



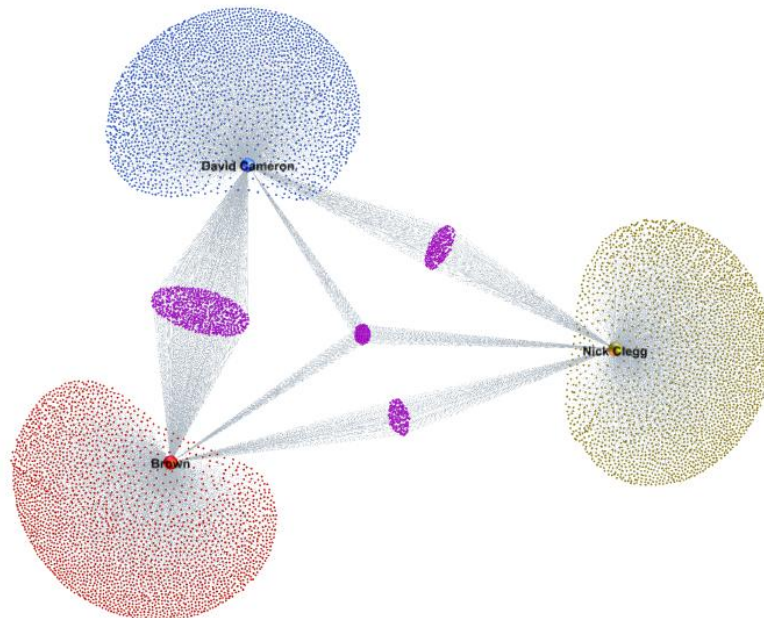
The leaders are no doubt frantically preparing for the next debate, it is worth a brief moment to reflect on what the first debate might have told us:

- 1) Novelty factor was in full effect, leaders debate was the most popular phrase on Twitter which related to the UK election while the debates were on, followed by the respective candidate names.
- 2) Focusing on Tweets relating to a specific candidate, unsurprisingly their names are closely followed by their fellow candidates.



3) No great surprise so far - each party has an opportunity to encapsulate their offer in a tweetable phrase, so far not so successful. In neither the cloud above, nor the clouds below focused on tweets about specific party leaders, contain any significant reference to policy or idea. Mention, for example, of 'Big Society' has not transferred significantly to Twitter, although there are scattered reference to health, education, teachers etc. If these manifesto ideas can be translated into a form of meme, there may be potential for greater impact following the coming debates.

4) Who were people tweeting about? The majority of users only tweet about one candidate. The image below shows the three candidate names and users linked to the candidates they mention in tweets. Users in Blue only tweet about David Cameron, Yellow, Nick Clegg and Red, Gordon Brown. Purple users, tweet about more than one candidate.



Immediately obvious is that very few users mentioned all three candidates at any point during the debate (not just in one tweet).

5) Those users that do tweet about more than one candidate tend to focus on Brown / Cameron, with Nick Clegg receiving less attention in relation to the other candidates. This may be because until the first debate attention focused on Labour and Conservative as main parties with Liberal Democrats as potential kingmaker in event of a hung parliament. Since the debate, Nick Clegg has received an upsurge in attention, which may translate into commentary on Twitter being spread across the three candidates.