



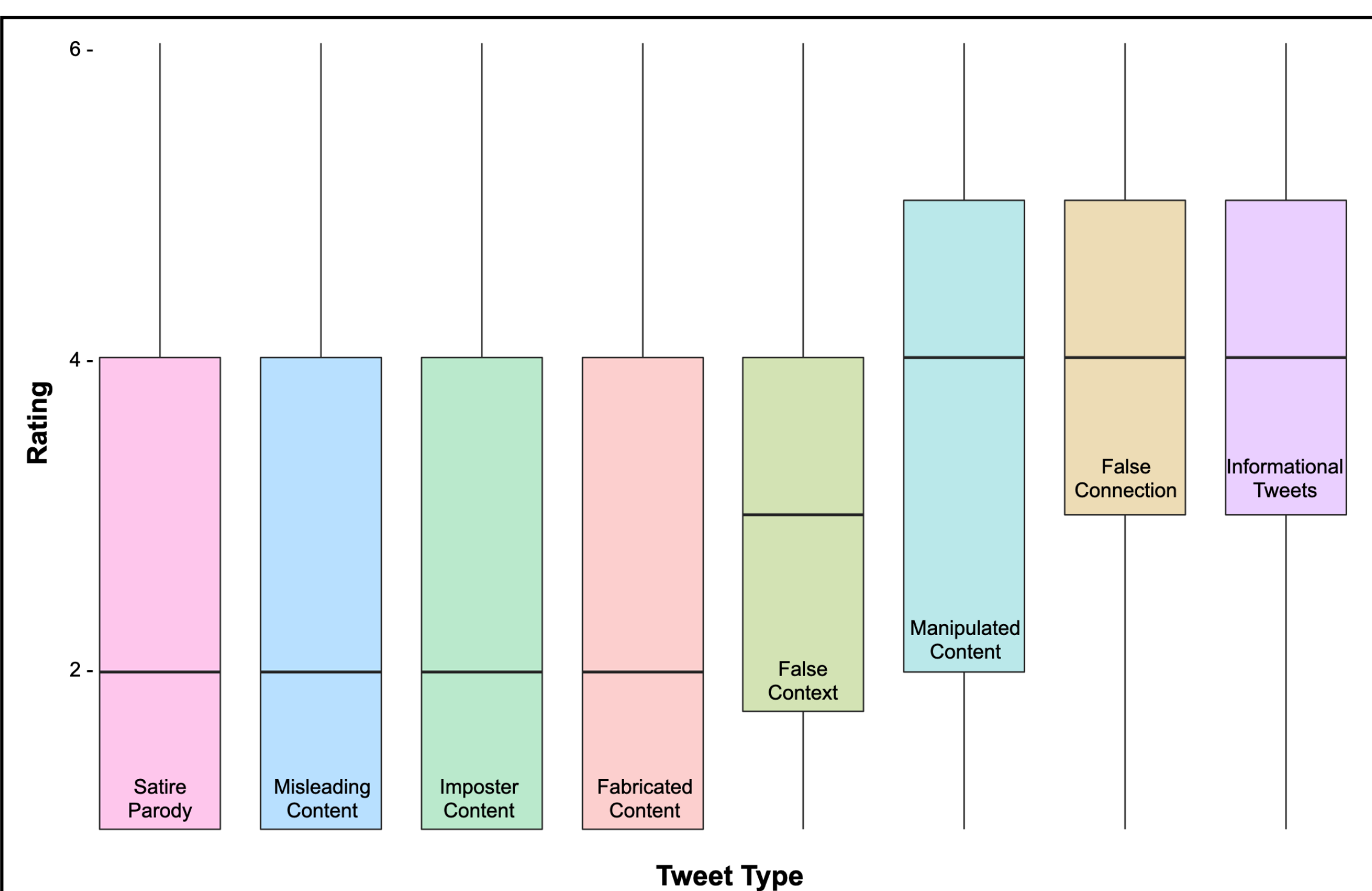
# A Closer Look Into Exploring Misinformation Through a Twitter Simulation

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## Discussion:

## Introduction:

- Misinformation (often referred to as fake news) is false, inaccurate, or misleading information that is spread either intentionally or unintentionally (Almaliki, 2019; Wardle, 2017; Warner et.al., 2022)
- Initial results from previous study showed that manipulated content & false connection misinformation tweets rated as high on the credibility scale as real information tweets
- Purpose of expansion is to explore why manipulated content and false connection tweet categories rated as accurately as real tweets in the credibility scale



## Research Questions:

- Will the prior results replicate when focusing on a broader classification of tweet types (real vs. false vs. manipulated)?
- If differences are found, which types of tweets will be perceived as more credible?

**Methods & Results** @UNHURC\_2023

Participants (n=294) rated the accuracy of 24 Tweets (8 Real Information, 8 False Connection, 8 Manipulated Content)

Participants assessed credibility of Tweets on a 6pt-Likert scale (1=Definitely False; 6=Definitely True) and then completed a series of follow-up questions asking for their reasoning for each rating

A linear mixed-effects model found that all 3 types of Tweets significantly differ from each other (accounting for participants as a random effect)

Category	Description
Real Tweets	Raw Tweets (not generated/genuine content)
False Connection	When genuine info is manipulated to deceive
Manipulated Content	Genuine content shared with false contextual info

**Linear Mixed-Effects Model Estimates**

Tweet Type	Model Estimate (Approx. Mean)
Real	3.95
False	3.65
Manipulated	3.35

- Differentiation amongst all 3 categories
- Results differ from original study due to more narrow focus of misinformation categories of interest
- Key takeaway: Real information tweets were most credible, then false connection and manipulated content tweets (this is good!)
- False connection rated higher than manipulated content potentially due to the natural drive to deceive within this category
- Limitations include that these tweets were created by us and in an experimental context

## Future Directions:

- Manipulate sourcing by including a variation of authors to tweets
- Explore the impact of headline statements on news sites
- Remove controls (hashtag, hyperlink, etc) and assess credibility based on statement alone

## Acknowledgements:

This research was supported in part by the Office of Naval Research (Grants: N00014-17-1-2300 and N00014-19-1-2424). Opinions, conclusions, or recommendations do not necessarily reflect the view of the Office of Naval Research. We want to thank fellow members of the Language of Learning Lab for their contributions to this study.