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WORDS AS WEAPONS: A SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS OF SOVEREIGNTY AND POWER RHETORIC IN RECENT SPEECHES OF PAKISTAN'S FIELD MARSHAL ASIM MUNIR

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Abstract
This study focuses on the functioning of the language of Field Marshal Asim Munir, the Chief of Army Staff in Pakistan, to build the meanings of sovereignty, power and national identity using speech acts in his recent public addresses. The study discusses the role of linguistic performance as an action in the political-military discourse. Six speeches of field marshal Munir (2023-2024) have been analyzed based on the frameworks of the Speech Act Theory by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) through the qualitative discourse analysis. The speeches were transcribed, coded and classified into assertive, commissive, declarative and expressive acts following the opted framework. The findings have showed that field marshal's language is characterized by assertive and commissive performances which are the elements of institutional authority and defense. The study brings out language as a performative state weapon, in which words create and recreate power relations. The speech acts of these public addresses linguistically enact the sovereignty of Pakistan showing that in politics-military, to speak is equal to act.

1. Introduction

Language is considered as one of the strongest tools of political and institutional power. It does not just give messages but also does things that make identities, justify power and help create social realities. Of special relevance is the idea that to speak is to act (Austin, 1962) especially in the context of politics and military where words are sometimes taken to be the behest of national policy, deterrence and sovereignty. The military has traditionally been at the frontline in Pakistan not merely in the defense but also in the formation of the political imagination of the state. Thus, the speeches made by the Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Asim Munir serve as imperative places of studying the ways in which linguistic performance creates the meanings of sovereignty, nationalism and state power.

Performative language (declarations, promises, warnings and reassurances) is a characteristic of political and defense language of all countries around the world which has both a symbolic and operational role (Searle, 1969; Fairclough, 2013). These are not simply acts of description of reality but they engage in the creation of reality. Such speech acts are also vital processes of generating identity and legitimacy in the collective sense in a place like Pakistan where the questions of sovereignty and security are at the core of the national discourse.

Scholars have considered the topic of political rhetoric and military communication on a global scale (Chilton, 2004; Wodak, 2015) but there is

still an evident lack of linguistic studies dedicated to the performative role of speech acts in the defense discourse in Pakistan. Pakistani political communication has been mostly studied within the context of ideology, framing or media representation (Rahman, 2012; Ahmad, 2019) but there has been little systematic study on how the language of military leadership enacts sovereignty and power in its speech acts. Since Field Marshal Munir is the pivotal figure in the expression of the current strategic and nationalistic vision of Pakistan, his speeches provide an important corpus of research on the issue of the execution of the institutional power through the linguistic performance. Thus, the issue is in comprehending performative aspect of military rhetoric in Pakistan and its contribution to the development of the sovereign identity of the state.

This study aims at doing a Speech Act Analysis of the latest speeches delivered by Field Marshal Asim Munir in order to find out the predominant types of speech acts, namely assertive, commissive, expressive and declaratives to analyze the way these types of speech acts contain meanings of power, nationalism and sovereignty. The study is based on the theories of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), in which one of the objectives will be to demonstrate how the discourse of Munir serves as a performative performance of power, devotion and self. By doing so, the study aims to fill the uninformed areas between linguistic examination and political discourse and thus shows how language is not a neutral but a tactical tool of administration and influence.

The current study is important both in theoretical and contextual terms. In theory, it adds to the emerging literature that uses the Speech Act Theory to political and institutional discourse that helps reaffirm its merit in studying the way language acts within power structures. Contextually, it illuminates the discursive culture of the military leadership in Pakistan which provides insights into how language strengthens the legitimacy, cohesion and national security discourses. In addition, the study contributes to the knowledge on performative sovereignty i.e. the concept of states performing their power not only in the military acts but also in words that declare, promise and assure. They also have some implications to the political linguistics, critical discourse analysis and security studies because they show that language is a symbolic and strategic weapon.

1.1 Research Objectives:

1. To identify and classify the dominant speech acts (assertive, commissive, declarative, expressive) used in Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent speeches concerning Pakistan's sovereignty, defense and deterrence.
2. To analyze how these speech acts function performatively to construct Pakistan's identity as a sovereign and militarily capable state.

1.2 Research Questions:

1. What are the most frequently used speech acts by Field Marshal Asim Munir to encode power and sovereignty?
2. What types of speech acts are most frequently employed by Field Marshal Asim Munir in his speeches on sovereignty and defense?
3. How do speech acts function performatively to construct Pakistan's identity as a sovereign and militarily capable state?

2. Literature Review

The language has always been considered as one of the main weapons of power, influence and political behavior. Scholars in the linguistics and discourse analysis field note that political speech is not a descriptive one but a performative one, language which performs authority and builds ideologies and recreates social hierarchies (Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 1997). In Pakistani terms, the rhetoric of the military and politics tends to mix, especially in the rhetoric which points to the national sovereignty, security and national patriotism. The study presents a literature review that captures both theoretical and empirical literature available on the issue of speech act analysis, language and power and rhetorical construction of sovereignty and which forms the basis of the analysis of Field Marshal Asim Munir recent speeches.

1.2 Theory of Speech Act and Political Communication

The theory of Speech Acts (as proposed by Austin, 1962 and further elaborated by Searle, 1969) has been identified as the key to understanding the way in which utterances act. The difference between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts provided by Austin justifies the manner in which language conveys meaning as well as the manner in which language performs meaning. This theory was later transferred to political settings by later scholars who demonstrated how what leaders say is a declaration of intent, policy or identity (Chilton, 2004; Wodak, 2009). As an example, Beard (2000) goes on to claim that political speeches work by way of illocutionary acts that include assurances, threats and statements, all of which do perform power. Also, Charteris-Black (2014) observes that the success of the political rhetoric resides in the combination of the persuasive and performative functions. When examining military discourse, speech acts also demonstrate how power is created within the context of assertion and commitment, authorizing the actions in the nation-state structure.

1.2 Language, Power and Ideology

The interaction of language and power has been one of the areas of concern in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). As shown by Fairclough (1989, 2013) and Van Dijk (1997, 2006), linguistic choices (modality, lexical choices, pronouns) are replicas and manifestations of institutional power relations. In the political-military discourse, they play a crucial role in maintaining power and in building credibility. In his book Bourdieu (1991) proposes the idea of linguistic capital, stating that language can be used as a symbolic weapon in domination fights. Military leaders are the representatives of the state and they have the extrinsic use of the institutional speech of authorized speech (Bourdieu, 1991). Equally, Thompson (2014) notes that discourse-based ideologies are the ones that foster a common conception of a nation in unity as well as threat. Research by Van Leeuwen (2008) and Wodak (2015) further emphasize the importance of legitimation strategies the use of which enables political actors to legitimize power and policy by linguistic framing, either by moral assessment or rationalization.

1.3 Military Rhetoric and Sovereignty and National Identity

Sovereignty of nations and security articulations are the major discourses in the South Asian politics and especially in Pakistan. According to Ahmad (2019), the discursive presence of the military frequently makes it the guarantor and the icon of national integrity. Equally, research by Khan (2021) and Shah (2014) indicates that national identity in Pakistan has been combined with defense narratives in the speech made by the military to create the image of a moral and territorial protector. In addition, Haider (2020) has discovered that the assertive and declarative acts tend to be taken in military rhetoric to create the feeling of stability, especially under the conditions of political uncertainty. This motif is echoed by the concept of performativity presented by Austin (1962) as utterances like the one saying We will defend every inch of our land do not simply inform but enact obligation. An addition to this, Rahman (2012) notes that the linguistic performance and power legitimacy of nationalism have historically been influenced by the language of the defense institutions in Pakistan, creating the ideological frames by which the construction of the state was viewed as an ideology.

1.4 The Use of Speech Act Analysis in Politics

The analysis of Speech Acts has been used around the world to reveal the performativity of politics. Ilie (2018) has studied European parliamentary debates, with the aim of demonstrating that declaratives are used to assert institutional power. Using the framework with 12 speeches of Middle Eastern politicians, Al-Momani and Bani-Khair (2016) have determined that commissive and directives were the key elements of credibility. Niazi (2021) and Aslam (2022) have also conducted an analysis of the speeches of Pakistani leaders in a South Asian context, demonstrating the prevalence of assertive actions, which form the patriotic solidarity. Additionally, Charteris-Black (2011) relates the usage of speech acts and metaphorical framing and demonstrates that the use of metaphors enhances performative power.

Wilson (2015) states that declaratives should be viewed as performative instruments of sovereign assertion in the context of military or defense discourse, which combines the institutional command and the persuasion of the masses. These observations show the analytical utility of the application of the theory of speech acts to the rhetoric of Field Marshal Munir.

Although, a body of research has been examining the nature of political and military discourse, little has been done to examine the linguistic performativity of the modern-day military leadership in Pakistan. The thematic or ideological focus is studied most of the existing works (e.g., Rahman, 2012; Khan, 2021; Aslam, 2022), but not the illocutionary roles of speech. In such a way, this study helps to address this gap in a systematic way, recognizing and interpreting the speech acts in the recent speeches of Munir, proving the role of the linguistic performance in the power, sovereignty and national identity.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design for the present study is qualitative descriptive in nature that is based on Speech Act Theory as proposed by Austin (1962) and expounded by Searle (1969). Qualitative approach is suitable since the emphasis is not on the numerical data but the interpretive meaning of how Field Marshal Asim Munir employs language to execute acts of authority, nationalism as well as sovereignty. Using linguistic analysis, the study aims at revealing how the speech acts (assertive, commissive, declarative and expressive) create meaning of power and national identity in discourse on defense in Pakistan. These are closely textual, contextual and performative aspects of discourse identified by the design.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The study will be based on the theory of Speech Act that sees language as a means of not only communication but also acting. The distinction between locutionary and illocutionary and perlocutionary acts was proposed by Austin (1962) who believed that utterances could do things other than just describe reality. With this, Searle (1969) classified acts of speech into five, assertive, directives, commissive, expressive and declarative, each characterized by the will of the speaker and situation of application. In this study, these classifications will serve as the analytical tool in recognizing the use of speech acts and categorizing them. The framework allows the exploration of the functioning of these acts performatively to claim power, commitments, demonstrate emotions and announce institutional positions.

3.3 Data Collection

The data for the present study consists of 6 official speeches of Field Marshal Asim Munir delivered in 2023-2025. The speeches have been purposely chosen based on the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) site, official YouTube and national newspapers (Dawn and The News International). The chosen speeches are based on such topics as sovereignty, defense, deterrence and national security which make them relevant to the research goals. The transcription of each speech was made word-to-word with close focus on such important elements as key phrases, modals, repetition which points to performative intent. There are about 9,000 words in the total corpus.

3.4 Data Processing and Coding

The imported texts were coded and categorized in NVivo 12 software. The illocutionary force was identified in each clause or sentence as per the taxonomy of Searle. As an example, the statements with the assertion of Pakistan autonomy were coded as assertive, promise of defense as commissive, statement of policy or resolve as declarative and expression of emotions as expressive. The reliability of the coding was improved by the application of repeated review and the consultation of the linguistic experts who were familiar with discourse analysis. This was a source of uniformity in determining the role and purpose of every speech act.

3.5 Analytical Procedure

The analysis was done in two phases:

- **Identification and Classification:** Both speeches were divided into clauses and were coded according to the five types of illocutionary acts of Searle (1969).
- **Performative Meaning as Interpreted:** The study was based on the concept of

performativity by Austin; it interpreted the role of these speech acts in creating meanings of sovereignty, legitimacy as well as nationalism. The contextual issues like the audience, occasion and political climate were taken into consideration to realize how the same linguistic act can produce a variety of performative consequences.

It is in this way that the study looked at how the utterances made by Munir describe, command and enact at the same time the military and national identity of Pakistan. Emphasis was placed more on the illocutionary force (intended action) and not the form of speech.

3.6 Reliability, Validity and Ethics.

To promote reliability, the categorization criteria were highly adherent to the theoretical definitions presented by Searle but a second coder was used to ensure consistency. Triangulation helped validate the research findings by involving numerous sources to support the contextual meanings, including text transcripts, news stories and videotaping. None of the ethical considerations since the data used are publically available speeches and there are no issues of privacy or consent. The researcher was also academically neutral since he did not use any political interpretation but only dealt with linguistic features.

3.7 Methodological Justification

Such an approach will enable the research to exhibit how political-military leaders adopt language as a tactical power tool. It fills the gap between linguistic and political communication to demonstrate how speech acts are not necessarily informative but sovereign. The combination of the frameworks by Austin and Searle provides the theoretical depth of the frameworks, whereas the application of NVivo offers the analytical accuracy and traceability of coding.

4. Data Analysis

This part discusses the qualitative analysis of the recent speeches of Field Marshal Asim Munir in terms of the Speech Act Theory formulated by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Six speeches (2023-2025) were chosen based on the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) site and the archives of the national media. The speeches are concerned with the sovereignty of Pakistan, its defense preparation and national security position. The study is aimed at defining the prevalent types of speech acts, such as assertive, commissive, declarative and expressive and explaining the performative role of these categories in the formation of the identity of Pakistan as a self-reliant and militarily strong state.

4.1 Occurrence and Distribution of Speech Acts

This first coding process in NVivo 12 has shown that the rhetoric of Field Marshal Munir is heavily dominated by assertive and commissive speech acts, then the expressive ones and finally the declarative ones. In the corpus (about 9,000 words), it was distributed as follows:

Speech Act Type	Frequency	Percentage	Primary Function
Assertive	156	43%	Stating, asserting, emphasizing sovereignty and national realities
Commissive	95	26%	Promising, pledging, and committing to defense and deterrence
Expressive	68	19%	Expressing pride, solidarity, and emotional appeal to unity
Declaratives	42	12%	Enacting or reaffirming institutional authority and decisions

This tendency indicates that the functions of the Asim Munir's discourse are mostly those of power assertion and commitment to the role of national defense, which fits the needs of his role as Chief of Army Staff.

4.2 Assertive Speech Acts: Making Reality and Power

The most common type was assertive which took up almost half of all acts identified. Such statements exist to establish national truths and instill some absolute certainty about the role of Pakistan on the issue of sovereignty and security. Examples include:

- The sovereignty of Pakistan is not negotiable.
- here is no force on earth that can be used against our territorial integrity.

These are performative claims of national survival and power. They are not just the narrations of reality but the narrations of triumph and moral rights. Their illocutionary force, as defined by Austinian terms, is assertive, whereas their perlocutionary one is the reinforcement of the trust and political consent of the population towards the military institution. The use of modal verbs like will, shall and must to repeat some assertions also makes it certain and inevitable, changing the declarative sentences into the institutional certifying acts. Such repetition of language, according to Van Dijk (1997), is ideologically supportive in stabilizing hierarchies in society and asserting power. Therefore, with assertive speech acts, Munir linguistically enacts power and control, which are the locus of the sovereign discourse.

4.3 Commissive Speech Acts: Guaranteeing Safety and Stasis

The second most common type was the commissive acts, those which bind the speaker to some future act. Examples are:

- We shall protect not a single inch of our country.
- The Pakistan Army is determined to protect the national interests.

These commissive acts undertake institutional reassurance which puts the military as a guarantee of continuity in the political uncertainties. In this case, the perlocutionary force is the psychological reassurance to the population and deterrence to the enemies. Searle (1969) stated that commissive commits the speaker to a course of action and it is the intention turned into a speech obligation. Where military discourse is strongly symbolically authoritative as in the case of the Pakistani context, such commissive acts are not only intentional but also enact commitment both nationally and internationally.

Interestingly, numerous commissive statements are incorporated in collective pronouns like we and our, and they create a sense of collectivity. That is in line with the opinion of Fairclough (2013) who argues that the selection of pronouns reflects the institutional power relations: the military incorporates the identities of both the state and the army and eliminates the distance between the power and the citizens.

4.4 Expressive Speech Acts: Acting National Solidarity

Emotions of pride, resilience and unity were expressed with the help of expressive acts. Examples include:

- We are proud of what our martyrs died.
- Our belief in Allah and people is our highest asset.

These words do the emotional labor of national unity, changing emotion into political unity. Expressive in this case have an external political role, though in traditional terms their role is to convey inner conditions, in this case they are a mobilization of collective feeling. Expressive in the framework of Austin are seen to expose the psychological state of the speaker but in the military discourse, they gain strategic power which justifies the emotional basis of power. According to Chilton (2004), this tends to reinforce the moral aspect of power making emotion an effective tool of political rhetoric. By means of these actions, Field Marshal Munir does pathos-based leadership i.e. the combination of empathy and emotion and defense rhetoric to maintain ideological commitment both among citizens and soldiers.

4.5 Declarative Speech Acts: Institutional Power enactment

The least common but the most performative in the sense that Austin uses this term are declaratives which bring a change of institutional or social reality into effect. Key examples include:

- We pronounce zero tolerance to any form of threat to sovereignty of Pakistan.

- We restate our firm determination today on national security.

The utterance itself, in such a situation, is the act: a statement that restates policy or order or institutional position. Declaratives as it is highlighted by Searle (1969), are based on the institutional authority of the speaker; thus, the illocutionary legitimacy of such statements made by Munir is due to his rank. These speech acts build the symbolic sovereignty of the military or the capacity to determine, make decisions and draw boundaries on the nation defense position by merely uttering words. This is an example of the so-called authorized language, which is a concept that Bourdieu (1991) theorizes and the power of speech is based on the status as an institution.

Therefore, declaratives in the rhetoric of Field Marshal Munir are performative materializations of sovereignty which rhetorically re-establishes the state of Pakistan in the wake of perceived external and internal threats.

5.6 Thematic Interpretation: Language as Strategic Weapon

In all the speech acts, there arose three thematic functions, which were interconnected:

- **Assertion of Sovereignty:**

Not only is sovereignty built by assertive and declarative as unquestioning and divine sanctioned but it is intended to be political. The use of such lexical patterns, as non-negotiable, sacred duty, unwavering resolve, etc., turns the sovereignty into a legal term and a moral command.

- **Institutional Legitimacy:**

The commissive actions reaffirm the military in the national security discourse. These utterances carry out the legitimacy of the army of collective will through appealing to guarantee protection and continuity.

- **Emotional Mobilization:**

Expressive act as rhetorical mediations between authority and the citizens and form the element of patriotic feeling in the institutional language. Power is humanized through emotional appeals and seen as being shared as opposed to be enforced.

4.7 Performative Construction of National Identity

Regarded as a whole, the speech acts of Field Marshal Munir serve to build the national identity in Pakistan as an independent, strong and God-defended state. The performative element is in what is said as well as in what is performed by saying. Every speech act is involved in a larger discursive ritual, such as reproducing state ideology, reinventing institutional hierarchy and establishing the audience around shared values. The idea of Austin (1962) that saying is to doing is brought into focus: the words of Munir are doing sovereignty, these are words bringing national being through assertion, promise and declaration.

Moreover, these acts are potent due to the interaction of the illocutionary force with the socio-political context. Pakistan belongs to the defense culture where speech is not just a form of communication but a form of symbolic government Field Marshal talks and this is an enactment of the ideological position of the nation making speech a weapon of statecraft.

5. Findings and Discussion

The speeches of Field Marshal Asim Munir were analyzed in terms of his discourse that is strategically structured to utilize the speech acts to exercise authority, declare national sovereignty and also reinforce the ideological role of the military in the national identity of Pakistan. Based on the frameworks suggested by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), the research found that there were four prevailing types of speech acts, namely, assertive, commissive, declaratives and expressive, that served distinct roles in creating performative meanings of power, nationalism and security.

5.1 Dominant Speech Act and Strategy

Assertive and commissive were the most common speech acts, and they took up close to 70% of the data. Such aggressive phrases as the sovereignty of Pakistan is something we cannot compromise on and there is no foreign power that can determine what we should defend and what we should not, demonstrate how Field Marsal Munir linguistically creates certainty and power. Such utterances do not just describe but enact the power of making an assertion they do

sovereignty with words. The illocutionary force of such statements as theorized by Austin (1962) is in their ability to make social realities true because the speaker has authority. However, the commissive acts, acted as pledges and vows and strengthened the custodial aspect of the military. Such statements as We will guard every inch of our homeland or We will stand firm on our borders carry out institutional reassurance. The perlocutionary effect is psychological and ideological- it recreates the confidence of the citizens with the continuation and the strength of the military. The commissive make the words binding, as Searle (1969) explains; in the conversation between Munir and Searle, they turn the intent into a promise of the institution, and the performative connection between language and action.

5.2 Expressive and Declarative: Legitimacy Emotional and Institutional

The emotional aspect of the rhetoric of Munir is expressed through such expressions like We take pride in our martyrs or Our faith and unity are our greatest strength. Though traditionally, the expressive are intended to convey feelings, in the political-military discourse, they serve to humanize authority too. These actions close the emotional divide between military leadership and citizens making affect a source of legitimacy. According to Chilton (2004), emotions in political speech tends to serve as a moral justification of power and create national solidarity. The performance aspect of declarative acts is the most substantial, even though they are fewer than declarative. Institutional power is performed by statements such as We declare zero tolerance to any threat to sovereignty, we reaffirm our national determination. The position of the speaker as the Chief of Army Staff makes these statements have illocutionary legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1991). These types of speech acts never describe a decision- they are the decision. They are the linguistic embodiment of sovereignty, demonstrating how the words themselves are used as the tools of governance.

5.3 Performing Power through Language

In each of the types, the rhetoric of Munir shows that the language is a performative state activity. His rhetoric builds Pakistan as a confident, military potent and God-led state. His speech turns military ideology into national consciousness through the frequent usage of modals (will, must, shall), collective pronouns (we, our), as well as assertive repetition. This corroborates the assertion by Fairclough (2013) that discourse also reflects and recreates power structures. The analysis concludes that the speech acts of Field Marshal Munir are used as a collective weapon of linguistic weapons, they execute the two tasks so as to defend the sovereignty on the discursive level and on the other hand to justify the centrality of the army in the national life. The assertive acts project reality, commissive ensure commitment, expressive bind emotion and declarative enact institutional will. This combination of them produces what Van Dijk (1997) terms a symbolic macro-act: a consistent ideological speech that frames the linguistic selection with a political agenda.

5.4 The Performative Sovereignty and Identity Construction

According to the findings, the discourse of Field Marshal Munir is more than communicative, it is the enactment of the identity of Pakistan as a nation that is characterized by defense, faith and endurance. His speech acts combine the illocutionary power of the command with the perlocutionary power of the unity and creates a performative identity that is both authoritative and shared. Sovereignty is not only perceived but it is actualized in language in the repetition, the ritualization of the phrase, pronouncement such that national existence is symbolically reasserted. This agrees with the proposition of Austin (1962), that to speak is to act and with the development of Searle (1969), that such acts get their meaning through institutional contexts. Therefore, what Field Marshal Munir does is a form of national performativity where each utterance or statement is a re-performance of Pakistan as a sovereign, moral, militarily intransigent state.

6. Conclusion

This study has aimed to discuss the use of language as a performative act by Field Marshal Asim Munir, the Chief of Army Staff of

Pakistan, to enact the notions of sovereignty, power and national identity in his most recent speeches. Following the Speech Act Theory developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) the study attempted to identify the most prevalent forms of speech acts assertive, commissive, declarative and expressive as well as the role played by these forms of speech in a performative way to develop the image of the nation as sovereign and militarily-powerful. The researchers aimed at revealing not only what is said, but what is done saying and in particular, the political-military discourse in Pakistan is practiced as a performative act of statehood, not as a form of communication. It was found that Field Marshal Munir uses assertive and commissive types of speech acts as the primary ones, as they correspond to the discursive purpose of the military institution in imposing power and making a commitment to protect. Assertive ways like Pakistan is a sovereign country which is not negotiable bring in a sense of certainty and legitimacy whereas commissive ones, like we will defend our every inch of our land, impose institutional promise and permanence. Expressive acts are used to humanize authority by using emotional appeals to become patriotic solidarity, and declaratives are a language that linguistically acts to impose sovereignty by reasserting institutional determination and policy.

With these, the functions of forming national identity and the legitimation of military power are performed in a combined manner. They combine ideological belief and emotional appeal and by speaking, one governs. Therefore, the power of Pakistan, as stated by Munir, is not only described but it is done in a linguistic and symbolic way. The results highlight the fact that language is a weapon of power in the environment of Pakistan political-military organization. The study has shown that sovereignty is re-enacted and reasserted through speech acts. The performative speech of command, promise and declaration make speeches into political actions. This works to endorse Bourdieu (1991) concept of authorized language in which the power of the institution grants legitimacy to utterances. Additionally, the study also adds to the wider knowledge of the political communication and discourse research, as it can be seen that the theory of speech acts still remains instrumental in analyzing the linguistic construction of national identity and ideological discourses. It also reveals that emotional appeals (expressive) are not the marginal, but the central components of power performance in the discourse of defense.

Although, this study can be understood as a narrow linguistic piece, its sample is very small (six speeches) and the research is narrowly confined to official speech as well. Lack of analysis of the public or media reception limits the comprehension of the perlocutionary effects (how the audiences interpret or react). Also, the qualitative characteristics of speech act identification though rigorous are subject to interpretive bias. Reliability may be improved in future research by addressing corpus-based quantitative instruments or comparing with speeches of other leaders of other countries. Future studies can use cross-institutional comparisons by investigating the differences in speech acts in political, military, and diplomatic leaders in Pakistan and other contexts. There might also be the studies of the reception of the audience and the media presentation of the performative speech to evaluate the negotiability of the linguistic authority in the discourse. A combination of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2013) and the Speech Act Theory (Searl 1969) would possibly provide more detailed information on how power is constructed in three ways through syntax, ideology, and context simultaneously. The gist of the above is that the words of Field Marshal Asim Munir are a weapon of sovereignty i.e. every statement, vow and declaration is the act of ideological and institutional power of the country. His speeches demonstrate the way in which, in the rhetoric of politics-military, to speak is to act and that the state is performing through speech.

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