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      "chunk": "Springer Nature 2021 LATEX template Learning Curves for Decision Making in Supervised Machine Learning: A Survey Felix Mohr1* and Jan N. van Rijn2 1Universidad de La Sabana, Chía, Cundinamarca, Colombia. 2Leiden Institute of Advanced Computer Science, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands. *Corresponding author(s). E-mail(s): felix.mohr@unisabana.edu.co; Contributing authors: j.n.van.rijn@liacs.leidenuniv.nl; Abstract Learning curves are a concept from social sciences that has been adopted in the context of machine learning to assess the performance of a learning algorithm with respect to a certain resource, e.g., the number of training examples or the number of training iterations. Learning curves have important applications in several machine learning contexts, most notably in data acquisition, early stopping of model training, and model selection. For instance, learning curves can be used to model the performance of the combination of an algorithm and its hyperparameter configuration, providing insights into their potential suitability at an early stage and often expediting the algorithm selection process. Various learning curve models have been proposed to use learning curves for decision making. Some of these models answer the binary decision question of whether a given algorithm at a certain budget will outperform a certain reference performance, whereas more complex models predict the entire learning curve of an algorithm. We contribute a framework that categorises learning curve approaches using three criteria: the decision-making situation they address, the intrinsic learning curve question they answer and the type of resources they use. We survey papers from the literature and classify them into this framework. Keywords: learning curves, supervised machine learning 1 arXiv:2201.12150v2 [cs.LG] 28 Jan 2025 Springer Nature 2021 LATEX template 2 Learning Curves for Decision Making 1 Introduction Learning curves describe a system's performance on a task as a function of some resource to solve that task. There can be a pre-defined budget of that resource, limiting the amount of resources that can be spent. In other cases, the goal can be to obtain reasonable results while minimising the spent budget of that resource. Typical types of budgets are the number of examples the learner has observed before performing the task or the number of iterations or time the learner spends in an environment. The performance measure expresses the quality of the obtained model, e.g., error rate or F1 measure. Learning curves are an important source of information for making decisions on the following matters in machine learning: • Data Acquisition determines how many data points should reasonably be acquired to obtain a desired performance. The top right plot in Fig. 1 visualises a scenario where we have already observed performance up to a certain amount of data (the blue learning curve). We can extrapolate this and make a prediction of what the performance would be if more data was available, i.e., the value of the orange extrapolation at different vertical pink lines in the figure (see, e.g., Last, 2009; Weiss and Tian, 2008). • Early Stopping of training a model. If we are committed to some specific learner (a learning algorithm and its hyperparameters), we might want to minimise the",
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    "chunk": "may be difficult or impossible for humans to discern. The typical process of designing a machine learning algorithm consists of two main phases: training and inference. During the training phase, the parameters of a machine learning model are tuned to solve a specific task. For this, a wide variety of data sources can be used, or even outputs from existing or pre-trained machine learning models. After the model is trained, its parameters are kept fixed so that the model can be used to predict outcomes or identify patterns in new or previously unseen data. This process is called inference. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between training and inference. After training, the model remains unchanged, and it remains unchanged until it is retrained again. Later, in Section 3, we will focus on the disparities that this can cause w.r.t. the inference phase and, in consequence, official statistics production. Supervised learning is one of the most common types of machine learning used for official statistics. This method involves training a model on a labeled dataset, where each data point has a known outcome or target variable. The model learns to associate features in the data with the target variable, enabling it to make predictions on new data with similar features. In the context of official statistics, supervised learning can for example be used to predict the happiness of an individual based on their Twitter profile [8]. Unsupervised learning, on the other hand, is used when the target variable is unknown or the goal is to identify patterns or relationships within the data. In this approach, the machine learning model learns to recognize similarities and differences among input data without explicit guidance from labeled data. In the context of official statistics, unsupervised learning can for example be used to identify citizens, companies or events that are similar to each other on one or more aspects that could be hidden from plain sight [9]. Machine learning can be used to complement or even replace official statistics, and its ability to nowcast and forecast is an extremely valuable addition. Modern machine learning models, tools and hardware can analyze vast amounts of data in real-time or near-real-time, providing more up-to-date and precise estimates of e.g. economic and social trends. By 1Although originally (and technically) they imply different methods and techniques, the terms machine learning, data science, artificial intelligence, deep learning... are nowadays considered interchangeable. In this paper we consistently use the term machine learning to denote the scientific discipline concerned with learning the most optimal model parameters based on data. It is a subdiscipline of artificial intelligence, while deep learning is a subdiscipline of machine learning. Data science encompasses both machine learning as well as data preparation, analytics and visualization. 2 incorporating machine learning into official statistical production, one can benefit from the strengths of both approaches and make more informed decisions based on the most current and accurate data [10]. 2.2 External data sources Let's focus on the data sources that will power such machine learning models. Their nature, size, structure, frequency... can",
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