

## A PHONO-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF ASSERTIVENESS AND RHETORICAL QUESTIONING IN SELECTED ENGLISH AND ARABIC ELECTION SPEECHES

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### Abstract:

This study presents a phono-pragmatic analysis of the argumentative strategies of assertiveness and rhetorical questioning in selected English and Arabic election speeches. Assertiveness is a strategy used to convey conviction and determination to the discourse. Rhetorical questioning is a strategy that is not used to elicit an answer, but to bring a problem to the minds of people and to make them think of it. To convey such meanings prosodically, politicians use a set of prosodic maxims with these strategies. This research aims at investigating the contribution of prosodic features and maxims to the transfer of the pragmatic meanings associated with these strategies. It also examines the universality of these argumentative strategies and their prosodic maxims. It is hypothesized that there is a correlation between the prosodic maxims and the argumentative strategies under investigation, and that they are universal in the English and Arabic election speeches. To test the validity of this study hypotheses, two TV shows are selected which are: the English TV show *Ohio U.S. Senate Debate*, which is broadcasted on the American NBC4 channel, and the Arabic one *The Opposite Direction*, which is broadcasted on Al-Jazeera Channel. To analyze the selected data, synthesis of Braga and Marques' (2004) phono-pragmatic model and Wennerstrom's (2001) discursal functions of intonation model are adopted. This research concludes that there is a correlation between the prosodic maxims and argumentative strategies, in that they are used universally, and some variables of each prosodic maxim are more frequently used than others.

**Key Words:** Phono-Pragmatics, Prosodic maxims, Assertiveness, Rhetorical questioning, Argumentative strategies.

**Introduction:**

Phono-pragmatics explores the use of the phonological dynamics in everyday communication to convey particular pragmatic meanings suprasegmentally. The phono-pragmatic approach is concerned with the pragmatically-oriented investigation of the phonological aspects of speech. It identifies “the interface between prosodic realizations and pragmatic implications” (Iaia, Provenzano & Sperti, 2016, p. 235). Since speech consists not only of *what* is said but also of *how* it is said, the way speakers produce their speech is of equal importance to what is said. The way speakers produce their speech is conditioned by the prosodic features they use. These features refer to the “variations in pitch, loudness, tempo and rhythm” (Crystal, 2008, p. 393). They are not “merely an added flourish or superimposed feature but central to a full understanding of any spoken text” (Wennerstrom, 2001, p. 6). Though it is hardly possible to provide a definitive list of prosodic features (Fox, 2000, p. 10), they can involve such features as pitch, length, loudness, speech rate, and voice quality. Pitch is the perceptual feature of auditory sensation. The acoustic correlate of pitch is the fundamental frequency (F0) which is determined by the rate of vibration of the vocal cords. The frequency describes “the number of complete repetitions (cycles) of a pattern of air pressure variation occurring in a second” (Johnson & Ladefoged, 2014, P. 24). Pitch involves three integral components. Firstly, the pitch direction which refers to the trajectory linked to the nucleus of an intonational phrase (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2019, p. 196). Secondly, the pitch range which indicates “the distance between adjacent syllables or stretches of utterance identified in terms of a scale running from low to high” (Crystal, 2006, p. 200). Thirdly, the pause which refers to the “periods of silence in the speech of a person” (O’Connell & Kowal, 1983, p. 221).

Length is the perceptual or auditory variable in terms of which listeners can perceive the duration of a linguistic unit once it is produced by a speaker. Reetz and Jongman, (2020, p. 243) state that the “acoustic correlate of length is duration”. The duration of a linguistic unit is measured by “in milliseconds and milliseconds per unit”. Acoustically, duration is “measured on a waveform or a spectrogram”. The other prosodic feature is loudness which indicates “the amount of energy present in the production of a sound” (Chun, 2002, p. 6). It is the auditory attribute in terms of which listeners perceive linguistic units. The “acoustic correlate of loudness is intensity” (Cruttenden, 1997, p. 3). The speech rate refers to “the relative speed or slowness in the sequential delivery of words,

sentences and the whole of a person's speech" (Poyatos, 2002, p. 8). It is measured by the number of syllables per unit of time (Oliveira, 2000, p. 102).

## **2. Assertiveness and Rhetorical Questioning as Argumentative Strategies**

According to Braga and Marques (2004, pp. 323-324), *assertiveness* and *rhetorical questioning* are identified as being argumentative strategies that reveal significant prosodic behaviors. *Assertiveness* is defined as the "most important argumentative strategy, where there is a conflict of ideas and where there is an audience to convince and a personal image to create" (Braga & Marques, 2004, p. 323). It conveys meanings such as determination, conviction, and assertiveness to the discourse. A variety of prosodic features and maxims are used within this strategy to communicate such meanings. *Rhetorical questioning* is an argumentative strategy in which the speaker does not elicit answers to his questions from the audience. However, the purpose is to bring a problem to minds of people and to make them think of it. The pitch contour is fairly opposite from what is expected. A rhetorical question is formulated with certain prosodic behaviors that the speaker employs within this argumentative strategy so that the question can be recognized by the audience that it is intended as a rhetorical question. Therefore, certain variables of each prosodic maxim are used more frequently than others in the English and Arabic discourse of election.

## **3. Research Methodology**

To analyze the selected data, Braga and Marques' (2004) phonopragmatic framework and Wennerstrom's (2001) discoursal functions of intonation framework are adopted. They are synthesized to suit analyzing the data of the study. Each of the following maxims involves a set of prosodic variables. The *Maxim of Pitch / F0 Tone* has the variables of high and low pitch. The *Maxim of Pitch* involves the variables of rising and falling pitch contours. The *Maxim of Emphasis and Focus* involves acoustically increasing the fundamental frequency (F0), intensity and energy, and duration. It is associated with the *Maxim of Pitch Range* which uncovers the relation between utterance location and the topic structure in the discourse. These two maxims have the pitch accents H\*, L+H\*, L\*, or L\*+H as prosodic variables. The *Maxim of Phrasing* that is associated with the speaker's ability to manage the syntactic structure of the discourse. It has a set of pitch boundaries such as H-H%, L-H%, H-L%, Partially Falling, and L-L%. Sixthly, the *Maxim of Silence* divides the silences into intentional and unintentional ones. Each of these variables of prosodic maxims is used

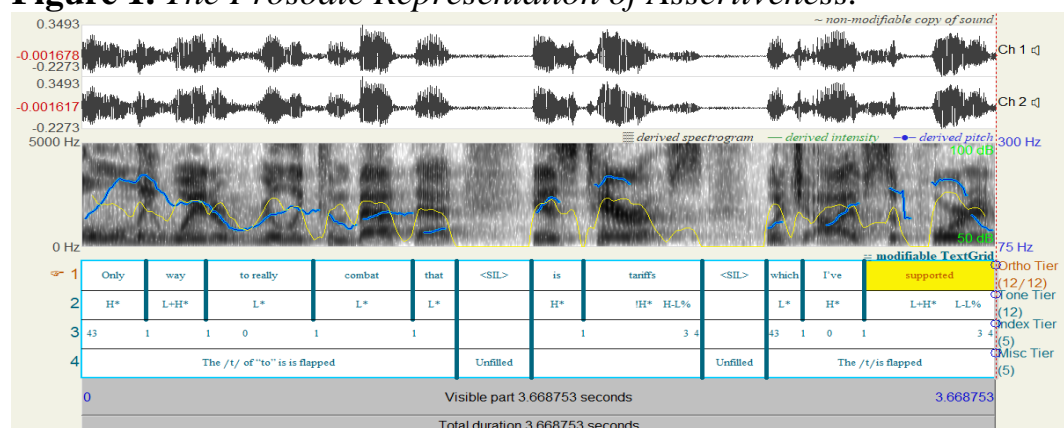
to convey certain pragmatic meanings. Such meanings are investigated phono-pragmatically in the selected data of the English and Arabic election discourse. The selected election TV shows are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The argumentative utterances in English and Arabic are analyzed according to the six prosodic maxims and their variables. The acoustic measurements and representation of each utterance are provided using *Praat software*.

#### 4. Data Analysis

##### 4. 1. Assertiveness and Rhetorical Questioning in English: A Qualitative Analysis

Answering the question by the interviewer “why does he label China as the enemy, implying that Chinese are taking over jobs and Ohio farmland?”, the speaker asserts, in his utterance, that “*only way to really combat that is tariffs, which I’ve supported*”. The acoustic representation of the prosodic features and maxims used within this utterance to convey assertiveness are represented in figure 1 below.

**Figure 1.** *The Prosodic Representation of Assertiveness.*



To convey the meaning of assertiveness, the speaker observes a set of prosodic maxims in his utterance. It is worth noting that the utterance comprises two intonational phrases. Following the **pitch/F0 tone**, both intonational phrases are articulated with a low pitch tone of voice to phono-pragmatically communicate authority, dominance, directness, and assertiveness. The **maxim of pitch** is observed to convey assertiveness by producing the utterance with a falling intonational contour. It is initiated with a maximum pitch of 230.60 Hz and terminated with a maximum pitch of 221.50 Hz. That is, the speaker uses the falling pitch in the two intonational phrases to assert that tariffs are the best solution which he supports.

The maxim of **emphasis and focus** is also manipulated in the two intonational phrases of this utterance to make the informationally important portions of speech intonationally prominent by increasing their F0, intensity, and duration. In the first intonational phrase, the words “only” and “way” are emphasized by increasing their F0 and its

intensity above the speaker's average. Furthermore, they have longer durations. Due to increasing F0 and intensity of these two words, they are accented with H\* and L+H\* respectively to assert to the audience that no other way is more effective than "tariffs", emphasized later in the utterance. In contrast, the words "to really", "combat", and "that" are deemphasized by decreasing their F0, and intensity. Their durations are also shortened. Thus, they are accented with L\* pitch accent type to convey the pragmatic meaning that they refer to a piece of information which is already given in the discourse. Moreover, the words "is" and "tariffs" are emphasized by increasing their F0, intensity, and duration. Therefore, they are accented with H\* pitch accent to phono-pragmatically convey that the word "tariffs" is added to the discourse as being new. In the second intonational phrase, the words "which" is deemphasized by decreasing its F0, intensity and its duration. Therefore, it is accented with L\* pitch accent because it is intonationally intended by the speaker to refer back to the word "tariffs", and to be perceived as given in the discourse. In contrast, the words "I've" and "supported" are emphasized by increasing their F0, intensity, and duration. Consequently, the word "I've" is accented with H\* pitch accent to be perceived as conveying new information while "supported" is accented with L+H\* pitch accent to convey the pragmatic meaning of contrast to what Tim Ryan is mentioned previously.

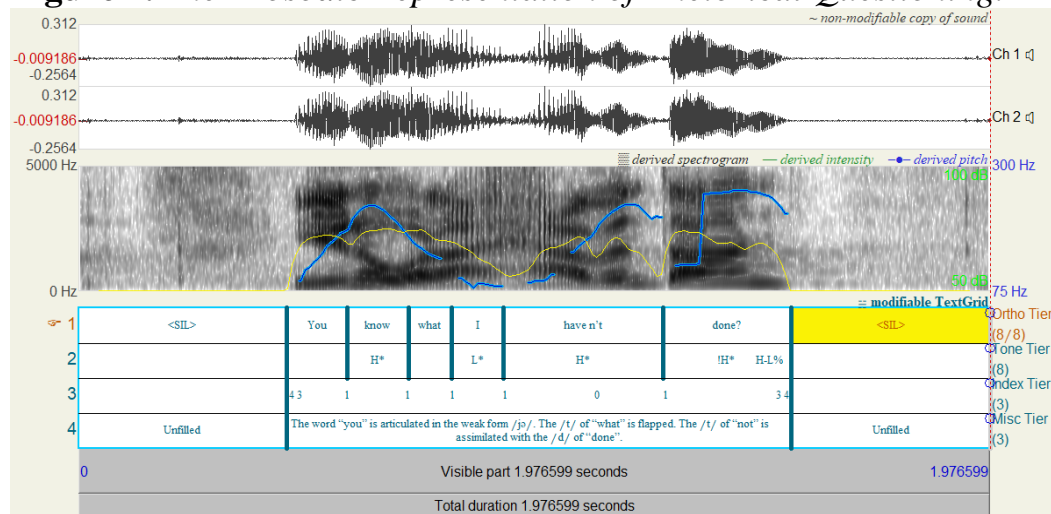
The use of the **maxim of pitch range** is also apparent in this utterance where the increases and decreases in pitch are employed to indicate the starting of new topics and the ending of old ones. To divide the utterance into meaningful intonational phrases or prosodic groups, the **maxim of phrasing** is exploited. The utterance is divided into two intonational phrases. The first, which is "only way to really combat that is tariffs", is terminated with plateau boundary to keep the hearers' attention to what he is saying, and wishes them to interpret this intonational phrase in relation to the second. In contrast, the second intonational phrase, which is "which I've supported", is ended with a low boundary to convey the meaning that the utterance is completed, and that there is no dependency or forward directionality of interpreting it in relation to subsequent utterances. The **maxim of silence** is intentionally manipulated twice. They are both unfilled silences. The duration of first attributable silence is used achieve two pragmatic functions. The first is to draw the audience's attention to what is going to be said, and giving them the opportunity to inquire about what that only way is. The second is to delay the delivering the important topic in the whole utterance which is "tariffs", indicating



that it is a word of high lexical content in the discourse. The second attributable silence is used perform two pragmatic functions. The first is to demarcate the boundaries between the two intonational phrases. The second is to give the audience more time to process what is articulated in the first prosodic group.

In response to the accusation by his opponent that he has done nothing to stop the flow of fentanyl through his twenty years as a congressman, the speaker uses the rhetorical question “you know what I haven’t done?” to reject this accusation. The acoustic representation of the prosodic features and maxims used in this rhetorical question are provided in figure 2 below.

**Figure 2.** *The Prosodic Representation of Rhetorical Questioning.*



It is obvious that the utterance involves one intonational phrase. The rhetorical question is employed to deny the accusations to the speaker that he has done nothing to stop the flow of fentanyl, and to invite the addressees to think of the opposite asserted claim that he has done everything possible to prevent it. To convey this meaning phono-pragmatically, the following prosodic maxims are employed.

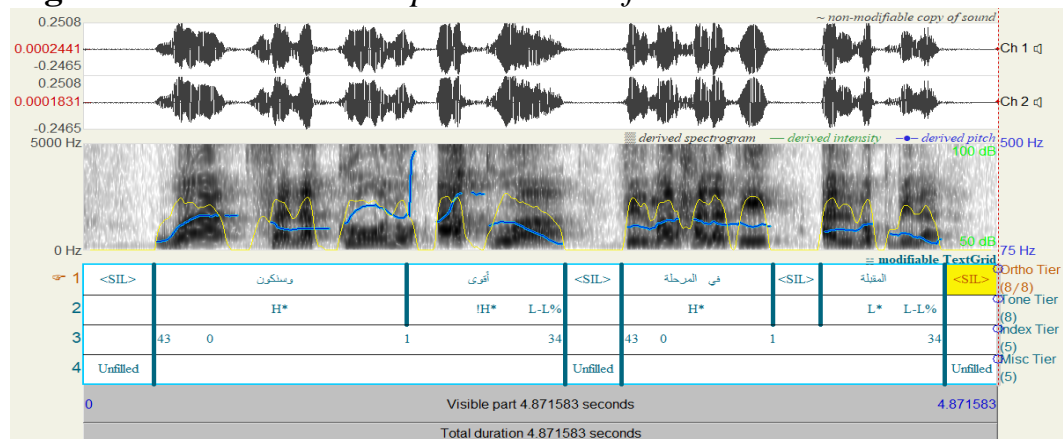
The **maxim of pitch/F0 tone** is observed by using the high pitch tone to convey the meaning that the speaker is polite so as to be argumentatively more convincing. The speaker intends the high pitch to convey the meaning of chastising and bringing to the audience's attention to what his opponent has done. The use of the high pitch continues to the end of the rhetorical question to focus and mark that more is to come on the same topic. With regard to **the maxim of pitch**, the intonational phrase is produced with a rising pitch where it rises towards the end at about 28.53%. The rising pitch contour is exploited to inform the audience that it is intended as a question, not a statement. Following the maxim of **emphasis and focus**, some of the words in this intonational phrase are intensified. The verb “know” is emphasized by increasing its pitch, intensity, and duration. Therefore,

it is accented with a H\* pitch accent to be perceived as communicating a newly added information to the discourse that the other interlocutor does not know what the speaker has done. Similarly, the words “haven’t” and “done” are accented with a H\* pitch accent to indicate this meaning. These words are intended to phonologically convey the ironic meaning to evoke anger, irritation, disgust, and repulsion of what the other interlocutor has done. In contrast, the pronoun “I” is accented with a L\* pitch accent to be processed as conveying a given information in the discourse that the speaker does not do such disgusting issues so as to enhance the persuasiveness of his argument.

As for the **maxim of pitch range**, the intonational phrase is produced with a pitch that ranges maximally from 257.23 Hz to minimally 80.11 Hz. To indicate the rhetorical characteristic of this intonational phrase, its pitch is widened towards the end at about 28.53%. Indicating the rhetoricity of the question prosodically is intended to distract the audience’s attention from the previous portion of the discourse and attracting it to what is going to be said by the speaker himself as an answer to his question. Observing the **maxim of phrasing**, the speaker produces the utterance as one intonational phrase. It is closed up with a plateau boundary H-L% to keep the audience anticipating a subsequent constituent from the same speaker in the form of listing. Following the **maxim of silence**, the utterance is initiated and terminated with silences. The first attributable unfilled silence is placed at the beginning of the intonational phrase to demarcate the boundary between the rhetorical question and the previous utterances. It is exploited to draw the audience’s attention to what is going to be uttered. The second attributable unfilled silence is used to give the addressees more time to perceive the rhetorical question and to think of its possible answer, and to indicate the end of the utterance.

#### 4. 2. Assertiveness and Rhetorical Questioning in Arabic: A Qualitative Analysis

After talking about the Turkish election and the way he committed to it, in the speaker argumentatively asserts his standpoint and political stance by uttering the utterance " وَسَنَكُونُ أَقْوَى فِي الْمَرْحَلَةِ الْمُقْبِلَةِ " that they will be more powerful in the coming stage. To argue for that kind of commitment to the election. The prosodic maxims and the acoustic measurements of the lexical items employed in this utterance are analyzed using Praat software. They are represented in figure 3 below.

**Figure 3.** *The Prosodic Representation of Assertiveness.*

The acoustic analysis of the utterance reveals that it comprises two intonational phrases. To convey the meaning of assertiveness, the speaker observes a set of prosodic maxims in his utterance. In the two intonational phrases, the maxim of **pitch/F0 tone** is observed where they are produced with a low pitch of voice. It is employed to convey the meanings of assertiveness and authority. Moreover, the low pitch of voice of the two phrases indicates dominance, attractiveness, leadership, honesty, trustworthiness of the promise that the speaker communicates with the utterance. With regard to the **maxim of pitch**, the acoustic analysis of the two intonational phrases are articulated with a falling pitch contour. The falling pitch is used to phonopragmatically add assertiveness to the promising. It is employed to convey the meanings of certainty, confidence that the speaker wishes the audience to perceive in what he says. The maxim of **emphasis and focus** is also evidently exploited in this utterance where some words along with their pitch, intensity, and duration are increased while the acoustic features of others are decreased. In the first intonational phrase, the two words “وَسَنَكُونُ” and “أَقْوَى” have their pitch, intensity, and duration increased. Thereupon, they are accented with a H\* pitch accent to communicate a meaning that is newly added to the discourse that of promising the audience to convince them with the argument, and to change their political stance. In the second intonational phrase, the assimilated words “فِي الْمَرْحَلَةِ” is emphasized by increasing their pitch, intensity, and duration. Therefore, they are accented with a H\* pitch accent to be processed as conveying new information. However, the word “الْمُقْبِلَةِ” is accented with a L\* pitch accent so that it can be perceived as communicating a given information. Therefore, it is articulated with a low pitch.

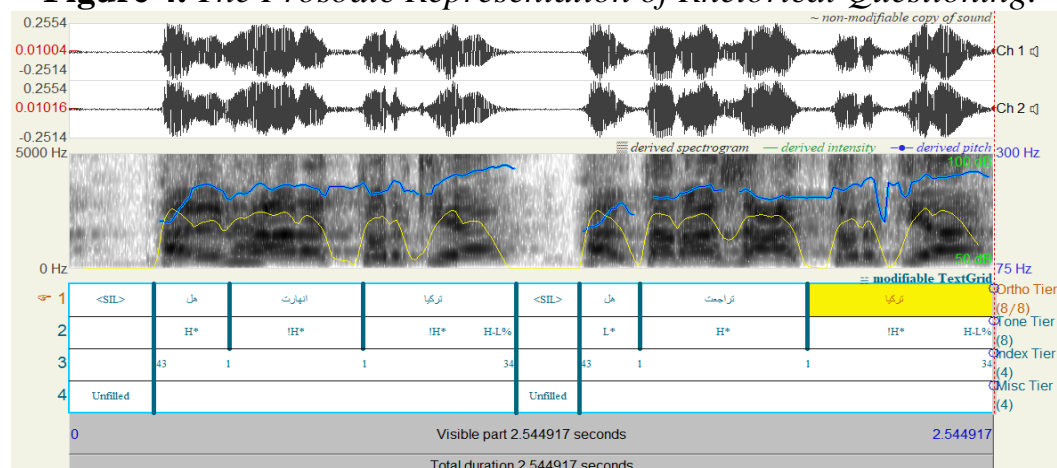
As for the maxim of **pitch range**, it is properly manipulated in this assertive utterance where it is produced with a maximum pitch range of 469.60 Hz and a minimum one of 97.70 Hz. The pitch is



widened where new information portion starts, and narrowed where old one ends. This interprets the falls and rises in the pitch contour. The first intonational phrase has a pitch that ranges from 469.60 Hz to 98.38 Hz while the second has one that ranges from 200.42 Hz to 97.70 Hz. The pitch of the whole utterance is narrowed towards the end at about 29.46% to indicate the termination of that assertive utterance. To divide the utterance into its constituent intonational phrases, the **maxim of phrasing** is employed twice. The first intonational phrase is closed up with a low pitch boundary L-L% to indicate its end, and so does the second intonational phrase. With respect to the **maxim of silence**, it is employed intentionally four times. The first silence is placed at the beginning of the assertive utterance to separate it from previous ones. The second attributable unfilled silence is placed between the first and the second intonational phrases to emphasize and show the boundary between them, giving the audience the enough time to grasp the promise and think of the time of fulfilling it. The third attributable unfilled silence is situated before the word “المُقْبَلَة” to highlight the time of fulfilling the promise. The fourth utterance is placed at the end of the utterance to figure out its end, and to separate it from the subsequent utterances.

In the Arabic selected sample, the speaker rhetorically asks the questions in which he says “هَلْ أَنْهَارَتْ تُرْكِيَا، هَلْ تَرَجَعَتْ تُرْكِيَا” draw the audience attention to the answer that none of his opponent’s speech will come true because he has said this a long time before. The acoustic representation of the prosodic features and maxims of rhetorical questioning used in this utterance are provided below.

**Figure 4.** *The Prosodic Representation of Rhetorical Questioning.*



The acoustic analysis of the utterance uncovers that it comprises two intonational phrases. In each intonational phrase, there is a rhetorical question. These two rhetorical questions are not employed to elicit information, but to argumentatively refute the opponent’s arguments that Turkey is on the verge of destruction, the coming

period is so dangerous, and that it will not be the country of stability at all. That is, the questioning is intended to assert and attract the audience's attention to the answer of negation "كلا". To convey this meaning, the following prosodic maxims are taken into account. The maxim of **pitch/F0 tone** is observed by articulating the utterance with a high average pitch/F0 tone. The high pitch/F0 tone is intended to communicate the meanings of ridiculing, belittling, and criticizing the opponent's standpoints that are presented in the previous portions of the discourse. Regarding the **maxim of pitch**, the utterance is produced with a rising pitch contour where its pitch rises towards the end at about 9.29%. In turn, its two intonational phrases are produced with a rising pitch where the first is risen at about 13.79% and the second at about 22.83%. The rising pitch contour is used to indicate the rhetoricity of the question, and that it is not intended to seek answers. It is exploited to seek ratification and consensus between the speaker and the audience by attracting the latter's attention to the negated expected answer.

The maxim of **emphasis and focus** is observed by emphasizing or deemphasizing certain lexical items. In the first intonational phrase, the interrogatory pronoun (harif istifham) "هَلْ", the word "الْهَارِثُ", and "تُرْكِيَا" are all accented with a H\* pitch accent to be perceived as conveying newly added information to the discourse that of attracting the audience's attention to, and vehemently intensifying the negative expected answer that *Turkey did not collapse* تُرْكِيَا لَمْ تَنْهَارْ. In the second intonational phrase, the question particle "هَلْ" is accented with a L\* pitch accent to convey the givenness of negation which is the expected answer. In contrast, the words "تَرَاَجَعْتُ" and "تُرْكِيَا" are accented with a H\* pitch accent so as to convey the meaning that *Turkey did not decline* تُرْكِيَا لَمْ تَرَاَجَعْ. Concerning the maxim of **pitch range**, the utterance is produced with a maximum pitch range of 277.94 Hz and a minimum of 147.54 Hz. The widening and the narrowing of the pitch range is intended to communicate the meaning that Turkey did not collapse and decline. Widening the pitch range of the utterance towards the end is intended to indicate the rhetorical characteristic of the question, and to distract the audience's attention from the previous discourse portion and directing it towards what is going to be articulated after the question; that is, "كلا". On the level of intonational phrase, the first intonational phrase has a wider pitch range than the second at about 4.94%. The wider pitch range of the first intonational phrase is intended to relate the rhetorical question to its expected answer. The narrow pitch range of the second is intended to communicate its relativeness to the first.

Adhering to the **maxim of phrasing**, the first intonational phrase is closed with a plateau boundary H-L% so as to stimulate the audience anticipating the subsequent intonational phrase in the form of listing. Similarly, the second intonational phrase is terminated with a plateau boundary H-L% to indicate the same meaning. Following the **maxim of silence**, the utterance is produced with two silences. The first silence used to indicate the boundary between this utterance and the previous ones, to emphasize, and make the audience anticipate an important information. The second is intended to demarcate the boundary between the two intonational phrases, and to allow the audience to absorb the intended meaning of the first rhetorical question the speaker has just asked.

#### 4. 3. Assertiveness and Rhetorical Questioning in English vs. Arabic: Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis of the election discourse of English and Arabic reveals that there are some variations in the use of argumentative strategies of assertiveness and rhetorical questioning, and the variables of the prosodic maxims. The differences between English and Arabic are revealed in the table below.

**Table 1.** *The Overall Statistical Distribution of Argumentative Strategies in the English and Arabic Discourse of Election.*

No .	The Argumentative Strategies in the English and Arabic Election Discourse	English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq	Pct %
1.	Assertiveness	7	53.85%	5	50.00
2.	Rhetorical Questioning	6	46.15%	5	50.00
Total		13	100%	10	100%

Table 1. reveals that in the English discourse of election, assertiveness is relatively more frequent than the rhetorical questioning. However, in the Arabic discourse of election, the two argumentative strategies are used with the same frequencies. The politicians' tendency to use the strategy of Assertiveness can be interpreted in terms of making their utterances more persuasive, being confident, asserting their political standpoints, and influencing the public opinion. The relatively higher use of Rhetorical Questioning can be reasonably justifiable if the primary pragmatic purpose of this strategy is taken into account; attracting the audience's attention and directing it to what the speaker himself wishes them to perceive as an answer to such a question. To communicate the meanings of assertiveness and rhetoricity, politicians manipulate a set of prosodic maxims. The variables of each maxim are statistically analyzed in table 2. below.

**Table 2.** *The Overall Statistical Distribution of the Variables of Prosodic Maxims Used in Assertiveness and Rhetorical Questioning in the English and Arabic Discourse of Election.*

No.	The Argumentative Strategies	The Maxim of Pitch/F0 Tone							
		High Pitch/F0 Tone				Low Pitch/F0 Tone			
		English		Arabic		English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %
1.	Assertiveness	2	14.29%	3	33.33 %	12	85.71%	6	66.67%
2.	Rhetorical Questioning	3	30.00%	2	33.33%	7	70.00%	4	66.67%
No.	The Argumentative Strategies	The Maxim of Pitch							
		Rising Pitch Contour				Falling Pitch Contour			
		English		Arabic		English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %
1.	Assertiveness	3	21.43%	4	44.44 %	11	78.57%	5	55.56%
2.	Rhetorical Questioning	2	20.00%	4	66.67%	8	80.00%	2	33.33%
No.	The Maxims of Emphasis and Focus, and Pitch Range	Argumentative Strategies							
		1. Assertiveness				2. Rhetorical Questioning			
		English		Arabic		English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %
1.	H*	30	55.56%	27	75.00%	22	56.41%	17	80.96%
2.	L+H*	7	12.96%	4	11.11%	4	10.26%	1	4.76%
3.	L*	13	24.07%	5	13.89%	10	25.64%	2	9.52%
4.	L*+H	4	7.41%	0	0.00%	3	7.69%	1	4.76%

No.	The Maxim of Phrasing	The Argumentative Strategies							
		Assertiveness				Rhetorical Questioning			
		English		Arabic		English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %
1.	H-H%	1	6.67 %	3	33.34%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
2.	L-H%	3	20.00%	2	22.22%	1	9.10%	0	0.00%
3.	H-L%	4	26.66%	1	11.11%	4	36.36%	4	66.67%
4.	L-L%	6	40.00%	2	22.22%	4	36.36%	2	33.33%
5.	Partially Falling	1	6.67 %	1	11.11%	2	18.18%	0	0.00%
No.	The Argumentative Strategies	The Maxim of Silence							
		Intentional Silence				Unintentional Silence			
		English		Arabic		English		Arabic	
		Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %	Freq.	Pct %
1.	Assertiveness	15	60.00%	16	61.54%	0	00.00%	0	00.00%
2.	Rhetorical Questioning	10	40.00%	10	38.46%	2	100.00%	0	00.00%



The statistical analysis of the prosodic maxims used with assertiveness and rhetorical questioning of the selected English and Arabic discourse of election reveals some similarities and differences between the two languages. Concerning the prosodic maxim of Pitch/F0 Tone, the low pitch is relatively more frequent than the high pitch with assertiveness and rhetorical questioning in English and Arabic. This can be interpreted in terms of that with the low pitch, the politicians can convey the meanings of dominance, attractiveness, leadership, intelligence, honesty, and trustworthiness. Within rhetorical questioning, it is used to indicate that the question is intended to direct the audience's attention to the answer of that question. As for the maxim of Pitch, the falling pitch contour is relatively more frequent with assertiveness in the English and Arabic. This is because the falling pitch conveys the meanings of certainty, confidence, and assertiveness that the speaker wishes to communicate to the audience concerning his argument. However, with rhetorical questioning, the low pitch is more frequent in English than in Arabic. This can be attributed to the linguistic differences between the two languages in forming the rhetorical questioning.

Concerning the maxims of emphasis and focus, and pitch range that are associated with the use of pitch accents in the argumentative strategies of assertiveness and rhetorical questioning in the English and Arabic discourse of election, there are certain pitch accents that are used more frequently than others. In both assertiveness and rhetorical questioning, the H\* and L\* pitch accents are relatively more frequent than the others in the English and Arabic election discourse. This can be attributed to the meanings these two pitch accents are intended to convey. The lexical items accented with H\* pitch accent are intended to be perceived as conveying new information while those accented with L\* pitch accents are intended to convey given information.

The statistical analysis of the pitch boundaries reveals some differences between English and Arabic. Within assertiveness, the relatively frequently used pitch boundaries are the L-H%, H-L%, and L-L% in the English discourse of election. However, in Arabic, the frequently employed pitch boundaries are the H-H%, L-H%, and L-L%. The differences in the frequency of using the pitch boundaries can be attributed to the phono-pragmatic meanings associated with these pitch boundaries. On the other hand, within rhetorical questioning, the H-L% and L-L% are the most frequently used in the English and Arabic election discourse. The frequent use of these pitch boundaries can be attributed to the pragmatic meanings they convey

such as the dependence of the question interpretation on the subsequent phrase, or indicating the end of that question and that it is not intended to seek information. However, it is used to direct the audience to think of the answer of such question provided by the speaker himself.

As for the maxim of silence, the statistical analysis of the selected data reveals that within both assertiveness and rhetorical questioning strategies, the intentional silences are used more frequently than the unintentional silences in the English and Arabic election discourse. This can be ascribed to the pragmatic functions the intentional silences are used to communicate.

## Conclusions

The analysis of the selected English and Arabic data comes up with some findings. First, the prosodic features and maxims are employed by politicians to convey the intended meanings associated with the argumentative strategies of assertiveness and rhetorical questioning. Second, some variables of each prosodic maxim are used more frequently than others. Third, the use of these two argumentative strategies and the prosodic maxims is universal in English and Arabic. Fourth, within each utterance of these argumentative strategies, the prosodic maxims are concurrently employed to achieve argumentativeness. Fifth, the politicians usually employ the variables of prosodic maxims to direct the audience to interpret their utterances according to the intended meaning. Moreover, the analysis of the selected data reveals some differences in the prosodic behaviors of assertiveness and rhetorical questioning between English and Arabic.

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تحليل صوتي-تداولي للتوكيد والتساؤل البلاغي في خطابات انتخابية إنكليزية وعربية مختارة  
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### المستخلص

تقدم الدراسة تحليل صوتي تداولي للاستراتيجيات للتأكيد والتساؤل البلاغي الجدلية في خطابات انتخابية إنكليزية وعربية مختارة. التوكيد هو إستراتيجية تستخدم لتوصيل معاني مثل القناعة والحسم في الخطاب. اما التساؤل البلاغي فهو استراتيجية لا تُستخدم للحصول على إجابة، بل لجلب مشكلة إلى أذهان الناس وجعلهم يفكرون فيها. لنقل هكذا معان عروضية، يستخدم السياسيون مجموعة من المبادئ العروضية مع هذه الإستراتيجيات. تهدف الدراسة إلى دراسة مساهمة السمات والمبادئ العروضية في نقل المعاني التداولية المرتبطة بهذه الاستراتيجيات والمبادئ. كما أنها تتحرى عالمية هذه الاستراتيجيات الجدلية ومبادئها العروضية. تفترض الدراسة أن هناك علاقة ارتباطية بين المبادئ العروضية والاستراتيجيات الجدلية قيد البحث، وتفترض أيضاً أن استخدام الاستراتيجيات الجدلية والمبادئ العروضية هو عالمي في الخطابات الانتخابية الانكليزية والعربية. وللتحقق من صحة فرضيات الدراسة، فقد تم اختيار برنامجين تلفزيونيين للتحليل. وهما البرنامج التلفزيوني الانكليزي "مناظرة مجلس الشيوخ الأمريكي في أوهايو" الذي يبث على قناة 4NBC الأمريكية، والبرنامج العربي "الاتجاه المعاكس" الذي يبث على قناة الجزيرة. لتحليل البيانات المختارة، تم اعتماد التوليف بين نموذج براكا وماركيز (٢٠٠٤) الصوتي التداولي ونموذج فينيرستروم (٢٠٠١) لوظائف التنعيم في الخطاب. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى نتائج مفادها أن هناك علاقة ارتباطية بين المبادئ العروضية والاستراتيجيات الجدلية، وأنها تستخدم عالمياً، وأن بعض المتغيرات من كل مبدأ عرضي هي أكثر استخداماً من غيرها.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الصوتية-التداولية، المبادئ العروضية، التوكيد، التساؤل البلاغي، الاستراتيجيات الجدلية.