

An Intonational Analysis of Donald Trump's Rhetoric on Muslims

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Abstract:

This study investigates Trump's rhetoric on Muslims through an eclectic analytical framework that integrates Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological Square model with Brazil's (1997) discourse intonation model. It aims to examine how ideological polarization between "us" and "them" is constructed through both discursive strategies and intonational patterns. The data consist of selected excerpts from Trump's speech, which are analyzed qualitatively and acoustically using PRAAT software.

The findings reveal that Trump's discourse constructs an ideological polarization in which Muslims are negatively represented as an out-group and Americans as a positively represented in-group. This is achieved through strategies such as generalization, evidentiality, presupposition, and hyperbole. Prosodically, the proclaiming fall tone is the most frequent, reflecting his tendency to present information as new and assertive, especially regarding the proposed Muslim ban. Although the non-dominance role occurs more frequently than the dominance role, suggesting a less overtly controlling stance, it still serves as a persuasive strategy that reinforces us-versus-them polarization and communicates ideological meanings effectively.

The study concludes that ideological meaning in political speech is constructed not only through lexical and rhetorical choices but also through intonational features. It highlights the importance of integrating Critical Discourse Analysis with discourse intonation to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how political ideologies are linguistically and phonetically realized.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, discourse intonation, Donald J. Trump, ideological square, rhetoric on Muslims, us/ other ideology.

تحليل تنغمي لخطاب دونالد ترامب حول المسلمين

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الملخص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة خطاب ترامب تجاه المسلمين من خلال إطار تحليلي انتقائي يدمج نموذج المربع الأيديولوجي لفان دايك (٢٠٠٦) مع نموذج نبرة الخطاب لبرازيل (١٩٩٧). وتهدف إلى دراسة كيفية بناء الاستقطاب الأيديولوجي بين "نحن" و"هم" من خلال استراتيجيات خطابية وأنماط نبرة صوتية. تتكون البيانات من مقتطفات مختارة من خطاب ترامب، تم تحليلها نوعيًا وصوتيًا باستخدام برنامج PRAAT .

تكشف النتائج أن خطاب ترامب يبني استقطابًا أيديولوجيًا يُصوّر فيه المسلمون بصورة سلبية كجماعة خارجية، بينما يُصوّر الأمريكيون بصورة إيجابية كجماعة داخلية. ويتحقق ذلك من خلال استراتيجيات مثل التعميم، والاستدلال، والافتراض المسبق، والمبالغة. أما من الناحية النبرية، فإن نبرة الاعلان الهابطة هي الأكثر تكرارًا، مما يعكس ميله إلى تقديم المعلومات بصورة جديدة وحاسمة، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بحظر المسلمين المقترح. على الرغم من أن دور عدم الهيمنة يتكرر أكثر من دور الهيمنة، مما يوحي بموقف أقل تحكمًا بشكل واضح، إلا أنه يظل استراتيجية إقناعية تعزز الاستقطاب بين "نحن" و"هم" وتُوصل المعاني الأيديولوجية بفعالية.

تخلص الدراسة إلى أن المعنى الأيديولوجي في الخطاب السياسي لا يُبنى فقط من خلال الخيارات المعجمية والبلاغية، بل أيضًا من خلال خصائص النبرة. وتبرز الدراسة أهمية دمج تحليل الخطاب النقدي مع نبرة الخطاب لتوفير فهم أشمل لكيفية تجسيد الأيديولوجيات السياسية لغويًا وصوتيًا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب النقدي ، تنغمي الخطاب، دونالد جيه ترامب، المربع الأيديولوجي، الخطاب ضد المسلمين ، أيديولوجية "نحن/الآخر".

1. Introduction

Many studies revealed that the election of the 45th President, Donald J.Trump, was an extraordinary event as he declared banning all Muslims from entering to United States (Nuruzzaman 2018). His anti-Muslim tones were very clear when he focused on many controversial issues like immigration, terrorism, and security and he regarded his decision as a grave issue which is very important to obtain the security for Americans because he accused Muslims are responsible for all violence and terrors in United States (Khan et al., 2021). Consequently, this study is crucial as it examines the various rhetorical strategies employed to construct Trump's rhetoric on Muslims discourse through the lens of us/them polarization ideology.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Integration between Critical Discourse Analysis and Phonology

Prosody is a crucial component of spoken language, encompassing the suprasegmental features of speech at the sentence level, such as variations in pitch, duration, and intensity. Speakers utilize distinct pitch patterns in their utterances to express various pragmatic meanings across different languages, significantly influencing the interpretation of intended meanings within context ([Gussenhoven, 2004](#); [Ladd, 2008](#)). Although there has been recent increasing interest among discourse analysts in incorporating prosody into the spoken language analysis, further research is needed to investigate speech prosody in discourse analysis.

The concept of Islamophobia has emerged as a highly contentious issue in the United States, particularly following the September 11 attacks. This term, which has its roots in the 7th Century and is linked to Orientalist perspectives on the Arab world, combines "Islam" with the suffix "phobia," signifying a fear or hatred of Islam and Muslims (Evolvi, 2018). In the same respect, Bazian (2018) states that the emergence of Islamophobia belongs to what is called 'Clash of Civilizations', that can be related to the Huntington's concept of 'Islamic Extremism'. Islamophobia is regarded as one of the most important forms of racism and discrimination and it is actually is unjustified hostility that is used against the Muslim community around the world because Islam has been connected with the negative perceptions (Waikar, 2018). However, many scholars argue that Islamophobia belongs to the refusal of the Muslims' religion because of the interrelated terms with Islam like violence and terrorisms. In this regard, [Terman \(2017\)](#) and Sides and Gross (2013) state that media in United States highlighted that Muslims are clearly sexist and extremists in nature and portrayed that Muslim communities are misogynistic, barbaric, uncivilized, which are always a threat to American values. It is important to mention that Islamophobia appeared as a trademark by Trump's campaign in the elections of 2016, when he declared his banning Muslims from entering to United States ([Kazi \(2017\)](#)). Trump's terms about anti-Islam and anti-Muslim are very well stated, particularly in an interview on CNN with Anderson Cooper, when he said 'I think Islam hate us', which reflects his Islamophobic ideology as he focused also on a harsh laws towards the Muslim-American community.

Accordingly, numerous prior studies have utilized Van Dijk's (2006) ideological framework in their analysis of discourse. Most of these studies examined the ways that the speaker can construct a reality for the audience, which frames his/her ideology of us/other in discourse. As a results, these studies highlight the significance of understanding the underlying ideology in speaker's messages, which he used to frame it in interpreting the discourse (McClay, 2017); (Nurfadilah, 2017); (Khan et al., 2021); (Fatima, 2021); (Kasiyarno & Murwantono, 2022); (Tennant, 2016); (Abbas, 2019); (Ahlstrand, 2020); (Qaiwer, 2020); (Kadim, 2022). Research on speech prosody within discourse analysis, especially in the context of political speech, remains limited. Some of these studies examined the intonational patterns in the speech of politicians like Nicolas Sarkozy, Segolene Royal, and Barack Obama. The findings mainly show that the (high-fall) is the most commonly used by the politicians to make their delivery sound assertive, emphatic, and unique (Martin, 2013; miyauchi, 2017). In addition, the rising tone is also employed as a cohesive device for reinforcing ideas and the falling tone is used mostly as a discourse marker for finishing and concluding the ideas while the falling tone is used as a cohesive device for extending ideas (Maghrabi, 2022). Some studies assured the effectiveness of pragmatic forces in the speech of politicians on their audiences in order to attract their attention and convince about their goals (Farhan, 2017; Mufiah & Rahman, 2019).

Moreover, In 1997, British phonetician David Brazil developed a framework known as discourse intonation, which focuses on the various informational tones present in discourse. This approach has been predominantly utilized in pedagogical research. For instance, Odeyemi (2017) examined the intonation patterns of Nigerians in advertisements, revealing that proclaiming tones are frequently employed to engage viewers effectively. Similarly, Shitwi et al. (2019) and Maghrabi (2022) found that politicians tend to use more proclaiming tones than referring tones, positioning themselves as controllers to highlight their objectives and capture the interviewer's attention. Conversely, Ali (2020) argues that speakers in religious discourse do not adopt a controlling role when addressing their audience. Mahfudhoh (2021) supports this observation, noting that in religious texts, the speaker remains non-dominant in delivering proclaiming information.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate the value of examining discourse from both ideological and prosodic perspectives. While research employing Van Dijk's ideological framework has mainly focused on revealing how speakers construct representations of "us" and "others" to promote particular ideologies, studies on political prosody have highlighted the role of intonation in conveying emphasis, persuasion, and speaker authority. Furthermore, research adopting Brazil's discourse intonation model has shown that tonal choices contribute significantly to the management of information and interpersonal relations in discourse.

However, the integration of ideological analysis with discourse intonation remains relatively underexplored, particularly in political speeches. This gap underscores the need for studies that investigate how ideological meanings are conveyed not only through linguistic choices but also through prosodic features in political speech. Therefore, this study addresses a significant gap in the existing literature by adopting an eclectic analytical approach that integrates Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological Square model with Brazil's (1997) discourse intonation model. It investigates the relationship between ideological representation and

intonational choices in Trump's rhetoric speech. Specifically, the study analyzes the information tones employed in the speech to identify how prosodic features contribute to the construction and reinforcement of ideological meanings, particularly the overarching us-versus-them dichotomy.

2.2 The Ideological Square in Van Dijk's model

One of the most essential approaches in CDA is the Van Dijk's (2006) model of discourse intonation, which aims to uncover the hidden ideologies in discourse. This approach is developed into a cognitive one to show how the meaning is structured in society and it is mainly a socio-cognitive one. It is based on both 'society' and 'discourse', which are important in providing descriptive, explanatory, particularly critical accuracy of the social problems in any study (Reisigl et al., 2009). Van Dijk (1998) argued that each social group owns certain ideology, which dominates its discourse. This study focuses on ideological square in Van Dijk's (2006) model because it is very suitable to highlight the polarization ideology of 'self versus other' in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims, where the self or in-group is represented as positive, while other or out-group is represented as negative. In terms of Van Dijk's, there are two stages of analysis, which are macro and micro analysis. According to macro analysis, there are four major strategies of legitimize the self and de-legitimize the other ((Van Dijk, 1998, 2004, 2006):

- 1 emphasize positive things about 'us';
- 2 emphasize negative things about 'them';
- 3 de-emphasize negative things about 'us'; and.
- 4 de-emphasize positive things about 'them'

Therefore, the analysis of macro level in this study focused on self/other binary, which is explained as follows:

Donald Trump: self, we, us (in-group)

Muslims: others, they, them (out-group)

Moreover, the analysis of micro level is composed on 25 discursive strategies, but only seven of them will be investigated since they are concerned specifically in achieving the objectives in the present study. The following is a summary about the seven selected discursive strategies:

1. Authority: this strategy is used commonly by politicians to support their claim in order to convince the audience on statement.
2. Categorization: this strategy is used by speaker to categorize people to different groups and acts like religious or political groups.
3. Evidentiality: the speaker used this strategy when he provides hard facts and figures to support's his/her own claim, opinion, believe, or any information. In this regard, Van Dijk's words, this strategy is an important as it conveys objectivity, validity, reliability, and credibility.

// ↘ DO you eat RICE // (I don't know the answer, please tell me)

Generally, the fall tone occurs when the movement of the pitch starts from a high point to a down point, for example:

//It is ↘ GREAT // (Roach, 2009:132)

In this regard, O'Connor (1973:47) explains that the low drop refers to these utterances, including statements, which include alternatives, answers to questions, announcements or comments that end with a falling tone, which shows that utterances are complete and, therefore, there are no other possibilities as shown in the following examples:

//You can have tea, | or milk, | or ↘ COFFEE //
(The list is complete and there are no more possibilities)

As for the rising-falling tone, the movement of the pitch rises, then falls. According to Brazil (1997), the rise-fall tone is utilized in expressions like insistence, forcefulness, and enforcing dominance of speakers, for instance:

//Why don't you ↗ASK him //

On the other hand, the referring tone can be either (rise or fall-rise), and it refers to the shared or as part of the common ground information, which is already known by the speaker. As for the level tone, it is very rarely happened and it is used commonly for routine and formulaic situations (Brazil, ibid.). Based on the rising tone pattern, the movement of the pitch starts from a low point, then moves to a high point such as:

// ↗ WHO? // (Wells, 2006:18)

In regards to the high-rise tone, it can be used in echo-questions (repeating the words of the questions by the listener). Echo-questions are used as fillers by the listener to take time to think as in:

(Do you know John Hancock?) _ John ↗Hancock? (Of course, I know him.)

In addition, Wells (2006:18) mentions that the falling-rising tone refers to the movement of the pitch when it starts from a high point, moves to a low point, then to a high point again as follows:

// I think it's ↘↗MINE//

Moreover, level tone can be used in unemotional, as well as normal speech, whereby it plays a little communicative role. The level tone can be utilized when the speaker's focus is on language production, not on the conveyed message. This tone is symbolised by (→), and it can be utilised with routine performance such as parade-ground commands or public recitation prayers, for example:

// Almighty →GOD // we humbly →beSEECH thee //

Furthermore, Brazil in his approach of discourse intonation (1997) identified another important factor regarding whether the speaker is dominant or non- dominant in the discourse. On one hand, the speaker who takes the controller role in the discourse is called dominant speaker and s/he can use either a (rise-fall) with a proclaiming plus tone or a (rise) with a referring plus tone. In this respect, Coulthard (1985:110) explains that if dominant speakers select the rising tone, it implies a kind of intervention such as:

// p WELL //r+ I've 'come to SEE you //.

However, when the rise-fall tone is chosen by speakers, it implies (horror, surprise) and speakers, at the same time, add new information such as:

// r he says gamey // p+ is the grape that makes Beaujolais//.

On the other hand, the speaker who didn't take the controller role in the discourse is called non-dominant speaker and s/he can use either a (fall) with a proclaiming tone or a (fall-rise) with a referring tone (Vilches, 2015). Two examples are given below by Brazil (1997) to distinguish between the dominant tone, i.e, (rise) and non-dominant tone (fall-rise), where the first example shows the controller role of the speaker for direct demand of the information and the second one shows the non-controller role of the speaker for indirect demand of the information, i.e., more polite requests:

// ↗ got a LIGHT // (direct demand of the information)

// ↘↗ got a LIGHT // (indirect demand of the information)

Gradually, Table (1) below shows the information tone types with their pragmatic functions and the role of speaker in relation to the dominance and non-dominance:

Table 1 Information tone types with their pragmatic functions and the role of the speaker in relation to the dominance and non-dominance

Tone Type & notation	Symbol	Pragmatic function	Role of the speaker
Proclaiming (P)	Fall ↘	Shared information (convergence between participants)	Non-dominance
Proclaiming plus tone (P+)	Rise-fall ↗↘	Shared information (convergence between participants) and dominance	dominance
Referring (r)	Fall-rise ↘↗	Unshared information (divergence between participants)	Non-dominance
Referring plus tone (r+)	Rise ↗	Unshared information (divergence between participants) and dominance	dominance
Level tone	o	Formulaic situation	

3. Methodology

This research examined the Trump's rhetoric on Muslims, in which he declared his 'Muslim Ban' on December 7, 2015, during a rally in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. The statement lasts approximately 4 minutes and 17 seconds and contains 217 words. The speech can be accessed via the official website of the American Presidency Project through the provided YouTube link: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=-sz0KY-3PbQ&t=62s>. The term 'Muslim Ban' serves as a key indicator of Trump's anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic stance, significantly influencing the evolution of his rhetoric against Muslims (Khan et al., 2021). This research primarily employs a qualitative methodology, analyzing three long excerpts, which contain (85) tone units and various discursive strategies reflecting the Trump's rhetoric on Muslims. The methodological procedures of data analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the selected excerpts from Trump's Rhetoric on Muslims were analyzed according to Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological Square model to identify the discursive construction of the us-versus-them polarization. Particular attention was paid to the strategies of emphasizing positive representations of the in-group (us) and negative representations of the out-group (them). Second, the identified excerpts were segmented into tone units following Brazil's (1997) discourse intonation model. The tone units were then analyzed acoustically using the PRAAT software to examine the pitch patterns of the tonic syllables. The pitch height of the prominent syllables was measured in Hertz (Hz) to determine the information tones employed in the discourse (Roach, 2009). The resulting tonal patterns were subsequently interpreted in relation to the ideological categories identified through Van Dijk's framework.

4. Data Analysis

According to Brazil's model of discourse intonation, Table (2) below shows the information tone types with their pragmatic functions and the role of the speaker of the selected Excerpts in Donald Trump's Speech:

Table 2: Information tone types with their pragmatic functions and the role of the speaker for each Tone unit in the selected Excerpts of Donald Trump's Speech

Discourse Intonation Transcription of each tone unit in the selected Excerpts	No. of TU	Type of Information tones	Meaning	The role of the speaker
1. //P Donald J. ↘ <u>TRUMP</u> //	1	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P is calling for a ↘ <u>T</u> otal //	2	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
//P and complete ↘ <u>SHUT</u> down//	3	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P+ of ↗ ↘ <u>MU</u> slims //	4	Proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P entering the United ↘	5	Proclaiming tone	Unshared	Non-

STates //		(fall)	information	dominant
//P until our country's repreSENTatives //	6	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P+ can ↗ FIGure out //	7	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P+ what the hell is ↗ GOing on//	8	Proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
// r+ We have no ↗ CHOICE//	9	Referring tone (rise)	Shared information	dominant
// r+ we have no ↗ CHOICE //	10	Referring tone (rise)	Shared information	dominant
//P we have no ↘ CHOICE //	11	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P+ According to Pew ↗ ReSEARCH//	12	Proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P among ↘ OTHERs//	13	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P+ there is great ↗ HATred //	14	Proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P towards ↘ aMERicans by //	15	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P large ↘ SEGments of the //	16	Proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P+ Muslim ↗ popuLAtion//	17	Proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
2. // r Most ↗ REcently//	18	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
//r a ↘ POLL from //	19	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P Center for Security ↘ POLicy //	20	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P released data show "25% of those ↗ POLLED// number game//	21	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P+ ↗ agREED//	22	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
//r that violence ↗ AGAINST//	23	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P ↘ aMERicans//	24	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P+ these are people that are	25	referring tone (fall-	shared	Non-

// HERE //		rise)	information	dominant
// P by the WAY //	26	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P twenty five percent, not one PERcent //	27	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P by the WAY //	28	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P one percent would be unacceptable //	29	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// r one percent is unacceptable //	30	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P twenty five PERcent, //	31	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P of those POLLED //	32	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// r agreed that violence against AMERICANS //	33	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// r here in the United STATES //	34	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P+ is JUSTified //	35	proclaiming plus tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
// r+ as part THINK of it //	36	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
// P+ as PART //	37	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// P of the global jiHAD //	38	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P they want to change your religion //	39	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P I don't THINK so //	40	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P I don't THINK so //	41	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P I don't THINK so //	42	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// r+ and fifty one percent of those polled, "agreed that Muslims in aMERica //	43	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
// r+ should have the choice of being GOVerned //	44	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
// P+ according to shaRIah //	45	referring tone (fall-	shared	Non-

		rise)	information	dominant
// P+ you know what ʔ\shaRIah is, //	46	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
// r as part of the global ʔʔjiHAD //	47	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
// P fifty one \PERcent //	48	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P Shariah \AUnder, //	49	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
//P authorizes and I \LOOK this is , //	50	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P I mean \TERRible//	51	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P Shariah \AUnderizes //	52	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P such \aTROCIities //	53	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// r+ as murder ʔAGAINST//	54	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
// r+ ʔnon-beLIEVers//	55	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
//P who won't \conVERT //	56	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
//P+ʔ\ beHEADings //	57	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
// P and more unthinkable \ACTS //	58	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
//P that pose great harm to \aMERicans//	59	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
3. // P Without looking at the various polling \DATA//	60	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
// P it is obvious to \ANybody//	61	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non- dominant
//P+ the ʔ\ HATred//	62	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
//P+ is beyond ʔ\compreHENsion//.	63	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
//r Where this hatred \ʔCOMES from//	64	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant
// r and why we will have to determine, we're gonna have to \ʔFIGure it out//.	65	referring tone (fall- rise)	shared information	Non- dominant

// r we have to figure it out we can't live \r <u>LIKE</u> this //	66	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
//r Gonna get worse and \r <u>WORSE</u> //	67	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// r+ we could be politically correct and we can be \r <u>STU</u> pid//	68	referring tone (rise)	shared information	dominant
// P+ but it's going to get worse and \r <u>WORSE</u> //	69	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
// P Until we are able to determine and understand this \r <u>PROB</u> lem //	70	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P and the dangerous threat it \r <u>POS</u> es//	71	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// r our \r <u>COUN</u> try //	72	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// r cannot \r <u>BE</u> //	73	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
// r the \r <u>VIC</u> tims //	74	referring tone (fall-rise)	shared information	Non-dominant
//P of horrendous \r <u>Att</u> acks //	75	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P+ by people that \r <u>beLIEVE</u> //	76	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P+ only in \r <u>JiHAD</u> //	77	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)		dominant
//P+ these people only believe in \r <u>jiHAD</u> //	78	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
//P They don't want our \r <u>SYST</u> em//	79	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
//P They don't want our \r <u>SYST</u> em//	80	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
P+ and have no sense of \r <u>REAS</u> on //	81	proclaiming PLUS tone (rise-fall)	Unshared information	dominant
// P or \r <u>reSPECT</u> //	82	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P for human \r <u>LIFE</u> //	83	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P they have no \r <u>reSPECT</u> //	84	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant
// P for human \r <u>LIFE</u> //	85	proclaiming tone (fall)	Unshared information	Non-dominant

4.1 Analysis of Excerpt No. 1

“Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what the hell is going on. We have no choice; we have no choice, we have no choice. According to Pew Research, among others, there is great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population”.

Figure 1 below shows an extraction of (fall) pitch contour in three TUs //P Donald J. \ TRUMP// , // P is calling for a \ TOtal // , and //P and complete \ SHUTdown//

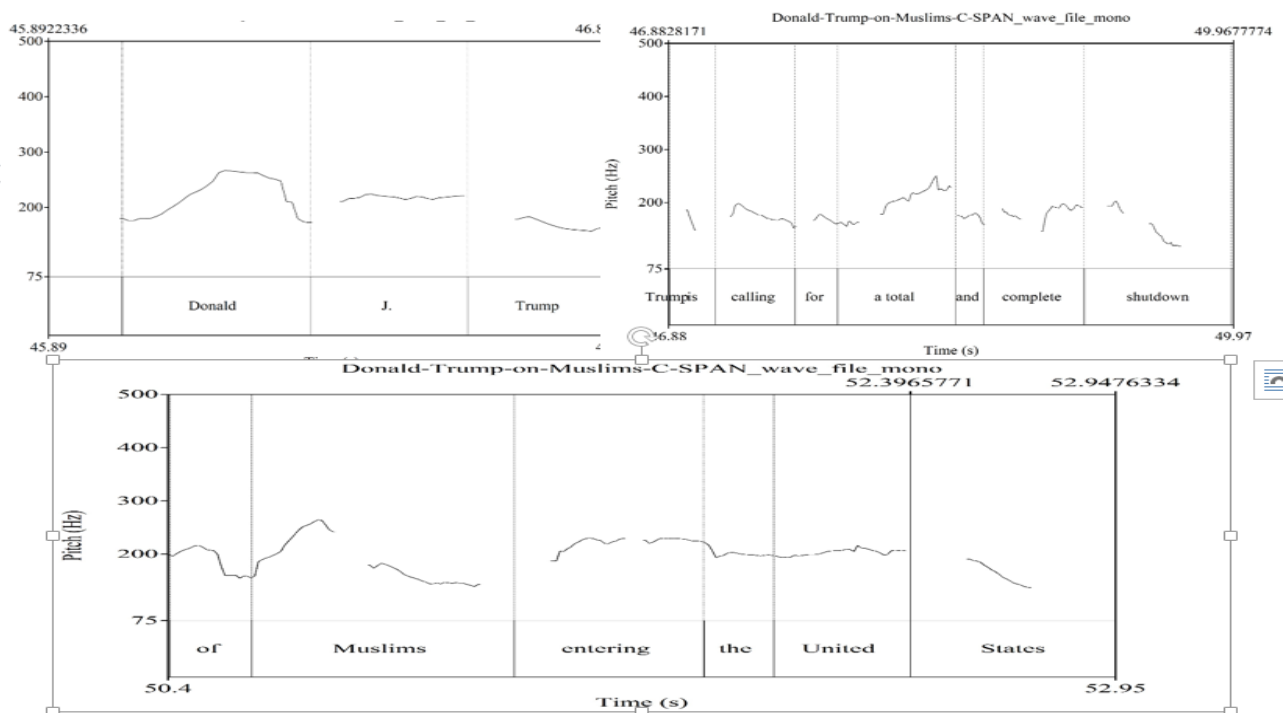


Figure 1 an extraction of (fall) pitch contour in three TUs //P Donald J. \ TRUMP// , // P is calling for a \ TOtal // , and //P and complete \ SHUTdown//

In this excerpt, Trump began his speech with a definite falling tone to draw the attention of Americans and declare about new and important decision which is that Muslims should not be allowed to set foot in the United States. In terms of Van Dijk’s terminology, Trump used authority as an important strategy when he exploited his name as powerful man by emphasizing on his American administration in the future. Actually, Trump employed the polarization strategy of us versus them when he states that Muslims are responsible for the tragic events of 9/11 attacks and he blamed them for all terrorist activities after this event in America. In this way, he regarded all Muslims as out-group who are terrorists participated in destructing America. In this excerpt, Trump used a proclaiming tone with either fall or rise-fall tone to reflect the authority strategy in order to provide unexpected information with a

definite decision about banning all Muslims entering US. In addition, he did not take the dominant role in his speaking to the public about his decision to increase pressure upon his public to obtain their agreement about his decision which in turn this can lead him to win in the presidential election. Actually, the real reason behind Trump's decision is to win the largest number of elected officials for him in order to win the upcoming presidential elections.

After that, Trump tried to share information with his audience when he referred to the destructive events of 9/11 attacks, which are already known by them. Here, he used a rise tone to argue the Americans that they should not be given any protection for any Muslim by stating that "we have no choice" except banning Muslims from entering America, because they may cause a serious threat to the security of Americans. In this way, Trump used generalization strategy by blaming all Muslims as out-group of being responsible for all the troubles and destruction in the world. The phrase "we have no choice" are used three times by Trump who used a rise tone in the first two times, while he used a fall tone in the third to reflect emphasis on achieving his decision if he wins in the upcoming presidential elections.

Moreover, Trump did not provide details to Americans when he referenced evidence such as "according to Pew research," which supports his claims through using the strategies of generalization and Evidentiality. He spoke in a commanding tone, either rising or falling, to discourage any doubts about his decisions and to assert that all Muslims are a threat to American safety. Trump employed the Evidentiality strategy to support his decisions and used generalization to label all Muslims as a threat. He highlighted negative aspects of Muslims, aligning with Van Dijk's Ideological Square by focusing solely on their perceived flaws and ignoring any positive attributes in the U.S. This approach reinforced his Islamophobic views, especially when he claimed that "there is great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population."

4.2 Analysis of Excerpt No. 2

"Most recently, a poll from the Center for Security Policy released data showing "25% of those polled agreed that violence against Americans , these people that are here by the way, 25% not 1% (by the way 1% is unacceptable), (1% is unacceptable), 25% of those polled agreed that violence against Americans here in the United States is justified as a part , think of it, "as part of the global jihad" they want change your religion, I don't think so, I don't think so.as part of the global jihad, and 50% of those polled "agreed that Muslims in America should have the choice of being governed according to Shariah". You know what Shariah is, 51% Shariah author, authorizes and I look this is I mean terrible Shariah authorizes such atrocities as murder against non-believers who won't convert beheadings and more unthinkable acts that pose great harm to Americans, especially women".

Figure 2 below shows an extraction of (fall-rise) pitch contour in TUs// r Most \∇REcently//, //r a \∇POLL from //, and (fall) pitch contour in TU // P Center for Security \∇POLicy //

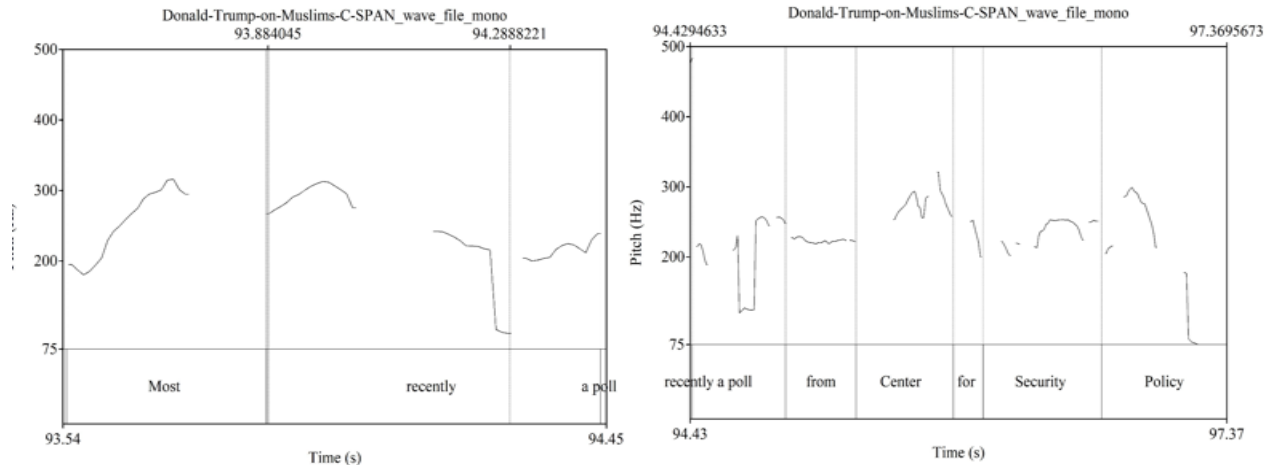


Figure 2 An extraction of (fall-rise) pitch contour in TUs// r Most ↘↗REcently//, //r a ↘↗POLL from //, and (fall) pitch contour in TU // P Center for Security ↘POLicy //

In this extract, two strategies are employed in Trump's speech which are numbers game and authority and he used a fall-rise tone in referring to a survey report of the Security Policy Centre. Then, Trump used a falling tone to draw the attention of American to an important thing when he mentioned that 25% of those participants agreed that it is the Global Jihad, which caused violence and turmoil against Americans and 51% of those participants regarded that Muslims in America should be supplied with liberty, so that they can spend their lives according to Shariah way (Islamic ways).

Trump's speech employs a fall-rise tone to highlight the word "violence," overshadowing the majority who support Muslim rights. He uses polarization by suggesting that Shariah poses a threat to Americans, implying that Muslims are allowed to harm non-Muslims. Presupposition is clarified when Trump presupposes the dangers of Shariah, hinting that Americans are unaware of its potential destructiveness, while he claims to be informed. Much of his speech features a falling tone to inform Americans about the future, increasing pressure regarding Muslim terrorist activities, especially against women. He exaggerates by labeling Islam as inherently misogynistic and Muslims as extremists, presenting them as a significant threat. At times, he shifts to a rising tone to emphasize that violence against Americans is justified by Muslims as part of global jihad. This rhetoric clearly reflects anti-Muslim sentiments and Islamophobia, aligning with Van Dijk's Ideological Square by stressing negative aspects of Muslims while ignoring their positive contributions to society.

4.3 Analysis of Excerpt No. 3

Without looking at the various polling data, it is obvious to anybody the hatred is beyond comprehension. Where this hatred comes from and why we will have to determine, we're gonna have to figure it out. we have to figure it out we can't live like this , Gonna get worse and worse. we could be politically correct and we can be stupid, but it's going to get worse and worse. Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in Jihad, these people only believe in jihad, They don't want our system, They don't want our system, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life, they have no respect for human life.

Figure 3 below shows an extraction of (fall-rise) pitch contour in TUs // r our \r\COUNtry // // r cannot \r\BE //// r the \r\VICTims //, and the (fall) pitch contour in TU //P of horrendous \r\Attacks //:

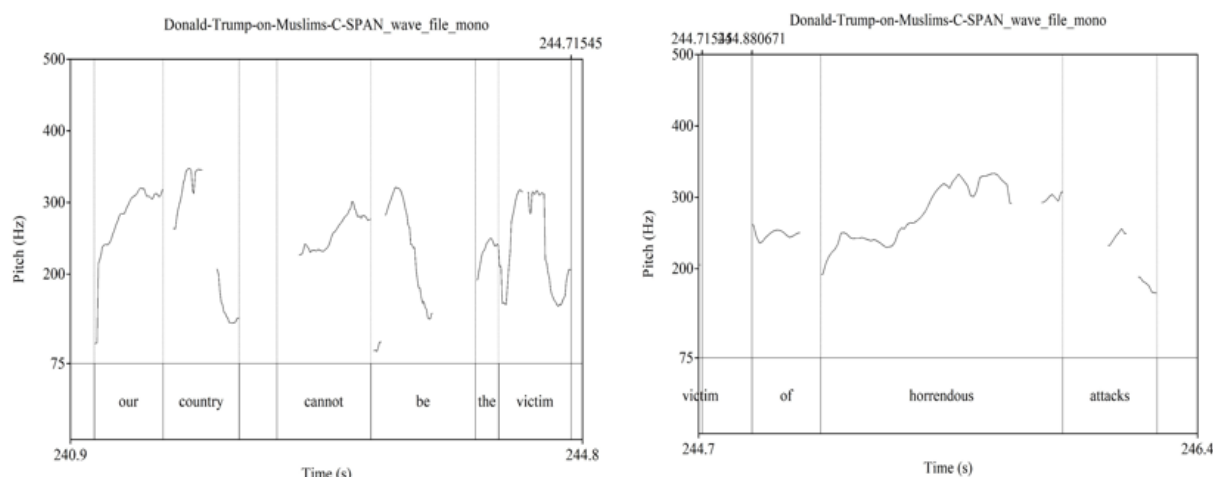


Figure 3 An extraction of (fall-rise) pitch contour in TUs // r our \r\COUNtry // // r cannot \r\BE //// r the \r\VICTims //, and the (fall) pitch contour in TU //P of horrendous \r\Attacks //

In this excerpt of Trump's speech, he started his speech with a definite falling tone in talking about the polling data. The proclaiming information in Trump's speech, which has a rise-fall tone, shows the non-finality about this topic when he claimed on how Muslims hated Western. In this point, Trump employed a fall-rise tone to share his statement of Muslim-Ban" with Americans as he tried to suggest a ban on Muslims immigration. Here, two strategies of generalization and hyperbole are used since he considered all of them are responsible about the terrorist's events happened in America. The hyperbolic argument is noted in Trump's speech when he declared that religious hatred all the Muslims because they are against American and non-believers. Sometimes, he used a referring tone with either a rising tone or a fall-rise tone in which the rise tone is used to encourage his audience to listen to his speech in order to convince them about his decision and the fall-rise tone to warn Americans from the threat of Muslims who believed in Jihad. Then, Trump ended his speech with a falling tone to proclaim negatively that those Muslims have no respect for human life. In this respect, Trump established an argument of Islamophobic against Islam and Muslims. These expressions indicate the first strategy of Van Dijk's (2006) model which reflects the positive things about "us" since Trump refers negatively to Muslims as "they have no sense of reason or respect for human life" which means "out-group". Therefore, Trump's speech presupposes that Trump himself and Americans in general as "in-group" who have sense of reason and respect for human life.

5. Results and Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the selected data from Trump's speech in light of the objectives of the current study.

5.1 What discursive strategies are employed in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims to construct us-versus-them ideological polarization?

Trump's polarization strategy is evident in his portrayal of Islam and Muslims through a predominantly negative lens. He argues that there is little need to further investigate Islam, associating jihad primarily with terrorism and portraying terrorists as indifferent to innocent lives. This representation aligns with Van Dijk's (2006) first ideological strategy, namely emphasizing the positive characteristics of the in-group, as Trump positions himself and America as victims of terrorism. It also reflects the second strategy, which involves emphasizing the negative characteristics of the out-group, by focusing exclusively on unfavorable representations of Muslims. Furthermore, the third strategy is apparent in the absence of negative references to the in-group, thereby presenting Americans and their policies in a favorable light. Finally, the fourth strategy is illustrated through the omission of positive representations of Muslims, as the discourse tends to generalize negative attributes to the entire group while disregarding alternative or positive perspectives. Consequently, the speech constructs a clear us-versus-them ideological polarization in which the in-group is positively represented and the out-group is negatively portrayed.

The results show that Trump consistently uses the ideological polarization strategy when he presents himself and America positively and Muslims negatively. Trump's rhetoric on Muslims construct them as the out-group with terrorism, extremism, and security threats, especially when he referred to the September 11 attacks. In this way, Trump's speech helps in developing the anti-Muslims discourse which legitimizes restrictive policies towards Muslims. For example, the authority strategy is noted in Trump's use of his political standing and potential leadership position to legitimize his arguments and policy proposals. Also, the number game is reflected when Trump referred to surveys and statistical claims to highlight the audience alleged connection between Islam and violence.

Accordingly, the strategy of evidentiality is used to justify the proposed ban on Muslims, whereas the generalization strategy attributes the actions of a few to Muslims as a whole. Similarly, Trump used the categorization strategy to frame Muslims as a homogeneous group associated with terrorism and social instability. On the other hand, Trump tends to use implied assumptions concerning the perceived threats of Shariah and jihad, presenting these notions established truths rather than debatable claims. Further, hyperbole strategy heightens these notions by exaggerating the hostile and dangerous traits attributed to Muslims.

These discursive strategies collectively support the construction of an us-versus-them ideological framework. Through the positive representation of the in-group and the negative representation of the out-group, Trump's rhetoric reinforces ideological polarization and legitimizes exclusionary political positions. In this respect, the proposed Muslim ban can be

interpreted as a discursive manifestation of this broader ideological framework, in which Muslims are represented as a threat to American society and national security.

5.2 What are types of tones used in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims in constructing the us-versus-them ideological polarization?

Table (3) below shows the percentages of information tone types used in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims in relation to polarization ideology of us/them:

Table 3 The percentages of information tone types used in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims in relation to polarization ideology of us/them

No. of Excerpt (no. of TUs)	Discursive strategies of us/them ideology	Type of Information tones				
		proclaiming		referring		level
		Fall P	Rise-fall P+	Rise r+	Fall-rise r	
Excerpt 1(17)	Authority Evidentially Generalization	9	6	2	0	0
Excerpt 2(42)	Authority Number game presupposition hyperbole	20	9	6	7	0
Excerpt 3(26)	Hyperbole Generalization presupposition	11	8	1	6	0
Total		40	23	9	13	0
Total %		47.05	27.05	10.58	15.29	0

The results show that the proclaiming fall tone is the most frequently used tone in Trump's speech, accounting for 47.05%, which is higher than the other tone types, namely the rise-fall proclaiming tone (27.05%) and the referring tones (rise and fall-rise), which constitute 10.58% and 15.29% respectively. This indicates that a significant portion of Trump's speech is constructed through the presentation of new and assertive information, particularly in relation to proposals such as the ban on Muslims entering the United States.

Moreover, the frequent use of proclaiming tones suggests an emphasis on delivering decisive and authoritative statements, often aimed at heightening concern about Muslim-related threats as framed in the discourse. The rise-fall proclaiming tone, in some instances, also signals a degree of non-finality while still reinforcing evaluative judgments, such as claims regarding hostility attributed to Muslims.

Referring tones (rise and fall-rise) are used to present information assumed to be shared knowledge between speaker and audience, such as references to past events like the September 11 attacks, which are employed to support and justify the speaker's stance. In this

way, these tones contribute to reinforcing the us-versus-them ideological framework by aligning the audience with the speaker's interpretation of events. The fall-rise tone also functions to introduce caution or warning regarding perceived threats. It is noteworthy that the level tone does not appear in the analyzed speech.

5.3 How dominance and non-dominance roles in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims contribute to the construction of us-versus-them ideological polarization?

Table (4) below shows percentages of the dominance and non-dominance role in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims in terms of us/other polarization ideology:

Table (4) the percentages of the dominance and non-dominance role in Trump's rhetoric on Muslims in relation to polarization ideology of us/them

No. of Excerpt (no. of TUs)	Dominance		Non-dominance	
	proclaiming	referring	proclaiming	referring
	Rise-fall P+	Rise r+	Fall P	Fall-rise r
Excerpt 1(17)	6	2	9	0
Excerpt 2(42)	9	6	20	7
Excerpt 3(26)	8	1	11	6
Total	23	9	40	13
	32		53	
Total %	37.6		62.3	

The results indicate that the non-dominance role is more frequently used than the dominance role, with a percentage of 62.3% compared to 37.6%. This suggests that Trump's discourse does not consistently adopt a direct dominant interactional stance; rather, it frequently shifts toward a less overtly controlling role when addressing the audience.

However, this non-dominant positioning does not necessarily imply neutrality. Instead, Trump strategically constructs arguments through various discursive techniques to reinforce an anti-Muslim ideological stance. These include evidentiality, generalization, hyperbolic claims, and presupposition. For instance, generalization is used to categorize Muslims as a homogeneous threatening out-group, while evidential and presuppositional strategies present claims about Islam and Shariah as self-evident or already known. Hyperbolic expressions further intensify negative evaluations of Muslims, contributing to a highly polarized representation.

In addition, the use of a falling tone at the end of the speech functions to close statements with strong assertiveness, reinforcing the negative portrayal of the out-group. Overall, these strategies align with Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological Square, particularly the emphasis on negative other-representation and positive self-representation. Trump constructs an

ideological contrast between the in-group (“Americans” and his political stance) and the out-group (Muslims), presenting his policies as protective and beneficial for national security.

It is therefore evident that the discourse contributes to the construction of polarized “us-versus-them” ideology, where the in-group is positively evaluated and the out-group is negatively represented through strategic linguistic and rhetorical choices. Overall, the distribution of tones reflects a systematic use of intonational choices to reinforce of us-versus-them ideological polarization. While proclaiming tones construct authority and assert ideological positions, referring tones function to create alignment with the audience. The absence of level tones suggests a lack of neutral or backgrounded information, which further intensifies the evaluative and persuasive nature of the discourse.

6. Conclusions

Based on the foregoing discussion, the major conclusions of the study are as follows:

1. This study investigated Trump’s rhetoric on Muslims through an eclectic framework combining Van Dijk’s (2006) Ideological Square and Brazil’s (1997) discourse intonation model. The findings demonstrate that ideological polarization is systematically constructed through both lexical-discursive strategies and prosodic choices. Trump’s rhetoric contributes to the construction of an anti-Muslim discourse, in which Muslims are framed as an out-group and associated with threat-related narratives. Overall, the integration of ideological and intonational analysis shows that meaning in Trump’s rhetoric is not only constructed through what is said, but also through how it is said. The interplay between discourse strategies and intonational choices contributes to the reinforcement of a polarized us-versus-them ideological framework, where the out-group is negatively constructed and the in-group is positively evaluated. This study therefore highlights the importance of combining Critical Discourse Analysis with discourse intonation to fully understand the multilayered nature of political speech.
2. From a discursive perspective, the analysis revealed a strong tendency toward negative other-representation of Muslims, while simultaneously constructing a positive self-representation of the in-group (“Americans”). This was accomplished through strategies such as generalization, evidentiality, presupposition, and hyperbole, which function to legitimize ideological claims and present them as factual and widely accepted.
3. From a prosodic perspective, the most common tone used in Trump’s speech is the proclaiming fall tone indicating that he frequently presents a new, assertive, and definite information, particularly concerning his decision to forbid Muslims from entering United states. He often consolidates this tone with a rise-fall pattern to enhance his claims, reduce alternative interpretations, and emphasize on portraying the Muslims as a threat to American community. On the other hand, the referring tones (rise and fall-rise) are used to express about information, which is already known by the audience, like referring to the September 11 terrorist attacks. Therefore, these tones function mainly in influencing and persuading the audience to believe in Trump’s viewpoint against Islam.

4. It appears that the role of non-dominance occurs more commonly than the dominance role, indicating that Trump does not always maintain full control over the conversation. Instead, he takes less direct role in expressing about his viewpoint on the Muslims ban. Nevertheless, it functions strategically in supporting arguments to construct and strengthen an anti-Muslim ideology in a discourse.

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