

DISCURSIVE USE OF HEDGING AND VAGUENESS IN PAKISTANI POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT

Political discourse is considered as an important instrument to (re) construct political identities and ideologies, by influencing individual's perceptions in a socio-political scenario. The present study aims to explore how the discursive strategy of hedging and vagueness is used in the political discourse presented in the manifestos of Pakistani political parties during 2013 elections, to transform people's political identities and ideologies. The manifestos of five most popular political parties of Pakistan are selected to be critically analyzed through the Qualitative mode of inquiry. The political parties are selected on the basis of the mean of IRI (International Republican Institute) surveys conducted in August 2012, and in November 2012. These political parties include Pakistan Muslim League(N), Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf, Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan Muslim League(Q) and Muttahida Quami Movement. Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive model (1998) is used as the theoretical framework for the present study. It is concluded that all political parties under study brought into use the discursive strategy of hedging and vagueness to portray a positive self-image and negative image of other parties. This was done in order to transform people's political ideologies and identities in their favor.

KEYWORDS: Discursive strategy, hedging, vagueness and political discourse

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