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Sentiment analysis (SA) or opinion mining is the computational study of people’s opinions, sentiments, attitudes, and emotions. Due to almost unlimited applications and numerous research challenges, SA has been a very active research area in natural language processing (NLP) and data mining. SA is regarded as a semantic analysis problem, but is also highly targeted and bounded because a SA system does not need to fully “understand” a sentence or document. It only needs to comprehend some aspects of its meaning, e.g., positive/negative opinions and their targets. Due to this targeted nature, it allows us to perform deeper language analyses to gain better insights into NLP than in the general setting because the complexity of the general setting of NLP is too overwhelming. Thus, although general NL understanding is still far from us, we may be able to solve the SA problem satisfactorily. In this talk, I will first introduce SA and the existing research, and then go into detail to discuss a recent study that aims to solve a SA problem but also contributes to machine learning in the areas of lifelong machine learning and topic modeling. (Received August 06, 2015)