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Evaluating word association-derived word embeddings on semantic analogies

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Abstract

Word embeddings trained on large scale text corpora are central to modern natural language processing and are also important as cognitive models and tools in psycholinguistic research. An important alternative to these text-based models are embeddings derived from word association norms. Recently, these association-based embeddings have been shown to outperform text-based word embeddings of comparable complexity (such as GloVE, word2Vec & fastText) in semantic similarity rating tasks. Here we evaluate English and Rioplatense Spanish association-based embeddings derived from the Small World of Words (SWOW) project on the Google Analogy set and the Bigger Analogy Test Set. We also developed a small analogy set that focuses on semantic relationships, such as event knowledge and category-exemplar relationships such as prototypicality. SWOW-derived word embeddings perform similarly as traditional text-based word embeddings in semantic analogies, and outform them in some categories. These results illustrate relevant similarities and differences between text-based and word association-derived embeddings.