

## **Discursive Construction of Immigrant Identity: Discourse Historical Analysis of a Mohajir Identity Blog**

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### **Abstract**

*The discourses play an important role in identity construction as identity discourses carry within themselves themes and discursive strategies. This study tries to explore the discursive construction of immigrant identity of Mohajirs (Urdu Speaking) in Pakistan by analysing an identity discourse in the form of a blog through Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach of Critical Discourse Analysis. The discourse constructs and deconstructs Mohajir identity by focussing on certain themes, the major one being the non-acceptance of such an identity and the perils attached with it. The blogger makes use of several discursive strategies with strategy of Dismantling and demontage as a prevalent one through which she expresses her dislike for this identity. The blogger believes that 'Mohajir' is a label and not an identity, the label with a negative connotation and derogatory denotation. The text aimed at dismantling the immigrant identity and the need to disown it. The term Mohajir and the identity that has come to be associated with it, is a part of discursive practices that have formed over decades. Removal or the re construction of this identity would need another set of discourses to take roots in the discourse producing circles in the country.*

**Keywords:** CDA, DHA, Immigrant identify, Urdu Speaking

### **Introduction**

This study tries to explore the discursive construction of immigrant identity of, Mohajirs (Urdu Speakers) in Pakistan by analysing an identity discourse in the form of a blog through Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach of Critical Discourse Analysis. The discourses play an important role in identity construction as identity discourses carry within themselves themes and discursive strategies. The identity discourses are driven by a 'forming force', which sets certain rules for interpretation of meanings. In social and political terms these discourses legitimize certain policies and practices and delegitimize and constrain the others. In short, the meaning of

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any articulation is contingent. Discourses are historically embedded with a certain regularity about them in terms of topic change, values, presupposition which in turn determine who can say what, to whom, where and when (Foucault, 1980), which also manifests the dependence of text on context. Foucault was the first to analyse discourses and to find out their regulatory functions which guide the user about what can be considered true, false, rational, irrational, legitimate or illegitimate, and the force of discourse may unnoticeably permeate our everyday conversation, thought processes and making sense of the world around. In one of his writings, 'The Order of Things', he explains how discursive practices put certain kinds of invisible constraints on human actions in a society. He explored the rules present in Discourses that govern the everyday life of people (cited in Mole, 2007).

Discourses do not only portray social reality but they play a role in creating one. As shown by Wodak, Reisigl and Cillia's research in Austria where identities were produced by dissemination of discourses through educational system, media, meetings which led to the formulation of discursive practices of sameness and differences to define the national identity. These are the manifestations of postmodern and post structural approaches, which examine the processes of construction of reality thus challenging its one stable form. It is the work of the discourses that makes a certain form of meaning dominates the other forms (Mole, 2007). The research also looked at the reified construction of identity through these discourses and their impact on social and political action. The members of the community or that particular group then internalize these identities and thus discursive construction of national identity takes place. For Lam (2004) realities are constructed through discourses which are the ways in which people make use of language in their speech and writing about the shared beliefs, experiences, values and cultures. Cameron (2001), therefore, calls discourse a complete identity kit that contains culture, values, words, attitudes, beliefs, gestures and even body postures. Discourse is an appropriation of meaning as emitted and gathered. It is a social act of forming and transforming of individual and collective identities. Adding to the same stance, Clark (2009) observes that 'we construct and reconstruct our views about the world as well as our relationship with one another through discourse. It is through discourses of language that we use strategies to position and reposition our 'selves' with regard to thinking, doing and being' (p.20), so discourses are produced and generated with certain aims and objectives of safeguarding some specific interest; forming and transforming of identities may be one of them.

## **Immigrants/Mohajirs (Urdu Speaking) in Pakistan**

Mohajirs (Urdu-speaking) are a group of people in the multilingual and multicultural Pakistan who are devoid of any ethnic identity, and the identity of the land. They are carriers of a bare linguistic identity and are recognized by their native language, Urdu. Such an identity is weak, especially in the tribal context of Pakistani society where people are known by their caste and clans, therefore, Urdu Speakers even after 70 years of Pakistan's independence are called Mohajirs, a term in Urdu which is equal to Immigrant in English.

Mohajir is the kind of community that has been called as the 'border lives' by Bhabha (1994) in his writing 'The Location of Culture' who live in the middle of the nations, between past and present at the margins of inclusion and exclusion negotiating 'liminal' identities that are culturally hybrid and go against the idea of essentialist subject. Bhabha believes that the immigrant position at the borders leads to new strategies of defining selfhood. Bhabha contends that 'the nation can only be written at its margins, in an interstitial space marked by loss and rupture, separated from the mainstream by the experience of migration which ultimately rejects the premise of belonging to any single national space, whether it be a distant point of departure, the original homeland or an immediate point of arrival-the adopted homeland' (Cited in Raza, 2005, p.8). The Mohajir identity is seen as made up of the remains of discontinuous scraps and fragments of cultural inheritances.

Defined by the census of Pakistan, 1951, 'A Mohajir is a person who has moved into Pakistan as a result of partition or for the fear of disturbances connected therewith'. The history witnessed an unprecedented movement of 8 million people who migrated to Pakistan (Refugee Review Tribunal, 2008). According to Raza (2005), the Mohajirs are considered as culturally displaced community of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The question of Mohajir identity remains an unsolved political issue in Pakistan.

The theme of partition has been well presented in some good Urdu fiction in the form of Novel and short stories written by Mohajir writers such as, Intizar Hussain's Basti (community), Mastur's Angun (courtyard), Hussain's Azad Naslein (The Weary Generation). English translation is available for all these. All these writings depict the negotiation of displaced immigrant identities in the domestic spaces manifesting the volatile political situation of Pakistan and India. The migrant voice in its literature bares the psychological impact of division on the ethnic communities who had difficulty in coping with the traumatic episode of division.

The Mohajir literature is distinct for the depiction of regret and loss of native homes that had to be left behind as a result of traumatic migration. They

brought their own culture and unwilling to leave it at a new place. Through culture, they continued to have ties with their native land. The regret, resentment, loss and difficulties that Mohajirs faced in the new state of Pakistan and the hitches to socio-cultural assimilation led to the formation of 'Mohajir sub-nationalism that threatened to literally 're-write the nation' (Bhabha 1995) from its margins during the late 1980s' (cited in Raza, 2005, p.9).

Many of these writers were the members of the Mohajir community so they were able to bring forth the 'othered' perspective, and the fragmented nation in terms of political state of the nation as they saw it. Thus, immigrant identity is shown to be negotiating but unable to get located, in other words, Mohajirs lack identity of place and remain displaced in terms of identity over the years.

### **Literature Review**

There hasn't been much work, in the field of immigrant discourses. Those, which are available, deal only with the immigrant stories, such as their lives in the home country, their reasons for moving to the host country, the new country, and their hardships. There is a clear difference between travel literature and immigrant literature. Immigrant literature has less to do with just the personal account or travel for pleasure. It particularly talks about oppression, hardship, and the circumstances of migration. At the same time, they are dependent on the history and economic cycles. The immigrant discourses deal with power relationship and construction of immigrant identity and should not be taken as narrations of regret, laments, and victims at the hands of the native population. The immigrant literature can be said to constitute the subcategory of exile literature and literature of diaspora. The task of locating immigrant literature is complex as not much work is done that can distinguish different forms of related literature such as 'exile immigration, dissident life, immigration, post-colonial relocation and different ways of travel, migrancy, resettlement, nomadic journey' (Coklin, 1999 p.6).

The area of migration research has remained devoid of much exploration. Few studies can be found that deals with investigating the link between migration and the process of construction of national identity. In a European context Schnapper (1994) (cited in Iberoamericana & Verlag, 2009) studied issues of immigration and identity by comparing the phenomenon in three different countries, Germany, France and Great Britain. Behr (2004) explored the American policy related to the immigrants. It was only in the last decades that such studies proliferated in countries like Spain, which received a considerable number of immigrants from non-European countries. Academic references related to immigration in Spain and its relation to the building of national

identity is not large. Spanish scholars remained interested in the heated debates of Castilian speaking immigrants in Catalonia. There are other related works to immigration other than identity such as attitudes towards immigrants, integration policy for them etc.

Migration and immigrant identity are a worldwide phenomenon. The issues related to the interrelation between migration and identity has been explored through transnationalism, diaspora, and biculturalism (Ballard, 1994; Vertovec 2009). The subject has remained the focus of academic exploration highlighting issues and answering questions qualitatively migrant identity with the host country and the home country and the formation of communities of the new country. It is just recent those social psychologists have tried to develop theories of immigrant identities and acculturation strategies (cited in Jaspal, 2015).

The contemporary literature on immigrants is suggestive of the fact that immigrant identity is fostered by transnational practices when immigrants think of themselves as the members of multiple communities across borders. Park (2007) believes that migration is not an event but a process in which life patterns are adopted such that these can link the home and the host country through social, cultural and economic connections. Park (2007) based his study on the post-immigrant identity of Korean Women living in New York. The researcher used the snowball-sampling technique for collection of data so that he may have an access to the social network of Korean Community. His focus was on the strategic use of identity markers by these women. Identity markers that were found in the study were education, social class, job etc. Multilayered post migration identities were found among the respondents. They would call Korea 'my own country', while US was typically referred to as 'where I will live my life', or as 'the scene/site of my life'.

Studies on immigrant identity have been done variedly. Some of the researchers have worked on the labels that are used for and by immigrants. For instance immigrants in America have moved from using their home identity such as Chinese and Mexican to compound label like Chinese Americans or Mexican Americans, with the passage of time, and then sometimes to the single national label of 'American', which shows feelings of belongingness to the new society and the positive attitude of the people towards the larger society. Choosing identity and labels very much depend on the context, which basically includes the immigrant population, home, and host countries and also the attitudes of the immigrants and the members of the new society. For example Antilleans in Netherland are treated as non-Dutch by the government so for this reason they kept a separated identity, similar is the case of Russians in Israel. Every context comes with a different implication.

In many studies on immigrants, the media discourse is analyzed so as to explore their perception about themselves through such discourses. One such research was conducted in Sweden by Sjobery & Rydin (2008) making use of media ethnographic discursive approach. The study found important interconnections between the ongoing popular media discourse and the immigrant perception of themselves, their culture and country and also how does the host country, in this case, Sweden looks at them.

Another dimension of immigrant discourses was researched by Verkuyten (2005) in Netherlands where he evaluated immigrant discourses for their consequences on multiculturalism. This research was conducted in the form of two studies among Dutch people. Through interviews, the discursive construction of categories of immigrants and the rhetorical consequences it had on the people way of evaluating cultural diversity and assimilation were found. The rhetoric from the data was divided into having a personal choice and the lack of it. The former was indicative of a desire for assimilation while the later was supportive of cultural diversity. The second study in this connection was experimental in which the endorsement for multiculturalism was found to be the consequence of notion of 'personal choice' or 'lack of it' where the endorsement was found to be greater for the later case. The study was based on analysis of ideological discourses of immigration and their consequences on multiculturalism. The conducted interviews were a means of finding out the repertoire deployed while talking about multilingualism specially its endorsement in immigrant discourses.

Migration discourses are often formed as political discourses. The dominant and hegemonic discourses influence the migration policies. "Discourses on migration, multiculturalism and integration are related to national identities and self-definition as well as practical policy interests" (Androvcova, 2010, p.10). Androvcova analyzed migration discourses by collecting rich data gathered from multiple sources such as the parliamentary debates, political programs, daily Press and Political documents related to migration in Slovakia. Being a new member of the European Union, Slovakia relied more on the vision already produced by the EU about the immigration, which was recontextualized in the national context of Slovakia. Buonfino (2004) remarks that there are many existing discourses on immigration that draw different frontiers between friends and enemies and between 'us' and 'them', some of these discourses are ignored by policy makers while others enter into dynamic dialogues with one another and shape the way policies are structured and negotiated (cited in Androvcova , 2010, p.6).

Language and discourse are important in defining identity in terms of post-structuralism, whereby language acts as a tool that forms and reforms shape and reshapes constructs and reconstructs identity. Kroskrity (1999) defines identity as a construction of group membership by linguistic means. The social categories made by discourses lie latent and they are made operational by discourses and therefore brought to function and existence to become socially effective (Versluys, 2007). It is the merit of (critical) discourse analysis to have focused on the discursive expression of social comparison and to have stressed that social categories and the differences among them have to be communicated if they have to become socially effective.

The discursive construction of identity is an observable phenomenon in the day to day interaction even in mundane situations because people are engaged in narratives which allow them to construct a continuous self, merging past with the present, they are considered a privileged form of discourse especially for analysis of identity (Bamberg, Fina & Schiffrin 2011).

Khosravi Nik (2008) investigated the discursive construction and representation of immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers in the British Newspapers between 1996 and 2006 at five critical periods in the history of Britain. The paper analysed the micro linguistic processes of the ways through which these people were discussed in the print media. The study also compared such representation in various newspapers in terms of their ideological association.

Beswick and Gutierrez (2010) studied the visible and perceived manifestation of identification patterns such as linguistic, social and cultural of Spanish and Portuguese immigrant communities in the UK. The paper also explored the relationship between language use and evolving identification strategies that are deployed at different steps of the process of migration. There were three dimensions to the exploration of the issue, the strategies that the immigrants adopt in order to fit in the host society, second they also try to preserve certain ethnolinguistic and sociocultural traits during the cycle of migration, thirdly the paper focused on the role of indigenous language to either highlight or underplay the distinguishing and differentiating traits.

In another study by Field (1994), Irish immigrants in the United States were seen in a perpetual struggle to resolve the contradiction between social and self-definition of their identity. The paper explores the created and presented personal identities through the use of certain strategies of identity construction such as exclusivity, pragmatic identification or autonomy. 'The construction of personal identities thus provides insight into people's struggle to maintain a positive sense of self in problematic situations and the social worlds and others

with whom they identify' (p.431). McCall (2003) is of the view that most of the identity-related research is based on self-identification as 'me' and not on an equally important part of self-disidentification 'not me' which needs to be explored. 'disidentification of the identity 'immigrant' (cited in Killian & Johnson 2006, p.60).

### **Methodology**

The research is underpinned by Critical Discourse Analysis which is the kind of social research in which the social processes and the social changes are seen through discourse and text, therefore CDA has enabled me for a deeper analysis of the immigrant discourse in the form of a blog. The basic premise of CDA is the assumption that besides being a social product, language has the potential to shape and reshape social practices. Therefore, the framework of CDA fulfils the aim of this paper to study the linguistic and social structures. Identities are treated by CDA as the product of ideological work of discourses. Through Critical discourse analysis of immigrant identity, the selected discourse is analysed at two levels, firstly in the grammar of the language and secondly in the attitudes and ideologies of the subject. The present work has tried to locate construction and reconstruction of immigrant identity through discursive practices by recognising the association between discourse and particular practices (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006).

Out of many models and approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis, Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach, which is different from the other CDA approaches because it incorporates all the historical information and social political knowledge that is related to the discursive events and practices under study underpin the present paper. DHA is selected as an analytical framework because it gives importance to the historical perspective and dimensions of the issue being investigated. The blog is historically situated and discourse historical analysis looks at the diachronic changes that have taken place in any discourse overtime. DHA emphasizes the background knowledge and the sequencing of the events in the analysis of any text. It acts as a multi theoretical and multimethodological approach to explore the discursive construction of immigrant identity.

The following analysis with the help of Discourse historical approach focuses on the linguistic aspect by taking help from linguistic theories like that of argumentation and rhetoric. Therefore, analysis through discourse-historical approach includes analysis at the macro level that consists of context in terms of history, society and culture and the micro level analysis comprising of textual-linguistic analysis. An analysis of the text in context is also a part of the interpretation presented as the historical context in the present work. The

main concern of this paper is to find out the interconnectedness between 'discursive practices and extra-linguistic social structures' (Wodak and Mayer, 2001 p.9).

The research questions motivating any discourse-historical study including the present one related to collective identity whether synchronic or diachronic are as follows

1. What identities are communicated in the text
2. How are those identities or any change in them communicated in the concrete text?
3. Why are collective identities conceptualized and communicated in the way they are or why have changes taken place?
4. Who is involved in the discursive practices around the text and in what role? What genre does the text instantiate? (Koller, 2009, p.4)

The analysis of the identities communicated in the text is done at the macro level of discourse, while the textual and linguistic description is done at the micro level.

## **Data Analysis**

### **About the Blog**

The selected discourse is a blog by the title "Don't label me Mohajir" that appeared in online 'The Express Tribune' on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and written by Aliya Suleman, a member of immigrant/Mohajir/ Urdu speaking community.

### **Historical Context**

Many people who immigrated to the newly formed country in 1947 were the speakers of the language, which was already a recognized one in the United India and was always officially supported. The Urdu language carried a rich literature even at that time and also considered to be an identity marker for Muslims of Sub Continent throughout their struggle for independence and a separate homeland. The people already settled in the areas that became Pakistan had to learn Urdu because it was declared a national and official language of Pakistan. The dominating situation did not remain the same for the immigrants who carried only Pakistani identity. Their generations suffered complex identity crises. People all around them started to recognize themselves with the land and ethnic groups and Mohajirs/ Urdu Speaking could not claim a similar identity.

## **Thematic Content**

The main theme of the blog is 'not my identity' and a negation of Mohajir identity that is also evident from the title of the blog. The writer does not agree with the way her ethnic group is referred to and each member is labeled as a 'Mohajir' or an immigrant despite being the citizen of Pakistan for more than half a century. The blog describes the dislike of the blogger towards her own identity as someone who belongs to the second generation of immigrants and has nothing to do with the actual event of migration of 1947.

Another theme with which the blogger starts her discourse is the change in the conceptualization of the collective 'Mohajir' identity through the comparison between the feelings of the first generation Mohajir and that of the subsequent ones, which slowly moved from positive to negative with the change of social and discursive practices around. The first generation that actually emigrated from India was full of expectations for a life on the new land, for which they struggled. They were quite enthusiastic about moving to the newly formed country that came into being in the name of religions for all the Muslims of United India. The second generation immigrants grew up in the days when provincialism had already begun. Ethnic and linguistic identities became more important than religious identity as a Muslim or a national identity as a Pakistani. The subsequent generations were faced with reality. So the selected discourse is not only a depiction of a diachronic change in the thoughts and aspirations of two generations of an ethnic group but reflects expectations versus reality. Wodak's discourse-historical approach contextualizes the text historically and also traces the changes in it over a period of time. The time period that is given in the text is that of a generation as the blogger writes, "reflecting over the three decades that have transpired since". The temporal reference in the discourse is the time of partition between 1947-1954 to the present during which the people became Mohajir and continued to carry the label of the same over generations.

The diachronic discourse describes the identity transformation of 'Mohajir' as an ethnic group. The first generation who could only see a land of their dreams coming into being were excited for a new identity as liberated Muslims who got their freedom and they hoped that they would have a chance of living as free Muslims with an even stronger identity of 'Pakistani'. They expected that all the people immigrating to Pakistan and those already settled would live under a single identity of Pakistani. These first generation immigrants at that time could only see one country as a whole under federation. But unfortunately, the notions of Muslim and Pakistani identity could not be well liked for long and taken over by ethnic identities represented by the provinces.

The blogger also believes that the emigrants who migrated to Pakistan over expected their settlement in a country that was ethnically and linguistically much diverse. It did not take provincialism too long to raise its ugly head and divide the newly formed Pakistani nation on ethnic and linguistic lines.

The third theme that she picks up is 'the perils attached to Mohajir identity'-the blogger believes that the Mohajir tag is a hindrance to assimilation and acceptance in Pakistan because the very word immigrant stands for an outsider and a minority. She also writes about affiliation by default with a political party that has come to be known for its notoriety but the rest of the ethnicities affiliate all Mohajirs with one political party, no matter if one does not have any political interests and affiliations at all.

### **Discursive Strategies in the Blog**

The blog is written in the first person and the writer makes use of the strategy of Perspectivization. This strategy refers "to the framing or discourse representation by means of which speakers express their involvement in discourse and position their point of view in the reporting, description, narration or quotation of discriminatory events or utterances" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001 p.45). She has used "I" roughly 24 times in a short blog. Every time she uses I, she actually positions herself as a 'Mohajir' for instance in the following sentences

- I'm labeled as an outsider
- I wonder where exactly I belong
- I don't even know why we are ever called immigrants.
- I stood out among my peers.
- I stand out among my colleagues.
- I have turned into a minority
- I am not looked at kindly
- I am a Mohajir

The blogger in the introductory section makes use of Strategy of Dissimilation/ Exclusion and Discontinuation, which emphasizes "the difference between now and then" (Wodak et al, 2009, p.40), making use of Topos of History and overall use of Strategy of Transformation, when she compares the social and political conditions in which the first and second generation Mohajir lived. The "three decades" mentioned in the initial lines refers to the period of major political decisions and change that transformed

the identity of Mohajirs, Urdu-speaking population of Pakistan specially their population concentrated areas of Urban Sindh. It started with the moving of the capital from Karachi to Islamabad in 1959 and passing of the Sind language bill in 1972 in Sindh assembly, followed by quota system within the province. As a member of the second generation Mohajir she finds herself unable to assimilate in the host society, therefore she feels excluded and does not want to continue with the immigrant identity. Within the same part of the text, she used Defense as a sub-strategy of Perpetuation where she rejects the action of calling her and the people like her as Mohajir or immigrants. The blogger believes that such a vague identity has deprived her rather than doing any good to her. She uses the Dismantling Strategy of Discrediting her forced identity of Mohajir when she writes "I feel that having chased these dreams has actually left me more devoid in numerous avenues than empowered".

Before continuing with her argument she makes use of a proverb as a means of realizing for how she feels about being a member of an ethnic group which is given a wrong label and then treated as such. As she writes "talk about giving the dog a bad name and hanging him". The writer makes use of Topos of Comparison and Difference as Argumentative strategy, where she compares the groups of people who had to leave their home and hearth and came to be known as Mohajirs/immigrants for generations to come with those settled ones who did not have to fret much to become Pakistanis. The former had to struggle and sacrifice to join Pakistan while the latter got assimilated in the newly gotten country without distress and displacement. Immigrants after such a long time passed of the creation of Pakistan and their settling down here are still seen as different and other. The blogger puts it in these words "...the forthcoming generation of Mohajirs myself included are ostracized for having migrated from India while the groups that did not fret are more comfortably assimilated in the national soil". She also makes use of Topos of Definition that defines Mohajir as a part of Strategy of Construction as people who "...migrated from India ...". The word 'ostracized' shows the Dismantling and Demontage Strategy of Dissimilation and Exclusion, that she feels or she is made to feel excluded among other fellow Pakistani citizens though she is not from the generation of people who migrated from India.

In the beginning of the paragraphs, she questions the need for a separate identity in a country whose basis of formation were not ethnic. Using the strategy of Assimilation, Inclusion and Continuation she tries to emphasize on intra-national sameness and similarity with the use of Topos of Similarity. She argues that if all the people in Pakistan could align with the single national identity, the immigrants would not have to push for a new unknown vague identity. But this did not happen due to very diverse linguistic and ethnic

landscape of the country. In the same paragraph she makes use of two strategies of Culturalization, one is ethnification where the word 'Mohajir' is used and the other linguification where the other word for the same people 'Urdu Speaking' is used as she writes "I feel like, I am labeled as an outsider on account of being Urdu Speaking" then using the Strategy of 'Party Political Alignment' of Politicization she rejects affiliation with a single political party that happens to represent Mohajir/Urdu Speakers politically. Many Urdu Speaking might have no affiliation with any political party but most of them are thought to be its members. Using the Discontinuing Strategy of Transformation she rejects and refuses to be stereotypically associated with a notorious and defamed party just because she carried the identity of Mohajir and speaks Urdu as a mother tongue. She writes that people of other ethnic groups around her make her "an unwitting member of the only political party representing me." She blames the party for attaching a negative association to the whole section of the population who migrated from India, settled down mostly in Sindh and speak Urdu. As she does not believe in the need for a separate Mohajir identity, which has now become more of a label, she is also not supportive of a separate political party with 'Mohajir' in its name that gives a wrong impression of acceptance of a pejorative and a derogatory label.

Continuing with the blog she expresses her fears that she will never get the identity of a Pakistani in Pakistan that puts her into identity crises with the confusion about her belongingness. The blogger is at a loss to understand the need for separate identities in Pakistan that was made for the Muslims of Indo-Pak sub-continent. Analyzing the same paragraphs for the discursive strategies, one can see the Strategy of Actionalization with the actionym of 'Mohajir' and 'Pakistani' and strategies of Spatialization with mentioning of the place Pakistan. 'Us' used twice in '...for us in a country that was made for all of us' signifies two different Collectivizations. The first "us" is for the Mohajir and the second for everyone who carries the identity of Pakistani.

The Referential and Predicational strategies can also be easily located in the writing when the writer uses the term Mohajir, Urdu-speaking Pakistani in the following,

- Don't label me Mohajir
- Being the first generation Mohajir...
- However as a second generation Mohajir
- The following generation of Mohajir

- The label of Mohajir has made it nearly impossible for me to be accepted s a Pakistani in Pakistan
- I am labeled as an outsider on account of being Urdu speaking
- Student association specifically for Mohajir Urdu speaking.
- A different creed of Muslims shunned in a Muslim country
- Why the label ‘Mohajir’ at all
- Elders moved here as new citizens
- I don’t even know why we are even called ‘immigrants’
- Give preference to another province resident rather than Urdu speaking
- And the burning city has stamped our infamous presence.
- The emergence of identity that honestly is no help
- Being a Mohajir would not have been such an issue

The above instances from the discourse show that there are terms which amount to the same as ‘Mohajir’ such as outsider, a different creed of Muslims, new citizens, immigrants, Urdu speaking, infamous presence.

The Topoi of Argumentative Strategy can also be located in the selected discourse. The most explicit topoi is that of comparison between those who were already settled on the land that became a part of Pakistan and those who migrated from Muslim minority provinces of India. As the text shows “for us in a country that was made for all of us anyway” and at another place “...the forthcoming generation of Mohajirs, myself included, are ostracized for having migrated from India while the group that did not fret are more comfortably assimilated in the national soil”.

The blogger uses Topoi of Disadvantage when that migration to the promised land proved to *be* “fool’s dream” and then following of such dreams has disadvantaged her more than being of any good, “having chased these dreams has actually left me more devoid in numerous avenues than empowered” and then she also points out that the label of ‘Mohajir’ also disadvantaged her to become an equal Pakistani citizen when she says “I continue being increasingly convinced that the label of Mohajir has made it near impossible for me to be accepted as a Pakistani in Pakistan”.

She believes that the ‘Mohajir’ tag is argumentatively strategic because it is used as a Topoi of Definition and name interpretation, which only “hurts my presence, my participation and my identity in a country that I consider my own

but that has gradually disowned me over the years”, “...I am not looked kindly...”. The way the identity is negatively interpreted today. The strategy of Dissimilation/exclusion that comes under the Strategies of Demontage or Dismantling and destruct is used where she writes that people from all the provinces know a local language along with the lingua franca Urdu, while the community known as ‘Mohajir’ are monolingual with Urdu as their mother tongue. They are linguistically dissimilar to the locals here.

The blogger uses Topoi of Numbers when she complains of being “turned into a minority in the country”. Topos of Uselessness in her argument is found when she writes “...the emergence of identity is no help to the common man”. The Mohajir identity that was politically driven is not of much use to its bearers and instead of bringing them closer to the rest of the Pakistanis, such an identity has taken them farther away.

She concludes the blog with the Topoi of Uselessness while she warns the countrymen that labelling and tagging a part of the population “only demote Pakistan at a time when it is imperative to pull together as a whole and not break apart into pieces based on labels, which might be hard to put together later”.

## **Conclusion**

The immigrant identity discourse in the form of a blog is embedded in the history of migration and the creation of Pakistan. The discourse constructs and deconstructs Mohajir identity by focussing on certain themes, the major one being the non-acceptance of such an identity and the perils attached with it. The blogger makes use of several discursive strategies with strategy of Dismantling and demontage as a prevalent one through which she expresses her dislike for her identity. The blogger believes that ‘Mohajir’ is a label and not an identity. The label with a negative connotation and derogatory denotation. The word is now used pejoratively. It questions the very existence of those people in Pakistan. It makes them an outsider as soon as it is uttered. She calls the label a forced one, which presents them negatively. The text aimed at dismantling the immigrant identity and the need to disown it as the blogger puts “this forced label only hurts my presence, my participation and my identity in a country that I consider my own but that has gradually disowned me over the years”. Thus a use of Discrediting of Identity as a sub-strategy of Strategy of Dismantling is conclusively utilized in the discourse.

The writer in such a situation prefers to be called a Pakistani than a Mohajir. But that is easier said than done because the term Mohajir and the identity that has come to be associated with it is a part of discursive practices that have

formed over decades. Removal or the re construction of this identity would need another set of discourses to take roots in the country.

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## ANNEXURE

### THE BLOG

#### Don't label me Mohajir

By: Aliya Suleman

Published February 11, 2014    The Express Tribune

Being a first generation Mohajir might have felt like stepping into an exciting new territory full of adventures in reassertion of identity, a deeper assimilation into the national fabric and finding a voice in a country teeming with provincialism.

However, as a second generation Mohajir reflecting over the three decades that have transpired since, it seems that these were nothing short of a fool's dreams that at least I could have survived without. Objectively, I feel that having chased these dreams has actually left me more devoid in numerous avenues than empowered.

Retrospectively, I find it hard to understand why we had to push for an 'identity' in a country that was in reality created as our collective identity regardless of language, race or creed. However, much to the contrary, the forthcoming generations of Mohajirs, myself included, are ostracised for having migrated from India while the groups that did not fret are more comfortably assimilated in the national soil.

Talk about giving the dog a bad name and hanging him.

I continue being increasingly convinced that the label of Mohajir has made it near impossible for me to be accepted as a Pakistani in Pakistan. In fact, I wonder where exactly I belong. Personally, I believe it was entirely unnecessary to have even attempted to carve out a 'niche or identity' for us in a country that was made for all of us anyway. I feel like I'm labelled as an outsider on account of being Urdu speaking. And on the political front, regardless of whether or not I agree with the party agenda, being Urdu speaking makes me an unwitting member of the only political party representing me.

Interestingly enough, Urdu speaking, like myself, are now even arrogantly brushed aside by '*rishta walis*' (aunties with proposals) who have added the 'Urdu speaking' clause to their regular questionnaire. Many a times when making selections, we, Urdu speaking girls, are not usually preferred. This is just one of many ways we are side-lined in the social avenues.

I hate to be blunt but the steadily increasing notoriety of the party over the years has polished off on the whole lot of us and has a lot to do with the situation.

Overly simplistic as it may sound, I often wonder why it was at all necessary to have created the student association specifically for Mohajirs or

Urdu speaking. Initially, the Mohajir students were grouped aside and gradually, the label spread to the Urdu speaking population in general that had emigrated from India. I think I was better off labelled 'Muslim' in a non-Muslim country than as a whole different creed of Muslim who is shunned in a Muslim country.

On that note, I don't even know why we are even called 'immigrants'. An entirely new country emerged on the globe in the form of Pakistan on August 14, 1947 and our elders moved here as new citizens.

So why the label 'Mohajir' at all?

This forced label only hurts my presence, my participation and my identity in a country that I consider my own but that has gradually disowned me over the years.

As a student, I stood out among my peers in my educational institutions. Now I stand out among my colleagues and in my social circles. The fact that I know only Urdu and English is enough indication that I am a Mohajir. Residents of the other four provinces speak the third provincial language and even if they don't, it is certainly spoken in their homes. I have even noticed people getting visibly uncomfortable around me. They prefer to flock together with 'similar feathers' and give preference to another province resident rather than an 'Urdu speaking' like myself.

My list of complaints could go on and on.

Don't pat my head and tell me it is all in my head because it is not.

We have started to suffer a lot now and the situation can no longer be brushed aside as a story in our heads or simple paranoia. Karachi has become a crazy hell hole and the burning city has stamped our infamous presence and name in the discussion columns around the world, which is soon disregarded.

Frankly, I have turned into a minority in the country, representing the white part of our flag, and sadly enough, minorities aren't very kindly accommodated here, especially, an unsavoury one. By hook or by crook, I might enjoy an upper hand in Karachi but in the other areas I am not looked at very kindly. Despite having emigrated from India, being a Mohajir wouldn't have been such an 'issue' if it hadn't been 'made such an issue' with the emergence of an identity that honestly is no help to the common man.

So dear countrymen, do me a favour and refer to me as a Pakistanis and not Urdu speaking or Mohajir.

Putting tags on each other and setting each other aside does nothing to strengthen our or the country's identity internationally or domestically. It only demotes Pakistan at a time when it is imperative to pull together as a whole and not break apart into pieces based on labels, which might be hard to put together later.