Using Large Language Models in Irony Detection – a comparative Analysis

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# 1. Introduction

The advent of commercially available AI tools, primarily the Generative Pretrained Transformer (GPT) from OpenAI, not only made large language models more accessible to the public, but also opened a plethora of research and commercial avenues previously stalled, halted or considered impossible. GPT belongs in the category of *generative AI*, which describes models that generate text (or other types of data such as images or videos) using patterns analyzed and learned from a set of training data. These models transform a given input into individual chunks (called “tokens”) and attempt to predict what should be the next word in its response based on different parameters (GPT-3.5, as an example, has 175 billion parameters (Meer, 2024)) and the training data. More specifically, GPT’s feature of chat completion is a demonstration of GPT as a *Large Language Model (LLM)*, meaning a probabilistic computational model which interprets and generates text from training and input data.

Generative AI models have found application in various industries, such as software development, entertainment or customer service among many others. One of the major flaws of generative AI however is the manner in which output is generated. Due to its nature as generative AI, models like GPT only predict the probability of each word to come next in the response and thus allow for flaws like *hallucination*, meaning the creation of text that is grammatically correct but includes misinformation or completely fabricated factoids. Another critical issue with the nature of generative AI as a trained model is that the size, content and context (among other factors) of the training data can create models that are incredibly biased or simply lack necessary information in order to create factually accurate responses. As such, it is important to note that generative AI models like GPT do not “think” in the traditional sense of the word, they merely analyze and predict. If the patterns of the training data or the structures of the model and its processes are faulty, the responses will include errors or inaccuracies. Referring to GPT in specific, the quality of its responses can vary depending on which version of the model is being examined. While earlier models like GPT-2 have been criticized for their lack of coherence and hallucinations (Quach, 2019) (Vincent, 2019), GPT-3 and especially GPT-4 have been praised for their increased accuracy, coherence and ability to preserve quality of generated text over longer interactions (Piper, 2020) (Heaven, 2023) (Bushwick, 2023). Especially GPT-4 showed the effectiveness of generative AI, in particular LLMs, by taking a bar exam and achieving “a score that falls in the top 10% of test takers [which] contrasts with GPT-3.5, which scores in the bottom 10%.” (OpenAI, 2024).

One of the major fields influenced by the advancements in AI technology is *Natural Language Processing (NLP)*, which primarily concerns itself with the decoding of information contained within natural language. Through their ability to interpret text and generate accurate responses, LLMs have become a tool used to perform various NLP tasks, such as in the field of sentiment analysis. Sentiment analysis describes the use of NLP and machine learning methods for the purpose of identifying and quantifying the meaning, intent and content of information. However, due to the intricacies of human language and the restrictions of rule-based algorithms (meaning algorithms that apply pre-set written rules to a piece of text in order to analyze its contents), high accuracy in certain sentiment analysis tasks has historically been hard to achieve. Some of these difficult tasks include negation detection, semantic overload, multipolarity and irony detection. Irony detection in particular is an almost impossible task to achieve consistently as even humans sometimes have trouble accurately assessing irony, due to its seemingly contrarian structure of a statement having an opposite meaning than its naïve interpretation. In addition, sarcastic notions can often be lost due to a lack of context or misunderstandings.

The purpose of this paper is to test and compare the performance of multiple LLMs, primarily GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, in irony detection by using the tools provided by OpenAI and datasets containing ironic and non-ironic statements. Section 2 will detail the background of this experiment, giving an idea of the types of statements that will be analyzed and explaining some of the work that has hitherto been done in irony detection with LLMs. Section 3 will list the various tools used in this experiment as well as give definitions of specific terms within the context of this paper and provide an overview of the structure of the experiment, the interactions with the GPT models and special metrics designed for the analysis of acquired data. Section 4 lists the results and scores obtained as part of the experiment, compares the performance of the examined LLMs and discusses their implications for irony detection using GPT or other LLMs. Section 5 will then go over the future of such experimentation, providing examples of further tests that could be done and giving a conclusion for this paper.

# 2. Background

## 2.1 Irony and Sarcasm

Irony comprises situations or statements which describe the opposite of what is expected or meant to happen. Different types of irony exist, including situational irony (such as the elevators at an elevator repair school breaking down) or verbal irony. The latter means statements which mean to convey the opposite sentiment of their literal meaning, such as “I love it when my phone just breaks for no reason”. Sarcasm is a term related to verbal irony in the sense that a sarcastic statement also actually means the opposite of what is said. However, sarcasm is specifically meant to mock or ridicule, and thus often does not include the negative connotation. An example of a sarcastic statement could be “What a great choice to get a white carpet while having two dogs who love to play outside!”. While technically different concepts, sarcasm and verbal irony are closely related. Thus, when referring in this paper to “irony” or “ironic”, it could be that the sentiment is actually sarcastic. However, due to the fact that the experiments of this paper will only be discussing verbal irony or sarcasm in the form of social media posts, it is possible to group the two together in the same concept.

## 2.2 Irony detection using LLMs

Previous work in the field of irony detection has been done using Large Language Models, specifically GPT, to classify irony. Aytekin et al. (Aytekin, 2024) used one of the same datasets as used in this paper from SemEval-2018 Task 3, however, the set is not balanced (but in some cases slightly edited) unlike the subset of the task 3 set used in this paper. Aytekin et al. tested multiple models of GPT, including GPT-2 based models as well as GPT-3 and GPT-3.5 based models. The paper also included irony classification on a dataset with a more detailed breakdown of irony into different subtypes.

Gole et al. (Montgomery Gole, 2023) conducted irony detection experiments using multiple GPT models, including GPT-3, GPT-3.5 and GPT-4. Their prompting was done on a dataset called *pol-bal*. *SARC*, which is a dataset including over 1 million reddit comments from various subreddits, is filtered to create a balanced subset containing only comments from the r/politics subreddit, called *pol-bal*. Gole et al. then used a prompt containing multiple comments in a thread to evaluate irony from GPT. Due to the prompt phrasing, the content of the dataset being political subreddit comments and different versions of fine-tuning, their results are not directly comparable to the results obtained in this paper.

Mu et al. (Yida Mu, 2023) used GPT-3.5-turbo, as well as fine-tuned BERT-large and a fine-tuned version of LLaMA trained by LAIONAI for their sarcasm detection experiments and a different dataset which includes irony to non-irony in a roughly 1:4 ratio on circa 5 thousand rows. Since their results are obtained using different datasets with different weights of irony to non-irony as well as some different models, their work is not directly comparable to the results obtained in this paper.

Most papers conducting irony-detection research using LLMs are done on different datasets or using different parameters, methodologies or models compared to this paper. Only one of these papers includes GPT-4, which is expected as it was released fairly recently. Thus, this paper will be one of the first to conduct extensive experimentation on GPT-4 for irony detection. Comparisons to other work will be made in the final section when appropriate, but fundamentally, most other research done is complementary to the results obtained by these experiments.

# 3. Methods

## 3.1 Code

The interactions with the GPT models have been programmed using Python in Visual Studio Code with the OpenAI Chat Completions API. Each GPT evaluation occurs in a new conversation, meaning that the model has no context of previous messages when responding to each input. This was done in order to prevent bias based on previous messages. In addition to the OpenAI Chat Completions API, Pandas was used for loading, reading and saving datasets to and from .csv and .xlsx format. Matplotlib and numpy were used to create figures found in this paper and the repository. Openpyxl was used to read excel tables for score calculations.

## 3.2 Terminology

When referring to a “run” in this context, it is meant that a model was given a specific number of inputs to evaluate from a dataset, the model’s responses or classifications were parsed, and assigned a score. When a run has a length (or size) of *x*, it is meant that the first *x* lines from the dataset were evaluated during the run. This way, when two runs of the same length have been done on the same dataset, it is guaranteed that the same rows were evaluated in both runs. When referencing a “set”, “run set” or “set of *(x)* runs”, it is meant that multiple runs have been done on the same data and using the same model and prompt. This set of runs then has calculated averages of result values (such as accuracy or F1-Score). The length of a set refers to its number of runs. A “row”, “line”, “post” or “posting” refers to one specific input, such as an individual tweet or reddit post, from a dataset. When referring to *actual irony* or *actual non-irony* in this context, it is in reference to how the rows are labeled in the dataset, rather than how the rows are evaluated by a model in a given run or run set.

## 3.3 Datasets

Multiple different datasets were used and compared to ensure that no specific wording or type of input (such as short tweets as opposed to longer reddit threads) would skew performance impressions. The main dataset used for evaluation is a dataset created by Barbieri et al. for their TweetEval project (Barbiery, Comacho-Collados, Neves, & Espinosa-Anke, 2020), which aimed at providing evaluation frameworks for multiple NLP tasks such as Emoji Recognition, Irony Detection and Hate Speech Detection. For Irony Detection Barbieri et al. created balanced subsets using the subtask A datasets from the SemEval-2018 irony detection task (task 3) (International Workshop on Semantic Evaluation, 2018), which contains tweets labeled with “1” (ironic) or “0” (non-ironic) depending on their irony content. This dataset used in TweetEval to train language models for irony detection, named “tweet\_eval\_irony\_train”, from here on designated “irony\_train”, “dataset 1” or “main dataset” will be the main set used for analysis in this paper. The first 100 rows of this paper consist of 49 irony-labeled and 51 non-irony-labeled tweets. A second dataset containing tweets with a more detailed breakdown of their irony content into sarcasm, ironic, figurative (meaning both irony and sarcasm) and regular (meaning non-irony) (John, 2020) was obtained and altered to manually create a dataset named “manual\_select\_odd”, from here on referred to as the “manual dataset”. For this purpose, and in accordance with the motivations explained in Section 2, irony, sarcasm and figurative classes were converted to class “1” (for irony) and regular classifications converted to “0” (for non-irony). The manual dataset was preprocessed to remove most hashtags (due to a large number of irony-labeled rows containing for example “#sarcasm” or “#IRONIC”) and consists of 100 rows (50 ironic, 50 non-ironic) that have been manually selected in order to create a subset with more clear examples of irony and non-irony and to remove potential mislabelings or unclear/debatable labelings. In addition, a dataset containing 1950 reddit comments annotated with irony and non-irony (Tatman, 2017) has been included as “fixedsetreadin”, “reddit comment dataset” or “reddit dataset”. Its first 100 rows contain 29 posts labeled as ironic and 71 posts labeled as non-ironic. The dataset used for a specific run or series of runs will be designated in the discussion section.

## 3.4 Prompts and Models

Multiple different prompts were used in order to achieve different goals, such as the basic binary evaluation of irony content as well as different degrees of confidence or emotional categorizations. As such, the runs are divided into different prompts, each with different intended classification goals. For the main prompt, various alterations were created used for prompt engineering with the goal of determining how applying changes to this prompt, however small, may influence the results of a run or run set. These altered prompts will be referred to as “sub prompts” in the rest of the paper. The main focus of the experiments lies on GPT. Because of this, each prompt and sub prompt has been run on GPT 3.5 as well as GPT 4 with adequate run sizes and set lengths. For the GPT-3.5 model, the OpenAI designated model ‘gpt-3.5-turbo’ was used (due to no other model being available for GPT-3 or GPT-3.5), whereas for GPT-4, the model ‘gpt-4’ was used. When referencing GPT-3.5 in the context of this experiment, the variant gpt-3.5-turbo is meant. The following table contains the main prompts (without sub prompts) used in the experiment, as well as their classification type and the purpose of the prompt.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Run type name** | **Purpose** | **Default Main System Prompt given to GPT** |
| binary | Default binary yes/no evaluation | You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic. |
| confidence | Determine confidence in binary evaluation | You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic, and add a percentage value of how confident you are in your assessment. Make sure your response format is '[1 or 0] [Confidence Percentage]' |
| percentage | Determine how ironic a message is with a percentage value | You are an irony detector. Respond to messages with your evaluation of how ironic the message is, given only as a percentage, such as '50%'. |
| sentimentchoice | Assign a message one of multiple sentiments | You are a sentiment detector. Assign posts a sentiment from the following list depending on which you consider most appropriate: angry, sad, ironic, happy, neutral, confused. Respond only with one word. |

Table 1: The different main prompts used as system prompts for GPT in the experiment.

Using code, the prompt is inserted as the system prompt (which is the main set of instructions given to the model) when calling the OpenAI GPT Chat Completions feature. The model then receives one of the postings as an input without additional context and responds. If a model returns a response that is not of a format supported by (or close to) the requirements of the prompt, that response (and entry) is disregarded and counted as an error. For example, during binary classification, the model may return:

*“I'm not sure about that statement. I can't detect irony in it.”*

or

*“I'm sorry, I couldn't detect any irony in that statement. 0”*

If an answer is close to a desired format (such as “Yes.” Or “no” for a classification into “Yes” and “No”), preprocessing steps have been implemented in the code to still evaluate those answers as valid. As such, failure cases are few and far between, can be treated as errors and simply disregarded from the final score calculations. The size of the runs is significant enough such that these errors do not influence the overall accuracy or outcome. For instance, a run with a length of 1000 in the “binary” run type using the gpt-3.5-turbo model on the main dataset resulted in an average of 3 such errors.

## 3.5 Consistency Metric

When discussing the consistency of a set, the responses GPT gives are evaluated by first counting the amount of correct and wrong evaluations for each classification. If a post is ironic, a set of 10 runs will usually (if no errors occur) result in 10 evaluations from GPT. These evaluations are then counted using a threshold. If the overall proportion of correct evaluations out of the length of the set is equal to or greater than the threshold, this post is counted as being *consistently correct*, meaning GPT classifies the post with its actual label most of the time (depending on the threshold). For example, if a post has a label of 1 (ironic) in the dataset, and a set of 10 runs returns the evaluations (1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1), then 7/10 = 0.7 of the evaluations correctly identify the post with its actual label. If the threshold is equal to or smaller than 0.7, this post is counted as being *consistently correctly* interpreted by GPT. *Consistently incorrect* posts are evaluations that are being incorrectly identified with the wrong label consistently throughout the set. This condition is met if the number of correct evaluations is lower than or equal to 1 minus the threshold for *consistent correctness,* in the above example this would amount to 1 – 0.7 = 0.3. If the proportion of correct evaluations for a post is lower than or equal to this threshold of 0.3, the row is counted as *consistently incorrect* or *consistently wrong*. If a row is described as just *consistent*, it means that it is either *consistently correct* or *consistently incorrect*. When referring to *absolutely correct* or *absolutely incorrect* evaluations, it is meant that all (or none) of the returned GPT evaluations correctly identify a post with its label (e.g., a post has a label of 1 (ironic) but every GPT run in a set returns this post as 0 (non-ironic), making the classification *absolutely incorrect*). This can be the case as a misinterpretation from GPT, however, it can also be the case that a post is mislabeled in the dataset. These cases will be examined when discussing the results of GPT runs in Section 4. An evaluation that is *absolutely correct/incorrect* also counts as *consistently correct/incorrect*. A notable factor however is that *absolutely consistent* (meaning *absolutely correct* or *absolutely incorrect*)rows may only be compared between sets of the same run length, as an increased run length also drastically increases the possibilities for GPT to classify a row differently. For example, a set of 10 runs obviously has more *absolutely consistent* rows than a set of 100 runs, as the likelihood that GPT will classify a row in the same category 100 times is lower than a uniform classification in only 10 runs. *Contested* rows refer to evaluations that aren’t *consistent* (i.e., meet neither the threshold for *consistent* *correctness* nor the threshold for *consistent* *incorrectness*). As a standard across all runs, 0.7 is used as the threshold for consistency. While this threshold is not very high due to the fact that in a more optimal case far more than 70% of evaluations should be consistent for a workable model, throughout testing this emerged as a fitting threshold for comparisons and evaluation.

## 3.6 Scoring Comparisons

Scores, such as accuracy, precision or F1-Score are rounded to two decimal points. When a score is prefaced with a tilde symbol (~) it indicates a rounded difference or change. For example, the difference between 0.635 (rounded 0.64) and 0.624 (rounded 0.62) is actually 0.011, which would round to 0.01. However, when looking at the difference between the rounded values 0.64 and 0.62, the difference would be 0.02. In such cases, the latter number will be used and prefaced with tilde to indicate a rounded difference of ~0.02. When a run set is mentioned without a specified parameter, it is assumed that the model and run type is the same as the model and run type of the current section. Run set designations are based on their parameters, in the following format:

*gpt-[model number]-[run type]-[sub prompt]-[dataset]*

For example, a run set may be called *gpt-3.5-binary-default-main* if the GPT-3.5-turbo model is used with the basic binary prompt and no sub prompt on the main dataset. When nothing is mentioned about the length of the set or the size of its runs, it is assumed that the run set has the standard parameters of set length 10 and run size 100. In most cases, deviation is low enough such that a set length of 10 is enough to get consistent average scores within ~0.02 deviation of each score, which is considered as a similar enough average to compare it to other run sets in this paper. If a set is explicitly named as having more runs, it is likely that the results of multiple run sets of length 10 had large enough deviations to warrant more runs in a set in order to arrive at a more stable average. However, while averages and other scores are calculated within a set, there is no quantification between sets. In addition, when looking at an averaged graph of the *true positive, false negative, false positive* and *true negative* scores (also named “matrix scores”) of a run set, the standard deviation between *true positives* and *false negatives* as well as between *false positives* and *true negatives* is likely each the same, as these score pairs are in a 1 to 1 relationship. Thus, if deviation of *tp*/*fn* or *fp*/*tn* is mentioned, these are each the same and can thus be mentioned as one. The only reason the scores would differ between pairs is if there are uncounted error responses from the model that were not fixable in preprocessing. In such a case, the deviation values and errors will be mentioned separately. Otherwise, small numbers of errors that don’t impact scoring will not be discussed each time, as discussed above.

# 4. Results & Discussion

This section will discuss the experiments run using different prompts and datasets, prompt engineering and scoring based on the methods outlined in Section 3. Not every run type or sub prompt may include the same points of analysis.

## 4.1 GPT

### 4.1.1 Run type: Binary

The first and main run type is the binary classification of tweets into ironic and non-ironic. The base default prompt for this type of run is:

*You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic.*

Prompt engineering has been used to create multiple different prompts similar to the base prompt that will be explained in each subsequent section. The main and longest section will focus on the default prompt.

#### 4.1.1.1 Default Prompt

GPT-3.5

Using the default prompt with GPT-3.5 on the main dataset, the average accuracy over the set 10 runs gpt-3.5-binary-default-main is 0.62, the average precision 0.57, the average recall 0.90 and the average F1-Score is 0.70. Figure 1 shows the score averages obtained from this set of runs. Note that the distribution of scores is quite low, indicating they remain largely similar or the same across runs.

A graph of a number of values

Description automatically generated

Figure 1: The score averages with distribution measures for a set of 10 runs of the binary prompt using the gpt-3.5-turbo model and the main dataset.

When looking at the number of classifications divided into their predicted and actual labelings, the average values for each type of classification are shown in Figure 2.

A graph with blue bars

Description automatically generated

Figure 2: The average values of true positive (tp), false negative (fn), false positive (fp) and true negative (tn) evaluations from the run set gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. Average values are also in parentheses next to their respective label.

The highest number of classifications are the true positive labelings. However, while false negatives are low, the number of false positives is exceedingly high. The highest amount of deviation in score distribution is seen in the pair of actual non-irony labels (false positives and true negatives), while the actual ironic labeled rows are relatively consistent with lower deviation in comparison, and no errors in the overall run set. Overall, 44.3 out of 49 posts on average were correctly identified as ironic, whereas only 17.3 out of 51 (just ~34%) of all non-ironic posts were correctly labeled as such. This, in addition to the very high number of false positives and higher deviation in actual non-irony rows, may indicate a tendency for GPT-3.5 to simply classify most statements as ironic, as it is possible that due to the prompt being phrased as specifically irony detection, GPT-3.5 is biased to interpret statements as ironic.

Looking at consistency, most classifications of irony and non-irony are the same over all 10 runs, with only slight deviations in some cases. Using the standard threshold of 0.7, 81 of 100 rows are consistent, with 52 consistently correct and 29 consistently incorrect evaluations. Out of these, 32 are absolutely correct and 10 absolutely wrong. Even with the comparatively low threshold of 0.7, the amount of incorrect consistency is concerning for irony detection. In addition, when examining the types of consistency, consistently correct posts were ironic 45 out of 52 times, with only 7 being non-irony, whereas out of the 29 consistently incorrect posts 28 were non-irony and only 1 consistently incorrect post was ironic. As such a large number of posts, almost 30% of all rows and over half of the non-ironic rows, are being consistently incorrectly identified as ironic, it supports the hypothesis that GPT-3.5 is primed to identify posts as ironic, and thus incorrectly labels most rows, even neutral or definitively non-ironic ones, as ironic. Looking at the posts that were consistently incorrect, they include (for example):

*Need to get back in to college.. #feeling #this*

This is a post labeled as 0 (non-irony). However, 8 out of 10 evaluations in 2024-08-01\_13\_34 interpreted this post as ironic. The punctuation of this post (specifically the double periods) makes almost no difference, as altering this line to include either three periods (“*Need to get back in to college… #feeling #this”)* doesn’t change the consistency, and neither does removing the periods or only placing one. However, when removing both hashtags and otherwise leaving the post the same, GPT-3.5 consistently interprets the statement as non-ironic, meaning that specifically the hashtags “*#feeling #this*” is causing the statement to be interpreted as ironic most of the time. It is possible that GPT-3.5 considers the hashtags to indicate an ironic statement, in the sense that irony is used to express the opposite of what is written (i.e., “feeling this” is interpreted as an ironic statement).

*@user @user you don't know a damned thing about baseball, do you?*

This post is also labeled as non-ironic. Out of 10 evaluations in 2024-08-01\_13\_34, 9 considered this post ironic. It is possible that GPT-3.5 recognizes “*do you?*” as a rhetorical question and rules the statement as ironic. Removing the two “*@user*” doesn’t change GPT’s classifications or consistency.

*well today is gonna be a great day ðŸ‘Œ*

This is the only post that was labeled ironic, but consistently interpreted as non-ironic by GPT-3.5 (here in 9 out of 10 cases). The last series of characters (*ðŸ‘Œ*) represents the OK hand sign emoji in Unicode (👌). Without more information, it is difficult to determine the true intention of the post. While it can be ironic, there is interpretations of this post that don’t include irony. It is however interesting that GPT-3.5 consistently analyzes this post as non-ironic, even if there is debate as to the true intention. Removing the emoji string at the end does not change the result of GPT’s classifications.

There are a number of absolutely correct (32) and absolutely incorrect (10) rows. While 29 out of 32 absolutely correct evaluations are of actual irony posts, every single absolutely incorrect evaluation comes from a non-ironic row. This fits with the ratio of consistent correctness as well, with the vast majority of consistently correct rows being ironic, and the vast majority of consistently incorrect rows being non-ironic. The complete absence of absolutely incorrect ironic classifications is notable, though not surprising given only 1 ironic row is consistently incorrectly identified.

As mentioned before, 81 out of 100 rows are consistent in interpretation in the gpt-3.5-binary-default-main run set. However, this leaves the dataset with 19 contested rows, which didn’t meet the 0.7 threshold of unified classification score. These rows are separated into 3 contested ironic posts and 16 contested non-ironic posts, already implying that non-ironic posts are more likely to be contested than ironic ones. Looking at some of the contested rows, they include the following posts:

*I refuse to be weak... #workout #motivation #fitfam*

This post is classified as ironic 6 times and as non-ironic 4 times, while being labeled non-ironic in the dataset. It is in fact not an ironic statement, and it is questionable why GPT-3.5 considers it ironic in the majority cases. It is possible that as in the case above, GPT-3.5 may consider the plethora of hashtags to imply irony as they can be interpreted as being intentionally placed to ridicule the statement. However, as this row is contested, this interpretation of hashtags is a matter of each individual evaluation, and some consider it to rightly be non-ironic in nature.

*@user I'll be a bit sweaty by the time I get to you!*

This is a contested row with an equal distribution of 5 ironic and 5 non-ironic classifications. While being non-ironic and labeled as such, this internal conflict may again indicate GPT-3.5’s predisposition to label posts as ironic due to specifically asking it to determine irony, as there is no clear indication of irony within the post.

When performing a binary run set on the reddit dataset across 10 runs (run set gpt-3.5-binary-default-main-reddit), average accuracy is 0.35, precision 0.28, recall 0.80 and F1-Score is 0.42. This is a significant decrease in performance compared to runs on the main dataset. It is likely that this is due to the fact that the dataset contains reddit comments, which are longer (with an average of ~242 characters per comment across the whole dataset compared to an average of ~78 characters per tweet across the main dataset), contain multiple sentences and potentially multiple sentiments within them. In addition, the set is not balanced and contains more non-irony than irony, thus likely making especially GPT-3.5 prone to misclassifications. The standard deviation of classification distribution does not change, with false positives and true negatives still having the highest variation in distribution. Likely due to the smaller number of ironic rows in conjunction with GPT-3.5’s tendency to overevaluate irony, false positives have increased, and true positives decreased. Consistency shows 89 out of 100 rows as consistent, separated into 22 consistently correct irony and 5 consistently correct non-irony classifications as well as 3 consistently incorrect irony and 59 consistently incorrect non-irony classifications. As expected, and observed during runs on the main dataset, consistently incorrect non-irony is the highest metric, followed by consistently correct irony, again pointing to a tendency for GPT-3.5 to classify rows as ironic.

The same binary classification prompt run on the manual dataset (gpt-3.5-binary-default-main-manual) results in an accuracy score of 0.59, precision of 0.55, recall of 0.92 and F1-Score of 0.69, showing strong similarities to the runs on the main dataset, with the only score changing by more than 0.02 being accuracy at ~0.03. Overall matrix scores have largely not changed. There is still an overrepresentation of positive evaluations, with the largest standard deviations still occurring with the actual non-irony rows. Comparing consistency to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, a higher number of rows is consistent (from 81 to 92 out of 100) and a lower number of rows contested (from 19 to 8). These changes are largely due to an increase in consistently incorrect non-irony (from 28 to 36). Overall, consistently correct rows have increased by a total of 2 (from 45/7 to 46/8 irony/non-irony), while consistently incorrect rows have increased by a total of 9 (from 1/28 to 2/36). Absolutely correct irony has increased (from 29 to 36), just as incorrect non-irony (from 10 to 17) while both other absolute scores remained the same. Some conclusions that can be drawn from this result are that firstly, performance in scoring stays relatively the same when the content of irony becomes clearer on a manually selected dataset. This further supports the supposition of GPT-3.5’s tendency to simply classify most lines as ironic, without actually correctly evaluating the irony content in detail. Results indicate that while GPT-3.5 has become more confident in its evaluations evidenced by the significant decrease in contested rows (which make up only 8 of all rows compared to the 19 on the main prompt run set), the overall quality of the analysis has not improved, resulting in a large increase in consistently incorrect lines.

GPT-4

Looking at the same run type using GPT-4 to evaluate irony into a binary classification, gpt-4-binary-default-main resulted in the following average scores, seen with distributions in Figure 3.

A graph of a number of values

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Figure 3: Average scores from a run set of 10 with length 100 using the gpt-4 model.

Most of these scores are an immediate improvement over the same type of run using GPT-3.5, most notably the accuracy increased from 0.62 in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main by ~0.15 to 0.77. Another interesting difference to the gpt-3.5-turbo runs is the almost switch in values of precision and recall. Whereas average precision in the exemplary GPT-3.5 run set was 0.57, in this GPT-4 run set it increased massively to 0.86 (difference of ~0.29), whereas recall decreased from 0.90 to 0.64 (difference of ~0.26). Recall is the only metric to have decreased in score in the overall average of the run set. However, due to the larger increase in precision, calculation of the F1-Score still resulted in a (albeit relatively minor) increase from 0.70 to 0.74. The changes in precision and recall indicate a more selective model (lower recall) which however is more effective in its fewer positive evaluations (higher precision), as opposed to the behavior seen with GPT-3.5. These values stay consistent throughout gpt-4 runs, indicated by the exceedingly small amount of deviation seen in Figure 3, which is also notably lower than distributions seen for the scores using GPT-3.5 in Figure 1.

Already the results show a clear performance improvement compared to GPT-3.5. However, it is necessary to investigate the cause(s) of these changes in especially precision and recall, which lead to the assumption that while the overall irony detection is better, the approaches by which this is achieved may be fundamentally different. This becomes even more apparent when looking at the averaged matrix scores. Figure 4 shows an immediate difference between score distributions from GPT-3.5 seen in Figure 2. While in the GPT-3.5 runs, both true positives and false positives were high, the latter have now dropped to an average of 5.1 over 10 runs, a stark change from the average of 33.7. However, while false positives have dropped by a small amount (12.8), false negatives have increased from 4.7 to 17.5. The latter change in particular, however, is most likely simply due to the overall much larger number of “negative” classifications in comparison to GPT-3.5. When looking at true negatives, their number has seen a large increase, indicating a stronger and better detection of non-ironic content than present in GPT-3.5.

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Figure 4: The averaged values from the expected and actual label over the run set of gpt-4-binary-default-main

It is also notable that the standard deviation is far lower than in the GPT-3.5 runs. This indicates a stronger and more reliable detection (even with increased number of parameters for GPT-4), as opposed to GPT-3.5 which had lower distribution for *true positives* and *false negatives* than the other two scores. For GPT-4 runs, the standard deviation is for all intents and purposes the same for each score. Looking at the scores, it is clear that the overall average number of correct classifications has dramatically increased from 62 out of 100 to 77,4 out of 100 on average, which constitutes a 15,4% increase in performance. More specifically, both false classification scores (*fn, fp*) are lower than each correct classification score (*tp, tn*), unlike during the GPT-3.5 runs, where the number of *false positives* almost doubled the number of *true negatives*. However, it is also necessary to note that the number of *true negatives* is far higher than the number of *true positives*. In fact, an average of 17.5, meaning about 36% of all posts labeled “ironic”, were not correctly identified as such. To contrast this, just 5.1, meaning only 10% of all posts labeled “non-ironic”, were misidentified by the model on average. This indicates the possibility that GPT-4 is decent at irony detection, but much stronger at correctly identifying when no irony is present in a piece of content.

Examining consistency, the vast majority of posts, 98 out of 100, are classified consistently using the threshold of 0.7. 78 of the 98 are consistently correct while 20 are consistently incorrect. The 78 consistently correct rows break down into 32 consistently correct irony and 46 consistently correct non-irony evaluations. Once again, the amount of correct non-irony detection outweighs the amount of correct irony detection. Incorrect posts are separated into 16 consistently incorrect irony and 4 consistently incorrect non-irony classifications. Unlike in the runs with GPT-3.5, the amount of consistently incorrect irony now far outweighs the amount consistently incorrect non-irony, here by a factor of 4. Examining multiple GPT-4 run sets, there is still an obvious performance increase, as while using GPT-3.5, about one third of all evaluations were consistently incorrect, whereas this number has now been reduced to 20 to 21 in all runs. Alongside this, the number of contested rows has also been reduced to only 1 to 3, meaning that the number of consistently correct rows has dramatically increased from 50 to 55 to 77 or 78 (results taken from 5 run sets of each GPT-3.5 and GPT-4). This indicates that not only does GPT-4 deliver more correct evaluations overall, but it also remains more consistent within them. In addition, the amount of inconsistency, meaning contested/unsure rows has been dramatically reduced. Going back to gpt-4-binary-default-main, even within consistent categories the amount of absolutely correct and incorrect rows is significantly larger than during GPT-3.5 runs. 26 out of 32 (about 81%) ironic rows were absolutely correct, contrasted with only 29 out of 45 (about 64%) being absolutely correct during the exemplary GPT-3.5 run set gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. The number of absolutely correctly interpreted non-ironic posts is even larger at 41 out of 46 (about 89%) posts, while this number was just 3 out of 7 (about 43%) using GPT-3.5. In fact, even when increasing the threshold for consistency to 0.9, still 93 out of 100 rows remain consistent without notable changes in distribution of correct and incorrect interpretations. These results again indicate GPT-4’s far stronger conviction in its evaluations and overall improved performance.

Referring to the examples of incorrect evaluations provided during the binary GPT-3.5 run set, all but 1 have now been correctly identified. The only still incorrectly interpreted post is:

*well today is gonna be a great day ðŸ‘Œ*

As explained earlier, this post is difficult to interpret as ironic without more context and information, making GPT-4’s interpretation of it as non-ironic (in 10 out of 10 cases) a valid evaluation. It is, however, notable that both GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 evaluate this post as consistently non-ironic (in GPT-4’s case even absolutely consistently).

Looking at some of the consistently incorrectly labeled posts by GPT-4, they include:

Halfway thorough my workday ... Woooo

Changing the spelling from “thorough” to “through” does not impact the evaluation. This post was labeled as ironic but interpreted as non-ironic in 9 out of 10 cases. While it is possible that this post is interpretable as someone genuinely expressing happiness at being halfway through their workday, it is more likely to be ironic in intention. Of note is the classification of this message in GPT-3.5 runs. In run sets gpt-3.5-binary-default-main and 2024-08-01\_14-28 this row is contested, while in 2024-08-01\_16-10 this row is just within the threshold of consistent correctness (with 70 runs evaluating this line correctly out of 100). This row shows the existence of evaluations that are correct or at least contested with GPT-3.5, but completely incorrect using GPT-4. Therefore, it is not possible to regard GPT-4 classifications as a flat improvement in all detection mechanisms (even if, of course, the overall average scores are better), as there are certain rows that feature wordings or phrases that would be classified correctly by GPT-3.5 in more cases than by GPT-4.

*ruling party in power#central#state#misusing their power#PM speaking only in foreign parliment#pm to visit out side india during session*

This post is labeled as non-ironic in the dataset, but every one of the 10 GPT-4 runs in the sets gpt-4-binary-default-main, 2024-08-09 and even every single run out of 100 in 2024-08-02 considered this post ironic. It is unclear what considerations lead GPT-4 to this conclusion, but it is very possible that as with GPT-3.5, too many hashtags could imply irony in this statement to GPT-4. When looking at this post in GPT-3.5 evaluations, it was absolutely incorrect in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main and only 1 out of 100 runs in the set 2024-08-01\_16-10 classified it as non-ironic. This further highlights that while generally performance is improved in GPT-4, some lines are still misinterpreted.

*@user lol how and what is a cthulhu ?? Funny autocorrect so helpful*

This post, while being correctly labeled as ironic, is still misinterpreted as non-ironic by GPT-4 in 2024\_08-07\_11-31 and other GPT-4 runs. It is possible that GPT-4 is unable to connect the two sentences to arrive at the implication that the user is only ironically praising the autocorrect feature for likely correcting a word into “cthulhu”, a term unbeknownst to the post author. Because this is not explicitly stated, these statements are regarded as unrelated, and the post labeled as non-ironic. GPT-3.5 also classified this posting consistently wrong in all recorded runs.

The two contested rows of gpt-4-binary-default-main were separated into 1 ironic and 1 non-ironic evaluation each.

*Pulis turned down #NUFC cos he wants to spend a load of money on 30 year old journeymen. Parish wouldn't let him & neither would MA. #cpfc*

This post about football manager Tony Pulis is correctly labeled as non-ironic in the dataset but considered ironic by 5 out of 10 evaluations in gpt-4-binary-default-main and 2024-08-09\_10-21, and by 48 out of 100 evaluations in 2024-08-02\_14-5. The exact reasoning is unclear, though it is possible that GPT-4 interprets the phrasing of “*he wants to spend a load of money on 30 year old journeymen”* as ironic, implying that Pulis doesn’t really want to spend this money. This however is inaccurate, as the statement is directed at questioning Pulis’ spending choices for football players in his club. In every recorded GPT-3.5 run set, this line was consistently incorrectly labeled as ironic. While GPT-4 has improved this somewhat, it is still not close to being consistently correct.

My secret name is lizard squad. I like to ruin people's fun time. Follow and rt to a billion and you'll have fun. #psn #giveitup

This is a post labeled as ironic, however there is no clear and obvious ironic sentiment without more context. It’s possible to interpret *“My secret name is lizard squad. I like to ruin people's fun time.”* as ironic, given that it’s likely not true depending on the intent of the author. The fact that it’s not entirely clear is reflected in GPT-4’s evaluations, with 4 out of 10 evaluations considering this tweet as ironic. This is also reflected in 2024-08-02\_14-5, with 38 out of 100 evaluations as ironic, meaning that overall, GPT-4 is more likely to consider this post as not ironic. GPT-3.5 on the other hand considers this post ironic in 96 out of 100 cases in 2024-08-01\_16-10. While GPT-3.5 is correct regarding this line more often than GPT-4, it is likely again due to its proclivity to classify most things as ironic.

When performing a binary run on the reddit dataset across 10 runs (run set gpt-4-binary-default-reddit, first 100 rows, contain 29 ironic and 71 non-ironic posts), accuracy is 0.73, precision 0.56, recall 0.42 and F1-Score is 0.48. Immediately an improvement is seen from GPT-3.5 in terms of accuracy and precision. F1-Score is also higher. Recall has decreased, but paired with increased precision this indicates a pattern of labeling fewer rows as positive, but only when confident in correctness of the classification, resulting in fewer false positives but more false negatives. This is reflected in the matrix scores, where true negatives have by far the highest amount, with true positive, false negative and false positive scores all being similar. A notable factor is that while scores overall have decreased with both GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 using this dataset, The difference in average F1-Scores has remained almost the same. Whereas the average F1-Score was 0.69 in run set 2024-08-01\_16-10 (GPT-3.5) and 0.75 in run set 2024-08-02\_13-46 (GPT-4) (both run sets of length 100) resulting in a difference of ~0.06 (due to rounding, difference may not be exact), the difference between the GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 runs on the reddit dataset was ~0.06 (GPT-3.5: 0.42; GPT-4: 0.48). This is further underlined by another pair of run sets on the reddit dataset (2024-08-13\_12-6 for GPT-3.5, 2024-08-14\_11-19 for GPT-4 respectively), in which F1-Scores are 0.41 and 0.48 respectively, resulting in a similar difference of ~0.07, showing consistency. This is still a minute difference in score compared to runs on the main dataset, leading to the assumption that while using the reddit dataset did have an impact on direct scores, the relation between GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 largely stayed the same or within expectedly small deviations. This may indicate that the type of content being evaluated does not cause significant improvements or declines in performance for one model of GPT that are not present in the other, i.e. the models may not have an inherent advantage or disadvantage based on the type of inputs (reddit comments, tweets, etc.).

Running the binary classification on the manual dataset for GPT-4 (gpt-4-binary-default-manual), the results showed an average accuracy of 0.78, precision of 0.75, recall of 0.84 and an F1-Score of 0.79. This is a measurable increase over the main dataset, as no binary classification GPT-4 run set with the default prompt resulted in an F1-Score higher than 0.75 or lower than 0.73, meaning that this difference is notable. However, while overall F1-Score increased, there is an almost switch of precision and recall with similar accuracy compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main, which indicates a change in matrix scores. Both average score values and average matrix scores showed remarkably low standard deviation across the board, with both matrix pairs having a standard deviation of below 1.

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Figure 5:

As seen in Figure 6, matrix scores have changed compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main, now showing better irony detection than non-irony detection. This could indicate actually different engagement methods with the content which were absent when using GPT-3.5, which close to reproduced its results from the main dataset on the manual dataset. GPT-4 results continue to have exceptionally low standard deviation, with an equally low deviation across all matrix scores, even when compared to already low deviation in the main prompt run set. This indicates that GPT-4 is even more confident in its evaluations, likely due to more clear examples or irony and non-irony in the dataset, which becomes apparent when reviewing consistency. Overall consistency is virtually the same with only one less line (from 2 to 1) being contested. The changes in matrix scores are reflected in the consistency as well, with consistently correct rows going from 32 irony / 46 non-irony to 42/35, due to very low standard deviation these scores are almost perfectly in line with average matrix scores seen in Figure 6. Consistently incorrect classifications have also switched from 16/4 to 8/14, once again showing evaluation scores are more balanced.

Reviewing overall performance comparatively, GPT-3.5’s results were about the same when using the manual dataset, which shows that the model’s overclassification of irony extends beyond just one dataset of tweets, and also reflects in the reddit dataset (albeit with far more false positives). GPT-4 shows improved irony detection when using a manual dataset, which could be an effect of better and more clear examples of irony. However, paired with decreased non-irony detection, it could be an effect caused by different prevalence of phrases or phrasings, which result in different distributions of scores, which is expected to some degree when using a different dataset. In either case, GPT-3.5’s almost stagnant performance is a strong indicator of the model’s weaknesses compared to GPT-4, which outperformed GPT-3.5 in both datasets.

#### 4.1.1.2 Sub prompt 1: No detector prompt

This prompt removes the first sentence of the default prompt “You are an irony detector”. The intention of this prompt is to remove the specific order for GPT to detect irony and simply leave it with the classification into irony and non-irony. The full prompt for this run is thus:

*Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic.*

GPT-3.5

This prompt run on the main dataset (gpt-3.5-binary-noDetector-main, run length 100, set length 20) resulted in an average accuracy score of 0.64, precision of 0.61, recall of 0.71 and F1-Score of 0.66. While not large, there is a difference in average scores to a binary run using the default prompt, particularly in terms of F1-Score (from 0.70 to 0.66). Precision and recall are more balanced, while precision was noticeable lower in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main with 0.57, it has slightly improved and gotten closer to recall which was 0.90. However, it is also clear that precision has improved far less than recall has declined, leading to an overall worse score. Accuracy as well has improved, though only slightly from 0.61 to 0.64.

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Figure 6: Results from the set of length 20 gpt-3.5-binary-noDetector-main

Figure 7 shows the results from the confusion matrices of each run. Standard deviation is remarkably high across all scores, leading to very inconsistent scoring (thus an increase of standard length of the run set to 20). Another very important difference is the larger number of true negatives. True negatives were far lower than false positives in the default runs, while now outnumbering them. True positives have decreased, and so have false positives. False negatives also increased overall. This further supports the theory that the default prompt is interpreted by GPT-3.5 in a way that increases the likelihood of marking rows as ironic despite there not being context or reason to support such a classification. Removing this condition to a more neutral phrasing thus increases GPT-3.5’s capability to mark more rows as correctly non-ironic. However, with this improvement comes a decrease in true positives, as less rows are marked as ironic, decreasing correct classifications. Thus, ironically, GPT-3.5 seemingly randomly or at least without good reason classifying rows as ironic leads to a better outcome in terms of F1-Score than a more accurate and precise evaluation of these entries.

Consistency shows 70 out of 100 rows as consistent, a decrease of 11 compared to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. The distribution also contains notable changes. While the default run showed consistently correct irony outweighing consistently correct non-irony by a large margin (45/7), this has changed to an almost equal 29/21, showing that while GPT-3.5 is still better at detecting irony, its capabilities to detect non-irony correctly do noticeably increase when using this prompt. In addition, consistently incorrect rows have also decreased overall, from 1/28 irony/non-irony to 7/13, with a slight increase in consistently incorrect irony but a large decrease in consistently incorrect non-irony. Contested rows have increased from 19 to 30 and gone from 3/16 to 13/17 irony/non-irony. Non-ironic contested rows have thus remained almost the same in number, while ironic contested rows have drastically increased by a factor of over 4. This shows the less convinced irony classifications of GPT-3.5, where instead of classifying most rows as ironic, every consistency score is now more balanced (even if not exactly equal).

GPT-4

Looking at a run set gpt-4-binary-noDetector-main, the results showed an average accuracy of 0.75, precision of 0.88, recall of 0.57 and F1-Score of 0.69. Already noticeable is a similar drop in overall F1-Score, whereas for GPT-3.5 it dropped from 0.70 to 0.66 (by ~0.04), for GPT-4 it dropped from 0.74 in 2024-08-02\_11-31 to 0.69 (by ~0.05), reducing by a similar amount for both models when using this prompt. Another noticeable difference to the main prompt on this dataset is a drop in recall from 0.64 to 0.57, whereas accuracy and precision have changed by a maximum average factor of ~0.02, which is still within expected deviations and does not indicate a clear difference.



Figure 7: gpt-4-binary-noDetector-main

As seen in Figure 8 and if compared directly to Figure 5, there is no noticeable difference in standard deviation or the general distribution of scores, unlike for GPT-3.5. Consistency shows a similar number of rows consistent at 96 out of 100 (98 for GPT-4 on the main prompt). The distribution also stays similar, with 74 and 22 rows being consistently correct or wrong respectively, whereas these numbers were 78 and 20 for the main prompt in gpt-4-binary-default-main. The 74 consistently correct rows separate into 27 irony and 47 non-irony evaluations, whereas the 22 consistently incorrect rows separate into 19 irony and 3 non-irony evaluations. There are no large differences between this set and gpt-4-binary-default-main, except for a comparatively minute decrease in both correct irony detection, with consistently correct irony going from 32 to 27 and consistently incorrect irony from 16 to 19, whereas contested rows have gone from 1 irony and 1 non-irony to 3 irony and 1 non-irony. Overall, there is thus a small but notable decrease in consistent irony detection, which may indicate a similar tendency for GPT-4 to now classify less things as ironic after removing the specific instruction for it to do so. Regarding the contested rows, both from gpt-4-binary-default-main have been consistent in the “no detector” run. The contested row marked as ironic is consistently incorrect at 9 out of 10 evaluations, whereas the contested row marked as non-ironic is consistently correct with 10 out of 10 evaluations. Every one of the 4 contested rows in the “no detector” run is a row that was consistent in gpt-4-binary-default-main, with the following correct/wrong classifications: 10/0, 10/0, 10/0 and 0/10. This shows that changing the prompt to not include the detector indication influences not just the margins around the threshold, but can sometimes cause rows that were otherwise even absolutely consistent to become contested. Overall, while performance in terms of F1-Score did drop an almost equal amount for both GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 when removing the detector instruction from the prompt, GPT-4 shows a far smaller, harder to detect impact on scoring metrics with a small reduction in true positives being the main cause of the decline in score. GPT-3.5 on the other hand had a complete rebalancing of the scoring metrics, with large changes to some scores and a more unbiased view of posts, causing a fairer evaluation which however still caused a decrease in overall score. Thus, while interesting insights have been gained, the “no detector” runs overall are not an improvement over the base prompt for GPT-3.5 as well as GPT-4.

#### 4.1.1.3 Sub prompt 2: Yes/No answer prompt

This prompt changes the phrasing of the instruction to label rows with “Yes” or “No” instead of “1” or “0” to test whether the type of binary classification has any influence over the expected outcome. The full prompt for the run sets examined in this section is:

*You are an irony detector. Respond with 'Yes' or 'No' depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic.*

GPT-3.5

This prompt run on the main dataset (gpt-3.5-binary-yesNo-main, set length 20) resulted in an average accuracy score of 0.66, precision of 0.65, recall of 0.65 and F1-Score of 0.65. These scores at first glance are very even, and when looking at their distribution shown in Figure 8, it becomes clear that not only are these scores almost exactly equal, the standard deviation of these scores is also lower compared to the main prompt, seen in Figure 1. Overall, this prompt sees an increase in accuracy (0.62 to 0.66) and precision (0.57 to 0.65) as well as a massive drop in recall (0.90 to 0.65). F1-Score also dropped (0.70 to 0.65).

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Figure 8: Scores

While there is no clear reason for recall to drop so much consistently throughout all runs by simply changing the answer method from binary to “yes” and “no”, the major drop in recall indicates a more selective and more sensitive evaluation. This is evidenced by the averaged *tp*, *fn*, *fp* and *tn* values, seen in Figure 9.

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Figure 9: LMAO

The standard deviation is about equal for each metric, whereas in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, deviation was significantly higher on the false positives and true negatives. This shift indicates that there is more variation, and about an equal amount of it, for both positive and negative labelings. There is a large increase in true negatives as well as false negatives, and a decline in both true positives and false positives. However, GPT-3.5 now correctly identifies true negatives most of the time, whereas using the default prompt (seen in Figure 2), false positives far outnumbered the true negatives. The phrasing of the prompt has thus resulted in an almost equal capability of identifying irony and non-irony in the main dataset, and an average correct evaluation of about 2/3 of all rows. This is further reflected in the consistency scores. 79 out of 100 rows are consistent, with 59 consistently correct (28 irony, 31 non-irony) and 20 consistently incorrect (10 irony, 10 non-irony) evaluations. The contested rows are separated into 11 ironic and 10 non-ironic rows. These scores show a remarkable balance in every metric, indicating that GPT-3.5’s irony and non-irony detection are about equal for this phrasing of the prompt and dataset. Compared to the main prompt run on this dataset, this sub prompt introduces a change in behavior coming in the form of a significantly better recognition of non-irony (which is even better than its irony detection), fewer incorrect irony classifications and a model overall less likely to classify the majority of rows as ironic.

Examining this prompt on the reddit dataset (run gpt-3.5-binary-yesNo-reddit, set length 20) expectedly resulted in worse scores overall, with average accuracy of 0.47, precision at 0.27, recall at 0.48 and F1-Score at 0.35, a decline in most scores compared to the main prompt on the reddit dataset (2024-08-14\_12-0). Once again, a strong drop in recall indicates a more selective process, which is also reflected in the consistency metrics and standard deviation of matrix score distribution, the latter of which slightly increased for every score, indicating a less certain and more varied evaluation. With 89 out of 100 rows consistent, the 27 consistently correct classifications separated into 24 irony and only 3 non-irony rows. This number has changed to 11 irony and 20 non-irony rows. A similar development in the other direction can be seen with consistently incorrect rows, as where 2024-08-14\_12-0 saw only 4 ironic lines consistently incorrect, 58 non-ironic lines were consistently incorrectly classified as ironic. This number has improved in this sub prompt as well, going to 12 ironic and 30 non-ironic consistently incorrect lines. However, a large number of non-ironic lines are now contested, at 21 out of 27 contested lines being labeled with non-irony, which is also a sizeable increase from only 11 lines being contested in 2024-08-14\_12-0. Overall, the reddit dataset run set sees most of the same changes (increased accuracy, drop in recall, decreased F1-Score) going from the main prompt to this sub prompt as the main dataset, and even some of the same behaviors, such as a significantly improved ability to detect non-irony and far fewer false ironic classifications, coming at the cost of some correct ironic classifications. These behaviors are also observable on the main dataset between the main prompt and this sub prompt, showing that these changes in classification behavior stay consistent and aren’t based on the dataset used.

GPT-4

When run using GPT-4 and the main dataset (gpt-4-binary-yesNo-main), the yes/no prompt resulted in an average accuracy score of 0.75, precision of 0.86, recall of 0.58 and an average F1-Score of 0.69. While average accuracy and precision are the similar to gpt-4-binary-default-main (0.77 and 0.86), recall and F1-Score have dropped, from 0.64 to 0.58 and from 0.74 to 0.69 respectively. As expected with GPT-4, the set shows very low standard deviation for these scores, seen in Figure 10.

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Figure 10:

When looking at distribution of matrix scores, the standard deviation again is quite low. The scores themselves do not significantly deviate from the results obtained in a binary run on the main dataset using the default prompt (results seen in Figure 5), which is interesting given GPT-3.5’s stark deviation from its previous results. Overall, the one of only two observable differences appears in the deviation, which is remarkably low for the pair of *fp*/*tn* compared to the main GPT-4 run, indicating far more consistency in its evaluations for non-irony labelings.

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Description automatically generated*

Figure 11:

The other difference is the small decrease in average true positives (with deviation for *tp*/*fn* staying similar at ~1.35 compared to ~1.20 in gpt-4-binary-default-main) and thus an equally small increase in average false negatives. Consistency reflects this almost perfectly due to low standard deviation, with 97 out of 100 rows consistent and with 28 ironic and 45 non-ironic consistently correct classifications. Similarly, 19 ironic and 5 non-ironic classifications were consistently incorrect with 3 contested rows separated into 2 ironic and 1 non-ironic. These numbers again are quite similar to the results obtained in gpt-4-binary-default-main, in which 98 out of 100 were consistent with 32 correct ironic and 46 correct non-ironic as well as 16 incorrect ironic and 4 incorrect non-ironic and 2 contested classifications. An important note is that the contested rows once again do not overlap between these two sets, again indicating some deviation in terms of classifications. Absolute consistency again is similar, with this run set showing 20 ironic and 44 non-ironic absolutely correct as well as 16 ironic and 3 non-ironic absolutely correct evaluations. Once again, GPT-4 continues the trend of having the majority of its evaluations be absolute, with absolute non-irony evaluations being larger in proportion to its consistent classifications than ironic ones.

Overall, the Yes/No answer prompt cause significant changes in GPT-3.5’s behavior, while GPT-4’s behavior was almost unaffected, save for a decrease in standard deviation of one score pair and an overall decrease in most scores due to a slight decrease in true positives. It is thus safe to assume that GPT-3.5 is far more prone to changing the way it evaluates inputs based on the answer and instruction format, whereas GPT-4 remains largely the same in most aspects, with only slight changes. GPT-4 thus seems to be not only better in raw performance, but also has a good capability to extract meaning from the instructions and be uninfluenced by syntactic changes that otherwise leave the experiment the same as a whole.

#### 4.1.1.4 Sub prompt 3: One-shot

This sub prompt is based on giving GPT an example of irony or non-irony along with the base prompt. For this purpose, the experiment is divided into two categories: oneshot-0, which gives GPT an example of non-irony, and oneshot-1, which gives GPT an example of irony. The irony and non-irony examples are also from tweet\_eval\_irony\_train, however from far later in the dataset (rows 2685 and 2624 respectively), meaning they are not being evaluated in any of the run sets discussed in this paper. The base prompts are thus:

*You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic. An example of a non-ironic statement: "@user No! I rarely drink at all. Got a stomach bug :-("*

for oneshot-0, and

*You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic. An example of an ironic statement: "Always fun when buses don't turn up! It's my favorite waiting outside in the freezing cold for them for like half an hour"*

for oneshot-1.

##### 4.1.1.4.1 Oneshot-0

GPT-3.5

The run set for this run (gpt-3.5-binary-oneshot0-main) resulted in an average accuracy of 0.65, precision of 0.59, recall of 0.89 and F1-Score of 0.71. These results are similar to the regular GPT-3.5 results using the main prompt, with an increase in average accuracy (0.62 in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main to 0.65) being the only notable difference. One other perhaps notable detail is the F1-Score of 0.71, when no GPT-3.5 run set on the main prompt resulted in a rounded score of higher than 0.70. Overall, thus, there may be a very small performance increase in F1-Score, but this difference is still within a small enough deviation to not be determinative of any clear quantifiable change.

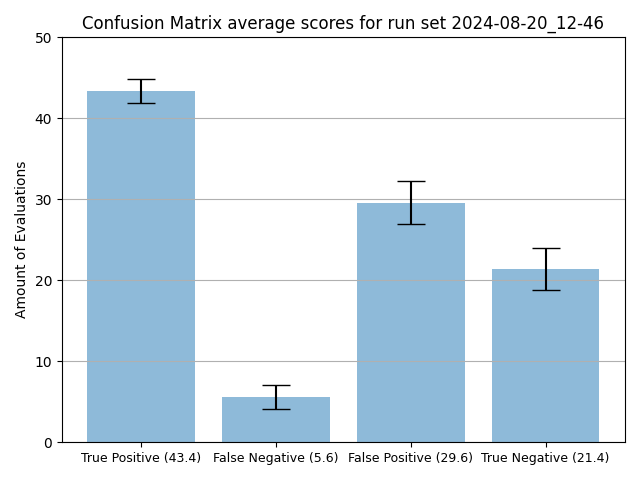


Figure 12:

The average matrix scores also show strong similarities in terms of distribution to Figure 1 (from the basic GPT-3.5 run set), with only a slight increase in true negatives and similar standard deviation. Overall, this sub prompt has the hitherto most similar results to the main prompt. It is thus possible that the slight increase in true negatives is due to the specific instructions clarifying the content of non-irony posts, marginally reducing false positives. Consistency shows 84 out of 100 rows as consistent, with 57 consistently correct rows (42 irony, 15 non-irony), 27 consistently incorrect rows (3 irony, 24 non-irony) and 16 rows contested (4 irony, 12 non-irony). These consistency numbers also barely differ from the set gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, which had 52 consistently correct (45 irony, 7 non-irony), 29 consistently incorrect (1 irony, 28 non-irony) and 19 contested rows (3 irony, 16 non-irony). Overall, the theme of increased consistently incorrect non-irony is again present in this set, with marginal, but observable increases in performance. The largest differences are seen, as expected from the results comparing Figure 12 to Figure 2, in consistently correct non-irony, going from 7 to 15, and thus decreasing consistently incorrect irony (from 28 to 24) and contested non-irony (from 16 to 12). This again indicates improved non-irony detection through the given example of non-irony, whereas the number of consistently correct rows barely changed, if anything reduced by a small (but for these analyses statistically insignificant) amount.

GPT-4

Running the same oneshot-0 prompt on GPT-4 (gpt-4-binary-oneshot0-main) resulted in an average accuracy of 0.79, precision of 0.84, recall of 0.71 and F1-Score of 0.77. These scores also show, as previously seen for GPT-4, remarkably low standard deviation in comparison to the average GPT-3.5 run sets. gpt-4-binary-default-main in comparison had an average accuracy of 0.77 (diff. of 0.02), precision of 0.86 (diff. of 0.02), recall of 0.64 (diff. of 0.07) and F1-Score of 0.74 (diff. of 0.03). Apart from a drop in recall and a small increase in F1-Score, these remain, like for GPT-3.5 oneshot-0 runs, largely the same as their main prompt counterparts. The matrix also shows similar results to the one seen in gpt-4-binary-default-main, with true negatives still being the highest metric, followed by true positives, with very similar deviation to the main prompt run. Consistency also shows no significant differences, with (results from gpt-4-binary-default-main in parentheses) 99 (98) rows consistent, separated into 34 (32) consistently correct ironic and 45 (46) consistently correct non-ironic classifications. 15 (16) rows were consistently incorrect irony and 5 (4) rows consistently incorrect non-irony evaluations. 1 non-ironic row was contested, compared to 2 rows in gpt-4-binary-default-main, separated into 1 ironic and 1 non-ironic row each. Overall, the sub prompt had no large effect on results compared to its main prompt counterpart, but a small increase in for example F1-Score indicate a slightly noticeable performance increase in some metrics, similar to the performance increase for GPT-3.5 using this prompt.

##### 4.1.1.4.2 Oneshot-1

GPT-3.5

Results from run set gpt-3.5-binary-oneshot1-main show an average accuracy of 0.69, precision of 0.64, recall of 0.84 and F1-Score of 0.73. Compared to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, these results show an immediate increase in accuracy by 0.07, precision by 0.07 and F1-Score by 0.03. While recall dropped by 0.06, the overall score improved measurably. This already indicates that the performance of GPT-3.5 increased when being shown an example of irony, more so especially compared to when being shown an example of non-irony, where scores had only slightly improved, if at all. Looking at matrix scores, the most notable difference to the main prompt is the fact that true negatives now slightly outnumber the false positives, meaning that the irony example has actually dramatically improved non-irony detection for GPT-3.5.

A graph of a number of blue bars

Description automatically generated

Figure 13:

The results also show a lower standard deviation for each score, especially the pair *fp*/*tn*. Consistency for this set also improved compared to the main prompt, with 93 out of 100 rows being consistent compared to 81 out of 100 in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. The improvement in average true negatives is also reflected, with only 19 consistently incorrect non-irony classifications compared to 28 in the main prompt run set. However, consistently incorrect irony has increase from 1 to 7, and while consistently correct non-irony improved from 7 to 27, consistently correct irony has dropped from 45 to 40. In addition, the already indicated smaller number of contested rows (7 compared to 19) separate into 2 irony and 5 non-ironic classifications, a stark difference compared to the 3 irony and 16 non-ironic contested rows in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. In total, there is an observable increase, especially when looking at consistency in primarily non-irony detection, which is as previously discussed a weak point for GPT-3.5.

GPT-4

Looking at the run set gpt-4-binary-oneshot1-main, the results show an average accuracy of 0.78, precision of 0.84, recall of 0.67 and F1-Score of 0.75. Except for a slight increase in recall (by 0.03), all other results do not differ from gpt-4-binary-default-main by more than 0.02, showing practically no real difference to the results obtained using the main prompt.

Matrix scores also show no real difference to the main prompt run set and similar standard deviation. Consistency as well shows no discernable differences compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main, strongly indicating that irony and non-irony detection are not affected by one-shot with an ironic given example, further suggesting that GPT-4’s irony detection is solid and largely unaffected by prompt changes, a pattern which has been seen in all sub prompts tried in this experiment.

#### 4.1.1.5 Conclusion of the main prompt experiments

To conclude the experiments on the main prompt and its sub prompts, results indicate that while GPT-3.5 is not terrible at irony detection, this is due to its overarching tendency for ironic labeling, as well as a higher standard deviation on average and worse consistency scores than GPT-4. GPT-3.5 is decent at irony detection, however due to the consistently high recall and lower precision scores, one can infer that GPT-3.5 is not very selective with its labelings, and abysmal in non-irony detection. Overall, due to its lack of non-irony detection, it’s difficult to say whether GPT-3.5 is actually capable of intelligently separating irony from non-irony. Thus, looking at the somewhat adequate F1-Scores of 0.69-0.71, this might through a naïve analysis seem to indicate GPT-3.5 is only slightly behind GPT-4 when it comes to irony detection, when in fact the methods, processes and results paint a different picture, showing GPT-3.5 having these scores mostly as a result of low sensitivity and an excessive amount of irony labelings. GPT-4 on the other hand appears to excel in non-irony detection and is in fact better at it than detecting irony, indicated by higher average scores and better consistency for non-irony detection. GPT-4 also displays more confidence in its evaluations, shown by consistently low deviation and high consistency scores in almost all metrics as well as the fact that most of its matrix scores are very closely reflected in its consistency scores, indicating low deviation and more importantly few contested rows. GPT-4 does not only produce better evaluations on average, but a more confident and intelligent separation of irony and non-irony, increasing both the number of absolute and consistent rows in comparison to GPT-3.5 in every examined experiment so far.

Prompt engineering had an impact on both models, however one of the most notable results is that throughout every prompt, the changes applied to it affected the results for GPT-3.5 far more than GPT-4. In fact, a changing of the answer format alone caused GPT-3.5 to have significantly improved non-irony detection, whereas the changes for GPT-4 in this new prompt were minimal. This once again highlights the low confidence of GPT-3.5, enabling one to cause massive changes to results by minimally changing the input prompt. In addition, there is no clear or obvious reason for these changes (as detailed in the relevant sections), making it unclear why changing the input format sometimes has these significant effects on results. However, also of note is that when experiment results indicated a declined effectiveness for GPT-3.5, a similar (though sometimes not as stark) decline in overall performance could most often be seen for GPT-4 as well. This indicates that there is a level of similarity between these models that cause a negative effect on one to be reflected in the other to some degree as well.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GPT-3.5 | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | TP | FN | FP | TN |
| Main prompt | 0.62 | 0.57 | **0.90** | 0.70 | **44.3** | 4.7 | **33.7** | 17.3 |
| No detector | 0.64 | 0.61 | 0.71 | 0.66 | 34.95 | 14.05 | 22.4 | 28.6 |
| Yes/No answer | 0.66 | **0.65** | 0.65 | 0.65 | 31.7 | **17.3** | 17.2 | **33.8** |
| Oneshot-0 | 0.65 | 0.59 | 0.89 | 0.71 | 43.4 | 5.6 | 29.6 | 21.4 |
| Oneshot-1 | **0.69** | 0.64 | 0.84 | **0.73** | 41.3 | 7.7 | 23.3 | 27.7 |

Table 2: Values from

Table 2 shows aggregated results from the GPT-3.5 binary prompt runs. The main prompt actually had some of the worst results overall, with accuracy and precision as the lowest scores out of all sub prompts, alongside the lowest amount of negative labelings. However, in terms of F1-Score, the main prompt ranked squarely in the upper middle at 0.70. The best non-irony detection was seen with the yes/no answer prompt which also almost entirely equalized irony and non-irony detection, but also had the lowest F1-Score due to far lower true positives. However, it also showed the highest precision due to the equal (and not bad) detection of irony and non-irony. Oneshot-1, as discussed earlier, showed most improvements overall and had the highest F1-Score and accuracy. While this run didn’t have any highlights in terms of matrix scores, it still resulted in decent detection of non-irony compared to the main prompt run without really losing any true positives, which is the reason for its high accuracy and F1-Scores. Overall, GPT-3.5 results are typically high in recall and low in precision, resulting from high true positives and low false negatives, but low in precision, resulting from high false positives along high true positives. These results underline the tendency for GPT-3.5 to drastically overestimate irony in shown results, with the notable exception of the yes/no answer prompt.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GPT-4 | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | TP | FN | FP | TN |
| Main prompt | 0.77 | 0.86 | 0.64 | 0.74 | 31.5 | 17.5 | 4.1 | 45.9 |
| No detector | 0.75 | **0.88** | 0.57 | 0.69 | 27.8 | **21.2** | 3.8 | **47.2** |
| Yes/No answer | 0.75 | 0.86 | 0.58 | 0.69 | 28.3 | 20.7 | 4.5 | 45.6 |
| Oneshot-0 | **0.79** | 0.85 | **0.71** | **0.77** | **34.7** | 14.3 | **6.4** | 44.6 |
| Oneshot-1 | 0.78 | 0.84 | 0.67 | 0.75 | 33.0 | 16.0 | **6.4** | 44.6 |

Table 3: Values from

Table 3 shows aggregated results from the GPT-4 binary prompt runs. Of note is the series of lowest scores for the no detector prompt, which however had the highest true negatives and precision. Compared to the rest, the no detector prompt may have had similar, if only slightly noticeable effects to GPT-3.5, lowering correct irony detection while boosting correct non-irony detection. It could be the case that due to GPT-4’s already high non-irony detection, this had little effect except lowering true positives, resulting in worse scores across the board, barring precision (due to low false positives). Also noticeable is the series of highest scores for oneshot-0, which are mostly still within error (~0.02) of scores for oneshot-1, but still indicate a marginally better result overall. This is likely due to increased true positives, and while true negatives are the lowest out of all sub prompts, they only show a difference of 1.3 to the main prompt set and a difference of 2.6 to the highest true negative score, as well as the lowest number of false negatives overall. Generally, the sub prompt runs for the main prompt show remarkably consistent scores for GPT-4, whereas GPT-3.5’s scores were far more malleable throughout the sub prompts.

### 4.1.2 Run type: Confidence

This run type consists of asking GPT to provide a binary evaluation, while also adding a measure of how confident it is in its classification as a percentage value. The complete prompt for this run type is thus:

*You are an irony detector. Respond with '1' (for yes) or '0' (for no) depending on whether you think the following statements are ironic, and add a percentage value of how confident you are in your assessment. Make sure your response format is '[1 or 0] [Confidence Percentage]'*

It is necessary to add the format requirement, as otherwise the responses are not parseable due to GPT answering with different sentence structures.

#### 4.1.2.1 Confidence run main prompt

GPT-3.5

The results from run set gpt-3.5-confidence-default-main show an average accuracy of 0.54, precision of 0.51, recall of 0.99 and F1-Score of 0.68. Compared to the main prompt run gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, this constitutes a decrease in accuracy by ~0.08, precision by ~0.06, an increase in recall by ~0.09 and an F1-Score within margin of error. The stark differences in accuracy and recall indicate a problem of low sensitivity that is even more pronounced here than in the base prompt GPT-3.5 runs. However, all scores have exceptionally low deviation at less than 0.01 for every score.

A graph of a number of blue bars

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Figure 14:

The problem is further underlined by looking at matrix scores in Figure 14. While the main prompt run sets already had a strongly increased false positive rate, the problem is exacerbated in the confidence run set, with an exceptionally low true negative rate. However, also of note is the very low standard deviation for all scores, indicating confidence in the evaluations are strong. Also noteworthy is the standard deviation for *tp*/*fn* being only ~0.49, with deviation for *fp*/*tn* being 0.9, almost double that of the first pair. This indicates that true positives are a little bit more consistent, even if both pairs have very low deviation.

Looking at the consistency of this run set, 98 out of 100 rows are consistent, a hitherto unseen number for GPT-3.5 run sets. Furthermore, out of the 52 consistently correct rows, 48 are ironic with 4 non-ironic classifications. The remaining 46 consistently incorrect rows all have a non-ironic label, as well as 1 contested irony and non-irony row each. Another interesting metric is absolute consistency, which shows 46 out of 48 consistently correct irony classifications as absolute (difference of 2), with none of the consistently correct non-irony evaluations being absolute. 39 out of the 46 consistently incorrect non-irony rows were absolutely incorrect (difference of 7). This shows that while GPT-3.5 is very, mostly even absolutely consistent with correct irony, there is still some marginally higher difference for consistently incorrect non-irony, which is also reflected in Figure 14 through the slightly higher deviation value.

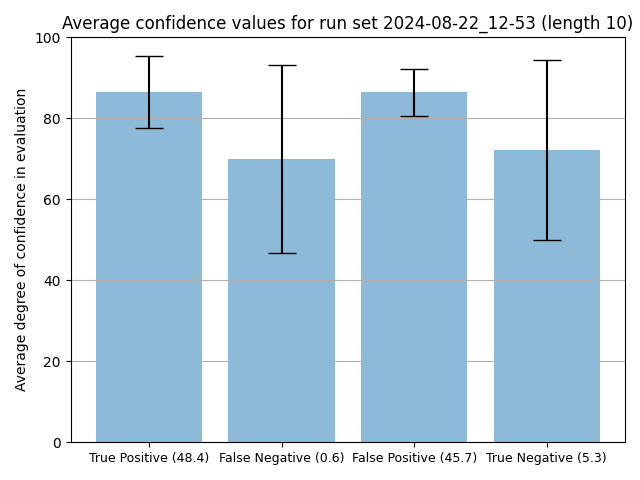


Figure 15: Confidence values for the set on a percentage scale from 0-100% averaged across 10 runs

Figure 15 shows the confidence percentages for the run set. Immediately noticeable is that the average confidence in evaluations is equal to or greater than 70% for all values. However, large standard deviations for false negatives and true negatives indicate that these deviate strongly, meaning the actual values are more spread out across the scale from 0-100. In the positive labelings however, standard deviation is comparatively low, which is also due to the higher number of evaluations, but nevertheless indicates a stronger degree of confidence in positive labelings. Also notable is the similar average confidence value in true and false positives, with the only difference being slightly higher deviation for true positives (8.84 compared to 5.82). Overall, GPT-3.5 gives fairly high confidence values, especially for positive labelings, even if about half of these labelings are actually incorrect (false positives). The problem of incorrect positive labelings not only continues but is far more pronounced in this run type. This indicates that asking GPT-3.5 to give confidence values in its evaluations leads to more actual positive evaluations as well, most of them with very high confidence percentages given. As such, it is fair to say that this prompt actually reduces the effectivity of GPT-3.5 in irony detection and basically nullifies any semblance of non-irony detection it had using the main prompt.

GPT-4

The results from run set gpt-4-confidence-default-main show an average accuracy of 0.79, precision of 0.86, recall 0.68 and F1-Score of 0.76. Compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main, this constitutes a small increase in recall (by ~0.04), however all other scores are within 0.02 of each other, already indicating no large change in performance.

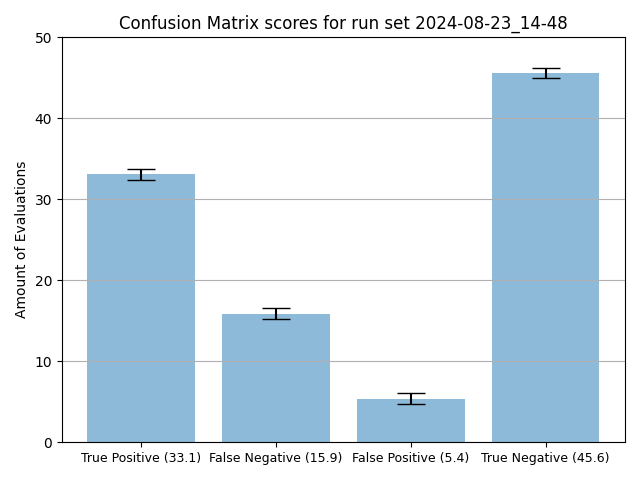


Figure 16:

As seen when comparing Figure 16 and Figure 5, there is no noticeable difference between GPT-4 sets when using the main prompt or the confidence prompt in absolute average values, however a small decrease in deviation is noticed for the two score pairs. Comparing consistency, no score shows any noteworthy difference.

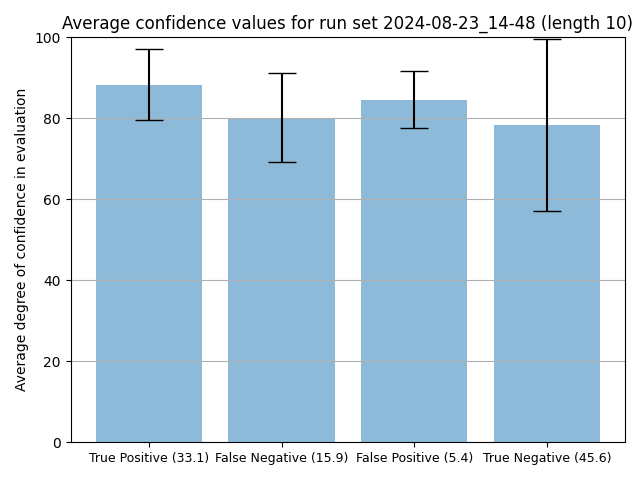


Figure 17:

Figure 17 shows the average confidence values for each metric across the 10 runs. Immediately noticeable is the comparatively higher average confidence and also the fact that all 4 metrics are far closer to each other than in the GPT-3.5 run seen in Figure 15. Another notable fact is the higher confidence deviation for negative labelings than positive labelings (similar to the results for GPT-3.5), especially seen in the true negative category. However, with true negative classifications being the highest of all 4 metrics, this means that GPT-4 actually has the lowest average score and the highest variation in confidence values for the score that it is most correct in. Though it is unknown what exactly causes this to be the case, it is possible that due to the irony detection instruction, GPT is more unsure about detecting non-ironic posts. On the other hand, it could simply be due to non-ironic posts possibly being interpretable as ironic, whereas ironic posts are more unambiguous.

#### 4.1.2.2 Conclusion of confidence prompt experiments

As seen in previous run types, GPT-3.5 once again shows the largest difference to its main prompt runs with significant changes in both absolute scores and deviations. This again supports the supposition that GPT-3.5 is a far more malleable model than GPT-4, which showed no real difference to its main prompt counterpart run sets. This leads to the conclusion that not only is GPT-4 (as seen in other run set comparisons on the main prompt) more consistent, but it would also in fact appear that for its evaluations, GPT-4 was not influenced by having to give confidence percentages in its responses, as the rest of the prompt was exactly the same as the main prompt. Overall, this run type sees the same pattern of GPT-3.5 to GPT-4 behavior as expected from previous results. The behavior in regards to confidence however is similar between both models, showing high confidence and low deviation for positive labels and a lower confidence and higher deviation for negative labelings (regardless of how they are labeled in the dataset).

### 4.1.3 Run type: Percentage

The concept of this run type is to have GPT evaluate a post with a percentage value of irony instead of a binary evaluation. The base prompt for this run is:

*You are an irony detector. Respond to messages with your evaluation of how ironic the message is, given only as a percentage, such as '50%'.*

As these results are not classified into irony and non-irony, in order to evaluate scores, a result of 50% or greater is counter as an irony classification, whereas any other value is counted as a non-ironic classification.

#### 4.1.3.1 Percentage run main prompt

GPT-3.5

The results of run set gpt-3.5-percentage-default-main show an average accuracy of 0.69, precision of 0.67, recall of 0.74 and F1-Score of 0.70. While F1-Score is the same as in gpt-3.5-binary-default-main and other GPT-3.5 run sets on the main prompt and dataset, this run actually shows an improvement of ~0.7 in terms of accuracy and ~0.1 in precision, making both of these scores some of the largest differences to other GPT-3.5 runs. Recall on the other hand has dropped by 0.16, which along with higher precision indicates a more selective result with lower sensitivity. Standard deviation shows no large change for this run set, meaning the distribution of scores around the average stayed roughly the same even if the absolute value of the score changed.

A graph with blue bars

Description automatically generated

Figure 18:

Figure 18 shows the averaged matrix scores for the run set. Immediately noticeable is a shift in actual non-irony labels, whereas the main prompt run sets (as well as alternate prompts and run types) continuously had higher false positives than true negatives, this run set shows a comparatively large increase in true negatives, making them almost as high as true positives, meaning that this prompt actually caused non-irony detection to drastically improve for GPT-3.5. This could be due to the fact that having to assign an actual value to the score forces GPT-3.5 to evaluate actual irony and non-irony content in detail instead of overall sentiment of a post, causing it to more accurately assess non-irony. However, this increase in true negatives also comes with a decrease in true positives, making the model more balanced in its results but not show a large increase in for example F1-Score. Both pairs also have gotten closer in terms of standard deviation, whereas in the main prompt run set the actual irony rows showed far less deviation than the actual non-irony rows. This again leads to the conclusion that the tendency for overconfident irony labelings is far more reduced, if not eliminated using this prompt. Consistency compared to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main (results in parentheses) shows a larger amount of consistently correct rows at 65 (52), and less consistently incorrect rows at 21 (29), making 14 (19) rows contested. As seen in the matrix scores, consistently correct rows have become far more balanced at 35 (45) irony and 30 (7) non-irony, marking a massive increase in consistently correct non-irony. Contested irony has increased to 6 (3), but contested non-irony has halved to 8 (16). Overall, the results can be considered better than runs done on the main prompt and many of its sub prompts, as there is a clear increase in non-irony detection, leading to the conclusion that the model stops overinterpreting most rows as ironic when asked to give percentages as answers.

GPT-4

Run set gpt-4-percentage-default-main resulted in an average accuracy of 0.76, precision of 0.91, recall of 0.58 and F1-Score of 0.70. Compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main, precision has increased by ~0.04 while recall has dropped by ~0.06. Of note is also the decrease in F1-Score by ~0.04 while F1-Score has remained the same for this run type using GPT-3.5, making this prompt cause a decrease in score for GPT-4 and not GPT-3.5, a pattern not yet seen with any other prompt. The comparatively small increase in precision and drop in recall also indicates a slightly more sensitive and selective model.

A graph of a number of blue bars

Description automatically generated

Figure 19:

Figure 19 shows a similar pattern to the one usually seen in GPT-4 runs, having high true negatives with true positives as the second highest score. However, true positives have slightly decreased and become more balanced with false negatives, whereas true negatives have become even larger in number compared to gpt-4-binary-default-main. This experiment also has higher standard deviation for actual irony labels at 1.83 compared to 1.20 in the main prompt run, as well as lower standard deviation for actual non-irony labels at 0.54 compared to 1.04. This prompt has thus shown a more confident and correct evaluation of non-irony for GPT-4, while at the same time causing a more scattered and less effective irony detection. It’s possible that the already better non-irony detection has been improved by a more thorough analysis of sentiment in order to give a better evaluation of irony as a percentage, however also making GPT-4 less sure about the irony content of posts. Except for a small decrease in consistently correct irony detection from 32 to 28 and a slight increase in contested rows from 1 irony and 1 non-irony to 4 irony and 2 non-irony, consistency shows no large differences to gpt-4-binary-default-main. Absolute consistency shows a more significant drop in absolutely correct irony from 26 to 15, further supporting less confidence when evaluating irony for this prompt using GPT-4.

#### 4.1.3.2 Percentage run conclusions

This run type showed a far better ability for GPT-3.5 to detect non-irony and seemed to almost eliminate its tendencies to incorrectly interpret a plurality of the rows as ironic, a tendency that has been observed not only in the main prompt runs and many of its sub prompts, but also in the confidence run type. This indicates that the phrasing of the main prompt once again has a very significant impact on performance using GPT-3.5, causing what is almost a flip in true negatives and false positives. The same cannot be said for GPT-4, which for the first time saw a performance decrease in terms of F1-Score whereas GPT-3.5’s score remained the same compared to run sets on the main prompt and dataset. Non-irony detection slightly improved while irony detection saw a drop in performance, reducing the overall F1-Score for this prompt. It is not exactly clear what causes these differences. However, while acknowledging that the performance did drop somewhat, no stark differences in terms of expected GPT-4 classifications are seen in this run, once again showing that the phrasing and type of prompt has a larger impact on GPT-3.5 than on GPT-4 compared to the main prompt and dataset.

### 4.1.4 Run type: Sentiment choice

The concept of this run type is to instead of having GPT respond with a binary evaluation, it should instead assign posts a sentiment from a given list, which includes irony as one of the options. The goal of this run type is to further test irony detection when not specifically instructed to detect irony, similar to sub prompt “no detector” for the main run type. However, this run fully removes any indication that the experiment is about irony specifically. The prompt is thus:

*You are a sentiment detector. Assign posts a sentiment from the following list depending on which you consider most appropriate: angry, sad, ironic, happy, neutral, confused. Respond only with one word.*

While of course not every possible sentiment is given in such a short list, it is expected due to the phrasing that GPT will assign the *closest* sentiment, such that “frustrated” would fall within “angry”, or “excited” within “happy”. For the purpose of this run, any evaluation that is not “irony” will be counted as a classification of “0” or “non-irony”.

#### 4.1.4.1 Sentiment choice run type results

GPT-3.5

Run set gpt-3.5-sentChoice-default-main resulted in an average accuracy of 0.62, precision of 0.75, recall of 0.34 and F1-Score of 0.47. Only 4 rows out of 10 runs on 100 rows (meaning 4 out of 1.000 evaluations in total) were errors, which is in line with most other run types, meaning the instructions did not cause GPT-3.5 any confusion as to which sentiments to assign. All errors are single sentiments that are not contained within the given list, such as *“hopeful”*. These results, especially in terms of F1-Score show a stark difference to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main, with a strong decrease in both recall (by ~0.56) and F1-Score (by ~0.23), putting them among the largest differences to the main run recorded in the entire experiment. However, while accuracy stayed the same at 0.62, precision actually increased by ~0.18. The increase in precision and stark drop in recall indicate that GPT-3.5 made more selective decisions, only labeling irony when very confident in that evaluation. Standard deviation shows no notable deviations from expected GPT-3.5 values.

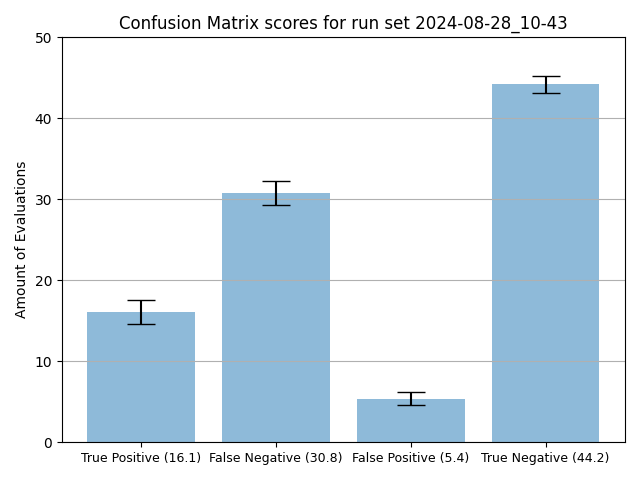


Figure 20:

The average matrix scores also show very different results from the main prompt runs, with true positives being the second lowest score. True negatives have drastically increased, which is not unexpected given that every not “irony” classification is counted towards “non-irony”. However, with the drastic increase in false negatives, there is an almost complete flip of scores in favor of non-irony detection. The scores from Figure 2 were 44.3 (tp), 4.7 (fn), 33.7 (fp), 17.3 (tn), which are a close to perfect mirror of these from Figure 20 scores in the other direction. This would indicate that instead of over-evaluating irony, GPT-3.5 now drastically under-evaluates irony, only giving the irony label when it is very obviously correct (which is backed up by the average scores from precision and recall, suggesting more selectiveness). Consistency compared to gpt-3.5-binary-default-main shows an increase of 9 in terms of overall consistency at 90 out of 100 rows, and also show the switch in scores seen in the matrix scores, albeit slightly less obviously. The main prompt run set had 45 consistently correct ironic and 7 consistently correct non-irony evaluations, while the sentiment choice run set had 12 and 43 respectively. A similar change can be seen in consistent incorrect rows at 1 ironic and 28 non-ironic for the main prompt run set and 29 ironic and 6 non-ironic for the sentiment choice run set. Of 10 contested rows, 8 were ironic and 2 non-ironic, whereas the main prompt run had 19 contested with 3 ironic and 16 non-ironic. While the absolute values are not a perfect match, the proportions and overall distribution support the idea of a reversing in terms of result scores. It is very possible that GPT-3.5 considering irony only as one of its choices and bundling all other sentiments to count as “non-ironic” created the exact effect seen in the main prompt run, where now the other sentiments made up the vast majority of GPT-3.5’s possible evaluations, making what would count as the “non-ironic” category far larger and posts more likely to be evaluated as such, causing the overclassification in comparison to ironic lines.

GPT-4

The results from run set gpt-4-sentChoice-default-main showed an average accuracy of 0.77, precision of 0.83, recall of 0.67 and F1-Score of 0.74. Barring a small decrease in precision by ~0.03 and an equally small increase in recall by ~0.03, accuracy and F1-Score are the same as in gpt-4-binary-default-main, with no notable change in standard deviation for any score. Overall, especially given the drastic changes seen in GPT-3.5, this result is remarkably consistent with the default prompt despite completely different phrasing and classification instructions.

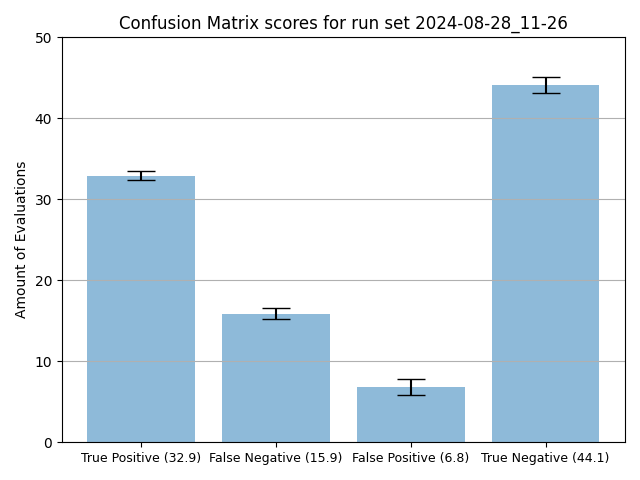


Figure 21:

Just as with the aforementioned scores, the average matrix scores show no significant differences to those obtained in gpt-4-binary-default-main, except for a minute decrease in standard deviation in *tp*/*fn* from 1.20 (both) to 0.54 (tp) and 0.7 (fn) (different due to 3 errors overall in the run set). Consistency, as expected from matrix results, shows no significant difference in any metric.

#### 4.1.4.2 Sentiment choice run conclusions

GPT-3.5 showed drastically different results when using this prompt, almost entirely switching scores for actual irony and non-irony detection, once again showing a drastic difference in results for GPT-3.5 when using a different prompt. GPT-4 on the other hand once again showed almost no changes from the main prompt run sets, despite receiving an entirely different task in the prompt. This result shows, once again, remarkable consistency for GPT-4 with great irony and non-irony detection overall, whereas most GPT-3.5 runs resulted in either good irony or non-irony detection capabilities.

### 4.1.5 GPT run conclusions

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GPT-3.5 | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | TP | FN | FP | TN |
| binary | 0.62 | 0.57 | **0.90** | **0.70** | 44.3 | 4.7 | 33.7 | 17.3 |
| confidence | 0.54 | 0.51 | 0.74 | **0.70** | **48.4** | 0.6 | **45.7** | 5.3 |
| percentage | **0.66** | 0.65 | 0.65 | 0.65 | 35.8 | 12.9 | 17.4 | 33.0 |
| sentiment  choice | 0.62 | **0.75** | 0.34 | 0.47 | 16.1 | **30.8** | 5.4 | **44.2** |

Table 4: Values from

Table 4 shows aggregated results from the different run types for GPT-3.5. Immediately noticeable are the comparatively good scores for the main run, with the highest F1-Score and highest recall, as well as no lowest scores. Throughout all run types apart from sentiment choice (which is an outlier in almost all scores) the pattern of labeling most posts as ironic continues, making it a pattern not just in sub prompts of the main prompt, but for GPT-3.5 in general, which was further seen taken to an extreme in the confidence run type, which had the highest true and false positives of all recorded run sets, resulting in the lowest precision for the run types and, due to extremely low true negatives, also the lowest accuracy of all recorded run sets. The sentiment choice run type resulted in a surprising flip of values, with great non-irony detection as discussed in the relevant section. This total flip of scores also resulted in the lowest recorded F1-Score and recall of all run sets, while having the highest precision of all GPT-3.5 run sets. Overall, most of these results (barring the sentiment choice run type) generally fall in line with the expected GPT-3.5 behavior also seen in the sub prompts for the binary run type.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GPT-4 | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | TP | FN | FP | TN |
| binary | 0.77 | 0.86 | 0.64 | 0.74 | 31.5 | 17.5 | 5.1 | 45.9 |
| confidence | **0.79** | 0.86 | **0.68** | **0.76** | **33.1** | 15.9 | 5.4 | 45.6 |
| percentage | 0.76 | **0.91** | 0.58 | 0.70 | 28.2 | **20.8** | 2.9 | **47.1** |
| sentiment  choice | 0.77 | 0.83 | 0.67 | 0.74 | 32.9 | 15.9 | **6.8** | 44.1 |

Table 2

Table 4 shows aggregated results from the different run types for GPT-4. Once again, as for the sub prompts of the binary run type, scores are generally consistent with little deviation. Scores remain similar or the same across run types, with the confidence run type resulting on some of the best scores, contrary to GPT-3.5’s confidence run set. The percentage run type saw some of the lowest scores, which are a result of its lowered irony detection, having the lowest true positives and highest false negatives of all run types. Overall, the GPT-4 results are all within generally the same ranges as the binary sub prompts, showing even greater consistency and confidence for GPT-4.

## 4.2 Other Large Language Models

As discussed in Section 3, two other irony detection models will be examined in this paper, namely the TweetNLP (TweetNLP, 2024) (Jose Camacho-Collados, 2022) and pysentimiento (pysentimiento, 2024) libraries for Python. Both of these libraries contain mechanisms and methods for multiple different NLP applications such as hate speech detection, emotion analysis or other sentiment detection tasks. Both of these models are based on a pretrained version of Google’s BERT, called roBERTa (Yinhan Liu, 2019), with further (separate) pretraining done using tweets. The main dataset, tweet\_eval\_irony\_train, is the same SemEval-2018 data used by TweetNLP and pysentimiento to train irony detection, and as such results in an unfair advantage (as it results in almost perfect scores) if comparatively used. Due to this, all comparisons done between LLMs will use the manual dataset formed from a different corpus of tweets so as no not give an advantage to any LLM. As TweetNLP and pysentimiento irony detection was trained on tweets, using a set of different tweets from training data is an appropriate way to maintain performance without unfair advantage. The main comparison will be between the libraries and the default prompt run sets for GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, as the results are stable and display the abilities of each model. For GPT, the same runs on the manual dataset as in Section 4.1.1.1 will be used for comparison to TweetNLP and pysentimiento results.

### 4.2.1 Direct Comparison

TweetNLP irony detection results are given in the form of a probability split into irony and non-irony which add up to 1. As such, similar to the percentage run type examined in Section 4.1.3, if a result contains an irony evaluation of 0.5 or greater, it is counted as an irony classification for the purposes of analysis. Unlike GPT as used in these experiments, TweetNLP irony detection always returns the same values for the same inputs, thus eliminating the necessity for multiple runs to gather a coherent average and allowing the use of one run of the dataset for comparison.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Accuracy | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | TP | FN | FP | TN |
| GPT-3.5 | 0.59 | 0.55 | **0.92** | 0.69 | **45.9** | 4.1 | **36.9** | 13.1 |
| GPT-4 | **0.78** | **0.75** | 0.84 | **0.79** | 41.9 | 8.1 | 14.0 | **36.0** |
| TweetNLP | 0.61 | 0.60 | 0.68 | 0.64 | 34.0 | **16.0** | 23.0 | 27.0 |
| pysentimiento | 0.71 | 0.66 | 0.86 | 0.75 | 43.0 | 7.0 | 22.0 | 28.0 |

Table 3

Table 6 shows the comparative results in average scores from GPT and the scores given by TweetNLP and pysentimiento. Immediately noticeable is the high performance in most scores by GPT-4 compared to all other models. With the highest F1-Score and Accuracy values as well has the best non-irony detection (as well as irony detection very close to the best result), it’s clear that GPT-4 delivered the best performance, even compared to models specifically trained for tweet irony detection. Perhaps unsurprisingly, GPT-3.5 delivered some of the overall worst results, and its tendency to overlabel irony is not reflected within the other two models, as true negatives are higher than false positives for the other LLMs. With the lowest precision and accuracy, GPT-3.5 still ended up with the third best F1-Score overall, due to high true positives.

TweetNLP’s irony detection on the other hand resulted in the second worst accuracy, with only about 2/3 of all actual irony and about half of non-irony being detected as such, whereas all other models were upwards of 4/5 for actual irony. With the second to lowest precision and the by far lowest recall value, the model did not manage to sufficiently detect irony or non-irony in any notable capacity compared to some other models. As a result of these overall comparatively low scores, TweetNLP ended up with a predictably low F1-Score of 0.64, which is on the lower end of all recorded run sets.

Pysentimiento’s results are measurably better than TweetNLP’s, showing better accuracy and precision due to more accurate irony detection at over 40 out of 50 correctly identified irony rows without sacrificing non-irony detection, which was similar to TweetNLP at a little more than half of actual non-irony correctly identified. Due to this comparative increase in true positives on-par with GPT-4’s irony detection, pysentimiento ended up with a relatively high F1-Score of 0.75.

### 4.2.2 Conclusions from comparisons

Results from 4.2.1 show that GPT occupies both the lowest and the highest score places, with GPT-3.5’s poor performance in correctly identifying actual irony and non-irony placing it lower than other models in most scores. GPT-4 on the other hand managed to outshine both libraries with better detection for both actual irony and non-irony, resulting in some of the highest scores (especially F1-Scores) of all recorded run sets. Both pretrained roBERTa models thus place in between the GPT models, with pysentimiento slightly outperforming TweetNLP due to better irony detection. An interesting note however is that while these two models showed differences in irony detection, their non-irony detection was almost exactly the same, potentially showing a difference in the training material or priorities in detection. It also might indicate progress in LLM performance over time, as out of all examined models, GPT-4 is the most recent model, being released in 2023, whereas both GPT-3.5 and roBERTa are older, with GPT-3.5 being released in 2022 but based on GPT-3 which was released in 2020. The pre-trained models from TweetNLP and pysentimiento were both released in 2022, possibly showing the advantage of an older model (roBERTa from 2019) being pretrained for specifically irony detection, a minute amount of this was also seen in GPT when using one-shot prompts, which increased scoring and irony detection. Thus, perhaps expectedly, even though GPT-3.5 and both libraries were released in the same year, GPT-3.5 as a model not specifically trained for irony detection had worse results than TweetNLP and pysentimiento.

# 5. Future & Conclusion

More experiments can be done using the frameworks discussed in Sections 3 and 4. Mainly, the experiments could be expanded to include run sets on all included datasets, such as the reddit set or the manual dataset which were only used very few instances due to brevity. Additionally, datasets could be further altered and preprocessed to check if differences such as the removal of all hashtags, mentions or other linguistic features measurably changes the effect on results for each run type and sub prompt. In addition, since only tweets and reddit comments were taken, valuable results could be obtained by acquiring more types of data, such as social media posts from different platforms or ironic/non-ironic statements from other sources. It could also be possible to create multiple different manual datasets from the same overall dataset with no overlaps between them and experiment with how the consistency and overall scores change between entries of the same dataset. More run types could have been included, such as asking “Are you sure?” after an irony classification from GPT and recording/evaluating those responses. Since no run type except the main binary runs had any sub prompts, the same, similar or entirely different sub prompts could be created for each run type beyond binary in order to evaluate scoring differences between sub prompts. Comparisons could also be done between different prompts and run types beyond just comparisons to the main set by comparing different result prompt performances to one another. Future experiments may also include new GPT or other LLM versions, such as the eventual GPT-5 or other more advanced LLMs.

Valuable insights were gained during these experiments. For one, GPT-3.5 performed measurably worse than GPT-4 in almost every experiment and metric, showing a rudimentary to missing ability to separate irony from non-irony. In addition, the sometimes massive changes in behavior when altering the prompt even slightly or between prompts indicates very poor consistency, leading to the conclusion that GPT-3.5 is not effective or fit for irony detection purposes on a general scale. GPT-4’s decent to good performance on the other hand indicates that if this model was further pre-trained with irony and non-irony inputs, it is likely based on the consistent performance of GPT-4’s basic model that such a fine-tuned LLM would excel at irony detection and consistently produce useful results. The other LLM’s performances show limitations of the models they are based on, which are not as performant as GPT-4, but due to fine-tuning and pre-training still manage to outperform GPT-3.5. Overall, while these tools were decent, one can conclude they are not necessarily fit for general irony detection purposes and probably would benefit from using more modern, advanced models.

[Figure 1: The score averages with distribution measures for a set of 10 runs of the binary prompt using the gpt-3.5-turbo model and the main dataset. 8](#_Toc176259366)

[Figure 2: The average values of true positive (tp), false negative (fn), false positive (fp) and true negative (tn) evaluations from the run set gpt-3.5-binary-default-main. Average values are also in parentheses next to their respective label. 9](#_Toc176259367)

[Figure 3: Average scores from a run set of 10 with length 100 using the gpt-4 model. 12](#_Toc176259368)

[Figure 4: The averaged values from the expected and actual label over the run set of gpt-4-binary-default-main 13](#_Toc176259369)

[Figure 5: 16](#_Toc176259370)

[Figure 6: Results from the set of length 20 gpt-3.5-binary-noDetector-main 17](#_Toc176259371)

[Figure 7: gpt-4-binary-noDetector-main 19](#_Toc176259372)

[Figure 8: Scores 20](#_Toc176259373)

[Figure 9: LMAO 21](#_Toc176259374)

[Figure 10: 22](#_Toc176259375)

[Figure 11: 23](#_Toc176259376)

[Figure 12: 24](#_Toc176259377)

[Figure 13: 26](#_Toc176259378)

[Figure 14: 29](#_Toc176259379)

[Figure 15: Confidence values for the set on a percentage scale from 0-100% averaged across 10 runs 30](#_Toc176259380)

[Figure 16: 31](#_Toc176259381)

[Figure 17: 31](#_Toc176259382)

[Figure 18: 33](#_Toc176259383)

[Figure 19: 34](#_Toc176259384)

[Figure 20: 35](#_Toc176259385)

[Figure 21: 37](#_Toc176259386)