# Multi-review opinion summarization via jointly modelling semantic and helpfulness

ENGG 5501 Project Report

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Nowadays, reviews and ratings are playing a more important role in the Internet social media. In this project, we plan to construct a system to analyse Chinese movie reviews as to realize multi-review opinion summarization via jointly modelling semantic and helpfulness. The whole project includes five parts: data scraping, word segmentation, semantic analysis, multi-purpose aggregation and visual presentation. Among them, more attention will be paid to the semantic analysis and multi-purpose aggregation. Several concepts, such as linear regression, machine learning and unsupervised learning, are combined to help realize several objectives of the opinion summarization, including the cleaning of useless comments, the refining of the key characteristics, the evaluation of review quality and other objectives. Further, since there are many scenes full of reviews and ratings upon different objects, such as foods, books, attractions and Weibo hot topics, our system could be easily transformed to analyse them, which might provide a new perspective on things and could perform much more efficiently upon data of large volume or high velocity.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Review semantic, Chinese Natural language processing, Movie rate prediction, Multi-review opinion summarization

#### 1 Introduction

# 1.1 Motivation

Since the Internet has achieved exponential increasing in these decades, billions of people all over the world benefit from the diversity and immediacy of information brought by

the Internet, which serves as an infinite platform for sharing opinions about everything, such as book reviews, video reviews, shop reviews, social hot comments, etc. Meanwhile, people are also getting accustomed to enjoying these reviews and ratings before or after appreciating the contents to help them preview or search for someone with similar interests. Compared with ratings, text reviews, especially long text comments, are usually more reliable and convinced due to the responsibility and interest of the authors, which might provide plenty of valuable information. However, due to the limited reading speed with respect to the massive data in the Internet, it becomes much harder to obtain useful information efficiently without any auxiliary tools. At the same time, a large amount of junk comments induced by commercial interests also influence the quality of the ratings and reviews. To solve the problem of the summarization of these text-based reviews, we plan to build such an online review analysis system via advanced big data algorithms to improve the process, starting from Chinese movie reviews. Multiple review purposes, such as the cleaning of useless comments, the refining of the key characteristics, the evaluation of review quality and other objectives will be implemented. Further hidden interesting clues are also expected to be dug out via applying the algorithms taught in this course.

#### 1.2 Topics related

To achieve the final goal, many subtopics in this course are highly useful for data processing. Two of the most related course topics should be natural language processing and machine learning. Natural language processing is the preliminary step for the abstraction, and machine learning is employed to aggregate and summarize the conclusions from raw big data. Besides, locality sensitive hashing and dimensionality reduction might also have a chance to be

applied to simplify data processing or enhance the final performance.

#### 1.3 Related work & differences

Our project is to capture the semantic features and the helpfulness of the review and determine the movie opinions according to both of the review representations and the review helpfulness. First of all, this project is related to regression-oriented representation learning. [1-4]employ the convolutional neural networks to learn the sentence/document-level representations.[5] explicitly models the contributions of the sentences within the review via a hierarchical Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU). Different from the above-mentioned works, [6, 7] proposes to combine the temporally recurrent structure and convolutional feature extractor, achieving competitive classification results. Recently, the language model pre-training techniques [8, 9] have been introduced into the classification models and substantially advance the state-of-the-art for the document classification task.

This project is also related to review helpfulness prediction; whose aim is to automatically assess the helpfulness score of the reviews. [10]and [11]are the pioneering works exploiting hand-crafted features for the prediction of review helpfulness. [12] further improves the prediction performance based on argument-based features. [13, 14] conduct some initial attempts to perform the helpfulness prediction with the help of neural network-based models and establish the new state-of-the-art results.

The differences between these problems and the problem investigated in our project are as follows:

- Our project does not solve these two problems separately but unifies them within a multi-task learning framework for predicting the movie-level rating.
- The supervision signals required by the helpfulness prediction task are dispensable in our framework. Theoretically, in order to predict movie-level opinions more accurately, the model has the tendency to highlight the useful reviews and down-weight those useless.

#### 2 Fetching data

The dataset comes from the famous movie website: movie.douban.com, which have millions of movie lovers from mainland China. The whole dataset contains 20 different types of movies that are classified by official Douban website. Each type includes around 1000 popular movies, where one movie has at least 2000 reviews. The reviews are divided into three categories following the scored stars when reviewers made these reviews. We assume

4-5 stars is positive attitude, 3 stars is middle attitude and 1-2 stars is negative emotion. Now we have approximately 500 reviews per class of emotions per movie to train our model and another 500 hottest reviews plus 100 newest reviews per movie for testing. We developed our unique crawler to obtain all the reviews from website and build the special dataset ourselves.

The dataset contains the corresponding reviews of various movies and each movie has its own five rows of reviews, including 500 positive reviews, 500 middle reviews, 500 negative reviews, 500 hottest reviews and 100 newest reviews. The total number of movies in our dataset is around 10000

The example of basic statistics of the dataset is shown in Table 1, which takes The Shawshank Redemption (肖申克

的 救 赎 ) for example. The dataset contains the corresponding reviews of various movies and each movie has its own five rows of reviews, including 500 positive reviews, 500 middle reviews, 500 negative reviews, 500 hottest reviews and 100 newest reviews. The total number of movies in our dataset is around 10000.

Movie	1	2		
Name				
(e.g., 肖申克的救赎)				
POS (500	超级喜欢,不看	经典的电影		
reviews)	的话人生不圆满			
MID (500	好看但这么高的	在我的心中,它一直都是		
reviews)	分有点假了吧	最被高估的电影		
NEG (500	真的不喜欢,不	大众经典我从不感冒,为		
reviews)	好看,没感觉	什么?我欣赏水平不行?		
HOT (500	不需要女主角的	关于希望最有力的诠释		
reviews)	好电影			
NEW (100	超级震撼	看完后劲很大的一部经典		
reviews)		,强推!		

Table 1: Basic statistics of the dataset

**Result of crawled reviews data** crawled around 15000 movies and finally got 10269 unique movies after processing. All of the movie information and the corresponding comments have been written into one csv file. We upload this file to kaggle.com and it is now publicly available at:

https://www.kaggle.com/liujt14/dou-ban-movie-short-comments-10377movies. Each record in the dataset has 12 attributes, including movie name, overall score, stars associated with each comment and so on.

The following figure shows a heading for the whole dataset, and the most important part should be the reviews part.

```
1D, Povile, Jame, Score, Review, People, Starn Distribution, Craw, Date, Usermane, Date, Starr, Comment, Comment, Distribution, Like

9, "1988##6005F Hico, 1988", 7.5, 555, 15.2048, 2023, 233.408, 38, 2019-10-95., Teah Journal Control Co
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Figure 1: The public available dataset on kaggle.com

# 3 Algorithm

#### 3.1 Model

As shown in Fig 2, the core components of the proposed framework are two transformer-based encoders, namely, word encoder and sentence encoder. Both of these two encoders perform the representation learning with the help of self-attention networks [15, 16] multi-head attention mechanism[16], and residual connection [17]. Apart from these features, the word/sentence encoder further introduces a point-wise feed-forward networks to filter some irrelevant information in the transformer output.

Given the i-th review  $\mathbf{x} = \{x_{i1}, ..., x_{iN}\}$  of length N, the embedding component firstly maps the input words to the low-dimensional word embeddings. Then, the obtained word embeddings are fed to word-level encoder for calculating sentence representation  $\mathbf{s}_i$  of the i-th review. Specifically, the word encoder is responsible for capturing word-word semantic dependency and word representation learning. The former one is achieved via self-attention and the transformation process is below:

$$\begin{split} \widehat{\mathbf{H}}^{l-1} &= \text{SLF} - \text{ATT}(\mathbf{Q}^{l-1}, \mathbf{K}^{l-1}, \mathbf{V}^{l-1}) \\ \mathbf{Q}^{l-1} &= \mathbf{H}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{Q} \\ \mathbf{K}^{l-1}, \mathbf{V}^{l-1} &= \mathbf{H}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{K}, \mathbf{H}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{V} \end{split} \tag{1}$$

$$SLF - ATT(\mathbf{Q}, \mathbf{K}, \mathbf{V}) = softmax(\frac{\mathbf{Q}\mathbf{K}^{T}}{\sqrt{d_{k}}})\mathbf{V}$$

where SLF – ATT denotes multi-head self-attention and  $\mathbf{Q}$ ,  $\mathbf{K}$ ,  $\mathbf{V}$  refer to query, key and value respectively.  $d_k$  is the dimension of hidden representations and  $\widehat{\mathbf{H}}^{1-1}$  are the transformed word representations encoding the global context. In order to filter the irrelevant information in the transformed word representations, a feed-forward networks FFN together with residual connection are applied:

$$\mathbf{H}^{l} = FFN(\hat{\mathbf{H}}^{l-1} + \mathbf{H}^{l-1})$$
  

$$FFN(\mathbf{x}) = relu(\mathbf{x}\mathbf{W}_{1} + \mathbf{b}_{1})\mathbf{W}_{2} + \mathbf{b}_{2}$$
 (2)

Where relu refers to relu activation function. The residual connection enables feeding the original word-level features to the calculation of the following layer and can reduce the training difficulty when the neural network is very deep. Note that we pack the word embeddings as **H**<sup>0</sup> here and set the word encoder as a two-layer transformer. As with the aggregation of word-level features, we simply regard the first word representation as sentence representation:

$$\mathbf{s}_{i} = \mathbf{H}_{i}^{2}[0] \tag{3}$$

where  $\mathbf{H}_{i}^{2}$  stores the transformed representations of words in the *i*-th review sentence.

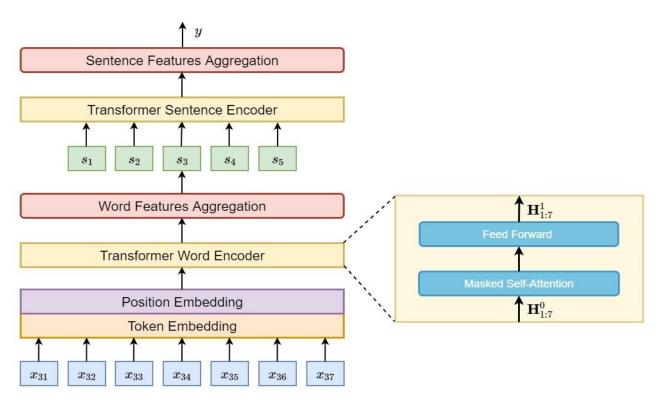


Figure 2: Architecture of the proposed model.

After obtaining the representations  $s_i$  ( $i = 1; \dots; M$ ) of the review sentence for a movie, we introduce sentence-encoder, another transformer-based encoder to calculate the overall review representation of movie. The computational process is as follows:

$$\begin{split} \widehat{\mathbf{S}}^{l-1} &= \text{SLF} - \text{ATT}(\mathbf{Q}'^{l-1}, \mathbf{K}'^{l-1}, \mathbf{V}'^{l-1}) \\ \mathbf{Q}'^{l-1} &= \mathbf{S}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{\mathbb{Q}} \\ \mathbf{K}'^{l-1}, \mathbf{V}'^{l-1} &= \mathbf{S}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{\mathbb{K}}, \mathbf{S}^{l-1} \mathbf{W}^{\mathbb{V}} \end{split}$$
(4)

$$\mathbf{S}^{l} = FFN(\hat{\mathbf{S}}^{l-1} + \mathbf{S}^{l-1})$$
  

$$FFN(\mathbf{x}) = relu(\mathbf{x}\mathbf{W}_{1} + \mathbf{b}_{1})\mathbf{W}_{2} + \mathbf{b}_{2}$$
 (5)

Similar to word encoder, the sentence encoder firstly captures the intra-relation between the review sentences for the same movie via self-attention and employ feed-forward networks to refined the sentence-level representations. The final representation  $\mathbf{r}$  for rating prediction is below:

$$\mathbf{r} = \mathbf{S}^{1}[0] \tag{6}$$

This overall representation is then fed to a linear layer with sigmoid activation to predict the overall movie score  $\hat{y}$ :

$$\hat{\mathbf{y}} = \delta(\mathbf{r}\mathbf{W}_3 + \mathbf{b}_3) \tag{7}$$

#### 3.2 Model training

On the whole, the overall framework is fully differentiable and can be efficiently trained with gradient descent. We adopt Mean-Squared Error as loss function:

$$\mathcal{L} = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{i} (y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2 \tag{8}$$

Where M denotes the number of movies, the training objective is to minimize the value of the loss function  $\mathcal{L}$ 

# 4 Experiment

#### 4.1 Experiment Setup

We utilize the movie review dataset built by ourselves to evaluate the proposed framework. Since there are a lot useless reviews or fake reviews, we adopt a simple rule to filter such kind of review sentences under the assumption that the reviews with high "Like" are more likely to be useful for rating prediction. The statistics of the training/development/testing data set are given in Table 2.

Both the word encoder and the sentence encoder in our framework are 2-layer transformer. The hidden dimension of transformer and the number of head in multi-head self-attention are set as 768 and 8 respectively. To stabilize the training, we apply layer normalization [18] on each transformer output. We employ Adam [19] as optimizer and the initial learning rate is set as 1e-4. The batch size is 8 and we train the model up to 20 epochs. We do not use the word embeddings pre-trained on large-scale corpus to initialize the embedding layer but train it from scratch.

We employ jieba, a popular Chinese Word Segmentation toolkit to transform each review sentence to a word sequence.

Dataset	movies	reviews
Train	8141	421931
Dev	994	43859
Test	1062	26398

Table 2: Statistics for the used dataset.

# 4.2 Comparison Models

**HCNN**: HCNN models the internal structure of movie document (i.e., the collection of reviews for this movie) with hierarchical convolution based encoder. In our implementation, we employ multi-channel CNN [1] as feature extractor.

**HLSTM**: HLSTM sequentially encodes the word/sentence representations to obtain the high-level features for movie review prediction. In our implementation, we employ LSTM [20] as feature extractor.

**LSTM-GRNN** [6]: LSTMGRNN learns sentence representation with LSTM encoder first and then performing composition of sentence representations with gated recurrent neural networks.

**HAN-CNN**: HAN-CNN is a varient of Hierarchical Attention Networks [5] where both word encoder and sentence encoder are set as CNN.

**HAN-LSTM** [5]: HAN-LSTM is another variant of Hierarchical Attention Networks and LSTM is introduced to produce the word-level representations and sentence-level representations.

#### 4.3 Evaluation Metrics

Since the problem studied in this paper is actually a regression problem, we adopt Mean-Squared Error (MSE),



Figure 3: Movie ratings result of the proposed model

one of the most commonly-used metric, to evaluate the model's capability of review rating. The formula of MSE, identical to Eq 8, is as follows:

$$MSE = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{j} (y_j - \hat{y}_j)^2$$
 (9)

#### 5 Result and discussion

# 5.1 Result of the model output

With the above algorithm and experiment methods, we got the output movie ratings using two proposed models. The first model named Model 1 is trained with additional data clearing procedures, like filtering with like parameters with the truth that reviews having small like values are less useful. The other model named Model 2 here is trained without data clearing procedures. Figure 3 shows ten movies with the score range from 0.3 to 0.9 as an example set. We want to find that if additional data clearing procedure could help movie lovers to remove the "water" of one movie. Here we compared the actual score of these movies and the rating results from our two models. The first column is the actual score, which we think is the ideal movie score, since it comes from the large number of reviewers. However, some short comment reviewers would like to occupy the comments with rubbish contents, these comments may make the score higher or lower than the actual score. In this case, the third column of figure 3 shows the big difference between rating of model 2 and original score of the movie. Fortunately, with the improvement of the clearing step, the second column shows better performance to get closer to the real score. The output shows that, this additional procedure introduces better performance, that is to say, less error between the exact movie rating.

Figure 4 shows the corresponding rating bias between our model and Douban rating. It can be easily seen that the bias of our model 1 (with additional data clearing procedure) has less mean value and shows narrower error limits. This figure is a supplement to the above conclusion.

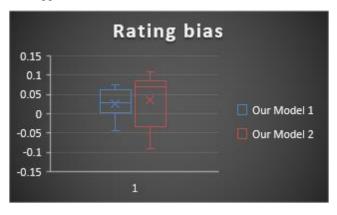


Figure 4: Movie rating bias of the proposed model

To examine what cause the better performance of model 1, we draw the attention graph as the function of *like* numbers. Figure 5 is the generated attention graph. Here we choose one movie with less reviews. The abscissa is each review with its "like" value, the ordinate is the attention of each review. This result proved that attention and the *like* value has highly relevant relationship. This result is also consistent with our common sense. After all, the review with more "like" means that more people agree with it, in general.

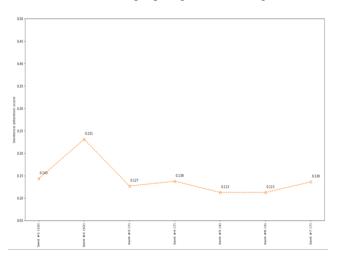


Figure 5: Generated attention graph

# 5.2 Discussion

As shown in Table 3, we compare our model with other five models (HCNN, HLSTM, LSTM-GRNN, HAN-CNN, HAN-LSTM). The criterion is mean-squared error (MSE).

Methods	MSE (unit: 1e-3)
HCNN	17.5
HLSTM	19.3
LSTM-GRNN	12.8
HAN-CNN	8.9
HAN-LSTM	6.5
Our Model	3.7

Table 3. Error analysis of semantic analysis model

Compared to other five models, our model obtains the best performance using our test set of Douban movie information.

#### 6 Conclusion

In this project, we successfully perform rating evaluation on movie reviews. Compared with other common models, our model obtains the best performance.

In the comparison between two models training with/without additional data clearing procedure, the former model obtains better result. It reflects that the review which is more appreciated by others always expresses their emotion more accurately. Hence, the model training without useless reviews map emotion to rating more accurately.

At the same time, we successfully visualize attention map of each movie. Interestingly, we find that the final attention map is consistent with the "like" value of reviews. This shows that the review with more "like" value is always more accurate to the true rating of this certain object.

For further development, more efforts can be made to solve and remove junk reviews, such as manually labelling junk reviews or summarizing certain features. In this way, we can eliminate the interference of junk reviews and obtain accurate results.

On the other hand, much more cases can be trained to help improve the performance of this model, such as the reviews of Zhihu, Weibo, Youku and so on. The bigger, boarder datasets we utilize, the better performance we might obtain. Also, there may be more interesting conclusions or even some contrary to our common sense in our output.

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