AUTHOR MARKS IN EXTREMIST TEXT

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Abstract. This study investigates the linguistic and rhetorical markers in extremist texts, focusing on the strategies employed by authors to radicalize and mobilize their audience. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, we analyzed a diverse corpus of 100 extremist texts through qualitative content analysis and quantitative linguistic techniques. The findings reveal distinct patterns, including the use of polarizing language, victimhood narratives, glorification of violence, and appeals to identity. These patterns were quantified using natural language processing (NLP) tools, which confirmed the high frequency of polarizing terms and negative sentiment towards out-groups. The study highlights the critical role of language in the spread of extremist ideologies and provides valuable insights for the development of targeted counter-narratives and early intervention strategies.

Keywords: Extremist texts, radicalization, rhetorical strategies, polarizing language, natural language processing.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of extremist texts has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly as global connectivity and digital platforms have amplified the dissemination of radical ideologies. These texts, often marked by polarizing and inflammatory content, play a crucial role in the recruitment and radicalization processes of extremist groups. Understanding the linguistic and rhetorical strategies employed in these texts is essential for developing effective counter-narratives and preventive measures. Extremist texts are characterized by their attempt to indoctrinate readers into a particular ideological stance, often through the manipulation of language and symbols. The marks or indicators of extremism within these texts can range from overt calls to violence to subtler forms of persuasion, such as the demonization of out-groups, glorification of martyrdom, and appeals to perceived injustices. The ability of these texts to resonate with and mobilize individuals stems from their strategic use of rhetoric that appeals to emotions, identity, and a sense of belonging. The study of extremist texts is interdisciplinary, intersecting fields such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, and political science. Researchers have identified various rhetorical strategies used by extremists, including the use of fear appeals, moral disengagement, and dehumanization of opponents. These strategies are designed to create a black-and-white worldview, where the in-group is portrayed as righteous and the out-group as evil. By examining the specific marks used in

extremist texts, scholars aim to uncover the underlying mechanisms of radicalization and the ways in which these texts seek to influence their audience.

Literature Review. Previous studies have provided insights into the common themes and rhetorical devices found in extremist literature. For instance, Winter et al. (2016) highlight the use of narrative frameworks that legitimize violence and foster a sense of urgency and crisis. Similarly, Conway (2017) emphasizes the role of identity construction in extremist discourse, noting how texts often frame the in-group as victims of oppression, thereby justifying retaliatory violence. Despite these advances, there remains a need for a comprehensive analysis that systematically categorizes the linguistic and rhetorical markers of extremism across different types of extremist literature. Extremist texts utilize a variety of rhetorical strategies to influence and radicalize their audience. These strategies often include the use of polarizing language, victimhood narratives, and the glorification of violence. Rock (2004) explores the thematic elements of trauma, sadomasochism, and death in the works of Laura Kasischke, Darcey Steinke, and Kathy Acker, highlighting how extremist texts often tap into deep-seated emotional and psychological triggers to resonate with readers. This aligns with the broader understanding that extremist literature seeks to manipulate emotional responses to foster a sense of urgency and righteousness among followers. The use of religious and cultural symbols is another prominent feature in extremist rhetoric. Kepel (2003) examines Muslim extremism in Egypt, illustrating how extremist leaders like the Prophet and Pharaoh use religious narratives to justify their actions and galvanize support. This manipulation of religious texts and symbols not only legitimizes extremist actions but also creates a strong sense of identity and community among adherents.

The detection and analysis of extremist texts have evolved significantly with the advent of natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning techniques. Mussiraliyeva et al. (2020) discuss the application of NLP to detect online radicalization and extremism, highlighting the potential of these technologies to identify extremist content based on linguistic patterns and markers. Their study underscores the importance of developing robust algorithms that can accurately classify and flag extremist material, thereby aiding in early intervention efforts.

Litvinova, Litvinova, and Panicheva (2019) delve into authorship attribution using different types of n-gram features, demonstrating how computational methods can be employed to trace the origins of extremist texts. By analyzing linguistic features such as word frequency, syntax, and stylistic markers, researchers can not

only identify the authors of anonymous extremist posts but also uncover broader trends and networks within extremist communities. Gaikwad et al. (2021) provide a comprehensive review of the techniques and tools used in online extremism detection. Their systematic review highlights the importance of diverse datasets, classification techniques, and validation methods in improving the accuracy and reliability of extremism detection systems. This review emphasizes that while significant progress has been made, ongoing refinement and adaptation of these techniques are necessary to keep pace with the evolving nature of extremist rhetoric. Mussiraliyeva et al. (2020) and Gaikwad et al. (2021) both highlight the potential of NLP and machine learning in identifying radicalization pathways and intervening before individuals fully commit to extremist ideologies. These technologies enable law enforcement and counter-terrorism agencies to monitor and disrupt online extremist networks, thereby preventing the spread of radicalization.

METHODS

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to systematically identify and analyze the linguistic and rhetorical markers in extremist texts. The methodology is divided into three main phases: data collection, qualitative content analysis, and quantitative linguistic analysis.

Data Collection. The data for this study comprises a diverse corpus of extremist texts sourced from various ideological spectrums, including religious extremism, political extremism, and nationalist extremism. The texts were selected based on their prominence and influence within extremist movements, as well as their availability through open-source platforms such as online forums, social media, and extremist publications. To ensure a representative sample, we included texts from different languages, geographies, and time periods. The final corpus consists of 100 texts, each ranging from short pamphlets to full-length manifestos.

Qualitative Content Analysis. The first phase of analysis involves a qualitative content analysis to identify recurring themes and rhetorical strategies within the texts. This process began with open coding, where texts were read multiple times to identify preliminary categories of interest. Codes were assigned to segments of text that exhibited features of extremist rhetoric, such as calls to violence, demonization of out-groups, and appeals to collective identity. These initial codes were then refined through axial coding, where relationships between codes were identified and grouped into broader themes.

Quantitative Linguistic Analysis. Following the qualitative analysis, a quantitative linguistic analysis was conducted using corpus linguistic techniques. Texts were processed using natural language processing (NLP) tools to extract linguistic features such as word frequency, sentiment analysis, and syntactic patterns.

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