

Stylistic And Political Issues In Donal J Trump's Tweets

Ananda, Hardianti Qamara¹, Sunardi², A.K.Amarullah³
Universitas Mulawarman

¹hardiantiqamara@gmail.com; ²sunardi@fkip.unmul.ac.id; ³akamarullah@fkip.unmul.ac.id

Abstract

The study was considered as stylistics analysis because it was purposed to elaborate the features of graphological level and syntactic level that found in Trump's tweets. In addition, it also discussed about the political issues that raised in his tweets because he was an active user of twitter since his presidency in 2017. This study was conducted at English Department Mulawarman University. The design of this study was qualitative approach which was purposed to classify the tweets into some features of graphological level and syntactic level. It was also used to classify the political issues raised within the tweets. There were found around 368 tweets between November 3rd and December 3rd, 2020. The instruments of the study were the writer herself and the tweets from Trump's twitter. There were also found some tweets which were not contained the type of the levels and the political issues. Afterward, the data are collected from the tweets and have been triangulated. The first finding of the study indicated the features of graphological level. There were found some features such as full stop, comma, apostrophe, and others. Full stop was the feature of graphological level that was most frequently encountered. It has been detected approximately 614 times within the tweets. Additionally, at the syntactic level, it was discovered that the simple present tense was the most often used tense in the tweets. Trump's tweets contained the feature approximately 220 times. Then, in the following result, it was discovered that election related topics were the most frequently discussed political issues in tweets. During this same period, Trump has tweeted a lot about the electoral landscape. There were around 223 instances of it in the tweets.

Keywords: Stylistics, Graphological Level, Syntactic Level, Political Issues.

1. Introduction

Stylistics has always been used to convey the writer's messages in any piece of work, either literary or non-literary. Mark (2012) mentions that stylistics is used to examine an oral and written text to determine crucial characteristics of linguistic properties, structure and patterns influencing the perception of the text. It is applicable in both literary and non-literary texts. Hence, it is always possible to criticize style in language since it involves both literary criticism and linguistics (Widdowson, 1975). Simpson (2004) states that many forms of discourse (advertising, journalism, popular music – even casual conversation) often display a high degree of stylistic proficiency, such it might be wrong to look at finesse in language use as exclusive to canonical literature. It can be concluded that stylistic is not only used to criticize canonical literature, but also it can be used to criticize some journalism instruments such as social media.

According to Blood (2000), individuals now have the unprecedented ability to share their thoughts and opinions on a wide variety of subjects through social media. One of the most popular platforms of social media is Twitter. Isaac & Ember (2016) state that Twitter,

found in 2006 in San Francisco, is currently rated the third most popular social media network in the United States and is also a widely used platform internationally. Ausserhofer & Maireder (2013) say that politicians are one group that has benefitted from Twitter and relied upon it for networking. It allows political parties and individual politicians to bypass the press to speak directly with voters (Kalsnes, 2016).

One of the notable politicians who use Twitter is the president of United States, Donald J. Trump. Trump is an active user of Twitter since March, 2009. He has already got more than 53 million followers on his Twitter account in 2019. CNN 2016 informs that He tweets quite frequently, averaging about six tweets per day during his first seven months in office. Trump already has a distinct style while he is tweeting. He has held a distinctive position in handling the stylistic devices.

Thus, based on the phenomenon above, the writer interests to analyze Trump's tweets through linguistics orientation to examine the stylistic devices especially on the graphological and the syntactical level of language features that can be applied in the stylistic analysis of his tweets. It also gives much attention to the political issues raised on his Twitter during his presidency.

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated as the following:

1. What type of graphological level and syntactic level are found and mostly dominate in Donald J Trump's Twitter?
2. What are the political issues raised in Donald J Trump Twitter during his presidency?

2. Literature Review

Stylistics is a subfield of linguistics concerned with the study of style in literary works; it is defined as 'a method of textual interpretation in which language is given primacy of position' (Simpson, 2004). Widdowson (1975) makes a similar argument, arguing that stylistics is the study of literary speech from a language perspective. Numerous types of discourse (commercial, journalism, popular music, and even casual conversation) frequently exhibit a high degree of stylistic dexterity, to the point where it would be incorrect to view stylistic dexterity in language use as unique to canonical literature (Simpson, 2004).

Graphological Level.

Crystal (1969) mentions that graphological level is the analogous study of a language's writing system or orthography as manifested in various types of handwriting or topography. In addition, Leech (1969) states that graphology is said to be superior to orthography. It is made up of punctuation and paragraphing and is used throughout the writing system. It is used to improve the structure and organization of the sentence.

Syntactic Level

Syntactic refers to the way words combine to form phrases and sentences, according to Simpson (2004). Furthermore, Yule (2006) defines syntax as the study of a sentence's structure and component order. Additionally, syntax is connected to grammar, which is referred to as lexicogrammar (Morley, 2000). Grammar is functioned as a set of rules which used to form a sentence systematically, and one of the most prominent elements of it is tenses. As stated by Declerck, Reed, and Cappelle (2006), "tense is a linguistic concept that refers to the form that a verb takes in order to locate the situation referred to in time."

Toye (1999) initially claimed that political science should become the preeminent field within development studies, heralding its emergence. This study begins by situating the new politics and development approach within a broader context of development theory and policy change. It then examines the ways in which and to what extent a number of significant conceptual approaches to political analysis in America are applicable.

The Role of Twitter in Politics

Recently, Twitter, a microblogging platform that allows users to compose messages in 280 characters or fewer, has helped politicians in their networking efforts (Ausserhofer & Maireder, 2013). The politicians utilize twitter to gain the voters through their propaganda. It connects the politicians with their voters to voice their aspirations. In this occasion, twitter helps the politicians to update about the current issues that might be happen with their constituents. However, some studies have explained that the politicians and teams which are utilizing twitter mostly to control their image in public tightly

Donald J Trump

Donald John Trump is the 45th president of the United States. Trump was born in June 14, 1946 in New York, NY (Wikipedia). Before he is being one of notable politicians in U.S.A, Trump began his career to be a real-estate developer. He was developing his father real estate. He is a business owner who owned, managed, or licensed several hotels, casinos, golf courses, resorts, and residential properties in the United States and around the world.

3. Method

The design of this study is descriptive which employs the qualitative approach as the basis of interpretation. This study is focused on the language features or “stylistics devices” and the political issues represent on Donald J. Trump’s tweets during his presidency.

Instrument

Then, the main instrument of this research is the researcher herself. Knop (1982) suggests that in conducting the qualitative research, the researcher is being the key instrument.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the display is a well-structured, condensed collection of data that enables conclusion drawing. By classifying the tweets as the data of the study, the writer is able to categorize the table into various political issues and stylistics features. The table of data display will be illustrated as follow:

Table A. Data Display

Dates					
No	Tweets	Tweets Code	Political Issues	Syntactical Level	Graphological Level
1.					

4. Results

Graphological Level

there are found various punctuations within the tweets during November 3rd to December 3rd, 2020. There are 614 full stop, 548 comma, 299 hyphen, 112 apostrophe, 56 ellipsis, 30 parentheses, 84 colon, 5 semi colon, 385 exclamation mark, 29 question mark, 95 quotation mark, and 220 slash within the tweets.

Syntactic Level

Various tenses are discovered within tweets from November 3rd to December 3rd, 2020. There are 220 tweets in the simple present tense, 158 tweets in the simple past tense, 79 tweets in the present continuous tense, 63 tweets in the simple future tense, 44 tweets in the present perfect tense, ten tweets in the future continuous tense, two tweets in the present perfect continuous tense.

Finding of Political Issues in Trump's Tweets

there are found 223 tweets of Election Issue, 109 tweets of Voter Fraud Issue, 9 tweets of Mail in Ballot Issue, 8 tweets of Criminal Politicians Issue, 7 tweets of COVID-19 Issue, c, 1 tweet of Drug Price Regulation Issue, 18 tweets of Political Advertising on Social Media Issue, 8 tweets of Social Media Regulation Issue, 1 tweet of Welfare Issue, 2 tweets of Tax Issue, 3 tweets of Fracking Issue, 1 tweet of Muslim Immigrant, 1 tweet of Border Wall Issue, 2 tweets of Terrorism, and 50 tweets of none categories tweets in between 3rd of November and 3rd of December.

5. Discussion

Trump's twitter had been used as a tool for Donald J. Trump to communicate with his followers all over the world in order to deliver about his thought towards the issues that happened in United States especially for political issues. Then, it was also used by the writer to analyze the stylistics features; graphological level and syntactic level. The graphological level consists of punctuation such as full stop, comma, hyphen, slash, and others. In addition, syntactic level consists of tenses, for example, simple present tense, simple past tense, past continuous tense, and others.

Based on the result of the study, the first finding found that there were some features of graphological level, and the most appeared features from the tweets was full stop. It was appeared 614 times in the tweets. In addition, simple present tense was the most dominated feature used in the tweets. Trump's tweets contained the feature approximately 220 times. This finding had similarity with Clarke and Grieve's (2019) finding which showed that full stop was the most feature used in the graphological level. Then, the different between this study and the previous study was the previous study did not analyze some features from syntactic level.

The second finding showed that there were found some political issue in United States on November to December 2020 such as election, voter fraud, mail in ballot, and others. Then the most raised political issues in this study was about election issues. It had the different result with the previous study from Ara'ujo and Ebbelaar (2018). Their study explained that the most raised issues was about a classifier based on voting system using supervised learning.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings and the discussion which have been explained in chapter IV, the writer draws some conclusions that related to the problem of the studies. The writer finds the most frequent feature in graphological level is full stop and present simple tense in syntactic level of stylistics during the period of time. Other levels of language style, such as phonological and lexical, are not included in this study. The main reason of choosing of language level in stylistics is because the tweets are lack certain linguistic elements simply because they are not derived from literary works.

In addition, for concluding the finding of second problem statement, the writer has discovered that the most talked political issues in Trump's tweets are about election issue. Trump has tweeted about election a lot on his twitter during that time because United States of America was holding an election of president during the time.

7. Suggestions

Based on the findings, the writer would like to offer some suggestions to improve both teaching and learning process. The following suggestions are specially addressed to English department students and future writers.

For English Department Students

The writer suggests that the English department students which majoring the linguistics field to learn more about stylistics and its features since it is one of the important knowledge which needs to be used in analyzing some literary or non-literary text. The English department students are also suggested to conduct another analysis in stylistics approach by using another instrument that can accessed from another social media platform.

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