

Assignment 1: Sentiment Classification

Deadline: week 3

Github invite link: <https://classroom.github.com/a/4Rc9pNVL>

Goals: The main goal of this assignment is for you to get experience extracting features and training classifiers on text. You'll get a sense of what the standard machine learning workflow looks like (reading in data, training, and testing), how standard learning algorithms work, and how the feature design process goes.

Dataset and Code

Please use Python 3.5+ for this project. You may find **numpy** useful for storing and manipulating vectors in this project, though it is not strictly required. The easiest way to install numpy is to install anaconda,¹ which includes useful packages for scientific computing and is a handy package manager that will make it easier to install PyTorch for Assignment 2.

The list of installed packages is: numpy, nltk, spacy. In addition, we download the **stopword lists** from **nltk** and **spaCy**, which you are free to use. Do not attempt to use packages beyond these.

Data: You'll be using the movie review dataset of Socher et al. (2013). This is a dataset of movie review snippets taken from Rotten Tomatoes. The labeled data actually consists of full parse trees with each constituent phrase of a sentence labeled with sentiment (including the whole sentence). The labels are “fine-grained” **sentiment labels ranging from 0 to 4: highly negative, negative, neutral, positive, and highly positive.**

We are tackling a simplified version of this task which frequently appears in the literature: **positive/negative binary sentiment classification of sentences**, with neutral sentences discarded from the dataset. The data files given to you contain of newline-separated sentiment examples, consisting of a label (0 or 1) followed by a tab, followed by the sentence, which has been tokenized but not lowercased. The data has been split into a train, development (dev), and blind test set. On the blind test set, you do not see the labels and only the sentences are given to you. The framework code reads these in for you.

Getting started: Download the code and data. Expand the file and change into the directory. To confirm everything is working properly, run:

```
python sentiment_classifier.py --model TRIVIAL --no_run_on_test
```

This loads the data, instantiates a `TrivialSentimentClassifier` that always returns 1 (positive), and evaluates it on the training and dev sets. The reported dev accuracy should be `Accuracy: 444 / 872 = 0.509174`. Always predicting positive isn't so good!

Framework code: The framework code you are given consists of several files. `sentiment_classifier.py` is the main class. It uses `argparse` to read in several command line arguments. It's okay to add command line arguments during development or do whatever you need, but **you cannot modify this file for your final submission**. For the existing arguments, you should not need to modify the paths if you execute within the `al-distrib` directory. `--model` and `--feats` control the model specification. This file also contains evaluation code.

¹<https://docs.anaconda.com/anaconda/install/>

The main method loads in the data, initializes the feature extractor, trains the model, and evaluates it on train, dev, and blind test, and writes the blind test results to a file.

Data reading is handled in `sentiment_data.py`. This also defines a `SentimentExample` object, which wraps a list of words with an integer label (0/1).

`utils.py` implements an `Indexer` class, which can be used to maintain a bijective mapping between indices and features (strings).

`models.py` is the primary file you'll be modifying. It defines base classes for the `FeatureExtractor` and the classifiers, and defines `train_perceptron` and `train_logistic_regression` methods, which you will be implementing. `train_model` is your entry point which you may modify if needed.

Part 1: Perceptron (40 points)

In this part, you should **implement a perceptron classifier with a bag-of-words unigram featurization**. This will require modifying `train_perceptron`, `UnigramFeatureExtractor`, and `PerceptronClassifier`, all in `models.py`. `train_perceptron` should handle the processing of the training data using the feature extractor. `PerceptronClassifier` should take the results of that training procedure (model weights) and use them to do inference.

Feature extraction: First, you will need a way of mapping from sentences (lists of strings) to feature vectors, a process called feature extraction or featurization. A unigram feature vector will be a sparse vector with length equal to the vocabulary size. There is no single right way to define unigram features. For example, do you want to throw out low-count words? Do you want to lowercase? Do you want to discard stopwords? Do you want the value in the feature vector to be 0/1 for absence or presence of a word, or reflect its count in the given sentence?

You can use the provided `Indexer` class in `utils.py` to map from string-valued feature names to indices. Note that later in this assignment when you have other types of features in the mix (e.g., bigrams in Part 3), you can still get away with just using a single `Indexer`: you can encode your features with “magic words” like `Unigram=great` and `Bigram=great|movie`. This is a good strategy for managing complex feature sets.

There are two approaches you can take to extract features for training: (1) extract features “on-the-fly” during training and grow your weight vector as you add features; (2) iterate through all training points and pre-extract features so you know how many there are in advance (optionally: build a feature cache to speed things up for the next pass).

Feature vectors: since there are a large number of possible features, it is always preferable to represent feature vectors sparsely. That is, if you are using unigram features with a 10000 word vocabulary, you should not be instantiating a 10000-dimensional vector for each example, as this is very inefficient. Instead, you want to maintain a list of only the nonzero features and their counts. Our starter code suggests `Counter` from the `collections` as the return type for the `extract_features` method; this class is a convenient map from objects to floats and is useful for storing sparse vectors like this.

Weight vector: the most efficient way to store the weight vector is a fixed-size numpy array.

Perceptron and randomness: throughout this course, the examples in our training sets *not necessarily* randomly ordered. **You should make sure to randomly shuffle the data before iterating through it.** Even better, you could do a random shuffle every epoch.

Random seed: if you do use randomness, you can either fix the random seed or leave it variable. Fixing the seed (with `random.seed`) can make the behavior you observe consistent, which can make debugging or regression testing easier (e.g., ensuring that code refactoring didn't actually change the results).

Q1 (40 points): implement unigram perceptron. To receive full credit on this part, you must get at least **74% accuracy** on the development set, and the training and evaluation (the printed time) should take less than **20 seconds**. Note that it's fine to use your learning rate schedules from Q2 to achieve this performance.

Exploration (optional) Try at least two different “schedules” for the step size for perceptron (having one be the constant schedule is fine). One common one is to decrease the step size by some factor every epoch or few; another is to decrease it like $\frac{1}{t}$. How do the results change?

Exploration (optional) Compare the training accuracy and development accuracy of the model. Think about why this might be happening.

Part 2: Logistic Regression (30 points)

In this part, you'll additionally implement a logistic regression classifier with the same unigram bag-of-words feature set as in the previous part. Implement logistic regression training in `train_logistic_regression` and `LogisticRegressionClassifier` in `models.py`.

Q2 (30 points): implement logistic regression. Report your model's performance on the dataset. You must get at least **77% accuracy** on the development set and it must run in less than **20 seconds**.

Exploration (optional): plot (using matplotlib or another tool) the training objective (dataset log likelihood) **and** development accuracy of logistic regression vs. number of training iterations for a couple of different step sizes. Think about what you observe and what it means. These plots are very useful for understanding whether your model is training at all, how long it needs to train for, and whether you're seeing overfitting.

Part 3: Features (30 points)

In this part, you'll be implementing a more sophisticated set of features. You should implement two additional feature extractors `BigramFeatureExtractor` and `BetterFeatureExtractor`. Note that your features for this can go beyond word n -grams; for example, you could define a `FirstWord=X` to extract a feature based on what first word of a sentence is, although this one may not be useful.

Q3 (15 points): implement and experiment with `BigramFeatureExtractor`. Bigram features should be indicators on adjacent pairs of words in the text.

Q4 (15 points): experiment with at least one feature modification in `BetterFeatureExtractor`. Try it out with logistic regression. Things you might try: other types of n -grams, tf-idf weighting, clipping your word frequencies, discarding rare words, discarding stopwords, etc. **Your final code here should be whatever works best (even if that's one of your other feature extractors).** This model should train and evaluate in at most 60 seconds. **This feature modification should not just consist of combining unigrams and bigrams.**

Deliverables and Submission

You will commit your code to Github.

Code Submission Your code will be evaluated on several axes:

1. Execution: your code should train and evaluate within the time limits without crashing
2. Accuracy on the development set of your unigram perceptron, unigram logistic regression, and “better” perceptron / logistic regression (we will take the higher number)
3. Accuracy on the blind test set: we may consider it, particularly if it differs greatly from the dev performance (by more than a few percent)

The **only** file you will be submitting is `models.py`. If you wish to implement other classes or functions, put them in `models.py` even if this might not be the ideal coding practice. Importing additional utilities is allowed, but the environment used to grade may not have every package. **We therefore recommend you stick to `numpy`, `nlTK`, `PyTorch` (for future assignments), and the provided utilities.**

The grading cutoffs are set to assign reasonable scores to high-performing submissions. If your code doesn't work or achieves very low performance, we will assess what you've done manually and award partial credit appropriately.

Make sure that the following commands work before you submit (for Q1-4, respectively):

```
python sentiment_classifier.py --model PERCEPTRON --feats UNIGRAM
python sentiment_classifier.py --model LR --feats UNIGRAM
python sentiment_classifier.py --model LR --feats BIGRAM
python sentiment_classifier.py --model LR --feats BETTER
```

References

Richard Socher, Alex Perelygin, Jean Wu, Jason Chuang, Christopher D. Manning, Andrew Ng, and Christopher Potts. 2013. Recursive Deep Models for Semantic Compositionality Over a Sentiment Treebank. In *Proceedings of the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP)*.