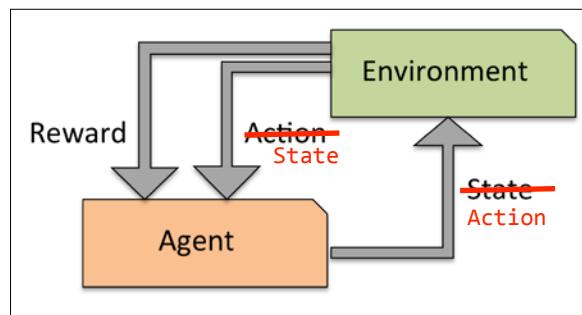


Solving interactive problems with reinforcement learning

Another type of machine learning is reinforcement learning. In reinforcement learning, the goal is to develop a system (*agent*) that improves its performance based on interactions with the *environment*. Since the information about the current state of the environment typically also includes a so-called *reward* signal, we can think of reinforcement learning as a field related to *supervised* learning. However, in reinforcement learning this feedback is not the correct ground truth label or value, but a measure of how well the action was measured by a *reward* function. Through the interaction with the environment, an agent can then use reinforcement learning to learn a series of actions that maximizes this reward via an exploratory trial-and-error approach or deliberative planning.

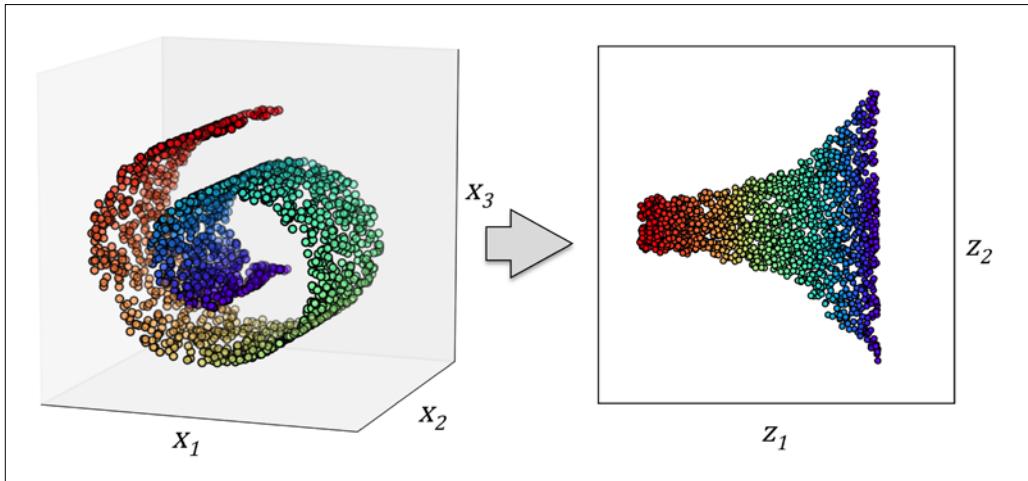
A popular example of reinforcement learning is a chess engine. Here, the agent decides upon a series of moves depending on the state of the board (the environment), and the reward can be defined as *win* or *lose* at the end of the game:



Discovering hidden structures with unsupervised learning

In supervised learning, we know the *right answer* beforehand when we train our model, and in reinforcement learning, we define a measure of *reward* for particular actions by the agent. In unsupervised learning, however, we are dealing with unlabeled data or data of *unknown structure*. Using unsupervised learning techniques, we are able to explore the structure of our data to extract meaningful information without the guidance of a known outcome variable or reward function.

Sometimes, dimensionality reduction can also be useful for visualizing data—for example, a high-dimensional feature set can be projected onto one-, two-, or three-dimensional feature spaces in order to visualize it via 3D- or 2D-scatterplots or histograms. The figure below shows an example where non-linear dimensionality reduction was applied to compress a 3D *Swiss Roll* onto a new 2D feature subspace:



An introduction to the basic terminology and notations

Now that we have discussed the three broad categories of machine learning—supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning—let us have a look at the basic terminology that we will be using in the next chapters. The following table depicts an excerpt of the *Iris* dataset, which is a classic example in the field of machine learning. The Iris dataset contains the measurements of 150 iris flowers from three different species: *Setosa*, *Versicolor*, and *Virginica*. Here, each flower sample represents one row in our data set, and the flower measurements in centimeters are stored as columns, which we also call the features of the dataset:

For the rest of this book, we will use the superscript (i) to refer to the i th training sample, and the subscript j to refer to the j th dimension of the training dataset.

We use lower-case, bold-face letters to refer to vectors ($\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times 1}$) and upper-case, bold-face letters to refer to matrices, respectively ($\mathbf{X} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times m}$). To refer to single elements in a vector or matrix, we write the letters in italics ($x^{(n)}$ or $x_{(m)}^{(n)}$, respectively).

For example, x_1^{150} refers to the first dimension of flower sample 150, the *sepal width*. Thus, each row in this feature matrix represents one flower instance and can be written as four-dimensional column vector $\mathbf{x}^{(i)} \in \mathbb{R}^{1 \times 4}$,

$$\mathbf{x}^{(i)} = \begin{bmatrix} x_1^{(i)} & x_2^{(i)} & x_3^{(i)} & x_4^{(i)} \end{bmatrix}.$$

 Each feature dimension is a 150-dimensional row vector $\mathbf{x}^{(i)} \in \mathbb{R}^{150 \times 1}$, for example:

$$\mathbf{x}_j = \begin{bmatrix} x_j^{(1)} \\ x_j^{(2)} \\ \vdots \\ x_j^{(150)} \end{bmatrix}.$$

Similarly, we store the target variables (here: class labels) as a

$$150\text{-dimensional column vector } \mathbf{y} = \begin{bmatrix} y^{(1)} \\ \dots \\ y^{(150)} \end{bmatrix} (y \in \{\text{Setosa, Versicolor, Virginica}\}).$$

A roadmap for building machine learning systems

In the previous sections, we discussed the basic concepts of machine learning and the three different types of learning. In this section, we will discuss other important parts of a machine learning system accompanying the learning algorithm. The diagram below shows a typical workflow diagram for using machine learning in *predictive modeling*, which we will discuss in the following subsections:

In the following chapter, we will implement one of the earliest machine learning algorithms for classification that will prepare us for *Chapter 3, A Tour of Machine Learning Classifiers Using Scikit-learn*, where we cover more advanced machine learning algorithms using the scikit-learn open source machine learning library. Since machine learning algorithms learn from data, it is critical that we feed them useful information, and in *Chapter 4, Building Good Training Sets – Data Preprocessing* we will take a look at important data preprocessing techniques. In *Chapter 5, Compressing Data via Dimensionality Reduction*, we will learn about dimensionality reduction techniques that can help us to compress our dataset onto a lower-dimensional feature subspace, which can be beneficial for computational efficiency. An important aspect of building machine learning models is to evaluate their performance and to estimate how well they can make predictions on new, unseen data. In *Chapter 6, Learning Best Practices for Model Evaluation and Hyperparameter Tuning* we will learn all about the best practices for model tuning and evaluation. In certain scenarios, we still may not be satisfied with the performance of our predictive model although we may have spent hours or days extensively tuning and testing. In *Chapter 7, Combining Different Models for Ensemble Learning* we will learn how to combine different machine learning models to build even more powerful predictive systems.

After we covered all of the important concepts of a typical machine learning pipeline, we will implement a model for predicting emotions in text in *Chapter 8, Applying Machine Learning to Sentiment Analysis*, and in *Chapter 9, Embedding a Machine Learning Model into a Web Application*, we will embed it into a Web application to share it with the world. In *Chapter 10, Predicting Continuous Target Variables with Regression Analysis* we will then use machine learning algorithms for regression analysis that allow us to predict continuous output variables, and in *Chapter 11, Working with Unlabelled Data – Clustering Analysis* we will apply clustering algorithms that will allow us to find hidden structures in data. ~~The last chapter~~ in this book will cover artificial neural networks that will allow us to tackle complex problems, such as image and speech recognition, which is currently one of the hottest topics in machine-learning research.

The last two chapters

Where η is the learning rate (a constant between 0.0 and 1.0), $y^{(i)}$ is the true class label of the i th training sample, and $\hat{y}^{(i)}$ is the predicted class label. It is important to note that all weights in the weight vector are being updated simultaneously, which means that we don't recompute the $\hat{y}^{(i)}$ before all of the weights Δw_j were updated. Concretely, for a 2D dataset, we would write the update as follows:

$$\Delta w_0 = \eta(y^{(i)} - output^{(i)})$$

$$\Delta w_1 = \eta(y^{(i)} - output^{(i)})x_1^{(i)}$$

$$\Delta w_2 = \eta(y^{(i)} - output^{(i)})x_2^{(i)}$$

Before we implement the perceptron rule in Python, let us make a simple thought experiment to illustrate how beautifully simple this learning rule really is. In the two scenarios where the perceptron predicts the class label correctly, the weights remain unchanged:

$$\Delta w_j = \eta(-1 - -1)x_j^{(i)} = 0$$

$$\Delta w_j = \eta(1 - 1)x_j^{(i)} = 0$$

However, in the case of a wrong prediction, the weights are being pushed towards the direction of the positive or negative target class, respectively:

$$\Delta w_j = \eta(1 - -1)x_j^{(i)} = \eta(2)x_j^{(i)}$$

$$\Delta w_j = \eta(-1 - 1)x_j^{(i)} = \eta(-2)x_j^{(i)}$$

To get a better intuition for the multiplicative factor $x_j^{(i)}$, let us go through another simple example, where:



$$\hat{y}_j^{(i)} = +1, \quad y^{(i)} = -1, \quad \eta = 1$$

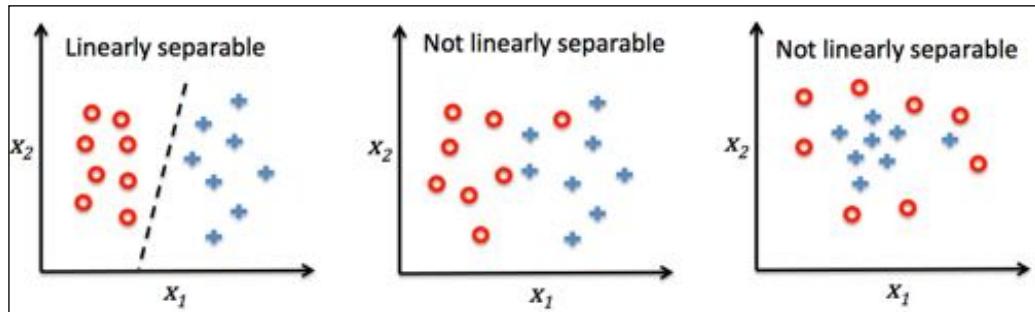
Let's assume that $x_j^{(i)} = 0.5$, and we misclassify this sample as -1. In this case, we would increase the corresponding weight by 1 so that the activation $x_j^{(i)} \cdot w_j^{(i)}$ will be more positive the next time we encounter this sample and thus will be more likely to be above the threshold of the unit step function to classify the sample as +1:

$$\Delta w_j^{(i)} = (1^{(i)} - -1^{(i)}) 0.5^{(i)} = (2) 0.5^{(i)} = 1$$

The weight update is proportional to the value of $x_j^{(i)}$. For example, if we have another sample $x_j^{(i)} = 2$ that is incorrectly classified as -1, we'd push the decision boundary by an even larger extend to classify this sample correctly the next time:

$$\Delta w_j^{(i)} = (1^{(i)} - -1^{(i)}) 2^{(i)} = (2) 2^{(i)} = 4$$

It is important to note that the convergence of the perceptron is only guaranteed if the two classes are linearly separable and the learning rate is sufficiently small. If the two classes can't be separated by a linear decision boundary, we can set a maximum number of passes over the training dataset (*epochs*) and/or a threshold for the number of tolerated misclassifications – the perceptron would never stop updating the weights otherwise:



Downloading the example code

You can download the example code files from your account at <http://www.packtpub.com> for all the Packt Publishing books you have purchased. If you purchased this book elsewhere, you can visit <http://www.packtpub.com/support> and register to have the files e-mailed directly to you.



After the weights have been initialized, the `fit` method loops over all individual samples in the training set and updates the weights according to the perceptron learning rule that we discussed in the previous section. The class labels are predicted by the `predict` method, which is also called in the `fit` method to predict the class label for the weight update, but `predict` can also be used to predict the class labels of new data after we have fitted our model. Furthermore, we also collect the number of misclassifications during each epoch in the list `self.errors_` so that we can later analyze how well our perceptron performed during the training. The `np.dot` function that is used in the `net_input` method simply calculates the vector dot product $\mathbf{w}^T \mathbf{x}$.

 Instead of using NumPy to calculate the vector dot product between two arrays `a` and `b` via `a.dot(b)` or `np.dot(a, b)`, we could also perform the calculation in pure Python via `sum(i*j for i, j in zip(a, b))`. However, the advantage of using NumPy over classic Python for-loop structures is that its arithmetic operations are vectorized. **Vectorization** means that an elemental arithmetic operation is automatically applied to all elements in an array. By formulating our arithmetic operations as a sequence of instructions on an array rather than performing a set of operations for each element one at a time, we can make better use of our modern CPU architectures with **Single Instruction, Multiple Data (SIMD)** support. Furthermore, NumPy uses highly optimized linear algebra libraries, such as **Basic Linear Algebra Subprograms (BLAS)** and **Linear Algebra Package (LAPACK)** that have been written in C or Fortran. Lastly, NumPy also allows us to write our code in a more compact and intuitive way using the basics of linear algebra, such as vector and matrix dot products.

Training a perceptron model on the Iris dataset

To test our perceptron implementation, we will load the two flower classes *Setosa* and *Versicolor* from the Iris dataset. Although, the perceptron rule is not restricted to two dimensions, we will only consider the two features *sepal length* and *petal length* for visualization purposes. Also, we only chose the two flower classes *Setosa* and *Versicolor* for practical reasons. However, the perceptron algorithm can be extended to multi-class classification—for example, through the *One-vs.-All* technique.

 **One-vs.-All (OvA)**, or sometimes also called **One-vs.-Rest (OvR)**, is a technique used to extend a binary classifier to multi-class problems. Using OvA, we can train one classifier per class, where the particular class is treated as the positive class and the samples from all other classes are considered as the negative class. If we were to classify a new data sample, we would use our n classifiers, where n is the number of class labels, and assign the class label with the highest confidence to the particular sample. In the case of the perceptron, we would use OvA to choose the class label that is associated with the largest absolute net input value.

First, we will use the *pandas* library to load the Iris dataset directly from the *UCI Machine Learning Repository* into a *DataFrame* object and print the last five lines via the *tail* method to check that the data was loaded correctly:

```
>>> import pandas as pd  
>>> df = pd.read_csv('https://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/'  
...     'machine-learning-databases/iris/iris.data', header=None)  
>>> df.tail()
```

| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|
| 145 | 6.7 | 3.0 | 5.2 | 2.3 | Iris-virginica |
| 146 | 6.3 | 2.5 | 5.0 | 1.9 | Iris-virginica |
| 147 | 6.5 | 3.0 | 5.2 | 2.0 | Iris-virginica |
| 148 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 5.4 | 2.3 | Iris-virginica |
| 149 | 5.9 | 3.0 | 5.1 | 1.8 | Iris-virginica |

Next, we extract the first 100 class labels that correspond to the 50 *Iris-Setosa* and 50 *Iris-Versicolor* flowers, respectively, and convert the class labels into the two integer class labels 1 (*Versicolor*) and -1 (*Setosa*) that we assign to a vector *y* where the values method of a *pandas DataFrame* yields the corresponding NumPy representation. Similarly, we extract the first feature column (*sepal length*) and the third feature column (*petal length*) of those 100 training samples and assign them to a feature matrix *x*, which we can visualize via a two-dimensional scatter plot:

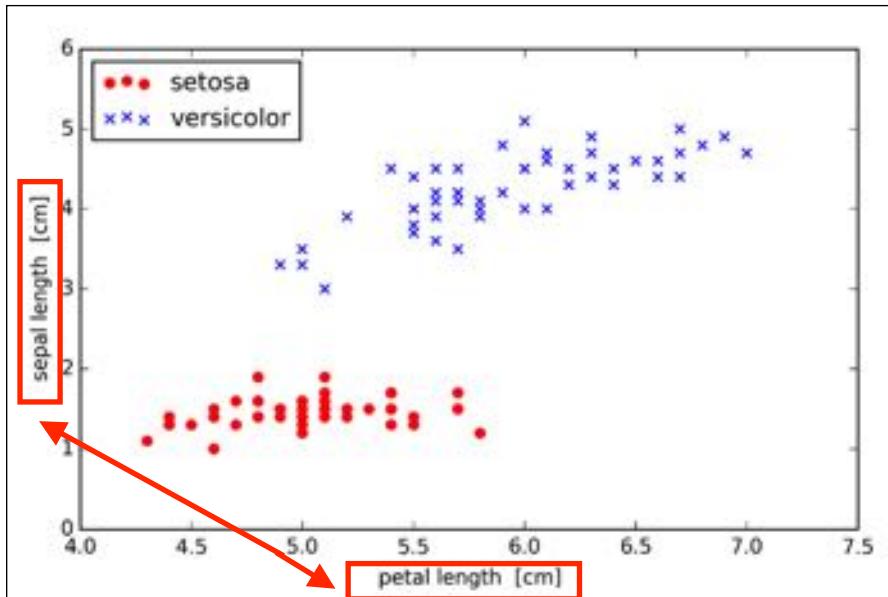
```
>>> import matplotlib.pyplot as plt  
>>> import numpy as np  
  
>>> y = df.iloc[0:100, 4].values
```

```

>>> y = np.where(y == 'Iris-setosa', -1, 1)
>>> X = df.iloc[0:100, [0, 2]].values
>>> plt.scatter(X[:50, 0], X[:50, 1],
...                 color='red', marker='o', label='setosa')
>>> plt.scatter(X[50:100, 0], X[50:100, 1],
...                 color='blue', marker='x', label='versicolor')
>>> plt.xlabel('petal length')  
    ↘
>>> plt.ylabel('sepal length')  
    ↘
>>> plt.legend(loc='upper left')
>>> plt.show()

```

After executing the preceding code example we should now see the following scatterplot:



Now it's time to train our perceptron algorithm on the Iris data subset that we just extracted. Also, we will plot the misclassification error for each epoch to check if the algorithm converged and found a decision boundary that separates the two Iris flower classes:

```

>>> ppn = Perceptron(eta=0.1, n_iter=10)
>>> ppn.fit(X, y)
>>> plt.plot(range(1, len(ppn.errors_) + 1), ppn.errors_,

```

If we compare the preceding figure to the illustration of the perceptron algorithm that we saw earlier, the difference is that we know to use the continuous valued output from the linear activation function to compute the model error and update the weights, rather than the binary class labels.

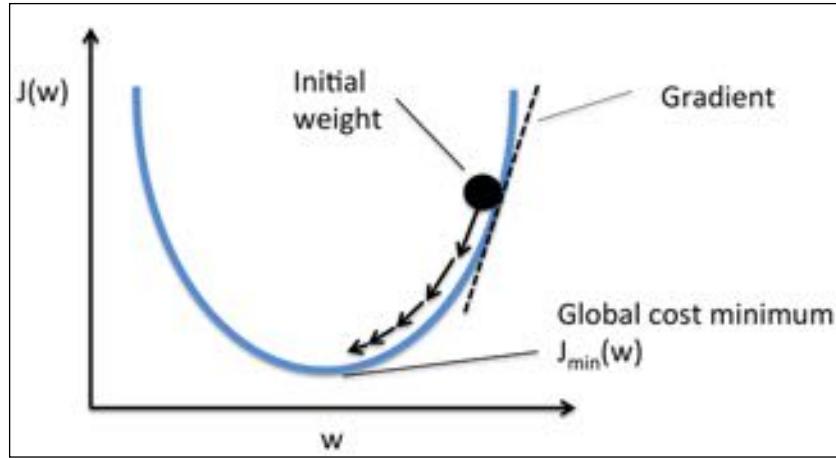
Minimizing cost functions with gradient descent

One of the key ingredients of supervised machine learning algorithms is to define an *objective function* that is to be optimized during the learning process. This objective function is often a *cost function* that we want to minimize. In the case of Adaline, we can define the cost function J to learn the weights as the **Sum of Squared Errors (SSE)** between the calculated outcome^s and the true class labels^s

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_i (y^{(i)} - \phi(z^{(i)}))^2.$$

The term $\frac{1}{2}$ is just added for our convenience; it will make it easier to derive the gradient, as we will see in the following paragraphs. The main advantage of this continuous linear activation function is – in contrast to the unit step function – that the cost function becomes differentiable. Another nice property of this cost function is that it is convex; thus, we can use a simple, yet powerful, optimization algorithm called *gradient descent* to find the weights that minimize our cost function to classify the samples in the Iris dataset.

As illustrated in the following figure, we can describe the principle behind gradient descent as *climbing down a hill* until a local or global cost minimum is reached. In each iteration, we take a step away from the gradient where the step size is determined by the value of the learning rate as well as the slope of the gradient:



Using gradient descent, we can now update the weights by taking a step away from the gradient $\nabla J(\mathbf{w})$ of our cost function $J(\mathbf{w})$:

$$\mathbf{w} := \mathbf{w} + \Delta\mathbf{w}$$

Here, the weight change $\Delta\mathbf{w}$ is defined as the negative gradient multiplied by the learning rate η :

$$\Delta\mathbf{w} = -\eta \nabla J(\mathbf{w})$$

To compute the gradient of the cost function, we need to compute the partial derivative of the cost function with respect to each weight w_j , $\frac{\partial J}{\partial w_j} = -\sum_i (y^{(i)} - \phi(z^{(i)}))x_j^{(i)}$, so that we can write the update of weight w_j as: $\Delta w_j = -\eta \frac{\partial J}{\partial w_j} = \mu \sum_i (y^{(i)} - \phi(z^{(i)}))x_j^{(i)}$:

Since we update all weights simultaneously, our Adaline learning rule becomes $\mathbf{w} := \mathbf{w} + \Delta\mathbf{w}$.

The logit function takes input values in the range 0 to 1 and transforms them to values over the entire real number range, which we can use to express a linear relationship between feature values and the log-odds:

$$\text{logit}(p(y=1|x)) = w_0x_0 + w_1x_1 + \dots + w_mx_m = \sum_{i=0}^m w_i x_i = \mathbf{w}^T \mathbf{x}$$

Here, $p(y=1|x)$ is the conditional probability that a particular sample belongs to class 1 given its features x .

Now what we are actually interested in is predicting the probability that a certain sample belongs to a particular class, which is the inverse form of the logit function. It is also called the *logistic* function, sometimes simply abbreviated as *sigmoid* function due to its characteristic S-shape.

$$\phi(z) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-z}}$$

Here, z is the net input, that is, the linear combination of weights and sample features and can be calculated as $z = \mathbf{w}^T \mathbf{x} = w_0 + w_1x_1 + \dots + w_mx_m$.

Now let's simply plot the sigmoid function for some values in the range -7 to 7 to see what it looks like:

```
>>> import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
>>> import numpy as np
>>> def sigmoid(z):
...     return 1.0 / (1.0 + np.exp(-z))
>>> z = np.arange(-7, 7, 0.1)
>>> phi_z = sigmoid(z)
>>> plt.plot(z, phi_z)
>>> plt.axvline(0.0, color='k')
>>> plt.axhspan(0.0, 1.0, facecolor='1.0', alpha=1.0, ls='dotted')
>>> plt.axhline(y=0.5, ls='dotted', color='k')
>>> plt.yticks([0.0, 0.5, 1.0])
>>> plt.ylim(-0.1, 1.1)
>>> plt.xlabel('z')
>>> plt.ylabel('$\phi(z)$')
>>> plt.show()
```

We minimized this in order to learn the weights w for our Adaline classification model. To explain how we can derive the cost function for logistic regression, let's first define the likelihood L that we want to maximize when we build a logistic regression model, assuming that the individual samples in our dataset are independent of one another. The formula is as follows:

$$L(\mathbf{w}) = P(\mathbf{y} | \mathbf{x}; \mathbf{w}) = \prod_{i=1}^n P(y^{(i)} | x^{(i)}; \mathbf{w}) = \prod_{i=1}^n (\phi(z^{(i)}))^{y^{(i)}} (1 - \phi(z^{(i)}))^{1-y^{(i)}}$$

y⁽ⁱ⁾ In practice, it is easier to maximize the (natural) log of this equation, which is called the log-likelihood function:

$$l(\mathbf{w}) = \log L(\mathbf{w}) = \sum_{i=1}^n [\log(\phi(z^{(i)})) + (1 - y^{(i)}) \log(1 - \phi(z^{(i)}))]$$

Firstly, applying the log function reduces the potential for numerical underflow, which can occur if the likelihoods are very small. Secondly, we can convert the product of factors into a summation of factors, which makes it easier to obtain the derivative of this function via the addition trick, as you may remember from calculus.

Now we could use an optimization algorithm such as gradient ascent to maximize this log-likelihood function. Alternatively, let's rewrite the log-likelihood as a cost function J that can be minimized using gradient descent as in *Chapter 2, Training Machine Learning Algorithms for Classification*:

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \sum_{i=1}^n [-\log(\phi(z^{(i)})) - (1 - y^{(i)}) \log(1 - \phi(z^{(i)}))]$$

To get a better grasp on this cost function, let's take a look at the cost that we calculate for one single-sample instance:

$$J(\phi(z), y; \mathbf{w}) = -y \log(\phi(z)) - (1 - y) \log(1 - \phi(z))$$

Remember that the goal is to find the weights that maximize the log-likelihood so that we would perform the update for each weight as follows:

$$w_j := w_j + \eta \sum_{i=1}^n (y^{(i)} - \phi(z^{(i)})) x_j^{(i)}$$

Since we update all weights simultaneously, we can write the general update rule as follows:

$$\mathbf{w} := \mathbf{w} + \Delta \mathbf{w}$$

We define $\Delta \mathbf{w}$ as follows:

$$\Delta \mathbf{w} = \eta \nabla l(\mathbf{w})$$

Since maximizing the log-likelihood is equal to minimizing the cost function J that we defined earlier, we can write the gradient descent update rule as follows:

$$\Delta w_j = -\eta \frac{\partial J}{\partial w_j} = \eta \sum_{i=1}^n (y^{(i)} - \phi(z^{(i)})) x_j^{(i)}$$

$$\mathbf{w} := \mathbf{w} + \Delta \mathbf{w}, \Delta \mathbf{w} = -\eta \nabla J(\mathbf{w})$$

This is equal to the gradient descent rule in Adaline in *Chapter 2, Training Machine Learning Algorithms for Classification*.

Tackling overfitting via regularization

Overfitting is a common problem in machine learning, where a model performs well on training data but does not generalize well to unseen data (test data). If a model suffers from overfitting, we also say that the model has a high variance, which can be caused by having too many parameters that lead to a model that is too complex given the underlying data. Similarly, our model can also suffer from **underfitting** (high bias), which means that our model is not complex enough to capture the pattern in the training data well and therefore also suffers from low performance on unseen data.

Here, λ is the so-called regularization parameter.



Regularization is another reason why feature scaling such as standardization is important. For regularization to work properly, we need to ensure that all our features are on comparable scales.

In order to apply regularization, we just need to add the regularization term to the cost function that we defined for logistic regression to shrink the weights:

missing "y"

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \left(-\log(\phi(z^{(i)})) + (1-y^{(i)}) \left(-\log(1-\phi(z)) \right) \right) \right] + \frac{\lambda}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|^2$$

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$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n y^{(i)} \left(-\log(\phi(z^{(i)})) \right) + (1-y^{(i)}) \left(-\log(1-\phi(z^{(i)})) \right) \right] + \frac{\lambda}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|^2$$

or

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \left[-y^{(i)} \log(\phi(z^{(i)})) - (1-y^{(i)}) \log(1-\phi(z^{(i)})) \right] + \frac{\lambda}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|^2$$

lower one prob. easier to read and more
consistent w. page 60

$$C = \frac{1}{\lambda}$$

missing "y"

So we can rewrite the regularized cost function of logistic regression as follows:

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = C \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \left(-\log(\phi(z^{(i)})) + (1-y^{(i)}) \left(-\log(1-\phi(z)) \right) \right) \right] + \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|^2$$

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = C \sum_{i=1}^n \left[-y^{(i)} \log(\phi(z^{(i)})) - (1-y^{(i)}) \log(1-\phi(z^{(i)})) \right] + \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|^2$$

like above, also consider this alt. form for readability

Here, $p(i|t)$ is the proportion of the samples that belongs to class i for a particular node t . The entropy is therefore 0 if all samples at a node belong to the same class, and the entropy is maximal if we have a uniform class distribution. For example, in a binary class setting, the entropy is 0 if $p(i=1|t)=1$ or $p(i=0|t)=0$. If the classes are distributed uniformly with $p(i=1|t)=0.5$ and $p(i=0|t)=0.5$, the entropy is 1. Therefore, we can say that the entropy criterion attempts to maximize the mutual information in the tree.

Intuitively, the Gini index can be understood as a criterion to minimize the probability of misclassification:

$$I_G(t) = \sum_{i=1}^c p(i|t)(-p(i|t)) = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^c p(i|t)^2$$

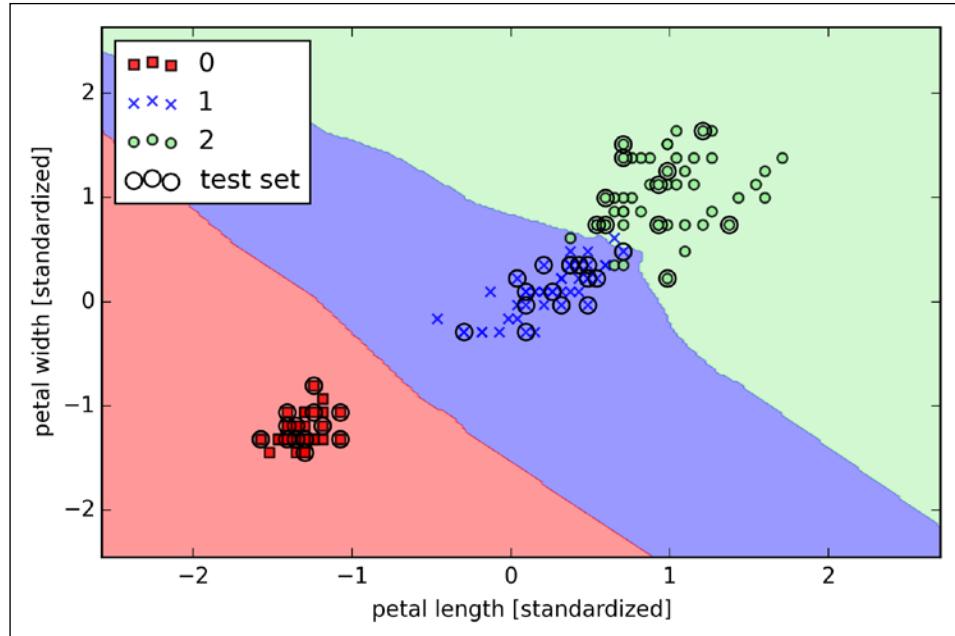
Similar to entropy, the Gini index is maximal if the classes are perfectly mixed, for example, in a binary class setting ($c = 2$):

$$1 - \sum_{i=1}^2 0.5^2 = 0.5$$

However, in practice both the Gini index and entropy typically yield very similar results and it is often not worth spending much time on evaluating trees using different impurity criteria rather than experimenting with different pruning cut-offs.

Another impurity measure is the classification error:

$$I_E = 1 - \max \{p(i|t)\}$$



[ In the case of a tie, the scikit-learn implementation of the KNN algorithm will prefer the neighbors with a closer distance to the sample. If the neighbors have a similar distance, the algorithm will choose the class label that comes first in the training dataset.]

The *right* choice of k is crucial to find a good balance between over- and underfitting. We also have to make sure that we choose a distance metric that is appropriate for the features in the dataset. Often, a simple Euclidean distance measure is used for real-valued samples, for example, the flowers in our Iris dataset, which have features measured in centimeters. However, if we are using a Euclidean distance measure, it is also important to standardize the data so that each feature contributes equally to the distance. The '`minkowski`' distance that we used in the previous code is just a generalization of the Euclidean and Manhattan distance that can be written as follows:

$$d(\mathbf{x}^{(i)}, \mathbf{x}^{(j)}) = \sqrt[p]{\sum_k |x_k^{(i)} - x_k^{(j)}|^p}$$

Unfortunately, most computational tools are unable to handle such missing values or would produce unpredictable results if we simply ignored them. Therefore, it is crucial that we take care of those missing values before we proceed with further analyses. But before we discuss several techniques for dealing with missing values, let's create a simple example data frame from a **CSV (comma-separated values)** file to get a better grasp of the problem:

```
>>> import pandas as pd
>>> from io import StringIO
>>> csv_data = '''A,B,C,D
... 1.0,2.0,3.0,4.0
... 5.0,6.0,,8.0
... 10.0,11.0,12.0,'''
>>> # If you are using Python 2.7, you need
>>> # to convert the string to unicode:
>>> # csv_data = unicode(csv_data)
>>> df = pd.read_csv(StringIO(csv_data))
>>> df
   A    B    C    D
0  1    2    3    4
1  5    6  NaN    8
2  10   11   12  NaN
```

Using the preceding code, we read CSV-formatted data into a pandas DataFrame via the `read_csv` function and noticed that the two missing cells were replaced by `NaN`. The `StringIO` function in the preceding code example was simply used for the purposes of illustration. It allows us to read the string assigned to `csv_data` into a pandas DataFrame as if it was a regular CSV file on our hard drive.

For a larger DataFrame, it can be tedious to look for missing values manually; in this case, we can use the `isnull` method to return a DataFrame with Boolean values that indicate whether a cell contains a numeric value (`False`) or if data is missing (`True`). Using the `sum` method, we can then return the number of missing values per column as follows:

```
>>> df.isnull().sum()
A    0
B    0
C    1
D    1
dtype: int64
```

This way, we can count the number of missing values per column; in the following subsections, we will take a look at different strategies for how to deal with this missing data.

 Although scikit-learn was developed for working with NumPy arrays, it can sometimes be more convenient to preprocess data using pandas' DataFrame. We can always access the underlying NumPy array of the DataFrame via the `values` attribute before we feed it into a scikit-learn estimator:

```
>>> df.values
array([[ 1.,   2.,   3.,   4.],
       [ 5.,   6.,   nan,   8.],
       [10.,  11.,  12.,  nan]])
```

Eliminating samples or features with missing values

One of the easiest ways to deal with missing data is to simply remove the corresponding features (columns) or samples (rows) from the dataset entirely; rows with missing values can be easily dropped via the `dropna` method:

```
>>> df.dropna()
      A   B   C   D
0   1   2   3   4
```

Similarly, we can drop columns that have at least one NaN in any row by setting the `axis` argument to 1:

```
>>> df.dropna(axis=1)
      A   B
0   1   2
1   5   6
2  10  11
```

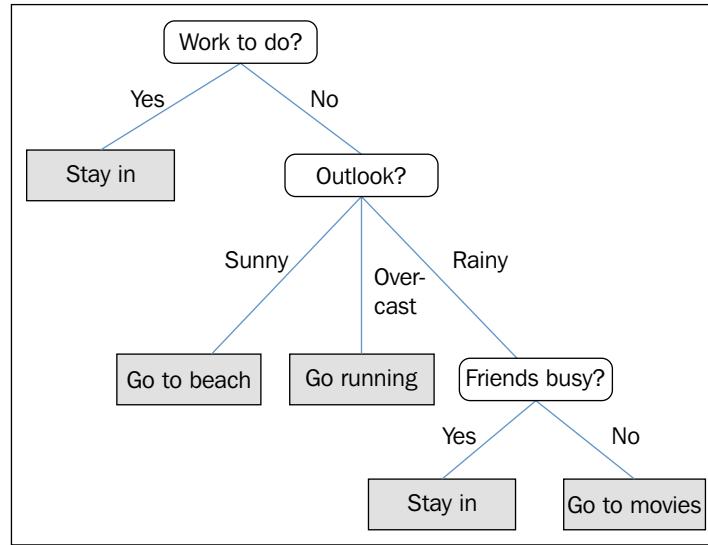
The `dropna` method supports several additional parameters that can come in handy:

```
# only drop rows where all columns are NaN
>>> df.dropna(how='all')

# drop rows that have not at least 4 non-NaN values
>>> df.dropna(thresh=4)

# only drop rows where NaN appear in specific columns (here: 'C')
>>> df.dropna(subset=['C'])
```

Let's consider the following example where we use a decision tree to decide upon an activity on a particular day:



Based on the features in our training set, the decision tree model learns a series of questions to infer the class labels of the samples. Although the preceding figure illustrated the concept of a decision tree based on categorical variables, the same concept applies ~~if our features. This also works~~ if our features are real numbers like in the Iris dataset. For example, we could simply define a cut-off value along the **sepal width** feature axis and ask a binary question "sepal width ≥ 2.8 cm?"

Using the decision algorithm, we start at the tree root and split the data on the feature that results in the largest **information gain (IG)**, which will be explained in more detail in the following section. In an iterative process, we can then repeat this splitting procedure at each child node until the leaves are pure. This means that the samples at each node all belong to the same class. In practice, this can result in a very deep tree with many nodes, which can easily lead to overfitting. Thus, we typically want to *prune* the tree by setting a limit for the maximal depth of the tree.

Although the removal of missing data seems to be a convenient approach, it also comes with certain disadvantages; for example, we may end up removing too many samples, which will make a reliable analysis impossible. Or, if we remove too many feature columns, we will run the risk of losing valuable information that our classifier needs to discriminate between classes. In the next section, we will thus look at one of the most commonly used alternatives for dealing with missing values: interpolation techniques.

Imputing missing values

Often, the removal of samples or dropping of entire feature columns is simply not feasible, because we might lose too much valuable data. In this case, we can use different interpolation techniques to estimate the missing values from the other training samples in our dataset. One of the most common interpolation techniques is **mean imputation**, where we simply replace the missing value by the mean value of the entire feature column. A convenient way to achieve this is by using the `Imputer` class from scikit-learn, as shown in the following code:

```
>>> from sklearn.preprocessing import Imputer
>>> imr = Imputer(missing_values='NaN', strategy='mean', axis=0)
>>> imr = imr.fit(df)
>>> imputed_data = imr.transform(df.values)
>>> imputed_data
array([[ 1.,  2.,  3.,  4.],
       [ 5.,  6., 7.5,  8.],
       [10., 11., 12.,  6.]])
```

Here, we replaced each `NaN` value by the corresponding mean, which is separately calculated for each feature column. If we changed the setting `axis=0` to `axis=1`, we'd calculate the row means. Other options for the `strategy` parameter are `median` or `most_frequent`, where the latter replaces the missing values by the most frequent values. This is useful for imputing categorical feature values.

Understanding the scikit-learn estimator API

In the previous section, we used the `Imputer` class from scikit-learn to impute missing values in our dataset. The `Imputer` class belongs to the so-called **transformer** classes in scikit-learn that are used for data transformation. The two essential methods of those estimators are `fit` and `transform`. The `fit` method is used to learn the parameters from the training data, and the `transform` method uses those parameters to transform the data. Any data array that is to be transformed needs to have the same number of features as the data array that was used to fit the model. The following figure illustrates how a transformer fitted on the training data is used to transform a training dataset as well as a new test dataset:

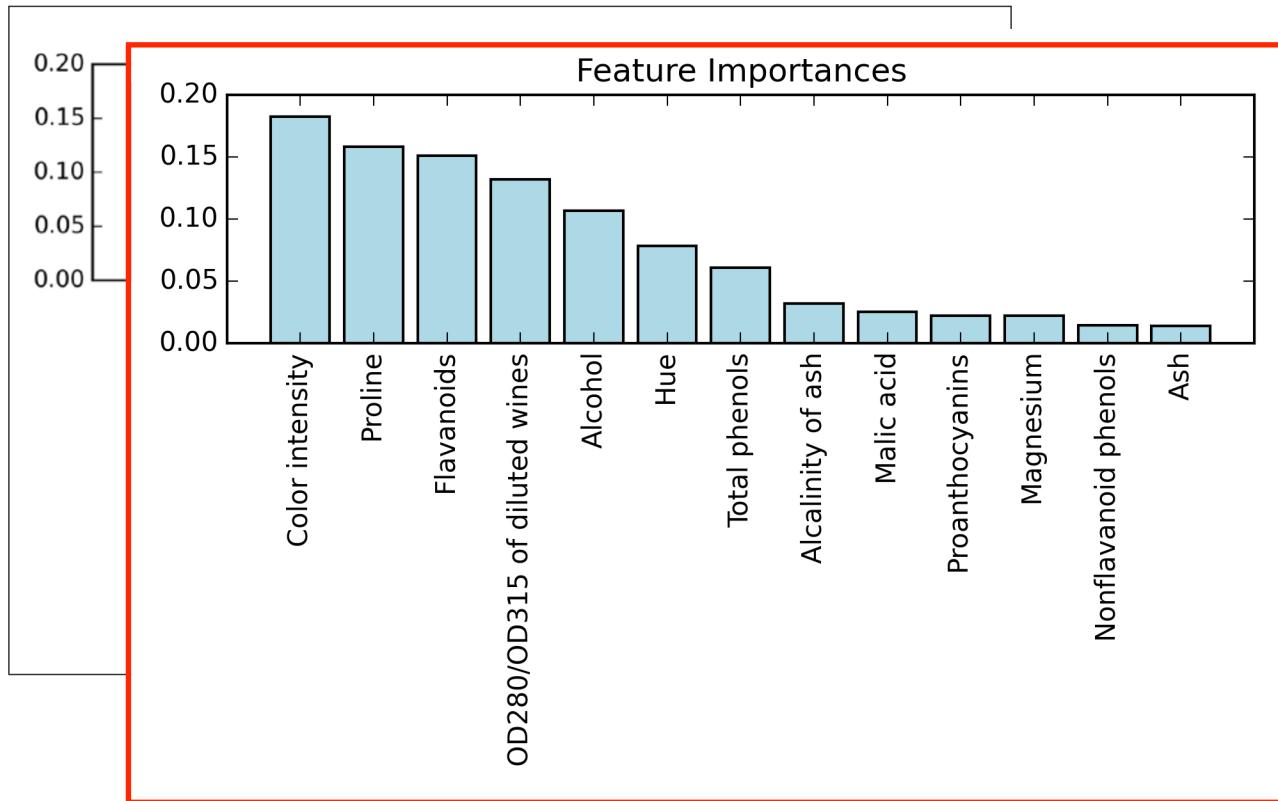
Assessing feature importance with random forests

In the previous sections, you learned how to use L1 regularization to zero out irrelevant features via logistic regression and use the SBS algorithm for feature selection. Another useful approach to select relevant features from a dataset is to use a random forest, an ensemble technique that we introduced in *Chapter 3, A Tour of Machine Learning Classifiers Using Scikit-learn*. Using a random forest, we can measure feature importance as the averaged impurity decrease computed from all decision trees in the forest without making any assumptions whether our data is linearly separable or not. Conveniently, the random forest implementation in scikit-learn already collects feature importances for us so that we can access them via the `feature_importances_` attribute after fitting a `RandomForestClassifier`. By executing the following code, we will now train a forest of 10,000 trees on the Wine dataset and rank the 13 features by their respective importance measures. Remember (from our discussion in *Chapter 3, A Tour of Machine Learning Classifiers Using Scikit-learn*) that we don't need to use standardized or normalized tree-based models. The code is as follows:

```
>>> from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier
>>> feat_labels = df_wine.columns[1:]
>>> forest = RandomForestClassifier(n_estimators=10000,
...                                 random_state=0,
...                                 n_jobs=-1)
>>> forest.fit(X_train, y_train)
>>> importances = forest.feature_importances_
>>> indices = np.argsort(importances)[::-1]
>>> for f in range(X_train.shape[1]):
...     print("%2d %-*s %f" % (f + 1, 30,
...                           feat_labels[f],   feat_labels[indices[f]],
...                           importances[indices[f]]))
1) Alcohol          0.182508
2) Malic acid       0.158574
3) Ash              0.150954
4) Alcalinity of ash 0.131983
5) Magnesium        0.106564
6) Total phenols    0.078249
7) Flavanoids       0.060717
8) Nonflavanoid phenols 0.032039
9) Proanthocyanins 0.025385
10) Color intensity 0.022369
11) Hue              0.022070
1) Color intensity  0.182483
2) Proline           0.158610
3) Flavanoids        0.150948
4) OD280/OD315 of diluted wines 0.131987
5) Alcohol            0.106589
6) Hue                0.078243
7) Total phenols      0.060718
8) Alcalinity of ash  0.032033
9) Malic acid         0.025400
10) Proanthocyanins  0.022351
11) Magnesium          0.022078
12) Nonflavanoid phenols 0.014645
13) Ash                0.013916
```

```
12) OD280/OD315 of diluted wines  0.014655
13) Proline                      0.013933
>>> plt.title('Feature Importances')
>>> plt.bar(range(X_train.shape[1]),
...           importances[indices],
...           color='lightblue',
...           align='center')
>>> plt.xticks(range(X_train.shape[1]),
...             feat_labels[indices], rotation=90)
>>> plt.xlim([-1, X_train.shape[1]])
>>> plt.tight_layout()
>>> plt.show()
```

After executing the preceding code, we created a plot that ranks the different features in the Wine dataset by their relative importance; note that the feature importances are normalized so that they sum up to 1.0.



Color intensity

We can conclude that the **alcohol content** of wine is the most discriminative feature in the dataset based on the average impurity decrease in the 10,000 decision trees. Interestingly, the three top-ranked features in the preceding plot are also among the top five features in the selection by the SBS algorithm that we implemented in the previous section. However, as far as interpretability is concerned, the random forest technique comes with an important *gotcha* that is worth mentioning. For instance, if two or more features are highly correlated, one feature may be ranked very highly while the information of the other feature(s) may not be fully captured. On the other hand, we don't need to be concerned about this problem if we are merely interested in the predictive performance of a model rather than the interpretation of feature importances. To conclude this section about feature importances and random forests, it is worth mentioning that scikit-learn also implements a `transform` method that selects features based on a user-specified threshold after model fitting, which is useful if we want to use the `RandomForestClassifier` as a feature selector and intermediate step in a scikit-learn pipeline, which allows us to connect different preprocessing steps with an estimator, as we will see in *Chapter 6, Learning Best Practices for Model Evaluation and Hyperparameter Tuning*. For example, we could set the threshold to 0.15 to reduce the dataset to the 3 most important features, **Alcohol**, **Malic acid**, and **Ash** using the following code:

Color intensity, Proline, and Flavonoids

```
>>> X_selected = forest.transform(X_train, threshold=0.15)
>>> X_selected.shape
(124, 3)
```

Summary

We started this chapter by looking at useful techniques to make sure that we handle missing data correctly. Before we feed data to a machine learning algorithm, we also have to make sure that we encode categorical variables correctly, and we have seen how we can map ordinal and nominal features values to integer representations.

Moreover, we briefly discussed L1 regularization, which can help us to avoid overfitting by reducing the complexity of a model. As an alternative approach for removing irrelevant features, we used a sequential feature selection algorithm to select meaningful features from a dataset.

In the next chapter, you will learn about yet another useful approach to dimensionality reduction: feature extraction. It allows us to compress features onto a lower dimensional subspace rather than removing features entirely as in feature selection.

First, we will start by loading the *Wine* dataset that we have been working with in *Chapter 4, Building Good Training Sets – Data Preprocessing*:

```
>>> import pandas as pd
>>> df_wine = pd.read_csv('https://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/machine-
learning-databases/wine/wine.data', header=None)
```

Next, we will process the *Wine* data into separate training and test sets – using 70 percent and 30 percent of the data, respectively – and standardize it to unit variance.

```
>>> from sklearn.cross_validation import train_test_split
>>> from sklearn.preprocessing import StandardScaler
>>> X, y = df_wine.iloc[:, 1:].values, df_wine.iloc[:, 0].values
>>> X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = \
...     train_test_split(X, y,
...                     test_size=0.3, random_state=0)
>>> sc = StandardScaler()
>>> X_train_std = sc.fit_transform(X_train)
>>> X_test_std = sc.fit_transform(X_test)
```

After completing the mandatory preprocessing steps by executing the preceding code, let's advance to the second step: constructing the covariance matrix. The symmetric $d \times d$ -dimensional covariance matrix, where d is the number of dimensions in the dataset, stores the pairwise covariances between the different features. For example, the covariance between two features x_j and x_k on the population level can be calculated via the following equation:

$$\sigma_{jk} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_j^{(i)} - \mu_j)(x_k^{(i)} - \mu_k)$$

Here, μ_j and μ_k are the sample means of feature j and k , respectively. Note that the sample means are zero if we standardize the dataset. A positive covariance between two features indicates that the features increase or decrease together, whereas a negative covariance indicates that the features vary in opposite directions. For example, a covariance matrix of three features can then be written as (note that Σ stands for the Greek letter *sigma*, which is not to be confused with the *sum* symbol):

$$\Sigma = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma_1^2 & \sigma_{12} & \sigma_{13} \\ \sigma_{21} & \sigma_2^2 & \sigma_{23} \\ \sigma_{31} & \sigma_{32} & \sigma_3^2 \end{bmatrix}$$

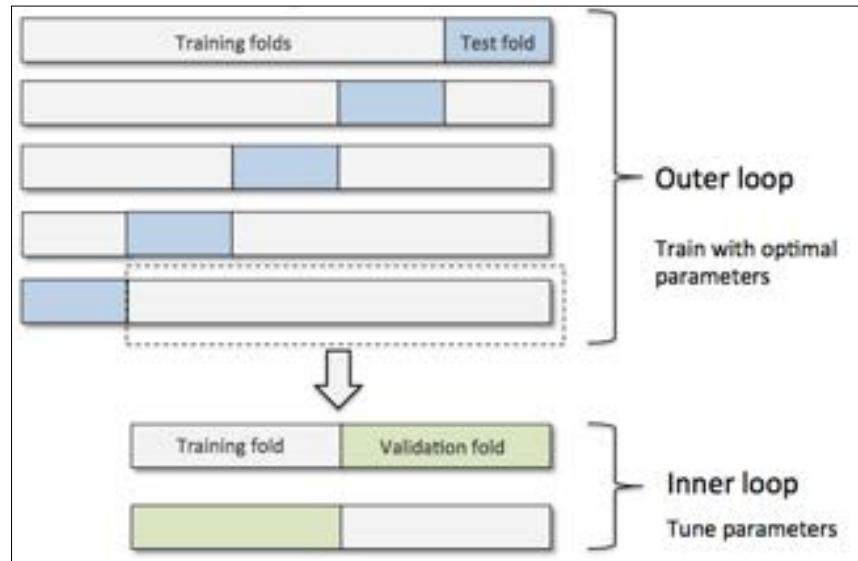
The eigenvectors of the covariance matrix represent the principal components (the directions of maximum variance), whereas the corresponding eigenvalues will define their magnitude. In the case of the *Wine* dataset, we would obtain 13 eigenvectors and eigenvalues from the 13×13 -dimensional covariance matrix.

Note that we want to re-use the training set parameters to transform any new data (or test data) as discussed in Chapter 3. I am sorry about this typo.
Please also see

<https://github.com/rasbt/python-machine-learning-book/blob/master/faq/standardize-param-reuse.md>

for an example why this can be a problem.

In nested cross-validation, we have an outer k-fold cross-validation loop to split the data into training and test folds, and an inner loop is used to select the model using k-fold cross-validation on the training fold. After model selection, the test fold is then used to evaluate the model performance. The following figure explains the concept of nested cross-validation with five outer and two inner folds, which can be useful for large data sets where computational performance is important; this particular type of nested cross-validation is also known as **5x2 cross-validation**:



In scikit-learn, we can perform nested cross-validation as follows:

```
>>> gs = GridSearchCV(estimator=pipe_svc,
...                     param_grid=param_grid,
...                     scoring='accuracy',
...                     cv=5,
...                     n_jobs=-1)    X_train, y_train
>>> scores = cross_val_score(gs, X, y, scoring='accuracy', cv=5)
>>> print('CV accuracy: %.3f +/- %.3f' % (
...             np.mean(scores), np.std(scores)))
CV accuracy: 0.978 +/- 0.012
```

Note: Optionally, you could use cv=2 here to produce the 5 x 2 nested CV that is shown in the figure.

[Note that the accuracy score is still correct, the error above was a typo in the chapter text template; the code in the accompanying IPython Notebook.]

Although we used another simple example for demonstration purposes, we can see that the performance of the AdaBoost classifier is slightly improved compared to the decision stump and achieved very similar accuracy scores to the bagging classifier that we trained in the previous section. However, we should note that it is considered ~~as~~ bad practice to select a model based on the repeated usage of the test set. The estimate of the generalization performance may be too optimistic, which we discussed in more detail in *Chapter 6, Learning Best Practices for Model Evaluation and Hyperparameter Tuning*.

Finally, let's check what the decision regions look like:

```
>>> x_min = X_train[:, 0].min() - 1
>>> x_max = X_train[:, 0].max() + 1
>>> y_min = X_train[:, 1].min() - 1
>>> y_max = X_train[:, 1].max() + 1
>>> xx, yy = np.meshgrid(np.arange(x_min, x_max, 0.1),
...                         np.arange(y_min, y_max, 0.1))
>>> f, axarr = plt.subplots(1, 2,
...                         sharex='col',
...                         sharey='row',
...                         figsize=(8, 3))
>>> for idx, clf, tt in zip([0, 1],
...                           [tree, ada],
...                           ['Decision Tree', 'AdaBoost']):
...     clf.fit(X_train, y_train)
...     Z = clf.predict(np.c_[xx.ravel(), yy.ravel()])
...     Z = Z.reshape(xx.shape)
...     axarr[idx].contourf(xx, yy, Z, alpha=0.3)
...     axarr[idx].scatter(X_train[y_train==0, 0],
...                        X_train[y_train==0, 1],
...                        c='blue',
...                        marker='^')
...     axarr[idx].scatter(X_train[y_train==1, 0],
...                        X_train[y_train==1, 1],
...                        c='red',
...                        marker='o')
...     axarr[idx].set_title(tt)
...     axarr[0].set_ylabel('Alcohol', fontsize=12)
>>> plt.text(10.2, -1.2,
...             s='Hue',
...             ha='center',
...             va='center',
...             fontsize=12)
>>> plt.show()
```

Now in order to calculate the tf-idf, we simply need to add 1 to the inverse document frequency and multiply it by the term frequency:

$$\text{tf-idf}("is", d3) = 2 \times (0 + 1) = 2$$

If we repeated these calculations for all terms in the 3rd document, we'd obtain the following tf-idf vectors: [1.69, 2.00, 1.29, 1.29, 1.29, 2.00, and 1.29]. However, we notice that the values in this feature vector are different from the values that we obtained from the `TfidfTransformer` that we used previously. The final step that we are missing in this tf-idf calculation is the L2-normalization, which can be applied as follows:

$$\text{tf-idf}("is", d3)_{\text{norm}} = \frac{[1.69, 2.00, 1.29, 1.29, 1.29, 2.00, 1.29]}{\sqrt{1.69^2 + 2.00^2 + 1.29^2 + 1.29^2 + 1.29^2 + 2.00^2 + 1.29^2}}$$

Here, it should be either

$$\text{tf-idf}("is", d3) = 0.48$$

or

$$\text{tf-idf}(d3) = [0.40, 0.48, 0.31, 0.31, 0.31, 0.48, 0.31]$$

As we can see, the results now match the results returned by scikit-learn's `TfidfTransformer`. Since we now understand how tf-idfs are calculated, let us proceed to the next sections and apply those concepts to the movie review dataset.

Cleaning text data

In the previous subsections, we learned about the bag-of-words model, term frequencies, and tf-idfs. However, the first important step – before we build our bag-of-words model – is to clean the text data by stripping it of all unwanted characters. To illustrate why this is important, let us display the last 50 characters from the first document in the reshuffled movie review dataset:

```
>>> df.loc[0, 'review'][-50:]
'is seven.<br /><br />Title (Brazil): Not Available'
```

As we can see here, the text contains HTML markup as well as punctuation and other non-letter characters. While HTML markup does not contain much useful semantics, punctuation marks can represent useful, additional information in certain NLP contexts. However, for simplicity, we will now remove all punctuation marks but only keep **emoticon** characters such as ":" since those are certainly useful for sentiment analysis. To accomplish this task, we will use Python's **regular expression (regex)** library, `re`, as shown here:

```
>>> import re
>>> def preprocessor(text):
```

Serializing fitted scikit-learn estimators

Training a machine learning model can be computationally quite expensive, as we have seen in *Chapter 8, Applying Machine Learning to Sentiment Analysis*. Surely, we don't want to train our model every time we close our Python interpreter and want to make a new prediction or reload our web application? One option for **model persistence** is Python's in-built pickle module (<https://docs.python.org/3.4/library/pickle.html>), which allows us to serialize and de-serialize Python object structures to compact byte code, so that we can save our classifier in its current state and reload it if we want to classify new samples without needing to learn the model from the training data all over again. Before you execute the following code, please make sure that you have trained the out-of-core logistic regression model from the last section of *Chapter 8, Applying Machine Learning to Sentiment Analysis*, and have it ready in your current Python session:

```
>>> import pickle
>>> import os
>>> dest = os.path.join('movieclassifier', 'pkl_objects')
>>> if not os.path.exists(dest):
...     os.makedirs(dest)
>>> pickle.dump(stop,
...             open(os.path.join(dest, 'stopwords.pkl'), 'wb'),
...             protocol=4)
>>> pickle.dump(clf,
...             open(os.path.join(dest, 'classifier.pkl'), 'wb'),
...             protocol=4)
```

Using the preceding code, we created a `movieclassifier` directory where we will later store the files and data for our web application. Within this `movieclassifier` directory, we created a `pkl_objects` subdirectory to save the serialized Python objects to our local drive. Via pickle's `dump` method, we then serialized the trained logistic regression model as well as the stop word set from the NLTK library so that we don't have to install the NLTK vocabulary on our server. The `dump` method takes as its first argument the object that we want to pickle, and for the second argument we provided an open file object that the Python object will be written to. Via the `wb` argument inside the `open` function, we opened the file in binary mode for pickle, and we set `protocol=4` to choose the latest and most efficient pickle protocol that has been added to Python 3.4. (If you have problems using protocol 4, please check if you are using the latest Python 3 version install. Alternatively, you may consider choosing a lower protocol number.)

On a side note, it is also worth mentioning that we technically don't have to update the weights of the intercept if we are working with standardized variables since the y axis intercept is always 0 in those cases. We can quickly confirm this by printing the weights:

```
>>> print('Slope: %.3f' % lr.w_[1])
Slope: 0.695
>>> print('Intercept: %.3f' % lr.w_[0])
Intercept: -0.000
```

Estimating the coefficient of a regression model via scikit-learn

In the previous section, we implemented a working model for regression analysis. However, in a real-world application, we may be interested in more efficient implementations, for example, scikit-learn's `LinearRegression` object that makes use of the **LIBLINEAR** library and advanced optimization algorithms that work better with unstandardized variables. This is sometimes desirable for certain applications:

```
>>> from sklearn.linear_model import LinearRegression
>>> slr = LinearRegression()
>>> slr.fit(X, y)
>>> print('Slope: %.3f' % slr.coef_[0])
Slope: 9.102
>>> print('Intercept: %.3f' % slr.intercept_)
Intercept: -34.671
```

As we can see by executing the preceding code, scikit-learn's `LinearRegression` model fitted with the unstandardized **RM** and **MEDV** variables yielded different model coefficients. Let's compare it to our own GD implementation by plotting **MEDV** against **RM**:

```
>>> lin_regplot(X, y, slr)
>>> plt.xlabel('Average number of rooms [RM] (standardized)')
>>> plt.ylabel('Price in $1000\'s [MEDV] (standardized)')
>>> plt.show()
```

However, a limitation of the LASSO is that it selects at most n variables if $m > n$. A compromise between Ridge regression and the LASSO is the Elastic Net, which has a L1 penalty to generate sparsity and a L2 penalty to overcome some of the limitations of the LASSO, such as the number of selected variables.

$$J(w)_{ElasticNet} = \sum_{i=1}^n (y^{(i)} - \hat{y}^{(i)})^2 + \lambda_1 \sum_{j=1}^m w_j^2 + \lambda_2 \sum_{j=1}^m |w_j|$$

Those regularized regression models are all available via scikit-learn, and the usage is similar to the regular regression model except that we have to specify the regularization strength via the parameter λ , for example, optimized via k-fold cross-validation.

A Ridge Regression model can be initialized as follows:

```
>>> from sklearn.linear_model import Ridge  
>>> ridge = Ridge(alpha=1.0)
```

Note that the regularization strength is regulated by the parameter α , which is similar to the parameter λ . Likewise, we can initialize a LASSO regressor from the `linear_model` submodule:

```
>>> from sklearn.linear_model import Lasso  
>>> lasso = Lasso(alpha=1.0)
```

Lastly, the `ElasticNet` implementation allows us to vary the L1 to L2 ratio:

```
>>> from sklearn.linear_model import ElasticNet  
>>> lasso = ElasticNet(alpha=1.0, l1_ratio=0.5)
```

For example, if we set `l1_ratio` to 1.0, the `ElasticNet` regressor would be equal to LASSO regression. For more detailed information about the different implementations of linear regression, please see the documentation at http://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/linear_model.html.

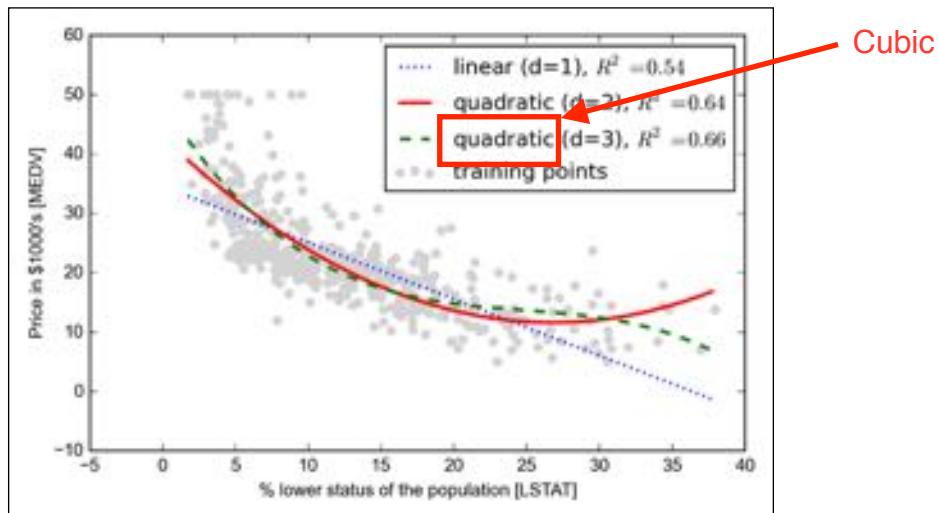
Turning a linear regression model into a curve – polynomial regression

In the previous sections, we assumed a linear relationship between explanatory and response variables. One way to account for the violation of linearity assumption is to use a polynomial regression model by adding polynomial terms:

$$y = w_0 + w_1 x + w_2 x^2 + \dots + w_d x^d$$

```
>>> plt.plot(X_fit, y_cubic_fit,
...             label='cubic (d=3), $R^2=% .2f$'
...             % cubic_r2,
...             color='green',
...             lw=2,
...             linestyle='--')
>>> plt.xlabel('% lower status of the population [LSTAT]')
>>> plt.ylabel('Price in $1000\'s [MEDV]')
>>> plt.legend(loc='upper right')
>>> plt.show()
```

As we can see in the resulting plot, the cubic fit captures the relationship between the house prices and LSTAT better than the linear and quadratic fit. However, we should be aware that adding more and more polynomial features increases the complexity of a model and therefore increases the chance of overfitting. Thus, in practice, it is always recommended that you evaluate the performance of the model on a separate test dataset to estimate the generalization performance:



In addition, polynomial features are not always the best choice for modeling nonlinear relationships. For example, just by looking at the MEDV-LSTAT scatterplot, we could propose that a log transformation of the LSTAT feature variable and the square root of MEDV may project the data onto a linear feature space suitable for a linear regression fit. Let's test this hypothesis by executing the following code:

```
# transform features
>>> X_log = np.log(X)
```

After executing the preceding code, we should now see the following distance matrix:

DataFrame containing the randomly generated samples:

| | X | Y | Z |
|------|----------|----------|----------|
| ID_0 | 6.964692 | 2.861393 | 2.268515 |
| ID_1 | 5.513148 | 7.194690 | 4.231065 |
| ID_2 | 9.807642 | 6.848297 | 4.809319 |
| ID_3 | 3.921175 | 3.431780 | 7.290497 |
| ID_4 | 4.385722 | 0.596779 | 3.980443 |

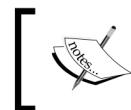
Performing hierarchical clustering on a distance matrix

To calculate the distance matrix as input for the hierarchical clustering algorithm, we will use the `pdist` function from SciPy's `spatial.distance` submodule:

```
>>> from scipy.spatial.distance import pdist, squareform
>>> row_dist = pd.DataFrame(squareform(
...     pdist(df, metric='euclidean')),
...     columns=labels, index=labels)
>>> row_dist
```

Using the preceding code, we calculated the Euclidean distance between each pair of sample points in our dataset based on the features X, Y, and Z. We provided the condensed distance matrix—returned by `pdist`—as input to the `squareform` function to create a symmetrical matrix of the pair-wise distances, as shown here:

| | ID_0 | ID_1 | ID_2 | ID_3 | ID_4 |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ID_0 | 0.000000 | 4.973534 | 5.516653 | 5.899885 | 3.835396 |
| ID_1 | 4.973534 | 0.000000 | 4.347073 | 5.104311 | 6.698233 |
| ID_2 | 5.516653 | 4.347073 | 0.000000 | 7.244262 | 8.316594 |
| ID_3 | 5.899885 | 5.104311 | 7.244262 | 0.000000 | 4.382864 |
| ID_4 | 3.835396 | 6.698233 | 8.316594 | 4.382864 | 0.000000 |



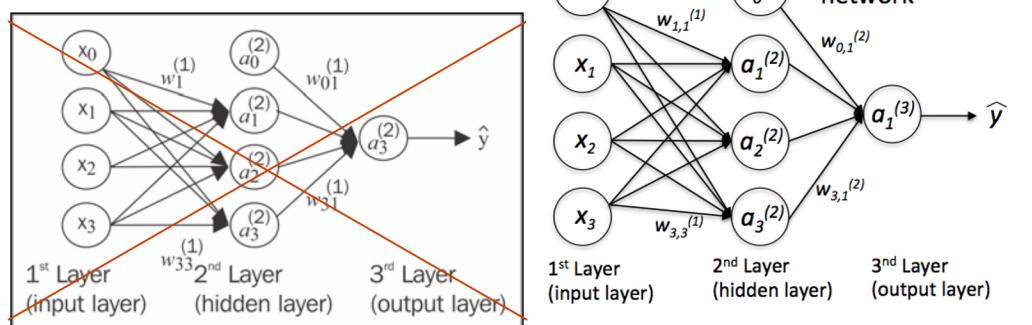
Note that although Adaline consists of two layers, one input layer and one output layer, it is called a single-layer network because of its single link between the input and output layers.



Introducing the multi-layer neural network architecture

In this section, we will see how to connect multiple single neurons to a **multi-layer feedforward neural network**; this special type of network is also called a **multi-layer perceptron (MLP)**. The following figure explains the concept of an MLP consisting of three layers: one input layer, one **hidden layer**, and one output layer. The units in the hidden layer are fully connected to the input layer, and the output layer is fully connected to the hidden layer, respectively. If such a network has more than one hidden layer, we also call it a *deep* artificial neural network.

Unfortunately, a lot of typos were made in this figure, please refer to my original on the right



We could add an arbitrary number of hidden layers to the MLP to create deeper network architectures. Practically, we can think of the number of layers and units in a neural network as additional **hyperparameters** that we want to optimize for a given problem task using the cross-validation that we discussed in *Chapter 6, Learning Best Practices for Model Evaluation and Hyperparameter Tuning*.

However, the error gradients that we will calculate later via backpropagation would become increasingly small as more layers are added to a network. This *vanishing gradient* problem makes the model learning more challenging. Therefore, special algorithms have been developed to pretrain such deep neural network structures, which is called *deep learning*.



Everywhere you read “ h ” on this page, you can think of “ h ” as “ $h+1$ ” to include the bias unit (and in order to get the dimensions right)

Here, $\mathbf{a}^{(1)}$ is our $[m+1] \times 1$ dimensional feature vector of a sample $\mathbf{x}^{(i)}$ plus bias unit. $\mathbf{W}^{(1)}$ is an $h \times [m+1]$ dimensional weight matrix where h is the number of hidden units in our neural network. After matrix-vector multiplication, we obtain the $h \times 1$ dimensional net input vector $\mathbf{z}^{(2)}$ to calculate the activation $\mathbf{a}^{(2)}$ (where $\mathbf{a}^{(2)} \in \mathbb{R}^{h \times 1}$). Furthermore, we can generalize this computation to all n samples in the training set:

$$\mathbf{Z}^{(2)} = \mathbf{W}^{(1)} [\mathbf{A}^{(1)}]^T$$

Here, $\mathbf{A}^{(1)}$ is now an $n \times [m+1]$ matrix, and the matrix-matrix multiplication will result in a $h \times n$ dimensional net input matrix $\mathbf{Z}^{(2)}$. Finally, we apply the activation function $\phi(\cdot)$ to each value in the net input matrix to get the $h \times n$ activation matrix $\mathbf{A}^{(2)}$ for the next layer (here, output layer):

$$\mathbf{A}^{(2)} = \phi(\mathbf{Z}^{(2)})$$

Similarly, we can rewrite the activation of the output layer in the vectorized form:

$$\mathbf{Z}^{(3)} = \mathbf{W}^{(2)} \mathbf{A}^{(2)}$$

Here, we multiply the $t \times h$ matrix $\mathbf{W}^{(2)}$ (t is the number of output units) by the $h \times n$ dimensional matrix $\mathbf{A}^{(2)}$ to obtain the $t \times n$ dimensional matrix $\mathbf{Z}^{(3)}$ (the columns in this matrix represent the outputs for each sample).

Lastly, we apply the sigmoid activation function to obtain the continuous valued output of our network:

$$\mathbf{A}^{(3)} = \phi(\mathbf{Z}^{(3)}), \quad \mathbf{A}^{(3)} \in \mathbb{R}^{t \times n}$$

Classifying handwritten digits

In the previous section, we covered a lot of the theory around neural networks, which can be a little bit overwhelming if you are new to this topic. Before we continue with the discussion of the algorithm for learning the weights of the MLP model, backpropagation, let's take a short break from the theory and see a neural network in action.

```

grad2[:, 1:] += (w2[:, 1:] * (self.l1 + self.l2))

return grad1, grad2

def predict(self, X):
    a1, z2, a2, z3, a3 = self._feedforward(X, self.w1, self.w2)
    y_pred = np.argmax(z3, axis=0)
    return y_pred

def fit(self, X, y, print_progress=False):
    self.cost_ = []
    X_data, y_data = X.copy(), y.copy()
    y_enc = self._encode_labels(y, self.n_output)

    delta_w1_prev = np.zeros(self.w1.shape)
    delta_w2_prev = np.zeros(self.w2.shape)

    for i in range(self.epochs):

        # adaptive learning rate
        self.eta /= (1 + self.decrease_const*i)

        if print_progress:
            sys.stderr.write(
                '\rEpoch: %d/%d' % (i+1, self.epochs))
            sys.stderr.flush()

        if self.shuffle:
            x_data, y_enc = x_data[idx], y_enc[:, idx]
            idx = np.random.permutation(y_data.shape[0])
            x_data, y_data = x_data[idx], y_data[idx]

        mini = np.array_split(range(
            y_data.shape[0]), self.minibatches)
        for idx in mini:

            # feedforward
            a1, z2, a2, z3, a3 = self._feedforward(
                X[idx], self.w1, self.w2)      x_data[idx]
            cost = self._get_cost(y_enc=y_enc[:, idx],
                                  output=a3,
                                  w1=self.w1,
                                  w2=self.w2)
            self.cost_.append(cost)

```

[359]

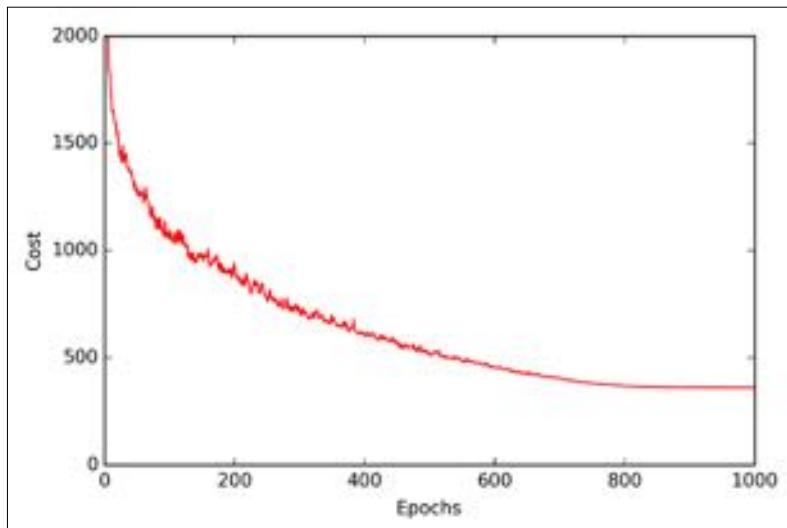
```

>>> nn = NeuralNetMLP([...],
...                      [...],
...                      shuffle=False,
...                      random_state=1)

```

These line changes above enable shuffling if the setting is `shuffle=True`. To match the original output in the book (no shuffling) after applying this patch, the `shuffle=False` setting needs to be added when the NeuralNetMLP is

The following plot gives us a clearer picture indicating that the training algorithm converged shortly after the 800th epoch:



Now, let's evaluate the performance of the model by calculating the prediction accuracy:

```
>>> y_train_pred = nn.predict(X_train)
>>> acc = np.sum(y_train == y_train_pred, axis=0) / X_train.shape[0]
>>> print('Training accuracy: %.2f%%' % (acc * 100))
Training accuracy: 97.74%
```

As we can see, the model classifies most of the training digits correctly, but how does it generalize to data that it has not seen before? Let's calculate the accuracy on 10,000 images in the test dataset:

```
>>> y_test_pred = nn.predict(X_test)
>>> acc = np.sum(y_test == y_test_pred, axis=0) / X_test.shape[0]
Test >>> print('Training accuracy: %.2f%%' % (acc * 100))
Test accuracy: 96.18%
```

Based on the small discrepancy between training and test accuracy, we can conclude that the model only slightly overfits the training data. To further fine-tune the model, we could change the number of hidden units, values of the regularization parameters, learning rate, values of the decrease constant, or the adaptive learning using the techniques that we discussed in *Chapter 6, Learning Best Practices for Model Evaluation and Hyperparameter Tuning* (this is left as an exercise for the reader).

Although our MLP implementation supports both L1 and L2 regularization, we will now only focus on the L2 regularization term for simplicity. However, the same concepts apply to the L1 regularization term. By adding the L2 regularization term to our logistic cost function, we obtain the following equation:

$$J(\mathbf{w}) = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n y^{(i)} \log(a^{(i)}) + (1 - y^{(i)}) \log(1 - a^{(i)}) \right] + \frac{\lambda}{2} \|\mathbf{w}\|_2^2$$

Since we implemented an MLP for multi-class classification, this returns an output vector of t elements, which we need to compare with the $t \times 1$ dimensional target vector in the one-hot encoding representation. For example, the activation of the third layer and the target class (here: class 2) for a particular sample may look like this:

$$a^{(3)} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.1 \\ 0.9 \\ \vdots \\ 0.3 \end{bmatrix}, \quad y = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Thus, we need to generalize the logistic cost function to all activation units j in our network. So our cost function (without the regularization term) becomes:

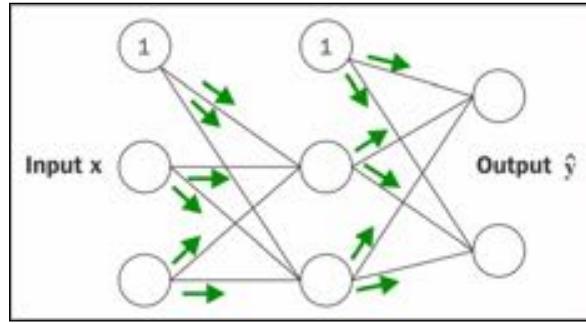
$$J(\mathbf{w}) = -\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^t y_j^{(i)} \log(a_j^{(i)}) + (1 - y_j^{(i)}) \log(1 - a_j^{(i)})$$

Here, the superscript i is the index of a particular sample in our training set.

The following generalized regularization term may look a little bit complicated at first, but here we are just calculating the sum of all weights of a layer l (without the bias term) that we added to the first column:

$$\begin{aligned} J(\mathbf{w}) = & - \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^t y_j^{(i)} \log(\phi(z_{\mathbf{j}}^{(i)})_j) + (1 - y_j^{(i)}) \log(1 - \phi(z_{\mathbf{j}}^{(i)})_j) \right] \\ & + \frac{\lambda}{2} \sum_{l=1}^{L-1} \sum_{i=1}^{u_l} \sum_{j=1}^{u_{l+1}} (w_{j,i}^{(l)})^2 \end{aligned}$$

Conciseley, we just forward propagate the input features through the connection in the network as shown here:



In backpropagation, we propagate the error from right to left. We start by calculating the error vector of the output layer:

$$\delta^{(3)} = a^{(3)} - y$$

Here, y is the vector of the true class labels.

Next, we calculate the error term of the hidden layer:

$$\delta^{(2)} = (\mathbf{W}^{(2)})^T \delta^{(3)} * \frac{\partial \phi(z^{(2)})}{\partial z^{(2)}}$$

Here, $\frac{\partial \phi(z^{(2)})}{\partial z^{(2)}}$ is simply the derivative of the sigmoid activation function, which we implemented as `_sigmoid_gradient`:

$$\frac{\partial \phi(z^{(2)})}{\partial z^{(2)}} = (a^{(2)} * (1 - a^{(2)}))$$

Note that the asterisk symbol (*) means element-wise multiplication in this context.

Alternatively, you can apply these settings only to a particular Python script, by running it as follows:

```
THEANO_FLAGS=floatX=float32 python your_script.py
```

So far, we discussed how to set the default floating-point types to get the best bang for the buck on our GPU using Theano. Next, let's discuss the options to toggle between CPU and GPU execution. If we execute the following code, we can check whether we are using CPU or GPU:

```
>>> print(theano.config.device)
cpu
```

My personal recommendation is to use `cpu` as default, which makes prototyping and code debugging easier. For example, you can run Theano code on your CPU by executing it *as* from your command-line terminal:

```
THEANO_FLAGS=device=cpu,floatX=float64 python your_script.py
```

However, once we have implemented the code and want to run it most efficiently utilizing our GPU hardware, we can then run it via the following code without making additional modifications to our original code:

```
THEANO_FLAGS=device=gpu,floatX=float32 python your_script.py
```

It may also be convenient to create a `.theanorc` file in your home directory to make these configurations permanent. For example, to always use `float32` and the GPU, you can create such a `.theanorc` file including these settings. The command is as follows:

```
echo -e "\n[global]\nfloatX=float32\ndevice=gpu\n" >> ~/.theanorc
```

If you are not operating on a MacOS X or Linux terminal, you can create a `.theanorc` file manually using your favorite text editor and add the following contents:

```
[global]
floatX=float32
device=gpu
```

Now that we know how to configure Theano appropriately with respect to our available hardware, we can discuss how to use more complex array structures in the next section.

Choosing activation functions for feedforward neural networks

For simplicity, we have only discussed the sigmoid activation function in context of multilayer feedforward neural networks so far; we used it in the hidden layer as well as the output layer in the multilayer perceptron implementation in *Chapter 12, Training Artificial Neural Networks for Image Recognition*. Although we referred to this activation function as *sigmoid* function – as it is commonly called in literature – the more precise definition would be *logistic function* or *negative log-likelihood function*. In the following subsections, you will learn more about alternative sigmoidal functions that are useful for implementing multilayer neural networks.

Technically, we could use any function as activation function in multilayer neural networks as long as it is differentiable. We could even use linear activation functions such as in Adaline (*Chapter 2, Training Machine Learning Algorithms for Classification*). However, in practice, it would not be very useful to use linear activation functions for both hidden and output layers, since we want to introduce nonlinearity in a typical artificial neural network to be able to tackle complex problem tasks. The sum of linear functions yields a linear function after all.

The logistic activation function that we used in the previous chapter probably mimics the concept of a neuron in a brain most closely: we can think of it as probability of whether a neuron fires or not. However, logistic activation functions can be problematic if we have highly negative inputs, since the output of the sigmoid function would be close to zero in this case. If the sigmoid function returns outputs that are close to zero, the neural network would learn very slowly and it becomes more likely that it gets trapped in local minima during training. This is why people often prefer a **hyperbolic tangent** as activation function in hidden layers. Before we discuss what a hyperbolic tangent looks like, let's briefly recapitulate some of the basics of the logistic function and look at a generalization that makes it more useful for multi-class classification tasks.

However, in certain contexts, it can be useful to return meaningful class probabilities for multi-class predictions. In the next section, we will take a look at a generalization of the logistic function, the **softmax** function, which can help us with this task.

Estimating probabilities in multi-class classification via the softmax function

The **softmax** function is a generalization of the logistic function that allows us to compute meaningful class-probabilities in multi-class settings (multinomial logistic regression). In softmax, the probability of a particular sample with net input z belongs to the i th class can be computed with a normalization term in the denominator that is the sum of all M linear functions:

$$P(y = i | z) = \phi_{\text{softmax}}(z) = \frac{e^z_i}{\sum_{m=1}^M e^z_m}$$

To see softmax in action, let's code it up in Python:

```
>>> def softmax(z):
...     return np.exp(z) / np.sum(np.exp(z))

>>> def softmax_activation(X, w):
...     z = net_input(X, w)
...     return sigmoid(z) softmax(z)

>>> y_probas = softmax(z)
>>> print('Probabilities:\n', y_probas)
Probabilities:
[[ 0.40386493]
 [ 0.07756222]
 [ 0.51857284]]
>>> y_probas.sum()
1.0
```

As we can see, the predicted class probabilities now sum up to one, as we would expect. It is also notable that the probability for the second class is close to zero, since there is a large gap between z_1 and $\max(z)$. However, note that the predicted class label is the same as in the logistic function. Intuitively, it may help to think of the softmax function as a *normalized* logistic function that is useful to obtain meaningful class-membership predictions in multi-class settings.

```
>>> y_class = np.argmax(Z, axis=0)
>>> print('predicted class label:
...      %d' % y_class[0])
predicted class label: 2
```

Broadening the output spectrum by using a hyperbolic tangent

Another sigmoid function that is often used in the hidden layers of artificial neural networks is the **hyperbolic tangent (tanh)**, which can be interpreted as a rescaled version of the logistic function.

$$\phi_{\text{tanh}}(z) = 2 \times \phi_{\text{logistic}}(2 \times z) - 1 = \frac{e^z - e^{-z}}{e^z + e^{-z}}$$

$$\phi_{\text{logistic}}(z) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-z}}$$

~~$$\text{logistic}(2 \times z) \times 2 - 1$$~~

In the last two chapters of this book, we caught a glimpse of the most beautiful and most exciting algorithms in the whole machine learning field: artificial neural networks. Although deep learning really is beyond the scope of this book, I hope I could at least kindle your interest to follow the most recent advancement in this field. If you are considering a career as^a machine learning researcher, or even if you just want to keep up to date with the current advancement in this field, I can recommend you to follow the works of the leading experts in this field, such as Geoff Hinton (<http://www.cs.toronto.edu/~hinton/>), Andrew Ng (<http://www.andrewng.org>), Yann LeCun (<http://yann.lecun.com>), Juergen Schmidhuber (<http://people.idsia.ch/~juergen/>), and Yoshua Bengio (<http://www.iro.umontreal.ca/~bengioy>), just to name a few. Also, please do not hesitate to join the scikit-learn, Theano, and Keras mailing lists to participate in interesting discussions around these libraries, and machine learning in general. I am looking forward to ~~meet~~ meeting you there! You are always welcome to contact me if you have any questions about this book or need some general tips about machine learning.

I hope this journey through the different aspects of machine learning was really worthwhile, and you learned many new and useful skills to advance your career and apply them to real-world problem solving.

meeting