

Association vs Disassociation: An Analysis of Inclusive and Exclusive Plural Personal Pronouns in the Pakistani Parliamentary Speeches

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Abstract

Politicians usually use plural personal pronouns *we* and *us* to highlight their qualities or positive aspects or of their in-group members. They also use these pronouns to represent a team, group or an organization and show shared responsibilities. This paper employs CDA approach to analyze the discursive practice of using inclusive and exclusive Urdu plural personal pronouns *ham* (we) and *hamain* (us) by the Pakistani Parliamentarians for showing association and disassociation, and see how they use these pronouns for including and excluding their fellow Parliamentarians in their in-group or out group participating the third joint session (September 2, 2014 to September 19, 2014). The paper analyzes nine of the Parliamentary speeches of the three leading parliamentary parties, three from each PML-N, PPP and PTI parties made during Islamabad sit-in 2014. The result shows that selected Parliamentarians used the first-person plural inclusive and exclusive to achieve certain objectives. They used the inclusive pronouns to include Parliamentarians and other political parties in their in-group when they aimed at showing unity, creating harmony, sharing responsibilities and invoking the sense of responsibility among their colleagues. They used the exclusive pronouns when they meant to highlight the positive aspects of their parties, show their loyalty and sincerity to the system and mention their efforts and sacrifices made for the democracy. The study may have important implications for political discourse analysis and language teaching in Pakistani classrooms.

Keywords: Inclusive we, exclusive we, speeches, Association, Disassociation

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Introduction

In linguistics, the terms *inclusive* and *exclusive* have been used for more than two centuries (Hass, 1969). Generally the term *inclusive* “we” refers to the speaker, hearers (you) and others (S+Y+O) and *exclusive* is used when “hearer/s” are not involved (S-Y+O) (Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. 1985, Fontaine, 2006, Uzum, B., Yazan, B. & Ali, F. S. 2017). In English, both *inclusive* and *exclusive* plural pronouns are translated as *we* and differentiated on the intended meaning. The personal pronoun “we” is normally not used to refer to something in the text; rather, its referents are decided by the role of a speaker and hearer depending on the context (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Similar to English, there is no clear distinction between an *inclusive* and *exclusive* personal pronouns in European languages (Cysouw, 2008), however, Hawaiian, Mauritian, some Australian and aboriginal languages have this distinction (Romaine, 1992). The politicians usually use plural personal pronouns *we* and *us* to highlight the qualities or positive aspects of theirs or their in-group members (van Dijk 1993, 1997). They also use these pronouns to represent a team, group or an organization (de Fina, 1995) and show shared responsibilities (Beard, 2000). In Urdu, *ham* (we) and *hamain* (us) are used as inclusive and exclusive plural personal pronouns, and context plays a key role in differentiating the intended meaning. However, no study has undertaken this discursive practice and tried to explore it in detail. This paper analyzes the discursive practice of using inclusive and exclusive plural personal pronouns *ham/hamain* by Pakistani Parliamentarians for showing association and disassociation, and see how they use these pronouns for including and excluding the Parliamentarians in their in-group or out-group sitting in the joint session during Islamabad sit-in in 2014. The study has also analyzed the possible motive behind using this discursive practice.

Background of the Study

After the completion of five years constitutional tenure by the first civilian government, general election was held in 2013. As a result of the election, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) emerged as a third largest Parliamentary party in the National Assembly. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) became the largest party by claiming 188 seats in the National Assembly. PTI blamed PML-N of rigging in the election and stealing its mandate by depriving it of few seats in the Punjab Province. In 2014, it announced a protest and a sit-in in the capital. Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT), another political cum religious party also announced to have a sit-in in the capital as well though with different demands. Both parties held sit-ins in Islamabad (67 days by PAT i.e. August 14, 2014 to October 21, 2014 and 126 days by PTI, i.e. August 14, 2014 to December 17, 2014). During their sit-ins, the capital was practically cut off from the rest of the country and leaders of the protesting parties made speeches and gave ultimatums to the government for accepting their demands.

There were also rumors that some non-democratic forces were behind the sit-ins which wanted to wrap up the democracy and impose Martial Law again in the country. On the suggestions of the Opposition Leader in National Assembly, PML-N led government called a joint session (of National Assembly and Senate) to show unity and take some unanimous measures to cope up with the political crisis. The session continued from September 2, 2014 to September 19, 2014 during which 50 Parliamentarians presented their speeches.

Research Methodology

The study uses CDA approach for analyzing the speeches of nine Parliamentarians: three from each of the leading parties, i.e. PML-N, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and PTI; the first, second and third largest parties respectively in National Assembly. The speeches of the Parliamentarians were selected from the third joint session, the longest session of the tenure 2013-2018. The Parliamentarians were selected based on their seniority and key positions in their parties. The names of the Parliamentarians and their party affiliations are given as under:

Table 1

Demographics of the Participants

S. No.	Party affiliation	Senator/Member of National Assembly (MNA)	Province	Speech Date	Name of the speakers
1	PML-N	Senator	Punjab	September 5, 2014	Raja Muhammad Zafar ul Haq (Chairman of PML-N and Leader of the House in Senate)
2		MNA	Punjab	September 2, 2014	Ch. Nisar Ali Khan (Interior Federal Minister)
3		MNA	Punjab	September 18, 2014	Khawaja Saad Rafiq (Federal Minister of Railways)
4	PPP P	Senator	Punjab	September 2, 2014	Ch. Aitzaz Ahsan (Leader of the Opposition in Senate)
5		Senator	Baluchistan	September 4, 2014	Mian Raza Rabbani (Chairman of Senate)
6		MNA	Sindh	September 5, 2014	Syed Khursheed Shah (Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly)
7	PTI	MNA	Punjab	September 3, 2014	Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi (Vice Chairman of PTI)
8		MNA	KPK	September 18, 2014	Nasir Khan Khattak (Senior member)
9		MNA	Punjab	September 2, 2014	Makhdoom Muhammad Javed Hashmi (President of PTI)

Results and Discussion

The table 2 shows that all selected Parliamentarians, except Mr Khattak (who limited himself to the inclusive use only), used inclusive as well as exclusive plural pronouns in their speeches. They chose exclusive pronouns for the representation of their party, party workers and some other groups. Mr. Qureshi, PTI Parliamentarian, used the personal plural pronouns 177 times; 60 (34%) of which were used in an inclusive sense, and 117 (66%) in an exclusive sense. The PPP Parliamentarian, Mr. Babar and PML-N Parliamentarian, Mr. Rafique were the third largest users of the pronouns who used them for 50 times each. They used them 20 (40%) and 21 (42%) times exclusively and 30 (60%) and 29 (58%) times inclusively respectively. Mr. Rabbani was the fourth largest user of the pronouns who used them 49 times out of which 28 (57%) times he used them inclusively and 21(43%) times exclusively. Overall, they used the plural pronouns 473 times out of which 236 (49.9%) times they used it inclusively and 237 (50.1%) exclusively. This shows that the number of plural personal pronouns used inclusively is almost equal to the number of pronouns used exclusively. In the following part, inclusive and exclusive use of the plural personal pronouns has been presented separately to have a closer understanding of their different uses and objectives.

Table 2

The use of the Plural Pronouns ham/hamain (we/us) by the Parliamentarians

Name of the Leader	Party representation	The use of <i>ham/hamain</i>		
		Inclusive	Exclusive	The plural personal pronouns
Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif	PML-N	18	6	24
Raja Zafar ulHaq		2	5	7
Ch. Nisar Ali Khan		5	12	17
Khawaja Sa'adRafique		29	21	50
Ch. I'tizaz Ahsan	PPP	12	14	26
Farhatullah Babar		30	20	50
RazaRabbabi		24	20	44
Syed. Khursheed Shah		7	12	19
Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi	PTI	60	117	177
Nasir Khan Khattak		23	0	23
Makhdomm Muhammad Javed Hashmi		22	9	31
Total		236	237	623

Inclusive use of plural personal pronouns *ham/hamain*

Table 2 shows that the selected Parliamentarians used inclusive plural personal pronouns *ham/hamain* in their speeches. As discussed previously, in inclusive use of personal pronouns, the speaker includes the audience or addressees (Y) and others (O). The Parliamentarians included their colleagues present in the joint session as well as political parties while using the plural pronouns. A few of them used the pronouns for referring to the nation collectively including their colleagues representing different political parties in the Parliament. They used them for referring to the Parliamentarians, other political parties and public in general for showing unity and sense of responsibility. For example, Mr. Haq, PML-N Senator, said:

- (1) *...jo asl qowmi agenda he who aik taraf reh jaaye aur **ham** saary kisi aur taraf chal parain* (..we might leave the real national issues on one side and move to some other side) (1:41).

In the example cited above, Mr. Haq used '*ham*' to refer to PPP and PML-N Parliamentarians especially and other members generally sitting in the joint session. By using the plural pronoun for referring to all of the members, he seems aiming at the unity of the house and in voke a sense of responsibility among the members.

Mr. Shah, PPP Parliamentarian, used first-person plural inclusive pronouns *ham/hamain* seven times in his speech to represent the whole Parliament. He used the pronouns to show unity among the Parliamentarians. For example, announcing the victory of the Parliament when Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Vice Chairman of PTI attended the session and showed his confidence in the Parliament and political system, he said:

- (2) *Aaj **ham** yeh mahsoos karty hain keh parliament jeet gai he* (..today we feel that Parliament has won...) (6:3)

Mr. Shah, in example given above, congratulated all the Parliamentarians and political parties, and used plural pronoun *ham* to refer to all the members of all political parties present in the joint session which showed their unity.

- (3) ***Hamny** is tareekh sy sabaq seekh kar aagy barhna he kiyoun keh aaj **ham** par bahut bari zimadaari he* (we are to proceed by learning the lesson from the history because there lies a heavy responsibility on us) (7:51-52).

In example 3, Mr Qureshi, PTI Parliamentarian, used the plural pronoun *ham* twice. The use of *ham* refers to all political parties and Parliamentarians. Through the use of the pronoun, he invoked the attention of the members of Parliament and made them realize their responsibility because he considered that their role in the past had not been commendable. He considered the situation a challenge for the politicians and feared that they might not become successful if they did not proceed carefully.

The results shows that four (three of PTI and one of PPP) of the selected Parliamentarians used the plural personal pronouns inclusively (Parliamentarians + General Public) for the representation of the nation as a whole. All PTI Parliamentarians used the plural pronouns referring to the nation as a whole including the Parliamentarians and political leaders. For example, PTI Parliamentarian, Mr. Hashmi used the first-person plural personal pronouns 13 times to represent the nation as whole. He said:

- (4) *Bad qismati sy ham aaj kisi baat par khary ho kar sar fakhr sy nahi utha saktay* (unfortunately, now **we** cannot raise our head on anything with pride) (9:13).

In the above example, Mr Hashmi drew the attention of Parliamentarians towards the inconsistencies in the policies of the country. He considered that the whole Pakistani nation in general and politicians in particular had not played their role positively. He regretted that as Pakistanis, they had lost 67 precious years of their history.

One of the PPP Parliamentarians used the plural pronouns to refer to the nation as a whole. Mr. Ahsan used it once in his speech. Expressing his view about the treatment of the police with media, Mr. Ahsan declared it a shameful act for the whole nation. In example 5, the pronoun *ham* refers to every citizen of Pakistan including the Parliamentarians.

- (5) *is sy ham sab Pakistani youn kas kar sharm sy jhuk jaana chahye* (because of this, **we** all Pakistanis should bend our heads with shame) (4:65)

The analysis of the first-person plural inclusive pronouns for the Parliamentarians and political parties shows that all selected members of the Parliament used them to show unity, create harmony, share responsibilities, invoke sense of responsibility, adopt forbearance and reiterate commitment for democracy. They attempted to give their possible opponents a message that they were united against any adventure. The PML-N Parliamentarians used the pronouns in the inclusive sense for the Parliamentarians to create unity and harmony among members against the protesting parties. They also aimed to urge the Parliamentarians for their support against the protesting parties and any other imminent unconstitutional adventure. The PPP Parliamentarians used the plural personal inclusive pronouns for the Parliamentarians to show their unity and commitment to the

democracy and represent the feeling of general public. PTI Parliamentarians used the personal pronouns for the Parliamentarians and general public. They used *ham/hamain* for the Parliamentarians for urging them to realize their responsibilities. One of the PTI Parliamentarians used the pronouns to reflect the present position of the nation as the result of wrong and irresponsible policies of the previous governments. Through the use of the pronouns, he indirectly criticized the previous governments, which consisted of some of the Parliamentarians still present in the Parliament. He expressed the regret of the nation on the postponement of the official tour of Chinese President to Pakistan due to the sit-ins in the capital. By using the plural pronouns, he showed the solidarity of the nation with China and requested her for rescheduling of her President's visit. He also used the pronouns for invoking the sense of responsibility among the members and urged the government for adopting a foreign policy based on the interest of the country and realities on the ground. Other PTI Parliamentarians involved the nation by expressing their regret on the mistakes done by the politicians which had caused the country irreparable loss. They used the plural pronouns for invoking the sense of responsibility among the Parliamentarians particularly and politicians generally for the sake of the nation.

Exclusive use of plural pronoun *ham/hamain*

Table 2 shows that all selected members except Mr. Khattak used the first-person plural exclusive pronouns *ham/hamain*. The Parliamentarians used exclusive pronouns *ham/hamain* for their party representation and excluded the Parliamentarians representing different political parties and sitting in the joint session to show the loyalty and commitment of their parties to the democracy, their belief in the Constitution and their efforts for the supremacy of the law. For example, Ch. Nisar used first-person plural exclusive pronouns 12 times in his speech. He used them for his party to show that his party believed in the democratic rights of the people and that was the reason it facilitated the protestors. The ruling party not only allowed them to come to the capital but allowed them to have sit-in where they wanted. He said:

- (6) *PAT ny Zero Point par ijazat mangi ham ny di, PTI ny Kashmir Highway par ijazat mangi tu hamny di* (PAT demanded (to have sit-in) at Zero Point we allowed them. PTI demanded at Kashmir Highway, we allowed them as well) (2:131-132)

In the above example, by using the plural pronouns, he showed the belief of his government especially of his party in the constitution and democratic rights of the people that is why it allowed the protestors to have sit-in on their demanded places despite some reservations.

Mr. Shah used first-person plural exclusive pronouns 12 times in his speech. His exclusive use of the pronouns was to represent his party, PPP, when he mentioned their role in letting the government allow PTI come in Islamabad for the protest. He said that it was his party which exerted pressure on the government to give the protestors free hand.

- (7) **Ham** ny, PPP ny hakoomat sy keh diya he keh **hamain** patience sy aagy bharna chahye aur aakhri fateh sabr ki hoti he (**we**, and the PPP had asked the government that **we** should proceed with patience and in the end, patience wins) (6:41-42).

In example 7, Mr. Shah used *ham* exclusively to refer to his party and *hamain* for the whole Parliament. He used *ham* to show that his party believed in democracy and despite their difference with PTI on their demands, they supported their democratic right to protest. He also tried to show that his party was a well-wisher of the government and had always advised it positively and seriously.

Mr. Hashmi used first-person plural exclusive pronouns *ham/hamain* four times to refer to his party and leadership. In example 8, he referred *ham* to PTI leadership which had planned to go back from Islamabad after a gathering. Through this he indirectly blamed his leader Imran Khan for backing out his promise.

- (8) **Ham** ny kaha keh **ham** D-Chowk par jalsa kar ky wapis aajain gy (**we** said that **we** will come back after having a gathering at D-Chowk) (9:232)

In the above example, he used *ham* for PTI when he had reminded Imran Khan of his initial promise of not proceeding from the D-Chowk. When PAT leadership and the workers decided to move towards Parliament and PTV Building and Imran Khan decided to join them. PTI leadership including Mr. Hashmi tried to convince Imran Khan to stay behind at D-Chowk, as claimed by Mr. Hashmi and not to proceed as he had promised not to do so. Mr. Hashmi used the plural pronoun to describe efforts in the party. He indirectly blamed his leader for not fulfilling his commitment. He also claimed that the whole decisions of the party were taken by the one person, i.e. Imran Khan.

Some of the selected Parliamentarians used *ham/hamain* for referring to their party workers and different factions of society while excluding the members sitting in the joint session. For example, PPP Parliamentarian, Mr. Ahsan, used the pronouns twice for party workers when he said that their supporters asked him the reason of supporting the government. He claimed that the PML-N government's treatment with PPP workers was very poor, and it had deprived them of their jobs and other opportunities.

- (9) *Guzashta paanch chay saal sy unhoun ny kitna jabr ham par kiya he* (in the last five six years, they have treated **us** cruelly) (4:30).

In the above example, Mr Ahsan used the first-person plural pronoun *ham* to complain about the government's unjust behavior with PPP workers. He also tried to impress upon the PM that, in spite of all reservations, his party was supporting him just for the sake of democracy. Mr. Ahsan had been the president of Supreme Court Bar and led the movement of the lawyers for the restoration of judiciary. He used *ham* twice to refer to the lawyers. The lawyers held a *dharna* throughout the country against Gen. Musharraf's government on the call of their leaders. On one hand, Mr. Ahsan praised the seriousness and loyalty of his fellow lawyers and on other hand, he criticized the inconsistency of PTI sit-in where people gathered at night and disappeared in the day. He said:

- (10). *Jab ham ny mulk geer dharny ka faisla kiya aur appeal ki tu 28 August ko poory mulk main dharna diya gia* (when **we** decided to have a sit-in throughout the country and on appeal, a sit-in was held throughout the country on August, 28) (4:181).

The analysis of the exclusive use also reveals that the six Parliamentarians used the plural personal exclusive pronouns for their parties. Mr. Qureshi used these pronouns 117 times whereas all other 13 Parliamentarians used the pronouns 169 times which means that he used 41% of overall use of the pronouns. This excessive use of the first-person plural exclusive shows his attachment and involvement with his party. He aimed to clarify the position of his party and answer the allegations of violating the constitution raised against it. In addition to Mr. Qureshi, Mr. Haq, Ch. Nisar, Mr. Shah and Mr. Khattak used the exclusive pronouns for their party representation. They aimed to present their parties positively and show that they believed in the democratic system in Pakistan and wanted to strengthen the Parliament by following the constitution of Pakistan. The PML-N Parliamentarians used the personal pronouns to create harmony and unity among the members by reminding them of their party's contributions in the past. They also tried to impress upon their opponents that their party believed in democracy and the rights of people. The PPP Parliamentarians showed that their party was a democratic party and despite reservations and differences with the government was cooperating with it for the sake of democracy. The PTI Parliamentarians showed that their party believed in Parliamentary System and their action was for the rights of common people.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the inclusive and exclusive use of first-person plural pronouns in the selected Parliamentary speeches. The analysis reveals that the Parliamentarians of four leading parties used the pronouns inclusively and exclusively with their vested objectives. Through the inclusive use of the first-person plural pronouns for the Parliamentarians and political parties, they aimed at showing their unity, creating harmony among the members, sharing their responsibilities, invoking the sense of responsibility and showing commitment against any unconstitutional change. The PML-N Parliamentarians seemed to win the sympathy of their colleagues and urge them to support their government. The PPP Parliamentarians aimed at showing the unity of the Parliament and the commitment of their party to the democracy. The PTI Parliamentarians aimed at realizing the Parliamentarians and political parties of their responsibilities. The PPP and PTI Parliamentarians insisted on adopting a responsible behavior for the sake of the nation. They used the exclusive first-person plural pronouns for the representation of their parties, party workers and multiple groups as well. The exclusive use of the pronouns for party representation was primarily meant to highlight the positive aspects of their parties, prove their parties to be the true followers of democracy, loyal and sincere to the system, efforts and sacrifices their parties made for the democracy and the loss they had suffered as a result. The PML-N Parliamentarians aimed at getting the support of the opposition parties to come out of the political crisis. The PPP Parliamentarians targeted at painting the positive picture of their party by presenting it as the only party which had always stood with the democracy. It had suffered irreparable loss but had not compromised its principles. The PTI Parliamentarians presented their party to be a sincere party to the country which wanted to strengthen its institutions by making them autonomous. The PPP Parliamentarians also tried to draw the attention of the parliament towards the discriminatory treatment of PML-N government with them. They also used the exclusive use of the pronouns for multiple groups to highlight their issues or to win their sympathies.

Recommendations

This analysis may help us understand and teach how political discourse is used/manipulated in Pakistani or other similar contexts. In this way, we may train our young learners not only for becoming aware of the manipulative uses of language but also for the future leadership roles in the country

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