Padova, 06/04/22

Reviewing International Conference Proposals: Awareness of Principles & Practices for Non-Native Research Novices

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1. Introduction

1.1. Digitalisation everywhere

growing digitalisation in universities since 1990s,
e.g. digitalisation of texts, of learning, of (academic) interaction,
digital humanities, etc.
increased digitalisation through the Corona pandemic in (remote online) teaching
new practices = transfer into digital space +++
not enough empirical research in developing practices → genre conventions

new technological affordances -> new opportunities in data collection, transparency, documentation, etc.

discourse as productive, effective interaction becomes more measurable?

1.2. Genre development: why academic "reviews"?

genres are discourse-community specific text conventions

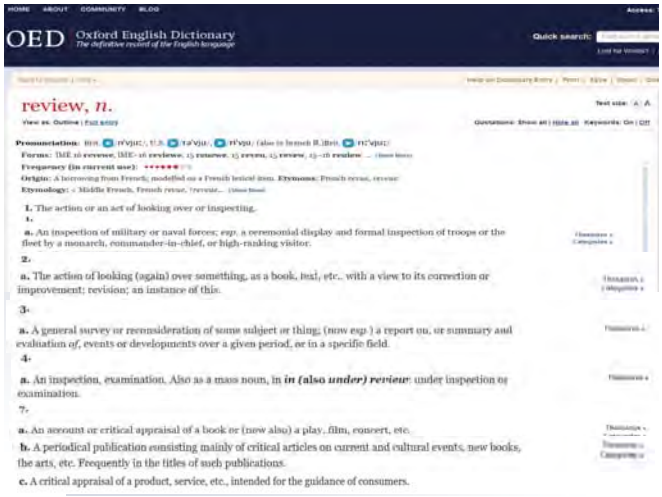
academic "reviews" = ambiguous: book reviews, journal article reviews, conference reviews

young scholars are affected passively → understand "reading reviews" (without anger)
as peer2peer community practice → understand "writing reviews" (without revenge?)
→ advancement of science through critical constructive, cooperative discourse
oral features make the communication more cooperative, personal, direct, friendly?
short forms: *I've, would've*
personal pronoun address: *you*
colloquialisms: *o.k.*

but oral features are often not explicit -> a risk in non-face-to-face communication, esp. out of (situational) context!

1.2. Genre development: expanding the meaning of "review"

"review" = Word-Of-Mouth: "Do you know a good restaurant around here?"
new digital "affordances" → "electronic Word-Of-Mouth" (e.g. on platforms)
the grand name "review" sounds more objective, better than "critique" or "appraisal"
because digital is not face-to-face, features of orality are "maintained", rather included to simulate "proximity", "adressivity", in the end "credibility"/"trust"
still personal, but "person" may be a "persona", even an agent, a bot!

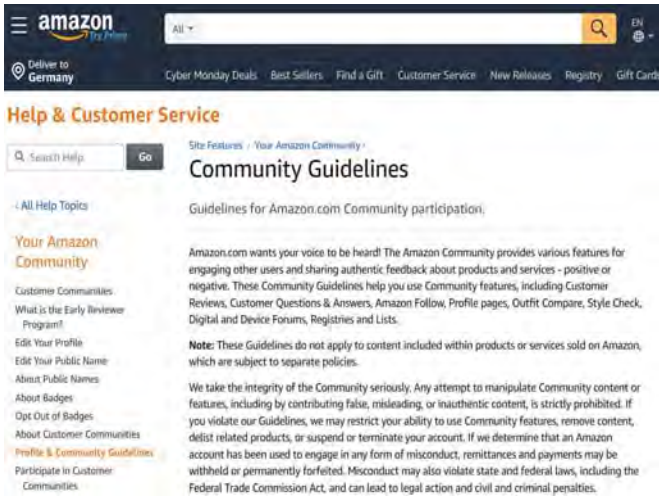


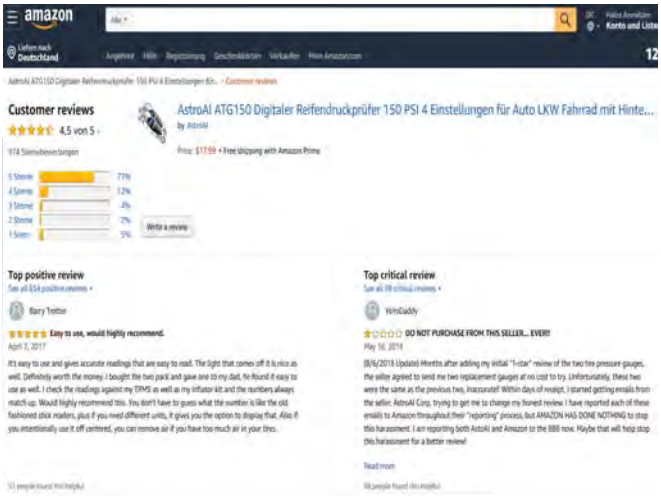
1.3. Genre development: standardizing practices

"community-specific practices"
are developing into conventions, expectations, finally guidelines in handbooks etc.
→ make choices easier for readers/customers,
→ make reading faster,
→ novices need to know,
and
→ "evaluation of review": "Did you find this useful?"

BUT standardisation makes (semi?-)automatic analysing possible - and bot-use!

examples from the market leader: Amazon





2. Concepts

2.1. Reviews

2.1.1. Reviews: popular definitions

A review is an evaluation of a publication, service, or company such as a movie (a movie review), video game (video game review), musical composition (music review of a composition or recording), book (book review); a piece of hardware like a car, home appliance, or computer; or an event or performance, such as a live music concert, play, musical theater show, dance show, or art exhibition. In addition to a critical evaluation, the review's author may assign the work a rating to indicate its relative merit. More loosely, an author may review current events, trends, or items in the news. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Review (16/10/21)

Scholarly peer review (also known as refereeing) is the process of subjecting an author's scholarly work, research, or ideas to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field, before a paper describing this work is published in a journal, conference proceedings or as a book. The peer review helps the publisher (that is, the editor-in-chief, the editorial board or the program committee) decide whether the work should be accepted, considered acceptable with revisions, or rejected. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholarly_peer_review (16/10/21)

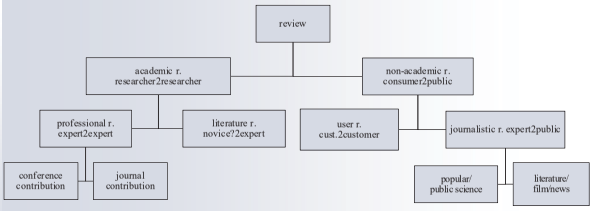
A user review is a review conducted by any person who has access to the internet and publishes their experience to a review site or social media platform following product testing or the evaluation of a service. User reviews are commonly provided by consumers who volunteer to write the review, rather than professionals who are paid to evaluate the product or service. User reviews might be compared to professional nonprofit reviews from a consumer organization, or to promotional reviews from an advertiser or company marketing a product. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_review (16/10/21) cf. Fake reviews!

2.1.2. Reviews: Academic definitions

"In this paper, the term 'OCR' [=online customer review] is used to refer to any positive, neutral, or negative online review about a product or service created and published on a CRW by a potential, former, or actual customer." (Filieri 2015: 1262)

"Online customer reviews can be defined as *peer-generated product evaluations posted on company or third party websites*." (Mudambi and Schuff 2010: 186)

2.1.2. Reviews: survey of subgenres



2.2. Professional Discourse

'professional discourse' better than 'business discourse',
since it covers economic, academic, legal, medical, and other domains

"characterized by the involvement of a "lay" person, whereas "business discourse is dominated by talk and writing between individuals whose main work activities and interests are in the domain of business and who come together for the purpose of doing business" (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 1999a, p. 2)."

"the tension between what counts as public/private and personal/professional" (Darics 2015: 5)
"highly contested and multidimensional nature of the term "discourse," whether we interpret it as discourse referring to language in use, or Discourse viewed as a social practice, focusing on the interplay between language, society, and thought (on the d/Discourse distinction see, for example, Gee, 2013)." (Darics 2015: 5)

'professional' vs. 'personal':
Peer2Peer = Professional2Professional and Customer2Customer
vs. hierarchical: Novice2Editor etc.
Customer2Company and (professional) Company2Customer

'professional' involves
→ more politeness and Digital Empathy / Digital Emotional Literacy
→ explicit language features=psychological cues that trigger (the impression of) (good) cooperation

2.3. Face

The English semantic field for "face" words meaning "prestige; honor" is smaller than the corresponding Chinese field. English face meaning "prestige; honor, respect, dignity, status, reputation,[11] social acceptance, or good name. The *lose* verb in *lose face* means "fail to maintain", while the *save* in *save face* means "avoid loss/damage". The country begins to feel that Government consented to arrangements by which China has lost face; the officials have long been conscious that they are becoming ridiculous in the eyes of the people, seeing that where a foreigner is concerned they can neither enforce a Chinese right, nor redress a Chinese grievance, even on Chinese soil. (1901:225)

Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987) expanded Goffman's theory of face in their politeness theory, which differentiated between positive and negative face.[31]

Positive face is "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants"[citation needed]

Negative face is "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction—i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition"[citation needed]

In human interactions, people are often forced to threaten either an addressee's positive and/or negative face, and so there are various politeness strategies to mitigate those face-threatening acts.[citation needed]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Face_(sociological_concept) (1/12/19)

2.3.1. Politeness theory and 'face'

Politeness theory is rooted in the theories of Goffman (1967), and identifies five strategies that participants in interaction may use to protect and maintain one another's "face". Acts which threaten face, such as performing a request, are called 'face-threatening-acts' (FTA). Speakers

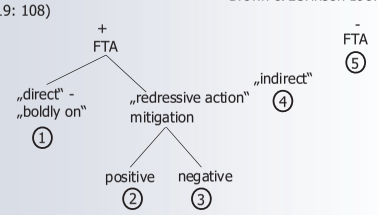
may perform the FTA directly, without redressive action (Strategy 1 – going baldly on record, e.g. "Reformulate the letter"); they may perform the FTA with compensation, by using either positive (Strategy 2, e.g. "You are doing excellent work, but would you please reformulate the letter") or negative (Strategy 3, e.g. "I know you are busy, but could you pls reformulate the letter") politeness strategies. The speakers may choose to perform the FTA indirectly (Strategy 4 – off record, e.g. "The letter needs some justifications"), or simply avoid doing the FTA (Strategy 5) (Brown & Levinson 1987: 69). (Skovhold 2015: 108)

2.3.2. Politeness: decision tree after face-threatening acts + examples

Leader´s decision tree

(Skovholt 2019: 108)

Politeness (Goffman 1967, Brown & Levinson 1987)



examples

1 = *Reformulate the letter*
2 = *You are doing excellent work, but … please*
3 = *I know you are busy, but … please*
4 = *The letter needs some justification*
5 = -

2.4. Emotional Intelligence (=Literacy) and empathy

Emotional intelligence (**EI**), **emotional leadership** (**EL**), **emotional quotient** (**EQ**) and **emotional intelligence quotient** (**EIQ**), is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, and manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt to environments or achieve one's goal(s).

Goleman's model outlines five main EI constructs (for more details see "What Makes A Leader" by Daniel Goleman, best of Harvard Business Review 1998):

- Self-awareness – the ability to know one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and goals and recognize their impact on others while using gut feelings to guide decisions.
- Self-regulation – involves controlling or redirecting one's disruptive emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances.
- Social skill – managing relationships to get along with others
- Empathy – considering other people's feelings especially when making decisions
- Motivation – being aware of what motivates them..

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_intelligence (01/12/19)

2.5. Genres in Academic Writing
2.5.1. Types of discourses

research "output"
- research article
- book reviews
- project proposals
- conference reviews
- conference presentations

discipline-specific culture-specific

teacher "talk"/e-learning
- ppt presentations
  - lectures (+/- remote!)
  - student presentations
- textbooks
  - Wikis/Moodle/Google+
  - www pages (HTML, php)

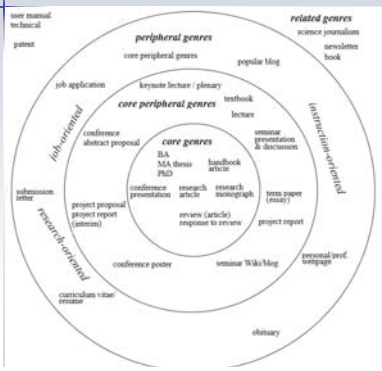
student "literacy"
- lecture/fieldwork notes
- "papers" (argumentative! essays)
- MA/BA thesis (persuasive!)
- seminar presentations

"Novice Academic English"

science "journalism"
- popular science articles
- popular blogs (David Crystal)
- popular science films (Horizon)
- popular science books
- science slam

author-specific culture-specific

2.5.2. Central-Peripheral Model of Genres in Academic Writing



2.5.3. Research Circle + quality control for dissemination in Academic Writing

Figure 1: The Academic Research Cycle

(Image from: Cann, A., Dimitriou, K. & Hooley, T. (2011) Social Media: A Guide for Researchers. London: Research Information Network p.15.)

3. Academic Reviews

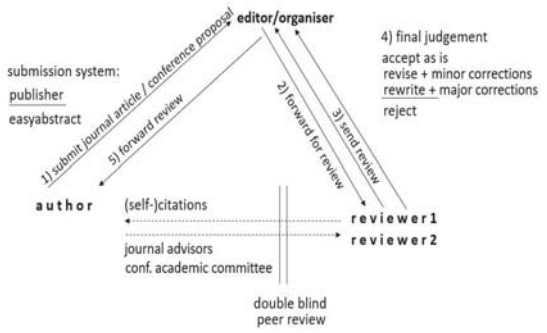
3.1. Double Blind Peer Reviews

fashioned in social science journals since the 1950s
also for conference abstracts
the identity of the authors is concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa,
to avoid bias
but despite any editorial effort to ensure anonymity, the process often fails to do so, since certain approaches, methods, writing styles, notations, etc., point to a certain group of people in a research stream, and even to a particular person.

BUT
most double-blind peer reviews are anonymous and unpublished

→ case study: "open"

3.2. Processes: Double blind peer review



4. Conference Reviews

4.1. Digital/on-line reviews

Since "standards" in community-specific discourse are developing, many case studies are necessary!

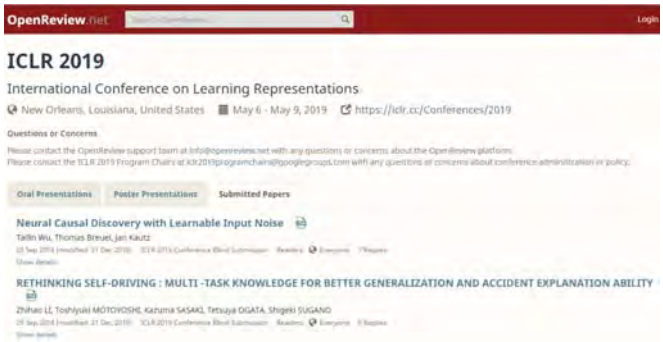
rarely publically available!

4.2. Case study: ICLR

Since "standards" in community-specific discourse are developing, many case studies are necessary!

AGAIN a Model case study!

Ivanova, Marina.
Concession in Single- and Double-Blind Open Peer Review:
A Corpus-Based Analysis. MA Thesis Chemnitz 2019 23 / 39



Ivanova, Marina.
Concession in Single- and Double-Blind Open Peer Review:
A Corpus-Based Analysis. MA Thesis Chemnitz 2019 24 / 39

unconvincing experiments; original theorem statement incorrect

ICLR 2019 Conference Paper594 Area Chair1

17 Dec 2018 (modified: 21 Dec 2018) ICLR 2019 Conference Paper594 Meta Review Readers: Everyone

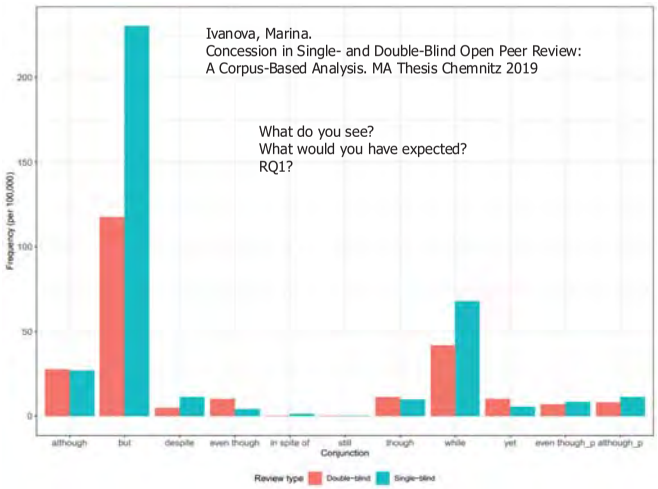
Metareview: Granger Causality is a beautiful operational definition of causality, that reduces causal modeling to the past-to-future predictive strength. The combination of classical granger causality with deep learning is very well motivated as a research problem. As such the continuation of the effort in this paper is strongly encouraged. However, the review process did uncover possible flaws in some of the main, original results of this paper. The reviewers also expressed concerns that the experiments were unconvincing due to very small data sizes. The paper will benefit from a revision and resubmission to another venue, and is not ready for acceptance at ICLR-2019.

Confidence: 4: The area chair is confident but not absolutely certain

Recommendation: Reject

	Category	Meaning	Paratactic	Hypotactic		
				finite	non-finite: conjunction	non-finite: preposition
(iv) causal-conditional	condition: concessive	if P then contrary to expectation Q	[concession ^ consequence] *but; (and) yet + still; but + nevertheless*	*even if, even though, although, while*	*even if, even though, although, while*	*despite, in spite of, without*
			[consequence ^ concession] (though)			

- **Criticism mitigation → "**I very much like the idea of the paper, ***but*** I am simply not convinced by its claims." (ICLR17_R3_R279)
- **Criticism reinforcement →** "The paper has a laundry list of related results (page 2) ***but*** no clear message." (ICLR17_R2_R363)
- **Praise mitigation → "*Even though*** no conclusive section is provided, the paper is not missing any information." (ICLRC_R3_O785)
- **Praise reinforcement →** "I found the paper very well written ***despite*** its level of mathematical depth (the authors provide many helpful pictures) and strongly recommend accepting this paper." (ICLRC_R1_O76)



Ivanova, Marina.
Concession in Single- and Double-Blind Open Peer Review:
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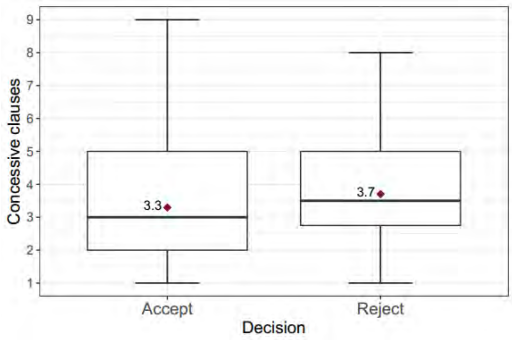

What do you see?
What would you have expected?
RQ2?

	Single-blind 2017		Double-blind 2018		Double-blind 2019		Sum	
	#	words	#	words	#	words	#	words
Accept Oral	36	9400	60	22787	33	16419	129	48606
Accept Poster	86	24609	29	14923	15	6892	130	46424
Reject	120	36533	109	43231	54	22691	283	102455
Sum	242	70542	198	80941	102	46002	542	197485

Table 1: The ICLR review corpus

		accept oral			accept poster			reject		
	Sum	#	/100,000	%	#	/100,000	%	#	/100,000	%
please	104	30	62	29	20	43	19	54	53	52
*ould	1509	425	874	28	408	879	27	676	660	45
no*	2691	599	1232	22	618	1331	23	1474	1439	55
only	382	74	152	19	83	179	22	225	220	59
question*	263	57	117	22	54	116	21	152	148	58
wh*	710	151	311	21	149	321	21	410	400	58
(?)	979	239	492	24	219	472	22	521	509	53

Table 2: Selected politeness features in positive and negative reviews

5. Exercise

qualitative self-evaluation of texts

we need many small case studies of current practices to confirm ad-hoc hypotheses of developing conventions

1) Recognise evaluative language features in accepted (prototypical; model) academic discourse
2) Identify communicative functions of linguistic features
3) Reading and interpreting critical reviews in order to improve conference proposals

Comment on linguistic features that signal Professional Discourse in two kinds of open reviews. Underline features of "emotional (intelligence)". Highlight those signalling "polite" in yellow, "oral/proximity/addressivity" in blue, "praise" in green and "criticism" in red.

Interesting work, quite domain-specific, suboptimal focus and structure

ICLR 2017 review AnonReviewer3 | Dec. 17, 2016 | Rating: 6: Marginally above acceptance threshold

These are interesting contributions, but due to the many pieces, unfortunately, the paper does not seem to have a clear focus. [...]. [T]he paper takes a quite domain-specific approach and discusses the pieces the authors used to obtain state-of-the-art performance for one problem. That is OK, but I would've rather expected that from a paper called something like "Improved knowledge transfer and distillation for text analytics". If accepted, I encourage the authors to change the title to something along those lines.

The many pieces also made it hard for me to follow the authors' train of thought. I'm sure the authors had a good reason for their section ordering, but I didn't see the red thread in it. How about re-organizing the sections as follows to discuss one contribution at a time? 1,2,4,3,8 including 6, put 9 into an appendix and point to it from here, 7, 5, 10. [...] One clue that the current structure is suboptimal is that there are 11 sections...

I like the authors' idea for transfer learning without catastropic forgetting, and I must admit I would've rather liked to read a paper solely about that (studying where it works, and where it fails) than about the many other topics of the paper. I weakly vote for acceptance since I like the ideas, but if the paper does not make it in, I would suggest that the authors consider splitting it into two papers, each of which could hopefully be more focused.

Confidence: 3: The reviewer is fairly confident that the evaluation is correct | Scale 1-5

Text 1: Prototypical positive review from the ICLR review corpus
Model accept (ICLR17_R2_O5, Rating 9/10, Confidence 4/5)
A nice contribution to differentially-private deep learning
ICLR 2017 conference AnonReviewer2
16 Dec 2016 ICLR 2017 conference official review
Rating: 9: Top 15% of accepted papers, strong accept
Review: Altogether a very good paper, a nice read, and interesting. The work advances the state of the art on differentially-private deep learning, is quite well-written, and relatively thorough.
One caveat is that although the approach is intended to be general, no theoretical guarantees are provided about the learning performance. Privacy-preserving machine learning papers often analyze both the privacy (in the worst case, DP setting) and the learning performance (often under different assumptions). Since the learning performance might depend on the choice of architecture; future experimentation is encouraged, even using the same data sets, with different architectures. If this will not be added, then please justify the choice of architecture used, and/or clarify what can be generalised about the observed learning performance.
Another caveat is that the reported epsilons are not those that can be privately released; the authors note that their technique for doing so would change the resulting epsilon. However this would need to be resolved in order to have a meaningful comparison to the epsilon-delta values reported in related work.
Finally, as has been acknowledged in the paper, the present approach may not work on other natural data types. Experiments on other data sets is strongly encouraged.
Also, please cite the data sets used.

Text 2: Prototypical negative review from the ICLR review corpus
Model reject (ICLR17_R1_R203, Rating 5/10, Confidence 4/5)
ICLR 2017 conference AnonReviewer1
20 Dec 2016 ICLR 2017 conference official review
Rating: 5: Marginally below acceptance threshold
Review: This paper proposes a method for transfer learning, i.e. leveraging a network trained on some original task A in learning a new task B, which not only improves performance on the new task B, but also tries to avoid degradation in performance on A. The general idea is based on encouraging a model trained on A, while training on the new task B, to match fake targets produced by the model itself but when it is trained only on the original task A.
Experiments show that this method can help in improving the result on task B, and is better than other baselines, including standard fine-tuning.
General comments/questions:
- As far as I can tell, there is no experimental result supporting the claim that your model still performs well on the original task. All experiments show that you can improve on the new task only.
- The introduction makes a strong statements [sic] about the distilling logical rule engine into a neural network, which I find a bit misleading. The approach in the paper is not specific to transferring from logical rules (as stated in the Sec 2) and is simply relying on the rule engine to provide labels for unlabelled data.
- One of the obvious baselines to compare with your approach is standard multi-task learning on both tasks A and B together. That is, you train the model from scratch on both tasks simultaneously (which sharing parameters). It is not clear this is the same as what is referred to in Sec. 8 as "joint training". Can you please explain more clearly what you refer to as joint training?
- Why can't we find the same baselines in both Table 2 and Table 3? For example Table 2 is missing "joint training", and Table 3 is missing GRU trained on the target task.
- While the idea is presented as a general method for transfer learning, experiments are focused on one domain (sentiment analysis on SemEval task). I think that either experiments should include applying the idea on at least one other different domain, or the writing of the paper should be modified to make the focus more specific to this domain/task.
Writing comments
- The writing of the paper in general needs some improvement, but more specifically in the experiment section, where experiment setting and baselines should be explained more concisely.
- Ensemble methodology paragraph does not fit the flow of the paper. I would rather explain it in the experiments section, rather than including it as part of your approach.
- Table 1 seems like reporting cross-validation results, and I do not think is very informative to general reader..

6. Outlook

new technical affordancies/opportunities → explore new practices with old tools?
electronic data collection to analyse practices to learn passively and actively

(functional) linguistic concepts like politeness, concessives, mitigation ...
correlate with non-linguistic concepts like face, interaction, ...
but
even reviewers have to learn to cooperate openly and transparently, e.g.
ICRL even guide their readers to "great in-depth resources on reviewing" with programmatic titles like "Criticising with Kindness" or "Mistakes Reviewers Make"
(https://iclr.cc/Conferences/2020/ReviewerGuide, 01/04/20).
The link to the "Last minute reviewing advice" even focusses on multiple-reviews ICLR style.

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and fill in the questions there.

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