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Article Title

Stylistic Analysis of Islamophobic Features in Selected Speeches of Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Imran Khan

Abstract

Stylistics comprises semantic, syntactic, and lexical analysis. Following the method of analysis outlined by Fairclough (1993), this study provides a theoretical analysis of former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Islamophobia-focused speeches in his speeches to the Organization of Islamic Conference and UN General Assembly. Through this analysis, the study aims to reveal the underlying reasons for Prime Minister Imran Khan's comments revealing his concerns about the Islamophobic tendencies of non-Muslims. It not only researches language content but also identifies supporting ideas for target speakers. Concerns about Islamophobia were most convincingly expressed through the narrative of the Pakistani president, who used rhetorical devices to announce his position around the world.

Keywords: Stylistics, Analytical Techniques, Islamophobia, PM Imran Khan, U.N.G.A., Figurative Language, Semantic Features, Persuasive Elements.

Authors:

Noor Ul Ain: (Corresponding Author)
Lecturer, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.
(Email: noorulainy1@gmail.com)

Sehrish Ayaz: M.Phil Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

Muhammad Anwar Farooq: Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

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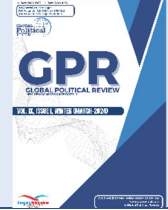
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Stylistic Analysis of Islamophobic Features in Selected Speeches of Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr.Imran Khan

Abstract

Stylistics refers to semantic, syntactic, and lexical analysis. Following the method of analysis outlined by Fairclough (1993), this study provides a theoretical analysis of former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Islamophobia-focused speeches in his speeches to the Organization of Islamic Conference and UN General Assembly. Through this analysis, the study aims to reveal the underlying reasons for Prime Minister Imran Khan's comments revealing his concerns about the Islamophobic tendencies of non-Muslims. It not only researches language content but also identifies supporting ideas for target speakers. Concerns about Islamophobia were most convincingly expressed through the narrative of the Pakistani president, who used rhetorical devices to announce his position around the world.

Contents

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Noor Ul Ainn: (Corresponding Author) Lecturer, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. (Email: noorulainy1@gmail.com)

Sehrish Ayaz: M.Phil Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

Introduction

Language is a complex tool that supports speech and enables speakers to express their thoughts in a variety of contexts. It plays a multifaceted role in a country's socio-cultural and emotional aspects. The field of stylistics provides analytical methods to reveal the underlying processes expressed in words. This article adopts the content of Fairclough (1993) to conduct a qualitative investigation of Prime Minister Imran Khan's oration on Islamophobia at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Stylistics and Figurative Language

As Qian (2006) explains, stylistics examines the use of different languages to describe social groups and individual identities. This method verifies the communication change. Fairclough (1993) emphasizes the importance of analyzing metaphors and discovering the meaning, purpose, and emotion in speech. This study scrutinizes various elements of figurative language, such as simile, metaphor, anthropomorphism, metonymy, paradox, exaggeration, understatement, and synecdoche, evident in the selected speech.

Semantics

Semantics, pivotal for understanding linguistic meaning, encompasses ontologies, lexical semantics, grammaticalization semantics, semantic role labeling, relational semantic analysis, reference resolution, and semantic logic. This study delves into these semantic dimensions to elucidate the conveyed meanings.

Lexical Level

Examining grammatical and lexical aspects, this study identifies distinctive features in legal texts, highlighting archaic expressions and legal terminology. Understanding these lexical nuances is crucial for political discourse analysis.

Language in Politics

Language in politics serves diverse social functions, enabling the communication of ideas, thoughts, and opinions. Politicians strategically wield language to influence and persuade, enhancing their authority and credibility.

Islamophobia

Kaya (2015) posits Islamophobia's historical roots, shaping Muslim identity as the "historical other," reflecting modern anxieties. Vakil (2010) suggests the emergence of "Islamophobia" as a response to contemporary realities, sparking debates on its definition and implications. Western Orientalist scholarship perpetuates medieval perceptions of Islam, casting doubt on its compatibility with modernity and democracy (Lim, Dollah, & Rahman, 2021). This study explores Islamophobia's historical and psychological foundations, examining its institutionalization through anti-Muslim legislation. Orientalist scholarship in the West has played a role in perpetuating the perception of Islam in its medieval form, asserting the incompatibility of Islam, modernity, and democracy (Lim, Dollah, & Rahman, 2021). Over time, Islamophobia has evolved from a political concept to a subject of social science analysis, sparking debates on its definition and implications. This study delves into the historical and psychological roots of Islamophobia, exploring its institutionalization through anti-Muslim legislation in various countries.

The objective of this paper is to undertake a stylistic analysis of Imran Khan's Islamophobic remarks delivered during his speech to UNGA, a pivotal moment as he assumed the role of Pakistan's 22nd Prime Minister. Recognizing the profound impact of his oratory, the strategic implications of Imran Khan's statements are expected to be diverse. On September 25, 2020, during the 75th session of the UNGA, he spoke for approximately 25 minutes, covering topics such as "Islamophobia," the Coronavirus outbreak, climate change, and regional harmony. Notably, Imran Khan delved deeper into the issue of Islamophobia in this speech, discussing it around the 11-minute mark and establishing a connection between Islamophobia and the Palestinian crisis.

One manifestation of Islamophobia is antisemitism, which becomes particularly harmful when entrenched in governmental and judicial structures leading to unfair discrimination against Muslims in the guise of national security (Katz, 2018). Politicians have exploited the unfounded fear of terrorism to justify egregious violations of civil and human rights. Islamophobia reaches an alarming level when government actions, often in the form of anti-Muslim legislation, legitimize anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim attitudes among the general public. For instance, in 2009, the French government made the decision to criminalize the covering of the face or head as part of a "national identity campaign" aimed at protecting a non-Muslim, non-immigrant French identity. Nicolas Sarkozy, in his inauguration speech, described the burqa as a "walking coffin" that is "not wanted" in France (Vandenbelt, 2021).

Background

According to Widdowson's (2007) perspective, communication inherently involves attempts to exert control, express one's position, and persuade others to adopt it. The act of speaking or writing aims to persuade the audience or reader to feel, think, or behave in a particular manner (Widdowson, 2007, p.67). Similarly, (2017) emphasizes that politics involves the use of power to make decisions, manage resources, influence behavior, and at times, shape values. Holman (2008) highlights the ability of words to use images for effects, explaining through analogy, finding similarities or differences, and gaining strength and freshness of expression, collectively constituting figurative language.

The significance of the selected speech by the

Pakistani Prime Minister transcends mere political discourse, positioning him as a prominent voice among global Muslim leaders. The virtual address at the UNGA garnered substantial attention, surpassing even the address by then-USA President Donald Trump, earning the title of "the most-watched video among world leaders". While the Muslim community praised the speech, criticism from media platforms in India for its boldness prompted a shift towards scholarly readings (Hindustan Times, 2021).

In response to this critical analysis, a recent linguistic study employed the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) model to delve into the transitivity process in the political speech delivered by the Prime Minister (Halliday, 1995). Sipra's study (2013) titled "Analyzing Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream' Speech": Connecting, Persuading, and Advocating" meticulously scrutinized Martin Luther King's renowned expression, "I Have a Dream." This investigation focused on King's language communicative strategies employed to foster connections and persuade the audience.

Analyzing the stylistic elements of a globally broadcasted speech provides researchers with a nuanced understanding of its meanings, considering that stylistic analysis captures the dynamic continuity of communicative behavior (Lomax et al., 1977). Stylistics, evolving to encompass various discourses, has become adaptable and useful in recent years (Simpson, 2004). Leech and Short (2007) assert that the purpose of stylistics is to explain how language and creative expression operate, extending to genre studies aimed at identifying the creative ideas guiding an author's decisions. Stylistics, straddling linguistics and literary criticism, serves as a mediator, influenced by one's perspective (Widdowson, 1975; Munir, 2014).

Beyond linguistic analysis, the discourse extends to the global issue of Islamophobia, marked by prejudice and discrimination against Muslims. Controversial policies, such as the 'Muslim ban' during Trump's presidency, coupled with the rise of far-right political rhetoric in Europe, have fueled acts of violence against Muslims (S. F. Z. A. Shah, 2018). The lack of a legal definition for this discrimination led to the popularization of the term "Islamophobia," encompassing macro-level prejudice, social exclusion, and hate crimes, including micro-aggressions (Ali, 2017).

Post-Brexit, hate crimes against Muslims surged in the UK, with incidents increasing after terrorist attacks (Abbas, 2019). The elevation of radical right-wing stirs in Europe, coupled with negative attitudes toward Muslims, necessitates psychological investigations into the implications of Islamophobia. The study acknowledges the racialization of marginalized groups, focusing primarily on Muslims' experiences (Abbas, 2019).

Research on the impact of Islamophobia reveals its link to psychological distress symptoms, influencing self-esteem, and prompting behavioral changes following hate crimes (N. Shah, Shah, & Pasha-Zaidi, 2021). Instances of anti-Muslim prejudice are evident globally, from Canada to Australia and New Zealand, emphasizing the need for comprehensive research in the digital age (Lim, Dollah, 2021).

Prejudice, unfortunately, seems ingrained in human nature, often arising from a lack of awareness. Islamophobia, a manifestation of bias, persists due to limited knowledge or misunderstanding of Islam. Educators play a vital role in dispelling misconceptions by providing accurate information on Islam's history and nature, crucial for fostering tolerance and understanding (Loyd & Gaither, 2018; Ali, 2017). If educational efforts fall short, reversing negative views toward any religion becomes an arduous task later in life.

Problem Statement

Language stands as a unique and potent instrument unparalleled by any other. It serves as a medium for mental expression, and individuals employ diverse communication techniques to garner support. Journalists and businesspeople, in particular, harness the power of persuasion and bombastic rhetoric, enhancing their ability to convey messages effectively. Figures of speech, such as similes, metaphors, and personification, are intricately woven into language to elevate its aesthetic appeal. The field of stylistics delves into the examination of how these specific linguistic devices are employed in speeches and various forms of writing. This study aims to scrutinize and analyze the language choices made by former PM Imran Khan, specifically in his oration to the UNGA on 27th September 2020.

Significance of Research

Intellectuals in political science and economics have considerably researched persuasion, investigating

how advertising and political strategies influence individuals to modify their beliefs and behaviors. Political campaigns employ diverse channels, such as tailored messages, canvassing measures, and approvals by public figures, to influence voters' opinions on parties, candidates, or policy positions. Mobilizing backing for a campaign is inherently challenging, demanding effectual communication and targeted outreach. This study illustrates political strategies to ensure votes, highlighting the importance of determining the truth behind political rhetoric. Promoting national unity and solidarity is critical, provoking individuals to communicate dedication responsibly in their discourse, thus contributing positively to politics, culture, and society.

The study advocates for a thoughtful choice of words, emphasizing their impact on shaping a constructive societal image.

Research Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the current study:

1. To identify the literary techniques employed by Imran Khan in addressing the subject of Islamophobia.
2. To analyze the aesthetic impact of these literary techniques on conveying messages related to Islamophobia in Imran Khan's discourse.
3. To explore the effectiveness of Imran Khan's use of literary techniques in shaping public perceptions and attitudes towards Islamophobia.
4. To provide suggestions and recommendations for leveraging literary techniques effectively in addressing Islamophobia, based on the analysis of Imran Khan's discourse.

Research Questions

On the basis of above mentioned objectives following research questions have been framed to be answered with support of analysis-based findings:

1. What specific literary techniques does Imran Khan utilize in discussing Islamophobia?
2. How do these literary techniques contribute to the aesthetic appeal of Imran Khan's discourse on Islamophobia?
3. In what ways do Imran Khan's literary techniques influence public understanding

and responses to Islamophobia?
4. 4. What suggestions can be derived from Imran Khan's use of literary techniques to combat Islamophobia effectively?
5. How can recommendations based on Imran Khan's discourse contribute to the development of strategies for addressing Islamophobia in broader contexts?

Methodology of Research

Descriptive qualitative research, as delineated by Isaac and Michael (1981), strives to present an accurate and factual depiction of the realities and characteristics concerning particular populations or areas of interest. In the scope of this research, our focus is on methodologically exploring the literary techniques utilized by Imran Khan in addressing Islamophobia during his speeches at the OIC and UNGA.

Employing a qualitative approach, this study delves into the content of Mr. Imran Khan's speeches at OIC and UNGA, scrutinizing his linguistic choices and stylistic nuances. The lexical analysis aims to decode the specific words and phrases chosen by Khan, unraveling the subtleties within his language. In the meantime, analysis of the syntax explores sentence structure and its impact on the intended delivery of messages. In addition, semantic analysis focuses on the underlying context and embedded content of selected words and sentences.

Using multiple qualitative analyses, this study aims to better understand Imran Khan's speech strategies during his speech at the Organization of Islamic Conference and the United Nations General Assembly in 2020. A carefully researched study seeks to reveal intent, persuasion, and nuances in the Prime Minister's speech on Islamophobia

Lexical Analysis

Analysis of word choice in Imran Khan's oration at the UNGA reveals that certain words and expressions were intentionally chosen at various levels of language use, including idioms, phrases, and adverbs. Speakers often choose such words to connect with their audience. For example, in his speech at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Imran Khan said, "Our Prophet PBUH was given the title in our holy book as a mercy for mankind," and shared useful information using simple words.

Likewise, in the UNGA speech, Khan used expressions like "Hijaab is seen as a weapon," including common words such as "freedom, hate, fight, brave, insulted, blamed, curfew, dream," among others. This sentence may sound old, but it made the Prime Minister's message available to the masses and conveyed it to the masses.

At a higher level, written language is associated with formal speech or is often found in official documents. In his speech, Khan used "impunity, wilful provocations, incitement, resilient coalition, subjugating, discriminatory laws, victimized, marginalized," apart from the rest. These words served the speaker's purpose by creating an atmosphere that emphasized Muslims' soundness in the face of the suppressing sensation of Islamophobia.

The phenomenon of violence, called "A scourge that divides humanity", is an atmosphere that shows that Muslims are getting stronger against Islamophobia. Here the word 'scourge' is often associated with the instrument of punishment or whipping and is used as a symbol to express argument or disagreement that becomes the main point of the discussion. This choice of words adds depth to the conversation, creating a powerful and emotional parsing of Islamophobia.

Syntactical Analysis

The syntactical analysis utilizes the concept of periodic sentences. Temporary sentences are sentences that are biased, do not reveal their meaning until the end, and aim to attract attention and emphasize the main point. For example, the Prime minister used it in the following sense. He said, "This is unprecedented in history and does not augur well for the future of India as we all know that marginalization of human beings leads to radicalization."

Through this rhetorical device, the speaker aims to strengthen the UN's long-standing complaint against India's alleged war crimes.

Another syntactical device, namely parallelism, serves to underscore the purpose of the speech. For instance, the Premier asserted, "We believe the driving force in international relations must be cooperation, in accordance with principles of international law, and not confrontation and force." This deliberate use of parallel structure draws attention to the core message, emphasizing the importance of cooperation over confrontation in international relations.

In a specific instance during the speech, Imran Khan employed personification by stating, "The worst and the most pervasive form of Islamophobia now rules India." Here, Islamophobia is portrayed as an abstract noun with the quality of ruling, akin to kings over kingdoms. This use of personification vividly conveys the speaker's perspective on the severity and dominance of Islamophobia in India.

Furthermore, Khan used personification again when he declared, "No religion teaches violence," endowing religion with the attribute of teaching, much like a teacher imparts knowledge. This rhetorical technique serves to emphasize the peaceful nature of religions and counter the notion that any particular religion advocates violence.

Semantic Analysis

The article begins by examining semantic features within a given context, with a particular focus on the prevalent use of euphemisms in speech. Euphemism is defined as the "substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend" (Zheng, 2014). It is often employed strategically to soften the impact of intense or unrestrained facts. In the selected speech, there are illustrations where Khan deliberately chooses words to convey his message without causing offense. For instance, the Prime Minister refers to Islamophobia as a "scourge that splits humanity," using the term "scourge" to symbolize oppression. This choice of words portrays Islamophobia as an unjust act perpetrated by the West against the Muslims.

Another example is when the premier discusses India's RSS-led fascist strategies, issuing a warning of potential retaliation from Pakistan. He states that any aggression against Pakistan will be met by a nation fighting for its freedom. This serves as a euphemistic expression, veiling the severity of the consequences while conveying a strong message. The speech also addresses India's military actions against Pakistan in a nuclearized strategic environment, using euphemisms to caution against potential nuclear conflict.

During Khan's speeches at OIC and UNGA, he employs anaphora by repeating phrases at the beginning of his statements. For instance, he refers to powerful communities as "powerful crooks" and oppressed communities as "poor crooks." This

rhetorical technique emphasizes his points and creates a memorable impact.

The analysis at the semantic level reveals the use of metaphors in the text or speech, with the Oxford English Dictionary defining metaphor as a trope applied "to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable." Khan effectively utilizes metaphors, such as describing Palestine as a 'festering wound' for the Muslims. This metaphor vividly portrays Palestine as a neglected and infected situation, akin to wound-producing pus, providing a powerful illustration of the Israeli occupation's impact. While metaphors are not abundant in the speech, their strategic use enhances the overall impact of Khan's message.

Conclusion

To conclude the discussion, it can easily be said that this article offers a good investigation of the Islamophobic features of Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech at the UNGA and the OIC. The speech was not only useful due to its political and strategic importance but was also attended and admired around the world. PM Imran Khan supported his speech with many rhetorical devices. Detailed stylistic analysis at the level of lexical, syntactic, and semantic features shows the significance of speech.

Concerns about Islamophobia were most convincingly expressed through the narrative that Pakistan's president used rhetoric to make his position known around the world. The study of language is about media culture. It shows the interest of citizens who are encouraged by the Premium of the country to promote Islam among their people.

One should give importance to Islam rather than one's preferences. Islam should be social and cultural and contribute to the development of the country. Muslims must be loyal and show respect and love for Islam. The speech made by Imran Khan is also political because this speech also shows his political mindset.

Recommendations

The role of language in supporting and fostering nationwide unity, love, and corruption in other forms of discourse politics, such as politicians' addresses and sermons needs to be explored. It also allows conversation analysts to examine the role of language in performing critical analysis. It is suggested that researchers conduct content analysis and literature review to scrutinize the functioning of language as a tool and medium to spread and promote love, solidarity, and lawlessness.

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