CS 6474 Social Computing: Text Analytics II

Munmun De Choudhury

munmund@gatech.edu

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Gender and Power: How Gender and Gender Environment Affect Manifestations of Power

Summary

- Interplay between gender, gender environment of online conversations and power
- Contributions:
 - Automatic gender assignment of 87% of the Enron corpus US Social Security Administration list of names matching the approx. age range of Enron employees; first names gathered from email headers
 - Test the sociolinguistic hypotheses: face-saving use of language, and to the use of language to strengthen social relations
 - Gender-based features boosts the accuracy of predicting the direction of power between pairs of email interactants

Summary

- Hypothesis 1: Female superiors tend to use "facesaving" strategies at work that include conventionally polite requests and impersonalized directives, and that avoid imperatives (Herring, 2008).
- Hypothesis 2: Women use language to create and maintain social relations, for example, they use more small talk (based on a reported "stereotype" in (Holmes and Stubbe, 2003)).



Overt display of power



Conventional Counts

No Country for Old Members: User lifecycle and linguistic change in online communities

Summary

- The paper proposes a framework for tracking linguistic change as it happens in a community, to understand how specific users react to the community's evolving norms
- Results show a two-stage lifecycle of linguistic change in communities (RateBeer and BeerAdvocate):
 - a linguistically innovative learning phase in which users adopt the language of the community
 - a conservative phase in which users stop changing and the evolving community norms pass them by



How can the sociolinguistic findings on gender, gender environment, and power be useful for social computing research? Ian: "The power framework provided an interpretable and actionable set of hypotheses [that] could apply productively to other social situations, such as the difference in moderator vs. user behavior in an online forum"

Ari: "How do the preexisting social/corporate structures and biases at a large corporation impact the data, especially given that less than 35% of the unique discourse participants were women?"

Shuli: The style of communication is largely dependent on the context or environment. Hilary Clinton absolutely has to be forceful working in the political environment dominated by males. Melinda Gates, however, do not have to use many ODPs while managing the Gates Foundation. Eva: [Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil] et al. tries identify connections between linguistic coordination and social power relations using discussions among Wikipedians and arguments before the U. S. Supreme Court As people in corporations increasing adopt platforms like Facebook and Twitter, how do you expect these findings to generalize/ change? Can we design tools to incorporate the sociolinguistic findings on gender, gender environment, and power?

Will the findings of linguistic change generalize to other communities?

Sindhu: "[...] this work can be extended to study a single user's linguistic change across multiple communities, for example on Reddit." Individual trait or a community trait? How do evolving linguistic norms impact participation in anonymous communities?

Juilee: "A natural question which might come up next is how does the evolution of both users and the platform happen simultaneously and gel well to give a final new outlook in a span of a few years"