

Discerning Rhetorical Techniques in Barack Obama’s Speech “A New Beginning”

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Abstract

The prime objective of this article is to discern rhetorical techniques in US President Barack Obama’s speech “A New Beginning” delivered at Cairo University on Thursday, June 04, 2009 as part of his efforts to improve American relations with the Muslim world by evoking a vision of peace, prosperity, coexistence and cooperation. Some major sentences or assertions were taken from his speech and were evaluated as analysis which involved rhetorical techniques to persuade his audience. Mr. Obama felt the necessity of removing burning suspicion, mistrust and discord between America and the Muslim World. He proposed a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, based upon mutual interest and mutual respect. He highlighted common principles of justice and progress; and valued the tolerance and the dignity of all human beings. It can be concluded that Mr. Obama’s rhetorical techniques used to persuade his audience were influential and his assertions trustworthy.

Keywords: Avoidance, Barack Obama, enforcement, rhetoric, targeting strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

“A New Beginning” is a much praised speech in which President Barack Obama projects his outstanding art of persuasion, beginning his speech with admiring words for two remarkable institutions Al-Azhar as a beacon of Islamic learning for over a century, and Cairo University as a source of Egypt's advancement. He tells the audience that they have met at a time of tension between the United States and Muslims around the world. He pinpoints seven sorts of tension concerning violent extremism, Israeli–Palestinian conflict, nuclear proliferation, democracy, religious freedom, women's rights and economic development and opportunity. He realizes that such sources of tension need to be eliminated through peaceful coexistence and mutual cooperation.

US President Barack Obama delivered more than hundred speeches. His key speeches include: A New Beginning (2009), Speech to joint session of Congress (2009), State of the Union Address (2010), Space Policy Speech at Kennedy Space Center (2009), Birth Certificate Statement (2011), Tucson Memorial Speech (2011), State of the Union Address (2011), Speech to joint session of Congress (2011), State of the Union Address (2012), Speech to the Clinton Global Initiative (2012), You didn't build that (2012), Speech at the Brandenburg Gate Berlin (2013), Speech at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool (2013), State of the Union Address (2013), State of the Union Address (2014), State of the Union Address (2015), Selma Anniversary (2015), Eulogy for Clementa Pinckney (2015), Address to the Nation by the President (2015), State of the Union Address (2016), Hiroshima Speech (2016), Democratic National Convention (2016), Hillary Clinton Presidential Campaign speeches (2016) and Farewell Speech (2017).

Muslims were not happy with the American administration. On June 3, 2009, Al-Qaeda released a video in which Osama Bin Laden strongly criticized Obama's foreign policy in the Middle East by stating that Obama and his administration have sowed new seeds of hatred against America. One day before, an Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri criticized Obama's policy, declaring "his bloody messages were received and are still being received by Muslims, and they will not be concealed by public relations campaigns or by farcical visits or elegant words." President Obama was criticized by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who delivered a speech to mark the 20th anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini a few hours before Barack Obama's speech. Ayatollah Khamenei commented on the pending U.S. President's speech declaring: "The nations of this part of the world deeply hate America. Even if they give sweet and beautiful [speeches] to the Muslim nation that will not create change. Action is needed." Obama came to realize that the relations of America with the Muslim World were worsening, and needed to be mended as soon as possible. He appealed for a new beginning in relations between America and the world's Muslims in a much-anticipated speech in Cairo.

1.1 Study Aim and Technique

The prime objective of this study is to discern major rhetorical techniques as persuasive dimensions that Mr. Obama used in his Cairo speech. The article writer culled some sentences that retain the quality of persuasion. Such persuasive speech lines were numbered as a. b. c. etc. and their shared messages or senses were drawn.

1.2 Delimitations of the Study

The study was carried out under the following delimitations:

- a. The study included only one speech of Mr. Obama. The speech was entitled “A New Beginning”.
- b. Only a few speech lines or sentences were consulted for discerning the persuasive dimensions.
- c. The frequency table involved only representative words that Mr. Obama mentioned or repeated in his speech.

2. THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF RHETORIC

Different writers have defined the term “rhetoric” as the art of persuasion. Longaker and Walker (2011) define rhetoric as “the study and the practice of persuasion” (p. 2). Cuddon (1999) considers rhetoric as “the art of using language for persuasion, in speaking or writing; especially in oratory” (p.747). Wales (2001) opines that rhetoric is concerned with “the skills of public speaking as a means of persuasion” (p.344). Harmon (2009) views rhetoric to deal with “the presentation of ideas in clear, persuasive language” (p.446). Billig (2003) assumes that rhetoric refers both “to the persuasive character of discourse and to the long-established tradition of studying oratory. Political speeches, for example, are instances of rhetoric in the first sense because they are communications designed to persuade.” Political rhetoric, according to Cos (2008) is “an art of articulating and promoting one’s political interests through influence in the public sphere by symbolic manipulation of signs and symbols, including language, images, and the staging of events.” Obeng (2002) asserts that one of the important aspects of political communication is “the art of persuasion or rhetoric,” and he defines it as “the ability of politicians to communicatively ‘sell’ themselves,

their ideologies, or their policies to an electorate” (p. 8). Zheng (2000) asserts that rhetoric can be seen as “the skills and methodologies brought into play in shaping the convictions of particular audiences”. He states that the study of rhetoric is very crucial in critical discourse analysis. All the definitions reveal rhetoric as the art of persuasion using effective language of reasoning and logic in a certain text or discourse under a certain context so that the audience or reader is convinced to follow the writer’s or speaker’s way of thinking and behaving. It is a sort of sowing a need seed of concept in persons by justifying the necessity for a new beginning in relations.

2.1 Rhetorical Analysis

Nordquist (2019) defines rhetorical analysis as “a form of criticism or close reading that employs the principles of rhetoric to examine the interactions between a text, an author, and an audience”. Longaker and Walker (2011) define rhetorical analysis as “the study of persuasion in order to understand how people have been and can be persuasive” (p.3).

A rhetorical analysis considers all elements of the rhetorical situation: the audience, purpose, medium, and context within which a communication was generated and delivered in order to make an argument about that communication.

2.2 A Rhetorical Situation

A rhetorical situation comprises a handful of key elements, which should be identified before attempting to analyze and evaluate the use of rhetorical appeals. The rhetorical situation identifies the relationship among the elements of any communication: audience, author/ speaker, purpose, medium, context, and content.

2.3 Basic Elements of Rhetorical Analysis / Rhetorical Triangle

There are primarily three elements of rhetorical analysis: appeal to logos, appeal to ethos and appeal to pathos. The elements of the rhetorical situation interact and influence one another. It is thus helpful to think about the relationship among these elements within the rhetorical triangle. By doing this, writers will be able to better understand how the elements of each text come together (often overlap) to make an argument strong to persuade an audience.

2.3.1 Appeal to Logos

Logos refers to information, or the speaker's or writer's appeal to logic and reason through the use of words. A successful logical appeal provides clearly organized information as well as evidence to support the overall argument. It means logos is the rhetorical appeal that focuses on the argument being presented by the author / speaker. It is an appeal to rationality, referring to the clarity and logical integrity of the argument. Logos is, therefore, primarily rooted in the reasoning that holds different elements of argument together.

2.3.2 Appeal to Ethos

Ethos refers to the character of the writer or speaker, or more specifically, his credibility. The writer / speaker needs to establish credibility so that the reader/ audience will trust him and, thus, be more willing to engage with the argument. In other words, ethos is the appeal focused on the writer. It refers to the character of the writer, including his/her credibility and trustworthiness. The reader /audience must be convinced that the author/ speaker is an authority and merits attention.

2.3.3 Appeal to Pathos

Pathos refers to emotion, or more specifically, the writer's / speaker's appeal to the audience's emotions. When a writer / speaker establishes an effective pathetic appeal, s/he makes the reader/ audience care about what s/he is saying. In other words, Pathos is the rhetorical appeal that focuses on the reader/ audience. Pathos refers to the emotions that are stirred in the reader/ audience during reading the manuscript or hearing the speech.

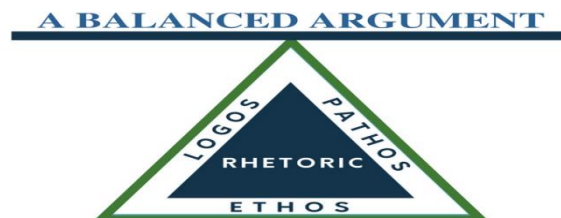


Figure 1: A Balanced Argument

A balanced argument retains appropriate logos, appropriate ethos and appropriate pathos. Such a balanced argument is persuasive, impressive and fruitful.

There is another element of rhetorical situation. It is appeal to kairos.

2.3.4 Appeal to Kairos

Kairos refers to appropriate timing, meaning when the writer / speaker presents certain parts of his/ her argument as well as the overall timing of the subject matter itself. Though it is not a part of the rhetorical triangle, it is still an important element for constructing an effective argument. If the writer or speaker fails to establish a strong kairotic appeal, the reader or audience may become polarized, hostile, or may simply lose their interest in his or her assertions.

3. Rhetorical Situation in “A New Beginning”

The writer deals with audience, author/ speaker, purpose, medium, context, and content under this heading.

3.1 Audience / Readers

The intended audience or readers of Obama’s speech are Muslims from a Muslim capital Cairo during his first few months as President. Moreover, this speech is intended for the Muslims, who have developed negative attitudes towards Americans in the World.

3.2 Actual Speaker

The actual speaker is 44th US President Barack Obama. An American President is considered to be one of the most influential and powerful political leaders in the world.

3.3 Purpose of the Speech

The purpose of the speech is to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world. Obama in his speech asserts:

I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world; one based upon mutual interest and mutual respect; and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles - principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings. (Para: 5)

3.4 Medium

The medium of the communication is speech in English language.

3.5 Context

This speech was delivered at Cairo University in Cairo, Egypt, on June 4, 2009. The worsening relation between the United States and the Muslim Society in the world was the context of his speech. A video (2009) released by Al-Qaeda against Obama's foreign policy in the Middle East, Al-Qaeda leader Zawahiri's criticism on Obama's policy and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's criticism on Obama were also the contextual situations that made him deliver this speech to maintain peace and harmony with the Muslims. This speech was supposed to be a new beginning in the American-Muslim relations after the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. That is why Obama says at the outset of his speech: "I've come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world" (Para: 5). He uses rhetorical techniques in gaining Muslim public support or feeling of reconciliation after the feeling of bitterness they have acquired from the discourse and deeds of his predecessor, George W. Bush. Moreover, Obama states that "the sweeping change brought by modernity and globalization led many Muslims to view the West as hostile to the traditions of Islam".

3.6 Content

The content of the speech involves seven sources of tension: violent extremism, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, nuclear proliferation, democracy, religious freedom, women's rights, and economic development and opportunity.

3.6.1 Violent Extremism

Obama shows his great concerns about violent extremism that has spread violent terrorism. He opines that the violent extremism is one of the sources of tension. He asserts:

The attacks of September 11th, 2001 and the continued efforts of these extremists to engage in violence against civilians has led some in my country to view Islam as inevitably hostile not only to America and Western countries, but also to human rights. This has bred more fear and mistrust. (Para: 3)

3.6.2 Israeli-Palestinian Conflicts

Mr. Obama called on Israelis and Palestinians to revive stalled peace talks, demanding Palestinians halt violence. He states that it is “a sign of neither courage nor power to shoot rockets at sleeping children or to blow up old women on a bus”. He told Israelis to ease the plight of those trapped in the occupied territories. “Just as Israel's right to exist cannot be denied, neither can Palestine's," he declared.

3.6.3 Nuclear Proliferation

Mr. Obama talks about nuclear proliferation reaffirms “no nations hold nuclear weapons. And any nation - including Iran - should have the right to access peaceful nuclear power if it complies with its responsibilities under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty” (Para: 45).

3.6.4 Democracy

Mr. Obama values democratic norms and deeds. He asserts “no system of government can or should be imposed upon one nation by any other” (Para: 47). He expresses “we will welcome all elected, peaceful governments - provided they govern with respect for all their people” (Para: 49).

3.6.5 Religious Freedom

Mr. Obama considers that every religion should be valued and respected. He remarks that “people in every country should be free to choose and live their faith based upon the persuasion of the mind, heart, and soul. This tolerance is essential for religion

to thrive” (Para: 52). People should have religious tolerance. Lack of tolerance will lead to tragic violence in the world as it occurred in Iraq.

3.6.6 Women’s Rights

Mr. Obama values the potentiality of human beings regardless of sex. He asserts “Our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons, and our common prosperity will be advanced by allowing all humanity - men and women - to reach their full potential” (Para: 60).

3.6.7 Economic Development and Opportunity

In Cairo, Mr. Obama announces that the U.S. will continue to seek a broader engagement with Muslims around the world, including new partnerships in education, economic development, and health to expand opportunity throughout the world. Highlighting the importance of partnerships, he proclaims that “Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments; community organizations, religious leaders, and businesses in Muslim communities around the world to help our people pursue a better life” (Para: 68).

4. Assessing Rhetorical Triangle in “A New Beginning”

The article writer evaluates primarily three elements of rhetorical analysis: appeal to logos, appeal to ethos and appeal to pathos along with appeal to kairos in this article.

4.1 Appeal to Logos

The writer or speaker fundamentally attempts to persuade the reader or audience through the language of acceptable reasoning, suitable logic, and trustworthy evidence as rhetorical strategies that support the claim. In the speech entitled “A New Beginning”, Mr. Obama employed following rhetorical strategies or tactics to persuade his audience.

4.1.1 Targeting Strategy

Targeting strategy is a broad term that includes arousing national identity, arousing religious identity, inclusive technique and giving promises. Mr. Obama demonstrated his excellent oratory skill in this speech.

4.1.1.1 Arousing National Identity

Mr. Obama started his speech by drawing upon symbols of national identity to win the support of the Arab and Muslim audience, especially the Egyptians. He asserts in the first paragraph:

- a. I am honored to be in the timeless city of **Cairo**.
- b. Al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning, and for over a century, **Cairo** University has been a source of **Egypt's** advancement.
- c. I am grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of **Egypt**.

He glorifies Cairo, the capital city of Egypt, by ascribing it being “timeless” to show the city with a long tradition. He portrayed Al-Azhar University as a beacon of Islamic learning and Cairo University as a source of Egypt’s advancement. He mentions that he was proud of hospitality of the Egyptian people.

4.1.1.2 Arousing Religious and Cultural Identity

Mr. Obama admires Muslims’ history, traditions, culture and contributions to world civilization in the eighth paragraph and asserts:

- a. As a student of history, I also know civilization’s debt to Islam. It was Islam...that carried the light of learning through so many centuries, paving the way for Europe’s Renaissance and Enlightenment.
- b. It was innovation in Muslim communities that developed the order of algebra; our magnetic compass and tools of navigation; our mastery of pens and printing; our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed.
- c. Throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.

- d. Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation.

Admiring someone's religion and culture is one of the ways to win the heart of the people.

4.1.1.3 Inclusive Technique

Our life styles and political ideas are shaped by the setting of our living places. According to Zheng (2000), "political discourse is a mixed product of personal development and the relevant social environment in which an individual grows. Any individual political discourse is the result of personal development in certain social settings." Obama uses the inclusive technique to win the support of the Muslim audience by saying that he was close to the Muslim Communities. He states this in the seventh paragraph.

- a. My father came from a Kenyan family that includes generations of Muslims.
- b. As a boy, I spent several years in Indonesia and heard the call of the azaan.
- c. As a young man, I worked in Chicago communities where many found dignity and peace in their Muslim faith.

Obama's employment of the inclusive technique can also be noticed in the following examples in different paragraphs.

- a. America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings. (Para: 5)
- b. The interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart. (Para: 6)
- c. There is a mosque in every state in our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. (Para: 13)
- d. Islam is a part of America. ... All of us share common aspirations. (Para: 14)

Mentioning the interrelation between two different persons, states, identities, groups and so on is a way to gain support.

4.1.1.4 Giving Promises

A politician tends to give a lot of promises to help the audience or their parties, groups, or countries in an effort to win their approval of his statements. Mr. Obama makes several promises in his Cairo speech. Some of them are as follows:

- a. We plan to invest \$1.5 billion each year over the next five years to partner with Pakistanis to build schools and hospitals, roads and businesses, and hundreds of millions to help those who've been displaced. (Para:24)
- b. We are providing more than \$2.8 billion to help Afghans develop their economy and deliver services that people depend on. (Para:24)
- c. We will help Iraq train its security forces and develop its economy. (Para:26)
- d. We will expand exchange programs, and increase scholarships. (Para:65)
- e. We will match promising Muslim students with internships in America. . (Para:65)
- f. We will create a new corps of business volunteers to partner with counterparts in Muslim-majority countries. (Para:66)
- g. We will launch a new fund to support technological development in Muslim-majority countries, and to help transfer ideas to the marketplace so they can create jobs. (Para:67)
- h. We will open centers of scientific excellence in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and appoint new Science Envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, and grow new crops. (Para:67)
- i. We will also expand partnerships with Muslim communities to promote child and maternal health. (Para:67)

4.1.2 Enforcement Strategy

The aim of the enforcement strategy is to prove the speaker's sincerity. Zheng (2000) mentions how sincerity is achieved in the speech. He enunciates that "the effectiveness of delivery, proverbs, poetry of expression and emotional investment of the rhetorician gives the audience a gauge for determining the speaker's sincerity." Mr.

Obama employed the following techniques under the enforcement strategy to hold his sincerity.

4.1.2.1 Testimony Technique

Zheng (2000) defines testimony technique as one in which “politicians list a series of the achievements or deeds of individual parties.” He glorifies the deeds of the American people in the following examples:

- a. The United States has been one of the greatest sources of progress that the world has ever known. We were born out of revolution against an empire. (Para:11)
- b. We were founded upon the ideal that all are created equal, and we have shed blood and struggled for centuries to give meaning to those words. (Para:11)

4.1.2.2 Citing Historical Speeches

Zheng (2000) assumes that “the citing of historical speeches is used as a means to increase the effectiveness of a speech, and to reduce the political risk of being branded an extremist”.

Obama cites the historical speeches of very famous American Presidents to persuade his audience.

- a. Our second President, John Adams, wrote, “The United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility of Muslims.” (Para:9)
- b. We can recall the words of Thomas Jefferson, who said: “I hope that our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us that the less we use our power the greater it will be.” (Para:25)

The two citations are utilized to show that America was not hostile to Muslims or Islam.

4.1.2.3 Inversion Technique

Zheng (2000) takes the inversion technique as “a means by which a speaker uses a particular expression in such a way that its commonly held meaning is inverted to

mean the exact opposite of the original expression.” Mr. Obama exercises this technique in the following examples:

- a. The situation in Afghanistan demonstrates America’s goals. ... We did not go by choice; we went because of necessity. (Para:21)
- b. The Iraqi people are ultimately better off without the tyranny of Saddam Hussein. (Para:25)

4.1.2.4 Fear Technique

Obeng (2002) shows the aim of using fear as a rhetorical device is to “manipulate an audience with a view to persuading them to support 'unsupportable' policies and issues. Political actors may play on the audience's emotions by instilling fear in them” (p. 8). Zheng (2000) views that this technique firstly “produces some kind of potential threat to the public, and then provides solutions from which the public can then choose. In reality, however, these solutions constitute choices made by the politician, and not the public.” Obama uses the fear technique in the following expressions:

- a. So long as our relationship is defined by our differences, we will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, those who promote conflict rather than ... cooperation. (Para:4)
- b. When violent extremists operate in one stretch of mountains, people are endangered across an ocean. (Para:16)
- c. Muslim communities ... are also threatened. The sooner the extremists are isolated and unwelcome in Muslim communities, the sooner we will all be safer. (Para:28)

4.1.2.5 Religious Citation

Zheng (2000) asserts that “political discourse seeks to pacify the public in order to make an unpleasant reality more palatable. This is accomplished by using proverbs, idioms or biblical utterances to attack opponents.” Most of the people in the world

believe that the things written in the religious books are true; therefore the teachings should be followed for a good and peaceful life. Mr. Obama used citations from the three major holy books: the Koran the Torah and Bible. From the holy book of Muslims, he cites these statements:

- a. The Holy Koran tells us, "O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another." (Para: 74)
- b. The Talmud tells us: "The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace." (Para: 75)
- c. The Holy Bible tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Para:76)
- d. As the Holy Koran tells us, "Be conscious of God and speak always the truth." (Para:6)

These three citations were employed to focus on the importance of peace and truth in life. Wars violate peace and create mistrust among people.

4.1.2.5 Emotion Technique

Zheng (2000) affirms that political speakers constantly use the emotion technique "in their bid to appeal to the viewing public." Watching Obama's speech, it can be noticed that he uses these tactics to arouse the emotion of his audience: talking in ringing tones, head and face gestures as well as arm and hand gestures. The emotions which Obama was trying to convey through his words are virtually concrete in the following assertions:

- a. I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear. (Para: 10)
- b. The United States government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab and to punish those who would deny it. (Para:13)
- c. I believe that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life, all of us share common aspirations - to live in peace and security; to get an education and to work with dignity; to love our families, our

communities, and our God. These things we share. This is the hope of all humanity. (Para: 14)

4.1.2.6 Use of Metaphorical Language

Obeng (2002) defines metaphor as one of the devices of expressing indirectness in politics. He indicates that “political actors use a word or phrase to establish a comparison between one idea and another” (p.11). Metaphor is a rhetorical device which involves a comparison between two dissimilar things for emphasis. Mr. Obama uses some metaphors in his Cairo speech.

- a. We will empower those who sow hatred rather than peace, and who promote conflict rather than the cooperation that can help all of our people achieve justice and prosperity. (Para: 4)
- b. Palestinians must abandon violence. ... Violence is a dead end. (Para: 35)
- c. All of us must recognize that education and innovation will be the currency of the 21st century. (Para: 64)
- d. We were born out of revolution against an empire.(Para:11)

4.1.2.7 Summarization

A politician summarizes the ideas he wants to convey at the end of his speech. Obama has talked about seven issues in his speech: violent extremism, the situation between Israelis and Palestinians, nuclear weapons, democracy, religious freedom, women's rights, and economic development. At the end of his speech, he summarizes these issues in one long sentence:

- a. The people of the world can live together in peace. We know that is God's vision. Now, that must be our work here on Earth. (Para: 77)

He realized that it was necessary to make a new beginning with the Muslim World to attain peace, harmony, cooperation and security. Maintaining peace is one of the most burning issues in the world.

4.1.3 The Avoidance Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to avoid responsibility for any negative deeds or bad sayings. According to Zheng (2000), this is achieved by never mentioning any negative side of self, using special categories of words, anaphora, and contrasting expressions.

4.1.3.1 Never Mentioning Negative Sides of Self

Zheng (2000) reports that it is one of the most common techniques embraced by politicians for “denying the existence of any flaws or negative aspects present in one’s own character or set of beliefs.” Van Dijk (2006) considers this strategy as a “positive self-presentation” and indicates that it operates in such a way that “our good things are emphasized and our bad things de-emphasized” (p. 126). This avoidance tactic is utilized by Obama in the following excerpts:

- a. America is not the crude stereotype of a self-interested empire. (Para: 11)
- b. When one nation pursues a nuclear weapon, the risk of nuclear attack rises for all nations. (Para: 16)
- c. America is not – and never will be – at war with Islam. (Para: 20)
- d. We do not want to keep our troops in Afghanistan. We seek no military bases there. (Para:22)

4.1.3.2 Exaggerating Negative Sides of Others

Van Dijk (2006) treats it as an ideological strategy under the label “negative-other presentation” and it operates in such a way that the bad things of the others “will be enhanced” and their good things “will be mitigated, hidden or forgotten”(p.126).

Obama uses this device in the following statements:

- a. Al Qaeda chose to ruthlessly murder these people ... and even now states their determination to kill on a massive scale. (Para: 21)
- b. Palestinians must abandon violence. ... It is a sign neither of courage nor power to shoot rockets at sleeping children, or to blow up old women on a bus. (Para:35)

- c. c. Iran has played a role in acts of hostage-taking and violence against U.S. troops and civilians. (Para: 43)

Gadalla (2009) evaluates Obama as a very competent political rhetorician. He views that Mr. Obama used “the three major rhetorical strategies that Zheng tackled: targeting, enforcement, and avoidance, each with several tactics”.

4.1.4 Special Categories of Words

Zheng (2000) states that the choice of words is an important rhetorical tactic. Lexical choice can be used to “enforce or attenuate illocutionary force”. Certain types of content words activate particular presuppositions, reveal speaker attitudes, and require reader agreement for interpretation. Some special “positive governing words” as well as “name calling words” are also used in political speeches. Such words are employed to achieve thematic emphasis of the speech or discourse.

This article includes some representative words Mr. Obama employed in his speech. The following tables show some representative words used for expressing different aspects.

Table 1: Words for Expressing Positive Transformation

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Progress	11	26.2	26.2	26.2
Development	6	14.3	14.3	40.5
Prosperity	3	7.1	7.1	47.6
Opportunity	4	9.5	9.5	57.1
Rights	12	28.6	28.6	85.7
Aspirations	6	14.3	14.3	100.0
Total	42	100.0	100.0	

This table evinces that Mr. Obama was much concerned about human rights. People are deprived of their rights because of wars and violent activities of extremists.

Table 2: Words for Expressing Harmony

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cooperation	2	4.5	4.5	4.5
Relationship	2	4.5	4.5	9.1
Partnership	5	11.4	11.4	20.5
Hospitality	2	4.5	4.5	25.0
Equality	5	11.4	11.4	36.4
Respect	10	22.7	22.7	59.1
Dignity	5	11.4	11.4	70.5
Innocent	4	9.1	9.1	79.5
Justice	3	6.8	6.8	86.4
Tolerance	3	6.8	6.8	93.2
Agreement	3	6.8	6.8	100.0
Total	44	100.0	100.0	

Mr. Obama focused on mutual respect, governments governing people with respects, respecting even traditional women and respecting the dignity of all human beings.

Table 3: Words for Expressing Values

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Democracy	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
Principles	3	6.7	6.7	15.6
Promise	4	8.9	8.9	24.4
Peace	20	44.4	44.4	68.9
Peaceful	8	17.8	17.8	86.7
Freedom	6	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Mr. Obama felt necessity of preserving peace, promoting peace and living together in peace and security.

Table 4: Words for Expressing Nation and Nationality

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
America	33	19.0	19.0	19.0
American	13	7.5	7.5	26.4
The United States	42	24.1	24.1	50.6
West	7	4.0	4.0	54.6
Pakistan	4	2.3	2.3	56.9
Afghanistan	4	2.3	2.3	59.2
Afghan	1	.6	.6	59.8
Palestine	2	1.1	1.1	60.9
Palestinians	10	5.7	5.7	66.7
Palestinian	10	5.7	5.7	72.4
Israel	14	8.0	8.0	80.5
Israelis	9	5.2	5.2	85.6
Egypt	3	1.7	1.7	87.4
Iraq	15	8.6	8.6	96.0
Iraqi	4	2.3	2.3	98.3
Africa	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	174	100.0	100.0	

Mr. Obama mentioned that there was a tension between the United States and Muslims around the World; therefore he intended to seek a new beginning between them. He asserted that the United States would partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams.

Table 5: Words for Expressing Human Beings and Humanity

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Human beings	5	5.9	5.9	5.9
Humanity	3	3.5	3.5	9.4
Mankind	3	3.5	3.5	12.9
People	48	56.5	56.5	69.4
Women	13	15.3	15.3	84.7
Men	5	5.9	5.9	90.6
Children	8	9.4	9.4	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Mr. Obama talked about Egyptian people, American people, Iraqi people, Jewish people, Palestinian people, black people, young people, and the people of the world in his speech. He was concerned about the people of the world.

Table 6: Words for Expressing Religious Beliefs

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
God	7	7.3	7.3	7.3
Religion	8	8.3	8.3	15.6
Christians	6	6.3	6.3	21.9
Muslims	45	46.9	46.9	68.8
Islam	18	18.8	18.8	87.5
Islamic	5	5.2	5.2	92.7
Bible	1	1.0	1.0	93.8
Koran	4	4.2	4.2	97.9
Talmud	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
Torah	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	96	100.0	100.0	

The speech was primarily focused on the Muslims who developed negative attitudes towards the United States and its people. By quoting the lines from the religious books, he stressed the necessity of peace to live in peace and security.

Table 7: Words for Expressing Problematic Aspects

Words	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Problems	4	4.8	4.8	4.8
Hostile	2	2.4	2.4	7.2
Fear	6	7.2	7.2	14.5
War	15	18.1	18.1	32.5
Tension	9	10.8	10.8	43.4
Conflict	5	6.0	6.0	49.4
Confront	3	3.6	3.6	53.0
Weapon	6	7.2	7.2	60.2
Extremists	9	10.8	10.8	71.1
Extremism	2	2.4	2.4	73.5
Al-Quaeda	6	7.2	7.2	80.7

Violence	10	12.0	12.0	92.8
Violent	6	7.2	7.2	100.0
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

Several violent events were created because of extremists who waged wars against their opponents resulting in fear, hostility and tension in the world.

4.2 Appeal to Ethos

The article writer believes that Mr. Obama’s credibility and trustworthiness was very high. The reader /audience must be convinced that the speaker was an authority and merits attention. He was the President of one of the most powerful nations in the world. His family background, his education, his deeds, his dynamic portfolio and his views about humanity contribute to his credibility. Most o the people retained a strong belief that he could do what he proclaimed.

According to Wellenfeldt and Mendell, Barack Hussien Obama II (born, August 4, 1961) was the President of the United States from 2009-2017. He was the 44th U.S. President and the first African-American President in American history. Mr. Obama spoke often of his multicultural background: his father was from Kenya, his mother from Kansas, and they met while at the University of Hawaii. After his parents divorced and his father returned to Africa, Mr. Obama stayed with his mother and was raised in Indonesia and Hawaii. He earned an undergraduate degree from Columbia University in 1983 and a law degree from Harvard in 1991. He then joined the Chicago law firm of Miner, Barnhill & Galland, which specialized in civil rights legislation. He also taught constitutional law for 12 years at the University of Chicago. Barack Obama was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996, and then to the U.S. Senate in 2004, beating Republican candidate Alan Keyes.

He shot to national fame after delivering a stirring keynote speech in support of John Kerry at the 2004 Democratic national convention. Obama ran for President in 2008, defeating a Democratic primary field that included New York Sen. Hillary Clinton, the former First Lady. He named Delaware senator Joe Biden to be his running mate at the Democratic Convention that August, and they defeated Republican

nominees John McCain and Sarah Palin in the November general election. They took office on 20 January 2009.

He published the personal memoir *Dreams from My Father* in 1995, and published a second book, *The Audacity of Hope*, in 2006. The title of the latter book was also the title of his 2004 keynote speech, and both books won Grammys for best spoken word album. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, for “his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples.” He ran successfully for re-election in 2012, defeating Republican candidate Mitt Romney on November 6, 2012. U.S. Presidents are limited to two terms, so he did not run again; he was succeeded by Republican Donald Trump on January 20, 2017. His education, position, deeds and achievements indicates a strong appeal to ethos.

4.3 Appeal to Pathos

Most of the Muslims in the world might have been moved by Mr. Obama’s influential speech. They might have come to realize that violence and hatred could not eradicate the mistrust between Americans and Muslims. He frequently talked about peace, progress, harmony, goodwill, co-existence, cooperation, partnerships, respect, justice, freedom, humanity, democracy, and dignity that could motivate the audience to believe or do something new and creative. Significance of the above mentioned terms in real life situations might evoke pathos in their hearts. But the rigid Muslim leaders might take this speech as a delusive piece of fake assertion and assurance.

4.4 Appeal to Kairos

Cairo University was a right place for the speech as it has been a source of Egypt's advancement. It was right or appropriate time for the speech to maintain relations between US and the Muslim World, because their relationship was worsening because of mistrust and violence.

5. Discussion

“A New Beginning” is one of the most influential speeches delivered by US President Mr. Barack Obama in Cairo in 2009. The title of the speech suggests his desire to make a new beginning with the Muslim World to avoid mistrust and conflict existed between the United States and the Muslim World for a long time. He mentioned that violent extremism, Israeli–Palestinian conflict and nuclear proliferation to have created mistrust hostility and fear between nations and sects. He further stressed that people of every nation should not be deprived of entertaining democracy and religious freedom. No one should deny women's rights, economic development and opportunity. He promised to support other nations in different fields for economic development. He showed his interest in working with other nations in partnerships. Finally, he focused on the necessity of living together in peace in the world. Most of his assertions are persuasive.

6. Conclusion

The speech “A New Beginning” delivered by President Obama is an excellent text that retains ample rhetorical techniques for persuading the audience or the readers. His oratory skill, choice of words, content of the speech, feeling of intimacy with the intended audience, his gestures, the beginning, the body and the conclusion of the speech are impressive; and all these make him a successful orator who emphasizes cooperation, harmony, partnership, justice, mutual respect, democracy, civil rights, equality, freedom, progress, development and peace in the world.

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