Discussion on Human-Like Reasoning Implementation Attempts in Large Language Models

compiled by D. Gueorguiev, 3/15/2024

# Quiet-STaR and STaR (Self-Taught Reasoner)

Figure 1: Quiet-STaR algorithmA diagram of a process

Description automatically generated

That is not thinking really. This is another predictive engine which has been trained on preexisting "thoughts". The novelty here is that an online reinforcement learning apparently is being used (policy gradient algorithm REINFORCE) in the "thought" generation. However, I do not see reinforcement-based*simulation* where 1) "thoughts"/ semantic structures are assembled based on *semantic laws* for the evolution of a *dynamical system* and 2) thought inferences are reinforced from previously made inferences. (The latter part 2) of the last statement apparently Zelikman attempts to model in his model). In such kind of simulation thinking will not arise immediately but it will be an emergent phenomenon in an evolutionary process based on the semantic laws (equations of evolution) of the dynamical system. It is a definitely interesting idea which models an important aspect of human thinking - that is reinforcing certain types of "thoughts" based on previously made inferences. but I do not think that this is thinking. What Zelikman is doing is very interesting (and I think a first) - the application of policy gradient RL in online context inside an LLM to reinforce reasoning based on "thoughts" generated in the past and discard "harmful" thoughts with low enough rewards. What Eric Zelikman has done is definitely a step in the right direction.

In [the earlier paper of Zelikman](https://github.com/dimitarpg13/large_language_models/blob/main/articles/human_like_reasoning/STaR-Self-Taught_Reasoner_Bootstrapping_Reasoning_With_Reasoning_Zelikman_2022.pdf) on self-taught reasoning Eric Zelikman does not use Reinforcement Learning to strengthen the importance of previously generated chain of "thoughts". Instead he has adopted the more conventional RAG-like approach in his training loop as can be seen on Figure 2.

A diagram of a language model

Description automatically generated

Figure 2: The STaR algorithm

# References

[1] [Quiet-STaR: Language Models Can Teach Themselves to Think Before Speaking, Eric Zelikman et al, Stanford U., 2024](https://github.com/dimitarpg13/large_language_models/blob/main/articles/human_like_reasoning/Quiet-STaR-Language_Models_Can_Teach_Themselves_to_Think_Before_Speaking_Zelikman_2024.pdf)

[2] [STaR: Self-Taught Reasoner Bootstrapping Reasoning With Reasoning, E. Zelikman et al, 2022](https://github.com/dimitarpg13/large_language_models/blob/main/articles/human_like_reasoning/STaR-Self-Taught_Reasoner_Bootstrapping_Reasoning_With_Reasoning_Zelikman_2022.pdf)