Team Reflective Journal

Team Name: TeamSharise

Course: ITAI-2373 – Natural Language Processing

Student: Sharise Griggs

Project Title: NewsBot Intelligence System 2.0

Date: August 3, 2024

Project Reflection

For this final project, I worked independently under the team name "TeamSharise," and I'm proud of how much I was able to accomplish on my own. The goal of the project was to turn our midterm NewsBot into a complete AI system, something production-ready and portfolio-worthy. That meant integrating advanced NLP features, building a user-facing interface, documenting everything clearly, and submitting it in a professional format.

The most challenging part for me was connecting all the pieces together not just building models in Jupyter notebooks, but making sure those models could be deployed through a real web app that worked reliably. I pushed myself to build two separate Flask apps one for news category classification and one for topic modeling and sentiment analysis. That included saving my models as `.pkl` files, loading them back into the app, and customizing the HTML interface with prediction outputs. It took hours of trial and error, especially dealing with dependencies, but I finally got it to work and I'm proud of the result.

Key Learning Moments

One major takeaway was realizing how different it is to write code that works in a notebook vs. writing code that runs in a real-world application. I had to think about things like user input validation, formatting the results, and making sure my Flask app wouldn't break when unexpected text was entered. I also learned more about version control, Git, and how to properly organize and push my project to GitHub using the command line and personal access token.

I learned how important it is to stay organized and think like a software engineer not just a student. Creating folders like `notebooks`, `models`, and `templates`, writing a solid `README.md`, and naming everything correctly for submission all helped me feel more confident about my ability to work in real project environments.

My Contributions

Although this project was technically a group assignment, I completed all deliverables on my own due to prior team coordination issues. I built:

- Notebook 02: News Category Classifier using TF-IDF + Logistic Regression
- Notebook 03: Topic Modeling with LDA + Sentiment with TextBlob
- Two working Flask web apps — with saved model files and customized HTML
- README.md: Clear setup instructions and project breakdown
- Technical Documentation and Executive Summary
- PowerPoint Presentation showing all my work visually
- GitHub repository with everything structured and uploaded via terminal

I handled all of the development, debugging, testing, deployment, and documentation myself.

Final Thoughts

This was one of the most intense but rewarding projects I've worked on so far. It pushed me to use everything I've learned in this course — from text preprocessing and vectorization to topic modeling, sentiment scoring, and deployment. I came out of this project feeling way more confident in my ability to build, document, and present real AI applications.

Now that it's complete, I feel proud of what I've built and excited to show this in my future portfolio. I also feel more prepared for future internships or roles that require hands-on NLP or AI development.

Submission Link

GitHub Repository:
https://github.com/stauriea21/sharise-ai-newsbot-final