

A Semiotic Approach to Qatari Political Discourse: The Speech of Emir Tamim Bin Hamad as a Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the political discourse of Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani from a semiotic perspective, aiming to analyze the linguistic and visual signs and symbols he employs to convey his political and humanitarian message. Focusing on the Emir's speech delivered at the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2024, within the context of the Gaza conflict, the research investigates how semiotic elements were utilized to reinforce his Arab and humanitarian stance and to advocate for justice, human rights, and the rule of law. Adopting a semiotic methodology that integrates linguistic, visual, temporal, and spatial analysis, the study draws on the theoretical frameworks of Saussure, Peirce, Greimas, and Roland Barthes. The findings reveal that the Emir's political discourse strategically employs repetition, symbolism, metaphor, metonymy, and various rhetorical devices to establish effective communication with an international audience, emphasize human values, and enhance Qatar's image as both a political and humanitarian actor on the global stage. The study further concludes that the dynamic interaction between language, signs, symbols, space, and time contributes to the production of a coherent and influential political discourse capable of shaping public opinion and guiding ethical and political positions.

Keywords: Semiotics; Political Discourse; Emir Tamim bin Hamad; Symbolic Communication

INTRODUCTION

Political discourse is among the most significant forms of discourse shaping the collective consciousness of societies due to its pivotal role in directing public opinion and forming political and social stances. It is a discourse issued by authority, expressing its vision and position on local, regional, and international issues, while contributing to the construction of the state's image and its standing among nations. Political discourse has been significant since ancient times, closely tied to the arts of speech, rhetoric, and persuasion. History has preserved speeches of leaders distinguished by eloquence, strong argumentation, and the ability to influence the masses, such as Demosthenes' speeches in Greece, speeches by Caliphs and governors in early Islam, and speeches by contemporary leaders on international platforms.

The influence of political discourse extends beyond language to its semiotic dimensions, where language intertwines with signs, symbols, gestures, body language, and vocal intonation to form an integrated communicative system aimed at persuasion, influence, and guidance. Successful political discourse employs these elements both semantically and aesthetically to appeal simultaneously to reason and emotion, necessitating modern analytical approaches capable of decoding its symbols and interpreting their significance within communicative, cultural, and political contexts.

From this perspective, this study is entitled: “*A Semiotic Approach to Qatari Political Discourse: The Discourse of Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani as a Case Study.*” Emir Tamim’s discourse is considered one of the most prominent Arab speeches, characterized by clarity, balance, and the ability to construct a coherent political stance based on human values and international justice, particularly in global forums such as the United Nations. Its significance is heightened in today’s turbulent global context, rife with conflicts, especially the Gaza war, which represents one of the most pressing political and humanitarian issues currently. The speech reflects a balanced Arab humanitarian position grounded in international law principles and the right of peoples to self-determination.

The importance of this study lies in its attempt to analyze political discourse from a semiotic perspective that combines linguistic, semantic, and visual analysis. This field remains underexplored in contemporary Arab criticism, despite its significance in understanding the deeper messages of modern political discourse. The research also contributes to enriching the Arab academic literature with a scientific study that addresses Arab political discourse through a contemporary critical lens, based on semiotic analysis methodologies. It opens new avenues for researchers in this field.

The study comprises several main sections that contribute to its scholarly structure and achieve its objectives. It begins with the abstract, providing a brief overview of the study topic and its key findings. The introduction follows, discussing the research background, significance, and rationale for selection. Next, the theoretical framework outlines the key concepts and principles of semiotics and political discourse, presenting the foundational theories supporting the analysis. The main section conducts a semiotic analysis of the discourse by examining its components and meanings. The study concludes with a conclusion highlighting the main findings and recommendations, followed by a list of sources and references used in preparing this study.

Objectives of the Study

1. Clarify the concepts of semiotics and political discourse and explain the relationship between them.
2. Identify the most prominent semiotic elements used in Emir Tamim bin Hamad’s discourse and analyze their meanings.
3. Understand the mechanisms of semiotic analysis and how to apply them to political discourse to comprehend its symbols, signs, and deep implications.
4. Provide researchers and critics with a framework for examining Arab political discourse in light of modern critical theories, enhancing critical and communicative awareness in linguistic and media studies.

Research Questions

1. What is political discourse? What is semiotics? What are their main components?
2. How does semiotic analysis help in understanding political discourse?
3. What are the main semiotic elements in Emir Tamim bin Hamad’s political discourse?
4. How were these semiotic elements employed in his communicative speech?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The nature and subject of this study necessitated the adoption of a semiotic methodology, as it is the most suitable approach for analyzing political discourse and understanding its deep structures and symbolic meanings. Semiotics—the study of signs—concerns the analysis of systems of signals and symbols that generate meaning within discourse, whether linguistic or non-linguistic. Accordingly, it enables the researcher to decode the discourse, explore its content, and analyze its textual and contextual relations that contribute to meaning-making (Chandler, 2017; Eco, 1976).

The semiotic methodology in this study is grounded in the theoretical foundations established by Ferdinand de Saussure, who viewed the sign as a relationship between the *signifier* and the *signified* (Saussure, 1983), and Charles Sanders Peirce, who expanded the concept of the sign to include icons, indices, and symbols (Peirce, 1931–1958). Additionally, it draws on Roland Barthes’ contributions, which extended semiotics to the analysis of discourse and culture, considering the text as a structure of signs that can be deconstructed and interpreted in light of the social and political contexts in which it was produced (Barthes, 1977, 1982).

The methodology also relies on the approach developed by Greimas in his analysis of discourse structure and the dynamics of meaning, which examines the relationships between the surface and deep components of discourse and how meaning is formed through symbols, signs, and narrative relations (Greimas, 1987). In this sense, political discourse is not merely a linguistic text but an integrated semiotic system that expresses an intellectual vision and ideological stance through language, tone, gesture, and the overall communicative scene (Van Leeuwen, 2005).

From an applied perspective, the semiotic methodology in this study follows three interconnected stages:

1. **Extraction:** Identifying the most prominent semiotic elements in Emir Tamim bin Hamad's discourse, whether linguistic (words, structures, visual metaphors) or non-linguistic (body language, gestures, intonation, pauses, and accompanying visual signs).
2. **Description:** Providing a precise descriptive account of these elements as they appear in the discourse, in light of their communicative and political context.
3. **Analysis & Interpretation:** Analyzing the meanings embedded in these signs and symbols, and interpreting them according to contemporary semiotic theories, to uncover implicit messages and construct the discursive and political image intended by the speaker.

This methodology draws on previous semiotic studies of political discourse in various contexts, such as Roland Barthes' study on myth and language in political and media discourse (Barthes, 1977), Fairclough's work linking discourse analysis and social critique (Fairclough, 1995), and Van Dijk's research highlighting the relationship between discourse, power, and ideology (Van Dijk, 2008). These studies demonstrate that political discourse is not merely a means of expression but a tool for producing meaning and shaping collective consciousness.

Therefore, the semiotic methodology in this research goes beyond a superficial reading of the text. It seeks to analyze the discourse across multiple levels—linguistic, symbolic, visual, and contextual—to uncover the semantic structure underpinning Emir Tamim's discourse, presenting it as a model of contemporary Arab political discourse that integrates rhetorical logic and semiotic signs to serve Qatar's political vision and humanitarian message.

Semiotics

Semiotics (*as-simiya'iyya*) is considered one of the most important concepts in the study of signs and signals, as well as their role in producing meaning. The origin of the term goes back to the Arabic word (*sūm*), as mentioned in *Lisan al-Arab* by Ibn Manzur:

(*as-sūma, as-simma, as-simā, as-simiya'iyya*): "a mark, and the mark put on a horse" (Ibn Manzur, 1994). Its English equivalent is the term *signal*, which refers to a sign, symbol, or indirect indication (Al-Azhari, 2001; Oxford Dictionary, 2000).

From a terminological perspective, Ferdinand de Saussure defined it as "the science that studies signals or signs within social life" (Saussure, 1985). In contrast, Muhammad Al-Sarghini described it as "the science that investigates systems of signs, regardless of their source, whether linguistic, conventional, or indexical" (Al-Sarghini, 1987). Mubarak Hannoun emphasized that semiotics is "a collaboration and intersection of several sciences—such as logic, philosophy, sociology, psychology, and linguistics—to study human activities and phenomena in their signifying forms and possible meanings" (Hannoun, 1987).

Perhaps the broadest definition is provided by Umberto Eco, who stated that "semiotics refers to everything that can be considered a sign" (Chandler, 2008). Saussure was the first to introduce it as *semiology*, focusing on the study of signs in social life (Saussure, 1985). Peirce, however, expanded the concept of the sign to encompass all human and natural sciences. He considered it the study of semiotics and introduced the term *semiotics*, distinguishing three types of signs: icon, index, and symbol (Debbagh, 2017). Europeans generally adopted the term "semiology," while Americans followed Peirce's term "semiotics" (Qattous, 2001).

The most prominent Western pioneers of semiotics are Saussure, Peirce, Greimas, Roland Barthes, Vladimir Propp, and Charles Thomas. It has several designations, including semiotics, semiology, semiosis, the science of signs, the science of symbols, and the science of evidence—all Arabic adaptations of the terms "semiology" and "semion" (Ibrahim et al., 1996).

Its approaches and schools vary according to the vision of each school, the most notable being: semiotics of communication, semiotics of culture, and semiotics of meaning (Al-Sarghini, 1987). Al-Sarghini identified the main orientations as American, French, and Russian. Arab scholars historically knew and practiced semiotics, linking it to chemistry through its symbols and talismans, as well as logic, semantics, and interpretation. Among the most prominent Arab pioneers are Muhammad Miftah, Mubarak Hannoun, Muhammad Al-Sarghini, Salah Fadl, Jamil Hammadou, and Abdel Malik Mortaz (Hammadou, 2015).

Discourse

In *Lisan al-Arab*, discourse is defined as "communication, interaction, and consultation" (Ibn Manzur, 1994), while *Maqāyis al-Lughā* defines it as: "The letters Khā', Ṭā', and Bā' are fundamental; one of their meanings is the speech between two people, e.g., *khāṭabahu yukhāṭibuhu khāṭaban* (he addressed him with discourse). In marriage, it refers to the request for marriage, and *al-khāṭba* (the engagement) is the speech with which the proposal is made" (Ibn Faris, 1979).

In Arabic, discourse carries two primary meanings: first, speech or verbal confrontation; second, the message exchanged between interlocutors or transmitted from the speaker (*al-khāṭib*) to the audience (*jumhūr al-mukhāṭabīn*) (Ayoub al-Kafawi, 1993).

Discourse is also one of the modern linguistic terms that emerged in the twentieth century with the rise of contemporary critical currents. It is an Arabization of the French word "*discours*" and the English "*discourse*," which refer to speech, lecture, or essay, and denote speech or communication directed from one person to another for understanding and clarification (Akasha, 2005).

Saeed Yaqtin defined discourse as "language in action, or the tongue performed by a certain subject, which here is synonymous with speech in Saussure's sense. Second, it means a unit equivalent to or exceeding the sentence, composed of a sequence forming a message with a beginning and end, synonymous here with the uttered word" (Yaqtin, 1997). Al-Humairi defines it as "discourse (*istratijyyat al-talaffuz*), a complex system consisting of several guiding, structural, semantic, and functional (utilitarian) systems that are parallel and partially or fully intersecting" (Al-Humairi, 2009).

Discourse is considered "a communicative unit of multiple meanings, produced by a specific speaker and directed toward a specific addressee within a defined context. It presupposes a listener linked to the moment of its production, not extending beyond the intended addressee. It is studied within the framework of discourse linguistics and results from the interaction of its elements (sender, message, and receiver)" (Bougtan, 2020).

Political Discourse

Political discourse is defined as "the discourse of the ruling authority in common use. It is intentionally directed at a specific audience to influence and persuade them regarding the content of the discourse. This type of discourse includes political ideas or addresses a political subject" (Akasha, 2005).

Political discourse assumes a functional concept that delves into rhetorical specialization and communication mechanisms. It is a text with complex features and multi-dimensional semantic connotations, distinguished from other types of speech in the same language. It consists of an interconnected set of sentences through which two parties communicate to achieve an important communicative purpose. It is also a cohesive, connected unit that forms a message with a clear beginning and end (Al-Noury, 2014).

Political discourse can be divided into two types: first, popular discourse, which addresses the political and social orientations of the ruling authority toward the people and the public, considering the interests of each party; second, official discourse, which addresses ideology, policy texts, political decisions related to regional and international relations, and the state's ruling authority strategy (Abdel-Latif, 2012).

The analysis of political discourse aims to understand how it functions and performs its roles. This includes studying its linguistic and semiotic structure, performance, distribution, reception, impact, and response (Abdel-Latif, 2020).

Elements and Characteristics of Political Discourse

Political discourse, in its general concept, is based on a set of fundamental elements, namely: the speaker (*al-mutakallim*), the addressee (*al-mutaqalli*), the message (*al-risala*), and the means of communication or transmission. The message passes through multiple stages from the sender to the receiver within the framework of the communicative theory described by Jakobson. These elements include the context or reference (*al-siyāq*), which performs the referential and cognitive function; the sender (*al-mursal*), whose function is emotional and expressive; the message itself (*al-risala*), which is the focus as an end in itself; the receiver (*al-mursal ilayh*), whose function is to comprehend; the conventions or code (*al-sunan / al-shafra*), which perform a meta-linguistic function; and finally, the channel or medium (*al-šila*), which serves an attentional function (Al-Masdi, 2014).

Political discourse is characterized by several main features, the most important of which are: the communicative feature, reflected in the interaction between speaker and listener; the pragmatic feature, which includes the speaker's purpose and stance; and the structural feature, which is evident in the rules of discourse at the level of sentences and words as analytical units. Political discourse is also dynamic and variable, has an audience, a specific purpose, and intent, and is composed of a set of texts and social practices (Mashaqbeh, 2014). Among its most distinctive traits are its strong authority over the audience and its capacity for influence and persuasion compared to other types of discourse.

This influence manifests in several ways: political discourse addresses internal and external issues, expanding its audience; it deals with matters that contribute to effective decision-making within society; and it remains connected to its audience through prevailing events and circumstances. Political discourse is argumentative at both the formal and substantive levels, as it is tied to politics, which provides it with content, ideas, and key issues, and carries terms and meanings that enhance its impact and persuasiveness (Karmal, 2016). It aims to express the speaker's viewpoint and simplify it to reach the largest possible audience (Akasha, 2005). It uses terms such as "the people" (*al-sha'b*), "the nation" (*al-ummah*), "the homeland" (*al-waṭan*), and "shared destiny" (*al-maṣīr al-mushtarak*), as well as employing the pronoun "we" (*nahnu*) to highlight the self and create effective communication with the audience (Sbeila, 2010).

Political discourse changes according to political and social circumstances, and it uses language appropriate for interaction with its audience (Akasha, 2005). It is intentional and deliberate, rather than spontaneous, conveying intended meanings to the receiver, devoid of personal emotions, and practiced through training, instruction, and guidance (Karmal, 2016). Discourse is linked to the context for which it was produced and the events it addresses, and it loses its force once those circumstances vanish (Akasha, 2005). Political discourse seeks the largest possible audience, with recipients varying according to the status and contexts created by the discourse: direct or indirect listeners, intended or eavesdropping audiences, as well as internal audiences when related to national issues and external audiences when related to international matters (Sbeila, 2010).

Political language is metaphorical, blending description with evaluation, documentation with command, and observation with recommendation. It also draws from science, religion, technology, poetry, art, and myth (Karmal, 2016). Among its notable features is the use of specific symbols, such as historical figures, to reinforce the political message. It is often broadcast through media and shared via social networks to reach the widest audience, using carefully selected language and high precision, along with a varied rhetorical style that depends on the intended impact and persuasion.

Semiotic Analysis

The research, in its first section, addressed the theoretical aspect, defining the key terms of the study: semiotics, discourse, and political discourse. In this section, the research addresses the applied aspect, which is a semiotic analysis of the speech of His Highness the Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, as follows:

First/The Idea of the Speech:

The core idea of the speech centers on defending human justice, human rights, the rule of law, and respect for the United Nations charters and international law in general. Specifically, it focused on the Palestinian issue, particularly the Gaza war. It called for resolving international conflicts in countries such as Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Venezuela by peaceful means, rejecting war, striving for a better future, and praising Qatar's role and effective contributions in global issues.

- ***Speaker:*** Emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani
- ***Place:*** United Nations General Assembly
- ***Time:*** September 25 2024, during the Gaza war
- ***Audience:*** The international community

Second/Semiotics of the Linguistic Structure of the Speech:

The linguistic structure of the speech achieved effective communication from beginning to end, reinforcing pride in his Islamic and Arab identity. He delivered the speech in Arabic, beginning with the Basmala. He addressed the audience with the phrase "honorable attendees," implying respect and fostering communication, which effectively captured their attention for what he would say. He greeted them with the Islamic greeting, repeatedly signaling his Islamic identity first and his humanistic message second, thereby creating an atmosphere of peace and security that aligns with his call for global peace.

He then congratulated the session president, Philemon Yang. He expressed appreciation for Mr. Denis Francis for his efforts in chairing the previous session, while praising the United Nations and its Secretary-General, António Guterres, for enhancing its role and achieving its noble objectives, conveying respect and recognition for the UN as the international legitimate authority referenced in the speech.

He proceeded to address the session president as *Mr. President*, as the first to be addressed, showing respect, reverence, and recognition for his position, and creating effective communication in line with the speech's content, explaining the Zionist crimes against the people of Gaza specifically, and the Palestinian people in general.

The linguistic structure remained strong and coherent, presenting issues starting with Arab issues (Palestine, which occupied the most considerable portion of the speech due to its importance and severity), followed by Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Sudan, then non-Arab issues (the Russia-Ukraine war), and mediation between Venezuela and the USA. He began with the most important to him—his Arab sphere—reinforcing his Arab identity, then expanded to his global and humanitarian identity by highlighting Qatar's role as an effective regional and global actor.

He concluded the speech by calling for respect for UN charters and international law to achieve global peace and security, reaffirming Qatar's support for international legitimacy in all its matters. He thanked the audience, saying: "Thank you, and peace be upon you," expressing respect for the UN, reinforcing his Arab and Islamic identity, and signaling peace, security, and stability as values that should prevail globally.

He strengthened the linguistic structure with rhetorical devices (repetition, direct address, interrogation, emphasis) and figurative devices (metaphor, simile, metonymy). All these semiotic elements contributed to strong cohesion, enhanced communicativity, affirmed his humanity and identity, and gave him an effective global

presence. The research will further clarify the most important semiotic elements of his speech and their role in effective communication.

Key Semiotic Elements of the Speech

First/Semiotics of Symbol and Signification:

The speech employed linguistic symbols and semiotic signs to express His Highness's political, humanitarian, and ethical stance, rejecting injustice and advocating for peace. These linguistic semiotic symbols reshaped the political reality for the audience (the international community), as they "carry perception, moral, human, and political evaluation, and what we use to name things reveals the nature of our perception of them or the way we wish people to perceive these things" (Abdel-Latif, 2012). The most prominent of these signs and their semiotic significance are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Semiotics of Symbol and Signification

Sign / Symbol	Semiotic Significance
Genocide War	The severity of crime, killing, and injustice inflicted on Gaza.
Crime	Describes the horror of war in Gaza and its rejection.
Palestine	A state of marginalization and injustice.
Double Standards	Bias and inequality in treatment.
Freedom	A value signifying independence and liberation.
Justice	Fairness and combating injustice.
Resilience	Persistence and defiance against oppression.
Peace	Stability, safety, and security.
Aggression	Barbarity, attack, and injustice.
Occupation	Control, oppression, and injustice.
Independence	Sovereignty and liberty.
Destruction	Chaos and devastation.
Suffering	Injustice, pain, and hardship.
Human Values	Ethical and humanitarian principles.
Fair Solution	Establishing justice and the rule of law.
Self-Determination	Freedom of choice.
Extremism	Rigidity and racism.
Unity	Solidarity and strength.
International Norms	Recognized international standards and rules.
Settlement	Seizure and occupation.
Solidarity	Support and cooperation against injustice.
Detainees	Injustice and oppression.
International Law	Justice.
Human Rights	Equality and dignity.

It is evident from the table above that the speech employed political and social symbols and signs (such as independence, freedom, sovereignty, double standards...), emotional signs related to feelings and sentiments (such

as dignity, respect, suffering...), and philosophical signs connected to existential and philosophical issues (such as freedom, justice, peace...).

This semantic diversity in the speech amplified its impact, elicited interaction and response from the audience, increased their persuasion, and kept them engaged, avoiding monotony and boredom.

Second/Semiotics of Repetition

Repetition is a very important semiotic element in the communication process. It is carefully used by the speaker to attract the audience to the speech, to emphasize meanings, and to alert them to their importance. Repetition is a communicative process and “an element of lexical cohesion, considered... one of the links connecting linguistic relations. The principle of rhetorical repetition requires continuity in speech, so that the discussion of the same subject continues either by maintaining the original description or by modifying it; repetition serves to reinforce argumentation and clarification” (Bougtan, 2012). The speech employed repetition semiotically to reinforce its meanings, as follows:

Repetition of Key Terms:

The speech deliberately repeated certain terms because of their multiple rhetorical functions. The most prominent examples are summarized in the following table:

Table 2. Repetition of Key Terms

Repeated Term	Phrases Used	Frequency	Semiotic Function
Cause + People + Palestine	The Palestinian people (8), Palestine cause (4), this cause, because it is a cause, these people, the Palestinian cause, Palestinians, State of Palestine (3), Palestine demand, Palestinian territories, Palestinian society, Palestinian (2), Palestinian prisoners, Palestinian state	28	Supports the cause, shows solidarity, highlights oppression, asserts the right to a Palestinian state, emphasizes legitimacy, calls for respect, and condemns aggression.
Occupation + Israel	Israeli leaders, settler occupation, this occupation, Israel, Israeli authorities, security of the occupation, under occupation, end of occupation (2), elimination of occupation, occupation partner, end of Israeli occupation, Israeli army, government of Israel, Israeli, northern Israel	17	Condemns crimes, exposes wrongdoing, creates aversion, and calls on international legitimacy to deter and stop crimes.
Qatar	State of Qatar (3), Qatari mediation	4	Emphasizes Qatar’s contribution and active humanitarian role in global issues.
War	War, the war (2), brutal war (2), world war, after the war, stop the war, genocide war, this war, destructive war, stop the war, war caused them, war separated them	13	Describes the brutality of war, creates aversion, emphasizes the danger of the situation, evokes sympathy with Gaza and its suffering, and calls on legal authority to stop it.
Crime	Indeed, a crime, genocide, naked crime, justification of crime, major crime	5	Highlights the horror of the Gaza war, expresses condemnation, generates international solidarity, and calls for Israel’s accountability.
Gaza	Gaza Strip, in Gaza (2), on Gaza (3), the Gazan	7	A symbol of resilience, a site of killing and destruction, it creates solidarity and support.
Humanitarian	Human values, humanitarian tragedy, humanitarian disaster, humanitarian work, our humanitarian duty, humanitarian support (2), humanitarian initiatives, human suffering	10	Emphasizes importance and effectiveness, calls for action, highlights Qatar’s active role.

Genocide	Genocide crime, indeed a genocide operation, mass genocide, genocide war	4	Demonstrates the severity of Israeli crimes and creates international solidarity with Palestine.
Peace	Peace illusions, peace process, for peace, peace (3), peace initiative, just peace, pillars of peace	9	Emphasizes importance, calls for its achievement in society.

It is evident from the table above that the terms most frequently repeated in the speech are those of greatest importance to the speaker. These are the key issues highlighted in the speech, reinforcing their significance and strengthening communication with the audience (international legitimacy). The frequency of repetition is as follows: the cause of the Palestinian people (28 times), the Israeli occupation (17 times), war (13 times), humanitarian work (10 times), peace (9 times), Gaza (7 times), crimes (5 times), Qatar's role (4 times), and genocide in Gaza (4 times).

Repetition of Other Utterances

The speech also repeated specific utterances such as: pronouns (“we,” the plural first-person suffix *-nā*, and the pronoun *-hā*), as well as the repetition of the present tense verb and the emphasis markers “inna” and “anna. (ان ، أنا)” These are semiotic elements with their own discursive significations, through which the speaker sought to achieve his communicative meanings. This will be clarified in the following table.

Table 3. Repetition of Other Utterances

Utterance	Frequency	Semiotic Function in the Speech
Repetition of the present tense verb	72	Indicates continuity in condemning the occupation, rejecting its crimes, all forms of injustice worldwide, renewing support for the Palestinian cause, and continuing political and humanitarian work with international legitimacy to achieve global peace.
(the pronoun “her/it”)	53	Enhances communication with the United Nations, demonstrates respect and appreciation for its representatives, emphasizes the importance of the issues he has raised, captures attention, and clarifies his precise position on them.
Emphasis using particles of affirmation	26	Reinforces the points made in the speech, enhancing credibility and convictions, consolidating his identity, condemning injustice and aggression, and increasing persuasiveness, acceptance, and engagement.
Pronouns <i>we</i> (the actors/speakers)	18	Highlights Qatar as an active political and humanitarian actor, demonstrating tangible contributions, reinforcing credibility, asserting its identity, communicating its stance, and showcasing continuous cooperation with international legitimacy to promote security, peace, and the rejection of war.
Demonstratives (<i>Thus, That</i>)	15	Reflects cohesion in the speech, signals care and attention to what is being referenced, and effectively captures the audience's attention.
Vocative style	7	Shows respect and appreciation for international legitimacy, captures attention for important points, and prevents boredom or disengagement.
Interrogative style	3	Expresses strong condemnation of occupation crimes and international silence, and persuades and influences the international community.

Conclusions from the Table:

1. **First:** The present tense verb ranked first with **72 occurrences**, as it conveys renewal, continuity of action, and its ongoing relevance—features emphasized in the discourse and the issues it addresses. This was followed by the repetition of **pronouns**, with the third-person pronoun being the most frequent, appearing **53 times**. Next came the first-person plural pronouns (subject and possessive forms) with **18 occurrences**.
2. The discourse also employed particles of emphasis **26 times**, demonstratives **15 times**, the vocative form **7 times**, and interrogative constructions **3 times**.
3. Pronouns played a crucial role in creating cohesion in the linguistic structure, allowing the speech to convey meaning harmoniously and effectively. Without these pronouns, the speech would have been fragmented, and its purpose would have been less clear.

4. The repetition strategies in the speech were diverse, including the use of present tense verbs, pronouns, emphasis, and rhetorical devices such as vocative and interrogative forms, which enhanced its communicative effectiveness.

Semiotics of Imagery

Images have been a means of expression used by humans since ancient times to convey what stirs their minds and emotions. They bring meaning closer to the audience with ease, providing it alongside evidence, thus forming a mental image for the audience. This increases persuasion, empathy, and response more than abstract speech alone. "Images move the audience's emotions and guide them toward a particular idea or opinion, thereby directing their behavior in the way intended" (al-Dridi, 2011). For this reason, speeches enriched with imagery are more beautiful, effective, and influential. His Highness the Emir used imagery in several instances, as summarized in the following table:

Table 4. Use of Imagery

Type of Imagery	Example	Semiotic Significance
Metaphor + Simile	"It is an extermination crime using the latest weapons against a besieged people in a detention camp with no escape."	Illustrates the brutality of Israeli acts of killing and siege against the trapped people of Gaza.
Metaphor	"Nothing remains but the ongoing naked crime with premeditation."	Abstracts the Israeli occupation war from legal and moral bounds, highlighting its deliberate and politically and morally reprehensible nature.
Metaphor	"But the Palestinian cause is resistant to marginalization."	Expresses resilience, resistance, and refusal to be marginalized.
Metaphor	"At a time when the Palestinian cause is absent from the speeches of major global powers"	Expresses neglect and deliberate exclusion of the Palestinian cause by certain international powers.
Metaphor	"As dozens of Ukrainian children were reunited with their families after being separated by war."	Highlights Qatar's humanitarian role in alleviating human suffering caused by war.
Metaphor	"The ongoing brutal war has delivered the coup de grâce to international legitimacy."	Condemns the brutal war in Gaza, which undermined the credibility of international legitimacy.
Metaphor	"It is the same way of thinking that leads from one disaster to another. It is the approach that seeks to reshape the entire region to Israel's measure and looks for evasive ways to avoid ending the occupation."	Condemns international legitimacy for failing to deter the occupation, repeatedly failing in its policies, standing with it, and lacking the will to end it.
Metonymy	"It is dust thrown in the eyes."	Symbolizes deception and misleading practices.
Simile	"As if the dire results of this approach, visible before our eyes, are not enough to prove that ignoring a just solution leads to disaster"	Illustrates the catastrophe caused by the absence of international justice in resolving the Palestinian issue.

From the table above, it is clear that the speech primarily emphasized conveying meanings through metaphor, simile, and metonymy, with metaphorical imagery being the most dominant. Metaphors personify and bring meaning closer to the audience's mind, conveying it in a perceptible way that evokes an emotional response. Their function goes beyond reporting and description to influence, persuasion, and changing attitudes and behaviors, which is precisely the goal of the speech in addressing international legitimacy.

Semiotics of Space and Time

The speech employed spatial and temporal settings as semiotic elements that influence and actively contribute to the meaning-making process. By strategically using these dimensions, the speaker created effective communication with the audience (international legitimacy), enhancing persuasion, credibility, and engagement.

First/Semiotics of Space

Space is an important semiotic element in discourse, as "the sender is inseparable from the place when delivering the speech, which gives spatial cues legitimacy in their contribution to the discourse" (al-Shahri, 2004). The first semiotic feature of His Highness the Emir's speech is that it is a global address, delivered from the platform of the United Nations, the international legitimate authority. This primary and prominent location made the speech more influential, effective, and far-reaching.

The speech also employed multiple locations semiotically. Qatar serves as a global humanitarian and mediating symbol, promoting peace and security. The speech affirmed the right of Palestine, the oppressed state, to live in lasting peace and security, strongly condemned the genocide inflicted on Gaza under global silence and complicity, and emphasized Jerusalem's religious identity as the rightful capital of the State of Palestine. Other locations mentioned—South Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, Libya, Russia, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Syria—are conflict zones where justice should prevail and international legitimacy must fulfill its legal, ethical, and humanitarian responsibilities. Israel is represented as the occupying enemy and oppressor to be restrained. Through this spatial framing, the speech created global solidarity and allowed the audience to visualize the magnitude of the tragedy in the absence of international justice. These locations in the speech are summarized below:

Table 5. Semiotics of Space

Place	Semiotic Significance
United Nations headquarters, Security Council	International legitimacy
Middle East	Region of tension and conflict
Qatar	Symbol of humanity, cooperation, and mediation
Palestine	Central issue of the speech
Gaza	Symbol of oppression and tragedy
Jerusalem	Religious and cultural symbol, capital of Palestine
West Bank	Palestinian territory
Egypt	Mediation partner between Palestinians and Israelis
USA	Global power, mediation partner, party to conflicts
Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, Libya, Russia and Ukraine, Venezuela, Syria	War and conflict zones
Israel	Occupying state

Second/Semiotics of Time

Time as a semiotic element in discourse carries great importance because a speech is affected by it positively and negatively. “It gives the event a specific form that indicates when it occurred, allowing understanding of the discourse’s dimensions and interpretive limits. It is also important for the audience to interpret the discourse correctly and grasp the moment of utterance, using it as a reference, whereby linguistic components are interpreted based on this knowledge” (al-Shahri, 2004). “If space is the container for the event, time is the hand that holds this container” (al-Nuaimi, 2004).

The Emir’s speech gained significance in the context in which it was delivered—during the Gaza war, representing the suffering of the Palestinian people, and amidst multiple regional and global conflicts. Different temporal references in the speech carried specific semiotic meanings, summarized in the table below:

Table 6. Semiotics of Time

Temporal Phrase	Semiotic Significance
“It gives me great pleasure at the outset to congratulate ...”	Respect and appreciation for the international body.
“The continuous Israeli aggression for nearly a year”	Long-standing Palestinian suffering is a challenge to international legitimacy, and it is neglected in the ongoing genocide.

“The ongoing humanitarian tragedy for the brotherly Palestinian people for over seven and a half decades is a stain on the face of the international community and its institutions.”	Highlights the international community’s inaction and condemnation of prolonged Palestinian suffering.
“But after a year of war, and with all that has been committed and continues to be committed, it is no longer possible to speak of Israel’s right to defend itself.”	Condemns the prolongation of the Gaza war, denies Israel’s legitimacy, denounces its crimes, and criticizes international inaction.
“This occupation has taken the form of an apartheid system in the twenty-first century.”	Condemns the occupation’s racism, exposing its hostile actions in today’s interconnected world.
“We highly appreciate the position of states that recognized the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders.”	Praises justice and affirms Palestine’s legitimacy.
“It is the Gazan Palestinian society that has maintained its dignity and achieved remarkable development despite a choking blockade for over seventeen years.”	Commends the people of Gaza for their resilience and development under prolonged siege.
“Every year I stand on this podium and begin my speech by addressing the Palestinian cause ... I have done so every year”	Shows dedication to the Palestinian cause and solidarity with it.
“In brotherly Yemen, we look forward to maintaining the 2022 truce.”	Highlights respect for international charters in preserving peace.
“Although the General Assembly adopted a resolution last May supporting Palestine’s membership request.”	Condemns the marginalization of Palestine from UN membership.
“By concluding a humanitarian truce agreement last November”	Emphasizes Qatar’s role in mediation and its commitment to establishing peace.

Fifth/Semiotics of the Body (Body Language):

Body language refers to non-verbal communication conveyed through body movements. It includes “all movements, gestures, facial expressions, appearance, voice, or changes therein, whether voluntary or involuntary, innate or acquired, which affect the communication process between sender and receiver” (Afida, 2012). It is “a communicative world reflecting a set of movements and expressions, including facial expressions, hand signals, bodily postures, and appearance such as clothing, all of which are semiological signs with meaning” (Younis, 2015).

His Highness the Emir used non-verbal (bodily) communication to connect with his audience as follows:

1. ***Attire:*** He wore formal attire (suit and tie) appropriate for a global meeting. The blue color signified self-confidence and security, being a calm color that conveys inner peace. “This color symbolizes clarity—it is the color of the sky, seas, and oceans, evoking longing and the long night awaiting sunrise” (Qaddour, 2008). It also represents calm, stable emotions effectively controlled (Saleh, 2008). The inclusion of white symbolizes purity, innocence, and peace—core values promoted by the speech. This attire conveyed discipline and reinforced his image as a globally minded political leader open to dialogue.
2. ***Emotional Stability:*** His calm tone, emotional balance, and minimal movement indicated the formality of the speech, conveyed confidence, and instilled a sense of security and calm in the audience. However, the tone occasionally shifted, especially when discussing the siege of Gaza; a sharper tone and a sigh indicated empathic tension. This emotional empathy affirmed his humanistic and ethical stance, conveyed solidarity, and maintained composure throughout the speech.
3. ***Focus on Written Speech and Audience Engagement:*** He frequently looked at the written speech and then at the audience between paragraphs, reflecting the formal nature of the address. This also conveyed sorrow and regret over the international and legal system’s weakness and failure in addressing Zionist atrocities against the Palestinian people and other global issues. It also demonstrated determination, self-confidence, and awareness of his responsibility as a leader amid widespread international inaction.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes by summarizing its key findings and offering recommendations derived from the analysis, emphasizing the central role of political discourse in articulating national and international policies and visions.

The Emir's speech employed formal language in a manner that reinforced Arab, Islamic, and global identity, thereby consolidating the unity of meaning and message and embedding the state's cultural and political identity in the audience's consciousness.

The discourse demonstrated strong semantic cohesion, emotional balance, and composure, qualities that enhanced its credibility and seriousness. The ideas were presented in a systematic and well-structured progression that linked the political content to the intended objectives, allowing for clarity, coherence, and gradual development of meaning throughout the speech.

The analysis also showed that the speech underscored Qatar's active role in regional and international affairs, both politically and humanely. It expressed firm solidarity with Palestine—particularly Gaza—and called upon the international community to respect international legitimacy, restrain the occupation, halt the war, support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and promote peace in areas of conflict. These messages reflect the state's commitment to human values and demonstrate how political discourse functions as an influential diplomatic tool capable of shaping international public opinion.

Furthermore, the study found that the speech made effective use of semiotic elements, including symbolism, pronouns, repetition, meaning depiction, and the strategic use of temporal, spatial, and bodily cues to reinforce its central message and achieve persuasive impact. These elements encompass both linguistic and non-verbal signs, contributing an added depth to the understanding and interpretation of political discourse.

Finally, the study affirmed the importance of the semiotic approach as one of the most appropriate methodologies for analyzing political discourse, given its capacity to examine verbal and non-verbal components simultaneously and uncover the deeper meanings conveyed through signs and symbols. In light of these findings, the study recommends expanding research efforts in discourse analysis—particularly political discourse—to better understand its linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions, broaden avenues for critical inquiry, and strengthen the ability to evaluate policies and recognize persuasive strategies across diverse political contexts.

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