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AUTNES Coding of Facebook Pages 2013

Coding procedure & overview of variables

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Content

Introduction

The dataset "AUTNES Content Analysis of Facebook Pages 2013" was gained by a manual content analysis of the party Facebook postings in the Austrian election campaign in 2013. Data collection took place under the confines of the Austrian National Election Study (AUTNES), a National Research Network funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (grant no. S10903-G11).

AUTNES applies a common method of content analysis to different sources. This coding scheme is described in greater detail in the coding instructions for the content analysis of party press releases (ZA5861). The document at hand builds upon this description and gives details only for adaptions of the coding scheme that aim at maximising the validity of the Facebook coding. Inquiries on further details regarding the data and coding can be directed at Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik (laurenz.ennser@univie.ac.at) at the University of Vienna's Department of Government.

How to cite these data:

Data users are kindly asked to acknowledge the data ***and*** the accompanying release document. Please refer to the GESIS data catalogue (www.gesis.org) for a recommendation on how to cite these data and the documentation.

File name:

"ZA6882_v1.0.0"

Conditions of use

Restrictions

The data are available for non-profit use without restrictions.

Confidentiality

AUTNES, the Principal Investigators and the funding institution bear no responsibility for the use of the data, or for interpretations or inferences based on their use, neither do they accept liability for indirect, consequential or incidental damages or losses arising from use of the data.

Deposit Requirement

In order to facilitate exchanges within the scientific community and to provide funding agencies with essential information about use of archival resources users of the AUTNES data are requested to notify the AUTNES team of all forms of publications making use of AUTNES data.

Description of the dataset and coding process

The dataset holds information of party Facebook postings during the six weeks of election campaign for the Austrian general election in 2013. Data collection took place in autumn 2015. We retrieved postings for all parties that passed the threshold for entering the parliament in 2013. No postings for the BZÖ, who lost parliamentary representation in 2013, could be gathered. As the Freedom Party (FPÖ) does not operate a Facebook page, the account of the party leader Heinz-Christian Strache was analysed instead.

We used the Facebook application *netvizz* (Rieder 2013) for the data collection. Netvizz allows for extracting technical information such as the text of the posting, the count of likes and the URL of the postings. The variables v03 through v09_3 contain this information.
In a second step, the postings were coded manually. Therefore, the postings were randomly assigned to research assistants. Each posting constitutes a unit of analysis. As Facebook postings and party homepages share many similarities, the coding rules and variables referring to the author, issues, object actors and individuals on images are almost identical (see ZA6881 for the coding of party homepages).

The list of variables consists of several sections. At the beginning, the ID variables are described. The second block of variables gives information about the Facebook posting that was gathered by means of *netvizz* (Rieder 2103). The third block of variables contains information of the Facebook posting extracted by human coders. Then, variables referring to the author of the Facebook posting, to the coded issues and to the object actors are described. The last variables contain information about individuals on pictures.

ID Variables

v01 id

- *Description:* ID variable
- *Type:* numeric

v02 coder id

- *Description:* coder ID (1-5)
- *Type:* numeric

Variables referring to Facebook posting: web scraping

The next variables refer to the Facebook postings. The information was extracted from Facebook by means of *netvizz* (Rieder 2013) and text processing.

v03 URL

- *Description:* URL of Facebook-site
- *Type:* string

v04 type of Facebook page

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the Facebook page is a party or candidate page.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values:*
    - (1) party page
    - (2) candidate page

v05 timestamp

- *Description:* v05 contains the date when the Facebook post was posted (19 August 2013 – 28 September 2013).
- *Type:* time (day-month-year, hh:mm:ss)

v06 post_message

- *Description:* v06 contains the text of the Facebook posting. Due to problems with the encoding, several special characters are not displayed correctly.
- *Type:* string

v07_1-v07_3 links

- *Description:* These variables contain the links that were published in the posting. Up to three links were coded per posting and then extracted in individual variables. The digit after the underscore indicates to which link the variable refers to. For example, v07_1 holds the first link whereas v07_3 holds the third link.
- *Type:* string

v08_1-v08_10 hashtags

- *Description:* v08 describes the hashtags used in the postings. Up to ten hashtags were coded per posting. The digit after the underscore indicates to which hashtag the variable refers to. For example, v08_1 indicates the first hashtag whereas v08_10 indicates the tenth hashtag.
- *Type:* string

v09_1 interaction: likes

- *Description:* v09_1 indicates the count of likes that the Facebook posting got.
- *Type:* numeric

v09_2 interaction: comments

- *Description:* v09_2 indicates the count of comments that were published on the posting.
- *Type:* numeric

v09_3 interaction: shares

- *Description:* v09_3 indicates the count of shares of a posting.
- *Type:* numeric

Variables referring to Facebook posting: manual coding

The following variables were manually coded and describe the Facebook posting more closely

v10 technical problems

- *Description:* This variable states whether or not the coder encounters technical problems (for example due to expired links).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no technical problems
    - (1) technical problems

v11_1 call for vote

- *Description:* This variable states whether the posting contains a call for vote (for the author of the page).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no
    - (1) yes

v11_2 call for preference vote

- *Description:* If the posting contains a call for a preference vote, this variable gives the name of the respective candidate.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*: according to AUTNES list of individuals

v11_3 call for campaign participation

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the author of the posting makes a call for participating in the campaign.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no
    - (1) yes

v11_4 call for campaign participation on Facebook

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the author of the posting makes a call for participating in the campaign by getting active on Facebook.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no
    - (1) yes

v12 continuous text

- *Description:* Does the posting contain continuous text?
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no text
    - (1) text

v13 picture

- *Description:* Does the posting contain a picture?
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no picture
    - (1) picture

v14 video

- *Description:* Does the posting contain a video?
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no video
    - (1) video

Variables referring to the author

The next variables refer to the author of the Facebook page, thus to the party or the party leader (for the FPÖ) responsible for the Facebook page.

v15a author: org

- *Description:* This variable indicates the organisation of the Facebook site's author.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values:* according to AUTNES list of organisations

v15b author: name

- *Description:* This variable indicates the name of the Facebook site's author. This variable is only relevant for Facebook pages of top candidates (thus Heinz-Christian Strache).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*: according to AUTNES list of individuals

v16 author: appearance

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the author is mentioned in the posting.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) not mentioned
    - (1) text
    - (2) picture
    - (3) text + picture

v17 author: outfit

- *Description:* Description of author's dress. This variable only applies to Facebook-sites operated by candidate.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values:*
    - (1) formally
    - (2) semi-formally
    - (3) workwear
    - (4) uniform
    - (5) casually

- (6) traditional costume
- (7) fancy-dress costume
- (8) undressed
- (88) not visible
- (99) not classifyable
- (.) no object/no picture

v18 author: characteristics

- *Description:* This variable contains the author's characteristics.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (1) no attribute
  - (2) competence: +
  - (3) competence: –
  - (4) character: +
  - (5) character: –
  - (6) leadership: +
  - (7) leadership: –
  - (8) appearance: +
  - (9) appearance: –
  - (10) not discernible: +
  - (11) not discernible: –
  - (.) no object

v19 author: record

- *Description:* This variable contains the author's record.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (0) no record
  - (1) record referring to policy issue
  - (2) record not referring to policy issue

Variables referring to issues

One policy issue and one campaign issue were coded per unit. If more than one issue was mentioned, the coders chose the dominant issue. Only written information was coded as text, images of issues without text were coded as "77777 - image of issue, no text"."
No justifications were coded for Facebook postings. In order to keep the order of the other variables consistent with the dataset on party websites (ZA6881), the variable for justifications (v24) was omitted.

v20 campaign issue

- *Description:* Coded campaign issue.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*: according to AUTNES list of issues, additional value:
    - (77777) image of issue, no text

v21 predicate

- *Description:* Author's position towards the coded policy issue (v22).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (-1) reject/criticise
    - (0) neutral
    - (1) support

v22 policy issue

- *Description:* Coded policy issue.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*: according to AUTNES list of issues, additional value:
    - (77777) image of issue, no text

v23 reference to EU

- *Description:* The variable indicates whether the author wishes to implement the policy issue on the European level.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no reference to EU

- (1) reference to EU

Variables referring to object actors

Up to ten object actors were coded per posting. The digit after the underscore indicates to which object actor the variable refers to. For example, v26_1 gives the name of the first object actor whereas v26_10 holds the name of the tenth object actor.

Organisations, for example parties or companies, were coded when written information was given. Individuals were always coded when they were mentioned as text. Moreover, a list of prominent political actors (including for example top candidates, high ranking party officials, members of the national government, head of the state) was defined. These prominent actors were coded even if they were only present in pictures but not mentioned in written form. Variable v28 contains information about the appearance of an object actor in written form or in a picture. Individuals in pictures that were not classified as prominent were not coded as object actor but in the variables related to pictures (v36-v39).

v25_1-v25_10 object actor 1-10: exists

- *Description:* Binary variable indicating whether an object actor was coded.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (0) no object
  - (1) object coded

v26_1-v26_10 object actor 1-10: name

- *Description:* This variable contains the names of individuals that were coded as object actors.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*: according to AUTNES list of individuals

v27_1-v27_10 object actor 1-10: organisation

- *Description:* This variable contains the object actor's organisation.
- *Type*: numeric
- *Values:* according to AUTNES list of organisations

v28_1-v28_10 object actor 1-10: appearance

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the object actor is mentioned in written form, as picture or both.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (1) text
    - (2) picture
    - (3) text + picture

v29_1-v29_10 object actor 1-10: predicate

- *Description:* This variable indicates the relation between the author of the homepage and the object actor. If no written information is given, this variable is coded as "88 – picture".
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (-1) reject/criticise
    - (0) neutral
    - (1) support
    - (88) picture
    - (99) not discernible

v30_1-v30_10 object actor 1-10: outfit

- *Description:* If the posting contains a picture of the object actor, the variable indicates how the object actor is dressed.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (1) formally
    - (2) semi-formally
    - (3) workwear
    - (4) uniform
    - (5) casually
    - (6) traditional costume
    - (7) fancy-dress costume
    - (8) undressed
    - (88) not visible
    - (99) not classifyable

- (.) no object/no picture

v31_1-v31_10 object actor 1-10: reference to campaign issue

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the object actor makes a reference to the coded campaign issue. "1 – text reference" is coded if the object actors makes a reference towards the coded issue in written form. "2 – image reference" is coded if there is no explicit relation between the object actor and the coded issue in written form, but a picture of the object actor indicates a connection.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (0) no reference
  - (1) text reference
  - (2) image reference
  - (.) no issue/ no object

v32_1-v32_10 object actor 1-10: reference to policy issue

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the object actor makes a reference to the coded policy issue. "1 – text reference" is coded if the object actors makes a reference towards the coded issue in written form. "2 – image reference" is coded if there is no explicit relation between the object actor and the coded issue in written form, but a picture of the object actor indicates a connection.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (0) no reference
  - (1) text reference
  - (2) image reference
  - (.) no issue/ no object

v33_1-v33_2 object actor 1-10: characteristics

- *Description:* Object actor's characteristics.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (1) no attribute
  - (2) competence: +
  - (3) competence: –

- (4) character: +
- (5) character: –
- (6) leadership: +
- (7) leadership: –
- (8) appearance: +
- (9) appearance: –
- (10) not discernible: +
- (11) not discernible: –
- (.) no object

v34_1-v34_10 object actor 1-10: record

- *Description:* Object actor's record.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (0) no record
  - (1) record referring to policy issue
  - (2) record not referring to policy issue
  - (.) no object

v35 additional object actors

- *Description:* This variable gives the number of object actors that were not coded due to the instruction to only code the first ten object actors per posting.
- *Type*: numeric

Variables referring to pictures

The next variables give information about individuals in pictures that were not coded as object actors (because they are no prominent political actors).

v36 picture of individuals

- *Description:* This variable indicates whether the posting contains pictures of non-coded individuals.
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no pictures of individuals
    - (1) pictures of individuals

v37_1-v37_5 pic 1-5: groups

- *Description:* This variable categorizes the individuals in pictures that were not coded as object actors. Individuals belonging to the same category were coded as a group (for example, a picture of five schoolchildren and a teacher were coded in two groups: v37_1 "7 – schoolchild" and v37_2 "15 – civil servant"). Up to five different groups were coded. The categorization of the groups is an adapted version of an unpublished codebook for analysing campaign posters developed by Lore Hayek (see Hayek (2016: ch. 7) for more information about the codebook).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
    - (0) no picture
    - (1) voter/people
    - (2) political activist
    - (3) woman
    - (4) man
    - (5) child/baby
    - (6) adolescent
    - (7) schoolchild
    - (8) student
    - (9) apprentice
    - (10) senior citizen/pensioner
    - (11) family
    - (12) employer/entrepreneur/freelancer
    - (13) blue-collar worker

- (14) white-collar worker
- (15) civil servant
- (16) unemployed person
- (17) farmer/rural population
- (18) journalist
- (19) representative of religions/clericalists
- (20) member of a minority
- (21) homosexual person
- (22) disabled person
- (23) person with migration background
- (24) member of a autochthonous minority
- (25) suspect of crimes

v38_1-v38_10 pic 1-5: number of people

- *Description:* Count of individuals of the respective category or group on the picture.
- *Type*: numeric
- *Values*:
  - 1 – 17 counts of individuals
  - (88888) non-countable

v39_1-v39_10 pic 1-10: reference to party

- *Description:* This variable indicates, whether the individuals on the picture support a party (for example by participating in campaign events).
- *Type:* numeric
- *Values*:
  - (1100000) SPÖ
  - (1200000) ÖVP
  - (1300000) FPÖ
  - (1400000) Greens
  - (1500000) BZÖ
  - (1600000) Team Stronach
  - (2400000) NEOS
  - (8888888) other
  - (9999999) none

References

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Rieder, Bernhard (2013): Studying Facebook via data extraction: The netvizz application. WebSci ’13 Proceedings of the 5th Annual ACM Web Science Conference, pages 346–355.