Language: a Window into Human Nature

Rada Mihalcea
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CURRENT RESEARCH

How language conveys sophisticated meaning about our decisions and values

Our conversations each day say something about who we are, what we believe, and the choices we make. In fact, current research argues that political orientation, values, and lifestyle choices can be predicted by language patterns. At the frontline of such research is Dr. Rada Mihalcea, Associate Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan, who studies computational linguistics to investigate how she can use language to understand human behaviors. Thus, her research can provide answers to fundamental questions about human nature and help get down to the roots of why we are the way we are. Additionally, practical applications range from medical pursuits where language can be used to gain insight into certain illnesses all the way to legal and political applications or market research. Thus, through research that asks basic questions, she and her team are able to impact society broadly.

Dr. Mihalcea's efforts provide a unique lens into the interaction between language and behavior. Her sophisticated computational linguistics techniques coupled with methods from psychology and sociology are helping to gain deeper insights into human nature. She and her team have already made important progress through many years of research and in the future, aim for many more major findings, with applications in several fields. In addition to several projects where human behavior is tracked through language use, Dr. Mihalcea is also working on projects that aim to sense human behavior by using other channels such as facial expression, physiological metrics, and acoustic features. In this way, Dr. Mihalcea puts the large data sets available in our data-driven world to use and is able to apply...

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AFFILIATION

University of Michigan

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., in Linguistics, 2010 , Oxford University
- Ph.D., in Computer Science and Engineering, 2001 , Southern Methodist University

AWARDS

- Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), 2009
- Honorary Citizen of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 2013
- National Science Foundation CAREER award, 2008
- General chair of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (NAACL), 2015
- Best papers awards at the Florida AI Research Society (1999, 2000), IEEE International Conference on Semantic Computing (2007), International Conference on Computational Linguistics and Intelligent Text Processing (2007)

RESEARCH AREAS

Technology, Computational Sciences / Mathematics, Informational Sciences / Internet, IOT, Devices, Data

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Rada Mihalcea, of the University of Michigan, as she uses sophisticated computational linguistics techniques to gain deep insight into human nature. Donations will fund the necessary $75K/year required for the support of a Ph.D. student and $100K/year required for the support of a postdoctoral fellow. By supporting her lab personnel, you will play a role in contributing to meaningful science while educating the next generation of researchers.