

Fuzzy Logic Email Classification

Peter Heemskerk, Stefan Schenk, Jim Kamans
..., 11881798, 10302905

Abstract—Large organizations have problems with their customer service, since due to their complexity, they cannot answer messages from external parties in a quick manner. This project aims to demonstrate that Fuzzy Logic can be used to solve this problem, by determining the correct addressee within the organization in an automatic way.

In this project it has been demonstrated that Fuzzy Logic can successfully be implemented. The team implemented software based on a Python implementation.

Index Terms—FLS (FLS)

I. INTRODUCTION

THIS work is done in autumn 2017 as part of the bachelor course Fundamentals of Fuzzy Logic by A. Bilgin (and M. Hol and V. Dankers) within the study Artificial Intelligence at University of Amsterdam.

A. Problem

Many large organizations suffer from their own complexity. If an external party seeks contact with a specific person in an organization, this works fine, but if a party seeks contact about a subject (without knowing whom to talk to), it usually takes more time before the party gets a good answer.

Who does not have experience with this complexity or large organizations? Suppose you have a question on [example], we all have been facing either that we are sent from one person to another department (“kastje naar de muur”), or perhaps worse that we do not get an answer at all, since the message is lost somewhere. Organizations aim to get better on customer service, but tools that support this are building up.

This project aims to solve this issue of customer service in a complex organization. We present software based on fuzzy logic which aims to bring a message of an external party to the correct internal department or person for further action, purely based on the content of the message.

Why fuzzy logic ?

- First, with fuzzy logic methods, we can better deal with the uncertainties from the real world.
- Second, fuzzy logic deals well with incomplete or difficult to interpret data.
- Finally, fuzzy logic uses linguistic terms. With this we can include human knowledge into the system which is relatively easy to interpret.

These fuzzy and linguistic features support dealing with unstructured messages.

B. Objectives

Via several steps our software will bring an unstructured message (email) to the correct department. For achieving this goal several steps are taken:

- 1) from an email a list with relevant words is produced, irrelevant words are filtered out
- 2) the words are matched and scored (word count) against a feature list
- 3) with fuzzy logic these features are matched with a department
- 4) so the end result is a department attached to an email

This project aims to prove that Fuzzy Logic works for this problem. Due to time-constraints the project has limitations:

- Only written emails are used as input. At this moment emailing is the main way of communication to businesses (120billion/day) [1], and far more used than other ways like social media or message apps. This will change, so in a later phase we envision this to be expanded to messages in any format, like messaging via WhatsApp or LinkedIn.
- The “word-to-feature translator” is implemented with limited scope, currently a number of only (xx?) English words. We did not extend to much on this, since we would like to focus on the Fuzzy Logic part of the software.
- We used a theoretical organization for the proposed structure of department, with first testing in the real world, we should test and amend this structure.

II. LITERATURE REVIEWS

A. A Proactive Anti-Phishing Tool Using Fuzzy Logic and RIPPER Data Mining Classification Algorithm

A Proactive Anti-Phishing Tool Using Fuzzy Logic and RIPPER Data Mining Classification Algorithm [3] is a paper that explains how phishing emails are detected using content- and non-content based approaches in the form of a combination of the RIPPER Classification Algorithm and a FLS. The RIPPER Classifier is used to learn relations of the different phishing features, resulting into rules that are used by the FLS.

While designing our system, the implementation of the content-based classification approach gives us a starting point for designing membership functions, linguistic variables and rules. However, the characteristics used to determine the crisp inputs aren’t mentioned.

B. A Content Based Classification of Spam Mails with Fuzzy Word Ranking

A Content Based Classification of Spam Mails with Fuzzy Word Ranking [2] introduces a different method by which a

FLS is used to categorize words that are spam in the degree to which these words are considered dangerous. The words are labeled to the names of five linguistic variables before they are fed to the particular input that corresponds with the name. After that, the FLS outputs a degree of dangerousness.

This work seemed relevant before we finished our detailed design, but as our team gained more knowledge, it seemed that this approach misses all the value a FLS is supposed to add.

C. A new fuzzy logic based ranking function for efficient Information Retrieval system

A new fuzzy logic based ranking function for efficient Information Retrieval system [4] explains how “conventional ranking functions fail to capture inherent features of documents and queries due to subjectivity involved in natural language text”, and offers a fuzzy approach to rank words based on term-weighting schema’s such as term frequency, inverse document frequency and normalization. The tf/idf and normalization of the query and document are fed to their FLC (Fuzzy Logic Controller), whose outputs are fed to the main FLC, which in turn outputs a relevance score.

As we are using a content based approach in classifying emails, we need to determine whether words in the emails are related to words in a pre-assembled list.

III. APPROACH

In this section we describe the data used, our design and implementation of the classifier.

A. Data

Describe the data, give snippets where applicable, provide the sources, collection (if scraped or gathered), data pre-processing techniques, creation of membership functions, etc. We used the Enron Email Dataset, May 7, 2015 version, available at <https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~enron/>. This dataset contains around 500,000 emails. Each email looks roughly like this:

Message-ID: <10929741.1075855668115.JavaMail.
evans@thyme>
Date: Mon, 25 Sep 2000 07:04:00 -0700 (PDT)
From: phillip.allen@enron.com
To: christopher.calger@enron.com
Subject:
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
X-From: Phillip K Allen
X-To: Christopher F Calger
X-cc:
X-bcc:
X-Folder: \Phillip_Allen_Dec2000\Notes Folders
\All documents
X-Origin: Allen-P
X-FileName: pallen.nsf

Chris,

What is the latest with PG&E? We have been having good discussions regarding EOL.
Call me when you can. X37041

Phillip

We read all the emails starting from the first blank line, so we only get the email body. This body is then cleaned, tokenized and prepared for the FLS. These steps are described in the next subsection.

B. Design

Present the details of your approach/system, how you designed your solution, provide flowcharts and figures to illustrate your design, clearly state the inputs and outputs of your system.

The solution consists of four main operations: Cleaning, Filtering, Ranking, and Classifying. These terms are descriptive, but contain more additional steps that are somewhat correlated to the meaning of the terms.

All actions in each step are represented by the colored arrows in figures 1 - 4.

1) Cleaning

An email is read from the file system as plain text, containing mostly irrelevant information for classification. The text is tokenized, meaning that individual terms are stored as individual values. After that, capital characters are converted to lower case, punctuation and special characters are removed, resulting in an array of words. After that, stopwords are removed. Some examples of stopwords are: “a”, “and”, “but”, “how”, “or”, and “what”. And finally the words are stemmed, reducing words to their base root form. For example: “waited” will become “wait”.



Fig. 1. Cleaning one email resulting into an array of words

2) Filtering

The remaining words may be meaningful now, but most of them may not be relevant. So the next operation will perform an intersection between the words and a list of predefined relevant words. All the words that reside in both lists will remain, but unlike sets, the list contains duplicates.

As the last filtering step, the words are counted, and a corpus is created.

3) Ranking

Other predefined sets of words within the set of relevant words share the same characteristics. For example a set $T \subseteq R$ exists where R is the set of technical words, and R is the set of relevant words from before. Feature list of technical words: $T = [t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n]$. Other feature lists contain other themed words: U, V, W .

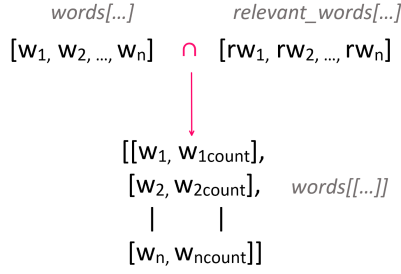


Fig. 2. Taking the intersection of the words with a relevant list of words

For every word in the email that is present in T , a score is calculated that takes the count of that word into account in relation to the total number of relevant words in the email. This calculation is made for all feature lists (T , U , V , W), for every word in the email.

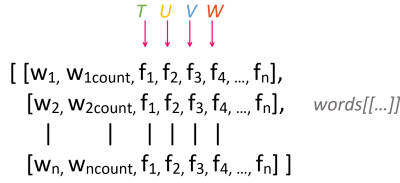


Fig. 3. The scores for each words are added as features

4) Classifying

Finally the scores are aggregated, resulting in the inputs for the FLS, which outputs the correct department.

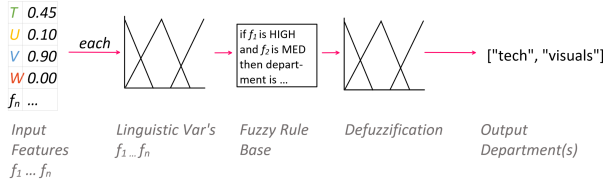


Fig. 4. The FLS outputs the department based on the input features

C. Implementation

Specify the software tools used, present your algorithm, provide pseudo-code if possible We used Python3 as programming language and Jupyter Notebook as development environment.

REFERENCES

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