



**RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF OPRAH WINFREY'S  
COMMENCEMENT SPEECH AT THE UNIVERSITY  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IN 2018**

a final project  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan*  
in English

by  
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**2019**

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Semarang, August 2019



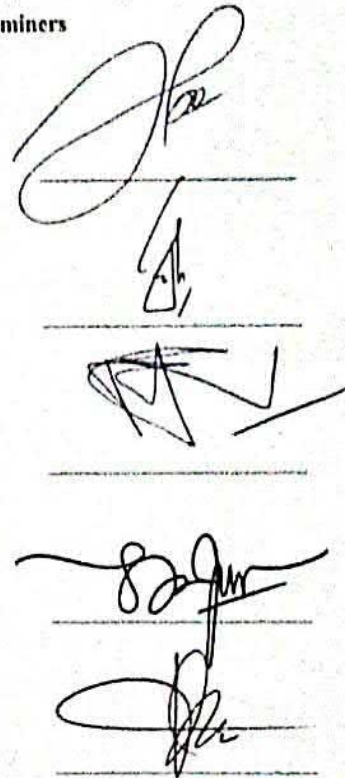
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## APPROVAL


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## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“Relax. Don’t be so hard on yourself. You are living and learning. Forgive yourself and grow from the experience.”

- *Instagram - @thegoodquote* -

“Not everyone in this world likes you, but you know, not everyone matters for you.”

*This final project is dedicated for:*

❖ *My Beloved Mom and*

*Strongest Dad*

❖ *My Future*

❖ *And of course, You*

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Lastly, I realize that my final project is imperfect. Therefore, I always look forward to any feedbacks for the betterment of it. I hope that this final project can be useful for the readers.

Wage Darminto

## ABSTRACT

**Darminto, Wage.** 2019. *Rhetorical Analysis of Oprah Winfrey's Commencement Speech at the University of Southern California in 2018*. Final Project. English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Semarang. The first Advisor : Widhiyanto, S. Pd., M. Pd., Ph.D

**Keywords:** Persuasion, Rhetorical proofs, Commencement speech, Aristotle, Speech delivery strategies

The idea of persuasion or rhetoric that is implemented in the communication with specific context can be used as a tool to persuade, motivate or inspire other people. Therefore, the study conducted with the focus of rhetoric in the public speech context. A rhetorical analysis is about an analysis of the way somebody persuades other with rhetorical strategies in the form of rhetorical proofs. This study aimed to identify the rhetorical proofs and to describe the speech delivery strategies used by the speaker that helps to create effective public speech. Oprah Gail Winfrey, a well-known American media executive, talk show host, and philanthropist, delivered a commencement speech on the graduation day at the University of Southern California in 2018. The commencement speech video of her and the transcription of the speech were used as the data to be analyzed in the current study. Qualitative approach and content analysis were used as the methods of the study.

According to the first finding related to rhetorical proofs explained that Oprah Winfrey used all types of rhetorical proofs during her speech. She used *ethos* for 63.5%, *pathos* for 34%, and *logos* for 2.5%. The second finding found out that Oprah Winfrey managed to use several speech delivery strategies during her speech. She used storytelling to explain several ideas of her speech, body language, tone of voice, and pause. Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that *ethos* is the most dominant proof used by the speaker in her speech. She managed to establish her credibility through some experiences and values that she delivered to the audience. In delivering the speech, Oprah Winfrey used 24% of the speech for storytelling, managed the posture and body movement well, used an effective tone of voice and managed proper pauses.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This first chapter of introduction presents the background of the research, reasons for choosing the topic, statements of the problem, objectives of the research, significance of the research, and outline of the report.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg, Oprah Winfrey delivered her commencement speech in front of the university of Southern California (USC) Annenberg's graduates. Her commencement speech video was uploaded on to her official Youtube channel named Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN). It has been trending and viewed by more than a hundred thousands viewers around the world. Oprah Winfrey is well-known as American media executive, actress, talk show host, television producer and philanthropist. She is also best known for her talk show "The Oprah Winfrey Show". Considering her background as a media mogul and her expertise in public communication, the researcher is interested in doing research to analyze how Oprah Winfrey used rhetoric or the idea of persuasion to persuade, inspire, and to motivate the audience through her commencement speech. The focus of the research conducted are on the rhetorical strategy or rhetorical proofs (*ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*), and the speech delivery features used in Oprah Winfrey's

commencement speech given at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg in 2018.

The idea of classical rhetoric or modes of persuasion was developed by Aristotle (1954). This theory of rhetoric mainly discusses about the way people try to persuade, inspire, change, motivate the other people through the idea, values, thoughts, and messages in the context of communication. So many studies have been conducted related to the classical rhetoric of Aristotle's theory and it's already been developed by the other figures. The researcher takes one example of study that correlate with the idea of persuasion or persuasive strategies. This study is about the comparison of persuasive strategies used in the context of English debate. The study was conducted by Andarini Handayani in 2015 entitled "Comparison of Persuasive Strategies Used by Debaters of Senior High School Students and University Students (Final Round of ADC 2014 and JOVED 2014)". The focus of the study is about the use of persuasive strategies in the context of debate. Persuasive strategies used by debaters are intended to influence and persuade the adjudicators of the debate. However, the theory used by Handayani is proposed by Hart (1983). The definition of persuasive strategies based on Hart's theory consisted of 16 persuasive features, which are inclusion, maximization, minimization, association, disassociation, simplification, unification, involvement, gradualism, overkill, projection, elimination, idealization, legitimation, self-depreciation, apprehension. The findings of her study found out the difference of persuasive strategies used by the High School debaters and University debaters. This study inspires the researcher to conduct a research about the idea of

persuasion. This current research conducted by the researcher is about rhetorical analysis. Rhetorical analysis is mainly focusing on the way someone tries to persuade and to motivate others in the communication process. The communication process that the researcher described here is about several contexts of communication including a public speech. The rhetorical analysis is worth doing because it helps people to be able to produce an effective public speech in front of the audience. The goal of delivering an effective speech in front of the audience is to share information and try to make the audience believe in the information shared by the speaker. The reason why rhetoric is necessary to be implemented in a public speech or public speaking context, its because public speaking skills in this globalization era is an important thing to be developed and mastering by people for many aspects of life.

Public speaking is one form of public communication. It defines as the process of communication in a situation which a single source transmits a message to a number of receivers, who give nonverbal and, sometimes, question and answer (Pearson, et al, 2011). In public speaking, the speaker adapts the message delivered to the audience in an attempt to achieve maximum understanding. Sometimes, people in the audience seen that they understand to the speaker's message, however, in other times, many people fail to understand the shared message.

Public speaking as one of the communication skills is important to every human resource for preparing themselves to improve their human resources quality. Public speaking is learned by people with the ability to produce messages



that would persuade, entertain, inspire, or do a variety of other things to the audiences. For instance, performing oral presentation in the classroom, teachers lecturing, master of ceremonies leading the events, corporate managers when they run large meeting, the actors who introduce award winners or accept awards, and even the political entities' speech in front of the supporters, those all of the examples are engaging in public speaking skills. This essential skill is needed for various aspects of human life, for example accountants, lawyers, politician, engineers, even more teachers and students.

The importance of public speaking skills is right for educational purpose. For the classroom purpose, both language teachers and students commonly understand that people have different ability in constructing texts and to perform a communication process with others. In more details, when the students practice their public speaking in front of the audience, each of them has their own anxiety and even their fears. Therefore, understanding that public speaking is beneficial for many aspects including classroom interaction, social life, and also the further professional careers. I believe that as students, they need to improve their communication skills.

Lastly, besides the importance of public speaking skill as described in the above explanation, the researcher realized that persuasive speech delivers by a good speaker with the use of persuasive strategies is not enough to create an effective public speech. Speech delivery strategy is also important to help a good speaker to create an effective public speech. There are many factors that contribute to the effectiveness on performing public speech. Speech delivery style

or feature of the speaker is one of the important factors which influenced to the audience's attention to what the speaker's says. If the audience pay full attention to the speech given by the speaker, it indicates that the speaker managed to deliver the speech with an effective speech delivery strategy. However, the speech delivery of the speaker is not just about making a louder volume of the speech, but it should cover other features of speech delivery. Recalling the importance of both persuasion idea and speech delivery in public communication context, it is urgent for people to understand the rhetorical and speech delivery strategies in order to develop the quality of communication skill.

Based on the above consideration, this research is conducted to give a comprehensive insight upon the use of rhetoric in the communication process.

## **1.2 Reasons For Choosing the Topic**

This research is conducted based on these following reasons:

First, it relates to the public communication context as a part of communication skills that is important to be analyzed. A public speech as one of the communication methods to convey messages or information, it has been gaining no less importance in the past and in the current situation. Because of its uniqueness than the other kinds of talk and also the strong influence on the audience, many people nowadays take a full advantage of public speech to convince, share and influence or persuade their targeted audience to achieve certain goals. This public speech context is related to the importance of

communication skill in the use of languages and the context in which it's occurred.

Second, it relates to the study of rhetoric. The idea of persuasion or rhetoric has been developed for a long time as proposed by Aristotle with his rhetorical theory. This theory cannot be separated while performing an effective public speaking or public communication context. Under this theory, it believes while performing an effective public speaking, the speaker have to take a concern on the rhetorical proofs to gain the audience' attention and to achieve the specific goals. The three rhetorical proofs are *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. The discussion of this idea of persuasion, especially in public speaking context is important to be analyzed as an insight for people in the various aspects of life.

Third, this study takes a well-known American media executive, talk show host, actress and billionaire philanthropist, that is Oprah Gail Winfrey as her speech used for the subject of the study. Oprah Winfrey is the best known for her talk show "The Oprah Winfrey Show", which aired for 25 seasons, from 1986 to 2011, and In 2011, Winfrey launched her own TV network, the Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN). On the behalf of May 2018 she gave an inspirational commencement speech at the University of Southern California (USC) and the speech was uploaded on YouTube. This speech at the University of Southern California (USC) is not the only one commencement speeches delivered by Oprah Winfrey, but this speech considered to be one of the most inspirational speeches in 2018 that have been trending and viewed by more than a hundred thousand people around the world. The researcher takes her speech as the subject in this

current study as her expertise in public speaking for many years and her ways of delivering and persuading her audience through the inspirational speech.

### **1.3 Research Problems**

Based on the background explained, there are two focusing problems that can be formulated in this research. They are:

- 1) What are the rhetorical proofs used by Oprah Winfrey in her commencement speech?
- 2) How does the speech delivery strategies used by the speaker help to create an effective public speech?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research problems explained, the objectives of the research are as follows:

- 1) To identify the kinds of rhetorical proofs are used by Oprah Winfrey in her commencement speech,
- 2) To describe the speech delivery strategies used by the speaker to help create an effective public speech.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the research is divided into three main parts, which are theoretically, practically, and pedagogically.

### 1) Theoretically

This research may be able to illustrate the new insight regarding the topic of rhetorical analysis in communication for the readers. It also provides the understanding of rhetorical theory and public communication context for the reader of this final project who interest in this related topic.

### 2) Practically

The result of this research can give a portrayal to the students of English Department, as the future teachers, and to the other teachers from other faculty to describe how to conduct analysis of rhetoric and the implementation of an effective public speech with the employment of modes of persuasion in the public speaking context.

### 3) Pedagogically

This research hopes to provide a reference for the readers who interest in public speaking context and rhetoric. Moreover, this research will also provide references to the English Department students in making a research related to the effectiveness of speech delivery and delivering a good public speaking.

## **1.6 Outline of the Report**

To present of the report, the researcher organizes the outline of this final project as follows:

Chapter I is introduction, which covers the background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, research problems, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, and eventually the outline of the report.

Chapter II presents review of the related literature. It discusses the review of the previous study related to the current topic discussed which is about the idea of persuasion and speech delivery strategies, review of the theoretical study, and the framework of the present research.

Chapter III sets out the methods of investigation, which covers research approach, the object of the research, roles of the researcher, unit of analysis, procedures of data collection, procedures of data analysis, and presentation of the results.

Chapter IV presents findings and discussions, it presents the findings of the research supported by descriptions of the analysis in rhetorical proofs and speech delivery strategies found in Oprah Winfrey's commencement speech.

Chapter V consists of conclusions and suggestions of the research, it presents brief conclusions of the findings, pedagogical implications, and suggestions about the reference of further related study regarding the findings of the current research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter presents the review of the previous studies, review of the theoretical studies, and framework of the present study.

#### **2.1 Review of the Previous Studies**

In this chapter, the writer presented the previous study about the analysis of rhetoric or persuasive strategies. The researcher found some studies relating to the topic of current research. This review of the previous studies divided into several categories, which are the idea of persuasion, public communication with specific purposes, and speech delivery strategies.

The first category is about the idea of persuasion. This study focusing on the idea of persuasion or rhetoric is defined as the use of language to influence choices. In the case of a persuasive speech, the meaning of influencing choices is about to persuade the audience' choices and to change their thoughts or views. The discussion in the area of persuasion is not a new heading in the world, but still worth to be analyzed. Several previous studies related to this topic have been conducted by many researchers. Higgins (2012), Mua'ti and Mahamed (2013), Haider (2014), Howington (2015), Keith (2015), Prabayanti (2015), Fengjie (2016), Heracleous (2017), and Chen (2018) conducted research with the use of rhetorical theories proposed by Aristotle, Burke, and Yang in the focusing area of public speeches delivered by Malala Yousaf Zai, Emma Watson, Steve Jobs,

Surya Paloh, and Barack Obama. Besides the employment of the rhetorical theory, their studies had similar objectives to be achieved on analyzing speeches from the related figures, it was to figure out the implicit meaning shared by the speakers on their speeches. However, Higgins (2012) and Keith (2015) broadened their studies to identify the use of ethos or ethical proof that affected to the power of speakers in delivering their speeches. While Prabayanti (2015) in her study, broadened her analysis to identify the political agenda behind Surya Paloh's speech. The results of related studies conducted by Higgins (2012), Haider (2014), Howington (2015) and Prabayanti (2015) revealed that most speakers analyzed in the study employed some rhetorical proofs such as ethos, pathos, logos, alliteration, metaphor, and parallelism. Moreover, the result of the studies declared that behind of some persuasive speeches delivered by the speakers, there were some subtle messages contained in the speech about hope and courage to fight for terrorism, movement campaign of feminism, and political campaign agenda.

Other studies conducted by Dastpak (2015), Andarini (2015), Doha (2015) Rezaei (2016), Edwards (2017), and Ari (2019) took their fields of the study in the area of persuasive strategies in public speeches. A number theories of rhetoric and persuasive strategies used in these studies, there was Burke and Yang theory of rhetorical functions, Fairclough theory about rhetoric and power, and Hart theory about persuasive strategies. Some of these studies focused on analyzing persuasive strategies in political speeches delivered by Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton, and Dr. Rouhani as the president of Iran. When the rest of studies



broadened their objectives to identify the persuasive strategies employed in English competitive debate as conducted by Andarini (2015), and the persuasive strategies related to religious speeches delivered by Zakir Naik as proposed by Ari (2019). The findings of these studies revealed that some speakers analyzed on these research employed a number of rhetorical features in their persuasive speeches, such as metaphor, illocutionary acts, inclusion, simplification, projection, and alliteration.

The second category of the review is about public communication context with specific purposes. Public communication as one of the communication's context, happens in the situation in which a speaker delivered and generate idea or message to a number of people as the audience. Public speech is one of the implementations of practicing public communication to the audience. In addition, this practice of public speeches can be held for specific purposes with the match of the situation and the targeted audience. A number of studies related to this context of public communication had been conducted. Robinson (2013), Slavickova (2013), Lambert (2014), Kazemian (2015), Chissano (2016), Widyawardani (2016), Shabrina (2016), Mai (2016), Mirzaei (2016), Ghazani (2016), Emzir and Noermanzah (2017), Malendra (2017), and Arofah (2018) conducted research related to the heading of public speeches for political purposes analyzed in the speeches of several political and state figures such as Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Prabowo, Ahok, George W. Bush, Robert Mugabe, and Donald Trump. Some of these studies as conducted by Widyawardani (2016), Shabrina (2016), Mai (2016), Ghazani (2016), Museta (2017), Alemi, Tajeddin,

and Kondlaji (2017), and Emzir and Noermanzah (2017) aimed to analyze the employment of rhetorical proofs and persuasive strategies by political figures' speeches. The political speech contexts in these studies included a presidential candidacy announcement speech, inaugural speech, state speech, and a grand campaign speech.

The other studies conducted by Malendra (2017) and Arofah (2018) extended their focus to analyze the theme of speeches about religion blasphemy case of Ahok and ideological of Prabowo's grand campaign at the Gelora Bung Karno stadium. The findings of the study as conducted by Widyawardani (2016), Shabrina (2016), Ghazani (2016), Emzir and Noermanzah (2017), Museta (2017), and Ari (2019) explained several persuasive strategies used by the speakers for their political agendas, such as the use of logos, pathos, ethos, hortatory variety, exposition, and narrative range. These rhetorical strategies found in the political figure speeches used to define their power and build a strong credibility realized in their speeches. The next findings of study conducted by Malendra (2017) and Arofah (2018) revealed several messages behind the grand campaign of Prabowo speech, and hate speech case related to Ahok. The results of Malendra (2017) study found that behind these two subjects of analysis, Prabowo's speech contained of two main intentions: a persuasive message to vote him in the election, and a message not to vote for his political opponents in the election. Another study as proposed by Arofah (2018) declared that the hate speech related to Ahok contained with the rhetorical aspects which neglected to the ethos and

logos aspects, but it mostly relied on the pathos aspect to persuade the audience for the idea of hatred.

The next studies conducted by Tomaz (2014) and Prastiwi (2016) had a similar study in the category of public speeches and rhetoric. The study proposed by Tomaz (2014) took a focus on the importance of practicing public speech in the classroom context between teachers and their students. Prastiwi (2016) conducted her study on the identification of the speech delivered by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at Harvard University in the context of a graduation speech. The result of Tomaz (2014) study revealed that teachers needed to realize and to master the principles of public speech or public speaking in the classroom context and the implementation of pedagogical communication to their students. This pedagogical communication should be implemented by teachers with two main objectives used to educate their students and to internalize several moral values in the classroom context. Meanwhile, the study conducted by Prastiwi (2016) explained the speech of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono employed the six aspects of good speech consisted of the coherence, fresh, repetition, surprising, humor, and purpose. These criteria of a good speech based on Lynn and Altenbernd theory, realized by the use of diction, metaphor and hyperbole in the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's speech.

The third category of the review is about speech delivery strategies. Public speech delivery defined as the process of speaker presenting ideas to the audience. To achieve an effective speech delivery, speakers needed to implement some strategies in delivering their speeches. Several previous studies had been

conducted related to this category. Ekawati (2016), Hapsari (2017) and Setyowati (2018) conducted research aimed to analyze the use of speech delivery strategies in the context of public speech delivered by Susi Pudjiastuti, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Michele Obama, Malala Yousafzai, and Hilary Clinton. The findings of the study explained that speakers of these studies used several speech delivery strategies such as personal pronoun, self-emotional controlled and high pitch voice, and degree of modifiers. Ekawati (2016) study revealed that the use of personal pronoun intended to emphasize the speaker's action and to seek his domination. Hapsari (2017) study described the use of self-emotional controlled and high pitch voice by Susi Pudjiastuti to define her masculine style of speech delivery strategies while Setyowati (2018) explained the employment of the degree of modifiers in Michele Obama, Malala Yousafzai, and Hilary Clinton speeches intended to give a powerful speech. Most of the previous studies related to speech delivery strategies portrayed how the speaker using his or her speech delivery style to achieve an effective persuasive speech.

Based on the review of a number of previous studies divided into three categories, which are the idea of persuasion or rhetoric, public communication for specific purposes, and speech delivery strategies, I found some similarities and differences between my research and the previous ones. Most of the previous studies employed various theories of rhetoric and persuasive strategies from many figures, some of them used Aristotle's theory of rhetorical proofs which is similar to my research. The study conducted by Keith (2015) and Chen (2018) for examples, only takes one or two rhetorical proofs to be applied as the main focus

in the study, however, my research comprehensively analyzed the three rhetorical appeals proposed by Aristotle. Besides, the study proposed by Mai (2016) and Heracleous (2017) employed the rhetorical theory with their focus on identifying the aspect of leaders' rhetorical competence and the persuasive political power found in the speakers' speech. Comparing these to my current research, the implementation of the rhetorical analysis in my research definitely aimed to figure out the use of three rhetorical proofs that affected to the making of persuasive speech delivered by Oprah Winfrey. Further, to reach out my second objective of the study of how to make an effective speech delivery, I use the speech delivery canons of rhetoric theory proposed by Cicero and the development theory of an effective speech delivery strategy by Nikitina. Lastly, I conducted my research on the topic of public speaking for special occasions, specifically a commencement speech, while most of the previous studies took their focused on the political purpose and the rest of other studies in the various purposes.

## **2.2 Review of the Theoretical Studies**

Review of theoretical study brings the theoretical backgrounds which become the basic of every progressions in this research. Several theories are explained based on the relevance to the subject and the object of the research.

### **2.2.1 Idea of Persuasion**

Most of the people in their daily life do persuasive strategies as an important aspect of communication. The term of persuasion becomes an important aspect because people can influence other people without violence or coercion, but with

the ways of persuasion. To understand the idea of persuasion usually people might try to see about what is the definition of persuasion. These following explanations are presented to give a portrayal of the idea.

Persuasion is the process of creating, reinforcing, or changing people's beliefs or actions. The ability to speak (and write) persuasively will benefit you in every part of your life, from personal relations to community activities to career aspirations. When economists added up the number of people, lawyers, sales representatives, public relations specialists, counselors, administrators, and others, whose jobs depend largely on persuading people to adopt their point of view, they concluded that persuasion accounts for 26 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. Understanding the principles of persuasion is also vital to being an informed citizen and consumer (Lucas, 2009: 324).

As the consequence, mastering the idea of persuasion theoretically and practically is a necessity that cannot be denied by people in any longer. Looking at wider point of view with the context of communication, persuasion can be seen as a complex process aimed at changing people's attitude or behavior toward some ideas, events, objects, or other people's thoughts, by using written or spoken words to convey information, feelings, and reasoning. From the understanding about the idea of persuasion, it can be admitted that persuasion becomes the art of influence and convince others. However, to implement the idea of persuasion, people must relate the term of persuasion with one of the essential aspects of humans life which is communication to achieve their persuasive goals.

### **2.2.2 Human Communication and Contexts**

The discussion of communication and the intention of the people in doing communicative activity is an interesting topic to be explored. However, to

understand what is the characteristic of human communication, we have to declare the essential definition of communication. To understand this term, the following paragraph will explain more about the communication itself.

Communication is dynamic, meaning that both senders and receivers continuously formulate, send, and interpret numerous messages during an interaction. A message is simply any signal sent by one person (sender) and interpreted by another (receiver). The communication is successful when the sender and receiver achieve mutual understanding regarding the topic discussed (Sellnow, 2005).

Communication is definitely compounded of two types of messages, which are verbal and nonverbal messages. Further, the process of communication should occur in the specific situation. The situation which affected to the process of communication is called context. Considering the context of communication, people will do an effective communication process. Based on the Pearson (2011), context of communication is categorized into several types, which are interpersonal communication, public communication, and mass communication. In the consideration of these communication contexts, the researcher focuses on the context of public communication.

### **2.2.3 Variety of Public Speaking**

Public speaking is one form of the public communication context. The idea of public speaking itself can be defined as a sustained formal presentation made by the speaker to an audience (Sellnow, 2005). For instance, when you give oral presentations in the classroom, so does a master of ceremonies, the actors who

accept awards, and corporate managers when they run large meetings, all of them are engaged in public speaking.

Throughout the life, many kinds of special occasions arise where you could be asked to speak. The speech on these special occasions looks a bit different from other types of public speaking such as the standard of informative, and persuasive speeches, as well as from entertainment speech. They're different because each is intended for a different type of occasion. Yet, they are similar because in each case the occasion is the special, these are all special occasion speeches. Sellnow (2005) argues there are several types of special occasion speeches consist of speeches of introduction, speeches of welcome, speeches of nomination, speeches of presentation, speeches of acceptance, and speeches of tribute. Meanwhile, one of the special speeches of tribute is a commencement address speech. A commencement address is a speech of tribute praising graduating students and congratulating them on their academic achievements. Commencement addresses are generally delivered by the class valedictorian or another student, or by a guest speaker.

#### **2.2.4 The Rhetoric**

Aristotle was a student of Plato in the golden age of Greek civilization, four centuries behind the birth of Christ. The theory of rhetoric proposed by Aristotle apparently consists of his reworked lecture notes for his course at the academy. Aristotle raised the rhetorical theory to a science by systematically exploring the effects of the speaker, the speech, and the audience. Aristotle saw the function of



rhetoric as the discovery in each case of “the available means of persuasion.” According to Aristotle (in Griffin, 2012), the available means of persuasion can be classified as *artistic* or *inartistic*. *Inartistic* or named external proofs are those that speaker doesn’t create while *artistic* or internal proofs are those that the speaker creates. Further, there are three kinds of artistic proofs or commonly named rhetorical proofs: logical (*logos*), ethical (*ethos*), and emotional (*pathos*).

### **2.2.5 Rhetorical Proofs**

The theory of rhetoric comes from Aristotle’s available means of persuasion and the aspect of artistic proofs is the methods or strategies used to persuade others. According to Aristotle (in Griffin, 2012), artistic proofs are the things that are created by the orator or speaker. There are three kinds of rhetorical or artistic proofs proposed by Aristotle, which are ethical proof (*ethos*), logical proof (*logos*), and emotional proof (*pathos*). These three kinds of rhetorical proofs are used by the researcher to be the focus of the rhetorical analysis in the current study.

#### **2.2.5.1 Ethical Proof (*Ethos*)**

Aristotle apparently held that of the three artistic proofs, *ethos* was potentially the most persuasive (Herrick, 2005). Herrick (2005) said that when people are convinced that a speaker is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and has their best interests at heart, they will be very likely to accept as true what that speaker has to say. In the rhetoric, Aristotle identified three qualities that can establish a high

source of credibility; perceived intelligence, virtuous character, and goodwill (Griffin, 2012).

#### **2.2.5.1.1 Perceived Intelligence**

Audience judges intelligence by the overlap between their beliefs and the speaker's ideas (Griffin, 2012). The speaker conveys his or her intelligence by explaining his or her competence. To define the competence, the speaker need to share his or her experiences that prove the speaker's knowledge in some fields. Further, giving evidence from respected sources who are experts in the speech helps the speaker to be seen more convincing to the audience.

#### **2.2.5.1.2 Virtuous Character**

A character as Griffin (2012) stated that it has to do with the speaker's image as a good and honest person. Good character is the ability of the speaker to establish the trustworthiness of the audience to what the speaker's says (Sellnow, 2005). To build the trustworthiness, the speaker can begin with telling his or her experiences and values.

#### **2.2.5.1.3 Goodwill**

Goodwill is a positive judgment of the speaker's intention toward the audience. Aristotle thought it was possible for an orator to possess extraordinary intelligence and sterling character yet still not have the listener's best interest heart (Griffin, 2012). According to Sellnow (2005), goodwill is a perception the audience forms of a speaker who they believe understands them, empathizes with them, and is responsive to them.

### **2.2.5.2 Logical Proof (*Logos*)**

In the rhetoric, Aristotle (in Griffin, 2012) used *logos* refer to the making of reasoning in an argument or speech using logic. It is also stated that *logos* was the study of interference that making or reasoning which is related to logic” (Herrick, 2005). According to Aristotle (in Griffin, 2012), logical proof comes from the line of argument in the speech. It means reasoning or proof that comes from a human logic. It is also used by a speaker to prove his or her argument in order to persuade the audience. Aristotle focused on two forms of *logos* which are enthymeme and example.

#### **2.2.5.2.1 Enthymeme**

Entymeme is an incomplete version of a formal deductive syllogism. A Syllogism is an argumentative statement that contains a conclusion and premises. The basic difference is that the syllogism leads to a necessary conclusion from true premises, but enthymeme leads to a tentative conclusion from probable premises (Aristotle, 1954). The audience will be satisfied with the probable conclusion because it’s considered to be the contingent nature of the rhetorical thing deals with rhetoric.

#### **2.2.5.2.2 Example**

Aristotle (1954) stated that example is the foundation of reasoning. Example is one of the effective ways to define an idea. This feature will help the audience visualize the idea of the speaker that is trying to convey to the audience.

### **2.2.5.3 Emotional Proof (*Pathos*)**

Emotional proof, which comes from the feelings and the speech draws out of those who hear it (Griffin, 2012). The term *pathos* is commonly used to refer to effective or emotional appeals that give the persuasive message and power to move the audience to action, but Aristotle's interest in emotion has to do specifically with the emotion's ability to affect the judgment of the audience (Herrick, 2005). To this end, he cataloged a series of opposite feelings, then explained the conditions under which each mood is experienced, and finally described how the speaker can get the audience to feel that way (Griffin, 2012).

#### **2.2.5.3.1 Anger versus Mildness**

Growing mild is the opposite of growing angry, and mildness is the opposite of anger (Aristotle, 1954). According to Griffin (2012), people will feel angry when they are thwarted in their attempt to fulfill a need. To calm the audience down after showing anger, a speaker need to attempt his or her sorry, deserves praise, show his or her great power.

#### **2.2.5.3.2 Friendship versus Hatred**

Friendship as described by Aristotle (1954) is a feeling towards anyone as wishing for what someone believes to be good things, not for oneself sake, but for others. Aristotle (1954) added that enmity and hatred might be produced by the feeling of being angry or calumniated. Griffin (2012) said that a speaker need to describe her or his goals, experiences, attitudes, and desires.

### **2.2.5.3.3 Fear versus Confidence**

Fear is described as the opposite of confidence. According to Griffin (2012), fear comes from a portrayal of mental image of potential disaster. On the other hand, confidence is felt when somebody believes that he or she has ever been succeeded and never suffered reverses (Aristotle, 1954). It can be concluded confidence can be built or evoked through several experiences of being succeeded.

### **2.2.5.3.4 Admiration versus Envy**

Griffin (2012) argues that people admire moral virtue, power, wealth, and beauty. Admiration feeling will increase by demonstrating about someone's story who has acquired life's goods through a hard work rather than mere luck. However, envy comes from the opposite of establishing the audience's admiration values.

## **2.2.6 The Fifth Canon of Rhetoric: Speech Delivery**

Looking at the history of the development theory about Aristotle's rhetoric, the society in ancient Greece knowing that the idea of speaking in public was a part of their democratic responsibility. Further, public speaking technique had been developed in Greece. Marcus Tullius Cicero is one of the most popular orators who gained his fame in Rome's greatest orator era. Cicero developed five canons of rhetoric that widely understood up to this day. Cicero (in Griffin, 2012) believed that the process of successful public speech delivering consists of five main steps, which are the discovery of convincing arguments (invention), organization of material (arrangement), selection of compelling an appropriate language (style), mastery and rehearsal of content (memory), and making of

effective use of voice and language (delivery). However, the researcher focuses this research on the speech delivery canon instead of the other four canons of rhetoric. The reason behind this is about the area of rhetorical strategies and analysis. According to McCroskey (1997), the speech delivery canon affects to the ethical proof or ethos. It's because the successful use of ethos is linked to the quality of speakers speech delivery. Ethos can help the speaker to build the credibility and trustworthiness of the speaker by emphasizing on the speaker's competence, virtuous character, and goodwill.

### **2.2.7 Speech Delivery Strategies**

The discussion of public speaking and the importance of speech delivery canon proposed by Cicero, leads the researcher to broaden this idea with the development theory of speech delivery strategies proposed by Nikitina (2011).

Based on the speech delivery theory proposed by an expertise of public speaker which is Nikitina (2011), speech delivery is the process of making an effective use of voice and body language. There are five components of a successful public speech, which are storytelling, body language, tone of voice, pauses, and visual aids (Nikitina, 2011).

#### **2.2.7.1 Storytelling**

Storytelling feature can be defined as a structural story account of imagined or real events that broadly used in public speaking. This feature used as a medium for sharing, interpreting, and offering the content of the story to the audience. A public speaker use storytelling for a variety of purposes. The purposes of using

storytelling are intended to build a connection with the audience, to highlight important points of the memorable speech, emphasize the message, encourage thinking and shape people's thought, raises the spirit, and to motivate people.

### **2.2.7.2 Body Language**

Body language is considered one the non-verbal communication manifested through body movement and gestures. Based on the psychological studies, body language accounts for 55% of the message received by the audience. In the other words, body language helps the speaker to deliver the content of the speech to the audience. The first feature of body language is posture. The posture of the speaker deals with the comforts and the interest of their audience. This feature can be used to interpret the feeling of relaxing, nervousness, tension, and degree of conviction. The second component of body language is body movement. This component is a vital part that allowing the speaker to quickly regain the attention of their audience. Nikitina (2011) argued that the usage of hand movements, eye contact can be one of the persuasive ways to gain the attention. A genuine smile can win the audience's admiration.

### **2.2.7.3 Tone of Voice**

The tone of voice often used to reveal the emotional state, speaker's confidence, and attitude (Nikitina, 2011). In fact, tone of voice accounts for about 33% of the transmitted message while the actual words the speaker say are responsible for

about 7% of the speech. It can be inferred that people are more influenced by the sound and quality of voice than about its content.

#### **2.2.7.3.1 Pitch**

Low-pitch speaking voices, for both men and women are preferable to the listeners as they are associated with authority, credibility, strength, and self-confidence. High-pitched voices, on the opposite, are less pleasant to the ears of the audience as they are perceived as less persuasive, weaker, less truthful and more nervous (Nikitina, 2011).

#### **2.2.7.3.2 Volume**

Volume refers to the power of loudness of your voice. Clearly, the volume of the voice should not be too high so that it looks as if the speaker is shouting or too low, when the audience have difficulty listening to the speaker. The variety of voices during presentation can be very effective in stressing an important or dramatic point, express strong emotions or to build suspense and make people lean forward to hear what is being said (Nikitina, 2011).

#### **2.2.7.4 Pause**

According to speech delivery strategies proposed by Nikitina (2011), public speaking is not just about talking in public. Moreover, It's about listening to the audience and letting the silence talk for us. The use of pauses is intended to give the audience time to absorb the shared information and to maintain the speed of speaking without distracting the audience' attention. A several pauses commonly



used during a performance of public speaking can be divided into three types, which are a short pause, spontaneity pause, and long pause.

#### **2.2.7.4.1 Short Pause**

Short pause is one type of pause occurred in half-a-second up to two seconds of the time. It's mainly used for separating thoughts, emphasizing the last word spoke or building anticipation for what's coming. Short pause also gives the audience time to absorb and process the message or information given by the speaker.

#### **2.2.7.4.2 Spontaneity Pause**

A spontaneity pause is used when the speaker is searching for the right word which actually the speaker already knows. It is also used by the speaker to pretend to reflect on something that the speech will look more natural and sincere. According to Nikitina (2011), spontaneity pauses are not necessarily unplanned, but they make the speech look more natural, polished and less rehearsed.

#### **2.2.7.4.3 Long Pause**

Long pauses can last anywhere from three seconds up to a couple of minutes more, and they are very powerful. They are intended to command the audience's attention by definitely creating a tension in the hall. Long pause should be used only by experienced public speakers who feel comfortable talking in front of large groups of people (Nikitina, 2011).

#### **2.2.7.5 Visual Aids**

Performing a public speaking event need to be accompanied by slideshows, graphs, and pictures. This kind of visual aids is needed when the speaker's goal is to help the audience to understand and remember some key point of the speech. There's no doubt that the speaker can benefit enormously for including some visual elements and data in the presentation. On the other hand, Nikitina (2011) argued, if the speaker's intention is to motivate, empower or persuade the audience to take some action, the speaker might not need to use visual aids, as the audience already knows about what they should be doing.

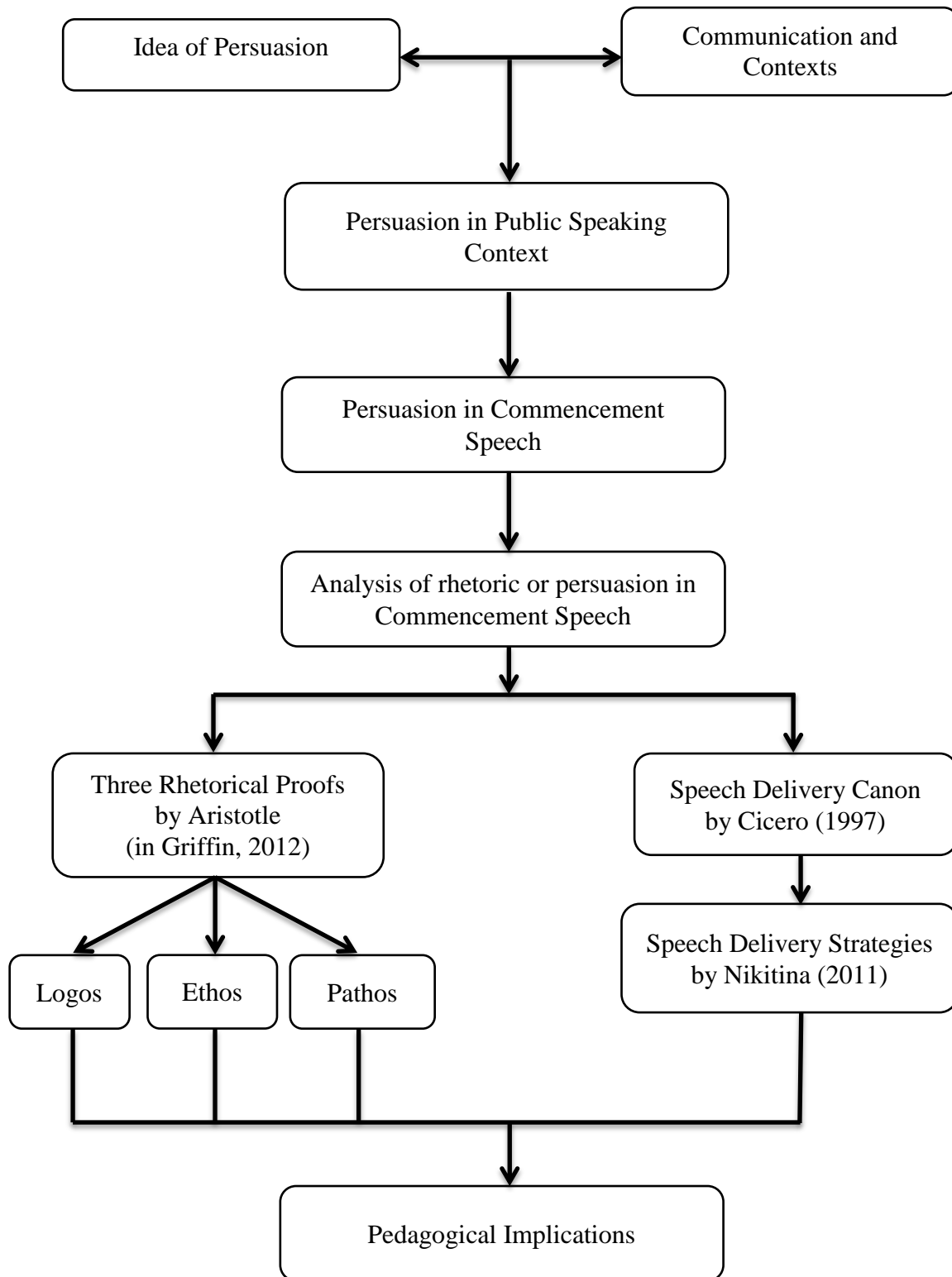
### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework provides sequences of thoughts from the researcher throughout the research. I use this theoretical framework as the tool of identifying research background and problems, answering the keywords through related literature, deciding the research method, and answering the research problems.

In relation to this research, I conducted an investigation about the use of modes of persuasion or rhetorical proofs and speech delivery strategies in Oprah Winfrey's commencement speech at the University of Southern California in 2018. This study is closely related to the persuasive strategies in the related context of communication. Therefore, the three rhetorical proofs which are *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* and speech delivery analysis become the main concerned of this study.

In the process of data collection and data analysis, I used descriptive qualitative approach and content analysis as its methods. I downloaded the video of Oprah Winfrey' speech from the internet. Then, I searched and cross-checked the transcription of the speech that I've got. I used the rhetorical analysis based on the rhetorical theory of Aristotle (1954), about the rhetorical proofs which are *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. I also used Cicero's theory of the speech delivery canon of rhetoric and the development theory of speech delivery by Nikitina (2011) to comprehend the analysis of speech delivery features used by the speaker.

By doing this research, I can get two important things to answer my research problems. First, I can identify the use of rhetorical proofs in Oprah Winfrey's commencement speech. Second, I can analyze the speech delivery strategy used by the speaker that affected to create an effective speech. These two points can be portrayed in the findings and discussion of the research. The findings and discussions can be employed further as the pedagogical resources for the readers.



**Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions provided regarding the research. The conclusion is the brief explanation to the answer of the research problem of the study. On the other hand, the suggestion proposed as important suggestions related to the issue that can be developed in the future about the topic in this current research.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

This research focuses on analyzing the use of three rhetorical proofs and speech delivery features or strategies in the commencement speech given by Oprah Winfrey at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg in 2018. Based on the analysis, these are several conclusions the research.

First, Oprah Winfrey used all types of rhetorical proofs in her commencement speech at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg. These rhetorical proofs are logical proof (*logos*), ethical proof (*ethos*), and emotional proof (*pathos*). *Ethos* is the most frequent rhetorical proof found in her commencement speech with the percentage 63.5% of the speech. It is followed by the use of *pathos* with the percentage 34% and the use of *logos* with the number in percentage 2.5% of the speech.

Second, the researcher found that Oprah Winfrey managed to deliver her commencement speech effectively by doing several strategies of speech delivery.

These strategies consist of storytelling, body language, tone of voice, pauses, and visual aids. The first attempt to make the speech effective is that Oprah Winfrey used storytelling, it is used by her for 24% found out in 48 sentences out of 200 sentences analyzed in the research. The second, she used proper body language which is posture and body movement during her speech. She managed to keep the upright posture and the movement of her hand, the eye contact and body placement during her speech. The use of body language properly by the speaker helps her to emphasize the credibility and authority that she tried to establish. The third, she managed to use the tone of voice and the three types of pauses to build her credibility, authority, emotional state, and to obtain the full attention of her audience. However, she does not use any visual aids during her speech. The reason why she doesn't need this visual aid because the speech delivered is a commencement speech which consisted of messages with the purpose of motivating and persuading the audience. In the conclusion, all of the speech delivery strategies used the speaker helps to deliver her speech effectively, however, she doesn't use any visual aids in her speech because the context of her commencement speech in the intention to motivate and persuade the audience does not need the visual aids.

## **5.2 Suggestions**

According to the significance of the study presented in chapter I, this final project is suggested being useful to public speakers, writers, language teachers, and

discourse analyst. The suggestions of the research are presented in the following explanations.

First, the suggestion is given for the students of English Education program who are expected to be a teacher in the future. As a language teacher, it is important to develop public speaking skills that can be used in the classroom context. The idea of persuasion also can be implemented in the pedagogical context in the form of written and spoken. The knowledge of the teacher in performing a persuasive speech and understanding of rhetorical strategies can be used as a material to be taught to his or her students in the speaking classes.

Second, the suggestion is given for public speakers and writers. The idea of rhetoric and communication cannot be separated, whether in spoken or written, it can be useful as an insight to develop their skills in public speaking and writing. The theory of speech delivery and modes of persuasion or rhetorical proofs can be translated as the knowledge and to be implemented in the context of performing communication in written and spoken form.

Third, the suggestion is given for discourse analyst. Discourse analysis is an important study to be conducted both for the spoken and written text. This research hopes to provide a reference for the readers who are interested in public speaking and discourse. Moreover, this research will also provide broaden point of view on how rhetorical study can be analyzed not only in the common context, such as political purpose, but it can be implemented in the various practical contexts such as advertising, law, economics, and also pedagogical context.

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