Chapter 7: Unsupervised Learning: Clustering

Reza Rezazadegan

Sharif University of Technology

Fall 2022

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- In a sense, in unsupervised learning we have to find the labels y ourselves.
- Note that most of the data we have is unlabeled. Labeling data is expensive and time consuming.
- Andrew Ng: "[A] toddler can usually recognize a cat after just one encounter, but a computer still needs more than one example to learn... Effective "unsupervised learning" – learning without labelled data – remains a holy grail of AI."

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- **Topological Data Analysis:** obtaining insights from the shape (topology) of data.
- Word embeddings: obtaining vector representations of natural language words in a way that words which usually occur together, have close vectors.

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Figure: Learning from labeled data alone (left) vs learning from labeled and unlabeled data (right). Credit: Xiaojin Zhu, Semi-supervised Learning

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- **Few-shot Learning:** training a classifier with only a few training instances. (Small Data)
- Zero-shot Learning: classifying unseen classes without any training examples!

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- Color quantization: reducing the number of colors in an image by clustering the pixel colors in it. Each color is regarded as a point in the 3-dimensional RGB space. We then replace each color with the mean of the cluster it belongs to. Used in image compression and image segmentation. QQ

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K-Means Clustering

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- \bullet The goal of k -Means method is to find the clusters that minimize the inertia or within-cluster sum of squares:

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\sum_{i=1}^{k} \sum_{\mathbf{x} \in C_i} ||\mathbf{x} - \mu_i||^2
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Exercise: show that this problem is equivalent to minimizing $\sum_{i=1}^k \frac{1}{|C|}$ $\frac{1}{|C_i|}\sum_{\mathbf{x},\mathbf{y}\in C_i}||\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{y}||^2$. And this is in turn equivalent to maximizing the sum of squares of distances between points in different clusters.

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- However this problem is NP-hard! Therefore we use an iterative method to find a near-optimum.

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- At each iteration, the loss in equation [\(1\)](#page-35-0) gets smaller.

Limitations of K-Means Clustering

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- It does not behave well when the would-be clusters are not spherically shaped or have different densities.

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- To remedy this, one can Run the algorithm several times with different initial points and choose the best one according to the evaluation metrics below.
- However unlike other clustering methods, the Scikit-Learn class for K-Means has a predict method.

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- The *Silhouette score* of the whole clusters is the mean of the silhouette coefficient of the instances.

Choosing the value of k

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Figure: Using the elbow method (middle) and silhouette coefficient (bottom) to choose the value of k .

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- We can then generalize the label of the representatives to all the elements in the cluster and train a classification model.
- We get better results if we generalize the labels only, say, the 20% of the elements in each cluster closest to the centroid.

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Hierarchical Agglomerative Clustering cont.

Figure: Dendrogram for the digits dataset, with complete linkage

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\sum_{\mathbf{x}\in C_1\cup C_2} ||\mathbf{x}-\mu_{C_1\cup C_2}||^2 - \sum_{\mathbf{x}\in C_1} ||\mathbf{x}-\mu_{C_1}||^2 - \sum_{\mathbf{x}\in C_2} ||\mathbf{x}-\mu_{C_2}||^2 \qquad (2)
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The computational complexity of Agglomerative Clustering is $\mathcal{O}(n^3)$.

Comparison of different linkage methods

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• DBSCAN is a *density-based clustering* algorithm.

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DBSCAN cont.

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- The value of min samples should be larger for higher dimensional data.

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