

# Prediction Sentiment Polarity using Past Textual Content and CNN-LSTM Neural Networks

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**Keywords:** Sentiment Analysis, Past Textual Content, Text-mining, Deep-learning.

**Abstract:** Sentiment analysis in social networks plays an important role in different areas, and one of its main tasks is to determine the polarity of sentiments about many things. In this paper, our goal is to create a supervised machine learning model for predicting the polarity of users' sentiments, based solely on their textual history, about a predefined topic. The proposed approach is based on neural network architectures: the long short term memory (LSTM) and the convolutional neural networks (CNN). To experiment our system, we have purposely created a collection from SemEval-2017 data. The results revealed that our approach outperforms the comparison approach.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Companies and other organizations need to know what people want through their opinions, impressions, etc. On the other hand, the huge volume of digital data available allows us to analyze them and create models according to the desired objective. Among these data, there are that of social media, which are seen as key platforms, where people express their sadness, happiness and attitude. In the field of sentiment analysis or opinion mining, experts use data for different purposes, such as predicting election results, predicting box-office revision and detecting opinions about a specific product, etc. In addition, there are two essential tasks in this field: emotion recognition (extraction of emotion labels) and polarity detection (positive, negative or neutral). All other tasks depend on both.

In the absolute sense, people's sentiments about specific things depend primarily on their backgrounds, so if the latter are available in the form of usable data, they can be used to predict sentiments. In this work, we aim to predict the polarity sentiment of a given user towards a specific topic. The prediction depends uniquely on a user's past textual content. For example, a company can rely on the previous texts of social media influencers to understand their orientations on a topic identified by words. Hence, it could understand the general sentiment towards a topic. Up to our knowledge, the only attempt was

this work (Belhareth and Latiri, 2019), The authors used a representation that depends on the polarity intensity of each tweet and the semantic similarity with the topics in order to apply different classifiers. Certainly, there are works that use past user content, but the use is for a main content reinforcement. For example, (Jiménez-Zafra et al., 2017) used past tweets as additional data for the tweet polarity classification.

In general, there are two types of approaches as quoted in (Hassan and Mahmood, 2018): traditional methods such as N-gram models that require a laborious feature engineering process, which usually results in redundant or missing features (Zhou et al., 2019). Secondly, the use of word-embedding features as inputs to classifiers and deep-learning methods which showed a great performance in the last years. Our approach is based on these latter methods. The most commonly used are convolutional neural network (CNN) and recurrent neural network (RNN). The CNN architecture is frequently used in the text classification process, and its purpose is generally to extract local information. The RNN is designed to handle entries that are in sequence, where the order is important.

Methods are tested on a collection created from the SemEval-2017 (Rosenthal et al., 2019a) corpus. We extract from it the users information in order to collect their past tweets, and the topics on which they have given their opinions and the sentiments of tweets for the categorization of observations.

In section 2, we present the related work. Section 3 presents our approach. The experiments are described in section 4. Finally, we conclude with the conclusion section.

## 2 RELATED WORK

This work falls within the field of affective forecasting. This field is divided into four components (Wilson and Gilbert, 2003): the prediction of valences (i.e. positive or negative), the specific emotions, their intensity, and their duration. In this study, we focus on the valence prediction component of social networks. Most of the work involved in social media prediction has used sentiment as a means to predict something else. For example:

- (Asur and Huberman, 2010) made a model that predicted the movie box office revenues using Twitter data. They used the model machine learning linear regression, and their principal parameters were: the rate of attention and the polarity of sentiments.
- (Tumasjan et al., 2010) worked on Germany's election prediction using Twitter and they proved the importance and richness of Twitter data, which reflected the political sentiment in a meaningful way.
- (Si et al., 2013) and (Nguyen et al., 2015) focused on the prediction of the stock index, based on sentiments detected from various topics of the recent past using twitter data.

Some work has been interested in the prediction of sentiments, but the goals are different. For instance:

- (Nguyen et al., 2012) created a model for predicting the dynamics of collective sentiments in Twitter, which depended on three main parameters: the time of the tweet history, the time to demonstrate the response of Twitter, and its duration. They utilized automatic learning models such as the support vector machine (SVM), the logistic regression and the decision tree.
- (Yoo et al., 2018) created a system that firstly detected real-time events, secondly, classified users' sentiments using CNN, and finally predicted the next sentimental path using LSTM.

On the other hand, task B of SemEval 2017 consists in classifying tweets according to the sentiment polarities towards a topic. Differently from our case, the classification depends only on past tweets. We can quote some studies of this task: (Cliche, 2017;

Kolovou et al., 2017; Müller et al., 2017) which used CNN, (Baziotis et al., 2017) who used the RNN.

All the work mentioned above treated the input (sentence, paragraph or tweet ...) as homogeneous information. Unlike our case, we use a set of tweets where each one represents different information. This problem is relatively similar to that of the classification of documents, where a document consists of several sentences. We can quote for example the work of (Zhang et al., 2016), whose objective is to classify movie review data according to the sentiment polarity. The author split each document into several sentences using punctuation, in order to treat separately each sentence information. In addition, they used both CNN and RNN architectures for their approach. Concerning the comparison approach, we use the methods based on word embedding which have shown a good performance in several studies. For example, the authors in (Conde-Cespedes et al., 2018) and (Djaballah et al., 2019) were interested in detecting a suspicious content in a given tweet. The authors in (Conde-Cespedes et al., 2018) used the simple averaging method of Word2vec while the authors in (Djaballah et al., 2019) utilized weighted averaging. However, since we work with several tweets at the same time, as well as a topic, we add two averaging operations: the first one is between tweets, and the second one is between the average of tweets and the topic.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Notations and Problem Definition

We consider a set of twitter users  $\mathcal{U}$  of size  $N$  and a set of topics  $\mathcal{T}$  of size  $M$ , where one topic represents a set of terms. We denote by  $\mathcal{E} = \{(e_1, s_1), \dots, (e_P, s_P)\}$  a set of tweets associated with its polarities, where  $e_k$  is a tweet and  $s_k \in \{1, 0\}$  (1 and 0 respectively indicate the positive and negative sentiments). Moreover, tweets were written by users  $\mathcal{U}$  about topics  $\mathcal{T}$ . We point out that one user can write several tweets about several topics. Of course, we just use the polarities of these tweets for categorization, as well as their usernames, so we can collect past tweets.

$C = \{c^1, \dots, c^P\}$  is a set of users past contents (tweets), where  $c^i$  is the past content of a user who wrote tweet  $e_i$ . It is a set of tweets with a maximum size  $Q$ . these tweets were written before the date of tweet  $e_i$ . Each user must have a number of tweets lower or equal to  $Q$  (it is a parameter to be inferred). Before the selection of  $Q$  tweets, a ranking operation is necessary in order to process the tweets that are se-

manically close to the current topic. This operation is done by measuring the cosine similarity between the word-embedding vectors of the tweets and the topic. We would like to point out that the ranking used in work (Belhareth and Latiri, 2019) is with respect to time. And we consider that this choice is illogical since they probably process tweets that are semantically far from topic.

Our aim is to create a sentiment forecasting model that depends on supervised learning. Its role is to classify the past content of a user according to a specific topic. We consider the training set  $\mathcal{D} = \{(c^1, t_{e_1}, s_1), \dots, (c^\ell, t_{e_\ell}, s_\ell)\}$ , and  $\mathcal{F} = \{(c^{\ell+1}, t_{e_{\ell+1}}, s_{\ell+1}), \dots, (c^p, t_{e_p}, s_p)\}$  is the set of test, where  $(c^k, t_{e_k})$  represents the input sample of the model,  $s_k$  represents its output, and  $c^k$  is the past content of user  $u_{e_k}$  who wrote tweet  $e_k$  about topic  $t_{e_k}$  and its sentiment  $s_k$  (see figure 1).

## 3.2 Model Description

### 3.2.1 Embedded Layer

As aforementioned, the input of our model is a set of past tweets from a user, as well as a topic, to predict its sentiment polarity.

First, we have to pass the inputs to a layer called the embedding layer. Its role is to convert words to real values where each passed tweet becomes a matrix of real numbers, and so is for the topic. This conversion is based on a dictionary, named word embedding, where each word is represented by a vector of real numbers. In general, it is generated from techniques that take a set of textual documents in order to find a numerical representation of words where the distances between them are semantic ones. Eventually, we have multiple inputs:  $c^k$  is a set of past tweets represented by matrices where one tweet is represented as  $c_j^k \in \mathbb{R}^{v \times d}$  and the topic  $t_{e_k}$  is represented in the same way as  $c_j^k$ . It is worth mentioning that we use the "zero-padding" technique in order to obtain the same word count dimension  $v$  of all tweets and topics. Then, the tweets will be treated by an LSTM-based model.

### 3.2.2 Sub-model based on LSTM

To extract the semantic meaning for tweets (Zhang et al., 2016), we used the LSTM layer, which is an improvement of the RNN operation designed to manage the input in the sequence form, to obtain either a prediction of the next element of it, or to encode in order to have a new encoded sequence. If we pass a

set of tweet words  $c_j^k = [x_1, \dots, x_v]$  as a sequence, each one is the input of an RNN-cell and at each step  $t$  the hidden state  $h_t$  is calculated as follows (Elman, 1990):

$$h_t = f(W_h x_t + U h_{t-1} + b_h) \quad (1)$$

The limit of RNNs resides in the exploding and Vanishing gradient (Hochreiter et al., 2001). LSTM overcomes this problem and provides larger memory to store more past data. The hidden state  $h_t$  of LSTM cell is calculated as follows (Gers et al., 1999) (Hochreiter and Schmidhuber, 1997):

$$i_t = \sigma(W^i x_t + U^i h_{t-1} + b_i) \quad (2)$$

$$f_t = \sigma(W^f x_t + U^f h_{t-1} + b_f) \quad (3)$$

$$o_t = \sigma(W^o x_t + U^o h_{t-1} + b_o) \quad (4)$$

$$g_t = \sigma(W^g x_t + U^g h_{t-1} + b_g) \quad (5)$$

$$c_t = f_t \circ c_{t-1} + i_t \circ g_t \quad (6)$$

$$h_t = o_t \circ \tanh(c_t) \quad (7)$$

where  $i_t$ ,  $f_t$  and  $o_t$  are respectively the input, forget and output gates,  $\sigma$  and  $\tanh$  are the sigmoid and hyperbolic tangent functions, and  $\circ$  is the element-wise product operator. After getting the vector of different hidden states of each word  $h^j = [h_1, \dots, h_v]$ , we feed-forward it to the average pooling layer, which simply averages the elements of  $h^j$  (see figure 2). This model is applied in a distributed manner to each past tweet, and it is applied also to the input topic. Before passing to the convolution layer, an averaging operation is done between the output generated by the precedent model of each past tweet and that of the topic. It is represented by  $F_j$ , and it is the feature vector generated between  $c_j^k$  and the topic  $t_{e_k}$ .

### 3.2.3 Sub-model based on CNN-LSTM

A convolution layer is applied on the output of the precedent layer. It is based on the one proposed by (Kim, 2014). We apply one filter of size  $h$  for each region size. For example, to produce a map feature  $z = [z_1, \dots, z_{Q-h+1}]$ , a filter  $W \in \mathbb{R}^{h \times d}$  is multiplied by the  $n$ -gram tweet sequences, and an element of  $z$  is calculated as follows:

$$z_n = f(W \cdot c_{j:n+h_1-1}^k + b) \quad (8)$$

where  $b \in \mathbb{R}$  is a bias value and  $f(x)$  is a non-linear function such as the ReLU function. Generally, the layer that follows the convolution layer is max-pooling, but we choose to replace it with the LSTM layer, in order to improve the performance and the time complexity (Hassan and Mahmood, 2018) (see figure 3).

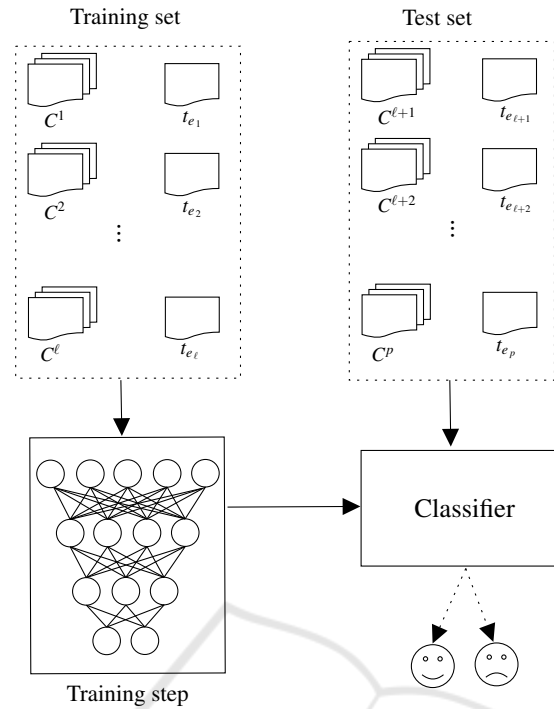


Figure 1: Overview of our approach.

### 3.2.4 Classification Layer

Finally, the output of the CNN-LSTM sub-model goes through the classification layer. It is a sigmoid activation function and its role is to compute the predicted probabilities of both categories (positive or negative sentiments). We can see the overall architecture of the approach in figure 4.

## 4 EXPERIMENTS

### 4.1 Data Collection

In this work, we need a specific collection of users who have posted tweets on different topics and their polarities, as well as the past tweets of each user. The SemEval-2017 (Rosenthal et al., 2019a) data and specifically the sub-task B data (classification of tweets according to the 2 polarities, positive and negative). In fact, it is an appropriate collection to create our own one. The tweets collection is composed of a training set, which was collected from July to December 2015 (the English tweets collection of SemEval-2016 (Nakov et al., 2019) and also some of SemEval-2015 (Rosenthal et al., 2019b)), and the test set, which was collected from December 2016 to January 2017. Several categories of tweets topics can be

distinguished, such as public personalities, athletes, artists, books, social phenomena, movies, etc. For each tweet in the collection of two sets, we collect the past tweets of its author, using python package<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately, after the collection of past tweets, we delete tweets for the following reasons:

- Unavailable authors (deleted or secure account)
- Authors who only have a number of past tweets below 30 (the maximum number is 300)
- An author who has written more than once on the same topic. In this case we just keep the first tweet

Table 1 shows the statistics before and after the collection of past tweets.

Table 1: Statistic collection.

	Topic	User	Positive	Negative	Total
<b>Train</b>	373	-	14,951	4,013	18964
<b>Test</b>	125	-	2,463	3,722	6185
<b>After past tweets collection</b>					
<b>Train</b>	348	10132	8104	2092	10196
<b>Test</b>	115	2476	788	1710	2498

<sup>1</sup><https://github.com/Jefferson-Henrique/GetOldTweets-python>

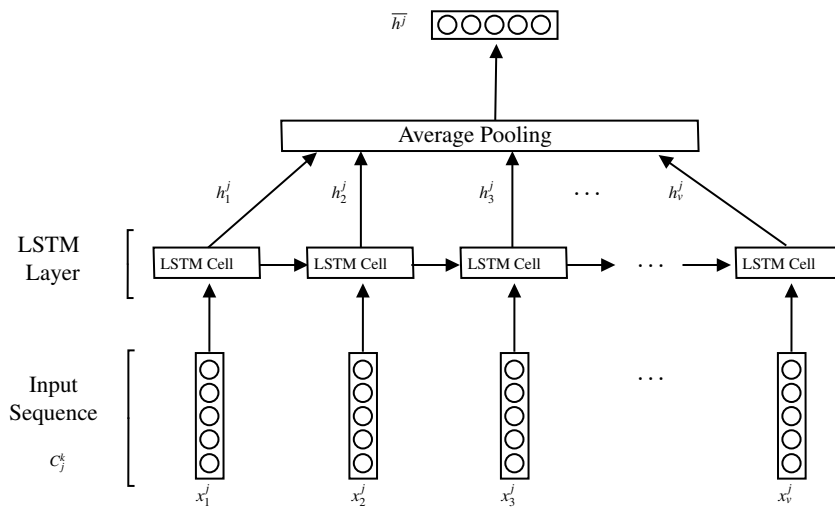


Figure 2: LSTM Sub-model.

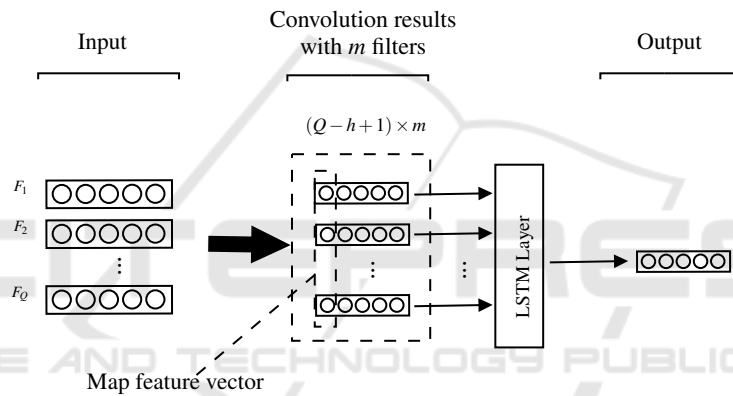


Figure 3: CNN-LSTM Sub-model.

### 4.2 Tweet Pre-processing

Tweets must go through the pre-processing stage before being fed to the learning models. To do this, we apply the following different steps:

- Remove URLs.
- Replace emojis by their short name such as <smile>, <laughing>, <worried>, etc. (using python package<sup>2</sup>)
- Convert tweet text to all lowercase letters.

### 4.3 Pre-trained Word Embeddings

We choose the unsupervised word embeddings model of Datasories(Baziotis et al., 2017) work, in order to initialize the word vectors. It is generated from a large number of tweets using Glove(Pennington et al.,

<sup>2</sup><https://pypi.org/project/emoji/>

2014). Its availability and performance allows us to rely on it.

### 4.4 Evaluation Measures

The performance is evaluated using average recall, F1- score and accuracy. These metrics have been used by SemEval participants. They are defined as follows:

$$R = \frac{1}{2}(R^P + R^N) \tag{9}$$

where  $R^P$  and  $R^N$  represent the positive and negative recalls, respectively.

$$F_1^{PN} = \frac{F_1^P + F_1^N}{2} \tag{10}$$

where  $F_1^P$  and  $F_1^N$  represent the positive and negative F1-score, respectively.

Finally, accuracy is simply the ratio between the number of observations correctly assigned to the total number.

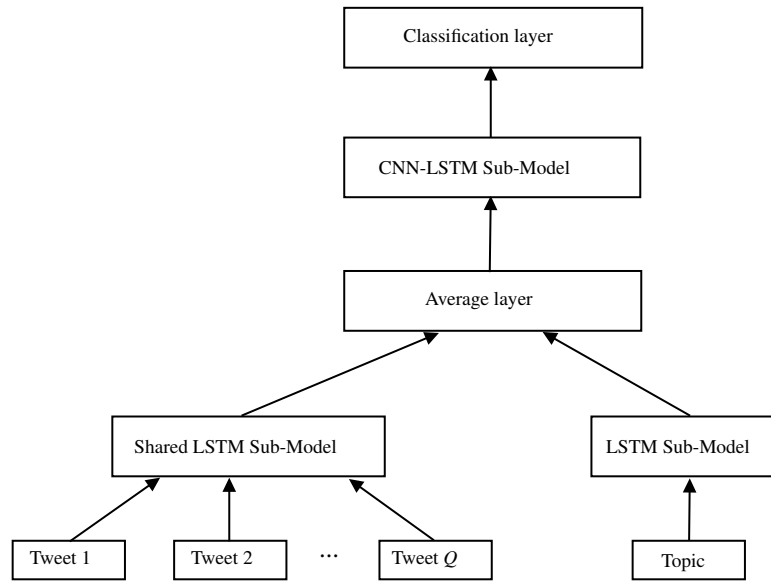


Figure 4: Architecture of proposed approach.

Since the dataset is divided into several topics, we calculate the measures individually for each topic and then average the results across the topics. As a result, the results obtained are named as follows: *AvgRecall*, *AvgFscore* and *AvgAcc*.

#### 4.5 Optimization

We randomly divide the training set into two subsets, the division is made by topics with 20% for the validation set and the rest for the training set. After a validation of parameters, we used an LSTM layer with hidden state dimension of size 32 for LSTM sub-model. For the CNN-LSTM sub-model, a convolution layer is considered with a filter number of 256 and a kernel size equal to 1 (chosen after a validation step with several numbers when the past tweets number is set at 10), followed by an LSTM layer of size 128.

Finally, to reduce the model over-fitting, we add some dropout layers: the first layer is after the embedding layers, one other before the average layer, one other between the CNN and LSTM layers in the CNN-LSTM sub-model and last one before the classification layer. In addition, we have use the L2 vector norms for the regularization of weights for certain layers. A validation of the past tweets number parameter  $Q$  is done after a model evaluation on multiple numbers ([15,10,30,50,100,150,200,250,300]) on the validation set. Table 3 contains the results of the model experimented on the test set.

For sentiment-intensity-based approach (Belhareth and Latiri, 2019), we follow the cross-

validation technique by setting the number of past tweets to 10. then, validate the validation of the past tweets number  $Q$  by the same technique (we also used the cosine similarity measure for ranking the past tweets). We also use the Principal Component Analysis (PCA)(Abdi and Williams, 2010) technique to reduce data dimensions by extracting important information in order to improve the performance of classifiers.

#### 4.6 Results and Discussion

Table 3 shows the results of different models experimented on the test set. For the sentiment-intensity-based approach, the PCA technique improves the performance of all classifiers except the Linear SVM classifier. We can note that the classifier naive bayes with PCA is the best model for this approach. On the other hand, our approach outperforms all comparison models, and outperforms the best models by more than 4% for the *AvgRecall* metric, by about 5% for the *AvgFscore* metric and by around 6% for the *AvgAcc* metric.

In addition, we notice that the number of past tweets chosen for the different classifiers as well as our approach are divergent, and this requires us to do a deep analysis in order to understand its effect.

Furthermore, a comparison with a model that directly processes the tweets that carry the sentiment without the past tweets is recommended in order to evaluate the utility of processing only the past tweets.



Table 2: Some observations of SemEval-2017 collection.

Id	Topic: $t_{e_k}$	Polarity: $s_k$	Text: $e_k$
802377144638709760	social security	negative	history is like your social Security number. long, useless, but needed.
805705353493155840	brexit	positive	@pimpmytweeting Happy birthday have a great day and drink a toast Brexit
805659700104691713	abortion	negative	I pray that you are against abortion, and political candidates who allow/promote abortion, to the same degree UR against the death penalty.
802351474005209088	wall on the mexican border	positive	@BIZPACReview This is great news. For a Mexican effort to build a parallel wall on their side of the border too.

Table 3: Results of different comparison models and our approach according to specified metrics.

Methode		Past tweets number: $Q$	AvgRecall	AvgFscore	AvgAcc
<b>Sentiment-intensity-based approach</b>					
Naive Bayes	Without PCA	30	0.570414	0.541824	0.704695
	<b>With PCA</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.594532</b>	<b>0.565484</b>	<b>0.717732</b>
Logistic Regression	Without PCA	300	0.575018	0.502351	0.605860
	With PCA	300	0.593699	0.506071	0.614399
Random Forest	Without PCA	10	0.459768	0.356416	0.454842
	With PCA	20	0.539360	0.418966	0.515915
Linear SVM	Without PCA	300	0.297630	0.319390	0.413075
	With PCA	10	0.288931	0.318957	0.412645
RBF SVM	Without PCA	20	0.567220	0.481756	0.573595
	With PCA	30	0.592770	0.493887	0.581992
<b>Our approach</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>0.639172</b>	<b>0.612123</b>	<b>0.774180</b>

## 5 CONCLUSION

In this paper, a sentiment prediction approach is proposed, depending uniquely on users' past tweets, and the objective is to predict their sentiment polarities on a specific topic. To do so, we have created a collection from the SemeEval-2017 collection. Our approach depends on the LSTM and CNN architectures performs better than the different suggested comparison models. In the end, it is necessary, first, to create a collection that is balanced at the polarity class level and which contains more than two classes to better test the approach and, second, to use other feature extraction techniques to improve the performance.

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