BERT's little minion:

A tool to normalise time periods extracted from Dutch text

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Oxford / Online, 10-08-2022







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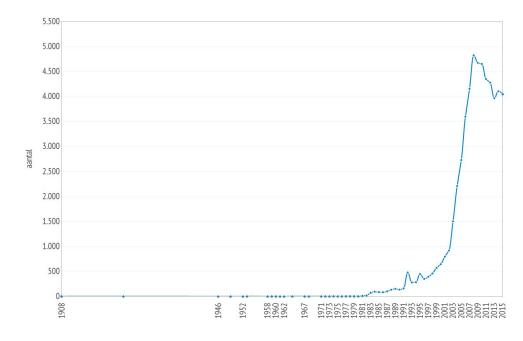




Problem: too much text

- Development-led commercial archaeology due to Malta treaty
- More than 80k reports available, growing with ~8k a year
- Search possible on metadata

Archeologische onderzoeksmeldingen in Nederland - 1908-2015



Eenheid: aantal

Bron: RCE - Monumentenregister - ARCHIS



Works, but doesn't account for synonymy and polysemy

Synonymy: Neolithic

- Neolithic
- Late Stone Age
- **3500 BC**
- 5000 4000 BP
- 4th Millenium BC
- And so on...

Polysemy: Swifterbant

- Place
- Excavation event
- Pottery type
- Time period

Named Entity Recognition (NER)

... the excavation in Amsterdam was ...

... fragments of pottery nearby ...

... dated to the Iron Age. Other finds ...



Deep Learning with BERT

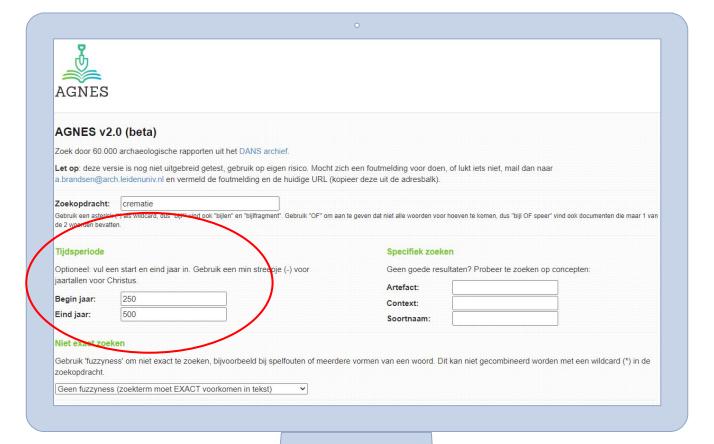
(Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers)

- BERT is a SotA deep learning technique (by Google)
- It can 'learn' a language by looking at large amounts of text
- Afterwards, you can teach it to classify, using human-labelled data
- Created ArcheoBERTje, taught it to detect entities
- Accuracy: 74% (Strict micro F1 score over all classes)



Labelling Full Document Collection

Entity	Total	Unique	Top 5
Artefacts	2,520,492	53,675	pottery, charcoal, flint, bone, brick
Contexts	1,602,124	21,319	pit, ditch, posthole, well, house
Materials	457,031	6,146	wooden, flint, wood, metal, bronze
Locations	3,488,698	147,077	nederland, ', groningen, noord - brabant, gelderland
Species	928,437	34,540	cow, hazel, sheep, goat, pig
Time Periods	4,698,323	98,445	roman period, iron age, 150 - 210, late medieval, modern
Total	13,695,105	361,202	



The Minion: extracting year ranges

https://github.com/alexbrandsen/timeperiod2daterange

- Rules based script: convert entity to start year / end year
- \blacksquare 'Neolithic' → -5200 / -3000 (using thesaurus)
- '1250 BC' \rightarrow -1250 / -1250
- 'second half 3rd century' \rightarrow 250 / 300
- '1450 ± 50 BP' \rightarrow 450 / 550
- Third quarter of the 2nd century to the late Medieval period' \rightarrow 150 / 1450







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Extracting Year Ranges

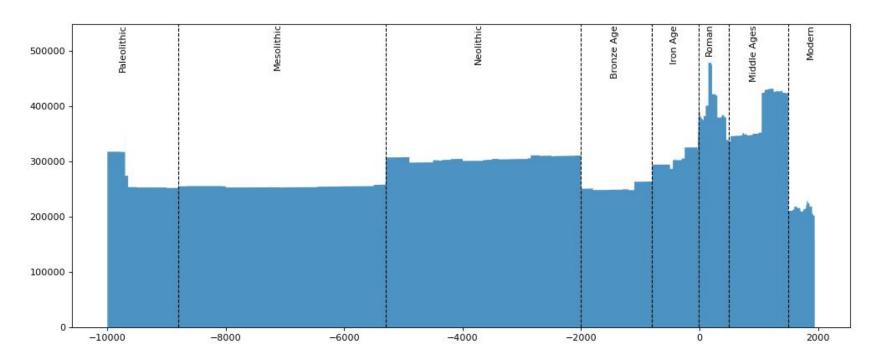


Figure from: Brandsen, A., Verberne, S., Lambers, K., & Wansleeben, M. (2021). Can BERT Dig It? - Named Entity Recognition for Information Retrieval in the Archaeology Domain. *Journal on Computing and Cultural Heritage*. https://doi.org/10.1145/3497842

Future Work

- Multilingual:
 - German
 - English
 - (maybe French?)
- Allows for semantic search:
 - 'Neolithic' also finds 'Neolithicum' and 'Kugelamphoren-Kultur'



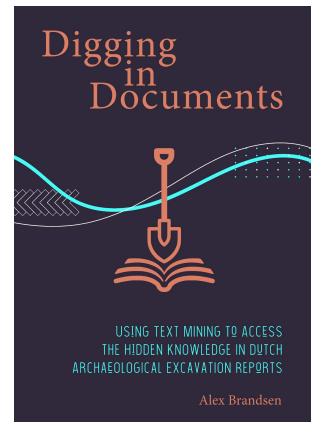




Thanks!

Any questions?

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https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3274287