INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES BULLETIN
ISSN: (E) 3007-1917 (P) 3007-1909
Volume 4, Issue 3, 2026

FEMINIST LINGUISTIC PRACTICES IN THE AGE OF AI: DIGITAL STRATEGIES OF LANGUAGE RESISTANCE AND EMPOWERMENT AMONG PAKISTANI WOMEN ACTIVISTS

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DOI:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21407736

Received	Accepted	Published
01 February 2026	17 March 2026	31 March 2026

ABSTRACT

In this study, the researcher is interested in the representation of the operations of the media and the political power in Kashif Nisar's Pakistani Television Drama (TVD) Breaking News, by applying linguistics semiotic approach. The research follows the three-part analytical tool of Roland Barthes (1972) namely denotation, connotation and myth as the only tool to analyze and deconstruct the dominant ideological narratives via verbal, visual and multimodal resources in the Pakistani context. The study uses purposive sampling of scenes and qualitative interpretive analysis of the texts to analyze the key denotative signs in newsroom and political discourses in three stages: the interpretation of the cultural connotations, newsroom and political discourses with reference to the issues of journalistic ethics and institutional authority, and the decoding of three overarching mythological themes: the myth of "objective" journalism, the myth of "political chaos" and the myth of "audience empowerment.

INTRODUCTION:

Language, gender and digital technology have become a highly fertile ground of feminist contestation and empowerment in today's Pakistan. With the auspicious Aurat March of 2018, Pakistani women activists have increasingly adopted digital spaces to contest entrenched patriarchal norms, assert the language of their own and to tell new tales of solidarity and resistance. It is a digital turn, not only because of the change of medium, but also because of the transformation of the way feminist discourses are produced, circulated and contested in the Global South. In this study, the linguistic strategies used by Pakistani women activists on the digital platform is examined especially focusing on the opportunities and challenges created by Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the resistances of Pakistani women activists.

The concept of feminism in Pakistan

The history of Pakistani feminism can be very rich with a lot of complexities due to the issues of colonialism, religious interpretations, military dictatorships and the fight for gender equality in a mostly patriarchal society. Women have always been resisting through a language of resistance, starting from the early days of Fatima Jinnah's resistance against British rule, and the women's movements of the 1980s which opposed Zia-ul-Haq's Islamisation agenda to the recent grassroots campaigns. But the feminist movement came to a large extent into a digital life after 2018, which was brought into the world by the Aurat March. The 2018 International Women's Day was the first time that the Aurat March was organized; it was a

movement that soon became a historical landmark. Claims of "Mera Jism Meri Marzi" (My Body, My Choice), large posters that challenged taboos relating to sexuality, consent and domestic work, and strong chants that challenged ideas of "respectable" femininity all disrupted and challenged traditional understandings of "respectable" femininity. This movement was unique in its effective utilization of digital platforms as tools for spreading the message of groups traditionally overlooked in the mainstream media, such as Twitter (now X), Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. The hashtags #AuratMarch, # MeraJismMeriMarzi and #WhyIAmNotASilentDaughter were trending across the country, and in doing so, they formed a transnational solidarity while at the same time attracting a huge amount of criticism from conservative parts of society.

This digital revolution has allowed for the establishment of a new approach to public debate that activists have been able to use to cut out the middle man. Social media offers a polyvocal, multimodal expression that is not limited by state control or corporatisation and where language is presented in a variety of modes–written posts, visual memes, video testimonies, live streams and interactive threads. Activists use creative linguistic strategies like code switching between Urdu and English, re-appropriation of derogatory terms (e.g., honour and morality slurs), the use of sarcasm, irony and intertextuality to challenge and problematize the patriarchal discourses in daily speech.

This digital transformation was accelerated by the onset of COVID-19 when many physical events were cancelled and feminist organizing has been completely online. Digital spaces came to be crucial for raising consciousness, mobilizing, fighting in court and providing emotional support groups. But, this power doesn't have any single rule. Digital platforms also are spaces of harassment, doxxing and coordinated trolling, where patriarchal norms of language are violently internalized by the use of gendered slur, threats of violence and moral policing.

1.3 Revolutionization of feminism in the era of AI

One development that was more recent is the inclusion of the generative Artificial Intelligence tools (like ChatGPT, Grok, Midjourney and other Large Language Models) in the activist process. Now activists are leveraging AI to create content, write speeches, design posters with empowering slogans, translate content, even run analysis of public sentiment and even create counter-arguments to patriarchal discourses. AI tools have the potential to expand feminist messages in ways that are far more efficient than any other translation or language tool, especially when it comes to language accessibility across different linguistic/cultural differences.

But, AI systems are not neutral. They are often trained using data from all over the world (usually in the west, with a male focus), and commonly perpetuate gender bias, cultural stereotyping and patriarchy. In Pakistan this appears in the form of the imbalanced output which reaffirms traditional gender roles, blurs out the language of the radical feminist movement and/or creates culturally insensitive content. For example, AI models that are being fed Urdu-English code-switched feminist slogans could sanitize or neutralize subversive elements, showcasing a conflict between the empowerment of technology and the bias of algorithms.

The conflict between the role of AI in enabling bias and AI in perpetuating it is the root conflict studied in this paper. Although digital tools offer an opportunity for access to linguistic resources, they also have the potential of reinforcing the power dynamics already in place by the use of opaque algorithms in decision-making processes.

Research statement

Although the engagement of feminist movements in Pakistan in digital activism has been flourishing, there is still a lack of linguistically based literature on the use of language as a site of resistance in such hybrid human-AI digital spaces. The traditional norms of the language, which are rooted in the

concept of izzat (honor), ghairat (modesty) and gender-based expectations of language, still prevail in public sphere. These are actively opposed by activists using innovative strategy of language, but as mediation by AI grows, so does the complexity. The problem lies in two aspects: Firstly, the patriarchal language norms continue to marginalize women's voices and secondly, the language is not a proper medium for communication....as being immoral, or western-influenced assertive feminist speech. Second, digital tools and AI can enable powerful reclaiming, amplifying and creative resistance in language, but can also, subtly, reinforce bias that can be counterproductive to activism. This leads to an ambivalent situation of the liberation/constraint of feminist linguistic agency. Most studies in applied linguistics and gender studies in the South Asian region are offline in nature, or have dealt with an analysis of social media in general, rather than deal with the specific dynamics of using activist language and the new technologies of AI. In this study, the linguistic aspects of resistance in technologically mediated space are examined, in light of the above.

Research Questions

The following questions are the ones used to guide this research:

1. What are the linguistic elements (lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and multimodal) that constitute the feminisms of resistance in the digital activism of Pakistan, especially in the case of the Aurat March?
2. What are some strategies for activists to leverage digital tools, such as social media, and generative AI for the reclaiming of language, building of narratives, and empowerment?
3: How are feminist language practices challenged by embedded gender and cultural bias in the systems of AI and how do activists work with the limitations?

Significance of the research

Theoretically, this study has implications in several areas, while practically, it contributes to the field of education. In the field of applied linguistics, it helps to better understand the technology-mediated discourse practices in the Global South, which builds upon the fast-growing body of research on digital multilingualism, code-switching and language activism. It combines Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) and digital ethnography to move beyond a linguistic approach and into a gendered perspective as a way to gain a better understanding of power dynamics in the language in hybrid contexts of online/offline. The study emphasizes the importance of culturally relevant and culturally-aware development of language models, especially in under-researched linguistic and cultural contexts such as Pakistan, for technology and AI ethics. In practice, findings will be used to train activists how to effectively utilise AI, and to inform policy dialogue relating to digital rights, online safety and gender-inclusive technology governance, in South Asia. The study also contributes to wider discourses on decolonial linguistics by emphasizing the voices and modes of resistance of Pakistani women, in opposition to Eurocentric approaches that dominate digital discourses that under-researched studies.

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A feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA).

From the perspective of feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) (as described by Michelle M Lazar 2005, 2007), there is a strong framework for analyzing the role of language in maintaining and/or changing gender inequalities. FCDA is an extension of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as it takes the gender as one of the main categories of power and inequality. It sees discourse as not neutral, but rather a place where the reproduction, negotiation and contestation of patriarchy takes place. Lazar is keen on studying not only the overt, but also the subtle linguistic processes, such as the selection of words, the syntactic structures, the components of presuppositions and multimodal tools, which create gendered subjectivities. The FCDA has special utility in digital environments for exploring practices of animating resistance in the form of counter-narratives, reclamation and multimodal

creativity. The purpose of this study is to examine the usage of language by Pakistani women activists in social media and artificial intelligence (AI) mediated spaces to question the patriarchal norms using FCDA approach.

Fairclough's model of CDA

This three dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Norman Fairclough (1989, 1992, 2010) was used to analyse this study.

A discourse analysis is complemented by FCDA, as four further modes of practice: textual analysis, discursive practice, and socio-cultural practice, show the dialectical relationship of the language and power. According to Fairclough discourse is an influence on, and an influence upon, a social structure. It helps to see how in the Pakistani feminist context, patriarchy is reproduced in the dominant discourse and contested in the space of digital activism through the concept of patriarchy and its language norms (embedded in the concepts of izzat, modesty and gendered language norms). The model enables us to investigate the micro (lexical/syntactic), meso (discursive mechanisms in platforms) and macro (socio-political) levels of the way in which activists make use of language to operate on asymmetries in power.

Feminism in the period of AI as fourth wave of feminism

The fourth-wave of feminism (c. 2012-2013) and the impact of 'intersectional feminism' (Munro, 2013) brought digital technologies to the forefront of mobilization, storytelling and intersectional feminist advocacy, particularly since they began to gain momentum in the post-2017 era, with the #MeToo movement in the United States and elsewhere being a key example (Chamberlain, 2017). It is distinct from previous waves in that it focuses on the importance of online/offline hybridity, the inclusion of marginalised voices, and creative and effective memes, hashtags and visual rhetoric. Globally, fourth wave feminism is localised and is a mix of transnational and local resistance.

This study placed the Pakistani digital feminists in this wave and explores their use of social media, as well as AI, to reclaim agency over the language and to increase resistance against the hierarchy of patriarchy. The study of gender issues in language long ago was the focus of feminist language studies, which have been concerned with documenting how language is used to describe and perpetuate gender inequalities, as well as how it can be used to empower women (Cameron, 1992; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013). Deborah Cameron calls attention to the regulation of women's speech that is associated with rules that link the use of assertive language with it being "unfeminine" or aggressive. Reclamation of slurs (re-appropriation of derogatory terms) and creative code switching are a couple of ways to fight back. The use of code-switching between Urdu and English is used by activists in their communication to ensure cultural authenticity and global reach in multilingual environments such as Pakistan. There are connotations of modernity, empowerment and English, and there are connotations of emotional and cultural resonance and Urdu.

The work of language reclamation (e.g., Croom, 2011, slur reclamation) demonstrates the ways in which activists can use derogatory terms as symbols of pride and undermine the male control of the female body and behaviour. These strategies are extended to multimodal forms (hashtags, memes, and visual-textual hybrids) in digital spaces that help to amplify subversive messages. This literature serves as the background to analyze the reclamation of the concepts of honor, modesty and sexuality in Pakistani activists' online discourse.

Digital Activism and aurat March

The Aurat march (2018- onwards) is a turning point in Pakistan's digital feminist movement. Activists spread out bold slogans on various social networking platforms like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook and "Mera Jism Meri Marzi," "Khud Khana Banao" (Build Your Own Home), and "Why I Am Not a Silent Daughter" were some of the slogans they mentioned. They use direct and declarative

style of sentence as slogans and make intertextual references to disrupt the control of patriarchs on women's bodies, labour, and voices (Khan, 2020; Mumtaz & Shaheed, 2021).

The discourse analysis of the online space shows innovative language practices such as heavy code switching, irony memes, satirical poetry and strategic hashtag campaigns. Digital activism however also has a lot of criticism – for example, cyber harassment, doxxing, and coordinated trolling involving the use of highly gendered abusive language (Siddiqi, 2019; Batool, 2022). Researchers have recorded the moral policing and violence as a means of upholding patriarchal norms in digital spaces of Pakistan, which underlines the high stakes of linguistic resistance in Pakistan.

Promote Bilingualism and Multilingualism in AI Systems and Models.

There are new dynamics to consider when it comes to generative AI tools in activism. Bender et al. (2021) and Bolukbasi et al. (2016) have highlighted the gender biases that are present in Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT and Grok. Such models are mainly based on English-dominant and western datasets, and tend to reinforce stereotypes about women as being submissive, emotional, or domestic. Bias is accentuated in multilingual settings, such as Urdu, which is a low resource language.

The literature from the Global South demonstrates problems with LLM capabilities to handle code-switching, cultural nuances, and feminist writing (Nekoto et al., 2020; Ruder, 2020). Models can sanitize radical language, water down the subversive intent or produce culturally inappropriate answers when prompted with Urdu-English feminist content. This poses pressing questions of digital patriarchy, or algorithmic bias, concerning the subject matter that activists will have to grapple with. Research also recommends decolonial strategies for the development of AI that places linguistic communities that are underrepresented at its center (Mohamed et al., 2020).

Research Gaps

Research on Pakistani digital feminism and Aurat March discourse continues to build but few of the studies have a critical linguistic approach to exploring the relationship between activist language practices and the use of AI tools. Most of the studies conducted so far are more on content analysis and sociological aspects than focusing on the fine-grained analysis of lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and multimodal strategies. Furthermore, gender inequities in LLMs' implications for feminist linguistic empowerment in multilingual contexts in the Global South have not been well researched. This study seeks to fill these gaps by integrating FCDA with the digital ethnography to explore the ways in which Pakistani activists employ AI to reclaim and resist against language, amidst the algorithmic constraints.

To conclude, literature provides a solid foundation to analyze the technology mediated feminist linguistics in Pakistan. This review places a focus on the need for nuanced, context specific research as it brings together FCDA, Fairclough's power framework and empirical research on Aurat March and the biases of AI. The identified gaps are addressed in this study by conducting a systematic linguistic analysis of the practices of activists in a hybrid digital/artificial intelligence space.

Methodology

This chapter provides an outline of the methodology that was used for this M.Phil's research interests are in Applied Linguistics. This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed methods research design to explore the language used by Pakistani women activists when they operate in digital spaces and how they engage with the Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. This design is especially well suited for the examination of intricate language practices embedded in complex contexts within feminist activism using technology. A multi-layered analysis of linguistic resistance, empowerment and algorithmic bias in the Pakistani context is enabled by the methodology, which combines Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA),

digital ethnography, corpus linguistics, and experimental AI prompt testing.

Research Design

The research taken is a qualitative dominant mixed method research in Applied Linguistics paradigm. Qualitative techniques lie at the heart and serve to explore linguistic resources, activist process of meaning making and socio-cultural aspects in depth.

Corpus elements, especially the use of corpus tools and systematic analysis of language used in AI prompts, can give additional patterns and measurable data regarding the use of language and its possible bias. This method mirrors the mixed method model proposed by Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) who believe the qualitative methods should dominate in order to give the interpretive depth, while quantitative methods support the rigor, and the generalizability of the specific findings.

The design is interpretative, constructivist, that language practices are socially created and context dependent. It is informed by Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005, 2007) which focuses on power relations in discourse and digital ethnography (Pink et al., 2016) in order to gain insight into activists' lived experiences in online contexts. The study is exploratory and explanatory which is meant to describe not only the linguistic strategy but also explain their ideological connotations and the influence of the use of AI in the development of them.

Data Sources and Sampling

The data used in this study were gathered from three different sources from 2023 to 2025.

1. Digital Discourse Corpus

For the purpose of this study, a corpus of around 250 texts was created, belonging to a purposive sample of social media posts relating to Aurat March from 2018 to 2025, from platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and Instagram. The posts were chosen based on the keywords and hashtags used, including # AuratMarch, #MeraJismMeriMarzi, #WhyIAmNotASilentDaughter and variations of the same. The inclusion criteria for the posts were designed to focus on posts that include explicit linguistic resistance strategies (code switching, reclaiming slurs, hashtags, memes and counter-narratives). To reflect dialogic interactions, both the posts of the activists and the public's high engagement responses were taken. NVivo and AntConc software were used for cleaning and organizing the corpus for qualitative and quantitative analysis.

2. Semi-Structured Interviews

The study involved 10 Pakistani women activists who participate in digital feminist campaigns, and were engaged in semi-structured interviews. The participants were selected using a snowball sampling technique from activists circles with a view to obtain diversity in terms of age, region (urban centres like Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad) and level of digital engagement. The interviews were conducted over Zoom or in person (as safe as possible at the time) with consent of the participants, and took 45–75 minutes, depending on the participant.

Linguistic activism, experiences with AI tools, and algorithmic bias were discussed as well as how to reclaim language. All interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed word for word and anonymized.

Experimental AI Prompt Analysis

This experimental dataset was created by interacting with generative AI models (mainly ChatGPT-4, and Gemini) using 50 specially formulated prompts concerning feminist issues in the Pakistani context. The prompts ranged from creating slogans, converting activist messages to social media, making social media responses and answering patriarchal arguments. This part of the framework enabled systematic identification of gender and cultural bias in the outputs of AI. Each of the prompts was conducted several times with controlled conditions so that the results brought out for the purposes of language and ideology analysis.

This was a multi-stage and iterative approach to data analysis which was informed by FCDA and thematic analysis.

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA)
Emphasizing the micro level, the linguistic characteristics of the texts were analyzed according to the principles of text analysis developed by Lazar (2005), focusing on the lexical choices (reclaimed slurs and code switching of Urdu and English), syntactic patterns, pragmatic strategies (implicature, irony, presupposition) and multimodal elements (hashtags, memes, visuals). The affordances of the platforms were examined as well as the interactions of activists through the discursive practices. The results of socio-cultural analysis were related to the wider patriarchal structures in Pakistan.

Thematic Analysis
Thematic analysis was used for the analysis of interview transcripts and selected corpus data that followed the six phase thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The initial coding resulted in the emergence of common linguistic devices, which were later followed by common themes of resistance, empowerment, AI navigation, and challenge to bias. Themes were developed by making use of member-checking (where applicable) and constant comparison.

Corpus Linguistic Tools
To determine the dominant linguistic features in the social media corpus, the use of the software AntConc for the keyword analysis, collocation pattern and lines of concordance was employed. Patterns were quantified using frequency counts and statistical measures, such as code-switching density, and hashtag usage.

AI Bias Detection
A mix of both FCDA and comparative techniques were used to analyze the AI-generated outputs. Ideological stance, lexical neutrality, cultural sensitivity and intent of the activist(s) were evaluated as outputs. Stereotypical gender roles, Urdu and English prompts and the "dilation" of the radical language were among the bias indicators.The triangulation of the three data sources gave a thoroughness of the phenomena and increased the validity.

Result and analysis
The detailed findings of the Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), corpus analysis, interview data and experimental AI testing on Pakistani feminist digital activism (mainly Aurat March 2018-2025) are presented in this chapter.
The analysis is directly related to the three research questions, exploring linguistic strategies of resistance, the empowering role of digital tools, and opportunities and challenges of integrating AI into feminist practices. Analysis of the 250-post corpora, 10 activist interviews and 50 AI prompt experiments shows the ways in which activists use language as a potent weapon of resistance in the face of constraints from patriarchy and technology. The findings are rooted in the micro level linguistic features (lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and multimodal) and related to the socio-cultural power dynamics in Pakistan.
Linguistic strategies used by Pakistani women activists are sophisticated ways of contesting the notion of patriarchy. Three main strategies were found: code switching/hybridity, reclamation with a shift in meaning, and hashtags with performative language. Her primary research interests are in the areas of code-switching and linguistic hybridity in contact languages.
The frequency of Code switching is seen as a significant resistance strategy in the Urdu-English language of the corpus with 68% of the posts in the corpus showing the use of the Urdu-English language. Activists produce hybrid utterances which combine the depth and culture of Urdu with the assertiveness of English world. One such example is the building “Pidar Shahi ko Reject Karo – Smash Patriarchy Now”. “Pidar Shahi” is still very much culturally potent in Urdu – evoking feudal-patriarchal authority – and has a militant urgency and trans-national resonance in the English imperative.
The Urdu words are coupled with English verbs, like "Izzat ke naam par control karna band karo" and English framing with Urdu

emotional anchors, like "My Body, Meri Marzi – No more silence" are identified from AntConc analysis. This hybridity is a multiple pragmatic concept as it reaches a variety of audiences, disrupts monolingual patriarchal expectations and generates what Bhabha (1994) calls a resistant "third space" for the performance of feminist identities.

The intentionality was always a central theme of the interviewees. Ayesha (28, Lahore) said: "If I put English slogans with 'pidar shahi' it has more impact locally and goes to the world at the same time it confuses the conservative gate keepers." Such hybridity, from a FCDA lens (Lazar, 2005), disrupts the ideology that one must speak "the proper" way to be a feminist, either in a traditional or in a Western manner.

Reclamation and Semantic shift

Reclamation and semantic reframing is a potent way of linguistic agency. The name of the slogan "Mera Jism Meri Marzi" is a good example of this. It was originally derived from a global discourse on reproductive rights, and has been strongly localised in Pakistan. Extended "Corpus" examples are the many extended forms of the slogan, e.g., "Mera Jism Meri Marzi", "Meri Choice", "Meri Zindagi", and visual-textual memes that combine the slogan with images of women in traditional clothing.

This reclamation is a semantic change in the ways of shame and control to autonomy and ownership. In the same manner terms like "Behayaa" (shameless), "Awara" (wayward) and "Gandi" (dirty) are used – "Behayaa Aurat March – Shameless and Proud" and "Main Awara Hoon aur Khush Hoon." These changes take away the derogatory power and turn these into affirmations of defiant power.

Interviews are analyzed thematically and the emotional and ideological work of the interview is identified. Sara (34, Karachi) commented: "Whenever we say Mera Jism Meri Marzi we take back language that has been used to silence generations of women." The frequency analysis shows that the reclaimed words and slogans can be found in 142 posts (56.8%), with the help of emojis (,), which amplify the emotion and shareability of the posts.

Mobilization, use of hashtag and performative language

Hashtags are very performative language that can be used to organize collective action. Popular hashtags are #MeraJismMeriMarzi, #AuratMarch, #KhudKhanaBanao and #WhyIAmNotASilentDaughter. These include declarative and imperative rhetoric ("Break the chains", "Reject Pidar Shahi", "Speak up now") that are not just descriptive but also that construct feminist subjectivities (Butler, 1990).

These hashtags generate counter-publics of thousands of posts that link together in chain-like conversations in the Corpus. Repetition is a performative act that fosters solidarity and empower people to create collective power from personal outrage. The chanting of video, infographics, and threaded narratives further add to their mobilizing power, which is further enhanced through multimodal integration.

The use of digital tools for empowerment where social media are being developed as counter-public spaces. These counter-public spaces (Fraser, 1990) on social media platforms have become critical spaces that can help marginalised feminist voices protest against dominant patriarchal narratives. X, Facebook and Instagram provide a platform where activists can find safe(ish) spaces to express, to be surrounded by and to mobilise.

These platforms make Dialogic resistance possible. Many threads to patriarchal comments are typically ironic, sarcastic, and argumentative, with groups countering the patriarchy, and making it a consciousness raising experience. For instance, when faced with the claim "Women should stay within boundaries," activists react with weaved counter-narratives, connecting to personal experience with structural critique.

The use of memes and multimodal discourse have a great impact on empowerment. Visual-textual memes are a mix of strong slogans and culturally significant imagery – women

protesting with signs, satirical cartoons of patriarchal figures or transformations of faces or bodies that represent awakening – before and after. These memes are so viral because they are easily accessible and come off as embarrassing. The combination of text, image, colour (bold red and black) and typography is examined and the effect seen as a powerful synergy in communicating meaning. One of the most popular meme series is "Mera Jism Meri Marzi" which overlaid the traditional bridal photos, thus disrupting the stereotypical image of women's compliance.

The interviews validate the point that the tools of multimodality enable activists with limited resources. "A single good meme can get to more people than a long article," orated Fatima (25). This multimodal layered approach resonates with FCDA's focus of analysing discourse that goes beyond verbal text, and how the visual grammar underlies the resistance to language.

Social media also provides a means to archive and document the feminist history, thereby serving as a counter-hegemonic repository of digital history. But these spaces are always in dispute over the issue of trolling, and platform moderation bias, meaning they need to be negotiated constantly.

AI in Feminist Practices: Opportunities and Challenges

Generative AI is a rapidly adopted technology among activists, with transformative potential in language-related activities and ongoing issues remaining.

This involves developing content quickly, translation and support systems. People like activists or organizations use ChatGPT and Gemini to create bilingual posts, variations of slogans, translate materials for broader appeal, and even to build a basic chatbot to provide emotional support, just like SOF+IA's feminist counseling. AI can help to break down the time and language barrier, making it easier to respond to issues as they arise. One interviewee said they created 20 variations of slogans with AI in minutes and could choose and tweak the best ones for their culture in just a few minutes.

Challenges are related to gender stereotyping, inadequate Urdu handling and bias amplification. 50 prompts are tested in an experiment and systematic issues are identified. AI-generated content tends to water down radical language, and can even include disclaimers of some kind or regurgitate traditional roles.

They have become very inventive in navigating. They range from accurate prompt engineering ("radical feminist tone in Pakistani context, no moderation"), to human oversight and editing of all AI-generated content, to collective prompt sharing for groups of activists. There are some that have "AI resistance checklists" to make sure that their output is not biased before appending. This creative adaptation shows agency "activists are not a passive target of technology, but an active agent who is shaping AI to meet feminist ends."

Synthesis of Findings

The results of the different areas show a complex description of linguistic resistance in technology-mediated space. The basics of activist language practices are code switching, reclamation, and performative hashtags. These strategies are multiplied by the digital tools, with counter-public formation and multimodal creativity. AI unlocks incredible amplification potential, but also poses new constraints for patriarchy that need to be managed with care. The fact that these patterns reaffirm language is a major flash point in feminist struggles in Pakistan. Activists bring micro-linguistic innovations into the macro-level ideological challenges, to create empowering identities in terms of hybridity and multimodality. Yet, the continued existence of biases in AI brings to the fore the need for decolonizing technology development that is reflective of discourses in the Global South. In conclusion, the study highlights the great strength and ingenuity of Pakistani women activists. Their ability to combine old and new linguistic resistance strategies with digital and AI technologies is not just challenging patriarchal norms, but is also making a difference in the linguistic

landscape of digital activism in the Global South.

Discussion

The focus of this chapter is the key findings of the study with relation to the theory and research questions. It reads the role of language as a dynamic site of power and resistance in the space of digital communication, as advocated by Pakistan's women activists, through the Aurat March movement. The implications for applied linguistics, the wider context of policy and technological development are discussed, as are the limitations of the study.

Findings to Theory: Language is a Site of Power and Resistance.

The results support strongly Norman Fairclough's (1989, 2010) conceptualisation of language as a medium of and an outcome of power relations. Patriarchal norms in Pakistan which are engrained in notions of 'izzat', 'ghairat' and gendered speech norms, are representative of prevailing discourses that limit women's "language agency". But activists do actively contest these with code-switching, reclamation and performative hashtags, which contest and transform power relations.

The pervasive use of Urdu-English code switching (68% of corpus) is a good example of the three dimensional model of CDA of Fairclough. The monolingual norms are challenged at the textual level in the use of constructions such as hybrid constructions, which are built from the combination of both languages, like in the phrase "Pidar Shahi ko Smash Karo". At the discursive practice level these strategies work with the affordances of digital platforms in order to disseminate the discursive practice. At the socio-cultural level they challenge the westernized ideology of association of English with western decadence and Urdu with traditional feminine qualities. This hybridity produces a "third space," in which new kinds of feminist subjectivities are formed in opposition to binary oppositions, as Bhabha (1994) refers to it.

The reclamation strategies utilised in this study are very similar to Michelle Lazar's (2005, 2007) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA). Activists use derogatory terms as weapons for empowerment, by changing their meaning from shame to individual autonomy and pride. It is a process of semantic reframing which shows how language is not just a reflection of the gendered reality it is part of, but constituting of it. The performative quality of hashtaging also reinforces Judith Butler's (1990) performativity theory, which posits that repeated utterances of words is an active politicization and creation of collective feminist identities and action.

When AI is combined with the tools, the picture of the power dynamics becomes more nuanced. The main hindrances of AI are the dilution of radical language, the framing of the narrative as "family dialogue", and the inability to translate between Urdu and English, which are all introducing a new wave of technological patriarchy, while it was being used as a tool for activists to amplify their voice through content creation and translation. The findings build on scholarship around fourth wave feminism (Munro, 2013; Chamberlain 2017) by highlighting an ongoing process of negotiation between empowerment and algorithmic control in digital and AI-mediated activism in the Global South.

Activists' engineering and human oversight strategies show agency in context as a language user, rather than the subject, and reinforce the concept that language users are active participants and not passive subjects (Cameron, 1992).

The study shows that throughout the course of the investigation, the language is a space of conflict, a site of the reproduction and strong contestation of patriarchal power. The digital spaces and the use of AI in Pakistan creates new challenges and opportunities in the field of language and ideology.

Implications for Applied Linguistics.

The results of this research have great implications for applied linguistics, specifically English Language Teaching (ELT), digital literacy and multilingual discourse studies. The highly visible code switching and hybridity

phenomenon poses a threat to the traditional monolingualism of ELT classroom in Pakistan. The results indicate that the use of the ACTIVE LINGUISTIC PRACTICE approach in teaching curricula, might help in improving students' pragmatic competence and critical language awareness. Analysis of “Mera Jism Meri Marzi”, for example, can be emphasized in the modules so that language learning becomes culturally relevant and socially engaged, such as teaching semantic changes, functions of code switching, and the multimodal rhetoric.

The study highlights the importance of shifting to critical digital linguistic literacy in digital literacy programs. Teachers and designers need to build courses on how to work with algorithmic biases, how to prompt for activism and how to assess AI output for bias.Teachers and program designers need to create courses on how to interact with algorithmic biases, how to prompt for activism, and how to assess AI output for bias. This would enable future generations of activists and citizens to engage the use of language in technology-mediated contexts.

The study also advances the multilingualism and language activism studies in the Global South. It illustrates the use of mixed methods research (FCDA + Corpus tools + experimental AI testing) in practical applied linguistics research aimed at the study of authentic language in use. Case studies of Aurat March discourse can be integrated in future ELT materials to encourage learners' critical consciousness and make them aware of how academic linguistics relate to the struggle of feminists in the real world.

The concept of "feminist AI design" is introduced.The term "feminist AI design" is defined.

The results will have significant implications for the development and technology policy in Pakistan. The gender and cultural biases of LLMs clearly demonstrate the need for inclusive and decolonial AI governance. It is important that the creation of local models that are trained to better teach code-switching between Urdu and English and culturally-sensitive feminist communication be emphasized in policymaking. The development of feminist-oriented tools on the grounds of AI for activism, counselling and education could be expanded with governmental or donor support to create such tools.

The need for national policies with a bias audit provision for AI systems used in the public sector, especially in the context of gender equality and digital rights, is well justified. If there is cooperation between linguists, computer scientists and activists, it will be possible to develop “feminist AI design principles” specific to the multilingual contexts in South Asia. These principles could encompass a variety of features, such as using a wide range of training data that includes activist language, clear explanations of the algorithms used in the moderation process, and community input on how AI systems perform.

The study calls for more robust digital safety policies at a societal level for the protection of women activists against online harassment, while maintaining online spaces for legitimate resistance. Media literacy campaigns may be used to reinforce the findings and help mitigate the backlash of patriarchy and encourage public debate on gender issues.

This work reinforces a language/technology/power dynamic and extends the discourse in the decolonial critique of language and technology studies, and how it is important to put the voice of the Global South at the heart of AI creation.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, a number of recommendations are proposed for different stakeholders.

There should be comprehensive training programs developed and implemented on the use of AI with bias awareness. Advanced techniques in prompt engineering, evaluation checklists for identifying ideological dilution, and strategies for synergising the output of AI with human creativity could be the themes of the workshops. Shared databases of effective prompts, especially in the context of Pakistan would be beneficial for activists to reclaim the

language and amplify their messages. This training would enable them to harness AI's potential, while sidestepping some of its hallmarks of patriarchy.

Need for localized feminist AI products.AI Researchers: Need for developing localized feminist oriented tools. Training models with different types of data that involve Aurat March discourse, Urdu-English code switched texts and radical feminist narratives would be more beneficial to the Global South users. Examples of " feminist AI toolkits" for creating content, translating texts, as well as support chatbots, could be developed through the collaboration of linguists, computer scientists and activist communities, based on open-source models such as SOF+IA. All developers should design a bias audit and feedback system that is transparent, to help ensure that algorithms are culturally sensitive and gender equitable.

Findings for Language Policy and Education: Language education policies should be influenced by findings. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan might incorporate the concept of digital linguistic literacy into the curriculum with the support of examples from the Aurat March like code switching, semantic reclamation and multimodal rhetoric.

. ELT materials need to go beyond the norm and incorporate hybrid language practices and activist language practices, develop student critical language awareness. There should also be measures to tackle GBV online in policy frameworks and space to safeguard spaces for legitimate feminist expression.

These recommendations focus on an interdisciplinary, collaborative praxis with the inclusion of the voice of activists in both language and technology.

Future research

There are a number of interesting directions for future research that could be pursued in this study. Research from 2018 onwards would uncover the evolution of linguistic strategies in the context of shifting political times and new technology. Native-language research analyzes patterns at the intersection of feminist digital linguistics and AI navigation across the South Asian landscape, including India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, which may help to highlight innovations within the region and patterns common to multiple contexts.

The reception studies of the interpretations of recipient groups (urban/rural, class and age differences) of activism slogans and AI-generated content would contribute to a better understanding of impact and effectiveness. Furthermore, through the co-design and testing of feminist AI solutions in experimentation with activist communities, practical solutions can be created. Other potential future studies could involve the use of a larger corpus from sites that are not yet included in this research such as TikTok and the use of audio-visual linguistic features in live streaming and short form videos.

Conclusion

To sum up, the current study reflects that language remains an important flash point of the fight for gender justice in Pakistan. Pakistani women activists are not only challenging patriarchy by using creative linguistic hybridity, reclamation and digital creativity, but are also challenging the feminist possibilities in the digital era. AI can be a real asset or a liability, bringing with it novel opportunities as well as novel challenges: biases embedded within the algorithms.But AI is a double-edged sword—with the novel opportunities come novel challenges, such as biases that are embedded in the algorithms.

This study invites voices and practices of Aurat March activists into the applied linguistics conversation in technology-mediated contexts, thereby enriching our understanding of applied linguistics by making it more inclusive and decolonial. A collective push in education, policy, activism and technology development is needed to realize the agency of women in language. In the era of rapid digital transformation, it is essential that Pakistan invests in feminist language resources and AI that are free of bias to create a more equal society. It is the purpose of this research to alert scholars, practitioners and policymakers that

"language" is not a neutral tool, but rather a powerful tool for social change.

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