A Statistical Approach for Quantifying Group Difference in Topic Distributions Using Clinical Discourse Samples

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Outline of this presentation

1. Motivation
2. Describe a statistical approach for explore and quantify topic distributions captured by topic models
3. Demonstrate its application using LDA and 2 corpora
    - 20Newsgroups — Usenet posts from different topics
    - Clinical corpus — Language samples of Autistic* and Typically Developing (TD) children

* We are using identity-first language (i.e., Autistic children) here instead of person-first language (i.e., children with Autism) as the former is the current preference among many Autistic individuals (Brown, n.d.).

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- Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA; Blei et al., 2003)
  - Capture and quantify topic distributions for a collection of language samples

Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA)

- LDA is a unsupervised, generative probabilistic model that is used on a corpus of text documents to model each document as a finite mixture over k topics
- Each document
  - Treated as a bag-of-words
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  - $k \times V$ topic-word matrix (β) — where V is total number of unique words across entire corpus

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Statistical Approach (1 of 3)

- Document-topic matrix, θ
  - Each row = single document
  - Each column = single topic
- The elements in θ are the estimated proportion of words in a document that were generated by a given topic

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- *To our knowledge, a statistical method for comparing topic distribution vectors between groups of documents has not yet been proposed*

Statistical Approach (2 of 3)

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- Isometric logratio (ILR) transformation (Egozcue et al., 2003)
  - ILR: $S^D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{D-1}$
  - Maps compositional data from its original sample space (D-part simplex) into real space ($D - 1$ Euclidean space) with all metric properties preserved
  - After the transformation, we are able to use classical multivariate analysis tools

Statistical Approach (3 of 3)

- Multivariate Analysis of Means (MANOVA)
  - Compares multivariate sample means
  - Requires a number of statistical assumptions to be met before using (described in more detail in the paper)
  - Examines effect of one discrete, independent variable on multiple dependent variables
    - Independent variable —> topic label // diagnostic group
    - Dependent variables —> topic distribution probabilities in the document-topic distribution matrix created by LDA, $\theta_{i,1}, \theta_{i,2}, \ldots, \theta_{i,k-1}$ where $i = 1,2,\ldots,M$

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- After MANOVA, calculate effect size
  - Partial eta-squared (η^2)
  - What proportion of the variance of the linear combination of topics can be explained by the independent variable

Statistical Approach

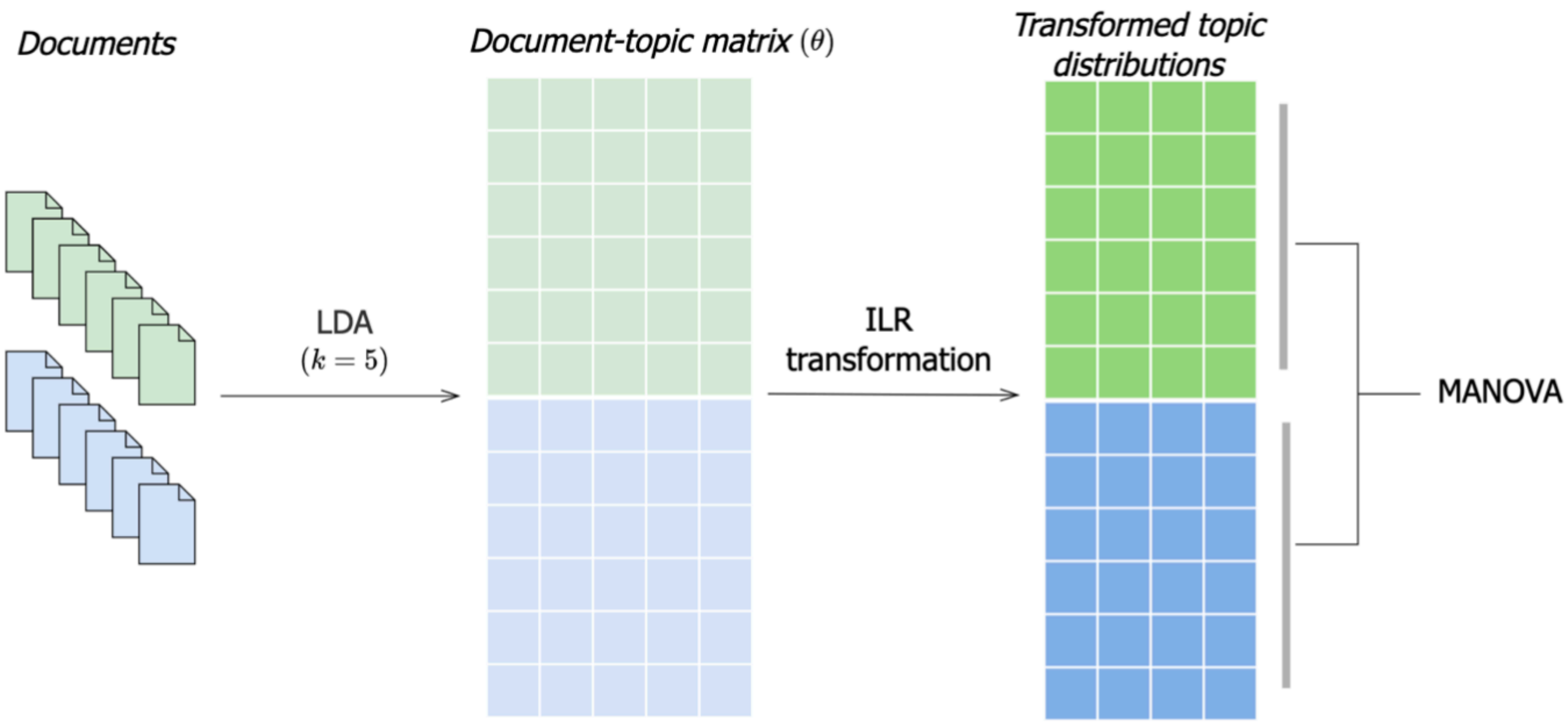

Figure 1: Example workflow for the described statistical approach described to explore and quantify group differences in topic distributions captured by topic models.

20NewsGroups (1 of 3)

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- Widely used for text classification and analysis

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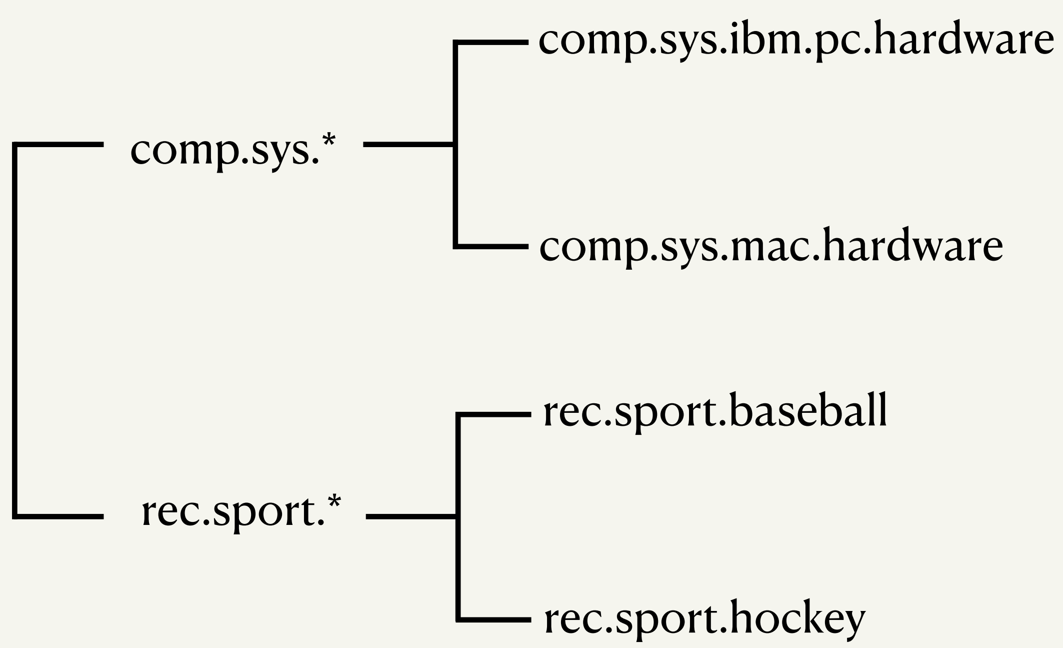
- Fit a single LDA model with a k value of 20
- Transformed topic distribution vectors using ILR transformation
- Checked MANOVA assumptions (detailed in paper)
- Performed 7 MANOVA tests

20NewsGroups (2 of 3)



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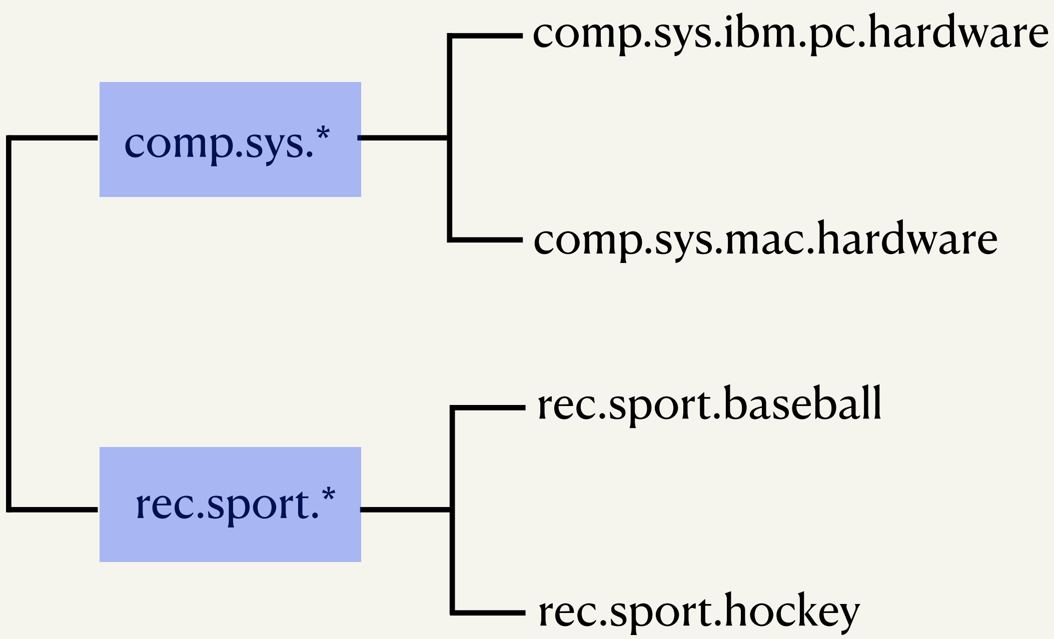

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   Hypothesis: topic distributions will be very different

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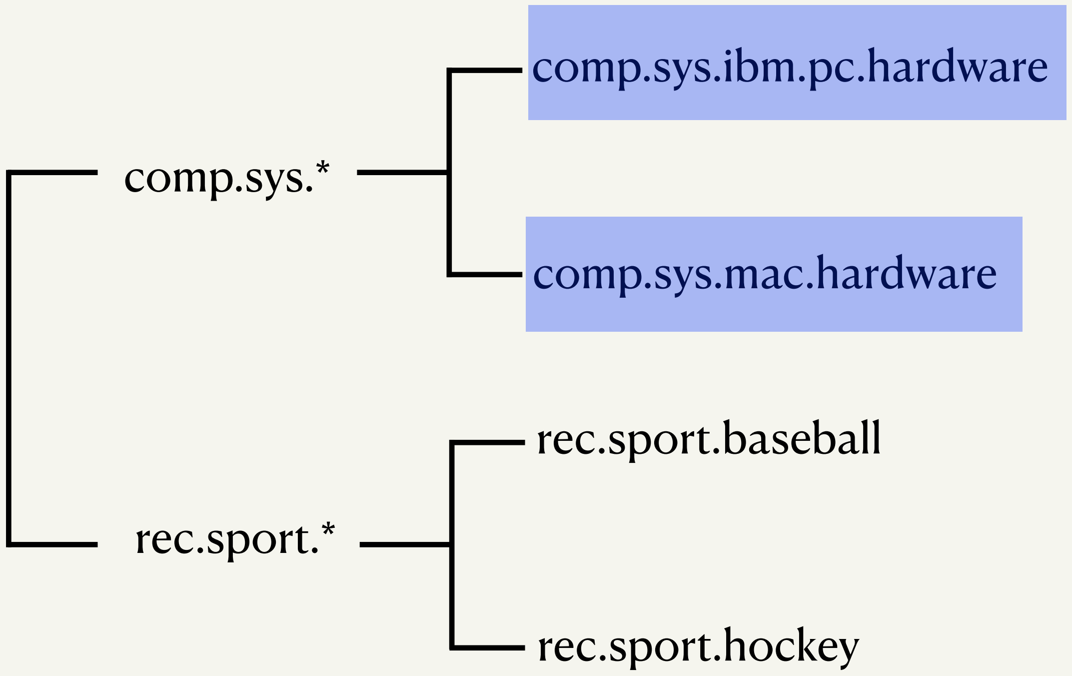

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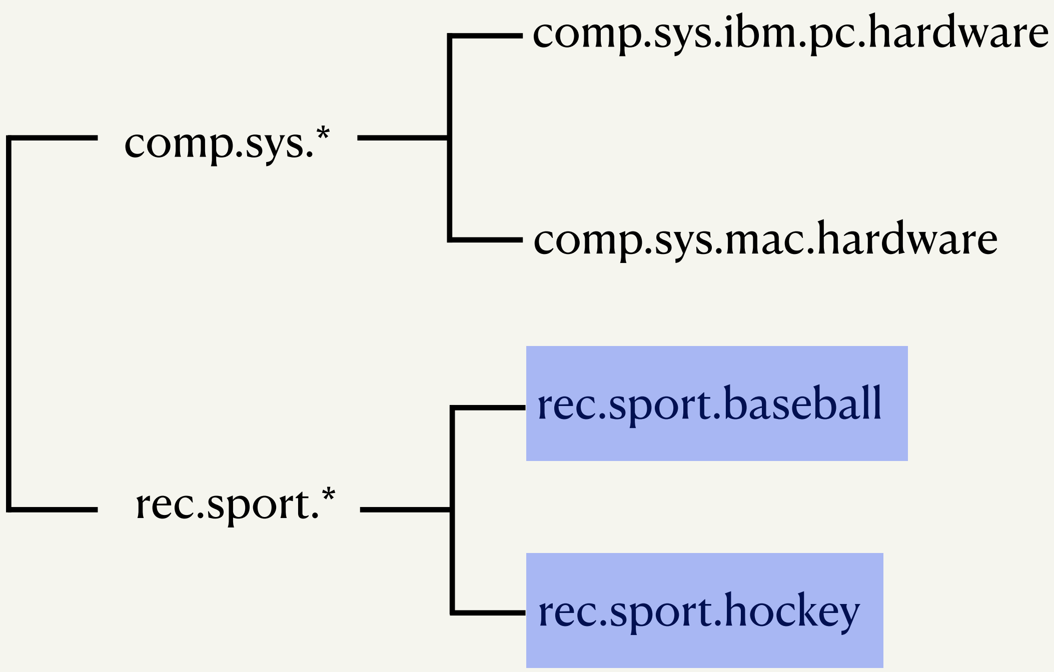

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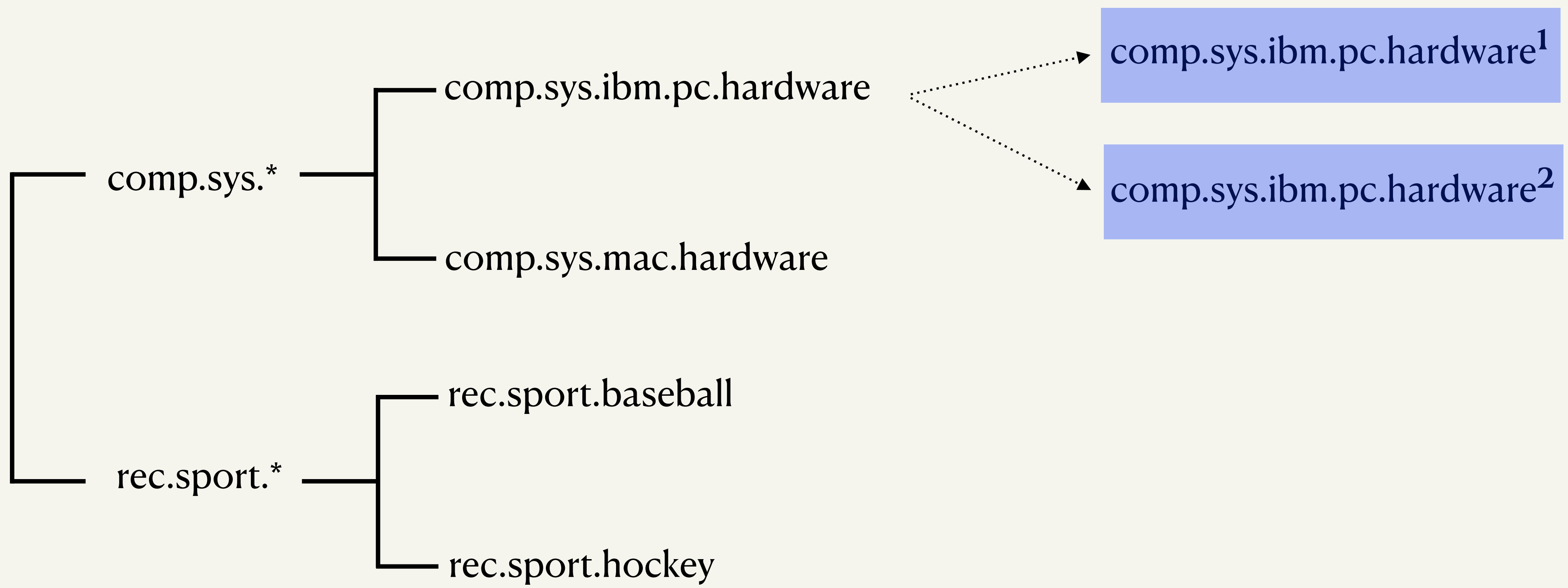

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3. Within a single topic (x4)

   Hypothesis: no difference between topic distributions

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Table 2: *20Newsgroups*, comparison of LDA topic distribution vectors between and within topics.

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rec.sport.baseball	423	1	0.571	62.722	19	895	<0.001	0.57
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rec.sport.baseball	206	1	0.041	0.903	19	403	0.579	0.04
"	217							
rec.sport.hockey	247	1	0.029	0.738	19	472	0.780	0.03
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Clinical corpus (1 of 3)

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder
  - Social communication difficulties, such as problems with topic maintenance
- Sample of 117 ASD and 65 Typically Developing (TD) children, 4 to 15 years old
  - Transcribed dialogues between child and examiner during conversation activities in the ADOS

ADOS = Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule

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- Sample of 117 ASD and 65 Typically Developing (TD) children, 4 to 15 years old
  - Transcribed dialogues between child and examiner during conversation activities in the ADOS
- Compare topic distributions in two ways, (1) within child speech (2) within examiner speech
  - For child speech, expect topic distribution vectors of ASD group to be different from those of their TD peers
  - For examiner speech, do not expect topic distributions to differ between ASD and TD groups

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- Fit two separate LDA models: one containing child speech and one containing examiner speech
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- k of 20 used for both models
  - Informed by prior knowledge of type and quantity of questions asked
- MANOVA tests
  - Independent variable = diagnosis (ASD, TD)
  - Dependent variables = topic probability values from the document-topic vectors
  - Null hypothesis: multivariate means of ASD and TD groups are equal

Clinical corpus — Results

		df	Pillai	approx. F	df_1	df_2	p	partial η^2
Emotions	dx	1	0.093	0.941	19	175	0.5334	0.09
Social	dx	1	0.188	2.055	19	169	0.0083	0.19
Friends	dx	1	0.131	1.388	19	175	0.1381	0.13
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Table 3: Child speech, comparison of LDA topic distribution vectors between ASD and TD groups.

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Table 3: Child speech, comparison of LDA topic distribution vectors between ASD and TD groups.

2. Examiner speech

		df	Pillai	approx. F	df_1	df_2	p	partial η^2
Emotions	dx	1	0.195	2.235	19	175	0.0035	0.20
Social	dx	1	0.296	3.858	19	174	<0.001	0.30
Friends	dx	1	0.165	1.833	19	176	0.0224	0.17
Loneliness	dx	1	0.151	1.557	19	167	0.0726	0.15

Table 4: Examiner speech, comparison of LDA topic distribution vectors between ASD and TD groups.

Future work

- Approach is not restricted to LDA
  - Method can be extended to any topic modeling algorithm that outputs a topic distribution that can be treated as a composition and satisfies the assumption for MANOVA
- Could include additional independent variables by using multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA)
  - For the clinical corpus, participant age, sex, and IQ

Thank you

A Statistical Approach for Quantifying Group Difference in Topic Distributions Using Clinical Discourse Samples

Grace O. Lawley, Peter A. Heeman, Jill K. Dolata, Eric Fombonne, Steven Bedrick

Github repo: https://github.com/gracelawley/lawley-sigdial-2023

I am expecting to graduate by the end of 2023 and am on the job market!

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