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A Big Five Analysis of Right-Populist and Social -
Democratic Austrian and German
Politicians “

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1. Introduction

The aim of politics is to initiate collectively binding decisions, while the media create public awareness and a possibility to convey and perceive reality (Sarcinelli, 2011, 33). This is important, as political participation depends on how well one informs themselves. For politicians and citizens, the media serve as the carrier for political information (Engel & Rühle, 2017, 388). Therefore, politics and media are closely intertwined.

Looking at recent developments in this area is crucial in order to understand the status-quo of this relationship. Politics, media and political psychology are key topics in political and communication science today (Safiullah et al. 2017, 10, Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2014, 1277, Sucharowski, 2018, 11).

The most recent development in media-conveyed communication is social media, as part of strategic political communication. The importance of social media can, for example, be seen by the fact that the platform Facebook had over 2.65 billion users worldwide in 2019 (Clement, 2019), remaining the most prominent online platform for political actors. In recent years, this channel was especially useful for right-populist politicians, representing the most popular way of communication and reaching out to voters (Schroeder, 2018, 8f, Krämer, 2017, 1304 f). A current example for this is the president of the United States, Donald Trump, and his use of the social media platform Twitter, sharing his thoughts and beliefs with his currently over 85 million followers.

Austria and Germany are in this context interesting examples, as the ideologies of their right-populist People's Party of Austria (FPÖ) and Alternative for Germany (AfD) parties, are very similar in their ideologies (Berger, 2018) and both parties have gained more popularity over the past years. The social-democratic parties, social-democratic party of Germany (SPD) and social-democratic party of Austria (SPÖ), both have the problem that they have lost significant support during the last years and seem to be in an ongoing crisis (Koller, 2019, Metzner, 2019). Furthermore, what makes a comparison between the right-populist parties and social-democratic parties particularly interesting, is that they represent two divergent ideologies, contrasting political spectrums of "right" and "left". The AfD, in particular, has been vocal in promoting anti-democratic attitudes, including hostility toward the media, anti-semitism and xenophobia ("Björn Höcke darf als "Faschist" bezeichnet werden", 2019, "Was Höcke mit der Denkmal der Schande Rede bezweckte, 2017, Konietzny, 2020, "Mehrheit demokratiefreundlich, ein Fünftel rechtspopulistisch", 2019), which makes it important to look closer at their way of communicating. The comparison between social media communication of personality of right- and left-wing politicians has not been sufficiently scientifically researched (Fatke, 2019, 141, Carney et al., 2008, 817), despite its importance to conduct research on how political parties use social media platforms as tools of influence and through this, gain power. The study of political psychology dates back decades ago, most researchers investigating the personalities of politicians or voters (Staerklé,

2015, 428, Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004, 584). Still, there is surprisingly little known about the use of social media to convey personality, when it comes to looking at the personality of political elites (Joly, Hofmans & Loewen, 2018,1). Furthermore, there is an imbalance, as elites are much more difficult to participate, are not objective and rather focus on the interests of their parties (Ramey, Klinger & Hollibaugh, 2016). A promising framework, which has gained usage since the 1960s to measure personality is the “Big Five” framework, focusing on the personality traits openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism/emotional instability (Gerber et al., 2011, De Raad & Perugini, 2002). However, research on this area is especially limited in Europe, as the trend in political science is “Americanized” (Strömbäck & Kioussis, 2014, 117, Plasser & Plasser, 2002, 1, Negrine & Papathanassopoulos, 1996, 59 f, Prapotnik et al., 2019, 2), leading to a gap in research as most influential studies on personality and politics took place in America rather than Europe.

The following master thesis tries to address this gap in research by focusing on personality representation as part of strategic political communication of Austrian and German politicians on Facebook. Personality representation will be measured by the Big Five Personality traits openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism/ emotional instability.

Furthermore, as right-populist parties are on the rise in Europe (Europe and right-wing nationalism Europe“, 2019, Mudde, 2013, 2) and other parts of the world (e.g. Oliver & Rahn, 2016, 192, Chacko & Jayasuriya, 2018, 529), it seems especially important to look at their strategic communication and personality representation on social media. As Austria and Germany are European countries, in which right-populist parties have gained much power of the past years or decades (Grigat, 2017, 9, (“European right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide, 2019”), they will be studied in this master thesis more deeply. In order to compare their communication style to another party, the social-democratic parties are analyzed here as well. The Austrian politicians in this study are part of the Social-Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the right-populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), whereas the German politicians are party of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the right-populist Alternative for Germany (AfD).

2. Strategic Communication in Politics

Politics and communication are complex phenomena and include multiple transdisciplinary approaches from political science, journalism- and communication science or sociology (Donges & Jarren, 2011, 15). Looking at strategic communication in politics is, according to Hallahan et al. (2007), important, given the rapid changes in public communication, including political communication, which is heavily driven by technology as well as by media economics. Therefore, differentiating between different types of communication becomes increasingly difficult. Furthermore, it is important to look at an organization's communication from a more strategic perspective, as the communication becomes more professional. This can be exemplified by the fact that organizations try to influence the audience's knowledge as well as their emotions and behaviors (Hallahan et al., 2007).

For McNair (2003, 1) political communication is seen as a "purposeful communication about politics", which includes the communication of politicians as well as other political actors in order to reach certain goals, communication of non-political actors (voters or newspaper columns) addressing political actors as well as the communication of the media through news reports or editorials about these political actors and their actions .

For Donges & Jarren (2011, 28), political communication is seen as a key concept in order to establish political interests and help to legitimize political decisions, which make it complicated to separate politics from communication. Due to the important role of the media today, it influences the structure as well as the actors and processes of political communication.

For some scholars, like Saxer (1998) or Engel & Rühle (2017), a definition of the term political communication cannot be established, as these two areas are seen to be too intertwined and complex. Most scholars agree though that the politician tries to establish power or enlarge their power for themselves as well as for the organization they stand for, the political party. All of their actions and interactions with the public, but also with the media, is influenced by this. In order to achieve their goals, the media are an important means to communicate with the "outside" world, focusing on the voters as well as to communicate with the "inside" world, the party members (Donges & Jarren, 2011, 235).

There have been three phases of political communication systems. The first phase took place after World War II, with the political systems being viewed as the primary source for information and a political landscape dominated by a longstanding identification with the parties. Group-based loyalty was more important than the arguments being made by the politicians. The second phase is described to have started in the 1960s, with the introduction of one of the most important media for political communication, television.

This led to less single-party loyalty. Therefore, the parties dealt with a larger audience and had to start professionalizing their campaigns. The current third phase can be characterized by a growing proliferation of information outlets, the growing importance of the internet and the growing professionalism of campaigns (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999, 213 f). It has to be considered, that Blumler and Kavanagh wrote this over 20 years ago, with no knowledge about how important the internet, especially social media, would become.

It became obvious that politicians would be more reliant on professional assistance, as a result of these changes in the third phase. Three key periods in the evolution of political campaigns can be characterized by “mass propaganda, media campaigning and political marketing” (Wring, 2001, 37 in Plasser & Plasser, 2002, 3).

Today, the communication techniques, which political parties apply have become increasingly professionalized (Negrine & Lilleker, 2002, 306) and specific terms were introduced as a result of professional political communication, such as “political marketing” (Maarek, 1995, Lees-Marshment, 2001) or “packaging of politics” (Street, 2001, Franklin, 2004). The term “political marketing” arose in the middle of the twentieth century, when commercial marketing methods were introduced into political campaigning. It was seen as a very demanding application of political communication, as it involves different fields of social sciences (Mareek, 1995). The closeness of politics and marketing is also referred to as a “marriage”, as core marketing concepts, like the concept of sales, product or market-orientation are adapted in political communication. It is about selling arguments about products to voters, arguing what the party's beliefs are or designing their behaviors to maximize the voters, their customers, satisfaction (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

“Packaging of politics” refers to the fact that politicians and parties have high power in managing and controlling the public's perception of them through political or media advisors, called “spin doctors”. Through this approach, personality became more important than the party, appearances mattered more than facts and reality and superficiality became more important than the profound, which poses serious threats to democracy (Street, 2001, 185).

The increasing professionalism in political communication can also be seen in the estimated 1 billion US-Dollars, which will be spent on digital political advertisements during the 2019/2020 Presidential election period (Gibson, 2020). Furthermore, spending on local political advertising in America is estimated at around 6 billion US-Dollars in 2020, with almost half of the money spent on television advertisements (Adgate, 2019).

This trend of more money being spent on political campaigns is not restricted to the United States but occurs around the world. In Germany, almost 3.5 million Euros were spent on Facebook targeting

political advertisement during the European Parliament Election in 2019, followed by the United Kingdom with around 3.3 million Euros and Spain with around 2.7 million Euros (Johnson, 2019).

How professionalized online communication is, can be exemplified by Austrian politics. Most of the political parties have big advisor companies to strengthen their political campaigning. The Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) works closely with the campaigning bureau of the party's former communication head, the social-democratic party (SPÖ) with the swiss company Fehr Advice or the left winged New Austria and liberal forum (NEOS) hired three advertising companies in 2019 (Mittelstaedt & Stefan, 2019).

2.1. Strategic Political Communication during Elections

Political campaigns as well as elections present two specific forms of political communication, because the political agendas of each party and its disputes with other parties are maximized. Political campaigns are key to strategic political communication, as otherwise the interests of a political actor cannot be communicated to the public. Positioning the own party is often accomplished by attacking other parties or political decisions and creating public attention. As attention is seen as a scarce good, more communication is needed in order to reach potential voters. The goal is to mobilize as well as activate the already existing party members and simultaneously trying to recruit new members. This is important in order to investigate the status-quo of the party members outside of election periods (Donges & Jarren, 2011, 217 f).

In the last decades, political campaigns have considerably changed due to the media revolution, like the rise of social media, which started in the United States before affecting the rest of the world (Plasser & Plasser, 200,2 1).

Political communication in election campaigns have mostly been the area of studies, as these campaigns consist of pure political communication. Furthermore, political communication is at its peak and of most importance during this time shortly before the elections (Lilleker & Jackson, 2011, 12, Enli & Skogerbo, 2013, 759). They are strictly regulated by the election day and they have a clearer agenda compared to political campaigns, as they focus on votes in the upcoming election. The precious good of attention, in this period, has the highest value, marking the manner and the intensity in which topics are presented as particularly crucial (Donges & Jarren, 2011, 211).

Elections are seen to involve three actors: the parties with their political actors, the society with the right to vote and the media, which are seen as particularly important during this time (Donges & Jarren, 2011, 224).

Strömbäck and Kiouisis (2014, 117) claim that in recent years, the biggest changes in campaign and election communication were Americanization, modernization and professionalization. American campaigning is described as being at the forefront, when it comes to new practices of political communication before other countries follow (Plasser & Plasser, 2002 1, Negrine & Papathanassopoulos, 1996 59 f). They are the center of attention for both international campaign consultants (Plasser & Plasser, 2002) as well as the media (Painter et al., 2011).

The theory of Americanization can be explained according to Strömbäck and Kiouisis (2014, 118) by the practice of visiting and studying the American political campaigns by international practitioners, by American practitioners working outside of their home country for different international political campaigns and by American campaign practices being covered by the media. Through these trends, political campaigning travels fast from America to other parts of the world.

Researchers also mention another explanation for the seemingly convergent political campaigns around the world, modernization. For example, as the media become more independent from political parties and thus forming their own subsystem, political parties need to form other ways to ensure that the media are framing them positively or they can use the media to their own advantage. Therefore, improving their skills regarding news management is critical. This is seen as a global change, leading to similar approaches of the parties around the world to manage this new independence from the media (Strömbäck & Kiouisis, 2014, 119).

Lastly, professionalization plays an important role within the framework of this modernization. Through this "(...) professionalization suggests an ongoing process where structures and practices are continually revised and updated in order to make them more `rational` and more `appropriate` for the conduct of politics at any particular moment of time" (Negrine, 2008, 2). More people have been involved in recent years to work for campaigns, leading to both internal and external professionalism, leading to a greater expertise among people working for parties as well as hiring special consultants from other areas with special knowledge (Plasser, 2009, 33 f, Street, 2001, 185).

It is undeniable that in recent years, the internet has become increasingly important for political advertisements (Lilleker & Jackson, 2011, Johnson, 2019) and social media is seen as creating and negotiating the image of a certain party or politician, especially before elections (Buccoliero et al., 2018, 4).

2.2. Social Media as a Political Game Changer

Communication and media play an important role in our daily lives by influencing our society and politics (Besand, 2008, 13). Looking back in history, media and politics always had a close relationship to one another (Bruns et al., 2018, 1) and are closely intertwined.

In general, the internet as well as the social platforms Facebook, YouTube or Twitter have changed our definition of political communication (Effing, Van Hillegersberg & Huibers, 2013, 57, Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2014, 1289).

How important social media has become to the political sphere can be exemplified by the 2008 United States Presidential election of Barack Obama. The campaign raised 750 million US-Dollars and 500 million US-Dollars of these were raised online. Obama's campaign is often referred to as the first political campaign successfully using the power of social media (Chadwick, 2013, Hughes, 2010).

The use of social media per se was not the only reason why a new way of political campaigning was introduced, but rather the integration of older media, like television or newspaper, and newer media logics as well as the spaces of online, broadcast, activism and elite control. The campaign did not neglect the power of older media in political campaigns, but rather integrated a them into newer media strategy (Chadwick et al., 2018, 11, Ren & Meister, 2010, 12).

Shortly after the election in 2008, the strategy of a mixed approach was also used in the European Parliament Election and contributed to an adaption of this new strategy throughout Europe (Vesnic-Alujevic, 2013, 12).

Chadwick et al. (2018,12) claim that recently there has been a more hybrid media system, meaning that a lot of different types of media approaches are used in politics. For this reason, there have been more and more studies on this area, which focused on the use of social media during election periods. For the most part these social media platforms subjected to research were Twitter, Facebook and YouTube (Jungherr, 2014, Krumsvik et al., 2015).

Having emerged in the United States, the importance of social media has started to influence electoral campaigns on a broader scale than a few years ago. The audience is more difficult to reach, and it is becoming necessary for campaigns to broaden their coverage to different audience segments and produce special content for these segments. For the Obama campaign, this was the case when press advertisements were produced for YouTube or the campaign website (Chadwick et al., 2018, 11).

Through the online world, the campaigns have now direct access to the public, they produce more reciprocity, virability and hybrid media form. Mostly, there is a topic which starts in the traditional media like television or in the press, and is then taken to online media for further discussion, either by the campaign promotions or discussion forums, or both (Nielsen, 2012), with political campaigns, especially on television, still playing an important role (Adgate, 2019). This can be exemplified in the United States, where social media is not the only important medium, rather there is to be a mix of

different channels. Broadcast television was the number one communication channel in 2018 in the United States, with 3.475 billion US-Dollars allocated to this medium, followed by online/digital, with 1793.3 billion US-Dollar, and cable television with 1116.1 billion US-Dollar in regard to this medium (Guttman, 2019). Another example of the importance of social media in elections is the 2007 French election with the campaign of Ségolène Royal. With her online campaign, she managed to increase the membership of her party significantly, from 120,000 to 200,000 members within a short period of time (Montero, 2009).

Twitter has been a powerful tool for politics recently, especially when looking at the 2016 United States Presidential Election between Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton (Carr, 2018, Buccoliero et al., 2018). For Donald Trump, Twitter has become his most powerful tool during his candidacy, and subsequent presidency, to communicate with the public (Ott & Dickinson, 2019). This was shown in the final week of October 2019, when he made over 250 tweets in just one week (Shear et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, Facebook seems to be one of the most used social media platforms both in the United States (with 69% of the population having a Facebook account in 2019) (Pew Research Centre, 2019) and Europe (80% of the population having a Facebook account in September 2019) (Statcounter, 2020). Some scholars see social media closely connected to the outcomes of elections (e.g. Cameron, Stewardson & Barrett, 2014) connecting for example the number of followers or posts with higher votes (Kruikemeier, 2014, 135).

Recently, some scholars have focused on two aspects of social media and politics. Firstly, the rise of social media having led to a blossoming of personalization of political actors, meaning that the politician becoming more important than the represented party (Vesnic-Alujevic, 2013, Hernández-Santaolalla, 2020, Brunnerová, 2019, Bøggild & Pedersen, 2018). Going one step further, the context of personalization has been linked to the rising area of political psychology, especially when looking at the Big Five personality approach (Gerber et al., 2011, Caprara & Vecchione, 2013).

Secondly, Big Five personality traits taking further in investigating their link to political ideology, focusing on conservatism and liberalism (e.g. Alford & Hibbing, 2007, Carney et al., 2008, Van Hiel et al., 2000, Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2004), a key research center in the emerging field of political psychology, which will be discussed in this thesis next chapter.

3. Political Psychology

The area of political psychology can be defined as the application of human psychology to political science. It is a highly varied field, including theories and research of the psychological fields of personality, psychopathology, social psychology, developmental psychology and interpersonal psychology. Furthermore, this area of research focuses on the effects of mass communication, international as well as interpersonal disputes. Political psychology is also an interdisciplinary study area. Apart from psychology and political science, it also involves history, sociology, anthropology, psychiatric science, communication science, educational science and legal studies (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 3, Iyengar, 1993, 3).

There are three phases when it comes to the history of political psychology: Researchers initially started to look at behavior of politicians as well as the role of personality impacting political processes. This was both inspired by psychoanalytic and behaviorist theories. The area of interest changed in the 1960s and 1970s towards looking at voting behavior as well as political attitudes of the voting public. The third phase took place in the 1980s and 1990s, when political cognition as well as individual decision making, were assessed, thereby looking at cognition and behavior at the same time (McGuire, 1993 in Staerklé, 2015, 427). The aim of this rather new research area is to find certain patterns or approaches, foreseeing trends and protecting society from damaging influence through politics (Cottam et al., 2004, VII).

Since the 1940s, research in political psychology has been present, but intense thriving research has been around for the past two decades (Staerklé, 2015, 427f, "Political Psychology", 2020).

The field of political psychology includes for example voting behavior, nuclear deterrence, racial politics or even genocide (Cottam et al., 2004, VII). Furthermore, it investigates political behavior both on an individual and collective level, the general public and political elites, relating to formal as well as informal political participation (Staerklé, 2015, 427, Hewer & Lyons, 2018, 24). Essentially, political psychology investigates how certain aspects of personality can be translated into political behavior (Cottam et al. 2016, 16). As people live under a certain government, political psychology plays a big role in this context, as it investigates people's motivation and needs (Hewer & Lyons, 2018, 24).

In addition to this, the combination of politics and psychology maximizes its external validity, as scientists, mostly with a psychology background, transfer their research spectrum from the laboratory into the real world. Combining these two areas of research can lead both in politics and in psychology to a new understanding of both disciplines (Krosnick, Stark & Chiang, 2017, 2) and therefore have been established as specific research areas in communication science (Oswald & Johann, 2018, 1, Sucharowski, 2018, 11).

Sears, Huddy & Jervis (2003) define different psychological approaches to politics:

Behaviorist Learning Theories

This kind of psychological approach was influenced mostly by the dog experiments on conditioning by Ivan Pavlov. Other studies (e.g. Watson and Skinner) from the 20th century showed similar results, namely that animals could develop complex habits, if they were sure basic needs like hunger or thirst could be satisfied. Learning would lead to long lasting habits, ultimately guiding later behavior. Especially, the development of political socialization is important in this context, as it describes how much children are being influenced by the political view of their parents and friends (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 5f).

Developmental Theory

Children are completing different cognitive phases when they grow up and through this process, they get to know the social world around them better (Tapp & Kohlberg, 1971).

This theory mostly focuses on premature political socialization (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 6), stating that young people are influenced by outside factors, when it comes to their political beliefs and early life experiences shape their political preferences and political behaviors (Neundorf & Smets, 2020).

Incentive Theory

On the basis of the behavioristic approach, this theory describes incentives as the cause of the behavior of a person in a certain position. Following Kurt Lewin, this theory states that individuals are situated in a certain field and the internal and external forces in this specific field push or pull certain behaviors. These theories are often put into context with the political behavior of the public (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 6).

Social Cognition

This theory is part of the so-called "Gestalt movement", which states that humans long for understanding and order and therefore develop their own perception and thoughts spontaneously to make sense of the world (Asch, 1952, Krech & Crutchfield, 1948 in Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2006, 7).

On the basis of this, the electoral voting behavior and mass communication are researched based on the electoral and other political preferences (Sears, 1969, Sears & Whitney, 1973 in Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2006, 7).

Intergroup Relations

Going back to Allport (1954) or Adorno et al. (1950), intergroup relations have been subject to extensive study. The theories in this area show the psychological power of group with its boundaries and attachments. Focusing on the group rather than the individual, this approach suggests more symbolic than realistic interests of group identities in political decisions (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2006, 9), e.g. a sense of belonging to an in-group is more important than what the group stands for or achieves.

Personality

This approach is probably the most popular one, as personality is the center of a number of studies (e.g. Cottam et al. 2016, Immelmann, 2003, Furnham & Fenton-O’Creevy, 2018).

Sears, Huddy and Jervis (2003, 4) describe the term personality as being “usually defined as a stable individual difference variable that transcends specific situations”.

Basic character traits like the level of activity or passivity of a person or the level of aggression, or friendliness, can give deep insights into personality (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 5). Sigmund Freud and his field of psychoanalysis, which focuses on the individual, massively influenced the early political psychologists. One of the first investigations of politicians was the analysis of Woodrow Wilson by George and George in 1956 and of Martin Luther by Erikson in 1958 (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 5).

As personalization is a central topic in political psychology (DeVries & De Landtsheer, 2011, 66, Bennett, 2012, 22), especially after social media became a new important source of information in political campaigns (Vesnic-Alujevic, 2013, Hernández-Santaolalla, 2020, Brunnerová, 2019, Bøggild & Pedersen, 2018), the next chapter will focus more thoroughly on this topic.

3.1. The Importance of Personality in Politics

The factor personality and how it can be translated into political attitudes or actions plays an important role in political psychology (Cottam et al. 2016, 16, Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003). Personality is defined by Feist and Feist (2009, 10) as „a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person's behavior“. The definition by Sears, Huddy und Jervis sees personality as “(...) a stable individual difference variable that transcends specific situations” (Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003, 4).

The beginning of research on personality and personalization in politics dates back to the 1930's, when the approach was mostly psychoanalytical (Lasswell, 1930 in Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003). Shortly after initial research in this area at the end of the 1950's, politicians were ascribed to certain personality traits (Hennessy, 1959 in Sears, Huddy & Jervis, 2003). Personality is seen as an important, yet underexplored topic in political research, especially when the focus is not on the personality of voters but on that of political elites. According to Carprara and Zimbardo (2004), personalization in politics of the western world is becoming increasingly important. Firstly, they claim that political choices are not collectivist but more individualistic. These choices mostly depend on liking and disliking of political candidates. That considered, these guide political behavior far more than previous sociodemographic variables such as education, gender or age. Secondly, this trend has also been noticed by politicians being more aware of the importance of their personal image and the narratives they stand for, leading to a promotion of their political ideology to voters.

“A crucial skill for politicians is learning to speak the `language of personality` - namely, to navigate properly in the domain of personality attributes by identifying and conveying those individual characteristics that are most appealing at a certain time to a particular constituency” (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004, 584).

Most research approaches on this topic are limited to surveys and while this can give useful insights, it tells us little about political elites. This leads to an imbalance in research, as legislators are largely absent from studies and even if they were to participate, most responses would likely be carefully selected and subject of strategic decisions (Ramey et al., 2016, 1, Joly et al., 2018,1). How difficult investigating political elites could be was for example demonstrated by a study conducted by Dietrich et al. (2012), in which the researchers tried to involve political elites in participating in surveys, but the response rates were between 17-26 percent, making it impossible to use the data in a representative study.

Focusing on political elites is important though, as political psychology should focus on both the collective and individual level of politics, which includes both the individual voters but also individual politicians (Staerklé, 2015, 427).

Leaders are often seen as “sense-makers”, tasked with interpreting events in a certain way, which influence the credibility, legitimacy and authority of certain organizations (Hickey & Essid, 2014, Haslam, Reicher & Platow, 2011).

The identity of leaders can be predicted by observed attributes, which the leaders use to characterize themselves or their style of leadership. Every kind of attack on this identity, which is socially constructed, is seen as especially threatening to the leaders. Therefore, it is important for the audience to know how the leader identifies with their worries, interpretations and imaginations (Kramer, 2018).

Another important hypothesis is that the more similar we see ourselves with someone else, the more identification and liking comes with it, named the “similarity-liking approach”, which draws mostly from social, cognitive and evolutionary psychology (Caprara et al., 2007, 610). Similar models have been introduced with the elective affinity model, based on Max Weber, who linked a close connection between the two social processes of Protestantism and Capitalism (Löwy, 2004 in Waisboard, 2018, 18), linking mutual attraction between a belief system with its structures with contents and individuals as well as groups trying to fulfill their needs and motives (Jost et al., 2009, 308). Another model on the basis of similarity is the attraction paradigm, also strengthening the power which similarity and attraction has on the behavior of people (Byrne, 1997).

The importance of identification to trust a source was also confirmed by Hameleers and Schmuck (2017). Their results showed that populist messages were supported by people, who already held populist ideas and identified themselves with the source of these messages. For participants opposing the source and not holding populist beliefs, the sympathy towards the source was reduced considerably.

Although the research on the relation between personality and politics is not new, the limited direct and raw access to political actors is a persistent challenge (Joly, Soroka & Loewen, 2018). Social media can be useful in this matter, as it plays a crucial role for politics today (Safiullah et al. 2017, 10, Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2014, 1277) and offers a lot of content, which can be easily accessed.

Some scholars have focused on content analysis in order to investigate the personality of politicians (Winter, 2005), which can be seen as a promising way to study the personalities of political leaders.

Direct access to the politicians is mostly denied and therefore scholars had to develop their own means for measuring personality, through more indirect means (Feldman & Valenty, 2001, Winter, 2005, 557). Winter (2005, 559) concludes that several methods have been used in the past, in order to

research political leaders from a distance. Some scholars have had a look at known biographical facts and tried to find personality patterns through this approach (e.g. Post, 2003), other scholars include analysis of experts who rate politicians on certain personality traits (e.g. Rubenzer, Faschingbauer & Ones, 2000, Rubenzer, Faschingbauer & Ones, 2004).

However, another fruitful area in the past was content analysis of written texts such as speeches (Ramey et al., 2016), government documents or interviews (Winter, 1992).

An important model, which is often mentioned in the context of personality and politics (Joly et al., 2018, 669 f), is the Big Five factor model of personality or also called the „Big Five“ Model (Costa & McCrae, 1992). It is seen as the dominating model in psychology when it comes to measuring personality traits and has been linked to political ideologies (Gerber et al., 2011, 266, De Raad & Perugini, 2002, 139).

3.2. The Big Five Framework

This personality model can be seen as a representation of personality description on an abstract level. In order to measure the Big Five personality traits, the selection of trait-variables is seen as the most direct one. Originally the Big Five factor framework was introduced by Tupes and Christal in 1961 (Goldberg, 1992, 26).

Development and criticism about these original traits and their definition led to the alternative of markers measuring the Big Five personality traits by Costa and McCrae in 1985: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Goldberg, 1992, 27), on which most scholars (e.g. De Raad, 2000, Ashton & Lee, 2005, Paunonen & Jackson, 2000, Gerber et al., 2011, 266, Joly et al., 2018, 669 f) agree on.

- Extraversion

Norman (1963, 577) defined this Big Five personality trait as people who are energetic, frank, adventurous and sociable. Impulsivity, high activity level or positive emotions are also strongly connected to this personality trait (Lucas & Diener, 2001).

John & Srivastava (1999) designed a Big Five inventory for extraversion:

I see myself as someone who...

...is talkative	... tends to be not quiet
... is not reserved	... has an assertive personality
... is full of energy	... is rarely shy, inhibited
...generates a lot of enthusiasm	... is outgoing, sociable

- Agreeableness

Although this Big Five personality trait has the shortest history, it is seen as an essential personality dimension since the Big Five have developed significant importance (DeRaad & Perugini, 2002, 139). Norman (1963) describes people who are scoring high on this personality trait as good-natured, cooperative, not jealous and mild.

John & Srivastava (1999) prescribe the following inventory for agreeableness:

I see myself as someone who...

- | | |
|---|--|
| ... tends to not find fault with others | ... can not be cold and aloof |
| ... is helpful and unselfish with others | ... is considerate and kind to almost everyone |
| ... does not start to quarrel with others | ... is never rude to others |
| ... has a forgiving nature | ... likes to cooperate with others |
| ... is generally trusting | |

- Conscientiousness

Especially in areas, where achievement, work or education, is important, this personality trait is crucial. It is being associated with adjectives like systematic, practical or being organized (Big Five Model Assessment, De Raad & Perugini, 2002, 139).

Norman (1963, 577) regards conscientious people as tidy, responsible, scrupulous and persevering people.

John & Srivastava (1999) designed a Big Five inventory for conscientiousness:

I see myself as someone who...

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| ... does a thorough job | ... perseveres until the task is finished |
| ... can never be careless | ... does things efficiently |
| ... is a reliable worker | ... makes plans and follows through with them |
| ... does not tend to be disorganized | ... is not easily distracted |
| ... does not tend to be lazy | |

- Neuroticism/ Emotional Instability

Woodworths personal data sheet was the first inventory in order to measure neurotic tendencies. This Big Five personality trait is especially used in clinical psychology, as it is highly correlated with the measurement of illnesses (Larsen, 1992).

Norman (1963, 577), having described the opposite of neuroticism in 1963, emotional stability as calm, composed and not easily upset. Therefore, neuroticism can be described as not calm, not composed and easily upset.

John & Srivastava (1999) designed a Big Five inventory for neuroticism/ emotional instability:

I see myself as someone who...

... is depressed, blue	... is not emotionally stable, is easily upset
... is not relaxed, does not handle stress well	... can be moody
... can be tense	... does not remain calm in tense situations
... worries a lot	... gets nervous easily

- Openness

This personality trait is especially used in psychiatry as well as in clinical psychology, as this is related to several disorders (Costa & Widiger, 1994 in De Raad & Perugini, 2002, 140).

People scoring high on this trait are usually very open to new ideas, as well as approaches and experiences. They are creative and curious, whereas people scoring low on this trait are more cautious, risk averse and are more conservative (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). People scoring high on openness are open to depth and complexity of life and are idealistic, adventurous and intellectual (John, Nauman & Soto, 2008). Norman (1963, 577) describes this personality trait with people being intellectual, polished, imaginative and artistically sensitive.

John & Srivastava (1999) designed a Big Five inventory for openness:

I see myself as someone who...

... is original, comes up with new ideas	... values artistic, aesthetic experiences
... is curious about many different things	... does not prefer work that is routine
... is ingenious, a deep thinker	... likes to reflect, play with ideas
... has an active imagination	... has a lot of artistic interests
... is inventive	... is sophisticated in art, music and literature

These dimensions have the reputation of being generally very stable and culturally independent („Persönlichkeitsanalyse für Jugendliche“, 2017, 3) and helping to simplify a very complicated number of personality traits (Hofstee, 1994).

Some studies link the general personality of politicians to a high level of extraversion, agreeableness and openness (Dietrich et al., 2012, Hanania, 2017, Nørgaard & Klemmenson, 2019), whereas others cannot support these claims (Rubenzer et al., 2000). Furthermore, in other studies politicians are seen to hold extraordinary narcissism (Watts et al., 2013) or a strong dominance (Lilienfeld et al., 2012).

In the past decades, there has been significant research within the Big Five approach, linking the personality traits to political ideologies, for example the trait openness occurring with liberalism and the trait conscientiousness occurring with more conservatism (e.g. Alford & Hibbing, 2007, Carney et al., 2008, Van Hiel et al., 2000, Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2004). Creative, imaginative and curious people tending to follow a more liberal or left-wing ideology, whereas orderly and organized people following a more conservative or right-wing ideology (e.g. Carney et al., 2008, 807 f).

These findings fit with results from studies from the last seventy years, linking openness with liberal/left-wing political parties (e.g. Adorno et al., 1950, Feather, 1984) and conscientiousness with conservative/ right-winged parties (e.g. Fromm, 1947, Caprara, Barbaranelli & Zimbardo, 1999).

The tendency in some studies is that extraversion is seen more with left-wing politically orientated people (e.g. Bem, 1970, Block & Block, 2006) and neuroticism or emotional instability/neuroticism is linked to conservatism (e.g. Altemeyer, 1998, Wilson, 1973). Some studies link agreeableness to be lower with right-winged or conservative parties (e.g. Altemeyer, 1998, Block & Block, 2006).

The construction of personality seems to be a complex one though, as some studies also linked emotional stability with conservative politicians (Stenner, 2005, Mondak et al., 2010), suggesting mixed results when looking at the Big Five personality traits and political ideology.

However, most of these studies took place in America, leaving Europe underrepresented (Prapotnik et al., 2019, 2, Plasser & Plasser, 2002 1).

This poses a limitation when using these studies from the United States for investigating European politicians, as the political systems and cultures differ between these two settings. In the United States there are two big political blocs, Republicans and Democrats, whereas in Europe there is a much greater diversity and plurality in parties and political actors (Prapotnik et al., 2019, 2).

Gerber et al. (2011) and Carney et al. (2008), have summarized studies from the last decades investigating this link between the Big Five personality traits and political ideologies. Although these

studies were conducted on voters and not on political elites, they are still a promising indicator for elites, as the personality traits of voters are often seen as similar to the personality traits of politicians (Vecchione, González Castro & Caprara, 2011, Caprara et al., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014). Furthermore, the similarity-linking approach, which gained a lot of popularity in the past years, supports this as well (Caprara et al., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014).

Despite the fact that research on this topic has been conducted extensively, scholars still think that currently there is not enough empirical evidence to confirm the aforementioned links (Carney et al., 2008, 817, Fatke, 2019, 141). Especially, as the large body of studies has been conducted years or decades ago, it is important to reevaluate these studies, as for example right-populist parties are gaining a lot of power at the moment.

4. The Rise of Right-Populist Parties

Populism is seen as either a political program or movement claiming to support the common person, opposing elites or (perceived) establishments (Munro, n.d.). A clear definition of the term populism is difficult, as it is rather seen as a collective movement than a specific group, trying to gain power (Urbinati, 2019, 112, Anselmi, 2018, 5). Populism can be found in the left and right spectrum of politics, leading to democratic or authoritarian movements. Today, the term populism mostly refers to right populism, asserting a more authoritarian form of politics. In the center of this approach is a charismatic leader, who is seen to stand for the ordinary person. This leader becomes more important than the political party. Elections are seen as the confirmation of the authority of the leader. Sometimes this type of populism can be extreme in its expression of nationalism, racism or scapegoating of certain groups. This is seen as a tactic to distract the public from failures of leaders or from economic or social problems (Munro, n.d.). Therefore, personalization seems to be at heart for right-populist parties.

Populism is a global phenomenon today (De Vresse et al., 2018, 2, Urbinati, 2019, 114), where “the people” are seen to hold the most important position and parliaments or political parties are, at best, second-placed (Pelinka, 2013, 3). Scapegoating is a commonly used method directed at foreigners, who pose a perceived threat to the dominant culture. Political elites are blamed for allowing such diversity in culture caused by immigration, with the populists regarding themselves as the only group willing and capable of stopping this multiculturalism. Simple, clear answers are offered to these problems of multiculturalism, aiming to produce fear among society. Right-populist parties commonly blame certain groups like Muslims or Roma, but also the elites, including other political parties, the European Union, the United Nations or the media for the problems in their country (Pelinka, 2013, 8).

The reasons for the rise in right-populism are complex, however the negative consequences of neoliberal policies led by social-democratic parties at the beginning of the 21st century is seen as a crucial development, leading to the popularity of right-wing parties. All right-wing parties started with an emphasis on a conservative economic approach, to address the public's frustration with neoliberalism and increased mobility of jobs, leading to economic insecurity (Berman & Snegovaya, 2018, 9, Salmela & Von Scheve, 2017, 2). In addition to this, recent events like the EU financial crisis, labor migration and high numbers of immigrants and refugees have influenced the development towards a more conservative and right preference (Gerbaudo, 2017, Salmela & Von Scheve, 2017).

Changes in economy and society, like globalization or economic deregulation, can be seen as factors for social inequalities and a stronger division between certain social groups (Bröckling, 2016).

Gerbaudo (2017,1) argues that current political parties fail to address demands from the public sufficiently and this leads to protests against governments, which have not been this prevalent since the Great Depression.

Looking at current right-populist parties is crucial, as right-wing politicians have gained a lot of power all over the world. This trend can be seen in the United States (Oliver & Rahn, 2016, 192), in Europe („Europe and right-wing nationalism Europe“, 2019, Mudde, 2013, 2) and Asia (Chacko & Jayasuriya, 2018, 529). Scharenberg (2006, 81) describes right-populist parties today as a softer version of the more commonly known right extremism parties and through this, trying to gain votes from a broader spectrum of the population.

This recent trend towards populism raises concerns among scholars. It poses a threat to liberal democracy, given the links between right-populist groups in the United States or Europe and xenophobic, racist, anti-liberal or anti-cosmopolitan views. Furthermore, the populist movement questions fundamental principles of modern democracy, which include respecting minorities, transparency and consensus (Laclau, 2002, Moffitt, 2016 in Waisboard, 2018,1).

Mudde (1996, 268) discusses the example of Dutch and Flemish politics, in which the right-populist parties criticize the other established parties as being anti-‘own-people`, favoring immigrants over the Dutch or Flemish people. They accuse them of neglecting their respective countries’ native-born population and destroying traditional national identity.

Oliver & Rahn (2016) label 2016 as the year of populists, mostly because of the election of Donald Trump as the new president of the United States. Despite speculation about why populist movements are becoming so popular, like economic conditions or class stratification, there is also the problem of the ruling government not responding to desires of large sections of the population, which is called the “representation gap” (Gerbaudo, 2017, Kortmann, Stecker & Weiß, 2019).

Nationalism is at heart of populism and characterized by an urge to achieve a strict social unit and clarity, leading to a strong pressure on society. As such, a clear identity and a heteronormative organization are important regarding sexuality or gender. Non-conformity is often met with hate and a hostile attitude (Stögner, 2017, 158), the results of these views are antifeminism, sexism and homo as well as transphobia (Stögner, 2017, 138).

Populist parties claim to provide protection against enemies from the outside and inside, especially focusing on perceived threats posed by immigration, Islamic fundamentalism or the current political establishment (Skocpol & Williamson 2012).

As far as other topics are concerned, right-populists have shown a certain skepticism towards threats such as climate change (e.g. McCright, Dunlop & Marquart-Pyatt, 2016, Forchtner, Kroneder & Wetzel, 2018).

As far as the thematization of gender is concerned, right-winged parties all over Europe follow a similar approach to this topic, focusing on a male-dominated and traditionalist point of view. The state is regarded as an analogy to a traditional family and this might explain why female right-wing politicians tend to assume a submissive role within their respective parties, fulfilling the role of the traditional caregiver (Norocel, 2010, Petö, 2015, Pettersson, 2017).

The aspect of gender had not been explicitly researched until the late 1980s, but ever since women were portrayed as the more sensitive and caregiving gender, strongly associated with family (Bitzan in Köttig, Bitzan & Petö, 2017). Especially in right-wing parties, masculinity as well as fighting political correctness are critical components (Auer, 2002, 298).

When talking about feminism in the context of right-wing politics, it mostly refers to feminist arguments of right-wing politicians. These are then subordinated to the general far-right discourse of gender and embedded in the parties focus on race, nation and national community. At a first glance, this adaption might misleadingly resemble feminism (Goetz, 2016, 130).

Since the 1990s, a wave of success for right-populist parties has been observed in numerous European countries. Austria and Germany are current examples of this rise, with the FPÖ having joined a ruling coalition with the ÖVP from 2017 to 2019 and the recently founded AfD joining the German Bundestag since 2017, becoming Germany's biggest current opposition party. Both parties are coming from countries sharing a similar culture and language and are similar in their views concerning anti-enlightenment, emphasis on the nation, anti-EU or an aggressive approach toward asylum-seekers and immigration (Grigat, 2017,11, Bewarder, Mühlherr & Naumann, 2019, Berger, 2018).

For these right-populist parties, social media platforms like Facebook have fundamental importance (Schroeder, 2018, 8 f, Krämer, 2017,1304 f). This can be seen in Germany, when in 2019 roughly 85% of all shared political posts by users were from the right-wing AfD (Diehl et al., 2019). At the same time, the popularity of social-democratic parties is declining rapidly (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, 5, Loxbo et al., 2019), Germany or Austria are examples for this trend (Koller, 2019, Metzner, 2019). The large absences of these parties on social media platforms might be one out of many reasons for this decline.

Research gaps can be found in the relationship between populists and the media in the sense that most studies focus on political advertising (Matthes & Schmuck, 2017 in Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017, 1426), but rarely on the importance of social media (Prapotnik et al., 2019, 2).

Furthermore, comparative studies between different European countries on populist communication are lacking (Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017, 1426).

Right-winged parties have been particularly effective in using this new way of communication, especially during elections (Schroeder, 2018, 8 f, Krämer, 2017, 1304 f).

This is important, as at present there is a shift towards the political right in Europe and worldwide (Mudde, 2013, 2, Oliver & Rahn, 2016, 192, Chacko & Jayasuriya, 2018, 529).

The characteristics of successful populist parties and their way of communication will be exemplified by looking at the Austrian Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) and the German Alternative for Germany (AfD).

4.1. FPÖ in Austria

The FPÖ was originally founded in 1956, succeeding the Society of the Verband der Unabhängigen (Society of Independents), which had a history being linked to the German National Socialist Labor Party (NSDAP) and Schutzstaffel (SS), which were important during the time of national socialism in Germany (Grigat, 2017, 13). Originally, having a German-Austrian orientated party program, the party moved towards a more liberal approach in the 1960s. This led to a split within the party and the national-democratic Party (NDP) was founded, which was outlawed at the end of the 1980s, due to re-engagement in national socialist activities. With the more liberal ideology, the FPÖ rose to power and formed a coalition with the SPÖ in the mid 1980s (Demokratiezentrum Wien FPÖ, n.d.).

However, this liberal approach changed in 1986, when Jörg Haider became the head of the FPÖ. The rapid growth of right-extremism within the party led to the situation that the Documentation Achieve of the Austrian Resistance (DÖW) declared the FPÖ as a right-extremist group in 1993 (Bailer & Neugebauer, 1993).

In 2000, the European Union posed diplomatic sanctions against Austria, because of the FPÖ being part of the new government. Statements, like Jörg Haider talking about the possibility to punish citizens, who are opposing the governments ideas, had alarmed the other EU countries (Winkler-Hermaden, 2010). Haider resigned as head of the FPÖ in 2000 and founded the Alliance Future Austria (BZÖ) in 2005. The new head of the FPÖ, Heinz-Christian Strache, moved the party back into the far-right political spectrum.

The FPÖ under Strache rose to power and this success could be seen by the fact that in 2016 Austrian Presidential Election, when the FPÖ candidate Norbert Hofer got 46,21% of the votes in the presidential election. This was the best outcome of an election for a right-wing party since 1945 (Grigat, 2017, 9). After this, the FPÖ became part of the government of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz from 2017 until 2019.

Non-conformity is rejected by the FPÖ and this can be seen by the fact that the party oppose homosexual relationships (FPÖ, 2011, 7). The women's quota is rejected on the basis that it discourages recruitment purely based on merit. Gender mainstreaming is also discouraged, as is the discipline gender-studies, which has been labelled by the party as “brainwashing” (FPÖ-Bildungsinstitut, 2013, 134 ff). In the current parliament, there are five female politicians from the FPÖ (Zögernitz, 2020,2) and there is no women’s quota in the FPÖ, which exists in other parties like the SPÖ or ÖVP (Bundeskanzleramt, 2019, 17 f).

As far as the content of the party is concerned, efforts have been made to distance the party from anti-semitism, however there is still a heavy focus on nationalism as well as xenophobia and anti-feminism (Stögner, 2017, 137). This can be exemplified by several FPÖ politicians who have been associated with discriminatory statements, like Jörg Haider, Heinz-Christian Strache and Herbert Kickl (Reisigl, 2020, 3). For example, in 2019, Herbert Kickl talked about a triple AAA judgment, referring to “Aggressive Afghan Asylum-seeker” and was sued for sedition (APA OTS, 2019).

2017 marked the biggest victory so far for the FPÖ, as it shared power in a ruling coalition with the ÖVP led by Chancellor Sebastian Kurz. This coalition was abruptly ended in May 2019, after the release of the so-called Ibiza video, in which the head of the FPÖ and Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache was filmed talking about bribery and enabling foreign political interference in Austria (Oltermann, 2019).

Populist parties do not trust media outlets (Pelinka, 2013, 8) and therefore, they try to produce a self-contained media world, which does not accept dissonances (Maan & Schmid, 2017).

This can be exemplified with the FPÖ expressing their goal to limit the power of the Austrian press and the Austrian Broadcasting Company (ORF). The official justification was that these sources were seen to report in a way which was one-sided and lacked objectivity (Bewarder, et al. 2019). The party's view on media is similar to the view of the AfD in Germany. Both parties are trying to produce their own media outlet, create distrust for their respective public broadcasters and the mainstream press in general. In this sense, the FPÖ is seen as the archetype for the AfD, as FPÖ-TV is very popular and has a lot of regular viewers on Facebook and YouTube (Fiedler, 2018).

The AfD is a sister party for the FPÖ, giving them a strong ally in a fellow German speaking country (Grigat, 2017, 10). How serious the parties view their relationship was seen in 2016, after a conference attended by the AfD and FPÖ, the parties discussed the formation of a united blue-alliance, starting with cooperation’s between the Bavarian AfD with the Austrian FPÖ (“FPÖ und deutsche AfD beschließen Zusammenarbeit”, 2016).

4.2. AfD in Germany

Founded in 2013, the AfD swiftly gained significant popularity and became part of Germany's Bundestag in 2017. Originally started as an anti-Euro party, the AfD quickly changed their agenda in demanding stricter anti-immigration laws, showing obvious hostility towards Islam and was breaking Nazi-taboos. Its popularity rose when the Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel allowed millions of refugees to enter the country in 2015. Currently, the AfD is a member of every state parliament in Germany. Their popularity reached its zenith in October 2019, when the AfD received more votes than Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Party (CDU) in the Thüringen state election ("European right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide, 2019", "Landtagswahlen 2019 Thüringen", 2019).

As the AfD is a relatively young party, it needs guidance by looking at the FPÖ in the way they handle the media and the public. Perhaps one of the most important goals is how the AfD, just like the FPÖ, can reach voters, which are not considered right-extremist and broadening their popularity among a bigger portion of the population (Grigat, 2017, 10).

When looking at the communication style of the AfD, social media is a crucial outlet. This can be supported by the fact that in 2019, 85% of all shared Facebook posts from political parties in Germany were related to the AfD (Diehl et al., 2019). Furthermore, the AfD has the highest popularity on Facebook, with over 500,000 Likes on the official homepage of the party. Other parties like the Green Party (199,000 Likes), the Social-Democratic Party (191,000 Likes) and the Christian-Democratic Union of Germany (190,000 Likes) are far behind in this context. This is consistent with literature closely linking predominantly right-wing politicians to social media channels like Facebook to communicate with their voters (Schroeder, 2018, 8 f, Krämer, 2017, 1304 f).

The AfD's challenge to democracy can be exemplified by the fact that Björn Höcke, one of the founders of the right-extremist and national-folkish wing of the party (Weiland & Dambeck, 2019), was labelled "fascist" by the administrative court of Meiningen. A demonstration against the AfD had called Höcke a fascist on the demonstration's flyer and was sued for this by the German city of Eisenach, but the court ruled against them („Björn Höcke darf als `Faschist` bezeichnet werden", 2019).

When it comes to the party's content, antisemitism is a sensible topic, as the AfD has a mixed approach to this: On the one hand they advocate a pro-Israel stand and are publicly condemning anti-semitism (Konietzny, 2020), but on the other hand there are AfD politicians who show antisemitism tendencies. In this context the example of Björn Höcke, talking about the Holocaust memorial in Berlin describing the monument as a disgrace to Germany, can be mentioned ("Was Höcke mit der Denkmal der Schande Rede bezweckt", 2017). Furthermore, most of the AfD voters want to put the legacy of national socialism in association with Germany behind them and more AfD voters (15%) believe that

the Holocaust was only propaganda of the Allies than voters from other political parties (2%) (Konietzny, 2020).

Lang (2017) argues that the AfD, which was originally founded as the “Anti-Euro Party”, had developed itself into a “Anti-Gender Party” in a very short period of time (Lang, 2017 63). The founding of the AfD in Spring 2013 coincided with the public critiquing of feminism and gender debates in Germany (Lang, 2015).

As far as feminism is concerned, the AfD, like the FPÖ, advocates for the traditional “German” family and against gender-ideology and opposes recent attempts for anti-discrimination and equality strategies (Lang, 2017). Lang (2017) argues that the political party follows a line of anti-feminism in their ideology. Furthermore, the term “family” is defined in a conservative sense, consisting of a partnership between a man and a woman (AfD, 2016, 80). Everything, which is not in accordance to this family, including single-parents or patchwork families, is not mentioned in the party’s program and homosexual parenthood is openly not supported (Lang, 2017 63).

5. The Fall of Social-Democratic Parties

The concept of social democracy is very broad in its definition and forms, loosely it can be defined as a political philosophy with the intention to link market capitalism with social responsibility. Furthermore, it revolves around ideas about fairness and equality and a moral approach on economy (Keating & McCrone, 2015, 2). Surprisingly, there is not a lot of research being done on why the social-democratic parties have lost so many votes during the past decade (Loxbo, 2019), but the decline in manufacturing, leading to a reduced working class and unions and reduced the potential social-democratic voters. At the same time, new topics emerged focusing on environmentalism, self-expression or gender equality, typically prominent among left voters. However, there is a distinction between “new” left voters and “old” left voters, who focus more on national identities or favor growth over environmental issues. The decline in popularity might be the result of a lost common identity in what the social democrats stand for these days and being overtaken by other left parties (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, 14f). This can be exemplified with the Green Party, which can be seen as the most famous new left party in Europe, having recently succeeded the SPD in opinion polls in 2019 in Germany (Bittner, 2019).

Economic reasons for the decline should be mentioned as well. Neoliberalism started to gain more popularity among social-democratic parties in the 1970’s and it was largely accepted that the government would have a limited role in shaping economic and social developments (Mudge, 2018). The aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008 led to more people becoming frustrated with neoliberalism and the political elites, turning to other more conservative ideologies, being offered by right-wing parties (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, 9).

Social-democratic parties have been struggling significantly over the past decades in Europe against this tide of populism, as is reflected in France, the Netherlands, Germany or Poland. Since 2019 there is no longer a social-democratic party in the Polish parliament (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, 5). All the mentioned countries' social-democratic parties have lost seats in the parliaments since 2017 and 2018. The biggest decline could be seen in France, with a loss of 286 seats and Italy with a loss of 180 seats for the social democratic parties (Downes & Chan, 2018). The Austrian SPÖ and German SPD, once very strong and established parties, are now facing serious problems in their decline in popularity (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, Loxbo, 2019). German SPD lost 40 seats in 2017, Austrian SPÖ did not lose or gain any seats in 2017 (Downes & Chan, 2018).

Liberal or social-democratic parties can be seen as the opposite of right-populist parties and therefore, it is interesting to compare the communication styles of these parties with each other, which is

especially important during the electoral campaigns (DeVries & De Landtsheer, 2011, 66, Bennett, 2012, 22).

5.1. SPÖ in Austria

The SPÖ dates back to 1889 and fought from the beginning for the rights of women, demanding equal voting rights and access to education (Sandner, 2018, 14, Sauer, 2007). In the years and decades to follow, the SPÖ gained more power and was the only party in power in Austria under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky from 1970 until 1984. His government modernized Austria in terms of feminist politics, law and education (Sandner, 2018, 57).

The importance of feminist politics for the SPÖ can be seen to this day by the fact that in parliament, there is a woman's quota in the SPÖ's seats, as well as by the fact that the female leadership of the party (Zögernitz, 2020, 2).

In the years to come, the SPÖ, after briefly forming a coalition with the FPÖ, shared its power with the ÖVP from 1987 until 2000 ("Regierungen seit 1945", n.d.), at times receiving a combined vote of over 90%, leaving the other parties in a state of political insignificance (Plasser & Ulram, 2000,4).

Despite the decline of social democracy in most parts of Europe, the SPÖ could maintain the chancellorship until 2017. When unethical methods of the team of then-Chancellor Christian Kern before the national councils' election became public ("Die Silberstein-Affäre. Alle Entwicklungen im Überblick", 2017), Kern resigned as head of the SPÖ in 2018.

The new party leader Pamela Rendi-Wagner has since tried to establish a new image of the SPÖ. One big step toward this new image involved the use of social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram as a new means of communication (Mittelstaedt & Stefan, 2019). How professionalized this tactic is, can be seen by the fact that the SPÖ hired the company "Fehr Advice" for their social media activities. In line with the importance of political psychology and personality, "Fehr Advice" studies the behavior of people and their motivation in order to maximize their influence via Facebook (Mittelstaedt & Stefan, 2019).

When it comes to the ideology of the SPÖ, they try to combine old and new left views, advocating affordable living costs and fair working conditions for everyone, but also action against climate change and fighting for women's rights (SPÖ, 2020). This seems important for current social-democratic parties to adapt to the satisfaction of "new" left voters (Berman & Snegovaya, 2019, 14f)

5.2. SPD in Germany

Like the SPÖ, the SPD has a long history, dating back to 1875, when the Socialist Labor Party was founded. The party is the oldest political party of Germany, but from the beginning the ideology of the party led to internal division within the party (Decker, 2018).

The SPD was part of the government from 1969 until 1982, in coalition with the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and returned to power from 1998-2005 and until 2009 in a coalition with the CDU/CSU under Angela Merkel (Unger, J., & Hurtado, A., 2013, 236).

Today the party is very diverse in its organization and its political program. It is decentralized and fragmented, the local and regional parties are highly autonomous. This dilemma is characterized as the lack of a genuine social-democratic project. A mix of traditionalist, modernist, materialist and post-materialist can be found in the party (Lösche, 2020). The argument of decentralization can be strengthened when looking at the German states. In Thüringen or Sachsen the SPD could only reach 8% in 2019, whereas in Bremen they reached 24,9% in the same year („Stimmenanteile der SPD bei den jeweils letzten Landtagswahlen in den Bundesländern bis Oktober 2019“, 2019).

The party stands for more focus on the family, fighting climate change or affordable living (SPD, 2020) as well as feminist politics (Jusos, 2020). Like the SPÖ in Austria, they focus on “old” and “new” left topics in order to not lose voters.

For all parties, social media is seen as a powerful tool and they all have specialist staff working for them exclusively on digital media (Lehmann, 2017).

Like the SPÖ, the SPD has recently started to invest more in digital campaigns. In the 2019 state election in Saxony, the SPD spent the most money on Facebook advertisements (around 35,000 euros), followed by the FDP (around 33,000 euros) and the Green Party (around 24,000 euros). Surprisingly the AfD only invested 300 euros. This is due to the fact that the AfD already has a strong community which shares their posts (Cygan, 2019, Diehl et al., 2019).

6. Research Question and Hypotheses

Based on the already discussed theory and literature, the following research question was established:

“Which Big Five personality traits are apparent in politicians belonging to social-democratic and right-populist party members of the FPÖ, AfD, SPÖ and SPD on Facebook?”

The following five hypotheses on the Big Five traits and political ideology are based on Gerber et al. (2011) and Carney et al. (2008), who have summarized studies from the last decades investigating this link. Although these studies were mostly conducted on voters and not on political elites, they can still be deemed relevant as the personality traits of voters are often seen to reflect the personality traits of politicians who they vote for (Vecchione et al., 2011, Caprara et al., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014). This is further strengthened by the similarity-linking approach, which gained a lot of popularity recently, stating that the more similarity is perceived to a person, the more this person is liked (Caprara et al., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014).

H1: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait openness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Background:

Gerber et al., (2011, 269) have summarized a large body of evidence positively linking liberal, mainstream or social-democratic parties with the Big Five personality trait openness (e.g. Alford & Hibbing 2007, Gerber et al. 2010, Gosling et al. 2003, Jost et al. 2003, 2007, McCrae 1996, Mondak 2010, Mondak & Halperin, 2008, Riemann et al. 1993, Van Hiel et al. 2000, Van Hiel & Mervielde 2004). Other studies, summarised by Carney et al. (2008) (e.g. Block & Block, 2006, McCrae, 1996, Levin & Schalmo, 1974) have also supported this claim. At the same time a negative correlation between openness and conservative or right-wing parties was found as well (e.g. Nai & Martinez i Coma, 2019, Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003, Kruglanski, 2005, Van Hiel, Pandelare & Duriez, 2004, Altemeyer, 1998).

H2: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait extraversion compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Background:

Carney et al. (2008) linked a large body of studies between liberal, mainstream or social-democratic parties with expression of extraversion (e.g. Macoby, 1968, Bem, 1970, Tomkins, 1963, Block & Block, 2006, Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003) and other studies linking right-wing or conservative parties to a low expression of extraversion (e.g. Fromm, 1947, Tomkins, 1963, Block & Block, 2006).

H3: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait agreeableness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Background:

Carney et al. (2008) linked a large body of studies between right-wing or conservative parties and a lower level of agreeableness (e.g. Nai & Martinez i Coma, 2019, Bakker, Rooduijn & Schumacher, 2015, Altemeyer, 1998, Van Hiel, Pandelaere & Duriez, 2004, Wilson, 1973, Tomkins, 1963). At the same time liberal, mainstream or social-democratic parties are seen to have a lower level of this Big Five personality trait (e.g. Schoen & Schumann, 2007).

H4: FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait conscientiousness compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

Background:

Carney et al. (2008) and Gerber et al. (2011) could also link a big body of evidence between right-wing parties and the Big Five personality trait conscientiousness (e.g. Alford & Hibbing 2007, Carney et al. 2008, Gerber et al. 2010, Gosling et al. 2003, Jost et al. 2003, 2007, McCrae 1996, Mondak 2010, Mondak & Halperin 2008, Riemann et al. 1993, Van Hiel et al. 2000, Van Hiel & Mervielde 2004, Jaensch 1938, Adorno et al., 1950, Fromm, 1947, Altemeyer, 1998, Constantini & Craik, 1980, Caprara, Barbaranelli & Zimbardo, 1999, Rentfrow, Jost, Gosling & Potter, 2009). Liberal, mainstream or social-democratic parties were linked in other studies with lower levels of conscientiousness (e.g. Schoen &

Schumann, 2007, Jaensch, 1938, Maccoby, 1968, Bem, 1970, St. Angelo & Dyson, 1968, Block & Block, 2006).

H5: FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait neuroticism/
emotional instability compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

Carney et al. (2008) and Gerber et al. (2011) could positively link the Big Five personality trait neuroticism with right-wing and conservative parties (e.g. Nai & Martinze i Coma, 2019, Fatke, 2019, Schoen & Schumann, 2007, Block & Block, 2006, Adorno et al. 1950, Wilson, 1973, Altemeyer 1998, Jost et al., 2003, Block & Block, 2006, Fromm, 1947, Kline & Cooper, 1984, Wilson, 1973).

7. Method

The suitable method for this study is the quantitative approach, as the analysis follows an already existing framework to develop the codebook: The Big Five framework with the five categories extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism/ emotional instability and openness (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Automated content analysis is seen as the suitable methodology, as the Facebook posts of politicians will be investigated. Videos, graphics etc. will not be part of this analysis, as this would go beyond the scope of the current thesis and would necessitate an analysis of the cut or the script (Matjan, 2002, 183). The postings on Facebook were not directly downloaded, but screenshotted. These screenshots will not be available in the master thesis, in order to follow copyright and data protection. In terms of the images being posted, this study will focus on the text being written in a post. Furthermore, the text in images being posted will be part of the analysis as well, in order to include all the text of a post. Looking at the images themselves would also be an important analysis, but this would go beyond the scope of this master thesis.

Content analysis is seen as the most important aspect in order to measure personality traits and is predominantly used to assess voters or politician's personality (Alford & Hibbing, 2007, Carney et al., 2008, Van Hiel et al., 2000, Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2004). McCrae & John (1992, 181 ff) see two historical paths to how personality within the Big Five model can be assessed. Firstly, the lexical approach and secondly, personality questionnaires. For Hogan (1990), observer ratings of people's personality, present the public self as well as the social reputation. The more commonly used self-reports, are more focused on inner drives and dispositions.

Text analysis dates back a long time ago, for example Sigmund Freud talked about the possibility to uncover hidden intentions through words in 1901 (Pennebaker, 2010, 25). Over the next decades this research focus was intensified (Gottschalk & Gleser, 1969, House et al., 1966).

Past research has shown that predicting Big Five personality traits from written information on social media is a promising new research aspect (e.g. Goldbeck, Robles & Turner, 2011, Yarkoni, 2010, Kircaburun et al., 2020). In particular, this is true for dictionary-based features such as the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count, short LIWC (Argamon et al., 2005, Mairesse & Walker, 2006, Sumner et al., 2012).

LIWC is seen as the most popular language analysis program in order to research how word use and psychological traits are related (Pennebaker & King, 1999, Yarkoni, 2010, 4, Pennebaker & Graybeal, 2001, Park et al., 2015).

As the text of the Facebook posts is written in German, the 2015 German version of the LIWC was used with its 50 categories. Categories were, for example, divided into language composition (articles, past tense, first person singular or prepositions) or psychological processes (positive emotions, negative emotions or cognition).

Furthermore, emotional states, thought processes as well as intentions and motivations are amongst others investigated. The LIWC program features the processing component and the dictionaries. The dictionaries are seen as the heart of the program, as the words being analyzed define a certain LIWC category (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010, 27). They consist of over 2,200 words as well as word stems. Words are related to certain categories and the percentage of total word use is presented (Pennebaker & King, 1999, 1298). A detailed version of the 50 categories used in this study will be found in the appendix.

In the past, language-based assessments have been associated with several advantages compared to the standard questionnaires. They are relatively fast, certain biases in self-report questionnaires can be avoided, they can be easily shared among researchers and as a computer code (Park et al., 2014, 10), are intensively used in various languages and disciplines. Meier et al. (2018, 16) even argued that the LIWC variables are telling us much more than psychological self-report measures and extend what we already know about social interaction and certain biomarkers.

Goldbeck, Robles & Turner, (2011, 260) concluded through their research that public information being shared on Facebook can predict the Big Five personality traits of its users.

The validity and reliability of word use is difficult though, as words are mostly not normally distributed and sometimes do not fit into solely one category of meaning (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010 28).

Nevertheless, some studies have shown promising results, concerning reliability and validity of automated content analysis. Park et al. (2014) could prove in their study, that there were almost identical results of the Big Five personality traits from self-describing questionnaires and language-based assessments from social media platforms. The LIWC software was also seen as valid by Pennebaker and Francis (1996). They compared experts rating of essays of students with the rating of the LIWC's analysis of those essays, with almost identical results. This was further strengthened by a similar study by Pennebaker and King (1999), suggesting a strong validity and reliability of personality investigated by computerized text analysis programs when compared to self-reports.

The intercoder (between-coder) reliability could not be applied in this study, as there was only one coder, leading automatically to a high percentage of matches in the data. Normally this sort of reliability is used when there are more coders assessing the same work, ideally coding very similarly to each other (Moore et al., 2019, 432ff).

The intracoder reliability (within-coder) measures, referring to how well the coder's data from text being coded at the beginning matches with the same text being coded later again, is the second type of reliability necessary in content analysis (Moore et al., 2019, 432ff). This was conducted with a small part of the data of this study. The first Big Five personality trait openness was coded again, and the accordance of the coding was identical.

LIWC was used in this study, as it can be regarded as a leading approach in analyzing psychology within language. Different types of dictionaries have been added overtime to the original English version. The comparison between English and German was nearly perfect (Ostendorf, 1990), which is why the German version was seen as reliable for future research. For most categories, the similarity between the English and German LIWC version was over 90% (Wolf et al., 2008, 90ff). Out of these promising results, the German dictionary version of LIWC is seen as a suitable approach to use as the quantitative software for this research.

7.1. Material Selection

The material for this analysis was directly accessed from the official personal Facebook accounts of the selected politicians. Facebook was used for this analysis, as with 2.45 billion active users worldwide it is the most used social media platform (Clement, 2019) and therefore, it can be assumed that it plays an important role for political parties as well.

Especially, when taking the growing popularity of right populism in Europe into consideration („Europe and right-wing nationalism“, 2019), these Facebook accounts will be from right-populist politicians from Austria and Germany, being compared and contrasted to the Facebook accounts of social-democratic parties of Austria and Germany.

In this respect, right-populist parties from Austria and Germany are represented by the FPÖ and AfD, which are very similar in their ideology concerning anti-immigration, Euroscepticism and nationalism (Grigat, 2017, 11, Bewarder et al., 2019, Berger, 2018). Furthermore, both parties come from are German-speaking countries, which makes it easier to compare the parties to each other.

Social-Democratic Parties from Austria and Germany are represented by the SPÖ and SPD.

The Facebook communication of 16 politicians from four parties in two countries was analyzed. The time of the postings was set during the National Council Election in Austria in September 2019 and the Thüringen state election in October 2019. These two elections were chosen because they were closest in the time to each other, which makes it easier to compare the topics the parties mentioned in their posts between the two countries. In general, elections were chosen because it is known that during this time strategic political communication is especially frequent and important (Lilleker & Jackson, 2011, 12, Enli & Skogerbo, 2013, 759).

In Austria the last National Council Election was on the 29 September 2019. For the FPÖ the period of time for the analysis was from 7th of September until 29th of September 2019. The 7th of September 2019 was chosen as the starting date, because this day marked the official start of campaigning for the FPÖ, with their appearance in Pasching, Austria (Rohrhofer, 2019). The time frame was then expanded

to 10 suitable posts before and 10 suitable posts after the election period. The reason for this was that during the election period, some politicians were not posting enough for a sufficient analysis, this was especially true for regional politicians.

In Germany, the Thüringen state election was analyzed, in which the AfD gained votes (12,5%), whereas the SPD lost votes (4,2%) compared to previous election results in this state (Schörs, 2019). This election was selected as it almost took place at the same time as the election in Austria. The period of time for the analysis was the 20th of September 2019 (official start of the election campaign of the AfD) until the 27th of October 2019, the day of the election. As with their Austrian counterparts, 10 posts from the German politicians from before and then 10 posts after the election period were included.

When looking at the 16 politicians which were analyzed in this study, the following procedure was conducted:

1. Four politicians per party were chosen, with two being female and two being male. Furthermore, the politicians should be from diverse positions, ranging from the regional levels, like the heads of Austrian or German state parties, to superregional, like head of the party or part of the national or EU parliament. The number of Likes on Facebook was a first indicator into how professional and popular the sites were and led to the assumption that more Likes led to more posts and therefore more likely to be fruitful for this analysis.

2. A qualitative pre-analysis of the Facebook accounts was conducted in order to see if there were enough posts during the election period, which could be analyzed and in addition to this, if these posts appeared to be useful for the analysis (e.g. mostly shared content of other politicians could not be used, as well as solely shares of videos, articles without text by the politician attached). The minimum number for the posts was 20 in the election period plus 10 before and 10 after the election period. It was ensured that there were enough posts for each candidate to compare with the others. In Austria this was from the 7th of September until the 29th of September 2019 for the FPÖ (Rohrhofer, 2019) and from the 30th of August until the 29th of September 2019 for the SPÖ ("Fulminanter SPÖ-Wahlauftakt: Menschlichkeit siegt", 2019). In Germany the time frame for the analysis was from the 18th of September until the 27th of October 2019 for the AfD (Schörs, 2019), and from the 11th of September until the 27th of October 2019 for the SPD (Mauroner, 2019).

3. Posts having met all of the criteria below were then further analyzed into the content being posted. Politicians were then excluded, for example because they mostly shared other people's opinions or newspaper articles. This was the case for Ursula Stenzel (FPÖ). She was a relatively inactive user and only made 18 posts in 2019, mainly consisting of sharing videos from "FPÖ-TV" and newspaper articles. Furthermore, the content was also analyzed in terms of factors like the length of the posts or if the posts were just reposted. In addition to this, politicians who shared mostly private content with few political messages, were denied as well, as it seemed to be contrasted too heavily with other posts of politicians, representing their party.

4. When selecting the actual 40 posts, as already mentioned, 10 posts before and 10 posts after the election period, the ones closest to the election period and with a suitable content, e.g. not too short and not too personal, this method was used. For the 20 posts during the election, the search option of Facebook was used for the different pages of the parties, in order to randomize the selection. Within the search setting, "2019" was chosen as well as a range of words in the search option.

Search words for FPÖ and SPÖ: Österreich, Wahl, FPÖ, SPÖ, ÖVP, die Grünen, Gemeinschaft, wichtig, Wien, Sozialdemokratie, rechts, links, Menschen (Austria, election, FPÖ, SPÖ, ÖVP, the Green Party, community, and, no, important, Vienna, social democracy, right, left, people).

Search words for AfD and SPD : Deutschland, Wahl, AfD, SPD, CDU, die Grünen, Gemeinschaft, wichtig, Berlin, Sozialdemokratie, rechts, links, Menschen (Germany, election, AfD, SPD, CDU, the Green Party, community, and, no, important, Berlin, social democracy, right, left, people)

5. Lastly, the images being attached to the post were included in the sense that whenever there was text in a post with an image, this was recorded as well. As there was no possibility to download Facebook posts, they were copy and pasted and then screenshotted, before being collected in a word document. Segments of the posts like Emojis or Likes were not included.

With these steps and the balance of the sample (gender and position in party) in mind, the following politicians were selected:

Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (FPÖ)

- o Herbert Kickl (Deputy of the FPÖ, with 92,000 Facebook subscribers, 73 posts during election period).
- o Marlene Svazek (Head of FPÖ Salzburg, with 45,000 Facebook subscribers, 46 posts during election period).
- o Udo Landbauer (Head of FPÖ Lower Austria, with 36,000 Facebook subscribers, 32 posts during election period).
- o Petra Steger (Member of Austrian National Council, with 30,000 Facebook subscribers, 67 posts during election period).

Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich (SPÖ)

- o Pamela Rendi-Wagner (Head of the SPÖ, with 106,000 Facebook subscribers, 160 posts during election period).
- o Michael Ludwig (Mayor of Vienna, with 33,450 Facebook subscribers, 70 posts during election period).
- o Peter Kaiser (Head of SPÖ Carinthia, with 23,000 Facebook subscribers, 40 posts during election period).
- o Ulrike Königsberg-Ludwig (Member of State Council Lower Austria, with 4,500 Facebook subscribers, 53 posts during election period).

Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)

- o Alice Weidel (Head of the AfD, with 265,000 Facebook subscribers, 71 posts during election period).

o Björn Höcke (Head of AfD Thüringen, with 73,000 Facebook subscribers, 118 posts during election period).

o Stefan Möller (State Representative of AfD Thüringen and member of the parliament in Thüringen, with 8,000 Facebook subscribers, 61 posts during election period).

o Katrin Ebner-Steiner (Head of AfD parliament in Bavaria, with 23,000 Facebook subscribers, 51 posts during election period).

Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (SPD)

o Lars Klingbeil (General Secretary of the SPD, 14,000 Facebook subscribers, 61 posts during election period).

o Elisabeth Kaiser (Member of state parliament of Thüringen, 2,5000 Facebook subscribers, 30 posts during election period).

o Wolfgang Tiefensee (Member of state parliament of Thüringen, 7,000 Facebook subscribers, 64 posts during election period).

o Christine Lambrecht (Minister for judiciary and consumer protection, 3,000 Facebook subscribers, 56 posts during election period).

After the 640 posts were recorded, the next step involved preparing the text for the LIWC software. For this purpose, all irrelevant parts of the text (e.g. date of the post, website links, quotes from other people, Emojis, ...) were removed. They were then analyzed by the Internal German Dictionary 2015 version of the LIWC program.

After this first part of the method and focusing on the Big Five personality traits, the correlation table from Yarkoni (2010) was used to draw a link between the LIWC categories and the Big Five Framework. Yarkoni was selected, as he is, to the best of the author's knowledge the only scholar who has specifically linked LIWC categories and personality to this extend. He measured personality in 100,000 words of social media content of bloggers. The fact that he comes from a psychology background further helps to connect the language and computer science-based program LIWC with social science. In political science-related research, Yarkoni's correlation results and approach have been used a lot,

mostly focusing on voters, in experiments (e.g. Evrim & Awwal, 2015) or social media content (e.g. Alizadeh et al., 2017, Guerrero, Sarchi & Tapia, 2019).

The LIWC program calculation on how much percentage of each category could be found in the analyzed text is seen in Table 1.

Filename	Segment	WC	Analytic	Clout	Authentic	Tone	WPS	Sixtr	Dic	function	pronoun	ppron	i	we	you	shehe	they	lpron	article	prep	auxverb	adverb
LIWC SPÖ SPD.docx	1	21876	93,17	48,56	1,00	26,76	14,57	32,68	12,51	4,24	0,80	0,80	0,79	0,00	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,44	2,18	1,30	0,30
LIWC FPÖ AfD.docx	1	32570	92,74	48,56	1,00	20,47	15,95	33,00	12,93	4,08	0,76	0,76	0,73	0,01	0,02	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,49	1,81	1,34	0,32

©LIWC program

Table 1: Output LIWC program

The correlation table of Yarkoni (2010) was then used to correlate the higher percentage of a category. For example, the category “first person sing.” is positively correlated with neuroticism meaning that one political ideology with the higher percentage in this category scores higher on the Big Five trait neuroticism than the other. This would be coded with 2= more neurotic and the other political ideology with 1= less neurotic. After the analysis of all available categories of one specific trait, this was continued for all the other traits.

7.2. Operationalization of the Hypotheses

H1: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait openness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

	Independent Variable: Political Parties	Dependent Variable: Openness
Manifestation	Social-Democrats Right-Populists	More open Less open

Operationalism

Social-Democrats:	Right-Populists:	Openness:
SPÖ	FPÖ	More open
SPD	AfD	Less open

H2: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait extraversion compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

	Independent Variable: Political Parties	Dependent Variable: Extraversion
Manifestation	Social-Democrats Right-Populists	More extravert Less extravert

Operationalism

Social-Democrats:	Right-Populists:	Extraversion:
SPÖ	FPÖ	More extravert
SPD	AfD	Less extravert

H3: SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait agreeableness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

	Independent Variable: Political Parties	Dependent Variable: Agreeableness
Manifestation	Social-Democrats Right-Populists	More agreeable Less agreeable

Operationalism

Social-Democrats:	Right-Populists:	Agreeableness:
SPÖ	FPÖ	More agreeable
SPD	AfD	Less agreeable

H4: FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait conscientiousness compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

	Independent Variable: Political Parties	Dependent Variable: Conscientiousness
Manifestation	Social-Democrats Right-Populists	More conscientious Less conscientious

Social-Democrats:	Right-Populists:	Conscientiousness:
SPÖ	FPÖ	More conscientious
SPD	AfD	Less conscientious

H5: FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait neuroticism/emotional instability compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

	Independent Variable: Political parties	Dependent Variable: Neuroticism/ Emotional Instability
Manifestation	Social-Democrats Right-Populists	More neuroticism Less neuroticism

Social-Democrats:	Right-Populists:	Neuroticism:
SPÖ	FPÖ	More neurotic
SPD	AfD	Less neurotic

8. Results

The independent t-test was used to analyze the data, as there were two independent groups with the populist-parties FPÖ + AfD and the social-democratic parties SPÖ + SPD. The goal was to compare the mean result of both groups to see if there is a significant difference between them when linking their language style with the Big Five personality traits.

The parametric assumption of homogeneity of variance for a t-test for independent samples was met, as the Levene's test was not statistically significant ($p=1.000$).

The second assumption of normal distribution was violated, as the Shapiro-Wilk Test showed a significant result ($p= 0.000$). Nevertheless, the independent t-test was conducted, as this test is often seen to be robust against the violation of normal distribution (Posten, 1984, Rasch & Guiard, 2004, Stonehouse & Forrester, 1998), and in addition to this, some researchers argue that normal distribution does not play an important role if the sample size is over 30 (Boneau, 1960, 60, Pallant, 2007, Sawilowsky & Blair, 1992), which is true of the data used in this study.

Hypothesis 1:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait openness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

27 categories were analyzed based on the correlation table of Yarkoni (2010).

The descriptive data showed that the mean range on the factor openness for the FPÖ + AfD was lower ($M=1.44$, $SD=0.51$) than for the SPÖ + SPD ($M=1.55$, $SD= 0.51$). This difference was not statistically significant with $t(52) = -0.80$, $p= .424$. Therefore, hypothesis 1 could not be confirmed.

Hypothesis 2:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait extraversion compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

20 categories were analyzed based on the correlation table of Yarkoni (2010). The descriptive data showed that the mean range on the factor extraversion for the FPÖ + AfD was lower ($M=1.40$, $SD= 0.50$) than for the SPÖ+SPD ($M=1.60$, $SD=0.50$). This difference was not statistically significant with $t(38) = -1.26$, $p=.216$. Therefore, hypothesis 2 could not be confirmed.

Hypothesis 3:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait agreeableness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

24 categories were analyzed based on the correlation table of Yarkoni (2010).

The descriptive data showed that the mean range on the factor agreeableness was slightly higher for the SPÖ+SPD ($M=1.54$, $SD= 0.51$) than for the FPÖ + AfD ($M= 1.46$, $SD= 0.51$). This difference was not statistically significant with $t(46) = -0.57$, $p= 0.573$. Therefore, hypothesis 3 could not be confirmed.

Hypothesis 4:

FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait conscientiousness compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

16 categories were analyzed based on the correlation table of Yarkoni (2010).

The descriptive data showed that the mean range on the factor conscientiousness was higher for the SPÖ + SPD ($M= 1.94$, $SD= 0.06$) than for the FPÖ + AfD ($M= 1.06$, $SD= 0.06$). This difference was highly statistically significant, with $t(30) = -9.89$, $p=0.000$. Therefore, hypothesis 4 could be confirmed.

Hypothesis 5:

FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait neuroticism/ emotional instability compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

17 categories were analyzed based on the correlation table of Yarkoni (2010).

The descriptive data showed that the mean range on the factor neuroticism was higher for the FPÖ+AfD ($M=1.82$, $SD= 0.39$) than for the SPÖ+SPD ($M=1.18$, $SD= 0.39$). This difference was highly statistically significant with $t(32) = 4.80$, $p=0.000$. Therefore, hypothesis 5 could be confirmed.

9. Discussion

This study has shown that it is possible to investigate personality traits from a distanced form of language, based on Facebook posts. Yarkoni (2010) has developed a correlation table which seems to be promising for future research. A total number of 640 posts, forty per politician, were analyzed.

Political Party	Facebook Posts during Election Period
SPÖ	323
AfD	301
FPÖ	218
SPD	190

Table 2: Facebook posts of political parties during election period

As this study investigated regional as well as superregional politicians, the activity on Facebook varied considerably within a party. For example, the head of the SPÖ, Pamela Rendi-Wagner, had posted 160 times during the election period in 2019, whereas Ulrike Königsberg-Ludwig, also from the SPÖ, only posted 53 times during the same period. The fact that right-populist parties use Facebook more than social-democratic parties was partly supported, as the combined length of the posts of AfD and FPÖ was with 32,570 words over 10,000 words longer than the posts of SPD and SPÖ with 21,877 words during the election time.

Surprisingly, the social-democratic parties posted more, on average 264,5 times, than the right-populist parties, on average 259,5 times, during the election period. This can be partly explained by the high number posts from the SPÖ, with 323, compared to 211 from the SPD.

Accordingly, it was surprisingly not a right-populist party which posted the most, but rather the head of the SPÖ Pamela Rendi-Wagner, with 160 posts, followed by AfD Thüringen head Björn Höcke with 118 posts. Rendi-Wagner posted almost half of all the combined SPÖ postings which were analyzed in this study, showing a professionalization in her communication as the head of the party, as this was already reported in Mittelstaedt & Stefan (2019).

The SPÖ sets with their campaign slogan “Menschlichkeit siegt” (“Humanity wins”) a strong sign for what they stand for. A big topic for this party in their Facebook posts is feminism and family matters, climate change and labor as well as living conditions. These three topics made up 37% of all posts from the SPÖ during the election period. With the SPD, these topics were also mentioned, but less frequent

compared to their Austrian counterpart, with 23% of all Facebook posts. This might be due to the fact that the SPÖ was in a National Council Election and had to post especially about their “traditional” topic plus the “new left” topics climate change and feminism, to reach as many left voters as possible. With the FPÖ and AfD the topics were opposed to the ones from SPÖ and SPD. The FPÖ, with their campaign slogan “FPÖ- die soziale Heimatpartei” (FPÖ- the social homeland party”), directed almost 30% of all Facebook posts toward the topic of immigrants or asylum seekers, mostly in the context of crime or fear. The only time women were the focus of a post was in the context of professing the need to protect women from immigrants.

Therefore there is a tendency that women are mostly instrumentalized and this can be exemplified by AfD politician Katrin Ebner-Steiner talking about “Angsträume für Frauen” (“Fear rooms for women”) (Ebner-Steiner, K., 31.10.2019), referring to an afghan asylum seeker sexually harassing a woman or by FPÖ politician Herbert Kickl “ Menschenhändler, Schlepper und Kartelle missbrauchen unser Asylsystem und schlimmer noch: Sie missbrauchen Frauen, machen ihnen falsche Hoffnungen und drängen sie in die Prostitution” (“Traffickers, facilitators and cartels abuse our asylum system and worse: They abuse women, make them false promised and force them into prostitution”) (Kickl, H., 02.09.2019).

This is in line with Goetz (2016, 130), that right-populist parties embed feminist tendencies in the parties focus on race, nation and national community.

However, as only two Facebook posts from the FPÖ thematized this, this is a rather loose connection. The FPÖ did not mention any antifeminist topics, but the AfD did, calling it “Gender-Unsinn” (“Gender-Nonsense”) (Möller, S., 03.09.2019) or “Gender - Gaga” (Ebner-Steiner, K., 20.09.2019).

The FPÖ did not talk about climate change often (2,5% of all posts), but they highly doubted science and facts about climate change, specifically attacking Greta Thunberg, with Herbert Kickl talking about the “Greta-fever” (Kickl, H., 22.09.2019) or the Katrin Ebner-Steiner from the AfD talking about “Greta victims” (Ebner-Steiner, K., 25.09.2019) and referring to the fact that people lost their jobs at the car supplier companies Continental and Michelin because of the fight against climate change. The AfD talked more than the FPÖ about climate change (6,25% of all posts), again exhibiting climate skepticism, referring to it as “Klimawahn” (“Climate delusion”) (Weidel, A., 11.09.2019) or denying that there is a climate crisis (Ebner-Steiner, K. 2019, September 28).

In contrast, the SPÖ (11% of all posts) and SPD (7,5% of all posts) talk about fighting climate change more often, urging action from politicians and combing this topic with socialist ones for example “Verbinden wir Sozialmaßnahmen mit Klimaschutz” (“Let's combine social measures with climate protection”) (Rendi-Wagner, P., 25.08.2019) or “Soziale Klimapolitik ist eine Frage der

Generationsgerechtigkeit" ("Social Climate politics is a matter of justice for generations") (Kaiser, E., 20.09.2019).

Posts concerning antisemitism were neither addressed by the SPÖ or FPÖ. The SPD and AfD both mentioned this topic, by stating a strong opposition against antisemitism. This might be explained due to the fact that in Halle, Germany, an anti-semitic terror act was carried out on the 9th of October 2019 ("Anschlag in Halle", 2019). This is in line with research stating that publicly, the AfD is fighting against antisemitism, but that this stands in contrast to controversial statements from the AfD politicians, predominantly by the AfD politician Björn Höcke ("Was Höcke mit der Denkmal der Schande Rede bezweckt", 2017, „Björn Höcke darf als `Faschist` bezeichnet werden“, 2019).

FPÖ and AfD see themselves as closely connected ("FPÖ und deutsche AfD beschließen Zusammenarbeit", 2016), and this could also be seen in the Facebook posts, predominantly by the AfD politician Björn Höcke, in exactly copying a political advertisement from the FPÖ head Jörg Haider from 25 years ago: "Sie sind gegen ihn, weil er für euch ist. Einfach ehrlich. Einfach Björn." ("They are against him, because he is for you. Just honest. Just Björn") ("Höcke kopiert 25 Jahre altes Wahlplakat - ausgerechnet vom toten FPÖ-Populist Haider", 2019, "Netz deckt auf: AfD kopiert Haider-Plakat mit Höcke", 2019). Furthermore, Höcke also posted an homage on the anniversary of Haider's death on 11th of October, referring to Haider as a new type of politician, praising his extraordinary talent but also criticizing him for not always exercising political correctness. Höcke concludes though "Seiner hohen Beliebtheit tut das aber bis heute keinen Abbruch" („His high popularity does not suffer because of this") (Höcke, B., 11.10.2019). In another post, Höcke discussed the Austrian Ibiza scandal and his distrust for the media: "Wir haben bei der Ibiza-Affäre in Österreich gesehen, zu welchen Mitteln das politische Establishment greift, um die Erosion ihrer Macht aufzuhalten. Rückruf, Rückruf, Rückruf" ("We have seen with the Austrian Ibiza scandal the measures used by the political establishment, in order to stop the erosion of their power. Recall, Recall, Recall") (Höcke, B., 30.08.2019).

This study's aim was to answer the following research question:

"Which Big Five personality traits are apparent in politicians belonging to social-democratic and right-populist party members of the FPÖ, AfD, SPÖ and SPD on Facebook?"

The five hypotheses to this research question were based on the Big Five personality traits on openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism/ emotional instability (Coste & McCrae, 1985 in Goldberg, 1992, 27, Ashton & Lee, 2005).

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 on openness, extraversion and agreeableness could not be supported, however the contention of these hypotheses were supported by previous findings, linking social-democratic and liberal parties to higher openness, extraversion and agreeableness when comparing them to right-populist parties. Especially, the insignificant result concerning openness was surprising, as Gerber et al. (2011) and Carney et al. (2008) had summarized a large body of evidence for a strong positive link between openness and liberal and social-democratic parties (e.g. Alford & Hibbing 2007, Gerber et al. 2010, Gosling et al. 2003, Jost et al. 2003, 2007, McCrae 1996, Mondak 2010) and a negative link between openness and conservative or right-wing parties (e.g. Nai & Martinez i Coma, 2019, Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway, 2003, Kruglanski, 2005, Van Hiel, Pandelare & Duriez, 2004, Altemeyer, 1998).

Hypothesis 4 and 5 on conscientiousness and neuroticism/ emotional instability could be provisionally verified in this study. A surprising observation was made when looking at conscientiousness. Previous literature (e.g. Alford & Hibbing 2007, Carney et al. 2008, Gosling et al. 2003, Jost et al. 2003, 2007, McCrae 1996, Mondak 2010, Mondak & Halperin 2008, Riemann et al. 1993, Van Hiel & Mervielde 2004, Jaensch 1938, Adorno et al., 1950, Constantini & Craik, 1980, Caprara, Barbaranelli & Zimbardo, 1999, Rentfrow, Jost, Gosling & Potter, 2009) had predicted a strong link between high conscientiousness and conservative and right-wing parties, whereas, with liberal or social-democratic parties, this was seen the opposite way (e.g. Schoen & Schumann, 2007, Jaensch, 1938, Maccoby, 1968, Bem, 1970, St. Angelo & Dyson, 1968, Block & Block, 2006). However, the results of this study stated that the SPÖ and SPD showed a highly significant positive correlation to this Big Five personality trait. This result could show that the concept of language and personality traits can be difficult, as a smaller body of studies have also linked social-democratic and liberal parties to high conscientiousness (e.g. Nai & Martinez i Coma, 2019).

Furthermore, the different results could be explained by the assumption that right-populist parties today might differ in their definition of conservatism strongly from the studies summarized by Gerber et al. (2011) and Carney et al. (2008), which were conducted decades ago. Furthermore, these studies were mostly conducted in America, which might make it more difficult to use these results for European politicians or voters.

Perhaps conscientiousness, which describes a person who is careful, does a thorough job, is reliable and organized (John & Srivastava, 1999), is still linked to conservative parties but not so much to right-populist parties from today. In summary, this could lead to the assumption that right-populist parties today differ strongly from what was understood decades ago of conservative or right-wing parties, especially in the United States.

The most consistent finding of this study with past literature was observed with the last hypothesis on neuroticism/ emotional instability. A highly significant result indicated that the AfD and FPÖ showed more emotionally unstable traits in their communication on Facebook, and this is in accordance to most studies being done in this area, provided again by the summary of Carney et al. (2008) and Gerber et al. (2011) (e.g. Nai & Martinez i Coma, 2019, Fatke, 2019, Schoen & Schumann, 2007, Block & Block, 2006, Adorno et al. 1950, Wilson, 1973, Altemeyer 1998, Jost et al., 2003, Block & Block, 2006, Fromm, 1947, Kline & Cooper, 1984, Wilson, 1973).

Based on the results of this study, the politicians of the right-populist parties can therefore be characterized as getting more easily upset, moody, anxious or nervous, as well as being more careless, unreliable, inefficiently working and easily distracted (John & Srivastava, 1999, John & Srivastava, 1999) on Facebook, when compared to the social-democratic parties.

Interestingly, less conscientiousness and more neuroticism/ emotional instability could be linked to each other, as the latter stands for a an emotional and probably less organized way of personality and communication. Conscientious people seem to follow a more strict and efficient way to get work done and are very reliable. In a way, these two personality traits differ in their definition and are significantly correlated (neuroticism/ emotional instability) and not correlated (conscientiousness) to right-populist personality traits. This is in line with previous theory stating that the core element of populism is emotions, especially fear or blame (e.g. Wodak, 2015, Fieschi, 2004, Hameleers, Bos & de Vresse, 2017). As previous studies have closely linked the personality of voters with the personality of the parties and politicians they vote for (Vecchione et al., 2011, Caprara et al., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014), it could be assumed that the voters of FPÖ and AfD are very similar in the publicly presented personality of right-populist politicians from these parties. The more similarity is perceived to a person, the more this person is liked (Caprara et a., 2007, Collisson & Lee Howell, 2014) and the more likely this person trusts the source of information (Hameleers and Schmuck, 2017).

In conclusion, it can be said that social media has developed as a new and crucial channel for strategic political communication. Right-populist parties in particular have acknowledged this potential earlier than other parties, explaining their popularity on Facebook or other social media platforms today. In line with theory, this strengthens the assertion that the right-populist parties do not trust traditional media and try to produce their own media world. Media is seen, amongst others, as this part of the elite, which is held accountable for letting multiculturalism “happen” in Europe (Pelinka, 2013, 8).

This study has tried to expound upon the promising potential that an indirect Big Five analysis based on language holds as a new method to investigate personality. This is particularly important when investigating the personality of politicians, as they are not suitable participants for questionnaires (Ramey et al. 2016). The results on more neuroticism/ emotional instability and less conscientiousness

in the personality being expressed by right-populist communication were highly significant and could lead to the assumption that the FPÖ and AfD have a more emotional and less organized communication style on Facebook, probably relying less on structure or facts and more on emotions like fear or anxiety. The term “packaging of politics” is in line with this, as it refers to politicians gaining more control over the public’s perception of them, creating a “public” personality of individual politicians (Street, 2001, 185).

As a lot of studies on personality in politics focus on voters rather than politicians (Joly et al. 2018,1, Ramey, et al. 2016), this study tried to address this gap in research.

With social media platforms, like Facebook, a purer means of research on the Big Five personality traits can be achieved and this helps us better understand political communication as a form of strategic and professionalized communication. As the FPÖ and AfD have been acknowledged potentially endangering principles of democracy like Björn Höcke being labelled as fascist, calling the Holocaust memorial a disgrace to Germany or the FPÖ trying to establish their own media and trying to limit traditional medias influence, their means of political communication needs to be observed carefully. For the field of political psychology, observing these trends is a significant component, as this field aims to find certain patterns in politics, foresee trends and protect society from potentially dangerous influence through politics (Cottam et al., 2004, VII).

9.1. Limitations

The results of this study are only valid for German or Austrian right-populist parties and are therefore not reflecting the general personality and communication styles of right-populist parties in general. The difference in the communication style between the two countries, between FPÖ and AfD and SPÖ and SPD could not fully be explored, as the method in this study was designed for analyzing the big five personality traits. Furthermore, the elections differed in this study, as one was the Federal Election in Austria with almost 9 Million residents and the State Election of German state of Thüringen with over 2 Million residents. Potentially, there was a different level of professionalism in Austria, as this was on a superregional level. Furthermore, the level of strategic communication might be different e.g. from the head of a party and a local politician and depending on the activity and popularity of a Facebook site. In addition to this, the study only focused on text analysis, but especially with personality, images and videos play an important role as well. Schwartz et al. (2013) and Iacobelli, Gill, Nowson and Oberlander (2011) argue that using open-vocabulary language cues could be used to get clearer results, looking at the context and content of the text, and not just the language. The context is a crucial factor when looking at language, which could not be adequately met in this study, as its main focus was on investigating the Big Five personality traits. With an open approach, richer and more numerous features can be extracted from a certain language sample (Park et al., 2014).

A major limitation is that most of the studies linking the Big Five personality traits and political ideologies come from the United States, which has a different political culture, compared to Europe. For example, in the United States there are only two main parties, whereas in Europe there is a much bigger diversity.

Carney et al. (2008) and Gerber et al. (2011) only presented two blocks, with liberal, mainstream or social-democratic parties in one coulomb and conservative or right-wing in the other coulomb. Today's definition of different political blocks should probably be broader, looking more closely at the difference between conservative and right-wing parties.

The correlation table of Yarkoni (2010) was not designed for investigating politicians but for bloggers, which might pose as a limitation. Furthermore, for the different personality traits, Yarkoni (2010) found different significant correlations for the Big Five personality traits:

Openness: 27 categories

Extraversion: 20 categories

Agreeableness: 24 categories

Conscientiousness: 16 categories

Neuroticism/ Emotional Instability: 17 categories

In addition to this, with the use of the German version of the LIWC program from 2015, only 50 categories could be used out of the 66 available ones.

9.2. Future Implications

This study focused on the countries Austria and Germany, but because the rise of right-populist parties is a global one, more studies on European countries are required. Looking at other social media channels like Twitter, YouTube or Instagram might also be important, especially as young people are very active on these platforms as well. Furthermore, a gender focused study would be interesting, for example, on how the language of women from the right-populist parties differs from other parties. As no appropriate correlation table could be found on this particular topic in the context of this study, it might be an important aspect to consider in future research.

There might also be a difference between spoken and written language and as images are a powerful tool in political communication as well, this could be beneficial in adding to the results from this study. Furthermore, a mixed methods approach might be fruitful as well, looking at the text and the context at the same time, as it could capture the political communication in its entirety.

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Output LIWC Software (Comparing FPÖ +AfD with SPÖ+SPD)

Filename	Segment	WC	Analytic	Clout	Authentic	Tone	WPS	Sixltr	Dic	function	pronoun	ppron	i	we	you	shehe	they	lpron	article	prep	auxverb	adverb
LIWC SPÖ SPD.docx	1	21876	93,17	48,56	1,00	26,76	14,57	32,68	12,51	4,24	0,80	0,80	0,79	0,00	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,44	2,18	1,30	0,33
LIWC FPÖ_AFD.docx	1	32570	92,74	48,56	1,00	20,47	15,35	33,00	12,93	4,08	0,76	0,76	0,73	0,01	0,02	0,01	0,00	0,00	0,49	1,81	1,34	0,33

conj	negate	verb	adj	compare	interrog	number	quant	affect	posemo	negemo	anx	anger	sad	social	family	friend	female	male	cogproc	insight	cause	discrep	tentat
0,31	0,01	4,68	0,19	0,01	0,00	1,35	0,03	0,68	0,37	0,31	0,03	0,23	0,00	0,45	0,01	0,04	0,03	0,10	0,21	0,05	0,04	0,03	0,04
0,33	0,10	5,07	0,11	0,01	0,00	1,17	0,04	0,61	0,13	0,48	0,07	0,26	0,02	0,46	0,00	0,02	0,03	0,27	0,48	0,31	0,07	0,05	0,02

certain	differ	percept	see	hear	feel	bio	body	health	sexual	ingest	drives	affiliation	achieve	power	reward	risk	focuspast	focuspresent	focusfuture	relativ	motion	space
0,03	0,02	0,06	0,00	0,04	0,02	0,16	0,11	0,02	0,00	0,04	0,68	0,16	0,15	0,31	0,07	0,05	0,16	4,45	0,11	2,98	0,05	2,64
0,05	0,01	0,08	0,03	0,01	0,05	0,21	0,13	0,04	0,01	0,04	0,83	0,13	0,11	0,52	0,03	0,10	0,20	4,77	0,13	2,65	0,11	2,40

time	work	leisure	home	money	relig	death	informal	swear	netspeak	assent	nonflu	filler	AllPunc	Period	Comma	Colon	SemiC	QMark	Exclam	Dash	Quote	Apostro	Parenth
0,31	0,49	0,26	1,09	0,43	0,16	3,55	0,71	0,01	0,21	0,01	0,49	0,00	17,54	5,55	4,64	0,56	0,00	0,15	1,49	1,50	0,55	0,03	0,25
0,18	0,34	0,29	1,07	0,22	0,30	3,89	0,76	0,01	0,20	0,01	0,54	0,00	17,10	5,40	5,35	0,76	0,01	0,19	1,17	1,65	1,24	0,08	0,37

leisure	home	money	relig	death	informal	swear	netspeak	assent	nonflu	filler	AllPunc	Period	Comma	Colon	SemiC	QMark	Exclam	Dash	Quote	Apostro	Parenth	OtherP
0,26	1,09	0,43	0,16	3,55	0,71	0,01	0,21	0,01	0,49	0,00	17,54	5,55	4,64	0,56	0,00	0,15	1,49	1,50	0,55	0,03	0,25	2,81
0,29	1,07	0,22	0,30	3,89	0,76	0,01	0,20	0,01	0,54	0,00	17,10	5,40	5,35	0,76	0,01	0,19	1,17	1,65	1,24	0,08	0,37	0,87

DE-LIWC2015 Output Variable Information (Meier et al., 2018,5)

Category	Output Label	Examples	Words in Category	Consistency (Uncorrected α)	Consistency (Corrected α)
Word Count	WC	-	-	-	-
Summary Variables					
Analytic Thinking	Analytic	-	-	-	-
Clout	Clout	-	-	-	-
Authentic	Authentic	-	-	-	-
Emotional tone	Tone	-	-	-	-
Words/sentence	WPS	-	-	-	-
Words > 6 letters	Sixltr	-	-	-	-
Dictionary words	Dic	-	-	-	-
Linguistic Dimensions					
Total function words	funct	es, zu, nicht, sehr	810	0.12	0.44
Total pronouns	pronoun	ich, sie, man	174	0.23	0.64
Personal pronouns	ppron	ich, sie, ihm	68	0.27	0.69
1st pers singular	i	ich, mir mein	12	0.41	0.81
1st pers plural	we	wir, uns, unsere	14	0.46	0.84
2nd person	you total	du, dein, dich, rrsie, rrihr, euch	30	0.36	0.77
2nd pers singular	you sing	du, dein, dich	14	0.51	0.86
2nd pers plural	you plur	euch, euer, ihr,	8	0.24	0.65
2nd pers formal	you formal	rrsie, rrihr, rrihnen	8	0.28	0.70
3rd person	other	sie, ihr, ihm, deren, ihrem	24	0.31	0.73
3rd pers singular	shehe	sie, ihr, ihm	22	0.30	0.72
3rd pers plural	they	sie, deren, ihrem	11	0.31	0.73
Impersonal pronouns	ipron	man, all, manche	109	0.28	0.70
Articles	article	ein, der, die, nen	22	0.17	0.54
Prepositions	prep	ab, auf, danach	186	0.16	0.54
Auxiliary verbs	auxverb	bin, habt, geht's	161	0.17	0.55
Common Adverbs	adverb	außerdem, dabei, gar	279	0.35	0.76
Conjunctions	conj	anstatt, auch, und	87	0.18	0.57
Negations	negate	kein, nein, nichts	39	0.19	0.59
Other Grammar					
Common verbs	verb	abreist, besuchen, esse	5405	0.29	0.72
Common adjectives	adj	lange, frei, schön	5343	0.34	0.76
Comparisons	compare	ähnlich, älter, wichtiger	1910	0.24	0.66
Interrogatives	interrog	inwiefern, wann, warum	50	0.26	0.68
Numbers	number	acht, eins, halb	92	0.30	0.72
Quantifiers	quant	viel, wenig, ziemlich	259	0.24	0.65
Psychological Processes					
Affective processes	affect	glücklich, weinen	4773	0.43	0.82
Positive emotion	posemo	glücklich, liebe, schön	2243	0.42	0.81
Negative emotion	negemo	beleidigt, böseartig, heulen	2739	0.44	0.83
Anxiety	anx	ängstlich, besorgt	430	0.24	0.65
Anger	anger	hass, sauer, zorn	1014	0.45	0.83
Sadness	sad	schluchzen, träne, trauer,	691	0.31	0.73
Social processes	social	gesellig, kumpel reden	3071	0.43	0.82
Family	family	papa, tochter, tante	166	0.39	0.80
Friends	friend	bro, kumpel	124	0.14	0.49
Female references	female	frau, mädchen, weiblich,	142	0.15	0.51
Male references	male	bruder, mann, onkel	156	0.15	0.51
Cognitive processes	cogproc	denken, weil, wissen	3711	0.53	0.87
Insight	insight	denken, realisieren	960	0.26	0.67
Causation	cause	deswegen, grund	448	0.15	0.52
Discrepancy	discrep	sollte, wollte	365	0.36	0.77
Tentative	tentat	eventuell, vielleicht	463	0.42	0.81
Certainty	certain	immer, sicher	690	0.35	0.77
Differentiation	differ	aber, sonst	227	0.38	0.78
Perceptual processes	percept	fühle, höre, schauen	1447	0.24	0.65
See	see	angeschaut, sehe, sicht	354	0.19	0.59
Hear	hear	höre, klang, zuhören	308	0.28	0.70
Feel	feel	fühle, fühlt, glatt	455	0.16	0.53

Biological processes	bio	essen, blut, schmerz	1912	0.35	0.76
Body	body	arm, kopf, muskel	729	0.39	0.79
Health	health	erkältet, klinik, medikament	663	0.37	0.78
Sexual	sexual	geil, heiß, nackt	381	0.32	0.74
Ingestion	ingest	hunger, mahlzeit, pizza	444	0.43	0.82
Drives	drives	Freund, erfolg, gemobbt,	3076	0.33	0.74
Affiliation	affiliation	allianz, freund, sozial	492	0.38	0.78
Achievement	achieve	besser, erfolg, sieg	1193	0.32	0.74
Power	power	gemobbt, herrscher,	1297	0.32	0.73
Reward	reward	jubel, medaille	360	0.21	0.61
Risk	risk	gefahr, kritisch	492	0.12	0.45
Time orientations					
Past focus	focuspast	früher, gestern, war	2061	0.54	0.87
Present focus	focuspresent	aktuell, bin, heute	2037	0.28	0.70
Future focus	focusfuture	bald, später, wird	100	0.19	0.58
Relativity	relative	gegen, region, plötzlich	2991	0.44	0.82
Motion	motion	ankunft, auto, gehen	1400	0.26	0.68
Space	space	unten, über, klein	915	0.22	0.63
Time	time	ab, bisher, dauerhaft	1033	0.49	0.85
Personal concerns					
Work	work	beruf, job, hochschule	1825	0.53	0.87
Leisure	leisure	aktivität, kino, reise	715	0.32	0.74
Home	home	sofa, wohnzimmer	157	0.28	0.70
Money	money	rechnung, schuld, teuer	689	0.41	0.80
Religion	relig	fromm, kirche	338	0.31	0.73
Death	death	begräbnis, tod	272	0.33	0.74
Informal language	informal	aufm, lol, cool	775	0.36	0.77
Swear words	swear	depp, drecksack, motherfucker	244	0.30	0.72
Netspeak	netspeak	likes, lol, ok	288	0.26	0.68
Assent	assent	gell, genau, ja	45	0.18	0.56
Nonfluencies	nonflu	äh, oh, hm	33	0.14	0.50
Fillers	filler	naja, wasweißich, sozusagen	27	0.09	0.38

Correlation between LIWC categories and Big Five personality traits (based on Yarkoni, 2010)

66 categories: 16 are not available in German version

n.s.= not significant

N+= LIWC category correlates positively and significantly with neuroticism

N-= LIWC category correlates negatively and significantly with neuroticism

E+= LIWC category correlates positively and significantly with extraversion

E-= LIWC category correlates negatively and significantly with extraversion

O+= LIWC category correlates positively and significantly with openness

O-= LIWC category correlates negatively and significantly with openness

A+= LIWC category correlates positively and significantly with agreeableness

A-= LIWC category correlates negatively and significantly with agreeableness

C+= LIWC category correlates positively and significantly with conscientiousness

C-= LIWC category correlates negatively and significantly with conscientiousness

Red Words: were excluded, as not available in the German LIWC version

LIWC Category	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Total pronouns	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
First person sing.	N+	n.s.	O-	n.s.	n.s.
First person plural	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
First person	N+	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Second person	N-	E+	O-	n.s.	n.s.
Third person	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Negations	N+	n.s.	O-	n.s.	C-
Assent	n.s.	n.s.	O-	n.s.	C-
Articles	N-	n.s.	O+	n.s.	C+
Prepositions	n.s.	n.s.	O+	n.s.	n.s.
Numbers	n.s.	E-	O-	A+	n.s.
Affect	n.s.	E+	O-	n.s.	n.s.
Positive Emotions	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Positive Feelings	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Optimism	N-	n.s.	n.s.	A+	C+
Negative Emotions	N+	n.s.	n.s.	A-	C-
Anxiety	N+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Anger	N+	n.s.	n.s.	A-	C-
Sadness	N+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	C-
Cognitive Processes	N+	n.s.	O-	n.s.	C-
Causation	N+	E-	n.s.	A-	C-
Insight	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Discrepancy	N+	n.s.	O-	n.s.	C-
Inhibition	N+	E-	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Tentative	N+	E-	n.s.	n.s.	C-

Certainty	N+	E+	n.s.	n.s.	C-
Sensory Processes (LIWC “Perceptual Processes”)	n.s.	E+	O-	n.s.	C-
Seeing	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	A+	n.s.
Hearing	n.s.	E+	O-	n.s.	C-
Feeling	N+	n.s.	n.s.	A+	n.s.
Social Processes	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Communication	n.s.	E+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Other references	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Friends	N-	E+	n.s.	A+	n.s.
Family	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Humans	n.s.	E+	O-	n.s.	C-
Time	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	C+
Past Tense Vb.	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Present Tense Vb.	n.s.	n.s.	O-	n.s.	n.s.
Future Tense Vb.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Space	N-	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Up	N-	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Down	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	C+
Inclusion	n.s.	E+	O+	A+	n.s.
Exclusion	N+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	C-
Motion	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Occupation (new category called “Work”)	n.s.	E-	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
School	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Job/ Work	n.s.	E-	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

Achievement	n.s.	E-	n.s.	n.s.	C+
Leisure	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Home	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Sports	n.s.	n.s.	O-	n.s.	n.s.
TV/Movies	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Music	n.s.	E+	n.s.	A+	C-
Money/Finance	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	A-	n.s.
Metaphysical	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Religion	n.s.	E+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Death	n.s.	n.s.	O+	A-	C-
Physical States (new category called "Health")	n.s.	E+	O-	A+	n.s.
Body States (new category "Body")	n.s.	E+	n.s.	A+	n.s.
Sexuality	n.s.	E+	n.s.	A+	n.s.
Eating/drinking (new category "ingestion")	n.s.	n.s.	O-	n.s.	n.s.
Sleep	N+	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Grooming	n.s.	n.s.	O-	A+	n.s.
Swear words	N+	n.s.	n.s.	A-	C-

SPSS Output

Shapiro-Wilk Test:

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Openness	,386	32	,000	,625	32	,000
Consciousness	,338	32	,000	,638	32	,000
Extraversion	,354	32	,000	,637	32	,000
Agreeableness	,354	32	,000	,637	32	,000
Neuroticism	,354	32	,000	,637	32	,000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Hypothesis 1:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait Openness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Group Statistics

	Political_Party	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Openness	FPÖ+AfD	27	1,4444	,50637	,09745
	SPÖ+SPD	27	1,5556	,50637	,09745

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Openness	Equal variances assumed	,000	1,000	-,806	52	,424	-,11111	,13782	-,38766	,16544
	Equal variances not assumed			-,806	52,000	,424	-,11111	,13782	-,38766	,16544

Hypothesis 2:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait Extraversion compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Group Statistics

	Political_Party	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Extraversion	FPÖ+AfD	20	1,4000	,50262	,11239
	SPÖ+SPD	20	1,6000	,50262	,11239

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Extraversion	Equal variances assumed	,000	1,000	-1,258	38	,216	-,20000	,15894	-,52177	,12177
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,258	38,000	,216	-,20000	,15894	-,52177	,12177

Hypothesis 3:

SPÖ and SPD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait Agreeableness compared to FPÖ and AfD on Facebook.

Group Statistics

	Political_Party	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Agreeableness	FPÖ+AfD	24	1,4583	,50898	,10389
	SPÖ+SPD	24	1,5417	,50898	,10389

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Agreeableness	Equal variances assumed	,000	1,000	-,567	46	,573	-,08333	,14693	-,37909	,21242
	Equal variances not assumed			-,567	46,000	,573	-,08333	,14693	-,37909	,21242

Hypothesis 4:

FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait Conscientiousness compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

Group Statistics

	Political_Party	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Conscientiousness	FPÖ+AfD	16	1,0625	,25000	,06250
	SPÖ+SPD	16	1,9375	,25000	,06250

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Conscientiousness	Equal variances assumed	,000	1,000	-9,899	30	,000	-,87500	,08839	-1,05551	-,69449
	Equal variances not assumed			-9,899	30,000	,000	-,87500	,08839	-1,05551	-,69449

Hypothesis 5:

FPÖ and AfD show a stronger characteristic of the Big Five personality trait Neuroticism/ Emotional Instability compared to SPÖ and SPD on Facebook.

Group Statistics

Political Party	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Neuroticism FPO+AfD	17	1,8235	,39295	,09531
SPÖ+SPD	17	1,1765	,39295	,09531

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
Neuroticism	Equal variances assumed	,000	1,000	4,801	32	,000	,64706	,13478	,37252	,92160
	Equal variances not assumed			4,801	32,000	,000	,64706	,13478	,37252	,92160

Abstract (English):

Predicting personality traits based on language has lately been a prominent area of research in political psychology. The most used approach to measure personality is the Big Five personality framework, with the personality traits openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism/emotional instability. A large body of evidence, which was summarized by Gerber et al. (2011) and Carney et al. (2008), has previously linked these personality traits to left and right political ideologies, which serve as the basis for this study's hypotheses.

Right-populism is on the rise worldwide and social media, as a form of strategic political communication, is especially used by these right-populist parties. With the help of the LIWC program, an automated content analysis was performed to analyze the Facebook pages of 16 politicians from Austrian and German right-populist and social-democratic parties. Results show that there is a significant difference in the Facebook language between right-populist parties and social-democratic parties. On the basis of these results, right-populist parties communicate more neurotic/ emotionally unstable and less conscientious on Facebook than social-democratic parties. The results can give conclusions about the personality traits of voters of these parties and to better understand how strategic communication in politics works today.

Big Five Personality Traits, Social Media, Strategic Political Communication, LIWC, Automated Content Analysis, FPÖ, AfD, SPÖ, SPD

Abstract (Deutsch):

Persönlichkeitsmerkmale auf Basis von Sprache ist ein wichtiger Untersuchungsbereich in der Politischen Psychologie. Der am meisten genutzte Ansatz, um Persönlichkeit zu messen, ist das Big Five Modell, mit den Persönlichkeitsmerkmalen Offenheit, Extraversion, Gewissenhaftigkeit, Verträglichkeit und Neurotizismus/ Emotionale Instabilität.

Gerber et al. (2011) und Carney et al. (2008) haben Studienergebnisse, welche die Verbindung zwischen diesen Persönlichkeitsmerkmalen zu rechten und linken Ideologien untersucht haben, zusammengefasst, und diese dienen als Grundlage für die vorliegenden Hypothesen.

Rechtspopulismus ist weltweit auf dem Vormarsch und gerade soziale Medien, als Teil der strategischen politischen Kommunikation, werden von rechtspopulistischen Parteien stark genutzt.

Mit Hilfe des LIWC Programms wurde eine automatische Inhaltsanalyse von den Facebook Seiten von 16 PolitikerInnen von österreichischen und deutschen rechtspopulistischen sowie sozialdemokratischen Parteien durchgeführt.

Die Ergebnisse zeigten einen signifikanten Unterschied in der Facebook Sprache zwischen rechtspopulistischen Parteien und sozialdemokratischen Parteien. Auf der Basis dieser Resultate kommunizieren rechtspopulistische Parteien neurotischer/ emotional instabiler und weniger gewissenhaft auf Facebook als sozialdemokratische Parteien. Durch diese Ergebnisse können Rückschlüsse auf die Persönlichkeit der Wähler dieser Parteien geschlossen werden und ein Einblick gegeben werden, wie professionalisiert Kommunikation in der heutigen Politik ist.

Big Five Persönlichkeitsmerkmale, Soziale Medien, Strategische Politische Kommunikation, LIWC, Automatische Inhaltsanalyse, FPÖ, AfD, SPÖ, SPD