GRAMMATICAL STRATEGIES OF PERSUASION IN PRESIDENT PRABOWO SUBIANTO'S D-8 SUMMIT 2024 SPEECH

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: March 2025 Revised: May 2025 Published: July 2025 *Keywords* *Persuasion Speech;* *Grammatical strategies;* *Rethorical strategies;* *Ethos;* *Pathos;* *Logos;*	*A leader's speech in an international forum functions as a strategic rhetorical instrument to convey vision, foster solidarity, and assert diplomatic presence. This study analyzes the speech delivered by President Prabowo Subianto at the 2024 D-8 Summit, which centered on the call for unity among Muslim nations. Using a qualitative discourse analysis approach, the study applies Aristotelian rhetorical appeals: ethos, pathos, and logos, within a lexicogrammatical framework. The dataset comprised 37 clauses, examined through mood types, speech functions, and polarity. The findings reveal that declarative mood was dominant (62%), establishing ethos through the delivery of credible statements and objective facts. Pathos was conveyed via both declarative and imperative moods, reflecting emotional intensity through critical remarks, expressions of solidarity, and direct appeals. Logos was constructed through the inclusion of statistical data and historical references, supporting argumentative coherence. The consistent use of inclusive pronouns such as "we" reinforced collective identity, while the interplay of positive and negative polarity created rhetorical tension that enhanced emotional engagement. This study demonstrates how grammatical choices underpin rhetorical strategies, offering insights into political communication. The findings have implications for diplomatic speechwriting and rhetorical pedagogy, especially in contexts emphasizing cross-national solidarity and advocacy.*

INTRODUCTION

Speech is a strategic tool for leaders to convey their vision, influence audiences, and strengthen their political and diplomatic positions (Sultan & Maman, 2024). In the realm of global relations, speeches serve as essential mediums for leaders to articulate their countries' stances on emerging regional and international issues (Helmi, 2023). Through speeches, leaders can garner support from other nations, influence global policies, and build strategic alliances (Kartika & Sudarwono, 2023). Persuasive rhetoric enables speakers to evoke emotions and deliver compelling messages, thereby mobilizing public opinion (Pratiwi & Karim, 2022). International forums provide platforms for leaders to construct positive national images and foster global cooperation (Heriamsal & Amin, 2024).

As Southeast Asia's largest economy and with a population exceeding 270 million, Indonesia holds significant strategic capacity to influence global policies and economic dynamics. Active membership in influential organizations such as the G20, ASEAN, and the United Nations positions Indonesia as a promoter of multilateral dialogue and an advocate for developing countries' interests (Astuti & Fathun, 2020; Brasukra, n.d.). This strategic role was evident in President Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 2024 D-8 Summit in Cairo, where he

underscored the importance of unity and cooperation among Muslim nations and highlighted the prevailing weak solidarity in addressing humanitarian crises, particularly in Palestine.

Prabowo's speech reflects his broader political strategy to reconstruct his public image, especially during the 2024 presidential election. His agenda-setting campaign effectively targeted Millennials and Gen Z through relatable language and viral social media content (Hidayah et al., 2024). The Prabowo–Gibran campaign employed creative messaging, debate performances, and visual storytelling to shape public opinion and enhance electability among first-time voters (Fardiansyah et al., 2024). Religious themes were strategically reframed to appeal to specific voter blocs, marking a shift from the narrative employed in 2019 (Smith et al., 2024).

Rhetorically, Prabowo is known for an aggressive communication style combined with nationalist appeals, whereas his vice-presidential candidate Gibran adopts a more passive tone, creating a deliberate contrast that highlights their complementary personas (Sulton, 2024). This duality continued in Prabowo's inauguration speech, which constructed a political identity rooted in unity, responsibility, and inclusivity (Mukminin et al., 2024). The frequent use of inclusive pronouns such as "kita" (we) exemplifies a linguistic strategy to foster collective belonging (Simanjuntak, 2025), while discourse analyses reveal how language shapes perceptions and asserts political power (Sutarman et al., 2024).

A distinctive rhetorical device in Prabowo's speeches, including the D-8 Summit address, is the use of conceptual metaphors that emotionally and ideologically engage audiences. Metaphors like "Trust is a financial asset" and "Strategies are tools" concretize abstract values, functioning ideologically, empathetically, and heuristically to strengthen persuasion (Ksatria, 2024). Beyond metaphors, Prabowo's grammatical choices, such as declarative statements, rhetorical questions, and inclusive pronouns. Construct interpersonal engagement that heightens emotional intensity and collective ethical responsibility.

Despite the importance of rhetoric in political speeches, particularly in shaping international relations and domestic political identity, research focusing on the detailed grammatical construction of interpersonal meaning in such speeches remains limited. Most studies have analyzed rhetoric at a thematic or metaphorical level, leaving a gap in understanding how specific grammatical mood systems contribute to persuasive force. This study aims to fill this gap by applying the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, specifically analyzing the mood system in Prabowo's D-8 speech to reveal how language encodes interpersonal meaning, attitude, and power relations. Therefore, this research seeks to examine how grammatical mood choices in President Prabowo Subianto's 2024 D-8 Summit speech construct interpersonal stance and persuasive appeal through ethos, pathos, and logos.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative discourse analysis approach using the lens of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) to investigate how President Prabowo Subianto constructs persuasive rhetorical appeals: ethos, pathos, and logos in his speech. The analytical framework follows Halliday's theory of mood types and speech functions, combined with Aristotelian rhetorical strategies. The primary data source is President Prabowo's official speech delivered at the D-8 Summit on December 19, 2024, in Cairo, Egypt. The transcript was retrieved from the official Indonesian Cabinet Secretariat website (www.setkab.go.id), ensuring authenticity and credibility. As the speech was originally delivered in English, no translation was necessary. The speech comprises 37 sentences, including 32 major and 5 minor sentences. For analytical consistency, sentences were broken down into clauses based on their grammatical complexity: simple complex sentences were treated as single clauses, compound sentences as two clauses, and more complex structures were segmented into as many clauses as functionally present.

Each sentence was deconstructed into functionally distinct clauses, resulting in a total of 43 clauses: 27 single (independent) clauses, 12 compound sentences (two clauses each), and 4 complex sentences containing three or more clauses. The clause serves as the unit of analysis, as it represents the minimal grammatical unit capable of conveying a complete proposition. Clauses were categorized according to the three classical rhetorical appeals: ethos (credibility or character), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logical reasoning). A summary of the distribution of rhetorical appeals across the analyzed clauses is presented in Figure 2 below, illustrating the relative frequency of each persuasive category in President Prabowo Subianto's speech.
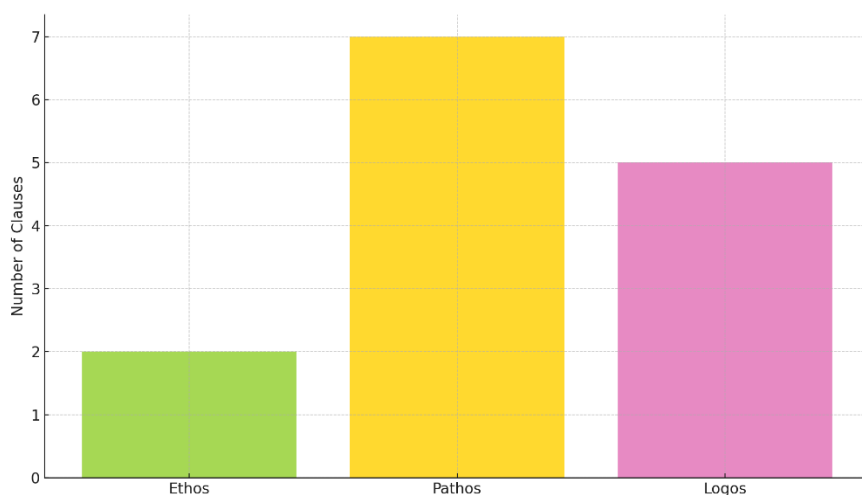
Figure 2. Frequency of Rhetorical Appeals in Clauses

Each clause was further examined based on mood types (declarative, imperative, interrogative), speech functions (statement, command, request, invitation), and mood components (subject, finite verb, complement, adjunct). A manual coding process was employed in two iterative rounds to ensure consistency. An initial codebook, grounded in theoretical definitions of rhetorical and grammatical functions, was tested during a pilot analysis involving five randomly selected paragraphs. Intercoder reliability was established by involving an independent analyst who reviewed 20% of the data, with discrepancies resolved through discussion.

The analytical interpretation ties each clause's mood type to its rhetorical function. Declarative moods are primarily associated with ethos and logos, often presenting facts or assertions. Imperative moods tend to support pathos by conveying urgency or solidarity, while interrogatives though less frequent may serve to evoke emotion or challenge logic. The objective of this analysis is to explore how mood structures grammatically realize rhetorical intentions within the speech. Findings are presented across three main sections ethos, pathos, and logos each supported by tables detailing the types of mood, realization strategies, rhetorical functions, and representative textual examples. To enhance transparency and reproducibility, the full text of the speech is included as an appendix (see Appendix A), enabling readers to trace the analysis process and verify interpretations.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Research Findings

Ethos is one of the main elements of rhetoric, referring to the credibility or character of the speaker in communication. In this context, ethos relates to the speaker's efforts to build trust and respect from the audience toward themselves, their arguments, or the message being conveyed (Isa, 2024). Ethos represents the audience's perception of the speaker's credibility

and authority or the subject being discussed. Persuasion occurs when the speaker successfully gains the audience's trust. Ethos establishes credibility in formulating logical arguments that can mobilize the audience's emotions (Fischer, 2009; Stucki & Fritz, 2018). A speaker with strong ethos is perceived as knowledgeable, possessing integrity, and having a good reputation, making the audience more likely to accept their arguments or messages. The use of ethos in rhetoric involves demonstrating competence and trustworthiness to the audience.

President Prabowo Subianto employs two clauses to establish ethos, conveyed through declarative mood. He uses declarative sentences to assert that the information he presents is credible, factual, and accountable. He highlights undeniable facts, ensuring that the statement concludes with positive polarity. The use of positive polarity helps foster a constructive atmosphere, encouraging listeners to agree with his statements and affirm, "Yes, that is the fact."

President Prabowo also demonstrates a strong understanding of the topic he discusses in his speech. Instead of using a personal subject pronoun, he replaces it with the term "Muslim community." This choice emphasizes his identification with the audience, reinforcing a shared experience of both struggles and triumphs. Implicitly, this indicates that he is well-informed and that the information he conveys is highly credible. At the end of the sentence, President Prabowo also communicates information using negative polarity. The negative polarity serves to underscore his concern and deep commitment to the ongoing situation. The mood system and ethos clauses in President Prabowo's speech are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Types of Mood System and Clause Ethos Function Realization in President Prabowo Subianto's Speech

Type of Mood System	Realization Technique	Function	Example
Statement	Declarative Fact	Personal Experience (Negatively)	a. "Human rights are not for Muslims" (*clause 48*)

In shaping pathos (emotion) in his speech, he utilized both declarative and imperative mood clauses. The declarative mood varied, including opinion statements, assertions, and indirect requests. The imperative mood was used for direct requests. The types of mood systems and the realization of pathos clauses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Types of Mood Systems and Their Realization Techniques in Expressing Pathos (Emotion)

Type of Mood System	Realization Technique	Function	Example
Declarative	Opinion Statement	Expressing critical opinion	a) "..all we do is give declaration of support." (clause *40*) b) "they do not care about our voice." (*clause 47*)
	Declarative Statements	Affirming commitment	c) "Indonesia will try to do his best.." (*clause 41*)
		Affirming hope	d) "I call for unity.." (*clause 42*)
	Indirect Request	Emphasizing a request for action	e) "We must work.." (*clause 24*) f) "When will this end?" (*clause 34*)
Imperative	Direct Request	Encouraging action	g) "Let us see the reality" (*clause 22*)

Pathos is an element of rhetoric that refers to efforts to evoke the audience's emotions to influence their perspectives or decisions (Dhia et al., 2021). Aristotle stated that pathos is psychological in nature, relying on the recipient's mood (Demirdogen, 2010). Pathos represents the audience's feelings and depends on the persuasive effects that trigger them, such as happiness, sadness, or fear (Afo, 1985; Higgins & Robyn, 2012). Pathos is built through an emotional connection between the speaker and the audience, whether through sadness, joy, anger, fear, or empathy. In speeches or arguments, pathos serves to reinforce the message and emotionally influence the audience, making them more open to accepting or acting upon the speaker's suggestions.

The mood system consists of two fundamental terms: imperative and indicative (Halliday, 2013; Eggins, 2004). An indicative clause is a clause that contains statements (propositional negotiation). The indicative mood is divided into two types: declarative and interrogative, which differ in syntactic and semantic structure. The declarative mood is characterized by statements of facts or opinions that serve to provide information, while the interrogative mood is used to ask questions and request information (Halliday, 2013; Eggins, 2004; Fanani et al., 2020). Declarative clauses specifically consist of statements and predictions as types of assertions; commands, requests, and direct invitations (Huddlestin & Pullum, 2002; Quirk et al., 1985; Collins, 2020).

An imperative clause, on the other hand, contains commands or requests (proposal negotiation). The imperative clause has a "deontic" mood, creating a normative rule relative to the recipient (Platzack & Inger, 1997). Imperative sentences play an important role in speeches as they engage the audience and encourage them to follow the speaker's instructions (Yang, 2017). The imperative mood originates from verbs and is closely related to desires and intentions (Lyons, 1977). The purpose of imperative sentences is to give commands, instruct, grant permission, invite, or request the listener to perform an action desired by the speaker (Rahardi, 2005).

In Prabowo Subianto's speech at the D-8 Summit, he employed two types of mood to build pathos: declarative mood and imperative mood. The declarative mood was realized in four different functions. In his speech, Prabowo expressed statements of opinion that conveyed his assessment of certain issues. His technique of delivering opinions was through criticism, as seen in (b). President Prabowo used a negative declarative mood to emphasize that merely issuing declarations of support without concrete action was insufficient. This criticism was intended to stir the emotions of the audience, highlighting the need for further action regarding the ongoing issues.

Secondly, President Prabowo also demonstrated the use of declarative mood through general statements. These clauses were used to communicate to the audience that Indonesia is committed to addressing these issues and to encourage other leaders to collaborate in achieving justice for Muslim communities still facing injustice. The technique used to convey these statements involved reinforcing commitments and emphasizing hopes, as illustrated in (c) and (d). From a lexico-grammatical perspective, President Prabowo also used the declarative mood to indirectly request action. In his speech, he implicitly sought the audience's approval to collaborate and take bold steps to intervene and advocate for peace amid the turmoil in the Middle East, including in Palestine, Lebanon, Sudan, and Syria.

President Prabowo also used the imperative mood to make direct requests to the audience, urging them to take action, as seen in (f) and (g). The technique in (f) involved a direct request in the form of an invitation to act collectively. The President used the word "Let's", signaling a collective appeal to the audience regarding the proposed action. Rather than enforcing, he used a persuasive approach to encourage the audience to recognize and acknowledge the existing reality.

The pathos, or emotional appeal of the audience, is shaped through the use of subject pronouns such as "we" and "i". The inclusive pronoun "we" is used nine times in the speech. In this context, "we" is employed to unify the audience and encourage them to act together as a single entity, as seen in the statement, "We are not respected" (*clause 45*). The inclusive use of "We" emphasizes the involvement of the entire audience and the Indonesian government in addressing human rights issues in Palestine and other Middle Eastern countries.

The speech contains both positive and negative polarity. Positive polarity is used by President Prabowo Subianto when discussing commitments and calls for cooperation. Negative polarity, on the other hand, appears when criticizing Muslim leaders who have shown indifference and failed to take serious action against ongoing humanitarian crimes.

In his speech, President Prabowo employs clauses in various tenses: past, present, and future. The past tense is used to express his opinion that previous D-8 summits have resulted only in declarations of support rather than concrete implementation to resolve the issues. The present tense is used to emphasize the urgency for Muslim nations to take a firm stance against ongoing violations of international law, as seen in the sentence, "We convene today once again to condemn the outrageous violation of international law" (*clause 3*). The future tense is used to stress the necessity of immediate cooperation following the summit to advocate for justice in Palestine, as in "Let us do what we can" (*clause 51*).

Additionally, President Prabowo employs adverbs and subject pronouns to reinforce pathos. This strategy highlights key facts and adds emphasis to his message. Adverbs provide temporal context, indicate shifts in direction, or convey deep moral urgency. Words such as "today", "must", "let's" and "every day" create an atmosphere of seriousness and urgency, leading to both critique and expressions of regret. For example, the phrase "every day" in the sentence "Every day we see Sudan, Muslim leaders against Muslim leaders" (*clauses 28* and *29*) underscores the ongoing crisis and the need for immediate action.

Table 3
Types of Mood System and Realization of Logos Function in President Prabowo Subianto's Speech

Type of Mood System	Realization Technique	Function	Example
Statement	Declarative Fact	Presenting data	h) "The Muslim population of the world is two billion people.." (*klausa 13*)
		Presenting facts	i) *"Devide et Impera,* that is the law of imperialism for thousands of years" (*klausa 26*)

Logos is an element of rhetoric that focuses on the use of logic and reasoning to persuade an audience (Aisyah, 2022). Logos represents the speaker's effort to engage the audience's logical thinking (Zhiyong, 2016). It emphasizes the clarity and integrity of arguments (Holt & MacPherson, 2010; Higgins & Robyn, 2012). In this context, logos refers to the speaker's attempt to construct rational arguments based on facts, data, evidence, and strong analysis (Fahrudin et al., 2022).

Logos is often employed by presenting verifiable information, such as statistics, research findings, comparisons, or concrete examples that support the argument. The effective use of logos helps persuade audiences who are more inclined to make decisions based on rational thought and evidence. Additionally, it strengthens the speaker's credibility by providing coherent and well-structured arguments.

In constructing logos (logic) for the audience, President Prabowo Subianto uses several clauses delivered in the declarative mood as factual statements. The technique used to establish logos includes presenting data, as seen in example (g). He uses population data to emphasize that Muslims worldwide are numerous and possess significant resources to intervene in the

violations of international law occurring in Palestine. The second technique involves presenting facts, as seen in example (h). He uses this clause to make a historical statement referring to the imperialist strategy of "Divide et Impera", which has been applied for thousands of years, illustrating how Muslims have continually been divided as a result. The division among Muslim countries is not a coincidence but rather a consequence of an imperialist strategy that has historically been used to weaken large groups.

From the perspective of mood elements, both personal and impersonal subjects are employed. Personal subjects such as "i" and "we" are used to evoke emotions by positioning the speaker as a responsible figure and a motivator. The use of "I" demonstrates a firm personal opinion, while "we" fosters a sense of unity and a call to collective action. Impersonal subjects such as "Muslim population" and "Divide et Impera" are used to build arguments that are more objective and rational, highlighting facts or statistics that support the speaker's statements. The use of these subjects strengthens the logos (reasoning and rationality) in the speech.

Logos clauses incorporate additional elements such as modifiers and subjects. Modifiers like "number", "Divide et Impera", and "human rights" are used to introduce clauses. The word "number" provides statistical facts, demonstrating that Muslims form a large and influential group. The phrase "Divide et Impera" is used to explain that the division among Muslim countries is not accidental but a result of a long-standing imperialist strategy designed to weaken large groups. The modifier "human rights" highlights that human rights principles are not applied fairly to Muslims. These elements are employed to construct fact-based and logical arguments that support the speaker's claims.

President Prabowo presents logos to his audience using both positive and negative polarity. Positive polarity is used when discussing the large Muslim population, while negative polarity is employed when addressing division and human rights issues. These rhetorical strategies provide a strong foundation for the audience to understand the complexities of the issues faced by Muslims and why unity is crucial for them.

Discussion

This study critically examined how President Prabowo Subianto's use of grammatical mood in his 2024 D-8 Summit speech constructs interpersonal meaning and persuasive appeal, focusing on the rhetorical elements of ethos, pathos, and logos. The findings reveal that Prabowo strategically employs declarative and imperative moods alongside positive and negative polarity to influence his audience's perception, emotions, and actions. This aligns well with the theoretical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and classical rhetorical theory, demonstrating how language choices function beyond mere sentence structure to enact powerful rhetorical strategies. In constructing ethos, declarative mood clauses serve as the primary vehicle for establishing the speaker's credibility and trustworthiness. This supports Halliday's (2013) assertion that declarative sentences convey certainty and factuality, which are essential in portraying the speaker as knowledgeable and authoritative. Additionally, Prabowo's replacement of personal pronouns with collective nouns such as "Muslim community" strategically aligns his identity with the audience, thereby enhancing his ethos through shared solidarity (Simanjuntak, 2025). These findings corroborate prior research emphasizing the importance of linguistic strategies in building political credibility (Isa, 2024; Fischer, 2009).

Regarding pathos, both declarative and imperative moods effectively evoke emotional engagement. Declarative moods, manifested in critical opinions and commitments, stimulate empathy and a sense of urgency, while imperative moods function as direct appeals to collective action. This dual usage is consistent with Yang's (2017) view on imperatives in persuasive communication. The frequent use of inclusive pronouns like "we" further fosters a collective identity and emotional unity, essential for mobilizing political support (Dhia et al., 2021;

Sutarman et al., 2024). These results echo the emphasis on pronouns and mood choices in enhancing emotional appeal found in earlier studies (Pratiwi & Karim, 2022). Although the analysis of logos in the study is less elaborated, initial findings suggest that declarative factual statements support logical reasoning by clearly presenting data and outlining arguments. This supports Halliday's (2013) idea that declarative clauses are fundamental in delivering propositional content crucial for rational persuasion.

Theoretically, these findings contribute to the SFL framework by illuminating the nuanced role of mood systems in interpersonal meaning and rhetorical power. They show how grammatical moods interact with polarity and pronoun usage to embody ethos, pathos, and logos within political discourse, extending previous studies that often focus more on thematic or metaphorical elements (Ksatria, 2024; Sutarman et al., 2024). Furthermore, the study empirically supports Aristotle's classical rhetorical framework by illustrating how modern political speeches continue to balance ethos, pathos, and logos through strategic linguistic choices (Demirdogen, 2010; Higgins & Robyn, 2012). It also enriches the literature on political communication in Southeast Asia by revealing how Indonesian political leaders negotiate identity, solidarity, and political agendas on international stages via grammatical strategies (Astuti & Fathun, 2020; Hidayah et al., 2024). Comparing with previous discourse analyses, the findings resonate with research highlighting the crucial role of inclusive pronouns and mood choices in fostering audience identification and engagement (Sutarman et al., 2024; Pratiwi & Karim, 2022). However, this study advances the field by providing a fine-grained grammatical analysis within the SFL framework, a perspective less explored in political speech studies, particularly in Southeast Asian diplomacy. Unlike studies focused predominantly on metaphor and theme (Ksatria, 2024), this research highlights distinct persuasive functions of declarative and imperative moods and elucidates how grammatical mood links explicitly to ethos and pathos appeals. The emphasis on polarity further offers novel insights into how positive and negative framing shapes political persuasion.

Nonetheless, the study is limited by its focus on a single speech, which constrains the generalizability of the findings. Future research could broaden the scope by analyzing multiple speeches across different political contexts to explore consistency and variability in mood usage. Moreover, incorporating audience reception studies would deepen understanding of how effectively these grammatical strategies influence public opinion and political behavior.

CONCLUSION

President Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 2024 D-8 Summit effectively demonstrated the use of rhetorical elements: ethos, pathos, and logos, through grammatical strategies to foster solidarity among Muslim nations. The declarative mood conveyed credible facts that reinforced ethos, while both declarative and imperative moods elicited emotions and motivated collective action, addressing pathos. Logos was emphasized through the presentation of concrete data and logical, rational arguments. The strategic use of pronouns like "we" created a strong sense of unity, and the interplay of positive and negative polarity underscored the urgency for collective engagement. These rhetorical strategies not only enhanced the speech's persuasive power but also reflect President Prabowo's ability to align his message with Indonesia's diplomatic positioning in international forums. Practically, this analysis offers valuable insights for political communicators, media practitioners, and educators in rhetorical training on how grammatical choices can be harnessed to build credibility, emotional resonance, and logical appeal in persuasive discourse. However, this study is limited by its focus on a single speech, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings across different contexts and speakers. Future research could extend the analysis to multiple speeches and political figures to examine consistency and variation in mood and polarity usage. Additionally, incorporating audience reception studies would provide deeper understanding of how such grammatical strategies influence public perception and political behavior.

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