Instance Based Learning

Readings: Mitchell, Chapter 8; Murphy, Chapter 1
Slides arranged by Vibhav Gogate, UT Dallas
sources: course slides are based on material from a variety of sources, including Tom Dietterich, Carlos Guestrin, Ray Mooney, Andrew Moore, Andrew Ng and others.

Instance Based Learning

- $k$-Nearest Neighbor
- Locally weighted regression
- Lazy and eager learning
Some Vocabulary

- **Parametric vs. Non-parametric:**
  - **parametric:**
    - A particular functional form is assumed, e.g., multivariate normal, naive Bayes.
    - Advantage of simplicity – easy to estimate and interpret
    - may have high bias because the real data may not obey the assumed functional form.
  - **non-parametric:**
    - distribution or density estimate is data-driven and relatively few assumptions are made a priori about the functional form.
- Other terms: Instance-based, Memory-based, Lazy, Case-based, kernel methods...

Nearest Neighbor Algorithm

- **Learning Algorithm:**
  - Store training examples
- **Prediction Algorithm:**
  - To classify a new example \( x \) by finding the training example \((x',y')\) that is nearest to \( x \)
  - Guess the class \( y = y' \)
**K-Nearest Neighbor Methods**

- To classify a new input vector \( x \), examine the \( k \)-closest training data points to \( x \) and assign the object to the most frequently occurring class.

*Common values for \( k \): 3, 5*

**Decision Boundaries**

- The nearest neighbor algorithm does not explicitly compute decision boundaries. However, the decision boundaries form a subset of the Voronoi diagram for the training data.

  - Each line segment is equidistant between two points of opposite classes. The more examples that are stored, the more complex the decision boundaries can become.
**Instance-Based Learning**

Key idea: just store all training examples \( <x_i, f(x_i) > \)

Nearest neighbor (1-Nearest neighbor):

- Given query instance \( x_q \), locate nearest example \( x_n \), estimate
  \[
  \hat{f}(x_q) \leftarrow f(x_n)
  \]

\( k \)-Nearest neighbor:

- Given \( x_q \), take vote among its \( k \) nearest neighbors (if discrete-valued target function)
- Take mean of \( f \) values of \( k \) nearest neighbors (if real-valued)
  \[
  \hat{f}(x_q) \leftarrow \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k} f(x_i)}{k}
  \]

**Distance-Weighted \( k \)-NN**

 Might want to weight nearer neighbors more heavily ...

\[
\hat{f}(x_q) \leftarrow \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k} w_i f(x_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^{k} w_i}
\]

where

\[
w_i = \frac{1}{d(x_q, x_i)^2}
\]

and \( d(x_q, x_i) \) is distance between \( x_q \) and \( x_i \)

Note, now it makes sense to use all training examples instead of just \( k \)
→ Shepard's method
Nearest Neighbor

When to Consider
- Instance map to points in $\mathbb{R}^n$
- Less than 20 attributes per instance
- Lots of training data

Advantages
- Training is very fast
- Learn complex target functions
- Do not lose information

Disadvantages
- Slow at query time
- Easily fooled by irrelevant attributes

Issues

- Distance measure
  - Most common: Euclidean
- Choosing $k$
  - Increasing $k$ reduces variance, increases bias
- For high-dimensional space, problem that the nearest neighbor may not be very close at all!
- Memory-based technique. Must make a pass through the data for each classification. This can be prohibitive for large data sets.
Distance

• Notation: object with $p$ measurements
  \[ x^i = (x^i_1, x^i_2, \ldots, x^i_p) \]

• Most common distance metric is *Euclidean* distance:
  \[ d_E(x^i, x^j) = \left( \sum_{k=1}^{p} (x^i_k - x^j_k)^2 \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \]

  • efficiency trick: using squared Euclidean distance gives same answer, avoids computing square root
  • ED makes sense when different measurements are commensurate; each is variable measured in the same units.
  • If the measurements are different, say length and weight, it is not clear.

Standardization

When variables are not commensurate, we can standardize them by dividing by the sample standard deviation. This makes them all equally important.

The estimate for the standard deviation of $x_k$:

\[
\hat{\sigma}_k = \left( \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} (x^i_k - \bar{x}_k)^2 \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}
\]

where $\bar{x}_k$ is the sample mean:

\[
\bar{x}_k = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} x^i_k
\]
Weighted Euclidean distance

Finally, if we have some idea of the relative importance of each variable, we can weight them:

\[ d_{WE}(i, j) = \left( \sum_{k=1}^{p} w_k (x_k^i - x_k^j)^2 \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \]

One option: weight each feature by its mutual information with the class.

Other Distance Metrics

• Minkowski or \( L_\lambda \) metric:

\[ d(i, j) = \left( \sum_{k=1}^{p} (x_k(i) - x_k(j))^\lambda \right)^{\frac{1}{\lambda}} \]

• Manhattan, city block or \( L_1 \) metric:

\[ d(i, j) = \sum_{k=1}^{p} |x_k(i) - x_k(j)| \]

• \( L_\infty \):

\[ d(i, j) = \max_k |x_k(i) - x_k(j)| \]
The Curse of Dimensionality

- Nearest neighbor breaks down in high-dimensional spaces because the “neighborhood” becomes very large.
- Suppose we have 5000 points uniformly distributed in the unit hypercube and we want to apply the 5-nearest neighbor algorithm.
- Suppose our query point is at the origin.
  - 1D –
    * On a one dimensional line, we must go a distance of $5/5000 = 0.001$ on average to capture the 5 nearest neighbors
  - 2D –
    * In two dimensions, we must go $\sqrt{0.001}$ to get a square that contains 0.001 of the volume
  - D –
    * In $d$ dimensions, we must go $(0.001)^{1/d}$

Curse of Dimensionality cont.

- With 5000 points in 10 dimensions, we must go 0.501 distance along each attribute in order to find the 5 nearest neighbors!
K-NN and irrelevant features

??
Efficient Indexing: Kd-trees

- A kd-tree is similar to a decision tree, except that we split using the median value along the dimension having the highest variance, and points are stored.
- A kd-tree is a tree with the following properties:
  - Each node represents a rectilinear region (faces aligned with axes).
  - Each node is associated with an axis aligned plane that cuts its region into two, and it has a child for each sub-region.
  - The directions of the cutting planes alternate with depth.

Kd-trees

- A kd-tree is similar to a decision tree, except that we split using the median value along the dimension having the highest variance, and points are stored.
Edited Nearest Neighbor

- Storing all of the training examples can require a huge amount of memory. Select a subset of points that still give good classifications.
  - **Incremental deletion.** Loop through the training data and test each point to see if it can be correctly classified given the other points. If so, delete it from the data set.
  - **Incremental growth.** Start with an empty data set. Add each point to the data set only if it is not correctly classified by the points already stored.

Nearest Neighbor Summary

- Advantages
  - variable-sized hypothesis space
  - Learning is extremely efficient
    - however growing a good kd-tree can be expensive
  - Very flexible decision boundaries
- Disadvantages
  - distance function must be carefully chosen
  - Irrelevant or correlated features must be eliminated
  - Typically cannot handle more than 30 features
  - Computational costs: Memory and classification-time computation