ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

THE PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE EMPLOYED BY STUDENTS RELATIVE TO THEIR ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

Kristine Dyan L. Zabala, Dr. Teresita Q. Adriano
University of the Immaculate Conception, Davao City, Philippines

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra20140
DOI No: 10.36713/epra20140

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the persuasive language used by students in academic misconduct and to probe how these persuasive languages assess the fairness and integrity of the incident review. This study aimed at unveiling the persuasive language and the persuasive strategies employed by students in the observed five cases of academic misconduct and emerging themes focused on the conviction of the school disciplinary authorities from the incident review. Through purposive sampling, five cases of academic misconduct on cheating, loitering, bullying, cutting classes and stealing served as the corpora of the study. While seven school disciplinary authorities served as participants in this research. Consequently, appeal to pathos was the predominant persuasive language employed by students in their academic misconduct. Moreover, the results showed five emerging themes as regards to the students' persuasive language used in their academic misconduct, minimization of misconduct, externalizing responsibility, denial and shifting blame, justification through promises and victimization rhetoric. Additionally, the response of school disciplinary authorities on persuasive language employed by students during incident review resulted to five essential themes, namely, evaluation of persuasive language, institutional and policy guidelines, fairness vs. empathy in decision making, bias and equity in the disciplinary process and collaboration with stakeholders in evaluating justifications. Lastly, identified authorities affective responses along with the disciplinary actions as to the ways on which students' persuasive language shape the result of the incident review. Results revealed namely emphasizing integrity and accountability, disappointment, neutrality, doubt, and encourage self-reflection and change. The key findings of this qualitative study opened the door in understanding these strategies and inform the development of targeted interventions to promote academic integrity and ethical decision-making in educational settings.

KEYWORDS: *Education, Persuasive language, persuasive strategies, academic misconduct, pathos, logos, ethos, rhetorical analysis, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Academic misconduct is defined as any action or attempted action that breaches academic integrity and may result in an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the academic community or wider society (Tauginienė, 2017). Problems (connect some words) were embedded through indirect appeal to student offenders, such as the use of emotive and persuasive language that manipulated school disciplinary authorities' decision-making (Aporbo, 2022). In school premises where different cases of academic misconduct happen (Farasonalia, 2020), disciplinary authorities in decision-making procedures could be compromised (Samokishyn & Tsonos, 2020) due to the persuasive language used by students in defending their misconduct.

In Australia, the study of Birks et al. (2020) inspected the perception of academic misbehavior in universities, and the results demonstrate that academic misconduct is a systemic issue with a wide range of manifestations that calls for management strategies. The handling of many forms of academic misconduct that continue to exist in the global higher education sector requires more consistency between policy and practices, together with a focus on preventative education for staff and students.

In the Philippines, the study of Calonge and Talili (2016) analyzed the State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered by the three presidents of the Philippines, and as per the study's findings, the presidents persuaded and influenced their audiences by employing rhetorical devices and strategies.
In the local setting, Vallejo's (2019) findings highlighted that many of these students, often labeled as troublemakers, were also victims of their environments. The study further revealed that principals recognized the importance of creating supportive school environments to mitigate the factors leading to academic misconduct.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to comprehensively explore the persuasive language used by students in academic misconduct and to probe how these persuasive languages assess the fairness and integrity of the incident review and disciplinary process within educational institutions.

Research Questions

1. What are the predominant persuasive language employed by students in their academic misconduct?
2. How do students' persuasive language justify their academic misconduct?
3. How do disciplinary authorities deal with the persuasive language employed by students during incident review?
4. How do students' persuasive language shape the result of the incident review?

Theoretical Lens

The foundation of this study was the use of Aristotle's Three Modes of Persuasion. The examination was specifically focused on the principles of the three main rhetorical appeals—ethos, logos, and pathos—as well as the corresponding rhetorical techniques that Aristotle himself developed.

This research used the Rhetoric Theory of (Aristotle, 1954) as part of the analysis in the meta functions of the language. Three things can persuade someone: the speaker's personality (ethos), the hearer's emotional state (pathos), or the argument itself (logos). Aristotle says that these three modalities of persuasion are required for any orator to influence and persuade his audience.

Rooted from Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle, this study also anchored Peters et al. (2022) Rhetorical Appeal. The framework emphasizes the systematic identification of rhetorical patterns, such as appeals to emotion, logic, or ethical appeal, which are critical to understanding how students attempt to justify or rationalize their actions.

Chapter 2
METHODOLOGY

This chapter comprises the research design, research materials, data collection, data analysis, the role of the researcher, the trustworthiness of the study, and ethical considerations. These research parts expounded a detailed description of how the research process was carried out.

Research Design

This research work employed a qualitative research design, specifically rhetorical analysis. As Creswell (2014) highlighted, qualitative research is an exploratory process grounded in distinct methodological traditions that delve into social or human issues. Utilizing a qualitative methodological approach in this study facilitated an in-depth exploration and examination of how the rhetoric of persuasive language is used by students to defend their academic misconduct in school.

Research Participants/Materials

In the context of this study, the research material was the field notes of the researcher coming from the observation from the five cases of misconduct, which only concerns the rhetorical skills of students and persuasive strategies used and not the case itself during the disciplinary process. As supported by the study by Atkinson and Heritage (1984), their collection includes studies on rhetorical techniques in public speaking and social interactions, often using participant observation without electronic recordings.

There were seven interview participants for focused group discussion guided by (Creswell and Poth, 2018) from school disciplinary authorities (Guidance Counselor, Prefect of Discipline, Principal, and four advisers).

Data Collection

In the completion of the study, a series of steps were undertaken. I obtained permission from the University of Immaculate Conception through the Dean of the Graduate School and the Review Ethics Committee (REC). Subsequently, a letter of permission was transmitted to the Schools Division Superintendent in Davao Occidental, the school principal, and specific faculty members and selected students, soliciting approval for the study's conduction.

Ethical considerations were meticulously observed in the second step. To ensure the confidentiality of documents for research purposes only and the voluntary participation of individuals, the researcher elucidated the fundamental purpose of the study to the principal and faculty members,.

From the recruitment of participants, the guidance counselor was the one who chose students who have been involved in academic misconduct cases within the academic year 2024-2025. The researcher worked with the guidance counselor to identify and reach out to potential participants.

Data Analysis

The analysis entailed a meticulous transcription of interviews. The study utilized the Cockatoo website for automatic transcription of the audio, subsequently cross-referencing it with the recorded interviews to ensure accuracy. Following transcription, thematic analysis was used as an approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), consisting of six phases: Phase 1 (Familiarizing with the data), Phase 2 (Generating initial codes), Phase 3 (Searching for themes), Phase 4 (Reviewing potential themes), Phase 5 (Defining and naming themes), and Phase 6 (Producing the report). During the familiarization phase, listening to the audio while reading the transcription to acquaint myself with the content. There were generated codes and open coding to identify recurring patterns, terminologies, and phraseologies relating to persuasive languages, focusing on academic misconduct. Then, axial coding will be applied to categorize these codes as core ideas based on the order of my interview guide questionnaire.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Chapter 3
RESULTS

This chapter dealt with the presentation of results of the predominant persuasive languages employed by students in their academic misconduct through anecdotal notes during the observation and the themes being probed on how these persuasive languages assess the fairness and integrity of the incident review and disciplinary process within educational institutions through focused group discussion from the school disciplinary authorities.

Predominant Persuasive Languages Employed by Students on their Academic Misconduct

This is the presentation on the predominant persuasive languages employed by students in their academic misconduct highlighted that pathos was the predominant persuasive language used by students in all cases. While Pathos was the most frequently used approach, Logos emerged as the second predominant persuasive language used. Under Logos, students employed several strategies to appeal to reason and logic when addressing academic misconduct issues throughout their arguments. Ethos was the least frequently used persuasive language among students as to the case of academic misconduct revealed. When students did employ Ethos, they primarily relied on aligning their arguments with principles or beliefs that were likely to resonate with the school disciplinary authorities, thereby attempting to build trust and legitimacy for their defenses against accusations of academic misconduct.

Table 2.
Predominant Persuasive Languages Employed by Students in their Academic Misconduct

Persuasive Language	Strategy	Frequency	Case	Sample Statements
Pathos	Evoke emotional response	26	Cheating (1)	OB-S1: Ikaw man gani nag sige katawa katawa ganina.
	Emotion-laden vocabulary			OB-S1: Siyempre ma'am, masakitan ko kay wala baya jud ko naghimo ana ma'am.
	Expressive descriptions			OB-S1: Sige man gani mo sitsit tapos sipaon ninyo akong bangko kay mangayo answer.
Logos	Deductive Reasoning	21		OB-S1: Akoa na maam pero wala ko na gipagawas ma'am.
	Elaboration			OB-S2: Nakita nako Ma'am naa na sa floor unya basin mapasanginlan ko, akoa gibutang sa ilalom sa akong armchair.
	Cause-effect thinking			OB-S1: Gikalat man niya na ako ang nagpagawas ana maam. Mao daw hinungdan na daghan na naka cheat sa English exam.
Ethos	Tapping into audience's values or Ideologies	8		S4: Isulti na bay. Para dili na kaanhi atong mama ug papa. Makasab-an jud ta ani ug taman bay.
Pathos	Expressive descriptions	29	Loitering (2)	OB-S3: Niuban ra unta ko sa ilaha kadali ma'am pero wala ko plano mag dugay unta didto.
	Evoking emotional response			S2: Maulaw na sad me mobalik ma'am kay Nakita namo naa na si Maam Joanna, basin masuko na siya.
	Using emotive words to manipulate feelings.			S1: Wala koy labot ana ma'am. Sila ra jud nah duha maam.
Logos	Elaboration	12		S2: Init bitaw kaayo sa room ma'am, tapos nalingaw me ug istorya-istorya about sa among dula gabii ma'am.
	Deductive reasoning			S1: Dili gyud unta ko mouban sa ilaha ma'am. Gibira man gyud ko nila.
	Using justifications			S2: Usahay ma'am, ma bored mi sa room. S3: Usahay man lisod bitaw ang klase.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

	Using factual language			S3: Wala man gud niingun si Denmark ana.
Ethos	Tapping into audience's values or Ideologies	2		S1: Ma'am, (about to cry). Masuko gyud to akong mama kay dili ra ba unta ko naga kuyog ani nila ma'am. Karun lang gyud na gidala ko nila.
Pathos	Emotion-laden Vocabulary	44	Bullying (3)	OB-S1: Yes Sir, (About to cry). Dugay najud nakog inantos halos one-month na po Ma'am.
	Evoking emotional response			OB-S1: Nahadlok ko mo tug-an kay ginabantaan ko nila po kung mutug-an daw ko.
	Vivid imagery			OB-S3: Naa me gamay nadungog sa tingog and Nakita namo sa nawong ni Ryle na nalipay siya.
Logos	Expressive descriptions	16		OB-S1: Silang duha Sir gina pugos ko nilag hatag ug kwarta sa ilaha tapos naa silay mga ginapabuhat sa ako nga dili nako gusto.
	Deductive reasoning			OB-S1: Joke ra sa ilaha tanan. Sa ilang joke, pati akong allowance ginakuha nila hantod sa wala man nay ibilin bisan coins man lang sa akoa, Ma'am.
	Inductive reasoning			OB-S1: Una, gina sunod-sunod ko nila pa ato ma'am, human ilaha nako tarog-tarogon, hantod sa pugson nako nila pangayo ug kwarta. Nahadlok ko mo tug-an kay ginabantaan ko nila po kung mutug-an daw ko.
Ethos	Tap into the audience's values or ideologies	3		OB-S3: Dili jud namo na mabuhat Sir nag tinarong man gani kog eskwela Sir kay mao jud na ang wish ni Mama Sir before siya gikuha sa ginoo na dapat gyod daw nga mag tinarong ko sa akong pageskwela.
Pathos	Emotion-laden vocabulary	27	Cutting Classes (4)	OB-S1: Nagtug-an naman mi Sir namalit rami sa gawas Sir.
	Evoking emotional response			OB-S2: Kinakasing-kasing jud ni Ma'am sorry jud kaayo Sir ug M'am.
Logos	Inductive reasoning	9		OB-S1: Gigutom bitaw mi Ma'am mao tung nag sabot mi na mugawas.
	Elaboration			OB-S2: Ang baynte (20) nimo Ma'am daghan nakag mapalit sa gawas. Sa canteen isa ra imong mapalit na pagkaon sama anang kwek-kwek unya mao ra . Dili jud masulbad imong kagutom.
	Deductive reasoning			OB-S1: Yes Ma'am, aside sa gigutom na jud mig pag ayo Ma'am mas barato pud jud ang baligya sa gawas kaysa sa canteen.
	Using justification			OB-S1: Duha ra bitaw Ma'am.
	Exemplification			OB-S2: Promise jud Sir wala mi nangatik. Bisan pag pangutan-on ninyo ang tindera sa gawas Sir. Namalit ra gyod mi didto.
Ethos	Tap into the audience's values or ideologies	2		OB-S1: Sus ka graduate man gud gihapon ta wala lang unta ka ni tug-an"
Pathos	Vivid imagery	23	Stealing (5)	OB-S3: Wala lagi Ma'am, nakita nako na siya nga nag tindog-tindog duol sa bangko sa class treasurer.
	Emotion-laden vocabulary			OB-S3: Sus! nakita tika ga tindog-tindog ka no.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

	Evoking emotional response			OB-S2: Nagsakit akong Mama! (Crying continue) Maong nabuhat nako to nagkinahanglan mig kwarta para sa maintenance niya.
Logos	Deductive reasoning	15		OB-S1: Kampante ra bitaw ko Ma'am nga nasulod na nako sa akong bag. Abi nakog walay manghilabot.
	Expressive descriptions			OB-S1: Mao to Ma'am pagkakita nako nga abre ang zipper dali-dali dayon nakog pangita ang pitaka nga akong gisudlan Ma'am. Mura kog nahugnuan ug langit nga wala na diay didto.
	Using justification			OB-S2: Kadyot raman gud ko ato ni tindog kay gipunit nako ang lapis nga naghulog.
Ethos	Tap into the audience's values or ideologies	2		OB-S3: Ma'am naging observant nako Ma'am. Learned my lesson in the hard way. Kay sa tinuod lang Ma'am, ika duha napud ko nawalaan una kwarta na 50 pesos sunod kay katong 200 nga ibayad unta nako sa PTA.

Students' Persuasive Language in Justifying their Academic Misconduct

The data on how students' persuasive language justify their academic misconduct were summarized into major themes and core ideas in Table 3. This is an answer to question number two. Moreover, the results revealed four essential themes: mitigating strategies, externalizing responsibility, denial and shifting blame, and defense mechanism.

Table 3

Students' Persuasive Language in Justifying their Academic Misconduct

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Mitigating Strategies	Downplay the seriousness of their actions by minimizing the extent of the cheating Actions as "small" to reduce perceived severity
Externalizing Responsibility	Blame onto external factors, such as family problems or external pressures Actions were caused by circumstances beyond their control External pressures (e.g., academic load, family struggles) forced them into misconduct
Denial and Shifting Blame	Offering alternate versions of events or deflecting blame Blame others for their misconduct to avoid consequences Denying clear evidence or minimizing the situation
Defense Mechanism	Attempt to prove that the misconduct did not happen Position themselves as victims of unfair rules or rigid teachers Defend their actions by repeating reasons or bringing in others to support their claims. Request tests or opportunities to prove their honesty.

Response of School Disciplinary Authorities on Persuasive Language Employed by Students during Incident Review

The data on how disciplinary authorities dealt with the persuasive language employed by students during incident review are summarized into major themes and core ideas in Table 4. This is an answer to question number three. Moreover, the results revealed five essential themes: language evaluation, adherence to policy, fairness and empathy, acknowledgement of disciplinary process, and collaboration with stakeholders.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Table 4

Response of School Disciplinary Authorities on Persuasive Language Employed by Students during Incident Review

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Language Evaluation	Assess logic, emotion, and ethics Emotions are less influential Consistency and clarity of students' explanations influence credibility
Adherence to Policy	Policies and rules guide the evaluation of persuasive language and its impact on student justification Child protection policies and formal guidelines ensure consistency and fairness in handling justifications Authority adheres to legal bases for handling persuasive language
Fairness and Empathy	Balancing fairness, objectivity, and empathy Listening to all sides of the story Showing empathy towards students
Acknowledgement of Disciplinary Process	Disciplinary authorities acknowledge potential biases Usage of local language Misinterpretation due to communication style differences
Collaboration with Stakeholders	Authorities collaborate with stakeholders for a more comprehensive evaluation Open communication with stakeholders

Ways on How Students' Persuasive Language Shape the Result of the Incident Review

Students' use of persuasive language played a significant role in shaping authorities' affective responses during incident reviews related to academic misconduct. This portion highlighted the affective responses of the authorities as way of shaping the incident review. The school disciplinary authorities responses were contextually aligned with the basic learners manual which shall serve as the basis of all public and private schools in crafting or developing or amending their Learner's Discipline Manual. Therefore, the school shall impose appropriate and reasonable disciplinary measures in case of offenses or infractions of good discipline. With that, disciplinary actions took place and also culled out from the Basic Learners Manual of school as this is what the main focus to answer the research question four.

Table 5

Ways on How Students' Persuasive Language Shape the Result of the Incident Review

Case	Type of Persuasive Language	Sample Statement	Authorities' Affective Response	Disciplinary Actions
1 (Cheating)	Pathos	(Nag hilak.) Parehas ra gyud mi tanan mam nagkamali. Sama Ninyo ma'am, dili pud me gusto mag biklanay kay isa ra me ka classroom and classmates ra me tanan. Lain kaayo dili magtagdanay. (OB-S1)	Emphasizing Integrity and Accountability	Reprimand with counseling with parent
	Logos	Ako pud ma'am uy. Before ang exam ganina, nag study pa ko ani akong notebook. (OB-S2)		
	Ethos	Ka remember pa gani ko sa imo ingun maam na bahalag ma zero basta dili lang mangopya. (OB-S1)		
2 (Loitering)	Pathos	Maulaw na sad me mobalik ma'am kay Nakita namo naa na si Maam Joanna, basin masuko na siya. (OB-S1)	Disappointment	Manual Labor
	Logos	Ma'am, nangihi man ko ato and then nisunod pud si Denmark ug Nygel sa akoa, gihulat na lang		

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

		nako siya, paggawas niya, niingun si Denmark nako na didto sa me magtambay sa likod. (OB-S1)		
	Ethos	Ma'am, (about to cry). Masuko gyud to akong mama kay dili ra ba unta ko naga kuyog ani nila ma'am. Karun lang gyud na gidala ko nila. (OB-S2)		
3 (Bullying)	Pathos	Gani Sir, dili jud namo na mabuhat ang mga accusations niya sa amoa. Sir ayaw ug tuo ana sa iya kami gyod ang katug-an ug tinuod! (OB-S3)	Neutrality	Suspension of 1-2 days with counseling with parent
	Logos	Gapataka ra gyod kag istorya no? Unsay gikuha imong allowance? grabe jud ka mamakak ba.(OB-S2)		
	Ethos	Ako sad Sir grabeng paningkamot akong Mama nga manglabada sa among mga silingan Sir dili jud nako na mabuhat Sir sayang kaayo ang sakripisyo ni Mama. (OB-S2)		
4 (Cutting Classes)	Pathos	Sir, wala jud namo to tuyua nga mag cutting classes.(OB-S1)	Doubt	Reprimand with home visitation
	Logos	Gigutom bitaw mi Ma'am mao tung nag sabot mi na mugawas. (OB-S1)		
	Ethos	Sir namalit ra lagi mig pagkaon sa gawas ana bara sila Sir na "Good food is good mood." (OB-S2)		
5 (Stealing)	Pathos	Yes Ma'am, napugos kog pangawat kay walang-wala jud mi Ma'am. (OB-S2)	Encouraging Self-reflection and change	Reprimand with counseling with parent
	Logos	Ma'am promise jud wala gyod ko nanghilabot ug kwarta naa rako nagpundo sa akong bangko nag drawing-drawing ganinang recess. (OB-S1)		
	Ethos	Wala ko kabalo anang mga accusations niya Ma'am basta kabalo ko sa akong sarili nga wala gyod ko nanghilabot kay wala nah gitudlo sa akoa sa akong parents ma'am. (OB-S2)		

Chapter 4
DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the discussion of the significant findings based on the analyses of the corpora and the responses, implications for educational practice, implications for future research, and concluding remarks.

Predominant Persuasive Languages Employed by Students in their Academic Misconduct

In this study, a rhetorical analysis espoused by Aristotle was used as the backbone of the analysis supported by Peters et al. 2022 Rhetorical Appeal to reveal the persuasive languages and their respective persuasive strategies in students' persuasive language used in justifying academic misconduct because these frameworks best fit the queries of this research undertaking. It

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

was revealed in this study that the cases and responses of students employed multiple persuasive strategies that constitute the use of three modes of persuasion and descriptors of rhetorical appeal in their presentation.

Strategies Employed under Pathos

Evoking emotional response. In his book Rhetoric, Aristotle defines pathos as the art of arousing emotion in an audience in order to persuade them to reach the conclusion that the speaker intends. The speaker demonstrates identification with the "needs, values, and desires of the audience" when making an emotional appeal (Higgins & Walker, 2012), which is basically characterized by the students' persuasive language employed by students in their academic misconduct. Evoking emotions among readers is one important way to convince the readers to believe their stances in their academic misconduct.

Strategies Employed Under Logos

Deductive reasoning. The study confirmed the presence of deductive reasoning, a key component of logos, in students' persuasive language when justifying academic misconduct across five cases: cheating, loitering, bullying, cutting classes, and stealing. In cheating case, students frequently began with broad general claims about their circumstances or intentions and then narrowed down to specific points to support their actions.

Strategies Employed Under Ethos

Tapping into audience's values or ideologies. This study found the strategy of Peters et al. (2022) tapping into the audience's values or ideologies under ethos. The study found that in justifying academic misconduct, students applied the strategy. The justifications provided by students for their academic misconduct reflected their use of ethos, specifically by tapping into the audience's values and ideologies to rationalize their actions anchored to Peters et al. 2022 Rhetorical Appeals. In their research, Ellederová (2023) highlighted how students employ personal narratives and rhetorical strategies to establish credibility and connect with their audience.

Students' Persuasive Language in Justifying their Academic Misconduct

In the previous chapter, the key themes and central ideas that emerged from the focus-group discussions with school disciplinary authorities on students' persuasive language in justifying their academic misconduct were presented. Notably, core concepts were developed and then labeled with a broad theme. In this section, each collected theme is discussed against a background of sufficient literature to facilitate a better understanding of the significant results of the study from the perspective of the research participants and various experts.

Mitigating Strategies. As highlighted in the discussion by a participant, students often employ minimization as a persuasive strategy to downplay the severity of their academic misconduct. This involves framing their actions as trivial or insignificant, such as describing them as "just a small part" of the test or emphasizing that the behavior was not pervasive. By diminishing the perceived seriousness of their actions, students aim to reduce accountability and shift the focus away from their misconduct.

Externalizing responsibility. Attributing their actions to circumstances beyond their control, as highlighted in the discussion by participant, students often justify their academic misconduct by externalizing responsibility. This approach involves blaming external factors, such as personal or familial challenges, for their inability to adhere to academic standards. By framing their actions as a reaction to hardships, such as financial struggles or family conflicts, students present themselves as victims of their circumstances rather than intentional rule-breakers.

Denial and Shifting Blame. Denial and shifting blame are common tactics used by students to justify their academic misconduct, as manifested in the participant's discussion. Students often refute allegations by providing alternate explanations or outright rejecting evidence. For example, even when caught with a cheat sheet, they may deny ownership, claiming, "Sir, that's not mine. I didn't make that." This strategy not only deflects accountability but also challenges the credibility of the accusation, creating uncertainty and potentially delaying disciplinary action. Kumar and Kaur (2023) emphasize that such denial tactics are prevalent among students seeking to evade responsibility, illustrating how language can be manipulated to undermine authority.

Defense Mechanism. As highlighted in the discussion by a participant, students frequently employ promises as a persuasive tactic to justify their actions and avoid consequences. This theme captures how students use verbal assurances, such as pledging not to repeat their behavior or denying any wrongdoing altogether, to assert their innocence. Promises like "I promise, Ma'am" or "I swear" serve as rhetorical tools to create a sense of sincerity and credibility, encouraging disciplinary authorities to believe in their honesty and integrity.

Response of School Disciplinary Authorities on Persuasive Language Employed by Students during Incident Review

In the previous chapter, the key themes and central ideas that emerged from the focused-group discussions with school disciplinary authorities' responses on the persuasive language employed by students during the incident review were presented. Notably, core concepts were developed and then labeled with a broad theme.

Language Evaluation. This involves examining whether the student provides a clear, rational explanation for their actions. Evaluation of persuasive language is central to how disciplinary authorities assess the justifications provided by students. Authorities do not rely solely on emotional appeals but carefully consider logical reasoning and evidence presented by the student. The logic behind the justification can help clarify the sequence of events that led to the incident, providing insight into the student's thought process and decision-making.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Adherence to Policy. The institutional and policy guidelines theme highlights the role of formal rules and regulations in shaping the evaluation process. Both participants pointed out that schools have established codes of conduct and integrity policies that guide the evaluation of student justifications. These policies ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency in the disciplinary process, allowing authorities to apply rules uniformly across cases. This is supported by Smith and Jones (2020) it explored the impact of codes of conduct on school climate and student behavior, finding a positive correlation between clear guidelines and an improved school environment.

Fairness and Empathy. Balancing fairness and empathy were a critical aspect of how disciplinary authorities handle persuasive language. Participant emphasized the importance of providing all parties involved in an incident with the opportunity to present their perspectives. This practice fosters an inclusive environment where every voice is heard, which is essential for making informed decisions. Research by Blasi (2022) explores the concept of procedural justice in school discipline, highlighting the importance of fair processes, including providing students with the opportunity to be heard, as crucial for fostering trust and reducing conflict.

Acknowledgement of Disciplinary Process. The potential for bias in interpreting students' persuasive language is a significant concern for disciplinary authorities. Participants noted that cultural and linguistic differences can lead to misinterpretations of students' intentions. Authorities are encouraged to develop cultural competence to ensure equitable treatment of all students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. A study by Welsh and Little (2018) discusses how cultural and linguistic differences can lead to misinterpretations of students' intentions, advocating for increased cultural competence among disciplinary authorities.

Collaboration with Stakeholders. Collaboration with various stakeholders, including parents and teachers, is a key strategy employed by disciplinary authorities to enhance the evaluation process. Participants highlighted the importance of structured communication and documentation in ensuring transparency and accountability. By involving stakeholders in discussions, authorities can gather multiple perspectives, which enriches the decision-making process. This approach aligns with the principles of restorative justice, which emphasizes repairing harm and building relationships. Research by Smith and Jones (2018) examined the impact of parental involvement in school disciplinary procedures.

Ways on which Students' Persuasive Language Shape the Result of the Incident Review

There were identified school disciplinary authorities' affective responses along with the disciplinary actions as to the ways in which students' persuasive language shapes the result of the incident review. This portion discussed the affective responses of the authorities as way of shaping the incident review. The school disciplinary authorities responses were contextually aligned with the basic learners manual which shall serve as the basis of all public and private schools in crafting or developing or amending their Learner's Discipline Manual. Also, school disciplinary authorities shall be deemed persons in authority when in the discharge of lawful duties and responsibilities, and shall, therefore. Be accorded due respect and protection.

Emphasizing Integrity and Accountability. Initially, the result emphasized the role of emotional responses from school authorities when addressing disciplinary issues. In a notable case of cheating, the school disciplinary authorities exhibited significant compassion for the student's situation. School authorities' empathetic response was pivotal in the decision-making process regarding the disciplinary measures to be implemented.

Disappointment. Authorities' affective response found disappointment in the case of loitering. Despite the use of ethos, pathos, and logos in their appeals, authorities uniformly expressed disappointment, which significantly influenced their disciplinary decisions. This finding underscores the complexity of student behavior and the emotional landscape that school authorities navigate when addressing such issues.

Neutrality. The study on the responses of school disciplinary authorities to bullying cases revealed a consistent stance of neutrality, regardless of the persuasive strategies employed by students. Authorities focused on the merits of the arguments presented rather than being swayed by emotional appeals (pathos) or character-based justifications (ethos). This approach highlights a deliberate effort by school officials to maintain objectivity in their decision-making processes.

Encourage self-reflection and change. In cases of stealing, authorities demonstrated self-reflection and change among students. This response emerged from the persuasive language used by students to justify their actions, which prompted educators to focus on the underlying issues rather than solely the misconduct itself.