

Image repair strategies in trump's self-defending speech in response to indictment: A pragmatic perspective

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Abstract: The present study examines the image repair strategies employed by former President Trump as a public response to the indictment against him in his (2023) Mar-a-Lago speech after his arrest and arraignment in New York court, which indicted him on 34 counts of falsifying business records. The current study aims at analyzing the types of image repair strategies and tactics employed as defense strategies to repair the damaged public image, identifying the types of speech acts used for realizing these strategies pragmatically according to the eclectic model developed for the analysis. The analysis reveals that three types of image repair strategies are used, namely: Denial, evasion of responsibility, and reduction of offensiveness, in which reduction of offensiveness is the most achieved strategy through the tactic of attacking the accuser as the frequently employed tactic, followed by the denial strategy in Trump's speech. The realization of image repair tactics as pragmatic strategies is through triggering speech acts, the most frequently utilized SAs are the expressive SAs of criticizing and blaming, and the representative SAs of denying and accusing, that are used to realize the tactics of attack the accuser, simple denial and shift the blame pragmatically as SAs.

Keywords: Image repair strategies, pragmatics, Speech acts, Trump's speech.

1. Introduction

Image repair strategies are efforts, or messages delivered by the accused party to repair, reduce or remove damages to an image in response to crisis situations. The concept of image repair has been studied primarily by most researchers within fields like public relations, communication studies, and philosophy. Regardless of its significance, it hasn't received much attention linguistically. Thus, this study is an attempt to study image repair strategies linguistically from a pragmatic prescriptive within the political context (formal self-defense) in Trump's speech. The present study answers the following questions: What types of image repair strategies are employed to defend on reputation and repair the damaged public image in Trump's speech? And which image repair strategy is mostly used? Which types of speech acts are dominantly used for the pragmatic realization of image repair tactics in Trump's speech?

2. Theoretical Background

Benoit's (1995,2000,2015) Image Repair Theory, also abbreviated as (IRT), is one of the predominant crisis communication approaches, that belongs to crisis communication field. Benoit (2015) views Communication in general as a process in which a speaker sends a message to an audience. In other words, it means the way people interact and exchange information with each other through language. Crisis communication is a post-crisis communication that follows the occurrence of a crisis, i.e., threats, it includes crisis responses through using crisis communication strategies triggered to reduce damages to reputation (Brown et al., 2015). Garcia (2011) points out that image repair mainly

concentrates on post-crisis situation via communicative messages employed by the accused party in response to crisis. Image repair theory supplies an integrative typology of strategic crisis responses, i.e., image repair strategies, to defend on reputation by responding to attacks that cause an image to be threatened.

Image repair strategies are characterized by Benoit (2015) as "patterns of communicative behavior" intend to "repair, reduce, redress, or prevent damage to their image (reputation or face) from accusations or suspicions of wrongdoing." In other words, they represent "verbal responses to perceived damage to reputation." Thus, from a pragmatic perspective, they are pragmatic strategies realized through triggering speech acts.

Benoit proposes a typology of image repair strategies in which he categorizes them into five main strategies to repair the damaged image under attack, the first three of these general strategies are categories realized by sub-categories (specific tactics), they are:

1. Denial strategy is one of the image repair strategies triggered by the tactics of Simple denial and shift the blame, that are designed to absolve the accused party from blameworthiness. Simple denial is a tactic of denial in which the accused asserts that he didn't commit the offensive act or that it didn't even occur. Shift the blame is another tactic of denial used to shift the blame for the offensive act from the accused party by assigning responsibility to someone else, therefore the audience's anger and negative perceptions about the target is shifted to someone else (Len-Rios & Benoit, 2004; Benoit, 2006)

2. Evasion of responsibility is a general image repair strategy achieved through four tactics are defeasibility, provocation, accident, good intentions, that are intended to reduce the blame for the act.

-Provocation tactic is designed to reduce responsibility by claiming that the negative action is performed in response or as a natural reaction to a preceding offensive act performed by another, thus implies that the provocateur shouldn't be totally blamed (Benoit, 2015).

- -The defeasibility tactic means claiming insufficiency of information or lack of ability or control over the situation, and hence implying that "he should not be held completely responsible for the offensive act" (Benoit & Henson, 2009).
- Accident is one of the tactics of evading responsibility in which the defendant claims that the offensive act occurred accidentally without awareness. If accepted by audience, it could help to decrease the degree of responsibility for it (Len-Rios & Benoit, 2004).
- Good Intentions, according to Benoit (2015), in this tactic the persuader tries to give excuses through claiming that the offensive act was committed while had good intentions, and that it was not intended to cause any harm.

3. Reduction of offensiveness strategy is realized by the tactics of bolstering, minimization, differentiation, transcendence, attacking the accuser, and compensation.

- Bolstering is one of the tactics of reducing the offensiveness strategy indicates rhetors' efforts to increase the target audience's positive feelings toward them by acclaiming their positive traits or achievements to mitigate the negative effects of their misbehavior (Benoit, 1997).
- Transcendence is a sub-category of reducing the offensiveness strategy, it means "placing the act in a broader, often moral, context so that the end justifies the means" (Len-Rios & Benoit, 2004).
- Minimization tactic is meant to minimize the passive impact of the offensive act by trying to persuade the audience that the act is not as serious or bad as it might initially seem, and implying that the "consequences or severity of the act were exaggerated". (Benoit, 2015).
- Differentiation is a tactic of reducing the offensiveness strategy, involves comparing or distinguishing the act performed by the persuader from other similar actions that are more serious and offensive committed by another, by this comparison, the act may seem less offensive, or reshape the act as acceptable (Benoit, 1994; Benoit, 2015).
- Attacking the accuser is a tactic used by the accused of offensive act in order to decrease the credibility of their accusers (opponents who represent the source of accusation or allegation), in an

attempt to reduce the severity of damages caused by their accusations on rhetor's reputation. Therefore, the rhetor's image may be improved (Benoit, 1997).

- In the compensation tactic, the persuader attempts to compensate the victim by offering positive reinforcements in various forms such as services, money, or goods, in order to offset the negative feelings associated with the offensive act (Benoit & Drew, 1997).

4. Corrective action: Concerning the image repair strategy of corrective action, the defender engages in this strategy by giving promises and pledges to solve the problem, or plans to prevent it from reoccurring (Benoit, 2015).

5. Mortification is an image repair strategy involves "expressions of regret (for one's role in the offensive act, or for the consequences of the act, or both), and requests for forgiveness" (Benoit & Drew, 1997).

The typology of image repair strategies (IRSs) is based in its evolution on Ware & Linkugel's (1973) theory of apologia, which focuses on formal (public) self-defense applied within political context.

Benoit (1997) demonstrates that in order for image repair strategies to be employed effectively, it is significant for the defendant to take into account and well comprehend the attacks on image, which threatened an image and therefore stimulate these defensive strategies to properly respond to accusations and repair a tarnished image effectively. Attacks, also termed as complaints, challenges, or crises (by accusations, criticisms, or suspicions of wrongdoings), which as Pomerantz (1978) asserts, consists of two elements that cause an image to be at risk depending on the audience perceptions, are the offensiveness of the performed act, and blaming the accused for being responsible about that act (as cited in Benoit, 2015; 2004). In relation to the elements of attacks, the denial strategy is designed to avoid and absolve from responsibility; The evasion of responsibility strategy is intended to reduce blameworthiness; The strategy of reducing the offensiveness functions to reduce the degree of the audience's negative feeling and the offensiveness of the act; Whereas the strategies of corrective action and mortification works to reduce the both elements of blame and offensiveness.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

The selected data of the current study is collected from Trump's (2023) Mar-a Lago speech following his arraignment in New York court, in which four self-defense full extracts are purposefully selected for the analysis, each extract is a self-defense delivered in response to the charges against him that represent serious crises cases threaten his public image. Only one crisis case is analyzed in this paper for the sake of brevity and length.

3.2. The Model of Analysis

In order to achieve the aims of the present study, the model of analysis is presented as an eclectic model developed to analyze the data under study, it is adopted from Benoit's (1995) theory of image repair strategies and tactics as an analytical model for image repair discourse. These defense strategies (i.e., IRSs) are defensive verbal responses realized pragmatically as speech acts depending on Searle's (1969) classification of illocutionary speech acts in order to achieve the perlocutionary effects of persuasion on the audience. This study is concerned with three categories (Representatives, Commissive, Expressive) of SAs to realize image repair strategies and tactics pragmatically.

3.3. Data Analysis

3.3.1. Trump Response to the Federal Case of the Illegal Handling of Classified Government Documents

Extract (1):

"Then you have a radical left lunatic known as a bomb thrower, who is harassing hundreds of ... my people day after day over the boxes hoax, do you know the boxes hoax as we call it? Just so everyone knows, I come under what's known as the Presidential Records Act, which was designed and approved by Congress long ago just for this reason. Under the Act, I'm supposed to negotiate

with NARA, the National Archives and Records Administration, which as of this date is a radical left trouble making organization that red flags the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights as dangerous and triggering. Can you imagine? This is what we have to deal with, but there is no criminality under the Presidential Records Act. That is not what it's all about. We were negotiating in very good faith, proper way in order to return some or all of the documents that I openly and in very plain sight brought with me to Mar-a-Lago from our beautiful White House just as virtually every other president has done in the past. When FBI and DOJ officials with NARA were here, I told my lawyer to show them the very secure storage room in which they were locked. The FBI still request in writing was, "Could you please put another lock on the door?" We immediately complied. It's a lot different than the Biden situation, isn't it? The next thing I know, we were raided by many gun-toting FBI agents, who took whatever they wanted, including my passports and medical records. Everybody was in shock. Nobody had ever heard of such a raid before. We can't even believe it. Who would think that that could happen today? I immediately thought of the Fourth Amendment that protects against unreasonable search and seizure, but they did it anyway because our justice system has become lawless. They're using it now in addition to everything else to win elections. Apparently, they're not looking at me through the view of the non-criminal Presidential Records Act. They came up with a new one. This is a new one, and they're looking at me through the Espionage Act. Think of that, how does that sound, of 1917 where the penalty is death, even though that has absolutely nothing to do with openly taking boxes of documents and mostly clothing and other things to my home, which President Obama has done. The Bushes have done. Jimmy Carter has done. Ronald Reagan has done. Everybody has done. In fact, Hillary Clinton got rid of 33,000 emails and that was okay, but nobody has done it like Joe Biden. This lunatic special prosecutor named Jack Smith, I wonder what it was prior to a change, who others of his ilk say he's even worse than they are, is only looking at Trump. Yet Joe Biden took massive amounts, more documents, even removed many boxes to Chinatown. Do you believe that? They just got 10 million dollars from China. Where did that come from? I guess they were banking on Hunter's expertise and had others stored in unsecured offices in Pennsylvania and strewn all over his garage floor where his now very famous Corvette is also stored, all over the floor including classified documents, but that's okay. Perhaps most importantly, he has 1,850 boxes in Delaware, which he is refusing to give up, but isn't that real obstruction? That's obstruction. As president, I have the right to declassify documents and the process is automatic. If I take them with me, it's automatic, declassified. Biden was vice president. He had absolutely no right to declassify as vice president. He doesn't come under the non-criminal Presidential Records Act. He comes under the very criminal Federal Records Act, unfortunately for him, but it's not going to matter because they don't follow the law, which has very severe penalties. He had classified documents that he took while he was a senator, which is absolutely inexcusable and other senators, including Democrats are outraged, but he's not being harassed and hounded like the people who work for me are. In fact, they seem to have forgotten about his documents entirely, so many, thousands and thousands. It's okay with him. They like to say that I'm obstructing, which I'm not, because I was working with NARA very nicely until the raid on my home. Biden is obstructing by making it impossible to get the 1,850 boxes or explain why many documents were located in Chinatown. Can't explain it. Why were they in Chinatown? I don't know." ... "We have this Jack Smith lunatic threatening people every single day through his representatives. They're threatening jail terms, "But talk about Trump and you'll go free." This is where we are as a nation. Who would've thought they can't beat us at the ballot box, so they try and beat us through the law. That's the country in which we live" (Web source).

3.2. *Persuasive Attack*

The former president Donald Trump faced accusations by the special counsel Jack Smith who indicted him in the federal charge of mishandling government classified documents, and

conspiracy to obstruct the government in retrieving these documents. Such criminal charges represent a serious threat to his public image in the midst of his upcoming re-election campaign, such attack calls and motivates him to defend himself.

3.3. Self-Defenses (*Apologia*)

3.3.1. Image Repair Strategies and Tactics as Defense Strategies

To address this criminal charge against him, self-defenses is achieved as Trump relies, in the prolonged extract above, on three primary image repair strategies are denial, evasion of responsibility strategy, and reducing the Offensiveness as defense strategies to repair his threatened public image.

3.4. Denial

Trump employs the main image repair strategy of denial, which is realized through using both the tactics of simple denial and shift the blame.

3.4.1. Simple Denial

Trump denies the criminal charge that he mishandled classified government documents by asserting that he belongs to the Presidential Records Act which allows and gives him immunity to keep them or to negotiate with the National Archives and Records Administration to return them if necessary. Implying that he did nothing illegal because classifying document is legal process and permitted according to the presidential records act. As it is manifested in the following extract: *"Just so everyone knows, I come under what's known as the Presidential Records Act, which was designed and approved by Congress long ago just for this reason. Under the Act, I'm supposed to negotiate with NARA, the National Archives and Records Administration"*.

Trump employs the simple denial tactic to absolve himself from the criminal charge of mishandling classified documents against him, in which he denies that he commits a crime and that his act of handling classified documents is crime according to the presidential records act. He restates: *"there is no criminality under the Presidential Records Act."*

Trump further denies the accusation that he refuses or obstructs returning the classified documents to government by stating the he negotiated orderly and in a peaceful way with the national archives and records administration (NARA) about returning the documents to government, and that he complied to their orders, as it is evident in the following extract: *"I'm supposed to negotiate with NARA, the National Archives and Records Administration...We were negotiating in very good faith, proper way in order to return some or all of the documents that I openly and in very plain sight brought with me to Mar-a-Lago from our beautiful White House just as virtually every other president has done in the past...When FBI and DOJ officials with NARA were here, I told my lawyer to show them the very secure storage room in which they were locked. The FBI still request in writing was, "Could you please put another lock on the door?" We immediately complied."*

"They like to say that I'm obstructing, which I'm not, because I was working with NARA very nicely until the raid on my home." In the above statement, Trump directly refuses the federal charges against him that he has obstructed the documents or refused to give them up, he asserts that he worked with NARA faithfully to return the documents, but such negotiations stopped because of the unforgiven armed raid on his house by FBI agents.

3.4.2. Pragmatic Realization

On the pragmatic level, the simple denial tactic is realized by performing the SA of denying which falls within the category of representatives, as Trump adopts this tactic, in multiple extracts, to deny committing crime, in which he denies considering his act of handling classified documents as crime by asserting that he did it legally as a president under the presidential records act which gives him immunity, and denying the accusation of obstructing to return the documents.

3.4.3. Shift the Blame

"The next thing I know, we were raided by many gun-toting FBI agents, who took whatever they wanted, including my passports and medical records. Everybody was in shock. Nobody had ever heard of such a raid before. We can't even believe it. Who would think that that could happen today? protects against unreasonable search and seizure."

In the extract above, Trump assigns responsibility, for obstructing the process of returning the documents, onto the FBI and DOJ officials and agents accusing them that they raided on his house and illegally took documents and even his personal properties. Thus, He implies that they are the reason for obstructing the negotiation to return the documents and they should be blamed not him.

In addition, Trump employs shifting the blame tactic to free himself from the criminal charge of the illegal handling of classified documents by shifting the blame to his opponent Biden when he accused him of illegally declassifying documents as a vice president and senator has no right and doesn't belong to presidential act record. So, Biden should be charged for these crimes not him. As evidenced in: *"Biden was vice president. He had absolutely no right to declassify as vice president. He doesn't come under the non-criminal Presidential Records Act. He comes under the very criminal Federal Records Act."*, *"He had classified documents that he took while he was a senator, which is absolutely inexcusable and other senators, including Democrats are outraged, but he's not being harassed and hounded like the people who work for me are."*

"Biden is obstructing by making it impossible to get the 1,850 boxes or explain why many documents were located in Chinatown. Can't explain it. Why were they in Chinatown? I don't know." In the extract above, Trump shifts the responsibility for the criminal charge of obstructing the government classified documents onto his opponent Biden by accusing him of obstructing massive number of boxes (1,850) in Chinatown, implying that Biden is the one that must be charged for obstructing documents not him.

3.4.4. Pragmatic Realization

From a pragmatic point of view, shift the blame is realized through performing the expressive SA of blaming when he blames his opponent Biden to be responsible rather than him, and the representative SA of accusing as he accuses him that he is the one who mishandled classified documents, and obstructed them.

3.4.5. Evasion of Responsibility

Trump resorts to the image repair strategy of reducing the offensiveness, which means that rhetors repair their damaged image by giving excuses (claims) to reduce the amount of responsibility and blame for the wrongful act (Benoit,1995, p. 76). This strategy is achieved as Trump utilizes the tactic of provocation.

3.4.6. Provocation

"We were negotiating in very good faith, proper way in order to return some or all of the documents...we were raided by many gun-toting FBI agents, who took whatever they wanted, including my passports and medical records...I was working with NARA very nicely until the raid on my home."

In the above extracts, Trump resorts to provocation tactic to justify his action and reduce blame by claiming that the offensive act is in response to another prior offensive act. By employing this tactic, Trump claims that he was negotiating to return the documents but because of the raid on his house by the FBI and DOJ officials and agents where they attacked his house and took everything even his personal things which is the reason which stopped and obstructed his peaceful negotiation with NARA to return the documents as a response to the offensive raid on his house.

3.4.7. Pragmatic Realization

Pragmatically speaking, the provocation tactic is achieved by the representative SA of claiming, in which Trump adopts this tactic to claim that his peaceful negotiation with NARA is canceled as a reaction to the unreasonable offensive raid by the FBI.

3.5. Reduction of Offensiveness

Trump employs the image repair strategy of reducing the offensiveness, to mitigate the negativity experienced by the audience regarding the criminal charge against him of mishandling classified government documents, which is realized through choosing the tactics of minimization, differentiation, and attack the accuser.

3.5.1. Minimization

Trump minimizes the offense and the seriousness of his act, by asserting that handling classified documents is not crime or illegal as his accuser claims it to be, because he took the classified documents when he was a president belonging to presidential records act, in which classifying documents under the presidential records act is not crime or illegal, but a normal process. Thus, he implies that the consequences of his act, which are criminalizing him for handling his documents when he left the office while he has immunity under the presidential records act, are unfair and exaggerated. As he asserted in the following quote: *"there is no criminality under the Presidential Records Act."*

"Even though that has absolutely nothing to do with openly taking boxes of documents and mostly clothing and other things to my home, which President Obama has done. The Bushes have done. Jimmy Carter has done. Ronald Reagan has done. Everybody has done."

In the above extract, Trump resorts to the tactic of minimization to minimize the seriousness and significance the classified documents by claiming that the boxes of documents he took to his home are mostly contain his personal properties like clothes, and that taking presidential documents is a normal and automatic process and it is his right just as all the other former presidents did.

3.5.2. Pragmatic Realization

The minimization tactic is pragmatically realized by accomplishing a speech act, as Trump employs it to perform the representative SA of claiming when he claims that his act, regarding handling classified documents when he left the office as president with immunity under the presidential records act, is of a minimum offensive in which it is not a crime, and that the boxes of documents he took to his home are his own properties like clothes to minimize the offense of his act.

3.5.3. Differentiation

"The FBI still request in writing was, "Could you please put another lock on the door?" We immediately complied. It's a lot different than the Biden situation, isn't it?" Trump exploits the differentiation tactic in the abovementioned extract, in an attempt to offset the offensiveness of the charge against him about obstructing to retrieve government documents, by comparing the way he treated FBI with Biden's one, implying that Biden doesn't obey and compel to the orders of the FBI, unlike him. Thus, he is the one who obstructs the investigation of government not him.

"In fact, Hillary Clinton got rid of 33,000 emails and that was okay, but nobody has done it like Joe Biden... Yet Joe Biden took massive amounts, more documents, even removed many boxes to Chinatown... but that's okay." In the quote above, Trump employs the differentiation tactic, in an attempt to reduce the offensiveness of his offensive acts when compared to similar offensive acts committed by others like Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden.

Trump gives another instance of the differentiation tactic when he compares between himself and Biden regarding declassifying documents, asserting that he, as a president under the

Presidential Records Act, can declassify document which is a normal process and legal, implying that he did nothing wrong or illegal so should not be charged with such a criminal case, in comparison to what Biden did, who declassify massive number of document while he was vice president not president, so he is the one who must be charged for obstruction under the very criminal Federal Records Act. As it is shown in this extract: *"As president, I have the right to declassify documents and the process is automatic. If I take them with me, it's automatic, declassified. Biden was vice president. He had absolutely no right to declassify as vice president. He doesn't come under the non-criminal Presidential Records Act. He comes under the very criminal Federal Records Act."*

3.5.4. Pragmatic Realization

From a pragmatic perspective, the representative SAs of comparing and accusing are performed to realize the differentiation tactic, as Trump uses it when he compares his act, on which he charged for, with other similar acts which are more offensive and criminal committed by his opponents, to highlight his opponent's passive deeds so his act becomes less offensive through comparison.

3.5.5. Attack the Accuser

Trump employs the tactic of attacking the accuser to reduce his accuser's reliability, the special counsel Jack Smith, as untrusted by criticizing him as radical left lunatic for innovating a fake case against him describing it as "boxes hoax", as the following extract shows: *"Then you have a radical left lunatic known as a bomb thrower, who is harassing hundreds of ... my people day after day over the boxes hoax, do you know the boxes hoax as we call it? "*

Also, Trump uses this tactic when he attacks the National Archives and Records Administration, abbreviating it as (NARA), by criticizing it as: *"a radical left trouble making organization that red flags the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights as dangerous and triggering."*

"Immediately thought of the Fourth Amendment that protects against unreasonable search and seizure, but they did it anyway because our justice system has become lawless. They're using it now in addition to everything else to win elections. Apparently, they're not looking at me through the view of the non-criminal Presidential Records Act. They came up with a new one. This is a new one, and they're looking at me through the Espionage Act. Think of that, how does that sound, of 1917 where the penalty is death" In the extract stated above, Trump resorts to attacking the accuser tactic moreover when he defiantly attacks his accuser and the American justice system as a whole, to reduce its credibility, by criticizing it as "lawless", and implying that his opponents Biden and the democrats control the law system and use it to achieve political win in the election by lying. He complains on the unfair judge and accuses his opponents that they change the laws and unjustly criminalizing him by the criminal Espionage Act instead of the non-criminal Presidential Records Act to interfere with his campaign and prevent him from win

"This lunatic special prosecutor named Jack Smith, I wonder what it was prior to a change, who others of his ilk say he's even worse than they are, is only looking at Trump." As shown in the above extract, Trump once more attacks his accuser, the special prosecutor Jack Smith, by criticizing him as an agent for democrats who named him as Jack Smith. And accusing him as unjust prosecutor because he only focuses on what trump did while ignores what others like Hillary and Joe Biden did which is more offense than what he did.

3.5.6. Pragmatic Realization

The tactic of attacking the accuser is realized pragmatically by performing the expressive SA of criticizing, Trump utilizes this tactic to criticize his accuser Jack Smith, the National Archives and Records Administration, and the whole justice system as lawless that is politically motivated against him. Another SA is performed using this tactic is the representative SA of accusing which is achieved when Trump accuses his opponents of using law for their political sake to win the election.

3.6. Corrective Action

This defense strategy wasn't employed in this case.

3.7. Mortification

No such a strategic response was used in this case.

Table 1.
The statistical distribution of image repair strategies and tactics.

Image repair strategies (IRSs)	Tactics (IRTs)			Total Fr.	Total Pr.
		Fr.	Pr.		
Denial	Simple denial	18	21.7%	35	42.2 %
	Shift blame	17	20.5%		
Evasion of responsibility	Provocation	1	1.2%	1	1.2 %
	Defeasibility	0	%		
	Accident	0	0		
	Good intentions	0	0		
Reduction of offensiveness	Bolstering	10	12.0%	47	56.6 %
	Minimization	6	7.2%		
	Differentiation	8	9.6%		
	Transcendence	3	3.6%		
	Attacking the accuser	20	24.1%		
	Compensation	0	0		
Corrective action		0		0	
Mortification		0		0	
Total		83	100%		

Table 2.
Image repair's speech acts.

Categories	Speech acts	Fr.	Pr.
Representative	Denying	18	15.7%
	Asserting	15	13.0%
	Claiming	10	8.7%
	Comparing	8	6.9%
	Accusing	17	14.8%
Expressive	Blaming	17	14.8%
	Acclaiming	10	8.7%
	Empathizing	0	0
	Criticizing	20	17.4%
	Apologizing	0	0
Commissive	Promising	0	0
	Offering	0	0
Total		115	100%

4. Conclusions

1. The analysis reveals that three categories of image repair strategies are used, namely: Denial, evasion of responsibility, reduction of offensiveness, with the absences of corrective action and

mortification strategies. Reduction of offensiveness is the most used strategy (56.6 %) through the tactic of attacking the accuser as the most frequent tactic employed 20 times with a percentage (24.1%), followed by the denial strategy (42.2 %). This result indicates that president Trump prefers to attack his accusers and deny committing the wrongdoings to absolve from blame. While evasion of responsibility is the least employed strategy.

2. Concerning the qualitative analysis of the pragmatic realization of IR tactics as pragmatic strategies performing speech acts, the table shows that the expressive speech act of criticizing realizing the tactic of attacking the accuser is the mostly performed SA. Followed by the representative SAs of denying which realize the simple denial tactic.

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