The Mediascape of Dutch Chroniclers (1500-1850) Labeling Media Mentions in Early Modern Chronicles Using CRF

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DH Benelux. June 3, 2021

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The Mediascape of Dutch Chroniclers (1500-1850)

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3 Machine learning media mentions



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Chronicling Novelty. New knowledge in the Netherlands, 1500-1850

- Project managers: Judith Pollmann (Leiden University) & Erika Kuijpers (VU Amsterdam)
- About: Circulation and evaluation of new knowledge, ideas and technologies among a non-specialist public
- www.chroniclingnovelty.com



Changing mediascapes and the collection of knowledge

• Explore how the use of computational methods allow me to get more insight in the media early modern chroniclers used and the information they received

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The Mediascape of Dutch Chroniclers (1500-1850)

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- The whole of sources of information available to the early modern chronicler
- Two elements:
 - ► The media that are mentioned by the authors of the chronicle
 - ► The information that the authors are reporting on, which has been obtained from the media

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Corpus

Corpus characteristics

- 350 manuscripts, 70,000 pages
- Written in the Dutch language in the Low Countries between 1500 and 1850
- Transcribed and annotated with Transkribus (HTR) and the help of volunteers (VeleHanden)

Three labels

• receiver, source, perception (oral/heard, written/read, seen, else)

This morning <source>mayor Vorsterman</source> came <perception: oral/heard> telling </perception> <receiver>us</receiver> that because of the disease, no one was allowed to be buried in the church

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Inter Annotator Agreement shows difficulty of the task

	F-score 1	F-score 2
all labels	0.589	0.742
source	0.208	0.764
receiver	0.777	0.619
perception	0.707	0.727

Table: Inter Annotator Agreement in the media annotation task.

Used data in first experiments: 12 volume chronicle by Jozef Van Walleghem about Bruges (1779 - 1800)

chronicle	p (% labeled)	n sources	n receivers	n perceptions
Van Walleghem	1165 (17%)	519	272	510

Table: Characterics of the data.

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Machine learning media mentions

- Classifier should assign a label to every token
 - O, source-B, source-I, receiver-B, receiver-I, perception-B, or perception-I
- Word vector model was trained on the data, using fastText
- 100 dimensional vector were used as 100 features for the classifier
- Model was trained using Conditional Random Fields (CRF) in sklearn-crfsuite
 - Able to deal with sequential data implicitly
 - Useful when working with sequence labeling tasks
 - Calculates features during training
- Information about the previous and next word as features (onsets, offsets, digits, vectors)
- Train set and test set were manually split (70% training and 30% testing of every volume)

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	precision	recall	f1-score	support
perception-B	0.643	0.552	0.594	134
receiver-B	0.828	0.578	0.681	83
source-B	0.513	0.488	0.500	121
source-l	0.670	0.448	0.537	145
perception-I	0.500	0.143	0.222	7
receiver-I	0.125	0.111	0.118	9

Table: F-scores per label.

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Preliminary results

label n	label n+1	weight
0	0	4.163518
receiver-I	receiver-I	4.029864
receiver-B	receiver-I	3.232955
source-l	source-l	2.888268
perception-I	perception-I	2.374591
source-B	source-I	1.727776

Table: Top likely transitions.

weight	label	feature
1.988054	source-I	+1:word.isdigit()
1.744118	perception-B	word[-5:]: lesen
1.472060	perception-B	word[-5:]: ndigt
1.466354	0	bias
1.145304	source-B	-1:word[-5:]: nde

Table: Top positive state features.

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Three main types of errors

- The token with which the label starts: which token gets the suffix -B?
 - de Gendsche Gazette
 - alderverschrikkelijkste berichten
- Lonely tokens: model is better in predicting when there is a sequence of labeled tokens
 - decreet
 - gerugt
- Consistency of the model
 - The word *men* often appears as receiver, but not always
 - Model labels media mentions that are overlooked by the annotators
 - Annotator confused source with receiver, but model assigned the correct labels

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• Removal of punctuation: our data consisted of one long sentence

- Problematic when trying to optimize the model
- Early modern chroniclers were very inconsistent in using punctuation
- Lowering all characters: mentions of oral sources or newspaper could not be recognized by its capital
 - Early modern chroniclers were very inconsistent in using capitals

• Cluster word vectors

- Add a lexicon: using a lexicon with frequently used words might improve the labeling of lonely tokens
- **Goal**: train a model that can be used to label media mentions in the whole corpus, and that can be used as a method to facilitate the close reading

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