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MSc Data Science

**Structured Information Retrieval with LLMs**

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of academic literature has necessitated the development of advanced methods for efficient information retrieval. This paper explores the application of large language models (LLMs) in structured information retrieval to enhance academic research processes. LLMs, with their ability to understand and generate human-like text, offer a transformative approach to extracting relevant information from vast academic databases. We propose a framework that leverages LLMs for structured information retrieval, integrating natural language processing techniques to interpret complex queries and retrieve pertinent data with high accuracy. Our system aims to streamline the research process by providing researchers with precise, contextually relevant information, thereby reducing the time and effort required to sift through extensive academic content. Through a series of experiments and case studies, we demonstrate the efficacy of our approach in various academic domains. The results indicate significant improvements in retrieval performance and user satisfaction compared to traditional methods. This study underscores the potential of LLMs to revolutionize information retrieval in academia, paving the way for more efficient and effective research methodologies.

INTRODUCTION

The volume of scientific literature has grown exponentially in recent decades, leading to a substantial increase in the availability of information. This explosion of data presents significant challenges for researchers who need to sift through vast amounts of academic content to find relevant information. Traditional methods of information retrieval, which often involve manual searching and categorizing, are increasingly becoming impractical. To address this challenge, there has been a growing interest in the use of large language models (LLMs) for structured information retrieval.

Large language models, such as BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers), have demonstrated remarkable capabilities in understanding and generating human-like text. These models can process and interpret complex queries, making them ideal for extracting structured information from unstructured text. By leveraging the power of LLMs, researchers can automate the extraction of specific information from scientific papers, thereby significantly reducing the time and effort required for literature reviews and data analysis.

In the context of astrophysics, supernovae are among the most studied phenomena due to their importance in understanding the life cycles of stars and the dynamics of the universe. Supernovae are classified into various types, each with distinct characteristics and underlying mechanisms. Detailed information about supernovae, such as their luminosity, light curves, spectra, explosion mechanisms, progenitor stars, and remnants, is crucial for advancing our knowledge in this field.

This project focuses on extracting detailed information about supernovae using the BERT base and pretrained models. The objective is to develop a framework that can accurately and efficiently retrieve structured data from scientific literature, specifically related to supernovae events. The extracted information is categorized into several key attributes:

* Supernova Type: Including Type I (Ia, Ib, Ic) and Type II (II-P, II-L, IIn, IIb).
* Event Characteristics: Such as luminosity, light curves, spectra, explosion mechanisms, progenitor stars, and remnants.
* Astrophysical Parameters: Including redshift, distance, and host galaxy characteristics.
* Observational Data: Discovery dates and coordinates.
* Metadata: Paper titles, authors, abstracts, keywords, journal names, publication dates, and DOIs.

The report begins with a literature review that examines existing approaches to information extraction using LLMs, highlighting their strengths and limitations. The methodology section details the data collection process, model utilization, and the exploratory data analysis (EDA) performed to understand the dataset's distribution and characteristics. Results from the information extraction process are presented, followed by a discussion on the effectiveness of the LLM approach compared to traditional methods. The report concludes with an analysis of the implications of these findings and suggestions for future research directions.

Through this project, we aim to demonstrate the transformative potential of LLMs in enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of information retrieval in astrophysics, paving the way for more streamlined and effective research methodologies.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The extraction of structured astrophysical data from scientific literature presents a significant challenge due to the diversity and complexity of language used in these documents. Information related to supernovae, including their types, luminosity, redshift, host galaxy, and observation dates, is often presented in various formats, embedded in dense scientific discourse, and sometimes scattered across multiple sections of a paper. This variability poses a challenge for automated extraction methods.

While both LSTM and BERT have shown promise in various NLP tasks, their comparative effectiveness in the specific context of astrophysical information extraction remains underexplored. Given the critical role that accurate data extraction plays in the field of astrophysics, a thorough comparison of these models is essential. Such a comparison will not only highlight the strengths and limitations of each model but also provide insights into their applicability for similar tasks in other scientific domains.

SCOPE

The scope of this project is focused on extracting specific types of astrophysical information from research papers. The dataset used for training and evaluation consists of scientific documents that have been carefully curated to include relevant data points in a structured JSON format. By concentrating on a well-defined set of information—supernova type, luminosity, redshift, host galaxy, and observation dates—the project aims to provide a rigorous and detailed comparison between GPT-3 and the trained BERT model.

The findings from this comparison are expected to contribute valuable insights into the applicability of advanced NLP models for scientific data extraction. Additionally, the project seeks to inform future research efforts in both the development of NLP models and their application in specialized scientific domains, such as astrophysics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focuses on the use of large language models (LLMs) for extracting structured information from research papers. This section critically analyzes key papers that demonstrate various approaches and techniques relevant to this project.

Literature Review

The extraction of structured information from scientific literature has gained significant attention in recent years, with large language models (LLMs) emerging as powerful tools for this task. This review examines key studies that have contributed to the advancement of information extraction techniques, particularly in the context of scientific and domain-specific texts.

Domain-Specific Language Models

Luan et al. (2019) made a significant contribution by developing a domain-specific BERT model for scientific information extraction. Their work demonstrated the effectiveness of adapting BERT for tasks such as named entity recognition (NER), relation extraction, and event extraction within scientific texts. The model's performance surpassed that of generic BERT models, highlighting the importance of domain-specific training in understanding scientific terminology and context.

Building on this concept, Gururangan et al. (2020) explored the impact of continued pre-training of language models on domain-specific data. Their research provided empirical evidence for the benefits of domain adaptation, showing substantial improvements in task-specific performance when models are further trained on relevant corpora.

In the biomedical domain, Lee et al. (2020) introduced BioBERT, a specialized language model pre-trained on large-scale biomedical corpora. BioBERT achieved state-of-the-art results in various biomedical NLP tasks, including NER, relation extraction, and question answering, underscoring the value of domain-specific models in specialized fields.

Contextualized Representations and Information Extraction

Wadden et al. (2019) proposed an innovative approach using contextualized span representations for entity, relation, and event extraction. Their unified framework demonstrated significant improvements in extraction accuracy across multiple datasets and tasks, showcasing the potential of span-based representations in capturing complex relationships within text.

Scientific Text Processing

Beltagy et al. (2019) developed SciBERT, a BERT-based model specifically pre-trained on scientific text. SciBERT's performance gains in scientific NLP tasks over general-purpose BERT models highlighted its effectiveness in handling scientific terminology and its potential applicability across various scientific fields, including astrophysics.

Dagdelen et al. (2021) presented a comprehensive study on optimizing LLMs for structured information extraction from scientific texts. Their work provided a methodological framework integrating LLMs with traditional NLP techniques, offering valuable insights into enhancing the performance of these models in processing scientific literature.

Meta-Information Extraction

Guo et al. (2022) explored techniques for extracting meta-information from scientific literature using LLMs. Their study addressed challenges in processing and retrieving valuable metadata such as authorship and affiliations, providing strategies for optimizing LLMs for specific scientific domains.

Tkaczyk et al. (2015) introduced CERMINE, a system for automatic extraction of structured metadata from scientific articles. CERMINE's combination of machine learning and rule-based techniques demonstrated high accuracy in identifying and extracting metadata elements, showcasing the potential of hybrid approaches in information extraction tasks.

LSTM for Information Extraction

Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks have also played a crucial role in information extraction tasks. Huang et al. (2015) proposed a bidirectional LSTM-CRF model for sequence tagging tasks, including NER. Their approach demonstrated superior performance in capturing long-range dependencies and context information, making it particularly effective for extracting entities from complex scientific texts.

Miwa and Bansal (2016) introduced an end-to-end neural network model using tree-structured LSTMs for joint entity and relation extraction. Their model's ability to capture both word sequence and dependency tree structures led to state-of-the-art performance on several datasets, showcasing the potential of LSTM-based architectures in extracting structured information from text.

### Methodology

My research methodology for extracting and classifying supernova-related information from scientific literature involves a multi-faceted approach combining traditional rule-based techniques with advanced machine learning models. This comprehensive method aims to accurately identify and categorize key attributes of supernovae from a diverse corpus of astronomical papers.

### Data Collection and Preparation

I began by assembling a curated collection of scientific papers focused on supernovae research. These papers were sourced from reputable astronomical databases and journals, ensuring a high-quality dataset for my analysis. The corpus comprises 20 carefully selected papers, each containing valuable information on various aspects of supernovae.

To transform these papers into a format suitable for computational analysis, I employed the PyMuPDF library. This tool allowed me to efficiently extract the textual content from PDF files, preserving the rich information contained within while making it accessible for my processing pipeline.

### Text Preprocessing

The extracted text underwent a rigorous preprocessing phase to enhance the quality and consistency of my dataset. I developed a comprehensive cleaning function that performs several key operations:

1. Conversion of all text to lowercase to ensure uniformity.
2. Removal of extraneous elements such as text within brackets, URLs, and HTML tags.
3. Elimination of punctuation marks and newline characters.
4. Filtering out words containing numerical digits.
5. Removal of common English stopwords using the NLTK library.

This preprocessing step was crucial in reducing noise and standardizing the text, thereby improving the effectiveness of subsequent analysis stages.

### Entity Recognition

My entity recognition strategy employs a hybrid approach, combining rule-based pattern matching with machine learning-based named entity recognition (NER).

#### Rule-Based Entity Extraction

I defined a set of carefully crafted regular expressions to identify key entities related to supernovae research. These patterns target specific attributes including:

1. Supernova designations (e.g., SN2004ef).
2. Supernova classification types (e.g., Type Ia).
3. Luminosity measurements.
4. Host galaxy identifiers.
5. Redshift values.
6. Distance measurements.

To ensure the accuracy of my extracted entities, I implemented a validation function that applies stringent criteria to each entity type, filtering out potential false positives.

#### Machine Learning-Based Named Entity Recognition

Complementing my rule-based approach, I leveraged the power of transfer learning by utilizing the SciBERT model, a variant of BERT specifically trained on scientific text. I employed the Hugging Face Transformers library to implement this advanced NER technique.

The process involved several steps:

1. Tokenization and chunking of the input text to conform with the model's requirements.
2. Application of the pretrained SciBERT model through a specialized NER pipeline.
3. Post-processing of the model's output to align with my predefined entity categories.

### Hybrid Annotation Approach

To maximize the accuracy and coverage of my entity recognition, I developed a function that combines the results from both the rule-based and machine learning-based methods. This hybrid approach allows me to leverage the strengths of each method, resulting in a more robust and comprehensive entity extraction process.

### Data Structuring and Preprocessing

The extracted entities were organized into structured records, with each record representing a unique supernova instance. These records include attributes such as the supernova's name, luminosity, type, host galaxy, redshift, and distance.

To prepare this data for machine learning model training, I performed several preprocessing steps:

1. Application of label encoding to categorical variables.
2. Conversion of numerical values to appropriate float types.
3. Handling of missing data through imputation of default values or "Unknown" labels.
4. Feature scaling using StandardScaler to normalize the input data.

### Addressing Class Imbalance

Recognizing the potential for class imbalance in my dataset, I implemented a random oversampling technique using the RandomOverSampler from the imbalanced-learn library. This step ensures that my model receives balanced training data, mitigating bias towards overrepresented classes.

### Model Architecture and Training

I designed a neural network model using TensorFlow and Keras, consisting of:

1. An input Dense layer with 64 units and ReLU activation.
2. A hidden Dense layer with 32 units and ReLU activation.
3. An output Dense layer with softmax activation for multi-class classification.

The model was compiled using the Adam optimizer and sparse categorical crossentropy loss function, which are well-suited for my classification task.

My training process incorporated several techniques to enhance model performance:

1. Application of class weights to further address class imbalance.
2. Implementation of early stopping to prevent overfitting.
3. Training for up to 20 epochs with a batch size of 32.
4. Utilization of a 20% validation split for performance monitoring.

### Model Evaluation

To assess the effectiveness of my model, I employed a comprehensive evaluation strategy:

1. Calculation of precision, recall, and F1-score metrics for each class.
2. Generation of a confusion matrix to visualize classification performance across different categories.
3. Analysis of overall accuracy and macro-averaged metrics.

### Inference on New Data

Finally, I developed a function capable of applying my trained model to new, unseen PDF documents. This function encapsulates the entire pipeline, from text extraction to entity recognition and classification, enabling seamless application of my methodology to ongoing supernova research.

This methodology represents a holistic approach to information extraction and classification in the domain of supernova research, combining traditional NLP techniques with state-of-the-art machine learning models. By addressing challenges such as unstructured text processing, entity validation, and class imbalance, my approach offers a robust solution for automating the extraction of valuable information from astronomical literature.

METHODOLOGY

**1. Data Collection:**

Data collection involves gathering a comprehensive dataset of scientific papers related to supernovae. These papers are sourced from reputable databases such as arXiv, NASA ADS, and other academic journals. The collected papers encompass various aspects of supernovae, including their types, characteristics, astrophysical parameters, observational data, and metadata.

**2. Preprocessing:**

Preprocessing of the collected data is crucial to prepare it for BERT's input requirements. This process includes:

* **Tokenization:** The text is tokenized into subwords using BERT's WordPiece tokenizer.
* **Special Tokens:** Addition of special tokens [CLS] at the beginning and [SEP] at the end of each sentence to indicate sentence boundaries.
* **Padding and Truncation:** Sequences are padded or truncated to ensure uniform input length, matching BERT's expected input size.

**3. Model Selection and Fine-Tuning:**

BERT models pre-trained on a large corpus are fine-tuned on our specific dataset. The fine-tuning process involves the following steps:

* **Model Initialization:** The pre-trained BERT model is initialized with its pre-trained weights.
* **Task-Specific Layer Addition:** A task-specific layer is added to BERT for the classification task. In this case, the layer is designed to categorize supernovae information into predefined attributes.
* **Training:** The model is trained on our dataset, optimizing for classification accuracy. This involves backpropagation and gradient descent to adjust the model's weights.
* **Hyperparameter Tuning:** Hyperparameters such as learning rate, batch size, and number of epochs are tuned to achieve the best performance.

**4. Information Extraction:**

The fine-tuned BERT model is used to extract structured information from the scientific literature. The process involves:

* **Query Formulation:** Complex queries are formulated to retrieve specific information from the text. These queries are designed to capture attributes such as supernova type, event characteristics, and astrophysical parameters.
* **Contextual Understanding:** BERT's bidirectional nature allows it to understand the context of each word in relation to others, improving the accuracy of information extraction.
* **Data Categorization:** Extracted information is categorized into predefined attributes for structured representation.

**5. Evaluation:**

The performance of the information extraction system is evaluated using standard metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. The evaluation involves:

* **Benchmark Comparison:** Comparing the performance of the BERT-based system against traditional information retrieval methods.
* **Case Studies:** Conducting case studies to demonstrate the practical effectiveness of the system in various academic domains.

RESULTS

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

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APPENDIX