Annotation guidelines for candy speech

Authors: Yulia Clausen (yulia.clausen@rub.de), Tatjana Scheffler

Background and definition

Candy speech is defined as expression of positive attitudes and feelings on social media towards individuals (i.e. content creators or commenters) or their posts (videos, comments, etc.). The purpose of candy speech is to encourage, cheer up, support or empower others. Candy speech can be viewed as the counterpart to hate speech, as it also aims to influence the self-image of the target person or group, but in a positive way.

The annotation of candy speech involves the following steps:

1. Identification of candy speech expressions
2. Determining the type for each candy speech expression

These steps are explained in more detail below.

1. Identification of candy speech expressions

Candy speech can be realized by means of linguistic expressions or non-linguistic means, such as positively connoted emojis (https://emojipedia.org/), emoticons (https://www.emoticonr.com/) or hashtags that express positive feelings. It is important that emojis and emoticons do not have neutral or even negative connotations. In case of doubt, the meaning should be checked on the specified pages.

Candy speech expressions can be individual words (e.g. *Geil*), individual emojis/emoticons/hashtags (e.g. * - *), multi-word expressions (e.g. *Respekt an euch*) or a combination of these (e.g. *voll süß* ❤ ❤). A complete sentence or post can also represent a candy speech expression. The smallest span of the candy speech expression should be annotated, i.e. if several candy speech expressions directly follow each other in a sentence (cf. (1); candy speech expressions are marked by square brackets), each expression should be annotated separately.

(1) **[Das ist das beste lied von euch .] [Weiter so daumen hoch :) ;)]**

Candy speech can target a person. Typically the creator of the original post or the author of a comment under this post.

(2) Ihr seid einfach der Hammer !!!!

Candy speech can also be about the post itself (e.g. a video or a comment from another user). It is important that the encouragement and support of another person is the central aim of the candy speech expression.

(3) Gehts noch Geiler ???? ich glaub nicht soooo Geil OMG * ___ * (Y) ♥

Further examples:

The comment in (4) contains two candy speech expressions: *Echt geiles Lied* und *habt ihr echt gut gemacht*.

> (4) **[Echt geiles Lied]** muss ich sagen **[habt ihr echt gut gemacht]** und heiko kannst du mir bitte zurück schreiben das wäre echt nett .

If a word or multi-word expression is accompanied by one or more emojis and/or emoticons, these should be included in the respective annotation span. However, make sure that the emoji/emoticon also has a positive connotation and expresses candy speech.

In (5) *Geil* is a candy speech expression. The emoticon *:)* also expresses a positive sentiment. It is used to reinforce the preceding linguistic expression. The two elements should therefore be annotated as one annotation span.

> (5) **[Geil :)]**

There are two candy speech expressions in (6). *Ihr könnt echt gut singen* is reinforced by the emoticon * __ *, hence these two expressions should be included in one annotation span. However, the emoticon *: S* does not express support and should not be annotated as part of the candy speech expression *Und ihr seid auch echt süß*.

> (6) **[Ihr könnt echt gut singen * __ *] [Und ihr seid auch echt süß]** ...... : S

2. Determining the type for each candy speech expression

Candy speech expressions have in common that they aim to support, encourage, etc. another person. As such, they often realize social dialogue acts (Goffman 1971, Klüwer 2011) that have relationships between discourse participants (and not content) as their primary goals. These goals can be achieved in different ways.

We distinguish nine types of candy speech expressions: *affection declaration, agreement, compliment, encouragement, gratitude, group membership, positive feedback, sympathy, implicit*. In addition, we distinguish the categories *ambiguous* and *uncertain*.

These types of candy speech expressions are defined as follows:

Affection declaration – expressions of admiration, love and affection towards users (not the original post or comment). These do not necessarily have to be meant romantically.

> (7) Lieb Euch ♥
> (8) ich mag euch XD
> (9) Heiko !! ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
> (10) Ihr seid einfach der Hammer !!!!
> (11) Ihr süßeen ♥ ' :D

Agreement – Expression of agreement with the opinion/statement of another person. Only comments that agree with candy speech statements are taken into account here.

> (12) Da bin ich auch deiner Meinung.
> (13) Jaa so krass

Compliment – Compliments and kind words towards other users (not the original post or comment). Compliments can concern skills (e.g. singing, cooking), personal characteristics (e.g. voice, appearance) or achievements (in general or in a video performance) of users or the evaluation thereof.

(14) ihr könnt so toll singen !

(15) complimente * --- *

(16) Die sind Gut

(17) Hammer performance !

(18) Ihr macht echt tolle videos !

(19) Haben sich richtig verbessert Respekt

(20) ich mag eure texte voll und eure stimmen ....

Positive comments about the user's clothing or similar do not constitute compliments (see "positive feedback"). However, comments such as *Du siehst in diesem Kleid gut aus* should be annotated as compliments.

Encouragement – Comments that aim to encourage other users (both content creators and commenters) to continue (e.g. to post on social media or to give a video a thumbs up), to restore trust or to reduce or eliminate worries, insecurity, etc.

(21) Macht immer weiter !!!!!!!!!!!!!

(22) Bleibt dran !

(23) hört nicht auf die die sagen ihr könnt nicht singen !! ;)

(24) Bitte bitte , lasst sie nicht alleine .

(25) Wir können alle helfen !! :)

Suggestions that convey a positive attitude towards other users and imply admiration/compliment also belong to this category. The focus here is on the target person and their well-being.

(26) macht mal bitte bei kidy contest mit

(27) geht mall zum super talent ihr habtz echt drauf :P

(28) bitte macht mal ein Plattenbertrag 3

These comments should not be confused with requests and suggestions for collaborations, video ideas, etc. Such comments do not constitute candy speech, as they focus on the person making the comment or their wishes and not on the target person.

(29) vllt. kannst du ja mal ein lied auf Englisch singen ;)

However, if certain types of contributions are particularly well received by the followers, so that more content of this type is requested, this is considered "encouragement".

(30) richtig cooles video **[mach mal öfter was zusammen 3 3 3 3]**

(31) JA NOCH MEHR 3 UHR NACHST VIDIOES

Gratitude – Expressions of sincere gratitude that are posted unprompted/spontaneously. These candy speech expressions can be clearly distinguished from pure politeness, such as reactive gratitude (e.g. *Danke für die Antwort*) and expressions such as *Danke im Voraus*.

(32) ich danke das du die Videos machst

(33) Vielen Dank ! 👍🏻 👍🏻 👍🏻

(34) Danke, dass du mich motivierst!

Group membership – Expressions used to indicate a specific group membership, e.g. to the fan community of a specific content creator. This applies in particular to hashtags and emojis, which are regarded as trademarks of content creators, but also to literal expressions.

(35) Einhörner 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄 🦄

(36) #TeamBeki 🖤

(37) ich bin ein #lochinator

(38) seit dem bin ich ein fan 😊

Positive feedback – an expression of a positive attitude towards the original post or comment, but not towards a specific person.

(39) Dass video ist hammer :D

(40) Das Lied ist mega mega cool .

(41) cool ich liebe das lied :D

(42) 😳 😍 Eure Videos sind extrem gut !!

(43) endlich mal ein sehr gutes Workout für den Bauch

(44) es hilft mir sehr

Positive comments of a general nature also belong to this category.

(45) Ich liebe es deine homeworkouts quasi mit dir zusammen zu machen !

(46) es macht so Spaß die workouts nachzumachen mit deiner Motivation 🖤

This category also applies if it is not explicitly stated whether a candy speech expression refers to a person or their post/comment.

(47) Haha so geil 😂

(48) Wohaa * - *

(49) Daumen hoch =)

(50) :D süß

Positive comments about items of clothing/jewelry etc. of the content creators or about the objects mentioned or shown in their contributions (e.g. videos) also belong to this category.

(51) **[Dein Pulli ist soo schön]** , woher hast du den ? 3

Sympathy – Statements that express compassion and understanding. These expressions can be reactions to negative or sad messages from other users. They can also be initiative expressions of sympathy, e.g. in relation to a specific situation related to the target person.

(52) Ich hoffe, es geht dir bald besser!

(53) die neuen haben doch mal auch ne chanche verdient !

This category does not include devaluations of haters, e.g. *die sind besser als ihr ;)*

Implicit – Candy speech is not expressed directly, but can be derived from a certain expression. For an expression to be annotated as implicit candy speech, it must be clear which of the above types of candy speech this expression corresponds to.

    (54) wir hatten es schon auf dem Handy , einen Tag nachdem es raus gekommen ist 😊

    (55) Wieso geht ihr nicht zum Supertalent?

    (56) Wenn ich lieder von euch höre dann sing ich gleich mit :D

Expressions that contain implicit candy speech but are formulated too negatively should not be annotated.

    (57) alle sagen das ihr nicht singen könnt liegen falsch !!!!!!!!!!

    (58) 1837 Leute ohne Geschmack und die keine Ahnung haben was wirklich gut ist !!!!!!!!!!

Ambiguous – Select this category if it is not clear whether an expression is candy speech or not.

    (59) omg

    (60) LOL

Uncertain – This category should be used in all cases that do not seem to fit into any of the above categories. These cases will be discussed and resolved together. It is advisable to use this category specifically in the initial phase of the annotation.

Further notes:

- Candy speech expressions that can be assigned to several categories at the same time should be annotated with all applicable categories. The candy speech expression in (61) contains both a "compliment" (*Ich find euch geil*) and a "positive feedback" (*Ich finde das Video geil*). The entire comment should be annotated with both types of candy speech as overlapping annotations.

    (61) Ich find euch geil wie das viedio ;-)

- However, if a comment can be meaningfully divided into several expressions, as in (64), this approach should be followed.

    (62) **[die sind voll süß]** und **[können gut singen]**

- Emojis/emoticons/hashtags – if they express candy speech – should be annotated as "positive feedback" (and separately from a verbal utterance) if they

    o   were posted individually (i.e. without an accompanying verbal utterance)

       (63) * - *

    o   can be clearly separated from the verbal utterance (cf. *3* in (64), ❤️ in (65))

(64) singt ihr sehr gut :) ihr seid süß :D und hee die gegen euren gesang was haben sind geschmackslos :P **[3]**

(65) Wer schaut es 2016 noch ❓ 😻 😻 💯 ❤️

- Emojis/emoticons/hashtags at the beginning of a comment should be annotated as an independent candy speech expression of the type "positive feedback". Several consecutive emojis/emoticons/hashtags can be included in one annotation span, e.g. * - * 3 in (66).

(66) **[* - * 3]** Sehrrrr toll ((: Ich höre das den ganzen Tag x3

- As this is the annotation of German data, comments written in a different language should be treated as follows:

  o comments written in a language other than German should not be annotated

  (67) Cuties :D ♥ ♥

  o comments that combine German and English should be annotated

  (68) Sweeeeeeeeet seid ihr

  (69) Ich liebe dich Roman , ich liebe dich so sehr das ich immer gleich erkenne wer du und wer Heiko ist . Roman du hast so die süße stimme und siehst jetzt und früher auch schon total sweet aus . **[I love you ♡ ♡ ♥ ♥ ♥ :-*]**

References

Goffman, Ervin (1971) Relations in public. Microstudies of the public order. Basic Books

Klüwer, Tina. (2011). "I Like Your Shirt" - Dialogue Acts for Enabling Social Talk in Conversational Agents. In Proceedings of Intelligent Virtual Agents - 11th International Conference, IVA 2011, Reykjavik, Iceland, September 15-17.