Learning from Observations









- Learning agents
- Inductive learning
- Decision tree learning
- Measuring learning performance

Outline



http://xkcd.com/1570/

- Learning is essential for unknown environments,
 - i.e., when designer lacks omniscience
- Learning is useful as a system construction method,
 - i.e., expose the agent to reality rather than trying to write it down
- Learning modifies the agent's decision mechanisms to improve performance

Learning



Learning Agents



- Design of learning element is dictated by
 - What type of performance element is used
 - Which functional component is to be learned
 - How that functional component is represented
 - What kind of feedback is available
- Supervised learning: correct answers for each instance
- Reinforcement learning: occasional rewards
- Unsupervised learning: agent learns patterns without explicit feedback
- Example scenarios:

Learning Element

Performance element	Component	Representation	Feedback
Alpha-beta search	Eval. fn.	Weighted linear function	Win/loss
Logical agent	Transition model	Successor-state axioms	Outcome
Utility-based agent	Transition model	Dynamic Bayes net	Outcome
Simple reflex agent	Percept-action fn	Neural net	Correct action

- Simplest form: learn a function from examples (tabula rasa)
 - f is the target function
- An example is a pair x, f(x), e.g.,



- Problem: find a(n) hypothesis h
 - Such that h ≈ f, given a training set of examples
- This is a highly simplified model of real learning:
 - Ignores prior knowledge
 - Assumes a deterministic, observable "environment"
 - Assumes examples are given
 - Assumes that the agent wants to learn f why?

Inductive Learning (a.k.a. Science)



- Construct/adjust h to agree with f on training set (h is consistent if it agrees with f on all examples)
- E.g., curve fitting:



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- E.g., curve fitting:
- Ockham's razor: maximize a combination of consistency and simplicity



- Examples described by attribute values (Boolean, discrete, continuous, etc.)
 - E.g., situations where I will/won't wait for a table at a restaurant:

Attribute-Based Representations

Example	Attributes								Target		
	Alt	Bar	Fri	Hun	Pat	Price	Rain	Res	Type	Est	WillWait
X_1	Т	F	F	Т	Some	\$\$\$	F	Т	French	0–10	Т
X_2	Т	F	F	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Thai	30–60	F
X_3	F	Т	F	F	Some	\$	F	F	Burger	0–10	Т
X_4	Т	F	Т	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Thai	10–30	Т
X_5	Т	F	Т	F	Full	\$\$\$	F	Т	French	>60	F
X_6	F	Т	F	Т	Some	\$\$	Т	Т	Italian	0–10	Т
X_7	F	Т	F	F	None	\$	Т	F	Burger	0–10	F
X_8	F	F	F	Т	Some	\$\$	Т	Т	Thai	0–10	Т
X_9	F	Т	Т	F	Full	\$	Т	F	Burger	>60	F
X_{10}	Т	Т	Т	Т	Full	\$\$\$	F	Т	Italian	10–30	F
X_{11}	F	F	F	F	None	\$	F	F	Thai	0–10	F
X_{12}	Т	Т	Т	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Burger	30–60	Т

- One possible representation for hypotheses
- E.g., here is a tree for deciding whether to wait:

Decision Trees



- Decision trees can express any function of the input attributes.
- E.g., for Boolean functions, truth table row → path to leaf:
- Trivially, there is a consistent decision tree for any training set w/ one path to leaf for each example (unless f nondeterministic in x) but it probably won't generalize to new examples
- Prefer to find more compact decision trees

Expressiveness





How many distinct decision trees with n Boolean attributes??

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 - = number of Boolean functions

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- How many distinct decision trees with n Boolean attributes??
 - = number of Boolean functions
 - = number of distinct truth tables with 2^n rows = 2^{2^n}
 - E.g., with 6 Boolean attributes, there are 18,446,744,073,709,551,616 trees

- Aim: find a small tree consistent with the training examples
- Idea: (recursively) choose "most significant" attribute as root of (sub)tree

Decision Tree Learning

```
function DTL(examples, attributes, default) returns a decision tree

if examples is empty then return default

else if all examples have the same classification then return the classification

else if attributes is empty then return MODE(examples)

else

best \leftarrow CHOOSE-ATTRIBUTE(attributes, examples)

tree \leftarrow a new decision tree with root test best

for each value v_i of best do

examples_i \leftarrow \{elements of examples with best = v_i\}

subtree \leftarrow DTL(examples_i, attributes - best, MODE(examples))

add a branch to tree with label v_i and subtree subtree

return tree
```

- Idea: a good attribute splits the examples into subsets that are (ideally) "all positive" or "all negative"
- Patrons? is a better choice gives information about the classification

Choosing an Attribute



- Information answers questions
- The more clueless I am about the answer initially, the more information is contained in the answer
- Scale: 1 bit = answer to Boolean question with prior <0.5, 0.5>
- Information in an answer when prior is <P₁, ..., P_n> is

Information Theory

$$H(\langle P_1, \ldots, P_n \rangle) = \sum_{i=1}^n - P_i \log_2 P_i$$

(also called entropy of the prior)

- Suppose we have p positive and n negative examples at the root
 - ⇒ H(<p/(p+n), n/(p+n)>) bits needed to classify a new example
- E.g., for 12 restaurant examples, p=n=6 so we need 1 bit
- An attribute splits the examples E into subsets E_i, each of which (we hope) needs less information to complete the classification
- Let E_i have p_i positive and n_i negative examples
 - \Rightarrow H(<p_i/(p_i+n_i), n_i/(p_i+n_i)>) bits needed to classify a new example
 - ⇒ expected number of bits per example over all branches is

 $\sum_{i} \frac{p_i + n_i}{p + n} H(\langle p_i / (p_i + n_i), n_i / (p_i + n_i) \rangle)$

- For Patrons?, this is 0.459 bits, for Type this is (still) 1 bit
 - ⇒ choose the attribute that minimizes the remaining information needed

Information

- Decision tree learned from the 12 examples:
- Substantially simpler than "true" tree - a more complex hypothesis isn't justified by small amount of data

Example



- How do we know that h ≈ f? (Hume's Problem of Induction)
 - 1) Use theorems of computational/statistical learning theory
 - 2) Try h on a new test set of examples (use same distribution over example space as training set)
- Learning curve = % correct on test set as a function of training set size

Performance Measurement



- Learning curve depends on
 - Realizable (can express target function) vs. non-realizable
 - Non-realizability can be due to missing attributes or restricted hypothesis class (e.g., thresholded linear function)
 - Redundant expressiveness (e.g., loads of irrelevant attributes)

Performance Measurement



- Learning needed for unknown environments, lazy designers
- Learning agent = performance element + learning element
- Learning method depends on type of performance element, available feedback, type of component to be improved, and its representation
- For supervised learning, the aim is to find a simple hypothesis that is approximately consistent with training examples
- Decision tree learning using information gain
- Learning performance = prediction accuracy measured on test set

Summary

Example	Attributes								Target		
	Alt	Bar	Fri	Hun	Pat	Price	Rain	Res	Type	Est	WillWait
X_1	Т	F	F	Т	Some	\$\$\$	F	Т	French	0–10	Т
X_2	Т	F	F	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Thai	30–60	F
X_3	F	Т	F	F	Some	\$	F	F	Burger	0–10	Т
X_4	Т	F	Т	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Thai	10–30	Т
X_5	Т	F	Т	F	Full	\$\$\$	F	Т	French	>60	F
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X_{10}	Т	Т	Т	Т	Full	\$\$\$	F	Т	Italian	10–30	F
X_{11}	F	F	F	F	None	\$	F	F	Thai	0–10	F
X_{12}	Т	Т	Т	Т	Full	\$	F	F	Burger	30–60	Т

.Strategy: Top Down Recursive *divide-and-conquer* fashion

•First: Select attribute for root node Create branch for each possible attribute value

•Then: Split instances into subsets One for each branch extending from the node

•Finally: Repeat recursively for each branch, using only instances that reach the branch

Stop if all instances have the same class or there are no more attributes to split on

Constructing Decision Trees









Which Attribute to Select?



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Which is the best attribute?

•Want to get the smallest tree

•Heuristic: choose the attribute that produces the "purest" nodes

Popular impurity criterion: *information gain*

•Information gain increases with the average purity of the subsets

Strategy: Choose attribute that gives greatest information gain

Criterion for Attribute Selection Measure information in *bits*

•Given a probability distribution, the info required to predict an event is the distribution's *entropy*

•Entropy gives the information required in bits (can involve fractions of bits)

> •Because were dealing with bits, the log is calculated in base 2

•Formula for computing the entropy:

 $entropy(p_{1,}p_{2,}\ldots,p_{n}) = -p_{1}logp_{1} - p_{2}logp_{2}\ldots - p_{n}logp_{n}$

Computing Information

Logarithms:

■ b^y = x

- y = log_bx
- e.g. 2⁴ = 16, 4 = log₂16
- To change to a different base:

$$\log_{b} x = \log_{10} x / \log_{10} b$$

- e.g.
 - $\log_2 2 = \log_{10} 2 / \log_{10} 2 = 0.301 / 0.301 = 1$
 - $\log_2 4 = \log_{10} 4 / \log_{10} 2 = 0.602 / 0.301 = 2$
 - log₂8 = log₁₀8 / log₁₀2 = 0.9031 / 0.301 = 3

An Algebraic Aside...

Example: Attribute *Outlook*

•Outlook = *Sunny* :

 $info([2,3]) = entropy(2/5,3/5) = -2/5 \log(2/5) - 3/5 \log(3/5) = 0.971 bits$.Outlook = Overcast: $info([4,0]) = entropy(1,0) = -1\log(1) - 0\log(0) = 0 bits$ is normally .Outlook = Rainy: $info([2,3]) = entropy(3/5,2/5) = -3/5 \log(3/5) - 2/5 \log(2/5) = 0.971 bits$.Expected information for attribute:

 $info([3,2], [4,0], [3,2]) = (5/14) \times 0.971 + (4/14) \times 0 + (5/14) \times 0.971 = 0.693 bits$

Computing Information Gain

Information gain: information before splitting – information after splitting

gain(Outlook) = info([9,5]) - info([2,3],[4,0],[3,2])
=
$$0.940 - 0.693$$

= 0.247 bits

Information gain for attributes from weather data:

gain(Outlook)	= 0.247 bits
gain(Temperature)	= 0.029 bits
gain(Humidity)	= 0.152 bits
gain(Windy)	= 0.048 bits



Final Decision Tree

Note: not all leaves need to be pure; sometimes identical instances have different classes

> ⇒ Splitting stops when data can't be split any further



•Properties we require from a purity measure:

> •When node is pure, measure should be zero

•When impurity is maximal (i.e. all classes equally likely), measure should be maximal

•Measure should obey *multistage property* (i.e. decisions can be made in several stages): Wishlist for a Purity Measure

 $measure([2,3,4]) = measure([2,7]) + (7/9) \times measure([3,4])$

Entropy satisfies all three properties!

Problematic - attributes
 with a large number of
 values

Subsets are more likely to be pure if there is a large number of values

> ⇒Information gain is biased towards choosing attributes with a large number of values

 \Rightarrow This may result in *overfitting* (selection of an attribute that is nonoptimal for prediction)

Highly-Branching Attributes

Weather Data with *ID Code*

ID code	Outlook	Temp.	Humidity	Windy	Play
A	Sunny	Hot	High	False	No
В	Sunny	Hot	High	True	No
С	Overcast	Hot	High	False	Yes
D	Rainy	Mild	High	False	Yes
E	Rainy	Cool	Normal	False	Yes
F	Rainy	Cool	Normal	True	No
G	Overcast	Cool	Normal	True	Yes
Н	Sunny	Mild	High	False	No
Ι	Sunny	Cool	Normal	False	Yes
J	Rainy	Mild	Normal	False	Yes
К	Sunny	Mild	Normal	True	Yes
L	Overcast	Mild	High	True	Yes
М	Overcast	Hot	Normal	False	Yes
Ν	Rainy	Mild	High	True	No

.Entropy of split:

⇒Information gain is maximal for ID code (namely 0.940 bits)

Tree Stump for *ID Code* Attribute



 $info(ID \ code) = info([0,1]) + info([0,1]) + \dots + info([0,1]) = 0 bits$

.Gain ratio: a modification of the information gain that reduces its bias

Gain ratio takes number and size of branches into account when choosing an attribute

> •It corrects the information gain by taking the *intrinsic information* of a split into account

Intrinsic information:

Entropy of distribution of instances into branches (i.e. how much info do we need to tell which branch an instance belongs to)

Gain Ratio

•Example: intrinsic information for ID code

 $info([1,1,...,1]) = 14 \times (-1/14 \times \log(1/14)) = 3.807 bits$

•Value of attribute decreases as intrinsic information gets larger

.Definition of gain ratio:

 $gain_ratio(attribute) \\ = \frac{gain(attribute)}{intrinsic_info(attribute)}$

Computing the Gain Ratio

•Example:

$$gain_ratio(ID \ code) = \frac{0.940 \ bits}{3.807 \ bits} = 0.246$$

Gain Ratios for Weather Data

Outlook		Temperature	
Info:	0.693	Info:	0.911
Gain: 0.940-0.693	0.247	Gain: 0.940-0.911	0.029
Split info: info([5,4,5])	1.577	Split info: info([4,6,4])	1.557
Gain ratio: 0.247/1.577	0.157	Gain ratio: 0.029/1.557	0.019

Humidity		Windy	
Info:	0.788	Info:	0.892
Gain: 0.940-0.788	0.152	Gain: 0.940-0.892	0.048
Split info: info([7,7])	1.000	Split info: info([8,6])	0.985
Gain ratio: 0.152/1	0.152	Gain ratio: 0.048/0.985	0.049

.Outlook still comes out top

However *ID code* still has greater gain ratio

•Standard fix: *ad hoc* test to prevent splitting on that type of attribute

Problem with gain ratio: it may overcompensate

> •May choose an attribute just because its intrinsic information is very low

•Standard fix: only consider attributes with greater than average information gain

More on the Gain Ratio

1. Calculate the information value of the problem as a whole.

2. For each attribute:

A. Calculate the information in each of its potential values.

B. Calculate the average information value of that attribute.

C. Calculate the gain by subtracting its value from the information value of the problem as a whole.

3. Calculate the intrinsic information value of the split.

4. Calculate the ratio by dividing the attribute gain by the intrinsic information value.

Walking Through the Weather Example...

1. Calculate the information value of the problem as a whole.

info([9,5]) = entropy(9/14, 5/14)
=
$$-9/14(\log_2 9/14) - 5/14(\log_2 5/14)$$

= $-9/14((\log_{10} 9/14)/(\log_{10} 2)) - 5/14((\log_{10} 5/14)/(\log_{10} 2))$
= 0.940 bits

2. For each attribute:

A. Calculate the information in each of its potential values.

```
Outlook = Sunny
info([2,3]) = entropy(2/5, 3/5)
             = -2/5(\log_2 2/5) - 3/5(\log_2 3/5)
             = -2/5((\log_{10}^2/5)/(\log_{10}^2)) - 3/5((\log_{10}^3/5)/(\log_{10}^2))
             = 0.971 bits
Outlook = Overcast
info([4,0]) = entropy(4/4, 0/4) = entropy(1, 0)
                                                                     Walking Through
             = -1(\log_2 1) - 0(\log_2 0)
             = -1((\log_{10} 1)/(\log_{10} 2)) - 0
             = 0 bits
Outlook = Rainy
info([2,3]) = entropy(2/5, 3/5)
             = -2/5(\log_2 2/5) - 3/5(\log_2 3/5)
             = -2/5((\log_{10}2/5)/(\log_{10}2)) - 3/5((\log_{10}3/5)/(\log_{10}2))
             = 0.971 bits
```

the Example...

2. For each attribute:

B. Calculate the average information value of that attribute.

info([3,2], [4,0], [3,2]) = 5/14 * 0.971 + 4/14 * 0 + 5/14 * 0.971 = 0.693 bits

2. For each attribute:

C. Calculate the gain by subtracting its value from the information value of the problem as a whole.

info([9,5]) - info([2,3],[4,0], [2,3]) = 0.940 - 0.693 = 0.247

3. Calculate the intrinsic information value of the split.

info([5, 4, 5]) = entropy(5/14, 4/14, 5/14)
=
$$-5/14(\log_2 5/14) - 4/14(\log_2 4/14) - 5/14(\log_2 5/14)$$

= $-5/14((\log_{10} 5/14)/(\log_{10} 2)) - 4/14((\log_{10} 4/14)/(\log_{10} 2)) - 5/14((\log_{10} 5/14)/(\log_{10} 2))$
= 1.577 bits

4. Calculate the ratio by dividing the attribute gain by the intrinsic information value.

Gain Ratio = Gain from Attribute / Intrinsic Value of Split = 0.247 / 1.577 = 0.157 Now you try the math for an attribute, (Temperature, Humidity, or Windy) and see if your numbers come out the same as those listed on slide 19.

Walking Through the Example... .Top-down induction of decision trees: ID3, algorithm developed by Ross Quinlan

> • Gain ratio just one modification of this basic algorithm

• C4.5: deals with numeric attributes, missing values, noisy data

There are many other attribute selection criteria (but little difference in accuracy of result)

Discussion