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978-0-521-83657-9 - The Text Mining Handbook: Advanced Approaches in Analyzing Unstructured Data

Ronen Feldman and James Sanger

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The Text Mining Handbook

Text mining is a new and exciting area of computer science research that tries to solve the crisis of information overload by combining techniques from data mining, machine learning, natural language processing, information retrieval, and knowledge management. Similarly, link detection – a rapidly evolving approach to the analysis of text that shares and builds on many of the key elements of text mining – also provides new tools for people to better leverage their burgeoning textual data resources. Link detection relies on a process of building up networks of interconnected objects through various relationships in order to discover patterns and trends. The main tasks of link detection are to extract, discover, and link together sparse evidence from vast amounts of data sources, to represent and evaluate the significance of the related evidence, and to learn patterns to guide the extraction, discovery, and linkage of entities.

The Text Mining Handbook presents a comprehensive discussion of the state of the art in text mining and link detection. In addition to providing an in-depth examination of core text mining and link detection algorithms and operations, the work examines advanced preprocessing techniques, knowledge representation considerations, and visualization approaches. Finally, the book explores current real-world, mission-critical applications of text mining and link detection in such varied fields as corporate finance business intelligence, genomics research, and counterterrorism activities.

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Advanced Approaches in
Analyzing Unstructured Data

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In loving memory of my father, Issac Feldman

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page x</i>
I. Introduction to Text Mining	1
I.1 Defining Text Mining	1
I.2 General Architecture of Text Mining Systems	13
II. Core Text Mining Operations	19
II.1 Core Text Mining Operations	19
II.2 Using Background Knowledge for Text Mining	41
II.3 Text Mining Query Languages	51
III. Text Mining Preprocessing Techniques	57
III.1 Task-Oriented Approaches	58
III.2 Further Reading	62
IV. Categorization	64
IV.1 Applications of Text Categorization	65
IV.2 Definition of the Problem	66
IV.3 Document Representation	68
IV.4 Knowledge Engineering Approach to TC	70
IV.5 Machine Learning Approach to TC	70
IV.6 Using Unlabeled Data to Improve Classification	78
IV.7 Evaluation of Text Classifiers	79
IV.8 Citations and Notes	80
V. Clustering	82
V.1 Clustering Tasks in Text Analysis	82
V.2 The General Clustering Problem	84
V.3 Clustering Algorithms	85
V.4 Clustering of Textual Data	88
V.5 Citations and Notes	92

viii **Contents**

VI. Information Extraction	94
VI.1 Introduction to Information Extraction	94
VI.2 Historical Evolution of IE: The Message Understanding Conferences and Tipster	96
VI.3 IE Examples	101
VI.4 Architecture of IE Systems	104
VI.5 Anaphora Resolution	109
VI.6 Inductive Algorithms for IE	119
VI.7 Structural IE	122
VI.8 Further Reading	129
VII. Probabilistic Models for Information Extraction	131
VII.1 Hidden Markov Models	131
VII.2 Stochastic Context-Free Grammars	137
VII.3 Maximal Entropy Modeling	138
VII.4 Maximal Entropy Markov Models	140
VII.5 Conditional Random Fields	142
VII.6 Further Reading	145
VIII. Preprocessing Applications Using Probabilistic and Hybrid Approaches	146
VIII.1 Applications of HMM to Textual Analysis	146
VIII.2 Using MEMM for Information Extraction	152
VIII.3 Applications of CRFs to Textual Analysis	153
VIII.4 TEG: Using SCFG Rules for Hybrid Statistical–Knowledge-Based IE	155
VIII.5 Bootstrapping	166
VIII.6 Further Reading	175
IX. Presentation-Layer Considerations for Browsing and Query Refinement	177
IX.1 Browsing	177
IX.2 Accessing Constraints and Simple Specification Filters at the Presentation Layer	185
IX.3 Accessing the Underlying Query Language	186
IX.4 Citations and Notes	187
X. Visualization Approaches	189
X.1 Introduction	189
X.2 Architectural Considerations	192
X.3 Common Visualization Approaches for Text Mining	194
X.4 Visualization Techniques in Link Analysis	225
X.5 Real-World Example: The Document Explorer System	235
XI. Link Analysis	244
XI.1 Preliminaries	244

	Contents	ix
XI.2 Automatic Layout of Networks	246	
XI.3 Paths and Cycles in Graphs	250	
XI.4 Centrality	251	
XI.5 Partitioning of Networks	259	
XI.6 Pattern Matching in Networks	272	
XI.7 Software Packages for Link Analysis	273	
XI.8 Citations and Notes	274	
XII. Text Mining Applications	275	
XII.1 General Considerations	276	
XII.2 Corporate Finance: Mining Industry Literature for Business Intelligence	281	
XII.3 A “Horizontal” Text Mining Application: Patent Analysis Solution Leveraging a Commercial Text Analytics Platform	297	
XII.4 Life Sciences Research: Mining Biological Pathway Information with GeneWays	309	
Appendix A: DIAL: A Dedicated Information Extraction Language for Text Mining	317	
A.1 What Is the DIAL Language?	317	
A.2 Information Extraction in the DIAL Environment	318	
A.3 Text Tokenization	320	
A.4 Concept and Rule Structure	320	
A.5 Pattern Matching	322	
A.6 Pattern Elements	323	
A.7 Rule Constraints	327	
A.8 Concept Guards	328	
A.9 Complete DIAL Examples	329	
<i>Bibliography</i>	337	
<i>Index</i>	391	

Preface

The information age has made it easy to store large amounts of data. The proliferation of documents available on the Web, on corporate intranets, on news wires, and elsewhere is overwhelming. However, although the amount of data available to us is constantly increasing, our ability to absorb and process this information remains constant. Search engines only exacerbate the problem by making more and more documents available in a matter of a few key strokes.

Text mining is a new and exciting research area that tries to solve the information overload problem by using techniques from data mining, machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), information retrieval (IR), and knowledge management. Text mining involves the preprocessing of document collections (text categorization, information extraction, term extraction), the storage of the intermediate representations, the techniques to analyze these intermediate representations (such as distribution analysis, clustering, trend analysis, and association rules), and visualization of the results.

This book presents a general theory of text mining along with the main techniques behind it. We offer a generalized architecture for text mining and outline the algorithms and data structures typically used by text mining systems.

The book is aimed at the advanced undergraduate students, graduate students, academic researchers, and professional practitioners interested in complete coverage of the text mining field. We have included all the topics critical to people who plan to develop text mining systems or to use them. In particular, we have covered preprocessing techniques such as text categorization, text clustering, and information extraction and analysis techniques such as association rules and link analysis.

The book tries to blend together theory and practice; we have attempted to provide many real-life scenarios that show how the different techniques are used in practice. When writing the book we tried to make it as self-contained as possible and have compiled a comprehensive bibliography for each topic so that the reader can expand his or her knowledge accordingly.

BOOK OVERVIEW

The book starts with a gentle introduction to text mining that presents the basic definitions and prepares the reader for the next chapters. In the second chapter we describe the core text mining operations in detail while providing examples for each operation. The third chapter serves as an introduction to text mining preprocessing techniques. We provide a taxonomy of the operations and set the ground for Chapters IV through VII. Chapter IV offers a comprehensive description of the text categorization problem and outlines the major algorithms for performing text categorization.

Chapter V introduces another important text preprocessing task called text clustering, and we again provide a concrete definition of the problem and outline the major algorithms for performing text clustering. Chapter VI addresses what is probably the most important text preprocessing technique for text mining – namely, information extraction. We describe the general problem of information extraction and supply the relevant definitions. Several examples of the output of information extraction in several domains are also presented.

In Chapter VII, we discuss several state-of-the-art probabilistic models for information extraction, and Chapter VIII describes several preprocessing applications that either use the probabilistic models of Chapter VII or are based on hybrid approaches incorporating several models. The presentation layer of a typical text mining system is considered in Chapter IX. We focus mainly on aspects related to browsing large document collections and on issues related to query refinement. Chapter X surveys the common visualization techniques used either to visualize the document collection or the results obtained from the text mining operations. Chapter XI introduces the fascinating area of link analysis. We present link analysis as an analytical step based on the foundation of the text preprocessing techniques discussed in the previous chapters, most specifically information extraction. The chapter begins with basic definitions from graph theory and moves to common techniques for analyzing large networks of entities.

Finally, in Chapter XII, three real-world applications of text mining are considered. We begin by describing an application for articles posted in *BioWorld* magazine. This application identifies major biological entities such as genes and proteins and enables visualization of relationships between those entities. We then proceed to the GeneWays application, which is based on analysis of *PubMed* articles. The next application is based on analysis of U.S. patents and enables monitoring trends and visualizing relationships between inventors, assignees, and technology terms.

The appendix explains the DIAL language, which is a dedicated information extraction language. We outline the structure of the language and describe its exact syntax. We also offer several code examples that show how DIAL can be used to extract a variety of entities and relationships. A detailed bibliography concludes the book.

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A book written on a subject such as text mining is inevitably a culmination of many years of work. As such, our gratitude is extended to both Haym Hirsh and Oren Etzioni, early collaborators in the field.

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