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COMPUTING THE POETIC AND THE PERSONAL WITH LINGUISTIC - SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

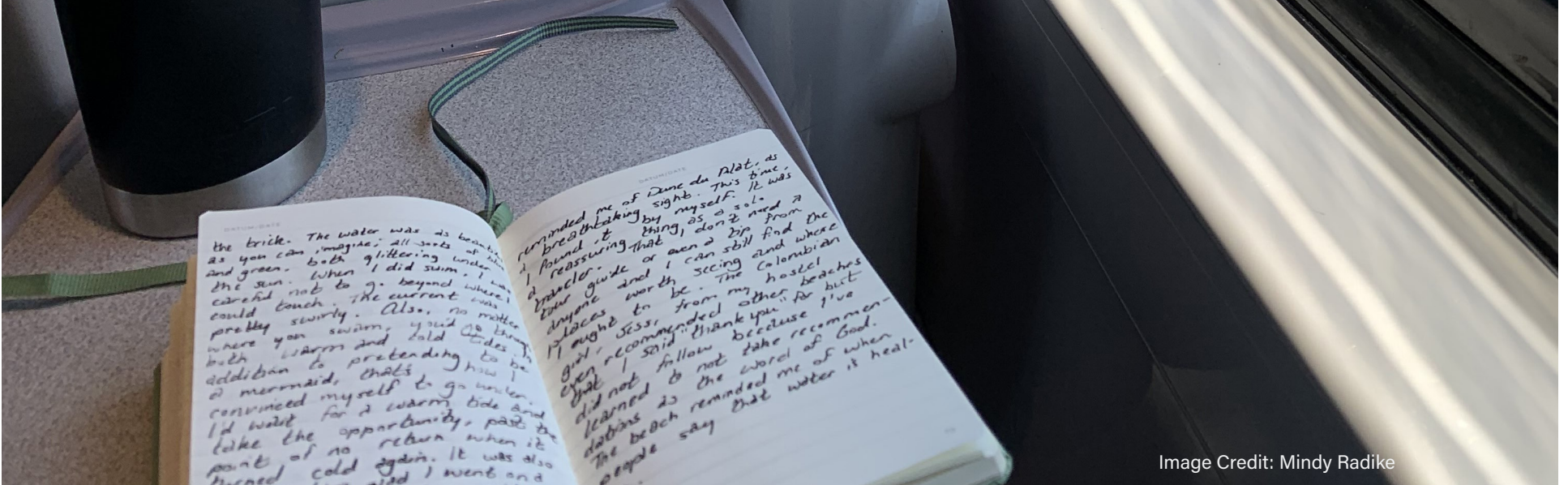


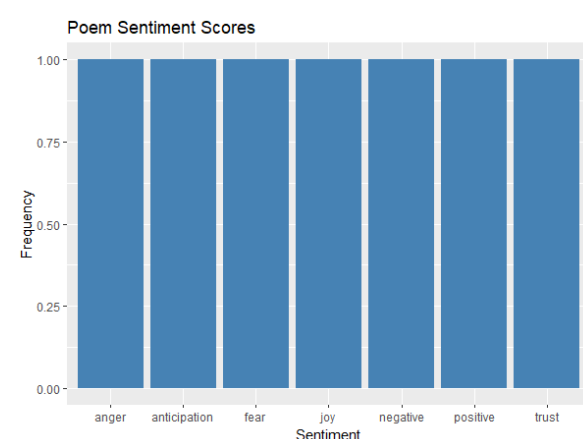
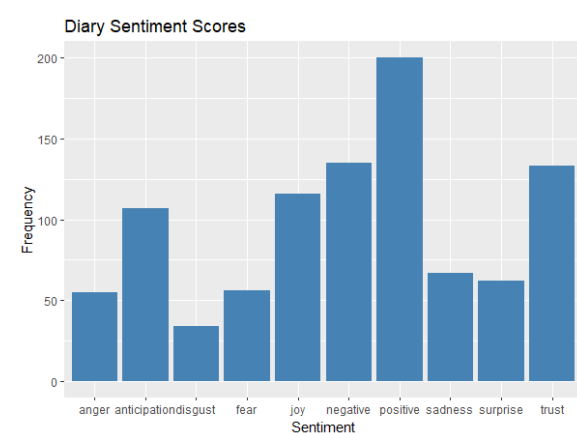
Image Credit: Mindy Radike

ABSTRACT

Rhetoricians and compositionists attend to the connections between audience, medium, and message. Affective rhetoricians are interested in the persuasive potential of emotional appeals. This study compares the emotional messages between two texts with different targeted audiences and media by conducting a linguistic - sentiment analysis. The first text is a 57-word poem, and the second text is a 4,449-word diary; both share the same subject matter, time frame of creation, and author. I transcribed each handwritten text into two .txt files and uploaded them into R Studio. Using R Studio, I resorted the texts into data sets which tokenized each word into its own variable. Then, I applied the NRC Emotion Lexicon [1] to the data sets to score each word with a sentiment. The sentiment scores of each text are visually represented below. The array of sentiments reflects a variety of emotions in each text. The code's ability to delineate figurative language representing dynamic emotions within the poem's limited sample size shows its sensitivity to rhetoric even with limited context. This shows that the linguistic - sentiment analysis code, like many other artificially intelligent tools, could be developed to represent the human experience in original writing. The purpose of conducting this study is to counterpose human and technological analysis, thereby comparing the strength of their approach to genre conventions.

KEY OUTCOMES

- » The NRC Emotion Lexicon applied to 955/4,449 words (20%) of the diary and 2/57 words (3%) of the poem.
- » The poem and diary share 7 sentiments: anger, anticipation, fear, joy, negative, positive, and trust.
- » The diary contains 3 additional sentiments: disgust, sadness, and surprise.
- » Fear was not the most salient emotion in either text.
- » The diary was more positive than the poem.
- » A limitation of the study was the unequal sample size of each text; a follow-up study should control either the intended audience or the medium.



[1] References: This project makes use of the NRC Emotion Lexicon created by Saif Mohammed (saif.mohammad@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca). at the National Research Council Canada.