

Univerzita Karlova

Fakulta sociálních věd

Institut politologických studií

**INDIA'S ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION AND THE REFRAMING OF
PROTESTS: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**



Author: Lakshmi Srikanta

Study programme: International Relations (MAIN)

Academic Advisor: Doc. PhDr. Ondřej Ditrych, MPhil. (Cantab.) Ph.D.

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Statement

With this statement, I hereby declare that I have written this diploma thesis by myself. Additionally, I agree with its eventual publication in print or electronic form. All sources and literature utilized have been properly cited and this work has not been used to gain any other academic title.

Prague, July 31st, 2024

Lakshmi Srikanta

CHANGES FROM PRELIMINARY THESIS PROJECT AND SUBSEQUENT DRAFTS:

1. Structural:

- a. Background was added to section 1.2 rather than 1.1, and Sections 2.1 and 2.2 were interchanged to allow for better flow of the ideas.
- b. 4.3 Conclusion section was removed as it was repetitive to the Conclusion sections in 5. and 6.
- c. Section 3.4 Limitations was also removed as it could be explained better after the 6.2 Contributions and Implications of the Study section
- d. 2.4 section was changed to just Research Question since the addition of the Theoretical Framework proved redundant after the preceding sections.
- e. Section 4.1.1 title was changed to Legislation Language
- f. Section 5.1 was changed from Language to Multimodal communication and 5.2 was changed to include Political in the title
- g. Section 3.4 was removed as it was redundant to subsections in 6

2. Conceptual:

- a. The data selection and criteria were modified and customised to fit the needs of the topic as more research was done on the topic during writing.
- b. Bibliography list was altered from initial proposal based on accessibility, necessity and availability.
- c. Initial drafts of the thesis were more focused on identifying and expanding on the concept of terrorism, however this was changed as the subject proved too complex and trying to tackle this did not provide much information into the discourse analysis framework that was created for the thesis.
- d. Explaining Dissent was also part of the initial draft, however this was also removed as it did not seem integral to the argument.
- e. Minor changes were made to the abstract to reflect the content of the thesis better like adding the section about social cognition etc

ABSTRACT

The 2019 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act's (UAPA) Amendment Bill allows the government of India to convict individuals, as well as organizations, as terrorists if they commit, participate, plan etc in the perceived acts of terrorism and promote terrorism. This allows the Government of India to book any individual participating in protests and activities that can be 'anti-national'. The UAPA terror amendments are the focus of the paper because it incorporates the provisions from the repealed Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) by making changes to the definition of unlawful activity to contain the definition of terrorist act and terrorist organizations as ones that threaten or is likely to threaten the unity, integrity, security, economic security, or sovereignty of India, as well as the ability to include and take due action against individuals suspected of unlawful activity. This dissertation utilising Critical Discourse Analysis tries to analyze the discourse pertaining to the UAPA in India in terms of media and the government, to provide insight into how the discourse between security vs democracy is a product of oppression of minorities through dominant power hierarchies due to the effects of social cognition and society shaping discourse structures, from the micro to the macro level. It constitutes how discourse affects perception in a local sphere.

Keywords: UAPA, Discourse Analysis, Critical Theory, Indian Terrorism Laws, Media Discourse, Government Discourse, Minorities, Critical Discourse Analysis

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. **CDA** - CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
2. **NIA** - NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY
3. **FIR** - FIRST INFORMATION REPORT
4. **NIC** - NATIONAL INTEGRATION COUNCIL
5. **UAPA** - UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTIONS) ACT
6. **LTTE** - LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM
7. **UN** - UNITED NATIONS
8. **TADA** -TERRORIST AND DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES (PREVENTIVE) ACT
9. **POTA** - PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT
10. **IPC** - INDIAN PENAL CODE
11. **BJP** - BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY
12. **PM** - PRIME MINISTER
13. **MP** - MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
14. **RSS** - RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH
15. **INC** - INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
16. **MDMK** - MARUMALARCHI DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM
17. **PMANE** - PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY
18. **SC** - SUPREME COURT
19. **AIMIM** - ALL INDIA MAJLIS-E-ITTEHADUL MUSLIMEEN
20. **AFSPA** - THE ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT
21. **PFI** - POPULAR FRONT OF INDIA
22. **SC** -SCHEDULED CASTES
23. **ST** - SCHEDULED TRIBES
24. **PDA** - PREVENTIVE DETENTION ACT
25. **MISA** - MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL SECURITY ACT
26. **MHA** - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
27. **CAA** - CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT
28. **OBC** - OTHER BACKWARD CASTES

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1. RESEARCH INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

“Theory is always for someone, and for some purpose”

- Robert W. Cox¹

Norman Fairclough (2001, 2013) analyses the relationship between usage of “language and power” and comes to the conclusion that language is a tool that reveals power structures. By this observation, we can understand that language is not passive, on the contrary, it is an active tool that helps in maintaining imbalanced power structures within society² (see van Dijk, 1997a).

This is done through discourse. According to van Dijk (1997a), discourse is conversation with aim and meaning through context. The meaning of the discourse is broad, but as per Dijk (1997a) in social sciences and specifically in politics, it is about how language is used in specific contexts in all forms of communication, both “implicit” and “explicit”. According to van Dijk (1997a, 1997b, 2015, 1983) discourse is a key factor in society that helps in identifying how language and beyond language helps shapes public opinion and influences political decisions and ideologies, which in turn is shaped through the social roles and the relationships between the participants. This idea is very pertinent to the examination of the UAPA, both directly and indirectly.

The term ‘Critical’ within an interdisciplinary framework encompasses several debated interpretations, which have been debated for scholars for a long time, particularly in terms of ‘Critical’ Discourse Analysis (see generally Breeze, 2011). Ruth Breeze (2011) draws on many Scholars in IR and one of the inferences is that ‘critical’ can imply an in-depth and “comprehensive examination” of the subject matter. But, she also explains that it can also denote a “critique”, i.e., in challenging established structures and norms, such as socio-political conditions, thus providing a subjective standpoint to evaluate different perspectives

¹ Quotation taken from Cox (1981)

² See generally, Fairclough (2001, 2013), Wodak (2015, 2009), as the discussion of language is also critical to the foundation of these CDA approaches

through a "critical" lens, where the "critical discourse" or "critique" is always for a purpose (Breeze, 2011)³. It is essential to adopt this multifaceted interpretation to thoroughly and effectively analyze the topic at hand because critical examination of an important law like UAPA provides detailed information on the structures within society that either benefit or hinder its presumed purpose.

Discourse has an important role in society (see van Dijk, 2015), as it affects the ways laws are perceived and protests are transformed, this is to be our central aim. Protesting is an act of showing dissatisfaction with the policies and laws that govern a state. It is done through a myriad of ways, including but not limited to, written criticism, demonstrations etc and it is acknowledged that it can turn violent. Critical thinkers like Habermas (1984;1996), emphasized the development of ideas in the public sphere, a concept he supported through "communicative action" where rational, open dialogue promoted emancipation "progress achieved through reason" (see also Dahlberg, 2004)⁴ Poststructuralists like Foucault examined the way language (knowledge) and power go hand in hand (Foucault, 1980) through nuanced, hidden mechanisms within society like routine and conformity (Foucault, 1985). It can be extrapolated from Dahlberg's (2004)⁵ analysis of Habermas (1996) and through the theorist himself, that for a strong democracy, there needs to be statistically a certain amount of freedom to express citizen's criticism and discussion on the government laws and policies to essentially participate in its decisions directly or indirectly for the laws to have legitimacy and acceptance.

According to van Dijk (2015; 1997a; 1997b), CDA acts as an interdisciplinary method by marrying a myriad of ideas to understand power dynamics, ideologies, and societal consciousness., which is possible as knowledge of the world comes from discourse and the inferences we create through our mental structures created through memory, which is subjective to each individual, by connecting psychology to social sciences in order to understand the subjectivity inherent in discourse dissemination. However this subjectivity at

³ Breeze (2011) provides multiple meanings of "critical" in her analysis, some of which are criticisms of the term, however, here the meanings that fit the CDA framework were used for support

⁴ Dahlberg (2004) explanation of the public sphere and communicative rationality of Habermas's is extrapolated here, but it also quotes the ideas in the text, so see generally Dahlberg (2004)

⁵ See Dahlberg's (2004) study for the six conditions for Habermas's public sphere and communicative rationality for a strong democracy

large is ruled by different communities and ideologies that are shared within a group of people (van Dijk, 2012)⁶.

At its heart, CDA aims to understand the construction of dominant ideologies and power hierarchies and their means of achieving legitimacy to maintaining imbalanced power hierarchies through different kinds of experiences⁷ which shape society, whether those experiences are historical (see Wodak, 2015; Wodak, 2019) or social practices and events (see Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough, 2013) or through social cognition (see van Dijk, 2015; 1997a; 1997b). It is not that there is an intersection in the theories put forth by these theorists, but that the weight each dimension carries in shaping the discourse differs from one to the other through different mechanisms. Understanding these mechanisms provides a deeper perspective on societal interrelationships.

The difference between CDA and other schools that study language is that while it is a linguistic approach, the main purpose is not just to focus on the intricacies of linguistic structures for its own sake, but to understand the society at the heart of the analysis (Breeze, 2011). This lends a very purposeful analysis which is focused on understanding why certain transformations lead to certain outcomes and how these outcomes affect the society at large.

1.2 Relevance of Research and Background

India is a diverse country, especially in terms of religious diversity. As per the 2011 census, the population of Hindus within the country is 79.8% population, compared to 14.2% of Muslims, Christian were 2.3%, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Other Religions & Persuasions made up 3.59%⁸, and those with no religious affiliations were only 0.2% (Press Information Bureau, 2015). So, it is not far off to say, different religions and their ideologies play a key role in the way the formation and maintenance of many structures of the country, even laws.

With regards to the terrorism laws in the country, there is a complicated history in their making and developing. Mate et al (2010), rightly points out that the UAPA was created in response to a series of terrorist attacks that targeted important areas like the Taj Hotel, the

⁶ van Dijk (2012) does separate explanation of knowledge explicitly in the text by never referring to CDA and only DA, however text links knowledge with mental models, a layer in van Dijk's model for CDA

⁷ Experiences here is referred to in a general context, taking meaning from the English language and does not denote specifically what Wodak's CDA explains experiences as in a historical context, which is referred later in the text

⁸ Sikh (1.7%); Buddhist (0.7%); Jain (0.4%); Other Religions & Persuasions (0.79%) (Press Information Bureau, 2015)

Oberoi Hotel and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Railway Terminus killed over 170 people and injured more than 30 in Mumbai. According to the authors, the Rowlatt Act of 1919, which enabled the British to carry out “preventive detentions of suspected terrorists without trial during peacetime” that led to incidents like Amritsar massacre⁹, was a predecessor to the other post-independence, with acts like the PDA - 1950, the MISA - of 1970 , (Mate et al, 2010). and the more recent UAPA precursors like the TADA and POTA as well (Nair, 2009)

In the context of the UAPA, before the law was enacted by the Government of India, a committee by the NIC put forth a suggestion to the Parliament to draw up an act that would frame a law that would mitigate activities that would be considered unlawful (Mahmood, 2021). From this consideration, the UAPA was drawn up, whose objectives was to ban and punish the organisations, as well as individuals (in the later Amendments), including those that were supporting any activities that were considered ‘unlawful’ through means such as funding, propaganda etc (see Mahmood, 2021). UAPA allowed for the provision to punish both organisations and individuals who were involved in “unlawful acts” and “terrorist acts” under a single law, but it is important to note that the addition of “terrorist acts” was an addition in the later years rather than during the creation of the Act (see V. Suresh et al, 2022; Mahmood, 2021).

By this logic, with a subject matter as important as national security and what unlawful means, it changes based different things within a country, and in a much more specific sense, one that changes based on the ideologies and principles of the current government. This leads to UAPA struggling with effectiveness due to its misuse and being used for personal gains, rather than protecting the people it was drafted for i.e., the citizens of the country.

1.3 Research Question

Due to the importance of national security and democratic values, it is necessary to analyze and scrutinize the terrorism laws in India, mainly the UAPA which is a conglomerate of its predecessors (Mate et al, 2010). In fact, an article by Times of India in 2023 found that UAPA cases registered has increased by 17.9% in 2022, with Jammu and Kashmir having the highest numbers, which second being Manipur, third Assam and then Uttar Pradesh (The Times of India, 2023).

⁹ see Mate & Nasemullah (2010) for details on the Amritsar Massacre

In that context and by those statistics, UAPA is a very important topic that needs to be analyzed. The primary focus of this thesis dissertation is the intersectional sphere, as explained by van Dijk (1997a; 1997b; 2015) created between social cognition, discourse and social structures to understand the dynamics between power, security, nationalism, democracy, and liberty, and how they influence each other. In particular, it aims to investigate how these factors shape the dialogue of national security in India by both its government and the media - the dominant power groups (van Dijk, 2015) - their active contribution as the elites in discourse, and how this perception affects the country's social, political, and cultural structures within India. The essence of the research is to analyze the relationship between the actual threat of terrorism and the narrative surrounding it, using the UAPA as a lens to examine the discourse on it and how the broadened scope of terrorism influences future discourse on it.

The aim of this research is to take an exploratory and critical look at the discourse surrounding UAPA. To streamline the lens through which these ideas are examined and presented, the setting of one of the largest democracies in the world, India (Institute of Development Studies, 2024), is being taken as the country examined in this research.

The research questions focused in this dissertation are,

- A. How does language, and other multiple facets of discourse reframe UAPA within the Indian community through the domestic media sphere and governmental sphere?
- B. How, due to discourse, the ambiguity surrounding the concept of terrorism and terror, lends to a transformation of its perception and categorisation within India?
- C. How does this affect the public sphere in terms of security vs democracy, due to power imbalances inherent within such discourse?

The reason why we are recognising and analysing the policies of the UAPA is to understand why even with development in recent years, India still struggles with finding the reason for the recurring abuse/issues with the minority population and religious unrest within the country¹⁰. Contextualising the reason for how power shifts and how these in turn affect a country with a diverse ideological and religious population like India, a valid setup to understand how such power structures are formed, biased and influenced in turn through the socio-political context and what terrorism has come to be identified as within the Indian context.

¹⁰ for individual breakdowns and statistics, (see generally Kahn et al, 2022a; Maharana et al, 2022; Khan et al, 2022b)

It is with this understanding that the topic of imbalance of power, by examining the language utilized to define and label the discourse around national security through UAPA as it pertains to how it is shaped by dominant ideologies. This dissertation hopes that CDA can reveal the underlying power dynamics and ideological assumptions that contribute to the ways in the discourse around terrorism and terror is constructed by those with power and, how in turn, it leads to reinforcing dominant power structures through social context.

The research will use critical theory to emphasize how dominant discourse leads to a shift in the understanding of fundamental rights. This dissertation hopes to create a functioning dialogue around how negative connotations are created through dominant and repetitive association within the sphere of context and memory using van Dijk's (1997a; 1997b; 2015) the model and its aim is to show how power dynamics reshapes what it means to be nationalistic and liberal. The research can also help in analyzing how the concept of terrorism has transformed in recent years and how discourse around terror shapes it¹¹.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology of research will be a CDA utilizing Critical Theory to understand the discourse pertaining to the UAPA in India, which can provide insight into not just how the idea of terror morphs within a domestic setting, but also to analyze what constitutes dominance and how its spreading effects can influence discourses within the local sphere thereby altering its meaning in a global context through the Indian lens. It will also help to understand the constant struggle between national security and democratic freedom, as well as the paradigm-shift around the discourse on terrorism in recent times as its scope is broadened.

The necessity for this CDA model analysis of UAPA is to see how it impacts members of minority communities, which for India would be in terms of religion and caste, with prevalent minorities still making up a large segment of the population such as Muslims and Dalits, who are already marginalized communities within Indian society. Discourse is necessary to understand how they have been oppressed by this law through reinforced elite power structures and narratives.

The research will be purely qualitative based and hence exploratory in nature (Mogashoa, 2014). It does not concern itself with hypothesis or establishment of variables for any form of measurement (Mogashoa, 2014). The collection of data is auditory (including visual) and

¹¹ see generally van Dijk (1995) which discusses on details on discourse and ideologies in detail

textual in nature to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue. The data will include the official Act and Amendment documents on the UAPA (textual), the Parliament addresses and debates (auditory), and media articles published about the law (textual and auditory/visual). Explanatory details of the research design will be provided in the Research Design and Data Collection subsection of the Methodology.

The data will be analyzed for the underlying political meaning through the lens of social context using CDA i.e, mainly focusing on van Dijk's (1983; 2015; 1997a; 1997b) model of Critical Discourse. The use of this model is necessary to examine UAPA because it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the role of language in shaping power relations and social practices, particularly in the context of protests and the government responses to them.

The data taken will be limited to the country of India to observe the influence of language associated with how information is discussed can reshape or even reaffirm power hierarchies, which can help us understand the struggle of the minorities within the country.

2. RELEVANT LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Critical theory

This section will focus on providing a background on Critical Theory by analysing its key ideas and differences because as mentioned because a Critical examination, following in line with the thinkers of the Frankfurt School who emphasized interdisciplinarity (see Corradetti, 2012) to analyse the society is very important to our discussion. Ruth Breeze (2011) explains the relationship between power and structures of society by how the term “critical” in CDA stems from the Marxist school itself as it was known for its ability to assess society from a particular viewpoint i.e., “critiquing” it or “being critical” of something. We have thinkers like Kant, who used in his earliest works the word ‘critical’ in terms of where he analyzed reason that did not rely on experiences (Billig, 2003, p. 37; see Kant, 1781, p. 3 as cited by Breeze, 2011). From this we can extrapolate that “critical” is an approach that does not take something at face-value (see Breeze, 2011) as it seeks to question extensively whatever it analyses and without holding back.

Corradetti (2012), also posits that the Frankfurt School's Critical theory saw its inception initially from Marxist ideologies, which makes sense given the way society was examined by Marxist thinkers. This foundation helped the School in building their approach with a focus on

how control is enforced by one group of the society to another (Breeze, 2011)¹². But there is a key difference between the two Schools of thinking. The Frankfurt branch, despite taking its inspirations Marxist philosophy, does so without restricting itself to just analysing the economic and material dimensions (Corradetti, 2012). This is an important deviation, as such a lack of restriction provided for many unique and interesting interpretation and explanantions of the society. According to Agger (1991), in engaging in understanding intersecting social identities and the different factors that contributed to them, but with the Marxist addition of dismantling it, the School differed from two other approaches that was popular at the time, mainly Poststructural and Postmodern thinking, i.e., rather than focusing on what is, seeks to question what it needs to be, with a more active participation in social change. This is where the “criticality” of language and discourse comes in. By including communication, and open dialogue (Habermas 1984; see Christensen, 2024), as one of society’s dimensions, Habermas (1984) acknowledged that this dimension plays an active role.

In understanding The Frankfurt School, we first need to understand the other two approaches that played a key role in studying power, discourse and knowledge. As per Agger (1991), Postmodernist thinkers like Lyotard rejected the notion of a “grand narrative” that attempted to explain the world through “patterned interrelationships, which was put forth by a Marxist reading of the world. It can be posited through Agger (1991) that this rejection of a “grand narrative” , also rejected the one-approach-fits-all way of thinking to end issues within society, but rather acknowledged the complexity and muti-faceted nature of things that interplayed with one another. To Agger (1991), the Poststructuralist and Postmodernist approaches are rooted in the emphasis on the diversity of knowledge and experiences, like analysis through, for example, semiotic theory (Saussure, 1960) and the existence of multiple narratives to examine the creation of “hyperreality”, through which reality is perceived and experienced, but does not link to the original (referent) (Baudrillard, 1983; Agger 1991). This explanation is rooted in how it is impossible to remove the observer and the observed from one another as the simulation becomes indistinguishable from reality, and each subsequent new representations represent the representations rather than the original (simulacra) (Baudrillard, 1983; see Agger, 1991), which we can infer becomes a cyclical thing, as one analysis gives rise to another one, without ever providing its origins and also in turn acting as symbols of different ideas, which are reproduced rather than being the idea itself i.e., “perception” becomes “representation”

¹² see also Corradeti (2012)

(Chandler, D., 1994; see Saussure, 1960). This notion of the text or language, representing more than what it is and instead what it implies ties these schools of thought to discourse.

Thinkers of Critical theory like Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, and Habermas, also focused on this fluidity or rather incomprehensibility in an absolute truth (Agger, 1991), mainly on the ideologies and social structures that contribute to injustice and inequality. This is what ties the three approaches together, even though within this sphere of fluidity, their mechanisms, aims and inferences differs. As per Agger (1991), this fluidity is seen in Derrida's "deconstruction theory" which explores the text and the subtext, where meaning constantly changes, rejecting technical notions of objectivism in the text, which was influenced by the works of other post structuralist thinkers like Foucault (1995), who emphasized this aspect through the exploration of knowledge and its link to power by rejecting "simple dualities" (Agger, 1991).

Expanding on this, according to Christensen (2024), conceptualization of power can be explained through three important thinkers - Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault. Christensen (2024) points out and rightfully so, that both Habermas (1984) and Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1977, p 84; Christensen, 2024) built on Marx's dialectical materialism with a slight difference. Bourdieu (2010, p 130) uses synoptic schema, to map power to be derived from "cultural, and economic (material) capital" thereby understanding social positions, and analyse how individuals act within their "habitus" (internalized behaviors) and "field" (power relations) (Christensen, 2024)¹³.

This expansion of power not being rooted in just material capital provides a reprieve from not being confined by a single dimension when examining power relationships in society, which can be restrictive, especially in the recent years. According to Christensen (2024), paraphrased here, Habermas (1984) considers the possibility that power can be oppressive depending on different characteristics, while Bourdieu and Foucault (1980) did not believe in a balance of power, since power was positioned as subtle mechanisms, like, for Bourdieu (2010), it is different types of capital that creates social positions - from small things like if they go to opera to important things education (Bourdieu, 2010; Christensen, 2024) or it is discursive and productive through the "episteme" that acts as "coordinates for knowledge" (Foucault, 1980, p 196; Christensen, 2024). However, these three thinkers are different in the way they view these relationships. The differences drawn in their approaches is that for Foucault, power and knowledge, though different spheres are interlinked and co-exist i.e., "power produces

¹³ see Bourdieu (1997), Bourdieu (1990)

knowledge” (Foucault, 1995, p 27; see Christensen, 2024), a notion that keeps power and knowledge assisting one another without putting a characteristic label of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ to either (Christensen, 2024). However, this does not mean that Foucault rejects in imbalanced power. Rather, Foucault (1991) does acknowledge the subtle, diffused mechanisms of power through conformity or routine by his examination of comparing punishments like quartering (public) and imprisonment (hidden) that is hidden in plain sight in society.

On the other hand, the work of Jürgen Habermas (1996), which is important to the development of Critical theory, has different conclusions on power, which is a cornerstone in the development of CDA. Habermas (1996; 1984) expands power through discourse with his theory on communicative rationality where he posits by using the lifeworld (everyday life, public sphere) and the system (institutions) as the two dualities (Dahlberg, 2004; Christensen, 2024)¹⁴. As per Dahlberg (2004), in his reading of Habermas (1996), he notes that in a strong democracy, the public sphere becomes a space for open dialogue and the public can exchange ideas, where change can be achieved through discourse through open interactions. Habermas (1996) means that communication in the public sphere is to achieve a goal through pragmatic discourse, which he calls for a democracy where consensus is achieved through discussion, giving equal voice to all parties, i.e., an open dialogue and thereby lends legitimacy (Dahlberg, 2004), a notion shared when we consider what is context in terms of discourse (van Dijk, 2015; van Dijk, 1983), but also to create a discourse without coercion in an ideal situation to achieve consensus, which would imply the ability to choose the content to cheer the discourse without restrictions (Habermas, 1984; Dahlberg , 2004).

In a way, as per Christensen (2024), Habermas, while similar to Foucault and Bourdieu on power and knowledge, is of the notion that power is oppressive in nature and an ethical issue, which would imply that knowledge as such can and should exist powerless. This way of linking power imbalances to communication (Christensen, 2024), which is in turn shaped by earlier thinkers like Gramsci (see Bates, 1975), who notes on internalised hegemony within society and a notion central to CDA through the link provided by Gramsci’s “common sense” achieved through coercion and consent (Donoghue, 2018, p 395-396). This is highly relevant to our topic as it helps navigate the threats to democratic norms, especially through shaping of dominant discourse. To understand how emancipation can be achieved through open dialogues in the public sphere (Dahlberg, 2004), it is also then necessary that the way that sphere is shaped through dominant discourse is also important.

14 see generally Habermas (1984; 1987; 1996)

As per Agger (1991), both poststructural and postmodern approaches share an equal skepticism on the achievement of equality of power (see also Christensen, 2024), a concept that makes sense given the way power plays a role in their theories. Critical theory, as seen with Habermas (1984), on the other hand, acknowledges the need for emancipation for dialogues in the public sphere, which sets it apart, but it still focuses on reason (Dahlberg, 2004; see Christensen, 2024)¹⁵. This is where we get CDA, which expands on this by choosing an interdisciplinary approach to achieve its main goals of emancipation.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

This section will focus on providing on van Dijk's approach to CDA, by exploring its nuances and differences. Language is taken as a reflection of existing power structures within society that actively shapes in its reinforcement and transformation (da SILVA, 2007; see van Dijk, 2015; Foucault, 1980). As such, CDA is always with a goal for better societal change through a critique. To Fairclough (2013), CDA is both normative (moral) and explanatory, where it seeks to describe and explain "social realities" against "fundamental values". As such, when language, one of the forms of communication is purposefully made abstract enough that it can be manipulated to fit different narratives for personal goals, we have an issue then.

The broadening interpretations in discourse is studied by Carolijn Terwindt's (2014) ethnographic analysis of anti-terrorism legislation in the US, Spain, and Chile, which examines how such laws are often misapplied to actions like civil disobedience which has led to the "broadening scope of prosecutions under terrorism laws". In fact, in a paper by Gautam et al (2021), which examines the legal language of the UAPA, they find the ambiguous definition of terrorism and the vague terms of the act to be a major issue.

Terwindt (2014), in her study, puts forth examples like: two activism cases of protest in the US in the 2010 with a precedent set by an incident in 1997 protesting against animal cruelty, both of which were labelled under eco-terrorism. In another case in Spain in 2000's for waving Basque flags in a soccer match for the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna which had precedent set by an incident in 1992 where Molotov cocktails were thrown in a train station which transformed the conviction from "public disorder offenses" to "terrorism" and one more in Chile, which was also criticised both by Human rights organizations and the UN for some occurrences of violence during activism for the Ralco hydroelectric plant by the Mapuche people, where arson was included as

¹⁵ see also Habermas (1996)

a potential terrorist act within the law due to lobbying from Chilean Forestry companies (Terwindt, 2014).

As per O'Donnell (2004), since laws are the foundation of democratic governance, the discourses involved in their creation and legitimization reveals the underlying imbalance in the power structures. Gautam et al (2021) expands on this revelatory nature of law by criticising the unanimous power given to the central government, and the lack of periodic review of the provisions, which has caused issues like the UAPA being misused. This is also supported by Nair (2009) who points out the lack of discussions by a revision committee which would have provided revisions of the law during its enactment, which has been a criticism among many experts who have reviewed the UAPA language. Without such a mechanism, some perspectives, whose lobbyists will have more power during the initial stages, will become dominant. This can be seen in Terwindt's (2014) study, especially in the case of the instances regarding Chile and the 1997 US incident, the broadening of the scope of legislation was done due to lobbying by various companies who were direct parties involved in the incident.

In another study by Kirsten Aleta Berry's (2015), on Canadian newspapers' coverage of Bill C-51, the Anti-Terrorism Act, also labels 9/11 as a turning point in anti-terror countermeasures and utilizes CDA to expose inherent racial and national biases in security discourse. The study is about how the popular discourse in the Canadian media legitimized state actions like C-51 bill, a response to tragic events, through a "feedback loop" by "circulating a particular version of a reality" (Berry, 2015), uses Lisa Stampnitzky's (2014) "theory of anti-knowledge", that found that there was a lack of rationality in terrorism studies which has created a "black box" around the concept, and thereby has misdefined explanations of what terrorism entails and why it occurs i.e., that it is multi-faceted and complex than just being "evil" (Berry, 2015). This is dangerous as such a case could broaden the scope of security laws and provide them with power that extends beyond National Safety and intersects also with democracy, which can be misused.

According to Berry (2015), this is seen in examples of Stephen Harper and Pierre Polievre, Canadian leaders who were more focused on ending terrorism than understanding or figuring out the root cause. Using CDA's intertextual approach to discourse around the bill, Berry (2015) found that the word "jihad" was never examined, which contributed to the public's growing "preconditioned association of jihadism with violence" (Berry, 2015). Words like "Anti-national" are also seen in India when talking about UAPA, but there is never an examination of what it means to be either National or Anti-national without bias. As per Berry

(2015), the C-51 Bill provided the Canadian Security Intelligence Service more power because of events like the October 2014 attacks. She also found that events like Justin Bourque's targeting of Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers in the same year were not labeled as terrorism even if the motives seemed similar, creating a very imbalanced narrative and specifically associating the Canadian public's unknown at the time, Islam and Jihad with fear, terrorism, and violence (Berry, 2015).

CDA, according to van Dijk (2015;1997a;1997b;1995;1983), is an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on the way language and methods of communication influence power structures, ideologies, and hence, the collective social consciousness by marrying linguistics with political theory to understand power imbalances within society. The exploration of intricacies of various form of communication and their impact is very critical to CDA. van Dijk (2015;1997a;1997b;1995;1983;1988) notes that discourse, social cognition, and social power shapes language and thereby society by reflecting and (re)constructing dominating ideologies and power hierarchies. His approach to CDA, loosely follows in the footsteps of Gramsci's hegemony (Bates, 1975), as discussed earlier, to understand the role of power in shaping the important intricacies of society by including a psychological layer to it by van Dijk (1997a; 1995; 1997b; 2015; 1983; 2012). This psychological layer is quite interesting as it can reveal deeper understand of the way human mind works in terms of discourse. van Dijk (1997b; see 2012) notes in his work that this requires understanding the various discourse levels present - the micro, macro, and intermediate levels, also known as the "meso-level". According to him, the dominant group controls the text not only in the context (van Dijk, 1983), which he calls "semantic macrostructures" but also in the "syntactic microstructures"¹⁶ (van Dijk, 1997a; 1997b; 2012)

In van Dijk's (1997b; 1995) analysis, the categorisations within these discourse structures are based on who the speaker and the audience are, whereby phrases and greetings can be allocated and restricted to individual groups employing hidden power relations, which then translates to manipulation of the subject¹⁷. According to van Dijk (1997a; 1997b; 2015; 2012; 1983; 1995), this is shaped on its reciprocity by the context around the information, the syntax and semantics of the construction of the sentence - from minute details like capitalisation to which words strategically used to convey a specific meaning, and mental models that connects the

¹⁶ see also van Dijk (2015; 1995)

¹⁷ see also van Dijk (1995; 2012)

information to the knowledge accumulated through the individual's various communities that in most cases are shaped by ideologies¹⁸.

Where van Dijk (1997a; 1997b; 2015; see also 2012) differs from earlier authors of CDA is that he posits that cognitive structures act as a middle layer between discourse and society. According to Dijk, memory and context are deeply interlinked in how we understand and use language. He calls these “mental models” (van Dijk, 1983; 1997b; 1997a), a subjective structure within our consciousness that helps us make sense of events and conversations by providing a mental picture of what is happening, by integrating our personal experiences (opinions and emotions) with socially shared beliefs through knowledge gained by discourse consumption (van Dijk, 2012; 1983).

In fact, in comparing a difference of perspective on the coverage of the same incident, we get very interesting details based on the intended audience. In a comparative CDA using Fairclough’s (2013; Blommaert et al, 2000) model of BBC and Hindustan Times on the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent figure in Canada supporting the Khalistan movement that advocated for an independent Sikh state, found that the BBC used neutral phrases like “credible allegations,” “expelled a Canadian diplomat,” “prominent Sikh separatist leader,” “independent Sikh homeland,” “anti-India elements”, while the Hindustan Times article used specific words like “pro-Khalistan supporter,” “Khalistani terrorist,” “agents of the Indian government,” “rise in pro-Khalistan activities,” “associated with banned Indian separatist group” that aimed more towards swaying the reader to the negative stance on the Nijjar and the movement (Rahman et al, 2024).

Importantly, discourse to van Dijk (1995) provides a deeper information on the biases of the dominant groups based on what a word means. What he means by this is that words and their meanings, even when are synonyms do not denote the same thing in the exact same way, as there are subtle and sometimes overt differences in them. According to van Dijk (1997b; 2012)¹⁹, for example, whether a text uses “terrorist” or “freedom fighter” is shaped by the discourse and knowledge which influences it based on different communities and their relationship to the text, background and context through their “subjective” psychological structures, as we can see in the previous example. On the other hand, in Fairclough’s (2006; 2013) model, the discourse (semiotic) is always tied to the “material” through a dialectical relationship as it focuses on how

¹⁸ see van Dijk (1983) that expands on the link between knowledge and discourse on the background of CDA development by van Dijk.

¹⁹ See van Dijk (1997a; 1983)

the abstract layer of social structures bridges social practices and events (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) through both textual and other representations (see Fairclough, 2013)

Within the study by Rahman et al (2024), the BBC also included perspectives from both Trudeau's allegations and the Indian government's denial of the killing, which was contrasted by the Hindustan Times, which calls Trudeau's allegations "absurd" and focused more on Nijjar's alleged criminal/terrorist activities rather than discussions on the allegations against the Indian Government. This rather contrasting perspective on a similar event, based on what part of the incident is focused on is what provides the meaning. Using the Fairclough model (Fairclough, 2013; Blommaert et al, 2000), article does acknowledge on the bias on such a reporting, however it does not explore on how this shapes different groups of people who read BBC news vs the readers of Hindustan Times, without going into the psychological aspect (van Dijk 2015; 2012) of discourse bias and the access to knowledge is the reason why the discourse is produced repeatedly in each of these communities in a particular way.

Rahman et al (2024) claims that this contrast comes from the BBC's target audience being global, which enables it to discuss the Sikh separatist movement – one that is inherently Indian, and Nijjar's role within it, exercised from personal bias and with respect to Hindustan Times , an Indian newspaper, focused on reporting to an Indian audience, where each piece of information and reporting is crucial to shape their perspective, it is not surprising that it focuses on portraying Nijjar in a negative light rather than the implications of the death, aligning closely with the Indian government's position. Drawing on van Dijk's (1983; 1997b; 1997a) theory on knowledge and contexts, we can see that this reveals that the media is actively taking a side when it needs to be objectively reporting the incident. If that had been the case, the power of drawing the conclusion on whether Nijjar's ideologies were right or wrong would be left to the audience. However, with them being exposed to half a story, the power of their conclusion rests with Hindustan Times, which is indirectly held by the government.

This psychological layer in discourse is what is interesting about Dijk's (1997a; 1997b; 2015) analysis of discourse, because while he acknowledges that mental structures of each individual are very subjective, this subjectivity is shaped by other macro structures like how the knowledge (van Dijk, 2012) and discourse they are exposed to differs between different communities i.e., the inference of these discourses requires a vast amount of knowledge which

the listener or reader in most cases does not have and even if they did, it is shaped by their community which are shaped by their own ideologies²⁰.

As per Dijk (1983; 1997b; 1997a) contexts also provide details about the setting, participants, and actions involved in the discourse. To van Dijk (1983;1997b), the contextt is an important separation between everyday talk and discourse, as his model concerns discourse structures created by elites groups (e.g., political discourse) specifically and an establishment of this idea of context lends legitimacy to why oppression occurs. This context is what separates everyday conversations and discourse, as the aim, setting and who does the discourse lends it this power to shape society (van Dijk, 1997b).

In another study on the US media portrayal of Islam and Muslims post-9/11 employs the Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2015; Wodak et al, 2019) within CDA to uncover the construction of “Muslim identities” (Samaie et al, 2017). According to Samaie et al (2017), the media portrays a dichotomous “in-group” (U.S. government and its non-muslim people) and the “out-group” (Muslims, Muslim countries, and Islamic jihadists). The authors reveal that the media’s representation of Muslims as alien and their values as being different from the “Western” world places them as a threat who should be either “controlled or assimilated” (Samaie et al, 2017). The study’s (Samaie et al, 2017) conclusion the solution of providing knoweldge about the minority communities is very similar to Dijk’s (2012; 1995; see 1983) theories on communities shaping knowledge and that the gaining of knowledge helps to understand the discourse better, however Wodak (2015) focuses more on the evolution of discourse through historical context, while van Dijk (1997a;1997b; 1995) acknowledges the role of historical context, since subjective mental models are ruled by experiences, his theories are not limited to it, but rather supplement in understanding the development of discourse through cognition.

According to Dijk (1995), in terms of discourse, he calls the differentiation in framing groups that are deemed as others and ones that the speaker or the writer identifies as belonging to their side as “ideological suares”, which is a way to reinforce ideologies. As per Pan et al (2020), the foundation for othering is done in three different ways: either defensive denial, by denying negative perspectives of self, can sometimes be a reaction to offensive othering. The third way is charm offensive, a soft power method by portraying self in a positive light (Pan et al, 2020; van dijk, 1995). In Berry’s study (2015), this is seen in phrasing “losing one of their own” - a

²⁰ see generally van Dijk (1995; 1983; 2012) to get a background on knowledge in the context of discourse for van Dijk

potential increase of Canadian sympathizer's narrative as evidence and in the lack of dissection of Canadian Military actions abroad in areas like the Middle East. The problem of this separation of 'us vs them', is that 'us' is always prioritised and viewed in a more positive light as is human nature to see familiarity and belonging as a non-threat. This can lead to those that are viewed as separate to being neglected or viewed as an afterthought. Stamou (2021), in her study on Greek protests, also found this when she found that protestors, who were grouped as "them" were never shown as existing in their own space, where the causes or reasons for their grievance were discussed.

These studies show CDA is necessary because it helps to identify the way of framing of language and thereby other aspects of discourse. When we talk about the cyclical nature of popular discourse, a favoring at the macro level or the elite, for example, media or the government or any majority group, can influence the micro, i.e., at the individual level, which creates more ideological propagation because at the macro level words (van Dijk, 1997b; 2015) are chosen in a way to rationalise the idea. This rationalisation is achieved through a necessary dilemma where ideas are framed as a necessity and irreplaceable to become acceptable without actually providing a reason for it, a concept also seen in de Beaugrande's study (2004) of the securitisation policies in the US.

2.3 Power, Democracy and Nationality

This section will explore the studies below to understand the intersectionality of power, democracy and nationality through various studies on the topic, with supporting theories, some of which are already established in the previous sections.

In terms of individual, national identity, patriotism is at the crux of it. It is an integral part of National security and the creation of Security laws. Robert de Beaugrande's (2004) uses the term ecological - "inclusive theories and inclusive practices in pursuit of democracy" in his study. Upon studying the case of the United States Patriot Act, he finds that the discourses of patriotism and national security can be a very complex issue that can be polarising for a lot of Americans as security is constantly pitted against transparency (de Beaugrande, 2004). Security is a human priority and when it is told to be at risk, there is panic and an urgency to become secure again. According to de Beaugrande (2004), from funding to information access to resisting protests to creating fear and even to creating laws with expansive and ambiguous lexicon etc, security was used as a reason for the lack of information provided to the public. In cases like this, as per de Beaugrande (2020), secrecy becomes synonymous with safety,

providing the government with reasons to legitimize secrecy. But does this secrecy actually help in securitising, especially when the trade-off is sometimes asked to be basic rights? There is a very complicated question here and the balance to it is hard to achieve without co-operation from not just the people, but all the parties involved, without misusing their power.

A similar tactic was seen in Osisanwo et al's (2020) study of the pro-Biafra protests in Nigeria, where "generalisation and functionalization" (van Dijk, 1997b) were employed in writing about protestors, but in this case it was to delegitimize the protests. According to Osisanwo et al (2020), in terms of economy, the pro-Biafra protestors were mentioned with respect to "cripple" and "shut down" "economic and social activities" or mention them destroying material goods, both of which could, in turn, halt the development of Nigeria. Osisanwo et al (2020) found that groups like MASSOB and IPOB are represented as "not armed" and "follow the law", contrasting it to a group like Boko haram and the Niger Delta Militants, but when they protested, they were arrested (like Nnamdi Kanu, leader of IPOB), the police attacked them nonetheless. While there is a differentiation in the groups that is acknowledged by the government, they still do not examine why these groups had such varied reactions in the way they protested, even though the later is spoken about in detail. The authors found that Gwary, who is the chief security officer of the state, is mentioned by explicitly pointing out his name, to place him apart from both police or the protestors, who are termed as collectives who "derail" peace (Osisanwo et al, 2020). In the third category, they found that, even though the protestors are depicted as unarmed, non-violent, and law-abiding victims, the articles strategically use inclusion and exclusion to denote circumstantiality - like the use of words like "for now" (Osisanwo et al, 2020).

On the other hand, exploring how media discourse shapes public perception of protests and terrorism reveals a complex interplay of ideological constructs and power dynamics. In a study of Greek protests by Stamou (2001) that delves into the way protestors are perceived, it was found that rather than the reasons, a focus was put towards any acts of violence or unusual incidents. This again ties back to both Berry's (2015) and Osisanwo et al's (2020) study. Stamou (2001) finds that the media utilized the non-protestors or the uninvolved observers such as the commuters, journalists, police etc (Us) who are affected by protests to provide a negative view of the protestors (Them), which turns the passive non-protestors into active participants, but also it divides the eye to their plight, while the protestors themselves are ignore. Violence of "Us" was always "downplayed or excused", while the violence by "Them" was "accentuated" because they were discussed only in terms of how they related exclusively

to non-protestors” (Stamou, 2021). We can posit from Stamou’s (2021) study that by not providing perspectives of the non-protestors, it dehumanises them and their sufferings, placing them more of as an obstacle for the lives of “non-protestors” rather than individual human beings, who could be victims too due of societal structures that hinders their lives.

Furthering the discourse on media representation, when Graber et al (2019) analyzed American newspaper coverage of Colin Kaepernick's protest against racial oppression, they found the discourses to be “coded” and “opaque” at the same time through use of three types of racism, aversive racism (black Americans and accusations of prejudice were both aversive to the contributors), modern racism (Black American don't have core American values) and colorblind racism (racism as a “thing of the past” or unavoidable and negative or positive generalizations. The authors explain that an example use of all three is portraying Black American athletes as “naturally talented and powerful” in contrast with how white athletes are mentioned as “hard working”, that “they earn their place” (Graber et al, 2019). From Graber et al’s (2019) study of this kind of narrative of this minority group puts a huge responsibility on them to not only uphold this value by never deviating, holding them in a cage, but it also shifts the responsibility solely to the Black Americans, while providing none of the power.

In another study, by Nickels et al (2012) on British newspaper coverage of Irish and Muslim communities, Nickels found that there is a practice of referring to both the communities, whether as an individual or a collective, with “essentialist terms” - through this, communities become monoliths that embody both the good (law-abiding citizens) and the bad (terrorists) based on the context. In the study, it was found that these communities exist in the extremes of either association; a “moderate Muslim” or an “innocent Irish” inherently implies a duality of Irish and Muslims that exist on the opposite end of the spectrum (Nickels et al, 2012).. This dichotomous label makes these communities exist in a sphere where they are part of British civil society and not, which creates an identity crisis and isolates them (Nickels et al, 2012). This is in line with Graber’s (2019) study as well where Kopernick’s anti-racism message and discussions on structural racism were pushed aside by diverting discussion to patriotism, as case while distinct but quite similar in tactic employed by US in order to expedite and legitimize terrorism laws (de Beaugrande, 2004).

On the other hand, Lewis et al (2018) found this monolithic depiction to be true in two case studies: the Russian government's portrayal of Chechen rebels as Islamist terrorists rather than representatives of the Chechen people, and Sri Lanka's depiction of the LTTE “not as a

community but as a terrorist group” (Rajapaksha, 2007 as cited by Lewis et al, 2018). This study follows Fairclough's (2013; Blommaert et al, 2000) three-level model in how practices shapes social structures and we can also see van Dijk's (1997b) model of the ideological square being used in the tactics, providing a very critical part of the dissection of such scenarios because if we look at such a reductive interpretation (Lewis et al, 2018), we forget that these people deemed the rebels to be much more than that.

According to Lewis et al (2018) the Chechen/Tamil community are not taken as representatives of said part of the population that are also equal citizens of the country, but as a larger ideology - the Islamist/LTTE terrorist group. There is an erasure of the identity of the Chechens and Tamils through reiteration of what they are associated with rather than who they are (Lewis et al, 2018). Such discursive strategies align with van Dijk's (1997a;1997b; 1995) argument that dominance is maintained through discourse, which lodges itself into the mental cognition of the reader, this reduces in our case one community, because of this repetition of association of Chechen/Tamil people with their ideologies rather than their communities (which is made up of individual people, who are not monolithic) because while mental models are subjective, the knowledge that supports these mental models (van Dijk, 2015; van Dijk, 1997a) is consumed is not individually subjective, but rather by discourse and community association (van Dijk, 2012).

These types of portrayals also align with broader narratives that marginalize these groups and highlight the role of media in reinforcing societal prejudices. Building on this in the Indian context, within the minority communities, there is a division where they are othered and considered part of the country based on what stance they take on issues related to their communities. But these stances never shake off their monolithic existence within the political and media sphere of discourse. Lewis et al's (2018) conclusion shows the ambiguity and the duality in the way the events are covered in the news can be equated to the way news media coverage on the multiple protests on various events involving the different communities in India, and based on which group they belong to, their nationality and patriotism is brought up as a means to be tested or proved.

In fact, in terms of the UAPA, the presence of a public list affects those in minority groups, as they are considered suspect communities (Lewis et al, 2018) too, where-in they are asked to choose between their nationalism and what they think is good for their communities and where their ideologies stand, regardless of whether their grievances have any truth and are expressed in a peaceful manner.

The relevancy of these articles is how they talk about minority rights and the topic of racism within each country. This can be equated to how religious diversity is handled within India, especially if we consider how minority or non-dominant groups are covered by the media. According to Ansari et al (2020), “othering” has always been used by the media in conjunction during times of National crisis. This is more noticeable however when it comes to the other being a different country. An example can be othering of Pakistan during the Pulawa attacks, Mumbai attacks etc , explored by Ansari et al (2020), which credits this “othering” to the effects of the Postcolonial theory (Said, 2023), considering that India and Pakistan, experienced a split in identity at the end of its colonial period. “Anti-national”, a word used for those who are charged with UAPA, thus becomes complex, carrying with it the weight of historical experiences that transforms it into a heavy label, both for the people who are accused of it and for the audience whose memory is still fresh with oppression during the Colonial Period.

Furthering this, in her research, Korsi Dorene Kharshiing (2020) expands on this idea of “Othering” by analysing the other discrimination experienced by the Northeastern Indians community across and within the region of Northeast. The Northeast region for decades has been a region that has had fragmented identity due to how the rest of the India views it. Kharshiing (2020) examines Meghalaya, where conflict exists between tribal and non-tribal communities since state inception, with tribal communities facing discrimination even if they are the majority within the state, and attributes this to the non-tribal communities being a majority within India as the state failed to develop a central national identity over ethnic or regional one. This othering can therefore be taken as a transformation of it from past experience on colonisation, grafting anti-colonial sentiments into the domestic sphere, an expansion created from absence of a specific “Other” after independence as its important to note North Easterners look different from the considered ‘typical Indian person’ and are discriminated against for their “Mongoloid features” (Samson, K., 2017).

According to Samson (2017), despite the North East’s resources and strategic importance, the region has seen a lot of economic challenges and developmental neglect, combined with a heavy military presence and employment of laws like AFSPA since the 1950s, which is similar to UAPA, which were often misused. In fact, this use of law to target minority groups is an accusation that has been faced by the Indian government before. In an article by Ravi Nair (2009), he points out that even with the previous laws like TADA and POTA, there were accusations of targeting minority groups as well.

In Samson’s (2017) study, she notes that North Easterners become an “other” even though they are Indian due to their distinct features, which contributes to being called derogatory racial slurs

like “chinky”, ‘china ka maal’ which means ‘made in china’, ‘Momos’, ‘half Chinese’ etc. It was also seen that when North Easterners travelled outside the region, within other parts of India, they were often mistaken to be from a different country, a situation that was heavily seen during the Covid-19 pandemic when many North Easterners were mistaken to be Chinese and discriminated against due to the spreading panic of the virus (Haokip, T., 2021).

The discrimination experienced by North Easterners, a racial minority who are not recognized as Indians and a majority of whom belong to tribal groups, are both covert and overt, which has affected major things from their safety, which has led to the death of individuals like Richard Loitam and Dana Sylvia Sangma, and in more indirect aspects like job security (Samson, K., 2017). We can see a case here of Indians who are not considered so because they deviate from the majority population, a situation that is also similar to Muslims within India after the Partition, who are simultaneously Indian and not Indian. The Northeasterns and Muslims exist in a limbo of identity similar to the Tamil/Chechen People (Lewis et al, 2018), The Muslims in Ireland (Nickels et al, 2012) and so on.

On the other hand, another aspect that plays a role in power is the control over information flow and production is held by the dominant group (see van Dijk, 1997b). In fact, author Fouzdar (2021) analyzes this in the erosion of journalism in Kashmir with respect to UAPA and AFSPA through a qualitative analysis of the arrests. In the study, it was found that AFSPA and UAPA restricted journalism through censorship, harassment, and psychological attacks on journalists. Fouzdar (2021) notes that the convictions using UAPA increased after 2014, particularly in Jammu & Kashmir and journalists like Auqib Javid were interrogated by the NIA for his interviews with separatist leaders, even though no solid charges were made. He points out that another acclaimed journalist, Aasrat Zahra, was charged by section 13 of UAPA for a nearly two-year-old photograph on Facebook that showcased the protest of Shia Muslims holding an image of Burhan Wani, leader of Hizbul Mujahideen, an Islamic military organization (Fouzdar, 2021).

Through this we can see that states can manipulate how events are interpreted, create disinformation, and restrict media access to conflict areas by claiming they are dangerous. In another example, during an incident at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, journalists were blocked from entering by the Delhi Police (Dawn, 2020). The legitimacy of people is undermined when people’s protests are called “anti-national” rather than revealing what could be a part of the truth - that they are legitimate grievances (Singh et al, 2019). This is evident in the Kashmir issue, where the protesters or even the media covering the said issue that were

unfavorable to the dominant power were labelled as unlawful activities rather than expressions of “democratic discontent” (Civicus Monitor, 2023).

An important point that needs to be made, from the analysis so far, is that transparency is at the crux of democracy and with a sensitive matter like national security at risk, it becomes a more complex issue than a matter of security vs transparency (Marzo, 2020; Scott et al, 2019). The issue of national security in terms of policy is pitted against a basic human right such as freedom of speech, in our case - protests, which go against dominant ideologies are taken as a threat to national security.

2.4 Research Question

This section will focus on establishing the main aim of this dissertation and the questions it seeks to answer by the end of it. In UAPA, where the amendments include “unlawful activities” which are not directly violent are also categorised as a subcategory of issues that threaten national security. There is a complicated discussion, as preservation of the lives of the citizens that its protocols are aimed for gets put on hold and becomes offensive at the cost of the said people’s validity to exist and exercise their democratic rights, especially considering different communities and their status within Indian society, which will be different.

The previous literary discussions presented provide a comprehensive understanding of narratives and ideological constructs as it pertains to power and how it weaves between security, national identity and individual identity. The framing, narrative and context through which details are reported is a very deliberate choice, using words such as “flow, waves or tides” when talking about refugees for example, is to evoke a feeling of “drowning” with the reader, this creates a connection in the mental model of refugees with drowning (van Dijk, 1997b). Such a connotation, when repeated, since headlines focus on catchy news even if they do not deliberately know what such an association could imply, it still influences the way the discourse propagation of these refugees will be repeated, becoming part of the social consciousness (van Dijk, 1997b; van Dijk, 2012)²¹. Such a discursive propagation would deny the legitimacy of the grievances of the communities that these ‘othered’ people belong to.

The point of national security laws like the UAPA laws and terrorism laws being different from one country to another is that they are tailored for the cultural, social and economic nuances of the country’s past, present and future. However, in the case of a drafting of a National Security Law, there needs to be a symbiotic relationship where diversity is acknowledged so that the minorities are not oppressed and there is no misuse. Fouzdar (2021) mentions that AFSPA, a law created to curb separatist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, in a spectrum similar to the

21 see also van Dijk (1995; 1983)

current UAPA, turned Kashmir into the most militarized zone in the world in 1990 rather than being beneficial.

The question we seek to ask is what happens when a schedule list is released and you find your neighbor is included in it because they attended one meeting in an organisation? Or mistakenly share a tweet in good conscience, because it is viral and you share it to help an injured person in need, but suddenly you are now charged as anti-national? What happens when laws are used as tools to instill fear against a particular power rather than to provide justice and security?

3.METHODOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

3.1 Characteristics and Assumptions

This dissertation will utilize a qualitative analysis through Discourse Analysis, specifically CDA, focusing on the UAPA in India. The research philosophy utilized will be interpretive and thereby qualitative given the subject matter is discourse analysis (Mogashoa, 2014), which is the observation of the text accessible to a set population through the lens of a specific law during a particular period to understand and interpret it to interpret the socio-political structures, their formations, and their transformations. Building on this, the methodology will be deductive in its approach to understanding and concluding how power hierarchies (Mogashoa, 2014) affect the discussion on UAPA coverage by government and media.

As noted in the introduction, UAPA is India's primary anti-terrorism law currently. Within it, the main amendments were made in 2008 and 2013, which separated provisions for terrorist acts and unlawful activities (V. Suresh et al, 2022). This particular duration of the law is focused on when checking the official UAPA documents, particularly during these amendments, and other details on the coverage are taken consecutively from the beginning of this period. This approach is to understand the media's interpretations and coverage of the topic, specifically 2019, which added individuals to the amendment (Mahmood, 2021).

3.2 Framework: Approach and Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis will be the main theoretical approach chosen for this paper as it was chosen for its interpretive and critical nature to dissect the issue to ensure a problem-solving approach that is ultimately aimed at reducing imbalanced power structures (Mogashoa, 2014). The CDA methodology was chosen for its versatility with the type of data we will be utilising. Moreover and importantly, CDA integrates the theoretical perspectives of the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory, which offers a socio-political lens to understand power

dynamics (Weber, M., 2005) and van Dijk's (2015; 1997a; 1997b) model of CDA, which examines the discursive interplay for the reproduction of power between language, social cognition and social structure is represented in the figure below²²:

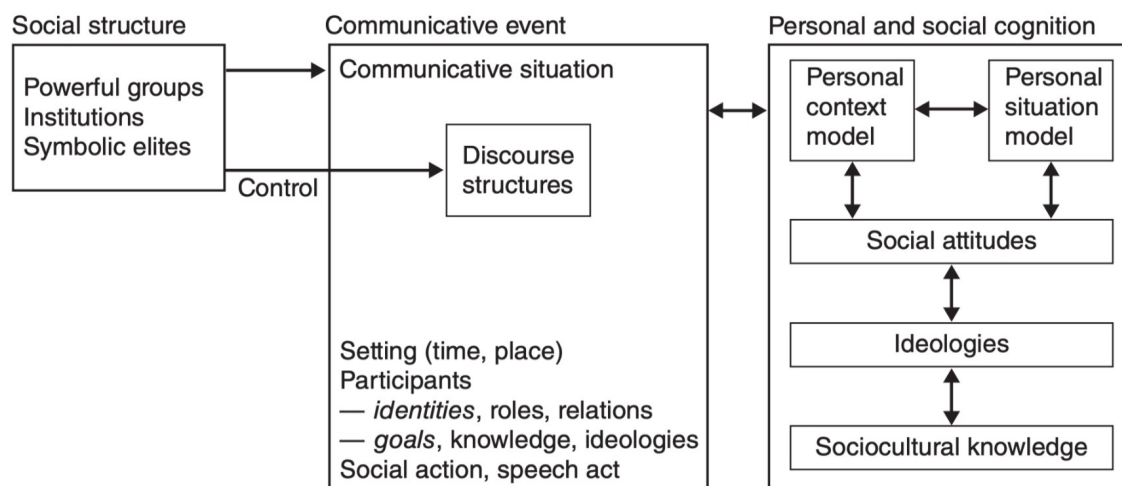


Figure 22.1 Schema of the discursive reproduction of power.

The CDA approach first will involve compiling the data, which will be categorized into sections based on the type of data, with a brief explanation of each of the data itself and to point out its characteristics, with a brief analysis of what it could mean. The second step will be to take this compiled data and analyze extensively, based on its nuances. The third step is to analyze the themes, language and context from a broader perspective. This three steps process of analysis is followed to be more coherent in the analysis, as well as to prioritize a richer analysis, rather than focusing on the amount, since as the figure above shows, this CDA method focuses on nuances.

The conclusions will be drawn in the final section to answer the dissertation's research questions. The aim here is that the results will provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the representations of the UAPA from 2004 to the present in a comprehensive way, from a multimodal (Van Leeuwen, T, 2015) angle, from two dominant discourse sources in India: the government and the media.

3.3 Research Design and Data Collection

The research design was made keeping in mind the exploratory nature of the topic and hence qualitative research was chosen as we are interested in exploring the discourse on the topic,

²² Image taken from van Dijk (2015, p. 474)

through the lens of a myriad of factors (Mogashoa, 2014). A qualitative approach using CDA is utilized here as it is an interpretive approach (Mogashoa, 2014). The data is of two types: textual and auditory (including visual), represented below for ease of understanding:

	Textual	Auditory (including visual)
Media	Articles	News videos
Government	Legislation documents	Parliament (Lok Sabha) addresses and debate videos

The structure of starting from legislative language is to analyze the information at a lexical level first and then moving deeper to understand the discourse multimodally (Van Leeuwen, 2015). The gap this dissertation is trying to fill in the current literature is through this type of multimodal analysis and including both the media and the government/political discourse simultaneously to understand discourse through the dominant (political/governmental) channel and the democratic channel (media). Including both text and visual data can provide a well-rounded analysis of the content (Van Leeuwen, 2015)

The data will provide a comprehensive understanding with selected data timelines, based on the type of data, explained as below:

Legislation Documents: It will focus on specific sections of UAPA document, since restricting this section to a particular timeline will hinder in providing context and deeper understanding for the preceding sections. It will focus on the frequency of different terms, important definitions, ambiguity in the text and their implications.

Media Analysis: While choosing the data for the media, there was a large necessity to not choose articles based on personal bias, so the criteria was built from the top down²³. The periods for the data were defined from 2014 to 2024 present, further narrowing down the sample to selected years with reasoning. These were 2016, which had the least difference between cases registered vs arrest rates (V. Suresh et al, 2022), 2014 was the year the BJP government came into power after a long time (Palshikar, 2015), 2019 was significant for the amendment of adding individuals (Mahmood, 2021), 2020 had the highest conviction rate based on number of persons arrested (V. Suresh et al, 2022), 2021 had 7 out of 8 crimes

²³ see Rahman et al (2022), Onwuegbuzie et al (2007), Clarke Hagan et al (2023) on the literature for sampling techniques

committed (87.5%) against Muslims (CJP, 2021), and 2024 because the details covered in the present year could include perspectives on future developments²⁴. With these years, the articles, 5 random samples each, from audio and textual were chosen, with the only criteria being that within those 5 samples media outlets are not repeated²⁴.

Government Parliament Addresses and Debates: The data will concentrate on the most impactful debate and key moments that are relevant within the Parliament debates/addresses on the UAPA for i.e., 2019 and the most recent 2024, with specific dates 24th and 25th July of 2019 (focus on UAPA criticisms), and the 27th June to 3rd July, 2024 (focus on ideologies)²⁴. With these two timelines, the addresses in the Lok Sabha, Amit Shah and Modi were chosen to be represented as they were the key figures in the current government. The criteria selection for opposition is Rahul Gandhi being the most prominent, as the leader of Congress and Owaisi being AIMIM's leader, representing the Muslim population and Moitra, who was repeatedly found to be the most critical of the Modi government, who gained popularity with her "fascism" speech at the parliament (India Today, 2019c). With the content being lengthy that focused on different details like fiscal/budget matters etc and due to the different language, the specific clips cited were taken from youtube. However the analysis only focused on the content we require, regardless of what media channel it was posted in.

The reason for focusing on specific timelines for each type of data will be to provide a more detailed and comprehensive examination of the UAPA. In addition, a varied type of data was also used. As three types of data sets are being analyzed, under two different categories - audio/visual and textual, it will allow for a detailed analysis of each set of data without being overwhelmed by the amount of data. Narrowing and focusing on specific key events is to provide a detailed and richer analysis.

The purpose of using a variety of media outlets was to capture a diverse media outlook at the micro level, to provide a detailed analysis. This in turn was to capture media trends at the macro level. The thinking here is that when people consume media, they consume it through a diverse set of outlets, as it was found in a study that a significant portion of people in India consume news online, which means they are not tied to one particular media outlet (Bot Populi, 2023). Because of this, focusing on different areas and outlets of the media helps in uncovering biases and differing stances, as well as themes that emerge within the media sphere

²⁴ see Press Information Bureau (2019; 2024b)

that influences discourse (Clarke Hagan et al, 2023)²⁵. One of the more important aspects from the reading of van Dijk's (1983; 1995; 2012) work that was recognised is how much knowledge is important to creation and updation of mental models (2015; 1997a; 1997b) to provide a map of broader ideological patterns and how they are formed through cognitive processes. To understand how it occurs, it was deemed that it was necessary to take a wide range of view, over a wide range of events based on the leanings of the media outlets presented.

Additionally, the data for legislation and media will be in English, while the Parliament addresses and debates use Hindi mainly. Two dictionaries, one being the Oxford hindi-english dictionary and the other is an Indian dictionary called Shabdkosh, will be cross referenced for finding the meaning of words. Two dictionaries are being used, one with a wider source for the Hindi language and the other with a more accurate English language source to compare the meanings/nuances, and to choose the most accurate one for the context. In addition, for the interpretive section of the discourse in English Language, Oxford dictionary (OED, n.d.) will be used for choosing the appropriate intention of the words used within discourse.

4. DESCRIPTIVE TEXTUAL AND AUDITORY ANALYSIS

4.1 Textual analysis

4.1.1 Legislation Language

The primary and currently the sole anti-terrorism act within the Indian law is the UAPA, which was enacted in 1967. It replaced two other laws and served in their stead, which have since been repealed, which were TADA and POTA (Nair, 2009). However, the unlawful act was much more similar to the 124-A IPC section law that dealt with 'sedition' (see V. Suresh et al, 2022), which served a similar purpose for 'unlawful' activities, as seen from the cases like Kedar Nath Singh vs Union of India, 1962 Supp (2) SCR 769, effectively performing the same function (Internet Freedom Foundation, 2023).

The Act saw various Amendments after it was created, with a major one in 2004, which added Chapter IV - "Punishment for Terrorist Act", a major change since before that the Act acted as a supplement to PDA, and another main amendment was in 2019, which added the provision for individuals to be charged under it (Mahmood, 2021). These amendments brought about what is now the UAPA, which was that the law was, in theory, bifurcated into two sections, with one

25 see also Rahman et al (2022), Onwuegbuzie et al (2007)

specifically for terrorist acts and the other for actions that were considered ‘unlawful’, which was initially what the law was created for in 1967 (Mahmood, 2021; see also Nair, 2009). The Section 2 (o) of the UAPA defined Unlawful activity, analysing the lexical language, in the section for definitions in Chapter I, Section 2 (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) of the definitions, vague terms are already utilised:

- “Association means any combination or body of individuals” - Section 2 (a)
- “supports any claim,” - Section 2 (i)
- “disclaims, questions, disrupts or is intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India” - Section 2 (ii)
- "causes or is intended to cause disaffection against India" - Section 2 (iii)

The usage of words like “any”, and “intended” points to very broad definitions, with perceived. Chapter III under Offences and Penalties, again in Section 10 (iv) of “in any way assists” has this usage of any (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967).

Under Chapter IV, Section 15, the definition for “Terrorist Act” - it mentions "likely to threaten" or "intend to strike terror" which points to inclusion for future action for perceived intent. It is also to note that the word likely appears four times in the original document, with all four being under the terrorist act section (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). Again, this word like “any” and “intended” introduces and establishes a degree of ambiguity, allowing for flexible interpretation (Nair 2009; V. Suresh et al, 2022).

This broader definition is another issue since in the same Chapter, Section 18 - “Punishment for conspiracy, etc.” - it is mentioned that the law has provision to punish “Whoever conspires or attempts to commit, or advocates, abets, advises or [incites, directly or knowingly facilitates] the commission of, a terrorist act or any act preparatory to the commission of a terrorist act” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967).

The main problem here is “any act preparatory to the commission of a terrorist act” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) - this definition could mean anything from actually conspiring with a terrorist organisation to writing a research paper or an article to activism. It is also important to note here that the word “conspiracy” is not defined under the law, and can only be found in Section 120A/120B of IPC (V. Suresh et al, 2022). This is also a reason for when cases will be booked based on suspicion, it will require surveillance and infringement of privacy to obtain proof, which is very broad, because the investigation is being done under suspicion a direct contrast to Articles 21(n.d.), which grants right to “his life or personal liberty”. It will not only

cause fear with the people of false accusations, which would suppress freedom of speech because any protest or even a small act of complaint against the government can be presumed as a “preparatory act” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). . Additionally, with such a vague and broad term like “preparatory” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967), which is future-indicating, it shifts the burden of proving innocence to the person who is accused.

The usage of ambiguous language provides a higher probability for its misuse. On the other hand, usage of rhetorical strategies (van Dijk, 1997b) by usage of framing actions to “threaten sovereignty and integrity of India,” the lexicon of the language uses a persuasive narrative to shape public opinion and policy enforcement (Syukri et al, 2020). Combining this with the power of defining what this “likely” action is, which solely depends on the central government (Nair, 2009), leads to misinterpretations, while additionally allowing for framing the government as proactive if necessary.

The terrorist act section also includes “economic security,” as one of the ways there can be threats, which is also very broad, and not all economic crimes might necessarily be done with terrorist intent, because even with definition provided in Chapter I, Section 2 (ea), the definition for it is “financial, monetary and fiscal stability, security of means of production and distribution, food security, livelihood security, energy security, ecological and environmental security” all of which are too broad and vague (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). It is also surprising that economic security includes “ecological security” and “environmental security,” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) both of which would require definitions in the context of the Act as well but they are not provided.

Again, under “Unlawful” actions, as per the lexicon of the act, is defined under Chapter I Section 2 (o) as “in relation to an individual or association, means any action taken by such individual or association (whether by committing an act or by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise)” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). This comes with the same problem as Section 18 (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). It is also a structural issue within the document, because there is no clear definition of separating a terrorist act, a conspiracy or an unlawful act. Any of the activities already mentioned like activism, publishing research, writing a news article (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) etc., that are not overtly violent, can be made to fit within these three categories depending on the state or the central government.

The 2019 amendment bill brought about three major changes for the UAPA. The first of which was that previously only organizations could be declared under the section of terrorist act (see Mahmood, 2021). However, now in addition, individuals could be charged under it if they were found in Chapter VI, Section 35 (a), (b) or (c) “commits or participate”, “prepares” or “promotes” and in Section 38 “membership”, in Section 39 “support” (not limited to funding), then they could be labeled as terrorist if found guilty of any of the above (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967; National Investigation Agency, 2019²⁶; see Mahmood, 2021; V. Suresh et al, 2022).

Secondly, as a country with a federal system of governance, in 2008 NIA was given the powers through the NIA Act that gave direct powers of only answering to the MHA (V. Suresh et al, 2022) and in 2019 they added investigative action like seizing properties, which was then changed to obtain permission from the Director General of NIA, additionally also adding a “list of offences” that could only be investigated by the NIA under the NIA Act (Mahmood, 2021; V. Suresh et al, 2022).

There is also an absence of traditional timeline for bail with respect to the arrests made under Section 43 D (5) of the Act if accusations are believed to be “prima facie” true, wherein as compared to a traditional case that grants bail after 60 to 90 days in the Section 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (The Hindu, 2023), here it is 180 days, up to which the accused can be detained before a charge sheet can be filed (The Indian Express, 2018; Nair, 2009; Mahmood, 2021). This is a major difference compared to the “Bail is the rule and jail is an exception” ruling, declared in the 1977 case of State of Rajasthan vs Balchand by the SC (Supreme Court of India, 1977), which set a precedent on Bail rights for an accused party.

Section 43 (E) says that the burden of proof rests on the accused i.e, it is provided as “Court shall presume, unless the contrary is shown” for Section 15 of “presumption of offence” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967). In addition to this, as previously discussed, arrest can also be made under presumptive actions due to the inclusion of words like “preparatory” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) as previously discussed. The long period of detention, if for “preparatory acts” or acts that “likely threaten” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967), is quite similar to preventive detention in Article 22 (n.d.) even if the reason in the UAPA law is for investigative detention. It is getting around Article 21 (n.d.), as any delay in investigation, which can lead to a

²⁶ VPN was used to access this document as it was restricted

time period of bail extended can hinder the “right to freedom”, which can be misused, especially if the arrest was for a small act like writing an op-ed in a newspaper²⁷.

In any traditional case, proving the case rests on the accusing party (Shankar, 2014). This implies that the accusing party has to prove that the accused is guilty. It is always easier to prove or disprove against the existence of something rather than nothing. Innocent is the baseline. Every citizen is assumed to be innocent until proof is brought up that they are guilty. This is how law has worked for a long time, because to prove someone is guilty, evidence can be gathered to support it, but it is not easy the other way around. Additionally, a right to innocence until proven guilty is also considered a Human right by the UN which the law is in direct violation of, especially when considering how the basic protocols for the declaration of guilt violates certain constitutional rights as discussed above (Nair, 2009; Mahmood, 2021; Shankar, 2014). This presumption of innocence acts as a double protection, both from the media bias coverage and in striking a balance between safeguarding human rights and addressing transnational crimes (Shankar, 2014).

Furthering on this, while there are methods to contest the accusations against the SC by an individual, it cannot be done so before their name is added to the Schedule, a publicly accessible list that names all the organizations and individuals that the government has found to be guilty of committing an unlawful action.

This implies that individuals are not given a warning of the inclusion. In fact, in a Memorandum, it states that the Ministry of Home Affairs has the “power to issue ex-parte orders for designating such individual or organisation”, which refers to “granting motions or orders without waiting for a response from the other side²⁸”, and that inclusion is “not contingent upon the existence of a criminal proceeding against the individual/organisation” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2023). The Schedule is also published and updated regularly by the government on the official website, which is free for access to the general public. With the law having words like "terrorist" and "unlawful" (words that carry negative connotations) and the details of names of individuals in the schedule being public, being associated with such a list can carry “social and affective meanings” with strong connotations, shaping public attitudes (Syukri et al, 2020) towards those listed.

²⁷ While it is acknowledged that bail delay in UAPA and Article 22 on prevention detention are different fundamentally, the language in the UAPA does find a loop-hole, which is problematic

²⁸ definition taken from LII (n.d.) and also cross-checked against a document of legal definitions found on the official website for Karnataka High Court, Karnataka Judiciary (n.d.)

4.1.2 Media Articles

- *NDTV*

The news on the Tamil Nadu Party MDMK General Secretary Vaiko being allowed to present his arguments before a special tribunal constituted by the Delhi High Court to investigate the ban of LTTE, a Tamil organization in Sri Lanka, as an "unlawful organization," was presented as information with political significance by the NDTV (2014). To explain his involvement, the writer maintained a neutral stance, providing information on Vaiko's past support for the Tamil people in Sri Lanka (NDTV, 2014). The overall voice is informative and objective, focusing on the legal proceedings and political implications of the tribunal's review, but is to be noted the article mentions "Vaiko was allowed" and that Vaiko's involvement arose from an advertisement by a tribunal headed by Justice G P Mittal calling for responses, meant to evoke a sense of just judicial process (van Dijk, 1997a; NDTV, 2014).

- *The Indian Express*

The Indian Express (2016) released an article on a village in Tamil Nadu that has been protesting against a Nuclear Plant for five years, covering the duration and aftermath after the SC laid down what cannot be considered sedition. The article mentions how the number on the board increased in the village, evoking the emotion of their plight and a sense of victory in them being allowed to protest more (van Dijk, 1997a; The Indian Express, 2016). However, it also points out that this is one of 140 cases against the village that was won, but there is a sense of defeat in how many remain (van Dijk, 1997a; The Indian Express, 2016). The article also has an interview from an officer who had written the First Information Report (FIR) (later withdrawn from order from SC), mentioned only a few by name and the rest as "3000 or 5000 people in each" as it was impractical to name them, but also that the FIR was to scare people away (The Indian Express, 2016). This piece of information - points to the dichotomy on both sides; the insurmountable cases booked under sections that can fetch the death penalty are a momentous victory to the village, is a "scare tactic", and an "impractical" and "tedious task" for even doing the legal formalities involved as the writer also points out "nobody expects these cases to amount to anything" (van Dijk, 1997a; The Indian Express, 2016). They were charged as their organisation the PMANE of getting foreign funding and points out a villager was also booked for attending one PMANE meeting (The Indian Express, 2016). The Indian Express (2016) uses a multimodal method of communication (Van Leeuwen, 2015), juxtaposing images of police

violence during protests with a smiling image of a villager and another of people taking refuge in a church, to evoke connection and sympathy within the reader.

The writer also points out the religion of the villagers, a mainly Christian community and points to the negligible Hindu Population, to link religion to the argument, since the ruling party is a Hindu dominant one (The Indian Express, 2016). It juxtaposes this information with how both the religion's places of worship are right across each other - to invoke what secular themes that India purports to stand for (van dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 1995), and it follows the timeline of the events, mentioning names of people and their background, along with how many cases were booked within each time period (The Indian Express, 2016). This is made to evoke a narrative so that the story sticks (van dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 1995; 2015) with the reader. It ends with a statement by a villager who mentions that though they are called a terrorist, that it is fine because they know who they are and creates a strong sense of identity and that the villagers are sure of their actions, that it is correct (The Indian Express, 2016).

- *The Print*

The article by The Print (2019) takes a stance of deep skepticism towards historical and contemporary political leadership, mainly targeting the Congress party for creating laws that are now used for repression under the BJP government. The piece emphasizes the failure of Indian society, including the media, political elite, middle classes, and civil liberty organizations, to defend civil liberties over the decades effectively for allowing repressive laws that affect marginalized communities such as Adivasis, Dalits, Muslims, and Kashmiris, making sure to highlight the groups to make it more memorable (The Print, 2019). The article is written through a critical examination standpoint, to create awareness on the marginalized communities, by focusing solely on the impact of the law to their rights.

- *Times of India*

In an article by Times of India (2019), that covered protests in the Bengal district during the CAA issue, has in the phrases like “Violent protests” and “rocked parts of West Bengal,” (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) capturing the dramatic and alarming tone of the article, implying the disruption to public safety due to the protests. The article includes quotes from the government talking about upholding the constitution, which is in stark contrast to the way the protestors are mentioned, detailing their violent acts such as “torched at least 17 buses, five empty trains, fire engines, and police vehicles, vandalised half a dozen rail stations, hurled stones at passing vehicles, and fought a pitched battle with police,” counting the damage in each incident which

emphasizes (van Dijk, 1997b) how the protestors are aggressive (Times of India, 2019). The article also mentions that the protestors using “children as human shields,” pointing out the unethical and desperate tactics and combines it with direct quotes from victims and passersby who were caught in between, like “the mob then set the bus on fire, burning our bags containing the entire set of my mother’s medical records,” painting a very vivid picture of chaos and evoking sympathy (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a), and highlighting how victims are created due to the actions of the protestors, positioning the ordinary people as victims, the governor and chief minister as upholders of justice, and the protestors as violent (Times of India, 2019).

- *India Today*

In another article by India Today (2019a), the writer reports on the government asking for data on terrorists to be compiled, and the article uses the words terrorism and terrorist, with a neutral meaning of reporting on the Government’s orders. However, there is a note of choice on words “terrorists operating from Indian soil” which is provided to evoke nationalism and reminder as has been noted many times, as national identity and physical things like land or soil are interlinked (see Herb, 1999; India Today 2019a).

- *Deccan Chronicle*

In an article by the Deccan Chronicle (2024), the death of Stan Sway, a Tribal activist under custody in 2021, is presented as an analysis three years later to report on how the US House of Representatives urged for investigation. The article names the Congressman and the lawmakers who have expressed concern on the misuse of the law and also mentions how they “applaud[ed]s” recent ruling by SC to suspend the “colonial-era sedition law”, presenting also the direct quotes from Vargas on the law itself and Father Stan’s efforts to “giving voice to the voiceless” (Deccan Chronicle, 2024). The article also mentions the background of Father Stan presented as “according to the resolution” (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) and the key roles he played in the Advisai movements like the Pathalgadi movement (Deccan Chronicle, 2024). The author never presents a direct report about Stan, but rather punctuates that the background is “according to the resolution” (Deccan Chronicle, 2024). The title is also presented with respect to the US resolution and details with respect to the US representatives is the central theme of the article rather than the death of Swamy or the way it occurred (Deccan Chronicle, 2024).

4.2 Auditory Analysis

4.2.1 Government

When the Parliament addresses are analysed, we find a deflection of criticism and emphasis on “ending terrorism” by the acting government (Hindustan Times, 2019a; 2019b). Hindustan Times (2019b) released a live transcript of the Parliament meeting in 2019 over the amendment bill. In it, the Speaker Amit Shah, aiming to evoke support and trust in the government's actions, mentions the law is to end terrorism and "urban maoism" and their "ideological pretense" (van Dijk, 1997b; 1995;) (Hindustan Times, 2019b). His statements are intended to reassure the public as he asserts their continuity from the previous government in creating strict laws and its intention is to “end terrorism” (Hindustan Times, 2019b; van Dijk, 1997b).

Home Minister Amit Shah, in his address to the Parliament regarding his “small” (van Dijk, 1997b) amendments, notes that the laws are strict to end terrorism and that it is necessary. He mentions that he wanted the rules to be “strict against terrorism” even during the tenure of the opposition party, but he never mentions that he agreed with them, rather that the Parliament was correct in passing them (Hindustan Times, 2019a). He mentions that it was the opposition party, INC in 1967 that created stringent laws for terrorism and kept increasing the stringency (Hindustan Times, 2019a). He mentions this by asking it repeatedly, in questions of “Who did it?” to increase curiosity within the listener, so finally, when the answer is provided, it creates satisfaction and positive connotation for the listener for correctly guessing (van Dijk, 1997b; 2015; 1997a)(Hindustan Times, 2019a). He calls it the government’s “fight” against terrorism and frames it as a question of whether governments should fight against terrorism (Hindustan Times, 2019a). He jokingly says, followed by laughter, that if the opposition is opposing the amendment because they made a mistake in bringing the law, then he has no problems (Hindustan Times, 2019a). It is interesting that in this address, he circumnavigates the question of stringency by placing the weight and responsibility of the decision on INC (Hindustan Times, 2019a). His tone (Hindustan Times, 2019a; 1997b) in this video is pleasant, leaning towards charm offensive (Pan et al, 2020).

Asaduddin Salahuddin Owaisi Owaisi, MP for the Hyderabad constituency in the Parliament, and the President of the political party AIMIM opposes the amendments to the bill (Hindustan Times, 2019b). He sounds passionate as he is told he has been speaking for a long time, he stutters and asks for time to speak hurriedly (Hindustan Times, 2019b). He talks about how after seven months of custody four boys were released by NIA, however the officers cannot be suspended for this action, this seems to be in conjecture with how the government mentions “zero tolerance for terrorism” (Hindustan Times, 2019b). Addressing the Home Minister, he mentions that he blames INC for this, as the articles were put into place during their tenure to

not suspend the NIA and calls them “culprits” (Hindustan Times, 2019b). He also says that when INC “is in power they’re bigger than BJP”, as in their policies and that when they lose the power they become the “big brother of Muslims” and his tone is critical and conveys disbelief when he says this (Hindustan Times, 2019b). It is important to note that this speech by Owaisi (Hindustan Times, 2019a) is after the Home Minister’s speech (Hindustan Times, 2019a) mentioned in the previous paragraph where he puts the responsibility on INC for creating the bill.

Home Minister Amit Shah justifies the need to designate individuals as terrorists to prevent them from forming new organizations after their current ones are banned, emphasizing that this amendment is a proactive approach to terrorism (ABP Live, 2019). In it, his counter to criticism is to draw parallels to the Emergency period to counter the opposition party’s accusations of misuse of the law (ABP Live, 2019). His intention here is to suggest that their past actions undermine their current criticism but hold them accountable and deflect criticism (van Dijk, 1997b; 2015), while also suggesting that the amendments were for the benefit of the people and to safeguard security (ABP Live, 2019).

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra Mentions that her friends and family have told her “to be careful” since her maiden speech at the parliament - one criticizing UAPA (The Wire, 2019). She mentions why she feels this way, including that she agrees, even though she and others present have been elected for her role, just like the ruling government, but the opposition faces the risk of being called “anti-national” every time they disagree with issues of “national security, law and order and policing” (The Wire, 2019). She calls the government’s supporters/resources “troll armies” and “propaganda machinery” works “overtime”, as in she discredits them as “trolls” (van Dijk, 1997b), a word popularly used for people who want to cause conflict by instigating it, putting her and the opposition speaking up as a victim of this behavior (The Wire, 2019). It also puts the speaker (The Wire, 2019) in a more sophisticated position (van Dijk, 1997b) as the “troll’s purpose” is to ‘bait’ (Ghosh, 2020). There is an immediate sound of disruption against the MP, and the speaker urges for order (The Wire, 2019). A BJP member interrupts her to disapprove that no one in their party called them anti-national and the speaker should withdraw the statement (The Wire, 2019). The speaker refutes it, raising her voice, saying she mentioned supporters and not the members themselves (The Wire, 2019). However, the Honorable speaker asks in a joking tone if she is then criticizing the entire government (The Wire, 2019). As her passionate speech continues, the camera pans to the Home Minister, who is shown laughing, and more disruptions are heard as she speaks (The

Wire, 2019). She goes into an explanation of the amendments (The Wire, 2019). It is interesting to note that she also mentions that she uses certain terms like “trolls” to be more understandable to the common people (van Dijk, 1997b; 1983; 1997a) and that she could be one of the people who are in threat in the future as they could be booked too (The Wire, 2019).

INC MP Rahul Gandhi, in his speech to the Parliament, brings and produces images of the Hindu idol of worship, Lord Shiva (The Indian Express, 2024). There is immediate disruption and the House Speaker criticizes him by mentioning no religious symbols are allowed (The Indian Express, 2024). Rahul counters this by keeping the image from view and explains the symbolism being each element in the idol image (The Indian Express, 2024). He specifically says the trident behind the left shoulder is “not a symbol of violence and that it is a symbol of non-violence,” which is why it is “not in Shiva’s hand” (The Indian Express, 2024). He uses this religious imagery (Van Leeuwen, 2015) because he says the BJP is associated with the religion, and it could be said he is trying to deconstruct the issue in the language of his opposition party (The Indian Express, 2024). He mentions his party’s non-violent regime immediately after explaining this passionate speech to associate INC with Shiva and immediately associating what the idol represents as truth, courage, and non-violence as the symbol of his party (van Dijk, 1997b; Van Leeuwen, 2015; The Indian Express, 2024). He discredits the PM by calling him in a humorous tone “non-biological” and “the spirit speaks to him” (van Dijk, 1997b), placing himself and the rest as mere mortals (The Indian Express, 2024). He mentions this by bringing in Islamic, Sikh, and Christian imagery and quotes (The Indian Express, 2024). There are disruptions during each of them, but none more so than when Rahul mentions that “those who call themselves Hindu are doing violence” (The Indian Express, 2024). The parliament goes into an immediate uproar over the statement, especially from the BJP side, and there are a lot of shouts and disruptions against the statement (The Indian Express, 2024). The PM interrupts and says that “calling the entire Hindu community is a very serious matter” (The Indian Express, 2024). Rahul says, “The Prime Minister is not the entire Hindu community” (The Indian Express, 2024). He says this in response, and his tone (van Dijk, 1997b) implies that he never called the community violent but the opposition (The Indian Express, 2024)

PM Modi (The Indian Express, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) addressed the Parliament in response to Rahul Gandhi's Hindu speech (The Indian Express, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) , indirectly referring to Rahul as “spreading lies”. This is a callback to Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) mention of truth being expunged in the

Modi government. He also calls it a “conspiracy” and a “hatred” (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a;) (The Indian Express, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024). He calls the opposition’s actions “irresponsible” and that he should apologize to the followers of the Hindu faith and other religions. The PM also calls Rahul as “Balak Buddhi” (Child minded)²⁹ (The Indian Express, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) to belittle him (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a).

This is a very passionate address, clearly meant to evoke an emotional response in the audience (van Dijk, 2015). While Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024) speech was aimed at addressing the use of violence of BJP's violence, he does use clunkier phrasing and leaves room for his intent (van Dijk, 1997b; 1995). The counter is that during Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024) speech, he mentioned that the PM is not the entire Hindu community; however, here, this is not addressed, and the central theme in this speech is one of hostility - either as being expressed by INC's MP. Modi (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) has the reason for tolerance to be Hindus. He also puts forth indirectly that Hindus are the reason democracy is upheld and that the country flourishes (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 2012; 1995) (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) . He also points out that Hinduism has been associated with diseases like “dengue, malaria and that people clap” (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024) . There is a clear case to align the BJP as pro-Hindu and the INC as anti-Hindu (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024). It is intended to motivate the community inadvertently as the dominant democratic religious group, because of whom other religions and diversity thrives. He blames the opposition for “demean[ing]”²⁸ Hindus (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024). Modi also brings up key figures like Swami Vivekananda for being proud of “his religion” 113 years ago and that the opposition “insulted Babasaheb Ambedkar”, By associating Hindus as the main upholders of democracy, it legitimises as the dominant power and responsible for India’s “flourish[ment]” (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024; Shani 2005; 2021; see Van der Veer 1994). The Speaker can be seen smiling during parts of Modi’s speech and in the background BJP raises slogans of “We want justice” when talking about Hindu’s “tolerance” and “Jhoot bole Kauwa Kaate” (if you lie a crow will bite), is heard during critical parts of his speeches where he talks about “destruction of power of Hindus” is not possible because Hindus are “shakti” (power) (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024). The slogan could be a call-back to an incident where Aam Aadmi Party’s MP Raghav Chadha was attacked by a

²⁹ see Shabd Kosh (n.d.)

crow outside the Parliament a few days before the speech (First Post, 2024), perhaps raised as a reminder (1997a; The Economic Times, 2024).

It is interesting how religious imagery and iconography are used to place the self in a positive light, which can essentially make the person/party in a favorable light to those who follow that religion (Shani 2021; see Van der Veer 1994; Shani 2005) and also shows Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024) appreciation for the religion. This is done to ensure that there is a rebuttal when he (The Indian Express, 2024) can be criticized for his later comments on violence by Hindus that it is individuals and groups, not the whole religious community, which is what he mentions later as well. He (The Indian Express, 2024) uses charm offensive here to create a positive image of the INC party in the minds of the listener (Pan et al, 2020) who holds the idol in great regard through ideological association and linking Mahatma Gandhi, like the religious Gods, done so to associate himself positive association of Gandhi and to the historical context for freedom fight, invoking patriotism (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; Shani 2005; 2021; see Van der Veer 1994). On the other hand, the response by Modi (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Bureau of India, 2024), is one of the offensive othering by the use of defensive othering (Pan et al, 2020), by placing Rahul Gandhi (The Indian Express, 2024) as a criticizer of the Hindu community by claiming that Rahul was calling all of them "violent" (van Dijk, 1997b). This is done to reshape the image of the audience who might have created a positive association of INC with the Hinduism idol Shiva (van Dijk, 1997b; 1995; Shani 2005; see also Van der Veer 1994; Shani 2021; van Dijk 1997a) (The Indian Express, 2024).

4.2.2 Media

- *Mirror Now*

Mirror Now (2020) Talks about how the Central Crime Branch invoked 2 cases for investigating the Bengaluru riots on August 11, 2020, with two police stations burnt down and a INC MLA, who is mentioned by name, that this home was "completely set ablaze" (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a). The reporter mentions that 400 people have been arrested, and more will be. She also mentions that no organizations are banned yet, and a solid decision will be made after consulting with the central government (Mirror Now, 2020; van Dijk, 2012). A INC official's relative was also linked to these riots as there was initial evidence, but now that has come under scrutiny. However, she also speculates on the connection of the said INC Corporator and questions whether this investigation will "reveal his involvement in any form". This seems to imply his involvement is unquestionable, but how he is involved is speculated, and that it will

be revealed, an absolute certainty (van Dijk, 1997b). She also speculates on whether the incident was spontaneous or planned (Mirror Now, 2020). The reporter, while mentioning that digital evidence is being investigated, uses the term “we” as in she mentions, “we are looking at the digital evidence” and not they to denote the investigative body (van Dijk, 1995; 1997b; 1997a) (Mirror Now, 2020). She is associating the Mirror Now team as part of the body investigating the incident, to distance the team/company from the accused or suspected perpetrators or to associate Mirror Now with the law enforcers (van Dijk, 1995; Mirror Now, 2020).

- *India Today*

The Police in Kashmir Zone, FIR registered for people who “misused” the social media in the region (India Today, 2020). The anchor mentions that the sources have said that the “Crackdown not on all social media users defying ban” but for those who “misuse” it (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) (India Today, 2020). The title is “Govt Slaps UAPA On Those 'Misusing' Social Media In Kashmir, Police Files FIR,” and the reporter here uses the term “miscreants” to refer to the people who are charged with “sensational ideologies” and “unlawful activities” (India Today, 2020; van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a). The anchor explains these terms regarding the law and who was booked with examples that only the people who spread false rumors and misinformation are being charged (India Today, 2020). The usage of VPN to access social media to spread misinformation is mentioned as “problematic” and “propagating Pakistan-based ideologies,” (van Dijk, 1995) which she mentions is “not acceptable” and emphasises that this is the first FIR registered to mention that the police have not taken the action without thorough deliberation and it was not a spontaneous action without thought put into it (India Today, 2020). The report ends with the anchor emphasising that those booked were “spreading rumors or hate” (India Today, 2020).

- *Republic World*

The Republic World (2020) anchor talks about a complaint filed against Arundati Roy, by a few lawyers. The anchor’s tone seems to convey anger and indignation as she uses words like “do you remember” (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) and that Arundati told the people in a university campus in Delhi to “lie to the government” about the National Population Register (Republic World, 2020). The word “lie”, “mistreat people of Delhi” and “provocative statements” are used to talk about Arundhati and the clip also features one of the lawyers Rajeev Ranjan who

filed the complaint says that complaint was filed against her and anyone who was with her who wanted to “break the nation into pieces” (Shabd Kosh, n.d.), a “criminal” complaint as they were “against” “the nation”, “the people” and “the government” (Republic World, 2020). He outlines the Acts used for complaint and that he hopes officers will investigate and provide them with “rightful punishment” and emphasizes how she “broke the country into pieces” again (Republic World, 2020). The news report is a very critical view on Arundhati and emphasizes how their activity is a threat by mentioning the act of “breaking the nation into pieces” and the emphasis on Arundhati’s comment to “lie” (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) (Republic World, 2020).

- *Wion*

The anchor opens with the day of incident being “Republic day”, repeatedly using “a day where” for each point that talks about “military might”, “cultural diversity”, “celebrates unsung heroes” (Wion, 2021). The anchor mentions that celebrations were “hijacked” (van Dijk, 1997b) by riots. The video immediately cuts to the actions during the day, where we can hear the narration again emphasising this is how the day looked like (Van Leeuwen, 2015) and that “public property was vandalized” (Wion, 2021). Captions like “farmers run riots” - which is also the title of the video, “farmers turn violent” among others, the narrator talks about the reason for the protest and the farmers sought “permission” for a tractor rally and was provided by Delhi Police (Wion, 2021). The article makes a mention of “how sympathy of the protesters has been eroded” and that the “leaders of the protests” by this act and places a point that such an act could have “de-legitimised the protests” (van Dijk, 1997b; 2015), seen in the title which uses the word “Gravitas” to punctuate how grave this act could be for the farmers (Wion, 2021).

- *NDTV*

The NDTV (2022) covers a story on how students were charged with UAPA for “cheering” Pakistan winning the world cup. mentions and emphasizes repeatedly (van Dijk, 1997b) that they were students, as well as the text next to her in the video (Van Leeuwen, 2015), also makes a point to mention that they are “Engineering students” and the title is framed neutrally, with the mention only being they “cheered”. The news report also mentions additional people who were booked for the same reason and that they said “pro Pakistan slogans - according to reports” (NDTV, 2022). The news report also features the authority who arrested the students,

who mentions that they are “Desh Dhrogi” i.e., enemy of the state, a very exaggerated label (van Dijk, 1997b) (Shabd Kosh, n.d.) for sending messages cheering in a whatsapp group (NDTV, 2022). The repeated use of students and the title not being provocative or evocative, but just mentioning “cheered” shows that the report was not presented in support (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) of the arrests (NDTV, 2022).

- *CNN-News 18*

CNN-News 18 (2022) reports on the “Crackdown on the PFI” in Shaheen Bagh, but the host also asks the reporter what is the state of the people and their families. The reporter mentions how the buildings/properties of the organizations were seized and investigated, and also mentions how the area, the situation is normal (CNN-News 18, 2022). He also says the police have been “proactive in making sure” (van Dijk, 1997b) of the safety, even before the raids were conducted and he mentions the crime of the four arrested as that they have been “working in these properties and making sure that unauthorized activities are carried out”, making a point in the end to point out that the community has not responded and again that the police have been “very very proactive” in making sure there is no “untoward action” (van Dijk, 1997b; CNN-News 18, 2022). It is noted that even though in this video, the topic is about the PFI arrest, the main points that are emphasized (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) is the proactiveness of the police in maintaining safety (CNN-News 18, 2022).

5. Interpretive: Discursive analysis

5.1 Multimodal Communication methods

Multimodal method of communication, captures the reader's attention, thereby creating a deeper impact on the consumption of content (Van Leeuwen, 2015). Language is a potent instrument that constructs meaning through the framework of asymmetrical power relations through discursive dominance (van Dijk, 1997b). According to van Dijk (1997b), based on the response required, words and representations are used to gain sympathy or to instigate fear. Words are also phrased, to create positive, negative and neutral emotions, based on what word is stressed, what tone is used, what lexical choices are used, and what synonyms, hyperbole and metaphors are also used (van Dijk, 1997b; 2012; 1997a). Personal details are provided to perspectives, as well as to create sympathy (van Dijk 1997b; 1997a). Words are repeated to create emphasis (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a).

- *Legislative*

Analysing just the lexical language of the legislation, there is a lot of vagueness (van Dijk, 1997b) and broad scope that is already discussed. However, one more important thing to note is that due to a federal system of governance, it is also very easy to misuse this law by the states for political gains, which has occurred with previous laws like POTA due to its ambiguous definitions too (Mate et al, 2010).

In their article Mate & Naseemullah (2010) note this by studying two different types of case studies under POTA. They point out that Jharkhand had 702 individuals, including minors, arrested in a single year due to POTA; this was contrasted with Jammu & Kashmir, which while the state of Jammu and Kashmir, a state with a high rate of reported terrorism, had only 168 arrests. On the other hand, the authors mention that in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Mayawati used the law to arrest her political rival Raja Bhaiyya, part of the highly dominant Rajput community and former member of BJP, Mayawati's coalition partner. Mayawati faced backlash and push from both parties for his release. This poses a very important question, even if Mayawati's actions were politically motivated, was the law rightfully used given the political motivation behind it? (Mate et al, 2010)

In the legislative language, the use of words like “intended”, “likely”, “any”, “preparatory” and not providing proper definitions for “ecological” or “environmental” security (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967), gives a broader scope, while lacking any clear boundaries, delivering a presumptive meaning (van dijk, 1997b; 1997a). It is doubly concerning, with the Amendment of 2019 (National Investigation Agency, 2019) adding individuals, leading to a myriad of concerns like privacy issues due to searches being conducted because someone is presumed to be doing “preparatory” (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1967) activities or does any kind of activity that might be considered harmless without such a context within the law. In fact, in the case of *Jyoti Babasaheb Chorge vs State of Maharashtra* in 2012, the SC charged 15 tribal people for possessing Maoist propaganda literature like books, articles and pamphlets as this was considered being part of the Maoist organisation even if they did not undertake any other a “unlawful” actions (The Indian Express, 2023).

- *Parliament*

The language used in the data compiled for the Parliament addresses in the above examples is crucial to how political discourse develops through a dominant ideology (van dijk 1995; 1997b; 1997a). It helps reveal how sensitive and contentious issues like the UAPA

amendments, political dynamics, and communal narratives are and how identity and ideologies become tools used to create certain narratives (van Dijk, 1997a; 1997b; 2015; 1983). In his speeches and dialogues, Home Minister Amit Shah emphasizes the Government's “proactive” approach to “end terrorism” and how the amendments are “small” (ABP Live, 2019; Hindustan Times, 2019a), which frames the amendments as necessary by showing that the Government is responsible and vigilant in creating them, and that any criticism is exaggerated as changes are negligible (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a).

In addition, he (ABP Live, 2019) constantly brings up the information that the opposition created the laws before the current Government or used similar laws during the Emergency period³⁰. Through this, he (ABP Live, 2019) is drawing a parallel to the opposition, which discredits any criticism by the opposition on the amendments, placing himself and the opposition the same square (van Dijk, 1995; 1997a), so that criticism from one is a criticism to the other (it is important to note here that his response is to the opposition, so he makes sense he places his government in the same square as them to deter them from providing more criticism and to invalidate them), even though the current 2019 controversial amendment was made by the current BJP Government, which is what the criticisms are aimed at²⁷. It also aims to suggest a sense of hypocrisy in the criticism of the opposition party. During the severe and passionate speeches of opposition members like Mahua Moitra, Amit Shah is shown laughing, giving an air of ease and contrasting the emotion displayed by Moitra (van Dijk, 2015; 1988; Van Leeuwen, 2015; The Wire, 2019). The Government employs a soft power—charming offensive throughout its dialogues with tactical rebuttals contrasting the opposition (Pan et al, 2020).

The opposition parties use religious symbolism (The Indian Express, 2024) to resonate with the Hindu community and their ideologies (van Dijk, 1995, Shani, 2015). They do this so that the current BJP governments cannot claim a monopoly in the favor of the Hindu community (The Indian Express, 2024). However, this same tactic is also employed by the PM when he positions the Hindu community as upholders of “democracy” (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Information Bureau, 2024). It is important to note here that not only does Modi discredit Congress's attempts to win favor using religion (Shani, 2005) by employing the same tactic, but he also legitimizes the Hindu community as the prioritized and dominant group within India (The Economic times, 2024). The implication and difference in the speeches, even

30 see Mahmood (2021), Nair (2009) and V. Suresh et al (2022) on the background of development of the amendment from Congress period and BJP government’s timeline for UAPA

though both are in a Parliamentary setting, which lends it legitimacy (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) is that the PM's words (The Economic Times, 2024) carries more weight since he is not just a part of the ruling party and a member of Parliament but also the Head of the Government of India as the PM.

The opposition, Rahul Gandhi uses terms like "Non-biological" and "spirit speaks to him" to refer to Modi (The Indian, 2024). These metaphors (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) mock Modi since Rahul calls himself and everyone else "mere mortals" to create an association of himself to mortal humility vs the perceived divine arrogance of Modi, a method of ideological framing (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) of vulnerable Rahul vs God-like Modi. Rahul also critiques those "who call themselves Hindu" (The Indian Express, 2024) as "committing violence". Analyzing his whole speech (The Indian Express, 2024) and the context, on the surface, he seeks to condemn the actions of individuals identifying with the community who commit violent acts and, more specifically, is aimed as a jab at the Hindu-centric BJP party (Palshikar, 2015) since he does speak highly of Hindu values and its representation of "non-violence". It is interesting to note here Rahul and the BJP government both use language and metaphors that the public would be familiar with in the ideological pattern of religion (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a), because India's culture is tied closely with religion³¹. When Rahul "PM is not the whole Hindu Community" (The Indian Express, 2024), Modi (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Information Bureau, 2024) calls him out for his speech and his criticism implies that Rahul (The Indian Express, 2024) did associate the whole community with violence, which can carry connotations (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a). The thing is while Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024) speech is more detailed, it is also complicated to get his narrative (van Dijk, 2015; 1997b; 1997a) and such a statement from Modi (The Economic Times, 2024) would immediately be simple and effective in capturing what Modi claims to become more resonant, simply by virtue of simple language.

Moitra, from her end, calls the supporters of the Government "Troll armies" and "propaganda machinery" (The Wire, 2019), signaling a dismissive language aimed at delegitimizing (van Dijk, 1997a; Dahlberg, 2004) and to associate the supporters as disruptive rather than of any import. On the other hand, we have Owaisi (Hindustan Times, 2019b), who also belongs to another opposition party and positions himself and his party as an independent and critical voice, not allied with any other party. He does this by highlighting wrongful arrests, not by

³¹ see Press Information Bureau (2015), Pew Research Center (2021) on more statistics regarding religion

trying to place himself as a sympathizer (van Dijk, 1995; 1997a) for the people arrested, but by questioning the "zero tolerance policy" (Hindustan Times, 2019b) and what it applies to i.e., if the policy applies to the people, it should also apply to the officials who enforce it. With this, he blames the current BJP government (Hindustan Times, 2019b). In line with this, he also blames the INC party by bringing up that they were the creators of the laws that give large amount of power to the NIA officers who enforce the UAPA (Hindustan Times, 2019b). His stance (Hindustan Times, 2019b) appeals to the voters, aimed at creating distrust with both political opposition parties (van Dijk, 1997b).

Actions like raised tone (The Wire, 2019), shouting slogans (The Economic Times, 2024), laughing (The Wire, 2019) are used for downplaying the other party in the discussion. In addition, deliberate misinterpretations are used for creating a biased narrative that fits their requirements. When Modi (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Information Bureau, 2024) uses repetition and brings up allegations that were not even part of Rahul's (The Indian Express, 2024), without also providing context or proof for when they occurred, he is providing misinformation with evocative ideas (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 1988) to shift the public's attention.

- *Media*

The news media outlets employ different forms of lexicon and multimodal reporting to convey different types of messages and emotional response they want to evoke in the reader/listener. Words with strong connotations (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a), both positive and negative like "scare tactic," (The Indian Express, 2016), "upholding the constitution" (Times of India, 2019), "failure of Indian society" (The Print, 2019), "problematic" (India Today, 2019a; India Today, 2020), "vandalized" (Wion, 2021), "proactive" (CNN-News18), "cheered" (NDTV, 2022), "mistreat" (Republic World, 2020), etc. The meaning is inferred from who is being referred to and why. For example, the word "allowed" (NDTV, 2014) has a very neutral connotation. However, it is being spoken about in combination with Vaiko being "allowed" to advocate for LTTE in front of a tribunal and the word allowed can imply "provided with opportunity", which would make the government process appear reasonable. This aligns the framing as positive in terms of NDTV reporting on the government. Repetition of words (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) is also used to drive home a point, an example is, "very very proactive" is used by CNN-News 18 (2022) to show support and appreciation for government action in making sure no "untoward action" happened in Shaheen Bagh while investigating PFI.

On the other hand, we have more indirect uses like hyperbole, rhetoric, metaphors, images, and videos to convey meanings and steer the discourse in a direction that is not overtly apparent to the reader (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a). These kinds of words are placed into the memory of the audience subconsciously. For instance, the usage of “nobody expects these cases to amount to anything” (The Indian Express, 2016) emphasizes the village's struggles in fighting against oppressive authorities and the performative nature of the law in the filing of FIRs (van Dijk, 1997b). In another case, The Print (2019) uses the phrase “we all know who this recent UAPA amendment is meant to target”, which is a hyperbole (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 1995) because it implies universal awareness and consensus without actually providing who the “we” is by indirectly letting the reader infer the meaning, which removes responsibility of directly communicating who “we” is. Metaphors (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) are also used to create a strong mental picture. Republic World (2024), in saying Arundhati’s action “broke the nation in pieces” implying that Roy physically broke the nation, which is an impossible case as it is not literal, but it is meant to convey that Roy, through her actions, has created discord or division in the country. Images (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; Van Leeuwen, 2015) are also used to either emphasize the implied meaning, like in the case of the Indian Express’s (2016) article which talks about the vulnerability of the people in images, humanizing them by including images of smiling residents in close-up to create intimacy, which creates sympathy or showcasing an image of a hand holding a gun to create fear and emphasize the danger of the terrorists in the India Today (2019a) article.

On the other hand, videos also provide supportive emphasis (see Van Leeuwen, 2015) and they do not necessarily have to be confined to news that is already being presented in a video format. For example, in the Times of India (2019) article, the writer includes a clip of the chaos of the Bengal district anti-CAA protests to emphasize as well as support his claims on the protestors using “children as human shields.” Including a video of the chaos and violence that shows the atmosphere during the protest, like burning vehicles, makes the audience more receptive to the claims because one shocking action makes a claim of another more believable (see Van Leeuwen, 2015).

Thereby, language is used to create a narrative through direct and indirect choices, and this narrative is what provides the emotion and context associated to become powerful (van Dijk, 2015). According to Forchtner (2021), a dominant narrative has longevity and reach due to how widely it is both created as well as consumed. This narrative, through word-of-mouth, is

legitimized by sheer numbers. On the other hand, a minor narrative lacks longevity and in turn is questioned more heavily (Forchtner, 2021). When we consider this, the value of a government, which represents the country and the leaders who are official spokespersons, especially if we take that in a multi-party, federal, parliamentary system like India, dominant is not necessarily representative of the ideologies, but also communities.

5.2 Analysis of the Social and Political Context

Language carries different meanings across communities, embedding values, attitudes, and assessments that require contextual understanding to grasp the implicit meanings (van Dijk (1997a; 1997b; 2015; 1983). According to van Dijk (1997a; 1997b; 2012), these semiotic constructions are macrostructure signals. That is, they signal (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a) which of many facts or events is relatively more important through position, size and indirectly emphasizing what is important within the language phrasing. The choice of words and their synonyms is also significant, as it affects the intended message (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a).

Words like “troll armies” (The Wire, 2019) and “miscreants” (India Today, 2020) are aimed at evoking a certain emotion with the reader (van dijk, 1997b; 1997a), who through their past experience has a distinct association with each of them. On the other hand, religion also plays a very important role in the data, with repeated associations, especially when it is used in a political and media context (van Dijk, 1997b; 1983;1997a) to the dominant religion by all the parties to gain favor. Rahul Gandhi’s calls Shiva as “Shivji” (The Indian Express, 2024), adding “ji” (Shabd Kosh, n.d.) - an honorific word used to signal reverence and respect that would immediately create a positive mental model with a religious Hindu audience (Shani, 2005; 2021; see Van der Veer, 1984). Modi also does something similar by equating the existence of “democracy” with Hindus in India (Shani, 2005; 2021) (Mint, 2024). It is important to note that during his speech, while he mentions other religious idols like Jesus Christ and Sikh leaders, his use of the honorific is only for Shiva (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a;) (The Indian Express, 2024).

In fact, invoking religion has been found to be a strategy within the context of gaining votes in India. It was found in a study published by the Center for Study of Society and Secularism & Minority Rights Group International (2017) that religious tensions, although provoked by a range of political actors, particularly benefited dominant right-wing political parties during periods 1977-79, 1998-99, 1999-2004 and at present, since 2014, which was the party’s third time in power after two decades (Palshikar, 2015) - which benefitted BJP during national level elections that resulted in communal divides in the riots in UP in 2013.

It was found that from the inception of societies like Brahma samaj and Arya Samaj, the development of national identity and the colonial struggle has always been Hindu-centric with Hindu God symbolism and by the popularity of Hindu leaders like Tilak, Subash Chandra Bose etc (Shani, 2005; 2021; see Van der Veer, 1994; van Dijk, 1995). This association of “Hindu centrism” with democracy and martyrdom carries over into the long term memory association, as they have through time been evoked with a positive frame of representation (van Dijk, 1997b; 2015; 1997a). While there is a struggle between secularism and Hindu-centric ideologies between organisations like RSS and the INC, both movements are primarily composed for and to high and middle class composed of higher caste communities with relatively Brahmin-centric ideologies, thereby ultimately marginalizing minorities both in terms of caste and religion (Shani, 2005; 2021; see Van der Veer, 1994).

This association of nationalism with the dominant group arises from social practices in the past, where the pre-independence freedom movement had a very Hindu-centric narrative, which generalised it as common knowledge in discourse that carried over into the present day, especially with the openly Hindu-centric ideologies provided by the current BJP government, especially with its inception rooted in Bharatiya Jan Sangh, which represented Hindu-centric and anti-Congress ideologies (Palshikar, 2015). RSS also focused on uniting Hindus, by including SC and ST individuals in its ranks (Palshikar, 2015). This explains India’s othering of Pakistan, a predominantly Muslim nation, that India has a complicated history carried over from the time of Partition (Devji, 1992).

This important role of religion in Indian politics follows van Dijk’s (2012; 1983; 1995) theory of knowledge propagation and creation within communities in discourse. According to Dijk (2012), epistemological communities are defined through the construction and reproduction of “shared beliefs and knowledge.” In India, religion has been used to relate to the shared beliefs to resonate with the Hindu majority (Shani, 2005; Shani 2021). The strategic use of religious references during the Parliament speeches is a manipulation strategy to shape and reinforce the audience's mental models (van Dijk, 2015) and thereby, beliefs. By repeatedly associating Hinduism with positive ideas like “democracy” (The Economic Times, 2024; Press Information Bureau, 2024) and “nonviolence” (The Indian Express, 2024), Modi and Rahul are attempting to influence the social cognition (van Dijk, 2015; 2012; 1997a; 1997b) of their audience, making these associations a part of the community's shared knowledge (van Dijk, 2012; 1983; 1995). They also use "othering" (Ansari et al, 2020) Pakistan as a Muslim nation based on shared historical narratives and collective memory to reinforce that Hindu-centric

equates to national identity within the Indian community (van Dijk, 2012; 1983; 1995). The Hindu-centric narrative of India's pre-independence freedom movement has helped shape the long-term memory (van Dijk, 2015; 2012; 1997a; 1997b; Ansari et al, 2020) of the community as a collective as well. This Hindu-centric ideological framework marginalizes minorities and reinforces the power of the dominant group through discourse.

This kind of discourse does affect the public consciousness because we can see in the way Muslims are charged with UAPA vs Hindus. In the case of the Delhi riots by the PFI, even though an equal number of Hindus and Muslims were charged, the charges were different as the Muslims were charged under the sections of UAPA, while the Hindus were charged with “bailable and petty cases” (Times Now, 2020). In another instance, the Diplomat (2022) reported that when two Muslims Mohammed Riyaz Akhtar and Mohammed Ghous killed a Hindu in Udaipur and put the video of the act online, claiming it was “in defense of their Islamic faith”, they were rightfully charged with UAPA for it. However, when a right-wing Hindu activist Abhinav Bharat was found to be involved in the Samjhauta Express and Mecca Masjid attacks in 2007 and the Malegaon blasts in 2008, his name was not added to the public schedule (The Diplomat, 2022).

5.3 Themes

In the data presented in the previous sections, we can see a lot of juxtaposed positions of claiming possession. In the article by India Today (2019a), there is the usage of “soil” in addition to the word national. Additionally in another article by India Today (2019b), the word soil is used in the context of talking about how India is attacked from “Pakistan soil” (Herb, 1999). We can see that there are two types of representations using small structures within the language and the context (van Dijk, 1995; 1997a; 2012) created, one by degree of association to the reader who is Indian in most cases - a sense of belonging - being noted positively and the other of Pakistan - the other - providing a negative connotation by talking about terrorist launching attacks (Ansari et al, 2020).

van Dijk (1988) in his work talks about how minorities are portrayed i.e., how they are written about in the media and how quotations, community names and individual names are mentioned to draw attention when talking about certain topics. He points out the mention of ethnic minorities by mentioning specific community names in countries like Germany, Netherlands with regards to discussion pieces rather than just as the “immigrant” is prevalent in media (van

Dijk, 1988). This type of strategic dichotomy of “us” vs “them” creates “othering” (Pan et al, 2020; van dijk 1995) .

We can see all three of these being used in the data compiled. The PM talks about the opposition party creating fear and tagging them as a threat falls under the defensive denial due to offensive othering, also creating association within different squares of good and bad, us and them, (Pan et al, 2020; van dijk 1995) for being portrayed in a negative light or threatened to be portrayed in a negative light when questioned about his policies and the criticism by the opposition (DW, 2020). We can also see a use of charm offensive (Pan et al, 2020), by portraying the UAPA and the authorities who root out the “insurrection groups” for the safety of the country as proactive members of the government, whose priority is to end to terrorism for the safety of the nation (van dijk 1995).

We have extreme examples of this in the information we compiled from the media outlets. On one hand we have serious acts of violence being committed like setting police stations on fire (Mirror Now, 2020) and chaotic acts like climbing up the red fort to hold a community flag that could injure themselves and others (Wion, 2021) being charged under the law. On the other hand, we have people protesting against a nuclear power plant being charged (The Indian Express, 2016), people in Kashmir who are charged for spreading misinformation on social media (India Today, 2020), which it can be added, is not uncommon and the intent is hard to find out.

In fact, in a quantitative study conducted by Tom Buchanan (2020) that analyzed reasons for people spreading disinformation on social media, he found that the majority of the people who spread disinformation believed in the information and had spread it because the information was seen before. When the majority of the people believe they are being conscientious by spreading information, primarily attributing it to malice or “anti-nationalism” like it was done in the Kashmir case (India Today, 2020), the rational argument for the charge falls apart. With how easy it is to come across “sensational news”, levying a charge without proper investigation other than committing the act, that entails the death penalty as punishment. Such a charge is an abuse and misuse of the law at its extreme to suit biased ideologies and goals, and an oversight at the minimum.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Research Summary and Conclusion

In a diverse country like India, various communities grow and develop, assigning different meanings to words based on their experiences, which in turn is a product of their social, political, and cultural histories. Connotations vary vastly depending on how they are framed and the specific issue they address based on social memory and context, shaped by knowledge gained throughout the life and the discourses we come across (van Dijk 1997a; 1997b; 1983).

The main reason this dissertation was written was to analyse the discourse and in turn understand how protests are transformed through the discourse around UAPA law. The reason why protest transformation needs to be understood is to understand the transformations in democracy. When freedom is pitted against security, there is a disconnect in what their meanings are. From the data analysed, we have a few findings on the discourse of UAPA. The government narrative is framed in a way there is emphasis on national security, they indirectly frame this as a trade off between safety from terrorism and freedom of expression and since the freedom to express can be directly equated to the level of measure of democracy (Dawood, 2013; see Habermas, 1996), it unfortunately in turn hurts the legitimacy of such laws (see Dahlberg, 2004; Habermas, 1996). Throughout the criticisms labelled at the law by the media, there is discussion only on ensuring that the law is not misused, rather than criticising anti-terrorism legislations like the UAPA in its entirety.

Information is also weaponised to create fear. Public names being released before a formal legal process occurs would inadvertently create social stigmatization (Syukri et al, 2020). The problem arises that due to the hierarchy of procedure in the legal framework, an individual and their family's reputation is already in question, especially with respect to how they are viewed in a civil setting as they are assumed as a terrorist in the public eye whether they are innocent or guilty even before they can contest a claim against the charges.

This type of provision and the broader scope of the law would affect minority rights and this is because the minority populations in India, like the SC and ST, and Muslims only have a limited seat within the Parliament at the end of the day, so they were not consulted on how such ambiguity in legislation could affect them (Raza, 2022), and the BJP party has no Muslim member (Palshikar, 2015). This becomes doubly concerning when we see that in the public list of names of individuals charged under the Act, it was found that the majority of the individuals

were Muslim (The Hindu, 2022)³². The system is made up of dominant channels, who rule the discourse, which is leading to oppression (van Dijk, 2015, 1997b; 1997a; 1995).

While there is some truth to combating terrorism, who the “terrorists” are that are being combated through this law is not. In a study by V. Suresh et al (2022), when acquittal rates from 2015 to 2020 were examined for the UAPA, it was found that only 2.8% of 8,371 persons arrested were actually convicted. It was also found that a majority of the charges for UAPA were under Section 18, which dealt with ‘punishment for conspiracy’, a similarity that was also found with TADA and POTA (V. Suresh et al, 2022).

On the other hand, the government, when required, has weaponized security to jump loops against transparency. When the Home Minister is questioned on the “zero tolerance” spoken of in the UAPA law, his answer is that the opposition government was responsible for the foundations of the current UAPA law (ABP Live, 2019). The concerns regarding the law becomes a “who blames whom?” rather than whether there are sections of the law that need to be analysed for rewrite due to democratic concerns and is used repeatedly to this effect in the Parliament.

On the other hand, the media uses both positive and negative reporting. Positive reporting provides legitimacy and support for actions, while negative ones create fear and distrust; this can be taken for both sides based on the type of reporting. Even with the small sample size we selected, we can see the reports being on opposite ends of the spectrum, with media pieces rarely providing context or details without taking a side. Except for the Indian Express (2016), none of the articles examined so far provide context or the grievances of any of the protestors, which was also highly critical of the government. Even mostly neutral media articles, like the piece by NDTV (2014), had small words that follow a dominant “allowed” slightly framing the government in a positive light (van Dijk, 1995), i.e., micro semantic structures within the text that frame the discourse (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a). Comparing the most pro-protestor (The Indian Express, 2016) and pro-government media, both with the most emotive words (Republic World, 2020) - we find that both get high traffic³³.

The answer we get from our analysis is the line cannot be drawn when there is no line to begin with. In fact, the case of using terrorism legislation to curb free speech is not restricted to UAPA

32 Data corroborated against (Ministry Of Home Affairs, n.d) - found at <https://www.mha.gov.in/en/page/individual-terrorists-under-uapa>, see also The Hindu (2022)

33 Data taken from <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>

within post-independence India. AFSPA was used in a 2016 Police raid in Jammu and Kashmir to seize three prominent newspapers in the area, blocking them from publication for three days; an action conducted immediately after the killing of Burhan Wani, a well known separatist supporter (Fouzdar, 2021). On the other end of spectrum, we have cases like arrest of an individual in the state of Tamil Nadu under Sec. 13 of UAPA because he posted a facebook post in 2019 “re-marking on whether India had really got independence to celebrate 15th August as Independence Day” (V. Suresh et al, 2022). These kinds of repeated charges occurring, as well as being reported supportively rearranges people's ideas of what is acceptable and what is not when repeatedly being exposed to the same dominant idea from authorities in power, who are looked up to as representatives of the country and who are considered knowledgeable (van Dijk, 1997b; 1997a; 2015).

Fear mongering, whether this be about societal stigma (Syukri et al, 2020) at being labelled “anti-national” to acquiesce people or the “other” be “violent vandals” (Wion,2021) or “Pakistanis” (India Today, 2020; 2019a) or some “foreign power” using people to fund their own interests (The Indian Express, 2016) is used both by government, and the media who support these stances to push for laws that do not question the full scope of what their impact can be. In fact, in an article by the Indian Express (2010), there is a dichotomy created in talking about the death of activist Swapan Dasgupta who died in custody. While the title calls Dasgupta - the publisher a “maoist mouthpiece”, it highlights how he took care of his family, and humanises Dasgupta - the person (The Indian Express, 2010), painting the death of the person as tragedy, but the death of Dasgupta, the “maoist” as not, creating an ideological representation at extreme ends of the same person (van Dijk, 1995). Dasgupta, the person and the activist are not allowed to exist within the same sphere (The Indian Express, 2010).

If laws are made catering to dominant political ideas and the dominant communities, the laws do not create growth or development as there ceases to be open discourse that can promote actual change (Dahlberg, 2004; Habermas, 1996). Laws are misused, catering to dominant political ideas and the discourse sphere becomes an “echo chamber” of dominant ideas, which gets into a feedback loop of content by users being created based on what they consume, a popularity seen in partisan leaning (Garimella et al, 2018). The law then, unfortunately, does not do what it was created for and it divides rather than unites. Why it is necessary to dispel this feedback loop is because at the end of the day National Security and laws that protect it are necessary, however as Habermas (see 1996; 1984) puts it, without balanced power and open

dialogue, it is not possible to create laws that can protect and assist all the citizens (see also Dahlberg, 2004)

6.2 Contributions and Implications of the Study

In a diverse country like India, various communities grow and develop assigning different meanings to words based on their experiences, which in turn is a product of their social, political and cultural histories. Connotations vary vastly depending on how it is framed and the specific issue it addresses based on what your past experiences and communities are (van Dijk, 2012; 1983). Broadening the scope of Terrorism laws without considering these communities, which thereby includes protests, hurts communities that would need voices to their grievances and issues that they currently face, (see Graber et al, 2019).

The study, analysed through van Dijk's (1997a; 1997b; 2015) model, provides a deeper understanding of the role of various modes of communication and discourse that can reinforce and maintain dominant ideological patterns.

Interestingly, one observation that emerges is that in his speech, Amit Shah (Hindustan Times, 2019a) speech focuses on an interesting type of ideological framing that is not discussed by van Dijk (1995) which is that he clubs the current government with the opposition, Congress and leaves the room for interpretation of whether they are good or bad, thereby if "they" are implicated then the Opposition would be too. This both shifts and deflects sole responsibility intentionally by being ambiguous in language framing and by association (van Dijk, 1997b; 1995; 1997a).

The study provides a rich analysis on collective media and government discourse patterns, which can help in future research, either qualitative or quantitative, to examine its implications.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research

Firstly, while the analysis did focus on the key timeline with respect to media and Parliament addresses, it is also acknowledged that this does not provide an analysis of the whole timeline of the law from beginning to current time, which might have missed smaller developments within other dates and perspectives of the discourse. Additionally, a large part of the Parliament data was in Hindi and with the researcher's personal knowledge of the language was limited, there could have been misinterpretations and nuances of the language that could have been missed, which also limited the Parliament data used. However, to mitigate this issue, dictionaries with different strengths were used and words appropriately chosen to

translate the data. Future studies can be conducted covering the entire timeline in detail and including a large number of events to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the themes. It can also include a different strategy to analyse different language data like using researchers with better proficiency of the language or using a professional translation service in the future.

Secondly, while focusing on diverse media outlets and different events in the micro-level, with a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the events, there could be bias in interpretation due to the small sample size analysed. This decision was taken to provide a more varied set so that van Dijk's (1997a; 1997b; 2015) model could be used for interpretation effectively and due to time constraints as well. The limitation was partially mitigated by including important articles from different media outlets and reputed studies as supplementary material to support inferences during key discussions. However, it was hard to provide a pattern on individual media outlets due to this, even though collective patterns in media and reporting were found, which fulfilled the aim in answering discourse framing on a broader note.

The overwhelming amount of data available was also an issue and since multiple key events were spread across the selected years, it was hard to choose key events based on without picking a randomised sample that would ensure unbiased selection³⁴. This was further complicated by the structure of descriptive and interpretive being separate sections, which while did allow for a richer and deeper analysis, also by mitigating bias by cataloguing the microstructures first before inferring the macrostructure (van Dijk, 1983; 1997a), it made for a lengthier dissertation and hindered a large sample analysis of the data. On the other hand, one more reason for selecting such a sample was the research aims, since the focus was on UAPA as a whole and its impact on protests, covering different events were necessary to identify the microstructures (van Dijk, 1983; 1997a).

However, the lack of individual media analysis did limit the findings and in hindsight, the study could have benefitted from purposive sampling, which was initially not picked for choosing the articles due to a concern of bias³⁵. In the future, the topic would benefit and provide a greater in-depth analysis through a focused study on specific media outlets or

34 (see Rahman et al, 2022; Onwuegbuzie et al, 2007; Clarke Hagan et al, 2023; Ziskin, 2019)

specific events over a period of time, which would provide more details on particular biases³⁵

The third limitation is that since this is a critical discourse analysis, and it uses qualitative data, which is interpretive and exploratory, there is a possibility of personal bias being included due to the subjectivity in the interpretation (Ziskin, 2019; Mogashoa, 2014). However, measures were taken to mitigate this by supplementing interpretations with empirical findings from other studies (Ratner, 2002).

35 (see Rahman et al, 2022; Onwuegbuzie et al, 2007; Clarke Hagan et al, 2023; Ziskin, 2019)

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