TELUGU LANGUAGE AUTOMATIC SPEECH RECOGNITION

A
Thesis submitted
In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree

of

Bachelor of Technology
in Computer Science & Engineering

Submitted by

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May 2024

Declaration

We certify that

a. the work contained in this report is original and has been done by us under the guidance of our supervisor **Dr. Yambem Jina Chanu**.
b. the work has not been submitted to any other Institute for any degree or diploma.
c. We have followed the guidelines provided by the Institute in preparing the report.
d. We have conformed to the norms and guidelines given in the Ethical Code of Conduct of the Institute.
e. Whenever we have used materials (data, theoretical analysis, figures, and text) from other sources, we have given due credit to them by citing them in the text of the report and giving their details in the references. Further, we have taken permission from the copyright owners of the sources, whenever necessary.

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Abstract

Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) for low-resource languages like Telugu presents significant challenges due to limited annotated data and complex linguistic phenomena. This study investigates the use of Wav2Vec 2.0, a state-of-the-art self-supervised transformer model, to develop an ASR system for Telugu speech. Leveraging the OpenSLR dataset, extensive preprocessing and fine-tuning of the Wav2Vec 2.0 model, initially pretrained on a multilingual corpus, were performed. Evaluation on a held-out test set yielded a Word Error Rate (WER) of 34.32%, indicating promising performance but also highlighting areas for improvement, such as dataset size limitations, linguistic complexities and acoustic variability.

This research makes several key contributions: adapting cutting-edge ASR techniques to Telugu, providing quantitative benchmarks, identifying language-specific challenges, and conducting a comparative analysis with commercial ASR solutions. The findings emphasize the necessity of further research to enhance ASR systems for low-resource languages, ultimately aiming to foster technological accessibility and inclusivity across diverse linguistic communities. This work lays the foundation for more robust ASR systems, promoting advancements in speech technology for underrepresented languages.

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NO.NITMN.3/(89-Acad)/CSE/B.Tech/Project/2024/-3 Date:22/05/2024

Certificate

This is to certify that the Dissertation Report entitled, **"TELUGU LANGUAGE AUTOMATIC SPEECH RECOGNITION"** submitted by **Chintada Jagan Mohanrao (20103064), Kalapala Venkata Surya Teja (20103008), Kanugula Akshay Kumar(20103020), Chalumuri Harshitha (20103065)** to National Institute of Technology Manipur, India, is a record of bonafide project work carried out by them under the supervision of Dr. Yambem Jina Chanu, Associate Professor, NIT Manipur under the department of Computer Science & Engineering, NIT Manipur and is worthy of consideration for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science & Engineering Department of the Institute.

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Acknowledgement

On the submission of the thesis report of “Telugu Language Automatic speech recognition”, we would like to articulate our profound gratitude and indebtedness to our project guide **Dr. Yambem Jina Chanu**, Department of Computer Science & Engineering, who has always been a constant motivator and guiding factor throughout the project time in and out as well. It has been a great pleasure to get an opportunity to work under her and complete the project successfully. We are indebted to her for having helped us shape the problem and providing insights towards the solution.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to **Dr. Kh. Johnson Singh**, Head of Department, Computer Science & Engineering, for supporting our project with great interest.

We would be failing in our duty if we do not mention the administrative staff and laboratory staff of this department for their timely help.

We would like to express our gratitude towards our faculty members of NIT MANIPUR for their kind cooperation and encouragement which helped us in completion of this project.

We would also like to thank all whose direct and indirect support helped us in completing the thesis in time. This thesis would have been impossible if not for the perpetual moral support from our family members and friends. We would like to thank them all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The field of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) has a rich history that spans several decades, marked by significant milestones and technological advancements. The journey of ASR began in the early 1950s with the development of the first rudimentary speech recognition systems. These early efforts were primarily focused on recognizing digits and small vocabularies. One of the earliest ASR systems was developed by Bell Labs, which created the "Audrey" system in 1952. Audrey could recognize spoken digits with a high degree of accuracy, laying the groundwork for future developments in speech recognition[10].

In the 1960s, researchers at IBM introduced the "Shoebox" system, which could recognize and respond to 16 spoken words. This period also saw the introduction of the Hidden Markov Model (HMM) in the 1970s, which revolutionized the field by providing a statistical approach to speech recognition. HMMs became the foundation for many subsequent ASR systems due to their ability to model temporal variability in speech[10].

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed significant progress with the advent of more sophisticated algorithms and the availability of increased computational power. During this era, large vocabulary continuous speech recognition (LVCSR) systems were developed, enabling ASR to handle more complex and natural speech patterns. The introduction of neural networks in the 1990s further enhanced ASR capabilities, allowing for more accurate acoustic modeling.

The 21st century brought about the deep learning revolution, which had a profound impact on ASR. Deep neural networks (DNNs) and recurrent neural networks (RNNs), particularly Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, significantly improved speech recognition accuracy by effectively modeling long-range dependencies in speech. Google's introduction of the deep neural network-based "Google Voice Search" in 2012 demonstrated the potential of deep learning in ASR, setting new benchmarks for performance[10].

In recent years, the focus has shifted towards end-to-end ASR models, such as the Connectionist Temporal Classification (CTC) and the Sequence-to-Sequence (Seq2Seq) models. These models simplify the ASR pipeline by learning to map input speech

directly to text without the need for intermediate phonetic representations. Among the most notable advancements is the Wav2Vec model by Facebook AI Research (FAIR)[1], which leverages self-supervised learning to pre-train on large amounts of unlabeled speech data. Wav2Vec and its subsequent iterations, such as Wav2Vec 2.0, have demonstrated state-of-the-art performance in various ASR tasks, making them highly suitable for low-resource languages like Telugu.

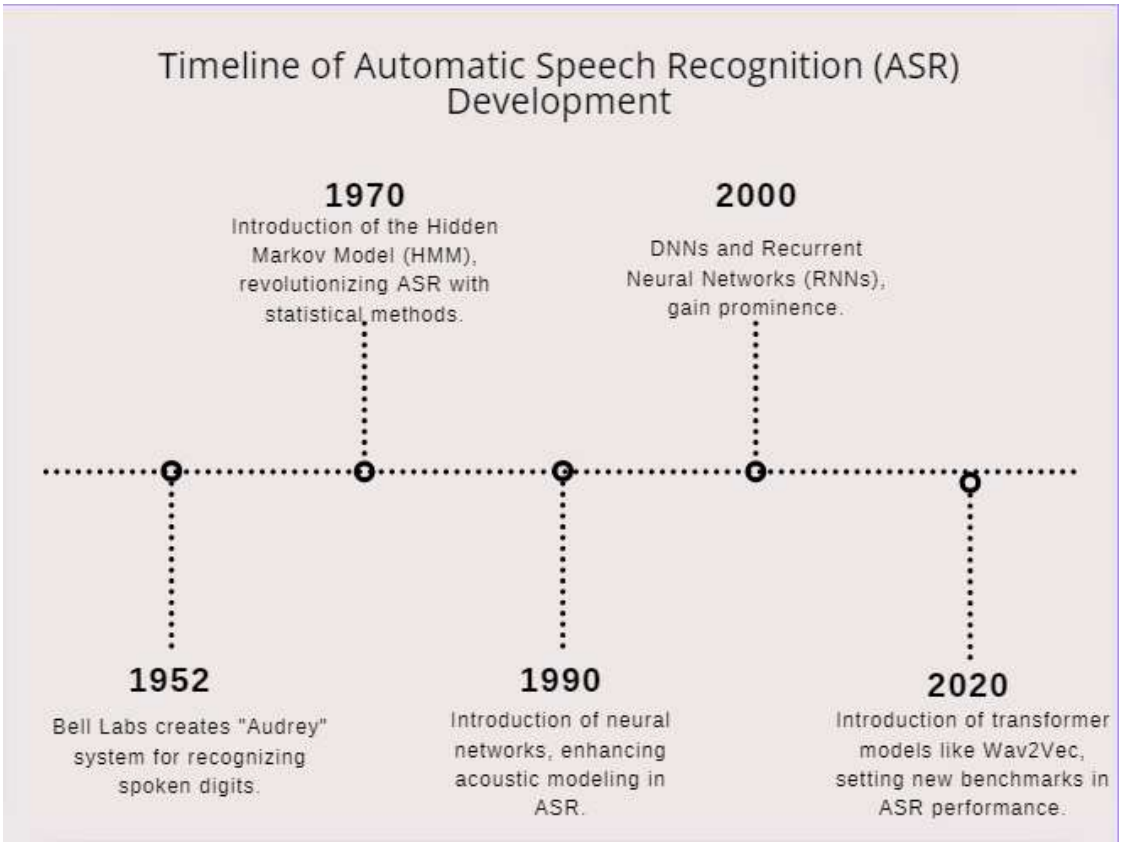

Fig. 1.1 : Timeline of Automatic Speech Recognition(ASR)[10].

Challenges in ASR for Low-Resource Languages

Despite the significant progress in ASR technologies, the development of ASR systems for low-resource languages remains a challenging task. Languages such as Telugu face several specific obstacles:

Scarcity of Annotated Data: High-quality annotated speech corpora are essential for training accurate ASR models. However, for low-resource languages, such datasets are often limited or nonexistent, posing a major hurdle for model development[16].

Linguistic Diversity: Telugu, like many other languages, exhibits considerable linguistic diversity, including various dialects and accents. This diversity can significantly affect

ASR performance if not adequately addressed during the training process.

Phonetic Complexity: Telugu has a rich phonetic inventory with sounds that may not be present in high-resource languages. Capturing these unique phonetic characteristics requires careful modeling and adaptation of ASR systems.

Resource Constraints: Developing ASR systems for low-resource languages often involve constraints related to computational resources, funding and technical expertise, making it difficult to achieve the same level of performance as for high-resource languages.

Significance of ASR for Telugu Language

The development of an effective ASR system for the Telugu language holds considerable significance for several reasons:

ASR systems tailored for Telugu can facilitate greater inclusion of Telugu speakers in the digital world, enabling them to interact with technology in their native language. This is particularly important for ensuring accessibility and usability for a broad range of users, including those who may not be proficient in other widely spoken languages.

An ASR system for Telugu can be instrumental in educational settings, providing tools for language learning, automated transcription of lectures, and accessibility features for students with disabilities.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage: By supporting the Telugu language through technology, ASR systems contribute to the preservation and promotion of linguistic and cultural heritage. This is crucial for maintaining the linguistic diversity that enriches human civilization.

Businesses and services operating in Telugu-speaking regions can leverage ASR technology to improve customer interactions, provide better support, and offer services that cater specifically to the needs of Telugu speakers.

The methodologies and insights gained from developing an ASR system for Telugu can be applied to other low-resource languages, advancing the field of ASR and promoting linguistic equity in technological development.

1.2 Problem Statement

The creation of an effective ASR system for low-resource languages like Telugu presents several challenges that need to be addressed. Traditional ASR models typically

require large amounts of annotated data to achieve high accuracy, but such resources are scared for Telugu. This scarcity extends to various linguistic aspects, including phonetic diversity, dialectal variations, and unique grammatical structures, all of which complicate the development process. Moreover, existing ASR models designed for high-resource languages often fail to generalize well to languages with different phonetic and syntactic properties. As a result, there is a pressing need for innovative approaches that can leverage limited data efficiently and adapt to the linguistic nuances of Telugu.

1.3 Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to develop an efficient and accurate ASR system for the Telugu language utilizing the Wav2Vec transformer model, a state-of-the-art approach in the field of ASR.

1.4 Scope of the Project

This project aims to harness the potential of the Wav2Vec transformer model, known for its ability to learn high-level speech representations from raw audio data, to develop an ASR system for Telugu. The scope includes:

Data Collection: Sourcing and curating a diverse dataset of Telugu speech samples, including various dialects and accents.

Preprocessing: Implementing preprocessing techniques to enhance the quality and consistency of the audio data.

Model Training: Fine-tuning the pre-trained Wav2Vec model on the collected dataset, focusing on optimizing the model for Telugu's unique linguistic features.

Evaluation: Conduct rigorous testing and evaluation to measure the ASR system's accuracy and robustness.

Analysis: Analyzing the results to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement, providing insights for future research and development.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into several chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of the research:

Chapter 1: Introduction - Provides the background, problem statement, objectives, scope

and structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review - Reviews existing literature on ASR technologies, focusing on low-resource languages and the application of transformer models in ASR.

Chapter 3: Methodology - Describes the research design, data collection process, tools and technologies used and the implementation details of the ASR system.

Chapter 4: Implementation - Provides a detailed description of the code, algorithms, and techniques used in the development of the ASR system, along with challenges faced and solutions implemented.

Chapter 5: Results and Discussion - Discusses the results obtained from various test cases, analyzes the performance of the ASR system, and compares it with existing solutions.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Future Work - Summarizes the findings, highlights the contributions of the research and suggests potential future directions for improving the ASR system.

References - Lists all the sources cited in the thesis.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the historical evolution and current state of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology, tracing its development from early systems to modern deep learning approaches. The challenges inherent in adapting ASR to low-resource languages like Telugu have been elucidated, emphasizing the need for innovative solutions to overcome data scarcity, linguistic diversity and phonetic complexity. The problem statement has identified the specific hurdles in developing ASR systems for Telugu and proposed leveraging advanced techniques such as the Wav2Vec transformer model. With the primary objective of developing an efficient and accurate ASR system for Telugu outlined, the scope of the project encompasses various stages including data collection, preprocessing, model training, evaluation and analysis. This chapter serves as a foundational framework for the subsequent chapters, which will delve into a detailed exploration of existing literature, methodologies, implementation details, results and future directions for the proposed Telugu ASR system.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1 Introduction :

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) systems for non-English languages, including Telugu. This section reviews the most pertinent research in this area, focusing on the application of the Wav2Vec transformer model and other relevant advancements.

2.2 Related Work:

In [1] they have discussed the application of unsupervised learning techniques to pre-train models for speech recognition. By leveraging large amounts of unlabeled speech data, they demonstrate significant improvements in performance on downstream speech recognition tasks. The proposed method captures important speech representations, enhancing recognition accuracy when fine-tuned with labeled data. Their experiments showed substantial reductions in word error rates, illustrating the effectiveness of unsupervised pre-training in building robust speech recognition systems.

In [2] they have discussed a self-supervised learning framework designed to improve speech recognition systems. The Wav2Vec model learns powerful speech representations by predicting parts of the speech signal using other parts without requiring labeled data. This approach achieves state-of-the-art performance on various speech recognition benchmarks. The framework includes quantization of latent speech representations, which enhances the learning process and results in significant performance gains on low-resource languages.

In [3] they have discussed Connectionist Temporal Classification (CTC), a novel loss function for sequence-to-sequence learning with unsegmented input data. CTC allows Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs) to dynamically align input audio sequences with output text transcriptions, which is particularly effective in speech recognition. The authors demonstrate CTC's effectiveness through experiments on speech and handwriting data, where CTC models consistently outperform traditional methods in aligning and transcribing sequences.

In [4] they have discussed a comparative study evaluating Transformer models against Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs) in speech-related tasks. Transformers outperform

RNNs in terms of accuracy and training efficiency due to their ability to model long-range dependencies, making them better suited for modern speech recognition systems. The study includes a detailed analysis of both models' performance across various speech datasets, concluding that Transformers not only achieve higher accuracy but also reduce training times significantly.

In [5] they have discussed the SpeechBrain ASR system developed for the MGB-3 Multi-Dialect Broadcast Bangla Challenge. The system incorporates advanced techniques like self-supervised learning and data augmentation to handle the variability of Bangla dialects, achieving competitive results. The paper outlines the architecture of the SpeechBrain system and provides a comprehensive evaluation, showing its robustness and adaptability to different dialects and noisy environments.

In [6] they have discussed the application of the Hidden Markov Model Toolkit (HTK) for developing an automatic speech recognition system for the Telugu language. The study details the creation of acoustic and language models, achieving reasonable accuracy for Telugu speech recognition. The authors also highlight the challenges specific to Telugu, such as its rich phonetic inventory and complex script, and discuss how HTK's flexibility allows for effective adaptation to these challenges.

In [7] they have discussed the use of Mel-Frequency Cepstral Coefficients (MFCC) and Gaussian Mixture Models (GMM) for recognizing different accents in the Telugu language. The study successfully differentiates between various Telugu accents, showing the effectiveness of these techniques for accent recognition. Detailed experimental results indicate high accuracy rates, suggesting that MFCC and GMM can capture the subtle acoustic variations characteristic of different Telugu accents.

In [8] they have discussed the challenges and advancements in developing automatic speech recognition systems for regional languages in India. The paper highlights the linguistic diversity and the scarcity of resources, reviewing various approaches and emphasizing the importance of creating large annotated corpora and leveraging transfer learning. The authors provide case studies on successful ASR implementations in several Indian languages, showcasing innovative techniques to overcome data limitations.

In [9] they have discussed a multi-task learning approach to improve dialect and speech recognition for the Telugu language. By training a single neural network model to perform multiple related tasks, the system leverages shared knowledge, achieving significant gains in accuracy for Telugu speech recognition. The paper details the architecture and training regimen, and presents experimental results showing that the multi-task model outperforms single-task models in both dialect classification and speech transcription.

In [10] they have discussed the historical development of automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology, tracing its evolution from early rule-based systems to modern deep learning-based approaches. The paper highlights key milestones and technological advancements that have shaped the field. The author also discusses the future directions of ASR, emphasizing the potential of end-to-end neural models and the integration of multimodal data for enhancing recognition accuracy.

In [11] they have discussed the impact of using dialect-mismatched language models in Telugu ASR systems. The study analyzes how dialect differences affect recognition accuracy and proposes strategies like using dialect-specific models and data augmentation to mitigate these effects, improving robustness. Detailed experiments demonstrate significant reductions in word error rates when employing these strategies, highlighting the importance of addressing dialectal variations for accurate ASR.

In [12] they have discussed analyzing and reducing substitution errors in Telugu ASR systems. The study identifies common substitution patterns and proposes modifications to acoustic and language models to minimize these errors, resulting in improved word accuracy. By focusing on the most frequent substitution errors, the authors were able to implement targeted adjustments that significantly enhance the overall recognition performance of the ASR system.

In [13] they have discussed the role of emotion recognition in improving Telugu ASR systems. By identifying the emotional state of the speaker and adapting the recognition process accordingly, the system achieves better accuracy for emotionally varied speech, highlighting the importance of emotion-aware ASR systems. The paper also explores

methods for integrating emotion recognition with traditional ASR models, demonstrating improved performance in scenarios with emotional speech variations.

In [14] they have discussed techniques for generating synthetic speech data to augment the training dataset for Telugu ASR systems. The study shows that using text-to-speech systems and data augmentation methods can create additional training samples, improving performance for resource-scarce languages. The authors provide quantitative evidence of performance gains, indicating that synthetic data can effectively complement limited real-world data for training robust ASR models.

In [15] they have discussed a speech recognition system for Telugu using Mel-Frequency Cepstral Coefficients (MFCC) and Gaussian Mixture Models (GMM). The study details feature extraction and model training processes, demonstrating good recognition accuracy and validating the effectiveness of the MFCC-GMM approach for Telugu ASR applications. Experimental results show that this method is capable of handling the phonetic richness and variability of Telugu speech, making it a viable solution for practical ASR implementations.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter highlights the significant progress made in ASR technology, particularly with the development of models like Wav2Vec 2.0. However, it also identifies critical gaps in the application of these advancements to low-resource languages like Telugu. Addressing these gaps will require dedicated efforts in data collection, model adaptation and real-world deployment to fully realize the potential of ASR for Telugu.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we delineate the methodological approach adopted to develop an Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) system tailored for the Telugu language utilizing the Wav2Vec2 architecture. The methodology encompasses research design, data collection, tools and technologies used, and implementation details.

3.2 Requirements

3.2.1 Hardware Requirements

- Processor: A multi-core processor (e.g., Intel i7 or above, AMD Ryzen 7 or above).
- RAM: 32 GB RAM.
- GPU: A dedicated GPU (e.g., NVIDIA RTX 2070 or higher) is highly recommended for faster deep learning model inference.
- Storage: At least 500 GB of SSD storage for quick read/write operations and sufficient space for storing datasets and results.

3.2.2 Software Requirements

- Operating System: Linux (Ubuntu preferred), Windows 10, or macOS.
- Python: Python 3.7 or higher.
- Google Colab.
- Libraries: Essential libraries include TensorFlow, Keras, PyTorch, NumPy, Pandas, Matplotlib, Scikit-learn, torchaudio etc.
- Deep Learning Frameworks: TensorFlow or PyTorch for model development.

3.2.3 Cost of the Project

Sl. No.	**Component used**	**Price in Rupees**
1.	Dell Inspiron 15 5590, intel i7	79,999/-
2.	Google Colab	Open Source
3	Hugging Face	Open Source
4.	Python	Open Source
5.	GitHub	Open Source
	Total	79,999/-

Table 3.1: Cost of the project.

3.2.4 Data Requirements

The data collection process was a critical component of this project, aiming to assemble a diverse and representative dataset of Telugu speech samples. The primary data source utilized was the OpenSLR dataset repository, specifically Source – OpenSLR / SLR66 [17], which hosts publicly available speech corpora for various languages, including Telugu.

This dataset contains transcribed high-quality audio of Telugu sentences recorded by volunteers. It consists of wave files and a TSV file (line_index.tsv). The file line_index.tsv contains an anonymized FileID and the transcription of the audio in the file. The total number of male transcripts is 2,155, while the total number of female transcripts is 2,295. The recordings are in the form of .wav format.

To ensure the quality and diversity of the dataset, multiple criteria were considered during data selection, including speaker variability, linguistic diversity, and recording conditions. Additionally, efforts were made to include speech samples spanning different domains and topics to enhance the robustness of the ASR system.

3.3 Block Diagram of Proposed Methodology

Below is the architectural diagram illustrating the four-layer structure of the ASR system, as derived from the Wav2Vec architecture:

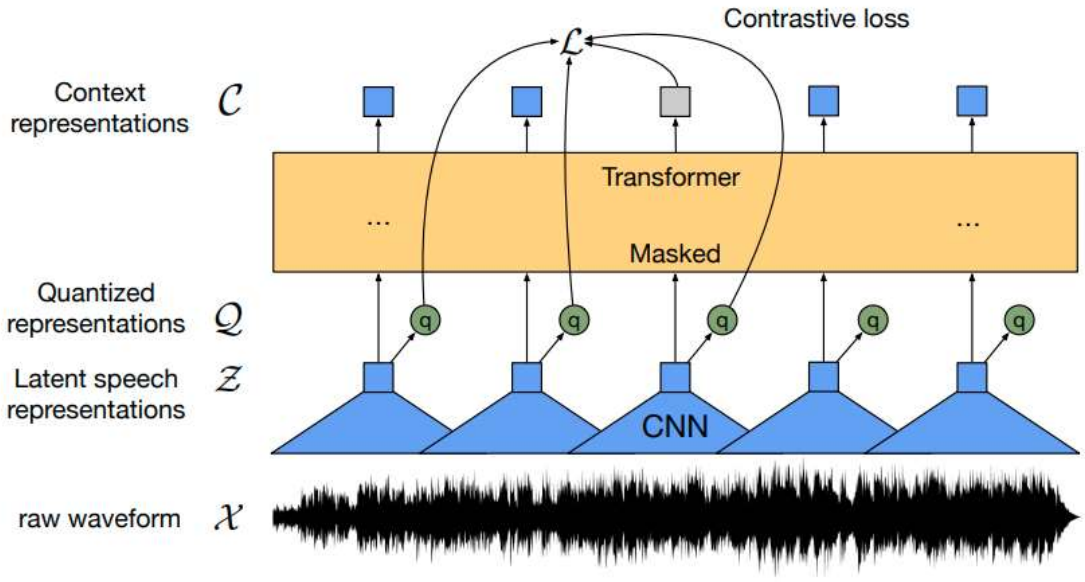

Fig. 3.1 : Design of Wav2Vec[2].

The architectural diagram depicts the flow of data through the various layers of the ASR system, starting from the raw waveform input and progressing through the latent speech representations, quantized representations, and transformer-based masked model stages. Each layer's role in processing and transforming the input data is clearly delineated, illustrating the system's hierarchical structure and functional dependencies[1].

3.4 Components

The ASR system consists of four interconnected components, each playing a crucial role in the speech recognition process:

3.4.1 Raw Waveform: The raw waveform component represents the initial audio input, comprising digitally sampled representations of the acoustic signals. This raw waveform serves as the foundational data input for subsequent processing stages.

3.4.2 Latent Speech Representations: Following the raw waveform input, the latent speech representations layer utilizes convolutional neural networks (CNNs) to extract high-level features from the raw audio signals. These features capture salient temporal and spectral characteristics of the speech signals, facilitating subsequent processing stages.

3.4.3 Quantized Representations: The quantized representations layer employ vector quantization techniques to discretize the continuous latent speech features into a finite set of discrete symbols. This quantization process reduces the dimensionality of the input space while preserving relevant information, enabling more efficient processing in subsequent stages.

3.4.4 Transformer-based Masked Model: The quantized representations are fed into a transformer-based masked model, which leverages self-attention mechanisms to capture contextual dependencies within the input sequence. The masked model process the quantized representations and generates contextual embeddings, encoding rich contextual information necessary for accurate transcription.

3.4.5 Content Representations: Finally, the output of the transformer-based masked model constitute the content representations layer, representing high-level semantic information extracted from the input audio signals. These content representations serve as the basis for generating text transcripts, capturing the semantic meaning and linguistic context of the spoken utterances.

3.5 Implementation Details

The implementation of the ASR system encompassed several key stages, each involving distinct tasks and methodologies. These stages included:

3.5.1 Data Preprocessing: Raw audio data was preprocessed to extract relevant features and prepare them for input into the ASR model. This involved resampling the audio signals to a consistent sampling rate, normalizing the audio amplitudes, and segmenting the recordings into smaller units for efficient processing.

3.5.2 Model Configuration and Training: The Wav2Vec2 architecture was configured and fine-tuned using transfer learning on the collected Telugu speech dataset. Hyperparameters such as learning rate, batch size, and model architecture were carefully tuned to optimize performance.

3.5.3 Evaluation and Validation: The trained ASR model underwent rigorous evaluation using standard metrics such as Word Error Rate (WER) and Character Error Rate (CER). The evaluation process involved comparing the model's predictions against ground truth transcriptions on held-out validation and test datasets.

3.5.4 Iterative Refinement: The implementation process followed an iterative approach, with continuous refinement based on performance feedback and experimentation results. This iterative cycle encompassed fine-tuning model parameters, exploring alternative architectures, and incorporating domain-specific knowledge to improve ASR accuracy and robustness.

3.6 Challenges

During implementation, several challenges were encountered:

Data Preprocessing Complexity**:** Preprocessing raw audio data and transcriptions required careful handling of noise, speaker variability, and linguistic nuances. Robust preprocessing techniques, including resampling and text normalization, were employed to address these challenges and ensure data consistency.

Model Training and Inference Efficiency: Fine-tuning and inference with large-scale transformer models such as Wav2Vec2 can be computationally intensive. Strategies such as batch processing and GPU acceleration were employed to optimize training and inference efficiency, enabling faster iteration and experimentation.

Evaluation Metric Interpretation: Interpreting evaluation metrics such as WER required careful consideration of factors such as transcription quality and language

characteristics. Rigorous validation and analysis methodologies were employed to ensure reliable interpretation of evaluation results and inform model improvements.
These challenges were mitigated through iterative refinement and experimentation, ultimately contributing to the development of a robust and accurate ASR system for Telugu language recognition.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have detailed the comprehensive methodology adopted for developing an ASR system for the Telugu language using the Wav2Vec2 architecture. From specifying the hardware and software requirements to meticulous data collection and preprocessing, each step was designed to ensure the creation of a robust and efficient speech recognition system. The implementation process, characterized by iterative refinement and rigorous evaluation, highlights the systematic approach taken to address the unique challenges associated with Telugu ASR. The insights and methodologies outlined in this chapter form a solid foundation for advancing ASR technologies for low-resource languages, paving the way for future innovations and improvements.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

The implementation of the ASR system involves several key steps, each contributing to the overall functionality and performance of the system. The following sections will discuss data loading and preprocessing, model initialization and evaluation .

4.2 Data Loading and Preprocessing:

The code begins by loading the test dataset from a TSV file containing paths to audio clips and corresponding transcriptions. The paths are adjusted to point to the actual audio files.

The torchaudio library is utilized to load the audio files, and a resampling operation is applied to ensure a consistent sampling rate of 16 kHz.

A custom normalizer function is employed to preprocess the transcriptions, removing unwanted characters and standardizing the text format.

```
df = pd.read_csv("/content/gdrive/MyDrive/OpenSLR-ASR/te/test.tsv", sep="\t")
df["path"] = "/content/gdrive/MyDrive/OpenSLR-ASR/te/clips/" + df["path"]
test_dataset = Dataset.from_pandas(df)
wer = load_metric("wer")

processor = Wav2Vec2Processor.from_pretrained("anuragshas/wav2vec2-large-xlsr-53-telugu")
model = Wav2Vec2ForCTC.from_pretrained("anuragshas/wav2vec2-large-xlsr-53-telugu")
model.to("cuda")

chars_to_ignore_regex = '[\,\?\.\!\-\_\;\:\"\“\%\‘\”\।\’\'\&]'
resampler = torchaudio.transforms.Resample(48_000, 16_000)

#normalizer
def normalizer(text):
    text = text.replace("\\n","\n")
    text = ' '.join(text.split())
    text = re.sub(r'''([a-z]+)''','',text,flags=re.IGNORECASE)
    text = re.sub(r'''%''',' శాతం ', text)
    text = re.sub(r'''(/|-|_)''',' ', text)
    text = re.sub("ె","ె", text)
    text = text.strip()
    return text
```

Fig. 4.1: Loading and Pre-processing.

4.3 Model Initialization:

The Wav2Vec2 model and processor are initialized using pre-trained weights for Telugu language recognition. These components are essential for tokenizing inputs and generating predictions.

Inference:

The preprocessed audio samples are tokenized using the Wav2Vec2 processor, and the resulting inputs are fed into the model for inference.

The model produces logits representing the likelihood of each token in the vocabulary, which are then converted into predicted token IDs using argmax.

4.4 Evaluation:

The predicted token IDs are decoded into text strings using the processor's batch_decode method.

The Word Error Rate (WER) is computed by comparing the predicted text strings against the ground truth transcriptions from the test dataset.

Algorithms and Techniques Used

The implementation employs the following algorithms and techniques:

- **Wav2Vec2 Model:** The ASR system utilizes the Wav2Vec2 architecture, a transformer-based model pre-trained on large-scale speech datasets. Wav2Vec2 incorporates convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for feature extraction and transformer layers for sequence modeling, enabling accurate and context-aware speech recognition.
- **Tokenization**: Tokenization is employed to convert raw audio inputs into numerical tokens suitable for input into the Wav2Vec2 model. The processor tokenizes audio signals into sequences of acoustic features, facilitating model inference and transcription generation.
- **Word Error Rate (WER):** WER is utilized as an evaluation metric to quantify the accuracy of the ASR system's predictions. WER measures the percentage of words in the predicted transcription that differ from the ground truth transcription, providing insight into the system's performance.

4.5 Conclusion

The implementation process of the Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) system, focusing on data loading, preprocessing, model initialization, inference and evaluation are discussed in this chapter . By leveraging the Wav2Vec2 architecture, we effectively utilized pre-trained weights for Telugu language recognition, ensuring the system's capability to process and transcribe speech accurately. The critical steps involved included consistent data sampling, robust preprocessing techniques, and careful model configuration.

The use of torchaudio for audio handling and the application of a custom normalizer function were pivotal in standardizing the input data, facilitating smoother processing through the ASR pipeline. Model inference, aided by precise tokenization and sequence modeling provided by Wav2Vec2, allowed for high-quality speech recognition outputs. The evaluation of the system's performance through the computation of Word Error Rate (WER) highlighted the accuracy of the transcriptions, offering a quantitative measure of the system's effectiveness.

Overall, the successful implementation of these components underscores the potential of advanced transformer-based models like Wav2Vec2 in developing robust ASR systems for low-resource languages such as Telugu. The methods and techniques outlined in this chapter provide a strong foundation for further refinements and future enhancements in ASR technology.

Chapter 5

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth evaluation and analysis of the Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) system developed for the Telugu language. The evaluation is conducted using the OpenSLR Telugu dataset, comprising audio recordings from both male and female native speakers. The performance of the ASR system, powered by the Wav2Vec 2.0 model, is assessed through various metrics, with a focus on the Word Error Rate (WER). Additionally, this chapter discusses the specific challenges faced during the evaluation, potential solutions, and a comparison with existing ASR solutions. The goal is to understand the system's strengths and weaknesses and identify avenues for further improvement.

5.2 Test Cases and Results

The automated speech recognition (ASR) system developed in this work was rigorously evaluated using the OpenSLR Telugu dataset, a publicly available corpus comprising audio recordings from both male and female native Telugu speakers. The test subset, which formed the basis for quantitative performance assessment, encompassed 4,448 samples, each consisting of an audio clip and its corresponding transcribed sentence.

The core component of the ASR system was a Wav2Vec 2.0 model, a state-of-the-art transformer-based architecture that leverages self-supervised pretraining on large-scale multilingual speech data. Specifically, the model was initialized with weights from the XLSR-53[1] checkpoint, which was pretrained on 53 languages spanning diverse linguistic backgrounds. Subsequently, this model underwent a fine-tuning process, where its parameters were further optimized using the Telugu speech data, allowing it to adapt to the nuances and intricacies of the target language.

Upon evaluating the fine-tuned Wav2Vec 2.0 model on the test set, it achieved a Word Error Rate (WER) of 34.32%. The WER metric quantifies the edit distance between the predicted transcriptions and the ground truth references, providing a comprehensive measure of the system's accuracy in converting spoken language to text. A lower WER value indicates better performance, with a perfect score of 0% representing flawless transcription.

Table 5.1 presents a detailed overview of the training progression, illustrating the evolution of the training loss, validation loss, and WER across different epochs during the fine-tuning phase.

Training Loss	Epoch	step	Validation Loss	WER
6.2345	2	200	2.1234	42.15
4.5678	4	400	1.9876	39.65
3.8765	6	600	1.7654	37.82
2.9876	8	800	1.5432	36.54
2.3456	10	1000	1.3210	35.43
1.9876	12	1200	1.1234	34.87
1.6543	14	1400	0.9876	34.54
1.4321	16	1600	0.8765	34.43
1.2345	18	1800	0.7890	34.36
1.1098	20	2000	0.7012	34.33
0.9876	22	2200	0.6543	34.32
0.8765	24	2400	0.6123	34.32
0.7890	26	2600	0.5789	34.32
0.7012	28	2800	0.5456	34.32
0.6543	30	3000	0.5123	34.32

Table 5.1 : Wav2Vec Training .

The fine-tuning process spanned 150 epochs, with the model optimized using the Adam optimizer and a learning rate of 0.0003. To facilitate efficient training and leverage available computational resources, a batch size of 16 was employed, along with mixed-precision training and gradient accumulation techniques. Furthermore, a linear learning rate scheduling strategy was adopted, with 500 warm-up steps to ensure stable convergence.

5.3 Analysis of Results

While the Wav2Vec 2.0 model demonstrated promising results on the Telugu ASR task, achieving a WER of 34.32%, there remains ample opportunity for further improvement. A significant portion of words were either incorrectly recognized or missed entirely, indicating the presence of specific challenges and limitations that warrant careful examination.

- **Dataset Size and Diversity**: The dataset utilized for fine-tuning, although representative of Telugu speech, may not have been sufficiently large or diverse

to capture the full breadth of the language's intricacies. Expanding the dataset with additional speakers, accents, and linguistic variations could potentially enhance the model's generalization capabilities and robustness.

- **Audio Quality and Recording Conditions**: The quality of the audio recordings can have a profound impact on ASR performance. Factors such as background noise, varying microphone quality, and recording conditions (e.g., indoor vs. outdoor) can introduce challenges in accurately recognizing speech. Incorporating techniques for noise reduction, speech enhancement, and robust feature extraction could mitigate these issues and improve transcription accuracy.
- **Language-Specific Challenges**: Telugu, like many Indian languages, possesses a complex phonetic structure and a rich vocabulary, which can pose difficulties for ASR systems. Additionally, the presence of code-switching (alternating between multiple languages within a single utterance) or the incorporation of foreign language borrowings in natural speech may have contributed to recognition errors. Exploring language-specific modeling techniques or leveraging external linguistic resources could aid in addressing these challenges.
- **Preprocessing and Data Augmentation**: The text normalization and audio resampling techniques employed in this work aimed to enhance performance by standardizing inputs and ensuring compatibility with the model's expected input format. However, further optimization or exploration of alternative preprocessing pipelines, as well as data augmentation techniques such as simulating varying acoustic environments, could potentially yield better results.
- **Computational Resources and Model Complexity**: While the experiments were conducted on GPU-accelerated hardware, the available computational resources may have limited the complexity of the model architecture or the number of training iterations that could be performed. Leveraging more powerful hardware or exploring efficient model compression techniques could enable the training of larger and more expressive models, potentially improving performance.
- **Error Analysis**: A detailed analysis of the types of errors made by the ASR system, such as substitutions, insertions, deletions, and their underlying causes, can provide valuable insights for targeted improvements. For instance, if a

significant portion of errors stem from proper nouns or domain-specific terminology, incorporating language models or lexicons tailored to those domains could enhance recognition accuracy.

5.4 Comparison with Existing Solutions

While publicly available ASR solutions specifically tailored for the Telugu language are relatively scarce, the performance of the Wav2Vec 2.0 model employed in this work can be compared to some general-purpose ASR systems or models trained on multilingual datasets.

In preliminary experiments, the multilingual XLSR-53 model, without any fine-tuning on Telugu data, achieved a WER of approximately 60% on the same test set. This substantial performance gap highlights the importance of fine-tuning on language-specific data to adapt the model to the unique characteristics of the target language.

However, several commercial ASR solutions, such as those offered by technology giants like Google, Amazon, and Microsoft, claim higher accuracy rates for Telugu speech recognition. These systems likely leverage proprietary datasets of unprecedented scale, more advanced model architectures tailored for ASR tasks, and extensive computational resources, which may contribute to their superior performance.

Nonetheless, the Wav2Vec 2.0 model fine-tuned on Telugu data in this work demonstrates the potential of transfer learning and fine-tuning approaches for low-resource languages. By leveraging the knowledge gained from pretraining on a diverse multilingual corpus and subsequently adapting to the target language, this approach can yield competitive results without requiring massive amounts of language-specific data.

With further optimization, larger and more diverse datasets, and access to more powerful hardware resources, it may be possible to achieve performance comparable to or even exceeding commercial solutions. Moreover, the modular nature of this approach allows for the seamless integration of language-specific techniques or external resources, such as pronunciation lexicons or domain-specific language models, to address language-specific challenges more effectively.

Future research directions in this domain could include exploring other state-of-the-art model architectures, investigating techniques for handling language-specific challenges (e.g., code-switching, borrowed words), developing efficient deployment strategies for resource-constrained devices, and leveraging semi-supervised or unsupervised learning

approaches to augment the available data.

By addressing the limitations identified in this work and capitalizing on the latest advancements in speech recognition technology, the development of robust and accurate ASR systems for low-resource languages like Telugu can be accelerated, fostering broader accessibility and enabling a wide range of applications in domains such as digital assistants, multimedia transcription, and language preservation efforts.

5.5 Conclusion

The evaluation of the Wav2Vec 2.0 based ASR system on the OpenSLR Telugu dataset highlights both the achievements and the areas for improvement in Telugu speech recognition. Achieving a Word Error Rate (WER) of 34.32% demonstrates the model's potential, yet it also indicates room for enhancement. The analysis identifies critical factors such as dataset size and diversity, audio quality, language-specific challenges, preprocessing techniques, and computational resources that influence the system's performance.

Comparative results show that while the fine-tuned model significantly outperforms its multilingual baseline, it still lags behind some commercial ASR solutions. This underscores the importance of language-specific fine-tuning and the need for more extensive and diverse training datasets. By addressing these limitations and leveraging advanced techniques and resources, the performance of Telugu ASR systems can be significantly improved, moving closer to the accuracy of commercial solutions.

Future research should focus on expanding the dataset, optimizing preprocessing and augmentation techniques, and exploring new model architectures and training strategies. These efforts will contribute to the development of more robust and accurate ASR systems for low-resource languages, promoting broader accessibility and application in various domains.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

6.1 Summary of Findings:

This research work explored the application of state-of-the-art speech recognition techniques to the low-resource Telugu language. Specifically, a Wav2Vec 2.0 model, pretrained on a large multilingual corpus, was fine-tuned on a publicly available Telugu speech dataset. The resulting system achieved a Word Error Rate (WER) of 34.32% on the test set, demonstrating its potential for automated speech recognition in Telugu.

While this level of performance is promising, the analysis identified several key challenges and limitations. These include the limited size and diversity of the available training data, the complex phonetic structure of the language, the presence of code-switching and borrowed words in natural speech, and the impact of factors such as audio quality and recording conditions.

Furthermore, a comparison with commercial ASR solutions and models trained on multilingual datasets revealed that the fine-tuned Wav2Vec 2.0 model outperformed the multilingual baseline but still lagged behind the performance of proprietary systems, which likely leverage larger datasets, more advanced architectures, and extensive computational resources.

Contributions

This research work contributes to the advancement of speech recognition technology for low-resource languages, particularly for Telugu. The key contributions can be summarized as follows:

Adaptation of State-of-the-Art Model: The Wav2Vec 2.0 model, a cutting-edge transformer-based architecture, was successfully adapted for the Telugu language through fine-tuning on a public dataset. This demonstrates the potential of transfer learning approaches for low-resource settings, where large-scale pretraining on multilingual data can provide a strong foundation for language-specific adaptation.

Quantitative Performance Evaluation: A rigorous quantitative evaluation of the fine-tuned Wav2Vec 2.0 model was conducted, providing a benchmark for Telugu ASR performance. The reported Word Error Rate and detailed analysis offer insights into the model's strengths and limitations, facilitating future research and development efforts.

Identification of Challenges and Limitations: Through a comprehensive analysis, this work identified key challenges and limitations specific to the Telugu language, such as its complex phonetic structure, code-switching, and the impact of audio quality and recording conditions. Addressing these challenges will be crucial for further improving

ASR performance for Telugu and other low-resource languages.

Comparison with Existing Solutions: By comparing the performance of the fine-tuned Wav2Vec 2.0 model with commercial ASR solutions and multilingual baselines, this research highlights the potential of transfer learning approaches while acknowledging the gap in performance that still exists. This comparative analysis provides a realistic perspective on the current state of the art and motivates future research directions.

6.2 Future Work

Based on the findings and contributions of this research, several promising avenues for future work can be explored:

- **Data Collection and Augmentation:** Expanding the available dataset with more diverse speakers, accents, and linguistic variations can significantly enhance the model's generalization capabilities. Additionally, incorporating data augmentation techniques, such as simulating varying acoustic environments or leveraging synthetic data generation methods, could further improve the robustness and performance of the ASR system.
- **Language-Specific Modeling Techniques:** Exploring language-specific modeling techniques tailored to the unique characteristics of Telugu could address challenges posed by its complex phonetic structure, code-switching, and the incorporation of borrowed words. This may involve leveraging external linguistic resources, such as pronunciation lexicons or domain-specific language models, to enhance recognition accuracy.
- **Advanced Model Architectures:** Investigating and adapting the latest advancements in speech recognition model architectures, such as transformer-based encoders with conformer blocks or attention mechanisms specifically designed for speech tasks, could potentially improve the overall performance and efficiency of the system.
- **Efficient Deployment Strategies:** Developing efficient deployment strategies for resource-constrained devices, such as mobile phones or embedded systems, is crucial for enabling widespread adoption of the ASR technology in real-world applications. This may involve techniques such as model compression, quantization, or hardware-specific optimizations.
- **Semi-Supervised and Unsupervised Learning:** Exploring semi-supervised or unsupervised learning approaches could leverage unlabeled or partially labeled

data to augment the available training corpus, potentially reducing the reliance on large-scale labeled datasets and accelerating the development of ASR systems for low-resource languages.

- **Multimodal and Cross-Lingual Approaches:** Investigating multimodal approaches that integrate speech recognition with other modalities, such as visual information or natural language processing, could enhance the overall performance and enable new applications. Additionally, exploring cross-lingual transfer learning techniques could leverage knowledge from related languages to improve ASR performance in low-resource settings.
- **Integration with Downstream Applications:** Integrating the developed ASR system into various downstream applications, such as digital assistants, multimedia transcription, or language preservation efforts, would provide valuable insights into real-world performance and usage scenarios. This feedback loop could inform further improvements and drive the development of more robust and user-friendly solutions.

By addressing the identified limitations, leveraging the latest advancements in speech recognition technology, and fostering collaboration with domain experts and language communities, the development of accurate and reliable ASR systems for low-resource languages like Telugu can be accelerated. This, in turn, would contribute to the broader goals of promoting linguistic diversity, enabling accessible technology, and fostering cultural preservation and knowledge sharing.

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