

# Building Interpersonal Relations: A Grammar for Construing Socio-Political Persona

Tazanfal Tehseem

## Abstract

This paper aims to explore how speakers negotiate interpersonal meanings and build relations with a focus on how political discourse is conducted in two different cultures, of the USA and Pakistan, as a way of reinforcing the SFL claim that language reflects and constructs context of culture. Therefore, based on the comparative analysis, the study builds on how linguistic choices construe, reflect and empower the speakers. Since political speeches offer rewarding data on how the interactants choose to express their intended meanings to disseminate their socio-cultural ideologies, therefore, it is of great interest to discourse analysts to identify linguistic patterns which construe socio-political persona. The speech extracts have been drawn of President Obama and Premier Gilani- the two key role politicians and the strategic partners in power at the time of Osama operation in Pakistan. Based on the comparative notion, the study builds on how the linguistic choices construe, reflect and empower distinctive interpersonal relations of the speakers in their socio-cultural contexts. The paper draws on the interpersonal framework of discourse analysis developed within functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) with focus mainly on choice of pronouns, mood, modality and appraisal (Thompson, 2013). A careful sample analysis has shown that the selected data is rich in terms of freer but recognizable interpersonal choices, such as the way the speakers use language to establish an in-group and out-group and also the extent to which, and the ways in which, the two speakers interact overtly with their audience in terms of evaluated choices and stance; for example President Obama significantly uses the pronoun 'I' to show power while premier Gilani prefers 'we' for solidarity. The detailed empirical account of the choices has been generated by using UAM corpus tool.

**Keywords:** *Political discourse, interpersonal meanings, appraisal, context of culture*

## 1. Introduction

Political speeches are characterized projecting socio-political ideologies in the most overt ways, hence are of great interest to discourse analysts (Thompson, 2013). Since such speeches serve to persuade a larger group of audience, they represent a prime example of the persuasive use of language; and such speeches are written by the experts, so are crafted not only to persuade the target audience but also to establish intended persona of the politicians. Therefore, the linguistic choices employed in such texts may be more significant than the conventional registers (such as academic discourses or the hard news reporting. In their content, political expressions are used to comment on government actions rather than the private conduct of any individual. Whereas, language use always intersects with the social and political reflexes of power, and the research on power often falls into one

of the two traditions: the main stream and the second stream. In main stream, power is authority whereas in the second stream, it is dominance which builds power. The present study would reveal how powerful groups influence the way language is used and how these groups convey their positions folded in linguistic patterns.

America and Pakistan remained two strategic partners in war against terror. In May 2011 US forces succeeded in killing Osama Bin Laden - the leader of Al Qaeda, in Abbotabad operation. On this occasion, US President Barak Obama amazed the world with his besieging speech claiming the victory of US against terrorism. Equally, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, also addressed the parliament and took the nation in confidence on Osama Operation. These two speeches are exceedingly loaded with terms of interpersonal choices through linguistic patterns which portray their socio-political stance and build their persona.

This paper primarily deals with the choice of pronouns, mood, modality and appraisal (Thompson 2013), based on Hallidayan framework of Interpersonal Metafunction within SFL. Poynton (1990) describes Interpersonal Metafunction as, it is the organization of conversation in terms of speech or conversational roles, including the relation of congruence or incongruence between speech function, such as statement or command, and the grammatical (mood) choices which realize them; a range of aspects of lexical choices, including terms of address, slangs, swearing and attitudinal lexis; and what has variously been referred to as 'the expressive' or 'the emotive' (feeling, emotion, evaluation or affect). As stated earlier, the data builds on those two political speeches with two different socio-political and cultural backgrounds and the author attempts to establish how distinctive interpersonal choices help to construe different meanings.

## **2. Literature Review**

Halliday (1994) defines the Interpersonal Metafunction in a way that it is the Interpersonal Metafunction through which users of language establish, negotiate and assume their positions in social relationship and it is concerned with *clause as exchange*. Interpersonal Metafunction represents the way the addresser and the addressee interact (Ye, 2010) whereas Martin (2002) has described it as "Negotiation" - concerned with resources for exchanging information, goods and services in dialogue. Interpersonal Metafunction discusses the social reality - tenor, where we come up with an exploration of how clause functions as exchange and what impact or influence a reader, a listener or news consumer can get from the specified text.

Language is always political in its nature that is exercised through power in main or second stream. So, language, power and politics are three interlinked terms. Fairclough (1999) explains that Power is always behind in discourses. Many studies of political discourse deal with the language of professional politicians and political institutions, some of which are discourse analytical (Simpson & Myer, 2010). For example, Halliday

(1979/2004); Fairclough (1989/2000); Martin (1990/2002); Patpong, Harris (1995); Thompson (1996/2000/13); Van Dijk (1997); Huang (2002); Chilton (2004); Guan and Shuhong (2005); Caffarel, and Rechniewski,(2009); Hinckel (2009); Feng and Liu (2010); Wang (2010); Ye (2010); and Kondowe (2014) to quote a few.

In my contribution, I evaluate the specified speeches of two the Premiers critically applying Hallidayan framework of Interpersonal Metafunction. This paper primarily attempts to explore linguistic patterns which construe socio-political persona. For instance,

1. *I as Commander-in-Chief, have to sign a letter to a family that has lost a loved one, or look into the eyes of a service member who's been gravely wounded. (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*
2. *We all are united and fully committed to sparing no sacrifice to uphold our national dignity and honour; to safeguard our supreme national interests by all means and all resources at our command. (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)*

Linguistic analysis of this illustration demonstrates that it as loaded with the particular ideology, in first example, the choice of pronoun 'I' shows the power of the speaker as an authority whereas in the second example, 'we' implies the government, military and the nation showing solidarity. So, the choice of pronouns used by the political speakers has an important persuasive function when it comes to referring themselves.

Begum (2015) attempts to analyze the mob's language while protesting against the shortage of electricity and gas, blocking the main airport road in the cantonment area in Rawalpindi and saying; Pakistan concludes that the masses in the so-called democratic countries are seen more willing to bend in favor of undemocratic set up. Whereas, Ghilzai, Din and Asghar (2017) analyze the ideological and persuasive components used in Imran Khan's speech to explore persuasive strategies based on Fairclough's paradigm and sum up that Imran Khan wants to rebuild Pakistan with a new shape through justice which must be delivered to everyone. In addition, Al-Majali (2015) explores linguistic features of the political speeches of the ousted Arab Presidents during the Arab Spring Revolution using the Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework of cohesion and establishes that the language of the political speeches is significantly different from other usage. Besides this, there has been a good deal of research on certain linguistic aspects of political speeches, from more pervasive features such as the use of pronouns (e.g. Wilson, 1990) or metaphor (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006), to specific features such as Simon-Vandenberg's (2000) study of the use of *I think*. Wilson (2003) provides a very useful survey of the areas which have been explored, while van Dijk (2006) illustrates briefly a wide range of approaches to analysis.

### 3. Methodology and Data Collection

For the present study, data builds on the speeches delivered by the US President, Barack Obama, and the then Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf

Raza Gilani - the two key politicians and strategic partners in power at the time of Abbotabad operation in Pakistan. President Obama's speech consists of 126 clauses delivered on 02 May, 2011 whereas Premier Gillani's speech contains 220 clauses delivered on 09 May, 2011.

Systemic Function Grammar has been chosen as the linguistic framework for the analysis of the study due to its emphasis on sociological aspect of language displaying the overall system of grammar (Halliday & Mathiesan, 2004). SFG puts that context of situation is organized in three categories: Field, Tenor and Mode. Corresponding to these, Halliday (1994) examines language into three metafunctions: Experiential (Ideational), Interpersonal and Textual. Each of the metafunctions articulates different modes of meaning at the clause level in different aspects of the world. He (ibid.) argues that all languages have three kinds of semantic components and have resources for construing experience (the ideational component), resources for enacting the varied and complex social relations (the interpersonal component) and resources for enabling these two kinds of meanings to come together in a coherent text (the textual function). In view of Butt et al. (1995), "The interpersonal metafunction uses language to encode interaction and to show how defensible or binding we find our proposition or proposal" (p. 13).

Meaning is considered from the point of view of its function in the process of social interaction in interpersonal analysis. The paper reveals how Interpersonal Metafunction works to explore the relation between an addresser and addressee. As, in SFL "choice construes meaning" is a widely accepted principle and this forms the realization of meaning in discourse analysis (Ye, 2010). Below are the parameters which the analysis builds on:

- The Mood choice of each independent clause (i.e. declarative, interrogative or imperative);
  - The speech function of each independent clause (i.e. statement, question, command, offer)
  - Subject and Finite in all finite clauses
- Modality (High, Median and Low)
- Pronoun usage (e.g. 'I' for power and 'We' for solidarity)
- Appraisal- Evaluation (the three major categories: Affect, Judgement, Appreciation)

## **Analysis and Discussion**

As stated earlier, the paper draws on the interpersonal framework of discourse analysis developed within systemic-functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) with focus mainly on choice of pronouns, mood, modality and appraisal (Thompson, 2013), therefore, following sections offer detailed discussion & interpretation of the selected data.

### **4.1 Analysis of Mood Choices**

Halliday (2004) describes language as a resource for making meanings. Further, he (ibid.) elaborates that meaning resides in systemic

patterns of choice. This system and structure has been illustrated through MOOD. Most of the clauses in English are constructed around declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives (Halliday, 1994). The mood choice selection depends on the role of speakers and their situation.

Table 1: English mood structure

MOOD	Speech Role
<b>Declarative</b>	Statement→ Giving Information
<b>Interrogative</b>	Question→ Asking Information
<b>Imperative</b>	Directive→ Offer, Command

Mood element consists of two parts: **Subject** which is a nominal group and **Finite** operator which is part of verbal group Halliday (2004). The ordering or position of subject and finite in clause plays an important role in indicating the speech function.

- Declarative (Subject^Finite)
- Interrogative (WH^Finite)
- Imperative (“you” subject i.e. let’s)

In present texts, the most common pattern in both the speeches is declarative (Subject^Finite) whose function is to give information in form of statements.

Table 2: Percentage of clauses according to mood choice

Clauses→	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative
<b>President Obama</b>	96%	0%	3.96%
<b>P.M. Gillani</b>	95%	2.72%	2.27%

Table 2 shows a clear difference between three mood choices. In Obama’s speech out of 126 clauses, 121 clauses are declarative with 96%. In Gillani’s speech 209 clauses are declarative out of 220 with 95%. Ye (2010) asserts generally that declarative clauses remain always dominant in political speeches followed by imperatives while interrogatives usually come last. Declarative clauses are always loaded with information provided to audience. President Obama and PM Gillani, both speakers gave excess of information about that particular incident. Obama states America as a power and recalls the horrific events of 9/11, 2001 and May, 2011. He shows sympathy with those American families who lost their dear ones in 9/11 incident. He declares this operation as a legal victory of US against terrorism. He foregrounds all the details of Abbotabad operation and killing of Bin Laden. On the other hand, PM Gillani also gives briefing about the Abbotabad operation and shares all the factors behind it. Further, he elaborates the agenda of Pakistan in war against terrorism and also shows solidarity with the nation by giving fifteen statements in his conclusion. In this regard, both speakers clearly defined

their strategies and ideologies behind their actions which could be achieved by declarative clauses.

In use of imperative clauses, Halliday (1970) states two functions of imperative clauses: one is command and other is offer. In political speeches, speakers usually offer by using “let’s” which means ‘together’, here speaker is offering audience to join him in performing some particular action. Following are some imperative clauses from Obama’s speech where he is inviting and requesting the audience.

1. <107> Finally, **let me** say to the families who lost loved ones on 9/11.
2. <111> And tonight, **let us** think back to the sense of unity that prevailed on 9/11. (President Obama: May 02, 2011)

Most studies show that these clauses build up some mutual relationship between audience and speakers and also shorten their distance. In Obama’s case, these clauses are at the last part of his speech arousing listener’s emotions and feelings. These clauses are encouraging audience’s sense of unity and showing emotional solidarity with them.

As Interrogative clauses make speech less convincing and less persuasive, so, President Obama completely avoids them. This is the reason that his speech focused on main events and is clearly action-oriented.

In comparison, PM Gillani uses following imperative clauses:

1. <105> **Let’s** not rush to judgment.
2. <161> **Let me** also affirm the Government’s full confidence in the high command of the Pakistan Armed Forces and the Inter Services Intelligence.
3. <164> Now **let me** put the present situation in its proper perspective (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)

Here we can note the clear difference between the two speeches. President Obama is engaging with audience in a way different from PM Gillani’s. In his speech, PM Gillani is emphasizing more on request for himself rather than any invitation for audience to stand with him together. These clauses show that the speaker is clearing the position of his agenda towards the audience.

In contrast to Obama’s speech, PM Gillani uses interrogative clauses in his speech, those created a quest and curiosity in listener’s mind. For instance,

1. <54> Who had joined the Jihad mutata into Al Qaeda?
2. <55> Who was responsible for the birth of Al Qaeda?
3. <56> Who was responsible for making the myth of Osama bin Laden? (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)

These questions have been aroused by speaker to create a plot for their answers. Here, *the myth of Osama bin Laden* is a sarcastic phrase rather.

Speaker is trying to take audience into confidence and making a room for his upcoming statements regarding the main event of Abbotabad operation. This makes Gillani's speech less convincing than Obama's speech.

## 4.2 Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns are chosen to evoke multiple identities of speakers, presented from a range of perspectives. They also function in building interpersonal relation between addresser and addressee in a speech and provide different meanings with their utilization. The choice of *I*, *we*, *they* and *you* can be analyzed through different perspectives. These pronouns help to unveil the particular sort of ideology behind the specified text (discourses).

### 4.2.1 Pronoun Usage in President Obama's Speech

Data analysis revealed a total of 107 pronouns in Obama's speech. Where the first person singular *I* was used for 10 times with allomorph *me* for only 1 time accounting 9.34% and 0.93% respectively. The pronoun *We* and its allomorph *Our* both discovered with same ratio as 39 (36.44%) while their counterpart *us* constituted 7 times with 6.54% of the total. The usage of *they* was noticed only 6 times with 5.6%. Second person *You* has been sparsely used, only 2 times with 1.86% with its equivalent *your*, used only 1 time with marginal percentage of 0.93%. Third person pronoun *He* is used only 2 times (1.86%).

Table 3 Pronoun Usage in Obama's Speech

President Obama's Speech										
Personal Pronoun	I	We	Our	They	Us	He	You	Your	Me	Total
Times (#)	10	39	39	06	07	02	02	1	1	107
Percentage (%)	9.34	36.44	36.44	5.6	6.54	1.86	1.86	0.93	0.93	

### 4.2.2 Pronoun Usage in PM Gillani's Speech.

Here, statically, the data reveals a sum of 111 pronouns in Gillani's speech with a varied distribution. The first person singular *I* used for 12 times with 10.81%, on the other side its corresponding *me* used for 5 times with 4.5%. Inclusive pronoun *We* used for 29 times (26.12%), *us* with 2 times (1.80%) and their counterpart *Our* is used with great majority of 58 times accounting 52.2%. There is no usage of *they*, found in Gillani's speech. *You* used for 2 times with minor percentage of 1.80% while there is no usage of *your*. Third person *He* came up with a usage of only 3 times with 2.70%.

Table 4: Pronoun Usage in PM Gillani's Speech

Gillani's Speech										
Personal Pronoun	I	We	Our	They	Us	He	You	Your	Me	Total
Times (#)	12	29	58	00	02	03	02	00	05	111
Percentage (%)	10.81	26.12	52.25	0	1.80	2.70	1.80	0	4.5	

**(a) The Use of I ↔ Me:**

There are first person singular pronouns *I* and *me*. These pronouns are always exclusive (Thompson, 2004). Politicians use first personal pronouns for self-reference to make strategic political functions. When the personal pronoun *I* is used, it refers not just to the speaker of the utterance, but also refers to any of the speaker's interactional and social identities (Bramley, 2001). Generally, *I* is used to show power whom we can call *presidential I*. It is analyzed to check that how much a discourse is highly self-centered and how an individual's authority has neglected the social dialogue.

Here, the study observes that Obama's speech prefers the pronoun *I* more than Gillani's speech with ratio of 1.58 and 1 respectively. Following some of the few examples are selected from data:

Table 5: Personal Pronoun 'I'

President Obama's Speech	Prime Minister Gillani's Speech
1. <i>Tonight, I can report to the American people and to the world</i>	1. <i>I wish to take the nation into confidence</i>
2. <i>I directed Leon Panetta, the director of the CIA, to make the killing or capture of bin Laden the top priority of our war against Al-Qaeda</i>	2. <i>I would like to inform you about my visit to France</i>
3. <i>I, as Commander-in-Chief, have to sign a letter to a family that has lost a loved one, or look into the eyes of a service member who's been gravely wounded.</i>	3. <i>I had extensive consultations with President Zardari, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the Chief of Army Staff, Director General ISI and other important stakeholders on issues relating to Pakistan's national security.</i>
4. <i>Finally, let me say to the families who lost loved ones on 9/11 (President Obama: May 02, 2011)</i>	4. <i>Let me also affirm the Government's full confidence in the high command of the Pakistan Armed Forces and the Inter Services Intelligence. (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)</i>



President Obama's choice of pronoun *I* is far different from PM Gillani's singular pronoun usage. In second clause, Obama says *I directed* which can be understood that he is portraying himself as powerful authority. He is portraying his image as a president of a super power USA, who has the authority to report and direct. A powerful influence can be drawn through the choice of presidential *I* in Obama's dialogue. In third clause, USA president's supremacy is clear when he says, *I, as a commander-in-chief*...

So, predominance of *I* projects him as a man who could stand up and can make impressive decisions above all pressures – a man with no fear, doubtless and free from obscurity. In case of its counterpart *me*, here USA president politely knocks the families who lost their loved ones in 9/11. Therefore, by using *I* he upholds himself as an individual politician with individual achievements which is actually the opposite of what he is claiming to do and entitles himself as a champion.

In the PM Gillani's choice of pronoun usage *I*, it can be seen that his clauses are directing towards a positive manner. In first clause, *I wish* is not showing power rather it reveals something for which the speaker is not hundred percent sure. In second clause, the speaker, individually, is going to brief about his visit to France, again here *I* is not claiming any sort of power. In third clause, he informs his audience about his consultation with other members on the main issue. So, all clauses of PM Gillani depict his mind about that specific issue where power is less dominating than Obama's words. In clause containing *me*, he is affirming to take government into confidence with a positively polite mode.

#### 4.2.3 The Use of *We* ↔ *Us*:

*We* and *Us* are inclusive, where speaker indulges himself with his audience to take them into confidence. *We* is used for solidarity and *Us* is used for collective identity e.g. *Let's* means *you and me*. Usage of plural pronouns also reveals the position of a speaker in a political discourse as to how he has managed to get himself into the public. "*We*" pattern can help create an intimate dialogic style and shorten the distance between the addresser and the audience which can further persuade the audience to share the same proposal of the addresser (Ye 2010). Including *We* and *Us*, *Our* also shows a harmony between orator and consumer.

Generally, plural pronoun usage comes under solidarity. *We* can be used in two folds, one is used to refer audience and speaker together and other is used to refer government and speaker eliminating audience. In second case, it can be used for exclusiveness.

Having analyzed each clause of both speeches, the study discovers that according to ratio, Obama used *We* and *Us* more than the Premier Gillani. Here, a point of interest can be taken from the usage of their correspondent *Our* which is used for 58 times by the PM Gillani and 39 times by President Obama. Consider a few clauses below:

Table 6: Personal Pronoun ‘We’

President Obama’s Speech	PM Gillani’s Speech
1. <b>We</b> reaffirmed <b>our</b> ties to each other, and <b>our</b> love of community and country.	1. <b>We</b> all are united and fully committed to sparing no sacrifice to uphold <b>our</b> national dignity and honour; to safeguard <b>our</b> supreme national interests by all means and all resources at <b>our</b> command.
2. <b>We</b> were also united in <b>our</b> resolve to protect our nation	2. <b>Our</b> real strength is <b>our</b> people and <b>our</b> State institutions.
3. <b>We’ve</b> disrupted terrorist attacks and strengthened <b>our</b> homeland defence.	3. <b>We</b> opened <b>our</b> homes and <b>our</b> hearts to those who fled the conflict in Afghanistan and also supported the great Jihad.
4. In <b>Afghanistan</b> , <b>we</b> removed the Taliban government	4. However, <b>we</b> are not so naïve to declare victory; mission accomplished, and turn around.
5. <b>Our</b> counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan helped lead <b>us</b> to bin Laden (President Obama: May 02, 2011)	5. Fascination for high drama sometimes makes <b>us</b> forget the sequence (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)

Usage of pronouns in these clauses creates a harmony, with inclusiveness, between the addressers and listeners. In first three clauses, Obama’s **we** affirms his connection with his audience. He reassures that he and the listeners are united and one community to protect their nation and fight against terrorism. The usage of **We** is very significant in order to win the support and confidence of audience. From fourth clause onwards, the use of **We** is exclusive one where the speaker excludes his consumers and talks about American government and army, who removed Taliban government from Afghanistan. In fifth clause, the use of both **our** and **us** can be noticed, here again Obama is directing his words and expressions toward his army and government with whom Pakistan cooperated to capture Bin Laden.

On the other page, in first three clauses PM Gillani’s pronoun usage and their expressions are clearly demonstrating a sense of commonality between himself and the audience. He says that **we**, the speaker and the listeners are a one united nation, upholding the degree of honor and dignity. Further, he claims that real strength of his country is its nation and directing nation towards his spectators. He talks about the open hearts and homes of the nation, straitening towards his listeners once again. In this way, he took his addressee in his confidence with a sigh of solidarity. In fourth clause, PM Gillani turns toward the government, army or other agencies who did not declare the victory as accomplishing the mission. As declaring a victory is not a matter of public rather it is something which upholds authority, and authority is government, so here narrator uses **We** in exclusive way

indicating himself with other establishments. In fifth clause, the use of **Us** can be discovered as exclusive and inclusive one. **Us** is used in a clause as objective case, here the spokesman can include his listeners with himself or exclude them and directs **Us** for himself and government who becomes forgetful in fascination of drama.

Generally, the regular use of **We** in political speeches has the effect of making the addressees feel that the speaker is on their side but the distinctions in use of **We** cannot straight-forwardly be a speedy conclusion rather its variability in meanings makes it technical.

#### 4.2.4 The Use of **They**

**They** refers to 'others' as a negative perspective. It highlights the distance as **we/us** and **they/them**. Third personal pronouns create a boundary through which a speaker clearly discloses his ideology about the opponent. This way political speeches are always ideologically oriented and come up with the revelation of specific identities through lexical representation. In Obama's speech, *they* appeared 6 times with a percentage of 5.6. See the following clauses:

##### **Obama's Speech:**

1. *After a firefight, **they** killed Osama bin Laden and took custody of his body.*
2. *But tonight, **they** feel the satisfaction of their work and the result of their pursuit of justice (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*

Here, in first clause, president Obama is using **they** to refer to the army who killed Bin Laden with a complete absence of possessiveness. In second clause **they** is referring to the American people who will be satisfied with their work and justice that has been done with a killing of terrorist. Again the meanings of **they** are overlapping which do not present opponents rather otherness.

There is no usage of **they** in PM Gillani's speech with a complete avoidance of any impersonalisation.

##### **(a) You:**

**You** is second personal pronoun which refers to audience as a separate identity. There are two forms of **You**, singular and plural depending upon the meaning of specified text. Similarly, it has two uses, first to draw the attention of the listeners and second is to separate the audience from speaker.

In both speeches, the use of *you* and its counterpart *your* has least usage. In both speeches *you* appeared 2 times and *your* 1 time in Obama's speech and is completely absent in Gillani's speech. For instance,

**Obama ►** *We have never forgotten **your** loss (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*

**Gillani ►** *I would like to inform **you** about my visit to France (Prime Minister Gillani, May 09, 2011)*

The clause taken from Obama's speech is referring towards a separation where the speaker is talking about the other's loss calling it as **yours**, clearly excluding himself from the loss. On the other hand, Gillani uses **you** to draw the attention of his audience to inform them about his visit.

## 5. Modality Analysis

In interpersonal metafunction, there are many intermediate possibilities, kind of interdeterminancy that fall in between 'sometimes' and 'may be' (Halliday, 2014). These intermediate degrees between 'yes' and 'no' are known as Modality. Generally, modality is realized through modal verbs but the words like *hope*, *wish* also come under this term. Thus, modality is an expression of the speaker's opinion and also initiated a role of exchange for a speaker (Halliday, 2014). It concludes the certainty in a speech which is divided in degrees e.g. high, median, and low as modal commitment in a proposition. These three scales of high, median and low lead to different meanings (Halliday, 1994). For instance, the semantic meaning of modal verbs like *can*, *will*, *should*, *must* and *may* is rooted in the notion of 'potentiality'.

The analysis focuses on modal operators to check the level of commitment in both premiers' speeches. All the modal auxiliaries are placed in a table to investigate their modal commitment. The choice of each leads to different meanings with a different ratio in selected data. The percentage can be seen in following chart:

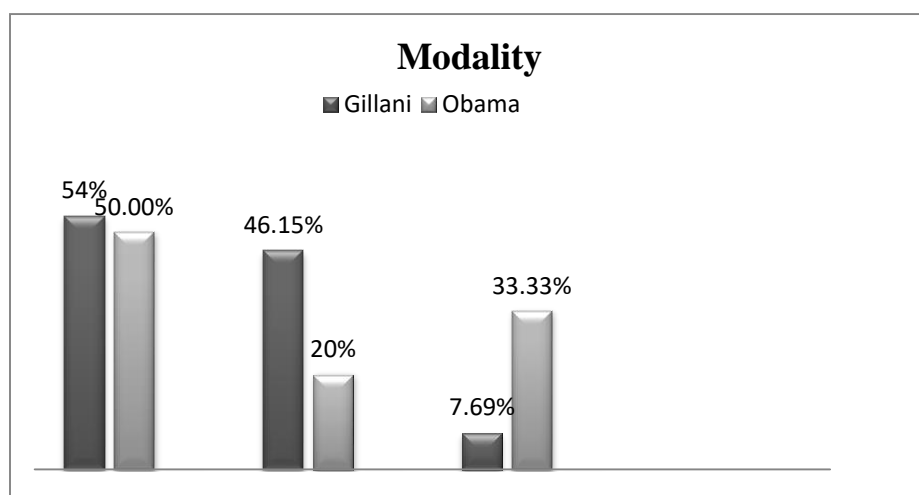


Fig. 1 Modality Analysis (High, Median, Low)

It is evident from the above graph that modal auxiliary of high scale dominate both speeches with an equal percentage of 50 and 53.5 (round about 54%). Median auxiliaries are second in P.M. Gillani's dialogues with a significant percentage of 46.15 while Obama used them only by 20%. In the case of low auxiliary scale, PM Gillani's usage is less than Obama's with the percentage of 7.69 and 33.33 respectively. The distribution of these modal scales is balanced in case of high auxiliaries as per ratio is concerned and

unbalanced in case of median and low. Therefore, it shows the level of certainty and uncertainty in both texts.

### 5.1 Function of auxiliary *will* and *must*

Both speeches favor the use of modal **will**. Halliday (1994) explains the two functions of will. One is to mark future tense and other is used in inaugural address as modal verb operator. Both premiers used this auxiliary to mark tense of future events. Consider the followings:

Table 7: (High modal auxiliary ‘will’)

President Obama	Prime Minister Gillani
<i>Yet as a country, we <b>will</b> never tolerate our security being threatened,</i>	<i>Pakistan <b>will</b> not relent in this national cause and is determined not to allow its soil to be used by any one for terrorism</i>
<i>There is no doubt that Al-Qaeda <b>will</b> continue to pursue attacks against us.</i>	<i>We <b>will</b> not allow our detractors to succeed in offloading their own shortcomings and errors of omission and commission in a blame game that stigmatizes Pakistan.</i>
<i>The United States is not - and never <b>will</b> be - at war with Islam.</i>	<i>We <b>will</b> utilize all means and resources and Insha Allah succeed.</i>
<i>We <b>must</b> and we will - remain vigilant at home and abroad.</i>  <i>(President Obama: May 02, 2011)</i>	<i>We <b>must</b> assume full ownership and responsibility for realizing our shared vision of stability and prosperity.</i>  <i>(Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)</i>

Both speakers have chosen such clauses to predict their possessions and power. They made their audience focus on the future approaches and plans. This modal auxiliary signals a relative higher degree of certainty about the validity of proposition and it is successful in showing the strong desire and determination of both leaders toward their countries and securities. In above table, President Obama predicted about the strength of his country and warned Al Qaeda. He also cleared the American strategy towards Islam. On the other side, Prime Minister Gillani made his audience focused on future concerns and took them into confidence, regarding national security. Since this modal is most often likely to perform the two functions inherently, Kondowe (2014), so the point to be noticed is the distinction between the two functions of will discussed here may not be discrete and clear-cut.

In case of **must**, Hickel (2009) notes that high scale modals like **must** indicate full commitment when used in discourse. It is an ideal modal to be used for the sake of self-assurance. It may lead a successful way for audience to believe in what speaker says. The usage of such high commitment modal might be deliberate toward personal accountability that will not spare the narrator from fulfilling his commitments. Similarly,

avoidance of this modal verb can create latitude in case he fails to live by his promises.

## 5.2 Use of Median and Low Modals

It can be seen through the chart that the median modals are preferred by Gillani more than Obama. On the contrary, in case of low modals, Obama's percentage is more than Gillani.

For median modals, consider Gillani's words:

- 1) *I **would** like to inform you about my visit to France which I undertook on 3rd May.*
- 2) *No one **should** underestimate the resolve and capability of our nation and armed forces to defend our sacred homeland.*
- 3) *Even at that time we had cautioned the international forces on the consequences of a flawed military campaign **could** lead to the dispersal of Al Qaeda. (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)*

PM Gillani seems polite and unsure with his audience. In first example, he is going to brief his audience about his visit, just to take them into confidence. In second instance, the usage of **should** made his dialogue a mere request than an order. In third case, the speaker is not sure about the information he is giving or anticipation he is making about the event and its consequences. The usage of median modals at this rate of 46.15%, disclosed PM Gillani as more explainable on Abbotabad operation.

In case of low modal usage, Hickel (2009) observes that low modals indicate a lack of confidence of speaker in truth of the proposition which is being advanced. As language always comes with its specified discourse, so interpretation should be given according to its context. President Obama emphasized on low modals more than PM Gillani. For instance,

- 1) *Tonight, I **can** report to the American people and to the world*
- 2) *Then, last August, after years of painstaking work by our intelligence community, I was briefed on a **possible** lead to bin Laden. (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*

In both examples, USA president is reporting to his public in a courteous manner. He is talking about the possibilities. Kondowe (2014) explains that **can** is used to express one's personal beliefs, and to express hope, possibility and so on, to be achieved by taking into account the current state of affairs. So, here we cannot state that Obama is not confident on what he says rather the choice of possibilities and likelihoods made him polite with his audience.

## 5.3 Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree tell us about the intensity or frequency of an action. These explain us how often something is done. The usage of these adverbs is better understood through interpersonal meanings. The adverbs like usually and always come under modality (say, temporality, intensity and modality), perhaps are more interpersonal than circumstantial and experiential. They can be used as interpersonal Mood Adjuncts, for example,

“Sara has been running for 5 hours” and “Sara has always been running”, ‘5 hours’.

During the analysis of two speeches, the very minor usage of adverbs of frequency can be seen. Both speakers avoided these adverbs as their purpose of ‘fixed expressions’ was fulfilled.

## 6. Appraisal: Language of Evaluation

Appraisal theory differs from other theories of emotions because of its emphasis on “the interpretations of events rather than the events themselves that cause emotion” (Roseman & Smith, 2001, p. 6). Martin and White (2005) describe appraisal as it’s one of the three major discourse semantic resources construing interpersonal meaning (alongside involvement and negotiation). Appraisal is divided into three sub systems i.e. Attitude, Engagement and Graduation.

Sub system of appraisal concerned with present study is Attitude which has further sub categories namely; affect, judgement and appreciation. They can be negative as well as positive depending upon the speaker’s attitude towards the issue.

Table 8: Appraisal (Attitude)

Register	Discourse Semantics	
Power (Status)	Appraisal (Attitude)	
	-Judgement	-concerned with resources for assessing behavior according to various normative principles, e.g. admire, criticize, praise or condemn
	-affect	-deals with resources for construing emotional reactions (positive or negative), e.g. shock, gloom, happiness etc
	-appreciation	-looks at resources for construing the value of things including natural phenomena and semiosis (either product or process)

Political speeches always present communicative objectives. Texts of such type (narratives) are much about personal recollection, observation and story-telling for explicit development of an argumentative position. In the context of war against terror from 9/11 to Abbotabad operation, these two political speeches reveal a certain type of attitudinal alignment on behalf of (powerful) speakers. Following is the (general) analysis of both texts on the basis of their language evaluation.

## 6.1 Evaluation of Obama's speech

President Obama's speech is dominated by the clauses showing judgment, appreciation is little less than judgment with very low affect.

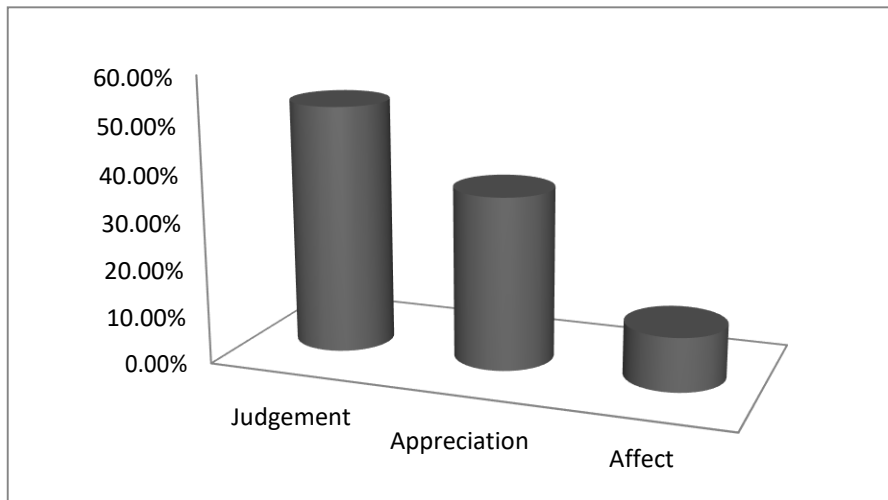


Fig. 2 Obama's Speech Appraisal Analysis

It is noteworthy that speaker showed a positive judgment throughout his speech. For instance,

<79>: *Our counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan helped lead us to bin Laden*

<88>: *The American people did not choose this fight. (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*

In the first clause, President Obama's attitude towards Pakistan (against terror) is very positive. He talks about cooperation between two countries helping each other for capturing Bin Laden. Here, he is admiring the role of other country in collaboration with America against terrorism in an explicit way. In second clause, President Obama is stating a very clear judgment for his public that they have not chosen this fight of war against terror so it's others (terrorist) who have chosen it. The speaker is foregrounding his collective attitude towards his audience involving his personal judgments about his public, country, terrorism and Pakistan.

In account of appreciation, consider these following clauses:

<57>: *The death of bin Laden marks the most significant achievement to date in our nation's effort to defeat Al-Qaeda.*

<102>: *Tonight, we give thanks to the countless intelligence and counterterrorism professionals who've worked tirelessly to achieve this outcome. (President Obama: May 02, 2011)*

Here, in first clause, President Obama is appreciating the significant achievement of his nation in a very positive manner construing its value. In



second instance, he is appreciating the different subjects like intelligence and other professionals who have worked hard to achieve the main goal.

There is a very low marginal percentage of affect in this speech. President Obama has avoided the usage of personal emotions. He remained very clear and subjective about the particular issue.

## 6.2 Evaluation of Gillani's Speech

Like Obama, Gillani's speech is also dominated by judgmental clauses both in positive and negative way. The percentages of both speeches are even near about each other so far as the ratio is concerned.

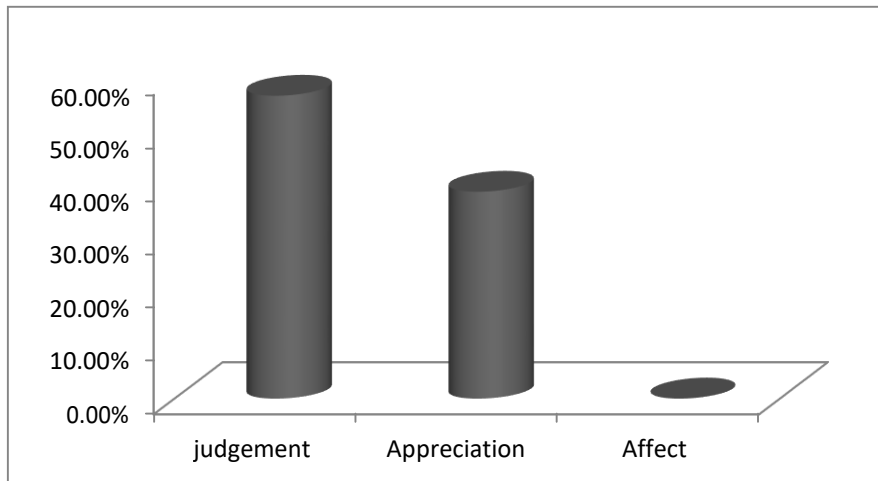


Fig. 3 P.M. Gillani's Speech Appraisal Analysis

P.M. Gillani has used affective clauses even less than Obama's usage. Consider the following examples from Gillani's speech:

<66>: *Osama bin Laden was the most wanted terrorist and enemy number one of the civilized world.*

<81>: *Pakistan will not relent in this national cause and is determined not to allow its soil to be used by any one for terrorism. (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)*

Here, in first instance, PM Gillani is giving a negative judgment about Bin Laden. He is qualifying him with his negative attributes as being the most wanted terrorist and enemy of civilized world. Second example is a positive judgment about Pakistan's attitude towards terrorism. This perfect sort of ideology behind the aim of national sovereignty is very positively judged by the speaker.

In case of appreciation, following are examples from data:

<33>: *We all are united and fully committed to sparing no sacrifice to uphold our national dignity and honour; to safeguard our supreme national interests by all means and all resources at our command.*

<123>: *Hiding in plain sight, as is evident in this case, is perhaps another technique that could be attributed to Osama bin Laden in the realm of asymmetrical intelligence. (Prime Minister Gillani: May 09, 2011)*

In the first clause given, speaker is appraising his nation, who is committed to sparing no sacrifice to uphold national dignity. Here, PM Gillani is clear about the priorities and interests of his nation with confidence. In second clause, Gilani has negatively appraised Bin Laden's shrewd attitude. So, Lexical choices and tone of the speaker refer to the negative attitude of Bin Laden and has appraised it negatively.

## **7. Conclusion**

This paper has taken deliberate steps in examining various elements of interpersonal meanings in the two speeches. The analysis has focused on various parameters i.e. mood, choice, speech functions, pronoun choices, modality and appraisal. Results from mood analysis reveal that most of the clauses are declarative in nature so, the speakers gave a lot of information through their address and imperative clauses rank second. Halliday (1979) states two functions of imperative clauses, one is command and other is offer. In rights-culture discourses people usually offer by using "let's" which means 'together'. Both speeches avoided interrogative clauses which make their address more objective and information oriented. In modality analysis, high modal auxiliaries dominated both speeches as compared to median and low. The usage of 'will' and 'must' made the two leaders' strong and desirable in their commitment about future challenges and war against terror. Median and low auxiliaries rank as second and third in the data which portray the level of uncertainty. In usage of personal pronouns, both the politicians have emphasized on 'we' (with its allomorph 'our'), in both exclusive and inclusive way. In inclusive way, the speakers are making a bond with their audience that they themselves and the audience share common objectives with a sense of solidarity. Usage of pronoun 'I' comes at the second where the speakers are using it for personal narrative as well as for power in implicit and explicit way, but this is also significant to unfold that 'I' also signifies individualism in west where the social set up promotes individual culture. However, in this case the same has been used to show power. In evaluative choices, both speakers remained objective toward a particular issue and made it more effective with their judgments. The distribution of kinds of attitude indicates more or less personal or institutionalized approaches to feelings in victory against terrorism. Appreciation also played a significant role in their speeches to show evidence to that historic development but the Affect remained negligible. Judgment helped to evaluate the ethical issues related to the operation. The graphs given above mark the US President's speech more powerful than his counterpart, the Pakistan Premier.

The study has demonstrated how leaders' political discourses are loaded with certain ideologies. The study further offers sufficient evidence that the grammar of speeches is not merely a combinational device of creating correct structures, but also a method of constructing information and transferring ideology Therefore, the paper unfolds a reasonable degree of

certainty and captures accurate ideologies behind portraying a socio-political stance. Furthermore, there is need for Premiers and their speech writers to be aware of the ideologies tagged through their lexico-grammatical choices which make all the extracts significantly recognizable as political speeches. The reason that political speeches show wide variation in lexico-grammatical choices, so are predictable in relation with a particular register. The present paper proposes that though the choices are freer but certain linguistic features appear less constrained. It also has highlighted complexities as well as the regularities in the given register of political speeches as a rich and acceptable area of on-going research.

## References

- Al-Majali, W. (2015). Discourse analysis of the political speeches of the Ousted Arab Presidents during the Arab Spring Revolution using Halliday and Hasan's framework of cohesion. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(14), 96-108.
- Begum, G. (2015). Critical discourse analysis of the protesters' language. *Language in India*, 15(3), 85-95.
- Butt, D., Fahey, R., Spinks, S., & Yallop, C. (1995). *Using functional grammar: An explorer's guide*. Sydney: Macquarie University, NCELTR (National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research).
- Caffarel, A., & Rechniewski, E. (2009). A systemic functional approach to analyzing and interpreting ideology: An illustration from French editorials. *Revista Alicantina de EstudiosIngleses*, 22, 27-43.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2006). Britain as a container: Immigration metaphors in the 2005 election campaign. *Discourse & Society* 17(5). 563-581.
- Chouliaraki, L., & Fairclough, N. (1999). *Discourse in late modernity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Harlow: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2000). *New labour, new language?* London: Routledge Kegan Paul.
- Feng, H., & Liu, Y. (2010). Analysis of interpersonal meaning in public speeches—A case study of Obama's Speech. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 27-49.
- Geoff, T. (2013). Picking an argument: Politicians' choice of persuasive strategies. In L. Fontaine, T. Bartlett & G. O'Grady (Eds.), *Systemic functional linguistics: Exploring choice* (pp. 226-246). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ghilzai, S. A., Din, A., & Asghar, M. (2017). A critical discourse analysis of Imran Khan's First Speech in the Parliament. *Perspectives in Language, Linguistics and Media*, 2, 149-167.
- Guowen, H. (2002). An interpersonal analysis of Du Mu's "Qingming" and its Translated Versions [J]. *Foreign Language Education*, 3, 006.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1970). *A course in spoken English: Intonation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1979). Modes of meaning and modes of expression: Types

of grammatical structure, and their determination by different semantic functions. *Function and Context in Linguistic Analysis*, 1, 57-79.

- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.
- Harris, A. C., & Campbell, L. (1995). *Historical syntax in cross-linguistic perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hinkel, E. (2009). The effects of essay topics on modal verb uses in L1 and L2 academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41, 667-683.
- Kondowe, W. (2014). Interpersonal metafunctions in Binguwa Mutharika's second-term political discourse: A systemic functional grammatical approach. *International Journal of Linguistics, Volume*, 6 (3), 70-84.
- Kondowe, W. (2014). Hedging and boosting as interactional metadiscourse in Literature doctoral dissertation. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, 5(3), 214-221.
- Martin, J. R. (1990). Interpersonal grammaticalization mood and modality in tagalog. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, 21(1), 2-50.
- Martin, J. R. (2002). Fair trade: Negotiating meaning in multimodal texts. *The Semiotics of Writing: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on the Technology of Writing*, 10, 311-338.
- Martin, J., & White, P. (2005). *The language of evaluation*. Palgrave: Macmillan.
- Patpong, P. (in prep). *A systematic functional interpretation of the Grammar of Thai* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Macquarie University, Sydney.
- Poynton, C. (1990). *Address and the semiotics of social relations: A Systemic functional account of address forms and practices in Australian English* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Roseman, I. J., & Smith, C. A. (2001). Appraisal theory. *Appraisal Processes in Emotion: Theory, Methods, Research*, 3-19.
- Simon-Vandenberg, & Anne, M. (2000). The functions of *I think* in political discourse. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 10(1). 41-63.
- Simpson, P., & Mayr, A. (2010). *Language and Power*. London: Routledge.
- Shuhong, G. (2005). The interpersonal metafunction of political speech. *Journal of Inner Mongolia Agricultural University*, 4.
- Thompson, G. (1996, 2000). *Introducing functional grammar*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Thompson, G. (2013). *Introducing functional grammar*. London: Arnold.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997). *Discourse as structure and process of discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction*. United States: Sage Publications.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Politics, ideology and discourse. In K. Brown (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (pp. 728-740). Oxford: Elsevier.

- Wang, J. (2010). A Critical discourse analysis of Barack Obama's speeches.  
*Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(3), 254-261.
- Wilson, J. 1990. *Politically speaking: The pragmatic analysis of political language*.  
Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ye, R. (2010). The interpersonal metafunction analysis of Barack Obama's victory speech.  
*English Language Teaching*, 3(2), 146-151.