## Appendix D: Annotation guide

1. **Group 1: Appeal to Commonality.**

**1.1.** The author bases his/her argument or the promotion of actions, or supports them, on the will of the people (which involves generalization), on the tradition of a community, or on history, or speaks for a wide collectivity to justify his/her argument/position **(Ad populum/ad antiquitam)**.

* We need to fight any kind of discrimination against any human being, just because of the persons’ ethnic identity, religious or political beliefs. This is what the heritage of the very dramatic history of Europe requires us to do
* The real foundation of #ChinaUS relations is the friendship and mutual understanding between our peoples. There is such enthusiasm among Americans to develop friendship with Chinese people and facilitate cooperation between us. Nobody can go against the will of the people
* History has proved time and again that external pressure will only lead to greater unity of the #Chinese people, stronger cohesion of the Chinese society and better resilience of the Chinese economy
* We know what we are doing. The most important factor for Chinese achievement is that we are adaptive to the changing world. That's the legacy of our ancestors. That's Chinese wisdom. Western people need to seriously learn Chinese history and culture to understand China.
* As history has shown us, Europe and the United States are strongest when working together
* July 7 is important both in history and present. The implementation rules of HK national security law came into effect today, which is *acclaimed by all Chinese people*.
* In West, Islam is considered alien to its western value. In China, that divisive distinction is not made as Islam been part of Chinese culture & civilisation for 1000yrs plus.
* *Europeans want to live* on a continent that masters its own destiny and takes control of its own future. Climate neutrality is our European destiny. A competitive and sustainable economy is our European future.
  + It would not be considered ad populum / ad antiquitam when the author supports his/her argument with an elaborated explanation based on specific historical facts or examples (that would need a verification of the facts to be considered a legitimate claim or not, which is out of the purpose of this task).

**1.2.1.** It contains fragments that exacerbate national feelings or a group’s identity by using words, expressions, metaphors with emotional connotations. These fragments can be referred to national symbols, the foundation/history of a nation, the members of that nation, its heroes, its leaders, the actions of its government, etc. (**flag waving, appeal to commonality**).

It may display an evocative or a heroic/triumphal tone, which may involve overcoming an adversity (injustice, obstacle, etc.), or facing a challenge through an admirable actions or sacrifices (sometimes carried out by a hero, a Government or a Leader) . For example, the following tweets:

* + - * + 2020 was a year to remember. In the face of the unfolding human tragedy, Europe stepped up in the greatest collective mobilisation in the history of our Union.
        + The great contribution of the Chinese People's Volunteers to defending peace and resisting aggression will be remembered forever, and the great courage of resisting aggression will always be precious spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation.
      * Positive promotion of actions does not necessarily imply Flag-Waving nor propagandistic language. Some emotional or heroical connotation is needed. When the action is presented in an objective/descriptive way there is usually no technique detected. For example:
        + “We will continue to help Pakistan to combat locusts & #COVID19. After sending an expert group, China provided locust control supplies to Pakistan, including 50,000 litres of malathion, 14 pesticide sprayers, & an additional batch of coronavirus testing kits”
      * Hopeful promises, intentions or goals are not necessarily flag-waving unless a heroical tone is perceived. For example, following tweet is not considered flag waving
        + “#Russia is not indifferent to the problems faced by other states due to the pandemic, we are trying to help countries in dire need. We will certainly continue this work as well as share our experience and exchange emergency information.”

**1.2.2.** It praises a group (e.g., a nation, or a community within a country) or a person / symbol linked to a group (a national hero, the national flag, a national invention) for being exemplary or outstanding in a certain aspect, using expressions or words with emotional/heroic/hyperbolic connotations. (**flag waving, appeal to commonality**).

* A common plot is the praise of a legendary/brave person that made an achievement / left a mark in History (sometimes despite adversities) and became a pioneer/founder/father of his/her field in his/her country, inspiring new generations. For example the following tweet is marked flag waving since it explicitly relates this hero with the Soviet Union:
  + - * + “ Today we commemorate the *legendary* Soviet flying ace Lydia #Litvyak - she was K.I.A. #OTD in 1943 during the Battle of #Kursk at the age of 21. Nicknamed the 'White Lily/Rose of Stalingrad' Lydia was the best #WWII female pilot (16 victories). *Hero of the Soviet Union*”
        + ðŸ—“ Born on January 16, 1909, *Hero of the Soviet Union*, #submarine commander Boris #Alekseev w*ent down into the history books for his courage and mastery of military craft* during the Defence of #Crimea &amp; #Sevastopol, as well as their liberation from Nazis in #WWII. #FacesOfVictory
      * By contrast, the following one is not considered flag waving (it is not heroic nor hyperbolic)
        + Oleg Konstantinovich Antonov was a Soviet aircraft designer and creator of numerous civilian and military airplanes, including the An-225 Mriya, the biggest, heavy cargo-lifting aircraft to date. He was born in the village of Troitsy near Podolsk in the Moscow Region #OTD in 1906

**1.2.3.** In the tweet, an actor subjectively praise itself or another actor (its country, for example) with nice-sounding adjectives or hyperbolic/evocative expressions without further data or arguments (**Flag Waving, appeal to commonality**)

* + - * + #COVID19 is an unknown virus to mankind. China was the first to report it and *has responded openly, transparently and responsibly* and put it under control in about 2 months.
        + Western democracies seem ill prepared to contain the spread on coronavirus despite *China buying time for them with huge self- sacrifices*
        + China adheres to the path of peaceful development & will never seek hegemony or engage in expansion, a pledge that has never been made by #US. *China is a force for good in the world, a force for global peace & prosperity*. China does not want to threaten, challenge or replace anyone.
      * It is also considered Flag Waving: when an actor is subjectively presented as a role model or example to follow without further explaining the reasons; when an actor explicitly says that thanks to his/her government or leader something good happened, without further explanation; and when an actor states that no one does X better than him/her/itself
        + The United States has conducted more than 4 MILLION coronavirus tests *thanks to the leadership of President @realDonaldTrump*
        + The European Union is the best example in the history of the world of conflict resolution and it is the duty of everyone to study how it was done
        + From "Water Cube" to "Ice Cube", from 2008 to 2022, China sets a model for sustainable utilization of #Olympic venues”
        + “We’re *at the forefront* of promoting & protecting democracy around the world” (which can be also considered within the 1.2.4. case. )
        + No one cares more about #HongKong's democracy and continued prosperity and stability than the Central Government of #China.
      * Note that Flag Waving can involve third nations, different from the speaker’s one. For example:
        + No surprise that Taiwan mounted one of the most successful efforts to contain COVID to date. *Transparent, vibrant, and innovative* democracies like Taiwan always respond faster and more effectively to pandemics than authoritarian regimes. #TweetforTaiwan
        + Portugal is not only an example of how to find a way out of the #coronavirus crisis, with good ideas, hard work and discipline. *Portugal is also a role model* for how to set the course for the future
      * Sometimes the receiver of the praise is not a person or a nation, but an object (the national flag) or a machine (national invention), like a car or a plane, that are presented as national symbols:
        + #OTD in 1946 the *legendary* GAZ-M20 Pobeda ('Victory') #car went into production. One of the first passenger vehicles designed & built entirely in the #USSR, it quickly became a symbol of the post-war #Soviet life, and remains a valuable collector's item to this day
        + OTD in 1957 *legendary Soviet* 4-engine turboprop airliner #Ilyushin #IL18 performed its maiden flight. It is one of most iconic passenger planes of XX century known for remarkable durability of its aiframe. Some Il-18 remain operational & 1 is even a luxury hotel

**1.2.4.** It states that a certain action or idea is contributing or has contributed to the wellbeing (or protecting, defending) of unspecific and appealing receivers with which many people can feel identified, such as “the people”, “the humankind”, “the world peace” without detailing how (**flag waving, appeal to commonality**).

* + - * + China's development is for the people. , and the benefits are shared by the people
        + In terms of the record of governance, no Chinese government in history has improved the living standard for the Chinese people as much as the #CPC has.
        + Through actions like the Great American Outdoors Act, President @realDonaldTrump is restoring, preserving, and protecting America’s natural heritage for generations to come!
        + On a daily basis, the @StateDept keeps Americans safe and advances American values by protecting #religiousfreedom, liberating American hostages, and realigning U.S. foreign aid. Bottom line: we are achieving real outcomes for the American people
    - Hopeful promises or intentions used to promote current actions would not be considered Flag Waving. That is, saying that a specific measure will have a X outcome for the people or that is made to protect the people is not necessarily flag waving (it would be considered as a prediction). More self-praising or a heroic tone is required. The following two tweets are not considered Flag Waving:
      * + The European Commission President has launched the largest funding package in the history of the EU -1.85 trillion euro-aimed at both recovery from the #COVID19 crisis and investing in long term sustainability for the benefit of future generations @eurireland #nextgenerationeu
        + Congratulations to our new Secretary of State, Antony Blinken. @SecBlinken will revitalize American diplomacy, advance our values in the world, and promote America’s security and prosperity
      * It is neither considered Flag Waving showing commitment to a noble cause, since it has the consideration of a promise (that can be accomplished or not, and therefore is subjected to further verification). For example:
        + The US is committed to protecting freedom of religion across the world
      * The following ones are marked as Flag Waving because of the emphasis, that suggests the characterization of these actors as saviors.
        + Europeans need access to affordable medicines during the #coronavirus crisis. Today @EU\_Commission issues guidelines to help secure supply of medicines. Member States should lift bans on exports, avoid stockpiling, increase production. *We will stop at nothing* to protect citizens.
        + “President @realDonaldTrump took *the most aggressive economic action* *in history* *to protect* *American workers*”.
    - Ad populum differs from Flag-Waving in the fact that Ad populum may use the will of the people as the source of legitimation, whereas in Flag-Waving the people are the beneficiary of an action. “I do this because it is what my people does or want” (ad populum)/ “I do this for the well-being of the people” (flag-waving).

**1.2.5.** It directly and explicitly contrasts the alleged success or exemplary behavior of an actor (e.g., a government) with the less successful or exemplary action of opponents, without supporting the claim with further facts. (**flag waving, appeal to commonality**). These tweets may also contain whataboutism.

* + - “People are truly upset by #US worldwide, systematic, indiscriminate cyberattacks and eavesdropping. This should be stopped, but the US "chose not to". As a responsible country, China defends internet security and proposed the Global Initiative on #DataSecurity. Why not join us?”
    - “The Democrat party is the party of high taxes, high crime, open borders, late-term abortion, socialism, blatant corruption, and the total destruction of your Second Amendment. The Republican Party is the party of the American Worker, the American Family, and the American Dream”
    - Le Yucheng: The difference between China and the US on the international order and global governance is not so-called "tyranny vs. freedom", but multilateralism vs. unilateralism, equity and justice vs. hegemony and "might makes right" , the common good vs. "America First".
    - There is no equivalence between the United States and China. We have rule of law. China doesn't. We have free speech. They don't. We defend religious freedom; China continues its decades-long war on faith. China ruthlessly imposes communism. The United States secures freedom

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| **Summary of Flag Waving specifications** |
| **1 Hot-headed patriotism** |
| **2 Hyperbolic / evocative praise of a symbol** |
| **3 Self-praise** |
| **4 Populist appeal / Savior** |
| **5 Contrast with flawed rivals** |

1. **Group 2: Discrediting the oppponent**

**2.1.** In the tweet there is a person, group, institution, country being attacked, confronted, diminished or discredited by using pejorative labels. (**Name** **Calling / Labeling, discrediting the opponent**). As this technique aspires to associate a label with an entity, the labels that entail Name Calling / Labeling do not refer to behaviors or ideas (for that case, see the specifications of 2.3.3., Undiplomatic assertiveness / Whataboutism).

* + Therefore, not all the negative adjectives are part of this category, the ones functioning just as descriptive adjectives that refer to actions or objects are not included (“Baseless and anonymous accusations”, “illegal actions”, “corrupt acts” would not be included as Name Calling / Labelling but might be appropriate for *Whataboutism*).
  + Categorical adjectives and nouns used to defame (without further arguments) are considered name calling. “reckless regime”, “Iran is a threat”, “Iran is a malign actor”, “they are gross and malicious”, “he is a corrupt politician”, “the illegitimate Maduro regime”, “A corrupt regime”
  + Name calling usually involves a label made by two or three words (“China Virus”, “Sleepy Joe Biden”, “Fake News CNN”), or pejorative nouns and adjectives that function as a noun (“imperialists”, “extremists”, “he is a *threat*”)
  + More examples: “very bad and dangerous people”, “extremist individuals”, “they are thugs”, “radical separatists”, “he is a JOKE!”, “they are thick losers”.

**2.2.** In the tweet there is a person, group, institution, or country, or their arguments, ideas or behaviors, being discredited or defamed by associating them with recognizable, renowned third parties that are despised by the author or the targeted audience. (**reductio ad hitlerum, discrediting the opponent**).

* "Some American politicians often arbitrarily slander China stealing American technology, undermine high-tech academic exchanges, and arrest some scientists involved in scientific and technological cooperation. *This is reminiscent of the ugly history of McCarthyism. Sadly*

**2.3.1.** An actor is accused of doing something deliberately hostile, immoral, with malign or selfish intentions (**Undiplomatic Assertiveness**/ **Whataboutism, discrediting the opponent**)1. Examples:

* + - “Some in the US have been unscrupulously encircling and smearing China, attempting to kneel on and choke China. But truth and justice will prevail anyway!”
    - “The Hong Kong 12 should be released immediately. Their so-called crime was to flee tyranny. Communist China today is turning Hong Kong into the East Berlin of yesteryear, actively preventing its own people from seeking freedom elsewhere.”
    - “Persistent wars in #Afghanistan, #Iraq, #Libya and #Syria indicate the #US meddling and trouble-making. Who fueled the turmoil in West Asia and North Africa? Who created "color revolutions" in many countries? The answer is obvious”
    - “You forgot to mention, Mr Secretary of state, that harassing other states, meddling and imposing on them US vision of their future since 1898 has also become part of US #UnalienableRights. That’s how progressive ideas are easily transformed in repressive reality! “

**2.3.2.** An opponent or its behavior are presented as hypocritical, sometimes directly accusing it of double standards, cynicism or hypocrisy (**Undiplomatic Assertiveness** / **Whataboutism, discrediting the opponent**).

* + - Australia opposes foreign interference, but interferes with Hong Kong affairs. It rejects Hong Kong's #NationalSecurityLaw, but requires Hong Kong residents coming to Australia to pass national security tests. What double standards! A cat's paw will end up getting burned.
    - “US's political suppression on Chinese journalists and media organizations exposes its Cold War mentality and hypocrisy of so-called freedom of the press”

**2.3.3.** The opponent’s behavior, ideas or actions are characterized with discreditable labels, showing undiplomatic contempt (**Undiplomatic Assertiveness** / **Whataboutism, discrediting the opponent**)

* + We’ve gone through this unnecessary spiral of closures. Our consulates in San Francisco and Seattle were closed, as a result US lost two in St. Petersburg and Vladivostok. What did Washington gain from this? only shot his own legs twice! *Irresponsible and pointless behavior*!
  + We are strengthening U.S. policy on South China Sea maritime claims, according to international law, in rejection of Beijing *intimidation, bullying, and claims of maritime empire*.
  + US #AttorneyGeneral #WilliamBarr called China a greater threat than #Russia &amp; #Iran in interfering in the upcoming US presidential election. This is another proof of the US "*Lying Diplomacy*".

**2.3.4.** By deviating the attention from an issue that affects the reputation of the author (or his/her country, ally, etc.), raising other issues that affect the reputation of the opponent, or making a counteraccusation. (**Undiplomatic Assertiveness** / **Whataboutism, discrediting the opponent**).

* + - Before mentoring anyone with sanctions, #UK should recall that its #HumanRights record is far from perfect: probes into #British crimes in #Iraq are being closed on a massive scale, the #Westminster pedophile dossier has been swept under the carpet, etc.
    - Western elites and MSM are readily shouting the name of #Navalny-the-crook who faces charges of embezzlement, but shyfully forget to mention their political prisoner Julian #Assange.
    - #US officials accuse #China of coercing others, but in fact the US is the real master of coercion. It openly threatens to cut cooperation or assistance or slap sanctions. Its message: my way or the high way.

**Note that not all criticism nor disapproval entails Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism.**

* + For example, declarations announcing a negative position about other actors’ actions are not necessarily whataboutism. In these cases, the core of the message is not the inappropriate behavior of the rival, but the announcement of relevant information. For example, it is not considered Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism the following texts:
    - “The Coronavirus is a global crisis and requires cooperation. The EU disapproves of the fact that the U.S. decision to impose a travel ban was taken unilaterally and without consultation”
    - “I have determined that the People’s Republic of China is committing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, China, targeting Uyghur Muslims and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups”
    - Deeply regret US decision to suspend funding to @WHO. There is no reason justifying this move at a moment when their efforts are needed more than ever to help contain & mitigate the #coronavirus pandemic. Only by joining forces we can overcome this crisis that knows no border.
  + Similarly, in other occasions, an actor can urge another actor to stop certain hostile behavior or resume a right behavior. In these cases, the tone is important to be considered Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism. Diplomatic, neutral statements are not considered whataboutism: “We urge XXX to cease the hostile activities”, “We condemn…” would not be considered whataboutism. The following tweets are an example:
    - We stand with the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada in calling out China’s disqualification of elected Hong Kong legislators as a clear breach of its international obligations. We urge China to live up to its commitments and its duty to the people of Hong Kong.
    - “We stand with the people of #Myanmar, condemn the brutal repression & the illegal overthrow of the elected government”.
  + However, this tweet would be considered whataboutism due to the last sentence, when it suggests that the opponent is in a “colonial dream” (ending the diplomatic/objective tone, using a pejorative label and shifting the focus towards the opponent unethical behavior rather than the stance upheld by China):
    - China firmly opposes the UK's suspension of its extradition treaty with the HKSAR as it violates international law &amp; interferes in China's internal affairs. We reserve the right to make further reactions. China urges the UK to wake up from its colonial dream immediately
  + Moreover, if there is an emphasis on the unethical behavior, the tone is aggressive and some contempt is perceivable, it will be considered Undiplomatic Assertivenes / Whataboutism. The previous example (wake up from the colonial dream) is also valid on this occasion. And the following tweet.
    - China urges US and UK to:

immediately STOP interfering in China’s internal affairs

immediately STOP hegemonism and power politics

immediately STOP provoking tensions and making troubles

* + Saying that an opponent is doing something illegal or disapproving some behavior in a descriptive way is not necessarily Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism. It is neither considered Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism when an author descriptively narrates remote past events that include criticism or accusations. (it would be external verification of the facts to know if it is right or not and therefore is not part of this task).

In these cases, the emphasis on the unethical of the action or cynicism is needed. For example, the following tweets are not marked as Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism:

* + - The nazis committed war crimes in World War II
    - UK failure to provide information on two Russian nationals is a clear violation of UK’s obligations implied in relevant international and bilateral agreements, let alone a disregard for universally recognised norms of diplomatic relation
    - OTD in 1945 the USA bombed the city of #Hiroshima, full of civilians, incl women & children. This criminal act had no military significance, as #Japan was already doomed to a defeat. To this day, the #US, a democratic state, remains the only country to ever use nuclear weapons.
    - #MFA: Outsiders should not interfere in relations between #China central government and #HongKong, Special Administrative Region of #PRC. Raising the Hong Kong situation in @UN Security Council amounts to undermining China’s sovereignty, runs counter to #UN Charter.
    - Different countries have different ways for media operation. The US doesn’t have the right to judge, stigmatize & suppress other country’s media based on its own ideology.

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| **Summary of Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism specifications** |
| **1 Accusations** |
| **2 Hypocrisy** |
| **3 Discreditable labels** |
| **4 Deviating attention** |

**2.4.** In the tweet the author explicitly transfers the blame to another actor (individual, group, institution, country, etc.) without supporting its denunciation with arguments (**Scapegoating, discrediting the opponent**).

Scapegoating is not merely accusing an opponent of doing something wrong (which might be considered Undiplomatic Assertiveness / Whataboutism). In scapegoating, the author may excuse him/herself or his/her country, institution, group, allies, etc. It usually involves portraying an opponent as the guilty of a dysfunctionality or injustice that affects the author’s country, or as the guilty of the author’s or other’s behavior. Examples:

* It is not China but the US that is militarizing and stoking tensions in the South China Sea. The US should stop its provocative military actions that endangered regional peace and stability.
* It is not #Russia who is distancing from the #EU, but rather the EU is distancing itself from everything that is Russian, including language, culture and, hence, Russia itself
* It’s a terrible situation, and I blame the leaders of those cities. The President of the United States has fought through a lot of different things since he’s been in office, and to be honest with you, he’s done one hell of a job

**2.5.** The author labels the behavior of the opponent as propagandistic or *disinformative* (i.e. untruthful), or directly saying that the opponent is lying, without augmenting why (**propaganda slinging, discrediting the opponent**). Examples:

* The U.S. should agree without further delay to join Russia to extend the #NewSTART, rather than continue its disinformation campaign against China
* Zakharova: We firmly refute the latest #FakeNews planted by our Anglo-Saxon pseudo-friends from the #US, #Canada and #Britain regarding the alleged hacking attack to steal Western #COVID19 #vaccine data.
* For years Fake stories and investigations, then the phony Russia, Russia, Russia HOAX, next Ukraine and the failed Impeachment, now the crummy Atlantic Magazine’s MADE UP STORY, and lastly, the political hit job by rapidly fading Bob Woodward and his boring book. It never ends!

**2.6**. The opponent’s personal background or conditions are attacked (I.e., referring to its family life, medical records, etc.) (**personal attack, discrediting the opponent**)

- No examples found in our dataset

* Example by Johnson-Cartee & Copeland (2004): He tries to appeal to Christian voters, but his real life is anything but Christian. He is a heavy drinker and a compulsive womanizer

**2.7.** The author invokes hatred or prejudice (usually using Name Calling / Labeling), portraying the opponent as an existential threat for something that the audience appreciates (**demonization, discrediting the opponent**). Example:

* Joe Biden is promising to delay the vaccine and turn America into a prison state, locking you in your home while letting far-left rioters roam free. The Biden Lockdown will mean no school, no graduations, no weddings, no Thanksgiving, no Christmas, no Fourth of July, and...
* Now, the US has mobilized allies to interfere in China's internal affairs, attempting to contain China's rise and plunder the wealth of the Chinese people. Can this be tolerated by the Chinese people? Please remember that the Chinese people don't let the history to be replay!
* The Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats keep chanting fairness, when they put on the most unfair Witch Hunt in the history of the U.S. Congress. They had 17 Witnesses, we were allowed ZERO, and no lawyers. They didn’t do their job, had no case. *The Dems are scamming America*!

**2.8.** The opponent, its arguments, ideas or actions are portrayed as ridiculous, absurd or pathetic (**absurdity appeal, discrediting the opponent**)

* Secretary #Pompeo and his allies have been talking about "allow" as if China could manipulate the virus. Ridiculous. If the virus could be ordered, then how to explain the 6.78 million cases and over 200,000 deaths in the #US? Is this what the #USgovernment "allows"?
* #Zakharova: Over the past day, the #EU has produced a series of sanctions decisions against #Russian individuals and entities. The reasoning behind them does not stand up to scrutiny and is bordering on the absurd
* Is there anything left that US hasn’t sanctioned yet? Maybe the dolphins that were swimming alongside the tankers? US looks increasingly pathetic and ridiculous by trying in vain to impose their will on other countries

**2.9.1** The author instils anxiety and/or panic in the population towards an alternative, or towards a hypothetical situation in the future provoked by the opponent (**Fear appeals (destructive), discrediting the opponent**).

* Last week, Joe Biden made perhaps the most shocking admission ever uttered in the history of presidential debates. On live television, Joe Biden confirmed his plan to ABOLISH the entire U.S. Oil Industry: that means NO fracking, NO jobs, and NO energy for Pennsylvania Families!
* In some cases, the author make a intimidatory statement towards an opponent, to dissuade it from doing something (fear appeals (destructive), discrediting the opponent).
* @SecPompeo China rejects & strongly condemns this. We won't allow any impediment to China's reunification or interference in domestic affairs under the pretext of Taiwan. Those harming our core interests will meet countermeasures & get severe punishment from history if going further astray.

**2.10**. By posing rhetorical questions, the author casts doubt (directly or indirectly) on the intentions, on the actions or on the capacities of someone (person, institution) (**doubt, discrediting the opponent**). It usually involves conspiratorial content, like for example suggesting the opponent is hiding information without further arguments.

* Chinese spokeswoman: More reports on previously undiscovered COVID-19 cases are emerging. New Jersey mayor was infected in November; 171 cases in Florida by January & NONE had been to China. What else hasn’t been revealed in the U.S.?
* He US accuses China of obstructing information flow, but when they expelled 60 Chinese journalists, what were they afraid of? What were they trying to cover up? Did they really believe they can silence a country like China without any consequences?

1. **Group III: Loaded Language**

**The tweet includes unspecific superlatives, hyperbolic language or evocative terms with emotional connotations in a vague way, to add appeal to the message promoted (Loaded Language).**

* These words can include unspecific or subjective superlatives that exaggerate the message. “The greatest player” “the most remembered author” would be considered unspecific superlatives (cannot be verified) unless a rational justification is given.
  + The “largest” would not be considered unspecific therefore would not be loaded language.
  + “The first”, “the last”, “the unique” would not be considered unspecific or subjective superlatives and therefore would not be considered loaded language.
  + If the superlative appears nuanced, such as in “One of the best/most” or “possibly/arguably the best/most”, is not considered loaded language.
  + It is not considered loaded language if the superlatives are not displayed in a hyperbolical way. For example, “isolation may be the most immediate way to prevent covid” would not be considered loaded language.
* Evocative metaphors used to add emotional appeal are considered loaded language. For example: “to breathe new life into our cherished alliance.”
* Evocative sentences/metaphors containing several successive glittering generalities (virtuous sounding words) are also considered loaded language. For example: “to build a *community* of *shared destiny* for *humankind*”, “the history of *humanity's* *fight* for *justice*”
* When a relationship between two or more actors is expressed with metaphors of kinship it is also considered loaded language: presenting China and Pakistan as “Iron Brothers”. Africa and Europe “sister continents” or the “European family”. Friend, friendship, partner, partnership, are not considered loaded language.
* Vague evocative terms associated to positive or negative emotions are also considered loaded language, such as “soul”, “hearts”, “heartbreaking” are considered loaded language. “The friendly ties between China & Nepal are *deep-rooted in the hearts* of the two peoples.”
* Forceful, categorical adjectives, nouns and adverbs commonly marked as loaded language: disaster, brilliant, incredibly, legendary, massive (except when it describes quantity of people), marvellous, abhorrent, maximum, enormous, vigorously, “more/better *than ever*”, “far better” “major (when used to highlight or praise some action made: major milestone, major achievement, major breakthrough)”, tremendous, fascinating, draconian, powerfully, tirelessly, unwavering, brutal, horrible, magnificent, monumental, radical, extreme, extremely, glorious.
  + Positive or negative adjectives like “Great”, “bad”, “remarkable”, “extraordinary” and forceful adjectives such as “indispensable”, “crucial”, “imperative”, “critical”, “key”, “decisive”, “vital” do not necessarily imply loaded language.
  + Forceful adjectives like “devastaging”, “tragic”, “fatal”, “terrible”, in cases such as condolences or description of tragedies, when used in a literal way, are not marked as loaded language. For example:
    - Ten years ago Japan was struck by a triple disaster - a devastating earthquake, a fatal tsunami and a nuclear meltdown. We honour the victims, stand in solidarity and admire the resilience of our Japanese friends in the face of this tragedy.
  + Common hyperbolic adverbs are not considered loaded language because they are frequently used to express degree of intensity in a reasonable way. Strongly, deeply, fully, firmly, highly. “deeply concerned”
* Capitalized words and repetitive exclamation marks (!!!) that add emphasis are considered hyperbolic language, and therefore loaded language. Capitalized words with no hyperbolic intention like BREAKING NEWS or LIVE or initials are not considered loaded language.

1. **Group 4: Appeal to Authority**

**4.1.** In the tweet there is a third person or institution that is included to support, endorse, reinforce an idea, message or behavior for which he/she/it should not be considered as a valid reference **(Appeal to False Authority, Appeal to Authority)**. That person/institution is not such a relevant authority or expert as the message may suggest, and therefore his/her/its position does not deserve credibility nor trust in the matter or topic that is being raised.

* + - A voice of a Pakistani student's wife tells real situation about the coronavirus in China. Trust the Chinese Government. No panic! #coronavirus #SolidaritywithChina
    - Ambassador Richard Grenell tweeted on consequences of choosing an "untrustworthy" 5G vendor. Who he is threatening? Who's the real threat? Remember, Snowden said US spied on Chancellor Merkel's phone! https://t.co/P0D2pkjvZJ

**4.2.** It includes a third figure (person, group, institution, country, etc.) to persuade someone to join in and follow an idea or behavior just because it is what the third figure does (**Bandwagoning, Appeal to Authority**). It may involve the appeal to the masses (“everyone is doing it, so do it”). The attempt to incorporate someone into a pre-existing course of action because someone else is doing it differentiates Bandwagoning from *appeal to false authority*. Bandwagoning also differs from ad populum / ad antiquitam, which may involve the reference to a wide collectivity, but to promote one’s (or his/her government) own actions or ideas, not to intend that a third party follows suit. Exap

* We welcome the actions of Canada and the UK to address forced labor and human rights in Xinjiang by raising awareness and imposing costs on organizations that enable abuses. We encourage others to take similar steps and join our shared condemnation of PRC abuses in the region.
* The U.S. commends Italy for setting an example for its neighbors by again repatriating and prosecuting an Italian citizen who allegedly traveled to Syria to support ISIS. We urge other Western European countries to follow suit and take responsibility for their citizens.