Lecture #2

9/3/2013

At post, "telling in" on Piazza

Agenda:
- To what extent is there social interaction on review sites?
- get used to talking in class
- Definition and annotation

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Since this is a class about language processing and social interaction, let's start with a warm-up to get us all familiar with each other and comfortable talking in class.

So, first, tell everyone your name, and what languages you speak.

Then, we'll go around again, and this time you'll have to pick someone else, say their name, what langs they speak.

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OK, now let's consider our main topic, which concerns review sites.

H: screen, pg for Straight Man

Here's the Amazon pg.

Let's quickly run through the features for a well-known review site: Amazon.

[Note: Straight Man is one of my favorite academic sites.]

We're going to be most interested in the customer reviews. ([Note: We'll return to that later.])

There are 339 customer reviews, which is arguably too many to read.
- Each has stars, text, helpfulness stats, can vote on helpfulness, can comment, use badges

Also some summary info about the whole body of reviews:
- histogram of the star ratings
- quotes, "automatically chosen by our system b/c they are representative of what people are saying about them," interesting to ask what they are doing

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Also: books are also life-changing, interesting, and I myself am very invested in issues topics about which one can have connotative opinions.
Now, but esp we want more detail on what those 331 people had to say to us:

- can sort by helpfulness, recency, or star rating
- let's also ask some questions about what's displayed per reviewer:
  - why "real name" badge? *but maybe better to be +*
  - why "Amazon verified purchase"? *is non-purchase helpful info?*
  - why location?

Now, what about types of social interaction?

- between readers, authors, if it's ok to divide
- it may, or may not, be useful to think to two potentially distinct groups:
  - authors,
  - readers

Are they largely distinct?

- Gilbert, Karahalios seem to argue that authors don't read other reviews (and that pro reviewers did not like the implications of rading other reviews, although phrasing played a role)
- [Finch, Kesler 2011]: top reviewers say: 42% look before, 53% look after, 5% never look

- much less likely to review an item that many others have

- [Wu; Huberman 2012]: later opinions more likely to disagree (effect of cost of expression is "high"); i.e. must expend some effort

Helpfulness ratings and comments are clear examples.

Let's focus on this.

Now it may seem like a stretch to view clicking the up button as an interesting social interaction, but let's leave that aside for a moment.

At first blush this may seem like a sort of impoverished interaction, since author, user aren't interacting directly, but let's go back to this point later.
(blank the screen)

Exercise:
- take a blank
- on the blank side, write your name
- and, what generic features of a review make it helpful:
  - to you
  - to others in general
- (don't have to be computationally feasible)
  - for each feature, any ideas about capturing it computationally
    can't be captured comp
- write neatly (for reasons we'll explain in a moment)

not ii [all the this was or equally weighting the factors]

<stare> take and shuffle. Who is yours? what has thy spelt? what features?
  show the 42/42 review,
  - helpful according to their reviews?
  vote.

Annotation instructions hard to get right, crucial

Why did I ask you to commit to answers? have someone else read this?
Annotation/labling is often an important part of this kind of research.
Writing these instructions can be fulfilling and test-running them can be crucial.
Let's talk about some interesting features.

- Straight Man most critical helpf ul comment thread

- One factor: personal point of view? - Frank is against it

  Alethera Knights says, "I've had my own reviews criticized..." is first person pronouns, "
  (note the discussion)

  Gilbert: Karahalios' peer interview:
  Ghos; Iperottis' subjectivity
  A completely

  "A completely unique review wouldn't serve any real purpose, would it?"
  vs. Ghos; Iperottis: extreme reviews most helpful?

- Gender?

  On IMDb,0b scholar CLIMB 2010:
  median utility for reviews by males: 2/3
  females: 0

  → If we think about translating to the more general case.

  Instead of product reviews, general forums for opinion expression
  'helpful' - a proxy for importance, possibly influential, or what people think is important
  about 10 min. over

Even framing of g is important:

Some: "helpful to you" & Amazon

vs. some study of presidential polling -
ask: who do you plan to vote for
who do you think is going to win

[ I need to find some ]