Toolformer:

Language Models Can Teach Themselves to Use Tools

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Toolformer:通过SFT训练语言模型学会使用外部工具。关键问题在于:如何构造带有tool calling的训练数据?论文提出了一种自监督的数据构建流程:LLM在观察少量tool calling示例后,利用few-shot能力自动采样大量候选的工具调用位置与工具调用内容;系统执行这些调用并获取返回结果。只有当某个调用结果能显著降低LLM对后续token的预测损失时,该调用才会被保留下来,并插入到原始文本中,形成带有调用标记的训练样本。最终,这些样本用于SFT训练模型。通过这种方式,Toolformer实现了无需人工标注即可学习"何时调用、调用什么、以及如何使用工具结果"的能力。

背景

如何让LLM学会使用外部tool以提升解决问题的能力? 现有方法大多依赖人工标注或特定任务的Prompt template,缺乏通用性和扩展性。Toolformer正是在 此背景下提出的:它试图让LLM通过自我生成训练数据 的方式,学习如何调用工具,并且在不牺牲通用语言能 力的前提下,增强模型在多任务场景下的 zero-shot 能 力。

生成API CALLING数据

对于每种工具,首先设计一个few-shot prompt template,LLM读到句子 "Pittsburgh is also known as..." 时,先计算插入<API>概率较高的位置i,然后在i位置采样多个API Calls,系统执行api call返回执行结果。模型检查这些答案是否真的有助于理解后续文本,只有能提升预测效果的调用才会被保留。最后,保留的调用会插入回原文中,形成新的训练数据,用于sft。

TOOLFORMER

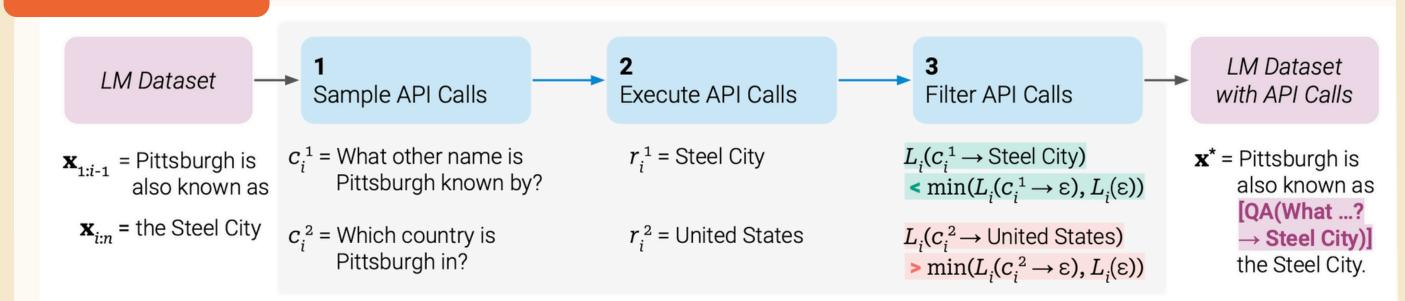


Figure 2: Key steps in our approach, illustrated for a question answering tool: Given an input text x, we first sample a position i and corresponding API call candidates $c_i^1, c_i^2, \ldots, c_i^k$. We then execute these API calls and filter out all calls which do not reduce the loss L_i over the next tokens. All remaining API calls are interleaved with the original text, resulting in a new text x^* .

PROMPT FOR SAMPLE API CALL

Your task is to add calls to a Question Answering API to a piece of text. The questions should help you get information required to complete the text. You can call the API by writing "[QA(question)]" where "question" is the question you want to ask. Here are some examples of API calls:

Input: Joe Biden was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Output: Joe Biden was born in [QA("Where was Joe Biden born?")] Scranton, [QA("In which state is Scranton?")]
Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania.

Input: Coca-Cola, or Coke, is a carbonated soft drink manufactured by the Coca-Cola Company.
Output: Coca-Cola, or [QA("What other name is Coca-Cola known by?")] Coke, is a carbonated soft drink manufactured by [QA("Who manufactures Coca-Cola?")] the Coca-Cola Company.

Input: x
Output:

Figure 3: An exemplary prompt $P(\mathbf{x})$ used to generate API calls for the question answering tool.

思考

本文通过sft的方式让LLM学会使用Tool,虽然Toolformer会使用多种Tool,但严格来说不属于MULTI-Tool的范畴,因为每条数据只包含一种Tool的调用,只不过在sft时将多种Tool数据混合在一起了。因为每条数据有k个位置供采样API CALL数据,因此是可以实现一条数据含有一种Tool的多次调用的,比如多次调用search tool,但是论文中似乎每条数据只含有一次Tool调用。