Learning Theory

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Learning Theory

- We have explored **many** ways of learning from data
- But…
  - Can we certify how good is our classifier, really?
  - How much data do I need to make it "good enough"?

A simple setting

- Classification
  - m i.i.d. data points
  - **Finite** number of possible classifiers in model class (e.g., dec. trees of depth d)
- Lets consider that a learner finds a classifier *h* that gets zero error in training
  - $\text{error}_{\text{train}}(h) = 0$
- What is the probability that *h* has more than ε true (= test) error?
  - $\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) \geq \varepsilon$

Even if *h* makes zero errors in training data, may make errors in test

How likely is a bad classifier to get m data points right?

- Consider a bad classifier *h* i.e. $\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) \geq \varepsilon$

- Probability that *h* gets one data point right

  $\leq 1- \varepsilon$

- Probability that *h* gets *m* data points right

  $\leq (1- \varepsilon)^m$

How likely is a learner to pick a bad classifier?

- Usually there are many (say k) bad classifiers in model class

  $h_1, h_2, \ldots, h_k$ s.t. $\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h_i) \geq \varepsilon \quad i = 1, \ldots, k$

- Probability that learner picks a bad classifier = Probability that some bad classifier gets 0 training error

  Prob(h_1 gets 0 training error OR
  h_2 gets 0 training error OR … OR
  h_k gets 0 training error)

  $\leq$ Prob(h_1 gets 0 training error) +
  Prob(h_2 gets 0 training error) + … +
  Prob(h_k gets 0 training error)

  $\leq \; k\,(1-\varepsilon)^m$

Union bound

Loose but works

How likely is a learner to pick a bad classifier?

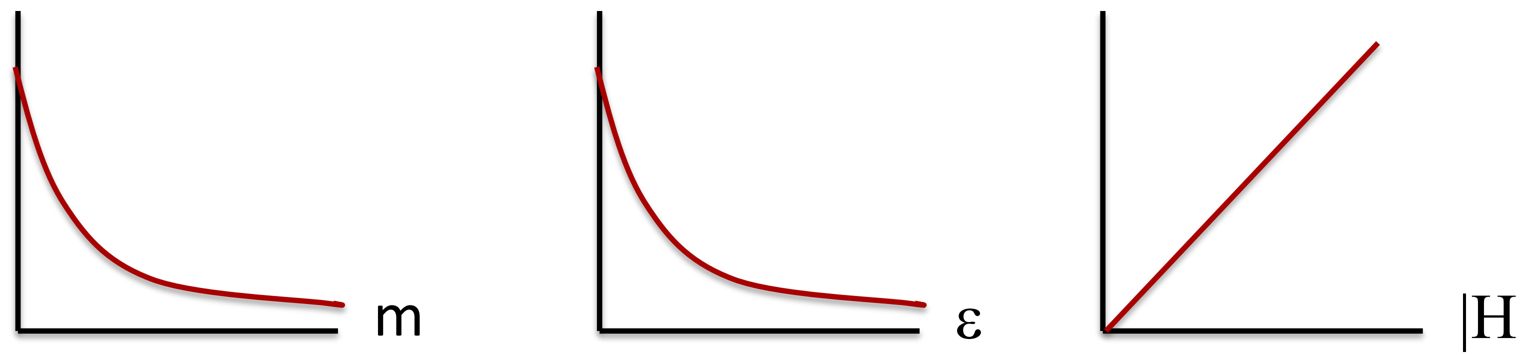
- Usually there are many many (say k) bad classifiers in the class

$$h_1, h_2, \ldots, h_k \qquad \text{s.t. } \text{error}_{true}(h_i) \geq \varepsilon \quad i = 1, \ldots, k$$

- Probability that learner picks a bad classifier

$$\leq \; k\,(1-\varepsilon)^m \quad \leq \; |H|\,(1-\varepsilon)^m \leq \; |H|\,e^{-\varepsilon m}$$

Size of model class



PAC (Probably Approximately Correct) bound

- ***Theorem [Haussler'88]***: Model class *H* finite, dataset *D* with *m* i.i.d. samples, $0 < \varepsilon < 1$: for any learned classifier *h* that gets 0 training error:

$$P(\text{error}_{true}(h) \geq \epsilon) \leq |H| e^{-m\epsilon} \leq \delta$$

- Equivalently, with probability $\geq 1 - \delta$

$$\text{error}_{true}(h) \leq \epsilon$$

Important: PAC bound holds for all *h* with 0 training error, but doesn't guarantee that algorithm finds best *h*!!!

Using a PAC bound

$$|H|e^{-m\epsilon} \leq \delta$$

- Given ε and δ, yields sample complexity

#training data, $m \geq \dfrac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{1}{\delta}}{\epsilon}$

- Given m and δ, yields error bound

error, $\epsilon \geq \dfrac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{1}{\delta}}{m}$

Limitations of Haussler's bound

- Only consider classifiers with 0 training error

  h such that zero error in training, $\text{error}_{\text{train}}(h) = 0$

- Dependence on size of model class |H|

$$m \geq \frac{\ln |H| + \ln \frac{1}{\delta}}{\epsilon}$$

  what if |H| too big or H is continuous (e.g. linear classifiers)?

PAC bounds for finite model classes

H - Finite model class

e.g. decision trees of depth k

histogram classifiers with binwidth h

With probability $\geq 1-\delta$,

1) For all $h \in H$ s.t. $\text{error}_{\text{train}}(h) = 0$,

$$\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) \leq \varepsilon = \frac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{1}{\delta}}{m}$$

Haussler's bound

What if our classifier does not have zero error on the training data?

- A learner with zero training errors may make mistakes in test set
- What about a learner with $error_{train}(h) \neq 0$ in training set?
- The error of a classifier is like estimating the parameter of a coin!

$$error_{true}(h) := P(h(X) \neq Y) \equiv P(H=1) =: \theta$$

$$error_{train}(h) := \frac{1}{m} \sum_i \mathbf{1}_{h(X_i) \neq Y_i} \equiv \frac{1}{m} \sum_i Z_i =: \widehat{\theta}$$

Hoeffding's bound for a single classifier

- Consider *m* i.i.d. flips $x_1,\ldots,x_m$, where $x_i \in \{0,1\}$ of a coin with parameter θ. For $0<\varepsilon<1$:

$$P\left(\left|\theta - \frac{1}{m}\sum_i x_i\right| \geq \epsilon\right) \leq 2e^{-2m\epsilon^2}$$

- For a single classifier h

$$P\left(|\text{error}_{true}(h) - \text{error}_{train}(h)| \geq \epsilon\right) \leq 2e^{-2m\epsilon^2}$$

Hoeffding's bound for |H| classifiers

- For each classifier h_i:

$$P\left(|\text{error}_{true}(h_i) - \text{error}_{train}(h_i)| \geq \epsilon\right) \leq 2e^{-2m\epsilon^2}$$

- What if we are comparing |H| classifiers?

  Union bound

- ***Theorem***: Model class *H* finite, dataset *D* with *m* i.i.d. samples, $0 < \varepsilon < 1$: for any learned classifier $h \in H$:

$$P\left(|\text{error}_{true}(h) - \text{error}_{train}(h)| \geq \epsilon\right) \leq 2|H|e^{-2m\epsilon^2} \leq \delta$$

Important: PAC bound holds for all *h*, but doesn't guarantee that algorithm finds best *h*!!!

Summary of PAC bounds for finite model classes

With probability $\geq 1-\delta$,

1) For all $h \in H$ s.t. $\text{error}_{\text{train}}(h) = 0$,

$$\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) \leq \varepsilon = \frac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{1}{\delta}}{m}$$

Haussler's bound

2) For all $h \in H$

$$|\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) - \text{error}_{\text{train}}(h)| \leq \varepsilon = \sqrt{\frac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{1}{\delta}}{2m}}$$

Hoeffding's bound

PAC bound and Bias-Variance tradeoff

$$P\left(|\text{error}_{true}(h) - \text{error}_{train}(h)| \geq \epsilon\right) \leq 2|H|e^{-2m\epsilon^2} \leq \delta$$

- Equivalently, with probability $\geq 1 - \delta$

$$\text{error}_{true}(h) \leq \text{error}_{train}(h) + \sqrt{\frac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}}{2m}}$$

- Fixed m

Model class	$\downarrow$	$\downarrow$
complex	small	large
simple	large	small

What about the size of the model class?

$$2|H|e^{-2m\epsilon^2} \leq \delta$$

- Sample complexity

$$m \geq \frac{1}{2\epsilon^2}\left(\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}\right)$$

- How large is the model class?

Number of decision trees of depth k

$$m \geq \frac{1}{2\epsilon^2}\left(\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}\right)$$

Recursive solution:

Given *n* **binary** attributes

H_k = Number of **binary** decision trees of depth k

$H_0 = 2$

H_k = (#choices of root attribute)

*(# possible left subtrees)

*(# possible right subtrees) $= n * H_{k-1} * H_{k-1}$

Write $L_k = \log_2 H_k$

$L_0 = 1$

$L_k = \log_2 n + 2L_{k-1} = \log_2 n + 2(\log_2 n + 2L_{k-2})$

$= \log_2 n + 2\log_2 n + 2^2\log_2 n + \ldots + 2^{k-1}(\log_2 n + 2L_0)$

So $L_k = (2^k-1)(1+\log_2 n) + 1$

PAC bound for decision trees of depth k

$$m \geq \frac{\ln 2}{2\epsilon^2}\left((2^k - 1)(1 + \log_2 n) + 1 + \log_2 \frac{2}{\delta}\right)$$

- Bad!!!
  - Number of points is exponential in depth k!

- But, for *m* data points, decision tree can't get too big…

Number of leaves never more than number data points

Number of decision trees with k leaves

$$m \geq \frac{1}{2\epsilon^2}\left(\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}\right)$$

H_k = Number of binary decision trees with k leaves

H_1 =2

H_k = (#choices of root attribute) *

[(# left subtrees wth 1 leaf)*(# right subtrees wth k-1 leaves)

\+ (# left subtrees wth 2 leaves)*(# right subtrees wth k-2 leaves)

\+ …

\+ (# left subtrees wth k-1 leaves)*(# right subtrees wth 1 leaf)]

$$H_k = n\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} H_i H_{k-i} = n^{k-1} C_{k-1}$$

(C_{k-1} : Catalan Number)

Loose bound (using Sterling's approximation):

$$H_k \leq n^{k-1} 2^{2k-1}$$

Number of decision trees

- With k leaves

$$m \geq \frac{1}{2\epsilon^2}\left(\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}\right)$$

$$\log_2 H_k \leq (k-1)\log_2 n + 2k - 1$$

linear in k

number of points m is linear in #leaves

- With depth k

$$\log_2 H_k = (2^k-1)(1+\log_2 n) + 1$$

exponential in k

number of points m is exponential in depth

PAC bound for decision trees with k leaves – Bias-Variance revisited

With prob ≥ 1-δ $\quad \text{error}_{true}(h) \leq \text{error}_{train}(h) + \sqrt{\frac{\ln|H| + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}}{2m}}$

With $H_k \leq n^{k-1}2^{2k-1}$, we get

$$\text{error}_{true}(h) \leq \text{error}_{train}(h) + \sqrt{\frac{(k-1)\ln n + (2k-1)\ln 2 + \ln\frac{2}{\delta}}{2m}}$$

k = m	0	large (~ > ½)
k < m	>0	small (~ <½)

What did we learn from decision trees?

- Moral of the story:

  Complexity of learning not measured in terms of size of model space, but in maximum *number of points* that allows consistent classification

Summary of PAC bounds for finite model class

With probability $\geq 1-\delta$,

1) For all $h \in H$ s.t. $\text{error}_{\text{train}}(h) = 0$,

$$\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) \leq \varepsilon = \frac{\ln |H| + \ln \frac{1}{\delta}}{m}$$

Haussler's bound

2) For all $h \in H$

$$|\text{error}_{\text{true}}(h) - \text{error}_{\text{train}}(h)| \leq \varepsilon = \sqrt{\frac{\ln |H| + \ln \frac{1}{\delta}}{2m}}$$

Hoeffding's bound