

# Towards a Discursive Analysis of Cyrus's Charter and His Will: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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**Abstract**—This study took a critical discourse analysis approach to investigate vocabulary feature, themes, and topics used in Cyrus Charter and Will. The analytical model was based on Norman Fairclough's (1989) framework. The findings of this study indicated Cyrus as the first founder of human rights, protected emancipation, brotherhood, equality and peace in the world through his charter. Moreover this charter had essential role in reflecting Persian rich culture toward other nations. It seems that by resorting to this charter, most of the ethnic and religious conflicts in modern world could be settled down. Also United Nations can keep peace by applying such rules in the world. In data analysis Spss's bar chart was used to analyze data.

**Index Terms**—critical discourse analysis, Cyrus Charter and will, emancipation, ideology, language and power

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Discourse analysis of Cyrus charter and will explores discourse structures at the level of phrases, sentences, and interaction between language, power and ideology. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse, which views language as a form of social practice and focuses on the ways social and political domination is reproduced by text and talk ([www.geography2.ruhosting.nl](http://www.geography2.ruhosting.nl)). CDA sees language as social practice and considers the context of language use to be crucial CDA sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of 'social practice'. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it: the discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them ([www.seangoggins.net](http://www.seangoggins.net)). Investigation of Cyrus Charter and Will reveals the mystery of eternity of Cyrus speech. Cyrus was the greatest Persian Emperor and righteous being at the time of victory. He was generous toward defeated people being a freedom. He won the heart of his people permitting them to worship their God. He was extraordinary peerless in all over the world. Comparing Cyrus manner with Semi's rulers, one feels pleasure for Persian liberality and generosity and truly regards as the instructor of human race. Cyrus was the first legislative who issued a number of principles in terms of human rights. Cyrus (600B. C) defeated Medes and founded Achaemenid dynasty as the first Persian Emperor([www.cyrusgreat.com](http://www.cyrusgreat.com)). Cyrus charter consists of two pages that were translated to several languages. After victory over Babylonia, Cyrus the Great presented himself not as a conqueror, but a liberator and the legitimate successor to the crown. He took the title of "King of Babylon and King of the Land". Cyrus had no thought of forcing conquered people into a single mould, and had the wisdom to leave unchanged the institution of each kingdom he attached to the Persian Crown. In 537 BC he allowed more than 40,000 Jews to leave Babylon and return to Palestine. He also declared the first Charter of Human Rights known to mankind, which is written on a clay cylinder ([www.forum.persiantools.com](http://www.forum.persiantools.com)).

### **Why was Cyrus considering a great emperor?**

The most civilized and powerful empire until even after the Romans fell, in 559 BC, the Persian king Cyrus the great defeated the Medes controlling what is now Iran, Iraq, and some other countries. Cyrus set out to create a powerful empire. In fact, he created the first empire. the word "Persia" comes from the Greek word "persis" which means empire. the relative strength of the Persian empire at the height of its power was like the relative strength of modern day, china, India, Russia, EU, US and Japan put together. The Persians were the first people in history to give men and women equal rights, abolish slavery and write the very first human and animal bill of rights. they also built in 400s BC the very first stadium, the Apadana in Persepolis (later burnt down by Alexander). The Apadana was able to seat 15 (fifteen thousand) people in it, with space left for a grand ceremony. This massive building was roofed, unlike the coliseum, the architectural and worth of this single building, if it lived through the fire Alexander put it through, would have dwarfed the city of Rome. The Persian empire was a god compared to Rome, when Rome attacked Persia (battle of carhae) with 44 thousand soldiers, a 10 thousand man army from the Persian empire crushed the Romans, and sent their general's head back to Rome ([www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)). Throughout history Cyrus charter played a very important role in the

birth of civilization in the World. Cyrus has made vast contributions to the World, of which some can be briefly listed as the following: world's first charter of human rights, world's first largest empire, first administrative system for Government, first communication lines ([www.une.edu.au/irsa/History](http://www.une.edu.au/irsa/History)).

The present English text of Cyrus charter was translation of Antoine Simonin and Shahrokh Razmjo Which comes in appendix. Several translations were available for Cyrus charter, in this study Antoine Simonin's translation ideologically analyzed, especially vocabulary features of Cyrus charter was focused.

According to Norman Fairclough (Fairclough, 1989 *pp.134-135*), text, interaction and social texture are the three dimensions of discourse, for analyzing these dimensions three stages of description, interpretation, and explanation were applied in a text. In this study Norman Fairclough's model was used to present text analysis such as lexical analysis, experimental values, relational values, uses of pronouns, modality, active and passive voice, and mainly vocabulary feature of Cyrus charter analyzed to show what values words reflect (paraphrase). Based on *Norman Fairclough's view 1989, (pp 93-94)*, discourse analysis aims to explores relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and process; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power, and to explores how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is ([www.ijhssnet.com](http://www.ijhssnet.com)). According to *Van Dijk, (dijk, 1993)*, in critical discourse analysis, we need to explore which structures and strategies of text and talk attended to discover patterns of dominance and manipulation.

### **Ideology**

Several definitions used to maintain concept of ideology in critical studies. Based on Van Dijk (Dijk, 2000) ideology have different aspects. Ideologies have something to do with systems of ideas or in a much better word, systems of beliefs, and especially with the social, political or religious ideas shared by a social group or movement. Communism as well as anti-communism, socialism and liberalism, feminism and sexism, racism and antiracism, pacifism and militarism, are examples of widespread ideologies. Group members who share such ideologies stand for a number of very general ideas that are at the basis of their more specific beliefs about the world, guide their interpretation of events, and monitor their social practices ([www.discourse-in-society.org/ideo-dis2.htm](http://www.discourse-in-society.org/ideo-dis2.htm)).

Ideology and discourse are not notions that can be adequately studied in one discipline: They require analysis in all disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences. However, we shall reduce this large number of potential disciplines to three main clusters, namely those involved in the study of Discourse, Cognition and Society. Thus, language use, text, talk, verbal interaction, and communication will be studied under the broad label of 'discourse'. The mental aspects of ideologies, such as their nature as ideas or beliefs, their relations with opinions and knowledge, and their status as socially shared representations, will all be covered under the label of 'Cognition'. And the social, political, cultural and historical aspects of ideologies, their group-based nature, and especially their role in the reproduction of, or resistance against, dominance, will be examined under the broad label of Society. Note that these conceptual distinctions are merely analytical and practical. They do of course overlap: Discourse for instance is part of society, and so are the socially shared ideas of group members. We make the distinction, however, because the concepts, theories and methods of analysis are rather distinct for these three areas of inquiry ([www.discourse-in-society.org/ideo-dis2.htm](http://www.discourse-in-society.org/ideo-dis2.htm)).

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Critical discourse analysis has become the general label for a special approach to the study of text and talk, emerging from critical linguistics, critical semiotics and in general from a socio-politically conscious and oppositional way of investigating language discourse and communication ([www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)), Norman Fairclough, who has made a great contribution to the establishment of CDA as a direction of research, maintains that the text doesn't convey meaning through linguistic features but it is generated and realized by its discursive formation reflecting certain ideologies or given ways of controlling and manipulating power relation ([www.journals.usb.ac.ir](http://www.journals.usb.ac.ir)). Similarly, van Dijk (*Dijk, 1988*), develop range of CDA and explained that CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. His analytical method, suggests two levels of analysis: a) micro structure: analysis of the text in term of syntax (grammar) and lexis (vocabulary) and b) macro structure: analysis and description of rhetorical organization of various texts ([www.journals.usb.ac.ir](http://www.journals.usb.ac.ir)).

CDA is characterized by some criteria: it is problem or issue oriented. Its work is inter or multidisciplinary and focus on the relation between discourse and society. Historically CDA is part of a broad spectrum of critical studies in humanities and social science. CDA studies pay attention to all levels and dimensions of discourse; grammar (phonology, syntax, semantics), style, rhetoric, schematic organization, speech acts, pragmatic strategy and those of interaction among others, (*Dijk, 1993*).

The most significant research within CDA has been performed by Teun Van dijk, who combines cognitive psychology and CDA to uncover how ideological structures are hidden in people's memory ([www.ijhssnet.com](http://www.ijhssnet.com)). He focuses on credibility in texts. Norman Fairclough focuses on social conflict and its linguistic manifestations in discourse of dominance, difference and resistance. To understand the nature of CDA and its theoretical realization its necessary to follow Norman Fairclough's CDA model. His model is based on the assumption that language is an

irreducible part of social life. Fairclough's model describes the process and the end product of meaning and how people interpret meanings in text within a variety of social context. Fairclough provide tripartite framework for the analysis of text and discourse: a) the linguistic description of the formal text and discourse (texture, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, text structure (cohesion). b) the interpretation of relationship discursive process and text (intertextually, intentionality, speech acts, implicature, pragmatic meaning, genre, style. c) the explanation of the relationship between discourse and social cultural reality. (Khajeh, Khnmohamadi, 2007)

Wodak and Meyer (2001) stated CDA is not used in its capacity to investigates social inequality as it is expressed ,signaled, constituted by language use in discourse, but rather as analytical tool to analyze text on identity and an integration .

According to Andrew Cifford (2009) interpreters in discourse do need to be concerned with lexicon, but it is only apart of their work. Furthermore, interpreters need to be concerned with deixis, modality speech acts. (Bahador, Hassani, & Ghorbani, 2014).

In the same vein Wodak and Fairclough (Wodak, Fairclough, 2010) characterized CDA partly in terms of its particular recontextualizing principle; a principle for approaching other discourses and bring them into special relation within each other for the purpose of their selection, transmission and acquisition.

Barbara Jonstone (Jonstone, 2008) stated that discourse usually means actual instances of communicative action in medium of language. He characterized discourse analysis usage in answering many different kinds of questions and 6 aspects of shaping text (world, language, participants, prior discourse, medium purpose).

According to Lotfollah Yarmohammadi (Yarmohammadi, 2004) in DA the way of using group power, authority, inequality is created through text and spoken language in social context (p, 4). Yarmohammadi stated that in DA relations between discursive structures and underlying ideological structure is described and analyzed. He introduced four discursive structures including: naming, nominalization, voicing, and using different patterns.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Norman Fairclough attempts to uncover ideological and power patterns in texts. In the description stage morphology and grammatical levels are analyzed. Three kinds of values (experienced, relational, and expressive) are considered in text analysis by Fairclough. The experiential value is concerned with the text produced experience of natural or social word (content, knowledge and belief) relational value reflects the social relationship, which are enacted via text in discourse. Expressive value shows the producer's evaluation of reality (attitudes towards subjects and social identities. In vocabulary analysis Fairclough point out main question related to lexical aspects in the text, i.e., what values do words reflect, are there any ideological traces that words reflect, rewording or over wording, are there any stylistic devices such as synonyms and metaphors. The vocabulary of certain discourse type may represent the ideology of a particular social grouping. Relational values show how the wording of a text depends on and establishes social relation between participants. Expressive values signal attitude toward a certain aspect in the text (Khajeh, Khnmohamadi, 2007.).

The present study attempts to uncover the underlying ideological assumption hidden in the Cyrus Will text according to Fairclough's model.CDA is this study may contribute to a better understanding of political texts and will give insights toward persuasive strategies which place readers in specific ideological position.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### Data for study

The present study is an attempt to analyze the Cyrus Will and Charter, under the model of Fairclough in CDA. Cyrus speech is significant in that he was the founder of human rights and the greatest Emperor in Persian. Figure 1. Show Fairclough's model.

Analytical framework of the study

• Description: vocabulary, values
• Interpretation: embedded meaning
• Explanation: social reality, cultural reality

#### Procedure

In this study vocabulary features of the Cyrus charter and will critically analyzed according to Fairclough's model. The following elements of Fairclough's framework were considered to function as the criteria for the analysis: description (texture, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, text structure), interpretation (intertextuality, intentionality, speech acts), explanation (relationship between discourse, social and cultural reality). All definitions were briefly presented based on Fairclough's elaboration in theoretical framework section. (Bahador, Hassani, & Ghorbani, 2014).

The study was a corpus based analysis of the Cyrus charter and will conducted on a descriptive, comparative based which was carried out on English translation of Cyrus charter and will. The corpus (charter and will) comprised 1400 words in English which whole text was selected for analysis. The data were gathered by analyzing the vocabulary

features, themes, topics and classification of Cyrus charter and will. Furthermore, comparison of themes and topics were conducted between two corpuses (Bahador, Hassani, & Ghorbani, 2014).

## V. DATA ANALYSIS

After analyzing the data, the following themes and topics were presented for Cyrus charter (Juraj, 2007).

I am Korosh, king of the world, great king, mightily king, king of quarter.

The marked words describe the role of the king in the country. The phrase 'king of the world', 'great king', signifies that the country was absolute monarchy. The phrase 'I set up a seat of domination' determine ideological lexicon that shows democratic ideology.

1) The sentence 'all the kings who sat in before him' underlies the power of the king and signifies the fact of other king's power relation with Korush. An interesting aspect is king's vocabulary, when he describes himself. According to Fairclough's model king employs over-lexicalization. It means that an excessive usage of synonyms signals the speaker's obsession with a certain ideology.

2) The king's choice of words (king of four garden, Marduk (the name of Persian God), the great God) reflects a very authoritative political governing system in the country.

3) From CDA perspectives the noun 'nation' is used to emphasize the fact that people in Iran determine the internal affairs and that the king has no power without his nation.

4) The usage of pronouns in the king's utterance is related to the spatial dimension of the text which reflects the characteristic of language and power. This reflects how the king positions himself when talking about Iran's nation and his duties.

5) 'I never let anyone oppress any other'. This example shows that the king transfer his duties to his nation and shows his responsibility in front of nation. The king used pronoun 'I' repeatedly to show his power to other nation.

6) 'I am the monarch'; I will never let anyone take position of '. This parallel structure reflects king's ideological stance.

7) 'May' Korush the king who reverse thee'. Modal auxiliary 'may' used in Cyrus speech associated with the meaning of possibility to express commitment to the truth.

8) The analysis of lexical level in Cyrus speech show democratic ideological representation of world. The ideological traces that words reflect ('gather together') present democratic authority in the country. It is argued that high amount of wording (nation, king) shows preoccupation of the king with some aspect of reality.

9) Relational values in Cyrus charter analysis shows the wording of king establishes social relationships between nations.

10) Expressive values signal the attitude toward equality of all nations especially in their rights king expresses that 'I will never let anyone take possession of others'.

12) Cyrus in his speech 'prevent slavery' which showed positive expressive values.

13) In this study (Cyrus charter) agency structure of king (animate process) in sentence are related to the SVO position in sentence which is connected to ideological intention of king in order to stress his responsibility. Majority of sentences structure in Cyrus charter presented in active voice to show active role of king.

14) In terms of topicality, symbols of power, ideology and messages in text cleared out.

15) In terms of thematic, brotherhood, peace, equality, paternalistic themes analyzed. The themes and messages in Cyrus charter signify Iran as glorious country. Its messages may help governors; its messages show friendship and peace. Cyrus charter is ultra nation and ultra time, that is, Cyrus speech not only depended on Iranian nation in the past, but also the nations of others in the past and present. As mentioned in Fairclough's model experimental value is important in lexical analysis. That is, choosing suitable lexicon, their classification, relative meaning formal and informal meaning. Experimental value created in our mind by ideological meaning of lexicon. For instance the experimental value of king in Cyrus will signifies the oppression. King entered Babylon peacefully, not using any war' shows the experimental value of king's power.

16) Cyrus' charter messages are ultra time and ultra nation. It can be beneficial all over the time and everywhere.

In analyzing Cyrus charter dominance of meaning is important, because the symbolic and meaningful lexicon should be dominated and symbolized. The essential themes that can be found in Cyrus charter are: brotherhood, Unitarianism (monotheism), peace, equality, politician, heroism, kindness, paternalistic.

17) These themes within lexical signify significant messages. For instance 'when I entered Babylon' signifies king's power and authority and king's pacifist. Cyrus stops slavery to show the equality in society and also equality between men and women. The feeling of Cyrus toward his country (Pars) was clear from phrase like as "after my death, embalmmen, quickly burry my body to soil.

18) Other themes that was clear in Cyrus charter is his Unitarianism. Cyrus guided nations toward *Ahoramazda* (the only God) while other kings, at the same time imposed their God to nation.

19) The analysis of lexicon in Cyrus charter represent that, in spite of being, *conqueror, militant*, Korus was pacifist, kind and ideal king. When Cyrus entered Babylon, he worships Marduk (Babylon's God) instead of Ahora to show his respect to Babylon's God and proved that there is just one God to worship. According to lexical evidences in Cyrus

charter, Cyrus in Babylon, stopped killing and murdering in Babylon to show his kindness and bravery, he also respect to Babylon's God and made people free in choosing their worship God.

20) Cyrus was the founder of human rights. Cyrus protects human rights, respect to human votes. Cyrus release slavery to show equality and fairness in the society (country). He ordered to reconstruct Tomb to extend Unitarianism (monotheism) among people. Cyrus in his will have used "king" repeatedly that shows his empirical authority and power. He also have used 'may' phrase that refers to his Unitarianism.

21) Cyrus' possessions were several countries that show civilization of Persian in the past time. Cyrus charter glorifies Persian magnificence, friendship and peace.

22) Providence was another theme that is significant in Cyrus speech. His speech was not just for nation of that time, it can be beneficial for all nations in all period.

23) Cyrus in his speech pointed out that he was the emperor of 25 countries that signifies his worldwide power. In all 25 countries, Cyrus issued Persian currency because he believes that king's power related to his wealthy not to his sword because of that Cyrus had powerful treasury.

24) Another theme in Cyrus speech is his intellectuality, as it is cleared from his speech, he was knowledgeable and wise. Cyrus was designer of several objects for the first time. For instance he designed channel, human rights... for the first time. Another theme in Cyrus speech is his trustworthiness and truthfulness, Cyrus hated lying. He tried to be kind and satisfactory with his soldiers and officers. According to Cyrus charter, he was Unitarian, he have used the word my God repeatedly in asking help from his God. Some historian called Cyrus Quran's Zolghamein. That is, they regard Cyrus as prophet. Cyrus charter is the oldest Statement of the human rights .It is a document for pride of Iran. It is a present from Iran to nations who are in war.

In order to arrive at more quantative based result of this analysis, a keyword analysis of frequently used words in Cyrus charter was undertaken, yielding the following results.

The speech consist of 1400 words ,the pronoun 'I' being the absolute champion of this count ,with its absolute occurrences being reaching 39, which can be attributed to an inclusiveness of Cyrus.

Keyword density report for Cyrus charter

Keyword	repeats	density
King	13	10%
Babylon	7	8%
God	10	10%
Nation	6	7%
Kingdom	3	5%
Ahuramazda	4	6%
Monarch	2	3%
Prosperity	6	7%
Region	5	7/5%
Friend	5	7/5%
Fatherland	5	7/5%
Respect	5	7/5%
Enemy	5	7/5%
Worship	4	6%

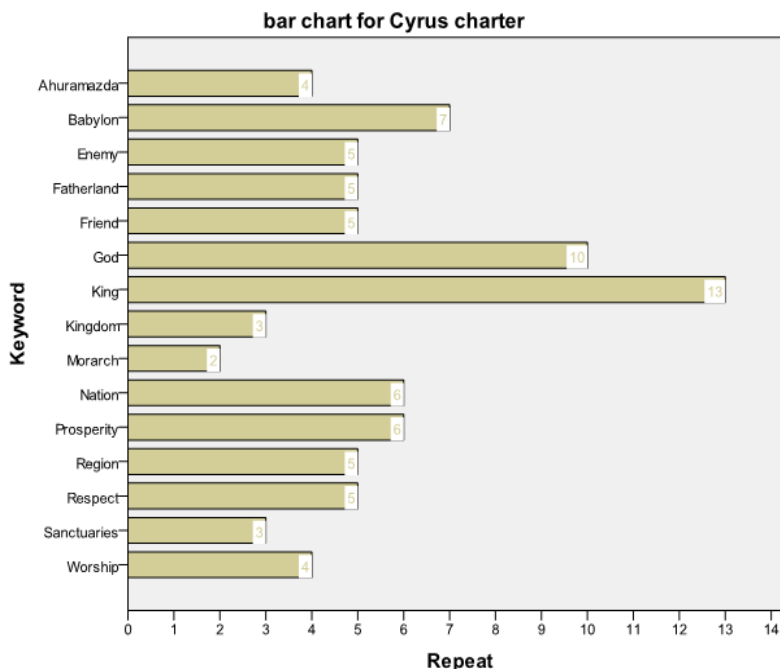


Figure 4 .keyword used in charter and will.

The results of keyword analysis can be interpreted as Cyrus concentrates on the ‘king’ the most prominent word to present king’s power. At the same time the key attribute of Cyrus speech is God, which characterizes Cyrus as monotheism.

Cyrus Will analyzed based on Fairclough’s model in the field of description, interpretation and explanation; mainly vocabulary, values in text, embedded meaning, social and cultural reality considered in analysis. Cyrus will consist of different topics, themes and classification; the main topics in Cyrus will were: monotheism, praise, righteous, gratitude avoidance, prosperous, paternalistic, prosperity of Iran and friends, amnesty, respect, faithful friends. The following phrases signify the themes in the text.

‘U have never deprive me of your help’, signify the monotheism of Cyrus. ‘Prosper my wife, children, friends and fatherland’, signify the prosperity of Cyrus family, his paternalistic and his love to his land. ‘It is queen of Asia’, signifies the greatness of Persian land that Cyrus achieved. ‘U have learned to respect the old man’, signify the importance of respect in Persian culture.

Other themes in Cyrus will were:

- In terms of King’s power, Cyrus issued Persian currency in 25 countries.
- Turning to respect, Cyrus made other countries respect to Persian religion and culture that accords with king’s power.
- Cyrus stated frequency of clauses with auxiliary ‘will’ which accords with king’s futurity, for instance he recommended strong exchequer and silo to his sun.
- There are numbers of points about vocabulary of the Cyrus will; for instance, avoiding lying emphasizing education, freedom in religion, fairness, that all accords with Cyrus generosity.

themes	charter	will
brotherhood	+	-
peace	+	-
equality	+	+
paternalistic	+	+
monotheism	+	+
fairness	+	+
Righteous	-	+
gratitude	-	+
Praise	-	+
amnesty	+	+
Trustworthy	-	+
Prosperous	-	+
Respect	-	+

Figure 5. Comparison of Themes used in charter and will (mine)

Comparing Cyrus charter and Will, yield following results:

- Cyrus charter is more humanistic.
- Both charter and Will have equal frequency in following themes; brotherhood, fairness, peace, equality
- Charter's focus is toward emancipation of slavery and human rights.
- The similar themes between charter and will refer to king's power, respect, monotheism, equality, amnesty, fairness, paternalistic.
- Prosperity, righteous, gratitude, praise are exclusive themes that just exists in Will.

## VI. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper analyzed the ideological component enshrined in the Cyrus will and charter based on Norman Fairclough's framework in interpreting events, themes, and topics. Analyzing different themes both in charter and will yield different frequencies; for instance frequency of occurrences of emancipation and human rights in charter is a higher level than the Will. Turning to other themes it was clear that equality, brotherhood, and peace emphasized in charter, moreover, amnesty, prosperity, gratitude, monotheism was focused in the Will. Having analyzed the themes of charter and Will, it is concluded that Cyrus was an emperor that nations know him because of his human rights charter. Cyrus had an international and global view in that time. Cyrus's view was extensive in governing country and enacting rules in human rights charter. It seems that observing of charter in modern world will settle down world's religion problems. The analysis of underlined themes in Cyrus charter and will revealed that equality and peace focused by Cyrus in that time. The analysis of embedded meaning of vocabulary in charter revealed that Cyrus was generous towards defeated people; He won the heart of his people permitting them to worship their God. Based on SPSS's bar chart the most repeated word was 'king' which signifies king's power; moreover the pronoun 'I' had occurrence of 39 which also represent Cyrus's inclusiveness. Another more repeated word based on bar chart is the word God which represents king's monotheism. Based on figure 5.(comparison of themes in charter and will), some themes were present in Cyrus's charter which showed charter as more humanistic and peaceful; while Cyrus's will was more prosperous righteous and gratitude. The analysis of sentences and phrases in Cyrus's charter showed that Cyrus was extraordinary peerless in all over the world; He was the first legislative who issued a number of principles in terms of human rights. Cyrus's greatness was because of his abolishing slavery, writing the very first human rights and building the very first stadium (the Apadana in Persepolis). The Consideration of charter rules would be useful for the United Nations to prevent crimes and murders all over the world, nowadays. On the other hand understanding the theme in Cyrus charter and Will yield the following applications.

1. Relying on Cyrus charter will solve the world's problem.
2. Iran would be introduced the founder of human rights.
3. Persian civilization would attract other nations to attend to Persian rich civilization.
3. Cyrus charter will introduce to all nations to apply these rules to solve their problem.

The present study was based on Antoine Simonin's translation; due to availability of several translations other studies are possible based on different frameworks. It is suggested that the next study would hold on the application of the charter in the modern world.

Unfortunately nowadays Cyrus charter ignored to apply in international relations and peace keeping. Cyrus who was founder of human rights should be attended. It is not deserved to destroy Cyrus mausoleum with intentional actions.

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