 sentences deal with offender and 115 sentences discuss the victim. The aim is to discover linguistic features which represent ideologies to construct offender, victim and crime.

### *Linguistic construction of offender*

This part of the article deals with how offender is linguistically constructed in the news stories on crime.

#### *Offenders - Naming and describing*

The newspaper stories refer to an offender in terms of noun choices. This is one aspect to view the offender (Erwin-Tripp, 1969; Richardson, 2007: 49). Names and labels are normally given by dominant groups and they put dominant ideologies into code (Mills 2005:76). Noun phrases or nominal references, with or without pre-modifier or post-modifier are linguistic devices used to construct an offender. *Rapist, killer, abductor, suspect, year-old, familiar and gang* are nouns which are lexically important to construct an offender. The offender is presented in contrast to the victim as mean, cruel, black and monster and evil incarnate. Offender's construction in one dimension reduces him to only one role of offending. The offender's construction is binary as opposed to the victim. It is Derrida's (1967, 2005) concept of deconstruction to use binary

opposites in the construction of meaning and value. The linguistics analysis provides the analyst a critical stance to identify the opposition in offenders' and victims' construction (Davies, 2012; Jeffries, 2010b)). The nouns suspect, killer, familiar and old-year have been used in the following to construct the offender.

*Example 1: "No suspect has been apprehended since nobody has pointed figure (towards the culprit) in Zainab murder case yet. We have a clue and we are working on those lines in the light of the CCTV footage,"* (January 11, 2018, The Nation)

*Example 2: "The killer seems to be familiar with the child since the girl could be seen (in the footage) strolling with him quite comfortably."* (January 11, 2018, the News)

*Example 3: The Anti-terrorism Court on Friday issued black warrants for 24-year-old Imran — convicted for the rape and murder of seven-year-old Zainab. (18-02-2018: Thr Express Tribune)*

*Example 4: Prime suspect of Zainab murder case-Imran Ali-has challenged the verdict of Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Lahore High Court. (20-02-2018, the Nation)*

In the first example the statement issued by the spokesperson of Punjab government uses the word suspect which implicitly suggests that the authorities are not still sure of who is the murderer of the minor girl.

The second example constructs the offender as a familiar person on whom the child may trust. This supports the notion that in child abuse cases the offender usually belongs to the victim's family or may be one of the acquaintances.

Police and courts are also source of knowledge on crime. In example 3, Anti-Terrorism Court issues warrant for the offender and is now an established offender of raping and murdering a minor girl. The offender is also being constructed with an evaluative adjective, a pre-modifier, 24-year-old. The modifier impliedly sheds light on the cruelty and monstrosity of the murderer because in the subordinate clause on the moral scale we find an innocent victim who is being contrasted as a seven-year-old female minor. The newspaper uses proper nouns of the offender to point out the exact identification of the perpetrator.

#### *Representing actions/events/states-transitivity and verb voice*

Transitivity is a grammatical source to relate experiences. It is a Hallydayan concept which is used to describe the ideational meaning of experiential world. It reflects the writer/ speaker's mental experience of reality through text (written/spoken). Transitivity model has been an important tool in the tradition of Stylistics and Critical Linguistics. Jeffries (2010: 40) chiefly depends on Simpson's (1993) model of transitivity to describe this tool. There are two concepts of transitivity. The first one emanates from the traditional grammar. It states the verbs are either transitive or intransitive. The second one is developed by Halliday (1985) and further developed by Simpson (1993) is 'much less completely based on structure' (Jeffries, 2010a: 39). Simpson observes that his model encourages the readers to do specific interpretations of texts and helps investigate how certain meanings and ideologies are suppressed and certain are pushed forward to create a world view. Simpson (1993:96) states the transitivity model can answer the essential question "who or what does what to whom or what?" The model demands to know how the offender is presented in certain news. Transitivity model also involves voice, whether the offender is being presented as an agent or he/she is just being acted upon i.e. patient.

Simpson (1993) has divided processes in different groups which state, action, speech or state of mind. In the analysis, I found Material Action Intention processes.

*Example 5: Imran Ali, 24, was on trial for the killing of six-year-old Zainab. The police arrested Imran Ali, a neighbour of the minor and charged him with rape and murder. (the News: December 10, 2019)*

*Example 6: In all cases, the bodies of children were recovered from near their homes... Zainb's body was also dumped near her house. (The Nation: Jan9, 2018)*

*Example 7: He fled to Pakpattan after the release.*

*Example 8: Numerous suspects were arrested in the case and there DNA was taken from them, the police said. (the Express Tribune: March, 2018)*

In these examples, words like *killing*, *arrested*, *recovered*, *fled* fall in the category of Material Action Intention (MAI). These words foreground the offender an active, brutal and merciless agent who has become a predator to prey an innocent minor girl. He was shrewd and he knew that the police would not spare him, so he fled to a nearby town.

**Mental processes.** Transitivity system presents our mental experiences (sensing, meaning, being, and becoming) of reality in form linguistic processes. Mental processes reflect the on-going development in the mind of *senser* or what *senser* is thinking about the *phenomenon*.

*Example 9: Prime suspect of Zainab murder case-Imran Ali-has challenged the verdict of Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Lahore High Court (LHC). (December 10, 2019)*

In this example, we note that the culprit Imran feels that the verdict of court is unsettling for him and his experience is being reflected by the verb *challenge*. To pass an order does not show doing a material action. So, *challenged* is a mental process and Imran is a *senser* and verdict is a *phenomenon*. This mental process signifies though Imran is proved guilty through DNA test and he still thinks that he can find some relief from the LHC.

**Verbal process.** The verbal processes include all types of expressing and indicating, even they may not necessarily be verbal like “show.” Example 10 carries an example of verbal process in which Chief Justice of Pakistan is ordering Lahore High Court not to take up Imran’s appeal because the Apex Court has already taken up this case and taking up the case by the Apex Court constructs Imran as a high profile offender against whom court proceeding should be conducted promptly and that, too, in the highest court of the country.

*Example 10: Headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar, a three-judge bench passed the order at the top court’s Lahore registry.*

*Equating and contrasting*

Oppositional meanings can be constructed by the usage of antonyms and also by negation (Jeffries, 2010b). Two events are brought under discussion, are stated or contrasted to each other. Non-events are opposed against events, non-existence against existence and non-states against states and construct an invisible world (Nahajec, 2009: 109).

Examples of opposition can be stated here.

*Example 11: 24-year-old Imran — convicted for the rape and murder of seven-year-old Zainab.*

In example the offender who is 24-year-old is being contrasted with the victim who is described as seven-year-old. It simultaneously constructs the offender and the victim as a powerful young man and a weak innocent child. The offender’s brutality and the victim’s innocence are no match to each other and this contrastive analysis of theirs present the offender as an abominable evil incarnate and the victim as a weak and innocence incarnate which evoke the feelings of revulsion against the offender and empathy for the victim.

### *Exemplifying and enumerating*

This includes generic categories and their examples, and most often the long list of members is enumerated. Opposites and equivalences are textually created (Jeffries 2010). There are numerous and different kinds of techniques which set up exemplifications. They may be adverbs and verbs as *include*. Supposing such relationship help the text, too, to establish a further ideological tools. Example can be viewed here.

*Example 12: the Anti-terrorism Court (ATC) hearing the high-profile case sentenced Imran to death four times.*

The court has constructed the offender as an established criminal. This is why he is awarded capital punishment. The court has come down on the criminal and awarded him death penalty four times and made him an example in the society that the evil doers will be dealt mercilessly. The numerical prescriptor *four* constructs the anger of the court as well.

*Example 13: The Senate passed the bill criminalizing sexual assault against minors, child trafficking and pornography for the first time in history of Pakistan. (December 10, 2019: The Nation)*

Because Zainab Case was a high profile case in the country it created ripples at every level. It was followed by another case of child abuse. It also appeared in Kasur where 300 children, almost boys were kidnapped, raped and video-taped. Hitherto in the country there was no such law which could deal sexual assault on minors, their trafficking and video-typing as a criminal activity. The Senate passed first time the law which declares aforementioned activities as a crime. This legislation constructs the offenders are stigma in the society and that they are criminals liable to be prosecuted.

### *Implying and assuming*

Two tools presupposition and implicature help achieve this textual-conceptual function. Presupposition assumes the presence or existence of an entity or action or event. For example, in noun phrase (NP) "her love making" there is a possessive pronoun "her" which describes the existence of a nominalized action of sexual activity and it also presupposes the existence of a female participant. In another example: He stopped fighting, the verb "stopped" assumes that a male person was previously fighting. Assuming and implicatures are based on Grice's maxims of conversation. These are the perceived and implied meaning in a text which the reader has to discover.

*Example 14: Nothing seems to have changed in Kasur after Zainab's murder case, which was highlighted by the media effectively. (10 April, 2018: The Nation)*

### *Presenting other's speech/ and thoughts*

Tabbert (2012) describes presenting other's speech and thoughts a manipulative way to implant others; views in the reader's mind. This is very much true when the authorities are quoted which give the verbiage a high rate of assumed truthfulness. This paves the way for misrepresentation when a less faithful quotation is compared with original statement. Leech and Short categorize the following: Direct Speech (DS), Indirect Speech (IS), Free Indirect Speech (FIS), Narrator's report of Speech Act (NRSA) and Narrator's presentation of Voice (NV) in descending order of faithfulness.

*Example 15: "The house is 300 meters away and her brother Usman used to go with her but on that day seven-year-old was alone," he said. (June12, 2018: the Nation)*



Example 16: “We carried out investigation not only in Kasur but also in Lahore, Sheikhpura, Okara and Nanakana Sahib [where such cases have occurred],” said Idrees. “Many people are missing but I’m hopeful that he (the culprit) will appear soon,” the officer said. (January 22, 2018: the Nation)

Example 17: “The footage is not so clear, unfortunately,” he said. “The killer seems to be familiar with the child since the girl could be seen (in the footage) strolling with him quite comfortably.” (January 11, 2018: the Nation)

Example 15 is the statement of DIG/RPO who is also head of JIT. This statement indicates as it is the routine of the victim to go to the nearby house to take her lessons of Quran, the offender might live in the vicinity area because the house where the minor victim got lessons was just a few yards away from her house. It constructs the offender is a known person and lives nearby. Example 16 is also the statement of the head of JIT that sheds light on the shrewdness of the offender that he might have fled to the adjacent towns. The thoughts of the head of JIT construct the offender a very clever person who may abscond in order to escape the consequences of the incident and we see his suspicions was true because the offender fled to Pakpatten example 7. Example 17 is the statement of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of the Punjab. His statement constructs the offender as an acquaintance to the victim. He gives reference to the CCTV footage where the minor child can be seen walking comfortably with the kidnapper. However, the footage is not as clear as can help identify the offender. All these statements are issued by the authoritative persons who lend credibility and trustworthiness to the thoughts and action being done to apprehend the criminal.

Having outlined the linguistic choice to construct the offender, it is to be noted that active voice sentences are frequently used to construct the offender. The reason is that he is an agent and is doing an action on the victim. It is noted that in many sentences the offender is mentioned by his name as Imran. Where his name is not mentioned, offender related nouns like rapist, killer and criminal is used with pre-modifier the definite article *the*. Mostly past indefinite tense is used to construct the offender and his actions. There was a tacit denial of offence by the offender when he appeals in the Lahore High Court against the verdict of Anti-terrorism court saying that he was dissatisfied with the decision. The Apex Court of Pakistan intervenes and upholds the decision of trial court.

The second part of the research question is to determine how the victim is linguistically constructed in the news on crime in the newspapers. Most of the sentences in the construction of the offender were active voice where as in the present case, in victim’s construction, majority of the sentences are in passive voice.

### ***Linguistic construction of victim***

This section deals with the linguistic construction of victim in news stories on crime.

#### ***Victims - Naming and Equating***

*Year-old, minor, child, children, boy, girl, boys, girls* are nouns which have been used in media reports on crime published in the newspapers to construct the victim. Out of these nouns, only one noun *year-old* has already been identified lexically important in the offender’s construction. The above mentioned nouns have been used repeatedly to describe the victimhood of the same victim. The nouns naming are modified by evaluative adjectives and provide information about the victim, for instance, the victim’s age, sex and his/her relations with the offender or offender’s

family. Victim's social standing and the harm inflicted to the victim and its effects on the social system and society. The noun *victim* is a neutral noun which does not specify biological sex of the sufferer in many instances and it becomes difficult for the reader to infer the sex of the victim until the reader has comprehensive knowledge of the story. In the data of this study both neutral and sex determining nouns have been repeatedly used. There are thirteen sentences when victims are mentioned by their original names. For example, Zainab, Kasur case (eleven sentences) and again Zainab (Sialkot case) is mentioned by her name once and three boys Suleman, Akram and Ali Husnin, in another case of Chuniyan, are mentioned one time. Apart from this number of sentences, the victims are mentioned with pre-modifiers like year-old or post-modifiers like minors, girls and minor boys. Victims are mentioned mainly in passive voice sentences and offenders are placed in the position of subject.

*Example 20: The six-year-old, who went missing on January 4, was found dead in a trash heap in Kasur on Jan 9. (July17, 2018: The News)*

In this example victim-naming nouns are neutral. Here *six-year-old* refers to Zainab, a minor who was abducted, raped and murdered. The offender is impliedly presented as a brute because he treats the dead body as filth. Therefore, he dumps the dead body in a heap of rubbish. The victim is mentioned first and foregrounded as weak and helpless child and offender is constructed implicitly as a callous in the second part of the sentence. The recovery of her body from garbage renders her as a valueless and useless entity. The offender's such brutal approach towards a human being causes moral outrage (Mayr & Machin, 2012: 18)

*Example 21: Sources close to police investigators revealed that there were visible marks of torture on her face and congestion in her muscles while her tongue was badly bruised and injured as it was pressed between her teeth. She said the hyoid bone was fractured, indicating strangulation. (January11, 2018: The Nation)*

The bruised body, fractured bone of jaw, pressed tongue between her teeth and cramped muscles of the victim foreground and construct her as a weak prey and it also reveals that she was badly beaten before her death and this constructs sympathy for the victim. The whole sentence is passive voice and places the victim in position of object and she becomes the center of attention of the readers

*Example 22: In January, 2018, 12 minors went missing in 10 kilometers radius of the city. (December 10, 2019: The Nation)*

In this example, the sentence is modified by a cardinal adjective. The victim naming noun is again neutral and a pre-modifier is used to impart the number of the victims who went missing in short time of a month and areas is particularly mentioned in order to portray the gruesomeness of the incident and apathy of law enforcement agencies which are doing nothing.

*Example23: Police claimed on Monday to have recovered the dead body of a missing six-year-old rape victim Zainab from a closet. Zainab, 6, daughter of labourer Rashid Ali went to neighbour Iqbal Jabro's house. (December 10, 2019: The Nation)*

*Example 24: The report revealed that around 300 children, mostly boys, were raped and then video-taped. (December 10, 2019: The Nation)*

*Example 25: The bodies of three minor boys were recovered from the Chunian Tehsil of Kasur. 12-year-old Muhammad Imran, 8-year-old Suleman Akram and 9-year-old Ali Husnain had gone missing. (October 8, 2019 The Nation)*

Again, in these examples the target words *year-old* appear before victim naming head nouns as pre-modifying descriptive adjectives which construct the victims as a minor and a female person in *example 23* and as minors male and female person in *example 25* because a pre-modifier *almost* precedes head noun *boy* and it foregrounds that girls were also raped and video-taped. However, the number of boys victims is greater than the girls and in *example 25* proper nouns has been modified by descriptive adjectives and all these victims were raped and murdered and their bodies were recovered from different places. In *example 25* where mostly boys are mentioned were raped and video-taped and the crime rape being video-taped and the number of victims constructs the offenders as an organized gang along with the victims' construction. When we take into account Christie's (1986) views that victim and offender's construction depends on each other. Victim's construction is only one aspect of the picture. In the present example, the text constructs the victims and at the same time affects the offenders' construction and presents them as powerful and merciless predator animals that are chasing innocent children. Proper noun *Zainab* along with an evaluative adjective is mentioned to depict her biological sex. The name of victim's father is also mentioned to construct him as a laborer only to portray the victim and victim's father's helplessness. Descriptive adjective *neighbour* is being used here to modify the offender who is no other than a known one whom the child can trust.

#### *Victims - presenting processes and states*

Majority of processes in the data consist of Material Action Intention (MAI). In the above examples, the findings suggest the results of transitivity analysis of the offenders are interlocked with the already mentioned results that the victims are mainly found in the object position *i.e. raped, video-taped, murdered* all are MAI and put the victims at the recipient ends. In the analysis of verbs, I found simple past was used followed by simple present tense and present continuous tense is also used occasionally. Present tense is used when authorities are quoted and present perfect tense is also seldom used. Doing verb voice analysis, I found active voice and passive voice. Journalistic language employs passive voice in a strategic manner. The reporters use passive voice deliberately leaving the identity of the agent unspecified or when they do not have any clue of the doer or they want to hedge the identity of the agent (Busa, 2014: 102). The example of active voice is in the following example:

*Example 26: Police recovered the dead body of a missing six-year-old rape victim. (July 7, 2018: Example: The Nation) Muhammad Amin Ansari, the father of seven-year-old Zainab who was sexually assaulted and murdered in Kasur earlier this year, has urged the heads of major political parties. (July 17, 2018: the Nation)*

Verbal processes are also found in the text. Verbal processes contribute to creating narrative by setting up distinctive dialogues. Verbs like *say, speak, state, ask etc.* belong to this category of processes.

*Example 27: The prosecutors said he received further life imprisonment and fines totalling 3.2 million rupees (\$30,000) for additional charges of hiding his victim's body. (June 12, 2018: The Nation)*

#### *Victims - Presenting opinions*

In examples 28, 29 & 30 we find speech presentation in form of direct speech which quotes spokesperson of the Government of the Punjab and the head of Joint Investigation Team (JIT) in the example 29 and offender's advocate in the example 30. I found direct speeches and they were issued either by police officers or judicial officers.

*Example 28: "The suspect is not identified, and so far, nobody came up to reveal his name," Ahmad Khan said. (January 11, 2018: The Nation)*

This is statement of spokesperson of The Government of Punjab. He is of opinion that the police are trying to land the culprit, and nobody came up with a cue that can help police arrest the criminal. In the second part of the same quote it is stated that the only evidence the police can rely is CCTV footage which unfortunately is blur.

*Example 29: "In all cases, the bodies of children were recovered from near their homes... Zainab's body was also dumped near her house; that shows the mindset of the criminal," he observed. (January 22, 2018: The Nation)*

This is the statement of the head of Joint Investigation Team (JIT). While probing he came to know that besides Zainab, a number of other children were abducted, raped and murdered, the common thing, according to the head of JIT, is the way how the culprit disposes the bodies of victims. The head suspects that in all the cases the offender appears to be the same person.

When such statements come from the persons holding great places lend credibility and trustworthiness to what they say and the readers can gather plenty of implied information about the case under discussion.

*Example 30: "Legal essentials were not fulfilled during hearing of the case," he argued. (February 20, 2018: The Nation)*

This statement is offender's advocate who is pleading on behalf of his client against the punishment meted out to him (the culprit) by Anti-terrorism Court. The offender was trialed in the anti-terrorism court because in Pakistan any offence that spreads terror is termed terrorism. The offender believes that he has not been trialed fairly and legal essentials were to be fulfilled to mete out justice to him.

#### *Victims - Presenting time and space*

The most frequently used tense in victim related sentences are in simple present and simple past tenses. Deixis e.g. (*in 2015*) are also used in order to anchor events in terms of time. One of the features of newspaper style is the use of present tense (Bednarek & Caple, 2012: 87, 88) that keeps the effects of crime evergreen and constructs the crime in present and the fear of crime is kept alive with the help of this device. Besides it, according to Bednarek and Caple (2012) the present tense is employed to maintain the recency and relevance of the incident.

I have used the major linguistic tools to construct victim. Naming choices provide information about the victim. It is important to note that majority of the naming nouns which construct the victim do not provide information about the actual biological sex of the victim. Different tools have been employed for the linguistic construction of the victim. The use of pre-modifiers and post-modifiers construct a relationship between the offender and victim though this relation is produced through crime. Victim naming nouns are mostly used in object position and are just recipient of action of the agent. Epistemic modality is not used to describe the innocence because the crime was established through DNA test and the confession of the offender. The victim naming nouns foreground the aspects which are termed stereotypes to construct victim,



particularly victims' innocence and weakness are linguistically foregrounded. The construction the victim ultimately leads to the construction of the offender's as well in which readers are mostly interested in due to his/her deviant behavior.

### ***Linguistic construction of crime***

The current section consists of linguistic construction of crime in news stories of crime.

#### ***Crime-naming***

Following are the nouns and verbs which construct crime and are frequently used in the data: *assault, murder, crime, rape, kidnaped, attacked, terror, prison, death-sentence, capital punishment, imprisonment, offender, victim, kill, killed, killing, dead body, died, execution, riots and sexual abuse*. These words repeatedly exist in sentences to construct crime. The majority of these words are used as nouns and verbs as well. When these words occur in form of head noun to refer to victim, they are usually preceded by pre-modifiers.

Example 31: *With 720 child assault cases reported in the last three years. ...convicted for the rape and murder of seven-year-old Zainab. (October 10, 201: the Nation)*

*Zainab was kidnapped from near her aunt's house. (January 9, 2018: The News)*

*Even after this incident, six minors have been sexually abused in two days in the city recently.*

*...on January 4 and was found dead in a garbage heap.*

*The authorities claimed to have nabbed her killer.*

*Seven other children attacked in Kasur -- five of whom were murdered.*

*At least twelve cases of rape and murder have been recorded in the Kasur area in the past two years.*

#### ***Crimes - presenting processes and states***

The majority of sentences to construct crime are in active voice. The crime-naming words appear either as nouns or verbs; they are present in either form in every sentence. The total number of active voice (example 3, 4, 27) sentences is 147 and passive voice (Example 31) sentences are 71. The sentences are usually compounds both active voice and passive voice (example 24, 26) can be found in the same sentence as well.

As far transitivity analysis is concerned, I found high percentage of Material Action Intention (MAI) processes which show that action is predominantly performed (example 31). The offender is revealed to perform an action whereas the victim is acting as a patient (example 21, 24, 25). Verbalization is another linguistic tool which is found in a high percentage after MAI. Verbal processes are mainly used by authorities when they are found ordering or directing the subordinates (example 28, 30). The nature of the majority of the sentences is complex subordinate sentence structure. Such sentences are useful as they provide background information.

#### ***Crimes - presenting opinions***

Mostly the sentences are in categorical form which implies that the majority of the sentences do not have modal auxiliaries and the sentences are in direct speech particularly when they are spoken by the authorities (example 15, 16, 28, 29). These sentences are written in direct speech because the writer distances himself from what is being said.

#### ***Crimes - presenting time and space***

As it has already been pointed out that the major tenses used in the data are simple past and simple present tenses. These tenses are followed by present perfect tense. Present continuously

tense is also used occasionally. Future indefinite tense is used only once when the date of execution of one offender is announced. It must be born in mind that only one offender was arrested, trialed and punished (*example 21, 23, 24, 27, 31*).

The results of the analysis of the sentences show that nouns naming crime are frequently used. Crime naming nouns and verbs often occur with offender naming nouns and victim naming nouns which demonstrates the close proximity among crime, the offender and the victim (M. Brown & Pratt, 2000: 5). Mawby & Walklate (1994) state people see the crime as a major problem almost in all societies and it generates fear and this fear unites the people against a common enemy. Media including print media nurture and disseminate this fear and media go beyond the stated role of informing people of the occurrence (A. Hart, 1991: 8). This is because people mostly rely on media to gain information about crime (Surette, 2009: 239). Jewkes (2009) states that media also satisfy people's appetite for crime news. Crime news sustains stereotypes about offenders, victims and crimes and crimes are socially constructed mental pigeon-holes where individuals and events can be stored to make sense of the world (Fowler, 1991: 17).

### Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated how offender, victim and crime are linguistically constructed in news stories on crime in English newspaper of Pakistan. Critical Stylistics was applied as a framework on data to find answer to the research question. The linguistic analysis of the data has revealed that offender and victim are constructed in opposition to each other. This is chiefly achieved through naming choices. To determine the functions of offender-victim naming choices working as subjects and objects, through the use of pre-modifiers, the use of transitivity processes and presentation of speech. Direct and indirect speech carry subjective assessment, direct speech is used mainly to quote authoritative persons whose judgments and statements are deemed insightful and truthful. Media also quote offenders and their legal representatives in offender-related sentences, though the media choose these quotes subjectively, help to their construction. The linguistic choices in victim related sentences reveal that they are constructed the way as if they belong to a family or a different social group and that the crime not only affects the victim but also the whole social system. The use of pre-modifiers creates a relationship between the offender and victim. The construction of the victim through transitivity analysis reveals that the victim is merely a passive recipient of the offender's actions and this is the main difference between the construction of the offender and the victim.

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