

Original Paper

Strategic Emotional Rhetoric in Political Social Media: A Comprehensive Analysis of Donald Trump's Tweeting Patterns and Propagandistic Techniques in the Digital Age

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Abstract

This study employs Python-based analysis to investigate how Donald Trump strategically leveraged propagandistic techniques and emotional rhetoric on Twitter (2009–2019) to shape public perception and advance his political agenda. Analyzing 43,913 original tweets through sentiment analysis, linguistic patterns, and temporal dynamics, we reveal Trump's systematic use of name-calling ("fake", "illegal"), glittering generalities ("greatness"), and plain folks appeals to cultivate a combative, relatable persona. Quantitative results show his preference for emotional punctuation (exclamation marks: 12,458), negative vocabulary (529 pejorative terms), and algorithm-optimized timing (e.g., breakfast hours) to amplify engagement. Temporal tweet patterns correlate with political milestones like his 2016 victory, illustrating digital rhetoric's weaponization to bypass media gatekeepers. Applying promotional arts theory, we expose how emotional manipulation, algorithms, and propagandistic framing interact in political communication. Findings highlight Twitter as a battleground for symbolic reality, where simplified language, repetition, and adversarial narratives fuel polarization and in-group loyalty. This research advances political communication scholarship by elucidating how digital platforms enable leaders to exploit cognitive biases, emotional contagion, and algorithmic mechanics to redefine democratic discourse in the post-truth era.

Keywords

strategic emotional rhetoric, propagandistic techniques, digital political communication, Twitter analytics

1. Introduction

The proliferation of digital media has redefined political communication, transforming platforms like Twitter into arenas for strategic self-presentation and ideological contestation. While early scholarship on online identity emphasized self-expression (Maslow, 2023) and performative role-playing (Goffman, 1959), contemporary research increasingly recognizes social media as a battleground for algorithmic persuasion (Benkler et al., 2018) and emotional contagion (Kramer et al., 2014). This evolution aligns with McLuhan's (1964) axiom that "the medium is the message", as platforms like Twitter now mediate not just communication but political reality itself—a phenomenon termed platformized symbolic power (Van Dijck et al., 2018).

Trump's Twitter ascendancy epitomizes what Bennett and Livingston (2018) term the "disinformation age", where propagandistic techniques merge with platform affordances to bypass institutional gatekeepers. Drawing on Lee and Lee (1979) framework of propagandistic artistry—particularly name-calling, glittering generalities, and plain folks appeals—this study bridges classic persuasion theory with computational propaganda scholarship (Woolley & Howard, 2017). Unlike previous works focusing on campaign rhetoric (Jamieson, 2018) or populist discourse (Moffitt, 2016), we analyze how platform-specific features (hashtags, retweets, temporal pacing) amplify propaganda's emotional resonance through networked affect (Paasonen, 2021).

1.1 Digital Performativity: Algorithmic Audiences and Curated Authenticity

Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theory posited that social interaction constitutes a theatrical performance, where individuals strategically manage frontstage (public) and backstage (private) selves. In the digital age, this performativity undergoes a platform-mediated transformation. As Tufekci (2013) argues, social media metrics (likes, retweets) create algorithmic audiences—a hybrid of human users and machine learning systems that jointly validate performative success. Politicians like Trump engage in metric gaming: crafting messages optimized not for human persuasion but for algorithmic amplification (Marwick, 2013). For instance, Trump's preference for exclamation marks (!) and capitalizations ("SAD!") aligns with Twitter's engagement algorithms, which prioritize emotionally charged content (Gillespie, 2018). This constitutes what Banet-Weiser (2018) terms authentic branding—a paradoxical performance where calculated outrage masquerades as spontaneity to satisfy platformed authenticity norms.

1.2 Affective Political Economy: Emotional Currency in Post-Truth Markets

Wahl-Jorgensen's (2019) reconceptualization of emotional labor in journalism provides a framework to analyze Trump's strategic emotionality. His tweets weaponize negative emotions (anger, contempt) as affective capital (Papacharissi, 2015), creating a political economy where emotional virality outweighs factual accuracy. The frequent use of "fake" (N=665) and "illegal" operates as discursive shorthands that bypass rational deliberation, activating what Hoggett (2006) calls affective alliances among supporters. This emotional economy thrives on Twitter's attention architecture, which rewards moral

grandstanding (Brady et al., 2021) and outrage loops (Vaidhyanathan, 2018). Crucially, Trump's affective strategies mirror the platform's business model: just as Twitter monetizes user engagement through targeted ads (Zuboff, 2019), Trump converts emotional engagement into political currency through retweet cascades and hashtag hijacking.

1.3 Propaganda-as-Service: Crowdsourced Disinformation Networks

Ellul's (1965) classical propaganda model—centralized, top-down, and institutional—fails to capture the decentralized dynamics of digital disinformation. Trump's real-time tweeting exemplifies participatory propaganda (Boler et al., 2018), where followers act as co-propagandists through retweets, meme creation, and hashtag activism. This aligns with Benkler et al.'s (2018) concept of network propaganda: a self-reinforcing ecosystem where influencers, bots, and ordinary users collaboratively construct adversarial narratives. For example, Trump's "Fake News!" accusations (N=665) function as crowdsourcing signals, mobilizing supporters to attack targeted journalists—a phenomenon Howard (2020) terms algorithmic harassment. Unlike mid-20th-century propaganda's reliance on state control, this model thrives on platform-enabled scale without hierarchy (Tufekci, 2017).

1.4 Methodological Innovation: Computational Critical Discourse Analysis

Building on Ott's (2017) sentiment analysis of Trump's tweets, we integrate three analytical dimensions: The first dimension is Linguistic Architecture: Using Python-based NLP tools, we quantify pejorative lexicons (529 distinct terms) and emotional punctuation (!:N=12,458 vs. ?:N=910), revealing a systematic rhetoric of certitude that suppresses dialogic exchange (Bakhtin, 1981). Then the Temporal Orchestration is proposed: Through time-series analysis, we map tweet frequency peaks to breaking news cycles (Woolley & Guilbeault, 2017) and circadian rhythms of U.S. voters (e.g., 8-10 AM surges). This demonstrates attention hijacking strategies that exploit cognitive scarcity in information-saturated environments (Hersh & Schudson, 2020). The third dimension is Platformed Materiality: By tracing client usage (Android→iPhone shift post-2017) and retweet networks (Starbird, 2017), we expose how Trump's team optimized content for mobile consumption and leveraged Twitter's retweet algorithm to manufacture consensus illusions.

This epistemological crisis manifests globally as democratic backsliding (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018), where social media's propaganda architectures erode institutional trust and rational deliberation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Evolution of Propagandistic Techniques in Digital Political Communication

Classical propaganda studies, notably Lee and Lee (1979) seven devices (e.g., name-calling, plain folks), have long dominated analyses of political persuasion in traditional media (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2018). However, the digital era necessitates re-examining these techniques through the lens of computational propaganda (Woolley & Howard, 2017), where algorithmic amplification and platform architectures reshape message dissemination (Benkler et al., 2018). While existing scholarship

emphasizes macro-level strategies (e.g., bot networks, disinformation campaigns), scant attention is paid to how micro-linguistic choices—such as punctuation patterns (“!”), lexical repetition (“fake”), and temporal pacing—interact with platform algorithms to enhance propagandistic efficacy (Tufekci, 2017). Based on the literature review, the research question was proposed:

RQ1: How did Donald Trump adapt classical propagandistic techniques (e.g., name-calling, glittering generalities) to the affordances of digital platforms, thereby forging a novel model of political communication?

2.2 Mechanisms of Affective Rhetoric and Political Mobilization

The “affective turn” in political communication highlights emotion’s centrality in post-truth publics (Papacharissi, 2015). Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) reconceptualizes emotional labor as a form of affective currency that drives networked mobilization, while Brady et al. (2021) demonstrate how moral outrage spreads contagiously on platforms. Ott’s (2017) sentiment analysis of Trump’s tweets reveals abnormally high negativity compared to peers, yet fails to quantify how linguistic devices (e.g., hyperbole, ad hominem attacks) and platform mechanics (e.g., retweet cascades) co-produce emotional virality. A critical gap remains in linking affective symbols (e.g., exclamation marks) to algorithmic reward systems that prioritize engagement over accuracy (Gillespie, 2018). Based on the literature review, the research question was proposed:

RQ2: How does negative emotional language (e.g., anger, contempt) function as political capital within social media ecosystems?

2.3 Platformed performativity Algorithmic

This platformed performativity redefined Twitter as a real-time broadcast tool for epistemic chaos (McIntyre, 2018). Van Dijck et al. (2018) theorize platforms as ideological infrastructures that reshape political agency, while Woolley and Guilbeault (2017) document how bots exploit temporal patterns to manipulate agendas. Starbird (2017) identifies crisis-driven retweet surges as tools for manufacturing consensus, yet overlooks routine temporal strategies (e.g., breakfast-hour posting peaks) that hijack voter attention rhythms. Similarly, Marwick’s (2013) work on authenticity metrics neglects the role of device choices (Android vs. iPhone) in signaling message authenticity—a tactic Trump employed post-2017 to mask team coordination. Based on the literature review, the research question was proposed:

Research Question 3: How did Trump’s team exploit Twitter’s technical affordances (e.g., posting times, device usage) to optimize message propagation?

2.4 Self-Presentation and Populist Branding in the Algorithmic Age

The construction of political identity in digital spaces operates at the intersection of performative authenticity and platformed populism. Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical theory, reinterpreted through the lens of algorithmic audiences (Tufekci, 2013), posits that political actors engage in metric-driven self-branding—curating personas optimized for platform engagement metrics (likes, retweets) that

serve as performative validators (Marwick, 2013). Trump's Twitter activity epitomizes this dynamic, where his "anti-establishment" persona ("Drain the Swamp") was not merely rhetorical but algorithmically engineered. While Mudde's (2007) framework of populism as a "moral dichotomy" (pure people vs. corrupt elites) explains the ideological structure of Trump's messaging, it fails to account for how digital platforms operationalize such dichotomies through technical affordances (e.g., hashtags, retweets) that amplify adversarial narratives (Moffitt, 2016).

Recent studies on European far-right movements (Farkas et al., 2018) introduce networked authenticity—a concept describing how politicians simulate grassroots connection through platform interactions. However, this work neglects two critical dimensions of Trump's strategy: Linguistic Minimalism: Simplified language ("Very sad!") and repetitive sloganeering ("Make America Great Again") exploited Twitter's character limits and attention economy, fostering memorability while bypassing critical scrutiny (Kreiss, 2019).

Research Question 4: How did Trump's tactical synthesis of populist rhetoric ("anti-establishment"), platform affordances (retweets, hashtags), and linguistic minimalism cultivate a digitally-native populist brand that consolidated voter identity?

3. Method

This study used Python programs to extract data from web pages. The captured data is stored in CSV format.

| created_at | favorite_count | id_str | is_retweet | retweet_count | retweet_source | text |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Sun Dec 22 20:21:31 +0000 2019 | 68102 | 1.2088E+18 | FALSE | 15826 | Twitter fo | Melania and I send our warm |
| Sun Dec 22 20:18:34 +0000 2019 | 108796 | 1.2088E+18 | FALSE | 26159 | Twitter fo | Crazy Nancy wants to dictate |
| Sun Dec 22 03:18:50 +0000 2019 | 49274 | 1.2088E+18 | FALSE | 14468 | Twitter fo | https://t.co/ryVzb6EGt |
| Sun Dec 22 03:17:31 +0000 2019 | 62794 | 1.2088E+18 | FALSE | 19964 | Twitter fo | https://t.co/14y04htpy |
| Sun Dec 22 00:15:33 +0000 2019 | 0 | 1.2085E+18 | TRUE | 11220 | Twitter fo | RT @WhiteHouse: LIVE: Presid |
| Sat Dec 21 21:07:01 +0000 2019 | 133473 | 1.2085E+18 | FALSE | 37281 | Twitter fo | https://t.co/h5bAKuoyV2 |
| Sat Dec 21 19:38:25 +0000 2019 | 154047 | 1.2085E+18 | FALSE | 31035 | Twitter fo | Last night I was so proud to he |
| Sat Dec 21 05:39:23 +0000 2019 | 59139 | 1.2083E+18 | FALSE | 16196 | Twitter fo | https://t.co/v1E6P7OePO https |
| Sat Dec 21 04:50:58 +0000 2019 | 59204 | 1.2082E+18 | FALSE | 15343 | Twitter fo | The great Democrat disgrace |
| Sat Dec 21 04:48:28 +0000 2019 | 0 | 1.2082E+18 | TRUE | 13479 | Twitter fo | RT @RandPaul: 欲速n the adv |
| Sat Dec 21 04:43:40 +0000 2019 | 149819 | 1.2082E+18 | FALSE | 27239 | Twitter fo | our new media, ex-governme |
| Sat Dec 21 04:41:07 +0000 2019 | 0 | 1.2082E+18 | TRUE | 47229 | Twitter fo | Brennan, Clapper and McCabe |
| | | | | | | appear? |
| | | | | | | RT @realDonaldTrump: We an |
| | | | | | | gang members, and many oth |
| | | | | | | shouldn't be here, out of o |
| | | | | | | https://t.co/Cfk4k? |
| | | | | | | Sat Dec 21 04:40:36 +0000 |
| | | | | | | 2019.36059.12082458619747 |
| | | | | | | Twitter for iPhone.Thank you F |
| | | | | | | https://t.co/UUM52t0zy |
| | | | | | | Sat Dec 21 04:39:44 +0000 |
| | | | | | | 2019.0.120824564520473805 |
| | | | | | | for iPhone RT @Scavino45: |
| | | | | | | https://t.co/5gy3ALeFaG |
| | | | | | | Sat Dec 21 04:18:08 +0000 |
| | | | | | | 2019.87693.12082402103640 |
| | | | | | | Twitter for iPhone.https://t.co/ |
| | | | | | | Sat Dec 21 03:43:47 +0000 |
| | | | | | | 2019.33439.12082315625521 |
| | | | | | | Twitter for iPhone.BIG thank y |
| | | | | | | Thornberry (@MacTXPress) for |

Figure 1. The Data is Stored in csv Format

In this study, the choice of Trump's Twitter in numerous social platforms for research, because Twitter is the most commonly used Trump social platform, this can be released from his Twitter client is analysed, from the back of the analysis as you can see, even Trump in sets or release information on Facebook, will connect to Twitter. In addition, since Trump took office, there has been a new term

“Twitter governance”. Trump uses social media as a springboard for policy change, a stick against criticism, and a means of self-affirmation. He has integrated Twitter fully into his administration, reshaping the presidency and the nature of presidential power, the way it is governed in the Trump era. In this study, the quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis are based on the same sample, namely, Trump’s tweets during the decade from 2009 to 2019. The reason this year’s data is not included is that Python failed to fetch this year’s data when it fetched the data. I then focused on the three months before and after the 2016 election.

The reasons for focusing on the three months before and after the 2016 election are that the three months before the election when states have open voting channels, are crucial for candidates to win over voters. The formation of a new government takes place three months after the general election. Combined with Python programming (code in appendix) and NVivo analysis processing, the data was initially quantified to form a visual chart.

This study involves no potential risk in the Information Sheet. Methods for Ensuring Confidentiality of Research Data:

- Identifying information will be removed from the data file and stored separately, with the link between identifying information and data made through codes only.
- Entered data will be stored on a password-protected file and a password-protected computer.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Political KOL’s Strategic Social Media Engagement

It becomes apparent that his use of negative emotional language in tweets aligns with the propagandistic technique of labelling adversaries and ideas unfavourably. Name-calling is a common strategy in political communication and advertising, aimed at evoking immediate emotional responses that can influence public opinion without requiring substantial evidence (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979). Trump’s tweets demonstrate the effective use of propagandistic techniques: name-calling, which serves to negatively label opponents and shape public perception without reliance on evidence. This strategy, commonly employed in advertising and political discourse, was notably consistent throughout Trump’s Twitter history.

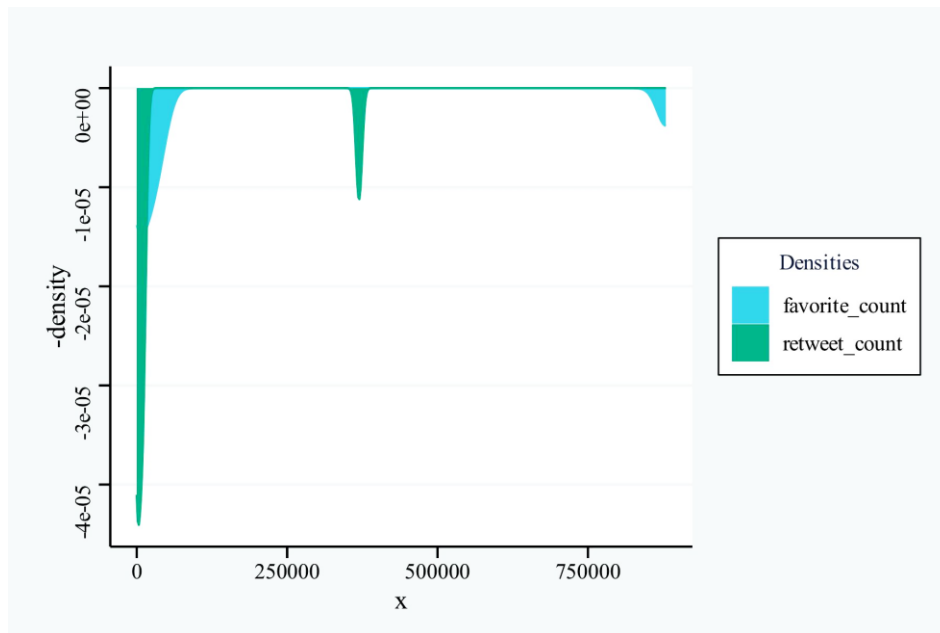


Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics of Trump's Tweets

The descriptive statistics of Trump's tweets indicate a stable pattern of engagement, with the number of favorites and retweets showing a similar trajectory over the study period. However, the variance in retweet counts was consistently lower than that of favorites, suggesting that Trump's tweets had a relatively stable impact on retweets.

Table 1. Number of Original and Retweeted Tweets

| Retweeted tweets | |
|------------------|-------|
| False | 42167 |
| True | 1756 |

Note: True for retweets, false for original tweets.

Trump's Twitter data revealed him to be a dominant opinion leader, with a vast number of original tweets ($N=42,167$) compared to retweets ($N=1,756$). This indicates a strong presence and influence in the social media landscape, where he was able to cultivate a personal brand that resonated with his audience (Table 1). Furthermore, the analysis highlighted the temporal distribution of Trump's tweets, showcasing distinct patterns of growth, fluctuation, and decline. This temporal dynamics provide insight into the evolution of his personal brand and its relationship with significant life events, such as his presidential election and term.

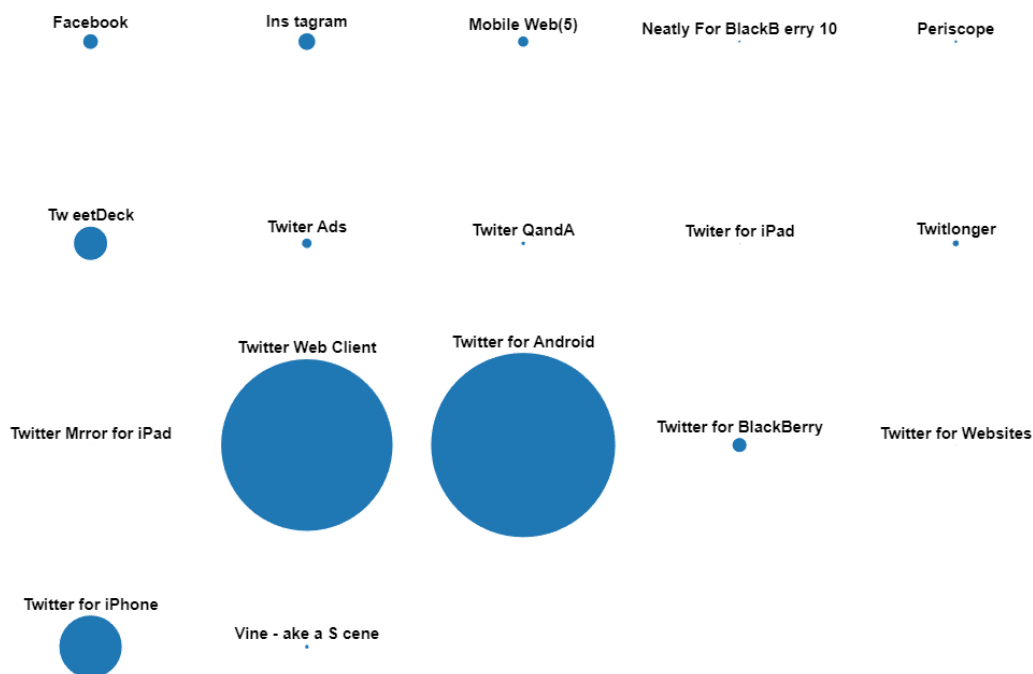


Figure 3. The Clients for the Release of Trump's Messages

Additionally, the study confirmed the preference for specific social media clients, with Trump primarily using Twitter for Android until a significant shift to iPhone usage following public revelation of this pattern. This shift underscores the importance of Twitter to Trump's communication strategy and his adaptability to changing public perceptions and technological advancements.

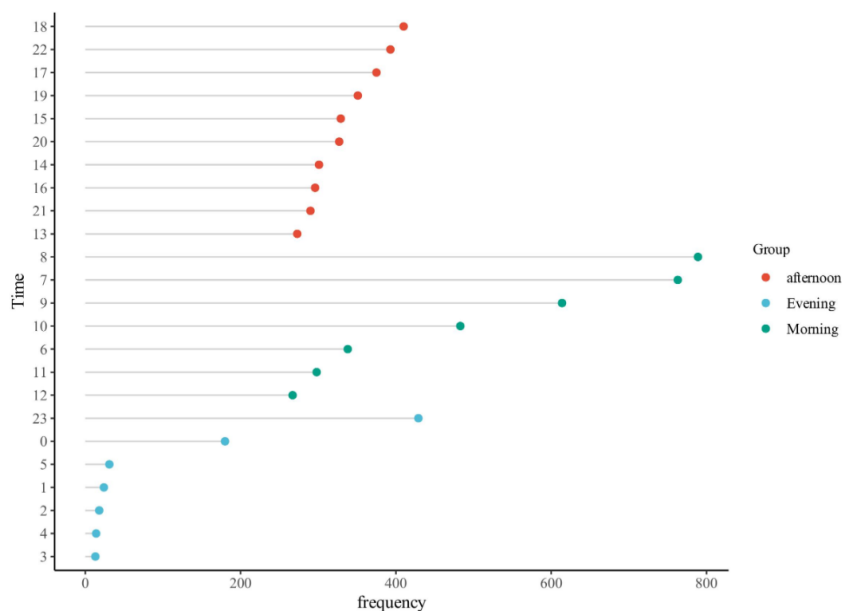


Figure 4. Trump's Twitter Uses Frequency (by day)

The analysis of Trump's tweeting frequency by year and daily tweet patterns highlighted his strategic approach to engagement, with peak tweeting times corresponding to periods of high user engagement, such as during breakfast hours. This strategic timing suggests a calculated effort to maximize the visibility and impact of his messages.

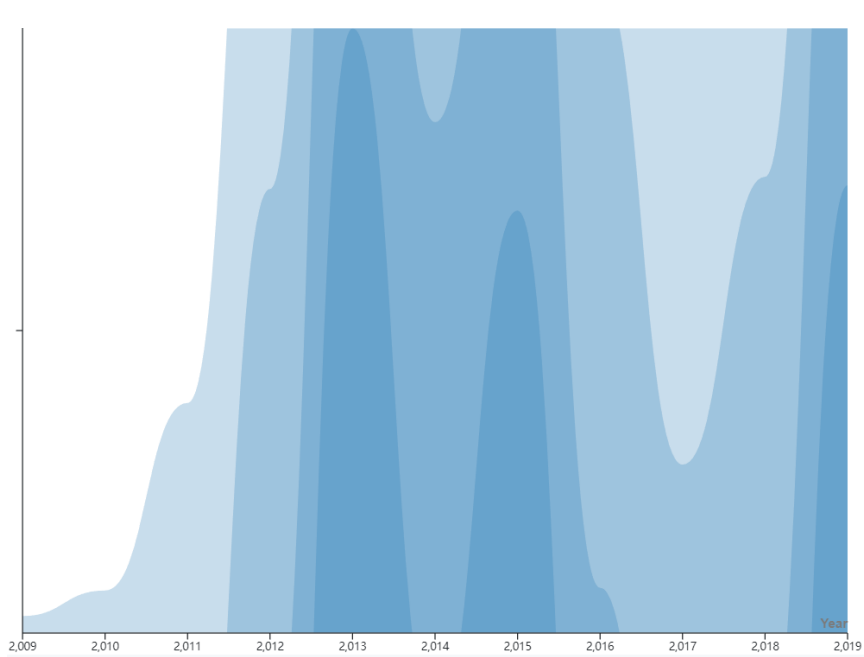


Figure 5. Trump's Twitter Uses Frequency (by year)

The temporal distribution of Trump's tweets reveals distinct patterns, with exponential growth in tweet frequency until 2013, followed by a period of fluctuation and decline. After 2017, there was a resurgence in activity, coinciding with the transition from his presidential election to his initial term. Notably, 2014 and 2017 marked significant troughs in tweet activity. These patterns offer valuable insights into the temporal dynamics of Trump's personal brand development on social media. President Trump's Twitter activity is characterized not only by his preference for original content and strategic timing but also by his use of negative emotional language, which can be seen as a form of name-calling. This approach to communication is instrumental in shaping his public persona and advancing his political agenda, illustrating the complex interplay between digital rhetoric and political manipulation in the digital age.

4.2 Emotional Rhetoric in Digital Political Discourse

The plain folk's technique is a propagandistic method where the propagandist poses as an average person. This strategy aims to sway the audience by presenting views as reflective of the mainstream consensus (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979). Building on this, research question 2 emerged: Le Pen highlighted that "movements are stirred by intense emotions. Speakers who wish to rally groups will inevitably resort to saying unpleasant things, solemnly declaring that in the contemporary media landscape of the post-truth era, facts and logic give way to emotions, opinions, and emotions" (Le Bon, 2017).

The Internet's anonymity cultivates a virtual memory, creating a space for network interaction that gives rise to a varied yet dispersed field of public opinion. This leads to various cathartic behaviours easily infiltrating this online realm. Groups like the grassroots engage in numerical communication, leading to the phenomenon of anomic behaviour in network media.

The progression of urbanization in modern society is a process that alienates individuals. Residents experience substantial psychological and life stressors and lack appropriate outlets. For instance, modernization results in wider roads that are better suited for driving, yet it also takes away the joy of leisurely walking and renders individuals lost in their sense of belonging. Humanized facilities and humane care are pushed to the margins amidst industrialization. Consequently, individuals yearn for emotional outlets, and social media undoubtedly provides a fitting platform for venting.

Studies have indicated that Trump's negative tweets are the most common and well-received, and tweets concerning media criticism and personal attacks receive the most likes and retweets (Ott, 2017).

In this study, we utilized emotional analysis to examine Trump's tweets and counted the occurrences of words with negative emotions. Trump frequently employs negative language, with a substantial number of tweets containing words like "bad" (56 times) and "fake" (665 times). This frequency dates back to the start of his presidential campaign. Mainstream media outlets in the United States, except for Fox News, were predominantly aligned with the Democratic Party and produced numerous biased reports against Trump during his presidential campaign. As a result, Trump resorted to Twitter as a platform to

counterattack, frequently using the phrase “Fake News!” to respond to these reports. Beyond simply criticizing mainstream media and their journalists online, Trump, with a punk-like approach, also engaged in Twitter spats with various individuals, ranging from his electoral opponent Hillary Clinton to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who initiated impeachment proceedings against him.

We compiled a comprehensive list of the pejorative terms frequently used by Trump using Python, totaling 529 distinct words he uses to express his displeasure. This arsenal of negative vocabulary demonstrates his seasoned and frequent engagement with rhetorical attacks. The most commonly used terms within this lexicon include “bad”, “fake”, “hard”, “illegal”, “wrong”, “low”, and “weak”, indicating a consistent reliance on these words to convey his negative sentiment. By using these negatively charged words, Trump steered individuals towards a platform for expressing negative emotions, aligning with his “negative slogans”.

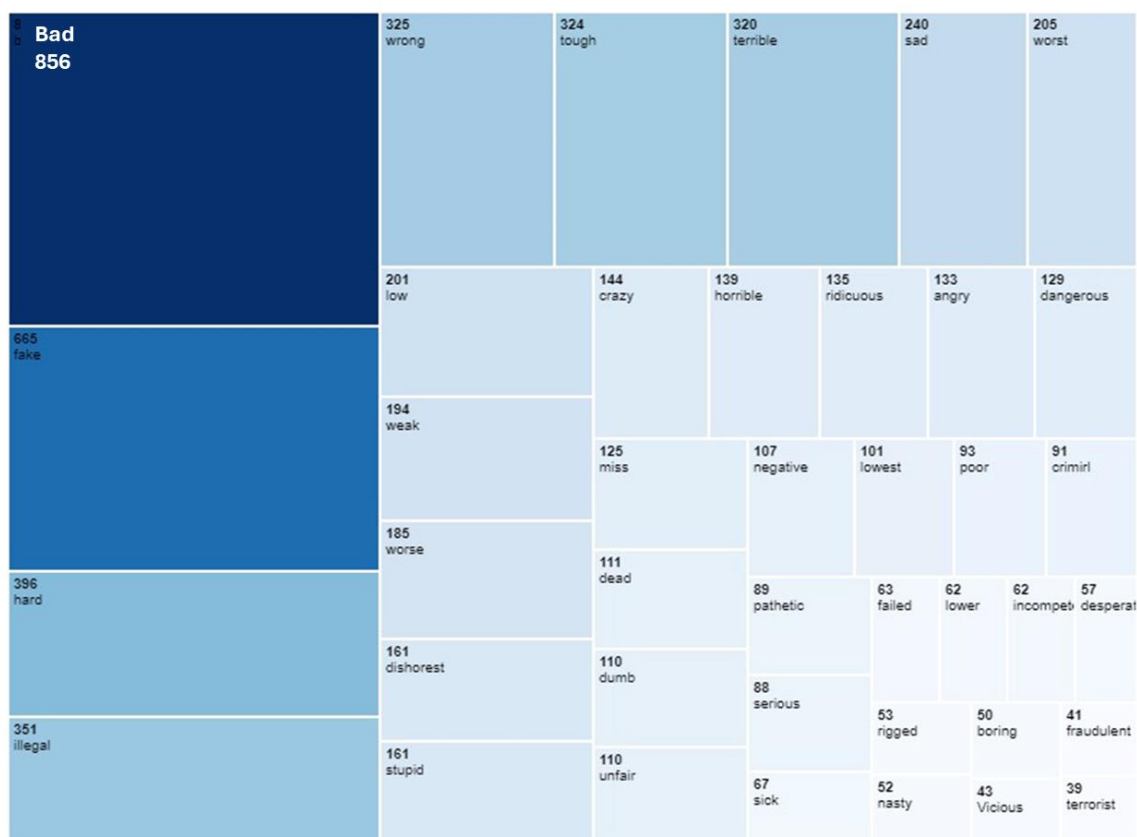


Figure 6. Trump's Twitter Negative Word Count

4.3 Name-Calling as an Emotional Manipulation Tool

The linguistic analysis of Donald Trump's Twitter communication provides a compelling insight into his rhetorical strategies and their effectiveness in engaging with his audience. Utilizing quantitative punctuation analysis, this study reveals the strategic deployment of linguistic elements to convey a sense of urgency and finality in Trump's tweets. Trump is a political star who is adept at revealing his emotions on social platforms and is rich in them. In addition to expressing emotions, he also likes to emphasize his own emotions. It can be found from the observation of text content that Trump likes to add a concluding word or sentence at the end of a narrative and capitalize the word or sentence. And like to use exclamation marks at the end of a text. The significant disparity between the frequency of exclamation marks (N=12,458) and question marks (N=910) suggests a deliberate rhetorical strategy to evoke and manipulate emotions, aligning with the theory of emotional intelligence in communication (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

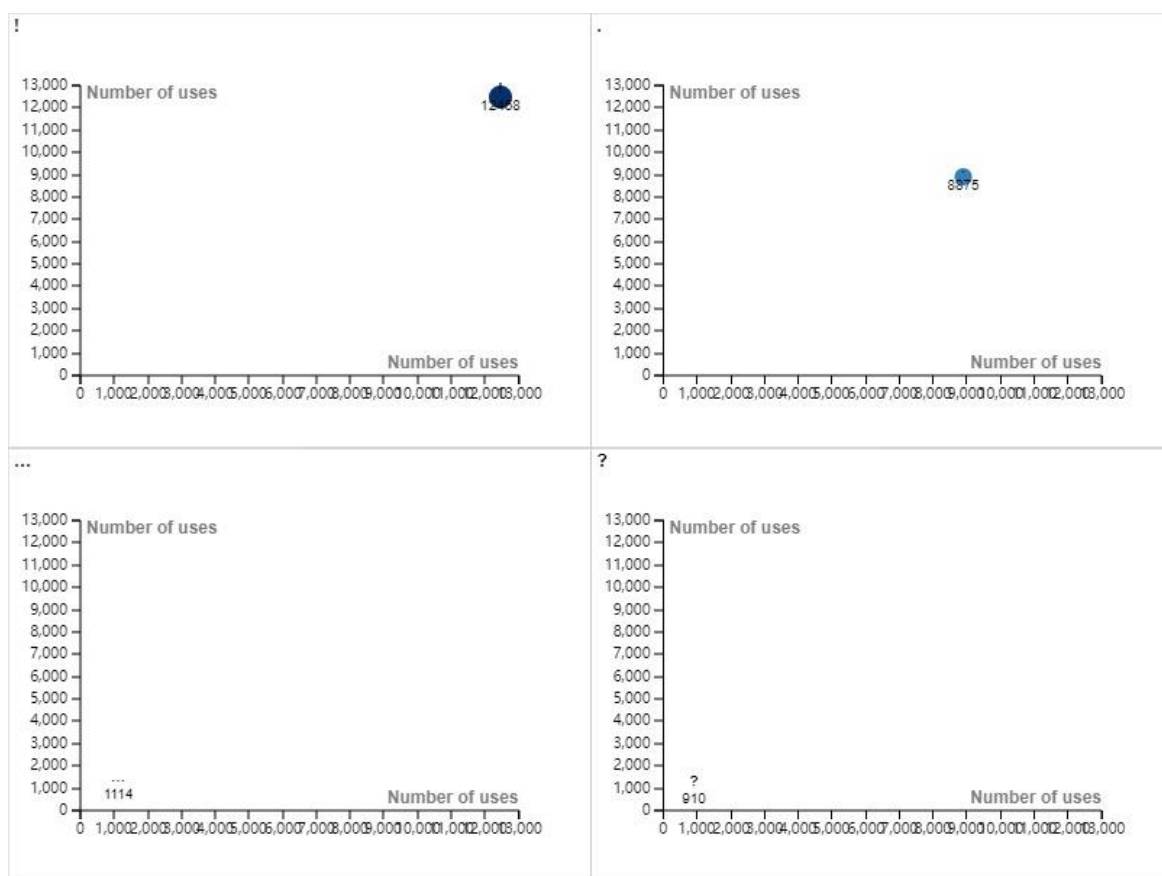


Figure 7. Trump's End-of-text Punctuation Habits

Moreover, the analysis indicates a preference for the ellipsis (N=1114) and periods (N=8,875) as concluding punctuation in Trump's tweets. The ellipsis, often used to convey a sense of suspense or incompleteness, aligns with Trump's communication style, which has been characterized as indirect and open to interpretation (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979). The frequent use of periods, on the other hand, implies a more formal and closed-ended approach to his statements, indicating a strategic choice to present his messages in a definitive and final manner.



Figure 8. Trump's Tweet Ended with an Emphasis on Formality

The implications of Trump's Twitter communication style are multifaceted. His simplification of language and the use of summative phrases or words at the end of his tweets, such as "SAD", underscore his ability to craft messages that are accessible to a broad audience. This approach fosters a sense of accessibility and relatability, particularly effective in appealing to a voter base with lower educational attainment or economic status (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).



Figure 9. Trump's Brief Tweeting Pattern

Furthermore, the analysis suggests that Trump's use of Twitter transcends traditional forms of writing, functioning as a form of oratory through written text. This method of communication resonates with his audience and leaves a strong personal impression, a crucial factor in the realm of political messaging (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

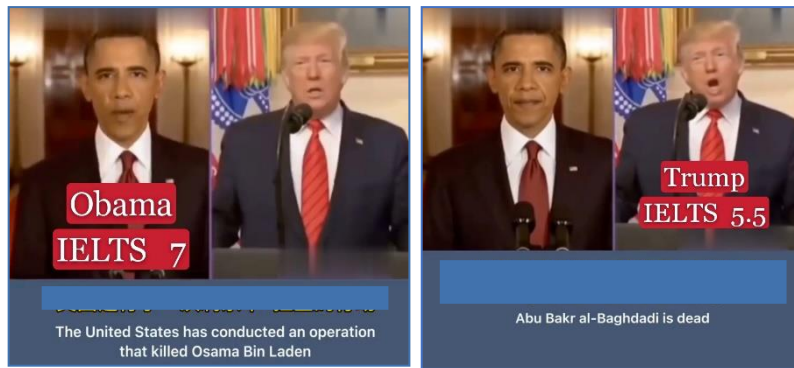


Figure 10. A Comparison between Obama's Speech and Trump's

After analyzing numerous tweets from Trump, a consistent pattern emerges: The language is kept as simple as possible. And the tweet begins with a narrative segment, concludes with a summative word or phrase in bold print, and often ends with an exclamation mark: “!”. The most common expressions found at the end of his tweets include affirmative adjectives such as “True/So True”, which serve to impart a sense of the author’s emotional bias and provide a concluding summary. These expressions enable audiences to quickly grasp the main points in an era of fragmented information. In the lead-up to the 2020 election, Trump’s communication strategy evolved, incorporating video content into his Twitter feed. These video messages, often excerpts from his public speeches, were meticulously crafted to ensure they were accessible, resonant, and straightforward, extending his appeal to a broader audience, including those with limited literacy capabilities (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

Trump’s Twitter communication style is characterized by a strategic deployment of linguistic elements and punctuation marks, designed to evoke and manipulate emotions, captivate the audience, and leave a strong personal impression. This approach aligns with his ability to connect with a diverse voter base and has been a key factor in his electoral success, adhering closely to the principles of the plain folks propaganda method (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

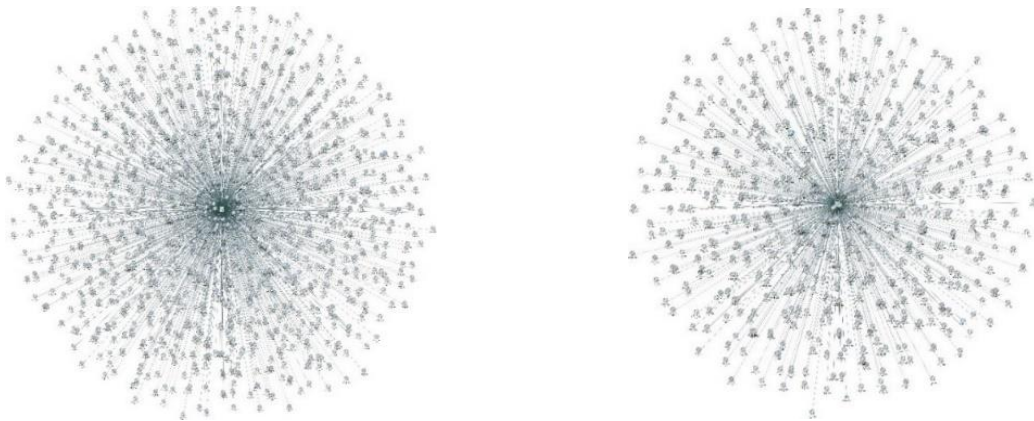
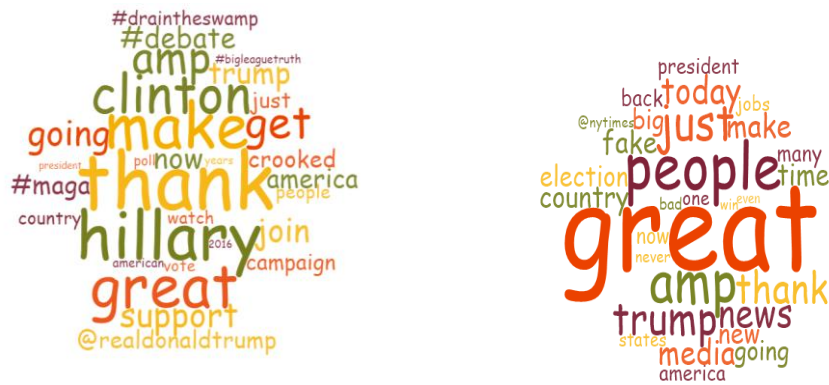


Figure 11. A More Approachable Twitter Model: Video

4.4 Glittering Generality: Crafting a Desirable National Identity and Image

In the domain of contemporary political communication, the strategic manipulation of language is fundamental in shaping public opinion and perception. Donald Trump's Twitter communication strategy exemplifies this principle, leveraging the platform to craft and disseminate a meticulously curated image that resonates with his supporters and detractors alike. This study has employed Elizabethan Lee's promotional arts theory as an analytical framework to examine the textual information reflecting Trump's personal psychological activities and cognitive dynamics on Twitter. The findings indicate that Trump skilfully deploys a variety of propagandistic techniques to construct a socially relevant image that is consistent with contemporary societal expectations.

The glittering generality, a propagandistic technique, is evident in Trump's use of grand rhetoric to associate his political vision with positive, aspirational concepts such as "greatness". A punctuation analysis of his tweets reveals a marked preference for exclamation marks and the frequent repetition of positive descriptors like "great", which serves to evoke a sense of excitement and urgency. This rhetorical strategy is not only about conveying messages but also about creating an emotional connection with the audience (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).



Trump's Twitter persona is further characterized by his ability to weave a "rhetorical illusion" that captivates the public, as evidenced by the selective information he releases and the grandeur of his statements. The American public, as the audience, is drawn to the beauty and grandeur of his constructed symbolic reality, further polarizing the cyberspace and solidifying his base of support (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

Through the aforementioned analysis, all research questions have been answered to date. This study, from the perspective of examining the personal image construction of political celebrities, employs the analytical framework of Elizabethan promotional arts theory to investigate the textual information reflecting Trump's personal psychological activities and cognitive dynamics posted on Twitter. The aim is to explore the personal characteristics of Trump and to discover that he has crafted a socially relevant image that is contemporary in nature on the platform. His mastery of social media and his bold expression of emotions have heralded a new era of public self-presentation for political figures. The media effects of invectives, testimonials, and populism in the era of social media have been demonstrated, endowing him with the influence and affinity of an opinion leader, thus achieving the

objective of self-presentation (Alfred & Elisabeth, 1979).

5. Discussion

The discourse surrounding political communication in the digital age is replete with the convergence of propagandistic artistry, self-presentation, and influencer strategies, showcasing a complex and multifaceted landscape that has captivated scholarly attention in recent years. This paper has delved into the intricate web of social interaction and public life, underscoring the pivotal role of visual resources and symbols in shaping human social self-organization (Mills & Mills, 2013). In the context of the 2020 U.S. election, both the Biden and Trump campaigns adopted “digital-first” advertising strategies, harnessing the power of social media influencers to connect with and mobilize voters (Goodwin et al., 2020). This strategic pivot reflects a broader trend in which political actors increasingly leverage social media platforms to disseminate propaganda and mold public opinion (Rainie et al., 2017). The rise of propaganda, misinformation, and fake news online has sparked calls for media and information literacy education in schools, where teachers play a critical role in equipping students with the skills to critically assess information and discern between credible sources and disinformation (Romanova et al., 2020).

Moreover, the impact of digital platforms on news and journalistic content has spurred discussions about the influence of communication technologies on contemporary economic, political, and social interactions (Wilding et al., 2018). The construction and influence of rhetoric in political campaigns, particularly in contemporary presidential campaigns, have been the subject of scholarly inquiry (Fiske, 2010). This includes an examination of how media and political communication intersect to shape public discourse and sway voter behavior. The historical context of art as social and political commentary offers valuable insights into the mechanisms by which visual media can be utilized to convey political messages and sway public opinion (McNeil, 2020).

As policymakers craft national security strategies, they must confront the evolving landscape of political influence campaigns, particularly those conducted through social media platforms (Arnas, 2009). The deployment of digital technologies to disseminate propaganda and misinformation poses a significant challenge to democratic societies, necessitating a coordinated response to safeguard the integrity of public discourse and democratic processes (Congress, 1995).

This study is constrained by several factors that may limit the generalizability of its findings and suggest avenues for future research. First and foremost, the current study was significantly impacted by the global health crisis, which necessitated the omission of direct audience input through interviews. This constraint was due to the logistical challenges posed by the pandemic, including the difficulty of arranging face-to-face interactions and the limitations of online interviews in capturing the nuanced aspects of nonverbal communication such as speaking gestures and micro-expressions. These limitations preclude the application of triangulation in the validation process, which is a cornerstone of

research design.

Furthermore, the study is limited by the unavailability of Twitter data post-2019. Following President Trump's departure from office in 2019, his @RealdonaldTrump Twitter account became the subject of legal and regulatory scrutiny. This situation highlights the ongoing challenges and debates surrounding the use of social media by politicians and their influence on self-presentation strategies.

Additionally, the decision by Twitter to shut down its API for academic research in 2019 has severely restricted access to social media data. This action means that scholars are unable to access Twitter data generated after that year, which severely limits the scope of subsequent research. The absence of real-time, comprehensive data hampers the ability to track and analyze the evolving strategies of politicians in leveraging social media for self-presentation and political communication.

These limitations underscore the need for future research to explore alternative methods for gathering audience input, such as the use of online surveys or the examination of secondary sources to supplement the analysis. Additionally, future studies should consider the implications of the loss of Twitter data and the potential for alternative platforms to emerge as key channels for political communication. The study of these new platforms and the strategies employed by politicians on them will be crucial in understanding the dynamic nature of digital political communication.

While the current study provides valuable insights into the use of social media by political figures for self-presentation, it is not without its limitations. The constraints imposed by the pandemic and the unavailability of Twitter data post-2019 necessitate cautious interpretation of the findings and point to important areas for future research.

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