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## Imran Khan's Maiden Speech: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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### Abstract

Critical discourse analysis is useful to analyse political addresses comprising of the communal dialogue where the orator earns the desired reaction from her/his audience. The manuscript studies Imran Khan's prime minister speech primarily through transitivity and modality, where we realise how semantics and syntax serve the thought as well as authority. Besides, we get an enhanced appreciation of the political resolve concerning the speech. The analysis tries to define the implication of the ideology of Khan's words for a country which was disturbed by severe economic, political, and social crises. For the present study, qualitative methodology for critical discourse analysis has been employed. The results of the study disclosed that Khan desired to show that Pakistan is not without leadership. It is a vivid fact that Khan's speech had both practical and theoretical inferences and through Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics aforesaid implications through text analysis surfaced.

**Key Words:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Imran Khan, Maiden Speech, Modality, Semantic Investigation, Transitivity

### Introduction

Critical linguistics, also known as CDA, is the study of the investigation of speech. It analysis the methods by which societal power exploitation, domination and discrimination are reproduced and disobeyed at various social and governmental levels through dialogues and transcripts. Critical discourse analysts openly challenge this and their main concern is to acknowledge, spread and disclose social equality. Critical ([Dijk, 1985](#)). An Australian linguist, Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday, proposed a globally important model termed Systemic Functional Grammar. The entity of CDA is communal dialogue, such as announcements, newsprints, administrative indoctrinations, formal papers, commandments and policies and a few others. Its purpose is to discover the association

between language, thought, and authority. In previous times, CDA has advanced speedily abroad and has accomplished pronounced successes. A huge sum of researchers has made their input in the subjects of analytical investigation of governmental address. We see new articles about CDA emerge in educational papers more often now. In speeches or interviews of political leaders, constituents like vocabulary and phraseology are always of great consideration for applied linguists and similarly for critical discourse analysts. A large proportion of work is found in speeches of various political or non-political leaders of diverse countries. [Kazemian and Hashemi \(2014\)](#) opine, "power is signified, for example, by rhetorical and grammatical forms within a text or a text's genre". It emphasises the

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requirement for analysing the language used by influential/important public figures critically.

Khan is one of the political leaders of Pakistan and he is famous for his perception, brainpower, and resolve. Especially with his rhetoric skills, he is reasonably famous among the common masses and his eloquence is never bereft of organization and significance. The present study aims to uncover masked conceptual denotation from the present text of Khan's maiden speech which was delivered on national television. Policy depends significantly on language and there is a convincing relationship between language and political interest, so it is difficult to detach them.

We see that every five years, the majority of Pakistanis appreciate the splendour of selecting a newly elected Prime Minister. The people campaign for their favourite contenders eagerly. Furthermore, all candidates use their rich language jargon, passionate dialogues and unstinting approaches to attempt to gain more votes. The scholarship of political talks has not just fascinated political researchers and historians but also got the notice of linguists. In 2018, Imran Khan, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Prime Minister in Pakistani history, caught the attention of the world. To study the composing structure of the first speech given by Khan, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar is utilized with respect to the triple meta-functions. The interrelations among thought, language and influence are discovered and the manners in which Khan made use of his speech to influence the audience and inculcates his strategies in the minds of the public are disclosed.

### Theoretical Footings

Discourse has widespread horizons having a range of numerous layers of definitions. [Van Dijk's \(1977: 3\)](#) notion of speech is to interpret the contextual setup of the script. Discourse could be understood as the verbal countenance of self-being. Discourses are generally utilised for forming knowledge and power, for training, and for the evolution and progression of fresh knowledge and power relationships. One can opine that "discourse" is a broader word than text: *"I shall use the term discourse to refer to the whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part"* ([Fairclough](#)

[1989, 24](#)). CDA is important for illuminating, deducing, and construing the social life's image within the text (Luke 1997). [Van Dijk \(1988\)](#) is of the understanding that the CDA is related to the analysis of words articulated and text written to expose the foundations of power, sovereignty, discrimination, and prejudice, and these ways and sources are initiated, prolonged, reiterated, replicated, and altered as far as some obvious historical contexts are concerned. O' Halloran (2003) visions CDA as an area of linguistics that completely explores and recognizes the meanings of spoken and written discourse in the cultural and ideological sense. For [Fairclough and Wodak \(1977: 271-280\)](#), CDA focuses on the issues which are social. They say that the CDA observes: the discursiveness of the power relations; discourse as creating the ideology of culture historically in which the link between society and text is also interwoven. CDA is also expounding and explanatory, and discourse is an arrangement and variety of societal action. Multiple linguists have written multiple critiques on discourse analysis. For instance, Huang Guowen wrote *An Outline of Discourse Analysis* in 1988. Zhu Yongsheng wrote *Reflections on Systemic-functional Linguistics* in 2001. Hu Zhuanglin highlights that discourse can be studied through the lens of language function and its use in *On the Cohesion and Coherence of Texts* in 1994. Three meta-functions are reliable for discourse analysis ([Huang Guowen, 2001](#)).

### Methodology

Several methods and techniques are used for studies such as CDA with Systemic Functional Linguistics ([Kamalu and Agangan, 2011](#); [Wang, 2010](#)) CDA ([David & Dumanig, 2011](#); [Harvaith, 2011](#); [Adetunji, 2006](#); [Boyd, 2009](#)) Political Linguistics, [Pu \(2007\)](#) and also the specification prototype of [Van Leeuwen \(2009\)](#). The focus of all these studies was the problems of prejudice and identity and ideological conflict. However, some studies also conversed political issues. Quantitative and qualitative methods are normally used for conducting research. The distinction between both methods is essentially the difference between numerical and non-numerical data. This study follows the qualitative research method. Strauss and

Corbin (1990) are of the view that this approach offers prospects to identify any notion and experience about something which is less or the least known. This overt practice is also used to accomplish new insights and meanings of already identified evidence that is harder to study and discover quantitatively.

## Data Collection

Despite the fact, there are different versions of Khan's speech available on the websites, however, the data are collected from the government publications produced publicly in 2018 and can be taken as the most authentic source. It has its own historical implications and values. Considering it is a government publication, the same script was picked for undertaking CDA.

## Discussion: Data Study Method

The current research used a content analysis approach for the qualitative analysis of data. This method is preferred because it permits a particular explanation of the situation of the discourse data point over the regular arrangement development of coding and finding ideas and forms. Systemic Functional Grammar has twofold constituents: Systemic Grammar and Functional Grammar. The twofold constituents of Systemic Functional Grammar are two intimate segments for the vital basis of the linguistic system.

Systemic grammar aims to explain the internal relations in language as a system network or meaning potential. And this network consists of subsystems from which language users make choices. Functional grammar aims to reveal that language is a means of social interaction, based on the position that the language system and the forms that make it up are inescapably determined by the uses or functions which they serve. (Zhuanglin, 1988).

According to Halliday, Stylistic analysis can be done on the basis of three methods i.e., investigation, explanation and estimation. The endless day-to-day roles can be simplified into an array of enormously mentioned and impalpable roles such as meta-functions. Meta-function is innate and inherent in all languages.

## Ideational Function

The principal role Halliday mentions is the ideational function. It is through this role that the orator or author symbolizes in language his familiarity with the wonders of the material realm; and this incorporates his involvement of the inner sphere of his personal realization: his rejoinders, understandings, and acuties, and similarly his philological actions of dialogue and understanding (Halliday, 2006). Erstwhile, this role is to transport innovative news, to transfer a substance that is mysterious to the listener. It replicates the occurrences and practices in both detached and particular domains.

The ideational function encompasses "voice" and "transitivity". A Chinese linguist, Hu Zhuanglin, indicates that the ideational function also comprehends the structural understanding along with the determining of possible options available in meaning (Zhuanglin, 1988). For example, in the sentence *Kinza flies a kite*, *Kinza* is the Actor, the Goal is a *Kite* and the course is Material. The process, Goal, Actor and subsections show our comprehension and understanding of the occurrences. The sentences are grammatically arranged in the ideational experience. The vivid structural part of this arrangement is a clause, which indicates the happening, the completion of an action, the state, the experience, and so on (Yumin, 2007). Six practices are included in the transitivity system. The material process is practised when something is being completed. These practices are expressed by an action verb (for example, irritate, bounce, annoy), an Actor (Valid subject) and the Goal (A valid direct object which is usually a noun or a pronoun) (Zhuanglin, 1988) e.g., *Amna is bouncing a ball*. Mental processes are the ones that give rise to mental sensations such as "reaction" (like, please), "perception" (perceive, gaze) and "cognition" (prove, recognize). A mental process consists of dual contributors i.e., Sensor and Phenomenon (Zhuanglin, 1988) e.g., *Mariyam enjoys tea*.

The Relational processes are divided into two categories i.e., Attribution and Identifying. The first state determines the characteristics and attributes that an object possesses. For example, *The fever is high*. The second state refers to the identical

properties of two articles. For example, *Laila is an adolescent. The adolescent is Laila* (Zhuanglin, 1988). Verbal practices are the practices in which the evidence switches. Acclaim, state, say, dialogue, define, and brag are the verbs usually used in these processes. The main contributors to these practices are the receiver, say, and verbiage. The behavioural process indicates an emotional and physical activity such as gaping, weeping, panting, visualizing, coughing etc. Only a single individual is involved in this process normally who is called the Behaver. This type of process assimilates with the mental process. And when the Behavioural process comprises two participants, it is considered a material process. For example, *His Daddy hit the naughty boy* (Zhuanglin, 1988). The last process is the existential process which indicates the action that takes place and evolves.

For a specimen,

*There is a girl in the garden.*

*Do ghosts exist on earth?*

*Here comes a bus.*

## Interpersonal Function

Language functions as interactive. Halliday perceived, the orator is exploiting language as the ways of his particular incursion into the discourse occurrence: the countenance of his explanations, approaches and appraisals, and similarly of the connection that he arranges between himself and the hearer – precisely, the interaction position that he assumes of updating, inquiring, welcoming, encouraging, and the like (Halliday, 2006). Hu Zhuanglin (1988:313) argues: "The interpersonal function embodies all uses of language to express social and personal relations. This includes the various ways the speaker enters a speech situation and performs a speech act."

The two key characteristics that are used to prompt an interactive role are mood and modality. Mood portrays the character that the speaker utilizes in his language and how he deals with the receiver. If the spokesman is someone who adheres to being dominant, he would choose a domineering mood and wants the receiver to follow his instructions. For example, *Pass them the manuscript* (Zhuanglin, 1988).

Modality is a midway between two extreme choices i.e., intense constructive and intense unconstructive. It is the most important arrangement in any societal contract. It does not only show the speaker's concerns for the subject but also creates a balance and expresses the measures of conventionalism and authority correlation.

## Textual Function

Halliday defined, "Language makes links between itself and the situation; and discourse becomes possible because the speaker or writer can produce a text and the listener or reader can recognize one" (Halliday, 2006). Agreeing with Hu Zhuanglin,

The textual function refers to the fact that language has mechanisms to make any stretch of spoken or written discourse into a coherent and unified text and make a living passage different from a random list of sentences. Although two sentences may have exactly the same ideational and interpersonal functions, they may be different in terms of textual coherence. (1988: 315)

The textual function offers the lasting components of connotation perspective to be knitted into the material of grammatical arrangement. Evidence can be evidently uttered in a speech. It can similarly be associated between the lines. Thus, each discourse is a unit of an obvious and implied message. (Halliday, 2006) Exclusive of the textual factor of connotation, we should be incapable of making any utilisation of language (Zhuanglin, 1988).

## Overview of the Model Speech

The newly elected Pakistani Prime Minister, Imran Khan, gave his maiden speech on 19 August 2018 giving a comprehensive, onscreen speech in which he pronounced reforms aiming at corruption and concentrating on human development in the quickly growing country. According to the official reports, following the PM's address, the hashtag #PMIAddress became the world's top trend on Twitter. PM Khan talked to the nation for more than an hour, recapping several of his electioneer guarantees to make an Islamic welfare state but similarly touching on matters seldom stated by

Pakistani prime ministers such as to combat child sex abuse and climate change. The recorded address that spanned well over an hour was unlike any other. Over the past years, Pakistan has witnessed similar and notorious speeches but that of Imran's seemed very extempore, extremely detailed and focused on topics never before addressed by any Pakistani leader.

### Detailed Reading of the Model Speech

We can have a broad interpretation of the speech from table 1. We can perceive the complete words

of the sample are 4748, comprising 217 sentences. We see that the language is easygoing and conversational. In order to curtail the space between the prime minister and the audience, we uncover Khan used simple language. Moreover, the focus of the speech is widespread, which is not on the excuse of one or two specific matters. That is because the political speeches especially of the prime minister frequently echo the political policies of the contender, so the arena is huge, such as Pakistani chronicle, contemporary predicaments, international problems and so on.

**Table 1.** Statistics of Model Speech

Numerical Detail	Digit
Words	4748
Sentences	217
Paragraphs	1
Characters (no spaces)	22578
Characters (with spaces)	27334

### Transitivity Study

It is an elementary semantic arrangement, which sees the domain of understanding as a controllable

arrangement of practice categories. Halliday divides these practices into six processes.

**Table 2.** Summary of Process Categories (Peng Pingping, 2007)

Process types	Central connotation	Contributors
Material	'Undertaking', 'proceeding'	Performer, Objective
Mental	'Distinguishing'	Device, occurrence
Relational	'Being'	
Verbal	'Speaking'	Sayer, Receptionist, Verbosity
Behavioural	'Performing'	Behavior
Existential	'Prevailing'	Extant

*Here, I will mainly analyse material, relational, and mental processes.*

### Material Process

The material process is related to an action, a course of "doing". In this process, a verb is involved

that voices an actual or a theoretic deed. Normally, the two main contributors used in the method are the Actor and the Goal. Usually, noun phrases are included in them.

**Table 4.** Transitivity Investigation of Model Speech (Material Process)

Actor	Manner	Goal
I	Make, demand, recognize	Call, aid
We/Pakistanis/all/our	Realize, started, acquire, face, distribute, use, meet, transformed, send, care	Capital, the trials, modification, belief, schools, threats, resources

Through table (Table 4), we can perceive the Actors of the model speech are I and we/Pakistanis/all/ours. Material process, as a course of performance, is a suitable selection in the discourse to validate what the regime is undertaking and what they will prepare in diverse facets of matters, domestic or abroad. Besides, it can similarly stir the Pakistani folks' assurance concerning the prime minister and his administration and acquire their help in strategies or actions in the subsequent five years. For instance,

We will have to change our thinking. We will have to invoke kindness in our hearts as half of our population cannot even get two times' meals... You all will be my team; I will fight against these things, I will not live in PM's house but in these two the 3 bedroom Military Secretary's House. Will use 2 servants and 2 vehicles two on account of security considerations.

### Relational Process

The relational process is a practice of "being". The Attributive relation is associated with the properties and characteristics that an entity possesses. The identifying relation is used for identifying and determining things and individuals.

Relational process, as an activity of actuality, is fitting to explicate the composite associations amongst various intangible things as it sounds certain. As an outcome, the procedure explains an enormous part of the speech to elaborate on the connection between conventional standards and principles. Such an explanation can grasp the Prime Minister's purpose of making the thought logically and automatically acknowledged and crafting the essential expense in the discourse eagerly acquired by the spectators. (Yumin, 2007)

### Mental Process

It characterizes innermost involvement, such as "perception", "reaction" and "cognition". We name the dual contributors as Senser and phenomenon.

So the first speech for a recently designated Pakistani Prime Minister is obligatory to realize the conventionally and officially essential purposes: to state shreds of evidence of the local or international conditions or difficulties empirically and the related

strategies convincingly, to handle rationale linked to the association between conventional views such as autonomy, egalitarianism, impartiality, fairness, moralities, unification, pleasure and Pakistani visions and people' input, accountabilities, sacrifice and the desirable reorganizations in the budget, Medicare, or supplementary arenas (Yumin, 2007).

The above sentences are specimens displaying the information that the condition in Pakistan is not wholesome. Thus, let us call a new attitude of nationalism, of duty, where every individual is determined to work harder and look after each other. These instances expose that the regime expects the Pakistanis can unite and restore their poise and thinks to conquest all the corrupt things.

### Modality Study

Modality denotes a presenter's approach or belief concerning the reality of an intention uttered by a sentence. Equated with supplementary verbs, modal verbs are simply acknowledged and comprehended and afterwards believed for at the phase of attending to the discourses, there is hardly any time for the audience to replicate.

### Tense

Halliday (1994) argues that the primary tense means past, present, or future at the instant of speaking, it is the period in relation to "now".

Table 5. Tense of Sentences

Total Number	Simple Present	Simple Past	Simple Future
217	65	30	25

If we look at the use of tenses in speech, we comprehend that the most widely used tense is the simple present sentence. Then comes the simple past tense and then the simple future tense. The simple present tense is more likely to address because it connects things with the current and present times such as internal and external circumstances, government and social conditions etc. This builds strong and close links between a prime minister and his audience who is more likely to accept and encourage people to agree to his proclamations.

The possibility of things happening in the future or having the intention to do them is expressed in the simple future tense. The prime minister uses the future tense to address the consequences or outcomes of the steps taken under his tense or their rule in the future. It revealed the goals and purposes of the government and the hope of a successful future is developed in the minds of the audience. The authority looks forward to Pakistani citizens that they will obey the rules and directions in the upcoming five years. Similarly, the speaker's aim of getting encouragement is seen. Simple past tense is used to indicate the things that happened in the past. An example of this would be a recently elected prime minister who usually points out his accomplishments in the making of the country in the past or the hurdles he faced as a foundation for his coming programs. Through this method, his esteem for the past will make his programs rational and influencing (Yumi, 2007)

### Personal Pronouns

We can comprehend that the first person is utilized maximum. For instance, the exercise of the first-person pronoun "we" is to restrict the gap between the speechmaker and the audience, heedlessly of their inequality in age, communal standing, and careers, it might encompass both the orator and the hearer into the similar field, and so create empathy between the audience and the speaker and his notions.

### Textual Study

Khan's opening speech for him is to offer a formal speech as a prime minister and correspondingly a supreme stage to prove him as a gifted prime minister. To realize the commitment of coaxing the Pakistani citizens and the entire world that he and his crew are competent for power, with robustness and with visualization, he desires to enlighten the people with his strategic diplomacies, both inside and outside, in an appropriate, swaying, and energetic style. It repeatedly contains the ensuing suggestion: (Yumin, 2007)

- 1) Welcoming
- 2) The manifestation of appreciation and honour

- 3) An evaluation of the Pakistani past and accomplishments in the former years
- 4) An investigation of the current condition, at the domestic level and in the world
- 5) An exhibition and elucidation of internal strategies and/or external plans of the latest regime
- 6) Optimism for the affluent forthcoming times of the country
- 7) Seeking help from God for support and benediction

The entire discourse is clear, prepared, perfect, and reasonable. Therefore, it can aid to influence the community to consent to and help in his plans. We discover the convincing holy matter in his discourse.

We see most Pakistani people are believers in Islam. These invocations, either by direct or indirect verses from Quran and the Islamic references can encourage the orator to achieve concern and support of the audience. They construct the discourse complete with the appeal.

### Conclusion

On the base of the above argument, we can summarise the descriptions of Imran Khan's speech as follows. Initially, he utilised unpretentious texts and brief sentences rather than hard ones. His dialect is easygoing and conversational. Consequently, it would effortlessly reduce the remoteness of the audience. Next, from the transitivity study, we can perceive material activity, a course of performance has been utilised in a major part of his speech. Through the mentioned method, Khan exhibited to us what they undertake and what they intend to prepare. Besides we can appreciate that by using transitivity, his speech is trying to stir the Pakistani publics' self-assurance concerning the prime minister and his management in the subsequent span of five years. Third, modality denotes a speaker's approaches to or belief concerning the certainty of a plan articulated by a sentence. Through the investigation of modality, we can discover that Khan prepared his audience more simply to appreciate and acknowledge his political speech by means of modal verbs, tense and first-person pronouns. He utilised simple present tense to explain the local and global circumstances

extending from administrative, monetary and social arenas at contemporary times. Furthermore, dependent on the simple future tense, he put forward his succeeding restructurings and strategies made in his tenure. Through this, the purposes of the government are revealed while simultaneously, the audience's poise is developed. Besides, by exploiting first-person pronouns and sacred beliefs, he effectively reduced the void between his audience and himself. So, it can benefit him to coax the community at large to take and encourage his strategies. Analysing political speeches, Schäffner (1996) suggests that political discourses reveal political acts that are associated with these activities. CDA can discover the associations between language, creed, and authority. It offers an innovative notion and process to analyse communal discourses. Therefore, it is appealing for us to pay more consideration. Sticking to his promise, Khan touched on key points in his very first address and

also talked about serious issues like human development, human rights, global warming, poverty, health, education, animal rights, foreign policy, water conservation, Zakat, justice, expenses, taxes and finance amongst others. Not only was Khan convincing but his confident and somewhat informal tone gave the indication that he was not addressing as a Prime Minister but rather as a common person concerned for the welfare of his country. Following Khan's historic address, political analysts, showbiz stars and common people alike all praised him and also prayed that the chief would deliver what he promised. Such was the impact of Khan's address that people around the world were talking about it as evident from Twitter's trend. Whilst Imran was speaking, the hashtag [#PMIKAddress](#) became the world's top trend on Twitter.



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