Emotional States in Clickbait Headlines

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INTRODUCTION

Clickbait is a social media nuisance that can spread misinformation and malware.

The Time I Spent On A Commercial Whaling Ship Totally Changed My Perspective On The World clckhl.co/qbpK0lP
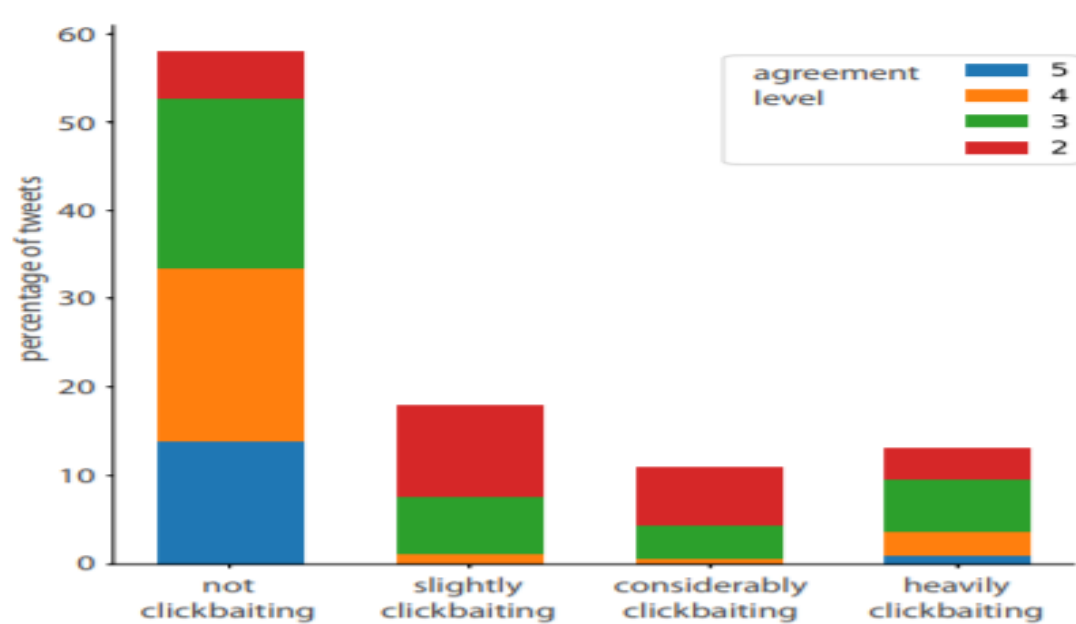

Existing clickbait **classifiers** don't address the **emotional states** that distinguish clickbait headlines from other news.

DATA

- Webis-Clickbait Corpus
  - 19,538 tweets, 2016-2017

METHODS

- Related emotional states to measurable linguistic features.
- Counted features using **L**inguistic **I**nquiry and **W**ord **C**ount tool.

FEATURES

Curiosity Gap
- Forward-Reference

This Picture Proves How Much Billie Eilish Actually Loves Justin Bieber

This Picture Proves How Much Billie Eilish Actually Loves Justin Bieber
In case it wasn't clear.
buzzfeed.com

Sensemaking
- Listicles

17 People Who've Basically Declared War On Their Roommates

Roommate has date coming by later and asked me to clean bc he's not home. So I made a Princess D shrine in his room
17 Roommate Pranks That Are So Good They're Borderline Evil
Might as well live alone.
buzzfeed.com

Engagement
- Direct Reference

This Italian City's Orange-Sized Hailstones Will Freak You Out And Make You Never Want To Leave Your House


This Italian City's Orange-Sized Hailstones Will Freak You Out And Make You ...
People are calling them "ice bullets."
buzzfeed.com

RESULTS

- Features are more prevalent in clickbait than non-clickbait.
- All features correlate (moderate-strong) with clickbaitness score. ($p << 0.05$)

DISCUSSION

- Features are hard to capture with word counts alone.
- More psychological dimensions should be considered.
- Clickbait is hard to define.

FUTURE WORK

- Behavioral Studies
  - Refine definition of clickbait.
  - Determine whether awareness of psychological manipulation affects clicking habits.
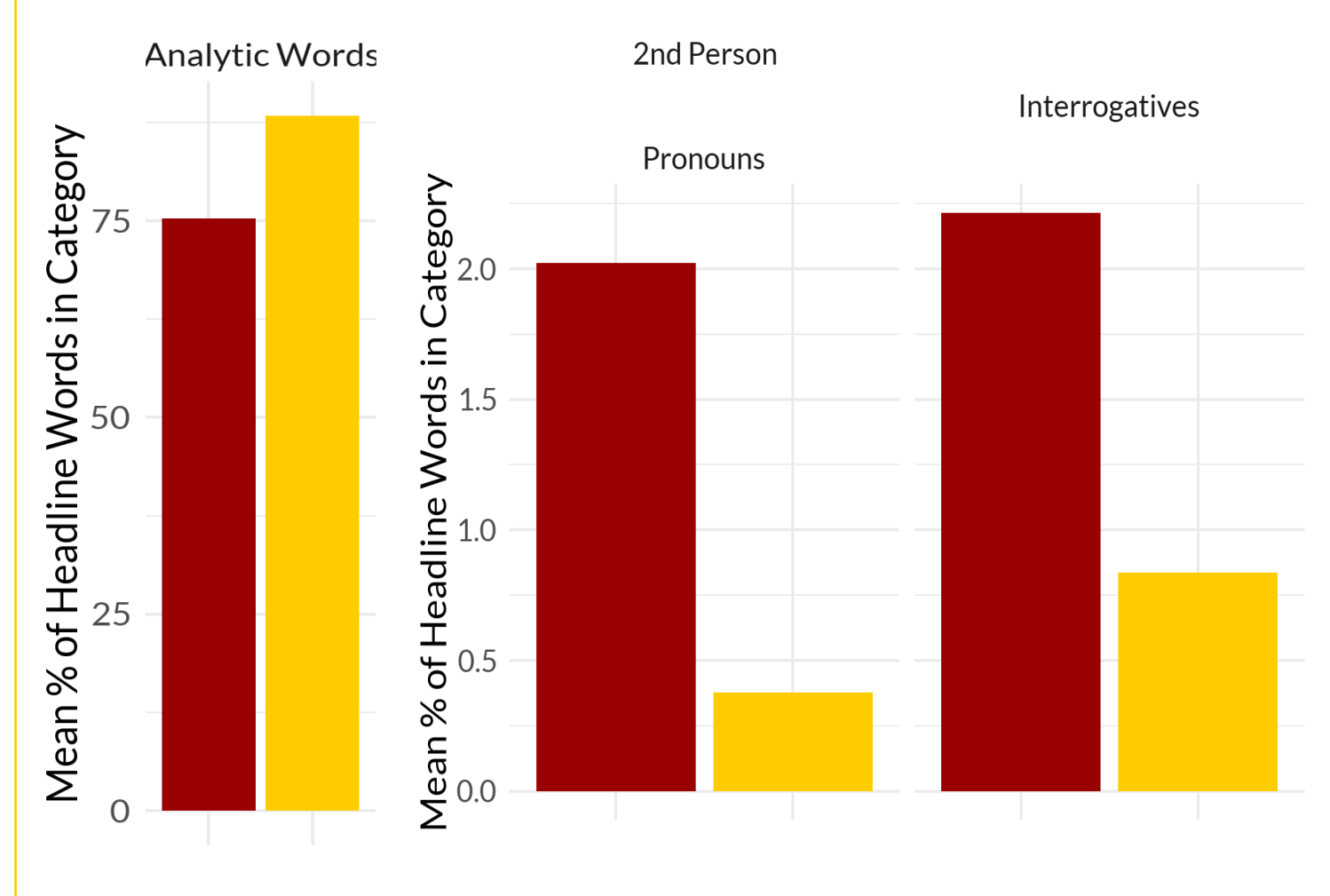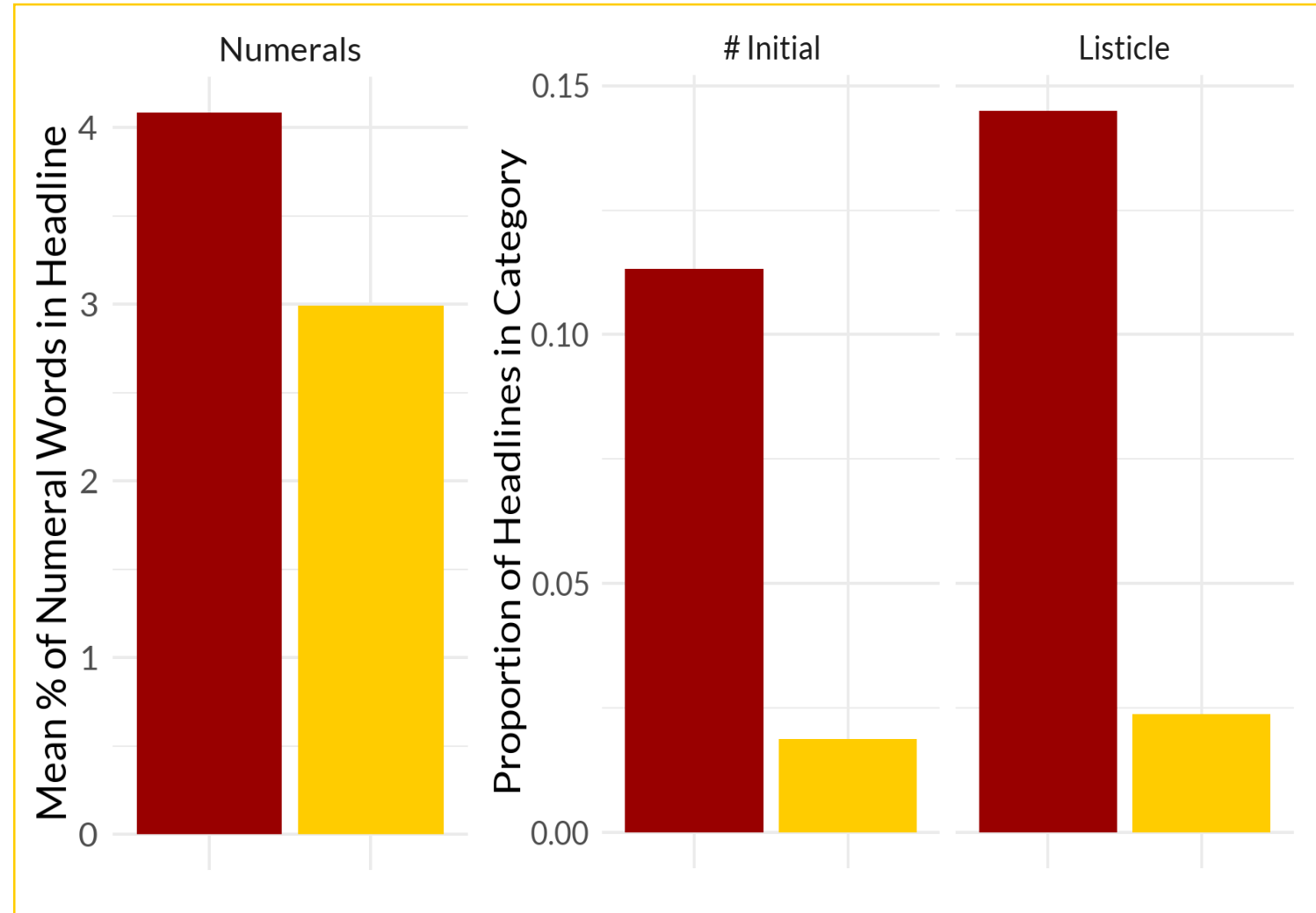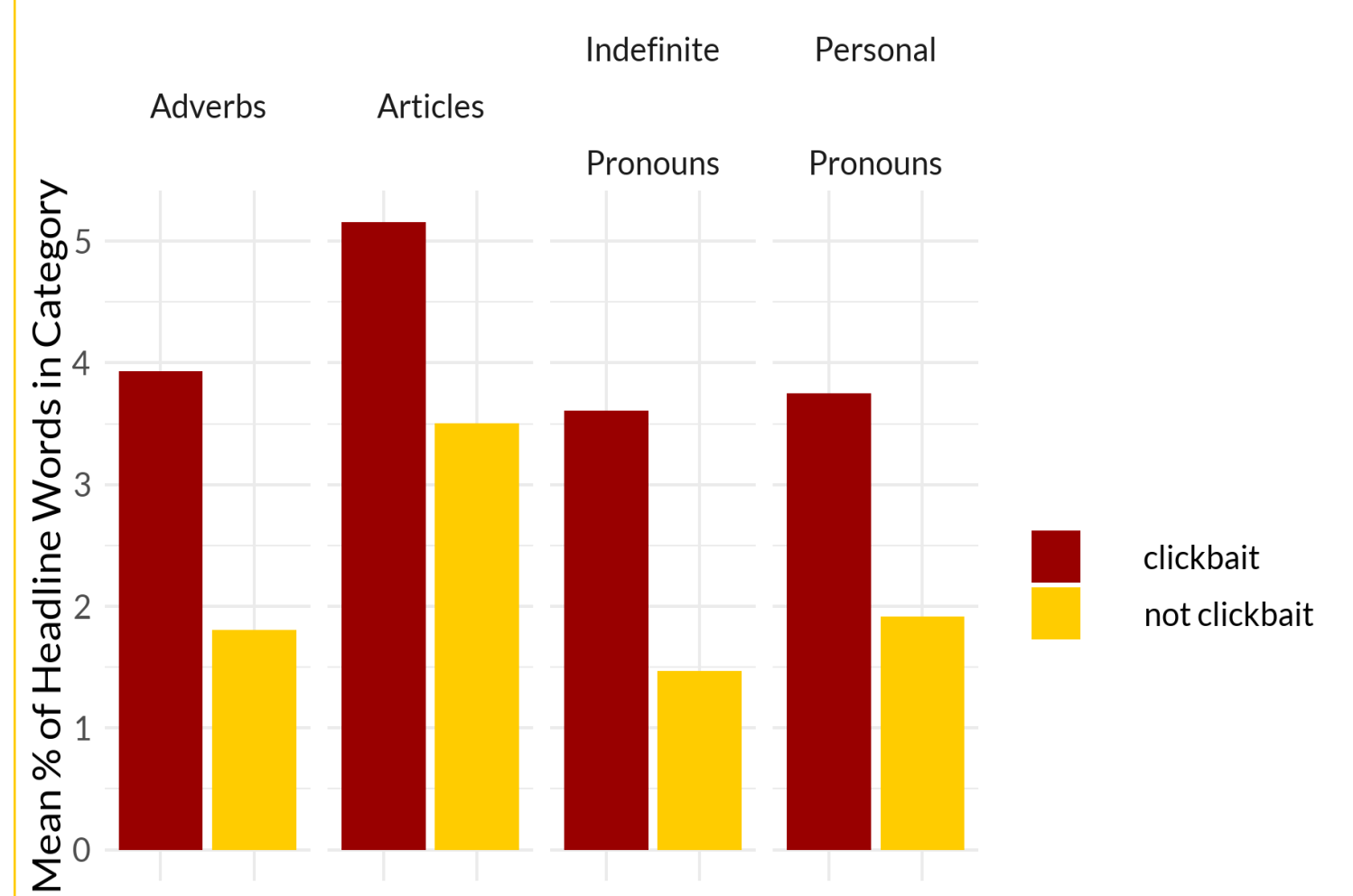
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