



Analyzing Speech Acts in Ayatollah Khamenei's Letter to Students Supporting the Palestinian People in American Universities

Morteza Hasani Nasab¹ , Reza Mohammadi² 

1. Assistant Professor, Department of Maaref Eslami, Faculty of Human Sciences, Arak University, Arak, Iran.

Email: M-Hasaninasab@araku.ac.ir. Corresponding Author.

2. Post-doctoral researcher, Department of History, Faculty of Human Sciences, Arak University, Arak, Iran.

Email: Reza.muhammadi90@gmail.com

Article Info

Article type:
Research Article

Article history:

Received: 2024/8/7

Received in revised form:
2024/9/7

Accepted : 2024/9/14

Available online: 2025/3/2

Keywords:

Speech act theory,
John Searle,
Ayatollah Khamenei,
American Students,
Palestinian People.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The study aims to analyze the speech acts used by Ayatollah Khamenei in his letter to students supporting the Palestinian people in American universities, focusing on the implications of these acts for understanding his political and social messages regarding the Palestinian issue.

Method: A descriptive-analytical approach was employed to examine the speech acts in the text. The analysis categorized speech acts into direct and indirect forms, identifying their frequencies and contexts within the letter.

Results: The findings revealed that the majority of direct speech acts were declarative, while indirect speech acts predominantly revolved around persuasive elements. This indicates a strategic use of language to convey clear positions while engaging the audience emotionally and intellectually.

Conclusions: Ayatollah Khamenei's letter not only seeks to explain the historical context of the Palestinian issue to the students but also encourages them to remain steadfast in their support, showcasing a blend of informative and motivational rhetoric that aligns with his broader political vision.

Cite this article: Hasaninasab, Morteza & Mohammadi, Reza (2025). Analyzing Speech Acts in Ayatollah Khamenei's Letter to Students Supporting the Palestinian People in American Universities. Contemporary Researches on Islamic Revolution, 7 (23), 56-75. <http://doi.org/10.22059/JCRIR.2024.380538.1650>



© The Author(s).

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.22059/JCRIR.2024.380538.1650>

Publisher: University of Tehran.

Introduction

The Palestinian issue, as one of the most contentious and significant political and social topics globally, has always been at the center of international attention. Following the genocide by the Zionist regime, students at American universities began sit-ins on campus to support the oppressed people of Gaza from early Ordibehesht, and these protests escalated to the point where they extended to some Western countries (Australia, Canada, France, Italy, and England). In this context, the positions and actions of leaders from various countries, particularly Islamic leaders, significantly influence public perception and attitudes towards the Palestinian crisis. The correspondence and statements of these leaders can serve as tools to affect public opinion and encourage the younger generation's involvement in social and political activities. Recently, Ayatollah Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, expressed solidarity with the anti-Zionist protests of these students in a letter, deeming them part of the resistance front and emphasizing the need to change the situation and destiny of the sensitive region of West Asia.

Speech acts, as one of the key tools in human communication, can convey meanings and messages that are often presented to audiences either directly or indirectly. In this regard, analyzing and examining speech acts enables us to better understand the expressive and linguistic strategies of political leaders and see how they can influence public opinion. From this perspective, Ayatollah Khamenei's letter to students supporting the Palestinian people in American universities is a significant political text that can contribute to a deeper investigation of speech acts and the motivations behind them. This letter, as a strategic text, reflects the attitudes and speech acts of the leader of the Islamic Revolution concerning the Palestinian issue. It contains not only political messages but can also aid researchers and enthusiasts in gaining a better understanding of how positions related to this topic are articulated from a linguistic and speech act analysis perspective. The present study aims to delve deeper into the mechanisms of speech acts and their impact on audiences, particularly in the form of letters with ethical and social themes. Therefore, this study intends to analyze the speech acts in this important letter. It will address two fundamental questions: 'What direct and indirect speech acts did the leader of the Revolution use more frequently?' And 'What is the reason for the selection and frequency of these acts?'

Background of the Research

Regarding the background of the research, it should be noted that, regarding the novelty of the topic, as far as the authors are aware, no research work has yet been conducted. However, there are some articles related to the subject of the research. In the article "The Analysis of Speech Acts Patterns in Two Egyptian Inaugural Speeches" by Imad Samir (2017), two inaugural speeches by Egyptian leaders Sadat and Sisi from different periods were analyzed using Searle's speech act theory to determine whether there are differences in this genre within the same culture. This study showed that there is very little difference between the two speeches in terms of speech acts.

Additionally, Andrea Viridian in the article "Discourse Analysis from the Perspective of Austin's Speech Act Theory and Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts: A Case Study of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*" (2021) utilized John Searle's discourse analysis theory, focusing on the writings of Charlotte P. Gilman regarding gender differences in how men and women use language, illustrating ways in which language can serve as a tool to silence the other.

The article "Discourse Analysis of the Letters Issued by Amir Masoud in Volume One of the History of Bayhaqi Based on Searle's Speech Act Theory" by Tahereh Eshani and Nahid Mehrafruz (2021 AD/1400 SH) indicates that the results of this research demonstrate the relevance and coordination of each of these speech acts with the goals of Amir Masoud. The prevalence of assertive speech acts in this linguistic corpus can symbolize his power in discourse. Additionally, the frequency of persuasive acts within the framework of this goal is notable, and a significant percentage of emotional acts appear as the third most recurrent act in one of the letters. The function of other speech acts in these letters is shown in the conclusion section.

The article "Analysis of the Speech Acts in the Friday Prayer Sermon of the Supreme Leader Following the Martyrdom of General Soleimani (27/10/1398)" by Reza Mohammadi and Ali Ghofrani (2022 AD/1401 SH) reveals that given the prevalence of assertive acts among the speech acts of the Islamic Revolution leader, it can be said that they aimed to explain the situation and enlighten and inform the people during significant events such as the assassination of General Qasem Soleimani, the attack on the Ain al-Asad base, and the plane crash.

The article "Speech Acts Revisited: Examining Illocutionary Speech Acts in Speeches of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk" by Alp Bugra Oder (2023) aims to analyze the non-verbal speech acts in two speeches by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (the speech at the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey and the address to Turkish youth) based on John Searle's theory. After a thorough analysis, this qualitative study concludes that Atatürk utilized more speech acts addressed to Turkish youth in his speech at the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey.

Another notable article in this regard is "An Analysis of Directive Speech Acts Utilized in Contemporary Islamic Sermons: A Case Study of Dr. Haifaa Younis's Sermons" by Noor Ilya Mohd (2024), which aims to analyze selected Islamic sermons delivered by Dr. Haifa Younis, examining the use of directive speech acts in her speeches using John Searle's method.

The article "An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Joe Biden's Victory Speech Regarding United States Election" by Zaenurdin and Sri Supiah Cahyati (2024) analyzes the speech acts in Joe Biden's 2020 electoral victory speech based on John Searle's speech act theory, concluding that most of Biden's acts in this speech are of a persuasive nature.

Combined Methodology

The research method in this article is of a combined nature. The combined approach, or multidimensional/methodological research, quantitative and qualitative, mixed, intertwined, is a type of research in which the researcher or researchers employ a set of quantitative and qualitative methods based on various paradigms to enable the investigation of an uncertain situation and facilitate the process (Bazargan, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 156). In other words, this type of research, which is philosophically based on a pragmatic approach, aims to combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single study simultaneously, sequentially, or interchangeably (Mohammadpour et al., 2010 AD/1389 SH: 77) and analyzes data in both numerical and verbal forms, emphasizing deductive and inductive reasoning (Hakimzadeh, Abdolmaleki, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 28). In this rapidly expanding approach, the question posed in the research is more important than the research method itself (Hasani, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 151). Therefore, as a methodology, it focuses on the collection, analysis, and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a series of studies (Creswell, Clark, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 5-6). Ultimately, the combined approach leads to a broader understanding of research issues (Creswell, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 346).

In light of this, we have decided to examine the application of this research method in political studies, emphasizing the letters of the Supreme Leader. Therefore, it is necessary first to study the qualitative data, namely the text of the letter and its historical context, and then to refer to the quantitative data regarding the frequency of speech acts and the count of each act, and finally, we will analyze the combined data.

Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory is one of the most important theories in linguistics originated by John Austin and further developed by John Searle. This theory examines the relationships between language and social actions, emphasizing that utterances and linguistic performances are more than just a set of symbols and structures; they possess social and cultural significance.

Speech Act Theory emphasizes that language and speech are used as a means to perform social and interactive functions. This theory focuses on the idea that language and speech are utilized not only to convey information and concepts but also to perform actions and create social connections. In other words, utterances and language, according to Speech Act Theory, are viewed as tools for performing social and cultural functions (Green, 2020).

One of the fundamental concepts in Speech Act Theory is the concept of "Speech Act." In general, a speech act refers to all the actions and activities performed through language and speech. These acts can include making statements, questioning and answering, describing, inviting, threatening, committing, absolving, and so on. In fact, any utterance that is made and has a reciprocal effect on one or more individuals can be considered a speech act in Speech Act Theory (Fotion, 2014: 61–62).

In Speech Act Theory, the primary linguistic unit is the speech act, which is produced as a piece of speech or writing by a specific individual for another individual in a particular context. A speech act consists of three components: The manner of speaking, the verbal message, and the illocutionary effect. The manner of speaking refers to the acoustic and semantic characteristics of the sentence. The verbal message pertains to the communication goals and intentions of the speaker, and the illocutionary effect describes the impact on the audience (Green, 2020).

John R. Searle, one of the key theorists in Speech Act Theory, identifies five basic types of speech acts (Dirven, R; Verspoor, 2004: 152) and elaborates on distinctions among them:

1. Assertive Acts: In this speech act, the speaker expresses their belief about the truth or falsity of a statement. Assertive acts are the most prevalent in the Holy Qur'an and are found in many chapters and verses.

2. Directive or Persuasive Acts: The goal of the persuasive speech act is to encourage the audience to do something and to place them in a state of obligation to perform an action.

3. Commissive Acts: The main point of this speech act is that the speaker commits themselves (to varying degrees) to perform an action in the future by making a statement.

4. Expressive Acts: These are acts in which the speaker's mental state and emotions are expressed. The speaker conveys their feelings through appreciation, thanks, apologies, congratulations, curses, and similar expressions.

5. Declarative Acts: A declarative speech act announces new conditions to the audience. The speaker creates new changes through their declarations. This act is based on the correspondence between language and the external world and occurs when the speaker has the authority and capacity to state new events (Abedini, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 52-53).

These five speech acts are specific linguistic tools that clearly indicate the intended speech act. For example, verbs like "Congratulate," "Insist," "Warn," or "Request" can signify which speech act is being used. Phrases like "I promise" or "I forgive you" demonstrate the illocutionary force that the speaker is conveying. These linguistic tools are known as "Performative Utterances" because they are active in the first-person singular, declarative, present tense, and indicative form. Often, the phrase "Hereby" can be added to them. Furthermore, the illocutionary force refers to other tools that can also be used. For instance, words like "Please" can enhance the effectiveness of a request, as seen in the three main types of sentences: Declarative, interrogative, and imperative (Yule, 1996: 54).

Speech acts that resemble sentences may function as requests, while speech acts that resemble announcements may act as warnings or threats. Searle also refers to indirect speech acts alongside direct ones (Searle, 1966: 30). In indirect speech acts, speakers perform the speech act (the primary act) through another speech act (the secondary act). Both speech acts must be assessed, and they can only be understood when considered as two interdependent sentences, one depending on the other. Again, these indirect speech acts may be highly conventional and reliant on the principles of linguistic cooperation, playing a crucial role in assessing linguistic politeness. For example, a simple request like "Could you please pass the

salt to me?" would prompt the listener more to hand the salt to the speaker than to respond with "Yes." (cf. Norgaard, 2015 AD/1394 SH)

The Leader's Letter to Western Youth

In response to the Israeli regime's attacks on Gaza, peaceful protests by students began on April 17, 2024, in reaction to the genocide and killing of the people in Gaza by Israel, starting from universities in the United States and gradually extending to universities in other Western countries. The crackdown, detention, and expulsion of protesting students by the U.S. government and other Western governments elicited various reactions. Among them, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, expressed solidarity and empathy with their actions in a letter addressed to the Palestinian-supporting students.

His letter to the students supporting the Palestinian people in U.S. universities marks the third letter by Ayatollah Khamenei to Western youth in the past ten years, issued in 1403 (corresponding to 2024). He expressed solidarity with the anti-Zionist protests of these students, regarded them as part of the resistance front, and emphasized the need for change in the situation and fate of the sensitive region of West Asia.

In the text of Ayatollah Khamenei's letter, it is stated:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

I write this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has compelled them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza.

Dear student youth in the United States! This is our message of empathy and solidarity with you. You are now standing on the right side of history—which is being turned.

You have now become part of the resistance front, and under the relentless pressure of your government—which openly defends the illegitimate and ruthless Zionist regime—you have embarked on a noble struggle.

The great resistance front has been fighting for years with the very awareness and sentiments you hold today. The goal of this struggle is to stop the blatant injustice that has been inflicted upon the Palestinian people by a terrorist and ruthless network known as the "Zionists," which has subjected them to the harshest pressures and tortures since the occupation of their land. The genocide today carried out by the Zionist apartheid regime is a continuation of the extremely oppressive behavior of previous decades.

Palestine is an independent land with a nation composed of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, and with a long historical legacy. Following World War II, Zionist capitalists, with the assistance of the British government, gradually brought in a few thousand terrorists to this land; they invaded its cities and villages; killing tens of thousands or driving them into neighboring countries; stripping them of their homes, markets, and farms; and establishing a state called Israel in the occupied land of Palestine.

The largest supporter of this usurping regime, after the initial British aid, is the United States of America, which has continued its political, economic, and military support for that regime without interruption and has even, with an unforgivable carelessness, opened the way for it to produce nuclear weapons and aided it in this endeavor.

From the very first day, the Zionist regime employed the policy of an "Iron Fist" against the defenseless Palestinian people, indifferent to all moral, human, and religious values, increasing its ruthlessness, terror, and oppression day by day.

The U.S. government and its partners have even refrained from a frown against this state terrorism and continuous oppression. Today, some statements from the U.S. government regarding the horrific crimes in Gaza are more hypocritical than they are genuine.

The "Resistance Front" has emerged from this dark and despairing atmosphere, and the establishment of the "Islamic Republic" in Iran has expanded and empowered it.

The leaders of international Zionism, who control or influence the majority of media outlets in the United States and Europe with their money and bribery, have labeled this courageous and humanitarian resistance as terrorism! Is a nation that defends itself against the crimes of occupying Zionists in its own land a terrorist? And is humanitarian assistance to this nation and strengthening its arms considered support for terrorism?

The leaders of global violent domination show no mercy even towards human concepts. They portray the terrorist and ruthless regime of Israel as defending itself, while they label the Palestinian resistance, which is fighting for its freedom, security, and the right to self-determination, as "Terrorists!"

I want to assure you that today, the situation is changing. Another destiny awaits the sensitive region of West Asia. Many consciences around the world have awakened, and the truth is coming to light. The resistance front has also become stronger and will continue to strengthen. History is turning.

In addition to you students from dozens of universities in the United States, universities and people in other countries have also risen up. The solidarity and support of university professors for you students is a significant and impactful development. This can provide some solace in the face of the government's heavy-handed police actions and the pressures put on you. I also empathize with you young people and appreciate your steadfastness.

The lesson of the Quran for us Muslims and all people of the world is to stand firm for the truth: "So remain steadfast as you have been commanded." (Hūd/112) The lesson of the Quran regarding human relations is: "Do not commit oppression, nor be subjected to oppression." (al-Baqarah/279) The resistance front progresses and will achieve victory by adhering to these instructions and hundreds of similar ones, with God's permission.

I recommend that you become familiar with the Quran.

Sayyid Ali Khamenei

1403/3/5

Historical Context of the Letter's Writing

Numerous factors led to widespread protests by students at universities in the United States and the writing of this letter. Among the most important reasons for these events are the actions of the Zionists in Palestine, the occupation of Palestinian land, the imposition of the harshest pressures and torture on the Palestinian people, the genocide by the Zionist apartheid regime, and the continuation of extremely oppressive behavior over the past decades.

To examine the history of this region, it should first be stated that the initial name of Palestine, considering the settlement of the Canaanite Arabs, was known as "The Land of Canaan." This region was later renamed Palestine due to the presence of one of the Cretan tribes (Za'itar, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 34).

During the reign of Joshua bin Nun, the Jews crossed into this area from the Jordan River and attacked the city of Jericho. In the Old Testament, the journey of Joshua bin Nun is described in Chapter 6:

"Israelites killed all the people of Jericho, men and women, old and young, and even passed the animals through the sword. They set fire to everything found in the city, except for gold, silver, copper vessels, and iron implements, which they did not destroy and collected in the treasury of the "Lord." After Jericho, they seized some other cities in Palestine; however,

the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Jebus) resisted and ultimately did not surrender, and the shores of Palestine remained in the hands of the Palestinians." (Zaytar, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 38)

Then, about two hundred years later, Prophet David established the first Israeli government in this region (Ahmadi, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 21). In 587 BC, the kingdom of Israel was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and the Jews were taken captive. George Friedman writes about this: "The twelve tribes of the Israelites were exiled to the Caucasus, Armenia, and especially Babylon, and thus, the Jewish people with all their essence, along with their race, national, and religious community, disappeared forever." (Behmanesh, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 250-251)

Of course, after the Iranian attack of Cyrus on Babylon, the Jews were freed, and some returned to Palestine; however, they were never able to establish a government again and fell under the control of the Macedonians and Romans. Most Jews in Babylon also remained in Babylon (Ivanov, 1977 AD/1356 SH: 21).

Subsequently, until the establishment of the state of Israel, few Jews lived in this region, and even Namn Jarvandi states that in the year 1267 AD, only two Jewish families lived in Jerusalem (Katan, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 16). Therefore, historically, contrary to the claims of Zionists, the region of Palestine cannot be exclusively assigned to the Jews, nor can they be considered the rightful owners of this land; as Maxime Rodinson, a French Jewish researcher, states: "The people of Palestine are, in every sense, the indigenous Palestinians of old and the descendants of the Canaanites and other early tribes of Palestine." (Katan, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 21)

Throughout these years, governance of these regions was mainly in the hands of Christians and then Muslims, with the last rulers of this area being the Ottoman Caliphs, whose rule was destroyed after World War I, and their territory was divided among Europeans, with the region of Palestine being allocated to the British.

Historically, the idea of forming a Zionist state and an independent Jewish state dates back to the late 19th century and the views of Benjamin Theodor Herzl. In his book "The Jewish State," he considered the establishment of a Jewish country as the only solution for the salvation of the Jews (Cleveland, 2004: 224). Herzl states that the Jewish issue is "Neither a social issue nor a religious issue; neither can be justified. This issue is, in fact, a national issue. A national issue that, to address it, we must present it as a political issue in international relations... In fact, we are a nation, a united nation." (Galina, 1976 AD/1356 SH: 23)

In 1896, the first Zionist Congress was held in the city of Basel, Switzerland, and it was presided over by Herzl. The result of this congress was to create a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine and to establish the World Zionist Organization (Lenchewski, 1956 AD/1336 SH: 322). At the first Zionist Congress, it was determined that: "The goal of Zionism is to establish a homeland for the Jewish nation in Palestine, this homeland is guaranteed by public law." (Kiyali, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 39) Herzl had several meetings with the Ottoman government regarding the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine; however, the Ottoman government opposed it (Nasiri, 2014 AD/1394 SH: 410). He also met with the wealthy Rothschild family to seek their support for the establishment of such a state. The Rothschild family, realizing that the formation of a Jewish state and Zionism in this region was in their interest, provided financial support for this approach (al-Masiri, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 6, 201).

In 1916, three countries—England, Russia, and France—signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement, agreeing that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Palestine would be administered under British control (Safataj, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 83-84). On November 2, 1917, in the Balfour Declaration, Britain agreed to the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine and promised to use its best efforts to bring this homeland into being (Sajjadi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 47; Sewidan, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 258). After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I in 1918, Britain occupied Palestine in September 1918 and appointed Zionist Jews to administer the region (Sajjadi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 50). Subsequently, many Jews migrated from across Europe to Palestine (Joodaki & Fallahi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 42) and established numerous organizations and institutions in the region (Sewidan, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 259). In 1948, with the end of British governance in the region of Palestine, David Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Zionists at the time, declared the establishment of the State of Israel (Zaidabadi, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 128; Kaffash et al., 2013 AD/1392 SH: 186).

One day after the official announcement of the establishment of the State of Israel, the armies of five Arab countries—Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq—fought against the Zionists in Israel. This war ended after several months with the defeat of the Arab countries' armies (Haddad, 2022). After this war, Israelis continued to occupy other areas of Palestine, a situation that persists to this day.

As a result, on October 7, 2023, Hamas forces launched an operation known as "Storm of al-Aqsa" against Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories. The motivation behind this operation for Hamas has been identified as a response to the occupation and violations of human rights by Israel. Hamas-supporting media have also stated that the reasons for this operation are in reaction to the ongoing crimes of Israel in the massacre of Palestinians, the desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque, assaults on its guardians, and support for the incursions of Zionist settlers against Palestinians. In the announcement from the military commander of Hamas, published on the third day of the battle, the justification for the operation referred to the desecration of Muslim sanctities by Zionists, the suffering endured by them, and the aggression against Palestinian land. (<https://fa.wikishia.net/view>)

In the narrative of Hamas regarding the "Storm of al-Aqsa," it is stated:

"The battle of our nation against the Zionist regime did not begin on October 7; it began 105 years ago. Our nation has been under British colonialism for 30 years and under the occupation of the Zionist regime for 75 years. Over the past decades, our nation has experienced various forms of oppression, injustices, and apartheid policies. The Gaza Strip has been under siege for 17 years and has become the largest open-air prison in the world. The Gaza Strip has experienced five devastating wars, and in all these wars, the Zionist regime was the aggressor. From the year 2000 until September 2023, the Zionist regime has martyred 11,299 Palestinians and injured 156,768 others, most of whom were civilians." (<https://www.isna.ir/news/1402110100719>)

Speech Acts in the Letter

The extraction of concepts and speech acts from the text of the letter of Ayatollah Khamenei is based on speech segments. These speech segments are small or large pieces of language, the meaning of which arises from the interaction of language and the context of its production, which can be a word, a paragraph, or several pages of text. This interactive interpretation is a factor in the production of hashtags in the virtual space. In other words, a speech segment is a short or long segment of language whose meaning is the result of the interaction of language and its production context. This perspective increases the researcher's flexibility in analyzing the communicative process in the text, as from the standpoint of speech acts, it can be a single word, a complete discourse, or a literary work; however, the principles of analyzing a single-sentence speech act and a lengthy piece are the same, thus

allowing for the selection and analysis of a portion of a text. In the following section, direct and indirect speech acts in the text of the letter will be presented in a table.

Table 1: Types of Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Speech Acts	Direct Speech Acts	Indirect Speech Acts
In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful(https://khl.ink/f/56567)	Statement	Persuasive
I am writing this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has urged them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza.	Statement	Persuasive
Dear student youths in the United States!	Emotional	Persuasive
This is our message of empathy and solidarity with you.	Emotional	Persuasive
You are now standing on the right side of history — which is currently being turned.	Statement	Persuasive
You have now formed a part of the resistance front.	Statement	Persuasive
And under the ruthless pressure of your government — which openly defends the usurping and ruthless Zionist regime — you have begun a honorable struggle.	Statement	Persuasive
The great front of resistance has been fighting for years with the same perceptions and feelings you have today.	Statement	Persuasive
The goal of this struggle is to stop the blatant oppression inflicted on the Palestinian people by a ruthless terrorist network known as "Zionists," which has subjected them to the harshest pressures and tortures since the usurpation of their land. The genocide being committed by the Zionist apartheid regime today is a continuation of the extremely cruel behavior of the past decades.	Statement	Persuasive
Palestine is an independent land with a nation comprised of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, with a long historical background.	Statement	Persuasive
After World War II, the Zionist capitalists, with the aid of the British government, gradually brought in several thousand terrorists to this land.	Statement	Persuasive
They attacked its cities and villages; tens of thousands were killed.	Statement	Persuasive
Or they were driven to neighboring countries; homes,	Statement	Persuasive

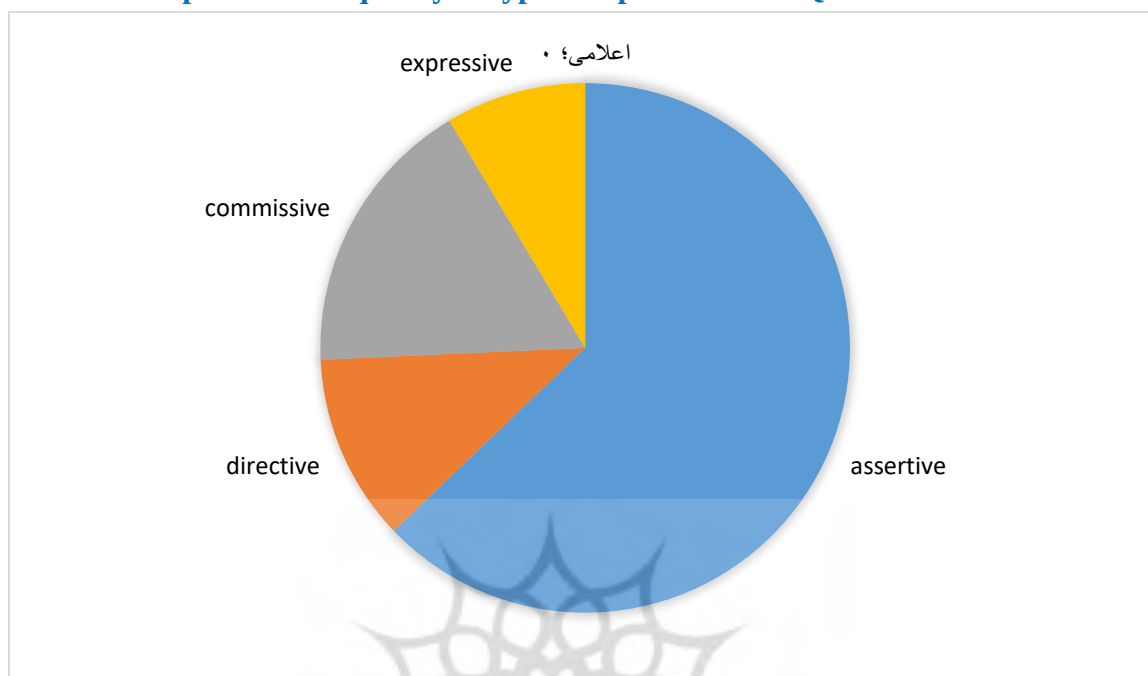
markets, and farms were taken from them, and a state named Israel was established in the usurped land of Palestine.		
The largest supporter of this usurping regime, after the initial aid from the British, is the United States government, which has continued its political, economic, and military support for the regime, and even, with unforgivable recklessness, opened the way for the production of nuclear weapons for it and assisted it in this regard.	Persuasive	Statement
The Zionist regime, from the very first day, employed an "iron fist" policy against the defenseless Palestinian people and, disregarding all moral, human, and religious values, has increasingly resorted to ruthlessness, terrorism, and oppression.	Statement	Persuasive
The U.S. government and its partners have even hesitated to frown upon this state terrorism and ongoing oppression. Even today, some statements from the United States regarding the horrific crimes in Gaza are more hypocritical than genuine.	Statement	Persuasive
The "Resistance Front" emerged from this dark and despairing atmosphere, and the establishment of the "Islamic Republic" in Iran expanded and empowered it.	Statement	Persuasive
The leaders of international Zionism, who own or exert influence over most media outlets in the U.S. and Europe through money and bribery, have labeled this courageous and human resistance as terrorism.	Statement	Persuasive
Is a nation that defends itself in its rightful land against the crimes of the occupying Zionists a terrorist?	Persuasive	Persuasive
And does humanitarian assistance to this nation and strengthening its arms count as aiding terrorism?	Persuasive	Persuasive
The leaders of global violent dominance do not spare even human concepts. They portray the terrorist and ruthless Israeli regime as the defender of itself	Statement	Persuasive
And label the Palestinian resistance, which defends freedom, security, and the right to self-determination, as "Terrorists"!	Statement	Persuasive
I want to assure you that today the situation is changing.	Commitment	Persuasive
A different fate awaits the sensitive region of West Asia.	Commitment	Persuasive
Many consciences on a global scale have awakened, and the truth is becoming apparent.	Commitment	Persuasive
The resistance front has also become stronger and will	Commitment	Persuasive

become even stronger.		
History is also being turned.	Commitment	Persuasive
In addition to you students from dozens of universities in the United States, universities and people in other countries have also risen up. The support of university professors for you students is a significant and influential event.	Statement	Persuasive
This can somewhat soothe the impact of the government's police actions and the pressures you face.	Statement	Persuasive
I also feel solidarity with you youths and admire your resilience.	Emotional	Persuasive
The lesson of the Quran for us Muslims and for all the people of the world is to stand firm in the path of truth:	Statement	Persuasive
"So remain steadfast as you have been commanded." (Hūd/112)	Statement	Persuasive
And the lesson of the Quran regarding human interactions is: do not commit oppression, nor submit to oppression.	Statement	Persuasive
"Do not oppress one another, nor be oppressed."(al-Baqarah/279)	Statement	Persuasive
The resistance front advances and will achieve victory by embracing and acting upon these commandments and hundreds of similar teachings.	Commitment	Persuasive
By the permission of God.	Statement	Persuasive
I urge you to become acquainted with the Quran.	Persuasive	Persuasive

According to Table 1, the most frequent speech act is declarative acts, accounting for 62.85%. In second place are commitment acts at 17.14%, followed by persuasive acts at 11.42%, and finally emotional acts at 8.57%, which occupy the last position. No instances of performative acts were found.

Table 2: Frequency of Types of Speech Acts

Row	Assertive	Directives	Commissive	Expressive	Declaration	Total
Count	22	4	6	3	0	35
Percentage	62.85	11.42	17.14	8.57	0	99.98

Graph of the frequency of types of speech acts in Quranic references

Conclusion

The present study, after examining the letter of the Supreme Leader, arrived at the following results within the framework of Searle's speech act theory. Since Ayatollah Khamenei, as a religious-political leader, consistently needs to consider the interests of the country, Islam, and the world, he has articulated appropriate speech acts in his statements under various political and cultural conditions. Given the crises, conflicts, and changing political circumstances, the statements of the Leader of the Revolution can assist the people in choosing the right path and making appropriate decisions.

A good communication between the Leader, as a religious figure, and the youth and students requires a clear understanding of events and enlightenment. Consequently, assertive speech acts hold the highest status and importance in Ayatollah Khamenei's letter. For example, at the beginning of his letter, he stated, "I write this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has driven them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza." The use of this type of speech act reflects his sincerity towards the students.

In the second place among speech acts, commissive acts account for 17.14% in the leader's discourse. For example, he mentioned, "I want to assure you that today the situation is

changing." This indicates that after explaining and clarifying issues, the commitment to victory, supported by divine promises and past experiences, is certain, instilling hope in the Palestinians and the axis of resistance, as well as the students that they will prevail with patience and steadfastness.

Next, persuasive acts make up 11.42% and rank third. For instance, he advises, "I recommend that you become familiar with the Quran." The goal of persuasive acts is to motivate and encourage students to take action, which is achieved through such acts and the use of verses like "So remain steadfast as you have been commanded, and do not oppress one another, nor be oppressed." Finally, emotional acts, accounting for 8.57%, occupy the last position. For example, the Leader begins the letter with an emotional appeal, addressing "Dear student youth in the United States!" Among the indirect speech acts in the letter, the most frequent were the persuasive acts.

References

Holy Quran

Abedini, J. (2020 AD/1399 SH). *Searle and the Humanities: A Philosophical Analysis of Social Reality from John Searle's Perspective and Its Implications for the Humanities*. Qom: Research Institute of Seminary and University. (in Persian)

Ahmadi, H. (2009 AD/1388 SH). *Roots of the Crisis in the Middle East*. Tehran: Keyhan Publishing. (in Persian)

Al-Masiri, A. (2004 AD/1383 SH). *Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism, and Zionism* (Middle Eastern Studies Research Institute, Trans.). Tehran: Secretariat of the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Intifada. (in Persian)

Bahmanesh, A. (2007 AD/1386 SH). *History of Ancient Nations in Western Asia: From the Beginning to the Rise of the Persians*. Tehran: University of Tehran Printing and Publishing Institute. (in Persian)

Bazargan, A. (2016 AD/1395 SH). *Introduction to Qualitative and Mixed Research Methods; Common Approaches in Behavioral Sciences*. Tehran: Didar. (in Persian)

Bugra Oder, A. (2023). "Speech Acts Revisited: Examining Illocutionary Speech Acts in Speeches of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 24-35.

<https://doi.org/10.33422/icrhs.v1i1.130>.

Creswell, J; Plano Clark, W. (2015 AD/1394 SH). *Mixed Research Methods*. (Kiavanesh Javid Sarayi, A. Trans). Tehran: Ayyizh.

Dastamooz, S; Mohammadi, M. R. (2016 AD/1395 SH). "Investigating the Impact of Indirect Speech Acts with a Questioning Structure on the Dialogue Process from the Perspective of the Russian Language." *Bi-monthly Journal of Linguistic Studies*. Vol. 7, no. 1, p. 29. (in Persian)

Eshani, T; Mehrafrouz, N. (2021 AD/1400 SH). "Discourse Analysis of the Letters Issued by Amir Masoud in the First Volume of Tarikh Bayhaqi (based on Searle's speech act theory)." *Research in Persian Language and Literature*. No. 61, pp. 51-76. (in Persian)

Galina, N. (1976 AD/1356 SH). *Israel State*. (Jazayeri, H. Trans). Tehran: Iqbal. (in Persian)

Hakimzadeh, F; Abdolmaleki, J. (2011 AD/1390 SH). *Proposal Writing in Qualitative and Mixed Studies*. Tehran: Sociologists. (in Persian)

Hasani, M. H. (2009 AD/1388 SH). "An Introduction to Integrative Methodology in Interdisciplinary Social Science Research." *Quarterly Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 2(4), 137-153. (in Persian)

Heidari, A. (2016 AD/1395 SH). "A Look at the Terrorist Incidents in France: The Result of Dividing Terrorism into "Good and Bad." *Tasnim News Agency*. Retrieved from <https://tn.ai/1130502>. (in Persian)

Ivanov, Y. (1977 AD/1356 SH). *Zionism*. (Younesi, I. Trans). Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications. (in Persian)

Joudaki, H; Ali Fallahi, S. (2018 AD/1397 SH). "Explaining the Issues of Conflict between Palestine and Israel." *International Monthly Journal of Research in Nations*. No. 39. (in Persian)

Kaffash, H. et al. (2013 AD/1392 SH). *Illustrated Encyclopedia of the History of Palestine*. Tehran: Sayan Publications. (in Persian)

Katan, H. (1990 AD/1369 SH). *Palestine and International Law*. (Fadaei, Gh. Trans). Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications. (in Persian)

Khamenei, S. A. (2014 AD/1393 SH). "The Letter of the Supreme Leader to the Youth of Europe and North America Following the Recent Events in France." Office of the Supreme Leader's Website. Retrieved from <https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/12784>. (in Persian)

Khamenei, S. A. (2015 AD/1394 SH). "The Letter of the Islamic Revolution Leader to All Youth in Western Countries." Office of the Supreme Leader's Website. Retrieved from <https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=31536>. (in Persian)

- Kiayli, A. (1987 AD/1366 SH). *Modern History of Palestine*. (Javaherkalam, M. Trans). Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications. (in Persian)
- Lynchovski, G. (1957 AD/1336 SH). *History of the Middle East*. (Jazayeri, H. Trans). Tehran: Eghbal Publishing. (in Persian)
- Mansori Moghaddam, M; Gholizadeh, M. R; Elahi, M. (2021 AD/1400 SH). "The Strategic Importance of Kandahar and Its Impact on the Safavid Relations with the Mughal Dynasty of India During the Reign of Shah Abbas I." *Quarterly Journal of Foreign Relations History*. Vol. 23, no. 89, pp. 121-138. (in Persian)
- Mohammadi, R; Ghofrani, A. (2022 AD/1401 SH). "Analysis of the Speech Acts in the Friday Prayer Sermon by the Supreme Leader Following the Martyrdom of General Soleimani (27/10/1398)." *Journal of Islamic Revolution Research*. Vol. 12, no. 42, pp. 51-65. (in Persian)
- Mohammadpour, A; Sadeghi, R; Rezaei, M. (2010 AD/1389 SH). "Mixed Research Methods as the Third Methodological Movement: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Principles." *Applied Sociology Journal*. Vol. 21, no. 38, pp. 77-100. (in Persian)
- Nasiri, H. R. (2015 AD/1394 SH). "Rothschild Family." *Encyclopedia of Islam World* (Vol. 20). Tehran: Islamic Encyclopedia Foundation. (in Persian)
- Norgaard, N. (2015 AD/1394 SH). *The Culture of Stylistics*. (Rezaei Jemkarani, A; Farahmandfar, M. Trans). Tehran: Morvarid Publishing. (in Persian)
- Safavi, K. (2008 AD/1387 SH). *Introduction to Semantics*. Tehran: Sooreh Mehr. (in Persian)
- Sajjadi, S. M. T. (2007 AD/1386 SH). *The Emergence and Continuity of Zionism*. Tehran: Nabavi Publications Institute. (in Persian)
- Searle, J. R. (2008 AD/1387 SH). *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Abdollahi, M. A. Trans). Tehran: Islamic Sciences and Culture Research Institute. (in Persian)
- Sefataj, M. (2002 AD/1381 SH). *The Story of Palestine and Israel*. Tehran: Cultural Publication Office. (in Persian)
- Suwaydan, T. (2012 AD/1391 SH). *Illustrated Encyclopedia of the History of Judaism and Zionism* (Collective translation and research). Tehran: Sayan. (in Persian)
- Veridiana, A; Jensen, F. (2021). "Discourse Analysis from the Perspective of Austin's Speech Act Theory and Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts: A Case Study of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*." *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*. Vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 198-203.

Yar Mohammadi, L. (2006 AD/1385 SH). Critical Discourse Analysis. Tehran: Samt. (in Persian)

Za'itar, A. (2009 AD/1388 SH). The History of Palestine (Hashimi Rafsanjani, A. Trans). Qom: Bustan Ketab Institute. (in Persian)

Zaydabadi, A. (2002 AD/1381 SH). Religion and State in Israel. Tehran: Rooznegar Publishing. (in Persian)

