**Predicting the Political Alignment of Twitter Users**

The purpose of this paper is to predict whether a user on twitter is left oriented or right oriented in terms of political parties. The authors did a background reading on recorded political speeches however they concluded that twitter is more centralized data source, broad range of individuals and new sources automatically get added in the corpus. They collected 335 million tweets between September 14-November 2010 which had text, username, retweets etc. They identified 66 hashtags and removed 11 as they had much more broader implications. The good thing here is they’re predicting the hashtags using SVM which gives them an accuracy of 90% and not using predefined hashtags. They have also formed networks based on mention edges and retweet edges on the latter they concluded that retweets are not from the same communities but are from communities separated by a factor of 0.48 In the graph which means that retweets are not just among the communities. They also removed the non-English tweets and spam accounts. They used a labelled SVM classifier which yielded them an accuracy of 79% and used a 10-fold cross validation technique to validate their results. Also, they selected a set of random 1000 users for classification which might have reduced their computational time over-fitting of data. They also excluded terms which were present only once in the corpus before classification which then resulted in generating 13,080 features for the classifier and each feature represented a single term in the corpus. Their initial hashtags for collecting data were #p2 and #tcot and based on the data from these 2 hashtags they were able to predict more hashtags and the classifiers classified them as left, right or ambiguous. I liked this approach because they’re generating new hashtags and any new hashtag in trend will be considered.

**Social Media Participation in an Activist Movement for Racial Equality**

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the participation of users on social media during an Activist Movement for Racial Equality. The theme is based on the killing of black people in America by police in recent years. The movement started with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter(BLM) which soon gained popularity and branched out into 31 cities and internationally. Their background study states that BLM was highly coordinated but didn’t have any formalized hierarchical structure and was led by different people in different locations, also black people were more involved in this. The authors collected dataset based on three real world incidents- the Ferguson incident, and 2 counter protest incidents after that. The authors used a service called Topsy which has every single tweet since 2009. They also obtained data from police encounters which has attributes such as location, time, cause of police shooting, and the race of the person killed. They calculated the protest volume from the protest data that they collected. Their observations were as follows: new users entered the movement whenever a noticeable event occurred. They adopted regression modelling approach where PK was used as dependent variable, high negative manifest was observed in high PK states, high psychological distancing in PK states, high interpersonal interaction in PK states. They predict that Greater social orientation and depiction of collective identities characterize high PV in the future. Greater use of categorical language and abstract information processing are associated with high PV in the future. However, the authors state that his work is limits them to not make casual claims for their analysis since they were not able to capture the complete engagement of this movement online or in the physical world. Future research needs to be done on how social media activities translate to real world mobilization.