STARTING POINTS IN FRENCH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS' LEXICOMETRY TO STUDY POLITICAL TWEETS

MARGE KÄSPER & LIINA MAURER

@EmmanuelMacron

Voyant Tools, AntConc, Lexico, Hyperbase

Linguistic Profile: Discursive Ethos Changing in Crisis

The Aim of the Research

To study a corpus of tweets by the French President Emmanuel Macron.

To characterize the discursive ethos of the President by the analysis of a linguistic profile of the corpus on Twitter from December 2017 to December 2019.

Presidents in French Discourse Analysis

Lexicometry

- Saint-Cloud Center of Political Lexicometry in 1970s and 1980s
- Vocabulary of De Gaulle's speeches (Cotteret & Moreau 1969)
- De Gaulle's and Mitterrand's systemized corpora (Labée in 1980s)
- From de Gaulle to Chirac (Mayaffre 2004); up to Macron (Mayaffre 2019) – an elaborated cluster analysis at a semantic level that gives birth to the interpretations in terms of socio–psychological and historical profiles of the presidents' discourses – an approach called "logometric".
- Genre of the New Year speech and discursive ethos by lexicometry (Leblanc 2016)

** You can find the references in the Proceedings paper*

We claim, however, that an important part of today's political communication is also performed through social media, for example Twitter, Facebook, etc.

Political Communication

Through Social Media

During the French presidential elections in 2017 Julien Longhi launched a platform called #Idéo2017 to analyze what the candidates say on social networks with the help of lexicometric tools to identify the lexical fields and dominant themes of the different candidates and to establish thereby "the linguistic profile" of the candidates and what differentiates them.

Data

To analyze Emmanuel Macron, it was necessary to select the text he has possibly written by himself (or by his PR team) which means excluding all retweets, quotes URLs etc. After filtering, there were 2308 of the 3200 tweets left for the analysis. The time frame of the corpus is from December 12, 2017 to December 11, 2019.

Fig. 1 presents a survey of our corpus in the form of a word cloud of the 25 most frequent words by @EmmanuelMacron visualized by Voyant Tools as follows:

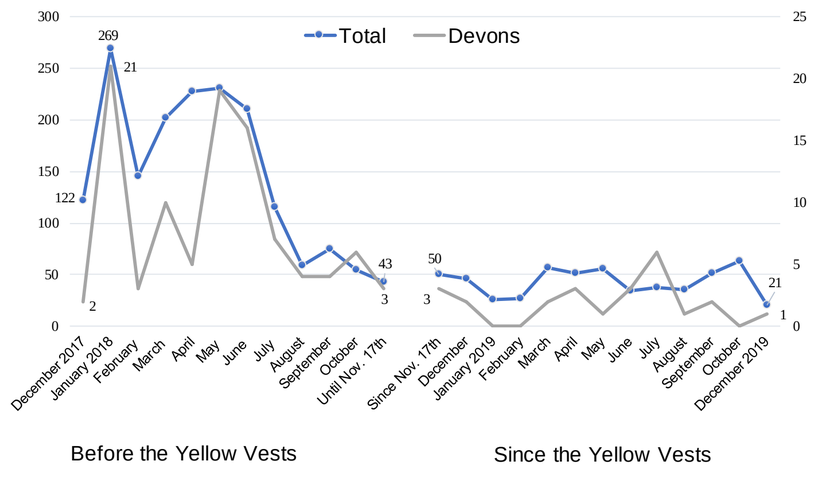
Macron Says 'We have to'

One of the specific words this graph represents is the verb form ***devons*** that is the first plural form of the verb *devoir*, meaning 'we have to'.

As in our corpus, we do not have other candidates to compare with, we can study the evolution in time. When looking at external factors, **the rise of the Yellow Vests Movement** may affect the president's self-expression and therefore we decided to study it more closely.

Fig. 2 and 3 present the frequency of the word *devons* before and after the Yellow Vests Movement represented in Concordance Plot by AntConc:

Fig. 4. The frequency of tweeting and the use of the word ***devons***:



UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
College of Foreign Languages and Cultures
1632

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