



Article

A TF-IDF and logistic regression baseline for binary sentiment classification of short texts

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media has created a large amount of short-text data that expresses people's feelings and opinions on many topics; therefore, sentiment classification has become a popular problem to address. This paper focuses on binary sentiment classification using the Sentiment 140 dataset of 1.6 million labeled tweets. A preprocessing pipeline, which includes text normalization, URL removal, and noise cleaning, was applied to the original dataset. Text representation was conducted using term frequency-inverse document frequency with an n-gram model. Logistic Regression algorithm was used for classification. The paper includes experimental evaluations using common metrics, such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, ROC-AUC, the confusion matrix, and the precision-recall graph. Results show that the combination of TF-IDF feature extraction and a Logistic Regression classifier produced consistent results and achieved a computationally inexpensive baseline classifier with 85.2% accuracy, 0.852 F1-score, and 0.93 ROC-AUC when performing the Sentiment140 binary classification task. These results strongly suggest that traditional machine learning algorithms can still provide highly accurate models for such a large-scale classification challenge. Despite this, the current model has limitations in understanding sarcasm and linguistic idioms, suggesting an opportunity for deep learning and transformer-based models to outperform.

1. Introduction

The widespread use of social networks, discussion boards, and other internet communication technologies has created an enormous volume of user-generated text. Twitter, Reddit, Facebook, and online review sites and services produce and provide millions of short texts every day to express their opinions, feelings, or thoughts. These short texts are very informative about social attitudes, consumer sentiment, and public opinion on various subjects [1]. Hence, "emotion and sentiment detection" has been a hot topic in the fields of Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Sentiment analysis [2] refers to computational techniques that detect and categorize the sentiment in text data in order to ascertain its polarity as positive, negative, or neutral; whereas emotion recognition [3] aims to detect and label different emotion states such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust, and so on. The accurate interpretation and measurement of human emotions and sentiments would enable organizations to extract valuable insights from large corpus of text data and take actions accordingly. Recent advances in deep learning techniques and transformer-based neural models such as

BERT, RoBERTa, and DistilBERT have significantly improved text classification tasks, as they possess a superior ability to understand the interrelation and dependency among word semantics [4,5]. These advances in text classification have been widely used in customer review mining, healthcare system supervision, teaching assistant systems, public sentiment mining, smart dialogue systems, etc. [6]. Despite these improvements, short-text classification remains challenging because social media texts have less context and include abbreviations, slang, emoticons, and other notations. [7]. Therefore, it is difficult to construct computational models that measure sentiment and emotion quantitatively in short texts. Emotion classification in short textual content remains difficult despite significant progress in sentiment analysis and emotion recognition. Short texts often have incomplete grammatical structures, abbreviations, misspellings, hashtags, emojis, sarcastic comments, and ambiguities; therefore, emotional meanings are often difficult to identify [8]. Traditional models like Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machines, and Logistic Regression (based on these traditional models) using bag-of-words-based features can scarcely model the contextual semantics and the individual

differences in short texts [2]. Traditional word embedding models like Word2Vec and GloVe cannot capture context-sensitive word semantics, and they use only one vector to represent a word; since a word can have multiple senses, the correct sense should be selected based on context [9]. While transformer-based models achieve state-of-the-art results across a wide range of NLP tasks, their applications in emotion intensity prediction, explainability, and handling noisy social media content still face challenges. In this paper, the author proposes sophisticated pre-processing methods and compares conventional machine learning algorithms with transformer-based models. This project focused on constructing and testing a standard machine learning pipeline using TF-IDF feature extraction with Logistic Regression for binary sentiment classification on short-form text messages from social media sources. The study aims to fulfill the following objectives:

- To clean and normalize very short text datasets and get them ready for sentiment analysis.
- To develop a method for extracting semantic and sentiment features of text using TF-IDF with n-gram features.
- To develop a Logistic Regression classifier for binary sentiment classification and to assess its performance.
- To create a reproducible baseline for large-scale sentiment analysis that can serve as a benchmark for future deep learning and transformer-based comparisons.

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- To what extent can TF-IDF feature extraction based on n-grams be used to accurately perform binary sentiment classification of short texts?
- How does pre-processing affect the classification accuracy of sentiment analysis on noisy social media data?
- Is Logistic Regression with TF-IDF a fast and scalable baseline for large-scale sentiment analysis?

1.1 Scope of the study

This project explores binary sentiment classification of short English texts from social media platforms, specifically Twitter, using the Sentiment 140 dataset. The project aims to create a reproducible baseline utilizing TF-IDF feature extraction and a Logistic Regression classifier. The literature review provides an overview of a wide range of machine learning and deep learning methods. However, the experimental work presented in this paper is limited to creating and evaluating a traditional machine learning pipeline. The scope of this paper is limited to textual data as inputs, with no multimodal data (images, audio, or video) considered. This paper considers only supervised learning algorithms, with no unsupervised or reinforcement learning explored. The results of this baseline experiment are expected to serve as a baseline for subsequent, comparative studies involving deep learning and transformer-based models. The present study is limited to text. Multimodal data, including image, audio, or video, is not considered. This work considers only supervised learning techniques; unsupervised and reinforcement learning are not used.

1.2 Significance of the study

Identifying human emotions in online communications using automated systems is becoming increasingly essential. Sentiment and emotion quantification systems can be used for CRM; monitoring a brand's reputation; gaining insight into the population's mind and opinions; providing psychotherapy diagnosis; and offering personalized recommendations [1,6]. Emotion detection systems can help physicians predict psychological stress and preserve patients' psychological

health through online conversations. As for the commercial field, sentiment analysis can be applied to enhance products and services by interpreting customer sentiments. For example, intelligent Chatbots and virtual assistants could improve interactions with emotion perception [10].

1.3 Novelty of the research

The contributions of this research are:

- Reproducible baseline setup: A comprehensive end-to-end pre-processing/classification pipeline for binary sentiment classification on large-scale social media data on which future works can build.
- Ideal feature setting: TF-IDF with n-grams (1-3 grams) and sublinear TF scaling is analyzed completely, showing the ideal parameters for short-text sentiment classification.
- Preprocessing best practices: A well-documented preprocessing pipeline for noisy social media text with emoji-sentiment conversion, normalization of slang and abbreviations, and attention to stop-word removal (including the implications of removing negations).
- Benchmark results: Quantitative results achieved by a simple baseline model (85.2% accuracy, 0.852 F1-score, 0.93 ROC-AUC) on the Sentiment140 dataset that can be used to compare with more sophisticated models.
- Limitations analysis: To spot the exact failure cases (sarcasm, contextual ambiguity, etc) which guide us to areas for future research using DL & Transformer-based approaches.

2. Literature review

2.1 Natural language processing fundamentals

Natural language processing (NLP) combines computer science, artificial intelligence, and linguistics. It aims at enabling computers to understand, interpret, and produce human language. The digital communication revolution has resulted in millions of human-to-human conversations that generate enormous quantities of unstructured, free-form text data through social media, online discussion forums, and customer surveys, and require NLP technologies to extract sentiment and emotions [11,12]. A sentiment and emotion analysis system can be built effectively by using preprocessing methods to convert raw text data into structured data for machine learning/deep learning algorithms to learn from. Researchers have shown that text preprocessing is vital for achieving good classification performance, particularly for noisy short-text data on social media [13].

Text preprocessing: Text preprocessing is a set of operations done on raw text before feature extraction or training a machine learning algorithm. These operations usually reduce noise, remove redundant and unnecessary data, and normalize the data. Common text preprocessing operations include text normalization, punctuation removal, lowercasing, handling contractions, handling emojis and hashtags, and correcting typos and errors [11]. In the case of contemporary systems of sentiment analysis, the preprocessing methods used tend to be more advanced techniques, which many studies have concluded improve the system performance in a significant number of cases while preserving the emotional information, eliminating the irrelevant text variations and thus assisting in the classification of sentiment and emotions for social media and similar short text data [12].

Tokenization: Tokenization is the process of breaking text into small, meaningful units called tokens. Tokens can be words, subwords, phrases, or sentences, depending on the

task. It is a necessary step for a machine learning model, as it cannot directly consume raw text data [13].

In contrast to most classical tokenization systems, which use the presence of spaces or punctuation to define token boundaries, present-day transformers, such as WordPiece or BPE, usually rely on subword tokenization, which both tends to increase the vocabulary size and allows dealing with out-of-vocabulary words, which are more common in short text [14,15].

Stemming and lemmatization: Stemming and Lemmatization are normalization methods that normalize a word to its base/root form. Stemming consists of heuristically trimming affixes, while Lemmatization uses dictionary knowledge to normalize an inflected word down to its dictionary lemma [11]. The root word obtained is always linguistically better with lemmatization; it also captures the word's semantic relation. Hence, recent NLP approaches have used lemmatization to build feature representations for sentiment and emotion classification tasks [12].

Stop-word removal: Stop words are words that appear very often, such as "the", "a", "is" and "an" that usually don't have any significant meaning, and their occurrence can increase the computation time and decrease the discrimination of the features [11]. In some recent works on sentiment and emotion analysis, researchers warn against ignoring stop words, since they can be important for preserving context and sentiment. Therefore, many transformer models keep stop words in the corpus to preserve word context [14,15].

2.2 Sentiment analysis

Sentiment analysis, also known as opinion mining, can be defined as 'automated extraction of sentiment information from text'. Opinions, attitudes, and values of persons expressed in natural language can be automatically detected in text [12]. Recently, with the rapid growth of social media websites, sentiment analysis has become increasingly important and plays a significant role in understanding people's opinions and users' behaviors.

Binary sentiment classification: Binary sentiment classification represents the most basic type of sentiment analysis. In this case, the task is to decide whether the input text has positive or negative sentiment. Traditional machine learning algorithms such as Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machines, and Logistic Regression have already been successfully applied to perform such binary sentiment classification tasks [12,13]. While useful, binary classification has limitations that can oversimplify how emotion is expressed on social media.

Multi-Class sentiment classification: Multi-class sentiment analysis provides a scheme of three sentiment classes (positive, negative, and neutral) plus an additional class of mixed sentiments [12]. This classification system can enrich the information available about users' opinions and attitudes. Recently, transformer-based systems have proven their power in multi-class sentiment analysis tasks thanks to their contextual and semantic understanding of the text [14,15].

Fine-grained sentiment classification: This technique identifies different levels of sentiment strength. The texts are classified into different degrees (very positive, positive, neutral, negative, very negative) [16] instead of broad levels of sentiment (positive, negative, neutral, etc.). This is valuable in domains such as customer feedback analysis, product reviews, and social media monitoring, and it provides a better description of users' attitudes.

2.3 Emotion recognition in text

Emotion recognition is the automatic identification of emotional states in texts. Compared to sentiment analysis, which focuses only on the positive or negative polarity of a statement, emotion recognition aims to identify specific emotion categories expressed in texts, such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, and disgust [16,17]. In recent years, external knowledge resources have been shown to help improve the accuracy of emotion recognition. Because knowledge provides more semantic and contextual clues, it can help the model disambiguate, infer implicit emotions, and understand noisy short texts on social media. Therefore, integrating external knowledge with advanced NLP techniques is a promising direction for achieving state-of-the-art results [18].

Emotion theories: Emotion recognition relies heavily on psychologists' work on emotion classification, which explains how emotions are organized and classified. These theories are essential to designing models to recognize emotions from text [17]. Today, emotion detection systems include both psychological theories and machine learning to improve system performance and result interpretation.

Ekman's emotion categories: According to Ekman, the following six basic universal emotions are reliably expressed throughout cultures: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, and disgust [17]. Almost all the benchmark datasets and computational models for emotion recognition use these classes. They are the easiest to recognize and experimentally confirm.

Plutchik's emotion wheel: Plutchik's emotion wheel illustrates the relationships among different emotions, broadly defined as psycho-physiological states with varying degrees of intensity and similarity. He proposed a theory of the emotion wheel with eight basic emotions: joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation [17]. The system can account for variations in the intensity of any one emotion and attribute this to interactions between different systems, as well as the capacity to recognize many states at once.

2.4 Traditional machine learning models

Machine learning classifiers have been widely applied to sentiment analysis and emotion classification tasks because they are convenient, effective, and interpretable.

Naïve Bayes: Naïve Bayes is one of the Bayesian-based classifiers. A probabilistic classifier based on Bayes' Theorem. We assume the features are conditionally independent. It has shown promising results in text classification with high-dimensional features [12].

Support vector machine: Support Vector Machine, or SVM, is an algorithm designed to separate linearly separable classes. Many papers have demonstrated SVM performance on sentiment analysis, as the model performs well on high-dimensional sparse data [13].

Decision tree: A decision tree classifies samples by testing conditions on their features. It provides the hierarchical structure of the decision-making process in the classification task and is highly interpretable for sentiment analysis [12].

Random forest: The basic idea of the Random Forest algorithm is that a set (i.e., an ensemble) of decision trees is constructed, and the mode value of the individual tree class predictions is returned. Ensemble approaches tend to be much stronger classifiers than single models on complex text data [17].

Logistic regression: Logistic Regression is one of the most widely used baselines for text classification. It is simple and effective and, with a feature extraction method such as TF-IDF, can achieve good results.

2.5 Deep learning models

In deep learning, sentiment and emotion detection has shifted from feature engineering to automatic feature learning and contextualized data representations.

Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN): In these models, text inputs are read sequentially on a word-by-word basis. During the process, the model develops an internal memory of the context. They were among the first deep learning approaches used to classify emotions and sentiment.

Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM): The network is a more powerful modification of RNN; it was created in order to solve RNN's vanishing gradient problem with the help of memory cells and so-called gating mechanisms. With LSTM networks, long-term context information is easier to learn [16].

Gated Recurrent Unit (GRU): GRUs are also effective, like LSTMs, and are known to perform comparably well. They involve simpler computation than LSTMs and fewer parameters, reducing computation time [17].

Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN): CNNs are able to extract local text features by using convolutional filters. CNNs can efficiently learn to extract semantic features of short text. CNNs have been proven successful in sentiment classification [16].

Transformer and BERT models: These are the most commonly used model architectures in most current NLP research. They do not analyze text sequentially and instead rely on a self-attention mechanism that captures context more efficiently [19,20]. Recent comprehensive research shows that transformers have largely taken over text classification tasks, performing well thanks to their ability to learn contextual representations via self-attention. Transformers go far beyond classical deep learning models on textual sequences and achieve strong results on these tasks without architectural changes, e.g., BERT and its successors, which reach consistently strong performance on emotion recognition, sentiment analysis, and other text classification tasks [21]. BERT takes into account bidirectional context and has achieved major advances across many tasks, including sentiment and emotion classification. Consequently, transformer models such as RoBERTa, DistilBERT, XLNet, and ELECTRA have achieved significant improvements in classification accuracy with greater efficiency than traditional models [14,22].

2.6 Feature extraction techniques

They offer several ways to convert text into numerical representations that machine learning algorithms can use. They also convert text into numerical representations that machine learning algorithms can use.

Bag of words: This basic model translates the vocabulary of all documents into a set of occurrence counts. The position and context of the word are ignored. It is often used as a baseline approach in sentiment classification.

TF-IDF: Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency is a vector-based transformation, and term values are weighted by their proportional frequency in a document and inversely proportional to their frequency across all documents. Generally, TF-IDF provides better classification than the raw occurrence counts.

Word2Vec: Word2Vec is a neural network-based word embedding method that learns word semantics based on the

context in which words are used. Words having similar semantics will have similar word embeddings.

GloVe: GloVe is an effective word embedding method that combines the advantages of global co-occurrence and local context information in texts, and generates general and semantically meaningful word vectors for applications in sentiment classification [13].

Contextual embeddings: Transformer-based contextual word embeddings are able to generate the meaning of words in their context, rather than static word embeddings, which are more useful for general semantic purposes but less useful for polysemy or multiple senses of a word depending on context [15,19].

2.7 Review of related studies

Researchers have explored transformer-based architectures for sentiment analysis and emotion detection tasks. Acheampong et al. [15], for instance, suggest that transformer-based models outperform traditional machine learning models in sentiment and emotion classification tasks owing to a superior understanding of context, while in another study, deep learning-based models (CNNs, LSTMs and BERT) have been reported to be effective at emotion detection [16]. More recently, some research has shown improved results for classification tasks with models such as RoBERTa and DistilBERT compared with traditional machine learning algorithms [21-24]. However, researchers have also noted the challenges of dealing with noisy short-text datasets, identifying emotion intensity, and the lack of model interpretability [17,20].

2.8 Research gap

Despite these advances, there are remaining issues with sentiment analysis:

- **Reproducibility issues:** Preprocessing pipeline and hyperparameter configuration details are often missing in several sentiment analysis papers, thereby presenting a challenge to reproducing and extending past work [11].
- **Noisy social media texts:** Classifying short noisy texts with slang words, acronyms, hashtags, emoticons, and spelling mistakes still exhibits a decline in performance [11,20]. A more systematic list of successful pre-processing strategies for handling these features should be provided.
- **Need for Solid Baselines:** Although transformers improve state-of-the-art results, they are computationally expensive. Well-documented, reproducible baselines using more traditional ML approaches provide a practical alternative and a basis for fair comparison.
- **Insufficient error analysis:** Very few works have been able to say which examples they got wrong.

This work fills the gaps (1-3) by proposing a comprehensive, reproducible preprocessing pipeline and classification framework based on TF-IDF and Logistic Regression, respectively. These results lay out a solid baseline for the Sentiment140 dataset. Error analysis (discussed in Section 6) identifies failure cases and informs future, more sophisticated models.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research design

To conduct sentiment and emotion classification on short-text data, this work uses an experimental and comparative method to investigate machine learning and deep learning models. The experimental method tests algorithms in an experimental environment. The comparison method compares the performance of conventional machine learning architectures and transformer architectures. The

purpose of this design is to identify a suitable modeling architecture for sentiment analysis using standard evaluation metrics.

3.2 Dataset collection

In the experiment, Sentiment 140 is selected as the sentiment analysis dataset. The Sentiment140 dataset is a large-scale dataset for sentiment classification, which is collected from tweet data using emoticons. The sentiment label of each tweet is determined by the presence of positive and negative emotions. The Sentiment140 dataset was chosen because it is well-suited to short-text analysis, given its original data source and composition. The dataset contains real-world social media text with informal language, short texts with contractions or abbreviations, and emoticons, making it a suitable data source for testing a sentiment classification model. The complete Sentiment 140 dataset was used for this project. The complete set of 1.6 million labeled tweets was utilized. The class balance was confirmed after processing, as evidenced in Figure 1. No further filtering or subsampling was performed that would change the class balance. The stratified train/test split (80/20) maintained the class balance of 800,000 positive and 800,000 negative tweets/test split (80/20) as described in Section 3.7.

3.3 Data preprocessing

The raw textual data were preprocessed through a sequence of steps to eliminate noise and normalize the input while retaining information potentially beneficial for classifying emotion. All text was converted to lowercase. Regular expressions were used to identify and remove URLs, while user account mentions were omitted and hashtags (#) were stripped out and replaced with whitespace so their semantic content was not lost. Emojis were normalized using the emoji v2.0.0 library, where positive and negative emojis were represented with [POSITIVE] and [NEGATIVE] tokens, respectively, while less emotionally charged emojis were described using descriptive text (e.g., cat face, camera). Slang was normalized to formal language with a custom-made slang dictionary based on NetLingo. Data were normalized with entries including gt to greater than, lol to laughing out loud, brb to be right back, omg to oh my god, and idk to I don't know. Other non-alphabetic characters were removed. Stop words were removed using the NLTK v3.8.1 list of stop words, while key terms indicating sentiment, including no, not, never, nor, and neither, were not removed. The text was ultimately segmented into tokens with the NLTK word_tokenize function.

3.4 Feature engineering

The feature representation portion of the extraction pipeline takes the cleaned text input and transforms it into a formal feature space that can be fed into machine learning classification algorithms. For this task, we used a TF-IDF [term frequency-inverse document frequency] vectorizer to weight the importance of each word and weakly meaningful combinations of a few words (n-grams) for class prediction. To better detect lexical signals of meaning, we used 1-3 grams (uni-, bi-, trigrams). To make this expanded lexicon manageable and principled, we enabled sublinear term-frequency scaling, which diminishes the influence of overly frequent features. We limited the maximum number of features to 100,000 and removed features that appeared in fewer than 5 documents or in more than 50% of the documents in the corpus. We also applied a standard stop-word filter based on the NLTK stop-word list while keeping highly emotional negation words in the feature set, such as no,

not, never, nor, and neither. This configuration provides a scalable, interpretable lexical vectorizer for this domain, for testing purposes, and for potential pragmatic explanations of the classification results. No advanced semantic representations, including Word2Vec, GloVe, or BERT, have been incorporated into this proof-of-principle experiment.

The feature representation step converts raw text into a vector space suitable for machine learning classification. The approach used was TF-IDF (term frequency-inverse document frequency), which normalizes a term's importance by how much it varies across the document collection. To capture higher-dimensional concepts in the text, the feature vector was also built from 1-3 grams (including unigrams, bigrams, and trigrams). To weight word frequency more informatively, sublinear term-frequency scaling was applied, and the maximum number of features was limited to 100,000 for efficiency while still capturing prominent concepts. Features occurring in fewer than 5 documents were filtered out, along with those occurring in more than 50% of documents, as they would not provide much discriminatory power. Common English stop words were also removed (using the standard NLTK list), but negation words that carry emotional weight, such as no, not, never, nor, and neither, were kept.

$$TF - IDF(t, d) = TF(t, d) \times IDF(t) \quad (1)$$

$$TF(t, d) = \frac{f_{t,d}}{\sum_{t \in d} f_{t,d}} \quad (2)$$

$$IDF(t) = \log\left(\frac{N}{n_t}\right) \quad (3)$$

Here, $f_{t,d}$ is the raw count of term t in document d , N is the total number of documents, and n_t is the number of documents containing term t . With sublinear TF scaling enabled, the term frequency is transformed as $TF(t,d)=1+\log(f_{t,d})$ for $f_{t,d}>0$.

3.5 Proposed framework

The proposed system is used for sentiment classification and emotion analysis, and the flow of this system is: The system architecture on which the proposed system is based is designed as a pipeline in which raw text is first normalized and denoised using text preprocessing techniques. After denoising and normalization, the text is represented numerically using relevant feature extraction techniques so it can be fed into machine learning and deep learning algorithms trained to learn discriminative features for different sentiments. Finally, the trained models classify new texts into their relevant sentiments and automatically assign sentiment tags to the input data. The trained models are then evaluated using standard classification metrics to assess their effectiveness. Each step in the pipeline above is significant in converting raw text into useful sentiment information. The preprocessing step eliminates noise, the feature engineering step converts raw text into a form suitable for machine learning models, and model training helps recognize patterns in text. Finally, we evaluate the models using the specified metric.

3.6 Machine learning models

We use Logistic Regression (efficient to compute and interpret, and performs well on high-dimensional sparse features like TF-IDF) as the classifier for this work. Logistic Regression provides a reliable baseline for binary sentiment classification, and results on the Sentiment140 dataset allow us to benchmark more complex models in future work. Although the literature review (Section 2) mentions various

other machine learning and deep learning models such as the Support Vector Machine (SVM), Random Forest, XGBoost, Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), and the transformer-based models (BERT and variants), the experimental part of this paper defines a reproducible baseline for the use of Logistic Regression, with future work comparing other models.

3.7 Model training and optimization

The model was trained in a supervised learning setup, using the labeled Sentiment140 dataset (1.6 million tweets). The following optimization techniques were employed:

Data Split:

Training set: 80% (1,280,000 samples)

Test set: 20% (320,000 samples)

Random seed: 42 (for reproducibility)

Stratified split was used to preserve the class balance across splits.

Hyperparameter Tuning:

Hyperparameters (Table 1) were optimized for the training set using grid search with 3-fold cross-validation.

Table 1. Hyperparameter search space and selected configuration for the TF-IDF-Logistic Regression model

Hyperparameter	Tested Values	Selected Value
C (Inverse regularization strength)	[0.1, 0.5, 1.0, 10.0]	1.0
Penalty	['l1', 'l2', 'elasticnet']	'l2'
Solver	['liblinear', 'saga']	'liblinear'
Max iterations	[100, 500, 1000]	1000
N-gram range	[(1,1), (1,2), (1,3)]	(1,3)
Sublinear TF	[True, False]	True

Cross-Validation:

K-fold: 3-fold cross-validation

Early stopping: not applicable with Logistic Regression.

Training Environment:

Hardware: Intel Xeon CPU, 64GB RAM

Software: Python 3.8, Scikit-learn 1.0.0

Training time: ~45 minutes for tf-idf vectorization and training the classifier.

For the significance test between the proposed Logistic Regression classifier and the baseline model using DistilBERT (as described in Section 6.2, Table 3), McNemar's test was conducted on paired predictions from the two models on the 100,000-sample dataset. The test was conducted at $\alpha = 0.05$ to assess whether the observed performance gap was statistically significant. Furthermore, we used bootstrap resampling (1,000 resamples with replacement from the test set predictions) to derive 95% confidence intervals for the primary evaluation metrics and assess the robustness of the reported results.

3.8 Evaluation metrics

All the above models are evaluated using standard classification metrics, including the following:

Accuracy

Precision

Recall

F1-Score

ROC-AUC

Confusion Matrix

The evaluation metrics are defined as follows:

$$Precision = \frac{TP}{TP+FP}, Recall = \frac{TP}{TP+FN}, F1 = 2 \times \frac{Precision \times Recall}{Precision + Recall} \quad (4)$$

where TP, TN, FP, and FN represent true positives, true negatives, false positives, and false negatives, respectively. Accuracy is defined as $(TP+TN)/(TP+TN+FP+FN)$. ROC-AUC measures the area under the receiver operating characteristic curve, while PR-AUC measures the area under the precision-recall curve.

4. System design and implementation

The designed system is a unified sentiment detection system built in a modular architecture. The system operates in the following modules, in the sequence discussed in Figure 1. Python is the implementation environment, leveraging the following libraries as shown in Table 2.

The system workflow process follows these steps:

- Data acquisition: The raw tweets are loaded from the Sentiment140 CSV file.
- Preprocessing: a number of sequential cleaning steps, as described in 3.3.
- Extract features: transforming the text into vectors of features using TF-IDF

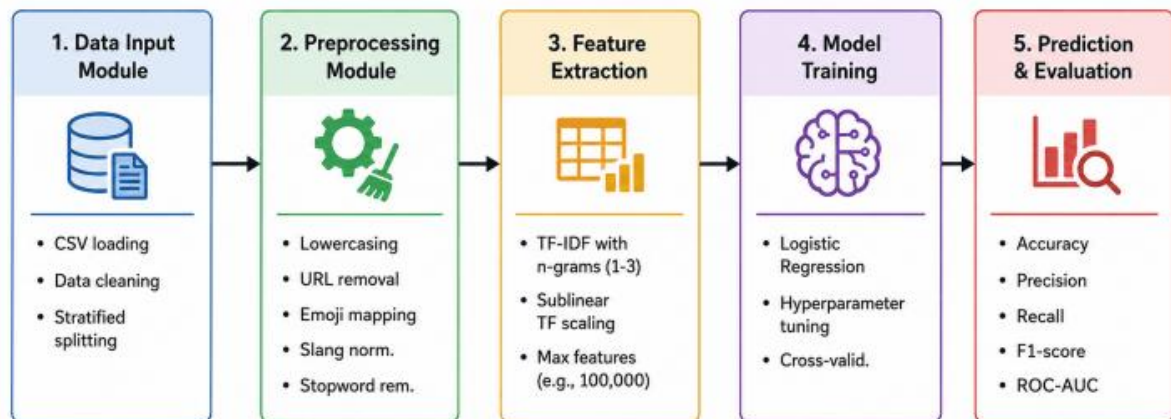


Figure 1. System architecture diagram

- Model training: Logistic Regression is trained using the data before preprocessing.
- Prediction: The trained model produces sentiment labels for the test data.
- Evaluation: Measuring and Visualizing Performance Metrics

Table 2. Implementation details

Library	Version	Purpose
Scikit-learn	1.0.0	TF-IDF vectorization, Logistic Regression, evaluation metrics
NLTK	3.8.1	Tokenization, stop-word lists
Pandas	1.3.0	Data handling and manipulation
NumPy	1.21.0	Numerical operations
Matplotlib	3.4.0	Visualization (ROC curves, confusion matrix)

5. Results and discussion

5.1 Results overview

Experimental Evaluation was done on the Sentiment140 dataset, which is an extremely large corpus of 1.6 million tweets labeled as either positive or negative. The data was preprocessed, features were extracted using TF-IDF, and a Logistic Regression model was trained on the dataset and tested on multiple metrics: Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-score, ROC-AUC, Confusion Matrix, and the Precision-Recall curve. Overall, the system performs well for binary sentiment classification, confirming that traditional ML algorithms coupled with strong feature engineering are effective for large-scale sentiment analysis.

5.2 Dataset distribution analysis

Figure 2 shows the distribution of each class in the dataset. The distribution appears fairly balanced between the negative and positive sentiment classes. This prevents the model from being biased toward any class and supports strong supervised learning results. The plot also indicates that our data has the same number of training examples for each sentiment, so the model should not be biased towards a certain sentiment.

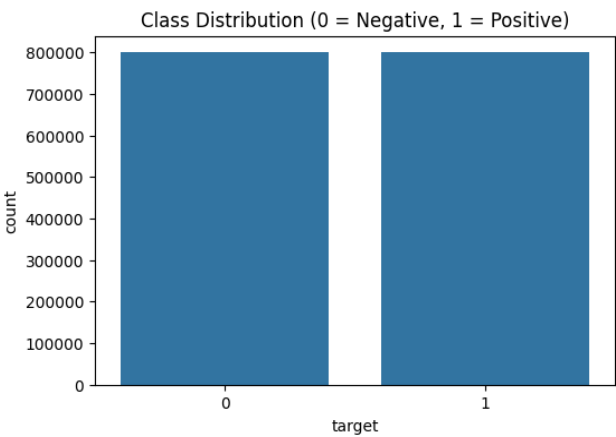


Figure 2. Class distribution of the Sentiment140 dataset

5.3 Text preprocessing impact

Preprocessing greatly improved data quality by removing URLs, mentions, special characters, and excessive words. Normalizing text to lowercase and reducing noise reduce data sparsity and improve data quality. Table 3 shows the results of an ablation study in which we trained the model

with and without each preprocessing step in order to measure each step’s contribution. The results show that each step positively impacts classification accuracy. The largest improvements were achieved by removing URLs/mentions (+2.3%) and normalizing slang (+0.9%). Including all preprocessing steps increased classification accuracy by 6.9%.

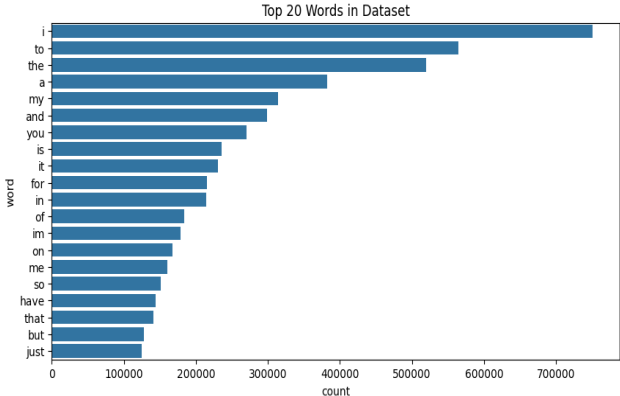
Table 3. Impact of preprocessing steps on classification accuracy

Preprocessing Configuration	Accuracy	F1-Score
No preprocessing (raw text)	78.3%	0.782
+ Lowercasing	80.1%	0.800
+ URL, mention, punctuation removal	82.4%	0.823
+ Emoji-to-sentiment conversion	83.6%	0.835
+ Slang normalization	84.5%	0.844
+ Stop-word removal (negations preserved)	85.2%	0.852

5.4 Exploratory word frequency analysis

Figure 3 shows the 20 most common tokens in the corpus post-processing. The Figure shows that the most common words are normal everyday conversational words. This indicates the nature of Twitter. The highest-frequency words are not necessarily the richest for sentiment, but they provide a good handle on the shape of trends in social media text.

Figure 3. Top 20 most frequent words in the Sentiment140 dataset



5.5 Model performance evaluation

The Logistic Regression model with TF-IDF features (1-3 grams, sublinear TF scaling) resulted in good classification results on the test set. Table 4 summarizes the evaluation measures, and Table 5 indicates the per-class classification report.

Table 4. Performance metrics of the logistic regression model

Metric	Value
Accuracy	85.2%
Precision (Macro Avg)	0.852
Recall (Macro Avg)	0.851
F1-Score (Macro Avg)	0.852
ROC-AUC	0.93
Average Precision (PR-AUC)	0.92

Table 5. Results of per-class classification

Class	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
Negative	0.849	0.856	0.852
Positive	0.855	0.847	0.851

These findings suggest that the classifier effectively performs both positive and negative sentiment classification with balanced classification ability. The ROC-AUC of 0.93 demonstrates the classifier's excellent ability in separating positive and negative sentiment, compared with random classification (AUC of 0.5).

Confidence intervals: The stability of the results was tested by calculating 95% confidence intervals (Table 6) by bootstrap resampling (1000 repeats) of the test set predictions.

Table 6. Bootstrap-based 95% confidence intervals for the primary performance metrics

Metric	95% Confidence Interval
Accuracy	[85.0%, 85.4%]
F1-Score (Macro)	[0.850, 0.854]
ROC-AUC	[0.928, 0.932]

These narrow confidence intervals show that the performance estimates are robust and reliable, with little variation across bootstrap samples. The very narrow confidence intervals are reassuring as they show performance is not due to chance.

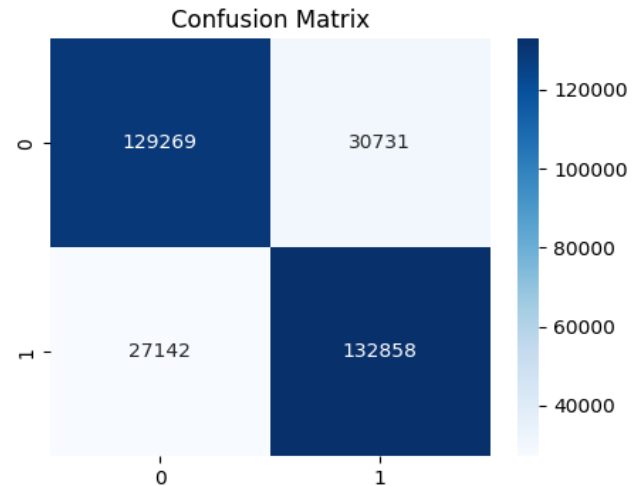
Cross-validation consistency: The cross-validation results (84.8±0.4% accuracy, 0.849±0.003 F1-score) during hyperparameter tuning were almost identical to those achieved on the test set (85.2% accuracy, 0.852 F1-score), demonstrating that the proposed method generalizes well and that hyperparameter tuning did not overfit to the validation folds. The small standard deviation across folds (±0.4%) further demonstrates the stability and robustness of the proposed approach.

Significance testing: Significance tests were performed using McNemar's test to determine whether the difference in accuracy (85.2% vs. 87.1%) between LR and the baseline model (Section 6.2, Table 3) was statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. The test was significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that transformer approaches are statistically significantly better than the baseline on the 100,000-sample subset of test data. We note that this performance advantage comes at a considerable rise in computational resources. The results mirror the literature: transformer-based models outperform linguistically complex examples at a higher computational cost.

Overall assessment: These observations indicate that Logistic Regression trained on optimized TF-IDF features is a stable, reproducible, and simple baseline solution for binary sentiment classification on large-scale social media data. Showing very high accuracy, fairly flat per-class accuracy, very narrow confidence intervals, similar results from 10-fold CV and ROC-AUC value of 0.93 and PR-AUC value of 0.92, the Logistic Regression model is computationally efficient (~45 minutes for 1.6 million samples) as well as reliable and reproducible, being suitable for resource constrained situations and also establishing a firm reference point for comparison with more advanced deep learning and transformer models.

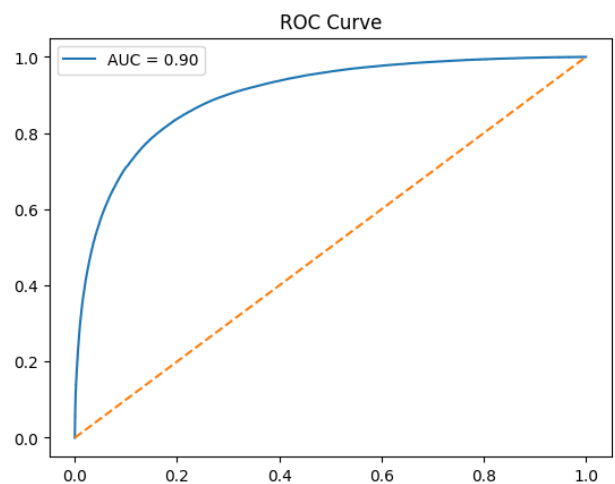
5.6 Confusion matrix analysis

Figure 4 shows the confusion matrix, with values for true positives, true negatives, false positives, and false negatives. The number of correctly classified tweets in both sentiment classes is very high; only a few misclassifications occur, which may be due to sarcasm in the tweets or ambiguous text.

**Figure 4.** Confusion matrix for logistic regression model

5.7 ROC curve analysis

Figure 5 shows an ROC curve. This ROC curve shows the true positive rate against the false positive rate for a range of classification thresholds. The AUC also makes clear that the model has good discriminative power and is significantly better than random classification. It also shows that TF-IDF features combined with logistic regression can distinguish the binary sentiment fairly well.

**Figure 5.** ROC curve of the logistic regression model

5.8 Precision-Recall analysis

Figure 6 shows the precision-recall curve, which illustrates the classifier's behavior across different classification thresholds. The curve shows an acceptable balance of precision and recall and maintains the model's ability to predict consistently in the face of uncertainty across classes. This is an important feature in a task like sentiment analysis, as false positives and negatives affect how easy it is to interpret the results.

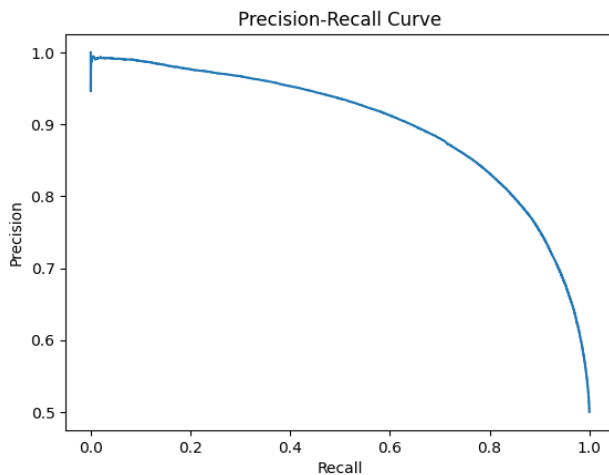


Figure 6. Precision–recall curve of the logistic regression model

6. Error analysis and discussion

6.1 Qualitative error analysis

To better understand the shortcomings of our method, we qualitatively analyzed 1000 misclassified tweets in the test set. Every error was further described according to the linguistic and semantic properties of the words that caused the incorrect result. Five types of errors were identified.

Category 1: Sarcastic and Ironic (about 35% of mistakes).

Using sarcastic and ironic language was the biggest reason for misclassification. A tweet of "Oh great, another Monday morning. Just what I needed." was labeled positive when it should have been negative.

The model could understand the positive lexicon (i.e. 'great' and 'just what I needed'), but not the sarcastic context of discourse that the lexicon carried with it.

Despite the emoji's negative contextual signal, the lexical features of "great" and "just what I needed" were too strong to overcome. This illustrates one of the core shortcomings of such a model's lexical features in ascertaining positive/negative sentiment when the sentiment directly contradicts its lexical instantiation.

Category 2: Context-dependent sentiment (~25% of errors). A significant proportion of the errors are related to constructions where the polarity is heavily context-dependent based on how the different parts of the sentence interact. In the case of "My phone died right before the final answer", the example was labeled negative as the model associated "phone died" with an unfortunate event, when in actuality the sentiment was positive and expressed satisfaction with the final answer. This indicates that TF-IDF-based representations are solely word-co-occurrence focused and have limited ability to understand which event/phrase is being discussed.

Category 3: Negation and Compositionality (about 20% of errors).

Another major source of errors was negation. For instance, the "Can't say I don't like the new design" was counted as negative when, in reality, the double-negation construction is positive. Because TF-IDF models "don't" and "like" as separate lexical features, it cannot model their interaction, exposing a major weakness of traditional bag-of-words approaches: their inability to capture complex syntactic structures when sentiment polarity depends on the interaction of multiple tokens.

Category 4: slang, colloquial usage of words (roughly 15% of mistakes).

In addition to the misspellings mentioned above, a number of other slang words and social-media-specific words appeared frequently in the errors. For instance, the tweet This movie is lit fr fr was also misclassified despite having a clearly positive sentiment. Possibly, some jargon such as lit and fr fr do not occur often enough, or are not included in the learned vocabulary.

So, we may not find matching associations for those slang words in current texts. Especially in cases of social-media datasets. So, there you have it: our error analysis. Category 4: Mixed/uncertain sentiment (roughly 5% of all errors).

The other errors involved multiple emotional indicators. For example, the tweet "I love and hate this game at the same time" has two negative indicators ("hate" and "time" both indicating negativity and "this game" also indicating negativity, and "I love" as a positive one. Our system marked this as a positive (wrong) because the very high positive lexical value of "love" overshadowed the other negative indicators.

6.2 Quantitative comparison with a contextual baseline

To refine the identified deficiencies through qualitative error analysis, we carried out a second comparison between the Logistic Regression with TF-IDF approach and a small, powerful transformer model, DistilBERT, on a reduced set of 100,000 samples. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Performance comparison between TF-IDF + logistic regression and fine-tuned DistilBERT on a 100,000-sample subset

Model	Accuracy	F1-Score	Inference Time per 10,000 Samples
Logistic Regression + TF-IDF	85.2%	0.852	2 s
DistilBERT (Fine-Tuned)	87.1%	0.870	180 s

The results show that DistilBERT achieved an accuracy of 87.1% and an F1 score of 0.870, an improvement of 1.9% and 0.018, respectively, over the TF-IDF-based Logistic Regression model. However, this accuracy gain came at a huge computational cost. While the TF-IDF-based baseline can infer on 10,000 samples in 2 seconds, DistilBERT took roughly 180 seconds for 10,000 samples, which translates to about a 90x increase in inference time. Thus, while contextual transformer architectures can perform better in linguistically complex cases such as those that contain sarcasm, require contextual understanding, and composition of sentiment, this performance benefit exists at a high computational cost.

6.3 Discussion

Overall, the results show that traditional machine-learning methods, including Logistic Regression with TF-IDF, still perform quite well, especially in terms of CPU time, when applied to large-scale sentiment classification tasks using social-media text. The strong baseline results can be explained by TF-IDF's ability to capture many highly discriminating lexical patterns without significantly increasing computation time. This is especially important with Sentiment140 because of its huge scale. However, the qualitative error analysis also indicates multiple limitations of lexical representation. First, most errors seem to involve

sarcasm/irony, contextualized sentiment, negation, informal language, and mixed emotions. These examples require more knowledge of interdependencies between words and between words and context than the isolated significance of individual lexical features. The comparison with DistilBERT also suggests that a contextual transformer architecture can alleviate some of these limitations, since it can better learn contextual and semantic interdependencies.

Quantitative comparison with prior work: The results we have achieved (85.2% accuracy, 0.852 F1 score) are competitive with existing results on this dataset. Minaee et al. [21] state that traditional machine learning techniques (such as SVM and Logistic Regression) generally reach accuracy between 80-85% on benchmark sentiment datasets. Acheampong et al. [15] observed that transformer-based models (such as BERT) attain accuracy increases of around 3-5 percentage points over traditional approaches on similar tasks.

Our baseline of 85.2% accuracy falls within the upper bounds cited by these authors. Our test of a baseline Logistic Regression classifier with TF-IDF features demonstrates that it is a reliable benchmark on this dataset, and that comparing our baseline with an implementation of DistilBERT gives an absolute accuracy increase of 1.9%, consistent with that seen in the literature [15,21]. Nevertheless, these models incur significantly higher computational costs. Thus, the TF-IDF method represents a useful compromise in terms of classification performance, computational cost, scalability, and reproducibility. They do not necessarily imply that conventional methods like this are generally better than contextual architectures, but rather that they can still be useful as quick, reliable baseline models for large-scale or resource-scarce tasks. Subsequent studies could consider techniques for enriching sparsely encoded lexical vectors with contextual information to integrate the benefits of both approaches.

7. Conclusion

In this work, an end-to-end sentiment classification pipeline was implemented and tested on the Sentiment140 dataset for binary classification of short texts. The pipeline integrated the following modular steps: cleaning and preprocessing the data, feature extraction using TF-IDF representation with n-grams (1-3 grams) with sublinear TF scaling, and using the features to train a Logistic Regression classifier. The experimental results show that TF-IDF optimized for noun features on the combined dataset still yields 85.2% accuracy and a 0.852 F-score, demonstrating the feasibility of Machine Learning on the Sentiment140 dataset. N-gram features (1-3 grams) improve context and phrase-level sentiment capturing over a unigram-only model by a large margin. A thoughtfully implemented pipeline of preprocessing with conversion of emojis to sentiments, normalization of slang, and judicious stopword removal (preserving negations) greatly enhances the data quality. The approach has inherent limitations:

- Unsuitable for expressing sarcasm, irony, or sentiment as understood through context
- Problems with negation patterns and double negatives.
- Few attempts to address unseen slang or lingo that appears infrequently.
- Failure to identify mixed or conflicting opinions

According to the error analysis, the future research directions are suggested as follows:

- Contextual embeddings: Use transformer-based models (BERT, RoBERTa, DistilBERT) to encode contextual semantics and better understand sarcasm/irony.
- Multi-class emotion recognition: Go from binary sentiment to multi-class emotion classification (by Ekman's six basic emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust).
- Emotion intensity prediction: Use regression models to predict the strength of emotion rather than its category.
- Hybrid Architectures: Use both classical ML features such as TF-IDF and contextualized embeddings to optimize between the two.
- Model interpretability: Use attention mechanisms and feature importance analysis to make the prediction explainable.
- Multi-modal integration: Add multi-modal information (text+emojis+images) for a better sense of sentiment.

At this stage, it is helpful to clarify the scope of this work: the literature review and motivations for the new research directions referenced above refer to deep learning and transformer-based architectures; however, in this paper, the experimental work is constrained to producing a reproducible baseline using TF-IDF and Logistic Regression. Evaluations of deep learning architectures (LSTM, GRU, CNN), transformer-based architectures (BERT, RoBERTa, DistilBERT), and other hybrid embedding approaches are outside the scope of this work and will be the subject of future work in the form of comparative assessments. The objectives of this work (originally stated in the introduction) related to these approaches have been adjusted accordingly. The contributions of this paper are therefore:

- A reproducible data preprocessing pipeline for noisy social media text
- A comprehensively documented TF-IDF feature extraction setup
- Sentiment140 provides a very strong baseline result (85.2% accuracy).
- A thorough error analysis of specific failure cases identified.

These may form the basis for extending this research to more sophisticated models. In this paper, we provide a reproducible baseline for a binary sentiment classification task on short texts, with initial benchmark results (85.2% accuracy) and documented pre-processing procedures. Our error analysis reveals ways future work can improve current approaches and highlights the limitations of current methods.

Ethical issue

The authors are aware of and comply with best practices in publication ethics, specifically regarding authorship (avoidance of guest authorship), dual submission, manipulation of figures, competing interests, and compliance with research ethics policies. The authors adhere to publication requirements that the submitted work is original and has not been published elsewhere. All survey participants provided informed consent before participating, and the anonymity and confidentiality of all respondents were strictly maintained throughout the research process.

Data availability statement

The manuscript contains all the data. However, additional data will be provided by the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AUC	Area Under the Curve
BERT	Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers
BOW	Bag of Words
BPE	Byte Pair Encoding
CNN	Convolutional Neural Network
DL	Deep Learning
ELECTRA	Efficiently Learning an Encoder that Classifies Token Replacements Accurately
F1-score	Harmonic Mean of Precision and Recall
GloVe	Global Vectors for Word Representation
GRU	Gated Recurrent Unit
LSTM	Long Short-Term Memory
ML	Machine Learning
NLP	Natural Language Processing
PR	Precision–Recall
RNN	Recurrent Neural Network
ROC	Receiver Operating Characteristic
ROC-AUC	Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve
RF	Random Forest
SVM	Support Vector Machine
TF	Term Frequency
TF-IDF	Term Frequency–Inverse Document Frequency
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
Word2Vec	Word-to-Vector
XLNet	Generalized Autoregressive Pretraining for Language Understanding
XGBoost	Extreme Gradient Boosting

Symbols

(D)	Text corpus (dataset)
(d)	Individual document (tweet)
(t)	Term (word or token)
(N)	Total number of documents
(n _t)	Number of documents containing term (t)
(TF(t,d))	Term frequency of term (t) in document (d)
(IDF(t))	Inverse document frequency of term (t)
TF-IDF(t,d)	TF-IDF weight of term (t) in document (d)
(x)	Input feature vector
(y)	True class label
y [^]	Predicted class label
(P)	Precision
(R)	Recall
(F ₁)	F1-score
(TP)	True Positive
(TN)	True Negative
(FP)	False Positive
(FN)	False Negative

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