

Ideological Analysis of Pervez Musharraf's Interview with SIEGEL (German Online Magazine)

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Abstract

This article critically examines the discursive strategies of Pervez Musharraf to find out his ideologies in the background of his multiple identities i.e. Army Chief, President and politician of Pakistan. The study is focused on analyzing the discursive strategies used by Musharraf to express and acquire his ideologies. It also studies the ways in which Musharraf explains and legitimates his actions. Data for the present study is an interview of Musharraf to German online magazine SIEGEL. I analyzed my data following the concept of ideology and discourse suggested by Van Dijk (2006). The study concludes that ideologies are attempted to be expressed and acquired majorly at two levels. In the context of internal political discourse of Pakistan, the binary is between Musharraf (as past and present political figure) and his opponent political parties and the government. The other level of binary is between Musharraf as a Pakistani politician/former head of the country/Chief of the Army staff of the country and the West. He expresses his ideology at both levels in an effective way but sometimes he fails to acquire the ideologies he attempted to acquire.

Keywords: Ideologies, discursive strategies, Ideological analysis, Political discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis.

Introduction

Parvez Musharraf is former Pakistani General, Chief of the Army Staff, former President of the country and head of the political party APML (All Pakistan Muslim League). Musharraf joined army in 1961 and after receiving his commission in 1964, was placed in an artillery regiment. He witnessed Afghan war and two wars between Pakistan and India in 1965 and 1971. In 1998, he was appointed as Chief of the Army Staff by Nawaz Sharif. He led Kargil operation in 1999 that turned into war between Pakistan and India which caused numerous casualties on both sides. This created tension between him and Nawaz Sharif and consequently he took over the government of Nawaz Sharif in 1999. This was the onset of his political career.

He started his military rule as Chief Executive of the country and later became the President of Pakistan (20th June, 2001). His dual position was challenged in the courts. Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered him to hold national elections. He arranged a referendum on 30th April 2002 which was to seek the opinion of the people to extend his

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rule, as President, to five years. He arranged general elections in October 2002 year. He remained in the office as President after the next elections held in 2008 but left his position as Army Chief in 2007 due to huge pressure from the political community of the country. He resigned from his position of the President five months after the April 2008 general elections and went on a self-imposed exile in London. He announced his political party APML (All Pakistan Muslim League) in June 2010. Musharraf is accused for the conspiracy of assassination of Akbar Bughti and Benazir Bhutto. Many cases were filed against him including major cases like, treason under article 6 of the constitution, Lal Masjid operation, disabling and forceful retirement of the then Chief Justice.

This background makes Musharraf an important personality in Pakistan as well as in international politics. In both the contexts, Musharraf holds an important position and represents a particular group in the binary of political power relations. The multiple identities of Pervez Musharraf enhance his position in the political context, both local and international. His ideologies as Army Chief and political figure of a nuclear power and strategically important country give him prominence in international political context. This background justifies the significance of the data selected for this research.

Ideology

Critical Discourse Analysis is aimed at analyzing power relations between the dominant and subordinate groups in social institutions. This can be achieved after examining the discourse to expose the ideologies of the social actors (Fairclough, 1989) because ideologies construct the position, interests and struggle of the individuals/groups in the power structure. Therefore, ideologies are considered foundation for power relations, dominance, inequality, bias and discrimination (Van Dijk, 1996). Discourse is a means of communicating ideologies for the individuals and groups (Wodak, 2002). Critical Discourse Analysis study discourse to expose these ideologies to find out the nature of power relations between the individuals/groups. Group members use ideologies to legitimize their interests in the power structure. It is the goal of Critical Discourse Analysis to discover facts about discourses by finding out and giving meanings to ideologies (Wodak, 2002). Ideologies are responsible for forming and organizing attitudes of a social group related to public opinion about social issues and are cognitively organized by the individuals (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Ideological analysis of the political discourse exposes the position, struggle, intentions and interests of the political actors. Their ideologies are incorporated in their discourse therefore, Critical Discourse Analysis is a vital tool to unveil them and understand the real situation.

In political context ideologies refer to the ideas and beliefs of the political actors on the basis of which they stand in front of the world. Political actors promote their perspective (ideologies) about the issues related to politics, economy and society through their discourse (Horváth, 2009). They strive to dominate and suppress other political groups through their discursive practices. When powerful, they struggle to sustain their position by suppressing those other group. When outside the government, they take a position in the

public sphere and attempt to achieve the power position through their discursive practices. Politicians use language as an effective tool to express, sustain and regain power. Their struggle for power makes them put their ideas and interests into practice through discursive strategies. Politicians as members of certain groups, have certain ideologies which are shared by the whole groups and depicted in their language use.

The research in the field of political discourse finds the study of political ideologies an important aspect. Many researchers in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis have examined ideologies of the political actors to expose their position and interests in the institution of politics. Horváth (2009) focuses on the persuasive devices used by Obama in his inaugural speech and exposes his ideologies both at local and international level. He exposes the struggle of Obama as a dominant political actor to construct and sustain the power relations in the world political order. Weintraub (2007) compares the national addresses by Kennedy (Cuban Missile Crisis) and Bush (9/11) and scrutinizes their ideologies (to legitimize the military action against the others; ideologically defined enemies) as exposed in the rhetorical devices they used. Hempstead (2005) carried out ideological analysis of the speeches of Bush and Kerry about gay marriages to study the difference in their ideologies about that matter and the way both the leaders communicated them in their speeches. The study finds out the ways in which Bush's ideology of tradition and Kerry's ideology of equality are dominant in their speeches. Matić (2012) studies the speeches of US presidential candidates for 2008 elections focusing on their ideologies at national and international context. He focuses on the strategies used by the candidate for positive self-representation and negative other-representation and found out that their ideologies shape their discursive structure at both national and international level. Van Dijk (1995, 2000) studies the ideologies in the political contexts. He approaches the hidden ideologies in the news items and instead of focusing on the issue first, finds out the ideologies and then relates them to the issues they are associated with. The present study is aimed at examining the ideologies of Pervez Musharraf at different levels which are set by his multiple identity in the context of national and international politics.

The objective of this research is to examine Musharraf's attempts to express and acquire ideologies using discursive strategies. The study is important because it focuses on the transformation of ideologies with the change of roles and position of the political leader. Change of position and ideology with a shift of roles puts the individuals in a position where they not only have to defend their past but also acquire new ideologies which they need for their new position. Musharraf was in the same situation where from a dictator he is going to be a democrat. The researcher has tried to find out how he expressed himself after the shift from one to another position.

The interview was published online on 4th October 2010 in SIEGEL. It is important because it gives a perspective about the crucial issues like Kashmir, Nuclear Weapons and terrorism. Pervez Musharraf presented himself as Ex-President, a politician and Ex-Army Chief who was responsible to answer the questions in these contexts. The researcher has

attempted to find out how Musharraf's ideology was expressed in this interview? Which discursive strategies he uses to acquire the ideology he wanted to? To what extent his attempt to acquire ideologies was successful and facilitated by his discourse?

Theoretical Basis of the Study

Theoretical basis of the study is Van Dijk's (1995, 2006) concept of ideology with relation to discourse. He believes that ideologies are explicit in discourse and can be acquired through it. Members of certain groups use ideological discourse to explain and defend their actions as ideologies of their group. The study follows Van Dijk's (2006) model as method for analysis of the data. The model covers different aspects of discourse to unveil the hidden ideologies of the discourse user. It categorizes discourse into five broad elements i.e. those are further divided into subcategories i.e. context, overall strategy, meaning, form and action. The present study has chosen all the elements for analysis with selective sub-categories. The sub-categories have been delimited for convenience and on the basis of their relevance.

Analysis

Context

The overall topic of the interview is Pakistani policies and politics with specific focus on the policies and political matters related to Musharraf (directly or indirectly). At macro level, the interview discusses the problems of Pakistan and different factors responsible for these problems. This creates a division between Pakistan and the other group. In this context, the other group is the West. However, at micro level there is another division that is between Musharraf and his (political) opponents within the country i.e. government and his political and other rivals. Therefore, we see the binary of us and them at two levels here. One is in the context of international political discourse and the other is in the context of internal political/other discourse of Pakistan. The two-level context makes this interview not just an ideological text but a multiple ideological text.

Overall Strategy

Us and them/Our and their

The division of us and them at broader level is between Pakistan and the world where Musharraf focuses on positive representation of us (Pakistan) and negative representation of them (the West). The division of us and them in the internal political discourse of Pakistan is between Musharraf (us) and his opponent political forces (them) in Pakistan. These forces include the then government (PPP) and his opponent political parties specially PMLN. Musharraf throughout the interview strives to emphasize the positive image of Us and negative image of Them at both the levels (local and international). He defends Our actions i.e. militancy in Kashmir, achieving nuclear power, position of

terrorism and criticizes actions of Their i.e. supporting India in Kashmir and on the issue of nuclear power, Afghan war, being responsible for the present situation of terrorism in Pakistan, not supporting Pakistan at any level, leaving Pakistan alone after achieving goals in Afghanistan with our help. At local level, he praises his actions i.e. selection of Kayani as Army Chief and blames other for i.e. economic decline, political turmoil, being characterless, extremism, poor law and order situation.

Positive Representation of Self

Musharraf is always criticized for demolishing the democracy and establishing his dictatorship in Pakistan because he took over the government from Nawaz Sharif when he was the Army Chief. He denies any chance for the army to take over the government even the performance of the government is very poor and the country is in “turmoil”. This is an aspiration of a politician because now democracy is his interest. While denying the chance of military rule in Pakistan he exposes two factors which can be the reason of military rule. Firstly, due to turmoil in the country “everybody looks to the army”. Secondly, the Supreme Court was previously supporting the military rule in the country but now *latest political developments have shown that the Supreme Court has set a bar on itself not to validate a military takeover*. The first factor helps him to justify his decision of taking over the government from Nawaz Sharif. Secondly, involvement of the Supreme Court as a stakeholder de-intensifies his action of demolishing the democratic government. He mentions these factors to justify his negative action and to establish his positive image in front of the world.

He claims that there is no case of corruption or fraud against him. He knows that there are some cases against him but they are not directly related to corruption and fraud. He specifies the matter by using the expression “corruption or fraud” to give a message to the world that he has been fair and honest. The positive self-representation in this context is very important for his political future in Pakistan.

Musharraf believes that he is a popular leader among masses because people (in Dubai) like him and he is popular on TV and social media. He mentions his money-raising campaign for the flood victims on TV which was (according to him) very successful. He strives to achieve positive identity and brings in examples which are not very convincing because gaining popularity on social media, raising money for flood victims and positive response of the people living in a foreign country does not show one’s political popularity. He brings in these examples to show that he is popular among Pakistanis because they believe he is fair and honest.

He defends Pakistan in different matters like militancy in Kashmir, Taliban, Al-Qaeda and issues related to Afghanistan. Here he plays the role of Pakistani leader who wants to represent the positive picture of his country and defends the arguments which may harm the reputation of his country in front of the world. In both the cases his ideology is expressed.

Negative Representation of Other

One of the important aspects of ideological discourse is negative representation of the other group/groups. Musharraf utilizes it well to achieve his goals in the binary of Us and Them. He is ideologically grouped against the present government, so he emphasizes the negative image of them. He identifies himself with the group of politicians out of the office. He intensifies the failure of government in the fields of economy, law and order, extremism and politics. He, by attacking the government, tries to defend himself as a politician and ex-ruler of the country. The negative picture of the government is more important for him to defend his position as former leader of the country because the extremely negative image of the government can conceal or de-intensify the weaknesses of his government.

At the international level, he stands as Us and the West in the position of Them. He accuses the West of blaming Pakistan every time for the disputes between India and Pakistan instead of taking actions against India that is responsible for many of the issues faced by Pakistan including separation of Bangladesh and tension in Kashmir. He criticizes the West for discrimination between Pakistan and India i.e. they never mention India's nuclear program and always blame Pakistan for possessing nuclear power. He blames them (U.S. and Germany specially) for not taking any action against India for Kashmir and other issues. He also accuses them of not taking measures for resolving the Kashmir issue. He blames Western policies for Taliban and Al-Qaeda which caused the present situation of terrorism and extremism in Pakistan. He indirectly blames the US for the flawed past and present strategies about Afghanistan and Pakistan which are responsible for terrorism in Pakistan and the world. Musharraf tries to intensify the mistakes and blunders of the other groups e.g. India, the West and Pakistani government/ politicians.

He strives to achieve his goals in the power structure both nationally and internationally for that purpose he attempts to establish his positive image in different positions i.e. common citizen, head of the country, army chief, and politician. Negative representation of Other as a discursive strategy is a tool in his hand to legitimize his actions.

Meaning

Implicit vs. Explicit

Musharraf, mostly, uses direct sentences and remains explicit while discussing Kashmir issue, Abdul Qadeer Khan, Indian stance on Kashmir. Sometimes he gets implicit and indirect and it happens when he refers to the West or the US. He utilizes the strategy of inclusion while talking about Afghan war in the context of the situation of terrorism in Pakistan i.e. "We poisoned the Pakistani civil society", "we fought the Soviets in Afghanistan", "we brought in militants from all over the world". The use of "we" shows the inclusion of his group into the other group. It indicated towards the time when Pakistan fought as US ally in Afghanistan. Pakistan took every step to defend the

Western interests in the area even its solidarity and peace was at stake. The West after achieving their goals in the area left Pakistan with all the problems unsolved which culminated in the present terrorist activities in the country. The use of “we” unveils the dishonesty of the West because they made Pakistan ally at the time of need and then left alone after destroying its peace. It also reveals the aspiration of Musharraf to be one with the West again to solve the problems of Pakistan created by the West. It is also an implicit attempt to present the other group as negative and dishonest. The implicit nature of discourse exposes the dominant position of the West.

Modality

Musharraf uses modal verbs in meaningful and effective manner. He knows how to convey his message in a suggestive and polite manner. He expresses his ideologies by selecting modal verbs in his discourse. The statement, “I would suggest that the times of military coups is over” is in suggestive mood and is meaningful. He suggests against the military coup because it is against his political interests. It also shows a desire and expectation that will benefit his political future in Pakistan.

Musharraf tries to present himself as an honest politician whose opponent (Nawaz Sharif) is after an opportunity to harm his reputation and political career. He individualizes his opponent in the statement “Nawaz Sharif would love to create a case against me” which intensifies his negative image. It is also an attempt to win the sympathies of the people. The politeness in the statement helps him to establish himself as a tolerant politician.

He further emphasizes his honesty and integrity by bringing in the court i.e. “I would reply in court”. He presents himself as a fearless, honest and true person. He is exaggerating his positive image because while saying all this he knows that there are some cases against him in Pakistani courts. He tries to give message to the people of Pakistan that his position in those cases is strong as they are not based on truth. Additionally, they are a conspiracy of his opponents against him.

The statement “You should reinforce the ancient Pashtun clan” has a suggestive as well as indirect tone. He is addressing the West on the matter of terrorism and to defend the position of Pakistan. The indirect nature of the statement exposes the dominance of the West as well as the subordinate position of Musharraf and his group in the world political discourse. He invites the West to play a positive role to eradicate terrorism because they are responsible and “...then Pakistan should think of how to handle it”. He opposes the Western point of view and presents his suggestions. He is successful in being convincing in front of the dominant political group. The statement also reveals his struggle to achieve the power position in the world politics.

Lexicon

Lexical choices expose the ideologies of the discourse users and their intensions of positive self-representation and negative other representation. These are the selection of the words and phrases of the discourse users for his group and the other group.

Negative lexical choices for other. Musharraf used many negative lexical items for the other group which expresses his ideological interests like

Pakistani Government. turmoil, decline, jeopardy, non-performance, vendetta, vindictiveness.

To defend his interest and image of his country he attacked Abdul Qadeer Khan and uses the word “characterless” for him.

The West. poisoned, blunders

Positive lexical choices for self. While talking about himself/his group he uses both positive and negative terms. However, while using negative terms he added expressions of negation or used questions to give them a positive sense i.e. “no case of corruption or fraud”, “not living a hermit’s life”, “I would be a traitor if...”, “Do you think.... they hate me?”

Apart from that he made positive lexical choices for himself and his group i.e. pride, happy and good

Form

Rhetoric Devices

Musharraf takes help from rhetorical devices like questions and metaphoric language to establish his ideologies. He uses questions in a very effective and dominating manner. Questions help him to challenge the Other group, to emphasize certain ideas, to criticize the other group and to defend his point of view effectively. Questions provide him the force required to enhance the negative actions of the other group “We expected the West...Germany done that? He uses this question to explain the role of Pakistan in militancy in Kashmir. Musharraf criticizes the silence of the West and Germany on the issue of Kashmir. The interrogative structure makes his criticism more forceful and effective.

He attempts to confirm his popularity as a politician with the use of question “do you think they are doing because they hate me?” the question makes his argument powerful and persuasive. He unveils the negative ideologies of the other group i.e. Western support for India on nuclear program while criticizing Pakistan for the same

reason. "Nobody asks the Indian prime minister, ... a nuclear weapon?" and legitimizes his actions in Kashmir. Interrogations make possible for him to present a negative picture of the West and to clear Pakistan from the blames put by the West. He defends the position of Pakistan on the matter of terrorism "Now you expect Pakistan ... all of this suddenly disappear?" He explains the situation Pakistan has faced through the years that made terrorists strong. He blames the West for the present situation of terrorism in Pakistan.

Musharraf uses metaphorical language as a discursive strategy to achieve his goals in the world political context. His metaphoric use of language is forceful and convincing. He aspires for a bright future as a politician in Pakistan therefore he does not want the army to coup again "Supreme court has set a bar". The idiom reveals his ideological intention in the political power structure of Pakistan. There is a shift of identity from Army Chief to the politician due to which there is a clash between his past actions and the present intentions.

He further strengthens his political ideologies and intentions for the future by using the proverb i.e. "No risks no gain". It shows his determination for coming back to Pakistan and starting his political career. His coming back to Pakistan might not be safe but he is ready to take the risk for his political interests. The proverb presents him as a bold politician who is not afraid of the conspiracies of his political opponents (Nawaz Sharif) and is ready to face any situation in Pakistan. He expresses his resentment on the demand of the West to finish terrorism "To pull out a magic wand". The proverb has a sense of reproach which is aimed at the West. Musharraf believes, Pakistan cannot solve the issue of terrorism in a short time because it is complicated and deep-rooted in the past policies of the West. The West should contribute in solving the problem because they are responsible. The proverb exposes the negative picture of the West in past and present.

He makes use of alliteration to expose the role of the West to harm peace and stability of Pakistan "Poisoned Pakistani civil society". He finds the present situation of terrorism in Pakistan a fruit of the Western policies for Pakistan and Afghanistan. Alliteration adds to his efforts of negative representation of the West and the Western policies.

Action

Speech Acts

Most of the time, Musharraf uses assertive sentences; the perlocutionary acts which are the expressions of the beliefs; descriptions, assertions and statements (Searle, 1969). Musharraf uses assertive sentences to express as well as acquire his ideologies; to establish his constructive image in all the positions. He describes the situations like Kashmir, the Western policy of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the past, present and the future picture of results which are caused by the Western policies about Taliban and other

matters. His assertive statements expose his ideologies i.e. about the West “blunders they made in Afghanistan”, the present government i.e. “Pakistan is experiencing a deep economic decline elected government is the issue”, about Abdul Qadeer Khan “characterless man”. The speech acts he used are meant to express his opinion about different people and related issues. The ideological importance of his speech acts is they are used to emphasize the positive nature of his group and negativity of the other group i.e. he praises General Kayani and debases Abdul Qadeer Khan. General Kayani is his successor and he appointed him the Army Chief. While Abdul Qadeer Khan is his opponent because his statements about the role of Pakistan in strengthening the nuclear power of North Korea and Iran. It makes him Other for Musharraf. He also uses speech acts to show his political interests “Supreme Court has set a bar on itself not to validate a military takeover.” He is responsible for military takeover but he declines the chance of another military takeover because at his present position he is more interested in democratic government.

Expressed Ideology

The detailed analysis above shows that at national level Musharraf tries to express himself as patriotic Pakistani politician who has a clear and honest past. His political opponents always try to file cases against him but they fail to prove the blames against them. He wants to come back to Pakistan just to serve the people otherwise he is well-settled and happy in London. He is away from his country but still, people love him and want him to be their leader. He is popular among the people and they support him whenever he needs their support and they will do the same in the future. He believes that the present government is not handling the country in a proper manner therefore Pakistan is in great trouble. He has handled the problems in a better manner when they were in his control and he can and will do it again after being elected by the people as their leader which is most likely to happen.

At the international level, he groups himself with Pakistan while the West is the other group. He uses the West majorly for America and its allies. He individualizes two countries in this context; America and Germany. America is included because it is ideologically Other to him and Germany is included because it supports American policies and his addressee at the moment is a German magazine. He finds the West responsible for creating the present situation of terrorism in Pakistan. They do not take interest in the solution of the problems faced by Pakistan. They support enemies of Pakistan (India). They unfairly blame Pakistan for the thing not done by it (terrorism). Pakistan is positive about solving the issues (Al-Qaeda and others). Whatever negative has been done by Pakistan is due to its security threats and the other group made Pakistan do it (militancy in Kashmir). He wants the West to play an active role to solve the issues of Pakistan which are mostly caused by their biased policies.

Acquired Ideology

Musharraf strives to acquire the expressed ideologies i.e. to make others believe that whatever he is saying is right. He wants to portray himself as an honest and popular leader and claims that he does not have any case against him but he avoids answering when he is asked about his negative actions i.e. “secret Kargil Operation, which led to an armed conflict with India in 1999”, “arbitrary changes to Pakistan’s constitution”, “dismissal of the country’s highest judge”, “the lack of concern for Benazir Bhutto’s life” and “mild treatment of religious militants”. The avoidance here weakens his position at national and international level. However, he proved to be in a better position while talking about the negative policies of the West for Pakistan which is explicit in his discourse i.e. use of assertive, questions, rhetorical language and active construction. He is clear, well-informed and having strong arguments which make his ideological position strong to some extent if not totally. Besides, he is unable to acquire the expressed ideologies at any level. He attempted to negativize the previous government to enhance his positive image but it also does not work. He fails to prove himself as a popular leader of Pakistan because the examples he presented to prove it are not effective enough (popularity on TV and social media and among people living in Dubai). His demands from the West and their role in creating problems for Pakistan put Musharraf in a subordinate position and the West in the dominating position. The West has the power to intrude in the internal matters of Pakistan even when they are not supporting it. Additionally, the West is supporting the enemies of Pakistan but still, Pakistan needs help from them. It weakens the position of Pakistan in the context of international politics. Musharraf here is unable to acquire his ideologies as a member of a strong, free and independent group.

Role of Discursive Strategies

He handles his language in a skillful manner and utilizes it well. His choice of words, structures and expressions are evidence of his ideologies and help him to convince his readers. His way of talking about the West can influence many Pakistanis who want the West to accept that their policies for Pakistan are flawed and biased. If he is not fully successful, to some extent he has influenced and persuaded the readers of the interview to be one with him in the issues discussed in the interview. It is true that he is not successful in acquiring his ideologies but no doubt his discourse is effective and persuasive.

Conclusion

The study has found out that discursive strategies play an important role for political actors to express their ideologies. Politicians utilize different discursive strategies not only to express but also to acquire the ideologies they want to. The study also finds that discourse of the politicians is made effective not only by linguistic choices but also by other strategies of discourse like choosing, leaving, molding and highlighting certain topics and expressions. The study links the expressing and acquiring of ideologies with the linguistics and discursive strategies and proves that this link is strong and compulsory.

The study proves that the interview has an ideological value and it has two layers. Both the layers are related to Musharraf with reference to his identity and status in the Pakistani politics and other matters. He tries to depict himself as a credible person and a fair politician and for this purpose he exploits his linguistic choices and discursive strategies. The results show that he is successful to an extent to acquire the ideology he expressed however he is not able to acquire them fully because sometimes he fails to handle the situation in an effective manner.

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Interview

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