

## ANALYZING THE LANGUAGE OF PROTEST IN PTI'S CAMPAIGN FOR FAIR ELECTIONS: A SOCIAL SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

*The protest language employed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in its quest for impartial elections is examined in this research. This qualitative study used Gunther Kress's (1988) paradigm of social semiotics, the study investigates the ways in which PTI's chants, signs, and slogans generate meaning and promote group behaviour. The objective is to comprehend how, in diverse social circumstances, these communication instruments promote social change, reflect ideas, and deliver messages. The research examined a number of protest placards, chant slogan transcriptions and posts on social media from demonstrations and rallies organised by the PTI. The process entails locating recurring signs, symbols, and language patterns, then analysing how these components combine to form a cohesive message that challenges the current quo in politics and appeals to supporters. According to the research, the main topics of PTI's protest language are anti-corruption, justice, and transparency. These concepts are captured in slogans like "Azadi March" ("Freedom March"), which conveys their meaning in an influencing yet powerful way. The party's devotion to democratic principles and national identity is emphasised via visual metaphors like national flags and justice scales. Furthermore, the report points out that PTI uses inclusive language and patriotic symbols in its chants and placards to promote solidarity among followers, as well as a feeling of urgency and collective identity. This study uses Kress's social semiotics framework to show how PTI's protest language effectively communicates the party's political goals and ideology while acting as a major instrument for popular participation and mobilisation. The findings showed language, imagery, and context work together to create an emotional and rhetorical impact that affects public opinion and political discourse. Overall, this study provides insights into the ways in which social movements use semiotic tools to communicate and effect change in the sociopolitical environments in which they operate.*

**Keywords:** Language of Protest, Social semiotics, analysis

### Introduction

A subfield of semiotics called social semiotics examines how signs and symbols convey meaning in social settings. Acknowledging that meaning is produced via social interactions and impacted by cultural practices and power relations, it emphasises the dynamic and context-dependent character of communication. "The study of the social dimensions of meaning-making, focusing on how language, images, and other forms of representation are used in specific social settings" is what Gunther Kress, a major contributor to the area, defines as social semiotics (Kress, 1988). This method aids in comprehending the ways in which language, signs, and symbols are employed to either support or contradict ideas. Leeuwen (2005) defines social semiotics as "the study of the resources used for meaning-making in society and how these resources are employed in various forms of communication" in his book "Introducing Social Semiotics." Van Leeuwen notes that social semiotics emphasises the social and cultural ramifications of examining multimodal, visual, and aural signs in addition to linguistic ones.

Protest language is a powerful tool for influencing political movements' course and results. One of Pakistan's most prominent political parties, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has

drawn a lot of attention for using placards, slogans, and chants to promote free and fair elections. This study looks at the ways that PTI's protest vocabulary creates social meanings, expresses political ideas, and inspires group action. Under Imran Khan's leadership, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has made a name for itself as a party that supports justice, openness, and the fight against corruption. PTI has been outspoken in its support of free and transparent elections, denouncing the current political system for what it sees as manipulation and corruption. Large audiences have attended the party's major marches and rallies in support of fair elections, which have affected Pakistani politics. A sizable segment of Pakistani society has taken to PTI's reputation for opposing the existing quo and advancing democratic ideals. Protesters' vocabulary and symbols mirror larger cultural concerns and have an impact on political debate. This research uses the framework of social semiotics to examine the language used in PTI's campaign, offering insights into the way the party explains its beliefs and objectives to its followers. This research investigates how textual and visual components interact in social situations to produce meaning and promote social change, with a particular focus on social semiotics.

As it clarifies how protest language may affect political movements and societal change, this research is important. This research looks at the slogans, placards, chants and post on social media used by PTI in an effort to determine if the party's language supports its larger objectives of promoting open elections and transparency. The study's conclusions may provide light on how well protest language works to galvanize support, subvert established hierarchies, and sway public opinion. The research is persuasive because it examines how language, symbols, and social situations interact. The study explores the cultural allusions and hidden meanings in PTI's protest rhetoric by utilising social semiotics. This approach contributes to the understanding of how political movements challenge prevailing narratives and foster a sense of togetherness among its followers by utilising semiotic resources. The findings can help to develop political communication tactics and advance knowledge of social movements and how they support democratic norms in general.

## Literature Review

Anwar (2023) examined protest art from Pakistan's Aurat March through the lens of feminist visual semiotics. In order to give a thorough account of the marches, the research included several instances of street art in addition to its primary examination of protest posters. Anwar's research employed both online and offline sources, including photographs of protest art from in-person demonstrations that were later posted online in addition to posters posted on Aurat March's social media accounts. In order to comprehend the meanings and significance of the protest art, the study concentrated on three semiotic signs: symbolic, iconic, and indexical. Anwar examined the ways in which these signals illuminated a number of topics, including women's labour, women's health, freedoms and justice in Pakistan, and gender-based violence. Ahaotu and Oshamo (2023) investigated the communication styles in social media posts on the Black Lives Matter (BLM) demonstration, especially after American police officers killed George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 25, 2020. The study examined how language, colour, and pictures were used in social media posts that resulted from the #BlackLivesMatter demonstration, emphasising the multimodality that was conveyed through both spoken and visual components. Six postings made by protestors were sampled for the study using a qualitative research approach. These postings were deliberately chosen from internet

publications as well as social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Utilising their theory of Visual Grammar and multimodal discourse analysis, Kress and van Leeuwen's investigation explored the visual-verbal synchronisation in the chosen evidence of multimodality, including verbal-visual synchronisation conveyed through text, typeface, pictures, colours, and frames, was discovered throughout the investigation. The #BlackLivesMatter protest's overarching theme, which included eight major themes—black identity, racism, oppression, brutality, social justice, global activism, indomitable spirit, and the quest for liberation—was enhanced by this multimodality. The study came to the conclusion that these themes were methodically projected in the postings with the use of multimodality, which improved the Black Lives Matter movement's message. Al Khotaba's (2023) study delves into the function of language in enabling social protests and knowledge sharing. Specifically, it examined the ways in which marginalised communities in Jordan utilise signs and symbols on social media sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram. Using a handy sample approach, the study looked at 189 signs, posters, and symbols to see how these materials push teachers to protest and get support from parents so they can't send their kids to school. For examination, the Arabic posters were translated into English. The study used the political discourse analysis paradigm developed by van Dijk (2005) to contextually analyse these signals and symbols. The results showed that teachers in Jordan used a range of roles, such as cultural inheritors, relevant resources, context specialists, in reaction to insulting and contemptuous discourses. Furthermore, the findings showed a close relationship between political discourse analysis and the use of sign language to protestors' and oppressed groups' social behaviours. The study's conclusion is that this method contributes to the body of knowledge on a local, regional, and global level and that the signs and symbols employed by educators in various Jordanian regions were successful in encouraging peaceful demonstrations and articulating their goals. Bahrudin and Bakar (2022) investigated the function of language in social movements, emphasising the ways in which slogans help to establish political and social ideas and spark change. The study examined the linguistic materials that demonstrators used to convey and discuss feminist ideology through chants at the 2019 Women's March MY in Kuala Lumpur. The study specifically looked at how social actors were portrayed in these slogans, using the Social Actor Network paradigm developed by van Leeuwen (2008) as a reference. Activation, categorization, nominalization, and agent deletion are the four main types of social actor representation that emerged from the analysis of 270 protest placards. Three key narratives were associated with these categories: the narratives of solidarity and incrimination, the generalisation of harmful activities, and the story of women's resistance and power reclamation. The study sheds light on the multi-vocal and multi-textual characteristics of protest rhetoric and showed how representational processes might promote social consciousness and feminist ideas. The study emphasised how these procedures might be used to combat persistent prejudice against women in the home, business, and society as well as to protest acts of violence against women.

Bahrudin and Bakar (2022) examined the function of textual and visual components in protest movements, emphasising their capacity to disseminate ideas, rally support, and encourage public participation. The study looked at the multimodal discourse found in protest placards used during the 2019 Women's March MY in Kuala Lumpur to convey and negotiate feminist ideology. In order to comprehend how multimodal resources are utilised to transmit information, the study examined three themes from the march using Kress & van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar

(2006) and van Leeuwen's Social Actor Network (2008). The results showed that different topics had different levels of multimodal representation predominance. For example, some protest banners relied primarily on text and had few images, while other signs employed both text and visuals to draw attention and communicate meaning. Velde (2022) conducted the theoretical and empirical value of protest literature and slogans for social movement research. The research also gives examples of how these resources might provide light on group identities, feelings, and the assertions made in modern protests. It highlights that political acts, including public staging and multi-audience political discourse, are what slogans should be regarded as. This viewpoint encourages scholars to examine slogans' function in political speech and social movements in addition to their literal meaning. The research suggested a typology of protest slogans and writings' political roles, grouping them into those that lay claims, proclaim, mobilise, or testify in order to account for the diversity of these expressions. Understanding the many formats and situations in which these slogans arise is made easier by this classification. The ethical and methodological issues surrounding the gathering and examination of protest literature for empirical social movement research are also discussed in this article. It investigates the potential applications of these texts through qualitative, visual, or textual analysis—typically in the context of a mixed-method approach. The study is based on an international analysis of young social movements conducted in the second decade of the twenty-first century, whereby the core rhetorics of post-2008 demonstrations were identified and compared using this methodology. In doing so, the paper offers a thorough method for comprehending the complex dynamics seen in social movements.

Akhtar and Aziz (2021) investigated the problems raised by participants in the 2019 Women's March in Pakistan, also known as the Aurat March. The researcher examined protest placards, chants, and banner messages in an effort to characterise patriarchy from the standpoint of the Pakistani feminist movement. The study emphasised that participants saw patriarchy as a system that objectifies women, keeps them in conventional gender roles, and limits their civil rights. It did this by using textual and visual tools to comprehend participants' perspectives. The study also discovered strategies for resistance against patriarchal dominance, such rethinking gender roles and reclaiming conventional narratives. This study adds to our knowledge of Pakistani women's difficulties and their fight to patriarchy. Khan and Jawed (2021) investigated how fragility and conflict in Pakistan influence contentious politics. With a focus on five distinct gendered mobilizations—a feminist movement, a protest against child sexual abuse, a workers' movement demanding greater employment benefits, an ethno-religious minority community demanding protection from sectarian attacks, and an ethno-nationalist movement seeking post-conflict security and greater rights—The claims behind these mobilisations are ones that the state has consistently neglected to address. In exploring why women act collectively and what leadership techniques are utilised, the research looked at the tactics and leadership philosophies employed by women participating in demonstrations and collective action. The authors contend that women employ a wider range of tactics, including demonstrations, to increase their influence and voice in a given situation. These tactics include of legal cases, official political participation, government advocacy, and partnerships with influential feminists. Some female leaders skillfully bridge the gap between formal and contentious politics by amplifying protest demands and rallying support with their feminist voices. The research also mentioned how these protest tactics may unite people over a variety of issues since female leaders see these techniques as a means of

achieving shared objectives. Better state accountability, the growth of feminist discourse, and the empowering of activists in public roles are all benefits of these tactics. The authors do acknowledge, though, that these advances are not without risk because of things like declining public places, gendered hurdles to political participation, and growing pushback. Nascimento (2021) focused on the discursive imbrication of the political inside the social investigation of the personal function in protest settings. The research used a theoretical and analytical framework grounded in historical-materialism from the French Discourse Analysis school of thought. Understanding the materiality of the body in protest settings is the goal of this method, especially as it relates to speech, ideology, history, and memory. In order to investigate these ideas, Nascimento looked at a particular piece of art by Dan Halter, a Zimbabwean artist, examining the metonymic and metaphorical meaning changes associated with various bodily views and how the researcher contributed to larger discourses. Using the writings of Pêcheux (1982 [1975]) and Lagazzi (2014a), the research seeks to make a connection between these changing meanings and the resistance-revolt-revolution process that results from ideological and political class battles. The approach also looked at the tensivity in social processes that result from body-occupied places that are shaped by historical, ideological, and symbolic factors. Munir (2010) explored the political landscape of Pakistan after its 1947 independence from Britain, with particular attention paid to the nation's past of military dictatorships and authoritarian administrations. In order to maintain civilian legitimacy, religious elites and parasite landowners worked together under military dictators, giving them the ability to use Islamic theology to control the discourse of society. Dissent and the freedom of expression were severely curtailed under this totalitarian system, which also strictly regulated all forms of communication. In spite of this, there were pockets of opposition that included pro-democracy organisations, academics, attorneys, and media. Munir's dissertation looked at social movements, resistance, and the fight for democracy in the face of authoritarian government in its first section. From a historical standpoint, it also explores the function of state-run broadcast media and restricted print media. The second section examined how the liberalisation of cable television and private-sector broadcasting in 2002 contributed to Pakistan's notable emergence of new media and digital technologies. The dissertation explored how, during General Musharraf's tenure, digital media enabled collective action and democratic struggles. It focuses especially on the period from March 2007 to October 2008, which was characterised by significant events such as the declaration of emergency, media crackdowns, Benazir Bhutto's assassination, and Musharraf's removal following new general elections. Munir seeks to remedy the dearth of scholarly research in this particular period of Pakistani history.

## Research Questions

This research aims to pursue following research questions as following:

1. How does PTI create and convey messages throughout their fair election campaigns using textual and visual components in its protest language?
2. Which rhetorical devices and themes are frequently used in PTI's protest vocabulary, and how do they help supporters come together and feel inspired to take action as a group?

3. To what extent does PTI's protest language contradict or uphold Pakistan's current political beliefs and power structures?

## **Methodology**

### *Design*

This study explores the language of protest employed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in its campaign for fair elections using a qualitative approach with a focus on social semiotics. The goal of the study is to comprehend how meaning is created and conveyed to inspire collective action by focusing on the analysis of textual and visual components in protest-related materials.

### *Data Collection*

This data is collected from PTI's protest operations. This includes images of banners and posters raised in protest, visual, audio and video recordings of speeches, chants and posts on social media. To offer further background, news stories and reports about PTI's happenings are also included. The approach of purposive sampling is utilised to guarantee that the data accurately reflects the campaign's important components and major events.

### *Data Analysis*

The data analysis process is a multi-step procedure that examines the usage of signs, symbols, and language patterns utilising social semiotic instruments. First, recurrent themes are coded and categorised. Next, visual analyses of images, colour schemes, and symbolic allusions are conducted. PTI's protest language is examined using discourse analysis to evaluate its linguistic structure, rhetorical strategies, and overarching narratives. The study seeks to understand the communication's social and political ramifications in addition to its denotative (literal) and connotative (symbolic) meanings.

### *Procedure*

The process starts with gathering information from several sources and includes a thorough analysis of PTI's protest materials. After then, the material is methodically examined to pinpoint important themes, symbols, and rhetorical devices. The study is placed in the larger sociopolitical framework, taking into account how PTI's protest rhetoric either supports or contradicts established hierarchies of power. PTI's communication is compared to other political movements in order to identify similarities and differences. The study concludes with an interpretation of the findings, a discussion of the consequences for public perception and political discourse, and suggestions for more research or successful social movement communication tactics.

## **Model**

Robert Hodge, who coauthored the 1988 book "Social Semiotics" with Gunther Kress, is credited with developing the field of social semiotics. By emphasising how signals are employed

in social interactions and how cultural and social elements impact their meanings, this work established the groundwork for social semiotics as a separate field of study. In their investigation of the connection between social practices and signs, Hodge and Kress emphasised that signs are dynamic and actively created within particular social situations. Therefore, although the foundation of social semiotics lies in Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, Hodge and Kress's work from the late 1980s is responsible for the concept's formalisation and wider articulation. As an expansion of semiotics, social semiotics emphasises the significance of human interaction and the social environment in the production and interpretation of signs and symbols. Social semiotics recognises that meaning is socially produced and impacted by cultural practices and power dynamics. Traditional semiotics concentrates on the form and function of signals, but social semiotics takes into account the dynamic and contextual components of communication.

1- Multimodality

2-Context Dependence

3-Social Construction of Meaning

4-Intertextuality

5-Ideology and Power

6-Agency and Choice

7-Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs

8-Functional and Communicative Purposes

9-Symbolism and Connotation

## Analysis

Picture 1

**RAWALPINDI:** PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has urged for a level playing field for their election campaign, seeking permission from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold a convention for its upcoming poll drive.

Addressing the media outside Adiala Jail following a meeting with former PTI chairman Imran Khan, Gohar reiterated the demand for fair electoral conditions, adding he has sought guidance from Imran for the party's strategy.

He announced that PTI would not engage in any electoral alliance with any party associated with the PDM.

Reflecting on a meeting with President Dr Arif Alvi held a day earlier, Gohar said the two-hour meeting was "positive".

"We appealed to the president for a fair playground for PTI and to ensure transparency in the upcoming elections."

President Alvi shares the belief that elections must be transparent and that all political parties must be allowed to participate, he added.

## 1. Multimodality

Both verbal communication and context-based clues are mentioned in the statement. During a news conference, the PTI Chairman conveyed his message using not just words but also body language, tone of voice, and maybe visual aids like banners or PTI emblems.

## 2. Dependence on Context

The impending Pakistani elections and the political unrest surrounding them serve as the statement's background. Since the speech is being delivered outside of Adiala Jail, the setting itself provides further symbolic context about justice, incarceration, and resistance to authority.

## 3. The Social Construction of Meaning

The larger political discourse in Pakistan shapes the meaning of this phrase. The call for a "level playing field" implies that unfair practices or bias are felt to exist, implying that the existing circumstances are not seen as equal.

## 4. Textual intertextuality

Other political organisations included in the statement include President Dr. Arif Alvi, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). These allusions imply continuity in political dynamics and alliances by establishing links with more general political narratives and historical occurrences.

## 5. Agency and Choice

In his statement, Gohar Ali Khan demonstrates agency by asking Imran Khan for advice and by deciding not to support groups connected to the PDM. This strengthens the PTI's approach to preserving its independence and forging its own course throughout the election campaign.



## 6. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs

Phrases like "transparency" and "fair playground" are examples of how Pakistani politics are changing via language. These phrases, which represent shifting political environments and expectations for democratic procedures, have become essential to the conversation around elections.

## 7. Ideology and Power

The remark poses a question to the established hierarchies of power. The focus on justice and openness suggests an ideological position opposed to alleged political manipulation and corruption. Resistance to prevailing authority is evoked by the meeting with Imran Khan, the former head of the PTI, and the mention of Adiala Jail.

## 8. Functional and Communicative Purposes

The statement conveys PTI's position on political coalitions while also pleading with the public for supporting and imploring the ECP to issue permits. In order to mobilise supporters and create an ideal environment for the campaign, the objective is to convey PTI's dedication to transparent and fair elections.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

The scene outside Adiala Jail is representative of opposition and links PTI to anti-establishment views. Talk of "transparency" and "level playing field" appeals to larger democratic ideals of fairness and justice, as well as anti-corruption sentiments. This statement paragraph analysis shows how several social semiotics components may be used to comprehend the various levels of context, symbolism, and meaning found in political communication.

Picture 2



### 1. Multimodality

This image combines text with visual components. The text is formed from the phrase "Awaam ka fesla sirf Imran Khan" (which means "The people's decision is only Imran Khan"), and the visual element is added by the way the 'alif' is designed to resemble the number '1'. This multimodal strategy blends words and pictures to provide a coherent message.

## 2. Context-Dependence

The image's backdrop is Pakistan's political scene, where Imran Khan, a prominent figure and a former prime minister, is situated. The backdrop of the artwork alludes to Imran Khan's positioning as the electorate's preferred option and alluded to a larger story about his political power and fan base.

## 3. Social Construction of Meaning

The societal background and the general public's opinion of Imran Khan determine the meaning that may be inferred from this image. As the graphic says, "Awaam ka fesla sirf Imran Khan," it implies that he is the only man who can represent the people. The 'alif's' distinct style as '1' visually bolsters the notion that he is the best option or the 'number one.'

## 4. Textual intertextuality

The text's usage of Urdu shows that it has cultural and linguistic significance in Pakistan. The slogan's shape and style may allude to other political catchphrases or well-known images in Pakistani politics, forging a link with larger themes and cultural narratives.

## 5. Power and Ideology

The image presents Imran Khan as the ideal leader, which sends an ideological message. This supports a story about exceptional leadership and strengthens the image of a powerful, authoritative individual. The '1' denotes Imran Khan's domination, signifying a concentration of strength and control inside his persona.

## 6. Agency and Choice

The public's agency in selecting their leader is shown by the expression "Awaam ka fesla" ("The people's decision"). But by adding "sirf Imran Khan" ("only Imran Khan"), which implies that there is only one distinct leader, this agency is limited to one option. This is consistent with PTI's emphasis on Imran Khan's pivotal position in its platform.

## 7. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs

A modified 'alif' used to imply '1' illustrates how indicators in political communication are always changing. It demonstrates how conventional features, such as Urdu writing, may be imaginatively modified to express extra meanings; in this example, the suggestion is made of Imran Khan's exceptional leadership rank.

## 8. Functional and Communicative Purposes

The way that the picture presents Imran Khan as the best candidate for leadership has a communicational function. It serves to bring his followers together and instill a feeling of uniqueness in his leadership. The '1' visual signal has a practical purpose as it promptly conveys his position.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

The modified 'alif' used as '1' has symbolic meanings related to dominance, uniqueness, and leadership. It can be seen as a brazen declaration that Imran Khan has no real competition. "Awaam ka fesla" reinforces the notion that Imran Khan is the representative of the general consensus by adding a democratic gloss and implying that the decision is made by the people themselves.

Picture 3



### 1. Multimodality

Text and hashtags are used in the message, which emphasises some points with capitalised letters and plain text ("LETS ALL VOTE," "PakistanUnderFascism"). Additionally, it uses exclamation points to convey enthusiasm and urgency as well as a call to action with a particular date ("8 February 2024").

### 2. Context-Dependence

This post's backdrop is Pakistan's political environment, specifically the country's decision to postpone elections for longer than the 90-day timeframe stipulated by the constitution after the

National Assembly was dissolved. Concerns regarding democratic administration are raised by this delay; therefore the vote on February 8, 2024, is being called in response to alleged anomalies in politics.

### **3. Social Construction of Meaning**

The concept of resistance against actions that the author considers to be unlawful and anti-democratic forms the foundation of this post's meaning. Words like "Haqeeqi Azadi" ("True Freedom") and "PakistanUnderFascism" weave a story of resistance against injustice. The reference to a particular voting day relates to the larger social demand for democratic engagement.

### **4. Textual intertextuality**

The passage makes reference to Pakistan's Constitution and makes oblique references to earlier political developments, such as the dissolution of the National Assembly. Additionally, it makes use of phrases that are widely accepted in Pakistani political discourse, such as "human rights," "caretaker government," and "fascism," to establish intertextual connections with more general topics and conversations.

### **5. Power and Ideology**

By exposing alleged breaches of the law and democratic ideals, the post questions the established power structures. It presents Imran Khan (also known as "The Captain") as a leader who defies tyranny and a symbol of resistance. This conceptualization is consistent with the philosophy of defending human rights and democracy.

### **6. Agency and Choice**

The rallying cry "LETS ALL VOTE" emphasises the power of the populace to shape the political environment. Voting is emphasised, which implies that group action may upset the status quo and effect change.

### **7. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs**

Using hashtags such as "#PakistanUnderFascism" is an example of how communication is changing and how social media is being used to efficiently and rapidly disseminate messages. The particular wording and capitalization schemes suggest a shift to more modern forms of communication.

### **8. Functional and Communicative Purposes**

The post accomplishes three goals: it alerts readers to the impending election, mobilises support for Imran Khan, and motivates followers to take action. Exclamation points and capitalised

words are examples of punctuation used in language and writing that tries to arouse passion and urgency in order to encourage people to vote in the impending elections.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

The text uses symbolic language that conjures up powerful pictures. The word "fascism" suggests a dire scenario in Pakistan since it implies excessive authoritarianism and the repression of rights. "Haqeeqi Azadi" is a symbol of the pursuit of true freedom, supporting the story of opposition and the fight for democratic principles.

In conclusion, this social media tweet from PTI's official Twitter feed conveys a call to action and a message of resistance. It challenges established power structures, communicates a feeling of urgency, and mobilises support for Imran Khan and the larger cause of democratic government in Pakistan through the use of multimodal components, context-specific references, and symbolic language.

Picture 4



### 1. Multimodality

Text and graphic design are combined in the huge banner. With "GO Nawaz Go" serving as a political figure-targeting slogan and "Azaadi March" designating the name of the protest or movement, it most likely has strong lettering to draw attention. Not only is the text multimodal, but so are the colours, visual composition, and maybe coordinating imagery such as the national emblems or the logo of PTI.

## 2. Context-Dependence

In order to comprehend this bend, the context is essential. The term "Azaadi March" signifies a march for freedom or liberation, implying a demonstration against injustice or tyranny. An anthem known as "GO Nawaz Go" is aimed at Nawaz Sharif, a well-known political figure and the former prime minister of Pakistan. The flex is probably being used to express dissent at a political demonstration or rally.

## 3. Social Construction of Meaning

The flex's meaning is socially manufactured and stems from Pakistan's political environment. "Azaadi March" suggests a freedom-oriented movement, but "GO Nawaz Go" demands the overthrow of a political person. The combination of these terms highlights popular opinion against Nawaz Sharif's leadership and points to a movement challenging the current political system.

## 4. Textual intertextuality

The flex's phrases relate to Pakistan's larger political storylines. The popular slogan "GO Nawaz Go" has been used in demonstrations against the government of Nawaz Sharif, while the "Azaadi March" could have something to do with earlier rallies and marches in Pakistan's past. These intertextual allusions harken back to earlier revolutions and bring up well-known themes of political action and resistance.

## 5. Power and Ideology

An ideological position against Nawaz Sharif and maybe the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is reflected in the flex. It advocates for the philosophy of freedom and resistance and implies resistance to the existing power systems. The gesture opposes the power of established political elites and is in line with the PTI's larger political objectives by calling on Nawaz Sharif to step down.

## 6. Agency and Choice

The PTI supporters' agency is shown by the phrases on the flex. "GO Nawaz Go" declares a strong opposition to a certain political person, but the "Azaadi March" implies that individuals are consciously choosing to participate in protest and call for change. The demonstrators' sense of empowerment and their conviction that they can have an impact on political results are reflected in this agency.

## 7. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs

Slogans such as "GO Nawaz Go" demonstrate how dynamic signals are in political discourse. The PTI's followers have come to recognise this slogan as a sign of opposition to Nawaz Sharif.

In a same vein, the "Azaadi March" symbolises a larger movement towards political freedom and demonstrates how signs may evolve over time.

## 8. Functional and Communicative Purposes

The flex has several useful functions. It conveys the protest's topic ("Azaadi March") and focuses its energies on achieving a particular political objective ("GO Nawaz Go"). It serves as a rallying cry for PTI supporters, bringing them together and sending a strong message to others. The slogans' efficacy as a means of communication is increased by their clarity and simplicity.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

The phrase "Azadi March" has political action, revolution, and liberation implications. It conjures us images of massive demonstrations and the group effort to bring about change. The simple symbolic meaning of "GO Nawaz Go" is to demand the overthrow of a leader. These symbolic components are highlighted by the flex's use of strong writing and perhaps vivid colours, which heightens the impression of urgency and resolve.

It is see that how the language, context, and graphic design work together to make a potent political message by dissecting the flex via these elements. It represents the wider political narratives, the political change agents' agency, and the ideological position of PTI followers.

Picture 5



## 1. Multimodality

The picture blends visual and literary components, with the words, colours, and visuals creating a unified statement. Text, a symbolic form (the moon), and a recognisable character (Imran

Khan) all work together to convey a larger story. Utilising green and white strengthens national identification because these are the colours of the Pakistani flag.

## **2. Context-Dependence**

The image's setting is Pakistan's political environment, where debates over the necessity of free and fair elections are still going on. A national focus is suggested by the mention of "Pakistan" and the portrayal of Imran Khan. The moon's shape may represent a fresh start or a cycle, representing the expectation of political transformation.

## **3. Social Construction of Meaning**

The writing, Imran Khan's artwork, and the green and white colour scheme all work together to create the image's meaning. Imran Khan is an advocate for democratic ideas, and his statement "Pakistan needs free and fair elections" implies a demand for these ideals. The moon shape's incorporation might allude to development or rebirth.

## **4. Textual intertextuality**

Green and white, the colours of the Pakistani flag, are used in the artwork to generate intertextuality with national symbols. Feelings of national pride and patriotism are aroused by this link. The moon's form may allude to Islamic symbolism or symbolise a fresh dawn—themes that are frequently found in Pakistani culture.

## **5. Power and Ideology**

An ideological position in favour of democratic administration is shown by the message regarding free and fair elections. Imran Khan's participation indicates that he is taking the lead in promoting these ideas. He is portrayed in the picture as an authoritative individual who stands in opposition to the current power structures that might obstruct free and fair elections.

## **6. Agency and Choice**

The statement "Pakistan needs free and fair elections" suggests that the country's citizens have the ability to demand democratic procedures on their own behalf. Imran Khan's leadership in directing this decision and promoting the people's right to vote and having their opinions heard is demonstrated by his position as PTI Chairman.

## **7. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs**

The picture illustrates how the meanings of signs may change throughout time. It's possible that the colours and shape of the moon will have distinct meanings depending on the situation, indicating that this picture will be able to symbolise multiple concepts over time. The way that these symbols are reinterpreted as political forces shift reflects the dynamic character of political imagery.



## 8. Functional and Communicative Purposes

A clear message about the need of free and fair elections is intended to be conveyed by the image. It accomplishes the dual goals of highlighting Imran Khan's leadership in this campaign and mobilising support for the PTI's cause. Imran Khan, the moon, green, and white are examples of recognisable symbols that are used to improve communication efficacy.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

Pakistan's national identity is symbolised by the colours green and white, which foster a sense of solidarity and patriotism. Numerous symbolic interpretations are associated with the moon form, ranging from Islamic allusions to the notion of fresh starts or cycles. Imran Khan's presence denotes power and leadership. These components work together to convey a message of change and optimism, expressing a desire for a political climate that allows for free and fair elections.

In conclusion, this design conveys a strong political statement through a combination of colours, forms, and text. It uses symbols that speak to national identity and invoke ideas of regeneration and democratic principles, connecting Imran Khan to the larger movement for free and fair elections in Pakistan.

Picture 6



Pakistan has suffered from utter lawlessness, suspended constitution, dismantled democracy, abolished human rights, eradicated freedom of speech, rampant fascism, desecration of morality, since April 2022.

The Nation will now decide the country's fate on 8 February 2024!

#ظلم\_کا\_بدلہ\_ووٹ\_سے  
#قوم\_کا\_فیصلہ\_صرف\_خان

## 1. Multimodality

To convey its ideas, the message makes use of both text and hashtags. Using hashtags on social media platforms facilitates quick distribution and classification while also connecting users to larger online debates. The message is delivered to a multilingual audience by using both English and Urdu together.

## 2. Context-Dependence

The political unrest that has characterised Pakistan since April 2022 provides background for this assertion. The book alludes to a political crisis and authoritarian government, mentioning suspended constitutions, destroyed democracies, and outlawed human rights. Emphasis is placed on February 8, 2024, as a critical date, implying that the situation calls for coordinated response.

### **3. Social Construction of Meaning**

The themes of resistance, injustice, and the struggle for democratic rights form the foundation of the statement's meaning. Through the use of words, a pessimistic view of Pakistan's current situation is suggested. Phrases like "rampant fascism," "utter lawlessness," and "suspended constitution" help to create a certain picture. The phrases "Take Revenge of Oppression with Votes" and "The Nation's Decision is Only Khan" imply a call to action and support for Imran Khan as the leader who can effect change.

### **4. Textual intertextuality**

The allusions to fascism, anarchy, and a suspended constitution provide intertextual connections with previous eras of political turmoil and autocracy. The hashtags are connected to more general movements and political campaign themes. Because of its historical associations, the term "fascism" connects the current state of affairs to earlier periods of repressive government.

### **5. Power and Ideology**

The declaration emphasises justice, democracy, and human rights while taking an ideological stand against repressive power systems. The emphasis on utilising democratic procedures to question and alter the existing power relations is indicative of a dedication to using voting as a means of exacting retribution against tyranny. The use of the term "Khan" alludes to Imran Khan's leadership as the movement's ideological core.

### **6. Agency and Choice**

The message encourages individuals to utilise their ballots to effect change, giving them a sense of agency. The remark implies that citizens have the ability to change the political landscape and that citizens ultimately decide the fate of the country. The call to action for the next election highlights this agency.

### **7. Dynamic and Evolving Nature of Signs**

The book shows how language and political narratives change throughout time. The allusions to current affairs and impending elections highlight how Pakistani politics are evolving. Using hashtags is a contemporary approach to disseminate messages and foster active relationships among followers.

### **8. Functional and Communicative Objectives**

The text mobilises, persuades, and informs in addition to doing three other things. It seeks to draw attention to Pakistan's terrible situation and motivate voters to use their right to vote as a form of resistance and change. The hashtags give a rallying point for Imran Khan and the PTI followers, promoting cooperation and unity.

## 9. Symbolism and Connotation

Within the text, there are significant symbolic implications in the language utilised. The terms "fascism," "lawlessness," and "dismantled democracy" conjure images of tyranny and crises. Voting is suggested as a symbolic method of resistance by the hashtags. The text has a feeling of purpose and optimism since Imran Khan is implied to be a leader who can bring back democracy and justice.

### Results and Discussion

A complex communication strategy that captures both a gripping story of political discontent and a call to action is revealed by the examination of the provided text. The narrative of a country in distress is crafted by the text, which describes Pakistan's situation since April 2022—a state of complete anarchy, a suspended constitution, and widespread fascism. It emphasises the seriousness of the issue using strong words and images. A crucial date—February 8, 2024—is mentioned, encouraging people to exercise their agency and optimism by casting a ballot. By promoting a democratic group reaction to oppression, the hashtags support the message. Imran Khan's participation as the main character provides supporters with a focal point while also signifying opposition to the established power structures and a potential restoration of justice and democracy. The blend of symbolic and linguistic components points to a larger story about taking back control and prepares the audience for a momentous political event that might change the course of the country. All things considered, this study shows how the text brings together a number of different aspects to provide an engaging political story. Positioning the impending elections as a critical turning point for Pakistan's future, it makes a forceful case for action using strong language and powerful images. Overall, this research demonstrates how this image's text and visual design work together to provide a potent semiotic statement. It illustrates the PTI's aim of using language and symbolism to bolster Imran Khan's leadership position and establish him as the main player in Pakistani politics. The following questions are answered as:

#### 1. How does PTI create and convey messages throughout their fair election campaigns using textual and visual components in its protest language?

In order to generate and spread messages throughout its fair election campaigns, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) combines textual and graphic elements. The party employs the following components to convey its messages in protest language:

#### Textual Components

Slogans and Chants: PTI condenses its themes into succinct, memorable slogans and chants. Supporters are intended to find it easy to recall and repeat these words, which aids in the

message's widespread dissemination. "Azadi March" ("Freedom March") is one example. **Hashtags:** To establish a consistent theme on social media and other platforms, the party use hashtags. These hashtags, which include #FreeAndFairElections and #HaqeeqiAzadi, frequently connect to the campaign's main theme. They facilitate the organisation of online conversation and foster a feeling of camaraderie among followers.

**Statements and Press Releases:** To express its position on free and fair elections as well as other political matters, PTI produces official statements and press releases. These materials provide thorough justifications of the party's stance and have the power to sway public opinion.

### Visual Components

**Banners and Signs:** To draw attention, PTI uses enormous banners and signs with eye-catching colours and lettering at its rallies and protests. The banners convey the party's message in an eye-catching way by frequently include slogans or requests for fair elections.

**Party Colours and Symbols:** The Pakistani flag's colours, green and white, are used to promote patriotism and a sense of national identity. The PTI regularly uses its logo and other well-known symbols to establish a unified visual identity that makes it easier for supporters to connect with the party's initiatives.

**Symbols & Imagery:** PTI uses a variety of symbols to give its visual statements more complexity. For instance, the crescent moon, a symbol of Pakistan and Islam, combined with Imran Khan iconography evokes a feeling of authority and tradition. Themes of openness and justice are emphasised through the use of visual metaphors like justice scales.

### Integration of Visual and Textual Elements

During its fair election campaigns, PTI uses these linguistic and visual elements to generate a message that is both coherent and impactful. While the visual components give impact and emotional resonance, the verbal pieces communicate clearly and directly. By combining these components, PTI creates protest language that effectively challenges established power structures, mobilises followers, and communicates the party's philosophy.

By using an integrated strategy, PTI can reach a wider audience and spread the word about free and fair elections, changing public opinion and the political dialogue in Pakistan.

## 2. Which rhetorical devices and themes are frequently used in PTI's protest vocabulary, and how do they help supporters come together and feel inspired to take action as a group?

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) inspires followers and promotes group action by utilising a range of rhetorical strategies and themes in its protest lexicon. These components support the development of political change by uniting supporters around a shared goal. Let's look at several important rhetorical strategies and themes that PTI often use and how they help to inspire followers.

### Using Rhetorical Devices

**Repetition:** PTI frequently employs repetition to reaffirm important points. To leave a lasting

impression, slogans like "Azadi March" (meaning "Freedom March") is repeated in speeches, posters, and social media posts.

Parallelism: Using parallel structures in speech and writing produces a rhythmic, well-balanced flow that increases the message's impact and memorability.

Emotive Language: PTI uses language that is meant to arouse strong emotions in its supporters. To evoke strong feelings and a sense of urgency, words like "freedom," "justice," "corruption," and "oppression" are employed.

Metaphors and Analogies: These are useful tools for providing a sympathetic explanation of difficult concepts. For instance, the term "Haqeeqi Azadi" ("True Freedom") links the fight for political change to more general concepts of justice and liberty in a symbolic way.

Hyperbole: PTI occasionally use exaggeration to highlight how dire the political situation is. Phrases such as "Abolished human rights" or "Pakistan under fascism" draw attention to alleged extremes and emphasise the urgency of taking action.

Several recurrent themes are used by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in their protest lexicon to galvanise followers, foster a sense of community, and encourage political action. These themes are intended to strike a chord with a wide range of people, inspiring them to get involved in the party's electoral activities and bringing them together behind a common goal. PTI's protest vocabulary is centered around the demands for freedom and democracy. The party's dedication to democratic values is seen in its demands for free and fair elections. This notion is embodied in party slogans such as "Azadi March" (which means "Freedom March"), which emphasise the party's commitment to a transparent and representative democratic process. PTI presents itself as a defender of the people by citing democracy, which appeals to a broad range of Pakistani residents. Accountability and the struggle against corruption are also major themes. PTI discourse frequently emphasises the necessity for an honest and open political system while criticising government corruption. Terms like "justice," "transparency," and "accountability" are used in the party's message to emphasise its dedication to battling corruption. This topic appeals to a wide audience because it offers a picture of a more morally upright political environment while also appealing to the public's resentment over alleged government misconduct. Patriotism and nationalism are major themes, and PTI regularly uses colours and symbols connected to Pakistan's national identity. Supporters' sense of solidarity and patriotism is strengthened by the party's colour scheme, which is green and white and represents the Pakistani flag. By connecting the political movement to more general patriotic feelings, this strategy fosters a sense of pride and allegiance among party members. The fourth major subject is solidarity and communal identity. The protest language used by PTI seeks to give its followers a feeling of community and solidarity. Words like "The Nation's Decision" and "We Stand Together" encourage people to think of themselves as a part of a bigger movement by fostering a collective mentality. This subject fosters a sense of unity and dedication to shared objectives, which is essential for galvanising followers. Together, these ideas build a gripping story that propels PTI's political campaigns and inspires followers to unite in favour of justice, fair

elections, and a sense of patriotism. They serve to strengthen the party's cohesiveness and provide impetus for its political goals.

### **3. To what extent does PTI's protest language contradict or uphold Pakistan's current political beliefs and power structures?**

The protest rhetoric of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) may both support and challenge aspects of the country's present political ideologies and hierarchies. Depending on the circumstances, the particular messaging, and the overall political climate, it varies in how much of each it accomplishes. Let's dissect this to see how these elements interact with the protest rhetoric used by PTI. Conflict with the Power Structures and Political Beliefs of the Present PTI protest rhetoric frequently challenges the status quo and criticises established power structures, thus contradicting Pakistan's current political institutions. This paradox is seen in a number of crucial areas as democratic accountability which describes that PTI frequently draws attention to the alleged lack of accountability in Pakistan's political system by calling for fair and free elections, transparency, and justice.

PTI's protest rhetoric challenges the legitimacy of current power structures and criticises current government practice by emphasizing anti-corruption and fair elections. Challenging Authority in which the PTI's rhetoric has the potential to undermine the authority of the government or governing party, particularly when it emphasises freedom and opposition to fascism. Chants like "Go Nawaz Go" and slogans like "Azadi March" (meaning "Freedom March") are intended to challenge and upend preexisting political hierarchies. Human Rights and Freedom of Speech in which PTI opposes acts that stifle dissent or restrict civil freedoms, placing a strong focus on the defence of these rights. The party's protest rhetoric draws attention to these problems in order to highlight instances when the current political structure might not be in line with democratic principles.

#### **Upholding Elements of Political Views and Power Systems**

Despite its inconsistencies, PTI's protest language also has parts that support or correspond with Pakistan's current political ideologies:

- **Patriotism and National Identity:** Pakistan's larger cultural and political views are reinforced by the PTI's usage of nationalistic themes and patriotic symbols. The party conforms to popular ideas of patriotism and national identity with its green and white colour scheme, allusions to the national flag, and Islamic iconography.
- **Democratic Ideals:** Although the terminology used by the PTI opposes some power structures, it also upholds the fundamental democratic principles found in Pakistan's constitution. PTI is consistent with generally held political beliefs by supporting democracy and fair elections.

#### **Conclusion**

The analysis of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) protest language, in conclusion, shows the complex relationship between questioning and upholding the country's current political ideologies and hierarchies of power. With the use of strong rhetorical strategies and textual and visual elements, PTI crafts an engaging story that has struck a chord with a sizable section of

Pakistani society. The party's focus on accountability, democracy, and fighting corruption runs counter to the established power structures, casting doubt on the honesty and openness of the current political order. Supporters who want more equitable and transparent government and political change have been energised by this critical posture.

Concurrently, the protest language used by PTI maintains wider patriotic themes, strengthening Pakistan's cultural and political identity. The use of national symbols, the colours green and white have evoked a sense of patriotism. With allusions to Islamic customs, PTI forges a bond with the general public and speaks to common ground. By taking a dual stance, the party strikes a balance between recognising and improving the current political structures and challenging the status quo while adhering to fundamental democratic principles. The incorporation of these components has enhanced PTI's capacity to mobilise public opinion, foster a sense of community, and motivate action. Through a forum to voice their complaints about the existing political environment and a strong sense of purpose, the party's messaging approach has successfully brought its supporters together. This dichotomy, meanwhile, also poses difficulties for the party since it has to walk a tightrope between upholding the integrity of the larger political system and allowing for reasonable criticism. The study's findings imply that PTI's protest language has a big influence on how people talk about politics and how they think. Subsequent research endeavours may investigate the effects of PTI's discourse on the broader political milieu and scrutinise the enduring consequences of its methodology for contesting and preserving power hierarchies. This study advances knowledge about the mechanics of political discourse and the influence of protest language on the democratic development of a country.

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