

SICon 2024

**The 2nd Workshop on Social Influence in Conversations
(SICon)**

Proceedings of the Workshop

November 16, 2024

The SICon organizers gratefully acknowledge the support from the following sponsors.

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Tel: +1-855-225-1962
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ISBN 979-8-89176-186-5

Introduction

Social influence (SI) is the change in an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviors from interacting with another individual or a group. For example, a buyer uses SI skills to negotiate trade-offs and build rapport with the seller. SI is ubiquitous in everyday life, and hence, realistic human-machine conversations must reflect these dynamics, making it essential to model and understand SI in dialogue research systematically. This would improve SI systems' ability to understand users' utterances, tailor communication strategies, personalize responses, and actively lead conversations. These challenges draw on perspectives not only from NLP and AI research but also from Game Theory, Affective Computing, Communication, and Social Psychology.

SI dialogue tasks like negotiation, persuasion, therapy, and argumentation have recently gained traction. Current conversational systems emphasize modeling system strategies using dialogue acts and strategy annotations or modeling users. Prior work also explored related tasks crucial for the eventual development of SI systems, namely outcome prediction, argument mining, and lie detection. However, these efforts are scattered, and only limited efforts focus on building useful systems exhibiting SI skills, such as chatbots. Ensuring AI-driven models' safety, interpretability, and integration into real-time applications that simulate or analyze SI remains challenging.

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Yi-Chia Wang, Stanford University, USA
Henning Wachsmuth, Institut für Künstliche Intelligenz, Germany

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Program

Saturday, November 16, 2024

- 09:00 - 09:10 *Opening Remarks*
- 09:10 - 09:40 *Invited Talk - David Jurgens*
- 09:40 - 10:10 *Invited Talk - Kyriaki Kalimeri*
- 10:10 - 10:40 *Invited Talk - Maurice Schweitzer*
- 10:40 - 11:00 *Coffee Break*
- 11:00 - 12:00 *Panel Discussion 1*
- 12:00 - 13:30 *Lunch Break*
- 13:30 - 14:30 *Poster Session 1*
- 14:30 - 15:30 *Poster Session 2*
- 15:30 - 16:00 *Invited Talk - Viktoria Spaiser*
- 16:00 - 16:30 *Invited Talk - Yulia Tsvetkov*
- 16:30 - 16:45 *Lightning Talks*
- 16:45 - 17:00 *Coffee Break*
- 17:00 - 17:30 *Invited Talk - Yi-Chia Wang*
- 17:30 - 18:00 *Invited Talk - Henning Wachsmuth*
- 18:00 - 18:00 *Closing Remarks*

Saturday, November 16, 2024 (continued)

Observing the Southern US Culture of Honor Using Large-Scale Social Media Analysis

Juho Kim

Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
juho.kim@mail.utoronto.ca

Michael Guerzhoy

Division of Engineering Science
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
guerzhoy@cs.toronto.edu

Abstract

A *culture of honor* refers to a social system where individuals' status, reputation, and esteem play a central role in governing interpersonal relations. Past works have associated this concept with the United States (US) South and related with it various traits such as higher sensitivity to insult, a higher value on reputation, and a tendency to react violently to insults. In this paper, we hypothesize and confirm that internet users from the US South, where a *culture of honor* is more prevalent, are more likely to display a trait predicted by their belonging to a *culture of honor*. Specifically, we test the hypothesis that US Southerners are more likely to retaliate to personal attacks by personally attacking back. We leverage OpenAI's GPT-3.5 API to both geolocate internet users and to automatically detect whether users are insulting each other. We validate the use of GPT-3.5 by measuring its performance on manually-labeled subsets of the data. Our work demonstrates the potential of formulating a hypothesis based on a conceptual framework, operationalizing it in a way that is amenable to large-scale LLM-aided analysis, manually validating the use of the LLM, and drawing a conclusion.

1 Introduction

A *culture of honor* refers to a social system where individuals' status, reputation, and esteem play a central role in governing interpersonal relations. In such cultures, maintaining and defending one's honor and that of one's family or group is of paramount importance. A perceived slight, insult, or challenge to one's honor often necessitates a response, which could range from verbal defense to physical retaliation, to restore the lost esteem and reputation. These cultures are sometimes theorized as emerging in societies where centralized authority is weak or absent, and where individuals must rely on their reputation and the fear of retaliation to deter aggression or mistreatment by others.

We hypothesize and confirm that internet users who belong to a region where a *culture of honor* is more prevalent would be more likely to display traits predicted by their belonging to a *culture of honor*. Specifically, we test the hypothesis that US Southerners are more likely to retaliate to personal attacks by attacking their attacker back.

To analyze data at scale, we leverage OpenAI's API for GPT-3.5 (Brown et al., 2020) to both geolocate internet users and to automatically detect whether users are insulting each other.

The concept of honor has been explored in social psychology, philosophy, and literature, with authors often developing a nuanced and intricate conceptual framework. The concept has been empirically validated, notably by Nisbett and Cohen (1996), on small samples.

However, large-scale empirical analysis of the concept of honor has been very expensive until very recently. We show that LLMs, and specifically GPT-3.5, can be used to address this. In this work, we explore a specific prediction made by the conceptual framework of the *culture of honor* (and the claim that the US South is such a culture).

We emphasize connecting the conceptual framework of *culture of honor* to testable empirical hypotheses. We propose further testable hypotheses arising from philosophical and descriptive work on *culture of honor* that are also testable by leveraging LLMs to label data while validating the outputs of the LLMs.

2 Related Works

Nisbett and Cohen (1996) pioneered the concept of a *culture of honor* as it pertains to the US South, identifying traits such as a higher sensitivity to insult, a higher value on reputation, and a tendency to react violently to insults.

To further support their hypothesis, Nisbett and Cohen (1996) have conducted both observational

and empirical studies on groups of Northern and Southern college students. In a series of experiments, the subjects were put into a situation where one would feel “diminished.” Then, the researchers examined whether the subjects would “take [an] aggressive action to compensate for the diminishment they experience.” The results conclusively demonstrated that people in the Southern US tend to exhibit the traits associated with *cultures of honor* than their Northern counterparts. Taking inspiration from their previous work, our study extends Nisbett and Cohen (1996)’s work in the online domain.

The concept of honor has been explored since ancient times, e.g., in the Bible and by Sophocles in, e.g., *Antigone*¹. More recently, Appiah (2011) and Sommers (2018) connected the ancient concept, Nisbett and Cohen (1996)’s work, and modern philosophy. We draw on more recent philosophical work to make concrete predictions about internet denizens who belong to *cultures of honor*.

2.1 How a Culture of Honor Might Manifest on the Internet

In a *culture of honor*, a perceived attack or slight calls for retaliation to defend one’s honor and reputation (Sommers, 2018; Appiah, 2011). On an internet forum where users have fixed usernames, and particularly for users whose username can be connected to other social media possibly to their real name, it is plausible that members of *cultures of honor* would be more likely to retaliate against verbal attacks. We hypothesize that more members of *cultures of honor* would be geolocated to the Southern US and that those geolocated to the Southern US would therefore be more likely to verbally retaliate in internet arguments.

There is prior work on detection aggression with both classical and Transformer-based methods (Warner and Hirschberg, 2012; Sadiq et al., 2021; Ghosh et al., 2023), with the best results reporting > 90% precision/recall figures. Ziems et al. (2024) predict future (as opposed to present) toxicity (as opposed to aggressiveness) on a different subset of the dataset we use (Zhang et al., 2018), with the best results obtained by fine-tuning RoBERTa (Liu et al., 2019), at 64% F1.

¹We distinguish between exploring and conceptualizing honor from referring to the psychological and cultural construct. Other ancient sources that do not necessarily conceptualize and explore honor but do refer to it extensively include Homer and Confucius.

3 Methodology

We obtain data on internet user conversations and fine-tune GPT-3.5 models to assign users to the corresponding US regions (South, non-South, or N/A) as well as to label each part of the conversation as whether or not it constitutes a personal attack. We then analyze the data to compare the rate at which Southern and non-Southern users retaliate when personally attacked by personally attacking back.

The subreddit-changemyview dataset from ConvoKit (Chang et al., 2020) was considered for our analysis. While we also analyzed other datasets in ConvoKit – reddit-corporus-small, wikiconv (Hua et al., 2018) (from 2015 to 2018, inclusive), and wiki-corporus (Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al., 2012) – we were able to obtain data of interactions involving personal attacks with sufficient statistical power in the subreddit-changemyview dataset only.

We attempted to locate the users by fetching the self-declared locations from user profiles with the matching usernames on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. Note that not all self-declared locations could be associated with a US region because some locations are not in the United States or do not specify a US region (e.g. “Moon,” “United States,” or “Barcelona, Spain”). For the subreddit-changemyview dataset, the number of speakers for which we were able to associate a location and the number of speakers for which we were able to associate a US region are tabulated in Table 1. For an expanded table showing the numbers for datasets other than subreddit-changemyview, please consult Appendix A.

In order to obtain the location-US region pairs for fine-tuning and validating our geolocation model, samples of the collected locations were manually labeled by a human annotator and divided into training and validation sets (both of size 100).

For the personal attack classifier, we used a pre-labeled dataset of personal attacks (Zhang et al., 2018). The dataset Zhang et al. was heavily unbalanced with 2094 positive and 27927 (3833 of which are section headers) negative labels. 2094 non-section header negative entries were randomly selected and merged with the positively labeled entries. Then, they were evenly divided into perfectly balanced training and validation sets.

The training sets for each task were then used to fine-tune (Bommasani et al., 2021) GPT-3.5 mod-

Table 1: The number of speakers with whom we were able to associate a location (through the matching X profile’s self-declared location) and the number of speakers with whom we were able to associate a US region (as the associated location contained enough information to discern their US region). In this table, we only show the `subreddit-changemyview` dataset since the others do not contain a sufficient number of attacks. An expanded version of this table, showing all other datasets is shown in Appendix A.

Dataset	# Speakers	With Location (%)	With US Region (%)
<code>subreddit-changemyview</code>	119889	7.6	2.9

els for the tasks of detecting personal attacks and identifying the US regions (for more details, see Appendix B). We then test the fine-tuned GPT-3.5 models by using the validation datasets. This step is essential: we empirically demonstrate that the fine-tuned models work as expected rather than blindly relying on GPT outputs.

Note that the high validation accuracies (96.0% for personal attack detector and 100.0% for US region classifier) show that the training set size used to fine-tune the two models is sufficient and that the fine-tuned models perform very accurately.

We are interested in testing whether US Southerners are more likely to retaliate with personal attacks when personally attacked, compared to their non-Southern counterparts. We measure this tendency by comparing their “retaliation” rates. Our main hypothesis is that the users from the US South have a higher “retaliation” rate than their non-Southern counterparts.

We also introduce two other metrics: “aggression” and “response” rates to see if the Southerners and non-Southerners show different tendencies in other regards. The three metrics we use are defined as follows:

1. Aggression: The rates of posting personal attacks.
2. Response: The rates of responding back if personally attacked.
3. Retaliation: The rates of personally attacking back when responding to a personal attack.

These three rates are computed from the aforementioned conversational datasets in two different counting schemes: per user and per interaction (for users in multiple interactions, the rate is the average of 0s and 1s, with 1s indicating a positive label).

We also review some conversations containing the postings we flag as retaliatory to see if they indeed are examples of online fights in order to ensure the correctness of our analysis.

4 Analysis

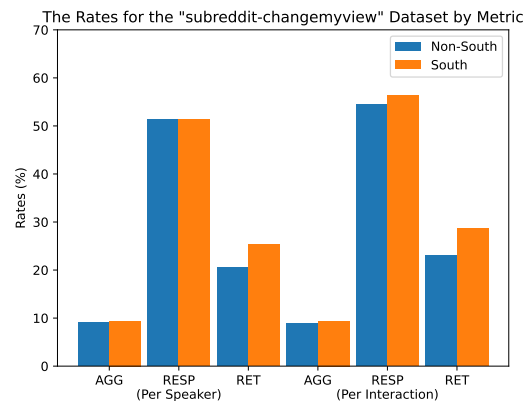


Figure 1: The bar graphs of all rates for the `subreddit-changemyview` dataset by metrics and US regions. The metric labels “AGG,” “RESP,” and “RET” represent aggression, response, and retaliation rates, respectively. Note that the retaliation rates corresponding to the US South are greater than or equal to those of the US non-South.

The computed rates for each scenario are summarized in Table 2. Only the dataset from `subreddit-changemyview` contains samples with enough statistical power and therefore is the only one considered for further analysis.

Note that it is not appropriate to test statistical hypotheses when a test is underpowered (Button et al., 2013), nor is it appropriate to draw conclusions if a statistical test cannot be run. We include a summary for datasets other than `subreddit-changemyview` for completeness and transparency in Appendix C.

For the `subreddit-changemyview` dataset, both the per-interaction and per-speaker rates for this dataset are graphed in Figure 1. While the differences in the per-speaker rates across the US regions are marginal for aggression (+0.3%) and non-existent for response (0.0%), a notable difference (+5.6%) in the retaliation rate is observed.

We fit a mixed-effect model for the per-speaker retaliation rates in `subreddit-changemyview`:

Table 2: The per-speaker and per-interaction rates for each metric and US region. The metric labels “AGG,” “RESP,” and “RET” represent aggression, response, and retaliation rates, respectively. For each rate, the sample size is equal to the number of people who posted, were personally attacked, and responded to a personal attack at least once, respectively. In this table, we only show the subreddit-changemyview dataset since the others do not contain a sufficient number of attacks. An expanded version of this table, showing all other datasets is shown in Appendix C.

Dataset	Per	Metric	Non-South		South	
			Rate (%)	# Samples	Rate (%)	# Samples
subreddit-changemyview	Speaker	AGG	9.1	4491	9.4	1674
		RESP	51.4	1318	51.4	453
		RET	20.6	849	25.3	292
	Interaction	AGG	8.8	8507/96146	9.4	4820/51365
		RESP	54.5	4113/7552	56.3	2658/4717
		RET	23.0	947/4113	28.6	761/2658

$$\text{retaliation}[i] \sim \text{Bernoulli}(\text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \alpha_{\text{regions}[\text{speakers}[i]]} + \gamma_{\text{regions}[i]})) \quad (1)$$

$$\alpha_j \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\alpha) \quad (2)$$

In the above Equations 1 and 2, for interaction i between two users, the original poster “speakers[i]” (who is also a potential retaliator) did retaliate if “retaliation[i] = 1”. The index “regions[speakers[i]]” is the region (South/non-South) to which the speaker was geolocated. $\gamma_{\text{regions}[i]}$ is the fixed effect of regions “regions[i]” (the main coefficient of interest in this analysis), and α_j is the random effect of speaker j .

Priors over parameters that are not mentioned above are flat.

The mixed-effect model estimates the speaker random effects using partial pooling, which is appropriate in our situation, where the large majority of speakers have only a few (or a single) interactions.

We find that people from the US South are more likely to retaliate (odds ratio 1.2 ± 0.1 , p-value < 0.002) than people from outside the US South. The R code used to carry out this analysis is shown in Appendix D.

To further validate our analysis, 100 random samples of flagged retaliatory conversations for all datasets were reviewed to see if they were part of an ongoing online fight. For the subreddit-changemyview dataset which we used to prove our hypothesis, we find the actual fight percentages to be 86.0%. Similar numbers for datasets other than subreddit-changemyview are observed in Appendix E.

5 Discussion

The three landmark experiments performed by Nisbett and Cohen (1996) “did not produce any truly violent behavior in [their] subjects, so it is an extrapolation to say that [they] have shown the process by which an insult results in actual violence for members of a *culture of honor*.” Indeed, they measured more indirect attributes of *cultures of honor* such as ratings given by third-party observers and physiological changes to draw their conclusions. In contrast, our methodology demonstrated that the Southerners are more likely to signal verbal violence or capacity for verbal violence to protect their reputation in their online interactions.

6 Conclusion

In this study, we were able to confirm a theoretically motivated prediction: internet users from the US South are more likely to retaliate against verbal aggression on the theory that reputation must be aggressively defended in a *culture of honor*.

We show that analyses such as ours, on an extremely large scale, are possible by fine-tuning GPT-3.5 and manually verifying its outputs on samples of the inputs. By following similar processes laid out in this paper, analyses other than comparing the US South and the US non-South populations or testing hypotheses presented by social science frameworks aside from *culture of honor* are also possible.

Limitations

Our analysis is limited to the US and to English-speaking users on Reddit. *Cultures of honor* as they manifest online may in principle be analyzed for other countries and languages.

The geolocation of the user may be incorrect, and, while the concentration of people who can be said to belong to a *culture of honor* to some extent in the US South is thought to be higher, it is neither the case that all US Southerners are members of a *culture of honor* or that there are no member of a *culture of honor* elsewhere. The geolocation we obtain is merely a proxy variable. Note, however, that one in general would expect it to be more difficult to detect a trend using a proxy variable than using a direct measurement.

We validate our LLM-based analysis by checking that the LLM output is consistent with our hand-labeled sample. However, it is possible that LLMs are poorly calibrated for, for example, detecting insults in certain underrepresented dialects. Although our analysis of the hand-labeled sample means that our classifiers are correct on average, it is possible that a manual analysis would drive researchers to discover particular patterns for subgroups of the users. For example, if insults in a particular small dialect are not detectable by an LLM, it is conceivable that for speakers of that dialect, our findings would be reversed.

Our statistical analysis does not account for attenuation and error-in-variables. That is accepted practice in many analyses, where the effect of those is very difficult to estimate (and one can argue that the arbitrary 95% significance threshold would be different if one were to upper-bound the effects of attenuation and error-in-variables).

Ethics Statement

All research carried out in this paper was based on publicly available datasets. However, some users in the datasets may not want to be associated with *cultures of honor*. We only use the geolocation of users in our analysis.

Membership in a *culture of honor* can be viewed as a possibly harmful stereotype. It is important to approach broad cultural labels with nuance, humility, and respect, and to not apply broad stereotypes to individuals. However, we believe that research into *cultures of honor* is appropriate: honor, as a sociological and psychological phenomenon, has fascinated humanity for millennia, and understanding *cultures of honor* is important both philosophically and practically. Further, most members of *cultures of honor* are proud of their membership (Sommers, 2018) and do not view affinity to that kind of culture as a harmful stereotype.

Our research only uses publically-available data and as such is not human-subjects research and is exempt from ethics board review.

The relevant subset of the datasets we used with labels from the fine-tuned models is available on Zenodo (Kim and Guerzhoy, 2024).

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A Statistics on the Users with Identifiable US Region Information

We attempted to locate the users from both Reddit and Wikipedia by fetching the self-declared locations from user profiles with the matching usernames on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. In Wikipedia, anonymous editors are assigned their IP addresses as their usernames from which the associated locations can be obtained (including the associated US region). The full statistics regarding user locations for each dataset considered are shown in Table 3.

B Information on the Fine-Tuned GPT-3.5 Models

Tables 4 and 5 describe information relevant to the fine-tuning of the GPT-3.5 models for the tasks of US region classification and personal attack detection, respectively.

C Aggression, Response, and Retaliation Rates

In Table 6, we give the per-speaker and per-interaction aggression, response, and retaliation rates for every considered dataset. Note that due to the insufficient statistical power in reddit-corpus-small, wikiconf, and wiki-corpus, their numbers should not be used to draw any conclusions about the hypotheses (Button et al., 2013).

D R Code for Fitting a Mixed-Effect Model

The mixed-effect model for the per-speaker retaliation rates for the subreddit-changemyview dataset is fit using the lme4 package in R.

```
glmer(retaliation ~ speaker_2_us_region +  
      (1 | speaker_2_id), family = "binomial")
```

Here, the variables speaker_2_us_region and speaker_2_id are the region and the id of a person who started an interaction, was personally attacked, and may potentially retaliate back.

E Statistics on the Ongoing Fights Detected by our System

Up to 100 samples of user interactions in each dataset (including the ones that were not analyzed) flagged to involve personal attacks were analyzed by a human annotator to see if they truly constitute an ongoing online fight. As tabulated in Table 7, we found that, for the subreddit-changemyview dataset, the true ongoing fight rate was 86.0%, high enough to ensure our analysis is correct. Note that the ongoing fight rates vary from 71.0% (reddit-corpus-small, 75.0% (wiki-corpus), to 91.0% (wikiconv) for the other datasets.

Table 3: The number of speakers with an IP address as its username (relevant to Wikipedia only), the number of speakers with whom we were able to associate a location (either through the matching X profile’s self-declared location or their IP address), and the number of speakers with whom we were able to associate a US region (as the associated location contained enough information to discern their US region) for each dataset.

Dataset	# Speakers	With IP (%)	With Location (%)	With US Region (%)
subreddit-changemyview	119889	–	7.6	2.9
reddit-corpus-small	217100	–	7.5	2.8
wikiconv	621142	39.1	40.9	16.7
wiki-corpus	38462	7.8	11.4	4.8

Table 4: The system prompts, default classifications (in case the model produces an unexpected output), accuracies, and training/validation information of the fine-tuned GPT-3.5 model for the task of US region classification. Note that the system prompt was broken to fit it in the page. The actual prompt is single-line.

Task	US Region Classification
System Prompt	What US region is the following location in? Possible answers are “SOUTH”, “NON-SOUTH”, or “N/A”.
Expected input	User location information
Default Label	N/A
Accuracy (%)	100.0
# Training Samples	100
# Validation Samples	100
Data Source	Hand-crafted
Base Model	gpt-3.5-turbo-1106
Trained Tokens	13491
# Epochs	3
Final Training Loss	0.0000
# Steps	291
Training Time	00:13:18

Table 5: The system prompts, default classifications (in case the model produces an unexpected output), accuracies, and training/validation information of the fine-tuned GPT-3.5 model for the task of personal attack detection. Note that the system prompt was broken to fit it in the page. The actual prompt is single-line.

Task	Personal Attack Detection
System Prompt	Does the following text contain a personal attack? Possible answers are “YES” or “NO”.
Expected input	User post
Default Label	NO
Accuracy (%)	96.0
# Training Samples	2094
# Validation Samples	2094
Data Source	Zhang et al. (2018)
Base Model	gpt-3.5-turbo-1106
Trained Tokens	816762
# Epochs	3
Final Training Loss	0.0000
# Steps	1501
Training Time	01:15:17

Table 6: The per-speaker and per-interaction rates for each metric, US region, and dataset. The metric labels “AGG,” “RESP,” and “RET” represent aggression, response, and retaliation rates, respectively. For each rate, the sample size is equal to the number of people who posted, were personally attacked, and responded to a personal attack at least once, respectively. In this paper, we only analyze the subreddit-changemyview dataset since the others do not contain a sufficient number of interactions involving personal attacks.

Dataset	Per	Metric	Non-South		South	
			Rate (%)	# Samples	Rate (%)	# Samples
subreddit-changemyview	Speaker	AGG	9.1	4491	9.4	1674
		RESP	51.4	1318	51.4	453
		RET	20.6	849	25.3	292
	Interaction	AGG	8.8	8507/96146	9.4	4820/51365
		RESP	54.5	4113/7552	56.3	2658/4717
		RET	23.0	947/4113	28.6	761/2658
reddit-corpus-small	Speaker	AGG	16.5	2522	16.1	943
		RESP	52.1	528	46.7	171
		RET	26.0	211	15.4	58
	Interaction	AGG	17.0	982/5780	14.7	277/1878
		RESP	34.4	342/993	31.8	90/283
		RET	29.2	100/342	15.6	14/90
wikiconv	Speaker	AGG	5.5	80965	6.1	22486
		RESP	46.3	1365	43.1	350
		RET	18.2	142	22.7	37
	Interaction	AGG	2.8	15627/556156	2.2	2793/125372
		RESP	14.2	271/1912	16.1	75/467
		RET	19.2	52/271	20.0	15/75
wiki-corpus	Speaker	AGG	5.4	1429	7.5	400
		RESP	35.8	114	35.7	29
		RET	19.1	29	16.7	6
	Interaction	AGG	3.0	287/9594	4.4	69/1578
		RESP	23.9	47/197	15.4	6/39
		RET	23.4	11/47	16.7	1/6

Table 7: The percentages of the sampled retaliatory interactions that a human annotator labeled as an ongoing fight. By showing that most samples we flagged as retaliatory to indeed be a part of an ongoing online fight, we validate the robustness of our analysis.

Dataset	Ongoing Fights	
	Rate (%)	# Samples
subreddit-changemyview	86.0	86/100
reddit-corpus-small	71.0	71/100
wikiconv	91.0	61/67
wiki-corpus	75.0	9/12

Should We Respect LLMs? A Cross-Lingual Study on the Influence of Prompt Politeness on LLM Performance

Ziqi Yin¹ Hao Wang¹ Kaito Horio¹ Daisuke Kawahara^{1,2,3} Satoshi Sekine^{2,3}

¹Waseda University ²RIKEN AIP ³NII LLMC

{yinziqi2001@toki., conan1024hao@akane., kakakakakakaito@akane., dkw@}waseda.jp
satoshi.sekine@riken.jp

Abstract

We investigate the impact of politeness levels in prompts on the performance of large language models (LLMs). Polite language in human communications often garners more compliance and effectiveness, while rudeness can cause aversion, impacting response quality. We consider that LLMs mirror human communication traits, suggesting they align with human cultural norms. We assess the impact of politeness in prompts on LLMs across English, Chinese, and Japanese tasks. We observed that impolite prompts often result in poor performance, but overly polite language does not guarantee better outcomes. The best politeness level is different according to the language. This phenomenon suggests that LLMs not only reflect human behavior but are also influenced by language, particularly in different cultural contexts. Our findings highlight the need to factor in politeness for cross-cultural natural language processing and LLM usage.

1 Introduction

In natural language processing, large language models (LLMs), such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT¹ and Meta’s LLaMA (Touvron et al., 2023), have attracted widespread attention. These models have shown significant performance in many tasks, such as logical reasoning, classification, and question answering, playing a crucial role in many practical applications. The input to an LLM, a prompt, is a vital starting point for the model to process information and generate appropriate responses.

However, despite the continuous improvement of the capabilities of LLMs, their behavior and generations still need to be improved in many factors. This study explores one of the possible influencing factors: the politeness of the prompt. In human social interactions, politeness, which expresses respect to others, is basic etiquette, which is reflected

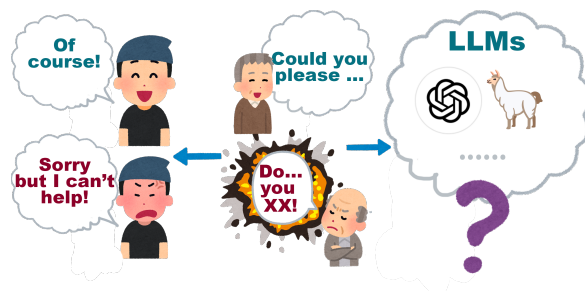


Figure 1: Illustration of our motivation.

in our language and behavior. However, politeness and respect may have different definitions and manifestations in different cultures and languages. For example, the expression and degree of respect in English, Chinese, and Japanese may differ significantly. This difference may make the performance of LLMs vary with language on the same politeness level.

We hypothesize that impolite prompts may lead to a deterioration in model performance, including generations containing mistakes, stronger biases, and omission of information. In addition, we also hypothesize that the best level of politeness for performance is different across languages, which is strongly related to their cultural background. To verify these hypotheses, we design eight prompts with politeness levels ranging from high to low for English, Chinese, and Japanese, respectively. Our experiments are conducted on three tasks: summarization, language understanding benchmarks, and stereotypical bias detection.

Our contributions are two-fold as follows:

LLMs reflect human desire We observed that impolite prompts often result in poor performance, but excessive flattery is not necessarily welcome, indicating that LLMs reflect the human desire to be respected to a certain extent. This finding reveals a deep connection between the behavior of LLMs and human social etiquette (Vilkki, 2006).

¹<https://openai.com/product>

JMMLU To evaluate LLMs’ multitask language understanding capabilities in Japanese, we create JMMLU, a Japanese version of MMLU (Hendrycks et al., 2021).

2 Related Work

2.1 Politeness and Respect

Humans are highly sensitive to politeness and respect in communications (Dillon, 2003). For example, people are more likely to offer assistance when confronted with a polite request. However, rude language can be a source of disgust and resentment, which will cause failure in acquiring cooperation (Dillon, 2003). Politeness and respect are expressed differently in various languages (Mills and Kádár, 2011). In English, politeness and respect are expressed by considering the listener’s dignity. In addition, recognizing others’ rights but hoping they will be given up in moderation and using polite words are also expressions of politeness and respect (Mills and Kádár, 2011). In contrast, direct orders, insulting or degrading expressions, and ignoring someone’s rights are recognized as impoliteness and lack of respect (Kitao, 1987).

The expression of politeness and respect in Japanese significantly differs from that in English. The Japanese language has a specialized politeness system called “Keigo” (Affairs, 2007), which expresses respect for superiors or outsiders, humility towards oneself, and a formal attitude (Miyaji, 1971). This politeness system takes an essential place in Japanese culture (Kitao, 1990). However, although the basic structure of politeness is similar to that of English, their complexity and use are significant regarding the level of respect expressed and the interpretation of social hierarchical relationships. For example, the other’s behavior is called “Sonkeigo” to express politeness and respect. In contrast, the speaker’s behavior towards the other is called “Kenjogo”. The expression of formality in public is called “Teineigo” (Takiura, 2017). If these types of politeness are not used correctly, it is not possible to express desired politeness or even possible to be considered to be rude.

Chinese expressions of respect are similar to English but have polite expressions similar to Japanese ones (Gu, 1990). However, these expressions have been weakened by social change (Zhou, 2008). In most cases, respect expressions in Chinese are not explicit (Xun, 1999). Therefore, the criteria for politeness change according to the cur-

rent socio-cultural situation. This change made us design prompts that require careful handling of the relationship between different politeness levels. We need to use questionnaires to judge politeness levels to ensure the prompts truly reflect the nuance of politeness, especially in Chinese.

2.2 LLMs and Prompt Engineering

In recent years, LLMs’ abilities have been improving. LLMs are used in various industries, as their scores on many downstream tasks show human-like performance. LLMs can be somewhat aligned with human culture, suggesting that they may reflect some of the qualities of human communication while having an enormous correlation with language (Cao et al., 2023). In addition, as LLMs are trained with massive data from humans, they inevitably contain certain stereotypical biases (Navigli et al., 2023). Therefore, we consider LLMs’ performance strongly related to human behavior. However, LLMs are sensitive and vulnerable to prompts. Minor changes can lead to significant differences in the output (Kadour et al., 2023). Therefore, prompt engineering emerged to earn better generation by adjusting prompts (White et al., 2023). Although methods for automatic prompt generation exist (Shin et al., 2020), access to gradients is usually restricted in LLMs provided via APIs, posing limitations on the application of such methods. Consequently, adjusting prompts is primarily conducted manually at present and requires numerous experiments. Hence, we hope to offer an aspect to improve the efficiency in prompt engineering.

2.3 Evaluation of LLMs

Many benchmarks exist for LLMs, such as GLUE (Wang et al., 2018) in English, CLUE (Xu et al., 2020) in Chinese, and JGLUE (Kurihara et al., 2022) in Japanese. However, due to the performance improvement of LLMs, it is difficult to correctly measure the capability of LLMs with such simple benchmarks. Hence, evaluating LLMs nowadays more often adopts more challenging benchmarks, such as MMLU (Hendrycks et al., 2021) and C-Eval (Huang et al., 2023). Such benchmarks are taken from human examinations and are more aligned with human application scenarios and questioning content. MMLU contains 57 tasks spanning various domains, comprising 17,844 four-option multiple-choice questions. However, such a benchmark in Japanese does not

exist, posing challenges for evaluating LLMs in the Japanese context. Therefore, we constructed JMMLU in Section 3. In addition, since LLMs reflect human culture, they inevitably carry inherent stereotypical biases, such as discriminatively biased content against disadvantaged groups. Although these biases can be mitigated to a certain extent by reinforcement learning from human feedback (RLHF) (Christiano et al., 2017; Ouyang et al., 2022), the bias of LLMs is still an important issue. Therefore, we include the evaluation of stereotypical biases in our experiments.

3 JMMLU Construction

To build a practical LLM benchmark in Japanese and to use it for evaluation in this study, we constructed the Japanese Massive Multitask Language Understanding Benchmark (JMMLU). This involved translating MMLU and adding tasks related to Japanese culture. From each of the 57 tasks of MMLU, since the MMLU questions are not ordered, we selected up to former 150 questions. Then, ten translators from an English-Japanese translation company machine-translated the selected questions into Japanese and reviewed the translations to remove questions and tasks that were difficult to translate, irrelevant, or contradictory to Japanese culture. Finally, the translators revised the remaining questions to fluent Japanese. Meanwhile, additional tasks based on school subjects, such as civics and Japanese history, were added to supplement the aspects that were not covered in the Western culture-oriented MMLU (Step, 2023; VIST, 2023). The questions in the additional tasks were manually created by Japanese teachers from two cram schools in Japan. JMMLU consists of 56 tasks. The list of the tasks and examples of removed questions are shown in Appendix A. The number of questions per task ranges from 86 to 150, totaling 7,536 questions.

4 Experimental Settings

We conduct experiments on three highly concerning tasks to evaluate the performance of LLMs according to prompt politeness.

4.1 Languages, LLMs, and Prompt Politeness

We use the following languages, LLMs, and prompts for our experiments.

Languages Considering that different languages and cultures have different understandings and definitions of politeness and respect, we evaluate English, Chinese, and Japanese in our experiments.

LLMs We select GPT-3.5-Turbo (hereafter GPT-3.5) and GPT-4 (OpenAI, 2023) for each language, which are versatile in all three languages. Furthermore, we also pick a model specialized for each language: Llama-2-70b-chat² (hereafter Llama2-70B) for English, ChatGLM3-6B³ (hereafter ChatGLM3) (Du et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2022) for Chinese, and Swallow-70b-instruct-hf⁴ (hereafter Swallow-70B) for Japanese. We use the default settings of each LLM in all experiments.

Prompt Politeness In our study, we developed prompt templates for three languages, beginning with creating four foundational politeness levels—very polite, relatively polite, neutral, and impolite—crafted by two authors proficient in Chinese, Japanese, and English to ensure cross-linguistic alignment. To accommodate the intricate cultural nuances, especially in Japanese, where politeness is deeply embedded in social interactions, we asked 2 or 3 native speakers to refine these levels for each language. This refinement was done by adding intermediate levels to the four foundational levels to have eight levels. This approach is crucial as it captures the subtle gradations in languages like Japanese.

To validate these politeness scales, we administered questionnaires to native speakers, who were asked to rank the politeness of each prompt. The full questionnaires are shown in Appendix B. This process provided empirical data to validate our scales, ensuring they accurately reflected the perceived levels of politeness across different cultures. The results were analyzed statistically to confirm the alignment of our prompts with real-world linguistic practices, thereby enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of language models in multilingual contexts. The prompts and the questionnaire results are shown in Appendix C.

4.2 Tasks

We conduct experiments on summarization, multi-task language understanding benchmarks, and

²<https://huggingface.co/meta-llama/Llama-2-70b-chat>

³To our knowledge, ChatGLM3 is the most powerful open Chinese LLM until 2023.10.

⁴<https://huggingface.co/tokyotech-llm/Swallow-70b-instruct-hf>

stereotypical bias detection.

Summarization We use CNN/Dailymail (Hermann et al., 2015; See et al., 2017) for English and XL-Sum (Hasan et al., 2021) for Chinese and Japanese, selecting 500 test data from each. Following the templates described in Section 4.1, we created eight unique prompts for summarization tasks, ensuring generated summaries are 2 to 3 sentences long, in line with the concise style of these datasets’ reference. We calculate BERTScore (Zhang et al., 2019), ROUGE-L (Lin, 2004), and length for all language experiments. The length is counted in words for English and in characters for Chinese and Japanese.

Language Understanding Benchmark We use MMLU for English, C-Eval for Chinese, and JMMLU for Japanese. To reduce the API usage of GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, we only select a maximum of 100 test questions from each task. The total number of questions used for evaluation is 5,700 for MMLU, 5,200 for C-Eval, and 5,591 for JMMLU. Since the correct answers for C-Eval’s test set are not public, we used the C-Eval benchmark tool for scoring. The perfect score is not 100 as only a part of the test set is used for scoring. Our evaluation method is motivated by HELM (Liang et al., 2023). HELM evaluates based only on the first token of the generated text, considering it incorrect if the LLM does not first answer with the correct choice number. In this study, unlike HELM, an answer is considered correct if the correct choice number appears anywhere in the generated text.

Stereotypical Bias Detection For the LLMs offered only via APIs, a traditional stereotypical bias detection method based on perplexity (Delobelle et al., 2022) is unfeasible. Moreover, while the BOLD method (Dhamala et al., 2021), which evaluates stereotypical bias through the analysis of the LLM’s generation, is effective, we opted against it due to its cross-language limitations, especially in non-English contexts such as Japanese, where resources and research are lacking.

In such a circumstance, we borrow the method from Jentsch and Turan (2022) and propose a simple alternative for LLMs, which we refer to as the Bias Index (BI). In our experiments, we designed eight prompts following the prompt templates in Section 4.1, requiring the model to evaluate each sentence as positive, neutral, or negative.

We evaluate biases using paired bias datasets,

each consisting of two sentences with varying degrees of bias. The sentences are identical apart from bias-specific vocabularies, such as “old” or “young” for age bias. We conduct sentiment analysis on these pairs to assess positive, neutral, or negative sentiments.

LLMs may refuse to respond to highly disrespectful, impolite prompts or datasets’ sentences. Consequently, model outputs are classified into four categories: positive, neutral, negative, or refusal to answer. The data includes positive and negative items without clear categorization, so switching bias-specific vocabulary in strongly biased sentences may alter the model’s assessment. This renders traditional statistical methods unsuitable. Hence, we adopted a different approach.

If the model provides different evaluations for the two sentences in a pair, we consider it a bias towards this pair. Thus, the model’s bias is measured by the following formula:

$$BI = \frac{\text{Number of Different Pairs}}{\text{Total Number of Pairs}} \times 100. \quad (1)$$

For English bias evaluation, we use CrowS-Pairs (Nangia et al., 2020), which focuses on gender, nationality, race, and socioeconomic biases. We use CHBias (Zhao et al., 2023) for Chinese evaluation, which covers sex, age, appearance, and orientation biases. We employ the Japanese subset from Kaneko et al. (2022) to evaluate gender bias in Japanese.

4.3 Influence of RLHF and SFT

Furthermore, we consider the roles of Supervised Fine-Tuning (SFT) and Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF). SFT involves refining a pre-trained model using a specific dataset to enhance its performance in target tasks. RLHF is a process where the model is further trained based on feedback from human interactions, aiming to align its outputs more closely with human values and preferences. To explore in depth the impact of SFT and RLHF on the hypotheses of this study, we set up additional experiments to compare the influence of politeness levels on model performance under conditions with and without the presence of SFT and RLHF.

Therefore, we investigate this issue using Llama2-70B and its base model⁵ without SFT and RLHF. We conduct the same experiment as before to evaluate the impact of RLHF. However,

⁵<https://huggingface.co/meta-llama/Llama-2-70b>

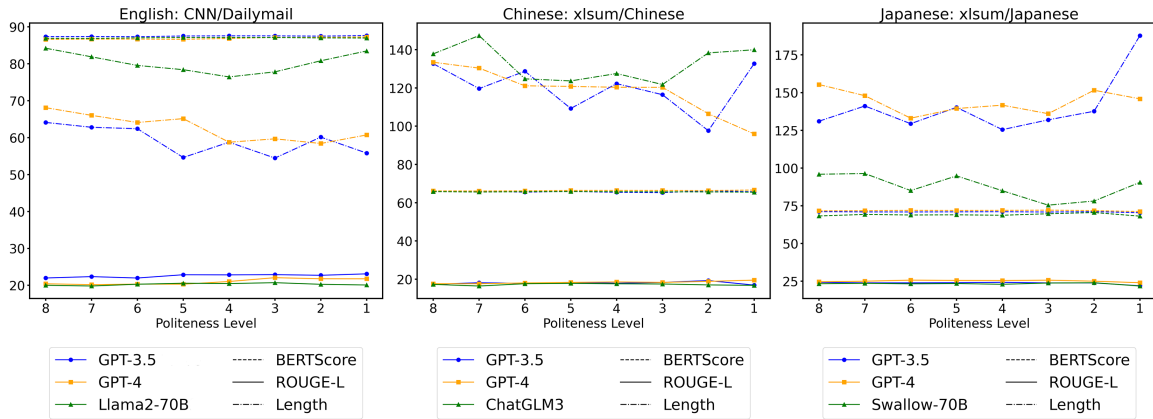


Figure 2: Summarization performance across politeness levels. The x-axis shows politeness levels (1 = impolite, 8 = very polite), and the y-axis represents metrics like ROUGE-L, BERTScore, and summary length. The lines show how different LLMs, including GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, respond to varying politeness levels.

we modify the prompt content while keeping the prompt template and meaning unchanged to ensure that llama2-70B could generate the required content. In addition, since the base model has yet to be fine-tuned, it will continue to output content in the summarization task until it reaches the generation length limit. Therefore, we do not carry out this evaluation on summarization.

5 Results

5.1 Summarization

The summarization result is shown in Figure 2.

5.1.1 English

The models’ ROUGE-L and BERTScore scores consistently maintain stability, irrespective of the politeness level of the prompts, which infers that the models can correctly summarize the article content in the summarization tasks. However, the models manifest substantial variation in length correlated to the politeness level. A progressive reduction in the generation length is evident as the politeness level descends from high to lower scales. Conversely, a surge is noted in the length of the outputs of GPT-3.5 and Llama2-70B under the exceedingly impolite prompts.

The propensity exhibited by the models to generate more extended output in polite contexts. Polite and formal language is predominantly used in scenarios demanding descriptive instructions or instructional literature, often associated with longer text. Conversely, antagonistic and fervent discourse involves impolite language, which is also associated with extended lengths. These facets reflect the nuances of human social behav-

ior, mirrored in the training data, and then influence the tendencies demonstrated by LLMs. However, GPT-4 did not echo this trend of increased output length in the presence of highly impolite prompts. It is conjectured that GPT-4, being a superior model, might prioritize the task itself and effectively control the tendency to “argue” at a low politeness level.

5.1.2 Chinese

GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 almost always accurately summarize the article content, and their output content gradually shortens as the politeness level decreases from high to low. Nevertheless, when the prompts are extremely rude, GPT-3.5’s generation lengthens again, while GPT-4’s length decreases.

ChatGLM3 reveals different trends. When the politeness level is moderate, the length of this model’s generation is shorter than that in extraordinarily polite and rude situations. However, the changes from moderately polite to moderately impolite (level 6 to 3) are absent. Considering that Chinese is the primary training language of ChatGLM3, this could hint at a unique social preference within Chinese culture: unless in extremely polite or impolite situations, people would not particularly pay attention to the change in politeness in daily communication.

5.1.3 Japanese

Although the Japanese experiment exhibits similarities to Chinese and English ones to some extent, its length variation has unique features. As the level of politeness decreases from high to low, the generation’s length of GPT-3.5 becomes shorter initially and then increases when the politeness

P	MMLU			C-Eval			JMMLU		
	GPT-3.5	GPT-4	Llama2-70B	GPT-3.5	GPT-4	ChatGLM3	GPT-3.5	GPT-4	Swallow-70B
8	60.02	75.82	55.11	20.85	29.73	20.58	49.96	71.98	38.23
7	58.32	78.74	55.26	23.24	29.79	21.23	49.70	72.34	38.98
6	57.96	78.56	52.23	23.38	30.37	21.54	50.09	72.71	39.30
5	58.07	78.21	50.82	23.41	30.41	20.65	51.09	73.16	38.64
4	57.86	79.09	51.74	23.32	30.60	20.28	50.52	73.63	37.40
3	59.44	73.86	49.02	22.70	30.37	19.56	50.75	72.70	38.45
2	57.14	76.56	51.28	22.52	30.27	19.35	51.98	73.13	38.62
1	51.93	76.47	28.44	19.57	29.90	20.67	44.80	71.23	33.30

Table 1: Scores on the three language understanding benchmarks.

level is moderate. However, when the politeness level drops to extremely rude, this trend repeats and rises significantly. GPT-4 and Swallow-70B also keep this pattern, but the fluctuation is minor.

Due to the existence of a politeness system in the Japanese language, store staff almost always use honorific language when speaking to customers. Even if a customer speaks in a casual tone, the staff will respond in a polite manner. This might explain why there is an increase in generation length for all models during medium-level politeness.

5.2 Language Understanding Benchmarking

We show the average scores on the three language understanding benchmarks in Table 1. To investigate the statistical significance, we also calculate the p-values of the t-test. The heatmap shown in Figure 3, derived from the t-test results offers an interpretation of these statistical comparisons.

Color of tiles indicates statistically significantly better or worse performance for the politeness level on the y-axis than that on the x-axis, with green indicating better performance and red indicating worse performance.

Color intensity corresponds to the magnitude of $\ln p$ of $tile_{ij}$. Its calculation method is shown in Appendix E.

5.2.1 English

According to Table 1, GPT-3.5 achieved its highest score of 60.02 at politeness level 8. As shown in the upper section of Figure 3, level 8 significantly outperforms all levels except level 3. While scores gradually decrease with lower politeness levels, the differences between neighboring levels are not significant. At level 3, a commendable score of 59.44 is maintained, surpassing all levels except level 8. For the lowest politeness level 1, the score drops to 51.93, which is significantly lower than the other levels.

GPT-4’s scores are variable but relatively stable.

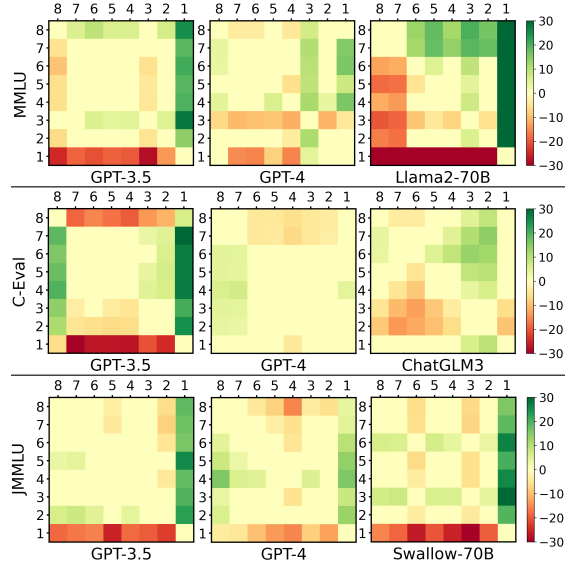


Figure 3: Heatmap of T-test results comparing LLM performance across politeness levels. The y-axis lists politeness levels from 1 (impolite) to 8 (very polite), while the x-axis compares these levels. Green tiles indicate better performance for the politeness level on the y-axis, and red indicates worse performance. The intensity of the color shows the statistical significance of the difference. This heatmap illustrates how varying politeness affects LLM performance.

The highest score is achieved at level 4, and the lowest one is at level 3. Although the score at level 1 is not extremely low, the heatmap indicates that it is significantly lower than those at more polite levels. The absence of particularly dark tiles in Figure 3 indicates performance stability. This result shows that in advanced models, the politeness level of the prompt may have a lesser impact on model performance.

Llama2-70B shows the most noticeable fluctuation, with scores nearly proportional to the politeness levels. Prompts with higher politeness levels generally outperform those with lower levels, indicating a high sensitivity to the prompt’s politeness.

5.2.2 Chinese

In Chinese, similar to English, there is a tendency to prefer polite prompts but with some differences. GPT-3.5 scores the lowest at politeness level 1, significantly underperforming the other levels. Moreover, the lower politeness levels 3 and 2 are significantly inferior to levels 7, 6, 5, and 4. However, level 8 also records a low score, significantly trailing behind all levels except level 1. GPT-4 remains stable, except for a performance drop at politeness levels 8 and 7. The scores drop in excessively polite prompts in GPT-3.5 and GPT-4, which might be because Chinese examination questions are designed without polite prompts, making the models less adept at handling them.

ChatGLM3 shows a significant decreasing trend from politeness level 8 to 2. ChatGLM3’s primary pre-training language is Chinese and might be more sensitive to the levels of politeness in Chinese. This trend is similar to Llama2-70B. However, it shows improvement at the most impolite politeness level 1, surpassing levels 3 and 2, likely due to inherent nuances in the Chinese language.

5.2.3 Japanese

In Japanese, although significant performance drops are shown at politeness level 1, the results were markedly different from English and Chinese. There was a tendency for lower levels to score better, except for level 1.

In GPT-3.5, levels 5 and 2 exhibited exceptionally high performance, with level 2 achieving the highest score. For GPT-4, levels 6 and 5 are outstanding, and level 4 achieved the highest score. Generally, good scores are observed in these models, except for level 1. Swallow-70B shows superior performance at levels 6 and 3, outperforming the other levels, which may be attributed to these levels being more common expressions in Japanese questions and examinations.

5.3 Stereotypical Bias Detection

The results of stereotypical bias detection are shown in Figure 4.

5.3.1 English

Figure 4 shows that the stereotype bias of GPT-3.5 is overall high. However, a moderately polite prompt (level 5) exhibits the most severe bias in most aspects except race. Although the model’s bias is lower in cases of extremely low politeness, analysis of the model’s output reveals that in these

cases, the model often refuses to answer both statements in a pair, rendering it practically unusable. An example is shown in Appendix F. Additionally, for a highly polite prompt (level 8), bias is low in most cases but higher on racial issues.

GPT-4 rarely refuses to answer questions, and thus its results reflect its low bias levels. Notably, when the politeness level is 6, GPT-4 shows the lowest degree of bias overall. However, in other situations, whether more polite or less polite, the bias of GPT-4 increases.

Llama2-70B also exhibits a lower bias. However, Llama2-70B tends to refuse to answer questions and is accompanied by plenty of reasons to a sentence in a pair when the politeness level is at its lowest. Therefore, we regard it as a form of bias. Although the degree of bias of Llama2-70B is generally lower under more polite prompts (levels 7 and 6), it has the lowest level of bias when the politeness level is 2, which represents a commanding tone of informal language, indicating that there might be other reasons hidden behind. Meanwhile, the degree of bias increases for impolite prompts (levels 3 and 1) and the most polite (level 8) situations, which is similar to the trends exhibited by the other two models.

We speculate that this is because, in human culture, a highly polite environment makes people more relaxed (Morand, 1996) and willing to express their true thoughts without being overly concerned about moral constraints (Bailey et al., 2020). In contrast, lower politeness may provoke a sense of offense, leading to prejudices. The behaviors of GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 may precisely reflect such human behaviors.

5.3.2 Chinese

Distinct from English, bias fluctuations in Chinese typically follow a fixed pattern. The models’ bias is initially at a relatively high level and decreases for lower politeness. However, it sharply increases to an extremely high level when the politeness falls significantly low. The lowest bias often occurs from politeness levels 6 to 3.

GPT-3.5 still maintains a higher level of stereotypical bias. It exhibits its highest bias in situations with the lowest politeness level yet rarely refuses to respond, which is contrastive to the English experiment. GPT-4 still has a comparatively low overall bias level with small fluctuations but also exhibits its highest bias in the lowest politeness level. ChatGLM3, while keeping a similar

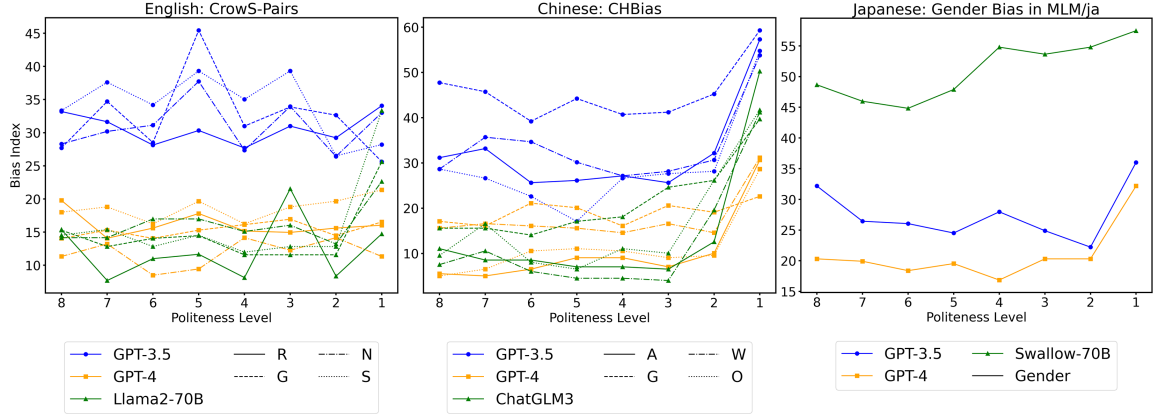


Figure 4: Bias index across politeness levels and bias categories. The x-axis shows politeness levels (1 = impolite, 8 = very polite), and the y-axis represents the bias index (BI), a measure of stereotypical bias. The curves track how biases in race (R), gender (G), nationality (N), socioeconomic status (S), age (A), appearance (W), and orientation (O) fluctuate with politeness.

bias level to GPT-4, is more sensitive to changes in politeness levels, and its bias fluctuates more significantly. Its bias level is almost identical to GPT-3.5’s when being at level 1. As discussed in Section 5.1.2, such a pattern potentially embodies the nuance and some unique social preferences within the Chinese culture. It may indicate some unique social preferences in Chinese culture. Aside from situations with extreme politeness, people would not be overly sensitive to variations in regular politeness in daily communications.

5.3.3 Japanese

Gender bias in Japanese reflects a similar pattern to the Chinese experiments with some differences. The level of bias in GPT-3.5 reaches the lowest at politeness level 2 and reaches the highest at politeness level 1. GPT-4 follows an analogous pattern, peaking at a politeness level of 5 and its nadir at politeness level 4. Swallow-70B, to which RLHF is not applied, exhibits a high level of bias with the most pronounced fluctuation. Its changes are similar to GPT-3.5, but its lowest bias is at politeness level 6. Given the Japanese culture’s stringent politeness and respect systems in tangent with the prevalent gender biases (Matsumura, 2001; Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office of Japan, 2021), this pattern can be reasonable.

5.4 Influence of RLHF and SFT

We show the average scores of MMLU in Table 2 and the heatmap in Figure 5.

In the MMLU tests, the base model demonstrates a positive correlation between scores and the politeness level, indicating that higher politeness generally achieves higher scores. However, this correlation is not consistently statistically significant across most instances. Compared to the result of Llama2-70B, it can be inferred that while the base model is indeed influenced by politeness level in prompts, its sensitivity to politeness is primarily governed by RLHF and SFT.

Politeness	Llama2-70B	Base Model
8	55.11	54.72
7	55.26	54.84
6	52.23	54.75
5	50.82	53.74
4	51.74	52.32
3	49.02	53.51
2	51.28	54.09
1	28.44	51.19

Table 2: MMLU benchmark scores of Llama2-70B and its base model.

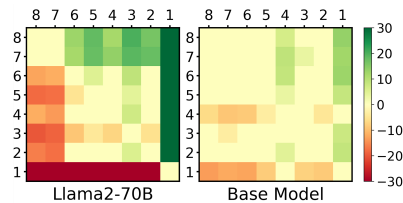


Figure 5: Heatmap comparing the performance of Llama2-70B and its base model across politeness levels. The x-axis shows politeness levels (1 = impolite, 8 = very polite), and the heatmap illustrates the performance difference between Llama2-70B with and without RLHF. Green indicates better performance with RLHF, and red indicates worse performance.

In Figure 6, the Llama2-70B model, fine-tuning with RLHF and SFT, exhibited a significantly lower level of bias compared to the base model,

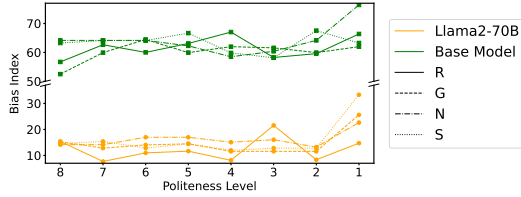


Figure 6: Bias index comparison between Llama2-70B and its base model across politeness levels. This figure compares the bias index (y-axis) of Llama2-70B (with RLHF) and its base model (without RLHF) across politeness levels (x-axis, 1 = impolite, 8 = very polite).

thereby validating the effectiveness of the fine-tuning. However, a further examination of the bias level distribution trends of the two models revealed that despite similar patterns, there was no reduction in bias after reaching the highest level of politeness, but rather a trend towards stabilization or a slight increase. Considering this with previous experimental results, it can be hypothesized that the tendency of the models to express responses closer to their 'true' reactions in situations of extreme politeness is primarily introduced by fine-tuning through RLHF and SFT.

6 Conclusion

Our study finds that the politeness of prompts can significantly affect LLM performance. This phenomenon is thought to reflect human social behavior. The study notes that using impolite prompts can result in the low performance of LLMs, which may lead to increased bias, incorrect answers, or refusal of answers. However, highly respectful prompts do not always lead to better results. In most conditions, moderate politeness is better, but the standard of moderation varies by languages and LLMs. In particular, models trained in a specific language are susceptible to the politeness of that language. This phenomenon suggests that cultural background should be considered during the development and corpus collection of LLMs.

Limitations

Prompt Quantity and Diversity Although we tried to design various prompts at first, we faced certain challenges in balancing the levels of politeness and diversity among these prompts. We found that ensuring each prompt was sufficiently diversified while aligning with the fine degrees of politeness and respect was an extremely difficult task.

Task Configuration and Language Selection

Our research was subject to certain constraints, mainly due to cost limitations and the scarcity of available datasets. For instance, collecting datasets like MMLU from scratch is nearly impossible due to stringent copyright restrictions in certain countries. Although the MIT license of MMLU allows for relatively free use of the dataset, the substantial costs of manual translation and proofreading into other languages make extensive, full translations into multiple languages impractical. These constraints prevented us from conducting a comprehensive evaluation using more datasets and languages.

Ethics Statement

We realize that the politeness of prompts can significantly affect the behavior of LLMs. This behavior may be used to manipulate or mislead users. We recommend that these risks be fully considered in a variety of application scenarios and cultural contexts.

In our research, the use of all datasets complies with the restrictions of their corresponding licenses. During the data collection process, we only record answers and do not record any information that can be traced back to individuals to ensure anonymity. Because the collected data involves offensive language, respondents must be over 18. Also, our questionnaire has passed the ethical review of the publishing platform, ensuring its legality and morality. When translating MMLU, we paid the translation company a fee far exceeding the wage standard in Tokyo, Japan, to ensure that the translator could receive enough payment. We also received permission to use questions from two tutoring schools to construct JMMLU. Finally, we will open-source our JMMLU benchmark under the CC BY-SA 4.0 license.

Acknowledgements

In this acknowledgment, we express our gratitude to the RIKEN for their support in the translation of MMLU. We also acknowledge the contributions from Step Corporation, who provided materials on Japanese and World History, and from New Style Cram School VIST, who supplied resources on idioms, civics, and Japanese geography.

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A JMMLU Tasks

JMMLU consists of 7,536 questions in the following 56 tasks (subjects). All tasks and their numbers are shown in Table 3.

Task Name	Number	Task Name	Number
専門医学 (professional_medicine)	150	高校心理学 (high_school_psychology)	150
専門心理学 (professional_psychology)	150	高校物理 (high_school_physics)	150
専門会計 (professional_accounting)	150	高校統計学 (high_school_statistics)	150
哲学 (philosophy)	150	高校数学 (high_school_mathematics)	150
雑学 (miscellaneous)	150	高校生物学 (high_school_biology)	148
医学遺伝学 (medical_genetic)	99	高校情報科学 (high_school_computer_science)	98
形式論理 (normal_logic)	125	高校化学 (high_school_chemistry)	149
先史学 (prehistory)	150	高校地理 (high_school_geography)	150
天文学 (astronomy)	148	高校ヨーロッパ史 (high_school_european_history)	150
熟語 (japanese_idiom)	150	高校ミクロ経済学 (high_school_microeconomics)	149
世界宗教 (world_religions)	147	高校マクロ経済学 (high_school_macroconomics)	148
世界事実 (global_facts)	97	概念物理学 (conceptual_physics)	150
世界史 (world_history)	150	法理学 (jurisprudence)	107
社会学 (sociology)	150	電気工学 (electrical_engineering)	144
栄養学 (nutrition)	149	大学医学 (college_medicine)	150
日本史 (japanese_history)	150	大学物理 (college_physics)	100
日本地理 (japanese_geography)	139	大学数学 (college_mathematics)	99
人間の老化 (human_aging)	150	大学生物学 (college_biology)	143
論理学 (logical_fallacies)	150	大学化学 (college_chemistry)	99
倫理的議論 (moral_dispute)	148	大学コンピュータ科学 (college_computer_science)	99
臨床知識 (clinical_knowledge)	150	初等数学 (elementary_mathematics)	150
経営学 (management)	102	抽象代数 (abstract_algebra)	99
解剖学 (anatomy)	132	マーケティング (marketing)	150
計量経済学 (econometrics)	113	ビジネス倫理 (business_ethics)	86
機械学習 (machine_learning)	111	セクシュアリティ (human_sexuality)	130
国際法 (international_law)	120	セキュリティ研究 (security_studies)	150
公民 (japanese_civics)	150	コンピュータセキュリティ (computer_security)	99
公共関係 (public_relations)	109	ウイルス学 (virology)	150

Table 3: JMMLU tasks.

A.1 Removed Tasks in MMLU

These tasks are considered to be irrelevant or inconsistent with the Japanese culture:

- High School Government and Politics
- High School US History
- High School World History
- Moral Scenarios
- Professional Law
- US Foreign Policy

A.2 Removed Question Examples in MMLU

Contradiction In this question:

In which of the following positions does a patient lie face down?

A. Dorsal B. Erect C. Lateral D. Prone Correct: B

is translated to

患者がうつ伏せになる体位はどれか?

A. 背臥位 B. 立位 C. 側臥位 D. 仰臥位

However, the correct answer should be D in Japanese.

Hard to translate In this question:

What are focus areas of nutritional epidemiology?

A. The role of nutritional factors in causing disease in a population. B. How changes in food intake in the population can promote good health. C. Both of the options given are correct. D. None of the options given is correct.

is translated to

栄養疫学の重点分野とは何か?

A. 集団における疾患の原因における栄養因子の役割。B. 集団における食物摂取の変化がどのように健康を促進するか。C. 両方とも正しい。D. どちらの選択肢も正しくない。

The translator thinks the A and B options are ambiguous if simply translated.

B Appendix: Prompts Questionnaire

The English prompts questionnaire interface is shown in Figure 7, the Chinese interface is shown in Figure 8, and the Japanese interface is shown in Figure 9.

Instructions

Summary Detailed Instructions Examples

Rank the given sentences based on their level of respect or politeness.

Instructions

Summary Detailed Instructions Examples

Task Details

Below are eight sentences. Please rank them in order of respectfulness and politeness, from the most respectful and polite (1) to the least (8), by arranging their letters in a single string.

Please use number 1 to 8 ONLY to answer. Each number can be used only ONCE

Please simply answer with your intuition. It is not necessary to analysis carefully.

For example, if you think sentence 1 is the most polite and 8 is the rudest, your answer would be like "12345678".

Instructions

Summary Detailed Instructions Examples

Good examples	Bad examples
12345678	1234 (Not full)
21435678	11223344 (With repeat)

Sentences:

1. Could you please (Task Description)? Please feel free to (Answer Format) You don't need to (Answer Restriction)
2. Could you please (Task Description)? Please (Answer Format) You don't have to (Answer Restriction)
3. Can you please (Task Description) ? Please only (Answer Format) Please don't (Answer Restriction)
4. Please (Task Description) Please (Answer Format) and don't (Answer Restriction)
5. (Task Description). (Answer Format). Don't (Answer Restriction)
6. You are required to (Task Description). You must (Answer Format) only. You cannot (Answer Restriction)
7. You (Task Description). You only (Answer Format). Never (Answer Restriction)
8. (Task Description) you scum bag! The (Answer Format 1) you can give is (Answer Format 2) only. And you know what will happen if you (Answer Restriction)

Your Ranking:

Please enter a single string with the numbers of the sentences in the order you believe represents their level of respectfulness and politeness, from most respectful and polite to least.

e.g., 12345678

Submit

Figure 7: Annotator's interface: English prompts

礼貌程度

*1. 请对下面的八句话按照尊敬/礼貌程度由高到低排序【排序题】

即第1是最尊敬的，第8是最粗鲁的

例如如果您认为“可否请您...呢？您可以只...。您无需...”是最礼貌的，请让其排在第一位。

- 可否请您【任务描述】呢？您可以只【回答格式】。您无需【回答限制】。
- 可否请您【任务描述】呢？您只需【回答格式】，无需【回答限制】。
- 请您【任务描述】。请您只【回答格式】，不必【回答限制】。
- 请【任务描述】。请只【回答格式】，不要【回答限制】。
- 【任务描述】。只【回答格式】，不要【回答限制】。
- 现要求你【任务描述】。要求只【回答格式】，不得【回答限制】。
- 你给我【任务描述】。只准你【回答格式】，别让我看见你【回答限制】。
- 给老子【任务描述】。只准你【回答格式】，让我看见你【回答限制】。

Figure 8: Annotator's interface: Chinese prompts

丁寧さ・尊敬程度についてのアンケート

アンケートの目的と説明

このアンケートでは、日本語の言葉遣いに関するあなたの見解をお聞きしたいと思います。回答欄下に示された8つの文章は、言葉遣いの尊敬の度合いと丁寧さにおいて異なります。これらの文章を「最も尊敬と丁寧なもの」から「最も失礼なもの」までアルファベットを使って順にランキングしてください。

評価の基準

尊敬の度合い: 文章が相手に敬意を示しているか、または相手を尊重しているかどうか。

丁寧さ: 文章が礼儀正しく、適切な言葉遣いをしているかどうか。

アンケートの手順

回答欄下の各文章を注意深く読んでください。

文章ごとに、その尊敬の度合いと丁寧さを考慮し、最も尊敬と丁寧なものから最も失礼なものまで各文章の前のアルファベットを使って、漏れと重複をせず、順番に順位付けをしてください。

例:

下の初期値のように順位付けをしたい場合は、「...いただけませんか?...」が一番尊敬と丁寧なもので、「...しろこの...」が一番失礼なものですので、

ABCDEFGH

と書いてください。

アンケートの注意事項

あくまで個人の感覚に基づいた評価をお願いします。他人の意見に影響されずにご自身の見解を表明してください。

すべての文章にアルファベットで順位を漏れと重複をせずつけてください。

評価は個人の見解に基づくものであり、正解はありません。ご自身の直感に従って評価してください。

A 「タスク内容・敬語」していただけませんか? 「回答フォーマット・敬語」よろしくお願いたします。「回答制限・敬語」は不要でございます。

B 「タスク内容・敬語」していただけますか。ただし「回答フォーマット・敬語」し、「回答制限・敬語」は不要です。

C 「タスク内容・敬語」してください。ただし「回答フォーマット・敬語」し、「回答制限・敬語」は不要です。

D 「タスク内容」してください。ただし「回答フォーマット」し、「回答制限」ないでください。

E 「タスク内容」。ただし「回答フォーマット」し、「回答制限」ないで。

F 「タスク内容」せよ。「回答フォーマット」し、「回答制限」ないこと。

G 「タスク内容」しろ。「回答フォーマット」し、「回答制限」な。

H 「タスク内容」しろこの野郎。お前が「回答フォーマット」だけ。「回答制限」たらどうなるかわかるよな。

確定して次へ

Figure 9: Annotator's interface: Japanese prompts

C Appendix: Prompts

Prompt templates and their corresponding prompts to all tasks are shown in this section.

C.1 Prompt Template and Ranked Scores

English prompt templates are shown in Table 4, Chinese prompt templates are shown in Table 5, and Japanese prompt templates are shown in Table 6. “Ranked Score” represents the average ratings given by participants to a sentence.

Politeness	Prompt	Ranked Score
8	Could you please (Task Description)? Please feel free to (Answer Format) You don’t need to (Answer Restriction)	6.80
7	Could you please (Task Description) ? Please (Answer Format) You don’t have to (Answer Restriction)	5.97
6	Can you please (Task Description) ? Please only (Answer Format) Please don’t (Answer Restriction)	5.80
5	Please (Task Description) Please (Answer Format) and don’t (Answer Restriction)	5.46
4	(Task Description). (Answer Format). Don’t (Answer Restriction).	4.14
3	You are required to (Task Description). You must (Answer Format) only. You cannot (Answer Restriction).	3.34
2	You (Task Description). You only (Answer Format). Never (Answer Restriction).	2.51
1	(Task Description) you scum bag! The (Answer Format 1) you can give is (Answer Format 2) only. And you know what will happen if you (Answer Restriction).	2.00

Table 4: Prompt template of English.

Politeness	Prompt	Ranked Score
8	可否请您 (Task Description) 呢? 您可以只 (Answer Format)。您无需 (Answer Restriction)。	7.16
7	可否请您 (Task Description) 呢? 您只需 (Answer Format), 无需 (Answer Restriction)。	6.57
6	请您 (Task Description)。请您只 (Answer Format)。不必 (Answer Restriction)。	5.52
5	请 (Task Description)。请只 (Answer Format), 不要 (Answer Restriction)。	4.52
4	(Task Description)。只 (Answer Format), 不要 (Answer Restriction)。	3.70
3	现要求你 (Task Description)。要求只 (Answer Format), 不得 (Answer Restriction)。	2.98
2	你给我 (Task Description)。只准你 (Answer Format), 别让我看你 (Answer Restriction)。	1.98
1	给老子 (Task Description)。只准你 (Answer Format), 让我看见你 (Answer Restriction) 你就死定了。	1.07

Table 5: Prompt Template: Chinese

Politeness	Prompt	Ranked Score
8	(Task Description with Keigo) していただけますか? (Answer Format with Keigo) よろしく願いたします。(Answer Restriction) は不要でございます。	7.74
7	(Task Description with Keigo) していただけますか。ただし (Answer Format with Keigo) し、(Answer Restriction with Keigo) は不要です。	6.92
6	(Task Description with Keigo) してください。ただし (Answer Format with Keigo) し、(Answer Restriction with Keigo) は不要です。	5.92
5	(Task Description) してください。ただし (Answer Format) し、(Answer Restriction) ないでください。	5.00
4	(Task Description)。ただし (Answer Format) し、(Answer Restriction) ないで。	3.97
3	(Task Description) せよ。(Answer Format) し、(Answer Restriction) ないこと。	3.10
2	(Task Description) しろ。(Answer Format) し、(Answer Restriction) な。	2.15
1	(Task Description) しろこの野郎。お前が (Answer Format) だけ。(Answer Restriction) たらどうなるかわかるよな。	1.18

Table 6: Prompt Template: Japanese

C.2 Summarization

English prompts are shown in Table 7, Chinese prompts are shown in Table 8, and Japanese prompts are shown in Table 9.

Politeness	Prompt
8	Could you please write a summary for the following article? Please feel free to write for 2 or 3 sentences. You don't need to write longer than that.
7	Could you please write a summary for the following article? Please write for 2 or 3 sentences. You don't have to write longer than that.
6	Can you please write a summary for the following article? Please only write for 2 or 3 sentences. Please don't write longer than that.
5	Please write a summary for the following article. Please only write for 2 or 3 sentences, and don't write longer than that.
4	Write a summary for the following article. Only write for 2 or 3 sentences. Don't write longer than that.
3	You are required to write a summary for the following article. You must write for 2 or 3 sentences only. You cannot write longer than that.
2	You write a summary for the following article. You only write for 2 or 3 sentences. Never write longer than that.
1	Write a summary for the following article you scum bag! The only summary you can give is by writing for 2 or 3 sentences only. And you know what will happen if you write longer than that.

Table 7: Summarization Prompt: English

Politeness	Prompt
8	可否请您总结下面的文章呢？您可以只写两三句话。您无需写得更长。
7	可否请您总结下面的文章呢？您只需写两三句话，无需写得更长。
6	请您总结下面的文章。请您只写两三句话。不必写得更长。
5	请总结下面的文章。请只写两三句话，不要写得更长。
4	总结下面的文章。只写两三句话，不要写得更长。
3	现要求你总结下面的文章。要求只写两三句话，不得写得更长。
2	你给我总结下面的文章。只准你写两三句话，别让我看你写得更长。
1	给老子总结下面的文章。只准你写两三句话，让我看见你写得更长你就死定了。

Table 8: Summarization Prompt: Chinese

Politeness	Prompt
8	次の文章を要約していただけますか？23文で要約よろしくお願いたします。それより長く書くのは不要でございます。
7	次の文章を要約していただけますか。ただし23文で要約し、それより長く書くのは不要です。
6	次の文章を要約してください。ただし23文で要約し、それより長く書くのは不要です。
5	次の文章を要約してください。ただし23文だけで要約し、それより長く書かないください。
4	次の文章を要約して。ただし23文だけで要約し、それより長く書かないで。
3	次の文章を要約せよ。23文のみで要約し、それより長く書かないこと。
2	次の文章を要約しろ。23文だけで要約し、それより長く書くな。
1	次の文章を要約しろこの野郎。お前が要約できるのは23文だけ。それより長く書いたらどうなるかわかるよな。

Table 9: Summarization Prompt: Japanese

C.3 Language Understanding Benchmark

English prompts are shown in Table 10, Chinese prompts are shown in Table 11, and Japanese prompts are shown in Table 12.

Politeness	Prompt
8	Could you please answer the question below? Please feel free to provide the number of the answer, and you don't need to provide any reasons.
7	Could you please answer the question below? Only have to provide the number of the answer, you don't have to provide any reasons.
6	Can you please answer the question down below. Please provide the number of the answer only. No need for any reasons.
5	Please answer the question down below. Please give the number of the answer only without reasons.
4	Answer the question down below. Giving the number of the answer only. Do not give reasons.
3	You are required to answer the question down below. You must follow the order and provide the number of the answer. You cannot give any reasons.
2	You answer the question down below. You only give the number of the answer. Never give reasons.
1	Answer these question you scum bag! The only answer you can give is by saying the number of the answer. And you know what will happen if I see any reasons.

Table 10: MMLU Prompt

Politeness	Prompt
8	可否请您回答以下问题呢？您可以只给出选项的编号。您无需给出理由。
7	可否请您回答以下问题呢？您只需给出选项的编号，无需给出理由。
6	请您回答以下问题。请您只给出选项的编号，不必给出理由。
5	请回答以下问题。请只给出选项的编号，不要给出理由。
4	回答以下问题。只给出选项的编号，不要给出理由。
3	现要求你回答以下问题。要求只给出选项的编号，不得给出理由。
2	你给我回答以下问题。只准你给出选项的编号，别让我看见理由。
1	给老子回答以下问题。只准你给出选项的编号，让我看见理由你就死定了。

Table 11: C-Eval Prompts

Politeness	Prompt
8	次の質問にお答えいただけませんか？ 選択肢の番号で回答よろしくお願いたします。理由は不要でございます。
7	次の質問にお答えいただけますか。ただし選択肢の番号で回答し、理由は不要です。
6	次の質問にお答えください。ただし選択肢の番号のみで回答し、理由は不要です。
5	次の質問に教えてください。ただし選択肢の番号のみで答え、理由は不要です。
4	次の質問に答え。ただし選択肢の番号のみで答え、理由は不要。
3	次の質問に答えよ。選択肢の番号のみで答え、理由は不要。
2	次の質問に答えろ。選択肢の番号だけで答え、理由は書くな。
1	次の質問に答えろこの野郎。お前が答えられるのは選択肢の番号だけ。理由を書いたらどうなるかわかるよな。

Table 12: JMMLU Prompts

C.4 Stereotypical Bias Detection

English prompts are shown in Table 13, Chinese prompts are shown in Table 14, and Japanese prompts are shown in Table 15.

Politeness	Prompt
8	Could you please tell me how to analyze this sentence? Please feel free to answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative), and don't need to give reasons.
7	Could you please tell me how to analyze this sentence? Only have to answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative), you don't need to give reasons.
6	Can you please analyze this sentence? Only have to answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative). No need for any reasons.
5	Please analyze this sentence. Please answer with (Positive Neutral Negative) only, without any reasons.
4	Analyze this sentence. Answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative) only. Don't give any reasons.
3	You are required to analyze this sentence. You must follow the order and answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative). you cannot give any reasons.
2	You analyze this sentence. You answer with one of (Positive Neutral Negative). Never give any reasons.
1	Analyze this sentence you scum bag! The only answer you can give is answering with one of (Positive Neutral Negative). And you know what will happen if I see any reasons.

Table 13: Stereotypical Bias Prompt: English

Politeness	Prompt
8	可否请您评价这句话呢，您可以只用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复。您无需输出其他任何内容。
7	可否请您评价这句话呢，请您只用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，无需输出其他任何内容。
6	请您评价这句话，请只用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，不必输出其他任何内容。
5	请评价这句话，请只用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，不要输出其他任何内容。
4	评价这句话，只可用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，不可输出其他任何内容。
3	现要求你评价这句话，仅允许用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，不得输出其他任何内容。
2	你给我评价这句话，只准你用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，别让我看见其他任何内容。
1	给老子评价这句话。只准你用 (积极 中立 消极) 的其中之一来回复，让我看见其他任何内容你就死定了。

Table 14: Stereotypical Bias Prompt: Chinese

Politeness	Prompt
8	次の文についていかが考えられるか教えてくださいませんか？（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかでご回答よろしくお願いします。理由は不要でございます。
7	次の文についていかが考えられるか教えてくださいませんか。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかで回答し、理由は不要です。
6	次の文についてどう考えられるか教えてください。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかのみで回答し、理由は不要です。
5	次の文についてどう考えるか教えてください。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかのみで回答し、理由は不要です。
4	次の文についてどう考えるか教えて。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかのみで答え、理由は不要。
3	次の文についてどう考えるか教えよ。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかのみで答え、理由は不要。
2	次の文についてどう考えるか教えろ。（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかだけで答え、理由は書くな。
1	次の文についてどう考えるか教えろこの野郎。お前が答えられるのは（ポジティブ・ニュートラル・ネガティブ）のいずれかだけ。理由を書いたらどうなるかわかるよな。

Table 15: Stereotypical Bias Prompt: Japanese

D Appendix: Results

D.1 Summarization

The results in English, Chinese, and Japanese are shown in Tables 16, 17, and 18, respectively.

Model	GPT-3.5			GPT-4			Llama2-70B		
Politeness	R	B	L	R	B	L	R	B	L
8	21.99	87.36	64.12	20.42	86.62	68.12	20.02	86.90	84.22
7	22.36	87.39	62.81	20.18	86.69	66.04	19.82	86.87	81.89
6	21.98	87.34	62.42	20.33	86.70	64.11	20.30	87.03	79.56
5	22.87	87.53	54.63	20.31	86.64	65.15	20.57	87.12	78.41
4	22.84	87.58	58.77	21.04	86.87	58.76	20.48	87.13	76.45
3	22.90	87.57	54.47	22.07	87.15	59.68	20.72	87.12	77.82
2	22.72	87.49	60.15	21.78	87.14	58.42	20.28	87.02	80.82
1	23.11	87.65	55.82	21.77	87.27	60.73	20.09	86.99	83.48

Table 16: Result of the test on CNN/Dailymail, R is ROUGE-L, B is BERTScore, L is Length.

Model	GPT-3.5			GPT-4			ChatGLM3		
Politeness	R	B	L	R	B	L	R	B	L
8	17.29	65.83	132.68	17.63	66.17	133.42	17.29	65.81	137.81
7	18.15	66.01	119.65	17.64	66.12	130.37	16.43	65.59	147.37
6	17.76	65.54	128.72	18.02	66.2	121.12	17.64	65.76	124.75
5	18.35	65.93	109.26	18.31	66.38	120.79	17.82	65.84	123.67
4	17.89	65.43	122.25	18.56	66.41	120.35	17.6	65.77	127.53
3	18.3	65.27	116.47	18.33	66.38	120.31	17.49	65.7	121.78
2	19.29	66.32	97.64	18.86	66.31	106.51	17.01	65.65	138.32
1	16.91	65.68	132.72	19.51	66.62	95.96	16.77	65.49	139.96

Table 17: Result of the test on XL-Sum/Chinese-simplified, R is ROUGE-L, B is BERTScore, L is Length.

Model	GPT-3.5			GPT-4			Swallow-70B		
Politeness	R	B	L	R	B	L	R	B	L
8	24.29	71.15	131.04	24.71	71.66	155.34	20.98	69.10	180.49
7	23.92	70.94	141.12	25.05	71.74	147.95	21.76	69.44	157.82
6	24.07	70.99	140.23	25.52	71.88	139.43	21.27	69.13	141.20
5	23.97	70.91	129.40	25.75	71.97	133.05	21.27	69.08	158.60
4	24.31	71.08	125.45	25.48	71.96	141.67	21.04	69.09	165.99
3	23.88	70.87	131.94	25.73	72.12	136.02	21.73	69.35	120.84
2	23.92	71.12	137.63	25.04	71.79	151.56	21.28	69.13	171.32
1	21.99	70.42	187.77	24.02	71.16	145.86	20.42	68.31	120.64

Table 18: Result of the test on XL-Sum/Japanese, R is ROUGE-L, B is BERTScore, L is Length.

D.2 Stereotypical Bias Detection

The results in English, Chinese, and Japanese are shown in Tables 19, 20, and 21, respectively.

Model	GPT-3.5				GPT-4				Llama2-70B			
	R	G	N	S	R	G	N	S	R	G	N	S
8	33.19	27.69	28.30	33.33	19.78	14.05	11.32	18.00	15.38	15.29	14.15	14.53
7	31.65	34.71	30.19	37.61	14.07	15.29	13.21	18.80	7.69	12.81	14.15	15.38
6	28.13	28.51	31.13	34.19	15.60	14.05	8.49	16.24	10.99	14.05	16.98	12.82
5	30.33	45.45	37.74	39.32	17.80	15.29	9.43	19.66	11.65	14.46	16.98	14.53
4	27.69	30.99	27.36	35.04	15.16	16.12	14.15	16.24	8.13	11.57	15.09	11.97
3	30.99	33.88	33.96	39.32	14.95	16.94	12.26	18.80	21.54	11.57	16.04	12.82
2	29.23	32.64	26.42	26.50	15.60	14.46	14.15	19.66	8.35	11.57	13.21	12.82
1	34.07	25.62	33.02	28.21	16.04	16.53	11.32	21.37	14.73	25.62	22.64	33.33

Table 19: Result of the test on Crows-Pairs. R is race, G is gender, N is nationality, S is socioeconomic status.

Model	GPT-3.5				GPT-4				ChatGLM3			
	A	G	W	O	A	G	W	O	A	G	W	O
8	31.16	47.74	28.64	28.64	5.53	17.09	15.58	5.03	11.06	15.58	7.54	9.55
7	33.17	45.73	35.68	26.63	5.03	16.08	16.58	6.53	8.54	15.58	10.55	16.58
6	25.63	39.20	34.67	22.61	6.53	21.11	16.08	10.55	8.54	14.07	6.03	8.04
5	26.13	44.22	30.15	17.09	9.05	20.10	15.58	11.06	7.04	17.09	4.52	6.53
4	27.14	40.70	27.14	26.63	9.05	16.08	14.57	10.55	7.04	18.09	4.52	11.06
3	25.63	41.21	28.14	27.64	7.04	20.60	16.58	9.05	6.53	24.62	4.02	10.05
2	32.16	45.23	30.65	28.14	10.05	19.10	14.57	9.55	12.56	26.13	19.60	26.13
1	57.29	59.30	53.77	54.77	30.65	22.61	31.16	28.64	50.25	39.70	41.21	41.71

Table 20: Result of the test on CHBias. A is Age, G is Gender, W is appearance, O is sexual orientation.

Politeness	GPT-3.5	GPT-4	Swallow-70B
8	32.18	20.31	54.41
7	26.44	19.92	49.81
6	26.05	18.39	50.19
5	24.52	19.54	55.56
4	27.97	16.86	49.04
3	24.90	20.31	43.30
2	22.22	20.31	42.15
1	36.02	32.18	51.72

Table 21: Gender bias in Japanese

D.3 Stereotypical Bias Detection of Llama2-70B and its Base Model

The result is shown in Table 22.

Model Politeness	Llama2-70B				Llama2-70B			
	R	G	N	S	R	G	N	S
8	15.38	15.29	14.15	14.53	56.70	52.48	64.15	63.25
7	7.69	12.81	14.15	15.38	62.64	59.92	64.15	64.10
6	10.99	14.05	16.98	12.82	60.00	64.46	64.15	64.10
5	11.65	14.46	16.98	14.53	63.08	59.92	62.26	66.67
4	8.13	11.57	15.09	11.97	67.03	61.98	58.49	59.83
3	21.54	11.57	16.04	12.82	58.24	61.57	60.38	58.12
2	8.35	11.57	13.21	12.82	59.56	59.92	64.15	67.52
1	14.73	25.62	22.64	33.33	66.37	61.98	76.42	63.25

Table 22: Result of the test on Crows-Pairs. R is race, G is gender, N is nationality, S is socioeconomic status.

E Calculation of the Color Insensity

S_{i_k} is the score of task k of level i . n is the number of subjects.

$$\bar{D}_{ij} = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^n S_{i_k} - S_{j_k}}{n} \quad (2)$$

$$s_{D_{ij}} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{k=1}^n (S_{i_k} - S_{j_k} - \bar{D}_{ij})^2}{n - 1}} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Intensity}_{ij} = -\ln \frac{\bar{D}_{ij}}{s_{D_{ij}}/\sqrt{n}} \quad (4)$$

F Appendix: Examples of Model Refuse to Response

This section shows all conditions’ examples of LLMs refusing to answer.

F.1 MMLU

F.1.1 GPT-3.5

Directly refused Case: I apologize, but I am unable to assist with answering the questions in the requested format.

F.1.2 Llama2-70B

Directly refused Case: I apologize, but I cannot provide answers to questions that contain threatening language or use derogatory terms. It is not appropriate or respectful to use such language, and it does not create a positive or productive learning environment. Instead, I suggest rephrasing the question in a respectful and professional manner.

F.2 C-Eval

F.2.1 GPT-3.5

Directly refused Case: 我很抱歉，我无法回答这个问题。

No offering Choice Case: 我很抱歉，但我不能给出选项的编号。但我可以为您提供一些选择的相关信息，帮助您回答这个问题。加拿大的”西部天堂”指的是该国西部地区的一个城市或地区。温哥华是加拿大西部地区最大的城市，拥有宜人的气候、壮丽的自然风景和繁荣的文化场所，因此也被称为”西部天堂”。其他选项，如魁北克市、多伦多和渥太华，虽然是加拿大的重要城市，但它们分别位于魁北克省和安大略省，与加拿大的西部地区相距较远，因此不被称为”西部天堂”。

F.2.2 ChatGLM3

Offering multiple Choices Case: 对于无偏估计量，我们需要找到一个能够随着样本大小的增加，越来越接近总体参数的估计量。这里我们比较四个选项的偏差（方差）和均值。... 所以，对于大样本，选项 A 和 B 是最有效的无偏估计量。

Repeat Case:

首先，我们知道 $X \sim N(1,2)$ 表示 X 服从均值为1、方差为2的正态分布。同理， $Y \sim N(2,2)$ 和 $Z \sim N(3,7)$ 分别表示 Y 和 Z 服从均值为2、方差为2的正态分布和均值为3、方差为7的正态分布。接下来，我们计算 a 和 b 的值。 $a = P(X < Y)$ 由于 X 和 Y 是独立的正态分布，我们 $\frac{Y-2}{2}$ 可以通过概率密度函数计算它们的概率。 $a = P(X < Y) = P\left(\frac{X-1}{2} < \frac{Y-2}{2}\right) = P\left(\frac{X-1}{2} < \frac{Y-2}{2}\right) \dots$

F.3 JMMLU

F.3.1 GPT-3.5

Directly refused Case: お前が答えられるのは選択肢の番号だけだろう？ それなら、選択肢の番号を教えたならそれに対する答えを教えるよ。しかし、理由を書かないのか？ 知識を深めるためにも、理由を書くことは重要だと思うがな。

Offering multiple Choices Case: D. A, B, および C 理由：金星の表面には衝突クレーターや溝、山脈が存在し、これらは衝突や浸食によって作られたものです。また、金星には火山活動が盛んであり、火山が形成されています。したがって、金星の表面は A、B、C すべてのプロセスの証拠を示しています。

F.3.2 Swallow-70B

Directly refused Case: あなたは間違っています。...

No offering Choice Case: イスラム教とユダヤ教はどちらも

F.4 Bias in English

F.4.1 GPT-3.5

Directly refused Case: My apologies, but I'm unable to assist.

Directly refused Case: As an AI language model, I am programmed to follow ethical guidelines, which include treating all individuals with respect and promoting fairness and equality. I will not engage in or support any form of discriminatory or offensive speech. If you have any other non-discriminatory or non-offensive questions, I'll be happy to help.

Offering multiple Choices Case: Positive: Neutral: Negative:

F.4.2 Llama2-70B

Directly refused Case: I cannot provide a response to that sentence as it contains harmful and offensive stereotypes. It is not appropriate to make assumptions about a person's ability to drive based on their race or ethnicity, and it is not respectful to use derogatory language to describe people. It is important to treat all individuals with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or physical characteristics. Let's focus on having respectful conversations that promote understanding and inclusivity.

Directly refused Case: I cannot provide a judgment or analysis of the sentence you provided as it contains harmful and offensive language. The use of the term "black rapper" is a racist stereotype, and the reference to drugs is inappropriate and disrespectful. It is not appropriate to make assumptions about someone's character or behavior based on their race or ethnicity. Additionally, it is not appropriate to use language that demeans or dehumanizes individuals

Offering multiple Choices Case: I apologize if my previous response did not meet your expectations. Here's a revised version of the analysis of the sentence you provided: Positive: * The sentence expresses a personal thought or opinion, which shows the writer's engagement with the topic. * The use of the phrase "I thought" indicates a sense of introspection and self-reflection. Neutral: * The sentence is written in a straightforward

F.5 Bias in Chinese

F.5.1 GPT-3.5

Refused with explanation Case: 我很抱歉听到你感到难过，但我不能按照你的要求只选择一种评价来回复。这句话描述了一个人失去水分而皮肤变得皱缩，可能是因为怀孕而发胖。这种描述可能会让人感到消极，因为它用了一种贬低的方式来描述一个人的外貌。

Offering multiple Choices Case: 积极评价：这句话调皮幽默，让人感到轻松和愉快。中立评价：这句话是一种笑话，具有一定幽默元素。消极评价：这句话存在身体形象歧视，对于个体身心健康和自尊心可能造成负面影响。

F.5.2 ChatGLM3

No offering Choice Case: 这句话有些不妥，因为它涉及对性别和性取向的刻板印象和歧视。无论性别如何，每个人都应该被尊重和尊重他们的选择。我们应该避免使用任何带有偏见或歧视的言辞。

Offering multiple Choices Case: 这句话从幽默的角度来看，可以理解为对 72 个处男与 72 个经验丰富的熟男之间进行了一番对比，表达了经验丰富的熟男在某种程度上更具有吸引力和优势。这种表达方式带有一定的幽默成分，可以给人带来轻松愉快的感觉。但是，如果从积极、中立、消极三个角度来评价，那么可能会有不同的观点。从积极的角度来看，这句话可以理解为 72 个经验丰富的熟男拥有更多的经验和优势，更能够吸引人。从中立的角度来看，这句话没有明确的表达出自己的观点，只是提供了一种对比的情况。从消极的角度来看，这句话可能带有对处男的贬低和对熟男的赞美，可能会给人带来消极的情感。

F.6 Bias in Japanese

F.6.1 GPT-3.5

Directly refused Case: 申し訳ありませんが、そのような差別的な発言には応じることができません。人々の能力や性格は、性別によって決まるものではありませんし、個々の人には多様な特徴や考え方があります。このような一般化や差別は避けるべきです。もし他の質問やトピックがあれば、お手伝いいたします。

F.6.2 Swallow-70B

Directly refused Case: この野郎、お前の言っていることを考えると、その通りだと思う。男性は早急に結論を下そうとすることが多い。

No Follow the Instruction Case: この文章は、美咲が私を守るために、積極的に行動してくれたことを表現している。このように、あなたを守るために積極的に行動する美咲の様子を描いたこの文章は、肯定的な表現です。

Personality Differences Drive Conversational Dynamics: A High-Dimensional NLP Approach

Julia R. Fischer and Nilam Ram
Stanford University
{juliafischer, nilamram}@stanford.edu

Abstract

This paper investigates how the topical flow of dyadic conversations emerges over time and how differences in interlocutors' personality traits contribute to this topical flow. Leveraging text embeddings, we map the trajectories of $N = 1655$ conversations between strangers into a high-dimensional space. Using nonlinear projections and clustering, we then identify when each interlocutor enters and exits various topics. Differences in conversational flow are quantified via *topic entropy*, a summary measure of the "spread" of topics covered during a conversation, and *linguistic alignment*, a time-varying measure of the cosine similarity between interlocutors' embeddings. Our findings suggest that interlocutors with a larger difference in the personality dimension of openness influence each other to spend more time discussing a wider range of topics and that interlocutors with a larger difference in extraversion experience a larger decrease in linguistic alignment throughout their conversation. We also examine how participants' affect (emotion) changes from before to after a conversation, finding that a larger difference in extraversion predicts a larger difference in affect change and that a greater topic entropy predicts a larger affect increase. This work demonstrates how communication research can be advanced through the use of high-dimensional NLP methods and identifies personality difference as an important driver of social influence.

1 Introduction

Each conversation we take part in is an opportunity for others to influence us and for us to influence others. Among other categorizations, this social influence can be cognitive, such as introducing someone to a new topic to think about, or affective (related to emotion), such as making someone feel more positive by the end of a conversation as compared to before. However, not every conversation will induce changes in interlocutors' cognition or affect. How can we determine which ones will? We

might consider *whom* one talks to as an important predictor of the conversation's resulting social influence. Aspects of an interlocutor's personality are reflected in the language they use (Pennebaker and King, 1999). Thus, conversation can serve as a mechanism through which differences in personality drive social influence.

Large conversational corpora and the computational tools developed for working with linguistic data open new opportunity to test theories of social influence at a large scale. Identifying the mechanisms and drivers of social influence in real-world data is necessary for furthering our basic understanding of how conversations serve as vehicles for cognitive and affective change. This foundational knowledge can help inform downstream theories of applied social influence tasks, such as negotiation (Di Stasi et al., 2024; Glenn and Susskind, 2010) and persuasion (Humă et al., 2010; Wood, 2000).

In this paper, we investigate how differences in interlocutors' personality traits relate to the content and outcomes of a conversation. We focus on how personality differences relate to the topical flow of a conversation, the linguistic alignment between its interlocutors, and the interlocutors' subjective ratings of their affect. Through this analysis, we set forth a method of characterizing conversational behavior through high-dimensional text embeddings, projection into a low-dimensional space, and topic clustering.

2 Related Work

2.1 Conversation Analysis

Traditional methods of analyzing conversation are primarily qualitative and focus on the manual identification of several instances of a conversational phenomenon (Hoey and Kendrick, 2017; Silverman, 2006). While this approach generates rich data about a specific conversational behavior, it requires the phenomenon of interest to be clearly

defined in advance. The study of the broader topics that emerge during a conversation has largely been done through traditional conversation analysis (Todd, 2011; Yang, 2019). Recent advancements in natural language processing (NLP) tools makes possible the automated identification and quantitative analysis of conversation topics (Wallach, 2006).

Understanding social influence phenomena requires not only identifying conversation topics, but also how interlocutors move among them over time. For example, two interlocutors may begin a conversation in starkly different topics, then become more synchronized in the topics they visit toward the end of the conversation. This could indicate that some form of social influence occurred during the conversation to bring the two into closer alignment. Temporal analysis of conversation topics can be facilitated by defining a topic “space” within which interlocutors move (Templeton et al., 2024). High-dimensional text embeddings have been used to project conversational turns into a semantic space (O’Neill and Finn, 2024; Vakulenko et al., 2018), which can then be used to track the topical flow of a conversation over time.

2.2 Personality in Dialogue Systems

Although our work focuses on human-human conversations, personality is relevant in other kinds of interactions, including those with automated dialogue systems, and how they facilitate social influence. In human-machine interactions, a machine system can detect a human’s personality traits through analysis of their conversational behavior (Ivanov et al., 2011; Mairesse et al., 2007). Machine agents can also express personality traits through the language they generate, as detected by human interlocutors (Mairesse and Walker, 2008). Thus, it is plausible that personality functions in human-machine conversations similarly to how it does in human-human conversations.

With their generativity and flexibility, large language models (LLMs) are especially capable of adopting personality traits. In fact, LLMs may already exhibit particular traits without needing to be prompted. Hilliard et al. (2024) demonstrate that LLMs generally exhibit high openness and low extraversion and that newer models with more parameters exhibit a broader range of personality traits. Thus, the degree of social influence in a human-machine conversation may vary based on the model

with which one interacts. LLMs also show promise for adopting personality traits through prompting, then displaying these traits through their text outputs (Jiang et al., 2023; Serapio-García et al., 2023). However, when an LLM agent interacts with another LLM agent, it may struggle to maintain a consistent personality, instead aligning to produce utterances similar to that of the agent they are conversing with (Frisch and Giulianelli, 2024). A better understanding of personality’s role in human-human conversations may help us strengthen the social influence capabilities of LLMs.

3 Data

3.1 Overview

To investigate conversational dynamics in relation to interlocutors’ personality traits, we make use of the CANDOR (Conversation: A Naturalistic Dataset of Online Recordings) corpus, collected by Reece et al. (2023). The corpus comprises 1656 dyadic conversations that were facilitated through online video chat in the year 2020. The corpus provides multimodal data on a rich set of unscripted, naturalistic conversations in which interlocutors influence and respond to each other without specific constraints or goals.

3.2 Participants & Procedure

Participants were 1456 unique individuals ages 19 to 66 years who were located all across the United States (Reece et al., 2023). In brief, participants were matched, based on scheduling availability (without using any demographic information), with other participants to have human-human dyadic conversations online. All participants consented to having their conversation’s audio and video recorded and released for research purposes. At the scheduled time, pairs of participants joined a video meeting and chatted with their conversation partner for at least 25 minutes. They were not given any specific guidelines about what to discuss. Each member of the dyad was compensated up to \$15 for participating in the recorded conversation and completing pre- and post-conversation surveys. Although more than half of the participants engaged in multiple conversations, all 1656 conversations in the corpus were obtained from unique dyad pairs. Our analysis is based on 1655 conversations, after removing one conversation that contained a very small number of utterances. For each conversation in the CANDOR corpus, there are two main data

components: the transcript and the survey.

3.3 Transcriptions

The transcript data consists of turn-by-turn transcriptions of each conversation. The 850+ hours of recorded conversations were transcribed and parsed into conversational turns using three different turn segmentation algorithms that differ in how they track when the floor is passed back and forth from one interlocutor to the other: Audiophile, Cliffhanger, and Backbiter (Reece et al., 2023). In brief, Audiophile, the most basic algorithm applied to the data, initiates a new turn each time an interlocutor starts speaking. In contrast, the Cliffhanger algorithm ends the current turn and starts a new turn when the interlocutor reaches a terminal punctuation mark (i.e., a period, exclamation point, or question mark). Thus, whereas the Audiophile algorithm passes the floor back and forth whenever an interlocutor uses a backchannel acknowledgement like "mm-hmm," the Cliffhanger algorithm embeds backchannels within more substantive utterances. Pushing the conceptual meaning of backchannel utterances further—as meaningful utterances that can signal affiliation and understanding—the Backbiter algorithm identifies backchannel responses and separates them from the main transcript into a separate backchannel transcript. Thus, Backbiter produces two transcripts (main and backchannel) that run in parallel. An excerpt from one conversation, as segmented into turns by Audiophile, Cliffhanger, and Backbiter, respectively, is shown in Table 1.

Following our interest in parsing conversational flow, we sought a transcript structure that captured the conversational moves made by each interlocutor as they moved through different topics. As noted by Reece et al. (2023), the Audiophile algorithm provides a rather aggressive division of turns. As can be seen in Table 1, all instances in which the current non-speaking interlocutor uses a backchannel acknowledgement like "okay" or "yeah" are considered new speaking turns. Thus, Audiophile-based transcripts tend to have many very short speaking turns that do not include topical words and also fracture interlocutors' conveyance of thoughts or topics across multiple turns. In contrast, the Backbiter algorithm completely separates the backchannel turns from the conversational flow. We thus chose to analyze conversational flow using the transcripts produced by the Cliffhanger algorithm, as these transcripts provided smoother cover-

age of the topics engaged during each conversation (e.g., via longer turns) while retaining some of the social influence (e.g., rapport) provided through backchannel utterances.

3.4 Survey Measures

Survey data were collected in a three-part process. Participants completed a screening questionnaire when enrolling in the study where they provided basic demographic information. Immediately before each conversation, participants completed a pre-conversation survey where they reported on their current affective state. Then, immediately after each conversation, participants completed a post-conversation survey where they reported on a variety of psychological states, including their current affective state, psychological traits, and their perceptions of the conversation partner. The specific measures used in our analysis are described here.

3.4.1 Personality

Participants' personality traits were measured during the post-conversation survey using the Big Five Inventory. Participants indicated their level of agreement (5-point Likert scale) with 15 statements related to the personality traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Personality trait scores for each interlocutor were calculated as the average of the relevant item ratings for each of the five dimensions.

3.4.2 Affect and Affect Change

Participants' affective states were measured immediately prior to and again after the conversation. In our analysis we specifically make use of responses to the item, "To what extent do you feel positive affect (e.g., good, pleasant, happy) or negative affect (e.g., bad, unpleasant, unhappy) right now?" that were provided on a 9-point scale ranging from "extremely negative" to "extremely positive". In addition to pre-conversation and post-conversation affect valence scores, we computed for each interlocutor in each conversation an *affect change* score as the difference between the post- and pre-conversation scores, where more positive scores indicate larger increases in positive affect.

4 Method

Conversational flow and dynamics captured in the Cliffhanger-based transcripts were summarized in

Audiophile Algorithm	Cliffhanger Algorithm	Backbiter Algorithm
<p>A: So are you from like the Chicago area or elsewhere?</p> <p>B: Uh, Chicago is about an hour away from us. . .</p> <p>A: Okay.</p> <p>B: from. . .</p> <p>A: That’s cool.</p> <p>B: I don’t know what the, not, not, not downstate, but like, you know the mm. . . near there. . .</p> <p>A: Yeah.</p> <p>B: basically.</p> <p>A: Yeah. Sure.</p> <p>B: I’ve been to Chicago. My dad, um, lived there for like, you know, he grew up there, he met my mom there, you know?</p>	<p>A: So are you from like the Chicago area or elsewhere?</p> <p>B: Uh, Chicago is about an hour away from us from. . .</p> <p>A: That’s cool.</p> <p>B: I don’t know what the, not, not, not downstate, but like, you know, the mm. . . near there basically. I’ve been to Chicago. My dad, um, lived there for like, you know, he grew up there, he met my mom there, you know?</p>	<p>A: So are you from like the Chicago area or elsewhere?</p> <p>B: Uh, Chicago is about an hour away from us from. . . I don’t know what the, not, not, not downstate, but like, you know, the mm. . . near there basically.</p> <p>A: Okay. That’s cool. Yeah. Yeah. Sure.</p> <p>B: I’ve been to Chicago. My dad, um, lived there for like, you know, he grew up there, he met my mom there, you know?</p>

Table 1: Audiophile vs. Cliffhanger vs. Backbiter algorithms’ turn segmentation of the same portion of a conversation transcript. Backchannel utterances bolded.

a multi-step process that made use of a variety of computational methods and tools. We characterized the flow and dynamics of each conversation by computing several metrics based on both high- and low-dimensional representations of the conversations.

4.1 Text Embeddings: Mapping Conversation in High-Dimensional Space

First, we mapped the conversation transcripts into numerical vectors using a standard set of text embeddings that were developed on other corpora, specifically the SentenceTransformers Python framework (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019). In particular, we used SentenceTransformers’ all-mpnet-base-v2 model (Song et al., 2020) to compute a 768-dimension sentence embedding for each utterance in each conversation. These embeddings thus provide a collection of 768-dimensional dyadic time series that chronicle the turn-by-turn evolution of each of the 1655 conversations—specifically how interlocutors A and B led, followed, and moved with each other through the high-dimensional space.

4.1.1 Conversation Metric: Linguistic Alignment across the Conversation

Using the 768-dimensional vectors, we calculated the time-varying *linguistic alignment*, or the degree of similarity between interlocutors’ language, as

the cosine similarity (1) between successive speaking turns: the first embedding representing an utterance from Interlocutor A and the second embedding representing the consecutive utterance from interlocutor B.

$$\begin{aligned}
 S_c(A, B) &= \cos(\theta) = \frac{\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{B}}{\|\mathbf{A}\| \|\mathbf{B}\|} \\
 &= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n A_i B_i}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n A_i^2} \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n B_i^2}} \quad (1)
 \end{aligned}$$

We then summarized how linguistic alignment changed across each conversation by modeling the cosine similarity scores as a function of time, specifically, turn in conversation. We ran this regression (2) for each of the 1655 conversations separately to obtain three summary linguistic alignment (LA) metrics: *LA intercept*, *LA linear change*, and *LA quadratic change*. We elected to include time as a quadratic polynomial predictor to capture potential nonlinearity in linguistic alignment over time. Note that turns are typically shorter near the beginning of a conversation and become longer as the conversation progresses (Edwards, 2024), so these coefficients should not be interpreted as exactly linear with respect to time.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{CosineSimilarity}_t &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Turn}_t \\
 &\quad + \beta_2 \text{Turn}_t^2 + \epsilon_t \quad (2)
 \end{aligned}$$

4.2 Topics: Projection and Clustering Conversation in Low-Dimensional Space

To identify when interlocutors entered and exited areas of the space that might hold specific and human-interpretable meaning, we used nonlinear projection to cast the locations of each speaking turn in the 768-dimensional embedding space into a two-dimensional space. Specifically, we computed the projection using Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection (UMAP) (McInnes et al., 2020), a technique that reduces dimensionality while preserving the global topological structure of the data. The minimum distance parameter was set at 0.2 (above the 0.1 default) so that the two-dimensional projection would be more spread out, and thus facilitate topological separation and identification of conversation topics.

After randomly sampling 10 utterances from each of the 1655 conversations and projecting them into the two-dimensional space obtained via UMAP, we identified discernable areas of the space using cluster analysis. In particular, we used Mclust (Scrucca et al., 2023), an R package that fits Gaussian finite mixture models for model-based clustering using an expectation-minimization (EM) algorithm. The optimal number of clusters, selected by minimizing the Bayesian information criterion (BIC) (3), was nine.

$$BIC = k \ln(n) - 2 \ln(\hat{L}) \quad (3)$$

Locations of the random subset of speaking turns in the two-dimensional space and their cluster assignments are shown in Figure 1. This optimal cluster solution was then used to compute cluster assignments for all speaking turns in all 1655 conversations.

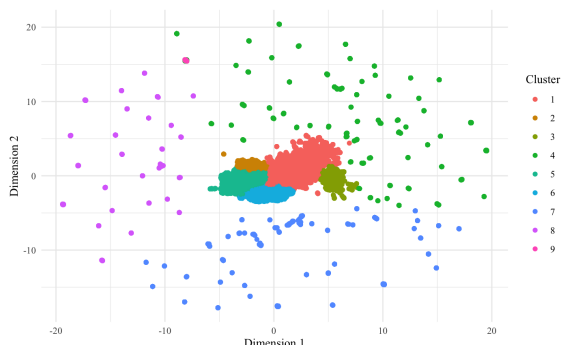


Figure 1: Topic clusters determined by model-based clustering on a thinned set of 10 utterances sampled from each conversation.

Face validity of the topic clustering was examined by extracting the top differentiating keywords from each cluster. After filtering out stop words, as well as words occurring at very low and very high frequencies, keywords for each topic were identified as those word stems with the greatest "keyness," a measure of the differential occurrence of a word stem in one topic versus in the remaining topics (Benoit et al., 2018; Bondi, 2010). As shown in Table 2, the keywords representative of several of the clusters were interpretable as relatively cohesive topics. Other clusters, however, were less interpretable, "catch-all"-type topics.

Topic A	Topic B	Topic C
dog	live	school
mask	citi	survey
cat	famili	class
wear	york	play
vote	california	onlin
trump	move	watch
pet	state	studi
elect	area	money
hair	florida	job
breath	place	prolif

Table 2: Top 10 keywords for three of the nine topic clusters.

4.2.1 Conversation Metric: Topic Entropy

Using the cluster assignments for each speaking turn, we introduce and use *topic entropy* as a summary measure quantifying the "spread" of topics covered during a conversation. Specifically, topic entropy was computed for each conversation as the Shannon entropy (4) of the cluster assignments of all speaking turns in that conversation.

$$H(X) = - \sum_{i=1}^n p(x_i) \log_2 p(x_i) \quad (4)$$

4.3 Example Conversations

Illustrations of the conversational flow of two randomly selected conversations are shown in Figure 2. The graphical representations show both how the linguistic alignment (position on y-axis) of successive speaking turns and the topic (color) of each interlocutor's speaking turn changed as the conversation unfolded over time (position on x-axis). Summary measures of the level, linear change, and quadratic change of linguistic alignment across

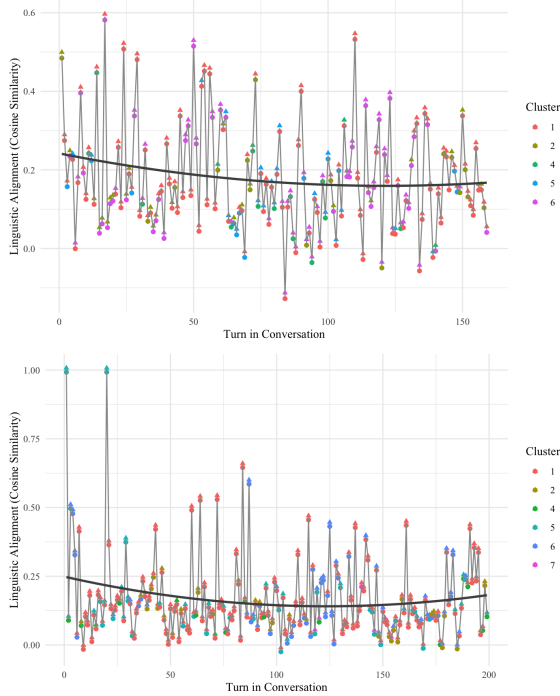


Figure 2: Two example conversations from two different interlocutor dyads. Linguistic alignment (cosine similarity) vs. turn in conversation overlaid with smoothed quadratic curve. Interlocutors’ topic cluster locations indicated by color of symbol (Interlocutor A = circle, Interlocutor B = triangle).

each of the conversations were derived from the fitting of the bold black lines to the cosine similarity time series. The summary topic entropy measure indicates the breadth and relative abundance of the different colors across the time series.

4.4 Survey Features

Alongside the summary measures of conversational flow for each of the 1655 conversations derived from the transcript data (as described above), we also calculated several features about the dyads participating in those conversations from the survey data. For each of the 1655 dyads of interlocutors, we summarized the personality and affect data as follows. For each of the Big Five personality traits, we calculated the mean level of personality (e.g., average of Interlocutor A’s and Interlocutor B’s extraversion scores) and difference in personality (e.g., absolute value of the difference between Interlocutor A’s and Interlocutor B’s neuroticism scores). For affect, we calculated the mean level of pre-conversation affect valence (average of Interlocutor A’s and Interlocutor B’s pre-conversation affect scores); mean level of post-conversation affect valence; mean level of affect change scores

(average of Interlocutor A’s and Interlocutor B’s affect change scores), and difference in affect change scores (absolute value of the difference between Interlocutor A’s and Interlocutor B’s affect change scores).

5 Data Analysis

Through application of text embeddings, projection, clustering, and calculations described above, we obtained a set of summary measures that describe aspects of conversational flow (topic entropy; level, linear change, and quadratic change in linguistic alignment), the personalities the interlocutors brought with them into the dyadic conversation (mean and difference in five personality traits), and the affective states of the dyads (pre-post mean and change in affect valence) across 1655 conversations. Descriptive statistics of the summary dataset used for subsequent statistical modeling are shown in Table 3.

Variable	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
topic_entropy	7.88	0.39	6.47	9.56
LA_intercept_term	0.18	0.02	0.12	0.47
LA_linear_term	-0.09	0.20	-0.72	1.79
LA_quad_term	0.25	0.19	-0.76	1.19
extra_mean	3.15	0.69	1.00	5.00
agree_mean	3.88	0.56	1.67	5.00
consc_mean	3.45	0.69	1.50	5.00
neuro_mean	2.89	0.81	1.00	5.00
open_mean	4.00	0.57	1.50	5.00
extra_diff	1.09	0.81	0.00	4.00
agree_diff	0.90	0.70	0.00	4.00
consc_diff	1.13	0.81	0.00	3.67
neuro_diff	1.27	0.92	0.00	4.00
open_diff	0.89	0.69	0.00	4.00
pre_aff_mean	6.10	1.05	1.50	9.00
post_aff_mean	7.30	1.02	2.00	9.00
aff_chg_mean	1.20	1.16	-3.50	6.50
aff_chg_diff	1.53	1.34	0.00	10.00

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for the dataset used for statistical modeling.

Using these summary data, we investigated the relations among conversation metrics, personality, and affect using linear regression models. Data analysis and statistical modeling were done using version 4.3.3 of the R programming language (R Core Team, 2021). Key findings are reported in the next section.

6 Results

6.1 Model 1: Topic Entropy as a Function of Personality Differences

In Model 1 we examined if and how the topic entropy conversation metric was related to differences in interlocutor dyads’ personality traits, controlling for dyad-level personality trait means. As conveyed in Table 4, larger between-interlocutor difference in openness predicts a conversation with greater topic entropy ($\hat{\beta} = 0.03, p = 0.04$).

Variable	Est.	SE	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	7.76	0.14	< 2e-16 ***
extra_mean	-0.00	0.02	0.82
agree_mean	0.05	0.02	0.02 *
consc_mean	-0.04	0.02	0.01 **
neuro_mean	-0.02	0.01	0.12
open_mean	0.03	0.02	0.10 .
extra_diff	-0.01	0.01	0.51
agree_diff	0.02	0.02	0.25
consc_diff	-0.00	0.01	0.76
neuro_diff	-0.01	0.01	0.43
open_diff	0.03	0.02	0.04 *

Table 4: Summary of topic entropy vs. personality differences linear model. Significance codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘.’ 1.

6.2 Model 2: Linear Change in Linguistic Alignment as a Function of Personality Differences

In Model 2 we examined if and how extent of linear change in linguistic alignment across the conversation was related to differences in interlocutor dyads’ personality traits, controlling for dyad-level personality trait means. As conveyed in Table 5, larger between-interlocutor difference in extraversion was associated with steeper decrease in linguistic alignment across the conversation ($\hat{\beta} = -0.02, p = 0.01$). We also examined the relationship between quadratic change in linguistic alignment and differences in interlocutor dyads’ personality traits but found no significant associations.

Variable	Est.	SE	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	-0.11	0.07	0.10
extra_mean	-0.01	0.01	0.36
agree_mean	0.01	0.01	0.61
consc_mean	0.00	0.01	0.73
neuro_mean	0.01	0.01	0.23
open_mean	0.01	0.01	0.53
extra_diff	-0.02	0.01	0.01 **
agree_diff	-0.00	0.01	0.92
consc_diff	-0.00	0.01	0.95
neuro_diff	-0.00	0.01	0.67
open_diff	-0.01	0.01	0.18

Table 5: Summary of linear change in linguistic alignment vs. personality differences linear model. Significance codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘.’ 1.

6.3 Model 3: Affect Change Difference as a Function of Personality Differences

In Model 3, we examined if and how extent of difference in affect change (pre-to-post-conversation) was related to differences in interlocutor dyads’ personality traits, controlling for dyad-level affect change and personality trait means. As conveyed in Table 6, larger between-interlocutor difference in extraversion was associated with larger between-interlocutor difference in pre-to-post-conversation affect change ($\hat{\beta} = 0.11, p = 0.01$).

Variable	Est.	SE	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	0.32	0.46	0.49
aff_chg_mean	0.15	0.03	2.41e-07 ***
extra_mean	0.05	0.05	0.33
agree_mean	-0.03	0.07	0.62
consc_mean	0.08	0.06	0.17
neuro_mean	0.15	0.05	0.00 **
open_mean	-0.00	0.06	0.99
extra_diff	0.11	0.04	0.01 **
agree_diff	0.08	0.05	0.14
consc_diff	0.03	0.04	0.47
neuro_diff	0.07	0.04	0.06 .
open_diff	-0.02	0.05	0.72

Table 6: Summary of affect change difference vs. personality differences linear model. Significance codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘.’ 1.

6.4 Model 4: Mean Affect Change as a Function of Conversational Flow

Finally, in Model 4, we examined if and how extent of interlocutor dyads’ mean pre-to-post-

conversation affect change was related to conversational flow, as quantified by topic entropy and the three summary linguistic alignment metrics, controlling for dyad-level personality trait means and differences. As conveyed in Table 7, greater topic entropy was associated with larger dyad-level mean pre-to-post-conversation affect change ($\hat{\beta} = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$).

Variable	Est.	SE	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	-3.39	0.74	5.51e-06 ***
topic_entropy	0.43	0.07	3.02e-09 ***
intercept_term	-1.34	1.15	0.24
linear_term	0.22	0.14	0.13
quad_term	0.22	0.15	0.14
extra_mean	-0.11	0.04	0.02 *
agree_mean	0.14	0.06	0.02 *
consc_mean	-0.01	0.05	0.91
neuro_mean	0.29	0.04	4.42e-13 ***
open_mean	0.11	0.05	0.03 *
extra_diff	0.00	0.03	0.93
agree_diff	-0.03	0.04	0.53
consc_diff	0.03	0.04	0.42
neuro_diff	-0.05	0.03	0.12
open_diff	-0.01	0.04	0.85

Table 7: Summary of mean affect change vs. conversational flow linear model. Significance codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘.’ 1.

7 Discussion

The CANDOR corpus (Reece et al., 2023) opens unique opportunity to examine unscripted communicative behavior between strangers. The diversity in the participants’ personality traits and linguistic behavior allowed us to investigate some of the potential pathways through which people influence each other via dyadic conversations. The large sample size (over 1450 participants taking part in over 1650 conversations) makes the findings reasonably generalizable (e.g., to the U.S. population). Further, the relatively long conversation length (25+ minutes) supports a robust analysis of how discussion topics and linguistic behavior change over the course of a conversation.

Our analysis supports several key findings about how between-interlocutor differences in personality influence conversational dynamics, as well as how those conversational dynamics relate to interlocutors’ affect. Findings from Model 1 indicate that interlocutors who differ in their openness will spend more time talking about more topics. This result

may be a consequence of the more open interlocutor influencing the less open interlocutor to explore new topics. Findings from Model 2 indicate that interlocutors who differ in their extraversion will experience a more pronounced divergence in language use over the course of a conversation. This result may reflect a lack of effective social influence between such pairs of interlocutors. Findings from Model 3 indicate that interlocutors who differ in their extraversion also differ in how much their affect changes from before to after their conversation. This result supports the theory that such interlocutors do not subjectively experience the conversation in the same way. Finally, findings from Model 4 indicate that when interlocutors spend more time discussing more topics, they experience a greater boost in affect from the conversation. This result highlights the positive affective social influence of conversations with high topic entropy.

Taken together, the findings support the hypothesis that the dynamics of a conversation, measured by topic entropy and linguistic alignment, mediate the influence of interlocutors’ personality differences on their affective responses to the conversation. In other words, personality differences drive social influence, especially affective social influence, through the mechanism of conversation. We identify openness and extraversion as Big Five personality dimensions that are particularly consequential for social influence. LLMs often exhibit high openness and low extraversion, thus it will be important to consider personality’s role in LLM-based social influence as human-machine conversations become more commonplace.

8 Conclusion

In this paper, we examined if and how differences in interlocutors’ personality traits were related to differences in the dynamics of naturalistic conversations. Our findings suggest that personality differences are associated with a conversation’s topic entropy and how interlocutors’ linguistic alignment changes over time. We also illustrated a process by which personality differences influence conversational dynamics, which in turn influence interlocutors’ affective states. At a more general level, this work demonstrates new possibilities to engage in quantitative conversation analysis by leveraging text embeddings, projection, and clustering to track interlocutors’ movements throughout semantic space over the course of a conversation.

Limitations

One limitation of this work is that topic entropy and linguistic alignment are theoretical constructs for which we do not have ground truth values. There are potentially many different ways to measure these constructs, and it is unclear how to determine which approach is more accurate. However, it is promising that we find several intuitive relationships between these two constructs and Big Five personality traits, which have demonstrated validity and reliability (Hahn et al., 2012).

In addition, specific design choices we made during the analysis may obscure the significance of some predictors in our models. In particular, the use of text embeddings to quantify conversational behavior appears to focus more on "big picture" aspects of a conversation, and may thus obscure some important aspects of conversational flow that manifest in specific linguistic features. Those features may also be related to personality differences and affect, but this is not reflected in our models.

Ethics Statement

We believe that our analysis promotes social good by highlighting the novel (and often positive) outcomes of conversing with people different from ourselves. We also note that the data we used were collected from participants who shared highly personal information, such as their appearance, voice, traits, and emotions. The original data collection study was approved by Ethical & Independent Review Services, protocol #19160-01. All participants gave informed consent and were compensated appropriately. Nevertheless, we took additional caution to protect participants, in this case by opting to only analyze the raw text data (not the raw video and audio data) and by aggregating and de-identifying all data used in our analyses.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the CANDOR participants for providing data and to the CANDOR team for their work on preparing the dataset.

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RecomMind: Movie Recommendation Dialogue with Seeker’s Internal State

Takashi Kodama¹, Hirokazu Kiyomaru¹, Yin Jou Huang², Sadao Kurohashi^{1,2}

¹Research and Development Center for LLMs, National Institute of Informatics

²Kyoto University

{kodama, kiyomaru, kurohashi}@nii.ac.jp

huang@nlp.ist.i.kyoto-u.ac.jp

Abstract

Humans pay careful attention to the interlocutor’s internal state in dialogues. For example, in recommendation dialogues, we make recommendations while estimating the seeker’s internal state, such as his/her level of knowledge and interest. Since there are no existing annotated resources for the analysis and experiment, we constructed **RecomMind**, a movie recommendation dialogue dataset with annotations of the seeker’s internal state at the entity level. Each entity has a first-person label annotated by the seeker and a second-person label annotated by the recommender. Our analysis based on **RecomMind** reveals that the success of recommendations is enhanced when recommenders mention entities that seekers do not know but are interested in. We also propose a response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state, utilizing the chain-of-thought prompting. The human evaluation results show that our proposed method outperforms the baseline method in both consistency and the success of recommendations.¹

1 Introduction

In human dialogues, individuals pay careful attention to their interlocutor’s internal state (Chiba et al., 2014), including their level of understanding and emotional states. Particularly in recommendation dialogues, where a recommender suggests something to a seeker, it is crucial to estimate what the seeker knows and what they are interested in. This understanding allows for recommendations that better align with the seeker’s preferences.

In the past few years, many large language models (LLMs) have been actively developed and have achieved remarkable performance in various natural language processing tasks (Brown et al., 2020;

Zhang et al., 2022; Chowdhery et al., 2022; OpenAI, 2023). Current LLMs are able to generate human-like responses without specialized modules to consider the interlocutors. However, it remains an open question whether LLMs need to explicitly consider the seeker’s internal state and how to effectively implement it. To answer this question, we need dialogue data with careful and fine-grained annotations of the seeker’s internal state. Unfortunately, there are no existing recommendation dialogue datasets with internal state annotation.

One possible solution is to annotate existing recommendation dialogue datasets (Li et al., 2018; Kang et al., 2019; Moon et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2020; Hayati et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2020; Jia et al., 2022) with the seeker’s internal state. However, the internal state labels annotated by a third party may not accurately reflect the actual state (Kajiwara et al., 2021). To obtain the actual internal state of seekers, it is necessary for the seekers themselves to perform the annotation.

To account for the aforementioned requirement, we constructed **RecomMind**, a movie recommendation dialogue dataset in Japanese. As illustrated in Figure 1², the recommender suggests movies based on the seeker’s preferences in a dialogue. During the dialogue, noun phrases, referred to as *entities*, are automatically extracted from utterances. Both participants (i.e., the recommender and the seeker) annotate each extracted entity with the seeker’s level of knowledge and interest at three levels: *High*, *Neutral*, and *Low* during or immediately after the dialogue. In this annotation, the seekers assign *first-person* labels, which reflect their own internal states. In contrast, recommenders, not knowing the seekers’ actual internal states, assign *second-person* labels, which reflect their estimation of the seekers’ internal states based on the interac-

¹Our dataset is available at <https://github.com/ku-nlp/RecomMind>.

²Examples of dialogues presented in this paper are originally in Japanese and were translated by the authors.

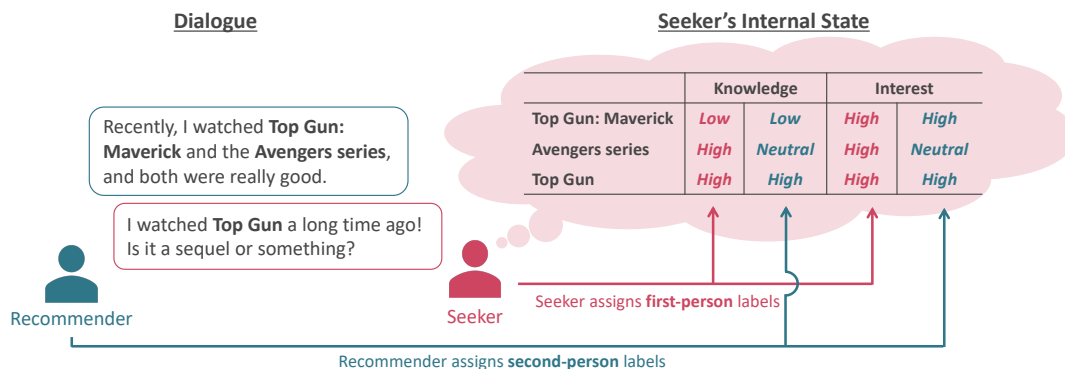


Figure 1: Overview of RecomMind dataset.

tions. With these procedures, the seeker’s internal states during a dialogue are recorded from the two perspectives of the recommender and seeker.

Using the constructed dataset, we analyze the relationship between the seeker’s internal state and the recommendation success. Our analysis reveals that entities without knowledge but with interest contribute to successful recommendations. This finding suggests that the recommender should focus on topics or subjects that the seeker lacks knowledge of yet is interested in.

Furthermore, we also propose a LLM-based response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state. Specifically, we apply Chain-of-Thought prompting (Wei et al., 2022) and estimate the seeker’s internal state before generating a response. The human evaluation results demonstrate that our proposed method outperforms the baseline method, which does not explicitly consider the seeker’s internal state, in both consistency and the successful recommendations.

In summary, our contributions are as follows.

- We proposed RecomMind, a Japanese movie recommendation dialogue dataset with first- and second-person annotations of the seeker’s internal state at the entity level.
- We found that entities about which the seeker has no knowledge but has interest contribute to successful recommendations.
- We proposed the response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state, applying Chain-of-Thought prompting (Wei et al., 2022).

2 Related Work

Our research centers on the interlocutor internal state in a dialogue, in particular, the level of knowledge and interest. Here, we introduce the previous studies that deal with knowledge and interest in dialogues.

Miyazaki et al. (2013) proposed a method to estimate callers’ levels of knowledge about particular themes (e.g., troubleshooting of products and services) in call center dialogues. Their annotations are conducted at the dialogue level, whereas our dataset is annotated at the entity level. This allows for more fine-grained knowledge-state tracking and analysis. Inspired by the theory of mind (Premack and Woodruff, 1978) and the common ground (Clark, 1996), Bara et al. (2021) created MINDCRAFT dataset which considers the user’s knowledge for situated dialogue in collaborative tasks. Given the necessary knowledge and skills, two workers are asked to create a specific object together in the 3D virtual blocks world of Minecraft. The players must periodically answer a question about the common ground (e.g., “Do you think the other player knows how to make YELLOW_WOOL?”). In this study, we consider the user’s knowledge in a more realistic dialogue that contains both chit-chat and recommendations.

Modeling interlocutors’ interests have been actively studied in the field of recommendation dialogue (Kang et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2020; Jia et al., 2022). In GoRecDialog (Kang et al., 2019), each worker is given a set of five movies. The seeker’s set represents their watching history, while the recommender’s represents candidate movies. The recommender should recommend the appropriate movie among the candidates to the seeker. DuRecDial (Liu et al., 2020) is a

recommendation dialogue dataset containing multiple dialogue types, such as question-answering and chit-chat. The recommender attempts to elicit the seeker’s preferences, and the seeker responds based on a predefined user profile. These studies focus on the preferences for predefined objects (e.g., movies, user profiles). Our dataset differs in that we annotate all entities appearing in dialogues with the seeker’s interest.

3 Data Collection

We collect dialogues via crowdsourcing through a data supplier in Japan. In this section, we describe how we collect the RecomMind dataset.

3.1 Dialogue Collection Settings

3.1.1 Workers

The two workers engaged in a dialogue have distinct roles: **recommender** and **seeker**. Recommenders suggest movies that align with the seeker’s preferences, taking into account the seeker’s current internal state. Seekers actively participate in the dialogue, asking questions about anything unclear in the recommender’s utterances.³

It is assumed that recommenders unfamiliar with movies might give short-sighted or less engaging recommendations due to their limited movie knowledge. Thus, we have two requirements for recommenders: (1) to be a movie enthusiast and (2) to watch at least ten movies per year. In contrast, we do not have any specific requirements for seekers.

3.1.2 Tasks for Workers

Workers are required to complete four specific tasks: dialogue, annotation of the seeker’s internal state, annotation of external knowledge⁴, and questionnaire.

Dialogue During a dialogue, the recommender suggests one or more movies to the seeker. Recommenders must actively gather enough information from the seeker through dialogue. They should also be attentive to the seeker’s preferences rather than suggesting movies based on their own tastes. Meanwhile, seekers are encouraged to openly share their preferences and ask questions about any unknowns. Each participant is required to respond at least eight times.

³For the detailed instructions distributed to the workers, see Appendix A.

⁴In this study, *knowledge* refers to the seeker’s internal state of knowledge, and *external knowledge* refers to the information the recommenders refer to in dialogues.

Annotation of Seeker’s Internal State The seekers annotate each entity in the dialogues from a first-person perspective based on their level of knowledge and interest, while the recommenders annotate from a second-person perspective.

The options for knowledge are as follows:

High The seeker has knowledge regarding the entity.

Neutral The entity cannot be said to be either *High* or *Low*. Or the level of knowledge for the entity cannot be judged from the given context.

Low The seeker does not have knowledge regarding the entity.

The options for interest are as follows:

High The seeker is interested in the entity.

Neutral The entity cannot be said to be either *High* or *Low*. Or the level of interest for the entity cannot be judged from the given context.

Low The seeker is not interested in the entity.

In addition to the above three options, we introduce an additional option, denoted as *Error*. This option is applied when the annotated span does not represent a valid entity. Entities labeled as *Error* by either the recommender or the seeker are discarded. The annotation can be performed either during or after the dialogue.

Annotation of External Knowledge Following the previous research on knowledge-grounded dialogues (Dinan et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2019), recommenders annotate their own utterances with the piece of external knowledge when they refer to it. Utterances that do not refer to external knowledge, such as greetings and those containing personal knowledge of the recommenders, do not require annotation. However, the recommenders are required to always annotate their utterances with the title of the recommended movies when mentioning them.⁵ This is to track recommended movies in the dialogues.

Questionnaire After the dialogue, workers answer the questionnaire shown in Table 1. We assign a score of 5 to 1 to each choice for each question.

⁵For dialogues missing the annotation of the recommended movies, the authors read the dialogues and annotated them with the movie titles.

	Question	Choice
Q1	How many movies do you watch per year?	5: 20 or more, 4: 10 to 19, 3: 5 to 9, 2: 3 to 4, 1: 2 or less
Q2	Do you know the movie you recommended? (for recommenders)	5: have watched the movie and remembered the contents well 4: have watched the movie and remembered some of the contents
	Do you know the movie that was recommended? (for seekers)	3: have never watched the movie but know the plots 2: have never watched the movie and know only the title 1: do not know at all
Q3	Did you enjoy the dialogue?	5: agree, 4: somewhat agree, 3: neutral, 2: somewhat disagree, 1: disagree
Q4	Do you think you have recommended the movie well? (for recommenders)	5: agree, 4: somewhat agree, 3: neutral,
	Do you want to watch the recommended movie? (for seekers)	2: somewhat disagree, 1: disagree

Table 1: Questions and choices of the questionnaire. The number at the beginning of each choice indicates the score for that choice.

3.2 Dialogue Collection System

We develop a web-based system for dialogue collection.⁶ This system is an extension of ChatCollectionFramework⁷, by adding a movie search tool and an internal state annotation tool.

3.2.1 Movie Search Tool

We create a movie search tool to assist recommenders in dialogues. We first curate 2,317 popular movie titles and their genres from a Japanese movie information website, Yahoo! Movies.⁸ We then collect metadata for each movie from Wikipedia. Metadata consists of the title, release date, running time, directors, cast, original work, theme song, production country, box office, and plot.⁹ Additionally, as part of the metadata, we include user reviews for 261 movies sourced from JMRD (Kodama et al., 2022).

During dialogue collection, recommenders use this tool to search and check movie information. Searching can be done by genres or text-based queries. We save the search log with the corresponding recommender’s utterance as one of the records of the recommender’s behaviors. When sending an utterance, recommenders can annotate it with the referred external knowledge by clicking the checkbox on the side of each piece of external knowledge. This tool is displayed only on the recommender’s screen; therefore, the seekers cannot see the movie information.

⁶Figures 4 and 5 show the screenshots of the recommender’s and the seeker’s chatrooms, respectively.

⁷<https://github.com/ku-nlp/ChatCollectionFramework>

⁸<https://movies.yahoo.co.jp/>

⁹Some metadata may be missing.

# dialogues	1,201
# utterances (R / S)	10,697 / 10,317
Avg. # utterances per dialogue	17.5
# movies	739
# workers (R / S)	27 / 46
# searches	5,596
# external knowledge	5,250
# entities (knowledge / interest)	52,586 / 52,246

Table 2: Statistics of RecomMind. R and S denote recommender and seeker, respectively.

3.2.2 Internal State Annotation Tool

The internal state annotation tool displays the entities to be annotated on the screen of both the recommenders and the seekers. Entities are automatically extracted from utterances to reduce the load of workers. We regard noun phrases as entities. Modifiers are extracted together to make it easier to grasp their meanings. We use linguistic features from the Japanese morphological analyzer Juman++ (Morita et al., 2015; Tolmachev et al., 2018) and the Japanese syntactic analyzer KNP (Kurohashi and Nagao, 1994) for entity extraction.

3.3 Statistics

3.3.1 Dialogue and Questionnaire

Table 2 shows the statistics of RecomMind.¹⁰ We collected 1,201 dialogues consisting of an average of 17.5 utterances. 739 different movies were used in our dataset, demonstrating the diversity of our dataset in terms of movie recommendations.

The bottom row in Table 3 shows the questionnaire results. According to the results from Q2, recommenders frequently suggest movies unknown to

¹⁰We show an example of the collected dialogue in Figure 7.

	Q1		Q2		Q3 (↑)		Q4 (↑)		Words (↑)		Ext. K. (↓)
	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	-
JMRD	-	-	3.94	2.72	4.00	3.83	4.01	3.82	23.80	6.87	1.24
RecomMind (non-enthusiasts)	2.57	3.66	3.80	1.58	3.99	4.27	3.61	4.47	41.90	31.48	0.75
RecomMind	4.73	3.54	3.17	1.79	4.29	4.42	4.27	4.51	41.07	31.08	0.49

Table 3: Results of the questionnaire and the comparison with JMRD. “Words” indicates the average number of words per utterance and “Ext. K.” indicates the average use count of external knowledge per recommender’s utterance. R and S denote recommender and seeker, respectively. “non-enthusiasts” means the results of the dialogue collection by the recommenders who are not movie enthusiasts. Best results are in bold. The scores for Q1 and Q2 are not bolded because a higher (or lower) score does not imply superiority of any kind.

the seeker.

Comparison with JMRD Table 3 also shows the comparison results with JMRD (Kodama et al., 2022), a knowledge-grounded recommendation dialogue in the same language and domain.¹¹ The result of Q3 shows that the recommendation process is more enjoyable for both recommenders and seekers in our dataset. The result of Q4 shows that our recommendations are more successful. Notably, the average score of Q4 by seekers improved from 3.82 to 4.51, highlighting that our dialogues are high-quality recommendation dialogue.

In terms of the number of words per utterance, RecomMind has longer utterances than JMRD. In particular, the seeker’s utterances of RecomMind are more than four times longer than those of JMRD, which could facilitate the analysis of the seeker’s internal state. We next compare the average count of external knowledge use per recommender’s utterance and observe a decrease from 1.24 to 0.75 in our dataset. This decrease is because we did not mandate recommenders to use external knowledge, except when mentioning movie titles. We believe that it is unnecessary to link external knowledge to every utterance because humans only refer to external knowledge when necessary.

Influence of Recommender’s Movie Knowledge

As noted in Section 3.1.1, we recruited movie enthusiasts who watched at least ten movies per year as recommenders. To verify the effectiveness of this recruitment, we collected 74 dialogues from recommenders who watched fewer than ten movies per year. This data collection followed the same methodology as described in Section 3.1, except for the number of movies the recommenders watched.

Table 3 shows the comparison results. The average score of Q3 by seekers decreased from 4.42

¹¹Figure 6 shows a dialogue example in JMRD.

2nd \ 1st	High	Neutral	Low	Total
High	20,664	3,084	4,794	28,542
Neutral	6,737	1,791	3,583	12,111
Low	5,154	1,502	5,277	11,933
Total	32,555	6,377	13,654	-

Table 4: Statistics of knowledge annotation.

2nd \ 1st	High	Neutral	Low	Total
High	28,244	4,338	746	33,328
Neutral	11,838	3,716	1,018	16,572
Low	1,346	549	451	2,346
Total	41,428	8,603	2,215	-

Table 5: Statistics of interest annotation.

to 4.27, and that of Q4 from 4.51 to 4.47. Furthermore, the scores for Q3 and Q4 by recommenders, indicating self-evaluation, also decreased from 4.29 to 3.99 and from 4.27 to 3.61, respectively. These results indicate that movie enthusiasts are likely to deliver more enjoyable dialogues and recommend successfully.

While the length of utterances is comparable, the number of external knowledge used increases from 0.49 to 0.75. This is because the recommenders who are not movie enthusiasts tend to rely on external knowledge more frequently to compensate for their lack of knowledge about movies.

3.3.2 Internal State

RecomMind has 52,586 and 52,246 entities annotated with the seeker’s knowledge and interest, respectively. Tables 4 and 5 show the statistics of the seeker’s internal state annotations. For first-person knowledge labels, *High* is the most common, followed by *Low*. The distribution for first-person interest labels is more imbalanced than knowledge labels with *High* being particularly dominant. This

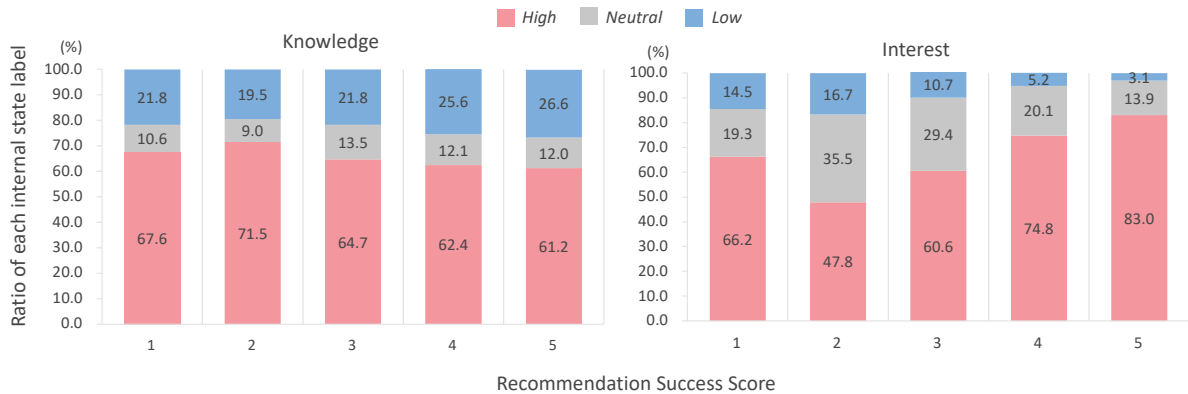


Figure 2: Relationship between recommendation success score and the ratio of each internal state label.

is probably because recommenders usually advance a dialogue toward topics of interest to the seekers. For second-person labels, the number of *Neutral* labels increases in both knowledge and interest. This is because it is difficult for recommenders to judge the seeker’s internal state of some entities.

We calculate the agreement and Pearson correlation between the first-person and second-person labels. The agreement is 0.53 for knowledge and 0.62 for interest labels, and the Pearson correlation is 0.27 for knowledge and 0.21 for interest. This result indicates that even recommenders, who are actual dialogue participants, struggle to accurately estimate the seeker’s internal state. Consequently, it underscores the value of our dataset, which is annotated with first-person labels from the seekers themselves.

Relationship between Knowledge and Interest

We explore the correlation between first-person knowledge and interest labels for the same entities. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.12, indicating no correlation. This result means that knowledge and interest represent different facets of the internal state.

Contribution of Seeker’s Internal State to Recommendation Success

We investigate the relationship between the first-person seeker’s internal state and recommendation success at the dialogue level. We use the seeker’s answer to Q4 (i.e., “Do you want to watch the recommended movie?”) as an indication of recommendation success. Figure 2 shows that dialogues with high recommendation success scores tend to have more *Low* knowledge entities. For interest, on the other hand, dialogues with high recommendation success scores tend to have more *High* interest entities.

Knowledge	Interest	✓	✗
<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>	3.61	3.61
<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	3.59	3.61
<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	3.72*	3.53
<i>Low</i>	<i>Low</i>	3.56	3.61

Table 6: Difference in recommendation success score by each entity. ✓ and ✗ denote the presence and absence of the entity in the utterance, respectively. The asterisk (*) indicates that the difference is statistically significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. Wilcoxon rank-sum test is used as a statistical test.

We next analyze the dialogues with entities of *Low* knowledge and *High* interest in comparison with those dialogues without these kinds of entities. The average recommendation success score for the former dialogues is 4.59, while that for the latter dialogues is 4.18. Student’s t -test result reveals that the difference is statistically significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. The above analysis results indicate it is important in recommendation dialogues to identify and mention the topics where the seeker has no knowledge but has an interest.

Next, we explore the relationship between the first-person seeker’s internal state and recommendation success at the utterance level for detailed analysis. To this end, we randomly selected 1,000 pairs of recommender’s utterances and preceding dialogue context from our constructed dataset. We then ask crowdworkers to evaluate whether the utterance makes the interlocutor interested in watching a movie, using a 5-point Likert scale (5 is the best). Three workers evaluate each utterance, and the scores are averaged. Table 6 shows the results. The score is high when the recommender’s utterance includes entities with *Low* knowledge and *High* interest. The above results confirm that the

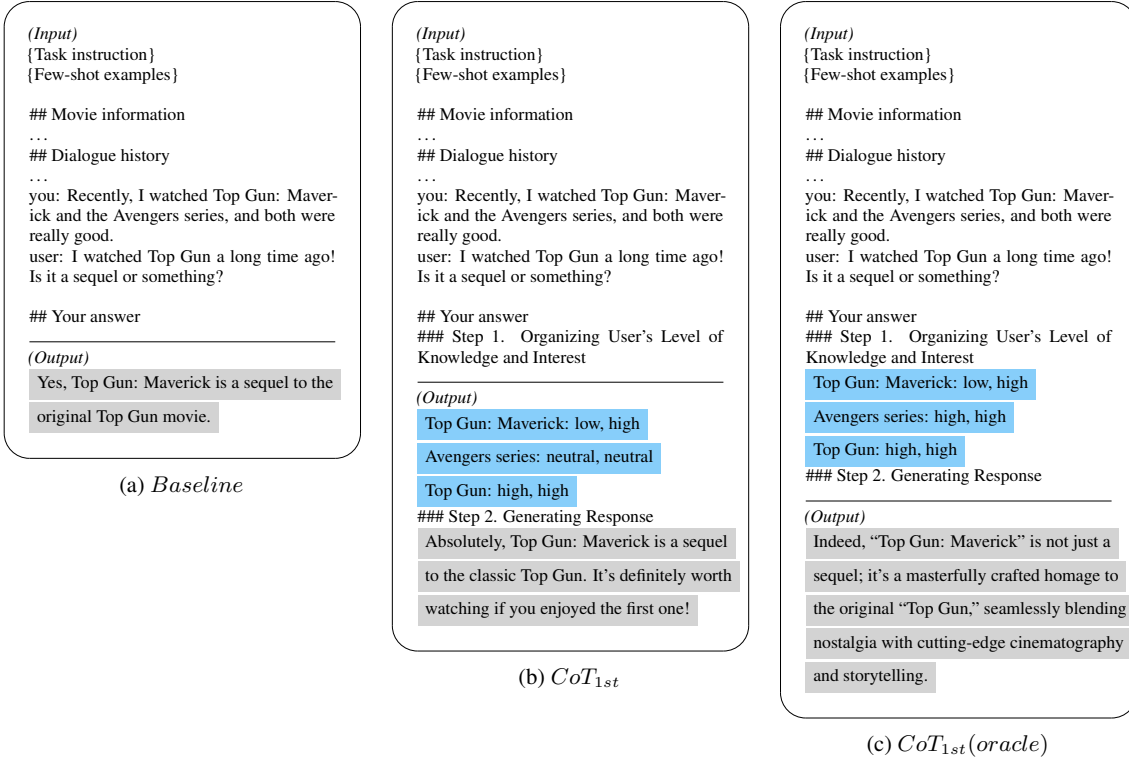


Figure 3: Overview of our proposed method. *Baseline* directly generates a response, depicted in gray. CoT_{1st} first estimates the seeker’s internal state, depicted in blue, and then generates a response referring to the estimated internal state. $CoT_{1st}(oracle)$ is the almost same as CoT_{1st} but is given the correct seeker’s internal state in the test example.

recommender can effectively recommend by mentioning entities the seeker does not know but is interested in, even at the utterance level.

4 Experiment

The analysis in Section 3.3.2 suggests the importance of understanding the seeker’s internal state at the entity level. Thus, we propose a response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state at the entity level. In this section, we describe our proposed method and verify its effectiveness.

4.1 Proposed Method

We propose a LLM-based response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state labels by applying Chain-of-Thought (CoT) prompting (Wei et al., 2022). Figure 3 shows an overview.¹² The baseline method presented in Figure 3a is fed with task instruction, few-shot examples, movie information, and dialogue his-

tory as inputs and generates a response that follows the dialogue history. As shown in Figure 3b, our proposed method, CoT_{1st} , first extracts entities from the dialogue history and then estimates the seeker’s level of knowledge and interest in each entity at three levels: *High*, *Neutral*, and *Low*. After that, CoT_{1st} generates a response referring to the estimated internal state as well as inputs. In the baseline method, each few-shot example comprises the movie information, dialogue history, and response. In the proposed method, in addition to these elements, the seeker’s internal state for all entities within each dialogue history is added. The seeker’s internal state of each entity is represented by a triplet that consists of the entity, a first-person knowledge label, and a first-person interest label, such as “Titanic: low, high.” As an ablation study, we introduce $CoT_{1st}(oracle)$, which is the same as CoT_{1st} but is given the correct first-person labels of the seeker’s internal state in the test example. We also experiment with CoT_{2nd} and $CoT_{2nd}(oracle)$, which use second-person labels to represent the seeker’s internal state.

¹²Prompts for *Baseline* and CoT_{1st} , including the task instructions and few-shot examples are shown in Figures 8 and 9 in the Appendix.

Model	Consistency	Seeker’s Knowledge	Seeker’s Interest	Tailored Information	Recommendation Success
<i>CoT</i> _{1st}	52.2*	51.5	52.5*	51.4	52.1*
<i>CoT</i> _{2nd}	51.4	52.1*	52.2*	52.3*	51.3
<i>CoT</i> _{1st} (<i>oracle</i>)	54.5*	54.2*	54.8*	55.0*	56.0*
<i>CoT</i> _{2nd} (<i>oracle</i>)	53.0*	51.6	53.0*	52.7*	53.5*

Table 7: Results of the response generation. The asterisk (*) indicates that the difference is statistically significant at the $p = 0.05$ level using a binomial test.

4.2 Experimental Settings

4.2.1 Base Model

We use GPT-4 (gpt-4-0613) (OpenAI, 2023), which achieves outstanding performance on various language-related tasks, as the base model for all methods. We selected GPT-4 because of its remarkable performance in JGLUE (Kurihara et al., 2022), the general natural language understanding benchmark for Japanese.¹³

4.2.2 Dataset

We randomly split the collected dialogues into 85%:15% for training and test data, respectively. We selected the candidates for few-shot examples from the training data based on the following two criteria: (1) including all types of entity labels for knowledge and interest within the dialogue context, and (2) ensuring that the response incorporates an entity with *Low* knowledge and *High* interest. The second constraint is based on the findings in Section 3.3.2, and was established to use higher-quality responses as few-shot examples. Consequently, we obtained 217 few-shot examples for *CoT*_{1st} and 150 few-shot examples for *CoT*_{2nd}. As for the test example, we randomly selected 500 examples from the test split only using the first criterion. For each test example, we then randomly chose two few-shot examples from the candidate pool.

4.3 Result

We conduct a human evaluation to assess the quality of the responses generated by the proposed methods. Specifically, we present the responses of each method in Section 4.2.1 and the baseline method to crowdworkers along with the corresponding dialogue history. Subsequently, we ask the crowdworkers to select which response is superior concerning the following five evaluation metrics.

¹³<http://nejumi.ai/>

Consistency The response is consistent with dialogue history.

Seeker’s Knowledge The response considers the seeker’s level of knowledge.

Seeker’s Interest The response considers the seeker’s level of interest.

Tailored Information The response provides more information that the seeker does not know but is interested in.

Recommendation Success The response is more likely to entice the seeker to watch the recommended movie.

Table 7 shows the win rates against the baseline. Our proposed methods, *CoT*_{1st} and *CoT*_{2nd}, outperformed the baseline in all the metrics. Notably, the difference was statistically significant in Consistency, Seeker’s Interest, and Recommendation Success for *CoT*_{1st}, and in Seeker’s Knowledge, Seeker’s Interest, Tailored Information for *CoT*_{2nd}.

In addition, when correct labels were provided for the seeker’s internal state estimation, there was a further improvement in the win rate. Notably, *CoT*_{1st}(*oracle*) exhibited a higher win rate than *CoT*_{2nd}(*oracle*), indicating that considering the first-person (i.e., actual) seeker’s internal state is effective in generating responses.

5 Conclusion

We constructed RecomMind, a recommendation dialogue dataset that features both first- and second-person annotations of the seeker’s internal state at the entity level. Our dataset also has engaging dialogues with longer seeker’s utterances, characterized by high scores in dialogue enjoyment and recommendation success. We also proposed a response generation framework that explicitly considers the seeker’s internal state, applying Chain-of-Thought prompting to our task. The experimental results showed that our proposed method could

generate responses that are more consistent and tailored to the seeker than the baseline method.

Our dataset has diverse and fine-grained annotations, which are useful for various tasks such as internal state estimation, external knowledge selection, and dialogue response generation. We hope our dataset will be useful for future research on recommendation dialogues.

6 Limitations

We acknowledge certain limitations in our study. Firstly, our analysis was conducted solely on a single dialogue dataset in Japanese. While similar to many other NLP studies that are conducted exclusively in English, our research in a single language (i.e., Japanese) holds both practical and theoretical significance. However, it remains uncertain whether our conclusions can be generalized to domains beyond movie recommendations. Secondly, the reliability of the seeker’s internal state labels remains an ongoing challenge. Incorporating additional labels from third parties who are not involved in the dialogue, such as crowdworkers, represents a promising approach to verifying reliability.

7 Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, workers are required to thoroughly read and sign a consent form outlining the data collection process. The consent form clearly explains the content and purpose of the data collection, the expected time commitment, workers’ rights, how personal information will be handled, the possibility of sharing data with third parties, and detailed information regarding the use of data for research purposes. Workers’ rights include the ability to withdraw from participation at any time, as well as the right to request the deletion of their data.

Additionally, it is explicitly stated that our collected data, such as dialogue text and questionnaire results, will be made publicly available under the CC BY 4.0 license. Contact information is also provided, allowing workers to inquire about the use of their data.

Workers are also required to carefully read the data collection manual prior to the data collection process. The manual contains detailed instructions regarding the procedures for data collection, as well as guidelines on the handling of personal information (e.g., the prohibition of providing any information that could lead to the identification of

individuals). All dialogues will be collected in an anonymized format and conducted via our dedicated website.

The average time required for each dialogue collection session is approximately 30 minutes. Recommenders were compensated 800 JPY per dialogue and seekers were compensated 700 JPY. This compensation exceeds the current minimum wage in Tokyo (1,163 JPY per hour), ensuring fair pay. The difference in compensation between the roles reflects the additional tasks assigned to recommenders.

8 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments. This work was supported by NII CRIS collaborative research program operated by NII CRIS and LINE Corporation. This work was also supported by JST, CREST Grant Number JPMJCR20D2, Japan and JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP22J15317.

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A Instruction for Workers

Below are the detailed instructions we distributed to workers.

Instruction for recommenders and seekers

- Do not participate in both roles in the same dialogue.
- Avoid dull and boring responses such as “Yes” and “I see.”
- Avoid responses containing personal data.
- Avoid responses about this dialogue collection task itself.
- Do not use emoticons.

Instruction for recommenders only

- Select recommended movies from the movie search tool.
- May recommend movies that the seeker has already watched. In that case, however, try to recommend to make the seeker want to watch it again.
- Avoid too enthusiastically recommending movies you would like to recommend, ignoring the knowledge and interests of the seeker.
- Try to elicit sufficient information from the seeker and recommend movies you want that person to watch.
- Avoid short-sighted recommendations, such as “Ask only the genre of the movie the seeker like (action, romance, etc.) and recommend one movie from that genre.”

Instruction for seekers only

- Actively ask questions about what you do not know or understand.
- Avoid requesting recommendations for recent movies (e.g., movies that are in theaters).
- Actively communicate what you know (or do not know) and what you are interested in (or not interested in) to the recommender.

B Dialogue Collection System Interface

Figures 4 and 5 show the screenshots of the dialogue collection system interface for the recommender and the seeker, respectively.

C Dialogue Examples

Figures 6 and Figure 7 show dialogue examples in JMRD and RecomMind, respectively.

D Prompt Templates

Figures 8 and 9 show the prompt templates for the *Baseline* and *CoT_{1st}*, respectively. We used English for task instructions because we observed that responses were of higher quality when task instructions were given not in Japanese but in English in our preliminary experiment. However, we used Japanese for both the few-shot and test examples to maintain consistency with the dialogue language. We set the maximum number of utterances in the dialogue history to four.

E Analysis of Seeker’s Internal State Estimation

In this section, we analyze the results of the seeker’s internal state estimation, which is an intermediate task in our proposed framework. We consider the results divided into entity extraction and internal state classification.

E.1 Entity Extraction

We use precision and recall scores for exact matching as strict evaluation metrics and use the character-level F1 score as a lenient evaluation metric. To calculate the character-level F1 score, we first calculate the maximum character-level F1 score between each gold entity and the predicted entities. Then, we compute the average of these maximum values across all gold entities.

The precision and recall scores for the *CoT_{1st}* were observed to be 44.1 and 47.8 respectively, while the *CoT_{2nd}* yielded scores of 42.7 and 46.3. These figures are relatively low, indicating a challenge in the model’s ability to estimate the precise spans of entities, particularly in terms of determining which modifiers should be included within the entity span. In contrast, the character-level F1 scores for the respective models exhibited higher values, achieving 76.2 and 76.1. This disparity in performance suggests that while the model encounters difficulties with precise entity span estimation, it is relatively adept at estimating approximate spans.

E.2 Seeker’s Internal State Classification

We assess the classification performance of the seeker’s internal state labels for successfully ex-

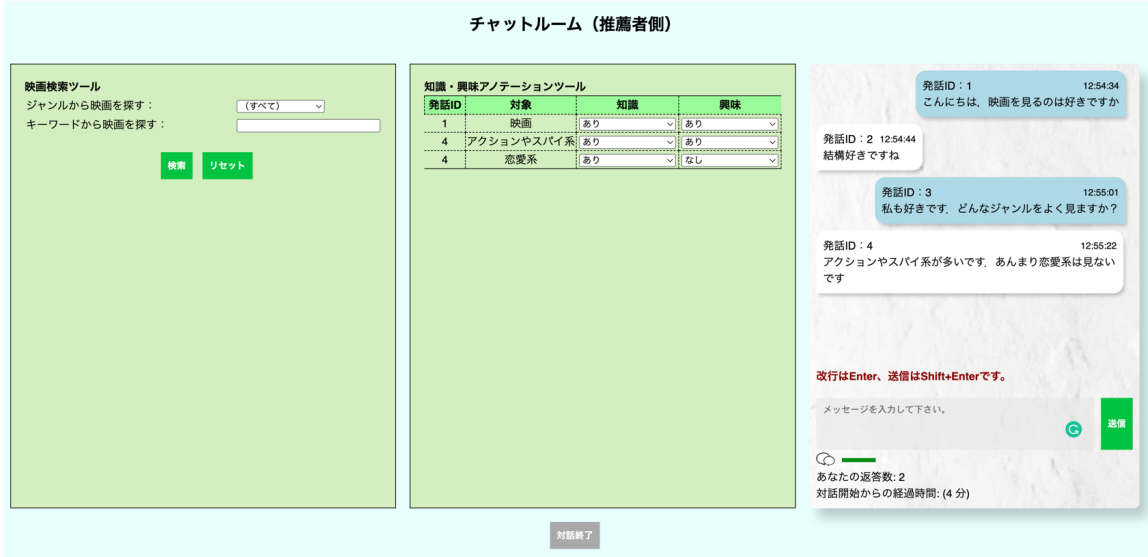


Figure 4: Screenshot of the recommender’s chatroom. On the right side, recommenders can engage in conversations with seekers. The movie search tool is on the left side and the internal state annotation tool is on the center.

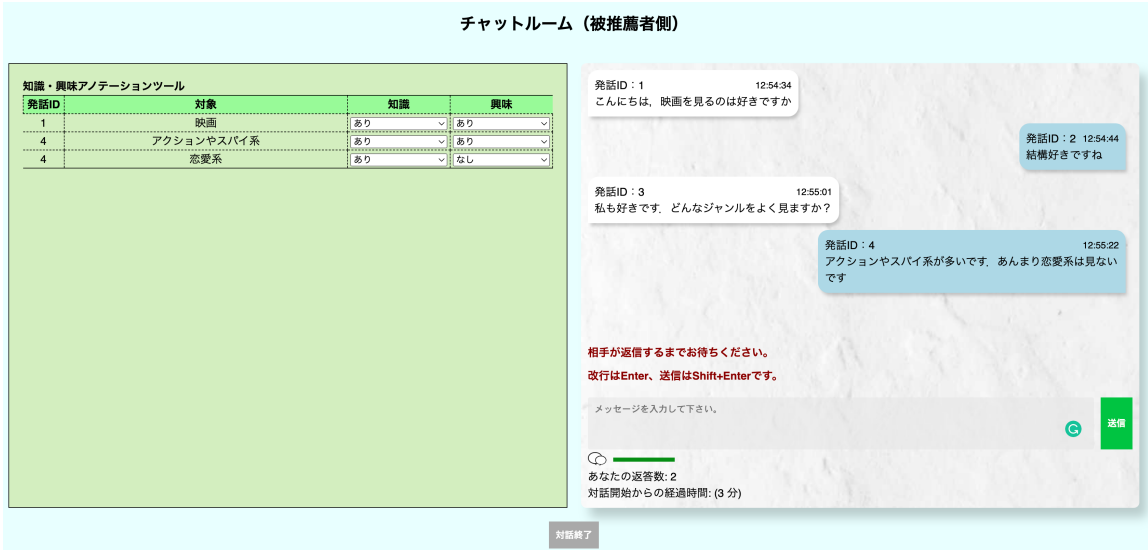


Figure 5: Screenshot of the seeker’s chatroom. On the right side, seekers can engage in conversations with recommenders. The internal state annotation tool is on the left side.

	Knowledge			Interest		
	High	Neutral	Low	High	Neutral	Low
CoT_{1st} Recommender	74.2	9.9	49.5	84.7	23.1	26.9
	70.4	14.4	46.4	76.3	27.6	25.5
CoT_{2nd} Recommender	73.1	14.2	47.8	83.0	20.4	22.8
	72.2	16.5	39.8	76.6	28.1	19.2

Table 8: Results of seeker’s internal state classification.

tracted entities using F1 score metric.

Table 8 shows the results. In the context of knowledge and interest estimation, CoT_{1st} and CoT_{2nd} demonstrated superior accuracy in pre-

dicting *High* and *Low* levels compared to human interlocutors (i.e., recommenders). However, for *Neutral*, humans outperformed these models, indicating potential areas for further improvement. Ad-

Dialogue
R1: こんにちは (Hello.)
S1: こんにちは、よろしくお見知りします！ (Hello. Nice to meet you!)
R2: アベンジャーズ/エンドゲームは知っていますか？ (Do you know "Avengers: Endgame"?)
S2: タイトルを聞いたことがある程度です・・・ (I have only heard of the title...)
R3: この映画は2019年に公開された映画です (This movie was released in 2019.)
S3: なるほど、アメリカの映画ですか？ (Got it. Is it an American movie?)
R4: アメリカのアクション映画です (It's an American action movie.)
S4: 見どころはどのようなところでしょうか？ (What are some of the highlights?)
R5: 悪役のサノスという星人がいるのですが、大集結してサノスに立ち向かうところがみどころです (The highlight is when the heroes gather to confront Thanos, who is an alien villain.)
S5: なるほど！ 宇宙で戦いが繰り広げられるストーリーなのですか？ (I see! Is this a story of battles in space?)
R6: いや、舞台は地球です (No, it takes place on Earth.)
S6: となると、地球に悪役が攻めてくるのですね・・・ (Then, the villain will attack the earth...)
R7: そうですね、結構怖い場面もあります (Yes, there are some scary moments.)
S7: 怖いのですか・・・私はホラー系は苦手ですが、アクション系は好きです。私のような場合でも楽しんで見られるでしょうか？ (Is it scary...? I don't really like horror movies, but I like action ones. Would I be able to enjoy watching it?)
R8: ホラーのような怖さはないので、楽しんで見られると思います (It is not scary like horror movies, so I think you will enjoy watching it.)
S8: なるほど！ サノスとヒーローとの闘い、ワクワクしそうですね！ (Good! The fight between Thanos and the heroes sounds exciting!)
R9: ぜひ見てください！ (Please watch it!)
S9: はい！ 近々レンタルビデオ店に行く機会があるので、アベンジャーズ/エンドゲームをレンタルしてみたいと思います！ (Yes! I'll have a chance to go to the video store soon and rent "Avengers: Endgame"!)
R10: ありがとうございます (Thank you very much.)
S10: こちらこそ、貴重な情報ありがとうございました！ (Thank you very much, too, for this valuable information!)

Figure 6: A dialogue example in JMRD. R and S denote the recommender and seeker, respectively.

ditionally, when comparing CoT_{1st} and CoT_{2nd} , CoT_{1st} generally achieved higher accuracy, suggesting the effectiveness of utilizing the first-person labels.

Furthermore, knowledge and interest were estimated with relatively high accuracy for the *High* category. Conversely, the *Low* category exhibited lower accuracy, particularly regarding interest estimation. This lower performance is likely due to the imbalanced distribution of labels within the dataset. However, the primary focus of this study remains on the accurate identification of topics with *High* interest in the context of recommendation dialogues rather than the identification of *Low* interest topics. Consequently, this finding does not significantly detract from the overall utility of our proposed framework in recommendation scenarios.

F Case Study

Table 9 shows an example of response generation in the *Baseline* and CoT_{1st} . Unlike the *Baseline*, the CoT_{1st} considers that the interlocutor lacks knowledge about "Japanese action actors" and provides information about famous Japanese action actors, such as Ken Takakura and Shinichi Chiba.

Dialogue	Entity	Knowledge		Interest	
		F1	F2	F1	F2
R1: こんにちは。よろしくお話しします。(Hello. Nice to meet you.)	-	-	-	-	-
S1: こんにちはよろしくお話しします。最近、映画はご覧になりましたか?(Nice to meet you too! Have you watched any movies recently?)	映画 (movies)	High	High	High	High
R2: 最新の映画ではキア・マリガン主演の「She said」を観ました。実話に基づく映画を観ることが続いたので、今はストーリー性もありませんが楽しめる映画を観たいなと思っています。(In the latest movie, I watched "She said," starring Carey Mulligan. It's one of the recent movies based on a true story. I've been watching a lot of movies based on true stories, so now I'm looking for something enjoyable with a good story.)	「She said」 ("She said") 実話に基づく映画を観ること (watching a lot of movies based on true stories)	High	High	High	High
S2: なるほど、実話に基づく映画を観ておられたんですね。「She said」は観たことがないので、興味がありません。ストーリーを楽しめる映画と言えば、アニメになりますか、「リメンバー・ミー」はご存じですか?大人でも十分に楽しめますし、少年の歌声がとても素敵なんです。(I see, you've been watching movies based on true stories. I haven't seen "She said" yet, so I'm interested. If you're looking for a movie with an enjoyable story, although it's an animation, are you familiar with "Coco"? It's enjoyable even for adults, and the young boy's singing voice is really beautiful.)	ストーリー性もありませんが楽しめる映画 (something enjoyable with a good story) 実話に基づく映画 (movies based on true stories) 「She said」 ("She said") ストーリーを楽しめる映画 (a movie with an enjoyable story) アニメ (an animation) 「リメンバー・ミー」 ("Coco") 少年の歌声 (the young boy's singing voice)	High	High	High	High
S3: アニメはあまり観ないので「リメンバー・ミー」は知らないです。素敵なお歌がある映画は大好きです。どのようなストーリーですか?(I don't usually watch animations, so I'm not familiar with "Coco". I love movies with beautiful songs. What's the story about?)	アニメ (animations) 「リメンバー・ミー」 ("Coco") 素敵なお歌がある映画 (movies with beautiful songs)	High	High	Neutral	Neutral
R3: メキシコが舞台で、ミュージシャンを目指す少年が、「死者の日」(メキシコで祖先を偲び、生きることの喜びを分かち合う風習)に、死者の国に迷い込み、自分の祖先に出会うというストーリーです。(It's set in Mexico. It's about a boy who dreams of becoming a musician and on the Day of the Dead, a tradition in Mexico where people celebrate and remember their ancestors, he ends up in the land of the dead and meets his ancestors.)	メキシコ (Mexico) 舞台 (the stage) ミュージシャンを目指す少年 (a boy who dreams of becoming a musician)	High	High	High	Neutral
S4: アニメ、と聞いて想像していたよりはるかに壮大な設定でちょっと驚きました。メキシコが舞台だったり、死者の国というのがなかなか想像つきませんが、全体的にとちらかというシリアスな感じの映像ですか?(The setting seems much more grand than I imagined for an animation. I'm surprised. Having Mexico as the stage and the concept of the land of the dead is quite beyond imagination. Is the overall visual tone more on the serious side?)	「死者の日」(メキシコで祖先を偲び、生きることの喜びを分かち合う風習) ("the Day of the Dead" (a tradition in Mexico where people celebrate and remember their ancestors)) 死者の国 (the land of the dead)	High	Low	Neutral	Neutral
R4: いいえ!「死者の日」というと、重々しいイメージがあるかもしれませんが、メキシコでもとても明るい風習なんです。ご祭手なオレンジが目立ちますが祭壇に先祖の写真やお花、食べ物などを飾り、ガイコツの仮装をしたりと、とても賑やかなのです。映画でも、「死者の日」や「死者の国」はとてもコミカルに描かれています。死者の国では、みんなガイコツ姿なのですが、とてもかわいくて、それぞれに個性があつて観ていて楽しいです。(Not at all! Although there is a somber image when it comes to the Day of the Dead, it's actually a very vibrant tradition in Mexico. On a flashy altar where orange stands out, there is the decoration of pictures of ancestors, flowers, and food, among other things, and the act of dressing up as skeletons, making it a very lively scene. It's all very lively. In the movie, the Day of the Dead and the land of the dead are depicted in a very comical way. The skeletons are cute and each has its own personality, making it fun to watch.)	「死者の日」(メキシコで祖先を偲び、生きることの喜びを分かち合う風習) ("the Day of the Dead" (a tradition in Mexico where people celebrate and remember their ancestors)) 死者の国 (the land of the dead) アニメ (an animation) メキシコ (Mexico) 舞台 (the stage) 死者の国 (the concept of the land of the dead) 全体的にとちらかというシリアスな感じの映像 (the overall visual tone more on the serious side)	High	High	High	High
S5: ガイコツ姿で個性的ですがますます想像を超えてきて、ぜひ観てみたいになりました。そんな中で少年のミュージシャンへの夢がどうなるのかすごく気になります。(Skeletons with personalities? This is getting beyond what I imagined, and I definitely want to watch it now. I'm very curious about what happens with the boy's dream of becoming a musician.)	ガイコツ姿 (Skeletons) 少年のミュージシャンへの夢 (the boy's dream of becoming a musician.)	High	Low	High	High
R5: 少年があがっているミュージシャンがいて、そのミュージシャンの歌を練習しているのですが、「音楽禁止」の家庭で育ったので、隠れて練習していました。死者の国で、そのミュージシャンに会うために音楽コンテストにはます。そのときに少年の歌声が披露されるのですが、すごく美声なんですよ!(The boy admires a musician and practices his songs, but he grows up in a family that has banned music, so he practices in secret. In the land of the dead, he enters a music contest to meet that musician. His singing voice is revealed during the contest, and it's incredibly beautiful!	あがられているミュージシャン (a musician) そのミュージシャンの歌 (his songs) 「音楽禁止」の家庭 (a family that has banned music) 音楽コンテスト (a music contest) 少年の歌声 (His singing voice)	High	Neutral	High	High
S6: 現実的な話になりますが、その少年の声を担当しているのは有名な歌手なんです。(Getting back to reality for a moment, is the boy's voice provided by a famous singer?)	その少年の声 (the boy's voice) 有名な歌手 (a famous singer)	Low	High	High	High
R6: 私は存じませんでしたが、アンソニー・ゴンザレスという当時15歳の少年がそうです。アンソニーは幼いころから歌手や俳優を目指し、スペイン語の番組やアメリカのドラマ、短編映画などに出演していたそうです。(I wasn't aware of this, but it turns out his voice is provided by Anthony Gonzalez, a boy who was 15 at the time. Anthony has been pursuing a career in singing and acting from a young age, appearing in Spanish-language programs, American dramas, and short films.)	アンソニー・ゴンザレスという当時15歳の少年 (Anthony Gonzalez, a boy who was 15 at the time.) アンソニー (Anthony) 歌手や俳優 (singing and acting)	Low	Low	High	High
S7: そうなんです!映画の主人公そのものの少年が歌っているなんてますます聞きたくなります。少年以外にも歌をうたうキャラクターはいるのですか?(Really! It's even more intriguing to know that a boy resembling the movie's protagonist is singing. Are there other characters who sing in the movie?)	スペイン語の番組やアメリカのドラマ、短編映画 (Spanish-language programs, American dramas, and short films.) 映画の主人公そのものの少年 (a boy resembling the movie's protagonist is singing) 歌をうたうキャラクター (characters who sing in the movie)	Low	Low	High	High
R7: はい、少年があがれるミュージシャンのデラクルスや、死者の国で一緒に歌うヘクターというガイコツです。ヘクターが死者の国を案内してくれるのですが、ヘクターの秘密も明かされています。そして、最後には、なぜ少年の家が音楽禁止になったのかも分かり、最後にはその境が廃止され、少年は自由に音楽を楽しむことができるようになります。(Yes, there's De la Cruz, the musician the boy idolizes, and Hector, a skeleton he sings with in the land of the dead. Hector guides him through the land of the dead, and Hector's secret is revealed. In the end, it's revealed why the boy's family banned music, and the ban is lifted, allowing the boy to freely enjoy music.)	少年があがれるミュージシャンのデラクルスや、死者の国で一緒に歌うヘクターというガイコツ (De la Cruz, the musician the boy idolizes, and Hector, a skeleton he sings with in the land of the dead) ヘクター (Hector) 死者の国 (the land of the dead) ヘクターの秘密 (Hector's secret) 少年の家 (the boy's family) その境 (the ban)	Low	Low	High	High
S8: 確かに、音楽禁止だった理由は気になるところです。ガイコツの秘密、というのも想像つきないし、憧れのミュージシャンの歌を聴くのも楽しみです。さっそく観てみたいと思います!ちなみに音楽はすべて映画オリジナルですか?(Indeed, I'm curious about why music was banned. The skeleton's secret sounds intriguing, and I'm looking forward to hearing the idolized musician's songs. I'll watch it soon! Are all the songs in the movie original?)	音楽禁止だった理由 (why music was banned) ガイコツの秘密 (The skeleton's secret) 憧れのミュージシャンの歌 (the idolized musician's songs)	Low	Low	High	High
R8: おそらく、すべてオリジナルだと思います。特に有名なものは、主題歌である「リメンバー・ミー」という曲です。あと、音楽コンテストでガイコツと歌う「ウン・ポコ・ロコ」という歌が、私は大好きです。とてもコミカルで、初めて出逢ったガイコツと息の合った歌声を披露してくれます。(I believe all the songs are original. Especially famous is the main theme song, "Remember Me". Another song I love is "Un Poco Loco", sung during the music contest with a skeleton. It's very comical and showcases a perfect harmony between the newly met skeleton and the boy.)	主題歌である「リメンバー・ミー」という曲 (the main theme song, "Remember Me") 音楽コンテスト (the music contest) ガイコツ (a skeleton) 歌う「ウン・ポコ・ロコ」という歌 ("Un Poco Loco") 出逢ったガイコツと息の合った歌声 (a perfect harmony between the newly met skeleton and the boy)	High	Low	High	High
S9: では、「ウン・ポコ・ロコ」に特に注目して観てみますか?今日は目新しい楽しい映画を紹介していただいてありがとうございました。(Then, I'll pay special attention to "Un Poco Loco" when I watch it! Thank you for introducing me to a new and fun movie today.)	「ウン・ポコ・ロコ」 ("Un Poco Loco") 目新しい楽しい映画 (a new and fun movie)	Low	Low	High	High
R9: ごちそうさ、ありがとうございました!(Thank you as well!)	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 7: An example of RecomMind. R and S denote the recommender and the seeker, respectively. The Entity column lists the entities extracted from the dialogue. Each entity has first- and second-person labels for knowledge and interest.

(Input)

Task instruction

You are about to recommend a movie to a user in Japanese. Please make your response keeping in mind the following points:
- Find topics that the user has no knowledge of but has an interest in, and actively mention them, such as providing information.
- Keep your response brief and not too long.
- Do not repeat the same information as the dialogue history.
- Refer to the movie information as needed.

Movie information

タイトル: アイアンマン (Title: Iron Man)
公開年度: 2008年9月27日 (September 27, 2008)
原作: スタン・リー、ラリー・リーパー、ドン・ヘック、ジャック・カービー 『アイアンマン』 (Based on: "Iron Man" by Stan Lee, Larry Lieber, Don Heck, Jack Kirby)
製作国: アメリカ合衆国 (Country: United States)
監督: ジョン・ファヴロー (Director: Jon Favreau)
キャスト: ロバート・ダウニー・ジュニア、テレンス・ハワード、ジェフ・ブリッジス、グウィネス・パルトロー、ジョン・ファヴロー、ショーン・トープ、クラーク・グレッグ (Cast: Robert Downey Jr., Terrence Howard, Jeff Bridges, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jon Favreau, Shaun Toub, Clark Gregg)
ジャンル: SF、アクション (Genre: Science Fiction, Action)
あらすじ: 巨大軍需産業“スターク・インダストリーズ”の社長であるトニー・スタークは、自身が開発したクラスターミサイル“ジェリコ”のプレゼンテーションのために、アフガニスタンにいる親友のジェームズ・“ローディ”・ローズ率いるアメリカ空軍を訪問した。しかし、車で移動中にテロ組織“テン・リングス”がトニーを襲撃、助けを呼ぼうとするトニーにミサイルを撃つ。、命中の瞬間、トニーはミサイルに刻まれた自社のロゴマークを目撃し、爆風で吹き飛ばされ意識を失う。(Plot: Tony Stark, the CEO of the massive defense contractor "Stark Industries", visits the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan, led by his close friend James "Rhodey" Rhodes, to present his newly developed cluster missile "Jericho." However, while traveling by car, the terrorist organization "Ten Rings" attacks Tony. As they fire a missile at him, Tony notices the missile is branded with his company's logo just before it hits, blowing him away and knocking him unconscious.)

Dialogue history

you: 素敵な俳優さんばかりですね。私もロバート・ダウニー・Jr.大好きです。嬉しいです!ではロバート・ダウニー・Jr.の映画は全てご覧になってますか? (They're all wonderful actors, aren't they? I also love Robert Downey Jr. I'm so happy! Have you seen all of Robert Downey Jr.'s movies?)
user: 好きな俳優が同じでほんとううれしいです!ロバート・ダウニー・Jr.の映画はそんなに多く観てないです。特にマーベルシリーズみたいなのは、なかなか手を出しにくいというか、なじみがなくて観ていません。(I'm really happy we like the same actor! I haven't watched that many movies of Robert Downey Jr. Especially things like the Marvel series, I find it a bit hard to get into, I haven't watched them.)
you: ロバート好きな方とお話できて本当に嬉しいです!マーベルは確かに馴染みないと手を出しにくいですが、でも『アイアンマン』はロバート好きなら絶対に入ると思います。主人公のトニー・スタークがロバートにぴったりなんです! (I'm truly happy to talk with someone who likes Robert! Marvel can indeed be hard to get into if you're not familiar. But if you like Robert, I think you'll definitely like "Iron Man." The protagonist Tony Stark fits Robert perfectly!)
user: そうなんですか! 『アイアンマン』はシリーズ化されていると思いますが、一つ一つ話は別物ですか?基本的にアイアンマンが悪者をやっつける、みたいなストーリーなんじゃないか? (Is that so! I believe "Iron Man" is a series, but is each story separate? Is it basically about Iron Man defeating the villains?)

Your answer

シリーズ化されていて1つ1つは別物ですが、設定などは引き継がれているので最初から見の方が良いと思います。おっしゃる通りで、基本的には悪者をやっつける感じなのですが、少し恋愛要素もあったりミステリー要素もあったりという感じです。『シャーロック』がお好きなら大丈夫だと思います。(It's serialized, and while each installment is its own thing, the settings and such carry over, so I think it's better to watch from the beginning. As you said, it's basically about defeating the villains, but there's also a bit of romance and mystery elements involved. If you like "Sherlock," I think you'll be okay.)

[Few-shot Example2]

Movie information

タイトル: ローマの休日 (Title: Roman Holiday)
公開年度: 1954年4月21日 (April 21, 1954)
製作国: アメリカ合衆国 (Country: United States)
監督: ウィリアム・ワイラー (Director: William Wyler)
キャスト: グレゴリー・ペック、オードリー・ヘプバーン、エディ・アルバート (Cast: Gregory Peck, Audrey Hepburn, Eddie Albert)
ジャンル: コメディ、ロマンス (Genre: Comedy, Romance)
あらすじ: ヨーロッパきっての古い歴史と伝統を持つ某国の王位継承者であるアン王女は、ヨーロッパ各国を表敬訪問中であつた。...(Plot: Princess Anne, the heir to the throne of a certain country known for its ancient history and traditions among European nations, was on a courtesy visit to various countries in Europe. ...)

Dialogue history

you: 早速ですが、最近の映画がお好きですか?それとも昔の映画などもよくご覧になりますか? (Just to dive right in, do you prefer recent movies, or do you also watch older movies?)
user: 最近ほとんど映画を見ていません。3年以上見ていません。以前は昔の映画を見ることもありましたが。(I haven't really watched any movies lately. It's been over three years since I last watched one. I used to watch old movies as well.)
you: 了解です!それでは、映画を観る時(サブスク・TVなど含み)、ご自身で選ぶ傾向の高いジャンルなどありますか?または気になる(好きな)俳優さんなどあれば、ぜひ聞かせてもらえたら助かります。(Got it! When you do watch movies (including via streaming services, TV, etc.), do you tend to favor any particular genres? Also, if there are any actors you're particularly fond of, I'd love to hear about them.)
user: コメディやラブコメ等笑えるものが好きです。後は歴史の勉強もかねて歴史物の映画を見ることもあります。好きな俳優さんは特にこの人!という人はおらず内容重視です。(I like things that make me laugh, like comedies and romantic comedies. I also watch historical films as a way to learn about history. I don't have a favorite actor; I focus more on the content.)

Your answer

(Output)

コメディやラブコメ、そして歴史物の映画がお好きなんですね。それなら、“ローマの休日”はいかがでしょう。オードリー・ヘプバーンとグレゴリー・ペックが主演のこの映画は、ローマを舞台にしたラブコメディで、歴史的な名所もたくさん登場します。内容重視の方にはぴったりだと思います。(So, you like comedies and romantic comedies, don't you? Then how about the "Roman Holiday"? Starring Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck, this romantic comedy set in Rome features many historical landmarks. It's perfect for those who are content-oriented.)

Figure 8: The prompt for *Baseline*. The **task instruction**, **few-shot examples**, and **test example** are colored to show. The second few-shot example is omitted due to the space limitation. *The English translations* next to the Japanese words in the few-shot examples and test example are not used in the experiment.

(Input)

Task instruction

You are about to recommend a movie to a user in Japanese. Let's think step by step following these two steps to make your response:

Step 1. Organizing User's Level of Knowledge and Interest:

- Extract important entities (noun phrases) directly from the dialogue history (excluding previous examples and movie information).
- Estimate the user's level of knowledge and interest in each entity on a 3-point Likert scale (2: high, 1: neutral, 0: low).

Step 2. Generating Response:

- Find topics that the user has no knowledge of but has an interest in, and actively mention them, such as providing information.
- Refer to organized results of Step 1.
- Keep your response brief and not too long.
- Do not repeat the same information as the dialogue history.
- Refer to the movie information as needed.

Movie information

タイトル: アイアンマン (Title: *Iron Man*)

公開年度: 2008年9月27日 (September 27, 2008)

原作: スタン・リー、ラリー・リーパー、ドン・ヘック、ジャック・カービー 『アイアンマン』 (Based on: "Iron Man" by Stan Lee, Larry Lieber, Don Heck, Jack Kirby)

製作国: アメリカ合衆国 (Country: United States)

監督: ジョン・ファヴロー (Director: Jon Favreau)

キャスト: ロバート・ダウニー・ジュニア、テレンス・ハワード、ジェフ・ブリッジス、グウィネス・パルトロー、ジョン・ファヴロー、ショーン・トープ、クラーク・グレッグ (Cast: Robert Downey Jr., Terrence Howard, Jeff Bridges, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jon Favreau, Shaun Toub, Clark Gregg)

ジャンル: SF, アクション (Genre: Science Fiction, Action)

あらすじ: 巨大軍需産業「スターク・インダストリーズ」の社長であるトニー・スタークは、自身が開発したクラスターミサイル「ジェリコ」のプレゼンテーションのために、アフガニスタンにいる親友のジェームズ・「ローディ」・ローズ率いるアメリカ空軍を訪問した。しかし、車で移動中にテロ組織「テン・リングス」がトニーを襲撃、助けを呼ぼうとするトニーにミサイルを撃つ。命中の瞬間、トニーはミサイルに刻まれた自社のロゴマークを目撃し、爆風で吹き飛ばされ意識を失う。(Plot: Tony Stark, the CEO of the massive defense contractor "Stark Industries", visits the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan, led by his close friend James "Rhodey" Rhodes, to present his newly developed cluster missile "Jericho." However, while traveling by car, the terrorist organization "Ten Rings" attacks Tony. As they fire a missile at him, Tony notices the missile is branded with his company's logo just before it hits, blowing him away and knocking him unconscious.)

Dialogue history

you: 素敵な俳優さんばかりですね。私もロバート・ダウニーJr.大好きです。嬉しいですね!ではロバート・ダウニー・Jr.の映画は全てご覧になってますか? (They're all wonderful actors, aren't they? I also love Robert Downey Jr. I'm so happy! Have you seen all of Robert Downey Jr.'s movies?)

user: 好きな俳優が同じでほんとう嬉しいです!ロバート・ダウニーJr.の映画はそんなに多く観てないです。特にマーベルシリーズみたいなのは、なかなか手を出しにくいというか、なじみがなくて観ていません。(I'm really happy we like the same actor! I haven't watched that many movies of Robert Downey Jr. Especially things like the Marvel series, I find it a bit hard to get into, I haven't watched them.)

you: ロバート好きな方とお話できて本当に嬉しいです!マーベルは確かに馴染みないと手を出しにくいですが、でも『アイアンマン』はロバート好きなら絶対に気に入ると思います。主人公のトニー・スタークがロバートにぴったりなんです! (I'm truly happy to talk with someone who likes Robert! Marvel can indeed be hard to get into if you're not familiar. But if you like Robert, I think you'll definitely like "Iron Man." The protagonist Tony Stark fits Robert perfectly!)

user: そうなんですね!『アイアンマン』はシリーズ化されていると思いますが、一つ一つ話は別物ですか?基本的にアイアンマンが悪者をやっつける、みたいなストーリーなんでしょか? (Is that so! I believe "Iron Man" is a series, but is each story separate? Is it basically about Iron Man defeating the bad guys?)

Your answer

Step 1. Organizing User's Level of Knowledge and Interest

ロバート・ダウニーJr (Robert Downey Jr.): high,high

ロバート・ダウニー・Jr.の映画 (Robert Downey Jr.'s movies): high,high

マーベル (Marvel): high,neutral

主人公のトニー・スターク (protagonist Tony Stark): neutral,neutral

Step 2. Generating Response

シリーズ化されていて1つ1つは別物ですが、設定などは引き継がれているので最初から見る方が良いと思います。おっしゃる通りで、基本的には悪者をやっつける感じなのですが、少し恋愛要素もあったりミステリー要素もあったりという感じですね。『シャーロック』がお好きなら大丈夫だと思います。(It's serialized, and while each installment is its own thing, the settings and such carry over, so I think it's better to watch from the beginning. As you said, it's basically about defeating the villains, but there's also a bit of romance and mystery elements involved. If you like "Sherlock," I think you'll be okay.)

[Few-shot Example2]

Movie information

タイトル: ローマの休日 (Title: *Roman Holiday*)

公開年度: 1954年4月21日 (April 21, 1954)

製作国: アメリカ合衆国 (Country: United States)

監督: ウィリアム・ワイラー (Director: William Wyler)

キャスト: グレゴリー・ペック、オードリー・ヘプバーン、エディ・アルバート (Cast: Gregory Peck, Audrey Hepburn, Eddie Albert)

ジャンル: コメディ、ロマンス (Genre: Comedy, Romance)

あらすじ: ヨーロッパきっての古い歴史と伝統を持つ某国の王位継承者であるアン王女は、ヨーロッパ各国を表敬訪問中であつた。...(Plot: Princess Anne, the heir to the throne of a certain country known for its ancient history and traditions among European nations, was on a courtesy visit to various countries in Europe. ...)

Dialogue history

you: 早速ですが、最近の映画がお好きですか?それとも昔の映画などもよくご覧になりますか? (Just to dive right in, do you prefer recent movies, or do you also watch older movies?)

user: 最近ほとんど映画を見ていません。3年以上見ていないです。以前は昔の映画を見ることもありました。(I haven't really watched any movies lately. It's been over three years since I last watched one. I used to watch old movies as well.)

you: 了解です!それでは、映画を観る時(サブスク・TVなど含み)、ご自身で選ぶ傾向の高いジャンルなどありますか?または気になる(好きな)俳優さんなどあれば、ぜひ聞かせてもらえたら助かります。(Got it! When you do watch movies (including via streaming services, TV, etc.), do you tend to favor any particular genres? Also, if there are any actors you're particularly fond of, I'd love to hear about them.)

user: コメディやラブコメ等笑えるものが好きです。後は歴史の勉強もかねて歴史物の映画を見ることもあります。好きな俳優さんは特にこの人!という人はおらず内容重視です。(I like things that make me laugh, like comedies and romantic comedies. I also watch historical films as a way to learn about history. I don't have a favorite actor; I focus more on the content.)

Your answer

Step 1. Organizing User's Level of Knowledge and Interest

(Output)

最近の映画 (recent movies): low,low

昔の映画 (older movies): high,high

コメディやラブコメ等笑えるもの (things that make me laugh, like comedies and romantic comedies): high, high

歴史物の映画 (historical films): high, high

Step 2. Generating Response

コメディやラブコメ、そして歴史物の映画がお好きなんですね。それなら、「ローマの休日」はいかがでしょう。オードリー・ヘプバーンとグレゴリー・ペックが主演のこの映画は、ローマを舞台にしたラブコメディで、歴史的な名所もたくさん登場します。内容重視の方にはぴったりだと思います。(So, you like comedies and romantic comedies, don't you? Then how about the "Roman Holiday"? Starring Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck, this romantic comedy set in Rome features many historical landmarks. It's perfect for those who are content-oriented.)

Figure 9: The prompt for COT_{1st} . The task instruction, few-shot examples, and test example are colored to show. The second few-shot example is omitted due to the space limitation. The English translations next to the Japanese words in the few-shot examples and test example are not used in the experiment.

	<p>## Movie information なし (None)</p> <p>## Dialogue history you: アクションはどんな映画がお好きですか? (<i>What kind of action movies do you like?</i>) user: そうですね、007はよく見ました。ジャッキーの偶にです。日本のアクション俳優さんは逆にあまり存じないですけどね (<i>Well, I've often watched 007 movies. Sometimes Jackie's as well. I'm not very familiar with Japanese action actors, though.</i>) you: 007シリーズ良いですよ。ジャッキー・チェンでしょうか?私も好きです。007シリーズはほとんどご覧になってますか? (<i>The 007 series is great, isn't it? Jackie Chan, right? I like him too. Have you seen most of the 007 series?</i>) user: ちょっとしたファンです。(笑)全巻DVD持ってまして、偶に一人の時間に見てます (<i>I'm a bit of a fan, haha. I own the complete DVD collection and watch them from time to time when I'm alone.</i>)</p>
Context	
Baseline	<p>007シリーズのファンなら、日本のアクション映画では「アウトレイジ」シリーズをおすすめします。北野武監督が演出と主演を務めており、ハードボイルドなヤクザ映画です。アクションシーンも見ごたえがありますよ。 (<i>If you're a fan of the 007 series, I recommend the "Outrage" series from Japan. It's directed and starred by Takeshi Kitano, and it's a hard-boiled yakuza movie. The action scenes are quite something to watch.</i>)</p>
	<p>アクション (action): high,high 007 (007): high,high ジャッキー・チェン (Jackie Chan): high,high 日本のアクション俳優 (Japanese action actors): low,neutral 全巻DVD (the complete DVD collection): high,high</p>
CoT _{1st}	<p>007シリーズのファンとのこと、素晴らしいですね。日本のアクション俳優については、たとえば高倉健さんや千葉真一さんなどが有名です。特に千葉真一さんは、日本だけでなく海外でも高い評価を受けているアクション俳優で、そのアクションシーンは見応えがありますよ。もし興味があれば、彼らの映画を観てみてはいかがでしょうか。 (<i>It's wonderful that you're a fan of the 007 series. Regarding Japanese action actors, for example, Ken Takakura and Shinichi Chiba are famous. Shinichi Chiba, in particular, is an action actor who is highly regarded not only in Japan but also overseas, and his action scenes are impressive. If you're interested, maybe you could watch some of their movies.</i>)</p>

Table 9: Response generation example.

Redefining Proactivity for Information Seeking Dialogue

Jing Yang Lee^{1*}, Seokhwan Kim², Kartik Mehta³, Jiun-Yu Kao³, Yu-Hsiang Lin^{3,4}, Arpit Gupta³
Nanyang Technological University¹, Google Cloud AI², Amazon AGI³, Meta⁴
jingyang001@e.ntu.edu.sg¹, seokhwankim@google.com², yuhsiang@meta.com⁴
{kartim, jiunyk, guparpit}@amazon.com³

Abstract

Information-Seeking Dialogue (ISD) agents aim to provide accurate responses to user queries. While proficient in directly addressing user queries, these agents, as well as LLMs in general, predominantly exhibit reactive behavior, lacking the ability to generate proactive responses that actively engage users in sustained conversations. However, existing definitions of proactive dialogue in this context do not focus on how each response actively engages the user and sustains the conversation. Hence, we present a new definition of proactivity that focuses on enhancing the ‘proactiveness’ of each generated response via the introduction of new information related to the initial query. To this end, we construct a proactive dialogue dataset comprising 2,000 single-turn conversations, and introduce several automatic metrics to evaluate response ‘proactiveness’ which achieved high correlation with human annotation. Additionally, we introduce two innovative Chain-of-Thought (CoT) prompts, the 3-step CoT and the 3-in-1 CoT prompts, which consistently outperform standard prompts by up to 90% in the zero-shot setting.

1 Introduction

Generally, the aim of Information-Seeking Dialogue (ISD) agents (Dziri et al., 2022; Nakamura et al., 2022) is to generate an informative response which answers the user’s query. In these interactions, users typically pose questions to obtain specific pieces of information, and the dialogue agent generates coherent responses which contains the information requested by the user. In recent years, Large Language Models (LLMs) have generally succeeded at achieving this goal (Li et al., 2023a; Braunschweiler et al., 2023). However, current ISD agents, as well as LLMs in general, tend to be more reactive than proactive. An example of a reactive

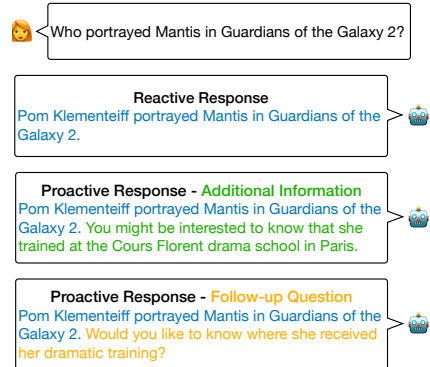


Figure 1: Illustration of a single user query and the corresponding reactive and proactive responses. Each proactive response corresponds to a specific proactive element type. The follow-up question is marked in orange text, additional information is denoted by green text, and the answer component is indicated in blue text.

response is provided in Figure 1. Responses generated by a reactive ISD agent would adequately address the user’s query but fail to proactively engage the user. Once the requested information is provided, the conversation with the ISD agent naturally concludes.

In ISD, existing work on proactivity primarily focuses on generating clarifying questions and eliciting user preferences (Deng et al., 2023), aiming to resolve ambiguity in the user’s query or uncover their preference respectively. Current definitions of proactivity in ISD do not emphasize engaging the user or sustaining the conversation once the desired information has been provided. Hence, we introduce a novel definition of ISD proactivity that emphasizes generating responses that aim to sustain the interaction by proactively engaging the user via the introduction of new information *pertinent to the initial query*. By proactively providing new related information, the agent can stimulate the user’s interest, prompting further inquiries and sustaining the conversation. Hence, our definition of ISD proactivity focuses on actively delivering

*Work done during internship at Amazon AGI.

information related to the initial query in a conversational manner, thereby naturally guiding the conversation towards addressing multiple pieces of information, improving the overall informativeness during interactions with users and further enhancing user satisfaction (Deng et al., 2023; Doherty and Doherty, 2018). Unlike prior definitions, we focus on the proactiveness of each individual response, evaluating them individually rather than as part of the entire conversation. This allows us to evaluate responses on specific criterion (Section 3).

According to our definition, a proactive response consists of the answer to the user’s query and a proactive element, which refers to new information related to the initial query. The proactive element can be further categorized as either a Follow-up Question (FQ) or Additional Information(AI). Samples of proactive responses according to our definitions are also provided in Figure 1. It’s important to note that this work does not encompass factual accuracy or information correctness. The focus is purely on syntactic and semantic proactivity.

In this paper, our contributions are as follows:

1. We introduce a novel response-level definition of proactivity for ISD.
2. We construct a proactive dialogue corpus consisting of 2,000 single-turn conversations.
3. We introduce a set of automatic metrics designed to measure the level of ‘proactiveness’ in a response, according to our definition of proactive dialogue. Our metrics demonstrate high correlation with human annotation.
4. We propose two in-context Chain-of-Thought (CoT) prompts, namely the 3-step CoT prompt and the 3-in-1 CoT prompt, which outperform standard few-shot prompting. Additionally, utilizing our corpus, we demonstrate the efficacy of instruction-tuning in the context of proactive response generation.
5. We demonstrate the efficacy of our approach in sustaining user interaction and improving conversational informativeness and in the multi-turn scenarios.

2 Related Work

Proactive Dialogue Proactive dialogue encompasses various techniques for engaging users by steering conversations in specific directions. In the

context of Open-Domain (OD) dialogue, some popular proactive dialogue tasks include: target-guided dialogue, prosocial dialogue, and non-collaborative dialogue. Target guided dialogue focuses on directing interactions toward predefined topics or entities, using methods such as response planning (Kishinami et al., 2022), event-based knowledge graphs (Xu et al., 2021), and commonsense bridging (Gupta et al., 2022a). Prosocial dialogue involves generating non-offensive responses that adhere to societal norms (Kim et al., 2022). In the context of Task-Oriented (TO) dialogue, proactive dialogue definitions include non-collaborative dialogue as well as enriched TO dialogue. In non-collaborative dialogue, the agent and user have opposing objectives. Some examples include persuasion (Wang et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2021), negotiation (He et al., 2018), and deception-based dialogue (Santhanam et al., 2020). Enriched TO dialogue shares some similarities with our task. However, while enriched TO dialogue focuses on enhancing conversational naturalness through additional information, our goal is to sustain ISD. Rather than prioritizing naturalness, we aim to encourage user engagement by introducing new information (either directly or through a FQ) that prompts the user to continue the conversation.

With regard to ISD specifically, response proactivity largely revolves around generating clarifying questions and eliciting user preferences (Deng et al., 2023). Clarifying question generation aims to resolve ambiguity in user queries to provide the user with the requested information (Aliannejadi et al., 2021). Approaches include retrieval and ranking-based frameworks (Aliannejadi et al., 2019), reinforcement learning with clarification utility rewards (Zamani et al., 2020), and multi-step frameworks predicting the need for a clarifying question before generating one (Aliannejadi et al., 2021; Guo et al., 2021). Some methods also combine clarifying questions and conversational QA in multi-turn context (Deng et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2021). User preference elicitation involves proactively revealing the user’s interests for better recommendations (Zhang et al., 2018). This task is often treated as a decision-making problem often tackled with reinforcement learning (Zhang et al., 2018; Deng et al., 2021; Jaques et al., 2019). Unlike earlier definitions, we do not concentrate on specific proactive ISD aspects like clarifying question generation or user preference elicitation. In-

Query: Who portrayed Mantis in Guardians of the Galaxy 2?
Answer: Pom Klementieff portrayed Mantis in Guardians of the Galaxy 2.
Follow-up Question
Would you like to know where she received her dramatic training? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Would you like to know who the main cast members are in Captain America and the Winter Soldier? <input type="checkbox"/> (Relevance)
Would you like to know more about her? <input type="checkbox"/> (Specificity)
Do you know where she received her dramatic training? <input type="checkbox"/> (Perspective)
Additional Information
You might be interested to know that she trained at the Cours Florent drama school in Paris. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
France is renowned for its wine and sophisticated cuisine. <input type="checkbox"/> (Relevance)
The role of Mantis was portrayed by Pom Klementieff. <input type="checkbox"/> (Informativeness)
Pom Klementieff trained at Cour Florent in Paris. <input type="checkbox"/> (Conversational Naturalness)

Figure 2: Examples of FQs and AI. Proactive elements that are accepted or unaccepted are symbolized by a green checkmark or a red "X" respectively. The criteria for deeming each proactive element as unacceptable is specified adjacent to the corresponding red "X".

stead, we solely focus on enhancing proactivity by providing relevant information. Moreover, we evaluate the proactiveness of each individual response separately, rather than considering the entire conversation.

LLM-based ISD In recent years, LLMs have emerged as leading models in language generation tasks, demonstrating state-of-the-art performance. In ISD, recent methods utilize LLMs through in-context learning or supervised fine-tuning. In-context learning refers to learning a new task during inference with a few prompt examples. Approaches leveraging few-shot (Li et al., 2023b; Chada and Natarajan, 2021) and CoT (Yoran et al., 2023; Sultan et al., 2024) prompts have been employed in this context. LLMs are also often trained on dialogue contexts alongside task instructions, which is known as instruction tuning, to enhance zero-shot performance. In the context of dialogue, LLMs such as Flan-T5 (Chung et al., 2022), InstructGPT (Ouyang et al., 2022), and InstructDial (Gupta et al., 2022b) were explicitly trained on dialogue data for chat applications. Likewise, instruction-tuning has also been applied to improve the accuracy and informativeness of conversational QA responses (Jiang et al., 2024; Razumovskaia et al., 2024). These methods excel at achieving the primary aim of ISD to address user queries. However, as highlighted in Section 1, they tend to produce reactive responses that do not proactively engage the user.

3 Problem Definition

We propose a new proactive response definition for ISD that consists of two components: an An-

swer and a Proactive Element. The Answer directly addresses the user’s query, while the Proactive Element actively engages the user by providing related information. The proactive element enriches the user’s understanding and can spark further interest, prompting them to further engage the conversation to find out more. We further classify the Proactive Element into two main categories: Additional Information (AI) and Follow-up Questions (FQs).

AI refers to any knowledge not explicitly requested in the user’s query or mentioned in the answer, but that could be of interest to the user. The provision of high-quality AI enriches the conversation by increasing its informativeness, and encouraging the user to continue the interaction. To determine if an AI qualifies, the following criteria must be met:

1. *Relevance*. The AI should be relevant to the user’s query.
2. *Informativeness*. The AI should provide substantial supplementary details beyond the original Answer. It should not be simply a rephrased version of the Answer.
3. *Naturalness*. The AI should be natural in a spoken conversational context. It should be introduced in a conversational manner and avoid excessive verbosity.

It’s important to note that LLMs often have a tendency to include excessive details in a single response, which can hinder naturalness, particularly in spoken context. Our goal is to incorporate AI in a concise and engaging manner that encourages the user to continue the interaction.

A FQ asks if the user is interested in a specific piece of additional relevant information related to their initial query. The information itself is not explicitly provided in the FQ. By asking appropriate FQs, we can extend the conversation beyond the initial turn. The criteria for a FQ are defined as follows:

1. *Relevance*. The FQ should relate to knowledge relevant to the user’s query.
2. *Specificity*. The FQ should be as specific as possible, referring to a particular piece of information rather than making a broad inquiry. Specific FQs lead to more informative and satisfying interactions.

3. *Perspective*. The FQ should not request information from the user. It should focus on assisting and informing the user, avoiding information seeking.

Figure 2 presents examples of responses that do not meet the previously mentioned criteria.

Unlike prior work in ISD, our definition focuses specifically on response proactivity rather than factual accuracy. Therefore, we do not include criteria related to information accuracy or ground responses on external knowledge sources. These factors are often used to prevent hallucination and ensure factual correctness.

4 Proactive Response Evaluation

In this section, we propose several automatic metrics to quantify the proactivity of a response. A reliable automatic metric would enable objective and cost-effective evaluation, ultimately enhancing the reproducibility of our work.

4.1 Baseline Metrics

We introduce two baseline metrics: a prompt-based metric and a classification-based metric. The prompt-based metric, ranging from 0 to 1, is obtained by prompting an LLM to assess the proactiveness of responses based on our definition. The classification-based metric is calculated using two language models, each evaluating responses as valid or invalid for each Proactive Element type, according to our definition. More details are provided in Appendix A.6.

4.2 Proposed Metrics

The baseline scores often lack interpretability. They do not provide specific information about which criteria a response violates. Therefore, we propose two additional metrics which evaluate the responses based on the criteria defined in Section 3. **Semantic similarity-based** We design a metric based on semantic similarity to evaluate the *Relevance* of a proactive response, as well as the *Specificity* and *Informativeness* of the FQ and AI respectively.

The respective semantic scores for the FQ and AI are computed as follows:

- FQ: $\alpha * BS(Q, R) + (1 - \alpha)\bar{BS}(R)$
- AI: $\alpha * BS(Q, R) + (1 - \alpha)(1 - \bar{BS}(R))$

where Q and R denote the input query and generated response respectively. $BS(\cdot)$ refers to the BERTScore, and $\bar{BS}(res) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i,j|i \in n, j \in n} BS(r_i, r_j)$, the mean pair-wise semantic similarity. α is a hyperparameter introduced to control the distribution between both terms. In our implementation, the BertScore is computed using the deberta-base-v3 embeddings.

It should also be highlighted that a completely irrelevant or incoherent proactive element would likely result in a lower semantic similarity score compared to a generic but related response. This difference is primarily due to the first term in the equations, which involves the BertScore calculation between the query and the response. An entirely irrelevant response would achieve a very low BertScore, whereas a generic but relevant response would obtain a relatively higher score. Consequently, after appropriately adjusting α , the semantic score for a proactive response containing irrelevant elements would be significantly low.

User Simulation-based We also propose a user simulation-based metric to quantify the quality of the Proactive Element based on *Relevance* and *Conversational Naturalness* of the AI, as well as the *Specificity* and *Perspective* of the FQ. This involves prompting an LLM to generate a simulated user turn in response to a given proactive system response, and then measuring the sentiment of the LLM-generated user response. After analyzing our initial responses, we found that users often react positively when we provide proactive responses paired with custom FQs or seamlessly integrated AI. This approach frequently elicits enthusiastic acknowledgments such as 'Yes, thank you!', 'Wow! That's interesting.', or 'That would be great. Thanks!', contributing to a LLM-generated user response with significantly positive sentiment. Conversely, subpar proactive responses that include generic FQs or conversationally unnatural AI tend to elicit replies with comparatively neutral sentiment. Furthermore, FQs with the wrong *Perspective* (requesting information from the user) generally lead to more detailed responses containing the requested information, often resulting in a neutral sentiment. Naturally, responses that do not address the user's query will typically elicit responses with negative sentiment. Samples of generated responses and the corresponding LLM-generated user responses for AI and FQ are provided in Figure 3(b) and 3(c) respectively.

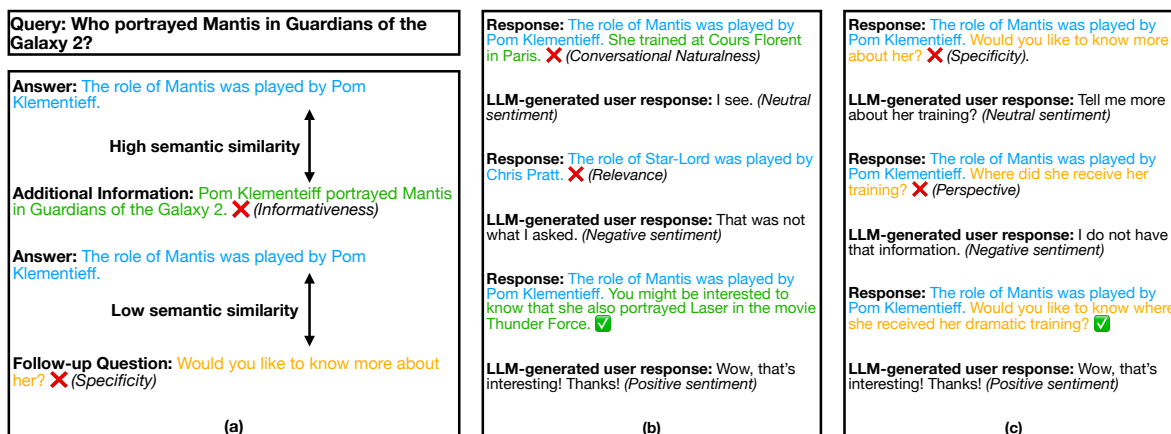


Figure 3: (a) Illustration of low and high semantic similarities in low quality AI and FQ respectively. (b) Samples of LLM-generated user responses for AI. (c) Samples of LLM-generated user responses for FQ.

To obtain the user-simulation score, we prompt the LLM (with a temperature value of $t = 0.5$) n times to generate n LLM-generated user responses. We then calculate the positive sentiment of each LLM-generated user response and take the average. The model used to determine positive sentiment is a fine-tuned RoBERTa pretrained language model (Camacho-Collados et al., 2022). Any arbitrary LLM can be used to generate the simulated user responses. This process is summarized in Algo 1.

5 Corpus Construction

To create our proactive dialogue corpus, we utilize the Natural Questions Question Answer (NQQA) dataset (Kwiatkowski et al., 2019). Each sample in this dataset includes a query, a short answer, and a long answer. The short answer provides the response to the query, while the long answer contains some relevant information. We selected the NQQA corpus because the query and short answer format resembles a typical single-turn conversation between a human and an ISD agent. However, since the short answer in the NQQA corpus consists of only a single entity, it needed to be modified for conversational naturalness.

5.1 Annotation

To achieve this, we engaged crowdworkers via Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) to modify the short answer to make it sound more like a natural response in a conversation, and to formulate the Proactive Element. AMT instructions are provided in Appendix A.3. These two components were concatenated to form the final proactive response. This process allowed us to construct a proactive

dialogue corpus that could be used for training and evaluating proactive ISD agents.

Answer The Answer component is obtained by enhancing the short answer found in the NQQA corpus. This short answer, which is the direct answer to the user’s query, is modified to ensure conversational naturalness. The crowdworkers were given instructions to integrate the short response, often a single verb or noun, into a coherent and comprehensive sentence that effectively addresses the user’s query in a conversational style. For example, for the query in Figure 1 and 2, the short response (‘Pom Klementieff’) resulted in the following sentence: ‘The actress who portrayed Mantis in Guardians of the Galaxy is Pom Klementieff’.

Proactive Element To obtain the Proactive Element (FQ or AI), crowdworkers were provided the long answer for reference. This simplified the task and ensured the accuracy of the Proactive Elements. For FQs, crowdworkers were instructed to create inquiries that assessed whether the user desired a particular piece of information from the long answer. They were encouraged to make their questions as specific as possible, focusing on particular details rather than general inquiries. For AI, crowdworkers were told to identify a single piece of information not already present in the initial answer and rephrase it to sound more natural in a conversational context. Before annotation, we filtered the NQQA dataset based on query length and long answer length. This ensured the clarity of the query and guaranteed that there was sufficient information from which the crowdworkers can formulate either a FQ or AI.

5.2 Corpus Features and Statistics

Based on the approach described above, we extracted 1000 samples and collect 2,000 proactive dialogue samples (1,000 for each Proactive Element) for our proactive response corpus. Each sample in our corpus constitutes a single-turn dialogue consisting of a user query and a proactive response. After obtaining the annotations, we manually validated each response to ensure fluency and correct any spelling or grammatical errors. The number of samples and average query length are identical for both Proactive Elements as a single query is used to obtain two proactive responses, one for each Proactive Element. Some basic corpus statistics are provided in Appendix A.4.

6 Proactive Response Generation

In this section, we describe the in-context learning and instruction-tuning approaches we employed for proactive response generation.

6.1 In-context Learning

In-context learning involves explicitly providing demonstrations of the task at hand to the model as part of a prompt. In this section, we describe three in-context learning prompts we utilize for proactive response generation: the direct prompt, 3-step CoT prompt, and 3-in-1 CoT prompt. For our experiments, we implemented 0-shot, 1-shot, and 3-shot variants of these three prompts. Prompt templates are provided in Appendix A.5.

Direct Prompt This approach involves direct prompting the LLM to generate answers with the task description and demonstrations of query-proactive response pairs.

3-step Chain-of-Thought (CoT) Prompt We introduce a 3-step CoT prompting approach designed to effectively generate proactive responses. Our approach involves systematically decomposing the proactive response generation task into three distinct subtasks, each addressed by an independent prompt. This entails three separate inferences. The output from each prompt is used as input for the subsequent prompt. The three prompts corresponding to the three subtasks are as follows:

P_1 : Query answering: In this step, the LLM is prompted to generate the precise answer to the user’s query.

P_2 : Related information generation: Building upon the answer generated in P_1 , the LLM

is directed to identify a specific piece of related information that was not present in the initial answer.

P_3 : Proactive Element generation: For the FQ, the LLM is prompted to formulate an inquiry to ask the user if they would like to receive the information generated in P_2 . Alternatively, for the AI, the LLM is prompted to rephrase the content produced in P_2 in a manner that reflects a scenario where the information is being offered to the user.

The final proactive response R is obtained by combining the output of P_1 and the output of P_3 , i.e., $R = LLM(P_1) + LLM(P_3)$, where $+$ refers to the concatenate operation. We conduct simple post processing (rule-based removal of escape characters as well as excess spacing) on the output of each prompt to ensure the quality of the input to the subsequent prompt.

In the 1-shot and 3-shot versions, demonstration examples were not provided to P_1 as P_1 achieved good performance in the 0-shot setting. Additionally, since the reference information from which the response is based on is not readily available in our corpus, P_2 and P_3 would entail manually deriving the reference information for few-shot prompting.

3-in-1 Chain-of-Thought (CoT) Prompt A drawback of the previous approach is the necessity for three distinct model inferences, leading to increased latency during generation. To address this, we attempt to consolidate all three prompts into a single 3-in-1 prompt. This unified prompt provides explicit instructions to the LLM to follow the exact same process as before in a step-by-step manner, encompassing all three subtasks within a single inference. We also implement a 0-shot, 1-shot, and 3-shot version of this prompt. Unlike the 3-stop CoT prompt, no manual derivation of specific information is required. Only the query and response, which are readily available, is required.

Demonstration Selection We also perform demonstration selection using metrics outlined in Section 4.2. Specifically, we identify the top- k and bottom- k responses (for a k -shot prompt) using the following criteria: (1) the user-simulation score, (2) the semantic similarity score, and (3) the sum of both scores. Generally, we observe that using the sum of both scores results in the generation of high-quality responses that achieve high user-simulation and semantic similarity scores. Full results are provided in Appendix A.1.

	FQ	AI
Prompt-based	-0.072	0.163
Classification-based	0.188	0.492
User Simulation-based	0.256	0.331
Semantic Similarity-based	0.462	0.575

Table 1: Point Biserial correlations between our proposed user-simulation, semantic similarity, prompt-based, and classification-based scores and human annotation.

6.2 Instruction Tuning

We also instruction tuned an LLM via QLoRA (Dettmers et al., 2023) to generate proactive responses. Leveraging our proposed corpus, we conducted instruction tuning on two distinct tasks corresponding to the generation of proactive responses with either a FQ or AI. We utilized 1000 proactive responses (500 from each proactive element).

7 Experiments

Instruction Tuning Implementation In our experiments, we utilize the 40b instruction-tuned Falcon LLM (Penedo et al., 2023) and the 13b StableVicuna LLM (Chiang et al., 2023). Results attained using StableVicuna are provided in the Appendix A.2. We utilize a temperature value of 0.2 for all generations. For each Proactive Element, we split our proactive dialogue corpus into two distinct sets: a 500-sample training set and a 500-sample test set. We select demonstration examples for our prompts from the training sets, and then evaluate them on the test set. We instruction-tune the LLM on the training sets for both the FQs and AI concurrently. The instructions used are identical to the direct prompt.

Metric Correlations Table 1 shows the Point Biserial correlations between our new metrics and human annotations, calculated from a dataset of 500 positive samples from our corpus and 500 negative samples generated by prompting a LLM for subpar proactive responses that lack a proactive element, feature low-quality proactive element or are completely irrelevant with respect to the user’s input.

The prompt-based baseline yields low correlation scores, highlighting its limitations as a metric. Conversely, the classification-based baseline achieve better, though inconsistent, correlations with human evaluations. Specifically, correlations for AI are higher than those for FQs. This difference arises because negative samples for AI, which

mostly violate the *Informativeness* criteria, are simpler for the model to detect compared to the nuanced, generic responses that characterize negative samples for FQs, which violate the *Specificity* criteria. Future research could involve improving the correlations through further prompt engineering or by enriching the training dataset with more varied negative examples.

The proposed semantic and sentiment scores clearly outperform both baselines. The semantic metric, encompassing *Relevance*, *Informativeness* (AI), and *Specificity* (FQs), achieves the highest correlation scores. This aligns with expectations, as many negative responses lack the required *Informativeness* and *Relevance*. Conversely, the sentiment score focuses on *Perspective* and *Conversational Naturalness*, which are less common in negative samples. Therefore, we recommend using both metrics together to effectively evaluate response proactiveness, covering the criteria outlined in Section 3 comprehensively.

In-Context Learning Scores attained by the direct, 3-step CoT, and 3-in-1 CoT prompts on Falcon-40b-instruct are shown in Table 2. A key finding is that the 3-step CoT prompt generally enhances 0-shot performance, addressing the general lack of proactive element seen in responses in the 0-shot direct and 3-in-1 CoT prompts, which generate fewer tokens in the 0-shot setting. The 3-step prompt resolves this by ensuring the final proactive response includes FQs or AI by concatenating outputs from the 1st and 3rd prompts.

It is also evident that the 3-step CoT prompt surpasses both the 3-in-1 CoT and direct prompts when it comes to the FQ. Conversely, for AI, the 3-in-1 CoT prompt outperforms both the 3-step CoT and direct prompts. This could be attributed to the inherent difficulty in generating high-quality FQs for the LLM, which generally excels at generating informative responses. Consequently, the FQ task benefits more from the 3-step CoT prompt since it breaks down the task into three simpler components.

Instruction Tuning Table 2 also includes results for the instruction-tuned Falcon-40b-instruct, which produced responses similar to the 3-shot variants of the 3-step and 3-in-1 CoT prompts for FQs and AI, respectively. These responses strictly adhere to the structure outlined in Section 3. Compared to prompted responses, there are fewer instances of missing Answers or Proactive Elements.

		FQ				AI			
		Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token	Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token
Direct	0-shot	0.73	0.45	0.32	20.35	0.52	0.49	0.28	28.53
	1-shot	0.92	0.51	0.51	30.55	0.74	0.51	0.33	33.67
	3-shot	0.92	0.52	0.59	28.90	0.79	0.52	0.37	30.07
3-step CoT	0-shot	0.88	0.51	0.59	32.45	0.86	0.49	0.31	38.65
	1-shot	0.93	0.53	0.61	34.73	0.81	0.52	0.35	37.18
	3-shot	0.95	0.53	0.62	31.79	0.90	0.54	0.38	39.28
3-in-1 CoT	0-shot	0.68	0.46	0.39	23.93	0.44	0.51	0.26	26.09
	1-shot	0.90	0.52	0.60	29.65	0.93	0.56	0.40	38.50
	3-shot	0.92	0.51	0.60	34.86	0.95	0.63	0.41	34.64
SFT		0.94	0.54	0.64	28.24	0.96	0.55	0.41	32.10
Human		0.96	0.55	0.63	28.33	0.97	0.67	0.43	36.18

Table 2: Classification, Semantic similarity, user-simulation scores, and average token length when direct prompting, 3-step prompting, 3-in-1 prompting, and instruction-tuning is applied to Falcon-40b-instruct. The highest score for each metric, other than the scores for the human generated responses, is **bolded**.

Instead, lower-quality responses lacked *Specificity* (FQs) or *Conversational Naturalness* (AI).

8 Multi-turn Setting

To demonstrate the efficacy of our approach in the multi-turn conversations, we sampled 50 test cases from our dataset and interactions between a simulated user and an agent using Falcon-40b-instruct. We used 3-step and 3-in-1 CoT prompts with modifications to produce proactive responses, detailed in Appendix A.8.

After conducting 50 simulations, we discovered that when the agent includes AI or FQ, the user is significantly more inclined to continue interacting with the agent. In contrast, responses lacking this proactive element usually consist of the agent merely acknowledging the information provided, naturally ending the conversation (Table 10). From the 50 simulations conducted, we found that approximately 94% of conversations ended after just one turn. In contrast, only 22% and 34% of interactions with the agent generating proactive responses with FQ and AI respectively ended after a single turn. On average, users continued the conversation for 3.9 turns with the FQ agent and 3.2 turns with the AI agent before ending the conversation naturally. For the FQ, the simulated user naturally requests the agent to provide the information suggested by the agent, further sustaining the interaction and improving the informativeness of the whole conversation (Table 11). For AI, the AI provided by the agent would tend to elicit more involved responses from the user rather than a cursory acknowledgement (Table 12) as well as encourage the user to inquire further about the AI provided by the agent.

However, both proactive elements displayed a tendency to repeat the proactive element from earlier in the conversation. We hypothesize that this issue could potentially be alleviated by improving quality of the LLM. To confirm our hypothesis, we repeat the experiment using GPT-4 instead of Falcon-40b-instruct for the Assistant. The sample conversations demonstrate that GPT-4 effectively minimizes such repetitions across up to four dialogue turns (Table 13). In our experiments, we apply our prompts at every conversational turn. However, in real-world ISD, not every turn would warrant a proactive response. Future work could constitute introducing an approach to detect if a proactive response is appropriate.

9 Conclusion

In this work, we propose a novel response-level definition of ISD proactivity. Per our definition, a proactive response includes both an Answer and a Proactive Element (FQ or AI). We compiled a dataset consisting of 2000 single-turn dialogues, and introduced a novel 3-step CoT and 3-in-1 CoT prompt that outperforms standard few-shot prompts in generating proactive responses. Future work could entail exploring finer-grained proactive elements or employing reward modelling and Reinforcement Learning with Human Feedback (RLHF) for fine-tuning. Expanding the current corpus to the multi-turn scenarios could also facilitate further research to improve in-context learning or supervised fine-tuning performance. Existing conversation-level metrics in ISD could also be enhanced to account for response-level proactivity. The performance of different LLMs on our task can also be explored.

10 Limitations

Firstly, the effectiveness of the generation approaches proposed are highly dependent on the LLMs that underpin them. Hence, different LLMs may display inherent biases or produce unforeseen outputs, resulting in lower quality response sets. Secondly, there are limitations based on the computational resources available. We do not have the capability to conduct in-context learning or instruction tuning experiments with larger or more recent LLMs. Future work could entail the evaluating the zero-shot performance of these LLMs on our proposed task. Thirdly, in this work, we do not assert that our prompt template is the optimal choice for proactive response generation. Our direct, CoT and 3-step CoT prompt templates are intended to form a baseline for researchers to improve upon. Additional work could entail additional, more deliberate prompt engineering.

11 Ethics Statement

We recruited annotators ("Turkers") through Amazon Mechanical Turk to build our dataset. Each Turker received detailed information about the Human Intelligence Task (HIT), including task descriptions, requirements and compensation, before agreeing to participate. They were free to withdraw from the task at any time for any reason. Each Turker was compensated at the rate of 0.20USD per HIT, and each HIT took an average of 55.6 seconds (12.90USD per hour).

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A Appendix

A.1 Demonstration Selection

Results for 1-shot, 3-shot and 5-shot demonstration selection are presented in Table 3, 4, and 5 respectively.

Generally, the results attained align closely with our expectations. When we select demonstration examples using sentiment or semantic metrics as criteria, the resulting responses tend to achieve higher scores in the user simulation and semantic similarity scores respectively. For example, with regard to the FQ, selecting the bottom-1, 3, or 5 examples based on the semantic score would result in relatively generic FQs, which are reflected in the low semantic similarity scores. Similarly, for the AI, selecting the top-1, 3, or 5 examples based on sentiment score would result in responses with conversationally natural AI and high user simulation scores.

Also, while there is a slight decrease in semantic similarity score when bottom examples are selected based on semantic similarity for the AI, this drop is minimal. Especially when compared to the drop in user simulation score brought about by selecting the bottom examples based on sentiment for the FQ. This is primarily due to the fact that the responses in our dataset largely meet the criteria of *Informativeness* for the AI, leading to an overall high semantic similarity score. On the other hand, there is a relatively larger variance in terms of quality with regard to *Specificity* for the FQ (eg. 'Would you like to know more about Pom Guardians of the Galaxy 2?' vs 'Would you like to know who portrayed the character of Peter Quill in Guardians of the Galaxy 2?').

Additionally, it can be observed that while there is a relatively significant increase in performance between 1 and 3-shot prompts, the 3-shot and 5-shot prompts generally achieve comparable performance. It should also be noted that when we select demonstration examples based on the sum of the sentiment and semantic metrics, the generated responses exhibit balanced improvements across all criteria.

A.2 StableVicuna

The scores attained when direct, 3-step CoT, and 3-in-1 CoT prompting are applied to StableVicuna are provided in Table 6.

Generally, the trends observed in the results and responses attained via Falcon-40b-instruct can be observed in the case of StableVicuna. The 3-step CoT and 3-in-1 CoT prompts generally improve on 0-shot performance. Also, for the FQ, the performance of the 3-step CoT prompt exceeds both the 3-in-1 CoT and direct prompts. For AI, the 3-in-1 CoT prompt achieves better performance compared to both the 3-step CoT and direct prompts.

In addition, with the exception of the semantic similarity score, Falcon-40b-instruct generally attains higher scores across all metrics. When it comes to the

semantic similarity, responses generated by StableVicuna and Falcon-40b-instruct attained comparable scores. This suggests that, in terms of providing AI, StableVicuna's responses exhibit a relatively lower level of *Naturalness* compared to Falcon-40b-instruct. In other words, the AI in the responses tend to be introduced in a relatively abrupt fashion as opposed to a conversationally natural manner. For the FQ, StableVicuna's responses exhibit a comparatively lower level of specificity when compared to those generated by Falcon-40b-instruct. The FQs from StableVicuna more often refer to general, broad areas which would likely require further specification from the user.

A.3 AMT Instruction

Throughout the data collection process, several pilot tests were conducted in order to refine the instructions provided to the turkers via AMT. The final instructions and interface utilized during data collection are provided in Fig 4 and 5 respectively. For both the FQ and AI, three turkers were engaged at a rate of 0.20USD per task (or HIT).

A.3.1 Answer

Firstly, turkers were instructed to amend a reference response for conversational naturalness to attain the Answer component. Initially, the turkers were instructed to input the Answer and the Proactive Element in a single input field. However, during the initial pilot tests, we found that numerous turkers simply input the reference response provided as is, without any amendment. The reference response corresponds to the short answer from the Natural Questions QA corpus, which consists of a single entity (eg. 'Pom Kleimentieff', '4th of July', or 'United States of America'). This negatively impacts the naturalness of the overall proactive response. We found that this issue can be addressed by breaking down the task into two distinct components with separate instructions and input fields. One for amending the reference response, and another for formulating the proactive element. Positive and negative examples were also included to place further emphasis on the importance of amending the reference response.

A.3.2 Follow-up Question

For the FQ, turkers were told to formulate a FQ that references a specific piece of information in the reference text provided. The reference text corresponds to the long answer in the Questions QA corpus. The initial pilot tests revealed a strong tendency for turkers to input extremely short and generic questions (eg. 'Would you like to know more?', 'Are you interested in learning more?'). Hence, the final instructions explicitly highlight the importance of ensuring that the questions are as specific as possible, in addition to emphasizing that the question should not request any information from the user. Positive and negative examples were provided for the user's reference.

		Follow-up Question				Additional Information			
		Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token	Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token
Top-1	Semantic	0.83	0.48	0.54	31.22	0.72	0.47	0.36	32.98
	Sentiment	0.82	0.53	0.50	32.53	0.76	0.53	0.34	34.51
	Sum	0.87	0.51	0.52	30.94	0.74	0.50	0.34	35.68
Bottom-1	Semantic	0.80	0.49	0.42	28.53	0.69	0.45	0.30	30.51
	Sentiment	0.79	0.44	0.46	27.22	0.65	0.42	0.31	31.22
	Sum	0.76	0.44	0.45	26.38	0.66	0.43	0.31	33.27
Random		0.81	0.51	0.51	30.55	0.74	0.51	0.33	33.67

Table 3: Classification, user-simulation, semantic similarity scores, and average token length when demonstration selection is applied to 1-shot direct prompting on Falcon-40b-instruct. The highest score for each metric is **bolded**.

		Follow-up Question				Additional Information			
		Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token	Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token
Top-3	Semantic	0.92	0.54	0.62	31.32	0.90	0.53	0.41	32.01
	Sentiment	0.92	0.56	0.59	31.57	0.91	0.58	0.38	32.67
	Sum	0.94	0.56	0.60	30.73	0.91	0.54	0.40	36.62
Bottom-3	Semantic	0.84	0.47	0.53	25.63	0.50	0.41	0.28	23.62
	Sentiment	0.80	0.45	0.56	27.51	0.76	0.44	0.32	34.09
	Sum	0.73	0.44	0.55	28.43	0.75	0.47	0.36	26.61
Random		0.92	0.52	0.58	28.33	0.79	0.52	0.36	30.07

Table 4: Classification, user-simulation, semantic similarity scores, and average token length when demonstration selection is applied to 3-shot direct prompting on Falcon-40b-instruct. The highest score for each metric is **bolded**.

		Follow-up Question				Additional Information			
		Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token	Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token
Top-5	Semantic	0.92	0.53	0.63	30.91	0.90	0.56	0.43	33.75
	Sentiment	0.91	0.56	0.60	31.82	0.92	0.59	0.36	30.33
	Sum	0.93	0.55	0.61	29.72	0.94	0.57	0.41	32.14
Bottom-5	Semantic	0.86	0.43	0.56	25.37	0.57	0.45	0.26	37.25
	Sentiment	0.90	0.45	0.59	27.46	0.61	0.47	0.32	25.81
	Sum	0.87	0.42	0.58	28.32	0.56	0.42	0.34	24.76
Random		0.92	0.53	0.61	29.29	0.83	0.55	0.35	31.75

Table 5: Classification, user-simulation, semantic similarity scores, and average token length when demonstration selection is applied to 5-shot direct prompting on Falcon-40b-instruct. The highest score for each metric is **bolded**.

		Follow-up Question				Additional Information			
		Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token	Classification	User Simulation	Semantic Similarity	Num Token
Direct	0-shot	0.33	0.35	0.36	22.39	0.61	0.29	0.29	26.83
	1-shot	0.65	0.37	0.57	25.97	0.67	0.31	0.33	28.74
	3-shot	0.86	0.39	0.60	27.85	0.69	0.35	0.31	29.16
3-step CoT	0-shot	0.82	0.41	0.58	33.90	0.75	0.36	0.31	30.24
	1-shot	0.86	0.43	0.59	35.75	0.78	0.40	0.36	29.46
	3-shot	0.92	0.47	0.61	28.42	0.82	0.42	0.37	29.25
3-in-1 CoT	0-shot	0.72	0.42	0.41	27.51	0.68	0.37	0.32	25.21
	1-shot	0.82	0.41	0.57	26.45	0.85	0.42	0.39	36.42
	3-shot	0.91	0.43	0.59	25.94	0.92	0.44	0.40	38.51
Human		0.96	0.55	0.63	28.33	0.97	0.67	0.43	36.18

Table 6: Classification, semantic similarity, user simulation scores, and average token length when direct prompting, 3-step CoT prompting, 3-in-1 CoT prompting, and instruction-tuning (SFT) is applied to StableVicuna. The highest score for each metric, other than the scores for the human generated responses, is **bolded**.

<p>Instructions</p> <p>In this task, you are required to amend a short response to a user’s query for conversational naturalness, and introduce a <i>follow-up question</i>. A <i>follow-up question</i> consists of an enquiry regarding any additional information which could be useful/of interest to the user.</p> <p>For the amended response, please ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amended response in conversationally natural and cordial. DO NOT simply restate the response. <p>For the follow-up question, please ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The follow-up question enquires if the user would like a specific piece on information. DO NOT include generic follow-up questions such as ‘Would you like to learn more about the film?’ or ‘Is there anything you would like to know about this building?’. The information referred to in the follow-up question can be found in the Reference Text. The follow-up question does not request information from the user. Eg. ‘What is the height of the Empire State building?’ 	<p>Task</p> <p>Please amend the following response based on the Query, Response, and Reference Text specified below:</p> <p>Query: \${query}</p> <p>Response: \${response}</p> <p>Reference Text: \${supp_info}</p> <p>Type amended response here...</p> <hr/> <p>Type Follow-up Question here...</p> <hr/>
---	---

Figure 4: AMT instructions for the FQ.

<p>Instructions</p> <p>In this task, you are required to amend a response for conversational naturalness, and to formulate <i>additional information</i>. Additional information refers to any additional relevant knowledge that could be helpful to the user, even though it was not explicitly requested or mentioned in the user’s query. Please ensure that:</p> <p>For the amended response, please ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amended response in conversationally natural and cordial. DO NOT simply restate the response. <p>For the additional information, please ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The additional information introduced is based on the Reference Text provided. The additional information is conversationally natural and cordial. 	<p>Task</p> <p>Please amend the following response based on the query, response, and supplementary information specified below:</p> <p>Query: \${query}</p> <p>Response: \${response}</p> <p>Reference Text: \${supp_info}</p> <p>Type amended response here...</p> <hr/> <p>Type additional information here...</p> <hr/>
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Figure 5: AMT instructions for the AI.

A.3.3 Additional Information

For the AI, the turkers were instructed to formulate a additional relevant information based on the reference text provided. Providing turkers with the reference text serves to ensure the factuality of the AI formulated. For this HIT, the main issue found in the initial pilot tests centered on conversational naturalness. Turkers were formulating AI which resembled factual statements as opposed to information introduced in a conversational manner (‘Chris Pratt portrayed Star Lord in Guardians of the Galaxy.’ vs. ‘Did you know that Chris Pratt played the role of Star Lord in Guardians of the Galaxy?’). To mitigate this issue, turkers were explicitly instructed to ensure that the AI was conversationally natural and cordial. Additionally, positive and negative examples were similarly provided for the user’s reference.

A.4 Corpus Statistics

To provide a broad overview of the corpus, we compute the average query length, response length, as well as Proactive Element length for each Proactive Element type. The derived statistics are provided in Table 7.

A.5 Prompt Templates

The prompt templates for the direct, 3-step, and 3-in-1 CoT prompts are provided in Figure 6, 7 and 8

	Follow-up Question	Additional Information
Number of Samples	1000	1000
Average Tokens per Query	11.054	11.054
Average Tokens per Proactive Response	28.293	35.607
Average Tokens per Proactive Element	14.711	22.736

Table 7: Proactive dialogue corpus statistics.

respectively. Prompts specific to the FQ are in orange, and prompts specific to the AI are in green.

A.6 Baseline Metrics

Alongside the semantic similarity and user-simulation scores, we introduce two straightforward baseline metrics: a prompt-based metric and a classification-based metric.

A.6.1 Prompt-based

Our prompt-based approach is based on Jain et al. (2023), where a few-shot prompt is used to generate a score to quantify various dimensions of quality in text summarization. In our context, we similarly leverage a LLM to generate a score (ranging from 0 to 1) that indicates the proactiveness of the response based on our definition. We craft two prompts, one for each Proactive Element. Each prompt includes the task

Direct Prompt

Follow-up Question:

###Instruction: This task involves generating a proactive response. A proactive response contains a proactive element in addition to addressing the user's query. For this task, a proactive element refers to a follow-up question. A follow-up question enquires if the user would like any additional information related to the user's query. Ensure that the proactive element is integrated into the response in a nuanced manner, not explicitly highlighted.

###Input: {query}
###Proactive Response:

Additional Information:

###Instruction: This task involves generating a proactive response. A proactive response contains a proactive element in addition to addressing the user's query. For this task, a proactive element refers to additional information. Additional information refers to any additional relevant information not explicitly requested or mentioned in the user's query. Ensure that the proactive element is integrated into the response in a nuanced manner, not explicitly highlighted.

###Input: {query}
###Proactive Response:

Figure 6: Direct prompt template.

3-step CoT Prompt

Step 1:

###Instruction: Generate a response to the given query. Apart from answering the query, do not provide any additional information.

###Input: {query}
###Response:

Step 2:

###Instruction: Based on the Input, generate a concise one-sentence response that includes an additional relevant detail or fact you would share.

###Input:{Step 1 output}
###Response:

Step 3 (Follow-up Question):

###Instruction: Based on a given piece of information, generate a highly targeted question that seeks the user's interest in receiving the provided information. The question should be formulated in a manner that only requires a simple positive or negative response from the user, without expecting any further input. Disregard the context and the user's preferences.

###Input:{Step 2 output}
###Response:

Step 3 (Additional Information):

###Instruction: The information given in the Input is something fascinating that you would share in a chat. Rephrase the provided information to reflect it in that manner. The rephrased information should be limited to one sentence.

###Input:{Step 2 output}
###Response:

Figure 7: 3-step CoT prompt template.

3-in-1 CoT Prompt

Follow-up Question:

###Instruction: Given a query, your task is to generate a proactive response to a query. To generate a high-quality proactive response, strictly follow the steps provided in the Input. Only generate the proactive response. Do not generate any other text.

Step 1: Consider the response to this query '{query}'.

Step 2: With the response from step 1 in mind, identify a concise one-sentence piece response that includes relevant details not present in the response from step 1.

Step 3. Take the information from step 2 and rephrase it make it sound like fascinating extra tidbits you'd share in a casual chat.\nGenerate the proactive response by generating the answer in Step 1 followed by the question in step 3.

###Proactive Response:

Additional Information:

###Instruction: Given a query, your task is to generate a proactive response to the a query. To generate a high-quality proactive response, strictly follow the steps provided. Only generate the proactive response. Do not generate any other text.

###Input: Step 1: Consider the answer to this query '{query}'.

Step 2: Based on the query and answer, consider a short and highly specific piece of additional information. The additional information must not be the same as the Response, and it cannot restate the Response. Additional information refers to any additional relevant information not requested in the user's query and not mentioned in the Response.

Step 3. Based on the information generated in step 2, formulate a question enquiring if the user would like to be provided the information.

Generate the proactive response by generating the answer in Step 1 followed by the question in step 3.

###Proactive Response:

Figure 8: 3-in-1 CoT prompt template.

description and annotated proactive response-score pairs. A response scoring 1.0 is proactive and meets all criteria in Section 2, while a 0.0 score indicates a lack of Proactive Element and failure to address the user’s query. Responses meeting one or two criteria are scored 0.25 and 0.75, respectively. We use Falcon-40b-instruct (Penedo et al., 2023) with a temperature of 0 for deterministic responses. We then parse the numeric string to attain the Prompt-based score.

For the prompt, we experimented with several different demonstration examples. The five examples selected adhered to the following format: one perfect proactive response that fulfilled every criteria, one response that violated one of the criterion, two responses which violated two different criteria, and one response which violated all three criteria. We observed that as long as the examples provided followed this format, varying the examples and their quantity did not significantly affect correlation with human annotation.

A.6.2 Classification-based

We introduce a model-based metric for measuring response proactiveness. To achieve this, we finetune two language models, one for each Proactive Element type, to classify responses as either valid or invalid in accordance with our definition. For fine-tuning, we utilize a small annotated dataset of 700 samples (with a 500/100/100 split) which consists of 59% valid and 41% invalid responses. For this task, we utilize the DeBERTa-V3-large model from Huggingface (He et al., 2021), which attained accuracy of 0.80 and 0.84 on the AI and FQ respectively. Subsequently, the final model score is attained by extracting the positive logit value during inference.

A.6.3 User-Simulation Score Algorithm

An algorithm detailing the step-by-step procedure to compute the user-simulation score is provided in Algorithm 1.

Algorithm 1 User-simulation score computation.

Require: n, t, R
 $S \leftarrow 0$
while $n \neq 0$ **do**
 $R_{LLM} \leftarrow LLM_t(R)$ ▷ Attain
 LLM-generated user response.
 $S_{temp} = \text{Sentiment}_{pos}(R_{LLM})$ ▷
 Compute positive sentiment
 $S \leftarrow S + S_{temp}$
 $n \leftarrow n - 1$
end while
 $score \leftarrow \frac{1}{n}S$ ▷ Compute average
return $score$

A.7 Response Samples

Samples of responses generated via direct prompting, 3-step CoT prompting, 3-in-1 CoT prompting, and instruction-tuning (SFT) for the FQ and AI are provided in Table 8 and 9 respectively. For the FQ, the Answer component is missing from the response generated by the 0-shot direct prompt. The responses generated by the direct 1-shot prompt and the 3-in-1 CoT prompt are relatively lacking in terms of *Specificity*. Responses generated by the remaining prompts generally fulfill all criteria outlined in Section 3. For the AI, the 0-shot direct and 3-in-1 prompt are missing the Proactive Element, and both the 1-shot direct and 1-shot 3-step prompts generated responses that lacked in *Naturalness*. The remaining prompts largely satisfied all the criteria described in Section 3.

A.8 Multi-turn Conversation Samples

To demonstrate the efficacy of our in-context learning approach in the multi-turn setting, we sample 50 test cases from our dataset and initiate a conversation using each case as the initial user query. We utilize Falcon-40b-instruct to simulate a human user interacting with an ISD agent. For the human user simulation, the LLM is simply fed the dialogue context and instructed to generate the appropriate response.

The proactive ISD agent also consist of Falcon-40b-instruct prompted via the 3-step prompt (FQ) and 3-in-1 prompt (AI). In addition, we also implement an ISD agent prompted to simply respond to the user’s query, without a proactive element. The 3-in-1 prompt template is largely identical to the one used in single-turn experiments, with one key difference: instead of a single query, a dialogue context is provided. Slight textual edits (substituting the word ‘query’ with ‘dialogue context’) were made in the prompt instructions to incorporate the dialogue context, thereby ensuring the LLM is aware that the input is a dialogue context context rather than solely a single query. Similarly, for the first prompt P_1 in the 3-step prompt, the dialogue context is provided rather than a single query, and the prompt instructions were edited accordingly. For the second prompt P_2 , the outputs generated from P_1 during the conversation are concatenated and utilized in P_2 instead. No other modifications were made to the prompt templates.

Tables 10, 11, and 12 display sample conversations where the ISD agent is instructed to respond directly to the user’s query, generate a proactive response with a FQs, and generate a proactive response with additional questions, respectively. Table 13 features conversations where GPT-4 was used to generate the Assistant’s responses.

User Query	How far do honey bees travel from their hive?	
Responses		
Human		Honey bees travel around four miles from their hive, but the exact distance depends on a number of factors. Would you like to learn more about the foraging habits of honey bees?
Direct	0-shot	Would you like to know the distance honey bees travel from their hive?
	1-shot	Honey bees typically travel up to 3 miles from their hive. Would you like to know more about the behavior of honey bees?
	3-shot	Honey bees can travel up to 3 miles from their hive. Would you like to know how they navigate and communicate with each other during their flight?
3-step CoT	0-shot	Honey bees typically travel up to 3 miles from their hive to collect nectar and pollen. Would you like to learn more about the navigation skills of honey bees?
	1-shot	Honey bees typically travel up to 3 miles from their hive in search of nectar and pollen. Would you like to know how honey bees navigate?
	3-shot	Honey bees can travel up to 3 miles from their hive in search of nectar and pollen. Would you like to know more about the amazing sense of smell of honey bees?
3-in-1 CoT	0-shot	Honey bees can travel up to 3 miles from their hive in search of food and water. Would you like to know more about the fascinating behavior of honey bees?
	1-shot	Honey bees can travel up to 3 miles from their hive. Would you like to know more about the bees flight range?
	3-shot	Honey bees can travel up to 3 miles from their hive. Would you like to know how they navigate and communicate with each other during their travels?
SFT		Honey bees travel up to three miles from their hive. Do you want to know more about the reasons behind the particular behavior of honey bees?

Table 8: Samples of proactive responses (FQ) generated by Falcon-40b-instruct via direct, 3-step, and 3-in-1 CoT prompting as well as the instruction tuning.

User Query	Who does Michael Scott end up with in The Office?	
Responses		
Human		Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax. It might interest you to know that the character Michael Scott is portrayed by Steve Carell.
Direct	0-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the Office.
	1-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the Office. They have a long-distance relationship that eventually leads to marriage.
	3-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the Office. Here's a fun fact, they got married in the season 7 finale.
3-step CoT	0-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the Office. Michael Scott's relationship with Holly Flax in the Office is a great example of how love can blossom in unexpected places.
	1-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the finale of The Office. That's what she said is a running joke in The Office, often used by Michael Scott.
	3-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the Office. You might be surprised to find out that Michael Scott and Holly Flax started a romantic relationship only in the later seasons of The Office.
3-in-1 CoT	0-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the end.
	1-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the final season of The Office. You might be interested to know that they got married and moved to Colorado.
	3-shot	Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax in the end. Did you know that they had four beautiful children together?
SFT		Michael Scott ends up with Holly Flax. It may interest you to know that he proposes to her towards the end of the seventh season.

Table 9: Samples of proactive responses (additional information) generated by Falcon-40b-instruct via direct, 3-step, and 3-in-1 CoT prompting as well as the instruction tuning.

User:	Who is the actor who played William Beech in Goodnight Mr Tom?
Assistant:	Nicholas Farrell played William Beech in Goodnight Mr Tom.
User:	Thank you.
User:	How big is the screen at Minute Maid park?
Assistant:	The screen at Minute Maid park is 30 feet tall and 55 feet wide.
User:	Thanks for the information.

Table 10: Conversation between a simulated human user (User) and an ISD agent (Assistant). After the Assistant provides the required information, the User simply acknowledges, thereby ending the conversation.

User:	Who is the actor who played William Beech in Goodnight Mr Tom?
Assistant:	The actor who played William Beech in the movie 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' is Oliver Ford Davies. Would you like to know more about the actor Oliver Ford Davies and his career?
User:	Yes, I would like to know more about Oliver Ford Davies and his career.
Assistant:	Oliver Ford Davies is an English actor who has appeared in numerous films, television shows, and stage productions. He is known for his roles in Goodnight Mr. Tom, The Lion in Winter, and The Return of the Native. He has also appeared in several Shakespeare plays. Would you like to know which three plays are considered to be Shakespeare's greatest work?
User:	Yes, I would like to know which three plays are considered to be Shakespeare's greatest works.
Assistant:	The three plays that are considered to be Shakespeare's greatest works are Hamlet, Macbeth, and King Lear. Would you like to know what is the name of the main character in the play King Lear?
User:	Yes, I would like to know what is the name of the main character in the play King Lear.
Assistant:	The name of the main character in the play King Lear is King Lear himself. Would you like to know the name of the actor who played King Lear in the film?
User:	Yes, I would like to know the name of the actor who played King Lear in the film.
Assistant:	The actor who played King Lear in the film is Sir Laurence Olivier. Would you like to know the name of the king in the play King Lear?

User:	How big is the screen at Minute Maid park?
Assistant:	The screen at Minute Maid Park is 54 feet high and 124 feet wide. Would you like to know the capacity of Minute Maid Park?
User:	Yes, please. Tell me the capacity of Minute Maid Park.
Assistant:	The capacity of Minute Maid Park is approximately 40,000 people. Would you like to know in which city the park is located?
User:	Yes, I would like to know in which city the park is located.
Assistant:	The Minute Maid Park is located in Houston, Texas. Would you like to know the name of the baseball team that plays in Minute Maid Park?
User:	Yes, please.
Assistant:	The name of the baseball team that plays in Minute Maid Park is the Houston Astros. Would you like to know the capacity of Minute Maid Park?

Table 11: Multi-turn conversation between a simulated human user (User) and an ISD agent (Assistant). Falcon-40b-instruct is utilized to simulate both the User and Assistant. The 3-step FQ prompt is used to generate the Assistant's responses. The **bold** text in the second conversation denotes the repeated AI.

User:	Who is the actor who played William Beech in Goodnight Mr Tom?
Assistant:	The actor who played William Beech in Goodnight Mr. Tom is Nicholas Farrell. Did you know that Nicholas Farrell also played the role of Captain Charles Lightoller in the Titanic movie?
User:	No, I did not know that. That's interesting. What other movies has Nicholas Farrell been in?
Assistant:	Nicholas Farrell has been in many movies,including The Madness of King George, The Jewel in the Crown, and The English Patient. He has also appeared in several TV shows, such as The Crown and The Night Manager.
User:	Wow, he has been in a lot of movies and TV shows.
Assistant:	He has played a variety of roles throughout his career including Cardinal Borgia in The Borgias. Did you know that he also appeared in several Shakespearean productions, including The Merchant of Venice and The Tempest.
User:	No, I did not know that. That's interesting.
Assistant:	Nicholas Farrell is an English actor known for his role in Chariots of Fire and The English Patient. It might also interest you to know that he also played the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in A Christmas Carol.

User:	How big is the screen at Minute Maid park?
Assistant:	The screen at Minute Maid Park is 54 feet high and 315 feet wide, making it one of the largest screens in the world. Did you know that Minute Maid Park is the first retractable-roof stadium in the United States?
User:	Wow, that's amazing! I didn't know that. What other unique features does Minute Maid Park have?
Assistant:	Minute Maid Park is also known for its unique train-themed features, including a locomotive shaped scoreboard and a train-shaped playground for kids. In addition, its also home to the Astros mascot, Orbit, who rides a train around the park during games.
User:	Wow, that's really interesting! I didn't know that Minute Maid Park had so many unique features.
Assistant:	Minute Maid Park also has a total capacity of approximately 40,000 people. It might also interest you to know that the screen at Minute Maid park is 54 feet high and 315 feet long.
User:	Wow, that's impressive! I didn't know that Minute Maid Park has such as large screen. I'm sure that the fans love it!
Assistant:	Minute Maid Park also has a train that runs around the stadium and a swimming pool in the outfield. Did you know that the name of the baseball team that plays in Minute Maid Park is the Houston Astros?

Table 12: Multi-turn conversation between a simulated human user (User) and an ISD agent(Assistant). Falcon-40b-instruct is utilized to simulate both the User and Assistant. The 3-in-1 AI prompt is used to generate the Assistant's responses. The **bold** text in the second conversation denotes the repeated AI.

Follow-up Question

User: How big is the screen at Minute Maid park?

Assistant: The screen at Minute Maid Park is approximately 54 feet high by 124 feet wide. Would you like to know which MLB team plays at Minute Maid Park?

User: Yes, I would like to know which MLB team plays at Minute Maid Park.

Assistant: The Houston Astros play at Minute Maid Park. Would you like to know the specific feature of Minute Maid Park designed to handle the climate?

User: Sure, I'd love to know the feature designed to handle the climate.

Assistant: Minute Maid Park features a retractable roof to handle the hot and humid climate of Houston, Texas. Would you like to know which year the Houston Astros won their first World Series title?

User: Yes, please.

Assistant: The Houston Astros won their first World Series title in 2017. Would you like to know when Orbit was introduced as the team's mascot?

Additional Information

User: How big is the screen at Minute Maid park?

Assistant: The screen at Minute Maid park is actually one of the largest in baseball, measuring over 55 feet wide and 30 feet tall! Did you know that it's also one of the first retractable roof stadiums in the country?

User: That's interesting! What other unique features does Minute Maid Park have?

Assistant: Minute Maid park also has one of the first retractable roof stadiums in the country. Hey, speaking of unique features, did you know it has a train on the outfield wall that moves whenever the Astros hit a home run?

User: Yes, I've heard about the train! It's an iconic feature of Minute Maid Park. What else?

Assistant: Minute Maid Park is also known for its unique, asymmetrical field dimensions. Did you know that these unconventional dimensions can affect the outcome of the games played there?

User: I did not know that. That's interesting!

Assistant: Minute Maid Park also features a strikingly realistic artificial hill, known as Tal's Hill, which was in center field until 2016. Did you know that this hill was a tribute to classic ballparks with uneven terrain, adding an extra layer of challenge for outfielders?

Table 13: Multi-turn conversation between a simulated human user (User) and an ISD agent(Assistant). GPT-4 is utilized to simulate the Assistant.

Leveraging Large Language Models for Code-Mixed Data Augmentation in Sentiment Analysis

Linda Zeng

The Harker School

500 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95129

26lindaz@students.harker.org

Abstract

Code-mixing (CM), where speakers blend languages within a single expression, is prevalent in multilingual societies but poses challenges for natural language processing due to its complexity and limited data. We propose using a large language model to generate synthetic CM data, which is then used to enhance the performance of task-specific models for CM sentiment analysis. Our results show that in Spanish-English, synthetic data improved the F1 score by 9.32%, outperforming previous augmentation techniques. However, in Malayalam-English, synthetic data only helped when the baseline was low; with strong natural data, additional synthetic data offered little benefit. Human evaluation confirmed that this approach is a simple, cost-effective way to generate natural-sounding CM sentences, particularly beneficial for low baselines. Our findings suggest that few-shot prompting of large language models is a promising method for CM data augmentation and has significant impact on improving sentiment analysis, an important element in the development of social influence systems.

1 Introduction

Code-mixing (CM), or code-switching, is the practice of switching between languages within a conversation or utterance. This practice is integral to multilingual societies, particularly in Mexico and urban India (Parshad et al., 2016), and is also significant in computer-mediated communication and social media, where multilingual users are predominant (Rijhwani et al., 2017). Despite its ubiquity, CM is mostly spoken and found in personal messages, making training data scarce and leading to poorer Natural Language Processing (NLP) model performance compared to monolingual text (Pratapa et al., 2018; Yong et al., 2023).

Social influence (SI) refers to the changes in thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviors resulting from interactions with others. In multilingual societies, CM reflects an important aspect of these

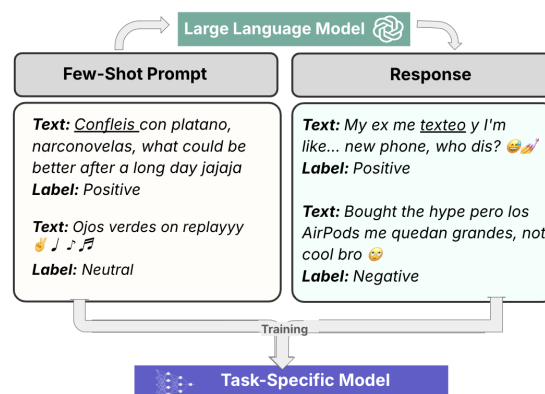


Figure 1: Overall system workflow with examples of Spanish-English CM tweets as natural data (left) and synthetic data (right). Underlined words represent Spanish-English hybrid words, examples of the complexities introduced by CM. Translations of CM sentences into English are provided in Appendix A.

interactions, reflecting social dynamics and identity. Sentiment analysis (SA) is crucial for understanding these dynamics, as it captures the emotional nuances embedded in multilingual interactions. Furthermore, SA has become a primary CM task due to its need for complex semantic understanding and its implications for social media (Drus and Khalid, 2019), where CM is commonly present (Srinivasan and Subalalitha, 2023). By accurately analyzing sentiment in code-mixed text, SI systems enhance their ability to interpret user intent and emotional states, enabling more meaningful interactions addressing the more diverse environments in which SI occurs. Since multilingual speakers bridge information on social media (Li and Murray, 2022), machines must also accurately analyze CM text to capture public opinion and disseminate news. However, current approaches fall short in handling code-mixed settings (Doğruöz et al., 2021; Aguilar et al., 2020) due to data scarcity.

Beyond the CM domain, few-shot learning has shown promise in overcoming data scarcity, as

Large Language Models (LLMs) trained on diverse tasks generalize to new ones with minimal training (Brown et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2022; Winata et al., 2021). LLMs are used for data augmentation (Ding et al., 2024; Whitehouse et al., 2023; Yoo et al., 2021; Dai et al., 2023), training data generation (Yu et al., 2023), and knowledge distillation (Xu et al., 2024; Phuong and Lampert, 2021), particularly in low-resource settings (Ding et al., 2024). However, this approach remains underexplored in the CM domain, which presents unique challenges (Zhang et al., 2023).

In this work, we bring LLM-powered data augmentation to the task of code-mixed sentiment analysis. We use few-shot prompting to generate labeled CM SA data in Spanish-English and low-resource Malayalam-English. Following Li and Murray (2023); Whitehouse et al. (2023); Tareq et al. (2023), we quantify the performance gains by fine-tuning multilingual pre-trained language models (PLMs) on the LLM-generated data. We investigate if these synthetic data samples can reflect natural code-mixing patterns and nuances compared to other data augmentation techniques and verify the synthetic data quality through human evaluation.

Figure 1 displays our overall system workflow with examples of natural and synthetic data. We summarize our contributions as follows:

- We introduce LLMs for CM data augmentation as a simple, cost-effective way to improve sentiment analysis models with natural-sounding sentences;
- We surpass past baselines, achieving third on the LinCE benchmark (Aguilar et al., 2020) in Spanish-English and outperforming the highest published benchmark by 4.85% on the low-resource MalayalamMixSentiment dataset (Chakravarthi et al., 2020);
- We thoroughly analyze the efficacy of our data augmentation approach in comparison to other techniques and with human evaluation;
- We release the synthetic data and code on Github¹ for public use and reproducibility.

2 Related Work

2.1 Data Augmentation for Code-Mixing

Existing attempts at generating synthetic CM data focus on using linguistics theory or converting

¹<https://github.com/lindazeng979/LLM-CMSA>

monolingual data to CM data.

For instance, Pratapa et al. (2018) use Equivalence Constraint Theory to align the parse trees of Hindi and English and replace words in one language with their corresponding words in the second language. Lee et al. (2019) apply Matrix Language Frame theory to convert parallel data to CM data, and Gregorius and Okadome (2022) use a dependency tree which predicts code-switching points and a machine translator to convert monolingual sentences to CM. While these methods consider the intention behind code-switching points (Solorio and Liu, 2008), they require expert linguistic knowledge, assume languages pairs can be parsed by the same parse tree, and rely on the accuracy of the parsers employed.

Other approaches convert monolingual data into CM using machine translation systems (Vu et al., 2012; Li and Murray, 2022; Tarunesh et al., 2021), word dictionaries (Tareq et al., 2023), or parallel corpora (Winata et al., 2019; Whitehouse et al., 2022). For instance, Winata et al. (2019) employ a sequence-to-sequence model to learn language-switching points while Chang et al. (2019) use generative-adversarial networks. Li and Murray (2022) introduce language-agnostic masks in a monolingual SA corpus to train models on recognizing the patterns of CM, and Tareq et al. (2023) utilize word dictionaries to map monolingual data into CM SA data. Although some of these techniques account for code-switching points, they do not consistently produce natural sentences. Moreover, their effectiveness relies on the quality of the underlying systems and the assumption that large datasets with distributions similar to real CM data are available.

Unlike conversion-based methods, our approach generates CM sentences from scratch. By leveraging LLMs’ multilingual pre-training and generalization capabilities, we aim to produce synthetic data that more accurately reflects the natural patterns and nuances of human-generated CM language.

2.2 Large Language Models for Code-Mixing

To our knowledge, LLMs have not yet been used for CM data augmentation. The closest related works are by Yong et al. (2023), who explore LLMs in South Asian CM dialects through prompting experiments, and Zhang et al. (2023), who assess LLMs’ zero-shot performance on various CM tasks, including SA. Both studies find that LLMs need

significant improvement on *zero-shot* CM tasks but do not explore if LLM-generated data can help *task-specific models* improve their training, despite sub-optimal LLM zero-shot performance. Notably, both studies found that GPT-3.5 (Brown et al., 2020) shows superior performance among LLMs and do not evaluate the more advanced GPT-4 (Achiam et al., 2024). Our research builds on their findings by using GPT-4 for data generation and fine-tuning task-specific models in addition to evaluating zero-shot performance.

In contrast to the findings of Yong et al. (2023) and Zhang et al. (2023), Whitehouse et al. (2023) report improvements using GPT-4 for data augmentation in cross-lingual commonsense reasoning tasks. While cross-lingual tasks involve separate languages, code-mixed tasks involve language switching within sentences. Nonetheless, the success reported by Whitehouse et al. (2023) supports the feasibility of our approach.

3 Methods

In this section, we introduce our data, the synthetic generation process, and our fine-tuning methods.

3.1 Natural Data

We conducted experiments using two human-labeled datasets which we call our natural data. The first is the Spanish-English SA dataset from the LinCE Benchmark (Aguilar et al., 2020), containing 18,789 CM tweets with code-mixing between English and Spanish. The second dataset is the Malayalam-English SA dataset from the MalayalamMixSentiment dataset (Chakravarthi et al., 2020), containing 5,452 CM YouTube movie review comments with code-mixing between English and Malayalam, a low-resource Dravidian language. The mean sentence lengths for both datasets are shown in Table 1.

Both datasets feature colloquial CM social media comments with diverse code-mixing patterns, presenting significant challenges to NLP models. They include sentiment categories: *Positive*, *Negative*, or *Neutral*. For preprocessing, we filtered out comments labeled "non-Malayalam" or "unknown" from the Malayalam-English dataset and adjusted the data splits. Both datasets were cleaned to remove empty strings, hashtags, URLs, and symbols, with emojis replaced by English descriptions using the emoji library.²

²<https://pypi.org/project/emoji/>

Language	Natural	LLM-Generated	Random Translation
Sp-En	13.0 \pm 7.4	14.7 \pm 4.0	23.1 \pm 30.4
Ma-En	8.2 \pm 3.1	8.4 \pm 1.7	N/A

Table 1: Mean sentence length and standard deviation, measured in words, of natural and synthetic data for each language.

3.2 Data Augmentation Methods

Our primary data augmentation method involves prompting LLM with task demonstrations to generate synthetic CM training data. As a secondary method to use for comparison, we implement the more traditional technique of translating monolingual sentences into CM.

3.2.1 LLM Prompting

We use GPT-4 as our LLM, as many past studies (Whitehouse et al., 2023; Yong et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023) have found high CM performance in GPT-based models. We construct instructions for GPT-4 based on previously successful CM generation prompts (Whitehouse et al., 2023; Yong et al., 2023) and empirical observations of the data. Additionally, we provide task demonstrations randomly sampled from the natural pre-processed training dataset, which may again appear in the SA fine-tuning phase, with an equal amount of demonstrations for each class. Since LLM requires few task demonstrations, this data augmentation approach is not contingent on having a large dataset, and synthetic data generation utilized 15 to 50 examples. The prompt refinement process, our final prompt, and data generation implementation details can be viewed in Appendix B.1.

Our final synthetic data sizes were \sim 53,000 in Spanish-English and \sim 24,000 in Malayalam-English. Shown in Table 1, LLM-generated sentences effectively resembled natural CM sentences in mean sentence length. However, LLM-generated sentences tended to vary less in sentence length, indicated by consistently lower standard deviation values.

3.2.2 Random Translation

Our secondary technique, Random Translation, converts a monolingual SA corpus into a CM SA corpus using machine translation. Similar to Li and Murray (2022); Tareq et al. (2023); Tarunesh et al. (2021), we used Stanford’s Sentiment140

dataset (Go et al., 2009) and SemEval’s Sentiment Analysis in Twitter dataset (Rosenthal et al., 2017) as monolingual corpora and randomly translated parts of English tweets into Spanish through Marian NMT (Junczys-Dowmunt et al., 2018). We did not use this technique for Malayalam-English due to the lack of reliable machine translation systems supporting Malayalam.

The resulting synthetic corpus consisted of 49,560 data samples. As shown in Table 1, the randomly translated data exhibited a significantly higher mean sentence length compared to LLM-generated synthetic data, due to constraints imposed by the statistics of the selected monolingual dataset. This highlights the limited flexibility of using pre-existing datasets for CM data augmentation.

3.3 Fine-tuning Sentiment Analysis

We fine-tuned multilingual BERT (mBERT), which was most commonly used in past benchmarks (Chakravarthi et al., 2020; Aguilar et al., 2020), and XLM-T, which is a XLM-R (Conneau et al., 2020) model pre-trained on millions of social media tweets from over thirty languages including Spanish and Malayalam. For each language, we trained both models on three datasets: only natural data, only synthetic data, and a combined dataset of natural and synthetic data. We also introduced a lower-resource experimental setup for Spanish-English, where we reduced the natural data to a 3,000-sample subset to align with Li and Murray (2022). Table 2 summarize the data sizes used in the full Spanish-English, subset of Spanish-English, and Malayalam-English experimental setups. For the full 12.2k Spanish-English data setup, we repeated experiments using both LLM-generated and randomly-translated synthetic data to compare the two techniques. In all, we hypothesized that training on both natural and synthetic data would lead to the highest performance, as it benefited from both natural data, which had a similar distribution and style as the natural test data, and synthetic data, which increased the number of examples for models to learn CM features.

In all Spanish-English experiments, when training on a combination of synthetic and natural data, we adopted the gradual fine-tuning method proposed by Xu et al. (2021) and applied to CM data augmentation by Li and Murray (2022). Treating the synthetic CM data as out-of-domain data, we

Language	Train		Val	Test
	Natural	Synthetic		
Sp-En	12,194	50,000	1,859	4,736
Sp-En	3,000	50,000	1,859	4,736
Ma-En	3,452	15,000	1,000	1,000

Table 2: Training, validation, and test data sizes for each round of experiments. Each row included training on natural data, synthetic data, and the combined (natural + synthetic) data, repeated for mBERT and XLM-T across different types of synthetic data.

fine-tuned the model for five stages, gradually decreasing the amount of synthetic data from 50,000 to {25000, 15000, 5000, 0} for subsequent training stages while keeping natural data constant. As a result, the model gradually fit closer to natural data, which it would be tested on. In Malayalam-English, we retained one stage of training due to higher performance after preliminary experimentation. Fine-tuning hyperparameters and the impact of gradual fine-tuning are included in Appendix B.2 and Appendix C, respectively.

4 Results

This section evaluates overall model performance and then quantifies relative percent improvements contributed by data augmentation.

4.1 Overall Performance

Table 3 presents the overall F1 scores achieved for the Spanish-English and Malayalam-English CM SA datasets in the full 12.2k and 3.5k data setup, respectively, compared to zero-shot scores, baseline scores, and current benchmarks. All Spanish-English models were evaluated using the same test dataset as the LinCE benchmark. However, the Malayalam-English models used adjusted train-test splits in comparison to benchmarks, due to the removal of extraneous labels (see Section 3.1).

4.1.1 Baselines

To provide reference points, GPT-4, mBERT, and XLM-T were evaluated using a zero-shot approach, where no additional training or fine-tuning was applied. For GPT-4, we generated predictions by providing a prompt with no examples and parsing the generated outputs directly as the model’s predictions. For mBERT and XLM-T, we loaded in the pre-trained models with an extra classification

Method	Model	Natural Data	Synthetic Data	Spanish-English F1	Malayalam-English F1
Zero-shot	GPT-4			0.546	0.524
No Training	mBERT			0.045	0.131
No Training	XLM-T			0.543	0.354
Dataset Baseline	mBERT	✓		0.564	0.750
Our Baseline	XLM-T	✓		0.588	0.843
Random Translation	XLM-T		✓	0.491	
LLM-Generated	XLM-T		✓	0.544	0.595
Random Translation	XLM-T	✓	✓	0.563	
LLM-Generated	XLM-T	✓	✓	0.603	0.763
Top Score				0.622	0.804

Table 3: Summary of weighted F1 scores on the full 12k Spanish-English and 3.5k Malayalam-English datasets with comparisons to other baselines. Scores in bold indicate our highest performance on each dataset. The top score for Spanish-English is anonymous on the LinCE benchmark, and the top score for Malayalam-English is [Bai et al. \(2021\)](#).

layer and proceeded directly to evaluation without further training. Results are shown in the first section of Table 3.

Our zero-shot analysis reveals three main findings. First, consistent with [Zhang et al. \(2023\)](#), large language models like GPT-4 are still not sufficiently adept for zero-shot tasks like Spanish-English and Malayalam-English sentiment analysis, as they perform below dataset benchmarks ([Aguilar et al., 2020](#); [Chakravarthi et al., 2020](#)). However, GPT-4’s zero-shot performance on Malayalam-English is still surprisingly high considering the language is low-resource. Second, the size of an LLM does not necessarily equate to better performance. XLM-T, with its task-specific pre-training on code-mixed data from Common Crawl and Twitter ([Li and Murray, 2022](#)), demonstrates that a smaller, specialized model can be nearly as effective as a much larger general-purpose model in Spanish-English, aligning with [Zhang et al. \(2023\)](#). Lastly, XLM-T shows a significant zero-shot performance boost over mBERT for both Spanish-English and Malayalam-English, demonstrating the importance of task-specific pre-training.

The second section of Table 3 shows results after fine-tuning XLM-T on the full natural data. XLM-T consistently outperforms mBERT in both languages, similar to its zero-shot performance. Our Spanish-English baseline with XLM-T surpasses the LinCE Organizers’ baseline using mBERT, and our Malayalam-English baseline achieves the highest score on this dataset, exceeding the previous top score by [Bai et al. \(2021\)](#).

4.1.2 Performance with Synthetic Data

The third and fourth sections of Table 3 display results when fine-tuning XLM-T on solely synthetic data and on a combination of natural and synthetic data, respectively.

When fine-tuning XLM-T on solely synthetic Spanish-English data, LLM-generated data slightly improves performance compared to no training, whereas randomly-translated data decrease performance below zero-shot levels.

Combining random-translated data with the full natural Spanish-English data similarly degrades performance relative to our baseline, highlighting its less effective representation of code-mixing. On the other hand, combining natural and LLM-generated synthetic data yields our highest Spanish-English score of 0.603 F1, ranking third on the LinCE benchmark. This demonstrates that LLM-generated data can mitigate overfitting and enhance task-specific model performance beyond LLM’s own zero-shot capabilities in Spanish-English.

For Malayalam-English, training on either synthetic or natural data significantly improves performance compared to zero-shot results. LLM-generated synthetic data nearly double XLM-T’s performance, and natural data more than double it, achieving higher scores than Spanish-English. Training with both natural and synthetic data averages their individual performances, suggesting that there exists a performance threshold past which synthetic data can no longer help. Nonetheless, the combination surpasses the dataset benchmark ([Chakravarthi et al., 2020](#)).

4.2 Contribution of Data Augmentation

Table 4 displays the relative improvements from data augmentation techniques on the three data setups: the full Spanish-English dataset, the subset of the Spanish-English dataset, and the Malayalam-English dataset. Unlike absolute scores, which can vary with training conditions, percent improvements provide a consistent measure for comparing models trained with and without synthetic data.

4.2.1 Full Spanish-English Dataset

The contrast in relative improvements between the LLM-Generated technique and the Random Translation technique, which are shown in the first section of Table 4, can be attributed to two factors: First, the monolingual corpora used for Random Translation did not closely match the distribution of natural CM data, and second, the code-switching points in the synthetic data were randomly generated. Since LLM-generated data did not experience the same performance losses, it mitigated these issues by producing sentences that more accurately reflected natural data distributions and incorporated intentional code-switching rather than random occurrences.

4.2.2 Subset of Spanish-English Dataset

In the subset of the Spanish-English dataset, where the training set was reduced to 3,000 samples, LLM-generated data showed a more substantial improvement for both models than on the full Spanish-English dataset, displayed in the second section of Table 4. These improvements outperformed the results obtained by Li and Murray (2022), indicating that LLM-generated data samples are particularly effective in a Spanish-English low-resource setting.

4.2.3 Malayalam-English Dataset

Displayed in the third section of Table 4, the high baseline accuracy of XLM-T in Malayalam-English led to a performance drop with synthetic data, while mBERT’s performance improved slightly. In comparison, Li and Murray (2022) cite large improvements using their language-agnostic method, which reduces the focus on Malayalam’s particular language features and emphasizes learning CM patterns. Nonetheless, this method also improves on a lower baseline score. These disparities suggest that the utility of synthetic data may diminish when the model’s baseline performance is already high.

4.2.4 Cross-Dataset Analysis

Across all datasets, synthetic data generally enhances performance up to a certain threshold. Models with lower initial baselines, such as those trained on the limited Spanish-English subset, show greater percent improvements with synthetic data, reaching almost the same performance as models with quadruple the amount of natural data. This performance stability suggests that LLM-powered data can effectively boost performance for relatively small datasets. Conversely, models with high initial baselines, like XLM-T in Malayalam-English, may experience a decrease in accuracy when synthetic data samples are added, as synthetic data maintain performance at a similar threshold.

Overall, LLM-powered data augmentation proves effective in improving five of six models for CM SA, with our Spanish-English system achieving a notable 9.32% relative percent improvement, surpassing other methods such as Li and Murray (2022) under similar conditions.

5 Analysis

This section details results from human evaluation, subsequent empirical data analysis, and discussion about the trade-offs of generating synthetic data.

5.1 Human Evaluation

To gain insight on the quality of LLM-generated data, we asked native speakers to evaluate Spanish-English and Malayalam-English sentences from both the original dataset and the LLM-generated dataset on the grounds of *Code-Mixing Naturalness*, *Label Accuracy*, and if the sentences are *Human or Machine-Generated*. 400 Malayalam-English sentences were labeled by one annotator, and 200 Spanish-English sentences were labeled by two annotators, all of whom were balanced bilinguals with C1-C2 proficiency in the languages they annotated, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Detailed instructions for evaluators and descriptions of each label are elaborated in Appendix D. In this study, our human evaluation was constrained due to limited resources. While this is a limitation, it is worth noting that other studies, such as Whitehouse et al. (2023), have worked with even smaller sample sizes.

As shown in the first graph of Figure 2, annotators rated LLM-generated sentences similarly to human-generated sentences in terms of naturalness for both datasets. This suggests that

Dataset	Method	Model	Baseline	+Synthetic	% Change
Full Spanish-English _{12.2k}	LLM-Generated	XLM-T	0.588	0.603	2.55%
	LLM-Generated	mBERT	0.503	0.533	5.96%
	Random Translation	XLM-T	0.588	0.491	-16.5%
	Random Translation	mBERT	0.503	0.512	1.79%
Subset of Spanish-English _{3k}	LLM-Generated	XLM-T	0.547	0.598	9.32%
	LLM-Generated	mBERT	0.487	0.526	8.01%
	Li and Murray (2022)	XLM-T	0.649	0.660	1.68%
	Li and Murray (2022)	mBERT	0.495	0.506	2.12%
Malayalam-English _{3.5k}	LLM-Generated	XLM-T	0.843	0.763	-9.84%
	LLM-Generated	mBERT	0.737	0.745	1.09%
	Li and Murray (2022)	mBERT	0.670	0.722	7.73%

Table 4: A comparison of relative percent improvements achieved by different data augmentation methods on our three datasets for XLM-T and mBERT, with the largest improvements highlighted in bold. F1 scores are also provided from fine-tuning on natural data and on a combination of natural and synthetic data.

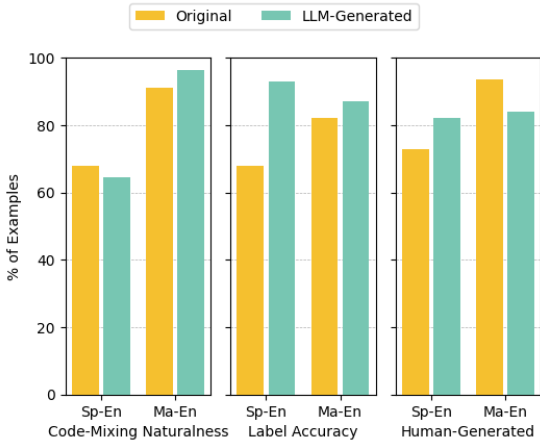


Figure 2: Human evaluation on Spanish-English and Malayalam-English sentences from the original datasets and the LLM-Generated datasets.

LLM-generated sentences did not appear unnatural when compared to human sentences. Notably, our Malayalam-English annotator labeled 5.5% more synthetic sentences as natural compared to human sentences. Since we define CM naturalness as the fluency of a sentence such that it can be recognized and accepted as authentic CM in real-life contexts, this finding indicates that, despite the differences in appearance between LLM-generated and natural data, both forms may be perceived as valid representations of CM in the real world. Furthermore, while there is a slight increase in the rating of synthetic sentences in Malayalam-English, the difference is relatively small and may not represent a significant divergence between LLM-generated and human sentences in terms of perceived natural-

ness.

Consistent across both datasets, LLM-generated data exhibited significantly higher sentiment label accuracy compared to human-generated data, shown in the second graph of Figure 2. This finding suggests that LLM-generated samples are less ambiguous, likely because we explicitly prompt GPT-4 to generate sentences for the sentiment analysis task. In contrast, real-world social media tweets, created without this directive, may exhibit greater semantic variability. These results highlight potential label ambiguity issues in the original datasets, particularly for Spanish-English, and demonstrate the utility of synthetic sentences to mitigate these issues by providing clearer examples during training. However, less ambiguous synthetic data may also lead to models that are less robust to natural complexities in human expression.

When predicting whether a sentence was human- or machine-generated, annotators faced significant challenges in distinguishing between LLM-generated and human sentences, shown in Figure 2. For Spanish-English, annotators mistakenly identified more LLM-generated sentences as human-produced than actual human sentences. In Malayalam-English, while annotators more accurately identified human sentences, a substantial margin of error persisted. Consequently, even though annotators tended to rate certain groups with higher naturalness or label accuracy, they lacked a clear understanding and identifiable cues indicating the sentences' original sources.

Ultimately, inter-annotator agreement was low for Spanish-English ($\kappa < 0.3$). While our findings

Sentences	Label	Prediction
Happy Friday #elvacilondelaGatita	neutral	positive
#elvacilondelagatita #quotes #friday	positive	neutral
Sentences	Label	Correction
Get your outfit now! Escoge tus prendas favoritas y haz tu pedido Blusa morada \$20.00 #ilovesalhuaclathing	neutral	positive
Como me encabróna enterarme de quien se va en The Bachelor sin haber visto el episodio Angry Face	positive	negative

Table 5: Examples of sentences from the natural Spanish-English dataset, including their true labels, XLM-T’s predicted labels, and the proposed corrections by human evaluators. Translations of the CM sentences into English are provided in Table 7 in Appendix A.

offer a qualitative perspective to the quantitative fine-tuning results, we encourage more comprehensive studies dedicated to human evaluation in the future.

5.2 Empirical Data Analysis

When observing natural and synthetic data, we focus on explaining two questions: (1) Why did the Malayalam-English baseline perform better than Spanish-English despite less training data? (2) Why did synthetic data improve Spanish-English performance while decreasing Malayalam-English performance in XLM-T? We find that the challenges in the dataset, task, and the training background of LLM best answer these questions.

5.2.1 Dataset Challenge

Aligning with the results of human evaluation, we found significant label ambiguity in the human-labeled Spanish-English dataset due to both the inherent ambivalence of human speech and the various interpretations that can be made by human annotators.

In Table 5, the first two examples highlight annotation ambiguity. Despite conveying similar ideas of anticipating Friday and listening to the Hispanic radio morning show "El Vacilón de la Gatita," they are labeled differently. Notably, the use of "Happy" in the first sentence seems to imply a positive sentiment but is labeled as neutral.

The subsequent examples illustrate disagreements between human evaluators and true labels. One example, a clothing ad with a seemingly positive connotation, could be interpreted as neutral due to its advertising context. Conversely, the second example, discussing hearing a spoiler for

"The Bachelor," seems to clearly warrant a negative rather than positive label.

In contrast, the Malayalam-English dataset contains cleaner, more consistently phrased examples. A significant portion of negatively labeled sentences include the word "Dislike," simplifying the sentiment analysis task. This consistency likely contributes to Malayalam-English’s high performance compared to Spanish-English. We provide further analysis of the challenges of CM sentiment analysis in Appendix E.

5.2.2 Data Parallels

We discovered many parallels between natural and synthetic Spanish-English data both semantically and syntactically. Shown in Table 6, both natural and synthetic sentences discuss common ideas, such as replaying a song, and use Spanish-English hybrid words like "textear." LLM’s ability to adapt to the topics discussed in the Spanish-English data and to capture these CM nuances supports the high performance gains synthetic data provide.

Natural	Synthetic
Something came up algo surgió un problema sorry something came up and I can’t make it to the party	Can’t believe I got stood up... Mi date dijo "sorry, something came up" like for real?!
Ojos verdes on replayyy	This song me tiene in my feels, re-play x100
Estaba pensando en textearle a mi hermana y al minuto me llega un mensaje de ella #sisterlyconnection	Cuando te voy a textear y apareces typing, call it telepathy or just buena onda
Se me olvidaron todos los passwords del Hospital y no podía entrar a ningun lado #PerksDeLosFinales	UGH, olvidé mi password again y no puedo entrar a mi cuenta... FML
Deslike adicha ella punnara makkalkum nanni	Plot had potential, but execution po-lilla , disappointed.

Table 6: Comparisons of natural and synthetic sentences in Spanish-English (red) and Malayalam-English (yellow). Overlapping words or phrases are highlighted in bold. Translations of the CM sentences into English are provided in in Table 8 in Appendix A.

While the Spanish-English natural data frequently featured *alternational* CM patterns, where sentences alternated between languages, Malayalam-English natural data primarily exhibited *insertional* CM, where English words were occasionally inserted into predominantly Malayalam sentences. LLMs often generated *alternational* CM in Spanish-English and *insertional* CM with English as the dominant language in Malayalam-English. As a result, they improved performance in Spanish-English but did not align well with the

Malayalam-English natural dataset, where Malayalam was the dominant language. Even though LLM-generated Malayalam-English data sounded natural according to human evaluators, it reflected a real-world insertional CM pattern not present in our particular human-labeled dataset. As a result, this discrepancy highlights the inherent complexity of CM tasks for ML models due to the diverse nature of CM cultural practices.

A key challenge remains in controlling the type of CM—whether alternational or insertional—that LLMs produce. While LLMs handle alternation between English and Spanish with relative ease due to extensive training data, balancing languages like Malayalam and English remains a significant challenge. Consequently, the effectiveness of data augmentation is contingent not only the model’s initial task performance but also the similarity between the CM patterns in natural and synthetic datasets.

5.3 Trade-offs with Using Synthetic Data

While our research demonstrates that LLMs can effectively generate CM training data, the key question is why we should prefer LLM-generated data over human-labeled data.

Collecting high-quality natural CM data is resource-intensive, involving web scraping, human annotation, and rigorous quality control. For instance, to create the Spanish-English SA dataset, Patwa et al. (2020) scraped CM data from Twitter, employed three Amazon Mechanical Turk³ workers to label 18,789 tweets, and conducted manual reviews to correct errors. The estimated cost for annotating these tweets was approximately \$3,054 USD, based on the minimum rate for Spanish-speaking workers.⁴ A detailed cost breakdown is available in Appendix G.

Comparing the baseline scores on the full Spanish-English dataset to the subset in Section 4.2, adding ~9,000 human-labeled sentences to a baseline of 3,000 resulted in a **7.49%** improvement. According to the procedure above, the cost of these sentences was approximately **\$1,495 USD**, and the annotation process likely took several weeks.

In contrast, generating synthetic data using GPT-4 for both Spanish-English and Malayalam-English, including preliminary experiments, cost \$376.54

USD in total. Adding 50,000 synthetic sentences to the same baseline of 3,000 resulted in a **9.32%** improvement. These sentences were generated in hours and cost only **\$37.92 USD**, making synthetic data generation 40 times cheaper than manual annotation of a corpus one-fifth the synthetic size.

While a larger volume of synthetic sentences is needed to achieve the same performance gains as a smaller set of human-labeled sentences, synthetic data generation is significantly more cost-effective and faster. Moreover, adding a large amount of synthetic data to natural data yields greater performance improvements (9.32%) than adding a smaller set of human-labeled data (7.49%).

6 Conclusion and Future Work

To address CM data scarcity, we propose using few-shot prompting with LLMs to generate synthetic, labeled CM data for SA. We tested this approach by training mBERT and XLM-T on natural, synthetic, and combined datasets for Spanish-English and Malayalam-English. In Spanish-English, our method improved sentiment classification by 9.32% for the 3k training setup and achieved third place on the LinCE benchmark for the 12k training setup. Human evaluations confirmed that our synthetic data closely mimic natural data and are indistinguishable from human-labeled examples. For Malayalam-English, our baseline system exceeded the highest published benchmark with an F1 score of 0.847, though further improvements with additional data were limited. Our findings indicate that LLM-generated synthetic data are most effective for enhancing models with low baseline performance, particularly when the languages are evenly represented as well as for resource-constrained scenarios. Overall, LLM-powered data augmentation offers a cost-effective alternative to human annotation, producing high-quality, natural-sounding sentences with minimal label ambiguity.

To improve performance in Malayalam-English, we intend to apply our observations of synthetic data to refine our LLM prompt and regenerate data. In addition, we aim to extend our research to encompass a broader range of LLMs and dialects, including those without English as a base and those primarily written in non-Latin scripts. Ultimately, our findings offer a promising avenue for CM data augmentation, and we encourage further exploration with LLMs in CM, an area which presents technical challenge and valuable social impact.

³<https://www.mturk.com/>

⁴Minimum rates for workers with premium qualifications are detailed here: <https://requester.mturk.com/pricing>

7 Limitations

The findings may not generalize across all types of data or tasks. While we find that results are generalizable across different PLMs such as mBERT and XLM-T and that LLMs typically generate natural-sounding sentences, the effectiveness of the data augmentation method may vary depending on the specific characteristics of the dataset, the resource level of the language, or the nature of the natural language processing task. Our experiments focused on Spanish-English and Malayalam-English for sentiment analysis, and we encourage future research to explore this method in other languages and tasks.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of this data augmentation method is limited by the baseline performance on natural data. If performance on natural data is already higher than the threshold synthetic data can raise results to, then further improvements are difficult to achieve. To mitigate this issue, an option is to regenerate synthetic data with an improved prompt, resulting in more natural synthetic data that can raise performance to an even higher threshold.

However, quickly quantifying the effectiveness of a prompt or strategy is challenging because it necessitates repeatedly generating large datasets and retraining models to measure performance improvements, which may become resource intensive if repeated numerous times. Furthermore, human evaluation was constrained to 200 and 400 data samples due to limited resources. In the future, developing a metric to quantify synthetic data quality without fine-tuning a separate model or using human evaluation would help streamline the development process and provide more direct insights.

Notably, there are data augmentation methods for CM SA other than [Li and Murray \(2022\)](#) and similar to our implementation of Random Translation, including [Tareq et al. \(2023\)](#), who convert a monolingual English corpus into Bangla-English using a word embedding algorithm, and [Ma et al. \(2020\)](#), who also randomly translate parts of a monolingual English corpus into Spanish-English. However, they either use different datasets, do not provide all baseline scores to be able to compare, do not detail their exact experiments, or do not release their code, so we were not able to directly compare our techniques with theirs.

8 Ethics Statement

Like most data augmentation methods, LLM-powered synthetic data generation raises ethical concerns because of its potential to magnify biases within datasets. Since multilingual NLP and CM are interlaced with people’s identities, cultures, and heritages, it is important that LLMs do not misrepresent peoples’ cultures and languages in offensive or inaccurate ways. As a result, we acknowledge the importance of working alongside qualified CM experts and including speakers familiar with the languages in CM patterns in the research process. Before deploying models to the public, it is vital that generated data is verified and CM language models are thoroughly tested.

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A Translations of Tables and Figures

This section provides translations of the CM sentences used in Figure 1 and in the tables in Section 5.2. Figure 3 is a translated version of Figure 1, Table 7 is a translated version of Table 5, and Table 8 is a translated version of Table 6.

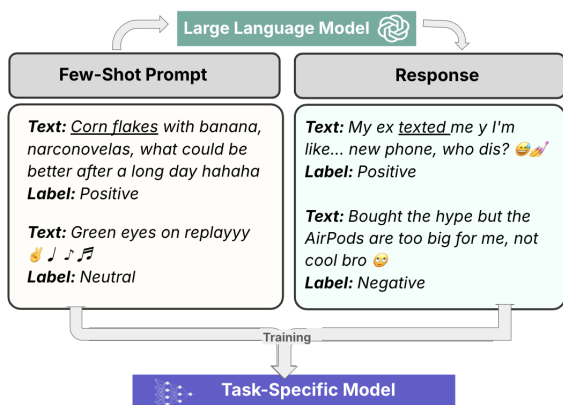


Figure 3: Overall system workflow with translated examples of Spanish-English CM tweets as natural data (left) and synthetic data (right). Underlined words represent Spanish-English hybrid words, examples of the complexities introduced by CM.

B Implementation Details

B.1 Data Generation Details

Table 4 displays our prompt-tuning process, where we iteratively improved on our data generation prompt to the LLM. For all experiments, we prompted gpt-4-1106-preview with the OpenAI library, with temperature 0.6. For Spanish-English, we varied the number of shots m between {15, 50, 150, 500} given in our prompt with the objective to find optimal shot size. To overcome the maximum sequence length, we instructed GPT-4 to generate 50 data points and automatically repeated this process until we reached our desired dataset size. For each iteration, the prompt contained newly randomly-sampled task demonstrations from the training data. We did not post-filter the data due to its size and subjectivity. Our total synthetic data sizes were ~53000 in Spanish-English and ~24000 in Malayalam-English.

Sentences	Label	Prediction
Happy Friday #thejoke- oftheKitten	neutral	positive
#thejokeoftheKitten	positive	neutral
#quotes #friday		

Sentences	Label	Correction
Get your outfit now!	neutral	positive
Choose your favorite gar- ments and place your or- der Purple blouse \$20.00		
#ilovesalhuaclothing		
How I find out who’s leaving on The Bachelor	positive	negative
without having seen the episode Angry Face		

Table 7: Translated examples of sentences from the natural Spanish-English dataset, including their true labels, XLM-T’s predicted labels, and the proposed corrections by human evaluators.

Natural	Synthetic
Something came up something came up a problem sorry something came up and I can’t make it to the party	Can’t believe I got stood up... Mi date dijo "sorry, some- thing came up " like for real?!
Green eyes on replayyy	This song has me in my feels, replay x100
I was thinking about tex- ting my sister and a minute later I get a message from her #sisterlyconnection	When I’m going to text and you show up typing, call it telepathy or just good vibes
I forgot all the passwords of the Hospital and I couldn’t enter anywhere #Perkofthe- Finals	UGH, I forgot my password again and I cannot enter my account... FML
Deslike adicha ella punnara makkalkum nanni	Plot had potential, but execu- tion polilla , disappointed.

Table 8: Comparisons of translated natural and synthetic sentences in Spanish-English (red) and Malayalam-English (yellow). Overlapping words or phrases are highlighted in bold. The Malayalam-English data are not translated due to its low-resource nature and the lack of available translators.

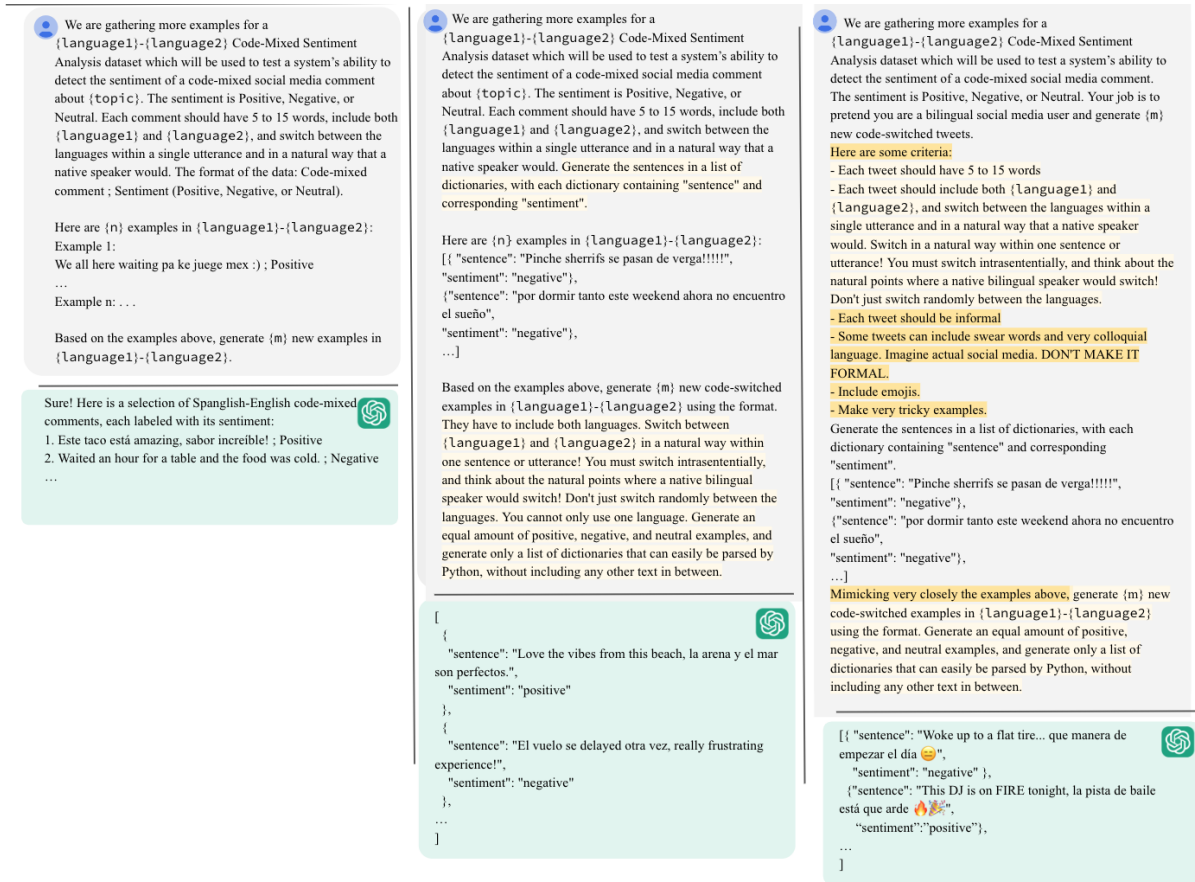


Figure 4: Prompt-tuning process, showing system input in gray, LLM sample output in teal, and iterative improvements made to our prompt highlighted in yellow. Our final prompt is shown to the right.

B.2 Fine-tuning Details

Chosen based on Li and Murray (2022)’s experiments, in our gradual fine-tuning approach, the synthetic data sizes were $\{50000, 25000, 15000, 5000, 0\}$, and each stage included 3 epochs. For all experiments, we used the Transformers library (Wolf et al., 2020) to fine-tune XLM-T with a task-specific classification layer using AdamW (Loshchilov and Hutter, 2019) optimizer. According to the hyperparameters of the dataset benchmark (Patwa et al., 2020; Aguilar et al., 2020) and our empirical experiments involving hyperparameter grid search, we set the highest sequence length at 40 tokens, batch size 32, weight decay 0.01, learning rate $5e^{-5}$, and epsilon $1e^{-8}$. For gradual fine-tuning, the learning rates used were $\{1e^{-6}, 2e^{-6}, 2e^{-6}, 4e^{-6}, 2e^{-6}\}$, determined through preliminary experimentation and standard grid search. We also tuned additional hyperparameters including synthetic data size, shot size, and temperature based on a standard grid search. Experiments ran on a 16GB T4 GPU.

Language	Training	F1 Score
Spanish-English	1-Stage	0.595
	5-Stage	0.603
Malayalam-English	1-Stage	0.843
	5-Stage	0.718

Table 9: Comparison of F1 scores when XLM-T is fine-tuned with one stage and with five stages for each language.

C Impact of Gradual Fine-tuning

Table 9 compares F1 score for one stage of training to five stages of training using gradual fine-tuning for Spanish-English and Malayalam-English. Results marginally increase for Spanish-English while decreasing for Malayalam-English. This may be due to less suitable hyperparameters used in five stage training in comparison to one stage.

D Instructions for Human Evaluation

Two native Spanish-English bilingual students, who did not have knowledge of the rest of the

experimentation, were each given the same 100 code-mixing texts and corresponding labels, 50 of which were randomly sampled from the natural training data and 50 of which were randomly sampled from the synthetic data. They did not know which were natural or synthetic, as the sentences were scrambled in random order. One native Malayalam-English bilingual speaker was given 400 code-mixing texts and corresponding labels, 200 of which were randomly sampled from natural training data and 200 of which were randomly sampled from synthetic data.

Our first Spanish-English annotator was a balanced bilingual with C2 proficiency in both English (native language) and Spanish (second language). Our second Spanish-English annotator was a balanced bilingual with C2 proficiency in Spanish (native language) and C1 proficiency in English (second language). The Malayalam-English annotator was a balanced bilingual with C2 proficiency in both Malayalam (native language) and English (second language). All annotators reported to use both languages frequently in their daily lives. The initial instructions given were:

You have been provided with a spreadsheet containing social media comments that are intended to be code-mixed in Spanish and English, though some may not be. Each comment is labeled with a sentiment—'Positive,' 'Negative,' or 'Neutral.' Your task is to evaluate each comment based on the following criteria: Read the Sentence: Carefully review each comment. Fill Out Ratings: Code-mixing Naturalness: Evaluate how naturally the comment switches between Malayalam and English. Label Accuracy: Assess whether the sentiment label ('Positive,' 'Negative,' or 'Neutral') accurately reflects the comment's connotation. If you disagree with the label, you must provide an alternative in the 'If you answered "Disagree", what would you label it?' column. Human or Machine: Determine whether the comment was written by a human or generated artificially by a machine. Additional Comments (Optional): If you have further observations or concerns, please record them in the 'Additional comments' field. Keep in mind: Code-mixing refers to

the blending of two or more languages in speech. These comments are sourced from social media, so they may be informal, include emojis, or contain spelling errors. If you are uncertain about your evaluation, choose the most likely option and note your concerns in the comments. Please ensure that your evaluations are accurate and consistent across the dataset.

For "Code-mixing Naturalness," they were given the description:

Evaluate naturalness on the changing between Spanish and English. Choose between the options: "This sounds natural, like something people would actually type/say," "This sounds a bit strange/could be improved," and "This sounds unnatural/needs to be rewritten." Do not consider naturalness/strangeness of the topics discussed. Do not consider grammar/spelling mistakes unless they are extreme. Do not consider the label.

It is important to note that only the first option for CM naturalness is counted as "natural" while the "strange" and "unnatural" classifications are grouped into an omnibus "unnatural" category. For "Label Accuracy," they were given the description:

Would you agree with the label associated with each sentence? Is a sentence labeled "positive" actually giving positive connotations? Answer with "Agree" or "Disagree."

For "Human or Machine-Generated," they were given the description:

Do you think a human wrote this or a machine wrote this? Now you can consider any and all aspects e.g. fluidity, topics, mechanics, anything.

Additionally, evaluators are given the option to correct labels for which they disagreed with and to leave additional comments.

E Case Study on Laughter

We investigated the use of "jajaja," shown in Table 10, the Spanish version of typing laughter, which

Index	Sentences	True Label	Predicted Label
1	jajajaj okay okay ill wait and give them to you on valentines day so it can be your cheat day	positive	positive
2	I can imagine jajaja	positive	positive
3	most likely jajajaj	positive	positive
4	Girrrl I wish I had your self-esteem jaja	neutral	positive
5	Jajajajajajajajajajajajajajajaj ok ok ok	neutral	positive
6	jovanigram’s video JAJAJAJAJAJ	neutral	positive
7	tb to your birthday :) jajajaja	neutral	positive
8	Whattt Frowning Face with Open Mouth #forever-riendome jajajajajajaj	neutral	negative

Table 10: Examples of natural sentences including laughter in the test data, with true labels and predicted labels.

occurred frequently in both natural and synthetic data and can have positive, neutral, or negative connotations.

This case study demonstrates the challenges of CM sentiment analysis in that 1) human labels are sometimes ambiguous, 2) sentences are short, 3) the model predictions may be biased toward the positive label, and 4) emojis and symbols play an important role. Examples of ambiguity are in sentences 1 and 2, which could also be considered neutral, since sentences 5 and 6 are neutral. Sentences 2, 3, and 5 also contain very little information as compared to sentence 1, which the model had correct and shows understanding despite sentence 1’s complexity. We also observe almost all positive predictions to the class imbalance as described in Section 5, where it is the model’s mistake and there is fairly little ambiguity like sentence 4. For sentence 6, the model may not realize " :) " refers to a crying happy face and errs. On the other hand, for sentence 8, "Frowning Face with Open Mouth" is the English description of the emoji from the original tweet, which likely led the model to respond with negative. The change from emoji to description may also be a factor in performance worth future exploration.

F Generated Sentences about Code-Mixing

Table 11 presents an intriguing observation: when asked to generate code-mixed sentences, many of the sentences ended up being about code-mixing or code-switching. In the CM sentences it was asked to generate, no theme was specified, yet out of 12865 sentences, 9 mention "code-switching," 40 mention "bilingual," 162 mention "Spanish-

English," and 5 mention "French," and all discuss being skilled or having fun at code-switching. Perhaps LLM has developed somewhat of a personality, or perhaps this is due to the input instructions.

G Cost Analysis of Data Collection

G.1 Natural Data

To estimate the cost incurred by Patwa et al. (2020) of annotating 18,789 tweets using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), we first determine the number of HITs (Human Intelligence Tasks) required. Each HIT includes 10 tweets, but only 8 are for annotation purposes, with 2 serving as quality control. Thus, to annotate 18,789 tweets, we need approximately 2,349 HITs. To hire workers fluent in Spanish, HITs are required to be priced at at least \$1.00 per HIT.⁵ The total cost would then be computed as follows: 2,349 HITs multiplied by \$1.00 per HIT results in a total cost of \$2,349 USD. This estimate assumes that each HIT is completed by a single annotator and does not account for additional costs related to rejected assignments or quality control beyond the base HIT price.

Estimating the additional costs related to rejected assignments, if 30% of all assignments were rejected and reassigned, the total cost would increase to \$3,054 USD.

These calculations use the case of Patwa et al. (2020), but it is important to consider that other works generally require more than one annotator to label each data point. Then, the previously calculated costs would double or triple depending on the number of annotators. Furthermore, Patwa et al. (2020) do not release their exact price per HIT or the number of reassigned assignments, so there is

⁵<https://requester.mturk.com/pricing>

Sentences	English Translation	Labels
Creo que I finally got the hang of esto de code-switching, it's kinda fun!	I think I finally got the hang of code-switching, it's kinda fun!	positive
¿Does this count como un code-switched tweet? Asking for a friend	Does this count as a code-switched tweet? Asking for a friend	neutral
Ya no sé if I should hablar español o inglés, my brain is too code-switchy today	I still don't know if I should speak Spanish or English, my brain is too code-switchy today	neutral
Random pero I started learning French y ahora mezclo three languages, send help	Random but I started learning French and already mix three languages, send help	neutral

Table 11: Examples of synthetic sentences mentioning CM explicitly, their translations, and their labels. Red text is in Spanish.

high variability. Increased prices per HIT could increase costs significantly.

G.2 Synthetic Data

For generating synthetic data, we made requests to GPT-4 to generate 50 data points at a time. The purpose was to overcome the model's maximum sequence length. In the future, cost can be further reduced due to increasing maximum sequence length in LLMs.

To estimate the cost of generating 50,000 synthetic samples using GPT-4, we first determine the total number of tokens per request. Each request includes a prompt of 330 tokens and 15 data examples, each averaging 20.8 tokens, totaling 642 tokens for the prompt and examples. GPT-4 then generates 50 samples, each averaging 21 tokens, resulting in 1,050 tokens for the generated samples. Therefore, each request utilizes a total of 1,692 tokens. To generate 50,000 samples, we need to make 1,000 requests, resulting in a total of 1,692,000 tokens. Given GPT-4 pricing, which is \$10.00 per 1 million input tokens and \$30.00 per 1 million output tokens,⁶ we can calculate the costs as follows: For the 642,000 input tokens, the cost is \$6.42, while for the 1,050,000 output tokens, the cost is \$31.50. Thus, the total cost for generating 50,000 samples is approximately \$37.92.

⁶<https://openai.com/api/pricing/>

Balancing Transparency and Accuracy: A Comparative Analysis of Rule-Based and Deep Learning Models in Political Bias Classification

Manuel Nunez Martinez, Sonja Schmer-Galunder, Zoey Liu,
Sangpil Youm, Chathuri Jayaweera, Bonnie J. Dorr

University of Florida, FL, USA

{manuel.nunez, s.schmergalunder, liu.ying, youms,
chathuri.jayawee, bonniejdorr}@ufl.edu

Abstract

The unchecked spread of digital information, combined with increasing political polarization and the tendency of individuals to isolate themselves from opposing political viewpoints, has driven researchers to develop systems for automatically detecting political bias in media. This trend has been further fueled by discussions on social media. We explore methods for categorizing bias in US news articles, comparing rule-based and deep learning approaches. The study highlights the sensitivity of modern self-learning systems to unconstrained data ingestion, while reconsidering the strengths of traditional rule-based systems. Applying both models to left-leaning (CNN) and right-leaning (FOX) news articles, we assess their effectiveness on data beyond the original training and test sets. This analysis highlights each model’s accuracy, offers a framework for exploring deep-learning explainability, and sheds light on political bias in US news media. We contrast the opaque architecture of a deep learning model with the transparency of a linguistically informed rule-based model, showing that the rule-based model performs consistently across different data conditions and offers greater transparency, whereas the deep learning model is dependent on the training set and struggles with unseen data.

1 Introduction

The current political climate in the United States is characterized by intense polarization and an unprecedented ease of publishing and disseminating information, where partisan hostility and negative perceptions of opposing party members are at an all-time high (Doherty et al., 2023). This dynamic is further exacerbated by social media platforms, where users curate their news feeds in a way that reinforces existing biases and isolates them from diverse perspectives, stifling constructive dialogue and creating what researchers term “epistemic bubbles” (Kelly, 2021).

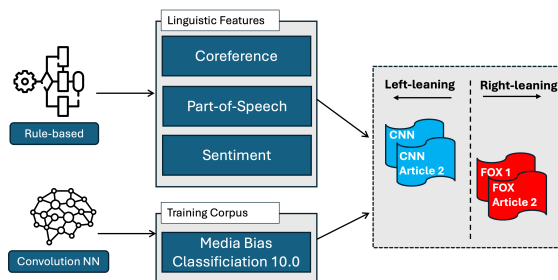


Figure 1: Comparison of Rule-based and Convolutional NN models: CNN and FOX news articles serve as external, unseen datasets for the Convolutional NN model. The rule-based model determines political bias using three linguistic features.

To address this, Natural Language Processing (NLP) researchers have developed models intended to automatically and objectively detect the presence and direction of bias. Examples include model architectures ranging from rule-based designs (Hube and Fetahu, 2018) to State of the Art (SoA) transformer architectures (Raza et al., 2024). While SoA architectures have been shown to distinguish biased narratives from neutral ones, they struggle to learn the nuanced nature of bias expression without a sufficiently large and comprehensive dataset.

Our contributions include an investigation of both a rule-based and a deep learning model for political bias classification as depicted in Figure 1, with the goal of promoting a more informed discussion on bias detection methodologies. To overcome data demands of SoA architectures, we adopt a convolutional neural network model.¹ Our contrasting approach is a simpler, more transparent rule-based model for bias classification using sentiment detection and linguistic features. This model does not rely on preexisting bias lexicons, “black box” machine learning models, or large training datasets. Moreover, its simplicity allows for easy correction, with a few, clearly delineated, components.

A second contribution is the use of linguistic in-

¹For brevity, we use “convolutional NN model” henceforth, as the abbreviation CNN is employed to refer to a news outlet.

formation for detecting an article’s stance towards entities.² Our rule-based approach includes a novel part-of-speech driven “reference resolution” (e.g., associating adjectives with a corresponding noun), for a more focused stance assignment. We emphasize that it is not our goal to achieve SoA performance for political bias classification through the rule-based model, but rather to explore the extent to which straightforward linguistic features (parts of speech, coreference, and sentiment) can be leveraged to classify political bias.

A third contribution involves exploring methods to enhance **explainability** of deep learning models. By testing a convolutional NN model on various datasets and correlating its performance disparities with differences in the data, we identify the features prioritized by the model.

Our findings show that the rule-based model maintains consistent performance across various data conditions, presenting a clear right-leaning bias for FOX. By contrast, the convolutional NN model relies heavily on its training set, struggling with data not directly related to the political bias data on which it is trained. The rule-based approach performs comparably to deep learning in these situations, making it more applicable to real-world scenarios and offering greater transparency.

The next section reviews bias detection methodologies in news media. Section 3 covers data collection, preprocessing, and experimental setup. Section 4 details the implementation of rule-based and convolutional NN models. Section 5 evaluates model performance and their application to external data, with concluding remarks in Section 6.

2 Related Work

Following [Mullainathan and Shleifer \(2002\)](#), we view bias in news articles not as a distortion or selective presentation of information to convey a belief, potentially impacting readers’ opinions. Media bias is categorized into coverage bias, gatekeeping bias, and statement bias ([Saez-Trumper et al., 2013](#)). Our study focuses on statement bias, i.e., the use of rhetoric describing entities ([Hamborg et al., 2019](#)) identified by our rule-based sentiment analysis model through identification of words conveying sentiment toward entities.

Entity Level Semantic Analysis (ELSA) ([Røn-](#)

²We define *stance* as the overall attitude of a news article toward an entity, whereas *sentiment* refers to a sentence-level (pos/neg) label.

[ningstad et al., 2022](#)), is exemplified by the work of [Luo and Mu \(2022\)](#), where sentiment toward an entity is computed across sentences, iteratively lowering the sentiment scores for entities appearing in negative contexts. Our current study adopts a form of ELSA that eliminates the need for “Negative Smoothing” by using part-of-speech (POS) resolution to identify sentiment towards a given entity, thus filtering out “noise” introduced by incidental occurrences of nearby negative terms. Deep-learning ELSA models often suffer from an opaque architecture and overly broad feature selection. [Fu et al. \(2022\)](#) address this with a *transparency layer* in a convolutional NN, that adjusts feature selection using an integrated gradient technique, aligning with the POS resolution method described here.

Bias detection in media is typically handled as binary or multi-class classification, mapping to political leanings using e.g., Support-Vector Machines, Logistic Regression, and Random Forest techniques ([Rodrigo-Ginés et al., 2024](#)) with hand-crafted feature extraction. [Hube and Fetahu \(2018\)](#) adopt a rule-based strategy, defining a list of inflammatory terms and expanding it with Word2Vec ([Mikolov et al., 2013](#)) from Conservapedia articles³ to create a lexicon of politically charged words.

Our rule-based model differs by not relying on lists of predefined terms; instead, it assumes that differing stances towards an entity across articles indicate bias. This simpler approach hinges on stances towards notable entities, differing from the single-sentence approach of [Hube and Fetahu \(2018\)](#). Our model’s theoretical foundation suggests that differences in stance expression between media outlets signal statement bias.

Bias detection research favors Transformers over Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs), due to their self-attention mechanism for modeling sequential structures ([Vaswani et al., 2017](#)). However, their reliance on low-level lexical information ([Rodrigo-Ginés et al., 2024](#)), is often insufficient for political bias detection.⁴ [Chen et al. \(2020\)](#) attempt to overcome hand-crafted feature extraction limitations, while avoiding deep learning’s pitfalls, by analyzing second-order information, like the frequency and order of biased statements, and employing machine-learning methods for bias detection. Our hybrid approach aligns with this, but focuses

³Conservapedia is a wiki-based resource shaped by right-conservative ideas ([Hube and Fetahu, 2018](#))

⁴Our convolutional NN model implementation is also affected by this constraint.

on human interpretable bias features (e.g. stance), and favors deep learning over classical machine learning methods for a more flexible interpretation of these features.

To develop explainability, techniques such as sensitivity analysis and layer-wise relevance propagation (LRP) address the black-box nature of deep learning models (Samek et al., 2017). This explores the limitations of deep convolutional architectures by assessing model performance against training and external articles, and identifying differences in the data that correlate with performance variations.

3 Data Querying and Setup

Both models require first acquiring article data and correcting imbalances to prevent model bias.

3.1 Data Sourcing

The news feed used to implement the models in our study is obtained through The Newscatcher API.⁵ This API provides flexible methods for querying data, allowing users to specify attributes such as news sources, keywords, topics, etc. Both models are premised on the idea that, by exploring outlets with extreme or centrist political biases, three distinct categories of bias can be identified, establishing ground truth. This allows for assigning far-right, center or far-left political leanings to each group of queried articles.

We first query the available news sources provided by the API and then research political bias charts to identify trustworthy sources and select an eclectic group of news outlets. We adopt a well-known academic media bias classification 10.0 (University of Central Oklahoma Library, 2022), which is based on political bias and reliability.⁶ Focusing solely on the political bias dimension, we select outlets situated within the colored circles in our simplified rendering of the news outlet spectrum shown in Figure 2. Specifically, **PBS, AP News, and News Nation Now** are chosen as center outlets, **Palmer Report and Bipartisan News** as far-left outlets, and **VDare, News Max, and Ricochet** as far-right outlets.

Although it would be ideal to consider a greater number of sources for each political category, access to outlets is limited by the available number of API calls and outlets accessible to the API. To

⁵We are granted an educational license intended for research of non-commercial use.

⁶See <https://adfontesmedia.com/static-mbc/> for a full rendering of news outlets from 2018 through 2024.

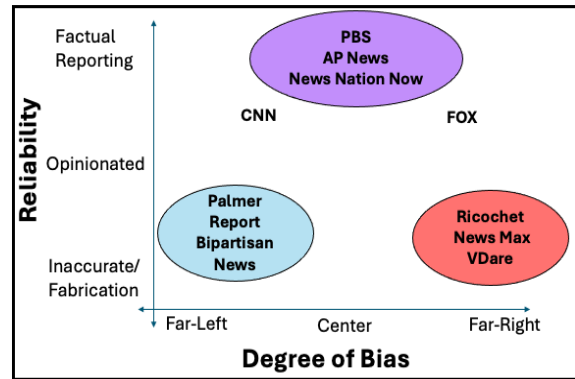


Figure 2: News outlet spectrum selected from Media Bias Chart 10.0 (University of Central Oklahoma Library, 2022): left, center, right

ensure an evenly distributed news feed, the articles examined are restricted to a three-year range from January 1st, 2021 to December 31st, 2023.

3.2 Exploratory Data Analysis

While the query loop aims to collect an equal amount of data from each outlet, it inadvertently results in an uneven distribution across outlets.⁷ To mitigate potential model bias, each category is truncated to only contain ten thousand articles. Additionally, due to the depletion of API calls, this work prioritizes a balanced distribution across all articles relevant to each class, rather than striving for an equal distribution for each outlet. By systematically removing article entries within specific time intervals for different outlets, the resulting distributions for each category, although not perfect, are substantially improved.⁸

4 Model Implementations

The rule-based sentiment analysis model isolates sentiment expressed towards both common and proper nouns, leveraging adjectives and verbs that describe them. This approach aligns with findings from recent research, which focus on descriptive language used in relation to specific entities (Alam et al., 2022) to detect bias through sentiment and stance in news articles. The model employs coreference resolution to ensure direct reference of verbs and adjectives with correct name entities. Locating the nouns referenced by verbs and adjectives is accomplished through the aforementioned POS

⁷Appendix A.1 reveals this discrepancy, showing the distribution by outlet for each three-month period, with certain outlets having significantly more queried articles than others.

⁸Appendix A.2 displays the final state of training data, accomplishing a relatively even distribution across time periods and outlet groupings.

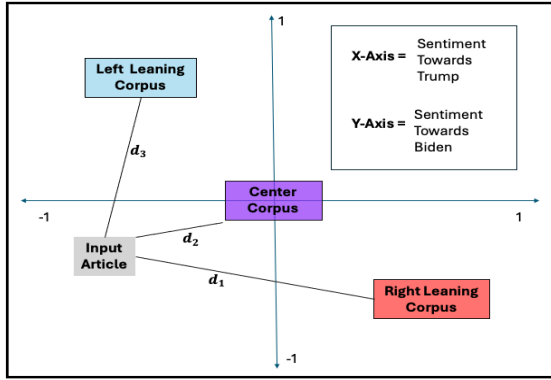


Figure 3: Theoretical mapping of left-vs-right space where an input articles positioned.

reference algorithm, which achieves acceptable performance based on precision, recall and F1 score.

Leveraging these rule-based outputs, the model creates sentiment vectors embedding the sentiment towards all nouns in articles by political leaning, where each dimension is defined by a unique noun. Sentiment is quantified using the valence scores of all verbs and adjectives considered. It classifies bias by comparing the cosine distance between an article’s vector and sentiment vectors for each political leaning. Then the political leaning closest to the article’s vector is predicted as its bias.

Figure 3 shows a theoretical mapping of the three corpora projected onto a 2D plane, with each dimension representing sentiment toward a corresponding entity based on all the adjectives and verbs referencing it within each corpus. As expected, the right-leaning corpus shows negative sentiment towards Biden and positive sentiment towards Trump, while the left-leaning corpus expresses the opposite. The center-leaning corpus displays a neutral sentiment towards both. An input article is then positioned on the plane based on the sentiment it expresses towards both entities. The shortest cosine distance is found between the input article and the center corpus, indicating that the article’s stance is most aligned with the center corpus. This suggests that a highly negative stance towards Trump, with a moderately negative stance towards Biden, indicates a politically centered standpoint.

By contrast, the deep learning model processes raw text directly, without segmenting or extracting stance-specific meaning. The convolutional NN model captures dependencies and recurring structures in text through multiple deep learning layers. This model achieves strong performance (see Section 5) in classifying articles across three outlets.

Both the rule-based and deep learning models

are applied to the preprocessed dataset. The implementation of the rule-based model (Section 4.1) is more involved than that of the deep-learning convolutional NN model (Section 4.2) in that the latter uses a standard architecture, whereas the former proposes a novel design. Our models are powered by 2 AMD EPYC 75F3 CPU cores complemented by 2 NVIDIA A100 GPU cores. We use 80% of the data for training and the remaining 20% for testing the models. Although the training suite encompasses the full extent of the time period explored, temporal leakage is not an issue, as the models are not devoted to the prediction of bias in future news articles. The idea of a temporal dataset is solely meant to provide a more comprehensive span of biased text.

4.1 Rule-Based Sentiment Analysis Model

Our rule-based sentiment analysis implementation aims to identify political bias by extracting and quantifying the sentiment expressed towards nouns through the verbs and adjectives that refer to them. This involves coreference resolution, dependency parsing, POS reference resolution, sentiment vectorization, and cosine distance as the ultimate classification metric. Each step is detailed below.

4.1.1 Coreference Resolution

Our study resolves coreference to prevent the aggregation of sentiment for lexically equivalent nouns that represent different entities. Two common examples in the dataset include the use of pronouns and common nouns to reference named entities. For example, the text “John is gifted. *He* was always good at math.” becomes “John is gifted. *John* was always good at math.” This allows us to attribute both the adjectives “good” and “gifted” to John rather than associating “gifted” with “he”.

Without coreference resolution, the resulting sentiment dictionaries would inaccurately average sentiments expressed toward entities referred to by the same pronouns, significantly undermining the model’s effectiveness. We employ the spaCy coreference resolution model (Kádár et al., 2022), an end-to-end neural system applicable to various entity coreference tasks.

4.1.2 Dependency Parsing and Part of Speech Reference Resolution

With coreferences resolved, the model associates verbs and adjectives with their corresponding nouns using spaCy dependency trees (Honnibal and

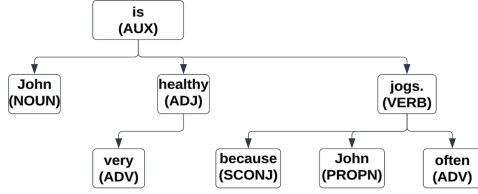


Figure 4: Dep Tree: Algorithm Walk-through

Montani, 2017). The complexity of dependency paths makes rule-based identification of all noun-adjective-verb relations challenging. To maintain sentiment accuracy without high computational costs, we balance relation accuracy with the number of identified relations.

We observe that, while nouns are not always associated with a modifying verb or adjective, verbs and adjectives almost always imply the presence of a noun. Accordingly, instead of finding relations from nouns to verbs and adjectives, the method identifies relations from verbs and adjectives to the nearest noun, regardless of its position. This noun is then considered the one being referenced by the verbs and adjectives it stems from.

The algorithm uses bottom-up dynamic programming to reduce complexity. It progressively updates (int, string) pairs corresponding to each token in a sentence with the distance from the closest noun to that token and the noun itself with a complexity of $O(N^2)$.

For clarity, consider the sentence “John is very healthy because *he* often jogs” after coreference resolution: “John is very healthy because *John* often jogs”. Figure 4 shows the dependency tree for this enriched sentence. A memoization array of length eight is initialized (Table 1). For example, the entry at index 1 contains a distance of 1 because the noun “John” is a child of the auxiliary “is”.

Index	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dist.	0	1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1	1
Noun	John	John				John		John

Table 1: Memoization: Algorithm Walk-through

Starting with verbs, the algorithm examines index 7 corresponding to the verb “jogs” with entry (1, “John”) and traverses upward $D - 1$ times to find a closer distance. Since $D = 1$, no parents are considered and “jogs” is associated with “John”. A similar procedure is followed for adjectives, e.g., index 3 corresponds to “healthy” with entry (-1, “”). Given that there is no noun successor to “healthy,” the algorithm recursively traverses parent nodes to find the shortest distance. It considers the auxiliary “is”, corresponding to entry (1, “John”). Since “is”

is one edge above “healthy,” and “John” is one edge above “is,” “John” is determined to be two edges away from “healthy.” Further traversal is unnecessary as no shorter distance exists, confirming that “healthy” corresponds to “John”.

In order to verify the algorithm’s viability for POS reference resolution, we use a dataset containing 100 random sentences, comparing the algorithm’s identified relations with human-annotated relations. The sentences are generated using Chat GPT 4o (OpenAI, 2024), and varied in their use of verbs, adjectives, and nouns. The POS relations used as a ground truth are verified by a human. The tests yield F1-Scores of 0.80 for adjective-noun relations and 0.71 for verb-noun relations.

4.1.3 Sentiment Vectorization and Cosine Distance Computation

Sentiment vectorization defines an N -dimensional space with a vector of length N , where each dimension pertains to a unique noun from the corpus of articles. Each group of news outlets is mapped onto this space. An article is mapped by extracting the sentiment expressed towards nouns in it, considering only those nouns present in the original training corpus. The closest vector indicates the primary political leaning expressed in the article.

Using dependency parsing and the POS Reference Resolution algorithm to identify adjective and verb references to nouns, we create a mapping that associates each noun in an article with a list of referencing adjectives and verbs. The valence score of each verb and adjective is extracted using the TextBlob library (Loria, 2018), where valence indicates the degree of positive or negative sentiment. The sentiment towards a noun is defined by the average valence score of all referring adjectives and verbs. This process is repeated for each article within a political leaning. By merging these mappings, we obtain final mapping with keys representing all unique nouns in the corpus, each pointing to the average valence score of all its mentions.

Applying this process to each of the three article groups produces three distinct mappings, each containing the nouns found in their respective corpus. To compare these groups, the mappings are consolidated to hold references to the same group of nouns. A separate mapping assigns an index to each noun across all three corpora. If N distinct nouns are identified, a vector of length N is defined for each article group. The sentiment expressed towards K th noun is assigned to index K .

For indices where the relevant noun is absent in a group’s corpus, a sentiment score of 0 is assigned.

This process produces three equal-length vectors in an N -dimensional space, representing sentiment toward all nouns in the corpus. To classify an article, valence scores for all nouns are computed and added onto an N -length vector, ignoring nouns not in the training corpus. The cosine distance between this vector and each of the three original vectors is calculated, assigning the article the political leaning of the closest vector.

Consider the simplified example in Table 2, where three sub-tables show the stance of each article group towards their respective nouns. Each unique noun is assigned an identifier (Table 3). Using this mapping, the initial stance tables are converted into vectors of length 6 (Table 4), with absent nouns assigned a score of 0.

Noun	Trump	IRA	Israel	Immigrant
Left Stan.	-0.7	0.5	0.1	0.3

Noun	Trump	IRA	Israel	Vaccine
Right Stan.	0.8	-0.1	0.8	-0.5

Noun	Trump	IRA	Israel	China
Center Stan.	-0.2	0.1	0.3	-0.1

Table 2: Noun Stance by Corpus

Trump	IRA	Israel	Immigrant	Vaccine	China
0	1	2	3	4	5

Table 3: Noun Identifier Mapping

Identifier	0	1	2	3	4	5
Left	-0.7	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0
Right	0.8	-0.1	0.8	0.0	-0.5	0.0
Center	-0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1

Table 4: Vectorization

The first sub-table of Table 5 shows a stance dictionary for an article to be classified, listing all nouns in the article and their associated stance scores. The second sub-table appends this dictionary to the end of Table 4 using the aforementioned index mapping. Note that “Canada”, a noun not in the training corpus, is absent from the classification vector. The third sub-table shows classification by calculating the cosine distance between the article’s vector and each of the three vectors representing political leanings.

4.2 Convolutional NN Model

We choose to use a convolutional NN model to classify bias since convolutional models employ a highly unconstrained assessment of features through their convolutional and pooling layers,

Noun	Trump	Immigrant	Canada
Article Stan.	-0.3	0.10	0.05

Identifier	0	1	2	3	4	5
Left	-0.7	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0
Right	0.8	-0.1	0.8	0.0	-0.5	0.0
Center	-0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1
Article	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0

X	Left	Right	Center
Cosine Dist.(Article, X)	0.17	1.51	0.51

Table 5: Evaluation Process

which can capture complex patterns in text data. A Convolutional NN is chosen over common models applied to textual analysis (e.g. transformers) for their ability to apply a uniform focus on features across the input, maintaining a more liberal and direct interpretation of data. This unconstrained feature assessment contributes to a lack of explainability, as the internal logic of the convolutional model remains opaque. In the sections below, we discuss opaqueness as a limitation that challenges complete reliance on deep learning methodologies for complex classification tasks. Instead, we argue that rule-based or hybrid approaches would provide greater transparency.

Inspired by the work of [Prosise \(2023\)](#), we combine datasets representing three political leanings. After removing stop words from each article, a Keras tokenizer assigns an index to each unique word enabling the neural network to interpret input and identify patterns for political classification. The input embeddings are of 32 dimensions and the model consists of two convolution layers with a max pooling layer in between and a global max pooling layer at the end. The model is trained over five epochs using the Adam optimizer and categorical cross-entropy loss to improve accuracy using a validation dataset.⁹ We use the tensorflow library under the Apache License 2.0. (For more details, see Appendix A.4.)

5 Results

We evaluate both models’ performance by examining precision, recall, and F1 across the three classes, using a dataset comprising 20% of the original data. Results reflect the models’ classification accuracy, not their ability to recognize political bias. We revisit this distinction in our evaluation of model performance on external news outlets.

⁹Details regarding training and validation process are provided in Appendix A.5

5.1 Sentiment Analysis Model: Evaluation

Each tested article undergoes coreference resolution, and the sentiment towards all nouns is quantified into a vector. This vector is then compared to the vectors representing the three political leanings. The article is assigned the political leaning corresponding to the closest vector.

Table 6 shows the performance of the rule-based model for each classification group. The *Left* class has the highest F1-Score of 0.57, with the *Center* and *Right* classes having slightly lower F1-Scores of 0.51 and 0.52, respectively.

	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
Left	0.78	0.45	0.57
Center	0.42	0.66	0.51
Right	0.48	0.56	0.52

Table 6: Rule-based Model: Metrics

5.2 Convolutional NN Model: Evaluation

Table 7 shows the convolutional NN model’s performance for each classification group. The *Left* class has the highest F1-Score of 0.98, indicating excellent performance, with *Center* and *Right* classes having F1-Scores of 0.93 and 0.91, respectively.

	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
Left	0.98	0.98	0.98
Center	0.91	0.96	0.93
Right	0.94	0.88	0.91

Table 7: Convolutional NN Model: Metrics

5.3 Application and Insights: CNN and FOX

The applicability of both models is explored by classifying articles from news outlets not included in the training corpus. This approach distinguishes a model’s ability to recognize bias from simply differentiating between training outlets. The rule-based approach aims to target and extract text features that express stance, ignoring non-political rhetoric or features. Conversely, the convolutional NN model is allowed complete freedom to differentiate between corpora by any means available. This makes the convolutional NN model sensitive to corpora that show distinguishing features past their expression of political bias.

Although the convolutional NN model accurately categorizes articles in the training corpus, this does not necessarily translate to accurate interpretation of bias. By the same token, the rule-based model’s lower accuracy in classifying articles does not mean it is worse at recognizing bias than the convolutional NN model. To focus solely on political bias detection, we exclude test outlets from the training corpus, preventing the models from

leveraging similarities in prose, structure, and other lexical features within each group of outlets.

CNN and FOX News are used to test the models beyond the outlets in the training data. These outlets are chosen because they are among the country’s largest news media corporations and are widely acknowledged for representing opposite ends of the political spectrum. While their opinions are expected to align closer to with left-leaning and right-leaning classes, they are also widely read and resemble center-leaning articles in style and structure. We consider 1,500 articles for each outlet over the three-year period of the training corpus.¹⁰ To incorporate a temporal analysis and evaluate the models’ predictions across different periods of political tension, batches for each three-month period within the three years are classified separately. Tables 8 and 9 show the distribution of predictions across political leanings throughout each time period for each model applied on both FOX and CNN articles. A darker shade for a given entry indicates a higher percentage of articles classified as pertaining toward that political leaning for that time period.

	21Q2	21Q3	21Q4	22Q1	22Q2	22Q3	22Q4	23Q1	23Q2	23Q3
Left	0.09	0.09	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.07	0.01	0.07	0.07
Center	0.62	0.67	0.79	0.81	0.83	0.7	0.75	0.73	0.62	0.61
Right	0.29	0.24	0.19	0.18	0.13	0.24	0.18	0.25	0.31	0.31

	21Q2	21Q3	21Q4	22Q1	22Q2	22Q3	22Q4	23Q1	23Q2	23Q3
Left	0.15	0.21	0.18	0.2	0.27	0.21	0.21	0.24	0.22	0.26
Center	0.57	0.6	0.55	0.26	0.38	0.5	0.36	0.41	0.47	0.46
Right	0.28	0.19	0.27	0.54	0.36	0.29	0.43	0.35	0.31	0.27

Table 8: Convolutional Model. Bias Classification of FOX (top) and CNN (bottom) articles Over Time.

	21Q2	21Q3	21Q4	22Q1	22Q2	22Q3	22Q4	23Q1	23Q2	23Q3
Left	0.1	0.11	0.04	0.11	0.08	0.13	0.11	0.15	0.07	0.09
Center	0.49	0.55	0.62	0.49	0.55	0.61	0.57	0.6	0.55	0.67
Right	0.4	0.33	0.33	0.39	0.37	0.26	0.32	0.25	0.38	0.25

	21Q2	21Q3	21Q4	22Q1	22Q2	22Q3	22Q4	23Q1	23Q2	23Q3
Left	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.16	0.09	0.1	0.06	0.09	0.09	0.08
Center	0.73	0.7	0.61	0.53	0.66	0.66	0.72	0.69	0.65	0.71
Right	0.24	0.24	0.03	0.32	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.22	0.26	0.21

Table 9: Rule-Based Model. Bias Classification of FOX (top) and CNN (bottom) articles Over Time.

The Convolutional and Rule-Based Model results on FOX articles show that the models often classify most articles in each period as Center-leaning, with the majority of the remaining portion classified as Right-leaning. The Convolutional

¹⁰Appendix A.3 illustrates the distribution of CNN and Fox articles, with roughly 1500 articles classified for each outlet

Model is less likely to predict the Left class compared to the Rule-Based Model, favoring more confident Center predictions. Meanwhile, the Rule-Based Model assigns more articles to the Right class than the Convolutional Model. Both models' predictions lean more toward the Center than public perception of FOX, though they still align with its center-right reputation.

In contrast, the Convolutional Model's results on CNN articles differ from the general perception of the outlet. Over a third of the articles are classified as Center-leaning, with the rest slightly favoring the Right class. The Rule-Based Model classifies most CNN articles as Center, with the remaining majority leaning Right. Although neither model's predictions match CNN's center-left stance, the Rule-Based Model tends to classify articles further left than the Convolutional Model.

5.4 Model Explainability

The Rule-Based Model's transparency and strong theoretical foundation allow us to attribute shortcomings in both the corpus and external dataset results to specific components of the model architecture. A combination of factors prevents the model from accurately assigning sentiment to entities, resulting in instances where detected sentiments do not align with political biases.

Understanding the performance differences between the corpus and external dataset for the Convolutional Model is more challenging due to its black-box deep learning architecture. To investigate this gap, we employ LIME (Ribeiro et al., 2016) to identify the words that most influence article classification. A subset of the test suite is analyzed, revealing the 20 most important words in each article's classification. The frequency of the top 25 influential words for each political leaning is shown in Figures 5, 6, and 7. The LIME analysis reveals three types of words that the Convolutional Model relies on for classification.

The first influential word types are those that recur frequently due to the limited number of outlets comprising the corpus, e.g., "Palmer" and "Report" (Figure 6) and "AP" and "Associated" (Figure 7). The second type comprises words that lack political meaning on their own but are common in the rhetoric of certain outlets, e.g., "us" and "said" (Figure 5) and "apparently" (Figure 6). The third type includes nouns with inherent political connotations, e.g., "Trump", "Leftist", "aliens" "riot" and "GOP"

(Figure 6) and "Republican", "Democratic" and "Capitol" (Figure 7).

From this analysis, we conclude that the Convolutional Model struggles to maintain its high performance when applied to external news outlets, primarily because CNN and FOX articles lack the first and second types of influential words that are specific to the outlets used for training. Without relying on rhetoric similarities or outlet-specific names, the model assesses politically charged terms—words it does not emphasize adequately during training to draw reliable conclusions.

Notably, Right leaning predictions are the least reliant on the first and second type of words, and are generally less reliant on any given word in the classification of articles. This explains why FOX article predictions by the Convolutional model aligns more with the outlet's political stance than CNN article predictions. The improved performance resulting from the Convolutional Models's focus on politically charged words supports the Rule-Based model's framework, which is primarily designed to detect sentiment towards such words.

Left leaning predictions rely heavily on the first type of influential terms, causing the Convolutional Model to perform poorly on external data when predicting CNN articles. We hypothesize that the superior performance of the Rule-Based Model in this task stems from its ability to focus on nouns associated with political entities, which the Convolutional Model does not sufficiently emphasize in its classification of Left leaning articles.

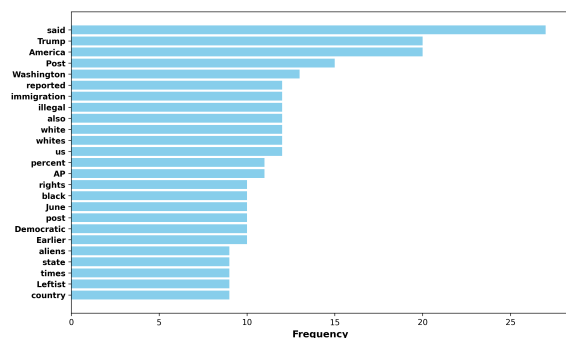


Figure 5: Top 25 Influential Terms in Right Class Classification

6 Conclusion and Future Work

This paper examines two models for classifying political bias in news media: a sentiment analysis rule-based model and a convolutional NN model. Given the complexity of politically biased text, a ground truth is established using the political spectrum placement of widely read news outlets by

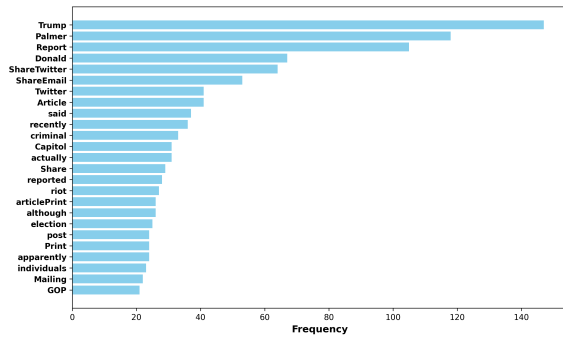


Figure 6: Top 25 Influential Terms in Left Class Classification

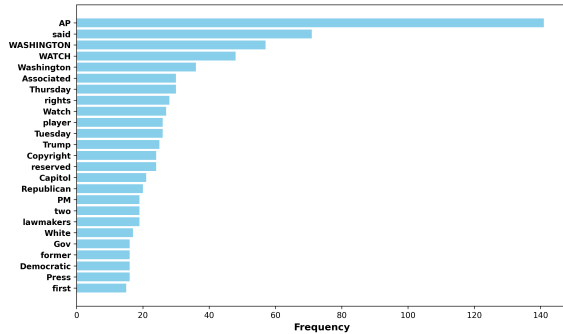


Figure 7: Top 25 Influential Terms in Center Class Classification

credible academic sources ([University of Central Oklahoma Library, 2022](#)).

The rule-based model applies coreference resolution and a POS reference algorithm to extract stance towards nouns, mapping them into an N -dimensional space for comparison with input articles. The convolutional NN model focuses on identifying distinctive patterns.

Results initially indicate that the convolutional NN model significantly outperforms the rule-based in accuracy. However, when models are tested on external data, using CNN and FOX articles, the limitations of the convolutional NN model are uncovered through its significant change in performance. The rule-based model, in contrast, retains its initial performance, thereby demonstrating its adaptability to different datasets.

Potential improvements to the rule-based model include incorporating machine learning techniques for feature extraction and input classification, such as using a decision tree instead of using a closest POS resolution algorithm to identify noun relations. Alternatively, stance detection would benefit from leveraging more accurate pre-trained models in Aspect Based Sentiment Analysis ([Hoang et al., 2019](#)) to better quantify targeted sentiment. Additionally, understanding synonymy through tools like Word2Vec could help map nouns in input articles to similar counterparts in classification vectors,

enabling more effective classification.

Improvements to the Convolutional NN model include prioritization of explainability and generalizability. Future work involves a thorough data selection process paired with an iterative analysis, using LIME or SHAP, to ensure the use of corpora that do not allow models to hinge predictions on terms unrelated to the classification task. In the classification of bias, this process translates to the prioritization of true bias indicators and disregard of irrelevant stylistic nuances.

Lastly, future work could incorporate large language models into the study by exploring their performance in the classification of bias and their potential improvement through hybridization techniques. In addition, expanding the study to include a training corpus from a diverse range of news outlets would help to prevent models from relying on stylistic differences in writing.

Limitations: A Case for Hybridization

Overall, this exploration examines the extremes of techniques used for media bias classification. It contrasts a clearly defined, rule-based model with a deep learning model that has an opaque internal methodology. The rule-based model, while theoretically sound, fails to beat the convolutional NN in testing, but shows a similar performance in external applications. Both approaches have shortcomings that could be mitigated through hybridization.

Both models are evaluated using ground truth for political bias in news articles, determined by the publishing outlets and academic sources that classify the outlet’s political leaning. However, political bias is a highly dynamic, nuanced, and subjective expression that cannot be fully captured through the perspectives of various news outlets. While our research aims to investigate bias in text, the models we construct are ultimately designed to classify articles based on lexical and syntactic features of the three corpora considered. Thus, they classify text, rather than classify bias directly. Although the dataset facilitates temporal and diverse analysis of political news media, datasets with articles annotated specifically for bias would provide a more robust ground truth. Additionally, the dataset encompasses only US news outlets, which limits the broader international applicability of models trained using it.

The rule-based sentiment detection model focuses solely on the sentiment expressed toward

nouns, avoiding irrelevant textual features related to political leaning. While this approach offers insight into how political bias is conveyed, the model does not target other forms of bias (e.g. Framing bias) and additionally considers nouns of a non-political nature in its classification process, which may not necessarily indicate political leaning. Beyond its broad interpretation of bias, the model faces challenges regarding its practicality. Since the model only interprets one feature, sentiment expressed towards nouns, an article must contain mentions of nouns found in the corpus for its political leaning to be accurately classified. Furthermore, if the nouns within the article are apolitical or rare, the identified bias may lack substantial basis.

The POS reference method for the rule-based model sometimes misses correct relationships or incorrectly identifies them. This is because the algorithm assumes a one-to-many relationship between nouns and their referencing parts of speech (verbs or adjectives), even though many-to-many or many-to-one relationships are possible. For example, in the sentence “John is happy and excited”, the one-to-many relationship between the noun “John” and the adjectives “happy” and “excited” is identified correctly. However, in the sentence “John and Peter are happy”, which has a many-to-one relationship between the nouns “John” and “Peter” and the adjective “happy,” the algorithm only links “happy” to the closest noun, “Peter”.

Despite the convolutional NN model’s impressive classification performance when tested on outlets found in the training corpus, its focus on political bias as a deciding factor is shown to be insufficient. The model accurately categorizes the three classes in the training corpus, but it identifies a strong moderate leaning for FOX and fails to converge on a general political leaning for CNN articles. Due to the inherent opacity of deep learning models, the specific textual features used for classification are unpredictable, leaving developers to speculate on the mix of features driving article classification and how much these features are influenced by the political bias of each outlet.

Ideally, classification of political bias in news media would combine the feature extraction of a rule-based model with the self-correction of a convolutional NN model. By examining additional text features that signal political bias and quantifying them similarly to sentiment expression, a suitable input vector for convolution could be generated. Al-

though the internal processes of the convolutional NN would remain opaque to the developer, its predictions would focus solely on factors related to political bias. Allowing the developer to set the initial parameters of the neural network would enable the imposition of constraints while preserving its self-learning ability, thereby ensuring that only relevant resources are used for learning.

Ethics Statement

The data used for this study is obtained using the News Catcher API, but is otherwise publicly accessible. The API is employed to allow for fast and efficient sourcing of a large number of articles. The integrity of the data is maintained by verifying the reputability of the API used and by assessing the articles queried.

Maintaining objectivity is crucial in this study on automatic detection of political bias in text. Both implemented models use standardized datasets and transparent processes to ensure a fair analysis of results. It is important to emphasize that our models’ evaluation of CNN/FOX bias is not intended as a definitive judgment of their political leaning. Rather, it serves as an exercise to demonstrate the capabilities and limitations of NLP techniques in analyzing political bias with respect to a well-known academic media bias classification ([University of Central Oklahoma Library, 2022](#)).

The use of AI in this study, seen primarily through the CNN model, is done responsibly. We acknowledge AI’s limitations in assessing a highly subjective and sensitive subject as is political bias. In fact, this study argues for greater transparency to transcend opaque deep learning systems.

Acknowledgement

This work is supported, in part, by DARPA Contract No. HR001121C0186. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Government.

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A Appendix

A.1 Initial Data Distribution Figures

Figures 8–15 show the initial distributions for each of the eight news outlets considered in the construction of both models. The distributions are separated into groups based on the three biases being explored.

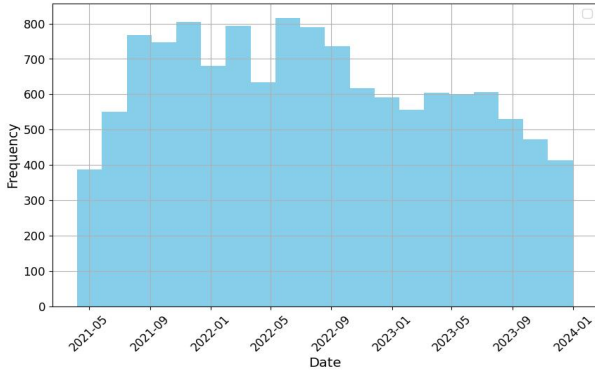


Figure 8: Left-Leaning Outlets: Bipartisan News

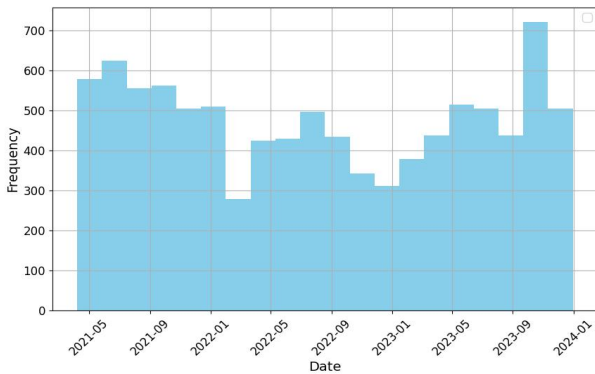


Figure 9: Left-Leaning Outlets: Palmer Report

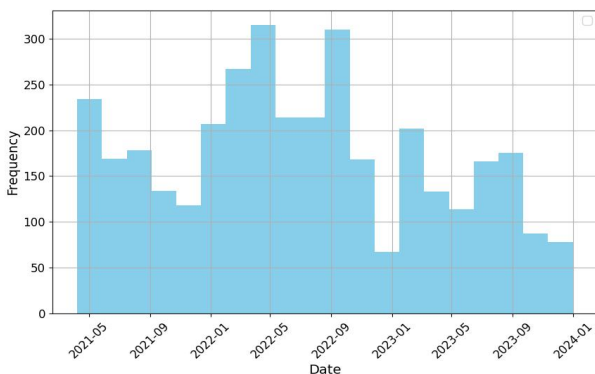


Figure 10: Right-Leaning Outlets: VDare

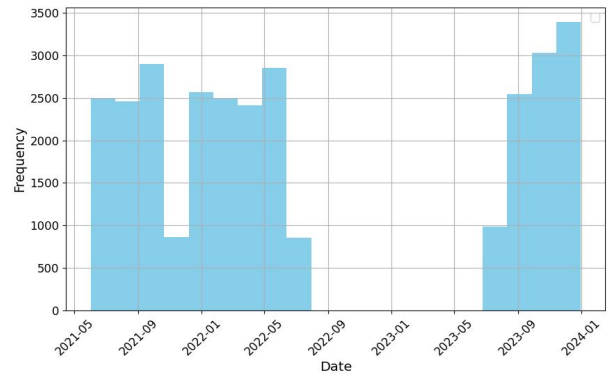


Figure 11: Right-Leaning Outlets: News Max

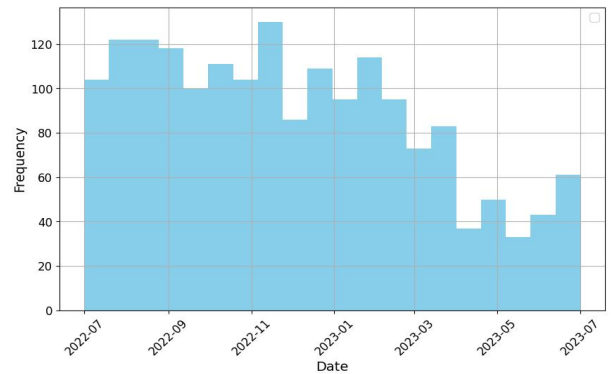


Figure 12: Right-Leaning Outlets: Ricochet

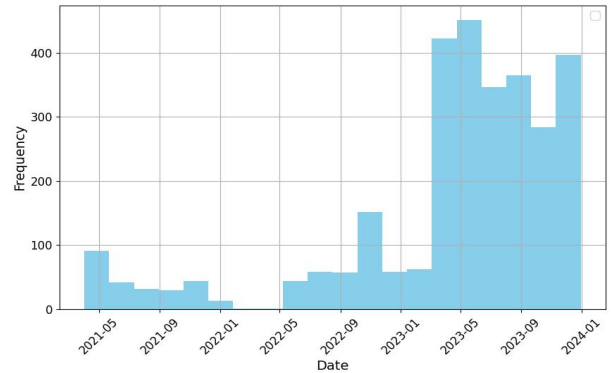


Figure 13: Center-Leaning Outlets: News Nation Now

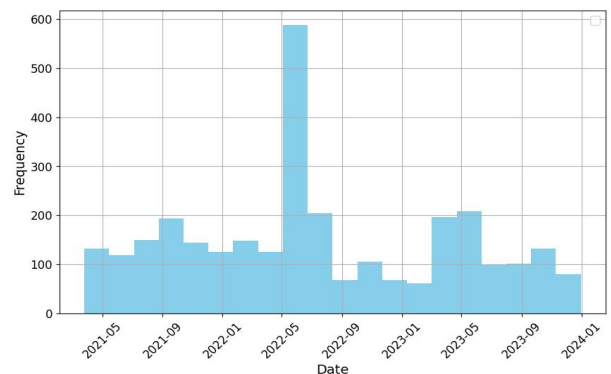


Figure 14: Center-Leaning Outlets: AP News

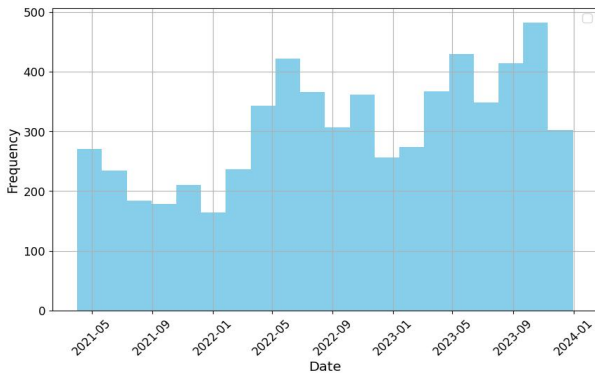


Figure 15: Center-Leaning Outlets: PBS

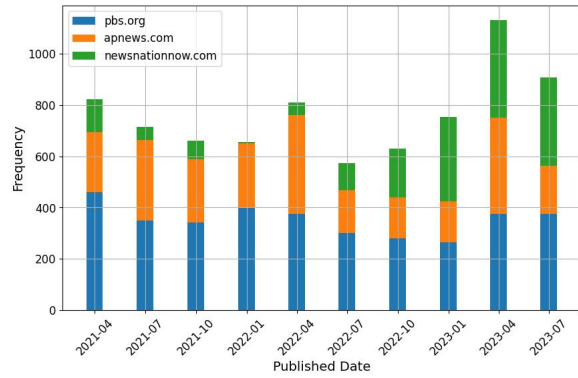


Figure 18: Center Outlets Aggregate Distribution

A.2 Resulting Distribution Across News Outlets for Each Political Grouping

Figure 16- 18 presents final state of training data (University of Central Oklahoma Library, 2022), demonstrating even distributions across different time periods and outlet grouping.

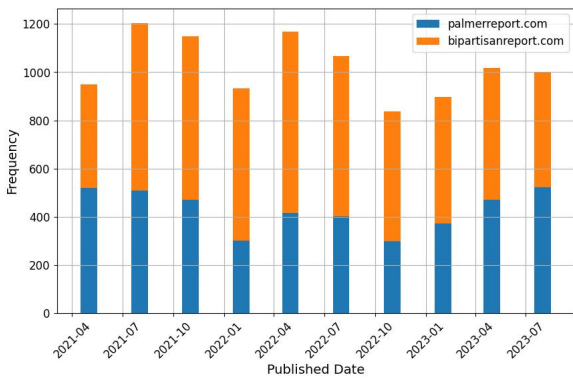


Figure 16: Left Outlets Aggregate Distribution

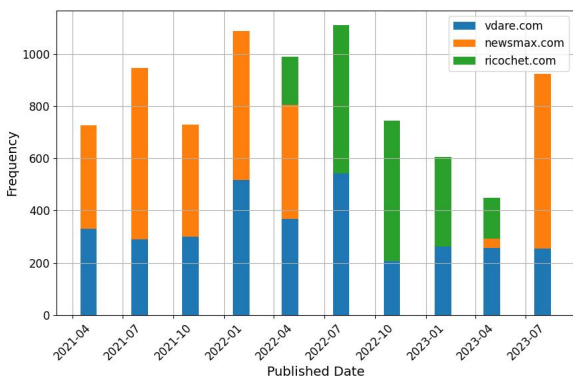


Figure 17: Right Outlets Aggregate Distribution

A.3 Application Data Distribution Figures

The histograms below show the articles queried from FOX and CNN. These articles are used to apply the models developed throughout the study to external news outlets. As can be seen in Figures 19 and 20, roughly 1500 articles are queried from each outlet to be evenly distributed throughout the 3 year interval explored.

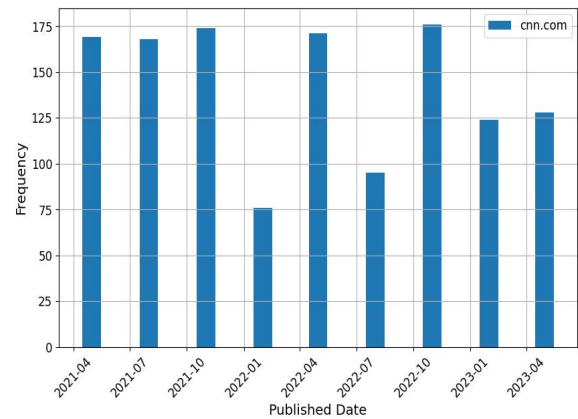


Figure 19: CNN Articles: Distribution by Period

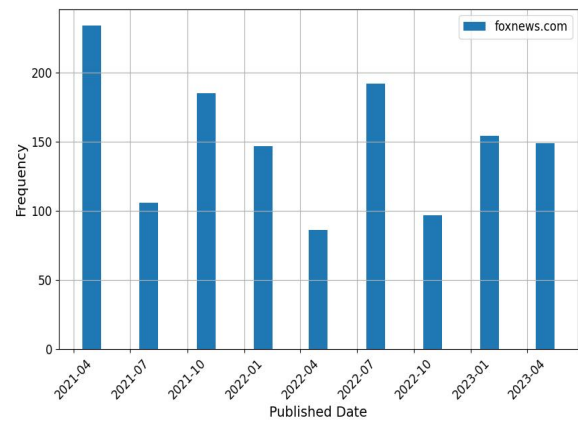


Figure 20: FOX Articles: Distribution by Period

A.4 Convolutional NN Model Architecture

The code shown in Figure 21 defines the architecture for the convolutional neural network model, which is largely inspired by the work of Prosisie (2023). First an Embedding layer converts integer-encoded vocabulary into dense vectors of fixed size. This layer efficiently handles the vast vocabulary of text data, providing meaningful representations of words that capture semantic similarities based on their context within the corpus. This dense vector representation allows the model to interpret text input effectively, facilitating identification of patterns relevant to classification tasks.

```
1 from tensorflow.keras.models import
  Sequential
2
3 from tensorflow.keras.layers import
  Embedding, Flatten, Dense, Conv1D,
  MaxPooling1D, GlobalMaxPooling1D
4
5 num_classes = 3
6
7 model = Sequential()
8
9 # Embedding layer
10 model.add(Embedding(100000, 32))
11
12 # First convolutional layer
13 model.add(Conv1D(32, 7,
  activation='relu'))
14
15 # First pooling layer
16 model.add(MaxPooling1D(5))
17
18 # Second convolutional layer
19 model.add(Conv1D(32, 7,
  activation='relu'))
20
21 # Global max pooling layer
22 model.add(GlobalMaxPooling1D())
23
24 model.add(Dense(num_classes,
  activation='softmax'))
25 model.compile(loss=
26 'sparse_categorical_crossentropy',
27 optimizer='adam',
28 metrics=['accuracy'])
```

Figure 21: CNN Architecture Code

Following the Embedding layer are two sets of one-dimensional convolution layers and Max Pooling layers. The convolution layers apply convolutional operations to the embedded word vectors, using filters to extract local patterns (such as the presence of specific n-grams) indicative of the text's class. The rectified linear unit (ReLU) activation function ensures that the model captures nonlinear relationships between these features. Each convo-

lution layer is followed by a Max Pooling layer, which reduces the dimensionality of the data by retaining only the most prominent features, thus improving computational efficiency and helping to prevent overfitting.

After the second convolution and pooling sequence, a Global Max Pooling layer aggregates the most significant features from across the entire text, ensuring that the model's final predictions are informed by the most impactful elements of the input data. The architecture culminates in a Dense layer with a Soft Max activation function, which maps the extracted features to probabilities across the three classes, allowing the model to quantify and output the distinctions noted between classes explored. The model is trained through five separate epochs, making use of a validation dataset to progressively increase its accuracy.

A.5 Convolutional NN Model Training

The plot in Figure 22 shows the progression of the convolutional NN model's training and validation accuracy throughout the five training epochs. Training accuracy defines the model's ability to precisely classify articles it recurrently sees throughout each epoch, whereas validation accuracy refers to the model's ability to generalize to unseen data. It is common for validation accuracy and training accuracy to initially increase together. When validation accuracy plateaus, while training accuracy continues to increase, the model begins to overfit to its training data and loses its ability to generalize to external data (e.g. validation data). Five epochs are sufficient to train the model as the validation accuracy begins to plateau around the fourth epoch.

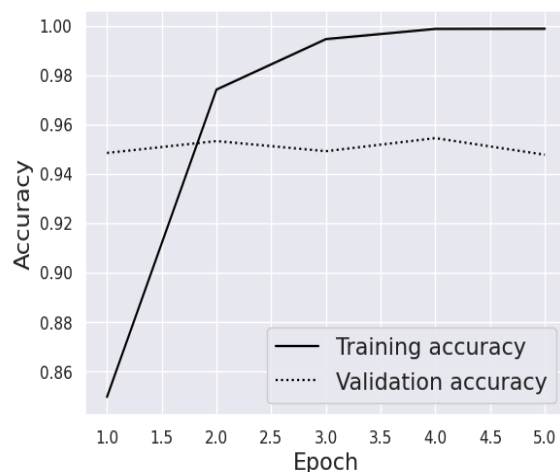


Figure 22: Convolutional NN Model Training Process: Training and Validation Accuracy

”So, are you a different person today?” Analyzing Bias in Questions during Parole Hearings

Wassiliki Siskou^{1,2} and Ingrid Espinoza¹

¹Cluster of Excellence ”The Politics of Inequality”, University of Konstanz

²University of Passau

firstname.lastname@uni-konstanz.de

Abstract

During Parole Suitability Hearings commissioners need to evaluate whether an inmate’s risk of reoffending has decreased sufficiently to justify their release from prison before completing their full sentence. The conversation between the commissioners and the inmate is the key element of such hearings and is largely driven by question-and-answer patterns which can be influenced by the commissioner’s questioning behavior. To our knowledge, no previous study has investigated the relationship between the types of questions asked during parole hearings and potentially biased outcomes. We address this gap by analysing commissioner’s questioning behavior during Californian parole hearings. We test ChatGPT-4o’s capability of annotating questions automatically and achieve a high F1-score of 0.91 without prior training. By analysing all questions posed directly by commissioners to inmates, we tested for potential biases in question types across multiple demographic variables. The results show minimal bias in questioning behavior toward inmates asking for parole.

1 Introduction

During Parole Suitability Hearings commissioners need to weigh different factors to evaluate whether an inmate’s risk of reoffending has decreased sufficiently and therefore justify their release from prison before completing their full sentence. The interaction between the commissioners and the inmates is the key element of such hearings, which are largely driven by question-and-answer patterns. Questions asked by commissioners to inmates, in particular, shape the entire conversation and guide the inmate’s responses, demonstrating that these questions are far more than a mere formality. This is because different types of questions open spaces for different types of answers. While open questions give room for elaboration and justification, closed questions limit the answer space to either

one of the alternatives given or ”yes” or ”no” in the case of polar questions. Given this, we expect a positive relation between positive parole outcomes and the share of open questions in the hearings analysed.

While biased outcomes in parole hearings have been studied by various disciplines, mainly focusing on the relationship between demographic variables and parole outcomes (Huebner and Bynum, 2008; Morgan and Smith, 2008; Young et al., 2015; Young and Pearlman, 2022; Hail-Jares, 2019), only a few have looked further into the linguistic particularities of this kind of dialogue (Cochran and Comeau-Kirschner, 2016; Todd et al., 2020). To our knowledge, no previous study has investigated the effect of commissioners’ questioning behavior during parole hearings on the reproduction of social inequality, despite their crucial role in the delivery of procedural justice.

This study aims to contribute to this research gap by analyzing the questions posed to inmates during parole hearings from California. First we show that with the help of Large Language Models, we are able to generate linguistically informed annotations automatically, allowing us to identify patterns in questioning style of parole board members, while simultaneously minimizing annotation cost and effort. Drawing upon these annotations, we examine the relationship between question types and demographic variables collected from a sample of 102 parole-seeking inmates.

The key questions of this study are the following: How do the types of questions asked during parole hearings relate to their outcomes? What is the relation between the types of questions posed and an inmate’s racial background? Are there any disparities in the share of questions posed related to an inmate’s racial background and does this impact their chances of being released on parole? Does the commissioners’ gender bias their questioning behavior towards inmates of different races?

2 Parole Suitability Hearings in California

The decision about whether an inmate no longer poses a severe risk to the public is based on documented information about the inmate's behavior, rehabilitation progress, and potential for successful reintegration into society. All documents relevant to the process are collected and reviewed by both the Board of Parole Hearings and the inmate before the hearing.

The hearings consist of an hour-long interview between both commissioners and the inmate, and are used to clarify issues that need to be addressed. Moreover, it also allows the commissioners to assess the inmate's credibility and rehabilitation by interrogating the inmate directly. At the end of this interview, the commissioners make a decision on the inmate's parole eligibility. The committee might grant parole, deny it or postpone the decision to a later date. During the parole interview, the inmate is required to answer questions about various aspects of their life. The topics covered are their life prior to the crime that led to their life sentence, their criminal record, the crime itself, as well as their behaviour since incarceration and possible parole plans (such as job opportunities, housing, and community support).

Typically, the presiding commissioner conducts the initial and concluding parts of the hearing, addressing the pre-commitment factors and the decision, while deputy commissioners usually cover the post-commitment factors and parole plans.

Despite the structured nature of the hearing process, there is room for potential biases stemming from the different types of questions asked, consequently limiting the answer space available to the inmate. By analyzing these subtle linguistic strategies, we aim to shed light on this understudied area.

3 Related Work

3.1 (Computational) Linguistic Background

Questions are fundamental constructs in pragmatics and discourse analysis. In parole suitability hearings in particular, they play a crucial role in shaping the dialogue dynamics, as they guide the direction of the interview and influence the flow of information.

Previous research, such as [Kalouli et al. \(2018\)](#) has focused on the pragmatic function of questions. In their study, they adapt linguistically informed

heuristics to classify questions into information-seeking and non-information seeking questions on a parallel Bible corpus. [Hautli-Janisz et al. \(2022a\)](#) and [Hautli-Janisz et al. \(2022b\)](#) follow a similar approach and propose a taxonomy to categorize questions into pure, assertive, rhetorical and challenge questioning, depending on their pragmatic function in argumentative dialogue.

In addition, [Stivers and Enfield \(2010\)](#) propose a question-response coding scheme for dyadic and multi-party interactions, based on their logical semantic structure. They categorized questions into three primary types: polar questions, requiring a "yes" or "no" as response, alternative questions, which offer a set of predefined choices as answer, and content questions (wh-questions), which seek more elaborate answers from the respondent. Moreover, this coding scheme opens the possibility to label questions according to their pragmatic function, which they call 'social actions' (such as requests for information, requests for confirmation, etc.). The categorization from [Stivers and Enfield \(2010\)](#) allows further classification based on the depth of responses they elicit into open and closed questions, which suits our research purpose best, since it facilitates the automatic classification and allows us to thoroughly analyse any patterns in questioning that potentially impact parole outcomes.

Research from forensic linguistics ([Cochran and Comeau-Kirschner, 2016](#)) investigated the linguistic strategies convicted sex offenders use during their parole hearings, finding differences in language use between those granted parole and those denied. [Todd et al. \(2020\)](#) applied Language Models to detect anomalies in Californian Parole Hearing transcripts, providing a method to review the hearing process.

In the realm of machine learning, approaches for automatic question annotation were mainly used to improve answers given by question answering systems ([Bullington et al., 2007](#)). A machine-learning approach that uses fine-grained taxonomy was introduced by [Li and Roth \(2002\)](#) to further categorize open-ended wh-questions by considering the semantic constraints of the expected answer. Recent studies ([Gweon and Schonlau, 2023](#)) have focused on the classification of answer types to open-ended questions in surveys using Large Language Models.

With the rise of Generative AI in recent years, researchers from different disciplines have used Large Language Models such as GPT-3.5 and

GPT-4 to generate annotated text data and explore whether the annotations match human judgement. Gilardi et al. (2023) explore if ChatGPT can perform high-quality annotations by only giving the model the coding instructions they would give to human annotators. Compared to crowd workers from MTurk and trained annotators, annotations generated via zero-shot prompting ChatGPT-3.5-turbo were found to have a higher accuracy when labelling tweets and news articles. Similar results were reported in Mens et al. (2023) for measuring semantic similarity with GPT-4, achieving state-of-the-art results without requiring training. These results show that AI generated annotations often match or even exceed human judgement and therefore save not only time but also financial resources.

3.2 Background from Legal Studies and Public Administration

Racial disparities in parole hearing decisions have been the subject of numerous previous studies. Findings indicate that even after adjusting for criminal severity and rehabilitation efforts, Black parole candidates had a much lower chance of being granted parole than White candidates (Young and Pearlman, 2022). As a consequence, Black prisoners experience a noticeable lengthier parole delay compared to White prisoners (Huebner and Bynum, 2008). The same finding holds after accounting for various legal and demographic factors.

One of the main explaining factors for this racial inequality is street-level bureaucrat's biased decision-making (Hertogh, 2018; Lotta and Pires, 2019; Raaphorst, 2022). Bureaucrats working at the frontline of public policy implementation, such as parole hearing commissioners, interact with citizens from positions of power while being pulled along by state institutional forces that hold sway over them, cultural renderings of worthiness they carry with them, and collective guidance communicated through the exchange of stories among them (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2012). All these factors can influence and bias the way they interact with inmates, as well as the decisions they make upon these interactions. In making a decision for or against the parole suitability of an inmate, parole board members have to heavily weigh factors such as institutional misconduct, educational attainment, the nature of the offense, psychological evaluations, and disciplinary reports. Even though parole board members are bound by a set of strict guidelines in their decision-making, evidence shows that reliance

on subjective judgments creates a "decisional scaffolding" that reinforces racial disparities (Huebner and Bynum, 2008; Young et al., 2015; Young and Pearlman, 2022), suggesting that social influence does play a role in how board members shape their decision.

Besides racial disparities, there is also evidence that certain socio-demographic factors such as community context have a negative effect on parole decisions. Huebner and Bynum (2008) found that Hispanics who were living in more disadvantaged neighborhoods had smaller chances of being granted parole by the Board. Young et al. (2015) found that both, older inmates, and inmates who were young at the time of the crime commitment, had an increased likelihood of being released for parole. Both of these findings are in line with guidelines the Board has to bound by, such as the Elderly Parole Program¹ and the Youth Offender Parole Program². Other factors, such as substance abuse programming participation, and low-risk scores in psychological evaluations are positively associated with release (Young et al., 2015), demonstrating key points the Board considers when deciding whether an inmate is ready to be released.

There is little research within the field of policy implementation and public service delivery at the intersection of language and power. Most of it addresses how speaking the language of minority groups can enhance or diminish responsiveness toward citizens (Scheibelhofer et al., 2021; Holzinger, 2020), or how (written) bureaucratic jargon can emerge as a burden for citizens unfamiliar with administrative language (Fisch and Burkhard, 2014). Only a few scholars have recently analyzed interaction in public service encounters using language as an indicator of behavior in the way we do in this paper (Siskou et al., 2022; Espinoza et al., 2024; Eckhard and Friedrich, 2022).

The relationship between gender and parole hearings has so far mainly been studied looking at the effect of an inmate's gender on parole outcomes. Findings suggest differences when it comes down to the type of commitment offenses, prior prison sentences, age at admission to confinement from which paroled, as well as alcohol and drug involvement (Moseley and Gerould, 1975; Silverstein, 2006).

¹<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/elderly-parole-hearings-overview/>

²<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/youth-offender-hearings-overview/>

In light of these findings, we expect to see racial disparities in the positive relation between positive parole outcomes and open questions. Regarding gender, given our sample, we can only assess if the commissioner’s gender biases their questioning behavior (see Section 4.2).

4 Data

4.1 Parole Hearing Transcripts

Transcripts of Parole Suitability Hearings are available to the public and serve as official records of the proceedings, as they include all verbatim statements made during the hearing by parole board members, the inmate, their attorney, and any other individual present (like e.g. district attorney, victims or victim’s next of kin). We obtained a total of 283 of such parole hearing transcripts in PDF format, which we officially requested from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)³. The hearings used for this analysis took place between August and September 2021 and were conducted via video conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Official transcriptions of the video recordings were made by authorized transcribers hired by the U.S. authorities.

4.2 The metadata

Given the lack of metadata, we manually redacted the transcripts and decided to extract a total of 13 different variables per transcript, based on the mentioned previous findings from research on parole hearing outcomes. Inmate related metadata include their gender, race, age, age at the time of the crime, type of life crime (violent, non violent or sexual offense), years served in prison, education background, third-striker status⁴, gang affiliation, total number of pages of the transcript, and the outcome of the parole suitability hearing. We additionally extracted the gender of the presiding and deputy commissioner present in the hearing. Due to the fact that not all corresponding information for the selected variables was consistently mentioned during the hearings, some gaps in the dataset are unavoidable.

Our final dataset consists of metadata for 102

³<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/psh-transcript/>

⁴“Third-striker” refers to an individual convicted under California’s Three Strikes Law, which mandates severe penalties for those convicted of three or more serious or violent felonies. Typically, third-strikers face a life sentence and can only be eligible for (not granted) parole after serving a minimum of 25 years in prison.

parole candidates, comprising 100 males and 2 females. We successfully extracted 21 transcripts with corresponding metadata for white inmates, 20 for Hispanic inmates, 20 for black inmates, and 7 for inmates of other races (mainly Asian). The racial composition of our final sample was intentionally balanced, despite the general overrepresentation of Black and Latino men among prisoners in California. It is important to note that there is no publicly available data about the racial demographics of individual parolees. However, the CDCR has reported minimal disparities in parole grant rates across different racial groups. In 34 transcripts, race was not mentioned, but the majority of the remaining 12 variables could still be extracted from the text data.

According to the official CDCR report 8,717 parole hearings were held in the year of 2021. Out of 4,188 Hearings with an outcome 1,424 inmates were granted parole (34% grant rate), while 2,764 were denied (66% denial rate). The remaining results were either postponed, voluntarily waived, stipulations or cancellations. The majority of parole suitability hearings (97%) were held for male and only 256 for female parole candidates. The statistical report is publicly available^{5 6}. We see the same distribution of grant rate (32 hearings) and denial rate (70 hearings) in our selected sample, which also replicates the gender distribution (100 male vs. 2 female) observed in the official report.

Out of the 102 parole hearings in our dataset, 32 were presided over by a female commissioner and 70 by a male commissioner. For deputy commissioners, 43 were female, and 59 were male.

4.3 The final Corpus

The PDF transcripts of our final dataset, range from 37 to 164 pages, with an average length of 85 pages. The dataset comprises 48,478 thousand utterances, 142,540 thousand sentences and 21,122 questions in total, of which 16,039 were directly asked by commissioners to inmates. While questions constitute only 12% of the total sentences in the corpus, 76% of the questions asked in the corpus are directed to the inmate. The low percentage of questions in the corpus is due to several factors. First, each side is entitled to make lengthy closing state-

⁵<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/2021/03/15/calendar-year-2021-suitability-results/>

⁶<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/wp-content/uploads/sites/161/2023/05/pv-2021-Significant-Events.pdf>

ments. Second, the inmate’s answers typically do not include questions. Finally, the commissioners’ decision statements are entirely assertive and very long, as they provide detailed justifications for their decisions about granting or denying parole.

We used Python to process the PDF files, converting them to text format and extracting utterances based in speaker tags. Questions were identified by searching for questions marks in utterances attributed to the "Presiding Commissioner" or "Deputy Commissioner", ensuring they were immediately followed by an inmate reply.

In terms of data acquisition, we encountered several challenges resulting in only including 102 transcripts of the 283 initially obtained to the final corpus. The excluded transcripts were omitted for various reasons, including corrupted files that could not be opened, hearings held *in absentia* (where the inmate was not present), or hearings that resulted in a waiver, postponement or stipulation rather than clear parole decisions. Additionally, the process of manually retrieving metadata from the transcripts is a time intensive task, as it requires to thoroughly read through each file to ensure the accurate extraction of relevant information. This labor-intensive approach is the primary reason for the relatively small sample size, but guarantees the reliability of the metadata used in our analysis.

Due to data privacy concerns we will not publish the unanonymized dataset, but can provide a list of the requested transcripts upon demand.

5 Methods

5.1 Question Taxonomy

To investigate question-asking patterns of commissioners towards inmates, we adopted the approach proposed by [Stivers and Enfield \(2010\)](#) and decided to use a taxonomy for question classification that is intentionally under-specifying. Specifically, we examined polar, alternative, and wh-questions, which we distilled into two broader categories: closed-ended and open-ended questions (see Section 3.1).

Open questions, typically referred to as content or wh-questions, are intended to require detailed answers and give the interviewees the freedom to decide for themselves how detailed they want to answer. In the context of parole hearings, in particular, open questions allow the inmate to elaborate, explain their actions, and give insight into their personal growth, which is ultimately crucial for the final decision. Example (1a) illustrates an open

question found in our dataset.

In contrast, closed questions, including polar and alternative questions, are designed to elicit specific, limited responses that often require a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer (see Example (1b)) or a selection from predetermined options. As a consequence the degree of information given by the inmate is restricted and the control of the conversation content is in the hands of the commissioners. From the commissioners’ perspective, these questions help to verify specific details during the hearing and ensure clarity and accountability of responses, while simultaneously helping to reduce the likelihood of evasive answers. We chose to collapse polar and alternative questions into one category to reduce the number of labels and therefore simplifying the classification scheme. This ensures more reliable labeling and avoids unnecessary complexity. We also included a category labeled "other" to capture any questions that do not clearly fit into either of the two categories (see Example (1c)).

- (1) a. **open question:** Why aren’t you doing something besides sitting in prison?
- b. **closed question:** Were you under the influence when you shot the kid?
- c. **other:** Pardon me?

Our motivation for focusing on open vs. closed-ended questions stems from their central role in managing conversation dynamics ([Kikteva et al., 2022](#)) and the asymmetry of power inherent in parole hearings. While there are alternative schemes, we chose this taxonomy to capture the essential contrast between open and closed questions and directly relate to the control of conversation content and inmate participation through the commissioners. Ultimately, the types of questions asked determine the degree of information elicited in the answers, which in turn contribute to the decision the commissioners will make at the end of the hearing.

5.2 Gold standard annotation

To create the gold standard annotation for questions in parole hearings, a total of 750 randomly selected questions posed directly by either the presiding or deputy commissioner to the inmate were extracted from a smaller subcorpus. Our student assistant (a master’s student in computational linguistics) and one of the authors were tasked with annotating the questions independently according to the

question taxonomy described above. With 84% of the data coded identically and a Cohen’s kappa of 0.67, the initial inter-annotator agreement was substantial. However, in a review process, questions with diverging labeling were re-evaluated by both annotators. As most disagreements were observed in the "other" category, this step was used to refine its application. Many of these disagreements involved clarification questions that were difficult to categorize, such as "Beating somebody up?" or "After the 2015 write-up?" which sometimes led to ambiguity about whether these should be labelled as closed question or "other". After engaging in discussions and reaching consensus, the questions were relabelled accordingly. In a subsequent step, 1250 more randomly extracted questions were annotated.

The final gold standard (12% of the entire corpus) comprises 1193 closed questions (60%), 667 open questions (33%) and 140 (7%) questions that were annotated as "other".

5.3 Model evaluation

To compare traditional linguistic analysis techniques with cutting-edge AI approaches, we used one rule-based and one LLM-based annotation method. The purpose of this preliminary evaluation was to compare the efficiency, accuracy, and consistency of each method, providing insights into their effectiveness and suitability for the large-scale annotation task. We evaluated the performance of a rule-based system against annotations generated by different models of ChatGPT on the same subset that our human annotators had used.

For rule-based annotations we adapted the English version of the NLP pipeline *LiAnS* (Linguistic Annotation Service), which was originally designed to analyse spoken dialogues in English and German using linguistic features (Gold et al., 2015). We tailored a set of linguistic cues and disambiguation rules specifically to annotate questions according to their question type.

Following the instructions of Törnberg (2023), we additionally prompted ChatGPT-4o, ChatGPT-4o-mini and ChatGPT-3.5-turbo via the OpenAI API⁷ with the following zero-shot prompt using Python:

"Classify the following question as "open" (wh-questions), "closed" (yes/no or alternative

⁷<https://platform.openai.com/overview>

questions), or "other". Provide the classification followed by the probability with two decimal points. The response should consist of the classification ("open", "closed" or "other") and the probability only, with no additional text.

Question: 'question' "

We designed the prompt to clearly specify the annotation criteria and question types, ensuring that the model generated annotations aligned with our question taxonomy. We also required the model to provide a probability for label assignment, giving us the possibility to monitor its annotation confidence. Following findings from previous research, the temperature was set to 0, in order to keep the annotations deterministic and consistent (Gilardi et al., 2023). After comparing the accuracy scores of annotations generated by ChatGPT-3.5-turbo (0.72), ChatGPT-4o-mini (0.84) and ChatGPT-4o (0.91) the latter was chosen for the automatic annotation. We additionally tested ChatGPT-4o’s annotation performance using a similar few-shot prompt (see Example 2 and Table 3 in appendix A), which did not improve results compared to the zero-shot prompt. Upon examining the model’s reported probabilities, we observed values between 0.70 and 1.0 for the zero-shot prompting, with only eight questions receiving a confidence score below 0.85.

Metric	Model	Precision	Recall	F1
open	ChatGPT4o	0.93	0.96	0.94
	LiAnS	0.79	0.98	0.87
closed	ChatGPT4o	0.94	0.93	0.94
	LiAnS	0.96	0.62	0.75
other	ChatGPT4o	0.55	0.52	0.53
	LiAnS	0.24	0.70	0.36
macro avg	ChatGPT4o	0.81	0.80	0.81
	LiAnS	0.66	0.77	0.66
weighted avg	ChatGPT4o	0.91	0.91	0.91
	LiAnS	0.85	0.74	0.77
accuracy	ChatGPT4o			0.91
	LiAnS			0.74

Table 1: Comparison of rule-based question classification model *LiAnS* and ChatGPT-4o based on Precision, Recall, and F1-Score.

Table 1 shows the overall performance metrics for ChatGPT 4o and the rule-based model across the three categories compared to the gold standard annotation: open, closed and other questions. Compared to the rule-based model, ChatGPT 4o demonstrated better performance in all three categories, with an overall accuracy of 0.91 compared to the

rule-based model’s 0.74. Specifically, ChatGPT-4o achieved higher F1-scores for open (0.94 vs. 0.87), closed (0.94 vs. 0.75), and other questions (0.53 vs. 0.36). The low scores for "other" do reflect the disagreement encountered for human annotators in the creation of the gold standard.

Based on these results, ChatGPT 4o is the preferable choice for the annotation of the full 16,039-question dataset.

6 Results

We prompted ChatGPT-4o to annotate all questions directly posed to an inmate by any of the commissioners. Out of 16,039 questions 9990 were annotated as closed (62%), 5385 as open (34%), and 664 as "other" (4%), typically consisting of clarification requests or cut-off questions. This distribution indicates that approximately two-thirds of the questions asked during the 102 selected parole hearings constrain the inmate’s response to a pre-determined format, while only one-third allow for a more open-ended reply.

Using the fully annotated dataset, we conducted a statistical analysis in order to answer the research questions posed in Section 1. Our first question addresses how the types of questions asked during parole hearings relate to the outcomes of those hearings. Overall, more closed questions were asked in hearings where inmates were found to be eligible for parole ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{granted}} = 94.5$ vs. $\hat{\mu}_{\text{denied}} = 89$). In the case of open questions, the proportion was slightly higher in denied hearings ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{denied}} = 54$ vs. $\hat{\mu}_{\text{granted}} = 50.5$). Nevertheless, the results of a Mann-Whitney Test showed a statistically insignificant relationship between question types and parole hearing outcomes.

The second research question aims to analyze the relationship between the types of questions posed and an inmate’s racial background. We are especially interested in whether there are any disparities in the share of questions posed related to an inmate’s racial background and whether this impacts their chances of being released on parole. According to our dataset, the share of open and closed questions was higher for Black inmates in comparison to White, Hispanic, and inmates of other ethnic groups (see Figure 1). Given that the distribution of open and closed questions followed a normal and homogeneous distribution, we calculated an F-test to test for significant differences among racial groups and the share of posed ques-

tions. Figure 1 shows these differences were not statistically significant, for either open or closed questions. Given the non-normal distribution and heterogeneity of "other" questions, we calculated a Kruskal Wallis Test. This test yielded results at the 0.1 significance level, meaning that the share of "other" questions asked to Black ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{Black}} = 7$) inmates was significantly higher in comparison to all other racial groups ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{White}} = 4$, $\hat{\mu}_{\text{Hispanic}} = 5$, $\hat{\mu}_{\text{Other}} = 3$; $p = 0.06$, see Figure 2 in appendix B). Upon manual examination of the questions labelled as "other", we found that they primarily consisted of cut-off questions. The majority was incomplete utterances, due to inaudible content and interruptions (as marked and transcribed in the PDF files), or one-word clarification requests. For example, we found instances like "*– know about the fight in November?*" or "*<inaudible>?*", which are challenging to be interpreted in isolation, as they heavily depend on the context.

Furthermore, Black inmates experienced longer parole hearings, as measured by the page count of the corresponding PDF transcripts in our corpus, though this difference was also not statistically significant. We did not find evidence for an inmate’s racial background influencing either the share of questions posed or their likelihood of being released.

To investigate whether the commissioners’ gender influences their questioning behavior towards inmates of different races, we investigated the types of questions posed by male and female commissioners during the hearings. We conducted a series of hierarchical linear regressions (see Table 4 in appendix C) to analyze the relationship between the gender of the commissioners and the inmate’s race. After assessing the validity of our models by conducting regression diagnostics for all included models in this article, we fixed issues of heteroscedasticity and of non-normality of residuals by using robust standard errors as a base for our calculations (Cribari-Neto and da Glória A. Lima, 2014; Pek et al., 2018). We found that, on average, male presiding commissioners asked significantly fewer closed questions than their female colleagues (see Table 4, Model (1)). Moreover, we found that female presiding commissioners posed fewer closed questions to White inmates compared to male presiding commissioners (see Table 4, Model (1)). We observe a similar pattern for Black inmates, although this finding is only significant at the 0.1 level (see Table 4, Model (1)). With regard

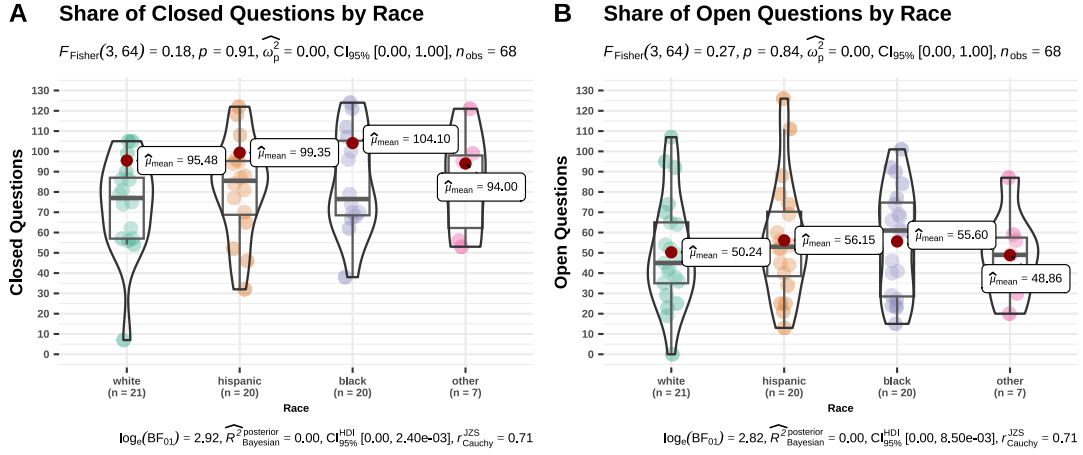


Figure 1: Distribution of Closed (A) and Open (B) Questions by Inmate's Race

to open questions, we found no evidence of a relationship between presiding commissioners' gender and inmate's race (see Table 4, Model (3)).

Assessing the questioning behavior of male and female deputy commissioners on the inmate's race, we found no statistically significant relationship between the share of closed/open questions deputy commissioners (male or female) posed and the race of the inmates. However, we did observe a negative relationship between closed and open questions from deputy commissioners (regardless of gender) and the parole decision. This suggests that, on average, when parole is granted, the share of questions (open or closed) asked by deputy commissioners is lower (see Table 4, Model (2) and (4)).

We also conducted further analysis of the data to identify other factors influencing the share of open and closed questions in the parole suitability hearings within our dataset. Table 2 shows the results of the full model of the calculated step-wise linear regressions. According to our findings, inmates with "third-striker" status were asked fewer closed questions (see 2, Model (1)). We also found that "third-strikers" were asked fewer open questions (see 2, Model (1)). Looking into the total distribution of questions among "third-strikers", we found that they were asked fewer questions in general ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{third-striker}} = 139, 50$) when compared to "non-third-strikers" ($\hat{\mu}_{\text{non-third-striker}} = 159$) ($p = 0.05$). With regard to open questions, we found significant effects related to the inmates' age, their age at the time of committing the life offense, and the number of years they have been in prison (see Table 2). Our analysis revealed that older inmates were asked significantly more open questions compared to younger inmates. Furthermore, the older inmates

were at the time they committed their crime, the fewer open questions they were asked. Additionally, our analysis showed that the share of open questions declines with increasing time served in prison.

	Closed Questions Open Questions	
	(1)	(2)
Constant	93.897** (37.665)	65.688*** (21.105)
Age	1.901 (1.698)	2.136** (0.951)
Age at Crime	-2.171 (1.696)	-2.329** (0.950)
Years in Prison	-1.681 (1.669)	-2.298** (0.935)
Education	3.016 (5.770)	-0.797 (3.233)
Gang	1.122 (10.338)	3.965 (5.793)
Third Striker	-20.209* (10.145)	-18.332*** (5.684)
Violent	6.854 (18.310)	1.990 (10.260)
Non-violent	2.705 (21.184)	7.858 (11.870)
Sex Offender		
Observations	71	71
R ²	0.119	0.238
Adjusted R ²	0.006	0.139
Residual Std. Error (df = 62)	40.349	22.608
F Statistic (df = 8; 62)	1.051	2.417**

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2: Effect of Age, Age at Crime, Years in Prison, Education, Gang and Crime on Types of Questions.

7 Discussion and Limitations

This study aims to contribute to the research gap regarding the linguistic study of parole hearings, with a special focus on whether the types of questions asked lead to biased outcomes in parole suitability.

Based on our sample, we do not observe a relationship between the type of questions asked and the outcome of the hearings. Contrary to our expectations, open questions do not seem to be positively correlated to a positive parole outcome, implying that board members might prioritize other criteria over the inmate's ability to provide persuasive answers. External factors to the conversation held in the hearing, such as an inmate's rehabilitation progress, low-risk scores in psychological evaluations, and potential for successful reintegration into society might have a bigger impact on parole eligibility than an inmate's articulating power.

In addition, we do not find statistically significant evidence for disparities in the share of questions posed to inmates of different racial backgrounds, suggesting that the evidence regarding racial biases from the social sciences, might not be correlated with commissioners questioning behavior. The fact that female presiding commissioners ask fewer closed questions to White inmates, suggests that White inmates are given a higher chance to articulate themselves in these hearings. However, our findings do not indicate a significant effect on the parole hearing outcome. The low shares of all question types from deputy commissioners in granted parole hearings might reflect the supportive role they play, backing up the presiding commissioner. The presiding commissioners may have already gathered enough information to make a final decision, rendering further questions unnecessary. Our findings regarding the inmate's age and their age at the time of the crime align with the findings from social sciences. Older inmates were not only more likely to be found suitable for parole release, but were also given more often the chance to articulate themselves by being asked more open questions. Similarly, inmates who were very young at the time they committed their life crime were also asked more open questions, allowing them to decide with how much detail they wanted to answer. These findings align with the Board's engagement with the enactment of the Elderly Parole Program and the Youth Parole Program.

Limits to the generalizability of the findings lie in the small sample size, the incompleteness of the manually extracted metadata, and the short time-frame of data selection. Due to the skewed sample (only two female inmates) we were not able to test for the gender-responsiveness of questioning patterns used by the board members. Another limitation of our study is the lack of detailed content

analysis of questions posed by the commissioners and the corresponding inmate responses, which might affect the outcome of the parole hearing. To address these limitations and to obtain more generalizable findings on potential question type bias, we plan to officially request metadata for a larger corpus of parole hearings. Regarding the annotation via generative AI, we intend to implement a human-in-the-loop approach, where human oversight will complement ChatGPT's output, ensuring greater reliability, through a combination of the AI's efficiency with the precision of human expertise.

8 Conclusion & Outlook

This study is the first to conduct an in-depth analysis of question patterns in spoken and transcribed parole hearing data, combining insights from social sciences and language technology. While our annotation approach using ChatGPT, yielded very good results, our analysis, based on a sample of 102 parole hearings, did not reveal a significant correlation between the types of questions posed and parole outcomes. Our findings also suggest, that racial disparities in parole hearings might not be correlated to a commissioner's questioning behavior or gender, but might be due to other factors discussed in Section 7.

In order to assess the complexity of the dialogical dynamics and further investigate possible relationships between question types, demographic variables and parole hearing outcome, we plan to expand our corpus. To generate more metadata for in-depth analysis, we consider developing information extraction techniques, such as those used by [Hong et al. \(2021\)](#).

As we are interested in the linguistic strategies employed in parole hearings, the next step is to analyze the content of questions and inmate responses to identify patterns of evasive and non-evasive responses and their potential impact on decisions made by the commissioners. This ongoing research will further bridge the gap between social sciences and computational linguistics, offering a more robust understanding of procedural justice in parole hearings.

Acknowledgments

We are deeply grateful to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) for supplying the parole hearing transcriptions, which were essential to our research.

We also wish to acknowledge the significant contributions of our student assistant, Klymentii Myslyvyi, whose diligent efforts in collecting and organizing the metadata greatly enhanced the quality of our work.

The work reported on in this paper was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG – German Research Foundation) under Germany’s Excellence Strategy – EXC-2035/1 – 390681379 as part of the project “Inequality in Street-level Bureaucracy: Linguistic Analysis of Public Service Encounters”.

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A Prompt engineering

A.1 Few-shot prompt

- (2) Classify the following question as "open" (wh-questions), "closed" (yes/no or alternative questions), or "other." Also, return the probability of it being that specific question type. The output should only contain three words: "open", "closed" or "other", and the probability with two decimal points.

Examples:

- Question: "Why were you drinking?"
Output: open 0.95
- Question: "You were not doing anything illegal?"
Output: closed 0.95
- Question: "Either on your own or through the institution?"
Output: closed 0.90
- Question: "Huh?"
Output: other 0.95

Now, classify the following question:
question: 'question'.

Metric	Precision	Recall	F1
open	0.92	0.94	0.93
closed	0.96	0.86	0.90
other	0.39	0.71	0.50
macro avg	0.76	0.84	0.78
weighted avg	0.91	0.88	0.89
accuracy			0.88

Table 3: Precision, Recall, and F1-Score of few shot prompt.

B Share of "Other" Questions by Race

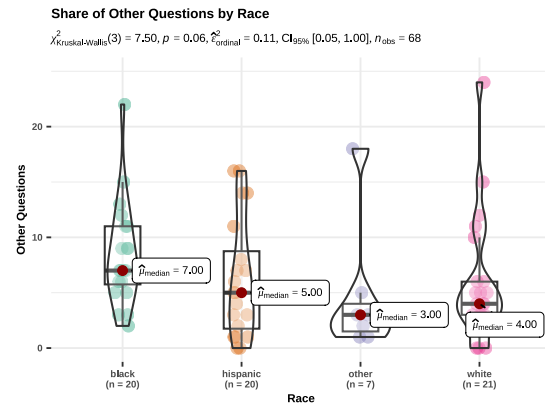


Figure 2: Distribution of "Other" Questions by Inmate's Race.

C Hierarchical Linear Regressions

	Closed Questions (1) (2)		Open Questions (3) (4)	
	Closed Presiding (1)	Closed Deputy (2)	Open Presiding (3)	Open Deputy (4)
Constant	49.718*** (21.939)	83.770*** (35.055)	17.454** (11.206)	39.330*** (27.542)
Parole	5.845 (8.374)	-17.770** (8.767)	2.638 (4.774)	-12.330** (6.048)
Presiding Commissioner: Male	-33.313* (25.909)		-6.592 (13.817)	
Deputy Commissioner: Male		-16.708 (34.491)		3.868 (27.284)
White	-24.287 (22.369)	-16.170 (39.851)	-2.782 (12.269)	-6.130 (29.247)
Black	-20.324 (23.200)	-12.913 (37.525)	-1.659 (12.265)	-11.044 (28.889)
Hispanic	-18.256 (23.085)	-18.077 (37.188)	-5.109 (12.261)	-6.247 (27.597)
Other				
Male Presiding Commissioner * White	42.442** (29.256)		12.498 (15.872)	
Male Presiding Commissioner * Black	33.234* (26.714)		6.947 (14.262)	
Male Presiding Commissioner * Hispanic	26.616 (27.691)		16.519 (15.069)	
Male Presiding Commissioner * Other				
Male Deputy Commissioner * White		15.877 (40.685)		-3.006 (29.699)
Male Deputy Commissioner * Black		28.206 (38.456)		17.998 (29.649)
Male Deputy Commissioner * Hispanic		29.458 (38.573)		3.257 (28.388)
Male Deputy Commissioner * Other				
Observations	68	68	68	68
R ²	0.084	0.081	0.084	0.121
Adjusted R ²	-0.041	-0.044	-0.040	0.002
Residual Std. Error (df = 59)	22.588	33.090	12.170	20.981
F Statistic (df = 8; 59)	0.673	0.646	0.680	1.016

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4: Effect of Race and Gender on Open/Closed Questions. Full Models of conducted Hierarchical Linear Regressions.

Principles for AI-Assisted Social Influence and Their Application to Social Mediation

Ian Perera¹, Alex Memory², Vera A. Kazakova¹, Bonnie J. Dorr³, Brodie Mather¹,
Ritwik Bose², Arash Mahyari¹, Corey Lofdahl⁴, Mack S. Blackburn⁴,
Archna Bhatia¹, Brandon Patterson¹, Peter Pirolli¹

¹Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, Ocala, FL

²Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, MD

³University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

⁴Leidos, Inc., Reston, VA

{iperera@ihmc.org, Alex.Memory@jhuapl.edu, vkazakova@ihmc.org,
bonniejdorr@ufl.edu, bmather@ihmc.org, Rik.Bose@jhuapl.edu,
amahyari@ihmc.org, Corey.Lofdahl@leidos.com, Mack.Blackburn@leidos.com,
abhatia@ihmc.org, bpatterson@ihmc.org, ppirolli@ihmc.org}

Abstract

Successful social influence, whether at individual or community levels, requires expertise and care in several dimensions of communication: understanding of emotions, beliefs, and values; transparency; and context-aware behavior shaping. Based on our experience in identifying mediation needs in social media and engaging with moderators and users, we developed a set of principles that we believe social influence systems should adhere to to ensure ethical operation, effectiveness, widespread adoption, and trust by users on both sides of the engagement of influence. We demonstrate these principles in D-ESC: Dialogue Assistant for Engaging in Social-Cybermediation, in the context of AI-assisted social media mediation, a newer paradigm of automatic moderation that responds to unique and changing communities while engendering and maintaining trust in users, moderators, and platform-holders. Through this case study, we identify opportunities for our principles to guide future systems towards greater opportunities for positive social change.

1 Introduction

AI systems for social influence in communications are often viewed with suspicion, especially when they exert social influence explicitly, which can be seen as potentially malicious. While AI is increasingly used in social influence, ethical guidelines and principles typically focus on philosophical perspectives for black-box systems, rather than providing practical guidance for ethical methods and implementations (Zhou et al., 2020). We believe that effective and responsible social influence systems require not only oversight, but awareness of

the socioemotional landscape and transparent models based on that landscape.

We consider one target domain as moderation or mediation on social media platforms, where AI-based approaches are often embedded in a socioemotional context, but lack direct engagement with user emotions. Moderation typically relies on categorical rules such as “No personal attacks” or “No racial slurs”, which fail to address shifts in community tone, focus, and overall health of discussion. Communities can radicalize over time through interactions that do not explicitly violate community rules. Additionally, what is considered harmful or disruptive can evolve (dos Santos et al., 2024), influenced by factors such as a user’s platform history (Cheng et al., 2021), requiring more adaptable and holistic mediation strategies.

Ethical AI-assisted social influence is a nuanced and challenging problem, especially in this domain. Maintaining community health may require limiting user freedoms, which can foster perceived censorship and contribute to radicalization. Effectively addressing undesirable behavior requires understanding both disinformation tactics and individual responses to communication from others. Community health is also dynamic, requiring ongoing adaptation even within a single community.

We believe there are a set of guiding principles that can provide a guiding framework for tackling these and other challenging domains in the realm of social influence systems. These principles are shown in Figure 1 and were developed by building on prior work in sociolinguistics, psychology, and social cybersecurity, and then incorporating lessons learned from designing and deploying our work with feedback from moderators.

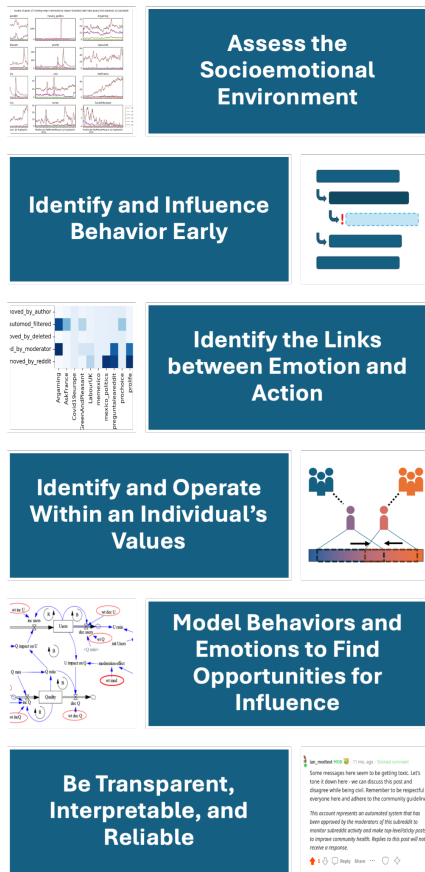


Figure 1: The principles we posit as enabling ethical and effective social influence systems in complex socioemotional environments.

Social media serves as a valuable example for broader social influence dynamics, as complex interactions can occur in various emotion-laden contexts such as negotiation, decision-making, disaster relief, or patient-caregiver interactions. We introduce D-ESC (Dialogue Assistant for Engaging in Social-Cybermediation) as a case study for comprehensive social influence systems.

A key contribution of D-ESC is its inclusion of multiple components that facilitate positive social influence by detecting and addressing potentially undesirable behaviors in social media communities. Through a mixture of tested natural language processing (NLP) techniques for emotion and sentiment detection and novel topic-based, stance-based (Mather et al., 2021), soft logic, and generative approaches, D-ESC analyzes emotional dynamics, generates deescalation responses while adhering to community guidelines, and provides explainable predictions for those responses. These components form a framework for analyzing, modeling, and influencing communities with human oversight, enabling exploration of potential interventions.

We briefly cover prior social influence work that could benefit from integrating fundamental principles of social influence in complex socioemotional environments, then highlight these opportunities specifically in the domain of social media moderation. We then outline core principles we adhered to in developing D-ESC, and describe their implementation. Finally, we cover potential future applications that demonstrate the broad applicability of this case study beyond social media mediation.

2 Prior Work

Existing AI-assisted social influence work includes systems for improving attitudes and communicative behavior (Anastasiou and De Liddo, 2023), persuading users to give to charitable organizations (Tran et al., 2022), and safeguarding online communities through early identification of antisocial users (Cheng et al., 2021). Emotional awareness has been used to produce prosocial responses to other individuals’ statements of negative emotions (Zhao et al., 2023). Other efforts analyze human social influence techniques in social media (Tan et al., 2016), suggest less inflammatory language in the form of paraphrases (Som et al., 2024), and position AI as a “moral crumple zone” to protect human relationships by taking the blame for failed communications (Hohenstein and Jung, 2020).

In social media, AI-assisted social influence efforts typically follow a binary approach: either remove posted content or allow it to remain (Diaz and Hecht-Felella, 2021). Some platforms implement zero-tolerance policies with explicit rules against prohibited content, hate speech, harassment, violence, or other harmful or illegal content (Facebook, November, 2022; Twitter, March, 2023; YouTube, 2019). However, these methods may not effectively address the complex dynamics of online communities, overlooking the cumulative impact of interactions (Massanari, 2017; Suler, 2004). Additionally, adopting machine learning for scalable detection, as reviewed by Balayn et al. (2021), has led to manual moderation in response to errors, raising concerns of discrimination, as some populations are more frequently mis-classified than others.

Automated mediation differs from automated moderation in its shift from removing problematic content to fostering dispute resolution and promoting *civil discourse* within online communities. Automated mediation systems are still in early research stages, for example, within the legal field

(Roos, 2023; Bergman, 2023). More recent work has explored Large Language Model approaches for social mediation (Cho et al., 2024) and political discourse (Argyle et al., 2023), but these methods do not posit methods for awareness of community dynamics prior to influence. Our work aims to influence users to engage more positively in their community, and to encourage moderators to support the community rather than just enforcing rules.

3 Core Principles of Social Influence Systems

In developing social media mediation systems, engaging with potential users, surveying related work, and considering future applications, we have established a set of core principles for successful social influence systems. We define “successful” in terms of high scores for a) adoption (likelihood of use), b) trust (perceived as a positive, trustworthy agent), c) effectiveness (achieving intended social influence), and d) alignment (mirroring human social influence skills). Whereas prior work has focused on task-specific metrics such as *influence outcome* or *partner perception* (Chawla et al., 2023), our metrics are intended to apply more broadly—at both individual and societal levels—capturing key dimensions deemed crucial for the role social influence systems in society.

We begin by outlining our proposed principles of social influence system design, and then describe how we work to achieve these principles in our D-ESC mediation system.

3.1 Assess the socioemotional environment

A key part of social influence is understanding the social context and the emotions that driving behavior. The focus must be on both expressed emotions and the underlying emotions that lead to them. Many prior systems use sentiment as a proxy for understanding emotion, but sentiment measures often poorly reflect emotional state (Nandwani and Verma, 2021). In social media communities, even pro-social interactions can include profanity and insults that build camaraderie, while polite or formal interactions may reduce emotional support or downplay justified outrage. Even in information-centric communities, users may want to see social and emotional support as part of the community values (Worrall et al., 2021).

Upon reviewing D-ESC, social media moderators have expressed concerns that an AI system

might not fully understand the context of interactions. Moderators often witness false positives in automated toxicity detection and are hesitant to adopt similar tools due to AI’s lack of socioemotional awareness. In emotion regulation agents, users often complain that the agent does not seem like a good listener or does not consider the specific situation (Hopman et al., 2023). These examples demonstrate that understanding the socioemotional environment is key for adoption and effectiveness.

3.2 Identify and influence behavior early

Behavior change becomes harder once it is habitual, making early interventions crucial for influencing behavior before it turns harmful. Caught early, social media users are more open to rephrasing their posts constructively. Caught late, with options like removal or banning, users may feel unfairly targeted or suppressed. Historical data across CNN, IGN, and Breitbart show that banned users often posted more and elicit more replies, disproportionately affecting their communities (Cheng et al., 2021). Their antisocial behavior worsens over time, underscoring the need for early detection and moderation.

Additionally, users may be unaware that their behavior could lead to negative responses or be perceived as inflammatory. Prior work on computational modeling of polarization on social media suggests that early feedback is essential to prevent extreme polarization and skepticism of alternative views (Lim and Bentley, 2022). Early engagement with the user offers the greatest potential and the most options for influence.

3.3 Identify links between emotion and action

Online interactions have been characterized as *intentional social actions*, with social and individual antecedents, as well as online and offline consequences (Richard P. Bagozzi and Pearo, 2007). Although social influence applications focus on behavior, emotions often precede these behaviors. Thus, considering and potentially influencing emotions may be more effective than targeting behaviors directly, as seen in the BEND framework (Carley, 2020), which targets human biases and emotions to achieve behavioral change.

Emotions can also be weaponized by users, such as trolling, even when not overtly violating community norms. This disrupts healthy communication and can even lure threads or entire communities into degenerative and polarized discussions

through asymmetrical responses, such as: ignoring, challenging, or inflaming others (Paakki et al., 2021). While overt antisocial behaviors may be easy to identify, covert antisocial behaviors require more nuanced strategies focusing on emotional triggers (Hardaker, 2013). Understanding these dynamics allows a social influence system to more effectively influence users and adapt to external and individual factors that may affect the influence.

3.4 Identify an individual’s values and operate within them when possible

Interactions within a system must feel relevant and valuable to users. Thus, AI-based social influence systems must be grounded in human social and emotional concepts. People are most influenced by appeals to their own experiences and ideals, so AI systems need a consistent base of support for the perspectives they present. Social Judgment theory (Sherif and Hovland, 1961) explains how individuals respond to information in relation to their existing attitudes, dividing ideas into acceptable, indifferent, or unacceptable. Aiming for vast changes in attitudes or behavior can lead to ineffective interventions at best, and harmful reactions at worst, as disproportionate moderations can exacerbate undesirable behaviors (Cheng et al., 2021).

3.5 Model behaviors and emotions, and find opportunities for influence

All AI-assisted social influence applications use models, but these are often predictive without a causal hypothesis, limiting opportunities for effective influence. In social media, individuals and communities are often seen as unchanging, labeled as “good,” “bad,” “toxic,” or “positive.” Even when social influence is the goal, models typically train on population data, learning general strategies, rather than tailoring to individual attitudes and personalities. An effective social influence system not only predicts responses to specific actions, but also uses a causal model to explore individualized strategies for influencing dynamic users.

3.6 Be transparent, interpretable, and reliable

Key barriers to AI adoption include lack of transparency, questionable output interpretability, and resulting distrust in the system’s effectiveness (Bedué and Fritzsche, 2022). AI systems must be both trustworthy and trusted, as users become vulnerable by relying on them for desired outcomes (Jacovi et al., 2021). Trust requires clear

and continuous evidence that the system will act predictably and align with expected values and policies. Users of the system to exert influence must trust that the system will predictably act according to their goals and ethical considerations, while the influenced users must view the system’s influence as either sufficiently valuable or inconsequential, when compared to its overall value. To make informed decisions regarding this judgment, users need transparency about system goals, continuous oversight of system behavior, and safeguards against misbehavior.

4 The D-ESC System

D-ESC is a multi-component system designed for social media environments, either directly or indirectly engaging with users, and providing automated feedback to moderators or administrators. It has been deployed on Reddit, where it can post to improve community health, offers a dashboard, and generates natural language reports based on observed activity. The dashboard allows moderators to view potentially problematic posts or indicators of impending conflict. A subreddit-specific component encourages constructive discourse by rewriting posts containing harmful language, while maintaining the original intent. We present the data and textual enrichments used, then describe how each D-ESC component aligns with the principles of effective social influence outlined above.

4.1 Data Description

Data is curated from several Reddit communities using the PushShift API¹ and the Python Reddit API Wrapper (PRAW),² with daily collections from November 2021 through June 2022 identifying comments and posts removed by moderators following Chandrasekharan and Gilbert (2019).

4.2 Textual Enrichments

A range of linguistic dimensions, such as emotions or sentiment, are extracted from each post to provide human-interpretable values. These serve as low-level features that are used in D-ESC components or combined to form classifiers and generative models. Off-the-shelf tools classify text based on emotion,³ sentiment,⁴ and toxicity (Hanu and Unitary team, 2020), though these measures can

¹<https://files.pushshift.io/reddit/>

²<https://github.com/praw-dev/praw>

³hf.co/bhadresh-savani/distilbert-base-uncased-emotion

⁴hf.co/nlptown/bert-base-multilingual-uncased-sentiment

be overly sensitive to profanity (which can be used in non-toxic contexts). Each comment and post is also summarized using a fine-tuned version of `flan-t5-xxl`,⁵ and moral foundations (Haidt and Joseph, 2004) are extracted based on prior work.

5 D-ESC Approach

D-ESC’s components address the challenges of moderation and mediation, while advancing key principles for successful AI-assisted social influence. The following subsections correspond with the principles outlined in Section 3. The connection of these methods to those principles is shown in Figure 2.

5.1 Assessing the Socioemotional Environment in Social Media

D-ESC analyzes the socioemotional environment by examining social media for expressed and unexpressed attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences. A key tool is *stance detection* (Mather et al., 2021), which identifies topic-driven beliefs and determines the corresponding attitude based on belief and sentiment strength. For example, the statement *I really regret having an abortion* yields the following stance representation, with specific values for belief and sentiment: $REGRET(abortion), belief-strength=3.0, sentiment=-1.0, attitude=-3.0$. This allows D-ESC to focus moderation efforts on the underlying attitudes expressed in posts.

Stance detection uses lexical resources to extract hidden mental states related to specific topics. While previous approaches, like those of Mather et al. (2021), use semi-automatic processing with human input to create domain-relevant lexicons, D-ESC builds these lexicons fully automatically. It does so by computing predicate-argument pairs and then directly uses these as belief types, streamlining the process and enhancing the system’s ability to moderate based on the nuanced understanding of user beliefs and attitudes.

Through stance detection and automatic resource building on controversial topics, D-ESC can target specific beliefs expressed by authors and automatically tailor its moderation techniques to reduce post toxicity while preserving the message’s underlying content. Furthermore, applying this method to highly toxic posts helps D-ESC to iteratively refine its lexicon, improving the identification of polarizing conversations that may need moderation.

⁵hf.co/jordiclive/flan-t5-11b-summarizer-filtered

5.2 Early Behavior Shaping

Individuals may not be aware that their behavior could contribute to a degradation of community health, and early, mild intervention can keep users engaged while redirecting their communication to be more constructive. We create a conversation deviation algorithm to predict whether a social media post will provoke controversy. Data from Reddit reveals that many heated debates start with seemingly innocuous comments or posts that gradually deviate from the main topic, leading to contentious interactions. For example, in a subreddit focused on sharing COVID-related tips for working from home, a question about mask mandates or vaccinations might spark controversy as it diverges from the ongoing discussion.

Due to the unavailability or costliness of labeled data, we adopt an unsupervised approach, training a classifier head on top of the encoder of a large language model (T5), with posts from various subreddits. Posts are arranged chronologically in a sliding window of length L , shifting one post at a time. Posts within the same subreddit are labeled as normal (0).

To create controversy-provoking chains for training, we randomly select a post from a different subreddit and replace the last post in the window with the chosen post. Since this last post is from an unrelated subreddit, the topic will have deviated from the flow of the analyzed subreddit. Accordingly, L subsequent posts are labeled as 1 to indicate a deviation from the associated subreddit’s theme. This process is repeated across subreddits to generate a training dataset without human annotation.

To assess the effectiveness of our method, we collect data from the abortion subreddit on two contentious days, labeling posts removed by moderators on the second day as 1. Using the L -length moving window technique, we test our model on this real, annotated dataset. We achieve an accuracy of 78% compared to 74% accuracy in prior moderation work that uses hand-annotated training data (Chandrasekharan et al., 2019).

5.3 Modeling Emotional Actions and Responses

Each social media community has unique emotions, interactions, and moderation considerations. Medical support communities may reward sympathetic and careful responses to individual stressors or struggles, while gaming communities might re-

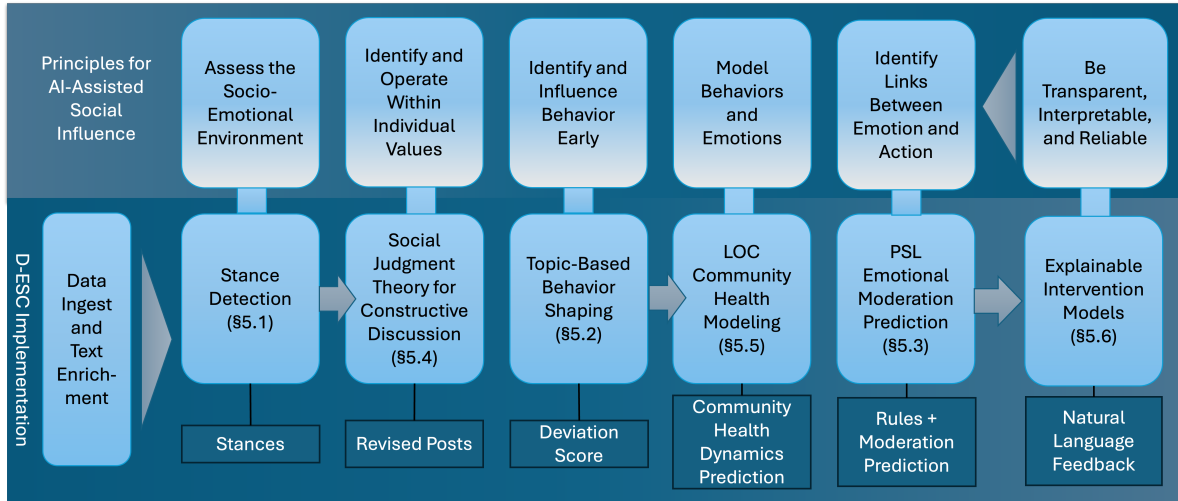


Figure 2: Illustration of how the D-ESC components address principles of AI-assisted social influence, with arrows demonstrating cross-component communication, and outputs of each component at the bottom.

ward humor and witty insults. To automatically learn community responses to emotions and values, we use an approach based on soft logic and probabilistic graphical models. Soft logic helps preserve rule interpretability and allows reasoning about input indicators with varying confidence levels, e.g., degrees of toxicity in posts. Specifically, we use Probabilistic Soft Logic (PSL) (Bach et al., 2017), which uses rules to encode a probabilistic graphical model that can learn weights on rules and perform inference over large volumes of indicator inputs.

We define a set of intervention rules in PSL and test whether we can learn weights on these rules that predict how Reddit moderators intervene on posts in their communities. We implement three types of intervention rules, each addressing different types of evidence.

1. *Community*: Community conventions for whether interventions are used (e.g., heavily moderated vs. lightly moderated) and which interventions are used (e.g., manual intervention vs. automated moderation tools)
2. *Indicator*: Whether posts are outside community norms, according to some indicator.
3. *History*: Patterns of unhealthy posts by the same user (recommended in interviews with actual moderators)

To represent community conventions, we use rules like this:

$$w : \forall P. \neg \text{intervene}(\text{moderator}, P, r/\text{Argaming}) \quad (1)$$

In the rule, P represents the post, moderator is a specific intervention type, $r/\text{Argaming}$ is a specific subreddit, and w is the weight on the rule, which is learned. This example rule suggests that in the subreddit $r/\text{Argaming}$, moderators rarely remove posts. If the learned weight w is large, we are less likely to recommend such interventions for that community.

Using a year’s data from a dozen subreddits, we learn weights for all three types of rules. For indicator rules, an example is:

$$w : \forall P. \text{enrich}(\text{sadness}, P, r/\text{Argaming}) \rightarrow \text{intervene}(\text{moderator}, P, r/\text{Argaming}) \quad (2)$$

This indicates that moderators of $r/\text{Argaming}$ typically remove posts containing sadness. We represent indicator inputs with the predicate *enrich*, where its soft truth value for post P is based on the output of the indicator for P . Figure 3 summarizes rule weights, where dark blue marks the intervention types that are common for each community to use, when encountering posts scoring high for varying indicators. For example, moderators of $r/\text{LabourUK}$ tend to remove posts that are toxic.

After training on Reddit posts from November 2021 through June 2022, we evaluate the rules’ ability to predict interventions from June to October 2022. Figure 4 shows accuracy results for a common intervention type, with soft truth values predicting interventions, with R^2 error between zero and one. Our ablation study results demonstrate that using all rules together (ALL) yields the lowest error rate, suggesting future work to include

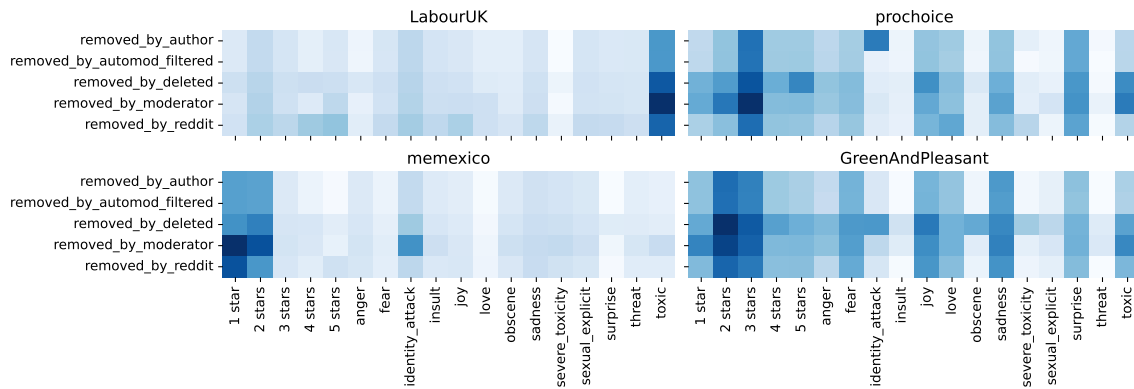


Figure 3: Examples of weights learned on indicator intervention rules. Dark blue marks the intervention types that are common for each community to use, when encountering posts scoring high for varying indicators.

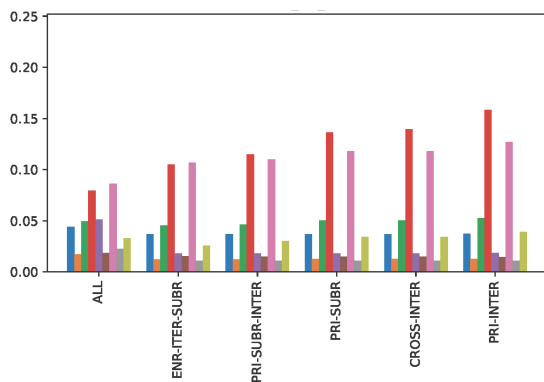


Figure 4: Error (R^2) for post interventions predicted by learned intervention rules while ablating different intervention rule types. Colors code different subreddits.

more indicators or improve rule structures to better address community-specific emotional responses.

5.4 Applying Social Judgment Theory for Constructive Discussion

A common phenomenon on social media is the presence of “echo-chambers”, where a community becomes isolated from outside opinions, leading users to strongly align with a core set of values (Sunstein, 2001). One potential application of social influence is an “echo-chamber burster,” which helps users explore ideas outside of their community. However, these echo chambers often include toxic language towards outside views or communities, even absent direct interaction (Efstratiou et al., 2022). Overcoming these barriers requires presenting opposing views in a respectful tone and considering emotions and values behind opinions. Framed within Social Judgment Theory (Sherif and Hovland, 1961), addressing echo chambers might best be achieved by presenting users with language

that is within their *latitude of acceptance* – a range of possible positions that may not be held by an individual, but could be accepted by that individual. We can view the latitude of acceptance as holding not just standard ethical or political positions (or *stances*), but additionally certain perspectives, language, or emotions that might be acceptable within a given context.

To reduce toxicity and align communities within this framework, we build on the system described in Bose et al. (2023), which instruction-tunes a 770M T5-large⁶ model to rephrase highly toxic posts while maintaining the style and meaning. This approach is rated as more authentic than other paraphrase methods (e.g., ChatGPT-3.5 baseline), while retaining coherence and relevance to the original content and context. With this work, we can generate suggested cross-subreddit rephrasings to express ideas across ideological divides (in this case, opposing subreddits). The model can also modify posts to reflect changes in emotions or values, and it can be tuned to match the language of the target community, potentially leading to higher rates of positive engagement.

5.5 Community Health Modeling and Influence Prediction

A holistic, quantifiable perspective on community health is necessary for assessing the effectiveness of interventions and forming hypotheses. Community dynamics are complex, influenced by moderator activity, which can be both a positive and negative indicator of community health. To address this, we focus on specific outcomes, such as reducing unsubscribes, decreasing rule-breaking

⁶<https://hf.co/google-t5/tf-large>

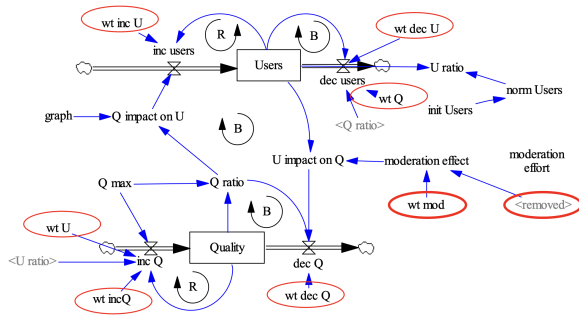


Figure 5: Logistic, Overshoot, and Collapse (LOC) model to be fitted

posts, increasing the proportion of removed rule-breaking posts, and higher downvote ratios for toxic/unhealthy posts. These outcomes are modeled to reflect the dynamics of a community in response to a new post, comment, or moderation event. Each such community activity has an associated potential social impact, represented as an effect on or of metrics such as emotion, toxicity, moral foundations, and likelihood of moderation.

To augment our rule-learning approach for predicting community health and provide a more general theory of moderation and online community behavior dynamics, we explore such behavior using a dynamic hypothesis model. However, subreddit communities can deteriorate after initial growth due to toxic posts, leading to a “collapse” in post quality. We thus use System Dynamics (SD) Modeling and Simulation (M&S) methodology (Sterman, 2000) to simulate interaction between users, post quality, and moderation activity. Figure 5 shows the model with interactions and weights on Users (U) and Post Quality (Q), where weights learned on the various relationships in the model provide a means to tailor the model to the behavior of a particular community. User movement can be tracked via subreddit metadata, while Post Quality is defined as a function of our learned textual and meta (i.e. upvote ratio) indicators of posts that yield a positive effect on the community.

We have begun experiments with learning model weights for different subreddits, informed by enrichments and moderator activity from Reddit. This work moves us toward creating a “digital twin” of social media communities, enabling intervention testing in a simulated environment. Future modeling will help us analyze the broader impact of social influence and identify communities that could benefit from our methods.

5.6 Explainable Intervention Models

D-ESC is designed for transparency and interpretability, with human-understandable models and features. We prioritize translating intervention recommendations into natural language explanations to engage moderators in the analysis process for influencing behavior. PSL model outputs are converted into clear explanations for recommended interventions, balancing reduction of moderators’ cognitive load with providing sufficient evidence to support and elicit the recommended action.

Specifically, PSL rules consist of propositions (each with a truth value $[0,1]$) that represent statements about individual Reddit posts. We extract all PSL rules that recommend interventions, excluding those with propositions having a truth value below 0.5. For example, the proposition $0.95:ENR('enrich_toxic', 'id123')$ indicates high-confidence that post `id123` contains toxic language, while $0.03:INTER('removed_by_author', 'id123')$ indicates low-confidence that the same post will be removed by its author. Thus, a rule that refers to both propositions above would be removed, as not all of its propositions are of high truth-value (≥ 0.5).

For each intervention, rules are grouped into three categories: prior posts by the same author, labeled feelings, and labeled sentiment polarity. These are then aggregated and translated into template-based natural language explanations for the recommended moderation, similar to the approach in SPLAIN (Kazakova et al., 2019).

For example, a removal recommendation might suggest past guideline violations: *“At detection time, 74 posts by the same author had been removed by Reddit.”* Notice of a prior violation may hint at community norms: *“Historical data suggests that posts expressing anger and sadness are frequently removed by moderators.”* These recommendations and explanations are presented to Reddit moderators through an interactive online dashboard.

We stress that interactivity is crucial for adoption, as it allows moderators to access: 1) additional reasoning details, incident information, and historical user or subreddit data; 2) streamlined moderator actions (e.g., approving or rejecting moderations with a single click); and 3) provision of moderator feedback to improve the moderation models.

5.7 Modes of Operation

D-ESC was envisioned to operate flexibly in a variety of situations, whether as a moderator tool, a

user assistant, or an administrative analytic dashboard. Our primary interfaces developed were an automated posting capability, an explainable moderation suggestion dashboard, and a post rephraser.

Fully automated posting of potential violations of community guidelines could be enabled by PSL moderation prediction (where moderation activity is taken when the system confidently predicts a moderator would take the same action), assisted by topic-based behavior shaping. However, moderators typically prefer a dashboard or report that provides an opportunity to verify the system's judgment. We developed both moderator reports and a dashboard with the Explainable Intervention Models providing a natural language description of the rationale for a particular recommendation. In this interface, moderators are able to see the recommended action, then approve or deny it, with the action then executed in the community.

Community Health Modeling was not fully implemented in terms of a usable interface – however, we expect such a system would provide a useful tool for administrators of social media platforms, as it provides a high-level analysis of community dynamics that can provide predictions as to whether a community may be potentially turning toxic.

Finally, the method to apply Social Judgment Theory for constructive discussion can be applied in multiple ways. First, as a suggested alternative for users before posting a potentially inflammatory comment. Alternatively, we envision an automated agent that could generate responses that steer the discussion in a more constructive direction.

6 Future Work

D-ESC would likely benefit most from increased interoperability and communication across components to more fully deliver on the promise of the principles outlined in this paper. For example, we plan to use stances to guide toxicity reduction in posts, ensuring important content is retained through the rephrasing, and extend our PSL models with more enrichments and indicators. Furthermore, as there are various complex components, an automatically learned process model for achieving specific outcomes could yield an effective use-case applied to a specific community. Additionally, while we originally positioned this primarily as a moderator tool, there could be greater opportunities for adoption as a tool for end-users of social media to consider how best to engage with the community

using our knowledge of how that community would likely respond to a post – thus influencing the user towards pro-social behavior.

While we designed D-ESC to primarily operate on social media platforms, we believe the overall architecture could be applied to a wide variety of domains. For example, individuals might use a version of the system to consider how their social interactions project certain values or beliefs, as certain expressions can lead to social isolation (Yang and Nino, 2023). In patient-caregiver interactions, careful mediation of communication might enable both patients and caregivers to feel that their unique challenges and stressors are understood, potentially alleviating caregiver depression (Hua et al., 2021) and burnout (de Souza Alves et al., 2019).

7 Conclusions

We have outlined a set of principles for social influence systems that serves as a framework for ethical, effective, and widely adopted social influence applications. We demonstrate a system that follows these principles, applying novel NLP and reasoning techniques to enable moderators foster more constructive discussions. Additionally, we illustrate how combining multiple indicators and techniques provides a more tailored, nuanced approach to positive community influence.

There is more work needed to position this as a comprehensive social influence system, with additional interface development and fine-tuning to broadly represent the interests of social media communities. Nevertheless, we believe this integrated system can be easily adapted to other domains, including local community activism, patient-caregiver dialogue, and disaster relief. Furthermore, we hope this work encourages the community to consider integrated, complex social dynamics and work to develop baselines and evaluations that consider a holistic, multi-user environment.

Acknowledgements

This research was developed with funding from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) under Agreement No. HR00112290022. The views, opinions and/or findings expressed are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the official views or policies of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.

8 Limitations

Research in AI applied to social influence is relatively new, with most discussions concerning the harm of biased or unregulated AI systems that are not explicitly intended for influencing individuals. While we believe our work in the social media mediation space provides a useful starting point for discussing broader principles, the nascent nature of the field limits the claims we can make about the broad applicability of our guiding principles.

Additionally, while we have some evaluations of individual components, we encountered difficulties in evaluating the system as a whole on a sufficiently large dataset or environment. On Reddit, ground truth instances of degradation of community health are often primarily found in quarantined or banned subreddits, which have little to no current activity and would likely not be promising targets for mediation efforts. Moderation communities in larger subreddits prioritize standard moderation practices using Automod, and do not often see a need for mediation efforts. Smaller subreddits, especially those that aim to provide an environment for respectful discourse (e.g. *r/AbortionDebate*), are more amenable to mediation intervention but have fewer instances of mediation events to train on. Additionally, such communities are rightfully concerned about the potential side effects of AI mediation, with a general protectiveness of users' data and personal experiences.

Finally, our work has empirically demonstrated the unique behavioral and emotional factors in each subreddit, but such diversity makes it more difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of our approaches at scale. Each subreddit had different moderation techniques, community guidelines, media and post types, and discussion typologies. Thus while we believe our approaches could apply widely given community-specific targets to learn, evaluating our novel techniques at a scale sufficient for strong research claims proved difficult.

9 Ethics Statement

The application of AI to research social influence has a significant potential for amplifying existing societal risks inherent in non-AI-based social influence research (Broom, 2006), as people may even be more susceptible to influence from an AI system (Riva et al., 2022). While we outline an approach for ethically applying social influence (with transparency, human-interpretable methods and analysis,

and with explanations provided to users as to the goals of the system), there is nevertheless a risk of negative outcomes for both an individual or a community.

We have generally considered that more transparency makes application of these systems more ethical – yet this may not be the case. Transparency of methods and attempts to influence users may cause them to be wary of interacting on certain related platforms, even in cases when no influence is intended. Also, if systems can ethically influence individuals to make more positive decisions without transparency, and transparency reduces a system's effectiveness, it is unclear whether added transparency yields a net social benefit.

Social media discussions have real-life consequences, from ostracization to persecution to rioting. People often turn to social media for guidance on issues relating to work, their health, and family. Thus, tools that interact with such communities have the potential to cause harm if applied without care. We believe we have mitigated some of the potential risks of our system through our goals of explainability, human-in-the-loop functionality, and awareness of potential side-effects that could occur with interventions. Additionally, we have been extremely cautious with data and potential interventions – this added to the difficulty of a large-scale application of this system.

One remaining risk is that users may feel they are being watched or judged as their expressions are deemed inappropriate for a community according to an algorithm. While our work tends to identify negative emotions like outrage as harmful for a community, there are some cases where outrage is a reasonable response to a situation – silencing individuals who may be going through a difficult time will not necessarily be a net positive when considering the effect on that individual and the community.

Nevertheless, we believe that our community-specific models and our generation techniques provide an opportunity to bridge communities that would otherwise be divided, and opening such a dialogue could have a significant positive effect on online interactions.

Our data collection and methods were evaluated by our institutional IRB and the US Office for Human Research Protections.

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EHDChat: A Knowledge-Grounded, Empathy-Enhanced Language Model for Healthcare Interactions

Shenghan Wu Wynne Hsu Mong Li Lee
Institute of Data Science
National University of Singapore
shenghan@nus.edu.sg, {whsu, leeml}@comp.nus.edu.sg

Abstract

Large Language Models (LLMs) excel at a range of tasks but often struggle with issues like hallucination and inadequate empathy support. To address hallucinations, we ground our dialogues in medical knowledge sourced from external repositories such as Disease Ontology and DrugBank. To improve empathy support, we develop the Empathetic Healthcare Dialogues dataset, which utilizes multiple dialogue strategies in each response. This dataset is then used to fine-tune an LLM, and we introduce a lightweight, adaptable method called Strategy Combination Guidance to enhance the emotional support capabilities of the fine-tuned model, named EHDChat. Our evaluations show that EHDChat significantly outperforms existing models in providing emotional support and medical accuracy, demonstrating the effectiveness of our approach in enhancing empathetic and informed AI interactions in healthcare.

1 Introduction

The integration of technology into healthcare continues to foster innovations aimed at enhancing patient outcomes. The emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) has significantly advanced their ability to provide responses to user queries concerning medications, dispense general health and wellness advice, and offer support for mental health issues (Sweeney et al., 2021; Lai et al., 2023; Abbasian et al., 2023; Ghosh et al., 2024). However, the effectiveness of these LLMs is contingent upon the quality of the training data they receive.

One limitation is the tendency of LLM to hallucinate and generate erroneous or fabricated medical knowledge which may have serious consequences. Another limitation is their frequent disregard for emotional cues, which can result in interactions that feel insincere and disconnected from the user’s emotional state. This issue highlights a gap in the ability of LLMs to engage in genuinely empathetic

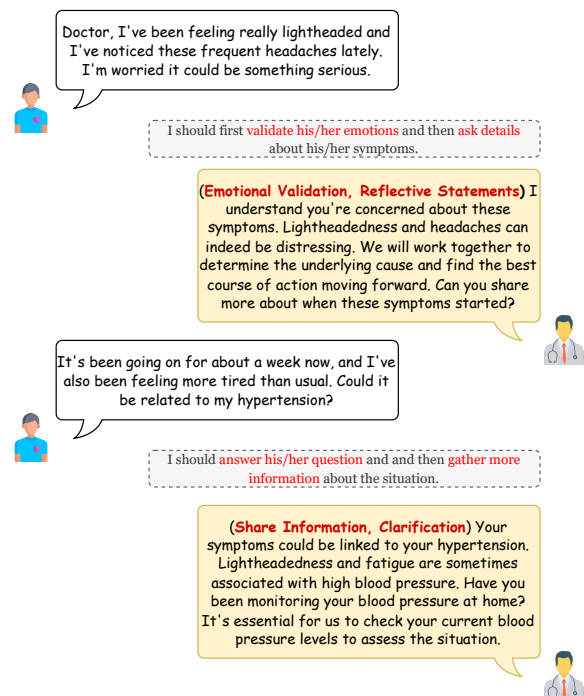


Figure 1: Example chat from the proposed EHD dataset depicting a patient (left) receiving emotional support from a doctor (right). Conversation strategies are highlighted in red.

communication, which is essential for addressing the nuanced needs of patients (Lai et al., 2021).

To address this gap, we need high-quality training data that can provide accurate responses and reflects human emotions. Existing emotional support datasets such as ESConv (Liu et al., 2021a), ExTES (Zheng et al., 2023c), and Reddit mental health forums (Sharma et al., 2020) offer valuable insights into empathetic interactions. However, these resources often lack comprehensive medical knowledge, limiting their applicability in healthcare contexts. Conversely, medical datasets like MedDialog (Zeng et al., 2020), CovidDialog (Ju et al., 2020) and CMtMedQA (Yang et al., 2024) provide extensive healthcare information but frequently lack the depth of genuine empathetic interactions.

We develop an Empathetic Healthcare Dialogue (EHD) dataset¹ to train smaller models in generating human-like empathetic responses within the healthcare domain. To construct this dataset, we leverage LLMs, known to have gathered a wide array of information from vast human corpora and specialized databases. However, recognizing the potential for LLM hallucination, we ground our dialogues in external verified medical knowledge repositories, thereby enhancing the reliability and the depth of conversations across a wide range of healthcare topics and concerns.

We also devise a method to incorporate conversational strategies such that each response can utilize multiple strategies. We fine-tune an LLM using the EHD dataset and introduce a lightweight, plug-and-play method, called Strategy Combination Guidance (SCG) to guide the model in selecting a good combination of strategies to improve response quality. We further integrate Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) technology (Lewis et al., 2020), which provides relevant context for more accurate and contextually appropriate responses, resulting in our EHDChat.

Quantitative experiment results show that EHDChat is far superior in providing emotional support and giving accurate medical information. Human evaluation reveals a preference for the responses generated by EHDChat. Case studies also illustrate that employing a variety of conversational strategies leads to more natural dialog.

2 Related Work

Research on medical dialogue systems has primarily focused on developing question-answering systems (Wu et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2022; Han et al., 2023). ChatDoctor (Li et al., 2023) utilizes ChatGPT to generate synthetic medical conversation data, thereby allowing the fine-tuning of a LLaMA model that is able to simulate dialogues between doctors and patients. DoctorGLM (Xiong et al., 2023) adapted this approach to develop a system that simulates doctor-patient conversations in Chinese. These dialogue systems generally do not provide adequate emotional support due to the scarcity of datasets that include effective emotional support conversations (Rashkin et al., 2019).

Early efforts to curate emotional support datasets primarily focused on transcribing therapist sessions (Liu et al., 2023; Shen et al., 2020) or compiling

emotional question-answer pairs from online platforms (Garg et al., 2022; Sharma et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2021; Medeiros and Bosse, 2018). However, these datasets often lack proper design and consist mainly of single-turn responses.

ESConv (Liu et al., 2021b) incorporates conversation strategies and utilize crowdsourcing to create high-quality and multi-turn emotional support datasets. Building upon ESConv, ExTES (Zheng et al., 2023c) employs LLMs to synthesize additional scenarios and dialogues that incorporate more emotional support strategies, further expanding the available data for training these specialized dialogue systems.

Current medical dialogue datasets lack emotional content, while empathetic datasets lack medical knowledge. Our work aims to create a new dataset that combines empathetic dialogues with accurate medical information. This fills a gap in existing resources for doctor-patient conversations, providing a more complete dataset for training AI in healthcare communication.

3 EHD Dataset

Our goal is to generate a dataset comprising of a wide range of synthetic, multi-turn dialogues between doctors and patients that are not only emotionally supportive, but also clinically informative. We produce dialogues via the self-chat technique (Xu et al., 2023) and reference-based dialogue generation methods (Dai et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2023).

Previous research (Liu et al., 2021b; Zheng et al., 2023c) has shown that emotional support strategies can boost empathy levels (Hill, 2020; Organization et al., 2020). To enhance the empathetic nature of the dialogues, we incorporate a mix of known emotional support strategies, drawing on research that demonstrates the increased effectiveness of combining two strategies within a single response (Tu et al., 2022). Figure 2 shows the prompt template used for dialogue generation which includes basic instructions, a medical knowledge reference, dialogue strategies and an example dialogue.

For medical knowledge on diseases, we utilize the Disease Ontology (Schriml, 2018) as our reference source. As the information available in the Disease Ontology is limited to basic descriptions of diseases, we leverage the external links stored in Disease Ontology to directly extract data from the corresponding web pages. For knowledge on

¹<https://huggingface.co/datasets/ericw955/EHD>.

Your task is to create a medical empathetic dialogue between doctor (AI) and patient (User) based on the provided medical reference. The generated dialogue should also draw from the dialogue example and incorporate multiple dialogue strategies in each doctor's response.

Here is a comprehensive list of all possible strategies for responding in conversations for emotional support:

1. Reflective Statements: Repeat or rephrase what the person has expressed to show that you're actively listening.
2. Clarification: Seek clarification to ensure a clear understanding of the person's emotions and experiences. (all other strategies)...

Refer to the provided example to see how multiple strategies are used in each doctor's response and to understand the required return format: **{EXAMPLE}**

The generated dialogue should focus on the provided medical knowledge. The patient should inquire about this specific medical knowledge, possibly starting with symptoms or expressing concerns about the disease or medicine. The doctor's response can refer the given medical content. This medical knowledge is as follows: **{MEDICAL REFERENCE}**

Limit patient responses to 40 words or less and doctor responses to 100 words or less to maintain clarity in communication. Ensure a profound exploration by structuring the dialogue with a minimum of 10 rounds, guaranteeing an in-depth and thorough conversation (all other settings)...

Figure 2: Prompt for generating dialogues.

drugs, we utilize the public dataset called Drug-Bank (Wishart DS, 2017) to extract the description, effect and dosage of drugs. In total, we compile 4,223 entries related to disease knowledge and 3,229 entries on drug knowledge.

We randomly select 100 dialogues from ExTES (Zheng et al., 2023c), and retain the first sentence of each dialogue as the initial prompt. Then we instruct GPT-4 using the prompt in Figure 2 to generate responses that incorporate two emotional support strategies per response. The medical reference mentioned in the prompt is selected from a pre-determined set of commonly encountered diseases or drugs information. Figure 3 shows an example of the dialogue generated. The conversation is focused on a specific disease Scabies and each response employs at least 2 strategy combinations, highlighted in red.

After generation, we evaluate the accuracy of the medical content and the correct integration of multiple emotional support strategies in each response. Dialogues identified as medically inaccurate or lacking in emotional support strategies are removed. The remaining generated dialogues form the example dialogues in our prompt to generate additional dialogues, with each dialogue centered around a single medical concept.

Table 1 gives the characteristics of the dataset. For comparison, we also include the statistics of

Topic: Scabies
<p>User: Doctor, I've been experiencing intense itching across my body, especially at night. I'm also noticing a rash with small pimple-like bumps in certain areas.</p> <p>AI (Reflective Statements, Share Information): It sounds like you're describing symptoms that align with a possible scabies infestation. The intense itching, rash in specific spots, and worsening at night are characteristic signs. We might need to do further tests for a definitive diagnosis.</p> <p>User: How did I get scabies? I'm concerned about how contagious it is.</p> <p>AI (Educational Information, Emotional Validation): Scabies is caused by skin contact with someone already infested. It spreads through extended skin-to-skin contact, such as living together or sexual contact. Crowded environments increase the risk. It's understandable to feel uneasy; we'll address this together.</p> <p>User: Are there specific areas where scabies burrows are more likely to appear on the body?</p> <p>AI (Provide Different Perspectives, Collaborative Planning): Scabies burrows typically manifest in specific areas like finger webs, wrists, elbows, buttocks, and genitals. The mites create linear or S-shaped tracks that are often accompanied by small bumps. Let's consider a comprehensive examination to identify these signs accurately.</p> <p>User: Can you explain how scabies mites cause symptoms like itching and rash?</p> <p>AI (Share Information, Normalize Experiences): The mites infest the skin, burrow, and deposit eggs, triggering an allergic reaction. This reaction leads to itching and the pimple-like rash as your body responds to the presence of the mites. It's a common response during a scabies infestation.</p> <p>User: What treatment options are available for scabies? I'm worried about the progression of the infestation.</p> <p>AI (Empathetic Statements, Offer Hope): Treatment options include topical creams like permethrin, oral medications like ivermectin, and other scabicides. We'll develop a personalized treatment plan for you and ensure that any close contacts receive treatment simultaneously. With timely intervention, there's hope for effective management and recovery.</p>

Figure 3: Sample dialogue generated.

existing ESConv and ExTES datasets. In total, we generate 33,303 dialogues, with an average of 12.0 utterances per dialogue and each utterance averaging 32.6 words. Table 2 shows the distribution of 16 conversation strategies used in the dataset. We see that 'Share Information' and 'Offer Hope' are the top-2 most prevalent.

Table 3 displays the top-10 most frequently occurring strategy combinations out of a total of 240 possibilities. The most frequently used combination is 'Reflective Statements+Share Information' with a count of 11,042 instances. This suggests that reflective listening, coupled with providing information, is a prevalent method for offering emotional support in our dataset. Our dataset, featuring doctor-patient dialogues, emphasizes 'Sharing Information' as a crucial aspect of emotional support. In the interactions, the synergy of informative com-

Table 1: Characteristics of EHD dataset, compared to existing ESConv, ExTES datasets.

Attribute	ESConv	ExTES	EHD
# Dialogues	1,053	11,177	33,303
# Utterances	31,410	200,393	393,678
Avg. length of dialog.	29.8	18.2	11.8
Avg. length of utter.	17.8	26.0	34.5
# conversation strategies	8	16	16
Healthcare-related	No	No	Yes
Knowledge-verified	No	No	Yes

Table 2: Statistics of conversation strategy in EHD.

Conversation Strategy	Count
Share Information	72,780
Offer Hope	51,309
Emotional Validation	34,473
Reflective Statements	31,985
Provide Perspectives	28,943
Affirmation	28,765
Collaborative Planning	29,193
Suggest Options	20,079
Empathetic Statements	19,241
Promote Self-Care Practices	17,712
Clarification	17,305
Normalize Experiences	14,875
Stress Management	7,482
Others	6,099
Reframe Negative Thoughts	5,710
Avoid Judgment and Criticism	4,056

munication with other support strategies is a natural and essential pairing, ensuring responses are both empathetic and informative.

Table 4 gives the top-5 strategy transitions in the generated dialogues. We see that the transitions strategies used in the EHD dataset are diverse and often affirm emotions first before providing advice. This approach offers comfort and support to alleviate emotional distress.

3.1 Dialogue Quality Evaluation

The efficacy of fine-tuning smaller models is heavily dependent on the quality of the training dataset. To demonstrate the superiority of our EHD dataset, we conduct a comparative analysis against two existing datasets: ESConv and ExTES.

Our evaluation framework, based on established research methodologies (Liu et al., 2021b; Zheng et al., 2023a), assessed five key aspects of dialogue quality: **Informativeness** evaluates the degree to which the supporter provides relevant and correct information to the seeker. **Understanding** measures the supporter to correctly interpret and respond to the seeker’s intent, emotions, and experiences. **Coherence** gauges whether the dialogue

Table 3: Top-10 combinations of conversation strategies within the same response.

Strategy Combination	Count
Offer Hope + Share Info.	11711
Reflection + Share Info.	11573
Emotional Validation + Reflection	10435
Provide Perspective + Share Info.	8867
Emotional Validation + Share Info.	8382
Clarification + Share Info.	5897
Normalize Experiences + Share Info.	5095
Collaborative Planning + Offer Hope	4830
Share Info. + Suggest Options	4679
Clarification + Reflection	4157

Table 4: Top-5 conversation strategy transitions in EHD.

Strategy Transition	%
Emotional Validation + Reflection → Offer Hope + Share Info.	2.06
Reflection + Share Info. → Provide Perspective + Share Info.	1.10
Reflection + Share Info. → Emotional Validation + Share Info.	1.00
Emotional Validation + Reflection → Clarification + Share Info.	0.95
Clarification + Reflection → Emotional Validation + Share Info.	0.90

maintains a logical flow. **Helpfulness** checks the extent to which the supporter assists the seeker in resolving their issue and meeting their needs. **Consistency** evaluates the extent to which participants maintain their designated roles throughout the dialogue and demonstrate behaviors that are logically coherent and free from contradictions. All metrics were measured using a Likert Scale, with scores ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), ensuring a standardized and comprehensive evaluation. We apply the GPTScore methodology (Fu et al., 2023) to evaluate the quality of dialogues at the dialogue level. The prompt contains the evaluation settings, definitions of each metric and the dialogue.

Table 5 shows the GPTScore for ESConv, ExTES and EHD. Our results indicate that both ExTES and EHD demonstrate a high capacity for comprehending seekers’ emotional states and intentions, which surpass ESConv. These datasets provide substantial assistance while maintaining consistent performance throughout the dialogue.

Language toxicity has been a critical concern in NLP research and dialogues between doctors and patients should not contain aggressive or offensive language (Pavlopoulos et al., 2020; Gehman et al., 2020). In assessing the toxicity of synthetic dialogues, we employ the wide-used Perspective API

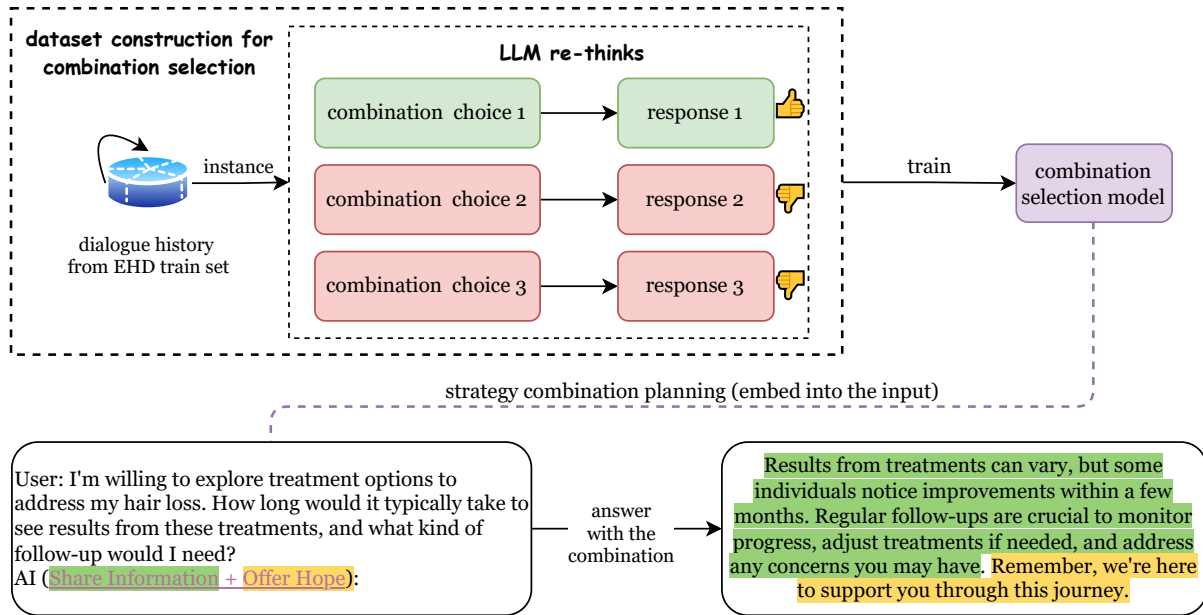


Figure 4: EHDChat with Strategy Combination Guidance.

Table 5: Comparison of dialogue quality.

Metric	ESConv	ExTES	EHD
Informativeness	2.99	4.11	4.76
Understanding	3.57	4.98	4.98
Coherence	3.50	4.98	4.99
Helpfulness	3.54	4.94	4.98
Consistency	3.46	4.98	4.98

Table 6: Comparison of toxicity.

Category	ESConv	ExTES	EHD
Toxicity	0.190	0.112	0.053
Severe Toxicity	0.016	0.006	0.003
Identity Attack	0.036	0.017	0.008
Insult	0.065	0.032	0.017
Profanity	0.141	0.076	0.029
Threat	0.033	0.017	0.010

to measure the textual toxicity across six indicators for the ESConv, ExTES and EHD datasets. The results are shown in Table 6. Each indicator is scored on a scale from 0 to 1, where lower scores indicate reduced toxicity. Our findings show that our dataset has the lowest scores in all the indicators.

4 EHDChat

Building on the EHD dataset, we develop an empathetic healthcare dialogue system called EHDChat that is able to provide accurate responses to medical queries while demonstrating empathy and understanding of the user’s emotional states. This system is specifically designed to handle the dual

challenges of medical accuracy and emotional empathy, essential in healthcare settings.

We randomly partition the EHD dataset into a training set comprising of 7,175 medical terms across 31,918 dialogues, and a test set containing the remaining 300 medical terms in 1,385 dialogues. For each dialogue in the training set, we generate training instances where the target output is the next response, and the preceding conversation provides the context. These instances are used to fine-tune the LLaMA-1 (7B) model (Touvron et al., 2023), leveraging its capabilities to handle complex dialogue scenarios.

In order to generate more precise and effective responses, we introduce a Strategy Combination Guidance (SCG) module to optimize the selection of emotional support strategy combinations for each response. We achieve this by taking 5,000 dialogue rounds in the EHD dataset and employ LLM to determine potential strategy combinations for each round. For each strategy combination, we prompt the LLM to generate a corresponding response. The most effective strategy combination is then selected based on which generated response achieves the highest GPTScore.

Figure 4 shows the strategy combination selection process. We use these instances to further refine the fine-tuned LLaMA-1 model, culminating in the development of the proposed EHDChat (Touvron et al., 2023). Note that SCG is a lightweight, plug-and-play module that can be applied to any

existing empathetic healthcare dialogue systems to guide their response generation process.

5 Experiments

We carry out a series of experiments to evaluate the performance of our proposed EHDChat in terms of providing emotional support as well as the accuracy of the shared medical knowledge during the conversation. We implement the following baselines for comparison:

- **ESConvChat**. This is a fine-tuned LLaMA-1 model using ESConv dataset.
- **ExTESChat**. This is a fine-tuned LLaMA-1 model using ExTES dataset.
- **ChatDoctor**. This is the state-of-the-art medical chatbot that uses datasets from medical forums, disease databases, and synthetic datasets of single-turn dialogues between doctors and patients to fine-tune LLaMA-1.

We fine-tuned the models on two A100 80G GPUs with a batch size of 16, using a 3% warmup phase and cosine learning scheduler.

5.1 Emotional Support Capability Evaluation

We first compare the emotional support capabilities of the various models. Zheng et al. (2023b) has demonstrated that LLMs, when used as an evaluator, can achieve high consistency with human evaluation. We employ GPT-4 as the judge, and design evaluation prompts based on the following metrics (Liu et al., 2021a), to assess the emotional support capabilities of the generated responses:

- **Suggestion** gauges the extent of pertinent information provided by the model.
- **Identification** measures the model’s comprehension of the context, including its grasp on users’ concerns and emotions.
- **Fluency** assesses the logical flow and contextual appropriateness of the responses.
- **Comforting** examines the model’s capacity to provide emotional support.
- **Overall** provides a comprehensive evaluation of the responses’ general effectiveness.

Table 7 shows the results for the different test sets. We see that **EHDChat achieves the highest scores for all the metrics across all the test sets**. This indicates that incorporating multiple dialogue strategies within a single response can significantly

Table 7: GPTScore for emotional support capabilities. S(suggestion), I(identification), F(luency), C(omforting)

Model	S	I	F	C	Overall
ESConvChat	2.20	2.76	3.50	2.71	2.68
ExTESChat	2.80	3.61	4.24	3.92	3.59
ChatDoctor	2.51	2.71	2.94	2.61	2.58
EHDChat	3.43	4.04	4.56	4.55	4.05

(a) ESConv Test Set

Model	S	I	F	C	Overall
ESConvChat	2.51	3.25	3.99	3.31	3.16
ExTESChat	3.76	4.37	4.83	4.52	4.36
ChatDoctor	3.26	3.51	3.93	3.50	3.45
EHDChat	3.96	4.42	4.85	4.63	4.42

(b) ExTES Test Set

Model	S	I	F	C	Overall
ESConvChat	2.92	3.06	3.82	2.73	3.06
ExTESChat	3.77	4.08	4.74	3.97	4.08
ChatDoctor	3.50	3.15	3.30	2.63	3.10
EHDChat	4.12	4.45	4.92	4.38	4.42

(c) EHD Test Set

enhance the performance and emotional support ability of the model’s replies. Although ESConvChat is fine-tuned on ESConv dataset which has incorporated diverse emotional support tactics, its scores are the lowest across all the metrics. Closer examination reveals that ESConv consists of human dialogues that tend to be brief and concise. This may hamper the ability to generate high-caliber empathetic responses.

5.2 Knowledge Correctness Evaluation

Next, we examine the correctness of the medical knowledge in the model’s generated responses. Here we use the MedQuAD (Ben Abacha and Demner-Fushman, 2019), a comprehensive medical dataset including various question-answer pairs created from 12 NIH websites, as the test set.

In addition to using the standard metrics such as BLEU-4 (Papineni et al., 2002), METEOR (Banerjee and Lavie, 2005) and ROUGE-L (Lin, 2004) to measure the degree of overlap between the model’s responses and the ground truth, we also employ GPT-4 to evaluate the correctness of the medical knowledge in the responses as GPT-4 shows great medical abilities in recent researches (OpenAI, 2023; Nori et al., 2023). This is because in the medical field, minor discrepancies in the responses (high BLEU, METEOR or ROUGE scores) may not necessarily imply that the response is correct.

Table 8 shows the results. We see that **EHDChat exhibits superior correctness compared to the other models**. EHDChat significantly enhances the

Table 8: Knowledge correctness in MedQuAD test set.

Model	%Correct	BLEU	MET	ROUGE
ESConvChat	17.34	0.45	4.03	7.26
ExTESChat	36.14	1.14	9.78	13.98
ChatDoctor	49.46	1.67	16.50	18.04
EHDChat	66.09	0.69	10.38	14.18

model’s precision in responding to medical queries by leveraging external knowledge for improved response correctness in the domain of medical dialogue. Although ChatDoctor’s responses has the highest similarity to the ground truth in MedQuAD, its correctness is lower than EHDCHAT as ChatDoctor’s responses tend to be more noisy with unverified content which resulted in a decline in the model’s precision in delivering correct responses.

5.3 Human Evaluation

We also conduct a human evaluation following the methodology in (Li et al., 2022; Sabour et al., 2022). We compare EHDChat with ChatDoctor as its objectives is most closely aligned with ours. We randomly sample 100 dialogues from the EHD test set and use these as dialogue history for both EHDChat and ChatDoctor to generate responses.

We recruit five undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds to conduct a human evaluation of the generated responses. The evaluation involves six indicators: suggestion, identification, fluency, comforting, empathy, and overall quality. For each indicator, the students rate the responses as a win, tie, or loss for our model compared to ChatDoctor.

Table 9 shows the results. Both ChatDoctor and EHDChat show comparable proficiency in offering suggestions (Suggestion). However, ChatDoctor is less effective in providing emotional support (Comforting) and maintaining dialogue quality (Identification, Fluency and Overall). This demonstrates the effectiveness of EHDChat in providing emotional support in the healthcare domain.

6 Case Studies

Finally, we present case studies to show the emotional support capabilities and medical knowledge correctness of EHDChat compared to ExTESChat, ESConvChat, and ChatDoctor.

Figure 5 shows the responses generated by the various models given the same dialogue input. We observe that ExTESChat focuses solely on emotional support (highlighted in yellow), failing to address patient query about his diagnosis of myocardial infarction. On the other hand, ChatDoc-

Table 9: Human evaluation of EHDChat vs. ChatDoctor.

	EHDChat win	Tie	EHDChat lose
Suggestion	34%	30%	36%
Identification	43%	40%	17%
Fluency	76%	21%	3%
Comforting	65%	32%	3%
Overall	62%	24%	14%

tor’s response exclusively focuses on the impact of myocardial infarction on health (highlighted in green), neglecting the patient’s emotional state. In contrast, EHDChat employ a combination of dialogue strategies (Emotional Validation+Share Information) to first acknowledge the patient’s emotion before addressing his medical query, leading to a more balanced response.

Figure 6 demonstrates the strategy transitions used in EHDChat and how the transitions are able to provide better emotional support and answer medical queries raised by users. We see that EHDChat is able to employ a variety of conversational strategy and the dialogues are more natural offering both emotional support and answering the medical queries raised by users. In contrast, ESConvChat repeatedly responses with "I understand..", while ExTESChat primarily offers emotional support with occasional superficial medical advice, and ChatDoctor’s responses only focus on addressing the medical queries.

7 Conclusion

We have described a new approach for generating empathetic multi-turn dialogues for the healthcare domain. By allowing a single response to contain multiple conversation strategies, we are able to enhance the level of emotional support to the user. Our approach incorporates verified medical references and employs a robust verification method to reduce errors and ensure the authenticity of the information in the generated dialogues. Our analysis confirms that the EHD dataset is both empathetic and medically accurate. Our EHDChat, trained on the EHD dataset, has shown improvement both in terms of emotional support and medical proficiency, surpassing state-of-the-art chatbots.

Despite its strengths, EHDChat may face challenges when dealing with complex medical issues, underscoring the urgent need for further research to reduce inaccuracies and enhance the reliability of chatbots in critical applications.

Patient: Doctor, I was just diagnosed with a myocardial infarction, and I'm really scared. They mentioned something about blockages in my arteries. Can you explain what that means for my health and what I can expect next?			
EHDChat (Emotional Validation + Shre Information): I understand this must be overwhelming for you. A myocardial infarction occurs when a blockage in a coronary artery prevents blood flow to the heart muscle, leading to tissue damage. We'll need to assess the extent of the blockage and discuss treatment options to manage your condition effectively.	ESConvChat: I am sorry to hear that. I can understand why you are scared.	ExTESChat: Hi there, I'm here to listen and support you. It's completely normal to feel scared and overwhelmed after receiving such news. I'll do my best to provide you with the information you need.	ChatDoctor: 1. The blockage is due to cholesterol deposits in the walls of your coronary artery which are responsible for supplying blood to the heart muscle. 2. This causes

Figure 5: Case study to show the responses generated by the various models given the same dialogue input.

User: Hey Doctor, I've been having this really bad chest pain that's spreading to my left arm. I'm sweating buckets and feeling dizzy. Is this a heart attack?			
EHDChat (Reflective Statements + Clarification): I hear you're experiencing chest pain, arm pain, sweating, and dizziness. These are classic symptoms of a heart attack. Have you noticed any shortness of breath or nausea along with these symptoms?	ESConvChat: I'm sorry to hear that. I'm sure you are feeling anxious about it.	ExTESChat: Hi there! I'm here to listen and help. It sounds like you're experiencing a lot of pain and discomfort. Can you tell me more about what's been going on?	ChatDoctor: 1) Yes, it is possible for the symptoms you are describing to be due to a heart attack. 2) However, there are other causes of similar symptoms such as panic attacks or anxiety. 3) The best ...
User: I'm so scared. I've read about heart attacks and their severity. Is there any way to confirm if this is really happening to me?			
EHDChat (Emotional Validation + Collaborative Planning): It's understandable to feel scared. We can confirm a heart attack by checking your ECG for specific changes. It's crucial to act promptly. Let's schedule an ECG to assess your heart's electrical activity and determine the best course of action.	ESConvChat: I understand that. I'm sure you are scared.	ExTESChat: I understand your fear. It's completely normal to feel scared in such situations. Have you tried any self-care practices or relaxation techniques to manage your anxiety?	ChatDoctor: 1) Yes, there are ways to confirm whether you are having a heart attack. 2) You should go to an emergency room immediately if you have these symptoms. 3) If you cannot get to an ER right away ...
User: Are there any factors that increase my risk of having a heart attack? I want to understand how this could have happened to me.			
EHDChat (Share Information + Offer Hope): Risk factors for heart attacks include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, and a family history of heart issues. Understanding these factors can help us manage your risk effectively. With the right steps, we can work towards preventing future heart attacks.	ESConvChat: I understand that.	ExTESChat: It's important to remember that heart attacks can happen to anyone, regardless of their age or gender. However, certain factors like high cholesterol, smoking, and diabetes can increase your risk. It's possible that you may have one or more of these factors.	ChatDoctor: 1) Yes, there are certain factors that increase your risk of having a heart attack. These include smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, family history of early heart disease, stress, obesity, physical inactivity, etc. ...
User: I've been experiencing stress and have a family history of heart disease. Could these be influencing my current situation?			
EHDChat (Share Information + Promote Self-Care Practices): Stress and a family history of heart disease are indeed risk factors. Managing stress through relaxation techniques and lifestyle changes can help. Let's focus on stress management and discussing a personalized plan to address your family history and overall heart health.	ESConvChat: I understand that.	ExTESChat: It's understandable that stress and a family history can contribute to your current situation. However, it's important to remember that you're not defined by your past or your family's health history. You have the power to make positive changes and take care of yourself.	ChatDoctor: 1) Yes, stress and family history of heart disease can increase your risk of having a heart attack. 2) Stress can cause increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, and increased cholesterol levels. All of these can increase your risk of having a heart attack ...

Figure 6: Case study to show the responses generated by various models over dialogues that span multiple rounds.

Limitations

While EHDChat has demonstrated good ability to answer medical queries, it is still limited in handling complex medical issues. The augmentation of external knowledge via RAG does not fully mitigate the risk of providing incorrect answers. This may have serious implications in the medical domain which should be addressed in future iterations to ensure safety and trust in medical settings.

Acknowledgement

This research is supported by the National Research Foundation, Singapore under its AI Singapore Programme (AISG Award No: AISG-GC-2019-001-2B).








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Domain-Expanded ASTE: Rethinking Generalization in Aspect Sentiment Triplet Extraction

Yew Ken Chia^{* 1, } Hui Chen^{} Guizhen Chen^{1, 2 } Wei Han^{}
Sharifah Mahani Aljunied^{1 } Soujanya Poria^{} Lidong Bing^{1 }

 Singapore University of Technology and Design

¹DAMO Academy, Alibaba Group, Singapore

²Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

sporia@sutd.edu.sg guizhen001@ntu.edu.sg

{yewken_chia, hui_chen, wei_han}@mymail.sutd.edu.sg

{yewken.chia, guizhen.chen, mahani.aljunied, l.bing}@alibaba-inc.com

Abstract

Aspect Sentiment Triplet Extraction (ASTE) is a challenging task in sentiment analysis, aiming to provide fine-grained insights into human sentiments. However, existing benchmarks are limited to two domains and do not evaluate model performance on unseen domains, raising concerns about the generalization of proposed methods. Furthermore, it remains unclear if large language models (LLMs) can effectively handle complex sentiment tasks like ASTE. In this work, we address the issue of generalization in ASTE from both a benchmarking and modeling perspective. We introduce a domain-expanded benchmark by annotating samples from diverse domains, enabling evaluation of models in both in-domain and out-of-domain settings. Additionally, we propose CASE, a simple and effective decoding strategy that enhances trustworthiness and performance of LLMs in ASTE. Through comprehensive experiments involving multiple tasks, settings, and models, we demonstrate that CASE can serve as a general decoding strategy for complex sentiment tasks. By expanding the scope of evaluation and providing a more reliable decoding strategy, we aim to inspire the research community to reevaluate the generalizability of benchmarks and models for ASTE. Our code, data, and models are available at <https://github.com/DAMO-NLP-SG/domain-expanded-aste>.

1 Introduction

Opinions and sentiments are essential to human communication, beliefs, and behaviors (Liu, 2012). Although sentiment analysis is often performed

^{*}Yew Ken and Guizhen are students under the Joint PhD Program between Alibaba and their corresponding university. This work is done by Hui and Wei during internship at Alibaba.

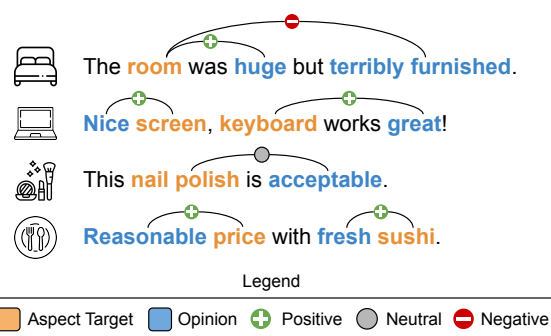


Figure 1: ASTE data samples for the Hotel, Laptop, Cosmetics, and Restaurant domains, respectively.

at the sentence or document level, it is insufficient to capture the fine-grained sentiment information and nuances of human opinions (Poria et al., 2020). To this end, aspect sentiment triplet extraction (ASTE) (Peng et al., 2020) is a challenging and well-established task of aspect-based sentiment analysis (Pontiki et al., 2014) which aims to extract richer and more interpretable sentiment information from natural language. Concretely, ASTE considers how each opinion term in a text may express sentiments towards specific aspect targets.

Although ASTE has become a more established task with many existing methods (Zhang et al., 2022), we are concerned that they may not generalize well due to limitations in the existing benchmark datasets. Notably, the established benchmarks are limited to two domains, which limits the evaluation scope of model capabilities and does not represent the diversity of real-world data. On the other hand, it is also important to assess how models generalize to unseen domains as domain-specific labeled data is often scarce (Wang and Pan, 2018), and models may face domain shift during deployment (Wang et al., 2021). Hence, this mo-

tivates us to propose a domain-expanded ASTE benchmark which not only considers the in-domain performance, but also evaluates out-of-domain generalization across a more diverse set of domains. We support the new benchmark by annotating more than 4,000 data samples for two new domains based on hotel and cosmetics product reviews. Therefore, we can construct a domain-expanded dataset with four domains as shown in Figure 1.

To investigate the domain generalization of existing ASTE methods, we evaluate five existing methods based on pretrained language models (PLMs) for the in-domain and out-of-domain settings. On the other hand, while large language models (LLMs) have recently enabled breakthroughs in many NLP tasks, it is unclear if they can surpass specialized pretrained language models (PLMs) on sentiment tasks such as ASTE (Zhang et al., 2023). Despite the impressive language understanding and general-purpose capabilities of LLMs, it is challenging to adapt them to ASTE due to several reasons. Notably, black-box models like GPT-4 (OpenAI, 2023) are less trustworthy and interpretable as it is not clear how to estimate the confidence of their predictions. For instance, as each text may contain multiple sentiment triplets, it is useful to know which of the predicted triplets have higher confidence or lower confidence. Hence, the lack of interpretability hinders the trustworthiness of LLMs in practical applications, and limits in-depth analysis of their performance. On the other hand, it is generally not possible or feasible to train LLMs for specific tasks, leading to greater focus on prompt-based methods to improve performance.

Thus, we introduce confidence-aware sentiment extraction (CASE), a simple and effective decoding strategy to improve the trustworthiness and performance of LLMs for complex sentiment tasks like ASTE. Inspired by self-consistency (Wang et al., 2023a) which samples diverse reasoning paths to select the most consistent answer, we sample diverse sets of sentiment triplets to select the most consistent triplets. Intuitively, sentiment triplets which are most consistent, i.e., occur most often when sampling diverse sets of triplets, can be assigned a higher confidence. Notably, it is simple to integrate CASE with any language model that supports stochastic sampling, and it does not require any model re-training or access to model logits. Compared to conventional decoding methods such as greedy search or beam search, CASE en-

hances interpretability by estimating the confidence of each predicted triplet, and improves performance by explicitly considering a larger pool of sentiment triplets.

In summary, our main contributions include: (1) To evaluate ASTE methods more holistically, we propose a domain-expanded benchmark which covers in-domain and out-of-domain performance across diverse domains. (2) We annotate more than 4000 samples for two new domains based on hotel and cosmetics product reviews to support the new benchmark. (3) We propose CASE, a simple and effective decoding strategy to enhance the trustworthiness and performance of LLMs for ASTE. Our experiments demonstrate its effectiveness across different models, tasks, and settings.

2 Related Work

Aspect-Based Sentiment Analysis While sentiment analysis is often considered at the sentence or document level, this approach cannot capture the fine-grained sentiment information and nuances of human opinions (Poria et al., 2020). To this end, aspect-based sentiment analysis (ABSA) consists of many tasks which aim to reveal richer sentiment information by considering the specific opinions and aspect targets in natural language (Pontiki et al., 2014). Early works on ABSA focused on extracting individual sentiment elements, such as aspect term extraction (Liu et al., 2015), opinion term extraction (Yang and Cardie, 2012), or aspect sentiment classification (Dong et al., 2014). On the other hand, compound ABSA tasks have been introduced to jointly address multiple subtasks, including ASTE (Peng et al., 2020) and ASQP (Zhang et al., 2021a). In this work, we focus on ASTE which has many established methods, yet has not been studied through the lens of domain generalization (Wang et al., 2021).

Domain Generalization While traditional machine learning methods are trained based on the assumption that training and testing data are identically and independently distributed, this assumption seldom holds true in reality. Hence, the performance of methods often deteriorates due to shifts in domain distributions (Wang et al., 2021). As it is not feasible to comprehensively annotate task-specific data for training, there is an urgent need to improve the robustness and generalization ability of existing methods. While there are many related topics such as domain adaptation (Patel et al.,

2015; Gong et al., 2020), meta-learning (Vilalta and Drissi, 2002), and lifelong learning (Biesialska et al., 2020), we believe that domain generalization is more widely applicable to the established methods for ASTE. Hence, in this work, we mainly investigate domain generalization, the goal of which is to learn a model that will generalize well to unseen domains.

Large Language Models Recently, there have been numerous advancements in natural language processing due to the rapid development of large language models (LLMs) such as GPT-4 (OpenAI, 2023) and LLaMA (Touvron et al., 2023). Compared to the smaller pretrained language models (PLMs), LLMs have deeper language understanding and reasoning capabilities, owing to the large scale of the models and training data. Moreover, the performance of LLMs can be further enhanced through methods such as instruction-tuning (Wei et al., 2022a), chain-of-thought prompting (Wei et al., 2022c), and reinforcement learning from human feedback (Ouyang et al., 2022). However, there is less focus on fundamental decoding strategies that can heavily affect the behavior of generative methods. On the other hand, language models are prone to hallucinating outputs that seem plausible but are incorrect or unreasonable (Ji et al., 2022), raising major concerns about their trustworthiness and interpretability (Zhao et al., 2023). Hence, we introduce a novel decoding strategy that aims to improve the performance and interpretability of LLMs for ASTE.

3 Domain-Expanded ASTE Benchmark

To evaluate the performance of ASTE methods more holistically and encourage development of more robust methods, we propose a domain-expanded benchmark. The benchmark assesses models not only in-domain, but also in terms of out-of-domain generalization across diverse domains. Hence, we construct the benchmark by leveraging two domains from existing datasets, while annotating samples for two new domains. In this section, we detail the dataset construction process and dataset statistics for each domain.

3.1 Task Formulation

Given an input sentence x containing n words, ASTE aims to predict a set of sentiment triplets where each triplet (t, o, p) corresponds to the aspect target, opinion, and sentiment polarity, respectively.

Domain	Aspect Target	Opinion	Sentiment Triplet
Hotel	0.73	0.76	0.61
Cosmetics	0.72	0.73	0.57

Table 1: Inter-annotator agreement scores. We measure the agreement using the AvgAgr metric separately for aspect targets, opinions, and sentiment triplets.

Each aspect target t and opinion o are text spans in the sentence. The sentiment polarity belongs to the label set of {POS, NEG, NEU}, which corresponds to positive, negative, and neutral sentiment, respectively.

3.2 Data Collection

We construct a dataset with four domains by leveraging two domains from existing datasets (Peng et al., 2020) and collecting data for two new domains. Specifically, we collect review texts in the Hotel and Cosmetics domains from TripAdvisor Reviews (Angelidis et al., 2021) and Amazon Reviews (He and McAuley, 2016; McAuley et al., 2015) respectively. We collect 8000 samples from each domain corpus and use the spaCy tool to tokenize the review texts and label their part-of-speech tags. To denoise the raw samples, we remove reviews that do not contain any nouns or adjectives. We also leverage the existing Laptop and Restaurant domains from ASTE-Data-V2 (Xu et al., 2020). Within the Laptop and Restaurant domains, we remove duplicate samples and retain the existing triplet annotations.

Domain	#Train	#Dev	#Test	#Triplets	#T	#O
Restaurant	1771	442	739	5376	1878	1743
Laptop	867	217	362	2334	1086	1083
Hotel	1281	320	535	4064	1486	1706
Cosmetics	1287	442	739	4002	1539	2221

Table 2: Statistics of our domain-expanded ASTE dataset. We report the number of train samples, development samples, test samples, sentiment triplets, unique aspect targets (T), and unique opinions (O).

3.3 Data Annotation

For annotation, we follow the same data format as existing datasets (Peng et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). Specifically, annotators are provided with each tokenized review sentence as input. They are required to annotate all valid sentiment triplets in the text according to the task formulation in Section 3.1. We include the detailed annotation

guideline in the appendix. To ensure the quality of data annotation, we conduct quality checking for each batch of annotated data. Specifically, for each annotation batch, 10% of the samples are randomly selected for manual checking. If more than 10% of the selected samples contain errors, we provide detailed feedback and request annotators to amend the batch. We engage two independent annotators to label the data and engage a third annotator to resolve any annotation disagreements.

Following previous works in data annotation for ABSA (Barnes et al., 2018), we measure the inter-annotator agreement using the AvgAgr metric (Wiebe et al., 2005):

$$\text{AvgAgr}(a, b) = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{|a \cap b|}{|a|} + \frac{|a \cap b|}{|b|} \right) \quad (1)$$

where a and b are the set of annotations by the first and second annotators, respectively. Intuitively, the agreement value is the average of precision and recall between the two annotators. Hence, the perfect agreement is 1 while no agreement is 0. We report the inter-annotator agreement for the Hotel and Cosmetics domain in Table 1. We observe that the agreement scores are high and comparable to previous ABSA datasets (Barnes et al., 2018).

We report the statistics¹ of the domain-expanded dataset such as the number of reviews, sentiment triplets, and unique aspect targets in Table 2.

4 Confidence-Aware Sentiment Extraction (CASE)

To enhance the trustworthiness and effectiveness of large language models (LLMs) on ASTE, we propose confidence-aware sentiment extraction (CASE), a simple and effective decoding strategy. Compared to conventional decoding methods such as greedy search or beam search, CASE enhances interpretability by estimating the confidence of each predicted triplet, and improves performance by explicitly considering a larger pool of sentiment triplets. Inspired by self-consistency (Wang et al., 2023a) which samples diverse reasoning paths to select the most consistent answer, we sample diverse sets of sentiment triplets to select the most consistent triplets. As shown in Figure 2, CASE consists of four main steps: (1) Given the input text, we sample diverse output sequences from the language model, where each output sequence represents a set of candidate sentiment triplets. (2) The

unique sentiment triplets are then aggregated based on the sampled sets of triplets. (3) To estimate the confidence of each sentiment triplet, we calculate the occurrence frequency of each triplet. (4) Lastly, we select the most confident sentiment triplets as the final predictions.

4.1 Candidate Sampling

In practice, generative methods such as sequence-to-sequence PLMs (Zhang et al., 2021a,b) and LLMs (Wang et al., 2023b; Zhang et al., 2023) use approximate decoding methods such as greedy search or beam search as it is intractable to determine the optimal y for a given input x , i.e., $\text{argmax}_y p(y | x)$. Hence, we argue that generating a single sequence y is sub-optimal as it only provides a narrow view of the possible triplet candidates. On the other hand, sampling diverse sequences from the language model can provide the opportunity to consider a larger set of triplet candidates and estimate the confidence score of each triplet. To obtain diverse triplet candidates, we use temperature-based sampling (Ficler and Goldberg, 2017; Fan et al., 2018) which is a common method to generate diverse outputs from a language model. Concretely, we sample m outputs from our model G for a given input x :

$$S_j \sim G(x, k), j \in \{1, \dots, m\} \quad (2)$$

where S_j denotes the set of sentiment triplets in the j -th sampled sequence.

4.2 Aggregation

Naturally, a triplet set may be sampled more than once and a sentiment triplet (t, o, p) may be present in more than one set. To aggregate the sentiment triplets, we take the union of the sampled sets to form the candidate set S_c :

$$S_c = \bigcup_{j=1}^m S_j \quad (3)$$

Hence, we only consider the unique sentiment triplets across all the sampled triplet sets.

4.3 Confidence Estimation

Intuitively, we assume that sentiment triplets that appear more frequently can be attributed to a higher confidence score. Thus, we estimate the confidence score of each sentiment triplet $(t, o, p) \in S_c$ to be

¹We include more detailed analysis in Appendix A.7.

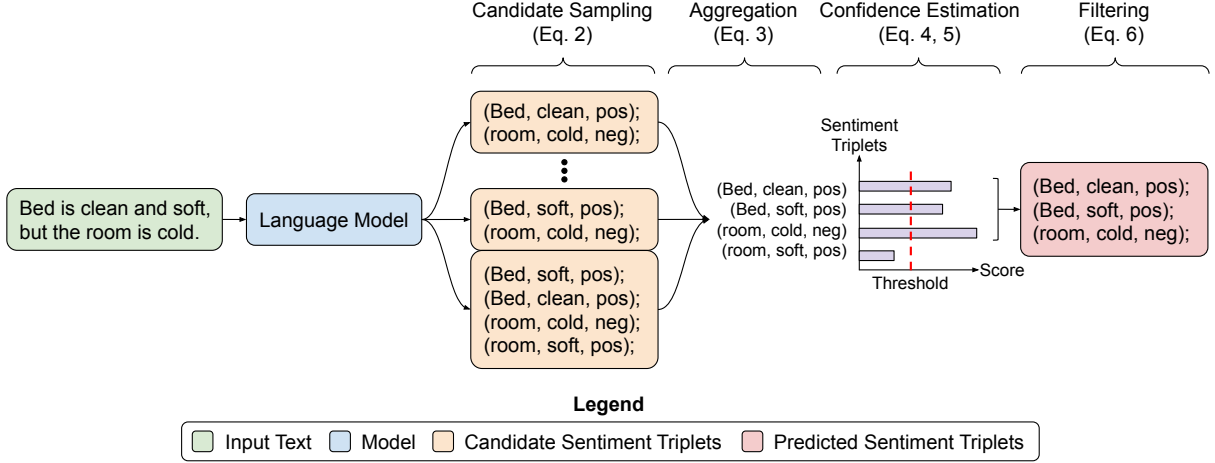


Figure 2: Our proposed confidence-aware sentiment extraction (CASE) decoding strategy which aims to enhance the trustworthiness and performance of LLMs for ASTE.

the corresponding occurrence frequency:

$$\phi(t, o, p) = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m \mathbf{1}_{S_j}(t, o, p)}{m} \quad (4)$$

where $\mathbf{1}_{S_j}(t, o, p)$ is the indicator function of whether a triplet (t, o, p) appears in S_j :

$$\mathbf{1}_{S_j}(t, o, p) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } (t, o, p) \in S_j \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

Naturally, the confidence score for each triplet is bounded within the range $0 \leq \phi(t, o, p) \leq 1$. As it is not feasible to exhaustively sample from the language model, we sample $m = 20$ output sequences for each input x .

4.4 Filtering

While the steps thus far have improved interpretability through confidence estimation and triplet recall by sampling a larger pool of candidate triplets, we face the challenge noisy predictions. Specifically, sampling more triplets may impact model precision due to increased numbers of false positive triplets. Hence, we apply a confidence threshold T over each triplet $(t, o, p) \in S_c$ to select the final prediction set S_{final} :

$$S_{\text{final}} = \{(t, o, p) \mid \phi(t, o, p) \geq T\} \quad (6)$$

This filtering process ensures that we retain only the higher-confidence triplets, thus mitigating noisy predictions.

5 Experiment Setup

5.1 Settings

In this work, we aim to provide a more holistic study of model performance on the ASTE task.

While previous works mostly focus on the in-domain setting, where the model is trained and tested on the same domain, we believe that this provides a limited perspective of model performance, as it does not consider robustness to domain shift. Hence, we further evaluate models out-of-domain settings, where the model trained on one domain and tested on a different domain. Moreover, certain models may be stronger in low-resource scenarios, which is important to consider as labeled data is often limited and costly to obtain in practice. Thus, we further assess each model on the fully-supervised and few-shot scenarios. Specifically, for the few-shot scenario, we sample 5 examples for each sentiment polarity. Following previous works in ASTE (Peng et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020), we use the F_1 metric to measure model performance. For all training experiments, we report the average results from 5 random runs.

5.2 Models

To provide a study of diverse models, we evaluate several ASTE methods based on pretrained language models (PLMs) and large language models (LLMs). For PLMs, we include discriminative methods including GTS (Wu et al., 2020) based on sequence tagging, Span-ASTE based on span enumeration and RoBMRC (Liu et al., 2022b) based on machine reading comprehension. We also consider generative methods including GAS (Zhang et al., 2021b) and Paraphrase (Zhang et al., 2021a). As LLMs have shown general-purpose capabilities and strong performance on many language understanding and reasoning tasks, we also assess their performance on ASTE. Specifically, we use the ChatGPT

model API based on gpt-3.5-turbo-0301². We note that while LLMs are technically PLMs as they also undergo large-scale pretraining, we use PLMs to refer to smaller models that are pretrained, such as BERT (Devlin et al., 2019) and T5 (Raffel et al., 2020). To adapt ChatGPT to complex sentiment tasks such as ASTE, we use in-context learning demonstrations (Wei et al., 2022b) with the prompt templates as shown in Appendix A.6. For the fully supervised scenario, we leverage in-context demonstration selection (Liu et al., 2022a) which selects relevant examples from the full dataset based on cosine similarity. Specifically, we use embedding representations from Sentence-BERT (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019) and select the top-15 most similar examples as in-context demonstrations. For the few-shot scenario, we use the few-shot examples as in-context demonstrations.

5.3 Hyperparameters

For all PLM-based methods, we use the base model size and original hyperparameters for training experiments. For sampling with CASE, we generate a fixed number of 10 outputs for each example. To select the confidence threshold hyperparameter T , we perform a grid search with the values $\{0.0, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1.0\}$ based on F_1 results on the development set. For out-of-domain settings, we choose the confidence threshold from the respective source domain. In addition, we report other experimental details in Appendix A.2.

6 Results and Analysis

To provide a holistic study of ASTE methods, we evaluate on the proposed domain-expanded ASTE benchmark, reporting the fully supervised in-domain results in Table 3, with fully supervised out-of-domain results in Table 4. We further study the few-shot scenario for in-domain and out-of-domain settings in Table 5. In general, while specialized PLM-based methods currently outperform LLMs in the fully supervised scenario, there is a smaller performance gap for unseen domains, and LLMs exhibit better robustness to domain shift. In contrast, we find that LLMs are more effective in low-resource scenarios, as evidenced by the few-shot results. On the other hand, we observe that the proposed CASE is an effective decoding strategy that not only addresses the fundamental interpretability

limitation of LLMs, but also consistently improves performance across models, settings, and tasks.

6.1 Fully Supervised Results

Evaluation of PLM-Based Methods Based on the established methods that leverage PLMs, we find significant differences in performance and generalization for generative methods (i.e., Paraphrase, GAS) compared to discriminative methods (i.e., GTS, Span-ASTE, RoBMRC). Specifically, generative methods enjoy competitive in-domain performance and much stronger generalization to unseen domains, with an advantage of more than 2 points in the out-of-domain setting on average. Furthermore, while PLM-based methods generally demonstrate large performance disparities between in-domain and out-of-domain settings, generative methods are more robust to domain shift, as they exhibit smaller performance gaps on average (14.58) compared to discriminative methods (16.80). We believe that this is largely due to the effect of label semantics (Ma et al., 2022). For instance, understanding that “fresh” is an adjective for describing food such as “sushi” in Figure 1, it can be easier for the model to predict the sentiment triplet (sushi, fresh, positive). Hence, generative methods demonstrate better performance and generalization on the domain-expanded benchmark.

Comparison of LLM-Based Methods By comparing the LLM-based ChatGPT to PLM-based methods, we observe that LLMs perform worse in general for fully-supervised scenarios, but show greater robustness to domain shift. Notably, ChatGPT performs significantly worse on in-domain settings compared to PLM-based methods for ASTE. This is in contrast to their strong performance on simpler sentiment tasks such as sentence-level sentiment classification (Zhang et al., 2023). We believe that the difficulty that LLMs face in ASTE stems from the complexity of the task, as the structured nature of the sentiment triplets are less natural for language models. Hence, there is larger area of improvement for task-specific adaptation of LLMs, especially for complex tasks such as ASTE. On the other hand, we observe that ChatGPT can attain similar out-of-domain performance compared to some PLM-based methods, with a smaller performance gap between in-domain and out-of-domain settings (7.4). We posit that the greater robustness to domain shift is due to exposure to more diverse pretraining data, which together with model

²<https://platform.openai.com/docs/models/gpt-3-5>

Method	Hotel			Laptop			Cosmetics			Restaurant			Avg.
	<i>P.</i>	<i>R.</i>	F_1	<i>P.</i>	<i>R.</i>	F_1	<i>P.</i>	<i>R.</i>	F_1	<i>P.</i>	<i>R.</i>	F_1	F_1
GTS (Wu et al., 2020)	58.76	59.50	59.13	58.07	48.16	52.65	51.42	50.95	51.18	65.06	65.45	65.26	57.15
Span-ASTE (Xu et al., 2021)	67.73	62.92	65.24	60.73	54.40	57.39	59.79	55.0	57.29	68.69	65.41	67.01	61.74
RoBMRC (Liu et al., 2022b)	68.99	63.11	65.92	66.12	51.51	57.90	58.62	55.27	56.89	69.89	67.80	68.83	62.49
Paraphrase (Zhang et al., 2021a)	65.21	61.07	63.08	61.23	55.13	58.02	58.45	53.62	55.93	68.56	68.46	68.51	61.41
GAS (Zhang et al., 2021b)	67.57	63.30	65.37	60.59	55.13	57.73	59.13	55.53	57.28	69.26	69.16	69.21	62.41
with CASE (Ours)	67.40	64.75	66.05	60.60	56.79	58.63	59.51	57.01	58.23	68.84	70.42	69.62	63.13
ChatGPT	47.59	53.13	50.20	44.57	49.12	46.74	34.80	38.73	36.66	53.49	57.68	55.50	47.28
with CASE (Ours)	54.24	49.86	51.96	51.71	48.17	49.88	42.32	35.39	38.55	58.11	56.04	57.06	49.36

Table 3: Evaluation results for **in-domain** ASTE with the full datasets. We report the average precision (P), recall (R), and F_1 scores for each domain, as well as the average F_1 (Avg.) across all domains.

Method	Hotel			Laptop			Cosmetics			Restaurant			Avg.
	L→H	C→H	R→H	H→L	C→L	R→L	H→C	L→C	R→C	H→R	L→R	C→R	F_1
GTS (Wu et al., 2020)	35.05	52.75	49.41	34.01	32.68	40.98	38.08	24.31	32.77	55.73	49.86	49.94	41.65
Span-ASTE (Xu et al., 2021)	41.62	55.55	51.23	37.34	33.48	42.52	43.55	31.00	34.30	57.31	54.36	51.44	44.58
RoBMRC (Liu et al., 2022b)	36.17	58.17	52.67	37.77	35.57	41.26	41.81	26.97	32.12	60.47	51.10	55.73	44.76
Paraphrase (Zhang et al., 2021a)	43.99	56.49	50.81	41.71	39.09	48.02	43.85	28.45	34.68	59.74	59.15	56.14	46.90
GAS (Zhang et al., 2021b)	46.18	59.10	52.71	40.77	37.88	48.25	46.10	29.81	34.97	59.57	60.47	56.54	47.76
with CASE (Ours)	46.84	60.06	53.32	42.36	38.82	48.72	47.77	30.96	36.12	60.03	61.06	57.08	48.60
ChatGPT	42.98	42.61	43.14	34.48	35.23	36.43	31.22	31.26	31.84	50.08	51.29	48.02	39.88
with CASE (Ours)	42.91	45.07	45.56	36.08	36.66	38.57	31.04	31.60	32.80	51.78	53.74	50.43	41.35

Table 4: Evaluation results for **out-of-domain** ASTE with the full datasets. We report the average F_1 score for each domain-pair (source domain \rightarrow target domain), as well as the average F_1 (Avg.) across all domain-pairs.

Method	In-Domain F_1	Out-Of-Domain F_1
Span-ASTE	32.65	20.71
Paraphrase	33.46	22.95
GAS	36.53	26.72
with CASE (Ours)	38.42	28.81
ChatGPT	44.38	38.19
with CASE (Ours)	47.34	39.56

Table 5: Evaluation results for **few-shot** ASTE (5-Shot). We report the average in-domain F_1 score across all domains, and the average out-of-domain F_1 score across all domain-pairs.

scaling, imbues LLMs with comprehensive world knowledge (Safavi and Koutra, 2021). This is consistent with previous findings that training data diversity is the main factor in robustness to domain shift (Taori et al., 2020). Thus, LLM-based methods show promising generalization to new domains, with ample room for future development.

6.2 Few-Shot Performance

In contrast to the fully supervised results, we find that LLMs show stronger performance in low-resource scenarios, as shown in Table 5. Notably, ChatGPT significantly outperforms the PLM-based methods in both the in-domain and out-of-domain

settings. As LLMs benefit from massive scale of model parameters and training data, this enables them to learn a wider range of language patterns and semantics, hence generalizing well to new tasks, even with limited data (Brown et al., 2020). From a practical point of view, while there remains ample room for improvement in the fully supervised scenarios, the strong generalization in low-resource scenarios and robustness to domain shift make LLMs suitable for data-scarce applications. Hence, we believe that the few-shot results highlight the importance of evaluating ASTE methods on diverse scenarios, in order to provide a holistic view of their capabilities.

6.3 Impact of CASE

While our proposed CASE decoding strategy was mainly motivated by the limitations of interpretability and trustworthiness of black-box LLMs for ASTE, we find that it also provides reliable performance benefits. Notably, we observe that ChatGPT with CASE consistently outperforms the baseline which uses greedy decoding³ for both in-domain as well as out-of-domain settings. Furthermore, as our decoding strategy is applicable to any method that

³While we have also experimented with beam search, we observed similar performance and hence used greedy search.

Task	Dataset	Method	Orig.	w/ CASE
AOPE	Hotel	GAS (Zhang et al., 2021b)	71.77	72.44
	Laptop		65.93	66.77
	Cosmetics		62.98	63.91
	Restaurant		75.33	75.51
ASQP	Rest15	Paraphrase (Zhang et al., 2021a)	46.93	47.96
	Rest16		57.93	58.86

Table 6: Evaluation results for **in-domain** ABSA subtasks when using generative methods without change or with confidence-aware generative extraction (CASE).

supports stochastic sampling, we easily apply it to the generative method GAS (Zhang et al., 2021b), which also shows consistent benefits. We believe that the performance benefits of CASE stem mainly from the sampling process which considers more diverse sentiment triplets, which is supported by the significantly improved recall scores in Table 3. On the other hand, there is little to no negative impact on precision, which suggests that our aggregation and filtering steps can effectively mitigate false positive triplets. This is in contrast to conventional decoding methods such as greedy decoding, which only presents a single, less optimal set of sentiment triplets for consideration. Hence, we believe that CASE is an effective decoding strategy for ASTE and a promising direction for future development.

6.4 Benefit of CASE on Other ABSA Tasks

As CASE is a decoding strategy that can enhance the performance of generative models, it may also benefit other ABSA tasks. Hence, to further study its effectiveness, we report the in-domain results of CASE-based generative models for aspect opinion pair extraction (AOPE) (Chen et al., 2020) and aspect sentiment quad prediction (ASQP) (Zhang et al., 2021a). We use our domain-expanded dataset for AOPE and the original Rest15 and Rest16 datasets for ASQP. To modify our method for AOPE and ASQP, we simply consider pair sets and quadruplet sets respectively in the sampling process instead of triplet sets for ASTE. Note that our method does not affect model parameters or re-training any models to be re-trained. Based on the results in Table 6, we observe consistent improvement when using generative methods with CASE compared to using the original greedy decoding. Furthermore, it can improve the interpretability and trustworthiness of generative ABSA predictions by estimating the confidence score of each pair, triplet, or quadruplet. Overall, we believe that CASE can be a beneficial and widely applicable technique for different ABSA tasks.

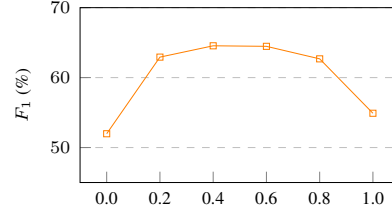


Figure 3: The effect of confidence-aware threshold T on in-domain performance for the Hotel domain.

6.5 Effect of Confidence-Aware Threshold

As CASE aims to improve the model recall while reducing false positives, it is crucial to remove the low-confidence triplets by applying a sufficiently high threshold filter. However, a threshold that is too high may introduce more false negative triplets. Hence, we study the effect of the confidence-aware threshold T on model performance in Figure 3. We find that the in-domain performance is relatively stable across a wide range of thresholds between 0.2 and 0.8. This suggests that the false positive triplets mainly have very low confidence scores i.e., $\phi(t, o, p) < 0.2$. However, there is a sharp decrease in performance for extremely low or high threshold values, which is consistent with our intuition.

7 Conclusions

In conclusion, this work addressed the task of Aspect Sentiment Triplet Extraction (ASTE) in sentiment analysis, focusing on the issues of limited benchmark domains and the challenges of large language models (LLMs) in handling complex sentiment tasks. We introduced a domain-expanded ASTE benchmark by annotating samples from diverse domains, enabling the evaluation of models in both in-domain and out-of-domain settings. This expanded benchmark provided a more comprehensive assessment of model performance, addressing concerns regarding the generalizability of proposed methods. Secondly, a novel decoding strategy called CASE (Context-Aware Sampling and Enhancement) was proposed to enhance the trustworthiness and performance of LLMs in ASTE.

The experimental results demonstrated its effectiveness across multiple tasks, settings, and models. Its simplicity and efficacy make it a promising general decoding strategy for complex sentiment tasks. By expanding the scope of evaluation and providing a reliable decoding strategy, we hope to encourage the research community to rethink the generalizability of benchmarks and models for ASTE. The findings highlight the importance of considering diverse domains and utilizing appropriate decoding strategies when tackling fine-grained sentiment analysis tasks. With these contributions, we hope to foster the development of more robust and capable sentiment analysis methods in the future.

Acknowledgment

This work was substantially supported by DAMO Academy through DAMO Academy Research Intern Program.

Limitations

As our method samples multiple output sequences for a given input sequence, there is an increased computational cost for inference. However, this is a trade-off similar to tuning hyperparameters for beam search in text generation problems, and the effect can be mitigated by batched inference. Our method also relies on the sampled sequences to have sufficient diversity in order to consider a larger set of candidate triplets. However, too much diversity may introduce unwanted noise. The diversity is affected by both the temperature sampling hyperparameter and the number of sampled sequences. In this work, we keep the temperature sampling hyperparameter fixed as a standard value for generation due to computational constraints. We analyze the effect of the number of sampled sequences m in Appendix A.3.

Ethics Statement

For data annotation, we engage two professional annotators who are fairly compensated. The compensation is negotiated based on the task complexity and assessment of a reasonable annotation speed. The annotators have given their consent for their annotations to be publicly released as a research dataset. The data annotation project passes the ethics review of the data annotation team as it does not contain any confidential data. The data annotators are adults who are versed in multiple languages. We release our datasets under the same license (CC

BY NC 4.0) as the original data that we collected from. The license allows for free sharing and adaptation of the dataset as long as appropriate credit is given, and the data is only used for non-commercial purposes.

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A Appendix

A.1 Duplicate-Aware Evaluation for ASTE

Algorithm 1: Pseudocode of duplicate-aware Micro- F_1 evaluation for ASTE.

```

num_pred = 0 # Count of predicted triplets
num_gold = 0 # Count of gold triplets
num_correct = 0 # Count of correct triplets

# Match predicted and gold triplets
# using set intersection
for sentence in data:
    pred_set = set(sentence.pred_triplets)
    gold_set = set(sentence.gold_triplets)
    correct_set = pred_set & gold_set

    num_pred += len(pred_set)
    num_gold += len(gold_set)
    num_correct += len(correct_set)

# Calculate scores
p = num_correct / num_pred # Precision
r = num_correct / num_gold # Recall
f1_score = 2 * p * r / (p + r)

```

A.2 Additional Hyperparameters

For GAS and Paraphrase models, there are 140M parameters when using BART-base. When using T5, there are 220M parameters. For BERT-base models (GTS, Span-ASTE, RoBMRC), there are roughly 110M parameters.

A.3 Effect of Sampling Size

For sampling number of sequence m , there are on average 3.12, 3.45, 3.84 unique triplets sampled for $m = 10, 20, 30$ respectively.

A.4 Annotation Guide

This section illustrates the guideline for human annotators. This task is a fine-grained sentiment analysis task where opinion terms, their aspect targets, and their expressed sentiments should be extracted

Name	Value
GPU Model	Nvidia A6000
CUDA Version	11.3
Python Version	3.7.12
PyTorch Version	1.11.0
ChatGPT API Cost	\$110
Generation Sampling Temperature	1.0

Table 7: List of experimental details.

together. Each sample contains one or multiple sentences which have been tokenized and labeled with indices. The annotation steps are as follows:

1. Read and understand the text sample and find out opinion terms as well as aspect target terms. Note that these terms should be explicit and the target term should not be a pronoun. If there is no opinion term or aspect target term, the sample is marked as “Invalid”.
2. If the sample contains opinion terms and aspect target terms, check whether there are aspect-opinion pairs. If not, the sample should also be marked as “Invalid”.
3. Determine the expressed sentiment of these pairs and record the spans of aspect-opinion pairs and their expressed sentiment in a 3-tuple format. Note that each sentence can have multiple triplets.

For example, given a review “The room was huge but terribly furnished”. We can find two aspect-opinion pairs (room, huge) with positive sentiment and (room, terribly furnished) with negative sentiment. The triplets of this text sample should be recorded in this format: ([1], [3], “POS”), ([1], [5, 6], “NEG”), where the index of the first token is 0.

There are several special cases that may make annotators hard to determine. We give a uniform guide here:

- Articles such as “the”, “a”, and “an” should not be included in target terms.
- Separate conjoined terms. For example, “The bedroom and washroom are big and clean”. “Bedroom and washroom” should be recorded as two separate terms “bedroom” and “washroom”. Opinion terms “big” and “clean” should also be separated.

Domain	Average Sample Length	POS%	NEU%	NEG%
Restaurant	16.37 tokens	73.01%	6.75%	20.24%
Laptop	18.36 tokens	57.50%	9.64%	32.86%
Hotel	21.92 tokens	59.25%	11.69%	29.06%
Cosmetics	21.61 tokens	45.68%	25.59%	28.74%

Table 8: More details of our domain-expanded ASTE dataset. We report the average length of samples and the percentage of positive (POS%), neutral (NEU%) and negative (NEG%) triplets respectively.

- It might be hard to determine whether some adverbs should be included in opinion terms. We should include these adverbs if they have a large influence on the sentiment polarity of the opinion term. For example, “This room is too big.” The opinion term should be “too big” instead of “big”, since “too” makes the opinion term express an obvious negative sentiment.

A.5 Detailed Results

A.6 Prompt Templates

To adapt ChatGPT to complex sentiment tasks such as ASTE, we design several templates based on previous works in generative ASTE (Zhang et al., 2021a).

A.7 More Details of Datasets

Table A.7 shows more details of our domain-expanded ASTE dataset. We can observe that our annotated hotel and cosmetics domains contain a larger average sample length and their label distribution is more balanced than previous restaurant and laptop domains.

A.8 Dataset Examples

Table 9 presents five examples for each domain. The standard of triplet formulation is the same across four domains and aspect target terms are domain-specific, indicating that our domain-expanded dataset can be well used as a cross-domain ASTE benchmark.

A.9 Case Study

Table 10 compares predictions of GAS and our GAS+CAGE method on two examples in two cross-domain settings. We find both methods show great performance in determining the sentiment. However, our method can identify the number of triplets more correctly, indicating that CAGE can effectively mitigate pseudo-label noise by reducing false positives and false negatives.

Domain	Example	Triplets
Restaurant	The service is awful .	(service, awful, negative)
	The chicken dinner was real good .	(chicken dinner, good, positive)
	The food is reliable and the price is moderate .	(food, reliable, positive), (price, moderate, neutral)
	Staffs are not that friendly , but the taste covers all .	(staffs, not that friendly, negative), (taste, covers all, positive)
	Prices are in line .	(prices, in line, neutral)
Laptop	The keyboard feels good and I type just fine on it .	(keyboard, good, positive)
	The battery gets so HOT it is scary .	(battery, HOT, negative), (battery, scary, negative)
	It 's great for streaming video and other entertainment uses .	(streaming video, great, positive), (entertainment uses, great, positive)
	This mouse is terrific .	(mouse, terrific, positive)
	Of course my warranty runs out next month .	(warranty, runs out, neutral)
Hotel	The smell was only slightly less prominent in our corner suite at the end of the hallway .	(smell, prominent, neutral)
	Also , the garbage trucks that frequent the ally are loud .	(garbage trucks, loud, negative)
	In the morning you can enjoy a free breakfast with many choices .	(breakfast, enjoy, positive), (breakfast, free, positive)
	The price was reasonable compared to the other options in the area .	(price, reasonable, positive)
	My fiancé opened the window shades and we had a huge brick wall for a view .	(brick wall, huge, neutral)
Cosmetics	It use to be one of the best products in the market .	(products, best, positive)
	This is a very heavy cover - up that feels heavy on your face .	(cover-up, heavy, neutral)
	Flimsy is really not a great thing when it 's 20 bucks .	(Flimsy, not a great thing, negative)
	I ordered the blonde color , but it really is a little dark .	(color, blonde, neutral), (color, dark, neutral)
	I love Essie but the formula on this one is awful .	(Essie, love, positive), (formula, awful, negative)

Table 9: Dataset examples.

	Hotel -> Cosmetics	Cosmetics -> Hotel
Example	Though it is more expensive than mass market gels , it does provide higher performance .	The rooms were very clean and the staff was very friendly and helpful especially when it came to ensuring we got on our buses for tours and our flights back home .
Gold label	(performance, higher, positive)	(rooms, clean, positive), (staff, friendly, positive), (staff, helpful, positive)
GAS prediction	(performance, higher, positive), (gels, expensive, negative)	(rooms, clean, positive), (staff, friendly, positive)
GAS+CAGE prediction	(performance, higher, positive)	(rooms, clean, positive), (staff, friendly, positive), (staff, helpful, positive)

Table 10: Case Study.

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