6C-05

言語スタイルのオンラインクチコミ有効性への影響に関する実証研究

馮　昕†

慶應義塾大学商学研究科†

Introduction

Although a great deal of research has demonstrated the determinants of eWOM effectiveness, most of it concentrates on *what* opinions have been conveyed as opposed to *how* such opinions are conveyed. However, as Hosman (2002) mentions, language use has a substantial impact on persuasion: the specific words used to declare opinions and evaluations are important. Following recent research in social psychology theorizing that linguistic styles are likely to shape the impact of information contained in reviews, marketing researchers have begun to examine the determinants of eWOM effectiveness from a linguistic perspective. However, one disadvantage of these eWOM studies from a linguistic perspective is that few of the language attributes they considered could reflect the intrinsic characteristics of the reviewer. In this study, I investigate the effect of the reviewer's analytical thinking and opinion leadership, which are reflected in the reviewer's self-confidence and ability to organize words. Since many consumers write online product reviews even though they have not experienced the product, I also take into account the moderating effect of review authenticity by referring to several psychological linguistic studies.

Methodology

This article aims to clarify the determinants of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) effectiveness from a social linguistic approach. In particular, the author concentrates on two kinds of language styles (analytical thinking and opinion leadership) in online consumer reviews and tests their perceived helpfulness.

In this study, I measured analytical thinking, opinion leadership by applying a content analysis of reviews using the linguistic inquiry and word count (LIWC) program created by Pennebaker, Booth, and Francis (available on the LIWC website [liwc.net]). This software first calculates the linguistic dimensions of the text (e.g., measures the proportion of function words) and then computes the analytical thinking level based on CDI (Pennebaker et al. 2014), opinion leadership based on the findings of Kacewicz et al. (2013), and authenticity based on the insights of Newman et al. (2003). The three variables are derived from linguistic lab studies and converted to percentiles based on standardized scores from large comparison samples. However, this program has two disadvantages. First, the algorithm details of these three variables are non-transparent due to commercial privacy. Second, the original algorithms are limited to the English language.

Furthermore, this study measures eWOM effectiveness by the perceived helpfulness of the review. On Amazon.com, consumers can evaluate posted product reviews: if they think a review is

helpful, they can click the 'Yes' button at the bottom of the review. This measurement can reflect eWOM effectiveness directly.

Results

The main findings indicate that reviews written in an analytical mode are more helpful than those written in a personal narrative mode. However, the marginal improvement in effectiveness decreases as the use of analytical language increases. Furthermore, reviews that reflect reviewers' high self-confidence are more helpful. Taken together, these findings indicate retailers should encourage not only consumers with great product expertise but also consumers who use analytical language with high self-confidence to describe their experiences.

Reference

Hosman, Lawrence A. 2002. "Language and persuasion." In *The Persuasion Handbook: Developments in Theory and Practice*, edited by James Dillard and Michael Pfau, 371-390. Singapore: Sage Publications, Inc.

Kacewicz, Ewa, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser. 2013. "Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies." Journal of Language and Social Psychology 33 (2): 125-143.

Newman, Matthew L., James W. Pennebaker, Diane S. Berry, and Jane M. Richards. 2003. "Lying Words: Predicting Deception from Linguistic Styles." Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 29 (5): 665-675.

Pennebaker, James W., Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne, and David I. Beaver. 2014. "When Small Words Foretell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays." PLOS ONE 9 (12)

How language style shapes word of mouth's effectiveness
† Feng Xin, Graduate School of Business and Commerce, Keio University