

Re: Finding useful functions– part 1

Source: <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2004–10/0818.html>

From: Wolf Kirchmeir (wwolfkir_at_sympatico.ca)

Date: 10/28/04

Date: Thu, 28 Oct 2004 17:45:24 -0400

Stargazer wrote:

> *Wolf Kirchmeir wrote:*

>

>>*Stargazer wrote:*

[snip a number oif clear answers to my questions – thanks. I think. :-)]

> **SG**

Your answers clear up some misconceptions on my part, but they also show terminological obfuscation on the part of artificial neural network researchers.

Throughout your explanation, the term "signal" is used ambiguously. It sometimes seems to apply to an input to a single neuron, and sometimes to a collection of inputs to a network of neurons. IMO this is confusing. Very. It's a hierarchy error, which always cause trouble.

Also, calling the calculated output of a NN a "training signal" because it's compared to the desired outcome is confusing, at least to me, for whom a "training signal" is a "signal that trains", ie, an input to the NN. And the use of "signal" for both inputs and outputs is confusing, since IMO an output is a signal to the experimenter, not the NN.

All in all, my immediate impression is that workers in artificial NNs don't have a clear conception of what they are trying to do. Not that that is a bad thing – after all, it's early days yet, and one of the functions of research is to clarify the questions one is trying to answer. My comments as a pure outsider may or may not help clarify vagueness. Either way, thinking about your explanations has been interesting.