The Faculty of Language: What Is It, Who Has It, and How Did It Evolve?

This paper was rather hard to read and understand for me. While I was reading this paper, I felt surprised when monkeys have no evidence of imitating the visual mediation, but chimpanzees are little bit better. What was interesting to me was, whenever we go to the zoo or see the monkey, they tend to move like human and also imitating human. Also, with evolution theory, it appears that humans have been evolved from monkey, where humans are good at imitating what they see. However, this paper, the authors put the experimental result of actually monkeys were not good at imitating what they see. It was quite fascinating to know about this result. But what was interesting to see was the dolphins where dolphins and humans are good at imitating multiple modalities. Whenever I see the dolphins from the zoo or the dolphin shows at the aquarium it seems to be true that the dolphins are quick learners and actually good at imitation.

Also it was interesting to see the result that how come humans are the only ones that actually use recursion to create limitless system of communication. It appears that the animals in the other hand, is not fully using the ability to recurs to communicate with other animals whereas the humans does. But like in the chimpanzee and monkey cases, even though the humans tentatively teach the monkeys and chimpanzee to imitate the visual mediation, they couldn’t follow up or at least imitate the what humans do. Humans most likely learn when they tentatively study and learn from their mistakes from the past. However, it seems like the animals doesn’t have that capability.

Another thing that would be interesting to see is how would the animals behave if they were to imitate the when humans are being socialize. Would they try to imitate what humans do? Or would they just see once and forget? Or would they just not follow up. I thought as a mean of communication, rather than just one animal to test the communication ability, it would be actually interesting to see the mass group communication amongst the animals of same type. Also reading this paper reminds me was the interesting research done by the chameleon. Where the reason for chameleon to change their color was similar to humans. When we thought when chameleons change their skin color was due to camouflage. However, with this research that was done about a year ago, if there are multiple chameleons in the same location, there is always one chameleon which changes the skin color. The reason behind it was it wanted to fool infront of the other chameleons like the humans who tentatively try to joke or make fool out of themselves when there are multiple of people. Thus, it would be interesting to see how actually if there are multiple of same species of animals in one location, would their communication improve and would their ability to imitate visual modalities would improve?
Social Catalyst

Throughout this paper, I felt that interesting about the term social catalyst where Karrie shows multiple of projects and identify the what is the social catalyst in each of the project. I felt it was interesting to see the term social catalyst in a sense that it can be used as an evaluation of what make it more interacted to the users.

One of the project that I liked about from Karrie’s paper was the tele-mural project. It was interesting to see based on the interaction within the mural space, the users can see themselves, from the silhouette to photorealistic images. Based on number of participants in the space, it will show the participants. I think the idea of fading silhouette to real image was interesting and a good tool for analyzing the group conversation and how people can interact more in the same virtual space. By fading the silhouette people know that their interaction level is low so that they can participate more. Plus, while they are in the tele-mural space, it also shows their enthusiasm to stay up with people from remote location and give incentive by show the real image and penalty for showing the silhouette.

Another project that interested me was the visiphone. I think it was interesting to see the social catalyst as the shape of the dome. I liked the idea of shape of the dome in a sense that it can be seen from multiple angles from various distances. If it was in the shape of the rectangle or the triangular and etc, it will be difficult for the users to see the different angles of the visualization. Also, the simpler the graphics would enhance the comprehension of the users about the visualization. It taught me that if we want something to let the others see and understand easily it would be important that it is something we can make the users to comprehend easily with simple or yet easy to understand interface or visualization.

Another portion of Karrie’s paper that I liked was the Carousel by replicating the static space in the media, and display the actual scene into that static location to show what was really taken in the movie. It showed how the alignment of the video and the replication of the static room can also show similar visual effect as the images that can be seen in the real video. I liked how they were trying to show that effect with real scene with the video to display. Also it is kind of funny to see the ghostly effect of the real images that was grabbed rather than actually the integrated scene of the replicated space and the video.
Primates on Facebook

I agree with the economists point that even though there are average of 120 “friends” in the facebook, the only number that we can frequently interact is very small and stable. For example, I don’t have many friends in the facebook because I tend to keep my social network with people I know personally or have met previously. But even with this, there are only few people that I talk or send message or receive message from. Also for the posting, only the friends that I know better tend me write a post inside my facebook wall. I definitely agree with the The Economist’s point that even though there are many friends inside facebook, but the only limited number keeps in touch and maintain the stable relationship within the social network.

But I’m not sure about the number 150 is the limit that our brains allow for stable network. It might be true that just thinking, we can’t think 150 at the time but while we are reading over the list of friends, we remember the people and why we are being friend or known to each other. So I think just limiting the number of people for stable network is not a good idea and also limiting our capability for the social network. But I agree with The Economist’s point that “broadcasting their lives to an outer tier of acquaintances who aren’t necessarily inside the Dunbar circle.” As they mentioned in the article, the “friends” that we can truly speak about the important and personal matter is very limited. One day, I can’t just say personal matter to a friend that I can’t trust or hasn’t talk much. But for a friend that I have been knowing for several years and consistently keep in touch, I can talk personal matters to him and I would feel more comfortable.

I think matter of how to maintain a social network depends on the user and that’s something that no one can argue about. Because to some extents, people like me tend to talk more about my stuffs to “friends” that I know better and have known for many years. But to some other people, they want to meet people and keep their relationship through online. So I think the issue with social networking really depends on the users. People like me wants to keep my social networking with people I have met personally and talk to in face-to-face, but to other people, they want to maintain their friendship with others by meeting them in the Internet and maintain their relationship.
Maintained Relationships on Facebook

In this article, I agree with the Facebook’s point that the technology can help to maintain the relationship amongst the people. Without a doubt, through the Internet, people can maintain their relationship through online. For example, I have a friend who is living in Brazil. By the instant messenger or through Orkut, I can still keep in touch with him even though I don’t call him or meet him personally. And as the facebook data team said in the article, technologies like News Feed and RSS can even help to maintain the relationship amongst the users by just clicking their icons. I think the number that was discussed in *The Economist* and also the way they used the anthropologist is not adequate to our presence time. Because the communication amongst the people before then and today is quite different. With current technology and even the technology that is forth coming, it can even be easier to maintain the friendship and maintain the relationship. My friends for example, know my birthday or my current status based on the updates I put in the facebook. This is definitely the faster communication method to spread to my friends compared to emails and phones and etc.

But one thing that I had in my mind was what is the procedure to make the friend and start the relationship. It is true that we can maintain our relationship and even further expand our social network with current technology. But what is the definition of our social network? As I wrote in the economist’s article, keeping the circle of my social network depends on the users. People like me want to maintain my network with people that I know of and also want to sustain the relationship by online or meeting with them personally. But what about the friends in my facebook or orkut account that I have never met before and just interacting with them online. I don’t know if I can say that it’s a true relationship but it tends that if I meet people online and while we were talking and actually actively interact in online. However, after I met them, it is rather the person stops contacting me or I stop after I see them and sometimes in the best case, maintain our relationship.

It seems like the indirect approach of actually seeing the people in our social network might question *The Economist* about the breadth of people’s network. Maybe considering the two approach might be helpful. For example, instead of just watching the news about the friend by RSS and News Feed, it might be interesting if they can post an message or something that can tell the user that the person only in the situation that the viewer has agreed upon. Let’s say that I have seen the recent picture of my friend in the facebook, but want to inform to my friend that I have saw the picture. Then instead of writing the post, the facebook can send a message or inform to my friend that I have seen his/her recent picture. Or if I don’t want my friend to know then choose the option of not telling him/her. I think the option of maintain the relationship directly or indirectly would help to actually how I maintain my relationship with my friend.