

## Dude, srsly?: The Surprisingly Formal Nature of Twitter's Language

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The paper talks about the surprisingly formal nature of Twitter's language which is contrary to the general perception that its language is more informal like SMS/IM. The paper's arguments and statistics are intuitive in a way since tweets are more often used to air personal opinions and for information sharing like news and updates. Tweets aren't usually used as a conversational tool since the data is mostly public. This is an important factor since there is general tendency to be more conservative and linguistically correct in public discourse than in private conversations.

The paper doesn't define what it means by the 'formal' language except that it considers the language of newspapers and magazines as 'formal'. It seems that this might be an oversimplified assumption since the language and writing style varies from newspapers to magazines. The writing styles used by news agencies and organizations vary according to culture, geography, proficiency and style preferences of writers and editors. A stricter definition of 'formal' and classification of news media would help in a better understanding of the parameters used to compare the language of Twitter to other media.

The large corpora of data used by the authors for comparison are restricted. Only Reuters news dataset is considered which may not be the same style used by other news organizations. The authors acknowledge that the datasets used are varied in terms of the time periods that they cover. This is an important factor which might change the statistics obtained since styles evolve rapidly and constantly in a media like twitter with the increase in the number and diversity of users.

One aspect of the style of language that the authors haven't considered is the use of devices by the users of twitter. On a laptop computer, it is easier to type complete words than their short forms. It is quite the reverse on mobile devices. Also, users are subconsciously more prone to using formal structure since they are more used to typing emails (which tend to involve business conversations) on a computer than on a mobile device although this trend is also continuously evolving with the proliferation of mobile devices.

It might be that the inherent difficulty in typing on a mobile device entices the users to use shorter and compact language. This might make use of informal structure more acceptable in business-like formal conversation. The devices and technology prevalent is an important factor in understanding the evolution of language structures in different media and especially media like Twitter that is constrained by a hard character limit.

The authors provide compelling proof and reasoning that the language of twitter is more formal than otherwise believed. The paper can serve as a base for more research into the constantly evolving dynamics of language and style in different media in a technology driven society.