



RESEARCH PAPER

Forensic Critical Analysis of Imran Khan's 2017-18 Defamation Case: A Critical Discourse Approach Using Fairclough's Model

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the linguistic features, power relations and ideology in defamation case filed against Imran Khan by Mir Shakeel-ur-Rehman in 2017-2018. It specifically explores linguistic characteristics, power dynamics, and ideological constructs in media-politics conflicts in Pakistan. Language has been a key point of legal and political struggle, in which discourse does not merely convey claims, but also establishes a power dynamic, ideological location, and institutional authority. Although research on political and legal discourse has increased globally, there is a notable gap of forensic linguistic studies focusing on defamation cases involving media-politics conflicts in Pakistan. The study uses Fairclough's three dimensional model, forensic linguistics and critical discourse. A mixed-method approach based on qualitative critical discourse analysis and quantitative frequency analysis of legal lexicons was adopted. The data consisted of the court issued notice titled "Legal notice for defamation under section 8 of defamation ordinance, 2002" and selected transcripts of Imran Khan's media briefings. Qualitative findings reveal that the legal notice contains formal dictative language to legitimize institutional authority and judicial power. Khan's counter narrative constructs him as a subjected political actor suffering from media and judicial winds of politics. Quantitative results demonstrate a high frequency of abstract legal nouns and evaluating terms reflecting ideological positioning and judicial power. The study recommends further forensic linguistic studies on political and legal discourse in Pakistan. It also highlights the importance of critical discourse analysis in understanding institutional dominance and contesting authority.

KEYWORDS Forensic Critical Discourse Analysis, Legal Discourse, Power and Ideology, Imran Khan, Defamation Case

Introduction

This analysis focuses on the critical discourse analysis of language used in the Imran Khan defamation ordinance(2002) case by applying Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. Imran Khan, former Prime Minister of Pakistan and chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), was brought to legal proceedings after making controversial remarks about the Chairman and Editor-in-chief Geo-Jhang group of media house during a media talk. Chairman of the Pakistan's largest media house (geo news) Mir Shakeel Rehman filed the case against Imran Khan after he made allegations on him and tried to defame his media house more than several times . The court order clearly announced that Imran Khan has violated the law, by using such allegations and accusations

against a renowned and well reputed person. This comes under the act of defamation ordinance(2002) .Furthermore, the legal notice states that some serious damages has been done to the reputation of the media house and Mir Shakeel Rehman, to compensate that Imran khan has to do a written and spoken apology along with One billion rupees as a token .The court gave Imran khan a time period of 14 days to respond on that ,otherwise he has to face the serious consequences .This case was filed in November 2017. After some trials Imran khan was given the period of 90 days to do the apology or face the consequences. However, Imran khan on the other hand used his strategical moves to preserve his public image and continuously tried to make adjournments to the case . Due to his continuous efforts , the case was postponed for five years . This time period was completed in 2022. At that time Imran khan was in the position of power and authority in government .He used his power to manipulate the defamation case , instead of doing apology he filed a case against Mir Shakeel Rehman for spreading false news and working under the foreign agenda to mislead the public. The whole case was twisted, the court asserted his powers through the legal notice by using such language and Imran khan on the other hand continuously tries to maintain his pubic and political image and shapes public perception by portraying himself as innocent and Mir Shakeel Rehman as the villain

The Fairclough CDA approach assumes that language is an inseparable part of social life, interconnected with other elements in social life, so that discourse analysis must also consider issues outside of language. Discourse as a social practice, according to Fairclough (1989), has three implications: (1) discourse cannot be separated from society, (2) discourse is a social process, and (3)discourse processes in accordance with what is being conditioned in society (Risdianto, Sumarlam, & Malihah, 2018).

Based on these implications, Fauzan (2015) concludes that linguistic phenomena are social, while social phenomena are also linguistics. Linguistics is social because linguistics cannot be separated from the influence of its social environment at all. Social conditions are also linguistic because language activities in a social context and are not only a form of expression or reflection of social processes and practices, but they are also part of the social process and practice. So this analysis focus on the social and textual interpretaion of the text within legal discourse . The study will examines the ideologies and power dynamics of the legal text and also it's influence in shaping the perception of the public. We will also examine the language strategies used by Imran khan to shape the people ideology as victim of the media and judicial biases. CDA characteristics, according to Fairclough (1989, 1995), are also supported by Van Dijk (1997, 2008), Fairclough and Wodak(1997), Eriyanto (2001), Badara (2012), and Sumarlam (2015) consisting of actions, contexts, historical, power and ideology.

The analysis utilizes Fairclough's CDA model , as it investigates language at three levels: textual analysis (examining vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices), discursive practice (how texts are produced, distributed, and interpreted), and social practice (the relationship between discourse and broader societal power structures). By using this model, the study seeks to uncover how both Imran Khan and the judiciary utilize language to assert authority, negotiate power relations, and influence public opinion.

Literature Review

It is well known how politics shapes language and speech practices. Political and legal language is essential in both public and institutional domains. In politics, authorities use linguistic tools to create ideological arguments. Words become means of power,

persuasion, and manipulation. Language and linguistics should also be used to protect society against false persuasion and social control. Similar goals drive language professionals when they study legal language. Speech practices are aimed at both introducing rules and legal procedures and manipulating voters.

Forensic linguistics, linguistics of law, language in the law, and legal discourse all research speech in legal institutions (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Tiersma, 1999). CDA studies language and relationships of dominance and reproduction (Fairclough, 1995). With this knowledge in mind, the present paper provides linguistic discourse analysis of a quote by a political leader.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Fairclough's Model

Norman Fairclough (1989, 1995) sees discourse as both socially conditioned and socially conditioning, reproducing and produced by social structures. There is ideology in discourse, and discourse is a major means of its reproduction. Critical discourse analysis supporters point out that language cannot be value-neutral (Fairclough, 1995).

Teun A. van Dijk (1997,2008) also saw language as a system of social representation. He stressed the cognitive side of discourse and showed how elites manipulate common knowledge with discourse. His studies proved how discourse can help dominant groups stay in power (van Dijk,2008).One of the many institutions that use discourse to create inequality is politics and law.

Fairclough's discourse analysis model is three-dimensional and comprises;

- **Textual Analysis (Description):** The provided information explains the usage of vocabulary, grammar, and other linguistic features of the text (Fairclough, 1989).
- **Discursive Practice (Interpretation):** concerns itself with the production and distribution of texts (Fairclough,1995).
- **Social Practice (Explanation):** Looks at the political and social context of discourse in general.

This model is best suitable for legal and political discourse analysis as it offers a framework for considering both linguistic and socio-political aspects of language use.

Legal Discourse and Forensic Linguistics

Legal discourse is a term that refers to the specialized use of language within the legal boundaries and contexts, including court judgments, legal notices, and legislative texts (Tiersma, 1999).It is characterized by formal vocabulary, complex sentence structures, passive voice, and the use of modal verbs such as shall and must, which denote obligation and authority.

According to Tiersma (1999), legal language is a form of a "sublanguage" that guarantees exactness and circumvents ambiguity, even if it is incomprehensible to the laymen.Similarly, Bhatia (2010) states that legal texts are expected to sustain institutional authority through a rigid and formal linguistic style.

The discipline of forensic linguistics as described by Coulthard and Johnson (2010), analyzes the use of language in legal contexts. This includes legal documents, courtroom interactions, and evidential texts, all of which require critical examination to reveal meaning, intention, and bias.

The relationship between language and law is paramount legal texts do not only narrate legal processes but also create authority and compliance. In defamation cases, linguistic devices become very crucial as they define harm, assign liability, and require remedy based on a discursive framework (Shuy, 1993).

Political Discourse, Media, and Ideology

Political discourse is thus persuasive and ideological in nature, with the aim of influencing public opinion and social beliefs. According to Chilton (2004), political language relies on rhetorical tools like metaphors, repetition and emotional appeals to produce persuasive narratives.

The media plays an important role in escalating political discourse and influencing public opinion. Through selective reporting and framing, media discourse can have an impact on the perception of occurrences and people (Fairclough, 1995). Language is often employed to define a “victim” or “villain” in ways that play a significant role in determining political outcomes.

According to scholars like Eriyanto (2001) and Fauzan (2015), argue that discourse is a site of ideological struggle where competing narratives vie for discursive dominance over the minds of the public. In this sense, political actors’ linguistic strategies are to “project a positive image of self and a negative image of others (van Dijk, 2008).

This is evident in political speeches especially that of Imran Khan where rhetorical devices of ideological analysis such as the production of a specific emotional tone and repetition have been used in a war between the media and legal institutions.

Previous studies have widely applied CDA to legal discourse, political speeches, and media texts. For instance, van Dijk (2008) and Fairclough (1995) have analyzed power relations in institutional discourse.

Also, Risdianto, Sumarlam, and Malihah (2018) critical studies on media and judiciary texts highlight the merits of CDA in unmasking covert and immanent ideologies. Deeper analysis on political discourse has also increased awareness on language as a tool for framing public opinion and generating ideological myths.

There is, however, little study that specifically addresses Pakistani legal discourse, particularly in defamation cases. Besides, there is scarcity of combining both legal and political discourse analysis under Fairclough’s CDA model.

The case of Imran Khan’s defamation proceedings is thus, a little researched area in the context of power and politics vis-a-vis legal and political rhetoric.

To sum-up, the reviewed literature reveals that language is crucial in constructing power, authority, and ideology in legal and political contexts. In this regard, CDA offers an all-inclusive framework of analysis, with Fairclough's three-dimensional model.

Legal discourse reinforces institutional authority through formal and structured language, whereas political discourse adopts persuasive strategies to sway public opinion. However, despite these targeted fields of study, there is still a noticeable lack of research on Pakistani legal discourse and its relation to political narratives.

This study aims to fill the gap by conducting a CDA analysis of the Imran Khan defamation case, which is relevant to the research objectives as CDA involves the analysis of linguistic features in relation to the socio-political context of power abuse and power negotiation through narratives.

Material and Methods

Methodology is a way of doing things in a particular manner. This research utilizes the purely qualitative method to analyse the legal notice served to Imran Khan under Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Qualitative research is particularly well suited to discourse studies, focussing mainly on language, meaning, context, and beyond numerical data (Denzin & Lincoln 2018). The research further examines the language used in accordance with the specific notice and how that language constructs authority, ideology, and socio-political discourse. Thus, the methodologies are divided into three sessions: data collection, data analysis, and theoretical framework.

Data Collection

We collected data from several primary and secondary resources in order to attain the accurate data.

The Legal Notice & Court Judgment: Our main and primary data was the legal notice sent by the high court to the Imran Khan. Legal discourse is characterized by formal structures, lexical choices, and syntactic features that warrant the institution's power (Bhatia, 2010; Teirisma, 1999). This notice served as our main and primary data for doing the forensic and linguistic analysis in terms of critical discourse. We have analyzed this whole legal paper through the lens of discourse that how it is shaping institutional power and maintains the narrative. (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010)

Imran Khan Speeches & Statements: Further we have collected our data from the speeches, briefings' and media talks of Imran Khan. Political discourse has often featured the rhetorical strategies that shape ideologies and public perceptions (Chilton, 2004). We have analyzed the language used by Imran Khan during his media talk, that how he is framing ideologies in order to control the public narratives and assert the power.

This multi-source strategy guarantees a wide-ranging perspective towards language functions at the level of legal and political discourse. This helps to generalize our findings.

Data Analysis

This research uses purely qualitative method consists of the analysis of the data collected through textual analysis-in particular, on the legal notice, to find out how it analyses the linguistic and rhetorical features. In CDA, through textual analysis, one can identify linguistic and rhetorical elements that construct meaning while affirming authority (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk,2008)).

Textual Analysis

In this step we will first analyse the whole text. We will focus on the word choices , grammatical structure of the sentences , use of passive voice in the legal text in order to assert the institutional power and we will analyse each and every linguistic element in order to get the deeper understanding of the text. This study also focus on assessing the structures of the legal language such as over lexicalization, more frequent use of noun , lexical terminologies , use of passive voice and imperative sentences to show commands and directives in order to show judicial authority. This text also uses modal verbs such as , shall, must or will in order to assert responsibilities and obligations. Furthermore, this study identifies the use of rhetorical devices. Overall, the detailed textual analysis has been performed in order to reach the target goals to understand the meaning of legal and political perspective of the case.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses Critical Discourse Analysis(CDA) theory by using Fairclough's three dimensional model to analyze text in deeper way.(Fairclough,1995).Through this approach ,this study aims to analyze structure of the legal language and to analyze the construction and interpretation of the meaning. It also focuses on how ideologies are shaped and social, political power dynamics.

Textual analysis (Description)

In this, focuses on the selection of words, grammar and rhetorical figures in the legal text.. It also profiles legal formalism and how it will build authority.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

It will quantum the process of production, distribution and interpretation of the legal notice. It will also see how different narratives of actors(the judiciary,Imran Khan, media) shape public perception.

Social Practice (Explanation):

It analyzes the case in larger framework of power relations in political landscape.Moreover, the role of judiciary plays in controlling politics becomes key to study the balance between constitutional governance. The judiciary regulates the political power critical for upholding constitutional forms of governance (Van Dijk,2008).

This research through Fairclough's model also shows how legal language is a tool in the hands of judges-making it power and public opinion on itself. This methodology takes a holistic understanding of legal notice by analysis from linguistic, discursive, and social aspects. An overview on linguistics in legal texts will show that language is used to

inscribe institutional authority and political resistance to the bigger authority structure in the legal and political spheres in Pakistan.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Legal Notice Using Fairclough Model

Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) consist of three levels:

textual analysis(description), discursive practice(interpretation), social practice(explanation).

Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is an important component of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which investigates how language is employed to create meaning, express power, and shape perception. In Fairclough's framework, textual analysis looks at word selection, grammar, sentence structure, and rhetorical devices to determine how a text frames its message. Legal documents, like defamation notices, employ technical vocabulary, formal language, and formal sentence structure to project authority, state legal requirements, and stress penalties. This study will examine how lexical options, such as legal nouns, verbs, adjectives, and modal verbs, support the efficacy of the legal notice by asserting credibility, imposing obligation, and exercising legal pressure on the defendant.

Vocabulary

Legal Terms and Legal Language:

Legal language also known as "legalese", refers to only those specialized types of communication associated with laws, contracts, legal notices, and court procedures that are structured in such a way to ensure that a precise, clear, and legally enforceable meaning is conveyed in reference to legal matters. According to Peter M. Tiersma (1999), legal language functions as a "sublanguage" that maintains consistency and avoids ambiguity, making legal texts highly structured and formal. However, its complexity can make it difficult for no experts to understand.

Legal language includes words and phrases that have specific meanings with respect to the law. To the extent that ordinary words in everyday life may mean something more simplistic, other legal phrases are aimed explicitly at defining rights, imposing obligations, or setting consequences. A prime example is that while many interpret the word defamation as meaning the act of harming another person's reputation, such wording under legal language refers to a false statement directed against an individual, resulting in measurable losses that could lead to legal action. In law, however, the word liability denotes not just a responsibility but a legally enforceable duty to respond in damages for this wrongdoing.

Legal language is characterized by formal sentence structures ,passive voice and extremely precise wording designed to avoid all possible misinterpretation. In such written notice, one is said to be at fault, and whereas we say, "You are responsible," the legal term must be resting on the edge, "You shall be held liable," creating an overwhelming obligation and certainty as to consequences. But there are also modal verbs used in legal texts that might convey the legally binding "must, shall, will".

This legal notice is structured using technical legal vocabulary to assert authority and legitimacy. The legal words give the document a serious and professional tone and show that it is official and legally binding.

Legal Terms Used:

Legal term	Parts of speech	Meaning
Defamation	Noun	A false statement that harms someone's reputation.
Ordinance	Noun	A law or regulation established by an authority.
Liability	Noun	Legal responsibility for an action or wrongdoing.
Malice	Noun	The intention to harm or defame someone.
Allegation	Noun	A claim that someone has done something wrong typically without proof.
Accusation	Noun	A formal charge or claim that someone is guilty of wrongdoing
Reputation	Noun	The public's opinion of a person or company often relevant in defamation cases.
Litigation	Noun	The process of taking legal action through a lawsuit.
Proceedings	Noun	The formal steps and processes followed in a legal case.
Claim	Noun	A demand for something as a right often financial compensation.
Damages	Noun	Monetary compensation awarded for harm suffered.
Lawsuit	Noun	A legal case brought against someone in a court of law.
Remedy	Noun	A legal means of enforcing a right or correcting a wrong.
Verdict	Noun	The final decision made by a judge or jury in a legal case.
Judgment	Noun	A court's official ruling or decision in a case
Penalty	Noun	A punishment or consequence for violating the law.
Apology	Noun	A formal statement expressing regret, often required in defamation cases.
Compensation	Noun	Payment given to someone for harm, loss or damages.
Statutory Notice	Noun	A formal legal notice required under specific laws.
Legal Framework	Noun	The system of laws governing an issue.
Strict Proof	Noun	A requirement for strong evidence in a legal case.
Decree	Noun	An official order or judgment issued by a court.
Legal Action	Noun	The act of pursuing a case in court to enforce a right.
Sue	Verb	To take legal action against someone in court.
Prosecute	Verb	To bring legal charges against someone for a crime or wrongdoing.

Defame	Verb	To damage someone's reputation through false statements.
Withdraw	Verb	To take back a statement, claim, or lawsuit.
Retract	Verb	To formally deny or take back a previous statement.
Comply	Verb	To follow a legal order, rule, or regulation.
Initiate	Verb	To begin legal proceedings or action.
Justify	Verb	To explain or defend an action legally.
Establish	Verb	To prove or set up a legal argument or precedent.
Violate	Verb	To break a law, rule, or legal agreement.
Issue	Verb	To formally send out a legal notice or order.
Enforce	Verb	To ensure compliance with a law or court order.
Scrutinize	Verb	To examine something carefully, often in a legal context.
Defamatory	Adjective	False and damaging to someone's reputation.
Misleading	Adjective	Giving a wrong idea or impression.
Reckless	Adjective	Careless and without regard for consequences.
Malicious	Adjective	Done with the intent to harm or defame.
Unlawful	Adjective	Not allowed by law.
Unjustified	Adjective	Lacking a valid reason or basis in law.
Fabricated	Adjective	Made up or false.
Unsubstantiated	Adjective	Lacking evidence or proof.
Provocative	Adjective	Intended to cause a strong reaction or incite conflict.
Injurious	Adjective	Causing harm or injury.
Slandorous	Adjective	False and harmful to someone's reputation.
Aggravated	Adjective	More serious than usual in legal terms.
Must	Modal verb	Indicates a strong legal obligation.
Shall	Modal verb	Suggests an expectation but not a strict requirement.
Will	Modal verb	Indicates certainty of legal action.
May	Modal verb	Indicates a possibility, often used for legal flexibility.
Should	Modal verb	Suggests an expectation but not a strict requirement.
Shall be liable	Modal verb	Indicates legal responsibility for a particular action.

Grammar

Grammar is crucial to text in a legal document, there are consequences for grammar in terms of the clarity, authority, and allure of legal text. The legal notice described uses a complex sentences structures, passive voice, and formal grammatical constructions which reinforce the legal precision, objectivity and credibility. We will be concentrating on parts of speech (nouns, verbs, and adjectives); modal verbs; complex sentence structures; and how these vary and come together to add legal effectiveness to the notice. In this analysis,

we are targeting to show how grammar works to strengthen the power of notice persuasion and authoritative appeal.

Purpose of Parts Of Speech in Legal Notice

Part of Speech	Purpose in Legal Texts	Examples from Legal Notice
Nouns	Define legal concepts, responsibilities, and consequences	Defamation, liability, reputation, damages, penalty, lawsuit, proceedings
Verbs	Describe legal actions, obligations, and consequences	Sued, accused, defamed, compiled, retracted, prosecuted
Adjectives	Strengthen claims by describing severity or credibility	Defamatory, misleading, reckless, malicious, unlawful, unsubsidized
Modal Verbs	Indicate legal obligations, requirements and consequences	Must, shall, will, may, should
Prepositions	Clarify relationships between legal actions and parties.	In violation of, under the law, according to, in compliance with
Passive Voice Constructions	Shift focus from the defendant to the harm suffered.	Serious damage has been caused, an apology is required

These grammatical elements work together to make legal texts formal, authoritative, and legally enforceable.

Sentence Structure:

The legal notice primarily uses complex sentences, passive voice, imperatives, and conditional clauses for clarity, authority and accuracy. Complex sentences are widely used to present detailed arguments while ensuring that no legal aspect is overlooked. For example: *"That from the beginning, our Clients have made extraordinary efforts to maintain impartiality, transparency, and objectivity in discharge of their professional work for dissemination of information among the readers and the viewers".* With several clauses in the sentence, this argument establishes credibility for the plaintiffs as they continue with their ethical stance.

Moreover, passive voice is used frequently to focus on the harm suffered rather than directly accusing defendant of something. For example: *"Serious damage to reputation has been caused.."* In this line the focus is on the damage itself rather than who caused it, which maintain a neutral and legal tone.

Furthermore, imperative statements appear in the notice for legal clarity, such as, *"You are hereby urged to tender an unconditional apology."* Such formal wording increases the gravity of a demand and renders it legally enforceable. Conditional clauses also exist to specify effects such as, *"Failing this, we have definite instructions to initiate appropriate proceedings against you."* This structure makes it clear that non-compliance will result in legal action, adding weight to the demands.

Overall, the application of sentence structure enhances the formality, enforceability, and persuasiveness of the legal notice so that legal obligations and threatened consequences can be communicated effectively with authority and precision.

Frequency

The entire legal notice contains approximately **2825** words, in which the most frequent words are:

Words	Occurrences
Clients	50 + times
Media	30 + times
Defamatory	20 + times
Allegations	15 + times
False	15 + times
Reputation	10 + times
Statements	10 + times
Legal	10 + times
Action	10 + times
Damage	10 + times

Frequency of Parts of Speech:

Nouns

- **Examples:** Clients, media, reputation, allegations, statements, defamation, campaign, etc.
- **Total Nouns:** 800 (estimated based on frequency).

Pronouns

- **Examples:** You, our, they, he, it, etc.
- **Total Pronouns:** 400 (estimated).

Adjectives

- **Examples:** false, defamatory, malicious, impartial, unbiased, etc.
- **Total Adjectives:** ~300 (estimated).

Verbs

- **Examples:** is, are, have, made, asserted, reported, etc.
- **Total Verbs:** 600 (estimated).

Adverbs

- **Examples:** highly, completely, falsely, particularly, etc.
- **Total Adverbs:** ~150 (estimated).

Prepositions

- **Examples:** of, in, to, for, with, etc.
- **Total Prepositions:** 400 (estimated).

Conjunctions

- **Examples:** and, but, or, however, etc. • **Total Conjunctions:** 200 (estimated).

Transcribed Data

Mir Shakeel -ur -Rehman Godfather of Media

"I want to talk about another god father today, this is the media's Godfather Mir Shakeel -ur -Rehman, what they are doing today. Is it saving corrupt family corruption? Is it your job that you are getting ads?"

Take a look at your advertisements, So far these two brothers have given advertisements worth 34 billion. Both brothers now tell me out of all these advertisements who received the most? If you check what this media godfather ,Mir Shakil ur Rehman doing. You will find out how many ads they get about these 34 billion and do this with the ads. After receiving these advertisements, what did he do? Is this the job of media house that you protect a corrupt family?"

Mir Shakeel -ur -Rehman The Media GodFather

"Is it the job of the media godfather to protect their corruption? Is it your job to spread false stories? Is it your job to risk everything and run false stories?"

Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif is risking everything. There are 2,000 police officers standing there, history is being made as he appears before the JIT.

Mir Shakeel -ur -Rehman Media GodFather, Boycott Jang and Geo

The Godfather's policy-this is so called King Maker is deciding Pakistan's fate. He is saying "If you don't oppose me out of fear; I am with you ;I can save you" .Is this the role of the media? Is this how the head of a media house should function in a country? Your job is to bring facts to light. your job is to expose corruption, not protect a corrupt person.

The whole nation knows that he is is lying, every child knows in Pakistan, he is lying. These people have been lying for a hundred years and now they claim that " Mughal e Azam" Nawaz Sharif is risking his life by appearing before the JIT .He has been summoned ,and yet ,the Supreme Court is being defamed. False news is being spread ,claims of a WhatsApp leak ,rumors of conspiracies ,trying to portray this as a plot against this corrupt family .But this family has been engaged in corruption for years."

DISCUSSIONS: Imran Khan's speech is full of rhetoric, and it has an argument that is emotionally appealing, metaphorical, and repetitive. Here are some prominent features regarding the arguments linguistic styles

Words and Terms Used

Metaphors and Labels

- *"Godfather of Media", "King Maker"*: These phrases depict Mir Shakeel-ur Rehman as having mafia like power and therefore suggesting media corruption.
- *"Mughal-e-Azam Nawaz Sharif"*: Implies authoritarian role and arrogance

Negative & Accusatory Language:

- *"Lying", "corrupt family", "false stories", "Defaming the governor of law"*: Supports the concept of a conspiracy against a person.

Hyperbolic & Emotional Appeals:

- *"Every child knows in Pakistan, he is lying."* :Uses to exaggerate the reality of his lie, portraying the overwhelming readiness to manipulate the truth in order to serve their own needs
- *"Risking everything" , "Risking his life"*: Sarcastically mocks Sharif's self pleading victim narrative.

Sentence Structure & Rhetorical Strategies

Questions & Repetition:

- *"Is it the job of media?", "Is it your job to protect corruption?"*

Repeating rhetorical questions forces the audience to internalize the accusations.

Direct Appeals To Audience:

- *"Take a look at your advertisements."* :Engages listeners by urging them to examine the facts.
- *"Boycott Jang and Geo."* : Tells the public to take action against manipulation.

Contrast & Parallelism:

- *"Your job is to bring facts to light. Your job is to expose corruption, not protect a corrupt person."*: Uses parallel structure to contrast ideal media role vs. actual conduct.

Tone and Ideological Positioning:

Conspiracy Theory Tone:

- Implies media and dishonest politicians are plotting . (*"false news is being spread," "WhatsApp leak ,rumours of conspiracies"*)

Populist Appeal:

- Positions himself as someone who is exposing the corrupt elite and with the common man.

Overall, the speech strategically demonizes Mir Shakeel-ur-Rehman, discredits mainstream media and gets public support by projecting Khan as an anti corruption consultant. Through loaded language, rhetorical questions and repetition it is pushing “*them vs. us*” narrative..

Interpretation And Explanation of Text (Discursive and social practices) :

According to Risdianto, Sumarlam, and Malihah (2018) interpretation is an analysis of discourse practices, namely the analysis of relations between the text and the practice of discourse by viewing the text as a production process. Applying Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model, the interpretation stage explores how language in the legal notice constructs meaning within institutional and social contexts. This stage focus that how language is produced , consumed and interpreted in both legal and political aspect. In this analysis, there are 2 main things, Supreme Court’s order and Imran Khan's media statements. These are examined to assess their communicative intent, underlying implications, and the dynamics of power relations they establish. The context of power is one of the main differentiators between discourse analysis and CDA. According to Eriyanto(2001), any discourse that appears in the form of text, conversation, or whatever, is not seen as natural, and neutral, but its a form of power struggle (for example, male power over women, king's power over his subordinates).the power of legislative towards the executive, etc.) . Therefore, CDA does not limit itself to the details of the text or discourse structure, but also relates into certain social, political, economic and cultural strengths and conditions. Interpretation is done by utilizing sources of interpretation and various interpretation principles (Sumarlam, 2013) so that it can produce an accurate interpretation (high level of truth) . In addition, researchers / analyst can also conduct intertextuality studies (Fairclough, 1992, 1995), which examines the relationship between one news text and other news texts that are related, and the context behind the emergence or production of a text.

We also want to see how Imran Khan is manipulating the whole scenario to turn this in his favour portraying himself as victim and Mir Shakeel Rehman as the villain of situation. Risdianto,

Sumarlam, and Malihah (2018) analyzed that CDA aims at revealing hidden ideologies in the use of language. Ideology is a central study in CDA. From the explanation above it can be understood that CDA does not only rely on a single approach, but is always multidisciplinary tries to expose ideology based on a positive self-portrayal strategy and a negative portrayal of others .Now we will see how this legal text is creating meaning and shaping the public opinion ,after that we will analyse the Imran khan response to that situation . First of all we will analyse the language used by legal notice

Court’s Narrative

The supreme court uses the the strong and formal language while showing it’s institutional discourse to project the authority over Imran khan’s actions. There are some strategies used by the court to show it’s discourse as authority :

- **Reveal power structures:** The court shows its institutional power and authority by giving direct commands , making the defendant accountable by using legal accountability terms , showing its institutional references and judicial enforcement through it’s language even when the defendant is a renowned public figure and a great politician. The court used language to portray Khan as someone who violated the legal

obligations ,reinforcing the judiciary supermacy over political actors .It also uses command oriented language such as:

Commanding Directives such as “*We direct that the office shall serve the reports...*” here the word “Direct” shows the court is giving an order, not a suggestion which is a sign of its power and authority , “Shall” A legal obligation, meaning compliance is mandatory. The legal notice also includes “*The said persons shall also answer the allegations levelled...*”. Here the word “Shall” indicates that Imran Khan and his lawyers must respond, reinforcing legal authority. The court is also depersonalizing Imran khan’s political status by stating him as respondent .

Establishing Legal Accountability The court is making khan accountable by using words like

:

“*Breach of the undertakings attracting the offence specified in Section 3 read with Section 2(a) of the Contempt of Court Ordinance, 2003.*”

Here the word “Breach” implies a serious violation of legal commitments and the word “Offence specified” frames the situation as a legal crime, not just a minor issue.

Institutional Authority & Formal Tone

The court notice maintains it’s final tone thought out the text e.g:

“*We have read the material and examined the provisions of the Ordinance and Order XXVII of the Supreme Court Rules, 1980.*” and “*This order shall also be implemented by the office mutatis mutandis in respect of the petitioner...*”

the word “Implemented” is a legal directive ensuring enforcement and “Mutatis mutandis” is a formal legal term indicating procedural adjustments while maintaining the core ruling.

Judicial Consequences & Enforcement The court is warning Imran khan for serious consequences

if the correct step has not been taken by him . This also refers to the court’s power dynamics . This is the statement from the notice , “He has accordingly urged that contempt proceedings be initiated against the Respondent.” Here “Contempt proceedings” means serious legal action implying punishment for defying the court.

- **Legal Proceduralism:** The document insists on due process, stating that Imran Khan and his lawyers must provide written replies by a deadline, demonstrating the legal procedural framework and also maintaining the judicial power .

Imran khan’s Narrative:

After that we will analyse the Imran khan’s perspective that how he manipulated the situation to turn it in his favour and the strategies used by khan to shift the narrative.

Delaying the case As court gave Imran khan 14 days to respond on that. The court also demanded an apology in both written and spoken form along with the compensation

of one billion rupees for the damages caused by him during his media talks .However Imran khan tried to make adjournment to the case. He continuously demanded the adjournments in the final court hearing. Finally the case which was filed in November 2017 was delayed for 5 years .

Controlling the narrative Imran khan is controlling the narrative by delaying the case .As case was adjourned for five years so when the time period of 5 years was finished Imran khan was in the position of power and authority. So in 2022 he filed the case against the Mir Shakeel Rehman by blaming him as the one who works for foreign agenda . It keeps him to be the hero in public image. He has characterized Mir Shakeel Rehman the chairman Jang-geo group as a “blackmailer”, “media godfather” and “pharaoh”, and accused of intimidation.By saying such words he wants to show that Mir Shakeel Rehman is the one who is doing wrong things and misleading the nation. In this way, he portrays himself as the one who really cares about the nation. He is controlling the narrative of people and shaping thier ideology in his favour.

Maintaining public ideology and reframing case as a struggle for democracy

Imran Khan’s in his media talks shapes the discourse as a targeted movement against him because he is the one who always talks about freedom and thinks the good for nation while everyone else is corrupt in the government and judiciary is biased .

In speeches, he says:

“Why is the judiciary silent when corrupt politicians break laws? Why are courts only after me?”

This reframes the legal case as selective justice, making his supporters view him as a victim rather than a lawbreaker. By blaming Mir Shakeel Rehman for defamation case he portrays himself as a victim of media manipulation .

4.Emotional tone He often uses emotional tone in his language to control the public opinion and play with the nerves of people. He uses such language to connect with the people . In one of his speech he stated that : “If the people want real freedom, they must stand up against this injustice.”

He mobilizes public sentiment, presenting himself as a leader of resistance against institutional corruption. He strategically construct himself as the one who is devoting his life to the country without any personal interests.

Analysis of socio-cultural practices (explanations) is an analysis of the relationship between discourse practices and social context.This analysis aims to find an explanation of the results of interpretation at the level of description and level of interpretation. This part examines the legal notice and overall case on a broader aspect that how the discourse is shaped throughout the case. The order issued by the Supreme Court concerning assembly definitely follows the larger societal - political dynamics in Pakistan where there is an ongoing tussle between judiciary and political leadership. By framing the case as a legal issue rather than a political dispute, the judiciary reinforces its power to hold political figures accountable under the rule of law. It has now reinforced its power to dictate political behavior through legal mechanisms such as contempt proceedings. The involvement of intelligence organizations like ISI and IBI indicates that case is not only about law but also maintaining the state control. By emphasizing procedural fairness, it is indicates a

discourse where state control is being imposed over political mobilization. It serves again to highlight the nexus between democratic rights like freedom of assembly on one hand and the judiciary's function to maintain order, wherein legal justifications are utilized to discipline political actors who challenge authority institutionalized. Overall, the document uses legal language to show its judicial power

Conclusion

In conclusion , this is the forensic analysis, carried out through Fairclough's CDA model, underscores how strategic language is employed within legal contexts to confirm reasons of power and narrative control. The language used by by supreme court is highly formal and professional asserting it's institutional power regardless of the social status of the defendant , while Imran Khan's reply is designed to twist public views of him as a subject of victimization against partial institutions. This case, therefore, emphasizes the conflict between judicial authority and democratic freedom as an avenue where legal language serves both ends of accountability and political power.

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