Comparing the Classification Performance of Various Models on News Headlines

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Kaggle dataset

This is a dataset of news headlines and their categories. In this problem, we will tokenize the dataset on each word and feed it as sequence data into various models.

The dataset is not split and is in JSON format, requiring heavy preprocessing to be loaded by Keras. I also use the tf.data API to load data in a RAM-efficient manner.

1 Preprocessing

1.1 Load data

```
[]: import pandas as pd
  import tensorflow as tf

[]: df = pd.read_json(
        './data/News_Category_Dataset_v3.json',
        dtype={'category': 'category'},
        lines=True
  )
  df = df[['headline', 'category']]
```

1.2 Preprocess data

Save to file for Keras text dataset handling:

```
[]: import os
  import re
  from pathlib import Path
  from sklearn.model_selection import train_test_split

def remove_special_characters(input_string):
    return re.sub('[^A-Za-z0-9]+', '', input_string)

def save_row_subset(subset):
    if subset != 'train' and subset != 'test':
        raise ValueError('Must be one of {train, test}')
    return lambda row: save_row(row, subset)
```

```
def save_row(row, subset):
         label = row['category']
         headline = row['headline']
         idx = row.name
         save_path_root = Path(f'./data/ByCategory/{subset}/
      →{remove_special_characters(label)}').resolve()
         if not os.path.isdir(save_path_root):
             os.makedirs(save_path_root)
         save_path = save_path_root / f'{idx}.txt'
         with open(save_path, 'w') as f:
             f.write(headline + "\n")
     train_df, test_df = train_test_split(df, test_size=0.20, random_state=42)
     train_df.apply(save_row_subset('train'), axis=1)
     test_df.apply(save_row_subset('test'), axis=1)
[]: 128310
               None
     139983
               None
     42339
               None
     131494
               None
     163649
               None
               None
    91721
     10964
               None
     140604
               None
     182108
               None
    28078
               None
    Length: 41906, dtype: object
    Create Keras datasets:
[]: BATCH_SIZE = 128
     seed = 42
     # load into TF dataset
     raw_train_ds, raw_val_ds = tf.keras.utils.text_dataset_from_directory(
         './data/ByCategory/train',
         batch size=BATCH SIZE,
         label_mode='categorical',
         validation_split=0.1,
         subset='both',
         seed=seed
     )
```

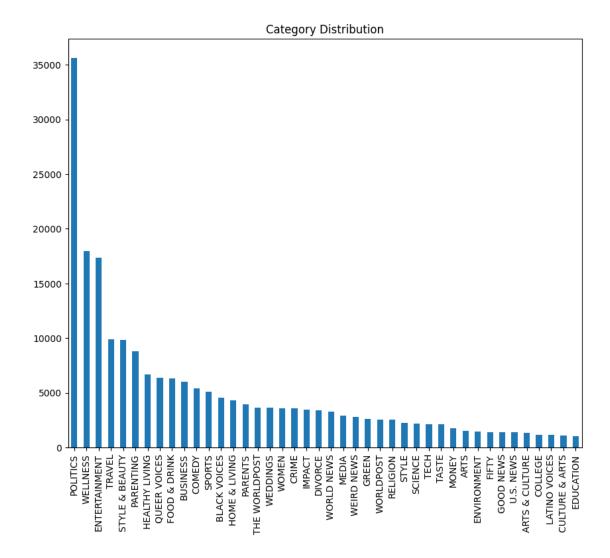
```
raw_test_ds = tf.keras.utils.text_dataset_from_directory(
         './data/ByCategory/test'.
         batch_size=BATCH_SIZE,
         label_mode='categorical',
         seed=seed
     )
    Found 167621 files belonging to 42 classes.
    Using 150859 files for training.
    Using 16762 files for validation.
    Found 41906 files belonging to 42 classes.
    Vectorize data:
[]: # vectorize sequences to length 120
     VOCAB_SIZE = 200000
     MAX_SEQUENCE_LENGTH = 120
     vectorize_layer = tf.keras.layers.TextVectorization(
         max_tokens=VOCAB_SIZE,
         output_mode='int',
         output_sequence_length=MAX_SEQUENCE_LENGTH
     )
     train text = raw train ds.map(lambda text, labels: text)
     val_text = raw_val_ds.map(lambda text, labels: text)
     vectorize layer.adapt(train text)
     vectorize_layer.adapt(val_text)
     def vectorize_text(text, label):
         text = tf.expand_dims(text, -1)
         return vectorize_layer(text), label
     AUTOTUNE = tf.data.AUTOTUNE
     def configure_dataset(dataset):
         return dataset.cache().prefetch(buffer_size=AUTOTUNE)
     train_ds = configure_dataset(raw_train_ds.map(vectorize_text))
     val_ds = configure_dataset(raw_val_ds.map(vectorize_text))
     test_ds = configure_dataset(raw_test_ds.map(vectorize_text))
```

1.3 Visualize class distribution

```
[]: df['category'].value_counts().plot.bar(figsize=(10,8), title="Category

→Distribution")
```

```
[]: <Axes: title={'center': 'Category Distribution'}>
```



We can see that most of the articles in the dataset are politics, followed by wellness, entertainment, travel, then style and beauty. However, there are disproportionately more politics articles, which may affect classification accuracy.

The model should be able to predict the category of a new article given its headline. This can be used in news aggregator websites to determine under which section to put an article under.

2 Train basic sequential model

2.1 Define helper function to create models

We will use this to create models in a quick and easy manner, abstracting away the training and evaluation steps in a standardized manner.

[]:

```
# helper function to create models
def eval model(middle layers, model_name='model', embedding size=128,__
 ⇒has_lstm=False, lstm_size=30, num_epochs=10, random_seed=42, ___
 →return_model=False):
   tf.keras.utils.set_random_seed(random_seed)
   model = tf.keras.Sequential()
   model.add(tf.keras.layers.Input(shape=(120,)))
   model.add(tf.keras.layers.Embedding(VOCAB SIZE + 1, embedding size,
 →mask_zero=True))
   if not has lstm:
       model.add(tf.keras.layers.Flatten())
   else:
       model.add(tf.keras.layers.LSTM(lstm_size))
    if middle_layers is not None:
        for layer in middle_layers:
            model.add(layer)
   model.add(tf.keras.layers.Dense(42, activation='relu'))
   model.compile(
        loss=tf.keras.losses.CategoricalCrossentropy(from_logits=True),
        optimizer='adam',
       metrics=['accuracy', tf.keras.metrics.Precision(name='precision'), tf.
 ⇔keras.metrics.Recall(name='recall')]
   )
   model.summary()
   history = model.fit(
        train_ds,
       validation_data=val_ds,
        epochs=num_epochs
   )
   test_loss, test_acc, test_precision, test_recall = model.evaluate(test_ds)
   train_loss, train_acc, train_precision, train_recall = history.
 ⇔history['loss'][-1], history.history['accuracy'][-1], history.
 ⇔history['precision'][-1], history.history['recall'][-1]
   val_loss, val_acc, val_precision, val_recall = history.
 whistory['val loss'][-1], history.history['val accuracy'][-1], history.
 ⇔history['val_precision'][-1], history.history['val_recall'][-1]
   metrics = {
        'model_name': model_name,
        'train_loss': train_loss,
        'train_acc': train_acc,
        'train_precision': train_precision,
        'train_recall': train_recall,
        'train_f1': 2 * (train_precision * train_recall) / (train_precision +

→train_recall),
        'test_loss': test_loss,
```

3 Basic model creation

This simple sequential model has a 128-dimensional embedding with a flattening layer, 2 dense layers with 100 units each, sandwiched between a 20% dropout layer, and an output layer of 42 units.

Model: "sequential_8"

Layer (type)	Output Shape	Param #
embedding_8 (Embedding)	(None, 120, 128)	25600128
flatten_8 (Flatten)	(None, 15360)	0
dense_24 (Dense)	(None, 100)	1536100
dropout_8 (Dropout)	(None, 100)	0
dense_25 (Dense)	(None, 100)	10100
dense_26 (Dense)	(None, 42)	4242

Total params: 27,150,570

Trainable params: 27,150,570 Non-trainable params: 0

```
_____
Epoch 1/10
accuracy: 0.3439 - precision: 0.0988 - recall: 0.5432 - val_loss: 2.3931 -
val accuracy: 0.4316 - val precision: 0.1199 - val recall: 0.5773
Epoch 2/10
accuracy: 0.4496 - precision: 0.1369 - recall: 0.5927 - val_loss: 2.2835 -
val_accuracy: 0.4544 - val_precision: 0.1507 - val_recall: 0.5910
Epoch 3/10
accuracy: 0.4944 - precision: 0.1712 - recall: 0.6074 - val_loss: 2.3459 -
val_accuracy: 0.4494 - val_precision: 0.1752 - val_recall: 0.5801
Epoch 4/10
accuracy: 0.5374 - precision: 0.2024 - recall: 0.6198 - val_loss: 2.4445 -
val_accuracy: 0.4521 - val_precision: 0.1682 - val_recall: 0.6037
Epoch 5/10
accuracy: 0.5883 - precision: 0.2159 - recall: 0.6550 - val_loss: 2.5694 -
val_accuracy: 0.4464 - val_precision: 0.1988 - val_recall: 0.5830
Epoch 6/10
accuracy: 0.6132 - precision: 0.2576 - recall: 0.6572 - val_loss: 2.7165 -
val_accuracy: 0.4392 - val_precision: 0.2307 - val_recall: 0.5609
Epoch 7/10
accuracy: 0.6281 - precision: 0.2898 - recall: 0.6587 - val_loss: 2.8922 -
val_accuracy: 0.4320 - val_precision: 0.2541 - val_recall: 0.5437
Epoch 8/10
1179/1179 [============= ] - 13s 11ms/step - loss: 1.4494 -
accuracy: 0.6369 - precision: 0.3226 - recall: 0.6592 - val_loss: 3.0063 -
val_accuracy: 0.4311 - val_precision: 0.2562 - val_recall: 0.5419
Epoch 9/10
accuracy: 0.6434 - precision: 0.3410 - recall: 0.6601 - val_loss: 3.1700 -
val_accuracy: 0.4326 - val_precision: 0.2721 - val_recall: 0.5345
Epoch 10/10
1179/1179 [============= ] - 12s 10ms/step - loss: 1.3923 -
accuracy: 0.6467 - precision: 0.3570 - recall: 0.6605 - val_loss: 3.3365 -
val_accuracy: 0.4337 - val_precision: 0.2659 - val_recall: 0.5410
328/328 [============ ] - 1s 4ms/step - loss: 3.3581 -
accuracy: 0.4153 - precision: 0.2641 - recall: 0.5262
```

4 Train LSTM model

This simple LSTM model has a 128-dimensional embedding, a 30-unit LSTM layer, and a 100-unit dense layer with an output layer of 42 units.

Model: "sequential_10"

Output Shape	Param #
(None, 120, 128)	25600128
(None, 30)	19080
(None, 100)	3100
(None, 42)	4242
	(None, 120, 128) (None, 30) (None, 100)

Total params: 25,626,550 Trainable params: 25,626,550 Non-trainable params: 0

```
Epoch 1/10
accuracy: 0.3962 - precision: 0.0873 - recall: 0.6701 - val_loss: 2.0761 -
val_accuracy: 0.4950 - val_precision: 0.1074 - val_recall: 0.7286
Epoch 2/10
accuracy: 0.5212 - precision: 0.1157 - recall: 0.7334 - val_loss: 1.9814 -
val_accuracy: 0.5245 - val_precision: 0.1253 - val_recall: 0.7251
Epoch 3/10
1179/1179 [============ ] - 19s 16ms/step - loss: 1.8033 -
accuracy: 0.5611 - precision: 0.1356 - recall: 0.7386 - val_loss: 1.9870 -
val_accuracy: 0.5259 - val_precision: 0.1440 - val_recall: 0.7151
Epoch 4/10
accuracy: 0.5925 - precision: 0.1559 - recall: 0.7406 - val_loss: 2.0397 -
val_accuracy: 0.5219 - val_precision: 0.1612 - val_recall: 0.7062
Epoch 5/10
accuracy: 0.6184 - precision: 0.1784 - recall: 0.7414 - val_loss: 2.1323 -
val_accuracy: 0.5144 - val_precision: 0.1775 - val_recall: 0.6914
Epoch 6/10
```

```
accuracy: 0.6406 - precision: 0.2021 - recall: 0.7417 - val_loss: 2.2687 -
val_accuracy: 0.5056 - val_precision: 0.1922 - val_recall: 0.6765
Epoch 7/10
accuracy: 0.6598 - precision: 0.2263 - recall: 0.7418 - val loss: 2.4104 -
val_accuracy: 0.4973 - val_precision: 0.2068 - val_recall: 0.6616
accuracy: 0.6741 - precision: 0.2497 - recall: 0.7417 - val_loss: 2.5622 -
val_accuracy: 0.4901 - val_precision: 0.2176 - val_recall: 0.6510
Epoch 9/10
accuracy: 0.6867 - precision: 0.2717 - recall: 0.7418 - val_loss: 2.7240 -
val_accuracy: 0.4783 - val_precision: 0.2312 - val_recall: 0.6349
Epoch 10/10
accuracy: 0.6979 - precision: 0.2935 - recall: 0.7418 - val_loss: 2.8824 -
val_accuracy: 0.4775 - val_precision: 0.2424 - val_recall: 0.6273
328/328 [============= ] - 2s 5ms/step - loss: 2.7918 -
accuracy: 0.4723 - precision: 0.2441 - recall: 0.6262
```

5 Create larger embeddings for both models

These models are the same as the ones above, just with larger embeddings.

Model: "sequential_11"

Layer (type)	Output Shape	Param #
embedding_11 (Embedding)	(None, 120, 256)	51200256
flatten_9 (Flatten)	(None, 30720)	0
dense_31 (Dense)	(None, 100)	3072100
dropout_9 (Dropout)	(None, 100)	0
dense_32 (Dense)	(None, 100)	10100
dense_33 (Dense)	(None, 42)	4242

Total params: 54,286,698 Trainable params: 54,286,698 Non-trainable params: 0 _____ Epoch 1/10 accuracy: 0.3029 - precision: 0.0986 - recall: 0.4648 - val_loss: 2.6085 val_accuracy: 0.3767 - val_precision: 0.1254 - val_recall: 0.4976 Epoch 2/10 accuracy: 0.4419 - precision: 0.1212 - recall: 0.6027 - val_loss: 2.2367 val_accuracy: 0.4729 - val_precision: 0.1235 - val_recall: 0.6426 Epoch 3/10 1179/1179 [============] - 20s 17ms/step - loss: 1.9956 accuracy: 0.5223 - precision: 0.1452 - recall: 0.6584 - val_loss: 2.2717 val_accuracy: 0.4730 - val_precision: 0.1497 - val_recall: 0.6259 Epoch 4/10 accuracy: 0.5709 - precision: 0.1780 - recall: 0.6662 - val loss: 2.3965 val_accuracy: 0.4598 - val_precision: 0.1800 - val_recall: 0.5950 Epoch 5/10 accuracy: 0.6048 - precision: 0.2143 - recall: 0.6694 - val_loss: 2.5573 val_accuracy: 0.4537 - val_precision: 0.2075 - val_recall: 0.5766 Epoch 6/10 accuracy: 0.6285 - precision: 0.2461 - recall: 0.6721 - val_loss: 2.7860 val_accuracy: 0.4412 - val_precision: 0.2252 - val_recall: 0.5548 Epoch 7/10 accuracy: 0.6423 - precision: 0.2689 - recall: 0.6735 - val_loss: 2.9067 val_accuracy: 0.4360 - val_precision: 0.2267 - val_recall: 0.5511 Epoch 8/10 accuracy: 0.6509 - precision: 0.2849 - recall: 0.6745 - val_loss: 2.9658 val_accuracy: 0.4372 - val_precision: 0.2396 - val_recall: 0.5440 Epoch 9/10 accuracy: 0.6585 - precision: 0.3004 - recall: 0.6752 - val_loss: 3.1576 val_accuracy: 0.4281 - val_precision: 0.2296 - val_recall: 0.5419 Epoch 10/10 accuracy: 0.6618 - precision: 0.3059 - recall: 0.6757 - val_loss: 3.2077 val_accuracy: 0.4303 - val_precision: 0.2589 - val_recall: 0.5277 accuracy: 0.4160 - precision: 0.2584 - recall: 0.5151

```
[34]: lstm_2_model, lstm_2_metrics = eval_model([
       tf.keras.layers.Dense(100, activation='relu'),
    ], has_lstm=True, embedding_size=256, return_model=True,_
     →model_name='lstm_model_basic_big_embedding')
    Model: "sequential 13"
    Layer (type)
                        Output Shape
    ______
                         (None, 120, 256)
    embedding_13 (Embedding)
                                             51200256
    lstm_3 (LSTM)
                         (None, 30)
                                             34440
    dense_36 (Dense)
                         (None, 100)
                                             3100
    dense_37 (Dense)
                         (None, 42)
                                             4242
    Total params: 51,242,038
    Trainable params: 51,242,038
    Non-trainable params: 0
                    -----
    Epoch 1/10
    1179/1179 [============= ] - 51s 38ms/step - loss: 2.4599 -
    accuracy: 0.4175 - precision: 0.0886 - recall: 0.6511 - val_loss: 2.0810 -
    val_accuracy: 0.5159 - val_precision: 0.1096 - val_recall: 0.7060
    Epoch 2/10
    accuracy: 0.5392 - precision: 0.1217 - recall: 0.7121 - val_loss: 2.0121 -
    val_accuracy: 0.5321 - val_precision: 0.1321 - val_recall: 0.7013
    Epoch 3/10
    accuracy: 0.5805 - precision: 0.1458 - recall: 0.7183 - val_loss: 2.0570 -
    val_accuracy: 0.5273 - val_precision: 0.1522 - val_recall: 0.6880
    Epoch 4/10
    accuracy: 0.6111 - precision: 0.1715 - recall: 0.7205 - val_loss: 2.1547 -
    val_accuracy: 0.5163 - val_precision: 0.1702 - val_recall: 0.6708
    Epoch 5/10
    accuracy: 0.6372 - precision: 0.1989 - recall: 0.7213 - val_loss: 2.2838 -
    val_accuracy: 0.5067 - val_precision: 0.1911 - val_recall: 0.6486
    1179/1179 [============= ] - 25s 21ms/step - loss: 1.4466 -
    accuracy: 0.6576 - precision: 0.2286 - recall: 0.7218 - val_loss: 2.4252 -
    val_accuracy: 0.4976 - val_precision: 0.2135 - val_recall: 0.6314
    Epoch 7/10
```

```
accuracy: 0.6733 - precision: 0.2580 - recall: 0.7220 - val_loss: 2.5856 -
val_accuracy: 0.4916 - val_precision: 0.2309 - val_recall: 0.6163
Epoch 8/10
accuracy: 0.6851 - precision: 0.2864 - recall: 0.7218 - val loss: 2.7519 -
val_accuracy: 0.4871 - val_precision: 0.2407 - val_recall: 0.6059
Epoch 9/10
accuracy: 0.6940 - precision: 0.3129 - recall: 0.7218 - val_loss: 2.8777 -
val_accuracy: 0.4783 - val_precision: 0.2530 - val_recall: 0.5934
Epoch 10/10
accuracy: 0.7006 - precision: 0.3365 - recall: 0.7220 - val_loss: 3.0744 -
val_accuracy: 0.4744 - val_precision: 0.2608 - val_recall: 0.5864
328/328 [============ ] - 2s 6ms/step - loss: 2.9822 -
accuracy: 0.4708 - precision: 0.2657 - recall: 0.5882
```

6 Bigger LSTM model

LSTM model with larger embeddings, more LSTM units, and similar dense layer config as the sequential one.

Model: "sequential_14"

Layer (type)	Output Shape	Param #
embedding_14 (Embedding)	(None, 120, 256)	51200256
lstm_4 (LSTM)	(None, 100)	142800
dense_38 (Dense)	(None, 100)	10100
dropout_10 (Dropout)	(None, 100)	0
dense_39 (Dense)	(None, 100)	10100
dense_40 (Dense)	(None, 42)	4242

Total params: 51,367,498
Trainable params: 51,367,498

```
Epoch 1/10
accuracy: 0.3917 - precision: 0.1144 - recall: 0.5610 - val loss: 2.2677 -
val_accuracy: 0.4860 - val_precision: 0.1470 - val_recall: 0.6040
accuracy: 0.4987 - precision: 0.1566 - recall: 0.6050 - val loss: 2.2191 -
val_accuracy: 0.4929 - val_precision: 0.1820 - val_recall: 0.6024
Epoch 3/10
accuracy: 0.5304 - precision: 0.1876 - recall: 0.6111 - val_loss: 2.2783 -
val_accuracy: 0.4897 - val_precision: 0.2072 - val_recall: 0.5882
Epoch 4/10
accuracy: 0.5508 - precision: 0.2081 - recall: 0.6158 - val_loss: 2.3865 -
val_accuracy: 0.4813 - val_precision: 0.2126 - val_recall: 0.5743
Epoch 5/10
accuracy: 0.5670 - precision: 0.2355 - recall: 0.6204 - val_loss: 2.4991 -
val_accuracy: 0.4712 - val_precision: 0.2309 - val_recall: 0.5562
Epoch 6/10
accuracy: 0.5789 - precision: 0.2602 - recall: 0.6217 - val_loss: 2.6032 -
val_accuracy: 0.4620 - val_precision: 0.2550 - val_recall: 0.5381
Epoch 7/10
accuracy: 0.5876 - precision: 0.2885 - recall: 0.6224 - val_loss: 2.7287 -
val_accuracy: 0.4516 - val_precision: 0.2773 - val_recall: 0.5217
Epoch 8/10
accuracy: 0.5946 - precision: 0.3116 - recall: 0.6224 - val_loss: 2.9187 -
val_accuracy: 0.4551 - val_precision: 0.2748 - val_recall: 0.5208
Epoch 9/10
accuracy: 0.5993 - precision: 0.3264 - recall: 0.6230 - val loss: 3.0364 -
val_accuracy: 0.4532 - val_precision: 0.2771 - val_recall: 0.5187
Epoch 10/10
accuracy: 0.6036 - precision: 0.3469 - recall: 0.6231 - val_loss: 3.1000 -
val_accuracy: 0.4496 - val_precision: 0.2954 - val_recall: 0.5100
328/328 [============ ] - 2s 5ms/step - loss: 3.0211 -
accuracy: 0.4455 - precision: 0.2918 - recall: 0.5126
```

7 Compare and analyze models

```
[37]: model metrics = pd.DataFrame.from records([
          seq_1_metrics, seq_2_metrics, lstm_1_metrics, lstm_2_metrics, lstm_3_metrics
      ])
      model_metrics
[37]:
                                                 train_loss
                                     model_name
                                                              train_acc
      0
                        sequential_model_basic
                                                    1.392291
                                                               0.646750
         sequential_model_basic_big_embedding
      1
                                                    1.332598
                                                               0.661757
      2
                              lstm_model_basic
                                                   1.230588
                                                               0.697850
               lstm_model_basic_big_embedding
      3
                                                    1.219402
                                                               0.700601
      4
                              lstm_model_large
                                                    1.607377
                                                               0.603603
         train_precision
                           train_recall train_f1
                                                    test_loss
                                                                test_acc
      0
                 0.356972
                               0.660458
                                          0.463452
                                                      3.358078
                                                                0.415263
      1
                 0.305888
                               0.675704
                                         0.421132
                                                      3.214554
                                                                0.416026
      2
                 0.293503
                               0.741819
                                          0.420596
                                                      2.791766
                                                                0.472271
      3
                 0.336535
                               0.721972
                                          0.459079
                                                      2.982210
                                                                0.470816
      4
                 0.346931
                               0.623052
                                         0.445690
                                                      3.021123
                                                                0.445521
         test_precision
                          test_recall
                                         test_f1
                                                  val_loss
                                                              val_acc
                                                                        val_precision
      0
               0.264149
                             0.526249
                                        0.351742
                                                  3.336539
                                                             0.433659
                                                                             0.264149
      1
               0.258409
                             0.515129
                                        0.344170
                                                  3.207735
                                                             0.430319
                                                                             0.258409
      2
               0.244146
                             0.626211
                                        0.351320
                                                  2.882399
                                                             0.477509
                                                                             0.244146
      3
               0.265722
                             0.588221
                                        0.366075
                                                  3.074434
                                                             0.474406
                                                                             0.265722
      4
               0.291802
                             0.512600
                                        0.371898
                                                  3.100049
                                                             0.449648
                                                                             0.291802
                        val f1
         val_recall
      0
           0.526249
                      0.356605
      1
           0.515129
                      0.347401
      2
                      0.349655
           0.626211
      3
           0.588221
                      0.361052
           0.512600
                      0.374125
```

Each model has metrics for loss, accuracy, precision, recall, and F_1 score for the train, test, and validation sets. We can see that the $lstm_model_large$ performed the best when compared in F_1 score to the others. Even though the accuracy is about 3% lower on the test set than the next best performing model ($lstm_model_basic$), we accept this tradeoff for better classification performance given the imblanced dataset.

If we wanted to perform better, we may try using pretrained word embeddings to capture semantic word meanings in order to boost classification performance.

Overall, the problem of predicting categories from just a headline proved to be hard to improve performance on, and a larger model does better in F_1 metrics while sometimes sacrificing accuracy.