Using Computational Models to Connect Language and Mental State

Philip Resnik

Professor, Department of Linguistics and Institute for Advanced Computer Studies, Affiliate Professor, Computer Science

CURRENT RESEARCH

Algorithms that find underlying perspectives in language use

The way a person uses language is a direct route to understanding the way they think. Today, researchers don't just bring people into the lab to study this connection -- the online world gives us access to what social scientist David Lazer and colleagues have called "digital traces that can be compiled into comprehensive pictures of both individual and group behavior, with the potential to transform our understanding of our lives, organizations, and societies." At the University of Maryland, Dr. Philip Resnik is developing new computational methods for analyzing the digital traces of language use and online behavior, with two goals: to advance our scientific understanding of how language reflects and influences our perceptions, and to develop practical technology, using the science to help solve pressing societal problems.

Mental health issues are a case in point. In the U.S., the human cost of depression-related conditions is staggering: some 25 million American adults will have an episode of major depression this year, suicide is the third leading cause of death for people 10–24 years old, and 18.5% of returning military service members meet criteria for PTSD or depression. Worse, 89.3 million Americans cannot even obtain ready access to a clinician who is qualified to perform a psychological evaluation, and standard screening and diagnostic methods are often limited by the motivation of many individuals to underreport psychiatric symptoms and lack of the self-awareness to report accurately. What if we were able to make early detection and monitoring of mental health problems easier and dramatically more accessible, by analyzing the day-to-day language that people use in their online interactions?

...

Read More at benefunder.com/

AFFILIATION

University of Maryland College Park Campus

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Computer and Information Science 1993, University of Pennsylvania
- M.S.E. in Computer and Information Science 1990,University of Pennsylvania
- A.B. magna cum laude in Computer Science 1987,Harvard University

AWARDS

- Morris and Dorothy Rubinoff Dissertation Award, University of Pennsylvania, 1993
- IBM Graduate Fellowship, 1992–1993
- Boylston Speaking Prize, Harvard University, 1986

RESEARCH AREAS

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

FUNDING REQUEST

Dr. Philip Resnik's goal at University of Maryland is to achieve high impact by generating non-incremental ideas, mentoring the next generation, and creating innovative technologies. Your contribution will support his most valuable resource and his most important product--graduate students and postdocs--in using computational models to connect people's language use and underlying mental landscape, resulting in new science and practical tools for social good.