

Using Large Language Models to Study Fiction

Diving into Computational Literary Studies

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4 mars 2024

PSL Intensive Week DHAI

Computational Literary Studies

- Machine Learning & Text Mining to model concepts in large literary corpus.
- A key concept : Distant Reading - Franco Moretti.
- Our Project : using LLMs as annotation power / as plot predictors
- **Stakes** : Evaluation - Interpretation

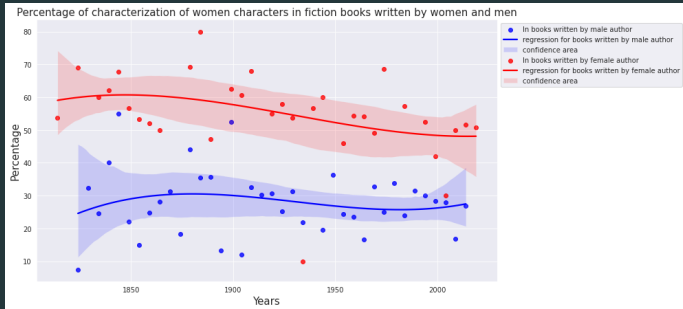


Figure 1 : Evolution of women's screentime over time, broken out by author gender

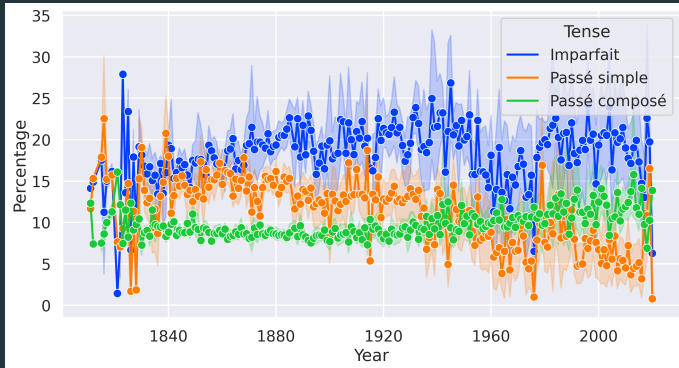


Figure 2 : Evolution of verb tense over time

Group Project 2 : Measuring predictability and surprise in adventure and police fiction

LLMs as a tool to study plot construction

- Plot - the Achilles' heel of the discipline
- LLMs & plot - (Underwood, 2024)
<https://tedunderwood.com/2024/01/05/can-language-models-predict-the-next-twist-in-a-story/>
- Modeling Predictability & Surprise

Are LLMs relevant to CLS ?

- Can LLMs effectively predict the unfolding events in a novel ?
- How can we assess their performance ?
- What changes in results occur when specializing (fine-tuning) LLMs on subgenres ?

Background : Language Models are Next Word Predictors

LLMs

- Pretrained language models take as input text and output the most likely next token(s) of that text.
- LLMs as an annotation tool - subgenre tags (recall problem)
- Finetuning - Specialization of LLMs on specific tasks

Subgenres are powerful cultural artefacts

- Plot is highly dependent on subgenres
- Adventure & Detective novels - Similarity / Differences ?
- Predictability benchmark of subgenre == Plot codification ?

- Data Annotation - Stereotypical Scenes + Plot completion
- Evaluation - text similarity : cosine + perplexity
- Scripts - Data preparation, Completion, Embeddings, Evaluation, Machine learning
- Analyses - Interpretation & Presentation

Work Packages - dated

Day	Indicative Work Packages
Monday	Project Presentation, Data Annotation - start. Notebooks - llms_annotation + llms_fine_tuning
Tuesday	Data Annotation. Notebooks - get_embeddings - text_similarity
Wednesday	Data Annotation - end. Notebooks - machine learning.
Thursday	Results -> Analyses + Start building Presentation
Friday	Morning - Writing Results, Finalizing Presentation Afternoon - Presentation

Questions ?

Github of the Project : https://github.com/crazyjeannot/DHAI_2024_TD_LLM