



Promotion of Nationalism: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan's National Assembly Speech

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This study focuses on the critical evaluation of Pakistani nationalism as discursively constructed in Imran Khan's speech. Imran Khan, Pakistan cricket hero turned prime minister who became world champion in 1992 and then stepped into politics in 1996, has been an icon of producing and propagating Pakistani nationalism under which Pakistanis as one strong nation could progress. The current study applies Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model to Critical Discourse Analysis. The aim of CDA is to analyse Imran Khan's speech at the micro and macro level from a socio-cultural perspective. The study is also related to the analysis of Imran Khan's firm determination to build Pakistan as a respected and great nation.

Keywords: *Pakistani Nationalism, Nationalism, Nation, CDA*

1. Introduction

The creation of Pakistan is a proof of nationalism. It is this nationalistic approach which paved the way to locate the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the map of the world in the mid twentieth century i.e. on August 14, 1947. According to Deutsch as mentioned in Qureshi's (1973) article, "Nationalism is an illusory concept and difficult to define. To an academic it is an object of inquiry, to a politician a tool to be used for the political purposes, and as the purpose varies so does the interpretation."

Deutsch further elaborates nationalism as:

Nationalism expresses preference for the competitive interests of the in-group and its members over those of all out-siders in a world of social mobility and economic competition, dominated by the values of wealth, power and prestige, so that the goals of personal security and group identification appear bound up with the group's attainment of these values.

Nationalism plays a vital role in the identity of a nation. People having no sense of nationalism lose their identity as a nation. Pakistan as a country has great significance both economically and geographically. The leaders of Pakistan, like any other leaders, have a nationalistic approach. Imran Khan as the emerging leader of Pakistan has shown more nationalism in his speeches.

The current research aims to analyse the elements of nationalism in Khan's speech. It tries to answer the question as to how Pakistani nationalism has been encoded in Imran Khan's speech. The present paper will be of significance in the sense that political discourse is investigated. Moreover, it will also be of help to researchers interested in the nature of speeches and the different messages encoded into the speech.

2. Literature Review

This section deals with the elaborate discussion on the related literature about nationalism. Rahman (2010) has worked on Pakistani nationalism, ideology and identity. Pakistan is a multi-ethnic country containing the Punjabis, the Pashtuns, the Sindhi and the Baluchi, with each ethnicity being regarded as Pakistanis. Wetherell (2007) has worked on 'community cohesion' and the integration of different ethnicities or nationalities as one community is important for a peaceful social life of that community. Smith (1990) focuses on nationalism: "Nationalism and national identity contain the concepts like nation, nationhood, nation-ness or nationality which are also the signs of identity and identification for different nations". According to Fenton (2010, p. 22) a nation is "descent and culture communities and nations are or should be associated with a state or state-like political form". The significance of the definition shows that a specific state or area which provides a border, is the habitat of a population (nation) which shares a widespread descent, culture, or language. Smith (1991), in line with Bradley (1996,) states that the idea of nation is connected with the 'nation-state' that appeared in Europe. According to Bradley's (1996, p. 123) brief statement "The concept of a 'nation' (although often linked to ethnicity) implies a distinct politically defined territory," and that anthropologists view "nations as extensions of kinship or clan groupings,". He connects it with European nationalism. The idea of a 'nation' is an imaginary and an explanatory creation which may be helpful or harmful on the basis of its manipulation by the people of a nation state. Several states are naturally multi-ethnic and heterogeneous. However, the fact is that the citizens of such states can peacefully live with equality and justice together.

Anderson (1983-1991) meticulously states these ideas in a very understandable way and defines nation that "it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (p. 6)." Anderson further says that the 'nation' is an imagined community because (some) members of a nation will not know of, and will not find the chance to interact with their group fellows, but the living image of their communion is still in the mind of each one. The nation is considered limited irrespective of the number if the borders are elastic

beyond which other communities lie in their areas. The consideration of sovereignty is there because the idea of ‘nation’ was developed “in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm (p. 7).” Owing to pluralism in religion, it is believed to be sovereign because the masses may adhere to different religious beliefs in different territories. The underlying idea is here of a sovereign nation. Finally, it is believed as a community “because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.” Very often cultural roots of nationalism are responsible for making a nation an imagined community (Anderson, 1983-1991, pp. 6-7).

Nations and nationalism have their roots deeply down in culture, it is not merely a political ideology or the form of it (Smith; 1991). The foundation for the appearance of the European modern idea of a nation is explained by him and how and why the pre-modern ethnic identities provide that foundation (ethnic origin of modern ‘nation’). His further argument regarding nationalism is that it is a definite help in creating or inventing nations, he further elaborates it by saying that the ethnic identity is a solid ground for the emergence of a nation (Smith, 1991, p. 71). His definition of a nation is “*a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members*” (p. 14; taken as original text). The concept that the definition provides is urging for a territory of their own and having shared commonalities in history, economy, culture, law, myths and duties. According to him ‘nationalism’ is a diverse idea with several significations and not a unitary one.

So, he hypothesises that nationalism is a process of nations’ construction and preservation, as a feelings of belonging to and good will for the nation, as expression and representation of the nation, as an ideology and central creed of the culture of the nation and as a socio-political movement initiated for the wellbeing and objectives of the nation. However, Smith (1991) believes “*nationalism as an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation’.*” Smith further says that ideology, sovereignty, movement, harmony and identity are the founding components of nationalism which enable a nation to strive for its existence and perpetuation. Ideology, movement, autonomy, unity and identity are the constituting elements of nationalism which keep a nation struggling for its survival and maintenance. According to Smith, ‘movement’ and ‘ideology’ are related as a political movement is initiated and reinforced by a particular ideology.

Anderson (1983/1991), sees it from another angle he thinks “nationality or nation-ness” and “nationalism” as “cultural artifacts of a particular kind.” He proposes that meticulous consideration is required as to how these artifacts were shaped historically, what are the ways through which with the passage of time has changed their meaning, and the cause of their recent association with “emotional legitimacy” (p. 4). He puts it forward that “the creation of these artifacts ... was the spontaneous distillation of a complex ‘crossing’ of discrete historical forces;

but that, once created, they became ‘modular,’ capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations” (Anderson, 1983/1991, p. 4).

However, the fundamental question as to what are the ways and means of representing nationalism (and its structural ingredients) are yet to be answered. According to Smith (1991), cultural and national symbols and rituals are traits of nations, and these personify the basic concepts of nationalism which are semiotically and discursively communicated, transferred, shared and replicated by the members of that community. The array of nationalism and the diversity and variability in each type show that nationalism has many functions and effects in the socio-political world. He elaborates on the various effects and socio-political functions of nationalism that points to both its bright as well as dark aspects.

For him the principles and ideology of nationalism are not the supporters of the idea of a monolingual group, a world community and that of its universal morality. Rather the idea of a political group or cultural group on the basis of conflict and cultural differences is supported. As a piece of political discourse, the speech under consideration contains elements of the concept of ‘Us versus Them’, as Imran Khan being the leader of one of the largest opposition party (Tehrik-e-Insaf) distinguishes between the opposition and the treasury benches during his speech. Costelloe’s (2014) study recognised that national identity and expression of nationalism were pointed out in an exclusionary way. It is believed that similar discourse marks symbolic boundaries between “us” and “them”. Exactly the same way, Poorebrahim and Reza (2012) formed the link between language and ideology by investigating the depiction of Islam and Muslims in the western discourse. The researchers focused on the newspapers’ headlines in the *Independent*, the *New York Times*, the *Herald Tribune*, and *The Times*. This linguistic choice research analysis showed that Islam was frequently stereotyped with a negative representation of Muslims. Similarly, Tahir (2013), applied the analytical framework of van Dijk for “us-and-them ideologies”, found the essential idea of the text connected to in-group and out-group presentations and concluded that the paper stated Muslims and their actions negatively by treating them as “others”.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Fairclough Modal for Analyzing the Text

Fairclough considers the relationship between language and society. Language is not only a source of communication but it is something more than that. Language is related with racism, ideology and power. It is one of the main functions of critical discourse analysis to study these social issues. Fairclough has proposed a three-dimensional model for analysing the different encoded meaning in language. Fairclough’s model has three aspects which are text, interpretation and explanation. At the textual level, Fairclough asks a major question. At the

interpretational level, the text becomes discourse. It is here that the text is interpreted as to why the text seems the way it seems. At the explanation level, the text is interpreted in light of social, economic, religious, environmental or social factors.

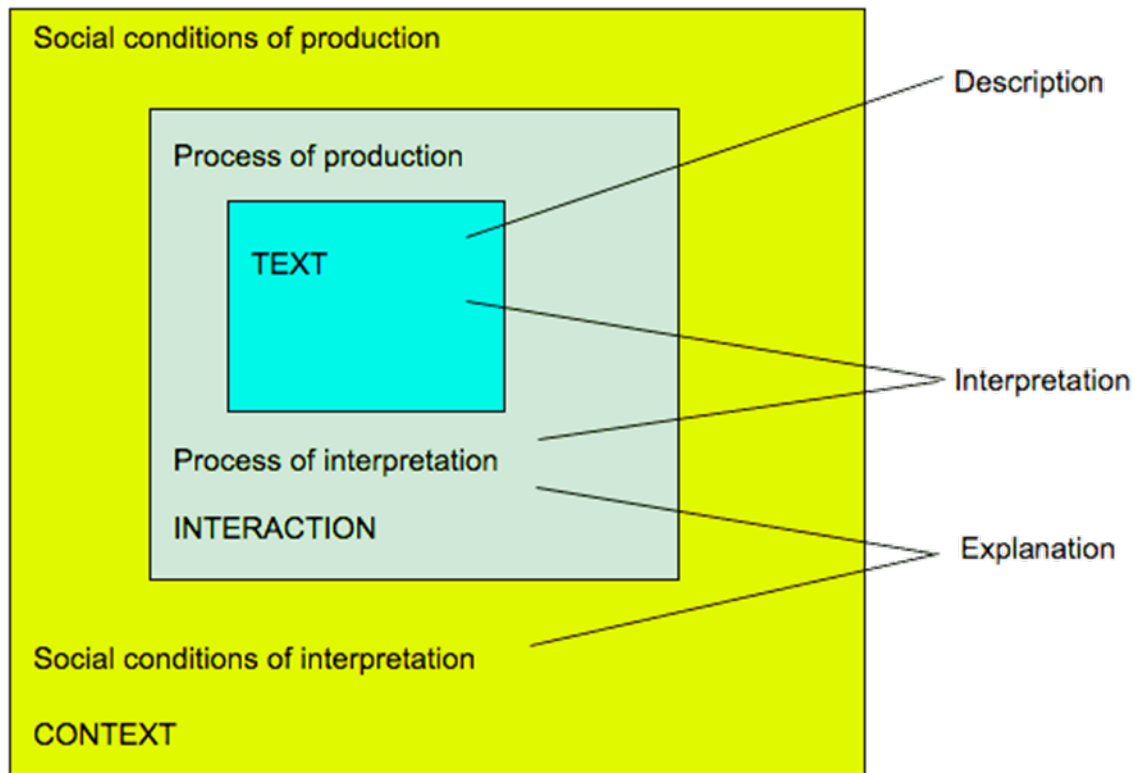


Figure 1

However, this current project has been analysed from the descriptive perspective of the text. But one should bear in mind that Fairclough says that the analysis of the text and description of the text cannot stand independently. Therefore, it is been mixed with the other two aspects of the Fairclough model which are interpretation and explanation.

4. Data Analysis

Data for the analysis is the speech of Imran Khan delivered in National Assembly on 19th June 2013 for the budget session 2013-14. The speech is retrieved from <http://tune.pk/video/109059/imran-khan%E2%80%99s-complete-speech-at-national-assembly-june-19-2013>. The selected passages of the speech are analysed as follows.

Experiential Values of words

Experiential values of words have to do with the idea that how words can be a clue in expressing the experiences. The speech delivered by Imran Khan possesses experiential values. The first thing we deal in experiential values is representation of world and social experience in

vocabulary. Thus, in this speech the political scenario and Pakistani nationalism has been represented in the words ‘Pakistan, Great country, California of Asia’.

Classification Scheme: the second important aspect of experiential values of words is a classification scheme. In this process, things and people are classified on an ideological basis. In the case of Imran Khan’s speech, there is a classification scheme in the sense that he deems a president/leader as someone from the elite class or rather from a feudal class which is the opposite of a common Pakistani. It is for this reason that Imran Khan says that he will not talk as an opposition leader but as a Pakistani which expresses the height of Pakistani nationalism.

Ideological Contest: ideological contest is another notable aspect of experiential values of words. Ideological contest is the process in which words show the differences in ideology. Regarding the speech, there are instances that show this ideological contest. In the line ‘The only thing I want to point out here is INJUSTICE’ ideological contest is expressed by two opposing ideas: one is justice and the other is injustice which has an implied meaning in the text as Roland Barthes says that the text says something which it does not say. Thus, justice refers to the Party of Imran Khan Tehrek-E-Insaf and Imran Khan calls himself a common Pakistani which shows that he is a servant of the people and not an elite or feudal like the prime minister.

Synonym, antonym, hyponym: synonym is the relationship between words which express the same meaning, and it is not necessary for them to be absolute in meaning, they can be relative. Antonym is the opposite of synonym which shows the difference in meaning. Hyponym is when the meaning of one word is encoded in the other word. For example, the concept of totalitarianism is coded in communism. In this speech, there are instances of synonym. For example, the word ‘common Pakistani’ shows nationalism in Imran Khan which is not the case with the ruling party so the idea conveyed by Imran is that he is from and among the Pakistani people, which is not the case with the prime minister. Secondly, Pakistan is compared with Switzerland. Both countries are different, but same in beauty. However, it can also be the antonym because Pakistan and Switzerland are two different countries which show the contrast that in the past these two countries were the same in beauty and natural resources but this is not the case in the present. Now Switzerland is far ahead of Pakistan and Pakistan is suffering because of corrupt leaders like the ruling party and the parties who ruled before them. There is also hyponym used in the speech. The idea of progress is encoded in the phrase ‘California of Pakistan’ which is the symbol of development and civilisation.

4.1 Relational Values of Words

Relational values of words have to do with the ability of words to express social relationships. In this case, we have an abundance of instances that express such social relationships. For example, the words ‘Prime Minister, and ‘common Pakistani’ shows the social relationship

between Imran Khan and the prime minister which is that one is the prime minister representing the corrupt elite class and the other is a common man representing the folk of Pakistan.

4.2 Formality:

Formality is one of the aspects of relational values of words. The concept of formality and informality also show the social relationship. The use of formal words express respect and that of informal ones show disrespect. However, the use of words in the speech are formal. For instance, 'congratulate', 'Respected Prime Minister' which show the relationship between the two is formal but it can also show the emotional coolness between the two leaders and thus a less friendly situation.

4.3 Expressive values of words

Expressive values of words have to do with how words express the social identities. Here the positive or negative practices of a participant are described through vocabulary. In the case of the prime minister and Imran Khan, the prime minister's practices are described in a negative way but indirectly probably on the basis of past experiences in which the prime minister has not been a competent Minister. Imran Khan brings the word 'Injustice' to associate with the government of the prime minister that when he rules the country there is no justice in the country and therefore the country needs a leader who is a common Pakistani and who understands the problems of a common Pakistani.

4.4 The Use of Metaphor

Metaphor is one of the important aspects of the Fairclough model while analysing the text. Metaphor is used in order to express often a negative quality with the help of images so one cannot be criticised directly, and it can also be used for expressing positive qualities. In the speech, Pakistan is compared by saying 'California of Asia' which symbolises the concept of civilisation and the ideology Pakistani nationalism is embedded here indirectly which says that now America is ruling the world but the time is not far away when it is going to be Pakistan to rule not only Asia but the world in general.

4.5 Experiential Values of Grammatical Features

Experiential values of grammatical features deal with how different aspects of grammar express social relations and outer world experiences.

Simple declarative sentence: the first thing we have to focus upon is a simple declarative sentence. It is divided into three structures. The first one is: subject and verb which show an event and in which one participant is involved. The second is subject, verb and object which express an action and in which two participants are involved. One is the agent and the other is

the patient. The third kind of sentence is subject, verb and a complement which shows attribution and it also involves two participants.

Let us analyse a simple declarative sentence. Imran Khan says that our parents used to tell us that “You are the first free generation of Pakistan”. This sentence has a subject which is ‘you’, a verb ‘are’ and a complement ‘free generation of Pakistani’ which shows that there was once a time when we were free but now since Nawaz Sharif is again going to rule the country we are going to be slaves again. In this sentence the attribution of freedom is shown through the complement but freedom has been no more there. In order to get this freedom we need nationalist leaders who are true Pakistanis and who are not corrupt.

There is another declarative sentence: “We see our country is paying the instalment”. This sentence has a subject ‘our country’, a verb ‘paying’ and an object ‘instalment’. This sentence shows an action in which two participants are involved. One is the agent and the other is the patient on whom an action is carried out. In this case, the agent is IMF and America, and the patient is Pakistan on which different sanctions regarding the loan are imposed. So it indirectly refers to the government that it is in this government that the country gets much loan which is agent the interest of a nation and Pakistani nationalism. This also shows that the government is a puppet of America and IFM.

4.6 Relational values of grammatical features

Relational values of grammatical features express the social relationship between the participants through grammar.

What modes are used?

There are three types of modes: declarative, grammatical question and declarative mood. Here we will be discussing the declarative mode. Two participants are involved and in which the position of the speaker is the provider of the information and the addressee is the receiver of information. In this case, Imran Khan is the provider of information and the prime minister is the receiver of information and the information is that because of his injustice and bad government, justice and Pakistani nationalism have been lost. Since the use of language is the use of power, thus Imran Khan speaks and he seems powerful. On the other hand, silence means powerless. Since the prime minister is silent, he is powerless.

The use of pronouns:

Pronouns play an important role in any text, but especially in a political one. In this speech, Imran Khan shows Pakistani nationalism through the use of pronouns ‘I’, ‘we’ and he does it in such a way that he is a common Pakistani and is among them but on the other hand the prime



minister seems to be excluded and thus cannot become a common Pakistani. Think about these sentences:

“We respected our country”, “We have twelve seasons”, “and we see our country is paying the instalment”.

4.6 What large scale structure does the text have?

The overall structure of the text gives a perception about Pakistani nationalism and justice in the hour of turmoil as Pakistan is going through many political issues. On one hand, it is fighting a War on Terror which is not ours and on the other hand, it is fighting Taliban at home. Moreover, it also faces the problem of corruption in the country especially in the form of corrupt leaders. It is in this hour that Imran Khan stresses the idea of Pakistani nationalism to be imposed if want to regain the lost paradise.

5. Conclusion

The speech is a good example of the expression of Khan’s Pakistani nationalism. Exploiting the idea of nationalism, Khan attempts to put the country on the right track it treaded till the 1960s. Khan has expressed his nationalism in a number of speeches. He tries to motivate the members of national assembly by referring to numerous blessings and natural resources of Pakistan that God Almighty has bestowed upon the country. Despite the government and the law enforcing agencies who are engaged in curbing injustice, they do not meet the public expectations fully. That’s why Imran Khan finds solace in reminding the gathering by comparing the Pakistan of the mid-sixties with the present, and by comparing it with the other industrially developed countries. He enumerates the effects of God’s orders, justice and equality in case of obeying and or disobeying them. Imran Khan’s statements reflect nationalism in every word, phrase and sentence.



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Appendix. A

“Respected Speaker, congratulations for the success! Today I congratulate the PM for becoming the prime minister. I am not fit to stay longer than my speech in the assembly. I need six more weeks to feel fit. Therefore, I would request to leave after my speech. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to talk as an opposition leader but I want to talk as a Pakistani. During sixties, when I was growing, Pakistan was an exemplary country in the world. A Korean minister ‘Millik Devos’ told me that they adopted the economic system of Pakistan. Malaysia adopted our model too. During sixties, the industrial production of Pakistan was equal to four Asian tigers; ‘Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippine and Thailand.’ the institutions of Pakistan were of the international standards. The medical colleges and engineering universities were of international standards. We all were proud of PIA that it was one of the best airlines of the world. Our parents told us, “You are the first free generation of Pakistan.” They used to tell us, “You don’t know what servitude is.” We respected our country. A Nobel Prize winner Gunner Malden wrote a book “The Asian Miracle” in the mid-sixties. He predicted in his book that Pakistan is going to be the California of Asia. Now, we as a nation have to think of our position. We should think how to get on the track back to fulfill the potential of this country. This is the only country which Allah has blessed with everything. If you compare Pakistan with Switzerland, Pakistan has higher mountains in the northern than Switzerland. We have twelve seasons, fertile land, copper, gold, gas and coal reservoirs, and hydro-potential. We are here today to assess and find out the mistakes. Allah says in the holy Quran; “I have devastated those great nations who disobeyed my orders.” What are the orders of Allah? What was the basis of the state that came into being in Madina? “on justice and equality”. The only thing I want to point out here is INJUSTICE. I again exemplify Switzerland because there is nothing; no resources are there but it is the most prosperous country. Germans, French and Italian live in it. But none of these people demanded to be the part of Germany, France or Italy. Germany and France are prosperous countries. Those are very happy in Switzerland. The main reason of this is there is a complete system of justice. The people want to become the part of a country because they get justice there. Whatever problems Pakistan is facing these days are because of injustice. People talk of Baluchistan that they have unjustly been treated. East Pakistan got separated because of injustice. We see our country is paying the installment of twelve billion rupees. The total revenue collection is less than two billion; and six to seven hundred millions are spent on army. So there is nothing left to run Pakistan with. The point to think of is, why does a country give more charities and less tax? The taxes will add to the devastation and increase in the poverty because the middle class is already stuck in the inflation. The oncologists go abroad and start their jobs with minimum thirty lakh...

Finally, I congratulate you again Mr. Speaker.”