

“TELLING” THE “TOLD” THROUGH INTERVENED POWER EXERCISE FOR REGIME CHANGE IN PAKISTAN: A CRITICAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI DIPLOMATIC CYPHER (MARCH 07, 2022)

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Abstract

The study is conducted to analyze the diplomatic Cypher leaked by The Intercept website. The Cypher consists of the diplomatic conversation between Pakistani Ambassador Asad Majeed and US diplomats Donald Lu. This Cypher proved the intentions of the US behind the regime change in Pakistan that took place on April 10, 2022, and the Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Imran Khan was replaced. The study is conducted to analyze the narrative in Cypher's text critically. Mishler's typology of narrative analysis (1995) is adopted as the research model. In Mishler's (1995) typology, the first methodological category is "Reference and Temporal Order: The "Telling" and the "Told," which mainly focuses on the references as the representational problem, keeping concerning the finding of the correspondence between the temporal sequence of actions, events and the symbolic orders inside data. The method in the second category is "Textual Coherence and Structure: Narrative Strategies," and the last is "Narrative Functions: Context and Consequences." Through the framework, the narrative analysis focuses on these methods, illuminating the larger society through personal and group stories. The present study has adopted the first category of analysis; "Reference and Temporal Order: The "Telling" and the "Told". Mishler (1995) allows the researcher to adopt further approaches and frameworks according to the aim of the study. There are different subcategories of research orientation, so specific frameworks such as the Labove model of narrative analysis (1972). The study results show a high exercise of power, and specific directions are given. Supremacy of own narrative, considering self as Hero and own nation consisted of the heroic values, loaded figurative language about the existence of aspects, ironical meanings, resistance against one another's perspectives, and discourse of hegemony on the cognition is presented.

Key Terms: Narrative Analysis, References, Temporal Order, Recapitulating, Reconstruction, Imposing, Infer

1 Introduction

The Intercept released the Cypher document, claiming that someone had delivered it to publish (The Intercept, 2023). It was sent to the Pakistani Foreign Office from the Pakistani Ambassador in the US, which is comprised of a conversation that took place between The Ambassador of Pakistan in the US, Mr. Asad Majeed, and the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Mr. Donald Lu (The Intercept, 2023). The discussion is based on the diplomatic concerns of many international crises.

Cypher references the back-and-forth conversation in the Pakistani Foreign Office in the United States. The document comprises the questions and answers discussed between Pakistan's Official Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Asad Majeed Khan, and the United States Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asia, Donald Lu. The conversation focuses on the concerns over Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to

Russia while ignoring the concerns regarding the United States as Russia's primary competitor. The Prime Minister of Pakistan took an extremely neutral posture in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and did not denounce the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Thus, the United States perceived Pakistan's Prime Minister negatively. The conversation brings to light significant questions regarding the United States version of events, which the Pakistani prime minister has chosen to ignore during the conflict in Russia and Ukraine. However, US officials have stated, "If the political regime in Pakistan is changed, then everything can be forgiven." However, the Pakistani Ambassador expressed national concerns concerning the UN charter. The discussion continued to expand on Pakistan's attitude toward Kashmir and the issue of Afghanistan. However, the US official expressed concern primarily about Pakistan's neutral stance on the global conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

The narrative in *The Cypher* is of more profound concern as it is loaded with different stretches of powers, ideologies, themes, figurative language, and styles. The narrative is used to convey the stories, and in recent times, it is also used to convey information in recent times (Tomascikova, 2009). The narrative also helps the researchers research the metalanguage discourse embedded in the narratives (Tomascikova, 2009). Narrative is the utterance and the act of communication (Tjupa, 2014). *Narrative* is the multimodal domain encompassing the social, psychological, discourse, and conceptual domains. Schiff (2012) said that narratives have their paths of conceptual development. These are not delineated to the linguistic or literary theories (Schiff, 2012).

Elliot Mishler (1995) proposed the comprehensive model of narrative analysis, encompassing most of the approaches addressing the narrative inquiry in many domains. The models of narrative analysis are presented in his research paper, which demonstrates the different typologies. Mishler (1997) states while describing the narrative, "In many sciences, there is the existence of the strength, depth, and diversity of the narrative turns" (p. 117). There is coverage of such ways in Mishler's typology through which researchers can "story the world" by focusing and considering the meanings of actions, events, and experiences by "telling and retellings" of the stories for different types and purposes under different genres and contexts. Therefore, different comparative perspectives on the differences of various narrative inquiries are delineated by Mishler (1995) in terms of assumptions, research aims, nature and type of data, genres, analytical strategies, and methods based on the lawyer of Halliday's functions of language (1973) as "reference, structure and functions" (p. 89). Mishler (1995) called the "narrative inquiry" as the "problem-centered area of inquiry" (p. 89). Therefore, Mishler (1995) provided the typology in each model of narrative analysis, used as a framework" and allowing the researcher to compare the aims, foci, methods, and problems from different perspectives. Mishler discussed his typology as "tentative, preliminary and incomplete" (Mishler, 1995, p. 89). Kim (2016) further illustrates that Mishler (1995) permitted the researcher to comprehend the framework as narrowing the approach can limit it. Kim (2016) therefore, quoted, "for pursuing alternatives, more inclusive and appropriate strategies can be provided for comprehension and deeper understanding of the narratives functions and how researchers have to do" (Mishler, 1997; p. 117). To explore "pursue alternative, more inclusive," Kim (2016) further modified the framework's structure (Kim, 2016).

The present study is conducted to understand the "told" (US and Western Narrative following Pakistani foreign policies), and it is repeatedly told that Pakistan would not take steps freely as there are global issues. "Telling" the "told" in the text of the *Cypher* is based on the

warning and threatening matters by US officials to the Pakistani foreign office and later confirmed by official stamen of US politicians.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Interventions by international powers in developing countries are directed through specific discourse and narrative. Restructuring and imposing the “told” narrative used in textual coherence and structures functions as the context and sequences of actions. The politics of power is played through specific discourse used as a narrative for cognitive experiences to exercise control in the conflicted situation.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To understand the referential and temporal orders by “telling” the “told” in the Cypher.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How is the “telling” the “told” given as referential and temporal orders in the Cypher for Regime Change in Pakistan?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study helps to understand the diplomatic relationships exiting between two nations with differed power background. The study can make understood the readers, the state of actions, participations and the national concerns inlaid in the diplomatic document. This study also helps to apply the theoretical framework to explore the narratives and the narrative strategies inlaid in the diplomatic documents,

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to the Mishler (1995) ‘s theory of narrative analysis which is based on the telling the told.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to the first aspect of the research which is “References and Temporal Order as the “Telling and the “told.” The subcategories are discussed and the adopted model is discussed in the methodology. The subcategories of the adopted models are the “Recapitulating the told in the telling (Labov, 1972), “Reconstructing the told from the telling (Reordering a Storyline)”, “Imposing the Told on the Telling (Identification a Story Patterns)”, and “Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)”.

2 Literature Review

Ismailov et al. (2020) researched the linguistics, cognitive, and pragmatic aspects of political and diplomatic language in the Kazakh context. The study found that political and diplomatic language contains figurative illustrations and functions differently. Diplomatic and political language exists in international domains, so the language carries the resistance to international politics and presents the public discourse in the language.

Marzynska (2021) analyzed Sweden's public diplomacy strategy in the 21st century. The study adopted the critical discourse analysis of Machin and Mayr (2012) as the analysis framework. The study found core values in the text that were not stated overtly and are highly relevant to technology and innovation trends, whose integration in the contemporary time can't be denied (Abdelrady & Akram, 2022; Akram et al., 2022; 2021a, 2021b).

House et al. (2022) researched "*Aggression in Diplomatic Notes – A Pragmatic Analysis of a Chinese-American Conflict in Times of Colonisation.*" The study examined the veiled aggression in the diplomatic language use from speech act perspectives. The speech act "Tell" is more specifically explored. The study revealed that "Tell" is used as the more diplomatic aggression and often used to deliver menacing messages under the civility veneers. "Tell" is a ritual genre of diplomatic notes used to show charge within the boundaries of ritual frames.

Ramzan, & Alahmadi, (2024) have analyzed the syntax instruction in the ELT domain that can be enhanced by social motivation (Chen and Ramzan, 2024). From the discourse perspective, Khan et al. (2017) viewed the materialistic agenda confirmed by Ramzan and Khan (2019) in nawabs' stereotyped ideology. Ramzan et al. (2020) have highlighted the stance of media in discourse by using speech act theory. Ramzan et al. (2021) also explained the politicians' statements for discursive practice which was confirmed in Nawaz et al. (2021) ideological representation.

3 Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive and is presented in the current perspective. The study is qualitative based on the textual analysis. Textual analysis study describes the in depth construction of meanings and intending ideologies (Arya, 2020). The study has adopted Mishler's (1995) model, which is of multiple domains and allows the researcher to add the frameworks according to the need.

Mishler (1995) has presented the major aspects (Mishler, 1995, p. 90)

- References and Temporal Order as The "Telling and the "told."
- Textual Coherence and Structure as Narrative Strategies
- Narrative Functions as Context and Consequences

Mishler (1995, p.90) presented the typology of models of narrative analysis as follows:

3.1 Models of Narrative Analysis: A Typology

In Mishler's (1995) typology, the first methodological category is "Reference and Temporal Order: The "Telling" and The "Told," which mainly focuses on the references as the representational problem, keeping concerning the finding of the correspondence between the temporal sequence of actions, events and the representational orders inside data. The method in the second category is "Textual Coherence and Structure: Narrative Strategies," which is grounded in the linguistics theory and the structuralist theory, which probably presents the ad surface structures. The linguistics and narrative strategies corresponded to deep and surface structures to search for such techniques in which coherence and unity are maintained in the narrative structures. These methods can be more inclined to oral discourse than written

discourse, so interest is produced in talking and telling ways to examine the process using talking communication functions. The third category of the methods is “Narrative Functions: Context and Consequences,” which correspond with the “social, cultural and psychological contexts and the functions of stories” (p. 90). Through the use of the framework, the narrative analysis is conducted by focusing on these methods, illuminating the larger society through personal and group stories.

3.1.1 References and Temporal Order as The “Telling and the “Told”

This is based on the representational problem concerning the finding of the correspondence between the temporal sequence of actions, events, and the representational orders inside data.

3.1.1.1 Recapitulating the told in the telling (Labove ‘s model, 1972)

Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Actions, Evaluation, Result or Resolution, Coda

3.1.1.2 Reconstructing the told from the telling (Reordering a Storyline)

Chronological Order of the Story Construction

3.1.1.3 Imposing the Told on the Telling (Identification a Story Patterns)

Polkinghorne’s Analysis of Narrative (Place of Interaction, Way of Interaction, Results of Relationship)

3.1.1.4 Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)

Inferring (Reader’s Interpretation and Infer)

3.2 References and Temporal Order as The “Telling and the “told.”

Temporal order is widely discussed in narrative research. Mishler (1995) described two of the orders as the order of the told and the order of telling. Order of the tools refers to the narrative orders of actions and events told by the participants, while “the order of telling” refers to the order of narratives of events and actions presented in the considered research. The main duty of the researcher is to produce a balance between these two kinds of temporal research. “Telling “ stands for the researcher’s narration, while “told “ stands for the data. Mishler (1995, p.90) calls these “a series of temporal event orders’ which show the interpretation of the researcher. This category provides the priorities of the researcher for the analysis representation of a sequence of the events, which includes the four methods of analysis: *Recapitulating the told in the telling (Labov’s model)*, *Reconstructing the told from the telling*, *imposing a told on the telling*, and *Making a telling from the told*.

3.2.1 Labov’s Model of Recapitulating the Told in the Telling

This method is adopted for identification of the “told “ story and what it is about. Mishler (1995) used William Labove’s model of a conceptual framework for the narrative analysis of personal experiences, which are connected to language elements, meanings, and actions. This

method can be used for point of departure and reference. There is a reconstruction of the actions and the meanings of personal experiences.

Labove (1972) defines the narratives as the “recapitulation of experience that maintains the strict temporal ordering of events as they occurred in the real world”. Mishler (1995) adopted Labove’s model (1972, cited in Kim, 2016), in which these six components are for personal narrative descriptions.

3.2.2 Reconstructing the told from the telling (Reordering a Storyline)

The order of the story (Cypher) is based on the chronological events that existed in Pakistan. The telling in the story had been USA policy, which had been a concern every time, while on the other hand, “told” is the command of and threatening discourse of the US Secretary for the Pakistani government and the stakeholders of the regime.

3.2.3 Imposing the told on the telling

This segment of the storytelling consisted of the aspects of “place of interaction, way of interaction and the results of relationships” (Mishler, 1995).

3.2.4 Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)

This category is further inferred by the researcher as the “the researcher describes the way, “told is told”.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Process

The under-study data is the leaked Cypher by The Intercept website on August 09, 2023. Selected data is studied again and again for analytical reasons. The core aspects and the samples of the texts are extracted for analysis based on the adopted frameworks of analysis according to the multimodal narrative analysis.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Recapitulating the told in the telling (Labov’s model)

Mishler’s theory of narrative analysis is based on the multimodal aspects describing the different phases of interpretation and allows inferring other theories as part of subcategories during analysis.

Labove’s model is adopted to recapitalize the told in the telling and describes the six elements of the story analysis. In these perspectives, the interpretations can be stimulated.

The abstract is the summary of the story and its main aspects.

The Cypher is a two-way discussion in the Pakistani Foreign Office in the USA. The document consists of the question-answer as the meeting held between the US Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, and the Pakistani Official Ambassador to the US, Mr. Asad Majeed Khan. The discussion is held by showing the concern of Pakistani PM Mr. Imran Khan’s visit to Russia neglects the concern of the US as Russia’s rival. The extreme Neutral stance of the Pakistani Prime Minister in UNGC and

no condemnation of the Russia-Ukraine War led to the Pakistani PM not favoring good book US. The discussion reveals deep concerns about the USA narrative, which the Pakistani Prime Minister neglected during the Russia-Ukraine War. Though the Pakistani Ambassador showed national concerns with respect to the charter of the UN, US officials declared that “if the political regime is changed in Pakistan, then everything can be forgiven.” The discussion further expanded on the Kashmir stance and Afghanistan issue. However, US officials showed concern only about Pakistan’s neutral stance on the global issue of the Russia-Ukraine War.

Orientation is the provision of the context of the story as time, place, and characters for ordination to the reader.

The orientation of the story is about the “action of Imran Khan to visit Russia, movements of Pakistani PM Imran Khan, and his resisting discourse against Western policies.

Complicating the action, as the events of the skeleton pilot, causes the problem as now and then happenings.

The complicating action is the Pakistani Ex PM’s rigid stance on neutrality while neglecting the Western perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine war, knowing that Pakistan is running on the coalition funds of the West in its major departments of the country.

Evaluation is the comments and the judgments of the events by justifying the telling or describing the teller’s meanings given to an event.

Based on Cypher’s text, the interpretation can be made that the Pakistani Ambassador showed his concerns in the foreign office by meeting a US officer. Then, I put all the discussions in the document and sent it to the Foreign Office of Pakistan. Based on the conversation, Asad Majeed is concerned about the Pakistani position in the Russia-Ukraine war, while on the other hand, the threatening and “no concern to Pakistani stance” is discussed by US officials. The meaning is clear that the US put Pakistani officials to the test, and the results and actions could be based on the “no-confidence motion in Pakistan against Pakistani PM of the time, Mr. Imran Khan.”

Result or Resolution, as the resolution for the stories of the conflict.

The results of the story came into existence when the “Regime Change in Pakistan “ was successfully conducted and Imran Khan was replaced. The conflict arose in the rigid discourse of Imran Khan in his speeches while resistance against the US policy of regime change emerged in Pakistan.

Cod is the process of bringing back the narrator and the listener to the present situation.

The narrator of the story is Asad Majeed Khan, who tries to recapitulate and reconcile the situation, but the audience (The government of the time) was told that the Pakistani regime is at risk due to the threats of the US, and the US has deep concerns in the regime change operation in Pakistan.

4.2 Reconstructing the told from the telling (Reordering a Storyline)

The chronicle orders based on the Cypher the hating discourse can be seen as

- Visit of Pakistani Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan's concern and intentions of meetings in Beijing with Russian President Putin.
- The stance of Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan on corruption and the resisting discourse against Western policies while in UNGA.
- Meeting of Foreign Ministers of OIC Members and high concerning discourse of Pro-Islamic values and issues.
- Visit to Russia while the Russia War was ahead.
- Neglecting the US and European discourse and stance on the Ukraine War.
- Bashing US policies of regime changes and intervention in other 's politics and governments by adopting resisting discourse after receiving threats in the shape of "Cypher" in foreign office.

4.3 Imposing the told on the telling

The "told" in the story is the Cypher loaded with the highly threatening discourse and reinforcing the officials of Pakistan to change the regime of Imran Khan. The story told in the story consisted of the "threats" of changing the regime and the "supremacy of the US over Pakistani foreign affairs."

The place of interaction is the Foreign Office of Pakistan in the USA. The way of integration is "messaging, threatening by the Donald Lu." The language of the conversation is about the superior concern where pessimism can be observed in Pakistan's official language. "I told Don that this was a completely misinformed, wrong perception. The visit to Moscow had been in the works for at least a few years. It was the result of a *deliberative institutional process*," which shows that Pakistani officials were concerned with satisfying the US officials by clearing the misconceptions rather than giving a rigid stance. On the other hand, the US official secretary is threatening the Pakistani official to put the US narrative as the policy of Pakistan. Donald Lu expressed, "The thinking in Washington was that *given the current political turmoil in Pakistan, this was not the right time for such engagement, and it could wait till the political situation in Pakistan settled down*," which shows that US concerns seemed much higher than of Pakistan and Pakistan would follow the set line of foreign policy orientated by the US.

The results of the relationships being presented in the story are ties, and the relationship is not based on the balance situation. The stretch of "supremacy" (US) and "justification" (Pakistan) can be observed in the story as the document reveals the high anger of the US as the dominant discourse. At the same time, Pakistani officials are concerned with showing justification for state affairs.

4.4 Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)

The researchers infer can be interpreted as native can be different and as a foreigner of Pakistan can be different. It can be said that "telling the story" is the "US foreign policy" and its implementation in the South Asian region, as Pakistanis would also follow the directions of the US. There would be no resistance and resisting discourse in the shape of actions and speeches by Pakistani officials against the US. Actions, sequence of the discussion, justification by Pakistani officials, and enforced discourse that "regime change" in Pakistan

was considered as the high concern of the US, and the results could be neglecting essentials on Pakistan.

5 Conclusion

The narrative in *The Cypher* is of more profound concern as it is loaded with different stretches of powers, ideologies, themes, figurative language, and styles. Elliot Mishler (1995) proposed the comprehensive model of narrative analysis, encompassing most of the approaches addressing the narrative inquiry in many domains. The models of narrative analysis are presented in his research paper, which demonstrates the different typologies. The study is delimited to the first aspect of the research which is “References and Temporal Order as “The Telling and the “told.” The subcategories are discussed and the adopted model is discussed in the methodology. The subcategories of the adopted models are the “Recapitulating the told in the telling (Labove and Valet model, 1967), “Reconstructing the told from the telling (Reordering a Storyline)”, “Imposing the Told on the Telling (Identification a Story Patterns)”, and “Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)”.

5.1 Findings

Recapitulating the told in the telling

- The *Cypher* is consisted of the chronical aspects which includes the question-answer as the meeting held between the US Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, and the Pakistani Official Ambassador to the US, Mr. Asad Majeed Khan. The discussion is held by showing the concern of Pakistani PM Mr. Imran Khan’s visit to Russia neglects the concern of the US as Russia’s rival. It also concludes the neutral stance condemnation of the Pakistani PM regarding Russia-Ukraine War too.
- The orientation of the story is about the “action of Imran Khan to visit Russia, movements of Pakistani PM Imran Khan, and his resisting discourse against Western policies.
- The complicating action is the Pakistani Ex PM’s rigid stance on neutrality while neglecting the Western perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine war, knowing that Pakistan is running on the coalition funds of the West in its major departments of the country.
- Based on *Cypher*’s text, the interpretation can be made that the Pakistani Ambassador showed his concerns in the foreign office by meeting a US officer
- The results of the story came into existence when the “Regime Change in Pakistan “ was successfully conducted and Imran Khan was replaced.
- The narrator of the story is Asad Majeed Khan, who tries to recapitulate and reconcile the situation, but the audience (The government of the time) was told that the Pakistani regime is at risk due to the threats of the US, and the US has deep concerns in the regime change operation in Pakistan.

Reconstructing the told from the telling

The chronicle orders based on the *Cypher* the hating discourse can be seen as

- Visit of Pakistani Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan’s concern and intentions of meetings in Beijing with Russian President Putin.

- The stance of Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan on corruption and the resisting discourse against Western policies while in UNGA.
- Meeting of Foreign Ministers of OIC Members and high concerning discourse of Pro-Islamic values and issues.
- Visit to Russia while the Russia War was ahead.
- Neglecting the US and European discourse and stance on the Ukraine War.
- Bashing US policies of regime changes and intervention in other 's politics and governments by adopting resisting discourse after receiving threats in the shape of "Cypher" in foreign office.

Imposing the Told on the Telling

- The "told" in the story is the Cypher loaded with the highly threatening discourse and reinforcing the officials of Pakistan to change the regime of Imran Khan.
- The story told in the story consisted of the "threats" of changing the regime and the "supremacy of the US over Pakistani foreign affairs."
- The place of interaction is the Foreign Office of Pakistan in the USA.
- The way of integration is "messaging, threatening by the Donald Lu."
- The results of the relationships being presented in the story are ties, and the relationship is not based on the balance situation.
- The stretch of "supremacy" (US) and "justification" (Pakistan) can be observed in the story as the document reveals the high anger of the US as the dominant discourse.

Making a telling from the told (Inferring a Story)

- "Telling the story" is the "US foreign policy" and its implementation in the South Asian region, as Pakistanis would also follow the directions of the US.
- There would be no resistance and resisting discourse in the shape of actions and speeches by Pakistani officials against the US. Actions, sequence of the discussion, justification by Pakistani officials, and enforced discourse that "regime change" in Pakistan was considered as the high concern of the US

5.2 Recommendations

- Mishler 's theory of narrative analysis can be applied to explore the characters and the incidents of the any story inlaid in diplomatic or in non-diplomatic documents.
- The theory can also be used to explore the deep aspects and the narrative strategies based on the relationship of the participants and their background so that the polices and the intentions could be better explored.
- The theory can also be used to analyze any document with the expanded and supported approaches too.

5.3 Gap for Future Research

There can be future research on the functions and the strategies exploration of the diplomatic cyphers. There can also be research on the "Textual Coherence and Structure as Narrative Strategies and "Narratives Functions as Context and Consequences ("social, cultural and psychological contexts and the functions of stories" which are further aspect of the Mishler (1995)'s theory. There can also be research on the styles, language choice and the syntactic aspects of the diplomatic Cypher.

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