

IMPACT OF CONTEXT ON LEXICAL AND SYNTACTICAL STRUCTURE OF A POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Original Article

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Abstract

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) covers the boundaries of analysis of political discourse including public speeches. The politicians' interests and attainment of favorite responses from the audience urge them to deliver public speeches so that they may achieve their goals and targets. The present study goes over the persuasive as well as hegemonic strategies implied by Nawaz Shareef in order to have his target achieved through speech and to influence his public. To underpin his stand-point, the speaker delivers speeches which highlight his focus on the contextual syntactical structure as well as linguistic strategies. This hypothesis helps the researchers in collecting such speeches. In order to have clear reflection of exhibition of purpose and power Taiwo's Micro, Meso and Macro levels are taken into account. In addition to it, the present study is underpinned only with the application of Macro level and Meso level analysis according to Taiwo's devices. Results reveal speaker's Western style of speech and depict that repeated words, usage of personal pronouns, platform of speech and words for appraisal are there to show intimacy as well as speaker's persuasive and hegemonic strategies. Moreover, the findings of the research display a clear impact of context on choice of syntactical categories employed by Nawaz Shareef in his political discourse. The present study's approach may help to disclose or highlight certain aspects which have been skipped. A number of other approaches can be implemented on these speeches to infer other results as well.

Key points: CDA, Hegemony, Power, Political, Speech

1.0 Introduction

As discourse is the main function of society, to imagine a world without discourse is to imagine a world without language. Simply it can be said to imagine the unimaginable. Originally the word 'discourse' comes from Latin 'discursus' which denoted 'conversation, speech'. However, discourse refers to too wide area of human life, therefore only discourse from the vantage point of linguistics, and especially Applied Linguistics, is explained here.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was initiated to uncover invisible socio-political control which supporters of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) consider to be the pillar of society on some levels. Political discourse is analyzed by applying

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It was first originated in Britain in late 1970s when the work *Language and Control* was published. The present research critically analyzes the speeches of Nawaz Sharif. Fairclough's work instigated the researchers to go for the present research (Fowler et al., 1979).

The word 'critical' is ubiquitous epithet attached to a variety of nouns: 'critical literacy', 'critical theory', 'critical approaches', 'critical applied linguistics', and so on (Locke, 2004).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) describes and interprets whatever and wherever is said. The description and interpretation is made

keeping in view the social context. Change of context, sometimes, changes the entire meaning of the words. One thing is good at one time but there is possibility that it is being taken negative at any other time. This, further, offers an opportunity to explain how the discourse changes the meaning, what changes are made in any specific situation and why are these changes made (Malinowski, 1923; Widdowson, 2004). However, CDA is not only a description and interpretation of discourses in social context but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work (Rogers, 2004).

At one side, CDA is not only contributing and corresponding as a subject but also, on the other hand, it is drawing upon uplifting fascination and attraction towards language which society of recent time is using. For example, there we find a great deal of mistrust of language in our daily life, in advertising ads, in speeches, in politicians' ideas or speeches to public as they sell their ideas to the common people. On the other hand, about racist and sexist, high degree of willfulness is seen in this regards. In the same way, political activism and public critique of the so-called 'War on Terror' have pinpointed two things; the army and the language tactics with which the war has been taken to court and legalized. To have critical awareness about the practice of language people face in their daily lives depicts the crucial change in the use of language in social life. In this shift, some changes are from past and associate to modern societies while some are from new age but they portray late modernity (Giddens, 1991).

In wider spectrum, language keeps on moving to have more importance and more conspicuousness covering social processes. In economic point of view, momentousness of language is undoubtedly remarkable. When the context of 'post-Fordism' is kept in view, it is seen that the stability of budgetary system and life has transferred from the industries which are manufacturing or fabricating to which are providing services, to culture and to leisure industries. The success, usefulness and favorable outcomes of these industries mostly depend upon the 'face' they proffer to public. This 'face' clarifies their main concern and passion with layout,

introduction and communication skills or techniques. They do this all just to compete the market. At the same time, prime fields and disciplines of social life are becoming progressively focused on media, specifically television. Particularly, same case is with politics (Mulderigg, 2003).

In the meanwhile major fields of social life are gaining so much importance and are being focused increasingly on media, specifically T.V. is playing its vital role in this regard. Every politician has revolutionary and unmatched right of entry or access to huge throng regularly, offering both chances to them of defining opinions and getting support, and greater danger or uncertainty/risk of being exposed and rejected by the masses. The most important key feature for avoiding the failure of political struggle is the measured and well-formed sketch of language. In order to be in the good books of the public, there are many workers to maintain the reputation and to disseminate the manifesto of the party. In this way, the politicians are able to save their impression. Nowadays, in Pakistan, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League (PML), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and many others are trying to disseminate their manifesto or slogans(e.g. New Pakistan by PTI and in the same way the last UK government was well-known for such commercial ads by 'rebranding' her as 'New' Labor (Mulderigg, 2007; 2011a).

1.1 Objective

1. To figure out how and to what degree does context determine the lexical and syntactical structure of a political discourse.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Is there any impact of change of context upon linguistic strategies used by Nawaz Sharif for persuading his audience through the exhibition of his political power?

2.0 Research Methodology

The researchers have employed techniques of CDA as CDA is a discipline assumes that relationship between language and power is found by reconstructing text. Furthermore, such research can help to identify the ways ideologies are propagated through text (Wodak, 2013). CDA-practitioners tend to work on applied topics and social domains such as: Political discourse, ideology, racism, the discourse of economics, advertisements and promotional culture, media language, gender, institutional discourse and education (Blommaert, 2005).

In order to collect the data, the researchers used secondary source—internet. Prime Minister's official site—<http://www.pmo.gov.pk> constitutes the real source for the collection of these speeches. Primarily, this study will be qualitative in nature i.e. descriptive research methods will be used in the current research. In order to underpin the qualitative research, mixed method will be used. In accordance with this, quantitative method will be used to validate qualitative data. Technique of purposive, non-random sampling will be used to select Nawaz Sharif's three speeches for analysis. Analysis will be done by following Faircloughian method of Critical Discourse analysis. In addition to it, Taiwo's (2004) three levels—Micro level, Meso level and Macro level have been taken into account to strengthen the research. Moreover, in the present study, speeches will be analyzed in line with Taiwo's (2004) Meso level and Macro level.

Meso-level leads to the following points: 1) context in which discourse/speech is being produced, 2) perspective idea being promoted and conveyed through discourse by the speaker. Cutting the long short, this level is said to have two points to be analyzed—production and reception.

For CDA, language is not powerful on its own—it gains power by the use powerful people make of it (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Macro-level deals with social aspect, social context, social circumstances and power relationship between the listeners or participants and the speaker.

3.0 Data Analysis

The research in CDA has been mainly concerned with the persuasive influence of power,

a conception of power associated with Gramsci (1971), whose concept of hegemony describes the ways through which dominant groups in society succeed in persuading subordinate groups to accept the former's own moral, political and cultural values and institutions (Machin & Mayr, 2012)

3.1 Meso-level analysis

Meso-level analyzes how the speaker has proved his points by using discourse. This also includes what linguistic features have been selected in order to convince as well as to persuade his audience and the choice of linguistic features, sentences and repetition of words reveal about the settings of the speech.

- This is a practice through which something is produced, circulated, and utilized in society.
- Speech acts, coherence and intertextuality connect this text with social context.
- Moreover, it discloses ideology depicted in the speaker's language.

At this level the main focus of the researchers will be to figure out how description of text leads towards understanding of ideological perspectives of the speaker. The researchers deliberately excluded study of coherence in the analysis as they believed that exclusion of this feature won't affect the findings of research.

Speech One (By Nawaz Sharif to All Countrymen at Independence-day)

“Nature has blessed us with all the bounties. We have all the four seasons; our mountains are full of natural resources and our rivers are in full flow” (Line 18-19).

The possession of something shows that these can be used for better purpose. The speaker here in this line of speech is showing determination of utilizing the resources which are in any form can provide help to make country prosperous. *Have* in this sentence is indicating possession of such type of things.

“Whereas this Day reminds us of the kindness of God, it also invites us to self-accountability” (Line 22).

Resolution of making the country walk of fast track of progress and feeling the responsibility as well as realization is shown in this segment of speech. The day of independence makes every citizen feel their sense of self-accountability and provokes them for better work.

“We wanted to make Pakistan a beacon of light for the people of the world” (Line 47).

Wanted reflects evaluation which is about the ideology of the speaker-what did he want to do in the past and what was the planning. Here again as in the prior lines we depicts the collective planning. The speaker tried to inculcate his ideology about the past and show what he wanted to do now.

“Today, I want to tell you that despite some difficulties, we are hopeful for a better and prosperous future. The leadership is united” (Line 118-119).

If *leadership* of a country is *united*, that would work wonders in no time. Such type of *leadership* can overcome *some difficulties*. The speaker is trying to spell bound his listeners with a view to offering bright and promising future for the sake of persuasion and convincement which is labeling his effort with *determination* of the speaker.

Speech Two (By Nawaz Sharif at Education Conference)

“Unfinished Agenda in Education: the Way forward” (Line 2-3).

Title of the conference discloses the agenda of the government regarding education that is of very high importance and top priority. Speaker has declared this *‘unfinished’* which navigates toward the objects of the government to be fulfilled. The education is an unlimited as well as continuous process and the government aims at providing this to excel the world in every sphere of life whether that is the field of science, technology or any other. The speaker has put forward his stand-point that education is limitless. Motive of the speaker is not irked over being *unfinished* but offers an idea to have pace to progress and prosperity.

“I believe that Education is not an expense but an investment into the future” (Line 34).

To make audience clear about ideology and aim lends a great opportunity on the shoulders of the speaker. Speaker intensifies his ideology in statement by *believing* education the future of Pakistan. With education, the future of Pakistan would be very promising. Again by nominating himself as the person who is to do this and persuade the audience to formulate a mechanism for cooperation in the field of education.

“Let us join our hands together to making this country a modern welfare state, where every citizen has access to equal opportunities and where everyone has the right to live in peace and dignity, without any discrimination on the basis of color, creed or gender” (Line 88-90).

Crossing the borders of cast, color, creed or gender, the speaker wants to suggest the idea of universal unity and cooperation. He convinces the audience with the idea of turning over a new leaf and living in peace and dignity without any difference or biasness. All the individuals have been mobilized to come forward and make Pakistan a place worth living.

Speech Three (By Nawaz Sharif at World Islamic Economic Forum)

“There are no inhibitions that prevent the Islamic countries from cooperating with the rest of the world” (Line 99-100).

Inhibitions cause countries lag behind, but the speaker encourages the listeners that with cooperation and rubbing the shoulders with each other, everything is possible. He is of the view that Islamic countries should not feel any *inhibition* which jams the traffic of progress.

“We must remember that future of all mankind is now interdependent and no part or region of the world can achieve sustained progress in isolation” (Line 105-106).

Favoring globalization, he is stressing upon for his thinking that survival of every state of the world is contingent on one another. No country or nation can flourish alone is the message of the speaker to preach his ideology through his words. Collaboration and collective efforts bear fruit soon.

“Technological and scientific advancement should serve as tools for human development rather than conflict and destruction” (Line 107-108).

He opines that technicality and scientific development *should serve* human being as a *tool* of progress and achievements positively not negatively—destruction and confliction against each other. Keeping this in view the speaker has expounded his ideology of solidarity and development.

3.2 Macro-level analysis

- This means ideological effects and hegemonic process in which discourse is seen to operate.
- This also involves social status and power disclosure through language.

In case language is to be used in a commonsensical way by us, the users must have knowledge of making utterance in a particular way and in a particular situation. In any discourse, language itself does not initiate any association with power. “Language is not powerful on its own—it gains power by the use of powerful people make to it (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). The institutions which generate or produce discourse gain power from social practices. These institutions “operate an incarnation of power” (Harvey, 1996) In addition to this, the hearers also have such type of knowledge whether utterance is making any question, invitation or anything else. J. L. Austin (1975) gave this type of function of language a name *speech acts*.

Speech One (By Nawaz Sharif to All Countrymen at Independence-day)

“Our morale is high and Insha’Allah we will defeat the terrorists. I am confident that with the active support of the people, the armed forces and the law enforcing agencies, we shall be able to eliminate terrorism and make the country a hub of peace so as to present a secure Pakistan to our coming generations” (Line 80).

Militancy and their militant activities have been disheartened with the words *we will defeat the terrorists*. Again *our morale is high* also shows that the speaker has power enough to *defeat* the people involved in destructive activities and he has command on them to make them work for the betterment of the country. He is much *confident* in this regard so as to prove his point.

“I will take the nation into confidence soon and present the salient features of the

promising future which I foresee” (Line 116-118).

Promising future cannot be offered or expected by anyone else in common but he who has dominance and control over the state. Only a ruler can *take the nation into confidence* not any ordinary person or layman. The pronoun ‘I’ is power in itself when someone centers himself all in all personality. Same situation is seen here.

Speech Two (By Nawaz Sharif at Education Conference)

“I have asked the Planning Commission to give education top priority in our prospective plan known as Vision 2025” (Line 72-73).

The use of ‘I’ indicates power because he has authority over this institution to make this work according to his ideology. No one can speak such words as the speaker has uttered. He has set his goals and gave that the name *Vision 2025*. He has power enough to instigate *education system* by giving it *top priority*.

“We strongly feel that knowledge should become the key driver of socio-economic development in Pakistan in the 21st century” (Line 55-56).

In this statement, ‘we’ has been used exclusively by him for himself and his subordinate government in order to show his power and strength over implementing his viewpoint. Any other person can speak these words without any emphasis but the speaker’s *strongly feel* is likely to be an order at the spot.

Speech Three (By Nawaz Sharif at World Islamic Economic Forum)

“In my view, there are five important transitions for which we need to make accelerated progress in our countries” (Line 69-70).

The speaker’s standpoint and thinking is valued is shown in this statement. He is demonstrating that he has influence on others. His words are socially accepted and he would play an important role in *accelerated progress*. His *view* has been weighed and he has transmitted power through his language.

We need to reject divisive ideologies and pursue our common destiny” (Line114).

Inclusively, the speaker has shown power that all of us have power to refute or rebuff the threats and other *divisive ideologies*. As a nation or nations of Islamic ideologies, we have *common destiny*. The speaker has framed his power by rejecting each and everything against the state.

4.0 Discussion and findings

TABLE 1

| Sr. No | Speech One | Speech One | Speech One | |
|----------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Category | Most frequently occurring words | Most frequently occurring words | Most frequently occurring words | |
| 1 | Nominals | Pakistan (19), Country (13), Peace (7), People (7), God (6), Independence-day (5), Muslim (5), Future (5), Forefathers (4), Answers (4) | Education(33), Pakistan(12), Government (10), Development(7) | World (25), countries (11), development (9), people (8), trade (7), growth (5), excellencies (5), economy (5), opportunities (5), |
| 2 | Adjective | we (47), our (36), us (15), I (13), they (8), it (8), their (7) | I(15), our(15), it(9), you(8), us(8) | We (19), I(5), our (13), it(3), my(2), their(2), its(2) |
| 3 | Verb | Pakistanis (5), able (4), dear (3), positive (3), objective (3), separate (3), democratic (3), global (3), full (2), great (2), important (2), active (2) | Key(4), Private(4), Important(3), International(3), Possible(3), Educational(2), Effective(2), Different(2), Equal(2), Modern(2), National(2), Religious(2), Strong(2), Social(2) | Islamic(13), global(13), economic(11), massive(2), national(3), Different(3), social(2), rapid (2) |
| 4 | Adverb | are (17), is (17), have (9), realize (5), fulfill (3), face (3), were (3), make (2), pledge (2), protect (2), achieve (2) | Is(23), congratulate(2), feel(3), has(3), have(2), thank(3) | need(9), Is(8), are(6), has(4), have(3), own(3), suggests(2), increase(2), open(2), offer(2), remember(2), serve(2) |
| 5 | Adverb | Today (10), also (7), so that (3), now (2), | Here(2), also(2), 21 st Century, Vision 2025, 2018 | Also(6), more(5), now(2), however(2), very(2), rapidly(2), |

Synopsis of the table regarding words used in the speeches present a picture that change of context changes the selection of vocabulary as well.

Comparison of speeches shows that in **speech one**, in the nominals, context was an occasion of Independence-day and the speaker

In there any impact of change of context upon linguistic strategies used by Nawaz Sharif for persuading his audience through the exhibition of his political power?

Fowles (2004) sums up the problem of a meaning of a word when he says that in language “so much depends on the angle at which it is held.” The question how and to what degree change of context follows the change of choice of vocabulary is underpinned with the statement of Fowles.

has selected vocabulary in accordance with this context, so he used the words *Pakistan (19), country (13), peace (7), people (7), God (6),*

Independence-day (5), Muslim (5), future (5), forefathers (4) and answers (4). This depicts his clear ideology of selecting words regarding Independence-day. As it was national day, the choice of *Pakistan, country, peace and people* in top frequency is a clear evidence in this regard. Moreover, pronouns usage *we (47), our (36), us (15), I (13), they (8), it (8), their (7)* is also a clear picture of this technique of the speaker. In **speech two**, the context was educationists, philanthropists, ambassadors and stakeholders, the speaker has chosen the words (nominals) according to the setting as well. This evidence is in the favor of the speaker that he has grip over his art of speech. *Education (33), Pakistan(12), Government (10), Development (7)* words clarify the setting of education. Education is important part of the country and government is trying its best to enhance the capacities through educating its youth. *I(15), our(15), it (9), you(8), us(8)* pronouns validate the importance as well. In **speech three**, context is a forum (WIFE), this context lends opportunity to the speaker to have proper discourse in order to meet the need and he with the help of *World (25), countries (11), development (9), people (8), trade (7), growth (5), excellencies (5), economy (5), opportunities (5)* conveys his message to the audience.

Progressing toward the second point, adjective, variation in the selection is also seen in a very frequent way. In **speech one**, to provide the audience with the emotive ideas he selects the words like *Pakistanis (5), able (4), dear (3), positive (3), objective (3), separate (3), democratic (3), global (3), full (2), great (2), important (2), active (2)*. To convince the audience in **speech two**, the speaker has adopted the technique as in the speech one. *Key (4), Private(4), Important (3), International (3), Possible (3), Educational (2), Effective (2), Different (2), Equal (2), Modern (2), National (2), Religious (2), Strong (2), Social (2)*, these words became the part of his speech when he was addressing to the audience consisting of educationists and other philanthropists. He is very cautious about the selection of emotive words by comparing the circumstances of Pakistan with the international standards. In order to motivate the audience, he picks up the words like *modern, effective, key, and possible*. **Speech three** has been delivered to a forum of Islamic countries and this lays the foundation for the selection of words like *Islamic (13), global (13), economic (11), massive (2), national (3), Different (3), social (2), rapid (2)*. This unveils the wittiness of the speaker.

The third aspect of vocabulary selection is verbs. To convey a clear message, **in speech one**, with full comprehension the speaker has used the verbs—*realize, protect, fulfill, achieve and make* which are about the betterment of the country and every politician at such occasion, like independence-day, chooses. There verbs are depicting possessions, realization, fulfillment of the promises made in the past, security concerns and achievements. If **speech two** is brought under consideration, it also provides the same picture of what the country is at the present stage, feeling, possessions and thanking. The context is educational setting and the conference has made and to make as well the prominent and spectacular progress in the field of education in Pakistan. World Islamic Economic Forum is the setting of the speech three. This forum is concerning with the needs, developments, Islamic system of finance and what Islamic countries should do. As the preceding lines deal with the setting, the words like *need (9), has(4), have (3), owns (3)* etc are the focus of the speaker to gain attention and support of the audience.

4.2 Conclusion

On the basis of the discussion, the present study concludes that Nawaz Sharif, in his speeches, adopts Western Style. He makes linguistic choices to let the audience feel closeness and shortens the distances. The change of context carries with it the variation of linguistics choices in the speeches of Nawaz Sharif. Also, these speeches carry contextual background with them. In first speech, Independence-day influences vocabulary, second has impact of educational setting and third includes vocabulary regarding objective and planning of the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF).

4.3 Thought for further studies

Different aspects of these speeches can be disclosed and highlighted through this approach like social cognition. There are many other approaches which, keeping in view the same procedure, can be implemented on these speeches. With same context, this research can be analyzed further taking into account all linguistic features including preposition, articles etc and theories like pragmatism, topicalization etc. it is also possible to explore features of politeness in these speeches too.

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