Classification using Naive Bayes algorithm

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2024-10-10

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## Introduction

Naive Bayes is a family of simple yet powerful probabilistic classifiers based on Bayes’ Theorem, with the assumption of independence among predictors. It is widely used for tasks like spam detection, text classification, and sentiment analysis due to its efficiency and simplicity. Despite being called “naive” for its strong assumption of feature independence, it often performs remarkably well in real-world scenarios.

## What is Naive Bayes?

Naive Bayes is a probabilistic classifier that leverages Bayes’ Theorem to predict the class of a given data point. It belongs to the family of generative models and works by estimating the posterior probability of a class given a set of features. The term “Naive” refers to the assumption that features are conditionally independent given the class label, which simplifies computation.

### Bayes’ Theorem: The Foundation

Bayes’ Theorem provides a way to update our beliefs about the probability of an event, based on new evidence. The formula for Bayes’ Theorem is:

Where:

* : Posterior probability of class given feature set
* : Likelihood of feature set given class
* : Prior probability of class
* : Evidence or probability of feature set

In the context of classification:

* The goal is to predict (the class) given (the features).
* is derived from the distribution of classes in the training data.
* is derived from the distribution of features for each class.
* is a normalizing constant to ensure probabilities sum to 1, but it can be ignored for classification purposes because it is the same for all classes.

### Assumptions and Requirements

The key assumption in Naive Bayes is the **conditional independence** of features. Specifically, it assumes that the likelihood of each feature is independent of the others, given the class label:

While this assumption is often violated in real-world data, Naive Bayes can still perform well, especially when certain features dominate the prediction.

**Requirements:**

* **Numerical Data**: Naive Bayes can handle both numerical and categorical data, though different versions (Gaussian, Multinomial, Bernoulli) of the algorithm handle specific types of data more effectively
* **Non-Collinear Features**: Highly correlated features can distort predictions since the model assumes independence.
* **Sufficient Data**: Naive Bayes relies on probability estimates; thus, insufficient data might lead to unreliable predictions.

## Types of Naive Bayes Classifiers

There are several variants of Naive Bayes, depending on the nature of the data:

1. **Gaussian Naive Bayes**: Assumes features follow a Gaussian distribution (useful for continuous data).
2. **Multinomial Naive Bayes**: Suitable for discrete data, often used in text classification (e.g., word counts).
3. **Bernoulli Naive Bayes**: Works well for binary/boolean data, often used in scenarios where the features represent the presence/absence of a characteristic.

## Mathematics behind the process

To understand the working of Naive Bayes, let’s start with the Bayes’s theorem

Where is one of the possible classes. Due to the independence assumption, the likelihood term can be factorized as:

Where are the individual features in the feature set . For each class , compute the posterior probability:

The denominator is constant for all classes, so we can ignore it during classification. Finally, the class with the highest posterior probability is chosen as the predicted class:

### Computing the probabilities

#### Prior Probabilities

is the prior probability, usually frequency of each class .

#### Class Conditional Probabilities

is the class conditional probability. For the

1. ***Gaussian Naive Bayes:*** when the features are continuous and assumed that the features follow a ***Gaussian*** distribution, the class conditional probability is given as
2. ***Multinomial Naive Bayes:*** when the featrues (typically word frequencies) follow a multinomial distribution, the class conditional distribution is given as

* where,
  + is the count of the feature (e.g. word or term) appearing in documents of class
  + is the total count of all features (e.g. words) in all documents belonging to class
  + is a smoothing parameter (often called **Laplace smoothing**), used to avoid zero probabilities. If not using smoothing, set
  + is the size of the vocabulary (i.e., the number of unique words)

1. ***Bernoulli Naive Bayes:*** when features are binary/boolean data, often used in scenarios where the features represent the presence/absence of a characteristic, the class conditional distribution is given as

$$
P(x\_i|y\_k)=\begin{cases}\frac{N\_{x\_i,y\_k}+\alpha}{N\_{y\_k}+2\alpha }\hspace{2mm}\text{ if } x\_i=1\\
1-\frac{N\_{x\_i,y\_k}+\alpha}{N\_{y\_k}+2\alpha }\hspace{2mm}\text{ if } x\_i=0\end{cases}
$$

## Python Implementation

### Gaussian Naive Bayes

Code credit for the custom classifier goes to [Assembly AI](https://github.com/AssemblyAI-Community/Machine-Learning-From-Scratch/blob/main/06%20NaiveBayes/naive_bayes.py)

import numpy as np  
  
class GNaiveBayes:  
 def fit(self, X,y):  
 """  
 n\_samples: number of observed data n; int;  
 n\_features: number of continueous features d; int;  
 \_classes: unique classes  
 n\_classes: number of unique classes  
 """  
 n\_samples, n\_features = X.shape  
 self.\_classes = np.unique(y)  
 n\_classes = len(self.\_classes)  
  
 # Calculate mean, variance, and prior for each class   
 self.\_mean = np.zeros((n\_classes,n\_features),dtype=np.float64)  
 self.\_var = np.zeros((n\_classes,n\_features),dtype=np.float64)  
 self.\_prior = np.zeros(n\_classes,dtype=np.float64)  
  
 for idx, c in enumerate(self.\_classes):  
 X\_c = X[y==c]  
 self.\_mean[idx,:] = X\_c.mean(axis=0)  
 self.\_var[idx,:] = X\_c.var(axis=0)  
 self.\_prior[idx] = X\_c.shape[0]/float(n\_samples)  
   
 def predict(self,X):  
 y\_pred = [self.\_predict(x) for x in X]  
  
 return np.array(y\_pred)  
  
 def \_predict(self, x):  
 posteriors = []  
  
 # Calculate the posterior probability for each class   
 for idx,c in enumerate(self.\_classes):  
 prior = np.log(self.\_prior[idx])  
 post = np.sum(np.log(self.\_pdf(idx,x)))  
 posterior = post + prior  
 posteriors.append(posterior)  
 # Return the class with the highest posterior  
 return self.\_classes[np.argmax(posteriors)]  
   
 def \_pdf(self, class\_idx, x):  
 mean = self.\_mean[class\_idx]  
 var = self.\_var[class\_idx]  
 numerator = np.exp(-((x-mean)\*\*2)/(2\*var))  
 denominator = np.sqrt(2\*np.pi\*var)  
  
 return numerator/denominator

Let’s apply this to the irish data set

import pandas as pd  
from sklearn.datasets import load\_iris  
  
  
# Load Iris dataset  
data = load\_iris()  
X = data.data # Features  
y = data.target # Target variable (Classes)  
df = pd.DataFrame(X, columns=data.feature\_names)  
df['target'] = pd.Categorical.from\_codes(y, data.target\_names)  
df.head()

|  | sepal length (cm) | sepal width (cm) | petal length (cm) | petal width (cm) | target |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 5.1 | 3.5 | 1.4 | 0.2 | setosa |
| 1 | 4.9 | 3.0 | 1.4 | 0.2 | setosa |
| 2 | 4.7 | 3.2 | 1.3 | 0.2 | setosa |
| 3 | 4.6 | 3.1 | 1.5 | 0.2 | setosa |
| 4 | 5.0 | 3.6 | 1.4 | 0.2 | setosa |

from sklearn.model\_selection import train\_test\_split  
from sklearn.naive\_bayes import GaussianNB  
from sklearn.metrics import accuracy\_score, confusion\_matrix, classification\_report   
  
# Split into training and testing sets  
X\_train, X\_test, y\_train, y\_test = train\_test\_split(X, y, test\_size=0.3, random\_state=42)  
  
gnb1 = GNaiveBayes()  
gnb1.fit(X\_train, y\_train)  
pred1 = gnb1.predict(X\_test)  
# Evaluate the model  
acc1 = accuracy\_score(y\_test, pred1)  
  
gnb2 = GaussianNB()  
gnb2.fit(X\_train, y\_train)  
pred2 = gnb2.predict(X\_test)  
acc2 = accuracy\_score(y\_test, pred2)   
  
print('Accuracy from custom classifier = {:.2f}'.format(acc1\*100))  
  
# Confusion matrix and classification report  
print(confusion\_matrix(y\_test, pred1))  
print(classification\_report(y\_test, pred1))  
print('\n')  
print('Accuracy from sklearn classifier = {:.2f}'.format(acc2\*100))  
print(confusion\_matrix(y\_test, pred2))  
print(classification\_report(y\_test, pred2))

Accuracy from custom classifier = 97.78  
[[19 0 0]  
 [ 0 12 1]  
 [ 0 0 13]]  
 precision recall f1-score support  
  
 0 1.00 1.00 1.00 19  
 1 1.00 0.92 0.96 13  
 2 0.93 1.00 0.96 13  
  
 accuracy 0.98 45  
 macro avg 0.98 0.97 0.97 45  
weighted avg 0.98 0.98 0.98 45  
  
  
  
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weighted avg 0.98 0.98 0.98 45

### Multinomial Naive Bayes

class MNaiveBayes:  
 def \_\_init\_\_(self, alpha = 1):  
 self.alpha = alpha  
  
 def fit(self, X,y):  
 """  
 Fit the Multinomial Naive Bayes model to the training data.   
 X: input data (n\_samples, n\_features)  
 y: target labels (n\_samples)  
 """  
 n\_samples, n\_features = X.shape  
 self.\_classes = np.unique(y)  
 n\_classes = len(self.\_classes)  
  
 # Initialize and count priors   
 self.\_class\_feature\_count = np.zeros((n\_classes, n\_features),dtype=np.float64)  
 self.\_class\_count = np.zeros(n\_classes, dtype=np.float64)  
 self.\_prior = np.zeros(n\_classes, dtype=np.float64)  
  
 for idx,c in enumerate(self.\_classes):  
 X\_c = X[y==c]  
 self.\_class\_feature\_count[idx,:] = X\_c.sum(axis=0)  
 self.\_class\_count[idx] = X\_c.shape[0]  
 self.\_prior[idx] = X\_c.shape[0]/float(n\_samples)  
   
 # Total count of all features accross all classes   
 self.\_total\_feature\_count = self.\_class\_feature\_count.sum(axis=1)  
   
 def predict(self, X):  
 y\_pred = [self.\_predict(x) for x in X]  
 return np.array(y\_pred)  
   
 def \_predict(self,x):  
 posteriors = []  
 for idx, c in enumerate(self.\_classes):  
 prior = np.log(self.\_prior[idx])  
 likelihood = np.sum(np.log(self.\_likelihood(idx,x)))  
 posterior\_prob = prior+ likelihood  
 posteriors.append(posterior\_prob)  
 return self.\_classes[np.argmax(posteriors)]  
   
 def \_likelihood(self, class\_idx, x):  
 alpha = self.alpha  
 V = len(self.\_class\_feature\_count[class\_idx])  
 class\_feature\_count = self.\_class\_feature\_count[class\_idx]  
 total\_class\_count = self.\_total\_feature\_count[class\_idx]  
 likelihood = (class\_feature\_count+alpha)/(total\_class\_count + alpha \* V)  
  
 return likelihood\*\*x  
  
X = np.array([[2, 1, 0],  
 [1, 0, 1],  
 [0, 3, 0],  
 [2, 2, 1],  
 [0, 0, 2]])  
  
# Corresponding labels (2 classes: 0 and 1)  
y = np.array([0, 1, 0, 0, 1])  
  
# Create and train Multinomial Naive Bayes model  
model = MNaiveBayes()  
model.fit(X, y)  
  
# Predict for new sample  
X\_test = np.array([[1, 1, 0], [0, 1, 1]])  
predictions = model.predict(X\_test)  
print(predictions)

[0 0]

## Pros and Cons of Naive Bayes

### Pros:

* **Simplicity**: Easy to implement and computationally efficient.
* **Fast Training and Prediction**: Naive Bayes is especially fast for both training and inference, even on large datasets.
* **Performs Well with Small Data**: Despite its simplicity, Naive Bayes works well even with relatively small datasets.
* **Handles Irrelevant Features**: Naive Bayes can often ignore irrelevant features in the data since the independence assumption dilutes their influence.
* **Multi-Class Classification**: Naturally suited for multi-class classification problems.

### Cons:

* **Strong Assumption of Independence**: The assumption that features are independent is rarely true in real-world data, which can limit the model’s effectiveness.
* **Poor Estimation of Probabilities**: When dealing with very small datasets or unseen feature combinations, Naive Bayes can yield inaccurate probability estimates.
* **Zero-Frequency Problem**: If a feature value was not present in the training data, Naive Bayes will assign zero probability to the entire class, which can be addressed using Laplace smoothing.

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