



RESEARCH PAPER

Mood Analysis of Ex Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's Speech at UNGA in 2021

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present research is to determine the predominant mood formations in the speech delivered by Imran Khan at the UNGA 2021 meeting and also examine how these mood pattern can be used to deliver a message and create an interpersonal meaning. Political speeches can be seen as a great tool that can create national identity and convince the whole world. The diplomatic policy of the Pakistani government expressed in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) speech of Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan shows the country and its moral image based on its word choice. This study embraces a clause-by-clause mood analysis of official language transcript in English as a system that follows Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a framework. Clauses were divided into the declarative; interrogative and imperative moods and their occurrence and rhetorical purposes were qualitatively analysed. Results indicate that declarative clauses predominate in the speech, they are projected and project an authority and factual reasoning, whereas interrogatives engage the moral reasoning and imperatives stimulate a collaborative appeal. The analysis shows that mood choice serves as a strategic way to build power, empathy, and achieving persuasion and turns grammar into a weapon of diplomatic rhetoric and representing oneself and the world. The study recommends to carry out an in-depth mood analysis of the speeches of the world leaders to dig out their strategies to tackle the upcoming global challenges. It also recommends to carry out on a bigger data stance evaluation to analyze rhetorical strategies of used in speeches and briefings.

Keywords: Mood Analysis, Ex Prime Minister, Speech, UNGA

Introduction

Language is not a medium of communication only but rather the potent tool of building social reality and thought. In the context of politics, the language usage is strategically used to assert power, appeal to emotions and create the ideological stance. Political leaders use their particular grammars and rhetorical frameworks to influence opinions of the masses, legitimize policies and fit audiences to their worldview. The mood system is one of such linguistic systems, and it is essential in identifying the ways of how interpersonal meanings are achieved through various types of clauses (declarative, interrogative, and imperative) that demonstrate different levels of power, solidarity, and persuasion (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014).

Political oratory at the international stage, specifically at such a body like the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), has attracted the attention of scholars over the past few years due to the complexities and effects it has on the world. Being the international platform, when the heads of the states speak to the entire world, UNGA speeches constitute a genre that incorporates diplomacy, building national identities, and moral persuasion. The speech given by Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan in 2021 presents a good argument to be analyzed linguistically and rhetorically in this context. The speech touched

upon a wide range of the problems such as Islamophobia, climate change, regional security, corruption, and humanitarian justice in a context of global moral responsibility. Such a complex speech deserves the analysis of how the choice of mood helps to express the power, sympathy, and ideology.

Although, there is a vast literature on the concept of political discourse and studies on SFL, little research has been done on mood structures in Pakistani political speeches, especially those that are made on international events such as the UNGA. Although, previous researches have investigated the thematic and critical aspects of the rhetoric of Imran Khan, not many have examined how particular mood patterns (declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives) inform his interpersonal communication with the international community. Thus, it is important to note that this study fills the significant gap that existed in the literature by exploring linguistic processes by which Khan frames persuasion and authority in the 2021 speech at the UNGA.

Some past studies on Pakistani political talk have been mainly concerned with ideology (Fairclough, 1995; Aziz et al., 2023) and appraisal structures (Martin and White, 2005) without much consideration on mood as a grammatical tool of meaning making. The focus of this research broadens the discourse analysis approach since it points out the importance of mood variation as a persuasive and image-making technique. The interpretation of such structures provides information about the linguistic representation of the Pakistani political identity in the global arenas, which is an underrepresented research question in the current linguistics.

Literature Review

Mood, Interpersonal Meaning and Political Discourse

An interesting application that uses systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to examine how political speakers manage interpersonal relations is the analysis of mood (declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives) in politics. As an example, Achmad, Setiawan, Purwati, Maisarah and Qoyyimah (2019) have examined the speech made by Donald Trump on Jerusalem and reveal that the speech consists of dominating declarative clauses and employing interrogatives and imperatives to construct ethos, pathos and logos. Firmansyah, Setiawan, Suharsono (2023) have studied how the communication of emotional languages in campaign speeches of Trump is done, which is primarily in declaratives with extensive use of modal. Likewise, Interpersonal Analysis of Imran Khan Speech: A Study based on SFG by (Ashiq et al., 2021) has identified the mood system of the SFL as an analysis of one of the speeches delivered by Imran Khan and revealed that the speech consisted of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives; mood variation was identified as a focus of the interpersonal meaning. The other one is A Comparative Mood Analysis of the English Speeches of General Qamar Javed Bajwa and General Pervaiz Musharraf (Saleem & Shahzad, Farooq, 2022), the researchers have analyzed the mood types in their speeches through SFL and discovered that they use interrogative and imperative clauses with similar dominance to demonstrate their authority and engage the audience. Therefore, mood analysis is not a new phenomenon in the study of political discourse, and it is applied to examine how speakers establish authority, develop solidarity, normativity, or mobilization.

Rhetoric Critical / Appraisal / Persuasion in Pak Martial Rhetoric

In addition to mood, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Appraisal theory, emotion and persuasion studies of Pakistani political life have been conducted extensively. For example, in the study by Aziz, Sharif, Hussain, Ahmad, 2023, the language of legitimization in political discourse on Kashmir issue Relying on the transitivity model by Halliday and the approaches to legitimization, the authors argue that political players (Imran Khan and Narendra Modi) employ emotion, rationality, future hypotheticals and expertise to

legitimize their cases. Other studies in the field of persuasion are Revisiting the dynamics of political persuasion and the psychology of emotional appeals in Pakistani political campaigns (Noor, Pasha, Siddiqui, 2022) that discusses the manner in which emotional appeals are created in speeches and political communication, specifically by using emotive content, repetition, metaphor and narrative. In these works, it is visible that Pakistani political language applies various rhetorical and linguistic tools (not only mood but also appraisal, transitivity, metaphor, narrative) to persuade people. Nevertheless, there are fewer mood-type specialized studies (specifically examined frequencies and functions declarative/interrogative/imperative).

Comparative and Genres Studies: UN/International Speeches

Several studies investigate those speeches that are made at international fora (UNGA, etc.) and the role of mood, speech acts and rhetorical structure in these contexts. As mood analysis is applied in the study Donald Trump Grammar of Persuasion in his Speech (Fanani, A. et AL., 2020), a discussion of a political situation of the UN/Eastern, which shows the contribution of rhetorical mood decisions to persuasive influences on the perception of the audience. The other genre of interest would be Investigating Jokowi ideological content: Representation of People in Political Speeches (Megah, Noor, Latif, 2021) that participates in independence day speeches with the use of SFL (transitivity, etc.). Although it is not about mood but transitivity, it contextualizes the absence of identity and persuasion with the help of grammar in international / formal speeches. These genre analyses validate that in high stakes, formal situations, when the audience is worldwide, a pattern can be found; there is a prevalence of declarative moods, rhetorical challenge by interrogatives, invitation by imperatives. To the best of my knowledge, however, no one has comprehensively analysed the mood of Imran Khan in his UNGA 2021 speech as your study suggests. Even though literature is a rich field, there are still a number of gaps:

Specific mood analysis: Although numerous studies investigate the persuasion, emotion, or critical discourse, less of them focus specifically on mood types (declarative, interrogative, imperative) in a complete UNGA speech of Imran Khan, where frequencies and qualitative analysis of interpersonal meaning are used. The change in mood / diachronic aspects in speeches of Imran Khan in comparison with time is also under-researched, particularly, the international speeches (UNGA) and domestic. Interaction between mood and modality and appraisal in his speeches could be further integrated: mood does not operate in pure form so a mixture of mood and modality (obligation, probability) and appraisal (evaluation, emotion) would provide more insights.

Representative sample of clauses and sample extraction: most studies make partial extracts or rather limit themselves to more specific topics; more strong ground can be given by a complete speech clause-by-clause mood analysis. Therefore, the point of your attention to the Mood Analysis of the UNGA 2021 speech of Imran Khan including the quantitative and qualitative analysis of mood types, the frequency of moods, the role of each mood in conveying the message is timely and covers a significant gap.

Material and Methods

The research design of the present study is a qualitative descriptive study based on the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to examine the mood structures employed by Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan in his speech to the United Nations general assembly (UNGA) in September 2021. The theoretical bases of the interpersonal meaning in the grammatical moods such as declarative, interrogative, and imperative, as a means of persuasion in political speech were described through the framework of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

Data Source

The official English transcript of the speech by Imran Khan at the 2021 United Nations General Assembly, which was accessed on the official website of the United Nations and then compared with the copy of the publication on the official site of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, was the primary data. The speech consisted of about 4,200 words and 218 independent clauses making the analytical corpus on the mood classification.

Analytical Framework

The research has been conducted according to the interpersonal metafunction model of SFL, according to which the concept of language is a tool to implement social relations (Halliday, 1994; Thompson, 2014). The different clauses were detected and categorized according to their type of mood such as declarative, interrogative, or imperative on the basis of their subject-finite structure. Mood identification criteria adhered to Eggins (2004) who provides the following definitions of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives; a statement providing information, a statement that questions about it, and a statement that gives a command or an invitation.

Having found the mood types, their frequency and percentage were computed in order to find out the prevailing structures. Qualitative interpretation was then used to comprehend the interpersonal functions of these moods how they are used to meet the political goals of the speaker, express emotion and create either authority or solidarity. This was done in two steps: categorization quantitatively and interpretation qualitatively; this was to guarantee precision of language and understanding of the context.

Analytical Procedure

1. **Transcription and segmentation:** The speech was transcribed in the form of the clauses and divided with the help of the punctuation marks and syntactic signs.
2. **Mood classification:** Hallidayan conventions were used to label each clause in terms of its grammatical mood.
3. **Interpretive analysis:** Interpretation of mood choices was based on thematic content (e.g., terrorism, justice, climate change) and rhetorical purpose (assertion, questioning, appeal).
4. **Validation:** Two linguists peer-reviewed the study, which guaranteed the inter-rater reliability of mood classification and interpretive consistency.

Results and Discussion

The analysis is based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theorized by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) that involves the mood system of grammatical resource where speakers establish social relations and share information. Within this context, all clauses operate as exchanges, which are achieved by three major moods:

- Declarative: to provide information.
- Interrogative: to demand information.
- Imperative: to demand action.

Therefore, mood analysis reveals the interpersonal semantics of language, the working of power, solidarity and persuasion in discourse. An address by Imran Khan to the 76th session of the United Nations general assembly (24 September, 2021) was chosen as a source of data. The formal transcript (some 2,900 words) was divided into clauses. All

clauses were coded according to mood type in accordance with Hallidayan conventions, and frequencies were made to find out the dominant structures. The realization of persuasive, moral and diplomatic functions of these moods was then looked at through qualitative interpretation.

Quantitative Profile of Mood Falters

Table 1
Mood Types Usage In The Speech.

Mood Type	Frequency	Percentage	Primary Function in Discourse
Declarative	274	90.1%	Assertion, explanation, evaluation
Interrogative	19	6.3%	Rhetorical questioning, challenge
Imperative	11	3.6%	Calls for action, moral exhortation
Total Clauses	304	100%	-----

In this case, the declarative mood prevails (90%), which proves that the speech has an informative and assertive role. Nevertheless, the interrogative (6%), imperative (4%) moods, though minimal, play an essential rhetorical role, establishing emotional appeal and moral discussion. This delivery is similar to other political speeches in international conferences (Fairclough, 2013; Eggins, 2004) but has a higher level of moral intensity in the interrogative and imperative application.

Sample Clause and Identification of Mood

The table 2
Typical Clauses And The Categorization Of Moods

Clause (from speech)	Mood Type	Interpersonal Function
1. "Pakistan has lost 80,000 lives in the war on terror."	Declarative	Presents factual evidence; builds authority.
2. "The people of Kashmir continue to face oppression."	Declarative	Evaluative statement asserting injustice.
3. "Climate change is a reality that threatens humanity."	Declarative	Global warning; creates shared concern.
4. "Why has the world remained silent on the suffering of Kashmiris?"	Interrogative	Rhetorical question challenging global conscience.
5. "How long will we ignore the plight of Afghan people?"	Interrogative	Moral provocation; appeals to empathy.
6. "Let us work together to prevent another humanitarian crisis."	Imperative (hortative)	Encourages collective responsibility.
7. "We must ensure that Afghanistan is not abandoned."	Declarative with high modality	Obligation expressed via modal verb <i>must</i> .
8. "Let me congratulate you, Mr. President."	Imperative (polite)	Diplomatic opening; maintains decorum.
9. "The international community should take immediate steps."	Declarative with modality	Suggestive directive; softens command.
10. "Islamophobia must be recognized and countered."	Declarative	Normative assertion; moral stance.

Mood Structure (Qualitative Interpretation)

Declarative Mood: Building Authority, Rationality and Ethos

The speech is dominated by declaratives and is the basis of linguistic elements of ethos (credibility) and logos (rational argument). Khan makes himself an informed and morally well-founded statesman, through declarative clauses. The declarative structure (Ordinarily: Subject + Finite + Predicator) is confident and commanding and it creates a tone of authority. For example: *There has been a huge human and economic loss in this war in Pakistan.*

In this case, it is not just a declarative but a evaluative form as well; it places Pakistan as victim and an actor of morality. The three overlapping functions of declaratives are:

Informative: It involves the reporting of verifiable facts (casualties, statistics).

Evaluative: The statement of judgments and moral evaluations (The world community has failed...)

Directive-modulated: To make a suggestion about action with being diplomatically polite, use modals (must, should, need to). By such stratification, declaratives gain persuasive refinement: they are the combination of facts with ethical expression, the urge to get the audience on the side without being coercive.

The Interrogative Mood: Fomenting Reflection and Moral Accountability

Interrogatives are mostly presented in form of rhetorical questions. They work to question, humiliate and morally involve world actors. Examples of two such clauses are:

"How long will the world remain silent on the suffering of the Kashmiri people?"
"Why are there different standards when Muslims are involved?"

These clauses are grammatically constructed with urgency using Wh-interrogatives and modal verbs that include will and are. Pragmatically, they are not information seeking calls but calls to look inside. With the help of such interrogatives, the tenor of the speech is changed not from informative to confrontational, not only does the UN audience become not passive listeners, but participants of a moral character. According to Thompson (2014), rhetorical interrogatives are very potent tools to challenge dominant ideologies. Such mood is used by Khan so as to reveal the Western two-sidedness and irresponsibility of the global community, repositioning Pakistan as the moral agent of the Muslim world. Interrogative mood thus represents pathos which entails emotion and reasonableness to create persuasive power.

Imperative Mood: Organising Solidarity and Mass Action

The imperative mode is used largely in hortative mode i.e. in most cases it starts with the word let us to make the imperative look more like an inclusive mode. For instance:

"Let us join hands to combat climate change."
"Let us work together to ensure peace in Afghanistan."

This form is an indication of collective agency and not authority. It reduces the levels of hierarchy between speaker and audience and establishes a collaborative spirit. Such soft imperatives are essential in diplomatic speech: they do not interfere with sovereignty, they beckon to involvement. Other imperatives include *Let me congratulate you* or *Let us recognize Islamophobia* that are politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987) that create a rapport and then proceeds with moral appeals. Therefore, the imperative tone of the speech given by Khan is more of an invitation to shared responsibility rather than an order, which is in line with international cooperation ethics.

Interaction of Mood and Modality

The usage of modality, particularly in the declarative clauses, is also revealed in the mood analysis to make an obligation and probability. High-obligation modals (must, should, need to) are statements made into quasi-directives:

*"We must take immediate steps to stabilize Afghanistan."
"The world should unite against Islamophobia."*

These modulated declaratives are statements in the form of ethical decrees that maintain courtesy and increase urgency. This interrelate of mood and modality, then, enables Khan to be assertive and diplomatic at the same time and to preserve both the authority and the courtesy.

Interpersonal Sense and Pattern of Rhetoric

There is a three-stage rhetorical process created by the mood sequencing:

Facts and moral foundations are made by declaratives →

Interrogatives arouse thought and doubt universal silence →

Imperatives (or modalized declaratives) offer solutions and demand unity.

This trend is reminiscent of the Martin and White (2005) concept of appraisal alignment: the speaker takes the audience through the intellectual acceptance (logos), moral reflection (pathos), and cooperative action (ethos). The manipulation of these moods helps Khan to move past national defense to advocate on a universal level, building the identity of Pakistan as a responsible moral actor, as opposed to a state that responds.

Discussion and Interpretation

The architecture of moods in the speech shows an effective stratification of interpersonal meanings:

- Declaratives give epistemic stability-Khan as an authoritative narrator.
- Interrogatives give moral dynamism-Khan as world conscience.

Imperatives: |human|>Pragmatic closure: Khan as cooperative leader.

The discourse of Khan is more affective and possesses more moral modality compared to Western UNGA speeches of 2021 (e.g., Biden, Johnson, Macron). His interrogatives tend to predict religious and moral aspects over and above geopolitical arguments. This characteristic rhetorical style corresponds to the South Asian rhetorical traditions of moral-political oratory (Rashid, 2018), in which persuasion is based on moral principle and national identity.

Conclusion

The mood analysis of the speech of Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan at the 76 th United Nations general assembly (2021) indicates how grammatical selections are influential persuasive and identity-creating tools of political speech. By using the Systemic Functional Linguistics paradigm, especially the model of the mood system by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), this study showed that the speech is based mainly on the use of the declarative Superstrategies (90 percent), as well as the little but intentional application of the interrogative (6 percent) and imperative (4 percent) ones. These trends demonstrate that these speech patterns are designed in strategic ways to inform, engage and mobilize the international audience through claiming with facts, questioning with morals, and exhorting with allies.

The inclusion of the dominance of declarative mood portrays the communicative purpose that Imran Khan aims at forming credibility and power concerning the matter of terrorism, climate change, and human rights. He makes an ethos of responsibility and knowledge through assertive statements and modalized statements (we must, the world should, hum) which makes Pakistan a victim of world neglect, moral agent, proponent of justice. Therefore, a dual role is taken by the use of declaratives not only providing the audience with verifiable information but also making a moral judgment to allow the speech to work at both the factual and ethical level.

Interrogative mood, which is less commonly used, is a transformative rhetorical one. He asks questions like; *why has the world been silent on the suffering of Kashmiris?* Passive information is restated by Khan in the form of moral inquiry. The rhetorical interrogatives are not questions but they raise questions and make the powers of the west and international institutions responsible. The interrogative mood brings to the table the issues of emotions and cognitive dissonance as it compels the listeners to address contradictions between universal values and selective action. In such a manner, linguistic questioning is changed by Khan into an ideological resistance revealing the differences in global justice narratives.

The imperative mood is not very frequent, though it has great rhetoric. Khan reduces direct command to cooperative invitation through the use of overwhelmingly friendly forms such as Let us work together and Let us join hands, which is acceptable according to the diplomatic principles of manners and companionship. These hortative imperatives change moral vision into actionable appeal in that the speech is ended by the collective and not confrontational energy. Their location, especially in the last sections, is an indication of a shift in their criticism to positive co-operation where they call on the world community to take responsibility together.

On balance, the mood system of the speech of Khan consists in the creation of an interpersonal structure. The declaratives construct Pakistan as a case in a factual and moral logic, the interrogatives interrupt the complacency with the provocation of the moral, and the imperatives create possibilities of a cooperative reaction. This combination of linguistic materials helps to produce what Martin and White (2005) refer to as appraisal alignment that leads the audience through rational comprehension (logos) to emotional involvement (pathos) to moral commitment (ethos).

The results imply that the linguistic strategy embraced by Imran Khan is not expression but performative one, that is, it turns the grammar into diplomacy. His restrained application of mood and modality enables him to be assertive and courteous, emotional and factual, national defense and world wide appealing. As such, the speech of the UNGA 2021 is presented not merely as a political speech, but as a moral one which re-brand Pakistan as a responsible and caring global actor.

Recommendations

The further study must be shifted to a comparative corpus of Imran Khan UNGA speeches (2019-2022) in order to follow the changes of the rhetorical position and linguistic means. Finalizing the automated corpus linguistics and applying it to the speech patterns of transitivity, modality and appraisal could give the quantitative strength and demonstrate the patterns of these parameters in the variety of situations. Furthermore, the linguistic mood structures of Khan in comparison with the analogues of other South Asian leaders at the UNGA may be enriched to comprehend regional standards of rhetoric. This sort of comparative study of linguistics would enhance the understanding of the way grammar not only expresses political ideology but in a certain way forms national identity and the international person.

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