Module (3)

Module 3: Problems in AI

Introduction

- Welcome back to Module 3 of DA 109, AI Basics.
- In this module, we will delve into various problems encountered in AI and explore methodologies to address them.

Recap of Module 2

- Module 2 focused on the concept of an agent, its interaction with the environment, and the decision-making process.
- Key concepts covered:
 - Agent: Perception and action within an environment.
 - Agent Function: Specifies actions based on perception.
 - Performance Measure: Evaluates agent behavior.
 - Task Environment: Specification of the agent's operational environment.
 - Agent Program: Implements the agent function.
- Examples:
 - Taxi case: Safe and fast performance measure.
 - Medical diagnosis system: Healthy patient as the performance measure.
 - Various agent program designs: Simple reflex, model-based reflex, goalbased, and utility-based.

Module 3 Objectives

- Aim: Equip learners with a solid understanding of problem-solving principles in AI.
- Divided into five parts:
 - 1. Problem Definition: Terms and requirements for defining problems in AI.
 - Problem Characteristics: Categorization and characteristics of AI problems.
 - 3. State Space Search: Basic idea of problem-solving.
 - 4. Significance of Search: The role of search in AI problem-solving.
 - 5. **Search Strategies:** Overview of search techniques in AI.

1. Problem Definition

- How problems are defined in AI.
- Mandatory terms for defining AI problems.
- Crucial step in AI problem-solving.

2. Problem Characteristics

- Categorization and characteristics of AI problems.
- Understanding the nature of problems encountered in AI.
- Helps in selecting appropriate problem-solving methodologies.

3. State Space Search

- Fundamental approach to problem-solving in AI.
- Process of navigating through possible states to reach a solution.
- Key step after defining a problem in AI.

4. Significance of Search

- The importance of search as a problem-solving tool in AI.
- Utilized to explore solution spaces efficiently.
- Integral part of various AI algorithms and methodologies.

5. Search Strategies

- Overview of different search techniques in AI.
- Techniques employed to efficiently explore solution spaces.
- Selection of appropriate search strategy depends on problem characteristics.

Conclusion

- Module 3 aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of problem-solving methodologies in AI.
- Understanding problem definition, characteristics, state space search,
 significance of search, and search strategies is crucial for AI practitioners.

Lecture Notes: Problem Definition in AI

Introduction to Problem Definition

- Definition: A specific task or challenge requiring a solution or decisionmaking process.
- **Scope:** Ranges from simple arithmetic calculations to complex tasks like image recognition, natural language processing, game playing, and optimization.

Components of a Problem

- Initial State: Starting conditions for the problem-solving process.
- Possible Actions: Choices or steps available to navigate from one state to another.
- Goal State: Desired outcome or condition to be achieved.

Examples:

- Game of Chess: Finding a sequence of moves resulting in a checkmate.
- Route Planning: Determining the shortest path between two locations on a map.

Problem Definition Process

- Description of the Problem: Clearly articulating what needs to be solved or achieved.
- Goal Identification: Defining the desired outcome.
- Scope Definition: Setting boundaries and limitations.
- Constraint Identification: Recognizing restrictions or limitations.
- Assumption Statement: Stating any assumptions made.
- Criteria for Success: Establishing performance metrics.

Importance of Problem Definition

- Guides problem-solving efforts.
- Prevents ambiguity and misinterpretation.
- Aligns stakeholder expectations.
- Focuses resources effectively.

Problem Space

- **Definition**: Set of all possible states, actions, transitions encountered while solving a problem.
- Representation: Defines configurations, arrangements of elements, and valid moves or actions.
- State: Represents a specific configuration.
- Action: Represents a possible move from one state to another.

Example: Route Planning

• **Problem Space**: Includes all locations on the map as states and valid roads or paths between them as actions.

• **Optimization**: Evaluating different routes based on distance, time, fuel efficiency.

Importance of Understanding Problem Space

- Guides exploration and evaluation of solutions.
- Facilitates identification of optimal paths.
- Informs decision-making during problem-solving.

```
# Example of problem space representation for route planning
locations = ["A", "B", "C", "D", "E", "F"]
valid_paths = [("A", "B"), ("A", "C"), ("A", "D"), ("A", "E"), ("A", "F")]
# Define distances between locations
distances = {("A", "B"): 30, ("A", "C"): 25, ("A", "D"): 28, ("A", "E"): 27, ("A", "F"):
32}
# Example: finding optimal route from A to B based on distance
optimal_route = min(valid_paths, key=lambda x: distances[x])
print("Optimal route:", optimal_route)
```

Lecture Notes: Introduction to Search Algorithms

What is Search?

- **Definition**: Search is the process of exploring the problem space to find the sequence of actions or moves that lead to the goal state or satisfactory solution.
- Example: Finding the shortest route between two locations on a map using a navigation app.
- **Search Algorithm**: Explores various paths and evaluates different routes to determine the optimal sequence based on criteria such as fuel or time consumption.

Search in AI

- **Purpose**: Search algorithms are used to systematically navigate through the problem space and discover paths or solutions that satisfy problem constraints and objectives.
- Process:
 - Start from an initial state.
 - Explore possible actions to generate new states.

- Evaluate states based on criteria like distance to the goal, cost, or utility.
- Continues iteratively until the goal state or a satisfactory solution is reached.

Components of Well-Defined Problems and Solutions

- Initial State: Where the agent starts from.
- Actions: Description of possible actions available to the agent.
- Transition Model: Description of what each action does.
- Goal Test: Determines whether a given state is a goal state.
- Path Cost: Assigns numeric cost to each path.

Formulating Problems

Example: Vacuum World

- **Description**: A cleaner equipped with AI designed to navigate indoor environments and perform cleaning tasks autonomously.
- Components:
 - States: Determined by agent and dirt locations.
 - Initial State: Any state from which the goal can be achieved.
 - Actions: Left, right, or suck.
 - Transition Model: Actions have expected effects.
 - Goal Test: Checks whether all squares are clean.
 - Path Cost: Each step costs one.

Example: 8-Puzzle Puzzle (murhafsousli.github.io)

- Description: A sliding puzzle game with a 3x3 grid and one empty space.
- Components:
 - State: Location of tiles and blank space.
 - Initial State: Any state.
 - Actions: Movement of the blank space (left, right, up, down).
 - Transition Model: Returns resulting state given a state and action.
 - Goal Test: Checks whether the state matches the goal configuration.
 - Path Cost: Each step costs one.

Conclusion

• **Summary**: Problem definition includes states, initial states, actions, transition model, goal test, and path cost.

• Importance: Understanding these components is crucial for solving problems optimally.

Suggestions and Tips

- **Understanding**: Take time to understand the components of a well-defined problem before attempting to solve it.
- Practice: Work on various problem formulations to strengthen problem-solving skills.
- Adaptation: Adapt algorithms and strategies based on specific problem characteristics for optimal results.

Lecture Notes: Understanding Problem Characteristics

Introduction

Understanding the characteristics of a problem is crucial for effective problemsolving. It helps in tailoring appropriate problem-solving strategies by analyzing complexity, scope, constraints, and underlying patterns.

Importance

- Foundation for selecting suitable problem-solving techniques.
- Efficient resource allocation and effective solution planning.
- Anticipation of potential challenges and proactive solution devising.

Problem Characteristics

Choosing an Appropriate Problem

To select an appropriate problem for problem-solving, consider the following checklist:

- Decomposability: Can the problem be broken down into smaller, manageable subproblems?
- **Ignoring or Undoing Steps:** Can solution steps be ignored or undone during the problem-solving process?
- **Predictability:** Is the outcome of the problem predictable based on available information?
- Solution Absoluteness: Is the solution to the problem absolute or relative?
- Solution Type: Is the solution represented as a state (final configuration) or a path (sequence of steps)?

- Role of Knowledge: What role does knowledge play in understanding and solving the problem?
- Human Interaction: Does solving the problem require human interaction or collaboration?

Considering these factors helps in selecting a problem that aligns with available resources, expertise, and problem-solving strategies, leading to more effective and efficient solutions.

Decomposability

• **Definition:** Can the problem be broken down into smaller problems to be solved independently?

• Criteria:

- Easily decomposable?
- Utilizing the divide-and-conquer technique?

• Use of Decomposing Problems:

- Each sub-problem is simpler to solve.
- Each sub-problem can be handled by different processors, enabling parallel processing.

• Implication:

- Decomposable problems facilitate parallel solving, improving efficiency.
- Example: Large-scale transportation network design can be decomposed into traffic flow optimization, infrastructure planning, and urban development.

• Is Travel Salesman Problem Decomposable?

 No because it just needs the shortest path there is nothing else to decompose to solve.

Got it, I'll incorporate this information about ignoring or undoing steps into the lecture notes:

I'll incorporate the provided information about ignoring or undoing steps into the lecture notes:

Ignoring or Undoing Steps

• **Definition:** Can solution steps be ignored or undone during the problem-solving process?

• Theorem Proving:

- Can be solved using a simple control strategy (order of application of rules).
- Example: Suppose a lemma is proven to be unhelpful in proving a theorem; it can be ignored, and another lemma can be pursued.

• The 8-Puzzle:

- Solved by backtracking, requiring a control strategy implemented using a stack.
- Example: Moves in the puzzle can be undone and backtracked, allowing exploration of alternate paths.

• Playing Chess:

- Solved through a planning process.
- Example: Moves in chess cannot be retracted, making the process irrevocable.
- It is as similar to the irreversible step of cooking food on flame.

Conclusion

Understanding problem characteristics is essential for selecting appropriate problem-solving techniques, fostering innovation, and promoting informed decision-making across various domains and contexts. It enhances problem-solving efficacy and fosters a systematic approach to tackling complex problems efficiently.

Lecture Notes: Is the Universe Predictable?

Determinism vs. Unpredictability:

• Deterministic Outcomes:

- Results known, predictable with certainty based on given conditions/rules.
- Example: Eight puzzle every move leads to known outcome.

• Non-deterministic Outcomes:

- Involves uncertainty or randomness.
- Example: Playing bridge uncertainty about cards, others' actions.

Real-world Examples:

- Weather patterns: Meteorological models face uncertainty due to chaotic nature of atmosphere dynamics.
- Challenges in predicting complex phenomena underscore limits of predictability.

Planning for Predictability:

• Certain Outcome Problems:

 Use planning to generate sequence of operators leading to guaranteed solutions.

• Uncertain Outcome Problems:

 Sequences have probabilistic solutions; plan revision required during execution. • Example: Eight puzzle vs. playing bridge.

Absolute vs. Relative Solutions:

- Objective Evaluation:
 - Absolute: Solution quality objectively assessed based on predefined criteria.
- Subjective Evaluation:
 - Relative: Solution quality depends on subjective factors, individual perspectives.
- Example: Marcus's lifespan inference based on historical context.

Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP):

- Objective: Find shortest route visiting all cities once.
- Heuristic vs. Exhaustive Search:
 - Heuristic suggests good paths; exhaustive search for best path.
- **Absolute vs. Relative Evaluation**: Minimalist vs. visually rich interface in mobile app design.

Solution as State or Path:

- State vs. Path Problems:
 - State: Configuration/arrangement of states.
 - Path: Sequence of actions to reach configuration.
- Example: Water jug problem transferring water to achieve target volume.

Ambiguity in Language:

- Contextual Interpretation:
 - Ambiguity arises from multiple meanings of words/phrases.
 - Importance of contextual cues for consistent interpretation.
- Example: Bank president eating pasta salad with a fork.

Maze Problem:

- State vs. Path Perspective:
 - State: Reaching specific location within maze.
 - Path: Sequence of movements to navigate through maze.

Role of Knowledge in Problem Solving

Introduction

The role of knowledge in problem solving is fundamental as it provides the necessary information, insights, and strategies to guide the decision-making process towards achieving desired outcomes efficiently and effectively.

Chess Knowledge Example

- Example: In chess, knowledge is essential to constrain the search for a solution.
- Explanation: Players rely on their knowledge of chess principles, tactics, and patterns to anticipate opponent moves and formulate winning strategies.
- Code Snippet:

```
# Example of using chess knowledge in a game
from chess import Board, Move

board = Board()
move = Move.from_uci("e2e4")
board.push(move)
```

Newspaper Story Example

- Example: Understanding a newspaper story requires a lot of knowledge to recognize the solution.
- Explanation: Readers need background knowledge about politics, current events, and social issues to interpret the news accurately.
- **Scenario**: Scanning daily newspapers to determine political affiliations during an election.

Factors to Consider

- Identifying political biases
- Analyzing editorial content
- Examining coverage biases
- Considering historical context
- Recognizing regional influences
- Utilizing external resources

Knowledge in Medical Diagnosis

- **Example:** Diagnostic medical systems rely on knowledge to contextualize crucial information for healthcare professionals.
- Explanation: Doctors leverage their medical expertise, training, and experience to diagnose illnesses and recommend treatments.

• Code Snippet:

```
# Example of medical diagnosis using knowledge-based systems
from medical_system import MedicalSystem

symptoms = ["headache", "fever", "cough"]
diagnosis = MedicalSystem.diagnose(symptoms)
```

Summary

• Knowledge empowers individuals and organizations to make informed decisions, overcome challenges, and achieve desired outcomes across various domains.

Does the Task Require Human Interaction?

Solitary Problems

- Definition: Problems where individuals work independently without communication.
- Example: Student solving math problems at home.
- **Explanation**: The focus is solely on individual skills and knowledge without collaboration.

Conversational Problems

- **Definition**: Problems requiring interaction and collaboration among participants.
- Example: Engineers brainstorming to optimize product design.
- **Explanation**: Collaboration leads to collective exploration of solutions and refinement of ideas.

Customer Service Example

- Scenario: Answering customer inquiries via email or chat.
- Explanation: Automated chatbots handle routine inquiries, but human intervention is necessary for complex issues requiring empathy and understanding.

Striking the Right Balance

 Achieving the right balance between automated and human interaction is crucial for optimizing problem-solving processes and delivering value to stakeholders.

Conclusion

Understanding the role of knowledge and the necessity of human interaction are essential for designing efficient problem-solving solutions across various domains.

Lecture Notes: State Space Search in AI

Introduction

- Problem Space: The set of all possible states a problem can be in.
- State: A specific configuration or arrangement within the problem space.
- State Space Search: A method to systematically explore the state space to find a solution.

Key Components of State Space Search

- 1. Set of Legal Positions (States): Every possible state the problem can take.
- 2. Initial State: The starting point of the search.
- 3. Set of Rules: Define how to transition from one state to another.
- 4. Goal State: The desired ending state of the problem.

Chess Example

- States: Each possible board configuration represents a state.
- Initial State: The standard starting position of the game.
- **Goal State:** Checkmate (opponent has no legal moves, or their king is under attack).
- Rules: Describe how pieces can move legally.

Water Jug Problem

Problem Definition:

Given two jugs, one 4-liter and one 3-liter, without measuring markers, fill the 4-liter jug with exactly 2 liters of water using a pump.

Steps:

1. Represent the State:

- x: Liters of water in the 4-liter jug
- y: Liters of water in the 3-liter jug
- Possible states for x: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4
- Possible states for y: 0, 1, 2, 3

- 2. **Initial State:** (0, 0) (both jugs empty)
- 3. **Goal State:** (2, *) (2 liters in the 4-liter jug, any amount in the 3-liter jug)

Production Rules (Operators):

Current State (x, y)	Condition	Action	Resulting State
(x, y)	x < 4	Fill 4-liter jug	(4, y)
(x, y)	y < 3	Fill 3-liter jug	(x, 3)
(x, y)	x > 0	Pour out some water from 4- liter jug	(x-d, y) (d is the amount poured out)
(x, y)	y > 0	Pour out some water from 3- liter jug	<pre>(x, y-d) (d is the amount poured out)</pre>
(x, y)	x > 0	Empty 4-liter jug	(0, y)
(x, y)	y > 0	Empty 3-liter jug	(x, 0)
(x, y)	x + y >= 3 and $y < 3$	Pour water from 4-liter jug into 3-liter jug until the 3-liter jug is full	(x - (3 - y), 3)
(x, y)	x + y <= 4 and $x < 4$	Pour water from 3-liter jug into 4-liter jug until the 4-liter jug is full	(4, y - (4 - x))

Solution Path:

- 1. (0, 0) -> Fill 3-liter jug -> (0, 3)
- 2. (0, 3) -> Pour into 4-liter jug -> (3, 0)
- 3. $(3, 0) \rightarrow Fill 3-liter jug \rightarrow (3, 3)$
- 4. (3, 3) -> Pour into 4-liter jug (1 liter remaining in the 3-liter jug) -> (4, 2)
- 5. (4, 2) -> Empty 4-liter jug -> (0, 2)
- 6. (0, 2) -> Pour into 4-liter jug -> (2, 0) (Goal State)

Visual Representation:

```
Start:
4L: | (0)
3L: | (0)

Goal:
4L: | (2)
3L: | (*)
```

State Space Search Problem

- 1. Define State Space: All possible configurations of the problem.
- 2. Specify Initial State: The starting configuration.
- 3. Specify Goal State: The desired ending configuration.
- 4. Specify Set of Rules: Actions to move between states.

Unstated Assumptions and Considerations:

- Generality of Rules: How broad or specific should the rules be?
- **Knowledge in Rules:** How much problem-solving knowledge should be embedded in the rules themselves?
- **Control Strategy:** The order in which rules are applied, impacting the efficiency and effectiveness of the search.

1. Core Concepts:

- Necessity of Search: Search algorithms are essential in AI because:
 - Incomplete Models: Real-world models are imperfect and cannot account for all possibilities.
 - **Dynamic Problems:** Many problems require solutions based on real-time, observed data.
 - Variable Environments: Solutions need to adapt to changing conditions.
 - Ambiguous Data: Search helps resolve uncertainties in sensor and perceptual data.
- Goal of Search: To find the optimal sequence of actions to achieve a goal or maximize utility.
- Key Aspects of Search:
 - Navigating Problem Spaces: Finding paths from initial to goal states.
 - Optimization: Finding the best solution.
 - Decision Making: Choosing among various options.
 - Efficiency and Scalability: Solving problems with limited resources.
 - Problem Formulation: Defining the problem clearly for search algorithms.

2. Detailed Outline:

I. Why Search is Necessary

- Incomplete Models:
 - No model of the world is complete, consistent, and computable.
 - AI systems encounter surprises due to the limitations of their models.
 - Example: Self-driving car facing an unexpected pedestrian.

• Dynamic Problem Solving:

- Solutions cannot always be precomputed.
- Real-time data requires dynamic problem-solving approaches.
- Example: Logistic company adjusting routes based on traffic conditions.

• Flexibility:

- Search algorithms adapt to variable environments.
- Example: Mobile robot navigating a crowded urban area.

Handling Ambiguity:

- Search helps resolve uncertainties in perceptual data.
- Example: Autonomous vehicle interpreting sensor data in complex scenarios.

II. Aspects of Search

Navigating Problem Spaces

• Finding paths or solutions within a space of possibilities.

Optimization

• Finding the best solution among multiple possibilities.

Decision Making

Selecting actions based on search results.

Efficiency and Scalability

 Designing search algorithms to work with limited resources and large problems.

Problem Formulation

Clearly defining the problem to be solved by the search algorithm.

3. Explanations & Elaborations:

- Surprise and Incomplete Models: AI systems, despite their sophistication, operate with incomplete models of the world. Unexpected events or surprises are inevitable. Search algorithms help find solutions or adapt strategies when surprises occur.
- **Dynamic vs. Precomputed Solutions:** Precomputed solutions are fixed plans that may not be suitable for unpredictable situations. Dynamic problem solving involves using real-time data to make decisions and adjust solutions on the fly.
- Flexibility in Variable Environments: Search algorithms provide the ability to adapt to changing conditions. They can explore alternative routes or strategies when obstacles or unexpected events occur.
- **Resolving Ambiguity:** Search algorithms can help disambiguate sensor data by considering global constraints and exploring different interpretations. This is crucial in scenarios like autonomous driving, where accurate perception is essential.

4. Examples:

- Self-Driving Car: Encountering a pedestrian outside the crosswalk (surprise).
- Logistic Company: Rerouting delivery trucks due to traffic congestion (dynamic problem solving).
- Mobile Robot: Navigating through a crowded urban area (flexibility).
- Autonomous Vehicle: Interpreting sensor data to distinguish between a pedestrian and a stationary object (ambiguity).

6. Professor's Insights:

- The professor emphasizes the limitations of even the most advanced AI models.
- They highlight the importance of dynamic problem solving and the flexibility offered by search algorithms.
- The examples provided demonstrate how search is applied in real-world scenarios.

7. Additional Considerations:

- The professor does not pose any direct questions in this segment.
- They indicate that search is a fundamental concept in AI with broad applications.

Search Strategies in AI

1. Core Concepts:

- Search Strategies: Algorithms that explore the problem space to find solutions. They are crucial for AI problem-solving as they determine how effectively a system can navigate through different states or configurations.
- Good Strategy Requirements: A good search strategy exhibits:
 - Motion: Actively explores the search space, making progress towards a solution.
 - Systematic Approach: Avoids revisiting the same states multiple times, ensuring efficiency.
 - **Efficiency:** Finds a good (not necessarily optimal) solution in a reasonable time frame.

Strategy Evaluation Dimensions:

- Completeness: Guaranteed to find a solution if it exists.
- Time Complexity: How long it takes to find a solution.
- Space Complexity: Amount of memory used during the search.
- Optimality: Ability to find the least-cost or best solution.

Search Strategy Classification:

- Uninformed Search (Blind Search): Explores the search space without domain-specific knowledge (e.g., BFS, DFS).
- Informed Search (Heuristic Search): Utilizes domain knowledge to guide the search towards promising paths (e.g., A* search).

2. Detailed Outline:

I. Introduction to Search Strategies

- Definition: Methods to find solutions by exploring problem space configurations.
- Importance in AI: Essential for problem-solving, decision-making, and optimization tasks.

II. Characteristics of Good Search Strategies

- Motion: Active exploration of the search space.
- Systematic: Avoid redundant revisits to states.
- Efficiency: Time and resource optimization.
- Example: Water jug problem a good strategy would avoid repeating the same sequence of actions.

III. Four Dimensions for Evaluating Search Strategies

- Completeness: Guaranteed solution finding.
- Time Complexity: Efficiency in terms of time taken.
- Space Complexity: Memory usage during search.
- Optimality: Ability to find the best solution.

IV. Broad Classification of Search Strategies

• Uninformed Search:

- Lacks domain-specific knowledge. Has no information about number of steps from current state to goal state.
- Examples: Breadth-first search (BFS), depth-first search (DFS), uniform cost search, iterative deepening, bidirectional search.

• Informed Search (Heuristic Search):

- Employs domain knowledge to guide search.
- Examples: A* search, greedy best-first search, memory-bounded heuristic search.

V. Summary of Key Points

- Problem definition components: State, initial state, actions, transition model, goal state, path cost.
- Problem characteristics: Decomposable, ignorable, predictable, absolute/relative state/path.
- State space search components: State space, initial state, goal state, rules, control strategy.
- Significance of search: Defines the problem-solving process.
- Search strategies: Uninformed and informed approaches.

3. Explanations & Elaborations:

- Uninformed Search vs. Informed Search: Uninformed search blindly explores all possibilities, while informed search uses heuristics (rules of thumb) to prioritize promising paths.
- Time and Space Complexity: These are crucial for real-world applications with limited resources. The choice of search strategy often involves a trade-off between time and space complexity.
- Time and space complexity are measured in terms of
 □ b: maximum branching factor of the search tree
 □ d: depth of the least-cost solution
 □ m: maximum depth of the state space (may be ∞)
- **Domain Knowledge:** In informed search, domain knowledge (specific information about the problem) can significantly improve search efficiency.

6. Professor's Insights:

- Importance of Control Strategy: The order in which rules are applied in a search is crucial (the control strategy).
- Application of Search Strategies: Search strategies are used in various domains, such as puzzle-solving, game playing, route planning, and resource optimization.
- Further Exploration: The professor suggests that learners explore uninformed and informed search strategies in more detail in the next modules.

7. Additional Considerations:

- No Questions Posed: The lecture transcript doesn't include questions from students.
- **Uncertainty:** The professor doesn't explicitly mention areas of uncertainty but implies that further exploration of search strategies is needed.

