Understanding Language in Social Interactions

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The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Abstract
Why do individuals engage in social interactions? As social media continues its worldwide expansion, the way we communicate with each other has been revolutionized. The exposure to new information and the exchange of personal opinions have been mediated through online platforms. As a result, the explosive growth of online discussions far outpaces human beings’ reading and understanding capacity. To facilitate social interaction understanding, my research focuses on how to automate the language understanding process for large-scale social interaction data. Most existing natural language processing (NLP) techniques, though work well on formal and well-edited texts, will suffer from the data sparseness exhibited in short and informal social texts. This talk presents two possible ways to enrich contexts for short messages: one is to exploit explicit context formed with user responses; the other is to explore implicit context via capturing word co-occurrence and learning corpus-level representations. Beyond message-level language processing, I also strive to understand social interaction process, making sense of the discussion topics and the purpose of participants. In this talk, I will show how the future trajectory of social interactions can be affected by what participants discuss and how they behave in online discourse, and how we can make use of it to build a better us.

About the Speaker
Jing Li is currently a senior researcher in the Natural Language Processing Center of Tencent AI Lab. She obtained her PhD degree in Nov 2017 from the Department of Systems Engineering and Engineering Management, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). Before going to CUHK, she received her B.S. degree from the Department of Machine Intelligence, Peking University (PKU) in July 2013. Jing has broad research interests on natural language processing (NLP), social computing, and machine learning. Specifically, she works on text mining, information extraction, discourse analysis for social media language. She has published over ten research papers in top-tier NLP conferences and journals, such as ACL, EMNLP, NAACL, TACL, and CL. Also, she regularly serves as a program committee member in premier NLP conferences (e.g., ACL, EMNLP, NAACL) and received a best reviewer award in EMNLP 2018.

ALL are welcome!
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