TTIC 31230, Fundamentals of Deep Learning

David McAllester, Autumn 2020

Some Information Theory

Why Information Theory?

The fundamental equation involves cross-entropy.

Cross-entropy is an information-theoretic concept.

Information theory arises in many places and many forms in deep learning.

Entropy of a Distribution

The entropy of a distribution P is defined by

$$H(P) = E_{y\sim P}\left[\,-\ln P(y)\right] \;\text{ in units of “nats”}$$

$$H_2(P) = E_{y\sim P}\left[\,-\log_2 P(y)\right] \text{ in units of bits}$$

Why Bits?

Why is $-\log_2 \ P(y)$ a number of bits?

Example: Let P be a uniform distribution on 256 values.

$$E_{y \sim P}\ [-\log_2 P(y)] = -\log_2 \frac{1}{256} = \log_2 256 = 8 \text{ bits} = 1 \text{ byte}$$

$$1 \text{ nat} = \frac{1}{\ln 2} \text{ bits} \approx 1.44 \text{ bits}$$

Shannon's Source Coding Theorem

Why is $-\log_2\ P(y)$ a number of bits?

A prefix-free code for $\mathcal{Y}$ assigns a bit string $c(y)$ to each $y \in \mathcal{Y}$ such that no code string is prefix of any other code string.

For a probability distribution P on $\mathcal{Y}$ we consider the average code length $E_{y\sim P}\ [\ |c(y)|]$.

Theorem: For any c we have $E_{y\sim P}\ |c(y)| \geq H_2(P)$.

Theorem: There exists c with $E_{y\sim P}\ |c(y)| \leq H_2(P) + 1$.

Cross Entropy

Let P and Q be two distribution on the same set.

$$H(P,Q) = E_{y\sim P}\ [-\ln\ Q(y)]$$

$$\Phi^* = \operatorname*{argmin}_{\Phi}\ H(\mathrm{Pop}, P_\Phi)$$

H(P,Q) also has a data compression interpretation.

$H(P,Q)$ can be interpreted as 1.44 times the number of bits used to code draws from P when using the imperfect code defined by Q.

Entropy, Cross Entropy and KL Divergence

Let P and Q be two distribution on the same set.

$$\begin{aligned}
\text{Entropy}: \quad H(P) &= E_{y\sim P}\,[-\ln\ P(y)] \\
\text{CrossEntropy}: \quad H(P,Q) &= E_{y\sim P}\,[-\ln\ Q(y)] \\
\text{KL Divergence}: \quad KL(P,Q) &= H(P,Q) - H(P) \\
&= E_{y\sim P}\quad \ln\frac{P(y)}{Q(y)}
\end{aligned}$$

We have $H(P,Q) \geq H(P)$ or equivalently $KL(P,Q) \geq 0$.

The Universality Assumption

$$\Phi^* = \underset{\Phi}{\text{argmin}}\ H(\text{Pop}, P_\Phi) = \underset{\Phi}{\text{argmin}}\ H(\text{Pop}) + KL(\text{Pop}, P_\Phi)$$

Universality assumption: P_Φ can represent any distribution and Φ can be fully optimized.

This is clearly false for deep networks. But it gives important insights like:

$$P_{\Phi^*} = \text{Pop}$$

This is the motivatation for the fundamental equation.

Asymmetry of Cross Entropy

Consider

$$\Phi^* = \operatorname*{argmin}_{\Phi} \; H(\mathrm{Pop}, Q_\Phi) \qquad (1)$$

$$\Phi^* = \operatorname*{argmin}_{\Phi} \; H(Q_\Phi, \mathrm{Pop}) \qquad (2)$$

We cannot use (2) because we cannot calculate $\mathrm{Pop}(y|x)$.

In any case, (2) produces mode collapse — Q_Φ is concentrated on the most likely values.

Asymmetry of KL Divergence

Consider

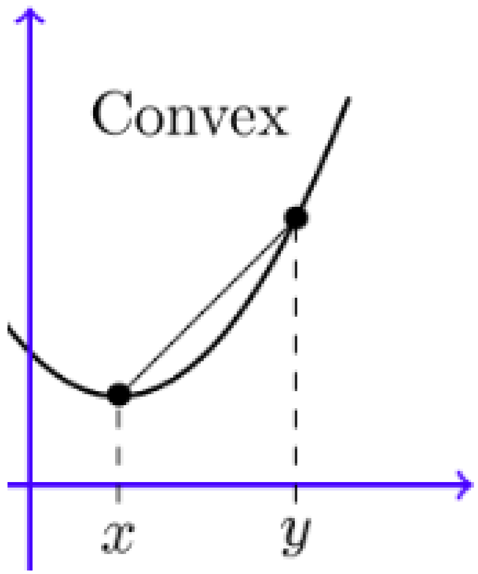
$$
\begin{aligned}
\Phi^* &= \underset{\Phi}{\mathrm{argmin}}\;\; KL(\mathrm{Pop}, Q_\Phi) \\
&= \underset{\Phi}{\mathrm{argmin}}\;\; H(\mathrm{Pop}, Q_\Phi)
\end{aligned}
\qquad (1)
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\Phi^* &= \underset{\Phi}{\mathrm{argmin}}\;\; KL(Q_\Phi, \mathrm{Pop}) \\
&= \underset{\Phi}{\mathrm{argmin}}\, H(Q_\Phi, \mathrm{Pop}) - H(Q_\Phi)
\end{aligned}
\qquad (2)
$$

We cannot use (2) because we cannot calculate $\mathrm{Pop}(y|x)$.

In any case, in practice (2) tends to produce mode collapse.

Proving $KL(P, Q) \geq 0$: Jensen's Inequality



For f convex (upward curving) we have

$$E[f(x)] \geq f(E[x])$$

Proving $KL(P,Q) \geq 0$

$$
\begin{aligned}
KL(P,Q) &= E_{y \sim P}\ \left[-\ln \frac{Q(y)}{P(y)}\right] \\
&\geq -\ln E_{y \sim P}\ \frac{Q(y)}{P(y)} \\
&= -\ln \sum_y\ P(y)\frac{Q(y)}{P(y)} \\
&= -\ln \sum_y Q(y) \\
&= 0
\end{aligned}
$$

Summary

$\Phi^* = \mathrm{argmin}_\Phi \;\; H(\mathrm{Pop}, P_\Phi)$ unconditional

$\Phi^* = \mathrm{argmin}_\Phi \;\; E_{x\sim\mathrm{Pop}}\; H(\mathrm{Pop}(y|x), P_\Phi(y|x))$ conditional

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{Entropy :} \quad & H(P) \;=\; E_{y\sim P}\;[-\ln\; P(y)] \\
\text{CrossEntropy :} \quad & H(P,Q) \;=\; E_{y\sim P}\;[-\ln\; Q(y)] \\
\text{KL Divergence :} \quad & KL(P,Q) \;=\; H(P,Q) - H(P) \\
& \qquad\qquad\;\; = \; E_{y\sim P}\quad \ln\;\frac{P(y)}{Q(y)}
\end{aligned}
$$

$H(P,Q) \geq H(P), \quad KL(P,Q) \geq 0, \quad \mathrm{argmin}_Q\; H(P,Q) = P$

END