

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS ON THE SPEECH “WE SHALL FIGHT ON THE BEACHES” BY WINSTON CHURCHILL

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ABSTRACT

Speech and the art of persuasion are powerful tools if delivered and done in the correct orders. A crucial moment can be created with such words and little action, speeches inspire people to do more and become more than themselves. The art of persuasion or rhetoric is a detrimental tool that can be sharper than a sword; a set of correctly used words with the right tone can be devastating. This paper and the author aim to analyze the rhetorical devices that were used in Winston Churchill's speech on the Second World War “We Shall Fight on the Beach”, using the three main pillars that Aristotle pioneered in the rhetorical device of the art of persuasion. The method of the study is by reading the speech text and analyzing it thoughtfully. The analysis also examines descriptive vocabulary and observe the ability of the speaker to adjust their words to inflict an effect on society (Van Herk, 2015). This study found 3 parts they are Logos, Pathos, and Ethos as the main of rhetorical language.

Keywords: rhetoric, rhetorical language, speeches

ABSTRAK

Pidato dan seni persuasi adalah alat yang ampuh jika disampaikan dan dilakukan dengan urutan yang benar. Momen penting dapat diciptakan dengan kata-kata dan tindakan kecil seperti itu, pidato menginspirasi orang untuk berbuat lebih banyak dan menjadi lebih dari diri mereka sendiri. Seni persuasi atau retorika adalah alat merugikan yang bisa lebih tajam dari pedang; satu set kata yang digunakan dengan benar dengan nada yang tepat dapat menghancurkan. Tulisan ini dan penulis bertujuan untuk menganalisis perangkat retorika yang digunakan dalam pidato Winston Churchill tentang perang dunia kedua “We Shall Fight on the Beach”, dengan menggunakan tiga pilar utama yang dipelopori Aristoteles dalam perangkat retorika seni persuasi. Metode penelitiannya adalah dengan membaca teks pidato dan menganalisisnya secara renungan. Analisis ini juga menguji kosakata deskriptif dan mengamati kemampuan pembicara untuk menyesuaikan kata-kata mereka untuk menimbulkan efek pada masyarakat (Van Herk, 2015). Penelitian ini menemukan 3 bagian yaitu Logos, Pathos, dan Ethos sebagai bahasa retorika utama.

Kata kunci: retorika, bahasa retorika, pidato

I. INTRODUCTION

To make well-spoken speech that will have a useful effect on an audience, the speaker must build and deliver speeches that can tap into the heart and emotions of the audience. To choose a rhetorical language or approach will help the speaker to set the mood of the speech. As long as the second world war Winston Churchill the British prime minister delivered a speech that was famously known as “We shall fight on the beaches” on the 4th of June 1940, during the allied force evacuation of Dunkirk. The British people morale during the second world war is rather low due to the limited supply and the fallen of France to the hands of the Nazi, this bring the British force to the last of their strength to fought the axis. Winston Churchill's speech also known as “Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat” helped to relieve the weight of the British Empire forces. The speech then increased the persuasion of committing to join the war that had been postponed by the British councilor staff that didn't want to support Churchill. He then also delivered a speech “Their Finest Hours” during a crucial Battle on the British air space by RAF and the Luftwaffe squad to assert dominance over the British Channel.

To acknowledge and study the various devices and methods that Churchill utilized in his speech gives insight to the art of rhetoric, seeing as according to the introduction provided by Cannadine in the book “*The Speeches of Winston Churchill*”, the Prime Minister possessed “the most rhetorical style of any statesman in British history”. Churchill manages to put an amazing display of strength and resistance during a crisis of morale with his rhetorical choices of words and language, how his speech touches the emotions of the entire country to keep on fighting against the Nazi.

The purpose of this discourse analysis is to unfold and study the words, language,

and methods used by Churchill in most of his delivery speech during the turmoil of the Second World War, describing the words in speech and its meaning that can affect the tides of the war. The analysis will use Churchill's speech to consider examples of Aristotle's three key rhetorical appeals – logos, ethos and pathos – discussed by Baker (Aristotle's three modes of persuasion).

II. METHOD

Conducting the speech of Winston Churchill during the Second World War as study material for this paper to answer and study the effect and the meaning of the rhetorical language and devices that Winston Churchill used in his speech to encourage the Morale of British People. By reading the speech text and analyzing it thoughtfully. The analysis also examine descriptive vocabulary and observe the ability of the speaker to adjust their words to inflict an effect on the society (Van Herk, 2015). To then adjusted with the Aristotle rhetorical devices

Data will be collected and analyzed from the speech text itself on the House of Commons by Winston Churchill. The speech text then will be sorted and chosen using the rhetorical devices by Aristotle, the chosen speech part will be conducted at the Finding and discussion part where it will be analyzed and categorized as the Rhetorical devices as follows. Taken from among Paragraph 15-22 from the Winston Churchill “We Shall Fight on the Beaches” speech text in 1940.

I return to the Army. In the long series of very fierce battles, now on this front, now on that, fighting on three fronts at once, battles fought by two or three divisions against an equal or somewhat larger number of the enemy, and fought fiercely on some of the old grounds that so many of us knew so well in these battles our losses in men have

exceeded 30,000 killed, wounded and missing. I take occasion to express the sympathy of the House to all who have suffered bereavement or who are still anxious. The President of the Board of Trade [Sir Andrew Duncan] is not here today. His son has been killed, and many in the House have felt the pangs of affliction in the sharpest form. But I will say this about the missing: We have had a large number of wounded come home safely to this country, but I would say about the missing that there may be very many reported missing who will come back home, someday, in one way or another. In the confusion of this fight it is inevitable that many have been left in positions where honor required no further resistance from them.

Against this loss of over 30,000 men, we can set a far heavier loss certainly inflicted upon the enemy. But our losses in material are enormous. We have perhaps lost one-third of the men we lost in the opening days of the battle of 21st March, 1918, but we have lost nearly as many guns -- nearly one thousand -- and all our transport, all the armored vehicles that were with the Army in the north. This loss will impose a further delay on the expansion of our military strength. That expansion had not been proceeding as far as we had hoped. The best of all we had to give had gone to the British Expeditionary Force, and although they had not have the numbers of tanks and some articles of equipment which were desirable, they were a very well and finely equipped Army. They had the first-fruits of all that our industry had to give, and that is gone. And now here is this further delay. How long it will be, how long it will last, depends upon the exertions which we make on this Island. An effort the likes of which has never

been seen in our records is now being made. Work is proceeding everywhere, night and day, Sundays and week days. Capital and Labor have cast aside their interests, rights, and customs and put them into the common stock. Already the flow of munitions has leaped forward. There is no reason why we should not in a few months overtake the sudden and serious loss that has come upon us, without retarding the development of our general program.

Nevertheless, our thankfulness at the escape of our Army and so many men, whose loved ones have passed through an agonizing week, must not blind us to the fact that what has happened in France and Belgium is a colossal military disaster. The French Army has been weakened, the Belgian Army has been lost, a large part of those fortified lines upon which so much faith had been reposed is gone, many valuable mining districts and factories have passed into the enemy's possession, the whole of the Channel ports are in his hands, with all the tragic consequences that follow from that, and we must expect another blow to be struck almost immediately at us or at France. We are told that Herr Hitler has a plan for invading the British Isles. This has often been thought of before. When Napoleon lay at Boulogne for a year with his flat-bottomed boats and his Grand Army, he was told by someone. "There are bitter weeds in England." There are certainly a great many more of them since the British Expeditionary Force returned.

The whole question of home defense against invasion is, of course, powerfully affected by the fact that we have for the time being in this Island incomparably more powerful military forces than we have ever had at any

moment in this war or the last. But this will not continue. We shall not be content with a defensive war. We have our duty to our Ally. We have to reconstitute and build up the British Expeditionary Force once again, under its gallant Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gort. All this is in train; but in the interval we must put our defenses in this Island into such a high state of organization that the fewest possible numbers will be required to give effective security and that the largest possible potential of offensive effort may be realized. On this we are now engaged. It will be very convenient, if it be the desire of the House, to enter upon this subject in a secret Session. Not that the government would necessarily be able to reveal in very great detail military secrets, but we like to have our discussions free, without the restraint imposed by the fact that they will be read the next day by the enemy; and the Government would benefit by views freely expressed in all parts of the House by Members with their knowledge of so many different parts of the country. I understand that some request is to be made upon this subject, which will be readily acceded to by His Majesty's Government.

We have found it necessary to take measures of increasing stringency, not only against enemy aliens and suspicious characters of other nationalities, but also against British subjects who may become a danger or a nuisance should the war be transported to the United Kingdom. I know there are a great many people affected by the orders which we have made who are the passionate enemies of Nazi Germany. I am very sorry for them, but we cannot, at the present time and under the present stress, draw all

the distinctions which we should like to do. If parachute landings were attempted and fierce fighting attendant upon them followed, these unfortunate people would be far better out of the way, for their own sakes as well as for ours. There is, however, another class, for which I feel not the slightest sympathy. Parliament has given us the powers to put down Fifth Column activities with a strong hand, and we shall use those powers subject to the supervision and correction of the House, without the slightest hesitation until we are satisfied, and more than satisfied, that this malignancy in our midst has been effectively stamped out.

Turning once again, and this time more generally, to the question of invasion, I would observe that there has never been a period in all these long centuries of which we boast when an absolute guarantee against invasion, still less against serious raids, could have been given to our people. In the days of Napoleon the same wind which would have carried his transports across the Channel might have driven away the blockading fleet. There was always the chance, and it is that chance which has excited and befooled the imaginations of many Continental tyrants. Many are the tales that are told. We are assured that novel methods will be adopted, and when we see the originality of malice, the ingenuity of aggression, which our enemy displays, we may certainly prepare ourselves for every kind of novel stratagem and every kind of brutal and treacherous maneuver. I think that no idea is so outlandish that it should not be considered and viewed with a search, but at the same time, I hope, with a steady eye. We must never forget the solid assurances of sea power and those

which belong to air power if it can be locally exercised.

I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone. At any rate, that is what we are going to try to do. That is the resolve of His Majesty's Government-every man of them. That is the will of Parliament and the nation. The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength. Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.

<https://www.famous-speeches-and-speech-topics.info/famous-speeches/winston-churchill-speech-we-shall-fight-on-the-beaches.htm>

III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Data will be examined and separated by reading and analyzing the text of Churchill's speech that was famously known as "We Shall fight on the Beaches". To understand the rhetorical devices and language techniques used in the Second World War speech. Analyzing the imagery and figures of speech to uncover what meanings, power, or atmosphere they create and the interaction and effect on the society (Van Herk, 2015).

Rhetorical devices used by Churchill were discovered by Aristotle. The word "rhetoric" itself means the art of persuasion through either writing or speech. Rhetorical devices can be used for different reasons, but they are always designed to have an impressive effect on their audience (Zimmer, 2016). The techniques used by the writer or author to persuade their reader to take up their point of view

3.1 Logos, Pathos and Ethos

These are the three major pillars that Aristotle purpose in order to successfully persuade the audience to take a different point of view (Zimmer, 2016). Every pillar will coherently work with a suitable choice of words or language to achieve the best possible outcome.

3.1.1 Logos

Logos is a pillar that shows that the speaker appeals to the audience in a logical sense, this pillar coherently well with fact and data (Zimmer, 2016). Stating the true events or a factional field data could bring the audience to a different point of view.

Churchill started with a statement that the France have fallen to hands of the Nazi and how the British Expedition Force have to make a crucial escape in Dunkirk and how many soldiers has fallen, and how now Britain have to fight alone against the Nazi with a limited support.

“In the long series of very fierce battles, now on this front, now on that, fighting on three fronts at once, battles fought by two or three divisions against an equal or somewhat larger number of the enemy, and fought fiercely on some of the old grounds that so many of us knew so well-in these battles our losses in men have exceeded 30,000 killed, wounded and missing.” (Churchill, House of Commons, 1940)

The fact now Britain is alone and suffered defeat in many fronts is an emphasize to his point that, and the number of casualties the British force have suffered, the phrase *“an equal or somewhat larger”* was a statement that they are outnumbered and as a logical point that he serve to the audience (Zimmer, 2016). This gives the people an image of what's currently happening in the front line.

“Against this loss of over 30,000 men, we can set a far heavier loss certainly inflicted upon the enemy. But our losses in material are enormous. We have perhaps lost one-third of the men we lost in the opening days of the battle of 21st March, 1918, but we have lost nearly as many guns — nearly one thousand- and all our transport, all the armored vehicles that were with the Army in the north.” (Churchill, House of Commons, 1940)

Churchill then emphasized that the loss of men is not the nation's only problem, but the loss of war supplies and goods in order to keep the men armed also have greatly

impacted the front line. *“But our Losses in material are enormous”* the phrase that he uttered are also a hint of his purpose of the speech, which is to get support from the entire nation on their war fund and other needs (Puputti, 2019). It is also a call of help to their ally the United States of America.

3.1.2 Pathos

Pathos is an appeal to emotion of the audience, this is when the speaker engages the audience's emotional state to convince them of their argument. Emotive language is a technique that works well with Pathos, how a correct choice of words can tackle the emotion state of the audience.

“I take the occasion to express the sympathy of the House to all who have suffered bereavement or who are still anxious. The President of the Board of Trade [Sir Andrew Duncan] is not here today. His son has been killed, and many in the House have felt the pangs of affliction in the sharpest form.” (Churchill, House of Commons, 1940)

The next Pillar that he uses is the Pathos pillar where he wants to persuade the people to understand the situation of their nation now, he emotionally expresses the loss of men and other loved ones (Zimmer, 2016). *“His son has been killed”* this may be seems inappropriate announcing someone son loss over a national speech, the message that he want to deliver is that he is still a human that can also be moved by a loss of their son who went to combat this shows that every young man who participate in the war is equally respected.

“Nevertheless, our thankfulness at the escape of our Army and so many men, whose loved ones have passed through an agonizing week.” (Churchill, House of Commons, 1940)

The sympathy then stressed with the utterance that he stated after, to show that he also felt as a family that was relieved that their loved ones managed to escape the horror of the west European war.

3.1.3 Ethos

Ethos is a Greek word that is roughly translated as “moral character”. Hence, the word ethical tends to be related to Ethos. This mode of persuasion is used by the speaker or writer to convince an audience of their point of view through their own character or credibility (Zimmer, 2016). You show that you have the right character and temperament to be believable.

“I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone.” (Churchill, House of Commons, 1940)

Winston Churchill is known as a man who is extraordinarily stubborn and cunning, he managed to be a Prime minister for England with his adventurous political journey. He boosts himself with confidence and he is not afraid of sharing those treats (Puputti, 2019). *“I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty,”* he showed his credibility to the audience with *“I have, myself”* to show that he is the right man to lead England out of the brink.

He showed his courage to fight the Nazi even without the support of other nation

nor allied with his utterance *“If necessary for years, if necessary alone.”* he stated that himself in a position that his ready to ‘entertain’ the Nazi even until his last breath.

IV. CONCLUSION

To deliver the speech and persuade the people with your argument is not a merely thing to do, there is a saying “you say what you say but not what you meant”. This means that most words that humans or people in general produce is just merely an accumulation of sound that is put up into a single unit of word and compiled into one sentence. Sometimes it resembles and manifests our interest and intention in those sentences, and some are just empty words without a purpose.

The utterances are empty without the emotion, intonation and the meaning behind it. If we use the wrong approach in our utterance we will have terrible possible outcomes, and vice versa. Humans are equipped with many tools of war, our speech and voice are just one of the most powerful.

“Wound a Man he recovered in Days, Break his heart and you left him dead” an old saying that intensifies if a tongue can deal more damage to a person emotionally and physiologically. In the analysis above it is proven how much Winston Churchill can achieve during such a short period of time, with just merely his words and little strength could change and persuade a tide of war into his favor. Sometimes it's not just what you said, but how you say it will remain a scar in a person's memories.

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