Abstract

Facebook has revolutionized the way people share information and use language which has the potential to mark individual and collective identity. This makes exploring patterns in language use of a paramount significance. One conventional marker of what is being expressed and how is the word used in writing. Focusing on the used words, this study aims at exploring the potential distinguishing patterns in language used by Jordanian male and female authors of self-generated Facebook-status texts. Data were collected from a purposive sample by means of the 'social network' model, and then categorized and analyzed statistically using eclectic computerized (stylometric and online automated) analysis tools, including LIWC. Results demonstrated the impact of gender on discriminating language patterns and, thus, might facilitate gender specific status-predictability. Men and women wrote their statuses in statistically different ways. Women exhibited higher frequency of use of (social) lexical items, first person and second person pronouns, and optimistic/'upbeat' tone. Men's statuses revealed more third person pronouns, positive affect and clout in their writing. Geopolitical and sport theme-related words characterized male-authored themes and male semantic orientation. This
study emphasizes the value of linguistic work with focus on resources used in social media to
mirror themes, affect, tone, clout and more. It also provides implications for (electronic)
discourse analysis, text/corpus analysis, sociolinguistics and forensic linguistics.

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41.

Index Terms

Computer Science          Information Systems

Keywords

Linguistic pattern, gender, lexical item, theme, affect, tone