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Twittering for Peace: Narratives on Otherness and Social Leaders in the Colombian Post-Conflict Time

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Chapter 5. General conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This dissertation examined the role of narratives in the digital sphere, particularly on Twitter, in the aftermath of the *Peace Agreement* (2016) between the Colombian government and the FARC insurgent group in 2016. This study primarily focused on the years 2018, 2019, and 2020, during which there was notable social unrest due to the murders of social leaders in various regions of Colombia. Furthermore, I delved into the 2022 presidential elections period. In this chapter, I outline the principal findings and conclusions. First, I detail the findings in relation to the guiding questions that underpin each chapter of my dissertation. Subsequently, I discuss the main contributions and challenges of my research. I conclude by suggesting avenues for future research.

5.2 Main findings

As mentioned in the introduction, a central question that persisted throughout all the chapters is to *what extent do Twitter narratives on social leaders contribute to a potential interpretative frame renovation of the Other in the Colombian post-conflict time?* To answer this question, I structured this dissertation into two distinct sections.

The first section, encompassing both the first and second chapters, explored narratives of social mobilization concerning endangered social leaders. The second section, detailed in the third chapter, drew on the Twitter discourse surrounding the 2022 Colombian presidential elections, with a particular emphasis on gendered alignment to discussions of Otherness. Importantly, each chapter was anchored in a central question that sought to address the overarching inquiry of the dissertation. These central questions were the baseline for the themes of each chapter. To illustrate, the inaugural question scrutinized narrative devices that might play a role in framing the public cognition and narratives about Otherness, such as metaphors. The second addressed methodological strategies for revealing dynamics within the studied narratives. The third delved into the framing resonance and potential homophily within Twitter narratives in relation to the political discourse on Otherness.

In the second chapter, I aimed to elucidate the framing of the concept of Otherness within the context of social mobilization narratives on Twitter. The initial chapter advanced a discourse analysis centered on the hashtag #NosEstanMatando [#TheyAreKillingUs], which transitioned as a significant call to action in response to systemic violence and injustice. Initially associated with violence against women in Latin America, this hashtag gained prominence in Colombia, echoing the public's denunciation of the assassination of social leaders and the associated complexities in preserving the *Peace Agreement* (2016). I delved into the intricate use of metaphors in tweets, positing their salient role in framing the public's imagination of endangered social leaders.

As such, I argued that the exploration of narratives and metaphors, drawing upon the insights of Caracciolo (2014), Damasio (2018), Valdivia (2019, 2020), Jensen (2017), among others, is integral to understanding the post-conflict context of Colombia and the impact of social media narratives. Narratives, as explained by Caracciolo and Damasio, are not just literary productions but constructs that define and reshape social reality. Therefore, I suggested that they play a critical role in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors in Colombia, especially concerning the *Peace Agreement* (2016) and the role of social leaders. These narratives, as Valdivia articulates, are instrumental in shaping cultural and political imaginaries, setting the stage for how society conceptualizes peace, justice, and coexistence.

Metaphors, too, hold a powerful sway over thought and understanding, as posited by Lakoff and Johnson (1990). In the political discourse of Colombia, as analyzed through the lenses of Valdivia and Jensen, metaphors reveal underlying political ideologies and biases, framing complex issues in ways that significantly influence public opinion and policy discussions. In the realm of social mobilization, narratives and metaphors on platforms such as Twitter prove relevant in rallying support, fostering collective action, and creating powerful, emotionally resonant messages for advocacy. They also play a pivotal role in the interpretation and reinterpretation of Otherness, a key aspect in a society striving for reconciliation and social justice. This exploration of narratives and metaphors, underpinned by the scholarship work of the mentioned authors, thus provides a comprehensive lens to analyze and interpret the complex dynamics of social mobilization, public discourse, and the ongoing process of peace and reconciliation in Colombia. This multifaceted approach underscores the power of language in shaping social realities, political perspectives, and cultural identities in the nation's post-conflict era.

The central proposition of this chapter is the impact of metaphors on the collective conceptualization of the Other. I posited that while social mobilization narratives pursue to acknowledge the Other, it simultaneously aligns with established national metaphorical frameworks. However, such narratives may also pave the way for differentiated cultural interpretations. Arguing from this standpoint, I maintain that both established and emerging narratives draw insights from the *Peace Agreement* (2016), with war-centric metaphors largely characterizing the portrayal of Otherness. My methodology employs Word Trees in Nvivo to grasp the contextual meaning around keywords such as "leaders," "peace," and "war," and Word Associations in Mozdeh to unveil deeper relationships, determining the frequency of term co-occurrences and their metaphorical connotations.

In Chapter 3, the analysis centered on tweets associated with the hashtag #LideresSociales, treating these tweets as complex tools for conveying information and influencing public sentiment in the context of post-conflict Colombia. Drawing upon the methodological foundations laid out by Hellsten & Leydesdorff (2020), the study commenced with mapping the co-occurrences of prevalent hashtags, usernames, and words. This process was facilitated using analytical tools such as

Pajek and VOSViewer, crucial for the analysis and visualization of complex data matrices.

In line with the theoretical perspective of framing as interpretive schemata, as articulated by Goffman (1974) and further developed by researchers such as (2023) and Benford (1997), the research addressed hashtags as indicators of various topics. This approach allowed for the exploration of community structures within social networks through clustering visualization techniques, following the Blondel et al. algorithm (2008) and Ling-long modularity principle (Noack, 2009). The study also incorporated the perspective of framing from the Other, which remains underexplored in existing literature (Georgi, 2023).

A secondary methodological approach involved examining fluctuations in connection strengths between nodes over successive years, using the tie strength ratio as a key metric. This method, informed by Granovetter's (1973) work on network information flow, was instrumental in identifying robust community clusters and discerning influential similarities or differences in meaning patterns. The research further explored high positive and high negative relative index co-words across the years, aiming to pinpoint significant shifts in node correlations. This analysis was significant in uncovering how public sentiment and framing of social leaders developed following the *Peace Agreement* (2016).

Finally, employing Mozdeh for an additional layer of analysis, the research assessed the annual difference in proportions of these connections. This step was important for identifying associated words that co-occurred more or less frequently than expected, providing insights into statistically significant changes in the framing of social leaders on Twitter. This comprehensive methodological approach ensured a nuanced understanding of the dynamic framing of social leaders and the conceptualization of Otherness in the digital sphere during a critical post-conflict period in Colombia.

In my examination of the fourth chapter, I explored how Gustavo Petro and Francia Márquez, during the 2022 presidential elections, assessing their narratives to address the need of recognizing "the Other" in Colombia, a concept pivotal to my research. This analysis was framed against the hashtag #EleccionesPresidenciales2022. My focus was on evaluating the potential

resonance of these political narratives, especially considering Márquez's role as a black woman from a disadvantaged region, representing voices often marginalized in Colombian society. The exploration extended to discern whether her narrative resonated more with women than with men, a phenomenon known as homophily in social media discussions (Esteve Del Valle & Borge, 2018; McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001; Barberá et al., 2015).

Colombia, known for its diverse population yet marred by a history of conflict and exclusion, provides a rich backdrop for this study. In this light, I examined the role of Twitter in shaping public opinion about the emerging political landscape in Colombia, particularly the narratives of Petro and Márquez, both prominent figures from the Colombia Humana party. Their rhetoric during the campaign emphasized bringing infrastructure to rural areas, transitioning to a green economy, and shifting from military to dialogue-based responses to illegal armed groups. Their "paz total" initiative, aimed at revitalizing the *Peace Agreement* (2016), focused on engaging peace negotiations with various factions, including the illegal armed guerrilla Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), and to address long-standing issues of marginalization and inequality.

The study analyzed tweet content to measure alignment with Márquez's narratives, considering variations in engagement between men and women (Holmberg & Hellsten, 2015; Scarborough, 2018; McGregor & Mourão, 2016). As such, I analyzed tweet content, paying particular attention to the differential engagement between male and female participants. The methodology incorporated content analysis through topic modeling and social network analysis of hashtag co-occurrences, following the established frameworks of Stelmach and Boudet (2022) and Hellsten & Leydesdorff (2019, 2020). Additionally, the study applied the external-internal index for identifying gender-based group embedding, as delineated in Esteve Del Valle (2022). Gender detection in the tweets was conducted in accordance with the methods described by Holmberg & Hellsten (2015) and McGregor & Mourão (2016), facilitating the analysis of gender variations in online discourse. For topic modeling, the research utilized Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), adhering to the methodologies proposed by Blei (2012) and Ahmed & Klan (2023), and employed the LDAvis library for topic visualization, as recommended by Sievert

& Shirley (2014). The application of the z-test for differences in proportions was in line with the procedures advocated by Benjamini & Hochberg (1995), ensuring statistical validity in the analysis of the large dataset. This methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive examination of Twitter interactions during the presidential elections, providing insights into public engagement with the narratives of Francia Márquez and uncovering gender-specific patterns in the political discourse. I used content analysis via topic modeling and social network analysis of hashtag co-occurrences, along with the external-internal index to detect gender-based group embedding. Preliminary findings indicated a stronger ideological-political alignment with Márquez's framing among women than men, suggesting a nuanced gender effect in the Twitter discussions.

The study conducted on chapter four aimed at contributing to the broader scholarship on peacebuilding narratives, highlighting the role of Otherness in peace processes and the importance of citizen participation. I also addressed the framing of female presidential candidates and public cognition in response to rhetoric from female social leaders, offering a new perspective on the potential emergence of a new cultural pathway in Colombia.

In this context, the study also delves into the concept of framing as an interpretive act, drawing on works by Snow, Vliegenthart, Goffman, and others. The analysis considers various emotional frames and the concept of hopefulness in political rhetoric. The focus on networked homophily and gender further enriches the study, examining gender differences in Twitter behavior and engagement.

Finally, the case study of Colombia, with its complex history and socio-political dynamics, offers a unique perspective on the narratives and framing surrounding the peace process and the election of progressive leaders such as Petro and Márquez. The research methodologies employed, including topic modeling and network analysis, provide a comprehensive understanding of the public discourse on Twitter, contributing valuable insights to the fields of political communication and social media analysis.

5.2.1 First question: How do Twitter narratives about social leaders intertwine with peace and conflict narratives, and what metaphors underpin these narratives, particularly in highlighting the roles and protection of these leaders in social mobilization?

In this chapter, the focus was on unraveling the metaphorical configurations underpinning Twitter narratives around the hashtag #NosEstanMatando [#TheyAreKillingUs], particularly in relation to Colombian social leaders who are often spotlighted as representatives of 'Otherness'. Central to the analysis is the dynamic role of social leaders, shaped by ever-evolving socio-cultural processes, where they emerge from the narratives as protectors of society, often facing threats such as assassination and systematic murder. This study notably highlighted the case of Maria del Pilar Hurtado, underscoring how female leaders are perceived with an additional layer of vulnerability, symbolized by their "silencing" through death, an act which echoes as a collective tragedy.

This research reveals a gendered perspective in these narratives, especially in the Spanish context where the term "líderes" (leaders) encompasses both genders, yet narratives associated with female leaders often dominate, emphasizing their vulnerabilities and roles from defenders of rights to victims of violence. The metaphoricity of the narratives uncovered a persistent antinomy between war and peace in Colombian discourse, with war personified as an overpowering force and peace appearing as both a lifeline and a goal under constant threat.

Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Valdivia (2019, 2020), Jensen (2017), and the historical insights of Uribe (2020) and García (2017), the analysis corroborates the persistence of war metaphors in Colombian discourse. However, it also suggests a potential shift in public perception and narrative framing, as the expected strong correlation between war and peace narratives was weaker than anticipated. The metaphorical undertones in these discussions brought forth themes of vulnerability, struggle, significant loss upon death, representation of marginalized identities, and the stimulation of collective action, highlighting both the physical and ideological implications of war.

The gendered narrative treatment of female leaders, aligning with Esteve Del Valle et al. (2020) observations, offers a counter-narrative to traditional peace-war dichotomies, advocating for more inclusive perspectives on collective action. This aligns with Kittay's (1990) assertion on metaphors, showing that Twitter narratives reframe existing concepts, particularly the experiences of social leaders in the context of Colombia's historical conflict. The metaphorical language intertwines the collective trauma and individual experiences, especially of women, with contemporary events represented in hashtags.

In conclusion, this study reveals a shift in narrative framework, with a pronounced emphasis on female social leaders and the emergence of life-affirming stories. This transition suggests a move towards more inclusive and diverse interpretations of Otherness and social mobilization in the post-conflict era. The findings, while aligning with historical narratives of violence and the metaphorization of war in Colombia, they also point to a transition in narrative focus. This switch in narrative framing and metaphor usage on Twitter could signal a broader societal shift in how Colombians are processing their past and envisioning their future in the aftermath of the *Peace Agreement* (2016).

5.2.2 Second question: What discursive patterns and dynamics represent the studied narratives when approaching social leaders on Twitter?

The third chapter focuses on a more nuanced methodological proposal to analyse the Twitter debate on social leaders. Accordingly, the research question is *To what extent do dynamics in node associations between three years after the signing of the Peace Agreement (2016) represent patterns or changes in the framing of social leaders on Twitter?*

In the second chapter, the focus was on presenting a nuanced methodological approach to analyze the Twitter discourse on Colombian social leaders, particularly through the hashtag #LideresSociales, from 2018 to 2020. This period, marking the years following the *Peace Agreement* (2016), was pivotal in understanding dynamics of node associations and their impact on the framing of social leaders.

In this chapter I proposed an automated analysis of the hashtag #LideresSociales during social mobilizations, capturing the shift in Twitter narratives from mourning to proactive action, community representation, and transformative efforts. By 2020, these discussions expanded to include critiques of governmental bodies, military institutions, and the media's roles in ongoing disputes. Simultaneously, there was an increased acknowledgment of the integral roles of social leaders in their communities and the awareness of the contribution of various institutions to exacerbating conflict.

This chapter extends beyond mere linguistic or statistical analysis, as it unveils the profound cultural connotations and dynamics of framing around social leaders, emphasizing the importance of co-occurrences in grasping public sentiment. Observable shifts in the narrative, particularly regarding the portrayal of the Other, highlight the symbolic meaning of social leaders and reveal progressive narrative structures and mechanisms propelling these changes. These patterns, including the association of words, hashtags, and mentions, provide a comprehensive view of the Twitter debates and the main issues discussed, especially concerning the threats against social leaders.

The approach adopted for this study incorporated the Blondel et al. algorithm (2008) for detecting clusters, as recommended by Hellsten, Opthof, and Leydesdorff (2020), to enhance the identification of framing topics. This clustering visualization uncovered communities within social networks, revealing divisions and connectedness. Additionally, eigenvector centrality, as defined by Ruhnau (2000), was measured to identify the most influential nodes within these networks annually. The study also analyzed connection strength fluctuations using the tie strength ratio to ascertain influential similarities or differences in meaning patterns within the network, as discussed by Georgakopoulos & Polis (2017).

This comprehensive methodological approach has provided significant insights into the framing of social leaders on Twitter. The findings resonate with the theoretical frameworks of Goffman (1974), Vicari (2023), and Benford (1997), indicating a shift from traditional negative portrayals of social leaders in Colombia towards recognizing them as integral community members and subjects of rights. This shift aligns with the historical context of narratives of marginalization, as

discussed by Uribe (2020) and Guerrero & Soler (2020), and suggests a reconfiguration of public sentiment, corroborated by the transformative nature of the *Peace Agreement* (2016) noted by Hernández & Gualdrón (2022).

However, the research also acknowledges the impact of the digital divide in Colombia, indicated by the Colombian Ministry of Technologies (2019), which may influence the representativeness of these narratives. This observation points to the need for future research to explore how narratives might differ across various segments of Colombian society. Further research avenues include exploring the longitudinal impact of Twitter narratives on offline social movements, as suggested by González-Bailón & Wang (2015), integrating qualitative frame analysis to deepen understanding of nuances within these narratives, and analyzing the emergence and interactions of new hashtags over time. Additionally, understanding the role of influential Twitter users and networks in shaping these narratives, as suggested by Vliegenhart & Zoonen (2009) and Snow, Vliegenhart & Katelaars (2019), can offer further insights into the mechanisms driving public opinion and social mobilization.

In conclusion, this chapter sheds light on the dynamic representation of social leaders in post-conflict Colombia and suggests avenues for future research. The study presented here delves into how digital narratives might affect societal attitudes and policies in these settings, thereby broadening the understanding of the role digital communication plays in social change.

5.2.3 Third question: To what extent does the rhetoric by Francia Márquez on the Other resonate in the public debate around the elections? Is there a gender homophilous effect in the Twitter network on occasion of the Presidential elections?

This chapter aimed to explore the framing resonance in Twitter narratives regarding Petro and Márquez's rhetoric in the Colombian presidential elections of 2022. The primary questions addressed include the traction gained by Petro and Márquez's rhetoric in public discourse, particularly concerning the concept of Otherness, and whether Márquez's narrative resonated more with women, indicating potential homophilous effects within the Twitter network during the elections.

In examining tweets related to Petro and Márquez's campaign narratives, a focus was placed on the interplay between gender, content, and hashtag use. Employing Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), the study identified topics semantically connected to both Petro and Márquez's discourses. Notably, the female dataset showed a stronger connection to Márquez's narrative, with terms such as 'vivir' [to live], 'vida' [life], 'paz' [peace], 'dignidad' [dignity] and 'mujeres' [women] being prominent.

The analysis highlighted differences in tweet content between genders. Male tweets tended to focus on the broader Colombian political scenario, often adopting a critical tone, whereas female discourse was more optimistic, reflecting collective sentiments and aligning with the campaign's language.

The analysis of Twitter mentions revealed a lack of pronounced gender-based homophily, contradicting Esteve Del Valle & Bravo (2017)'s findings of a homophilic tendency among political figures on Twitter. Both male and female users mentioned individuals of either gender almost equally. The E-I index suggested a slight gender homophily among male users, yet overall, political or ideological orientations seemed to influence user interactions more than gender.

The relationship between authors and hashtag usage was also examined. While both genders used similar hashtags, female users showed a greater affinity for those reflecting Márquez's narrative. This observation corroborates that females resonated more with Márquez's rhetoric. Additionally, the social network analysis I addressed indicated a political-ideological homophily, evident in mentions of activists and social movements, further supporting the idea of ideologically driven user interactions on Twitter.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights the complex relationship between gender, narrative, and content in the context of the Petro and Márquez campaign on Twitter. While both genders engaged with the campaign narratives, distinct variations in content, themes, and hashtag preferences were evident. Female users, in particular, displayed a greater sensitivity to Márquez's discourse, emphasizing life, peace, and transformation themes. The near-neutral gender mentions and the findings from the E-I index analysis indicate that political or ideological leanings may be more influential than gender in these Twitter interactions, thus providing a

nuanced view of gender dynamics and framing resonance in the digital political discourse.

5.3 Contributions to the debate

In my dissertation, I sought to bridge multiple interdisciplinary areas, including digital humanities, Twitter studies, post-conflict studies, and discourse analysis, to create a cohesive examination of sociocultural phenomena in the digital age. This work navigates through the complexities of post-conflict Colombia, offering an in-depth analysis of narratives that permeate this transitional society through the lens of Twitter, a platform critical for public discourse and social mobilization.

A key feature of my dissertation is its innovative approach to digital humanities. By merging computational data analytics with qualitative cultural analysis, the study transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. Utilizing sophisticated tools such as Pajek (Batagelj & Mrvar, 2006), Mozdeh (Thelwall, 2018), Nvivo (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019), and VOSViewer (Van Eck & Valtman, 2010), I managed extensive datasets to uncover nuanced social patterns and trends. This approach revealed insights into the digital footprint of societal changes in post-conflict Colombia. The qualitative aspect of the study adds depth, interpreting the data within Colombia's complex sociocultural landscape. This integrated approach ensures a nuanced understanding of social constructs such as Otherness, deeply embedded in cultural and social contexts.

In the realm of Twitter studies, my dissertation offers substantial insights into the dynamics of digital discourse and community building on the platform. I analysed the strategic use of hashtags such as #NosEstanMatando, #LideresSociales, and #EleccionesPresidenciales2022, illustrating how these digital markers act as rallying points for social mobilization and narrative construction. However, the analysis extends beyond mere hashtag usage, delving into the evolution of digital communities, their communicative practices, and the role of Twitter in shaping public discourse over time. I also explored gender dynamics on Twitter, highlighting how different genders interact with and contribute to these dynamic discourses.

The potential contribution of my research to post-conflict studies is particularly noteworthy. I explore how the *Peace Agreement* (2016) and subsequent developments have reshaped the country's narrative landscape, particularly in terms of peace, conflict, and social leadership. My work brings to light the public perception and representation of social leaders in the post-conflict era, underscoring their critical role and the urgent need for their protection. This aspect of the study might be relevant for understanding how narratives can influence and reflect a society's journey towards reconciliation and healing.

Regarding discourse analysis, my dissertation enhances the understanding of the dynamics of digital conversation. Through a detailed analysis of conversations on Twitter, I enlightened the mechanisms of narrative spread, change, and interaction among various social groups. This approach is innovative in its application to post-conflict societies and highlights the role of digital platforms as barometers for societal sentiment and catalysts for societal change.

My research could enrich academic discourse and also has implications for policy-making, social media governance, and understanding the role of digital communication in societal transformations. As social media continues to evolve, my research is poised to remain a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners. The methodologies and insights provided offer a robust framework for future research, particularly in understanding the impact of digital platforms on shaping, reflecting, and potentially transforming societal narratives, especially in contexts emerging from conflict.

Furthermore, my dissertation may enhance the value of interdisciplinary research in the digital age. This study demonstrates how diverse fields such as technology, sociology, political science, and cultural studies can converge to deepen our understanding of societal dynamics in a digital world. As such, the insights and methodologies from my research may continue to inform and influence the study of digital sociocultural phenomena.

Lastly, I endeavored to contribute to the understanding of Otherness within the digital landscape, drawing upon the conceptual framework of narratives and storytelling as pivotal to human cognition and collective meaning-making, as theorized by Bruner (1986) and Sadler (2018). This analysis, grounded in the works

of scholars such as Baudrillard (1998), White (1980), and Todorov (1981), offers a nuanced perspective on the articulation of the Other in the Colombian post-conflict context, responding to the challenges posed by Pujante & Morales-López (2017) in analyzing digital narratives and their impact on cultural cognition. The focus of my study on gender dynamics, informed by the work of Bouvier (2016) and Paarlberg-Kvam (2017), and aligned with discourses on gender power relations in post-conflict societies as discussed by Webster, Chen, & Beardsley (2019), adds a relevant dimension to the understanding of Otherness in contemporary society.

5.4 Challenges and opportunities for future research

5.4.1 Challenges

The development of my doctoral thesis involved addressing a series of challenges. Ensuring the integrity of data from the extensive and dynamic conversations on Twitter was a primary concern. The objective was to compile a dataset that was both comprehensive and representative, while acknowledging and mitigating potential biases, data omissions, and irrelevant information that could affect data quality. To address this, I employed several methods and tools such as Mozdeh (Thelwell, 2019) for data retrieval and pre-processing, which provided a structured dataset by removing duplicates and irrelevant content.

Furthermore, the performed discourse analysis required a careful integration of data analytics and qualitative research methods to address the research questions effectively while maintaining the quality of the qualitative analysis. In this vein, understanding and placing the data within the specific sociocultural context of post-conflict Colombia was significant. This process required detailed knowledge of the local language nuances, cultural context, and dynamics of the post-conflict situation in Colombia, as these factors could influence the analysis significantly. Additionally, to synergize data analytics with qualitative analysis, I integrated the computational functionalities of Nvivo (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019) to generate word trees, thereby facilitating a nuanced exploration of the context in

which certain terms were employed. This approach was complemented by employing word association mining capabilities of Mozdeh, which, through the application of the difference in proportion z-test and the Benjamini-Hochberg significance testing, allowed for a meticulous examination of the relationships between key terms.

The interpretation and contextualization of data within the sociocultural framework of post-conflict Colombia were underpinned by network analysis tools such as Pajek (Batagelj & Mrvar, 2006), and VOSViewer (Van Eck & Valtman, 2010). These applications enabled the visual mapping and analysis of the complex interplay of hashtags, usernames, and words, providing an understanding of the discourse patterns.

However, handling and analyzing the large volumes of data involved significant computational efforts and specialized expertise in using data analysis software. As such, for handling the technical exigencies of managing and scrutinizing large datasets I also employed R for Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) analysis, enhanced by the LDAvis library to facilitate a deeper topic modeling and thematic visualization.

Generalizability and the validity of the findings are common concerns in social science research, and they were also pertinent to my thesis. Time and resource constraints were significant considerations, given the scale of data analysis and the complexity of blending different analytical approaches within a detailed sociocultural framework.

Additionally, there was the challenge of potential bias in interpreting data, particularly due to the subjective nature of such work, which could be influenced by personal biases or perspectives. This risk was heightened by the sensitive nature of the topics under investigation, which included post-conflict discourse and political matters in Colombia.

In addressing the potential for interpretive bias and ensuring the objectivity of the research findings, I employed a rigorous approach grounded in the aforementioned analytical tools and statistical methods. These methodologies were pivotal in identifying and mitigating biases, enabling me to distill insights from the Twitter discourse reflective of the complex post-conflict dynamics in Colombia.

Through these methodical and analytical practices, my research aimed to contribute a well-founded perspective to the discourse surrounding this critical period in Colombia's history.

5.4.2 Opportunities for future research

My study, which focused on post-conflict discourse in Colombia, reveals a rich terrain for future research in this vital area. While my research provides significant insights, there is ample scope to broaden this exploration. One promising avenue is extending this research to other post-conflict societies. By comparing discourse dynamics across various contexts, future studies could yield a more comprehensive understanding of global post-conflict narratives, highlighting common themes and differences. Such comparative analyses would enrich the understanding of how different societies navigate the aftermath of conflict through public discourse.

Another opportunity lies in conducting longitudinal studies. My research offers an overview of discourse at a specific point in time. A longitudinal approach, tracking narratives over a more extended period, could unveil how these narratives and discourses develop in response to unfolding events and changing societal dynamics (Georgi, 2023; Weinraub et al., 2023). This perspective would be particularly valuable in understanding the fluid nature of post-conflict narratives and how they adapt to new developments and challenges.

The gender-specific engagement on Twitter, which my research has begun to uncover, opens another fertile ground for future inquiry. There is potential for a deeper analysis of gender dynamics in social media discussions across various contexts (Van Duyn, Peacock, & Stroud, (2021). Future research could explore the role of gender in framing narratives, the impact of gender on engagement levels, and the influence of gender-specific discourses on broader conversations (Eienwohner & Rochford, 2019). Such an analysis would contribute significantly to our understanding of gender dynamics in digital communication, particularly in the context of post-conflict discourse.

While intersectionality was not the central focus of my doctoral research, my study has touched upon the presence of multiple layers of meaning and power

relations in discourse. For future research the Other can also be approached from an intersectionality perspective. It is about how the narrative of social mobilization drives a discourse of solidarity, call for attention, and at the same time they are constructing a narrative of who is the other protesters are thriving for recognition (Eiennwohner & Rochford, 2019). This other is many times someone that goes through several overlapping identities and unique challenge. Future research could delve deeper into this aspect, examining the intersecting social, political, and cultural factors that shape discourse dynamics in post-conflict societies. A focus on intersectionality would provide a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay of various factors (Martella & Pavan, 2023) and their collective impact on cultural narratives.

Lastly, my study underscores the potential of combining quantitative and qualitative methods for analyzing sociocultural issues comprehensively. This methodological approach can be further developed and refined in future research, particularly in the analysis of narratives within digital environments and from the perspective of studies of the Global South. By building on this methodological contribution, future studies can innovate and enhance our capacity to interpret and understand the complexities of digital narratives, especially in societies emerging from conflict.

In conclusion, the opportunities for future research emerging from my study are vast and varied. They hold the promise of deepening the understanding of post-conflict narratives, exploring new dimensions of gender dynamics, delving into intersectional analysis, and advancing methodological approaches in the study of digital discourse. These avenues not only extend the scope of my initial research but also contribute to a broader understanding of societal transformations in post-conflict settings.

5.5 Conclusion

By exploring the digital narrative around social leaders in the post-conflict setting in Colombia, I aimed to enrich both post-conflict studies and digital humanities, emphasizing the significance of social media in shaping public perceptions during transformative periods.

As such, the three chapters of the dissertation propose a complementary exploration of Twitter narratives concerning the portrayal and perception of the "Other" in the Colombian post-conflict setting. Each chapter, while distinct in its focus, threads a cohesive fabric that examines how these narratives are constructed, disseminated, and dynamic in this digital realm. This intricate relationship unfolds through the prism of narrative construction, methodological analysis, and the political lens. The foundational first chapter dives into the overarching narratives surrounding social leaders in Colombia, focusing on the metaphors that shape collective understanding and perceptions. The chapter lays the groundwork, presenting a landscape punctuated by cultural narratives of conflict, peace, and collective activism. The metaphoric undertones revealed in this chapter underscore the deep-rooted cultural and societal frameworks that are interwoven with the Colombian consciousness. Transitioning from this base, the second chapter delves deeper, employing a technical lens to the dynamics of ongoing Twitter narratives. By using word association analytics, this chapter meticulously tracks and analyzes shifts in the narrative over time, giving a detailed track of discourse dynamics. Notably, the chapter captures the progression from a tone of mourning to one of proactive collective action. The chapter also highlights a potential reframing of the Other - a transition from marginalized narratives to recognition as individuals with rights. This shift is indicative of potential influences from both the grassroots level and more structured political discourses. The final chapter offers a tangible real-world context to the preceding analytical narratives by analysing the arenas of political discourse. Focusing on the political narratives during the 2022 Colombian presidential elections, the chapter explored how prominent political figures tap into, challenge, or possibly reshape the established narratives. This chapter bridges the gap between political strategy and public resonance on Twitter, suggesting a reciprocal relationship. The chapter emphasizes a mutual influence: while public discourse on Twitter might mold political narratives, politicians too have the power to frame, challenge, or reinforce existing stories.

In sum, the three chapters offer a comprehensive exploration of the complex relationship between societal narratives and their reflections on Twitter. This dissertation highlights the potential for narrative differentiation, emphasizing on the

Other in Colombia's post-conflict time. From grassroots metaphors to methodical analytics, and through the strategic corridors of political discourse, the chapters collectively emphasize the transformative power of (digital) narratives in framing, reflecting, and potentially redefining societal values and perceptions.

