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Natural Language Processing

Critique #2:

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*A computational approach to politeness with application to social factors*

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The methods and analysis in this paper seemed thorough and very well thought out. The careful selection of annotators, for example, in section 2, that involved pre-screening them, spatially restricting their location, and going so far as to use an effective paraphrasing test "...[to filter out] annotators with uniform or seemingly random annotations" effectively restricts data quality to a very high caliber. Such serious methods of pre and post screening can ultimately lead to cleaner data in virtually any research arena and ultimately lead to better research and discoveries.

The paper was not without its limits: by simply limiting the test and training of the systems to Stack Exchange and Wikipedia, a plethora of other forums that handle power dynamics and social networks is ignored. It's also quite possible that Wikipedia contributors are also Stack Exchange contributors (or vice versa) OR that the nature of Stack Exchange and Wikipedia both being electorally decided upon data/answers leads to a specific subset of people who would contribute to those communities. This means that the results of the study are potentially stronger than they actually are.

That being said, the paper and concepts therein open up the possibility for many fascinating and insightful follow-up studies (some of which would alleviate or answer to the potential pitfall called out earlier). One such study would involve taking the politeness test to different types of online forum sites that have focuses outside of factual information. For example, how does *Politeness* affect a Reddit user's post or comment? Does politeness in a forum focused on factual questions and answers warrant more of a positive outcome than it would in a forum without such an "academic" environment? You could apply the study into various subreddits and see if there is any correlation to Politeness and "Expected Professionalism" based on the nature of that forum.

One other very interesting study would be to see the effect of increased positive and negative politeness indicators from someone already in a social position of power and witnessing what occurs in either situation. You could set this experiment up by taking "moderators" and other "power players" in these various forums and begin increasing the politeness for one group and decreasing the politeness in the other group. It would be interesting to see if continue politeness after attaining power increases that power or the length in which it is held or whether decreasing politeness after attaining power is necessary to maintain it.

Great paper – it was well thought out and sparked many ideas.