Discourse Analysis of References in the Speech of Amir of Qatar Sheik Tamim Bin Hamad Al -Thani in the 72 Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Abstract

Discourse as a connected speech which extends beyond the borders of a single sentence. Therefore, this study analyse references in the speech of Amir of Qatar Sheik Tamim Bin Hamad Al -Thani in the 72 session of the United Nations General Assembly on 19-September 2017. The researcher will present personal, demonstratives and comparative references by analysing their frequency of occurrence as an analytical study. Basically, this study reveals that personal references are most frequently used by Sheik Tamim, followed by demonstrative references. The comparative references happen to be the least occurring type.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, Reference, Personal references, Demonstrative references, Comparative references

1. Introduction

This study entitled discourse analysis of references in the speech of Sheik Tamim Bin Hamad Al -Thani in the 72nd session of the United Nations. In fact, Sheik Tamim delivered his powerful and effective speech on 19- September 2017 at the UN General Assembly.

According to Crystal (1992:25) "Discourse is a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence". Similarly, Nunan (1993:5) defines "discourse as a stretch of language consisting of several sentences which is perceived as being related in some ways". Schiffrin (1994) considered discourse analysis as a branch of linguistics which deals with linguistic units at levels above the sentence that is text and conversation. Similarly, Yule (2010) added that the word discourse means language beyond a sentence. Thus, there are some grammatical and lexical cohesive devices to hang a text together.

Grammatical cohesion refers to the linguistic structure. The highest structural unit in the grammar is the sentence Halliday and Hasan (1976: 28). Moreover, reference is nothing but the situation in which one element cannot be semantically interpreted unless it is referred to another element in the text. Comparatives, demonstratives, pronouns, and articles are used as referring devices to refer to items in linguistic or situational texts (M. Bloor and T. Bloor, 2013).

Reference is defined as using pronouns and other words to refer to something found in the text. The words like pronouns, articles do not have their own meanings and the reader has to understand them Wisniewski (2006). Referential cohesion plays a special role in creating cohesive ties between the elements that can be difficult or even impossible to interpret if a single sentence is taken out of context Nunan (ibid).

Salkie (1995) classified reference as a grammatical cohesion into three different types namely, personal, demonstratives and comparative pronouns. Also, according to him all of the following pronouns *I, we, you, he, she, it,* and *they,* as well as their objective forms (*me, him, her, it, them, us, you),* along with their possessive forms (*my, your, her, its, their, our* and *mine*, *him, hers, its, theirs, ours)* are used for personal pronoun references. Therefore, personal pronouns can be classified into existential personal pronouns and possessive personal pronouns.

According to Diessel (1999:2) demonstratives are serving specific syntactic functions, and they are semantically characterised by having at least two forms: proximal and distal.

Accordingly, Salkie (ibid) regarded that all the demonstratives namely; *this, that, these* and *those* are known as reference words. Generally, the use of *this* and *these is* to indicate a thing which is closer, whereas *that* and *those are used* to point to something which is far away.

Halliday and Hasan (ibid) distinguish between two types of comparative reference: general and particular. General comparative reference expresses likeness between things, in the form of identity, similarity and unlikeness or difference, whereas particular reference expresses comparability between things with reference to quantity or quality.

2. Review of Literature

Adetunji (2006) analysed the personal, temporal and spatial deixis as used by president of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo and found that the deictic centre is nearer the first person plural *we* than the singular *I*, whereas the deictic *I* preponderates because the speaker speaks from a personal point of view.

El Saj (2012) analysed the personal pronouns in Oprah Winfrey's speech with Queen Rania of Jordan and observed that the subjects *I* and *you* were the most frequently occurring personal pronouns in the utterances of Oprah than the other personal pronouns.

Purnamawati (2012) analysed the referential cohesion in the novel *My Mother My Self*, and pointed out the three different types of referential cohesion appear, personal references, demonstrative references and comparative references. Regarding the use of personal references that occur in the novel the following observations have been made: *I, you* and *they are the personal references used and the* comparative references occurring in the novel are *else*, *other*, *more* and *so*. Whereas the demonstrative references that appear in the novel are *this* and *that*.

Ratnasari and Sudartini (2016) analysed the use of cohesive devices in the speech of grade IV students' of the academic year 2014 (English education.) They analysed 18 different speeches and found the use of 1267 lexical and grammatical cohesive ties. Lexical cohesion appeared 435 times (34.3%) of the total occurrence consisting of reiteration 340 times (26.8%) and collocation 95 times (7.5%) whereas grammatical cohesion appeared 832 times (65.7%) of the total occurrence which consisted of reference 281 times (22.2%), substitution 6 times (0.5%), ellipsis 69 times (5.4%), and conjunction 476 times (37.6%).

Bouk (2016) examined the use of place deixis as used by Xanana Gusmao the Prime Minister of Timor Leste. He came out with the conclusion that the frequent use of place deixis *here* and *this* indicate that the Prime Minister aimed to introduce his country Tmior Leste to the others.

3. Methodology

This research is an analytical research by its nature. The method used was to collect the data from the speeches and to classify and analyse them, and then to draw the conclusion based on the analysis of the data. The effectiveness of the royal speech led the investigator to take into account the three categories of references (personal, demonstratives and comparative) the three linguistic elements frequently occurring in his speech.

Table 3.1 The frequency of references

personal	*demonstratives*	*comparative*
153	48	2

From Table 3.1 we can conclude that the   personal, demonstratives and comparative references are very frequently occurring in his speech. The most frequently used reference

was the personal references (153). The personal references are followed by demonstratives (48) and comparative (2).

Table 3.2 The frequency of personal references

existential	possessive
52	101

Having a look at Table 3.2 shall reveal the fact that the existential personal references have been used more frequently (52) times than the possessive personal references (101) times.

Table 3.3 The frequency of demonstrative references

proximal	distal
38	10

From Table 3.3 it can be observed that Sheik Tamim has preferred the use of proximal demonstrative references (38) times to distal demonstrative references (10) times.

Table 3.4 The frequency of comparative references

quality	quantity
1	1

From Table 3.4 it can be found that The Amir has used quality and quantity comparative references once each.

4. Results

The following section is devoted exclusively for the discussion of the results obtained through the analysis of the data on the use of the different types of references viz. personal, demonstratives and comparative references and their sub-categories (*existential, possessive*, *proximal*, *distal*, *quality* and *quantity)* in the royal speech.

4.1 Analysis of References

As all of his speeches are formal in the capacity of head of the country, the powerful royal speech consisted of a large number of references as linguistic elements namely; personal references (existential and possessive), demonstrative references (proximal and distal) and comparative references (quality and quantity).
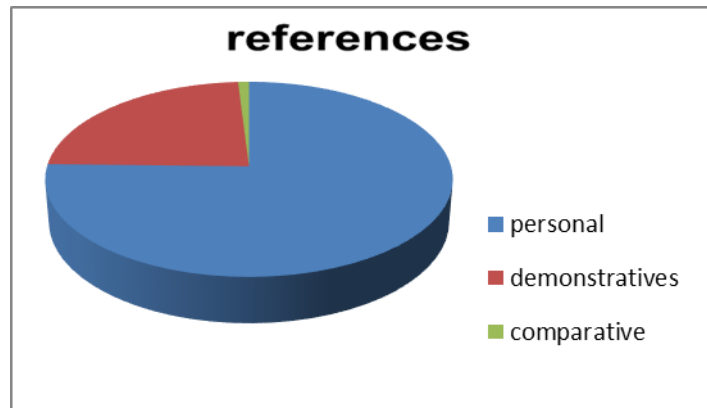
Figure 4.1 Uses references (personal, demonstratives and comparative)

Pie chart above (4.1) depicts the comparison of each type of reference as used by Amir Tamim in his formal speech, the personal references, the demonstrative references, and the comparative references. It can be concluded that the personal references have been used the highest number of times (153) than the other two types viz. demonstratives (48) and comparatives (2) times.

4.2 Analysis of Personal References

The main purpose here is to analyse the personal references *(existential* and *possessive)* that were used in the speech of Sheik of Qatar.
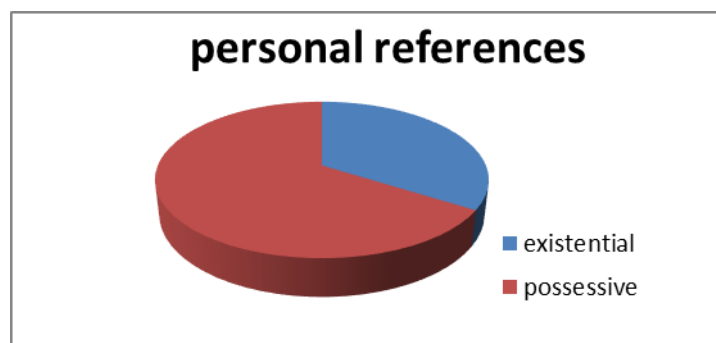

Figure 4.2 Uses of personal references (existential and possessive) in the speech

By observing figure 4.2 on the use of personal references shows that, out of 153 times, Sheik Tamim has used more possessive references (101) times than the existential references (52) times. Here are examples from the data:

A- Existential references

*(1) **I** reiterate my thanks to the sisterly and friendly countries which recognize the significance of respecting the sovereignty of States and the rules of international law.*

*(2) **We** commend opting for the theme of this session: focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet.*

*(3) **They** are inflicting damage on the war on terror, while at the same time opposing reform and supporting the tyrannical regimes in our region, where terrorists are initiated in their prisons.*

B- Possessive references

*(4) This time I stand here, while **my** country and **my** people are subjected to a continuing and unjust blockade imposed since June 5th by neighboring countries.*

*(5) I highly value the sincere and appreciated mediation that the State of Qatar has supported since the outbreak of the crisis, and which was initiated by my brother, **His** Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jabir Al-Sabah, the Amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait.*

*(6) They have **their** full legitimate rights as full-fledged citizens, and we in this regard urge all States to provide humanitarian assistance to **them**.*

4.3 Analysis of Demonstrative References

The main purpose here is to analyse demonstrative references (proximal and distal) that were found in the speeches of Amir of Qatar.
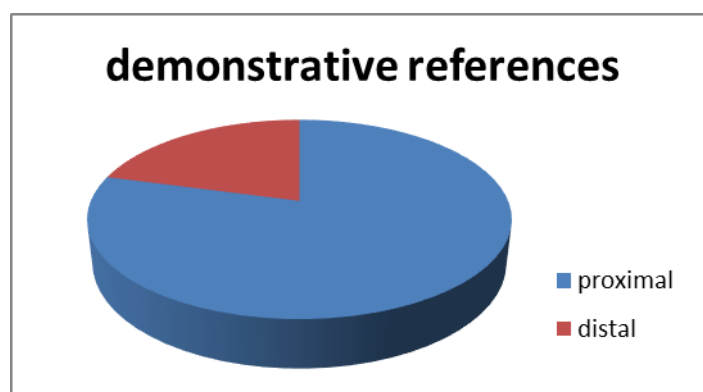

Figure 4.3 Uses of demonstrative references (proximal and distal)

Figure 4.3 reveals the occurrence of the two types of demonstrative references, namely; (proximal and distal) in the royal speech. Proximal references occurred more number of times (38) than the distal references (10). Here are examples from the data:

A- Proximal references

*(7) I reiterate my thanks to the sisterly and friendly countries which recognize the significance of respecting the sovereignty of States and the rules of international law, for their appreciated stances which were, and still are, supportive of the Qatari people during **this** crisis.*

*(8) Qatar is currently managing successively its living, economy, development plans and its outreach to the outside world, with the availability of sea and air routes which **these** countries have no control over.*

*(9) From **here**, I renew the call for an unconditional dialogue based on mutual respect for sovereignty and I highly value the sincere and appreciated mediation that the State of Qatar has supported since the outbreak of the crisis.*

*(10) It is time **now** to take steps in this regard, and we are ready to put our potentials to serve a joint effort in this connection.*

B- Distal references

*(11) The State of Qatar has fought terrorism - the whole international community bears witness to **that**, and it is still fighting it and will continue to do **that.***

*(12) Every time I stand here I speak in favour of the constructive international cooperation, just peace, and the rights of peoples under occupation, as well as **those** who are subjected to crimes against humanity and those who are under siege.*

*(13) **There** are countries that permit themselves not only to attack a neighboring country to dictate its foreign and media policy, but also believe that their possession of funds qualify them to put pressure and blackmail other countries to participate in their aggression.*

4.4 Analysis of Comparative References

The main purpose here is to analyse the two types of comparative references (quality and quantity) that are used by Sheik Tamim.
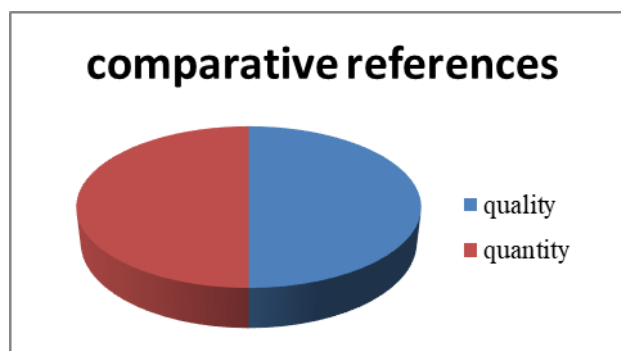

Figure 4.4 Uses of comparative references

A careful glance at figure 4.4 shall reveal that as for as the uses of comparative references are concerned, Sheik Tamim has used both the comparative references the equally. Here are examples from the data:

A- Quality references

*(14) And what is **worse,** the blockade planners found it necessary to rely on fabricated quotes attributed to me and posted on the website of Qatar News Agency after hacking it.*

B- Quantity references

*(15) We have refused to yield to dictations by pressure and siege, and our people were not satisfied by **less** than that. At the same time we have taken an open attitude towards dialogue without dictation.*

5. Discussion

"The subject of the study for discourse analysis is an utterance, or a text unit, or a communicative event that is generally perceived as having a unifying theme or topic or setting. It can be a political speech, a TV advertisement…'' Kompaore (2004:1).

As the head of the state, all his addresses were formal and therefore, he did not leave any part of the sentence omitted, so that the listeners can make their own meaning. Also, his addresses contain serious issues. Therefore, he carefully words his sentences without giving room for any misunderstanding or misinterpretations.

Table 5.1 The Overall use of references

Type	personal	demonstratives	comparative	Total
Frequency	153	48	2	203
Percentage	75.3%	23.6 %	1%	99.9%

Regarding the use of references in his speech, the most frequently occurring references were personal *references* followed by *demonstratives* and the least occurring type was *comparative references*.

Table 5.2 The Overall use of personal references

Type	Total occurrences	Percentage
Existential	52	34%
Possessive	101	66%
Total	153	100%

The study clarified that possessive personal references were the most frequently used ones (101) and the least occurring type was existential personal references (52).

Table 5.3 The Overall use of demonstrative references

Type	Total occurrences	Percentage
Proximal	38	79.1%
Distal	10	20.8%
Total	48	99.9%

Table 5.3 indicates that of the two types of demonstrative references, the proximal demonstrative references were the most frequently used (38), whereas the distal demonstrative references were the less frequently used ones (10). He has frequently referred to things that are nearer to him or in the same location rather than away from him.

Table 5.4 The Overall use of comparative references

Type	Total occurrences	Percentage
Quality	1	50%
Quantity	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Regarding the use of comparative references in the speech, the two types were occurred equal number of times i.e. once each in the royal speech. This indicates that The Sheik gives the same importance for both quality and quantity without compromising one for the other.

6. Conclusion

The researcher examined three different types of references viz. personal, demonstratives and comparative and their sub-types as they are used by Sheik Tamim Bin Hamad Al -Thani   in his speech in the United Nations. The research sample was extracted from the speech of Seikh Tamim which was delivered on 19th September 2017 at the 72nd Session of the General Assembly. From the above analysis of data collected and the discussions that followed, it can be concluded that personal references were the most frequently used ones by Sheik Tamim (153) times75.3%.The personal references were followed by demonstrative references, whereas comparative references were the least occurring references with the following frequencies respectively: (48) times 23.6% and (2) times 1%. However, The Sheik used the personal references 75.3% in his speech than the other two types; demonstratives and comparatives references.

It is interesting to note that The Sheik had utilized references 203 times. This reveals the fact that The Sheik meticulously used references in his speech as to avoid any kind of misunderstanding and misinterpretations by the audience as well as the readers who read his speech reported in the newspapers. His skill in the use of references enhanced the clarity and specificity of each and every utterance made by him in formal speeches amidst learned politically significant audience. The more use of personal references is an indication of his preference to add a personal touch to his speech than using frozen and impersonal sentences.

  Regarding the personal references, The Sheik had used possessive references (101) times 66% and the existential references (52) times 34%. Of the seven personal existential pronouns studied by the researcher the most frequently used pronoun by Sheik Tamim in his speech was the pronoun *we* 68%. In addition to that, both the pronouns *he* and *she* did not occur at all in the royal speech.

As for the use of demonstrative references, proximal demonstrative references 79.1% were occurred more frequently than the distal demonstrative references 20.8%. As related to the two types of comparative references, The Seikh had used both the quality and quantity comparative references equally each one time only.

Sheik Tamim had the potential ability to persuade the audience to accept what he says. He presents the facts and the issues in such a way that the audience were left with no other option than to accept his argument. This is achieved by his effective and efficient use powerful

linguistic expressions such as *personal references* (existential and possessive) *demonstrative references* (proximal and distal) *comparative references* (quality and quantity) as grammatical cohesive devices.

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Appendix

The translated speech from Arabic into English by the Royal court of the State of Qatar at the 72 Session of the General Assembly dated 19th September 2017

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MI26F-dTIU

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