

A Discursive Representation of the Politicians: The Case of 'Iran Sanctions'

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Abstract

Language is used to communicate and convey information from one person to another. Understanding the world of others depends on understanding their language. In other words, language is ideology. The present study aims at analyzing the ideological import of news stories. It aims at exploring the ways in which language is employed differently by different people based on their ideologies of the political parties they belong to. To do this, Hodge and Kress' (1993) framework for Critical Discourse Analysis was used to reveal the underlying ideology. Two Iranian and American politicians' statements and speeches related to the issue of 'Iran Sanctions' were analyzed. This analysis was based on three important features of texts, namely, grammar, modality and vocabulary. The results showed that there was a direct relationship between language and ideology and to convey meaning through language, different structures were employed in the service of ideological considerations.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, political discourse, language, ideology, power, politicians

INTRODUCTION

The press has an influential role in constructing certain realities. It is necessary, therefore, to display a framework to understand and analyze these ideologies and their political contexts. Furthermore, since the study is about the discourse of media, such a framework has to offer a theoretical basis for the understanding of, and the tools for analyzing the discourse of media and, more importantly, ways of explaining and interpreting the relationship between the discourse and its wider sociocultural and political contexts. The framework that meets such demands is Critical Linguistics (CL) or what more recently has come to be labeled as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), some versions of which are rooted in the Systematic Functional Linguistics (SLF) (Chouliarak & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a, b; Fowler, 1991; Hodge & Kress, 1993).

CDA has been defined by Carmen (2007) as “an approach devised by Fairclough (1989) which differs from other forms of discourse analysis by having the clear political aim of attempting to reveal connections of hidden relationships encoded in language that may not be immediately evident in order to bring about social change. Critical discourse analysts often conduct research on disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities” (p. 210).

In this respect, “ideology” is an important issue. Presenting various definitions of this term by different practitioners in many research areas can show the importance of it. An ideology, according to a definition presented by van Dijk (1998) is “the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group” (p. 8). Freedden (1996) maintains, the notion of ideology in contemporary political science is used in a more neutral, descriptive sense, e.g., to refer to political belief systems. And finally Hodge and Kress (1993) contend that ideology involves “a systematically organized presentation of reality” (p. 15). The present study, based on CDA approach, tries to demonstrate how ideology can affect political discourse of the speakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media discourse is one noticeable subject under investigation which is different for various scholars who apply CDA. The undeniable power of the media has aroused many critical studies in different disciplines: linguistics, semiotics, pragmatics, and discourse studies. In the past decades, the first studies of media language often were content-analytical and consisted in the analysis of biased, stereotypical-sexist or racist-images in the media, both intents, as well as illustrations and photos. The focus of these studies was on surface structures, such as the biased use of words in the description of *Us* and *Them* in the socio-political texts (van Dijk, 2001). Offering interpretations of meaning, situating discourse in the context in which it occurs, and adopting the view that meaning is co-constructed through the author-text-reader interactive relationship, critical approach within media discourse analysis reveals societal inequalities in power relations while invoking a call to action (Richardson, 2007).

Fairclough (1995a) proposed that the representation of discourse in news media is a social ideological process and the detail of discourse representation is a matter of technical properties of the grammar and semantics of texts which can be adjusted to social effects. This issue is significant both for linguists to help them for social relations and for sociologists to help them introduce social relations in daily social practices, including discourse. One comprehensive study about the relationship of discourse, ideology, and media has been done by van Dijk (1998). He defines ideology as “the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group” (p. 8), and takes a multidisciplinary approach to ideology, which is represented by an analysis of cognition, society, and discourse. According to van Dijk (1998), as cognitive structures and mental models act as the mediating dimension between discourse and society, societal structures cannot be related to discourse structures directly.

Generally, during the past two decades, the role of CDA as a multidisciplinary approach is obvious as illuminating the relationship between language and ideology in media discourse. Believing that "anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position" (Fowler, 1991, p. 10)

The studies exploring the relationship between language and ideology in media discourse with the CDA approach focus on issues of prejudice and power dominance and the subtle role of news discourse in the maintenance and legitimation of injustice and inequality in society, with racism and sexism as the most widely discussed themes. Many CDA scholars have observed that the press has always depicted negatively or stereotypically the ethnic minority groups. For instance, van Dijk (1991) examines the recurring features and structures in British press coverage of ethnic relations and finds that being the agents of negative action, minority actors tend to get first position in headline, and they are labeled with negative terms of reference.

In a broader perspective, it is especially the original theoretical work on social action, actors and legitimation by van Leeuwen (1995, 2000) that bridges the gap between semiotics and CDA. Teo (2000) in his study on the news reports relating to a Vietnamese gang in Australia, shows the existence of a systematic 'othering' and 'stereotyping' of the ethnic community by the white majority. He also unveils the racist ideology of the press, which is manifested in asymmetrical power discourse between the (ethnic) law-breakers and the (white) law-enforcers. Other studies by Caldas-Coulthard (1993) and Fowler (1991) reveal that women are dissociated from power structures, and as a result, sexual discrimination is pervasive in news text. These studies illustrate that in British newspapers, whereas women's public identity tends to be characterized in terms of marital or family relations, men are generally described in terms of their professional status. Caldas-Coulthard (1993) has also found that news texts exclude women from the speaking position, even when women are given voice. They are not given the same speaking space. The asymmetrical reproduction of power relation of power relations between the genders can be seen in these studies.

Kress (1989) concentrates on the 'political economy' of representational media. It is an attempt to understand how various societies value and use different modes of representation. Understanding the formation of the individual human being as a social individual in response to available 'representational resources', is the central aspect of this work. Moreover, he has been concerned with multi-modality and semiotics. Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996) have developed a taxonomy, which allows the precise description and interpretation of visual data. This work has influenced research on the new media (Lemke, 2001).

THE STUDY

This paper tries to analyze the speeches of two Iranian politician, Seyed Ali Khamenei and American politician, Barack Obama, on the issue of "Iran Sanctions". In this regards, their declarations related to this issue have been selected during 2010-2012. The aim of this study is to find politicians' ideological assumptions in their statements related to

the issue of “Iran Sanctions” and more specifically it is to find whether discursive features are differently used by these two politicians. Hence, following questions will be raised:

1. How do ideological assumptions appear in the speeches of Iranian and American politicians, related to the issue of “Iran Sanctions”?
2. How different structures and meanings are employed in the service of certain ideology?

METHODOLOGY

Corpus of the study

The materials of this study were the statements of two politicians selected from their specific websites. The numbers of Iranian Leader’s statements are 16 with 513 sentences and the total number of his words is 4823 chosen from www.leader.ir, while Barack Obama’s statements are 12 with 355 sentences which include 4218 words taken from www.whitehouse.org.

Data collection procedure and data analysis

The model provided by Hodge and Kress (1993) is the basis of analyzing the data in this study. To get the aim, news stories about “Iran Sanctions” were selected from different speeches delivered by leading politicians of Iran and United States. They were collected within a period of 2 years (2010-2012). In this way, the leader website (www.leader.ir) has been considered to be used for Iranian leader’s declarations and statements and among those statements, some related to the issue of “Iran Sanctions” were chosen and samples of sentences have been examined. Obama’s statements and declarations as the American politician have been collected from www.whitehouse.org.

Selected sentences of leaders of Iran and USA in the form of T-unit were collected and analyzed to determine ideological perspectives of discursive structures. In so doing, syntactic aspects like grammar, vocabulary and modality were considered to explain their ideological significances. As the structures are not just grammatical descriptions of phonological, morphological, syntactic or semantic structures of isolated words, more complex properties like semantic features have been considered. Based on these explanations, the framework proposed by Hodge and Kress (1993) was applied to compare the speeches of Iran and United States of America’s leaders about the issue of “Iran Sanctions”. During this process, the findings were reported in terms of frequencies and percentages and *Chi-square* was applied to decide their significances. Generally, news stories were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

Theoretical framework

Hodge and Kress’s (1993) framework is the basis of the analysis of this study. They claim that this model can reveal hidden relationship of language, power and ideology and make them visible by analyzing the text.

Hodge and Kress (1993, p. 6) define ideology as “a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view”. The ideology, embedded in the language we use, becomes “immersed in the ongoing life of a society, as the practical consciousness of that society” (1993, p. 6).

In order to specify the probable invisible ideology through the text, Hodge and Kress’s framework introduces some features which are grammar, modality and lexicon (vocabulary). Each feature will be discussed below:

Grammar

According to Hodge and Kress (1993), the grammar of a language can be considered as its theory of reality. In another view, it can be mentioned that the theory of language will be one which accept the form of the grammar. In addition, language consists of “a related set of categories and processes” (p. 8). A set of ‘models’ forms these categories and defines the interrelation of objects and events. They believe that the analysis of each text should be done with regard to two properties: syntagmatic and transformations.

Syntagmatic models relate to those models which specify the interrelation of objects and events (Hodge & Kress, 1993). This model is provided through assumptions about the interaction of language, thought, ideology and a system of classification which consists of *actionals* (A) and *relationals* (R) (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2008).

In this framework, actional models, or actionals, describe the perceived relationships between objects and a verbal process in the physical world (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2008), i.e. there are two entities related by a process (Hodge & Kress, 1993). Human beings perceive these processes through visual perception. Events of the world are categorized by these schemata in critical but comprehensible ways. Hodge and Kress (1993) claim that in this group, there are two subtypes: transactive (T) and non-transactive (NT) model.

- Transactives: Structures in which a verbal process relates entities to each other, i.e. one affects the other. So, the *actor*, who is considered as the causer of the process, is the source of the process; and the entity which is *affected* by the process is specified and also the *verbal process* link *actor* and *affected*. If the causes and causal relations are the main concerns for the writer, the best model is transactive model.

Example:

I issued Executive Order.

- Non-transactives: This model contains only one entity related to a process which is difficult to decide whether it is actor or affected. In fact, the actual causal and affected status is not clearly specified.

Example:

The Iranian oil ministry acknowledged.

Relational models, or relationals, are dealt with categorization and evaluative systems of language. They specify the consequences of mental activities, suggest judgments, comments, etc. (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2008). There is a simple relation and they deal with relational and existential processes, not a relation of action. According to Hodge and Kress (1993), there are two kinds of relational models: equative and attributive.

- Equatives: Equative models create relations between nouns and there is no performed action, while two entities are related to a verb. The equative model is the articulation of the logic of a system.

Example:

This is not a day that we sought.

- Attributives: This model is concerned with the relation between an entity and a quality; there is one entity related to a quality. As the attributive model result in the act of judgment, we can conclude that the text in which there is a high number of attributives, the writer or speaker is judgmental.

Example:

Let's be honest.

Hodge and Kress's (1993, p. 9) framework can be schematized as the following:

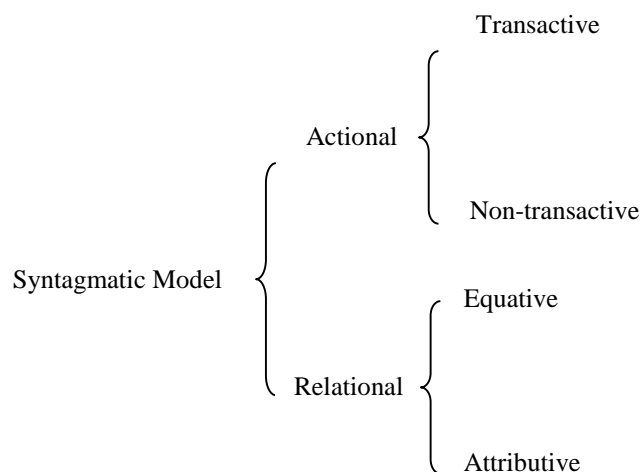


Figure 1. Hodge and Kress's (1993) framework

There is another operation which can be performed in language. This operation is transformation which is used for text analysis. According to Hodge and Kress (1993), a set of operations on basic forms are included in transformations, like deleting, substituting, combining, or reordering a syntagm or its elements.

Two types of transformations are passivisation (P) and nominalization (N).

According to Hodge and Kress (1993), in passivisation, some linguistic changes happen: the actor is deleted, while there is no certainty of the particular identity of the deleted actor. If the actor is present, the order of *actor* and *affected* is inverted. In this case, the *actor* is no longer directly attached to the verb, but instead is linked by a proposition, *by*. Then, the verb *to be* is used and the main verb changes from an actual to a finished process; and the surface structure is in the form of *noun-'is'-adjective* construction, i.e. it changes from *attributive* to *transactive*. Fowler (1991) believes that passivisation serves space, as well as immediately establishing the topic. Agency may be immaterial, or predictable from context, or unknown, and anyway if it is known and is important, it can be specified straight away in the opening of the report. In Thompson's words "passivisation – the rendering of the verb in the passive form – involves deletion of actors and focusing the hearers or readers on certain themes at the expense of others" (1984, p. 120). Passivisation provides an escape, a way out from particularization, therefore, encouraging anonymity (Abdullahi-Idiagbon, 2010, p. 40).

Example:

Sanctions may be imposed

The next kind of transformation is nominalization which is defined by Trask (2007) as "any grammatical unit which behaves like a *noun* or a *noun phrase* but which is built up from something very different" (p. 186).

Example:

Prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange

Iedema (2004) claims that "nominalization is a dynamic and situated facet of discourse practice, not a road map to readers' views about syntactic categories" (p. 419).

Modality

Modality is "indications of the degree of likelihood, probability, weight, or authority the speaker attaches to the utterance" (Hodge & Kress, 1993, p. 9). These categories are relative which are performed by the speaker and the speaker is the only one who selects them to apply, based on their being new or second-hand. Modality refers to the part of the verb system which is known as modal verbs which represent truth, reliability and authority. They also believe that some resources, like gestures, expressions, posture, etc. which refer to as 'paralinguistics' can affect modality and make it more complicated. Comparing modality and mood, Janicki (2006) believes that *modality* is a semantic category rather than grammatical, while *mood* is a grammatical one.

Examples:

Sanctions could damage Iran's economy.

Oil prices might endanger Obama's chances for reelection.

They *should* attack Iran

Israel *must* reserve the right to defend itself

They *think* more sanctions are like amulets that protect them against evil spirits.

Vocabulary and Semantic Feature Analysis

Vocabulary and lexicon can show the ideologies used in a text and can also reveal the writer or speaker's ideas. Simpson (2005) believes that "lexical specificity is a way of conveying pragmatic meanings". This kind of lexicon may reveal a more precise and general meaning than is expected. So, we can conclude that there is a direct relationship between ideology and selected vocabularies. Lexical choices can help us decide about the analysis of individual actions and their accomplished practices (Clayman & Heritage, 2004).

Individuals use different lexical items in different situations. Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2011) mention that Contrastive Analysis (CA) helps speakers select words and also helps recipients understand them. For example, officers may be referred to as 'police' or as 'cops', depending on whether they are used by individuals in a court or by adolescent peers. And since, as van Dijk (2006) attends that there is an interdependence relationship between vocabulary and ideology, it is helpful to consider the analysis of lexicon to decide whether the producer selects specific vocabulary to imply a certain ideology. However, one should know that vocabularies are not free from grammar, so they are found in the form of nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

Semantic Feature Analysis (SFA) is a constructivist approach to learning (Rowel & Palmer, 2007). This strategy has been introduced by Anders and Bos (1986). They state that SFA can strengthen the power of learning vocabulary to comprehend important concepts in a text. It can also allow relating different words with the same concept. According to Bryant et al. (1999), SFA is a procedure used for students to incorporate new information with previous one. This procedure is related to words and the association among them. They discuss this process in a way that new word is in a column and *semantic features* (aspects of meaning shared by words or distinguish them from another) are introduced in a row.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Syntactic Features

This section explains the results of the analysis of the statements considering three features, called grammar, modality and vocabulary.

Grammar

The grammatical features in Iranian Leader and Obama's statements are demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Presentation of grammatical features taken from Iranian and American leader's statements

	Syntagmatic					Transformation				
	Actional		Relational		Total	No. of sentences containing			Total	
	T ^a	NT ^b	E ^c	A ^d		N ^e	P ^f	NP ^g		
Iranian Leader	#	271	68	78	62	479	133	22	9	164
	%	56.57	14.19	16.28	12.94	100	81.09	13.41	5.48	100
Obama	#	162	82	38	28	310	216	17	27	260
	%	52.25	26.45	12.26	9.03	100	84.70	6.53	10.38	100
Chi-square		1.47	18.35	2.43	2.84		44.15	8.21	3.10	
p-value		0.234	0.000	0.119	0.091		0.00	0.03	0.07	

Notes: a:Transactive, b:Non-Transactive, c:Equative, d:Attributive, e:Nominalization, f:Passivisation, g: both e and f

Based on table1, with respect to syntagmatic model, in the actional part, the study of the number of transactive ($x^2=1.47$, $p=0.234$) and non-transactive ($x^2=18.35$, $p= 0.000$) in statements of both politicians proves that transactive model results in statistically no significant differences between the speeches of these two people, while the difference related to non-transactive model is significant. As the table indicates, the most frequent one employed by Iranian Leader and Obama is transactive (56.57% and 52.25%, respectively). However, it is evident that Obama uses the non-transactive model much more than the Iranian leader (26.45% and 14.19%, respectively). This result shows that in comparison to Iranian Leader's speeches, Obama has more tendencies toward obscuring the relation between the actor and affected, because, in non-transactive model, just one entity is directly involved in the process and it is not distinguished as either the actor or affected. In other words, Obama may guess not to be able to act based on his slogans, so he uses more non-transactive than Iranian Leader. Regarding relational model, both Iranian and American politicians use the equative model more than the attributive one (16.28% and 12.26%, respectively). However, the results of *Chi-square* test show that there are not statistically significant differences between these variables in Iranian and American politicians (for equative model, $x^2= 2.43$, $p= 0.119$ and for attributive model, $x^2= 2.84$, $p= 0.091$).

As mentioned before, according to Hodge and Kress (1993), the two actional models, that is, transactive and non-transactive, present different versions of causality. In the transactive model, there are structures in which two entities or objects are related by means of a verbal process. So, one entity which is the *causer* of the process affects the other which is *affected* and finally the *verbal process* link *actor* and *affected*. Therefore, as we can see, both politicians use transactive structures more frequently than other parts in their statements and declarations. On the other hand, in the non-transactive

model, there is only one entity related to a process which is difficult to decide whether it is actor or affected. They are not clearly specified.

Relational structures which are the least in both leaders' statements refer to relational and existential processes. According to Hodge and Kress (1993), as it has been explained before, in the equative models, two entities are related to a verb, while in the attributive models, there is only one entity related to a quality.

Some examples related to this issue are as follows:

The Secretary of the Treasury shall block all property. (T)

The European Union is moving ahead with additional strong measures against Iran. (NT)

Iran is an oil producer. (E)

The door is open. (A)

یک روز این را کتمان می‌کردند. (T)

در مسأله ایران هیاهو می‌کنند. (NT)

اینها نشانه ضعف اینهاست. (E)

استفاده‌هایش از خود این صنعت، مهمتر است. (A)

According to table 1, and with respect to transformation, the number of sentences which contain nominalization is more in Obama's speeches than in Iranian leader's declarations (84.70% and 81.09%, respectively). Table 1 shows that the difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2= 44.62$, $p<0.05$). As it has been defined before, nominalization is "any grammatical unit which behaves like a *noun* or a *noun phrase* but which is built up from something very different" (Trask, 2007, p. 186).

Regarding this topic, in addition to the number of sentences which contain nominalization, the total number of nominalizations presented in the texts can be considered. As figure 1 demonstrates, the total number of nominalizations used by Obama is more than Iranian Leader's (11.92% and 3.85%, respectively). According to Hodge and Kress (1993), in nominalization, by turning a sentence or verb into a noun, there is a kind of loss in identifying an actor or an affected. There is no specific time and modality as for a sentence or a verb. Here are some examples of nominalization which are underlined.

Examples:

Any *transaction* by a United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, has the purpose of *evading* or *avoiding*, causes a violation of, or *attempts* to violate any of the *prohibitions* is prohibited.

اینکه فکر کنند با ستیزه‌گری می‌توانند جمهوری اسلامی را به عقب‌نشینی وادار کنند، یک خطای بزرگ و فاحشی است.

Using these nominalizations, both politicians notice to processes rather than participants and they shift from specificity or concreteness to a more general and abstract case. They also avoid specific time and modality and therefore increase the opacity of the statements. In this regard, as we mentioned before, Obama tends to use more nominalizations than Iranian Leader.

Regarding passivisation, according to table 1, the result of *Chi-square* between both leaders' statements shows that the difference of using passivisation is statistically significant ($\chi^2= 8.21$, $p < 0.05$). As it has been mentioned before, according to Hodge and Kress (1993), in passivisation, we are not certain about the particular identity of the actor and based on Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2010), "Passivisation provides an escape, a way out from particularization, therefore, encouraging anonymity" (p. 40). The following examples show that declarations of Obama and Iranian Leader contain some passivisations in which the actors are not clear and one cannot be certain of the specific identity of the deleted actor.

The Secretary of State *is authorized* to impose similar sanctions.

وقتی دشمن مأیوس شد، تلاش دشمن، توطئه دشمن، کید دشمن هم تمام خواهد شد.

Using passivisation demonstrates attribution and classification rather than causality and the result of analyzing two politicians' statements in figure 2 indicates that in comparison to all T-units, Obama has used much more passivisation than Iranian Leader (12.39% and 6.28%, respectively) and this is an indication of a kind of obscurity in his speech. Based on this notion, one understands that Obama is not clear in his declarations and tries to evade specific situations.

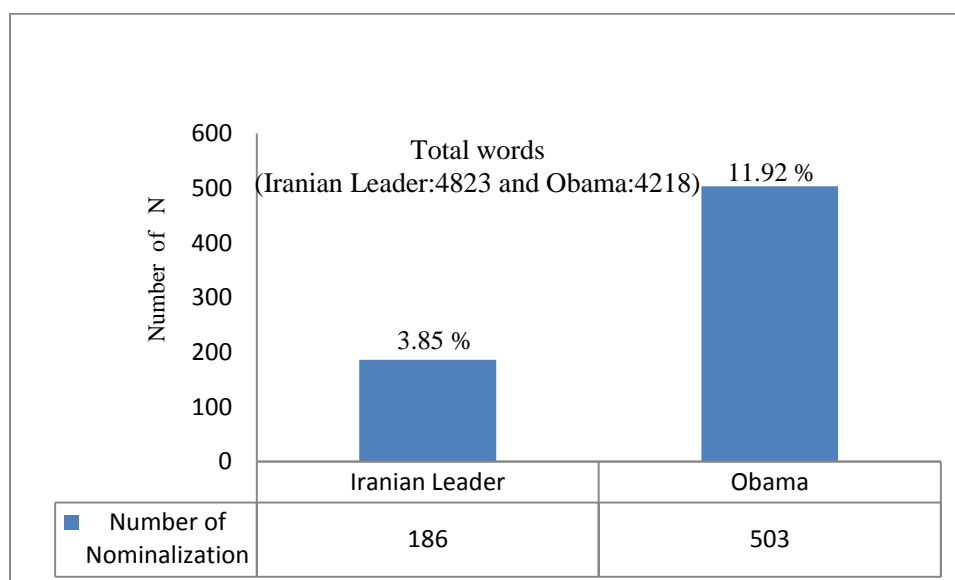


Figure 2. Total number of nominalizations used by politicians

With respect to transformation, a combination of nominalization and passivisation (NP) can be considered. Based on table 1, we notice that the differences between sentences

contain NP in Obama and Iranian Leader’s declarations are not statistically significant ($\chi^2=3.30, p>0.05$).

Examples:

Such person is engaged in activities to relieve human suffering.

The United States was prepared to begin a new chapter of engagement with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

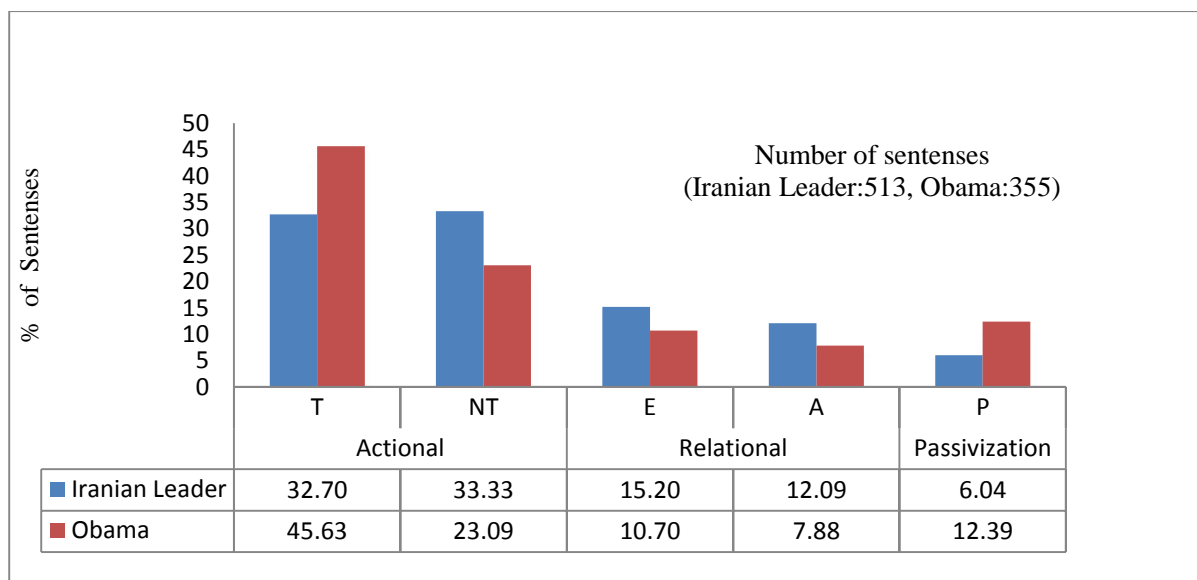


Figure 3. Total number of sentences

Comparing syntagmatic and transformation models, analysis related to active and passive sentences have been reviewed. The result shows that Iranian Leader has used more active sentences in his statements which indicate explicitness of his speech without uncertainty, while passive sentences are more presented in Obama’s statements which may be due to ambiguities of his speech (93.37% and 87.32%, respectively). *Chi-square* analysis proves that the difference of using active and passive sentences by politicians is significant ($\chi^2=9.27$ and $8.53, p<.05$). Following table explains this issue.

Table 2. Comparison of active and passive sentences

		sentences		
		active	passive	total
Iranian	#	479	39	513
	%	93.37	6.62	100
American	#	311	44	355
	%	87.32	12.39	100
Chi square		9.27	8.35	
p value		.002	.003	

Modality

According to Simpson (2005, p.43), the term modality refers to “attitudinal features of language”. He believes that modality refers to “a speaker’s attitude towards, or opinion about, the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence” (p. 43). Gu (2010) defines modality as it “expresses the speaker/writer’s degree of affinity with or affiliation to a proposition or a text participant. In other words, modality reflects the extent to which speakers/writers commit to representations in terms of truth or necessity” (p. 143).

In this study, the texts were analyzed with respect to these features: 1. Modal auxiliaries, 2. Modal adverbs, and 3. Modal verbs.

Modals found in statements of Iranian and American politicians related to ‘Iran Sanctions’ are represented in the following table:

Table 3. Modals used in ‘politicians’ statements’

	Modal				Total (T-units)
	Auxiliaries	Verbs	Adverbs		
Iranian Leader	#	61	42	33	513
	%	11.89	8.18	6.43	
Obama	#	61	13	15	355
	%	17.18	3.66	4.22	
Chi-square (x²)		4.86	7.23	1.95	
p-value		0.027	0.007	0.162	

According to this table, we notice that the modal auxiliaries used by Obama are more than ones used by Iranian leader (17.18% and 11.89%, respectively). So, the difference is statistically significant ($p < .05$). Based on Hoge and Kress (1993) and in comparison to Iranian leader, Obama using many modal auxiliaries tries to protect his utterances from criticism and he is considerably not certain about his statements. Regarding modal verbs and adverbs, the table shows that Iranian leader uses modal verbs and adverbs more than American politician (8.18% and 6.43% vs. 3.66% and 4.22%, respectively). While the results of *Chi-square* show that in modal verbs, the difference of using them is statistically significant ($p < .05$), but related to modal adverbs, the difference is not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Some examples of using modality are as follows:

The Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank *shall* deny approval of the issuance of any guarantee. (Modal auxiliary)

Iran has *decided to* utilize financial institutions. (Modal verb)

All of us are *firmly* committed to continuing with the approach of sanctions. (Modal adverb)

رئیس جمهور قبلی آمریکا صریح گفت (Modal adverb)

من می‌خواهم بر روی این نکته تکیه کنم (Modal verb)

نه تولید کردیم و نه تولید خواهیم کرد (Modal auxiliary)

Table 4. Modal auxiliaries used in statements

		Number of sentences contain				Total (T-units)
		Must	May	Will	Can	
Iranian Leader	#	2	1	25	34	513
	%	0.38	0.19	4.87	6.62	
Obama	#	12	3	29	17	355
	%	3.38	0.84	8.16	4.78	
Chi-square (x²)		11.82	1.93	3.90	1.28	
p-value		0.001	0.164	0.048	0.257	

Regarding modality, four main cases have been studied in modal auxiliaries. They are the concept of *must* (*shall, should, ought to*), *may* (*might*), *will* (*would*) and *can* (*could*). Based on table 4, one can notice that Obama's statements have much certainty. He frequently tries to force Iran to obey his orders. He uses this concept much more than Iranian Leader (3.38% and 0.38%, respectively). The result of *chi-square* shows significant differences between the use of the notion by them ($x^2=11.82$, $p<0.05$). This may indicate his selfish characteristic.

Agencies *shall not* issue any specific license.

نباید فکر کرد که دشمن از فعالیت منصرف خواهد شد.

May which specifies a low degree of certainty has been applied by Obama more than Iranian Leader (0.84% and 0.19%, respectively). This demonstrates that his uncertainty is more than Iranian Leader's. The result shows insignificant differences ($x^2=1.93$, $p>0.05$) between the politicians.

Sanctions *may be* imposed.

شاید یادتان هست.

Related to this issue, the table illustrates that *will* has been utilized by Obama more than Iranian Leader (8.16% and 4.87%, respectively). By using this case, Obama states his

future program to impose different sanctions against Iran, while Iranian Leader explains the future program of Iran to progress.

Iran *will not receive* this assistance.

سلاح اتمی هم نخواهیم ساخت.

The last auxiliary which has been examined is *can*. This term has been applied more in Iranian Leader's statements than in Obama's statements (6.62% and 4.78%, respectively). By utilizing this term, Iranian Leader signifies that Iranian nation has much potential abilities and emphasizes that they are able to reach their goals. The difference of using *can* is not significant ($\chi^2=1.28$, $p>0.05$).

Iran *can reclaim* its place in the community of nations and find greater peace and prosperity.

میتوانیم به شکلهای مختلف با تحریمها مقابله کنیم.

Studies on modality can prove that two concepts of *certainty* and *uncertainty* in politicians' statements are noticeable. Table 5 shows a complete review of these two concepts. The result verifies that Iranian Leader is more certain in his speech than Obama (5.45% and 4.78%, respectively), while Obama is more uncertain than Iranian Leader (1.69% and 0.97%, respectively). *Chi-square* test shows insignificant differences between them ($p>0.05$).

Table 5. Modality in statements

		Sentences	
		Certainty	Un-Certainty
Iranian Leader	#	29	5
	%	5.45	0.97
Obama	#	17	6
	%	4.78	1.69
Chi-square (x²)		0.312	0.858
p-value		0.576	0.354

Vocabulary and Semantic Feature Analysis

Each person uses specific vocabularies to describe a situation and these vocabularies show his/her ideology. According to Ingram (2007), semantic feature analysis is a very useful method for different subsets of words and it can prepare a basis to consider the relationship for semantically similar words. Texts taken from Iranian and American politicians reveal that their vocabularies have ideological significance. Examples from

these sentences will be explained. There are some words which are specific and others which are common for both leaders. Table 6 shows this analysis.

Based on the result in Table 6, one observes that related to the issue of "Iran Sanctions", both politicians use some vocabularies which refer to this issue. Examples reveal that each one has used these vocabularies based on their own view. American politician frequently persist in those items to impose sanctions against Iran, while Iranian leader states that United States cannot do anything and emphasizes that Iran is the winner of the game noting that sanctions has no effect on their activities. Some common words which are noticeable in statements are '*sanctions*', '*nuclear issue*', '*pressure*', '*oil*' and '*technology*'.

The most frequent term used by both politicians is '*sanctions*'. As it is clear in the statements, Obama repeatedly states that sanctions will be imposed on Iran, while the Iranian leader claims that these sanctions will not be successful. In this regard, Obama has used this term much more than Iranian leader to prove his claims (1.51% and 0.74%, respectively). Examples are as follows:

We will *implement this sanctions instrument* consistent with our strong belief.

این شاخ و شانه کشیدن‌ها، شلتاق کردن‌ها و تحریم‌ها و دعوایها و تهدیدها و اینها همه‌اش از روی ترس است.

Another term which has been observed frequently in both statements is the '*nuclear issue*'. In this respect, again Obama uses this expression more than Iranian leader (0.68% and 0.53%, respectively). The result of *Chi-square* proves that the difference is not statistically significant ($x^2=3.39$, $p>0.05$). As the examples show, Iranian leader uses this term to support Iran's nuclear issue, while American leader employs it against Iran limiting Iran's nuclear program. Examples show this concept:

Sanctions have sensitized countries to the risk of doing business regarding items that can be used to further *Iran's nuclear program*.

ما خواهیم توانست از صنعت هسته‌ای برای مصارفی که به سود منافع ملی است، استفاده کنیم.

The next expression applied by both politicians is '*pressure*'. This term which refers to different types of '*pressure*' has been employed by Iranian more than American politician (0.24% and 0.18%, respectively). The result shows that the difference is not statistically different ($x^2=0.007$, $p>0.05$). In this respect, Obama tries to convince others about their '*pressure*' on Iran, while Iranian leader attempts to offset these practices.

Table 6. Ideologically loaded vocabulary used by Iranian and American politicians

	Number of total words	Critical Words	Number of critical Words		%		X ² p-value
			Iranian Leader	Obama	Iranian Leader	Obama	
Common between Iranian Leader & Obama	9041	Sanctions	36	64	0.74	1.51	24.95 0.000
		Nuclear issue	26	29	0.53	0.68	3.39 0.065
		Pressure	12	8	0.24	0.18	0.007 0.934
		Oil	12	14	0.24	0.33	1.85 0.173
		Technology	8	13	0.16	0.30	3.92 0.047
Iranian Leader	4823	Iranian nation (themselves)		91		1.88	
		Ability		28		0.58	
		Progress		21		0.43	
Obama	4218	Prevent		19		0.45	
		Obligation		12		0.28	
		Isolation		8		0.18	

The United States will continue to impose new sanctions *to increase the pressure on Iran.*

این فشارهایی که اینها می‌آورند - فشار تحریم و تهدید و ترور و اینها - نشانه‌ی ضعف اینهاست.

Another case is 'oil' which is used by both of them. However, this term is expressed in Obama's statements more than in Iranian leader's declarations (0.33% and 0.24%, respectively). Obama decides to impose sanctions by avoiding importing oil from Iran, while Iranian Leader supports Iranian oil products. The result shows that the difference is not statistically significant ($x^2=1.85$, $p>0.05$). Examples are as follows:

There currently appears to be sufficient supply of *non-Iranian oil* to permit foreign countries to significantly reduce their import of *Iranian oil*.

مسئله‌ی اصلی، حراست مقتدرانه‌ی نظام اسلامی از ثروت عظیم نفت و گاز در این کشور است.

The last important expression is 'technology' which has been utilized by both leaders. However, Obama used it more frequently than Iranian leader (0.30% and 0.16%, respectively). The result of Chi-square shows that the difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2=3.92$, $p<0.05$). In this issue, American leader wants to close doors to Iranian 'technology', while Iranian leader decisively refuses these activities.

Impose sanctions on the person that sells, leases or provides to Iran *goods, services or technology*.

دروازه‌های فناوری را بر روی ما بستند، راه‌ها را مسدود کردند، محصولات مورد نیاز ما را به ما نفروختند و ما/اینجور پیشرفت کردیم.

In addition to words which are common for both leaders, there are some vocabularies that are special for each of them. Some of the words which have been applied more than others are as follows:

Regarding Iranian leader, we can refer to 'progress', 'ability', 'Iranian nation' and '(them/our, your) selves'.

Based on table 6, one frequent expression is 'Iranian nation' and 'youth' who are able to progress by 'themselves'. As it is clear, it forms 1.88% of total expressions and indicates the importance of Iranian people and youth as the basis of this country. He supports Iranian nation through his statements. Examples demonstrate these claims:

جوانان ما خودشان آن را تهیه کردند.

جوانان ایرانی خودشان از درون خودشان جوشیدند.

The above table shows that the term 'ability' is 0.58% of the total words. Based on this term, the leader continuously proves Iranian proficiency and emphasizes that while Iranian people have potential abilities, nothing can prevent their progress.

اقتدار متکی به سلاح هسته‌ای را هم میتوانیم بشکنیم.

ما خواهیم توانست از صنعت هسته‌ای برای مصارفی که به سود منافع ملی است، استفاده کنیم.

According to table 6, one notices that 0.43% of total words of Iranian leader's declarations about "Iran Sanctions" is the term 'progress'. The leader decides to explain Iranian progress, in spite of sanctions against Iran. In all of his speeches, there is a sign of Iranian ability and tireless power of the youth.

ما انشاءالله در علم پیشرفت میکنیم، در اقتصاد پیشرفت میکنیم، در سازندگی پیشرفت میکنیم.

همه‌ی این پیشرفتهای علمی و اجتماعی و فنی در شرایط تحریم اتفاق افتاده است.

These examples show and emphasize Iranian attempts and skills.

All these explanations signify the importance of 'Iranian nation (themselves)', 'their frequent progress' and also 'their ability and confidence' and the statements prove Iranian stability against their enemies.

Regarding "Iran sanctions", American politician has his own specific vocabularies which indicate his ideologies. Table 6 shows the statistics.

Considering Obama's statements, the terms '*obligation*', '*isolation*' and '*prevent*', indicating a kind of limitation against Iran, have been used more than other expressions.

The most frequent term used by Obama is 'prevention, prohibition and restriction'. He repeatedly and in different situations, states that Iran will be refused to do activities.

The Secretary of the Treasury *shall restrict or prohibit imports of goods, technology, or services*.

Table 6 proves that 0.28% of Obama's statements are the concept of 'obligation'. He emphasizes Iranian 'obligations' to force Iran and Iranian nation to move based on his own thought.

It could *fulfill its international obligations* and realize greater *security*.

American leader also tries to condemn Iran to a kind of 'isolation' and about 0.18% of his statements is about this concept. He wants to convince others that Iran will be isolated because of its refusal to do its obligations.

Iran will find itself *more isolated, less prosperous* and *less secure*.

CONCLUSIONS

According to this study in which two renowned politicians' statements were reviewed, both Iranian and American politicians utilized different structures to convey their meanings. In some situations, the Iranian leader speaks directly, while in other cases, Obama does. However, on the whole, according to the results, the Iranian leader uses more transactive units indicating his certainty and Obama employs more non-transactive units denoting his uncertainty and ambiguity. Again, in the case of modality, the Iranian leader speaks more obviously and with determination than Obama. As for transformation which is an impressive model, Obama is more passive, while the Iranian leader is more active. In addition, their uses of specific vocabularies and expressions show their specific ideologies to convey their meanings. For instance, in the Iranian leader's speeches words such as youth and Iranian nation appear frequently while in Obama's speeches words such as prevention, prohibition and restriction are used more often.

These discursal features may have been used unintentionally. In fact, as van Dijk (2006) states since people get ideology during their lives, it becomes part of their identity and as a result they apply it through their languages. He also mentions that people with specific ideology in a group cannot easily change their beliefs and ideas. He

additionally confirms that there is no prefabricated ideology for words and phrases; rather the specific context is the one that determines their use.

Finally, this line of research is always open and new events develop in the political arena, which could influence the ideological principles eventually manifested in the media. With the historical nuke agreement between Iran and 5+1 countries, one may want to examine the ongoing debates over this issue from the perspective of CDA. Also, other models such as Fairclough's (1987), which is especially concerned with political discourse, can be employed to get deeper insights into the ideological import of such debates.

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