

Ideological Representation Through Political Communication: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Molana Fazal ur Rehman Speech

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Abstract:

Molana Fazal ur Rehman played an important role in changing the regime by leading a group of political parties and delivering public speeches in gatherings and protests. This study aims to investigate how he disseminated his agenda through political communication and made the people believe in his ideology. The study is qualitative and the data contains an English translation of Molana's speech (Dunya News. (2023, May 15) delivered before the change of Imran Khan's government through a vote of no confidence. The data was analyzed by applying a self-made model drawn from the theoretical framework of Van Dijk (1999). He shows how the super elite controls the minds of people through discourse. The data was analyzed at two levels: i) Textual Analysis that explains lexical patterns of language, i.e., creativity, reference, intertextuality, and ii) pragmatic use of language, i.e., historical and contextual meanings; and persuasive strategies that helped him achieve his target. The study reveals that Molana effectively used linguistic items and discursive strategies to manipulate the audience. His authoritative tone and selection of Urdu language were equipped with powerful syntax. Moreover, he presented himself as the right choice for the future of the Public. The study concludes that political leaders strategically design their public speeches effectively and present the content in front of the audience by following the linguistic features. This study will provide a road map for young researchers to conduct similar analyses of other speeches of the same patterns.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Discourse as social practice, Discourse as discursive practice, Molana Fazal ur Rahman

1. Introduction

Molana Fazal ur Rehman has been engaged in political activities for decades and played a vital role in regime change by leading a government of 13 parties named PDM. The elite class or powerful groups through the use of language control the poor class (Brass, 2024). The Analysis of the current study explores how Molana's political communication is effective in terms of influencing the public or keeping the other political groups engaged with him during the campaign against Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI). Political leaders use discursive strategies that change the opinion of the public (Malet & Thiebaut, 2024). In this regard, CDA and DA have been a common choice among linguists to use as a method to analyze speeches of public figures, influencers, and agenda setters (Badmus, Badmus, Opeyemi, & Kilani Sakiru Opeyemi 2024). This research is significant in many ways as the current political scenario provides a background to Molana's speeches and creates between his speeches and the results after the regime change. Moreover, how the use of language played a role in making the minds of people and setting an agenda for them to build a negative narrative for Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf and a positive narrative for other political parties that were being led by Molana. This research

work explores the issues related to power, ideology, and inequality by presenting a comprehensive analysis of the selected discourse. Moreover, it highlights the use of linguistic choices in a different way and how they create meanings.

It has been observed throughout history that people are forced to believe in an ideology (Chomsky, 2023) that they do not want to accept but they do because of strategic use of language by the political leaders. People in any society have different thoughts (Shodiyev, 2023), but agree upon a single ideology due to the convincing power of any political leader that he expresses through his communicative competence. LLUNJI (2024) argues that speech writers and politicians successfully manipulate the ideas and images they create in the minds of people. The primary objectives of the study are to investigate those linguistic strategies that bring people into the influence of strategic communicators.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

- i) What are the different CDA strategies Molana Fazal ur Rahman used in his speeches to build a narrative?
- ii) What are the ideological meanings Molana tried to communicate?
- iii) What are the specific linguistic items used by Molana to prove his political stance to the public?

For this study, qualitative methodology was used to analyze the content of the speech.

2. Literature Review

Linguists have been interested in using CDA as an approach to explore the issues related to language, power, and ideology (Van Dijk, 2014). The terms Critical Linguistics and Linguistic Criticism were earlier used by (Flower and Kress, 1979) and aimed to look at the role of a language in society, i.e., how it creates dominance or inequality. The powerful elite uses language in a way that impacts on lower class which is later controlled or ruled by the elite (Ali, Hassan & Majid, 2024). Critical Discourse Analysis is used to explore those linguistic devices that are particularly used to generate power through written or spoken text (Umami, 2024). Moreover, it helps the general public to understand how the discourse is used to persuade or manipulate them in a given context (Kareem, 2024). It further explores the hidden ideology and pragmatic meanings used by the speakers or writers (Bukhari, Fatima, Jameel & Rashid 2024). CDA not only focuses on textual meanings but it also looks at the other parts of language use, i.e., pragmatics meanings of the discourse (Pham, Nguyen, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2024). The current study focuses on these other parts of language too, i.e., how meaningful communication creates an impact on society and how certain types of linguistic choices persuade the audience. Researchers have used CDA methods to analyze influencing strategies in advertisements (Shah, Irfan & Shamim, 2024); and social media headlines, i.e., how YouTube thumbnails manipulate the audience to click certain links (Shah & Bashir, 2024). Al-Haq& Al-Sleibi (2015) have presented a CDA of three speeches of King Abdullah, in which they argued that King Abdullah used creative language, and presented influential talk by creating references and maintaining intertextuality in his speech. In an analysis of Biden's speech, Hatab, Al-Badawi, &Alsmadi (2024) claimed that Biden engaged the people by highlighting emotional and sensitive issues of society. Moreover, he tried to show sympathy by discussing the rights of people, and to create a reference in his speech, he discussed some historical events. Mandela's speech was analyzed by Sadiqa, Arif & Ali (2024), in which they explored how a freedom fighter induced an ideology of ending racism in the minds of people. The current study relates to the above literature as Molana delivered that speech to prevail an ideology in a specific political scenario.

3. Methodology

3.1 Description of Data

The data of Molana Fazl u Rahman's Speech (Dunya News. (2023, May 15) has been downloaded from a social media site YouTube. The total length of the video is two hours but for a detailed analysis six minutes of his speech were selected. All the words, phrases, and sentences were placed on a table having two columns. The left column provides Urdu text of Molana's speech while the second column contains its English

translation. The purpose of making a table is to provide the data in one place in a sequence for easy reading. A self-model drawn from Van Dijk's (2000) theoretical framework was applied to analyze the data.

3.2 Theoretical Frameworks

Figure 1 Schema of the discursive reproduction of power

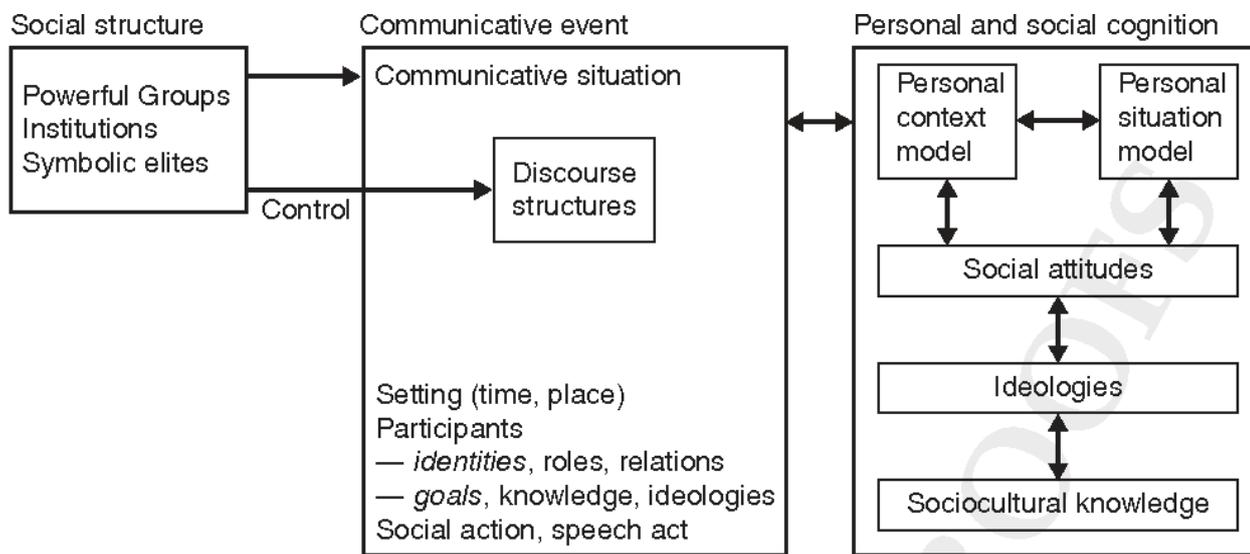
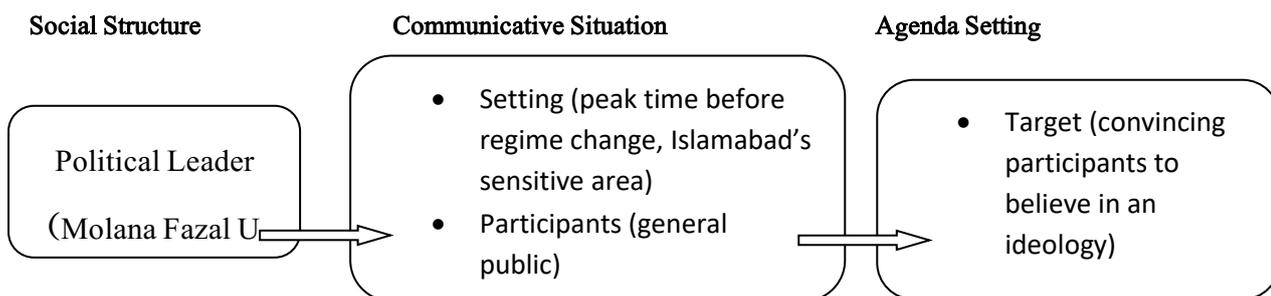


Figure 2 Self-model drawn from Van Dijk's Theoretical Framework



3.3 Explanation of Self-Made Model

Molana's main agenda was to show power against a political leader who had huge popularity in public. Powerful groups, institutions, or symbolic elites use specific structures in a specific context to achieve certain goals related to power. We have made this model simpler as this study focuses on agenda setting through Molana's speech, i.e., how he used different speech acts to convince a class to believe in an ideology. Van Dijk's model was the road map for the development of the above model. In the first part, the social structure discusses Molana as an elite class who himself presents a change maker. The second part focuses on the environment where he delivered his speech and who the listeners were. The third part discusses the participants' behavior toward the acceptance of that agenda.

At the time of the speech, Molana was not in direct power but he had the intention to come into power through an alliance of other political parties. The implication of this model will explain how Molana presented himself as a powerful iconic political leader to the extent of his speeches. This model further elaborates on how people reacted to his voice. In this analysis, we will explore those linguistic choices that might have made the audience set some goals for being induced through his speech.

4. Analysis

Before we move to the analysis section, we would like to present a brief political and social context of the speeches delivered by Molana Fazl u Rahman.

4.1 Political and Social Context of the Speeches

As a political leader, Molana has been an influential personality among other political leaders as well. He remained part of Pakistan's parliament since he joined politics but in Imran Khan's reign, he could not get any seat and he started his political movements against Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf. One of his top moves was to encourage the other parties to get together as a unit against Imran Khan's party. The gathering of all 13 parties was named PDM which mutually spoke against PTI's policies and raised their voices against issues by picturizing them as genuine issues. The agenda of all parties was the same and Molana was leading them.

NO OF ROWS	ORIGINAL TEXT	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
1	برادرانِ ملت، میرے بزرگو، دوستو، بھائیو اور بہنو،	Brothers of a nation, my seniors, friends, brothers and sisters
2	تاریخی اجتماع اس بات کا اعلان کرتا ہے کہ فیصلہ سامنے والی بلڈنگ کے اندر کچھ لوگ نہیں کریں گے	Historical gathering announces that the people inside that building will not make any decision.
3	اب فیصلہ پاکستان کے عوام کریں گے	Now the people of Pakistan will take the decision.
4	جانبدار جج اپنی عدالتی حیثیت کو مجروح کر چکا ہے۔	Biased judges have damaged their judicial existence.
5	عوام کی عدالت اسلام آباد میں براہ راست بر اجماں ہے۔	Nation's court is live in Islamabad.
7	پاکستان کی عوام نے فیصلہ دے دیا ہے کہ سپریم کورٹ کے چیف جسٹس اور اسکا ایک مختصر ٹولہ وہ پاکستان کی عدالت کی توہین کر رہا ہے۔	Pakistan's nation has given the decision that the chief justice of supreme court and his short group of fellows is dishonoring Pakistan's court.
8	ہم پاکستان کی عدلیہ کے وقار کو بحال کرنا چاہتے ہیں۔	We want to restore reputation of Pakistan's court.
9	عدلیہ اتنی محترم ہے۔۔۔ اس عدالت کا وقار اتنا بلند ہے کہ اس کے وقار کیلئے اس بلڈنگ میں بیٹھے دو چار ججوں کو قربان کر دیا جائے تو اس سے کوئی فرق نہیں پڑے گا۔	The court is so honorable. The majesty of the court is so high that if two to four judges sitting in this building may be slaughtered for its dignity, it will make no difference.
10	ان کرسیوں پر بیٹھ کر تمہیں پارلیمنٹ کی ناپارلیمنٹ کی تذلیل کی اجازت دی جاسکتی ہے، نا عوام کی۔۔۔	While sitting in these chairs, you can neither be allowed to disrespect the parliament nor and the public.

11	تمہارے ہتھوڑے سے ہمارا ہتھوڑا بہت مضبوط ثابت ہو گا۔	Our hammer will be proven more powerful than that of yours.
12	ایک مرتبہ تم بھی آؤ اور اس میدان میں کھڑے ہو جاؤ، پتہ لگ جائے گا تمہاری قیمت کیا ہے۔	Once you should also come and stand in this arena, you will come to know what your worth is.

4.2 Findings

Molana Fazal ur Rehman starts his speech by addressing the audience with relationships that create a bond with him. He uses a phrase that could possibly draw the attention of each member present in the hall. Then he explains to the people that it is a historical gathering [2] to highlight the importance of his agenda. He talked about a building [2] and mentioned some people [3], he knows about the building and the people but he intentionally kept them hidden from the general public. From the speech, it is not clear which building is this and the people involved in the decisions. He does not mention the nature of decisions. He further makes the people realize that the decision [3] is in their hands. That shows he is trying to get their sympathy by giving them authority. The start of the speech cannot be understood without knowing the political and historical background as the sentence [2] and [3] contain pragmatic and contextual meanings. Molana blames the judges by using the singular word judge [4] while he does not provide any evidence or logic for bias. The purpose of using such a statement might be because the decisions were not of his choice. He seems to have an authoritative language and shows dominance. He compares the nation's court [5] with the other legal courts but his way of saying such words shows that people have higher authority than the legal courts. The public is dominant in his decision or in other words, they will not accept the decision of other courts as they have set their own if otherwise announced against their benefits. This is how power is expressed through the use of language.

He puts another blame on the chief justice of the Supreme Court [6] and his fellow judges who dishonor the court of Pakistan. These are Molana's words and they may be taken as blame but he linked them with the decision of the people. Being present in a gathering does not mean that the audience would agree with all the words said by the speaker rather it is a style of speech in which Molana is trying to convince people to set an agenda of the ideology that Molana claims. Therefore, he repeats the second time: Pakistan's people have given their decision [3] and [6]. He has a clear understanding of what he says as he instantly uses a Repair Tool to fix his statement and tells the people that the court is so honorable [7]. The reason behind using such a statement is to avoid any legal action in the future from the court for speaking against it. In row [8], he shows sympathy with the court. That is another strategy to win the hearts of the public. Those who have real respect for the court in their hearts will believe that Molana is their real well-wisher. Moreover, if people have no trust in the judiciary, they will start making their decisions themselves and there will be huge violence in the society. Molana is strategically repairing his speech and making spontaneous adjustments. Repair and adjustments are known as functions of language.

Part [9] presents a higher level of showing political power as someone may interpret the judges will be removed from their posts, or some other judges will take their places. Moreover, he repeats the word 'dignity' several times to make an adjustment in his speech. This context can be linked back to the word building [2] that it is a court's building and the people [6] who support the judges of the court are still kept hidden. While commenting on the dignity of the court, he tries to develop its relationship with the public. That means the common public may not have a negative opinion about the court as it can cause several other consequences. Molana uses an authoritative tone as he has the authority to bring dignity back. Several other questions appear, i.e., did the court really lose its dignity or it is Molina's statement to set an agenda and persuade the people? He compares the Supreme Court with parliament and asks the judges not to disrespect the parliament [10]. This comparison shows that he tries to create a clash between these two mentioned entities. He uses the word 'chairs' pragmatically which means the posts on which judges are present. Without knowing the context, people might think both places are opposite to each other. The sentence [11] is expressed in a contextual way where hammers mean the 'hammer of judges. Judges do have a hammer but political leaders do not really

have he used ‘a hammer’ for himself as an icon of power and tried to present himself as stronger than judges. If we deeply look into it, he strategically used his statement. It is a conditional sentence, that starts with ‘if’, i.e., if you disrespect us then it will happen. That may mean, they will neither disrespect nor it will happen. However, the stress patterns used in this statement were so strong that he is threatening them.

Molana challenged the opponents to come to the ground and know their worth [12]. Though there is no competition in the ground he says these words because of the support of people. At the same time, Molana used two strategies. i) challenged the opponent and through language use, he presented them as less worthy than him; or their ideology less worthy than that of his. And, he did that by presenting him as stronger than him. The challenging tone encourages the people to believe that their ideology is right and they are on the winners’ side. It is the public’s behavior that the majority follows the more powerful side. Those political leaders who show themselves as a weak member of society, people immediately leave them. ii) he delivered a clear message to the opponents that he has got public power and he is quite confident about it.

5.0 Discussion

The purpose of the study was to find out the discursive strategies (Othman, 2024) used by Molana Fazl u Rehman in his speech, and how the specific use of language helps the political leaders make the people believe about a certain ideology (Yapp, 2024). The findings reveal that Molana used linguistic strategies in his speech to set an agenda in the minds of people. He remained careful in his words, for instance, he spoke against the court later he corrected himself making an adjustment or repair. CDA researchers have also used a term circumlocution for the same phenomenon that is: politicians are able to avoid the obvious and save face (Obeng, 1997). These politicians are also able to make irrelevant additions and thus to elaborate in detail their own group’s beneficial action and horror stories about their enemies (Van Dijk, 2000).

Molana maintained phonological patterns in his speech by adding stress patterns to specific words that he considered important to be mapped on the minds of audience. He further repeated those words twice or thrice to add extra stress. His speech remained interactive as the audience kept on chanting and calling “Nar e Takbeer – Allah u Akbar”. Through the use of religious slogan or shouting, he presented himself as if he were on the right path and the party against him is on the wrong side because such slogans are commonly used in wars from Muslim side (Hussain, 2024). The blaming strategy in his speech was dominant. He blamed each possible member that was against his ideology. This is how political leaders set an agenda in the minds of people by telling positive things about themselves and negative about the people. The role of religious quotes has been explained in research published in an Indonesian Journal and the study was conducted by Al-Nussairi (2024). Throughout his speech, it seems Molana is in some fear as he tries to establish the link between him and people on the different occasions to make them realize as if he were the real well-wisher for them. This might be because he was not sure whether people are going to believe in his ideologies and agenda. Molana has used rich vocabulary, the syntax of Urdu was of advanced level. It shows he has a high command on Urdu language therefore, he uses it as a tool effectively and his followers are influenced by him.

The analysis further reveals that Molana used metaphorical language and creativity was also part of his speech. According to Van Dijk (2014), creativity is a part of any successful political speech. Intertextuality was also found in his speech as he kept on connecting one idea to another with the help of creating links between text. Though in start, he used ambiguous language but later he started to reveal what he meant earlier and for whom he used those contextual words. The intertextuality can be observed when he talks about some decisions, then moves on explaining who has been making these decisions and how people took over the responsibility to make those decisions now. Then he talks about the dignity of court and links it with the justice system of Islam to make the people realize that the current system is not according to Islamic teachings. Meanwhile, one of his workers raised a slogan ‘not accept your decision’ and people are forced to repeat the same words while shouting. That is another strategy to fit something on people’s minds because when something is uttered from tongue, it becomes part of brain. According to Dahlin & Watkins (2000), repetition help in memorizing. When a political ideology is to be disseminated, people are encouraged to utter those agendas themselves to have them in their minds.

Reference is known as a strategy where political pronouns are used to signal roles (such as agency) and for self-reference and identity (Van Dijk, 2000). In case of his opponent Imran Khan, we observe that he uses ‘I’

quite often in his speeches but Molana uses 'we' in order to show a mutual power. He might mean the collaboration of all political parties who joined him or to make the people believe that they are also the part of their agenda. Molana remained in an attacking mode in his speech. First, he used blaming strategies against his opponents and later invited them to come in the ground and have a competition of knowing worth.

6.0 Conclusion

Politics is used as a force to drive the people and language plays a vital role to change the minds of people by setting a new ideology (Calignano & Nilsen, 2024). Political leaders use specific linguistic items and common people are not aware of those strategies therefore, they easily are trapped by the communicators (Yulianti, Sukmarini & Rizal, 2024). Critical Discourse Analysts may help the society through their research work that how they are being controlled by the politicians. Having one's own thoughts and following one blindly either he is right or wrong these are two different concepts. The public that is aware of the linguistic and discursive strategies may be able to see the political moves rationally. This study would be helpful to create such awareness and it would also give a road map for the further researches.

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