

SOLUTIONS TO MACHINE LEARNING: A PROBABILISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Contents

I. Foundations	5
1. Probabilistic Inference	7

Part I.

Foundations

1. Probabilistic Inference

1. Bayes rule for medical diagnosis

After your yearly checkup, the doctor has bad news and good news. The bad news is that you tested positive for a serious disease, and the test is 99% accurate (i.e., the probability of testing positive given that you have the disease is 0.99, as is the probability of testing negative given that you don't have the disease). The good news is that this rare disease, striking only one in 10,000 people. What are the chances that you actually have the disease?

The probability matrix will be given by table 1.1. The probability of the prevalence of the disease is $p(H = 1) = 1/10000$ for the population. The probability that we are infected and tested positive is

$$\begin{aligned} p(H = 1 | Y = 1) &= \frac{p(Y = 1 | H = 1)p(H = 1)}{p(Y = 1 | H = 1)p(H = 1) + p(Y = 1 | H = 0)p(H = 0)} \\ &= \frac{0.99 \cdot 0.0001}{0.99 \cdot 0.0001 + 0.01 \cdot (1 - 0.0001)} \\ &= 0.0098 \text{ or } 0.98\% \end{aligned}$$

2. Legal reasoning

Suppose a crime has been committed. Blood is found at the scene for which there is no innocent explanation. It is of a type which is present in 1% of the population.

- 2.1. The prosecutor claims: "There is a 1% chance that the defendant would have the crime blood type if he were innocent. Thus there is a 99% chance he is guilty." This is known as the prosecutor's fallacy. What is wrong with this argument?

We are given that the probability of prevalence is $P(H = 1) = 0.01$ so $P(H = 0) = 0.99$. Moreover, the number of people in the community with this rare blood type is 8,000 and there is no innocent explanation for it. That is, the true negative rate, or the probability that person doesn't have this blood and is not guilty is 1. From the probability matrix in table 1.2, we have that true negative rate is 100% and the true positive rate is $1/8000$ for the given blood type; therefore, the probability that we are guilty with the rare blood type is

$$\begin{aligned} p(H = 1 | Y = 1) &= \frac{p(Y = 1 | H = 1)p(H = 1)}{p(Y = 1 | H = 1)p(H = 1) + p(Y = 1 | H = 0)p(H = 0)} \\ &= \frac{1/8000 \cdot 1/100}{1/8000 \cdot 1/100 + 7999/8000 \cdot 99/100} \\ &= 0.000126\% \end{aligned}$$

- 2.2. The defender claims: "The crime occurred in a city of 800,000 people. The blood type would be found in approximately 8,000 people. The evidence has provided a probability of just 1 in 8,000 that the defendant is guilty, and thus has no relevance." This is known as the defender's fallacy. What is wrong with this argument?

	Y = 0	Y = 1
H = 0	0.99	0.01
H = 1	0.01	0.99

Table 1.1.: The probability matrix for the given rare disease.

	Y = 0	Y = 1
H = 0	1	0
H = 1	7999 / 8000	1 / 8000

Table 1.2.: The probability matrix for guilty and rare blood and vice versa.