

EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE IN POLITICAL INTERVIEWS WITH PAKISTANI POLITICIANS: AN SFL-BASED APPRAISAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study investigates the evaluative language employed by key Pakistani politicians in their political interviews. Six interviews, two each of Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif were selected for analysis. Following Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005), the percentage of frequencies of different appraisal resources was calculated through the UAM corpus tool. The findings revealed that all types of major appraisal resources like attitude, engagement, and graduation were used in their interviews, along with their subcategories like affect, judgment, appreciation, monoglossia, heteroglossia, force, and focus, etc. Imran Khan employed more negative attitudinal resources than others. He evaluated his opponents negatively and held them responsible for the downfall of Pakistan. Bilawal Bhutto was found in using more appreciation resources and appraised the coalition government for lifting Pakistan from the crisis. Shahbaz Sharif employed the attitudinal subtype "affect" in greater numbers to promote his ideology of bringing Pakistan back on track economically. On the contrary, Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto employed monoglossia in their interviews. It was also observed that Shahbaz Sharif employed graduation's subtype "force" mostly in both of his interviews at the time of his premiership. The study concluded that politicians use evaluative language as a powerful tool in their political interviews and speeches for positioning themselves positively, criticising, and discrediting opponents in political discourse. By employing evaluative language, they influence public opinion and promote their political agendas.

Keywords: Evaluative language, Political interviews, Pakistani politicians, Appraisal analysis

1. Introduction

Language is a medium through which people express opinions, thoughts, and emotions in front of others. It is used for conveying information, but its functions are not limited. It also plays a key role in maintaining power relations and building identities in society. In the political realm, language is not only restricted to delivering messages and conveying information, but politicians also use it as a powerful tool to perform different functions like constructing authority, discrediting their opponents, and influencing public opinion. One of the key strategies in political discourse is the use of evaluative language. Evaluative language refers to the use of words and expressions through which people express their attitudes, appreciations, criticisms, approvals, disapprovals, ideologies, emotions, and judgments toward events, situations, or people. Pounds (2015) also defines evaluative language as "Evaluative language includes the range of linguistic resources that may be used to express language users' attitude or stance to different entities in the real world or to propositions. It

expresses speakers' or writers' views of the world and at the same time, typically engages with shapes, and influences others' views and feelings (p. 1)." Politicians can use evaluative language to position themselves positively and criticise their opponents in political discourse. By employing evaluative language, they influence public opinion and promote their political agendas. As Qadeer and Shehzad (2018) argued, politicians, whether they are in government or opposition, always try to employ rhetoric to craft their speeches and interviews strategically, whether delivering speeches to the nation or public gatherings, aiming to persuade and influence through effective language manipulation.

Different studies were conducted on the interviews and speeches of different politicians in political discourse in the past. Aljuraywi and Alyousef (2022) conducted their study on Donald Trump and Joe Biden's interviews and analyzed attitudes in their interviews by applying Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005). Asad et al. (2021) interpreted attitudinal realizations in Pakistani Online newspapers, i.e. "DAWN" and "THE NEWS", through appraisal theory. Anjum et al. (2023) analyzed Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto's interviews on CNN through multimodal discourse analysis. Irfan et al. (2024) employed Fairclough's (1995) 3D model to examine persuasive language in the former prime minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan's interviews.

Other various research studies were also conducted on political interviews of different politicians in the political realm. However, the appraisal analysis of evaluating language in political interviews of Pakistani politicians remains unexplored. Researchers pay less attention to the appraisal analysis of such interviews in Pakistani political discourse. Therefore, there lies a gap in past studies conducted on political interviews and speeches, and the present research study aims to fill that gap. Pakistani politicians also use evaluative language to influence public opinions and pass judgments and appreciation towards people and events within Pakistani political discourse. This study aims to examine the evaluative language used by Pakistani politicians in their interviews by following Martin and White's appraisal framework.

1.1 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the study are;

1. To identify various appraisal resources, i.e. attitudes, engagement, and graduation, in Pakistani politicians' political interviews.
2. To find the purposeful reasons for using appraisal resources in Pakistani politicians' political interviews.
3. To compare the use of evaluative language in Pakistani politicians' political interviews.

1.2 Research Questions

The study seeks the following research questions;

1. What different appraisal resources are used in Pakistani politicians' political interviews?
2. Why do Pakistani politicians use different appraisal resources in their political interviews?
3. What are the differences in the use of evaluative language in Pakistani politicians' political interviews?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study is significant for the students of linguistics who are interested in understanding the applications of appraisal systems in Pakistani political discourse. It is also very helpful in understanding the appraisal analysis of different texts, interviews, and speeches in general. This research study has much significance in both the academic and the social sectors by

raising awareness of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This study fills the gap in the past studies conducted on Pakistani political discourse and contributes to the existing body of literature. It is also significant for future researchers as well, as they can base their studies on this research.

1.4 Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to the interviews of three key Pakistani politicians namely, Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif. These politicians were chosen because they represent and lead the top political parties (PTI, PPP, and PMLN) of Pakistan. For this study, their six interviews in English were selected, given by them to the international media after 2021. Another reason for analyzing these political interviews is to explore the linguistic choices of these politicians and their impact as they remained in power several times in Pakistan's history.

2. Literature Review

This section of the literature review discusses the key concepts related to the topic of the present study. It explains the major concepts like; evaluative language, political interviews, and appraisal theory. It also explains the theoretical framework followed in the present study and provides a critical overview of the past studies conducted on different political speeches and interviews. In the end, it also presents an identified research gap.

2.1 Evaluative Language

Evaluative language refers to the use of words and expressions through which people express their attitudes, appreciations, criticism, approvals, disapprovals, ideologies, emotions, and judgments toward events, situations, or people. It consists of those linguistic choices that are used to express speakers' or writers' stances and attitudes towards worldly entities. Pounds (2015) states that evaluative language carries context-based meanings therefore its meaning is implicit rather than explicit. Evaluative language is register-specific as well as genre-specific. For identifying register-specific evaluative language, its corpus analysis is quite helpful. This analysis is also very useful in identifying common grammatical structures associated with evaluating language. Evaluative language is such a kind of language which judges. It expresses the point of view of the speaker or writer who speaks or writes. It also ranges from low to high (weak to strong) in intensity and can contain different phrases like; Noun, verb, adverbial, and adjectival.

2.2 Political Interviews

An interview is a kind of formal communication between the participants. It is an interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Interviews are conducted to gain information on different topics, events, issues, etc. It provides a platform for the interviewers to convey their opinions to the audience. Since the emergence of TV, interviews have been conducted on TV to grab the attention and viewership of people on a large scale. Most of the time a journalist on TV becomes an interviewee and conducts interviews with politicians as their interviews are the main focus of social, electronic, and print media. Conducting interviews with politicians has two main purposes; Firstly, they try to gain viewership for the channel on a large scale and secondly, they provide a platform for the publication of politicians' ideologies and opinions on different matters. Hussain et al. (2020) stated that the critical and creative approach of journalists to interview extracts facts from the interviewees. Such an approach of journalists brings the true face of interviewees to the public. It also helps in knowing the political complexities and biases. Politicians also adopt evaluating language in interviews which reflect their attitudes, engagement, and graduation by employing different linguistic choices.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

After reviewing the previous studies conducted on different interviews and speeches, it was observed that most of them followed Martin and White's Appraisal Theory (2005) as a theoretical framework as it suited best the nature of such kinds of research studies. It analyzed the collected data very well which is why the present study also followed this theory as a theoretical framework while analyzing evaluative language in the political interviews of Pakistani politicians.

2.3.1 Appraisal Theory

Appraisal theory is the framework given by Martin and White within Halliday's (1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It is the extended form of M.A.K. Halliday's interpersonal meta-function of language. J.R. Martin and P.R.R. White were of the view that people also use language to express what they feel, what they value, and what they think and its function is not limited just to interact with people as interpersonal meta-function of language states. Martin and White (2005) claimed that while conducting SFL-based studies on interpersonal meaning before 1990, researchers' main focus was "more strongly oriented to interaction than feeling" (p. 7). Therefore, there was a need to expand this theoretical orientation to consider the speakers' and writers' emotions, attitudes, and judgments as well. For this reason, the development of an appraisal framework occurred (Martin & White, 2005, p. 1).

Martin and White along with their colleagues developed this appraisal framework in the 1990s and 2000s. This framework focuses mainly on evaluating language. It consists of three major systems, i.e. attitude, engagement, and graduation, which are further divided into subtypes.

2.3.1.1 Attitude

Attitude refers to the system of how one language user can pass judgments, express feelings, and evaluate different entities by using language. It can be positive and negative. It has three subtypes; Affect, judgment, and appreciation. Affect deals with emotions and feelings, and judgment is someone's opinion towards people's behaviors. Qasim et al. (2020) stated that judgment is the assessment, either positive or negative, of the socially assigned value of the person, the objects, or the state of affairs. In simple words, the judgment refers to the evaluation of people's behaviors in terms of their social norms and morality, e.g. criminal, friendly, honest, loyal, and corrupt. On the other hand, appreciation refers to the assessment, either positive or negative, of different entities in terms of their worth and value, e.g. impressive, boring, effective, and beautiful.

2.3.1.2 Engagement

Engagement deals with the interactions of others' views. It refers to how language users open and close space for other people's views. This system also explains how people position themselves in relation to others' voices, which means that either it endorses or disclaims others' beliefs or not. In simple words, engagement is the speaker's alignment or disalignment with others' views. It has two subtypes; Monoglossic and heteroglossic engagement. Monoglossic engagement does not consider others' views while heteroglossic engagement acknowledges others too. Heteroglossic engagement can be further divided into dialogic contraction and dialogic expansion. Dialogic contraction closes space for others' views while on the other hand, dialogic expansion opens space for others' voices and views.

2.3.1.3 Graduation

The graduation system of appraisal framework refers to the intensity and degree of evaluation or assessment. It has two subtypes; Force and focus. Force refers to the strength and intensity of the expression. It includes intensifiers like slightly, utterly, very, and extremely, etc. On the other hand, focus deals with the softening and sharpening of the expression.

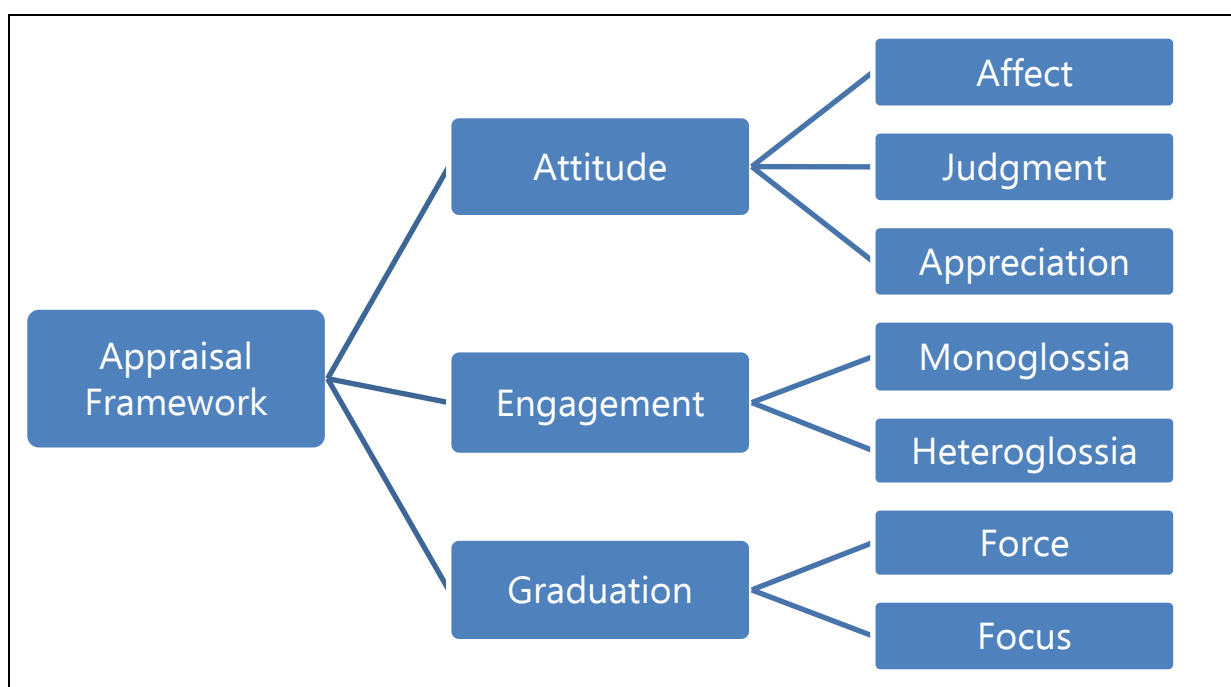


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Martin and White's Appraisal Framework

2.4 Past Studies

Many researchers have conducted different research studies based on appraisal theory in the political discourse. Some of the key studies in the field are reviewed and discussed below:

Siddiq et al. (2025) analyzed the role of evaluative language features in editorials of Pakistani newspapers during the general elections of 2024. In this study, 20 editorials were taken from four Pakistan newspapers, for instance, The NEWS, The Nation, The Daily Times, and DAWN. These editorials were analyzed by following Martin and White's Appraisal Framework (2005) under the broader umbrella of Fairclough's 3D Model of CDA. The findings of the study revealed that there was use of different evaluative tools in editorials for shaping public opinion during elections. Some of the newspapers used negative evaluative tools in their editorials while criticizing the electoral system while others used positive evaluative tools in supporting the government and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Risdianto et al. (2024) conducted their research study on Indonesia's national online newspapers and analyzed the evaluative language they used about the shifting of the Indonesian capital city. The study also critically analyzed how these newspapers construct ideologies and shape public opinion regarding the relocation of the Indonesian capital city. The study adopted SFL as a tool for discourse analysis and used Martin and White's Appraisal Framework for the analysis of evaluative tools present in these selected newspapers. After the analysis, researchers found more instances of positive attitudes than any other evaluative tool in all of the newspapers. It revealed that all of the newspapers aligned with the government and promoted its narrative of capital city dislocation.

Aljuraywi and Alyousef (2022) conducted their study on Donald Trump and Joe Biden's political interviews and analyzed attitudinal realizations in their interviews by applying Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005). In this study, the researchers analyzed four interviews, each two of Donald Trump and Joe Biden on the program "60 Minutes" with the interviewers Leslie Stahl and Norah O'Donnell respectively during the US elections, in 2020. The study adopted a mixed-method design as it calculated the frequencies of attitudinal

realizations, i.e. affect, judgment, and appreciation, and it also qualitatively analyzed specific instances in the interviews by following Martin and White's Appraisal Framework (2005). The quantitative analysis of attitudinal realizations was done through the UAM corpus tool. The key findings of the study revealed that Trump along with interviewer Leslie Stahl used more "affect" strategies, while on the other hand, Biden with interviewer Norah O'Donnell used more "appreciation" in their interviews. All of the participants used different attitudinal realizations to gain specific purposes. In this study, the researchers effectively applied an appraisal framework to analyze Trump and Biden's interviews that generated meaningful insights. The study teaches us how to use attitudinal items strategically to position ourselves and others positively or negatively in interviews or daily communication.

Asad et al. (2021) interpreted attitudinal realizations of Imran Khan's speech at the 74th UN Session in Pakistani Online newspapers i.e. "DAWN" and "THE NEWS". In this study, researchers applied Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005) to analyze attitudinal realizations, i.e. affect, judgment, and appreciation. As per Norman Fairclough (1995), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was combined with Appraisal Framework to explore the context and ideologies in the speech. The findings of the study revealed that more instances of "Judgment" were found as compared to affect and appreciation. Negative evaluations (Judgments) were frequently used, reflecting the nature of climate change, Islamophobia, and Kashmir's issues and conflicts covered in the speech. Both of the newspapers gave prominent coverage of the speech. This study is only delimited to the analysis of attitudinal items in the speech.

Anjum et al. (2023) analyzed Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto's political interviews on CNN through multimodal discourse analysis. Their expressive modes of communication were interpreted in their interviews given to CNN in 2022 after the vote of no-confidence move. The findings of the study revealed that Imran Khan is more confident and mature as a politician than Bilawal Bhutto Zardari when expressing his stance and position regarding different matters.

Irfan et al. (2024) employed Fairclough's (1995) 3D model of CDA to examine persuasive language in the former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Khan's interviews with FRANCE 24 English and CNN in 2022. The study revealed that his interviews were full of rhetorical and persuasive elements. Context control and mind control are the major features found in his interviews.

Krishnan et al. (2024) conducted their research study from the perspective of attitudinal subsystems under the broader umbrella of Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005) in order to investigate the performance of Malaysian fresh graduates in their job interviews. The researchers found more instances of the Appreciation subsystem. The successful fresh graduates employed positive attitudinal subsystems (Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation) in their job interviews.

Talib and Khaleel (2021) conducted a comparative study on Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif's speeches at the UN assembly and analyzed their diplomatic language. In this study, the researchers applied Halliday's SFL to analyze the selected speeches. The findings of the study revealed that ZA Bhutto deviated from the norms of diplomatic language due to factors like war at that time in his country. His tone was harsh and aggressive and used blunt language. On the other hand, remained within the domain of diplomatic discourse, Nawaz Sharif used straightforward language because situations were not alarming at his time as compared to that of ZA Bhutto.

Qasim et al. (2020) conducted their study on Pakistani newspaper editorials after the results of general elections held in 2018. This study analyzed how these editorials constructed

ideologies and shaped public opinion regarding the election results. This study adopted a mixed-method approach and applied Martin and White's appraisal framework (2005) and transitivity systems under the broader umbrella of SFL. The findings of the study revealed that for constructing ideologies, newspaper editorials are considered powerful tools. Different editorials presented different ideologies by employing different grammatical and linguistic choices, appraisal resources, and transitivity systems regarding the results of the general elections in 2018. For instance, DAWN was found to use suggestive and evaluative language to influence public opinion regarding election results while editorials of Pakistan Today countered the rhetoric of rigging by using such grammatical and linguistic choices. On the contrary, The Nation represented the rhetoric of rigging and irregularities in the elections 2018 while The Express Tribune claimed the fairness of elections.

Noor et al. (2017) examined mock job interviews of future engineers in Malaysia. In this study, their communication abilities in mock job interviews were analyzed by following the framework of Verbal Impression Management, and their appraisal systems in the interviews were examined by following the Appraisal Framework. The findings revealed that the candidates using positive evaluative language and managing impressions while communicating were considered successful.

Parvin (2017) analyzed three news reports regarding the Paris Attacks in Iran by following Martin and White's appraisal framework along with CDA. Specifically, attitudinal subsystems of the appraisal framework were applied to these news reports. The findings of the study revealed that 1st news report showed negative attitudinal realizations, 2nd report also contained negative attitudinal realizations and expressed them by adopting the invoked strategy, while the 3rd news report adopted a neutral tone, which means that it consisted of equal instances of negative and positive evaluative expressions.

Pekařova (2011) conducted a study on journalistic discourse and analyzed features of evaluative language in newspaper articles. In this study, a total of 45 articles were analyzed from three British newspapers, i.e. The Telegraph, The Guardian, and The Independent. Martin and Rose's (2007) Appraisal Framework was applied to analyze the selected articles, although the framework of appraisal analysis given by Martin and White (2005) was also considered in the study. The findings of the study revealed that "affect" (attitude) was less used in all of the newspapers. Graduation (amplification) was the most used category in all of the newspapers. The Independent used more features of the evaluative language as compared to others.

2.5 Research Gap

All of the above-mentioned research studies have effectively analyzed different news reports, speeches, and interviews by following different frameworks. As the present study deals with the political interviews of Pakistani politicians, different research studies have been conducted on political interviews of different politicians by following different relevant frameworks. However, the appraisal analysis of language in political interviews of Pakistani politicians remains unexplored. Researchers pay less attention to the appraisal analysis of such interviews in Pakistani political discourse. Therefore, there lies a gap in past studies conducted on political interviews and speeches and the present research study is aiming to fill that gap in the existing literature. This study aims to examine the evaluative language used by Pakistani politicians in their interviews by following Martin and White's Appraisal Framework (2005).

3. Research Methodology

This section deals with the research design of the present study. It discusses the source of the data and data collection methods. It also describes the procedures followed while analysing

the collected data. It also briefly explains the theoretical framework followed in the present study.

3.1 Research Design

The present research study adopts a mixed-method design. Keeping in view the research questions, this study best suits the pragmatist paradigm as it aims to interpret the use and purpose of evaluative language qualitatively. This study also deals with the percentage of frequencies of appraisal systems, i.e. attitude, engagement, and graduation were identified quantitatively through the UAM corpus tool. It also deals with the comparison of the usage of evaluative language in their interviews. As this study is both qualitative and quantitative, a mixed-method research design best suits the study.

3.2 Data Collection

The data were collected for this research study as:

3.2.1 Source of the Data

For this study, data were collected from YouTube. Six interviews were selected – two each of Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif. These politicians were chosen because they represent and lead the top political parties of Pakistan namely, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), and Pakistan Muslim League (N). Their interviews were downloaded, transcribed by using online software: www.youtube-transcript.io, and then analysed for the present study.

3.2.2 Sampling Technique

This study employed a purposive sampling technique, as the participants were selected based on their political relevance, vote bank, and leadership status in Pakistan.

3.2.3 Sample

Two political interviews on international media of each Pakistani politician namely, Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif, were downloaded from YouTube and then transcribed for further analysis. A total of six interviews were analysed in this study. Table 1 shows a detailed description of the selected interviews.

Table 1: Description of Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto, and Shahbaz Sharif's Interviews

| Politician | Channel | Date | No. of Words |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Imran Khan | Al Jazeera English | August 05, 2023 | 3,380 |
| | FRANCE 24 English | May 18, 2023 | 1,916 |
| Bilawal Bhutto | CNBC International Live | February 19, 2023 | 3,466 |
| | The Daily Show | March 15, 2023 | 4,867 |
| Shahbaz Sharif | Bloomberg | September 23, 2022 | 1,549 |
| | CGTN | November 13, 2022 | 2,978 |

3.3 Data Analysis Procedure

After transcription, the collected data were analyzed in two ways: Qualitatively and quantitatively. The datasets of interviews were uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool in order to calculate the frequencies of appraisal systems in the interviews and also to identify what types of appraisal systems are mostly used by politicians in their interviews. As the number of words was not equal in each politician's interviews, the frequencies of appraisal systems were calculated in percentage. The selected interviews were also thematically analysed

qualitatively in order to interpret them in different ways to know the purpose of using appraisal systems. Figure 2 shows the scheme that was made in the UAM Corpus tool for tagging the appraisal resources in the collected data of interviews.

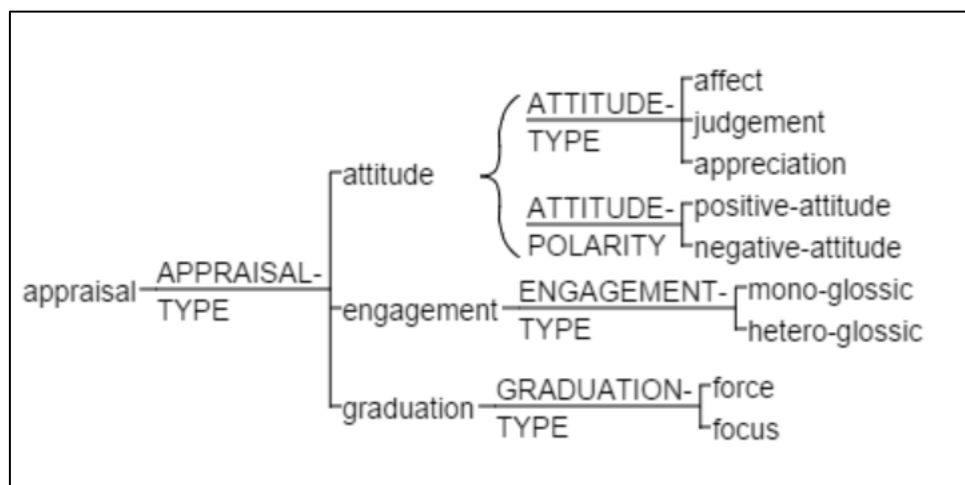


Figure 2: Final version of the employed appraisal systems annotation scheme

Texts of all six interviews were uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool for calculating the frequencies of appraisal resources as shown in the figure 3.

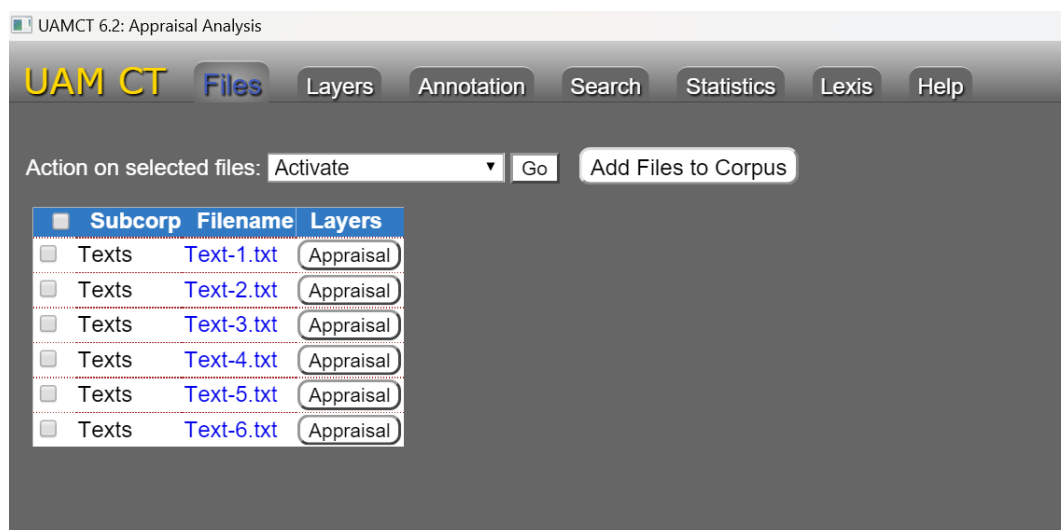


Figure 3: Visual of Uploaded Texts of All Six Interviews in UAM Corpus Tool

3.4 Theoretical Framework

This research study followed Martin and White's Appraisal theory (2005) as a theoretical framework while analysing the selected political interviews.

4. Data Analysis

This section focuses on the analysis of collected data. Data collection methods, sampling technique, and theoretical framework have been discussed in the Section 3 of Research Methodology. The analysis of collected is presented in three separate sections: First section deals with the analysis of Imran Khan's interviews, second and third section deal with the analysis of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Shahbaz Sharif's interviews respectively.

4.1 Imran Khan's Interviews

When the text of Imran Khan's interview on Al Jazeera English was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 2: Appraisal Resources in Imran Khan's Interview on Al Jazeera English

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 76 | 38.38% |
| Engagement | 64 | 32.32% |
| Graduation | 58 | 29.29% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 17 | 22.36% |
| Negative Attitude | 59 | 77.63% |

Table 2 shows that Imran Khan employed more attitudinal resources in his interview as compared to engagement and graduation resources. Among attitudinal resources, Imran Khan used more negative attitudes (77.63%) than that of positive attitudes (22.36%).

Table 3: Types of Appraisal Resources in Imran Khan's Interview on Al Jazeera English

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 13 | 17.10% |
| | Judgment | 38 | 50% |
| | Appreciation | 25 | 32.89% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 30 | 46.87% |
| | Heteroglossia | 34 | 53.12% |
| Graduation | Force | 51 | 87.93% |
| | Focus | 07 | 12.06% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Imran Khan's interview are;

- (1) "Sadly 25 people died" [Attitude: Affect]. (Imran Khan)
- (2) "They are actually dismantling democracy" [Attitude: Judgment]. (Imran Khan)
- (3) "It was one of the best performances in two decades of any government" [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Imran Khan)
- (4) "The PDM and the establishment they are petrified of Elections" [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Imran Khan)
- (5) "If you look at the polls ratings, the surveys, PTI is 70% popular now" [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Imran Khan)

(6) “Up to 600 people who got injured” [Graduation: Force]. (Imran Khan)

(7) “Something floating out on the social media” [Graduation: Focus]. (Imran Khan)

When the text of Imran Khan’s interview on FRANCE 24 English was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 4: Appraisal Resources in Imran Khan’s Interview on FRANCE 24 English

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 89 | 45.87% |
| Engagement | 68 | 35.05% |
| Graduation | 37 | 19.07% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 42 | 47.19% |
| Negative Attitude | 47 | 52.80% |

Table 4 shows that Imran Khan employed more engagement resources in his interview as compared to attitudinal and graduation resources. Among attitudinal resources, Imran Khan used more negative attitudes (52.80%) than that of positive attitudes (47.19%).

Table 5: Types of Appraisal Resources in Imran Khan’s Interview on FRANCE 24 English

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 25 | 28.08% |
| | Judgment | 36 | 40.44% |
| | Appreciation | 28 | 31.46% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 38 | 55.88% |
| | Heteroglossia | 30 | 44.11% |
| Graduation | Force | 28 | 75.67% |
| | Focus | 9 | 24.32% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Imran Khan’s interview are;

(8) “We want” [Attitude: Affect]. (Imran Khan)

(9) “What I am saying is right” [Attitude: Judgment]. (Imran Khan)

(10) “Our best investigative journalist” [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Imran Khan)

(11) “I do think that they could try again” [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Imran Khan)

(12) “People do not want these criminals” [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Imran Khan)

(13) “Really can’t put wait” [Graduation: Force]. (Imran Khan)

(14) “Actually was assassinated” [Graduation: Focus]. (Imran Khan)

4.2 Bilawal Bhutto Zardari’s Interviews

When the text of Bilawal Bhutto’s interview on CNBC International Live was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 6: Appraisal Resources in Bilawal Bhutto’s Interview on CNBC International Live

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 110 | 57.59% |
| Engagement | 44 | 23.03% |
| Graduation | 37 | 19.37% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 52 | 47.27% |
| Negative Attitude | 58 | 52.72% |

Table 7: Types of Appraisal Resources in Bilawal’s Interview on CNBC International Live

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 12 | 10.90% |
| | Judgment | 35 | 31.81% |
| | Appreciation | 63 | 57.27% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 17 | 38.63% |
| | Heteroglossia | 27 | 61.36% |
| | Force | 31 | 83.78% |
| Graduation | Focus | 6 | 16.21% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Bilawal Bhutto’s interview are;

(15) “I hope” [Attitude: Affect]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(16) “Police were successful” [Attitude: Judgment]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(17) “Most realistic practical and perhaps optimistic scenario” [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(18) “We’re still working out our plans” [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(19) “Surely all democrats in Pakistan should welcome that...” [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(20) “More than nine billion” [Graduation: Force]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

(21) "First time the institution of parliament is constitutionally and democratically removed a prime minister" [Graduation: Focus]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

When the text of Bilawal Bhutto's interview on The Daily Show was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 8: Appraisal Resources in Bilawal Bhutto's Interview on The Daily Show

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 251 | 37.54% |
| Engagement | 198 | 29.64% |
| Graduation | 219 | 32.78% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 84 | 33.46% |
| Negative Attitude | 167 | 66.53% |

Table 9: Types of Appraisal Resources in Bilawal Bhutto's Interview on The Daily Show

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 34 | 13.54% |
| | Judgment | 46 | 18.32% |
| | Appreciation | 171 | 68.12% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 106 | 53.53% |
| | Heteroglossia | 92 | 46.46% |
| Graduation | Force | 178 | 81.27% |
| | Focus | 41 | 18.72% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Bilawal Bhutto's interview are;

- (22) "It devastates me" [Attitude: Affect]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (23) "Violated court orders time and time again" [Attitude: Judgment]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (24) "Peaceful transfer of power" [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (25) "60% of our population is beneath the age of 35." [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (26) "The courts are saying that..." [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (27) "Biggest climate catastrophe" [Graduation: Force]. (Bilawal Bhutto)
- (28) "Actually a socialist political party" [Graduation: Focus]. (Bilawal Bhutto)

4.3 Shahbaz Sharif's Interviews

When the text of Shahbaz Sharif's interview on Bloomberg was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 10: Appraisal Resources in Shahbaz Sharif's Interview on Bloomberg

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 68 | 38.20% |
| Engagement | 58 | 32.58% |
| Graduation | 52 | 29.21% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 21 | 30.88% |
| Negative Attitude | 47 | 69.11 % |

Table 11: Types of Appraisal Resources in Shahbaz Sharif's Interview on Bloomberg

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 26 | 38.23% |
| | Judgment | 11 | 16.17% |
| | Appreciation | 31 | 45.58% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 28 | 48.27% |
| | Heteroglossia | 30 | 51.72% |
| Graduation | Force | 46 | 88.46% |
| | Focus | 06 | 11.53% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Shahbaz Sharif's interview are;

- (29) "Very happy to meet XI Jiang" [Attitude: Affect]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (30) "He (Xi Jinping) is a man who has been you know dedicating his life for human interesting cause" [Attitude: Judgment]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (31) "We are rated as one of the most vulnerable countries" [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (32) "I'm here to tell the world what happened with us..." [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (33) "Leaders have touched the subject in their speeches" [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (34) "Less than one percent" [Graduation: Force]. (Shahbaz Sharif)
- (35) "To be very exact" [Graduation: Focus]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

When the text of Shahbaz Sharif's Interview on CGTN was uploaded to the UAM Corpus tool, the following frequencies of different appraisal resources were identified in his evaluative language.

Table 12: Appraisal Resources in Shahbaz Sharif's Interview on CGTN

| Appraisal Resources | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | 162 | 39.22% |
| Engagement | 136 | 32.92% |
| Graduation | 115 | 27.84% |
| Attitude Polarity | | |
| Positive Attitude | 144 | 88.88% |
| Negative Attitude | 18 | 11.11% |

Table 13: Types of Appraisal Resources in Shahbaz Sharif's Interview on CGTN

| Appraisal Resources | Types | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Attitude | Affect | 34 | 20.98% |
| | Judgment | 36 | 22.22% |
| | Appreciation | 92 | 55.55% |
| Engagement | Monoglossia | 56 | 41.17% |
| | Heteroglossia | 80 | 58.82% |
| Graduation | Force | 98 | 85.81% |
| | Focus | 17 | 14.78% |

Different types of appraisal resources in Shahbaz Sharif's interview are;

(36) "This is like a family... if a part of the body aches the whole body aches..." [Attitude: Affect]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(37) "President Xi Jinping... is a very Visionary leader... man of great wisdom..." [Attitude: Judgment]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(38) "This friendship is unbreachable..." [Attitude: Appreciation]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(39) "China has always been a very prosperous and rich country..." [Engagement: Monoglossia]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(40) "Some say China is a threat..." [Engagement: Heteroglossia]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(41) "Back-to-back meetings..." [Graduation: Force]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

(42) "Real source of all-weather fraternity..." [Graduation: Focus]. (Shahbaz Sharif)

5. Findings and Discussion

The collected data were analyzed by following Martin and White's Appraisal Framework in the previous section of data analysis. This section presents the findings obtained from the analysis and also compares those findings with the results of previous studies conducted on different interviews and speeches.

5.1 Findings

Keeping in view the research questions of the current study, the findings are presented in three separate sections.

5.1.1 Identified Appraisal Resources in Selected Political Interviews

The analysis of the collected data revealed that Pakistani political figures, Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif, used evaluative language mostly in their political interviews given to the international media. All types of major appraisal resources like attitude, engagement, and graduation were used in their interviews along with their subcategories like affect, judgment, appreciation, monoglossia, heteroglossia, force, and focus, etc.

5.1.2 Comparison in the Usage of Appraisal Resources

To compare the usage of appraisal resources in the evaluative language in the political interviews of key Pakistani political figures, the analysis of the data revealed that Imran Khan employed more negative attitudinal resources in his both interviews as compared to Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Shahbaz Sharif. He used 22.36% positive and 77.6% negative attitudinal resources in his interviews on Al Jazeera English and 47.19% positive while 52.80% negative attitudinal resources in his interviews on FRANCE 24 English. Among the subtypes of attitudinal resources, frequencies of judgment were found more in number than affect and appreciation in both of Imran Khan's interviews which were 50% and 40.44% respectively. On the other hand, among the subtypes of attitudinal resources, frequencies of appreciation were found more in number than affect and judgment in Bilawal Bhutto and Shahbaz Sharif's interviews. Bilawal Bhutto employed more appreciation resources in his interviews which were 57.27% and 68.12% than Shahbaz Sharif which was 40% and 55.55% in his both interviews respectively. Among the subtypes of attitudinal resources, affect was frequently used in both of Shahbaz Sharif's interviews which was 38.23% in one interview and 20.98% in another.

It was found that Imran Khan employed more engagement resources as compared to Bilawal Bhutto and Shahbaz Sharif and there was less difference between the frequencies of monoglossic and heteroglossic resources in his both interviews. In one interview (On Al Jazeera English), he opened space for other views and voices as monoglossic resources were 46.87% while heteroglossic resources were 53.12%. In his second interview (On FRANCE 24 English), he closed space for other views and voices as monoglossic resources were 55.88% while heteroglossic resources were 44.11%. Similarly, Bilawal Bhutto also opened space for other voices in one interview (On CNBC) while closing it in his second interview on The Daily Show. On the other hand, Shahbaz Sharif was found opening spaces for other views and voices in both of his interviews.

Moreover, it was also found that the frequencies of graduation resources were greater in both interviews of Shahbaz Sharif than those of Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto. The frequencies of graduation's subtype force were also found greater in number in his interviews that were 88.46% and 85.81%.

5.1.3 Purpose of Using Appraisal Resources in Political Interviews

As the frequencies and usage of appraisal resources of key Pakistani political figures were compared in the previous section it was observed that Imran Khan employed more negative attitudinal resources as compared to others. Among those negative attitudinal resources, most

of them were negative judgmental appraisal resources because Imran Khan was removed from his office in April 2022 which is why he evaluated their opponents negatively and made responsible them for the downfall of Pakistan. On the other hand, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Shahbaz Sharif employed more appreciation resources (Subcategory of attitude) because they were in power at that time. They appreciated themselves for lifting Pakistan from the crises and others for helping them in crucial times. Bilawal Bhutto was found to use more appreciation resources than Shahbaz Sharif because he was the foreign minister at that time and he tried to promote the country's image internationally, to build diplomatic goodwill, and to influence international stakeholders. Shahbaz Sharif employed attitudinal subtype "affect" in greater numbers in both of his interviews as compared to Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto. He adopted this subtype of attitudinal resources to promote his ideology of bringing back Pakistan economically on the track. Through these resources, he expressed emotional views towards the flood effects and hopes for a strong friendship with China.

Shahbaz Sharif employed heteroglossia and opened spaces for multiple voices and views in his both interviews in order to make himself more democratic and in touch with the public. He used it for strategic purposes to manage controversy without directly supporting or endorsing it. On the other hand, Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto employed this strategy only in one of their interviews. Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto employed monoglossia in their interviews on FRANCE 24 English and The Daily Show respectively where they closed spaces for other views and voices. They employed this strategy in order to show themselves as sound assertive and decisive. Imran Khan employed it to mobilize his supporters and to control the narrative strongly. The use of heteroglossia can become a question mark on politicians' real stance because the public supports those leaders who can reflect their ideas. On the other hand, monoglossia can strengthen authority and help in building public trust.

It was also observed that Shahbaz Sharif employed graduation's subtype force mostly in both of his interviews at the time of his premiership. He used it to emphasize the urgency of international aid for flood effects in Pakistan and the importance of Pak-China friendship. He employed it to make his interviews more compelling and emotionally engaging. Supporters of such politicians feel that the person cares about his public.

5.2 Discussion

This section compares the findings with the results of previous studies conducted on different interviews and speeches to check whether the findings of the present study support the results of previous studies or challenge them.

The outcomes of the present research study align with the study of Aljuraywi and Alyousef (2022) conducted on Donald Trump and Joe Biden's political interviews where Trump employed negative judgments to criticize US media and his opponents as Imran Khan used negative judgment resources for discrediting and criticizing his opponents, military establishment, and judiciary and made them responsible for the downfall of Pakistan. The present study revealed that Bilawal Bhutto employed more appreciation resources to appreciate the coalition government for lifting Pakistan from the crises and others for helping them in crucial times just like Trump who employed more positive resources of appreciation to appreciate the outcomes of his political efforts concerning increasing employment rates. Shahbaz Sharif was found using more resources of affect just like Trump and Biden who used these resources to promote their ideology of Making America Great Again and to express emotions toward freedom of speech, equality, and minority rights respectively. The findings of the present study support all the previous studies conducted on different interviews, speeches, and news editorials like Qasim et al. (2020), Talib and Khaleel (2021), Krishnan et

al. (2024), Risdianto et al. (2024), and Siddiq et al. (2025), etc. The present study does not challenge any previous studies.

6. Conclusion

The present study analyzed evaluative language in the political interviews of key Pakistani political figures by following Martin and White's Appraisal Framework (2005). Politicians use evaluative language in their political interviews and speeches as a powerful tool to express their attitudes, appreciations, criticism, approvals, disapprovals, ideologies, emotions, and judgments toward events, situations, and people in political discourse. The present study aimed to find out different evaluative tools and their purposeful use in Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Shahbaz Sharif's political interviews – key Pakistani politicians. The findings revealed that all types of major appraisal resources like attitude, engagement, and graduation were used in their interviews along with their subcategories like affect, judgment, appreciation, monoglossia, heteroglossia, force, and focus, etc. The study concluded that Imran Khan employed more negative attitudinal resources as compared to others. He evaluated their opponents negatively and made responsible them for the downfall of Pakistan. Bilawal Bhutto was found in using more appreciation resources because he was the foreign minister and he appraised the coalition government for lifting Pakistan from the crises and others for helping them in crucial times. Shahbaz Sharif employed the attitudinal subtype "affect" in greater numbers to promote his ideology of bringing back Pakistan economically on track. He also employed heteroglossia and opened spaces for multiple voices and views. Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto employed monoglossia in their interviews where they closed spaces for other views and voices. It was also observed that Shahbaz Sharif employed graduation's subtype force mostly in both of his interviews at the time of his premiership.

To conclude, politicians use evaluative language as a powerful tool in their political interviews and speeches for positioning themselves positively, criticizing, and discrediting opponents in a political discourse. By employing evaluative language, they influence public opinion and promote their political agendas.

6.1 Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research

Many ways are open for researching political interviews and speeches in the future. As the present study investigated major appraisal systems along with their subcategories in Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto, and Shahbaz Sharif, therefore researchers can investigate further subtypes of the subcategories like subtypes of affect, judgment, appreciation, monoglossic, heteroglossic, force, focus and so on, in their interviews. Future studies can apply the appraisal framework in the political realm about power and gender. Researchers also can conduct comparative studies on the interviews and speeches of other Pakistani political figures.

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