Persuasive Strategies in Arabic Religious Discourse: Evidence From the Friday Sermons of Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al-Nabulsi

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Abstract

The present study aims at examining the persuasion process in Arabic religious discourse. In particular, it seeks to investigate the persuasive strategies used in Friday sermons. The data of the study is elicited from ten randomly selected Friday sermons delivered by Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al-Nabulsi. The study utilizes Connor and Lauer's (1985) model to explore rational, credibility and affective appeals. The findings point out the crucial role of persuasive appeals in enhancing the persuasive impact of the argument. The results reveal that the most frequently used appeals are rational appeals followed by affective and credibility appeals respectively. The analysis records the prevalence of the authority strategy among rational appeals, while showing the speaker's shared interest and point of view is the most pervasive strategy among credibility appeals. Finally, the use of vivid pictures is the most dominant strategy among affective appeals.

Keywords: Affective appeals, Credibility appeals, Persuasive strategies, Rational appeals, Religious discourse

1. Introduction

Persuasion is a formal and intellectual process that is adopted by someone to influence his/her addressees. Strictly speaking, persuasion is "a process that aims to change or reform attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or behaviours towards a predetermined outcome through voluntary compliance". (Mortensen, 2004:7). Persuasion has a social nature which can be evident through the discourse that occurs between two or more interlocutors. The writer or the speaker who is engaged in producing such a persuasive piece of discourse employs language

to raise a question, respond to a certain claim or deny a certain statement (Eemeren et al. 1996). Thus, persuasion plays a vital role in human interaction and communication that take place in various cultural, professional and social settings. It is intrinsically context-dependent and audience-oriented (Virtanen & Halmari, 2005).

Hirschberg (1996:1) maintained that a persuader needs several strategies to convince and influence his/her audience. Persuasion makes the hearer interested in gaining information without any form of coercion or violence. In particular, the persuader stimulates the recipients by using persuasive language to get a response which might be a modification in their behaviours. Persuasion usually takes the form of argument which means giving reasons for or against certain claims and statements. Argument and persuasion which are closely interrelated are not synonymous. In case of argument, the speaker admits the existence of opposing claims and attempts to justify why his claims deserve to be adopted, whereas the persuader tries to convince the addressee to take his/her claims for granted because there are no other claims that are worth adopting than his or hers

Aristotle is a leading persuasive theorist who classifies persuasive strategies into three main groups: Ethos, pathos and logos. Ethos refers to the credibility of the speaker and includes three dimensions: competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism. Competence refers to the persuader's expertise in the discussed topic. This competence can be perceived by providing arguments that are well organized and based on solid research. Trustworthiness refers to the extent to which the addressees believe that the sender is providing accurate and credible information, whereas dynamism means the degree to which the audience considers the speaker to be outgoing and animated. Pathos refers to the emotional appeal which makes the audience more involved in the discourse. Logos indicates the logic and reasoning of the argument (Stiff and Mongeau, 2003).

Persuasive texts can be examined from different perspectives. From a psycholinguistic viewpoint, persuasion might be explored by identifying the attitudes of the recipients and what is going in their minds when they listen to or read a persuasive piece of discourse. In sociolinguistics, researchers investigate the relationship between the persuader and the recipients to see to what extent social distance and inequality influence the recipients' behaviours and attitudes towards the conveyed message. According to discourse analysis, discourse analysts are concerned with analyzing the language of persuasion in terms of the structure of the persuasive linguistic message and how it is interpreted by the recipients (Brown and Yule, 1983: 1). The current study aims at examining the persuasion process in Arabic religious discourse. In particular, it attempts to explore the persuasive strategies employed in ten randomly selected Friday sermons delivered by Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al-Nabulsi.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies on the Persuasive Strategies Used in Religious Discourse

Several studies have been conducted on persuasion in religious discourse. Al-Nasher 2010; Al-Hussaini 2012; Mohan 2014; Sharif and Abdullah 2014; Sallomi and Nayel 2017; Adam

2017, among others). Al-Nasher (2010) investigated the use of persuasive strategies in English argumentative religious discourse that addresses non-Muslims. In particular, she examined 30 argumentative texts from the first volume of Deedat's *The Choice: Islam and Christianity*. The analysis revealed that the rational appeal is the most prevalent while the emotional appeal is the least in enhancing the religious persuasive text. The study emphasized the major role that linguistic and textual elements serve to maintain the authority of the religious discourse, increase the degree of certainty, improve the comprehension of the persuasive message and enhance the relations between the persuader and the audience.

Al-Hussaini (2012) explored the rhetoric of oratory in English and Arabic. The findings showed that oration in both languages performs an essential role in persuading and addressing the audiences. The orators in both languages depend on the use of different linguistic features such as the use of personal pronouns, emotional words, repetition, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, rhyming, metaphor, simile, parallelism and paronomasia, etc.

Mohan (2014: 28) identified the persuasive strategies that religious orators use to persuade their audience. The study concluded that "the power of these orators lies not only in forging acceptable religious ideologies but also in the strategic use of paralinguistic strategies such as pitch, pause, and pace in their oratory".

Sharif and Abdullah (2014: 329) investigated persuasion in some ceremonial speeches of Mother Teresa. The researchers concluded that "persuasion is a multi-faceted phenomenon that results via the use of various discursive strategies and rhetorical techniques", such as questions, figures of speech, rhetorical proofs and speech acts of expressive, assertive, directives, and representatives.

Sallomi and Nayel (2017) examined the use of persuasive techniques in both English and Arabic religious sermons. The researchers found that although the vast majority of persuasive techniques are used in both sermons, there are still some slight differences between both of them. The English sermons examined in the reported study lack the anecdote technique which is an important strategy in persuasion, whereas the use of Al-Sajja (alliteration) is more widespread in the Arabic sermons.

Adam (2017) analyzed scripted sermons, particularly sermon titles and openings to identify the persuasive strategies employed. The researcher maintained that persuasive appeals (ethos, pathos and logos) are used to legitimize the set of Christian values via language. Thus, the intended purpose of religious discourse is achieved. Moreover, the study concluded that pathos (an emotional appeal to the audience) is crucial in persuasion. Humor also plays a key role in bridging the gap between the speaker and the audience and in making the persuasive message more accessible.

2.2. Studies on the Persuasive Strategies Used in Different Genres

Many research studies have been carried out on persuasion in different genres such as political discourse, advertisements and literary work, etc. (Boden 2004; Mikayelyan 2011; Flergin 2014; Ko 2015; Rabab'ah and Khawaldeh 2016; Rezaei and Nourali 2016, among

others). Boden (2004) investigated Shakespeare's persuasive dialogues. The researcher found that the results of the analysis contradict the traditional assumption about persuasion as a type of communication that is dominated and controlled by only one speaker.

Mikayelyan (2011: 13) examined persuasive discourse from the perspectives of literary discourse. The researcher concluded that "the persuasive discourse markers can be revealed within the situation/context modelled through contextual clues and communicative strategy markers".

Flergin (2014: 67) explored the use of persuasion in a number of advertisements published in some printed media in India. The study concluded that lexical and grammatical words at the textual level and figures and images at the visual level are crucial in advertisements. Moreover, the use of speech acts is a powerful persuasive technique among textual advertisements. Photographs are more persuasive than paintings and drawings. Attraction and persuasion are two different levels of influence. While attraction "is more sensory and immediate, persuasion is more intensive and long- lasting".

Ko (2015:114) examined Taiwan's President Ma Ying-Jeou's political discourse to analyze the persuasive techniques adopted in his discourse. The results indicated that "fear and anger were the negative elements of pathos used by Ma, while hope and security were the positive elements of pathos used". The Findings showed that among these four components of pathos, "appealing to the security of the public was dominant throughout the debate".

In the same vein, Rezaei and Nourali (2016) investigated the use of persuasive strategies by Iran President Mr. Rouhani and the U. S. former President Mr. Obama. The researchers stated that although both presidents can persuade, their persuasive techniques differ dramatically. President Rouhani uses more persuasive strategies than the former President Obama. He also uses Alliteration, while the U. S. former President Obama uses metaphor more than other techniques in his speeches. The study concluded that the use of persuasive techniques is based on culture.

Rabab'ah and Khawaldeh (2016) identified the persuasive appeals utilized in English and Arabic TV advertisements published on YouTube. The researchers found that the most prevalent appeals in the sample are emotional appeals, rational appeals, and play on words. According to Aristotle's categorization, pathos is the most widely used appeal.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 3 describes the study's objectives and methodology. Findings are presented and discussed in section 4, while conclusions and recommendations are provided in section 5.

3. The Present Study

3.1 Aims and Questions of the Study

Language plays a significant role in religious discourse since religious orators use this valuable tool to persuade people, shape their thoughts and achieve certain goals. The primary concern of this paper is to investigate the persuasion process in religious discourse. More specifically, the current study seeks to answer the following question:

(1) What are the persuasive strategies used in Friday sermons?

3.2 Data Collection Procedures and Analysis

Ten Friday sermons delivered by Dr. Mohammad Al-Nabulsi were randomly selected and downloaded from Nabulsi Encyclopedia of Islamic Science website, http://nabulsi.com. The sermons covered a variety of topics such as cooperation, patience, Ramadan and how to raise children, etc. The sermons were fully transcribed and analyzed to find out the persuasive strategies which were employed. The researcher adopted Connor and Lauer's (1985) model of appeals which is presented in the following tables 1, 2 and 3 (Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007:124). This model makes use of Aristotelian's theory of persuasion in which persuasive strategies are classified into: rational, credibility and affective appeals which correspond to logos, ethos and pathos. This model classifies persuasive strategies into: 12 rational strategies, four credibility strategies and three affective strategies. This research is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Quantitatively, frequencies and percentages of persuasive strategies were found and tabulated. Qualitatively, the researcher presented an explanation of how and why such strategies are used. The next section presents the data generated in the current study.

Table 1. Types and explanation of rational strategies

Type of Strategy	Abbrev.	Explanation
Descriptive example	R1	Using a compelling descriptive example from one's own or someone else's experience.
Narrative example	R2	Employing narrative examples which have a story form i.e. a beginning, middle and end.
Classification	R3	Placing in a class or unit, and describing what that means.
Comparison	R4	Using comparison to support one's focus.
Contrast	R5	Using contrast to support one's focus.
Degree	R6	Arguing that two things are separated by a difference of degree rather than kind, or making an appeal for an incremental change.
Authority	R7	Using the authority of a person other than the writer.
Cause and effect-consequences	R8	Showing how one event is the cause of another.
Model	R9	Proposing a model for action that relies on existing programs.
Stage process	R10	Reviewing previous steps and looking forward to what steps need to be taken.
Ideal or Principle	R11	Basing the argument on universal premises that are accepted by all members of the audience.
Information	R12	Using supporting facts and statistics.

Table 2. Types and explanation of credibility strategies

Type of Strategy	abbrev.	Explanation
Firsthand experience	C13	Providing information taken from the speaker's experience.
Showing the speaker's respect for the audience's interests and point of view	C14	Avoiding clash with the receiver's own beliefs and conviction.
Showing the speaker's shared interests and point of view	C15	Highlighting any views or interests that are similar to those of the receiver.
Showing the writer's good character and judgment	C16	Being neutral and objective.

Table 3. Types of affective strategies

Type of Strategy	abbrev.	Explanation
Appealing to the audience's views	A17	Either emotional, attitudinal or moral.
Vivid pictures	A18	Creating a thought or a mind's eye vision.
Charged language	A19	Using strong language to arouse emotion.

4. Results and Discussion

The Friday sermons are analyzed and classified into three persuasive appeals (rationality, credibility and affective). The persuasive strategies used in each appeal type are classified and then analyzed. The results of the strategies' classification are listed in tables.

4.1 The Overall Frequency of Persuasive Appeals and Their Percentage

Table 4 presents a complete list of the persuasive appeals identified in the ten Friday sermons of Dr. Mohammad Al-Nabulsi. It shows that the orator tends to use some persuasive appeals more than others.

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of persuasive appeals in the ten Friday sermons

Appeal type	Rational Appeals	Credibility Appeals	Affective Appeals	Total
Frequency	334	76	90	500
Percentage	66.8%	15.2%	18%	100%

Table 4 shows that the overall number of appeals in the ten Friday sermons is 500. The quantitative analysis records the highest frequency for rational appeals which reach 66.8%, whereas the percentages of credibility and affective appeals are 15.2% and 18%, respectively.

The dominance of rational appeals can be attributed to the nature of the propositions being discussed in which the orator depends on using logic and referring to authoritative texts to support his arguments. Rational appeals enable the orator to validate the truthfulness of his claims. On the other hand, the orator used affective appeals more than credibility appeals because he aimed at arousing emotions and attracting the attention of the audience more than focusing on showing his moral virtue and goodwill.

4.1.1 The Frequency and Percentage of Individual Strategies Within Each Appeal

Table 5 presents a complete list of the individual strategies that are identified within each appeal. It shows that the orator tends to use some strategies within each appeal more than others.

Table 5. Frequency and percentage of individual strategies within each appeal

	Strategy Type	Abbreviation	Frequency	Percentage
Rational Appeal	Descriptive example	R1	23	6.88%
	Narrative example	R2	15	4.49%
	Classification	R3	7	2.09%
	Comparison	R4	2	0.59%
	Contrast	R5	27	8.08%
	Degree	R6	19	5.68%
	Authority	R7	192	57.48%
	Cause and effect-consequences	R8	19	5.68%
	Model	R9	3	0.89%
	Stage process	R10	2	0.59%
	Ideal or Principle	R11	17	5.08%
	Information	R12	8	2.39%
Credibility Appeal	Firsthand experience	C13	16	21.05%
	Showing the speaker's respect for the	C14	2	2.63%

	audience's interests and point of view			
	Showing the speaker's shared interests and point of view	C15	41	53.94%
	Showing the writer's good character and judgment	C16	17	22.36%
Affective Appeal	Appealing to the audience's views	A17	2	2.22%
	Vivid pictures	A18	54	60%
	Charged language	A19	34	37.77%

Table 5 shows that among rational appeals, the highest percentage is that of authority (R7): 57.48%. Contrast (R5): 8.08% is the second in rate after (R7). Descriptive example (R1) scores 6.88%, whereas degree (R6) and cause and effect-consequences (R8) equally register 5.68%. The percentage of ideal or principle (R11) is 5.08% and the narrative example (R2) is 4.49%%. The lowest frequency is recorded for comparison (R4), stage process (R10) and model (R9): 0.59%, 0.59% and 0.89%, respectively.

The prevalence of authority strategies is due to the fact that the recipients addressed are spiritually committed people who pray in mosques. Moreover, the orator depends heavily on referring to some Islamic religious texts to support his arguments since he knows the great impact of the Holy Quran and Hadith on Muslims. The use of contrast (R5) reveals how the orator shows the differences to add more focus to the suggested point. The utilization of degree (R6) indicates that the orator depends on arguing that there are two things which are separated by a difference of degree rather than of kind, whereas the employment of cause and effect-consequences (R8) emphasizes the causes and effects of several issues. The use of (R12), which is concerned with any piece of information that is presented through statistics and facts, proves that the orator is logical in his argument and he is more concerned about addressing the rational sense in the receiver's mind.

Among credibility appeals, the highest percentage is that of showing the speaker's shared interests and point of view (C15): 53.94%. Showing the writer's good character and judgment (C16): 22.36 % is the second in rate after (C15), whereas firsthand experience (C13) scores 21.05%. The lowest frequency is recorded for showing the speaker's respect for the audience's interests and point of view (C14): 2.63%.

Showing the speaker's shared interests and point of view (C15) is the most dominant strategy within credibility appeals. This can be attributed to the fact that all recipients are Muslims who pray in mosques and share several things in common with the speaker. Thus, the speaker focuses on those shared views to enhance the credibility of his speech. Besides, the orator attempts to create a common ground and maintain a good relationship with the audience. Showing the writer's good character and judgment (C16) is also utilized in the sermons. It indicates how the orator is neutral and objective and he does not take sides. In this strategy,

the orator has also referred to the source from which he has taken his claims and all these sources are derived from the Holy Quran and Hadith to show that the speaker is neutral and he just refers to what is mentioned in these holy resources.

Among affective appeals, the highest percentage is that of vivid pictures (A18): 60%. Charged language (A19): 37.77% is the second in rate after (A18). The lowest frequency is recorded for appealing to the audience's views (A17) 2.22%. The high percentage of vivid pictures shows that the orator depends heavily on creating a thought or a mind's eye vision to persuade his audience. Moreover, the speaker employs the charged language to arouse the emotions of his audience.

4.2 Rational Appeal and Its Strategies

Rational discourse utilizes arguments to address the mind of the audience logically (Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007: 125). The analysis reveals the use of the following rational persuasive strategies.

4.2.1 Descriptive Example

This strategy involves giving supportive descriptive examples from one's own experience or others'. A descriptive example is shown below.

Strategy Type	Ex. NO.	Citation
R1	1	أحياناً يعطيك إنسان سنداً، هذا السند مضبوط بمبلغ معين، لك عندي مئة ألف، لك عندي مليون، لك عندي مئة مليون، لكن ما قولك أن تأخذ سنداً موقعاً و اكتب أي مبلغ تريد، إن كتبت ألف مليون تأخذهم، هذا معنى قول الله عز وجل: (إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ)
		Sometimes a person gives you a cheque. This cheque is worth a hundred thousand, a million, or a hundred million. But what about taking a blank signed cheque and writing on it any amount of money you wish to receive? Thus, if you write a thousand million, you will get it. This is the meaning of the words of Allah Almighty: "Verily the steadfast will have their reward without measure".

In this example, Al-Nabulsi attempted to show how in the hereafter God will reward patient people who endure difficult circumstances in their life. The reward that these people receive will be huge and endless. It looks similar to the following situation in which a certain person gives you a blank signed cheque and you are asked to write on it any amount of money you wish. This descriptive example thrills the reasoning process of the receiver to believe how God rewards patient people generously and it supports the persuader's claim about the

enormous value of patience as one of the best virtues of life in Islam. This descriptive example also clarifies the intended meaning conveyed by the Quranic verse.

4.2.2 Narrative Example

This strategy employs narrative examples that have a story form, i.e. a beginning, middle and end. A narrative example is shown below:

Strategy Type	Ex. NO.	Citation
R2	1	النبي عليه الصلاة والسلام عنده صحابي جليل، له ابن جميل الصورة، كان يحبه حباً لا حدود له، من شدة تعلقه بابنه كان يضعه على كتفه وهو عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، النبي الكريم سأله مرة أتحبه؟ فهذا الصحابي قال له كلمة رائعة، قال له: أحبك الله كما أحبه، بعد أيام افتقد النبي هذا الصحابي، فسأل عنه، فقيل له: لقد مات ابنه، فاستدعاه وعزاه، لكن الذي يلفت النظر أنه قال له: أيهما أحب إليك أن تمتع به عمرك- معك دائماً كظلك، في خدمتك، ولد بار، لم يفارقك، مطواع لك، بار بك- أم أن يسبقك إلى الجنة، فأي أبوابها فتحها لك؟ قال له: بل الثانية، قال له: هي لك. One of the Prophet's companions had a son who looked extremely beautiful. This companion loved his son very much and he was placing him on his shoulder to express his deep love for him. Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) once asked his companion if he loved his son. "May Allah love you as I love him," the companion replied. After a few days, the Prophet (PBUH) noticed his companion's absence and asked about him, it was said to him: "his son passed away." Thus, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) called the companion and expressed his condolences to him. "Do you prefer to keep your son with you in this life or to see him preceding you to paradise where he opens its gates for you?" the Prophet (PBUH) asked. "I will select the second choice," the companion replied. Thus, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said, "you will get it."

The orator provided a narrative example to show the great value of patience and to highlight the great reward that patient people will gain in the hereafter. In this narrative, there was a companion of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) who loved his son very much and he was playing with him a lot. After a certain period of time, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) noticed the absence of his companion. Thus, he asked about him. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was informed that his companion's son passed away. Consequently, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) had expressed his condolences to the companion and asked him whether he preferred to keep his son with him in this life or to see his little child in Paradise opening its gates for him. The companion selected the second choice. Then, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said you would be in Paradise. This narrative story supports the persuader's claim about the vital importance of patience in the life of Muslims since patient people will be in Paradise as a reward from God for their patience. This narrative example is derived from an authentic source (Sunnah)

which upgrades its credibility. And it influences the receiver's attitude as the example is imported from a holy source

4.2.3 Classification

This strategy mentions classes and labels units. Connor and Lauer (1985: 323) indicate that 'classification' can be indicated throughout moving from general to specific information. Below is an indicative example of classification:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R3	1	العلماء أجمعوا على أن الصبر ثلاثة أنواع، صبر على الطاعة، وصبر عن المعصية، وصبر على المصيبة.
		Islamic scholars agreed that there are three types of patience. Patience to perform worship, patience to abstain from sins and patience to endure calamity and troubles.

In the above example, Islamic scholars classified patience into three types. The first type which is patience in obedience to Allah means you need to be consistent in performing your worship with full conviction. The second type is the patience shown by abstaining from the things that God prohibits. For instance, striving not to commit sins like gambling and drinking alcohol, etc. The third type is the patience that you must have to endure difficulties like misfortunes, calamities and illnesses without complaining. The orator started with a broad proposition about patience, and then he proceeded throughout discussion into its specific types. The series of types shown above serves to legitimize the validity of the proposition articulated at the beginning about the three types of patience.

4.2.4 Comparison

This strategy is employed to show similarities to add more focus to the suggested point. An indicative example of comparison is shown below:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R4	1	وتؤخذ بنود هذا المنهج من القرآن الكريم والسنة، فكل أمر في القرآن الكريم يقتضي الوجوب ما لم تقم قرينة على خلاف ذلك، وكل أمر في السنة الصحيحة يقتضي الوجوب.
		The terms of this approach are taken from the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Each command in the Holy Quran requires necessity unless there is a presumption that contradicts it. Each command in Sunnah also requires necessity.

This example shows the similarity between the Holy Quran and Sunnah which is known as the body of traditional, social, and legal custom and practice of the Islamic community, based on the verbally transmitted record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions (or

disapprovals) of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about Muhammad's companions. They are similar in the following way, any command that is mentioned in the Holy Quran or Sunnah has to be obeyed. This strategy renders a clear relation of similarity between the Holy Quran and Sunnah whose commands have to be carried out. Al-Nabulsi made this comparison to stress the necessity of cooperation in Islam since God orders us to cooperate on good things and this command is mentioned both in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. The previous comparison is supported by the authority of these two holy references.

4.2.5 Contrast

This strategy shows the differences between things to add more focus to the suggested point. Below is an indicative example that shows how contrast is made:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R5	1	**الدنيا دار تكليف بينما الآخرة دار تشريف، الدنيا دار عمل لكن الآخرة دار جزاء.**
		Dunya (the temporal world) is a place for working and fulfilling Islamic duties, while ākhira (the hereafter) is a place for honour.

The orator employed contrast in the above example to enhance the rationality of his argument that we should have patience to endure calamity and troubles in dunya. The contrast is made here between dunyā and ākhira. Dunya refers to the temporal world and its earthly concerns and possessions, while ākhira is the hereafter. Dunyā is created for work and fulfilling Islamic duties, whereas ākhira is created to reward those who obey God's commands. The difference between dunyā and ākhira is stated to support the truthfulness of the orator's claim that Muslims should show patience to endure difficulties like misfortunes and calamities since this life is temporal and they will be rewarded generously in the hereafter for their patience in dunyā (the temporal world).

4.2.6 Degree

This strategy is used to argue that two things are separated by a difference of degree rather than kind. Below is an indicative example of degree:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R6	1	أحب ثلاثاً، وحبي لثلاث أشد، أحب الطائعين، وحبي للشاب الطائع أشد، أحب المتواضعين، وحبي للغني المتواضع أشد، أحب الكرماء، وحبي للفقير الكريم أشد.
		The Almighty said: "I love three among people, but I love other three more; I love the obedient, yet I love the young obedient more, I love the humble, yet I love the humble rich more and I love the generous, yet I love the generous poor more."

The previous Hadith Qudsi (sacred hadith) shows how God loves three types of people, but his love differs in terms of its degree in each case. God loves those who obey his commands,

but he loves young people who obey his commands more. God loves humble people, but he loves humble people who are rich more. God loves generous people, but he loves generous people who are poor more. This strategy highlights the great value of being young and obedient, humble and rich, and generous and poor at the same time.

4.2.7 Authority

This strategy involves utilizing the authority of others rather than the speaker himself. Authority appeal is used to put more emphasis on the content of the message and it involves referring to religious sources or mentioning a distinguished name that has a strong influence on the listener (Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007: 127). Below are three indicative examples of authority.

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R7	1	نحن في موضوع التعاون: (وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى) "Help one another in righteousness and piety".
R7	2	لا يغيب عن أذهانكم أن ابن خلدون واضع علم الاجتماع يقول في كتابه الذي يعد الأول في هذا العلم، المقدمة لابن خلدون يقول: إن الاجتماع الإنساني ضروري. Keep in mind that Ibn Khaldun, the true founder of sociology, says in his book: "human gathering is essential".
R7	3	يمكن أن أقول لكم بشكل دقيق الحديث الشريف: (علموا ولا تعنفوا، فإن المعلم خير من المعنف). [أخرجه الحارث عن أبي هريرة] The Prophet, peace be upon him, said in the following wonderful Hadith: "Instruct other people and don't rebuke them, because the instructor is better than the rebuke." [Al-Harith, by Abi Hurairah]

In the first example, the orator mentioned a verse from the Holy Quran to support his argument about the importance of cooperation in Islam. He recited the verse because it starts with an imperative verb "help" which means God orders us to help and cooperate with each other by doing good things. In particular, he referred to the Holy Quran to rationalize his claim that cooperation in Islam is a must. Moreover, referring to such an authentic religious source makes the receiver commit to whatever being cited from this source since the authenticity of the Holy Quran cannot be questioned.

In the second example, he mentioned the name of Ibn Khaldun as a historiographer to support his argument that a human being is social by nature and he needs to cooperate with others. The persuader assumed that the reader is acquainted with Ibn Khaldun, and thus he will accept what stated by him.

In the third example, the orator resorted to an Islamic Hadith that is said by Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) to urge people to instruct their children instead of rebuking them. By mentioning this Hadith, Al-Nabulsi succeeded in persuading people to focus on instructing and raising their children according to the Islamic principles. Referring to this Hadith adds more credibility to the orator's argument.

4.2.8 Cause and Effect-Consequences

This strategy is employed to manifest the end result of something or how one thing leads to the existence of another. Below is an indicative example of cause and effect-consequences:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R8	1	بدافع من حرصك على كمالك، على بقائك، على سعادتك، أطع ربك، لأن منهج الله عز وجل منهج موضوعي.
		Stemming from your strive for perfection, survival and happiness, obey your God because the approach of God Almighty is objective.

The above example illustrates the cause and effect consequences. It shows that we have to obey our God to maintain our existence, happiness and perfection. The orator indicated the legitimacy of his claim since it can be assessed through its effect. If you follow God's approach which is objective, you will maintain your existence, happiness and perfection. In other words, this strategy enables the speaker to urge his audience to take a certain action by showing its positive consequences.

4.2.9 Model

This strategy involves agreeing on a suggested model or an example to follow. Below is an indicative example of a model:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R9	1	النبي عليه الصلاة والسلام كان واثقاً من ربه، حينما نزل من الطائف كذبوه، وسخروا منه، ونالوه بالأذى، وأدميت قدماه الشريفتان، سأله زيد: كيف تعود إلى مكة وقد أخرجتك ؟ قال: إن الله ناصر نبيه، هذه الثقة، الله لا يتخلى عنا أبداً، لكن ينبغي ألا نتخلى عن ديننا، ينبغي أن نطيعه، ينبغي أن ننصره حتى ينصرنا، ينبغي أن نلجأ إليه، ينبغي أن نقيم منهجه، ينبغي أن نصطلح معه.
		The Prophet (PBUH) was confident of his God. When he came down from Ta'if, its people did not believe him. Instead, they ridiculed and hurt him. His honored feet were hurt. "How do you return to Mecca since its people kicked you?" Zaid asked Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). "God always supports his Prophet," the Prophet (PBUH) replied. This is the trust that we should have, God

> never abandons us, but we should not abandon our religion, we
> should obey our God, we should defend him until he supports us,
> we should resort to him, we should follow his approach.

The orator mentioned Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a model to be followed in all aspects of Muslim's life. The example shows how Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) believes in his God who always supports him. Thus, Muslims have to believe that their God will not abandon them and he will always support them if they follow his orders. In the above example, the orator referred to an incident in which Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was humiliated and beaten by people in Ta'if, but he did not surrender because he knew that his God would never abandon him. In the same manner, Muslims should always believe that their God will never abandon them. Through following Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a model, this strategy convinces the receiver to believe that God always supports Muslims as he always supports his prophet (PBUH).

4.2.10 Stage Process

This strategy is employed to review previous steps and look forward to what steps need to be taken. Below is an indicative example of stage process:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R10	1	يعني في مرحلة لا يصلح له إلا الملاعبة والمداعبة لأنه لا يدرك، وهناك أب أحياناً يبكي ابنه فيضربه ضرباً مبرحاً، عمره ثلاث سنوات، لاعب ولدك سبعاً، بعد السبعة أدبه سبعاً، ثم كبر صار له كيان، هذا الكيان لا يسمح لك أن تهينه أمام الناس، وراقبه سبعاً، يحتاج أن تعامله بحذر شديد لا هو راشد فيرضيك ولا هو طفل فتعذره، يسمونه عند بعض النساء سن محير، فبعد السبعة الثالثة راقبه وبيّن له بينك وبينه. The first seven years of a child's life, playing is exactly what he needs because everything else is beyond his comprehension. Some fathers punish their 3–year- old child severely, because he cries, while he should play with him at this age. Play with your child for seven years and educate him for another seven years. After he is 14, he becomes a whole being, and so he won't accept to be insulted in front of people. You'd rather stand by and watch him, be very careful while treating him, because he is not old enough to act like adults and please you with his behavior, nor is he a child to be excused. Children in this particular period of their life are described as "Juveniles". After the third seven years (of your son's life), you should watch him from a distance, and you may offer him your advice in private.

The orator mentioned the stages that people should pass through to raise their children effectively. The stages are stated as follows: Play with your child for seven years. Then discipline him/her for seven years. Then be his/her friend for seven years. Then give him/her free rein. This strategy is employed to review these stages which are necessary to raise children properly.

4.2.11 Ideal or Principle

This strategy involves basing the argument on universal premises that are accepted by all members of the audience. Below is an indicative example of a principle:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R11	1	ويعبر الحكماء عن هذا بقولهم: الإنسان اجتماعي بالطبع والضرورة.
		The wise said, "Human beings are social creatures by nature".

The orator mentioned a principle that all people agree on. It states that a human being is social by nature and necessity. Al-Nabulsi referred to this premise to highlight the need for cooperation in any society. This premise was acknowledged by the receivers as an undeniable fact. The persuader set up a basis upon which the reasoning was built up to encourage people to cooperate. Thus, after accepting the premise, the orator moved to appeal to the receivers' common sense in order to enhance them to cooperate and deal with each other in a good way.

4.2.12 Information

This strategy involves using supporting facts and statistics. A number of facts and statistics are mentioned, below is an indicative example of information:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
R12	1	إذا صحّ أن أقول لم يبق للمسلمين في أيديهم من ورقة رابحة إلا أولادهم. فإذا كانت شاشات الصغار فيها 58% من مشاهد الجنس في شاشات الكبار، و37 % سحر وشعوذة، والباقي أعمال عنف ماذا تنتظر من هذا الجيل الذي تعقد عليه الأمة كل آمالها ؟
		The only trump card in Muslims' hands is their children, but can we expect to have a good generation on who all the hopes of the Ummah are pinned since the cartoon movies include 58% of sexual scenes, 37% of black magic and the rest are about violence?

Al-Nabulsi mentioned several facts that are supported by some statistics to strengthen his claim that young people and children are affected by what they watch on TV and thus we cannot raise them properly if we do not control what they watch. 58% of TV programs that are watched by young people are about sex, 37% of these programs are about magic and superstitions and the remaining percentage of programs is about violence. This strategy maintains the validity of the persuader's claims in his arguments. The persuader in religious discourse should be precise and definite in presenting his evidence. In fact, the numbers given in this example show the certainty of the persuader's remark and reflect his knowledge and confidence.

4.3 Credibility Appeal and Its Strategies

According to Aristotle, the persuader should not depend only on presenting arguments to convince people, but he should reflect a trustworthy image of himself. The term "credibility" is used to replace the Aristotelian's ethos. Both of them indicate goodwill, wisdom and moral

virtue, but the new term comes to include more persuasive strategies (Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007: 129).

4.3.1 Firsthand Experience

This strategy involves providing information taken from the speaker's experience. Mentioning personal incidents and stories helps to establish the speaker's experience and knowledge in his domain. The image of the speaker's character in the eyes of the receiver is very important in increasing the credibility of his/her claims. Below is an indicative example of firsthand experience:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
C13	1	أنا أعرف عالماً أظنه صالحاً وأحترمه كثيراً، ليس من دمشق من الشمال، له ابن درس الطب، ثم دخل كلية الشريعة، ثم حفظ كتاب الله كله، ثم أدى الخدمة الإلزامية، ثم خطب له، كان عرسه بعد أسبوع، مات بحادث سير، ذهبنا مع بعض الأخوة العلماء من دمشق إلى الشمال كي نعزيه، أنا فوجئت أنه كان في أعلى درجات الرضا عن الله، رأيت الصبر بشكل واضح جداً عندما زرناه في مدينته، هذا هو المؤمن.
		I know a scholar. I think he is a good person and I respect him very much. He is not from Damascus, he is from the North. His son studied medicine, then he enrolled in the faculty of Sharia. He also memorized the Holy Quran. After he performed the compulsory service, he got engaged. One week before his wedding, he passed away in a traffic accident. We went with some scholars from Damascus to the North to express condolences to him. I was surprised how this father was fully satisfied with God's will. We saw his patience very clearly when we visited him in his city, this is the believer.

The above example presents a story from the orator's own experience to show how Muslims have to endure calamity and troubles with patience. In this story, there was a scholar in Syria whose son studied Medicine and then he studied Shari'a. His son was going to get married, but he passed away one week before his wedding because of a car accident. When the orator had visited this scholar, he noticed how patient he was. The orator narrated this personal experience to increase the credibility of his claim about the necessity of enduring difficulties like misfortunes, calamities and illnesses without complaining. This strategy creates the impression that the orator is knowledgeable about the topic that he is discussing with his audience.

4.3.2 Showing the Speaker's Respect for the Audience's Interests and Point of View

This strategy involves avoiding clash with the receiver's own beliefs and conviction. Below is an illustrative example that shows the speaker's respect for the audience's interests and point of view:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
C14	1	أول حقيقة أتمنى على كل أب منكم أن يعترف بها أن أخطاء أولاده ربما ترجع في الأعم الأغلب إلى أخطائه، فقبل أن تعنف تلافي الخطأ، بدل أن تعنف تلافى الخطأ، لأن الطفل فطر فطرة سليمة إن علمته على الصدق كان صادقاً، إن علمته على الأمانة كان أميناً، إن وجهته كان كما تتمنى.
		The truth that every father should admit is that the flaws of his children are most likely the outcome of his own. Therefore, instead of rebuking his child, the father should first nip his own flaw in the bud, because the child originally has a clean Fitrah. Hence, when you teach him honesty and trustworthiness, he will become honest and trustworthy, and if you instruct him properly, he will be as you want him to be.

In the above example, the orator highlighted that the flaws of children are most likely attributed to the flaws of their fathers. He attempted to avoid clash with the receiver's own beliefs when he used "most likely". The orator believes that fathers are responsible for their children's flaws. However, this claim might be rejected by the audience. Thus, he used "most likely" to avoid such a clash. This strategy reflects the politeness of the orator and serves to give a good impression of him.

4.3.3 Showing the Speaker's Shared Interests and Point of View

This strategy involves highlighting any views or interests that are similar to those of the receiver. Below is an illustrative example of showing the speaker's shared interests and point of view:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
C15	1	ونحن أمة واحدة، إلهنا واحد، نبينا واحد، قرآننا واحد، أهدافنا واحدة، تجمعنا عوامل لا تعد ولا تحصى.
		We are one nation. We have one God, one prophet, one Qur'an and we have the same goals. We also have countless factors that gather us.

In this example, the orator tended to mention something shared between him and his audience because all audience members are Muslims. All Muslims believe that they belong to one nation, they have one God, one prophet, one Quran and they have the same goals. This strategy creates a positive attitude towards the orator who highlighted the shared points between him and his addresses. Thus, this increases the credibility of his claims. Further, this effective strategy enables the speaker to create solidarity with his audience by showing himself as a part of it.

4.3.4 Showing the Writer's Good Character and Judgment

This strategy shows how the speaker is neutral and objective and he is not taking sides. Below is an illustrative example of showing the writer's good character and judgment:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
C16	1	اذاً الصبر بكلام النبي عليه الصلاة والسلام عند الصدمة الأولى. True patience according to the Messenger of Allah is that which comes at the first blow.

The orator in the above example showed his fair judgment when he noted that according to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), true patience is the patience that you first show once you face a calamity. The objectivity of his judgment is demonstrated by referring to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). This strategy gives authoritative evidence and highlights the credibility of the argument. It also aims at creating a positive image of the speaker as a person of good intentions.

4.4 Affective Appeal and Its Strategies

Persuasion "may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotion. Our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile" (Aristotle 1954: 9). Rational and credibility appeals are not sufficient to change the receiver's attitude. Thus, affective messages serve to catch attention and are likely to let the receiver accept a certain claim easily.

4.4.1 Appealing to the Audience's Views

This strategy involves emotional, attitudinal or moral appealing to the audience's views. Below is an illustrative example that shows appealing to the audience's views:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
A17	1	أسوق هذا الكلام لمن لم يعجبه صيامه في رمضان، أسوق هذا الكلام لمن شعر بالإحباط في أثناء الصيام، كل أشهر العام رمضان، والواحد الديان معك وهو يستمع إليك، التوبة النصوح كما قال بعض العلماء: "الندم بالقلب، والاستغفار باللسان، والإقلاع عن الذنب." I am mentioning these words to those who were not satisfied with their fasting in Ramadan. I am mentioning these words to those who felt frustrated during the fast. All months of the year are like Ramadan since God is with you and he is listening to you. As some scholars said: "Repentance is regretting in the heart, asking for forgiveness by the tongue, giving up the sin."

This example shows that the orator encouraged those who were not satisfied with their fasting during Ramadan not to feel disappointed because God always forgives our sins when we ask

for forgiveness. This justification comes in the form of supportive statements that appeal to the receiver's emotion. These supportive statements such as "*I am mentioning these words to those who were not satisfied with their fasting in Ramadan". "I am mentioning these words to those who felt frustrated during the fast"* put the receiver into the right mood to accept the argument that *"God is with you and he is listening to you*". These statements also evoke strong and positive emotional reactions and put the receiver towards the desired direction.

4.4.2 Vivid Pictures

This Strategy involves creating a thought or a mind's eye vision. Below is an illustrative example of a vivid picture:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
A18	1	وفي القلب نيران حسرات لا يطفئها إلا الرضا بأمره ونهيه.
		In the heart, there is a fire of regret which cannot be extinguished except by satisfaction with God's commands, and prohibitions.

In the above example, the orator created a picture that depicts the heart as a container that is filled with fire, and this fire can only be extinguished by being satisfied with what your God orders you to do and what he prevents you from doing. Your satisfaction with Gods' commands and prohibition is described as a substance that is used to extinguish this fire. This picture which makes the thought vivid and more present enables the audience to become deeply involved in the message that the orator is trying to convey. It also arouses desired emotions in the audience.

4.4.3 Charged Language

This strategy involves the use of strong language to arouse emotion. The purpose of this appeal is to let the receiver experience a feeling of negative connotation. Below is an illustrative example of charged language:

Strategy Type	EX. NO.	Citation
A19	1	قضية المسلمين اليوم قضية نكون أو لا نكون، قضية بقاء أو فناء، لأن الطرف الآخر يريد إفقارنا، وإضلالنا، وإفسادنا، وإذلالنا، وإبادتنا، فلذلك الورقة الوحيدة الرابحة في أيدينا أولادنا.
		Today the issue of Muslims is "to be or not to be", so it is an issue of being or extermination. The other party wants to impoverish, mislead, corrupt, humiliate and destroy us, and the only trump card that we have is our children.

In the above example, the orator used a strong language to arouse the emotion of anger which aims at urging Muslims to protect their religion from their adversaries who try to mislead, destroy, and humiliate them. The speaker wanted his audience to experience anger in order to let them take immediate actions. Consequently, he was angry in his language by using words that were charged with negative emotions such as "impoverish", "mislead", "corrupt", "humiliate" and "destroy". The orator showed that the only way for Muslims to face their adversaries is by raising their children properly based on the Islamic traditions and instructions. Raising this issue stirs up the feeling of anger and agitation against Muslims' adversaries. Thus, this drives the receivers to accept the solution suggested by the speaker which refers to the necessity of bringing up their children according to the Islamic principles.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study has examined the rhetorical structure of Friday sermons in relation to three basic appeals: (rationality, credibility, and affective). The findings of the present research study revealed that persuasive strategies are widely used in religious discourse in general and in Friday sermons in particular. The three appeals are extensively employed in the examined sermons to create the orator's persuasive message. However, the average occurrence of each appeal varies. The quantitative analysis records the highest frequency for rational appeals followed by affective and credibility appeals respectively. The dominance of rational appeal can be attributed to the nature of the propositions being discussed in which the orator depends on using logic and referring to authoritative texts to support his arguments. The prevalence of authority strategy (R7) in the rational appeal is due to the heavy reliance on the Quranic verses and Hadith. The orator used affective appeals more than credibility appeals in which he attempted to arouse emotions and attract the attention of the audience more than focusing on showing his moral virtue and goodwill. The most frequently used strategy among affective strategies is the use of vivid pictures (A18) which aims at creating a thought. The credibility appeal is demonstrated by showing the speaker's shared interests and points of view (C15). The study concluded that persuasive religious arguments are structured throughout the interaction of the three rhetorical appeals. Future research may examine the persuasive strategies that are employed in a number of Islamic websites dedicated to calling non-Muslims to Islam.

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