

The power of language and religious thoughts: A pragma-rhetorical analysis of Israr Ahmed's speech

Farzana Nawaz, Tahira Jabeen and Sadia Rather*

Abstract: Language has transforming power to shape thought, inspire action, and communicate complicated concepts. In religious discourse, it serves as a medium for communicating spiritual truths, and a means for persuasion; affecting beliefs and directing actions. The current study employs the pragma-rhetorical concept developed by Dascal (2003) in that he treats rhetorical appeals and figures of speech as both pragma rhetorical devices. It further investigates the way they affect the ultimate goals of discourse. The research explores how Dr. Israr Ahmed uses rhetorical techniques such as ethos, pathos, and logos along with rhetorical tropes to transmit theological teachings to diverse audience effectively. His speech titling "Human Personality and Two Types of Knowledge" has been taken as a case study. By answering the essential questions about the type and the role of rhetorical strategies in Dr. Israr Ahmed's speeches, this research establishes the critical role that English rhetoric plays to establish the pragmatic purposes of religious discourse. The analysis shows that he uses a variety of rhetorical strategies, including ethos, pathos, logos, metaphor, parallelism, repetition, understatement, exaggeration, and rhetorical questions to attain the pragmatic functions like motivation, persuasion, information, justification, evidence, understanding, overcoming cultural boundaries, and promoting spiritual and social solidarity in the modern context of religious thinking. The findings suggest that the role of rhetorical strategies is indispensable in religious speeches. This study would provide a solid foundation for future linguistic researches on pragma-rhetorical strategies in various languages and religions.

Keywords: language, religious discourse, rhetorical strategies, pragmatic functions, pragma-rhetorical

Introduction

Israr Ahmed (1932-2010), one of the prominent Islamic scholars, philosopher and theologian of our times, is well known especially for

* Farzana Nawaz; Tahira Jabeen; Sadia Rather (✉)

The University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Muzaffarabad. Pakistan

e-mail: wee4t@yahoo.com (corresponding author)

his great work in Islamic Revivalism. His significant speeches combined religious insights with practical guidance. He advocated for a return to Quranic principles and authentic Islamic practices, critiquing the traditionalist and modernist approaches. He emphasized the *Quran* as a complete code of life. His efforts to revive Islamic teachings have left a lasting impact globally. Dr. Israr Ahmed's preaching is thought to be among the most significant and influential types of discourse. His speeches have distinctive linguistic features of rhetoric. Beyond the linguistic beauty, they have the ability to persuade, to impact on hearts and minds, to form beliefs and to promote moral understanding. This study focuses on how he uses rhetoric pragmatically. The data has been taken from the English Conference, "Round Table with Dr. Israr Ahmed", that was organized in Lahore by Tanzeem-e-Islami North America and Pakistan where Dr. Israr Ahmed had delivered speeches during six sessions on different topics addressing to the Panellists from USA, UK, and many other countries. The sample of this particular study is the first speech titling "Human Personality and Two Types of Knowledge". This study provides a pragma-rhetorical analysis of Dr. Israr Ahmed's speech in order to better understand how the aim of persuading the audience is achieved. This multidimensional paradigm provides a comprehensive perspective for strategic communication and persuasive intent in conversation. Given the strong relationship between the two fields of English rhetoric and pragmatics, the current study attempts to address the pragmatic roles English rhetoric plays in religious speeches.

A work of rhetoric is pragmatic in itself because it comes into being for the sake of more than itself. The creation of an action or the alteration of the thought depends heavily on rhetoric. The current study employs the pragma-rhetorical concept developed by Dascal (2003), in that he treats rhetorical appeals and figures of speech as both pragma rhetorical devices. The study further investigates the way they affect the ultimate goals of discourse. Dascal's work incorporates aspects of integrating rhetoric and pragmatics. He explores how the process of interpretation combines rhetoric—the art of persuasion—with pragmatics—the study of language use in context. Dascal proposes that knowing goes beyond mere word meaning to include consideration of how speakers employ language deliberately to accomplish different communicative objectives, including persuasion. The researcher intends to investigate how pragmatic functions can be attained through

the utilization of rhetorical appeals and certain tropes in religious discourse.

The current research tries to answer the following essential questions to fulfil the research objectives:

1. What type of rhetorical strategies are manifest in Dr. Israr Ahmed's speech?
2. What role do these strategies have in attaining the pragmatic goals?

Literature review

Pragmatics and rhetoric have been widely studied in a variety of contexts including political, religious, and social discourse. Many academics and linguists have examined the phenomenon in a variety of languages and genres, utilizing a variety of approaches and perspectives.

Khaleel and Abed (2016) investigated Nelson Mandela's interview before his presidency, concentrating on his use of rhetorical figures such as metaphors and rhetorical questions to persuade listeners. Their research highlighted how Mandela deviated from Grice's conversational maxims to increase persuasion while maintaining clarity and efficacy. This study underlined the importance of rhetorical devices in accomplishing communicative goals. Kim (2016) carried out a similar study in which he examines the discursive strategies employed by Christian religious speakers to support the church's decision to exempt women from pastoral guidelines. The study demonstrated that the *Bible* is founded on rules, principles, and beliefs by illuminating how some religious arguments are constructed using implicit presuppositions that are portrayed as unalterable, undeniable truths. Similarly, Al-Hindawi and Abu Krooz (2018) examined Lady Fatimatulzahra's speeches using Toulmin's argumentation model to identify her pragmatic rhetorical methods. Their research revealed how structured reasoning and rhetorical strategies were used to achieve her goals, offering insights into the persuasive power of religious discourse.

Bin Yuan (2018) conducted a research to explore the pragmatic functions of English rhetoric in public speech. The study examines the role of English rhetoric in shaping and expressing opinions during public speech programs. Using Emma Watson's *He for She* as a case study, the study concludes that parallelism strengthens opinions, irony expresses dissatisfaction, and rhetorical questions invite no response.

Proper English rhetoric promotes communication effectiveness and efficiency in both public and everyday settings. The rhetorical structure of Friday sermons in Islamic religious discourse is examined by Abu Rumman (2019). He looks at Aristotle's three modalities of persuasion in relation to the way language is constructed and used in Friday prayers for Muslims. Religious scholars use the holy Quran's surahs (chapters) and ayahs (verses) to persuade the audience. This demonstrates that religious speakers are responsible for influencing the audience. This indicates that, in contrast to other kinds, religious discourse is written with greater caution.

In order to provide a practical reflection on the introduction of COVID-19 headlines, Aziz (2022), examined pragmatically the language and style of newspaper headlines. He concluded that Journalists must be honest and impartial. As a result, they rely on facts and reasoning, particularly when discussing health issues. The results lend credence to the theory that the most common rhetorical devices used in relation to health-related themes, particularly the announcement of a pandemic disease, are logical appeals. Malik et al. (2022) studied the persuasive rhetoric present in religious. They analyze the effectiveness of language elements and various persuasive techniques found in religious speeches and rhetoric of persuasion to understand the significant role that rhetoric plays in the speeches, showcasing the art of language in informing, persuading, and impacting the listener's thoughts. The rhetoric of persuasion is classified into two categories: rational persuasion and irrational persuasion. In simpler terms, the rhetoric of persuasion in religious speeches is a crucial component utilized by experts to enhance the atmosphere and sway the listener's thoughts.

Yahaya and Ali (2022) examined pragma-rhetorical methods in the theological discussion between Ahmed Deedat and Jimmy Swaggart. Their investigation revealed the employment of logos, ethos, pathos, and figures of speech to create appealing arguments. This study showed how debaters employed pragmatics and rhetoric to engage listeners and establish trust. Alamgir, Waqar & Haq (2023) examined speeches by notable Islamic philosophers using Aristotle's rhetorical modes to discover persuasive methods. Their research showed how religious experts use reasoning, emotional appeals, and trustworthiness to effectively engage audiences. In the field of political rhetoric, Adebomi (2023) investigated President Muhammadu Buhari's COVID-19 speeches, identifying eight discourse tactics classified as

Aristotle's rhetorical appeal. These techniques included using data, collaboration, and emotional appeals to address public concerns during the pandemic. The results demonstrated how pragma-rhetorical strategies can efficiently manage public trust amid crises.

Al-Hadrawi & Al-Khazaali (2023), using Van Eemeren and Houtlosser's concept of strategic maneuvering, investigate the pragma-rhetorical framework of argumentative speech in the British Parliament. Important conclusions are that Jeremy Corbyn and the Prime Minister use different rhetorical devices to either justify or defend their points of view. The most common rhetorical strategy is exaggeration, so the arguments are quite rhetorical. Furthermore, emotional appeals—pathos—rule other kinds of arguments, stressing the need of audience emotions in effective communication. Naydenova et al. (2019), investigate the rhetorical strategies and linguistic mechanisms used in contemporary sermons, focusing on Patriarch Kirill's style as shown in his book *Patriarch Kirill in His Own Words*. The study examines how he uses dialogical, logical, and repetitious strategies to improve his sermons' efficacy and persuasiveness at the semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic levels.

Oswald (2023) in his essay offers a historical perspective on the connection between language and argumentation, emphasizing the ways in which linguistic pragmatics has been integrated into argumentation studies during the previous half-century. Based on Austin and Grice's writings, it examines the ways inferential traditions and speech act theory has impacted argumentation studies. The three main contributions of pragmatics to argumentation—descriptive, normative, and explanatory—are covered in this study. It draws attention to recent studies in this field and implies that there are still plenty of chances to investigate this intersection further.

The body of research on pragma-rhetorical methods is extensive but studies examining the pragmatic functions of rhetoric in the context of religious discourse are scarce. This study will surely contribute to the discipline by investigating the previously unexplored junction of pragmatics and rhetoric, providing a framework for future analysis of discourse.

Analytical framework

The current investigation was carried out using a qualitative descriptive approach to better understand the selected data pragmatically.

The data were collected from an English conference “Round Table with Dr. Israr Ahmed”. His first speech titled, “Human Personality and Two Types of Knowledge”, was taken as the sample of the study. It was then thoroughly evaluated through an intensely concentrated listening and transcribing of the YouTube video. A pragmatic-rhetorical examination was conducted through the concept developed by Dascal (2003), in that he treats rhetorical appeals and figures of speech as both pragma rhetorical devices. The study further investigated the way they affect the ultimate goals of discourse. The data analysis had two primary components. The first was to explore how Dr. Israr built his credibility (ethos), provoked emotional responses (pathos), and delivered rational reasons (logos) to influence his audience’s views and behaviours. The second was the rhetorical tropes utilized. Rhetorical tropes were derived inductively from studied data. This study looked beyond the analysis of overt rhetorical devices to uncover implicit communicative objectives that were ingrained in rhetorical appeals, and devices. The study focused on analyzing the relationships between form and function as it moved through this analytical process of unearthing deeper layers of meaning in the discourse.

Method of analysis

In light of the current study’s objectives, descriptive analysis was employed as a data analysis method to emphasize rhetoric’s significance in establishing pragmatic functions. The data was analyzed using the eclectic model that contains rhetorical appeals and rhetorical devices.

Data analysis and discussions

A speaker can accomplish certain communicative and persuasive objectives with the aid of certain rhetorical elements. The analysis suggests that Dr. Israr Ahmad tends to use ethos, logos and pathos along with rhetorical tropes to educate, inspire, and mentor his audience. It reveals how rhetoric works not only to inform, but also to engage, convince, and guide behaviour.

Pathos

The way in which the speaker appeals to the audience’s emotions to achieve the pragmatic goals of connecting with them or persuading them is referred as pathos. The prayers at the beginning of the speech call upon an emotional connection between the speaker and the

audience by sharing common beliefs. "I praise Allah and send my salutations and blessings to Muhammad..." (Ahmad, "Round Table 1/6", 6:11). Dr. Israr Ahmed employs honesty and respect in his persuading style. He further shows thankfulness to the audience and demonstrates big-heartedness, and admiration. He addresses: "Dear Brothers and Sisters, I must and do thank you from the depths of my heart that you have taken out time from your busy schedules..." (Ibid, 7:01) A personal touch is added through a detailed narrative of sharing a moment of his life. "During an operation on my knee there was an episode that my heart stopped for some time, so I had a fresh life after that..." (Ibid, 9:03) Empathy and relatability is enhanced through anecdotes. The speaker sounds more humanized.

"This material universe started from the Big Bang. I agree with it..." (Ibid, 7:01) The speaker mentions Big Bang, the widely accepted scientific theory about origin of the universe about 13.8 billion years ago. His interdisciplinary insights by blending the Big Bang theory and evolutionary biology further enhances ethos. It suggests the interconnections of knowledge that stimulates wonder and inquisitiveness. The speaker acknowledges the intricacy of the topics and exhibits a student-like inquisition, such as "Let me say here according to the Quran..." This humbleness makes him more approachable and genuine. He knows the complexity of the topic that requires careful consideration. He is not imposing his personal opinion rather he recognizes Quran as an ultimate source of guidance and truth.

Emotion and responsibility are evoked by the imagery of spirits. It covenants God with creation. "Am I not your Lord? And all of us...said in one voice, 'Why not, You are our Lord'".

The audience feels a sense of responsibility and belonging as a result. It provokes audience' acknowledgement of religious duty of submission to the highest power. It also induces the divine relationship between Allah and a believer. "...we belong to Allah." evokes a feeling of purposefulness and belonging to Allah. The vivid description of the imagery of life and death, heaven and hell connects the audience on personal level. "...heaven will remain forever and ever, but hell may come to an end" provokes hope. Two opposite emotions 'peace and fear' create pathos. By asking questions he doesn't mean to get answers rather he wants his audience to be emotionally charged to think deeply about their life and its purpose. "Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is knowledge? What is evil? What is good?" These existential question arise curiosity in the

audience. They become emotionally motivated to know the purpose of life.

He uses emotionally charged language to persuade the audience to understand the urgency regarding the harmfulness of knowledge when it is separated from spiritual wisdom:

Humanity is fearful, at any time any accidental war can start and which can wipe out life from this planet—the good old planet Earth—it can happen...This is the calamity, now our knowledge has become destructive.

The emotion of fear is aroused as a consequence of neglecting spiritual knowledge and warns of a possible worldwide calamity. “Don’t be like those who forgot Allah and Allah in return made them forgetful of their own selves.” By reminding people of their spiritual self-realization, there is also an appeal for spiritual growth and a sense of hope. The emotional depth of the speech is manifested in the above examples. It combines fear with a call to action that inculcates hope for self-realization.

Ethos

A deep analysis of Dr. Israr Ahmad’s speech manifests the formation of ethos which is essential for a religious discourse to be effective. To gain the trust of his audience, he highlights his academic background and personal honesty in his lectures:

I want to profess I am not scholar in the usual sense... I have never studied social sciences.... My background education is medical so I know little bit of physics and chemistry and zoology and botany... I am a humble student of al-quran and because Quran claims to be guidance for all mankind for all times... hence as a humble student of Quran I take courage, speak about the guidance.... Another condition I’m not good at English, so I have asked brother Dr. Absar to be on my side not only as a moral support but also to help me if he feels I am fumbling for words. (Ibid, 10:01)

In the above example, Dr. Israr is perceived more relatable and modest as he is self-aware, promotes trust and shows himself as approachable. He does not speak with absolute authority. He clearly admits that he is not a traditional religious scholar. He discusses his medical background. Ethos is further strengthened by being truthful about his credentials. By exhibiting humility and honesty, Dr. Israr increases his credibility. He admits his sickness and requests for the help of a colleague, showing humility and attempting to ensure accuracy, which develops ethos. By portraying himself as a “humble student of Al-

Quran,” inside the context of Islamic authority, he further builds his ethos. Because of his commitment to the teachings of the Qur’an, he is regarded as credible by an audience that values Islamic education:

What I have understood from Quran and what I believe is that human beings have a composite existence...one being is the animal being which has come out of clay, the crust of the earth according to the scriptures Bible, Quran both and according to the scientists, biologists. (Ibid, 13:39)

Appeals to the credibility of sources are a means to confirm the speaker’s own truthfulness. Dr. Israr continually makes reference to the *Quran*, *Bible*, and sciences. Synthesizing of spiritual as well as religious narratives enhances his credibility and authenticity. By mentioning the religious scholars like Ibn Arabi’ Ibn Taymiyyah and many others, the speaker adds depth to his discussion. It shows that he is familiar with different theological concepts. Dr. Israr’s forthright and straightforward expression of his points of view, as well as his preparedness to address difficult topics, enables him to establish rapport with his listeners while assuring that his arguments are perceived as real and grounded in fact. He emphasizes the need of following divine guidance and preaches morality with confidence.

His reliability is further heightened through his commitment to Islamic principles. His justifications become more convincing to the audience. “...if it proves to be an exercise in futility then the blame will be solely on me.” Dr Israr gives credit to Dr. Abu Rhabi and Dr. Absar for their contribution. Acknowledging their efforts bolster up his collaborative approach. It shows his personal accountability. He accepts total responsibility of failure that reflects his integrity and honesty. The audience thinks him as reliable and trustworthy. He does not blame external factors, it makes him honourable. On the whole, The speaker’s moral character, determination to take responsibility, humility in embracing possible failure, his bravery, and leadership help to shape ethos.

Logos

Speakers use logical appeals, such as facts, numbers, and real-life examples as rhetorical devices to get pragmatic purposes. The data analysis reveals that Dr. Israr expertly uses logos primarily for persuasion and objectivity.

The speech is logically organized through structured arguments. It starts from introduction then moves to the central idea. This well

thought-out approach facilitates understanding. The coherent structures simplify intricate concepts and the sequential explanations of existence: “pre-birth, worldly life, death, resurrection, and eternity”, “...we live here; this is our worldly life...then comes another death, and then resurrection.” the rational order and cause-and-effect structure that the speaker uses (pre-birth → worldly life → death → resurrection → eternity) enhances logos and also facilitates comprehension. He logically connects each stage by presenting a structured and rational outline for understanding life and death that appeals to the audience’ reason. It provides a logical explanation of existence beyond the physical world. “We find 1,000 years of ours becomes one day for Allah, and there is in other words 50000 years of ours go to make a day the day of judgment... You put us to death twice, and then You revived us twice.” Dr. Israr logically and quantitatively presents the ideas of divine time and resurrection using numbers—1,000 years, 50,000 years, and two examples of death and rebirth. This gives the abstract concepts of time and life beyond death a logical framework, therefore enabling the audience to better appreciate the scope and flow of divine activities.

These examples demonstrate Logos by mentioning numbers. The speaker relies on facts to make his argument truthful by referring to the holy books.”...animal existence and spiritual existence... according to the scriptures *Bible*, *Quran* both and according to the scientists, biologists.” The approach of referring to both science and religion strengthens the logical basis of the argument. He integrates the two perspectives, empirical and spiritual to authenticate the concept of existence. Discussion of human knowledge and the means of acquiring it as well as the difference between revealed knowledge and acquired knowledge serve to demonstrate the logical appeal by the speaker. “Human knowledge has two sources: one is the animal source, the other is the spiritual source.” The concept of human knowledge is made easier and more approachable to the audience’s rational understanding. It explains how these two types are combined to understand the physical world. The step by step process makes the abstract idea concrete.

The cause and effect relationship and logical sequence are provided by the speaker at many stages of the speech through examples and references.

Whosoever saw for the first time a rock fell on another rock and there was a spark of fire... fire was invented first form of energy that human being invented.

The statement provides logical progression how previous knowledge brings new discoveries. The statement appeals to the reason. The logos in the speech depends on rational thinking, dissecting difficult concepts of human understanding, discovery, and the difference between learned and revealed knowledge. The speaker makes abstract ideas more logical and approachable for the audience by means of cause-and-effect links, unambiguous distinctions, and sequential explanations.

Tropes

To attain the pragmatic goals, Dr. Israr Ahmed uses several rhetorical devices in his speech.

Metaphor

Metaphors frame our understanding of the world. Metaphors can be valuable tools in pragmatics. The impact of this tool is evident when it deviates from literal meaning to express hidden meaning through the use of certain images. Dr. Israr compares two things using terms that do not have the same literal meaning. Abstract ideas are made easier to be understood by using Metaphors. “Human beings have a composite existence.” The metaphor of “composite existence” portrays the complexity of human nature by connecting scientific and spiritual viewpoints. It simplifies difficult theological and philosophical concepts into understandable images. “‘The dust was to return to dust’ was not spoken of the soul. It has come from above.” The origin of human soul has been described metaphorically ‘come from above’ that expresses it is different from our earthly bodies. “Put in some cold storage.” The metaphor of ‘cold storage’ suggests temporary dormancy before being alive earthly to simplify a difficult theological notion. “The covenant from those spirits... put to sleep.” “Put to sleep” is a metaphor describing the period of inaction or suspension that human souls go through following their first existence. One idea is explained in the light of other.

Overstatement (Hyperbole)

Overstatements increase the emphasis and impact on emotions. “The life that has come from the clay, the crust of the earth, through a very long, very long, very long process of evolution.” The hyperbolic

description of ‘very long’ emphasizes the huge scale of evolutionary process. It magnifies the appreciation of the concept. It accentuates how big the timeline is. “Rain and rain and rain, for thousands of years.” This repetition engages the addressees by portraying a vivid and lasting picture. “Very hot, very hot, very hot, and running away from each other with speed.” The intensity of the Big Bang and the magnitude of that event are over exaggerated by repeating ‘very hot’ and by the dramatic description of the particles “running away”.

“All human beings from the first Adam till the last son of Adam” this statement puts emphasis on the timelessness and universality of the message of the holy *Quran* to connect all humanity to one fraction of the creation of God. “The knowledge of all names was given to Adam.” This overstatement increases the significance of acquired knowledge.

Understatement

Understatement contributes to the effectiveness of speech by establishing humility and encouraging deeper thought in the audience. Abstract concepts become more accessible. “I know a little bit of physics and chemistry and zoology and botany.” Referring to his knowledge of several scientific disciplines as ‘a little bit’ is an understatement which is adding to his modest tone. “Interaction of water and clay started the life on this planet”. Dr. Israr Ahmed uses such simple statements to simplify the complexity of evolutionary concepts to make them understandable to diverse audience. “We are just a few creatures on Earth.” This declaration serves as an understatement to point out the humble status of human beings in such a vast universe. We are a small part of larger divine order.

Repetition

Repetition adds focus and engages the audience. In his speech, Dr. Israr Ahmed employs repetition as a pragma rhetorical strategy to convey the complex theological and philosophical concepts.

These eyes don’t get blind... they were not blind of eyes; they were blind of their spirits... The ear of the heart, not the ear of the body, receives revelation.

The word “blind” is used to contrast corporeal blindness with spiritual unawareness. In the same way “ear” makes distinction between physical sense of hearing and spiritual understanding: “Animal being

and spiritual being”. Recurrence of this phrase throughout the speech underlines the dual nature of human personality. The audience becomes more focused on establishing a balance between both aspects of life. “Step by step, step by step” has been used multiple times in the speech that reveals the gradual process of human civilization and knowledge. It shows that empirical knowledge is gradual, and revealed knowledge is immediate and complete in nature.

Rhetorical questions

The purpose of rhetorical questions is to highlight a point or stimulate thought rather than to elicit answers. They can be used to both provoke and emphasize ideas. Rhetorical questions serve primarily as indirect speech acts. “Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going?” ... “Did the universe come into being by itself, or was it created by a higher power?” These questions motivate the listeners to think deeply about the transient nature of this life. They are encouraged to reflect on their spiritual existence the importance of revealed knowledge and the existence of God. These questions guide the audience to contemplate about the central idea of the speech.

Parallelism

Parallelism refers to repeating the same structure (Aziz 2012). Murdick (2003, 205) explains that this device emphasizes a specific argument or notion. Parallelism is a rhetorical strategy that helps readers assimilate information more effectively. Parallelism mostly creates rhythm and harmony. Parallel structures are commonly employed in speech to enhance memory, interest, emphasis, and persuasion. Dr. Israr Ahmed uses parallelism throughout his speech to make it more emphatic. He clarifies the concepts through this device. It also creates rhythm. Parallelism helps in comprehension and enhances persuasion: “Do this; don’t do this. Eat this; don’t eat this. Drink this; don’t drink this.” A rhythmic pattern is created by the repetition of verb and object structure. This pattern emphasizes the clarity and simplicity of religious obligations. Dos and don’ts become memorable in an easy way by Parallelism. “Why this fasting has been made imperative upon you? Why these five prayers a day? Why are these things so?” These rhetorical questions have parallel structure starting with “why”. It makes the audience focus on the wisdom behind the religious practices and think deeply about the benefits of religious observances. “Material knowledge and spiritual knowledge. Animal being and spiritual

being.” Contrasting elements are juxtaposed to create a dichotomy. It represents two opposite domains-physical and metaphysical. This binary opposition makes it evident that these are inherently different yet interconnected. It implies the need for balance.

Conclusion

Religious speakers need to be persuasive, emphatic, and credible. To achieve such goals, the role of rhetoric is indispensable. It enhances our understanding and improves communication efficiency. The analysis shows that Dr. Israr uses a variety of rhetorical strategies, including metaphor, parallelism, repetition, understatement, exaggeration, and rhetorical questions to attain the emphatic function. The combination of these tools results in an engaging and thought-provoking speech. Theme is developed through these pragma-rhetorical strategies. Dr. Israr’s speech is more courteous as it uses milder language. A convincing persona is developed through the rhetorical appeals. By employing ethos, pathos, and logos, the concepts of creation, existence, forms of knowledge, and the relationship between humans and the divine are made easy and universal to the diverse audience. It promotes self-reflection and contemplation. By making references to authentic religious scriptures and scholarly traditions, Dr. Israr develops his credibility as a knowledgeable figure with deep wisdom. His arguments are intellectually challenging, and emotionally stirring. The combination of all these strategies is essential to reach the persuasion in religious discourse. Overall effectiveness of speech is enhanced by pragmatically employing all in a balanced way in order to be convincing. The findings indicate that ethos effectively captures readers’ attention and enhances comprehension, thereby facilitating reliance on the source’s credibility. It’s also important to note that these kinds of appeals have the power to influence the reader to reach particular conclusions. Consequently, the application of emotional, credible, and intellectual tactics is equally significant. As a rhetorical device, parallelism fulfils the pragmatic function of facilitating readers’ mental processing of information. A primary purpose of parallelism is to produce balance and rhythm. Thus, practically speaking, the analysis demonstrates that religious speakers use parallel patterns primarily to capture readers’ attention, emphasize certain points, and persuade them. The second most commonly employed rhetorical device is the metaphor that is used to make concepts simpler to imagine and as a form of exaggeration. Metaphors

in the speech play a vital role in conveying complex and abstract concepts by comparing them to familiar things. Metaphors used by the speaker have made the speech more compelling. Emotions are aroused to make the message more relatable and powerful. Persuasion is enhanced through metaphors. After metaphor, hyperbole is the most popular technique utilized by the speaker to pique the interest of readers. It is very much effective in religious discourse. Hyperbolic language strengthens readers' reactions. It increases the emphasis and affects the emotions. It performs an essential role in shaping communication. The analysis of the speech shows that it helps in making the situation more significant to influence the audience. It magnifies the appreciation of the concepts. English rhetorical features like understatement provide a stronger communicative effect. It adds to ethos that is a core element for persuading the audience. It has helped in building credibility and trustworthiness of the speaker. He seems to be very humble, sensitive, and emotionally intelligent. His modest tone has increased the persuasiveness to the audience by creating deeper thought. The findings suggest that rhetorical questions have been used to engage in indirect speech acts. According to the study, they are employed indirectly to allude to behaviors such as taking action. These inquiries are inherently indirect, as the writers do not have intention of getting reply from the audience. On the whole, the research findings are consistent with those of other studies, which indicate that rhetorical strategies have a vital role in attaining pragmatic goals. With a particular focus on religious discourse this study contributes to the existing body of research on pragmatics and rhetoric. The study's methodology could be modified to be applied to more extensive investigations with a related goal or in many contexts, including other religious speeches.

References:

- Adebomi, O. 2023. A Pragma-Rhetorical Analysis of Speeches of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari on COVID-19. *Language Matters*, 54(1): 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10228195.2023.2185903>
- Ahmad, Israr. 2021. "Round Table with Dr. Israr Ahmed (Human Personality and Two Forms of Knowledge) | 1/6". https://www.drissrar.com/watch/round-table-with-dr-issrar-ahmed-human-personality-and-two-forms-of-knowledge-1-6_OJsd8dhmyQsi3w4.html
- Al-Hadrawi, Fatima, and Musaab Al-Khazaali. 2023. Pragma-Rhetorical Strategies in British Parliamentary Argumentative Discourse. *Kufa Journal of Arts* 1, no. 56: 574-596.

- Al-Hindawi, Fareed Hameed, and Hasan Hadi AbuKrooz. 2018. A Pragmatic Study of Argument in atimatulzahra's (PBUH) Speech. *Adab Al-Kufa* 2, no. 37.
- Aziz, Rana Naji. 2022. Pragma-rhetorical analysis to Covid-19 headlines. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 6, no. 1: 100340.
- Dascal, Marcelo. 2003. *Interpretation and Understanding*." John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Khaleel, Jinan Ahmed, and Nawal Mahmood Abed. 2016. A pragma-rhetoric analysis of persuasion. *European Academic Research* 3, no. 10: 11182-11206.
- Kim, Eun-Young Julia. 2016. Persuasive strategies in a chauvinistic religious discourse: The case of women's ordination. *Faculty Publications*, 97. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/97>
- Malik, Badrol Hisham Abdul, Muhd Alif Redzuan Bin Abdullah, Wan Noor Aini Binti Wan Ahmad, Muhammad Qawiem Bin Hamizan, and Norimah Binti Zakaria. 2023. Rhetoric of Persuasion in Religious Talk. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education & Development* 13: 901-913. 10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i12/19898
- Muhammad Alamgir, Noureen Waqar, and Ijaz ulhaq. 2023. Exploration of Persuasive Strategies in The Religious Speeches of Contemporary Islamic Scholars. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology* 20 (2):1838-53. <https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/11963>
- Naydenova, Natalia, Yulia Ebzeeva, and Lyudmila Sorokina. 2019. Rhetorical devices in the contemporary orthodox sermon: Case study of Patriarch Kirill in his own words. *Slavonica* 24, no.1-2: 25-35.
- Oswald, Steve. 2023. Pragmatics for argumentation. *Journal of Pragmatics* 203: 144-156.
- Rumman, Ronza N. Abu. 2019. Persuasive strategies in Arabic Religious discourse: Evidence from the friday sermons of dr. mohammadrateb al-nabulsi. *International Journal of Linguistics* 11, no. 6: 248-270.
- Yahaya, Zaid Samir, and Abd Hmood Ali. 2022. A Pragma-Rhetorical Study of Argument in Islamic-Christian Debates. *Journal of Al-Frahids Arts* 14.
- Yuan, Bin. 2018. On the Pragmatic Functions of English Rhetoric in Public Speech: A Case Study of Emma Watson's *He for She*. *English Language Teaching* 11, no. 3: 113-118.