



Reshaping Nationalism: CDA of Harari's Speech, Nationalism in Twenty-First Century

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ABSTRACT

This research article aims at doing the Critical Discourse Analysis of Yuval Noah Harari's speech Nationalism in Twenty-First Century. The study follows qualitative method. It is designed descriptively. The study answers the questions that how Harari has treated nationalism, globalization and twenty first century in the speech. Also, it evaluates the discourse techniques proposed by Fairclough. The data were collected from books, YouTube, articles and web links. By using Norman Fairclough's model of CDA (i.e. description, interpretation and explanation), the data were analyzed and, it was found that nationalism cannot survive alone. A state should also be globalist in order to face the global crisis, as a nationalist state cannot face the annoying music of global crisis: health, nuclear and climate change. The research retains a great importance even at the global level. It has scrutinized the hidden discourse about the existing condition of nationalism which has turned itself as self-centered political entity.

Keywords: nationalism; twenty-first century; CDA

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INTRODUCTION

The brief history of humankind has faced some national and global crises and developments. History has witnessed agricultural, scientific, economic, sexual, moral and religious revolutions. The story of civilization has indoctrinated human beings the immortal lessons about human history. The different phases of history have proved that humans want a transition, and the change itself is scientifically proven constant. Humans change by time, by people, by environmental phases and by global issues (Harari, 2015). Additionally, the contemporary world has been breathing in the twenty-first century. This century also follows a shortlist of global issues, and it does retain a good number of scientific revolutions, such as, scientific discoveries which have marveled the world. The twenty-first century believes that humans are not going to die because of starvation, but over-eating. Suicide determines

human's death more than war. War is constant in human psychology (Harari, 2019). Along with a good score of critical challenges, the global world is at the position to witness climate change, global warming, nuclear war, and the contemporary issue of global health.

Yuval Noah Harari is a contemporary Israeli historian. He is a Ph.D. from Oxford University. He teaches at the University of Jerusalem, Israel. Harari is also a well-known author of his three international bestseller books: *Homo Deus* (2015) *Sapiens* (2017), and *21 Lessons for 21 Century* (2018). Among them, *Sapiens* is considered a masterpiece of his works, which entails the history of mankind. Harari is also very famous for his interviews and speeches on global issues. He talks about homosexuality, sex, politics, economy, feminism, religion, technology, biology and environmental issues and so forth.

This research deals with a speech, *Nationalism in Twenty-First Century* (2018) by Yuval Noah Harari. The speech was delivered at the conference, *The India Today Conclave*, held in Mumbai, India. Harari shades light on the nationalistic discourse of its true nature. He tends to elaborate the historical roots of nationalism, contemporary nationalism and the future of nationalism. The researcher has considered the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis under the light of the Fairclough's (1989) model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to understand the critical discourse analysis of nationalism. The research opens up the hidden discourse used by Yuval Noah Harari in his speech, *Nationalism in Twenty-First Century* (2018). The problem of recognition of nationalism is taken into account to solve through the use of language. The research is aimed at finding the true spirit of nationalism through critical discourse analysis, and the understanding of global issues that are beyond nationalism. The research answers the following research questions.

Research Questions

- How does Yuval Noah Harari look at nationalism, globalization and twenty first century?
- How does Harari's speech reflect the Fairclough's model?

Understanding Nationalism

A well-known expert on nationalism, Khon (1946), describes it as a mindset wherein the person's greatest devotion is regarded to be owing to the nation state. It's a real, breathing corporate will. We call this will nationalism, a frame of consciousness that inspires the large number of people and claims to influence most of its followers. It claims that the nation-state is the perfect and also only valid form of political organization, and that patriotism is the wellspring of all environment of culture to create and economic prosperity. Nationalism is

basically a system of opinions; it is a method of consciousness by which a specific sort of political enthusiasm can be transferred from a bourgeoisie to the common people (Minogue 1967). The Cambridge Encyclopedia aims to explain the notion of nationalism as:

The country is the primary unit of political organization, according to this political ideology. The concept that humans possess the trait of nationality, through which people affiliate socially, financially, and politically, lies at the heart of it now. In the result, nationalism is related with nationalist groups, attempts to establish autonomy from those other country' rule. It is frequently linked to the anti-colonial fight (Crystal, 1990).

Hayes (1926) defines nationalism as a modern emotional union and amplification of two factors: patriotism and nationality. Nationality isn't something you're born with. The sense of belonging to a nationality is the product of a lifelong process of socialization of life and behavioral modification. Throughout this view, nationality does not have to be a political organization. Even though it frequently assumes political forms, it is ultimately a cultural touchstone (Plamenatz, 1976). Nationality is primarily a cognitive bias. This is a group of people who believe they hail together and retain shared customs and culture. Moreover, nationalism has its roots from European concept. It is entirely a European product that is exported to the rest of the world. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Europe was the birthplace of modern nationalism. It is basically human imagination, a mental state, imagination (Anderson, 2006). It grew into a widespread European movement in the nineteenth century, and it has since evolved as world's most incendiary political theory (Khon, 1946).

Additionally, a single language would show shared traditions and ideas, forming a strong bond between the groups. However, as the French scholar Renan put it over seven decades back, language may call to join together, but this does not require people to choose (Singhal, 1961). People speaking diverse languages have formed their distinct national identity in Canada and Switzerland, on the other hand, Language is not a national feature. Relatively, Rabindranath Tagore (1950) described nationalism as one of the most potent general anesthesia ever devised by mankind. He continues that under the effect of all its emissions, the entire population can execute its methodical agenda of the most rabid self-seeking sans being conscious of its ethical distortion. Lastly, the current study comes forward to the studies of Sorenson (1991), Upreti (2006), Latif & Hamza (2009), Mohammadi (2015),

Sharma (2017), Yi (2018), Dewantara (2018) and Hajjaj (2020). Their studies analyze different aspects of nationalism across genre and culture.

METHOD

The research followed the qualitative method of research. It is done through the tool of Critical Discourse Analysis. It is designed descriptively. Researchers have used Fairclough's model of CDA as theoretical framework in order to analyze the data. The data are collected from the speech *Nationalism in Twenty first Century* by Yuval Noah Harari. YouTube was the source for speech. The selected excerpts from the speech were taken accordingly, and the researchers put them in Appendix section of this paper. Also, the secondary data were gathered from different sources like the internet, journals, articles and books. Fairclough's model was applied on the primary data. It enabled the researcher to focus on elements that produced the text, the particular linguistic varieties, their arrangement, layout, and how they juxtapose. It shed light on points of analytical items, and lastly analyzed the discourse of nationalism with reference to literature review and theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

The researchers have followed Norman Fairclough's approach of CDA. According to Janks (2006), Fairclough's (1989, 1995) model for CDA comprises of three processes of analysis that are interconnected and tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse. The first dimension is the object of analysis which includes verbal, visual, or both kind of texts. The second dimension is the process through which the object is established and formed. It includes designing/writing/speaking and viewing/listening/reading. The third dimension is the socio-historical conditions that administer these processes. According to Fairclough (1984), each of the aforementioned dimensions necessitate a different kind of analysis. The first kind is text analysis i.e. description. The second one is production and reception i.e. interpretation. The last one is social settings which affect construction and response i.e. explanation. Similarly, the researchers have analyzed the discourse of nationalism vs globalization through three aforementioned dimensions of the theoretical framework.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Yuval Noah Harari's speech "Nationalism in 21st Century" is analyzed from the perspective of representation of nationalism in the speech. The researcher has applied Critical Discourse Analysis by using the Fairclough's approach of CDA. The analysis is divided into three parts according to the three dimensions of Fairclough's approach of CDA. The first

part comprises of the linguistic features of the speech, the second part interprets the context, discourse types and if the later or the former causes change or difference. The third part gives the explanation of the speech with relation to the social context.

Description

The first stage of critical discourse analysis Fairclough has described in his book, *Language and Power* (1989) is description of text. Text can be in any form; written or spoken. The description of text includes vocabulary, grammar and textual structures. These three features contain many features within them. Under these three headings, total of ten questions are presented in order to do Critical Discourse analysis. The questions uncover the features such as; experimental values, rewording/overwording, relational values, euphemistic expressions, expressive values, metaphors, nominalizations, modes, pronouns, interactional conventions, etc. Here, however, only the features that are relevant to the topic are discussed as Fairclough in his book *Language and Power* (1989) says, “The set of textual features included is highly selective, containing only those which tend to be most significant for critical analysis” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 110).

1. Vocabulary

The features of vocabulary as discussed by Fairclough (1989) that are relevant to this research are; rewording, overwording, formal/informal words and metaphors. All these features are discussed below.

The speech is about nationalism so, clearly, the word has to be repeated several times. Throughout the speech, the word “nationalism” is repeated 19 times. The words “nation/s” are repeated 33 times. Harari has presented his views about nationalism in the past, present and future. Words/phrases that refer to the past that are used in the speech are; “for millions of years”, “until about 5000 years ago” (3), “for millions of years”, “until about 5000 years ago”, “For thousands of years”, “For four billion years” (3), “billions of years”, “in the 19th century”, “not a long time ago”, “Until a short time ago”, This rewording and overwording of words shows that Harari has talked about nationalism in the time that was a billions of years ago till the time “not a long time ago”. To present the present, he has used words; “in 21st century” (9), “today” (8), “now” (16). To present the future he has basically just used future tense, repeated the word “will” 27 times and mentioned “in 51 years” once. The use of words representing time shows that he has talked about nationalism that was billions of years ago up till the nationalism in future. He has repeated the pronoun “we” 39 times, “our” 21 times and “us” 9 times, this use of overwording shows that Harari is including himself along with the

world and not just blaming everything on only government, he is showing the true spirit of nationalism just through the mere use of these pronouns.

Harari has used the vocabulary that is easy to understand but in an effective style. His speech is a blend of formal and informal style. He has talked in a way that does not offend anyone, he just has just presented his ideas in a way that they seem like (and probably are) facts. One time he talked about “Human stupidity” that made the audience laugh. He talked about “human stupidity” in a way that it did not seem offensive but self-realizing (See [Appendix A](#)). Throughout the speech, he made the audience laugh 8 times. His speech was attentively heard by the audience, as throughout the speech his effective way of speaking and a few lines of sarcasm here and there kept the audience attentive.

Harari has used two metaphors in the following lines:

“...the river was the life-blood of these tribes. It was the source of their prosperity, but it was also a source of great danger. If there was not enough water in the river, there was drought, and people starved to death...There was nothing that the small, independent tribes could do about these problems...This was one of the main reasons why the small tribes coalesced to form large kingdoms and nations.”
(Harari, 2018).

Harari has used “river” as a metaphor for nationalism and the “tribes” as a metaphor for countries (See [Appendix B](#)). Just like the river is the source of “prosperity” as well as “great danger”, nationalism, too, can play both the roles. Too much water can prove to be disadvantageous, while just the right amount of water proves to be resourceful and beneficial for all the tribes. “The small tribes” merged to form “large kingdoms and nations”. Similarly, if the countries join hands and work for the benefit of not only their country but for the other countries, too, i.e. prioritize globalism over nationalism by sharing the resources with other countries, too, and working as a team, then it would create a world that lives and works not only for their country, but the whole world. These metaphors basically present the gist of the speech.

1. Grammar

According to Fairclough (1989), grammar includes experiential values, types of process and participant that predominate, agency, active/passive sentences, etc. In this section, the relevant grammatical aspects are discussed. As the text of the speech, ideas are represented in a flow, so, there are multiple types of grammatical features used. The speaker has not used a consistent method. The speech is full of the three types of processes that are

represented in the sentences i.e. actions, events, and attributions (Fairclough, 1989). The speech is in active voice which has created a sense of immediacy in the speech.

Fairclough (1989) has explained three kinds of relational values that grammatical features have i.e. modes of sentence, modality and pronouns. According to Fairclough (1989), “There are three major modes: declarative, grammatical question, and imperative”. (p. 125-128). Harari has mostly used declarative sentences. He has used an imperative sentence only once; when after asking a rhetorical question, he said, “Deal with it” using a sarcastic tone (See [Appendix C](#)). The speech is full of suggestions but they are hidden in the discourse, by presenting facts and figures, along with examples. Instead of simple questions, the speaker has asked rhetorical questions, 11 times throughout the speech. He has used inclusive “we” (39 times) i.e. he has included himself with the audience. Basically, he is talking about the human beings in general. Similarly, he has used “you” (17 times) as an indefinite pronoun. It shows that he has counted himself, too. The issues he has addressed, is not blaming anything on government or the public. He is talking about the world as a whole.

2. Textual Structures

Textual structure is the order in which the elements appear. In the beginning of the speech, Harari raised some questions and explained what nationalism was a thousands of years ago. Then, he described the causes of focusing on nationalism rather than globalism i.e. the “the nuclear challenge, the ecological challenge, and the challenge of disruptive technologies” (Harari, 2018). After that, he explained the solutions that can prove to be beneficial for the whole world if nations start working together. At the end, he concluded his speech by summarizing his speech and giving the gist of why globalism is better than nationalism.

Interpretation

According to Fairclough (1989), “The stage of interpretation is concerned with participant’s process of text production as well as text interpretation” (p. 141). This stage includes “the situational context and the intertextual context”, “discourse types”, and if the context and discourse types are different for different participants or if they change during the interaction.

The speech was held in India at “The India Today Conclave 2018”. The India Today Conclave is a platform which is held every year since 2012 in India. Speakers from different spheres are invited. They talk about global issues. Every year, the conclave has a different theme. The theme of 2018 was “The Great Churn: Triumphs and Tribulations”. The conclave addressed the return of nationalism in the globalized world (India Today, 2018).

Harari gave a speech on Nationalism in Twenty-First Century. The programme is aired on Indian television and the platform has audience, too. Local Indians can also join the audience and celebrities, politicians and different social figures are also invited. As the topics are about global issues and the audience is basically the whole world, that's why the speakers mostly address to the whole world. Harari, too, presented his ideas in a way as if he was talking to the whole world. Thus, he has portrayed his ideas in a simple but effective way. He has used colloquial language throughout the speech. His discourse type remained the same in the whole speech. As the speech was delivered in 2018, nationalism was still given more importance than globalism and Harari talked about how it must be changed.

Discourse Practices and Representation of Nationalism

In this part of the research, the speech is analyzed with the perspective of the topic of the research. It explains the affiliation between discourse social realities. A few parts of speech are quoted in order to justify what is being explained. Harari has explained his ideas about nationalism which are relevant to the society as a whole. He has explained the causes of nationalism. Moreover, he has described the benefits of globalism and how globalism is much needed in the world today.

“Until a short time ago, it seems that nationalism was waning, and that humankind is on a path, to become a single global peaceful community, but now nationalism is making not only in the remote corners of the world but in the western part of Europe, North America, Russia, China and India” (Harari, 2018).

Harari in his speech, held in India states that the world, until a short time ago, was going towards a single power system, but now in the world every country is going to have an individual identity. In the above quote, he exemplifies this by giving the example of China, India and Russia. Harari states this in the context of pre-world war time and post-world war time. He professes that pre-world war was the time when every state was having a global peace community system in the world. But in post-world war era the world has been divided into nationalist nature. One super power nation controls all lower riparian nations. He claims about western European countries and America having the identity of powerful world nations. They stand by their own and apparently have no caring attitudes towards other nations.

Harari in his speech talks about its origin and claims that nationalism is a new phenomenon which is not natural but a recently created concept. He says; “Contrary to what many people think, nationalism is not a natural and eternal part of the human psyche or of

human biology, but it is actually a very and very recent evolutionary development” (Harari, 2018). He repeats the word “very” two times to forcefully urge the emission of nationalism in the world. Contextually, he is talking about the life of human being that about 5000 years ago human beings lived in small intimate communities in which everybody knew everybody else, and now the nations comprising millions of strangers have been prevailing in the world. No nation cares for others. Every nation has its own causes, effects, culture, language, identity, needs, desires, benefits and national interests. They are selfish. They are self-centered. This research examines the discourse of Harari as a negation of individual identity in the global world. He claims that historically nations have been a benefit for human beings, like they built dams, canals etc. for making human life not severe. Such evolutions have been made by humans. Historically, nations enabled corporations between people. And nations like, America, Switzerland and Japan have a strong sense of nationalism and are rich in all terms, but the nations which don’t have strong sense of nationalism like Afghanistan are poor. He may be talking about the strong nationalism which is globalism in real terms. States like Iran and Afghanistan are not global, so such nations at world level are always considered extremist and backward.

Harari says in the speech; “Nations are no longer the right framework” (Harari, 2018). Here this line is starching the discourse of representation of nationalism by Harari. Harari neglects and criticizes the nature of nationalism in twenty-first century. Context behind this claim is the nature of nationalism in contemporary time. He claims that nations have been self-centered. They are focused on their own benefits. Nationalism has lost its globalism. It may also cause the identity crisis of nations at global level. He claims that nationalism is not a right framework because they have been indulged in hatred. Americans hate Iranis. Iranis hate Saudis. Nations have lost their global cooperation. They are not much conventional. Nations breathe for their own. They love their own interests. For example, America has been a super power nation after the World War-II. America manipulates states for its own interests. The foreign policy between Afghanistan and America has been its global epitome. Nations like America in twenty-first century has eradicated the true conventional nature of a nation.

Harari’s discourse of nationalism is very meaningful when he says; “To be a nationalist is not bad, but not to be a globalist is very bad” (Harari, 2018). It involves a great volume of interpretation in terms of twenty-first century’s context. He wants to say that twenty-first century lives along with a single global river. The river of scientific discoveries, a river of information, and of a technological invention. This river is the source of prosperity, but it is also a great threat to human civilization, to the survival of human species. He aptly

clarifies that the contemporary world has been facing some global threats. The threat of nuclear war, global warming, climate change, and now the most recent contemporary threat of health, but his speech is pre Covid-19. Nationalism cannot survive individually in this world. For example, Iran being without a globalist nation is at a big threat. If climate change occurs in recent future, Iran being a nationalist state cannot survive. Individually, Iran cannot face climate change. So, it needs to be a globalist state having ties and corporation with other states. It must have ties with countries which are developed to face the crisis with a global ally. Such examples can fit to any nation. It also stands for Pakistan.

If Pakistan in this pandemic situation stands like an extremist nation alone without needing any assistance from other nations, it will medically collapse. Coronavirus is a global health crisis. Pakistan needs assistance from the countries like, China, New Zealand and other developed nations in order to fight the coronavirus. So, Pakistan cannot stand only as a nationalist state denying other nations' existence, stability and global strength. In simple words, it discourses that a state should be a nationalist, but along with being a globalist state.

DISCUSSION

The speech, Nationalism in Twenty-First Century is a political-predictive speech by a contemporary historian, Yuval Noah Harari. The objective of the speech is to highlight the hidden discourse about true spirit of nationalism through CDA. The research question that is answered in the research is that how Yuval Noah Harari has interpreted the true spirit of nationalism in the speech, and how discourse practices mark it. The speech is analyzed under the light of Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis. It contains three stages; description, interpretation and explanation. The speech shows the past, present and somehow the future of nationalism. It critically evaluates the concept of nationalism in twenty-first century. It states its existing point and provides some suggestions for the approval of global nationalism. It concludes that nationalism cannot survive alone. A state should also be globalist in order to face the global crisis, as a nationalist state cannot face the annoying music of global crisis: health, nuclear and climate change. In this race of survival, countries have always prospered by stepping on the rights of other countries. The fight to gain benefits is never ending. The spirit of nationalism has destroyed many homelands which is why Harari has put forth the idea of inducing globalism in every country. As globalism comes with several benefits and it will diminish the fight that the countries have been facing for years. Instead of struggling for survival, complex issues like poverty, famine, and corruption can be

addressed. This will be beneficial for all the nations in the bigger picture. Hence, nations who are on the verge of disappearance such as Palestine can be saved.

CONCLUSION

The research retains great importance even at the global level. It has scrutinized the hidden discourse about the existing condition of nationalism which has turned as self-centered. The research is also beneficial for understanding the perspective of representation of nationalism in critical discourse analysis. It helps the readers to realize the negative connotation of nationalism in the twenty-first century. Moreover, the application of Fairclough's Model of CDA on this speech can be beneficial for those who want to understand the hidden meanings behind discourse. This research is also a great aid for the contemporary house of knowledge. The upcoming readers and critic are welcomed to display their positive criticism.

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APPENDIX

A

“But, there is not guarantee that we'll continue to make wise decisions, we, or at least some of us, and some of our leaders might start making very stupid decisions. You should never underestimate human stupidity (audience laughs). As a historian I can tell you that human stupidity has been one of the most powerful forces in history and it is still a very powerful force” (Harari, 2018).

B

“The first big groups of people, kingdoms and nations, appeared about four to five thousand years ago in the Indus Valley, the Nile Valley, the Euphrates Valley, and the Yellow River Valley. Until that point those river valleys were populated by many small, independent tribes. The river was the life-blood of these tribes. It was the source of their prosperity, but it was also a source of great danger. If there was not enough water in the river, there was drought, and people starved to death. If there was too much water in the river then the river overflowed, flooding villages, and fields, and granaries, and again people starved to death. There was nothing that the small, independent tribes could do about these problems, because each tribe commanded just a very small part of the river, and could mobilize only a few hundred people to dig canals, and build dams, and so forth. This was one of the main reasons why the small tribes coalesced to form large kingdoms and nations. And these nations now commanded thousands of kilometers and millions of people, and they could build the large dams, and canals, and reservoirs, and granaries that helped humans control the river and that increased the security and prosperity of the people who lived in these kingdoms and in these nations” (Harari, 2018).

C

“Now of course it's true that when you have multiple identities and multiple loyalties sometimes there are conflicts, but whoever told you that life was simple? Deal with it, it's difficult” (Harari, 2018).

