

RC Research Fellowship Proposal: OpenBrain

William Guss
26793499
wguss@berkeley.edu

January 3, 2016

1 Background

2 Goals

There are essentially four goals of the OpenBrain project.

- Build a massiveley parallel Beowulf cluster of parallela computers controlled using MPI on ArchLinux.
- Create an always online, turing complete modification to the recursive neural network algorithm whose fitness is determined by the Universal Intelligence Measure described in (Legg and Veness, 2011). The algorithm must have the following constraints:
 - In the spirit of John Conway’s turing complete Game of Life, the individual neural nodes must follow arbitrarily simple rules in a decentralized fashion.
 - *Training* is unsupervised and occurs over the lifetime of an *instance* of the open brain, such that the aforementioned governing rules are modified with respect to the fitness of the instance.
- Implement each neural node as an Erlang process distributed across the Beowulf cluster asynchronously.
- Provide always on input/output to the OpenBrain cluster in similar fashion to that done in Google DeepMind’s Deep Reinforcement Learning.

3 Plans

The OpenBrain project will commence in two phases. First the algorithm in question must be exactly theorized and mathematical guarentees about its capabilities must be given. Then given that motivation, the project must be implemented in hardware and software.

For the theory behind OpenBrain, we apply the nuronal model proposed in (McCulloch and Pitts, 1949) and assume that each neuron functions according Conwaynian turing complete rules; that is in particular, we apply the synaptogenesis model suggested in (Thomas et al, 2015) with parameters dictated by a universal intelligence indicator function.

For any neuron π in the OpenBrain algorithm, a list of axonally connected posterior neurons P_π is stored along with a list of proximal neighboring neurons, N_π . The neuron π is efficiently implemented as asynchronous thread with a message queue such that neurons connected to its anterior can activate and provide a voltage on π such that π itself will activate. Furthermore, each neuron has the capacity to signal to a particular proximal neuron in order to form a new dendritic or axonal synapse.

Under this lightweight model, we will experiment freely with different schemes of synaptogenesis and learning. Upon finding the most appropriate model, guarantees will be made on its computational capacity of the algorithm, and with any hope the second phase of the project will commence.

The second phase of the project involves implementing the algorithm on a massively parallel system, and hence the initial focus of this phase is the construction of a 32 node Beowulf cluster of parallel computers. The necessity for this construction is due to the large amount of CPU hours required to have the algorithm run continually. It would not be cost effective to run each OpenBrain instance on per CPU hour clusters such as Berkeley's own PSI cluster. Furthermore control of the hardware provides the opportunity to maximize the performance of each instance with respect to parallel processing power.

Once completed the cluster will be linked directly to a build system using hooks from Github which automatically pushes Erlang OTP code for the OpenBrain algorithm to every node. This will allow for easy prototyping and live code hot swapping.

Finally much research can be done in a variety of external environments using the universal intelligence indicator and other metrics that evaluate performance. Specifically, OpenBrain will be compared to Deep Reinforcement Learning. These applications and comparisons will be understood with more specificity as the project matures.

4 Qualifications

Coursework

1. Honors Real Analysis (MATH H104) [A] - Useful tools for providing mathematical guarantees on computability.
2. Data Structures and Algorithms (CS61B) [A] - Useful for ensuring optimal computational complexity as it pertains to the project.

Past Research

Over the past year, I've been developing an algorithmic generalization of McCulloch and Pitts feed-forward neural networks called functional neural networks. The project has provided me the education and the toolset to give actual guarantees on a variety of different neural network algorithms. The project received a prize from the AAAI at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Attached is a copy of the paper, currently in progress, describing the project. Hopefully that may provide a sample of the quality of research I will do.

Miscellaneous

Over the past semester I've attended Peter Bartlett's Statistical Machine Learning reading group weekly.

5 Budget

The majority of the budget of this project deals directly with the construction of the Beowulf cluster.

Budget				
Item	Use	Quantity	Price	Total
Parallela	Used as the primary computation unit for the cluster. Has 18 discrete cores and low power consumption	32	\$100	\$3200