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Linguistic Markers of Deception in Computer-Mediated Communication:  
An Analysis of Politicians' Tweets

Master's thesis

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**Table of contents**

- 1. Introduction ..... 1
- 2. Defining deception ..... 2
  - 2.1. Deceiver and receiver ..... 4
- 3. Previous research of deception with special focus on language..... 6
- 4. Computer-mediated communication ..... 12
- 5. The study ..... 14
  - 5.1. The analysis of tweets ..... 15
- 6. Discussion ..... 23
- 7. Conclusion..... 24
- 8. References ..... 25
- 9. Web sources ..... 29
- 10. Appendix: List of examined tweets..... 31

## 1. Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to examine mechanisms of deception in computer-mediated communication. Specifically, the goal is to provide an overview of relevant research on deception and then observe and analyse whether the proposed mechanisms of deception could be used to recognize deception in statements made by politicians. Due to the set format of this paper, the author decided to concentrate solely on the false statements that were transmitted through social media websites. Another reason for analysing messages on social media is the continuous growth of popularity, availability and the overall use of sites such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* among politicians. In order to analyse dishonesty, falsehood and disinformation in messages that they communicate, one needs to define what deception is, describe the characteristics of participants in a deceptive exchange and specify various cues that leak during deception and consequently point to it. The author shall provide a summary of several studies which focused on describing the profile of deceptive behaviour and, particularly, enumerating the linguistic features that characterize deceitful messages will be provided. Since the main material for the analysis are statements published on the Internet, it will be necessary to define aspects of computer-mediated communication and the model of deception and its detection in this medium. However, the studies which aimed to describe the linguistic profile of deceptive behaviour will be of the greatest interest for the purpose of this paper, when an attempt will be made to recognize those features in the selected false statements. The results should indicate if a person can rely on language components when determining whether a politician's account, proclamation, testimony or assurance communicated via social media is truthful or not. In other words, since there are no studies which aimed to deconstruct brief deceptive statements directed towards the public via medium such as *Twitter*, this thesis will serve as an attempt at discovering if any of the linguistic features from the cited studies applies in this context.

## 2. Defining deception

Buller and Burgoon define deception as a “message **knowingly**<sup>1</sup> transmitted by a sender to foster false belief or conclusion by the receiver” (Buller and Burgoon 1996, 205). As an intentional act that occurs when communicators control information in a message to create a particular effect, it may take a variety of forms ranging from fabrication, which is its most direct form, to more subtle ones, such as half-truths, vagueness, equivocations and concealments (Burgoon et al. 1996, 64-66). It has been reported that people tell an average of one to two lies a day (DePaulo et al. 1996, 991). Despite its prevalence in everyday life (from the mundane matters, such as opinions about appearance, to the essential, such as courtroom testimony), people generally possess poor ability to detect deception (Burgoon et al. 1994). One potential explanation for this is associated with the fundamental nature of communication, which is made possible by cooperation that requires conversation participants to work together to try to understand the meaning of a message (Carlson et al. 2004, 5). When people communicate they attempt to make sense of what another has said and in doing so they assume that the message is comprehensible and truthful (McCornack 1992). This assumption is called truth bias or a predisposition to assume truthfulness or trust (Levine and McCornack 1992).

On the other hand, in situations when a person becomes suspicious or recognizes that a message may not be truthful, communicators intently examine message cues to try to determine the veracity of the message (Carlson et al. 2004, 5). Deception is seen as a demanding and anxiety-provoking process for the deceiver and, therefore, researchers have assumed that some evidence of lying “leaks out” in communication (Ekman and Friesen 1969). The cues which are potentially available to any message recipient and provide evidence for deception and/or create suspicion are divided into verbal, non-verbal and contextual (Carlson et al. 2004, 5). Verbal cues include language style, which can be “powerful” or “powerless”, and message content (Carlson et al. 2004, 5). Powerful language style is characterized by the usage of fluent, terse and direct speech (Bradac and Mulac 1984). Powerless language style, on the other hand, is defined by the overuse of polite forms, hedges, hesitations, deictic phrases, intensifiers and tag questions (Carlson et al. 2004, 6). Its users may appear less credible or persuasive because powerless or weaker linguistic forms might indicate distancing or disassociating the speaker from message contents (Carlson et al. 2004,

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<sup>1</sup> Emphasis mine

7). This kind of speech makes deceivers appear submissive and less responsible for their communication (Carlson et al. 2004, 7). As opposed to language style, message content refers to specific informational attributes of a message; in other words, if statements in a message are in partial or direct contradiction to each other, it signals the possibility of deception (Carlson et al. 2004, 8). Generally, deceivers give less plausible responses, use obfuscation and vagueness, provide more irrelevant information, are unable to add much detail to responses and so on (Buller and Burgoon 1994).

Non-verbal cues accompany the delivery of the message and include auditory, visual, spatial and temporal behaviour (Carlson et al. 2004, 8). Eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, vocal features such as speech fluency or tempo and pitch levels, use of distance or space are some of the non-verbal cues available to communicators (Carlson et al. 2004, 9). Although speakers depend more heavily on these than verbal cues, the number of highly reliable non-verbal cues indicative of deceit is rather small (Carlson et al. 2004, 9). They include blinking, pupil dilation, speech errors, voice pitch, arm shrugs, adaptors (self-grooming behaviour and cues often associated with nervousness), pauses, response latencies, hand and leg gestures, message duration and so on (Carlson et al. 2004, 9).

Environmental features and aspects of the communication channel that provide a frame of reference for the exchanged messages are seen as main contextual cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 5). In other words, the message may be more scrutinized depending on the situation in which it is transmitted (Carlson et al. 2004, 10). For instance, when purchasing a used item, the buyer will be more suspicious in analysing the information given by the seller about the item's condition than when buying a brand new item.

In addition, interactions among two or more of these cues are referred to as meta-cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 6). In a study from 1992, Bond and colleagues found that during deception people often enact non-verbal cues that are incompatible with the verbal message and other non-verbal cues. These findings are consistent with Interpersonal Deception Theory, which will be touched upon later in this thesis (see chapter 3). However, a clear profile of deceptive behaviour has still not emerged (Carlson et al. 2004, 11). The problem mainly lies in the fact that deceptive communication is not a single isolated event, but rather one which takes place in the context of an ongoing dialogue (Carlson et al. 2004, 11). Moreover, the actions of message receivers are as influential as those of deceivers, because deceivers can use receiver feedback to adapt and improve their performance (White and Burgoon 2001).

## **2.1. Deceiver and receiver**

In an on-going deceptive communication event, the successful detection of deceptive message is determined by the participants involved (deceiver and receiver), their relationship, the design and delivery of the deception and the medium chosen to convey it (Carlson et al. 2004, 17). The deceiver is an individual or a group that engages in the act of deception (Carlson et al. 2004, 18). They may experience a number of different motivations to deceive, with likelihood of successfully relaying deception being the most of obvious (Carlson et al. 2004, 18). For instance, individuals feeling little risk of being detected may be additionally motivated in performing the unethical behaviour (Jones, 1991). However, high levels of motivation may occasionally be cognitively and emotionally exhausting and have impairing effect on deceiver's performance (DePaulo et al. 1983). On the other hand, their intrinsic ability to carry out a successful deception is a product of their social skills and speaking fluency (Carlson et al. 2004, 20). In other words, if a person possesses more proficiency in expressing themselves verbally (and non-verbally), they will produce deceptive messages that are less likely to be detected (Burgoon et al 1995). Additionally, the deceiver's increased experience with co-participants, experience with the message topic and experience with the available communication contexts, as opposed to receiver's experience, will improve the former's ability to successfully deceive (Carlson et al. 2004, 23). However, due to the universal disapproval and discouragement of deception and because societal sanctions against it generate feelings of unease for many deceivers, the cognitive and/or affective dissonance associated with deceit usually induces less fruitful deceptions (Carlson et al. 2004, 23).

The receiver's motivation to detect deception is based on intrinsic (receiver's truth bias and naturally suspicious nature) and contextual factors (receiver's trust in the sender, their suspicion concerning the message, the value of successful deception detection) (Carlson et al. 2004, 24). Individuals with greater motivation will have higher rates of deception detection performance (Carlson et al. 2004, 24). Moreover, receiver's sensitivity and communication skills play an important role in correctly uncovering deceptions; people who are more sensitive to the available deception cues and who possess good social and emotional sensitivity skills as well as both verbal and non-verbal communication competence are generally more successful in detecting deception (Burgoon and Buller 1996). As with deceivers, receiver's increasing experience will improve their detection ability, though a strong desire to maintain positive relationship with the deceiver may prevent them from

asking certain questions or challenging certain assertions (Carlson et al. 2004, 26). Finally, just as some deceivers find it unpleasant to have to lie, it may also be unpleasant for some receivers to detect deception (Buller and Burgoon 1996, 210). Similarly to deceivers, the unpleasant experience of dissonant cognitive and/or affective reactions when uncovering duplicity does not improve receiver's performance; such reactions are usually likely to result in unsuccessful deception detection (Buller and Burgoon 1996, 210).

When it comes to the relationship between the deceiver and the receiver, there are two categories which affect the success of a deception or its detection: the mutual experiences of the participants and their relational closeness (Carlson and Zmud 1999). Regarding the former, it is believed that the more experiences deceivers and receivers have in common, the more likely receivers will be to successfully detect deception (Carlson and Zmud 1999). As for the latter, a perception of relational closeness to a deceiver will make it more difficult for a receiver to perceive deception cues (Carlson and Zmud 1999).

Having determined the participants involved and their relationship, it is now time to describe a deceptive communication event, which can be defined as an ongoing dialogue in which a deceiver presents some deception and attempts to control the leakage of cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 28). Given that the cues may be perceived by a receiver whose suspicion is triggered, they will actively assess these cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 28). However, this perception may arouse the receiver to display cues which in turn signal their suspicion and, if not managed by them, will leak in the interaction and be detected by the deceiver (Carlson et al. 2004, 28). This may allow the deceiver to adapt their strategy to better focus on the aspects of the deception they believe to be suspicious (Burgoon and Buller 1996). Therefore, the potential of the deceptive message to be successfully communicated is based on the presence or absence of a sufficient number of deception cues and the availability of alternative cues signalling trustworthiness (Carlson et al. 2004, 29). Such a composition of cues is most likely to appear under low-stakes, low-pressure conditions and conditions when a deceiver can organize and rehearse their message (Carlson et al. 2004, 29).

### 3. Previous research of deception with special focus on language

It is now time to provide a summary of some of the studies which attempted to describe the profile of deceptive behaviour. An important point of interest in this discussion is the already mentioned Interpersonal Deception Theory. It states that language choice in deceptive messages reflects strategic attempts to manage information through non-immediate language (Buller et al. 1996, 268). Several tests of this theory have shown that deceivers and receivers engage in strategic behaviour and non-strategic non-verbal behaviour (Buller et al. 1996, 268). For instance, deceivers manage behaviour through submissive, formal and non-immediate actions (Buller et al. 1996, 268). They project a positive image with more pleasantness and relaxation while managing information through hesitant and brief messages (Buller et al. 1996, 268). Additionally, they show nervousness, arousal and negative affect and suffer impaired performances that create disfluencies and poor impressions (Buller et al. 1996, 268).

It goes without saying that **language**<sup>2</sup> is the key component of deceptive behaviour and, therefore, the information and image management strategies are most relevant to language use during deception (Buller et al. 1996, 269). One common way of creating deception is to employ the information management sub-strategy of complete omission, but if information cannot be totally withheld, deceivers may opt to use vagueness and uncertainty, in which message content becomes evasive and ambiguous (Buller et al. 1996, 269). Relatedly, deceivers can choose a non-immediacy sub-strategy, which reduces the degree of directness and intensity of interaction, having the effect of distancing senders from their messages (Buller et al. 1996, 269). When it comes to linguistic choices which are characteristic of verbal non-immediacy, deceivers use more levellers (terms that lack denotative specificity, e.g. “everyone”, “always”), modifiers (indirect forms of expression that modify or objectify a response, e.g. “sometimes”, “it seems to me”, “it is obvious”) and group references (e.g. “they”, “we”) (Buller et al. 1996, 270). On the other hand, they use less self-references (e.g. “I”, “me”), which reduces the link between the individual and the action (Buller et al. 1996, 270). Additionally, they prefer past tense verbs to present tense, which weakens the intensity of a message by temporally shifting it from a contemporary time frame to a more distal period (Buller et al. 1996, 270).

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<sup>2</sup> Emphasis mine



As mentioned before, when suspicion is provoked in receivers, deceivers are motivated to mask the leakage of cues by withdrawing and dissociating themselves from the message on the one hand and to maintain sufficient conversational involvement on the other; this creates a conflicting pattern of verbal and non-verbal behaviour (Buller et al. 1996, 270). According to Interpersonal Deception Theory, whether information management and leakage create abnormal conversational styles or behaviour management succeeds in creating a normal interaction pattern depends on interactional factors as well as those which precede interaction (Buller et al. 1996, 270). The latter include degree of relational and behavioural familiarity, as well as type of deception enacted and suspicion aroused (Buller et al. 1996, 270). As we noted before, deceivers acquainted with receivers are likely to be more concerned that their deception would be detected and are motivated to engage in more strategic behaviour while at the same time experiencing more arousal and negative emotions. Similarly, receivers are more trustworthy towards acquaintances, who in turn reduce strategic moves if they detect such acceptance. In this respect, expertise is equally important; while deception detection experts may be more sceptical of the speaker's veracity and consequently adopt a less accepting demeanour, deceiver's knowledge of their inquisitor's expertise elevates their detection apprehension and motivates strategic behaviour (Buller et al. 1996, 272).

When it comes to different types of deception, some may depart less from the truth than others. Falsifications, as the most basic violations of the expectations for truth, might contain the most linguistic non-immediacy (Buller et al. 1996, 272). On the other hand, messages that conceal information may contain the least linguistic non-immediacy, given that they convey some truthful information (Buller et al. 1996, 273). On the non-strategic side, communicators may experience the most arousal when falsifying and the least when equivocating and concealing, because the latter two do not violate the honesty expectations to an equal degree as the former and draw less unfavourable reactions when detected (Buller et al. 1996, 273). Falsifications have the effect of more anxiety cues, but are also easier to enact, because deceivers are simply substituting dishonest for honest information and do not have to decide what information to reveal as compared with when concealing (Buller et al. 1996, 273). Without such cognitive load of having to balance truth and deceit, falsifications can sometimes contain less arousal cues (Buller et al. 1996, 273).

Finally, suspicion stimulates strategic behaviour by deceivers to repair their performance, but it also can evoke non-strategic behaviour by increasing arousal, cognitive effort and guilt (Buller et al. 1996, 273). If their performance is threatened, there is an

increase in the same linguistic features which characterize deception according to the Interpersonal Deception Theory (more levellers, modifiers, group references and past tense verbs and fewer self-references and present tense verbs) (Buller et al. 1996, 273).

Following an extensive literature search, Stephen Porter and John C. Yuille analysed eighteen principal verbal cues to deception which have received attention by researchers and forensic practitioners (Porter and Yuille 1996, 444). In order to establish or negate the validity of these clues they tested them in a realistic crime interrogation simulation (Porter and Yuille 1996, 444). The participants in the experiment were divided into four groups and each group was asked to provide a “truthful alibi”, “partial deception”, “complete deception” (“false alibi”) and “truthful confession” respectively (Porter and Yuille 1996, 448). The authors found that only three of the eighteen criteria (16.7%) discriminated the truthful from the deceptive accounts (Porter and Yuille 1996, 452). This finding raised concern about the validity of many cues promoted in the literature or even advocated in training programs for investigators (Porter and Yuille 1996, 452). The cues or criteria which differentiated the groups were the amount of detail reported, coherence ratings and admitting lack of memory (Porter and Yuille 1996, 451). Firstly, participants in the “truthful alibi” and “truthful confession” groups reported more details than participants in the “partial deception” and “false alibi” groups (Porter and Yuille 1996, 451). Similarly, accounts by “truthful alibi” and “truthful confession” participants were rated as being more than twice as coherent as the accounts by “partial deception” and “false alibi” participants (Porter and Yuille 1996, 451). Finally, “truthful alibi” suspects admitted lacking memory for an aspect of the target event more frequently than suspects from the “partial deception” group (Porter and Yuille 1996, 451). All things considered, dishonest suspects gave less detailed and less coherent accounts and were less likely to admit not remembering aspects of the target event throughout the interviews (Porter and Yuille 1996, 452).

In their 2003 study, Newman and his colleagues aimed to identify linguistic manifestations of false statements. They noticed that deceptive communications were characterized by fewer first-person singular and third-person pronouns (Newman et al. 2003, 670). The lower rate of self-references is consistent with previous literature as it reflects the desire to dissociate from the deception (Knapp et al. 1974). The lower rate of use of third-person pronouns is inconsistent, because deceivers usually use more other-references than truth-tellers (Knapp et al. 1974). It is possible that in Newman’s study this inconsistency

reflects the subject matter – attitudes towards abortion (Newman et al. 2003, 672). The authors say that:

“Talking about abortion necessarily involves talking about women, but this can be done using pronouns (*she, her*), more specific nouns (*a woman, my sister*), or even proper names. This word use may reflect differences in the underlying psychology between liars and truth-tellers such that people lying about their attitudes added concrete details by referring to specific people instead of using the generic *she*.” (Newman et al. 1974, 672)

Secondly, it was noted that deceivers used negative emotion words at a higher rate than truth-tellers, which is associated with the feeling of guilt, either because of the lie itself or because of the topic (Newman et al. 1974, 672). The tension and guilt provokes the deceivers to express more negative emotion (Newman et al. 1974, 672). Thirdly, deceivers used fewer “exclusive” words such as “but”, “except” and “without” (Newman et al. 1974, 672). The authors believe these serve to make a distinction between what is within the category of someone’s statement and what is not (Newman et al. 1974, 672). Telling a false story is a cognitively complicated task and adding information about what did not happen may require cognitive resources that a typical deceiver does not possess (Newman et al. 1974, 672). Finally, deceivers used more “motion” verbs (e.g. “go”, “walk”, “carry”), which also indicates the cognitive complexity of telling a lie; motion verbs provide simple, concrete descriptions and are more readily accessible than words that focus on evaluations or judgements (e.g. “think”, “believe”) (Newman et al. 1974, 672).

In 2004 Hancock and colleagues found that when deceivers lie they produce more words overall, use more third person pronouns and use more terms that describe the senses (e.g. “see”, “hear”, “feel”) than when they tell the truth (Hancock et al. 2004, 538). Such linguistic profile is consistent with Interpersonal Deception Theory because it suggests that deceivers attempt to create a more cohesive and detailed story, especially through increased number of words (Hancock et al. 2004, 538). While the use of sense words indicates their attempts to enhance the believability of the deception, the use of third person pronouns reveals their attempts to shift the focus away from themselves (e.g. “They saw her do it.”) (Hancock et al. 2004, 538). Although previous research suggests that liars use fewer words than truth tellers, the authors note that the deceivers were formerly examined in monologue formats, whereas in their study they were engaged in conversation with a partner (Hancock et al. 2004, 538). In a subsequent research the authors analysed how motivation affected different dimensions of deceivers’ linguistic output (Hancock et al. 2008). They found that

motivated deceivers tended to produce fewer negations and causal terms (e.g. “because”, “hence”, “effect”) when lying, but also, more importantly, that motivated participants were more successful in their deceptions than unmotivated participants (Hancock et al. 2008, 17).

In 2005 a team led by Frank Enos, a lecturer at Columbia University, conducted a series of experiments on deceptive speech in order to determine other factors which could affect deception detection (Benus et al. 2006). They created the Columbia/SRI/Colorado Deception Corpus, a laboratory collection of thirty two recorded interviews containing within-subject deceptive and non-deceptive speech (Enos et al. 2007). Speakers were motivated via financial incentive to deceive successfully while being led to believe that the ability to deceive correlates with other desirable personal and social qualities (Enos et al. 2007). This linked success at deception to what social psychologists term the “self-presentational” perspective (Enos et al. 2007). One of the goals the team had was to investigate the relationship between the distributional and prosodic characteristics of silent and filled pauses in speech and the intent of an interviewee to deceive an interviewer (Benus et al. 2006). The results revealed that the use of pauses, both silent and vocalised, correlates more with truthful than with deceptive speech (Benus et al. 2006). This finding supported the team’s hypothesis that subjects monitor their speech more during lying than during truth-telling even though they did not have time to plan their deceptive utterances in advance (Benus et al. 2006). Enos and his colleagues also found that speaker-dependent lexical habits, such as the use of filled pauses or cue phrases (e.g. “now” or “well”), proved to be helpful in detecting deception in speech (Benus et al. 2006).

Secondly, the team hoped to find that certain segments of speech that deal directly with the most salient topics of the speaker’s deception are more easily classified than deceptive statements in the corpus at large (Enos et al. 2007). They presumed that such segments, dubbed critical segments, would be both emotionally charged (potentially resulting in stronger prosodic and acoustic cues) and cognitively loaded (potentially resulting in more lexical cues to deception) (Enos et al. 2007). It was found that the presence of positive emotion words correlates positively with truth in many segments of the corpus, while the presence of qualifiers such as “absolutely” and “really” is employed as a cue to deception (Enos et al. 2007). The presence of a specific, direct denial that the subject was lying, as well as self-repairs, was used in many instances as a cue to truth (Enos et al. 2007).

Finally, Enos and colleagues wanted to examine human performance at detecting deception; precisely, they suggested that particular personality factors may contribute significantly to a judge's success at distinguishing lies from truths (Enos et al. 2006, 1). In order to do that, they recruited a number of "judges" who were asked to listen to the recorded interviews from the Columbia/SRI/Colorado Corpus (Enos et al. 2006, 2). The judges were then required to indicate whether they believe the interviewees were lying or not (Enos et al. 2006, 2). However, the authors emphasize that, just as previous studies show, humans perform worse than chance when trying to detect deception (Enos et al. 2006, 2). Also, it goes without saying that individual differences have to be taken into account (Enos et al. 2006, 4). Enos and his team enumerated five personality dimensions which affect one's performance: Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness and Extraversion, with the first three being notably significant (Enos et al. 2006, 3). Openness measures the degree to which an individual is available to new experience and able to adjust viewpoints (Enos et al. 2006, 3). The authors hypothesize that it enhances the ability of judges to base labelling decisions on the available data rather than on preconceptions (Enos et al. 2006, 3). Highly agreeable individuals tend to be compassionate, good natured and eager to cooperate and avoid conflict (Enos et al. 2006, 3). The qualities of compassion and eagerness to cooperate entail sensitivity to affect; the authors believe that this sensitivity enhances the judge's ability to perceive cues to deception (Enos et al. 2006, 3). Finally, Enos and his colleagues observed a negative correlation between Neuroticism and the proportion of interview sections labelled as deceptive by the judges (Enos et al. 2006, 3). They speculate that Neuroticism may entail an inflated need to believe that people are generally truthful, since the neurotic individuals suffer more than others when faced with upsetting thoughts or negative perceptions (Enos et al. 2006, 3).

#### **4. Computer-mediated communication**

For the purpose of this thesis, it is important to describe a model of deception and its possible detection in computer-mediated communication (CMC). In order to do so, one should be familiar with the characteristics of CMC and the aforementioned roles of deceiver and receiver.

CMC is a common communication medium, with e-mail serving as a standard communication tool for employees and businesses all over the world while new services like social media continue growing immeasurably (Carlson et al. 2004, 12). However, despite the possibility of high-speed interaction between participants, this form of communication necessarily omits some non-verbal cues that are typically associated with transmitting contextual and social information (Adkins and Brashers 1995). When used among anonymous and pseudonymous communicators (e.g. chat rooms), even fewer cues are available to affect interaction (Carlson et al. 2004, 12). The bandwidth or the ability of a given communication medium to transmit the cues necessary to understand a message is not fixed (Carlson et al. 2004, 14). There are four factors which impact an individual's perception of the richness of the CMC medium; these are the three already mentioned types of experience which improve deceiver's ability to successfully deceive (experience with other participants, experience with messaging topic and experience with the organizational context) and experience with the medium (Carlson and Zmud 1999). It was found that as the experience of communicators in these four areas improves, their perceived ability of the medium to handle socio-emotional messages becomes greater (Carlson and Zmud 1999). Additionally, five characteristic constructs important for understanding media differences and significant for deception research were proposed. These are synchronicity, symbol variety, tailorability, reprocessability and extensibility (Dennis and Valacich 1999). Synchronicity pertains to the speed of interaction and feedback and symbol variety relates to the number of differing cues and language elements that a medium can simultaneously communicate (e.g. text as the main component of e-mail, as opposed to video conferencing) (Carlson et al. 2004, 15). Tailorability is the function of the medium to allow the author to customize the communication event according to perceived individual needs of participants (Carlson et al. 2004, 16). Reprocessability is the ability to store past content and allow subsequent access to it and its analysis (Carlson et al. 2004, 16). Extensibility is the degree to which the medium supports tools and information to aid in message composition and interpretation (Carlson et

al. 2004, 16). Additionally, one must consider the social presence of a medium; it was defined as a subjective, cognitive synthesis of all the many factors that reflect the social immediacy or intimacy of a communication medium (Short et al. 1976). The visual non-verbal cues transmitted, the apparent distance of communicators and their “realness” are all measurable factors that determine a medium’s social presence, that is, it being chosen for communication in a particular situation (Short et al. 1976).

In CMC the selection of the medium is also important since it heavily influences the communication event. For instance, with low-bandwidth media, fewer cues are available to participants, which lessens their confidence as to whether their respective communication goals are met (Carlson et al. 2004, 30). As mentioned above, in addition to social presence, there are five characteristics which differentiate the media: synchronicity, symbol variety, tailorability, reprocessability and extensibility. It is claimed that high social presence engenders more trust on the part of the receiver by triggering truth biases; on the other hand, messages that appear socially distant are not evaluated with the same degree of trust (Carlson et al. 2004, 30). Higher speed of feedback or synchronicity provides the receiver less ability to analyse the exchanged ideas to uncover deception, while high level of tailorability gives the deceiver the necessary tools to customize the message to convey the best assortment of cues to a particular receiver (Carlson et al. 2004, 30). Moreover, deceivers prefer media with moderate levels of symbol variety, because lower levels inhibit social presence, but also restrict the cues available to the receiver; in turn, higher levels allow for additional social presence, but also provide the receiver with an abundance of potential cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 31). Finally, media with lower levels of reprocessability and extensibility enable messages with higher deceptive potential (Carlson et al. 2004, 32). In case of the former, lower levels allow the receiver less opportunity to review messages for cues, while lower levels of the latter provide them with less ability to extend the information content of the message or to create customized tools within the medium to uncover cues (Carlson et al. 2004, 32).

## 5. The study

Although there is a substantial amount of features which characterize deceptive speech in different contexts, as one can see in the previous section, not all of them can be relevant in computer mediated communication or, more specifically, in brief statements which consist of several sentences or less, which a medium like *Twitter* allows. For instance, the three verbal clues which according to Porter and Yuille (1996) distinguished truth from deception were established after an implemented crime interrogation simulation and, accordingly, have to be discarded here. Therefore, the goal is to provide examples of false statements which contain one or more of the following linguistic markers:

- levellers (e.g., “everyone”, “always”)
- modifiers (e.g., “sometimes”, “it seems to me”, “it is obvious”)
- negative emotion words (e.g., “hate”, “worthless”, “sad”)
- motion verbs (e.g., “go”, “walk”, “carry”)
- sensory words (e.g. “see”, “hear”, “feel”)
- qualifiers (e.g., “absolutely”, “really”)
- higher rate of group references (e.g., “they”, “we”) as opposed to self-references (e.g., “I”, “me”)
- higher rate of past tense verbs as opposed to present tense verbs

These markers were selected from the studies presented in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Levellers, modifiers, higher rate of group references as opposed to self-references and higher rate of past tense as opposed to present tense verbs are markers associated with Interpersonal Deception Theory. According to the theory (Buller et al. 1996, 269-270), using group references and past tense verbs are indicators of a non-immediacy sub-strategy; in other words, deceivers supposedly use them to distance themselves from their messages. As for the levellers and modifiers, the former are defined as terms that lack denotative specificity, while the latter are indirect forms of expression that modify or objectify a response. A search was conducted for negative emotion words and motion verbs as well in the materials analysed for this thesis, following the results of the study by Newman and colleagues (Newman et al. 1974, 672). Negative emotion words were used by deceivers at a higher rate than truth-tellers, which is associated with the feeling of guilt and/or tension. On the other hand, the more frequent use of concrete and simple motion verbs indicates the cognitive complexity of telling



a lie; as mentioned above, such verbs are more readily accessible than, for instance, words that focus on evaluations or judgements. The use of sensory words is a marker singled out by Hancock and colleagues (Hancock et al. 2004, 538). According to their paper (Hancock et al. 2004, 538), the use of sensory words indicates deceivers' attempts to enhance the believability of the deception, particularly in combination with third person pronouns (e.g. "She heard some noise."). Finally, qualifiers were observed and analysed in the selected tweets as well; the presence of qualifiers<sup>3</sup> such as "totally" was selected as a cue to deception by Frank Enos and his team. The examples of tweets containing the identified markers are given below<sup>4</sup>.

### 5.1. The analysis of tweets

Due to its popularity, especially among the politicians from the USA<sup>5</sup>, and the format of the messages (tweets) which are restricted to 280 characters, statements published on *Twitter* – rather than *Facebook* or some other social media website – will be analysed. All the statements and their evaluations are taken from the website *PolitiFact.com*, a project operated by the *Tampa Bay Times*, in which its reporters, editors and affiliated media fact-check statements by members of Congress, the White House, lobbyists and interest groups in the USA. The reporters publish original statements and their judgements on the website and assign each a "Truth-O-Meter" rating, which can range from "True" for completely accurate statements to "Pants on Fire" (from the taunt "Liar, liar, pants on fire") for false claims (<https://www.politifact.com/>).

The author of this paper chose to analyse the statements by the four major candidates in the 2016 presidential election in the USA, namely Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Ted Cruz. The tweets, which are given in the appendix (see p. 31) along with the date of their publication, *PolitiFact.com* rating and its hyperlink, were made in the period between the announcement of their candidacy in the spring and summer of 2015<sup>6</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> qualifier *n.* [C] – A word or phrase, especially an adjective, used to attribute a quality to another word, especially a noun (Oxford Dictionary of Contemporary English)

<sup>4</sup> The markers in the statements will be highlighted with bold font.

<sup>5</sup> The use of the Internet as a main source of information in presidential elections in the USA has climbed from 3% in 1996 to 36% in 2008 (Owen 2014, 6).

<sup>6</sup> Donald Trump – 16 June 2015 (*Time* 2015);  
Hillary Clinton – 12 April 2015 (Chozik 2015);  
Bernie Sanders – 30 April 2015 (Kane and Ruker 2015);  
Ted Cruz – 23 March 2015 (*Washington Post* 2015)

September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018. In total, the author examined 123 tweets. Of that number, 109 were written by Trump, five by Clinton, seven by Sanders and two by Cruz.

	Total number of tweets	False statements	False statements containing linguistic markers of deception		Truthful statements	Truthful statements containing linguistic markers of deception	
			N	N		%	N
Donald Trump	109	89	37	41.6	20	3	15.0
Hillary Clinton	5	4	2	50.0	1	/	/
Bernie Sanders	7	3	/	/	4	2	50.0
Ted Cruz	2	2	1	50.0	/	/	/
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20.0</b>

Table 1. Number of tweets per politician

Considering the present socio-political and economic situation in the USA, the statements by the current president Donald Trump are of highest interest to the editors of *PolitiFact.com*. It was estimated that since assuming office in the White House, Trump has made over five thousand false or misleading claims (*The Washington Post Fact Checker*, 2018). He is also a prolific user of *Twitter*: in 2016, he averaged 375 tweets a month through to the end of November<sup>7</sup>. His language is, therefore, often subjected to scrutiny. A linguistic analysis conducted at the Carnegie Mellon University showed that presidential candidates in general use “words and grammar typical of students in grades 6-8, though Donald Trump tends to lag behind the others” (Blow 2017). Another research discovered that 78 percent of the words he deploys are monosyllabic and that his most avidly used term is “I”, followed by “Trump”, “very”, “China” and “money” (Waldman 2016).

Since the majority of Trump’s statements are rated false on *PolitiFact.com*, the author started by looking at some of his claims on *Twitter* which were analysed by the authors of the website.

<sup>7</sup> “Trump on Twitter: A history of the man and his medium”, 2016.

In a tweet from August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, he wrote:

“The **very** unpopular Governor of Ohio (and failed presidential candidate) @JohnKasich hurt Troy Balderson’s recent win by tamping down enthusiasm for an otherwise great candidate. Even Kasich’s Lt. Governor lost Gov. race because of his unpopularity. Credit to Troy on the BIG WIN!”

Without going into details of this particular election in Ohio, the author will focus solely on Trump’s statement about Kasich’s unpopularity. A compilation of recent polls show that Kasich has largely positive approval ratings. In this first segment of Trump’s statement, one can make an assertion that the qualifier “very” serves as a marker which points to deception.

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, he claimed:

“The Democrats are making a strong push to abolish ICE, one of the smartest, toughest and most spirited law enforcement groups of men and women that I have ever seen. I **have watched** ICE liberate towns from the grasp of MS-13 & clean out the toughest of situations. They are great!”

Trump’s language suggested that towns had been under the rule or full control of an international criminal gang MS-13, but neither the White House nor law enforcement agencies have named such towns. Experts on sociology and gang research told *PolitiFact.com* they were unaware of U.S. towns wholly controlled by the gang and that Trump’s wording sounded like political hyperbole. In this instance, the use of a sensory word (“I have watched...”) is suggestive of the falsehood of his statement.

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Donald Trump wrote:

“Put pressure on the Democrats to end the **horrible** law that separates children from there (sic) parents once they cross the Border into the U.S. Catch and Release, Lottery and Chain must also go with it and we **MUST** continue building the WALL! DEMOCRATS ARE PROTECTING MS-13 THUGS<sup>8</sup>.”

Since there is no law that mandates separating children from their parents, it is clear why this statement was rated as false. As for the linguistic feature which would indicate the deceptive

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<sup>8</sup> It is also worth commenting on Trump’s use of capital letters for writing entire words and sentences (see tweet from April 2nd, 2018 on p. 19). This habit may be motivated by his wish to influence the reader’s opinion with strong key words. Typographer Jonathan Hoefler says: “A sign that says, 'BRIDGE OUT' isn't inviting a dialogue. It's announcing something that's vital for you to know.” (Lukas 2013)

potential of this message, it can be argued that the adjective “horrible” could be put under the category of negative emotion words. As stated before, tension and/or guilt about the subject matter provokes deceivers to express negative emotion. Given that the subject matter in question was the scandalous practice of keeping children apart from their families, it was likely what caused the American president to label it unfavourably.

In a tweet from April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Trump claimed:

“James Comey Memos just out and show **clearly** that there was NO COLLUSION and NO OBSTRUCTION. Also, he leaked classified information. WOW! Will the Witch Hunt continue?”

The tweet badly mischaracterizes the contents of the documents, since, according to *PolitiFact.com*, nowhere in Comey’s memos does it say that Trump did not collude or obstruct justice. It is possible that the modifier “clearly” serves as a marker which indicates deception in the statement.

Former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was caught in a lie on several occasions, but her tweets which contain linguistic markers of deception are infrequent. On August 23<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, she wrote:

“**Not one** of the 17 GOP candidates has discussed how they’d address the rising cost of college. Disappointing, but not surprising.”

The statement was rated inaccurate since she omitted Florida’s state senator Marco Rubio and a number of other congressional candidates from the Republican Party who had set forth ideas and positions on college education funding. Clinton’s use of the leveller “not one” should be taken as a marker of deception.

When it comes to the rate of group references as opposed to self-references and past tense verbs as opposed to present tense verbs in tweets, one can assume these features cannot be taken as safe indicators of deception. Below are a couple of tweets which support this claim. We have already talked about the following statement:

“The Democrats are making a strong push to abolish ICE, one of the smartest, toughest and most spirited law enforcement groups of men and women that I have ever seen. I **have watched** ICE liberate towns from the grasp of MS-13 & clean out the toughest of situations. They are great!”

Although Donald Trump’s use of past tense verb at the beginning of the second sentence is in accordance with Interpersonal Deception Theory, his use of first person singular pronoun is not. However, the pronoun “I” is the most frequently deployed word by Trump; its use in his statements (both false and truthful) likely reflects the desire to exploit the trust of the followers who believe his authority.

Similarly, his tweet from April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, shows that the choice of verb tense also does not reflect honesty or dishonesty:

“Only fools, or worse, are saying that our money losing Post Office makes money with Amazon. **THEY LOSE A FORTUNE**, and this will be changed. Also, our fully tax paying retailers are closing stores all over the country...not a level playing field!”

According to *PolitiFact.com*, *Amazon* is not causing the United States Postal Service losing money. In fact, it is contributing to package delivery, which is its biggest growth sector and deals like the one with *Amazon* brought in \$7 billion in fiscal year 2017. Although Trump used a third person pronoun, he also used a present tense verb in a deceptive statement. Therefore, we may consider that the rate of group references as opposed to self-references and past tense verbs as opposed to present tense verbs are not adequate linguistic markers of deception in tweets.

However, an argument can be made that the choice of words does not reflect duplicity in any person’s statements at all, since a number of tweets which are rated false on the website do not contain any of the above-mentioned linguistic markers. We can take a look at some of the statements which support this argument.

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Donald Trump wrote on *Twitter*:

“The people of Germany are turning against their leadership as migration is rocking the already tenuous Berlin coalition. Crime in Germany is way up. Big mistake made all over Europe in allowing millions of people in who have so strongly and violently changed their culture!”

*PolitiFact.com* made an inquiry and according to the latest government numbers that came out in May, crime in Germany is down by about 9.6 percent from 2016 to 2017. However, analysing only the sentence “Crime in Germany is way up”, it is clear there are no features which could point to the deception of this statement.

Another example is from July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018:

“Wow, highest Poll Numbers in the history of the Republican Party. That includes Honest Abe Lincoln and Ronald Reagan.”

Although he is indeed very popular among the Republican Party voters, the statement was rated false because no pre-1936 president served in an era with scientific polling, so Trump’s comparison of himself to Lincoln is a baseless claim. Meanwhile, his approval rating at the time of the tweet was worse than every post-war Republican president except for Gerald Ford. When it comes to linguistic markers of deception as used in this thesis, none can be identified in this statement.

In addition to false tweets without linguistic features that point to deception, one should also take a look at some truthful statements transmitted via *Twitter*, before discussing the results. Specifically, it should be determined whether the markers appear in any of the truthful tweets in order to validate their reliability as markers of deception. Therefore, the author again turned to Donald Trump, since he mostly looked into the President’s statements.

On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, he wrote:

“Jackie Evancho's album sales have skyrocketed after announcing her Inauguration performance. Some people just don't understand the ‘Movement’”

The tweet was rated true on *PolitiFact.com*, given that compared to the previous week the artist's album sales nearly doubled in the first full week after she was announced as an inauguration performer.

In another truthful tweet from June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Trump wrote:

“Democrat Jon Ossoff, who wants to raise your taxes to the highest level and is weak on crime and security, doesn't even live in district.”

Although Ossoff had said he would oppose any increase in income taxes, Trump is correct in his warning to voters of Georgia's 6th Congressional District – Ossoff's residence is outside the district.

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, he tweeted the following:

“Dow goes from 18,589 on November 9, 2016, to 25,075 today, for a new all-time Record. Jumped 1000 points in last 5 weeks, Record fastest 1000 point move in history. This is all about the Make America Great Again agenda! Jobs, Jobs, Jobs. Six trillion dollars in value created!”

*PolitiFact.com* focused on the second and third sentence of the tweet and found Trump was indeed correct about the size of the climb and the fact that it was the fastest in history.

Finally, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, he wrote:

“Democrats mistakenly tweet 2014 pictures from Obama's term showing children from the Border in steel cages. They thought it was recent pictures in order to make us look bad, but backfires. Dems must agree to Wall and new Border Protection for good of country...Bipartisan Bill!”

Several Democrats did tweet a photo of a facility where child migrants were detained and while they initially stated the image had been produced recently, the photo was actually from 2014 and, therefore, Trump's attack on "Democrats" was rated accurate.

When it comes to these tweets, none of the markers can be identified. However, the author also found several tweets which were rated true and contained linguistic markers of deception.

On August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Donald Trump wrote:

“The media is going crazy. They **totally** distort so many things on purpose. Crimea, nuclear, "the baby" and so much more. **Very** dishonest!”

At the time, many media outlets reported that the President "threw out" or "ejected" a baby from a campaign event in Virginia, based on his commentary on the incident, but Trump's comments came as the mother was already voluntarily exiting from the rally. The tweet contains the qualifiers “totally” and “very”, which would serve as markers of deception in a deceptive statement.

The second example is by Bernie Sanders. On September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, he wrote:

“Unlike **virtually every** other campaign, we don't have a Super PAC which collects money from billionaires and corporations.”

Out of the 21 presidential candidates, Sanders is one of five who did not have an affiliated super PAC (political action committee), and of the four major candidates, only Sanders and Trump would have been able to claim that. The author marked the words “virtually<sup>9</sup>” (qualifier) and “every” (leveller), which would serve as markers of deception in a deceptive statement.

Although one could claim that these examples disprove the reliability of the markers, we need to keep in mind that they were taken from a very limited sample of tweets. Also, in the aforementioned studies the markers were singled out purely based on statistical calculations and none of the studies analysed messages on social media. In the following section the author will discuss why identifying the markers is not a failsafe method of detecting deception in CMC or, in other words, why the results are not conclusive.

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<sup>9</sup> The reporters who rated the statement as Mostly True on the website note that the qualifier “virtually” makes Sanders' claim more accurate, given that his campaign team was not the only one without a political action committee.



## 6. Discussion

Although these results may be used as a starting point into constructing a linguistic profile of deceptive behaviour on social media, some cautionary points need to be addressed. Firstly, as the table on page 15 shows, of the examined 98 tweets containing false statements, the author identified linguistic markers of deception in only 40 of them (40,8 %). On the other hand, indicators of deception were also present in five out of 25 tweets containing truthful statements. The lack of markers in false tweets may derive from one of the characteristics of computer mediated communication, i.e. tailorability, which enables deceivers to customize the message prior to posting it online in order to convey the best assortment of cues to a particular receiver (which, in this case, is the public). Furthermore, the lack of tweets containing motion verbs as markers of deception should also be addressed. Although it is highly likely these verbs simply were not used in the limited number of tweets the author examined (due to the subject matter of the tweets, the authors' manner of expressing themselves, etc.), one must consider the possibility that these markers are not associated with deception in statements broadcast through social media. Secondly, the partial profile of deceptive behaviour which this study aims to depict is based on a limited number of statements and the use of linguistic markers is presumably different from person to person. A more comprehensive sample of both false and truthful tweets may yield a dissimilar set of results. In addition to that, it should be noted that the obtained data may only apply to American politicians, since the author only examined their tweets. Unfortunately, there is not a site similar to *PolitiFact.com* that compiles and rates the truthfulness of statements by British, Australian and other English-speaking politicians, whose deceptive linguistic behaviour when expressing themselves on the Internet might be altogether distinctive from their American counterparts. Thirdly, *Twitter* utilizes a specific way of communicating its users' messages by restricting them to 280 characters, which necessarily influences the way people compose messages and, by extension, their approach to producing false statements. It is possible that one would obtain entirely different results by analysing deceptive posts on *Facebook* or some other social medium. Finally, needless to say, these findings are limited to English; a completely separate set of verbal cues may be indicative of deception in other languages.

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this master's thesis was to examine the lies of English-speaking politicians by determining whether relevant scientific data on deception applies to the statements they communicated on social media. Specifically, the goal was to analyse the studies on deception and see if one could make use of the data to detect deception in their messages. In addition to set format of this work, the reason for concentrating solely on messages transmitted via website such as *Twitter* is its popularity, availability and overall use of it among politicians. In order to analyse dishonesty, falsehood and disinformation in messages they communicate, the author first had to define deception, describe the characteristics of participants in a deceptive exchange and point out cues that signal deceptive behaviour. He compiled a summary of several studies which focused on describing the profile of deceptive behaviour and enumerated the linguistic features that characterize deceitful messages. Finally, given that the author looked into statements published on the Internet, it was also necessary to become acquainted with aspects of computer-mediated communication and the features of deception and its detection in this medium. In the following analysis the objective was to recognize those features in the selected false statements in order to discover if one can rely on language components when determining the truthfulness of a politician's proclamation, testimony or assurance. Therefore, the author presented examples of several American politicians' tweets containing different linguistic markers which, according to Interpersonal Deception Theory and several additional studies, point to deception. Namely, these are levellers, modifiers, negative emotion words, sensory words and qualifiers. Additionally, it was demonstrated that, when it comes to transmitting messages via *Twitter*, the rates of group references as opposed to self-references and the choice of verb tense are not reliable as indicators of deception. On the other hand, at the beginning of the section the author enumerated motion verbs as another marker which he attempted to identify in the false tweets; however, he was not able to come across any of them. Lastly, in addition to false tweets which contained no markers of deception, the author provided a handful of examples of truthful tweets, which suggest the markers can appear in truthful statements as well. Taking into account the characteristics of computer-mediated communication and a limited number of examined tweets, it can be argued that identifying the markers may be used as a method of detecting deception in statements published on Twitter. However, the method is far from being failsafe and these findings strengthen the importance of non-verbal cues, some of which, as we know, are necessarily omitted in text-based computer-mediated communication.

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## 10. Appendix: List of examined tweets

“Isn’t it a **shame** that someone can write an article or book, **totally** make up stories and form a picture of a person that is **literally** the exact opposite of the fact, and get away with it without retribution or cost. Don’t know why Washington politicians don’t change libel laws?”

(Donald Trump, 5 September 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/sep/05/donald-trump/donald-trump-inaccurately-describes-libel-law/>)

“Two long running, Obama era, investigations of two **very** popular Republican Congressmen were brought to a well publicized charge, just ahead of the Mid-Terms, by the Jeff Sessions Justice Department. Two easy wins now in doubt because there is not enough time. Good job Jeff.....”

(Donald Trump, 3 September 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/sep/04/donald-trump/fact-checking-donald-trumps-tweet-collins-hunter-i/>)

“I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers. “South African Government is now seizing land from white farmers.” @TuckerCarlson @FoxNews”

(Donald Trump, 23 August 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/aug/24/donald-trump/trump-tweets-incorrect-south-african-land-seizures/>)

“The **very** unpopular Governor of Ohio (and failed presidential candidate) @JohnKasich hurt Troy Balderson’s recent win by tamping down enthusiasm for an otherwise great candidate. Even Kasich’s Lt. Governor lost Gov. race because of his unpopularity. Credit to Troy on the BIG WIN!”

(Donald Trump, 13 August 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/ohio/statements/2018/aug/14/donald-trump/after-close-ohio-special-election-trump-falsely-tw/>)

“.....Be happy, be cool! A football game, that fans are paying soooo much money to watch and enjoy, is no place to protest. Most of that money goes to the players anyway. Find another way to protest. Stand proudly for your National Anthem or be Suspended Without Pay!”

(Donald Trump, 10 August 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/aug/13/donald-trump/do-players-get-most-nfl-revenues-donald-trump-says/>)

“California wildfires are being magnified & made so much worse by the **bad** environmental laws which aren’t allowing massive amount of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean.”

(Donald Trump, 5 August 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/california/statements/2018/aug/06/donald-trump/california-wildfires-made-worse-hot-dry-conditions/>)

“Collusion is not a crime, but that doesn’t matter because there was No Collusion (except by Crooked Hillary and the Democrats)!”

(Donald Trump, 31 July 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/jul/31/donald-trump/donald-trump-says-collusion-no-crime-right/>)

“Wow, highest Poll Numbers in the history of the Republican Party. That includes Honest Abe Lincoln and Ronald Reagan. There must be something wrong, please recheck that poll!”

(Donald Trump, 29 July 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/jul/30/donald-trump/has-donald-trump-had-highest-poll-numbers-any-gop-/>)

“So we now find out that it was indeed the unverified and Fake Dirty Dossier, that was paid for by Crooked Hillary Clinton and the DNC, that was knowingly & falsely submitted to FISA and which was responsible for starting the **totally** conflicted and discredited Mueller Witch Hunt!”

(Donald Trump, 23 July 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jul/23/donald-trump/donald-trump-falsely-says-new-carter-page-document/>)

“Farmers have been on a downward trend for 15 years. The price of soybeans has fallen 50% since 5 years before the Election. A big reason is **bad (terrible)** Trade Deals with other countries. They put on massive Tariffs and Barriers. Canada charges 275% on Dairy. Farmers will WIN!”

(Donald Trump, 20 July 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jul/24/donald-trump/donald-trump-falsely-blames-trade-deals-lower-soy/>)

“The Democrats are making a strong push to abolish ICE, one of the smartest, toughest and most spirited law enforcement groups of men and women that **I have ever seen. I have watched** ICE liberate towns from the grasp of MS-13 & clean out the toughest of situations. They are great!”

(Donald Trump, 30 June 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jul/09/donald-trump/did-ice-liberate-towns-donald-trump-claimed-have-w/>)

“The people of Germany are turning against their leadership as migration is rocking the already tenuous Berlin coalition. Crime in Germany is way up. Big mistake made all over Europe in allowing millions of people in who have so strongly and violently changed their culture!”

(Donald Trump, 18 June 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jun/18/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrong-about-crime-germany/>)

“Canada charges the U.S. a 270% tariff on Dairy Products! They didn’t tell you that, did they? Not fair to our farmers!”

(Donald Trump, 8 June 2018, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jun/13/donald-trump/fact-checking-donald-trumps-tweets-about-canadas-2/>)

“The Philadelphia Eagles Football Team was invited to the White House. Unfortunately, only a small number of players decided to come, and we canceled the event. Staying in the Locker Room for the playing of our National Anthem is as **disrespectful** to our country as kneeling. Sorry!”

(Donald Trump, 4 June 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/pennsylvania/statements/2018/jun/05/donald-trump/president-trump-said-eagles-players-kneeled-anthem/>)

“There is no one better to represent the people of N.Y. and Staten Island (a place I know very well) than @RepDanDonovan, who is strong on Borders & Crime, loves our Military & our Vets, voted for Tax Cuts and is helping me to Make America Great Again. Dan has my full endorsement!”

(Donald Trump, 31 May 2018, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/new-york/statements/2018/jun/04/donald-trump/did-rep-dan-donovan-vote-tax-cuts-trump-said/>)

“Democrats mistakenly tweet 2014 pictures from Obama’s term showing children from the Border in steel cages. They thought it was recent pictures in order to make us look bad, but backfires. Dems must agree to Wall and new Border Protection for good of country...Bipartisan Bill!”

(Donald Trump, 29 May 2018, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/may/29/donald-trump/trump-correctly-tweets-democrats-mistakenly-tweete/>)

“The Failing @nytimes quotes ‘a senior White House official,’ who doesn’t exist, as saying ‘even if the meeting were reinstated, holding it on June 12 would be impossible, given the lack of time and the amount of planning needed,’ WRONG AGAIN! Use real people, not phony sources.”

(Donald Trump, 26 May 2018, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/may/29/donald-trump/donald-trump-said-ny-times-source-didnt-exist-he-d/>)

“Put pressure on the Democrats to end the **horrible** law that separates children from their (sic) parents once they cross the Border into the U.S. Catch and Release, Lottery and Chain must also go with it and we MUST continue building the WALL! DEMOCRATS ARE PROTECTING MS-13 THUGS.”

(Donald Trump, 26 May 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/may/29/donald-trump/trump-blames-democrat-own-policy-separating-family/>)

“Trump should be happy that the FBI was SPYING on his campaign’ No, James Clapper, I am not happy. Spying on a campaign would be illegal, and a scandal to boot!”

(Donald Trump, 23 May 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/may/23/donald-trump/did-ex-intelligence-chief-clapper-say-fbi-spied-tr/>)

“At what point does this soon to be \$20,000,000 Witch Hunt, composed of 13 **Angry** and Heavily Conflicted Democrats and two people who have worked for Obama for 8 years, STOP! They have found no Collusion with Russia, No Obstruction, but they aren’t looking at the corruption...”

(Donald Trump, 20 May 2018, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/may/23/donald-trump/mueller-probe-costing-20-million-donald-trump-says/>)

“Senator Cryin’ Chuck Schumer fought hard against the **Bad** Iran Deal, even going at it with President Obama, & then Voted AGAINST it! Now he says I should not have terminated the deal - but he doesn’t really believe that! Same with Comey. Thought he was terrible until I fired him!”

(Donald Trump, 10 May 2018, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/new-york/statements/2018/may/24/donald-trump/schumer-once-opposed-iran-nuclear-deal-he-now-supp/>)

“Sleepy Eyes Chuck Todd of Fake News NBC just stated that we have given up so much in our negotiations with North Korea, and they have given up nothing. Wow, we haven’t given up anything & they have agreed to denuclearization (so great for World), site closure, & no more testing!”

(Donald Trump, 22 April 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/22/donald-trump/trump-wrongly-says-north-korea-has-agreed-denuclea/>)

“James Comey Memos just out and show **clearly** that there was NO COLLUSION and NO OBSTRUCTION. Also, he leaked classified information. WOW! Will the Witch Hunt continue?”

(Donald Trump, 20 April 2018, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/20/donald-trump/trump-falsely-says-comey-memos-disprove-collusion-/>)

“When a car is sent to the United States from China, there is a Tariff to be paid of 2 1/2%. When a car is sent to China from the United States, there is a Tariff to be paid of 25%. Does that **sound** like free or fair trade. No, it **sounds** like STUPID TRADE - going on for years!”

(Donald Trump, 9 April 2018, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/09/donald-trump/donald-trump-right-china-slaps-25-percent-tariff-a/>)

“While Security spending was **somewhat** more than his predecessor, Scott Pruitt has received death threats because of his bold actions at EPA. Record clean Air & Water while saving USA Billions of Dollars. Rent was about market rate, travel expenses OK. Scott is doing a great job!”

(Donald Trump, 7 April 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/10/donald-trump/did-epas-pruitt-pay-below-market-rent/>)

“Mexico is making a fortune on NAFTA...They have **very** strong border laws - ours are pathetic. With all of the money they make from the U.S., hopefully they will stop people from coming through their country and into ours, at least until Congress changes our immigration laws!”

(Donald Trump, 2 April 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/02/donald-trump/donald-trump-base-comparison-us-mexico-border-laws/>)

“Only fools, or worse, are saying that our money losing Post Office makes money with Amazon. THEY LOSE A FORTUNE, and this will be changed. Also, our fully tax paying retailers are closing stores all over the country...not a level playing field!”

(Donald Trump, 2 April 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/apr/02/donald-trump/trump-usps-postal-service-amazon-losing-fortune/>)

“Why does the Mueller team have 13 hardened Democrats, some big Crooked Hillary supporters, and Zero Republicans? Another Dem recently added...does anyone think this is fair? And yet, there is NO COLLUSION!”

(Donald Trump, 18 March 2018, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/mar/21/donald-trump/fact-checking-donald-trumps-claims-about-Mueller/>)

“We do have a Trade Deficit with Canada, as we do with **almost all** countries (some of them massive). P.M. Justin Trudeau of Canada, a very good guy, doesn’t like saying that Canada has a Surplus vs. the U.S.(negotiating), but they do...they almost all do...and that’s how I know!”

(Donald Trump, 15 March 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/mar/15/donald-trump/donald-trumps-misleading-tweet-trade-canada-rest-w/>)

“Hundreds of good people, including very important Ambassadors and Judges, are being blocked and/or slow walked by the Democrats in the Senate. Many important positions in Government are unfilled because of this obstruction. **Worst** in U.S. history!”

(Donald Trump, 14 March 2018, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/mar/16/donald-trump/why-trump-appointments-have-lagged-behind-other-pr/>)

“Lowest rated Oscars in HISTORY. Problem is, we don’t have Stars anymore - except your President (just kidding, of course)!”

(Donald Trump, 6 March 2018, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/mar/06/donald-trump/donald-trump-correct-about-record-low-ratings-2018/>)

“It’s March 5th and the Democrats are nowhere to be found on DACA. Gave them 6 months, they just don’t care. Where are they? We are ready to make a deal!”

(Donald Trump, 5 March 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/mar/07/donald-trump/are-democrats-nowhere-be-found-daca-donald-trump-c/>)

“I have been much tougher on Russia than Obama, just look at the facts. Total Fake News!”

(Donald Trump, 20 February 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/feb/20/donald-trump/has-donald-trump-been-much-tougher-russia-barack-o/>)

“I **never** said Russia did not meddle in the election, I said “it may be Russia, or China or another country or group, or it may be a 400 pound genius sitting in bed and playing with his computer.” The Russian “hoax” was that the Trump campaign colluded with Russia - it never did!”

(Donald Trump, 18 February 2018, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/feb/19/donald-trump/donald-trump-falsely-denies-he-denied-russian-medd/>)

“Thank you for all of the nice compliments and reviews on the State of the Union speech. 45.6 million people watched, the highest number in history. @FoxNews beat every other Network, for the first time ever, with 11.7 million people tuning in. Delivered from the heart!”

(Donald Trump, 1 February 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/feb/01/donald-trump/trump-state-union-ratings-not-highest-history/>)

“Somebody please inform Jay-Z that because of my policies, Black Unemployment has just been reported to be at the **LOWEST RATE EVER RECORDED!**”

(Donald Trump, 28 January 2018, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/30/donald-trump/donald-trump-partly-correct-rejoinder-jay-z/>)

“We need the Wall for the safety and security of our country. We need the Wall to help stop the massive inflow of drugs from Mexico, now rated the number one most dangerous country in the world. If there is no Wall, there is no Deal!”

(Donald Trump, 18 January 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/24/donald-trump/mexico-isnt-deadliest-country-world-trump-said/>)

“...Because of the Democrats not being interested in life and safety, DACA has now taken a big step backwards. The Dems will threaten “shutdown,” but what they are **really** doing is shutting down our military, at a time we need it most. Get smart, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”

(Donald Trump, 12 January 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/17/donald-trump/would-military-shut-down-if-federal-government-doe/>)

“Reason I canceled my trip to London is that I am not a big fan of the Obama Administration having sold perhaps the best located and finest embassy in London for “peanuts,” only to build a new one in an off location for 1.2 billion dollars. Bad deal. Wanted me to cut ribbon-NO!”

(Donald Trump, 12 January 2018, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/12/donald-trump/trump-wrongly-faults-obama-london-embassy-move/>)

“African American unemployment is the lowest ever recorded in our country. The Hispanic unemployment rate dropped a full point in the last year and is close to the lowest in recorded history. Dems did nothing for you but get your vote! #NeverForget @foxandfriends”

(Donald Trump, 8 January 2018, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/08/donald-trump/how-accurate-donald-trumps-about-black-hispa/>)

“Dow goes from 18,589 on November 9, 2016, to 25,075 today, for a new all-time Record. Jumped 1000 points in last 5 weeks, Record fastest 1000 point move in history. This is all about the Make America Great Again agenda! Jobs, Jobs, Jobs. Six trillion dollars in value created!”

(Donald Trump, 5 January 2018, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/08/donald-trump/donald-trump-right-dow-jones-had-its-fastest-ever-/>)

“I authorized Zero access to White House (**actually** turned him down many times) for author of phony book! I never spoke to him for book. Full of lies, misrepresentations and sources that don’t exist. Look at this guy’s past and watch what happens to him and Sloppy Steve!”

(Donald Trump, 4 January 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/05/donald-trump/did-author-michael-wolff-have-access-white-house/>)

“Many **mostly** Democrat States refused to hand over data from the 2016 Election to the Commission On Voter Fraud. They fought hard that the Commission not see their records or methods because they know that many people are voting illegally. System is rigged, must go to Voter I.D.”

(Donald Trump, 4 January 2018, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2018/jan/05/donald-trump/trump-blames-democratic-states-providing-voter-d/>)

“So now that Matt Lauer is gone when will the Fake News practitioners at NBC be terminating the contract of Phil Griffin? And will they terminate low ratings Joe Scarborough based on the “unsolved mystery” that took place in Florida years ago? Investigate!”

(Donald Trump, 29 November 2017, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2017/nov/29/donald-trump/donald-trumps-pants-fire-unsolved-mystery-attack-j/>)

“The last thing we need in Alabama and the U.S. Senate is a Schumer/Pelosi puppet who is WEAK on Crime, WEAK on the Border, Bad for our Military and our great Vets, Bad for our 2nd Amendment, AND WANTS TO RAISES TAXES TO THE SKY. Jones would be a disaster!”

(Donald Trump, 26 November 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2017/nov/28/donald-trump/donald-trump-falsely-claims-doug-jones-wants-raise/>)

"I am proud of the Rep. House & Senate for working so hard on cutting taxes {& reform.} We're getting close! Now, how about ending the **unfair & highly unpopular** Indiv Mandate in OCare & reducing taxes even further? Cut top rate to 35% w/all of the rest going to middle income cuts?"

(Donald Trump, 13 November 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/nov/14/donald-trump/how-unpopular-obamacare-individual-mandate/>)

"U.S. COAL PRODUCTION Up 7.8% past year. Down 31.5% last 10 years. #EndingWarOnCoal"

(Donald Trump, 31 October 2017, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/nov/06/donald-trump/trump-pairs-recent-rise-coal-output-ending-war-coa/>)

"Sorry, but this is years ago, before Paul Manafort was part of the Trump campaign. But why aren't Crooked Hillary & the Dems the focus?????"

(Donald Trump, 30 October 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/30/donald-trump/trump-wrongly-says-manafort-crimes-came-years-he-j/>)

"Working hard on the biggest tax cut in U.S. history. Great support from so many sides. Big winners will be the middle class, business & JOBS"

(Donald Trump, 25 October 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/26/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrong-his-tax-plan-biggest-cut-ever/>)

"It is finally sinking through. 46% OF PEOPLE BELIEVE MAJOR NATIONAL NEWS ORGS FABRICATE STORIES ABOUT ME. FAKE NEWS, even worse! Lost cred."

(Donald Trump, 22 October 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/24/donald-trump/trump-says-46-people-think-media-make-news-about-h/>)

"I am supportive of Lamar as a person & also of the process, but I can **never** support bailing out ins co's who have made a fortune w/ O'Care."

(Donald Trump, 18 October 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/23/donald-trump/trump-says-insurers-made-fortune-obamacare-they-di/>)

"Why is the NFL getting massive tax breaks while at the same time disrespecting our Anthem, Flag and Country? Change tax law!"

(Donald Trump, 10 October 2017, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/12/donald-trump/nfl-getting-massive-tax-breaks-donald-trump-said/>)

"Bob Corker gave us the Iran Deal, & that's about it. We need HealthCare, we need Tax Cuts/Reform, we need people that can get the job done!"

(Donald Trump, 8 October 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/12/donald-trump/sen-bob-corker-responsible-iran-deal-donald-trump-/>)

"In analyzing the Alabama Primary race,FAKE NEWS always fails to mention that the candidate I endorsed went up MANY points after endorsement!"

(Donald Trump, 1 October 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/02/donald-trump/donald-trump-says-luther-strange-gained-many-point/>)

"...NFL attendance and ratings are WAY DOWN. Boring games yes, but many stay away because they love our country. League should back U.S."

(Donald Trump, 24 September 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/sep/24/donald-trump/trumps-mostly-false-claim-nfl-ratings-are-way-down/>)

“I would not sign Graham-Cassidy if it did not include coverage of pre-existing conditions. It does! A great Bill. Repeal & Replace.”

(Donald Trump, 21 September 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/sep/21/donald-trump/trumps-misleading-claim-pre-existing-protections/>)

“I spoke with President Moon of South Korea last night. Asked him how Rocket Man is doing. Long gas lines forming in North Korea. **Too bad!**”

(Donald Trump, 17 September 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/sep/19/donald-trump/are-gas-lines-forming-north-korea/>)

“Study what General Pershing of the United States did to terrorists when caught. There was no more Radical Islamic Terror for 35 years!”

(Donald Trump, 17 August 2017, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/aug/17/donald-trump/donald-trump-retells-pants-fire-claim-about-gen-pe/>)

“My first order as President was to renovate and modernize our nuclear arsenal. It is now far stronger and more powerful than ever before....”

(Donald Trump, 9 August 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/aug/09/donald-trump/under-donald-trump-us-nuclear-arsenal-far-stronger/>)

“Working hard from New Jersey while White House goes through long planned renovation. Going to New York next week for more meetings.”

(Donald Trump, 7 August 2017, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/aug/08/donald-trump/renovations-Trump-out-White-House/>)

“United Nations Resolution is the single largest economic sanctions package ever on North Korea. Over one billion dollars in cost to N.K.”

(Donald Trump, 6 August 2017, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/aug/06/donald-trump/trump-claims-un-sanctions-cost-north-korea-over-1-/>)

““Corporations have **NEVER** made as much money as they are making now.” Thank you Stuart Varney @foxandfriends Jobs are starting to roar, watch!”

(Donald Trump, 1 August 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/aug/01/donald-trump/have-corporations-never-made-much-money-now-donald/>)

“Problem is that the acting head of the FBI & the person in charge of the Hillary investigation, Andrew McCabe, got \$700,000 from H for wife!”

(Donald Trump, 25 July 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/25/donald-trump/tweet-donald-trump-revives-charge-improper-ties-be/>)

“Is Fake News Washington Post being used as a lobbyist weapon against Congress to keep Politicians from looking into Amazon no-tax monopoly?”

(Donald Trump, 24 July 2017, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/26/donald-trump/amazon-no-tax-monopoly-donald-trump-said/>)

“The ABC/Washington Post Poll, even though almost 40% is not **bad** at this time, was just about the most inaccurate poll around election time!”

(Donald Trump, 16 July 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/17/donald-trump/trumps-false-claim-his-presidential-approval-ratin/>)

“**Everyone** here is talking about why John Podesta refused to give the DNC server to the FBI and the CIA. **Disgraceful!**”

(Donald Trump, 7 July 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/11/donald-trump/did-john-podesta-deny-cia-and-fbi-access-dnc-serve/>)

“Gas prices are the lowest in the U.S. in over ten years! I would like to see them go even lower.”

(Donald Trump, 4 July 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/06/donald-trump/donald-trump-right-gas-prices-now-lowest-over-10-y/>)

“Fake News CNN is looking at big management changes now that they got caught falsely pushing their phony Russian stories. Ratings way down!”

(Donald Trump, 27 June 2017, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jul/03/donald-trump/trumps-pants-fire-claim-cnn-ratings-are-way-down/>)

“Democrat Jon Ossoff, who wants to raise your taxes to the highest level and is weak on crime and security, doesn't even live in district.”

(Donald Trump, 20 June 2017, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/georgia/statements/2017/jun/20/donald-trump/trump-right-ossoff-does-not-live-georgias-6th-cong/>)

“The new Rasmussen Poll, one of the most accurate in the 2016 Election, just out with a Trump 50% Approval Rating. That's higher than O's #'s!”

(Donald Trump, 18 June 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jun/19/donald-trump/donald-trump-tweet-50-approval-cherry-picks-pollin/>)

“2 million more people just dropped out of ObamaCare. It is in a death spiral. Obstructionist Democrats gave up, have no answer = resist!”

(Donald Trump, 13 June 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jun/14/donald-trump/trump-wrongly-ties-flawed-obamacare-data-death-spi/>)

“At least 7 dead and 48 wounded in terror attack and Mayor of London says there is "no reason to be alarmed!"”

(Donald Trump, 4 June 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jun/04/donald-trump/donald-trumps-tweet-misleads-about-london-mayors-r/>)

“Just arrived in Italy for the G7. Trip has been very successful. We made and saved the USA many billions of dollars and millions of jobs.”

(Donald Trump, 26 May 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/may/26/donald-trump/did-donald-trumps-trip-create-or-save-millions-job/>)

“When James Clapper himself, and **virtually everyone** else with knowledge of the witch hunt, says there is no collusion, when does it end?”

(Donald Trump, 12 May 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/may/12/donald-trump/trumps-mostly-false-claim-clapper-said-no-collusio/>)

“You can't compare anything to ObamaCare because ObamaCare is dead. Dems want billions to go to Insurance Companies to bail out donors...”

(Donald Trump, 30 April 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/may/04/donald-trump/trumps-false-claim-dems-want-billions-go-insurance/>)

“The U.S. recorded its slowest economic growth in five years (2016). GDP up only 1.6%. Trade deficits hurt the economy **very** badly.”

(Donald Trump, 26 April 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/apr/27/donald-trump/did-trade-deficit-cause-slow-growth-2016-donald-tr/>)



“Out of our very big country, with many choices, does **everyone** notice that both the “ban” case and now the “sanctuary” case is brought in the Ninth Circuit, which has a **terrible** record of being overturned (close to 80%). They used to call this “judge shopping!” Messy system.”

(Donald Trump, 26 April 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/apr/26/donald-trump/does-ninth-circuit-have-overturn-record-close-80/>)

“The weak illegal immigration policies of the Obama Admin. allowed **bad** MS 13 gangs to form in cities across U.S. We are removing them fast!”

(Donald Trump, 18 April 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/apr/18/donald-trump/trump-falsely-claims-obama-policies-blame-growth-m/>)

“The super Liberal Democrat in the Georgia Congressional race tomorrow wants to protect criminals, allow illegal immigration and raise taxes!”

(Donald Trump, 17 April 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/georgia/statements/2017/apr/17/donald-trump/trump-makes-false-claim-about-jon-ossoffs-immigrat/>)

“Despite what you have heard from the FAKE NEWS, I had a GREAT meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Nevertheless, Germany owes vast sums of money to NATO & the United States must be paid more for the powerful, and **very** expensive, defense it provides to Germany!”

(Donald Trump, 18 March 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/mar/19/donald-trump/fact-check-donald-trump-says-germany-owes-vast-sum/>)

“122 vicious prisoners, released by the Obama Administration from Gitmo, have returned to the battlefield. Just another **terrible** decision!”

(Donald Trump, 7 March 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/mar/07/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrongly-blames-barack-obama-former-gu/>)

“The media has not reported that the National Debt in my first month went down by \$12 billion vs a \$200 billion increase in Obama first mo.”

(Donald Trump, 25 February 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/feb/25/donald-trump/why-donald-trumps-tweet-about-decline-national-deb/>)

“72% of refugees admitted into U.S. (2/3 -2/11) during COURT BREAKDOWN are from 7 countries: SYRIA, IRAQ, SOMALIA, IRAN, SUDAN, LIBYA & YEMEN”

(Donald Trump, 12 February 2017, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/feb/12/donald-trump/donald-trump-says-refugee-admissions-surged-7-coun/>)

“While on FAKE NEWS @CNN, Bernie Sanders was cut off for using the term fake news to describe the network. They said technical difficulties!”

(Donald Trump, 12 February 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/feb/12/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrongly-says-cnn-cut-bernie-sanders-c/>)

“Chris Cuomo, in his interview with Sen. Blumenthal, **never** asked him about his long-term lie about his brave “service” in Vietnam. FAKE NEWS!”

(Donald Trump, 9 February 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/feb/09/donald-trump/trump-wrong-sen-blumenthals-cnn-interview-and-viet/>)

“Do you believe it? The Obama Administration agreed to take thousands of illegal immigrants from Australia. Why? I will study this dumb deal!”

(Donald Trump, 1 February 2017, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/feb/02/donald-trump/trump-claims-obama-made-deal-take-thousands-illega/>)

“Congressman John Lewis should spend more time on fixing and helping his district, which is in **horrible** shape and falling apart (not to mention crime infested) rather than falsely complaining about the election results. All talk, talk, talk - no action or results. Sad!”

(Donald Trump, 14 January 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jan/15/donald-trump/trumps-john-lewis-crime-invested-atlanta/>)

“Jackie Evancho's album sales have skyrocketed after announcing her Inauguration performance. Some people just don't understand the ‘Movement’”

(Donald Trump, 4 January 2017, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/pennsylvania/statements/2017/jan/05/donald-trump/did-word-trumps-inauguration-concert-cause-jackie-/>)

“General Motors is sending Mexican made model of Chevy Cruze to U.S. car dealers-tax free across border. Make in U.S.A. or pay big border tax!”

(Donald Trump, 3 January 2017, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/jan/04/donald-trump/mostly-true-trump-tweet-about-gm-chevy-cruze-manuf/>)

“If Russia, or some other entity, was hacking, why did the White House wait so long to act? Why did they only complain after Hillary lost?”

(Donald Trump, 15 December 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/dec/15/donald-trump/pants-fire-trump-tweet-about-russian-hacking-probe/>)

“Boeing is building a brand new 747 Air Force One for future presidents, but costs are out of control, more than \$4 billion. Cancel order!”

(Donald Trump, 6 December 2016, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/dec/06/donald-trump/fact-checking-donald-trumps-tweet-air-force-one-bo/>)

“Serious voter fraud in Virginia, New Hampshire and California - so why isn't the media reporting on this? Serious bias.”

(Donald Trump, 27 November 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/virginia/statements/2016/nov/29/donald-trump/trumps-pants-fire-serious-voter-fraud-claim-virgin/>)

“In addition to winning the Electoral College in a landslide, I won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally”

(Donald Trump, 27 November 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/nov/28/donald-trump/donald-trumps-pants-fire-claim-millions-illegal-vo/>)

“The @nytimes sent a letter to their subscribers apologizing for their **BAD** coverage of me. I wonder if it will change - doubt it?”

(Donald Trump, 13 November 2016, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/nov/15/donald-trump/donald-trump-says-new-york-times-apologized-bad-co/>)

“The @nytimes states today that DJT believes "more countries should acquire nuclear weapons." How dishonest are they. I **never** said this!”

(Donald Trump, 13 November 2016, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/nov/14/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrongly-tweets-he-never-said-more-cou/>)

“Wow, Twitter, Google and Facebook are burying the FBI criminal investigation of Clinton. **Very** dishonest media!”

(Donald Trump, 30 October 2016, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/nov/02/donald-trump/trump-says-twitter-google-facebook-buried-clinton-/>)

“Of course there is large scale voter fraud happening on and before election day. Why do Republican leaders deny what is going on? So naive!”

(Donald Trump, 17 October 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/oct/17/donald-trump/donald-trumps-pants-fire-claim-large-scale-voter-f/>)

“Despite winning the second debate in a landslide (**every** poll), it is hard to do well when Paul Ryan and others give zero support!”

(Donald Trump, 11 October 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/wisconsin/statements/2016/oct/12/donald-trump/donald-trumps-ridiculous-claim-all-polls-show-he-w/>)

“Inner-city crime is reaching record levels. African-Americans will vote for Trump because they know I will stop the slaughter going on!”

(Donald Trump, 29 August 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/aug/30/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrong-inner-city-crime-reaching-recor/>)

“The media is going crazy. They **totally** distort so many things on purpose. Crimea, nuclear, "the baby" and so much more. **Very** dishonest!”

(Donald Trump, 7 August 2016, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/aug/08/donald-trump/donald-trump-accurately-says-media-wrong-he-kicked/>)

“American homeownership rate in Q2 2016 was 62.9% - lowest rate in 51yrs. WE will bring back the 'American Dream!’”

(Donald Trump, 30 July 2016, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/aug/02/donald-trump/donald-trump-correctly-claims-homeownership-51-yea/>)

As usual, Hillary & the Dems are trying to rig the debates so 2 are up against major NFL games. Same as last time w/ Bernie. Unacceptable!”

(Donald Trump, 29 July 2016, rated Pants on Fire, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/aug/01/donald-trump/donald-trumps-pants-fire-claim-clinton-democrats-r/>)

“**Not one** American flag on the massive stage at the Democratic National Convention until people started complaining-then a small one. Pathetic”

(Donald Trump, 27 July 2016, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/jul/27/donald-trump/dnc-flag-missing-controversy/>)

“An analysis showed that Bernie Sanders would have won the Democratic nomination if it were not for the Super Delegates.”

(Donald Trump, 23 July 2016, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/jul/25/donald-trump/no-donald-trump-bernie-sanders-wouldnt-have-won-ev/>)

“Taxpayers are paying a fortune for the use of Air Force One on the campaign trail by President Obama and Crooked Hillary. A total disgrace!”

(Donald Trump, 5 July 2016, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/jul/07/donald-trump/donald-trump-isnt-winging-it-complaint-about-air-f/>)

“Hillary Clinton surged the trade deficit with China 40% as Secretary of State, costing Americans millions of jobs”

(Donald Trump, 21 June 2016, rated Mostly False, web: [Hillary Clinton surged the trade deficit with China 40% as Secretary of State, costing Americans millions of jobs](https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/jun/21/donald-trump/hillary-clinton-surged-the-trade-deficit-with-china-40-as-secretary-of-state-costing-americans-millions-of-jobs/))

“Goofy Elizabeth Warren lied when she says I want to abolish the Federal Minimum Wage. See media—asking for increase!”

(Donald Trump, 11 May 2016, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/may/19/donald-trump/donald-trump-wrong-elizabeth-warren-lied-saying-he/>)

“Ted Cruz is mathematically out of winning the race. Now all he can do is be a spoiler, never a nice thing to do. I will beat Hillary!”

(Donald Trump, 20 April 2016, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/apr/20/donald-trump/trump-largely-accurate-cruz-has-been-mathematicall/>)

“Just remember, the birther movement was started by Hillary Clinton in 2008. She was all in!”

(Donald Trump, 22 September 2015, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/sep/23/donald-trump/hillary-clinton-obama-birther-fact-check/>)

“Las Vegas, we are **grieving** with you—the victims, those who lost loved ones, the responders, & all affected by this cold-blooded massacre. The crowd fled at the sound of gunshots. Imagine the deaths if the shooter had a silencer, which the NRA wants to make easier to get.”

(Hillary Clinton, 2 October 2017, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/oct/04/hillary-clinton/no-gun-silencers-wouldnt-have-worsened-las-vegas-s/>)

“Donald Trump says he'd deport 16 million people. How do you even begin to quantify that?”

(Hillary Clinton, 23 October 2016, rated Half True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/oct/25/hillary-clinton/hillary-clinton-exaggerates-saying-donald-trump-pl/>)

“Ryan is still endorsing Trump.”

(Hillary Clinton, 10 October 2016, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/wisconsin/statements/2016/oct/11/hillary-clinton/after-donald-trumps-campaign-missteps-does-paul-ry/>)

“How do Jeb Bush and Donald Trump differ on immigration? Spoiler alert: They don't.”

(Hillary Clinton, 25 August 2015, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/florida/statements/2015/aug/28/hillary-clinton/hillary-clinton-says-jeb-bush-and-donald-trump-sha/>)

“**Not one** of the 17 GOP candidates has discussed how they'd address the rising cost of college. **Disappointing**, but not surprising.”

(Hillary Clinton, 23 August 2015, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/florida/statements/2015/aug/26/hillary-clinton/hillary-clinton-says-no-gop-candidate-has-talked-a/>)

“You know what Amazon paid in federal income taxes last year? Zero.”

(Bernie Sanders, 30 April 2018, rated True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2018/may/03/bernie-s/amazon-paid-0-federal-income-taxes-2017/>)

“Why is it more important to give a \$100 billion tax break to 3 of the wealthiest families than to feed, house and educate 15 million people?”

(Bernie Sanders, 25 May 2017, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/may/31/bernie-s/bernie-sanders-inflates-trump-tax-plan-benefits-bi/>)

“Increasing the min. wage to \$15 an hour would reduce spending on food stamps, public housing and other programs by over \$7.6 billion a year.”

(Bernie Sanders, 4 May 2016, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/may/05/bernie-s/bernie-sanders-says-minimum-wage-hike-15-would-red/>)

“The largest U.S. companies would owe \$620 billion in U.S. taxes on the cash they store in tax havens, the equivalent of our defense budget.”

(Bernie Sanders, 6 April 2016, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/apr/11/bernie-s/sanders-us-multinationals-would-owe-620-billion-ov/>)

“Unlike **virtually every** other campaign, we don't have a Super PAC which collects money from billionaires and corporations.”

(Bernie Sanders, 28 September 2015, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/sep/30/bernie-s/bernie-sanders-only-presidential-candidates-withou/>)

“There is no justice when the largest low-wage employer is not McDonalds or Walmart but the US government”

(Bernie Sanders, 22 September 2015, rated Mostly False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/sep/29/bernie-s/bernie-sanders-says-federal-government-not-mcdonal/>)

“The gap between the very rich and **everyone** else in America is wider today than at any time since the 1920s.”

(Bernie Sanders, 4 June 2015, rated Mostly True, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/jun/18/bernie-s/bernie-sanders-says-income-inequality-widest-1920s/>)

“With opioids ravaging so many American communities, Congressman Beto O'Rourke's radical resolution to legalize all narcotics—including heroin and other deadly opioids—is looking **worse and worse** all the time”

(Ted Cruz, 1 May 2018, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/texas/statements/2018/may/02/ted-cruz/ted-cruz-falsely-beto-orourke-legalize-narcotics-a/>)

“The #IranDeal will facilitate and accelerate the nation of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons - #StopIranDeal”

(Ted Cruz, 9 September 2015, rated False, web: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/sep/10/ted-cruz/ted-cruz-says-deal-will-facilitate-and-accelerate-/>)