

FakEDAMR: Fake News Detection using Abstract Meaning Representation

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Abstract

Given the rising prevalence of disinformation and fake news online, the detection of fake news in social media posts has become an essential task in the field of natural language processing (NLP). In this paper, we propose a fake detection model named, FakEDAMR that encodes textual content using the Abstract Meaning Representation (AMR) graph, a semantic representation of natural language that captures the underlying meaning of a sentence. The graphical representation of textual content holds longer relation dependency in very few distances. A new fake news dataset, FauxNSA, has been created using tweets from the Twitter platform related to ‘Nupur Sharma’ and ‘Agniveer’ political controversy. We represent each sentence of the tweet using AMR graph and then use this in combination with textual features to classify fake news. Experimental results on two different sets of features show that adding AMR graph features improves F1-score and accuracy. In the experiments, Random Forest with AMR-encoded features outperforms other models in Feature-set 1, achieving 88.90%, 89.48%, 87.09% accuracy and 85.92%, 88.69%, 86.70% F1-score on the FauxNSA, Covid19-FND, and KFN datasets, respectively. However, when Feature-set 2 is used, BiLSTM with AMR-encoded features emerges as the top-performing model. It achieves highest accuracy and F1-score of 93.96% and 91.96% on the dataset. It also maintains high performance on Covid19-FND and KFN datasets, with accuracy and F1-scores of 93.26% and 93.20% on Covid19-FND, and 93.52% and 93.52% on KFN, respectively.

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Index Terms—Fake News Detection, Natural Language Processing, AMR Graph, India Nupur Sharma protest, India Agniveer protest.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media became essential for communication and information sharing. However, news shared over social media platforms lacks cross-referencing, allowing the spread of misinformation. Interestingly, it appears that the rate at which fake news is shared on Twitter exceeds that of genuine news [19]. Figure 1 presents some examples of fake news which spread through various media platforms, including Twitter. Many ML/DL methods were proposed to identify fake news from social media [8]. These existing methods focused on syntactic features and did not investigate how semantic features of news content affect ML models. However, complex semantic features are seen to improve the performance of different NLP tasks such as event detection [7], abstractive summarization [15], and question answering [14] in machine learning. Considering this one may ask “Does incorporating complex

semantic features of sentences enhance the performance of fake news detection models too?”



Fig. 1. Examples of false information related to the ‘Nupur Sharma’ and ‘Agniveer’ controversy showcased in the images (Courtesy: Boomlive). The images depict various misleading claims, including: a) Russia, Netherlands, France and 34 other countries are supporting India and Nupur Sharma. b) Nupur Sharma is arrested and in the jail. c) Oppressors are damaging the railway line in the protest of Agniveer scheme.

The present study proposed a fake news detection model, FakEDAMR, that classify tweets as genuine and fake information, by introducing graph-based semantic features with syntactic and lexical features of the sentences. The main contribution of our work is to use deep semantic representation from the features of the Abstract Meaning Representation (AMR) graph. AMR helps to better extract the relationships between entities far apart in the text with minimum cost. This approach reduces the emphasis on syntactic features and collapses certain elements of word category, such as verbs and nouns, as well as word order and morphological variations. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the semantics features of AMR graphs for detecting fake news. We curated a fake news dataset, namely, FauxNSA, related to the well-known controversies *Nupur Sharma* and *Agniveer* in India. Tweets with a list of curated hastags (Table I) on said topics are collected from the Twitter platform, in two different languages - Hindi and English. We extracted AMR graphs from each text document by using STOG model [25]. We encoded AMR graphs using graph embedding and combined them with the syntactic features of the text used in state-of-the-art model [23]. Finally, the resulting embedding vector, which included both semantic and syntactic features, is fed into a deep-learning model to predict the probability of fake and real. We have experimented our model on two publicly available datasets (Covid19-FND[20], KFN[13]) and FauxNSA. Our experiments demonstrated an improvement in accuracy of 2-3% over all the datasets when the AMR graph features were included with exiting textual features in the model. In particular, we sum up contributions of this study as follows:

- A new fake news dataset, FauxNSA has been created, focusing on a well-known controversy in India involving

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individuals named ‘Nupur Sharma’ and ‘Agniveer’. This dataset comprises tweets pertaining to religion, politics, and terrorism. To ensure the dataset’s credibility, a meticulous methodology was employed to gather both fake and real information from reliable sources.

- In this study, a new model called FakEDAMR is introduced for detecting fake news. The model incorporates Abstract Meaning Representation (AMR) to capture intricate semantic details, resulting in a significant improvement of 2-3% in accuracy on two publicly available datasets (Covid19-FND [20] and KFN [13]), as well as FauxNSA dataset. This novel approach effectively enhances the ability to identify and distinguish fake news articles.
- Further, this study aims to determine the relative importance of AMR graph features compared to text-based features within a model and evaluate the model performance in handling unknown samples.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section II reports the related work. Section III and IV describe the working methodology and experimental setup. Section V reports the results with comparative analysis. Ablation study is presented in Section VI. Finally, Section VII concludes the research outcome.

II. RELATED WORK

Fake news detection has been extensively studied recently using Natural Language Processing. Oshikawa et al. [17] clarify the distinction between detecting fake news and related concepts, including rumor detection, and provide an overview of current data sets, features, and models. As mentioned in the introduction, Castillo et al. [3] created a set of 68 features in the identification of false information. They used propagation tree over the feature set to identify whether the news is false or not. An extension to the lexical-based analysis model is used in [16] by incorporating speaker profile details into an attention-based long short-term memory (LSTM) model. Zervopoulos et al. [24] created a set of 37 handcrafted features that includes morphological (e.g., part of speech), vocabulary (e.g., type-to-token ratio), semantic (e.g., text and emoji sentiment), and lexical features (e.g., number of pronouns) to predict the false news using traditional ML algorithms. Further, in 2022 [23], they have extended the research to run different feature set with complex deep learning models.

AMR is a graph-based representation of natural language that accurately captures the complex semantics of a sentence in a way that is both language-independent and computationally tractable. A growing number of researchers are investigating how to use the information stored in the AMR graphs and its representations to assist in the resolution of other NLP problems. AMR has been successfully applied to more advanced semantic tasks such as entity linking [18], abstractive summarization [15], question answering [14], and machine translation [11]. Garg et al. [6] were the first to employ AMR representation for extracting interactions from biomedical text, utilizing graph kernel methods to determine if a given AMR

subgraph expresses an interaction. Aguilar et al. [1] and Huang et al. [9] had conducted research and indicated that the semantic structures of sentences, such as AMR introduced in [2], encompass extensive and varied semantic and structural information concerning events. AMR graph has never been explored in the Fake News detection, however, considering its capability to determine the trigger words by extracting complex semantic information, AMR graphs have potential to improve efficiency of existing fake news detection methodologies. Recently, graph based fake news detection models [5, 10, 22] are proposed. Xu et al. [22] used evidence based encoded features with graph neural network to achieve better performance. The model effectively captures and incorporates long-distance semantic dependencies among scattered relevant snippets through neighborhood propagation. KAN [5] and FinerFact [10] models are proposed which takes social user information and Wikipedia information as an evidence to enhance the performance of the fake news detection model.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology in this study is divided into two parts: 1) curation of the proposed data set FauxNSA, and 2) fake news detection model FakEDAMR. Figure 2 shows the methodology, and the description of each step is provided in the following sections.

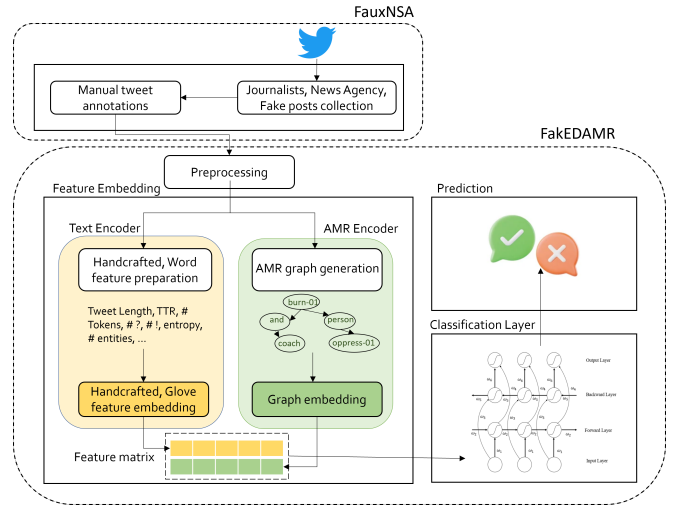


Fig. 2. Structural outline of proposed fake news detection methodology.

1) *FauxNSA: Fake News Dataset on Nupur Sharma and Agniveer controversy:*

a) *Fake news dataset:* The data set was gathered from the Twitter platform between May and September 2022 using the Twitter Academic API’s full-archive search over the political controversy ‘Nupur Sharama’ and ‘Agniveer’. This controversy holds the data related to religion, political, and terrorist issues. The methodology to collect the tweets can be broken down as follows. First, a list of curated hashtags mentioned in Table I related to ‘Nupur Sharama’ and ‘Agniveer’ controversy is manually constructed. Tweets were captured through Twitter

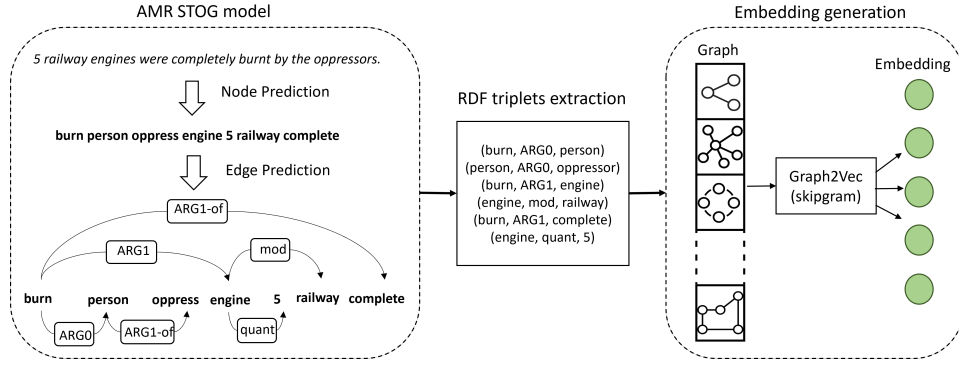


Fig. 4. Process Flow of AMR Encoder: Text-to-Graph Conversion, RDF Triplet Extraction, and Graph Embedding Generation.

and manner. Our approach involves several steps to generate an AMR graph from each text document (Figure 4) and extraction of RDF (Resource Description Framework) triplets from generated AMR graph. These triplets are represented in the form of *(subject, relation, object)*. Subsequently, we create a final graph using the extracted edges from the RDF triplets. Finally, we fed this converted graph into the Graph2Vec model to obtain the AMR graph embedding.

The AMR graph conversion process of each text in the document utilizes STOG model [25]. STOG model breaks down the sequence-to-graph task into two main components: node prediction and edge prediction.

In node prediction, the model takes an input sequence $w = \langle w_1, \dots, w_k \rangle$, where each word w_a is part of the sentence. It sequentially decodes a list of nodes $v = \langle v_1, \dots, v_k \rangle$ and assigns their indices $i = \langle i_1, \dots, i_k \rangle$ deterministically using the equation:

$$P(v) = \prod_{a=1}^k P(v_a | v_{<a}, i_{<a}, w) \quad (2)$$

For edge prediction, given an input sequence w , a list of nodes v , and indices i , the model searches for the highest scoring parse tree y within the space \mathcal{Y} of valid trees over v , while adhering to the constraint of i . A parse tree y represents a collection of directed head-modifier edges, depicted as:

$$y = \{(v_a, v_b) | 1 \leq a, b \leq k\} \quad (3)$$

To efficiently find the highest scoring parse tree (i.e., maximum spanning arborescence), the model utilizes a scoring mechanism used in [12].

$$\text{parse}(v) = \arg \max_{y \in \mathcal{Y}(v)} \sum_{(v_a, v_b) \in y} \text{score}(v_a, v_b) \quad (4)$$

After obtaining the parse tree, the model proceeds with a merging operation to reconstruct the standard Abstract Meaning Representation (AMR) graph by combining nodes that share identical indices. Once we have the AMR tree denoted as y , we extract the RDF triplets from it. These triplets

are represented as $t = \{(v_1, r_1, v_2), \dots, (v_{k-1}, r_j, v_k)\}$. Each triplet consists of a subject v_a , a concept r_k , and an object v_b .

Using the extracted RDF triplets, we construct the final graph denoted as $g = (v, e, r)$. Here, v represents the set of vertices, specifically $v = \{v_1, \dots, v_k\}$, r corresponds to the set of concepts obtained from the RDF triplets, i.e., $r = \{r_1, \dots, r_j\}$. Lastly, e represents the set of edges in the graph, which is defined as $e = \{(v_a, r_j, v_b) | \exists v_a, v_b \in v \text{ and } r_j \in r\}$. In other words, the edges in e connect the vertices v_a and v_b using the relation r_j . This process of extracting RDF triplets and constructing the final graph enables the representation and analysis of the AMR graph, capturing the semantic relationships between entities and facilitating further processing and interpretation.

Afterward, a list of graph G , where each graph $g \in G$ represents one text, is passed as input to the Graph2Vec model, specifically the skip-gram model, to obtain the final embedding. The Graph2Vec model processes the AMR graph and generates embeddings by considering the graph structure and the relationships between its elements. The resulting embedding is obtained from the last hidden layer of the model, capturing the learned representation of the AMR graph in a vector form. Finally, we get the graph embedding vector $u = ([u_i]_{i=1}^{i=d}; u_i \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times 1})$, where d is the fixed dimension and n is number of sentence in the document.

c) *Classification layer*: After getting the text embedding $t_{(m \times d)}$ and graph embedding $u_{(n \times d)}$, we get final embedding x by Eq. 5, where $|$ represents concatenation operation:

$$x = (t_{(m \times d)} | u_{(n \times d)})_{(m+n) \times d} \quad (5)$$

Finally, BiLSTM model is used as classification layer to identify tweets in fake or real news using the prepared feature embedding x .

$$f_t = \text{sigmoid}(W_{fx}x_t + W_{fh}h_{t-1} + b_f) \quad (6)$$

$$i_t = \text{sigmoid}(W_{ix}x_t + W_{ih}h_{t-1} + b_i) \quad (7)$$

$$c_t = c_{t-1} \odot f_t + i_t \odot \tanh(W_{cx}x_t + W_{ch}h_{t-1} + b_c) \quad (8)$$

$$o_t = \text{sigmoid}(W_{ox}x_t + W_{oh}h_{t-1} + b_o) \quad (9)$$

$$h_t = o_t \odot \tanh(c_t) \quad (10)$$

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF DATA FOR DATASETS: A) COVID19-FND, B) KFN, AND
C) FAUXNSA (OURS)

Dataset	Covid19-FND	KFN	FauxNSA
# Real	5100	10387	4657
# Fake	5600	10413	4632
# Total	10700	20800	9289

Where $x_t \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ is the input vector, $W \in \mathbb{R}^{l \times n}$, $b \in \mathbb{R}^v$ and the superscripts n and l depict the dimension of the input vector and the number of words in the dataset or vocabulary at any time t , respectively. For an input vector x_t , h_{t-1} and c_{t-1} are previously hidden and cell state, whereas the current hidden and cell state h_t and c_t . The above output represents the LSTM network. Finally, output of the BiLSTM can be summarized by concatenating the forward and backward state as $h_t = [\vec{h}_t, \overleftarrow{h}_t]$. At the output layer, it employed binary cross-entropy as the loss function to identify probability of true label $p(y_i)$ for real/fake classification.

IV. EXPERIMENTAL SETUP

A. Dataset

Other than our dataset, we have also used two publicly available dataset Covid-FND [20] and KFN [13]. Statistics of the data is given in the table II and detailed description of each is described below.

1) *Kaggle Fake News (KFN) [13]*: The Kaggle Fake News dataset includes 20,387 news items which spans the fields of politics, commerce, and technology, contains an evenly distributed mix of real and fake news pieces.

We ignored additional information, such as article content and author information, and concentrated only on the news titles for our analysis. Although the limited textual length available for classification makes it difficult to detect fake news with this option, it is consistent with earlier studies that show that a sizeable portion of fake news is disseminated on social media platforms like Twitter that have strict character limits.

2) *Covid19-FND [20]*: This dataset consists social media posts and articles related to COVID-19. These posts and articles are labeled as either real or fake. They specifically collected data from social media platforms that are actively used for peer communication and information sharing, including news, events, and social phenomena. To gather fake claims, authors referred to fact-checking websites such as Politifact, NewsChecker, Boomlive, and others. Additionally, they utilized tools like Google Fact-Check Explorer and the IFCN chatbot. Real news articles were collected from verified Twitter handles. This dataset contains 10,700 fake and real news related to COVID-19.

B. Metric

Four quality metrics, namely, Precision, Recall, F1-score, and Accuracy are considered for comparative study. Although accuracy is frequently employed as the primary metric for classification tasks, it might not be appropriate for unbalanced

data sets. In these situations, we need to take into account alternative metrics that offer a more thorough review. One such metric is the F1-score, which takes into account both recall and precision and provides a balanced assessment by using their harmonic mean.

C. Implementation details

We have developed and tested our code in Keras (Python library). We partitioned each data set into training, validation, and testing sets, following a 70:20:10 split. This approach maintains the proportional representation of classes within both the train, validation, and test sets, enabling a robust evaluation of the model performance across various data sets. We have used basic preprocessing, like removing URLs, stopwords, etc., on each text document of the data set. We have incorporated AMR graph features on the feature sets proposed by [23]. They used two feature sets: Feature-set 1 adopts a feature engineering approach, where the chosen features are hand-crafted, including various categories such as morphological, vocabulary, and lexical features. Feature-set 2 employs tokenization of each tweet's text and conversion into word embedding. GloVe embedding [21], pre-trained with a Twitter-based corpus of 27 billion tokens, is used to map each word to a 100-dimensional vector. Despite each word being mapped to a fixed-size vector, tweet length still varies; to address this issue, post-padding (i.e., padding at the end of a tweet) is used to match the longest tweet (approximately 100 tokens). Therefore, a tweet in Feature-set 2 is presented as a 100x100 matrix. Although the size of Graph2Vec can vary based on the length of the AMR graph, we have fixed the dimension to 100, considering the length of the tweet is fixed in the Twitter platform. We evaluated Feature-set 1 on Naive Bayes, SVM, C4.5, random forests, and Feature-set 2 on CNN, C-LSTM, and BiLSTM. For the purpose of training each model on the data sets, we carried out three distinct trials with various seed values. The performance metric was then generated using the test data set findings, taking into account the best-performing trial. Model configuration, such as the number of hyper-parameters and number of layers used in the model, is kept the same as in the research [23].

V. RESULTS

We evaluated the performance of AMR with different feature sets on different ML/DL algorithms. Table III presents the comparison results of different models. It is evident that incorporating AMR semantic features into the feature sets significantly improves the performance of the models. Among the models evaluated using Feature-set 1, Random Forest with AMR-encoded feature sets achieves the highest accuracy of 88.90% and an F1-score of 85.92% on the FauxNSA (proposed) dataset. Furthermore, it also achieves the highest accuracy of 89.48% and 87.09%, along with F1-scores of 88.69% and 86.70%, on the publicly available datasets Covid19-FND and KFN, respectively.

BiLSTM with AMR-encoded features outperforms other models in the case of Feature-set 2. The model achieved an

accuracy of 93.96% and an F1-score of 91.96% on our data set. Similar performance is observed on the other two publicly available data sets as well, where the accuracy and F1-scores of 93.26% and 93.20% on Covid19-FND, and 93.52% and 93.52% on KFN, respectively, are achieved.

VI. ABLATION STUDY

A. Performance analysis of pretrained FakedAMR on South African Dataset

In order to assess the effectiveness of our model on an unknown set of samples, we utilized a South African fake news dataset (SA1) [4] obtained from various South African websites such as MyBroadband⁴, News24⁵, and MM Africa⁶. This dataset includes 807 fake articles in total, along with details like the article’s title, publication date, and URL.

To evaluate the performance of our best-trained model on this South African dataset, we employed the models trained on the Covid19-FND, KFN, and FauxNSA datasets. The results revealed that the models trained on KFN and FauxNSA exhibited remarkable accuracy, achieving **97.78%** and **95.83%** respectively, on the unknown South African dataset. However, the model trained on the Covid19-FND dataset displayed a significantly lower accuracy of 39.38%. One possible explanation for this disparity is that the Covid19-FND dataset predominantly contains tokens related to the Covid-19 disease, while the KFN and FauxNSA datasets encompass a wider range of topics such as politics, commerce, and technology, which are more diverse and akin to the South African dataset.

B. Effect of AMR graph features

We conducted an investigation to understand why AMR features enhance the accuracy of the model. To provide evidence for our hypothesis, we visualized the features of the concatenation layer in the model, which merges the AMR features with textual features. In our experiment, we randomly selected three samples each from three datasets that demonstrated improved prediction accuracy when using both textual and AMR features compared to using only textual features in the model.

Figure 5 clearly illustrates the impact of AMR features on the model’s performance. It shows that the AMR features create a distinct and decisive boundary that aids the model in effectively distinguishing between target classes. On the other hand, the textual features are scattered across dimensions and do not significantly contribute to the final prediction regarding the authenticity of the content (fake or real). These findings confirm that the integration of AMR features with textual features significantly enhances the model’s ability to establish the correct decision boundary during the final prediction.

Through this series of experiments, we have successfully demonstrated the substantial contribution of AMR features in conjunction with textual features, enabling the model to create

accurate decision boundaries and improve overall prediction accuracy.

VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this paper, we show that detecting fake news requires a more sophisticated understanding of the semantic relationships between trigger words and entities in the text. We demonstrated that how Abstract Meaning Representation (AMR) graph improves the fake news detection model and we concluded that semantic features are just as important as linguistic and syntactic features for identifying fake news in posts. Our experimental results indicate that for Fetaure-set 1, Random Forest with AMR-encoded features outperforms other traditional ML models with 88.90% accuracy and 85.92% F1-score. On the other hand for Feature-set 2, BiLSTM with AMR encoded features outperforms other methods, achieving 93.96% accuracy and 91.96% F1-score on our proposed dataset (FauxNSA) along with BiLSTM with AMR encoded features achieves accuracy and F1-scores of 93.26% and 93.20% on Covid19-FND, and 93.52% and 93.52% on KFN, two publicly available datasets respectively. In future, we are exploring the way to embed AMR graph with pretrained transformers based models such as Bert, XLM-Roberta, Electra, etc. Also, we are interested in exploring the more ways to encode AMR knowledge in order to increase the performance of existing fake news models.

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⁴<https://mybroadband.co.za/forum/threads/list-of-known-fake-news-sites-in-south-africa>

⁵<https://exposed.news24.com/the-website-blacklist/>

⁶<https://mediamonitoringafrica.org/>

TABLE III
COMPARISON OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT MODELS ON FEATURE-SETS (FS) 1 AND 2 FOR DATASETS COVID19-FND, KFN, AND FAUXNSA (OURS).

Model	Feature-set	Covid19-FND				KFN				FauxNSA			
		Precision	Recall	F1	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1	Accuracy
Naive Bayes	FS1	76.06	67.81	71.67	71.55	67.25	79.90	73.03	69.42	82.19	80.85	81.51	80.11
	FS1+AMR	78.83	66.93	72.39	72.58	67.46	79.59	73.10	70.13	84.41	82.06	83.21	80.81
SVM	FS1	82.05	81.47	81.76	80.71	85.91	83.80	84.84	83.71	84.58	82.87	83.71	84.35
	FS1+AMR	81.70	82.39	82.04	82.24	85.66	83.84	84.73	84.65	83.71	83.63	83.67	85.31
C4.5	FS1	81.94	79.57	80.74	79.85	80.81	79.56	80.18	80.28	86.08	83.16	84.59	83.32
	FS1+AMR	82.70	80.04	81.34	80.03	81.42	80.87	81.14	81.67	87.64	83.47	85.50	86.04
Random Forest	FS1	86.01	90.02	87.96	88.26	88.86	84.89	86.83	86.92	87.37	84.05	85.67	86.35
	FS1+AMR	86.25	91.28	88.69	89.48	88.90	85.12	86.70	87.09	87.72	84.21	85.92	88.90
CNN	FS2	91.16	91.30	91.20	91.21	91.74	91.27	91.50	91.52	89.25	84.35	86.34	89.64
	FS2+AMR	92.65	92.75	92.69	92.71	92.42	92.18	92.29	92.11	90.14	89.99	90.06	92.10
C-LSTM	FS2	91.49	91.46	91.47	91.51	91.58	91.58	91.57	91.57	91.61	86.13	88.34	91.11
	FS2+AMR	92.87	92.93	92.90	92.95	93.38	93.28	93.23	93.24	91.85	88.68	90.23	91.89
BiLSTM	FS2	91.55	91.71	91.54	91.55	92.44	92.40	92.41	92.36	90.60	86.83	88.45	91.12
	FS2+AMR	93.43	93.08	93.20	93.26	93.55	93.54	93.52	93.52	92.25	91.67	91.96	93.96

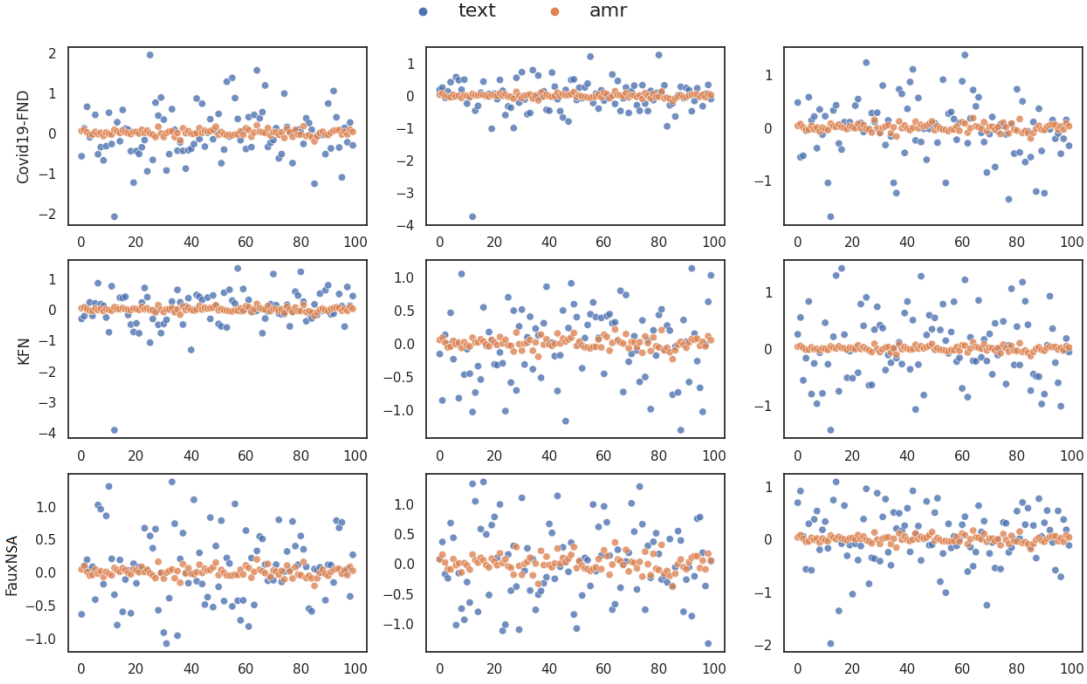


Fig. 5. Comparative analysis of AMR and text features in three datasets: Covid19-FND, KFN, and FauxNSA. Graph is plotted for three correct predicted samples by model where x-axis represents the feature index and y-axis represents its corresponding value.

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