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TOPIC IDENTIFICATION CONSIDERING WORD ORDER
BY USING MARKOV CHAINS

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Preface

The research provided hereunder was conducted between June 2012 and May 2016 under the supervision of Professor Christoph Schommer. Following the list of publications is exposed.

- Dimitrios Kampas, Christoph Schommer, and Ulrich Sorger. A Hidden Markov Model to detect relevance in financial documents based on on/off topics. *European Conference on Data Analysis*, 2014.
- Dimitrios Kampas and Christoph Schommer. A Hybrid Classification System to Find Financial News that are Relevant. *European Conference on Data Analysis*, 2013.
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This small piece of work is dedicated to my nephews Yannis and Michel hoping that one day I will have the chance to read their PhD thesis.

Abstract

Automated topic identification of text has gained a significant attention since a vast amount of documents in digital forms are widespread and continuously increasing. Probabilistic topic models are a family of statistical methods that unveil the latent structure of the documents defining the model that generates the text a priori.

They infer about the topic(s) of a document considering the bag-of-words assumption, which is unrealistic considering the sophisticated structure of the language. The result of such a simplification is the extraction of topics that are vague in terms of their interpretability since they disregard any relations among the words that may settle word ambiguity. Topic models miss significant structural information inherent in the word order of a document.

In this thesis, we introduce a novel stochastic topic identifier for text data that addresses the above shortcomings. The primary motivation of this work is initiated by the assertion that word order reveals text semantics in a human-like way. Our approach recognizes an on-topic document trained solely on the experience of an on-class corpus. It incorporates the word order in terms of word groups to deal with data sparsity of conventional n-gram language models that usually require a large volume of training data. Markov chains hereby provide a reliable potential to capture short and long range language dependencies for topic identification. Words are deterministically associated with classes to improve the probability estimates of the infrequent ones. We demonstrate our approach and motivate its eligibility on several datasets of different domains and languages. Moreover, we present a pioneering work by introducing a hypothesis testing experiment that strengthens the claim that word order is a significant factor for topic identification. Stochastic topic identifiers are a promising initiative for building more sophisticated topic identification systems in the future.

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List of Acronyms

LDA Latent Dirichlet Allocation

pLSI Probabilistic Latent Semantic Indexing

L-topic LDA topic

LSI Latent Semantic Indexing

IR Information Retrieval

MLE Maximum Likelihood Estimation

CTM Correlated Topic Model

HMM Hidden Markov Model

IDF Inverse Document Frequency

SVD Singular Value Decomposition

TF Term Frequency

NLP Natural Language Processing

BoW bag-of-words

NB Naïve Bayes

CRP Chinese Restaurant Process

HMM Hidden Markov Model

STM Syntactic Topic Model

SVM Support Vector Machines

NLP Natural Language Processing

FED Federal Reserve Bank

FOMC Federal Reserve Open Market Committee

OANC Open American National Corpus

MASC Manually Annotated Sub-Corpus

MTI Markovian Topic Identifiers

MLE Maximum Likelihood Estimation

LTS Logarithmic Topic Score

MCC Matthews Correlation Coefficient

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Study Motivation

The amount of documents available in digital form is overwhelming and continuously increasing. Nowadays there is a growing interest in digesting the information provided in the text. Considering the limitations of human processing capacity, more automatic text processing approaches have been developed to address the issue of text understanding. When dealing with a big collection of text documents, it would be convenient for each document to have a “short description” that could briefly give us what it is about. We may use it to select the text(s) of interest or achieve a text overview. Moreover, we may use the extracted information to introduce new metrics to categorize, cluster or measure the “similarity” or “relevance” of documents.

Numerous approaches have been developed on how to extract content-features based on different statistical weights [42, 50]. Recently, probabilistic topic models have gained significant attention as a modern way to capture semantic properties of documents. [LDA](#) [9] which is a widely used topic identification method on large corpora considers that documents are mixtures of distributions over words. [LDA](#) outputs sets-of-words out of a collection of documents naming each individual set, a *topic*¹ as

¹We call the topic of [LDA](#) as *L-topic* to distinguish by the human perception of topic

it is demonstrated in Figure 1.1. They claim [9] that the significantly co-occurring words in a document provide us with the LDA topics (**L-topics**) of a document. For instance, they expect the terms “pasta” and “pizza” to appear in a document discussing about Italian food. They employ the extracted sets-of-words to assign **L-topic** mixtures to documents regarding their word proportion or they classify texts regarding their **L-topic** similarity (word proportion).

word	prob.	word	prob.	word	prob.	word	prob.
DRUGS	.069	RED	.202	MIND	.081	DOCTOR	.074
DRUG	.060	BLUE	.099	THOUGHT	.066	DR.	.063
MEDICINE	.027	GREEN	.096	REMEMBER	.064	PATIENT	.061
EFFECTS	.026	YELLOW	.073	MEMORY	.037	HOSPITAL	.049
BODY	.023	WHITE	.048	THINKING	.030	CARE	.046
MEDICINES	.019	COLOR	.048	PROFESSOR	.028	MEDICAL	.042
PAIN	.016	BRIGHT	.030	FELT	.025	NURSE	.031
PERSON	.016	COLORS	.029	REMEMBERED	.022	PATIENTS	.029
MARIJUANA	.014	ORANGE	.027	THOUGHTS	.020	DOCTORS	.028
LABEL	.012	BROWN	.027	FORGOTTEN	.020	HEALTH	.025
ALCOHOL	.012	PINK	.017	MOMENT	.020	MEDICINE	.017
DANGEROUS	.011	LOOK	.017	THINK	.019	NURSING	.017
ABUSE	.009	BLACK	.016	THING	.016	DENTAL	.015
EFFECT	.009	PURPLE	.015	WONDER	.014	NURSES	.013
KNOWN	.008	CROSS	.011	FORGET	.012	PHYSICIAN	.012
PILLS	.008	COLORED	.009	RECALL	.012	HOSPITALS	.011

Figure 1.1: Each **LDA** topic (column) lists sixteen words. Next to each word is assigned the probability of the term to belong to the corresponding **L-topic** [54].

To infer about the document **L-topics**, **LDA** relies on the following assumptions:

- Documents are generated by initially choosing a document-specific distribution over **L-topics**, and then repeatedly selecting an **L-topic** from this distribution and drawing a word from the **L-topic** selected.
- The permutation of the words in the document let the model unaffected - each document is modeled as a bag-of-words (**BoW**).

The latter assumption implies that the document structure is disregarded. The key insight of **LDA** is the premise that words convey strong semantic information about

the content of the document. In other words, Blei et al. assume that texts on similar **L-topics** consist of the similar **BoW**. **LDA** definition of topic neglects other text semantics; the authors mention [9] that: “*A topic is characterized by a distribution over the words in the vocabulary*” and “*the word distributions can be viewed as representations of topics*”. But, the fact that the word order is ignored is the main deficit of this method; in fact, it is an important component [1] of the document structure since two passages may have the same words statistics, nonetheless, different topics. For example, the passages “*the department chair couches offers*” [56] and “*the chair department offers couches*” [56] convey different topics but the vocabularies and the word frequencies are identical.

The above example depicts that the human perception of topic encompasses the word order. After **LDA** was published several works remark and deal with word order as a significant factor to improve the quality of topics [58, 53, 41] and the performance of clustering or classification systems. Word order has been considered as an indicative factor for topic inference and a fundamental element to improve natural language representation. In 2006 Wallach [56] claimed that: “*It is likely that word order can assist in topic inference*”. In 2013, Shoaib et al. [53] claimed that: “*Some recent topic models have demonstrated better qualitative and quantitative performance when the bag-of-words assumption is relaxed*”, thus they introduced a model that is no longer invariant to word reshuffling since it preserves the ordering of the words [53]. In 2009, Andrews et al. [1] discuss the importance of word order in semantic representation. They claim that: “*The sequential order in which words occur (...) provide vital information about the possible meaning of words. This information is unavailable in bag-of-words models and consequently the extent to which they can extract semantic information from text, or adequately model human semantic learning, is limited.*”.

In this thesis, we study the word impact on topic recognition by introducing a model to improve topic inference incorporating the order of words. Our topic identification approach considers the sequential statistics of documents. It extends the prevalent bag-of-words paradigm and infers about the topic discourse of text by considering

the inherent sequential semantics. The goal of our model is to classify a document as ‘on’ - close with a domain specific discourse - or ‘off’ otherwise. It detects similar structural properties of a new document with respect to the provided input.

However, it is not a conventional binary classifier since it relies exclusively on the experience of documents of one class. We often need to recognize documents of a particular topic out of an ocean of ‘off’ documents because it is easy to gather data on the requested situation and it is rather expensive or impossible to do the same for data of undesirable situations. In this setup, ordinary classification systems are inappropriate since they require training in the entire universe of topics to be effective.

A promising approach to incorporate word sequence applied on different applications related to natural language is using a Markovian model. In literature, Markovian models have been used on text to perform topic segmentation [8, 45, 53], [LDA](#)-like topic identification [1, 28, 45] and speech recognition [37, 48]. They provide a way to model the sequential semantics of the natural language. In this work, we have modeled a stochastic process for word sequences, where each word is conditionally dependent of its preceding words. A Markov chain hereby provide a reliable potential to incorporate language and domain dependencies for topic recognition. They are trained to employ knowledge provided about the corpus words and recognize topics regarding the sequential statistics of the input. The knowledge used is tuned and gauged to achieve superior results.

1.2 Natural Language and Topic

The problem for scientists that deal with natural language is that human language holds ambiguities. First, different words may convey the same meaning and each word might have diverse meanings in different sentences. Second, at the sentence level, the valid sequence of parts of speech, might have more than one reasonable structure making it challenging to disambiguate the sentence meaning. Although humans deal with natural language ambiguities effectively, it is not straightforward how machines can deal with them.

The complexity of human language makes abstract notions like meaning or topic difficult to be addressed. In topic research a central question someone may meet is: *What is a topic?* Provided an answer to this question might reflect the building of systems that perform effectively on identifying topics.

Linguists provide many definitions of a topic. In 1983, Brown and Yule [23] stated that “*the notion of topic is clearly an intuitively satisfactory way of describing the unifying principle which makes one stretch of discourse ‘about’ something and the next stretch ‘about’ something else, for it is appealed to very frequently in the discourse analysis literature*”. According to the authors, the topic is a very frequent - but usually undefined - term in discourse analysis. It has been used to represent various meanings; Hockett [32] in 1958 used the term as a grammatical constituent to describe sentence structure. In 1976 Keenan and Schieffelin [39] introduced the term *discourse topic* that it was further explained by Brown and Yule in 1983 as the notion of “*what is being talked/written about*”.

In computer science literature a *topic* is defined as a distribution over the vocabulary [9]. Blei et al. [9] state that: “*We refer to the latent multinomial variables in the [LDA](#) model as topics, so as to exploit text-oriented intuitions, but we make no epistemological claims regarding these latent variables beyond their utility in representing probability distributions on sets of words.*” The previous quote implies that there

was not much research on further notions of topic. Actually, for computer scientists topics are set of words that are used as features to accomplish other tasks such as document similarity.

Apparently, the definition of topic in topic modeling disregards any information about the topic structure. On the contrary, linguistic definitions of topic [23, 32, 39] are rather abstract to be utilized by machines for topic identification. Although, humans can recognize the topic of their interest in a straightforward manner, it is challenging for scientists to pin down the procedure of automatic topic recognition. It is challenging for human to provide the characteristics of the topic since it is a multidimensional problem associated with the human intuition and personal interpretation [14, 31].

This thesis does not address the problem of what a topic is. Instead, we scrutinize a division of how to identify a topic in a piece of text. Therefore, we assume that regardless of what a topic may be, it remains latent but somehow common knowledge. We define a topic as the stochastic model that best recognizes what humans consider as topics, modeling human semantic learning. We consider words and the word sequence as the language aspects to be indicative of the latent topic. In this thesis, we ignore any fine-granular distinctions between topic, field, theme et cetera. We considered a particular probabilistic model, which we train to develop a robust topic model oriented to formal written language. We aim to distinguish documents of subtly different topics in terms of akin vocabularies experimenting on financial reports. We examine the possibilities to generalize by introducing various probabilistic topic models that we apply on the same datasets.

1.3 Objectives

The task of topics identification on written documents is a manifold assignment. Not only due to the fact that a clear definition of what a topic is or how a topic look like is missing (Subsection 1.2), but also because of the complexity and ambiguity of natural language texts. Natural language complexity makes inference assumption of topic identification or classification methods to look as oversimplifications. Therefore, the outcome of such methods is inaccurate considering the human understanding of topic.

In computer science, the task of topic identification has been considered as an intermediate step to perform several other tasks on large collections of documents like organization, summarization, large corpora exploration et cetera. As far as the final task provides a satisfactory outcome no further investigations have been conducted on how to actually improve topic identification. A reason for that might be what Blei claims in a review of 2011 [4] : “*There is a disconnect between how topic models are evaluated and why we expect topic models to be useful*”. Moreover, questions related to topic evaluation and topic model assumptions “*have been scrutinized less for the scale of problems that machine learning tackles*” [4]. In other words, the assumptions of topic models and their outcome are not subject of scrutinized research.

In this thesis, we extend the prevalent bag-of-words assumption exploring the performance of topic identifier that encompass the word sequence of text. Consequently, the research question is:

1. *How well a stochastic topic identifier can perform on discriminating text of different domains and languages?*

The bag-of-words representation facilitates the inference of complex statistical models due to the simplification of the representation. The scenario in which the word order is considered in a conventional topic model, would lead to intractable calculations. In this work, we keep the complexity of the model moderate to facilitate the study of this research question.

Secondary, current topic models incorporate no prior knowledge about the ‘semantics’ of natural language. They are applied to a collection of not annotated documents with no other information provided because their primary goal is to give an insight of the corpus. In this work, we encompass prior knowledge in terms of sets of words with common characteristics. In this way, we indent to enhance model’s discriminating performance.

2. What form of prior knowledge would increase the topic identification efficiency of the introduced model?

Many different pieces of knowledge can be incorporated regarding different criteria. In our case, we heuristically explore the role of different linguistic components i.e stopwords to boost the detection efficacy of the model.

Finally, several works [58, 53, 41] highlight the importance of word order as a significant factor to perform topic inference and a key element to improve natural language representation. Thus, they explore the efficacy of unsupervised and supervised methods that consider word order in their premise. Nevertheless, a quantification analysis that exhibits the importance of word order in the text is missing. The third research question is the following:

3. Which is the impact of word order, as an additional property of bag-of-words, on topic identification?

To answer the above question we introduce a hypothesis testing experiment that randomly generates documents out of a particular vocabulary and compares them with the original documents probing the differences in topics. The next sections outline the corresponding milestones.

1.4 Thesis Outline

Chapter 1 discusses the background and motivation of the research work of this thesis. Moreover, it provides the notion of topic as it is introduced in literature and

clarifies the direction of this research work. It specifies the research questions we deal with in the next chapters.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to provide an overview of the related works. First, it summarizes probabilistic topic models giving the development of them in time until LDA was introduced. The basic concepts and the modeling fundamentals are introduced. Modern variations and improvements of LDA are provided as well. Some classification methods are introduced because to some extent they may be used to discriminate documents of different topics besides the fact that we use some classification methods as a comparison to assess the efficacy of our approach. At the end advantages and disadvantages of the introduced methods are provided and a discussion of what is missing in the literature is given.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the introduced approach. The milestones are given and in the next sections, a set of methods to recognize topics are provided. A set of stochastic models that consider word order are formalized and the inference and learning is provided. At the end the classification steps of a new given document are described and the classification boundary is identified. We name the set of identifiers we introduced Markov topic identifiers (MTI) since they are based on Markov chains to incorporate word order.

In Chapter 4 we provide a number of test scenarios on different datasets to evaluate the Markovian topic identifiers performance. We discuss the presented results compared with the baseline results provided by the widely used classifiers of naïve Bayes and support vector machines. Different measures are used to assess the models performance in a ten-fold cross validation schema. The implemented experiments reflect the introduced research question of Section 1.3. The number of classified samples are provided in the appendix sections where each section is dedicated to a model introduced. In Chapter 5 we summarize the overall research work and we provide potentials and shortcomings it exhibits. We suggest extensions and possible applications of the introduced model as well.

Chapter 2

Related Works

This chapter is dedicated to present the state-of-the-art of topic identification. We present works that are related and hold the same objectives like the model proposed in this thesis. Some of the related work is summarized in the following two Sections [2.1](#) and [2.2](#).

At the beginning, we provide a brief overview of the most important topic models and their extensions. We present the probabilistic topic models that disregard the word order in documents, [BoW](#) assumption. We highlight the fundamental ideas behind and the formalization of each single model providing in chronological order the evolution of topic modeling until latent Dirichlet allocation was introduced. We later present some extensions of [LDA](#) that amend its initial text generation schema capturing different aspects of a topic like topic evolution or topic correlations corpus-wide. Moreover, they relax the [BoW](#) assumption dealing with word collocations to form [L-topics](#).

Later, we discuss some of the widely known classifiers that may be used in topic related tasks to discriminate the topic of a new document. We select the classifications methods that are representative regarding the inference assumptions and feasible to be applied on text. For instance back propagation neural networks are not presented since they exhibit high computational cost to converge on multidimensional problems

like topic classification.

Finally, in Section 2.3 we discuss the pros and cons of the probabilistic topic models and classifiers. We spotlight the improvements we intend to achieve in this thesis contradicting the already presented methods of this chapter. In particular, we discuss the advantages of our method in terms of cost-effectiveness and performance that the two other cannot provide.

2.1 Probabilistic Topic Models

Topic models are a suite of algorithms used to discover the themes of large and unstructured document collections and can be used to organize the collections. They are generative statistical models that uncover the hidden thematic structure that has generated the document collection. They are effective, thus widely used, on applications in the fields of text classification and Information Retrieval (IR) [4].

In this section, we introduce models where the hidden topic structure of a document is explicitly provided in the definition of the model. The set of models we discuss feature a proper hierarchical Bayesian probabilistic framework that permits the use of wide range of training and inference techniques. The topics of the models are not a priori determined but rather extracted from the document collection. Once the training phase is accomplished, the model can infer about new documents using the statistical inference process. Probabilistic topic models can also be used for various tasks like document or topic similarity exploration; they deal with these tasks by comparing probability distributions over the vocabularies. Thus, methods like Kullback-Leibler or Jensen-Shannon divergence are applied.

Topic models are considered to be text generators with different statistical assumptions about the parameters that generate the text. They infer about the posterior distribution from the data and they require no prior knowledge or labeling of the documents. The vocabulary of the documents and the word frequencies is the nec-

essary input to the topic models. Moreover, topic models deal effectively with words of similar meanings and distinguish among words with multiple meanings. They go one step further annotating documents with thematic information and provide the relationship among the assigned themes. To achieve their goal they consider that the words are chosen from sets of polynomial distributions which are used to deduce about the significantly co-occur words in the collection. They consider that each document is a mixture of word distributions and they define each individual multinomial distribution to be a topic.

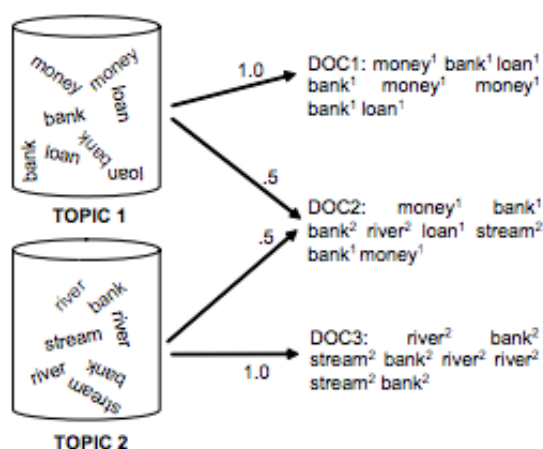


Figure 2.1: The generative process of topic models with two topics and three documents [54].

Figure 2.1 demonstrates a generative process with two topics and three documents. Topic 1 and topic 2 are about money and river respectively. They exhibit different word distributions according to the word importance for the topic. Doc1 and Doc3 are produced by topic 1 and topic 2 respectively with weights 1.0, while Doc2 is generated by an equal mixture of both topics. The superscript on each word indicate the topic that is employed to draw the word. The way the model is defined does not presume word exclusivity in topics, i.e., bank occurs in both topics. This allows topic models to capture word with multiple meanings (polysemy). The generative

process described in Figure 2.1 neglects the word order of the documents; this is the common bag-of-words assumption of many statistical language models.

Following in this section, we will describe the development of probabilistic topic models from a simple model to recent and sophisticated models that deal with state-of-the-art issues like the relationship between topics. First, we present the *mixture of unigrams* as the primary method to perform topic identification. It is a method close to Naïve Bayes (NB) which exhibits several deficits. In subsection 2.1.2, we present Probabilistic Latent Semantic Indexing (pLSI) which is a probabilistic development of Latent Semantic Indexing (LSI). In 2.1.3 we present the LDA model which is a development of pLSI. Latent Dirichlet allocation overstepped pLSI shortcomings assuming that the topics are drawn from a Dirichlet distribution. LDA stimulated the deployment of several topic models that comprise several extension and amplified modeling capacities. It goes beyond text analysis and is applied to music and image analysis. In the following sections, we present significant LDA developments with diverse setups and various research objectives.

2.1.1 Mixture of Unigrams

In 2000 Nigam et al. introduced a simple generative topic model for documents called mixture of unigrams. [46]. This model assigns only one topic z for a document and then a set of N words is generated from the conditional multinomial distribution $p(w|z)$. This type of model is suitable for supervised classification problems where the set of possible values of z corresponds to the classification tags. The key idea of the mixtures of unigrams is that each topic is related to a particular language model that draw words pertinent to the topic. A mixture of unigrams is identical to naïve Bayes classifier with N_d the size of the vocabulary and M training documents where the set of possible topics are given.

The mixture of unigrams model is demonstrated in Figure 2.2. A directed graph with “plates” is used to represent the model, in which each node indicates a random variable and the direct edge represents the statistical dependencies between the vari-

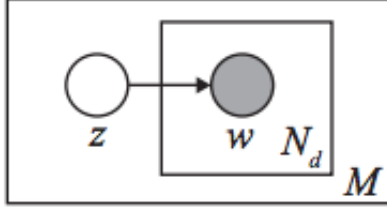


Figure 2.2: The mixture of unigrams model

ables. The plates express the replication of different parts of the graph. The inner plate represents the document and the outer plate the collection of documents. The numbers in the lower-right corners of the plates represent the document collection size which is M and the document vocabulary which is N_d for a document d . Each document has a single topic z as is shown in the graph. The graphical model of Figure 2.2 reveals the conditional probability distributions for the nodes with parents i.e., w . The conditional probability $p(w|d)$ follows the multinomial distribution. For the variables without parents a prior distribution is assumed; i.e., for z a multinomial distribution over the possible topics is defined. For a document d the following probability is defined:

$$p(d) = \sum_z p(z) \prod_{n=1}^{N_d} p(w_n|z) \quad (2.1)$$

Practically, the implementation of the mixture of unigrams model requires the calculation of the multinomial distributions $p(z)$ and $p(w|z)$. Granted that we are provided with a set of labeled document, each one annotated with a topic, we can calculate the parameters of these distributions utilizing the maximum likelihood estimation (MLE). For this reason, we calculate the frequency of each topic z_i that appears in the collection of documents. We estimate the $p(w|z)$ for each z_i by counting the times each w_i appears in all documents assigned with z_i . In case that a word w_j does not exist in any documents with label z_j ; MLE will assign zero probability to $p(w_j|z_j)$. A number of different smoothing methods (i.e., Laplace[29]) can be applied to ensure

that this does not happen. If the topic labels are not provided for the documents the expectation-maximization technique[19] can be applied. After the training phase has been completed, the topic inference about new documents can be achieved using Bayes rule.

2.1.2 Probabilistic Latent Semantic Indexing

One widely studied issue in IR is the query-based document retrieval. Suppose a document retrieval system which intends to sort documents regarding their relevance to a query. The challenge of implementing such a system is to deal with the ambiguity of natural language and the short length of typical queries that increase the complexity of the system. If we simply build the system on matching words in documents with words in queries we will end up dropping most relevant documents since short user queries tend to contain synonyms for the essential words. Another key point is the polysemy of the words; for instance if a query contains the word ‘bank’ multiple sets of documents will be matched regarding the various meanings of the word. Documents that discuss the banking sector and rivers will be returned. To address the previously mentioned issues additional information needs to be considered from text that reveals the semantic content of a document beyond the set of words itself.

LSI [18, 3] was introduced in 1990 to deal with these concerns in a more effective manner. LSI is a technique that maps documents in a semantic space with lower dimensions, for that matter, texts with alike topics will be close each other in the produced space. The latent topic space in LSI is derived from the word co-occurrence in the whole collection of documents, on that front, the degree of relevance between two documents is also a matter of the other documents¹ in the collection. The central technique that LSI employs comes from linear algebra and it is called Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) [3]. It is used to perform noise reduction and at the

¹Two documents are close whether they share a sufficient big number of words. For example, in the world wide web, two documents that contain words about programming languages will be close in the latent space. But between two documents in a collection of texts of software engineers, more terms need to be common for the documents to be close.

same time, it plummets the scale of the problem.

Nonetheless, The effect of [SVD](#) on words has been criticized since it is hard to be assessed. Therefore, Hofmann introduced *probabilistic latent semantic indexing* [33] to provide improvements on [LSI](#). Actually, probabilistic Latent Semantic Indexing preserves the same objective but it is different from [LSI](#) since it has a probabilistic orientation with a clear theoretical justification that [LSI](#) lacks. [pLSI](#) is demonstrated in [Figure 2.3](#) and is described by the following generative model for a document in a collection:

- Choose a document d_m with probability $p(d)$
- For each word n in d_m
 - Choose a topic z_n from a multinomial conditioned on d_m with probability $p(z|d_m)$
 - Choose a word w_n from a multinomial conditioned on the previously chosen topic z_n with $p(w|z_n)$

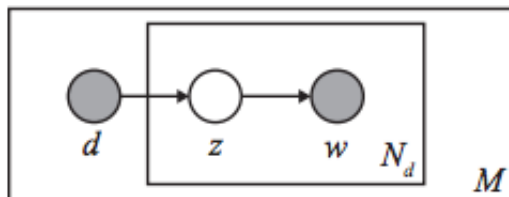


Figure 2.3: The probabilistic latent semantic indexing model

From the graphical model of [Figure 2.3](#), we notice that [pLSI](#) relies on certain assumptions of independence about the documents in the collections and the words in the document. More precisely, the words are conditionally dependent of the topics and conditionally independent of the documents. The key assumption on which [pLSI](#) relies upon is the [BoW](#) assumption. In particular, the word order of the document

is not incorporated in the model. Additionally, in **pLSI** model each observed item (word) of the data is associated with a latent variable (topic); this one-to-one association is called aspect model[34, 51] in literature.

The objective of **pLSI** is to estimate the probability:

$$p(w, d) = \sum_{z \in Z} p(z)P(w|z)p(d|z) \quad (2.2)$$

Hofmann introduced a version of expectation-maximization to train the model in an unsupervised manner. In experiments performed by the author, **pLSI** overstepped the latent semantic analysis in **IR** tasks.

pLSI finds various applications in information retrieval and topic classification. In **IR** the similarity between query keywords w_q and document d_i needs to be estimated. This similarity is defined as follows:

$$Similarity(w_q, d_i) = w_q \cdot P(w, w) \cdot d_i^T \quad (2.3)$$

where $P(w, w)$ denotes the probability similarity matrix between the words. In topic classification the key point is to estimate the similarity between two documents d_i and d_j . w_i and w_j are the normalized word vectors of the frequencies of the words that have been calculated from d_i and d_j respectively. The similarity is defined as follows:

$$Similarity(d_i, d_j) = d_i \cdot P(w, w) \cdot d_j^T \quad (2.4)$$

Compared to mixture of unigrams, **pLSI** exhibits enhanced modeling facilities, since it allows a document to discuss more than one topics. As a matter of fact each word in a document can be derived from a different topic. Moreover, **pLSI** has a broader range of applications than the ad hoc **LSI**. **pLSI** relies on a solid theoretical background that allows it to have a clear interpretation of its results. Nevertheless, **pLSI** exhibits a drawback on the assigned topic proportion of a document. By the generative process of **pLSI**, we realize that the topic mixture assigned to a document

is estimated from the collection. When pLSI deals with standalone IR tasks this may not be crucial. But, in various other tasks like text categorization, the lack of flexibility on handling newly seen documents cause issues on document inference. Coupled with the above, the principle of learning the topic distribution for each document in the collection leads to a high number of parameters estimations that grow with the number of documents in the collection making pLSI inappropriate for large scale datasets.

2.1.3 Latent Dirichlet Allocation

In 2003 Blei et al. published a work named latent Dirichlet allocation [9] which is one of the most popular topic models. It goes beyond information retrieval and it is applicable not only to text but on images and music collections. Latent Dirichlet allocation can be considered as a generalization of pLSI in which the Dirichlet distribution is utilized to ‘identify’ the topics. On that front, LDA is considered to be a complete generative probabilistic model with high descriptive power since the number of model parameters is independent of the number of training documents as pLSI regards. Additionally, LDA is robust to overfitting thus widely used for large scale problems.

Let’s suppose that LDA is applied on a corpus of three topics, such as medicine, finance, and biology. A document that describes a disease treatment may discuss either medicine and biology topics. The medicine texts have a number of words that exhibit high probability in appearing in a document related to medicine. Likewise, there is a set of words that are related to biology with a corresponding probability. During the generation process of LDA on a document about disease treatment, the topics will be randomly selected at the beginning. The probability of selecting the topics of medicine and biology will be increased and following a word will be selected. Words that are related to the two topics will have the higher probability to be selected. After N words have been selected, where N is the vocabulary size of the document, the selection is accomplished and the document is generated. The

formalization of the generative process for a document d is as follows:

- Choose topic proportion θ for document d with a Dirichlet parameter α .
- For each word $w \in d$:
 - Choose a topic z_n from a multinomial distribution over topics with parameters θ .
 - Choose a word w_n from a multinomial distribution over words with parameters ϕ^{z_n} ; where $\phi^{z_n} = p(w|z_n)$ is the multinomial conditioned over words for topic z_n .

LDA assumes that a text is constituted of a particular topic multinomial distribution sampled from a Dirichlet distribution. The number of topics is k and a priori given. Then, each of these k topics is repeatedly sampled from generate each word in the document. Therefore, a topic is defined to be a probability distribution of the words. The documents are described as a mixture of topics with a certain proportion. The plate graphical representation of **LDA** is demonstrated in Figure 2.4.

The graphical representation of **LDA** uses plates to represent the replicates. The outer plate represents the documents, each one of them is described by a topic mixture θ which is sampled by a Dirichlet distribution with hyperparameter α . The inner plate represents the repeated sampling from θ . The filled circle represent the observations (words) and the hollow circles represent the hidden variables of the model. The arrows represent the dependencies between the linked nodes.

The Dirichlet variables in **LDA** are vectors θ that receive values in $(k - 1)$ simplex, thus $\sum_{i=1}^k \theta_i = 1$. The probability density of a k -dimensional Dirichlet distribution over the multinomial distribution $\theta = (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_k)$ is defined as:

$$Dir(a_1, \dots, a_k) = \frac{\Gamma(\sum_i (a_i))}{\prod_i \Gamma(a_j)} \prod_{i=1}^k \theta_i^{a_i-1} \quad (2.5)$$

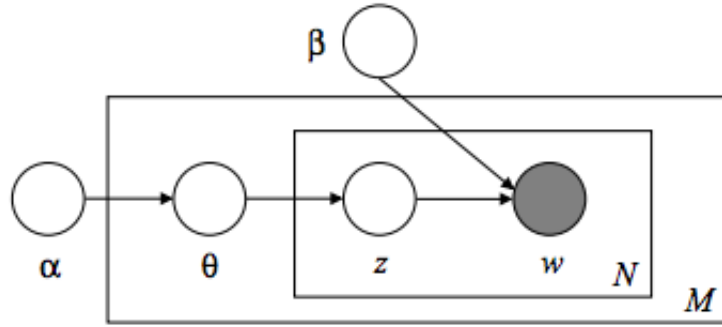


Figure 2.4: The latent Dirichlet allocation topic model

where $\Gamma()$ is the gamma function and the α_i are the Dirichlet parameters. Each α_i can be interpreted as a prior observation count on the number of times a topic z_n has appeared in a document, before the training of the model. The implementation of [LDA](#) by the authors uses a single Dirichlet parameter α , such that each $\alpha_i = \alpha$. The single α parameter results in a smoothed multinomial distribution with parameter θ . The hyperparameter β is the prior observation count on the number of times words are sampled from a topic before any observations on the corpus occurred. This is a smoothing of the word distributions in every topic. In practice, a proper choice of α and β depends on the number of topics and the vocabulary size.

2.1.4 Latent Dirichlet Allocation Extensions

[LDA](#) is a significant topic model on which many researchers based their work to capture other properties of the text. To do so, they added variables to their models to describe the development of topics over time, the relationship among topics, the role of syntax in topic identification and so on. In the following, we briefly present some of recently introduced topic models where the majority of them are based on the fundamentals of latent Dirichlet allocation.

In 2006 Blei et al. introduced dynamic topic models [6] to analyze the evolution of

topics over time in a sequentially organized corpus of documents. This approach infers about the latent parameters of the model using the variational method. The parameters of the model follow the multinomial distribution. A state space representation is used to transmit the multinomial parameters upon the words of each topic. The Correlated Topic Model (CTM) [5] was designed to provide correlation among topics. The key idea that CTM relies on is that a document discussing about medicine is more likely to be related to disease than astronomy. The assumption of LDA that topics are drawn from a Dirichlet distribution confines LDA to provide the correlation between topics. To facilitate topic correlations, topic models assume that topics have correlations via the logistic normal distribution that exhibit a sufficient satisfactory fit on test data.

In 2004 Blei et al. introduced an extension of LDA -named hierarchical latent Dirichlet allocation [25] - that deals with topics in the manner of hierarchies. On that front, they combine a nested Chinese Restaurant Process (CRP) with a likelihood that relies on a hierarchical variant of latent Dirichlet allocation to derive a prior distribution on hierarchies. In 2010, the supervised topic model [7] was introduced to deal effectively with prediction problems. They designed a topic model to perform prediction regarding the vocabulary. They examine the prediction power of words with respect to the topic class. They compare LDA with supervised topic model and they find the new model to more effective.

In traditional topic models, such as LDA, most of the syntactic words are removed since we are only interested in meaning and only long-range dependencies are concerned. Therefore, topic models focus on identifying semantic words through documents or entire collections. On the contrary, the composite model [26] that was introduced by Griffiths et al. considers the short-range dependencies as well. It blends a Hidden Markov Model (HMM) to capture the parts of speech and a latent Dirichlet allocation to extract words that are deemed semantic. Composite model competes for part-of-speech taggers and it is not used for topic classification itself. In Figure 2.5 it is demonstrated the generating phase of this model where an au-

tomaton is constructed to describe the structure of the language. Figure 2.5 shows the transitions of a three class HMM annotated with the corresponding probabilities. The semantic class shown in the middle consists of three topic sets each one assigned a probability. The other two classes are simple multinomial distribution over words. Document phrases are generated by following the transitions of an automaton like the one in 2.5. Particularly, a word is chosen from the distribution associated with each syntactic class, a topic follows and a word comes next from a distribution associated with that topic for the semantic class.

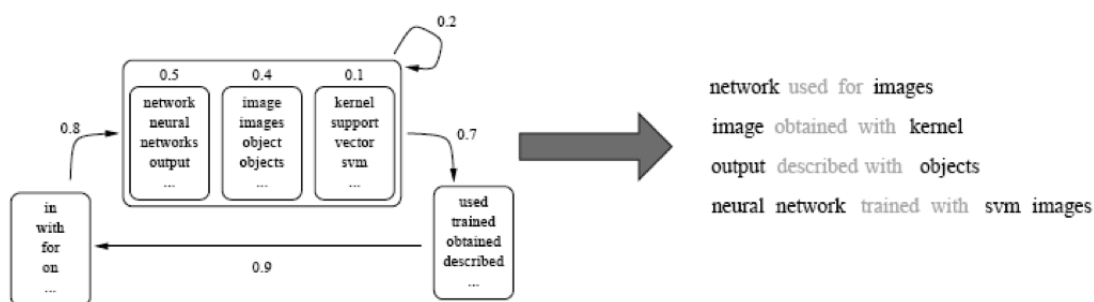


Figure 2.5: The generating phase of composite model [26]

Although exchangeable word models are useful for classification or information retrieval, they are limited for problems that depend on more fine-grained qualities of language. For instance, a topic model is efficient on providing documents relevant to queries but it cannot suggest relevant phrases for question answering. Syntactic Topic Model (STM) [12] is a document model that blends the observed syntactic structure with the latent thematic structure of a document. STM intends to extract groups of words that are utilized the same way in similar documents. STM can be used to incorporate document context into parsing models but is not a full parsing model. It provides a way to learn both simultaneously rather than combining the two heterogeneous methods. Syntactic topic models have been used for statistical natural language generation [17].

In 2009, C. Wang et al. introduce a generative probabilistic model [57] to capture firstly the corpus-wide topic structure and secondly the topic correlation across corpora. They test their model on a dataset extracted from six different computer science conferences; they evaluate their model on the abstracts parts of the text. Additionally, researchers have studied the efficiency of topic models on different levels of resolution. Bruber et al. [27] consider that each sentence discusses one topic and all the words in a sentence are assigned the sentences topic. The goal of the authors is to perform word sense disambiguation. Wallach [56] extended LDA to facilitate n-gram statistics by designing a hierarchical Dirichlet bigram language model. They produce more meaningful topics than LDA since bigrams statistics restrict the dominant role of stopwords.

2.2 Text Classification

This section is dedicated to the presentation of text classification methods in the literature. It is a hotspot in the fields of Natural Language Processing (NLP) and information retrieval. The main goal of a classification method is to identify rules in the training set that discriminate new text in one or more of the predefined classes. Text classifiers can be used, to sort regarding the topic of a document.

We present some of the important text classification methods in terms of efficiency and computational cost when applied on texts. We spotlight two of the most used classifiers on a text. We select naïve Bayes as a primitive classifier that we compare our approach. We evaluate the word order impact on topic identification since naïve Bayes classifies based solely on the word independence in the document. In contrast, we select Support Vector Machines (SVM) as a sophisticated, effective and computationally efficient [35] method to perform topic classification.

2.2.1 Naïve Bayes

[NB](#) is a classification method that reduces the complexity of the calculations. It is based on the assumption of conditional independence between data features. Despite the fact that the independence assumption does not reflect the reality, it is an effective classifier [62]. [NB](#) deals effectively with numerical and nominal data and it can be used in a wide variety of applications independent independent from the domain. Naïve Bayes classifiers relies on the Bayes theorem as it is depicted in [2.6](#)

$$P(y | \mathbf{x}) = \frac{P(y)P(\mathbf{x} | y)}{P(\mathbf{x})}. \quad (2.6)$$

Where $\mathbf{x} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$ is the data feature vector and y is the class variable. The independence assumption is formulated as in [2.7](#):

$$P(\mathbf{x} | y) = P(x_1, \dots, x_n | y) = \prod_{i=1}^n P(x_i | y) \quad (2.7)$$

Usually, the assumption about the feature distributions [NB](#) considers are discrete. [NB](#) is defined for Gaussian distribution with parameters σ_y and μ_y as follows:

$$P(x_i | y) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_n^2}} \exp\left(-\frac{(x_i - \mu_i)^2}{2\pi\sigma_n^2}\right). \quad (2.8)$$

In text classification, words are considered as the classification features of the document. To identify the class c a new document $d = (w_1 \dots w_n)$ belongs, [NB](#) calculates the product of the likelihoods of the words given the class $P(c | d)$ multiplied by the class probability $P(c)$ - called prior probability. It performs these calculations for all the classes. The class of the new document is the class with the maximum score. The mathematical formalization is shown in [2.9](#).

$$c_{map} = \arg \max_{c \in C} (P(c | d)) = \arg \max_{c \in C} (P(c)) \quad (2.9)$$

An important issue naive Bayes classifiers exhibits is the existence of a word w in the test set where they do not appear in a particular class c of the training set. Then its conditional probability $P(w | c)$ is equal to zero which results in zero product of

probabilities. To anticipate this some extra probability mass for the unseen words in the testing documents is considered. We use *Laplace smoothing* [44] that assumes that for each word w of the test corpus: $N(w | c) \geq 1$. The Laplace smoothing formalization is shown in 2.10.

$$P(w|c) = \frac{1 + N(w, c)}{|V| + \sum_{w \in V} N(w, c)} \quad (2.10)$$

Where $N(w, c)$ is the frequency the word w exist in document of class c and $|V|$ is the vocabulary size of the training set.

2.2.2 Support Vector Machines

SVM is a classifier that, maximizes the separation margin hyperplane between two classes[36]. The linear **SVM** identifies the maximum margin between the closest data points of the distinct classes. The filled points of the two classes depicted in Figure 2.6 define the support vectors. In 2.6 it is demonstrated points the points of two classes that are linearly separable. – Support vector machines can separate classes that are not linearly separable by projecting the data points to a higher dimensional space using various kernel functions.

To identify the support vectors for a given dataset, we consider the case where two data classes S_1, S_2 exist. Labeling the data points by $y_k \in \{-1, 1\}$ Joachims [36] uses the following equations:

- The plane of the positive support vectors is: $\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x} + b = +1$
- The plane of the negative support vectors is: $\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x} + b = -1$

We define a hyperplane such that:

$\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x} + b > +1$, when $y_k = +1$ and $\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x} + b < -1$, when $y_k = -1$. We can write the previous two as:

$$y_k(\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x}_k + b) \geq 1, \forall k \quad (2.11)$$

The goal to maximize the separation distance is achieved by the optimization problem in 2.12

$$\text{minimise } \frac{1}{2} \|w\|^2 \quad (2.12)$$

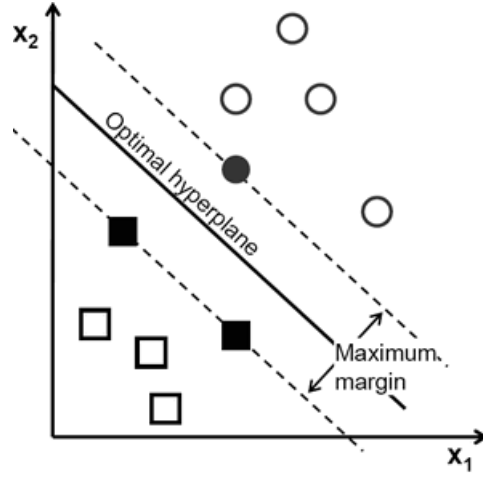


Figure 2.6: Support vector machine hyperplane

Equation 2.11 provides the hard margin hyperplane where the data points are linearly separable. It is unlike in real problems lines or even curves can separate the data points by their classes. Therefore, it is advantageous to allow some data points to lie on the wrong side of the hyperplane. This is beneficial because it prevents the overfitting of the model on the training dataset. The soft margin version of SVM relaxes the margin constraint penalizing the miss-positioned data points. The idea of using a soft margin is to find a line that penalizes points on the “wrong side” of the line as it is depicted in Figure 2.7. The hyperplane is defined in 2.13:

$$y_k(\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x}_k + b) \geq 1 - \xi_k \quad \xi_k > 0 \quad (2.13)$$

The constraint in 2.13 allows a margin lower than 1 and a penalty of $C\xi_k$ for each data point where $\xi_k > 1$ when the point lies on the wrong side or $0 \leq \xi_k \leq 1$ when

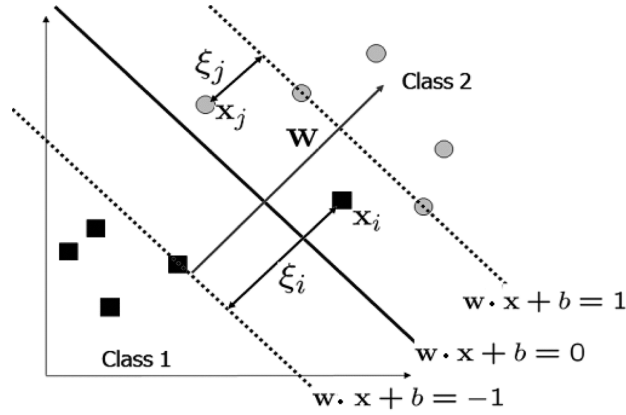


Figure 2.7: Soft margin support vector machines

the point lies on the correct side. The optimization problem is defined as in 2.14.

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{minimise} && \frac{1}{2} \|w\|^2 + C \sum_{i=1}^n (\xi_i) \\
 &\text{s.t.} && y_k(\mathbf{w}^T \cdot \mathbf{x}_k + b) \geq 1 - \xi_k \quad \xi_k > 0
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.14}$$

Practically, C is empirically determined using cross-validation. The error rate of an SVM classifier is determined by the number on non-zero ξ_k . The slack variable and penalization assist on making SVM robust to overfitting.

Another aspect of SVM is the kernel function. The role of kernel function is to map the initial feature space to a new of different dimensions feature space that can make the separation problem feasible. In general, a good kernel function depends on the data domain. Some of the widely used kernels are the linear, polynomial, radial basis functions.

2.3 Discussion

We have explored some widely known topic models in text. We have unveiled the most prominent trends and the most significant paradigms in topic analysis of text. Some classification techniques have been presented that may be used to perform topic analysis. Any classification problem where the classification labels denote topics are considered as topic-oriented tasks. Not to mention that many different probabilistic topic models and classification approaches have been introduced that are not presented here but all of them are based on the same anchors. The majority of the machine learning methods that deal with document topics consider the documents as bag-of-words and they are based on content features to form the topics or separate among them.

Notably, topic models considered to be the state-of-the-art in topic identification due to their expressiveness and efficiency when dealing with large corpora. Moreover, they provide the necessary capacity to model several aspects of topics like the topic evolution or the topic correlations et cetera. A point often overlooked is that the majority of topic models are unsupervised lacking of accurate results and accuracy of the systems.

In particular, topic models are used to identify the latent semantic structure and they are a powerful tool that can infer about the structure representation. They provide a framework to address questions about the topic structure and they provide potentials to infer about semantic representations that, to some extent approximate human semantic knowledge. They outperform several other models in information retrieval and they are effective when dealing with word synonyms. They are modular and easily extended to capture interactions about semantics and syntax in natural language and can be used to solve problems in several other contexts.

Despite the extended use of topic modeling in different genre of problems in text and image analysis, it exhibits a number of downsides. Foremost, it is not clear how the

evaluation and model checking is performed. In 2012 Blei [4] claimed that “*There is a disconnect between how topic models are evaluated and why we expect topic models to be useful*”. Given that topic models are often used for organization, summarization and large corpora exploration; the typical evaluation methods of machine learning where a subset of the training set is held out as test set, is not proper to evaluate the organization or the model interpretation. Frequently, a manual inspection of the output needs to be performed to assess the efficiency of a topic model. It remains an open question to develop of evaluation methods that measure how well the algorithms perform. Additionally, given a new corpus and a new task, questions like which topic model better describes the collection of text or which of the assumptions are important for the task can hardly be addressed.

Moreover, the statistical inference of topic models is in some cases problematic. Despite the fact that statistics provide a rich toolbox to comfort the inference of latent variables in topic models, it is still computationally expensive to infer about complex models that are in some cases intractable. Considering that the newly and more sophisticated probabilistic models that were introduced do not yield significant gains over the simpler models; the extent in which, more complex systems will be on focus remains uncertain since system designers pursue a combination of good results for low cost.

On the other hand, classification methods may be used on topic discrimination but it is not their main orientation; thus, they are not widely used tools for topic analysis. But, despite their low expressiveness, topic classifiers rely on knowledge-intensive resources that increase their discriminating capacity. Nonetheless, topic classifiers require enormous human effort for text annotation and data gathering for wanted and unwanted situation for the classifiers to be trained properly.

Our approach combines the advantages of both approaches to achieve simultaneously high accuracy and cost-effectiveness. Our position on this problem is to use a robust statistical techniques to improve discriminating performance avoiding the necessity

of gathering data of all unwanted situations. Our method requires training solely on the experience of one-class documents to sufficiently recognize them.

Chapter 3

MTI Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The anchor where probabilistic topic models are based is the [BoW](#) assumption. Both probabilistic latent semantic indexing [33] and latent Dirichlet allocation [9] neglect the order of the words in the document; therefore they represent documents in a form where the word sequence is ignored i.e., word-document matrix. In probabilistic topic modeling the exchangeability [9] of the words in a document is a convenient simplification that leads to computationally efficient methods. Nevertheless, the effect of such a simplification is the disregard of the semantics of the text.

Later, we introduce a set of models to incorporate the word order as an additional property over the bag-of-words methods to better capture the document ‘semantics’ [56, 30, 53, 38]. Moreover, different works [58, 53, 41] have shown that the word sequence - in terms of word collocation - improves the interpretation of produced topics compared to unigram methods. Alongside, the study of the interplay between topic recognition and word order haven’t been explored previously; yet it is an appealing finding.

We introduce a topic recognition method trained solely on the experience of one-class

documents and it is evaluated regarding its classification efficacy compared with sophisticated binary classifiers that rely on BoW representation. We explore the extent in which word order contributes to topic recognition. The structural knowledge can provide us with a more solid perception of the topic. In that front, we utilize Markov chains that consider common properties of the words in the document - i.e., stopwords. We deal with words of the same group in the common manner capturing the fluctuation of the predefined groups in the document. The groups-of-words that input the model are determined according to their functionality or their statistical importance. In this way, we regard the short-range dependencies of the words along with the long-range dependencies of content words that dominate the corpus.

In the following sections we present a set of models that rely on the sequential and statistical knowledge of the word groups in the text to detect documents with respect to the topic of our interest. In this context, we retain stopwords as significant structural components that topic models disregard. Markov chains models provide us with the necessary capacity to describe the document semantics in an automata representation. We train our model to learn the transitions among the predefined states (word groups) and the emission of the words in the corpus.

In addition, we explore whether a richer - in terms of word order - document representation that provides a closer match to human semantic representation can be a powerful tool to infer about a “human topic”. Particularly, we explore the efficiency of the sequential statistics of different structural elements by introducing several sequential topic models. We conduct a number of experiments to explore the possibilities to generalize.

We assess our model in three different scenarios to prove first that our method is as effective as other classifiers in the “easy” case of distinct topics, second in the case where other classifiers exhibit low performance and third on different domains and language. In the first scenario, our approach is assessed on two corpora that belong on different domains. In the second scenario we evaluate our approach on corpora of

the same domain simulating conditions close to what it is described in Wallach [56] work as an example where BoW based models exhibit low discriminating capacity. Document A is: “the department chair couches offers” [56] and document B is: “the chair department offers couches” [56]. The third scenario is applied on German language and on health domain documents of German newspapers.

3.2 Milestones

As mentioned in section 3.1 our research method is based on the extension of the BoW based topic models incorporating the word order. Our method is data independent and it is based on four main working tasks to infer about the research hypothesis in Section 1.3. The first task is the Model Definition where our research model is introduced and some formalizations are provided based on Markov chains (Section 3.4). The second working task is the Word Groups Composition, in which group of words are constructed and fused to the model. Different manners to form the groups and different criteria are considered as it is described in Section 3.4. The third task is Model Training. Here, the inference and learning of the model parameters are performed and the topic boundary is identified based on the topic scores of the training set. The fourth working task is the Model Evaluation in comparison to BoW based classifiers on three different dataset that cover three different scenarios as described in Section 4.1.

In line with the research hypothesis in Section 1.3, we define six working milestones that end to the evaluation of the research model in Chapter 4 followed with some discussion about the results in the Chapter 5.

1. **Model Definition:** Model formulations are provided.
2. **Word Groups Constitution:** Form the word groups that are considered by the model.
3. **Inference and Learning:** The model parameters are estimated on the dataset.
4. **Document Classification:** The classification task and the boundary identification are presented.
5. **Data Acquisition:** Assembling the input.
6. **Evaluation:** Quality measures and performance interpretation.

3.3 Notation

In the Table 3.1 below is provided the notation used to describe the proposed model:

Notation	Description
X_i	A random variable in a stochastic process.
\mathbb{T}	The state set of a stochastic random variable.
t_i	An element of the state set.
\mathbb{S}	A set of nodes of a directed graph.
S_i	A node in a directed graph.
\mathbb{E}	A set of edges in a directed graph.
\mathcal{E}	An edge in a directed graph.
\mathbb{D}	A text corpus.
d	A document
\mathbb{V}	The vocabulary of a corpus.
\mathbb{C}	The classification classes.
w_i	The i-th word of a document.
w^i	The i-th word of the vocabulary.
n_d	The length of a document d .
$ \mathbb{X} $	The cardinality of set \mathbb{X} .

Table 3.1: Notation

3.4 MTI Definition

Markov Chains

A Markov chain is a stochastic process [11] that undergoes transitions between states on a set of states. It is a sequence of random variables with the Markovian property claiming that the current state depends only on the previous state as is depicted in equation 3.1. The set of possible values of X_i is called *state set* and it is denoted with \mathbb{T} .

$$P(X_{n+1} = t \mid X_1 = t_1, X_2 = t_2, \dots, X_n = t_n) = P(X_{n+1} = t \mid X_n = t_n) \quad (3.1)$$

where:

X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n are random variables

Markov models may be used to model sequential events. We essentially, model the probabilities of going from one state to another. They are used in NLP and speech recognition to model sequences of words, numbers or other tokens. An alternative representation of a Markov chains is a directed graph with $\mathbb{S} = \{S_1, \dots S_n\}$ and $\mathbb{E} = \{\mathcal{E}_1, \dots \mathcal{E}_{n-1}\}$ where \mathbb{S} and \mathbb{E} denote the set of nodes and the set of edges respectively. The edge \mathcal{E}_i connects the state S_i and S_{i+1} i and i+1 positions. Each \mathcal{E}_i is labeled by the probability of going from $S_i \rightarrow S_j \in \mathcal{E}_i$. The probability of hopping from one state to the next one is called *transition* and the matrix that stores the transition is called *transition matrix*.

When time is not considered, the chain represents a finite state machine assigning a probability of going from each vertex to an adjacent one. When the probability of edge \mathcal{E}_i is zero then we exclude the edge \mathcal{E}_i in the graph. Figure 3.1 illustrates an example of a finite state machine with $\mathbb{S} = \{\text{Sunny, Rainy, Partly cloudy}\}$ and the transition probabilities of hopping between the pairs of states assigned on each edge.

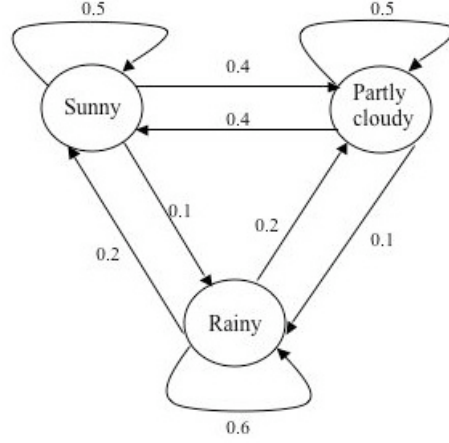


Figure 3.1: Finite state machine with three possible states

Proposed Approach

The models described in the following subsections rely on a Markov chain where a state X_{i+1} depends on the two preceding states X_{i-1} and X_i for a state sequence $X = (X_1, \dots, X_N)$, where X_i is a random variable. In Equation 3.2 it is depicted the previously mentioned dependency. We define as $\mathbb{T} = \{t_1, t_2, \dots, t_M\}$ the state space of Markov chain.

$$P(X_{i+1} = t_{n+1} \mid X_1 = t_1, \dots, X_i = t_n) = P(X_{i+1} = t_{n+1} \mid X_{i-1} = t_{n-1}, X_i = t_n) \quad (3.2)$$

The limited horizon (Equation 3.2) is the first fundamental property of our Markov chain. This dependency does not change over time - it is time invariant. For instance, if the state t_{n+1} has 0.1 probability to occur after the states t_{n-1} and t_n at the beginning of a document, this probability remains the same for the same sequence of states at each other position in the document as it is depicted in Equation 3.3. Time invariance is the second property of our Markov chain.

$$P(X_3 = t_{n+1} \mid X_1 = t_{n-1}, X_2 = t_n) = P(X_{i+1} = t_{n+1} \mid X_{i-1} = t_{n-1}, X_i = t_n) \quad (3.3)$$

The transition matrix of the models is defined as: $A = (a(t_i, t_j, t_k))$ where:

$$a(t_i, t_j, t_k) = P(X_{t+1} = t_k \mid X_{t-1} = t_i, X_t = t_j) \quad (3.4)$$

where:

$$a(t_i, t_j, t_k) \geq 0, \forall i, j, k \text{ and } \sum_{k=1}^M a(t_i, t_j, t_k) = 1$$

The set of possible states are defined by the word classes that are a priori provided to the model. The models that are introduced later in Section 3.5 are differentiated by the type and number of the words classes that are considered. The groups are crafted either manually or by using ranking methods for words in the corpus. Each group contains words of similar structural function in the text. In this setting, we introduce the notion of emission which is the probability of a word $w^i \in \mathbb{V}$ to emit given the document class. In our case, the document class $c_d = \text{on}$. The emission matrix $B = (b(w^i))$, where $b(w^i)$ is as in 3.5:

$$b(w^i) = P(w^i \mid c_d = \text{on}) \quad (3.5)$$

where:

$$b(w^i) \geq 0 \text{ and } \sum_{i=1}^K b(w^i) = 1$$

The value K is the cardinality of the vocabulary . Since we train our system on one class documents, we refer to the emission probability as $b(w^i) = P(w^i)$. Our proposed approach permits the emission of only a single word $w^i \in \mathbb{V}$. In other words, we consider uni-grams and ignore bi-grams, tri-grams et cetera emissions. The $b(w^i)$ calculation is provided in Formula 3.15. For a document $d = (w_1, \dots, w_{n_d})$, the emission distribution assumes conditional word independence given the document

class c_d as it is demonstrated in 3.6.

$$P(d \mid c_d) = \prod_{i=1}^{n_d} P(w_i \mid c_d) \quad (3.6)$$

The initial distribution of the Markov chain leaves the structure of Markov chain unaffected. The initial probability matrix is $\Pi = (\pi(t_i, t_j))$ and it is calculated in 3.7. The $\pi(t_i, t_j)$ denotes the probability of having the sequence (t_i, t_j) in the first two positions of a document. We define the set $\mathbb{S} = \mathbb{T}^2$ to be the ordered pairs of states.

$$\pi(t_i, t_j) = P(X_1 = t_i, X_2 = t_j) \quad (3.7)$$

where:

$$\pi(t_i, t_j) \geq 0 \text{ and } \sum_{(i,j) \in \mathbb{S}} \pi(t_i, t_j) = 1$$

The summary of the notation of the second order Markov chain we introduced above is shown in Table 3.2

Set of states	$\mathbb{T} = \{t_1, \dots, t_M\}$
Set of ordered pairs	$\mathbb{S} = \mathbb{T}^2$
Corpus vocabulary	$\mathbb{V} = \{w^1, \dots, w^K\}$
Initial state probabilities	$\Pi = (\pi(t_i, t_j)), 1 \leq i, j \leq M$
State transition probabilities	$A = (\alpha(t_i, t_j, t_k)), 1 \leq i, j, k \leq M$
Word emission probabilities	$B = (b(w^i)), 1 \leq i \leq K$
State sequence	$X = \{X_1, \dots, X_N\}$

Table 3.2: Proposed approach notation

The following described models posit two classes of document d , $\mathbb{C} = \{on, off\}$. The models ignore any topic fluctuations, thus each single document discuss a sole topic, which is either ‘on’ or ‘off’. Any contingent topic transitions may result to ‘off’ classification. The models are trained to recognize ‘on’ documents only. The documents not recognized as ‘on’ are considered to be ‘off’.

In fact, a document class depends on a range of factors like the topic distribution, the context, et cetera. As stated, we posit that the document class depends solely on the sequence of the states and the emission of the words. The algorithm takes advantage of the class labels of the annotated documents and regards that the document collection is generated only by considering that the employed words are influenced by the two previous states. We refer to the introduced set of models with the name Markovian Topic Identifiers ([MTI](#)).

The [MTI](#) are not ordinary topic classifiers since they are trained on instances of the same class. They are trained on the “experience” of the dataset that discusses the topic of our interest and they are employed to resolve whether an unknown document is ‘on’ or ‘off’ the given topic. Shortly, they perform *one-class classification* since they solely “learn” the properties of the ‘on’ topic and they are not trained on ‘off’ topics as binary classifiers require to perform.

The [MTI](#) models provide an exploratory analysis of the impact of different properties of word to recognize topics based on the semantics of the input. For example, in subsection [3.5.1](#), we investigate the impact of stopwords in topic detection; thus we consider two classes of words. One that reflects the stopwords and the other, the rest of the vocabulary. Several other models are introduced in the following section.

3.5 Word Groups Constitution

The primary objective of this process is to form groups of words that are data-representative. The language sequential models that treat words as atomic units suffer from sparsity [15]. Thus, in several different works [13], words are treated in terms of clusters regarding a common role they exhibit. For instance, verb and nouns words are studied to “*unveil their semantic roles*” [22]. The labor that it is needed to train a statistical system to understand language is significantly reduced [22] since fewer classes are considered compared to language models where each single word is a class itself [15].

In this work, we form sets of words by following heuristic criteria exploring their efficacy as prior knowledge on topic recognition. The sets are formed considering linguistic components [59] i.e structural¹ or content² words.

We apply two different methods to form the word groups. Firstly, by manually crafted (Subsection 3.5.1) the word sets and secondly by an explanatory analysis of the dataset regarding different statistical measures (Subsection 3.5.2) that rank terms regarding their “importance” to the topic class.

3.5.1 Manually Crafted Word Groups

The Role of Stopwords

This model explores the role of stopwords that topic models ignore [9] and Shoaib [53] claims that “*It is not clear the role that the stopwords play in topic modeling*”. Here, we define two groups, one consists of the stopwords and the other consists of the content words of the document. The stopwords for the English language come

¹Or functional are the words that convey a short lexical meaning and their main goal is to hold the sentences together

²Or lexical words words have meaning(s) i.e., nouns, verbs

from the Stanford NLP³ and counts three hundred and fifty nine words, and for the German language come from nltk⁴ stopwords list is one hundred and twenty nine.

Each word is assigned a tag value which corresponds its state in the Markov chain. The stopwords are considered topic neutral; thus, they assigned the label ‘n’. The rest of the terms considered to convey on-topic meaning; therefore, they are labeled as ‘o’. Therefore, the transition set of states is $\mathbb{T} = \{o, n\}$. We define as \mathbb{O} the set of ‘on’ words and as \mathbb{N} the set of neutral words, where $\mathbb{O} \cap \mathbb{N} = \emptyset$.

To map a document d to the transition sequence, we define a mapping function ϕ : $\mathbb{D} \longrightarrow \mathbb{K}$ such that:

$$d = (w_1, w_2, \dots w_{n_d}) \longrightarrow \phi(d) = (I(w_1), I(w_2), \dots I(w_{n_d})) \quad (3.8)$$

where:

$$\mathbb{K} = \bigcup_{n=1}^Z \mathbb{T}^n \text{ and } I(w) = \begin{cases} o & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{O} \\ n & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{N} \end{cases}$$

and

$$Z = \max n_d$$

At the implementation level, we consider one more state that might appear only in the test documents in case that we meet a word that never occurred in the training set. This state is called “unknown” and it is denoted as ‘u’. We introduce this state in order to enhance the discriminating power of our model. This state is assigned to the unknown words of the test set and it never appears in the training corpus by default. Considering the set of state \mathbb{T} and the “unknown state” we estimate the transition matrix A as in 3.19. The initial probabilities Π are estimated as in 3.20. The emission for a word $w^i \in \mathbb{V}$ is estimated as in Equation 3.18.

The state automaton has a state space $\mathbb{S} = \mathbb{T}^2$. The current model automaton is

³<http://www-nlp.stanford.edu/software/corenlp.shtml>

⁴<http://www.nltk.org>

illustrated in Figure 3.2. If $\mathbb{S} = \{S_1, \dots, S_n\}$ is the set of nodes of the state automaton and $\mathbb{E} = \{\mathcal{E}_1, \dots, \mathcal{E}_n\}$ its set of edges, then, $\forall S_i, S_j \in \mathbb{S}, S_i \rightarrow S_j \notin \mathbb{E}$. This means that we need to calculate a subset of all possible connection of the nodes of the automaton. For example, there is not a directed edge between $S_i = (n, n)$ and $S_j = (o, o)$ nodes because the probability of such a transition is zero. This decrease the number of transition calculations in the model.

On each edge a label of the form $P(t_i | t_j, t_k)$ is assigned that denotes the probability to meet t_i while the two previous states are (t_j, t_k) , where $t_i, t_j, t_k \in \mathbb{T}$. The transition, in this case, is from state (t_j, t_k) to (t_k, t_i) . For example, the edge $\mathcal{E}_1 : (o, n) \rightarrow (n, n)$ has a probability $P(n | o, n)$ to occur. We refer to this model as *Stopwords_Model*.

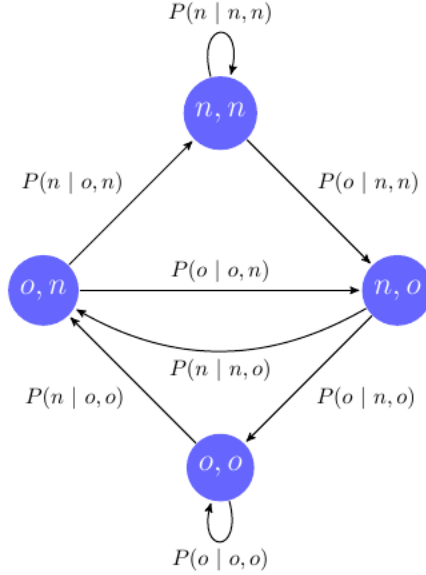


Figure 3.2: State diagram of Stopwords_Model

3.5.2 Weighting Schemes Crafted Word Groups

In this set of models, we rely on a weighting schemes to constitute the initial groups of words, we consider in our model. In literature exist several word selection methods for dimensionality reduction that are important for tasks like clustering and document classification. Some of the widely used methods are information gain, mutual information and chi-square. As described in a comparative study by Yang et al. [60] all of the previously mentioned methods are calculated in conjunction with the classification classes. They rely on formulas that weight the words regarding to at least two classes. In this work, we propose a system that relies only on one-class documents. Thus, we need weighting schemes that are class independent. As a rather promising approach [10, 49] that relies on the word frequency and the corpus size, we use Term Frequency (TF)-Inverse Document Frequency (IDF) to extract the “important” words and form groups of words.

TF-IDF Weighting Schema

The TF - IDF [50] was introduced as a weighting factor that reflects the “importance” of a word w in a document d . For each word, the word frequency is calculated and the inverse frequency of the word in the corpus \mathbb{D} it is contained is also computed according to the formula:

$$TFIDF(w, d, \mathbb{D}) = TF(w, d) \times IDF(w, \mathbb{D}) \quad (3.9)$$

where TF is the logarithmically scaled word frequency defined as:

$$TF(w, d) = \log(f(w, d) + 1) \quad (3.10)$$

and the IDF scale factor for the “importance” of the word:

$$IDF(w, \mathbb{D}) = \log \frac{|\mathbb{D}|}{|d \in \mathbb{D} : w \in d|} \quad (3.11)$$

TF-IDF is designed to attenuate the effect of terms that occur very often in a collection of documents. TF-IDF scales down the term frequency of a word w by the

reversed metric of the total number of documents containing the term w . **TF-IDF** is used as an “importance” measure of the words in a collection of documents. In our case, higher **TF-IDF** score implies higher topic importance.

The Role of TF-IDF

In this model, we use three sets of words. One is crafted by the stopwords and it is denoted as \mathbb{N} . The second consists by the first thousand most important words with respect to **TF-IDF** ranking and is denoted by \mathbb{F} and the third set is the rest of the input vocabulary; denoted as \mathbb{O} . The previously defined sets are pairwise disjoint.

The set of states of the Markov model is $\mathbb{T} = \{f, n, o\}$ for the \mathbb{F} , \mathbb{N} and \mathbb{O} respectively. The **TF-IDF** is applied on the input dataset to rank the words regarding the input documents. In this case, **TF-IDF** provides us with a ranked list of the words that are considered to be important for the topic of our interest.

We define a mapping function $\phi: \mathbb{D} \longrightarrow \mathbb{K}$ that maps a document d to the transition sequence as follows:

$$d = (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_{n_d}) \longrightarrow \phi(d) = (I(w_1), I(w_2), \dots, I(w_{n_d})) \quad (3.12)$$

where:

$$\mathbb{K} = \bigcup_{n=1}^Z \mathbb{S}^n \text{ and } I(w) = \begin{cases} f & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{F} \\ n & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{N} \\ o & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{O} \end{cases}$$

and

$$Z = \max n_d$$

As in the Stopwords_Model, at the implementation level, we consider the “unknown state” denoted as ‘u’. We need this state in order to enhance the discriminating power of our model. This state is assigned to the unknown words of the test set

and it never appears in the training corpus. Considering the set of state \mathbb{T} and the “unknown state” we estimate the transition matrix A as in 3.19. The initial probabilities Π are estimated as in 3.20. The emission matrix B is estimated as in equation 3.18. The set of states for the finite state automaton of this model has a set of states $\mathbb{S} = \mathbb{T}^2$. We refer to this model by *TF-IDF_model*

The Role of Latent Dirichlet Allocation

In this model, we explore the discriminating power of the introduced sequential model blended with groups of words produced by latent Dirichlet allocation. Latent Dirichlet allocation is used to extract the corpus-wide topics of the dataset. It provides the significant co-occurrent words in the collection sorted into a predefined number of sets. We explore how the LDA topics fluctuation in the training set can be used to recognize the input topic on unknown documents.

To extract the corpus-wide topic we utilize the LDA package⁵ of R. The number of topics are predefined to three. The total number of words into the three sets is nine hundred and ninety. LDA topics as illustrated in Figure 1.1 can produce topics that contain common words. In our case we craft the groups to be pairwise disjoint; we select two hundred unique words for each set.

On that front, we assume that a word $w^i \in \mathbb{V}$ is assigned a tag value in $\mathbb{T} = \{p_1, p_2, p_3, n, o\}$. The p_1 to p_3 represent the tags for the three topics extracted by LDA. The tag n is assigned to stopwords and the tag o is assigned to the rest of the vocabulary. We denote the corresponding sets as \mathbb{P}_1 , \mathbb{P}_2 , \mathbb{P}_3 , \mathbb{N} and \mathbb{O} respectively. We define a map function ϕ that maps a document d to a transition sequence as follows: $\phi: \mathbb{D} \longrightarrow \mathbb{K}$ such that:

$$d = (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n) \longrightarrow \phi(d) = (I(w_1), I(w_2), \dots, I(w_n)) \quad (3.13)$$

⁵<https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/lda/lda.pdf>

where:

$$\mathbb{K} = \bigcup_{n=1}^Z \mathbb{S}^n \text{ and } I(w) = \begin{cases} p_i & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{P}_i, \text{ for } 1 \leq i \leq 3 \\ o & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{O} \\ n & \text{if } w \in \mathbb{N} \end{cases} \quad (3.14)$$

and

$$Z = \max n_d$$

We refer to this model as *LDA3_Model*.

3.6 MTI Training

In this section, we discuss the model inference parameters (Subsection 3.6.2) and the document classification process of a new document (Subsection 3.6.3). Following the document classification process we present a way to deal with the classification boundary identification given that we have calculated the scores of only the on-topic class documents. At the beginning (Subsection 3.6.1) we discuss the document representation structure that facilitates the training process.

3.6.1 Document Representation and Pre-processing

Before discussing the inference and learning of the models parameters and the document classification formalization it is important to discuss how a document is represented. The standard in statistical NLP and machine learning is the *feature vector*. Feature vector provides the ability to deal with different text objects like words, sentences et cetera. It facilitates the test of various hypothesis using different mathematical frameworks. The common BoW representation considers a document as a probability distribution of words for a given vocabulary. In this case, a feature vector is a set of unique words its one assigned a positive real number lower than one, which represents a probability. Other options exist where instead of a probability the frequency or a boolean value that denotes the word existence occur. Generally, a feature vector can contain several feature like the document length or other infor-

mation related to the text.

Our representation retain the entire collection of documents as it is. The fundamental idea is to store each document in a form of tri-grams to facilitate the mathematical calculations. For instance the document: “The unemployment rate was projected” is represented in the form of trigrams as: {[The, unemployment, rate], [unemployment, rate, was], [rate, was projected]}. This technique is used in other domains like speech recognition or language modeling. The trigram representation although requires more storage capacity eases the implementation of the model.

Moreover, we discard any punctuation of the source text and convert all words in lower case. Since we are interested of the word sets fluctuations and not the word fluctuations itself; our approach is not influenced by the different forms of the same word stems because they exhibit high probability to co-exist in the same predefined groups.

3.6.2 Inference and Learning

The models described in 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 rely on a Markov chain. To infer the model parameters we need to calculate the Bayesian statistics of the model. As introduced in section 3.4 the transition, emission and initial probabilities need to be estimated on the training set.

The most intuitive way to estimate probabilities is the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE). The MLE estimations are frequents counts normalized to receive values between zero and one. For a fixed set of observed data, MLE parameter values provide the maximum probability of the training corpus. The MLE estimators are denoted with the $\hat{\cdot}$ symbol to discriminate from probability values.

The training data consists of documents where each document $d = (w_1, \dots, w_{n_d})$ is paired with the hidden state sequence $\phi(d) = (I(w_1), I(w_2), \dots, I(w_{n_d}))$ provided

by the $\phi: \mathbb{D} \rightarrow \mathbb{K}$ function of each model, where $I(w_i) \in \mathbb{T}$. We define $N(w^i)$ and $N(t_k, t_j, t_i)$ the number of times the word w^i is observed in the corpus and the number of times the hidden sequence (t_i, t_j, t_k) has been observed in the training corpus respectively.

Given the above definitions, the maximum likelihood estimates are:

$$\hat{b}(w^i) = \frac{N(w^i)}{\sum_{w^i \in \mathbb{V}} N(w^i)} \quad (3.15)$$

$$\hat{a}(t_i, t_j, t_k) = \frac{N(t_i, t_j, t_k)}{\sum_{t_k \in \mathbb{T}} N(t_i, t_j, t_k)} \quad (3.16)$$

and

$$\hat{\pi}(t_i, t_j) = \frac{|\{d \in \mathbb{D} \mid (I(w_1), I(w_2)) = (t_i, t_j)\}|}{|\mathbb{D}|} \quad (3.17)$$

The $\hat{a}(t_i, t_j, t_k)$, $\hat{b}(w^i)$ and $\hat{\pi}(t_i, t_j)$ do not consider events that are not present in the training corpus making the probability of observed events the higher it can be. In [NLP](#), even if we use a large training collection of documents, it is very likely that in the test corpus we meet words unseen in the training corpus. The [MLE](#) assign zero probabilities to unseen words/states or combinations of them; these zeros will propagate through the multiplication of subparts probabilities ending up to bad classifiers.

To resolve the issues that arise from data sparseness, we need to assign some probability mass to unseen events. Therefore, we utilize a smoothing method to consider some probability mass for events never occurred in the training set. One simple way to smooth the probabilities is by adding one to zeros and on the other hand, we reduce the non-zeros ones. In other words, we discount the non-zero probabilities to get the probability mass that we assign to the zero counts. This method is called Laplace smoothing [\[44\]](#).

Considering Laplace smoothing we update Formulas [3.15](#), [3.16](#) and [3.17](#) as follows:

$$\hat{b}(w^i) = \frac{1 + N(w^i)}{|\mathbb{V}| + \sum_{w^i \in \mathbb{V}} N(w^i)} \quad (3.18)$$

$$\hat{a}(t_i, t_j, t_k) = \frac{1 + N(t_i, t_j, t_k)}{|\mathbb{T}| + \sum_{t_k \in \mathbb{T}} N(t_i, t_j, t_k)} \quad (3.19)$$

and

$$\hat{\pi}(t_i, t_j) = \frac{1 + |\{d \in \mathbb{D} \mid (I(w_1), I(w_2)) = (t_i, t_j)\}|}{|\mathbb{S}| + |\mathbb{D}|} \quad (3.20)$$

In 3.18 we ensure that unseen words in a test document receive a non-zero probability. In particular, each unseen word w is assigned $P(w) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{V}|}$. Smoothing the generated words is very significant, more than the transitions probabilities since it might exist many new words that do not emit in the training corpus.

Similarly, in 3.19 we assign a probability mass of $P(t_k \mid t_i, t_j) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{T}|}$ for each unseen transition $\mathcal{E} : (t_i, t_j) \rightarrow (t_j, t_k)$. For each unseen pair (t_i, t_j) of initial probabilities we assign probability mass of $P(t_i, t_j) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{S}|}$ as it is provided by 3.20.

3.6.3 Document Classification

The classification of a new unknown document d relies on the two following tasks. First, we map d to a topic space regarding a score we introduce in this section. Second, we deduce ‘on’ class for d whether its classification score falls into the classification boundary created by the topic scores of the training documents.

Usually, in probabilistic binary classification methods we infer about the class of document d according to the probabilities of d to belong c_1 or c_2 class. The class $c_d \in \{c_1, c_2\}$ is the class where $P(c_d \mid d)$ is maximized:

$$P(c_d \mid d) = \max\{P(c_1 \mid d), P(c_2 \mid d)\}$$

In our model, we can not use the probability as a classification measure since we train our system in solely one class. Instead, we use a topic score that is derived directly from the posterior probability $P(c_d = on \mid d)$, which is the probability of the document d to belong to class $c_d = on$.

To achieve the classification of $d = (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_{n_d})$ into two classes $\mathbb{C} = \{on, off\}$, we need the corresponding ϕ function, $\phi: \mathbb{D} \rightarrow \mathbb{K}$ for each model introduced in 3.5.1 to 3.5.2 that maps the document d into the sequence of states $\phi(d)$. The probability of d to be ‘on’ given the transition sequence $\phi(d)$ is $P(c_d = on \mid d)$. Using Bayes rule, $P(c_d = on \mid d)$ is estimated as follows:

$$P(c_d = on \mid d) \propto P(d \mid c_d = on)$$

where:

$$P(d \mid c_d = on) = \pi(I(w_1), I(w_2)) * b(w_1) * b(w_2) \prod_{i=3}^{n_d} a(I(w_{i-2}), I(w_{i-1}), I(w_i)) * b(w_i) \quad (3.21)$$

We logarithm over 3.21 and normalize dividing by document length to yield length independent scores. We refer to the above-introduced score as Logarithmic Topic Score ([LTS](#)).

$$LTS = \frac{\log(\pi(I(w_1), I(w_2)) * b(w_1) * b(w_2)) + \sum_{i=3}^{n_d} [\log(a(I(w_{i-2}), I(w_{i-1}), I(w_i))) + \log(b(w_i))]}{n_d} \quad (3.22)$$

We believe that documents of the same topic yield scores concentrated around a limited area. Documents that exhibit high frequency of words the are not in the training set, we forsee, to have high [LTS](#) score because we assign a small emission probability to unknown words. Documents that have vocabularies close to the training set but of different topic we expect to have different fluctuation of the Markov states, thus

values located on different areas of input corpus. In the next subsection 3.6.4 we introduce the method that we determine the topic boundary.

3.6.4 Classification Boundary Identification

In this section, we handle the issue of identifying a classification boundary given the value space of only one class of documents. We want to identify the bounding values of the LTS topic score distribution of the training corpus.

In literature two approaches have been proposed to address *one-class classification* problems. In 1999 Scholkopf et al. [52] extended SVM to deal with solely one-class instances. Scholkopf proposed a way to identify a boundary given data of one class.

First, they use a kernel function to map data to a feature space F and then they setup an optimization problem in which they separate the mapped data from the origin using the conventional support vector machines technique. The classification function returns +1 in a confined region where the training data points are located and -1 elsewhere.

In 2004 Dax et al. [20] proposed a method that provides a hyperspherical boundary in feature space that surrounds the training data points. The spherical classification boundary is described by a center α and a radius R . The center is a linear combination of support vectors and the distance of all data points from the center is less than R . The soft margin penalized technique (Subsection 2.2.2) is used for data points where the distance is greater than R . This problem is an optimization problem where they minimize the outliers effect.

Practically, to specify the topic boundary we use the *e1071* library or R-project which implements the LIBSVM [16] library of SVM. The implementation of e1071 library follows Scholkopf's implementation [52] The tolerance of the boundary to outliers is determined by the ν parameter, where $\nu \in (0, 1)$. The lower value ν receives, the

fewer outlier ratio it exhibits as is depicted in 3.3.

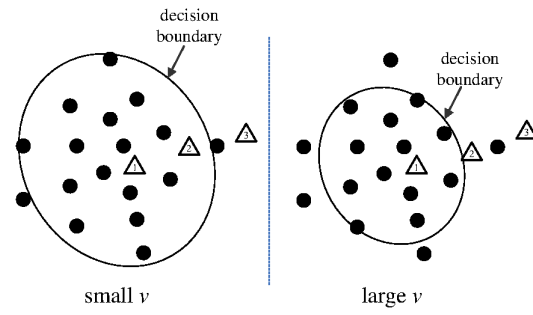


Figure 3.3: Boundary variation on different ν values

Chapter 4

MTI Evaluation

4.1 Data Acquisition

In this thesis, we obtain data for three different evaluation scenarios. We gather documents that discuss the topic that we train our model. This consists the gold standard dataset. Some more datasets are obtained to evaluate the discriminating power of our model that exhibit low and high vocabulary overlapping to the gold standard dataset.

4.1.1 Federal Reserve Datasets

We download documents from Federal Reserve Bank ([FED](#)) of the United States. [FED](#) is the central bank of the USA and its main goals are to provide the USA with a safer, more flexible, and more stable monetary and financial system. The first corpus is called Federal Reserve Open Market Committee ([FOMC](#)) and it is the gold standard document that we train our model. The second dataset we collect comes also from [FED](#) and it is called Beige Book. We select these datasets because they are in well written English, they are issued by the same institute and they both lay on the same domain. They discuss different financial aspects concerning the US economy and we assume that regardless their different themes that maybe exist in,

each collection discusses one particular topic.

Federal Open Market Committee Corpus

The emphasis of the gold standard dataset is on a particular topic. We download [FOMC](#) documents between the years 2007 and the end of 2014. The gold standard comprises the official releases of the Federal Open Market Committee of Federal Reserve concerning the monetary policy decision in the United States. These reports are released eight times per year. Furthermore, it comprises the corresponding meeting *Minutes* that include personalized statements and further policy details released three weeks after the date of the policy decision. In addition to FOMC, an *Economic Projection* is issued to supplement FOMC releases four times annually. The data include charts and figures that are not subject to this work. The number of the documents that consist the gold standard dataset is one hundred and fifty eight. The dataset is downloaded from the official website¹ of the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States.

Beige Book Corpus

The second collection of documents is used to evaluate the performance of our model in the case that we have documents of the same domain. This dataset consisting of the *Beige Book* summaries. The Beige Book summaries are released two weeks before [FOMC](#) meetings and eight times per year exposing anecdotal information about the current economic conditions in its District sourced by banks, economists, market experts et cetera. This corpus consists of brief and extended reports for each event from 2007 and the end of 2014. The corpus counts one hundred and twelve documents downloaded from the official website of [FED](#).

¹<http://www.federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy/default.htm>

4.1.2 American National Corpus

The third dataset is the generic Manually Annotated Sub-Corpus ([MASC](#)) corpus part of the Open American National Corpus ([OANC](#)) downloaded from the official website². It is a balanced collection of mainly written texts of half million words of contemporary American English. It is comprised of nineteen different genres of text discussing different topics. The corpus has been manually annotated by the authors for logical structure, tokenizations and part-of-speech, name entities et cetera. [OANC](#) and [MASC](#) rely on contributions of data from various linguistics and [NLP](#) communities. The genres distribution is demonstrated in Table 4.1. The number of documents of [MASC](#) is three hundred and ninety.

Genre	No. words	Pct corpus
Court transcript	30052	6%
Debate transcript	32325	6%
Email	27642	6%
Essay	25590	5%
Fiction	31518	6%
Gov't documents	24578	5%
Journal	25635	5%
Letters	23325	5%
Newspaper	23545	5%
Non-fiction	25182	5%
Spoken	25783	5%
Technical	27895	6%
Travel guides	26708	5%
Twitter	24180	5%
Blog	28199	6%
Ficlets	26299	5%
Movie script	28240	6%
Spam	23490	5%
Jokes	26582	5%

Table 4.1: MASC topics specification

²<http://www.anc.org/>

4.1.3 HC German Corpora

HC is a German corpus consist of documents of published on three different source, newspapers, web blogs and twitter. The list of some of the sources and the number of documents collected from each one of them is depicted in Table 4.3³. The corpus is downloaded from the original source⁴ preserving only the news items that come from newspapers and magazines.

The list of documents available from newspapers and magazines are assigned the code numbers one and two respectively. The dataset contains documents that lay on twenty-eight different categories assigned specific codes that denote the topic of each document. Some of the topics of HC corpus are Politics, environment, food, health, crime & law, travel, arts, sport, science and technology, travel et cetera.

We retrieve the documents that are about health, crime & law, and travel and discard all the rest. These three categories contain a number of documents that ensure the statistical significance of our experiments and at the same time the processing time remains acceptable. The number of documents that we retain for each of the three topics is shown in Table 4.2.

Topic	No. of document
Health	1150
Crime & Law	501
Travel	1138

Table 4.2: HC topics-documents specification

³Downloaded from <http://www.corpora.heliohost.org/statistics.html>

⁴<http://www.corpora.heliohost.org/>

Source	No. of document
spiegel.de	4931
sueddeutsche.de	1251
tagesspiegel.de	1104
muensterschezeitung.de	1611
abendblatt.de	3461
stern.de	3143
zeit.de	2775
welt.de	3517
handelsblatt.com	1159
kn-online.de	126
rp-online.de	4265
focus.de	831
faz.net	4396
ruhrnachrichten.de	1567
noz.de	4595
augsburger-allgemeine.de	3567
ln-online.de	142
derwesten.de	1061
an-online.de	3912
badische-zeitung.de	229
jungewelt.de	517
haz.de	571
fazfinance.net	4021
az-web.de	3908
neues-deutschland.de	4662
taz.de	635
blogger.de	7935
blogmonster.de	5353
twitter.com	947774

Table 4.3: HC corpus sources

4.1.4 Corpora Overview

An overview of the corpora specifications is depicted in Table 4.4. It is provided the number of documents for each corpus, the vocabulary size, the number of tokens each dataset consists of and the mean document length.

Corpus	Documents	Vocabulary	Tokens	Mean Document Length
FOMC	158	6000	500,000	3,259
Beige Book	112	9000	1,200,000	10,721
MASC	390	35,000	500,000	1,317
HC Health	1150	38,000	280,000	211
HC Crime & Law	501	13,000	60,000	117
HC Travel	1138	54,000	400,000	341

Table 4.4: Corpora specification

4.2 Validation Techniques

In machine learning beside the model selection and its parameters inference, we address the problem of model validation. Obviously, the dataset and the model selection process are linked in such a way where we choose the model that exhibits the lower error rate on the training dataset. It would be ideal if we could utilize the whole training set to estimate the hit and error rate of the model. However, machine learning algorithms tend to “learn” in a satisfactory way the training set but lack generalization. In other words, they memorize the training samples than representing the underlying relationships. On that front, they exhibit worse performance on the unknown datasets they are applied; a potential performance estimation on the training dataset tends to be optimistic with respect to the test set.

In literature, this is called *overfitting* and several methods have been proposed to estimate the efficacy of the model in a realistic way. Following we present the three

methods that are widely used to validate supervised machine learning algorithms with respect to a particular dataset.

Hold-Out Validation

A common approach is the hold-out method where the training set is split into two disjoint sets where one of them is used to train the model and the other to estimate its performance and it is called test set (Figure 4.1). Usually, the training set possesses the higher proportion of the training set since sufficient number of samples need to be fed to the algorithm for its parameters to be estimated properly. The proportion of the training set might be split into two third and one third for the learning and the test set respectively. In practice, different proportions can be used depending on the size of the training set and the complexity of the model.

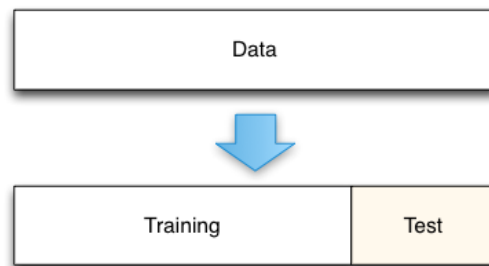


Figure 4.1: Holdout validation method

Hold-out exhibits two significant shortcomings. Considering the learning curve in Figure 4.2, where the model accuracy increases with the size of the training set, the hold-out efficacy estimation is pessimistic since only a part of the of the training set is used for model training. Moreover, it may happen that the learning set proportion is not sufficiently representative deriving a misleading efficacy estimation. This is due to the fact that the hold-out method relies on a singular split of the train and test set.

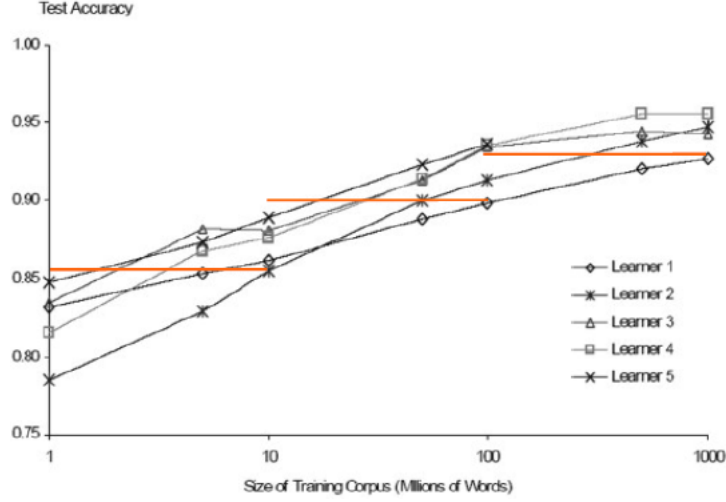


Figure 4.2: Learning curve of different learners on text data [2]. It demonstrates the rising accuracy performance as the training set is increasing.

Cross Validation

In k-fold cross-validation, the training set S is partitioned in k disjoint equal sized folds S_1, S_2, \dots, S_k . The validation is repeated k times and for each iteration one of the k folds is used for validation and the rest $k-1$ is used for learning. For each iteration $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ the algorithm is trained on $S \setminus S_i$ and tested on S_i as is illustrated in Figure 4.3, for $k = 5$. The supervised method efficacy is estimated on every of the k subsamples. Practically, the validation is performed on the entire training set and the error rate is the average of the errors on the k iterations [40] as shown in equation 4.1

$$e_{avg} = \frac{1}{k} \sum_{i=1}^k e_i \quad (4.1)$$

The advantage of cross-validation compared with the hold-out method is that the whole set is used for training and testing. In this setting we avoid inappropriate splits that lead to inaccurate performance estimations that are too pessimistic for the model. The average error estimation provides us with more realistic efficacy

estimation.

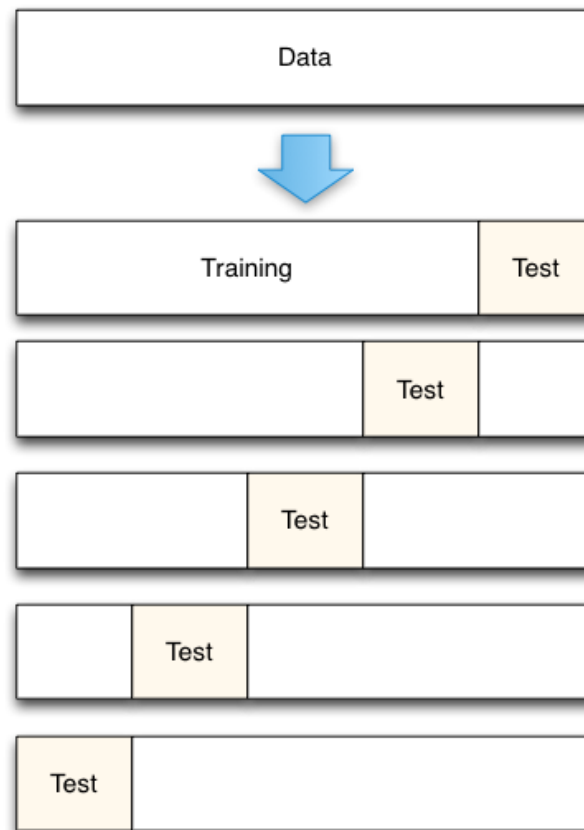


Figure 4.3: Cross-validation method with five folds. Each iteration uses the one fifth of the data for testing. The five folds are equally sized and disjoint.

An important point concerning k-fold cross validation is the criteria that we choose the value of k. In general, it is a trade-off between efficacy estimation and computational time. In case that k is large, the bias of the error estimate is small and the efficacy assessment is pragmatic. On the other hand, the computational time to perform more iteration is expensive considering that some of the machine learning models exhibit high computational complexity. In case that k is small, the bias of the error is higher and the estimator is conservative. Apparently, the iterations are less and the computational time is reduced.

In general, the choice of the number of cross-validation iterations is practically correlated with the size of the dataset. For large datasets, even three iterations could provide sufficiently accurate error estimates, but more iterations are needed on sparse datasets to receive an accurate estimation. The commonly used value for k is ten; the test set on each iteration is the ten percent of the entire training set then.

Leave-One-Out Validation

Leave-one-out is analogous to cross-validation. In a set of N training samples, N-1 are used for the learning phase and one for efficacy estimation. The process is repeated N times since all the dataset samples are used for testing. In this extreme case of cross-validation, the error estimate is unbiased but it could exhibit high variance. Moreover, the computational cost is the highest since the number of folds is equal to the number of training instances. For each fold, a new model has to be trained making this validation method slow.

This approach is suitable when there is not sufficient number of data or they are not properly distributed in order to be split into training and test set as in conventional validating approaches. Ultimately, it is sensible to use five or ten-fold cross validation since they appear to be quite effective in practice.

4.3 Evaluation Measures

In literature different evaluation methods have been developed to measure the performance of classification systems. In this section, we present several measures that can be used on binary classification to measure the efficacy of the positive and negative samples or of the entire test set. All of the classification measures we present in this section are based on a confusion matrix as it is illustrated in table 4.5

		Prediction outcome		
				total
actual value		True Positive	False Negative	P
		False Positive	True Negative	N

Table 4.5: Confusion matrix

The binary classification performance is described by a number of measures that facilitate the performance estimation based on different statistical observations. Firstly, we describe what the values true positive/negative and false positive/negative represent in table 4.6.

In table 4.7 we summarize the most important measures. We denote X and \hat{X} the random variables for the class and the prediction respectively. We refer to the true positives as TP, the true negatives as TN, the false positives as FP and the false negatives as FN. The positive samples are P and the negatives are N, the positive and negative class is \oplus and \ominus respectively.

Terminology	Description
True Positive	A positive sample which is classified as positive
False Positive	A negative sample which is classified as positive
True Negative	A negative sample which is classified as negative
False Negative	A positive sample which is classified as negative

Table 4.6: Terminology of confusion matrix

Following we introduce the most important measures to evaluate classifications systems. We provide the values of accuracy, recall, specificity, precision and Matthews correlation coefficient our models achieve in the Section [4.4](#).

The *accuracy* of a classifier is the ratio of correctly classified samples:

$$Accuracy = \frac{\text{Correctly classified samples}}{\text{Test size}} = \frac{TP + TN}{TP + TN + FP + FN} \quad (4.2)$$

Precision represents the ratio of positive prediction that is correct.

$$Precision = \frac{\text{Correctly classified positive samples}}{\text{Positive classified samples}} = \frac{TP}{TP + FP} \quad (4.3)$$

Recall represents the ratio of positive labeled samples that are correctly predicted. It is also known as *sensitivity* or *true positive rate*.

$$Recall = \frac{\text{Correctly classified positive samples}}{\text{Positive samples}} = \frac{TP}{TP + FN} \quad (4.4)$$

Specificity represents the ratio of negative labeled samples that are correctly predicted.

$$Specificity = \frac{\text{Correctly classified negative samples}}{\text{Negative samples}} = \frac{TN}{TN + FP} \quad (4.5)$$

False positive rate (FPR) represents the ratio of negative labeled samples that are misclassified as positive.

$$FPR = \frac{\text{Correctly classified negative samples}}{\text{Negative samples}} = \frac{FP}{FP + TN} \quad (4.6)$$

F_1 score is the harmonic mean of precision and recall. It receives values $F_1 \in [0,1]$, where 1 is the best score and 0 is the worst. Good classification algorithms maximize precision and recall simultaneously. In general, a classifier that exhibits a moderate good performance on both is favored over overly high performance on only one of them.

$$F_1 = 2 \cdot \frac{\text{precision} \cdot \text{recall}}{\text{precision} + \text{recall}} \quad (4.7)$$

Matthews Correlation Coefficient (*MCC*) [43] is a quality measure of a binary classification. It returns the correlation coefficient between the actual and the predicted class values. The coefficient value $MCC \in [-1,1]$. $MCC = -1$ is the worst value MCC receives since it denotes a total discrepancy between the actual and the predicted values. $MCC = 1$ denotes a perfect concordance between the actual and the predicted values. $MCC = 0$ denotes a prediction not superior to the random classifier⁵. The advantage of *MCC* is that it can be used even if the two classes possess different proportion whereas metrics like accuracy, precision, recall, specificity etc are misleading if they are not contrasted with random classifier predictions. *MCC* is also known as *phi coefficient*.

⁵A random classifier is the classifier that predicts always according to the class that possesses the higher proportion in the training set

$$MCC = \frac{\frac{TP}{N} - S \cdot P}{\sqrt{P \cdot S(1-S)(1-P)}} \quad (4.8)$$

where:

$$N = TN + TP + FN + FP,$$

$$S = \frac{TP + FN}{N},$$

$$P = \frac{TP + FP}{N}$$

Metric	Description	Estimation
Accuracy	$P(\hat{X} = X)$	$ACC = \frac{TP+TN}{P+N}$
Precision	$P(X = \oplus \mid \hat{X} = \oplus)$	$PREC = \frac{TP}{TP+FP}$
Recall or Sensitivity	$P(\hat{X} = \oplus \mid X = \oplus)$	$REC = \frac{TP}{P}$
Specificity or True Positive Rate	$P(\hat{X} = \ominus \mid X = \ominus)$	$SPEC = \frac{TN}{N}$
False Positive Rate	$P(\hat{X} = \oplus \mid X = \ominus)$	$FPR = \frac{FP}{N}$
MCC ⁶ or Phi Coefficient	Returns a classification quality measure with respect to random classifier.	$MCC = \frac{TP \cdot TN - FP \cdot FN}{\sqrt{P \cdot (TP+FP) \cdot (TN+FN) \cdot N}}$
F_1 Score	Represents the harmonic mean of precision and recall.	$F_1 = 2 \cdot \frac{precision \cdot recall}{precision + recall}$
Rate of Positive Predictions	$P(\hat{X} = \oplus)$	$RPP = \frac{TP+FP}{P+N}$
Rate of Negative Predictions	$P(\hat{X} = \ominus)$	$RNP = \frac{TN+FN}{T+N}$

Table 4.7: Classification performance measures

⁶MCC returns a value $C \in [-1,1]$. $C = 0$ implies a random prediction. $C = 1$ implies a perfect prediction. $C < 0$ implies a worse than random prediction

4.4 Results

In this section we proceed to the [MTI](#) (Chapter 3) evaluation results. We propose three evaluation scenarios the outcome of which we discuss subsequently. The first scenario evaluates the `Stopwords_Model`, `TF_IDF_Model` and `LDA3_Model` of Subsection 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 in comparison with two widely used binary classifiers [NB](#) and [SVM](#) presented in Section 2.2. The datasets the three models discriminate are the [FOMC](#) and the [MASC](#) corpus presented in Subsection 4.1. In the second scenario, our models are evaluated on the [FOMC](#) and Beige Book corpora. The Markovian topic identifiers are compared with [NB](#) and [SVM](#) as in the first scenario. In the third scenario, `Stopwords_Model` and `TF_IDF_Model` are evaluated on two subcases to explore their performance on German language and on other than financial documents. We conduct two tests, one the HC Health against the HC Crime & Law corpus and the other the HC Health corpus against the HC Travel corpus. In both cases, the on-topic documents are the ones of the health topic.

In both experimental scenarios we take into account the following evaluation metrics: Precision, recall, accuracy, specificity and [MCC](#) introduced in Table 4.7. All the tests are conducted using a ten-fold cross-validation method presented in Subsection 4.2.

We choose the precision ([PREC](#)) and recall ([REC](#)) measures for our models because we are interested in the percentage of positive predictions that are correct and the the percentage of positive labeled instances that were predicted as positive. We examine how our models deal with the recognition of on-topic documents since they are trained on them. Furthermore, we calculate the specificity of our models to explore how accurately our model discard off-topic documents.

The [MCC](#) is used because it is a comparison coefficient between the proposed model and the default classifier. In our case the compared corpora are unbalanced, so the default classifier achieves accuracy higher than fifty percent. [MCC](#) provides us with a numerical value of how much better our classifier is regarding the default classi-

fier. The accuracy (ACC) provides the proportion of predictions that are correct but it should be interpreted in contradistinction with the default classifier performance otherwise it can be misleading.

As it was presented in Subsections 3.6.4 a classification boundary is calculated given the topic scores [LTS](#) of the training collection. To do so the one class [SVM](#) method is used [52]. The selection of the ν (Subsection 3.6.4) value is important since it dramatically influence the classification performance. When $0.1 \leq \nu \leq 0.3$ we notice that we achieve high accuracy values in all the scenarios. In particular, in the majority of the scenarios when $\nu = 0.3$, we achieve the highest performance values. To keep it uniform we select $\nu = 0.3$ for all scenarios, since even if we do not reach the highest performance values we are close to them. The selection of $\nu = 0.3$ does not change the rank of the performance of [MTI](#) models in each scenario.

The classification tasks and the processing steps of the algorithms were implemented in *R-project* and some corresponding CRAN [55] libraries that implement different classification, evaluation and plotting tools. Weka⁷ was used to apply the baseline classifications of [NB](#) and [SVM](#). Weka [61] provides an easy and convenient environment to perform plenty of data mining and machine learning tasks. It is an open source framework implemented in Java that provides, among the implementation of popular algorithms, other pre-processing and manipulation tools and graphic representation facilities.

4.4.1 Evaluation Classifiers Selection

In both experimental scenarios, we compare our models performance with the baseline results provided by the other two classifiers, [NB](#) and [SVM](#). In literature exist several other classifiers that are used for text classification. We select the multinomial [NB](#) because it is a primitive classifiers than rely solely on the bag-of-words

⁷Weka stands for Waikato Environment for Knowledge Analysis

representation without the utilization of extra weighting methods or optimizations. It uses only the emissions of the words given the class to discriminate between the two classes. The **MTI** models rely also on the emissions (Subsection 3.6.2) with the extra property of the word sequences provided by the transitions (Subsection 3.6.2). **NB** provides in our case the “ground zero” to study our research questions 1 and 2 presented in Section 1.3.

The selection of **SVM** as the second baseline classifier is preferred since it is effective in text classification [35] providing an upper bound of the efficiency of our models. **SVM** are effective in text classification since they provide zero weight to the words that do not contribute to discrimination and weights the terms that support the classification process (support vectors). In its soft margin version, they penalize the missclassified terms and using the kernel trick (Subsection 2.2.2). they exhibit high discriminating efficiency.

Having a baseline comparison framework in one’s disposal we can identify how well our models perform. The baseline performance of **NB** and **SVM** facilitates a comparison between the baseline provided results and the efficiency of the introduced models preserving the same input. Herein, the aspect of evaluating the topic recognition performance of the Markovian topic identifiers is examined. The topic recognition is evaluated in terms of classification performance between ‘on’ and ‘off’ topic instances.

4.4.2 Experimental Scenario I

In this scenario, we evaluate the performance of **Stopwords_model**, **TF_IDF_model** and **LDA3_Model** as described in Section 3.5 on the two dataset that discusses different topics. The dataset we train our model is the **FOMC** dataset that has a clear financial orientation (Section 4.1). The topic of **FOMC** documents is the monetary policy in the USA. The topic of **FOMC** is the one we intend to recognize.

The dataset that we use to evaluate our model in conjunction with FOMC is the MASC corpus. It is a generic dataset that discusses several topics covering different domains. We examine the efficacy of our method on “learning” the ninety percent of FOMC and recognize it among the rest ten percent set of FOMC and the entire MASC corpus documents in a single iteration of a cross-validation setup.

We consider this as the “easy” case since the topics of the two collections are clearly different and lay on different domains. Thus, in this scenario we use as baseline classifiers NB and SVM, as discussed in 4.4.1, to be the “ground zero” of our models performance estimation.

Classifier	PREC	REC	ACC(%)	SPEC	MCC	Kernel
NB	0.90	0.90	99.4	1	0.90	—
SVM	0.90	0.90	99.2	0.90	0.90	Radial
Stopwords_Model	1	0.81	99.2	1	0.90	—
TF_IDF_Model	1	0.83	99.3	1	0.91	—
LDA3_Model	1	0.63	98.5	1	0.79	—

Table 4.8: Classification results - Experimental scenario I

At a first glance of the models accuracy in Table 4.8 we realize that all of them classify with high accuracy, greater than ninety-eight percent. MCC shows that the majority of methods perform much better than the default classifiers since MCC value is close to one. The MCC value of LDA3_Model is significantly lower than all the other models. The reason is that its recall $REC = 0.63$ is low. Considering Stopwords_Model and TF_IDF_Model we notice that both reach with efficacy on this scenario.

The precision (PREC) and specificity (SPEC) of Stopwords_Model, TF_IDF_Model and LDA3_Model is one. In other words the percentage of positive predictions that

are correct is one hundred percent; and the percentage of negative labeled instances that are predicted as negative is one hundred percent respectively. This means that our models don't have false positive but they exhibit a number of false negatives.

In absolute number, one to five documents are miss-classified as negative in the first two proposed models during the ten-fold cross-validation iterations. For LDA3_Model the number of miss-classified documents are three to seven. In Tables A.1, B.1 and C.1 are exposed the numbers of documents classified in each iteration. A reason for that might be a miss-classification error of one-class SVM and/or the lack of enough samples for the proposed models to unveil properly the FOMC structure. Taking into consideration the values of precision and specificity we realize that our models can miss-classify a positive sample but they never miss-classify a negative sample. In other words the resulted positive classified documents discuss the topic of our interest.

4.4.3 Experimental Scenario II

In this scenario, we evaluate the performance of Stopwords_Model, TF_IDF_Model and LDA3_Model on the two datasets that discuss different topics but lay on the same domain. The two datasets are the FOMC, that discuss the monetary policy in the US, and the Beige Book. Both of them have clear financial orientations and issued by Federal Reserve Bank.

We consider this as the “difficult” case since the topics of the two collection fall into the same domain. As previously we use as baseline classifiers NB and SVM to be provided with “ground zero” performance of two widely used methods on text. As we can see in Table 4.9, NB exhibits an accuracy of fifty-eight percent, which is apparently poor. It classifies as bad as the random classifier does since MCC measure is zero. The reason is that in NB the entire vocabulary contributes to the classification of the two corpora of similar terminology.

On the other hand [SVM](#) classification accuracy rockets to more than ninety-nine percent. The reason for this is that support vector machines classify regarding a subset of the training set. In particular, it identifies the words (support vectors) that have some discriminating power and weights zero to the rest of the vocabulary. The [MCC](#) classification performance of [SVM](#) is close to one which means an almost perfect efficacy compared to the default classifier.

Classifier	PREC	REC	ACC(%)	SPEC	MCC	Kernel
NB	0.34	0.58	58.4	0	0	—
SVM	0.99	0.99	99.6	0.99	0.99	Radial
Stopwords_Model	1	0.66	95.8	1	0.79	—
TF_IDF_Model	1	0.82	97.7	1	0.90	—
LDA3_Model	1	0.64	95.6	1	0.78	—

Table 4.9: Classification results - Experimental scenario II

As in experimental Scenario I of Subsection [4.4.2](#) the precision (PREC) and specificity (SPEC) of Stopwords_Model and TF_IDF_Model is one. This means that our models do not have false positive but they have a number of false negatives. In absolute numbers three to eight documents are miss-classified as negative in the Stopwords_Model during the ten-fold cross-validation iteration (Table [A.2](#)) and one to four for TF_IDF_Model (Table [B.2](#)). For LDA3_Model the miss-classified documents are three to nine as depicted in Table [C.2](#) Considering the values of precision and specificity we realize that our models can miss-classify a positive sample but they never miss-classify a negative sample. This means that the resulted positive classified documents discuss the topic of our interest.

Comparing the three proposed methods we realize that TF_IDF_Model outperforms Stopwords_Model and LDA3_Model. In particular, the accuracy is better (about

ninety-eight instead of about ninety-six percent of the other two models) and the recall of TF_IDF_Model is twenty five percent higher than the one of Stopwords_Model and LDA3_Model. The [MCC](#) measure indicates again that the TF_IDF_Model classifies better than other two proposed models with respect to the default classifier.

4.4.4 Experimental scenario III

In this scenario we evaluate the performance of Stopwords_model and TF_IDF_model as described in Section [3.5](#) on a different language than English and different domains than finance. We conduct two experiments, both on German language but different topics. In the first experiment we train our model on HC Health corpus against the HC Crime & Law corpus, the specifications of them are presented in Table [4.4](#). We discard LDA3_Model since it exhibits lower discriminating performance than Stopword_Model and TF_IDF_Model.

In the second experiment, we evaluate the performance of HC Health corpus against HC Travel corpus (Table [4.4](#)). In the following two subsections, we discuss the efficacy of our models by the measurements provided in Tables [4.10](#) and [4.11](#).

Health versus Crime & Law

Classifier	PREC	REC	ACC(%)	SPEC	MCC
Stopwords_Model	0.82	0.79	93	0.96	0.76
TF_IDF_Model	0.75	0.78	91.1	0.94	0.71

Table 4.10: Experimental Scenario III - Health vs Crime & Law

At a first glance of the models performance in Table [4.10](#) we realize that both models exhibit high accuracy greater than ninety percent. The [MCC](#) value indicates that

both classify significantly better than default classifier since both values are significantly higher than zero. Comparing Stopwords_Model and TF_IDF_Model we notice that the former performs slightly better in contrast to scenarios I and II.

The recall values are very close to both models, slightly lower than 0.8. As in scenarios I and II, a number of false negatives exist; in other words about eighty percent of the ‘on’ instances are predicted correctly. What it is different regarding the scenario I and II is that in this case we have a number of false positives; this means that a proportion of eighty-two percent and seventy-five percent of the ‘on’ classified documents are correct in Stopwords_Model and TF_IDF_Model respectively.

The precision values exhibit some difference, since Stopwords_Model is nine percent higher than TF_IDF_Model and both, are close to one. This means that a number of false positives exist when dealing with the German language. In contrast, in scenarios I and II the number of false positives was zero. Furthermore, Specificity rockets close to one for both models which means that as in scenarios I and II our proposed models are very effective on the percentage of correctly classified ‘off’ documents since its higher than ninety-four percent for both models. We notice the same in scenarios I and II since both reach the highest value of precision. The absolute numbers of miss-classifications can be seen in Tables [A.3](#) and [B.3](#)).

Health versus Travel

Classifier	PREC	REC	ACC(%)	SPEC	MCC
Stopwords_Model	0.76	0.79	95.8	0.97	0.75
TF_IDF_Model	0.76	0.70	95.2	0.98	0.70

Table 4.11: Experimental Scenario III - Health vs Travel

In Table [4.11](#) we observe that both models have accuracy values that are close and

greater than ninety-five percent. The [MCC](#) value indicates that both classify significantly better than default classifier since both values are apparently greater than zero. Comparing `Stopwords_Model` and `TF_IDF_Model` we notice that the former performs slightly better in contrast to scenarios I and II.

The precision values are identical and lower than 0.8. In other words a number of false positives exist as in the previous experiment of HC Health versus HC Crime & Law. Likewise, we realize that our models exhibit a significant number of false positives when dealing with the German language. The recall values are different. In particular, `Stopwords_Model` has twelve percent higher recall value than `TF_IDF_Model`. In contrast to the first two experimental scenarios where recall is one, a significant number of false negatives exist.

Specificity rockets close to one for both models. Similarly, as in scenarios I and II our proposed models can effectively discard ‘off’ documents since specificity is greater than ninety-seven percent for both models. We observe the same in scenarios I and II since both reach the highest value of precision. The absolute numbers of misclassifications can be seen in [Tables A.4](#) and [B.4](#)).

4.4.5 Word Order Impact on Topic Recognition

In this chapter, we perform an exploratory analysis of the impact of word order on topic recognition. We essentially study the research question three we pose in [Section 1.3](#). We conduct a number of experiments to prove that the topic of a collection of documents is bound to a particular word order. As Wallach depicted in her work [56] the documents A, B “*the department chair couches offers*” [56] and “*the chair department offers couches*” respectively exhibit the same word statistics but convey different topics. We are motivated by this example to prove that shuffling the words in the documents of a corpus we come up with several other topics.

We notice that the [LTS](#) scores exhibit a small standard deviation in the experiments of the Subsections [4.4.2](#) and [4.4.3](#) when the document collection discuss a single topic. On the contrary, when the corpus discuss diverse topics, then the standard deviation is greater. In the Table [4.12](#), we see the standard deviations of the corpora of the scenarios I and II.

Model	Corpus		
	FOMC	Beige Book	MASC
Stopwords_Model	0.17	0.14	1.01
TF_IDF_Model	0.2	0.13	0.98

Table 4.12: Corpora standard deviation

In both models the standard deviations of [FOMC](#) and Beige Book are small in comparison with the standard deviation of [MASC](#) corpus. In particular in Stopwords_Model the [MASC](#) corpus standard deviation is six and seven times higher than the standard deviations of [FOMC](#) and Beige Book respectively. In TF_IDF_Model the standard deviation of [MASC](#) corpus is five and seven times higher than [FOMC](#) and Beige Book respectively.

This notice reflects the behavior of [LTS](#) scores produced by our approach considering the emissions, transitions and initial probabilities of the corpus. The [LTS](#) scores are located around a particular number for each corpus and exhibit high variance whether the corpus discussed topics that lay on a broad spectrum. The fact that documents of different topics receive distant topic scores is sensible leading to remarkable classification accuracy in experimental scenarios I, II and III.

In Plot [4.4](#) is demonstrated the histograms and the densities of [FOMC](#), Beige Book and [MASC](#) corpora scores for the Stopwords_Model. As it is noticed their range of scores is smaller than the [MASC](#) corpus. Similarly, for the TF_IDF_Model, we see in Plot [4.5](#) that the scores of [MASC](#) corpus are scattered in a broader area than the

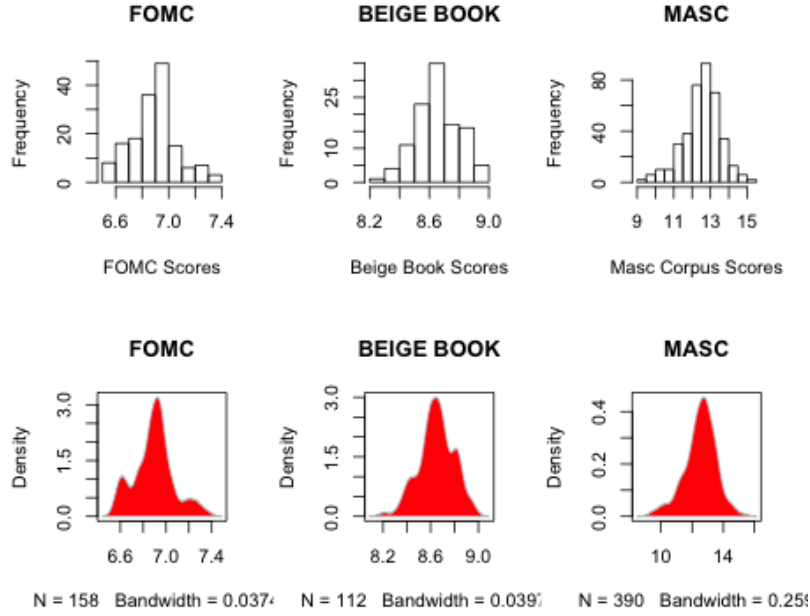


Figure 4.4: Stopwords_Model scores histograms and densities

other two datasets.

Hypothesis Testing

We believe that by randomly permuting the words in the documents of a single-topic collection, we produce a permuted corpus that discusses more than one topic as in the documents “*the department chair couches offers*” [56] and “*the chair department offers couches*” [56] of Wallach. The obtained collection we expect to have a larger variance of scores as [MASC](#) corpus exhibits.

To explore the impact of word order on topic identification we introduce a statistical hypothesis testing. We calculate later how likely it is a higher standard deviation to occur on the permuted corpora. Given that the null hypothesis is true, we accept or

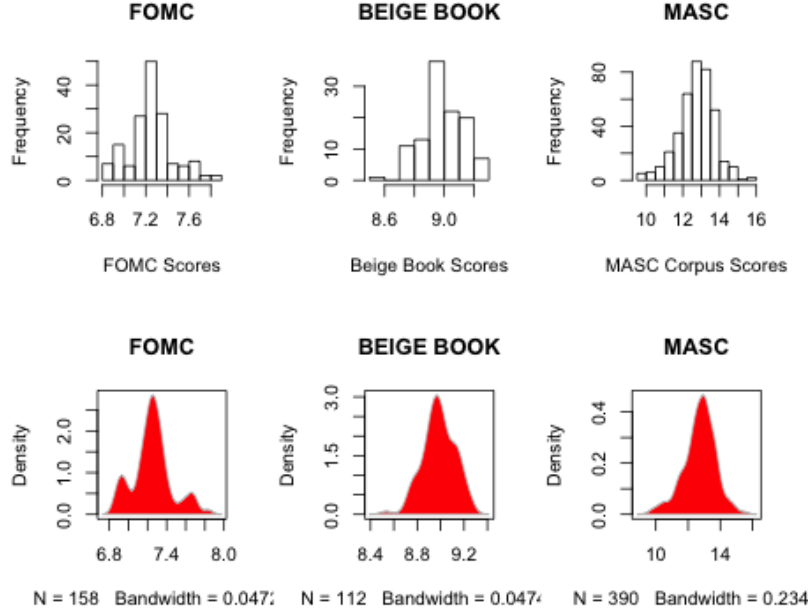


Figure 4.5: TF_IDF_Model scores histograms and densities

reject it with respect to the standard deviations of the permutations. We introduce the following null hypothesis:

1. *Null hypothesis (H_0): The order of the words in documents does not affect the topic(s) of the corpus.*

The null hypothesis is rejected if the p-value which is the probability under the null hypothesis is less than the significance level of $s_0 = 0.05$. This means that at least ninety five percent of the permuted corpora should have a greater standard deviation than the initial corpus (unpermuted).

We conduct the permutations experiments on the Beige book which exhibits the smallest standard deviation in the TF_IDF_Model. We perform a number of P permutations, which in our case is one hundred, on a random sample of ten percent of the beige book corpus. The p-value is the probability that the permuted corpora

have lower standard deviation than the original one. The p-value is calculated as in Equation 4.9.

$$pval = 1 - \frac{|\{sd_i > sd_0, 1 \leq i \leq P\}|}{P} \quad (4.9)$$

where:

$$P = 100$$

The histogram and densities of the standard deviations of the permuted corpora are illustrated in Figure 4.6. The red perpendicular line represents the standard deviation of the source corpus from where the permutations were derived. The permuted corpora standard deviations are located rightmost of the red line at their majority. The p-value is calculated to be $pval = 0.5$.

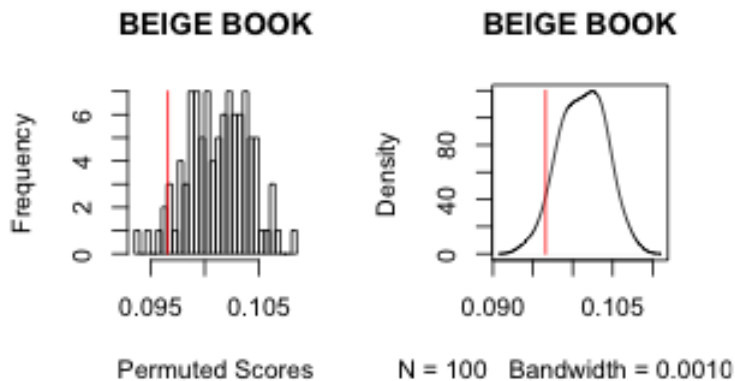


Figure 4.6: Beige Book permutations distribution

The evidence of p-value is equal to the significance level s_0 which means that the H_0 is rejected at the s_0 level of significance. Thus, we accept the alternative hypothesis H_1 .

2. *Alternative hypothesis (H_1): The order of the words affects the topic(s) of the*

corpus.

One reason for receiving scores of high standard deviations might be the fact that the permuted documents in each corpus contain a sequence of words that never exist in human written language. Thus, they are assigned very low probabilities in the transitions calculated on the training set. This could influence significantly the standard deviation of a corpus. Considering the groups of words we utilize in the permutation tests only a sequence of stopwords is unusual to occur in reality.

To assure that this is not the reason for the low received p-value that led us to accept the alternative hypothesis H_1 , we conduct an experiment of ten permutations on the ten percent of randomly selected documents of the [MASC](#) dataset that has a wider diversity of topics. We receive nine standard deviations greater than the original corpus and one that it is lower than the original one as it is depicted in Plot [4.7](#). The red line represents the original collection of documents standard deviation value.

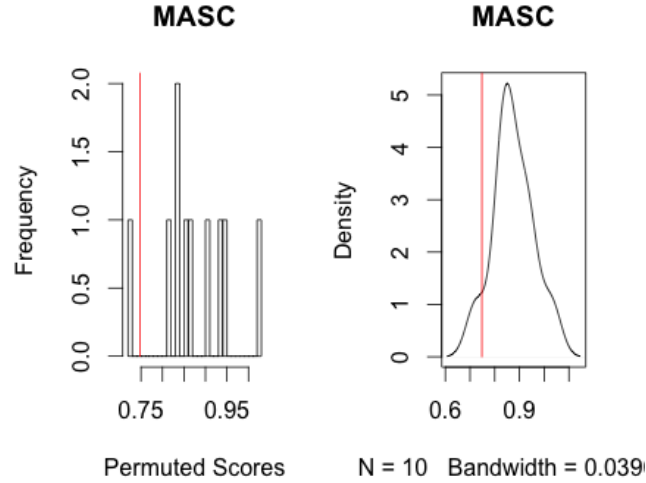


Figure 4.7: MASC permutations distribution

In case that the reason for the nine highly standard deviated corpora is the abnormal

consecutive stopwords then the consecutive stopwords distribution of the only low standard deviated corpus would be different of the nine highly standard deviated corpora. We calculate the correlation of the stopwords duplet, triplet, quadruplet, quintuplet et cetera vector of the one against the other nine others. The values we receive are all close to one as it is shown in Table 4.13. Perm 1 is the permutation one that exhibits lower standard deviation than the source. With Perm 2 to 10, we denote the rest nine permutations with standard deviations higher than the source.

	Perm 2	Perm 3	Perm 4	Perm 5	Perm 6	Perm 7	Perm 8	Perm 9	Perm 10
Perm 1	0.9998980	0.9999799	0.9999417	0.9999158	0.9999560	0.9999321	0.9999692	0.9997212	0.9999321

Table 4.13: Permutation correlations

For the calculation of the correlations of Table 4.13 we use *Pearson correlation* that makes no assumptions about the distributions of the population. Pearson correlation [47] measures is a correlation measure providing the linear dependence between two variables X and Y . It outputs +1 in case of a perfect positive correlation, 0 in case of no correlation and -1 in a perfect negative correlation.

As a result, we point out that in the low standard deviated permuted corpora, the stopwords sequences are not distributed differently than the nine others. Therefore, stopwords effect is not the reason for the low p-value. It is due to the fact that by permuting the words in a document we receive more topics as Wallach [56] claimed with her example in 2006: Document A: “*the department chair couches offers*” [56] can be permuted to document B: “*the chair department offers couches*” whereas documents A and B discuss different topics.

Chapter 5

Summary

5.1 Conclusions

This research work presents a stochastic process to recognize documents of a particular topic. The primary motivation stems from an assumption coherent with probabilistic topic models. Their inference relies on the bag-of-words representation of documents; only the word and their frequencies are considered in the model. We introduce an approach based on high order Markovian chains to capture the natural language semantics inherent in the sequence of words.

The [MTI](#) are supervised topic models since they consider the human background to infer about the model parameters. They are oriented to recognize similar to the training corpus document structures; in this way they discriminate a document as ‘on’ or ‘off’ topic. Their discriminating power is based on the premise that documents of the same topics follow the same patterns. Following infrequent to the input patterns leads to distant to the on-topic documents scores. The models are trained on the experience of one class input thus they need less effort than usual binary classifiers that require data for both the wanted and unwanted situations.

In this thesis, we figure out that the introduced topic identifiers exhibit a satisfactory

performance on several different scenario, different domains and languages compared to other popular topic classifiers. In experimental scenarios I and II in Section 4.4 we notice that the MTI compete for classifiers that rely on bag-of-words representation. MTI perform as effective as NB and SVM in scenario I; they approach the performance of SVM and overstep NB in scenario II. MTI performance is satisfactory in the German language as well. Considering the research question one as defined in Section 1.3 we deduce that the stochastic topic identifiers can perform satisfactorily on discriminating text of different domains and languages.

MTI are fused with prior knowledge in terms of groups of words with common characteristics. It is shown that the stochastic model that relies on TF-IDF weighting scheme exhibits a supreme performance in comparison to the other stochastic models introduced in experimental scenario I and II. On the other hand, the Stopwords_Model exhibits supreme performance in the German language in scenario III although the performance of TF-IDF_Model competes for the one of Stopwords_Model. A reason for this may be the special characteristics of each language. Accordingly, to answer the research question two in Section 1.3 we need to conduct more experiments.

Moreover, in this thesis we experiment the inter-correlation of topic and word sequence and we conclude that word order impacts the topic of a document (research question three in Sections 1.3). Granted that we define a topic as the model that best fits what humans consider as a topic, we are provided the terrain to study the impact of word restructuring on topic modulation since the topic of a document is reflected in a particular score area. We strengthen in this way the intuition that humans have as it is depicted in Wallach work [56]; we may produce a new topic by simply restructuring the words of a passage. To put it in a different way, the order of the words is selected in a concrete way to convey the authors topic. We conclude that the documents produced by restructuring the word sequence convey different topics.

In conclusion, the [MTI](#) models exhibit a number of strengths compared to other topic identification and classification methods that rely on the bag-of-words paradigm. We highlight the advantages and potentials of the introduced models in the following points:

- [MTI](#) models require small training datasets to be effective. Not only due to the fact that they recognize a topic by unveiling the structure of only same topic documents but also because they consider a set of words to reduce the number of the possible transitions manipulating data sparsity. Both considerations make [MTI](#) cost performance efficient.
- In [MTI](#) pre-processing steps are not required. Probabilistic topic models and conventional classifiers require the feature vector of word frequencies to perform. The construction of such a vector adds extra computational cost to the bag-of-words models. Not to mention the extra pre-processing steps that are required to increase their effectiveness i.e., word stemming. In [MTI](#) the documents are represented in their original form and special pre-processing steps like stemming is not necessary to be implemented since words with the same stem may occur in the same set of words.
- [MTI](#) can be used on interdisciplinary fields and on different applications. The proposed models rely on learning the common patterns of the training collection of documents which is reflected on the probability values. [MTI](#) models may be used to recognize the writing style of a person since it is characterized by a particular vocabulary and a manner the words are structured. Moreover, they may be used on image topic identification. The key point is to define in a proper way how the word and the document are reflected on an image. A reasonable way is to consider that the pixels block are the words and an image is a document. The aspect of the multidimensionality of images with respect to a document needs to be addressed because a picture element is featured by many dimensions itself. Consequently, the application and the parameters estimation of [MTI](#) on images need further studies to be achieved.

- [MTI](#) models capture fine-grained topic semantics. [MTI](#) models as it is shown in the experimental scenario II may be used to perform a more fine-grained analysis of topics that lay on the same domain; a scenario where a robust classifier like naïve Bayes exhibit poor performance. In particular, [MTI](#) exhibit high accuracy on discriminating documents of financial domain as shown. [MTI](#) meet the requirements of retrieving documents that have a particular theme or discuss a particular subject. i.e., the sovereign debt crisis in Europe.
- [MTI](#) models are closer to the human semantic representation than bag-of-words models. Human perception and cognition embrace human memory to infer about the gist of text [24]. Topic categorization includes not only the memorization of words but also the manner words are linked. Besides, the personal interpretation and conception which is challenging to model, word order contributes to topic identification mechanism. Although [MTI](#) models do not address questions that lay into cognitive science, they simulate to some extent the topic categorization learning. The usefulness of such systems may assist firstly, in better understanding human learning processes and secondly, in the development of better classification models that mimic human brain.

5.2 Shortcomings and Future Work

The [MTI](#) models proposed in this thesis exhibit some shortcomings that could lead to some interesting future research. In the following points, we summarize some weaknesses our approach exhibits.

- [MTI](#) models are language dependent. They adhere to the word order to calculate a score and classify a document as ‘on’ or ‘off’ topic. They are tested on English and German language and exhibit a remarkable discriminating performance. Nevertheless, some languages like Greek and Russian allow flexibility in the order of the words while preserving the same syntax, thus the same topic. The generalization of [MTI](#) models on any language requires further studies.

- [MTI](#) models are expensive in both time and space. The [MTI](#) models have a large number of parameters that need to be estimated. In large corpora of millions of tokens it is computationally demanding to train and validate its performance in a ten-fold validation scenario. Moreover, the input of our models is not the conventional vector space but the entire collection of documents retaining the word order of the documents.

Finally, in the next points, we provide some extensions and future research based on the fundamentals provided in this thesis.

- The [MTI](#) models can be extended and tested with different parameters and prior knowledge. Firstly, [MTI](#) models can be extended to incorporate the emissions of bigrams and trigrams in order to deal effectively with common collocations like fiscal deficit or White House. This provides more realism to the model since in domain-oriented documents several n-gram may appear. The way in which a bigram or a trigram phrase will be selected instead of a uni-gram, may be achieved either by incorporating a set of usual n-grams or by an exploration analysis of the corpus based on statistical measures - i.e., c-value [21] - to detect n-grams.
- The [MTI](#) Markov chains can be extended to incorporate longer memory. We can introduce Markovian topics identifiers to rely on higher order Markov chains. It is feasible in this case to deal with the sparsity of data without dramatically increase the volume of the training set, but just adjusting the content and the number of sets of words used. This allows models that perform topic identification at the sentence level. In this way, we can study whether processing text at a higher level - i.e sentence level - affects topic identification. This may lead us to the development of more sophisticated models.
- The [MTI](#) can recognize topics in a dynamic manner. [MTI](#) models are trained on a fixed set of documents to infer whether an unknown document is ‘on’ or

‘off’ topic. [MTI](#) can be designed to incorporate “knowledge” that they miss by updating their parameters without being trained again on the whole. In this way they maximize their performance based on the feedback from the environment as the time goes by. The complexity of such a model is high and requires sophisticated techniques to make [MTI](#) modular. This topic learning approach may imply some human external assistance to be maintained simpler.

- The [MTI](#) could be language independent. As mentioned in Section 5.2, [MTI](#) rely on the word order to infer about a topic. In some languages like the Greek one can convey a particular topic by changing in several ways the sequence of the words. [MTI](#) are not designed to capture these details since they stick to the word order. We might design a language independent stochastic model by incorporating syntactical knowledge to relax the word order strictness of our approach.

Appendices

Appendix A

Stopwords_Model

A.1 FOMC - MASC Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	14	390	0	2
2	12	390	0	3
3	13	390	0	3
4	14	390	0	2
5	12	390	0	4
6	14	390	0	2
7	12	390	0	4
8	13	390	0	3
9	12	390	0	4
10	13	390	0	2

Table A.1: Stopwords_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - MASC corpora

A.2 FOMC - Baige Book Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	12	112	0	4
2	13	112	0	3
3	11	112	0	5
4	12	112	0	4
5	10	112	0	6
6	11	112	0	5
7	10	112	0	6
8	11	112	0	4
9	8	112	0	8
10	7	112	0	8

Table A.2: Stopwords_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - Beige Book corpora

A.3 HC German Corpus (Health - Crime & Law)

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	93	481	20	23
2	90	482	19	25
3	88	482	19	27
4	92	481	20	23
5	90	481	20	25
6	99	481	20	17
7	89	483	18	25
8	94	482	19	20
9	93	482	19	22
10	87	483	18	28

Table A.3: Stopwords_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on HC Health - HC Crime & Law corpora

A.4 HC German Corpus (Health - Travel)

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	89	1111	27	26
2	93	1109	29	22
3	89	1111	27	24
4	86	1113	25	30
5	91	1109	29	24
6	89	1110	28	27
7	90	1110	28	26
8	92	1108	30	24
9	94	1111	27	21
10	94	1110	28	19

Table A.4: Stopwords_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on HC Health - HC Travel corpora

Appendix B

TF_IDF_Model

B.1 FOMC - MASC Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	12	390	0	4
2	15	390	0	1
3	12	390	0	3
4	13	390	0	3
5	15	390	0	1
6	14	390	0	2
7	15	390	0	1
8	11	390	0	5
9	13	390	0	3
10	11	390	0	4

Table B.1: TF_IDF_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - MASC corpora

B.2 FOMC - Baige Book Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	13	112	0	3
2	11	112	0	4
3	15	112	0	1
4	12	112	0	4
5	14	112	0	2
6	12	112	0	4
7	12	112	0	3
8	12	112	0	4
9	15	112	0	1
10	13	112	0	3

Table B.2: TF_IDF_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - Beige Book corpora

B.3 HC German Corpus (Health - Crime & Law)

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	94	471	30	21
2	95	472	29	21
3	79	472	29	37
4	97	471	30	17
5	77	470	31	39
6	89	471	30	26
7	96	472	29	17
8	93	471	30	21
9	91	471	30	24
10	91	472	29	25

Table B.3: TF_IDF_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on HC Health - HC Crime & Law corpora

B.4 HC German Corpus (Health - Travel)

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	76	1111	26	39
2	84	1113	24	31
3	85	1111	26	31
4	89	1111	26	25
5	70	1114	23	45
6	80	1111	26	36
7	75	1113	24	39
8	81	1111	26	34
9	79	1113	24	36
10	86	1111	26	29

Table B.4: TF_IDF_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on HC Health - HC Travel corpora

Appendix C

LDA3_Model

C.1 FOMC - MASC Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	9	390	0	7
2	10	390	0	6
3	13	390	0	3
4	9	390	0	6
5	9	390	0	7
6	13	390	0	3
7	9	390	0	7
8	10	390	0	6
9	9	390	0	7
10	9	390	0	6

Table C.1: LDA3_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - MASC corpora

C.2 FOMC - Baige Book Corpora

Iteration	TP	TN	FP	FN
1	12	112	0	4
2	12	112	0	4
3	9	112	0	7
4	9	112	0	7
5	8	112	0	7
6	12	112	0	4
7	11	112	0	5
8	10	112	0	6
9	6	112	0	9
10	13	112	0	3

Table C.2: LDA5_Model ten-fold cross validation performance on FOMC - Beige Book corpora

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