Quantitative analysis of evolution and role behaviour in usenet groups

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A number of usenet groups have a long history where individual users are found to participate over long time ranges. These groups therefore offer the possibility to test hypotheses like e.g .preferential attachment scenarios on such time scales. Our focus is in particular on developing quantitative indicators for the type of discussion (e.g. technical or philosophical) and the self-defined roles of the participants. Analysing technical discussions we identify time evolving network motives that describe fbexpertfb members who answer many questions while in fbphilosophicalfb discussions some members occur who initiate a multitude of discussions. Developing indicators for these roles we observe quantitatively how they may evolve and may change with time.