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# RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN DR ZAKIR NAIK'S LECTURE TERRORISM AND JIHAD-AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE: A POSITIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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## ABSTRACT

*The present study aims at investigating religious moderation in Zakir Naik's lecture Terrorism and Jihad: An Islamic Perspective. The concept of religious moderation, which implies understanding and practicing religion in a way that goes with values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, balance, and justice, has not been studied from a positive discourse analysis perspective as far as the researchers could investigate. To fill this gap, the present study tries to answer the subsequent questions: What are the discursive strategies that are positively used to express religious moderation in Zakir Naik's lecture? and what positive ideologies are targeted to foster religious moderation in the lecture? The study designed an eclectic model to analyse six extracts selected from Zakir Naik's lecture. The researchers employ a mixed-method approach to analyse religious moderation both qualitatively and quantitatively. The main results of the present study show that religious moderation is realised through various discursive strategies including syntactic, semantic, rhetorical, and ideological strategies. Religious moderation is also expressed via a set of positive ideologies including tolerance, peaceful coexistence, equality, anti-radicalism, and empowerment.*

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**KEYWORDS:** Religious Moderation, Positive Discourse Analysis, Dr. Zakir Naik.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

To accomplish a study with a positive analytical orientation, one must get a clear vision of religious moderation and the hidden positive ideologies that align with certain discourse patterns. That is, ideologies serve as a source of positive social changes for discourses created by those who have high position and positive power. As a linguistic field of study, positive discourse analysis (henceforth: PDA) highlights disclosing the ideologies of empowerment in order to foster peace, inspiration, persuasion, strength, and resistance of oppressed communities against the oppressive actions of the dominant social group [1]. Investigating the concept of religious moderation and the implicit ideologies in Zakir Naik's lecture *Terrorism and Jihad: An Islamic Perspective* (henceforth: TJIP) is achieved through the strategies of critical discourse analysis (henceforth, CDA) since PDA is a complementary face of CDA, in which positive ideologies are detected. The concept of religious moderation is of a specific importance because of the recurrent tensions and struggles between various religious groups. Religious moderation is defined as the attitudes which avoid extreme actions and encourage tolerance, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence among people of different religions [2]. Although religious moderation is a significant concept, it is not linguistically investigated by researchers, especially, in the field of PDA. This study, therefore, aims at filling this gap by tackling religious moderation in TJIP from a PDA perspective. Zakir Naik positively attempts to influence and persuade different types of people from different cultures and backgrounds, by using certain positive ideologies.

In the light of the aforementioned information, the researchers seek to answer the subsequent questions:

1. What are the discursive strategies that are positively employed to support religious moderation in TJIP?
2. How frequently are these discursive strategies used to realise religious moderation in TJIP?
3. What positive ideologies are targeted to foster religious moderation in TJIP?
4. What is the most frequently used ideological strategy to reflect religious moderation in TJIP?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Concept of Religious Moderation

Religious moderation is defined as actions or attitudes which prevent fanaticism and radicalism and encourage tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence among people of various religions [2].

Thus, it is an attitude or behaviour which has a tendency for benevolence, goodness, equality and benefit of mankind life generally. In other words, it is a balance in religious practices, thereby preventing overreaction towards extremism and revolutionary attitudes in practicing religious teachings.

Religious moderation, in this era of globalization, is increasingly needed to mitigate the recurrent tensions and struggles between religious groups [3]. Put differently, due to the countless diversities of the faith-based groups in the world, religious moderation is significant in keeping tolerance and social harmony among religious communities. In addition, it boosts balance with respect to religious ethics, principles, values, and beliefs, whether in dealing with individuals or institutions. Its significance in society and religion becomes the responsibility of religious preachers and orators to reflect typical behaviour and reinforce positive values based on their faith.

### 2.2 The Foundations of Religious Moderation

Religious moderation does not belong to a specific religion; it is rather associated with each and every religion. In Jewish traditions, religious moderation is clear in the teachings of equity, humanity and compassion in which the Scriptures are the major sources of teachings and laws. The Torah and Talmud show the significance of social equity as a basis for the treatment of fellow human beings apart from their social status. For instances, Talmud says, "Whoever saves one soul is regarded as if he had saved the whole world" (Bavli Talmud, Sanhedrin 36a) [4]. This denies extremism as well as confirming the significance of each human being in life. In Christianity, religious moderation can be found throughout the teachings of Jesus Christ in the New Testament which encourages justice, love, compassion, humanity, forgiveness, and peace. The lord Jesus Christ said, in Mathew 5:10, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" [5]. This implies that spreading peace and avoiding struggles are principles that are highly appreciated in Christian teaching. Meanwhile, in Islamic religion, the term religious moderation can obviously be noticed in the Holy Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's Hadiths. For instance, in Sura Al-Kafirun chapter 30 verse 6, Qur'an says "For you your religion and for me my religion". This refers to the importance of respecting each other's religions as well as being a moderate and just believer who refuses all forms of fanaticism. Likewise, in Haith reported by Ans Ibn Malik, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said "None of you [truly] believes until he

likes for his brother what he likes for himself" [6]. This profound saying teaches a lot about the importance of compassion, love and humanity among human beings.

### 2.3 Key indicators of Religious Moderation

According to Saifuddin, there are four key signs of religious moderation: (1) *National Commitment* is about loyalty to the ideology of the country, thereby refusing ideologies that are contrary to the state integrity like extremism; (2) *Tolerance Commitment* which refers to a gentle and open attitude that appreciates and respects differences in ethnicity, gender, race, beliefs and rights of every citizen; (3) *Anti-Violence Commitment* which opposes all kinds of violence as well as rejecting ideological challenges which aim to make shifts in political and social systems; and (4) *Accepting and accommodating to local cultures* which concerns the willingness to respect and maintain the local cultural traditions of religious practices [7].

### 2.4 Moving from CDA to PDA

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, PDA has emerged as the other facet of CDA within the broader field of discourse analysis, which concentrates on the constructive social action and affirmative aspects of communication, which intends to build a better world to live in. Kress states that critical language projects are still concerned with uncovering, inequitable, dehumanising and deleterious states of affairs as well as criticising discourses and the social practices that are realised in these discourses [8]. Then, he takes a more transformative stance by suggesting that if critical linguistic projects contribute to develop reasonable theories in this domain, they would be capable of moving from deconstructive to productive activities.

Martin links this relationship to the yinyang in which deconstruction and construction activities are required [9]. He asks for positivity in front of criticality. Martin's inspiration of PDA is drawn from Kress' criticism of critical language studies, which leads to suggest a new complementary field of analysing discourse critically in a positive manner. Accordingly, Martin's PDA is a highly-pivotal ideologically-oriented perspective for doing a discourse analysis because it does not merely focus on the deconstructive aspects of language for the sake of power relations, but also attempts to promote empowerment and make successful social changes in the society in which language is used [10].

According to Yongsheng [11], PDA intends to create a peaceful community through discourse analysis and promotes a positive approach to resolving social

tensions. Although CDAs have not been limited to negative critique alone, they are concerned with doing critiques of the social wrongs. They put positive critique, in which people aim to lessen or mitigate social wrongs, as secondary to negative critique [12], i.e., their methodologies place resistance as secondary to oppression. Finally, Ting Su states that PDA is not a complete refusal of CDA in related to the theoretical basis and analytic methods but a supplement and development to it [13]. In other words, PDA is established from CDA so that it is not regarded as an independent or alternative field; it is rather a new complementary direction of CDA.

To sum up, the operational definition of PDA in this study is that it is a branch of DA which is interested in analysing a given discourse by unclouing the implicit positive ideologies of the discourse producer. Though PDA shares the same approaches and principles of CDA and intends to make constructive social change of the surrounding world, it displays a high degree of pertinence to the idea of influencing others positively through focusing on various discursive strategies as empowerment, persuasion and resistance.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The researchers adopt qualitative and quantitative analyses. The qualitative analysis is achieved through examining the data according to the eclectic model of the study (Figure 1) which is based on Van Dijk [14] Socio-cognitive framework of CDA. This framework combines social, discourse and cognitive analyses. The quantitative analysis, on the other hand, is achieved through frequencies and percentages to count out each discursive ideological strategy.

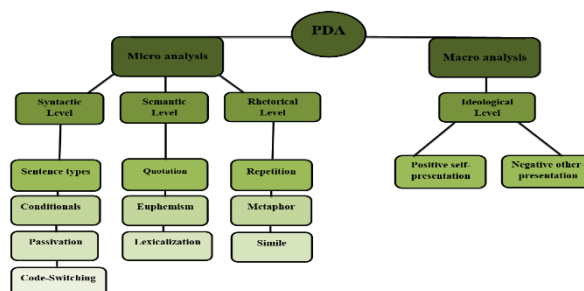


Figure 1: An Eclectic Model for PDA.

### 3.1 Data and Analysis

#### 3.1.1 Data Collection

The main theme of this lecture is "terrorism and jihad" while the subthemes are terrorism, fundamentalism, and spread of Islam. Hence, six extracts are evenly selected from these three subthemes of the lecture (Table 1).

**Table 1: Summary of related information regarding the Selected lecture.**

<b>Lect. Terrorism and Jihad –an Islamic Perspective</b>		<b>Place</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Sub theme (1)</i>	<b>Fundamentalism</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>4th Oct. 2002</b>
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim man</b>		
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim woman</b>		
<i>Sub theme (2)</i>	<b>Terrorism</b>		
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim man</b>		
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim woman</b>		
<i>Sub theme (3)</i>	<b>Spread of Islam</b>		
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim man</b>		
<i>Addressee</i>	<b>A non-Muslim woman</b>		

Needless to say, the extracts are selected to serve the concept of religious moderation and reveal the hidden ideologies throughout positive discourse analysis by using different strategies. They emphasise many positive thoughts and capture diverse perspectives on equality, inclusivity, and social harmony.

### 3.1.2 Data Description

The chosen lecture is a public religious one concluded with an interactive question and answer session. This lecture was delivered in India on October 4, 2002, i.e., the year after the 2001 attacks in New York City (9/11). It tackles certain misconceptions connecting Islam with fundamentalism, terrorism, and Jihad. Overall, the lecture promotes religious moderation by framing Islam as a religion of justice, peace, social harmony, and moral responsibility. By rejecting all kinds of violence, it encourages ethical conduct and peaceful coexistence among people of different religions. Besides, it carries certain ideologies that could be uncovered positively at micro and macro levels.

The length of lecture is two hours and half and the selected extracts range between two to ten minutes. This lecture reflects Zakir Naik's overall orientation and it is believed to fit the gist of PDA because it tackles the subject of religious moderation. Another central aspect is that the lecture was a Live broadcast to ensure its spontaneity. Besides, it is widely seen on YouTube with roughly 4000 views [15]. It is delivered by Zakir Naik as an Islamic preacher. It targeted the public in general, that is the global audience. Consequently, it is considered authentic data for analysis.

Although Zakir Naik is known for presenting most of his lectures in English, it is noted that he mostly switches to other languages during his preaching like Arabic, Hindi, etc. This code-switching is practical, systematic, and audience-oriented rather than random. For example, when the audience rise a question related to their religions, he first quotes all the verses from their own Scriptures by using their own languages and then he quotes

verses on the same issue from Prophetic Hadith or the Holy Qur'an by using original Arabic version and an English translation of the same verse(s).

## 3.2 Data Analysis

### 3.2.1 Qualitative Analysis

In this section, the researchers will analyse six extracts, i.e., two extracts from each subtheme are selected. The first extract of each subtheme will be taken from a non-Muslim man while the second from a non-Muslim woman. All extracts are going to be analysed depending on the eclectic model of the study that integrates micro-level linguistic analysis with macro-level ideological interpretation (Figure1). The logical basis for this model is to capture how religious moderation is linguistically constructed, justified, and legitimised in the data, rather than merely identifying conflicts. Note that the sentences of each extract are numbered for ease of reference.

**Extract 1:** "M.F. Hussain did some painting of god Saraswati unclothed and many of the journalist supported him. (1) Making a nude picture of any lady whether god or not god is haraam in Islam, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. (2) It is unethical, inhuman. (3) Why do you want to sell your daughters? (4) Why are you going back? (5) See what's happening in the western culture. (6) They are selling our sisters, selling our mothers. (7) And one of the famous ads which I heard about BMW car, you know BMW car, you know about the BMW car. (8) It is somewhat like Mercedes for the youngsters. (9) In that ad I'm sorry to say I was told that there's a lady standing in a Bikini in front of that car. (10) And it is mentioned there "TEST DRIVE HER NOW"! (11) Who? (12) The Car or the Girl (13) What has the girl got to do with the car? (14) So, this is all in the name of freedom of expression. (15) They're degrading the women. (16) What M. F. Hussain did was totally wrong. (17) Allah says in the Qur'an in Surah Anam Ch. 6:108 "Revoke not those, Abuse not those who they worship god besides Allah lest in their ignorance they'll abuse Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala)". (18) In Islam it is prohibited to abuse anyone else's God even though he may not agree he' God, it's prohibited. (19) Wa Aakhiru Da'waana Anil Hamdulillahi Rabbil Aalameen! (20)" [16]

## 1. Micro Level

### A. The Syntactic Level

#### 1. Sentence Types

Declaratives are predominantly adopted in this extract to express moral judgments as well as reinforcing religious norms. The utterances (3) and (19) are employed to state certain actions as "haraam" and "prohibited", thereby educating and clarifying the issues with the audience rather than to create controversy. Meanwhile, interrogatives are less frequently used than declaratives. They are positively used to attract the attention of the audience and get them to agree with what Zakir Naik says as in the utterances (4), and (5). Likewise, imperative forms are used to stir up moral awareness as illustrated in utterance (6).

#### 2. Passivation

In the utterances (10) and (11), Zakir Naik deletes the agent to avoid potential struggle and minimizing the effect of the action.

#### 3. Code-Switching

According to the three standard types of codeswitching, the French word "Bikini" is intra-sentential code-switching. It is inserted to meet a real lexical need and providing more emphasis about a particular subject.

### B. Semantic Level

#### 1. Quotation

The direct quotation "TEST DRIVE HER NOW" shifts the discourse from personal opinions to authentic evidences. Zakir Naik reports the exact words of the slogan to strengthen his argument and make it more persuasive.

#### 2. Euphemism

The word "unclothed" is euphemism for the taboo word "naked" or "nude"; it describes the case in a more respected way, especially, because it deals with religious imagery. This reflects a deliberate effort to retain respect and avoid offense. Hence, this strategy allows criticism while maintaining politeness and seriousness.

#### 3. Lexicalization

The extract contains strong moral and evaluative lexical items such as "unethical", "inhuman", "prohibited". These lexemes clearly identify Islamic moral boundaries. They convey worthy judgments based on Islamic ethics. In addition to that, inclusive kinship terms like "our sisters," and "our mothers"

promote collective moral responsibility rather than division.

### C. Rhetorical Level

#### 1. Repetition

The repeated phrase "totally prohibited" emphasise ethical clarity rather than emotional aggression and ensures understanding of the key ethical principles by the audience.

#### 2. Metaphor

The phrase "selling our daughters" describes women as products rather than human beings. Zakir Naik does not exactly mean the literal sale but he discloses the market-based practices onto women's bodies in media.

#### 3. Simile

"like Mercedes" is employed to make discourse persuasive and accessible to a wider audience.

### 2. Macro Analysis

#### A. The Ideological Level

##### 1. Positive Self-representation

In the utterances (1-3), Zakir Naik employs positive representation through moral normativity by strongly emphasises the good things of Islamic religion and describing Islam as ethically restrained and protective of dignity. He creates a positive change in the misconceptions of the audiences and framing Islam and himself as morally superior and extremely good. As Islamic preacher, he successfully supports his position through authoritative religious texts from the Quran which promote tolerance as illustrated in the utterances (18).

##### 2. Negative Other-representation

Zakir Naik criticizes actions that are perceived as unethical in accordance with Islamic teachings. He exaggerates negative thoughts and practices of others through negating issues rather than identities. This controlled criticism preserves ideological balance and supports peaceful coexistence as in the utterances as in the utterances (7-12). He emphasises a negative point which is the unethical actions media in marketing. The western culture is negatively introduced as degenerate thereby portraying this culture as commodifying women and reducing human dignity to sexual objects. He presents the out-group as institutionally powerful and economically developed but ethically weak.

**Extract 2:** "A Fundamentalist is a person who strictly address to the fundamentals of a particular subject. (1) For

example, if a doctor has to be a good doctor, he should know, follow and practice the fundamentals of medicine. (2) Unless he is a fundamentalist in the field of medicine, he cannot be a good doctor. (3) For a Scientist to be a good Scientist, he should know, follow and practice the fundamentals of science. (4) Unless he is a fundamentalist in the field of science, he cannot be a good scientist. (5) For a Mathematician to be a good mathematician, he should know, follow and practice the fundamentals of Maths. (6) Unless he is a fundamentalist in the field of Maths, he cannot be a good Mathematician. (7) You cannot paint all fundamentalists with the same brush that all are good or all are bad, depending upon the field in which a person is a fundamentalist; you can label him accordingly whether he is a good human being or a bad human being. (8) For example, if there is a person who is a fundamentalist robber, a fundamentalist thief, whose profession is to rob, whose profession is to steal, he is a nuisance to society; he is not a good human being. (9) On the other hand, if you have a fundamentalist doctor whose profession is to save human lives, then he is a boon for society, he is a good human being. (10)" [16]

### 1. Micro Level

#### A. The Syntactic Level

##### 1. Sentence Types

Declaratives are frequently used sentence type which function to define, explain, and evaluate the theme of fundamentalism as well as introducing Zakir Naik's viewpoint as factual and logical. Likewise, they are employed to normalize and legitimize the developed definition of *fundamentalist* as a neutral or positive category rather than an extremist one as in shown in utterance (1).

##### 2- Conditionals

The extract is overwhelmingly with conditional constructions with *if* and *unless* as subordinators. They positively reframe *fundamentalism* as context-dependent rather than ideologically labelled as in shown in the utterance (2) and (3).

#### B. The Semantic Level

##### 1. Lexicalization

Lexicalization plays a central ideological role by reframing the term *fundamentalist*, as well as organizing the discourse into behaviour-based evaluative lexemes rather than identity-based condemnation. Thus, the extract is lexically structured through two clashing semantic lexemes, namely positive (e.g., "a good human being", "a boon for society", "save human lives") and negative (e.g., robber, thief, and nuisance to society). Hence, passivity constructs a moderated framework where

moral worth is conditional and contextual and negativity is attached to actions and behavioural deviation instead of identities.

### C. The Rhetorical Level

#### 1. Repetition

The utterance "He should know, follow and practice..." is repeated to reinforce Zakir Naik's value system and persuade the audience accepting his developed definition, as well as making it memorable, reasonable and normal instead of ideological labelling as extremism.

#### 2. Metaphor

The phrase "a nuisance to society" and "a boon for society" vividly present two contrasting views as well as making intangible things as concrete.

### 2. Macro Level

#### A. Ideological level

##### 1. Positive Self-Presentation

Zakir Naik in this extract emphasises a positive image of religious fundamentalism by associating it with non-religious jobs that are gender-neutral, social and universally respected, and culturally non-threatening for a non-Muslim, as in the utterance (2). In this strategy, in-group is implicitly constructed as moral, rational, and socially useful, thereby building trust and credibility, subtly inviting the audience to reconsider their preconceived notions about religious fundamentalism. And this strongly goes with PDA perspective because it counters reduces fear and stereotyping image of the theme of fundamentalism by promoting rational, profession-based evaluation.

##### 2. Negative Other-Presentation

Zakir Naik redirects negativity toward criminal behaviour rather than the belief systems in order to not constructing a religious or cultural "enemy" and preventing ideological confrontation with non-Muslim. Hence, he utilizes such negative utterances and words in his discourse for the sake of attracting the audience's attention as well as making them think deeply about the others bad actions as in utterance (9), which defines out-group by harmful actions, not religion.

**Extract 3:** "I personally don't know Osama bin Laden. (1) I don't know him; I haven't met him. (2) If you are going to ask and say that based on the news that I get from the media whether it be BBC, CNN, etc., I have no option but to label him as a terrorist. (3) The Glorious Qur'an in Surah Hujurat Ch.49 Ve.6. says that "whenever you get an information about something, check it up before you

pass on to the second person" (4) I cannot base my answer just on the news reports, unless the news reports are verified. (5) But one thing I can say for sure, that he was always called as a "Prime Suspect" on CNN, prime suspect. (6) Till today "Prime Suspect", prime suspect number one, No proofs! (7) According to a normal human being who has little bit logic, there were no proofs at all. (8) What were the proofs? (9) I'm not here in favour of Osama bin Laden. (10) He is not my friend. (11) I don't know him. (12) I'm neither saying he is good I'm neither saying he is bad but just to say on the Prime Suspect, and just on suspicion to attack a country, which is one of the least equipped country in the World. (13) Qur'an says in Surah Hujurat Ch.49, V.12 "Avoid suspicion, for in many cases suspicion is a sin" (14)" [16]

## 1. Micro Level

### A. The Syntactic Level

#### 1. Sentence Types

Declaratives are heavily employed to state factual limitation as the utterances (1) and (2). They enhance intellectual responsibility which depends on verified knowledge rather than assumptions. Interrogatives are used as rhetorical question that increases critical thinking of the audience instead of demanding an actual response as in utterance (9). Imperatives are appeared within the Quranic verse in utterance (4), which emphasises verification as well as avoiding rumours.

#### 2. Conditionals

Conditionals are used to emphasis the idea of reliance on actual evidence rather than personal accusation as the utterances (3) and (5).

#### 3. Passivation

Passive constructions are used to highlight institutional discourse instead of personal bias and shifting attention to media channels as in (6).

### B. The Semantic Level

#### 1. Lexicalisation

Neutral and moral- religious lexemes like "suspicion, proofs, and sins" are used to reinforce justice, moral responsibility and rational evaluation as well as emphasising moderation instead of emotional condemnation.

### C. Rhetorical Level

#### 1. Repetition

The phrase "prime suspect" is repeated to indicate the difference between suspicion and proof which leads to the premature judgement, i.e., it emphasises fairness as Islamic principle.

## 2. Macro Level

### A. Ideological level

#### 1. Positive Self-representation

Having read this extract, it can be seen that Zakir Naik's tendency is rational and moderate in conveying his positive religious points of view. He introduces himself as objective and fair and Islamic religion as intellectually responsible and based on evidences as in the utterances (4) and (14). As neutral preacher, he refuses to engage in emotional and ideological bias despite the challenges. Moreover, he strongly emphasises the good things of Islam which stress the importance of commitment to the Quran and avoiding unverified news and suspicion as well.

#### B. Negative Other-representation

Mainly, negative other- representation strategy can be seen indirectly through criticism of lack of evidences in media labels and unfair suspicion as in the utterances (6-7) which challenge the unverified narratives of media. Moreover, this strategy is presented in a measured and reasonable manner rather than aggressive condemnation and this keeps him moderated in his preaching.

**Extract 4:** "Some people may really be terrorizing the innocent people. (1) Some Muslims may be on the wrong track. (2) They may not be following the guidance of the Qur'an. (3) You have black sheep in every community. (4) One of the number one terrorist of human history, who it is? (5) It is Hitler. (6) He has incinerated six million Jews. (7) So, can I blame Christianity for that? (8) There are people who are harassed. (9) It is like giving the example of Palestine. (10) When Hitler incinerated six million Jews, the Jews were kicked out from Germany. (11) And the Palestinians said "Ahlen Wa Sahlan" you are our cousins, come and join us. (12) It is like I tell a stranger that if you have a problem come and stay in my house. (13) After a few years he kicks me out of the house. (14) And when I started making a noise outside my house, you call me a terrorist. (15) Am I a terrorist? (16) I have welcomed a person who is a stranger just as a human brother. (17) Who's to blame? (18) We are to blame; we are to blame. (19) We have to find out that what is the root cause of the problem. (20) If we get to the root cause, you will come to know that why should a person want to die? (21) Who'd like to die? (22) Who'd like to die? (23) So, we have to find the root cause and solve this problem, that's the only way we can see to it that these terrorizing the innocent people will stop. (24) And all human beings can live together as one brotherhood. (25)" [16]

## 1. Micro Level

### A. The Syntactic Level

#### 1. Sentence Types

Declaratives are predominantly used to construct arguments and reasonable explanation instead of emotional incitement as in shown the utterances (1) and (7). Interrogatives are employed as rhetorical questions to stir up reflection and shifting from accusation to logical thinking as in (21-22), i.e., they foster critical thinking instead of hostility and creating dialogic engagement.

#### 2. Conditionals

Conditional construction is employed to display causality and problem-solving as illustrated in the utterance (22). It indicates that the violent acts are a result of consequence of conditions rather than inherently religious feature.

#### 3. Code-Switching

"Ahlen Wa Sahlan" is intra-sentential code-switching which happens within the same utterance without interruption or pauses for the sake of expressing group identity and hospitality culture.

### B. The Semantic Level

#### 1. Lexicalisation

To positively present Muslims and Islam, Zakir Naik makes benefit of certain constructive lexical words that support religious moderation as well as lessening severity. For instance, the word "brotherhood" promotes solidarity, constructs humanity, and encourages interfaith harmony. Likewise, the adverbial "together" is used to refer to the togetherness and unity.

### C. Rhetorical Level

#### 1. Repetition

The utterances "We are to blame" and "Who'd to die" are repeated to intensify emotional engagement and ethical emphasis which directs the blame on collective human responsibility rather than a single religious group.

#### 2. Metaphor

The phrase "black sheep" implicitly implies that there are extreme people who behave wrongly in every community.

#### 3. Simile

The utterances (10) and (13) illustrate explicit comparison between the geopolitical issue of

Palestine and a domestic life situation where one welcomes a stranger to his house who later kicks him from out.

## 2. Macro Level

### A. Ideological level

#### 1. Positive Self-Representation

Zakir Naik morally tries to discuss the accusations that attach Islam to terrorism throughout introducing Islam and Muslims community as capable of self-criticism as shown in the utterances (1-3), which admitting that some individuals within the Muslim group may deviate in their ethical and religious behaviour. He gives a strong ethical stance against fanatics who seek to distort the image of Islam throughout committing radical actions against innocent civilians. The use of the verb "may" and the quantifier "some" refers to the limited scope of the problem. However, he smartly employs the metaphor "black sheep" in utterance (4) for normalising the presence of the problematic people in any society.

#### 2. Negative Others-Representation

The utterances (9-15) illustrate the bad side of others by portraying the injustice and bad treatments committed towards Palestinians. He makes reference to this geo-political state of injustice to justifying the main reasons behind creating violent actions of certain individuals who may be labelled as terrorists. Likewise, he makes historical reference to Hitler who killed six million Jews and this leads Jews to immigrate from Germany to Palestine. He implicitly sheds light on how the historical unfair events can create complex geographical and political problems. By using the Arabic code-switching "Alen wa Sahlan", he positively presents Palestinians as generous hosts and the out group as violators of hospitality.

**Extract 5:** "Today Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. (1) There may be stray incidents somewhere in the world. (2) There are black sheep in every community but you will not be able to point out as a whole that there are people forcing other non-Muslim to accept Islam at the point of the sword. (3) Infact, they are getting harassed because they are Muslims. (4) This thing can only be solved if you go back, if you go back to the Bible. (5) If you read the Bible, Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) said that "if anyone strikes you on right cheek offer him the other", If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, offer him the other, "If someone asks you to walk one mile, you walk with him twain, if someone ask for the shirt, you give him the clock." (6) So, Jesus Christ (pbuh), a messenger of Almighty God, he shows us how peace should prevail. (7) He says love

your neighbour. (8) If you go back to the scripture, you don't find anywhere where Jesus Christ peace be upon him, himself prescribed that you should harass the Muslims. (9) I tell all the human beings that go back the scripture. (10) You consider to be the most holiest. (11) Go back to your scriptures. (12) The Qur'an says in Surah Ale Imran Ch.3, V.64, "Ta'alaw 'Ilá Kalimatín Sawá'in Baynana Wa Baynakum", "Come to common terms as between us and you" which is the first term? (13) "Allah Na'buda 'Illallah" "that we worship none but Allah." (14)" [16]

## 1. Micro Analysis

### A. The Syntactic Level

#### 1. Sentence Types

Declaratives are used to introduce real evidence as in the utterances (1) and (3) by stating actual information that defend Islam against unjust accusations. Likewise, imperatives are not used in the sense of strict commands but as rhetorical invitations to foster people reading their Holy Books as in the utterance: "Go back to your scriptures." (12) which enhances dialogue and interfaith understanding.

#### 2. Conditionals

Here, conditionals function to guide the audience towards a logical finding, that is, holly scriptures reinforce peace instead of violence as in shown in the utterances (5), (6), and (7)

#### 3. Code-switching

In utterance (13), there is inter-sentential code-switching which fosters the sacred nature of the speech or religious authenticity, thereby, emphasising the call for shared ground among various religions.

### B. The Semantic Level

#### 1. Quotation

The religious direct quotation in utterance (12) legitimises and fosters the credibility of the speech by adding Quranic evidence.

#### 2. Lexicalisation

"harassed", "growing", "prevail", and "love" are used to accomplish two functions; the first one is to defend Islam against stereotype images of violence and the second to foster universal moral values like forgiveness, tolerance and peace.

### C. Rhetorical Level

#### 1. Repetition

The conditions "If you go back..." and "If anyone strike you ..." are repeated to highlight peaceful

teachings in religious texts and establishing more persuasive and memorable discourses.

## 2. Metaphor

The phrase "black sheep" is example of metaphor that makes vivid description for individual who behave badly within Muslims or any community. It does not admit generalization as well as stereotyping Muslims but it fosters a balanced and moderate understanding of any social group.

## 2. Macro Level

### A. Ideological level

#### 1. Positive Self-Representation

When reading this extract, the first utterance (1) strongly asserts the positive representation of peaceful growth of Islam, thereby introducing Islam as a dynamic and outstanding religion. Zakir Naik aligns the Islamic values with other universal moral principles by quoting verses from the Bible as in the utterance (7) and (8). These two utterances are positive points to show Muslims as tolerant, peaceful, and estimating other faiths as well.

#### 2. Negative Others-Representation

Zakir Naik employs negative representations indirectly which appear whenever he refers to the out-group members who accuse Muslims of spreading Islam through violence. Through reading the utterances (3) and (4), it is noticed that he challenges the false accusation of the fanatics against Muslims through negation "will not" and evidential demand. Though claims of the out-group members lack the credible evidence, he did not attack any specific religious group or community and this reflects his strategy of retaining a moderate tone as well as attracting the audience's attention to make them think deeply about the victimization of Muslims in certain contexts.

**Extract 6:** "We know that we Muslims we ruled Spain for about 800 years, we did not force anyone to accept Islam (1) Later on, the Crusaders came, and they wiped out the Muslims. (2) We were the lord of the Arab land for the past 1400 years. (3) For a few years the Britishers came, for a few years the French, came but as a whole, the Arab Muslims were the lord of the Arab land for the past 1400 years. (4) Yet today, yet today, there are more than 14 million Arabs who are Coptic Christians, Coptic Christians. (5) These 14 million Coptic Christian Arabs, they are bearing witness, they are giving 'Shahadah' that Islam was not spread by the sword. (6) The Muslims ruled India for about a thousand years. (7) If they wanted, they could have forced every Indian to accept Islam at the point of the sword. (8) Today, we find in India that more than 80% of the Indians are non-Muslims. (9)

These 80% Non-Muslims Indians, they are bearing witness, they are giving Shahadah, that Islam was not spread by the sword. (10) Which Muslim army went to the East Coast of Africa? (11) Which Muslim army? (12) Which sword? (13) Which sword? (11) Thomas Carlyle gives the reply and he says, "Which sword? First you have to get your sword. (15) Every new idea originates in the mind of one, it originates one man against the full world. (16) It will do little good that he picks up a sword and propagates it, first you have to get your sword" (17) He is referring to the sword of intellect, as Allah says in the Qur'an in Surah Nahl, Ch. 16, V. 125, "Ud'u 'ila sabili rabbika bil-hikmah wal maw'izatil hasanah wa jaadilhum bilati hiya 'ahsan" (15)" [16]

## 1. Micro Analysis

### A. The Syntactic Level

#### 1. Sentence Types

Through reading, it can be realised that declaratives provide historical evidence to verify the argument as well as presenting information in smooth and reasonable way as shown in the utterances (1), (5), and (10). Interrogatives are employed as rhetorical questions to stand firmly against unverified claims and encouraging the audience to think deeply and critically about the historical assumptions as illustrated in the utterances (11), (12), and (13)

#### 2. Conditionals

The extract contains only one conditional sentence which is used as suppositional and indicating an unreal situation as shown in utterance (9).

#### 4. Code-switching

The Quranic verse in utterance (15) is inter-sentential code-switching which strengthens religious identity and Islamic authority.

#### 1. Quotation

Zakir Naik uses two authentic quotations from two different sources. The first quotation is from Europe by Thomas Carlyle and the second quotation is from the Quran as in the utterance (18). He uses this strategy to add authority and credibility to his speech. Besides, he links the western intellectual testimony with Islamic Holy Book, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy between cultures.

#### 2. Euphemism

The euphemism "wiped out" is employed to soften the severity of the action being described. Although the phrase will still be conveying violence, it presents the situation in a less direct way, thereby avoiding explicit mention of violence actions (such as slaughter) that

crusaders committed against innocent Muslims. Zakir Naik is steering the discourse away from the harsh descriptions of the massacre as well as maintaining a balance in tackling historical struggles.

## 3. Lexicalization

The term "Lord" is used to reflect the political management of Arab away from religious compulsion. Also, the word "witness" is employed to strengthen the moral argument as well as presenting the Islamic concept of testimony.

## C. Rhetorical Level

### 1. Repetition

The repetition of the phrases "Yet today, yet today" and "Coptic Christian, Coptic Christian" supports the sub theme in this extract. Likewise, the repetition of the rhetorical questions "Which Muslims army" and "Which sword?" establishes rhetorical emphasis and audience interaction.

### 2. Metaphor

The phrase "The sword of intellect" implies metaphor in which the *sword* stands for reasoning thinking, dialogue and knowledge instead of violence, i.e., the negative stereotype image of the sword coverts to positive intellectual concept.

## 2. Macro Analysis

### A. Ideological level

#### 1. Positive Self-Representation

Zakir Naik employs historical references and linguistic markers to introduce Muslims as just, tolerant, and respectful of religious diversity as illustrated in the utterance (1) the use of the inclusive pronoun (*we*) fosters a collective in-group identity and shared historical responsibility between him and his audience. This historical reference serves as evidence indicating that Muslims had broad political power but they did not exploit this power to force others to Islam and this explicitly refutes the false accusation that Islam spread by the force. Ideologically speaking, in this utterance the in-group members are positively represented as tolerant rulers, respected for religious freedom and morally responsible despite their political authority.

#### 2. Negative Other-Representation

In utterance (2), he gives a clear negative image about the out-group members through strongly focusing on the severity of their actions towards innocent Muslims. The utterance implies an ideological contrast between the two groups. By

stating this historical reference, he intentionally gives a clear message that violence in religious history is not limited to Muslims. Consequently, this strategy is not mainly used to promote aggression but instead of that it reinforces the positive self-presentation of Muslims as well as supporting the discourse of religious moderation.

### 3.2.2. Quantitative Analysis

After qualitatively analysing the extracts, it is time to examine them quantitatively. Table (2) displays the frequencies and percentages of the total of each discursive strategy (The Micro and Macro levels) used to identify religious moderation in the three sub themes in general:

**Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of the Discursive Strategies in the three Sub-themes in general.**

Discursive Strategies	Sub-theme 1 Fundamentalism		Sub-theme 2 Terrorism		Sub-theme 3 Spread of Islam		Total	
	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.
	Sentence types	2	4.166	2	4.347	2	4.444	6
Conditionals	6	12.5	4	8.695	6	13.333	16	11.594
Passivation	2	4.166	4	8.695	0	0	6	4.347
Code-Switching	3	6.25	1	2.173	3	6.666	7	5.072
Quotation	1	2.083	0	0	3	6.666	4	2.898
Euphemism	1	2.083	0	0	1	2.222	1	0.724
Lexicalization	2	4.166	2	4.347	2	4.444	6	4.347
Repetition	5	10.416	6	13.043	4	8.888	15	11.363
Metaphor	4	8.333	1	2.173	2	4.444	7	5.072
Simile	1	2.083	3	6.521	0	0	4	2.898
Positive Self-Representations	10	20.833	13	28.260	17	37.777	40	28.985
Negative Other-Representations	11	22.916	10	21.739	5	11.111	26	18.840
Total	48	100	46	100	45	100	138	100

Obviously, Zakir Naik has employed different discursive strategies to express religious moderation in these three subthemes. In *sub theme (1)*, negative other-representation strategy is employed 11 times (22.916%) to refuse untrue stereotypes attached to *fundamentalism*, while positive self-representation strategy is employed 10 times (20.833%) to reconstruct *fundamentalism* positively via its developed definition. Further, the linguistic strategies of conditional, metaphor and repetition also play a role in illustrating abstract ideas and logical thinking as well. In *sub theme (2)*, positive self-representation is frequently employed 13 times (28.260%) to emphasis justice, true information, and avoid suspicion while negative other representation is used 10 times (21.739%) to criticise political actions

and media discourse as well as rejecting unjust accusations. The linguistic strategies of repetition, passivation, and simile also play a role in depersonalising accusations and strengthening argument. In *sub theme (3)*, positive self-representation ideological strategy is the highest across all sub themes 17 times (37.777%) to shed light on interfaith dialogue and peaceful spread of Islam. Other linguistic strategies of conditional, repetition and quotation are used to strengthen the logical argumentation and providing claims with authority. Consequently, the discourse of religious moderation in the three sub themes transforms from defensive to balanced and then persuasive discourse, i.e., Zakir Naik strategy of expressing moderation is different from one sub theme to another.

**Table 3: Frequencies and Percentages of the Discursive Strategies of non-Muslim Men in the three Sub-themes.**

Discursive Strategies	Sub-theme 1 Non-Muslim man		Sub-theme 2 Non-Muslim man		Sub-theme 3 Non-Muslim man		Total	
	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.
	Sentence types	1	3.846	1	5.882	1	4.545	3
Conditionals	0	0	2	11.764	5	22.727	7	10.769
Passivation	2	7.692	2	11.764	0	0	4	6.153
Code-Switching	3	11.538	0	0	1	4.545	4	6.153
Quotation	1	3.846	0	0	1	4.545	2	3.076
Euphemism	1	3.846	0	0	0	0	1	1.538
Lexicalization	1	3.846	1	5.882	1	4.545	3	4.615
Repetition	2	7.692	2	11.764	3	13.636	7	10.769
Metaphor	1	3.846	0	0	1	4.545	2	3.076
Simile	1	3.846	0	0	0	0	1	1.538
Positive Self-Representations	3	11.538	6	35.294	7	31.818	16	24.615
Negative Other-Representations	10	38.461	3	17.647	2	9.090	15	23.076
Total	26	100	17	100	22	100	65	100

Table 3 shows an obvious transformation in responding to non-Muslim men across the three subthemes. In *subtheme (1)*, non-Muslim men are represented negatively with strong criticism to correct their misunderstandings. Zakir Naik utilises the negative other-representation 10 times (38.461%) to some extent more than positive other representation 3 times (11.538%) because his preaching concentrates on correcting untrue accusations and stereotype images attached to Muslims. Linguistic strategies of code-switching and passivation also play a role in engaging audience and strengthening certain points. In *subtheme (2)*, his preaching turns to be more rational and balanced when positive self-representations increase

significantly 6 times (35.294) to display Islam as just and depending on evidence. Negative other representations still introduce criticism to median and unverified accusations. In *sub theme (3)*, positive self-representation dominantly occurs 7 times (31.818%) to highlight historical coexistence and peaceful spread of Islam while negative other-representation are minimally occurred 2 time so that non-Muslim men are represented in an inclusive and cooperative way to construct common ground and lessening conflicts. As a result, one can notice that Zakir Naik's discourse of religious moderation strategically differs with non-Muslim men in accordance to the thematic context, i.e., he shifts in his preaching from critique to more balanced and then inclusiveness.

**Table 4: Frequencies and Percentages of the Discursive Strategies of non-Muslim Women in the three Sub-themes.**

Discursive Strategies	Sub-theme 1 Non-Muslim woman		Sub-theme 2 Non-Muslim woman		Sub-theme 3 Non-Muslim woman		Total	
	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.	Freq.	Prec.
Sentence types	1	4.347	1	3.448	1	4.347	3	4
Conditionals	6	26.086	2	6.896	1	4.347	9	12
Passivation	0	0	2	6.896	0	0	2	2.666
Code-Switching	0	0	1	3.448	2	8.695	3	4
Quotation	0	0	0	0	2	8.695	2	2.666
Euphemism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lexicalization	1	4.347	1	3.448	1	4.347	3	4
Repetition	3	13.043	4		1	4.347	8	10.666
Metaphor	3	13.043	1	3.448	1	4.347	5	6.666
Simile	0	0	3		0	0	3	4
Positive Self-Representations	8	34.782	8	27.586	12	52.173	28	37.333
Negative Other-Representations	1	4.347	6	20.689	2	8.695	9	12
Total	23	100	29	100	23	100	75	100

As can be seen in Table 4, the ideological strategy of positive self-representation strongly dominates the three subthemes with limited use of negative other-representation and this demonstrates that discourse including non-Muslim women are more respectful, careful, and inclusive. In *sub theme 1*, Zakir Naik's responses to non-Muslim women are full of positivity and relatively low criticism, i.e., he reinforces moral values as well as retaining respect toward them. He makes use of positive self-representations 8 times (34.782%) to shed light on respecting and protecting women dignity and ethical values of modesty. Further, linguistic strategies of conditionals, repetition and metaphor also take a role in fostering logical moral thinking. In *sub theme 2*, positive self-representation is used 8 time (27.586%) to keep soft and empathetic mode of moderation. Negative other representation is the highest across the three subthemes which occurring 6 times (20.689%) to discuss harassment, oppression, and injustice. Other linguistic strategies of conditional, repetition and simile are also used to provide logical defence, highlight injustice and clarifying complex

cases. In *sub theme 3*, Zakir Naik fosters harmonious and inclusive discourse in which positive self-representation is the highest across the three subthemes which occurring 28 times (52.173%) to reinforce peaceful coexistence, and interfaith harmony. Negative other-representation occurs 2times (8.695%) to criticise the out-group members. Other linguistic strategies of code-switching, quotation, and metaphor are utilized to increase reliability and enhance persuasion.

Moreover, if one compares the total of the discursive strategies of non-Muslim men in table 3 with the total of the discursive strategies of non-Muslim women in table 4, one can realise that Zakir Naik's way of expressing religious moderation is not randomly occurred, i.e., it is influenced by the sex of the addressee. In his preaching toward non-Muslim men, religious moderation is expressed through refutation, correction and logical defence, while religious moderation, toward non-Muslim women, is expressed through high positivity and low criticism, and protection of women's dignity and human values as well.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The researchers come up with the following conclusions:

1. The discursive strategies that are positively used to support religious moderation in Zakir Naik lecture to make social change in the life of the audience include: a) the syntactic strategies of sentence types, Conditionals, passivation, and code-switching, b) the semantic strategies of quotation, euphemism, and lexicalization, c) the rhetorical strategies of repetition, metaphor and simile, d) the ideological strategies of positive self-representations and negative other-representations.
2. The discursive strategies of positive self-representations and negative other-representations, are the most frequently employed strategies in

analysing the data of the present study. Other strategies such as syntactic, semantic, and rhetorical strategies are less frequently used.

3. Through analysing, it can be noticed that religious moderation is expressed via a set of positive ideologies which are frequently repeated through certain discourse strategies, especially positive self-representations, namely: tolerance, peaceful coexistence, equality, anti-radicalism, and empowerment.

4. As can be seen in Table 2, the most frequently used ideological strategy in all sub themes is positive self-representation counting up 40 times (28.985%). This indicates that Zakir Naik mainly expresses religious moderation via constructive, positive as well as value oriented-discourse.

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