



RESEARCH PAPER

Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan's Address at the 74<sup>th</sup>  
Session of the General Assembly of the UN

Momina Tahir\*<sup>1</sup> Sana Nawaz<sup>2</sup> Naveed Yousaf<sup>3</sup>

1. M.phil Scholar, Department of English, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Punjab Pakistan.
2. Lecturer, Department of English, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Punjab Pakistan
3. Lecturer, Department of English, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Punjab Pakistan

DOI

[http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022\(6-II\)58](http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022(6-II)58)

PAPER INFO

ABSTRACT

**Received:**

February 28, 2022

**Accepted:**

June 02, 2022

**Online:**

June 04, 2022

**Keywords:**

Critical Discourse  
Analysis,  
Norman  
Fairclough's  
Three-  
Dimensional  
Model,  
Political Address

**\*Corresponding  
Author**

Mominatahir999@  
gmail.com

The present research aims to delve into the descriptive, Interpretative and discursive features of Imran Khan's address. In critical discourse analysis, utterance type meaning and utterance token meaning are taken into account and human speech is analyzed. This paper focuses on the language of address and ideological power which was behind the narrative. It shows how language is an expression of authority and truth. This paper further reveals the personal ideology of the addresser and his blunt expression for religion and for the glorification of the country. The data for this research paper is collected from a video Clip and it is analyzed through Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The three-dimensional model will investigate the relational, experiential and expressive values of speech. The findings of this research illustrate that this address was not an attack on any country rather certain issues were discussed and presented before the leaders of the world community. It was mentioned in address that they need just the support of the United Nations and other developed countries. This paper successfully propounds the power and ideologies of language in political context. This address can be analyzed through the power of narrative in critical discourse analysis.

Introduction

Critical discourse analysis deals with the underlying meanings of text and works at utterance type meaning and utterance token meaning. "Critical discourse analysis is the uncovering of implicit ideologies in texts. It unveils the underlying ideological prejudices and therefore the exercise of power in texts". As Teun A. van Dijk (1993) puts it, "critical discourse analysts want to understand, expose and resist social inequality".

"To explain, how real language users go about producing and understanding discourse, how their personal and socially shared beliefs affect discourse production and how these are in turn affected by discourse. No critical account of discourse is theoretically complete without such a cognitive interface" (Van Dijk 2009: 79).

This paper propounds the political address of Pakistani Prime minister Imran Khan which was held at the general assembly on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. This speech has historical significance because for the first time at an international forum the topic of Islamophobia was discussed. This paper aims to find the expressional values of speech that how the language describes the power ideologies. The research paper while analyzing the political discourse shows how in politics sometimes undiplomatic and informal language is used. "To explain, how real language users go about producing and understanding discourse, how their personal and socially shared beliefs affect discourse production and how these are in turn affected by discourse. No critical account of discourse is theoretically complete without such a cognitive interface" (Van Dijk 2009: 79).

### **Literature Review**

Sabir and Kanwal (2018) studied the analysis of Robert Frost's *Fire and Ice* by using Fairclough's framework. In this research the focus was on descriptive analysis of poems. Zahoor (2015) studies the psychological, emotional and political changes in various situations by dropping atoms on Nagasaki to the incident of 9/11. All the discourse studies depend on the text and critical discourse analysis focuses on the deep situational meanings of text. Sultan Rafique, Tariq, and Imran (2019) studied the critical discourse analysis of Pakistani T.V comedy show 'Khabarnak'. Their results were how humorous acting and comedy depict the Pakistani political culture. They used the type meanings to analyze. Another research in which Ahmad, Bilal and Gohar (2012) tells us about media talk shows and their manipulative discourses. They analyzed through the socio cognitive model of critical discourse analysis. Their results show the party and media houses politics in shaping political opinions. In this research paper researcher tries to reveal the ideological structures of political address.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

CDA has its origin in twentieth century, CDA's foundation was established critical linguistics in 1970s. Fowler et al., (1979) states that the foundations of CDA as a proper and developed field of linguistic research were laid by the 'critical linguistics' in Britain in 1970s. As the name of this type is denotes the idea because it refers to the idea where discourse analysis view itself critically in order to trace out the power dominance which affects the discourse.

"Critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in social and political context." (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352)

Critical discourse analysis sees the contextual data through micro eye. The things which cannot be understood through surface meaning are understood by critical discourse analysis. It defines the societal values and relational features of text. Through various models' different texts are investigated just to know the value of text in different socio-political settings. Critical discourse analysis defines the power

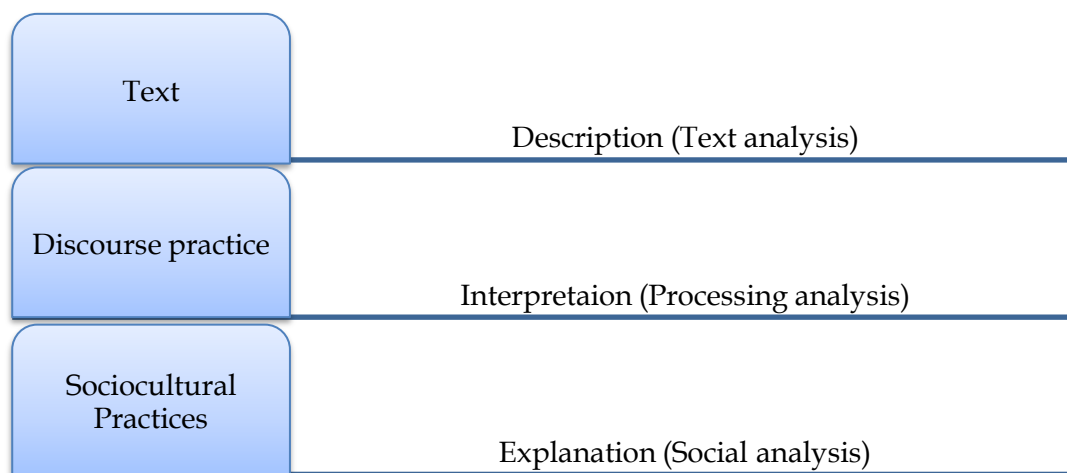
and ideology and their dominance on language. As Van Dijk (2000) says; “ if there is one notion often related to ideology it is that of power”.CDA aims to identify the relationship between interactional process and process of production and then how it relates these concepts with political discourse.

## Material and Methods

### Research Framework

#### Norman Fairclough’s model in research

Norman Fairclough is a CDA scholar. He is the only person who elaborates the link between power, language and ideology in his research in 1989. Fairclough presented a model in 1989 and revised it in 1995. His model is considered a hub around which the wheel of critical discourse analysis revolves. He was the first to design a theoretical framework for CDA and gave guidelines for text interpretation. Fairclough’s model consists of a three step process of analysis which is tied to three inter\_ related dimensions of discourse which are given below.



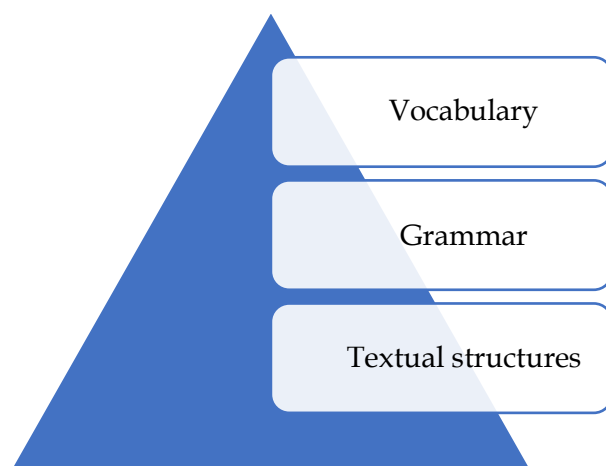
- The text as a means of process of production.
- The process through which the object is produced and received.
- The sociohistorical conditions which control these processes.

These three dimensions of CDA investigate the text and in this research the address of Imran Khan at New York in the 74<sup>th</sup> session of general assembly would be critically analyzed firstly, at descriptive level. Secondly, at an interpretative level. And thirdly, at a social level.

## Results and Discussion

The three levels of analysis are as follows;

### Descriptive level



This is the first level of analysis according to Fairclough's 3D model. It has three levels which deal with words of the text. These three steps of descriptive approach are vocabulary, grammar, and textual structures. The political discourse of Imran Khan's speech deals with four main points. While doing the descriptive analysis there are certain questions at each step which are asked for descriptive analysis. Therefore, at this level the vocabulary, grammar and textual structure of Imran Khan's speech would be analyzed.

### **Vocabulary**

The questions for vocabulary analysis of Imran Khan's speech are as follows;

#### **What experiential values do words have?**

In Imran Khan's speech, he talks about four basic points which are Climate change, Money laundering in developing countries, Islamophobia and Kashmir, a disputed territory. While analyzing the experiential values of text these four thesis statements have experiential value. The experiential value of text describes the ideology of experiences and these experiences are relational and situational.

#### **Experiential values in words in speech**

**Climate Change;** It is challenging for Pakistan because of political, territorial disputes and border tension with neighboring countries. Pakistan is facing a shortage of water and an environmental crisis.

**Islamophobia;** It was also used in speech and this is experiential value, not just for prime minister but, for all the Muslim. who are radicalized and targeted just because, they are Muslims and their religion are Islam? Muslims are recognized as terrorists around the world. Thus, it has experiential ideology.

**Money Laundering;** It is an issue in developing countries and especially in Pakistan. Because in the Panama case there were the names of Pakistani elites and politicians and it was painful to see such criminals in your own country. That is the reason Imran Khan's words had experiential values.

**Kashmir issue;** This is one of the most debated issues of Pakistani politics and every politician when they came into power took it into consideration. And The prime minister Imran Khan also took the United nations forum to talk about it before all the world leaders.

### **What classification schemes are drawn upon?**

In the classification scheme, the ideological organization of words has been analyzed. Either these were intentionally systematic or it had situated context. Therefore, the speech classification scheme was kept in mind.

### **Classification scheme in speech;**

**"I feel honored today to represent my country at this forum of world leaders. I want to talk about lot of problems but just four today".**

**"lack of seriousness".**

**"we human are facing a huge Catastrophe".**

**"Tax havens, expensive properties".**

In this political discourse, the classification scheme of words has a positive face value and the way one by one things are being told in an organized and systematic manner.

### **Are there words which are ideologically contested?**

**Tax havens;** These are ideologically contested words which explains the corrupt ideology of states which encourage the system of money laundering.

**Islamic radicalization;** This is used in text by the prime minister and it has a strong ideology behind. After 2001 Muslims are known as radicals and terrorists.

**Pulwama attack;** It has historical ideology behind it. India did attack on Pakistan and their one pilot left behind. On the contrary, the Pakistani government returned him.

Thus, in speech there are words which have strong ideology and in political context they are interpreted from different dimensions.

### **Is there rewording or over wording?**

Over wording shows preoccupation with some aspect of reality which may indicate that it is the focus of ideological struggle. (Fairclough,1989)

The speech language is much preoccupied with words like, **Global warming, corruption, territorial threats, disputes of boards.** Some pronouns I, we, our and us are also frequently used in the discourse.

**What ideologically significant meaning relations are there between words? (synonyms, Antonyms, Hyponyms).**

There are meaning relations between words and these are near to the meaning like, the word **Agriculture** has vast ideology and under this ideology **rivers, glaciers** and the most important **water** has relation to agricultural field. In the same way the noun phrase **money laundering** covers the ideologies of corruption, tax havens, and expensive properties. In Pakistani context when the name **Politician** is taken then the relational words like, **corruption, political elite, expensive properties** across the border come to mind.

### **What relational values do words have?**

The relational values in the text focus on the social relationships between the participants. The vocabulary is analyzed according to its form, meaning, experiential and relational value.

### **Relational values**

In the text of speech vocabulary related to **climate change** and **Islamophobia, wars** are used because these issues were being addressed in the conference.

### **Are there euphemistic expressions?**

A euphemistic expression is a word which is substituted for a more conventional and familiar one as a way of avoiding negative values.

### **Euphemistic expression in text**

**Lack of seriousness** is used by prime minister Imran Khan while talking about the international community. He used this term instead of using carelessness.

**“I feel United Nations must take leadership of this”**

Now in this sentence the word leadership is used instead of responsibility which is alternative and can be used.

### **Are they markedly formal or informal words?**

The words which were used in speech while discussing the country's issues were highly formal even when Prime minister Imran Khan was talking about the cruelties in Kashmir, the word choices were situational. But at some points it got informal such as, when he was discussing the issue of Islamophobia he says;

**“Muslim women wearing hijab it's become an issue in some countries. A woman can take off her clothes in western countries but she can't put on more clothes.”**

This statement shows the bold attitude of speaker on international forum which is regarded as sarcastic from feministic point of view and too blunt according to place of discussion.

### **What expressive values do words have?**

The expressive values of words are present throughout the text and the words which are used by the speaker truly express the ideology of the country. All the four basic points which were addressed in the conference had some ideologies and that's why this address of prime minister Imran Khan has great importance. The words like, radicalization and terrorism had ideologies related to Islamophobia. The term Islamophobia is being debated long after 9/11. Therefore, each statement had situational and utterance value.

### **What metaphors are used?**

Metaphors is a means of representing one aspect of experience in terms of another. In this research paper the focus is to see all these insights which are present in speech, metaphorically and critically. In speech there are metaphors used to show the world a different perspective.

**“how is a person in New York in the Mid \_West in the US in European capital, how is he going to distinguish between who is a modern Muslim and who is a radical Muslim”?**

Here in this statement, the speaker is pointing towards all the westerners who claim that Islam is oriental in nature and there is no freedom of expression in it. There is no diversity and development with time. He said; who are they to judge us? What do they know about our religion? Although he was describing Islamophobia but he was also expressing his anguish as a Muslim. In that way, metaphors are used to present the hidden ideologies of discourse.

### **Grammar**

The questions related to Grammar of words are as follows:

#### **What experiential values do grammatical features have?**

The experiential values of grammar of words and sentences would be analyzed here. In this feature the happenings of the world and its relationship with society has been analyzed. In the text simple grammatical structures are used to define the speaker's perspectives.

#### **What type of process and product predominant?**

In the text of speech, the process of grammar was simple to complex and there was fluctuation in the structure. When the speaker was speaking the utterance type meaning was intending that he wants to have support from the United nation specially on Kashmir issue. That issue has been disputed for the last seventy years. The process of his speech was low to extreme. He started from climate change and ended up with the Kashmir issue. In the text of speech there was a process and justifications and product of all the discussion was religion.

#### **Is agency unclear?**

The text agency was clear because prime minister Imran Khan was presenting his perspectives about religion and corruption and also what the Indian government

was doing on borders. He cleared that they have threats from India and before this that the Indian government would take any step and would blame Pakistan. I have come here to tell the truth to the world community.

### **Are processes what they seem?**

The process of his ideologies in the speech is evident that there was not any manipulation but he talked about every issue which was current at that time in a very direct manner. Thus, direct speech was used. Another thing which can be predicted is why Imran Khan talked about Kashmir issue and Pulwama there? This question arouses here and may be this was taken by Prime minster because if it had not been discussed at international forum then Pakistan had become a terrorist state.

### **Are nominalizations used?**

The word **Terrorism in Pakistan to terrorist state**, it has been changed from adjective to noun terrorism to terrorist. **Radical** is changed into **radicalization**. It has also changed from adjective to noun.

### **Are sentence active or passive?**

In the text of speech when it is analyzed by the researcher it was seen that the text is in active sentences when the speaker speaks ,he uses the words or phrases like, **I spoke to them , we took action , They called us terrorist , Climate has been changed, We need to take steps, This is responsibility of United Nation**. This is how active sentences were used in speech.

### **Are sentences positive or negative?**

Positive sentences are used whenever there was demand of help in his utterance and negative sentences are used when he was talking about the Islamophobia and Indian tensions on Kashmir issue.

### **What relational values do grammatical features have?**

There are a variety of grammatical features but here in this question the focus is just on three features. Modes, relational modes and pronouns.

### **Modes in text**

Modes in text means the mode of sentence. In what mode a question is asked and sentences are uttered. In the speech, Imran Khan used all three modes declarative, imperative, grammatical mode.

### **Declarative mode in the speech**

In declarative mode, the position of speaker or writer is that of a giver of information and the position of addressee's is that of a receiver.

**"In my country, when I took charge of government a year back in the ten years preceding that our total dead went up four times. The death we had**



accumulated in sixty years, just in ten years, it went up nine times. As a result, the total revenue we collected in one-year half of it went the death serving”.

“I just briefly want to make you people understand how can anyone do something like this and for that I have to explain to you. What is RSS? RSS was an organization that was inspired by Adolf Hitler, came about in 1925.”

So, here in this text, Imran Khan is using declarative mode while giving information to the addressees and they are receiving information.

### **Imperative mode in the speech**

In this imperative mode the speaker writer is asking something to the addressee and the addressee is a complaint actor.

“What is RSS?”

“Look, what is going to happen? When curfew is lifted is lifted?”

“So, what do you think? What the people do when they lift the curfew?”

Here, the speaker is asking questions from the listeners and they are complaint actors and the speaker is actually not asking for answers.

### **Grammatical mode in the speech**

In this mode the writer is again asking something to the receiver and the receiver is in the position of a provider of information.

This mode is not used in the speech because it has no relational value of grammatical mode to the participants.

### **Are there important features of relational modality?**

Modality is to do with speaker and writers’ authority and there are two dimensions to modality. Firstly, it is a matter of the authority of one participant in relation to others.

“It must free, it must free all the political prisoners. The world community must give the people of Kashmir their right of self-determination”.

“Mr. President! If a conventional war starts and if anything would happen but supposing a country seven times smaller than its neighbor”.

“Would I want to live this humiliation”.

Here the modal verbs must and would are used by the speaker because he is in power on the forum of the United Nation and authority is in his hands.

### **Are the pronouns we and you used, and if so, how?**

In the text of speech pronouns are used by the speaker to emphasize on his statement.

**"I feel, we are back to 1939".**

**"I ask myself this question and my belief is 'LA, ILLA HA, IL ALLAH', there is no GOD but ONE".**

**"I pictured myself, I am in Kashmir, I am locked up for fifty-five days".**

**"Would I want To Live like humiliation"?**

**"I repeat I am here."**

In the text the pronoun I is frequently used throughout. Here, I, is used to make them aware that he has ability and authority, he can own his words and whatever he is saying can be investigated.

### **What expressive values do grammatical features have?**

Expressive values of text show the good expression, the right words which shows a person's attitude, feelings and appropriateness. In the speech, at certain points prime minister Imran Khan used some words which shows the feelings and aggression of his words.

### **Expressive modality in the text**

Expressive modality is a matter of speaker or writer's authority with respect to truth or probability of a representation of reality, and speaker or writer's evaluation of truth.

**"Mr. President! what about 1.3 billion Muslims who are watching and they know that this is only happening in Kashmir because they are Kashmiri Muslims. This is not happening to Kashmiri Hindus".**

**"The previous homeminister of congress gave a statement that in RSS camps terrorists are trained. These terrorists butchered 2000 Muslims and one hundred and fifty thousand Muslims made homeless".**

In the above-mentioned statements, the speaking is presenting truth, every statement he explained describes the conditions of Kashmiri Muslims and the word like *butchered* is used instead of murdered or killed. It shows how painful it is for the speaker to tell the situation to the world. *This is not happening to Kashmiri Hindus*. This shows that being a Muslim is the biggest fault of those human beings who are living in Kashmir and that's why they are facing cruelties of Hindus. Religion is an integral conflict.

### **Textual structures**

The questions deal with textual structures are as follows;

**What interactional conventions are used?**

In the text of speech there was not any kind of interaction with addressees but it was just a simple address where the speaker discussed the current affairs before the world.

**What large scale structures does the text have?**

The text of the speech had four main structures and those structures had all the three ideologies of experiential, relational, expressional values. Those realities were not based on situated meanings but they had long historical perspectives behind them. The issue of Kashmir has been disputed for the last seventy years. The Indian terrorism was also not new. Therefore, these issues had historical value.

**Interpretative level**

The stage of interpretation is concerned with participants, process of text production as well as interpretation. Interpretation is a combination of what is in the text and what is in the interpreter, in the sense of member resources (MR). In the process of interpretation dialectical interplay is kept in mind.

In text of speech the process of production is debate and discussion and while interpreting text some points are kept under negotiation.

1. Situational context
2. Intertextual context
3. Surface of utterance
4. Meaning of utterance
5. Local coherence
6. Text structure and point

These points are discussed while interpreting the text. In this research paper the textual form of speech is discussed and the first thing which is seen is situational context. In the situational context the situated meanings are observed and according to the situation the speaker discussed the issues which were the concern of Pakistan. Pakistan being an Islamic state protects its religion and around the world after the accident of 9/11, the identity of Muslims has been suspicious. Therefore, Islamophobia was a very important issue. The other issue which was immensely important to discuss was the Kashmir issue because after the Pulwama attack it became important to clear to the world that the atrocities which were happening in Kashmir were not done by the Pakistani government. The resource of interpretation is text itself and the product which is received by this interpretation is truth, self-determination and freedom of expression.

**Explanation and social practices**

Relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation and their social effects. While explaining the text societal practices are observed and here in this research paper the text which is taken for critical discourse analysis is the address of prime minister Imran Khan. It was the 74th session of the general assembly of the United Nations. It was prime minister's first address to the international community as a prime minister and that's why, he discussed his priorities and disputed issues before the leaders of powerful states and after this address he was appreciated by all the Muslim leaders and Muslims around the world. It happened first time in the history that any Muslim leader debated so bluntly about Islam and western world, about neighbor country and its terrorist activities. The interaction of the prime minister with the world community and the way he delivered all his stances without any manipulation shows his confidence in his stances and he didn't let the fear of powerful states to overpower him.

### **Discussion**

In this research Imran Khan's speech is analyzed by using Norman Fairclough's three\_ dimensional model. This model of critical discourse analysis deals with three dimensions of text. The first dimension is called descriptive and it incorporates the text's inner layer or the core of text. At this stage, analysis is done between words and their lexical, grammatical, intertextual features are taken into account. The second dimension of this model of critical discourse analysis deals with discursive practices. This is attributed as interpretation of text and at this level the MR which is called the member resources interpret the text according to situated meaning. The third dimension of Fairclough's model deals with social context and develops the societal relationship of participants and socio cognitive structures. In this research the text which is a political speech is analyzed through Norman Fairclough's 3D model of critical discourse analysis.

After having a huge analysis of text at each level we can say that the political discourse is used to emphasize, to incite, to recognize the existence and to give threats and to present the ideologies of countries. This analysis at word sentence and social level shows the seriousness and sympathy of the leader for his state. The language which was used was formal when support was being asked from the world community and United Nations but it was really informal when problems and issues were discussed. The declarative and imperative mode was used throughout the speech. Here, the answers of research questions are provided that Language and power go hand in hand and these both phenomena are fluctuated in the hands of elites. The second answer is that language helps us to convey the large ideologies and facilitate us with lexical structures to express powerful insights. As a result, we can say that it was immensely patriotic and humanitarian in nature. Because the way the Kashmir issue was discussed, shows the empathetic attitude of a leader.

### **Conclusion**

At the end of this discussion and deep study of speech, it is concluded that critical discourse analysis provides various concepts and dimensions to evaluate language and the power behind it. Fairclough's three-dimensional model evaluates

the text from all perspectives. The way prime minister Imran Khan addressed to the world community paved ways for future leaders that how, even if you are not powerful enough, through language properties you can hold truth and express your ideas before the world. The political discourse of Prime Minister shows that how the country has external threats but Pakistan military forces and all political groups are unite for the national cause. This speech designates the speaker's passion and his trifulness towards his country. Every point is clearly stated and all the extrnal threats are answered complacently.

CDA revealed the poltical unrest in the country, tensions with neighbouring countries and threats of climate change. The hyperactive topic of Islamophobia is presented really tactfully before the world community. The Kashmir issue is also discussed to allow the other nations that in the name of religion one cannot marginalize people and their rights. It shows that narrative power matters in speech and this research explicitly propounded the Prime Minister's stance for national cause.

## References

- Bilal, H. A., Ahsan, H. M., Gohar, S., Younis, S., & Awan, S. J. (2012). Critical Discourse Analysis of Political TV Talk Shows of Pakistani Media. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(1),203. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v4i1.1425>
- Budd, K. (2015). Analysing political speeches: rhetoric, discourse and metaphor. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 13(1), 139–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2015.1105420>
- Fairclough, N. (2021). *Analysing Discourse - Textual Analysis for Social Research (03) by Fairclough, Norman [Paperback (2003)]*. Routledge, Paperback
- Fairclough, N. (2014). *Language and Power* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Gee, J. P. (2014). *How to do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Iqbal, N., Azhar, K. A., & Shah, Z. A. (2020). Discourse and Power Relations: A Critical Discourse Analysis of a Pakistani Talk Show. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, 2(1), 26–40. <https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v2i1.26-40>
- Janks, H. (1997). Critical Discourse Analysis as a Research Tool. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 18(3), 329–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0159630970180302>
- Nunan, D. (1993). *Introducing Discourse Analysis*. Penguin Group.
- Rauf, A., Sajjad, F., & Malghani, M. (2019). Ideology, (Mis)perceptions and (Re)construction of Political Identities: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan's Political Speeches. *Global Social Sciences Review*, IV(I), 205–210. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019\(iv-i\).27](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019(iv-i).27)
- Sharififar, M., & Rahimi, E. (2015). Critical Discourse Analysis of Political Speeches: A Case Study of Obama's and Rouhani's Speeches at UN. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(2), 343. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0502.14>
- Uddin, M. N., & Sharmin, M. (2019). The Role of Gender in TV Talk Show Discourse in Bangladesh: A Conversational Analysis of Hosts' Interaction Management. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(6), 22. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n6p22>