The Balanced News Recommender

April 12, 2013

1 Background

Most people can spend a very limited time for news reading and it is difficult to get the relevant information regarding the day's main subjects in a short period of time. That is because most news sources present only one perspective and most stories are biased. This is especially true in sensitive matters, such as finance or politics. Reading about each novel story from multiple sources is time consuming. Selecting those sources that have different views on the matter is even more so.

The goal of this project is to help users by presenting a balanced view on current events. Instead of searching by themselves for the various points of view, they will be presented contrasting opinions regarding the same subject to achieve *a balanced view*.

2 Description and Tasks

You will create a web page that allows readers to save precious time **and** be better informed. They will quickly see the current top stories and browse articles that contain different perspectives on them. In essence, you will

- use readily implemented methods to extract the topics from a news corpus,
- find news that are positive and negative with respect to those topics and
- create a web page to show these structured news to people
- get feedback from users regarding the site's usability

Various modules for extracting topics from a collection of news and to extract opinions from individual articles already exist. We need to create a framework that uses the various modules and then show their output to the end users in a friendly format. The deeper research question is whether people agree with the results obtained using the current state of the art and thus evaluate the opinion mining and topic extraction modules.

3 Skills

- Good web programming skills

- Experience with NLP tools is a plus.

4 Benefits

- Create a tool that can directly improve people's online experience.
- Learn about opinion mining and topic modeling
- Learn how to design user studies.