Detecting Changes in Coherence in Trauma Narratives Using Latent Semantic Analysis

Rose Bono
Virginia Commonwealth University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/uresposters

© The Author(s)

Downloaded from
http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/uresposters/87

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Research Posters by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.
Introduction

When people repeatedly write about a traumatic event, their physical and mental health improve. Why? Perhaps people cognitively process the trauma between writing sessions. We can look at the text of these narratives to explore this. One quantitative method of examining meaning in text is Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA), a program that can score the coherence of a given document.

This project examines how coherence changes over time in neutral versus trauma narratives using LSA.

Method

246 undergraduates wrote about a traumatic event or their daily activities for twenty minutes on 3 separate days. Participants were also given stimulus, response, or no training. The resulting narratives were submitted to LSA for coherence analysis, and an ANOVA tested the differences between groups.

Results

Neutral narratives were more coherent than trauma narratives overall, but from the first session to the third session, neutral narratives decreased while trauma narratives increased in coherence.

Select References


Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Scott Vrana for guiding me through this thesis, and the UROP Summer Fellowship Program for supporting this project.