S&DS 365 / 665

Intermediate Machine Learning

Reinforcement Learning

October 31

Yale

Tricks and Treats

- Assignment 3 due Wednesday
- Assignment 4 posted Wednesday
- Quiz 4 next Wednesday
  - Variational inference and VAEs
  - Undirected graphs and glasso
  - Graph neural nets
- Wednesday: Deep Q-Learning with Prof. Zhuoran Yang

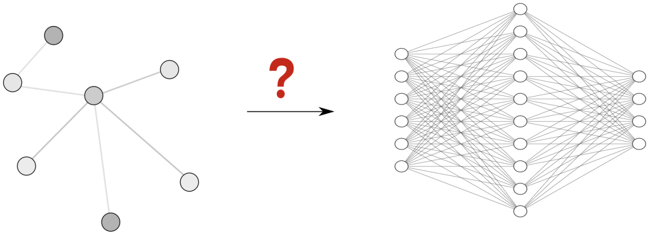
Outline for today

- Graph neural nets (recap)
- RL concepts
- Q-learning

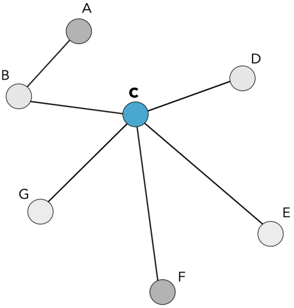
Graph neural networks

Let's quickly recap graph neural networks from last time

How to use graph structure in neural nets?



Graph Laplacian



Input Graph G

$$
\begin{array}{c|c}
 & \begin{array}{ccccccc} \mathsf{A} & \mathsf{B} & \mathbf{C} & \mathsf{D} & \mathsf{E} & \mathsf{F} & \mathsf{G} \end{array} \\
\begin{array}{c} \mathsf{A} \\ \mathsf{B} \\ \mathbf{C} \\ \mathsf{D} \\ \mathsf{E} \\ \mathsf{F} \\ \mathsf{G} \end{array} &
\begin{bmatrix}
1 & -1 & & & & & \\
-1 & 2 & -1 & & & & \\
 & -1 & 5 & -1 & -1 & -1 & -1 \\
 & & -1 & 1 & & & \\
 & & -1 & & 1 & & \\
 & & -1 & & & 1 & \\
 & & -1 & & & & 1
\end{bmatrix}
\end{array}
$$

Laplacian L of G

Polynomials of the Laplacian

$$p_w(L) = w_0 I_n + w_1 L + w_2 L^2 + \cdots w_d L^d$$

If $\mathrm{dist}(u, v) > i$ then the (u, v) entry of L^i is zero

- This is analogous to a CNN filter (kernel)
- The weights w_i play role of filter coefficients
- Degree d of polynomial plays role of the size of the kernel

Equivariance

A transformation $f : \mathbb{R}^n \longrightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$ is equivariant if

$$f(Px) = Pf(x)$$

for any permuation matrix P, where $PP^T = I$.

Showed graph Laplacian satisfies this

Building layers

Let $h^{(k)}$ be the neurons at layer k.

We start with $h^{(0)} = x$, a value x_j at each node j

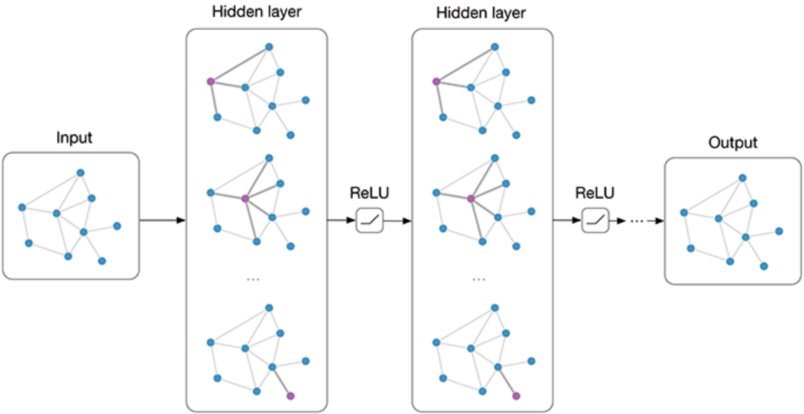
The next layer is

$$h^{(k+1)} = \varphi\left(p_{w^{(k)}}(L)h^{(k)}\right)$$

See tutorial for other ways of building layers

https://distill.pub/2021/understanding-gnns/

Building layers



Another tutorial: https://tkipf.github.io/graph-convolutional-networks/

Summary: Graph neural nets

- Certain data have natural graphical structure
- GNNs are analogues of CNNs for graphs
- Based on use of graph Laplacian
- Independent of ordering of nodes (equivariant)
- This is just a quick intro to an interesting current ML topic

Next topic: Reinforcement learning

Reinforcement learning

- An agent interacts with an environment
- The actions the agent takes change the state of the environment
- The agent receives rewards for each action, and seeks to maximize the total cumulative reward

Reinforcement learning is a framework for sequential decision making to achieve a long-term goal.

Reinforcement learning: Motivating examples

- Playing chess, backgammon, Atari games, etc.
- Learning to walk or ride a bike
- A robot vacuum cleaning up the house
- Drug discovery, personalized health, energy management

Article

Discovering faster matrix multiplication algorithms with reinforcement learning

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Improving the efficiency of algorithms for fundamental computations can have a widespread impact, as it can affect the overall speed of a large amount of computations. Matrix multiplication is one such primitive task, occurring in many systems—from neural networks to scientific computing routines. The automatic discovery of algorithms using machine learning offers the prospect of reaching beyond human intuition and outperforming the current best human-designed algorithms. However, automating the algorithm discovery procedure is intricate, as the space of possible algorithms is enormous. Here we report a deep reinforcement learning approach based on AlphaZero[1] for discovering efficient and provably correct algorithms for the multiplication of arbitrary matrices. Our agent, AlphaTensor, is trained to play a single-player game where the objective is finding tensor decompositions within a finite factor space. AlphaTensor discovered algorithms that outperform the state-of-the-art complexity for many matrix sizes. Particularly relevant is the case of 4 × 4

Reinforcement learning: Formalization

- The environment is in state s at a given time
- The agent takes action a
- The environment transitions to state $s' = \text{next}(s, a)$
- The agent receives reward $r = \text{reward}(s, a)$

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This is said to be a *Markov decision process*. It's "Markov" because the next state only depends on the current state and the action selected. It's a "decision process" because the agent is making choices of actions in a sequential manner.

Characteristics

- RL is inherently sequential
- In between supervised and unsupervised learning
- Agent can’t act too greedily; needs to be strategic

The aim of RL is to learn to make optimal decisions from experience

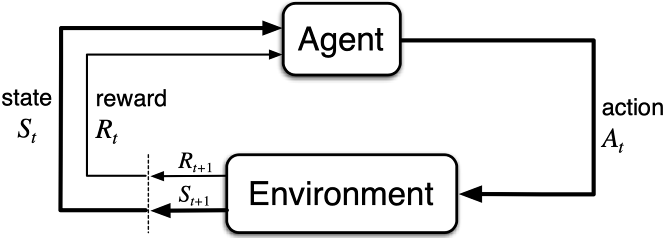
Principles of RL

Some key RL concepts and principles:

Policy, reward signal, value function, model, Bellman equation

"Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction" (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Principles of RL



Rewards and state transitions are probabilistic, in general

"Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction" (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Principles of RL

Policy: A mapping from states to actions. An algorithm/rule to make decisions at each time step, designed to maximize the long term reward.

"Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction" (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Principles of RL

Reward signal: The sequence of rewards received at each time step. An abstraction of “pleasure” (positive reward) and “pain” (negative reward) in animal behavior.

“Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction” (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Principles of RL

Value function: A mapping from states to total reward. The total reward the agent can expect to accumulate in the future, starting from that state.

Rewards are short term. Values are predictions of future rewards.

"Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction" (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Principles of RL

Model: Used for planning to mimic the behavior of the environment, to predict rewards and next states.

A *model-free* approach directly estimates a value function, without modeling the environment.

Analogous to distinction between generative and discriminative classification models

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“Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction” (Second Edition), Richard S. Sutton and Andrew G. Barto

Taxi problem

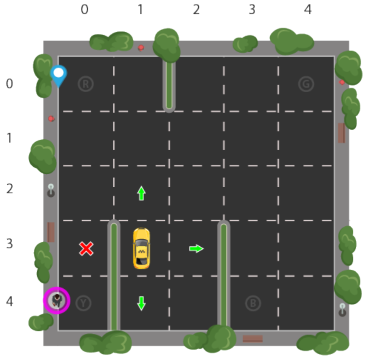
We'll introduce the important Q-learning algorithm with the toy "Taxi problem"

The code uses OpenAI gym.

Our presentation follows the tutorial
https://www.learndatasci.com/tutorials/reinforcement-q-learning-scratch-python-openai-gym/

Taxi problem

A taxicab drives around the environment, picking up and delivering a passenger at four locations



Taxi problem

A taxicab drives around the environment, picking up and delivering a passenger at four locations

”Ascii art” rendition:

```
+---------+
|R: | : :G|
| : | : : |
| : : : : |
| | : | : |
|Y| : |B: |
+---------+
```

Taxi problem: Description

- Four designated locations: R(ed), G(reen), Y(ellow), and B(lue)
- Taxi starts off at random square and passenger is at random location
- Taxi drives to passenger's location, picks up the passenger, drives to passenger's destination, drops off passenger
- Once the passenger is dropped off, the episode ends.

Taxi problem: State space

- 25 taxi positions
- 5 possible locations of passenger: At waiting location or in taxi
- 4 possible destination locations
- Total number of states: $25 \times 5 \times 4 = 500$

Taxi problem: State space

Passenger location coded as integers:

- 0: R(ed)
- 1: G(reen)
- 2: Y(ellow)
- 3: B(lue)
- 4: in taxi

Taxi problem: State space

Destinations coded as:

- 0: R(ed)
- 1: G(reen)
- 2: Y(ellow)
- 3: B(lue)

Taxi problem: State space

Agent actions coded as:

- 0: move south
- 1: move north
- 2: move east
- 3: move west
- 4: pickup passenger
- 5: drop off passenger

Taxi problem: State space

Rewards:

- Default reward per step: -1
- Reward for delivering passenger: +20
- Illegal "pickup" or "drop-off": -10

Taxi problem: State space

State space represented as a tuple:

state = (taxi row, taxi column, passenger location, destination)

Q-learning

- Maintains a “quality” variable $Q(s, a)$ for taking action a in state s

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Q-learning

- Maintains a “quality” variable $Q(s, a)$ for taking action a in state s
- A measure of the cumulative rewards obtained by the algorithm when it takes action a in state s
- Quality should not be assessed purely based on the reward the action has in the current time step
- Need to take into account the future rewards

Q-learning update

Update:

$$Q(s,a) \longleftarrow$$
$$Q(s,a) + \alpha\Big(\text{reward}(s,a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(\text{next}(s,a),a') - Q(s,a)\Big)$$

Q-learning update

Update:

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- When action a is taken in state s, reward $\text{reward}(s, a)$ is given
- Then, the algorithm moves to a new state $\text{next}(s, a)$

Q-learning update

Update:

$$Q(s,a) \longleftarrow$$
$$Q(s,a) + \alpha\Big(\text{reward}(s,a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(\text{next}(s,a), a') - Q(s,a)\Big)$$

- For example, if the taxi is location $(2,2)$ and takes the "West" action ($a = 3$), then there is a reward of -1, and the taxi moves to the new location $(2,1)$
- If cab is empty, it remains empty, and if it contains the passenger, the passenger remains.

Q-learning update

Update:

$$Q(s,a) \longleftarrow$$
$$Q(s,a) + \alpha\Big(\text{reward}(s,a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(\text{next}(s,a),a') - Q(s,a)\Big)$$

- Cumulative future reward of this action is $\max_{a'} Q(\text{next}(s,a),a')$
- Future rewards discounted by factor $\gamma < 1$
- Trades off short-term against long-term rewards
- A gradient *ascent* algorithm, with step size α

Let’s go to the notebook!

Bellman equation

The optimal value function is the largest expected discounted long term reward starting from that state.

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_E._Bellman

Bellman equation: Deterministic case

The optimality condition for the value function v_* is

$$v_*(s) = \max_a \Big\{ \text{reward}(s, a) + \gamma v_*(\text{next}(s, a)) \Big\}$$

Bellman equation: Deterministic case

The optimality condition for the Q-function is

$$Q_*(s, a) = \text{reward}(s, a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q_*(\text{next}(s, a), a')$$

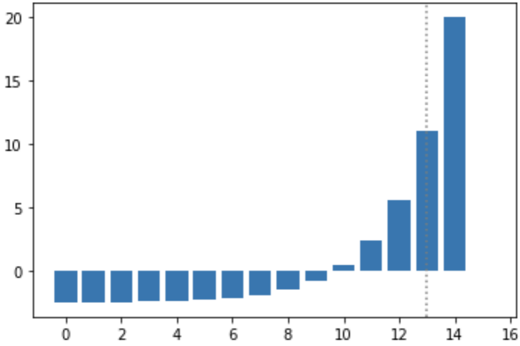
and then $v_*(s) = \max_{a'} Q_*(s, a')$

Q-learning update

Note how this makes sense in terms of the update rule:

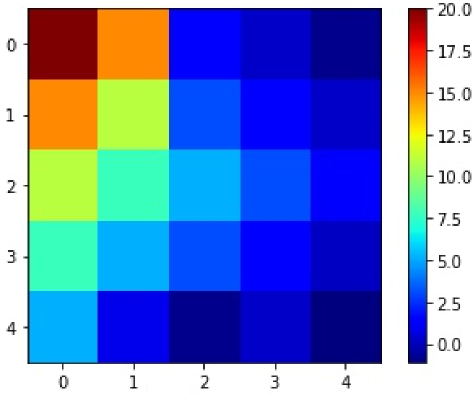
$$Q(s, a) \longleftarrow$$
$$Q(s, a) + \alpha \Big(\text{reward}(s, a) + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(\text{next}(s, a), a') - Q(s, a) \Big)$$

```
+---------+
|R: | : :G|
| : | : : |
| : : : : |
| | : | : |
|Y| : |B: |
+---------+
  (East)
```



Question

For a fixed passenger location and destination, the value function $v(\texttt{row}, \texttt{col})$ assigns a value to each of the $25 = 5 \times 5$ grid points.



Is the passenger waiting, or in the taxi?

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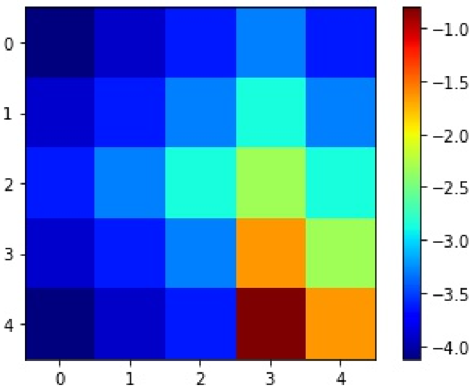

Is the passenger waiting, or in the taxi?

Summary

- Reinforcement learning is a framework for sequential decision making to achieve a long-term goal
- The agent receives rewards for each action, and seeks to maximize the total cumulative reward
- The value of a state is the total reward the agent can expect to accumulate in the future, starting from that state
- Q-learning is an iterative algorithm that estimates the value of each state-action pair
- The Bellman equations are optimality conditions that characterize the value function