

# An Analysis of Mood Types and Their Roles of Persuasion in An ISIS' Article "A True Promise of Allah"

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**Abstract.** This present paper is to reveal the types of mood and their role of persuasion in an ISIS' article issued in *Ruumiyah* magazine entitled 'A True Promise of Allah'. A discourse analysis with a qualitative approach is applied. The results show that, in line with the main purpose of the article, the author commonly employs declarative moods working as statements of fact. The facts delivered in the texts are usually telling the readers about past events (stories) to motivate IS followers and enhance their commitment in fighting in the cause of Allah. The mood types applied indicate two strategies of persuasion applied in the article: The 'logical empirical' strategy to give factual examples and sound argumentation and 'nature of situation' to deliver the opinions about something.

**Keywords:** ISIS, persuasion, motivation, Mood, victory

## 1 INTRODUCTION

IS (Islamic State), or ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), or ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Islam), or *Daesh* (Arabic language acronym) is an Islamic fundamentalist sect (*salafi jihadist*) which has its roots in Sunni Islam [1]. IS got its glory in early 2014 when they succeeded in defeating Iraqi forces and seizing important areas in Iraq including Mosul, the Iraq's biggest city [2]. Since then, IS continued to grow rapidly to control important cities not only in Iraq but also in Syria [25].

However, since mid-2014 the coalition forces led by the US had been launching air raids on IS-held cities in Iraq. Meanwhile in Syria, the Syrian troops with support from Russia launched attacks on IS's territory. These attacks caused ISIS to lose tens of thousands of troops and suffering from financial and military-infrastructure losses [1]. ISIS continued to experience the defeats and deaths of their important figures. In July 2017, ISIS lost their most important and biggest territory, Mosul, followed by the fall of ISIS's de facto capital city, Raqqa to the Iraqi army. US military administrators stated in December 2017 that ISIS reserved a mere 2% of the territory they had formerly seized. This situation continues until 2019. The leader of ISIS, Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi, was killed on 27 October 2019 during an airstrike conducted by U.S. special forces [3].

Although IS undoubtedly suffered from many defeats and lost most of their territories, they did not actually lose, either strategically or militarily [4]. They changed their fighting tactics by carrying out many hit and run (terror) attacks not only in Iraq and Syria but

also in western countries. According to the New York Times' estimate, from the summer of 2018 to the end of March 2019, IS had launched more than 1000 attacks both in Iraq and Syria and in areas beyond their control [5].

In line with the defeats, IS's propaganda narratives in their online media also shifted, from putting forward their ideology of Islamic caliphate into persuasion to continue fighting, terrorizing, and hating their enemies [6]. Many of IS's publications (including *Rumiyah*) were concerned with how to conduct terrors in Crusader' lands, the prominence of harming and hating the *kuffar* (non-Muslim) and persuasion to remain steadfast in *iman*. Azman [7] revealed three main narratives of IS's propaganda in *Dabiq* magazine. The three narratives are: (1) IS remains strong and lethal; (2) Western non-Muslims should convert to Islam; and (3) IS has justifiable reasons for hating their enemies. These three narratives were abundantly featured in *Dabiq* magazine.

This article was to find out the patterns of mood applied in a text entitled "A True Promise of Allah" which is published in *Rumiyah* edition 8. This article is mainly aimed at persuading the readers to remain steadfast in struggling in the cause of Allah.

## 2 THEORY

There are two basic terms in the mood system, namely imperative mood and indicative mood [24]. The exchange of information is represented by the indicative mood, while the performance of an action to give services or to exchange goods is represented by imperative mood. There are two terms in the indicative mood that are declarative and interrogative. Declarative mood typically functions as a statement (facts, opinion, etc.) that is to give information. Interrogative mood is the mood of the question that is to request information [24]. The imperative mood is the mood of the verb and is characterized by a verbal group in the form of a basic form of a verb [25]. Imperatives typically functions as an order, request, and directive [10]. The imperative mood is not found in subordinate clauses or subordinate questions since, essentially, it is a performative mood [10].

In the interpersonal meaning, clauses are used to relate with others, negotiate relationships, and to convey opinions and attitudes. Halliday [10] explained that the relationship between speakers is constructed whenever the language is utilized to relate with others. Halliday [10] further said that speech roles are divided into two: giving and demanding. Giving means asking to accept, for example, 'Do you want this?' Conversely, demanding means asking to give, for instance, 'May I have this?' In the case of commodity exchange, Information and Goods & services are two types of commodities exchanged. Each type of mood includes different constituent structures. In this case, a complete English clause has five elements: Subject, Finite, Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct. The type of mood of the clause can be identified by the subject and finite position in a clause, while the clause residue is filled by a combination of Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct.

### 3 METHOD

This present study applied a content analysis which was qualitative in nature to see how the system of mood is played for persuading the readers to remain steadfast in fighting in the cause of Allah. The data source (the article 'True Promise of Allah') was taken from *Rumiyah* magazine the 8<sup>th</sup> edition. In the article, there were 39 major clauses to analyze. In this study, the simple sentence and complex sentence are treated the same. They are counted as one main clause. Meanwhile the compound sentence is treated differently. A compound sentence that consists of two major clauses, for example, is counted as 2 clauses. A compound sentence that consists of three major clauses is counted as three clauses, and so forth depending on the number of main clauses that construct the sentence. The data (major clauses) are then analyzed using Spradley model of cultural theme analysis to see the regularities of the clauses. The discussion is emphasized on how the results reflect the persuasion strategies that are applied.

### 4 RESULTS

#### 1. Domain analysis of the clauses

In the text, there are 38 major clauses. All of the clauses are group in accordance with their speech functions.

Table 1: The domain analysis of the clauses

Domain	Number of clause (%)
Statement of fact	79%
Statement of opinion	16%
Statement of hope	3%
Statement of praise	3%

Table 1 shows the domain analysis of the mood in the Text. In general, the clauses in can be grouped into four domains: statement of fact, statement of opinion, statement of hope, and statement of praise. In the text, the statements of fact and the statement of opinion are dominant in the structure of the texts. In this case the clauses that belong to the statement of fact dominate the texts. 79% of the clauses are categorized as statements of fact.

#### 2. Taxonomy analysis of the clauses

Table 2 shows that all clauses in each domain are delivered in the declarative mood, as indicated by the S + F construction of the clause as in "They hoped thereby to finish off the Muslims,... (clause 09)." In this clause, 'They' is the Subject (S) and 'hoped' is the Finite+Predicator (F+P).

Table 2: Taxonomy Analysis of the Mood of the clauses

Domain	Mood Type		
	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative
Statement of fact	30 (100%)	-	-
Statement of opinion	6 (100%)	-	-
Statement of hope	1 (100%)	-	-
Statement of praise	1 (100%)	-	-

Basically, the text is composed by a declarative mood either in the domains of statement of fact, statement of opinion, statement of hope, and statement of praise. In the domain of statement of fact, 30 clauses (100%) in the text are written in the declarative mood. In the domain of statement of opinion, 6 clauses (100%) in the text are delivered in the declarative mood. In the domain of statement of hope and statement of praise, only two clauses in Text 1 that belong to the domains and all of them are written in the declarative mood.

### 3. Componential analysis of mood in the text

As seen in table 3, there are differences of presentation of the clauses in the same domain in the same type of mood. Generally speaking, in Text 1 there is a contrast of presentation among the declarative clauses in the domain of the statement of fact and opinion.

Table 3: Componential Analysis of the Mood

Domain	Mood type	Technique of presentation	%
Statement of fact	Declarative	telling past event	73
Statement of fact	Declarative	telling about someone saying something	27
Statement of opinion	Declarative	presenting the characteristic of something	83
Statement of opinion	Declarative	giving evaluative opinion of something	17

It is identified that 73% of the declarative clauses in the domain of the statement of fact are presented by using the technique of telling past events (TPE), while the rest 27% of the declarative clauses are presented by employing the technique of someone saying something (TSSS). Similarly, in the domain of statement of opinion, 83% of the declarative clauses are presented by using the technique of presenting the characteristic of something (PCS), while the rest 17% of the declarative clauses employ the technique of giving evaluative opinion of something (GEOS).

## 5 DISCUSSION

The text is targeted to the readers who are the true supporters of ISIS. They are suffering from adversaries due to their loss of lands and the demises of ISIS's noticeable figures. They need to be convinced that one day a victory will come to them though they are presently facing a number of troubles.

The text is an analytical exposition due to the fact that the text is aimed at convincing that that steadfastness in *iman* (a belief that one day Allah will help them) is imperative and must be reinforced. Moreover, the text also convinces that the opinion delivered is accurate and supported by strong opinions. According to Coffin [8] in such kind of text, the relationship between the author and the readers is interpersonally separated naturally.

The type of mood chosen is clearly affected by the type of readers in the texts. The readers targeted are the true supporters of ISIS (inner-group supporters) who were suffering from loss in war. They need to be motivated to continue their holy struggle. Therefore, the text is aimed at arousing the readers' conviction that adversities they are facing today should not be a hindrance to fight in the cause of Allah.

In line with this, the author chooses the declarative mood that mainly tells success stories gained by the past Muslim warriors. Such kind of mood becomes reasonable to use to arouse the readers' motivation to be committed in fighting in Allah's cause.

In general, the text is characterized by the dominant use of the declarative clauses functioning as statements of fact delivered by the technique of Telling Past Event and as statements of opinion delivered by Presenting the Characteristic of Something and Giving Evaluative Opinion of Something. The other moods such as interrogative and imperative are not present in the text.

The declarative mood that is applied helps the author act as the informer. By this position, he put himself not too higher or lower than the readers. The author 'stays' in the middle by only providing information to them, sounding not too obtrusive to the readers. The information is, therefore, becomes objective as the interpersonal relationship that is built is relatively separated [8]. In this text, the author does not use the subject 'I' or 'we', indicating himself.

By a declarative mood, the author can deliver the message instantly without making a distance with the readers. It is because a declarative mood is naturally used to make a statement [10]. This kind of mood is different from that of imperative or interrogative which tend to build a distance between a speaker or author with the audience or the readers [9]; [10].

Therefore, the application of declarative mood can help the author to send the information smoothly and the readers can get it promptly.

In this research, the speech function of the declarative mood commonly follows its typical speech function as statement, which is in contrast with Ayoola's research [9] that indicated that the interpersonal meaning of a structure was not always in line with its lexicogrammar. In this text, the writer used the declarative mood functioning as statements of fact to present as many facts and evidence as possible to support the main argument. Generally, the author presents about the facts which relate to the triumph obtained by the Muslims in the past due to Allah's help after He tested them. This is in line with the principal objective of the text that is to motivate ISIS followers to remain steadfast in fighting in the cause of Allah, though they had experienced many loss in war, e.g., the loss of territory and the death of some ISIS's figures.

The declarative clauses that present facts indicate the application of a logical-empirical strategy of persuasion [11]. In this text, the author presents as many facts as possible in the form of the success stories of the previous Muslims. This strategy is very useful for motivation because empiricism uses direct evidence, data, and confirmed facts rather than opinion, fallacies, or false reasoning in an argument [12]. One will have difficulty challenging the argument which applies a good and clear logical empirical persuasive statement unless he/she chooses to use emotional responses, lying, or other untruths [12]. In this text, the author uses the clauses as the empirical basis to persuade the readers (ISIS followers) to continue fighting and believe that triumph would come to them because a similar situation occurred in the past.

By presenting past events, the author is actually using storytelling as the technique of persuasion. We know that most people like to listen to good stories [13]. And because of this, many professional motivators choose to use storytelling as a motivational tool to motivate others [14]. Tran [15] clarified that it is the neurochemical that makes our brains vulnerable to storytelling. In other words, when someone is more tied up in a story, he/she releases more oxytocin, which ultimately makes the persuasion process easier to do.

In advertising, many advertisers choose to use stories that may create a positive emotion for the customer, and in this way the brand's sale increases [16]. Furthermore, stories play a vital role in communication. Mulholland [17] says that narrators frequently use stories to suggest an understanding of the world; and through it they provide social and cultural values for what happens in life. It is proved that people are easier to learn through stories and take the teachings they offer.

Moreover, in Islamic point of view, the Noble Quran contains many stories of either good or bad examples of conduct of previous people that every Muslim should learn and use as the guidance in living his/her life [18]. Therefore, by using clauses that contain stories the author would effectively persuade and motivate the readers (IS followers) who are facing difficulties and adversities.

The stories (facts) told in the text are commonly to build the readers' positive emotion, a strong conviction, that one day Allah will surely help the Muslims (ISIS) and gives them victory. This is in line with Lakomy's research [19] revealing that IS tended to turn their defeats into winner's image as one of their propaganda strategies. By exposing positive messages, it is expected that the readers will be convinced and inspired.

One of the positive messages can be seen in clause 11 that tells about what happened in the past time in the war of *Badr* when Allah helped the Muslim warriors against the Qurays *kuffar*. It is told that though the number of Muslims at that time was fewer than the *kuffar's* army, Allah had made them seem twofold in the eyes of the *kuffar*, making the Muslim warriors heartened in fighting them. This story contained in the clause is used to make the readers (ISIS followers) keep inspired and determined in struggling in the cause of Allah though they are now undergoing many losses. By this clause, the author would like to say that any adversities should not discourage them in fighting the *kuffar* because Allah will assuredly help them as what Allah did beforehand.

Another important feature of the clauses in this text is the use of direct quotation. It indicates that the author strengthens his opinions through Allah's or Muslim scholars' statements. For example, Clause 13 is used to support the previous statement (Clause 11), telling that Allah had made the Muslims appear folded in the *kuffar's* eyes, and vice versa.

Similarly, Clause 24 is used as a supportive basis for supporting the previous clauses in the form of examples of what Allah had done to the *kuffar* in the war of *Badr*. In this *ayat*, Allah sent His help in the form of wind and armies of angels to destroy the *kuffar* forces. A direct quotation from a Muslim scholar can be identified in Clause 31. The clause is used as a further explanation about the previous statement in Clause 30, stating that the mobilization of the *kuffar* was a hard trial for the Muslims.

Making use of a direct quotation of Allah's statements is in line with the results of the studies by Bisgin et. al., [20] and Macnair and Frank [21]. They revealed that ISIS focused more on spirituality and Islamic justification as the foundation of their terror operations through the utilization of Allah's and Prophet's statements as one of the means of persuasion.

The application of direct quotation is can be categorized as a logical-empirical strategy [11]. Direct quotation may increase the power of the arguments by directing the readers to a respected authority [22]. The author, in this case, bases the arguments and opinions on logical and empirical foundations, leaving no room to encounter the argumentation. More specifically, citing Allah's statements makes the propositions offered have a very strong scientific basis because it is Allah (the God, the all-Knowing) who said.

In the text, some declarative mood functions as a statement of opinion, giving judgments on something. In the text, the author's opinions are largely to ensure the readers that someday Allah would give them triumph, and the defeat they experienced was only a trial from Allah. The author tells that such loses should not make them surrender and lose hope but should make them reorganize, increase their efforts, relight the flames of war, recollect every inch of land they had lost, instead.

The clauses that contain fact-based opinions can be regarded as a 'nature of situation' strategy [11] because the author positions himself as the one who knows very well about the matter of discussion, henceforth the nature of the situation of something. The fact-based definition or evaluation will sound valid or correct since they are grounded on the facts [22]. People are likely to have faith in rigorous arguments which are based on facts and instances; it is why numerous advertisements make use of data or actual instances of success and failures to promote their products.

Clause 02, for instance, tells about the Muslims in the past who believed that Allah's help would surely come to them in any condition they were facing. In this clause, the author

seems to have a good understanding of how the previous Muslims looked like. In his view, they were the people whose *iman* (belief) was solid, and this was reinforced by several facts that exist in the text.

Similarly, Clause 03 represents the author's evaluative opinion about the previous Muslims when facing adversities and difficulties. In this instance, it is convinced that any adversities experienced by previous Muslims were only a test from Allah, whether they would believe or disbelieve of the power of Allah. It is argued that such difficult situation naturally increased their *iman* and continuously fought in the cause of Allah. Again, the author does not leave his argument without any supportive data but provides them with robust facts about it.

In sum, from the mood used, it can be concluded that in the text, the author positions himself as an informer and largely wraps the information borne in the form of statements of fact and opinion. The facts brought in the text are commonly telling about past events (stories) to inspire ISIS followers and increase their commitment in fighting in the cause of Allah. Thus this kind of text can be considered as a *response-reinforcing* text which is aimed at reinforcing or strengthening the existing behavior or attitude [23], which in this case the conviction that one day Allah will give them great victory.

## 6 Conclusion

From the types of mood applied, it can be inferred that in the text, the author positions himself as the informer and commonly wraps the information carried in the form of statements of fact and opinion. The facts conveyed in the text are frequently telling the readers about past events (stories) to encourage ISIS followers and increase their commitment in struggling in Allah's cause. Thus, this kind of texts can be classified as a *response-reinforcing* text which is proposed to strengthen an existing behavior or attitude, which in this case is one day Allah will help them. The mood types implemented indicate two persuasion strategies namely the 'logical empirical', to give accurate instances and rigorous argumentation, and 'nature of situation', to convey his opinions about something.

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