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Hooked on the Right: Explaining the Electoral Success of the Sweden Democrats

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Hooked on the Right: Explaining the Electoral Success
of the Sweden Democrats

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Abstract

Why do radical right parties achieve electoral success? Although radical right parties are far from a new phenomenon in modern politics, it nonetheless remains difficult to pinpoint the exact reasons behind their electoral success. Therefore, to provide greater insight into the success of radical right parties this study investigates the Sweden Democrats, a radical right party in Sweden, and their recent electoral success. According to the literature on the radical right, there are two distinct hypotheses that emerge to explain radical right parties' electoral success. One (the "emphasis" hypothesis) argues for continued, and consistent emphasis on the signature ideological issue, while the other (the "moderation" hypothesis) suggests moderation as a preferable strategy for electoral success. This project uses a form of comment frequency analysis of eleven of the Sweden Democrats' annual speeches to evaluate whether and when they emphasize or moderate their signature ideological issue of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism. This study suggests that the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue, depending upon the addressed audience. In an attempt to reconcile the difference between the existing subsets of literature, I introduce the "hook" hypothesis, which challenges a core assumption made by the literature and presents a potential explanation for why the Sweden Democrats are pursuing what appears to be a unique strategy. The findings help to reconcile and add nuance to the existing literature on the rise of the radical right more generally and the Sweden Democrats in particular.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Why do radical right parties achieve electoral success? Although radical right parties are far from a new phenomenon in modern politics, it nonetheless remains difficult to pinpoint the exact reasons behind their electoral success. This question is particularly important to answer as Europe is experiencing a changing political climate, which has in part resulted in greater electoral success for radical right parties.

This article investigates the Sweden Democrats, a radical right party in Sweden, and their recent electoral success. For the first two decades after their inception in 1988, the party only saw moderate electoral success, and was as recently as 2005 dismissed as a “fringe” party.¹ Prior to 2010, they had never gained more than four percent of the national vote, which is the required minimum for a political party to win seats in the Swedish parliament.² However, in 2010 they received 5.7 percent of the total votes, and in the following election in 2014 they won 12.86 percent of the total votes.

There is a widespread agreement in the literature that there is a set of structural conditions that has created a political opportunity for anti-establishment political parties such as those on the far right. However, there is also an acknowledgement that long-term success depends upon the ability of parties like the Sweden Democrats to present themselves as viable alternatives to mainstream parties by being responsive to public opinion. In other words,

¹ Pippa Norris, *Radical Right Voters and Parties in the Electoral Market* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 67.

² Sweden has a proportional representation system, which is different from a winner-take-all system, as it awards political parties representation in parliament based on the percentage of national votes won, whereas a winner-take-all system awards the political party who receives a majority of the national votes each parliamentary seat up for election.

although the structural conditions in Sweden—such as the 2009 economic crisis and the increase of immigration due to the crisis in the Middle East—are important for the emergence of radical right parties like the Sweden Democrats, they do not automatically contribute to their electoral success.³ Instead, the strategies pursued by the radical right parties also fundamentally impact whether or not they are able to take advantage of the structural conditions.

There are two sets of literature attempting to explain possible strategies the Sweden Democrats can adopt to become electorally successful. The theoretical literature on radical right parties in general (the “emphasis” hypothesis) argues that in a proportional representation system like Sweden’s, they must gain and maintain ownership of their signature ideological issue.⁴ Long-term, sustained success requires ownership, and once it has been established a radical right party must consistently emphasize their signature ideological issue, thus ensuring their ownership is not lost to any of the established mainstream parties. These theoretical and cross-national studies contrast starkly with existing empirical work on the Sweden Democrats. The literature on the Sweden Democrats (the “moderation” hypothesis) argues that they are moderating to attract a larger constituency, consequently appearing as a more viable democratic alternative.⁵ However, because the recent electoral success of the Sweden Democrats is relatively understudied, the conclusions might be focused on earlier moderation away from neo-Nazi leanings, which raises questions about whether it applies to contemporary behaviors/strategies on the issues of immigration and Islam.

³ Jens Rydgren, “Radical Right Populism in Sweden: Still a Failure, But for How Long?,” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 25, no. 1 (2002): 32, accessed November 6, 2015, doi: 10.1111/1467-9477.00062.

⁴ A signature ideological issue is a political question that a radical right party promotes in order to set themselves apart from established mainstream parties.

⁵ Anders Hellstrom and Tom Nilsson, “‘We Are the Good Guys’,” *Ethnicities* 10, no. 1 (2010): 66-67, accessed October 17, 2015, doi: 10.1177/1468796809354214.

In order to explain the recent electoral success of the Sweden Democrats, and specifically, to identify which strategy they are employing, this project will analyze the party's annual speeches made between 2010 and 2015. The analysis allows me to observe patterns of extremism and moderation in their public appeals over time, which suggest a possible explanation for their electoral success, and subsequently, why existing theories have fallen short in explaining it.

This study suggests that the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, both moderating *and* emphasizing their signature ideological issue depending upon the audience they address and the specific time period one examines. These findings raise questions for both existing explanations of radical right electoral success. Contrary to the “moderation” hypothesis, the party is more ideologically extreme when addressing the general populace, and more moderate when addressing its core constituency of members and sympathizers, except in election years. On the other hand, contrary to the “emphasis” hypothesis, the party does not appear to be especially consistent in its emphasis of its signature ideological issue; even when addressing more general audiences, the party is much more likely to take a more extreme stance on its signature ideological issue in election years than in non-election years. In an attempt to reconcile the difference between the existing subsets of literature, I introduce the “hook” hypothesis, which challenges a core assumption made by the literature and presents a potential explanation for why the Sweden Democrats are pursuing what appears to be a unique strategy. These findings, and by extension, the “hook” hypothesis, allow me to reconcile and add nuance to the existing literature on the rise of the radical right, and the Sweden Democrats in particular.

Chapter II: Background

Up until 1980, radical right parties in Europe were not very different, if at all, from previous fascist political parties. However, post-1980 a turning point occurred when a new set of neoconservative ideas were introduced to the political arena, creating the “new” radical right. Piero Ignazi argues that the “new” radical right differs from the old radical right because of its “popular and mass appeal, a meritocratic rather than elitist principle, preference for market and individualism instead of organicism, its radical standings rather than *juste milieu* patterning, and its (difficult) encounter with liberalism while sharply opposing post-material libertarianism.”⁶

Because the “new” radical right attempts to create a transformation of the current political and cultural society towards either a futuristic vision or back to an idealistic past, it requires a certain degree of discontent among the general populace. According to Jens Rydgren, emerging “new” radical right parties attempt to appeal to the discontented populace by exploiting the current structural conditions of the political environment in order to become electorally successful. Such structural conditions could be a postindustrial economy, economic crises, unemployment, widespread political discontent, the emergence of green parties, dissolutions of established identities, fragmentation of culture, and multiculturalism.⁷

In order to appeal to the discontented populace, the “new” radical right argues that there are several threats to their perceived national identity. Included in this perceived threat is immigration, which radical right parties frequently address as an exceptionally troubling trend. Muslims are regularly singled out among immigrants, with special focus placed on their cultural

⁶ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 25.

⁷ Rydgren 2002, 32.

values, as they are considered to be incompatible with the values of Europe.⁸ Therefore, in order to achieve electoral success, the “new” radical right parties in Europe attempt to offer a solution to the current political environment by promoting policies related to anti-immigration and anti-Islamism.

Another commonly used strategy to appeal to the discontented populace is to emphasize the impact immigration has on the economy. In 1978, the National Front (NF) in France created an infamous poster stating, “Two million unemployed is two million immigrants too many.”⁹ As such, although the cultural implications of immigration are important, the perceived economic cost of immigration is important too, as some citizens believe immigrants unfairly take benefits that are perceived not to be theirs, like jobs and access to the welfare state.

Although some structural conditions, such as immigration, have drastically changed in Sweden, suggesting a more favorable political environment for the Sweden Democrats to become more electorally successful, others, such as the fact that unemployment has decreased and economic growth has increased, suggest that structural conditions are not a sufficient explanation for their electoral success. For example, since 2010 Sweden has experienced a historically high level of immigration. In 2010, 98,801 immigrants arrived in Sweden compared to 2015, which had a record high of 134,240 immigrants; this represents an increase in immigration of roughly thirty-five percent.¹⁰ However, in 2010 Sweden also experienced a

⁸ Jens Rydgren, “The Sociology of the Radical Right,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (2007): 244, accessed January 16, 2016, <http://jstor.org/stable/26737762>.

⁹ Adam Nossiter, “For Marine Le Pen, Migration Is a Ready-Made Issue,” *New York Times*, October 5, 2015, accessed May 6, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/06/world/europe/for-marine-le-pen-migration-is-a-ready-made-issue.html?_r=0.

¹⁰ “Population and Population Changes 1749–2015,” Statistiska Central Byran, accessed April 22, 2016, http://www.scb.se/en_/Finding-statistics/Statistics-by-subject-area/Population/Population-composition/Population-statistics/Aktuell-Pong/25795/Yearly-statistics--The-whole-country/26046/.

record high GDP growth rate of six percent. Although the GDP growth has dropped to 4.1 percent in 2015, it nonetheless shows how the Swedish economy grew consistently in the wake of a global economic shutdown.¹¹ In addition to a growing economy, the unemployment rate has also decreased. In 2010, the unemployment rate was at 8.6 percent, while in 2015 it decreased to 7.4 percent. In sum, the structural conditions suggest that immigration has increased, but the economic implication of immigration appears to not substantially affect Sweden's economic growth, suggesting that structural conditions alone are not sufficient to explain the Sweden Democrats' recent electoral success.

While the Sweden Democrats are recognized in the literature as a "new" radical right party,¹² it was founded in 1988 by neo-Nazi sympathizers, who held an extreme far-right radical ideology and were, for example, committed to wearing uniforms and swastikas. Since their inception, the Sweden Democrats have renounced their neo-Nazi roots, but have maintained their signature ideological issue of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism. Because of their signature ideological issue, the Sweden Democrats share the same platform as many more successful radical right parties in Europe, like the NF in France and the Danish People's Party (DPP) in Denmark.¹³ Although the Sweden Democrats have a platform similar to the NF and the DPP,

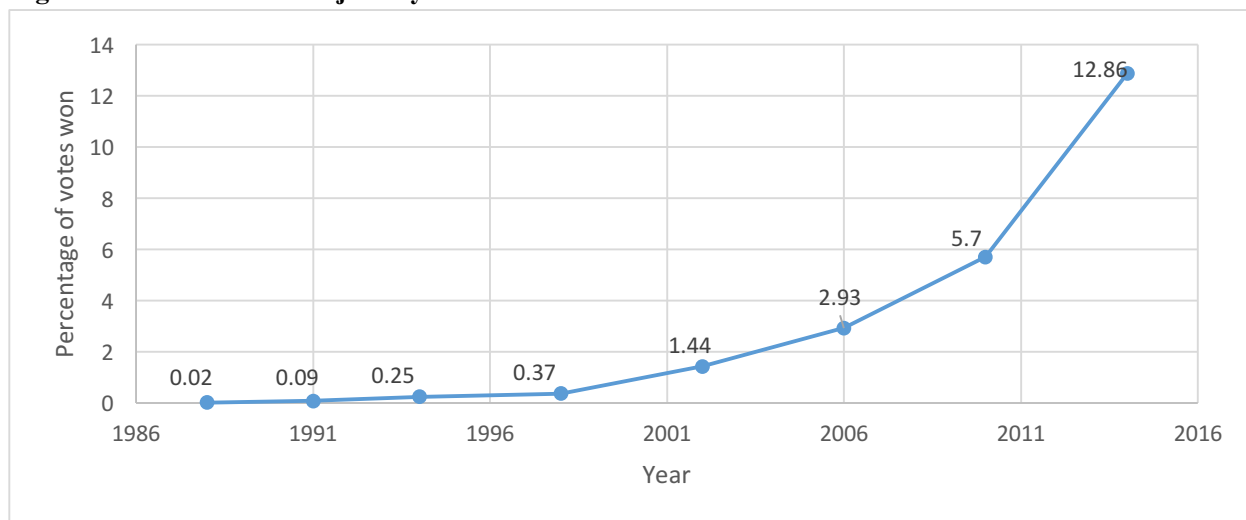
¹¹ "Rekordar och Kriser – Sa har BNP Okat och Minskat," Statistiska Central Byran, accessed April 22, 2016, <http://www.sverigeisiffror.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/samhallets-ekonomi/bnp---bruttonationalprodukten/>.

¹² Norris 2005, 53-57.

¹³ Bjorn Burscher, Joost van Spanje, and Claes H. de Vreese, "Owning the Issue of Crime and Immigration: The Relation Between Immigration and Crime News and Anti-Immigrants Voting in 11 Countries," *Electoral Studies* 38 (2015): 66, accessed April 11, 2016, doi: 10.1016/j.electstud.2015.03.001.

they have only recently started to experience electoral success, with the result that little attention has been paid to them.¹⁴

Figure 1. The electoral trajectory of the Sweden Democrats from 1988 to 2014.



However, as shown in Figure 1, the Sweden Democrats achieved their first electoral triumph in 2006 and have become increasingly more successful since. Because structural conditions alone are an insufficient explanation, their rapid electoral success raises questions regarding what they have done to take them from a party mostly ignored by the mainstream literature on the “new” radical right to become the third-largest political party in Sweden.¹⁵

¹⁴ Anders Hellstrom, Tom Nilsson, and Pauline Stoltz, “Nationalism vs. Nationalism: The Challenges of the Sweden Democrats in the Swedish Public Debate,” *Government and Opposition* 47, no. 2 (2012): 186, accessed October 12, 2015, doi: 10.1111/j.1477-7053.2011.01357.x.

¹⁵ “Fran Fem Till Atta Partier i Riksdagen,” Statistiska Central Byran, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://www.sverigeisiffror.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/val-och-partier/valresultat-over-tid/>.

Chapter III: Literature Review

According to the literature on the radical right, there are two distinct hypotheses that emerge to explain their electoral success. One argues for continued and consistent emphasis on the signature ideological issue, while the other suggests moderation as a preferable strategy in order to appeal to a broader constituency.

The Emphasis Literature

The branch of literature that supports the “emphasis” hypothesis suggests that the radical right needs to establish and maintain ownership over a signature ideological issue, which will distinguish it from its mainstream competitors.¹⁶ In “Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success,” Bonnie Meguid argues that such ownership is ensured by focusing on issues rarely addressed by mainstream parties.¹⁷

Additionally, Meguid also explains how radical right parties differentiate themselves from mainstream parties by addressing a restricted set of issues, each related to their signature ideological issue. It is necessary for the radical right to force a new issue on the agenda, because by doing so, the radical right not only establishes ownership of their signature ideological issue, but also cleaves the electorate in a new way, drawing voters from all mainstream competitors, rather than just the center-right. Hence, by emphasizing their signature ideological issue, radical

¹⁶ Bonnie Meguid, “Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success,” *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3 (2005): 349, accessed September 27, 2015, http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FPSR%2FPSR99_03%2FS0003055405051701a.pdf&code=635ac9fb83362026892e95a86818a91c; Norris 2005, 27.

¹⁷ Mainstream parties are defined as the electorally dominant actors in the center-left, center, and center-right blocs on the left-right political spectrum.

right parties ensure political relevance. Once ownership is established, the radical right parties must maintain their newly-gained foothold. The mainstream parties will attempt to steal the radical right parties' ownership, thus undermining the foundation of the radical right parties, which puts the radical right's chances of becoming electorally successful at risk.¹⁸

In a proportional representation electoral system like Sweden's, the strategy by which radical right parties maintain ownership of their signature ideological issue is by consistently emphasizing it. Drawing on a cross-national, longitudinal study of European radical right parties, Pippa Norris argues that such emphasis is vital, as it will set them apart from the mainstream competition on the center-left and center-right. She states,

Strategies emphasizing core ideological values work best in proportional representation systems with low effective thresholds. The theory predicts that in this context, radical right parties can gain seats by adopting 'bonding' strategies emphasizing 'signature' ideological appeals which distinguishes them most clearly from mainstream competitors on the center-right and center-left. Under these rules, minor radical right parties can gain seats by focusing their appeals almost exclusively upon the values of cultural protectionism, emphasizing hard-line xenophobic rhetoric, proposing racist anti-immigration and anti-refugee policies, and advocating radical economic and social policies, such as 'flat tax' or the abolition of welfare eligibility for noncitizens.¹⁹

This hypothesis of emphasizing one's signature ideological issue in order to achieve electoral success is far from rare. There are two famous examples of radical right parties adopting this strategy: the NF and the DPP. Both the NF and the DPP are among the most well-known radical right parties to emphasize their signature ideological issue of anti-immigration. They have become a source of inspiration for many other up-and-coming radical right parties, among them the Sweden Democrats. Through policies opposing immigration and Islamism, they

¹⁸ Meguid 2005, 349.

¹⁹ Norris 2005, 27.

have both become textbook examples of radical right parties achieving electoral success by emphasizing their signature ideological issue.²⁰

Although Norris provides an extensive explanation of how radical right parties achieve success in proportional representation systems, she does not explain what it means to “emphasize” a party’s signature ideological issue, which can be interpreted in multiple ways. For example, does “emphasizing” describe a party that always, independent of whether it is an election year or not, produces large quantities of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism comments, or is emphasis only during election years sufficient for electoral success?

Moreover, while Norris argues for the emphasis hypothesis, she also acknowledges the need for a radical right party to *moderate* in order to become electorally successful. She explains how political parties ought to be aware of the “zone of acquiescence,” which represents the policies supported by the majority of all voters. It then follows that a radical right party, with policies outside of the “zone of acquiescence,” is going to be electorally unsuccessful, as their policies are seen by the majority of voters as too extreme.²¹ This suggests that some moderation is necessary to become electorally viable.

Although a certain degree of moderation has been observed in the Sweden Democrats, especially in 1995 when they renounced neo-Nazi symbols such as uniforms and swastikas, it nonetheless remains unanswered whether they have continued their moderation on issues like immigration and Islam.²²

²⁰ Subrata Mitra, “The National Front in France – A Single-Issue Movement?,” *West European Politics* 11, no. 2 (1988): 52, accessed April 2, 2016, doi: 10.1080/01402388808424681; Burscher, Bjorn, Joost van Spanje, and Claes H. de Vreese. 2015, 66.

²¹ Norris 2005, 20.

²² Hellstrom and Nilsson 2010, 58.

The Moderation Literature

Independent of whether the moderation literature acknowledges the Sweden Democrats' initial moderation of renouncing uniforms and swastikas, it nonetheless suggests that instead of emphasizing their signature ideological issue, the radical right should employ a strategy of moderation in order to attract a larger constituency.²³ Imagine a bell curve where the majority of voters are located in the middle. The radical right, when emphasizing their signature ideological issue, will be unable to attract voters from the middle, as they view the radical right as too extreme. Therefore, to achieve greater electoral success, radical right parties need to moderate, which allows them to attract voters from the middle, who now see them as less extreme. This strategy of moderation has been observed in numerous examples of nationalist or extremist parties, two of which includes the Irish Sinn Fein and the Indian nationalist party Bharatiya Janata.

A 2011 study by Matthew Whiting analyzes the Irish Republican party Sinn Fein's political speeches, paying special attention to their political moderation; in particular, he concentrates on the movement's use of violence over time. Whiting's data suggest that Sinn Fein are becoming less violent, consequently showing signs of becoming more moderate. Additionally, Whiting also acknowledges the possibility of their moderation as being "strategic" to gain access to a larger constituency.²⁴

Similar to Sinn Fein, the Indian nationalist party Bharatiya Janata has also moderated over time. As a reaction towards violence in India during the early 1990s, the Bharatiya Janata

²³ Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 198-199.

²⁴ Matthew Whiting, "The Challenges of Measuring Political Moderation – Lessons From the Case of Sinn Fein" (PhD diss. London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011), 4.

agreed to a strategic moderation, which included scaling down the party's dependence on religious symbols. The reorganization of the party proved successful, and in the 1996 election they won the most seats in the Lok Sabha (local parliament).²⁵

Moderation as a strategy to gain access to a larger constituency has also been historically observed in Sweden. According to Prezeworski and Sprague, the Swedish Social Democrats are a premier example of adopting moderation as a strategy. In 1911, the Swedish Social Democrats abandoned their previous references to the working class and instead appealed to the "oppressed class," because the term "working class" had become too narrow and limited the size of the Social Democrats' target constituency. As a result, through moderation, as shown by their use of the term "oppressed class," the Social Democrats were able to moderate the party's policies and move towards the median voter on the bell curve, which allowed the Social Democrats to achieve greater electoral success.²⁶

According to literature on the Sweden Democrats they are, similar to the Swedish Social Democrats, moderating to achieve greater electoral success. Hellstrom and Nilsson's "'We Are the Good Guys'" describes how the party "employs a strategy of moderation to convince the electorate that it has cleaned out its closet and should now be regarded as the most viable democratic alternative."²⁷ There are additional studies supporting this hypothesis: they claim that the Sweden Democrats' moderation manifests itself through the party's decision to sever ties with its neo-Nazi roots and excommunicate members unwilling to accept the change.²⁸

²⁵ Hansen 1999, 198.

²⁶ Adam Prezeworski and John Sprague, *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 50.

²⁷ Hellstrom and Nilsson 2010, 66-67.

²⁸ Anders Widfeldt, "Party Changes as a Necessity – the Case of the Sweden Democrats," *Representation* 44, no. 3 (2008): 275, accessed January 15, 2016, doi:

Although the literature on the Sweden Democrats suggests that they have become more moderate, it remains an unsupported hypothesis that leaves the reader wanting. The claim rests largely on circumstantial evidence and requires further investigation to understand if the hypothesis is valid. An additional challenge for the moderation hypothesis is understanding whether moderation is sincere. Whiting acknowledges this difficulty and argues that Sinn Fein's moderation is not a transformation, but instead a case of subordinating long-term goals for short-term goals.²⁹ Building on Whiting's argument, perhaps radical right parties speak in different voices when addressing members versus non-members, consequently adopting a "devil in disguise strategy," which suggests that the alleged moderation is strategic, rather than sincere. Such strategic moderation has previously been observed in the Bharatiya Janata, where certain members spoke in different voices to different audiences.³⁰ A final challenge to the moderation hypothesis concerns what it means to "moderate." For example, does moderating mean expressing more positive attitudes towards immigration and Islam, or simply fewer extreme negative attitudes?

In sum, there is considerable ambiguity on how to explain the Sweden Democrats' recent electoral success. Each side of the debate leaves questions unanswered, which the analysis that follows seeks to address: First, are the Sweden Democrats adopting the moderation or the emphasis strategy? Second, what does it mean to consistently emphasize a signature ideological issue, and how is this expressed empirically? Third, if the data suggest that the Sweden

10.1080/00344890802237031; Thage G Peterson, "Vaga ta Debatten med SD," *Sydsvenskan* (Malmo, Swe), Feb. 24, 2007.

²⁹ Whiting 2011, 16.

³⁰ Sanjay Ruparelia, "Rethinking Institutional Theories of Political Moderation: The Case of the Hindu Nationalism in India, 1996-2004," *Comparative Politics* 38, no. 3 (2006): 319, accessed October 3, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20434000>.

Democrats are moderating, is the moderation strategic rather than sincere? Fourth, do the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences? The answers to these questions will reduce some of the current ambiguity on the subject, and by extension, help to explain the electoral success of the Sweden Democrats.

Chapter IV: Methodology

There are several different sources of data, like speeches, articles, interviews, and manifestos, that can be used to understand whether the Sweden Democrats are employing a strategy of moderation or a strategy of emphasis. However, since the Sweden Democrats do not publish an annual manifesto, write publicly accessible and consistently published articles, or have regular interviews, it becomes increasingly hard to use them for a comparative study that seeks to explore shifts in party strategy over time. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that articles and interviews are used as valuable secondary resources to provide greater context to the Sweden Democrats in general.³¹

This study will analyze eleven of the Sweden Democrats' annual speeches over a six-year period and use a rubric (to be discussed below) to extract and decipher patterns regarding their speech strategies.³² Thus, because the speeches analyzed in this study are the only widely accessible and consistently-held annual event by the Sweden Democrats, they are preferable to analyze as they allow for a continuous comparative study. The speeches analyzed in this study can be divided into two groups based on where they were held. First, six of the speeches are annually held at the end of June in Solvesborg, Sweden, the hometown of party leader Jimmie Akesson. These speeches address members and sympathizers and are roughly forty-five minutes long. During the speeches, Jimmie Akesson addresses specific topics related to the upcoming

³¹ The Sweden Democrats produce a newspaper called "SD Kuriren." Since "SD Kuriren" is not available online, and only experiences a very limited run to be distributed to members and sympathizers, it is increasingly difficult to create a comparative study using their newspaper as the core material.

³² Speeches are originally in Swedish and have been translated; See bibliography for a detailed citation of each of the eleven speeches.

year, while also providing a short summary of the previous year's events. To easily identify and differentiate these speeches from the others they will be referred to as the "Members and Sympathizers Speeches."

Second, since 2011 the Sweden Democrats have been invited to participate in the Almedalen week. This event, which is annually held on Gotland, a small island on the east coast of Sweden, is considered the political highlight of the year. Each political party currently in parliament is given one day to promote itself and its political agenda.³³ Different from the "Members and Sympathizers Speeches," during these speeches the Sweden Democrats are no longer exclusively addressing members and sympathizers, but the Swedish population as a whole. Therefore, to easily identify and differentiate these speeches from the "Members and Sympathizers Speeches" they will be referred to as the "General Populace Speeches."

There are several similarities between the two sets of speeches, which allows for comparison. First, both sets of speeches provide opportunities for the Sweden Democrats to address the upcoming year and the specific issues they will highlight to set themselves apart from the competition. Second, both sets of speeches are delivered by the party leader Jimmie Akesson. Third, they are only three weeks apart, which limits external events from affecting the content of the two speeches in any given year. Fourth, they are roughly the same length of time.

Since the speeches are only three weeks apart—consequently limiting the influence of external events—they can be compared and contrasted in order to reveal larger patterns and trends. In addition to this, since the Sweden Democrats' speeches are annually held and address

³³ The 2010 Almedalen week took place before the 2010 election, which is why the Sweden Democrats were not invited to participate.

vastly different audiences, they can also provide a unique opportunity to understand whether the Sweden Democrats are tailoring their content to a certain audience.

Speeches are preferable to manifestos since the Sweden Democrats do not produce an annual manifesto, and if they did, manifestos are more often than not meant for the general public, thus failing to provide information about whether they are tailoring their content to certain audiences. Additionally, although interviews and articles are able to provide information about whether the Sweden Democrats are tailoring their content to different audiences, they are not preferable to speeches since the Sweden Democrats are inconsistent in producing both interviews and articles, making it difficult to use for a systematic longitudinal and comparative study.

The Rubric

To capture different levels of extremism when the Sweden Democrats address immigration and Islam, I have developed a rubric, which uses a comment frequency analysis in order to identify the Sweden Democrats' nine possible positions on immigration, each representing a distinct level of extremism. This approach builds upon previous work done by Laver, Benoit, and Garry, who developed a method for extracting political positions from texts produced by political actors.³⁴ Their method observes and analyzes word frequency, which reveals information about the position of the texts' authors on predefined policy dimensions. This approach breaks from previous traditional praxes of analyzing texts, which are exposed to a

³⁴ Michael Laver, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry, "Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data," *American Political Science Association* 97, no. 2 (2003): 312, accessed November 2, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3118211>.

high degree of subjectivity as each text, and its relevant content, needs to be extracted and interpreted by a coder. Consequently, the coder's past experiences will influence how they interpret and perceive the information, thus resulting in subjective interpretations of the texts' content.

Different from the traditional subjective and interpretative technique, the method developed by Laver, Benoit, and Garry is mathematical rather than interpretive, thus limiting the influence of bias and political affiliation on the data, and is therefore an especially appropriate method to use when analyzing political texts.

The rubric used in this study differs from that of Laver, Benoit, and Garry in one important way: their approach focused exclusively on words, and this study will focus on comments. The decision to use comments instead of words was taken in acknowledgement of the fact that languages have multiple ways of expressing political attitudes without using single words. For example, a word count analysis that counted the number of times the words "immigrant" or "immigrants" appear in a text would potentially miss relevant expressions in a specific context, such as "individuals with a foreign background." In an attempt to reconcile this problem, the word count analysis would include words such "foreign." However, additional problems arise when doing this. For example, the inclusion of "foreign" would score immigration statements, but also any comment related to "foreign" policies, which may be unrelated to either immigration and Islamism.

An additional benefit to using a comment frequency analysis is that it enables words to be put in context in order to capture their full meaning and significance, which the original word count analysis would be unable to do.

Thus, adopting a word count approach without any adjustments to the original technique would produce inaccurate data; the rubric would only be able to identify a limited way in which the Sweden Democrats express their views on immigration. It is also important to acknowledge that there is a certain level of subjectivity necessary for this study, principally when creating the various categories of comments, as they must be chosen by the author within a certain context. Nevertheless, the comment frequency analysis will remain replicable and falsifiable, while providing sufficient data to make the method valuable and worthwhile. As such, the comment analysis strikes a balance between the traditional subjective and interpretive technique and the word count analysis in order to limit subjectivity and increase accuracy.

The rubric discussed below identifies nine different categories of comments, each representing a distinct position on the Sweden Democrats' signature ideological issue of immigration and Islam. This builds upon the work of Harris, Morgan, and Gibbs, who when studying Utah's immigration debate identify several different levels of extremism in their analysis of political texts.³⁵

The different categories that will be analyzed are divided as follows: extreme anti-Islamic, moderate anti-Islamic, negatively treating immigrants as a homogenous group, negative impact of immigrants on the Swedish welfare state, neutral, positive impact of immigrants on the Swedish welfare state, positively treating immigrants as a homogenous group, moderate pro-Islamic, and finally extreme pro-Islamic. To effectively distinguish each unique category and their various levels of extremeness, I have listed examples of the type of statements and comments that fit under each category. These statements and comments are, when possible,

³⁵ Brian D. Harris, Charlie V. Morgan, and Benjamin G. Gibbs, "Evidence of Political Moderation Over Time: Utah's Immigration Debate Online," *New Media & Society* 16, no. 8 (2014): 1317-1319, accessed November 2, 2015, doi: 10.1177/1461444813504262.

extracted from actual speeches by the Sweden Democrats and will serve as representative examples for each category and its unique level of extremeness.

Moreover, each category in the rubric is assigned a numerical score ranging from plus four to negative four. A negative comment related to immigration and Islam receives a score of plus one to four depending on its level of extremeness, where a higher score represents a more extreme type of comment. Similarly, a comment that reflects positive sentiments towards immigration and Islam receives a score of negative one to negative four depending on its extremeness, where the lowest score reflects an extremely positive comment. A neutral comment receives the score of zero. Adding up comment scores produces an estimate of the “extremeness” of each speech. Speeches with higher positive scores are more extreme while those closer to zero, or with lower negative scores, are comparatively moderate.

The following is an in-depth look at each of the nine different categories and, specifically, what differentiates them from each other.

Extreme anti-Islamic. Under this category falls any comment that explicitly singles out Islam, Muslims, the Middle East (when referred to in the context of either Islam or Muslims), and various Islamic Holy scriptures. This category distinguishes itself by either explicitly favoring reduced immigration from the Middle East and/or other related areas where Islam is a majority religion, and by having specific hostile and threatening comments related specifically to Islam. Any comment that will be labeled as extreme anti-Islamic will receive a score of plus four.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2014

I will firmly claim that in light of the recent year's developments in Egypt, Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and other related countries, that it is no longer possible to ignore Islam and its bloody borders. We cannot, we should not, and we will not turn a blind eye to the fact that today's Islamism is the greatest global threat for peace, security, democracy, equality, and human rights known to man. Sweden and the West must view and treat Islamism similarly to how we have previously viewed and treated other conquering and totalitarian ideologies. Islamism is today's Nazism and Communism.

Moderate anti-Islamic. Comments related to this category will generally describe unfavorable and unsupportive sentiments towards Islam. However, unlike the previous category, this category distinguishes itself by not stereotyping all Muslims. For example, rather than stereotyping, it recognizes that not all Muslims are fundamentalists or terrorists. Any comment that will be labeled as moderate anti-Islamic will receive a score of plus three.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2011

I will never blame Muslims who are condemning Islamism, and neither those Muslims who are in a similar fashion condemning certain parts of the Quran and other Islam-related scriptures, which are encouraging violence against other ways of thinking.

Negatively treating immigrants as a homogenous group. This category includes any comment and/or statement that is no longer specifically dealing with Muslims, but is instead focusing on immigrants as a collective entity. Thus, this category distinguishes itself from the previous two by focusing on comments that refer to immigrants as a collective without specifically singling out a certain religious group. Any comment that will be labeled to fit this category will receive a score of plus two.³⁶

³⁶ It is possible to argue that the “*negatively treating immigrants as a homogenous group*” category ought to be considered to be the most extreme as the Sweden Democrats are

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2010

We must figure out more efficient ways of ensuring that immigrants who are coming to Sweden are not criminals [...] We must also demand that immigrants choosing to stay in Sweden are adjusting to Sweden and adapt to our way of life.

Negative impact of immigrants on the Swedish welfare state. Comments related to this category, depending on context, may or may not be related to immigration. It is important to include a category that showcases how the Sweden Democrats are periodically presenting a more moderate view of immigration, and how such views are frequently expressed by highlighting the impact immigration has upon the welfare state. In other words, this category sets itself apart from the preceding three by addressing the economic implications of immigration, rather than immigrants themselves. Any comment that will be labeled to fit inside of this category will receive a score of plus one.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2012

I have spent a lot of time in my recent speeches addressing immigration and integration policies. Among such things I have recently criticized is the newly-proposed bill, which would allow illegal immigrants to gain access to our welfare state.

While the preceding categories signify some form of negative statement regarding Muslims, Islam, the Middle East, and immigrants, the rubric must also allow for the possibility of positive comments being made by the Sweden Democrats. Therefore, for the rubric to be all-encompassing, it is important to ensure that it can account for any comment, whether positive or

stereotyping all immigrants as being bad, rather than a certain religious group. However, when the scores are switched, similar patterns emerge. For more information, see page 50.

negative. Hence, the following categories will showcase four different levels of positive comments in regards to immigration and Islam. The different categories of positive statements will be ranked as follows: positive impact of immigrants on the Swedish welfare state, positively treating immigrants as a homogenous, moderate pro-Islamic, and finally extreme pro-Islamic. Each category, similar to those addressing negative comments about immigration or Islam, will also be graded on a scale from one to four, where four signifies comments which are the most pro-Islamic. However, unlike the categories where a comment receives a positive score, these comments will receive a negative score.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to create a neutral category, representing any speech or political text in which the Sweden Democrats does not address either immigration or Islam.

Positive impact of immigrants on the Swedish welfare state. Any comment and/or statement in which the Sweden Democrats publicly acknowledge immigrants as having a positive impact on the Swedish welfare state. Any comment that will be labeled to fit under this category will receive a score of negative one.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2010

It is important to emphasize—when discussing immigrants—that very few commit rape; this is rather self-explanatory. Among those immigrants who have travelled to Sweden during the last decades, there are many examples of well-adjusted people who have contributed to Sweden and our welfare state.

Positively treating immigrants as homogenous group. This category includes any comment that acknowledges positive contributions from all immigrants, or a subset of immigrants, without addressing a certain religious group. Different from its negative counterpart,

this category specifically focuses on ways immigrants, or a select subset of immigrants, have had a positive impact on Sweden and its society and culture. Furthermore, this category distinguishes itself from the former by focusing on immigrants, or a subset of immigrants, independent of their economic impact on the Swedish welfare state. Any comment that will be labeled to fit under this category will receive a score of negative two.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2014

There are many people in this country with a foreign background who have contributed a lot of positive things to our society, and that is important to acknowledge.

Moderate pro-Islamic. This category will include any comment in which the Sweden Democrats recognize Islam and Muslims as potentially being a positive influence on Sweden and its culture. Further, different from the preceding two categories, this specifically addresses Islam and Muslims and not immigrants as a whole or their economic impact. Following is a fictitious comment meant to represent a presently non-existent statement that might fit this category. Also, any comment that will be labeled to fit under this category will receive a score of negative three.

Fictitious Author | Fictitious Speech | Fictitious Date and Location

Sweden has become a nation of mixed religious beliefs. No longer do we have a society with only Christians, but also Muslims, Jews, Hindus, and many more. Although change comes to all, it is important to ensure that change is controlled and not forcefully thrust upon anyone. Therefore, we must acknowledge that religions other than Christianity, particularly Islam, may have something to contribute to the Swedish society.

Extreme pro-Islamic. Any comment which would fit under this category would require the Sweden Democrats to recognize the importance of Islam for Sweden, and also acknowledge

that Christian Swedish society is benefitting from Islam and its various Holy scriptures, including Sharia. Or, in other words, different from the preceding three categories, this category praises Islam and encourages its teachings and transformative benefits for Sweden. Following is a fictitious comment meant to represent a presently non-existent statement that might fit this category. Any comment that will be labeled to fit under this category will receive a score of negative four.

Fictitious Author | Fictitious Speech | Fictitious Date and Location

It is important to recognize the value of a multicultural society in Sweden. Although Islam is in many ways different from the Christian Swedish society we have lived in for many centuries, Islam has nonetheless proven itself to be of vital importance to Sweden. Understanding the various positive lessons of the Quran will provide us with an essential cornerstone for the future of Sweden.

Neutral. Although many may argue that the Sweden Democrats are a single-issue party, it is important to note that they do address issues beyond immigration and Islam. Such comments addressing issues not related to Islam, Muslims, or immigrants will thus receive a score of zero. Following is an example of such a comment:

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Almedalen Speech, Almedalen, Sweden | July 2013

I believe in equality, and I think that politics can do a lot more to help with issues of equality in our society. No progress has been made by the government, not even in their own signature issue regarding the salary difference between men and women.

Scoring

Once comments in all the speeches have been categorized and scored using the rubric, these scores will be used to address the various questions raised in the literature review. First, in order to understand whether the Sweden Democrats are adopting an emphasis or a moderation strategy, the scores of all the comments within each speech will be added together to compile a total score to estimate the level of each speech's extremeness. The scores of speeches will be tracked over time in order to identify patterns or trends. In addition to answering whether the Sweden Democrats adopt an emphasis or a moderation strategy, this will also allow for a greater understanding of what it means to "emphasize" a signature ideological issue.

Second, in order to evaluate whether any observed moderation is sincere or strategic, I will create a comment frequency table. This table shows each comment from all of the Sweden Democrats' eleven annual speeches and uncovers how they are addressing positive aspects of both immigration and Islam. Then, to understand the purpose of the positive comments, I will apply a text analysis technique known as the "hermeneutics of suspicion." This technique places the positive comments in context of the speech as a whole, and suggests alternative explanations different from the initial, obvious interpretation.

Third, to understand whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences, the analysis below looks at the average comment score for each speech event. Such comment score analysis is produced when the total score of each speech is divided by the total number of comments in that speech. The result of this analysis will be presented in an average comment score table. However, since this measure is relatively crude, which may produce inaccurate data, two additional analyses are necessary to produce a finer grain, and by extension, more nuanced dataset: First, the proportion of negative comments as a percentage of the total

number of comments for each speech; second, the percentage of comments scored either as plus three or plus four compared to the total number of negative comments in each speech.

Chapter V: Analysis

The data from the comment analysis suggest that the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue. Thus, neither set of literature adequately explains the electoral success of the Sweden Democrats.

The findings can be summarized in three main points. First, the Sweden Democrats are consistently emphasizing their signature ideological issue *in election years*. Each of the two election years (2010 and 2014) experienced a drastic increase in anti-immigration and anti-Islamism comments in comparison to non-election years. For example, during the 2010 election, the members and sympathizers speech received a total score of forty-nine points, roughly 250 percent higher than the 2011 non-election year speech addressing the same audience, which only received nineteen points. When analyzed in greater detail, this data will allow for a deeper understanding about whether the Sweden Democrats are employing an emphasis or a moderation strategy. Additionally, the data raise questions about what it means to emphasize a signature ideological issue.

Second, the Sweden Democrats frequently acknowledge both negative and positive aspects regarding immigration and Islam in the same speech. Unlike the findings discussed in the previous paragraph, this data potentially explains whether the Sweden Democrats' moderation is sincere or strategic.

Third, the results attempting to determine whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences suggest that moderation is a complex phenomenon. Deceivingly, the results are highly dependent on which measure is used to determine moderation. For example, average comment score suggests that the general populace speeches are always

more extreme in non-election years, whereas a finer grain analysis reveal more complex and ambiguous results.

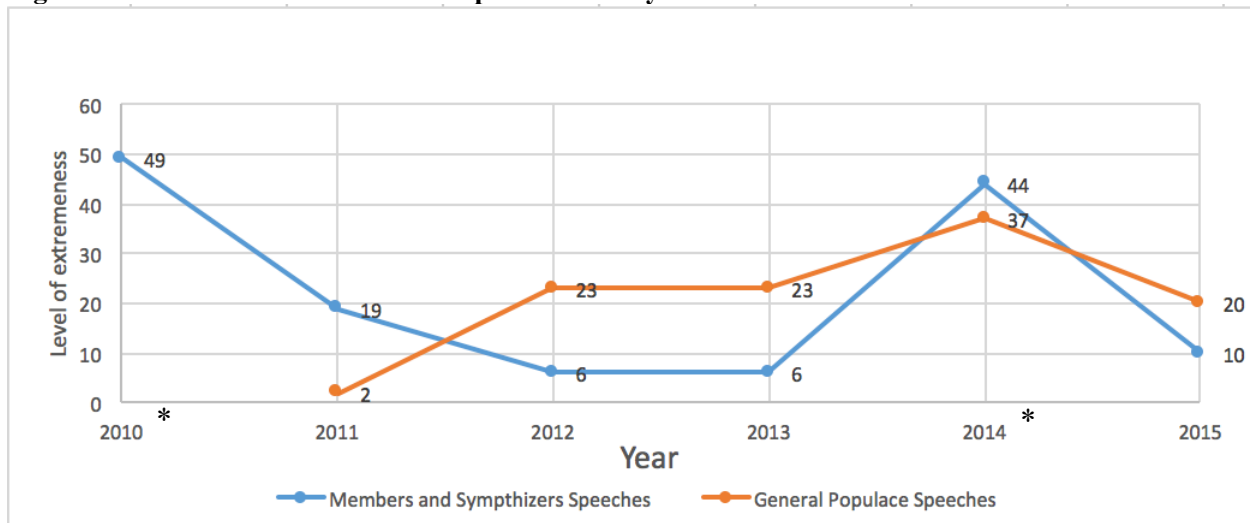
Thus, the results of the data suggest that the Sweden Democrats are counterintuitively both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue. However, further investigation is required to confirm this initial observation. As such, the following subchapters will address specific parts of the data to attempt to confirm or reject the initial observations.

An Emphasis or a Moderation Strategy?

By observing Figure 2, which shows the total score of each speech, we can understand whether the Sweden Democrats are adopting a moderation or an emphasis strategy. The data from Figure 2 suggest that the Sweden Democrats are more extreme regarding their anti-immigration and anti-Islamism policies during election years compared to non-election years. This suggests that the Sweden Democrats are both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue.

First, the scores in Figure 2 are consistently high during election years (2010 and 2014), independent of whether they are addressing members and sympathizers or the general populace. This indicates that the Sweden Democrats are returning to their core issues of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism during elections, which is consistent with Norris' theory of emphasizing their signature ideological issue. Or, in other words, when the Sweden Democrats need to rally their voters for an upcoming election, they are unwaveringly returning to issues related to

Figure 2. Total score of each annual speech made by the Sweden Democrats from 2010-2015.



Note: Each election year is marked with an asterisk.

anti-immigration and anti-Islamism. Hence, since the election year scores are high independent of audience, this suggests that when it matters most, the Sweden Democrats rely on values of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism. By doing so, they are regularly emphasizing their signature ideological issue, which is consistent with the emphasis strategy discussed by Norris and Meguid.

Second, since the the total score of each speech in Figure 2 varies greatly depending on year, the data also suggest that the Sweden Democrats are moderating. If the Sweden Democrats consistently, independent of whether it is an election year or not, produced similarly high scores, then the data would suggest that they are consistently emphasizing their signature ideological issue. However, since the scores vary greatly between election years and non-election years, this then suggests that the Sweden Democrats are in fact not *consistently* emphasizing their signature ideological issue, but are instead moderating, at least in non-election years.³⁷ Therefore, this particular set of data may also support the moderation hypothesis, as the Sweden Democrats are

³⁷ Whether their moderation is strategic or sincere will be discussed in the following subchapter.

clearly not consistently emphasizing their signature ideological issue, but are instead showing signs of moderation by not addressing anti-immigration and anti-Islamism as frequently.

Moderation, Strategic, or Sincere?

Although the data from the previous subchapter suggest that the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, adopting both the moderation and emphasis strategy, it has nonetheless been unable to provide supporting evidence indicating whether the moderation observed in non-election years is strategic rather than sincere. However, through an additional analysis, specifically of the positive comments in Figure 3, I will be able to provide an answer suggesting that their moderation is strategic rather than sincere.

Because the total score of all speeches is higher than zero, it may appear that the Sweden Democrats only address negative aspects regarding immigration and Islam. However, when analyzing Figure 3, the data show how the initial observation is incorrect. Since Figure 3 shows each comment produced during the Sweden Democrats' eleven annual speeches, it reveals how five of the speeches address both positive and negative aspects of immigration and Islam. While the Sweden Democrats are considered a single-issue party, focusing on policies related to anti-immigration and anti-Islamism, their positive comments raise questions regarding why they choose to address positive aspects of immigration and Islam.³⁸

Since these positive comments exist, they may suggest that the Sweden Democrats are genuinely starting to acknowledge positive aspects of immigration and Islam. Compared to zero

³⁸ Gissur O. Erlingsson, Kare Vernby, and Richard Ohrvall, "The Single-Issue Party Thesis and the Sweden Democrats," *Acta Politica* 49, no. 2 (2014): 209-210, accessed October 14, 2015, <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ap/journal/v49/n2/full/ap201318a.html>.

positive comments, six indicates some moderation. This moderation may support the hypothesis that radical right parties achieve greater electoral success by moderating rather

Figure 3. A table showing all comments made by the Sweden Democrats during their annual speeches from 2010-2015.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Extreme Anti-Islamic	0	1	0	0	5	0
Moderate Anti-Islamic	6	3	0	1	6	1
Negatively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	14	2	1	1	1	1
Negative Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	2	2	4	1	8	5
Neutral	8	5	12	11	5	7
Positive Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	1	0	0	0	0	0
Positively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	0	1	0	0	2	0
Moderate Pro-Islamic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Extreme Pro-Islamic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Amount of Comments	31	14	17	14	27	14
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Extreme Anti-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	3
Moderate Anti-Islamic	N/A	0	4	4	3	1
Negatively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	N/A	1	3	3	7	0
Negative Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	N/A	0	6	5	15	5
Neutral	N/A	15	7	6	14	7
Positive Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	N/A	0	1	0	1	0
Positively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Moderate Pro-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Extreme Pro-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Total Amount of Comments	N/A	16	21	18	40	16

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014).

than emphasizing their signature ideological issue. On the other hand, since there are 125 negative comments and only six positive comments, there is clearly a pattern of predominately negative comments, raising questions about the purpose of the positive comments. To understand why the Sweden Democrats are addressing positive aspects of immigration and Islam, a closer examination of the positive comments is needed.

The five speeches that include positive comments about immigration and Islam appear in both the members and sympathizers speeches and the general populace speeches. Apart from appearing in both election year and non-election year speeches, there appears to be no

distinguishable pattern linking speeches which contain the positive comments. Therefore, these comments warrant further investigation to understand their function within the larger context of the analyzed speeches. The following comments are those addressing positive aspects regarding immigration and Islam.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2010

It is important to emphasize—when discussing immigrants—that very few commit rape, this is rather self-explanatory. Among those immigrants who have travelled to Sweden during the last decades, there are a many examples of well-adjusted people who have contributed to Sweden and our welfare state.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2011

However, ideologies, organizations, and individuals [immigrants] working for democracy, and through democratic means, can never be held responsible for violence.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2014

There are many people in this country with a foreign background who have contributed a lot of positive things to our society, and that is important to acknowledge.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Summer Speech in Solversborg, Sweden | August 2014

Several of our members today have a background in other countries. Further, several of our voters have a background in different countries, and we need to become better at emphasizing and highlighting them as good examples, not only to show Swedes and immigrants that we are wide and inclusive party that wants a safe and inclusive society.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Almedalen Speech, Almedalen, Sweden | July 2012

It is entirely possible to assimilate certain individuals and there are several examples of this throughout Swedish history. People who are born in different countries have contributed enormously to Sweden and our society.

Jimmie Akesson | Annual Almedalen Speech, Almedalen, Sweden | July 2014

It is important to mention that Sweden can, and shall, welcome foreign individuals with honest intentions into our community.

The previous comments are clearly addressing positive aspects related to immigration and Islam, which suggests that the Sweden Democrats may be showing signs of occasional moderation. Whether this moderation is sincere or strategic remains unanswered. Clearly, moderation is not a foreign concept to the Sweden Democrats, as they have previously moderated when renouncing neo-Nazi uniforms and swastikas.³⁹ If moderation has happened once, it may happen again. However, over the course of six years and eleven speeches, there are only six comments addressing positive aspects of immigration and Islam, but 125 addressing negative. This suggests that the Sweden Democrats are addressing these positive aspects for strategic reasons rather than a genuine moderation of their ideology. Since the Sweden Democrats have been labeled as neo-Nazis by the Swedish media,⁴⁰ these positive comments may be a way for the party to show how they are addressing beneficial aspects of immigration and Islam, consequently appearing less extreme. For example, as a result of the 2011 terrorist attack in Norway, which was conducted by a neo-Nazi sympathizer of the Sweden Democrats,⁴¹ they had to devote the majority of their 2011 members and sympathizers speech addressing allegations of supporting the terrorist's actions, which also included a positive comment regarding immigrants.⁴² Such a comment could arguably be an example of how the Sweden Democrats use moderation as a strategy to distance themselves from the political views held by the Norwegian terrorist. If so, then their moderation is clearly strategic, rather than sincere.

³⁹ Hellstrom and Nilsson 2010, 58.

⁴⁰ Jorgen Grubb (Chairman of the Sweden Democrats Malmo, Swe) in discussion with the author, August 2015.

⁴¹ Magda Gad, "SD-Politiker Delar Breiviks Asikter," *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm, Swe), Jul 26, 2011.

⁴² Jimmie Akesson, Jimmie Akesson, [*SD-TV*] *Jimmie Akessons sommartal 2011*, YouTube Video, 41:30, August 10, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncquWkCxbY4>.

Moreover, putting the positive comments in their larger context of the speeches as a whole challenges the conclusion that the positive comments are genuine. In 1970 Paul Ricoeur discussed a text analysis tool employed by Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, which Ricoeur later named the “hermeneutics of suspicion,” which at its core is meant to circumvent obvious and self-evident meanings by putting the comments in context of the speech as a whole, consequently drawing out less visible and less flattering truths.⁴³ Before employing the hermeneutics of suspicion, and to avoid premature and invalid interpretations, one needs to establish a pattern of suspicion. For example, such a pattern can be the ratio of negative and positive comments observed in this analysis. As mentioned previously, there are 125 negative comments and only six positive comments; a clear pattern of predominately negative comments is present, which raises questions regarding the purpose of the positive comments.

As such, once the pattern has been observed, the hermeneutics of suspicion can be applied. Ricoeur acknowledges that the approach walks a thin line between science and art, which opens the approach to a certain degree of subjectivity. Nevertheless, the approach is worthwhile, as it may shed light on any text analysis that reveals unexpected outliers. Subsequently, when employing the hermeneutics of suspicion to the analysis outliers, the six positive comments, it suggests that the comments might in fact highlight *negative* aspects regarding immigration and Islam, rather than positive.⁴⁴

⁴³ Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 54.

⁴⁴ G.D Robinson, “Paul Ricoeur and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion: A Brief Overview and Critique,” *Premise 2*, no. 8 (1995): 19, accessed April 3, 2016, http://individual.utoronto.ca/bmclean/hermeneutics/ricoeur_suppl/Ricoeur_Herm_of_Suspicion.htm.

It appears that when the Sweden Democrats address positive aspects of immigration and Islam, they are simultaneously reinforcing how other individuals are doing the “wrong thing,” which is—according to the Sweden Democrats—not assimilating to Sweden and her Swedishness.⁴⁵ For example, comments such as “there are many people in this country with a foreign background who have contributed a lot of positive things to our society and that is important to acknowledge”⁴⁶ highlight how there are people who are doing what the Sweden Democrats believe to be right: this draws attention to those foreign individuals who are not assimilating and should become more like the highlighted individuals, or in other words, more Swedish. This suggests that the Sweden Democrats are merely using positive comments as a veil to continue discussing anti-immigration and anti-Islamism related topics, showing how they are emphasizing their signature ideological issue by turning a positive comment into a negative.

Another example is from 2014, when Jimmie Akesson states, “It is important to mention that Sweden can, and shall, welcome foreign individuals with honest intentions into our community.”⁴⁷ Once again, at face value this statement seems to suggest that the Sweden Democrats are moderating by allowing foreigners to enter Sweden, compared to encouraging policies which close the borders completely. However, when employing the hermeneutics of suspicion, the statement is instead focusing on how there are foreigners with dishonest intentions, and how Sweden needs to be protected from them. Thus, the hermeneutics of suspicion is once again suggesting that the Sweden Democrats use positive examples in order to highlight the negative.

⁴⁵ Hellstrom, Anders, Tom Nilsson, and Pauline Stoltz. 2012, 198.

⁴⁶ Jimmie Akesson, Jimmie Akesson, *Jimmie Akesson sommartal 2014 bra ljudkvalitet*, YouTube Video, 38:54, August 3, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLbMmVzwzTY>.

⁴⁷ Jimmie Akesson, Jimmie Akesson, *Almedalen 2014*, YouTube Video, 52:20, July 2, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fqq6Jz8uNr0>.

Hence, when employing the hermeneutics of suspicion, it appears as if the Sweden Democrats' positive comments are meant to draw attention to the number of individuals who are not assimilating to Swedish culture, or present some type of threat to Sweden and its culture. Simply put, the hermeneutics of suspicion suggests that the Sweden Democrats are using positive comments to emphasize and reinforce negative aspects of immigration and Islam.

Thus, through the hermeneutics of suspicion, it appears as if the positive comments should not be taken at face value, and are instead a different way in which the Sweden Democrats expresses anti-immigration and anti-Islamism. However, since the hermeneutics of suspicion is merely an interpretive tool meant to suggest a different meaning compared to the obvious, superficial interpretation, the positive comments may still be expressing genuine sentiments towards immigrants and Islam. Having positive comments, compared to no positive comments could be a sign of some moderation. Nevertheless, if the positive comments are a reaction towards the Swedish media labeling the Sweden Democrats as neo-Nazis, then it is more likely that the Sweden Democrats are veiling their extremism in positive statements, consequently suggesting that the "moderation" is strategic rather than sincere.

Different Voices to Different Audiences?

Although the previous discussion, by employing the hermeneutics of suspicion, suggests that the Sweden Democrats' moderation is strategic rather than sincere, it did not address whether they speak in different voices to different audiences.

Figure 4. Average comment score of each of the Sweden Democrats' annual speeches from 2010-2015.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Score	49	19	6	6	44	10
Number of Comments	31	14	17	14	27	14
Average Comment Score	1.58	1.36	0.35	0.42	1.63	0.71
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Score	N/A	2	23	23	37	20
Number of Comments	N/A	16	21	18	40	16
Average Comment Score	N/A	0.13	1.09	1.27	0.93	1.25

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014). Scores rounded to the nearest hundredths.

In non-election years, the average comment score for the general populace speeches is 0.96 points versus the members and sympathizers speeches of the same years, which only receive 0.69 points. This result is counterintuitive; when the Sweden Democrats are addressing their members and sympathizers, the moderation hypothesis would expect greater emphasis on issues related to anti-immigration and anti-Islamism as they ought to feel more comfortable expressing more extreme views to like-minded individuals. On the contrary, the Sweden Democrats are instead more extreme when addressing the general populace. However, the 2011 general populace speech gets an average comment score of 0.13 points, versus the members and sympathizers speech of the same year, which gets 1.36 points, suggesting that the average comment score of the non-election year speeches may not be an accurate representation of the level of extremeness in the individual non-election year speeches.

Although the average comment score suggests that the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences during non-election years, it is subject to a high degree of inaccuracy. For example, this approach is able to determine whether two speeches have the same average comment scores, but is clearly unable to distinguish the composition of the scores that

make up the average comment score. While this approach provides valuable data, further analysis is necessary in order to provide a more nuanced observation.

Another approach to understand whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences is to analyze the percentage of negative comments compared to the total amount of comments made in each speech. If the Sweden Democrats are not speaking in different voices to different audiences, the proportion of negative comments in each speech ought to be consistent, irrespective of the audience.

Figure 5. Total number of negative comments as a percentage of total number of comments in the Sweden Democrats’ annual speeches from 2010-2015.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Number of Negative Comments	22	8	5	3	20	7
Total Number of Comments	31	14	17	14	27	14
Negative Comments as a Percentage of Total Number of Comments	71%	57%	29%	21%	74%	50%
General Populous Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Number of Negative Comments	N/A	1	13	12	25	9
Total Number of Comments	N/A	16	21	18	40	16
Negative Comments as a Percentage of Total Number of Comments	N/A	6%	62%	67%	63%	56%

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014). Scores rounded to the nearest full percentage point.

The data in Figure 5 suggest, similar to the average comment score, that the Sweden Democrats are speaking in different voices to different audiences. In non-election years, the percentage of negative comments versus the total amount of comments in the general populace speeches are, apart from 2011, consistently higher compared to the members and sympathizers speeches of the same year.⁴⁸ However, similarly to the average comment score analysis, in election years, the members and sympathizers speeches contain a higher proportion of negative

⁴⁸ Although the percentage of negative comments during the 2011 members and sympathizers speech is higher compared to the general populace speech of the same year, it has particular circumstances influencing its content. As previously mentioned, the focus of the 2011 members and sympathizers speech was likely to have been heavily influenced by the terrorist attack in Norway.

comments. Thus, so far, whether one looks at the average comment score or negative comments as a percentage of the total amount of comments made in one speech, the same results appear.

Another method that can be used to determine whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences is to analyze the percentage of comments that received either a score of plus three and plus four compared to the total amount of negative comments. This method will showcase when the Sweden Democrats are the most extreme, rather than focusing on immigrants as a homogenous group or their economic impact on the Swedish welfare state.

Figure 6. The percentage of comments that received either a score of plus three and plus four as a percentage of the total number of negative comments.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negative Comments (3's and 4's)	6	4	0	1	11	1
Total Number of Negative Comments	22	8	5	3	20	7
Negative Comments (3's and 4's) as a Percentage of Total Negative Comments	27%	50%	0%	33%	55%	14%
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negative Comments (3's and 4's)	N/A	0	4	4	3	4
Total Number of Negative Comments	N/A	1	13	12	25	9
Negative Comments (3's and 4's) as a Percentage of Total Negative Comments	N/A	0%	31%	33%	12%	44%

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014). Scores rounded to the nearest full percentage point.

When observing Figure 6, the data appear similar to the two preceding methods, but is distinct from them in one important way. Previously, non-election years, apart from 2011, have consistently appeared more extreme. However, this method shows how the 2013 speeches have the same proportion of comments that receive either a score of plus three or plus four compared to the total amount of negative comments. Nevertheless, apart from the 2013 speeches, the result appears consistent with the two preceding methods.

In sum, the data from this particular analysis show that the concept of moderation is far more complex than it initially appeared. Deceptively, depending on which type of measure is

used—average comment score, the percentage of comments that received either a score of plus three and plus four compared to the total amount of negative comments, etc.—the conclusion regarding moderation changes. Although the average comment score suggests that the general populace speech is always more extreme in non-election years, the finer grain analysis reveals more complex and ambiguous results.

Chapter VI: The Hook Hypothesis

Since the results from the previous analysis suggest that the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, employing both an emphasis and a moderation strategy, it also suggests that neither set of the current literature adequately explains the electoral success of the Sweden Democrats. This observation raises the question of why the Sweden Democrats are emphasizing their signature ideological issue more during the general populace speeches and less during the members and sympathizers speeches. Perhaps the answer relates to the different locations. Since the general populace speeches take place during the Almedalen weekend, they consequently share a political stage with the mainstream parties in Sweden. According to Meguid, in this setting, the Sweden Democrats may be forced to employ the emphasis strategy for two reasons. First, in order to ensure that the audience, when comparing policies across party lines, continues to recognize the Sweden Democrats as sole owners of their signature ideological issue. Second, the Sweden Democrats, as a radical right party, is not seen by the median voter as an authority on issues apart from their signature ideological issue.⁴⁹ If this explanation holds true, it raises several questions such as, are the Sweden Democrats addressing other issues apart from their signature ideological issue of anti-immigration and anti-Islamism when speaking to their members and sympathizers? If so, how frequently are they addressing other issues in their members and sympathizers speeches?

To provide an answer to the questions above, an additional analysis is necessary. This analysis needs to address not only the content of the speeches, but also the amount of time devoted to each issue. The data from the analysis will provide information about whether the

⁴⁹ Meguid 2005, 347-350.

Sweden Democrats are in fact tailoring the content of their speeches to the audience. It is important to ensure that there are no external events influencing the speeches, like an immigration and refugee crisis, or terrorist attack. Such events would undoubtedly affect the content of the speeches as they force any party to address these events explicitly. Therefore, speeches held in 2011 would be unsuitable for this analysis. As mentioned previously, in the three weeks between the 2011 speeches there was a terrorist attack in Norway conducted by an alleged Sweden Democrat supporter that shook the region to its core.⁵⁰ Because of the terrorist attack, the upcoming members and sympathizers speech was forced to exclusively devote all its content to the event.⁵¹ The 2011 members and sympathizers speech highlights how external events influence the content of a speech, and is therefore not a suitable representation of the general strategies of the Sweden Democrats. However, the 2012 and 2013 speeches appear to have no external events significant enough to force the Sweden Democrats to change the content of their speeches. Additionally, the election years (2010 and 2014), are also unsuitable for this analysis, as it investigates non-election years. In short, the analysis needs speeches from non-election years, with little to no external events influencing their content.

The content analysis of the 2012 and 2013 speeches suggests that the Sweden Democrats are devoting more time to address issues not related to immigration and Islam when speaking to members and sympathizers rather than the general populace. First, the 2012 general populace speech devotes twenty-four minutes and thirty-five seconds (64.27 percent) of its running time to anti-immigration and anti-Islamism issues, compared to the members and sympathizers speech of

⁵⁰ Magda Gad, "SD-Politiker Delar Breiviks Asikter," *Aftonbladet* (Stockholm, Swe), Jul 26, 2011.

⁵¹ Jimmie Akesson, Jimmie Akesson, *[SD-TV] Jimmie Akessons sommartal 2011*, YouTube Video, 41:30, August 10, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncquWkCxbY4>.

the same year that only devotes nine minutes (21.28 percent) to anti-immigration and anti-Islamism related issues. Similarly, the 2013 general populace speech devotes twenty-three minutes and twenty seconds (53.62 percent) on anti-immigration and anti-Islamism issues, versus the members and sympathizers speech of the same year, which devotes only six minutes and forty-five seconds (15.02 percent) to the same category of issues.⁵²

Clearly, the time and issue distribution between the speeches suggests that the Sweden Democrats are both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue depending upon audience and year. The data suggest that the Sweden Democrats are choosing to address their signature ideological issue less when speaking to their members and sympathizers, but more when addressing the general populace. Although this strategy appears counterintuitive, there may be a reason for why the Sweden Democrats are employing both strategies rather than choosing only one. I call this potential reconciliation between the explanations in the current two subsets of literature the “hook hypothesis.”

I suggest that the reason why the Sweden Democrats are addressing their signature ideological issue less when speaking to their members and sympathizers is because the audience already agrees with the party’s ideas. This hypothesis challenges a core assumption made by part of the current literature on the radical right’s electoral success, and Meguid in particular, who do not distinguish between two audiences, members and sympathizers versus the general populace, and instead treats the audience as one collective entity. Because Meguid’s hypothesis is focused on strategies at an ideological level, meant to differentiate the radical right from mainstream

⁵² Scores are rounded to the nearest hundredths; For more information, see pages 58-63 in the appendix.

parties, she fails to account for the impact the ideological strategy has upon different audiences, which I suggest is key to why the Sweden Democrats are becoming electorally successful.

When the Sweden Democrats address their members and sympathizers, there is no need to constantly emphasize their signature ideological issue, because like-minded people are already hooked on their politics, consequently allowing the Sweden Democrats to address other issues apart from their signature ideological issue. It then follows that when the Sweden Democrats address the general populace they are no longer speaking to individuals who are hooked, but are instead addressing those who are not. Therefore, when addressing the general populace, the Sweden Democrats need to emphasize their signature ideological issue to hook those individuals who are not yet familiar with their politics. Consequently, this hypothesis attempts to combine the current literatures' hypotheses, one regarding emphasizing one's signature ideological issue and the other regarding moderation, and instead suggests that the Sweden Democrats are employing both, but adjust their approach depending on their audience.

It initially appears as if the "hook hypothesis" fails to explain why the Sweden Democrats significantly increase their anti-immigration and anti-Islamism rhetoric during election years. However, according to the emphasis and ownership literature, when an upcoming election approaches, a radical right party needs to emphasize their signature ideology and illustrate to their constituency that they still maintain ownership over their signature ideological issue. If they were to continue and consistently address non-immigration and non-Islamism issues, their constituency may begin to doubt their ownership, which by extension questions the legitimacy of the party as a whole.

The "hook hypothesis" then offers a possible reason to why the Sweden Democrats are observed to be simultaneously moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue.

Moderation is observed when they address their signature ideological issue less while speaking to their members and sympathizers, whereas emphasizing their signature ideological issue is observed when they address the general populace. This result is inconsistent with Meguid's hypothesis, as she explicitly states that a radical right party should not address any other issues apart from their signature ideological issue. Meguid argues that such behavior would make the radical right party look and feel too much like mainstream parties, which she views as detrimental to their electoral success.⁵³

The "hook hypothesis" still has several obstacles to overcome before its validity can be confirmed. First, this analysis addresses only one case, the Sweden Democrats. Hence, further research on the "hook hypothesis" ought to include a larger sample size of radical right parties. Second, this analysis is limited to eleven speeches. Because of the limited sample size, there is not enough room to recognize larger patterns and outliers. For example, as of right now, the "hook hypothesis" is refuted, since the total score from some of the members and sympathizers speeches are higher compared to the total score of the general populace speeches of the same years. In other words, for the "hook hypothesis" to be consistent, the score of the members and sympathizers speeches should always be lower than the general populace speeches. However, since this is not the case in 2011 and 2014, the hypothesis appears inconsistent.

Nevertheless, through additional and extensive research, which ought to include other radical right parties and a larger amount of speeches, their results may provide evidence in support for the "hook hypothesis," and recognize the score reversal in 2011 and 2014 as outliers, and should consequently not be considered to refute the validity of the hypothesis.

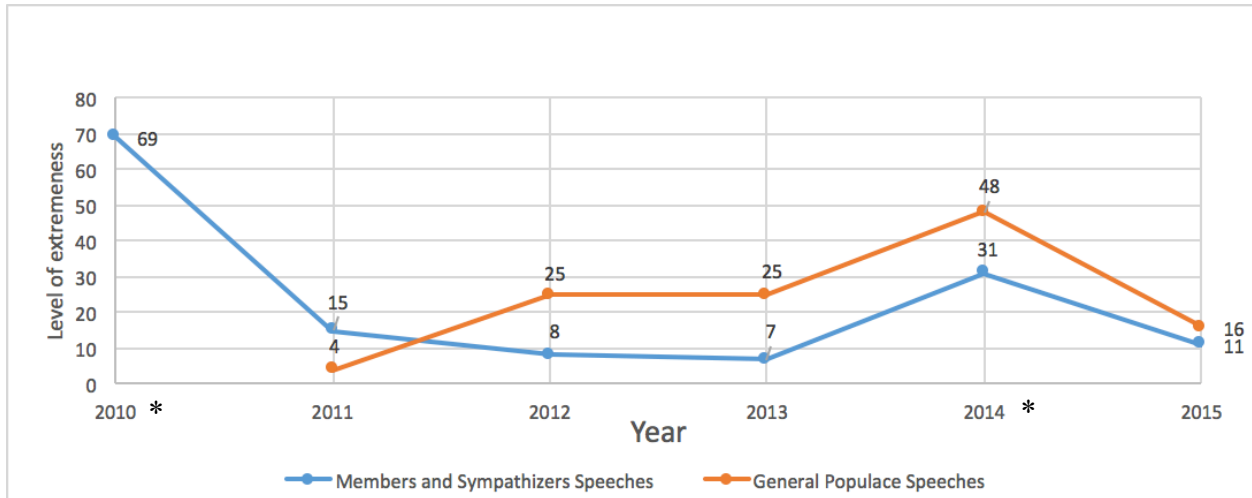
⁵³ Meguid 2005, 348.

Chapter VII: Rubric Modification

As previously mentioned in the methodology chapter, a certain degree of subjectivity has been necessary when conducting this study. For example, choosing to score “extreme anti-Islamic” comments as more severe compared to when the Sweden Democrats treat all immigrants as a homogenous group was a subjective choice. There are arguments to support either as being more extreme compared to the other. For example, I decided to score the “extreme anti-Islamic” category as more severe because of the nature of its comments. The comments scored to fit the “extreme anti-Islamic” category are harsher compared any other category and should therefore be given the highest score. However, when the Sweden Democrats treat all immigrants as a homogenous group, they are making a more extreme generalization compared to when they make extreme anti-Islamic comments. Therefore, independent of the extreme level of the comments in the “extreme anti-Islamic” category, because the large scale generalization, one could argue that any time the Sweden Democrats treat immigrants as a homogenous group, such a comment should be scored as the most extreme.

Interestingly, as observed in Figure 7, if comments treating immigrants as a homogenous group (both positive and negative) were to be scored as the most extreme, the pattern previously observed remains the same. Although the individual score of each speech changes, the same conclusions can be drawn from them. For example, when changing the rubric, the election year scores remain significantly higher compared to non-election years, creating the same rollercoaster-looking graph. However, when the rubric is changed, each total score of the general populace speeches, apart from 2011, is consistently higher compared to the members and sympathizers speeches.

Figure 7. Total score of each of the Sweden Democrats’ annual speeches from 2010-2015 when employing the reversed rubric.



Note: Each election year is marked with an asterisk.

When reversing the rubric, the data provides a more compelling answer to whether the Sweden Democrats are speaking in different voices to different audiences. As it stands, when using the data from the original rubric, the analysis suggests that assessments of party moderation are subject to which method one uses to analyze it. However, the data from the reversed rubric suggest that the general populace speeches, apart from 2011, are consistently higher-scoring than the members and sympathizers speeches. Hence, the previous inconsistency created from the election years is no longer present. Therefore, when using the reversed rubric, the data suggest that the Sweden Democrats are speaking in different voices to different audiences, specifically, they are more extreme when addressing the general populace compared to when they address their members and sympathizers. Compared to the original rubric analysis, this dataset provides *stronger* supporting evidence for the “hook hypothesis.”

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

This study has attempted to answer why the Sweden Democrats have become electorally successful. Through the established literature on radical right strategy in general, and the Sweden Democrats in particular, there has emerged contradictory ideas of which strategy ought to be adopted in order to achieve electoral success. Interestingly, the conclusions of this study suggest that the Sweden Democrats are not limiting themselves to a specific strategy, but are instead adopting both an emphasis and a moderation strategy. This result appears counterintuitive, as the Sweden Democrats are emphasizing their signature ideological issue when addressing the general populace and adopt the moderation strategy when speaking to their members and sympathizers.

The findings of the study can be summarized in three main points. First, based on an empirical analysis comparing and contrasting the total scores of each speech, the data suggest that the Sweden Democrats are not limiting themselves to one strategy, but adopt both an emphasis and a moderation strategy. Second, the data clearly show that some moderation was present, particularly when the Sweden Democrats address positive aspects regarding immigration and Islam. However, although these comments appeared at face value to be positive, when applying the hermeneutics of suspicion, it suggests that the positive comments are in fact negative comments veiled in positive language. In other words, while some occasional moderation was observed, it appeared strategic rather than sincere. Third, through a variety of methods, each attempting to explain whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences, the results appear to change depending on whichever measure is used. For example, the average comment score suggests that the Sweden Democrats are always speaking in

different voices during non-election years, whereas an analysis of the percentage of comments that received either a score of plus three or plus four compared to the total amount of negative comments disagrees, as the 2013 speeches' scores are the same.

Since the analysis and conclusions of this study are derived from a single case, its generalizability is yet to be determined. Further studies are needed to understand whether the Sweden Democrats are unique in pursuing both a moderation and an emphasis strategy. Such studies should preferably include a larger sample size of radical right parties, that each have a longer tradition of annual speeches compared to the Sweden Democrats, which only have six years' worth of annual speeches to distinct audiences.

Although the generalizability of this study is in question due to its limited sample size, the results nonetheless clearly show signs of how the Sweden Democrats are, counterintuitively, both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue. Such behavior by a radical right party in a proportional representation system is not expected to lead to electoral success. However, since the Sweden Democrats have experienced a dramatic increase in their electoral success since 2006, their unique strategy of both emphasis and moderation may in part be responsible.

The findings of this study also suggest that determining whether a radical right party is “emphasizing” a signature ideological issue is a complex question. Although the empirical data suggest that the Sweden Democrats are both moderating and emphasizing their signature ideological issue, it nonetheless remains difficult to define what it means to “emphasize.” For example, is emphasis necessary during election years and non-election years, or only during election years? Since the Sweden Democrats have consistently, since 2010, produced better

election results while only emphasizing their signature ideological issue during election years, it suggests that emphasis during election years may be sufficient for electoral success.

When attempting to understand whether the Sweden Democrats speak in different voices to different audiences, the analysis revealed how moderation is also a very complex phenomenon to evaluate empirically. The data suggest that moderation is subject to whichever method one uses to analyze it. For example, different results will appear if one uses an average comment score approach or analyzes the proportion of comments scored as either plus three or plus four as a percentage of total number of negative comments. This highlights how the conclusion made by previous literature on radical right parties' moderation may be inaccurate, particularly if they have limited themselves to only one way of measuring moderation.

Finally, in an attempt to reconcile the opposing sets of literature explaining radical right electoral success, I developed the “hook hypothesis.” It suggests that when the Sweden Democrats address their members and sympathizers, they do not always have to emphasize their signature ideological issue, as the audience is already hooked. As a result, this allows the Sweden Democrats to address issues unrelated to their signature ideological issue when speaking to their members and sympathizers. It then follows that when the Sweden Democrats address the general populace, they need to emphasize their signature ideological issue since they are no longer speaking to individuals who are hooked, but are instead addressing those who are not.

At its core, the “hook hypothesis” challenges the basic assumption underlying the current literature on radical right electoral success, which is that the strategy pursued by radical right parties should not be influenced based on the addressed audience. The “hook hypothesis” suggests that instead of treating audiences as one collective entity, it is more accurate to

distinguish between different types of audiences, such as members and sympathizers versus the general populace.

While the “hook hypothesis” currently faces obstacles in terms of its consistency, if future studies were to support its validity, it could add nuance to our understanding of how radical right parties pursue their campaign strategies. This would then suggest that adopting a similar moderation and an emphasis strategy is preferable to achieve electoral success, rather than only adopting either a moderation or an emphasis strategy. This approach appears to be a previously unacknowledged strategy for achieving electoral success by a radical right party. Or, in other words, the Sweden Democrats’ recent electoral success could in part be a result of their unique strategy of both emphasizing and moderating their signature ideological issue, thus suggesting that many Swedish voters are hooked on their politics.

Appendix

Since Chapter VII: Rubric Modification only discussed some of the measures used in the study, it is therefore, for the sake of transparency, important to present each different measure used in the study as a whole. The following tables and figures each represent the same figures used in the study, but differ as the “treating immigrants as a homogenous group” is now scored as the most extreme.

Figure 3B. Showing all comments made by the Sweden Democrats during their annual speeches from 2010-2015 when employing the reversed rubric.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negatively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	14	2	1	1	1	1
Extreme Anti-Islamic	0	1	0	0	5	0
Moderate Anti-Islamic	6	3	0	1	6	1
Negative Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	2	2	4	1	8	5
Neutral	8	5	12	11	5	7
Positive Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	1	0	0	0	0	0
Moderate Pro-Islamic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Extreme Pro-Islamic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Positively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	0	1	0	0	2	0
Total Amount of Comments	31	14	17	14	27	14
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negatively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	N/A	1	3	3	7	0
Extreme Anti-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	3
Moderate Anti-Islamic	N/A	0	4	4	3	1
Negative Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	N/A	0	6	5	15	5
Neutral	N/A	15	7	6	14	7
Positive Impact of Immigrants on the Swedish Welfare State	N/A	0	1	0	1	0
Moderate Pro-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Extreme Pro-Islamic	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Positively Treating Immigrants as a Homogenous Group	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Total Amount of Comments	N/A	16	21	18	40	16

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014).

Figure 4B. Average comment score of each of the Sweden Democrats' annual speeches from 2010-2015 when employing the reversed rubric.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Score	69	15	8	7	31	11
Number of Comments	31	14	17	14	27	14
Average Comment Score	2.23	1.07	0.47	0.5	1.15	0.79
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Score	N/A	4	25	25	48	16
Number of Comments	N/A	16	21	18	40	16
Average Comment Score	N/A	0.25	1.19	1.39	1.2	1

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014). Scores rounded to the nearest hundredths.

Figure 6B. The percentage of comments that received either a score of plus three and plus four as a percentage of the total number of negative comments when employing the reversed rubric.

Members and Sympathizers Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negative Comments (3's and 4's)	20	5	1	1	6	1
Total Number of Negative Comments	22	8	5	3	20	7
Negative Comments (3's and 4's) as a Percentage of Total Negative Comments	91%	63%	20%	33%	30%	14%
General Populace Speeches	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Negative Comments (3's and 4's)	N/A	1	3	3	7	3
Total Number of Negative Comments	N/A	1	13	12	25	9
Negative Comments (3's and 4's) as a Percentage of Total Negative Comments	NA	100%	23%	25%	28%	33%

Note: Years highlighted in bold represent election years (2010 and 2014). Scores rounded to the nearest hundredths.

The “hook” hypothesis draws supporting evidence from how much time the Sweden Democrats devoted to issues other than their signature ideological issue. Below is a detailed description of each speech and much time the Sweden Democrats devoted on each issue.

The 2010 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-4:00	Immigration
4:00-9:30	Critique of Other Parties
9:30-10:30	General Critique of Government
10:30-17:00	Retirees
17:00-22:00	Women (Rape)
22:00-28:00	Immigration
28:00-30:00	Immigrants
30:00-31:30	Rape
31:30-40:40	Women (Equality)
40:40-44:12	General Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2011 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-1:45	General Information
1:45-8:30	Terrorist Attack Norway
8:30-10:00	Immigration
10:00-33:20	Terrorist Attack Norway
33:20-35:00	Islam and the Quran
35:00-37:00	Terrorist Attack Norway
37:00-41:30	General Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2012 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-1:00	General Information
1:00-6:00	Critique of Government
6:00-13:55	Welfare
13:55-22:00	Women (Equal Rights)
22:00-28:30	Immigration
28:30-31:45	Welfare
31:45-34:00	Retirees
34:00-36:00	General Election Information
36:00-38:30	Danish People's Party
38:30-42:17	General Election Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2013 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-3:20	General Information
3:20-7:00	Syria
7:00-18:30	Church Elections
18:30-20:00	Islamism
20:00-24:40	Church Elections
24:40-34:40	Economic Policies (Equality)
34:40-35:30	Immigration
35:30-38:00	Economic Policies
38:00-38:10	Immigration
38:10-38:40	Economic Policies
38:40-39:15	Immigration
39:15-40:00	Economic Policies
40:00-44:56	General Election Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2014 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-00:40	General Information
00:40-28:50	Middle East (ISIS)
28:50-34:15	Psychology of Victims
34:15-36:00	Women (Equality)
36:00-37:00	Rape
37:00-38:54	General Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2015 Members and Sympathizers Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-12:00	General Information
12:00-15:00	Critique of Other Parties
15:00-18:00	Milk Farmers
18:00-19:20	Gas Taxes
19:20-21:10	ISIS, Immigration
21:10-25:30	Critique of Other Parties
25:30-33:00	Immigration
33:00-36:00	Critique of the European Union
36:00-38:00	Immigration
38:00-42:20	Critique of Other Parties
42:20-48:13	General Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2011 General Populace Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
0:00-13:30	General Information, Critique of Criticizers
13:30-17:00	Welfare, Taxes
17:00-29:00	Critique of Government, Taxes, Welfare
29:00-30:00	Immigration
30:00-34:00	Critique of Government, Taxes, Welfare
34:00-36:00	Critique of European Union
36:00-43:00	Criminality (Legislative Focus)
43:00-50:45	General Information, Socialism, Welfare, Employment

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2012 General Populace Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-3:20	General Information, Economic Crisis in Europe
3:20-5:20	Syria, Muslims
5:20-9:45	Criminality, Police Efficiency
9:45-12:40	Critique of the Government
12:40-14:00	Achievements by the Sweden Democrats
14:00-17:00	Critique of the Government
17:00-20:20	Welfare, Economy, Immigration
20:20-27:40	Swedishness, The Nation, Immigration, Assimilation
27:40-38:15	Immigration Policies

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2013 General Populace Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-4:30	General Information
4:30-11:10	The Middle East, Refugees, Welfare
11:10-13:20	General Information, Critique of Government
13:20-14:20	Immigration
14:20-15:50	Immigrants
15:50-19:50	Equal Rights for Women
19:50-23:00	Swedishness
23:00-23:30	General information, Critique of Government
23:30-25:30	Swedishness
25:30-28:00	Equal Rights for Women
28:00-28:30	Honor Killings
28:30-30:00	Equal Rights for Women
30:00-38:30	Welfare for Immigrants
38:30-43:31	Federalism

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2014 General Populace Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-6:00	General Information
6:00-8:30	Honor Killings
8:30-9:40	Critique of Government
9:40-11:10	General Information
11:10-12:50	European Union Critique
12:50-13:50	General Critique of Other Parties
13:50-16:40	Immigration
16:40-18:20	General Information
18:20-35:10	Immigration
35:10-38:40	Retirement
38:40-42:00	General Information
42:00-43:50	Immigration
43:50-52:20	General Critique of Other Parties

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

The 2014 General Populace Speech

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subjects Discussed</u>
00:00-4:45	General Information
4:45-10:00	Islamism
10:00-12:30	Danish People's Party
12:30-16:50	Immigration
16:50-19:30	Immigrants
19:30-22:30	General Information
22:30-28:00	Children
28:00-43:00	Welfare for Children, Parental-Leave Policies
43:00-47:00	General Information

Note: Numbers highlighted in bold represents whenever the Sweden Democrats discuss subjects related to their signature ideological issue.

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