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“A STUDY OF RHETORICAL ELEMENT AND POLITICAL PERSUASION IN TRUMP'S SPEECH AT UNGA 74TH SESSION: A POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS”

**Dr. Masroor Sibtain¹, Muhammad Zammad Aslam², Zia-ur-Rehman³,
Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Qasim⁴**

¹Government College of Science, Multan, Pakistan

²Universiti Utara Malaysia

³Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Pakistan

⁴GC University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The present research pertains to political discourse analysis that seeks to explore the political persuasion strategies employed by political leaders in their speeches. The persuasive strategies employed by Donald Trump in his speech delivered at the United Nations General Assembly 74th session provide primary data for this qualitative study. The study critically analyzes the ways to project political ideologies through the propagation of self-presentation and political persuasion. Political leaders make use of rhetorical fallacies, more specifically, the pretentious use of language to garner support from the masses and so is the case reflected by Trump's speech. As a world leader, due to enormous political power wielded by the US, the speech under reference provides valuable insights into the ways how language is linked with power. The present study employed the political discourse analysis (PDA) model proposed van Dijk and Dunmire. It is a descriptive study that Employs purposively sampling technique to figure out the elements of political ideology contained by the speech. The analysis of discursive elements shows that Trump's speech under reference is well-rooted in the US political ideology of declaring non-aligned countries as threats to international peace and US allies as partners to peace. This self-proclaimed positive self-presentation and negative others-presentation are employed politically, transforming the perception and political views of people.

1. Introduction

Language is one significant means to acquire power and politics, as a

struggle to get governance and power, has assumed more considerable significance for discourse analysis. Political speeches and rhetorical skills employed by political figures provide insightful study (Sibtain et al., 2020) into the ways how speakers exploit language choices both socially and politically often to gain this power (Aazam et al., 2019).

In addition to this, language prepares political action, accompanies it, and affects it (Kazemian&Hashemi, 2014, p. 1178; Wodak, 2011; Sajjad et al., 2018), so the political speakers consciously focus on deliberate persuasion (Baig et al., 2019) to convey the specific political meanings. Political discourse, with its peculiar persuasive features, conveys meaning quite distinctly from other modes of expression (Sibtain et al., 2020). The strong historical tradition of oratory in the US offers the researchers to identify various strategies orators that are often found to be using to manipulate language to their specific meanings, i.e., to color others' perception of political trends, policies, actions (Ko, 2015). They seem to exploit expertise in political engineering (Beha, 2019) to persuade the audience to political realities. Furthermore, they use the language with utmost care to indicate the right moment for the audience to break into spontaneous applause, to ponder over the delivered messages.

In the same vein of projecting an ideology (Sajjad et al., 2018, p. 200), Trump's possesses the potentiality of meanings conveyed to the nations of the world. Trump gets the advantage of the situation that prevailed in the region on behalf of India, Iran, Pakistan, and so many other countries. He is cognizant of the situation and occasion and tries to clarify his position regarding his role in building a constructive or destructive relationship among the nations and various geographical regions of the world. As president of the US and holding enormous political powers in the international arena, he can play a vital role concerning the establishment of world peace and the subsequent betterment of the people at large. As a leader of the top world power, he tries to make the world realize that Americans can rule and guide the world in a better way and a better manner. Whatever he argues can be interpreted and deconstructed well though linguistic analysis of his speech, which may highlight the perspectives of the goals he wants to achieve.

The present analysis of Trump's speech exposes many aspects, most specifically on pretentiousness in deliberate pursuance. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) model from van Dijk (1997) and Dunmire (2012) have been employed as an analytical framework to carry out the present study. As Trump's speech falls under political discourse, and the language used in such discourse carries its specific importance, special attention has always been given to such a language phenomenon (Sharififar&Rahimi, 2015). The notion that language and political discourse are intertwined intimately with each other has been investigated to bring to light the assumed relationship empirically through discursive choices.

As Trump's speech in UNGA 74th session is subjected to analysis, it shows the element of pretentiousness as one of the marked features of his rhetoric, and this aspect may be viewed as a dual personality of the speaker. Although he also tries to become a hero and tries to prove himself a well-wisher for the nations that are considered underdeveloped or developing communities owing to their

backwardness in most of the fields of life, yet he seems helpless to back up the endeavor because of the role that the US plays which seems distinctive from Trump's character.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the present study is adapted and modified from Dunmire (2012). Discourse, as such, is a significant term with various definitions which arranges a whole palette of meanings (Titscher et al., 2000; Anwar et al., 2015), it, further, oscillates between linguistics, sociology, and other disciplines. van Dijk's (1993, p. 3) defines discourse as text in context, and this view leads one us a step ahead, for instance, to maintain that language use by an individual comprises data that is liable for empiric analysis (see Titscher et al., 2000), discourse analysis focuses on highlighting how discourse assumes the shape of action as well as a process. From this, it seems that "discourse" is a broader term when compared with "text": The term discourse refers to the whole process of social interaction, and a text would be considered just a part of it" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24). In the same way, one comes to realize that language in discourse possesses the element of power that plays a pivotal role in the daily routine life and marking different ideologies of the social actors. Whether they are laymen or leading actors such as politicians or other representatives of society, language does convey a specific meaning through contexts of use, and such meaning is construed well by the respective audience without fail with the help of discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis can further be perceived as an ideological analysis (Sajjad et al., 2018) because ideologies are typical, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced within discourse communication including non-verbal semiotic messages, such as pictures, photographs, and movies" (van Dijk, 1995, p.17). Henceforth, his approach for analyzing ideologies consists of three parts, namely social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis. Whereas social analysis pertains to examining the overall social structures (the context), the discourse analysis is simply text-based analysis involving syntax, lexicon, local semantics, topics, and schematic structures. In this sense, his approach consists of two traditional approaches in media education: interpretative (text-based) and social tradition (context-based), into the one analytical framework for analyzing media discourse.

According to van Dijk (1997, p. 6 awaz), there occurs a close alignment of the critical study of political discourse analysis with the discourse analytic approach of CDA. The alignment of PDA and CDA assumes that political discourse ought to be continued through a critical lens, and CDA is, at its depth, a political earnest and conscientious activity. In his argumentation for an extensive critical reading of the label PDA, he asserts that this area of research should be understood as girding the analysis of political discourse and a political approach to discourse analysis.

2.1 Political Discourse Analysis and Persuasion

'Persuasion' is a specific technique that political leaders utilize to gain the intention of the audience and make them believe in doing something according to

the speaker's will (Alghamdi & Rand, 2019). Therefore, the speech of 'Trump' may be perceived as a political speech and it falls under the range of PDA. In the PDA perspective, it becomes essential to understand the nature of PDA, as what the objectives of PDA study are, and how it can tell someone about the discourse and practice of politics. According to Wodak and Cillia (2006, p.

713), politics and politics are key issues having research on language and politics. So far as politics is concerned, it is understood as the area of the polity that consists of the political actions and practices of professional politicians, the institutions which are considered formal, and it involves populace who take part actively in the political process. It is also commonly considered that political practices seek power and acts of mutual support in the advancement of a society or group's goals (Chilton, 2004; Chilton and Schaffner 2002; van Dijk, 1997). It can also be viewed as the way through which social players maintain, create, keep going, and resist stance of power, claims of legitimation, and the same things (Chilton, 2004). However, the function of politics takes place at the micro and macro levels of society. Society is considered as the level of the reflection of thought, action, and reaction. The people living in a society interact with each other in different situations, and new perceptions are created on different topics concerning daily life issues. These issues may be simple or complex, comprising new angles of thought, and the ideas generated through such interactions may be perceived as political discourse having political purposes. When micro-politics occurs between individuals, gender, and social groups, it aims to persuade, argument, threat, bribe, and so many other things as well. However, the macro-level of politics deals with the conflicts between and within political organizations and appears in lawful criteria, exemplary exercises, and democratic conditions (Chilton, 2004).

Although, perception of politics and political discourse is supported as the limited field, and, that, the analysis should focus on discourse produced by the central actors in the politics (van Dijk, 1997; Fairclough, 2006, p. 33), while others think the range of politics as a specific thing. Still, they think that it is a social-based subject (Fairclough, 2006, p. 33). The language that is used in daily life is filtered through expressions from the politics organized in the institutions (Wodak and Ceillia, 2006; Wodak, 2011).

Any kind of discourse is considered political, as it serves as a place of struggle, and it has semantic form creating meanings, or it is challenged (van Dijk, 1997). This idea shows that every day human beings are involved in reciprocity, and the same reciprocities are known as political discourses because every conversation held between or among the individuals or groups has its purposes. So, to get advantages in daily life, discourse can be converted into political form. Regarding the idea of politics, Lemke (1995) asserts that comprehension of politics and political discourse deals with the acts of meanings as political acts and for texts as the ground on which such acts appear. Hence, it can be said that meaning derived from the discourse, has vital importance because if there is no meaning in a text, it cannot be called discourse. Therefore, political discourse, in its targeted aims seems to have, always, meaningful interactions.

Fairclough (2006) considers the political domain as consisting comparatively of solid institutionalized forms and exercises of the politically

organized unit (p. 33). Whereas Joseph (2010) stresses that political functioning must be consolidated according to the situations, and generally, it should be perceived as a matter of connection. It may rightly be maintained that in modern times, it was Orwell (1946) who pioneered the idea of the political perspective of language (Lederer, 2013). It can be seen in his classical article "Politics and the English Language," where he seeks to highlight the ways how language may be used to the projection of a particular thought and further suggests, for example, that "political speech and writing may be the defense of indefensible at a large scale. His examples, as such, are types of reverted logic (reflected in literary detail his book *Nineteen Eighty-four*), and they are reproduced through much of the present work on political discourse (Lederer, 2013, para.2). Examples include the use of "pacifism" to give reference to the attack of unsecured villages, or the use of "validity" to refer to the resettlement or merely the removal of thousands of farmers from their homes. He was concerned with a general downfall in the use of English, and politicians had a central responsibility for this decline. They have a general idea for the formation of what Americans call "fog" or the British "political jargon" (Neaman and Silver, 1990; Al-faki & Abdul, 2014).

Hence, the general principle here is one of the integral parts of the transformation. Similar, words and phrases may appear to be re/interpreted within different ideological and political frameworks. To be linked directly to this process is the concept of "representation." Representation refers to the issue of language usage that is how it is employed in different ways to represent what one can know, belief, and probably think. There are two views of representation: the universal and the relativist (Montgomery, 1992). The universal view assumes that the world can be understood concerning a set of universal conceptual known principles. Language, in this view, simply depicts these universal odds. So, it can be interpreted that language may be the tool for expressing one's system of thought, and this system seems to be independent of the language itself. The relativist position observes language and thought as an inseparably intertwined object.

The understanding of the world in relativist background is affected by available linguistics resources. Moreover, it is also observed in a natural environment that someone has to do what s/he wants from the others, and in this way, the belief of the people can be gotten (ibid) Hence, a person becomes able to see the world in the way most favorable for his goals, and he, just, needs to manipulate, or, at least, pay attention to the linguistic limits of forms of representation while the relativist nature of representation in language has been accepted by many analysts. In other words, the experiences of the world are not given to the readers directly but are mediated through language. It is also assumed that a politically controlled presentation is not generally positive. Fairclough's (1998) view of critical linguistics/discourse, for example, political discourse, is criticized that it is a form of social practice with a malign social purpose (Wodak, 2011). The alternative goal is "a discourse which has no underlying instrumental goals for any participant but is genuinely undertaken in a cooperative spirit to arrive at understanding and common ground" (ibid).

3. Research Methodology

The analytical framework for the present study is adapted from van Dijk (1997), Dunmire (2012) and Sibtain et al. (2020) to understand the features of political discourse Trump's speech at the UNGA where a congress of the leaders across the globe took place. It is a qualitative study that employs a descriptive approach to explore the meanings of political speech through language choices and elements such as devices used to generate political persuasions. Moreover, the present study is exploratory research that aims at identifying the conscious efforts and strategies for self-representation on the part of the US president. The textual excerpts from the original speech available with the official website of the Whitehouse constitute the primary data for the present work. The salient features of political discourse were selected through purposive sampling technique after transcription; a rigorous analysis has been carried out.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The political victory of Donald Trump is viewed by political scientists as a shift in populist politics and the beginning of Americanism. The hegemonic stance taken by the incumbent US leadership has been noticed from time to time by all and sundry. The world at large has seen that the present regime in the US has resorted to a political route hitherto unknown to the American population. On the one hand, America wishes to limit her role in international disputes like Afghanistan, but on the other hand, it asserts its powerful and domineering role in the world as the sole superpower. Such two-pronged motives and initiatives in its policy are providing an opportunity to countries like China and India to fill the vacuum created by the US disinclination to lead the world. Trump, in his speech to UNGA, ridicules the UN calling the spent period in it 'a drama' when he argues that 'this hall sees seventy years of playfulness and dramatic art' (L. 12, p.1). This remark depicts the power of a super nation, Americans, who always considered the UN as a puppet in their hands. Moreover, he distinguishes the negative people from the good ones when he argues that the revolution could be brought by the best leaders and saints who arouse a hope for them. Then he mentions the people who have been proved as rebellious, causing Americans' motivation and inspiration (L. 15, p.1). So far as Americans are concerned, they play a vital role in limiting the part of the UN by the power they have, being a superpower in the world.

Trump praises his nation's determination to be peaceful, arguing as he gives preference to freedom, sovereignty, and the government that is made (L. 2, p.2). He also makes the world realize how his government spends trillion dollars on building his army powerful. Further, he tries to convince the nations that his army would never use its power against any other country (L. 4, p.2).

Nevertheless, his statement, mentioned above, seems against the realities that have always been proved right to the rest of the world in the form of attacks on the developing nations. Everywhere in the world, American governments have always manipulated the rights of the poorer countries in the name of terrorism. It still gets the advantage of its power of supremacy all over the world. For instance, it attacked Iraq in 1991 and Afghanistan after 9/11, respectively, to wipe terrorism and terrorists but could not get any benefit except assassination of its opponents and selling its ammunition.

The word 'hopefully' (L. 4, p.2) manifests the intentions of Trump against anyone who dares to raise his voice against America. It seems Trump knows the situation of the world and can guess what may happen with him and America in the future due to his aggressive rhetoric may also be considered a fear in his mind.

According to him, America possesses richness in traditions and customs that make it a remarkable state to be wealthy, powerful, and passionate (L. 6, p.2). In this statement, Trump tries to be a nationalist and patriot while other leaders and nations seem to be wielding less power as compared to his because he considers others just terrorists and harmful things; that is why he repeatedly stresses the progress and safety of his own country. The speech contains emotional fallacies to take the world leaders on board to support the US politically in its moves to eliminate terrorism from the world the way it has been doing even without involving the UN which he calls a theatre or hall having a small role to play as compared to the actions taken so far by the US. Thus, anti-globalization seems to be the rising sum and substance for him due to his frequent reference to American patriotism when he argues that 'globalists would be pushed back in the coming times. However, only the patriots who possess the sense of caring and respect for their nations and knowing the following factors would survive' (L. 17, p.2). The use of lexical items such as 'globalists', 'patriots,' progressive factors' and 'survive' has the political orientation as these words may shift the meaning for Americans and non- Americans. In the idea, as mentioned earlier, it can be perceived fully that every country saves its own identity by itself. However, the facts show that the anti-globalism movement or idea can never be succeeded because, now, it is the age of a powerful communal system that connects the whole world in every aspect, whether it is a social life, technical field, the mechanical or economic field.

When Trump argues about the power and building of his army, he seems to depend on others, which negates his idea of anti-globalization. On the one hand, he explains that he intends to build unmatched military and invoke awe among the coalition partners. Still, on the other side, he makes them realize that they must pay their share to lessen the defense burden, which has been born by the united states in the previous years (L. 4-5, p.3).

The question arises as to how to assign the role for being responsible for this said burden. History proves that it has been the superpower USA after the fall of the former USSR that put the strain on the other countries by attacking the lands known as terrorist states. In the absence of no balance of power among the nations, there would be extremism to get just rights, and to gain equality, the marginalized people may go for wars as a last resort, and that becomes even more destructive to everyone in the world. So he does realize the fact that no single nation can survive alone when he says that 'their target needs balanced trade that would be based on honesty and mutuality'(L. 12, p.3).In his statements, he uses duel posture to show his intentions about the future when he dislikes globalism, but at the same time, he raises his hands of friendship to others.

There seems 'Irony' in his speech when he argues that the US does not have any dispute with any other state, but they wish to have calmness, alliance, and bilateral relations (L.1, p.5). Moreover, at the same time, he tries to shrink for the just benefits and interests of his country, as he says, he will always save and care

for America's benefits (L. 2, p.5).

Furthermore, in his speech, he condemns Iran regarding its policies, which he perceives threats to the security of the nation that loves peace. He declares Iran as a terrorist state when he comments that death and havoc exist because of Iran and Iran's leaders who are raising deadly wars in Syria and Yemen (L. 5, p.5). He projects himself as a pacifist and maligns his political rival Iran as sabotaging his efforts for world peace. His speech, on the one hand, shows that America is going to mind its own business, and on the other hand, he shows his disposition to get involved in another conflict in the Middle East.

He tries to convince the world nations that no nation should favor or support the blood-lust nature of Iran's government. Moreover, he threatens and declares that Iran would be banned, economically, until it ends its annoyance attitude because, according to Trump, Iran's leaders do not give attention to public welfare but pursue personal power and wealth (L. 16-19, p.5). Despite the ground realities, Trump just blames Iran, not his partners or himself, in de-shaping the states.

He declares Iran as an extremist country considering that there exists anti-Judaism in Iran's community, especially in leaders. He warns them by quoting Iran's Supreme Leader's statement in which he says that Iran possesses enmity against Israel, considering it a deadly cancerous neoplasm. Moreover, it should be destroyed from the earth: this action seems to have the possibility of occurrence, and it would occur. However, America would never bear such an act consisting of anti-Judaism hate (L. 21-25, p.5).

The ideology, as mentioned earlier, may depict the discrimination-policy of the American president as he ignores the cruel steps and actions of Israel against Palestine and the merciless massacre of Muslims in the world at large. Wherever they are, even the minorities

of different communities are suffering many issues on the earth, but no one cares for it. This diplomacy cannot inspire any nation that has reservations regarding its liberty and fundamental human rights that have been suppressed by powerful nations. There can be no peace in any part of the world until there persists an imperialistic mindset on the part of world political and economic powers, and the same can rightly be termed as the most significant hindrance for nations to seek justice. A powerful country always tries to dominate and rule over the weak country to get political and trade advantages from there, as it can be seen in under-developed countries like Iraq, Palestine, and Afghanistan, where the masses only chaos and destruction at the hand of world powers instead of the prosperity which they earlier promised to bring after the change of regime. This attitude of the world cannot be justified at any term because the depressed and suppressed communities possess the ability, efficiency, and power to snatch their fundamental rights from the suppressor. The backwardness of such nations in every field of life pushes them on the back foot, and they cannot compete with the developed nations; that is why the powerful countries get an undue advantage when they rule and try to lead them. Trump employs the phrase 'illegal migration' that seems to him a substantially problematic issue for him, and he argues that illegal migration can never be considered fair, safe, and favorable for the countries that make their people move to other countries and the countries that receive these

immigrants (L.23, p.6). However, this statement of Trump ignores the ground realities that may go against his self-proclaimed ideology of peace, calm, and prosperity because he seems to violate the international rules of cooperation. Whatever he says about his policies about his own country and other nations as well, can be seen everywhere in the world. The whole world knows that America, without any solid proof, attacks Iraq in 1991 to wipe out the so-called 'weapon of mass destruction' reported to be possessed by former US ally Saddam Hussain, and then next in Afghanistan in 2001, to uproot terrorism to take the revenge of the 9/11 incident.

Hence, when some nation is suppressed by the storm of brutality and persecution, most of the people try to migrate to safer places. Still, the receiving countries consider them illegal immigrants. Also, these immigrants do not get proper survival or safety of their lives, but they are killed or prosecuted. In his speech, Trump also indicates the life of such people, when he argues that immigrants are victimized, murdered, and misused (L. 27, p.6). Although terrorism leaves grave marks on a common man and whole society, yet no one can be held single-handedly responsible for it.

Somehow, Trump offers to welcome the innovative migrants to his country, when he argues that they want every nation in their region to flourish and its people to thrive in freedom and peace (L.30, p.7). If this statement manifests costiveness on the one hand, then there arises a fair question of why he does not allow the migrants to his state whether they want legal or illegal entry due to unsuitable conditions in their countries where their governments do not reach such talent or do not appreciate them.

Conclusion

Political discourse analysis provides particular insights into language use under the dictates of political or social ideologies. The ideologies under reference constitute a significant point of departure in discourse analysis concerning public speeches. The tradition of making public speech concerning the US is very well established, and speeches made by various American presidents are subject of great interest among linguists and political thinkers. The speeches are patterned in such a way that analysts can identify the schemata through various language choices and rhetorical or persuasive modes employed by a speaker. Trump's speech contains various elements that point to typical American political ideology and policy matters. The speech under reference reveals fully Trumps' dual policy, where it wants to continue with its hegemonic role in the world but with a different mode other than the previous regimes. It seems to minimize the role of the UN and instead involve like-minded countries as decision-makers. The defense and elaboration provided by him raise various concerns among the people of the world, especially those where direct US involvement has been witnessed in the recent past. Be it Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria or Iran, and subsequent refugee crisis in the world calls for a reappraisal of the US policy. The refugees who suffer a lot in these counties due to the US policies in the international political maneuvering look at the content of his speech as a case of pretentiousness and political persuasion to legitimize its past action. He also adopts a discriminative policy favoring the powerful nations and ignoring the weak states. Most of the

immigrants belong to the states which suffer the US attacks with its allies and their support. Therefore, people move to America or the nearest borders, but there they are pushed back, murdered, or manipulated in every term. So, it remains a question who would take responsibility for peace and economic growth in the world.

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