



RESEARCH PAPER

Exploring Transitivity System in the Speech of 1st Female Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz at her Oath Taking Ceremony

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to examine the language used in the speech of the 1st female chief minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz at her oath taking ceremony. The primary objective of the study was to explore the different types of processes employed by the CM in her discourse along with the secondary objective to figure it out the strategical use of language to convey the desired meanings to the target audience. Systemic functional linguistic model proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) has been applied as a framework of this study. The findings revealed the occurrence of four types of processes; verbal, mental, behavioral and relational among which the verbal has been the dominant one throughout the speech and compromised of 45% of the total clauses. The results also asserted that the CM made the strategical use of language to express her emotions towards her newly elected post and her ambitious plans to set the province on a way of an ultimate success in every aspect of life.

KEY WORDS: Political Discourse, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Transitivity Analysis

Introduction

Language plays a crucial role when it comes in a form of general communication as it is widely perceived as an effective tool for exchanging information (Martin, 2015). However, in terms of politics, it facilitates the politicians to develop an effective discourse by making them able to employ diverse rhetorical devices to win the hearts of the masses. Politics is deeply connected with the concept of authority that is sometimes achieved by making the use of physical force and sometimes by an indirect coercion to the legal system. However, in the present scnerion, language has become the most useful tool for the politicians to achieve and exercise their power. So, they seem to make the persuasive use of language to influence people's behavior in a certain way (Suler, 2011). Halliday (1960) done a great contribution in this perspective by proposing systemic functional linguistic approach to understand the functions language performs in certain contexts.

Hence, in today's world, systemtic functinal linguistics is being considered as one of the most influential approach of linguistics and seems determined to give significant importance to language functions (Xiaoyu, 2022). The approach was proposed by well known linguist namely Michel Halliday im 1960s who asserted that systemic Functional Linguistics must acknowledged as the one of the most linguistic mechanism for understanding language features as a medium of meaning making and is embedded in social semiotics (Khan, 2021).

Apart of this, systemic Functional Linguistics shows a great concern for the way, language is being selected and utilized by the speakers under the grammatical features. This sort of grammar is usually shifts it's focus on the context in which people use language

and convey articular meanings unlike the traditional one that goes for the apparent syntactic structure of the words like nouns and verbs.

“We use language to communicate with others in order to construct meanings, to main international relations and the social order that lies behind those relations. This process helps us to interpret and represent the world not only for ourselves but for the others also. He further asserted that language is a natural part of living process that facilitates us to store the experiences gained as a result of that process, personally and collective both (Halliday, 1997, P. 3)”.

Further, Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics is based on three metafunctions that are respectively: international and textual and ideational. International metafunction refers to the grammatical choices that enable a speaker to build his/her diverse and complex international relationships and this metafunction is realized by two aspects termed as mood and modality. Meanwhile, ideational metafunction deals with the grammatical resources that help the individuals to construct their experiences of the outer world. This metafunction is realized by transitivity system that is further divided into different types of processes. Hence, textual metafunction basically deals with the creation of text representing ideational and international meanings as a body of knowledge that can be shared by the speakers and listeners in a particular text along with the consideration of the context in which it is occurred (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1997).

Literature Review

Xiaoyu (2022) conducted a qualitative research that was an attempt to examine Obama’s speech from the perspective of systemic functional linguistic approach proposed by Halliday (1997). The results of that particular study revealed the occurrence of different types of process among which material process was the dominant one that showed the percentage of 56%. The findings also asserted that these processes played a significant role to make the people realize that only their collective attempt can bring a series of achievements to the whole country.

Gu and Shi (2002) explored the political discourse of British Queen’s parliament speech by employing Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) notion of systemic Functional Linguistics. However, the researchers used the mixed method in their study within an aim to not only figure out the numerical value of the data but to give the descriptive interpretation also to get the deeper understanding of that particular discourse. The results showed the existence of four types of processes that were respectively material, mental, relational and existential. However, throughout the speech, material process had been the dominant one. In short, all these linguistic features showed the seriousness of the speaker towards her responsibilities towards her people.

Khan (2021) also examined the speech of the former prime minister Imran Khan from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics. The study was based on qualitative descriptive paradigm and has been limited to the exploration of the ideational metafunction of the data only. It was actually an attempt to explore the way, semantic and syntactic patterns tend to serve speaker’s ideological thoughts and authority to turn those thoughts into reality. The findings asserted that the former prime minister’s thinks that Pakistan needs a strong leader in order to be stabilized in socio-economic sphere.

Wirza et al (2020) examined Kamala Harris presidential victory speech based on Covid 19 under the lens of systemic Functional Linguistics. However, the main objective of the study was to explore the different types of process that the speaker used in her

particular discourse to convey certain realities and ideologies to the target audience. The findings revealed the occurrence of 60% material process, 19% relational, 11% mental and 3% behavioral process to share her liberalism ideology to get the people ready to be focused on their own liberty.

Noori (2019) done the transitivity analysis of US president Obama's selected speeches delivered from the time period of 2009 to 2017. The study was based on qualitative paradigm and Halliday and Matthiessen (2006) systemic Functional Linguistics model was applied as the framework. The findings revealed that 70% use of verbal process to highlight the issue of Iraq and Afghanistan.

From the studies discussed above, it has been proved that no body in Pakistan has explored the political discourse of Marium Nawaz from any angle yet and this is also the research gap of this study which adds its authenticity.

Theoretical Framework

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) transitivity system belongs to the ideational metafunction and helps to construct an experience in terms of configuration of different types of processes, participants and circumstances. It is also very important to note that in terms of experiences, processes are always realized through clause structure. Moreover, the process is usually realized by the verbal group in the clause. There are six types of processes that have been briefly discussed below;

Material Process

Material process refers to the activity that happens in the outside world. It construes the physical experience of human beings. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) this type of process expresses the notion that an entity has been or is getting physically influenced by some other entity. The main participant of this process is usually termed as "agent or doer".

Mental Process

Mental process can be identified with the clauses that indicate affection, cognition, desire and perception. Further, it facilitates speakers to express their thoughts and opinions that ultimately construct their sense of reality. Moreover, this type of process is realized by the verbs like "want, smell, feel, hear, admire and enjoy. This process is related to the psychological matters and the participant of this process who is usually named as "sensor" must be the conscious one.

Behavioral Process

This type of process can be perceived as the combination of material and mental. It includes the verbs like snoring, crying, smiling, watching and listening. According to Garot and Wignol (1994) this process has not any clear or defined features that why it borrows some elements from mental and material process. The participant of this process is known as "behavior".

Relational Process

Relational process explains the relationship between two different entities through possession, identification and attribution. This type of process occurs inside an human

being and is realized by clauses carrying the verb “be” or some others like “become”, “appear and “seem”. It further falls into two sub categories.

Identifying

It occurs when an entity is identified with something else. The verbs used in this type of process are “is”, “are”, “was” and “were”. This process involves two participants known as “token and value”.

Attributive

It refers to the process that gives some qualities or attributes to some entity. Further, it is realized by the verbs “it”, “has”, “will” and “belong”. The participants of this process are called “carrier and attribute”.

Verbal Process

It refers to the act of saying and the main participant of this process is known as “sayer” and the thing he/she talks about is called “verbage”. Further, it is believed that this process takes some characteristics of mental process specially when we believe that vocalization of thoughts is a type of inner speech (Saraigh, 2010).

Existential Process

Existential Process is a process of existence. It represents that something exists without predicating something additional. This process can be easily recognized because it usually uses the word “there” as a subject of the clause.

Material and Methods

The study has been examined under the paradigm of the qualitative descriptive method due to its research friendly nature that paves the way to get deeper understanding of the phenomenon under a particular investigation (Kumar, 2012). The data has been comprised of political discourse and a particular sample of Marium Nawaz’s speech given at her oath taking ceremony has been chosed by employing purposive sampling technique. While, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) model of systemic functional linguistics has been utilized as the framework of the study.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Frequency and proportion of each process type in Maryam Nawaz’s Speech

| Process Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Verbal | 45 | 45% |
| Mental | 40 | 40% |
| Relational | 10 | 10% |
| Behavioral | 5 | 5% |
| Total types of processes=5 | | Total no of clauses=100 |

The content being investigated is comprised of total 100 clauses among which 45% clauses were containg verbal process. Through the occurrence of this process, the newly elected chief minister (sayer) gave the brief description of her political career and the sufferings that she had to face while being in apposition. The second type of process that has been observed to be Occured frequently throughout the speech was mental process. The ration of this process was 40% and as a result of this occurrence, the CM expressed her

gratitude to be elected as the 1st female chief minister ever in Pakistan's history and wished all Pakistani women to be successful in their lives. Further, she showed her determination to set the province on an ultimate way of success in every aspect of life like education, health and employment opportunities.

"I desire to make Punjab an economic hub by empowering businessmen and we will provide one window solution for establishing and running businesses, she promised".

Another example of mental process used in this political discourse can be observed below;

"I consider this office a big responsibility on my shoulders"

The third type of process was relational identifying and relational intensive that the carrier used to describe the qualities of Pakistani women.

"This is the honour of every mother, sister and daughter that a woman has been elected as the CM"

In the line mentioned above, the speaker has identified herself with a common Pakistani woman and claimed that to be elected as the 1st female chief minister is not only her success rather it is the success of every Pakistani woman whether she is a mother, daughter and sister.

"She is still present with me, her prayers and wishes"

Further, she seemed to assume her late mother as alive one who always stays along with her and guides her in her tough times.

Through the realization of relational process, she also emphasized the need to develop useful reforms to improve the economy of the country in these words.

"The reforms are required in the economic backbone with facilitating businessmen and small enterprises".

Apart of the processes mentioned above, the researcher observed the occurrence of behavioural process for five times that is only 5% of the total clauses. Through the utilization of this process, the speaker acknowledged her late mother efforts who gets her daughter ready to face all the challenges of life and to set her own way of life.

"She knowingly and unknowingly trained me for this day"

"She taught me how to face trials"

Discussion

The study was based on two research questions and at the end, the criteria of both questions has been successfully fulfilled as the first objective has been to explore the different types of processes employed by the newly elected 1st female chief minister's speech at her oath taking ceremony. Hence, the researcher found four types of processes respectively; mental, verbal, behavioral and relational. However, verbal has been the most dominant one through the speech having the ration of 42% of the total clauses. On the other hand, the question was to examine the way, language was being used as a tool to

convey intended meaning to the target audience? The study responded this question in the way that the CM made the very strategical and persuasive use of language to achieve her intended purposes. Firstly, she thanked to all the people who supported her throughout her political career and also to her political rivals as well who while being in government, gave her a series of challenges which ultimately prepared her for this day. Secondly, she claimed that to be elected as the first female chief minister is not only her success but it is the moment of celebration for all the women of country irrespective of their age group and profession. In the political context, It was actually an indirect attempt to arise the emotions of Pakistani women and to get them in favor of their own gender. Thirdly, in a positive way, the newly elected CM expressed her ambitious plans to set Punjab on the way of an ultimate success by developing useful policies to strengthen the economy of the country, by providing best medical, educational and financial opportunity to every individual. In short, she claimed that it is her utmost desire to make the country an economic hub.

Future Implications

1. The future researchers can explore the transitivity system in the political discourse developed by some other politician.
2. They apply some other linguistic framework on the same political content under this investigation.

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