

Natural Language Processing

Language modeling

Yulia Tsvetkov

yuliats@cs.washington.edu

1

Regularization

A solution for overfitting

Add a **regularization** term R(θ) to the loss function (for now written as maximizing logprob rather than minimizing loss)

$$
\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmax}} \sum_{i=1}^{m} \log P(y^{(i)} | x^{(i)}) - \alpha R(\theta)
$$

Idea: choose an $R(θ)$ that penalizes large weights

● fitting the data well with lots of big weights not as good as fitting the data a little less well, with small weights

L2 regularization (ridge regression)

The sum of the squares of the weights

$$
R(\theta) = ||\theta||_2^2 = \sum_{j=1}^n \theta_j^2
$$

L2 regularized objective function:

$$
\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmax}} \left[\sum_{i=1}^{m} \log P(y^{(i)} | x^{(i)}) \right] - \alpha \sum_{j=1}^{n} \theta_j^2
$$

L1 regularization (=lasso regression)

The sum of the (absolute value of the) weights

$$
R(\theta) = ||\theta||_1 = \sum_{i=1}^n |\theta_i|
$$

L1 regularized objective function:

$$
\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmax}} \left[\sum_{1=i}^{m} \log P(y^{(i)} | x^{(i)}) \right] - \alpha \sum_{j=1}^{n} |\theta_j|
$$

Multinomial Logistic Regression

Often we need more than 2 classes

- Positive/negative/neutral
- Parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, etc.)
- Classify emergency SMSs into different actionable classes

If >2 classes we use **multinomial logistic regression**

- = Softmax regression
- = Multinomial logit
- = (defunct names : Maximum entropy modeling or MaxEnt)

Yulia Tsvetkov Undergrad NLP So "logistic regression" will just mean binary (2 output classes) 5

Multinomial Logistic Regression

The probability of everything must still sum to 1

P(positive|doc) + P(negative|doc) + P(neutral|doc) = 1

Need a generalization of the sigmoid called the **softmax**

- Takes a vector $z = [z_1, z_2, ..., z_k]$ of k arbitrary values
- Outputs a probability distribution
- each value in the range $[0,1]$
- all the values summing to 1

We'll discuss it more when we talk about neural networks

One-hot representation

Gold labels – one-hot representations

[0, 0, ..., 1, 0, 0]

Predicted values – vector of class probabilities

 $[0.1, 0.05, ..., 0.08, 0, 0.07]$

$Sigma \rightarrow$ softmax

The **softmax** function

• Turns a vector $z = [z_1, z_2, ..., z_k]$ of k arbitrary values (logits) into probabilities

$$
softmax(z_i) = \frac{\exp(z_i)}{\sum_{j=1}^k \exp(z_j)} \quad 1 \le i \le k
$$

• The denominator $\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} e^{zt}$ is used to normalize all the values into probabilities

$$
softmax(z) = \left[\frac{exp(z_1)}{\sum_{i=1}^k exp(z_i)}, \frac{exp(z_2)}{\sum_{i=1}^k exp(z_i)}, \dots, \frac{exp(z_k)}{\sum_{i=1}^k exp(z_i)}\right]
$$

softmax: a generalization of sigmoid

• For a vector z of dimensionality k , the softmax is:

$$
\text{softmax}(z) = \left[\frac{\exp(z_1)}{\sum_{i=1}^k \exp(z_i)}, \frac{\exp(z_2)}{\sum_{i=1}^k \exp(z_i)}, \dots, \frac{\exp(z_k)}{\sum_{i=1}^k \exp(z_i)} \right]
$$
\n
$$
\text{softmax}(z_i) = \frac{\exp(z_i)}{\sum_{j=1}^k \exp(z_j)} \quad 1 \le i \le k
$$
\nExample:

$$
z = [0.6, 1.1, -1.5, 1.2, 3.2, -1.1]
$$

 $softmax(z) = [0.055, 0.090, 0.006, 0.099, 0.74, 0.010]$

Language modeling

What is Natural Language Processing (NLP)?

- NL∈ {Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, Arabic, English, … Inuktitut, Njerep}
- Automation of NLs:
	- \circ analysis of ("understanding") what a text means, to some extent ($\mathsf{NL} \to \mathcal{R}$)
	- \circ generation of fluent, meaningful, context-appropriate text ($\mathcal{R} \to \mathsf{NL}$)
	- \circ acquisition of \mathcal{R} from knowledge and data

My legal name is Alexander Perchov.

My legal name is Alexander Perchov. But all of my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version of my legal name.

My legal name is Alexander Perchov. But all of my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version of my legal name. Mother dubs me Alexi-stop-spleening-me!, because I am always spleening her.

My legal name is Alexander Perchov. But all of my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version of my legal name. Mother dubs me Alexi-stop-spleening-me!, because I am always

spleening her. If you want to know why I am always spleening her, it is because I am always elsewhere with friends, and disseminating so much currency, and performing so many things that can spleen a mother.

My legal name is Alexander Perchov. But all of my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version of my legal name. Mother dubs me Alexi-stop-spleening-me!, because I am always

spleening her. If you want to know why I am always spleening her, it is because I am always elsewhere with friends, and disseminating so much currency, and performing so many things that can spleen a mother. Father used to dub me Shapka, for the fur hat I would don even in the summer month.

My legal name is Alexander Perchov. But all of my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version of my legal name. Mother dubs me Alexi-stop-spleening-me!, because I am always

Yulia Tsvetkov Undergrad NLP *generative.* ¹⁹*spleening her. If you want to know why I am always spleening her, it is because I am always elsewhere with friends, and disseminating so much currency, and performing so many things that can spleen a mother. Father used to dub me Shapka, for the fur hat I would don even in the summer month. He ceased dubbing me that because I ordered him to cease dubbing me that. It sounded boyish to me, and I have always thought of myself as very potent and*

Language models play the role of ...

- a judge of grammaticality
- a judge of semantic plausibility
- an enforcer of stylistic consistency
- a repository of knowledge (?)

The Language Modeling problem

- Assign a probability to every sentence (or any string of words)
	- finite vocabulary (e.g. words or characters) *{the, a, telescope, …}*
	- infinite set of sequences
		- *■ a telescope STOP*
		- *■ a STOP*
		- *■ the the the STOP*
		- *■ I saw a woman with a telescope STOP*
		- *■ STOP*
		- *■ ...*

The Language Modeling problem

- Assign a probability to every sentence (or any string of words)
	- finite vocabulary (e.g. words or characters)
	- infinite set of sequences

$$
\sum_{\mathbf{e}\in\Sigma^*} p_{\text{LM}}(\mathbf{e}) = 1
$$

$$
p_{\text{LM}}(\mathbf{e}) \ge 0 \quad \forall \mathbf{e} \in \Sigma^*
$$

p(*disseminating so much currency STOP*) = 10-15 $p({\rm spending~a~lot~of~money~STOP}) = 10^{-9}$

Motivation

• Speech recognition: we want to predict a sentence given acoustics

Motivation

• Speech recognition: we want to predict a sentence given acoustics

Motivation

- Machine translation
	- p(*strong winds*) > p(*large winds*)
- Spelling correction
	- The office is about fifteen minuets from my house
	- p(*about fifteen minutes from*) > p(*about fifteen minuets from*)
- Speech recognition
	- p(*I saw a van*) >> p(*eyes awe of an*)
- Summarization, question-answering, handwriting recognition, OCR, etc.

Equivalent definition

• Language Modeling is the task of predicting what word comes next

the students opened their

Equivalent definition

Language Modeling is the task of predicting what word comes next

• More formally: given a sequence of words $x^{(1)}$, $x^{(2)}$, ... $x^{(t)}$ compute the probability distribution of the next word $x^{(t+1)}$ Where $x^{(t+1)}$ can be any word in the vocabulary $V = \{ w_1, w_2, ... w_{|V|} \}$

We use Language Models every day

We use Language Models every day

Google

LLMs are language models

ChatGPT 4o \sim

what are the weaknesses of NLP today?

- 6 NLP has made great strides but still faces key challenges:
	- 1. Lack of Deep Understanding: Models often lack true contextual comprehension, struggling with nuanced reasoning and **long-term dependencies** in texts.
	- 2. Bias and Fairness: NLP systems inherit biases from training data, which can result in unfair outputs. Debiasing remains difficult without affecting performance.
	- 3. Data Quality: Models often rely on noisy or low-quality data from the web, and obtaining high-quality, domain-specific labeled data is expensive and time-consuming.
	- 4. Domain-Specific Limitations: General NLP models don't perform well in specialized domains like medicine or law without significant adaptation.
	- 5. Explainability and Reasoning: Most models lack explainability and struggle with logical reasoning or multi-step inferences, which is critical for high-stakes applications.
	- 6. Efficiency and Scalability: Large models are resource-intensive, requiring significant computational power for both training and inference, which limits accessibility.
	- 7. Multilingual Limitations: NLP models perform poorly in low-resource languages and codeswitching scenarios, leaving many languages underrepresented.
	- 8. Safety and Misinformation: Models can be vulnerable to adversarial attacks and can generate misinformation easily, posing ethical concerns.

These weaknesses highlight the need for improvements in understanding, fairness, domain adaptation, and safety in NLP systems.

 QH QH QH QH

Language Modeling

● If we have some text, then the probability of this text (according to the Language Model) is:

$$
P(\mathbf{x}^{(1)},...,\mathbf{x}^{(T)}) = P(\mathbf{x}^{(1)}) \times P(\mathbf{x}^{(2)} | \mathbf{x}^{(1)}) \times \cdots \times P(\mathbf{x}^{(T)} | \mathbf{x}^{(T-1)},...,\mathbf{x}^{(1)})
$$

=
$$
\prod_{t=1}^{T} P(\mathbf{x}^{(t)} | \mathbf{x}^{(t-1)},...,\mathbf{x}^{(1)})
$$

This is what our LM provides

"I have a dog whose name is Lucy. I have two cats, they like playing with Lucy."

• Question: How to learn a Language Model?

A trivial model

- Assume we have n training sentences
- Let $x_1, x_2, ..., x_n$ be a sentence, and $c(x_1, x_2, ..., x_n)$ be the number of times it appeared in the training data.
- Define a language model:

$$
p(x_1, \ldots, x_n) = \frac{c(x_1, \ldots, x_n)}{N}
$$

A trivial model

- Assume we have n training sentences
- Let $x_1, x_2, ..., x_n$ be a sentence, and $c(x_1, x_2, ..., x_n)$ be the number of times it appeared in the training data.
- Define a language model:

$$
p(x_1, \ldots, x_n) = \frac{c(x_1, \ldots, x_n)}{N}
$$

No generalization!

- Question: How to learn a Language Model?
- Answer (pre- Deep Learning): learn an *n-gram* Language Model!

"I have a dog whose name is Lucy. I have two cats, they like playing with Lucy."

• Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}
	- \circ bigrams: {I have, have a, a dog, dog whose, \dots , with Lucy}

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}
	- \circ bigrams: {I have, have a, a dog, dog whose, \dots , with Lucy} have cats

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}
	- \circ bigrams: {I have, have a, a dog, dog whose, ..., with Lucy} have cats

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}
	- \circ bigrams: {I have, have a, a dog, dog whose, \dots , with Lucy}
	- \circ trigrams: {I have a, have a dog, a dog whose, ..., playing with Lucy}

- Definition: An n-gram is a chunk of n consecutive words.
	- \circ unigrams: {I, have, a, dog, whose, name, is, Lucy, two, cats, they, like, playing, with}
	- \circ bigrams: {I have, have a, a dog, dog whose, \dots , with Lucy}
	- \circ trigrams: {I have a, have a dog, a dog whose, \dots , playing with Lucy}
	- \circ four-grams: {I have a dog, ..., like playing with Lucy}
	- \circ …

- \bullet w_1 a unigram
- \bullet $w_1 w_2 a$ bigram
- \bullet w₁ w₂ w₃ a trigram
- \bullet $w_1w_2...w_n$ an n-gram

"I have a dog whose name is Lucy. I have two cats, they like playing with Lucy."

- Question: How to learn a Language Model?
- Answer (pre- Deep Learning): learn an *n-gram* Language Model!

● Idea: Collect statistics about how frequent different n-grams are and use these to predict next word

45

unigram probability

- corpus size $m = 17$
- $P(Lucy) = 2/17$; $P(cats) = 1/17$

• Unigram probability:
$$
P(w) = \frac{count(w)}{m} = \frac{C(w)}{m}
$$

bigram probability

$$
P(A | B) = \frac{P(A,B)}{P(B)}
$$

\n
$$
P(\text{have} | I) = \frac{P(\text{1 have})}{P(I)} = \frac{2}{2} = 1
$$

\n
$$
P(\text{two} | \text{have}) = \frac{P(\text{have two})}{P(\text{have})} = \frac{1}{2} = 0.5
$$

\n
$$
P(\text{eating} | \text{have}) = \frac{P(\text{have eating})}{P(\text{have})} = \frac{0}{2} = 0
$$

$$
P(w_2|w_1) = \frac{C(w_1, w_2)}{\sum_{w} C(w_1, w)} = \frac{C(w_1, w_2)}{C(w_1)}
$$

trigram probability

$$
P(A | B) = \frac{P(A, B)}{P(B)}
$$

\n
$$
P(a | I have) = \frac{C(I have a)}{C(I have)} = \frac{1}{2} = 0.5
$$

\n
$$
P(w_3 | w_1 w_2) = \frac{C(w_1, w_2, w_3)}{\sum_{w} C(w_1, w_2, w)} = \frac{C(w_1, w_2, w_3)}{C(w_1, w_2)}
$$

\n
$$
P(\text{several } | I have) = \frac{C(I have several)}{C(I have)} = \frac{0}{2} = 0
$$

n-gram probability

$$
P(A | B) = \frac{P(A,B)}{P(B)}
$$

$$
P(w_i | w_1, w_2, ..., w_{i-1}) = \frac{C(w_1, w_2, ..., w_{i-1}, w_i)}{C(w_1, w_2, ..., w_{i-1})}
$$

Sentence/paragraph/book probability

$$
P(\boldsymbol{x}^{(1)},\ldots,\boldsymbol{x}^{(T)}) = P(\boldsymbol{x}^{(1)}) \times P(\boldsymbol{x}^{(2)} | \ \boldsymbol{x}^{(1)}) \times \cdots \times P(\boldsymbol{x}^{(T)} | \ \boldsymbol{x}^{(T-1)},\ldots,\boldsymbol{x}^{(1)})
$$

$$
= \prod_{t=1}^{T} P(\boldsymbol{x}^{(t)} | \ \boldsymbol{x}^{(t-1)},\ldots,\boldsymbol{x}^{(1)})
$$

P(its water is so transparent that the) $=$

 P (the | its water is so transparent that) \rightarrow How to estimate?

Markov assumption

- We make the Markov assumption: $x^{(t+1)}$ depends only on the preceding n-1 words
	- Markov chain is a "*…stochastic model describing a sequence of possible events in which the probability of each event depends only on the state attained in the previous event.*"

$$
P(\mathbf{x}^{(t+1)}|\mathbf{x}^{(t)},...,\mathbf{x}^{(1)}) = P(\mathbf{x}^{(t+1)}|\mathbf{x}^{(t)},...,\mathbf{x}^{(t-n+2)})
$$

n-1 words

assumption

PAUL G. ALLEN SCHOOL

Andrei Markov

Markov assumption

P (the | its water is so transparent that) $\equiv P$ (the | transparent that)

Andrei Markov

or maybe even

P (the | its water is so transparent that) $\equiv P$ (the | that)

First-order Markov process

Chain rule

$$
p(X_1 = x_1, X_2 = x_2, \dots, X_n = x_n) =
$$

$$
p(X_1 = x_1) \prod_{i=2}^n p(X_i = x_i \mid X_1 = x_1, \dots, X_{i-1} = x_{i-1})
$$

First-order Markov process

Chain rule

$$
p(X_1 = x_1, X_2 = x_2, \dots, X_n = x_n) =
$$

$$
p(X_1 = x_1) \prod_{i=2}^n p(X_i = x_i \mid X_1 = x_1, \dots, X_{i-1} = x_{i-1})
$$

Markov assumption

$$
= P(X_1 = x_1) \prod_{i=2}^{n} P(X_i = x_i | X_{i-1} = x_{i-1})
$$

Second-order Markov process:

• Relax independence assumption:

$$
p(X_1 = x_1, X_2 = x_2, \dots, X_n = x_n) =
$$

\n
$$
p(X_1 = x_1) \times p(X_2 = x_2 \mid X_1 = x_1)
$$

\n
$$
\times \prod_{i=3}^n p(X_i = x_i \mid X_{i-2} = x_{i-2}, X_{i-1} = x_{i-1})
$$

Second-order Markov process:

• Relax independence assumption:

$$
p(X_1 = x_1, X_2 = x_2, \dots, X_n = x_n) =
$$

\n
$$
p(X_1 = x_1) \times p(X_2 = x_2 | X_1 = x_1)
$$

\n
$$
\times \prod_{i=3}^n p(X_i = x_i | X_{i-2} = x_{i-2}, X_{i-1} = x_{i-1})
$$

• Simplify notation:

$$
x_0 = *, x_{-1} = *
$$

3-gram LMs

- A trigram language model contains
	- a vocabulary V
	- a non negative parameters $q(w|u,v)$ for every trigram, such that

$$
w \in \mathcal{V} \cup \{ \text{STOP} \}, u, v \in \mathcal{V} \cup \{ * \}
$$

○ the probability of a sentence $x_1, ..., x_n$, where x_n =STOP is

$$
p(x_1, \ldots, x_n) = \prod_{i=1}^n q(x_i \mid x_{i-1}, x_{i-2})
$$

Example

p (the dog barks STOP) =

Example

p (the dog barks STOP) = q (the | *, *) ×

Example

 p (the dog barks STOP) = q (the | *, *) \times $q(dog \mid *, the) \times$ $q(barks | the, dog) \times$ $q(STOP | dog, barks) \times$

Berkeley restaurant project sentences

- can you tell me about any good cantonese restaurants close by
- mid priced that food is what i'm looking for
- tell me about chez pansies
- can you give me a listing of the kinds of food that are available
- i'm looking for a good place to eat breakfast
- when is caffe venezia open during the day

Raw bigram counts (~1000 sentences)

Bigram probabilities

$$
P(w_i \mid w_{i-1}) = \frac{C(w_{i-1}, w_i)}{C(w_{i-1})}
$$

 $P(w_1, w_2, ..., w_n) \equiv \prod_i P(w_i | w_{i-1})$

Bigram estimates of sentence probability

- $P(\langle s \rangle$ i want chinese food $\langle s \rangle$ = $P(i|< s>)$
- \times P(want $|i\rangle$
- × P(chinese|want)
- × P(food|chinese)
- \times P(\lt /s>|food)

= …

$$
P(w_i | w_{i-1}) = \frac{C(w_{i-1}, w_i)}{C(w_{i-1})}
$$

 $P(w_1, w_2, ..., w_n) \equiv \prod_i P(w_i | w_{i-1})$

What can we learn from bigram estimates?

 $P(to|want) = 0.66$

Months the my and issue of year foreign new exchange's september were recession exchange new endorsed a acquire to six executives

gram

gram

Months the my and issue of year foreign new exchange's september were recession exchange new endorsed a acquire to six executives

Last December through the way to preserve the Hudson corporation N. B. E. C. Taylor would seem to complete the major central planners one point five percent of U.S. E. has already old M.X. corporation of living on information such as more frequently fishing to keep her

Months the my and issue of year foreign new exchange's september were recession exchange new endorsed a acquire to six executives gram Last December through the way to preserve the Hudson corporation N. B. E. C. Taylor would seem to complete the major central planners one point five percent of U.S. E. has already old M. X. corporation of living gram on information such as more frequently fishing to keep her They also point to ninety nine point six billion dollars from two hundred four oh six three percent of the rates of interest stores as Mexico and Brazil on market conditions gram

- -To him swallowed confess hear both. Which. Of save on trail for are ay device and rote life have
- -Hill he late speaks; or! a more to leg less first you enter gram
	- -Why dost stand forth thy canopy, forsooth; he is this palpable hit the King Henry. Live king. Follow.
- -What means, sir. I confess she? then all sorts, he is trim, captain. gram
- gram

gram

- -Fly, and will rid me these news of price. Therefore the sadness of parting, as they say, 'tis done.
- -This shall forbid it should be branded, if renown made it empty.

-King Henry. What! I will go seek the traitor Gloucester. Exeunt some of the watch. A great banquet serv'd in;

-It cannot be but so.