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LIDILEM

Emergence of attention in a neural model of visually grounded speech

UNIVERSITÉ Grenoble Alpes

William N. Havard¹², Jean-Pierre Chevrot¹, Laurent Besacier² ¹LIDILEM, Univ. Grenoble Alpes, 38000 Grenoble, France ²LIG, Univ. Grenoble Alpes, CNRS, Grenoble INP, 38000 Grenoble, France



1. Introduction

- Context provides children with all necessary information to build a coherent mental representation of the world. While acquiring their native language, children learn to map portions of this mental representation to whole or part of acoustic realisations they perceive from surrounding speech: this process is known as lexical acquisition.
- The goal of this research is to study how a visually grounded neural network segments a continuous flow of speech hoping it could shed light on how children perform the same process. To do so, we analyses how the final representation learnt by the attention mechanism changes over time and more specifically, we focus on the attention models of the network.
- An attention mechanism is a component that computes a vector representing the focus of the system on different parts of the speech input.

2. Architecture

4. Peak detection and statistics

• Peak detection for each level of attention



- Based on Chrupała *et al.* (2017)
- Two attentions mechanisms (inspired by Matthys et al., 2005)
- Model regularly saved during training

• Statistics on peak number and height and speech segments located underneath



- Attention unevenly distributed over time between GRU1 and GRU5:
 - Network gradually reduces the number of peaks for GRU5 while making them higher. The network focuses on very one specific part of the speech signal: the main **concept** of the image
 - On the contrary, the number of peaks for GRU1 increases while also making them smaller. GRU1 attention is distributed over the whole speech signal and is thus less specific

Attention weights for GRU1 and GRU5 evolve differently time over suggesting they encode speech in a different manner

3. Attention weights

Peaks are first randomly positioned and gradually shift to part of the speech signal that are useful in describing the image before reaching their final position.





5. Word level

Ref. frequencies		GRU1		GRU5	
1-gram	2-gram	1-gram	2-gram	1-gram	2-gram
a	<S0> a	a	a cat	with	a skateboard
<S $0>$	on a	of	a man	toilet	a toilet
$$	in a	cat	a dog	$<\!/\mathrm{S0}>$	a giraffe
on	of a	dog	a tennis	<unk $>$	living room
of	with a	is	a giraffe	skateboard	a baseball
the	a man	white	on a	in	stop sign
in	in the	tennis	<S0> a	is	baseball player
with	on the	in	a white	sign	a kitchen
and	next to	man	a table	and	fire hydrant
is	<S0> two	with	a plate	giraffe	a laptop

Top 10 occurrences

- Word bigrams for GRU1 and GRU5 very different from reference frequencies
- GRU5 focuses on the end of the captions (</S0>)

7. Conclusion

• GRU5 highlights speech segments that match word bigrams and isolated word that correspond to the main concept of the image.

6. Phone level

GR	LU1	GRU5		
1-gram 2-gram		1-gram	2-gram	
æ	1 Ŋ]	n]	I C	
t]	[kæ	t]	eı n]	
e 1	$\begin{bmatrix} \Lambda & V \end{bmatrix}$	L	1 ŋ]	
n]	I C	Λ	л n]	
ŋ]	aı t]	k]	u m]	
\mathbf{t}	c b]	d]	aı n]	
3	u m]	\mathbf{S}	t 3r]	
1	[dz 3r	32]	Λ l]	
n	l eı	\mathbf{Z}	kл	
a_1	lα	sp	Λ S	

Top 10 occurrences

• GRU5 peaks mainly located above phones ending a word: cue for word segmentation?





- Behaviour of the first attention mechanism (GRU1) is still unclear, and it is hard to tell so far which linguistic units are targeted by this attention mechanism. However, **removing the** attention layer on GRU1 yields worse results, suggesting it does bring useful information to the network.
- Further linguistics units could be considered, such as **POS and syllables**.
- **Diachronic study**: How does the distribution of the words under the peaks evolve over time?

References

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