The Grammar of Social Relations Lab

Magdalena Formanowicz

SOCIAL GR MM R LAB

SWPS University

SDPS

Our work in language

Gender-fair language

Gender slurs

Mobilizing others

Social Grammar Model

Agency in well-being

Identity language

The effects of dehumanizing language

Our work in language

Gender-fair language

Gender slurs

Mobilizing others

Social Grammar Model

Agency in well-being

Identity language

The effects of dehumanizing language

Challenging status quo

Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin
OnlineFirst
© 2024 by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Inc, Article Reuse Guidelines
https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672241238418

Sage Journals

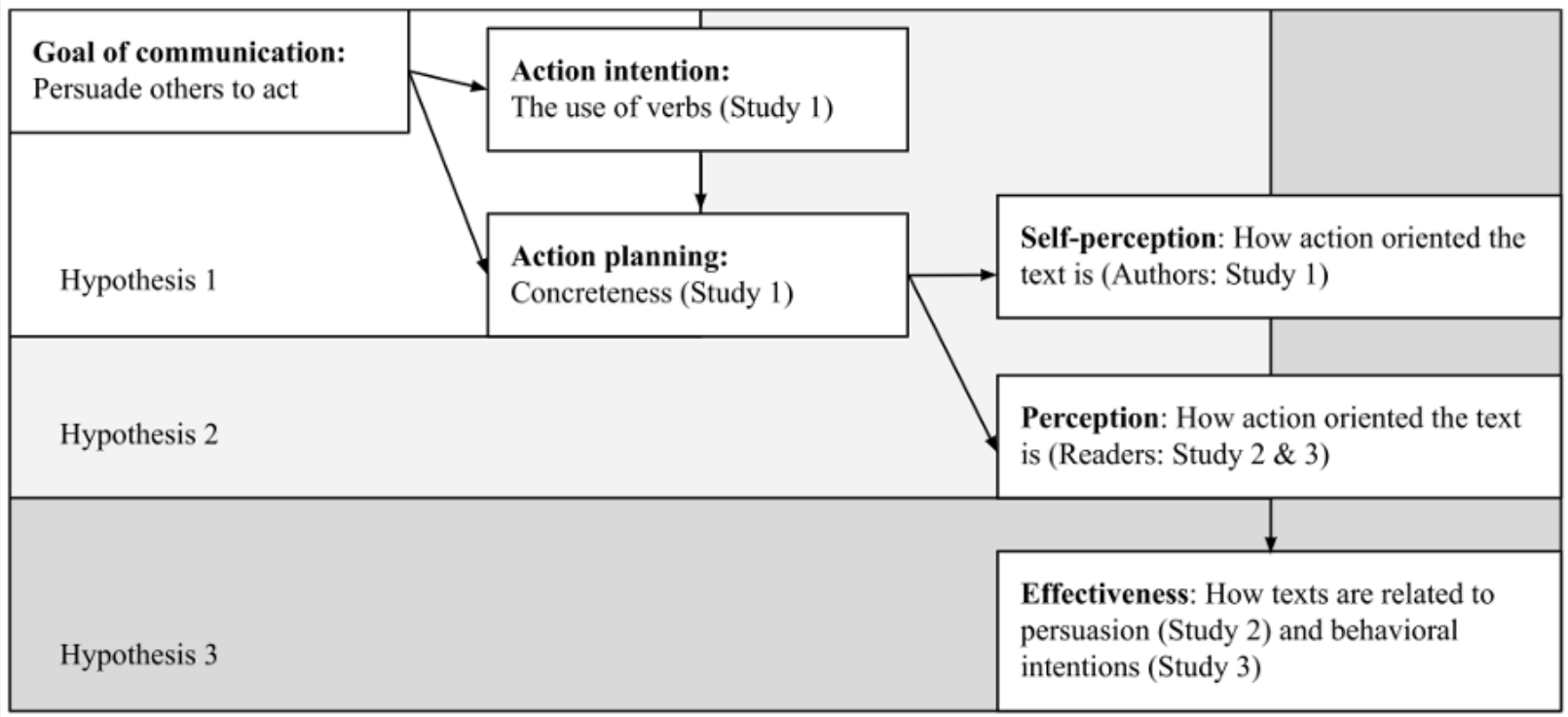
Empirical Research Paper

Mobilize Is a Verb: The Use of Verbs and Concrete Language Is Associated With Authors' and Readers' Perceptions of a Text's Action Orientation and Persuasiveness

Magdalena Formanowicz [1], Marta Beneda [1,2], Marta Witkowska [1], Jan Nikadon [1], and Caterina Suitner [3]

Challenging status quo

Challenging status quo



Formanowicz et al., 2024

Challenging status quo

Challenging status quo

- Procedure:
  - Write a leaflet **expressing your thoughts about participating in environmental action/volunteering/voting** in elections or **write a leaflet encouraging others to participate in environmental action/volunteering/to vote** in elections

- Participants asked to evaluate the text they had written in terms of action orientation

Challenging status quo

Environmental action has never had so much traction and focus as it has nowadays. Up to this point in human history, it has been about advancement and marvelling at out intelligence and what we can do. In the last couple of decades, awareness has grown around the impact we are having on the planet. There is much enlightenment and positive action to reduce the impact we are having on the planet in an effort to be more sustainable. Yes there are certainly many doubts over "green label" initiatives and the benefits that they purport to yield - zero carbon badges can sometimes hide scenarios where they are actually worse than conventional "non green" actions. So environmental action is a great thing in general, and I do and will participate, but am also mindful of the bigger picture and what I'm trying to achieve. blocking a road for the purpose of "Insulate Britan" is actually harmful to the cause and I believe actually is a hindrance to taking positive steps.

Challenging status quo

Please take care of our environment. This is really important as we only have one planet and our actions are causing it harm. We can do this is many different ways things like walking or using a bike where possible instead of motorised fossil fuel transport. Turning the heating or Aircon down and instead dressing suitably for the weather. Drying clothes outside instead of using a tumble dryer and only washing clothes when actually dirty. Skipping fast fashion makes a huge difference as fast fashion is a major polluter. Wear clothes for as long as possible repair when needed. Avoiding buying new clothes due to them being trendy. You can also buy clothes from thrift shops, ebay, vinted etc instead of buying new.

Challenging status quo

Measures:

- ***Verbs:***

the percentage of lexical verbs in their base form (VB; e.g., ‘work’, ‘love’) relative to the total number of words in the text

- ***Concreteness:***

we used concreteness ratings provided for over 40,000 English words by over 4,000 participants in the study by Brysbaert et al. (2014)

Challenging status quo

Measures:

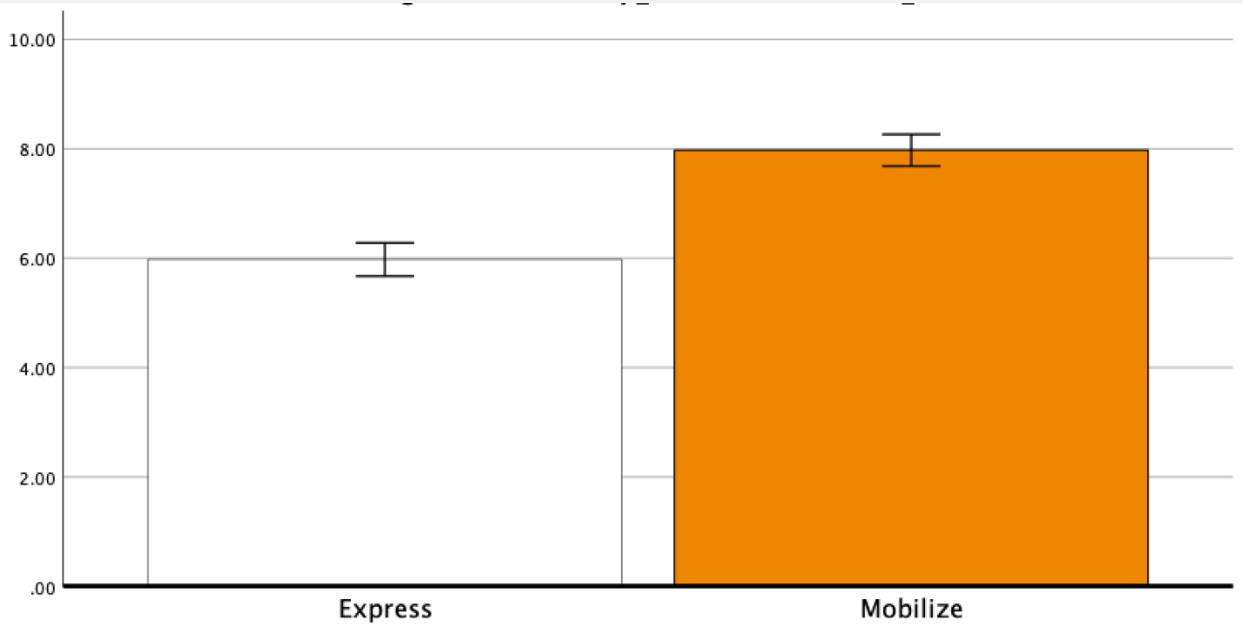
- ***Action orientation:***

Participants rated the text written by them as: practical, task-oriented, and focused on getting things done

Challenging status quo

Verbs:

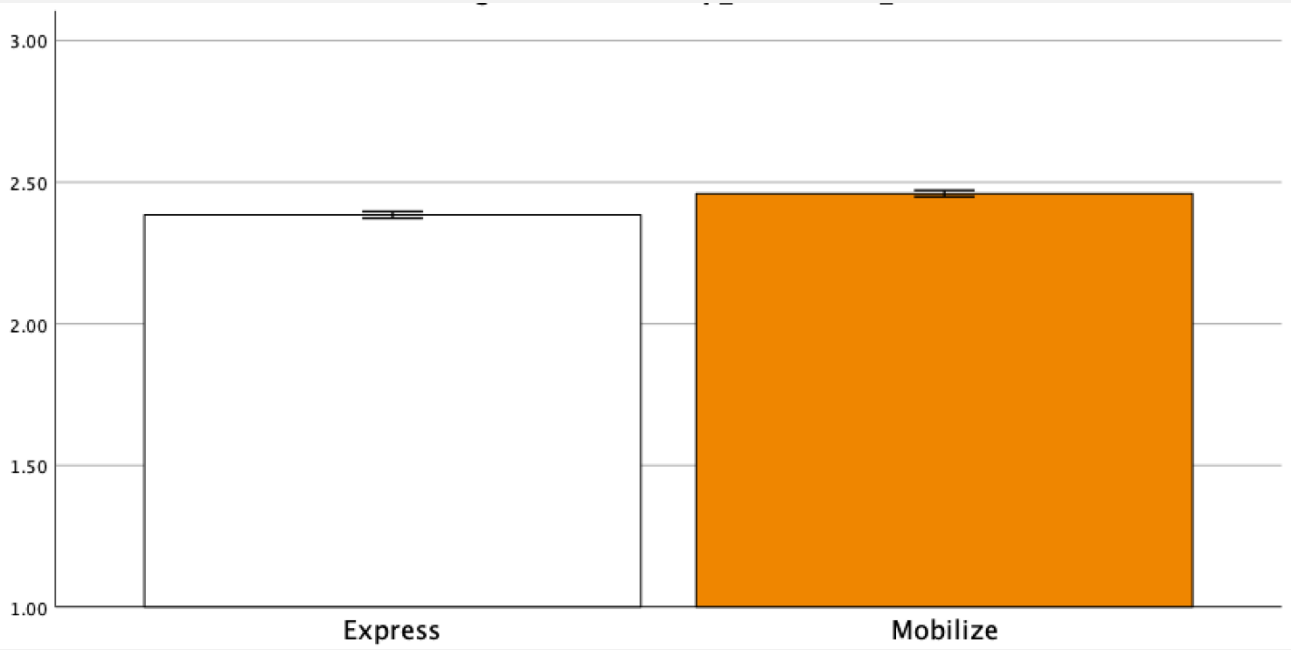
F(1, 722) = 90.51, p < .001, η^2 = .11, 90% CI [.08, .15].



Challenging status quo

Concreteness:

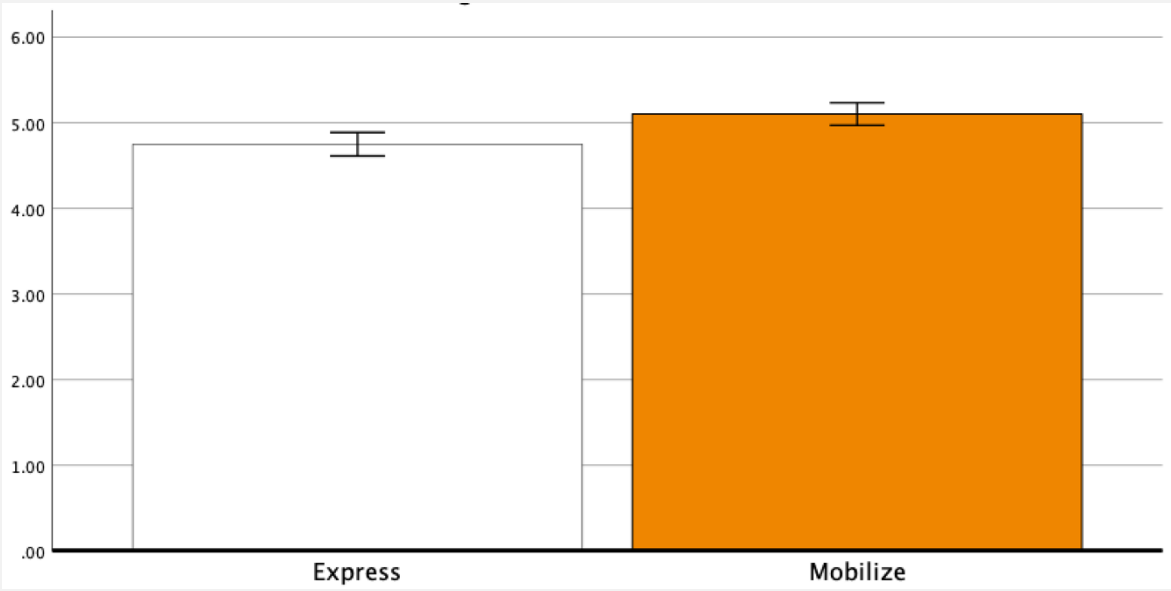
F(1, 722) = 86.50, p < .001, η^2 = .11, 90% CI [.07, .14]



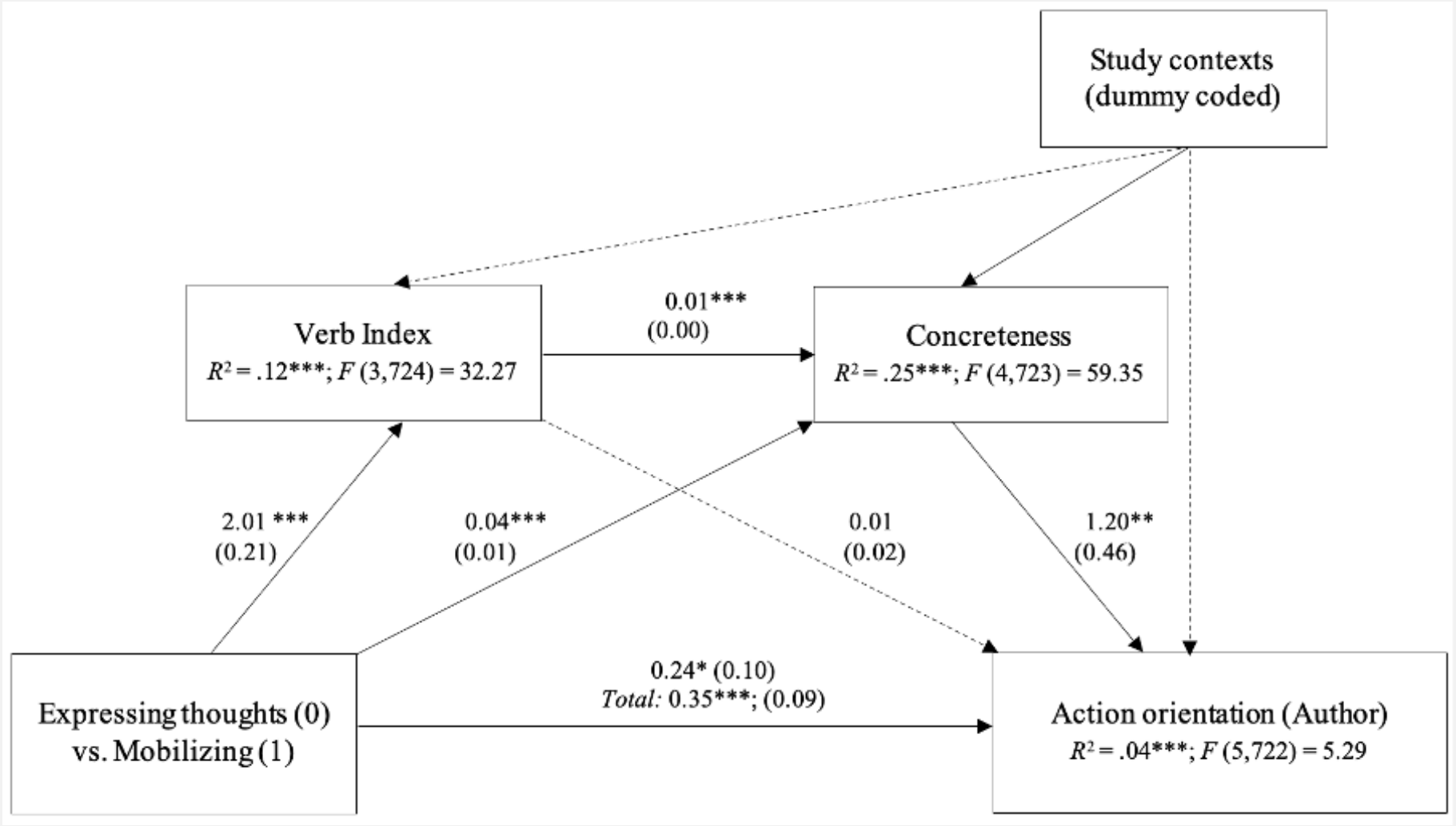
Challenging status quo

Action orientation:

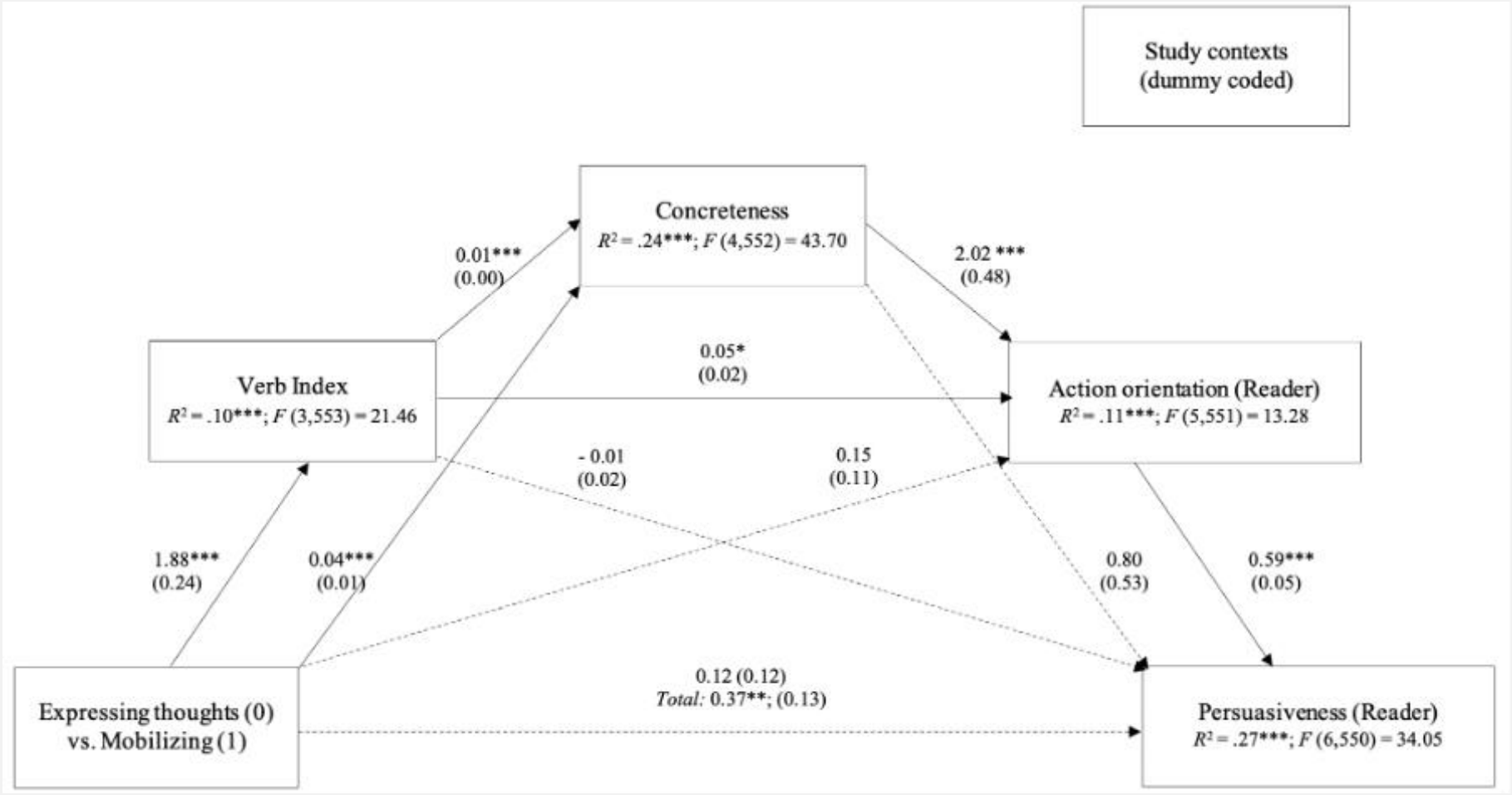
F(1, 722) = 13.71, p < .001, η^2 = .02, 90% CI [.01, .04]



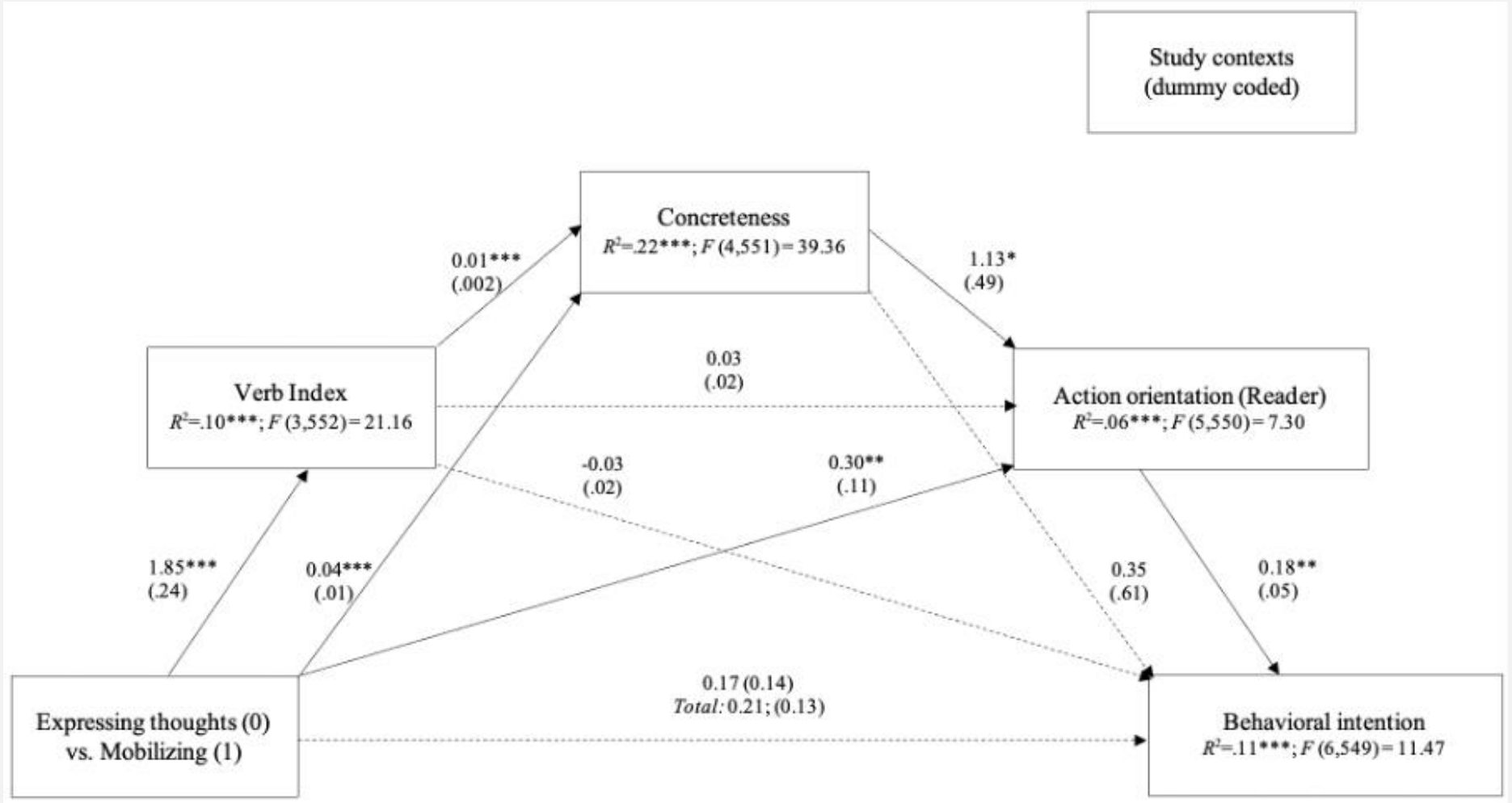
Challenging status quo



Challenging status quo



Challenging status quo



Challenging status quo

Raise awareness of mental health issues
Prevent climate change and protect environment
Increase voting turnout in elections
Reduce economic inequality
Increase volunteering
Advocate for free speech
Protect human rights
Ensure food security and sustainable agriculture
Advocate for digital privacy and security

Highlights by Authors (N = 800) and Readers (N = 800)

raise awareness of mental health issues	No	Hey everyone, let's come together to shine a light on mental health! It's crucial to start conversations, offer support, and break the stigma. By raising awareness, sharing our stories, and educating others, we can make a difference in the lives of those struggling. Let's share resources, show empathy, and foster understanding. Every conversation counts in making a positive difference in someone's life. Together, we can create a more compassionate and supportive community for everyone dealing with mental health challenges. Let's build a safe space for everyone to openly talk about their struggles and seek help without fear of judgment or shame. Join us in this important mission!

Challenging status quo

Real-life (election) Context

Politicians may align their language with their persuasive goals;

Function as a catalyst for action orientation among constituents, effectively serving as a tool for mobilization

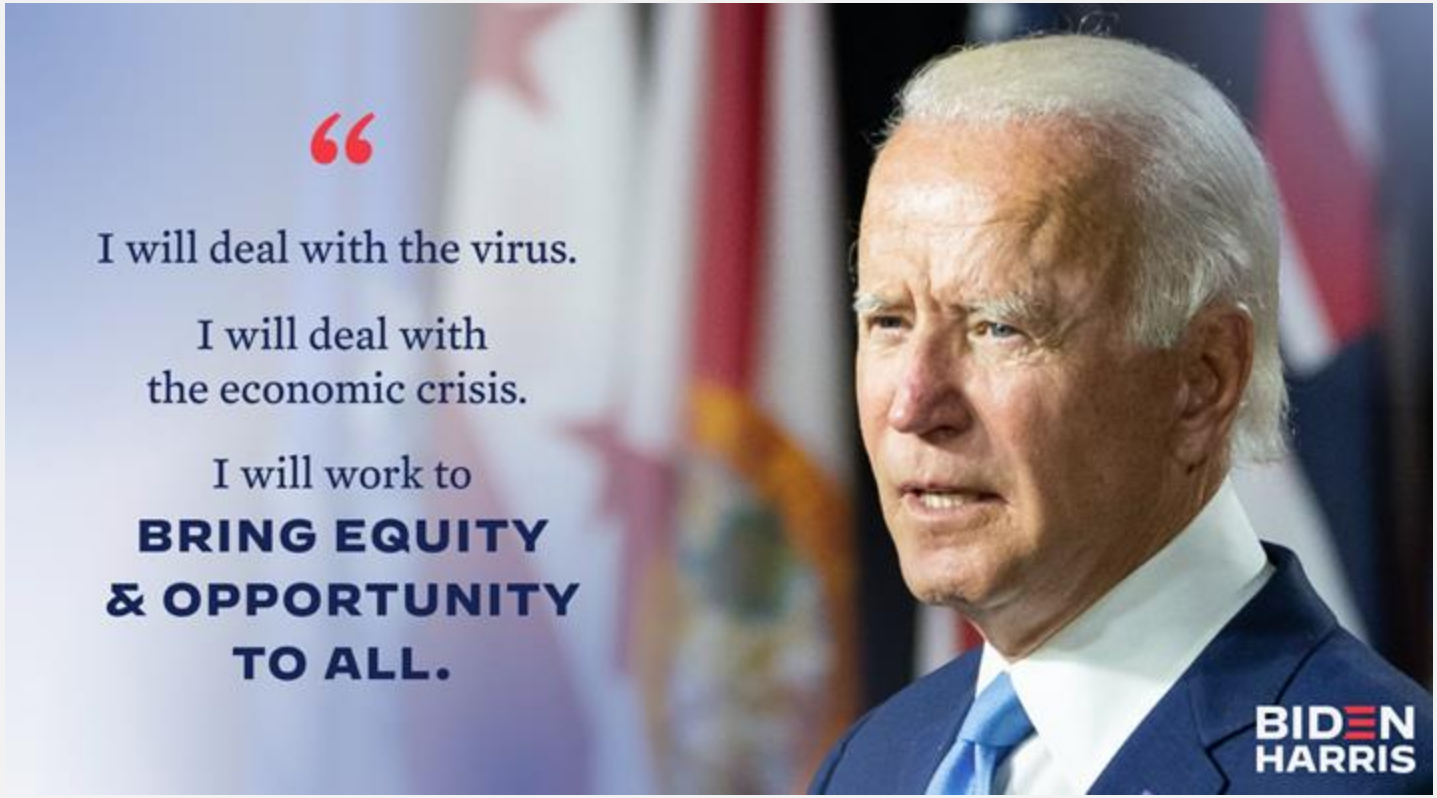
Also, enhances perceptions of the speaker's agency, thereby boosting the perceived effectiveness of the campaign (Formanowicz et al., 2021)

Longitudinal approach:

We examined whether as actors come closer to their goal they will also use more agentic language.

YES WE CAN

Text UNITED to 30330
BUILD BACK
BETTER
BIDEN


“
I will deal with the virus.
I will deal with
the economic crisis.
I will work to
BRING EQUITY
& OPPORTUNITY
TO ALL.
BIDEN
HARRIS

MAKE AMERICA
GREAT AGAIN

Vote Your Values
Fight for Your Rights
ACLU Kentucky

Honor the past,
support the future -
vote!
Design by: Department of Defense Graphic & Presentation Division ★ Slogan by: Andrea K. Bristol, Civilian, USA, Rock Island, IL
DOD114 Federal Voting Assistance Program, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1155 ★ www.fvap.gov ★ vote@fvap.ncr.gov ★ (800) 438-VOTE

Challenging status quo

~ 0.5M original tweets from Democrat (D) and Republican (R) candidates;

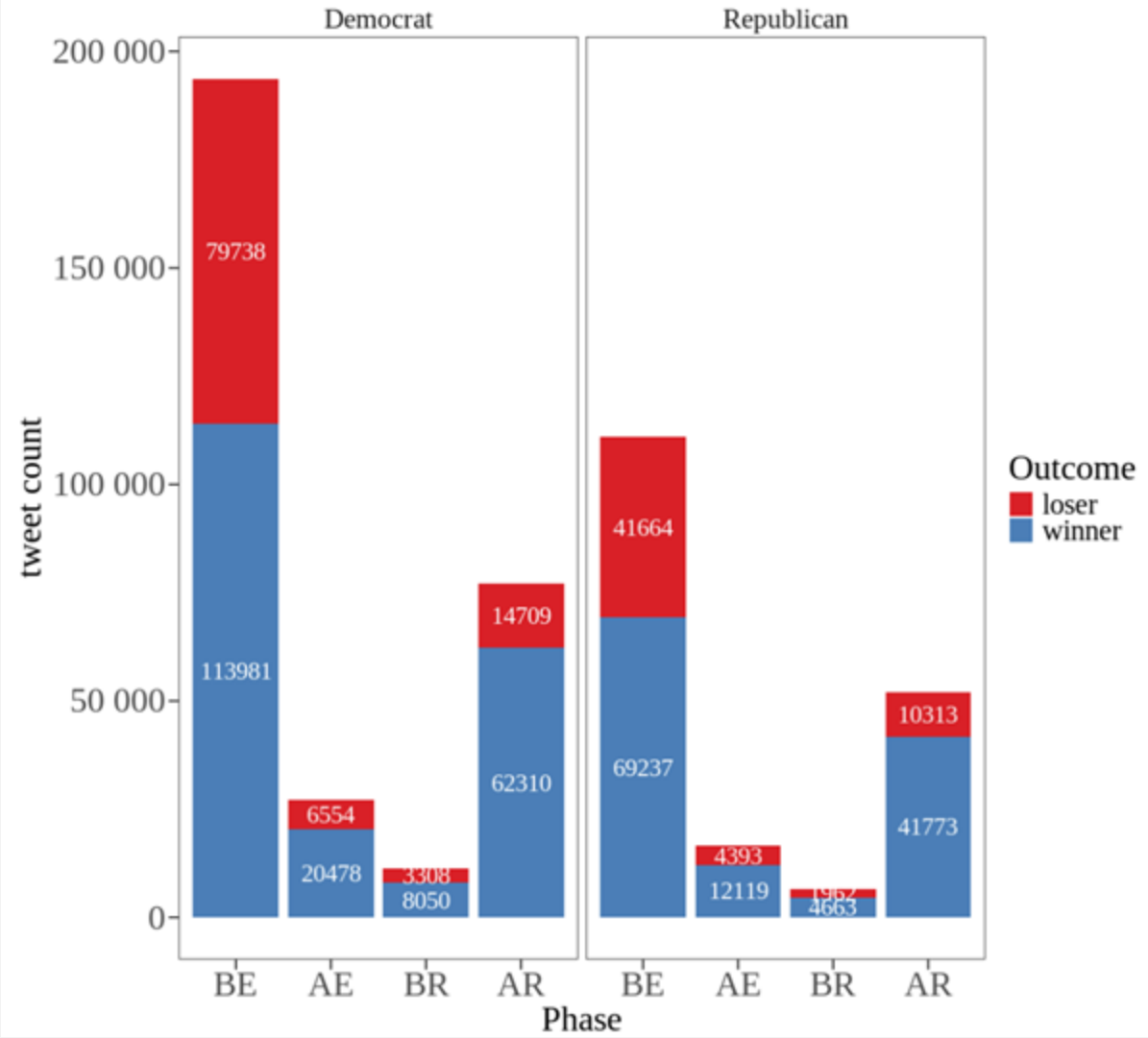
180 days prior and after the election;

870 candidates (454 D and 416 R)

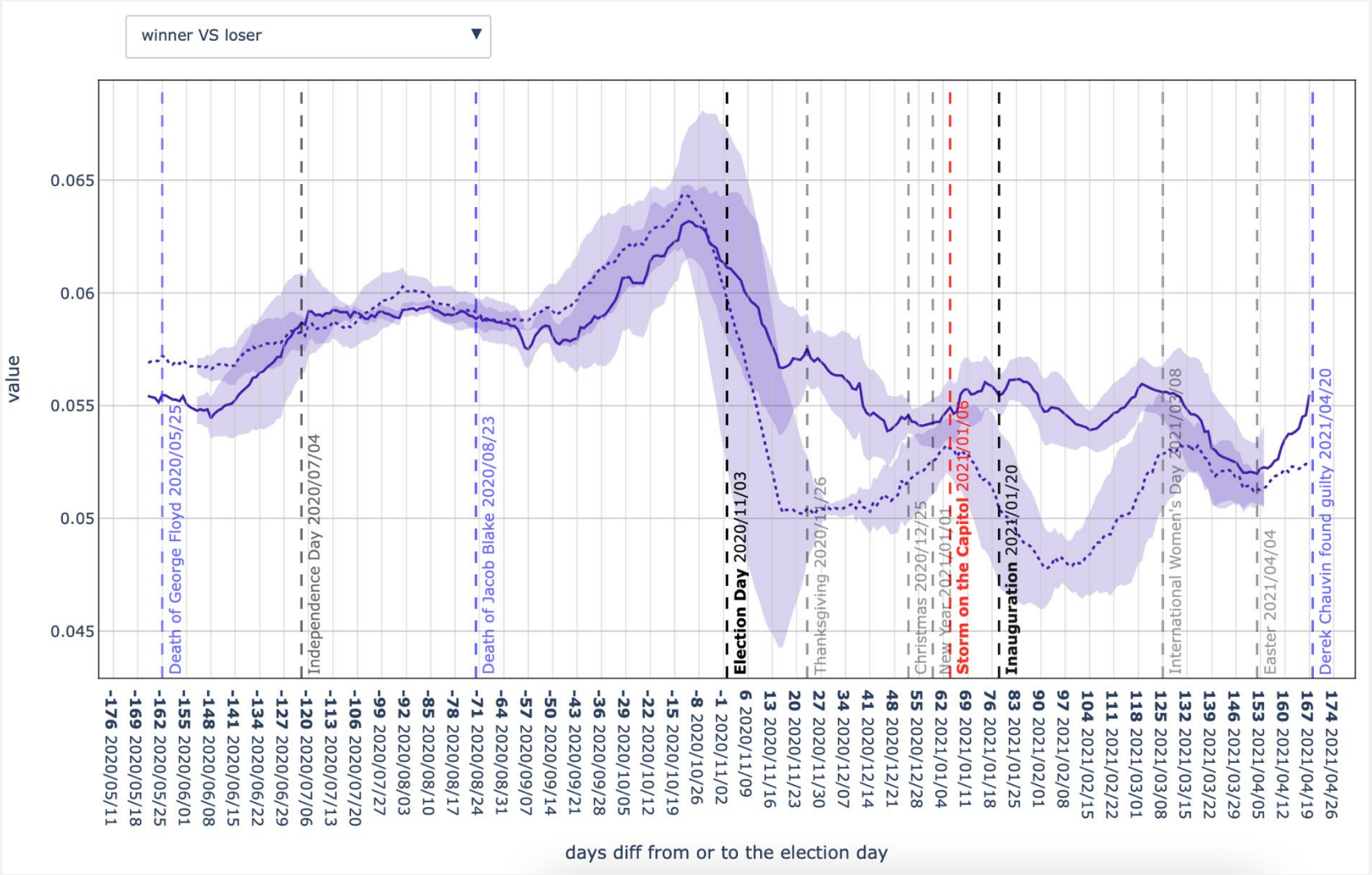
1283 Twitter profiles (671 D and 612 R)

Agency was quantified in each tweet using BERTAgent;

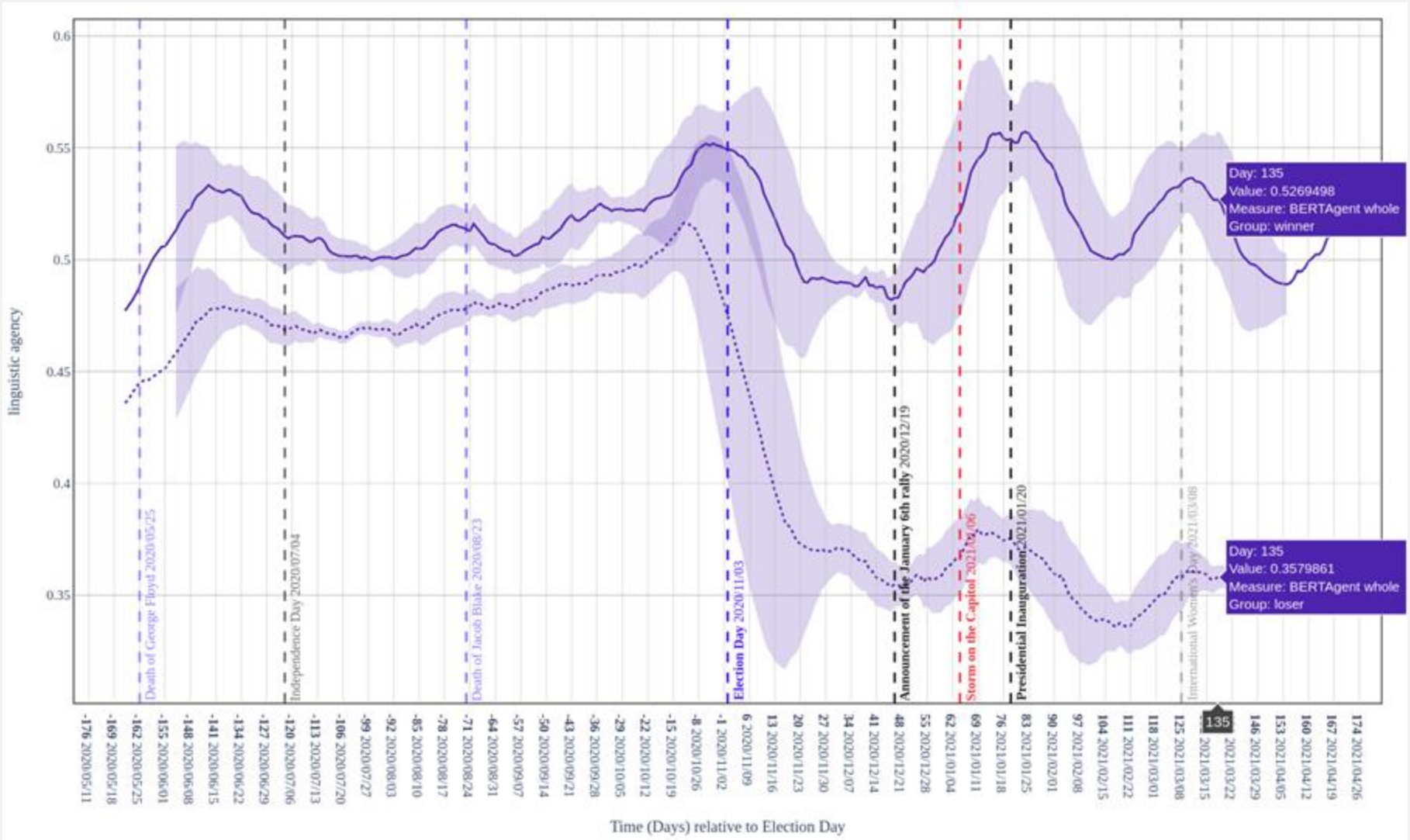
A daily average was computed for every candidate.

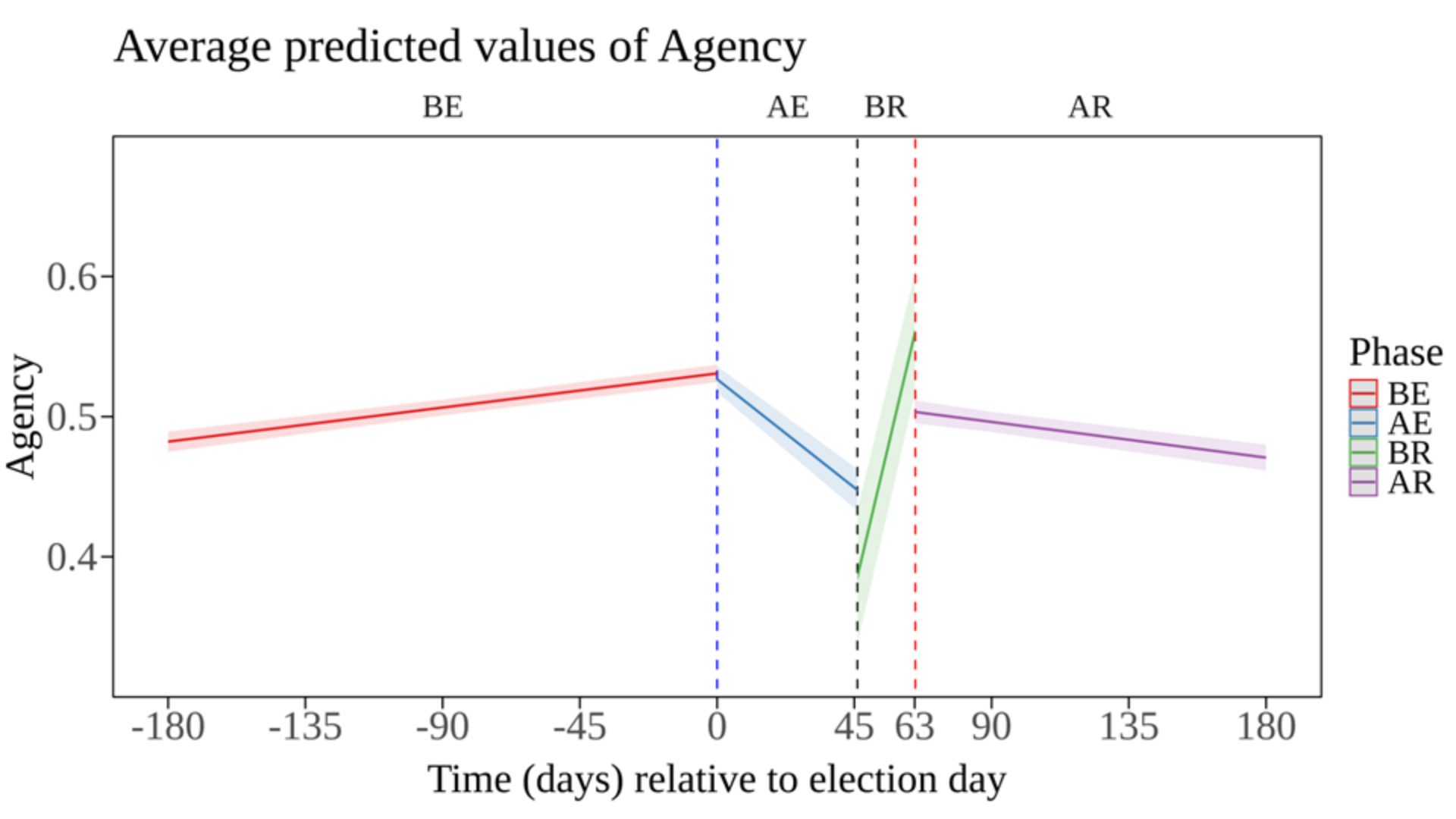

Democrat
Republican
200 000
150 000
100 000
50 000
0
tweet count
79738
113981
6554
20478
3308
8050
14709
62310
41664
69237
4393
12119
10313
41773
BE
AE
BR
AR
BE
AE
BR
AR
Phase
Outcome
loser
winner

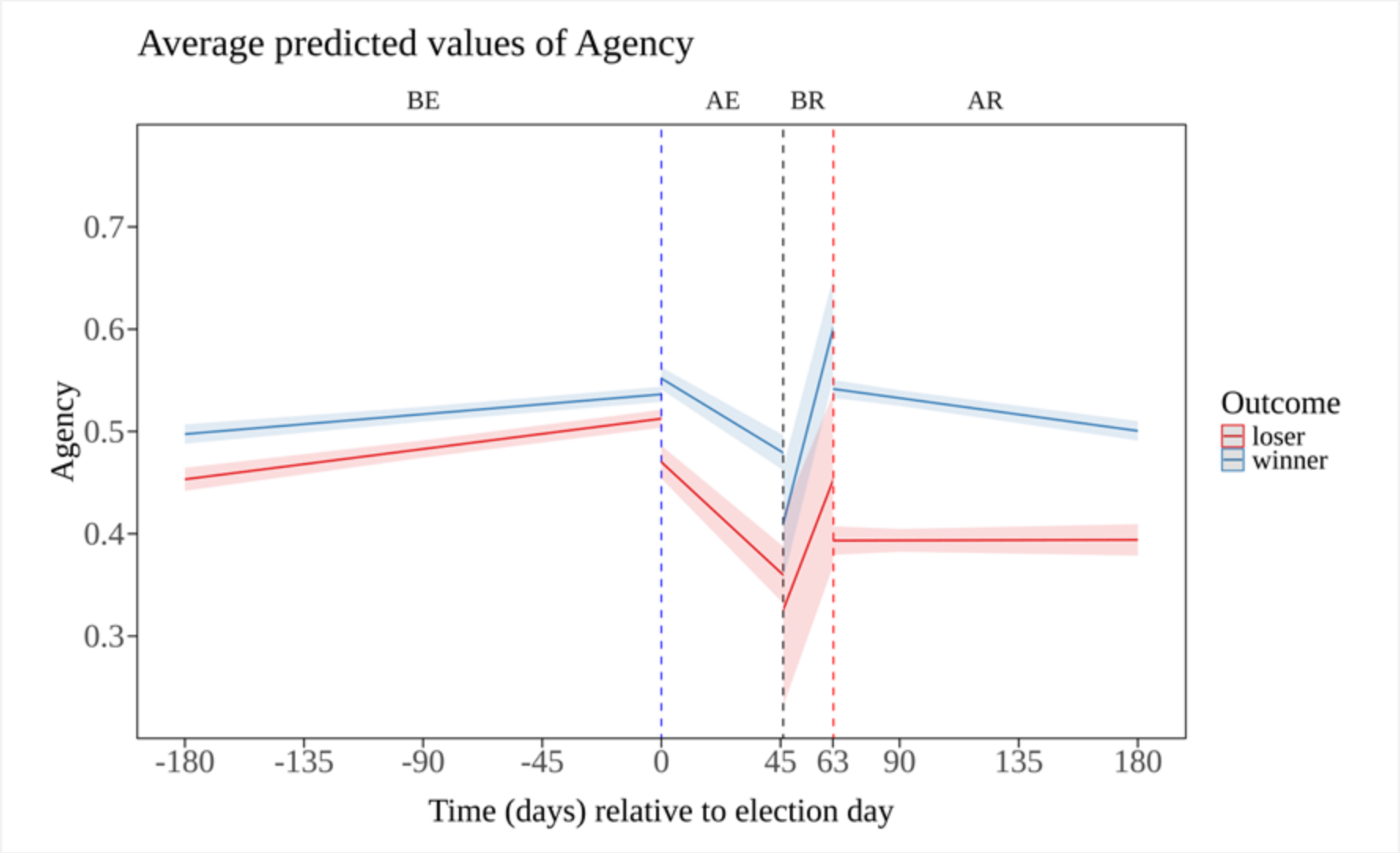
Challenging status quo



Challenging status quo




Average predicted values of Agency
BE
AE
BR
AR
0.6
0.5
0.4
Agency
-180
-135
-90
-45
0
45
63
90
135
180
Time (days) relative to election day
Phase
BE
AE
BR
AR


Average predicted values of Agency
BE
AE
BR
AR
0.7
0.6
0.5
0.4
0.3
Agency
-180
-135
-90
-45
0
45
63
90
135
180
Time (days) relative to election day
Outcome
loser
winner

Dziękuję!

Grazie!

Thank you!

SOCIAL GR MM R LAB

SWPS University

SDPS