

Moving in a Gyre:

A Discourse Analysis of President Rouhani's De Facto Inaugural Speech

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to critically analyze the discourse of the de facto inaugural speech presented by president Rouhani while receiving his presidential percept from the leader, to seek the ideology beyond his speech and to detect the point that to which of discourses, reformists' or principalists', Rouhani's discourse belong to. Based on Dijk's socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis the selected corpus' ideological and persuasive components are assessed. To this end and based on the model, the historical, political or social background of the election is discussed firstly. Then, the political groups and parties, specifically reformists and principalists, their ideologies and power relations are elaborated. Finally, based on the examination of all formal structure, lexical choice and syntactic structure, the presupposed and the implied notions are made explicit, to determine the ideology beyond the formal text. Comparing the extracted notions from the speech with the polarized viewpoints of two political parties, it was concluded that Rouhani tried to keep the golden middle path while presenting his ideas, trying to introduce himself a moderate person and base all his plans on moderation. His speech revealed the strategies to move in a gyre of ideas trying to avoid condemning any party or person of eminence in line to keep all parties in one line to make his move.

Keywords

inaugural speech, socio-cognitive model, critical discourse analysis, reformists, prncipalists

1. Introduction

Politics is the arena for contest in order to gain power to execute and for the ideology. The most versatile tool in the hands of politicians to put their political, economical and social ideas into practice is language. Language thus serves as the medium of delivering ideas. To scrutinize the hidden meaning and ideologies beyond texts different approaches have been introduced and taken into account. As Mozaffari (2009) stated, the impact of ideology on policy is generally acknowledged by scholars. That which is disputed concerns the modality and degree of ideological influence on the formulation and

execution of foreign policy. Worldviews are embedded in the symbolism of a culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse.

Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) and Walter (1987) suggest that ideology performs diverse functions. According to them it performs a cognitive function, serving as an analytical prism, and a normative function, providing specific policy prescriptions, a guide to action are distinguished. Mozaffari (2009) maintained that the general functions of ideology are legitimizing the political systems and justifying or rationalizing shifts in policy. More specifically, Barry Farrell draws a connection between the degrees of the impact of ideology on the nature of the political system.

One of the areas pertaining to the analysis of texts to elaborate on the ideology beyond the text is critical discourse analysis. According to Dijk (1998a) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a field that is concerned with studying and analyzing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias. It examines how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political and historical contexts.

The purpose of this study is to critically analyze the discourse of the de facto inaugural speech presented by president Rouhani while receiving his presidential precept from the leader, to seek the ideology beyond his speech and to detect the point that to which of discourses, (reformists or principalists) currently in use in Iran, Rouhani's discourse belong to. To this end the theoretical underpinning concerning critical discourse analysis are discussed and Dijk sociocognitive model within the domain of the critical discourse analysis is employed to analyze the proposed inaugural speech.

Horváth (2011) defined inaugural address as a speech for a very specific event—being sworn into the office of the presidency. Each president, however, has faced the particular challenges of their time and put their own distinctive rhetorical stamp on the address.

The inauguration of Hassan Rouhani as the 7th President of Iran took place on two rounds, first on Saturday 3 August 2013 whereby he received his presidential precept from Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and entered the Sa'dabad Palace, the official residence of the president in a private ceremony. The second was on the following day with the sworn in for the office in the Parliament of Iran. This marked the commencement of the four-year term of Hassan Rouhani as president and his vice president.

Hassan Rouhani won Iran's presidential elections by posing as the voice of protest and change. Selvik (2013) reported that although he was previously considered a conservative, he ran a campaign with a strong reformist flavor. Rouhani himself does not use the terms "conservative" and "reformist" but defines himself as a moderate. He represents a middle-of-the-road current in Iranian politics. He continued that Rouhani's victory will empower this centrist political current. However, the 2013 election has also brought the centrists closer to the reformists. There is, hence, a new momentum for reform.

When Hassan Rouhani prevailed in the June 14th 2013 presidential election with 50.71% of the vote, both the principalists or the whole system and its reformist opposition claimed victory: because the

participation rate was high 72.7%, and because it had demonstrated to “the enemies” that elections in Iran are genuine; the reformist opposition because the president-elect had adopted its political demands and symbols.

Based on the background depicted here, some of the theoretical underpinnings of critical discourse analysis are explained, and the socio-cognitive model by Dijk (1988) is explicated and employed as the basis for the discussion in the present study. After elaborating on the political parties in Iran and the current political and social background the lexical and structural notions of Rouhani’s inaugural speech are analyzed to elaborate on his ideology in the discussion section.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings

2.1 Discourse Analysis (DA)

Discourse analysis is a holistic way of looking at language. As a science, according to Metzger and Bahan (2001), discourse analysis pulls from many different fields including, linguistics (how discourse is structured), sociology (how discourse is used between parties), and psychology (how discourse is perceived). Both Metzger and Bahan (2000), and Lakoff (2001) describe discourse analysis as being “interdisciplinary”. While some areas of discourse analysis reside within traditional linguistic fields, discourse analysis as a whole, refers to the study of language beyond the level of the grammatical sentence. Rather than examine language in a vacuum, as Agar (1994) noted, discourse analysis looks at language as it naturally flows in the context.

Discourse, as such, is a broad term with many a definition, which “integrates a whole palette of meanings” (Titscher et al., 1998, P. 42), ranging from linguistics, through sociology, philosophy and other disciplines. For the purposes of this paper we apply the definition of discourse based on Dijk’s (1977), and his general concept of discourse as text in context, seen as “data that is liable for empiric analysis” (cited in Titscher et al., 1998, P. 44), with the focus being put on discourse as action and process.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

As noted by Dijk (1993b), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is obviously not a homogenous model, nor a school or a paradigm, but at most a shared perspective on doing linguistics, semiotic or discourse analysis (p. 131).

Horváth (2011) defines CDA’s objective to perceive language use as social practice. The users of language do not function in isolation, but in a set of cultural, social and psychological frameworks. CDA accepts this social context and studies the connections between textual structures and takes this social context into account exploring the links between textual structures and their function in interaction within society. Such an analysis is a complex, multi-level one, given the obvious lack of direct one to one correspondence between text structures and social functions. Especially when it comes to creating and maintaining differences in power relations.

Fairclough (1993) in his definition of CDA states that discourse analysis which aims to systematically

explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practice, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (p. 135).

Thus, CDA understands discourses as relatively stable uses of language serving the organization and structuring of social life.

The one element of CDA by which it is differentiated from other forms of discourse analysis lies in its attribute of “critical”. Fairclough (1992, p. 9) describes the use of “Critical” as showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change. It is important to expose the hidden things, since they are not evident for the individuals involved, and, because of this, they cannot be fought against.

What the followers of CDA try to achieve has been summarised by Batstone (1995) Critical Discourse Analysts seek to reveal how texts are constructed so that particular (and potentially indoctrinating) perspectives can be expressed delicately and covertly; because they are covert, they are elusive of direct challenge, facilitating what Kress calls the “retreat into mystification and impersonality” (Batstone, 1995, pp. 198-199).

Fairclough in his work *Language and Power* (1989) wishes to “examine how the ways in which we communicate are constrained by the structures and forces of those social institutions within which we live and function” (p. vi). In the same publication, the possible procedures for analysing texts are suggested. Fairclough (1989) gives his opinions on the actual nature of discourse and text analysis. In his view, there are three levels of discourse, firstly, *social conditions of production and interpretation*, i.e., the social factors, which contributed or lead to the origination of a text, and, at the same time, how the same factors effect interpretation. Secondly, the *process of production and interpretation*, i.e., in what way the text was produced and how this effects interpretation. Thirdly, the *text*, being the product of the first two stages, commented on above. Fairclough (1989) subsequently gives three stages of CDA, which are in accord with the three above mentioned levels of discourse:

- 1) Description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text,
- 2) Interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction—with seeing the text as a product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation,
- 3) Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context—with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects (p. 26).

2.3 Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Model

As Ezewudo (1998) noted, among CDA practitioners, Dijk is one of the most often referenced and quoted authors in critical studies of media discourse, even in studies that do not necessarily fit within the CDA perspective.

In his *News Analysis* (1988), he integrates his general theory of discourse to the discourse of news in

the press, and applies his theory to authentic cases of news reports at both the national and international levels. What distinguishes Dijk's (1988) framework, as noted by Boyd-Barrett (1994), for the analyses of news discourse is his call for a thorough analysis not only of the textual and structural level of media discourse but also for analysis and explanations at the production and "reception" or comprehension level.

By structural analysis, Dijk posited analysis of "structures at various levels of description" which meant not only the grammatical, phonological, morphological and semantic level but also "higher level properties" such as coherence, overall themes and topics of news stories and the whole schematic forms and rhetorical dimensions of texts.

For Dijk it is the sociocognition—social cognition and personal cognition—that mediates between society and discourse. He defines social cognition as "the system of mental representations and processes of group members" (p. 18). In this sense, for Dijk, "ideologies...are the overall, abstract mental systems that organize...socially shared attitudes" (p. 18). Ideologies, thus, "indirectly influence the personal cognition of group members" in their act of comprehension of discourse among other actions and interactions (p. 19). He calls the mental representations of individuals during such social actions and interactions "models". For him, "models control how people act, speak or write, or how they understand the social practices of others" (p. 2). Of crucial importance here is that, according to Dijk, mental representations "are often articulated along Us versus Them dimensions, in which speakers of one group will generally tend to present themselves or their own group in positive terms, and other groups in negative terms" (p. 22). He believes that one who desires to make transparent such an ideological dichotomy in discourse needs to analyze discourse in the following way (1998, pp. 61-63):

- a. Examining the context of the discourse: historical, political or social background of a conflict and its main participants,
- b. Analyzing groups, power relations and conflicts involved,
- c. Identifying positive and negative opinions about Us versus Them,
- d. Making explicit the presupposed and the implied,
- e. Examining all formal structure: lexical choice and syntactic structure, in a way that helps to (de) emphasize polarized group opinions.

For the sake of the topic of this study Dijk's socio-cognitive model (1988) is applied.

3. Related Literature Review

With regard to the inaugural speech some studies have been done on the rhetorical, linguistic or discourse features of their texts. Most of these studies have been done on the American presidents to elaborate on the kind of ideologies beyond the speech.

Ebunoluwa (2009) examined the persuasive strategies of President Obama's public speaking in his inaugural address. The selected corpus' ideological and persuasive components were assessed. The

analytical part of this research work analyzes the possible interrelatedness of textual properties and power relations, which is also underpinned in Fairclough's conceptual work, thus revealing Obama's persuasive strategies showing the relationship between language, ideology and reality. This work investigated the ability to empower people with a new political power by bringing into view the real knowledge of the inauguration speech of President Barrack Obama.

Pagliarini (2011) examined the utilization of the term "democracy" in presidential inaugural speeches as a rhetorical device and the impacts of this terminology upon conceptions of American governance. This rhetorical analysis provides a lens to view the changing dynamics of American political thought.

Batluk analyzed Barack Obama's Inaugural Address, January, 2009 from the perspective of various linguistic techniques. She proposed and focused on the idea that the composition of the speech has an aim to create a unity of the speaker and the audience in order to deliver the message. Moreover, the speaker maintains the atmosphere of unity throughout the speech, so that the speech produces an effect when the audience becomes a co-author of it. Also, she discussed some aspects of persuasive strategies employed in the speech from those dating back as long as Ancient Greece to temporal discourses. The aim was to analyze how the use of a number of linguistic approaches creates a speech which senses an agreement and co-operation between the orator and the audience.

Viberg (2011) analyzed the public discourses of U.S. president Barack Obama and former U.S. president George W. Bush from a post-colonial perspective using the practice of Critical Discourse Analysis. The researcher looked into two linguistic features: pronouns and ideologically contested words and made a qualitative study of the inaugural speeches of the presidents in which they are also compared to each other. His conception is that there are thoughts and ideas represented in the speeches which have derived from a colonial heritage.

The result of the study shows that there are indeed some connections to a colonial or neocolonial way of thinking although it is not very clear what direct political consequences comes out of these. What is more explicit, however, is the lack of post-colonial insight in both Bush's and Obama's speech. Between the two Bush stands out as the more direct in his discourse but also the one with least self-criticism. In contrast, Obama does beat around the bush a great deal and uses many profound expressions that he has yet to live up to.

Gatta (2010) analyzed the textual features of Barack Obama's inaugural address. He concluded that Obama effectively used historical, religious, and political references to signify the status quo and propose where we will go from here. He strategically placed literary devices such as metaphors to enunciate his sense of change and hope with the audience. Obama captured the audience with the confidence in his rhetoric to relay his symbols of "we" and "us" in the speech.

Given the historical and unprecedented pressure of the address, the study suggests that Obama effectively used his tools as a rhetorician to provide an ever-lasting effect on his audience. Moreover the Gatta (2010) author concluded that Obama had to lift the spirits of the nation that was going through hardships not seen in decades. Obama's rhetoric had to persuade the American people that he

was the right leader for this transition of times. He had to persuade them with a strong message that he had a plan to improve the economy, fix the health care system, get the troops out of Iraq, and uplift the pulse of the nation.

Since most of the studies have been done on the American presidents inaugural speech the aim of the present research endeavor is to analyze the inaugural speech presented by Iranian presidents, more specifically on Rouhani's speech.

3.1 Research Question

To what sort of political discourse, i.e., conservative, reformist, or centric (moderate) does Rouhani's inaugural speech belong to? What is his strategy to present his ideology?

4. Method

To critically investigate the discourse of inaugural speech presented by President Rouhani, Dijk's socio-cognitive framework (1988) which is mostly applied to new analysis and political texts is employed. The material to be investigated for the present study is the text [Persian version] of president Rouhani's de facto inaugural speech presented before the supreme leader of Islamic republic of Iran when he was to receive his presidential precept from the leader.

Based on this model, first of all the historical, political and social background of the election in which Rouhani won the presidency are elaborated. The main elements of this background include the economical and social conditions of the country during the last presidency, nation's disappointment to participate in the election, and former president's advocations such as Khatami and Rafsanjan, which are elaborated in detail.

Secondly, the main political parties currently active in Iran, principalists and reformists, are explicated in terms of their ideologies, power relations, their current status in the country and their viewpoint with regard to participation in election are discussed. Moreover their positive and negative opinions with regard to their ideologies and discourse are enumerated.

Then, in the analysis part the presupposed and implied notions which can be determined based on the discourse delivered by the President are extracted and compared with the main points of ideologies of principalists or reformists. To this end, all the words, structures and utterances were extracted, analyzed and compared to determine their similarities and differences to the viewpoints of the two political parties to find the polarized group opinion if there was any.

5. Discussion

5.1 Examining the Context of the Discourse: Historical, Political or Social Background

5.1.1 Political Parties and Ideologies in Iran

In Iran there are two main Islamic political philosophies within the Islamic Republic. The 1997 presidential election split the Islamic state into two factions, namely Eslahtalaban (the reformists) and Osulgaran (principalist, conservatism). The prospect of reformist movement was the new ambitions for

Iran as a “democratic” country. The main themes of their political discourse were individual freedom, civil rights and civil society, with Mir-hosseini in (2006) defending them as a “New Religious Thinking”.

Conversely, the Osulgaran (“Principalists”) in reference to the principles of the 1979 revolution presented themselves as the heir to the 1979 Islamic revolution and the ideas of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The Osulgaran believe that the ruler is God and that Ayatollah Khamenei is God’s representative politically and religiously known as *velayat-faghih*. According to the Osulgaran, in a divine Islamic society no form of state-tyranny can exist and everybody would be equal, because the goal of everything is God.

Scholars and journalists have also labeled the Osulgaran group as “Islamic conservatives”, the “hardliners”, “the traditionalists” and “Islamic fundamentalists” (Lausten & Wæver, 2000, p. 722). In this article they are referred to as “conservatism”.

5.2 Analyzing Groups, Power Relations and Identifying Positive and Negative Opinions

5.2.1 Discourse of Principalists

One of the main principles of the fundamentalist beliefs is the idea of a threat against Islam from its “enemies”. The Iranian “fundamentalists” were not only “conservative Muslims” in their philosophical thoughts, they have also created a securitized political situation in which they claimed that Islam was under siege from its enemies, including Western and secular ideologies (Juergensmeyer, 2000).

For the Islamic fundamentalists, the “enemy of Islam” was not only the “West”—the USA—but also the Islamic reformists working to liberalize the Islamic political system. The Islamic fundamentalists perceived themselves as being thoroughly threatened by the Islamic reformists; more than the threat posed by other groups such as the secularists, atheists, socialists, religious minorities or any group that was more directly opposed to their leadership.

In the Islamic fundamentalist debate, the main concepts include “justice”, “truth”, “Islamic values and morals”, “duties and responsibilities”, “Western cultural threat”, the unity of the Islamic Ommat, the leadership of the *Vali-e faqih*, and his knowledge and his ability to define the common good (*Maslahat-e ommat*).

Parsa (2008) elaborated on the communitarian Islam ideology stands for political concepts such as Justice (*Haq*), the Islamic Community (*Ommat*), Moral Values (*Arzesh-haye Akhlaqi*), Duties and Responsibilities (*vazifehv amasuli yat*) Unity (*vahdat*), Common Good (*Maslahat-e ommat*) and Sovereignty of God.

5.2.2 Discourse of Reformists

According to Ganji, freedom, democracy, civil society, respect for other nations and cultures, peace, the preservation of human rights and tolerance were the ideological foundations of the reformist camp (Ganji, Interview with Mashayekhi, 1998, p. 22). He explained the differences between the reformists and fundamentalists by referring to the reformists’ support of the idea that the legitimacy of the state depended on the people and that it was the people who should decide on behalf of the country. Ganji

criticized the fundamentalists for claiming that God had entrusted them with the privilege of leading all aspects of the lives of the people.

One of the best known reformists was Abdul-Karim Soroush (1945), a leading oppositional figure in Iran. Soroush argued that the principles of democracy and human rights are in harmony with Islam. Shirin Ebadi, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003, also supported the reformists, advocating for democracy and human rights in Iran. She argued that “Islam was built on democratic values and respect for public opinion” (Ebadi, 2004, p. 16).

As Parsa (2008) mentioned, the new reformists in Iran built their political ideas and argumentation on “Islam”, just as the fundamentalists did but with a new perspective, however, there are some opposition of ideas between the traditional and the new prospects. As Parsa (2008) noted the two Islamic groups presented two Islamic political philosophies.

The reformists believe in religious tolerance, personal political freedom and individual rights demonstrating an inclination towards liberal ideas. For the reformists, “Islam” was a human-centered religion (Siavoushi, 2006), and the reformists debated concepts such as freedom, democracy, civil society and rule of law. However, they did not present their thoughts as a unified and coherent Islamic political theory. Notably, the reformists present the political ideas of individualism and rights as true Islamic thoughts rather than as Western liberal thinking.

Parsa (2008) defines the liberal Islam ideology equal to reformists ideals stands for political concepts such as Freedom (Azadi), Democracy (Mardomsalai), Political Participation (Mosharekat), Political Legitimacy (Mashru’iyat-e Siyasi), Sovereignty of People (Hakemia-et mardom), Pluralism (Takasor), Rule of Law (Hakemiat-e Qanun) and Civil Society (Jame’eh-ye Madani). The reformists debated these concepts and related them to the idea of Iranian political reform.

Besides the ideologies and the political faction in Iran, it is noteworthy to explicate on the three main discourses in Iran. Selvik (2013) clearly categorized the discourse during electoral campaigns which is the reflex of basic ideologies beyond the political parties in Iran as the following:

According to his report, “...the first is the centrist-pragmatic discourse which gained prominence when Rafsandjani was elected president on the promise of post-war reconstruction in 1989. It stresses competence over ideology and pragmatism over lofty political goals. The second is the reformist discourse which showed its force during the election of Khatami in 1997. It calls for the strengthening of civil society, constitutional government and recognition of the will of the people as the most important source of political authority. The third is the conservative discourse which wore traditional garments in the 1990s and emerged with a neoconservative slant under Ahmadinejad. It insists on the absolute authority of the Leader and “the system” over popular sovereignty” (p. 2).

Rouhani’s discourse is closest to the first of these which is the harbinger of the peoples’ inclination to moderation and the return of centrists to the Iranian government offices. More to this, he made clear in his first TV interview during the electoral campaign, “I have never been extreme (efratgar), neither to the right nor left” (SedavaSima, 2013). However, as Selvik (2013) reiterated Rouhani’s calls for

“desecuritisation” and political and civil rights in particular had a strong reformist flavor.

Based on what is discussed, the purpose of this study is to critically analyze the discourse of the de facto inaugural speech presented by president Rouhani while receiving his presidential percept from the leader, to seek the ideology beyond his speech and to detect the point that to which of the above mentioned discourses, currently in use in Iran, Rouhani’s discourse belong to.

5.3 Making Explicit the Presupposed and the Implied Examining all Formal Structure of Rouhani’s Inaugural Speech

5.3.1 Starting by the Name of God and Supplication [paragraphs 1-4]

He starts in God’s name, with internal rhyme that makes a musical effect to get spiritual accompaniment from the audience. He then follows in epic style to ask for help from God, Vali e Asr, martyrs, imam Khomeini and the present supreme leader in a hierarchical order. This start is much closer to the conservatives’. He makes the use of a quotation from imam Ali linking that to Ramadan the time of the year he starts his work. This strategic use is filled with the connotation of honesty and trust among Muslims as the major part of his audience. Making the firm ground for his key concepts of Hope and prudence.

5.3.2 Answering the Cynical by Making a Comparison between the Participation of People in the Present and Last Election [paragraphs 5-6]

He then approaches by answering the cynic’s pessimistic views by a slight comparison to the last elections vote rate through a tacit implication to the past government via emphasizing the opposites such as clarity, competition, and calmness. He mentioned that “*election started with skepticism and suspicion but ends with people’s justification and participation*”...“*Election was held with clarity, competition and calmness*”. Terms such as calmness, clarity implicitly refer to the crisis happened after the election in 2009 in which some of the people’s objected the result and persisted that the process of election was not justified. In this way Rouhani wanted to claim the righteousness and validity of the result and the process of election. He then went on his utterance with “...*cynical predicts internal chaos because of sanctions and...*” which again referred the audience to the previous presidency election.

The other key concepts of this part are common conscious, participation, all the people, and elites. These concepts are generally related to reformists ideas although addressing and thanking the participation of the “*elites*” [nokhbegan] and the “*insiders or the activists loyal to the system*” [pay bandan b nezam] comprises the reformists and the principalists.

5.3.3 Binding with the Audience, Focusing on a Gap, Using Reformists Terms [paragraphs 7-9]

Binding with his audience he praises the mutual trust between the government and the nation. However, in this part he starts to foreground the reformist ideals by prioritizing republic to Islamic in a simple use of adjectives.

5.3.4 Defining Democracy [paragraph 9-10]

Defining democracy and stabilizing that in politics is the next hint to his plan to nourish reformation to his audience. It is in the 9th paragraph which for the first time he made use of “*democracy*”

[mardmsalari] convoking the audience attention to this point that “*democracy has been established and stabilized in Iran so far...*” The other example of this kind would be “participation”, “cooperation”, “criticism” with the base of Islamic and republic foundations. These are the key terms in reformists’ ideology. The reconciliation of these two (Islamic and republic foundations) is in itself the key criteria of conservatism. The notion of glide is also clear here by referring to republic before mentioning Islamic.

5.3.5 Pointing to Peoples’ Participation and Coalition [paragraph 5]

The emphasize he makes on people’s cooperation and coalition reveals the actual gap he is trying to disguise by pointing the opposite. The more he shows his surprise, the more his previous doubts about people’s participation in election comes to light which triggers the poor strategies of the ex-government.

The element of surprise in Rouhani’s speech for the populated participation of people in the election can be traced back to the discouraging climate of society before the election. The disillusioned prospect among the people was due to two main reasons. On the one hand, there was a doubt in the participation of reformists in the election and there was the probability of abstaining from or “boycotting the entire electoral circus” (Selvik, 2013, p. 1). On the other hand, this disillusionment boosted when the candidature of Hashemi Rafsandjani, former president and chairman of the Expediency Council, was rejected.

He referred to people’s participation as “deposit” for him and the country which is the output of peoples’ hilarity, hope and trust which can be useful both in defending against the “external threat” and paving the way for “*progress and development*”.

5.3.6 Mentioning the Concept of Hope—Part of His Motto—and Appreciation [paragraph 12]

He repeats the concept of hope and appreciates all parties in a hierarchical order from conservative to reformists thus accordingly foreshadowing his plans for a shift from conservatism to reformation. He starts with thanking the leader, then the clerics and Islamic exerts [maraje’] and then moves to elites and political parties.

5.3.7 Linking the People’s Participation to Government’s Responsibility [paragraphs 13-14]

In two short paragraphs he continued with channeling from peoples participation in election (emphasize the elements of surprise) to the governments’ reciprocal role in taking care of people, pointing to the fact that peoples’ participation brings about responsibility for government.

5.3.8 Inviting the Elites [paragraph 15]

In this part he invites researchers, thinkers, scientific and civil organizations for an establishment of new policies, stability and serenity gliding from conservatism to reformation happens here since there is no mention of the religious authorities in this part. To make this move he simply keeps one element from the last part “people” and sandwiches that with reformists’ ideals, tacitly leaving the religious parts aside. He mentioned that “*the minimum expectation of people ...is establishing serenity and stability...*” Here again he made a mention of the problems the country is afflicted with at that time,

consciously refers to the previous governments mistreat to cause these problems, i.e., *getting rid of all the hardships the country is afflicted with these days...*”.

5.3.9 Relating Governments’ Power to Peoples [paragraphs 16-17]

He defines government’s power through its social establishment and commitment to people which is a reformist notion. He then justifies that via making strong connection with people and being honest to them. Then with the parallel religious equivalence again he reverted to the starting remarks of Imam Ali and Ramadan making a strong loop of ideas which nourishes the concepts he is wishing for. He noted that *“telling lies cause destruction and however telling the truth reforms the issues...”* Mentioning this and adding a Hadith from Imam Ali can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly he slightly refers to the accusations alleged to the ex-president and secondly uses the narration from Imam Ali to document his speech using a religious point which is highly appreciated in principalists ideology. Another interesting point is the narrating the remarks Arabic avoiding Persian translation which is mostly common in public lectures and speeches. This can be due to the point that the addressees of these remarks are certain people who are familiar with religious discourse.

To circle the loop he continued in paragraph 17, declaring his aim as *“blooming the Islamic ethics and the realization of Islamic mandates”*.

5.3.10 Pointing to His Motto (Hope and Key) [paragraphs 18-19]

Nurturing the concept of hope through the wisely use of peoples’ priorities considering routine life and dignity, he spotlights honesty and clarity when it comes to government’s dealing with problems. He stated part of his motto and specifically reformists’ ideal “change” in this part. However, this word—change—is not specifically refers to the change of system or ideology and quickly he added that his aim is to change the way people live and manage their life pinpointing the economical life. This means that although he made use of a reformists’ term, declared that in relation to people’s life and expenses, the notion that the principalists often claim to solve.

For the first time, he addresses the youth asking them to channel their idealism in order to filter unreasonable expectations.

In this part [paragraph 19] he introduces the concept of key for the first time which later becomes one of his key concepts. Key was part of his motto besides hope and prudence (During the election campaign on TV several times he showed a real key and used the sketch of a key on his posters).

He defines that as sticking to the golden middle path, eliminating fanatical concepts form politics. This bridge makes the state of his own discourse.

5.3.11 The Main Discourse of the New Government [paragraph 20]

The main discourse of the new government is described as via media, defining as not trespassing the “basic principles” which is the key concept of conservatism, but sticking to wisdom, prudence to avoid fanaticism. Hence he introduces democracy, reformist concept. A lop is again observed here. He defines moderation as the “property of Islamic and Iranian culture”, referring to “Islamic” before “Iranian”, and also as not trespassing the basic principles.

Via media is defined as “the god’s will” quoting from Imam Ali and the Quran verse enriching the loop of concepts he started from earlier in his speech. His loop starts with appreciating conservatism principles and sweeping slightly towards reformists’ ideals.

5.3.12 Revealing His Personal Ideas and Experience [paragraph 21]

He established a difference between personal ideas concerning morality and moderation and the practical social ones, tacitly pointing to the past wrong policies concerning the same issue.

5.3.13 Signifying the Reformist Ideals [paragraph 22]

Explaining his prospects he signified the reformists’ ideals through defining the reconstruction of old structures as a necessary basis of moderation. He referred to some terms such as “scientific pathology”, “structural reformation” and “evolutionary society” when defining his plan. This is a sophisticated use of the terms to avoid using troublesome terms such as change.

5.3.14 Continuing on His Plan with Reformists’ Flavor [paragraph 23]

He continues on the same issue discussed in the preceding paragraph, making the example from the current problems of people and government, national and international, to internalize the concept of reformation tacitly. Also he disguises the governments’ prospects within the reformists’ ideals.

He uses a genius strategy to make the audience internalize the necessity of reformation: Defining the concept (...*we are in a critical situation...*), making a tangible example (*we should pay attention to economics through agricultural production...*) and going to the international issues at hand. The first line foresees the last one in prospect.

5.3.15 Continuing on His Plans [paragraph 24]

His manner of articulation of the new prospects is through acknowledging the current deficiencies of the government; therefore the identification unites him with his nation. He invites all parties to forget the past enmities and reconcile to reconstruct, using all the possible potentials from all parties. He then consolidates his reformist ideals through iconoclasting all the stereotypical concepts attributed to Islam, Iran, revolution, and government.

5.3.16 Thanking and Appreciating [paragraphs 25-28]

Appreciating the previous government and the ex president, acknowledging peoples’ vote with the element of surprise, and implicitly pointing to the flaws of the last government through encouraging to learn from history. He then takes god as the supreme observer of his deeds and words and make supplications to God and stops the words to start the work.

6. Conclusion

Iran’s presidency climate has been a matter of dispute over the last three rounds. Hence there were wars fought and parties dismissed for the winners’ dominancy. However, the last election took a different color when the winner came for his inaugural speech with his chosen parliament members. His ministers were a combination of both opposing parties which were in constant opposition during years. Taking this hint, his speech spotlights the reconciliation of ideas with a very slight reference to his

dominant position. Considered of a reformist nature, Rouhani does not choose to be a fanatic. He starts a conservative tone and finishes with a reformist one, but this shift happens so moderately that all the conservatives would agree and all the reformists would feel powerful. In his unique manner of articulation he moves in a gyre. There is no reformist point put forward unless there has been a stand point in conservative's ideology. Using a loop of ideas is the main strategy he uses to avoid any certain party line reactions. He starts with the previous basis and moderately feeds in the reformists ideals by the tacit identification of both parties where they all feel on the same boat. The frame work of Ramadan by which his speech starts and finishes carries the burden of religion on which both parties sustain power but surprisingly moderates them all. He starts with mild reformist hints among strong conservative ideals and through further looping of the ideas in the same fashion he moves one step up the gyre he climbs to get to his final point. On top of this gyre the reformists ideals gorgeously glare and the conservative ones respectfully accompany.

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