

Discourse, Ideology and Youth Engagement: A Critical Analysis of Imran Khan's Speeches

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Abstract

Language plays a crucial role in human beings' lives. Every culture has its own specification of words and dialect of speaking language. Through the language, politicians project their ideologies. The focus of this study is Imran Khan's chosen political addresses. This is a single-contextual research approach that employs a qualitative research methodology. Critical discourse analysis is used to examine language and power dynamics in discourse by analyzing the data. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used in a qualitative research design to study Imran Khan's speeches and their influence on Pakistani youth. The Fairclough model—textual analysis, processing analysis, and socio-cultural analysis—is followed by the CDA framework in order to identify themes, metaphors, rhetorical devices, and framing tactics in the addresses. By conducting a thorough textual analysis, the study reveals how Khan built his political image and interacted with the public through the deliberate use of words, syntax, coherence, and rhetorical devices that define his addresses. The processing analysis reveals how Khan places himself in the larger political context of Pakistan by highlighting the interconnected and interdiscursive aspects of his discourse. Through a study of how Khan's speech conveys and shapes power dynamics, ideologies, and values within society, the socio-cultural analysis makes connections between these results and broader political and social frameworks. The results show that young people are greatly impacted by Khan's rhetoric, which shapes their opinions on political and social problems and influences their political activity.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Imran Khan, Fairclough model, three stages, qualitative, Pakistan, Youth, Politics

Introduction

Language is the oldest form of persuasion. Skilled speakers have actually been able to influence people's perceptions, thoughts, intentions, and motivations through the indirect manipulation of language (Alkhaldeh, 2021; Afzaal et al., 2020). This causes people to accept false statements as true declarations or support policies against their interests. Leaders must plan, organize, lead, and control. Raising issues and overseeing clarification is fundamental to leadership in a federal or state government. Conversations about autonomy, entrepreneurship, and evolutionary leadership are among the many that exist in organizations. It is important to investigate the language by which politicians assert power over the public or their subordinates (Afzaal et al., 2019). Politicians use language as an influential tool to persuade or persuade subordinates or voters to take certain actions. Language is ideological because politicians can use it to coerce their voters.

Leaders may similarly use specific language structures (policy language) when addressing writers' queries. Politicians talk significantly differently when they speak the language with other politicians (Imran et al., 2019). Therefore, It is unavoidable that language plays an important role in politics because its primary function is to empower politicians to establish social relations that are structurally compatible with different political contexts. To be able to

achieve political goals in various political discourses, the purpose of this study is to look into the methods by which politicians subvert people's ideals and truth. This will first provide insight into the root causes of this phenomenon. Next, it will look at the linguistic techniques that were used to connect the ideas. The lexical and semantic devices used in this political discourse will be the sole focus of this study. By choosing specific lexical items or rhetorical strategies, politicians often play with the public's assumptions and activate appropriate mental maneuvers to increase their statements' credibility and launch and promote a particular ideology.

This study provides a linguistic framework for the CDA of Imran Khan's speeches. This is for those people who got interested in the CDA of the speeches of different politicians, but these speeches contain different hidden agendas and have their political discourse. The lack of comprehensive studies on how Imran Khan's utilization of online platforms in his addresses specifically affects youth involvement and political engagement—a poorly researched aspect—is one of the study's major contributions. In this study, the researcher analyzed the kind of language devices Imran Khan uses and how he attracts the attention of youth.

Literature Review

Mr. Imran Khan's political rhetoric was examined because he is popular. He served as the Prime Minister of Pakistan for a few years including (from 2018 to 2022). Mr. Imran can be considered to be a rather well-recognized political figure as long as he wants to come out of the closet (Shah, 2020). Even before engaging in politics, he was well-known in the country since he was a talented cricketer. His team won the victory over the Cricket World Cup in 1992, and this was a big factor as it also reflected that Pakistanis should be proud of him. He has also been viewed as a leading orator, communicator, and advocate. Therefore, this makes his language style, choice of words, tone, and rhetoric used a possible focus of the linguistic investigation of his language of leadership (Shah, 2020). What he says as a leader determines the shift in people's perception, changes in policies and even monetary policies and international relationships (Siddique, 2019). Thus, examining his language style might be informative to understand the role of language for the construction of power and the change of politics, mobilizing people and responding to national and global concerns (Nusrat et al., 2020). It can educate those within the layperson population about how language influences many forms of reasoning and critical decisions and judgments. IK is still considered as one of the most pivotal political figures and he is still quite controversial. He has used different paradigms of communication techniques in his political career including employing figure of speech, selecting specific audiences and appealing to the audience (Umar & Kamran, 2019).

Given their interdependence—leadership is language, after all—the link between language and leadership is special (Marquet, 2020). The one regarded as a leader is one who expresses language. Because language prepares, accompanies, controls, and influences every step in politics, it is therefore essential to leadership. Politicians, according to Alkhaldeh (2021), attempt to motivate and satiate their intended public with their leadership dialect since it is heavily laden with social, political, and racial beliefs. Through language, different political beliefs and policies are controlled. Through their words, deeds, or discussions on special venues or on television, political leaders alter the ideologies of the general public (Anjum & Hussain, 2023).

The study "Analyzing Language and Power Relationship; A Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan's Speeches" was conducted in 2022 by Ashraf, Nayab, and Tahir. According to the research, language plays a variety of roles in the lives of individuals. It tells you a lot about how someone uses language and sets them apart from other people from different ethnic

backgrounds. Language is, therefore, essential to what and how individuals say things (Rashid et al., 2024). Because of this, people's linguistic choices in political speech affect how other people see them, either positively or negatively. In any civilization, politicians usually use words to force their will and influence others to agree with them. This study looks at the terminology used in verbal political discourse by Mr. Imran Khan, the former prime minister of Pakistan. It made a more concentrated attempt to assess the language used by "you," prominent leaders and politicians. Employed Through a qualitative analysis of Mr. Imran Khan's spoken political language, the study attempts to understand his word choices as expressing his intentions in the political sphere. It can influence others to believe in a particular objective, philosophy, or even course of action. Using the Fairclough three-dimensional model as the theoretical basis, Imran Khan's leadership during this period, both nationally and globally, was investigated. The study draws multiple conclusions regarding Mr. Imran's use of speech and language to indicate his leadership both domestically in Pakistan and internationally (Ashraf et al., 2022).

By examining the statements made by Mr. Imran Khan, the former prime minister of Pakistan, Ashraf (2022) explores the complex function that language plays in political discourse. The study's objective is to understand how Khan's language choices impact people's beliefs and perspectives both locally and internationally. The study use Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology to examine the rhetorical strategies, linguistic nuances, and discursive structures that Khan employed during his leadership roles. By attentively analyzing Khan's conversational style, the study seeks to clarify how language imparts ideological viewpoints, conveys power in politics, and influences audiences. With this qualitative research, Ashraf illuminates Khan's political landscape acumen and leadership style.

Moreover, Rauf et al. (2019) examined Imran Khan's political tactics from the theoretical standpoint of Fairclough and Van Dijk. They looked into the hidden ideas beneath the surface of the situation. They tried to comprehend the linguistic components that supported his ideas and encouraged young people and those from lower socioeconomic status to participate in society. Through a combination of language and textual research, they concluded that Khan had created a favorable political persona for his radical party while accusing rival political organizations of being unfair, prejudiced, and corrupt. To learn more about how speakers operate in conveying leadership communications, a qualitative speech act analysis of speeches given at the UN by Imran Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is conducted (Zamir et al., 2021). This study used a design of exploration. The researchers used Searle's Speech Act characteristics and Austin's Speech Act Theory. According to the study, representative acts made up a larger proportion of all speech acts and were often employed. This suggests that the speeches' representational role places more emphasis on the stated recommendations' actuality.

Methodology

This study focuses on Imran Khan's chosen political addresses. It employs a single-contextual research approach and a qualitative research methodology (Imran & Almusharraf, 2023). The data has been analyzed using critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine language and power dynamics in discourse. CDA is used in a qualitative research design to study Imran Khan's speeches and their influence on Pakistani youth.

Norman Fairclough is an expert in Critical Discourse Analysis. In his 1989 research, he is the sole researcher to elucidate the relationship between language, ideology, and power. Fairclough presented a model in 1989, and it was revised in 1995. Fairclough's approach is a three-step analytical procedure linked to the three interlinked discourse aspects listed below.

- Text Analysis (encompassing spoken, written, or spoken and written texts)
- Processing analysis (Interpretation, Discourse practice)
- Social analysis (explanation, sociocultural practices)

Data collection

For this study, the data was gathered from the internet source. This required the researcher to use particular keywords, such as "Text of Imran Khan's Address at the 76th session of the General Assembly of the UN" and "Imran Khan's first speech in the Parliament on 19th June 2013." The researcher then looked through the search outcomes from a variety of sites, such as newspapers, political group pages, and video-sharing sites like YouTube, to collect a variety of addresses. These websites frequently give full text or video clips, which can be instantly analyzed or transcribed if necessary. The data consisted of two selected speeches by Imran Khan. The addresses that comprise the study's source material are transcriptions of some of Imran Khan's finest addresses, chosen at random. The data for research was collected through YouTube and Google.

Findings

The current work focuses on analyzing the impact of Imran Khan's speeches on youth of Pakistan through Critical Discourse study (CDA). This work examines the multidimensional aspect of forced rhetoric through which political persona of Imran Khan is constructed convert its supporters, and urge the youths to participate. By applying the presented model of critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough, it is possible to show how various textual dimensions, discursive mechanisms, and the latter's social impacts are manifested in his discourse.

The analysis indicates how and why Imran Khan uses metaphors, frameworks of narration, and rhetorics in the speeches made. Language can elicit emotions of anger, create a shared identity, and vision of change according to the findings presented by him. The narrative receives more support when analysed with the language and grammar of his addresses, which include mostly active voice and direct address to convey a sense of urgency to the words being said. It strengthens his talks in terms of impact and content and at the same time increases the usability and entertainment value of the material for the person listening. Imran Khan employs a lot of metaphors and parallels while speaking which is good because these figures make complex and hard to achieve political goals more accessible and comprehensible for everyone. He paints clearer pictures that excite the mind of his followers and unites them under one cause or the other by describing political rivalry as warfare or exploration. His addresses are coherent for he always uses parallelisms, recurrence and other connections in a language to ensure that he repeats ideas and points. This is because his addresses follow this format of a well thought out plan that gradually forms a plane story out of it. In his speeches, spirited questions and calls are made with the young people as the addressees through this, the young people are engaged actively and feel like they owe the country something.

Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan's Address at the 76th Session of the General Assembly of the UN

Text Analysis

Vocabulary:

- The language maintains a very formal tone appropriate while delivering it to the world leaders. Some of these are; “Mr. President,” “distinguished colleagues,” “esteemed Assembly,” which sound polite.
- The speaker used these phrases to address the assembly, Excellencies, Honorable Delegates, and Mr. President."
- In a gesture of diplomatic etiquette, the speaker starts by greeting the incoming General Assembly president and praising the work of the outgoing one:

"I congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the 76th session of the General Assembly."

- To create an impression of clarity and sequence, the speaker enumerates major global issues along with suggested fixes in a methodical manner.

"The world is facing triple challenge of the Covid-19, the accompanying economic crisis, and the threats posed by climate change."

- The speaker elicits a sense of emotion from viewers by using vivid descriptions that highlight the seriousness of the topics covered.

"A destabilized, chaotic Afghanistan will again become a safe haven for international terrorists – the reason why the US came to Afghanistan in the first place."

Grammar

- Pronouns like "I," "we," "our," "you," "they," and "it" are commonly used by the IK to establish an association with the listener and personalise the discourse.

"I congratulate you..."

- Imran Khan used some model verbs some of them are mentioned below:

"We must strengthen and stabilize the current government..."

- IK used to ask thoughtful questions and involve the audience without anticipating a clear response.

"What about us?"

- The speaker used conditional clauses to talk about fictitious circumstances and possible results.

"If we neglect Afghanistan right now, according to the UN half the people of Afghanistan are already vulnerable..."

Metaphors

To successfully convey its main ideas, the speech makes use of a variety of metaphors. Below is an explanation of the important metaphors that were used:

Smart Lockdowns

"Our calibrated strategy of smart lockdowns to help save lives and livelihoods and kept the economy afloat."

In contrast to general, indiscriminate procedures, the phrase "smart lockdowns" figuratively denotes a smart and adaptable strategy for lockdowns. "Kept the economy afloat" refers to preserving financial stability using the buoyancy metaphor.

Haven Destinations

"A staggering 7 trillion dollars in stolen assets are parked in the financial 'haven' destinations."

The term "haven" refers to secure havens in the financial world, which are comparable to sanctuaries where money that has been obtained illegally is kept safe.

Final Solution

- "New Delhi has also embarked on what it ominously calls the 'final solution' for the Jammu and Kashmir dispute."

Using the Holocaust as a historical example, the term "final solution" is used to characterise India's actions in Jammu and Kashmir as excessive and murderous.

Language devices

- The speaker use hyperbole in order to highlight how serious some circumstances are.

"A series of illegal and unilateral measures in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir... has unleashed a reign of terror by an occupation force of 900,000."

- Khan used allusion, to establish context and make comparisons, the speech makes reference to historical occasions and personalities.

"President Ronald Regan invited them to the White House in 1983... He compared them to the founding fathers of the United States."

- Imran Khan used analogy, and employed comparison to make his views clear.

"What the East India Company did to India, the crooked ruling elites are doing to the developing world – plundering the wealth and transferring to western capitals and offshore tax havens."

Socio-cultural Analysis

Some of the points covered in this stage of analysis are as follows

Socio-Cultural Context

- The Islamic calls, Bismillah", opens the discourse. This draws attention to Pakistan's Islamic character.
- The Ehsaas social security programme is mentioned, which highlights Pakistan's attempts to combat poverty and promote social stability in the face of economic difficulties.
- Imran Khan talks on the increase of Islamophobia, especially in light of the post-9/11 world situation and the frequent association of Islam with terror. This underscores the cultural obstacles that Muslims encounter worldwide.

Political Context

- The Prime Minister talks about the illegal cash flows that widen the financial gap between affluent and poor countries.
- In the address, India's activities in Jammu and Kashmir are sharply denounced as breaches of both international law and the rights of individuals.

- The Prime Minister considers Pakistan's past engagement in Afghanistan, especially in relation to the Soviet invasion and the US-led Battle on Terrorism.

Power Relations

- It is a world, as articulated in the speech, of disparity between wealthy and poor countries in terms of power, especially when it comes to financial resources, equitable access to health, and care for the environment.
- It draws the world's attention to certain global issues, especially between Pakistan and India, and the uneasy situations concerning Afghanistan.
- The injustices are therefore promoted through higher international cooperation, fairness, and changes in the structure to ensure a just and stable international system.

Imran Khan's First Speech in the Parliament On 19th June 2013

Systemic Functional Grammar

In this case, we use M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) to parse the information. Language by focusing on how it functions in social conditions it has three meta-interactive functions namely, the ideational (experiential), the interpersonal and the textual. These meta-cognitive functions help us in understanding the order of the text, interpersonal relationships as well as the content of the message.

Experiential Metafunction

In this speech, IK employs a few ways to express his opinion. These actions are then grouped into three classes, namely material, which involves activities and events; relational, involving countries and interactions; and mental, including opinions and feelings. For instance, when considering the topic of terrorism, he employs material procedures that include "we will not do as the previous government did" and "we should all be on the same page," emphasising acts that must be accomplished or ignored. In a similar way while discussing corruption, he employs material procedures such as "we will have to make NAB an independent institution" and "we are planning to form an anti-corruption bureau in KPK."

Material processes are dominant, indicating acts and happenings. For instance, Khan discusses building a separate board of citizens, which entails a tangible procedure for "forming." The participant in this procedure is "we," which refers to his party, with the purpose of "an independent board of citizens." This emphasises the proactive measures his party plans to implement.

Interpersonal Metafunction

The interpersonal metafunction in Systemic Functional Grammar examines how language serves to build and sustain social connections, transmit a person's perspectives, and regulate relationships between individuals. In Imran Khan's speech on June 19, 2013, the interpersonal metafunction plays a major part in the way he interacts with his audience, authority, and expresses his position on many problems.

"We will form an independent board of the citizens and the bureau will be answerable to that board,"

He follows with a declarative sentence stating a plan of action which he is going to take, stating both directions and commitment needed for him to begin bringing about change. He has deliberately used personal pronouns to ensure responsibility and unity. He often refers to

himself and his party with the pronoun "we" to give a sense of coherence and participation towards one goal. For instance, he says, "We are trying our level best to conduct local bodies' elections in 90 days.", and depicts his party working with the public for one cause. Khan uses a variety of modalities in his speech to convey varying levels of duty and high modality statements, like "We must ensure free and fair elections," demonstrate an intense dedication to and need for reforming elections, highlighting its urgency.

Textual Function

Thematic arrangement is a crucial component of the textual metafunction. Khan regularly used themes like "In KPK, ministers and government officials will not be able to appoint their SHOs" and "We will form an independent board of the citizens." These theme selections highlight his goals and deeds, creating a coherent and logical flow of thought.

"Because if they do not investigate and guide us to the tribunals, and we all know how tribunals work, and take 4,5 years to decide the cases, it will not work."

Here, the prefix "because" establishes a cause and effect, connecting the tribunals' ineffectiveness and the need for an inquiry. These types of conjunctions guarantee that the address flows naturally from one thought to the next and serve to make the connections between thoughts clear.

Throughout the discourse, cohesive tactics like ellipsis, substitution, and references are utilized to keep things flowing smoothly and prevent repetition. In order to maintain coherence without resorting to redundant naming, pronouns such as "we," "our," and "they" make reference to already defined entities. For instance, "We'd like to know what went wrong and have this matter legally rectified. What was the purpose of asking people to capture their thumb prints if you weren't going to utilize them for voter authentication? In order to preserve coherence and audience participation, the pronouns "we" and "you" refer back to Khan and the rest of the audience.

Relational Process

From Imran Khan's speech, it is observed that relational processes are used to identify ideas, qualities and give out a relationship between different objects, problems, and solutions.

"Corruption is rampant in the government institutions."

He employs relational processes to link corruption to certain functions and organizations. In this instance, the relational process "is" attributes the characteristic of corruption to the government organizations, thereby creating a direct line of relationship among the issue and them.

"NAB is an independent institution."

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is defined in this phrase by the relational process "is" assigning it the attribute of freedom. The same relational processes are used to highlight and explain the nature of systemic concerns when he speaks about them: "Conflict of interest is the root cause of corruption." The word "is" establishes an obvious meaning and connection in this sentence by connecting the issue that matters to being the main reason for it.

Mental Process

In Systemic Functional Grammar, phrases that depict internal activities like seeking, thinking, seeing, and experiencing are referred to as the mental process.

"I believe that for the first time there was going to be an election under the independent judiciary."

Imran Khan expresses his ideas and opinions regarding the several problems that Pakistan is facing through mental processes. In above mentioned sentence, the mental process "believe" denotes Khan's personal belief in the independence of the court while the elections. Also, he says, "I felt relieved," wherein the mental process "felt" shows his feelings towards that certain circumstance.

"I appeal that the entire nation is looking towards you Mr. Chief Justice. "

An "appeal" is an intentional mental act that communicates a genuine request that the recipient pays attention and take action. For similar reason, the statement "We hope to conduct local body' elections in 90 days" also emanates positive sentiment that depict an intention for holding election as soon as possible.

Modality Analysis

Modal verbs, are often used by Imran Khan when describing the changes and measures that are necessary to overcome the problems that concerns Pakistan.

"We must ensure free and fair elections."

The use of the modal verb-must in this context denotes a strong urgency, owing to the fact that free and fair elections are very important. Likewise, the adverbial phrase "need to" underlines an obligation to deal with terrorism by coherent actions when he says, "We need to come up with a coherent policy on terrorism. "

Modal Verbs with Future Implications

Khan also expresses need, duty, potential, and suggestions for further action using modal verbs.

Extracts from the speech

- "We must ensure free and fair elections."
- "We should conduct an inquiry into the elections."
- "We can fix the governance system by depoliticizing it."

Textual Analysis

In his speech, Imran Khan presents a clear plan to tackling the various challenges which Pakistan is going through. It must be noted that the speech features a logical pattern in order to ensure its rational and meaningful delivery. Conjunctions, Vocabulary and Reiteration these are all qualities that work together to bring cohesion to the speech. To make sure that the basic concepts of the speech are well understood, the terms such as corruption, NAB, elections and governance are repeated several times. To connect concepts and create a flow from one concept to another and from one sentence to another sentence, words such as and, but, so and because are used.

All anaphoric and cataphoric reference are another way through which cohesion is maintained in the passage. Terms like "this" in Khan's statement 'This would help us know what actually happened' for instance; refer to the audit and confirmation procedure that Khan has recently talked about. Another significant peculiarity of the speech is the usage of the rhetorical devices.

Appeal to authority is also used by Khan in the presentation of his ideas where he uses examples of famous people and other notable countries. Another important point to discuss is the one that has to do with Khan's direct speech – he directly targets several recipients, namely the Chief Justice, the Election Commission and the citizens of the country. This engages the listener and makes his arguments more convincing, and passionate.

Impact on Youth

Imran Khan's addresses strike a chord with young people because they speak to their ingrained ambitions, desires, and disappointments. During his speech to the UN General Assembly, he addressed global concerns including equality for all, climate change, and Islamophobia, all of which are very important to youngsters. These subjects correspond with the interests of young people who are becoming more involved in efforts for a sustainable environment, rights for individuals, and equality. Young audiences are idealistic, and Khan played to this by presenting himself as a leader who speaks truth to power and defends the underprivileged.

The "Naya Pakistan" message that Khan delivered in his First Speech in Parliament clearly addressed the youth's yearning for change. The young people of Pakistan, who were frequently demoralized by the incompetence, corruption, and inadequate opportunities in the present system, found hope in Khan's pledge to bring about transformation. Young individuals who felt cut off from the political class and were searching for a leader who could make a real difference in their communities were drawn to his emphasis on anti-corruption, schooling, job opportunities, and democracy reform. Khan was particularly appealing to younger people looking for a change of direction because of his capacity to present an image of hope, honesty, and a novel vision for the nation.

Both addresses strike a chord because they transcend conventional political discourse and address general concepts of fairness, equity, and the potential for revolutionary change. These ideals particularly appeal to young people, who are generally more idealistic, upbeat, and eager to advocate for systemic modification.

Conclusion

The emphasis on equity, change, and idealism in Khan's language resonates strongly with youngsters, as demonstrated by the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of both his First Speech in Parliament and his UN General Assembly Address. Khan crafts a story of ethical leadership and transformation in both addresses, presenting himself as an ally of the oppressed and an ally opposed to inequality and corruption. Fairness, global accountability, and national rebirth are the guiding principles of his discourse, and they resonate deeply with the youth's idealistic and aspiring worldview.

Khan addresses global issues in his UN speech, including systemic inequality, climate change, and Islamophobia. These issues are relevant to today's socially and globally informed youth. His focus on social justice and moral leadership positions him as an activist who can work across national boundaries, which appeals to youth becoming increasingly involved in worldwide campaigns for progress. In his parliamentary speech, Khan focuses on domestic changes related to education, employment, and anti-corruption. These themes appeal to young Pakistanis who are dissatisfied with their country's political as well as financial stagnation. His story of creating a "Naya Pakistan" appeals to the youth's longing for change and disappointment with the established political class.

By providing a picture of a better, more equitable world—locally and globally—Khan's addresses motivate young people by speaking to their desires to make improvements and discontent with the present quo. This is made clear by CDA. His deliberate emphasis on topics that directly affect youth and his image as a reforming leader help him build a rapport with them, making his addresses powerful tools for encouraging and organizing them.

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