

## THE ROLE OF DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES IN CONSTRUCTING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MARYAM NAWAZ SHARIF'S INAUGURAL SPEECH

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Critical discourse analysis, patriarchy, familial metaphors, inclusivity, identity, unity and political legitimacy.

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### Abstract

Political speeches are central to shaping public discourse, as they motivate people toward collective goals and serve as powerful tools of political communication. These speeches convey ideological meanings through distinct linguistic choices and strategic rhetorical devices, influencing public perception and social attitudes. It has been observed that a number of studies are available on the political speeches of different political leaders, but limited research has focused on the inaugural speech of the current Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, particularly in relation to her use of gendered metaphors and linguistic strategies to construct political legitimacy. Applying a qualitative approach, this study draws data from the official inaugural speech delivered by Maryam Nawaz. Thereby Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework under the umbrella term of critical discourse theory, the current study aims to focus on the inaugural speech of the current Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, particularly in relation to her use of discursive strategies to construct political legitimacy. The findings of the study show that Maryam Nawaz Sharif uses gendered familial metaphors like sister, mother and daughter to build political legitimacy through cultural familiarity and emotional connection. Furthermore, she employs reconciliatory tones, gratitude and unifying language to represent herself as a unifying political leader. Finally, the findings also reveals that her discourse challenges traditional gender norms by blending culturally accepted femininity with political strength, thereby reframing women's leadership in Pakistan.

### INTRODUCTION

Political speech delivered during the inauguration ceremony is an important aspect of the political system. Political speeches like other messages have purpose and power. These speeches can expose people's objectives and attitudes. Inaugural speech also serves a significant role and has a great impact as a political discourse. political speeches serve as an agenda by providing information about future goals and connected actions to the previous actions (Graber, 1981, p. 196) in Cheng (2006). Political speeches are conveyed to the large masses,

and they have great influence on the masses. Language plays an important role in communication, in addition it can also shape the speakers' image in the eyes of the message receivers (Manan, 2019, p. 55). Language is important in political speech, as language is used to organize, accompany, and operate all political activities. Language is part of all social actions. It may be categorized as political discourse, health discourse, family discourse and more, is the actual use of words in any field of social activities (Desale,

2021). In this sense, the inauguration speech or discourse is well-known and is typically categorized as a political speech or discourse delivered to an audience (Jegade, 2020). Politics has a strategic effect aimed at attaining and exercising power. It is maintained and achieved using language. Persuasive political discourse is considered as a good strategy for gaining and exercising power. Political discourse serves as a breeding space for the investigation of the relationship between power, ideology and politics, and is fashioned to suit the beliefs and opinions of the citizens in favor of political actors or governments (Fagunleka & Olorunsogo, 2022; Odebunmi & Oni, 2012). It is understood our words in language are not neutral McGregor's (2003, p. 7). Ideology, being an important element in political discourse, is reproduced and transferred through language in political speeches (Olorunsogo & Akinade, 2020, Renaldo, 2021: van Dijk, 2006). Elective executive members use inaugural speeches to perform persuasive functions (Biria & Mohammadi, 2012; Olusola, 2020). Support from the citizens is galvanized in political speeches by justifying the legitimate process of attaining power. Maryam Nawaz sharif's inaugural speech is often marked by its passionate tone, focus on political accountability, rhetorical appeal and democracy. As a female political leader in Pakistan, she addresses issues like justice and role of women in society. Her speech highlights her role as a strong female voice in Pakistan's male dominant political landscape.

Using Norman Fairclough, a three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis, this analysis delves into the textual, discursive and social dimension of Maryam Nawaz inaugural speech. It is described as an attempt to interpret any text. It is used to investigate discourse as a social practical form (Eriyanto, 2006, p. 7). Textual dimension in critical discourse analysis describes the linguistic features, lexical choice's syntactic structure, and rhetorical strategies. Discursive dimension focuses on how her speech focuses on how her speech connects with other ideas, events or other texts to create meaning. Social dimensions describe the speech in the context of Pakistan. It reflects and

shapes the power dynamics, gender relations and ideological constructs.

This paper aims to examine Maryam Nawaz sharif's inaugural speech, emphasizing the language methods she employs to exert influence and persuade the Pakistani public. Moreover, this study aims to show how Maryam Nawaz sharif, through her inaugural address, challenges the established order and the wide political system. This study aims to examine how Maryam Nawaz sharif shows her vision and strategies for addressing her experiences to improve the Pakistani political system and its society. Moreover, the examination of Maryam Nawaz sharif's inaugural speech using critical discourse will serve as an appealing illustration of the impact of language in shaping public opinion as well as achieving social transformation.

#### **Problem statement:**

Political speeches play a significant role in shaping public discourse, motivating people toward collective goals, and functioning as powerful tools of political communication. These speeches carry ideological meanings, distinct linguistic choices, and strategic blends of clarity and sophistication that influence public perception. Despite this, limited research has focused on the inaugural speech of the current Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, particularly in relation to her use of gendered metaphors and linguistic strategies to construct political legitimacy. Thereby Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework under the umbrella term of critical discourse theory, the current study aims to focus on the inaugural speech of the current Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, particularly in relation to her use of discursive strategies to construct political legitimacy.

#### **Research objectives:**

1. To examine the linguistic strategies employed by Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her inaugural speech.
2. To explore the rhetorical devices used to construct political legitimacy.

3. To analyze the use of gendered metaphors in framing her leadership and connecting with the audience.

### Research questions:

1. What linguistic strategies are employed by Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her inaugural speech?
2. How do rhetorical devices contribute to constructing political legitimacy in her speech?
3. How are gendered metaphors used to frame her leadership and audience connection?

### Literature review:

Linguistic features and discourse strategies influence public perception and power dynamics. Critical analysis of Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural speech shows its role in challenging the U.S political establishment and how it affects the perception of the audience. Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2022). HIS language is strategy They argue that Trump's speech exemplifies the strategic use of language to sway public opinion and contest dominant narratives, highlighting the importance of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in understanding such manipulative discourse practices. Their study underscores how language shapes societal power structures and fosters social change, providing valuable insights into the interplay between political rhetoric and societal impact.

Linguistic features and discourse strategies influence public perception and power dynamics. Critical analysis of Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural speech shows its role in challenging the U.S political establishment and how it affects the perception of the audience. His language is strategic once, and it grasps the ideologies of people. It leads to contesting the dominant narratives highlighting the need of critical discourse analysis in understanding inspiring discourse practices. These studies show how language is used to shape social structures and how it causes changes in these social structures. This shows the interrelationship between linguistic strategies and societal impacts Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2022).

Nigerian governor's speeches study shows the intricate portrayal of ideologies in political

discourse, and it aligns with various themes such as power relations and ideological patterns. Studies of 25 inaugural speeches between 2014 and 2015, authors using Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis framework identify reoccurring ideologies such as idealistic, theistic, messianic, and democratic. These ideologies are seen as tools for the governors to establish and maintain their authority. These ideologies are also important to present governance principles and influence citizens' perceptions. The study highlights the role of linguistic strategies such as use of metaphors, consensus and polarization are important to protect these ideologies, these strategies then significantly contribute for the understanding of political communication in Nigeria.

To analyze political ideologies and power dynamics in political speeches, Critical discourse analysis (CDA) serves as a valuable tool for understanding them. In this study using Van Dijk's multidimensional critical discourse analysis, it is shown that how language is used to construct and maintain dominant ideologies (Van Dijk, 2008). Study on political discourse has emphasized the use of figure of speech, use of pronouns, lexical choices to foster unity and establish power dynamics authority (Fairclough, 1995). On the other hand, the broader level studies align with play a crucial role in organizing topics to align with broader ideological goals such as constructing unity and promoting democracy (Chilton, 2004). Studies of cognitive elements such as victimization and polarization have their ability to delineate and in-groups and out-groups, reinforcing collective identity (Wodak, 2015). Historical references such as the use of linguistic strategies in Abiy Ahmed's speech clarify how leaders use language to inspire and motivate people, Nigatu and Admassu (2024). This study reflects how critical discourse analysis is used to explore the linguistic strategies used by political leaders.

For the analysis of political rhetorics Joe Biden's speeches serve as a rich site, showcasing how language is used to assert power, communicate priorities and reflects ideologies (Pramadya & Rahmanhadi, 2024). Based on Fairclough's three-dimensional model, the study highlights speech as

a textual product, discourse practice and sociocultural practice. Biden's speech through the use linguistic strategies while highlighting the contemporary sociopolitical condition of America fostering unity and nationalism (Fairclough, 1992). Such speeches aim to legitimize authority and align with broader cultural narratives and ideologies (Chilton, 2004). Through a unifying discourse, Biden framing his beliefs and policy agenda which resonate with the continuity and societal change (Pramadya & Rahmanhadi, 2024). Studies highlight that Critical discourse analysis and Halliday systemic functional linguistics provide a nuanced analysis of Joe Biden's inaugural speech Zhou's (2024). The study focuses on macro and micro levels, focusing on the language strategies such modality, transitivity, subject verb agreement to uncover ideational, textual and interpersonal meta function. The study highlights that ideology and power are constructed by using linguistic strategies, illustrating concepts like "freedom" and "democracy and America's hegemonic role. It helps with deeper understanding of political discourse and its ideological impacts.

### Research methodology:

This research uses qualitative approach, using Critical Discourse as the primary method to analyze the text. Fairclough three-dimensional model will serve as the analytical framework to explore the text, discursive practice and social practice dimensions of speech.

### Theoretical Framework:

The study is foregrounded in Fairclough, a three-dimensional model of Critical discourse analysis, which involves:

### Textual analysis(description):

This step focuses on examining the speech's vocabulary, grammar, rhetorical devices, and other linguistic features. This dimension involves the complete description of linguistic choices in the text. This dimension analyzes the linguistic choices in terms of pronouns, metaphors and other linguistic patterns in the text. The aim of this dimension is to know how different linguistic choices are used to create meaning. The use of

certain linguistic features such as pronouns, metaphors and modal verbs in a specific text have underlying ideologies and power dynamics (Fairclough, 1992). The words used in the text represent specific themes, ideologies and power dynamics.

### Discursive practice (interpretation):

This discursive practice stage will analyze how the speech is produced, distributed, and consumed by various audiences, including how Maryam Nawaz constructs political identities and ideologies. This dimension involves the process of text production, distribution and reception. It guides how text is created, what the target audience is and what the purpose of the text is. This dimension also invokes interpretative practice in a text. Discursive practices also represent the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of different texts, portraying how different texts depend on other discourses to convey meaning (Fairclough, 1995).

### Social practice (explanation):

Social practice stage will place the speech within the broader larger socio-political context of Pakistan, analyzing how the discourse reflects and reinforces power structures and ideologies in the political discourse. This dimension connects the texts and discourse practices with broader social and cultural contexts. This dimension reflects the relationship between discourse, power, and ideologies. It shows how power and ideological practices shape discourse and how they are shaped in response in a particular context. This step is important for understanding how discourse affects existing social change or sustain the inequalities in a particular context Fairclough (1989).

### Data collection:

The study's primary data source is a translated version of Maryam Nawaz Sharif's inaugural speech as a chief minister of Punjab province, retrieved from YouTube. Additional speeches are also used for comparison or to deepen the analysis.

**Discussion /analysis (findings):****Textual Analysis:**

This step is used to examine the use of linguistic features in a text. These linguistic features include the use of different vocabulary, rhetorical devices, and grammar. This step shows the overall structure of the text. In the analysis of Maryam Nawaz speech, this step shows how she uses these linguistic features as a female political leader to create unity and construct political legitimacy in her inaugural speech. These metaphors construct her leadership rationally rooted in emotional connection and trust.

She uses familial metaphors like sister, daughter and mother. These familial metaphors are used to evoke trust, care, moral responsibility and trust. These metaphors make her speech as relational and authoritative. For example: as their sister and daughter I stand here, shows her commitment to serving every citizen of the province. Here, she associates herself with a caregiver traditional gender role. Male leaders do not use familial metaphors because they consider themselves as trustworthy and morally strong. Instead, they might use terms like servant and guardian emphasizing duty and responsibility over relational proximity. For example: I am here to serve every one of the provinces. She uses reconciliatory tones, for example my heart is open for everyone. she expresses gratitude repeatedly for example: (I humbly bow my head, I extend my heartfelt congratulations), it is culturally related for women for their humility. She uses a deliberate effect to be neutral and inclusive in her leadership. For example: I am not only the chief minister of those who voted for me. In her personal journey she acknowledges Nawaz sharif and Shehbaz sharif. This mix of individuality and gratitude allows her to maintain political alliance expressing her own identity. She also uses the inclusive 'we' for collective action. Women are generally considered as weak as compared to men. She also represents victory as a collective empowerment for example: this is a victory not just for me, but for every daughter, sister and woman in Pakistan. Pasing of my mother, and victimization of my father represent her resilience.

**Discursive practice stage:(text production, distribution and consumption)**

As a female political leader, she acknowledges the patriarchal barriers in her political journey. Her sentiment appears through her linguistic strategies and choices, such as it is the movement of immense pride for all Pakistani woman, daughter, mother and sister that today, for the first time, a female leader stands as a chief minister. Her tone is not antagonistic. Instead, focusing on moral authority and reconciliation. for example: it is human being's nature to take revenge, but I hold no such desire to take revenge against everyone. This shows contrast against stereotype of woman as overly emotional and vengeful.

She uses ideas and words related to emotions and family like sister, mother and daughter to relate to these cultural values. Use of these family roles in her speech, positioning herself as a leader to understand and care about everyone. These roles make her more respected and relatable. This approach makes her a leader who stands with her traditional familial values. It makes her position strong and makes her acceptance in the eyes of the audience. These family metaphors are also important to foster unity and moral connection with the audience for example: I am also the chief minister for those who did not (vote for me).

By becoming a powerful leader, she challenges traditional ideas. She does this in a way which does not upset old beliefs. she uses such roles which are acceptable, and people are comfortable with that in Pakistan. Without directly going against the traditional patriarchal norms, it provides a way to be seen as a strong political leader. On the other words, she makes her identity as a woman in a way that makes her leadership more acceptable, while still breaking the traditional value for women in politics. She continuously emphasizes inclusivity, for example: my government would work for all citizens regardless of the political association. It softens power dynamics, represents her as a unifying figure.

**Explanation stage:**

This stage explains how the speech reflects broader social and cultural dynamics of the context. Any text reflects social practices in any context. Text

has its roots in the cultural prospects of societies. Here, the speech is a text, and it reflects the more valuable elements in the context of Pakistan. For example, in the speech, the familial metaphors serve to humanize Maryam Nawaz as a female political leader. Though Pakistani society is patriarchal society, still it has more valuable roles in the form of mother, sister, and daughter. These metaphors align her leadership as a woman with the cultural expectation of the society. This approach legitimizes her leadership in a society where women leadership is often scrutinized. The opponent's acknowledgement in her speech, such as (thanks for their lesson these trials have taught me) demonstrates a reconciliatory and mature approach that counters the political hostility of traditional notion.

By using these familial metaphors, she universalizes her leadership, making it not only for herself, but broader representation of women potential in the context of Pakistan. Perception of women is reframed in politics through her speech, showing them as having strong and soft leadership qualities. She also expects the same narratives for the women in the future. Along with these familial metaphors, she also uses inclusivity for example: I am also the chief minister of those who did not (vote for me). It reflects the national unity in the polarized society. In the context of Pakistan, even though women take part in different activities like in this case politics still patriarchal society has its impact on women.

### Conclusion:

It is concluded that Maryam Nawaz Shari's speech represents a blend of themes such as political acumen and cultural awareness. This representation of blend of theme in her speech reflects her identity as a female political leader in the patriarchal society. By using strategies in her language, such as familial metaphors like sister, mother, and daughter, she deeply connects herself with the traditional cultural norms as well as positioning herself as a morally authoritative and passionate political leader. This strategy not only legitimizes her political identity, but also provides inclusivity and unity. This kind of approach is important in a polarized society like Pakistan.

Along with these rhetorical choices she uses in her speech, such as emphasizing on gratitude, neutrality, and reconciliation counter stereotype about women in politics, and it reflects her resilient and strength. By reflecting on her personal journey and familial metaphors, she connects herself with gratitude and enhancing her political alliances while maintaining her distinct identity. Her focus on inclusivity and collective empowerment reframes women position in politics. Finally, her speech serves as a narrative in transformative form, and it indirectly challenges the traditional norms. It provides a frame for women about their future. It also provides women a clue to be strong and passionate when they are facing difficulties in their path. This approach not only makes her culturally resonant but also a symbol of empowerment and progress in a society navigating the interaction of modernity and tradition.

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