Islamic Fatwa Question Answering System

Introduction

The aim of this project is to create an intelligent Islamic Fatwa Question Answering (QA) system, that is capable of:

- 1- Taking a user's input as a question
- 2- Searching the most relevant fatwa from the dataset
- 3- Extracting the correct answer from the fatwa content

We utilized deep learning techniques including BERT fine-tuning and FAISS vector search to optimize accuracy and speed.

Dataset Preparation

Dataset Source:

Scraped from Islam Web Fatwas database using Selenium tool as it was the most useful tool to scrape dynamic and interactive websites by simulating real user behavior in a browser.

Key Columns:

- "URL" → Fatwa's link
- "Question" → Fatwa Question
- "Text" → Fatwa answer context

	link	question	answer
0	https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/510664/%D8%A	هل يجوز لذا دخول المسجد الحرام وتحن ترتدي أحذي	الحمد الله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله،وعلى
1	https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/509005/%D8%B	هل يجوز للمقتدر أخذ كفن من المسجد؟ وهل يجب على	الحمد لله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، وعلى
2	https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/509749/%D8%A	حاليًّا، أسكن بالإيجار مقابل 10 ألاف جديه شهرئِ	الحمد الله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، وعلى
3	https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/510337/%D9%8	هل عمل المعصية أثناء الطاعة يبطل الطاعة؟ مثل ع	الحمد أله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، وعلى
4	https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/509116/%D8%A	سؤالى بخصوص اللحوم المستوردة من بلاد يغلب عليه	الحمد أله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، وعلى

Preprocessing Steps:

- Diacritics removal
- Opening sentences removal
- Text cleaning
- Preparing only the important columns

Model Architecture Overview

The project is divided into two major modules:

- **Retriever:** Find the most similar fatwa question using FAISS and dense embeddings.
- **Extractor:** Fine-tuned BERT QA model extracts the correct answer span from the retrieved context.

Then the system can answer user queries by finding relevant fatwas in a dataset and extracting the exact answers from them. It involves fine-tuning a BERT model, using dense retrieval methods, and applying the hybrid retrieval approach for better accuracy.

Model Components and Steps

Step 1: Loading Fine-Tuned BERT Model

The **BERT model** is used for **answering extractive questions** (QA), We fine-tune the Arabic BERT model to extract answers from a fatwa context

Using:

- **AutoTokenizer:** tokenize questions and context.
- **AutoModelForQuestionAnswering:** to load the BERT model pretrained for question answering.

Step 2: Loading the Fatwa Dataset

We read the cleaned CSV, separated the questions for search, and contexts for answers extraction, we loaded the dataset from a CSV file and then convert it into a HuggingFace dataset format

Step 3: Preprocessing the data

A custom preprocessing function is defined to:

- Tokenize the input question and context.
- Map start and end positions for the answer.

Step 4: Defining training arguments

The **TrainingArguments** configure the training parameters such as the batch size, learning rate, and number of epochs.

Step 5: Training the Model

We use the **Trainer API** from HuggingFace to start training the model, the training uses the prepared dataset and training arguments.

Step 6: Saving the fine-tuned model

Once the model finishes training, we save the fine-tuned model and tokenizer for later

Step 7: Building the Retrieval System

For this part, we use:

BM25 (Best Matching 25):

- It is a sparse retrieval method used to find the most relevant documents based on a query.
- How it works?

It scores document by considering:

- The <u>frequency</u> of query terms in the document (how many times words from the query appear).
- The <u>inverse document frequency (IDF)</u>, which measures how common or rare the words are across all documents.

Dense Retrieval:

- It moves beyond simple keyword matching.
- How it works?
 - It uses deep learning models (like Sentence-BERT) to embed both queries and documents into dense vectors (numerical representations of meaning). The system then computes the semantic similarity between these vectors to find the most relevant documents.
 - Used to understand the meaning behind words, rather than just matching exact keywords.

Sentence-BERT:

• It is a modification of the **BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers)** model, specifically fine-tuned for **sentence-level embedding**.

FAISS (Facebook AI Similarity Search):

• It is a library designed for <u>fast nearest-neighbor search</u>. It can efficiently search through large collections of dense vectors (embeddings generated by Sentence-BERT) to find the most similar ones.

Step 7: Improved Retrieval Function

By combining BM25 for fast keyword matching and Dense Retrieval with FAISS for deep semantic matching, the search system can be much more efficient and accurate in retrieving relevant documents.

Step 8: Generating Training Data for Fine-Tuning

Then, we created a dataset for positive and negative question-paragraph pairs to fine-tune the retrieval model.

Step 9: Fine-Tuning the Retrieval Model

We fine-tune a **Sentence-BERT** model on the dataset of question-paragraph pairs for **retrieval re-ranking**.

Step 10: FAISS Index for Final Retrieval

Finally, we save the embeddings and build the final FAISS index for efficient search.

Step 11: Retrieval and Answering Pipeline

- Search the Best Matching Fatwa
- Extract the Final Answer

Building the Gradio Interface for deployment

- Provides an easy-to-use web interface for users to input questions and view answers.
- Generated a public URL to access the app.

(Islamic Fatwa QA System) نظام الإجابة على الفتاوى الإسلامية

السؤال وسيقوم النظام بالبحث عن أقرب فتوى واستحراج الإجابة بدقة باستحدام الذكاء الاصطناعي السؤال (السؤال السؤال المقتدر أحد كفن من المسجد؟ وهل بجب عليه رد مثله لاحقا؟ وكيف يتصرف القالم على المسجد إذا طلب المقتدر أحد كفن من المسجد؟ وهل بجب عليه رد مثله لاحقا؟ وكيف يتصرف القالم على المسجد إذا طلب المقتدر أحد كفن من المسجد عليه و المترح به المترح به أن حصر الانتفاع به في الفقراء أو غير الفادر إحده . ولا القادر إحده . ولا القادر أحده على المسجد مرفة أنه . ولن لم يشرط المتبرع ذلك - بل وضعه لينتفع به عموم الناس ، فلا حرج عب المسجد مرف المداور أن يد بدله . ولأن أن هذا الكفن من أموال الصدقات التي تجمع في المسجد ، فلا يحوز صرفة اللمن يصح صرف الصدقات اليه ، وهم الفقراء اعلم المترك من أموال الصدقات التي تجمع في المسجد ، وانطر للفايدة الفنويين : 459522 ، 457918 والله أعلم

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Conclusion

This project successfully built an **Islamic Fatwa QA system** combining:

- Modern NLP models (BERT-based fine-tuning)
- Efficient retrieval systems (FAISS)
- Professional deployment (Gradio)

It can help users instantly find and extract Islamic rulings from thousands of fatwas with minimal effort.