

## Persuasion in Arabic and English Diplomatic Discourse

الإقناع في الخطاب الدبلوماسي العربي والانجليزي

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**Abstract:** The present study is an attempt to explore the persuasive side of diplomatic discourse. Our work pinpoints the diversity of framing an argument so as to function as a persuasive device in diplomatic discourse. It considers the case study of two United Nations letter-type texts from the permanent representative of the member state Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations organizations. The research then analyzes the persuasive linguistic tools in both Arabic and English diplomatic discourses to investigate the speaker's used strategies to convince the audience as to change their beliefs in line with his own vision. To fulfill that, studying the linguistic and rhetoric aspects of persuasion and examining the use of logic and reason in the framing of arguments are a prominent part of our objective. The research findings reveal that manifold strategies are used in which assertion, typecasting, storytelling, and rhetorical repetition are among the chief practices of framing arguments in Arabic diplomatic texts, which are preserved as well in their English translated versions. In due course, we assume that this initiative work lays the first stone to tackle the issue of persuasion cross-linguistically in diplomatic communication.

**Keywords:** persuasion; diplomatic discourse; framing arguments; Arabic/English UN texts.

**ملخص:** يدرس هذا البحث موضوع الإقناع في الخطاب الدبلوماسي فهو يحدد تنوع صيغ الحجج وينظر في كيفية عملها كأدوات مقنعة في الخطاب الدبلوماسي. من خلال دراسة رسالتين موجّهتين من الممثل الدائم للدولة العضو الجمهورية العربية السورية إلى منظمات الأمم المتحدة، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل أدوات الإقناع اللغوية في الخطاب الدبلوماسي باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية للتحقيق في الاستراتيجيات المستخدمة من قبل المتحدث لإقناع

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الجمهور بتغيير معتقداتهم بما يتماشى مع رؤيته الخاصة . ولتحقيق ذلك نسعى من خلال هذه الورقة إلى دراسة الجوانب اللغوية والبلاغية للإقناع وفحص استخدام المنطق والعقل في تأطير الحجج. تكشف نتائج البحث عن استخدام استراتيجيات متعددة، فيعتبر كل من التأكيد والتلبس والسرد والتكرار الخطابي من بين الممارسات الرئيسية لتأطير الحجج في النصوص الدبلوماسية العربية، والتي يتم الاحتفاظ بها أيضاً في نسختها المترجمة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية. وفي الأخير، يمكن اعتبار هذا العمل بمثابة محاولة لدراسة ترجمة أساليب الإقناع في الخطاب الدبلوماسي. **كلمات مفتاحية:** الإقناع، الخطاب الدبلوماسي، تأطير الحجج، نصوص الأمم المتحدة عربي/الإنجليزي.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the crucial strategies that characterize diplomatic discourse is persuasion. Since diplomats work towards preserving the safety of their countries and contribute in shaping their refined image among other nations, their discourses are constructed to entail persuasive devices. It is obvious, then that diplomats need to have specific qualities and useful tools to be persuaders per se. Kappeler (2013, p.16) stresses that

The better a diplomat is at persuading, the more successful they will be in furthering the cause they represent. From the faraway days when representatives of fighting tribes tried to arrange for a truce, thereby risking their head, to the often derided endless discussions within present day international frameworks, the common aim of diplomacy has remained persuasion.

Thereby, persuasion is considered to be the core of diplomacy. In such a persuasive endeavor, arguments are used by diplomats to reach their focal points and considered decisions. Framing arguments will help diplomats/interlocutors think in a similar way and fully understand each other; it “will determine how the issue will be understood and acted upon” (Scott, 2013, p.47). It is worth mentioning that in this process, i.e. in any diplomatic communication, language has a vital role to play; the use of language is “the very essence of the diplomatic vocation” (Nick, 2001, p.39), and this explains why the language of diplomacy is very careful.

By understanding diplomatic language as a specialized case, the objective of this study is to examine the various ways of framing arguments to show how they function as persuasive devices in this specific genre. The main aim is twofold: to

study the persuading linguistic devices in both Arabic and English diplomatic discourse, and to investigate the speakers' used strategies in convincing the audience to alter their beliefs according to the diplomats' own viewpoints. Therefore, we seek to learn about the linguistic and rhetoric aspects of persuasion via examining the use of logic and reason in the framing of arguments. To this end, we will analyze two United Nations (UN) documents; they are letters from the permanent representative of the Member State Syrian Arab Republic to the UN organizations.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section two reviews some definitions of diplomatic language and explores its main applications in international relations. This part highlights language importance as an element in diplomatic communication and describes its functions. The third section is devoted to the topic of persuasion, which is among the main research areas of modern diplomatic communication; it deals in particular with the skill of framing arguments in diplomacy. Some examples of persuasive devices, particularly, those related to the logical appeal in two Arabic documents and their translations into English are examined in section four. Finally, section five concludes with a summary of the main key findings of this work and suggests some recommendations.

## **2. Language in Diplomacy**

Diplomacy is defined in the Cambridge Online Dictionary as “the management of relationships between countries, and the ability to control a difficult situation without upsetting anyone.” It refers to the taken actions by the governments' bodies or their representatives to achieve a specific foreign policy goal. The lines of these actions are usually transmitted via official channels with the purpose of delivering the interests and the foreign policy of their states to the world public. Diplomacy, then, is viewed as “the most important foreign policy instrument, a harmonious component” by which the states improve their international relations (Ismailov et al., 2020, p.807). According to (Vella, 2013, p.12), “Being the art of communication, diplomacy necessitates a thorough knowledge of human psychology, body language, and a wide knowledge of the process of human thinking and the factors, intrinsic and extrinsic, that influence it.”

The ability to practice diplomacy is pertinent also to the art of negotiation

and dialogue. For example, on behalf of their states, diplomats and representatives build a cohesive coexistence between and among states, or promote peaceful international relations to reach a compromise concerning the various conflicting issues. According to D'Acquisto (2017, p.10), diplomacy is “the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of groups or states and improving international relations with regard to issues of peace-making, trade, war, economics and culture.”

In diplomacy, language has a crucial role to play. Nick (2001, p.39) suggests, “the use of language in diplomacy is of major importance, since language is not a simple tool, vehicle for transmission of thoughts, or instrument of communication, but very often the very essence of the diplomatic vocation, and that has been so from the early beginnings of our profession.” Language of diplomacy, i.e. spoken or written, holds multiple meanings. First, it may refer to the use of one unique language used between different nations; French, for example, was the diplomatic language in the first fifty years of the 20th century. In addition, the requirements of the diplomatic language necessitate careful use of language; for example, representatives of countries are not allowed to use a non-diplomatic language. Furthermore, it may refer to both the verbal and non-verbal communicative expressions that diplomats want to transmit; they use a specific style, tone voice such as friendly, solemn, confidential, menacing, nonchalant, etc., or gestures to send messages that everyone understands (Nick, 2001).

In the past, there were times where the leading role of one language in diplomacy was not a result of linguistic or semantic decisions made by scholars, but a result of the political, strategic, economic, cultural dominance of one power in international relations. According to (Nick, 2001), there is no single lingua franca used as a diplomatic language. Different languages were widely used as a means of communication between different countries, for example, “Acadian (Asyrian-Babylonian) by literary Chinese, by Greek “koin`e” (a mixture of dialects, based mainly on Ionic and Attic), and later by mediaeval Greek, then Latin, Arabic, Turkish, and yet later by Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, Dutch, German, French.” (Nick, 2001, p.39)

So, what language should diplomats use? To answer this question, Nick (2001) indicates that the first role of diplomats is to find a common language for communication. That is to say, people from different countries need to find a common ground to achieve a successful conversation. In some rare cases, representatives of different countries agree on one language, such as Standard

Arabic between Arab countries, English varieties between English speaking countries, or Portuguese and Brazilian between South American countries. However, these are not only very rare occasions, in which only one language is used a medium of communication, but also huge differences are found between these same languages. Nowadays, English, as the international language, is becoming the diplomatic medium of communication. “The use of an international language such as English is important for the efficient handling of international affairs, but at the same time, it can generate problems of cross-cultural misunderstandings” (Cohen, 2001, p. 67, in D’Acquisto, 2017). It is worth mentioning that in addition to English, the five working languages of the UN, i.e. Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish, can be considered as diplomatic mediums of communication as they are delivered in most international and official documents.

## 2.1 Functions of Diplomatic Language

For a better understanding of the specialized discourse of diplomatic language, it is important to make reference to the main functions of this type. Ismailov et al. (2020) state that diplomatic language is viewed as a functional and international language of communication; since its main objective is to provide adequate and convincing evidence, the diplomat’s main weapon is their language. Arakelyan and Avetyan (2017, p. 6) say: “language is not only a means of reflecting political reality. A much more important role is played by the fact that language serves as a “secret source of power”, which allows its users to have a direct impact on the course of events.”

Robertson (2016, in Arakelyan and Avetyan, 2017) points out that the main functions of diplomacy focus on four main language areas. First, *negotiations*, specifically, negotiations with the government of the receiving state; they are “the basic means to pursue, prevent, manage, resolve and transform conflicts among states and other parties including conflicts on how to overcome problems and insure cooperation.” Second, *the protection of nationals abroad*: “that is the protection of the interests of the sending state and of its nationals in the receiving state within the international law permissions.” Third, *representing the sending state in the receiving state* “in which the diplomat represents the political, economic, strategic and military interests of the sending state.” Fourth, *reporting*, “ascertaining by all lawful meaning conditions and development in the receiving

state and reporting thereon to the government of the sending state” (Arakelyan and Avetyan, 2017, p.4).

### **3. Persuasion and Framing Arguments in Diplomatic Discourse**

Persuasion is one of the main functions of diplomacy. For the purpose of persuading others, diplomats attempt to convince their counterparts that their considered decisions or decisive actions are the most apposite under certain conditions. According to Vella (2013, p.11), “persuasion is the result of a process whereby one succeeds in convincing another that one’s opinion or one’s assessment of a particular situation is credible and acceptable, being based on knowledge of related circumstances, objective unprejudiced assessment, good judgment, and clear decisions.”

Since diplomacy requires integrating in communication, conducting negotiations, and reaching agreements, persuasion is the key. In his chapter, “Why persuasion? reflections after 50 years of practising, teaching, and studying diplomacy”, Prof. Kappeler (2013) explains why persuasion is the essence of diplomacy. He (2013, p.15) maintains that

The diplomat, whether they represent a State or any other entity or stakeholder, is there to persuade with a view to furthering the interests of the sending entity, reaching an agreement with the receiving entity, or avoiding or ending a conflict between the two entities. In a multilateral context the diplomat must persuade the other actors, or at least a number of them, of the position of the entity they represent. Finally, the diplomat may exercise persuasion as a mediator between two or more conflicting entities.

In the practice of persuasion, arguments are used by diplomats. According to Vella (2013, p.11), “persuasion is winning over by argument.” Moreover, Kappeler (2013, pp.15-16) states that arguments, which may be “logical, emotional, ideological, religious, legal, economic, political or a combination of several [...] are reinforced by considerations of power.” The usefulness of persuasion appears only when the arguments used do convince the recipient/interlocutor of the diplomatic endeavor. That is why, it is important to thoroughly learn about the interlocutors and understand their representing countries, especially, their history, culture, national sensitivities, and even their languages. Once the indispensable knowledge is achieved, mutual respect and

understanding take place (Kappeler, 2013).

Hence, in any persuasive endeavor, the skill of framing arguments is needed. It will help diplomats/interlocutors think in a similar way and fully understand each other, as Scott (2013, p.47) points out “framing arguments will determine how the issue will be understood and acted upon.”

From the linguistic perspective, it seems that the importance of framing in the exercise of persuasion is reinforced by those devices which appeal to logic, i.e. those tools pertinent to the power of reason from assertion to typecasting besides to the appeal of emotion and the relationship between reason and emotion (Scott, 2013). In her analysis of Obama’s Nobel speech, Scott (2013) lists the following framing devices:

1. *Assertion*,
2. *Pre-emptive arguments* (i.e. the acceptance of the opposing position, but then showing why the particular circumstances demand the alternative approach being proposed),
3. *Typecasting and selectivity* (creating stereotypes and deploying them for good or ill),
4. *Appeals to authority and precedent* (i.e. in the form of citations of great men),
5. *Semantic categories* (i.e. a checklist of semantic features by which to evaluate the reality on the ground and determine words.)

In addition to these five, there are other framing devices which are relevant to the appeal of emotion, and the relationship between reason and emotion.

It is worthwhile to note that the term persuasion is traditionally coined to the argumentative trilogy proposed by Aristotle (1967). His theory is based on the three persuasive appeals: Pathos, Logos, and Ethos. *Pathos*, also called the appeal to emotions, persuades the audience by using emotions. *Logos*, originated from the Greek word ‘word’, refers to systems of reasoning; it is the appeal to logical and sound arguments. *Ethos* refers to the ethical appeal; it makes use of what an audience values and believes to be good or true. In other words, *Pathos* changes the audience viewpoints by playing on their feelings, *Logos* convinces the audience through the power of logic, and *Ethos* affects the audience by demonstrating the sincerity of the speaker. Driss (2018, p.60) states:

[These aspects] are effective tools to influence the addressee to the extent of changing his mindset and altering his behaviour, as well as unveiling the latter’s different cultural representations, deriving from his identity which is governed

by many factors, too, including religion, ideology, social, psychological and geographical elements.

#### **4. Data and Methodology**

We adopted in this study a discourse-based perspective on the language of diplomacy to examine the framing devices which appeal to logic, and which are very pertinent to the vital function of persuasion. More particularly, the focus was on the frames chosen by the representative of the Syrian Member State to the UN organizations. For this purpose, a qualitative analysis of two UN texts representing examples of diplomatically pertinent texts was carried out.

The documents selected for this study were two official correspondences from the Syrian Arab representative to the General Assembly (GA) and the Security Council (SC) organisations derived from the Parallel Corpus of the UN texts (Chaalal, 2018). They were two letters from the Permanent Representative of the Member State Syrian Arab Republic to the UN addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the SC. It is important to note that letters to the UN bodies are short and informative; they serve to transmit the Members States' position on the UN reports or to express their governments' opinions and concerns about a specific topic or crisis. They also aim to negotiate with their counterparts and convince the audience. The letters provide examples of diplomatic language.

The analysis of these documents started with a description of the context of the letters as it provided a background to the texts and prepared for a profound linguistic analysis. Then, the analysis of the framing devices used in the examples was discussed; it covered the framing devices which appeal mainly to logic. It is worth noting here that this research is not subjective but rather neutral.

##### **4.1 Description of Data**

The first selected text was a document issued by the SC (S/2011/286)<sup>1</sup>; it was an annex to the identical letters from the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the UN addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the SC. The document described the position of the Syrian Arab Republic on the semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of SC resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2011/258). The author, Bashar Ja'afari, transmitted this letter and stressed the support of Syria for the stability and security of Lebanon for its efforts to liberate the parts of its territory occupied

by Israel and for its territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence.

The second text was a document issued by the GA and SC, A/68/622–S/2013/686 <sup>2</sup>, under the agenda: “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the UN including special economic assistance: Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the UN.” It was an identical letter from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the UN addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the SC. Bashar Ja’afari transmitted his country’s information regarding the latest measures taken to strengthen its cooperation with UN entities and other international organizations active in Syria.

The writing style of these texts is an example of diplomatic language. The documents include various types of texts: exposition, argumentation and narration. They are descriptive and argumentative since they aim at presenting facts and persuading not only the UN authorities but also readers. Furthermore, the documents exhibit the narration of the successions of events or precise reports that took place (Chaalal, 2018).

## 4.2 Analysis of Texts

The analysis of the documents was carried out following the framing issues of diplomatic language as found in Scott’s headings (2013). The two letters, which were originally written in Arabic and their translations into English, were examined in this section. At first observation, it seemed obvious that the translated versions preserved the formal aspects of the two texts, and the persuasive strategies were maintained, effectively. The letters demonstrated examples of *assertion*, *typecasting* and *selectivity*, *storytelling*, and *rhetorical repetition*. Consider them in what follows:

### 4.2.1 Assertion

One way of framing arguments is through assertion. We mean by assertion “the starting point of an argument; a general statement of belief or judgment that can be supported with specific evidence and examples” (Rhetoric terms, 2018, p. 5). Examples of assertive facts appear in the use of *linguistic expressions* (such as: acknowledgement, must, that is why, in fact, etc.) in addition to *assertive verbs* (such as: reiterate, affirm) which are used to acknowledge the truth and emphasize

on the factual events. The followings are some examples of the occurrence of some emphatic expressions used by the author in Text 1:

1. إن ما ذكره التقرير حول الجهود السورية لتنفيذ أحكام قرار مجلس الأمن ١٥٥٩ ٢٠٠٤ هو اعتراف صريح بأن سوريا قد قامت بتنفيذ ما يخصها في هذا القرار.

1. *The references made in the report to the Syrian Arab Republic's efforts to implement the provisions of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) are **an explicit acknowledgement** that Syria has fulfilled all obligations incumbent on it under that resolution.*

In example 1, the author uses the emphatic phrase: 'هو اعتراف صريح', '**an explicit acknowledgement**' to explain the evidence that Syria has fulfilled all obligations incumbent upon it under that resolution.

2. ومن غير المقبول الاستمرار بنزع اسم سوريا في تقرير الأمين العام حول تنفيذ القرار ١٥٥٩ بالرغم من أن سوريا قامت بتنفيذ ما يخصها من أحكامه.

2. *It is **therefore** no longer acceptable for the Secretary-General to introduce Syria into his reports on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004).*

In example 2, the author uses the adversative conjunction 'من أن بالرغم' '**despite the fact**' to express his discontent in introducing Syria in their reports, and stresses the point that Syria had implemented the provisions of SC resolution. On the other hand, in the translated version, a resultative conjunction '**therefore**', which explains reason, is used to transmit the same idea though asserting the fact that Syria had implemented the provisions of SC resolution is not translated.

Another use of conjunctive devices is illustrated in example 3, where the Arabic resultative conjunction 'ولـ' adds an assertion to the efforts made by Syria to solve this political crisis. The English equivalent '**yet**' is similarly used to add emphasis to the word *another*, and hence accentuates on the same idea.

3. وإن تناول التقرير الجهود المشتركة السعودية السورية المبذولة لمعالجة تصاعد الأزمة السياسية في لبنان، هو دليل آخر على حرص سوريا لبذل كل جهد ممكن للحفاظ على أمن واستقرار لبنان.

3. *The reference made in the report to joint efforts by Syria and Saudi Arabia to address the Lebanese political crisis is **yet** another indication that Syria is doing its utmost to preserve the security and stability of Lebanon.*

Moreover, in this text, the Arabic modal expression 'يجب على...أن' and its abbreviation 'على...أن' are used to focus on the proposition which follows. These modal expressions correspond to the English modal verbs '**must** and **should**'. They are forms of assertion of facts. These linguistic markers are illustrated in Examples 4, 5 and 6.

4. وعلى المجتمع الدولي أن يقوم بالجهد المطلوب لإجبار إسرائيل على الانسحاب من الأراضي اللبنانية والسورية المحتلة استنادا إلى قرارات الشرعية الدولية لا سيما قراري مجلس الأمن رقم (١٩٧٣ و ١٩٦٧ و ٣٣٨) (٢٤٢) ومبدأ الأرض مقابل السلام لإنجاز السلام العادل والشامل في المنطقة.

4. The international community **must** take the steps required to compel Israel to withdraw from the Lebanese and Syrian territory which it occupies, in accordance with internationally recognized resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the principle of land for peace, in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

5. إن من يدعي الحرص على استقرار لبنان ووحدته أراضيه **يجب** أن يكون حريصا **على** أمنه واستقلاله أيضا، وبالتالي **يجب** العمل **على** الضغط الفعلي على إسرائيل للانسحاب من باقي الأراضي اللبنانية المحتلة، **وعلى** اتخاذ إجراءات رادعة لمنع الانتهاكات الإسرائيلية ووقفها.

5. Those who claim to care about Lebanon's stability and territorial integrity **should** also care about its security and independence. Therefore, effective pressure **must be** brought to bear on Israel in order to compel it to withdraw from the Lebanese territory it continues to occupy. Steps **must be** taken to prevent and put an end to Israeli violations.

6. **يجب على** معدي التقرير الالتزام باحترام استقلال لبنان وسيادته وعدم التدخل في شؤونه الداخلية تحت أي ذريعة كانت، وكذلك عدم الاستمرار في تجاهل أن العنصر الجوهري للأمن والاستقرار اللبناني هو ردع إسرائيل عن انتهاكاتها المستمرة وإنهاء احتلالها للأراضي اللبنانية.

6. The authors of the report **should** respect the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon and should not interfere in its internal affairs on any pretext whatsoever. They should also not continue to overlook that, in order to ensure Lebanon's security and stability, it is vital to deter Israel's continual violations and end its occupation of Lebanese territory.

Other cited examples of assertion include confident assertive verbs (Leech, 2014). Assertive verbs, such as 'يكرر' and 'يؤكد' (**reiterate** and **reaffirm**) are considered as argumentative assertions since they reiterate the author's claim and insist on his position. Consider examples 7, 8 and 9, below.

7. تكرر سوريا عدم قبولها بإشارات هذا التقرير إلى ترسيم الحدود بين سوريا ولبنان، باعتبار أن هذه المسألة أمر

ثنائي بين البلدين. وتؤكد سوريا مرة أخرى أن العائق الحقيقي الذي يقف أمام ترسيم الحدود السورية-

البنانية بشكل تام، هو استمرار العدوان والاحتلال الإسرائيلي للجولان السوري المحتل ولمزارع شبعا.

7. Syria **reiterates** that it does not accept the references that were made in the report to the delineation of the Syrian- Lebanese border, which is a bilateral matter. It **reaffirms** that the real obstacle to the final delineation of the Syrian-Lebanese border is Israel's continued aggression and its occupation of the Syrian Golan and the Shab'a Farms.

8. تؤكد مجدداً أنه يجب على المجتمع الدولي، إذا أراد أن يلعب دوراً إيجابياً في الساحة اللبنانية، العمل السريع

لإنهاء الاحتلال الإسرائيلي للأراضي اللبنانية، الأمر الذي من شأنه أن يدعم أمن واستقرار لبنان وانعكاس

ذلك إيجابياً على سوريا والمنطقة كلها.

8. We **reaffirm** that, if the international community wishes to play a positive role in Lebanon, it must act swiftly to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory, which would bolster Lebanon's security and independence, and as a result, have a positive impact on Syria and the entire region.

9. وأخيراً تجدد سوريا التأكيد على دعمها لاستقرار و أمن لبنان ودعم جهودها لتحرير أرضه التي تحتلها إسرائيل

ولسلامة لبنان الإقليمية وسيادته واستقلاله.

9. Lastly, the Syrian Arab Republic **reaffirms** its support for the stability and security of Lebanon, for its efforts to liberate the parts of its territory occupied by Israel, and for its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

These linguistic markers are used by the ambassador to provide convincing evidence and factual arguments following his country's directions and viewpoints. What is worth mentioning here is that not all what is transmitted via this letter is commonly acknowledged as truth, but it may be a subjective; only the authorities can decide if these propositions are disputable and obscure or not. Scott (2013, p.48) states: "In listening to others, one needs to distinguish between purported

facts and established ones. In speaking persuasively one must estimate when it might prove Judicial to blur that distinction.”

#### 4.2.2 Typecasting and Selectivity

Scott (2013, p.49) defines typecasting as “creating stereotypes and deploying them for good or ill.” In her opinion, giving always the ‘other’ a fixed or general pattern is another standard framing device.

In fact, in their diplomatic discourse, diplomats tend to depict the ‘other’ as the bad while the ‘self’ as good. Such tools are pertinent to their countries’ ideologies and agendas, especially in moments of war or political crisis. The notions ‘Positive Self and Negative Other-presentation’ were introduced by VanDijk (1995, 2006, in Youssef and Albarakati, 2019). The model distinguishes between (us/in-group) and (them/out-group); “it maintains that we emphasize our positive things, and de-emphasize our negative things while we emphasize their negative things and de-emphasize their positive things. This stresses the significance of group members’ perception of themselves and of the other group” (Youssef and Albarakati, 2019, p.86).

At a time of sensitive diplomatic relations between Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine on the one hand, and Israel, on the other, in his letter, the permanent representative, Ja’afari, depicts ‘the other’, as a bitter enemy that is the source of violence in the region while the image of his country is portrayed as a peace loving nation that is doing its utmost to abide by the international rules to implement the organization resolutions and to help in ensuring Lebanon’s security and stability. This is reflected in Examples 10, 11, 12, and 13.

10. يجب على معدي التقرير الالتزام باحترام استقلال لبنان وسيادته وعدم التدخل في شؤونه الداخلية تحت أي

ذريعة كانت، وكذلك عدم الاستمرار في تجاهل أن العنصر الجوهري للأمن والاستقرار اللبناني هو ردع

إسرائيل عن انتهاكاتها المستمرة وإنهاء احتلالها للأراضي اللبنانية.

10. They should also not continue to overlook that, in order to ensure Lebanon’s security and stability, **it is vital to deter Israel’s continual violations and end its occupation of Lebanese territory.**

11. نؤكد مجدداً أنه يجب على المجتمع الدولي، إذا أراد أن يلعب دوراً إيجابياً في الساحة اللبنانية، العمل السريع لإنهاء الاحتلال الإسرائيلي للأراضي اللبنانية، الأمر الذي من شأنه أن يدعم أمن واستقرار لبنان وانعكاس ذلك إيجابياً على سوريا والمنطقة كلها.

11. *We reaffirm that, if the international community wishes to play a positive role in Lebanon, it must act swiftly to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory, which would bolster Lebanon's security and independence, and as a result, have a positive impact on Syria and the entire region.*

12. إن ما ذكره التقرير حول الجهود السورية لتنفيذ أحكام قرار مجلس الأمن ١٥٥٩ ٢٠٠٤ هو اعتراف صريح بأن سوريا قد قامت بتنفيذ ما يخصها في هذا القرار.

12. *The references made in the report to the Syrian Arab Republic's efforts to implement the provisions of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) are an explicit acknowledgement that Syria has fulfilled all obligations incumbent on it under that resolution.*

13. وأخيراً تجدد سوريا التأكيد على دعمها لاستقرار و أمن لبنان ودعم جهودها لتحرير أرضه التي تحتلها إسرائيل ولسلامة لبنان الإقليمية وسيادته واستقلاله.

13. *Lastly, the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its support for the stability and security of Lebanon, for its efforts to liberate the parts of its territory occupied by Israel, and for its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.*

Accordingly, it seems very obvious that the ambassador opts for the examples that serve his country's interest, concerning the efforts made to preserve the safety and satiability of the countries in the region. In so doing, he wins the audience over by his selective use. Scott (2013, p.49) explains that "This kind of selective disclosure is a standard framing device: we foreground evidence which promotes our argument and omit mention of evidence which might detract from it. The very process of typecasting involves selecting certain attributes over and above others, and presenting them as definitive."

#### 4.2.3. Storytelling

Another way of framing arguments is through storytelling including narratives. This narrative technique is widely used by diplomats and politicians. It can shape facts to have an impact on the understanding of human beings. In that,

it plays a vital role in manipulating the audience to see through the speakers'/writers' own eyes. Scott (2013, p.55) affirms "stories are a key resource in persuasion because they structure events, create cohesion and invite identification not only with actors but with values as well. Above all, they expand our horizons by speaking to us of possible worlds from which we can learn." Hence, storytelling can elicit pathos; it becomes impactful when it provides values rather than the truth.

In what follows, we present two paragraphs from Text 2 which exhibit the narration of the successions of events or precise accounts of what took place. The illustration of events proves that narration plays a vital role in the organization of the documents' information.

14. ولعل أهل العوامل التي تعوق تأمين وتوزيع المساعدات الإنسانية يكمن في النشاطات الإجرامية التي تقوم بها المجموعات الإرهابية المسلحة، والتي يتبع بعضها لتنظيم القاعدة، حيث استهدفت هذه المجموعات عددا من قوافل المساعدات الإنسانية، وقامت بسرقة ونهب كميات كبيرة من هذه المساعدات، علاوة على قيام تلك المجموعات بتدمير البنى التحتية في المناطق التي تنشط فيها، وقطع سبل معيشة المواطنين والسيطرة على الموارد الطبيعية من نفط ومياه ومحاصيل زراعية من أجل تمويل أعمالها.

14. *Perhaps the greatest obstacle to humanitarian aid distribution is posed by the criminal activities of armed terrorist groups, some of which are affiliated with Al- Qaida. The groups have targeted a number of humanitarian convoys, stealing significant quantities of aid. They have also destroyed the infrastructure in their areas of activity, disrupted civilians' livelihoods, and taken control of natural resources including petrol, water and crop harvests to fund their activities.*

15. وفيما يتعلق بموضوع المنشآت الطبية والمشافي، تتابع مجموعات إرهابية، بعضها يرتبط بالقاعدة، الاعتداء على المشافي، حيث قامت مؤخرا باحتلال مشفى مدينة دير عطية في ريف دمشق، واحتجزت فيه رهائن من الأطباء والطاقم الطبي، وحتى من المرضى، وقامت أيضا بتفخيخ الطابق الأول من المشفى بالمتفجرات . تضاف هذه الجريمة إلى سلسلة الجرائم التي قامت بها هذه المجموعات ضد المنشآت الطبية، ومنها تلك العملية التي استهدفت فيها مشفى في محافظة حمص كان قد تم تفخيخه وتفجيره نهاية العام الماضي بمن فيه من طاقم طبي ومرضى، وقامت تلك المجموعات الإرهابية بتصوير عملها هذا ووضعه على مواقعها على الإنترنت.

15. Terrorist groups, some of them Al-Qaida affiliates, have targeted hospitals. They recently occupied the hospital in the town of Dayr Atiyah, in Rif Dimashq, holding doctors, medical staff and even patients hostage. They planted explosives on the first floor of the hospital. That crime is one of several against health facilities. In late 2012, explosives were planted and detonated in a hospital in Homs governorate while medical staff and patients were in the building. The terrorist groups filmed the operation and uploaded the footage to the Internet.

#### **4.2.4. Rhetorical Repetition**

There are other rhetorical devices that are so powerful to guarantee the persuasive intent. Repetition is one of them. Repetition is used in this text to add emphasis and power to its meaning. This is evident in the use of any kind of repetitions, i.e. *lexical* or *syntactic* which usually serves some rhetorical purposes.

Jawad (2009, pp. 762-763) asserts, "The rhetorical function of repetition is concerned with the meaning that formal repetition invokes in the mind of the reader. By the recurrence of certain lexical items in a short piece of text, a foregrounded image is projected on the surface of the text signaling a semantic weight that goes beyond the mere senses of the repeated utterances." The use of repetition, which is ascribed to rhetorical devices, such as *assertion* التوكيد and *exaggeration* المبالغة, aims at persuading readers. Koch (1981 in Al-Jabr, 1987, pp. 82-83) stresses, "Repetition is a means of persuasion in Arabic argumentative discourse." This view is also affirmed by Baker (1992, p. 236). According to her, Arabic is well known to use repetition as a major rhetorical device. This includes repetition of both form and substance so that the same information is repeated again and again in a variety of ways in an effort to convince by assertion (Chaalal, 2018).

On the one hand, *lexical repetition* is obviously used to help readers remember and recognize the importance of the message conveyed by the author of the document in transmitting his Member State's positions on the UN report and in expressing his government's opinions and concerns about this specific issue. This is quite obvious in example 16.

16. إن ما ذكره التقرير حول الجهود السورية لتنفيذ أحكام قرار مجلس الأمن -٥٥٧- ٢٠١٨ هو اعتراف صريح بأن سوريا قد قامت بتنفيذ ما يخصها في هذا القرار، ومن غير المقبول الاستمرار بنزاع اسم سوريا في

تقرير الأمين العام بالرغم من أن سوريا قامت - حول تنفيذ القرار ٢١١٨٠٥٥٧ بتنفيذ ما يخصها من أحكامه . فقد أشاد التقرير ليس فقط بإجراء انتخابات رئاسية ونيابية حرة ونزيهة في لبنان أي من غير تدخل أو نفوذ أجنبي، وبجهود سوريا حول سحبها لقواتها ومعداتها العسكرية من لبنان، وإنما أشاد أيضا بإقامة علاقات دبلوماسية كاملة بين سوريا ولبنان.

16. *The references made in the report to the Syrian Arab Republic's efforts to implement the provisions of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) are an explicit acknowledgement that Syria has fulfilled all obligations incumbent on it under that resolution. It is therefore no longer acceptable for the Secretary-General to introduce Syria into his reports on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004). The report notes not only that presidential and parliamentary elections took place in a free and fair manner in Lebanon (i.e., without foreign interference or influence), but also that Syria had withdrawn its troops and military equipment from Lebanon and established full diplomatic relations with Lebanon. The reference made in the report to joint efforts by Syria and Saudi Arabia to address the Lebanese political crisis is yet another indication that Syria is doing its utmost to preserve the security and stability of Lebanon.*

As it can be seen, the term *Syria* reappears in every sentence to put emphasis on *Syria the Republic*. In the Arabic extract, the term *Syria* and its derivative recur in each sentence in order to convince readers that *Syria*, the Republic, had drawn attention to fulfilling all obligations incumbent on it. This recurrence of the term *Syria* aims at putting emphasis on the main point that *Syria* is doing its utmost to preserve the security and stability of Lebanon in that document and that *Syria* is still a republic despite all. Therefore, it can be said that lexical repetition is prominently used to put emphasis on the same point of view. The employment of this device is not at random; it is rather dictated by overall rhetorical purposes (Chaalal, 2018).

On the other hand, regarding *syntactic repetition*, there is one instance where the author repeats the same structure '**for+ noun**'. This structure is repeated to stress the message the author wants to send to the writers of the report, in particular, and the world public, in general. In example 17, Ja'afari states:

17. وأخيرا تجدد سوريا التأكيد على دعمها لاستقرار و أمن لبنان ودعم جهودها لتحرير أرضه التي تحتلها إسرائيل ولسلامة لبنان الإقليمية وسيادته واستقلاله.

17. Lastly, the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its support **for the stability** and security of Lebanon, **for its efforts** to liberate the parts of its territory occupied by Israel, and **for its territorial integrity**, sovereignty and independence.

Hereby, repetition as a rhetorical technique conveys strong emphasis on the ideas and facts that the ambassador wants to accentuate and guarantee to a great extent his persuasive intent.

## **5. Summary of the Results**

The following is a summary of the main findings obtained:

*Assertion devices*, such as *emphatic expressions* and *confident assertive verbs* were used to provide convincing evidence and factual arguments following the directions and viewpoints of author's state. What is worth mentioning is that not all what is transmitted via these letters is commonly acknowledged as truth, but they may be subjective. Eventually, only the authorities can decide if those propositions were disputable and obscure or not (Scott, 2013).

Concerning the linguistic tools of *typecasting* and *selectivity*, the author opted for the examples that serve his country's interest concerning the efforts made to preserve the safety and satiability of the countries in the region. In so doing, he won the audience over by his *selective use*.

As regards *storytelling/narratives*, the illustration of the successions of events or precise accounts of what took place proved that narration plays a vital role in the organization of the documents' information.

Finally, *lexical* and *syntactic repetitions* are prominently and equally-used to put emphasis on the same point of views throughout the texts. The employment of this device was not at random; it was rather dictated by overall rhetorical purposes.

## **6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Lastly, the present work scrutinizes the framing devices that appeal mainly to logic in Arabic diplomatic texts and their English translations following Scott's analytical scheme (2013). The obtained findings from the two letters analysis from the Syrian Arab Member State to the UN organization revealed the use of different persuasive devices, namely: *assertion*, *typecasting/selectivity*,

This work clearly has some limitations; nevertheless, we postulate it could be a helpful starting point to tackle the topic of persuasion, which is among the main research areas of modern diplomatic communication cross-linguistically. As the focus of the study was on framing arguments which appeal only to logic, there is a possibility to conduct further research on the relationship between reason and emotion in this specific type of texts. Moreover, the analysis of persuasion can be undergone through the methods of corpus-linguistics in which whole available corpora (for example, Arabic/English specialized parallel corpora) and advanced corpus tools would be considered as a good source of information for a more inclusive analysis of these framing devices.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <http://documents.un.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://documents.un.org/>