Learning Sentiment Lexicons in Spanish

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Abstract

In this paper we present a framework to derive sentiment lexicons in a target language by using manually or automatically annotated data available in an electronic resource rich language, such as English. We show that bridging the language gap using the multilingual sense-level aligned WordNet structure allows us to generate a high accuracy (90%) polarity lexicon comprising 1,347 entries, and a disjoint lower accuracy (74%) one encompassing 2,496 words. By using an LSA-based vectorial expansion for the generated lexicons, we are able to obtain an average F-measure of 66% in the target language. This implies that the lexicons could be used to bootstrap higher-coverage lexicons using in-language resources.

Keywords: multilingual natural language processing, multilingual subjectivity and sentiment analysis, lexicon generation

1. Introduction

Subjectivity and sentiment analysis focuses on the automatic identification of private states, such as opinions, emotions, sentiments, evaluations, beliefs, and speculations in natural language. While subjectivity classification labels text as either subjective or objective, sentiment classification adds an additional level of granularity, by further classifying subjective text as either positive, negative or neutral. A large number of text processing applications have already used techniques for automatic sentiment and subjectivity analysis, including expressive text-to-speech synthesis (Alm et al., 2005), tracking sentiment timelines in on-line forums and news (Lloyd et al., 2005; Balog et al., 2006), analysis of political debates (Thomas et al., 2006; Carvalho et al., 2011), question answering (Yu and Hatzivassiloglou, 2003), and conversation summarization (Carenini et al., 2008).

Much of the research work to date on sentiment and subjectivity analysis has been applied to English, but work on other languages is growing, including Japanese (Kobayashi et al., 2004; Suzuki et al., 2006; Takamura et al., 2006; Kanayama and Nasukawa, 2006), Chinese (Hu et al., 2005; Tsou et al., 2005; Zagibalov and Carroll, 2008), German (Kim and Hovy, 2006), and Romanian (Mihalcea et al., 2007; Banea et al., 2008b). In addition, several participants in the Chinese and Japanese Opinion Extraction tasks of NTCIR-6 (Kando et al., 2008) performed subjectivity and sentiment analysis in languages other than English.

As only 27% of Internet users speak English,\(^1\) the construction of resources and tools for subjectivity and sentiment analysis in languages other than English is a growing need. In this paper, we propose a new method to build a subjectivity and sentiment lexicon for Spanish, which we will later employ to perform sentence level sentiment classification, as well as seek to enrich through a bootstrapping process in the target language.

2. Related Work

Lexicons have been widely used for sentiment and subjectivity analysis, as they represent a simple, yet effective way to build rule-based opinion classifiers. For instance, one of the most frequently used lexicons is the subjectivity and sentiment lexicon provided with the OpinionFinder distribution (Wiebe and Riloff, 2005). The lexicon was compile from manually developed resources augmented with entries learned from corpora, and it contains 6,856 unique entries that are also associated with a polarity label, indicating whether the corresponding word or phrase is positive, negative, or neutral. SentiWordNet (Esuli and Sebastiani, 2006) is a resource for opinion mining built on top of WordNet, which assigns each synset in WordNet with a score triplet (positive, negative, and objective), indicating the strength of each of these three properties for the words in the synset. The SentiWordNet annotations encompass more than 100,000 words and were automatically generated, starting with a small set of manually labeled synsets.

While there are several English lexicons for sentiment and subjectivity analysis, we are only aware of a very small number of such lexicons available for other languages. (Abdul-Mageed et al., 2011) manually compiled a list of approximately 4,000 Arabic adjectives from the newswire domain annotated for polarity. (Clematide and Klener, 2010) extract a list of 8,000 nouns, verbs, and adjectives in German annotated for polarity and strength. Most efforts to date, though, have focused on automatic procedures of lexicon construction, such as (Kaji and Kitsuregawa, 2007) for Japanese, (Lu et al., 2010; Xu et al., 2010) for Chinese, or (Banea et al., 2008a) for Romanian. The work closest to ours is authored by (Rao and Ravichandran, 2009), who introduce a lexicon induction method that uses the WordNet graph and the relationships it entails to extend polarity classification to other words using graph based semi-supervised learning algorithms, such as mincuts, randomized mincuts, and label propagation. The latter method is the best performing one and was applied to Hindi (employ-

\(^1\)www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm, Oct 11, 2011
ing the Hindi WordNet\(^2\) and to French (using the OpenOffice thesaurus\(^3\)). Our work is different in that it only explores the WordNet structure to extract parallelism across languages, and does not make use of the embedded additional relations such as hypernymy, hyponymy, meronymy, antonymy, etc., and to a limited extent synonymy. Thus while they use WordNet for within-language polarity propagation, we use it for cross-language expansion.

### 3. Learning Subjectivity and Sentiment Lexicons

While manually constructing a subjectivity and polarity lexicon in other languages is desirable, this process is both time and resource intensive, and thus prohibitive. A less costly approach may be importing such information from other languages with readily available electronic resources (Mihalcea et al., 2007) and then manually or automatically filtering and growing the newly acquired lexicons within each language.

In this study we seek to answer two questions. First, can we generate a reliable sentiment lexicon in a target language by using manually annotated lexicons from a source language? Second, if a manually annotated dataset is not available, could we use instead resources that have a higher coverage due to being automatically annotated for sentiment? As (Mihalcea et al., 2007; Wan, 2008) have shown that simply translating a subjectivity or polarity lexicon in a target language (in their experiments the languages are Romanian and Chinese, respectively) using a bilingual dictionary does not create a high accuracy resource due to the highly overloaded meaning of words, we seek to sidestep this issue by employing a multilingual sense aligned lexical ontology.

First, we attempt to make use of the manual annotations embedded within the Opinion Finder lexicon that are available at the word level. Since subjectivity and polarity are qualities that were shown to be most robustly expressed in English at the sense level (Wiebe and Mihalcea, 2006), we attempt to transfer the manual annotations onto the English WordNet by enforcing SentiWordNet (Esuli and Sebastiani, 2006) based constraints. The criterion we applied in order to select the corresponding sense was to match the Opinion Finder manually assigned polarity strength (i.e., strong positive and strong negative) to the sense with the highest polarity score (positive or negative) present in SentiWordNet, and then transfer the label to the English WordNet sense. This way we are able to select a polar sense with a high degree of confidence of it actually displaying a polar charge. Afterward, we draw upon the fact that the entire multilingual WordNet family uses aligned synsets\(^4\) as building blocks, which allows for unequivocal sense-level mapping among languages. Thus, this method would be able to port manually annotated polarity and subjectivity information from English in any of the approximately fifty languages in which non-commercial WordNets are available\(^5\) and thus afford what we will call a full strength lexicon.

Second, since the amount of manually annotated sentiment data in English is nonetheless limited, we use a second method that allows us to leverage resources that are automatically annotated for sentiment at the sense level in English. Since these resources are automatically generated, they espouse a higher coverage at the cost of lower precision, when compared to manually annotated data. We thus transfer the scores provided by a resource such as SentiWordNet by traversing the same multilingual synset-aligned WordNet structure. In the end we are able to generate a secondary medium strength lexicon in the target language.

To demonstrate these methods, we focus on Spanish as the language in which we seek to develop sentiment lexicons, and we employ the Spanish WordNet\(^6\) for our experiments and evaluations. The generated lexicons are publicly available.\(^7\)

For the first method, we start out with the single word entries available in the OpinionFinder lexicon annotated as either strong positive or strong negative. This choice is motivated by the fact that the entries are annotated at the word level, yet we seek to transfer these annotations at the sense level, and thus we need the words to exhibit a reliable sentiment content. Let us consider the word “devastation” and its annotations extracted from the OpinionFinder lexicon:

- devastation - part-of-speech: noun
- type: weak subjective
- polarity: strong negative

Once we query SentiWordNet for “devastation,” five synset offsets are returned, with varying positive and negative scores (see Table 1). From these we select the highest score matching the manually assigned polarity label, and thus map “devastation” to the synset 00067157 in WordNet 3.0. As the Spanish WordNet is aligned to WordNet 1.6, we locate the corresponding translation based on the immutable sense key identifier across all WordNet versions. This allows us to obtain the translation into Spanish as “devastación,” and add it to our full strength lexicon. We thus are able to generate a lexicon containing 1,347 entries. In those rare situations where we are not able to resolve the synset alignments between different WordNet versions (such as a synset from WordNet 1.6 gaining additional granularity, or being merged with another synset in WordNet 3.0), we discard the conflicting cases.

In order to leverage the additional automatic annotations contained in SentiWordNet, in the second method we rely only upon the polarity scores that are higher than 0.5, and translate their respective synsets into Spanish, thus obtaining a medium strength lexicon of 2,496 entries.

\(^2\)http://www.cfilt.iitb.ac.in/wordnet/webhwn/
\(^3\)http://www.openoffice.org/
\(^4\)A synset represents a grouping of entities (be they nouns, verbs, adverbs or adjectives) that share a distinct meaning or sense, and its members can be used interchangeably in the same context.
\(^5\)http://www.globalwordnet.org/gwa/wordnet_table.htm
\(^6\)http://nlp.lsi.upc.edu/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=57
\(^7\)http://lit.csci.unt.edu/
novels listed on Project Gutenberg
lion words Spanish corpus, consisting of publicly available
INFOMAP software
of the lexicon entries. The vectors were obtained using the
(Dumais et al., 1988) to generate concept vectors for each
mantic expansion using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)
chine learning model. Instead, we opt to implement se-
tures, this would allow for a very sparse data represen-
tent. If we were to use context-based word unigrams as
ture both semantic information and a rich sentiment con-
2011) has suggested such a representation is able to cap-
ability of infusing semantic information to create a vector
sidering a machine learning setup, we explore the possi-
bility of automatically translating sentiment lexicons developed for En-
Gutenbergs and the 2008 Spanish
glish using bilingual dictionaries, the accuracies obtained
matically translating sentiment lexicons developed for En-
ish gold standard (EsTest1), the F-measure is 90% for
both positive and negative labels; the manual annotations,
ether assigned in Spanish or in English coincide 90%
of the time. For the second lexicon (using the SentiWord-
lexicons represent disjoint sets.
ond lexicon. The reader should also not forget that the two
precision of 62.9% occurs for the negative class of the sec-
t to 36 negative). This explains why the lowest performing
is more skewed towards the positive class (e.g. 64 positive
timent dimension carried by the lexicon entry alone. While
participate in the decision process, complementing the sen-
using LSA allows context based co-occurrence metrics to
the first, thus allowing a larger train set to provide input
factors. First, the second lexicon has 85% more entries than
ations on the first and second lexicons is explained by two
drop by 16.2% experienced in the case of manual evalu-
measure of 67.2% for the first lexicon drops to 66.6% for
chine learning experiments, we notice that the overall F-
Wanting to verify whether this trend carries on to the ma-
in a target language.
erated resources may make up for what is lost in precision
(see discussion below). These two types of lexicons should
be seen as complementary in allowing resource generation in

t Table 1: SentiWordNet annotations for the synsets in
which the noun “devastation” appears and the correspon
ding WordNet definition.

| Syn Offset | Pos | Neg | WordNet Definition |
|------------|-----|-----|-------------------|
| 00967157   | 0   | 0.625 | Plundering with excessive damage and destruction. |
| 07335414   | 0   | 0    | An event that results in total destruction. |
| 07509827   | 0.25 | 0.5 | The feeling of being confounded or overwhelmed; “her departure left him in utter devastation.” |
| 14562142   | 0   | 0    | The state of being decayed or destroyed. |
| 00217014   | 0   | 0    | The termination of something by causing so much damage to it that it cannot be repaired or no longer exists. |

Table 2: Lexicons evaluations

| Gold standard Method | Class | P   | R   | F   |
|----------------------|-------|-----|-----|-----|
|                      | Full strength lexicon | | | |
| EsTest1 SVM          | Pos   | 64.6% | 82.4% | 72.4% |
|                      | Neg   | 74.3% | 53.1% | 61.9% |
| EsTest1 Manual       | Pos   | 91.8% | 88.2% | 90.0% |
|                      | Neg   | 88.2% | 91.8% | 90.0% |
|                      | Full strength lexicon | | | |
| EsTest2 SVM          | Pos   | 73.7% | 54.9% | 62.9% |
|                      | Neg   | 62.9% | 79.6% | 70.3% |
| EsTest2 Manual       | Pos   | 85.1% | 67.8% | 75.4% |
|                      | Neg   | 64.1% | 82.9% | 72.3% |

4. Lexicon Evaluations

As our lexicons were compiled using English resources that
are manually and / or automatically annotated for polarity,
we expect them to carry strong polarity clues. In order to
evaluate each lexicon’s quality, we perform an evaluation
using machine learning over a vector representation of the
entries, and seek to discriminate between positive and neg-
itive words.

Since a raw word is unable to provide sufficient information
regarding its polarity charge on its own when consid-
ering a machine learning setup, we explore the possi-
bility of infusing semantic information to create a vector
space model. Previous research in this regard (Maas et al.,
2011) has suggested such a representation is able to cap-
ture both semantic information and a rich sentiment con-
ent. If we were to use context-based word unigrams as
features, this would allow for a very sparse data represen-
tation, further requiring a large corpus to train a viable ma-
chine learning model. Instead, we opt to implement se-
metric expansion using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)
(Dumais et al., 1988) to generate concept vectors for each of
the lexicon entries. The vectors were obtained using the
INFOMAP software⁶ trained on an approximately 55 mil-
lion words Spanish corpus, consisting of publicly available
novels listed on Project Gutenberg⁷ and the 2008 Spanish
version of Wikipedia. We were able to obtain 44 features
resulted from performing singular value decomposition on
the word count matrix derived from this corpus. We then
build two training sets: in the case of the full strength lex-
icon, the class is assigned based on the manual annotations,
while for the medium strength lexicon, it is automatically
ascribed to the label having the highest polarity score.

Since these evaluations were done on data annotated for po-
larity in English, we decided to double our evaluations by
annotating 100 entries from each lexicon in Spanish, this
time. This setup would further allow us to appraise how
reputable an English gold standard would be in evaluating
out-of-language lexicons. Annotations were performed by
two native speakers of Spanish, agreement was 91% and

5. Discussion

In terms of class suggestion made by the OpinionFinder
lexicon when projected onto Spanish compared to the Span-
ish gold standard (EsTest1), the F-measure is 90% for
both positive and negative labels; the manual annotations,
ether assigned in Spanish or in English coincide 90%
of the time. For the second lexicon (using the SentiWord-
Net based labels) weighed against the Spanish gold stan-
dard (EsTest2), the F-measure drops to 75.4% for the pos-
tive class and to 72.3% for the negative class, while the
labels agree 74% of the time. These metrics capture the
fact that the lexicon generated using the first method is, as
expected, more accurate than leveraging automatically as-
signed scores. However, the coverage of automatically gen-
resources may make up for what is lost in precision
(see discussion below). These two types of lexicons should
be seen as complementary in allowing resource generation in
a target language.

Wanting to verify whether this trend carries on to the ma-
chine learning experiments, we notice that the overall F-
measure of 67.2% for the first lexicon drops to 66.6% for
the second. This lower gap of 0.55%, in comparison to the
drop by 16.2% experienced in the case of manual evalu-
ations on the first and second lexicons is explained by two
factors. First, the second lexicon has 85% more entries than
the first, thus allowing a larger train set to provide input
for the classification task. Second, the vectorial expansion
using LSA allows context based co-occurrence metrics to
participate in the decision process, complementing the sen-
timent dimension carried by the lexicon entry alone. While
the class distribution for the first Spanish test set is 51 po-
itive to 49 negative, for the second test set the distribution
is more skewed towards the positive class (e.g. 64 positive
to 36 negative). This explains why the lowest performing
precision of 62.9% occurs for the negative class of the sec-
don lexicon. The reader should also not forget that the two
lexicons represent disjoint sets.

While (Mihalcea et al., 2007; Wan, 2008) have tried auto-
matically translating sentiment lexicons developed for En-
lish using bilingual dictionaries, the accuracies obtained

⁶http://infomap-nlp.sourceforge.net/
⁷http://www.gutenberg.org/
by these resources has been low. By using the WordNet structure and its main appeal of relating words based on senses both within and between languages, we are able to provide a sensible solution to sentiment lexicon export with an accuracy of approximately 90% for Spanish.

6. Conclusion

We presented a framework that generates sentiment lexicons in a target language by using manually and automatically annotated English resources. The manual annotations performed in the target language show that the first lexicon has an accuracy of 90%, since it leverages manual English annotations, while the second lexicon (which uses automatically assigned SentiWordNet scores) attains an accuracy of 74%. This demonstrates that we are able to obtain better results when using a multilingual sense aligned resource (such as the WordNet structure enriched in a number of languages) than when using multilingual dictionaries. Furthermore, machine learning experiments using feature expansion for the extracted lexicons offer a precision higher than 62.9% for both the positive and the negative classes. This allows us to explore this venue further in future work by attempting to bootstrap the derived lexicons in the target language, as well as using them to train sentence level classifiers demonstrating a higher coverage than what could be achieved with rule-based classifiers using sentiment lexicons.

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