EXPLAINABLE AI: WHAT IS IT AND WHAT CAN IT DO? Kary Främling Professor in Data Science

Head of Explainable AI Team



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WHAT IS XAI?



- **Inputs** ⇒ **outputs** examples:
 - Income situation \Rightarrow credit grading
 - Image pixels \Rightarrow probabilities of different objects
 - Sensor signals \Rightarrow probabilities of different diagnostics
 - Text, sound, ...
- **AI models:** Rule base, decision tree, random forest, neural network, ...
- **XAI is not only for Machine Learning models** but the XAI community seems to think it is only for ML
- What is understandable for the **AI engineer** may not be understandable for **expert** and even less for **end-user**
- **Interpretable(/transparent?)**: can be understood, interpreted and explained by expert
- **Explainable**: can produce end-user understandable explanations
- No consensus on meaning of Interpretable/Explainable

ROUGH TIMELINE OF XAI



¹⁾https://www.cc.gatech.edu/~alanwags/DLAI201 6/%28Gunning%29%20IJCAI-16%20DLAI%20WS.pdf (but XAI seems to have been proposed as a name also earlier) ²⁾ Främling, Kary. Explaining Results of Neural Networks by Contextual Importance and Utility. In: Robert Andrews and Joachim Diederich (eds.), Rules and networks: Proceedings of the Rule Extraction from Trained Artificial Neural Networks Workshop, AISB'96 conference, 1-2 April 1996. Brighton, UK, 1996.
³⁾ Främling, Kary. Modélisation et apprentissage des préférences par réseaux de neurones pour l'aide à la décision multicritère. PhD. thesis : Institut National de Sciences Appliquées de Lyon,

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Saint-Étienne, France, 1996. 209 p.

SOME CHOICES TO MAKE IN XAI

- Use "white-box" or "black-box" models?
- Model-agnostic vs. Model-specific?
 - White box XAI methods are always model-specific (or are they?)
- Expose the inner workings of the AI system as rules or similar ("global") or only what lead to a specific result ("local")?
- Use surrogate models or not?
 - $_{\odot}~$ Then there's a question of fidelity, accuracy, ...
 - Why not use non-surrogate methods, such as CIU, Counterfactual?
- Can explanations be produced in reasonable time, and with what precision?



Example of AI/ML vs. XAI

airplane 0.738

airplane 0.998

ruck 0 960

Machine Learning: *Resnet-101* deep neural net and *Mask R-CNN* recognizes objects with indicated location and probability

airplane 0.973

But current XAI doesn't actually provide an answer to that question... XAI: Why is this an ⁄airplane?

LAND A AFA

CURRENT STATE-OF-THE-ART IN XAI



XAI FOR EXPLAINING IMAGE CLASSIFICATION



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XAI FOR EXPLAINING IMAGE CLASSIFICATION



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Shapley values

0.2 0.4 0.6 08

age=8-

fare=72-

0.0

class=1stparch=0sibsp=0-

gender=male

embarked=Cherbourg-

STATE OF THE ART IN XAI (SIMPLIFIED)

- XAI for Image classification:
 - GradCAM, LRP, LIME, SHAP, CIU etc.
 - Mainly answer "where?" question, rather than "why?"
- Feature Influence (rather than "importance") methods are presumably the most popular ones for the moment for "tabular data"
 - Shapley values, LIME etc. Example: Explain 63.6% survival probability of 8-year old boy 'Johnny D' on Titanic
- New trends:
 - Generate **rules** (actually the oldest XAI approach)
 - **Counterfactual**: answer "what-if?" and "how-to?" questions
- Explanations tend to be given as such, **no user interaction**

WHO ARE EXPLANATIONS INTENDED FOR?

- End-user (patient) versus expert (doctor) perspective (versus others...)
- Different vocabularies, levels of detail for different targets



The primary source in PA is the capsule of the glenohumeral mechanism; the treatment intervention would be to improve extensibility of the capsule, whereas in case of impingement, the source lies in the scapula-thoracic mechanism altering the scapular mechanics.

Interpretable



Black-box AI

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You'll be ok after 3 days of rest, no permanent damage

Explainable

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WHO ARE EXPLANATIONS INTENDED FOR?

 Current XAI methods and research seem to ignore this person (and usually also ignore the expert)
 XAI sometimes seems to be about ML researchers

developing debugging tools for ML researchers



SOCIAL EXPLAINABLE AI (SXAI)



WHAT IS SOCIAL XAI?

- Seminar "Social Explainable AI: Designing Multimodal and Interactive Communication to Tailor Human–AI Collaborations" in Shonan, Japan, September 2023
 - An attempt to allow communication between sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, computer scientists, AI researchers, ...
 - https://shonan.nii.ac.jp/seminars/200/
- XAI systems should communicate in similar ways as humans when justifying or explaining decisions, actions, plans, ...
 - Adapt the used vocabulary, levels of details etc. to the explainee
 - Present information in digestable "chunks", go into details only if needed (incrementality)
 - Use images, text, gestures as appropriate (multimodality)
 - Be "co-constructive", i.e. have explainer and explainee gain mutual understanding throughout the interaction





EXAMPLE: KARY JUSTIFIES CAR CHOICE TO HIS WIFE

Question/Answer	Explanatory move	
Why?	Why should we buy car A?	
Why answer	It's safe, spacious and not too expensive.	
Why not?	But car B looks quite similar and it's cheaper.	
WhyNot answer	Yes but it consumes a lot of fuel and maintenance costs are high.	
Contrastive	But car C is bigger than car A and has the same price, so why not car C	
	instead?	
Contrastive answer	Yes, but then	
What if?	But what if you would add this extra option to car C?	
Counterfactual answer	Yes, then it would become better but the price	



EXAMPLE: KARY JUSTIFIES CAR CHOICE TO HIS TECHIE FRIENDS

Question/Answer	Explanatory move	
Why?	Why did you buy car A?	
Why answer	It's quick, fun, big enough and not too expensive.	
Why not?	Why didn't you buy car B instead, which has 4-wheel drive?	
WhyNot answer	It's expensive and consumes a lot of fuel.	
Contrastive	But then car C has more power and same price?	
Contrastive answer	Yes, but then	
What if?	But what if you would remove this extra option from car C?	
Counterfactual answer	Then it would become cheaper but	



XAI SYSTEM JUSTIFIES CAR RECOMMENDATION TO HUMAN

Proposal/Reaction/Question/Answer	Explanatory move
<>	<initial ai="" before="" first="" gives="" interaction="" proposal="" system=""></initial>
Proposal	I suggest you buy car A
Why?	Why should I buy car A?
Why answer	It's safe, economic and within your price range.
Why not?	Wouldn't car B be better?
Why Not answer	It's expensive and consumes a lot of fuel.
Refusal	But I like car B more
Question	Why do you like car B more?
(Human) answer	I like its shape and I preferred driving with it
New proposal	Ok, I took that into account. Then car C might actually be even better
Reaction	Indeed, I had forgotten car C
Why this and not that?	So why would car C be better than car B?
Contrastive answer	Because
<>	<interaction continues=""></interaction>



SOME TYPICAL QUESTIONS ASKED BY HUMANS

• Why? Get a justification for the current output or result of an AI system.

- XAI
- Why not? A "why not?" explanation presumably emphasizes features with a negative influence
- Why is this feature important (or not)? Answering this question requires that the XAI method is not a black box itself
- What if? A "counterfactual" question, i.e. what would happen if the values of one or more features change?
- Why A and not B? Contrastive question where the answer emphasizes the most important features that differentiate A and B.
- How confident are you about your outcome (and explanation)? Again a valid question for Social XAI...
- How? The explainee might want a more extensive answer about the model's training, the data set used etc.
- I don't agree with the outcome, nor the justification or explanation provided! How can I correct that? This goes beyond the capabilities of current XAI methods but is relevant for Social (X)AI.



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XAI

SOME TYPICAL QUESTIONS ASKED BY HUMANS Social

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- Why is this feature important (or not)? Answering this question requires that the XAI method is not a black box itself
- What if? This is the basic counterfactual question, i.e. what would happen if the values of one or more features change?
- Why A and not B? Contrastive question where the answer emphasizes the most important features that differentiate A and B.
- How confident are you about your outcome (and explanation)? Again a valid question for Social XAI...
- How? The explainee might want a more extensive answer about the model's training, the data set used etc.
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SOCIAL XAI: WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER?

- **Interaction**. Explainees should have the possibility to guide the dialog by choosing the question to ask ("Why?", "Why not?", "What if?", . . .).
- Capability of **structuring explanations into appropriate chunks** that provide the necessary amount of information but not more.
- Capability to **adjust the modality, abstraction level etc.** used in different explanatory moves.
- Adjust explanations depending on the **context**, **explainee model and other information** that the AI systems might discover or learn during the interaction.
- Explainer needs to have a (trainable) **partner model** of the explainee in many real-world cases in order to have a successful interaction.
- The explainer has to have a **model of the context** for any explanation that goes beyond highlighting the pixels in an image.
- Etc.



HOW CAN WE MAKE IT HAPPEN?

... by using Contextual Importance and Utility (CIU)



INSPIRATION BEHIND CIU: HUMAN BRAIN IS BIGGEST BLACK BOX IN THE WORLD...

- ... but we still manage to explain our "high-level" actions and decisions without knowing anything about the black-box internals
- Humans can even adapt explanations to the target explainee(s)
 - Vocabulary
 - Level of detail/abstraction
 - Visualize, illustrate in different ways
- Why wouldn't we be able to do the same with XAI?





CONTEXTUAL IMPORTANCE AND UTILITY (CIU)

- Developed by Kary Främling during his Diplôme d'Études Approfondies¹ (D.E.A., 1991-1992) and Ph.D. Thesis² (1992-1996), both in French
- Papers in English:
 - FRÄMLING, Kary. Explaining Results of Neural Networks by Contextual Importance and Utility. In: Robert Andrews and Joachim Diederich (eds.), Rules and networks: Proceedings of the Rule Extraction from Trained Artificial Neural Networks Workshop, AISB'96 conference, 1-2 April 1996. Brighton, UK, 1996. Download as PDF.
 - FRÄMLING, Kary, GRAILLOT, Didier. *Extracting Explanations from Neural Networks*. ICANN'95 proceedings, Vol. 1, Paris, France, 9-13 October, 1995. Paris: EC2 & Cie, 1995. pp. 163-168.
- Break from 1996 to 2017, then received AI professorship at Umeå University, Sweden
 - o During the break: Internet of Things, Digital Twins, Intelligent Products, Smart houses, Smart Cities, ...
- Result: "nobody" remembered or found CIU when XAI became fashionable in around 2017
- Coincided with Kary's professorship in Data Science at Umeå University in November 2017
- The time was right, Kary had the time and the XAI approaches proposed were far from satisfactory (according to Kary), so CIU was revived
 - 1. Främling, K. Les réseaux de neurones comme outils d'aide à la décision floue. D.E.A. thesis, 1992. 55 p.



 Främling, K. Modélisation et apprentissage des préférences par réseaux de neurones pour l'aide à la décision multicritère. PhD. Thesis, 1996. 209 p.

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WHAT IS "FEATURE IMPORTANCE"?

Common-sense (not specific to ML or XAI) definition by HuggingChat*:

- Feature importance can be understood as the significance or relevance of a particular characteristic or attribute in a given context.
- Feature importance refers to the degree to which a specific characteristic or property of something contributes to its overall value, performance, or outcome. It highlights the significance or influence of that particular feature **in relation to the whole**.
- Importance is typically indicated in the range [0,1]

* meta-llama/Meta-Llama-3.1-70B-Instruct



WHAT IS "FEATURE INFLUENCE"?

Common-sense (not specific to ML or XAI) definition by HuggingChat:

- Feature influence refers to the causal or explanatory effect that a specific characteristic or property has on an outcome, behavior, or phenomenon. It highlights how **changes or variations** in a particular feature can impact or influence the resulting outcome.
- This implies having some *"reference instance"* that changes/variations are applied to
- LIME method produces influence values by indicating whether changes to current instance values increase or decrease the output value. LIME values are relative.
- SHAP method's influence values indicate whether the current instance's feature values increase or decrease the output compared to a reference instance. SHAP values are relative but their sum is known.
- Influence can be positive, negative or zero.



WHAT IS "VALUE UTILITY"?

- Explanation given by HuggingChat:
 - Value utility refers to the perceived usefulness, benefits, or advantages that an entity, such as a product, service, idea, or action, provides to its users, consumers, or stakeholders. It represents the extent to which something satisfies needs, fulfills desires, or delivers value, making it desirable or beneficial to those who interact with or possess it.
- Examples of values:
 - Temperature = 23
 - Engine horse powers is 350
 - Apartment price is \$250 000
- Values in context and their utility:
 - +23• Celsius is a **good** indoor temperature but **bad** in a freezer
 - 350 hp is **a lot of** power for a car but **not so much** for a truck
 - \$250 000 can be **high** or **low** in different contexts but also for different users, e.g. seller vs. buyer
- Utility is typically indicated in the range [0,1]



CIU: CORE CONCEPTS



We skip the mathematics for now...



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CIU FOR EXPLAINING THE PROBABILITY OF SURVIVAL ON THE TITANIC*

- Example: Random Forest model predicts 61.0% probability of survival on Titanic for "JohnnyD", an 8-year old boy who travels alone.
- Plot output value y_j as a function of one (or two) inputs $x_{\{i\}}$ while keeping the values of all other inputs set to $x_{\neg\{i\}}$





- CIU values for one feature are directly "readable" from input-output (IO) plot
- 3-D plot shows output value for two features jointly

THE POTENTIAL INFLUENCE (PI) PLOT

- Uses only importance (CI) and utility (CU):
 - $_{\circ}$ $\,$ Importance is indicated with a transparent bar $\,$
 - $\circ~$ Solid bar indicates how "good" the current value is
- "Potential influence" because a big transparent area indicates potential improvement by changing the feature value
- Solid area indicates how much worse the output could become by changing feature value
- Example of use: "What renovation of my house would increase its value the most?"
- Utility can also be shown using colors







TEXTUAL EXPLANATION

The explained value is **Yes** with the value 0.61 (CU=0.61), which is **higher than average utility**. Feature *Pclass* has **very low importance (CI=0.08)** and has value(s) 1.0, which is **low utility (CU=0.13)** Feature Sex has **low importance (CI=0.27)** and has value(s) 1.0, which is **low utility (CU=0.00)** Feature Age has **high importance (CI=0.67)** and has value(s) 8.0, which is **high utility (CU=0.91)** Feature SibSp has **very low importance (CI=0.16)** and has value(s) 0.0, which is **higher than average utility (CU=0.56)** Feature Parch has **very low importance (CI=0.19)** and has value(s) 0.0, which is **low utility (CU=0.00)** Feature Fare has **very low importance (CI=0.18)** and has value(s) 72.0, which is **higher than average utility (CU=0.72)** Feature Embarked has **very low importance (CI=0.03)** and has value(s) 3.0, which is **lower than average utility (CU=0.33)**

- Since $CI \in [0,1]$ and $CU \in [0,1]$ their values are meaningful as such
- Current CIU implementations use a simple template-based approach
- The use of textual explanations has not been elaborated or compared with other modalities, even though CIU initially produced textual explanations



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INFLUENCE-BASED EXPLANATIONS



- Somewhat similar for the three XAI methods but not identical, which one to trust?
 - At least Contextual influence can be understood and validated from IO-plots and is consistent with PI plots, textual explanations etc.
- Even important features may have small or even zero influence, which can be misleading
 - For instance, the number of siblings (SibSp) and number of accompanying parent/children (Parch) give an impression of being quite insignificant, even though the PI-plot shows that they are quite important
 - Features with values that are close to the reference instance values will have small influence, by definition!



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INTERMEDIATE CONCEPTS

- An Intermediate Concept (IC) is a named coalition of features
 - ICs are a **cornerstone concept of CIU** since the beginning
- Features in coalitions can be **dependent** in many ways
 Fuzzy/binary AND, OR, XOR or "whatever" for ML systems
- CIU is "well-defined" also for dependent features
- ICs can be interrelated as meronomies, hierarchies or other kinds of semantic structures, i.e. **vocabularies**
- Vocabularies can be **adapted** to context, explainee, interaction, ...







EXAMPLE: AMES HOUSING

- Ames housing is a data set with 2930 houses described by 81 features
- Gradient boosting model trained to predict the sale price based on the 80 other features
- With 80 features, "classical" bar plot explanations become unreadable
- Influence values may mislead the explainees: The most important features may have even zero influence!
- Many features are dependent, which causes misleading explanations because individual features have a small importance, whereas the joint importance can be significant
- IC-based vocabulary can be adapted to the context, the explainee, ...
- Simple, common-sense vocabulary used as example



Overall quality House condition House Year built EXAMPLE VOCABULARY FOR HOUSE Overall condition Year of remodeling **EXPLANATIONS (AMES)** External quality External condition Total basement surface Basement Surface of unfinished basement Meronomy ames voc = { Surface of finished basement Type 1 "Garage": [c for c in df.columns if 'Garage' in c], used for Surface of finished basement Type 2 "Basement": [c for c in df.columns if 'Bsmt' in c], explanations Presence of Type 1 finished basement surface "Lot":list(df.columns[[3,4,7,8,9,10,11]]), Presence of Type 2 finished basement surface "Access":list(df.columns[[13,14]]), Quality of basement "House_type":list(df.columns[[1,15,16,21]]), "House_aesthetics":list(df.columns[[Condition of basement 22,23,24,25,26]]), Full bathroom in basement "House_condition":list(df.columns Half bathroom in basement Same in [[20,18,21,28,19,29]]), Basement exposure Python code "First floor surface":list(df.columns[[43]]), Garage "Above_ground_living area": Lot [c for c in df.columns if 'GrLivArea' in c] Access House type House aesthetics First floor surface Above ground living area UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

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DEMONSTRATION



WHY SHOULD YOU FORGET WHAT YOU JUST SAW?



CIU DOES NOT EXIST IN THE "XAI WORLD"

- Tens of XAI survey papers have been published over the last years but hardly any even mention CIU, even though CIU has presumably been around the longest (by far)
- Why could that be? No clue but some theories:
 - XAI researchers do not want a "new kid in town" (or a "dark horse"?) that might disrupt current SOTA too much (and maybe the status of current XAI "thought leaders")?
 - "Being scientific" is about complex mathematics, rather than solving real problems?
 - More comfortable to find challenges with current approaches, rather than solving them?
 - (X)AI research prefers using benchmark tasks with a small number of features and avoid involving "real users"?
 - XAI researchers don't want humans to mix up their mathematics?
 - General effect of path dependency?



HOW ABOUT CIU IN INDUSTRY?

- Collected comments:
 - $_{\circ}~$ We only use SOTA, no new methods
 - Old saying from 1980's: "Nobody has ever been fired for buying IBM", i.e. "do like everyone else and you are safe"
 - Real question asked: "Everyone else is using SHAP (LIME, ...), why are you doing something different?"



RECENT PAPERS ON CIU

- Främling, Kary. Contextual importance and utility in python: new functionality and insights with the py-ciu package. In: XAI 2024 Workshop of 33rd International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2024), Jeju, South Corea, 2024. <u>https://arxiv.org/abs/2408.09957</u>
- Främling, Kary. Feature Importance versus Feature Influence and What It Signifies for Explainable AI. In: Longo, L. (eds) xAI 2023: Explainable Artificial Intelligence. Communications in Computer and Information Science book series (CCIS,volume 1901). Springer, Cham. pp. 241–259. <u>https://arxiv.org/abs/2308.03589</u>
- Främling, Kary. Counterfactual, Contrastive, and Hierarchical Explanations with Contextual Importance and Utility. In: Calvaresi, D., et al. Explainable and Transparent AI and Multi-Agent Systems. EXTRAAMAS 2023. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 14127. Springer, Cham. pp. 180-184. https://rdcu.be/dnTo9
- Främling, Kary. Contextual Importance and Utility: a Theoretical Foundation. In: Long G., Yu X., Wang S. (eds) AI 2021: Advances in Artificial Intelligence. AI 2022. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 13151. Springer, Cham. pp. 117-128. <u>https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-030-97546-3_10.pdf</u>?pdf=inline%20link
- Knapic, Samanta, Malhi, Avleen, Saluja, Rohit, Främling, Kary. Explainable Artificial Intelligence for Human Decision Support System in the Medical Domain. *Machine Learning & Knowledge Extraction*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, 2021.pp. 740-770. <u>https://doi.org/10.3390/make3030037</u>
- Främling, Kary. Decision Theory Meets Explainable AI. In: *Calvaresi D., Najjar A., Winikoff M., Främling K.* (*Eds.*): *EXTRAAMAS 2020, LNAI 12175*, pp. 57-74, 2020. Springer Nature Switzerland AG. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-030-51924-7_4.pdf



TRY OUT FOR YOURSELF

- Open-source implementations published on GitHub:
 - https://github.com/KaryFramling/py-ciu (Python, tabular data)
 - https://github.com/KaryFramling/ciu (R, tabular data)
 - https://github.com/KaryFramling/py_ciu_image (Python, images)
 - https://github.com/KaryFramling/ciu.image (R, images; obsolete)
- Ongoing for other data types such as time series, natural language, ...
- Book project "Social Explainable AI" to be published in 2025
 - https://link.springer.com/book/9789819652891
 - Extensive book written by tens of authors from different disciplines
 - Among other things, describes how partner models, context models, dialogs etc. can be implemented based on a combination of CIU, weighted Knowledge Graphs and adaptive learning of user preferences (which was shown in the demonstration)



THANK YOU!





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