

# The Pragmatics of Persuasiveness in American Christian Sermons

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## Abstract

The present study is concerned with examining persuasiveness from a pragmatic standpoint in some American Christian sermons about the USA elections 2016 basing on Aristotle's persuasive appeals and Grice's maxims. It includes qualitative as well as quantitative analyses to answer the questions of this study, fulfill its aims, and verify its key hypotheses. The findings have provided a new dimension added to the previous literature about the pragmatics of persuasiveness. Most previous studies on American Christian sermons concentrate on its theological aspects regardless of its pragmatic importance. Thus, the present study attempts to bridge this gap by offering a pragmatic analysis of American Christian sermons especially those about the USA elections to examine their persuasive effectiveness. The findings have shown that the persuasive appeal of pathos is highly resorted to by the American Christian preachers so that the congregation will be receptive to and convinced by the preacher's message. They also have shown that resorting to the strategy of the non-observance of conversational maxims means that American Christian preachers breach one or more of the conversational maxims to express their messages indirectly by the strategy of flouting and opting out. The study suggests executing further research works on the pragmatics of persuasiveness used in sermons by adopting different pragmatic theories and strategies.

**Key Words:** Persuasiveness, Pragmatics, American Christian Sermons, USA Elections 2016

## تداولية الإقناع في الخطاب المسيحية الأمريكية

احمد صاحب مبارك      حوراء جبار راهي

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## الخلاصة

تتناول الدراسة الحالية الإقناع كظاهرة لغوية تداولية في بعض الخطب الأمريكية المسيحية بشأن الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية ٢٠١٦ من المنظور التداولي اعتماداً على أساليب أرسطو الإقناعية وقواعد جرايس. تتضمن الدراسة تحليل نوعي وكمي للإجابة على تساؤلات الدراسة وانجاز الأهداف و تحقيق فرضيات الدراسة. قدمت الدراسة تحليل تداولي للإقناع في الخطب الأمريكية المسيحية التي تتناول الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية ٢٠١٦ كأهم موضوعاتها لتفحص مدى فعالية الاستراتيجيات التداولية في الإقناع. توصلت نتائج الدراسة إلى منظور جديد يضاف إلى ظاهرة الإقناع من وجهة نظر تداولية. كما توصلت الدراسة إلى هناك استراتيجيات ذو فعالية كبيرة في الإقناع منها أساليب أرسطو الإقناعية وخرق قواعد جرايس.

**الكلمات الدالة:** الإقناع، التداولية، الخطب الأمريكية المسيحية، الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية ٢٠١٦

## 1. Introduction

The present study sheds light on two important strategies that are used to do a persuasive function in American Christian sermons. These two strategies comprise Aristotle's persuasive appeals and the non-observance of Grice's conversational maxims. Generally, religion and politics are linked together in one way or another to guide people to safety in so many nations. Religion and politics are twined together in the United States than in most other developed countries since the USA is basically built on religion, mainly Christianity, and politics. Due to the fact that sermons form a part of the language and the culture of the Christian communities, it is not surprising to find that sermons become the subject of linguistic analysis [1, pp. 71]. The present study focuses on examining the pragmatics of persuasiveness in American Christian sermons about the USA elections 2016 as they have a pivotal role in the USA elections. Sermons about elections constitute a special kind of sermons that are given by clergymen to voters before the event of elections [2, pp. 272]. These sermons serve to promote a patriotic fervor as they link between the natural rights and the Christian moral duty of the believers because Christianity requires both religious as well as political liberty. At this point, this type of sermons are political in a broader sense as they emphasise the responsibilities of the believers and the moral seriousness of the election by emphasising the religious and civil liberty.

USA is a God-fearing and Christian nation where the vast majority of the Americans are Christians [3, pp.76]. Within the same vein, American Christian sermons in the USA as a challenging activity since is not an essay matter due to the turbulent political dominance and the continuous social change [4, pp. 14]. Therefore, the present study is motivated as an attempt to examine American Christian sermons with a political topic, the USA election 2016, as the main topic. These sermons are selected to show how persuasion is achieved from a pragmatic standpoint especially when dealing with such a sensitive topic as the USA election in 2016 with the aim of persuading the people to vote for the suitable political party or candidate. As such, American Christian sermons can be considered as a necessity for Christians in the critical time of the American presidential election to lend a hand for people to take their decisions. Therefore, some sermons can be seen as instances of American sermons about the USA elections.

The present study aims at investigating the persuasive pragmatic strategies that are used in American Christian sermons about the USA presidential elections in 2016. It focuses on two kinds of strategies. First, it employs Aristotle's persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos. Second, it utilises breaching of Grice's maxims by the techniques of flouting and opting out of conversational maxims [5]. Therefore, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the persuasive pragmatic strategies that are used in American Christian sermons about the USA election basing on Aristotle's persuasive appeals and Grice's maxims?
2. Does the employment of Aristotle's persuasive appeals and the breaching of Grice maxims achieve persuasion in American Christian sermons about the USA elections 2016?

Accordingly, the present study hypothesises that persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos in addition to the strategies of flouting and opting out of conversational maxims are sufficient to do a persuasive job in American Christian sermons.

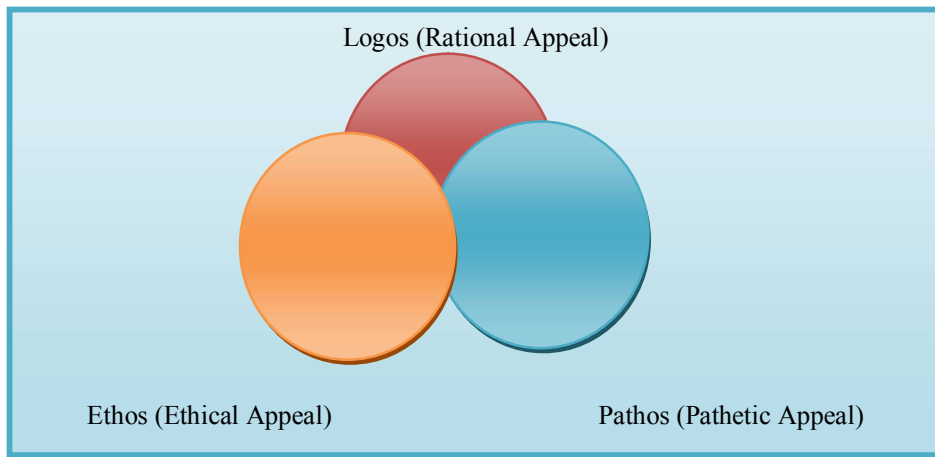
## 2. Persuasion and American Christian Sermons

In an attempt to provide a general definition of persuasion, persuasion can be seen as a "successful intentional effort" to influence other's mental states through communication [6, pp. 5]. Persuasion is a way of influencing and convincing others through communicative goal based on the free choice of the person being influenced [7, pp. 311]. Generally, rhetoric is concerned with persuasive arguments based on the beliefs, commitments, and values of the target audience to be persuaded. Thus, the aim of rhetorical arguments is to persuade others by picking premises that represent the values of the specific audience [8, pp. 171]. Persuasive argument combines the aims of argumentation with those of persuasion. The two aims do not conflict because one can, in certain cases, achieve a change in disposition by accepting a reasonable argument [9, pp. 15]. However, these aims are complementary of each other because the aims of persuasion go beyond those of argumentation since they actually seek to provoke an action. In this way, the epistemic aims of a particular argumentation join up with the pragmatic ones of persuasive effectiveness. As such, persuasive arguments imply pragmatic meanings.

### 2. 1 Aristotle's Persuasive Appeals and American Christian Sermons

Persuasive argument calls for particular means, i.e., strategies, that are combined together where such a combination, therefore, shows the compatibility of those means or strategies as manifested by ethos, logos, and pathos. Put differently, persuading and convincing others requires an amalgamation of three persuasive appeals, namely ethos, logos and pathos. In his masterpiece, *The Art of Rhetoric*, Aristotle (1967) systematises three persuasive strategies: ethos (moral character), logos (the speech itself), and pathos (putting the hearer into a certain emotional frame of mind) [10, pp. 8]. That is, persuasion requires an appealing to these three persuasive appeals. A rhetorical appeal is an appeal in written or spoken text with the aim of persuading the hearer to respond or assent to a point of view [11, pp. 37]. As such, logos is a good sense, ethos is a good character, and pathos is a goodwill.

Understanding persuasive discourse is of great significance in understanding sermons as it drives the congregation to the intended destination [12, pp. 478]. In preaching, the three persuasive appeals represent three settings through which the congregation hears a particular sermon and these settings affect how the congregation perceives the message of the delivered sermon [13, pp. 5]. The three persuasive appeals are at work within every member of the congregation who listens to a particular sermon and they interact with one another in different way in relation to each member. That is, a member of the congregation who listens through the setting of ethos is still affected by the settings of logos and pathos as well. Consequently the three settings, i.e., persuasive appeals, operate simultaneously. Moreover, these three appeals are context-dependent since they may differ according to the context, the utterances used to express them, and the way they are appealed by the preacher. More elaborations on the three PAs are presented in the following sections. Figure (1) below designs the three appeals more clearly.



**Figure (1): Persuasive Appeals**

Regarding ethos, any interaction involves a communication of the speaker's personality which is emerged not only in what the speaker said, but also in how he said it [10, pp. 8]. Ethos as the character of the speaker and his power of persuasion or the shared concerns between the speaker and the hearer [14, pp. 91]. It seems to be the strongest persuasive strategy because it is considered as the controlling force in persuasion and, therefore, the rhetorical power of a particular discourse comes from the ethos that represents the speaker. That is, it expresses the shared values and concerns between the speaker and the hearer and this helps in establishing a rapport with the hearer. Viewing ethos from the agenda of preaching, ethos is the congregation's perception of the preacher's character along with the congregation's relationship with the preacher [13, pp. 5]. Hence, ethos represents the congregation's perception of the person and the character of the preacher. Ethos as the character, the integrity, the trustworthiness, and the genuineness of the preacher [12, pp. 242]. Ethos in preaching refers to the credibility and reliability of the preacher which make the congregation listens to the preacher with a degree of trust and this, of course, depends on the personality and the moral essence of the preacher. The integrity of the preacher as a biblical preacher, the sacredness of Scripture, and the uniqueness of the congregation as religious people or God's people demand that the preacher is as ethical as possible [12, pp. 480]. Ethos as an appeal to authority or character because it refers to the character or goodwill of the speaker [15, pp. 33]. It also refers to the speaker's reliance on authority, credibility, or benevolence and, thus, it is the deliberate use of the speaker's character as a mode of persuasion. Ethos is concerned with how to appear knowledgeable and insightful in relation to the subject matter in question [16, pp. 113].

As far as logos is concerned, it is considered as the content of what the preacher said and what makes sense to the mind of the congregation [12, pp. 242]. Logos is the content of the delivered sermon and how the preacher develops it and, thus, it stands for the congregation's perception that the preacher has developed the content of the delivered sermon in order to show that the message of his sermon is true [13, pp. 5]. Logos is an appeal to the logical structure of a particular discourse which involves rational argument in an attempt to persuade the audience through plain reasoning by means of logical appeals such as statistics, facts, definitions, formal proofs, and interpretations [15, pp. 33].

In terms of pathos, it is the emotions that stir the congregation to an action or a change of behaviour [12, pp. 242]. In other words, when pathos is triggered, the congregation may feel a desire to achieve the goal in question. Pathos suggests feelings generated by the process of preaching and how these feelings orient or disorient the target congregation towards the delivered sermon so that it signifies the congregation's response to the feelings and identifications that are generated in connection with the delivered sermon [13, pp. 5]. Pathos can be considered as the band through which the hearer processes the two other persuasive appeals, logos and ethos. The speaker attempts to put the hearer into a particular emotional state so that the hearer will be receptive to and ultimately convinced by the speaker's message as when the speaker uses inflammatory language and sad stories or appeals to nationalist sentiments [15, pp. 33].

It is worth pointing out here that the above elaborated persuasive appeals are context-dependent since they may differ according to the context, the utterances used to express them, and the way they are appealed by the preacher. However, they are prerequisites of any persuasive argument in a particular communicative event such as sermons in the preaching event. For their importance and pragmatic implications, persuasive appeals will be considered as strategies with pragmatic implications as they are intertwined in the preachers' utterances.

## **2.2 Breaching of Grice's Maxims and American Christian Sermons**

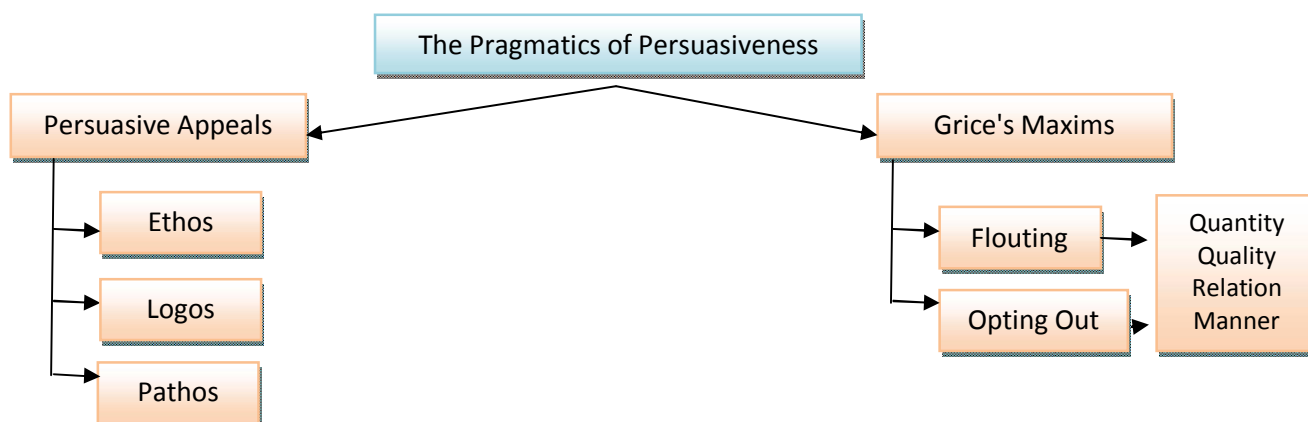
Paul Grice proposes one of the most leading contributions to the philosophy of language which is the Cooperative Principle (CP) and its Conversational Maxims (CMs). Most importantly, Grice focuses on the social roles of interlocutors in a particular communication and the principles that administrate such communication. In other words, there is a general agreement between the interlocutors and this agreement is regulated by conventions or rules. It is worth pointing out that CP and CMs are important in the study of American Christian and in the analysis of the data under inspection due to the fact that preachers expect the congregation to understand their message by depending on the background or the shared knowledge which they both have in common. Thanks to CP and its four CMs, interlocutors can understand and interpret the underlying meaning of utterances. These CMs may either be observed or not. When the speaker does not observe CMs, intended meaning takes place. Two cases of non-observance of CM can be distinguished in the data under scrutiny, namely flouting and opting out. With regard to flouting of CMs, the speaker deliberately fails to observe a particular CM, with no intention of deceiving or misleading the hearer, but because the speaker intends to prompt the hearer to look for a further meaning that is different from, or in addition to, the expressed one [17, pp. 65]. Preachers normally flout CMs and they expect the congregation to appreciate the meaning implied with no intention of deceiving or misleading their congregations.

Concerning opting out of CMs, the speaker opts out of CMs by indicating unwillingness to cooperate in the way CMs require especially when S cannot, perhaps for legal or ethical reasons, cooperate in the way normally expected. Another reason for opting out CMs is that giving the requested information might hurt a third party or put them in danger. In this way, opting out of CMs is expected to be utilised by preachers in the data under scrutiny.

## **3. Model**

The selected model depends on the employment of Aristotle's persuasive appeals and the breaching of Grice's maxims. Simply because these two strategies are relevant to the pragmatics of persuasiveness in American Christian sermons for the

reason that they allow American Christian preachers to preach in an effective way and to communicate more than what is actually said. Therefore, the model of analysis of the American Christian sermons about USA election is simply schematised in Figure (2) below:



**Figure (2): The Pragmatics of Persuasiveness in American Christian Sermons**

#### 4. Data Analysis

The data under of the present study are two American prolonged sermons selected from official websites [See Website Sources of the Data]. They are found in forms of videos taken and transcribed by the researchers. It is of great importance for the data to be oral rather than written, and consequently the data represent a reliable as well as authentic source for the analytical purposes conducted by the present study. As regard the main topic of the two American Christian sermons is concerned, the USA presidential election in 2016 is the central topic of these sermons under examination. This date, 2016, is intentionally selected because it has witnessed the highly heated conflictive period in the American policy in which religion is necessary to a moral society. Owing to the fact that a sermon is a lengthy discourse and the large size of the extracts can take a considerable space in the present study, the analysis of only some illustrative instances that are representative of the data under study are introduced. It is worth pointing out here the statistical analysis includes all the results of the representative examples in addition to other extracts of the two selected sermons with are not presented in the present study due to space limits. Hence, the main focus is on showing how the pragmatic analysis is achieved and on presenting the results of this analysis. The following sections deal with the pragmatic analysis of persuasiveness of the two American sermons that are titled as "Presidential Election and the Christian Vote" and "America in Peril" which are preached by the American preachers: Pastor MacArthur and Pastor Lawson respectively. The analysis goes in two directions, first it deals with the pragmatic analysis of these sermons depending on the model presented in Figure (2) and then it deals with the statistical analysis to confirm the pragmatic analysis quantitatively.

##### 4. 1 The Pragmatic Analysis

###### A. "Presidential Election and the Christian Vote" by Pastor MacArthur

Pastor MacArthur (1939-) is one of the famous contemporary American preachers who gains a reputation as one of the greatest preachers at the present time in America. The following are some extracts of his sermon with their pragmatic analysis:

**Extract No. 1**

(1) We put it to you simply, our country, like all other countries, is the Titanic. (2) The ship is going down. (3) They are trying to rearrange the deck chairs, but the ship is going down. (4) Our responsibility is not to get caught up in the rearrangement of the deck chairs. (5) Our responsibility is to provide the lifeboat of the Gospel. (6) That is, we are here for the rescue of souls. (7) So, do not overestimate this election. (8) It is just another part of the world system.

In extract (1) above, Pastor MacArthur employs persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos. Ethos is manifested in the character of Pastor MacArthur, his power of persuasion, and his shared concerns with the congregation. This shows the effect of SV of the power of Pastor MacArthur as a religious preacher who has the ability to persuade his congregation. By virtue of ethos, Pastor MacArthur uses his credibility as an authoritative figure to show the responsibility of the American Christians to rescue of souls of people and to advise them to avoid overestimating the coming USA elections as it is a worthy part of the world system. Appealing to ethos shows the power of the preacher over the congregation. Logos is employed as it represents the content of the delivered sermon and how the preacher develops his message. In extract (1), logos is manifested when Pastor MacArthur depicts his country, American, as the ship of Titanic when it is going down in order to present the main topics sermon which is the coming USA election and to show its importance as it decides the future of the USA. Pathos is utilised by Pastor MacArthur when he tries to stir the congregation's emotions to the importance and sensitivity of the coming USA elections in an attempt to achieve the goal of preaching, i.e., to provide the congregation with religious information as to guide them to the right way in relation to the topic in question. Doing so, he refers to the ship of Titanic which stands for a tragedy that causes great suffering, distress, and destruction. In this context, pathos highlights the solidarity between Pastor MacArthur and the congregation.

In relation to Grice's maxims, Pastor MacArthur starts with the non-observance technique of CMs in utterances (1-6) for the reason that Pastor MacArthur metaphorically depicts his country as the Titanic which is going down and the American responsibility is to provide the lifeboat of the Gospel for the rescue of souls. In this way, the maxims of quality is flouted in the sense that what is actually said by Pastor MacArthur is not literally true.

**Extract No. 2**

(1) So, How am I as a Christian supposed to approach this manner of voting? (2) How am I understand the role that God wants me to play? (3) We do not revolt. (4) We do not rebel. (5) We live quiet peaceful lives in all godliness and dignity. (6) We pay our taxes. (7) We submit to those who are over us. (8) We submit to them and we pray for their Salvation. (9) But, we also understand that God has designed a human government and Romans 13 tells us what is designed in God is designed in human government and gives human government ultimate authority for two purposes; to protect those who do good and punish those who do evil. (10) That is the role of government. (11) Anything beyond that is invented by men. (12) The role of government is to protect those who do good and punish those who do evil so you can have order and civilization in a culture.

Pastor MacArthur, in extract (2) above, preaches persuasively by employing ethos, logos, and pathos. Ethos is manifested in his credibility as a pastor, his power of persuasion, and his shared concern with the congregation which is clear in utterance (1) when he says "*How am I as a Christian*". This shows the effect of SV of power that Pastor MacArthur possesses as a religious preacher who has the ability to

persuade the congregation. With the help of logos which represents the content of the delivered sermon, Pastor MacArthur concentrates on the view that God has designed a human government for two purposes; to protect those who do good and punish those who do evil. Thus, the role of government is to protect those who do good and punish those who do evil in order to build a civilization in a particular culture. With Pastor MacArthur's intention of arousing the congregation's emotions to the importance and sensitivity of the coming USA presidential elections, he provides the congregation with helpful religious information concerning the role of government. Hence, appealing to pathos is clearly manifested. In this sense, persuasive appeals of ethos and pathos contribute to create solidarity between the preacher and the congregation.

In utterances (3) and (4), the non-observance technique is employed. In utterance (3): "*We do not revolt*" and utterance (4): "*We do not ravel*", the maxim of quantity is flouted as he repeats the same word structure with the same idea to mean that they do not attempt to put an end to a particular party or candidate by rebelling.

### **Extract No. 3**

(1) You are not voting for persons, you are voting for a coalition. (2) The person at the head of it that is running for the office of president is a public relations agent for the coalition behind it. (3) So, your question is this; which party, which coalition, and which collection of leaders and influencers will uphold God's design for government? (4) Most people in the human history do not have a chance to weigh in on that. (5) They get what they get. (6) The simple question, which coalition will do what God has designed for government to protect those who do good, make people safe, and punish those who do evil? (7) No Christian can vote for a coalition, an earthly powerful social political machine, that reverses that. (8) That sets out punishing those who do good and protecting those who do evil. (9) When you see that, it is pretty clear who to vote. (10) The Democratic Party is trending in the reverse direction of God's design for government. (11) It would be good if to protect life and it would be evil to kill

To persuade his congregation to vote for the suitable political party and candidate, Pastor MacArthur appeals to ethos and logos. He employs his ethics to gain the congregation's trust and convince them that he knows the needs of the people of his nation. He tries to persuade the congregation to vote for the political party which upholds God's design for government. This appealing to ethos, of course, comes as a results of Pastor MacArthur's power and authority over the congregation. Appealing to ethos shows the effect of SV of Pastor MacArthur's power as an authoritative religious preacher who has the ability to persuade the congregation. Additionally, Pastor MacArthur appeals to logos by appealing to logical issues concerning the idea of voting for the right political party and candidate in the coming USA elections especially when he say "*The Democratic Party is trending in the reverse direction of God's design for government*" in utterance (10).

In extract (3) above, Pastor MacArthur keeps to CP and its four CMs. As such, he is informative, truthful, relevant, clear, brief, and orderly. He states everything adequately and completely as he wants to convey his message about the political party in relation to God's design for government.

### **B. America in Peril by Pastor Lawson**

Pastor Lawson is an American popular preacher. He is a well known for his serious and intellectual style and, thus, he is described as a "hellfire" and "brimstone" type of preacher.

### **Extract No. 4**

(1) If you want to see revival in America. (2) If you want to see the churches in America and I would like to see that. (3) Would not you? (4) Maybe in a couple of



days. (5) This is Sunday. (6) This coming Tuesday, America's temperature is going to be taken. (7) Are you listening to me? (8) Its temperature is going to be taken the vital signs. (9) They do that all the time when you are in the hospital. (10) They come in four o'clock in the morning, wake you up, plug you up, check your blood pressure, stick something in your mouth, and find out what your temperature is. (11) Now they say look at, walk out the door, and say you are still alive. (12) They are taking your vital signs. (13) And I am not kidding you, they do. (14) And the vital signs in America for our churches need to be taken in.

In relation to the three persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos, they are used effectively in extract (4). Ethos is apparent as Pastor Lawson tries to convince the congregation to take their decision in the coming USA presidential elections by using his character or credibility as an authoritative preacher who is a religious guider and director. This confirms the effect of SV of the power of Pastor Lawson as religious preacher who has the ability to persuade his congregation. In relation to logos, Pastor Lawson tries to present his argument concerning the revival in America which is decided by the coming Tuesday, i.e., the day of the USA elections 2016. Pathos is a common PA used to evoke the emotions of the congregation and, hence, Pastor Lawson tries to persuade his congregation by using noticing their conditions and persuading them to vote in the coming Tuesday in which fateful decision in America is going to be taken by the Americans. Additionally, the use of the inclusive pronoun "our" in utterance (14) reinforces PA of pathos and strengthens the sense of solidarity and inclusiveness between Pastor Lawson and the congregation.

Pastor Lawson makes use of CMs. He starts with non-observance of Grice's maxims by flouting MM because some of his utterances are not clearly expressed and easily understood. Utterances (1) and (2) are not complete and, then, he moves to a question in utterance (3) rather than completing his utterances. His utterances are characterised by obscurity of expression and he is not orderly in his speech. In utterance (4), the maxim of quality is flouted when Pastor Lawson says "*Maybe in a couple of days*" which indicates that he is not really sure about what he says. Furthermore, utterance (6), "*This coming Tuesday, America's temperature is going to be taken*" is metaphorically expressed. As such, Pastor Lawson flouts the maxim of quality by saying what is literally false. For the same reason, the maxim of quality is flouted by Pastor Lawson in utterances (12) and (14) as he metaphorically says that politicians will take the vital signs of Americans and the church in America. In utterance (8), the maxim of quantity as well as quality are flouted because his utterance is repeated and expressed metaphorically. Moreover, opting out is also used by Pastor Lawson as he uses the passive form in his expression "*America's temperature is going to be taken*" in utterance (6) to avoid mentioning any name so that he opts out the maxim of quantity by providing less information that it is required. Furthermore, he uses the pronoun "they" in utterances (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), and (14) because he is not in a position to mention any name and this, actually opts out MM because he is not clear and his utterances cause ambiguity.

#### **Extract No. 5**

(1) I think a lot of times that we are the elect nation. (2) The Lord Jesus Christ said "*upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*". (3) To build the nation, build the church. (4) Hey man. (5) That is a big deal. (6) Hey man. (7) A Chinaman or a Japanese or a Korean can be closer to God than me. (8) Yep, he sure can. (9) He can be closer. (10) God is the same to a Japanese, African, and an Italian. (11) Yes, it will make no difference what colour your skin is, how much money you got in the bag, and no matter where you came from. (12) I think that you will probably find throughout the world pockets of Christians that

are far more on fire for God than American. (13) We will go to the polls. (14) It is the coming Tuesday to vote your belly. (15) Listen to this, here is the problem. (16) There is no new birth, no repentance, no Redemption, no justification, no propitiation, and no sand preached from the pulpits. (17) When was the last time you heard the word propitiation from a pulpit? (18) You do not hear it. (19) Let me tell you why the preachers do not preach the new birth. (20) They are not born again themselves. (21) They have never been saved. (22) They have never been born again.

Pastor Lawson in extract (5) above appeals to ethos when he tries to authenticate his account on togetherness and equality and to increase his creditability to grab the congregation's attention. The use of ethos can be an evidence for the effect of SV of Pastor Lawson's power as religious preacher who has the ability to persuade his congregation. In relation to logos, Pastor Lawson, tries to convince the congregation using a logical issues by asserting that building a nation needs building the church and accordingly Christians are required to go to the polls to elect their president in the coming Tuesday for the sake of their nation and their church. In appealing to pathos, Pastor Lawson wants to arouse the feelings of the American citizens and to do so he selects a biblical text in utterance (2), "*The Lord Jesus Christ said "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it"*" to emotionally affect his congregation. Besides, he uses emotional expressions such as "*Hey man*" in utterances (4) and (6) to arouse the feelings of the congregation. Additionally, he says "*we are the elect nation*" in utterance (1) to declare his attitude towards his nation, America.

In relation to CMs, Pastor Lawson employs non-observance technique by the use of the strategy of flouting. He flouts QIM in utterance (1) and (12) when says "*I think*" which means that he is not sure of what he says. However, in the remaining utterances, he is truthful and this is assured by the use of numerous Rep SA of asserting and by uttering truthful facts. In the other parts of extract (5), Pastor Lawson keeps to CP and its four maxims; therefore, he is informative, relevant as he has kept to the main point of the topic, and clear, brief, and orderly.

#### **Extract No. 6**

(1) One candidate has already said that they want to open borders. (2) All right? (3) What does that mean? (4) You have not seen crime yet. (5) You do not know anything about crime until the borders are opened up in America. (6) You think you have lost your jobs. (7) You wait till they come in and then everything can get bad. (8) You will see the refugee camps as the squalid places that they will be piling up here and there. (9) Wait until the borders are open, folks. (10) You no longer have the United States of America.

To make his utterances persuasive, Pastor Lawson appeals to the three persuasive appeals, viz., ethos, logos and pathos. He appeals to ethos when he deals with political topics that are closely related to moral and ethical conventions of the American society as he talks about the bad consequences of the decision of opening the borders of the USA to the refugees because it affects the security and economy of the USA. In this way, he tries to affirm his credibility by presenting this idea. This explains the effect of SV of the power of Pastor Lawson as a religious preacher who has the ability to persuade his congregation. Additionally, Pastor Lawson presents his logical idea about open borders as an a argument to affect the mind of the congregation and to support his idea as well. To arouse the emotion of the congregation, Pastor Lawson appeals to pathos. He does so by using expressions that arouse the congregation's feelings as utterance (4), "*You have not seen crime yet*",

utterance (9), especially the word "folks" in "Wait until the borders are open, folks", and (10), "You no longer have the United States of America".

Within the same extract, CMs are noticeable. As such, Pastor Lawson the non-observance of CMs as he uses the strategy of opting out the maxim of quantity by being less informative than it is required in utterance (1) when he says "One candidate" without mentioning the name of the intended candidate. In this context, opting out the maxim of quantity indicates that Pastor Lawson is not in a position to openly give the name of the candidate who intends to open the USA borders to the refugees.

## 5. Results

In a nutshell, a combination of the three persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos is established in the American Christian sermons to create persuasive and valuable argument and Table (1) below can be evidence for their use. The strategy of pathos proves its worthiness in preaching as it scores the highest percentage that amounts (70.87%) among other PAs of ethos and logos as clearly shown in Figure (3) below. The statistical tool of Two-Factor Without Replication ANOVA is used to authenticate the hypothesis that states "persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos in addition to the strategies of flouting and opting out of conversational maxims are sufficient to do a persuasive job in American Christian sermons". The finding substantiates the eighth hypothesis for the reason that (P-value) of the use of PA of pathos amounts to (0.013) which is less than the standard level of significance (0.05) as shown in Table (2) and (3) below which demonstrate the statics of the use of persuasive appeals.

**Table (1): Overall Analysis of Persuasive Appeals in American Sermons**

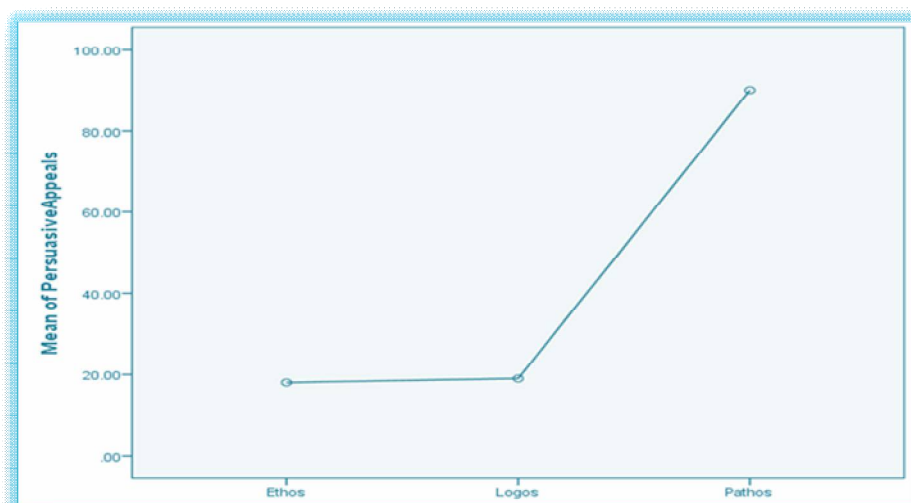
%	Fr	Persuasive Appeals
14.17	18	Ethos
14.96	19	Logos
70.87	90	Pathos
100	127	Total Number

**Table (2): Overall Statistics of the Use of Persuasive Appeals**

Variance	Average	Sum	Count	SUMMARY
7.33445	16.085	32.17	2	Ethos
8.1608	16.98	33.96	2	Logos
182.9784	80.435	160.87	2	Pathos

**Table (3): Two-Factors Without Replication ANOVA of the Use of Persuasive Appeals**

ANOVA						
F crit	P-value	F	MS	df	SS	Source of Variation
19	0.013938	70.74503	2722.754	2	5445.507	Rows
18.51282	0.217586	3.156922	121.5	1	121.5	Columns
			38.48685	2	76.9737	Error
				5	5643.981	Total



**Figure (3) The Use of Persuasive Appeals in American Christian Sermons**

To preach effectively, CMs are used commonly by employing the strategy of observance and non-observance of CMs as Table (4) demonstrates. Resorting to the strategy of non-observance of CMs means that American preachers breach one or more of CMs to express their messages indirectly by the strategy of flouting and opting out. The statistical tools of One-way ANOVA is adopted to explicate the statistic of CMs. In view of that, the analysis proves the validity of their persuasive use since its level of Sig amounts to (0.048) which is less than the standard level of Sig that amounts to (0.05) as illuminated in Table (5) below.

**Table (4): Overall Analysis of CM in American Christian Sermons**

%	Fr	Conversational Maxims	
61.5	222	Observance of CMs	
38.5	139	Non-Observance of CMs	
100	361		
69.61	71	Quantity	Flouting
21.57	22	Quality	
1.96	2	Relation	
6.86	7	Manner	
100	102		
45.95	17	Quantity	Opting Out
10.81	4	Quality	
43.24	16	Manner	
100	37		

**Table (5): One-way ANOVA Analysis of CM in American Christian Sermons**

ANOVA					
Significance F	F	MS	SS	df	
0.048154	4.44093	54908.1	54908.1	1	Regression
		12364.1	111276.9	9	Residual
			166185	10	Total

## 6. Conclusions

On the grounds of the results arrived at by the pragmatic and statistical analyses of the data under investigation, several conclusions can be presented in accordance with the aims and hypotheses of the present study. Consequently, the following conclusions are suggested:

1. American Christian sermons are regarded as one of the best persuasive arguments through which a diversity of pragmatic strategies are employed for the purpose of persuasion.
2. Persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos in addition to the strategies of flouting and opting out of conversational maxims are effective pragmatic weapons in the hands of the American Christian preachers to convince the congregation about the religious truths concerning political topic as the topic of the USA election and to persuade the congregation to vote for the suitable political party and candidate.
3. Persuasive appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos are employed in the process of preaching as ways of influencing and convincing the congregation by the use of persuasive argument. Such persuasive appeals in the hands of skilful preachers evoke a sense of conviction in the religious and political beliefs. To put the congregation into an emotional state and make them receptive to and convinced by the messages of the American preachers, the persuasive appeal of pathos is frequently appealed to by the American preachers.
4. Conversational maxims stand as effective pragmatic strategies in the American Christian sermons with the use of the technique of non-observance of conversational maxims which is, in its turn, managed by the strategies of flouting and opting out of these maxims. As regards flouting of the conversational maxims, the American Christian preachers deliberately do not observe a particular maxim with no intention of deceiving or misleading the congregation but with the intention to prompt the congregation to look for a meaning which is different from, or in addition to, the expressed one. Concerning the strategy of opting out of conversational maxims, the American Christian preachers use this strategy to indicate unwillingness to cooperate in the way a particular maxim is required especially when they cannot, perhaps for legal or ethical reasons, cooperate in the way normally expected or when they realise that giving the requested information might hurt a third party or put them in danger.
5. The two strategies of flouting and opting out of conversational maxims function as persuasive strategies in American Christian sermons. These strategies are powerful enough to be used by the preachers in order to preach religious truth in accordance with political topic as the USA election in 2016 because these strategies allow the preacher to convey pragmatic meaning more than what is actually said.
6. American sermons can be regarded as the best means which are proved to be a powerful way to successfully affect the congregation and guide them to the safe side. It is an effective weapon of persuasion used by the American preachers to convince the congregation to participate in the USA elections 2016 and to vote for Donald Trump than Hilary Clinton. Put differently, American Christian voters were more likely to vote for Donald Trump than Hilary Clinton [Website Source 1]. This conclusion is supported by the results of the exit polls which show that most weekly Christian churchgoers support Donald Trump over Hilary Clinton and these results are given in percentages [See Appendix 1]. The results of the exit polls demonstrate that the American Christians who attend the church

regularly and listen to the American sermons about the USA elections 2016 which back the Republican party or Donald Trump rather than the Democratic party or Hilary Clinton vote for the Republican party or Donald Trump rather than for the Democratic party or Hilary Clinton.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

**There are no conflicts of interest**

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#### **Website Sources**

##### **Web Source (1)**

[http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/11/09/how-the-faithful-voted-a-preliminary-2016-analysis/ft\\_16-11-09\\_relig\\_exitpoll\\_attendance/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/11/09/how-the-faithful-voted-a-preliminary-2016-analysis/ft_16-11-09_relig_exitpoll_attendance/). Accessed at the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, 2018.

##### **Website Sources of the Data (American Christian Sermons)**

**Sermon (1): Presidential Election and the Christian Vote**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nr5\\_563sSTI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nr5_563sSTI). Accessed at the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, 2017.

**Sermon (2): America in Peril**

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=116161256467>. or [http://pastorcharleslawson.org/sermons?currpage=10&sa\\_action=](http://pastorcharleslawson.org/sermons?currpage=10&sa_action=). Accessed at the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, 2017.

**Appendix (1)**

**Presidential Vote by Religious Attendance (Website Source 1)**

Attend worship services...	Clinton Trump	
	%	%
At least once a week	40	56
Monthly	46	49
Few times a year	48	47
Never	62	31

Source: National Election Pool national exit polls, as reported at NBCnews.com. Comparisons with previous years are not available because the way the religious attendance question is asked changed in 2016.

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