

Computational Approach to Recognizing Wordplay in Jokes

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Abstract. With advancing developments of artificial intelligence, humor researchers have begun to look at approaches for computational humor. Although there appears to be no complete computational model for recognizing verbally expressed humor, it may be possible to recognize jokes based on statistical language recognition techniques. This paper describes an investigation into computational humor recognition. It considers a restricted set of all possible jokes that have wordplay as a component. The original phrase and the complimentary wordplay have two different scripts that overlap in the setup of the joke. The method uses Raskin's Semantic Theory of Verbal Humor for its theoretical foundation. The algorithm deployed learns statistical patterns of text in N-grams and provides a heuristic focus for a location of where wordplay may or may not occur. It then discovers a possible wordplay; and, using the N-gram model determines if a found wordplay transforms the text into a joke.