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A Rhetorical Study of Persuasion in Selected TED Talks

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Abstract

This study employs a rhetorical approach to analyse the persuasiveness of TED Talks. The researcher intends to examine the use of persuasive strategies and the rhetorical strategies employed by TED Talks presenters in their speeches. The researcher tries to uncover the effectiveness of using such rhetorical aspects and how speakers effectively engage and persuade their audience. To achieve the aims of the study and to answer the research questions, it has been hypothesised that TED Talk presenters employ different persuasive and rhetorical strategies via which they intend to persuade their audience and make them believe certain allegations and justifications. Two presentations have been selected as samples of the current study. The selected data have been analysed qualitatively according to Lucas' (2009) theory of persuasive strategies and Leech's (1969) theory of rhetorical strategies. After analysing the selected data, it has been concluded that TED Talks presenters used some persuasive strategies like pathos, ethos and logos; this conclusion proves the first hypothesis of the study. It has also been concluded that they employ some rhetorical strategies like metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, simile and personification; this conclusion confirms the second hypothesis of the study. By utilising such persuasive and rhetorical strategies, the presenters try to convince their audience of particular claims and make their audience believe their justifications of such claims.

Keywords: Rhetoric, TED Talks, Persuasive Strategies, Rhetorical Strategies.

Introduction

It is challenging to draw easy conclusions about rhetoric and rhetorical devices, their origins, and how people utilize such devices in realistic circumstances since they are complex phenomena. Rhetorical devices are unique because of their explanations and effect on the linguistic texts in which they are used. In the language of media, presenters employ rhetorical devices as a strategy to persuade audience of their viewpoints or ideologies. TED Talks presenters put their thoughts in "containers" and convey them to their audience along "conduits," and then their audience attempt to figure out the hidden meanings contained within these containers. As a result, this leads to a difficulty for the readers to take into account all the nonliteral meanings of rhetorical devices and the characteristics that are employed in the TED Talks (Gad, 2016).

Rhetorical devices cannot be understood directly through language expressions because they include abstract notions that require contextual knowledge. Instead, such devices must be filtered through prior experience, knowledge and related context in order to be understood. TED Talks presenters employ these rhetorical and persuasive strategies for certain aims and purposes. They are believed to be trying to persuade their audience of some allegations which they believe to be true and reasonable. Those presenters are found to depend on such strategies in order to influence

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their audience's emotions and feelings and make them trust their claims and think of them as valuable and reasonable (Gad, 2016). Therefore, the current study intends to investigate the forms of rhetorical devices and persuasive strategies in selected presentations of TED Talks from a rhetorical point of view.

Problem of the Study

In spite of the increasing acceptance and inspiration of TED Talks as a means of discussing ideas and sharing information and knowledge, there is a gap in unveiling the main rhetorical strategies which add to their persuasive effects. Though in the literature, some researchers have investigated different angles of TED Talks (e.g., their effect on the audience, their content style, their presentation style), there is not enough analysis integrating the rhetorical perspectives.

On the other hand, the persuasive aspects of the TED Talks do not result from the speaker's appeal or the degree of informativeness of the presentation content but mainly depend on the effective employment of different rhetorical techniques and methods of analysis. Therefore, the linguistic analysis of TED Talks presented here attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the persuasive strategies used by TED Talks presenters in their speeches?
2. What are the types of rhetorical strategies that are employed by TED Talk presenters in their speeches?

Aims of the Study

The current study aims at:

1. Exploring the types of persuasive strategies employed by TED Talks presenters in their speeches.
2. Finding out the rhetorical strategies used by TED Talks presenters to persuade the audience.

Hypotheses of the Study

The current study attempts to validate the following hypotheses:

1. TED Talks presenters employ different types of persuasive strategies in their speeches by which they intend to persuade their audience of their implied messages.
2. TED Talks presenters use various forms of rhetorical strategies to persuade their audience.

Literature Review

Definition of Rhetoric

The origins of rhetoric as a system of persuasion strategies can be found in the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. The capacity to perceive, in any given situation, the available techniques of persuasion" is the definition of rhetoric. The effective use of language is rhetoric. With the publication of Aristotle's Rhetoric in the fourth century BC, this field of study developed thanks to the efforts of renowned Roman rhetoricians like Cicero and Quintilian (Argyle, 1988).

Rhetoric is currently evolving once more. According to Leech (1983, p. 15), rhetoric is significant because it "places emphasis on a goal-orientated situation in which speaker(s) employ the language so as to achieve a specific impact on the mind of the listener." Leech divides rhetoric into interpersonal and textual rhetoric, following Halliday's classification system. Each

is made up of the cooperative principle and the politeness principle. These tenets themselves are made up of a number of maxims and sub-maxims.

A rhetorical argument is one that is intended to persuade a particular audience. It (i.e., rhetoric) is the study of persuasion, to put it another way. Rhetoric employs language to persuade and/or influence people's judgements using both argumentative arguments and rhetorical figures of speech (Dave, 2008).

Rhetoric, according to Kennedy (2007, p. 13), is "the force inherent in thoughts and feelings communicated via a system of indications, especially language to others in order to impact their decisions or behaviours." Rhetoric occurs when we communicate our feelings and ideas to others with the intention of influencing (persuading) them. Persuasion, according to Lakoff (1982), is the non-reciprocal attempt or goal of one person to alter the intentions, behaviour, feelings, or worldview of another person through the use of communication. The goal of the speaker in persuasion is to commit the listener to taking some course of action, which is known as "a directive speech act". As a result, persuasion is an attempt to make the world reflect the words.

Lucas's (2009) Persuasive Strategies

The capacity to speak clearly and successfully with a purpose is referred to as rhetoric. A rhetorical situation refers to the environment in which people compose. Simply defined, as a writer, they have a target audience and a particular purpose. People must be aware of their intended messages as well as the expectations of their audiences, and they must make some effort to meet those expectations.

Considering the rhetorical situation before people begin writing can help them to make a number of important choices with regard to the content of their works, including the level of vocabulary to employ (simpler words for an audience of middle academics than for an audience with a higher education), which kinds of instances to employ (more technical examples for an audience of experts than for an audience of laypeople), as well as what kind of scheme of colours to apply (a high-contrast colour scheme for people who have a college education). Communication expert Lloyd Bitzer first proposed the contemporary idea of a rhetorical context in 1968. Three aspects of the rhetorical studies were provided by him:

The exigence: The inspiration for the author or performer, or the exigence. To communicate the sense of exigence, people utilise the verse "purpose".

The audience: The intended recipient of the writer's or composer's message is the audience. Students taking a college writing course make up their audience at this time.

The constraints: the restrictions on a writer's or composer's responsibility to consider contextual elements. Although speakers would want to use an interpretive dance to illustrate rhetorical circumstances to them, one of their limits is that textbooks depend on what is written (Lucas, 2009).

While speakers choose how to tell a story about a snowboarding vacation they went on, they are responding to a particular rhetorical scenario. They might use more flamboyant vocabulary and slang while recounting the story to their friends and formal language when presenting the story to their insurance agents. There is no one "correct" method to tell the tale of their trip; it all depends on who they are telling it to. The reason why they are telling the story also matters. If they want to demonstrate that they are a thrill-seeker junkie, they might emphasise the degree of danger or risk associated with skiing; however, if they want to convince a hesitant companion to

try skiing, they may emphasise how they avoid harm on their journey by following certain strategies and utilising high-quality equipment (Lucas, 2009).

To add a persuasive element to their stories, storytellers typically turn to a series of rhetorical appeals (Dake, 2000). Aristotle's rhetoric is where the concept of using rhetorical appeals in argumentative and persuasive conversation first appeared. Aristotle asserts that speakers can use the three rhetorical devices of pathos, ethos, and logos to increase the persuasiveness of their arguments. These rhetorical appeals and their functions in the inspirational tale are clarified in the ensuing subsections (Argyle, 1988).

1. Pathos. Pathos is concerned with igniting and motivating the audience's emotions to do subsequent actions (Lucas, 2009). A speaker tries to convince the audience to accept or reject a claim by employing this appeal. In other words, Kennedy (2007) used the term "their self-interest" to describe how pathos manipulates the audience's personal identities.

Pathos is actualised in the audience's emotions and feelings that are sparked while they are listening in the realm of motivating storytelling (Arkoun, 1990). According to Finch (2003), the story that the storytellers choose to tell can be used to affect the audience's emotional state. So, the use of emotive language to depict the events of the story and their connection to the audience's current position can be used to control the audience's emotions.

For instance, Fiske (2010) used pathos in his motivating storytelling when he discusses his own experience of wasting the money his parents had saved up over their lives without seeing any noticeable returns. In order to inspire the graduates to draw lessons from his experience and manage their finances responsibly, he wants to appeal to their emotions and feelings.

2. Ethos. Ethos is concerned with how speakers present themselves to their audience or the common traits between the speakers and their audience to validate their moral character and believability (Lucas, 2009). Kanu (1996) claimed that ethos focuses more on demonstrating who a speaker is than what s/he is about. According to Arkoun (1990), a speaker's reputation and identity lend authority to their statements. According to Keyton (2011), this tactic has a considerable influence if it is employed by speakers who stand for high shared values in their communities because their "excellent reputation brings with it notions of integrity and honesty" for the topics they address.

For the purpose of communicating experiences, describing beliefs, or outlining decisions related to the story they are telling, storytellers rely on their notoriety and trustworthiness (Arkoun, 1990 & Koneru, 2008).

3. Logos. All factual arguments and evidence that a speaker might use to support their claims are referred to as logos (Lucas, 2009). According to Kennedy (2007), the internal coherence of the message, the clarity of the claim, its logical chain of reasoning, and its supporting evidence all serve as manifestations of logos.

2.3. Leech's (1969) Rhetorical Devices

1. Simile. In reality, similes are used to explicitly compare two objects, and they are denoted by words or phrases such as "like", "as", "than", "similar", "resemble", or "seems" (Leech, 1969). A simile compares two things by using the terms "like" or "as".

Example: She moves quickly, like a cheetah. Girl sprinting (she runs quickly).

2. Metaphor. Metaphors compare two things without using the words "like" or "as".

Examples: The house is covered in a layer of snow. (The home is covered in snow.) White House. My young daughter is an angel. (My little kid is really nice and sweet).

3. Personification. Personification is the practice of imputing human traits to non-human entities, such as objects or animals. To give accurate descriptions, authors give objects a human quality. For example, my pen was scribbling all over the paper. (I was typing at a breakneck pace.) As the wind blew, the leaves jived. (The wind was shifting the leaves.) A fall of leaves. Personification is the rhetorical technique of giving a notion, an object, or an animal the characteristics of a human being. It is a subtype of metaphor, an implicit comparison, where the rhetorical phrase of the comparison is always a human being (Leech, 1969, p. 158). Inanimate objects and people are being contrasted. Personification breathes life into words and helps readers visualise certain objects more clearly.

4. Apostrophe. According to Leech (1969, p. 160), an apostrophe is used to address an absent person or an inanimate object as if they were alive, present, and able to respond to what is said. Apostrophes are another type of personification in which inhuman or inanimate objects are referred to directly as though they were human or living things. For instance, Oh, Thames! Run gently until my song is over.

5. Synecdoche. Synecdoche occurs when a component is used to represent something as a whole. Synecdoche is divided into two categories by Leech (1969, p. 161): *pars pro toto* and *totem pro parte*. *Totem pro parte* is when the whole item stands for its part, while *pars pro toto* is a part for the whole. Shakespeare, for example, I hear a cuckoo! Word of fear, oh. To a married ear, unpleasant!

6. Metonymy. The usage of a word or phrase that is closely related to the meaning intended is known as a metonymy. It can be viewed as the replacement of a term naming a thing with another word that is closely related to (Leech, 1969, p. 152). For instance, he has a drinking problem. It is referred to as utilising metonymy because it is just another way of saying that he drinks too much whisky.

7. Symbol. According to Leech (1969, p. 154), a symbol is described as something that implies more than it actually does. For example, an ageing dog cannot learn new tricks.

8. Allegory. According to Leech (1969, p. 166), an allegory is a narrative or description with a deeper significance. A description with a secondary meaning is an allegory. The deeper meaning is distinct from what is described. Consider this: A cheerful squirrel was thrown a pine cone, which caused him to flee in chattering terror.

9. Hyperbole. An explicit exaggeration is a hyperbole. In order to emphasise a point, hyperbole is frequently employed. Using hyperbole literally is inappropriate. Instances include: We waited in line for hours, I'm so hungry I could eat a horse, and more. It took a while for us to get to the front of the line, and by the time we did, the coffee was so hot that I was spitting flames. Exaggeration used for the sake of the truth is called hyperbole (Leech, 1969, p. 168).

10. Understatement. Saying less than one means, whether in what is said or simply in the manner in which it is said, is known as understatement (Leech, 1969, p. 170). The antithesis of hyperbole is understatement, which involves expressing less than what is actually meant. Keep your shining swords, for instance, otherwise the damp will dull them.

11. Parallelism. Repeating words and phrases is typically viewed as a symptom of poor style. However, it is still frequently utilised, either as an entire equivalence or paraphrastic replacement, which refers to a different pattern of repetition when something is repeated in other words. A repetition figure of significance to rhetoric and literature alike is parallelism.

The verse refers to the use of linguistic devices like sentences, phrases, and expressions repeatedly. Parallelism is regarded as a primary form of foregrounding due to its unexpected regularity. It is a method of repetition, either of sound or pattern, that serves as an efficient method of memorisation for specific statements (Leech, 1969, p. 173).

2.4. TED Talks

TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, and Design. TED is a series of global conferences that aim to present and spread new and innovative ideas to the world. These conferences are sponsored by the American Sapling Foundation, a private non-profit organization whose motto is "Ideas Worth Spreading." TED was founded in 1984 as a one-time event. The annual conference began in 1990 in Monterey, California. TED's early focus on technology and design was aligned with its origins in Silicon Valley. Today, the events are held in Long Beach and Long Springs in the United States, Europe, and Asia, accompanied by live streaming of talks that cover a wide range of topics in the fields of research and practical application of science and culture, often done in a storytelling manner. Speakers are given a maximum of 18 minutes to present their ideas in the most innovative and engaging ways.

One of the famous speakers were Bill Clinton, Jane Goodall, Malcolm Gladwell, Al Gore, Gordon Brown, Richard Dawkins, and Bill Gates, educator Salman Khan, Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin, and many Nobel Prize winners. The current organiser of TED is Chris Anderson, a former British computer journalist and magazine publisher. From 2005 to 2009, TED awarded three annual prizes of \$100,000 each to help winners achieve their dreams of changing the world. However, in 2010, the selection process changed to include only one winner to ensure that TED could maximize efforts in fulfilling the winner's wish. Each winner reveals their wish at the main annual conference.

TED conferences have been available for free online viewing under a Creative Commons license on "TED.com" since 2006. The talks have been translated into various languages, including Arabic. By November 2009, the number of available talks online has exceeded and these talks have been viewed 50 million times. This number jumped to 500 million by July 2011, indicating a rapidly growing audience.

TED Talks are a new means of public speaking which have attracted wide range of acceptance and popularity. These talks have been planned by TED (i.e., a non-profit organization started in 1984). The main goal of these talks is to present people's ideas in a form of talk that lasts around 18-minutes. What motivated TED to sponsor such activity is their belief in the effects of expressing ideas that induce a change in lives and attitudes (Sroikudrua, Punkasirikul and Tawichai, 2021, p. 362). Speakers of TED Talks belong to different backgrounds: businessmen, scholars, scientists, designers among experts of different fields. TED talks are presented as either a live chat or a recorded one; they are also posted on YouTube.

Methodology

To reach an obvious view and understanding of the selected data, it is important to keep in mind that the selected data include two presentations that have been collected from TED Talks. As far

as the researcher knows, the selected presentations are liable to the aims of the current study, as they contain various themes, which ensure the use of different rhetorical aspects that are employed for the purpose of persuasion. Therefore, each of the selected presentations has been deliberately and intentionally chosen, as it may comprise rich material that serves the aim of exploring the main strategies of persuasion and rhetorical aspects that are utilised in presenting the language of persuasion in the selected presentation in TED Talks.

To understand a particular linguistic or social concept, it has to be investigated according to the context in which it appears and all the other aspects to which this linguistic concept might be related (Nakhilawi, 2016). Persuasion, for instance, cannot be studied in isolation from the social context since it represents an important type of communication, which is the non-verbal one (Seidman, 2006).

The current study conducts a qualitative research analysis, and as Shank (2002) states, qualitative research can be defined as “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning” (p. 5). In this definition, the word systematic means organised and following certain rules and is accepted by the community of qualitative researchers. The word empirical, on the other hand, means that this form of research approach is proved by certain knowledge and experience in a way that the researchers can make sense of their own experience. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) claim that “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). The selected data have been analysed according to an eclectic model that is based on Lucas' (2009) theory of persuasive strategies and Leech's (1969) theory of rhetorical strategies.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Presentation (1)

This presentation is entitled "3 ways to lead tough, unavoidable conversations" and was presented by Adar Cohen on 12 November 2019.

Extract (1)

"I'm in a concrete maze the size of 72 football fields. I'm being led from checkpoint to checkpoint, and before each door opens, the door behind me slams shut. The lock echoes while I'm searched and interviewed again. It's a maximum security jail, the largest in the country: the Cook County Jail, in Chicago, Illinois."

This extract is believed to include rhetorical aspects that contribute to constructing its linguistic meaning. From the rhetorical point of view, it is noted to include some persuasive and rhetorical strategies. Regarding the persuasive strategies, the speaker is seen to appeal to pathos in order to influence his audience and make them listen to his story and make them accept and believe in it. He, moreover, tries to appeal to ethos in that he presents himself as a character that has been to a place where no one can easily enter, and he has been checked many times without telling them the reason behind his going to such a place, whether he has a visit to that place or he has been taken as a prisoner. He wants to present himself as a trustworthy person and a man who has an important message to deliver. He intends to gain their attention, belief and trustworthiness. The speaker, furthermore, appeals to logos when he says, *"It's a maximum security jail, the largest in the country,"* where he mentions something his audience already knows. He gives them some evidence about the reasonability and logic of what he says. He wants to convince them

of his claim when he says that he has been checked many times and the place he has been to is highly secured.

In terms of the rhetorical strategies, the expression *"I'm in a concrete maze the size of 72 football fields"* in the above extract is assured to comprise a metaphor. The speaker metaphorically describes the jail and compares it to a football field. He is noted to focus on the size of the jail in order to persuade his audience of the importance of that jail and the number of prisoners in it. He wants to say that he has been to the largest jail in the country, where he wants to get their attention to the important story behind his going to that jail.

Extract (2)

"I believe they might be one conversation away from accomplishing that thing, but they're not having the conversation they need to have, or they've tried, and it hasn't gone well. I've led some pretty tough conversations in some pretty tough environments: Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and corporate boardrooms. I actually have a PhD in leading difficult conversations, and here's what I've learnt: we're not having the conversations we need to have."

The linguistic meaning of the above extract is constructed by the use of some rhetorical strategies. In terms of the rhetorical aspects, the extract is noted to include some persuasive strategies, particularly pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker is noted to appeal to pathos in that he tries to influence his audience's emotions and feelings. He intends to affect the audience and make them believe him and listen to his story. In fact, he wants to manipulate and convince them of his claim. He is also seen to appeal to ethos in that he tries to present himself as a figure who has been an influential member of the society. He mentions many places he has been to, and he talks about his PhD in his specialisation in leading conversations. He is found to do his best to persuade his audience of his personality and achievements, which is part of his aim in persuading his audience of his claims and intended messages. The speaker, moreover, is noted to appeal to logos in that he presents some information and remarks that prove his claims of being an influential figure in the society.

In addition to the persuasive strategies in the above extract, the speaker is also found to employ some rhetorical strategies. The expression *"I actually have a PhD in leading difficult conversations"* has been metaphorically used by the speaker. In this expression, the speaker does not speak of a real educational degree in a certain field of study, but he speaks of his long experience in giving speeches, making conversations and delivering presentations in different places and at different times. The speaker employs metaphor as a rhetorical strategy to persuade his audience of his claims and make them believe everything he says.

Extract (3)

"But getting released and not winding up back inside is also difficult. Inmates are released into gang territory, often with no way to get home – if they have a home. And the barriers to finding housing, employment and education are such that it's no wonder so many returned to the jail again and again, back through the system."

The linguistic meaning of the above extract is formulated via the employment of certain rhetorical aspects that make it contain different meanings and interpretations. As far as the rhetorical aspects are concerned in the extract, it has been found that it includes some persuasive strategies, including pathos, ethos and logos. The strategy of pathos is employed where the speaker appeals to his audience's emotions and feelings in order to convince them that prisoners

should not be released without a plan for their future. They must have something to do when they are released, like starting a job, having a family and getting a house; if not, they would return to the jail again and again. The speaker also appeals to the strategy of ethos in that he presents himself as someone who knows for sure that most of the prisoners have been in the jail as a result of being jobless, homeless and uneducated. He pretends that if people had families, houses and jobs, then they would not become criminals and terrorists, and they would not be in jail. In fact, he tries to convince his audience that he knows the reasons for certain problems that happen in society and also knows the solution to such issues. He, furthermore, appeals to the strategy of logos when he mentions that some prisoners have returned to the jail many times for the same reason. This means that he tries to persuade his audience that he is right and his justifications for the prisoners are logical and reliable.

In addition to the persuasive strategies, the extract is noted to contain some rhetorical strategies, such as metonymy, which appears in the expression *"Inmates are released into gang territory, often with no way to get home"*. In this expression, the speaker wants to say that if they release the prisoner without finding them something that helps them and keeps them busy, like a job, or giving them what they need, like a house, then no doubt they would return to the jail again and again. He wants to say those prisoners are victims of the conditions of their life and the system's decisions. If those prisoners were given the opportunity to live like the rest of the society, they would never do anything that makes them go to jail.

Extract (4)

"Now, these are men who have taken lives, who have devastated many families, in some cases their own, and now they start finishing each other's sentences about tolerance, inclusion and respect, and this builds and builds in the room until finally, I can't resist the irony, and so I announce, "Well, mission accomplished."

This extract is realised to include some rhetorical aspects that contribute to the formation of its linguistic meaning. From the rhetorical perspective, the extract is noted to comprise some persuasive strategies, particularly pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker appeals to the strategy of pathos in that he tries to affect his audience's emotions and feelings when he describes how the prisoners have changed after the conversations he has had with them. He tries to persuade his audience that he has motivated those people who are killers and criminals and changes their minds. He intends to show his audience that he has the ability to motivate anyone regardless of their good or bad behaviour and deeds. By describing how influential he is, the speaker is assured to appeal to the strategy of ethos, where he presents himself as having the ability to influence everyone, even the criminals, and persuade them to forget everything evil they have committed and start a new life away from everything that may make them return to their evil life. Moreover, the speaker is found to appeal to the strategy of logos by mentioning that those prisoners started talking with each other about tolerance, respect and inclusion. By doing so, the speaker tries to prove that his claim is logical and reasonable. He wants to persuade them that it is possible to change someone's mind from evil to good thinking.

The extract, furthermore, is thought to include some rhetorical strategies like hyperbole, which is employed in the expression *"they start finishing each other's sentences about tolerance, inclusion and respect"*. In this expression, the speaker is assured to exaggerate in describing how those prisoners have changed and how he could make them think in a positive way. He uses such a strategy to show his audience that those prisoners are human beings that deserve to be given

the chance to live like the rest of the people. He means that those people are deprived of most of their rights, and this is the reason that has made them criminals and killers.

Analysis of Presentation (2)

This presentation is entitled "How trees talk to each other" and was presented by Suzanne Simard in June 2016.

Extract (1)

"But soon I found myself working alongside the powerful people in charge of the commercial harvest. The extent of the clear-cutting was alarming, and I soon found myself conflicted by my part in it. Not only that, the spraying and hacking of the aspens and birches to make way for the more commercially valuable planted pines and firs was astounding."

The above extract is believed to include some rhetorical aspects that have an essential role in constructing the linguistic meaning of the extract. Rhetorically speaking, the extract is seen to comprise some persuasive strategies such as pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker appeals to the pathos strategies in that he has tried to influence his audience and persuade them that he stands with the environment and wants to do everything he can to prevent cutting trees to protect the environment. He intends to convince them of the importance of the forests for the environment and that it is necessary to stop the processes of cutting the trees to preserve the environment from desertification. The speaker, furthermore, appeals to ethos in that he describes himself as an environmentalist who wants to protect the environment from destruction and preserve trees, which are the most important vegetation cover that helps reduce global warming and climate change. Moreover, the speaker appeals to logos when he says, *"The spraying and hacking of the aspens and birches to make way for the more commercially valuable planted pines and firs was astounding."* The speaker mentions cutting some types of trees as evidence in order to persuade his audience that cutting trees really exists and that it is something dangerous for the environment; he wants to convince them to stop such an issue.

In addition to the persuasive strategies, the extract is noted to include some rhetorical strategies, such as metaphor. The speaker has described cutting the trees and considers it a commercial harvest, as in the expression *"But soon I found myself working alongside the powerful people in charge of the commercial harvest."* In this expression, he has used the phrase *"commercial harvest"*, which could be considered a sort of metaphor in that it can be interpreted in different ways. It might refer to processes of cutting trees in particular, which represents a dangerous process that destroys the environment. It also might mean that it refers to the powerful people's job in general in trade by cutting trees or other things and goods they buy and sell.

Extract (2)

"Instead of weakening our forests, how can we reinforce them and help them deal with climate change? Well, you know, the great thing about forests as complex systems is they have enormous capacity to self-heal. In our recent experiments, we found with patch-cutting and retention of hub trees and regeneration to a diversity of species and genes and genotypes that these mycorrhizal networks recover really rapidly."

Linguistically speaking, this extract is thought to include some rhetorical aspects that formulate its meaning. In terms of the rhetorical aspects, the extract is believed to contain some persuasive strategies, including pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker has been found to appeal to pathos when he has discussed the importance of reinforcing the forests and helping them deal with

climate change. The speaker has intended to influence his audience and persuade them of the consequences of weakening the forests and the effect of such an issue on the environment. He tries to convince them that they have to act and save the situation by reinforcing the forests to heal and protect the trees and other living species that live in the forests from death and extinction. The speaker has also appealed to ethos in that he presents himself as someone who knows the problems of the environment, global warming and climate change; he knows the reasons behind such problems and the solutions to these problems. He tries to present himself as a reliable person who could be trusted by his audience and other people. He has intended to make them believe him and start protecting the forests and reinforcing them to heal. He, additionally, has been found to appeal to logos by stating that they have made some experiments on the forests and what is really happening there. He has presented such evidence to convince his audience that his claims are logical and justifiable.

Besides the persuasive strategies, the extract is noted to comprise some rhetorical aspects such as hyperbole, which has been employed in the expression "*Well, you know, the great thing about forests as complex systems is they have enormous capacity to self-heal.*" In this expression, the speaker has been found to exaggerate his description of the natural system of the forests. He has overstated in saying that forests are organised in a complex system and that they have the ability to self-heal. The speaker has tried to use such a rhetorical strategy to persuade his audience that forests represent such an important and amazing system that needs to be protected and developed, which leads to the protection of the whole environment.

Extract (3)

"You see, you can take out one or two hub trees, but there comes a tipping point because hub trees are not unlike rivets in an aeroplane. You can take out one or two, and the plane still flies, but you take out one too many, or maybe that one holding on the wings, and the whole system collapses."

This extract has a linguistic meaning that is based on the use of rhetorical aspects. From the rhetorical point of view, the extract is noted to include some persuasive strategies such as pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker has been found to appeal to pathos, via which he intends to influence his audience and persuade them of the danger of cutting trees and the importance of stopping this disastrous issue. The speaker has tried his best to convince his audience that even if there were huge forests with an uncountable number of trees, the continuous cutting will make these forests collapse. The speaker has also been seen to appeal to ethos by presenting himself as one of those who should bear the responsibility of protecting the forests and preventing others from cutting the trees. He, however, has thought of persuading his audience and making them take him as a symbol and follow his instructions in protecting the environment and helping in stopping global warming. The speaker has, additionally, been realised to appeal to logos in that he has presented some evidence about the possibility of the collapse of the system of nature if nothing had been done about cutting the trees. The speaker has presented such evidence, which is based on his experience in studying forests and trees. Via such evidence, the speaker has intended to affect his audience and persuade them to do everything possible to protect the environment.

In addition to the persuasive strategies, the extract is found to include some rhetorical strategies like simile. This rhetorical strategy appears in the expression "*hub trees are not unlike rivets in an aeroplane*". In this expression, the speaker has compared the trees to the rivets and the environment to an aeroplane. The speaker has intended to clarify his message by telling his

audience that the environment they live in is just like an aeroplane, and the more trees they cut, the more rivets are taken out of the plane. As a result, their environment would collapse in the same way an aeroplane would collapse.

Extract (4)

"When we do cut, we need to save the legacies, the mother trees and networks, and the wood, the genes, so they can pass their wisdom onto the next generation of trees so they can withstand the future stresses coming down the road. We need to be conservationists."

The linguistic meaning of this extract is composed by utilising some rhetorical aspects. Concerning the rhetorical aspects, the extract is seen to encompass some persuasive strategies, including pathos, ethos and logos. The speaker has appealed to pathos, where he has tried to affect his audience's emotions and feelings in order to persuade them of the necessity of protecting the forests or at least saving their legacies. The speaker tries to convince his audience by regarding the forests as living beings that have a legacy to be saved and wisdom they need to pass from one generation to another. The speaker has also appealed to ethos in that he has intended to present himself as someone who cares for nature and as an influential character who has taken the responsibility to defend nature, protect it and reinforce its system to heal and preserve it again. He has also appealed to logos in that he has intended to present evidence about the processes of cutting the forests. He does so by stating that if people continue to cut the forests, then they must protect the legacies of those trees they cut, which means that cutting trees does exist, and the difficulty to stop such an issue also exists. He, in fact, has tried to persuade his audience of the logicity and reasonability of his claims.

Besides the persuasive strategies, the extract is believed to include some rhetorical strategies like personification. This rhetorical strategy is employed in the expression *"They can pass their wisdom onto the next generation of trees so they can withstand the future stresses coming down the road."* In this expression, the speaker is seen to address trees as human beings who have a legacy that needs to be saved and wisdom that needs to be passed to the next generation. The speaker is found to speak of trees as if he speaks of real human beings that have emotions, feelings, aims and desires that need to be accomplished.

Conclusion

After analysing the selected data, it has been found that the selected TED Talks contain different forms of persuasive strategies such as pathos, ethos and logos. By using such persuasive strategies, the presenters have tried to influence their audience's emotions and feelings in order to persuade them of certain messages and intended meanings. Therefore, this result confirms the first hypothesis of the study, which says that TED Talks presenters employ different persuasive strategies via which they intend to affect their audience and persuade them of some ideas and implied intentions. Moreover, the presenters are noted to use various forms of rhetorical strategies, including metonymy, hyperbole, metaphor, simile and personification. Such rhetorical strategies are found to have an essential role in persuading the audience and making them believe what the speakers say. Thus, this conclusion proves the second hypothesis of the study, which says that TED Talks speakers use various types of rhetorical strategies by which they try to persuade their audience of some implied meanings and make them trust their claims and regard their allegations and justifications as reasonable and reliable.

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