

## Rhetorical Strategies and Speech Acts Analysis: A Linguistic Research on Indonesia's Minister Speech Advocating for Palestine

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### Abstract:

This research is aimed at finding out the use of rhetorical strategies and speech acts in the speech delivered by the minister of foreign affairs regarding the conflict between Palestine and Israel. This research applies qualitative method. The data taken was in the form of text from H.E Retno LP Marsudi's speech that was delivered during United Nations Security Council Open Debate which emphasized on the current situation happening in Palestine due to Israeli's bombardment that has been happening since October 2023. The speech also emphasized the stance and the concern from Indonesia as a country which supports the freedom of the Palestine as well as condemning any kinds of genocide. The result of this research showed that there were two linguistic features employed in the H.E Retno LP Marsudi's speech i.e rhetorical strategies which are of 32% for Pathos, 32% of Ethos, and 37% for Logos. Besides, the 5 speech acts were also found in this research with the proportion of 13% for assertive and declarative, 31% for directive, 25% for expressive, and 19% for commissive. This is to prove that rhetorical devices are considered to contribute to the overall persuasiveness and impact of the speech to help the speaker conveying the message effectively and build a comprehensive engagement to the audience.

**Keywords:** *Political Speech, rhetorical strategies, Speech Acts*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The conflict between Palestine and Israel has been around for decades and debated all over the world creating polarization among countries regarding which side is to be supported. The Israeli attack was initiated after Hamas's surprise attack on Southern Israel on October 7<sup>th</sup> which killed at least 1.139 people (Al Jazeera, 2024). The Israel war on Gaza is still happening now until today and does not seem to give any sign of stopping although it has escalated many protests from all around the world. Many leaders summit included the discussion of this conflict into the agenda, and it gave access to leaders from respected countries to show their stance whether supporting Israel or Palestine through political speech.

Several previous research had been conducting regarding political speeches and rhetoric strategies. Zakariya (2018) investigated the rhetoric and discourse of SBY and Jokowi related to policies and subsidy plans in increasing the price of fuel to enhance Indonesian economic recovery and development. The research aimed to find out the comparison of persuasive strategies and the involvement of discourse devices towards their rhetorical speeches. He found out that the use of rhetorical proofs such as ethos, pathos, and logos are present in the speech in which syllogism, factual evidence and numbers were presented in both speeches with the

frequency of logos to occur the most. It showed that the speeches were meant to build audience's acceptance by employing reasoning for persuasiveness.

Political speech represents a well-managed and planned narratives that is made by political actor, which in this case, leaders from different countries to persuade the audience (Sutherland, 2015). It is clear that when a political speech is presented, it carries persuasiveness and impact so the audience will pay attention and it is expected that their emotions will be evoked which leads to the actual actions. The speeches related to political terms are also intended to channel ideas and information, as well as convincing the audiences related to their political claim which are justifiable, executable, and logical. Conveying a political speech with rhetorical strategies will make the audience impressed by the sentences full of persuasiveness without their knowing that it carries hidden meaning.

In the case of conflict between Palestine and Israel, political actor, be it president or minister, have addressed their concern and condemnation towards the bombardment launched by Israel. Many leaders presented their speech conveying the idea that this war must stop immediately through their speeches which are accessible worldwide. The General UN Assembly, Leaders Summit, have been some of the platforms to convey the message expecting that the audience from the whole world will watch and urge their leaders also to take part in this concern. Indonesia has long been in emotional connection with Palestine. Moreover, the fact that the majority of Indonesians are Muslim, has led to even deeper connection. Indonesia is actively advocating the freedom of Palestine. The newest support can be seen from the speech delivered by H.E Retno LP Marsudi, Indonesia's Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this speech Indonesia is declaring that it will not stop to voice this issue until justice and dignity restored for the Palestinian people. It also reveals numbers and statistics of devastation or loss during the war.

Speech is considered as public speaking. One of the arts used in public speaking is rhetoric as it is intended to inspire, amaze, and convince the audience towards specific point of view. Political speech structure can be analyzed by going thoroughly towards rhetorical approaches in order its context, argument and effect can be obtained (Martin, 2015). Rhetoric has long been used for persuasiveness in communication strategies, especially in important areas of socio-political such as education, public affairs, law, and civil disputes (Ilie, 2006). Rhetoric is the technique to gain compliance (Herrick, 2021). Rhetoric is also considered as a strategy to transform weak argument into stronger one through the use of language (Szczyzny, 2017). Aristotle defined rhetoric as the ability to visualize the available tools of persuasion (Isai, K.I.A., Lin, T.M., Ching, H.S., Selvajothi, R, and Maruthai, 2020). To give the effect of persuasiveness to the audience, the speaker can apply three rhetorical proofs i.e. *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*.

1. Ethos is the character or the authority of speaker in delivering speech and it is must be obtained by the speaker so that what is being addressed can be trusted and judged as credible by the audience (Aristotle, 2008). Ethos appeals to the character of the speaker. It can be considered as the role of the speaker in making arguments, and how reliable the argument is.

There are three parts suggested by Aristotle in relation to ethos i.e. *phronesis*, *eunoia*, and *arete*.

- 1) *Phronesis* or in another word good sense is the quality of the speaker in understanding the subject they are addressing. It is related to the intelligence that can be seen from the knowledge of the related subject. The speaker, in this extent, can showcase their intelligence by expressing thoughts after conducting comprehensive research.
- 2) *Arete* is considered as morally correct. It means that in order to build reliability and trustworthiness, the speaker can present the value they are holding as well as their experience. From this, the audience can consider the speaker as trustworthy figure.

- 3) *Eunoia* is the intention carried out by the speaker. According to Aristotle, a speaker may be intelligent and possess a nice character but does not win the audience's best interest yet (Griffin, 2022). To demonstrate a favour, the speaker can focus on showing empathy and understanding to the audience.
2. The second part proposed by Aristotle is *Pathos* or emotional proof. It is used to evoke audience's empathy to make them sense what the speaker want them to feel. *Pathos* refers to the affective engagement which later will contribute to persuasiveness to the audience so they will do an action. There are four emotions that can be extracted from the audience using *Pathos*:
- 1) Anger versus Mildness  
Anger is driven by the failure of fulfilling needs or getting what is needed. After evoking the audience's anger, the speaker can calm them down by showing sorry and delivering praises.
  - 2) Friendship versus Hatred  
Friendliness is a feeling that makes someone hopes something good will happen to them while hatred is the opposite. This is to show that the speaker is suggested to highlight goals, experiences, and attitudes to the audience.
  - 3) Fear versus Confidence  
Fear, in this extent, refers to a pain driven by a thought of disaster that might happen in the future. The speaker can show the pain by giving description of the event and indicate that it potentially might happen. The feeling of confidence, as the opposite, is built by successful experience. The feeling might manifest after success or being able to avoid danger.
  - 4) Admiration Versus envy.  
Admiration refers to respect while envy refers to a pain that manifests from seeing good things happen to others. When someone achieve something through hard work, admiration will occur, and it can also lead to envy since the good fortune is happening to others rather than to them.
3. The last rhetorical proof is *Logos*. It can be considered as the ability to reasoning in giving arguments. Here, logic plays a crucial role in building audience's acceptance. There are two forms of *logos* i.e. enthymeme and example. Enthymeme can be interpreted as the art of rhetoric's central concern (Herrick, 2021). It is a narrative argument where one of the premises is implied or not explicitly stated.

Delivering objection, support, or condemnation is also a part of communication emotions. Communication is the process of sharing ideas, feelings, thoughts and messages with others. (Ojomo, 2004). When an action is done through utterances, it is called as speech act (Searle, 1976). Speech act can be classified into locutionary act. Illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act.

Illocutionary acts refers to the speaker's intention in making utterance in which they aim to achieve it through delivering speech (Yule, 1996). According to Yule, illocutionary acts can be classified into the following categories:

- 1) Assertive Act: It is intended to provide the audience with facts.
- 2) Directive Act: It is intended to get the audience to do something.
- 3) Commissive Act: Committing to a future course of action.
- 4) Expressive Act: Conveying the speaker's personal state of mind.
- 5) Declarative Act: It is intended to bring a change to external world.

Political speech often contains illocutionary acts since the speaker use language not only to convey information but also to obtain specific purposes, giving opinions and engaging with their audience.

This research is intended to seek the prove of how rhetorical strategies can contribute to the overall persuasiveness of the speech in relation to the effort of the speaker conveying the message effectively and build engagement to the audience.

## 2. METHOD

This research applied descriptive qualitative approach which means a method used that is intended to produce narrative or textual descriptions towards the phenomenon obtained from the study (Vanderstoep, S.S., & Johnston, 2009). The data being analysed in this research is the speech from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi, at The UNSC Open Debate which was held in New York January 23, 2024. The transcript was retrieved from [www.kemlu.go.id](http://www.kemlu.go.id). The researcher applied content analysis in analysing the data. The text of speech was downloaded, then each line was sorted, classified and categorized based on rhetorical strategies employed in each statement. Then, each line was later being sorted to find the type of speech acts present. After all the sorted text obtained, the frequency of both rhetorical strategies and speech acts were calculated in order to get the percentage of each occurrence.

## 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The qualitative research methodology proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) is used in the data analysis process. They separated the methods into three phases which are data reduction connected to data coding for locating and categorizing the data in line with study issues, data display presenting the categorized data that was analyzed and interpreted following the coding, and conclusion of the displayed data. Based on the analysis of the data, it is found that the speech employed rhetorical strategies i.e. *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. The number of rhetorical proofs employed can be seen as follows:

**Table 1. Rhetorical proofs**

<b>Rhetorical Proofs</b>		
<b>Ethos</b>	<b>Pathos</b>	<b>Logos</b>
32%	32%	37*

### 1. Pathos (Emotional Appeal):

- 1) Data: "Is over 25,000 people dead with increasing numbers dying from hunger and the freezing cold, including babies and children, too little for us to act?"

The emotional interest is present in this question. It leads the audience to feel empathy and concern for the suffering of the Palestinian people caused by the war. Babies and children dying from hunger and cold is emotionally mentioned and it is aiming to evoke a compassionate response. This elicits a strong emotional state appealing to their empathy.

- 2) Data: "Once again, I urge Council members to stop the everyday horrors faced by the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank."

The use of the term "everyday horror" creates clear imagery, and it paints a picture of the current suffering which is faced by Palestinian people in Gaza and West

Bank. The choice of words is intended to trigger emotional response, representing a sense of urgency for an action.

- 3) Data: "And third, stop the flow of arms to Israel. Every weapon sent to Israel can be used to kill innocent civilians."

By connecting the call to stop the flow of the arms with the potential harm to innocent civilians, the speaker urges the audience's humanitarian awareness. This link is designed to trigger a moral response, emphasizing the human impact of geopolitical moves.

- 4) Data: "A threat of full-blown war in the Middle East is a real and present danger."

A sense of urgency is created by characterizing the situation as a real and present danger and it aims to evoke fear and awareness among the audience. It urges the audience to recognize the immediate need for action to anticipate further escalation.

- 5) Data: "This statement is unacceptable."

This is a straightforward declaration of the speaker's strong disapproval in response to Israeli's PM Benjamin Netanyahu who stated that Palestinian State cannot exist.

- 6) Data: "Stop the everyday horrors faced by the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank."

The emotional appeal is reiterated here by using words like "horrors" and specifying the location (Gaza and the West Bank). This appeal aims to evoke a sense of urgency and empathy, urging the audience to consider the human suffering and act.

## 2. Ethos (Credibility and Ethics):

- 1) Data: "I am here today for the third time in three months, joining the Council's debate on Palestine"

The repeated presence of the speaker in the Council's Debate on Palestine demonstrates a consistent commitment. It establishes a sense of responsibility and dedication. It contributes to the speaker's ethos by portraying them as actively engaged in the problem.

- 2) Data: "to reaffirm Indonesia's unwavering commitment to stand with Palestine."

This assertion emphasizes a steadfast commitment and dedication to supporting Palestine and it escalates the speaker's credibility by presenting Indonesia as reliable and consistent ally.

- 3) Data: "The UN Charter is clear. The Security Council resolutions are binding and must be enforced."

By referencing the UN Charter, the speaker points out the arguments with established norms. This leads to the speaker's ethos by showcasing the stance that Indonesia is holding as grounded in recognized principles and agreements.

- 4) Data: "And next month, Indonesia will present its Oral Statement for the ICJ Advisory Opinion..."

By mentioning Indonesia's plan to present an oral statement at the ICJ, it adds layer of legal legitimacy to its position. This action elevates the speaker's ethos by demonstrating a commitment in pursuing diplomatic and legal avenues.

- 5) Data: "Indonesia strongly rejects this statement. This statement is unacceptable."

By announcing an explicit rejection towards the statement, the speaker puts herself as upholding ethical standards and principles.

- 6) Data: "We all have the responsibility to uphold International Humanitarian Law without exception to the situation in Gaza."

This appeal reinforces the speaker's ethos by highlighting Indonesia's stance with widely accepted principles.

### 3. Logos (Logical Appeal):

- 1) Example: "The UN Charter is clear. The Security Council resolutions are binding and must be enforced."

The logical interest is present in this statement as the speaker refers to the UN Charter and the binding nature of Security Council resolutions. This is to show that the stance is align with established international norms and legal frameworks.

- 2) Example: "On 18 January, Prime Minister Netanyahu openly declared he would not allow a Palestinian state to exist."

The logical urge in this statement manifests from presenting a factual event. By referring to Prime Minister Netanyahu's declaration, the speaker provides a real example to support their argument, grounding their position in a specific and verifiable incident.

- 3) Example: "Stop the flow of arms to Israel. Every weapon sent to Israel can be used to kill innocent civilians."

The speaker builds a causal relationship, aligning the flow of arms to potential harm to innocent civilians. This logical connection strengthens the argument against supplying weapons to Israel, appealing to the audience's sense of cause and effect.

- 4) Example: "First, we demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire."

The call for an immediate ceasefire is presented as a logical step to address the ongoing conflict. This aligns with the principle of conflict resolution, appealing to a logical sequence of actions to bring about a positive change.

- 5) Example: "Most importantly, it will provide space to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza, begin work on post-conflict reconstruction, and the process for the two-state solution."

The speaker argues that a two-state solution as logical outcome of a ceasefire. This appeal to a diplomatic solution adds a rational dimension to the speech, suggesting a pragmatic approach to resolving the conflict.

- 6) Example: "Palestine must be granted immediate full membership in the UN. This is essential to start fair and balanced work on the two-state solution and to stop Israel's brutal aggression."

The call for Palestine's full membership in the UN is presented as a logical step toward achieving a fair and balanced resolution.

Besides rhetorical strategies, the data analysis also shows that there are 5 speech acts employed in the speech. The occurrence of the speech acts are as follows:

The analysis can be seen as follows:

### 1. Assertive Act:

Data:

"I am here today for the third time in three months, joining the Council's debate on Palestine to reaffirm Indonesia's unwavering commitment to stand with Palestine."

"I am also here to remind Council members that you have a great mandate to maintain international peace and security, not to tolerate wars and especially not genocide."

In this statement, the speaker is making an assertion about their presence in the Council and Indonesia's commitment to supporting Palestine. It aims to convey information and express a position.

### 2. Directive Act:

Data:

"Once again, I urge Council members to stop the everyday horrors faced by the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank."

"Israel must be held accountable for its actions, including atrocities in Gaza. No nation is above the law."

"First, we demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire."

"Second, Palestine must be granted immediate full membership in the UN."

"And third, stop the flow of arms to Israel."

This statement is a directive act where the speaker is urging or requesting the Council members to take a specific action. It is a call for immediate attention and action regarding the situation in Gaza and the West Bank.

### 3. Expressive Act:

Data:

"This statement is unacceptable."

"We all have the responsibility to uphold International Humanitarian Law without exception to the situation in Gaza."

"At the same time, it is critical to support the work of UN Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator to pave the way for the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance in Gaza."

“This is essential to start fair and balanced work on the two-state solution and to stop Israel's brutal aggression.”

This is an expressive act where the speaker is expressing their opinion and emotions about a particular statement made by Prime Minister Netanyahu. It reflects the speaker's strong disapproval and condemnation.

#### **4. Commissive Act:**

Data:

"Indonesia will take any possible avenues to support Palestine."

“And next month, Indonesia will present its Oral Statement for the ICJ Advisory Opinion brought to the court on the mandate of the General Assembly.”

In this sentence, the speaker is committing to taking actions in the future to support Palestine. It's a promise or commitment to engage in certain activities for the benefit of Palestine.

#### **5. Declarative Act:**

Data:

"On 18 January, Prime Minister Netanyahu openly declared he would not allow a Palestinian state to exist."

“The UN Charter is clear.”

The speaker is making a declarative act by presenting a fact or information about a statement made by Prime Minister Netanyahu. It provides information to the audience and contributes to the argument being presented.

Each of these speech acts serves a specific communicative function within the context of the speech, contributing to the overall message and persuasive intent of the speaker.

As seen from the analysis, the speaker employs a combination of emotional, ethical, and logical interest to build a persuasive and comprehensive argument. This is intended to evoke audience's emotions, to establish credibility, and to present logical reasoning. The speaker employs pathos as part of the strategy to evoke emotional responses from the audience. It fosters a deeper connection to the issue them to consider the human impact of the geopolitical conditions in Palestine. At last, the speaker builds ethos by emphasizing their consistent presence, expressing unwavering commitment, referencing international norms, pursuing legal action, rejecting unacceptable statements, and appealing to shared responsibilities. These elements collectively contribute to the credibility and ethical standing of the speaker in addressing the issue of Palestine.

Besides rhetorical strategies in which rhetorical proofs are employed in the speech, speech acts are also present in the speech. This indicates that the speech delivered is intended to not only evoking audience's awareness and concern, but also it aims to spread the notion that an action must be taken regarding the conflict that have been occurred between the two countries. The type of speech act which occurs the most is directive which is 31%. This aligns with the goal of the speech which aims to demand all countries to take action. Moreover, the situation which in this extent is considered unfortunate from the side of the Palestinian causes suffering and loss towards its people. The speech also signifies the stance of Indonesia which support the freedom of Palestine and condemn any kind of genocide that is happening there.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study looks on the remarks made by Indonesia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Retno LP Marsudi, in response to the conflict between Israel and Palestine before the UN General Assembly. The purpose of the study is to investigate how Indonesia uses speech acts and rhetorical evidence to communicate its perspective on the matter. In this study, a qualitative methodology was utilized. Rhetorical devices and speech acts were the main areas of examination for the data. This rhetorical analysis demonstrated how the speech used pathos, ethos, and logos. Ethos—which placed a strong emphasis on ethics and credibility—was made clear by the minister's regular attendance at council meetings, Indonesia's steadfast support of Palestine, and allusions to global standards and established legal frameworks. Pathos, which plays on emotions, was used, especially when discussing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank, to arouse empathy, concern, and a sense of urgency. References to the UN Charter, Security Council resolutions, and causal linkages between actions and effects revealed logos, which includes logical appeal. Additionally, the research distinguished five categories of speech actions within the discourse: directive, expressive, declarative, assertive, and commissive acts. With 31% of all speech acts, directives were the most common type of speech act. This is in line with the speech's objective of pressing the international community and Council members to adopt particular measures in response to the situation. The speaker's thoughts and feelings were represented in the expressive acts, which strongly disapproved and condemned specific words. Commissive behaviour demonstrated a promise to continue supporting Palestine in the future. The study's findings highlight the complex interactions that occur when persuasion, language, and diplomatic efforts are used to resolve international disputes. The results advance our knowledge of how political speeches are written to deliver complex ideas, elicit reactions, and shape the direction of international conversation.

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