

Assignment 2 Reflection

For this assignment, I experimented with the P+x technique by changing the value of x, which controls which ranked prediction from the language model replaces the last word of each line. When x was small (like P+7), the output still felt somewhat connected to the original poem. The new words often made sense grammatically and sometimes even kept a similar mood, even though the meaning shifted in strange or poetic ways. When I increased x to a higher number (like P+30 or P+39), the results became much more absurd and unexpected. The words felt less predictable, sometimes more humorous, and sometimes more disconnected from the original tone. This showed me that the higher the x value, the more the model moves away from the “most logical” continuation and into more surprising, surreal territory, which fits well with the Oulipian idea of using constraints to create creative accidents.

Since I was not present during the in-class activity, it was difficult at first to understand what the code was doing and how the P+7 idea connected to language models. I used ChatGPT to help me understand each part of the script step by step. Once I understood that the model was simply predicting the next word and that I was selecting the seventh (or thirtieth, etc.) most probable option, the process became much clearer and more playful. Changing the k value and seeing how the poem transformed felt like turning a dial between sense and nonsense.

This technique also reminded me of older methods I have used in game writing, like using tables or “blab files” to randomly replace words in dialogue to generate variation. The difference is that here the randomness is guided by probabilities learned from language, rather than by a fixed list. I can imagine this being a useful tool for generating strange narrative ideas in games, although I would like more control over filtering specific word types, such as limiting replacements to nouns or emotional terms, to shape the results more intentionally.