

## HOW TO BECOME A PRESIDENT: ELECTION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE POST-TRUTH AND FAKE NEWS ERA

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**Abstract:** The recent politico-social events characteristic of different countries – which have different political regimes and different level of democratic institutions development – showed us the necessity of a fresh insight into the issue of information and communication technologies in terms of their influence on a public sphere as well as on the entire world. New trends, characterizing a politico-social sphere, such as “fake news” or a “filter bubble” – generated by the Internet development and social media mainstreamification, require that civic and scientific tools, analysis methods for research findings are to be developed and hybridized. This research gives the analysis of Donald J. Trump’s US Presidential Campaign (the Campaign 2016), performed by means of a hybrid form of modern methods of research, based on network and linguistic analysis methods of research. Hybrid analysis enables us to study the Campaign 2016 through performing a social graph analysis, i.e. through identifying the key participants and defining their innovative communication strategies, the procedures and the bottom results of the Campaign 2016. On the other hand, the analysis of the Campaign’s linguistic content makes it possible to shape the guidelines on how to transform conventional election campaign strategies and methods towards an ultimate efficiency in the context of current interaction of a political leader and a votership. For example, it is essential that political advertisement compiled from particular online content should be not only be target-voter-oriented but also ultimate-voter (or prospective voter)-oriented – in terms of taking into account social and psychological profile of a votership and their role and status as participants of network processes. Such analytics is essential for curbing the dissemination of deconstructive patterns, which has a negative impact on politico-social sphere transformations, and performing a predictive analysis in order to manage complex hybrid systems, which are currently developing in the modern society.

**Keywords:** Post-truth, post-truth politics, alternative facts, “filter bubble”, fake news, political content management, the Internet, social networks, Twitter feed linguistic analysis, Donald J. Trump’s US Presidential Campaign.

### INTRODUCTION

As a result of long discussions and research, Oxford Dictionary named the term “post-truth” the word of the year. The word “post-truth” means “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” (Word of the Year, n. d.). According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, the term “post-truth” was first used by Serbian-American playwright Steve Tesich. Giving an account of the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991, codenamed “Operation Desert Shield”, he underlined a massive support of American public opinion given to the anti-Iraqi multinational coalition actions (the coalition main forces were made up of the U.S. Armed Forces). Steve Tesich noted the shift in collective consciousness which led to the fact that we opted for the world without the truth, and started to assimilate the

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truth to bad news, which we had no intention to receive any more. *“We are rapidly becoming prototypes of a people that totalitarian monsters could only drool about in their dreams. All the dictators up to now have had to work hard at suppressing the truth. We, by our actions, are saying that this is no longer necessary, that we have acquired a spiritual mechanism that can denude truth of any significance. In a very fundamental way we, as a free people, have freely decided that we want to live in some post-truth world”* (Tesich 1992). Experts from various fields note that in social media there have been surges in use of the term ‘post-truth’ combined with the term ‘post-truth politics’ in the context of the Brexit referendum discussions in Britain and US Presidential Election, 2016. The both terms integrated into political agenda, initiating transformations in politico-social systems all over the world.

What fundamental changes have occurred with the post-truth era onset and the development of information-communication technologies and online space in particular? The main and, probably, the most significant change is a new system of categorical concepts which portray the current reality. The “fact” – “myth” conceptual entity is being substituted by a conceptual construct, which functions within the “fact” – “alternative fact” dual conceptual framework. The vivid example of this trend is Kellyanne Conway’s, the current Counselor to the U.S. President Donald Trump, public speech. During a Meet the Press interview on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Kellyanne Conway, as the Counselor of the President, used the phrase “alternative facts” to defend the statements made by White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer as regards the inauguration crowd size (Conway: Press Secretary Gave “Alternative Facts”, n. d.). Social media “took up” her statement and associated it with an obfuscatory language style portrayed in George Orwell’s dystopian novel “1984”, a notion which means an ability to have two opposing opinions simultaneously.

What is the procedure of shaping opinions as regards the veracity of events or the reality as a whole? In the essay “Truth and Politics”, which is a part of the work “Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought” by Hannah Arendt, the author is contemplating upon the issue of politics and truth, and states that truth in political sphere becomes attainable as long as there is a possibility of public discussion of diverse opinions on the issue being discussed (Arendt 1977). The truth supported by facts is an entity which is a result of discussions and disputes, which should actually constitute the core of politics. Political thought is representational in essence. This feature is primarily determined by the fact that acquiring public opinion enhances our ability to develop and articulate justified opinions and views.

The current development of information and communications technologies provides, on the one hand, virtually boundless opportunities for the development of communication and political discourse and, consequently, political content, which is critical for shaping the direction of social development. On the other hand, the peculiarities of online space functioning, which is a space for social and political

activities, results in the development of some mechanisms of restraining public discourse, such tools as fake news or a “filter bubble”.

## THEORY AND METHODS

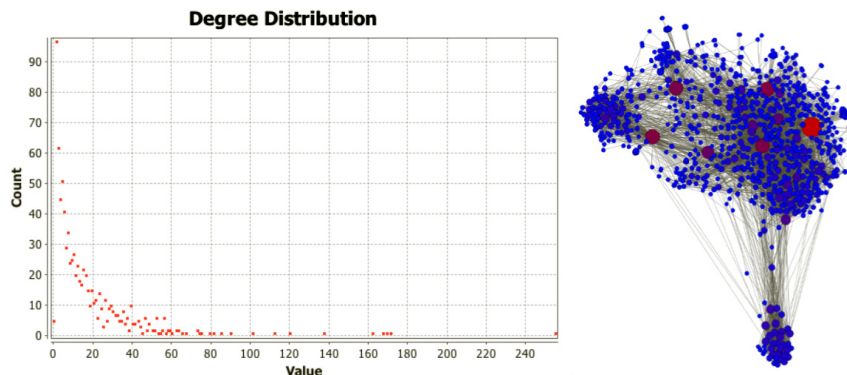
Different social applications and social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Classmates, VKontakte, WatsApp, Viber, Telegram, YouTube etc.) – as technological mediators to communication within the online space make it possible to analyze the latter by using multiple data traces, which are left by the users of different communities or groups either consciously or not. These are such various data as GPS traces, a network user’s ID-number (Ryabchenko 2016), not to mention the multiple content-activity – which is constituted by messages, comments, likes, and hash-tags – become a new tool of humanities research, which include a new paradigm of scientific research – interdisciplinary approach. Thus, such new paradigms of scientific knowledge as Digital Humanities and BigData emerge. One of Digital Humanities scientific directions is a networks analysis based on a mathematical theory of graphs and a theory of complex networks.

In 1999 physicists N. Dam, R. Albert, L. Barabasi (2002), when studying the properties of real networks – online social networks and the online space as a whole – developed a theory of scale-free networks. According to the theory, scale-free networks are patterned and analyzed as a graph, wherein the edge number of the vertices constituting the graph follows a power law distribution:

$$P(k) \sim k^{-\alpha}$$

where,  $\alpha$  is a constant, acquiring a value ranging from 2 to 3.

For example, Figure 1 features a D. Trump social graph (the analysis of the whole social graph follows), which can be viewed as a scale-free network, as the number of the participants’ links, constituting D. Trump’s social network, follow a power law distribution.



**Figure 1: An example of a scale-free social network and its correlation with a power-law distribution**

How does a scale-free network theory contribute to the social networks and the online space research? Firstly, it proves that such networks are characterized by a restricted number of users who have a large number of edges (according to the user's classification – the sensors or the opinion leaders) and an overwhelming number of users who have a few edges (according to the user's classification – the readers) [The user's classification theory is given in the article 19 Ryabchenko]. This is vividly demonstrated by the right-hand part of the Figure 1 (the red vertices of the studied network have the most number of edges; also, the number of the red vertices is by far fewer than the number of the blue ones). This trend is also proved by the graph of vertex degree distribution following a power-law distribution. According to the theory of scale-free networks, the vertices with the most number of edges are called Hubs. In general, when defining the network as a scale-free or complex, we analyze the networks which are resistant to random influences or failures. Experiments showed that random elimination of 80% of vertices in a complex network does not influence the network as a "coupled cluster", which means that the network is able to generate a various social action and affect the environment (Yevin 2010). However, a targeted elimination of vertices can lead to a complete destruction of a network, particularly when the eliminated vertices are hubs.

Secondly, defining a system as complex network we can study the dynamics of the network, as every new link changes the topology of the network and this leads either to the development of new qualities or a qualitative change of current ones. This very kind of analysis allows us to predict the behaviour of the network while passing the bifurcation point, which identifies, for instance, at which point the network is going to pass from a constructive into a destructive state. In fact, the description of a scale-free network topology is feasible as long as the process of its formation and development are clearly understood (Barabasi, 2009).

For a scale-free network to develop and evolve, two laws are crucial to observe (Albert and Barabasi, 2002): the growth law and the preferential attachment law. We describe these laws from the point of view of social networks:

- the growth law: at its initial stage the network consists of a negligible number of users; in course of a particular interval a new user joins the network; the new user has particular links that attach this very user to the current users of the given network;
- the preferential attachment law: the probability of a new user to get attached to the current users of the network depends on the number of links, which this user is attached with to different current users of the network:

$$P(n_i) = n_i / \sum_i n_i,$$

where,  $P(n_i)$  is the probability of an attachment to a user,  $n_i$  is the number of links of a user. The number of links of a user in a network is called a degree and refers to a local property of a network.

Structural properties of social networks are as follows (Yang and Leskovec 2012):

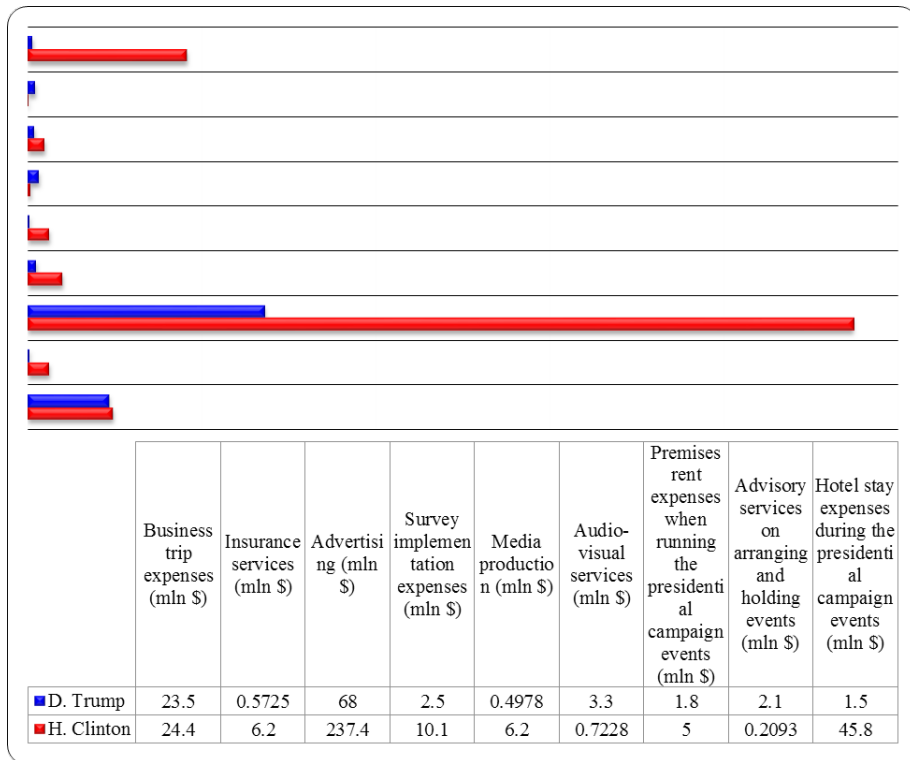
- the size of a social network follows a power-law distribution;
- the number of users involved follows a power-law distribution;
- the number of links within a network grows superlinearly according to the size of a network (the larger the network, the higher is the speed of new links formation);
- social networks are clearly identified from the whole online space;
- a social network property involves high density.

The online space can be visualized as a multitude of minor units – online communities and online networks: i.e. school friends, colleagues, neighbors, football fans – these communities are of key importance in developing the global public space and its discourse. According to the civic science, an online network-community is a non-hierarchical and a self-developing social unit of actors or groups of actors, who are interlinked by common values, goals and functioning in a common information and communication field. The boundaries of an online network-community are defined by means of distributing the links as the ones situating inside and outside the community. The links outside the community function as an interconnection between the communities and form a common network or, in other words, a social graph. Social graph is constructed by means of analyzing the content interchanged by online network users (Ryabchenko and Gnedash 2015). Each online social network and an online community is, in fact, a graph. Thus, a user playing a definite role (“opinion leaders”, “sensors”, “implementers”, “readers”, “reputation players”) is a vertex or a node of this graph, while social links are called edges. “Opinion leaders” initiate wave effect of information spread, thus changing the news and data field. Active actors can be referred to as “opinion leaders”. “Sensors” are the users who collect significant items of information within the given conceptual framework; they make up the context for the information, which is contributed by “opinion leaders”. “Implementers” are the users, who, by means of hypertextuality, initiate a blogwave, herewith the users choose the role of an “implementer” either consciously or not. “Readers” make up the majority of users functioning both in the online space and a particular online social network. The peculiarity of these users is that they are constantly online and do not virtually generate public messages. However, under certain circumstances these users can change their role to an “implementer”. “Reputation players” in online network communities are the businessmen and people in power. This group enters the online network community the very moment when the popularity of the community is relatively high (Ryabchenko and Gnedash 2014).

Predominantly, users do not search for online communities independently – they are “invited” either by friends, colleagues or acquaintances or by social network communities. According to the analysis of user preferences, social media platforms make recommendations on joining one or another community or a group (Building Global Community, n. d.), which results in personalization of the content, which surrounds the user, as well as “filter bubble” effect activation. A “filter bubble” effect describes a phenomenon which means that different information systems – including search engines and social media platforms – determine which piece of information a user is willing to view according to the information previously viewed by him/ her, as well as their location, search preferences and results. Consequently, the user gets the content which corresponds with his/ her previous views, however becomes deprived of the rest of the content. By creating the so called *information blind spot*, the “filter bubble” effect can have detrimental implications not only for an individual but a society as a whole, as it influences public opinion and makes users more susceptible to propaganda and manipulation (Pariser 2011). This trend is becoming a tangible threat to a stable development of the politico-social system of any government. Regardless of the social platforms used by civil population, the principles of their operation are the same as regards the technologies used. Apart from blind spots, the “filter bubble” forms a favorable ground for a ‘fake’ or, in other words, ‘fake news’ dissemination. A fake news item is used by “sensors” for developing and implementing constructive and destructive patterns within the framework of a particular conceptual entity introduced by “opinion leaders”. The word “fake” is of English origin and means ‘false, counterfeit’. The primary objective of fakes is a modification of public opinion as regards a given political leader, a company, a political party, etc. Primarily, fakes have detrimental implications on image and reputation constituents of the targeted entities. Thus, in course of the 2016 -2017 Presidential Race in France, Alan Juppé – the Mayor of Bordeaux and the first Republican Presidential Primary 2016 candidate – quitted the Race. The spread of an item of fake news about the relations between Alain Juppé and organizations – close to radical Islamists, for example “Muslim Brothers” whose activities are banned in the majority of countries worldwide – did play a significant role in the decision made by the candidate (Ali Juppé, n.d.). The result of the information spread in popular social media platforms based on ‘viral and fake content’ principle resulted in attaching a nickname (‘Ali Juppé’) to the candidate, which lead to a #alijuppé hashtag steadfast association with all the content containing compromising material about Alain Juppé within the online space. Thus, all the content posted with references to the politician was accompanied by a continuous ‘ambient noise’ in the information-news field, which had negative implications on his Presidential Campaign. Fake news spread via modern information and communication technologies have become a real political actor during the 2016 Presidential Campaigns in the USA and France.

**RESULTS OF HYBRIDS METHODS OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

The Presidential Campaign of the current US President Donald Trump forced analysts, political strategists, journalists and civil right activists to reconsider their attitude to network technologies, which are developing in online space and to reassess their influence on politico-social systems globally. D. Trump raised twice as little money as his primary rival H. Clinton did. However, this factor proved to be of little importance in course of the 2016 Presidential Campaign, because this electoral period was based on an “it-is-not-the-money-that-decides-but-the-way-and-those-who-it-is-spent-on” principle. Using the data presented by US Federal Election Commission, we constructed a comparative diagram of candidates’ expenses in course of the US Presidential Race 2016 (Figure 2) (Federal Election Commission website, n. d.)



**Figure 2: A comparative diagram of the Candidates’ Expenses in course of US Presidential Race 2016.**

The diagram shows that the main expenditure line in the 2016 Presidential Campaign Budget is the money spent on advertising, which differs substantially in amount. Thus, the difference in the volume of expenditure on media products

is rather significant, and the reason is that the candidates implemented different communication and communicative strategies. Notably, D. Trump put a particular emphasis on communication strategies, whereas H. Clinton, on communicative ones. A communicative entity is 'inner-oriented', while communication entity is 'outer-oriented' (Leshhev 2002). These entities are integral constituents of a communication process, influencing each other and constructing a reality. Nevertheless, in course of information technologies and the online space development, the influence of communicative constituent on the reality is diminishing, mostly, due to the fact that alternative realities and spaces, such as fake news space, are being constructed.

D. Trump used the Internet, and social networking sites in particular, as a principal communication tool. The first stage of his communication strategy was based on neglecting conventional communication channels (for example, the TV), and focusing on social networks communication algorithms. The implementation of these algorithms meant making eccentric statements regarding controversial issues, thus, securing top positions in search results as regards social networks news feed. This ploy allowed him to avoid direct interaction with conventional journalists and to be able to perform an overall control over conventional media services, which were restricted to reacting to the politician's statements with no opportunity to interview him.

So what makes a fundamental difference between the Internet and television as a channel of communication? What are the principles of forming a communication strategy? The Internet, by means of network technologies, makes any item of information (including a marketing message) ultimately target-oriented. Television as a means of mass communication is void of such an opportunity. In other words, in the online social networks sphere the same message does not only bear a particular conceptual meaning, it is infused with a personalized delivery and perception mechanism, in which case – as long as an adequately developed online-content management system exists – it is possible to have an online dialogue with any Internet user as if it were a friendly chat of co-thinkers. The result of a wisely designed system of political content management was that D. Trump succeeded in delivering the content to every prospective voter virtually person-to-person. Given that, each prospective voter received exactly the content he/she had been searching for and which was of interest to him/ her. Undoubtedly, not only versatile in subject was the content produced, it contained various affective features and was usually a blunt propaganda by nature.

In his interview, which the 45th American President gave to the "Financial Times", when asked about any remorse on the bitter tweets regarding his allies, political rivals and the worlds as a whole, D. Trump noted: "*I don't regret anything, because there is nothing you can do about it. You know if you issue hundreds of tweets, and every once in a while you have a clinker, that's not so bad*". And also underlined: "*Without the tweets, I wouldn't be here... I have over 100m followers*



*between Facebook, Twitter [and] Instagram. Over 100 m. I don't have to go to the fake media".* Network interaction was the brightest and the most significant element of the D. Trump Presidential Campaign (Donald Trump, n. d.). The basis of D. Trump's digital operations was constituted by Instagram, Facebook, Twitter online social networks. It is the operation in these social media platforms that became the basis of the D. Trump Digital Presidential Campaign codenamed the 'Alamo Project' – a project developed by Brad Parscale, a Social & Media Advisor for the Donald J. Trump Presidential Campaign. The 'Alamo Project' was a part of the election campaign simulator, codenamed 'Battleground Optimizer Path to Victory', a model which was monitoring online the D. Trump Campaign 2016 implementation in key six American states – chosen by 'Quid' Program System ('Quid' Program System, n. d.). 'Quid' is a predictive program based on data analysis, developed by Sean Gourley's company. It provides analysis of systems (civil population, companies, opposing parties in conflicts) regarding them as communities of individuals i.e. cenoses. A cenosis represents an entity in which all the constituents are interlinked: such approach enables evaluation of a predictive system dynamics; also, it allows to identify the areas most susceptible to minor influences, which, inversely, can initiate drastic changes in the required direction. So, the 'Quid' system pinpointed several states (Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Florida) where the victory of the US candidate for presidency D. Trump could be secured by just a few precise actions. The states chosen were reduced to quarters and particular communities, where lived and participated the voters, which were of paramount importance for the outcome of the Election Campaign 2016. Thus, social profiles of these people were determined: a communicator – an "opinion leader", a whip – a "sensor", a follower – an "implementer". That very people became the primary driving force of the Presidential Campaign 2016, by allying people enraged by the elite. "Communicators" are the users who are the members and an interlink for several communities. "Whips" are conventionally the people, who ensure the unity of different communities. For example, the party's leadership and the ranks in the US Congress are interlinked by 'whips', i.e. the elected party legislators. The "Whips'" primary function is to ensure the party discipline in the Parliament, to invite their fellow legislators to attend Chambers' plenary sessions and to vote according to the official party policy (American Government: unity in diversity, 2000). The Trump's team offline operations were being coordinated and amplified by online operations. The two directions were not separate, rather, they precisely were completed and controlled by one another.

What innovations did D. Trump's team implement in Presidential Campaign 2016:

- firstly, as the research conducted by Virginia Polytechnic Institute suggests, online space – by means of social media platforms – provides lead indicators in the majority of political processes; it is possible to describe the oncoming

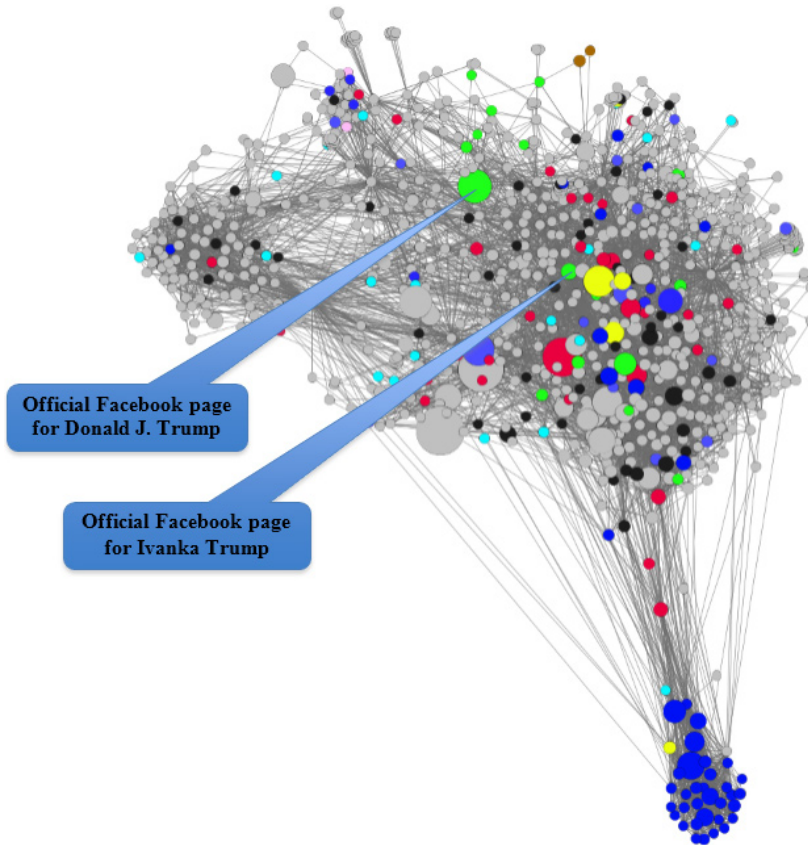
trends and events, i.e. the Internet users discuss the events that have yet to happen or are very likely to happen, thus they are predictable\ liable to analysis and forecast\estimation and are therefore controllable (Keneshloo, Cadena, Korkmaz and Ramakrishnan, 2014);

- secondly, negative news spread much faster and more efficiently than positive ones, besides, they serve as a consolidating force as regards the opponents;
- thirdly, the basis of communication strategies – which D. Trump used in his Campaign – was that acquiring domination in online sphere by means of social media promotion can be converted into an offline domination; therewith, different social networks differ in efficiency when targeting the Campaign objectives.

The described principles of conducting an online political campaign determined Facebook and Twitter to be the principal social media platforms for the purpose in question. Each of the social media platforms targeted a particular set of tasks. Facebook social media platform served to be a magnet for a particular votership, such as major businesses, politicians, media celebrities and other media representatives. Facebook network analysis defines the role of these specific groups in the Presidential Campaign 2016 and D. Trump's real-world social environment. Besides, it allows to analyze the hubs in D. Trump's online network environment because, as it has been shown above, the network environment represents a scale-free network.

We analyze the online network environment of the D. Trump's Facebook official page (Official Facebook page for Donald J. Trump, n. d.). According to the analysis of mutual likes in D. Trump's online network environment, we construct a social graph.

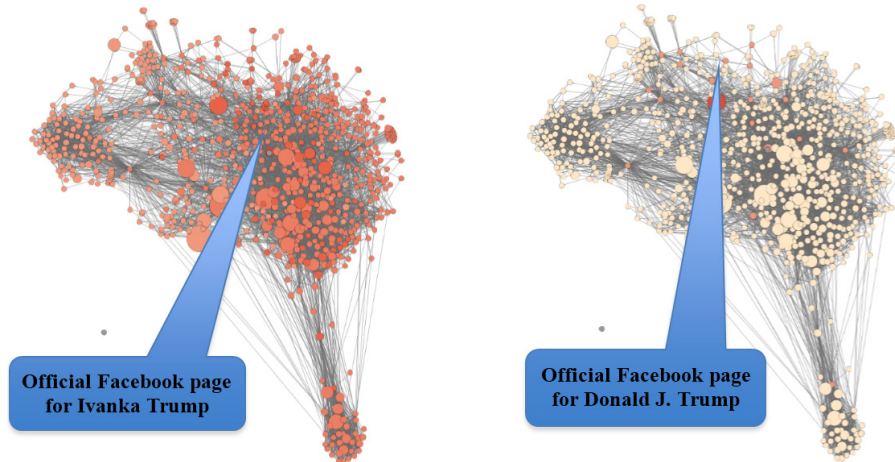
The given graph includes 826 vertices and 6817 edges. This structure is not a complete one – the number of vertices and edges is by far more numerous – as the given graph is constructed up to the second connection. What does a second incorporation mean? First, we collected the pages 'liked' by D. Trump; thus, they were posted on his home page – these pages made up the first incorporation. Second, we collected all the pages 'liked' by the first incorporation – those made up the second incorporation. The received social graph is adequately ample and depicts D. Trump's close network environment. Thus, the vertices of the given social graph are all the pages, which were 'liked' by the home page – which is 'Donald J. Trump' Facebook Homepage in our research. The colour of the vertices is defined by their correspondence to a particular category: the red colour represents 'Media/ News Company' category, the blue – 'TV Show', the black – 'Magazine'. The structure of the social graph comprises different networking pages such as of commercial organizations, individuals, bloggers, magazines, modern media companies, as well as multiple brand clothing companies.



**Figure 3: Social Graph “Online Network Environment – Official Facebook page for Donald J. Trump”**

A particular mention should be made about the pages correlating with D. Trump’s or his family activities. These pages function as the ‘opinion leaders’ in the community under analysis. An undisputed opinion leader – as the analysis of the edges of the given graph implies – is ‘Ivanka Trump’ Facebook profile. This very page is a hub of the whole social graph. Consistent with this finding is the heatmap of the social graph which we constructed from the ‘Ivanka Trump’ vertex and the heatmap constructed from the ‘Donald J. Trump’ vertex (Fig 4.). A heatmap is constructed by distributing the colours of the vertices as a gradient according to the remoteness from the chosen vertex (consistent with the edge weight as a distance). The ‘opinion leaders’ heatmaps are more homogeneous in colour. Figure 4 shows that the lefthand graph – which represents Ivanka Trump’s online interactions – is more homogenous in colour than the righthand one – representing D.Trumps network relationships. This proves that Ivanka Trump was one of the key actors

in the D. Trump Presidential Campaign 2016; consequently, she became the key figure in the White House Office under D. Trump's Presidency.



**Figure 4: The Heatmap of the social graph, constructed from the 'Ivanka Trump' vertex (on the left) and the heatmap of the social graph, constructed from 'Donald J. Trump' vertex (on the right)**

Up to September 2016 communication through Facebook online social media was the D. Trump's team general strategy. However, in September 2016 their Digital Strategy changes dramatically, and Twitter becomes its principal medium. The posts published by the candidate for presidency in Twitter become the key topic of discussion for the mass media. Usually, the subject is unimportant – the mere fact of running a Twitter account generated public discussion. Apparently, the generated hype was the primary objective of using Twitter as a part of an extended communication strategy. Why Twitter? Cambridge Analytica analysts on psychological targeting within online social media have proved that the majority of the US voters view a twitter-message as a personal message addressed directly to each of them; which reminds of a long-lasting tradition of communication with the votership on fairs, in shops and in the streets in contrast to present day's campaign rallies. D. Trumps communication in Twitter was a simulation of direct spontaneous talks in the street. Via simple short messages addressed directly to the voters – unlike costly corrupt mass media – Twitter has made D. Trump 'the fellow guy' for each category of the votership. Twitter was functioning as a direct channel of communication and as a tool for shaping the views of co-thinkers and opposition, while Facebook, as a tool to raise funds and retain the elite. In other words, Twitter was accumulating the votes, while Facebook, the funds.

We analyzed the above mentioned social platforms as regards the production and presentation of content; besides, we are going to provide an insight into the changes

in the content posted after D. Trump was elected the US President. The linguistic analysis produced some interesting findings such as that the posts containing identical information message markedly differ in terms of style (journalistic style – colloquial\ informal style, public speech style – newspaper heading style), emotional colouring (shades of meaning and axiological components), as well as inner and organizational structure of the text.

The findings of the analysis of Facebook posts – published from September to December 2016 and from January to June 2017 – showed that the Donald J. Trump Facebook profile maintained the strategies and techniques characteristic of a public speech. What implies that D. Trump’s Facebook posts are either his public speech excerpts or an appeal to all the votership and each voter in particular:

- firstly, the majority of posts are accompanied by a video clip featuring D. Trump pronouncing that very speech the excerpt of which we can see posted on D. Trump’s Facebook Homepage;
- secondly, a great number of graphic expressive means and stylistic devices (capitalization of the whole word or an initial letter of a word, which is not usually capitalized; hyphenation/ putting a dash to show a pause; the use of bold type to put an emphasis on the word; besides, the use of exclamation marks (usually one or two) at the end of the sentence).

As for the inner structure, the posted messages are characterized by the use of syntactical expressive means: anaphora, epiphora, antithesis, parallel structures, gradation, inversion etc. The devices mentioned, however used in the written text, are a powerful tool of persuasion in rhetorics/ oration – i.e. public speaking, which is an act of performing a speech to a live audience. Using an invitation such as “Thank you! / Thank you all! / Thank you Louisiana / Iowa!”, as well as “GOD BLESS AMERICA!” are more like cliches used by American Presidents, prevalently in their public speeches.

However, Facebook posts published after D. Trump was elected the US President bear characteristics of a uniquely written text, notably, of a promotional text: terse and pithy phrases (“Just met with General Petraeus -- was very impressed!”) and slogans (“Together, we can save AMERICAN jobs, AMERICAN lives, and AMERICAN futures. - DJT”), excerpts from Twitter posts, or either a hashtag (“#FakeNews”) or a combination of a hashtag and a phrase, which is an introduction to it (“Great news! #MAGA”). Also, introductory phrases are used as regards some Twitter profiles (“@FoxNews”; “@nytimes”; “@washigtonpost”, “@realDonaldTrump”) the reference to which is typical for D. Trump’s official online accounts: those refer to trends or events under D. Trump’s Presidency (“#FakeNews”), the USA in general (“#MAGA”; “#AmericaFirst”), either the opposition and the former US Administration (“#FollowTheMoney”; “#Obamacare”), or D. Trump, his team and his supporters (“#ImWithYou”; “#TrumpIsWithYou”).

Capitalization is a graphic expressive means which is used in posts characteristic of the two platforms – in order to emphasize the CAPITALISED word; besides, ‘phonetically’ capitalization means using higher pitch of the voice or even shouting, which, in fact, is possible only in speech. As we deal with a text, capitalization is not the only but one from a variety of emphatic devices. For example, one of the emphatic devices is using the initial letter capitalization – common nouns, adjectives, adverbs acquire an initial capital letter, which is grammatically incorrect, though is intentionally done to generate a demand for a new hashtag – for example, using “CrookedHillary” in the posts consequently led to an advent of a hashtag #CrookedHillary. The use of vocabulary bearing an axiological dimension of lexical meaning, expressive potential of which is also enhanced by capitalization (“RIGGEDsystem”, “CrookedHillary”) as well as parallel syntactic structures.

Apparently, D.Trump Facebook posts also had characteristics of online communication: such as abundant hashtagging – #FollowTheMoney (used as regards the allegations of corruption addressed to the former US Administration); as well as eloquent ones – #CrookedHillary, #ImWithYou, # AmericaFirst, #TrumpIsWithYou.

Notably, references to Twitter post differ in number as regards D. Trump’s Presidency: however scarce the references to Twitter are before D. Trump is elected the US President, they become an integral feature of Facebook posts during the presidency. Furthermore, they represent a text which duplicates the Twitter posts, published as a screenshot, and a link to the corresponding source.

Compared to Facebook, Twitter posts are far more multiple, quite pithy and more assertive due to a regular common use of an imperative form of the verb and expressive vocabulary; besides, they are void of characteristics of a public speech (as regards the use of oration techniques), they are abrupt and terse which is consistent with the style of newspaper headlines – “TREMENDOUS, incredible, your sacrifice – such a disgraceful thing to say about fellow – hardworking Americans!”.

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We analyzed structural and semantic peculiarities of the posts, comprising the D. Trump's Twitter feed, which, in fact, was crucial in the Presidential Campaign 2016; and conducted their linguistic analysis. The posts bear the following characteristics.

1. *Structural and compositional features:*

- 1.1. standardized set of syntactic structures (to maximize the efficiency in terms of the time spent on reading and processing the text): "I'm at a biker rally in Perry, Kansas...and everyone is a @realDonaldTrump fan. Love it", "I am returning to the Pensacola Bay Center in Florida- Friday 9/9/16 at 7pm. Join me!", "I visited our Trump Tower campaign headquarters last night, after returning from Ohio and Arizona, and it was packed with great pros – WIN!";
- 1.2. conversational or slangy style in syntactic composition of the sentences (which – as they resemble the newspaper headlines – is treated as a norm due to a long-lasting tradition of such presentation): "Wow, @CNN is so negative. Their panel is a joke, biased and very dumb. I'm turning to @FoxNews where we get a fair shake! Mike will do great", "Dow hit a new intraday all-time high! I wonder whether or not the Fake News Media will so report?", "Here we go – Enjoy!";

2. *Expressive potential of the text:* Expressive stylistic means are aimed at ultimately prompt involvement of a reader through affecting his/ her mental imagery; it is created by means of the following techniques or their combinations referring to different linguistic layers\ strata:

2.1. Graphic means:

- 2.1.1. capitalization of words/ initial letters of words – "HILLARY'S BAD TAX HABIT!", "AMERICA will become the world's great magnet, SAD!";
- 2.1.1. exclamations – "JOBS BACK! A Clinton economy = more taxes and more spending!";

2.2. Structural means:

- 2.2.1. slogans – "Tune in! Join the MOVEMENT";
- 2.2.2. rhetorical questions – "Why isn't Hillary Clinton 50 points ahead? @HillaryClinton has been part of the rigged DC system for 30 years? Why would we take policy advice from her?"; "Lyn' Hillary Clinton told the FBI that she did not know the "C" markings on documents stood for CLASSIFIED. How can this be happening?"; "President Obama & Putin fail to reach deal on Syria - so what else is new? Obama is not a natural deal maker. Only makes bad deals!", "Can you believe that the Chinese would not give Obama the proper stairway to get off his plane - fight on tarmac!", "Mainstream media never

covered Hillary’s massive “hacking” or coughing attack, yet it is #1 trending. What’s up?”, “Why isn’t Hillary 50 points ahead? Maybe it’s the email scandal, policies that spread ISIS, or calling millions of Americans deplorables!”;

- 2.2.3. ellipsis. Intentional omission of words or parts of sentences is partially caused by saving space. Different words or parts of a sentence. Thus, a subject, a predicate, an article, the verb ‘be’ in the passive voice, reporting verbs – which actually express the speaker’s attitude to the concept described – can be omitted. However useful in terms of saving time on reading the message (which is also a result of considering the ‘clip thinking’ effect) and pithy this can be, this could result in abundance of inaccuracies, misinterpretations and, consequently, misinterpretation of the causes, motives and thoughts: “Great visit to Detroit church, fantastic reception, and all @CNN talks about is a small protest outside. Inside a large and wonderful crowd!”, “@CherNuna: @realDonaldTrump It defies belief the Web of Lies Hillary is spinning! One excuse after another. Then it’s this, then it’s that”, “Thank you to our fantastic veterans. The reviews and polls from almost everyone of my Commander-in-Chief presentation were great. Nice!”, “Thank you for your support - on my way now! See you soon. #TrumpTrain”, “Heading to Pennsylvania for a big rally tonight. We will MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”, “Thank you for joining me this afternoon, New Hampshire! Will be back soon. #FollowTheMoney”;

### 2.3. Lexical means:

- 2.3.1. axiological lexics – “Crooked’s FBI release, no longer a credible source; Crooked Hillary”, “@CNN is so disgusting in their bias”, “The Republican Party needs strong and committed leaders, not weak people such as @JeffFlake, if it is going to stop illegal immigration”, “Can’t believe these totally phoney stories, 100% made up by women (many already proven false) and pushed big time by press, have impact!”, “Animals representing Hillary Clinton and Dems in North Carolina just firebombed our office in Orange County because we are winning @NCGOP”, “Anytime you see a story about me or my campaign saying”, “DO NOT believe it. There are no sources, they are just made up lies!”, ““State works hard, and illegally, for Clinton’ #DrainTheSwamp”;

### 2.4. Phonetic means:

- 2.4.1. rhyming; as well as slogans rhyming aims at becoming catchy, getting ingrained and going viral: “HILLARY’S BAD TAX HABIT! Here we go – Enjoy!”;



2.4.2. snappish insistent rhythmic patterns: “HILLARY’S BAD TAX HABIT! Tune in! Join the MOVEMENT!”;

3. *Lexical layer is characterized by the following features:*

- 3.1. abundance of social and political terms, numerals, neologisms;
- 3.2. phraseological units, clichés, puns/ play on words (intentionally altered fixed phrases), allusions: “the failing @nytimes”, “the Web of Lies Hillary is spinning!”, “@trumplican2016: @realDonaldTrump There will be MASSIVE turn out for you, Mr. Trump — These polls don’t register the pulse of the PEOPLE!”;
- 3.3. juxtaposition of bookish/ literary and colloquial style: “I visited our Trump Tower campaign headquarters last night, after returning from Ohio and Arizona, and it was packed with great pros – WIN!”, “The polls are close so Crooked Hillary is getting out of bed and will campaign tomorrow. Why did she hammer 13 devices and acid-wash e-mails?”, “@adhd\_fa:Kudos to @PARISDENNARD for standing up to CNN’s attempt to bully you and shout you down for defending @realDonaldTrump #media bias”, “Wow, Crooked Hillary was duped and used by my worst Miss U. Hillary floated her as an “angel” without checking her past, which is terrible!”;
- 3.4. contractions, abbreviations: “O term! Crooked Hillary’s V.P. Pick”, “VOTE “T””, “Wow, Crooked Hillary was duped and used by my worst Miss U. Hillary floated her as an “angel” without checking her past, which is terrible!”;
- 3.5. attributive nominal groups: “Lyn’ HillaryClinton”, “...Commander-in-Chief”.

4. *Verb forms:*

- 4.1. imperative: “Join me in Pensacola, Florida this Friday at 7pm!”, “DON’T LET HER FOOL US AGAIN”, “Thank you North Carolina- get out & #VoteTrump on 11/8/2016! #MakeAmericaGreatAgain”, “I will be interviewed on @oreillyfactor tonight at 11pmE @FoxNews. Enjoy!”, “While Hillary profits off the rigged system, I am fighting for you! Remember the simple phrase: #FollowTheMoney”;
- 4.2. the Future Simple Tense allows to emphasize the promise and feasible changes in the future: “Together, WE WILL MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”;
- 4.3. the Present Perfect Tense allows to underline the completed projects and the action made. The combination of the Present Perfect Tense with the Future Simple Tense creates an effect of the fluency and feasibility of all the promises made, which is enhanced by parallel structures to boost its persuasive potential: “I have created tens of thousands of jobs and will bring back great American prosperity. Hillary has only created jobs at the FBI and DOJ!”.

The given analysis proves that the posts constituting D. Trump's Twitter feed, which seem to be impulsive are, in fact, a result of a wisely designed and developed Presidential Campaign 2016, prevalently the Digital Presidential Campaign 2016. Particular mention should be made about the issues, correlating to the fake news – which functioned as a part of the Presidential Campaign technique – and their use by D. Trump's rally team for the social networks content. Fake news peculiarities are their entertaining, sensational and viral potential, which makes up a constant urge to spread the news further. The above mentioned features enable the fake news spread blog-waves as uncontrollable, expanding information flows, thus make the post-truth phenomenon a tremendously powerful weapon of information wars.

## DISCUSSION

Apparently D. Trump's team implemented a digital-marketing strategy as a basis for the Presidential Campaign 2016. A digital marketing strategy is a strategy of marketing products and services by means of digital technologies, which is used in order to attract loyal customers (Definition of digital marketing, n. d.). Digital marketing techniques are thoroughly described and analysed in terms of theory and their application; thus, they are fully available for use. Why did not H. Clinton use them in her presidential campaign like D. Trump did? Why did D. Trump delegate to an unrenowned B. Parscale – who neither had any experience of participating in presidential campaigns nor implementing political campaigns in general – the responsibility to work in his representations of social media. B. Parscale and the 'Alamo Project' presented D. Trumps as a product or a service ready to use; the only thing remained was to persuade the consumers that they had to chose this very product and inspire the idea of the popularity of the product among the majority. Regarding the hype around the exhibition "Donald J. Trump Presidential Twitter Library", organised by a popular satiric TVShow –TheDailyShow – in June 2017, the D. Trump's team succeeded in implementing the strategies of marketing 'the President D. Trump' product in an ultimately efficient way. Therein, the network users were discussing the fact that entering the exhibition meant queueing for no less than an hour or so (Dederick 2017).

Undoubtedly, the implementation of such a presidential campaign would be impossible without the online data analysis, which was being conducted and gave the results rather different from the findings of conventional sociological surveys. Therefore, our further research will be aimed at analytical processing and description of online data analysis methods, which can complete and substantially enrich conventional sociological methods used in political studies, including the technologies based on Big Data analytical scheme.

## CONCLUSION

Electoral periods have always been notable for being particular growth points of concentrated use of technologies for the politico-social system development. Indeed, the B. Obama Presidential Campaign 2007 was the time when viral marketing technologies were used as fund-raising tools within the online space for the first time. This innovative technique was introduced by B. Obama's team and meant allowing full participation in the election process – via online space people could create their own shares and produce various online content by means of social media for B. Obama support. The key idea of the B. Obama Presidential Campaign was to make the candidate for presidency more open to potential votership, to the youth in particular, via social media. It was the very first instance when video hosting services were used as an alternative to television. All these templates were used by H. Clinton for her Presidential Campaign; however, it has proved to be insufficient to be able to beat D. Trump. The interval between B. Obama and the D. Trump Presidential Campaigns was long enough for online users' needs to transform. It is not sufficient to encourage the users to subscribe to an social media account. It is essential to develop a "CustomerJourneyMap" in order to manage online users' actions so that to reach the objectives. "CustomerJourneyMap" is a tool enabling a detailed analysis of a target audience and understanding its objectives: what are its expectations in terms of a company, a project, a social action, a politician or a candidate for presidency. The analytical research findings, for example, resulted in posting a selphy-photo in many election campaigns: following public events – for example, meeting the votership; the posted photos do not feature the candidate, instead, the posted photos featuring the participants of the event. Thus, it enables the users label themselves in the photos, once they have been posted in social networks. That way, the content gets likes and comments according to the "I-like-the-fact-that-I'm-in-the-photo" rather than "I-like-the-candidate" principle. Consequently, it leads to raising the popularity of a politician.

The implications of the D. Trump Presidential Campaign and his team will long be analysed and discussed by specialists from different fields ranging from Market Research Management to Political Strategy. One implication is obvious: online technologies are in constant development, which is infused by the needs of online users and business. All the transformations of online space, either way, will be applied for introducing different political strategies. The examples of a strategy transfer from business into politics, social sphere and state administration are well-known to analysts – crowd sourcing is one of these. It is crucial to develop fringe research, which will make it possible to analyse and react to changes in IT-sphere and business in order to diminish negative implications of such transformations on politico-social systems.

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