

CS70: Lecture 33.

WLLN, Confidence Intervals (CI): Chebyshev vs. CLT

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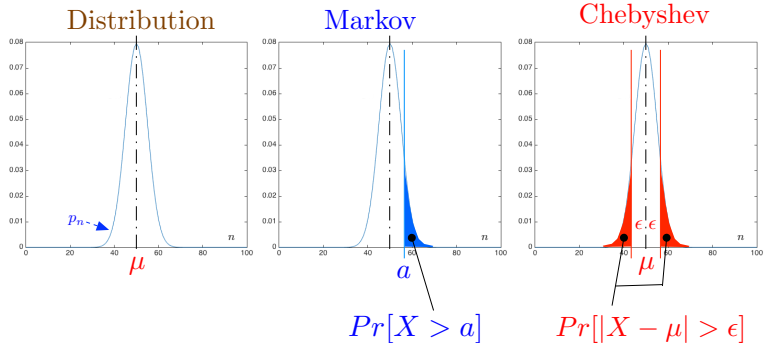
WLLN, Confidence Intervals (CI): Chebyshev vs. CLT

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1. Review: Inequalities: Markov, Chebyshev
2. Law of Large Numbers
3. Review: CLT
4. Confidence Intervals: Chebyshev vs. CLT

Inequalities: An Overview



Markov Inequality

If X can only take non-negative values then

$$P(X \geq a) \leq \frac{E[X]}{a}$$

for all $a > 0$.

This inequality makes no assumptions on the existence of variance and so it can't be very strong for typical distributions. In fact, it is quite weak.

Chebyshev Inequality

If X is a random variable with finite mean and variance σ^2 , then

$$P(|X - E[X]| \geq c) \leq \frac{\sigma^2}{c^2}$$

for all $c > 0$.

Also, letting $c = k\sigma$:

$$P(|X - E[X]| \geq k\sigma) \leq \frac{1}{k^2}$$

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$$\text{Var}(X_i) = p(1-p) \leq (.5)(.5) = \frac{1}{4}$$

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We look at a general case next.

Weak Law of Large Numbers

We perform an experiment n times independently and

$$M_n = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$$

The fact that $\text{var}(M_n) \rightarrow 0$ at rate $\frac{1}{n}$ is great but what does that tell us about $P(|M_n - E[X_i]|) ?$ How quickly does it go to zero?

Just use Chebyshev: $P(|X - E[X]| \geq c) \leq \frac{\sigma^2}{c^2}$

$$P(|M_n - E[X_i]| \geq \epsilon) \leq \frac{\sigma^2}{n\epsilon^2}$$

for any $\epsilon > 0$.

This is a form of the Weak Law of Large Numbers.

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What does the Weak Law Really Mean?

WLLN: $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} P(|M_n - \mu| \geq \epsilon) = 0$.

Just using the defn of limit: For any $\epsilon, \delta > 0$, there exists a number $n(\epsilon, \delta)$ such that

$$P(|M_n - \mu| \geq \epsilon) \leq \delta \text{ for all } n \geq n(\epsilon, \delta)$$

- δ : Confidence level
- ϵ : "Error"
- $n(\epsilon, \delta)$: threshold function for a given level of confidence and accuracy

What this is saying is that if we compute M_n for large n then:

Almost Always, $|M_n - \mu| < \epsilon$.

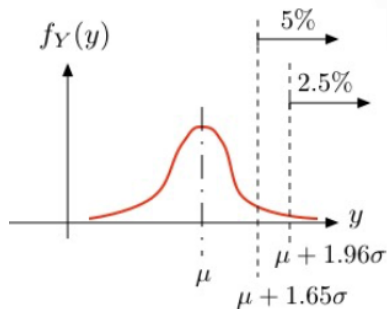
We say that M_n **converges to μ in probability**.

Recap: Normal (Gaussian) Distribution.

For any μ and σ , a **normal** (aka **Gaussian**) random variable Y , which we write as $Y = \mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma^2)$, has pdf

$$f_Y(y) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} e^{-(y-\mu)^2/2\sigma^2}.$$

Standard normal has $\mu = 0$ and $\sigma = 1$.



Note: $Pr[|Y - \mu| > 1.65\sigma] = 10\%$; $Pr[|Y - \mu| > 2\sigma] = 5\%$.

Recap: Central Limit Theorem

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Central Limit Theorem

Let X_1, X_2, \dots be i.i.d. with $E[X_1] = \mu$ and $\text{var}(X_1) = \sigma^2$. Define

$$S_n := \frac{A_n - \mu}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}} = \frac{X_1 + \dots + X_n - n\mu}{\sigma\sqrt{n}}.$$

Then,

$$S_n \rightarrow \mathcal{N}(0, 1), \text{ as } n \rightarrow \infty.$$

That is,

$$\Pr[S_n \leq \alpha] \rightarrow \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^{\alpha} e^{-x^2/2} dx.$$

$$E(S_n) = \frac{1}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}} (E(A_n) - \mu) = 0$$

$$\text{Var}(S_n) = \frac{1}{\sigma^2/n} \text{Var}(A_n) = 1.$$

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The CLT states that

$$\frac{A_n - \mu}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}} = \frac{X_1 + \dots + X_n - n\mu}{\sigma\sqrt{n}} \rightarrow \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ as } n \rightarrow \infty.$$

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Thus, the CLT provides a smaller confidence interval.

Coins and CLT.

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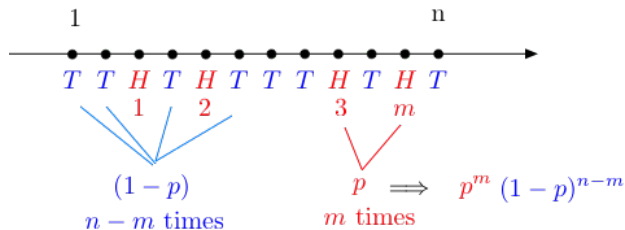
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$\binom{n}{m}$ outcomes with m Hs and $n-m$ Ts

$$\Rightarrow Pr[X = m] = \binom{n}{m} p^m (1-p)^{n-m}$$

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Comparing Chebyshev and CLT: Polling

We ask n randomly sampled voters whether they support Bob.
 $X_i = 1$ if the i^{th} voter says "yes" and $X_i = 0$ otherwise. The X_i are iid.

We want to be sure with prob ≥ 0.95 that $|M_{100} - p| \leq 0.1$. How many people should we ask?

Again, use the bound that $\text{var}(X_i) \leq \frac{1}{4}$

By Chebyshev:

$$\frac{25}{n} \leq 0.05 \Rightarrow \boxed{n \geq 500}$$

By CLT:

$$2(1 - \phi(2 * 0.1 * \sqrt{n})) \leq 0.05$$

$$\phi(2 * 0.1 * \sqrt{n}) \geq 0.975$$

Since $\phi(1.96) = 0.975$:

$$\boxed{n \geq 96.04}$$

CLT much better than Chebyshev.

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Inequalities and Confidence Intervals

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