The Performance of Character: Digital Models for Gendered Speech in Romantic Literature

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Although the identification of gendered speech in fiction has long been a goal of Digital Humanities research, efforts thus far have predominately focused on detecting word patterns associated with an author’s gender and assigning writing to one of two binary poles, male or female. In this project, I look instead at the spectrum of gender performance through literary dialogue. Using new methods of quantitative textual analysis, I explore how authors of different genders voice female or male characters differently and the ways in which these gendered performances reflect or resist the dominant social codes of the early nineteenth-century.

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