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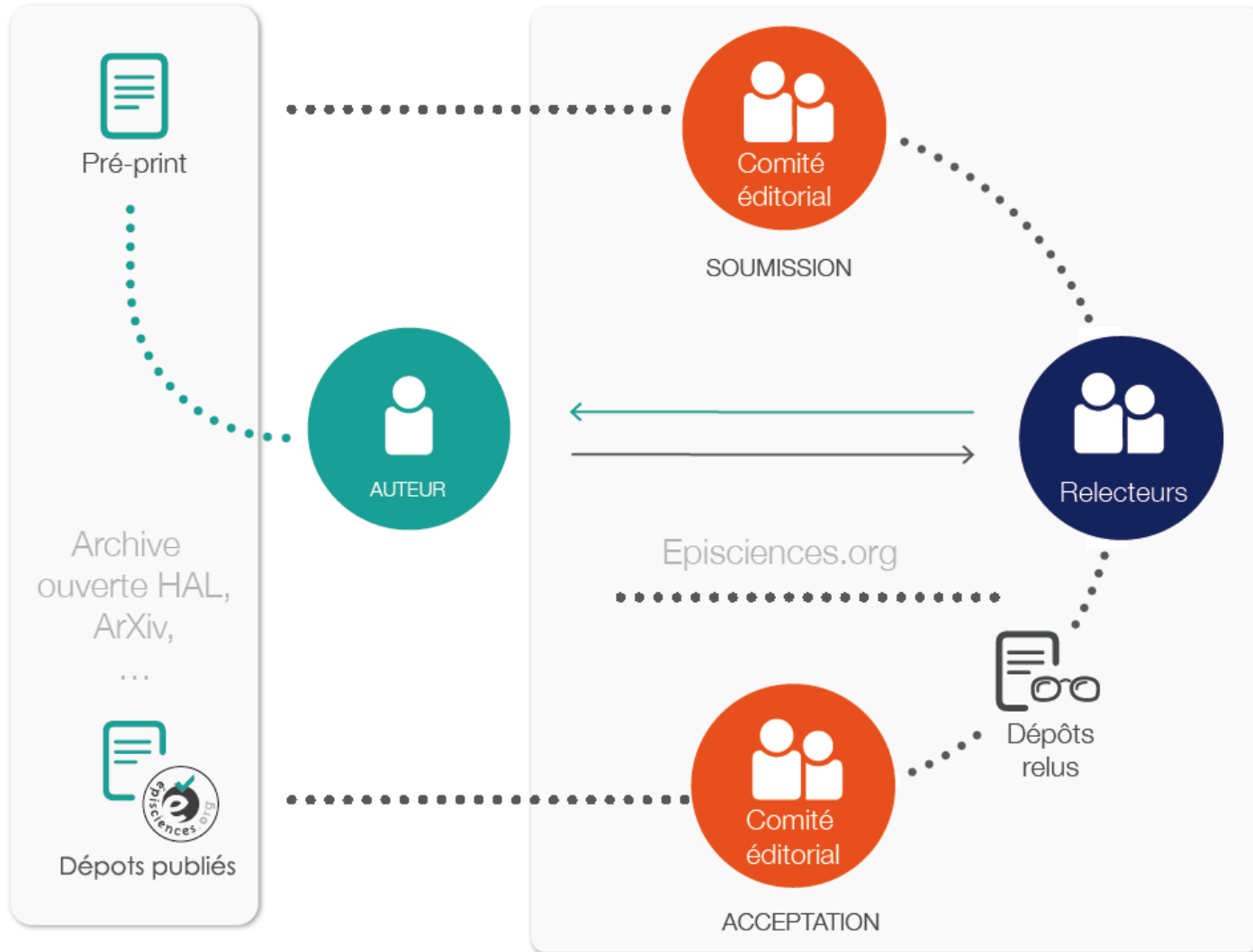


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Skillicorn, David and Leuprecht, Christian - **Deception in Speeches of Candidates for Public Office** 

jdmdh:1276 - Journal of Data Mining & Digital Humanities, August 17, 2015, 2015

Deception in Speeches of Candidates for Public Office

Authors: Skillicorn, David and Leuprecht, Christian

The contribution of this article is twofold: the adaptation and application of models of deception from psychology, combined with data-mining techniques, to the text of speeches given by candidates in the 2008 U.S. presidential election; and the observation of both short-term and medium-term differences in the levels of deception. Rather than considering the effect of deception on voters, deception is used as a lens through which to observe the self-perceptions of candidates and campaigns. The method of analysis is fully automated and requires no human coding, and so can be applied to many other domains in a straightforward way. The authors posit explanations for the observed variation in terms of a dynamic tension between the goals of campaigns at each moment in time, for example gaps between their view of the candidate's persona and the persona expected for the position; and the difficulties of crafting and sustaining a persona, for example, the cognitive cost and the need for apparent continuity with past actions and perceptions. The changes in the resulting balance provide a new channel by which to understand the drivers of political campaigning, a channel that is hard to manipulate because its markers are created subconsciously.

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Keywords: political discourse, corpus analytics, U.S. presidential elections, deception, singular value decomposition, [SHS.SCIPO] Humanities and Social Sciences/Political science

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Deception in Speeches of Candidates for Public Office

David Skillicorn¹, Christian Leuprecht² [Details](#)

- 1 School of computing [Kingston]
- 2 RMCC - Royal Military College of Canada

Abstract : The contribution of this article is twofold: the adaptation and application of models of deception from psychology, combined with data-mining techniques, to the text of speeches given by candidates in the 2008 U.S. presidential election; and the observation of both short-term and medium-term differences in the levels of deception. Rather than considering the effect of deception on voters, deception is used as a lens through which to observe the self-perceptions of candidates and campaigns. The method of analysis is fully automated and requires no human coding, and so can be applied to many other domains in a straightforward way. The authors posit explanations for the observed variation in terms of a dynamic tension between the goals of campaigns at each moment in time, for example gaps between their view of the candidate's persona and the persona expected for the position; and the difficulties of crafting and sustaining a persona, for example, the cognitive cost and the need for apparent continuity with past actions and perceptions. The changes in the resulting balance provide a new channel by which to understand the drivers of political campaigning, a channel that is hard to manipulate because its markers are created subconsciously.

Keywords : [political discourse](#) [corpus analytics](#) [U.S. presidential elections](#) [deception](#) [singular value decomposition](#)

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