

Data- and Human-aware Explainable AI

From Faithful to Human-Friendly Explanations

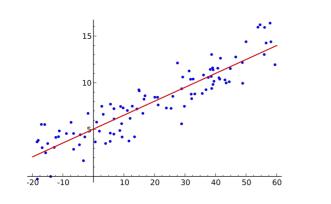
Luis Galárraga RJCIA 2025 Dijon, 30/06/2025

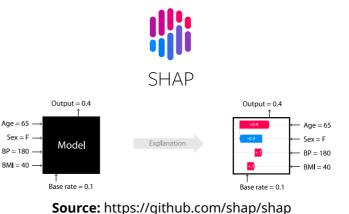
Explainable AI: What? Why? How?

AI, ML, XAI



- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
 - Intelligent traits implemented in **algorithms**
- Machine Learning (ML)
 - The study of methods to **generalize** from data
- Explainable AI (XAI)
 - Making AI-powered solutions **understandable** to **us**



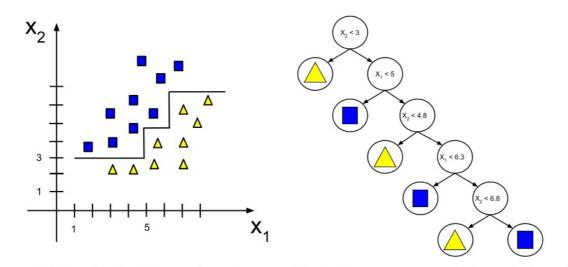


Explainable AI: What?



Interpretability

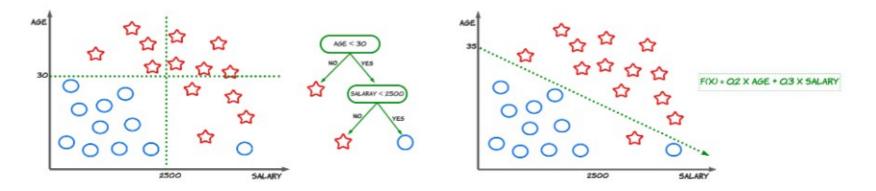
A **model** can be said to be **interpretable** if, within a **given time limit**, the level of expertise of the user allows them to **understand** the model through its **representation**



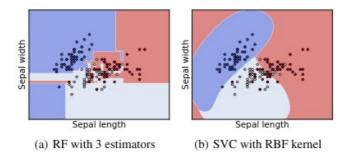
A. Bibal. Interpretability and Explainability in Machine Learning with Application to Nonlinear Dimensionality Reduction. PhD Thesis. University of Namur, Belgium, 2020

Explainability

The **explainability** of a model refers to its capacity to be explained by (external) tools or techniques



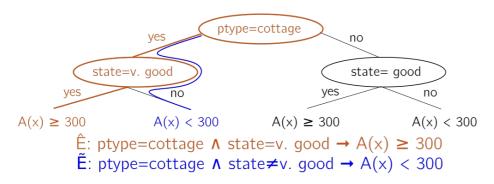
Source: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023.



A. Bibal. Interpretability and Explainability in Machine Learning with Application to Nonlinear Dimensionality Reduction. PhD Thesis. University of Namur, Belgium, 2020 T. Laugel, et al. The dangers of post-hoc interpretability: Unjustified counterfactual explanations. International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI). 2019

What is an explanation?

Statement or asset that characterizes the (causal?) **relationships** between the **inputs** and **outputs** of an AI model



Prediction probabilities

atheism	0.53
christian	0.47

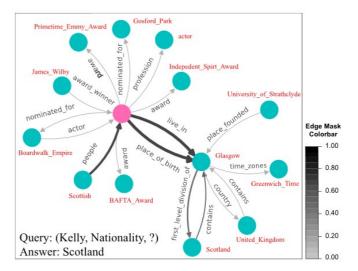
Text with highlighted words

From: salem@pangea.Stanford.EDU (Bruce Salem) Subject: Re: Science and theories Organization: Stanford Univ. Earth Sciences Lines: 42 NNTP-Posting-Host: pangea.stanford.edu

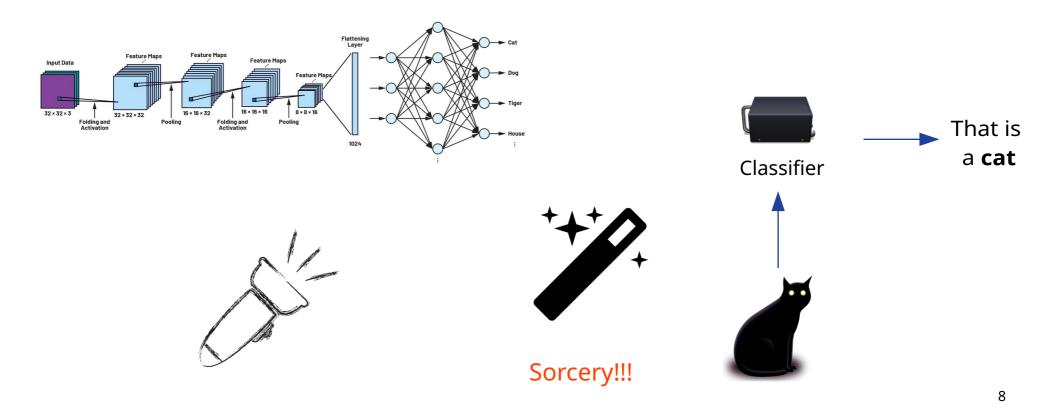
In article IC5u7Bq.J43@news.cso.uiuc.edul cobb@alexia.lis.uiuc.edu (Mike Cobb) writes: IAs per various threads on science and creationism, I've started dabbling into a Ibook called Christianity and the Nature of Science by JP Moreland.

As I don't know this book, I will use your heresay.

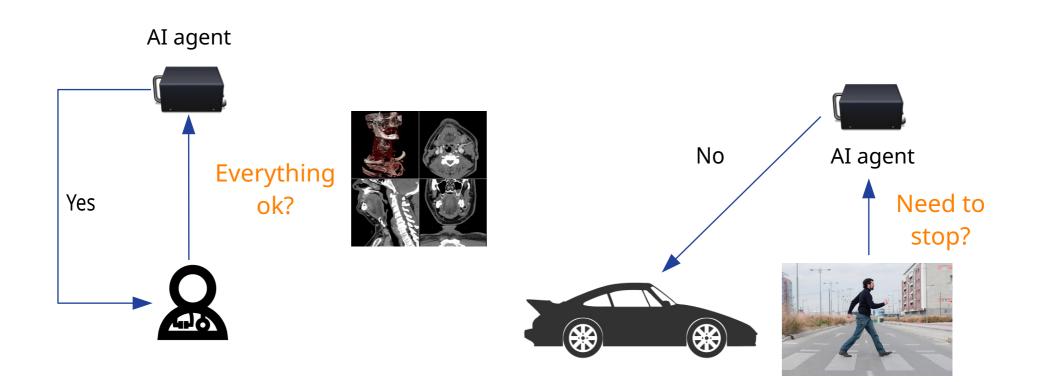




- AI models resemble sorcery
 - Due to their complexity or the way they are deployed



- AI models are used to make critical decisions
 - We need to understand the logic behind their answers



- For auditing
 - Tuning, debugging, detecting biases, etc.





re used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks. by Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner, ProPublica May 22, 2016

O N A SPRING AFTERNOON IN 2014, Brisha Borden was running late to pick up her god-sister from school when she spotted an unlocked kid's blue Huffy bicycle and a silver Razor scooter. Borden and a friend grabbed the bike and scooter and tried to ride them down the street in the Fort Lauderdale suburb of Coral Springs.

Just as the 18-year-old girls were realizing they were too big for the tiny conveyances which belonged to a 6-year-old boy — a woman came running after them saying. "That' my kid's stuff." Borden and her friend immediately dropped the bike and scooter and walked away.

But it was too late — a neighbor who witnessed the heist had already called the police. Borden and her friend were arrested and charged with burglary and petty theft for the items, which were valued at a total of \$80.

Dutch scandal serves as a warning for Europe over risks of using algorithms

The Dutch tax authority ruined thousands of lives after using an algorithm to spot suspected benefits fraud — and critics say there is little stopping it from happening again.

C SHARE



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https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing https://www.politico.eu/article/dutch-scandal-serves-as-a-warning-for-europe-over-risks-of-using-algorithms/ https://www.reuters.com/article/us-amazon-com-jobs-automation-insight-idUSKCN1MK08G https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/12/12/1064751/the-viral-ai-avatar-app-lensa-undressed-me-without-my-consent/

- For legal and ethical reasons^(‡)
 - General Data Protection Regulation^(*)
 - The European AI Act^(**)
 - Ethics guidelines for trustworthy AI⁽⁺⁾
 - EU Directive 2014/65 on Markets in Financial Instruments^(†)
 - Directive 2011/83 on Consumer Rights^(§)

(*) See Recital 71, https://www.privacy-regulation.eu/en/r71.htm, see also the Guidelines on Automated Individual Decision-making:

https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/article29/items/612053/en

- (+) https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/ethics-guidelines-trustworthy-ai
- (†) See Article 7, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/65/oj/eng
- (§) See Article 6, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex:32011L0083

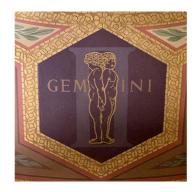
^(‡) Bibal et al. Legal Requirements on Explainability in Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Law, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 149-169. https://doi.org/10.1 007/s10506-020-09270-4

^(**) https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/

The two faces of XAI



XAI in the AI and ML Communities

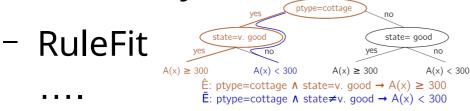


Supervised ML: Glass vs. Black

Interpretable



- Linear functions
- Decision (Reg.) Trees
- Rule-based models
- Exemplar-based methods
- Naive Bayes



 $y = -189.69 - 0.0002 \times cases + 2.39 \times score + 5.08 \times age,$

Not always accurate but simpler **Black-box**



Neural Networks

. . .

- Ensemble methods
 - Random Forests
 - Gradient Boosting
- Support Vector Machines

Often accurate but not intepretable

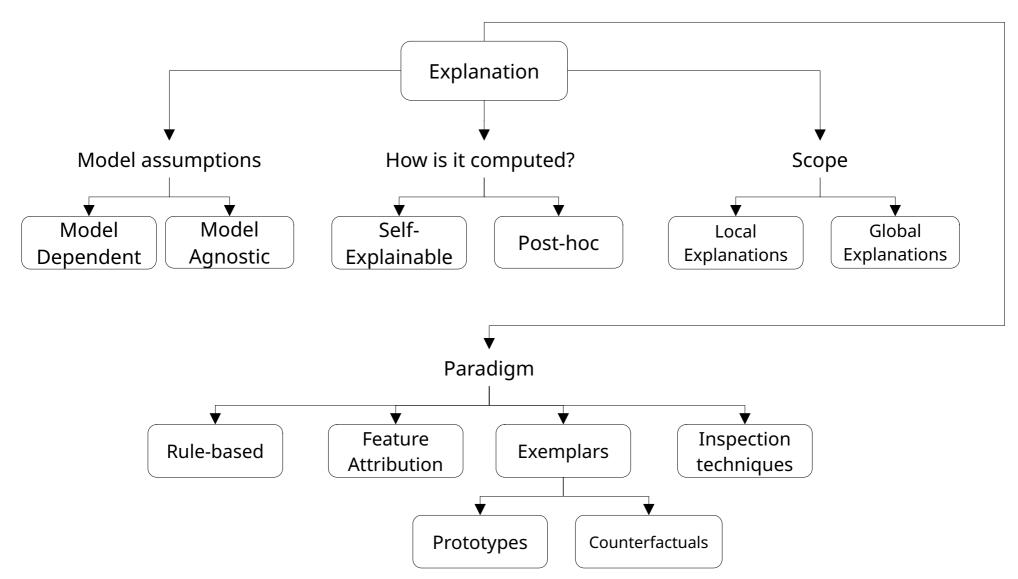
Pure CS-style XAI

- AI and ML researchers have focused on producing:
 - Novel interpretable and accurate AI models
 - Faithful post-hoc explainability modules
 - Studies of the properties of models and explanations
 - Robustness
 - Stability
 - Diversity
 - Recall⁽⁺⁾

- Complexity
- Plausibility/Actionability
- Fidelity/Accuracy/Adherence
- Runtime⁽⁺⁾
- They often put less emphasis in user evaluation

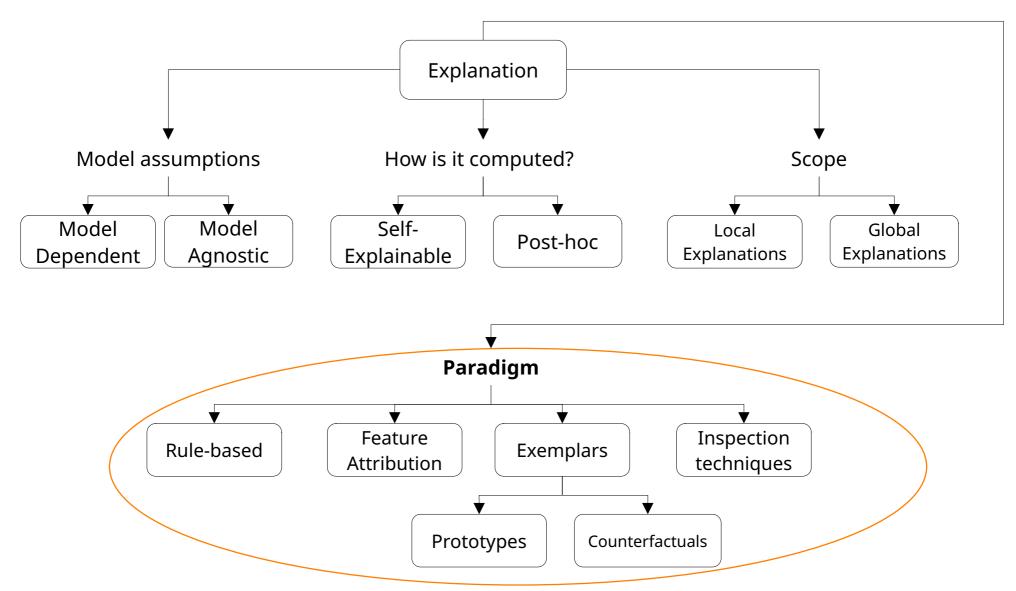
(+) Properties of the methods to compute the explanations

Taxonomy of XAI Techniques



Taken from: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023

Taxonomy of XAI Techniques

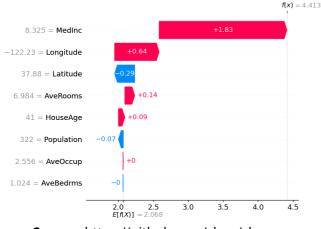


Taken from: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023

Explanation Paradigms

Feature-Attribution

Rules

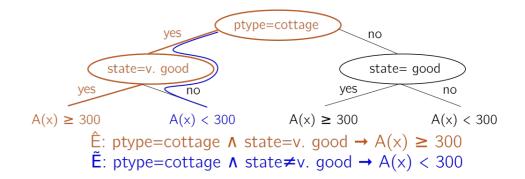


Source: https://github.com/shap/shap

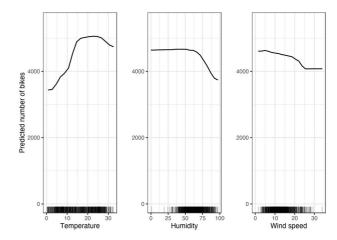




Source: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023.



Inspection Techniques

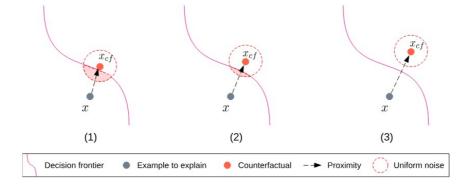


Evaluating Explanations

- Complexity
- Fidelity
 - Adherence
 - Sensitivity/Infidelity
- Stability & Robustness

Databases (ECML/PKDD). 2023. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-43418-1 24

- Realism
- Diversity

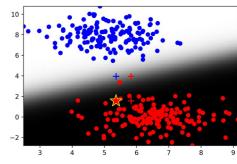


V. Guyomard et al. Generating Robust Counterfactual Explanations. European Conference on Machine Learning and Knowledge Discovery in

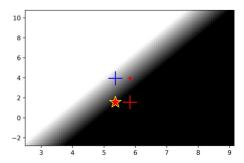
R. Poyiadzi et al. FACE: Feasible and Actionable Counterfactual Explanations. In Proceedings of the ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society, 2017

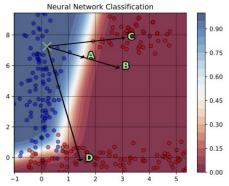
State of the state

A classifier

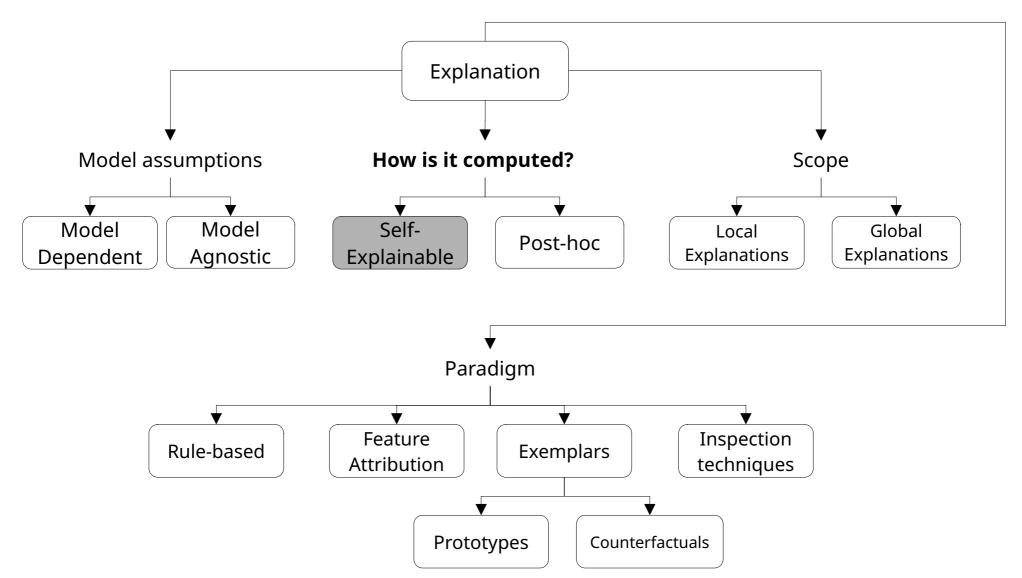


LIME explanation





Taxonomy of XAI Techniques



Self-explainable methods

Some neural approaches learn to **predict & explain** at the same time

SENN⁽⁺⁾

Input	Saliency	Grad*Input	Int.Grad.	e-LRP	Occlusion	LIME	SENN		Cpt 1	Cpt 2	Cpt 3 7	Cpt 4	Cpt 5
a	5	191	5	10	101	1		- C1 - C2 - C3	l	0	7	20	76
7	IJ	- El	T	I	H			- C4 - C5	i	0	7	2	4
2	A.	ØR:	On.	(A)	Es.	a.		- C1 - C2	1	00	7	2	6
1_	the	The second	the	the	the a	- 60		- C2 - C3 - C4	t	0	7	2	6
	ATHE	STOR	2.00	A COMPANY	the second			- C5	i	0	7	2	6

Figure 2: A comparison of traditional input-based explanations (positive values depicted in red) and SENN's concept-based ones for the predictions of an image classification model on MNIST. The explanation for SENN includes a characterization of concepts in terms of defining prototypes.

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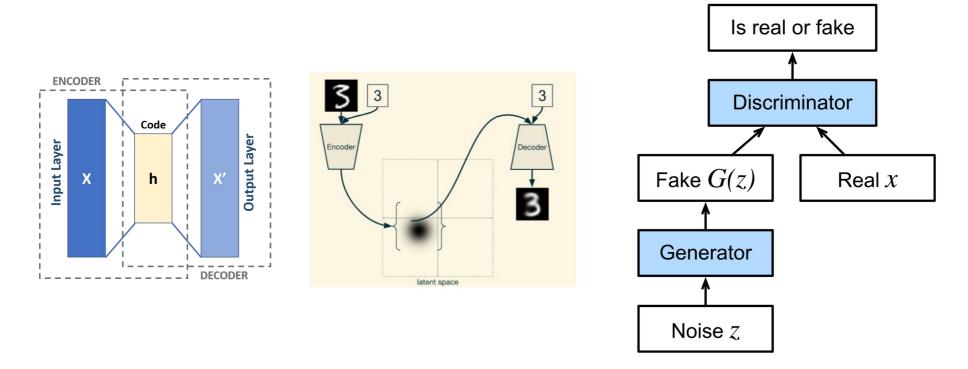
ProtoPNet(+)

Leftmost: a test image of a clay-colored sparrow Second column: same test image, each with a bounding box generated by our model -- the content within the bounding box is considered by our model to look similar to the prototypical part (same row, third column) learned by our algorithm Third column: prototypical parts learned by our algorithm Fourth column: source images of the prototypical parts in the third column Rightmost column: activation maps indicating how similar each prototypical part resembles part of the test bird

(*) D. Alvarez-Melis and T.S. Jaakkola. Towards Robust Interpretability with Self-Explaining Neural Networks. https://arxiv.org/pdf/1806.07538.pdf, 2018. (+) C. Chen et al. This Looks Like That: Deep Learning for Interpretable Image Recognition. Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems 32 https://arxiv.org/abs/1806.10574, 2019.

Self-explainable methods

GANs and VAEs are common architectures to explain an outcome via **realistic** exemplars



V. Guyomard et al. VCNet: A Self-explaining Model for Realistic Counterfactual Generation. European Conference on Machine Learning and Principles and Practice of Knowledge Discovery in Databases, https://is.gd/FEkx0f, 2022.

Y. Wang et al. Adversarial Regularization for Explainable-by-Design Time Series Classification. International Conference on Tools with Artificial Intelligence (ITCAI), 2020.

Self-explainable methods

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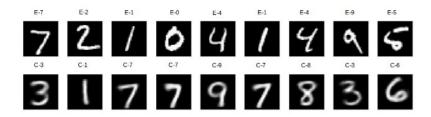
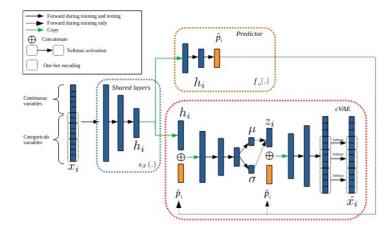
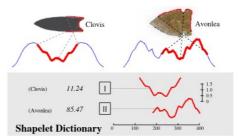
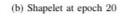


Figure 5: Counterfactuals obtained with VCNet for the MNIST dataset. The top line corresponds to the examples to explain, the bottom to the corresponding counterfactuals.









(e) Shapelet at epoch 800

(f) Shapelet at epoch 8000

V. Guyomard et al. VCNet: A Self-explaining Model for Realistic Counterfactual Generation. European Conference on Machine Learning and Principles and Practice of Knowledge Discovery in Databases, https://is.gd/FEkx0f, 2022.

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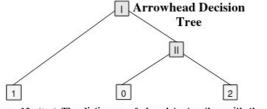


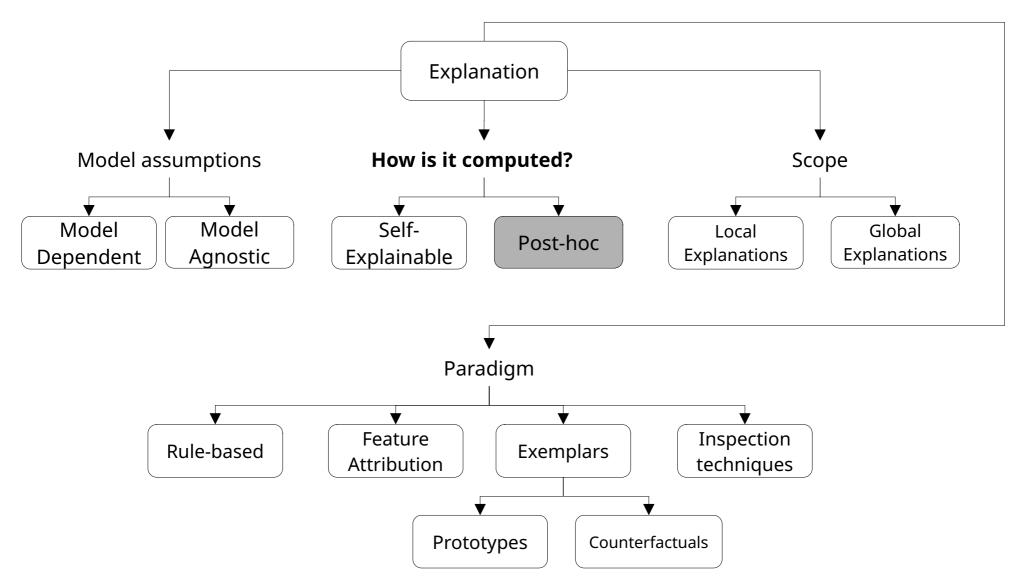
Figure 13: (top) The dictionary of shapelets, together with the thresholds d_{th} . (bottom) The decision tree for the 3-class projectile points problem



(c) Shapelet at epoch 200

23

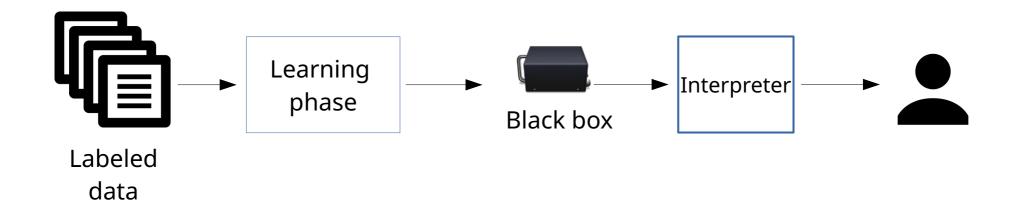
Taxonomy of XAI Techniques



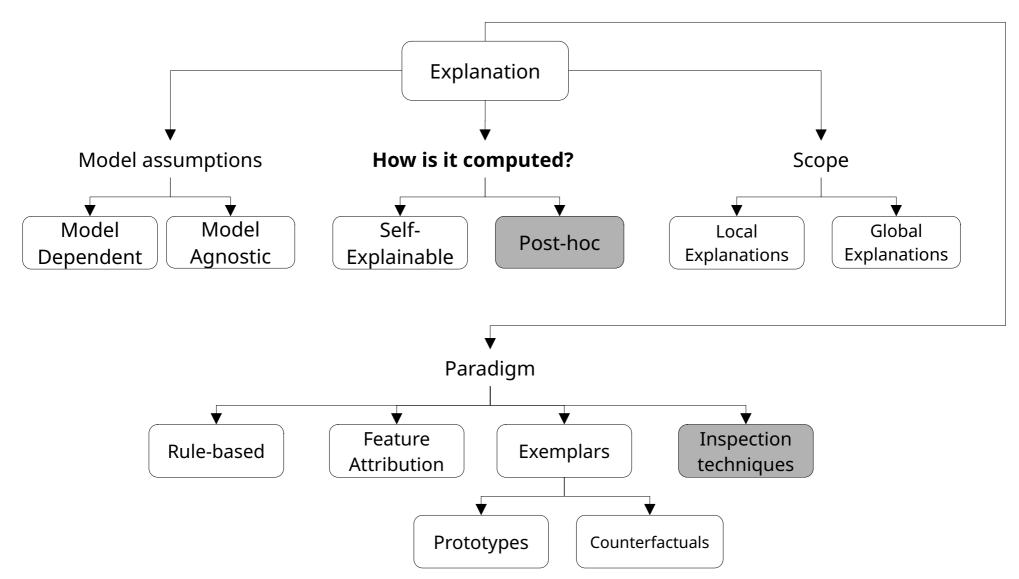
Taken from: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023

Post-hoc Explainability

Design an interpretation layer between the model and the human user



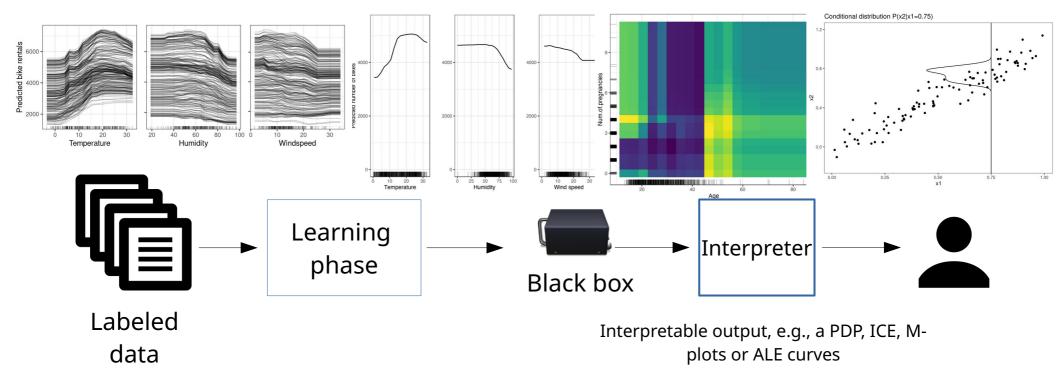
Taxonomy of XAI Techniques



Taken from: J. Delaunay. Explainability for Machine Learning Models: From Data Adaptability to User Perception. PhD Thesis, Université de Rennes, 2023

Post-hoc Explainability

We can also **plot** or **inspect** correlations between the input features and the output

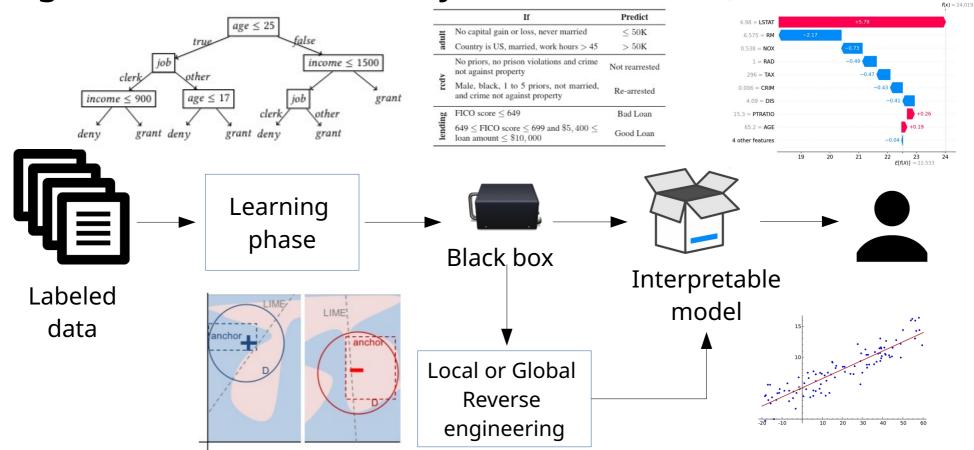


C. Molnar. Interpretable Machine Learning. A Guide for Making Black Box Models Explainable. https://christophm.github.io/interpretable-ml-book/ D.W Apley and J. Zhu. Visualizing the Effects of Predictor Variables in Black Box Supervised Learning Models. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series B: Statistical Methodology 82 (4): 1059–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/rssb.12377.

Post-hoc Explainability

Surrogate-based Approaches

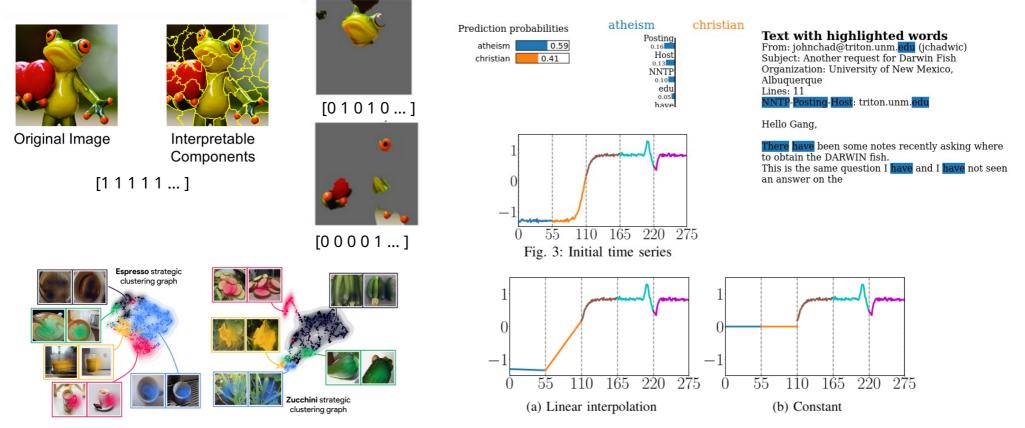
The surrogate model explains the black box in general or in the vicinity of an individual instance



Marco T. Ribeiro, Sameer Singh, and Carlos Guestrin. Anchors: High-Precision Model-Agnostic Explanations. AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence, 2018.

Interpretable Features

For explanations to make sense, their constituent elements must be understandable



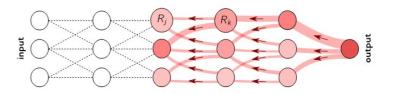
M. T. Ribeiro, S. Singh, and C. Guestrin. Why should i trust you?: Explaining the predictions of any classifier. In Proceedings of the 22nd ACM SIGKDD International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining, 2016.

T. Fel, et al. A Holistic Approach to Unifying Automatic Concept Extraction and Concept Importance Estimation. Conference on Neural Information 29 Processing Systems (NIPS).

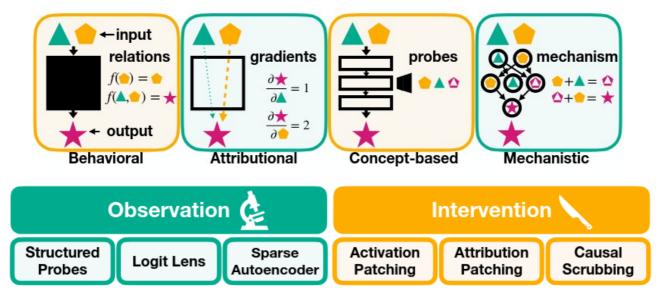
To touch or not to touch?

Also, agnostic vs. dependent

 Some XAI approaches only work for NNs



- They can be either observational or interventional
 - Interventions are needed to find causality



Montavon G. et al. Layer-Wise Relevance Propagation: An Overview https://iphome.hhi.de/samek/pdf/MonXAI19.pdf Bereska, L.F and E. Gavves. Mechanistic Interpretability for AI Safety—A Review. Proceedings of The 1st Conference on Lifelong Learning Agents. 2022.

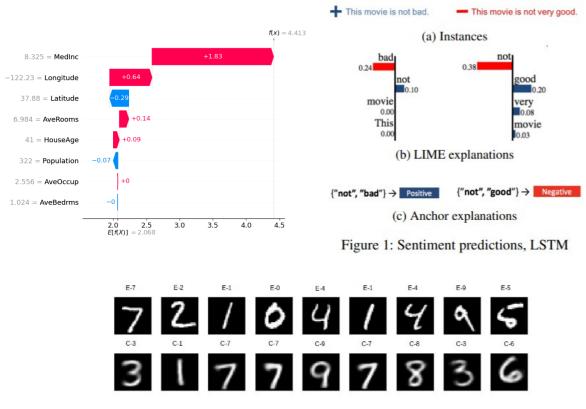
Is XAI really XAI?

What to reveal? What about interactivity & representation?

Model

Prediction

5



Origina LIM E-LR IntGrad Deenl i SmoothGra XRA GradCa GradCa RISE

dog

deer

deer

puck

shower cap seashore

Figure 5: Counterfactuals obtained with VCNet for the MNIST dataset. The top line corresponds to the examples to explain, the bottom to the corresponding counterfactuals.

XAI approaches are rarely evaluated on users!

Bodria et al. Benchmarking and Survey of Explanation Methods for Black Box Models. Journal of Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery, 2023 Lundberg, Scott M. and Su-In Lee. A Unified Approach to Interpreting Model Predictions. Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems, 2017

XAI in the HCI and HC-AI communities



Humans and Explanations

- Using XAI always comes with an **immediate goal**
 - What if I earned 10K more? Would my loan have been accepted?
 - Is the AI model **using a sensitive attribute** for prediction?
- What is the expected **impact** of the explanation?
 - To elicit trust? To achieve legal compliance?
- Who is the **recipient** of the explanation?
 - An AI engineer? Grandpa? A physician?
 - Cognitive aspects:

Understanding

Trust

Perception

confidence, <mark>complacency</mark>

fairness, empathy, plausibility

User-centered Evaluation

Understanding

- Usually via a "proxy" task
 - **Predict** the model's answer for a given case
 - **Explain** the features that play a role in the prediction
 - Validate or reject statements about the model
 - **Use** the model (also used for measuring trust)
- And via <u>behavioral</u> and <u>self-reported</u> metrics
 - Accuracy, completion time [more objective, tedious to collect]
 - Specialized questionnaires [easier to collect but subjective]

User-centered Evaluation

Trust and Confidence

- Via questionnaires
- Adherence to the AI's recommendation

What is your confidence in the tool? Do you have a feeling of trust in it?										
I do not trust it at all. 2 3 4 5 6 I trust it completely.										
		2								
Are the actions of the tool predi	ctab	le?								
It is not at all predictable. 2 3 4 5 6 It is completely predictable.										

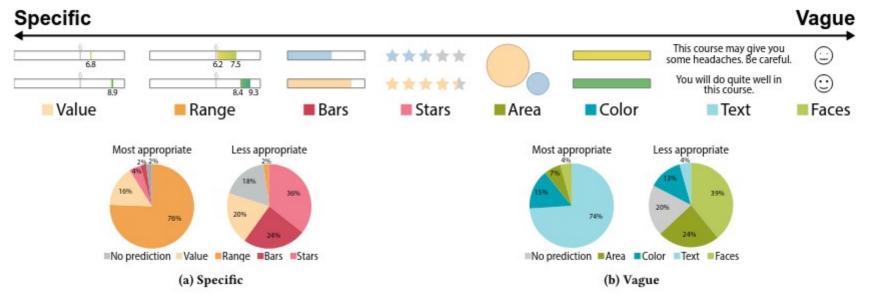
		- 3				
Is the tool reliable?						
It is not at all reliable.	2	3	4	5	6	It is completely reliable.

		4				
Is the tool efficient at what it do	es?					
It is not at all efficient.	2	3	4	5	6	It is completely efficient.

- Trust is a complex construct
 - Questionnaires test some related constructs
 - They are a proxies to trust

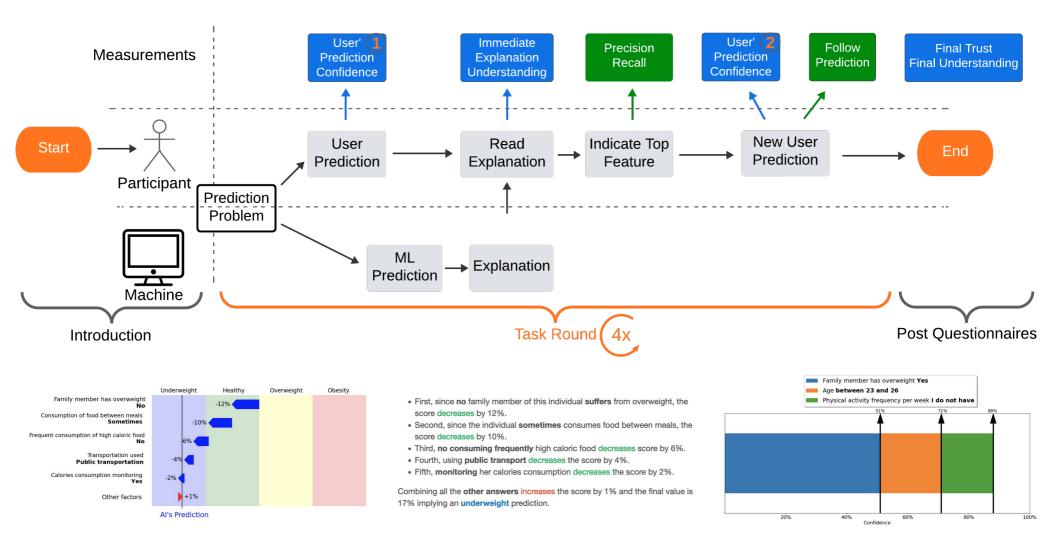
Explanations & Cognition

- Explanation type and visual representation impact cognition
 - How the prediction is presented matters as much
 - When the explanation is dense, interactivity can help!



G. Méndez, et al. Showing Academic Performance Predictions during Term Planning: Effects on Students' Decisions, Behaviors, and Preferences. ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). 2021

Comparing Explanations A protocol

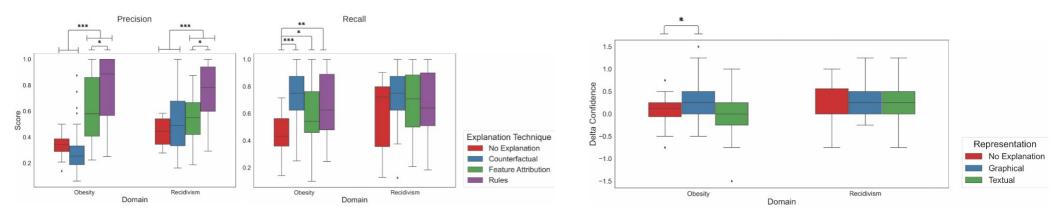


J. Delaunay et al. Impact of Explanation Techniques and Representations on Users Comprehension and Confidence in Explainable AI. Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing.

Comparing Explanations Some Results

	Understanding							confidence				
	Recidivism				Obesity				Recidivism		Obesity	
	Self-Reported		Behavioural		Self-Reported		Behavioural		Self-Reported	Behavioural	Self-Reported	Behavioural
	Immediate	Final	Precision	Recall	Immediate	Final	Precision	Recall	Δ Confidence	Follow Prediction†	∆ Confidence	Follow Prediction†
Technique	0.87	1.20	16.24 ***	1.58	3.75^{*}	1.35	31.42***	6.37***	1.40	0.78	0.12	0.38
Representation	0.96	0.36	0.13	3.00	0.14	0.55	0.05	2.85	0.04	0.00	8.22**	0.12
Age	1.07	0.01	1.88	0.10	0.16	0.06	6.41^{*}	0.02	0.46	2.76	0.06	0.00
Education	1.63	0.93	0.94	0.43	0.50	0.34	0.25	1.31	0.13	0.34	2.14	0.63
Gender	0.54	1.07	0.35	0.30	0.14	0.03	0.18	0.36	2.16	0.31	0.12	1.11
Technique:Representation	0.28	0.87	1.12	0.74	0.48	0.16	0.35	4.99^{**}	0.35	0.75	0.26	3.55*

 $^{***}p < 0.001, ^{**}p < 0.01, ^{*}p < 0.05$



J. Delaunay et al. Impact of Explanation Techniques and Representations on Users Comprehension and Confidence in Explainable AI. Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing.

Explainability is not universal

- Knowing who receives the explanation is crucial
 - Users & communities have different backgrounds, knowledge gaps, preconceptions, etc.



- Preconceptions can make acceptability challenging
 - That is why domain experts are harder to convince
- Behavioral and reported understanding may not correlate

Where are we heading towards?

LLMs are really cool for XAI

Interactive dialogs

User "utterances" & TalkToModel response

"What are the predictions on patients older than 30? Could you also tell me what would happen to these predictions if we increased bmi by 10?"

On data with age greater than 30.0, the model predicts:

⇒ No Diabetes on 46.8% of data

⇒ Diabetes on 53.2% of data

On data with age greater than 30.0 and bmi is increased by 10.0, the model predicts:

 \Rightarrow No Diabetes on 30.1% of data

⇒ Diabetes on 69.9% of data

"So how important is bmi for the model's predictions on the over thirty group?"

For the model's predictions on data with **age greater than 30.0**, the **bmi** feature is ranked on average **2.86** (95% CI [2.685, 3.035]). Here, rank 1 is the most important feature (out of 8 features). Overall, **bmi** is **highly important** for the model's predictions.

"Ah, so which two features are mostly more important than bmi for these people?"

For the models predictions on data where age is greater than 30.0, the top 2 most important features are:

- 1. glucose
- 2. pedigree function

LLMs are really cool for XAI

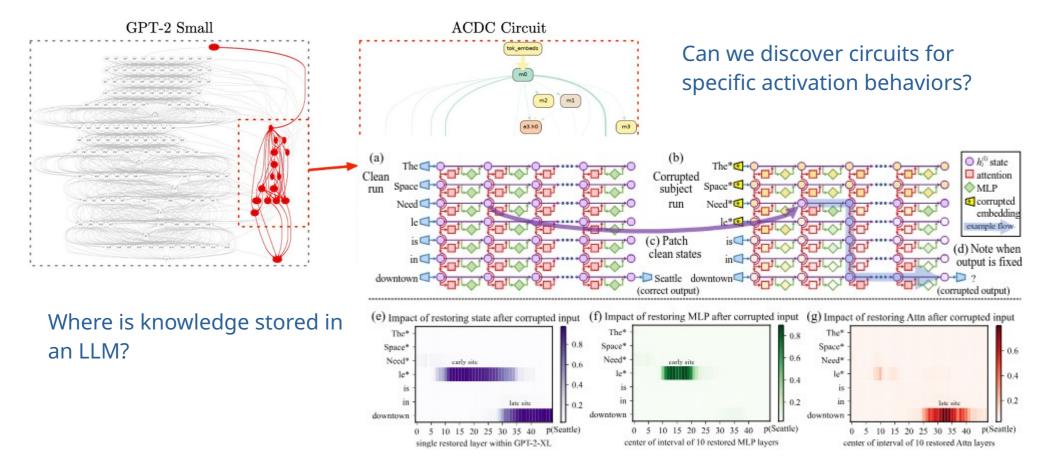
certain loan applicant	has the following	ng features:		SHAPstories:	SHAPstories: data science	SHAPstories: data science		
Feature	Value	Feature	Value		general			
Account Status	< 0 DM	Property	real estate		audience	audience own	audience: genera	
Duration	18 months	Age	27 years		dudience	usage	audience usage	
Duration in Current Address	< 1 year	Other Loans	bank	Convincingness	93.2% ***	77.	.8% ***	
Purpose	education	Housing	rent	Ease	92.4% ***	61.1% *	91.7% ***	
Credit Amount	750 DM	Existing Credits	1	and the second				
Savings	< 100 DM	Occupation	unemployed	Confidence	79.7% ***	38.9%	91.7% ***	
Employment History	unemployed	Dependants	3 or more dependants	Speed	87.5% ***	44.4%	88.9% ***	
Installment Rate	4%	Telephone	none	Likeliness to use	92.2 % ***	61.1% *	83.3% ***	
Sex and Marital Status	male : married	Foreign Worker	yes					
Other Debtors	none	Credit History	existing credits paid	Note: For all results we test if the obtained result is statistically sig				
			back duly till now	nificant: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$				

Our individual is a young, unemployed person with a significant savings amount less than 100 DM (Deutsche Mark). They reside in their own house and have lived at their current address for less than a year. Their current account status indicates a balance less than 0 DM which appears as the largest negative contributor to the prediction. Furthermore, they recently took a loan amounting to 750 DM, with the purpose of education, from a bank where they have a credit history of existing credits paid off duly till now. However, the negative SHAP value for credit history suggests that the AI notes some risk associated with this factor. Employment history also weighs in heavily against them, as they are unemployed. [...]

But LLMs are black boxes

(that explain other black boxes)

XAI on LLMs often learns neural activation patterns

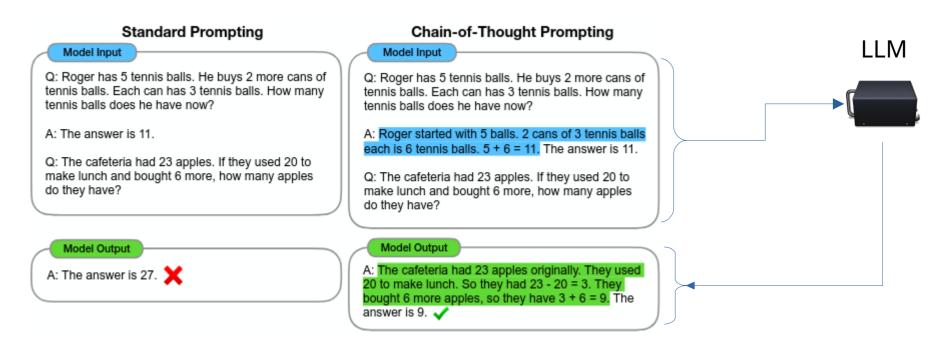


A. Conmy, et al. Towards Automated Circuit Discovery for Mechanistic Interpretability. Conference on Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS). 2023.

K. Meng, et al. Locating and Editing Factual Associations in GPT. Conference on Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS). 2022.

Explicit problem solving = XAI?

- From a **classical** perspective, no!
 - But it provides hints of the tokens and language structures that correlate with the answer.



J. Wei, et al. Chain-of-thought prompting elicits reasoning in large language models. Conference on Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS). 2022

LLMs and XAI

Are we done? Nope!

- Also, LLMs have serious issues with common sense
 - They are mere translators into natural language
- Could AI decide automatically how to explain itself?
 - Choose paradigm, representation, features, rhetorical style based on the user?

Explaining why an AI model predicted that a student would graduate

Imagine the student's **success in graduating as a heavy ball rolling down a hill**. The slope of the hill is determined by factors like the student's academic performance, family background, and socio-economic status.

In this case, the student had a lower-than-average grade in the first semester, and didn't complete as many required units as others. This made the hill steeper and more challenging for the ball to roll down. Meanwhile, factors like the student's age and gender also played small roles in making the hill slightly steeper.

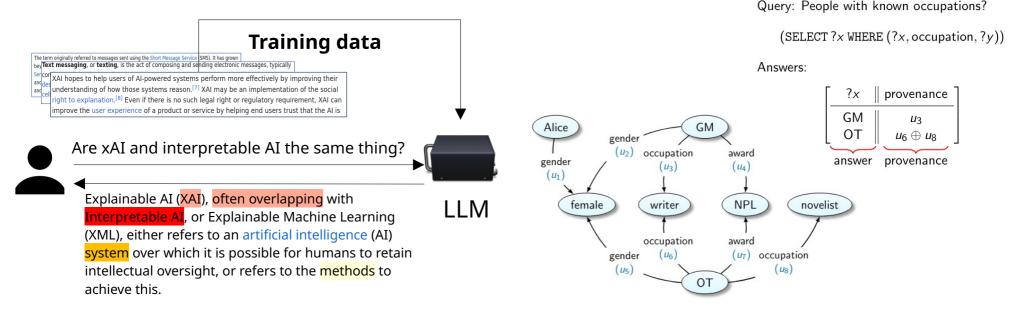
However, the student didn't receive a scholarship, which can act like a gentle wind pushing the ball down the hill. Their parents' education levels also provided some support, acting like small inclines in the hill.

Taking all these factors into account, the model predicted the student would still manage to graduate, although the journey might be a bit tougher.

Source attribution

(where did you get inspiration from?)

- Can we link AI answers to specific training examples?
 - Starting point: neural provenance models

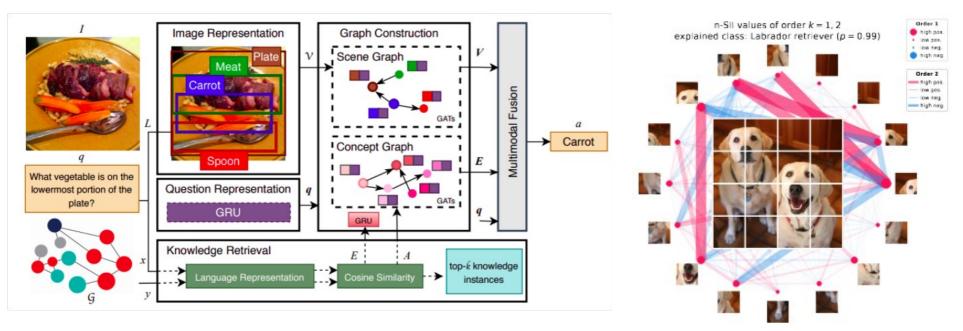


- Done for simple models, great for tracing authorship

Yinjun Wu, Val Tannen, and Susan B. Davidson. PrIU: A Provenance-Based Approach for Incrementally Updating Regression Models. ACM SIGMOD International Conference on Management of Data (SIGMOD). https://doi.org/10.1145/3318464.3380571 Zhao, D., Wan, G., Zhan, Y., Wang, Z., Ding, L., Zheng, Z., & Du, B. (2023). Ke-x: Towards subgraphexplanations of knowledge graph embedding based on knowledge information gain.Knowledge-Based Systems, 110772. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.knosys.2023.110772 46

Multimodal Explanations

- How could multimodal explanations look like?
 - Starting point: feature coalition attributions
 - Challenges: combinatorial explosion, representation



Ziaeefard, Maryam, and Freddy Lecue. Towards knowledge-augmented visual question answering. Proceedings of the 28th International Conference on Computational Linguistics, 2020.

Kolpaczki, P. SVARM-IQ: Efficient Approximation of Any-order Shapley Interactions through Stratification. Proceedings of Machine Learning Research, vol 238, pages 3520-3528 https://proceedings.mlr.press/v238/kolpaczki24a.html 47

Take-away message

- XAI is being studied by two heterogeneous crowds
 - One obsessed with fidelity, the other with users
 - They should talk more to each other!
- If you do XAI, please evaluate it with potential users!
 - Beware, domain experts are hard to convince
- Post-hoc XAI does not always point out causality
- LLMs are great news for XAI
 - But they are just translators that lack common sense
- As AI becomes multimodal, so should explanations