



Appraisal Analysis of Political Stance: Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats Facebook Page towards Charlie Kirk

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi sikap politik terhadap Charlie Kirk melalui bahasa evaluatif pada halaman Facebook Turning Point USA dan Occupy Democrats. Studi ini menerapkan Teori Appraisal (Martin & White, 2005) dalam kerangka desain studi kasus kualitatif dan paradigma interpretatif. Data penelitian terdiri dari takarir dan teks tambahan pada takarir gambar yang diambil dari halaman Facebook kedua organisasi tersebut terkait Charlie Kirk. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sikap politik dikonstruksi melalui tindakan pengagungan, tuduhan, dan manipulasi, yang diperkuat oleh unggahan-unggahan berkelanjutan yang mengekspresikan serta melipatgandakan tindakan-tindakan tersebut. Dengan menggunakan kerangka landasan moral Haidt untuk merepresentasikan wacana sikap politik berdasarkan enam landasan utama dalam kerangka tersebut, ditemukan bahwa landasan loyalitas/pengkhianatan, otoritas/subversi, serta kesucian/penodaan muncul sebagai landasan yang dominan. Lebih lanjut, temuan ini juga mengungkapkan bahwa politik digital modern tidak terutama digerakkan oleh kebijakan dan fakta berbasis data aktual. Sebaliknya, politik digital memanfaatkan kemarahan moral yang emosional serta manipulasi citra tokoh politik untuk memicu respons psikologis mendalam, yang mendorong publik untuk menyerang atau membela tokoh politik tertentu secara membabi buta serupa dengan cara seseorang membela keluarganya sendiri. Studi ini menunjukkan bagaimana bahasa evaluatif berfungsi secara ideologis dalam mengonstruksi sikap politik di ruang digital.

Abstract: The study investigates the representation of political stance towards Charlie Kirk through evaluative language in the Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat's facebook page. The study applies Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) within a qualitative case study design and interpretative paradigm. The data consist of captions and overlay captions taken from two institutional organization facebook pages domains about Charlie Kirk: Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats. The findings reveal that political stance is constructed through glorification, accusations, manipulation through constant posts that express and amplify those acts of glorification, accusations, manipulation. Using the Haidt framework of moral foundations as a way to represent the discourse political stance through the six main foundations within the framework, the foundations of loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, sanctity/degradation emerged as the dominant foundations. Furthermore, the findings also reveal that modern digital politics is not mainly driven by policies and facts with actual data. Instead it uses emotional moral outrage and manipulating the political figures' image to trigger deep psychological feelings that lead to the public blindly attacking or defending that specific political figure, much likely defending their own family. This study demonstrates how evaluative language functions ideologically in constructing political stance within digital space.



A. INTRODUCTION

Within this polarized era of politics, Charlie Kirk has emerged as one of the most influential controversial activists of this generation, particularly in mobilizing young voters toward his political belief. Charlie's political belief is considered controversial because of his racism with people that were not associated with his political belief and party. As the founder of Turning Point USA at age 18, Kirk pioneered a new model of political advocacy that combines digital media intelligence, campus activism, and controversial rhetoric to the youth. Charlie is one of the most noticeable voices when he supports Trump's movement of MAGA (Make America Great Again). He believed his influence through the MAGA movement will help him in rebuilding America. Charlie Kirk's influence extends across multiple platforms, with the most followers coming from Facebook, with a total of 10 million followers as of 2025. On 10 September 2025, Charlie Kirk was assassinated during a public event at the University of Utah. According to CNN, Tyler Robinson, a 22-year-old man accused of fatally shooting Charlie Kirk, appeared in a Utah court Thursday for the first time in-person since his arrest. Charlie Kirk died leaving a controversial legacy. The incident triggers intensified public debate over his legacy, rhetoric, and influence on the youth.

Occupy Democrats was founded in late 2012 by twin brothers Omar Rivero and Rafael Rivero. They created the platform as a social media-based counterbalance to the polarized political conditions in America, influencing through posts and interactions. They are mostly active on Facebook, with a following of 11 million followers as of January 2026, obtaining thousands of likes on every post they upload. The post mainly consists of political figures and their surrounding social political phenomena. Ranging from as old as the first president of America, Abraham Lincoln, all the way to young political figures such as Charlie Kirk. The organization functions as a participant in ideological framing in America's politics. Occupy Democrats, as of today, is one of the biggest organization pages on Facebook.

In this context, language plays an important role in digital political discourse. Political stance in digital space is not only communicated through visual representation, but also through linguistic choices

that shape the meaning, emotion, and position of the stance. According to Martin & White (2005), evaluative language allows speakers and texts to express attitudes, negotiate positions, and align audiences with specific perspectives. Therefore, the analysis of the language of digital politics is important in understanding how representations of political stance are linguistically constructed in the discourse of digital politics.

Despite the increase in posts in this digital space, the role of language in shaping political stance identity has limited the research on how to analyze linguistic choices in constructing political stance from fandoms and the linguistic framework in social media discourse. A recent study using qualitative descriptive method by Asilady et al. (2025) revealed how political figures, specifically Indonesian presidential candidates, used evaluative language to increase their view on the people during their election campaigns on X, finding that different candidates have different strategies to build and influence their persona in the campaign period. The research on presidential speeches has revealed how political leaders' persona on the ability to construct authority and public view. However, these studies only focus on political leaders' evaluative language on their own social media posts, not their organization.

Language is not merely a neutral way for expressing pre-existing political stance beliefs, but actively constitutes political reality through appraisal choices in discourse. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly Martin and White's Appraisal Theory, offers a wide analytical framework for examining how evaluative language constructs political stance through Appraisal theory. Previous studies on Appraisal theory, such as Noor et al. (2021), demonstrate the ideological political stances in presidential speeches using attitude as the appraisal category, revealing how linguistic patterns manifest underlying ideologies that may not be explicitly articulated. This research uses qualitative descriptive method for analyzing how speakers express attitude through Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation, position themselves relative to other voices through Engagement, and intensify or soften their evaluations through Graduation. However, the Study only focuses on presidential speeches, not on how political figures influence the political stance of an organization.

Appraisal can also be used to investigate extremists who justify their violence. A study from Etaywe (2024) about how extremist figures linguistically justify their threat on violence through discourse, Etaywe's analysis centers around terrorist threat texts from leaders such as Osama bin Laden and Abubakar Shekau, it relates to victim blaming, retaliating, and legitimating moral misalignment. Using qualitative descriptive as the research method, The research applies the appraisal framework to reveal justification of violence while this research extends that framework to explore stance taking and polarization in digital media discourse and how those political organizations constructed those stance towards a public figure.

Language can be constructed and used in demonstrating evaluative language using Appraisal Theory in a political world environment. A research conducted by Zhang, S., & Pei, Z. (2018) about political language based on Appraisal theory. The research is using qualitative interpretative method. The research is about President Xi Jinping and Donald Trump at the World Economic Forum found that Trump frames his speech as national promotion, emphasizing America's strength and achievements to attract investment, aligning with "America First." While Xi Jinping speech on global cooperation, highlighting shared challenges and calling for unity, aligns with the concept of "a community of shared future for mankind, using negative words such as terrorism, then positive words such as innovation and a driven high technological environment. The study demonstrates that language is inseparable from power: Trump's discourse constructs unilateralism and national promotion, while Xi's constructs multilateralism and global responsibility. However, this research only focuses on language as a tool of persuasion and power in global politics. Not focusing on the organization that connects to a specific individual.

Language also functions as justification that builds public view on a controversial individual. In this research by Aian, Ding. (2017)., the researcher attempts to make an analysis of attitudinal resources in president Obama's victory speech using qualitative descriptive method. The research uses the perspective of Appraisal Theory and to discover how resources of Affect, Judgment and Appreciation are applied to rebuild public confidence, minimize hostility, appeal to the public for national solidarity

and rally the country to challenges ahead. This research only focus about speech that justifying individual brand rather than political stance using appraisal towards an individual.

The purpose of this research extends beyond academic interest, as understanding how political stance is linguistically constructed can inform efforts to bridge partisan divides, promote media literacy, and develop more nuanced approaches to communication in this increasingly digital polarized societies. By revealing the linguistic evaluation of fandoms, this study contributes to ongoing conversations about the role of language, media, and affect in shaping contemporary discourse and digital engagement.

B. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative case study design within an interpretative paradigm. The interpretative paradigm is appropriate because this study focuses on understanding the meaning constructed through language within Political and ideological contexts rather than through quantitative measurement. Creswell (2013) explains that qualitative research is interpretative in nature because it seeks to understand how individuals or texts construct meaning based on particular experiences and contexts. In discourse studies, this paradigm enables researchers not only to describe linguistic phenomena but also to interpret the ideological meanings within language use. This design was chosen because this research focuses on efforts to understand meaning constructed through language in social and political ideological contexts.

The data for this study consists of the captions and overlay captions that are in the posts collected from Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats official Facebook page. The research consisted of textual screenshot from Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats Facebook page, that is divided into linguistic units (words, phrases, clauses) from each post. The posts serve as the data source that provides textual narratives from Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats, while text transcripts serve as a form of data that is ready to be analyzed. The Appraisal Framework acts as an analytical instrument to identify and classify evaluative clauses based on the textual data collected in the posts.

The data collection procedure involves documentation. This method involves collecting and analyzing the data identified in the source of the data. The post is then collected by capturing a high-resolution screenshot and reading the text multiple times to preserve its original visual and textual composition as it appeared on the platform. The documentation process enabled accurate extraction of linguistic elements that are relevant to the study's objectives. Then the clauses are categorized using Martin and White (2005) Appraisal Theory. The documentation process helped the researcher to identify according to each research goal.

The analysis is carried out in stages through several levels of analysis that follow the model proposed by James Spradley (1979), because it provides a systematic stage to analyze qualitative data from the linguistic to the ideological level method to understand the realization of interpersonal meaning at the linguistic level and interpret the ideological meaning that appears in digital discourse. The four main stages of ethnographic data analysis are: Domain Analysis, Taxonomic Analysis, Component Analysis, and Cultural Analysis. Domain Analysis aims to provide a general description of the data and phenomena studied (Spradley, 1979). Domain analysis is the first step in qualitative research that aims to find the main areas of meaning from the data collected. Then there is taxonomy analysis. The aspects analyzed are characterization through the Appraisal system, namely: Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. Then followed by Componential Analysis that functions as combining the analysis of the previous Domain and Taxonomy analysis into a single set of data. This stage allows for identification of interpersonal relationships and the textual structures are realized. The final stage is Cultural Analysis. Cultural analysis draws on the patterns of evaluative meanings that emerge from the appraisal system that has been identified at the componential stage, interprets the patterns that emerge from the relationship between cultural and language contexts, and will be used to relate linguistic findings to a broader political socio cultural context using the framework of Moral foundation theory that highlights the evaluative language and political ideology found based on the evaluative language identified in appraisal categories that form narratives of political stance.

C. RESULTS

1. Analysis of Appraisal System in Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat's Facebook Page

To provide a general overview of the Evaluative Language part of the data. The four domains are condensed into one table. This table summarizes each frequency of Appraisal Category across Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat's posts. The total data is 84 clauses that contain evaluative meanings. Below is the distribution of data in Table 1:

Table 1: Distribution of Appraisal System across the Domains

Domain	Amount of data	Attitude						Engagem ent		Graduati on	
		Affect		Judge ment		Appre ciation		Mo nogl oss	Het erogl oss	For ce	Foc us
		+	-	+	-	+	-				
Turning Point USA	39	2	0	40	0	0	0	6	32	41	4
Occupy Democrats	45	1	2	1	42	0	0	4	41	42	2
Total	84	5	2	41	42	0	0	59	73	83	6

According to Table 1, the most common Appraisal sub system is Judgement for both Domains with 83 identifications. Followed by the Sub Type of Engagement are commonly Heterogloss with 73 identifications. Graduation is commonly Force with 83 identification. These findings reveal that Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats rely on evaluating Charlie's Behaviours as a public political figure as a foundation towards each facebook page's respective Political Stance. The following section analyzes each sub category of Appraisal system in the data.

A. Appraisal Analysis of Attitude in Turning Point USA

Table 2 Distribution of Attitude in Turning Point USA

Category	Frequency	Polarity (+/-)	Percentage
Affect Happiness	1	+	2,4%
Affect Security	1	+	2,4%
Judgement Tenacity	17	+	40,5%
Judgement Propierty	14	+	33,3%

Judgement Capacity	7	+	16,7%
Judgement Veracity	1	+	2,4%
Judgement Normality	1	+	2,4%
Total	42		100%

In Turning Point USA’s case, there are some affect subtypes identified in these post. These affect can be found in Turning Point USA posts. Which in this page is used to evaluate positive emotions of happiness, power, and desires towards Charlie and his beliefs. Using affect to position Charlie as this influential figure that keeps fighting for his beliefs. The clause identified that has attitude happiness and inclination. Clauses that show emotions such as *“HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHARLIE”* and *“PLEASE Share his impact in the comments”*

Judgement is the most common attitude sub category found in Turning Point USA post towards Charlie Kirk. Judgment is a system of meaning used to assess human behavior positively or negatively based on social values and norms. It is related to how a person’s attitudes and actions are perceived and evaluated by society (Martin & White, 2005). Across 39 clauses identified in Turning Point USA’s post, 40 of the words/phrases identified as Judgement. Judgment is used to describe the way language is used to judge someone’s character, morality, and behavior, both explicitly and implicitly.

In Turning Point USA’s section, These Judgement resources are mainly through evoked meanings and emphasize positive evaluations of Charlie’s tenacity, capacity, propriety, veracity, and normality. The dominant sub-type identified is Positive Judgement: tenacity and propriety, which positions Charlie Kirk in Turning Point USA as a tenacious and morally good figure. There are also a minor identification of Judgement veracity, capacity, and normality. Clauses such as *“A LEGACY REMEMBER”, “TODAY’S A GREAT DAY FOR CHURCH, REJOICE!”*, *“Countless lives were changed by Charlie’s example”*, *“CHARLIE KIRK EXPOSES THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT FATHERLESS HOMES.”*, *“Charlie Kirk among American educational figures depicted on banners*

hung over DOE building” all contains each sub type of judgement representatively.

Overall the sub-types Judgement in Turning Point USA’s domain is dominated by positive evaluations of judgement tenacity and Propriety, with minor references to Capacity, Normality and Veracity. Highlighting words/phrases in clauses of the posts that glorified Charlie’s behaviour. Judgement resources in Turning Point USA’s highlights Charlie Kirk as a morally good figure that has done good for the benefit of America.

B. Appraisal Analysis of Engagement in Turning Point USA

Table 3 Distribution of Engagement in Turning Point USA

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Monogloss	5	13,2%
Heterogloss Entertain	3	7,9%
Heterogloss Attribute	25	65,8%
Heterogloss Endorse	1	2,6%
Heterogloss Pronounce	4	10,5%
Total	38	100%

In Engagement, monoglossic resources are rarely identified in Turning Point USA. Clauses such as *“LONG LIVED BOLDLY”* that highlights a single voice in the form a bare assertion of fact and does not acknowledge any alternative voices. While Heterogloss is common in Turning Point USA posts with Heterogloss attribute being the most common sub type identified. Clauses that acknowledge alternative voices such as *“SERGIO GOR: “*, *“ERIKA KIRK: “*, *“ANNA PAULINA LUNA: “*. Using the (:) symbol as a way to quote the alternative voice. There is also the subtype Heterogloss Entertain, though it is not as common as Attribute, it still uses alternative voices through openly inviting to respond. Clauses such as *“REMEMBERED CHARLIE KIRK”, “If he left a mark on your life”* that highlights Occupy Democrats inviting other voices to respond to their statement of possibility in reminding Charlie’s image according to them. Some posts have Heterogloss Endorse with Turning Point USA fully agrees towards Charlie’s statement without any other alternate answers.

Clauses such as *"America's greatness isn't up for debate"* that highlights Turning Point USA's unquestioned agreement towards Charlie's authority.

Taken together, the Engagement resources highlight the voices of Turning Point USA's as authoritative that reinforce their foundation in framing Charlie through glorification. Monoglossic statements show unquestionable facts that have no alternative dialog while heteroglossic resources introduce alternate voices in the form testimony in Charlie's overall behaviour as a political public figure.

C. Appraisal Analysis of graduation in Turning Point USA

Table 4 Distribution of Graduation in Turning Point USA

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Force Intensification	27	60%
Force Quantification	14	31,1%
Focus Sharpen	4	8,9%
Total	45	100%

The use of Graduation in Turning Point USA mainly use the subtype Force with 41 total identification and a minor subtype in Focus with 4 identifications. The use of Force functions as Intensifying and quantifying Charlie's impact and public image towards the public. Clauses such as *"NEVER SURRENDER"*, *"America is the greatest country to ever existed"* -Charlie Kirk, *"not just across our land, but around the globe."*, *"we will make ten times greater through the power of his memory."* that highlights the process of intensifying Charlie as a whole in pursuing his goals. There are also some rare cases that the clause contains intensification in a form of downscale. Clauses such as *"there was no hate in his heart."* highlighting the purity of Charlie's morals by completely denying Charlie truly has no evil in his heart. In the context of Focus, it is also rare to have a post that sharpens/blurs Charlie, Clauses such as *"truly fearless to his last moment"* that highlights Charlie's embodiment of fearless.

The Graduation in Turning Point USA shows a majority towards intensifying through upscale Charlie's influence. Indicating that Turning Point USA

really emphasizes on shaping Charlie's image towards the public.

D. Appraisal Analysis of Attitude in Occupy Democrats

Table 4 Distribution of Attitude in Occupy Democrats

Category	Frequency	Polarity (+/-)	Percentage
Affect Inclination	1	-	2,3%
Affect Satisfaction	2	-	4,5%
Judgement Propriety	38	-	86,4%
Judgement Capacity	3	-	6,8%
Total	44		100%

In the Occupy Democrats case, there are some affect subtypes identified in these posts. These affect can be found in Occupy Democrats posts. Which in this page is used to evaluate Negative emotions of sadness, dissatisfaction, and desires towards Charlie and his beliefs. Clauses that highlight these emotions such as *"Why is he the only one talking about?"*, *"Does anyone know of their names?"* that highlight Occupy Democrats emotions of disappointment towards Charlie's use of his public image in gaining unnecessary attention towards his death. With Judgement as the most common among the affect subtypes in these posts. Additionally these evaluations are realized mainly through evoked meanings. Occupy Democrats mainly use emotional manipulations such as guilt tripping in the form of justifying Charlie Kirk's controversial behaviour which falls in the category of Judgement Propriety. Clauses such as *"IF I SEE A BLACK PERSON"* -Charlie, *"I don't care that George Floyd died"*, *"and his unfortunate assassination doesn't change that,-Charlie Kirk towards George Floyd"*. It is used to morally frame Charlie's behaviour so that the public shifts their perspective in believing Charlie's controversy is justified. There is also some identification of Judgement Capacity, which functions as Occupy Democrats mocking Charlie's capability as a political figure. With clauses such as *"if Charlie Kirk were a first grader at school"* and *"America would have moved on by now"* devalues Charlie's capabilities of his political

influence. The attitude's identified in Occupy Democrat reflect their criticism and deep hatred towards Charlie's Political Influence. Signaling a sort of denial and retaliation towards Charlie's Political Ideology..

E. Appraisal Analysis of Engagement in Occupy Democrats

Table 5 Distribution of Engagement in Occupy Democrats

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Monogloss	6	13,3%
Heterogloss Entertain	5	11,1%
Heterogloss Attribute	23	51,1%
Heterogloss Counter	5	11,1%
Heterogloss Endorse	3	6,7%
Heterogloss Pronounce	3	6,7%
Total	45	100%

In Occupy Democrats, the use of voices mainly come from alternate views. With the majority being fully attributed towards another voice through tagging (@) and (-) the user. Clauses such as *"Yes, Charlie Kirk REALLY said that", "JUST SAYIN!" -Stephen king, "YET THE FASCIST SEE HIM AS A MARTYR" @ANARKYOUTUBE, "I don't remember the Right being this upset back then, do you?" @johncoopertweets.* Some of these from the perspective of the speaker highlights their counter and denial towards Charlie's public image. There is also the use of single voice in the posts. In Occupy Democrats, it is a decent amount to see posts that use Occupy Democrat's own voice as the main messenger about opposing Charlie. The clauses that use Occupy Democrats' own voice usually functions as a direct information of facts. Essentially the bare assertion of Charlie's phenomena of his controversy. Clauses such as *"Podcaster Activist Charlie Kirk Made millions by insulting minorities and dividing people", "Just about every person in Trump's cabinet made it out to Charlie Kirk's memorial. ", and "The sad truth of charlie kirk"* highlight a single voice in the form of bare assertion that is knowingly

unquestionable facts about Charlie and his phenomena.

F. Appraisal Analysis of Graduation in Occupy Democrats

Table 6 Distribution of Graduation in Occupy Democrats

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Force Intensification	38	86,3%
Force Quantification	4	9,1%
Focus Soften	2	4,5%
Total	43	100%

The use of Graduation in Occupy Democrats mainly towards amplifying their demoralizing or framing Charlie's public image. Showing a high impact on intensifying Charlie's controversial side. Clauses such as *"Charlie was a deplorable bigot", "CHARLIE KIRK ADVOCATED STONING GAYS TO DEATH.", "What's funny If you played some of Charlie Kirk's show out loud at various workplaces", "And suddenly quoting Charlie Kirk is deeply offensive to Charlie Kirk fans."* highlight Occupy Democrats framing Charlie by emphasizing his controversial side. Using demoralizing words that function as amplifying the controversies, Occupy Democrats intentions of shifting the public's view of Charlie became more convincing. These clauses highlight how Occupy Democrats' seriousness in revealing Charlie Kirk is more controversial rather than good that the public normally viewed. Some identified clauses also have the sub type Focus identified, though not as common as Force, it also functions towards degrading Charlie's public image. Clauses such as *"SO WEIRD THAT CHARLIE KIRK WAS SUPPOSEDLY NOT A FASCIST", "What about the roughly 400 who were shot and killed since then"* are Clauses that frames Charlie's controversy by giving an estimation based on personal view rather than the actual fact. Giving a vague meaning on Charlie's controversial reasons.

The Graduation that Occupy Democrats used in their posts reflect their denial and retaliation towards Charlie's political influence. By increasing the impact of the retaliation, Occupy Democrats can be more

convincing towards demoralizing, degrading, and dehumanizing Charlie as a Controversial Political Figure.

The Appraisal system across Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats facebook posts about Charlie Kirk constructs a contrast representation of political stance through different means such as glorification, loyalty, respect, care, emotional manipulation, demoralization, degradation. Affect resources evaluate the emotional connection between Charlie and his closest companion, Judgement resources evaluate Charlie's phenomena in contributing political and social change in America. Engagement resources show alternate voices as witness towards Charlie's work and influence, showing authority, denial, agreement towards alternative voices, expectation towards their witness towards Charlie Kirk's actions and his phenomena surrounding him. Graduation resources intensify Charlie's behaviours, his scope and potency of his influence while sharpening his identity as a public figure, soften through ambiguous accusations

G. Analysis of Moral Foundations

Based on the data analyzed from Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat's clauses, a very polarized contrast towards Charlie Kirk. Turning Point USA consistently positions Charlie Kirk using a combination of positive foundations such Authority and Loyalty, which is consistently found in the clauses of Turning Point USA post about Charlie to affirm his leadership legitimacy in the eyes of the internal group. On the other hand, Occupy Democrats take an opposite approach towards Charlie. In nearly every post, Occupy Democrats use a combination of the foundations of subversion and degradation to morally demoralize, dehumanize Charlie and frame him as a threat towards social order.

Across the two facebook page domains, the post constructed the foundations of care through evaluative language associated with highlighting the amount of care Turning Point USA makes by highlighting Charlie in changing people's lives. Glorifying his behaviour While Occupy Democrats use Harm to personally attack Charlie and his past that ruined people's lives, highlighting his controversy to reveal the public for who he is.

Fairness/Cheating the foundations that is related to altruism, essentially using the ideas of

justice and rights. Across the facebook posts in Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat, fairness in this case highlights Charlie's ability to stand up towards solving problems of society. However, Cheating is used to highlight Charlie's behaviour that shows personal gain through accusations about Charlie Kirk's controversial side.

Loyalty/betrayal is the second most common foundation found in Turning Point USA and and the third most common in Occupy Democrats facebook posts about Charlie Kirk. Loyalty/betrayal is commonly used to show loyalty towards Charlie and betrayal is used to show Charlie's betrayal towards anything that revolves around his identity. Showing how Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats relationship and how far each domain could go expresses that Loyalty and Betrayal towards Charlie Kirk.

Authority/Subversion is the most common foundation found in Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats facebook posts about Charlie Kirk. Authority/Subversion is commonly used to highlight authority towards Charlie by showing respect towards anything about him and subversion is used to show disrespect towards Charlie's political identity. Showing how Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats express these foundations and how deep they are towards Charlie Kirk.

Sanctity/Degradation is also a foundation found in Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats facebook posts about Charlie Kirk. Sanctity/Degradation is commonly used to highlight Charlie's behaviour that is connected towards his faith and how he pursues that religious identity that shapes his view towards the public. Showing how Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats highlight how far Charlie's faith in his religions.

In total there are 5 moral foundations identified in each domain. In Turning Point USA facebook posts the majority of the clauses contain Authority, Loyalty, and Sanctity. Which are moral values contained in the binding foundation according to moral foundation theory. Because Turning Point USA values Charlie as a figure that has many heroic and saviour traits. Prioritizing social hierarchy, religious values and morals, and a loyal demand that represents Charlie Kirk as the highest form of authority in TPUSA. Creating a form of binding morality to create unification towards the organization so that Charlie

will be immortalized in the name of Turning Point USA. This mainly reflects the political ideology of Conservatism, specifically Modern conservatism because it focuses on glorification of Charlie as a figure. Showing Turning Point USA's care to preserve Charlie and any opposition will be counted as a threat towards the Organization and Charlie as a whole.

In Occupy Democrats facebook posts the majority of the clauses contain the foundation of Betrayal, Subversion, and Degradation. Treating Charlie's political influence as a moral contamination. Occupy Democrats frame Charlie's legacy as something "degraded" that America has normalized. This ruins his reputation as a public figure. In Occupy Democrats' view Charlie Kirk represents something wrong towards America. A controversial figure that is glorified in America that has many followers controlling one of the biggest and influential institutions that spread his views and faith who also hides his controversy. By highlighting these controversies in Occupy Democrats post, it shows hatred towards Charlie by manipulating any phenomena that is related to him to gain hatred from the public. By relying heavily on Subversion, Betrayal, and Degradation, Occupy Democrats use psychological weapons of Charlie's own belief. Treating everything Charlie's behaviour as betraying and defiling. Overall Occupy Democrats stance is progressive, specifically progressive tribalism because OD positions Charlie Kirk as a dehumanized figure. It specifically focuses on acknowledging Charlie Kirk's legacy as a threat towards America. Ensuring that the public views Charlie's political memory as dangerous.

Both Institutes highlight opposed moral foundations as psychological weapons to construct their political narratives. Creating a sort of binding towards Charlie Kirk's political life as a foundation towards their political stance. Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat's political stance towards Charlie Kirk is a manifestation of a broader ideological clash.

D. DISCUSSION

A. Attitude

The distribution of the data shows Turning Point USA's view of Charlie Kirk's behaviour. In the Turning Point USA domain, Positive Judgement functions as establishing a foundation related to glorifying Charlie Kirk. Positive Affect functions as

establishing emotions that are inline towards Charlie's goal for example *"His passion was my passion"*. Positive judgement that evaluates Charlie attributes such as his tenacity *"Charlie is truly fearless"*, his capabilities such as *"Charlie was more than an activist"*, his transparency such as *"CHARLIE KIRK EXPOSES THE HARD TRUTH"* functions as establishing an authoritative and glorifying image of Charlie's action. This highlights Turning Point USA's effort in creating Charlie as this figure that only highlights the good of his action while intentionally avoiding controversy towards his image.

While in Occupy Democrats domain. The majority of the data consist of Negative Judgement Propierty. In Occupy Democrats domain, Judgement Propierty Functions as a foundation related to Occupy Democrats framing Charlie Kirk as a demoralized and deranged figure. Negative Affect functions as Occupy Democrats showing negative emotions of disappointment towards Charlie's status as controversial but still gain respect towards the people such as *"Why is he the only one"*. With negative judgement show Occupy Democrats framing Charlie as a demoralized figure such as him saying *"george floyd is a scumbag"* This highlights Occupy Democrat efforts in revealing Charlie Kirk is not the good figure that the public view. Denying his good political public image by relating Charlie with his controversial side acting as the opposition that only reveals the truth.

B. Engagement

In Engagement, monoglossic resources are rarely identified in both Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats posts, with 10 total identified, compared to 73 total heteroglossic resources identified. By framing alternative voices such as *"@Charlie Kirk"*, *@BSO*, *"Stephen King"*, *"Erika Kirk:"* and *"Tucker Carlson:"* as heterogloss, the text completely opens towards alternate voices. The alternate voices function as reinforcing each institute's evaluations towards Charlie Kirk. For Turning Point USA the use of alternate voices mainly for Charlie's glorifying image in Turning Point USA. While In Occupy Democrats it functioned as reinforced their opposition in revealing the controversial side of Charlie. Positioning the alternate voices as support/opposing towards refining Charlie's image as a political public figure.

C. Graduation

This evaluation is further intensified by Graduation resources where the majority are Force with a total of 83 resources identified are applied through high intensity and quantity with words such as *"GREATEST", "Bigot", "BLACK, TRANS, ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT," "at all times", "various", "18.533th american shot"* to intensify the overall supporting or opposing the political impact of Charlie's public image. With a minor identification of focus resources totaling 6 resources functions as a sharpening/blurring Charlie's status as a public figure with words such as *"a modern day disciple", "Truly", "SUPPOSEDLY", "Roughly 400"* highlights the use of focus in Emphasizing/Blurring Charlie's name towards the public.

D. Political Stance

For the political stance of Turning Point USA, the majority identified in the Turning Point USA post are foundations of loyalty and authority. With both 14 resources identified. Clauses containing appraisal judgement such as *"LEGACY REMEMBER", "President Trump honors Charlie Kirk", and "Charlie Kirk among American educational figures depicted on banners hung over DOE building"*. Turning Point USA is mainly leaning towards the conservatism stance, specifically modern conservatism. Modern conservative stances in the form of loyalty or authority when addressing Charlie Kirk in the posts. Turning Point USA mainly focuses on glorification towards Charlie's image, influence and beliefs. Turning Point USA shows authority in the form of constantly posting texts that contain glorifying Charlie's actions and influences. This is how Turning Point USA constructed their political stance towards Charlie Kirk. By glorifying Charlie Kirk and consistently showing Charlie as this figure that always influences authority and the good in himself and for others.

The political stance of Occupy Democrats are majority identified in the Occupy Democrats posts are foundations of subversion and degradation. With 15 clauses identified as subversion and followed by 12 clauses for degradation. Clauses containing negative judgement such as *"IM SORRY", "I don't care that he's dead", and "You would definitely GET FIRED!"*. This falls in the political stance of progressivism. Specifically tribal progressivism. Occupy Democrat's disrespecting Charlie's authority as an individual

while also dehumanizing him. Occupy Democrats using emotional manipulation asking about Charlie whether it is about his influence, past claims, beliefs, and policy then try to align them with something bad such as specific groups he does not have relations with, a national tragedy, or framing him using false accusation from someone else. These attempts from Occupy Democrats are how they show Charlie's controversial side. By proving a point that Charlie Kirk is not the individual that the public and media thought to be. Competing against the social and political ideologies of Charlie Kirk.

E. CONCLUSION

This study investigates how political stance towards Charlie Kirk is constructed in Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats facebook page through Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). The findings reveal that political stance in each facebook page is linguistically constructed through evaluative language across dimensions adapted from Haidt (2004) Moral foundation framework. This reveals that political stance is not only to show expressed ideological opinion, it is also used as a way to show hidden ideological conflict in America by taking control through shaping Charlie's identity. By shaping Charlie's identity based on each institute's perspective, each side of the institute follows a specific way of highlighting Charlie Kirk in their posts such as glorification, accusation, manipulation to build their own version of Charlie's image. Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrat are in a hidden ideological conflict that uses Charlie's image as the foundation towards their ideological and political belief.

Through the data of Appraisal resources identified, Attitude Judgement was overwhelmingly the dominant resource, far outweighing Affect and Appreciation, indicating that both pages evaluate Kirk chiefly through his character and conduct rather than emotional reaction or appreciation of qualities. The direction of that judgement is where the two pages diverge completely: Turning Point USA's judgements are almost entirely positive, constructing Kirk through terms such as *"fearless", "faithful", and "patriot,"* while Occupy Democrats' judgements are almost entirely negative, constructing him through terms such as *"scumbag" and "bigot"*. The same grammatical resource is thus mobilized to build

opposite evaluations of the same referent. While the voices in Engagement, heteroglossic resources far outnumber monoglossic ones across both pages. Rather than asserting claims as bare fact, both institutions routinely invoke alternative voices quoting Kirk himself, allies such as Tucker Carlson, or bystanders and critics to authenticate their evaluation. For Turning Point USA, these voices function as testimony reinforcing Kirk's glorification; for Occupy Democrats, they authorize his condemnation. Engagement thus operates less to open genuine dialogic space than to recruit supporting witnesses for a stance each page has already taken. With the use of Graduation resources, dominated by Force rather than Focus, show that both pages intensify rather than simply state their evaluations, using amplifiers such as "*GREATEST*" or capitalized emphasis to sharpen the emotional charge of each post. This reliance on intensification over precision indicates that both pages are optimized to provoke strong affective reactions rather than to inform.

Combine the appraisal results together through the Moral Foundations framework, these choices cohere into two distinct ideological constructions of Charlie Kirk. Turning Point USA's posts cluster around the binding foundations of Authority, Loyalty, and Sanctity, recasting Kirk from a political figure into an almost sacred, father-like authority within the movement consistent with modern conservatism's emphasis on hierarchy, in-group loyalty, and moral purity. Occupy Democrats' posts cluster instead around Subversion, Betrayal, and Degradation, recasting Kirk as a source of moral contamination whose legacy must be rejected consistent with a more combative, tribal strand of progressivism. Both pages, in other words, use the same linguistic architecture to pursue the same rhetorical goal: converting Charlie Kirk from a contested public figure into a moral symbol, sacred to one audience and profane to the other. Taken together, these findings suggest that political stance in institutional digital discourse is constructed less through policy argument or verifiable fact than through the strategic accumulation of evaluative language Judgement to assign character, Engagement to recruit supporting voices, and Graduation to intensify emotional charge. This machinery did not merely report public sentiment on Charlie Kirk; it

actively produced two irreconcilable versions of the same person, each treated by its respective audience as beyond dispute. This illustrates a broader feature of digital political culture, in which moral outrage and identity-based image-making, more than fact or policy, increasingly shape how the public come to know and judge political figures.

This study has several limitations. First, the research focuses only on two institutions based on the USA as the political stance, which is Turning Point USA and Occupy Democrats, so the findings cannot be generalized to every institute that has a political stance towards Charlie. Second, the study mainly analyzes verbal discourse and evaluative language, while visual elements such as lighting, colour palette, visual angles, and multimodal interaction are not examined in detail. Third, the analysis is limited to only posts. Future research can include videos and credible websites in exploring political stances. Lastly, this research is only limited towards a controversial political figure, it does not include a political figure who has not had any controversies.

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several suggestions can be proposed. Future studies can conduct research that investigates political stances using institutes outside of America for a more diverse perspective in digital discourse in order to compare different political stances towards Charlie Kirk. Future studies may also use other political figures that have not had any controversial past to compare with political figures who had controversial past. Future studies may also integrate multimodal discourse analysis to examine how verbal and visual elements interact in constructing political stances.

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