

# Word Sense Disambiguation for Arabic Text Categorization

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**Abstract:** In this paper, we present two contributions for Arabic Word Sense Disambiguation. In the first one, we propose to use both two external resources AWN and WN based on Term to Term Machine Translation System (MTS). The second contribution relates to the disambiguation strategies, it consists of choosing the nearest concept for the ambiguous terms, based on more relationships with different concepts in the same local context. To evaluate the accuracy of our proposed method, several experiments have been conducted using Feature Selection methods; Chi-Square and CHIR, and two Machine Learning techniques; the Naïve Bayesian (NB) and Support Vector Machine (SVM). The obtained results illustrate that using the proposed method increases greatly the performance of our Arabic Text Categorization System.

**Keywords:** Word Sense Disambiguation, Arabic Text Categorization System, Arabic WordNet, Machine Translation System.

## 1. Introduction

Word Sense Disambiguation is the problem of identifying the sense (meaning) of a word within a specific context. In Natural Language Processing (NLP), Word Sense Disambiguation is the task of automatically determining the meaning of a word by considering the associated context. It is a complicated but crucial task in many areas such as topic Detection and Indexing [1, 2], Information Retrieval [3], Information Extraction [4], Machine Translation [5,6], Semantic Annotation [7], Cross-Document Co-Referencing [8, 9], Web People Search [10- 12]. Given the current explosive growth of online information and content, an efficient and high-quality disambiguation method with high scalability is of vital importance.

All approaches to Word Sense Disambiguation [13-15] make use of words in a sentence to mutually disambiguate each other. The distinction between various approaches lies in the source and type of knowledge made by the lexical units in a sentence. Thus, all these approaches can be classified into corpus-based approaches and knowledge-based ones. Corpus-based methods use machine-learning techniques to induce models of word usages from large collections of text examples. In [16, 17], the authors extract statistical information from corpora that may be monolingual or bilingual, and raw or sense-tagged. Knowledge-based methods use External Knowledge Resources which define explicit sense distinctions for assigning the correct sense of a word in context. In [18, 19] the authors have utilized Machine-Readable Dictionaries MRD, thesauri, and computational lexicons, such as WordNet. Since most MRD and thesauri were created for human use and display inconsistencies, these methods have clear limitations. Like WordNet extends Knowledge

Resource for the English language, Arabic WordNet has been developed for the Arabic language, but it is an incomplete project. To overcome the above cited problem, we propose in this work an efficient method for Arabic WSD based Knowledge External resource (Arabic WordNet). For the terms don't exist in Arabic WordNet, we traduce the terms from Arabic into English using MTS and search the corresponding concepts in WordNet resource. After extracting the concepts, or the list of concepts, we choose the nearest concept based on the semantic similarity measure. Then, these concepts will be translated into Arabic language using the MTS and the text document is represented as a vector of concepts.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 summarizes the related work. Section 3 introduces the different strategies of mapping and disambiguation. Section 4 describes the architecture of our proposed methods. In section 5, we evaluate the results of the experiments. Finally, in the last section, we present the conclusion and future work.

## 2. Related work

Word Sense Disambiguation is the process of automatically determining the meanings of ambiguous words based on their context, which is one of problematic issues in NLP. Various works on WSD can be found in English and other European languages that solve the problem of the terms that have several meanings. The authors in [13] have proposed a WSD strategy based on dependency parsing tree matching. In this strategy, firstly, a large scale dependency Knowledge base is built. Secondly, with the knowledge base, the matching degree between the parsing trees of each sense gloss and the sentence are computed. The sense with the maximum matching degree would be selected as the right sense. In [21], the authors have proposed a method to

disambiguate the ambiguous words based on distributional similarity and semantic relatedness. Firstly, they select feature words based on direct dependency relationships. They parse a corpus with the dependency parser to get a great deal of dependency triples. Based on the dependency triples, distributional similarities among words are computed and top-N similar words are chosen as feature words [22]. Secondly, the relatedness between each sense of ambiguous words and feature words is computed. The sense with the maximum weighted sum of relatedness is selected as the right sense. In [14], the authors have presented the method for WSD with a personalized PageRank. [21], they collect feature words with direct dependency like relationships. Knowledge from Wikipedia is injected into a WSD system by means of a mapping to WordNet. Previous efforts aimed at automatically linking Wikipedia to WordNet include; full use of the first WordNet sense heuristic [23], a graph-based mapping of Wikipedia categories to WordNet synsets [15], a model based on vector spaces [24] and a supervised approach using keyword extraction [25].

Unlike European languages, there are few works and contributions that deal with Arabic WSD. In [26], the authors propose a new approach for text categorization, based on incorporating semantic resource (WordNet) into text representation, using the Chi-Square, which consists of extracting the  $k$  better features best characterizing the category compared to others representations. The main difficulty in this approach is that it is not capable of determining the correct senses. For a word that has multiple synonyms, they choose the first concept to determine the nearest concept. Another work, [20] is a comparative study with the other usual modes of representation; Bag-of-Word (BoW), Bag-of-Concepts (BoC) and N-Gram, and uses the first concepts after mapping on WordNet to determine the correct sense for an ambiguous term. The authors in [27] proposed a new approach for determining the correct sense of Arabic words. They proposed an algorithm based on Information Retrieval measures to identify the context of use that is the closest to the sentence containing the word to be disambiguated. The contexts of use represent a set of sentences that indicate a particular sense of the ambiguous word. These contexts are generated using the words that define the meanings of the ambiguous words, the exact String-Matching algorithm, and the corpus. They used the measures employed in the domain of Information Retrieval, Harman, Croft, and Okapi combined with the Lesk algorithm, to assign the correct sense of those words proposed. In the Lesk algorithm [28], when a word to disambiguate is given, the dictionary definition or gloss of each of its

senses is compared to the glosses of every other word in the phrase. A word is assigned the meaning which gloss shares the largest number of words in common with the glosses of the other words. The algorithm begins new for each word and does not utilize the senses it previously assigned.

These works show some weakness, [27, 28] uses the dictionaries gloss for each concept. For example, the term "عين" has two glosses in the Al-Wasit dictionary1 : gloss 1 "eyes": "عضو الإبصار للإنسان وغيره من الحيوان", the visual organ of humans and of animals" and gloss 2 "source": "ينبوع الماء ينبع من الأرض و يجري", the source of water that comes from the earth", which gives an ambiguity in the gloss of concepts. In [20,26] the authors present the systems that use Bag-of-Concept and choose the first concepts after mapping on Arabic WordNet for determining the correct concepts, and the first concept is random and therefore not always the best choice.

Table1. Difference between Arabic WN and WN

	WordNet	Arabic WordNet
Number of Concepts	117.659	10.165
Number of Nominal	117.798	6.252
Number of Verbal	11.529	2.260
Number of Adjectival	21.479	606
Number of Adverbials	4.481	106

However, one major problem when dealing with Arabic WordNet is the lack of many concepts because Arabic WordNet is an incomplete project (e.g. Table1). Therefore, for the terms that do not exist in AWN we search for the corresponding concepts on WordNet based on Machine Translation System (MTS).

Therefore, for the terms that do not exist in AWN we search for the corresponding concepts on WordNet based on Machine Translation System (MTS). In this paper, for any term that has a different meaning, we propose a new method for Arabic Word Sense Disambiguation (WSD) based on relationships with different concepts in the same local context.

### 3. Mapping and Disambiguation Strategies

In Natural Language, the assignment of terms to concepts is ambiguous. Mapping the terms into concepts is achieved by choosing a strategy of matching and disambiguation for an initial enrichment of the representation vector. In this section, we will describe the different strategies of mapping and disambiguation.

#### 3.1. Mapping Strategies

The words are mapped into their corresponding concepts. From this point, three strategies for adding

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.al3arabiya.org/2010/01/arabic-arabic-dictionary.html>



ناضج "دمج" . For each term that does not exist in AWN, we propose to translate the term by using Machine Translation System from Arabic to English, in order to restart the search of the meanings in WordNet. For example: the term "agriculture الزراعة" does not exist in AWN, so we search the translation "agriculture" in WordNet. The synset corresponding are: "department of agriculture, agriculture department" which are equivalent to the concepts "قسم الزراعة".

In our approach, we adopt the only concept strategy for vector representation and for the term that has several meanings (concepts) we present a new method to choose the nearest concept, based on more relationships with different concepts to the same local context. More details of our proposed method are described in the next section.

## 4.2. Strategy for Word Sense Disambiguation

Word Sense Disambiguation allows us to find the most appropriate sense of the ambiguous word. One word may have several meaning and thus one word may be mapped into several concepts, therefore we need to determine the correct concept. The main idea behind this work is to propose a new and efficient method for Arabic WSD based on the Knowledge approach. In this, to determine the most appropriate concept for an ambiguous term in a sentence, we select the concepts that have a more semantic relationship with other concepts in the same local context.

Where Sim will be detailed in section 4.3.

The nearest concept is calculated as follows:

$$C_{nearest} = \max S_c \quad (3)$$

Where: n is the number of concepts proposed and c is the concept.

Figure 1 below describes the proposed method for Arabic WSD. We then describe the similarity measures in more detail. Figure 2 presents the algorithm for Arabic WSD.

### 4.2.1. Semantic Similarity Measures

Measures of text similarity have been used for a long time in NLP applications and related areas.

In this section, we present the similarity measure [29] which can be applied to find the concept that corresponds to the correct sense of the ambiguous words.

We use the following definitions and notations:

Len: The length of the shortest path in Arabic WordNet from synset to synset (measured in edges or nodes) is denoted by  $\text{len}(c_1, c_2)$ .

Depth: The depth of a node is the length of the path to it from the global root, i.e.,

$$\text{depth}(c_1, c_2) = \text{len}(c_1, c_2) .$$

Lso: We write  $\text{lso}(c_1, c_2)$  for the lowest super-ordinate of  $c_1$  and  $c_2$ .

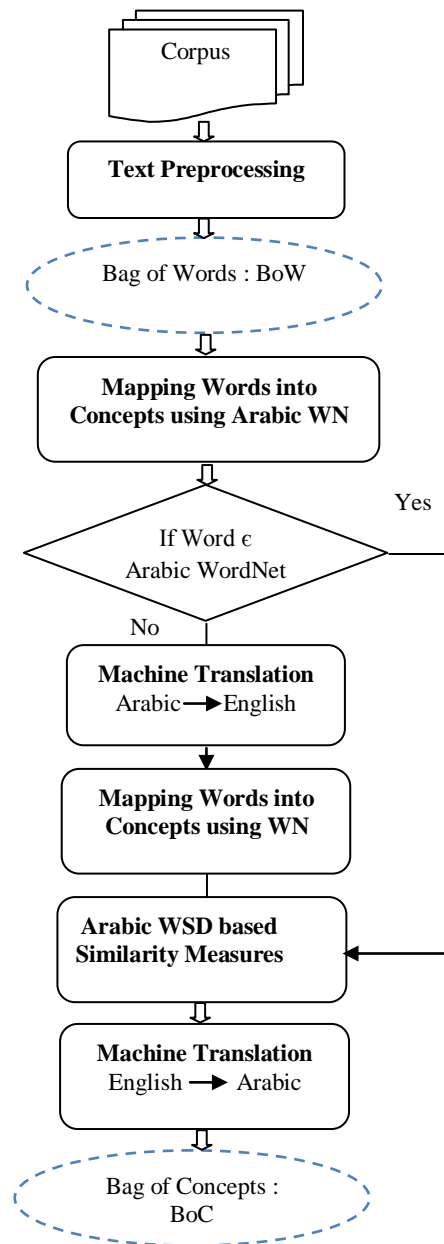


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Proposed Method for Arabic WSD

**Wu and Palmer's Similarity:** Wu [29] introduce a scaled metric for what they call conceptual similarity between a pair of concepts in a hierarchy such as:

$$\text{sim}_{wp}(c_1, c_2) = \frac{2 * \text{depth}(\text{lso}(c_1, c_2))}{\text{len}(c_1, \text{lso}(c_1, c_2)) + \text{len}(c_2, \text{lso}(c_1, c_2)) + 2 * \text{depth}(\text{lso}(c_1, c_2))} \quad (4)$$



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W: Ambiguous term.
S: Sentence containing w.
N: Number of the concepts of term w.
LC = {c1, c2, ..., cN} : List of the concepts of W.
K: Number of concepts in the local context of W.
LW = {c1, c2, ..., ck} : List of the concepts of Local
Context (± 2 terms).
MTS: Machine Translation System
WN: WordNet Ontology
AWN: Arabic WordNet Ontology
Sim(ci, cj) : The similarity measure between two
concepts ci and cj.
For each term W ∈ S do{
- Map W into concepts using AWN.
- If W ∈ AWN then LC = {c1, c2, ..., cN}
- Else
- Use MTS (Arabic to English) for term W.
W' ← MTS(W)
- Map W' into concepts using WN
o If W' ∉ WN then omit the term
o Else LC = {c1, c2, ..., cN}
o End If
- End If
/* Calculate the score with the other concepts in the
local context*/
S(C) ← 0
For each concept ci ∈ LC
{
For each concept wj ∈ LW
S(ci) ← S(ci) + Sim(ci, wj)
}
/* Select the nearest concept*/
Cp(W) = cp / maxi=1..N S(ci) = S(cp)
}

```

Figure 2. The Algorithm of the proposed method for Arabic WSD

In the next section, we describe the Feature Selection methods applied to reduce dimensionality and remove irrelevant features.

#### 4.2.2. Feature Selection

Feature Selection [20, 30] studies how to select the list of variables that are used to construct models describing data. Its purposes include reducing dimensionality, removing irrelevant and redundant features, reducing the amount of data needed for learning and improving accuracy. In this work, we used the Chi-Square statistics for feature selection.

#### Chi-Square

The Chi-Square statistics can be used to measure the degree of association between a term and a category [20]. Its application is based on the assumption that a term whose frequency strongly depends on the category in which it occurs will be more useful for

discriminating it among other categories. For the purpose of dimensionality reduction, terms with small Chi-Square values are discarded. The Chi-Square multivariate is a supervised method allowing the selection of terms by taking into account not only their frequencies in each category but also the interaction of the terms between them and the interactions between the terms and the categories. The principal consists in extracting k better features characterizing best the category compared to the others, this for each category.

An arithmetically simpler way of computing chi-square is the following:

$$X_{w,c}^2 = \frac{n * (p(w,c) * p(\bar{w}, \bar{c}) - p(w, \bar{c}) * p(\bar{w}, c))^2}{p(w) * p(\bar{w}) * p(\bar{c}) * p(c)} \quad (5)$$

Where:  $p(w,c)$  represents the probability that the documents in the category  $c$  contain the term  $w$ ,  $p(w)$  represents the probability that the documents in the corpus contain the term  $w$ , and  $p(c)$  represents the probability that the documents in the corpus are in the category  $c$ , and so on. These probabilities are estimated by counting the occurrences of terms and categories in the corpus.

The feature selection method chi-square could be described as follows. For a corpus with  $m$  classes, the term-goodness of a term  $w$  is usually defined as either one of:

$$X_{\max}^2(w) = \max_j \{X_{w,c_j}^2\} \quad (6)$$

$$X_{\text{avg}}^2(w) = \sum_{j=1}^m p(c_j) * X_{w,c_j}^2 \quad (7)$$

Where  $p(c_j)$  is the probability of the documents to be in the category  $c_j$ , then, the terms whose term-goodness measure is lower than a certain threshold would be removed from the feature space. In other words, chi-square selects terms having strong dependency on categories.

#### 4.2.3. Weighting Concepts

The weight  $W(C_d^i)$  of a concept  $C^i$ , in a document  $d$  is defined as the combined measure of its local centrality and its global centrality, formally:

$$W(C_d^i) = cc(C^i, d) * idc(C^i) \quad (8)$$

The local centrality of a concept  $C^i$  in a document  $d$ , noted  $cc(C^i, d)$  based on its pertinence in the document, and its occurrence frequency. Formally:

$$cc(C^i, d) = \alpha * tf(C^i, d) + (1 - \alpha) \sum_{i \neq l} Sim(C^i, C^l) \quad (9)$$

Where  $\alpha$  is a weighting factor that balances the frequency in relation with the pertinence (this factor is determined by experimentation),  $Sim(C^i, C^l)$  measures the semantic similarity between concepts  $C^i$  and  $C^l$ ,  $tf(C^i, d)$  is the occurrence frequency of the concepts  $C^i$  in the document  $d$ .

The global centrality of a concept is its discrimination in the collection. A concept which is



$$F1 - \text{measure} = \frac{2 * (\text{Precision} * \text{Recall})}{\text{Precision} + \text{Recall}}, a + c > 0 \quad (12)$$

To evaluate the methods proposed, we explore the semantic similarity measure to choose the nearest concept, and we propose to use the Chi-Square method to reduce dimensionality.

A result of our proposed method with two classifiers: SVM and NB, and to using CHI method to feature selection, is presented in Figure 4.

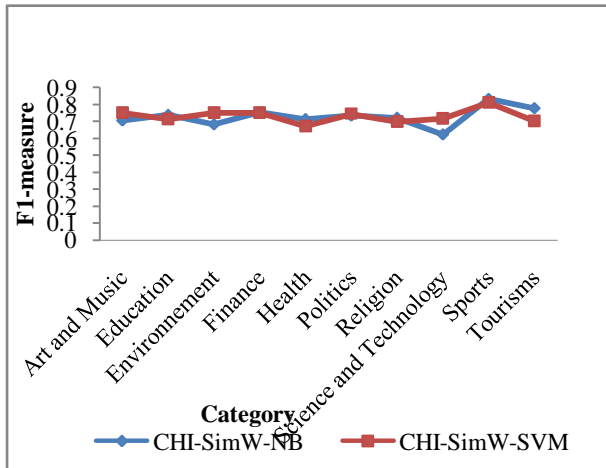


Figure 4. The results (F1-measure) obtained with Chi-square reduction techniques using SVM and NB classifiers.

Overall, the proposed method achieved the best performance. Specifically, the best accuracy 73, 2% (table 3) was achieved with the proposed method with Wu and Palmer's measure using the CHI to features selection and the SVM classifier.

Table 3: The comparison of performance on EASC's corpus

	Rappel	Precision	F1-mesure
<i>SVM</i>	0,746	0,718	0,732
<i>Naive Bayesian</i>	0,747	0,71	0,782

## 6. Conclusion and Future Work

Word Sense Disambiguation plays a vital role in many Text Mining applications. WSD problem has been widely investigated and solved in English and other European languages. Unfortunately, for Arabic language this problem remains a very difficult task. Yet no a complete WSD method for this language is available.

In this paper, to overcome this problem, we proposed an efficient method based Knowledge approach. In fact, two contributions have been proposed and evaluated. In the first one, we suggested to use both two external resources AWN and WN based on Term to Term Machine Translation System MTS. The second contribution relates to the disambiguation strategies, it consists of choosing the nearest concept

for the ambiguous terms, based on more relationships with different concepts in the same local context.

To illustrate the accuracy of our proposed method, this later has been integrated and evaluated using our Arabic TC System [31]. The obtained results illustrate clearly that the proposed method for Arabic WSD outperforms greatly the other ones.

In the future work, we propose a generalized method exploring the use of Wikipedia as the lexical resource for disambiguation.

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