topmodpy: A Simple Python Script for Topic Modeling

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ABSTRACT

Subjective assessment is rampant in literature verification and title evaluation. While subjective assessment is a valid practice but creates a void in terms of validity of results. Intuition is unique and tend to depend on several other aspects which are not methodological. As a result of which, there may be a possibility of unreasonable yet unfair amount of personal opinion in action. Natural Language Processing (NLP) offers robust mechanisms or techniques to evaluate unstructured data. Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) is one of such techniques which adds logic while processing unstructured but subjective data. This article explains suitability of topmodpy to perform Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) using Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA). topmopy is a Python script and is a collection of 12 different functions each with a unique aim. This article shows as how to use topmopy module on certain data collected using a valid search criteria. topmodpy module found to have obtained these latent constructs related to search criteria. Hence the efficacy of the module has been proved.

Keywords: Python, Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), latent semantic analysis, text mining, topic modeling.

CITATION

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BACKGROUND

"Traditional philosophy relies heavily on the use of rational intuition to establish theses and conclusions ... appeal to rational intuition is epistemically justified only if a form of foundationalism is true."

- Steven D. Hales, "The Problem of Intuition"

[1]

Intuition and logic is probably the two most vital skills required to make decisions effectively. People often take bipartite opinion while arguing about intuition vs logic. They are two very different yet effective and above all complements each other. Logic is the one's cognitive ability used to solve problems based on rules and principles. Logical approach always remains systematic backed by scientific methods. Logical thinking can be associated with problem solving and often stands on proofs or evidences. Intuitive thinking,

on the other hand, can be described as a sense of reason developed through experience and perceptions. This is why, intuition always confused with superstition. Perhaps, intuition in absence of logic can be a hunch. There is a middle path known as *logical intuition* or *mathematical intuition* which is a series of instinctive foresight, know-how often associated with the ability to perceive logical or mathematical truth and the ability to solve mathematical challenges efficiently using one's intuitive capabilities.

Critical Thinking

What is critical thinking? Is this anything to do with intuitive thinking? No. Critical thinking is a skill that involves clear, purposeful, and goal-oriented thinking. Critical thinking arises while interpreting or explaining the scenario in hand. Some extent, it is the ability to think cautiously and rationally to resolve problems.[2] Hence, the reason and rationality assumes highest priority in critical thinking. Critical thinking can be practiced by using conclusions without biases, reliable evidence and reasoning and it is only possible through data and information. Critical thinking is an imperative analytical skill as it underpins contemporary living in areas such as education and professional careers, but it is not restricted to a specific area.

"Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action."

- Michael Scriven & Richard Paul

[3]

Critical thinking is used to solve problems, calculate the likelihood, make decisions, and formulate inferences. Critical thinking requires examining information, reflective thinking, using appropriate skills, and confidence in the quality of the information given to come to a conclusion or plan. Critical thinking includes being willing to change if better information becomes available. As a critical thinker individuals do not accept assumptions without further questioning the reliability of it with further research and analysing the results found.

"Critical thinking is deciding rationally what to or what not to believe."

- Norris, Stephen P.

[4]

Text mining

Is it text mining a kind of namesake tool? Can text mining offer a solution for intuitive logic? Text mining deals with text analytics and is the process of obtaining information from text. It involves extracting information from different written resources which is not possible through subjective assessment. Written resources may include websites, books, emails, reviews, and articles. High-quality information is typically obtained by devising patterns and trends by means such as statistical pattern learning. Text mining can be done through three different perspectives: information extraction, data mining, and Knowledge Discovery in Databases (KDD). [5] Text mining usually involves the process of structuring the input text. The text is usually parsing, along with the addition of some derived linguistic features and the removal of others, and subsequent insertion into a database, deriving patterns within the structured data, and finally evaluation and interpretation of the output. Typical text mining tasks include text categorization, text clustering, concept/entity extraction, production of granular taxonomies, sentiment analysis, document summarization, and entity relation modeling. [6] ¹

Text analysis involves information retrieval, lexical analysis. It is also possible to use few statitical techniques like association analysis, predictive analytics and visualizations. A typical set of activities are scanning a set of documents, written in a natural language, modeling those documents for decision making. The document is the basic unit of element in text mining. The term text analytics describes a set of linguistic, statistical, and machine learning techniques that model and structure the information content of textual sources for business intelligence, exploratory data analysis, research, or investigation. Most of the data is unstructured and it is primarily in the form of text.

The data deluge

Why do we need a new approach for text analysis? According to market intelligence company IDC, the 'Global Datasphere' in 2018 reached 18 zettabytes. This is the total of all data created, captured or replicated. In fact, IDC predicts the world's data will grow to 175 zettabytes (1000⁷ KBs) in 2025. [7] [8] Whooping amount of data is being generated daily at lightening speed. As much as 90 percent of that data is defined as unstructured data. But what does that mean and what do you need to know about unstructured data? We delve into the details below. Unstructured data arises from few sources such as text files, photos, video files, audio files, webpages, blog posts, social media sites, presentations, call center transcripts/recordings, open-ended survey responses and others.

The growing data poses so many problems while creating sense

Source	Online (incl. social)	TV	Social media	Radio	Print (incl.mags)
UK	79%	71%	47%	35%	18%
USA	73%	60%	47%	21%	16%
Germany	69%	72%	39%	41%	26%
Spain	83%	71%	63%	24%	28%
South Korea	85%	65%	51%	14%	19%
Argentina	90%	77%	78%	24%	30%
Average change	2	5	5	2	-2
from January					

Table 1

Online news growth in 2020.

Notes: More information is available at https://www.digitalnewsreport.org/survey/2020/overview-key-findings-2020/

LATENT SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

Latent semantic analysis (LSA) is a technique in natural language processing, in particular distributional semantics, of analyzing relationships between a set of documents and the terms they contain by producing a set of concepts related to the documents and terms. LSA assumes that words that are close in meaning will occur in similar pieces of text (the distributional hypothesis). A matrix containing word counts per document (rows represent unique words and columns represent each document) is constructed from a large piece of text and a mathematical technique called singular value decomposition (SVD) is used to reduce the number of rows while preserving the similarity structure among columns. Documents are then compared by taking the cosine of the angle between the two vectors (or the dot product between the normalizations of the two vectors) formed by any two columns. Values close to 1 represent very similar documents while values close to 0 represent very dissimilar documents.

An information retrieval technique using latent semantic structure was patented in 1988 (US Patent 4,839,853, now expired) by Scott Deerwester, Susan Dumais, George Furnas, Richard Harshman, Thomas Landauer, Karen Lochbaum and Lynn Streeter. In the context of its application to information retrieval, it is sometimes called latent semantic indexing (LSI)

Latent Dirichlet Allocation

The latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) is a generative statistical model that allows sets of observations to be explained by unobserved groups that explain why some parts of the data

¹Most of this text related to "text mining" is obtained from Wikipedia. Wikipedia is open source knowledge management platform. Wikipedia is not used as valid source of information in many academic circles. These purists has few reservations for they believe that knowledge is personal and proprietary in nature, *which is not true*. Knowledge is not proprietary asset but open. More social than individual and dissemination of the same beyond copyrights always leads to social good. By the way, I am a *geek*. I donate money to Wikipedia (though not much only a pittance), call me a sinner, I don't care!!!

are similar. For example, if observations are words collected into documents, it posits that each document is a mixture of a small number of topics and that each word's presence is attributable to one of the document's topics. LDA is an example of a topic model and belongs to the machine learning toolbox and in wider sense to the artificial intelligence toolbox. In the context of population genetics, LDA was proposed by J. K. Pritchard, M. Stephens and P. Donnelly in 2000. LDA was applied in machine learning by David Blei, Andrew Ng and Michael I. Jordan in 2003.

Model

With plate notation, which is often used to represent probabilistic graphical models (PGMs), the dependencies among the many variables can be captured concisely. The boxes are "plates" representing replicates, which are repeated entities. The outer plate represents documents, while the inner plate represents the repeated word positions in a given document; each position is associated with a choice of topic and word. The variable names are defined as follows:

- M denotes the number of documents
- N is number of words in a given document (document i has N_i words)
- α is the parameter of the Dirichlet prior on the perdocument topic distributions
- β is the parameter of the Dirichlet prior on the per-topic word distribution
- θ_i is the topic distribution for document i
- φ_k is the word distribution for topic k
- z_{ij} is the topic for the j^{th} word in document i
- w_{ij} is the specific word.

et_allocation

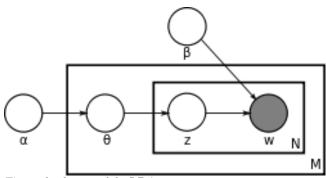


Figure 1. plate model - LDA
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latent_Dirichl

The fact that W is grayed out means that words w_{ij} are the only observable variables, and the other variables are latent

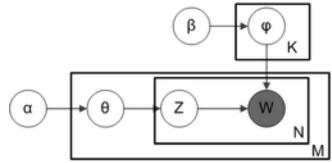


Figure 2. plate model - LDA (Dirichlet)
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latent_Dirichl
et_allocation

variables. As proposed in the original paper, a sparse Dirichlet prior can be used to model the topic-word distribution, following the intuition that the probability distribution over words in a topic is skewed, so that only a small set of words have high probability. The resulting model is the most widely applied variant of LDA today. The plate notation for this model is shown on the right, where K denotes the number of topics and $\varphi_1, \ldots, \varphi_K$ are V-dimensional vectors storing the parameters of the Dirichlet-distributed topic-word distributions (V) is the number of words in the vocabulary).

It is helpful to think of the entities represented by θ and φ as matrices created by decomposing the original document-word matrix that represents the corpus of documents being modeled. In this view, θ consists of rows defined by documents and columns defined by topics, while φ consists of rows defined by topics and columns defined by words. Thus, $\varphi_1, \ldots, \varphi_K$ refers to a set of rows, or vectors, each of which is a distribution over words, and $\theta_1, \ldots, \theta_M$ refers to a set of rows, each of which is a distribution over topics.

Generative process

To actually infer the topics in a corpus, we imagine a generative process whereby the documents are created, so that we may infer, or reverse engineer, it. We imagine the generative process as follows. Documents are represented as random mixtures over latent topics, where each topic is characterized by a distribution over all the words. LDA assumes the following generative process for a corpus D consisting of M documents each of length N_i :

- 1. Choose $\theta_i \sim Dir(\alpha)$, where $i \in \{1, ..., M\}$ and $Dir(\alpha)$ is a Dirichlet distribution with a symmetric parameter α which typically is sparse $(\alpha < 1)$
- 2. Choose $\varphi_k \sim Dir(\beta)$, where $k \in \{1, ..., K\}$ and β typically is sparse
- 3. For each of the word positions i, j, where $i \in \{1, ..., M\}$, and $j \in \{1, ..., N_i\}$

- (a) Choose a topic $z_{i,j} \sim Multinomial(\theta_i)$.
- (b) Choose a word $w_{i,j} \sim Multinomial(\varphi_{z_{i,j}})$.

Note that multinomial distribution here refers to the multinomial with only one trial, which is also known as the categorical distribution.

The lengths N_i are treated as independent of all the other data generating variables w and z. The subscript is often dropped, as in the plate diagrams shown here.

TOPIC MODELING

Topic modeling? Can that offer solution against hunch? It is easy to share or obtain data easily. Today, everything is online, so the data about those things. Large amounts of data are collected everyday as more and more online activity takes place. As more information becomes available, it becomes difficult to access what we are looking for. So, we need tools and techniques to organize, search and understand vast quantities of information. Topic modeling provides us with methods to organize, understand and summarize large collections of textual information. It helps in:

- Discovering hidden topical patterns that are present across the collection
- Annotating documents according to these topics
- Using these annotations to organize, search and summarize texts
- Topic modelling can be described as a method for finding a group of words (i.e topic) from a collection of documents that best represents the information in the collection. It can also be thought of as a form of text mining a way to obtain recurring patterns of words in textual material.

In more classical sense a *topic model is a type of statistical model for discovering the abstract "topics" that occur in a collection of documents.* Topic modeling is a frequently used text-mining tool for discovery of hidden semantic structures in a text body.

An early topic model was described by Papadimitriou, Raghavan, Tamaki and Vempala in 1998. [9] Another one, called probabilistic latent semantic analysis (PLSA), was created by Thomas Hofmann in 1999. [10] Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA), perhaps the most common topic model currently in use, is a generalization of PLSA. Developed by David Blei, Andrew Ng, and Michael I. Jordan in 2002, LDA introduces sparse Dirichlet prior distributions over document-topic and topic-word distributions, encoding the intuition that documents cover a small number of topics and that topics often use a small number of words. [11] Other topic models are generally extensions on LDA, such as

Pachinko allocation, which improves on LDA by modeling correlations between topics in addition to the word correlations which constitute topics. Hierarchical latent tree analysis (HLTA) is an alternative to LDA, which models word co-occurrence using a tree of latent variables and the states of the latent variables, which correspond to soft clusters of documents, are interpreted as topics.

topmodpy

topmodpy is a very simple Python script, roughly with 250 lines of code may be useful for students, scholars, academics for implementing or performing *topic modeling* algorithms as a user but not as developer. The script has roughly 12 very useful functions which helps researchers to exhume latent semantic patterns in any given input data. The idea of writing this code is to get or provide a simple script for practice of topic modeling. Performing "topic modeling" is never that straight or simple especially using programming languages like R and Python. Lot of code need to be executed to get very simple statements also known as topics. This script performs Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) to elicit few topics from any data given as input.

- Import data
- Create variable
- Print topics
- Print topics with weights
- Make visuals

The script is available from https://github.com/Kamakshaiah/topmodpy. topmodpy is free and open source application Anybody can download, change and commit using Github or Git. The directory looks as shown below after downloaded to the computer.

Above listing shows the output obtained using dir in Windows 10 PowerShell. ²

The file data.xlsx is a data file with roughly 30 entries of literature-review entries. Data is related to a domain called big data analytics. Data has been collected only from those articles which are traced by using a search phrase particularly related to another domain of operations called supply chain management. This file has data related to all those articles which are identified as valid through certain matching criteria i.e., big data and supply chian. Files starts with ldavis_prepared_5.html represents visualizations obtained by using the module topmodpy. This HTML document is provided only for users' reference. Whoever uses this module may be able to create this type of sample document at the end of the analysis. The file with a name requirements.txt has information related to dependencies. These are Python packages required to utilize this module. These packages can be installed using pip install -r requirements.txt. ³ The last but not least is the file with a name topmodpy.py. This file has all that code related to topic modeling. Feel free to have a glance of those functions but using any yet simple Python editor (such as the one like IDLE). The module can be accessed or imported by performing following action in CLI, assuming that the data file is available in your current working directory.

```
>>> import os
>>> for i in os.listdir():
        print(i)

data.xlsx
ldavis_prepared_5
ldavis_prepared_5.html
nltk_download.png
requirements.txt
topmodpy.py
```

Import the module as usual as any other python module.

help() is a utility function which helps in retrieving information about all those functions available from this module. There are 12 different functions for performing analysis.

Importing excel file

Obviously to perform topic modeling one need to use data and the data need to be imported well for analysis. Topic modeling is performed on a corpus of literature. A corpus represents collection of documents. Each document is in turn a collection of words. These words as a set serves as essential input for analysis.

Crate variable

data is an object created by using method FileImport and it has 30 rows each representing a document.

```
>>> data['Abstract']
0 The purpose of this paper is to investigate th...
1 Big Data Analytics offers vast prospects in to...
2 The amount of data produced and communicated o...
3 Scholars acknowledge the importance of big dat...
4 Recent studies in the field of big data analyt...
5 A high number of business cases are characteri...
```

The data which is required for topic modeling is available in the column with a name Abstract. Each row is a distinct yet individual document for analysis. The column Abstract has all required documents for topic mining. Below code snippet shows as how to create a variable or separate required variable from rest of the variables

```
>>> var = tmp.CreateVariable(data, 'Abstract')
>>> var.head()
0 The purpose of this paper is to investigate th...
1 Big Data Analytics offers vast prospects in to...
2 The amount of data produced and communicated o...
3 Scholars acknowledge the importance of big dat...
4 Recent studies in the field of big data analyt...
Name: Abstract, dtype: object
```

Clean data variable

The object var in above code snippet is required variable for topic modeling. This variable is just an instance of the Abstract column in the data set (or .xlsx file). Right now the documents (rows) are not amenable for analysis. These documents need to cleaned by eliminating all unwanted symbols such as special characters and need to be converted lower case.

```
>>> cleanedvar = tmp.CleanVar(var)
>>> cleanedvar.head()
0 the purpose of this paper is to investigate th...
1 big data analytics offers vast prospects in to...
```

³Installing Python packages is same irrespective of host OS. This statement need to be executed in CLI.

²All modern versions of Windows operating systems ship with PowerShell installed. If you're running a version older than 5.1, you should install the latest version. By the way this code also can be obtained from Windows default CMD, also known as COMMAND by Windows users.

```
2 the amount of data produced and communicated o... 3 scholars acknowledge the importance of big dat... 4 recent studies in the field of big data analyt... Name: Abstract, dtype: object
```

Wordcloud image

Now all the letters in doc-strings were converted to lower case letters. topmodpy has few visualization techniques. One of the useful techniques is *wordcloud*. It is rather intuitive to obtain wordcloud well before we proceed to further analysis. Wordcloud is a novelty visual representation of text data, typically used to depict or visualize text. Words are usually single words, and the importance of each word is shown with font size or color. This format is useful for quickly perceiving the most prominent terms to determine its relative prominence. Bigger term means greater weight. [12] The statement that creates wordcloud is as follows:

```
>>> tmp.CreateWordcloudImg(cleanedvar)
```

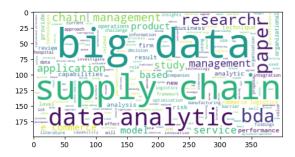


Figure 3. Wordcloud image

Wordcloud image has done most of the work required for topic modeling. From the image it is clear that words such as big, data, supply, chain, data analytiic seems to be prominent among all. This means the most prominent issue in the current data file is seemingly related to big data analytics in supply chain domain. However, it is not clear as what is the relative importance of each word compared to other words in the image. We are just a couple steps away from expected outputs. We have input data cleaned and ready for analysis. The final step is to obtain topics. There are two methods to do so. It is possible to obtain topics a plain statements and also with weights. topmodpy has two methods to obtain topics they are

1. PrintTopics: depends on three arguments viz., var: variable of interest, nt: number of topics and nw: number of words. Produces output as plain statements each topic with required number of words.

2. PrintTopicsWithWeights: depends on three arguments viz., var: variable of interest, nt: number of topics and nw: number of words. Produces output as plain statements each topic with required number of words. However, each word in the topic is associated with certain number, called weight, which represents relative importance of that word in that very topic.

```
>>> import time
>>> st = time.time()
>>> tmp.PrintTopics(var, 5, 10); ft = time.time(); ft-st;
Topics found via LDA:
Topic \#0:
data big supply chain research bda analytics integration

\[ \to \text{management hospital} \]
Topic \#1:
data sca big analytics chain supply product level

\[ \to \text{techniques based} \]
Topic \#2:
bda data supply chain big barriers performance research
\[ \to \text{analytics environmental} \]
Topic \#3:
data big supply chain analytics paper management service
\[ \to \text{research value} \]
Topic \#3:
data big logistics commerce chain supply management risk
\[ \to \text{ analytics agricultural} \]
34.79504704475403
```

The code took approximately 35 seconds of time to compute topics. Table 2 shows the topics that were computed by PrintTopics method.

Topic No.	Topic title		
Topic #0:	data big supply chain research bda analytics		
	integration management hospital		
Topic #1:	data sca big analytics chain supply product		
	level techniques based		
Topic #2:	bda data supply chain big barriers performance		
	research analytics environmental		
Topic #3:	data big supply chain analytics paper management		
	service research value		

Table 2

Topics obtained from data file

The following code snippet produces topics, but with weights, for given arguments.

The code has taken approximately 2 seconds. Topic are produced as list of tuples. Each tuple (topic) is a combination of words along with its relative weight which represents importance. Table 3 shows the topics that were computed by PrintTopics method.

(Topic number, [topic wt. * word])

```
(0, '0.032*"data" + 0.020*"big" + 0.010*"big" + 0.009*"paper" + 0.009*"management"')
(1, '0.034*"data" + 0.021*"chain" + 0.021*"supply" + 0.019*"big" + 0.013*"bda"')
(2, '0.033*"data" + 0.027*"big" + 0.021*"supply" + 0.021*"analytics" + 0.021*"chain"')
```

Table 3

Topics with relative weights

Topic 3 seems to be more reasonable. Words big, data seems to me more prominent compared to rest of the words supply, chain, analytics. However, the whole anlaysis shows one thing very clear that it is possible to obtain two latent constructs i.e., big data analytics and supply chain analytics, and the topic big data analytics in supply chain domain seems to be a reasonable topic of the interest.

The final step, which is more interesting and optional to the user is to obtain HTML documents. Two of the functions i.e., MakeHTML and OpenHTMLFile can perform this step. The function MakeHTML requires one argument i.e., var, study variable, which is cleanedvar obtained by using CleanVar method in one of the code snippets done earlier. The following code creates HTML document in the working directory. The file can be opened in the default browser of the host OS by executing OpenHTMLFile subsequently after executing the method MakeHTML. ⁴

```
>>> tmp.MakeHTML(cleanedvar)
>>> tmp.OpenHTMLFile()
```

Following is the resultant HTML document produced by above code snippet.

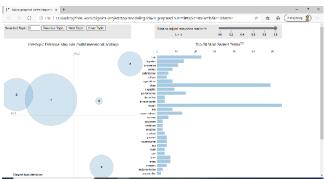


Figure 4. HTML document with topics and words

This document offers several interactive features such as topic-wise and word level statistics. It is possible to view topics through certain navigation features such as *previous*, *next* and *clear*. More importantly there is a metric called lambda (λ) , which offers a slider to adjust relative importance of word for a given topic. Few metrics like *saliency*,

relevance are displayed with appropriate hyper links at the bottom of the document.

CONCLUSION

Subject and object are complementary. Though intuition and logic are two different aspects of thinking but they are interdependent. Intuition without logic is a hunch and logic without intuition is rote. So, the best solution could be logical intuition, such hybrid approach can fill the gap while dealing with subjective phenomenon. There is lot of data in the world and most (80 to 90 %) of which is unstructured. Such unstructured data needs to be processed by using novel yet consistent methods. Finding hidden or latent patterns in unstructured data using hunch or personal opinion for processing such data is not appropriate and gives rise to superstitions. Unstructured data is highly subjective that is why it requires vigorous methods to process. Involvement of quantitative techniques fills the gap created by superstitious practices in processing unstructured data.

Text mining offers very rich methods to process unstructured data. Natural Language Processing (NLP) offers plethora of techniques to process unstructured data. One such techniques is Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA). LDA processes data given in the form of documents into a set of plausible yet consistent bag of words also known as titles. This article verify this method using well established code practices in the body of Natural Language Processing (NLP).

Python is a popular programming language used for writing code snippets. All the code is organized in 12 different methods comprising of a module called topmodpy. This module is tested and verified using scholarly data collected online from certain reliable sources. The script could exhume topics from the collected corpus of literature as intended by the researcher. Hence the efficacy of the module, topmodpy, has been proved.

⁴The function MakeHTML might throw certain warning. This warning is created by a Python package called imp. Need not be panic about this warning.

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