



Analyzing Donald Trump's Negotiation Approach Using evaluation assertion analysis

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Abstract

Introduction

In the present era, human life is closely linked to social media and cyberspace. It can be said that in the coming years, the pattern of human behavior, prediction, and action will be followed in this space. Obviously, the most influential actions and behavior are attributed to those who have power, wealth, and resources. Currently, US President Donald Trump is one of these figures. One of his important and influential issues in the current world is his negotiation style. Donald Trump is famous for his special style of public diplomacy in the Twitter space. He has also brought his negotiations to the virtual field, especially the Twitter space or the X network. In the initial assessment of Trump's statements, the impact of his personality on the negotiation process is obvious. In this study, an attempt has been made to analyze his personality and to find out his negotiation style through his tweets before, during, and after the negotiation. It seems that the US President has advanced his foreign policy with an aggressive negotiation style based on threats and enticements. To answer this question, first, Trump's statements and orientations were extracted from the opinion poll method, and then his personality type was examined, and from this personality, his negotiation method and applied policy were extracted. It should be noted that the exact personality type of individuals cannot be extracted from a person's tweets and statements, and clinical examination is needed; but with high accuracy, by examining actions and effects, it is possible to achieve what affects the outside of individuals. This examination can at least be effective in examining his negotiation method.

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Methodology

Examining Trump's personality and negotiating style requires examining his comments on Twitter. In line with this goal, the research method of this article was content analysis using the technique of measured comments. The content analysis method was initially used to analyze lexical items in journalism and political studies, but today, due to the deepening of this method, it is used in various fields such as psychology, linguistics, history, and recently geography. Therefore, political psychology will be very helpful in this article. There are three main approaches to the content analysis method:

1. Frequency counting analysis: This method is the most common content analysis method used to count the frequency of words and not the intensity of the meanings of words.
2. Probabilistic analysis: This method deals with the relationships between symbols, not just their occurrence.
3. Personal statement analysis: This method is used by Osgood, Saporta, and Nunnally to extract evaluations from texts. (Reimer & Osborne, 1973, 96)

In the third method, evaluative statement analysis, sentences are divided into three parts:

1. Attitude object: That is, words or phrases whose meaning or evaluation varies greatly from one person to another; such as negotiation, freedom, source, etc. These differences in the evaluation of attitudinal objects are the main concern of this technique.
2. Verbal link: That is, the verb form that determines the degree of certainty of the evaluation and its interpretation has the least difference between different people.
3. Evaluative words: That is, words and phrases that convey the intensity of the qualitative evaluation of the attitude object with words such as valuable, worthless, useful, useless, and their interpretation also has the least difference between different people.

In this method, the existing propositions are divided into evaluative propositions into the above sections, and compound sentences can also be used. After dividing into sections of attitude objects, verbal conjunctions, and measurement words, coding is done. Each code represents the direction (positive and negative) and intensity (1, 2, and 3), which are used separately for verbal conjunctions and measurement words as follows.

Determining the direction (positive or negative):

Verbal conjunction: If the verb is such that it connects the attitude object and measurement words, it is considered positive (+), otherwise it is considered negative.

Measure words: If the meaning of the term is desirable, it is considered positive (+), and if the term is undesirable, it is assigned negative (-).

Determining intensity:

Verbal conjunction: The values are determined based on the degree of certainty of the verb: 1. Certainty (3) 2. Probability (2) 3. Possibility (1)

Measuring words: The values are proportional to the following degrees: 1. Very (3) 2. Relatively (2) 3. Slightly (1)

Security Horizons

In the next step after assigning the coefficients, the coefficients of the verbal conjunction and the measuring words are multiplied together and the final coefficient will be obtained and the result will be between +9 very favorable and -9 very unfavorable. Finally, to understand the direction and intensity of the person's statement, the sum of the coefficients and the division by the number will be determined. 1973, 98-100): Reimer & Osborne)

Analysis method

This study is a qualitative analysis using the content analysis technique. In this regard, the method of quantitative statement analysis was used to examine the attitudes, judgments, and orientations of the speaker in the form of linguistic structures. The research also has a descriptive-analytical aspect.

Population and Statistical Sample

The population of this research was all tweets published by Donald Trump's official account with the word North Korea filter. The number of these tweets was 250. Among them, by using lexical filters including keywords: 1. Negotiation 2. Agreement and contract 3. Meeting and summit 4. Disagreement 5. Support or opposition to agreements 6. Diplomacy and relations with leaders (such as Kim Jong-un) .. The tweets reached 66 numbers. These tweets directly or implicitly referred to the subject of negotiations with North Korea, and were selected and analyzed as a research sample. The sampling was purposeful and theoretical to maintain the greatest semantic affinity with the research topic.

Data collection and analysis tools

Data were extracted from Donald Trump's official account. After applying content filters, the time periods were divided into three parts based on the milestones in the Trump-Kim negotiations process:

Pre-negotiation (before the Singapore summit in June 2018)

Negotiation threshold (near the time of the meetings)

Post-negotiation (after the end of the meetings until 2020)

After translating the tweets into Persian, content analysis was conducted using the commentarial method. Each tweet was divided into three key components; attitude topic, verbal link, and measurement words. Then, using analytical tables, its orientation (positive, negative) and intensity were determined.

Validity

All tweets were extracted directly from Trump's official website and filtered using the two keywords negotiation and North Korea. Since these filters are directly related to the research topic, it can be said that the selected data have acceptable content validity. In addition, the coding of attitudes (positive, negative) and their intensity are also directly derived from the tone and vocabulary of the tweets themselves and, for this reason, are considered a direct reflection of the original text. These tweets are presented in specific tables with their classification and coefficients.

Result and discussion

The application of Evaluative Assertion Analysis to Donald Trump's tweets regarding North Korea revealed a distinct three-phase pattern in his negotiation approach, aligning closely with the carrot-stick framework and reflecting underlying narcissistic traits.

In the pre-negotiation phase (2017), Trump's tweets were predominantly negative, with an average final score of -5.37. The primary attitude object was North Korea, frequently associated with strongly negative evaluative words such as threat, sanctions, and misbehavior, often at the highest intensity level (3). The verbal conjunctions also carried a negative direction, emphasizing certainty in his aggressive stance. This phase clearly represents the stick – using threats, blame, and pressure to set the stage and assert dominance.

During the threshold of negotiation (first half of 2018), a significant shift occurred. The tone became overwhelmingly positive, with an average score of +4.5. The attitude object remained largely North Korea and Kim Jong-un, but the evaluative words changed to progress, cooperation, agreement, and great meeting. The verbal links often conveyed high certainty and positive direction. This phase embodies the carrot – offering praise, highlighting diplomacy, and building a narrative of potential success and personal achievement, often while attacking domestic critics and media to control the narrative.

In the post-negotiation phase (2018-2019), the positive tone was sustained and intensified, with an average score of +6.9. Trump focused on showcasing successes, such as the halt of nuclear tests, and praising his own diplomatic achievements. The attitude objects included himself (Trump), North Korea (as a success story), and the media/critics (as negative foils). This phase reflects the self-aggrandizing aspect of narcissism, using positive outcomes to reinforce his self-image and validate his approach, effectively leveraging the reward aspect after the perceived application of the carrot.

The discussion of these results highlights how Trump's narcissistic personality – characterized by a need for admiration, sensitivity to criticism, and a grandiose self-image – fuels this carrot-stick cycle. The pre-negotiation aggression establishes control and superiority. The shift to a positive tone is a calculated move to claim credit and shape public perception, not necessarily a genuine change in strategy. Finally, the post-negotiation focus on self-praise serves to secure the admiration and validation he craves. This pattern demonstrates a highly instrumental and media-conscious negotiation style, where tactics are flexibly adapted to maintain narrative control and bolster the leader's self-image, rather than being purely driven by diplomatic objectives.

Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that Donald Trump has used a phased pattern of threat, soft turn, and reward in his negotiations with North Korea; an approach that is well-suited to the carrot-stick theory and his narcissistic characteristics. In the pre-negotiation phase, Trump's tone was very aggressive and critical, but on the eve of the negotiation, his tone changed towards

compromise and diplomacy, and finally in the post-negotiation phase, he focused on success and self-praise. This tactical flexibility is a reflection of instrumental calculus and an approach based on media narrative control. Among the limitations of the study are the sole reliance on Twitter data and the lack of clinical data for personality analysis. It is suggested that future studies analyze the negotiation behavior of other leaders using the same method and explore the relationship between media narratives and foreign policy in more depth.

Donald Trump's narcissistic personality, as his most prominent behavioral characteristic, has played a decisive and decisive role in shaping the phased pattern of negotiations with North Korea. Narcissism, which in the field of psychology means an extreme focus on a positive self-image, a constant need for admiration and praise, and a desire to control and direct the surrounding narratives, has been clearly and openly manifested in Trump's political behavior and has become the basis for the complex tactics he has used in the diplomatic process. Trump's narcissistic personality, with its inherent desire to show off power and maintain a flawless image, has led him to simultaneously use two opposing but complementary strategies; namely, the carrot and stick. In the pre-negotiation stage, his aggressive and threatening tone represents the stick; psychological and political pressure that is used with the aim of disrupting the psychological balance of the other party and gaining absolute superiority. This stage reflects the narcissist's need for dominance and dominance, which provides the basis for increasing bargaining power by displaying verbal violence and explicit threats.

However, the narcissist's characteristics are not limited to threats and pressure; rather, in the middle stage, a softening and gentle turn in his tone emerges, which can be considered the manifestation of the carrot in this pattern. This tactical shift indicates that Trump's narcissism, beyond a mere desire for dominance, has a kind of instrumental calculation; he knows how to put aside the stick at the appropriate moment and gain the trust and satisfaction of the other party by making positive promises. This temporary softening is not only a sign of a change of position, but also a means of rebuilding his image as a negotiating figure, authoritative and responsible.

Finally, the post-negotiation stage is the arena for the most obvious manifestations of narcissism; Where Trump, by focusing on his successes and self-praise, adjusts the dominant media narrative to his own advantage and inscribes the image of the victorious field in the minds of the people. This stage reflects the deep need of narcissists to be seen and admired; controlling the narrative, distorting the facts in his own favor, and highlighting personal achievements are all part of this psycho-political game that Trump plays with particular skill.

Therefore, it can be said that the carrot and stick pattern in Trump's negotiations is not simply a simple diplomatic technique, but rather the manifestation of his narcissistic personality; a personality that, through pressure and threats, tactical flexibility, and then attracting attention and admiration, always seeks to maintain a superior image and consolidate his position in the

international system. This process is a clear manifestation of the profound influence of the personality traits of political leaders on the strategies and outcomes of international negotiations.

However, one of the important limitations of this research is its sole reliance on Twitter data; The data, although a rich and immediate treasure trove of Trump's language and tone, lacks the psychological depth and underlying dynamics of his personality. More comprehensive psychological analyses, especially for someone as multifaceted and complex as Trump, require clinical data, expert interviews, and broader sources of information to uncover the hidden layers of his motivations, beliefs, and behaviors. Therefore, the results of this study, while insightful and valuable, should be used with caution and awareness of these limitations.

Also, the complexity of contemporary diplomacy and the interplay between domestic politics, the media, and international relations require an interdisciplinary and multifaceted approach. It is suggested that future studies, in addition to analyzing the negotiation behavior of other world leaders, examine the relationship between narcissistic personalities and negotiation styles in a systematic and scientific manner. Furthermore, exploring the links between media narratives and foreign policy is an area that deserves more attention and deeper research, as understanding this relationship can be a beacon for better explaining the mechanisms that influence macro-political decision-making.

In conclusion, this research is an invitation to a new and deeper understanding of the art of negotiation in an era where words are held in high esteem, like power and action, and images sometimes overshadow reality. Such an understanding provides an opportunity for policymakers, analysts, and researchers to redefine their strategies in line with new complexities and, with a more precise understanding of behavioral and media layers, to leave a lasting and lasting impact in the field of diplomacy and international relations.

Keywords: Psychology; Personality; Trump; Negotiation; Quantitative Comment; North Korea

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■ Analyzing Donald Trump's Negotiation Approach Using evaluation assertion analysis

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