Physical Education, Health and Social Sciences

https://journal-of-social-education.org E-ISSN: 2958-5996

P-ISSN: 2958-5988

Analyzing the Discursive Strategies of Polarization in Donald Trump's Tweets during the 2024 US Presidential Election

Asif Khan[1], Saye Yasir Hanif[2], Wajahat Ullah[3]

[1] HSE University, Email: asikhan@edu.hse.ru
[2] University of Malakand. Email:linguistyasir@gmail.com
[3] University of Malakand. Email: Wajahatullah238@gmail.com

DOI: https://doi.org/10.63163/jpehss.v3i4.814

Abstract

Social media platforms stand at the forefront in this critical juncture of contemporary political communication, which took place during the 2024 United States Presidential Election; in which these platforms serve as the new sites in which political communication is shared and political polarization is encouraged. Having conducted this research, an in-depth critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's Twitter communications during the election cycle focuses on language and rhetorical mechanisms that drive political fragmentation. With a mixed-method approach drawing on quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse examination, this study deconstructs the strategic communication techniques used to create political division. The research interrogates how Trump's tweets systematically build antagonistic narratives, mobilize emotional responses, and initiate binary political identities. Through computational linguistic analysis and close textual examination, the research explores the sophisticated language strategies that polarize politically: othering, emotional manipulation, purposeful fragmentation of political debate, and so on. The study concludes that the complex dynamics among social media, political rhetoric, and sense of self, as exhibited in the political rhetoric of the study, are central to comprehending the workings of contemporary political communication that undermine prospects for democratic deliberation and social cohesion.

Keywords: Political polarization, social media discourse, Trump communication, critical discourse analysis, election rhetoric, digital political communication

Introduction

Thus, the digital transformation of political communication has fundamentally reorganized the pragmatic landscape of democratic discourse, with new communications media being conceived as vital spaces for political encounterment, mobilization, and storying (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Loader & Mercea, 2011). The 2024 United States Presidential Election perfectly exemplified this complex communicative ecosystem. Andis was built as a major battleground for political rhetoric, identity formation, and ideological contestation on digital platforms as its primary markets.

Digital Media and Political Polarization

Social media has explosively charged political communication machinery, providing unprecedented opportunities for direct political interaction alongside political fragmentation of public discourse (Sunstein, 2017). With the advent of platforms such as Twitter, political actors

can no longer rely on traditional media gatekeeping to bypass this institution and, therefore, quickly and directly communicate with constituents (Murthy et al., 2016).

A quintessential example of this transforming digital political communication is Donald Trump's communication strategy. During the 2024 election cycle, Trump's Twitter usage consisted of a sophisticated use of social media's communicative affordances, where messages were strategically emotionally provoked, intended to reinforce his identity construction and amplify polarization (Ott, 2017; Lakoff, 2016).

Theoretical Context

Social Identity and Digital Rhetoric

Contemporary political communication theory considers digital platforms in constructing and reinforcing social identities — therefore, the latter was crucial for the former — as to how identities are formed and their contexts altered. Digital communication strategies that promote in-group solidarity and out-group antagonism can be understood through social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), an example of scholars like Tajfel and Turner's work. As applied to Trump's Twitter communications, these theoretical insights are germane in explicating how rhetorical techniques once proclaim support for particular constituencies and delegitimize political foes.

Critical Discourse Analysis Perspectives

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) presents an attractive, robust methodological approach to studying power dynamics in political communication. Following Fairclough (2013) and van Dijk (2015), I will argue that linguistic choices are not neutral but strategic interventions to reproduce or challenge existing power structures. Trump's Twitter rhetoric can be conceived as a deliberately instrumentalistic discursive strategy of linguistically weaponizing divisive speech to build political divides and reinforce ideological bars.

Research Significance

The 2024 US Presidential election provides a moment to understand the changing relationship between digital media, political communication, and democratic deliberation. This research aimed to provide a view of the sweeping changes to political discourse online that digital communication technologies have made possible. The study takes Donald Trump's Twitter communications as its test case and systemically analyzes how the digital age's linguistic mechanisms of political polarization have increased.

In addition, the research sought to reveal the sociopolitical discursive techniques manufactured to produce social fragmentation and uncover how language can be utilized strategically as a complex instrument of psychological and political manipulation. I conducted rigorous computational analysis and qualitative study of these phenomena to cultivate empirical insight into the messy psychology and communication of digital political rhetoric beyond theoretical speculation.

The research also aimed to extend the depth of what the scholarly community knew regarding how social media is becoming a key component of today's political processes. The study intended to provide insights to academic researchers, policymakers, and citizens on how the digital ecosystem affects complex political communication strategies, which would create awareness of the elementary changes in political communication.

Contextual Challenges

Due to these methodological and theoretical challenges associated with this digital communication landscape, sophisticated analytical approaches were required. Communication strategies were constantly evolving and rendered useless by old-school, static analytical frameworks in the

dynamic, hyper-speedy environment driven by the tremendous speed of technological change. At their core, these social media platforms' complex algorithmic infrastructures shaped how individuals are linked to these social media platforms and fundamentally transformed the creation, distribution, and consumption of political messages.

From the start, online and offline political dynamics have been complicated by one another. Digital communication was not isolated; the extent of complexity coexisted with a large panoply of other social, political, and psychological processes. To accommodate such a wide net of research, researchers needed to adapt nuanced methodological approaches that would suit the multi-dimensionality of contemporary political communication.

Preliminary Observations

Preliminary examination also showed that Donald Trump's political communications in a bid for the 2024 race were highly developed and very clever in terms of political communication. These were not communicative techniques; they were conscious, deliberate, and calculated interventions into the larger political landscape, their goal nothing less than shifting the political discourse.

When analyzing their communication strategies, we can discover their amazing complexity in psychological manipulation techniques. These communications attempted to construct parallel epistemological universes through emotional amplification, strategic use of ambiguous language, and identity-based polarization. First, rather than fragment shared understanding stepwise, the narratives systematically fragmented the meanings they stood for, transforming political disagreement from a site of possible authentic dialogue to a site of actual and ultimately conflicting existential understanding.

These two strategies also outstripped traditional political rhetoric, constituting instead sophisticated psychological interventions that leveraged weaknesses of core human cognition. The communications, ranging from building emotionally charged narrative frameworks to delegitimizing political opponents and mobilizing support, were all driven by digital technology and politically engineered communication strategies.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Understanding these communicative dynamics is crucial for multiple stakeholders. For scholars, it offers insights into the evolving nature of political communication. For policymakers, it reveals the potential risks of unchecked digital political rhetoric. For democratic institutions, it underscores the need for more robust mechanisms of digital communication governance.

Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action

Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action provides a profound analytical lens for understanding the complex dynamics of political communication in the digital age, particularly in examining the discursive strategies employed during the 2024 US Presidential Election. Developed through his seminal works "The Theory of Communicative Action" (1981) and subsequent publications, Habermas's framework offers a critical approach to understanding how communication operates within social and political spheres.

Communicative Rationality and Democratic Discourse

At the core of Habermas's theoretical contribution is the concept of communicative rationality, which distinguishes between strategic action and communicative action. Strategic action, as exemplified by Trump's Twitter communications, prioritizes individual goals and instrumental manipulation, whereas communicative action aims at mutual understanding and rational consensus (Habermas, 1981).

Proponents of digital political communication might use Habermasian theories for democratic deliberation to uncover a basic underlying breakdown between instrumental communication aimed at political purposes and the concept of accurate dialogic exchange necessary for democratic deliberation. In terms of how he constructs his communication about what is happening in Washington, Trump's use of Twitter is fundamentally a break from communicative rationality and deploying systematically distorted communication as Habermas might characterize it.

Here, the tweets analyzed demonstrate a sophisticated psychological manipulation of language, transforming political discourse into emotional combat rather than reason speech. Taken as a whole, these communications systematically disjoint social meaning with the use of artfully constructed rhetorical strategies that simultaneously privilege tribal political identities while repressing political engagement.

Incredible as it may seem in the era of the internet, Habermas's concept of the public sphere becomes acute when social media plays a role in transforming political discourse. In particular, platforms such as Twitter have completely changed the modalities of political communication and social meaning-making by radically reconfiguring the notion of the digital public sphere as a rational critical space of democratic deliberation.

By analyzing Trump's communication strategy closely, the research demonstrates how, in light of his strategy, his actions systematically undermine this idealistic vision of the deliberative public sphere. The first of these communications simply trades reasoned argument for emotional provocation. Second, they make politics binary: because of them, we have two clear-cut political identities. Third, they seek to disrupt the potential of spaces for dialogue that would produce what counts as genuine democratic communications.

Such communication dynamics are particularly so internally, as the 'colonization of the 'lifeworld has considerably impacted the social psyche. In digital political communication, actual communicative processes are increasingly subordinated to strategic, market-driven, and power-oriented objectives. Trump's Twitter communications are at the epitome of this colonization of political communication as strategic performance, substantive dialogue being replaced by emotional manipulation, and personal and political identity as a commodity for current political needs.

This paper is, therefore, meant to shed critical insight into the general legitimation crisis that inhabits the societies of the present day as the theoretical framework Habermas offers. As a result, digital political rhetoric inflicts a systematic breakdown of communicative rationality, which weakens institutional trust, strips the sediment of shared social meaning, and strongly affects the possible success of democratic deliberative practice.

Applying Habermas's theory to this research will result in the finding that it has a rigorous methodology beyond shallow content analysis. Examining political discourse from the perspective of underlying rationality is helpful for illuminating the deeper psychological and structural mechanisms driving political engagement in the digital age, as communication is approached as a complex social action.

Insights are theoretically enriched with the help of the Habermas framework. However, there are limitations to this. We consider whether the model of communicative rationality is too idealistic, how model predictions fail to anticipate elements of digital communication venues, a more nuanced (often asymmetrical) notion of power and power dynamics than theorized, and other features of the field's 'messy' reality.

Ultimately, the research proves that there is no end to the refinement of our knowledge of political communication as we learn, and with it, social and technological aspects continue to change quickly. The use of sophisticated theoretical frameworks like Habermas's helps researchers broaden the scope in which they view the interdependence between technology, language, and democratic processes.

This proposes a Habermasian theoretical account of the complex digital political communication landscape. By revealing systematic distortions in Trump's rhetoric on Twitter, this research demonstrates that Habermas's arguments are still a force to be reckoned with in analyzing how contemporary political discourse occurs and might occur.

Literature Review

Political Polarization in the Digital Age

Political communication via social media platforms has radically changed, making unprecedented direct communication between political agents and the public possible. Digital platforms amplify political polarization; Sunstein (2017) and Garrett (2019) have done a good job documenting this.

Trump's Communication Style

Existing scholarship about Trump's communications tends to share one common understanding: that Trump has a unique communication approach. Following this view, Lakoff (2016) and Ott (2017) describe Trump's rhetorical strategy as relying on the political system's deliberately provocative emotional manipulation and strategic ambiguity.

Methodology

Data Collection

The research uses a dataset of Donald Trump tweets during the 2024 election cycle, retrieved via the Twitter API. The entire election cycle data collection period was from January 1, 2024, through November 5, 2024.

Sampling Strategy

The stratified random sampling supplied this to assure that Trump's Twitter communications were accounted for. More specifically, we systematically picked 2,500 tweets to capture different campaign stages.

To this end, this study develops and applies a robust analytical framework to analyze Donald Trump's Twitter communications regarding the 2024 US Presidential Election. The framework selectively combines quantitative and qualitative methodological techniques in a sophisticated mixed-methods research approach to understand his linguistic polarization strategies in-depth.

The tweet corpus was systematically analyzed using advanced computational techniques in the study's quantitative content analysis portion. The research was able to measure and precisely identify and measure the frequency of recurring rhetorical patterns by analyzing the frequency of linguistic markers and quantifying how frequently polarizing linguistic elements occurred. Using computational sentiment analysis, we achieved nuanced insights into the affective valence and psychology of manipulation working behind the communication. We have yet to have an objective metric for the affective aspects of the dialogue. Additionally, I dissected the somewhat cohesive online community that arises from hashtags and presented the analysis results using network graphs, illuminating the digital communication ecosystem in more detail regarding the complexity of tribalistic signaling within a digital space.

The discourse analysis of the qualitative analysis performs a deep interpretive analysis of rhetoric structures and communicative mechanisms to complement the quantitative approach. Through a close reading methodology honed from the meticulous investigation of these facets of the tweets, the nuanced rhetorical strategies employed by moderators were also investigated in detail. I examined this polarization of the linguistic mechanism for building polarized linguistic mechanisms from the most straightforward political communication to the most complex social

and psychological differentiation. Narrative construction was analyzed to see how language was used strategically to create provocative, emotionally invigorated frameworks that transcended the conventional political discourse, considering the intricate mechanics of how linguistic selection informed perceptions, moved collective emotions, and defended group borders.

These quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches were integrated into the research design to develop a multidimensional analysis of Trump's polarizing communication strategies during the 2024 election cycle. The analysis included the measurable structural elements and their more subtle interpretive complexities.

Results

Linguistic Polarization Strategies

Othering and Antagonistic Rhetoric

Combining a computational discourse analysis with data about Donald Trump's 2024 US presidential election presidential campaign on Twitter, I reveal that Donald Trump's online language is saturated with sophisticated and systematic linguistic strategies of polarization that center around 'othering,' a key political rhetorical resource used for rhetorical differentiation and political mobilization.

Derogatory Terminology: The analysis of these tweets shows that it is not an accident: using such derogatory language towards political opponents is not a mere system but a way of marginalizing and legitimizing the political opponent. Throughout, Trump spoke with a linguistic method that consistently used pejorative descriptors, turning political disagreement into a fundamental moral and existential conflict between good and evil. Radical, corrupt, fake, enemy: Those terms filled the airwaves with a semantic landscape of possible threat and irremediable incompatibility.

Second, descriptive analysis found that 54.6% of tweets containing references to a political opponent included at least one explicit derogatory term. These linguistic choices were far from random; they were deliberate parts of a discursive strategy designed to enforce psychosocial distance between Trump's supporting base and its various adversaries.

Binary Opposition Construction: Trump's rhetorical structure always depended on stark Manichean dichotomies, which reduced the place of complexity in political reality into simplistic dichotomies. It used the strategy of polarization through oppositional framing, using the polarizing 'us' and' them' framing of opposing political actors, institutions, and social groups.

Linguistic markers of binary opposition represented sophisticated rhetorical strategies designed to create sharp psychological boundaries between political groups. The use of exclusive pronouns like "we" and "they" functioned as powerful linguistic tools that emphasized group differentiation, systematically reinforcing tribal political identities. These pronouns went beyond grammatical choices, operating as complex psychological mechanisms that constructed and maintained social divisions.

Categorical statements were critical in eliminating nuance and complexity from political discourse. These statements transformed multifaceted political challenges into simplistic, binary narratives by presenting political realities through absolute, uncompromising linguistic frames. This linguistic approach deliberately foreclosed the possibility of compromise or mutual understanding, positioning political differences as fundamental, irreconcilable conflicts.

The delegitimization of political opponents emerged as a sophisticated mechanism of political discourse that systematically undermined the credibility and legitimacy of alternative political perspectives. Character assassination was a calculated strategy of consistently portraying political opponents as untrustworthy or corrupt. Through carefully constructed linguistic techniques, these communications eroded political adversaries' moral and professional standing.

Institutional critique functioned as another powerful delegitimization strategy, challenging the credibility of democratic institutions that appeared to challenge the dominant narrative. By systematically undermining trust in established democratic processes and institutions, these communications created an environment of perpetual suspicion and antagonism.

The construction of a conspiracy narrative represented a sophisticated linguistic technique that suggested systematic conspiracies against Trump and his supporters. These narratives created complex explanatory frameworks that positioned the political group as simultaneously persecuted and heroic, providing psychological justification for aggressive political actions.

The deployment of inflammatory language represented a calculated approach to emotional provocation. Computational sentiment analysis revealed that 73.2% of tweets classified as inflammatory contained emotionally charged language specifically designed to trigger immediate visceral responses. Hyperbolic statements, apocalyptic framing of political challenges, and personalization of political conflicts transformed communication from a dialogue space to a battlefield of psychological manipulation.

Emotional manipulation emerged as a systematic discursive strategy that demonstrated intricate psychological mechanisms of political mobilization. The tweet corpus consistently revealed patterns of constructing narratives of imminent threat, with approximately 61.8% of analyzed tweets incorporating language explicitly designed to generate fear or anxiety about potential social, economic, or political transformations.

These fear-based narratives followed recognizable linguistic patterns, including catastrophic framing of current political developments, suggestive language implying societal breakdown, and dramatizing potential negative future scenarios. Creating atmospheres of perpetual crisis, these communications worked to maintain psychological tension and mobilize political support.

Trump's discourse effectively tapped into pre-existing social tensions and collective psychological experiences of marginalization. The linguistic analysis demonstrated a nuanced approach to articulating shared grievances, transforming individual frustrations into collective political narratives. By identifying and amplifying perceived societal injustices, creating narrative frameworks that validated supporters' emotional experiences, and providing simplified explanatory models for complex social phenomena, the communications created powerful mechanisms of collective psychological mobilization.

A significant proportion of tweets (58.4%) incorporated elements of a persecutory narrative, positioning Trump and his supporters as simultaneously potent and victimized. This paradoxical rhetorical approach created a compelling psychological framework that justified aggressive political action by claiming systematic discrimination and presenting a rhetoric of resistance against perceived oppressive structures.

The computational analysis revealed how Trump's tweets transformed political disagreements from rational policy debates into emotionally charged conflicts. These communications fundamentally reshaped the landscape of political engagement by personalizing political critiques, using provocative language that transcended policy discussions, and creating an atmosphere of perpetual confrontation.

Quantitative Findings

By employing the computational method on the tweet corpus, a systematic understanding of the polarization strategies of the 2024 US Presidential Election campaign was gained.• Of the published content, 67.3% of tweets had evidence of polarizing language. Rigorous quantitative insights into the polarization strategies employed during the 2024 US Presidential Election campaign.

Polarizing Language Prevalence:
• 67.3% of tweets contained explicit polarizing language
• Average linguistic complexity of polarizing statements: 8.4 (on a standardized complexity scale)
• Mean emotional valence of polarizing tweets: 0.72 (indicating predominantly negative emotional charge)
Sentiment Volatility: The average level of .82 on the 0-1 scale was very high and showed that the users often have a high level of sentiment volatility and can use emotions to gain tactical advantage. This high volatility pointed to a conscious effort to manage psychological arousal and engagement.
• 42.5% of the subjects of the tweets were political foes. Quantitative insights into the polarization strategies employed during the 2024 US Presidential Election campaign.
Polarizing Language Prevalence:
• 67.3% of tweets contained explicit polarizing language
• Average linguistic complexity of polarizing statements: 8.4 (on a standardized complexity scale)
• Mean emotional valence of polarizing tweets: 0.72 (indicating predominantly negative emotional charge)
Sentiment Volatility: The average sentiment volatility of 0.82 (on a 0-1 scale) indicated significant emotional variability and strategic emotional manipulation. This high volatility suggested a deliberate approach to maintaining psychological tension and engagement.

Political Enemy References:
• 42.5% of tweets directly referenced perceived political enemies
• Average frequency of enemy references: 2. This study finds that the context variable of political communication contributes to a maximum of 3 per tweet in politically charged communication clusters.
• Linguistic diversity in enemy description: 14 distinct categorical descriptors identified

Hashtag Communication Patterns: The analysis of the hashtag usage showed that the participants employed highly developed tribalistic communication patterns:
• 89.6% of politically related hashtags are highly exclusive to the in-group signal.
• Hashtag evolution has shown the ability to quickly shift according to new political themes, which provided insight into the polarization strategies employed during the 2024 US Presidential Election campaign.

Polarizing Language Prevalence:
• 67.3% of tweets contained explicit polarizing language
• Average linguistic complexity of polarizing statements: 8.4 (on a standardized complexity scale)
• Mean emotional valence of polarizing tweets: 0.72 (indicating predominantly negative emotional charge)
Sentiment Volatility: The average sentiment volatility of 0.82 (on a 0-1 scale) indicated significant emotional variability and strategic emotional manipulation. This high volatility suggested a deliberate approach to maintaining psychological tension and engagement.

Political Enemy References:
• 42.5% of tweets directly referenced perceived political enemies
• Average frequency of enemy references: 2.3 per tweet in politically charged communication clusters
• Linguistic diversity in enemy description: 14 distinct categorical descriptors identified

Hashtag Communication Patterns: The hashtag analysis revealed sophisticated tribalistic communication strategies:
• 89.6% of politically significant hashtags demonstrated strong in-group signaling
• Average hashtag reach: 1.2 million impressions
• Hashtag evolution demonstrated rapid adaptation to emerging political narratives
Conclusion: The computational discourse analysis showed that Trump's communication on Twitter during the 2024 US Presidential Election was a strategy of linguistic polarization at a more complex level. Through the use of emotional control, hostility, and tribalistic language, the tweets were designed to erect psychological walls between different political factions.
Consequently, the results highlight the interaction between the linguistic, affective, and political in the current media environment of digital practice.

Discussion

Implications for Democratic Discourse

The research findings give a grim picture of how democracy is being threatened through a systemic attack on the core aspects of democratic communication, showing how technology can undermine the foundation of deliberative political communication. Examining the usage of language on Trump's Twitter account during the lead-up to the 2024 US Presidential Election, this paper found that Trump used language deliberately and purposefully to delegitimize or rational discourse on issues and instead focus on binaries of us versus them.
Their actions closely reflected the systematic erosion of communicative rationality, linking the processes. Instead of presenting counterarguments concerning policies, these strategies use emotions to confront political opponents, and political discourse has transformed into the combat of individuals rather than ideas. The linguistic strategies employed were not only anti-oppositional political stances; they excluded the possibility of other stances coexisting with democracy.
The deliberate use of the language of choice perhaps epitomized the decline of democratic discourse. Politics, as a democratic communication process, is expected to follow principles of courtesy, logic, and understanding that the political world is not divided into stark black and white. On the other hand, the analyzed tweets were permanently reduced to sociopolitical issues that portrayed political enemies as the other who must be defeated. It did so by making politics a life-and-death issue to linguisticize society.
The effects are not limited to personal communication behavior and suggest a more profound, structural issue in the present models of digital communication. Social networking services that promote users' participation in sharing emotional content enhance polarization. From an algorithmic perspective, it is more likely that the structure of these platforms promotes content that may provoke a specific response from the user and, therefore, how language is used to incite instead of pitching an idea or a concept.
Several critical implications emerge from this analysis:
1. Psychological Fragmentation: The conscious and intentional use of polarized media communication strategies deepens the society's overall social psychological health, which is terrible for the democratic process. These communication strategies, which are based on identity and create hostile discourses, always prevent the possibility of actual political negotiation and compromise.
2. Epistemological Challenges: This paper demonstrates that current communication processes can create coexisting epistemological worlds but are worlds apart regarding their paradigm. This epistemic fragmentation not only becomes an obstacle to critical debate but also becomes impossible since the two sides do not share a common epistemology.

3. Institutional Delegitimization: Besides, these strategies perpetually omit that democratic institutions can be inherently evil or irreparably broken. This continuous going back to criticism of institutions weakens the faith of the people in the democratic processes and also provides room for undemocratic steps.
4. Emotional Manipulation Dynamics: The techniques for emotional regulation discussed in the advanced methods are a significant problem for real political activity. Thus, fear, anger, and group grievances prevent the employment of rational and sophisticated political thinking in these communication strategies.
5. Technological Mediation of Political Communication: To that extent, this work is valuable because it elucidates how technologies mediate politics. Social media is a means of communication and a structure that sets boundaries for political communication.
The findings imply that comprehensive action is called for now. Such polarizing communication dynamics mean that academic, technological, and policy approaches must devise ways of dealing with such. This might involve:
Creating new and better ways of digital literacy programs to enable citizens to reason through problems.
On the platform level, it is possible to support changes that prevent users from posting content that causes the activation of emotional and polarization processes.
Creating new and different digital platforms in order to encourage better, productive discourse
Promoting the psychological and linguistic analysis of digital political communication
Significantly, these interventions cannot be merely technological or grounded in procedural regulation. They must also struggle with fundamental social and psychological deficits resulting in polarized communication strategies. This implies that three broad factors must be considered in attaining the above goal: technological design, media ecosystem, and social psychological factors. The research concludes that democratic discourse in the age of digital communications is also an issue of human communication and its change. Technological platforms are only growing, and thus, our communication principles must also have sufficient measures to maintain the democratic values of courtesy, tolerance, and decision-making.

Psychological Mechanisms of Polarization

The computational and discourse data examination provided a rich and nuanced understanding of the cognitive processes that drive polarization and how these can be escalated with the help of the digital media platform. Thus, polarization is a system of subjective interpretation, interaction, and communication technologies.

Identity-Based Fragmentation

Consequently, polarizing communication strategies can be considered grounded in the construction of identity. Consequently, Trump's Twitter communication intentionally used identification: political identification was not only a policy but identification with an entity. This identity-based fragmentation works through several psychological processes.
First, all the communication strategies described in the examples always contained linguistic features that constructed Insider/Outer opposition. Other features that contributed to the formation of the groups include exclusive pronouns, categorical statements, and specific use of language. These linguistic choices led to a phenomenon of the categorization processes in which individuals gradually associate themselves with the political team to which they belong.
The most effective strategy, identity fragmentation, appealed to people's most fundamental desires to belong, be acknowledged, and be safe. Therefore, polarizing communication provided the psychological meaning of collective identification by telling a motivational story of collective

identity. The tweets the authors analyzed were not just a reflection of the political attitude; they were an explicit representation of who Twitter is, what it supports, and whom it involves.

Emotional Contagion through Social Media

Social media platforms were expected to act as a framework for emotion transmission, and it was not difficult to share emotions across different social networks. The work and its computational analysis also revealed processes of emotional amplification that did not occur at the dyadic level.

Certain words and subject matter were selected in the tweets to get quick and generalized emotional reactions. Hedious language and catastrophic language were used in the communication, as well as narratives that are emotionally based in order to get high arousal emotions, which are more likely to be passed on through the digital networks. The affective consequences of these posts were heightened by the algorithmic features of the SM platforms because they were designed to suggest content that elicited strong affective reactions by signaling adequate information.

This emotional contagion process went through the rational thinking process and influenced our limbic and autonomic nervous systems. The tweets acted as triggers that could quickly ignite fear, anger, group grievances, and conformity with the tribe among a reasonably large audience.

Reinforcement of Pre-Existing Cognitive Biases

The study also explained how some forms of communication could manipulate psychological dispositions and behaviors, ensuring that only positive feedback loops were created. Nevertheless, the confirmation bias was the most prominent because the communication offered stories supporting prior attitudes and emotions.

The linguistic strategies aligned with recognizing the cognitive perspectives of language generation and perception. Therefore, because the information has been given in a way that would appeal to people's feelings and has been presented in the form of stories, people could not reason with the information. The tweets posted by the selected individuals were fallacious in that they contained cognitive models that were in line with the current paradigm; thus, the audience was likely to accept new information that challenged their previous knowledge.

Furthermore, aspects of selective exposure and motivated reasoning were also used in the communication. Thus, the strategies provided a structure of knowledge from which it was almost impossible to distinguish or even imagine the other possibilities. This led to the development of what might be referred to as cognitive isolationism, through which individuals shield themselves from receiving information that might be contradictory to their own.

Erosion of Interpersonal Political Empathy

The most painful of all the described mechanisms was the systematic deconstruction of political interpersonal empathy. The communication strategies also showed the political adversaries as irrational holders of opposing opinions and dangers to the public and concord.

Hence, the author presented the gradual decrease in people's empathy through related linguistic and psychological mechanisms. Through dehumanization of the other, construction of the persecution narrative, and erasing the potential to recognize the other as a subject with multiple personalities, communication was about depersonalization in order to get to honest interpersonal communication.

Based on the research, the authors concluded that this empathy decay was indeed deliberate. In this way, communication reduced the potential for conventional political processes, bargaining, comprehension, and cooperation to address the issues.

Technological Amplification

These psychological mechanisms were, therefore, relevant to the context of the digital communication framework. The architecture of social media platforms ensures that content that creates a high level of emotion is posted, and therefore, the technological system encourages extreme approaches.

For this reason, polarization is not a simple phenomenon and cannot be explained by one theory. These works show that language, technology, and cognitive operation define the politics in mass society.

These mechanisms must be known to design better interventions and restore the possibility of democratic dialogue in the increasingly polarised world of digital communication.

Conclusion

In the paper, the author analyzes the 2024 US presidential election and the qualitative analysis of the posts on Donald Trump's Twitter. The author concludes that the latter uses a different strategy regarding the polarization of political discourse. This was not political propaganda; no, this was a PSYOP aimed at breaking apart social bonds and amplifying affective polarization.

Linguistic strategies were deliberately chosen to target weaknesses in the digital media environment. Trump's tweets modified the political discourse paradigm by sharing the political stories of the 'other' as an opponent and encoding the political rivalry as a fight for existence.

Communication uses linguistic strategies to create clear and mutually exclusive boundaries between the social and political fields. These sophisticated strategies included using invective to vilify political opponents and cast them as the other, dividing politics into clear winners and losers, portraying the political spectrum as binary and polarised, labeling political rivals, and turning politics into a sports team.

Interestingly, the author of the tweets at least had some curiosity about the psychological aspect of social pressure. Hence, with repeated reference to group antagonism, the creation of persecutory discourses, the enhancement of affective struggles, and, therefore, the manipulation of the current social categories, the communication was to control the psychological reaction.

Social networks were most directly relevant to these polarization strategies. This paper examined algorithmic architecture strategies by design based on content that stimulated high levels of emotional engagement and thereby contributed to the formation of a technological culture of spectacle and polarization.

The quantitative analysis also showed a high level of polarity of the tendencies. Of the tweets, 67.3% used explicit polarizing language, and the overall sentiment volatility was 0.82 on the 0-1 scale. The target political opponents were named in the tweets in 42.5% of cases, and hashtag usage revealed a relatively well-defined pattern of partisanship.

It removed the potential for politicizing interpersonal and political empathy, affirmed prior political attitudes, produced separate realities of knowledge, undermined the credibility of institutions, and framed the political conflict in terms of identity.

In addition to these direct political communications, these strategies disclosed some of the significant problems of democracy and its deliberation process. Therefore, the tweets offered two opposing means of understanding the world; therefore, honest political discourse was barely discernible. This change is the political party – from being a policy ideology to the politics of identity, and the latter gave rise to psychological barriers between the two parties. In other words, it became almost impossible to find a middle ground to stand on or at least attempt to try to put ourselves in the other person's shoes.

During this communication, I also learned that emotion can be used as a means of psychological warfare. In this manner, tweets could generate emotional responses that would disrupt people's normal political cognition.

Thus, polarization strategies cannot be analyzed apart from the technological environment of the campaigns. The structures of the current SMs encourage communication through provocative and emotional content, and communication has become psychological warfare.

This paper discussed some of the most critical issues of contemporary democratic societies, namely, the problem of democracy viability, the issue of institutional trust, the issue of political discourse as a war on minds, and the issue of the possibility of rational political discourse at all.

Finally, the analysis of Donald Trump's discourse on Twitter during the 2024 US Presidential Election was an incredibly complex psychological warfare approach to the changing political engagement paradigm. These communication strategies and technologies were, hence, crucial in the process of the polarization of politics in the United States.

Addressing the problem at all stages, including enhancing digital literacy, regulating content at the platform level, conducting psychological research into the best communication strategies, and creating an alternative communication infrastructure, leads to the first set of concrete recommendations for further action.

Hence, this research affirms that to encourage democracy in a technological society, one needs the context of the relationship between linguistic, computing, psychological, and group factors.

Limitations

Analyzing the current study's results must also consider several other limitations that may impact the study. Some of the possible unintended biases in the data collection process may affect the computation of Trump's tweets. Some of these could be due to the Tensorflow and Keras data collection, sentiment analysis, and linguistic features detection routines, which could be complex and unintentionally embedded with a given approach or may not capture some features. Also, the problem of how to get the context interpretation is a theoretical methodological problem. Political discourse on social media is not just on the textual level of analysis. Nevertheless, some aspects of context, such as a sense of humor, culture, and the latest tendencies in language usage, cannot easily be hardcoded by an algorithm. This poses a big methodological challenge for formulating a sound theoretical framework because digital communication is an ongoing process through which linguistic signifiers can alter meanings in the blink of an eye.

The second major constraint of the study is the aspect of time in the social media communication processes. Social media technologies are dynamic; language, technology, and the public are constantly in flux. A clear-cut communication strategy that may work at one time may be meaningless or have to be changed entirely in no time. This is a problematic issue for the research and raises questions over the reliability of the conclusions that can be drawn from the data, suggesting that whilst it is possible to conclude the data, these conclusions are best described as being time-bound and that the study offers a snapshot of digital political communication at a particular time.

As such, these are not fatal flaws to the research but rather demonstrate the difficulties experienced when using the methodological approach to analyze digital political communication. Thus, the question arises as to why more of this work is not being conducted, particularly that which is ongoing, developing, and methodological, to capture today's political communication's complex, technical, and linguistically sophisticated nature.

References

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. Cambridge University Press.

Fairclough, N. (2013). Critical discourse analysis and critical policy studies. Critical Policy Studies, 7(2), 177-197.

Garrett, R. K. (2019). Social media's contribution to political polarization. Annual Review of Political Science, 22, 301-319.

Gillespie, T. (2018). Custodians of the internet: Platforms, content moderation, and the hidden decisions that shape social media. Yale University Press.

Habermas, J. (1989). The structural transformation of the public sphere (T. Burger, Trans.). MIT Press.

Kitchin, R. (2014). The data revolution: Big data, open data, data infrastructures and their consequences. Sage.

Lakoff, G. (2016). Moral politics: How liberals and conservatives think (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. Information, Communication & Society, 14(6), 757-769.

Murthy, D., Pension, V., & Middleton, C. (2016). Techmopolitics: Thinking about digital politics in a big data era. Social Media + Society, 2(3), 1-4.

Ott, B. L. (2017). The age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of disorder. Critical Studies in Media Communication, 34(1), 61-79.

Sunstein, C. R. (2017). Republic: Divided democracy in the age of social media. Princeton University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), The social psychology of intergroup relations (pp. 33-47). Brooks/Cole.

van Dijk, T. A. (2015). Critcal discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach.Methods of Critical Discourse Studies, 3, 63-74.