

Piotr Szymański

Multi-geomodal representation learning for geographic transfer learning

This project aims to revolutionize how we use and understand location data, similar to breakthroughs in language processing and image recognition. Imagine a world where AI can seamlessly understand and predict complex geographic patterns, like urban development, traffic flow, or the spread of disease. This project seeks to make that a reality.

Currently, most AI struggles to "understand" maps like humans do. We can look at a map and instantly grasp the relationships between streets, buildings, and parks. But AI typically sees maps as simple images, missing crucial information about how these elements connect and interact.

This project tackles this challenge by developing new AI methods to:

1. **Teach AI the language of maps:** This involves creating "embeddings," which are like digital fingerprints that capture the essence of different map elements (points, lines, polygons) and their relationships. Imagine translating the complexity of a city map into a format AI can easily comprehend.
2. **Build a universal map understanding:** Just like large language models are trained on massive text datasets, this project will create a comprehensive map knowledge base. This will allow AI models trained on one city to understand and make predictions about other cities, even if they've never "seen" them before.
3. **Unlock the power of open map data:** This project will leverage OpenStreetMap, a Wikipedia-like resource for map data, to train these powerful AI models. This democratizes access to advanced geospatial AI tools, benefiting researchers and developers worldwide.

The potential impact is extensive, as the output of this project could be used in:

- **Smarter cities:** AI could optimize traffic flow, predict urban growth, and improve emergency response times.
- **Enhanced environmental modeling:** AI could analyze deforestation patterns, predict natural disasters, and aid in conservation efforts.
- **Improved public health:** AI could track disease outbreaks, optimize healthcare resource allocation, and predict areas at high risk for health issues.

The goals of this project offer a perspective for pushing the boundaries of AI and map understanding.