CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: A CASE STUDY OF MURAD ALI SHAH'S SPEECH IN 4TH RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE 2025

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Abstract

This study examines a critical discourse analysis of Murad Ali Shah's speech. Shah's address criticising professors and vice chancellors with Ph.D. degrees. The research employs Van Dijk's discourse methods from 1991, 1995, and 2006. This study seeks to demonstrate how Murad Ali Shah ideologically employed these discursive methods in the affirmative discourse of the US (Sindh Government) and the adverse discourse of THEM (university administration, particularly Ph.D. professors). The analysis revealed that Shah ideologically employed discourse tactics in nearly all of Shah's speech for political purposes. Language functions as a powerful tool in politics, playing a vital role in the contest for power to maintain and implement particular views and goals. Language undeniably has aspects that reveal various intended meanings expressed in political speeches, manipulate, plan, accompany, and organise all political endeavours. The efficacy of political speeches depends on fulfilling criteria such as rationality, credibility, and emotional resonance. Credibility is achieved by holding a certain degree of authority and comprehension of the relevant problem. Logical coherence is apparent when the discourse is lucid and comprehensible to the audience. Furthermore, forging an emotional bond with the audience is crucial for capturing and sustaining their attention. This study aims to plead with politicians to refrain from using

language imbued with ideology, authority, discrimination, and power, as such rhetoric adversely affects innocent civilians.

Keywords: *CDA, Political Discourse, Power, Discrimination, Discourse, Ideology, Authority.*

Introduction

Political speech, a distinguished genre of discourse, elucidates the distribution, exercise, and perception of power within a nation. Speech serves as a potent instrument for influencing the political cognition and mindset of a society, enabling participants and recipients of political engagement to develop a specific political perspective (Fairclough, 1989).Political speeches constitute a crucial genre within political discourse, when politicians deliberately employ language to influence public mindsets and emotions to attain a particular objective.

Politics primarily revolves around an ongoing contest for dominance among relevant individuals or factions, making persuasive approaches essential tools that politicians employ to influence others or gain acceptance for their established ideologies and strategies. Persuasion entails use language to persuade the target audience to adopt specific ideologies, attitudes, and behaviours on a particular problem (Van Dijk, 2015).

Political discourse is defined as "a form of communication wherein individuals articulate their stance, elaborate on opinions, and disseminate propaganda regarding the state's domestic and foreign affairs" (Li & Zou, 2003, p.29). The researchers demonstrated that "to cultivate a positive public image of the party and establish conducive conditions for its future political development, the speaker would adeptly employ specific linguistic skills and strategies" (Zhang, 2005). The notion of ideology (Geng, 2012) has been elucidated by figures such as Napoleon, Marx, Al Jammed, Antonio Gramsci, and numerous others since its initial introduction by the French philosopher Destutt de Tracy; yet, it has acquired a novel significance in contemporary critical discourse analysis. It pertains to a conviction and principle. Commonly accepted and overlooked by social groups (Ding & Liao, 2011, p.101).

CDA examines the interplay of language, power, and ideology, elucidating how discourse emerges from and supports social structures and power dynamics (Xin & Gao, 2013). Discourse constitutes a social practice wherein language mirrors power dynamics and reiterates ideology within a social environment (Tian, 2009, p.7). It possesses a clear ideological function. Political

speech, as a significant form of political discourse, is intricately linked to power and its exercise.

Richards and Schmidt (2010) characterise CDA as a critical approach to discourse analysis which examines the utilisation of language. Critical conversation Analysis (CDA) seeks to rigorously examine texts and various forms of conversation to reveal the concealed Ideologies, subjugation, power relations, manipulation, and the racism inherent within them.

Fairclough characterises Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a methodical investigation of the frequently ambiguous causal connections amid (a) events, discursive practices, and texts (b) overarching social and cultural structures, relations, and processes. This study aims to examine how these practices, events, and texts arise from and are shaped by power dynamics and conflicts, while also analysing how the ambiguity of the connections between discourse and society sustains power and hegemony (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132).

Widdowson (2007) illustrates that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines the use and manipulation of language for ideological and authoritative purposes. In this setting, critical discourse analysts seek to uncover and trace these ideologies within texts employed by powerful groups and institutions. Wodak and Meyer (2001) demonstrate that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) functions as an analytical framework aimed at clarifying ambiguities and improving comprehension for individuals. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is utilised to clarify and investigate notions such as dominance, power, control, and the ideology in language.

Trask asserts that Critical Discourse Analysis primarily focuses on the social circumstances around the creation of a document. CDA can effortlessly analyse texts by examining vocabulary and structures, which are the language mechanisms that connect different parts. CDA addresses social concerns and globally sensitive topics, focusing on the function of discourse in the establishment and continuation of domination, power abuse, ideologies, injustice, and inequalities, as manifested in the language (Van Dijk, 2001a).

Shah's speech demonstrates opposition of Ph.D. professors and the vice-chancellors. This criticism and hatred would undoubtedly disturb the academic community in universities throughout Sindh province. I employ various discourse tactics from Van Dijk's works (1991, 1995; 2006). The chosen speech methods are capable of

being ideologically utilised by the politicians and the persons in the media. Political figures employ this methods for influential objectives. They compel individuals to adhere to their own ideals. This study seeks to demonstrate how Murad Ali Shah philosophically employed discursive methods to negatively portray Ph.D. professors and vice chancellors while positively representing the Sindh Government.
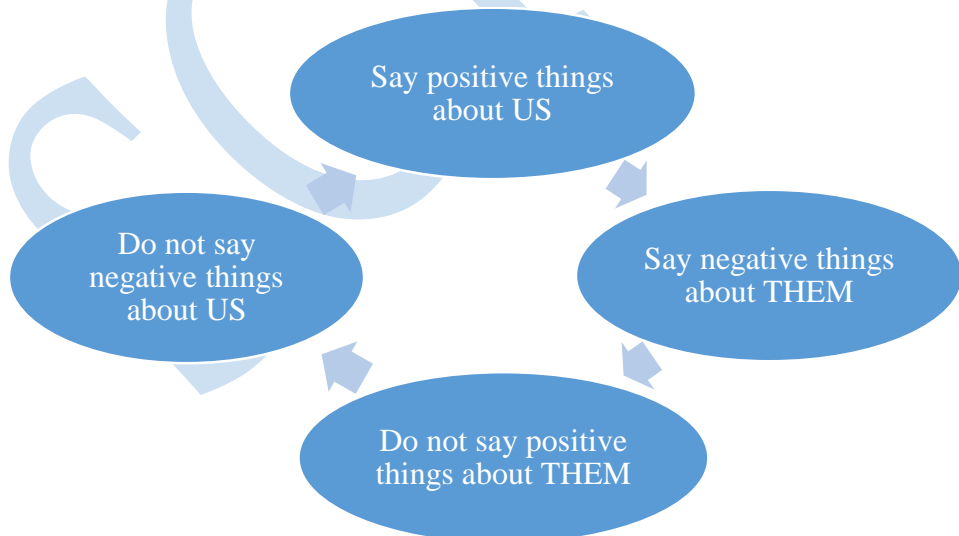
Literature Review:

Political communication is typically categorised as persuasive discourse, as its objective is to influence or persuade individuals that they have taken the correct decision. Persuasive conversation is an effective instrument for obtaining desired outcomes. In this sort of speech, individuals employ communicative methods to persuade or incite particular thoughts, acts, and attitudes. Scheidel characterises persuasion as "the process wherein the speaker and listener are interconnected, and the speaker deliberately seeks to affect the listener's behaviour through audible, visible, and symbolic means." Consequently, persuasive language is employed for multiple purposes, one of which is to persuade individuals to adopt a particular viewpoint or concept. People regard political speeches as articulate forms of communication that aim to persuade the intended audience. Politicians frequently employ various persuasive strategies to articulate their agendas in sophisticated language, aiming to persuade the public about their perspectives on certain problems, garner support, and ultimately realise their objectives. Leaders who manage uncertainty, cultivate alliances, and produce supportive resources can effectively acquire sufficient leverage to lead. This indicates that their linguistic usage seeks to implement their desired political, economic, and social actions.

Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to reveal the underlying ideologies and power dynamics embedded in texts that may go unnoticed by the general populace. CDA is an analytical framework focused on examining and elucidating topics such as control, power, injustices, inequality, and the dominance in the discourse (Van Dijk, 2001b). CDA Critical Discourse Analysts aim to elucidate concealed ideology within the text(s) for public comprehension. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) seeks to address enquiries such as the rationale behind the construction of a particular text. To which individuals or communities is it directed? What is the reason? Does the author or speaker possess ulterior motives? What implicit assumptions and prejudices are present in

the   text?
Politicians and media proprietors employ propaganda, deceit, and manipulation in their rhetoric to attain political objectives and interests while simultaneously undermining the worth or reputation of their adversaries. Text producers, particularly politicians, employ language strategically through various manipulative techniques to attain their goals. CDA seeks to uncover the genuine intentions of text creators for the general public. In this instance, it is crucial to discern the manipulative and implicative strategies employed by text producers to influence others.

Wilson (1990) asserts that political language not only communicates messages to the public but is also susceptible to manipulation, deceit, and persuasion.

Van Dijk demonstrates that ideology significantly influences the favourable portrayal of specific groups and the unfavourable portrayal of others. The narrative of SELF (positive and virtuous) versus OTHERS (negative and malevolent) is consistently employed by politicians and the media. In summary, in-group members are consistently shown positively, whereas out-group members are invariably depicted negatively.

Say positive things about US

Do not say negative things about US

Say negative things about THEM

Do not say positive things about THEM

Ideology is defined as a set of beliefs or ideas collectively maintained by specific groups and institutions concerning a particular topic, characteristics that characterise ideology, as recognised by philosophers and social theorists. Ideology is a compilation of concepts that convert specific

fallacious beliefs about critical matters, which directly impact many persons and communities, into truths for manipulative and persuasive purposes. Ideology functions as "meaning in the service of power." In other words, particular factions utilise them to achieve power, supremacy, and control over others. Ideology functions to legitimise the interests of prevailing groups within certain cultures. Ideology comprises a set of beliefs and values that could be influential for such individuals to further the interests of the subservient group in society.

Ideology comprises incorrect beliefs employed to obscure social contradictions for the benefit of ruling societies. Ideology is typically distorting and indicative of dominative abilities. Luke demonstrates that Y exerts control over Z by compelling Z to comply with his/her desires. However, Y employs additional methods of power to influence Z's beliefs and wants, including manipulation, indoctrination, deception, and propaganda (Luke, 1974). Politicians and media proprietors understand that such power and control can only be attained via the adept manipulation of words.

Research methodology and data analysis
This part addresses the selection and characterisation of the study's data, specifically Shah's speech on one hand and the analytical methodology on the other.
The analysis utilises selected quotations extracted from Shah's political address regarding the appointment of vice chancellors and Ph.D. professors. I concentrate on specific quotations regarding Shah's perspectives on the appointment of vice chancellors, PhDs, and professors. I sourced the information from Pakistani media websites. Can be downloaded from Youtube : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfNGbilclvA
Van Dijk's analytical frameworks focus on the microfeatures of political discourse, particularly the semantics, style, and rhetoric of its lexical components and sentences. Van Dijk delineates many discourse strategies related to the contextual significance of political rhetoric (Van Dijk, 1991, 1995; 2006).

Strategies   for   Discourse:
Media owners, journalists, and politicians use implication as a strategy to indirectly communicate an idea or mood. Individuals convey meaning through their assertions. The listener infers meaning from another's comments (Van Dijk, 1991). Presumption Yule characterises a presupposition as an assumption held by a speaker or writer about what the listener or reader

perceives as true or previously familiar. Hyperbole Politicians utilise hyperbole to exaggerate their assertions. They deliberately utilise this method to emphasise a point, introduce humour, capture attention, stimulate interest, or achieve a political aim. The Compassion Move technique exemplifies empathy for weak or innocent persons impacted by the erroneous policies or acts of others for political advantage. Van Dijk (1995) employs the tactic of negative comparison to highlight the unfavourable acts and attributes of others in order to achieve significant advantages and objectives.

Assigning responsibilities to the victim Politicians employ this tactic by deflecting blame onto their opponents (Van Dijk, 1991).Contrast and division are strategies employed by politicians against their adversaries. It is frequently encountered in electoral campaigns. Politicians consistently portray themselves as "virtuous," while depicting their adversaries as "malevolent" (Van Dijk, 1991).

Actor descriptions refer to the ideological characterisation of certain actors or participants. In-group individuals are consistently shown as virtuous and favourable, whereas out-group members are invariably depicted as malevolent and unfavourable. Politicians utilise facts and statistics to convincingly establish credibility and objectivity. Metaphor serves as a potent ideological instrument capable of facilitating negative portrayals of specific groups while favourably depicting others. In media and political discourse, repetition functions as a powerful ideological tool to favourably portray in-group members while disparaging out-group individuals (Van Dijk, 2006).

Politicians can ideologically invest in the power of pronouns. Pronouns like I, we, and they possess significant ideological force. The pronoun 'I' denotes individual virtues and accomplishments, 'We' signifies collective unity and solidarity, and 'They' highlights the negative attributes of others.

Data Analysis

This section is an examination of quotations from Shah's political speech. The emphasis will be on Shah's contentious perspectives about the appointment of Vice Chancellors, PhD holders, and Professors. The chosen quotations are analysed as follows:

"I attempted to remove them, but they obtained stay orders from the court, allowing them to remain in their positions until the completion of their tenure," he lamented.

In quotation (1), the verb "attempted" signifies a profound aversion, deep animosity typically stemming from rage. The assertion "I attempted to remove them" reflects a disdain for venture capitalists, failing to differentiate between reputable and disreputable Ph.D. teachers. The term "obtained stay orders" refers to significant court orders that might provoke considerable attention. The verb "remain" exemplifies the intentional hyperbole employed by Shah to influence the public and incite societal opposition against VCs, PhDs, and professors. This hyperbole is emphasised when Shah refers to the phrase "allowing them." The word "remain" combined with the negation "not" is employed to deny permission. The statement "I attempted to remove them, but they obtained stay orders from the court" reflects a favourable perception of Shah and the Government of Sindh, but the adverse perception is associated with VCs and Ph.D. professors in society. The motif of "division and contrast" is evident in this quotation. The line "I attempted" illustrates Shah's assertion that all negative outcomes stem from PhDs, professors, and vice-chancellors.

"Given the dire administrative conditions in public sector universities, which are on the verge of collapse, the cabinet decided to amend the law to include a requirement for administrative experience, and this bill has been referred to the assembly," he added.

Shah's quotation (2) clearly employs language methods such as implication, presupposition, power, and authority to achieve ideological objectives. Shah presents the themes of victim-blaming, compassion manipulation, and negative sentiments in a more manipulative and compelling manner to further interests at the expense of VCs, PhDs, and professors.

"These are the main reasons we are amending the law — to establish safeguards because our children deserve the best vice-chancellors who know how to effectively run universities and secure the nation's future," he said.

In quotation (3), Murad Ali Shah references the modification to the law. Shah posits that the new laws are inevitable, as they will enable our inclusive children to study under the most esteemed Vice Chancellors. The use of the adjective "best" conveys a favourable perception of Shah and the government of Sindh, contrasting with the unfavourable image associated with VCs and Ph.D. professors in society. The notion of "division and contrast" is evident in this quotation. The phrase "secure the nation's future" exemplifies the intentional hyperbole employed by Shah to influence public sentiment and galvanise society against VCs, PhDs, and professors.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has emphasised the need for the appointment of vice chancellors at universities with administrative experience and expressed disappointment over the inability to remove VCs accused of sexual harassment despite extensive efforts.

In quotation (4), Shah explicitly references the words "VCs accused of sexual harassment.". Shah asserts that the venture capitalists are Ph.D. professors, lacking any differentiation about administrative experience. The phrase "emphasised the need" exemplifies the intentional hyperbole employed by Shah to influence the public and galvanise society. The term "expressing disappointment over the inability" conveys a favourable perception of Shah and the Government of Sindh, but the unfavourable perception is attributed to the VCs.

He stated that three vice chancellors, all holding PhD degrees and having the required published research papers, were appointed through the search committee but were found involved in sexual harassment cases.

In quotation (5), the phrase "three vice chancellors, all holding PhDs" exemplifies Shah's ideology to influence the public and motivate society while disavowing his involvement by stating they "were appointed through the Search Committee." Shah exhibits indications of empathy and solidarity. Shah's speech clearly illustrates imagery of negative comparison, division, and contrast. The distinction between "US" and "THEM" is evident in the previously stated quotes. The phrase clearly conveys the notion of attributing blame to the search committee. In all studied quotations, Ph.D. professors and VCs are culpable and responsible for every negative outcome.

"Some vice chancellors and vested interests have instigated protests in response to this amendment. I am warning the concerned vice chancellors to stop the protests in their universities; otherwise, I will hold you accountable," he warned.

In the (6) quotation, Murad Ali Shah charges VCs and professors with having personal motives, as shown by the verb "instigated," for their support of FAPUASA against the amendment. The term "warning" exemplifies the notion of power and manipulates authority to suppress dissent, whereas the verb "accountable" has a menacing tone directed at the VCs. The portrayal of attributing blame to the venture capitalists and Ph.D. professors.

"Our universities must support students and researchers in developing practical solutions to immediate local issues. This is the mindset we need to cultivate," he remarked.

In the (7) Quotation, the pronoun "our" signifies inclusiveness, while the modal verb "must" conveys necessity and provides forceful recommendations and directives to others. The speech of Shah is imbued with profound compassion. The Compassion Move is a method employed by Shah to attain political objectives. Shah frequently exploits the public by use pronouns such as "our" and "we" to convey empathy, suggesting a commitment to local issues and acting in the best interest of the populace.Murad Ali Shah employs negative comparison, division, contrast, and sympathy in a distinctly manipulative and compelling manner.

CM Murad also pointed out the case of a vice chancellor who withdrew funds from the university's account for the travel expenses of the visiting French team despite the team having already covered their costs independently.

In the (8) excerpt. C.M, Murad Ali Shah employs the phrase "pointed out" to emphasise an unexpected or improbable situation, specifically on the corruption allegations against the vice chancellor, who claimed travel expenses for visiting a French team.Shah used manipulative tactics to incite public animosity towards venture capitalists, Ph.D. holders, and professors. Shah's speech distinctly articulates the dichotomy between "US" (self) and "THEM" (others). The portrayal of "US" (the virtuous, innocent, and tranquil) is exemplified by Shah and the Sindh Government. The portrayal of "THEM" (the adversaries and VCs, Ph.D. holders, Professors) is conveyed by VCs, Ph.D. holders, and Professors.

They are detrimental and unfavourable. Shah's ideology advocates for the eradication of bad individuals and elements, positing that this will restore the magnificence of colleges. This will not be accomplished without legislative amendments under his leadership. Shah positioned himself as a formidable agent capable of transforming adverse circumstances into favourable outcomes.

Conclusion:

C.M. Murad Ali Shah's political speech exhibits hatred and bigotry towards vice chancellors and Ph.D. professors. In the examined passages, I have determined that Shah is solely concerned with authority and power.He intentionally employs language methods in a more manipulative and convincing manner to attain political advantages over his adversaries, particularly VCs, Ph.D. holders, and professors. He intentionally exaggerates the erroneous policies of venture capitalists, Ph.D. holders, and

professors   to   attain   political   objectives. In the majority of the quotations, Shah's rhetoric is empathetic and empathic, laden with blame and negativity.He consistently portrays himself as empathetic towards the populace and critiques the detrimental policies of venture capitalists, Ph.D. holders, and professors.

His hate speech, regardless of its intensity, might provoke significant issues regarding intolerance and prejudice. Shah explicitly employs the motif of prejudice in the majority of the examined passages. He embodies the positive and commendable discourse of the United States. The adverse and detrimental rhetoric of them is epitomised by Ph.D. professors.

This discrimination can adversely affect the harmonious coexistence of both individuals and the entire province. Politicians should refrain from employing racist rhetoric solely to further their personal agendas. Politicians ought to prioritise the interests, needs, and issues of the populace over their own personal agendas. Individuals ought to cultivate their critical understanding, literacy, and language consciousness to discern how language can perpetuate and endorse prejudice, hatred, social inequity, and injustice.

The study shows a link between political scientists, linguists, and discourse analysts by explaining specific problems using various concepts and discourse analysis methods. It has significant implications for the effective use of language to promote specific moral concepts such as freedom, equality, and unity. Examining language usage within a specific context enables individuals to uncover or analyse the manner in which statements or actions are articulated, as well as their potential manifestations in alternative situations.

It is important to study political language because it helps language users understand how people who want power use language to get people's attention, change their attitudes or behaviours, spread information that wasn't known before, make their own attitudes or behaviours clear, and get other people to do certain things.

Getting students involved in CDA research like this study would help them become better at using rhetorical devices and CDA strategies. It would also make them think about the ideas that are behind any written work. The report recommends conducting additional research studies on persuasive methods in various political speeches.

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