The Influential Role of Social Media in Creating a Public Stance: A Corpus-Based Appraisal Analysis

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Abstract

By using a corpus-based analysis, this study aims to investigate how social media microblogging platforms, namely Facebook and Twitter, are effective tools in the formation of a public stance and fostering interpersonal affiliation. Primarily, the integration of Corpus Linguistics and Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005) has aided in identifying the common stance of social media users who aspire to make their voices heard and attract more supporters with common interests to form a community of shared values. AntConc software version 3.5.9 is utilized to analyze posts and tweets taken from Facebook and Twitter concerning the Qur'an burning incident that took place in Sweden on 21st January 2023. The total number posts came to 2037 and were collected during the period from 21st January to 27th February 2023. The emphasis is on the more frequently used clusters described with attitudinal values that micro bloggers employ to figure out their public stance. This study concludes that Online hate speech on social media can potentially result in offline hate crimes. Thus, a negative appraisal is utilized more frequently across all attitude systems to convey the rejection of social media users mixing hate speech with the concept of freedom of expression.

Keywords: microblogging platforms, ambient affiliation, stance, corpus-based analysis, Appraisal Theory.

1- Introduction

With the advent of social media, unprecedented forms of sociality and communication are emerging through these new technologies that made our life more digitalized. Social media are a great resource for linguistic analysis that necessitates delving deeply through its content. Social media are an umbrella term used to denote not only web-based services that permit some sort of social contact and communication but also platforms through which content can be generated and shared (Zappavigna, 2012). It is also claimed that social media are a community of its own that is capable of making changes in reality. Micro bloggers use digital discourse to make their voices heard on a global scale. Digital discourse can take place either synchronously, in real time, or asynchronously, in delayed time (Rumsiene, 2009).

Social media have aided in expanding democracy by providing more people the ability to have a public voice. For instance, the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 were triggered to a large extent by social media. Additionally, Zappavigna (2012) suggests that "Social media afford a lens on types of social interaction previously not easily viewed" (p.7). For instance, Debates on social media can create collaborative engagement and a union of thought that shall eventually lead to a certain unified stance.

On 21st January 2023, Rasmus Paludan, a Danish-Swedish far-right extremist, delivered an hour-long speech against Islam and immigration and subsequently set light to a copy of the Qur'an near Turkey's embassy in Stockholm and then Turkey's embassy in Copenhagen later that month amid tight police protection (Hajjaj, 2023). Qur'an burning is a heinous insult to Muslims worldwide; such incident arouses hate crimes based on religion and hatred. The burning of Islam's holy book infuriated the Muslim world, leading to protests and calls for boycotts of Swedish products (Agence France-Presse, 2023). Additionally, Turkey's Foreign Minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, requested Sweden to prevent such a "vile act" that he deemed to be a "hate crime" that cannot be categorized as freedom of expression or freedom of speech (Hajjaji, 2023). As a result, several countries with a majority of Muslims, such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Morocco, and Iran have denounced such blatant displays of Islamophobia in response. The Qur'an-burning incidents led to numerous street protests in Tehran, Lebanon, and Kuwait. Moreover, The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) also called for unified actions to stop Qur'an burnings in the future (Welle, 2023).

1.1. Microblogging

Zappavigna (2014) defines Microblogging as "a highly social activity involving communicative practices in which conversational reciprocity is central" (p.141). Hence Microblogging affiliation might be considered "ambient" in the sense that micro bloggers do not have to communicate directly to align around a similar value (Zappavigna, 2014, pp.141-142). Instead, they can indirectly express their alignments by presenting specific patterns of evaluation, or they can do so explicitly using resources like hashtags (e.g.#Qur'an_burning #Sweden #doublestandards) (Zappavigna, 2014).

1.1.1. Twitter

Twitter, launched in 2006, is a dominant microblogging service, where users not only share their opinions, achievements, life events, etc, but they can also utilize it as a forum for people to interact with one another, report on and reply to current events, engage in discussions, and share their passions and hobbies. Accordingly, people form "hashtag Communities" on microblogging sites in which they interact and get engaged around a topic or an issue (Seargeant & Tagg, 2014, p12). Consequently, Twitter fulfills an interpersonal function by bringing people from all over the world together to establish an online community via tweets and hashtags.

1.1.2. Facebook

Facebook is a social networking site that allows users to create and maintain connections with other users, known as friends. Facebook adopts a different method, allowing users in the same "network" to view each other's profiles by default, except if the profile owner has chosen to restrict permission to specific users (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 213). Like other social media sites, Facebook employs hashtags to group information into categories to make it simpler for other users to find their postings through conversational tagging (Israel, 2023). Hence, hashtags make it easier for our postings to be more searchable and findable (Bhattacharya, 2020).

1.2. Significance and Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate how social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are effective tools in the formation of a public stance and fostering interpersonal affiliation. Moreover, it explores how ambient affiliation is enacted among micro bloggers who manage to get united around a shared attitude and value by engaging in conversational exchanges and conversational tagging. The focus is on the attitudinal clusters that social media

users utilize, to better track stance. To do this mission, both the Corpus Linguistic quantitative approach and Appraisal Theory for qualitative analysis were used.

1.3.   Hypotheses of the Study:

1- Facebook and Twitter are powerful tools for establishing a public attitude and enhancing sociality and bonding.
2- The Qur'an burning incident triggers more negative attitudinal values of appreciation.

1.4. Research Questions:

1- How can ambient affiliation be enacted via conversational exchanges and conversational tagging?
2- What is the most frequently used subcategory of attitude in this study?
3- How can people use microblogging services to join conversations and construe interpersonal affinity?
4- How can the general features of digital discourse be manipulated to influence a global collective response?

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study:

This study comprises Facebook posts and Twitter tweets taken from the two tech giants to explore how these platforms are influential in construing a common stance. The study is limited to the attitude category of the Appraisal Theory to see how micro bloggers get united around a shared attitude. It contains two corpora, the first corpus is taken from Facebook posts and the second one is from Twitter tweets. This study overlooks the difference in style between the two corpora, as this is beyond the scope of the study.

2- Literature Review

This section shows how several studies employed the Appraisal Theory to analyze evaluative language. Furthermore, it presents an investigation of the linguistic theories that form the foundation of this linguistic framework.

2.1. Review of Related Studies:

Several studies have applied the Appraisal Theory in the analysis of evaluative language (e.g., Martin, 2004) while other studies integrate Appraisal Theory and corpus linguistics to explore the evaluative nature of social media discourse (e.g., Zappavigna, 2012, Ross and Caldwell, 2020, Schaede, 2018). Some researchers have focused on the grave consequences of online hate speech (e.g., Williams et al. 2019, Shehabat, 2015) while other researchers have

focused on how micro bloggers form online and virtual communities (e.g., Zappavigna, 2011, 2012).

Zappavigna (2011) investigates the use of language as a tool to build an online community of shared value through using one of the social media platforms, Twitter. She combines corpus linguistics and discourse analysis to explore "how the hashtag, a typographic convention on Twitter, has extended its meaning potential to operate as a linguistic marker referencing the target of appraisal in a tweet" (Zappavigna, 2011, p.788). She reaches the finding that 'hashtags' play a linguistic and social function of affiliating digital followers "Search for me and affiliate with my value!" (p.789).

Zappavigna (2012) focuses on ambient sociality and how Twitter users affiliate through searchable talk and constitute virtual communities. Zappavigna builds on the idea of "ambient affiliation", a concept introduced in her article (2011). Zappavigna (2012) integrates Appraisal Theory, and corpus linguistics in her study to explore the evaluative and interpersonal nature of social media discourse. In her book, Zappavigna utilizes qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the interpersonal and ideational meaning.

Schaede (2018) investigates, in her paper, the evaluative functions of hashtags in social media discourse, particularly on Twitter to see "how meme hashtags take on evaluative qualities in certain online communities." (p. 2). She analyzes a corpus of 200,000 tweets by utilizing Martin and Whites' (2005) Appraisal Theory. She concludes that the majority of the evaluations in her data falls under the category of attitude.

Shehabat (2015) examines the role of social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in aiding political mobilization and the emergence of the Arab Spring revolutions (p.3). In his thesis, Shehabat (2015) demonstrates that social media networks can be regarded as a double-edged weapon when used for political activism (p.8). Shehabat (2015) highlights how social networks have transformed from being sites of "cohesion and hope to ones of antagonism and hate" (p.28).

Chetty and Alathur (2018) indicate that hate speech addresses a variety of protected qualities, including disability, ethnicity, gender, and religion. They argue that hate speech is a form of terrorism that can either trigger or follow a terrorist incident. Moreover, they emphasize that hate speech may arise from several factors, including the freedom of expression. They reach the findings that combating hate speech and terrorism is efficient when governments formulate appropriate policies in collaboration with Internet service providers (ISPs) and online social networks.

Williams et al. (2019) indicate that online hate speech is being considered as representing "a pernicious social problem" by national governments (p.93). They reach the findings that, for the digital era, hate crimes occur as a cycle rather than a singular incident. Williams et al. (2019) conclude that online hate speech is part of a larger cycle of abuse that can start on social media and then spread to the real world.

Ross and Caldwell (2020) integrate the theory of appraisal of Martin & White (2005) and "a corpus-based comparative keyword analysis" to examine a selection of the tweets of President Donald Trump (p.13). Ross and Caldwell (2020) analyze a large research corpus of 3000 tweets collected between 29th June 2016 and 21st August 2017 in addition to "a discourse reference corpus" comprising 205,303 original tweets (p.18). This paper focuses on the interpersonal metafunction of language that attends to the linguistic resources speakers use to construct roles and negotiate relationships.

Martin (2004) highlights the significance of appraisal and the positive function it plays in enacting sociality and bonding through communicating our emotions to get connected (p.321). Moreover, he examines the structure of a 'Mourning' editorial from HK Magazine, a weekly lifestyle magazine published 10 days after September 11, 2001, highlighting how the editor negotiates solidarity with his readers. Martin (2004) concludes that "one text can change the world" (p.342).

The current study extends some of the findings of the previously listed studies. However, it differs from them as it focuses on the clusters utilized by micro bloggers in reaction to the Qur'an burning incident. In addition, this study displays how a stance established by micro bloggers realizes the interpersonal metafunction of Halliday by uniting people into a virtual community of a shared attitude.

2.2. Review of Related Linguistic Theories:

This section presents the theoretical framework used in this study. This section introduces Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) briefly, after which the theory will be narrowed down to focus on Appraisal Theory

2.2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics:

A group of researchers led by Professor James Martin of the Linguistics Department at the University of Sydney in the 1900s put forward the Appraisal Theory derived from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). SFL views language in terms of its social functions. It provides 3 metafunctions for language: the ideational function of constructing experience, the interpersonal function of negotiating relationships and identities, and the textual function of

organizing text (Halliday& Matthiessen, 2004). SFL considers language to be a tool for creating meaning. It is a functional theory in the sense that it is designed to address questions about how meanings work, or function, within the contexts in which they are created (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004).

2.2.2 Appraisal Theory

The Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005) is a comprehensive theory about emotion in text. The appraisal framework, as the extension and supplement for Halliday's Systemic-Functional Theory, focuses on the "systematic analysis of evaluation and stance as they operate in whole texts" (White, 2011, p. 14). Appraisal Theory is displayed as a particular approach to analyze language, adopt stances and attitudes, construct textual voice, and constitute interpersonal and evaluative positioning (Martin & White, 2005).

Martin and White (2005) regard "appraisal as an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics" (p. 33). The Appraisal Theory is primarily designed to examine how stance and emotion are conveyed to readers and listeners through language. Hunston (2007) noted that stance markers are better identified through phrases rather than individual words. Appraisal Theory addresses the second metafunction of language, that is, the formation of interpersonal meaning through language. Appraisal comprises three main categories: Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation.

2.2.2.1 Attitude

Attitude, according to Martin and White (2005), is concerned with the semantic resources used to express "emotional reactions, judgments of behavior and evaluation of things" (p.35). Attitude can be positive or negative, explicit or implicit, and it is associated with what has traditionally been alluded to as emotion, ethics, and aesthetics. Furthermore, it is divided into three subcategories: 'affect', 'judgment', and 'appreciation' (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35).

Firstly, **Affect** is concerned with the resources for expressing feelings in discourse (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). Affect, according to Martin & White (2005), is further subdivided into three variables: un/happiness, in/security, and dis/satisfaction. The un/happiness variable has to do with the emotional feeling of the speaker; the in/security variable is concerned with the speaker's feelings of peace or restlessness toward their environments or other people; the dis/satisfaction variable deals with people's feelings of accomplishment and frustration toward themselves or their performances (pp.46-49).

Secondly, **Judgment** is concerned with "attitudes towards behavior, which we admire or criticize, praise or condemn" (Martin & white 2005, p. 42). Under Judgment, human behaviors are evaluated positively or negatively based on social expectations, common values, and social norms, as well as laws, rules, and regulations. Judgment, following Martin and White (2005), is further divided into two sections (p. 52):

1. **Social esteem**: is the section of judgments in which the evaluation of people's behavior is based on social ethics. This section of judgment comprises three traits which are 'normality' (how unusual someone is), 'capacity' (how capable they are), and 'tenacity' (how resolute they are) (Martin &White, 2005, p.52).

2- **Social sanction**: is the section of judgments in which the evaluation of people's behavior is based on legal /religious rules. This section comprises judgment of two traits which are "veracity (how truthful someone is) and propriety (how ethical someone is)" (Martin &White, 2005, p.52)

Thirdly, White (2011) defines **appreciation** as "meanings by which assessments are made of semiotic and natural phenomena by reference … to their aesthetic qualities" (p.17). Appreciation covers aesthetics, i.e., the resources for expressing people's evaluations and reactions to things, their composition, and their value (Martin & White, 2005).
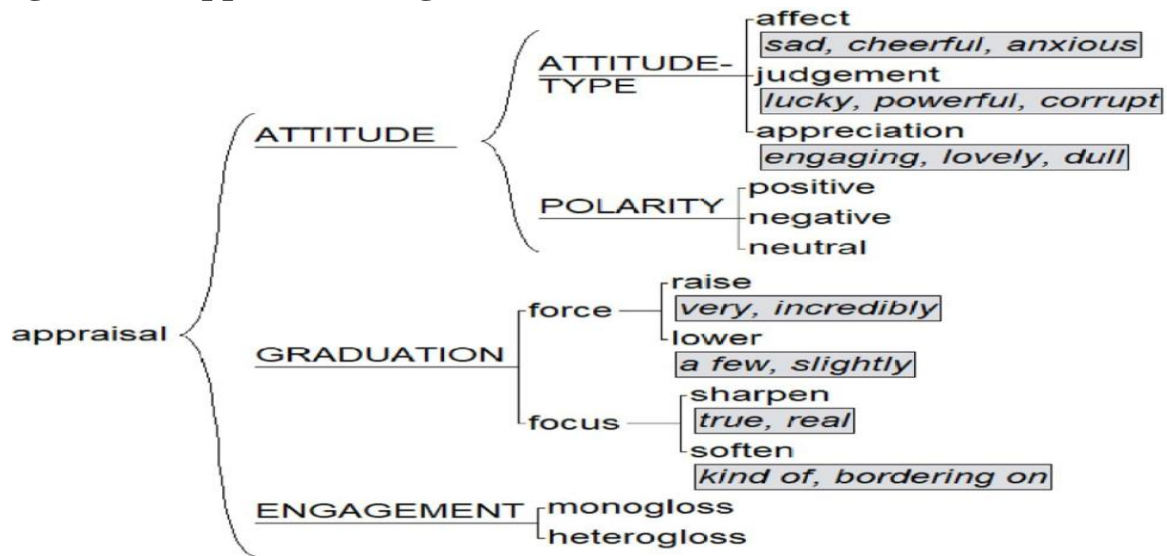
2.2.2.2 *Engagement*

According to White (2001), engagement is concerned with "resources by which speakers/writers adjust and negotiate the arguability of their utterances" (p.1). It tackles "meaning-making processes by which the speaker/writer negotiates relationships of alignment/disalignment vis-à-vis the various value positions" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 95). Martin and White (2005) described the term "engagement" as "the play of voices around opinions in discourse"," or the way speakers engage and interact with other voices and how they position themselves in response to other viewpoints (p.35).

2.2.2.3 *Graduation*

Graduation deals with "grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). It is divided into two major resources: force and focus. Force displays how strong or weak an evaluation is whereas focus refers to a ranking inside a statement, directing the reader's attention to what is significant and what isn't (Martin & White, 2005).

Figure 1   Appraisal Categories Based On Martin &White (2005)

2.2.3 Corpus Linguistics

Corpus Linguistics (CL) is concerned with the study of language in its actual context via using corpora which Baker (2006) defined as "large bodies of naturally occurring language data stored on a computer" (p.1). CL can be considered as a research tool or a methodology to study language and investigate certain linguistic phenomena according to a set of criteria determined by its intended purpose. In addition, by utilizing statistical software, CL facilitates the investigation of written or spoken language structures, usages, and patterns of lexis. The software enables the researcher to locate a specific word or phrase in its actual context within a collection of texts (Hunston, 2007). The current study employs CL as an analytical methodology to provide a quantitative analysis which will be followed by a qualitative analysis of the evaluative patterns and clusters.

3-   Methodology

The corpus software employed in this study is Laurence Anthony's AntConc version 3.5.9 (2020). The free AntConc software is utilized for its Word List tool, Concordance tool, and Cluster tool to get the statistics, words in context, and patterns of the searched terms. A stop list is used before producing a word list to cut off all function words because of their high frequency of occurrence that may unnecessarily affect the total number of the word count of the corpus. My investigation will focus on posts, tweets and their comments taken from Facebook and Twitter, respectively, amounting to a total number of 2037 posts concerning the Qur'an burning incident that took place in Sweden. The corpus consists of 21250 word tokens and 4497 word types. The period for

these corpora spans from 21st January to 27th February 2023. In my study, I explore repeated patterns and clusters that occur over and over again in posts and tweets that express evaluation and affective stance.

4. Data Analysis

Given the difficulty of manually and individually analyzing every post and tweet in the corpus, samples of posts with the chosen clusters that predominantly abound in evaluative language are analyzed, tagged, and then evaluated using the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005). The cluster tool demonstrates words or patterns that frequently come together, either to the left or the right, with the search terms, and then ranks these results by their frequency. The samples are manually scrutinized and analyzed within their concordance lines to describe the recurrent patterns of evaluation. The chosen attitudinal affectual terms are bolded and tagged in square brackets next to them. The system of coding serves as the foundation for a qualitative analysis.

Tweets and posts in English from all over the world were also chosen. There have been no restrictions on nationalities or regions. The corpus was manually built by searching social media platforms: Twitter and Facebook. The search process was conducted via the usage of Twitter's advanced search engine and Facebook keyword search respectively. The corpus is amassed by manually searching the hashtags #Qur'an burning, #Sweden, and #doublestandards on Twitter and by searching for keywords "Qur'an burning" and #SwedenQur'anburning on Facebook. The study adopts the abbreviation system introduced by Martin and White (2005, p.71) for annotating the corpus:

Table 1

List of Symbols and Abbreviations on Martin and White (2005)

Symbols	Stands for	Symbols	Stands for
+	Positive valence/attitude	Reac	appreciation: reaction
_	Negative valence/attitude	Comp	appreciation: composition
Hap	affect: un/happiness	Val	appreciation: valuation
Sec	affect: in/security	C	The causes of the incident
Sat	affect: dis/satisfaction	SM users	Social media users
Inc	affect: dis/inclination	Prop	judgment: propriety
Norm	judgment: normality	Ver	judgment: veracity
Cap	judgment: capacity	Ten	judgment: tenacity

4.1. Causes of the incident

As the analysis demonstrates, this part focuses on clusters of hate. The following figure displays the clusters of two lexical items associated with the search term "hate". The minimum threshold of frequency for words to count as clusters for "hate" is a frequency of (5). The attitudinal lexical item "hate" is closely associated with the lexical term "hate speech" to show the pervasive attitude that the incident generates. The following clusters demonstrate that among the causes of this despicable act are (hate speech and freedom of speech).

Figure 2 **Qualitative Analysis of *"hate speech"***

This cluster occurs 6 times. The following concordance hits contain several attributes used by micro bloggers to reveal their stance of such an awful crime. The listed attitudinal lexical items and patterns are analyzed and explicated for attitude only. However, the graduation subcategories of force and focus are also employed when significant.

Hit 1 texts and beliefs, without discrimination. Thank you @Norway MFA for taking **decisive action (+appreciation: reac)** against **hate speech**! TLP in Pakistan shows **full power (+judgement: cap)** against the culprit who tried to burn

Hit 2 Paludan is a Danish-Swedish rightwing extremist politician who has earlier convictions of **bitter (- appreciation: reac) hate speech**. He has Swedish

Hit 3 an illegal act even under Swedish law, rising to the standard of what they define as **damned (- appreciation: reac)** hate **speech**. Sweden needs to take responsibility for its **shortsighted love of hate (-judgment: prop).** The Russian

Hit 4 I don't get how this Qur'an burning in Sweden doesn't fall under **disrespectful (- appreciation: reac) hate speech.** Turkey says it won't OK

Hit 5 Or freedom of expression when it comes to Islam and Muslims and a **strict prohibition (+ appreciation: reac) of hate speech** when it's against anyone else

Hit 6 in a world of double standards where whosoever does anything wrong, Muslims get blamed. Why **vicious (- appreciation: reac)** <u>hate speech</u> is allowed in Europe in the name of free speech, freedom of expression, and secularism?

In hit 1, the micro blogger appreciates the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for taking a stern stance on hate speech and discriminatory discourse. This tweet demonstrates that Qur'an burning is an issue that requires a firm response. The use of the negative quality "bitter" to attribute hate speech, in Hit 2, demonstrates the grave repercussions of hate speech. In hit 3, SM users negatively describe hate speech to be damned and condemned. Furthermore, Sweden is viewed as an unwise country that cherishes hatred, a fact manifested in its indiscretion to consider the likely results of its actions. **"Shortsighted love of hate"** is a token of –ve propriety where the micro blogger describes how imprudent Sweden is. Judgement is inscribed by employing a metaphor that depicts an emotional outburst.

In the above concordance lines, SM users resort to employing digital discourse features where they use emotionally charged negative adjectives such as "bitter", "damned", "disrespectful", and "vicious" to reiterate the resulting negative reaction of the micro bloggers. Hence, the appreciation category in these hits could also evoke negative judgement of Paludan himself as the doer of the action.

In the above-mentioned hits, ambient affiliation is created at the evaluative level of language. Furthermore, SM users get united over the theme of rejection of the Qur'an burning act which creates solidarity among them. Digital discourse affords the global reach of online debates and discussions. Participants may come from different places, have different experiences, and come from different cultural backgrounds (Hafner, 2018). This variety of viewpoints can improve communication and enhance intercultural understanding.

Figure 3   Qualitative Analysis of the Cluster *"freedom of"*

The phrase "freedom of" occurs 220 times in the corpus. It co-occurs with different lexical items such as (speech, expression, press, action, consequences, right, religion, worship). Some of these associations depict the negative assessment of micro bloggers' attitude (freedom of hypocrisy, freedom of hate, freedom of violence, freedom of depression).

Hit 5. May be if it was the Torah they would call it anti-Semitic. Everything has limits, no **absolute (- appreciation: reac)** **freedom of speech**. When there is no **respect (-judgment: prop)** and no **decency (-judgment: prop)** then the line

Hit 9. of burning anything would be the rainbow flag, but would that be considered as **aggravating (- appreciation: val)** **freedom of expression**?! boycott Sweden

Hit 16. taking away the right of others to access it. And I want to add that hypocrisy and **freedom of expression** are two different and **frustrating (- appreciation: val)** issues. Let's not

Hit 21. right to practice their faith. And yes, democracy is **important (- appreciation: reac) and freedom of speech**, **essential (- appreciation: reac)** but you don't have to burn somebody's

Hit 26. title of freedom of expression is only **a loathsome (- appreciation: reac)** showcase and has no practical application **Freedom of speech** is just **insufficient (- appreciation: reac)** excuse

Hit 29. your school didn't teach you the difference between **awful (- appreciation: reac) freedom of expression** and freedom to hurt **(- affect: hap)** the sentiments of

Hit 33. guidance and favour of the govt.is not **freedom of expression but freedom of depression (- affect: hap)** .... **condemnable (- appreciation: reac)** act Agree entirely with all you have said

Hit 47. responsible for all this Islamophobia act They are not clever enough to know where their **damned (- appreciation: reac) freedom of expression** and liberty ends. Why playing with fire?

Hit 48. untries a democracy. Freedom of speech, freedom of opinion and **rotten to the core (- appreciation: reac) freedom of religion** are all **disgusting (- appreciation: reac)** fundamental

Hit 49. is not the book, but its content! Let's go digital. "**Freedom of speech** is **adjustable (- appreciation: reac)** baton that is **selectively (- appreciation: reac)** applied to humiliate some

Hit 98. themselves and respect other religions. God bless us all. Believe it or not that's a **masked (- appreciation: reac)** **freedom of expression** named Democracy.

Hit 142. is double standard sickness   Shame on them, it's their **adaptable (- appreciation: reac)** definition of **freedom of speech**… so they can apply it however and whenever they want! The

Hit 176. **Disgusting (- appreciation: reac) and filthy (- appreciation: reac)** is the **selective (- appreciation: reac). freedom of speech**. Shame on those who can n't

In hits 5, 106, 179 the micro blogger attempts to clarify the concept that nothing is off limits or absolute. Even freedom of speech has its responsibilities; it doesn't permit fomenting racial or religious hatred. Freedom of speech doesn't mean infinite freedom of consequences. Qur'an burning is not only a serious hate crime but it is a crime against humanity and an insult of Islam. Micro bloggers share the belief that freedom of expression ends at God's limits. Freedom of speech/expression triggers negative reaction values of appreciation as exemplified in the use of these evaluative lexical terms (ugly, damned, harsh). Moreover, digital discourse features are employed by SM users who utilize emotionally charged pejorative terms such as (distasteful, disgusting, filthy). Martin and White (2005) argue that "the terms disgust/revolt arguably combine affect with judgement or appreciation along similar lines" (p.61).

Evaluation is enhanced via the use of intensified lexis (aggravating, loathsome, rotten to the core) which triggers emotional responses of condemnation regarding such misconception of freedom. For Muslims, it is not acceptable that freedom to offend Muslims' faith is enclosed within freedom of expression. Social media users call for an action that translates their condemnation of the incident which is the boycott weapon in hit 9. The choice of the lexical terms "racism" and "hate", in hit 19, is again very symbolic since it includes the idea of hate and intolerance. To intensify the attitude, the micro bloggers, in hits 49 and 142, utilized a metaphor in which freedom is compared to a baton that can be adjusted and adapted according to tendencies. Micro bloggers, in hits 29 and 39 state that freedom should be restricted when it has to do with sanctities or to protect individuals of a religious community from harm. Thus, unrestricted freedom can result in harmful or offensive incidents. The right

to freedom of expression cannot be used as a pretext to hurt the emotions of the Muslims across the world.

5- Conclusion

Appraisal Theory is an effective and significant framework for analyzing attitudes, the kinds of emotions, and stances that are adopted in microposts. In this study, the researcher attempts to analyze the influential role of the tech giants, namely, Facebook and Twitter through a lens of Appraisal Theory to create interpersonal affinity and encourage others to follow a shared attitude. This means that they are conveying their stance to their respondents. Micro bloggers wish to differentiate between hate crime and freedom of speech as they are two different issues. There have been warnings about the dire consequences of the recurrence of Qur'an burning incidents, including the escalation of Islamophobia, the proliferation of hate speech and extremism.

Online hate speech has become increasingly prevalent and it leads to hate crime in the real world. social media platforms can be held responsible for spreading hate speech; these platforms are required to spread awareness of the seriousness of this issue. This hate speech should be removed or else it would lead to stigmatization, large-scale violence, and hate crimes. Previous research has revealed that online hate crimes and hate speech are linked to terrorist attacks such as the Christchurch Mosque shooting in New Zealand (Hanes and Machin, 2014). These social media tools should be used to strengthen messages of tolerance and combat discrimination. There should be more websites such as "STOP HATE UK" devoted to monitoring, tracking, and combating all forms of Hate Crime. These websites work closely with social media providers to get hateful content removed. Moreover, there should be more Facebook pages and Twitter feeds to spread the culture of tolerance and acceptance of others. For instance, there is an actual Facebook page titled "Stop the Burning of the Qur'an" that helps gather like-minded people and spreads awareness of the dire repercussions of the recurrence of such incidents.

Nations need to impose restrictions on freedom of expression when it comes to hate speech or violent provocation, for instance, to safeguard defenseless individuals or groups (Çıbık, 2023). On Thursday, 7th December, the Danish parliament took a good step to stop the public desecration of the Qur'an which triggered incensed demonstrations across Muslim countries. It passed a new law making it illegal to disrespect any holy text in the nation

(Olsen, 2023). The new law imposes fines and a maximum two-year prison sentence for violators (Olsen, 2023).

The researcher concludes that negative appraisal is utilized more frequently across all attitude systems: affect, judgment, and appreciation. The negative appreciation of the incident as an unacceptable one functions as an incentive for sharing and fosters an interpersonal attitude. Appreciation was the dominant subcategory of attitude employed by micro bloggers in the above concordance hits to expose the contradictory standards used by Sweden in handling Islamic issues such as the Qur'an burning. Thus, SM users are ideologically maneuvered towards construing a negative view and a common stance against that hypocritical country. Hence, Muslims all across the world affiliate ambiently to condemn the act of burning the Qur'an which is described to be highly abhorrent and offensive. The Qur'an burning incident has triggered emotional responses of condemnation of the Swedish officials who gave permits for conducting such a terrible event.

Future research may attempt to include other social media platforms to investigate more general characteristics of digital discourse and their influence in facilitating and motivating collective action. Moreover, other studies may expand the corpus to investigate all the categories of the Appraisal Theory. The researcher believes that further research may be conducted to find out more effective ways to tackle online hate speech.

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الدور المؤثر لمواقع التواصل الأجتماعي في خلق توجه عام:

تحليل تقييمي مبني على علم المدونات

فاطمة جادالرب عثمان يوسف

باحث ماجستير ـقسم اللغة الأنجليزية وأدابها

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المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى توضيح الدور المؤثر الذي تلعبه وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، وتحديداً فيسبوك وتويتر، كأدوات فعالة في خلق توجه عام وتعزيز الترابط فيما بين مستخدمي تلك المنصات. لقد ساهم الدمج بين منهج علم المدونات ونظرية التقييم لمارتن ووايت (2005) في تحديد التوجه المشترك لمستخدمي تلك المنصات، والذين يطمحون لجعل اصواتهم ذات تأثير وجذب مزيد من المؤيدين لهم من اصحاب الاهتمامات المماثلة لتكوين مجتمع من القيم المشتركة. تستخدم الدراسة برنامج(Antconc) نسخة 3.5.9 لتحليل بعض المنشورات والتغريدات المأخوذة من كلاً من فيسبوك وتويتر، والتي يبلغ عددها 2037 ، وتم تداولها خلال الفترة من 21 يناير الى 27 فبراير 2023، فيما يتعلق بواقعة حرق القرآن التي حدثت في السويد في 21 يناير 2023. تُركز الدراسة على مجموعة من التعبيرات الاكثر تكراراً والتى قام مستخدمي وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بوصفها باستخدام بعض القيم والمصطلحات التي توضح توجههم العام. واستنتجت الدراسة أن خطاب الكراهية الذي يُبث عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يُمكن أن يؤدي إلى جرائم كراهية في الواقع، ومن ثم أستخدمت الدراسة الكثير من التعبيرات السلبية التي تُعبر عن رفض مستخدمي تلك المنصات الخلط بين خطاب الكراهية ومفهوم حرية التعبير

الكلمات المفتاحية : منصـات التـدوين، التـرابط بـين الاشـخاص، التوجـه العـام، التحليـل المبنـي علـى المدونات، نظرية التقييم