

An Optimized Cost-Free Learning Using ABC-SVM Approach in the Class Imbalance Problem

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Abstract: *In this work, cost-free learning (CFL) formally defined in comparison with cost-sensitive learning (CSL). The primary difference between them is that even in the class imbalance problem, a CFL approach provides optimal classification results without requiring any cost information. In point of fact, several CFL approaches exist in the related studies like sampling and some criteria-based approaches. Yet, to our best knowledge none of the existing CFL and CSL approaches is able to process the abstaining classifications properly when no information is given about errors and rejects. Hence based on information theory, here we propose a novel CFL which seeks to maximize normalized mutual information of the targets and the decision outputs of classifiers. With the help of this strategy, we can manage binary or multi-class classifications with or without refraining. Important features are observed from the new strategy. When the degree of class imbalance is changing, this proposed strategy could able to balance the errors and rejects accordingly and automatically. A wrapper paradigm of proposed ABC-SVM (Artificial Bee Colony-SVM) is oriented on the evaluation measure of imbalanced dataset as objective function with respect to feature subset, misclassification cost and intrinsic parameters of SVM. The main goal of cost free ABC-SVM is to directly improve the performance of classification by simultaneously optimizing the best pair of intrinsic parameters, feature subset and misclassification cost parameters. The obtained experimental results on various standard benchmark datasets and real-world data with different ratios of imbalance show that the proposed method is effective in comparison with commonly used sampling techniques.*

Keywords: Classification, Class Imbalance, Cost-Free Learning, Cost-Sensitive Learning, artificial bee colony algorithm, Support vector machine

1. Introduction

Recently, the class imbalance problem has been recognized as a crucial problem in machine learning and data mining [1] which occurs when the training data is not evenly distributed among classes and is also especially critical in many real applications such as credit card fraud detection when fraudulent cases are rare or medical diagnoses where normal cases are the majority. In these cases, standard classifiers generally perform poorly. Also, the classifiers usually tend to be overwhelmed by the majority class and ignore the minority class examples with most classifiers assuming an even distribution of examples among classes and assume an equal misclassification cost. Moreover, classifiers are typically designed to maximize accuracy but that is not a good metric to evaluate effectiveness in the case of imbalanced training data. Hence, we need to improve traditional algorithms so as to handle imbalanced data and choose other metrics to measure performance instead of accuracy. Here we focus our study on imbalanced datasets with binary classes.

Much work has been done in addressing the class imbalance problem. These methods can be grouped in two categories: the data perspective and the algorithm perspective [2]. The methods with the data perspective re-balance the class distribution by re-sampling the data space either randomly or deterministically. The main disadvantage of re-sampling techniques are that they may cause loss of important information or the model over fitting, since that they change the original data distribution.

The imbalanced learning problem in data mining has attracted a significant amount of interest from the research community and practitioners because real-world datasets are frequently imbalanced containing a minority class with

relatively few instances when compared to the other classes in the dataset. These standard classification algorithms of literature which were used in supervised learning have difficulties in correctly classifying the minority class. Most of these algorithms assume a balanced distribution of classes and equal misclassification costs for each class. In addition, these algorithms are designed to generalize from sample data and output the simplest hypothesis that best fits the data.

This methodology is embedded as principle in the inductive bias of many machine learning algorithms including nearest neighbor, Decision Tree and Support Vector Machine (SVM). Therefore, when they are used on complex imbalanced data sets, these algorithms are inclined to be overwhelmed by the majority class and ignore the minority class causing errors in classification for the minority class. Putting differently, standard classification algorithms try to minimize the overall classification error rate by producing a biased hypothesis which regards almost all instances as the majority class. Recent research on the class imbalance problem has included studies on datasets from a wide variety of contexts such as, information retrieval and filtering [3], diagnosis of rare thyroid disease [4], text classification [5], credit card fraud detection [6] and detection of oil spills from satellite images [7]. Imbalance degree varies depending on the context.

A cost-sensitive classifier tries to learn more characteristics of samples with the minority class by setting a high cost to the misclassification of a minority class sample. It does not modify the data distribution. Weiss [8] left the questions “why doesn’t the cost-sensitive learning algorithm perform better given the known draw-backs with sampling and are there ways to improve the cost-sensitive learning algorithms

effectiveness.” He pinpointed to improve the effectiveness of cost sensitive learning algorithms by optimizing factors which influence the performance of cost sensitive learning. There are two challenges with respect to the training of cost sensitive classifier. The misclassification costs play a crucial role in the construction of a cost sensitive learning model for achieving expected classification results.

Nevertheless, in many contexts of imbalanced dataset, the costs of misclassification cannot be determined. Apart from cost, intrinsic parameters and the feature set of some sophisticated classifiers also influence the classification performance. Moreover, these factors influence each other. This is the first challenge. The other is the gap between the measure of evaluation and the objective of training on the imbalanced data [9]. Indeed, for evaluating the performance of a cost-sensitive classifier on a skewed data set, the overall accuracy is inapplicable. It is common to employ other evaluation measures to monitor the balanced classification ability, such as G-mean [10] and AUC [11]. However, these cost-sensitive classifiers measured by imbalanced evaluation are not trained and updated with the objective of the imbalanced evaluation. In order to achieve good prediction performance, learning algorithms should train classifiers by optimizing the concerned performance measures [12].

In order to solve the challenges above, we propose a CFL strategy in the class imbalance problem. Using normalized mutual information (NI) as the learning target, we conduct the learning from cost-insensitive classifiers. Therefore, we are able to adopt conventional classifiers for simple and direct implementations. The most advantage of this strategy is its unique feature in classification scenarios where one has no knowledge of costs. Simultaneously for improving the performance of cost-free ABC-SVM optimize the factors such as cost of misclassification, intrinsic parameters and feature set of classifier.

The remainder of this paper is as follows. In section 2 related works is described. In section 3 proposed CF-ABC-SVM discussed for class imbalance problem. In section 4 discussed the experimental results and conclusion is described in section 5.

2. Related Work

When costs are unequal and unknown, Maloof [13] uses ROC curve to show the performance of binary classifications under different cost settings. To make fair comparisons, an alternative to AUC is proposed to evaluate different classifiers under the same cost ratio distribution [14]. These studies can be viewed as comparing classifiers rather than finding optimal operating points. Cost curve [15] can be used to visualize optimal expected costs over a range of cost settings, but it does not suit multi-class problem. Zadrozny and Elkan [16] apply least-squares multiple linear regression to estimate the costs. The method requires cost information of the training sets to be known. Cross validation [17] is proposed to choose from a limited set of cost values, and the final decisions are made by users.

There exist some CFL approaches in the class imbalance problem. Various sampling strategies [18] try to modify the imbalanced class distributions. Active learning [19] is also investigated to select desired instances and the feature selection techniques are applied to combat the class imbalance problem for high-dimensional data sets. Besides, ensemble learning methods are used to improve the generalization of predicting the minority class. To reduce the influence of imbalance, Hellinger distance is applied to decision trees as a splitting criterion for its skew insensitivity. And the recognition-based methods that train on a single class are proposed as alternatives to the discrimination-based methods.

However, all CFL methods above do not take abstaining into consideration and may fail to process the abstaining classifications. In regards to abstaining classification, some strategies have been proposed for defining optimal reject rules. Pietraszek [20] proposes a bounded-abstention model with ROC analysis, and Fumera et al. [21] seek to maximize accuracy while keeping the reject rate below a given value. However, the bound information and the targeted reject rate are required to be specified respectively. When there is no prior knowledge of these settings, it is hard to determine the values. Li and Sethi [22] restrict the maximum error rate of each class, but the rates may conflict when they are arbitrarily given.

Zhang et al [23] proposed a new strategy of CFL to deal with the class imbalance problem. Based on the specific property of mutual information that can distinguish different error types and reject types, we seek to maximize it as a general rule for dealing with binary/multiclass classifications with/without abstaining. The challenge will be a need of specific optimization algorithms for different learning machines. Many sampling techniques have been introduced including heuristic or non-heuristic oversampling, undersampling and data cleaning rules such as removing “noise” and “borderline”. These works focus on data-level techniques whereas, other researchers concentrate on changing the classifier internally as for example SVM that is to deal with class imbalance; Whereas uses ensemble learning to deal with class imbalance while combines undersampling with ensemble methods; focuses on incorporating different re-balance heuristics to SVM to tackle the problem of class imbalance while incorporate SVM into a boosting method.

These all literature studies introduced a test strategy which determines how unknown attributes are selected to perform test on in order to minimize the sum of the misclassification costs and test costs. Furthermore, applied synthetic minority oversampling technique (SMOTE) to balance the dataset at first and then built the model using SVM with different costs proposed applied some common classifiers (e.g. C4.5, logistic regression, and Naive Bayes) with sampling techniques such as random oversampling, random undersampling and condensed nearest neighbor rule, Wilson’s edited nearest neighbor rule, Tomek’s link, and SMOTE. In different to the literature, rather than focusing only on data sampling or CSL, here we propose using both techniques. In addition to that, we also do not assume a fixed cost ratio and we neither set the cost ratio

by inverting the ratio of prior distributions between minority and majority class. Here instead, optimize the cost ratio locally.

3. Dealing with Class Imbalance with ABC-SVM

On dealing with imbalanced datasets, literature researchers focused on the data level and the classifier level. At the data level, the common task is the modification of the class distribution whereas at the classifier level many techniques were introduced such as manipulating classifiers internally, ensemble learning, one-class learning and CFL.

1.1 Cost-Free SVM

Support Vector Machines (SVM), which has strong mathematical foundations based on statistical learning theory that has been successfully adopted in various classification applications. SVM aims maximizing a margin in a hyper plane separating classes. However, it is overwhelmed by the majority class instances in the case of imbalanced datasets because the objective of regular SVM is to maximize the accuracy. In order to provide different costs associated with the two different kinds of errors, cost-sensitive SVM (CF-SVM) [15] is a good solution. CF-SVM is formulated as follows:

$$\min \frac{1}{2} \|w\|^2 + C_+ \sum_{i; y_i=+1} \xi_i + C_- \sum_{i; y_i=-1} \xi_i$$

$$\text{st } y_i[(w^T x_i) + b] \geq 1 - \xi_i \quad \forall i = 1, L, \dots, n \quad \xi_i \geq 0$$

where the C_+ is the higher misclassification cost of the positive class that is the primary interest, where C_- is the lower misclassification cost of the negative class. Using the different error cost for the positive and negative classes, this SVM hyper plane could be pushed away from the positive instances. In this paper, we fix $C_- = C$ and $C_+ = C \times C_{rf}$, where C and C_{rf} are respectively the regularization parameter and the ratio of misclassification cost. On the construction of cost sensitive SVM, this misclassification cost parameter plays an indispensable role. In general, the Radial Basis Function (RBF kernel) is a reasonable first choice for the classification of the nonlinear datasets, as it has fewer parameters (γ).

1.2 Optimized cost free SVM by measure of imbalanced data

SVM tries to minimize the regularized hinge loss; it is driven by an error based objective function. Yet, the obtained overall accuracy is not an appropriate evaluation measure for imbalanced data classification. Finally, there is an inevitable gap between the evaluation measure by which the classifier is to be evaluated and the objective function based on which the classifier is trained. The classifier for imbalanced data learning should be driven by more appropriate measures. We inject the appropriate measures into the objective function of the classifier in the training with ABC. The common evaluation for imbalanced data classification is G-mean and AUC. However for many classifiers, yet the learning process is still driven by error based objective functions. In this paper

we explicitly treat the measure itself as the objective function when training the cost sensitive learning. Here, we designed a measure based training framework for dealing with imbalanced data classification issues. A wrapper paradigm proposed that discovers the amount of re-sampling for a dataset based on optimizing evaluation functions like the f-measure, and AUC. To date, there is no research about training the cost sensitive classifier with measure based objective functions. This is one important issue that hinders the performance of cost-sensitive learning.

Another important issue of applying the cost-sensitive learning algorithm to the imbalanced data is that the cost matrix is often unavailable for a problem domain. The misclassification cost, especially the ratio misclassification cost, plays a crucial role in the construction of a cost sensitive approach; the knowledge of misclassification costs is required for achieving expected classification result. However, the values of costs are commonly given by domain experts. They remain unknown in many domains where it is in fact difficult to specify the cost ratio information precisely. Also, it is not the correct method to set the cost ratio to the inverse of the imbalance ratio (the number of majority in-stances divided by the number of minority instances); especially it is not accurate for some classifier such as SVM. Heuristic approaches were used search the optimal cost matrix in some of the cost sensitive learning such as Genetic Algorithm or grid search to find the optimal cost setup. Feature subset selection and the intrinsic parameters of the classifier have a significant bearing on the performance, apart from the ratio misclassification cost information. These both factors are not only important for classification of imbalanced data, but also applicable for any kind of classification. The technique, feature selection is used for selecting a subset of discriminative features for building robust learning models by removing most irrelevant and redundant features from the data. Furthermore, this advanced optimal feature selection can concurrently achieve good accuracy and dimensionality reduction.

Unfortunately, the imbalanced data distributions are often accompanied by high dimensionality in real-world datasets such as bio-informatics, text classification and CAD (Computer Aided Detection). It is important to select features that can capture the high skew in the class distribution. Furthermore, proper intrinsic parameter setting of classifiers like regularization of cost parameter and the kernel functional parameter of SVM can improve the classification performance. It is necessary to use the grid search to optimize the kernel parameter and regulation parameters. Also, these three factors influence each other. Thus, we obtain the optimal ratio of cost of misclassification, feature subset selection and intrinsic parameters must occur simultaneously.

Based on the reasons above, our specific goal is to devise a strategy to automatically determine the optimal factors during training of the cost sensitive classifier oriented by the imbalanced evaluation criteria (G-mean and AUC). For binary class classification, there is only one parameter called cost parameter i.e., the relative cost information,

known as ratio misclassification cost factor Crf . Since the RBF kernel is selected for the cost sensitive SVM, γ and C are the parameters to be optimized. We need to combine the discrete and continuous values in the solution representation since the costs and parameters we intend to optimize are continuous while the feature subset is discrete as like each and every feature is represented by a 1 or 0 for whether it is selected or not. In our proposed method, the food source (solution) is randomly generated in the initial process. Then, each solution is evaluated through SVM classifier. The solving of SVM is generally a quadratic programming (QP) problem; sequential minimal optimization (SMO) will be applied in this study to optimize the computation time of training period of SVM.

SMO divides the large QP problem into series of smallest possible QP problem to avoid the intensive time and memories required. For this study, the radial basis function (RBF) is used as the kernel function of non-linear SVM classifier to learn and recognize pattern of input data from the training set. The equation of RBF function is defined as

$$K(x_i, x_j) = e^{-r(x_i, x_j)^2} \quad (1)$$

where r is a kernel parameter in RBF function. Then, a testing set is used to determine the classification accuracy for the input dataset. The fitness value is obtained by the classification accuracy of this testing dataset. For a small- and medium-sized data, the accurate value can be estimated by using the 10-fold cross-validation method. The method will randomly separate data into 10 subsets; one subset is used as a testing set while the remaining nine subsets are used as training sets. The process will be performed for 10 times in total. As a result, each subset will be used once as a validation or testing set. The accuracy of classification will be obtained from the average of all correctness values from 10 rounds. For the large-sized data, the holdout method is applied. This method divides the data into two parts for construction training and testing models. Each food source is modified based on the process of updating feasible solution by employed bees as expressed in the equation (2) where Φ is

a random number in the range between $[-1, 1]$, negative one and one.

$$v_{ij} = x_{ij} + \Phi(x_{ij} - x_{kj}) \quad (2)$$

The equation (2) returns a numerical number of a new candidate solution v_{ij} from their current food source x_{ij} and their neighboring food source x_{kj} . However, for dimension reduction these solutions must be binary numbers. Thus, this numeric solution must be converted into either 0 or 1 by using equation (3) and (4) as follows:

$$S(v_{ij}) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-v_{ij}}} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{if } (rand < S(v_{ij})) \text{ then } v_{ij} = 1; \text{ else } v_{ij} = 0 \quad (4)$$

The equation (3) is a sigmoid limiting function into the interval $[0.0, 1.0]$. Then, a random number between range $[0.0, 1.0]$, $rand$, is used to determine the binary value of the solution in the equation (4). The new candidate solution must be evaluated with SVM classifier. If the new fitness value is better than the current one, the employed bees will replace its solution with this new candidate solution; otherwise, the new candidate solution will be ignored. Onlooker bees will select a food source according to the calculated probability of each food sources based on the equation (5), once after employed bees share information of their solutions.

$$P_i = \frac{fit_i}{\sum_{i=1}^N fit_i} \quad (5)$$

where P_i is the probability value of the solution i , N is the number of all solutions, and fit_i is the fitness value of the solution i . Thus, the solution with higher fitness value will have greater opportunity to be selected by the onlooker bees. After the onlooker bees select their desirable food source, the bees will perform the process of updating feasible solution similar to employed bees. The whole processes will be repeated until the termination criterion is reached. The dimension reduction process of ABC-SVM is summarized as follows:

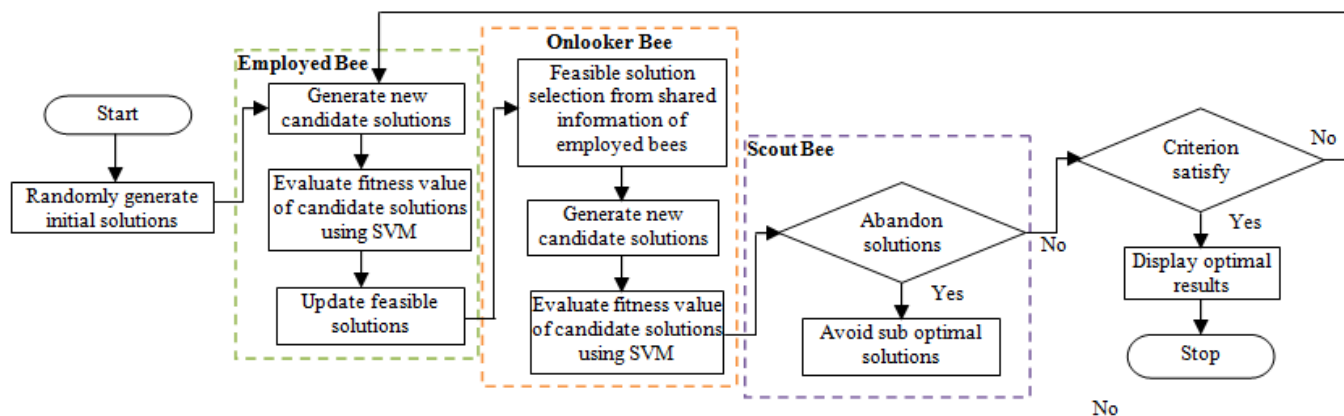


Figure 1: The flowchart of ABC-SVM method

4. Experimental Results and Discussion

1.3 Dataset Description

To evaluate the classification performance of our proposed method in different tasks of classification and to compare with other methods specifically devised for imbalanced data, we tried several datasets from the UCI database. We used all available datasets from the combined sets used. This also ensures that we did not choose only the datasets on which our method performs better. The minority class label (+) is indicated in Table 1 and the chosen datasets contains diversity in the number of attributes and imbalance ratio. Also, these shown datasets have both continuous and categorical attributes of data. All the experiments are conducted by 10-fold cross-validation.

Table 1: The data sets used for experimentation the dataset name is appended with the label of the minority class (+)

Dataset	Instances	Features	Class Imbalance
Hepatitis (1)	155	19	1:4
Glass(7)	214	9	1:6
Segment(1)	2310	19	1:6
Anneal(5)	898	38	1:12
Soybean(12)	683	35	1:15

The comparison is conducted between our method and the other state-of-the-art imbalanced data classifiers, such as the random under-sampling (RUS), SMOTE, SMOTEBoost, and SMOTE combined with asymmetric cost classifier. The re-sampling rate of under-sampling algorithm such as the SMOTE and SMOTEBoost is unknown. In order to compare equally, in our experiments, no matter whether it is under-sampling or over-sampling method, we used the evaluation measure as the optimization objective of the re-sampling method to search the optimal re-sampling level. The steps of both increment and decrement are set at 10%. This is a greedy search kind of approach which repeats the process greedily, upto no performance gains are observed.

Then the optimal rate of resampling is decided in an iterative fashion according to the evaluation metrics. Hence in the each fold, these data of training set is separated into training subset and validating subset for searching the appropriate rate parameters. The evaluation metrics are also used with the G-mean and AUC. For the CS-SVM with SMOTE, for each search of re-sampling, the optimal misclassification cost ratio is determined by searching under the evaluation measure guiding under the current over-sampling level of SMOTE.

1.4 Execution Time Comparison

This graph contains execution time of planned and existing system. The execution time of existing method is incredibly high compared with the planned system. The initial purpose of CF-ABC-SVM approach is there employing a screening methodology it'll be useful for mechanically effort class imbalance problem. This is shown in Fig.2. From the results it is observed that the

proposed work takes less computational time to solve the class imbalance problem.

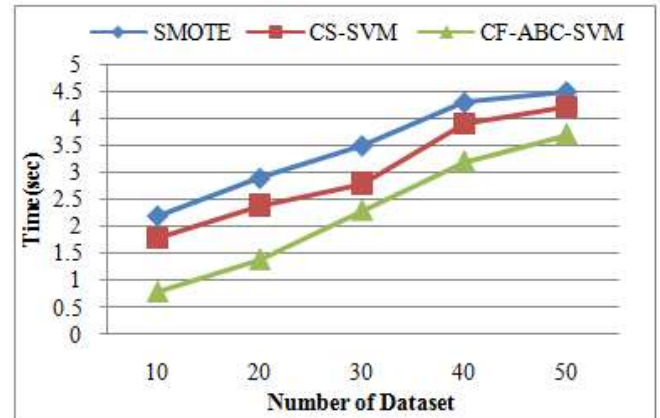


Figure 2: Execution Time Comparison

1.5 Accuracy

This graph contains execution time of planned and existing system. The accuracy of proposed system is incredibly high compared with the planned system. The initial purpose of CF-ABC-SVM approach is there employing a screening methodology it'll be useful for mechanically effort class imbalance problem. This is shown in Fig.3. From the results it is observed that the proposed work takes less computational time to solve the class imbalance problem.

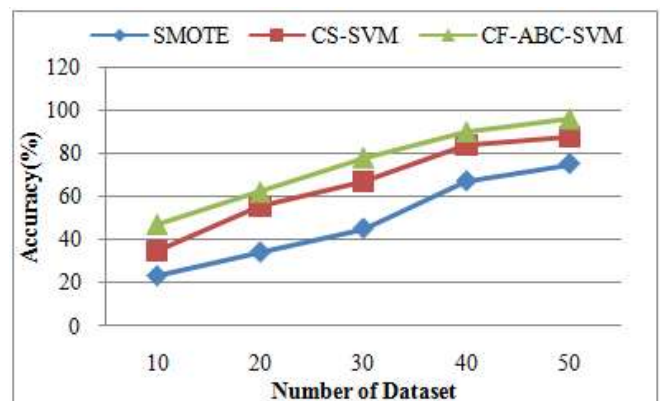


Figure 3: Accuracy Comparison

5. Conclusion

Learning with class imbalance is a challenging task. We propose a wrapper paradigm oriented by the evaluation measure of imbalanced dataset as objective function with respect to cost of misclassification, selection of feature subset and intrinsic parameters of SVM. Our measure oriented framework could wrap around an existing cost-sensitive classifier. The proposed method has been validated on some benchmark imbalanced data and real-world application. The obtained experimental results in this study have demonstrated that the proposed framework provides a very competitive solution to other existing state-of-the-arts methods, in terms of optimization of G-mean and AUC for conflicting imbalanced classification problems. These experimental results confirm the advantages of our approach that shows the promising

perspective and new understanding of cost sensitive learning. In the future research, we will extend the framework to the imbalanced multiclass data classification.

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