Not My President: How Names and Titles Frame Political Figures

Esther van den Berg   Katharina Korfhage   Josef Ruppenhofer   Michael Wiegand   Katja Markert

UNIVERSITÄT HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT SEIT 1386

LiMo
Empirical Linguistics
and Computational Language Modeling

Introduction

Framing is to select aspects of a target and make them more salient to promote a certain interpretation.

- First large-scale work on the framing of **entities**.
- Looks at impact of **names and titles** on **stance**
- Data: **4002** tweets mentioning **6 presidents**.

Examples

Twitter username @twitter_handle	Twitter username @twitter_handle
Go President Trump 2020!	Can we get trump outta office already

A difference in naming co-occurring with a difference in stance

Hypotheses

H0 Variation in naming and stance are **not related**.

H1 Naming signals **status** → **positive** formality↔stance relation

H2 Naming signals **solidarity** → **negative** formality↔stance relation

Examples

Status?

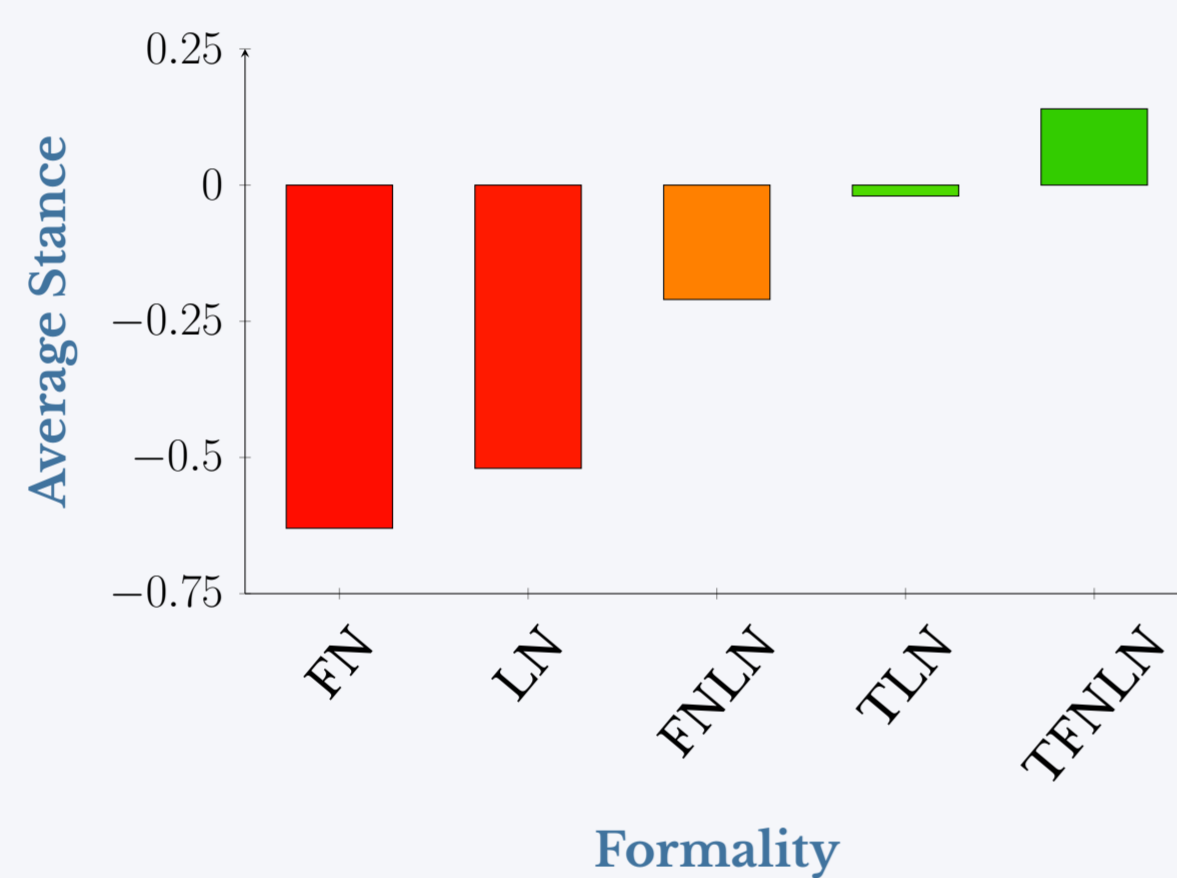> *Dear **President Joko Widodo**, Happy Birthday. God bless you jokowi*

> *That's the truth!!! Double-standard #**Donald** at it again https://t.co/C4J*

Solidarity?

> ***President Trump** probably won't like next week's news-stands*

> *Duterte & **Widodo** are truly public servants.*

Experiment

FN = First Name
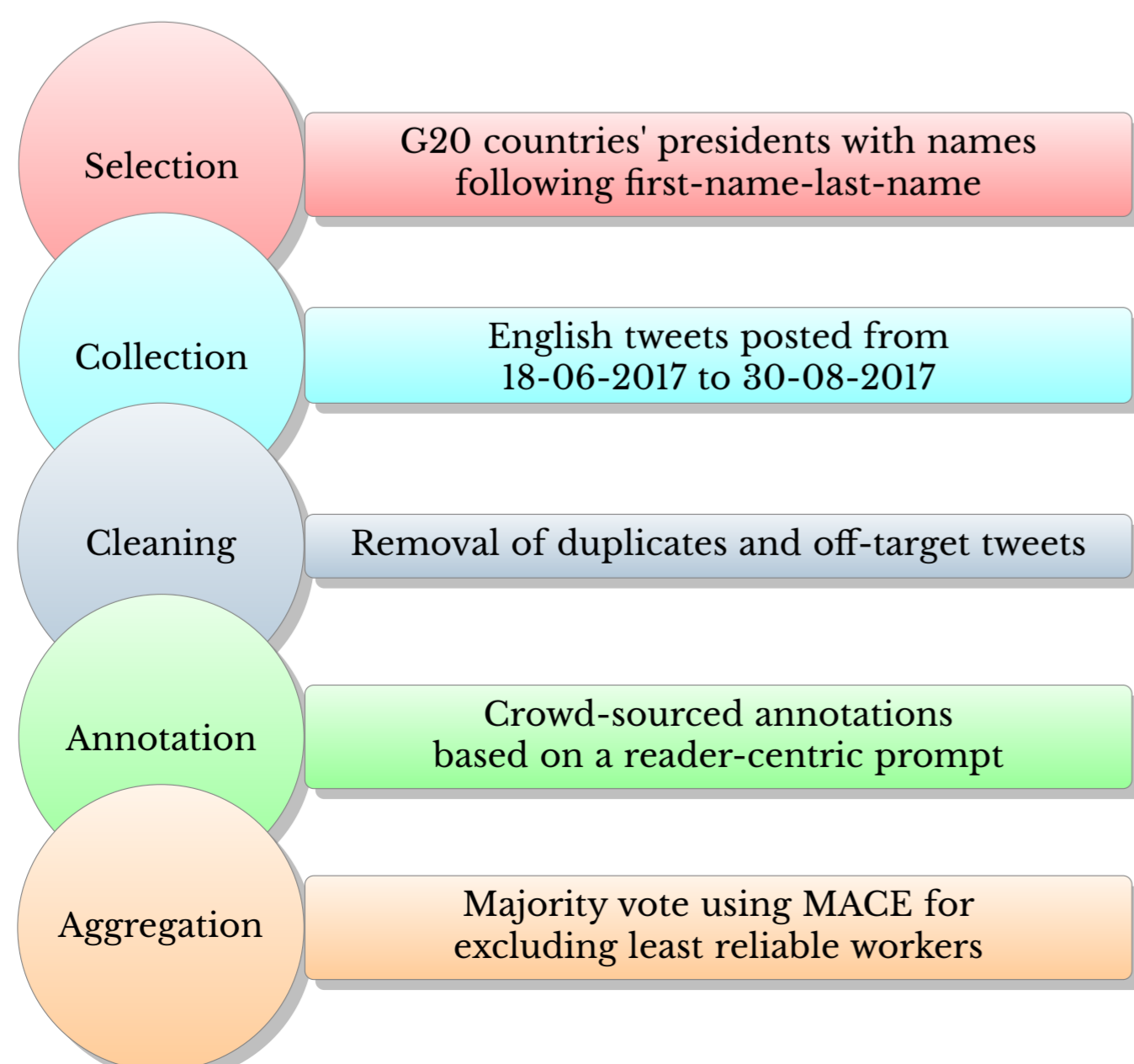**LN** = Last Name
T = Title

- Country-independent analysis.
- Naming forms ranked by **formality**.
- Kruskal-Wallis to test H0.
- Spearman's rho to compare H1 to H2.

- Stance different between all naming groups (p<.01) except FN & LN → **reject H0**.
- Formality **positively** correlated with stance ($r_s(4002) = .32$, p=.01) → **in line with status hypothesis H1**.

Corpus Statistics

	Tweets	Workers	Agreement (α)
France	638	39	0.55
Indonesia	477	27	0.58
Russia	754	66	0.49
South Africa	698	82	0.51
Turkey	692	53	0.62
United States	743	43	0.64

Corpus Construction

- **Selection**: G20 countries' presidents with names following first-name-last-name
- **Collection**: English tweets posted from 18-06-2017 to 30-08-2017
- **Cleaning**: Removal of duplicates and off-target tweets
- **Annotation**: Crowd-sourced annotations based on a reader-centric prompt
- **Aggregation**: Majority vote using MACE for excluding least reliable workers

Limitations

- No distinction between **address** and **reference**.
- Infrequent naming forms (FN, TFNLN) **too rare** for country-specific analysis.

Future Work

We will extend our work to **naming/titling of German Bundestag members** to see if our findings generalize to:

- Different language and culture → German.
- Different time span → from 04-06-2018 to 19-07-2018.
- Different naming forms → Dr.

Summary

> First work on portrayal of persons through naming/titling in social media data.

> Clear trend across country subsets that formality of naming/titling is positively related to stance.

> Indicates framing effect mediated by respect.

> Confirms sociolinguistic claims about the function of naming.