



TOWARDS REALISTIC COUNTERFACTUAL EXPLANATIONS FOR TABULAR DATA

GJERGJI KASNECI



O X F O R D ACADEMIC

60

Subject

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The ESC Textbook of Cardiovascular Medicine (2 edn) A. John Camm (ed.) et al.

Contents

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1 The Cardiovascular History and Physical Examination

CHAPTER

32 Sports and Heart Disease Get access >

Domenico Corrado, Cristina Basso, Antonio Pelliccia, Gaetano Thiene

https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199566990.003.032 Pages 1215–1238 Published: August 2009

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Extract

Summary

Sports activity is recommended by the medical community because it improves fitness and reduces cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. However, physical exercise may precipitate acute fatalities in both adults and young competitive athletes with concealed heart diseases.

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The ESC Textbook of Cardiovascular Medicine (2 edn) A. John Camm (ed.) et al.

Contents

► Front Matter

1 The Cardiovascular History and Physical Examination

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT | 14 April 2022

Using AI to predict future cardiac arrest

A deep-learning model predicts the likelihood of, and time to, sudden cardiac death in patients with heart disease – providing an opportunity for clinical intervention.





... but must handle uncertainties and must be explainable

=



Example: Using AI to recognize cancerous moles [S. G. Finlayson et al., *Adversarial attacks on medical machine learning*, Science 2019]

"If dermatologists were to get reimbursed only for removing a mole by insurance companies if an Al agreed that it was malignant, there could be an incentive to alter borderline cases to ensure payment for more procedures"

- Samuel G. Finlayson.

Conclusion: It isn't always clear what factors Al uses for prediction, which can cause problems when the tools are used in the real world.





Dermatoscopic image of a benign melanocytic nevus, along with the diagnostic probability computed by a deep neural network.

99% confidence benign



Perturbation computed by a common adversarial attack technique. See (7) for details.

Adversarial example



Combined image of nevus and attack perturbation and the diagnostic probabilities from the same deep neural network.

100% confidence malignant



This could lead to many cases of misclassification in day-to-day practice



AI has influence on personal lives



Source: https://web.br.de/interaktiv/ki-bewerbung/en/?utm_keyword=referral_input

- **BR24:** How can it be that factors not related to facial expressions or gestures play a role in the evaluation of personality traits?
- Retorio.com: As in a normal job interview, such factors are also included in the assessment. All of this is done without being asked, without any pressure of the kind that can arise in an interview situation.
- Q1: What are the main factors that led to the result?
 Q2: What can I do to achieve the desired outcome?

- Algorithmic Recourse aims to explain an automated decision and suggest actionable changes to achieve favorable outcomes for the end user (emphasizing feasibility)
- Central question: Which inputs are responsible for the produced output and what is the order of importance or what are the interactions between those inputs?

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• Popular approaches: SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) framework by [5], LIME [6], and others [7], [8]).

- Central question: What are the instances that lead to specific results and how are they distributed?
- Select **particular instances** from the dataset or exploit particular instances **provided by human experts** to explain the behavior of an ML model or explain the underlying distribution [9, 10].
- Central question: Why a model predicted the actual output and not another close alternative?
- Grounded in cognitive psychology our explanation-seeking behavior is considered as rather contrastive [11] (it is argued that such explanations are easy to process from a cognitive perspective).
- Central question: What can the user do to achieve a desired outcome?
- These approaches (see [12]) provide model explanations by highlighting important features and suggesting actionable feature changes, e.g., paying off small loans in time, to achieve favorable outcomes in the future.

Feature Attribution

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Contrastive Explanations



tual Is



[5] Lundberg & Lee. A unified approach to interpreting model predictions. NeurIPS 2017.

[6] Ribeiro, Singh & Guestrin. Why should i trust you?: Explaining the predictions of any classifier. KDD 2016.

[7] Shrikumar, Greenside & Kundaje. Learning Important Features Through Propagating Activation Differences. ICML 2018.

[8] Bach et al. On pixel-wise explanations for non-linear classifier decisions by layer-wise relevance propagation. PloS one 10, 7 (2015).

[9] Gade et al. Explainable Al in industry. KDD 2019.

[10] Mittelstadt, Russell & Wachter. 2019. Explaining explanations in Al. In FAT* 2019.

[11] Peter Lipton. Inference to the best explanation. Routledge 2003.

[12] Wachter, Mittelstadt & Russell. *Counterfactual explanations without opening the black box: automated decisions and the GDPR*. Harvard Journal of Law & Technology 31, 2 (2018).



Algorithmic recourse should respect GDPR principles!?					
Data protection and minimality	Right for explanation	Right to be forgotten			
Use only relevant and as few data points as possible	Need for human- interpretable explanations	Data deletion applies also to the models			



Given a classifier $f: \mathbb{R}^n \to [0,1]$ and fixed threshold $t \in [0,1]$ (1) Explain how the factual input \mathbf{x}^F influences $f(\mathbf{x}^F)$ (2) If $f(\mathbf{x}^F) \leq t$, find counterfactual input $\mathbf{x}^{CF} \sim \mathbf{x}^F$ that fulfills certain feasibility constraints and $f(\mathbf{x}^{CF}) > t$

Practically viable CEs should be

- Realistic (i.e., the suggestions are realistically achievable)
- Robust (e.g., noise or small changes to the data distribution or to the classifier, e.g., through recalibration, should not invalidate the CE)
- Simple (small set of easy-to-implement or easy-to-attain suggestions increases the probability of success)

CEs are a powerful mean towards

- Context-wise understanding through individualized actionable suggestions
- Empowerment through education and step-wise personal improvements
- Perceived fairness is increased when individual improvements are possible (in constructive interaction with the system)









 X_1 e.g., blood pressure X_2 e.g., age X_3 e.g., heart condition



Independence-based approaches

- Impose independence assumption on input features
- **Combinatorial solvers** generate recourse suggestions in the presence of feasibility constraints, e.g. [13,14,15,16]
- Neighborhood search [17,18] with decision trees, random search, and SVMs aim to fulfill fairness constraints
- Gradient-based **optimization** to find **low-cost CEs** given multiple constraints, such as feasibility and diversity [10,19,20]
- Shortcoming: neglecting input dependencies leads to overly optimistic intervention costs in practice
- [13] Karimi et al. Model-Agnostic CE for Consequential Decisions. AISTATS 2020.

[14] Rawal & Lakkaraju. Beyond Individualized Recourse: Interpretable and Interactive Summaries of Actionable Recourses. NeurIPS 2020.

- [15] Russell. Efficient Search for Diverse Coherent Explanations. FAT* 2019.
- [16] Ustun, Spangher & Liu. Actionable recourse in linear classification. FAT* 2019.
- [17] Lash et al. Generalized inverse classification. SIAM 2017.
- [18] Tolomei et al. Interpretable predictions of tree-based ensembles via actionable feature tweaking. KDD 2017.
- [19] Dhurandhar et al. Explanations based on the Missing: Towards Contrastive Explanations with Pertinent Negatives. NeurIPS 2018.
- [10] Mittelstadt, Russell & Wachter. Explaining explanations in Al. FAT* 2019.
- $\label{eq:constraint} [20] \, \textit{Mothilal, Sharma \& Tan. Explaining ML Classifiers through Diverse CEs. FAT \star 2020.}$

Dependency-based approaches

- Bridge the gap between the strong independence assumption and the strong causal assumption, e.g. [21,22,23,24,25]
- Main idea: exploit factors of variation in lower-dimensional latent space to capture input dependencies [26,27]
- Feasibility constraints can be encoded into the CE model [23] and classification uncertainty can be modeled, e.g., CLUE [28]
- Shortcoming: data handling for CE generation is a challenge

[23] Mahajan, Tan, & Sharma. Preserving causal constraints in counterfactual explanations for machir learning classifiers. arXiv preprint arXiv:1912.03277(2019).

- [24] Pawelczyk, Broelemann & Kasneci. Learning Model-Agnostic CEs for Tabular Data. WWW 2020.
- [25] Pawelczyk, Broelemann & Kasneci. On CEs under Predictive Multiplicity. UAI 2020. PMLR.
- [26] Kingma & Welling. Auto-encoding variational bayes. ICLR 2013.
- [27] Nazabal et al. Handling incomplete heterogeneous data using vaes. PR 2020.
- [28] Antorán, et al. Getting a CLUE: A Method for Explaining Uncertainty Estimates. ICLR 2021.

^[21] Downs et al. CRUDS: Counterfactual Recourse Using Disentangled Subspaces. ICML WHI 2020.
[22] Joshi et al. Towards Realistic Individual Recourse and Actionable Explanations in Black-Box Decision Making Systems. arXiv preprint arXiv:1907.09615(2019).
[23] Mahajan, Tan, & Sharma. Preserving causal constraints in counterfactual explanations for machine



Model for data generating process

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- $\mathbf{x}^F = g(\mathbf{z}^F), \ z_j^F \perp z_k^F \text{ for } j \neq k$
- Need not assume that $x_i^F \perp x_k^F$
- Explanation Model • Explanation Model $\delta_{\mathbf{z}}^{*} = \arg \min_{\delta_{\mathbf{z}}} \| \mathbf{x}^{F} - g(\mathbf{z}^{F} + \delta_{\mathbf{z}}) \|$ such that $f(g(\mathbf{z}^{F} + \delta_{\mathbf{z}})) > t$

where $f(\mathbf{x}) \in [0, 1]$ as before.

• $\|\cdot\|_1$ leads to sparse explanations



[24] Pawelczyk, Broelemann & Kasneci. 2020. Learning Model-Agnostic CEs for Tabular Data. WWW 2020.



Variational Autoencoder models for learning CEs for tabular data

0

5

10

Neighbors (k)

15



[16] Ustun, Spangher & Liu. Actionable recourse in linear classification. FAT* 2019.

[31] Laugel et al. Inverse Classification for Comparison-based Interpretability in Machine Learning. arXiv preprint arXiv:1712.08443(2017).

GMSC: https://www.kaggle.com/brycecf/give-me-some-credit-dataset

HELOC: https://community.fico.com/s/explainable-machine-learning-challenge

20

20



Let $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ with $g(\mathbf{z}) = \mathbf{x}$ and $f(\mathbf{x}) \le t$, and let $\hat{\mathbf{x}} = g(\mathbf{z} + \delta_{\mathbf{z}})$ with $(\hat{\mathbf{x}}) > t$

Let $J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x},g)} \coloneqq \frac{\partial g(\mathbf{z})}{\partial \mathbf{z}} \Big|_{\mathbf{z}}$ (controls to what extent the dimensions of \mathbf{x} are affected by latent actions $\delta_{\mathbf{z}}$)

Theorem: $\|\delta_{\mathbf{x}}\|^2 = \|\mathbf{x} - \hat{\mathbf{x}}\|^2 = \|g(\mathbf{z}) - g(\mathbf{z} + \delta_{\mathbf{z}})\|^2$ (recourse cost) $\approx \|g(\mathbf{z}) - (g(\mathbf{z}) + J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x},g)}\delta_{\mathbf{z}})\|^2 = \delta_{\mathbf{z}}^T (J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x},g)T} J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x},g)}) \delta_{\mathbf{z}}$

Variational Autoencoder models avoid low-density recourse

Corollary: For $g(\mathbf{z}) = \boldsymbol{\mu}(\mathbf{z}) + \boldsymbol{\sigma}(\mathbf{z}) \odot \epsilon$ where $\epsilon \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \mathbf{I})$ we have $\mathbb{E}(\|\delta_{\mathbf{x}}\|^{2} | \delta_{\mathbf{z}}) \approx \delta_{\mathbf{z}}^{T} \left(J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}, \boldsymbol{\mu})^{T}} J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}, \boldsymbol{\mu})} + J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}, \boldsymbol{\sigma})^{T}} J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}, \boldsymbol{\sigma})} \right) \delta_{\mathbf{z}}$

The induced expected cost of recourse will be large, if the generator (i.e., decoder) is uncertain in regions of the latent space



Main advantages of this model (1) Reconstructions adhere to input correlations (2) Reconstructions happen in dense regions (with data support)

[24] Pawelczyk, Broelemann & Kasneci. *Learning Model-Agnostic CEs for Tabular Data*. WWW 2020.

[29] Pawelczyk et al. Algorithmic Recourse for Correlated Inputs with Independent Mechanisms. Under review



Learning CEs for tabular data by independent mechanisms

Model for data generating process

$$\mathbf{x}^F = g(\mathbf{v}^F, \mathbf{x}^F_J), \ \mathbf{v}^F \perp \mathbf{x}^F_J \text{ for } J \subset \{1, \dots, n\}$$

- Do recourse intervention on \mathbf{x}_{I}^{F}
- Explanation Model

$$\begin{split} \delta_{\mathbf{z}}^* &= \arg\min_{\delta_{\mathbf{x}_J}} \left\| \mathbf{x}^F - g\left(\mathbf{v}^F, \mathbf{x}_J^F + \delta_{\mathbf{x}_J} \right) \right\| \\ &\text{such that } f\left(g\left(\mathbf{v}^F, \mathbf{x}_J^F + \delta_{\mathbf{x}_J} \right) \right) > t \\ &\text{where } f(\mathbf{x}) \in [0, 1] \text{ and } t \text{ as before.} \end{split}$$

• $\|\cdot\|_1$ for rather sparse explanations

•
$$\|\delta_{\mathbf{x}}\|^2 = \|\mathbf{x} - \hat{\mathbf{x}}\|^2$$

= $\delta_{\mathbf{x}_J}^T \left(J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}_{-J})^T} J_{\mathbf{z}}^{(\mathbf{x}_{-J})} \right) \delta_{\mathbf{x}_J} + \delta_{\mathbf{x}_J}^T \delta_{\mathbf{x}_J}$
indirect costs direct costs



End-to-end Autoencoder training with adv. Regularizer:

$$\mathcal{L}(\Theta, \mathbf{x}) = \left\| dec(\mathbf{v}^{F}, \mathbf{x}_{J}^{F}) - \mathbf{x}_{-J}^{F} \right\| - \lambda \left\| disc(\mathbf{v}^{F}) - \mathbf{x}_{J}^{F} \right\|$$

[29] Pawelczyk et al. Algorithmic Recourse for Correlated Inputs with Independent Mechanisms. Under review





[23] Mahajan, Tan, & Sharma. Preserving causal **Competitors** Summary constraints in counterfactual explanations for machine learning classifiers. arXiv preprint arXiv:1912.03277(2019). EB-CF [23] Median individual costs are lower • . [28] Antorán, et al. Getting a CLUE: A Method for Explaining Uncertainty Estimates. ICLR 2021. CLUE [28] Less cost variability ٠ . [20] Pawelczyk et al. Algorithmic Recourse for Correlated Inputs with Independent Mechanisms. FACE [32] Worst-case CE less costly ٠ • [32] Poyiadzi et al. Face: Feasible and actionable counterfactual explanations. AAAI-AIES 2020.



Study robustness to perturbations of prescribed recourses (under review)

Perturb recourses by adding Gaussian RV with mean 0 and variance 0.01





Further research on practical CEs



Invalidation under recalibration or model update, UAI PMLR 2020



Invalidation under noisy recourse implementation by end users (joint work with Harvard Business School), under review



Gjergji Kasneci | Towards Realistic Counterfactual Explanations | AICPM 2022



CARLA: Counterfactual And Recourse LibrAry



CARLA (Counterfactual And Recourse LibrAry) – Python library for standardized benchmarking of CE methods, NeurIPS Datasets and Benchmarks 2021



Further research in explainable and reliable AI







Truth Discovery: Data Quality and Reliability (ICDE'17, CHB'17, ...)



BACK-UP

Gjergji Kasneci | Towards Realistic Counterfactual Explanations | AICPM 2022





According to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA), the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) in the US, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe, creditors are required to offer their customers minimum explanations for why a specific decision was made \rightarrow adverse action notice

Feature Subset	Current Value	
# delays elsewhere / year	5	
current income	\$1000	
tenure w/ current job credit file	4 months NaN	

Q2: What can I do to achieve the desired outcome?

>10%

Feature Subset	Current Value		Required
eq delays elsewhere / year	5	\rightarrow	0
current income	\$1000	\rightarrow	\$2500
tenure w/ current job credit file	4 months NaN	$\rightarrow \rightarrow$	12 months True



Al has influence on personal lives

Caitlin: Oil Spill News

Google bp bout 139,000.000 results (0.19 seconds) Advanced search Everything Bp www.BP.com/GulfOfMexicoResponse Info about the Gulf of Mexico Spill Learn More about How BP is Helping - News Maps BP Global | BP May 26, 2010 ... Welcome to BP. Our products and services provide the freedom to move, to Blogs heat and to see. Show stock quote for BP More www.bp.com/ - Cached - Similar Careers BP worldwide Investors Gas and petrol station locator Any time Contact us Gas and fuel cards Latest About BP Press releases Past 3 days More results from bp.com » More search tools

Gulf of Mexico response | Oil spill | BP

May 28, 2010 ... BP started the "top kill" operations to stop the flow of oil from the MC252 well in the Gulf of Mexico at 1300 CDT on May 26, 2010. ... www.bp.com/extendedsectiongenericarticle.do?categoryId=40...

BP - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

BP plc is a British global energy company which is the third largest energy company and the fourth largest company in the world. ... en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BP - Cached - Similar

News for bp



3P Retries Diverting Oil Leak With Dome - 2 hours ago By CLIFFORD KRAUSS HOUSTON - Unable for six weeks to plug the gushing oil well beneath the Gulf of Mexico, BP renewed an effort Monday to use a dome to ... New York Times - 222 related articles » Obama administration moves to distance itself from BP on oil spill ... -WKRG TV

Washington Post - 257 related articles » US oil spill has not stopping Kiwis going to BP - TVNZ - 25213 related articles >

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May 26, 2010 ... Welcome to BP. Our products and services provide the freedom to move, to heat and to see. H Show stock quote for BP www.bp.com/ - Cached - Similar Careers BP worldwide Investors Gas and petrol station locator Contact us Gas and fuel cards About BP Press releases

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BP - A leading energy provider - BP investor information including BP shareholder information, shares update, BP annual report, BP guarterly results ... www.bp.com/investorhome.do?categoryId=132... - Cached - Similar

BP - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

BP plc is a British global energy company which is the third largest energy company and the fourth largest company in the world. ... en wikipedia org/wiki/BP - 2 hours ago - Cached - Similar-

BP | Business | guardian.co.uk

31 May 2010: BP prepare for hazardous salvage operation that may risk increasing the gush of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico ... www.guardian.co.uk/business/bp - 26 minutes ago - Cached - Similar

BP: Summary for BP P.L.C- Yahoo! Finance

Get detailed information on BP PLC (BP) including guote performance, Real-Time ECN, technical chart analysis, key stats, insider transactions, ... finance.yahoo.com/g?s=BP - Cached - Similar

Source: https://medium.com/the-open-book/filter-bubbles-3eca0f892366

Not a bad price and it works. Can't do much more than that. We'll see how long it takes me to wear it **8**GB out.







I love this camera. It is amazing. It gives professional quality. I am still learning all the excellent features. The more I learn, the better I love this camera.

original predicted date and that was disappointing

since it was a prime item and should have been two

**** Love the watch, but the delivery was WAY after the



Search

Advanced search

day max.

A 11111 Continuously shuts down. Numerous errors and issues.



Fred

Pretty good performance in night, especially when recording videos. Good choice for a starter.

Great lens for its price sure it doesn't have phase detection but the a7ii has it built in and with the update the autofocus is pretty fast once you calibrate it to your camera



This lens is great and perfectly functional. Be sure to take off both protective films from the front and back of the lens. The focus doesn't pull as cleanly as the canon brand 50mm but it is a perfect intermediate lens when you are on a budget.

For the price, I would definitely buy again. It's sturdily constructed, bright, and feels good in hand.

Source: Yongfeng Zhang; Xu Chen, Explainable Recommendation: A Survey and New Perspectives, now, 2020.

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explanation		
SAPIGITATION		

Recommend



Nazabal, Alfredo, et al. "Handling incomplete heterogeneous data using vaes." Pattern Recognition 107 (2020): 107501

- Continuous/real-valued data $p(x_{nd}|\boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) = \mathcal{N}\left(x_{nd}|\mu_d(\mathbf{z}_n), \sigma_d^2(\mathbf{z}_n)\right)$
- Positive real-valued data $p(x_{nd}|\boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) = \log \mathcal{N}\left(x_{nd}|\mu_d(\mathbf{z}_n), \sigma_d^2(\mathbf{z}_n)\right)$

• Counting data
$$p(x_{nd}|\boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) = \text{Poiss}\left(x_{nd}|\lambda_d(\mathbf{z}_n)\right) = \frac{(\lambda_d(\mathbf{z}_n))^{x_{nd}}\exp(-\lambda_d(\mathbf{z}_n))}{x_{nd}!}$$

• Categorical data
$$p(x_{nd} = r | \boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) = \frac{\exp(-h_{dr}(\mathbf{z}_n))}{\sum_{q=1}^{R} \exp(-h_{dq}(\mathbf{z}_n))}$$

• Ordinal data
$$p(x_{nd} = r | \boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) = p(x_{nd} \le r | \boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd}) - p(x_{nd} \le r - 1 | \boldsymbol{\gamma}_{nd})$$
 $p(x_{nd} \le r | \mathbf{z}_n) = \frac{1}{1 + \exp(-(\theta_r(\mathbf{z}_n) - h_d(\mathbf{z}_n)))}$