

 NLP & political science

# Trump and Venezuela

What the analysis of the  
January 3, 2026 press conference reveals

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January 5, 2026

# A press conference, four speakers

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**January 3, 2026**

White House press conference following  
the military operation in Venezuela.

 858 annotated sentences

 Associated Press transcript

 Source video

 **Donald Trump**  
President

 **Marco Rubio**  
Secretary of State

 **Pete Hegseth**  
Secretary of Defense

 **Dan Caine**  
Chairman Joint Chiefs

# Methodology



少不了 Transcription

少不了 antoinelemor/Transcribe-tool

少不了 LLM Annotation

少不了 antoinelemor/LLM\_Tool

少不了 Analysis

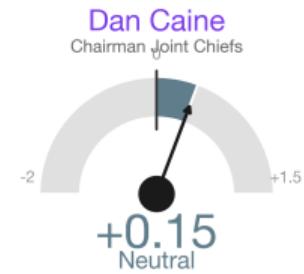
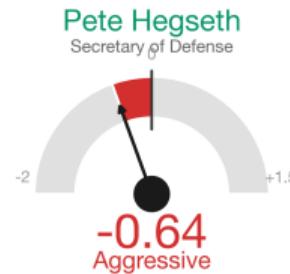
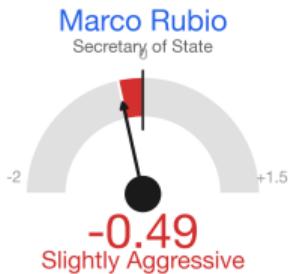
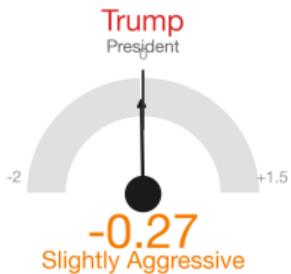
少不了 antoinelemor/nlp-pol

ANALYSIS #1

What rhetorical  
posture adopted?

## Rhetorical Posture Index by Speaker

Weighted average of tone annotations (-2 = aggressive, +1.5 = neutral)



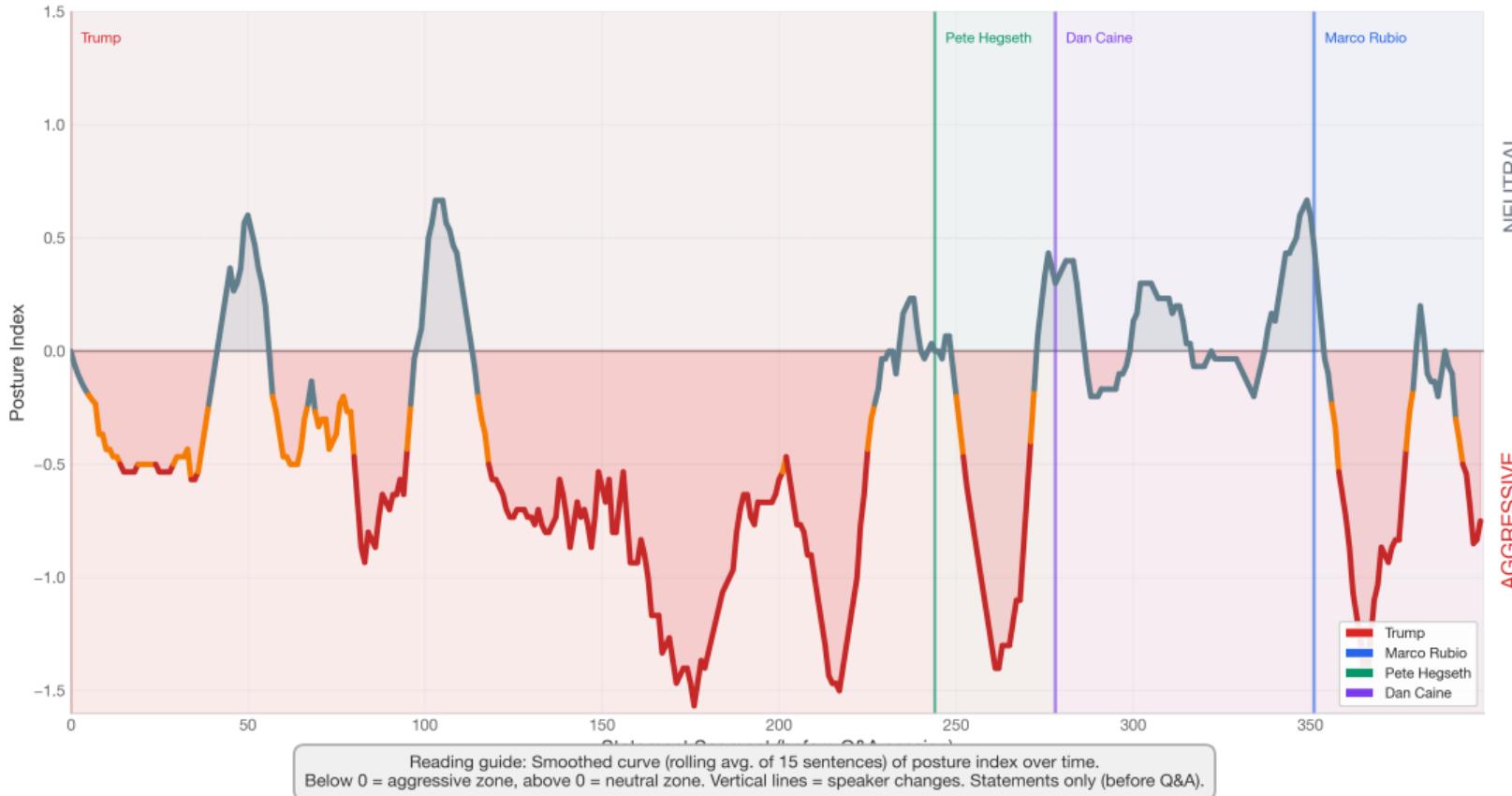
AGGRESSIVE

Reading guide: Each sentence is annotated by LLM for tone (7 categories). Index = weighted average of all sentences.  
Scale: threatening (-2), confrontational (-1.5), dismissive (-1), triumphant (-0.5), factual (0), reassuring (+1), deferential (+1.5).

NEUTRAL

# Rhetorical Posture Evolution During Press Conference

Rolling average (window = 15 sentences) of tone-weighted posture index



# Finding: Trump is not the most aggressive

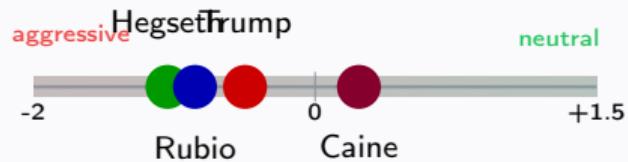
Contrary to the usual image, Trump adopts a **moderate** tone.

The most aggressive?

⚠ **Pete Hegseth** (-0.64)

⚠ **Marco Rubio** (-0.49)

Joint Chiefs Chairman Caine remains neutral, he describes and doesn't justify.



Hegseth	-0.64
Rubio	-0.49
Trump	-0.27
Caine	+0.15

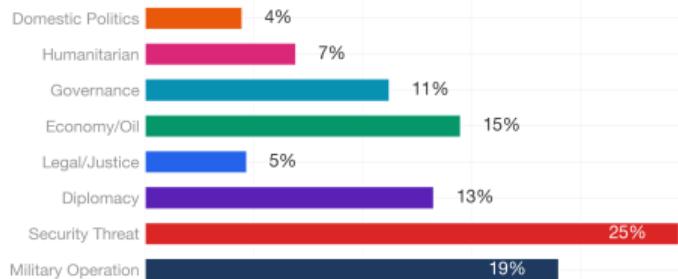
ANALYSIS #2

What topics raised by  
each speaker?

## Topic Distribution by Speaker

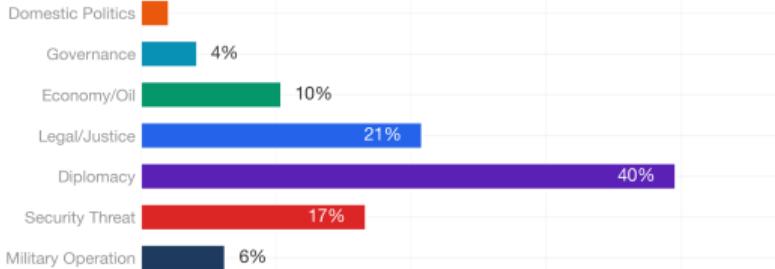
Proportion of each speaker's interventions by theme

**Trump**



President · n = 489

**Marco Rubio**



Secretary of State · n = 48

**Pete Hegseth**



Secretary of Defense · n = 28

**Dan Caine**



Chairman Joint Chiefs · n = 67

Reading guide: Each bar = % of that speaker's sentences with that theme (LLM-annotated). Top 8 themes shown.  
Shows what each official talked about most. n = total sentences analyzed for that speaker.

## Finding: a very clear division of roles

### Trump n=489

Security threat 25%  
Military operation 19%  
Economy/Oil 15%  
Humanitarian 7%

### Rubio n=48

Diplomacy 40%  
Legal/Justice 21%  
Security threat 17%  
**Humanitarian 0%**

### Hegseth n=28

Military operation 57%  
Security threat 36%  
**Humanitarian 0%**

### Caine n=67

Military operation 96%  
Technical, factual

## Interpretation: an imperialist justification

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- ▶ The advisors focus on threat and force
- ▶ Trump alone mentions humanitarian issues: a facade role?
- ▶ Total absence of humanitarian concern from Rubio and Hegseth
- ▶ Operation justified mainly by security and economy

ANALYSIS #3

## The US against the rest of the world?

## "Us" vs "Them": Named Entity Sentiment Analysis

Named entities = people, countries, and institutions mentioned by name in the speech



ANIMOSITY INDEX

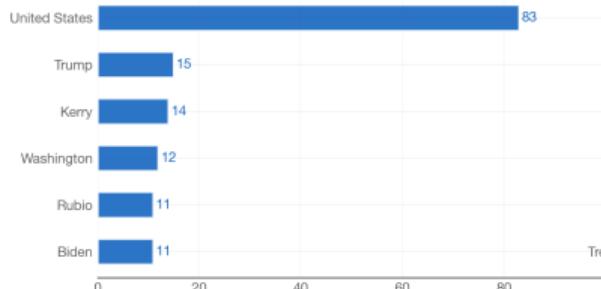
-0.46

High Animosity

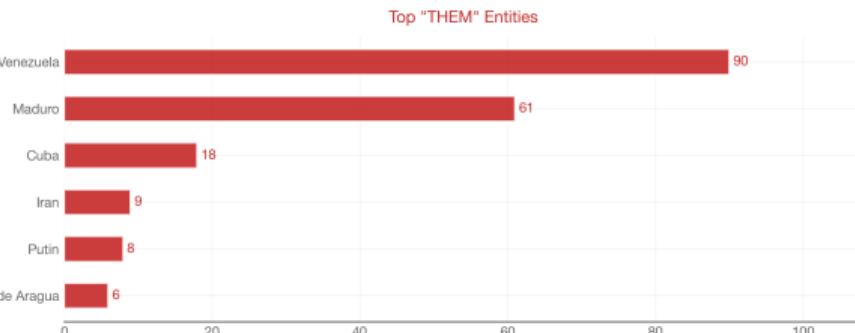
-1 <-> +1  
hostile conciliatory



Top "US" Entities



Top "THEM" Entities



Reading guide: Each named entity is classified as "US" (United States, officials, military) or "THEM" (foreign: Venezuela, Maduro, Cuba...). LLM annotates valence (positive/neutral/negative) per mention. Score = (positive – negative) / total. Animosity < 0 = hostile to out-group.

# Finding: a strongly Manichean discourse

“Us”

United States

+0.39

Positive 48%  
Neutral 42%  
Negative 9%

“Them”

Foreign entities

-0.53

Positive 2%  
Neutral 43%  
Negative 55%

Animosity index: -0.46 (high)

## Interpretation: an imperialist isolationism?

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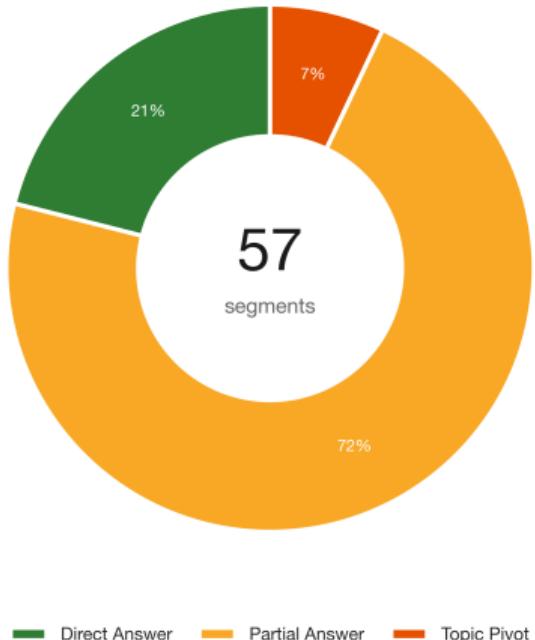
- ▶ Binary worldview: “us” (positive) vs “them” (negative)
- ▶ An assumed regional interventionism
- ▶ A binary discourse that serves to justify imperialist actions

ANALYSIS #4

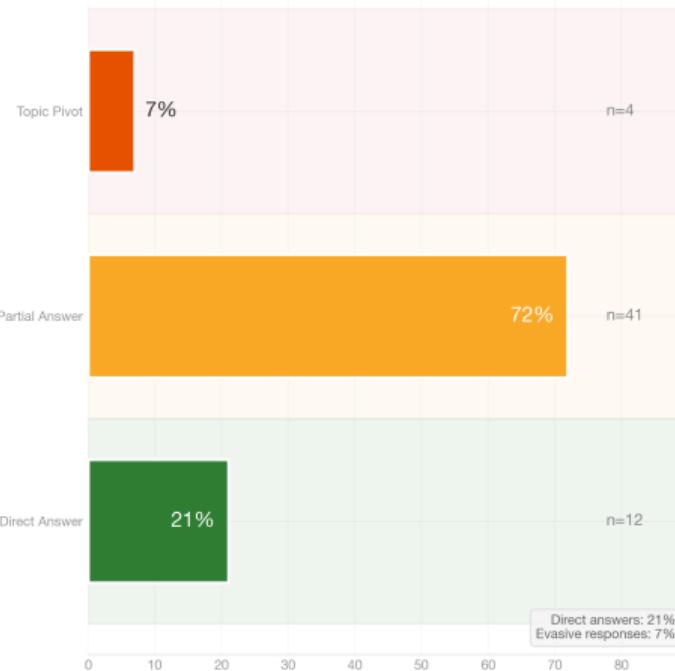
## Facing journalists

# How Did Trump Respond to Journalists' Questions?

Analysis of response patterns during Q&A session



Response Quality Breakdown



Reading guide: Trump's response sentences during Q&A, classified by LLM into 5 types.  
Direct = answers the question. Partial = incomplete answer. Pivot/deflection = avoids. Attack = criticizes questioner.

## Finding: rarely direct answers

72%  
partial answers

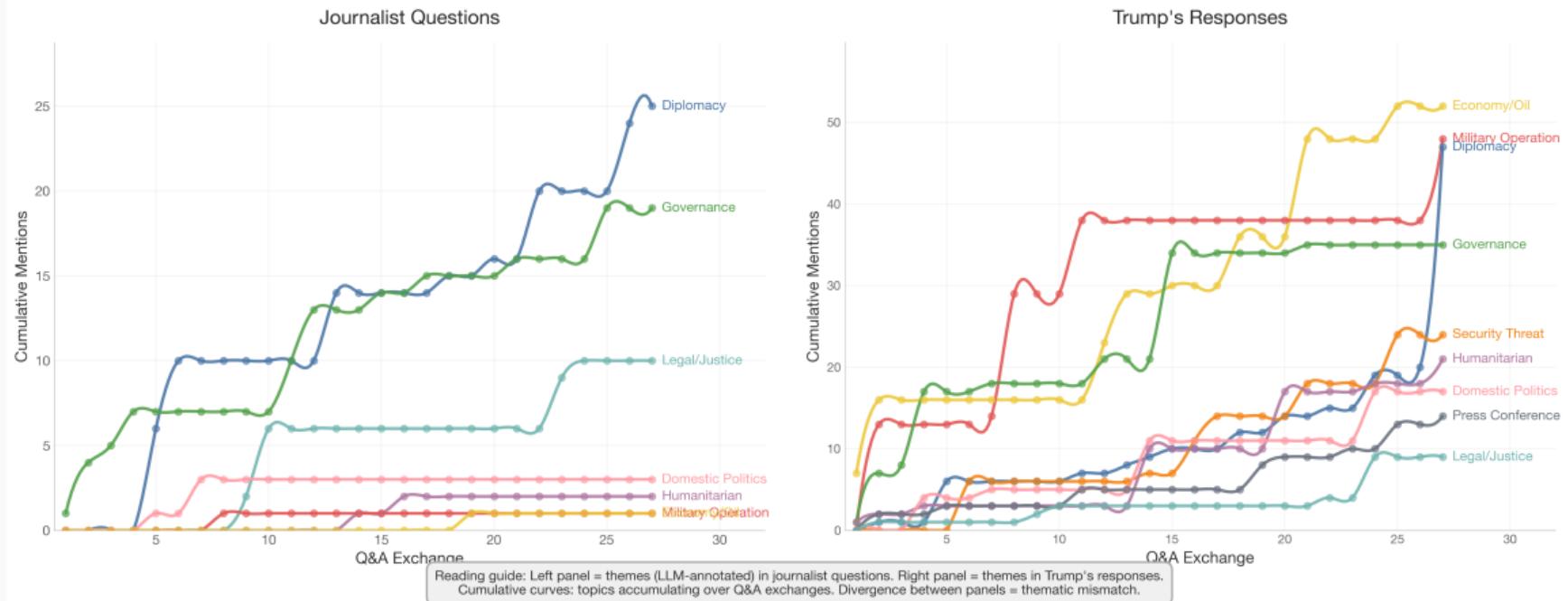
21% direct answers

7% topic changes

Journalists get **fragments**, rarely complete answers.

Out of 57 response segments, only 12 directly answer the question asked.

## Theme Focus Evolution During Q&A Session



# Finding: oil above all

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A revealing thematic gap

## Journalists

1. Diplomacy
2. Governance
3. Legal / Justice

Questions about the *how*

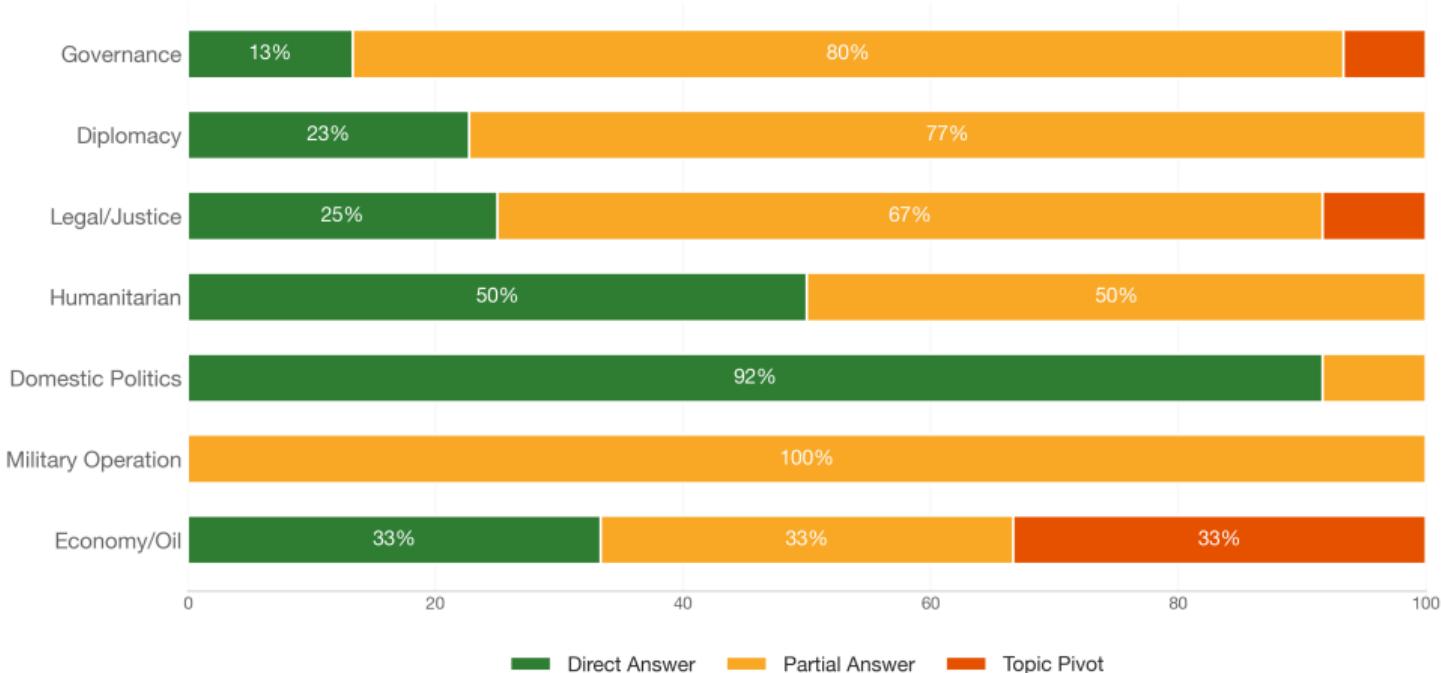
## Trump answers

1. Economy / Oil
2. Military operation
3. Diplomacy

Insistence on *resources*

# How Did Trump Respond to Questions by Topic?

Response type distribution by topic during Q&A session



Reading guide: For each topic asked by journalists, shows how Trump responded (% of response types).  
Green = direct. Yellow = partial. Orange = pivot. Red = deflection. Purple = attack. Sorted by question volume.

# Finding: the “how” remains unanswered

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The most **avoided** topics are the most **concrete**

80%

Governance

partial answer

67%

Legal / Justice

partial answer

77%

Diplomacy

partial answer

33%

Economy / Oil

topic change/defer to advisor

ANALYSIS #5

# Conclusion

# What the analysis reveals

## Delegated aggression

Trump moderate, advisors offensive. The president leads, pushed by his entourage.

## Clear imperialism

Assumed regional interventionism. Binary “us” vs “them” worldview.

## Oil above all

Revealing thematic gap. Justified by resources, not humanitarian concerns.

## The future remains unclear

Governance, legality: no concrete plan for the aftermath.

**Antoine Lemor**

 [github.com/antoinelemor](https://github.com/antoinelemor)

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Want to see the method and code?

 **This analysis** [antoinelemor/nlp-pol](https://github.com/antoinelemor/nlp-pol)

 **Transcription** [antoinelemor/Transcribe-tool](https://github.com/antoinelemor/Transcribe-tool)

 **LLM Annotation** [antoinelemor/LLM\\_Tool](https://github.com/antoinelemor/LLM_Tool)