

Metaphorical Devices in Political Cartoons with Reference to Political Confrontation in Pakistan after Panama Leaks

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Abstract : It has been assumed that metaphorical and symbolic contests are waged with metaphors, captions, and signs in political cartoons that play a significant role in image construction of political actors, situations or events in the political arena. This paper is an effort to explore the metaphorical devices in political cartoons related to the political confrontation in Pakistan between the ruling party Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) and opposition parties especially after Panama leaks. For this purpose, political cartoons sketched by five renowned political cartoonists on the basis of their belongings to the most highly circulated mainstream English newspapers of Pakistan and their professional experiences in their genre, were selected. The cartoons were analyzed through the Barthes's model of Semiotics under the umbrella of the first level of agenda setting theory 'framing'. It was observed that metaphorical devices in political cartoons are one of the key weapons of cartoonists' armory. These devices are used to attack the candidates and contribute to the image and character building. It was found that all the selected political cartoonists used different forms of metaphors including situational metaphors and embodying metaphors. Not only the physical stature but also the debates and their activities were depicted metaphorically in the cartoons that create the scenario of comparison between the cartoons and their real political confrontation. It was examined that both forms of metaphors shed light on cartoonist's perception and newspaper's policy about political candidates, political parties and particular events. In addition, it was found that zoomorphic metaphors and metaphors of diminishment were also predominantly used to depict the conflict between two said political actors.

Keywords : metaphor, Panama leaks, political cartoons, political communication

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