Naive Bayes classifier

A Naive Bayes classifier is a probabilistic machine learning model that's used for classification task. The crux of the classifier is based on the Bayes theorem. This is a powerful algorithm used for

- **Real time Prediction**
- **Text classification/ Spam Filtering**
- **Recommendation System**

Bayes Theorem:

$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(B|A)P(A)}{P(B)}$$

Using Bayes theorem, we can find the probability of **A** happening, given that **B** has occurred. Here, **B** is the evidence and **A** is the hypothesis. The assumption made here is that the predictors/features are independent. That is presence of one particular feature does not affect the other. Hence it is called naive.

Types of Naive Bayes Classifier:

Multinomial Naive Bayes:

This is mostly used for document classification problem, i.e whether a document belongs to the category of sports, politics, technology etc. The features/predictors used by the classifier are the frequency of the words present in the document.

Bernoulli Naive Bayes:

This is similar to the multinomial naive bayes but the predictors are boolean variables. The parameters that we use to predict the class variable take up only values yes or no, for example if a word occurs in the text or not.

Gaussian Naive Bayes:

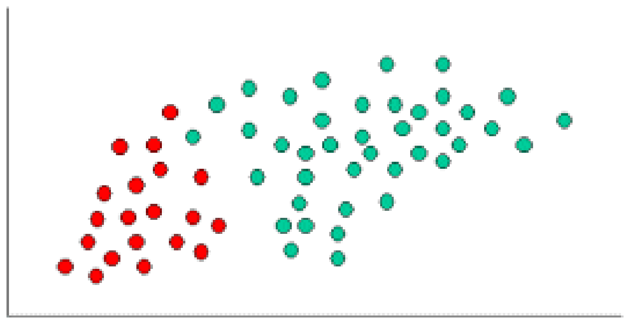
When the predictors take up a continuous value and are not discrete, we assume that these values are sampled from a gaussian distribution.

Pros of the Naive Bayes Classification:

1. Simple and easy to implement.
2. Needs less training data.
3. Handles boht continuous and discrete data.
4. Highly scalable with number of predictors and data points.
5. Can be used for real time predictions.
6. Not sensitive to irrelevant features.

An example:

To demonstrate the concept of Naïve Bayes Classification, consider the example displayed in the illustration below. As indicated, the objects can be classified as either GREEN or RED. Our task is to classify new cases as they arrive, i.e., decide to which class label they belong, based on the currently exiting objects.



Since there are twice as many GREEN objects as RED, it is reasonable to believe that a new case (which hasn't been observed yet) is twice as likely to have membership GREEN rather than RED. In the Bayesian analysis, this belief is known as the prior probability. Prior probabilities are based on previous experience, in this case the percentage of GREEN and RED objects, and often used to predict outcomes before they actually happen.

Thus, we can write:

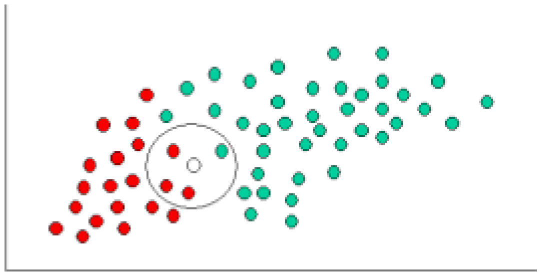
$$\text{Prior probability for GREEN} \propto \frac{\text{Number of GREEN objects}}{\text{Total number of objects}}$$

$$\text{Prior probability for RED} \propto \frac{\text{Number of RED objects}}{\text{Total number of objects}}$$

Since there is a total of 60 objects, 40 of which are GREEN and 20 RED, our prior probabilities for class membership are:

$$\text{Prior probability for GREEN} \propto \frac{40}{60}$$

$$\text{Prior probability for RED} \propto \frac{20}{60}$$



Having formulated our prior probability, we are now ready to classify a new object (WHITE circle). Since the objects are well clustered, it is reasonable to assume that the more GREEN (or RED) objects in the vicinity of X, the more likely that the new cases belong to that particular color. To measure this likelihood, we draw a circle around X which encompasses a number (to be chosen a priori) of points irrespective of their class labels. Then we calculate the number of points in the circle belonging to each class label. From this we calculate the likelihood:

$$\text{Likelihood of } X \text{ given GREEN} \propto \frac{\text{Number of GREEN in the vicinity of } X}{\text{Total number of GREEN cases}}$$

$$\text{Likelihood of } X \text{ given RED} \propto \frac{\text{Number of RED in the vicinity of } X}{\text{Total number of RED cases}}$$

From the illustration above, it is clear that Likelihood of X given GREEN is smaller than Likelihood of X given RED, since the circle encompasses 1 GREEN object and 3 RED ones. Thus:

$$\text{Probability of } X \text{ given GREEN} \propto \frac{1}{40}$$

$$\text{Probability of } X \text{ given RED} \propto \frac{3}{20}$$

Although the prior probabilities indicate that X may belong to GREEN (given that there are twice as many GREEN compared to RED) the likelihood indicates otherwise; that the class membership of X is RED (given that there are more RED objects in the vicinity of X than GREEN). In the Bayesian analysis, the final classification is produced by combining both sources of information, i.e., the prior and the likelihood, to form a posterior probability using the so-called Bayes' rule (named after Rev. Thomas Bayes 1702-1761).

$$\textit{Posterior probability of X being GREEN} \propto$$
$$\textit{Prior probability of GREEN} \times \textit{Likelihood of X given GREEN}$$
$$= \frac{4}{6} \times \frac{1}{40} = \frac{1}{60}$$
$$\textit{Posterior probability of X being RED} \propto$$
$$\textit{Prior probability of RED} \times \textit{Likelihood of X given RED}$$
$$= \frac{2}{6} \times \frac{3}{20} = \frac{1}{20}$$

Finally, we classify X as RED since its class membership achieves the largest posterior probability.