



Critical Discourse Analysis of Discursive Strategies Employed in UNGA Speeches of Imran Khan: A Socio-Cognitive Perspective

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Abstract

Language is a powerful tool used by socio-political actors to persuade and win support. This study investigated how Pakistani political leaders use language to gain support from other countries' leaders and the general public. Specifically, it analyzed Imran Khan's speeches at the United Nations General Assembly to identify linguistic and discursive strategies that revealed ideological perspectives. Using a qualitative approach, the study collected speeches from Google and the UNGA's website via purposive sampling and analyzed them using Textual Analysis and Teun A. van Dijk's (2005) Model. The findings show that Khan employed various devices, including topicalization, polarization, lexicalization, populism, metaphor, and the dichotomy of positive self-representation and negative other-representation. These strategies served to promote Pakistan's perspective, advocate peace, and counter Islamophobia. This research highlights the role of language in shaping socio-political realities and suggests further comparative research on world leaders' speeches at the UNGA to explore universal and culturally specific rhetorical strategies in global diplomacy.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Political Discourse Speeches, Critical Discourse Analysis, Unga, Discursive Strategies, Linguistics Strategies, Ideologies

1. Introduction

Language shapes identities and plays a key role in social and cognitive development, also being crucial for forming social assessments (Bayram, 2010; Mason & Platt, 2006; Post, 2009). It reflects and shapes our reality, permeating public discourse with ideologies that reveal the speaker's perspective (Strauss and Feiz, 2014; Simpson, 1993). Understanding the choice of linguistic elements in discourse reveals underlying ideologies, particularly in political contexts aiming to implement specific ideas (Bayram, 2010; Post, 2009; Ali et al., 2022 and Gul et al., 2022(a)). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been pivotal in examining politics, where "Power," "Influence," and "Authority" are expressed through language to achieve political objectives (Dunmire, 2012). Language is seen as a tactical tool for displaying power, dominance, and ideologies (Iqbal, 2015; Pelinka). It is used to manipulate and create power inequalities by influencing people, often against their best interests (Van Dijk, 2006; Post, 2009; Rudyk, 2007). Despite lacking intrinsic power, language can alter power arrangements and highlight disparities in social structures (Wodak, 2001 and Gul et al., 2023(a)).

Political speech, encompassing all forms of communication-like speeches and legislative debates, is instrumental in shaping ideologies (Nusrat et al., 2020 and Gul et al., 2023(b)). Politics is inherently ideological, influenced by power struggles and competing interests, requiring factions to understand and organize around their ideologies (Van Dijk, 2005). Ideologies are frequently implicit within political rhetoric and are critical in maintaining societal norms (Van Dijk, 2000; Zirak Ghazani, 2016 and Afaq et al., 2023).

This study focused on the linguistic and discursive features of political speeches at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), a platform for global expression and dialogue. These speeches can enhance a nation's global standing or address conflicts, offering a chance to influence international perspectives.

CDA studies on political discourse employ diverse methodologies, like Van Dijk's approach and Fairclough's framework, to understand the strategic use of political language in achieving various goals such as gaining support and influencing societal behavior (Blommaert & Bulaen, 2000; Sardabi et al., 2014; Bazargani, 2015 and Sajjad et al., 2023).

Political language uses strategies like Van Dijk's ideological square model, emphasizing "Us vs. Them" to garner support by contrasting positive self-images with negative portrayals of the opposition (Van Dijk, 2005). This research analyzed three significant UNGA speeches by Imran Khan, exploring how discursive strategies promote ideologies and influence public and international opinion.

1.1. Problem Statement

Several CDA studies have explored UNGA discussions, but a research gap exists due to the limited scope of these investigations, focusing mostly on individual speeches, which hampers comprehensive insights into leaders' ideologies and international stances (Sardabi, Biria, and Azin, 2014). This research gap is also widened by the predominance of formal speeches in the data, neglecting richer sources like live interactions and campaign talks which could offer deeper insights into global perspectives. To bridge this gap, this study employs Van Dijk's Ideological Square Model (2005) and (Ishtiaq et al., 2022) on three speeches by Imran Khan at the UNGA, enhancing the scope and sample size of the analysis. This approach provides a broader understanding of the

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linguistic strategies and ideological nuances across different speeches, enabling more robust conclusions about the leader's ideological influence on international discourse.

1.2. Research Objectives

The present study aims to address the following research objectives:

1. To examine the discursive strategies employed in the speeches given by Imran Khan at the United Nations General Assembly.
2. To analyze the strategies used to legitimize in-group and delegitimize out-group.

1.3. Research Question

The current research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- a. What discursive devices are prevalent in Imran Khan's United Nations General Assembly Speeches?
- b. How do these discursive devices operate in speeches before the United Nations General Assembly to legitimize the in-group and delegitimize the out-group?

1.4. Significance

This study offers significant insights into political discourse, communication, and international relations. It explores how leaders like Imran Khan use language to influence, employing a socio-cognitive approach to examine the interplay between language, cognition, and the impact of rhetoric on public perception and policy. This analysis provides a culturally sensitive perspective on global political communication, influenced by regional and cultural factors. This research benefits multiple fields, enhancing educational frameworks in political science and communication, and providing actionable insights for diplomats and communication professionals to develop effective international diplomacy strategies. It also expands discourse analysis literature by applying critical discourse analysis in a new context, aiding media professionals and policymakers in creating informed content and policies. Overall, this study links academic research to practical applications, emphasizing the role of language in shaping politics and its impact on society and international relations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Discourse

Discourse is defined by its role and impact within society (Fairclough, 2001; Van Dijk, 2005). Supporting this view, Van Dijk (1997) describes discourse as the way people use language to express their thoughts, ideas, or values in a social setting.

2.2. Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis primarily looks at the patterns and structures within texts and speech, but it also takes into account the surrounding environment where the language is used (Sadeghi et al., 2015; Sharififar & Rahimi, 2015 and Gul et al., 2022(b)).

2.3. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is a research methodology focused on uncovering the ideologies embedded within language, including issues like inequality, power imbalances, conflict, and social change (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Darweesh & Muzhir, 2016). This critical approach involves researchers adopting a definitive stance to expose and challenge social inequalities (Van Dijk, 2011).

2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) represents a critical approach to examining the speech of political figures, aiming to uncover the hidden ideologies and agendas within their discourse (Van Dijk, 1997). Rooted in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), PDA helps us understand the nature and role of political discourse. It also provides a critical assessment of how speech influences the creation, maintenance, opposition, and abuse of power in society.

2.5. Empirical studies

Discourse analysts are deeply interested in political discourse due to its complexity, analyzing various formats of political communication at local, national, and international levels. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been applied to speeches and texts of prominent leaders such as Donald Trump, Barack Obama, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Pakistani figures like Quaid-e-Azam, Benazir Bhutto, and Imran Khan, enriching the field of Political Discourse Analysis (PDA). Numerous studies have utilized Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model to evaluate political speeches. For instance, Shakoury (2018) found that Iranian presidents Hassan Rouhani and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad employed different discursive techniques at the UN to present their political beliefs, with Rouhani favoring "positive self-presentation" and Ahmadinejad using "negative other presentation." Nasih and Abboud (2020) revealed that Iraqi leaders Barham Salih and Ayad Allawi used linguistic strategies to influence public opinion, with Allawi using more extensive strategies to maintain power. Khan et al. (2019) highlighted Donald Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric during his 2016 campaign, showing how he employed Van Dijk's model to portray Islam negatively. Iqbal (2015) examined Pakistani politicians' speeches, demonstrating their use of rhetorical tactics to establish authority. Malghani et al. (2019) investigated the 2013 and Gul et al., 2022(c) manifestos of Pakistani political parties, uncovering how they used discursive strategies to construct political identities and assert dominance. Additionally, Masroor et al. (2019) analyzed tweets by Imran Khan and Maryam Nawaz, revealing their ideological agendas through the ideological square model. These studies collectively

demonstrate the application of Van Dijk's socio-cognitive paradigm to political discourse, providing insight into the complex tactics used by political figures to establish authority, gain legitimacy, and shape ideologies.

3. Methodology

This research has investigated the discursive strategies employed in United Nations General Assembly speeches of Imran Khan using Critical Discourse Analysis within Van Dijk's ideological square model (2005). This study utilized purposive sampling techniques for analysis, emphasizing relevance to international politics. Data was collected from the official UNGA website. Qualitative analysis was used and it examined both micro and macro levels, identifying specific discursive devices and their contribution to ideological contrasts like positive self-presentation and a negative other presentation.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Imran Khan Speeches Analysis

4.1.1. Topicalization

Imran Khan skillfully employs topicalization in his United Nations General Assembly speeches to craft narratives that promote Pakistan positively and influence global perceptions. By emphasizing Pakistan's engagement in addressing climate change and terrorism, he portrays the nation as both responsible and victimized, enhancing its international image. Khan also uses this technique to highlight the contrasting actions of wealthier nations and India, positioning Pakistan as a champion of justice. Continuing this approach, he underscores Pakistan's response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Gul et al., 2022(d) with initiatives like 'smart lockdowns' and a massive tree-planting campaign, reinforcing the portrayal of Pakistan as proactive and resilient. Additionally, Khan addresses global economic inequalities and issues like Islamophobia and the Kashmir situation, advocating for the underprivileged and defending Muslim rights, while critically viewing India's policies. Through consistent topicalization, Khan navigates complex geopolitical issues, shaping perceptions and advocating for justice and equity on the global stage.

4.1.2. Number Game

The number game is a discursive strategy that relies on numerical data and statistics to bolster arguments and enhance credibility. In political discourse, it is essential to substantiate claims with relevant statistics (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Excerpts from Imran Khan Speeches are,

Excerpt 1: “Pakistan is among the top 10 nations in the world affected by climate change”.

Excerpt 2: “80 percent of our water comes from the glaciers and these are melting at an alarming pace”.

Excerpt 3: “We detected 5000 glacier lakes in our mountains”.

Imran Khan, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, effectively uses the 'Number Game' strategy in his political discourse to underscore Pakistan's environmental and geopolitical challenges while critiquing global inaction. By strategically employing statistics, such as positioning Pakistan among the top ten nations most affected by climate change and detailing the country's reliance on glaciers for water, Khan emphasizes the urgency of Pakistan's environmental issues. He also highlights Pakistan's proactive efforts, like the goal to plant 10 billion trees, and the severe impacts of global issues such as Islamophobia and the war on terror, using poignant figures like "1.3 billion Muslims affected" and "70,000 people lost." Additionally, Khan uses grim statistics about Kashmir to critique international oversight, effectively using numbers to highlight the scale of challenges and Pakistan's active response, while calling for international support and action.

4.1.3. Polarization, Positive Self-Presentation and Negative Other-Presentation

Polarization refers to the classification of individuals into two groups: "us" with positive qualities and "them" with negative qualities (van Dijk, 2006b). Polarization in Imran Khan Speeches are;

Excerpt 1: “Rich countries who contribute the most to greenhouse gas emissions must be held accountable”.

Excerpt 2: “Billions of dollars siphoned by corrupt politicians to tax havens, expensive properties bought in western capitals. It is devastating to the developing world”.

Imran Khan employs a rhetorical approach marked by discursive strategies of polarization, exemplified in his delineation of positive self-presentation versus negative other-presentation across several issues. On climate change, Khan portrays himself as an environmental steward, holding wealthy nations accountable for emissions

and positioning them as the main perpetrators of the environmental crisis. In financial matters, he casts himself as an advocate against global corruption, opposing Western capitals and corrupt politicians whom he depicts as exploiters of the developing world. His commentary further addresses economic inequalities, presenting himself as a proponent of justice aware of global injustices, while critiquing the global financial system's double standards. Khan also tackles Islamophobia, positioning himself as a defender of Muslim rights and opposing those he perceives as instigators of religious discrimination. Additionally, he supports the hijab as a symbol of religious freedom, countering views that label it as problematic. His discourse on terrorism seeks to detach Islam from violence, challenging Western leaders' associations of the religion with terrorism. Finally, in discussing Kashmir, Khan advocates for human rights against what he views as oppressive actions by Indian authorities, contrasting these with Western values of freedom. Through these narratives, Khan aims to present himself positively while casting his adversaries or critics in a negative light, a polarization tactic that simplifies complex issues but may also contribute to increased public discourse polarization.

4.1.4. Situation Description and Examples/Illustrations

An example or illustration usually consist of a short tale or vignette, which clarifies or adds credibility to a more significant point the speaker presents (Van Dijk, 2005, Hassan et al., 2023 and Afaq et al., 2022). Example or illustration in Imran Khan speeches;

Excerpt 1: “About Suicide attacks; because the 9/11 bombers did suicide attacks, all sorts of theories came out like those about virgins in heaven”.

Excerpt 2: “When we came into power; my first priority was that Pakistan would be that country that would try its best to bring peace. ... 70,000 Pakistanis lost their lives, due to a war Pakistan had nothing to do with”.

Imran Khan strategically highlighted Pakistan's environmental initiatives at international forums, notably the significant tree-planting project, positioning Pakistan as a leader in ecological conservation against global inaction on climate issues. He emphasized the country's resilience facing climate change and economic challenges, noting Pakistan's low emissions yet severe climate impacts and heavy debts, which portrayed Pakistan as a determined and resourceful nation. Additionally, Khan addressed corruption and illegal financial flows, advocating for global cooperation against economic exploitation, and positioned himself as a champion for economic justice. He also tackled Islamophobia, presenting himself as a defender of Muslims worldwide and highlighting issues affecting Muslim women. Further, Khan spotlighted human rights violations in Kashmir, aligning Pakistan with global justice principles and against oppression. Through these points, Khan crafted a narrative that enhanced Pakistan's international image as an environmentally conscious, resilient, and justice-seeking nation.

4.1.5. Victimization

Victimization involves employing a dichotomy of 'us versus them' to represent the out-group negatively and depicts members of the in-group as sufferers of unjust behaviour (Van Dijk, 2005). Victimization in Imran Khan Speeches;

Excerpt 1: “Pakistan is among the top 10 nations in the world affected by climate change. Every year billions of dollars leave poor countries & go to rich countries. Billions of dollars siphoned by corrupt politicians to tax havens... It is devastating to the developing world”.

Excerpt 2: “In Pakistan, we realized very early on that if we imposed a strict lockdown, the type that several affluent countries had imposed, we would have more people dying of hunger than the virus. Therefore, we adopted a policy of ‘smart lockdown’... we have been able to protect the poorest segment of the society from the worst fallout of the lockdown”.

Imran Khan articulately addresses climate change and economic exploitation, emphasizing Pakistan's vulnerability despite its minimal carbon emissions. This highlights Pakistan as a responsible yet victimized nation. He also critiques the economic exploitation by affluent countries and corrupt elites, painting them as perpetrators of global injustice, which adversely affects developing nations. Discussing Pakistan's COVID-19 response, Khan contrasts its 'smart lockdown' strategy with the harsher measures of wealthier countries, portraying Pakistan's approach as compassionate and considerate of socio-economic realities, in stark contrast to the less humane policies of affluent nations. Furthermore, regarding Afghanistan, Khan presents Pakistan as a victim of external geopolitical decisions, emphasizing the country's undue burdens from its US alliance in the Afghanistan conflict. This narrative not only evokes sympathy for Pakistan's plight but also critiques the actions of wealthier nations

and the US, framing Pakistan as a responsible and unfairly burdened nation in contrast to the criticized actions of others.

4.1.6. Lexicalization

According to Van Dijk (2006b) and Ali et al., (2022) lexicalization differs based on the discourse producers' position, role, aims, point of view, or attitude. Lexicalization in Imran Khan Speeches are;

Excerpt 1: “Islamophobia”, “Radical Islam”, “Corrupt ruling elites”, (UNGA 74th session).

Excerpt 2: “Naya Pakistan”, “The State of Madinah”, “Fascist totalitarian RSS-led Indian government”, (UNGA 75th session).

Imran Khan employs positive self-presentation through terms like "Naya Pakistan" and "The State of Madinah," suggesting a transformative renewal and alignment with the aspirational qualities of the Islamic state founded by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), such as justice and equality. Conversely, his use of negative other-presentation is evident in terms like "Islamophobia," "Radical Islam," and "Corrupt ruling elites," which critique global discrimination against Muslims, dissociate the majority of peaceful Muslims from extremists, and castigate corrupt leadership, respectively. Furthermore, terms like "Fascist totalitarian RSS-led Indian government" and "Hate-filled 'Hindutva' ideology" criticize the Indian government's authoritarian and extremist actions. "Fragility of the international system" and "Destabilized, chaotic Afghanistan" highlight global instability and regional turmoil. Through strategic lexicalization, Khan constructs a narrative that casts Pakistan and its goals in a favorable light while critically portraying external adversities and ideologies, positioning Pakistan as a beacon of positive change in a world of challenges.

4.1.7. Populism

Populism is characterized by the deliberate attempt of the speaker to obtain popularity by advocating for the wants and desires of the general public (Shakoury, 2018 and Nasir et al., 2023). Imran Khan uses populism in his UNGA speeches as;

Excerpt 1: “My optimism comes from the fact that the Almighty has given humans great powers. We can do great things. And this is where I want the United Nations to take the lead in invoking this will” (Imran Khan, 74th session).

Excerpt 2: “Don’t you think that 180 Million Muslims will be radicalised in India as they see 8 million Kashmiris locked up?” (Imran Khan, 74th session).

In his speeches, Imran Khan effectively positions himself as a globally responsible leader who prioritizes humanitarian concerns over domestic challenges, enhancing Pakistan's image as a proactive nation on the world stage. He expresses optimism for global cooperation, positioning himself as supportive of United Nations-led efforts and contrasting this with other leaders' possible inaction. Khan highlights the plight of Muslims in Kashmir to criticize India's policies and positions Pakistan as a defender of Muslim rights, concerned about the potential radicalization resulting from India's actions. He promotes his governance agenda inspired by the State of Madinah, emphasizing justice and equity, and contrasts this with previous less equitable policies. Khan's narrative around Pakistan's 'smart lockdown' response to COVID-19 portrays a compassionate approach, particularly towards the underprivileged, again setting Pakistan apart from wealthier countries. He accuses Indian personnel of human rights violations in Kashmir, elevating Pakistan's stance as a victim and advocate for justice. Furthermore, Khan champions global equity in healthcare and economic support, voicing concerns of less privileged nations against wealthier counterparts. Additionally, he addresses Islamophobia, positioning himself as a protector of global Muslim rights while casting countries like India in a negative light regarding their treatment of Muslims. Overall, Khan uses these speeches to cast Pakistan and his administration as champions of the common people, peace, and justice, while often portraying others, particularly India, negatively regarding oppression and human rights issues.

4.1.8. Metaphor

A metaphor is comparing two dissimilar items or events to attribute the characteristics of one to the other (Shakoury, 2018, Khan et al., 2023(a), Khan et al., 2023(b)) and Gul et al., 2023(c) Imran Khan also makes use of metaphoric language in his discourse, as shown in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1: “Ideas without funding is mere hallucination”, “Caged like animals”, “The world is changing; if the poor get poorer and the rich get richer, there will be a crisis soon. It will lead to a major crisis” (UNGA 74th session).

Excerpt 2: “Palestine remains a ‘festering wound’”, “The pandemic was an opportunity to bring humanity together” (UNGA 75th session).

Excerpt 3: “10 billion tree tsunami” (UNGA 76th session).

Imran Khan adeptly uses metaphors to emphasize his pragmatic and empathetic leadership. His metaphor "Ideas without funding is mere hallucination" criticizes plans that lack financial support, highlighting his practical approach. The metaphor "Caged like animals" used to describe the situation in Kashmir vividly paints the oppression faced by Kashmiris, positioning Khan as a defender of human rights while depicting the Indian government as the oppressor. He warns of an impending socio-economic crisis due to widening wealth gaps with the metaphor about the global landscape, critiquing the current economic system. Additionally, Khan portrays COVID-19 as a missed opportunity for global solidarity, advocating for unity and implicitly criticizing others' divisive responses. His reference to the conflict in Palestine as a "festering wound" underscores ongoing suffering and his sympathy for the cause. Finally, the "10 billion tree tsunami" metaphor communicates his significant environmental initiatives, contrasting his active environmental policies with others' insufficient actions. Through these metaphors, Khan not only conveys his policies but also sets his proactive, solution-oriented leadership apart from others' inadequate approaches.

4.1.9. Modality

Politicians often employ Modality as a persuasive strategy, often involving modal verbs (like can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would) or other linguistic elements that indicate the speaker's attitude towards the likelihood or desirability of an event or action. Modality in Imran Khan Speeches are;

Excerpt 1: “But I don’t see world leaders really realizing the urgency of the situation”.

Excerpt 2: “There is only ONE Islam and that is the Islam of Prophet (PBUH)”.

Excerpt 3: “There is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan”.

Imran Khan adeptly uses modality in his speeches to highlight a clear distinction between his approach to global issues and that of other world leaders. By stating that world leaders do not fully recognize the seriousness of global challenges, Khan underscores his own awareness and implicitly criticizes others for their lack of urgency, positioning himself as more proactive and insightful. He confidently defends the interpretation of Islam, enhancing his image as a devout leader committed to authentic Islamic teachings. Regarding the Afghan conflict, Khan advocates for diplomatic solutions over military interventions, distinguishing himself as a rational and humane leader. His expressions of solidarity with the Kashmiri resistance against Indian oppression showcase his support for justice and self-determination, reinforcing his stance as a human rights advocate. Khan’s call for vaccine equity and his commentary on the struggles of poorer nations to retrieve stolen assets emphasize his global consciousness and his commitment to fairness and equality in addressing international health crises and economic disparities. Through these statements, Khan effectively constructs a positive self-image as a knowledgeable, just, and proactive leader, strategically differentiating his perspectives and actions from those of other international figures.

5. Findings

One of the key findings is Khan's use of topicalisation. He strategically highlights topics that favorably present Pakistan, emphasizing its environmental efforts and counter-terrorism sacrifices. Simultaneously, he critiques wealthier nations' actions and India's Kashmir policies. Additionally, Khan's speeches are marked by the 'Number Game', where he employs statistics to underscore Pakistan's environmental initiatives and challenges, contrasting these with global inequalities and the situation in Kashmir. Khan also utilizes polarization, creating a divide between the positive attributes of Pakistan and the negative characteristics associated with other entities, particularly in discussions about climate change, global injustices, and Kashmir. His speeches are enriched with situation descriptions and examples that highlight Pakistan's proactive responses in various domains, juxtaposed with critiques of other nations' actions. The analysis also reveals Khan's use of victimization, portraying Pakistan as a victim of external geopolitical strategies and global economic injustices, offering a stark contrast to the portrayal of other nations or systems. Lexicalization is another tool in his rhetorical arsenal, where specific terms shape audience perceptions, casting Pakistan positively while depicting others, mainly India, negatively. Khan's rhetoric often aligns with populist strategies, claiming to represent the people's will and emphasizing Pakistan’s positive attributes while critiquing others, particularly India. He effectively uses metaphors to communicate

complex ideas, highlighting Pakistan's challenges and the negative aspects of other nations or global situations. Finally, Khan employs modality in his speeches, using certainty or speculation to enhance the positive portrayal of his statements, contrasting them with other viewpoints.

6. Conclusion

In concluding the research on "Critical Discourse Analysis of Discursive Strategies Employed in United Nations General Assembly Speeches of Imran Khan: A Socio-Cognitive Perspective," several key insights emerge. This study has provided a comprehensive exploration of the linguistic and discursive devices used by Imran Khan in his addresses at the UNGA. Through a detailed socio-cognitive lens, the analysis has revealed how Khan adeptly uses discursive strategies to construct and communicate his political ideology, national identity, and international relations stance.

Firstly, the research identified various discursive devices, including *topicalisation*, *number game*, *polarization*, *illustrations*, *metaphor*, *modality*, *victimization*, *populism* and *the lexicalization*. These strategies were crucial in shaping the narrative and enhancing the persuasive power of Khan's speeches. The topicalisation technique, for example, enabled Khan to set the agenda and frame discussions, focusing on issues like climate change, terrorism, and socio-economic disparities. Metaphors and modality created vivid imagery and expressed attitudes towards certain propositions, bolstering Khan's viewpoints. A significant finding is the use of polarization and victimization, which created a clear dichotomy between positive self-representation of Pakistan and negative portrayal of other entities, particularly India and affluent Western nations. This approach highlighted Pakistan's challenges and achievements and positioned Khan as a vocal advocate for justice, equity, and human rights on the global stage.

Finally, the study showed how these discursive strategies align with socio-cognitive elements showing dichotomy for *positive self-representation* and *negative other-representation*, influencing public perception and shaping collective social understandings. By employing these discursive tools, Khan resonated with both domestic and international audiences, effectively conveying Pakistan's stance on various global issues and its aspirations in the international community. Moreover, the research contributes to the broader discourse on political communication, demonstrating how political leaders use language as a powerful tool to influence, persuade, and mobilize support. It underlines the importance of discourse analysis in understanding the socio-political context and cognitive impact of political speeches. In light of these findings, this study adds to the academic discourse on critical discourse analysis and socio-cognitive approaches. It provides a framework for analyzing political rhetoric in international forums. Future research could expand this analysis to include speeches from other political leaders or different international platforms, providing comparative insights and further understanding of the dynamics of political communication in the global arena.

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