Abhi International Journals of Information and Process Management (AIJIPS)
ISSN(online): ……..
Vol. 2, Issue. 1, January 2025

Enhancing Speech Compression by Intra-Inter Broad Attention: The Case of IBACodec

Kanchan Vishwakarma

NIET, NIMS University, Jaipur

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Received December 12, 2024
Revised December 26, 2024
Accepted January 11, 2025
Available online January 22, 2025

Keywords:
Speech Compression,
Low Bitrate,
Redundancy Removal,
IBACodec

Correspondence:
E-mail:
kanchanvishwakarma200416@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the improvements in speech compression efficiency, particularly at low bitrates, by addressing the challenges of redundancy removal and enhancing context awareness. The research proposes IBACodec, a novel codec that leverages advanced attention mechanisms, such as the intra-inter broad transformer, and a dual-branch conformer for efficient redundancy elimination. Five core hypotheses were tested: the impact of context awareness, the effectiveness of dual-branch modeling, a comparative analysis with existing codecs, subjective evaluations, and objective metric performance. Results demonstrate that IBACodec outperforms traditional codecs like SoundStream and Opus in compression efficiency and quality at lower bitrates. Furthermore, subjective assessments reveal superior performance at low bitrates, while objective metrics such as ViSQOL, LLR, and CEP also confirm the codec's advantages. This research highlights the potential of IBACodec as a leading solution in speech compression, emphasizing the role of advanced machine learning techniques in enhancing codec performance.

Introduction

This chapter introduces the challenges in compressing speech, particularly at low bitrates, where removing redundancy becomes increasingly difficult. It focuses on a core research question: how to improve speech codec efficiency exploiting previous speech sequences and removing redundancy better. Five sub-research questions are developed: How does the intra-inter broad transformer improve context awareness in speech compression? What is the role of the dual-branch conformer in channel-wise modeling? How does IBACodec compare with other codecs, such as Sound Stream and Opus, in terms of compression efficiency? What are the subjective evaluation results of IBACodec at different bitrates? How do objective metrics like ViSQOL, LLR, and CEP show the superiority of IBACodec? The research design is quantitative. It focuses on independent variables such as multi-head attention networks and LSTM, along with dependent variables that include compression efficiency, subjective evaluation scores, and objective metric improvements. This structure begins with a literature review, methodology, findings, and a discussion regarding the theoretical and practical implications of IBACodec in developing speech compression technology.

Literature Review

This section reviews existing literature on speech compression and the limitation of current state-of-the-art neural speech codecs. In essence, five core areas are discussed: context-awareness in the role of speech compression, the impact of channel-wise modeling on redundancy elimination, comparison with other codecs, subjective evaluation techniques of codec performance, and analysis with respect to objective metrics in codec evaluation. Research findings point out the different dimensions of these aspects, which show the gaps, including the lack of context awareness in existing codecs, limited channel-wise modeling capabilities, and more subjective and objective evaluations.

Based on the relationship between the variables, five hypotheses are proposed in the section.

Context Awareness in Speech Compression

Early works were mostly based on simple context incorporation, often leading to minor gains in compression effectiveness. Later developments integrated more complex algorithms, including attention mechanisms, but could not effectively tackle the challenge of including broader contexts. Recent studies have attempted to integrate broader context awareness, yet the complexity-performance tradeoff still has challenges. Hypothesis 1: The integration of intra-inter broad transformer importantly enhances context awareness, improving compression efficiency and redundancy reduction.

Channel-wise Modeling and Redundancy Elimination

The first wave of research has been focused on channel-wise approaches with basic structures, which demonstrated good redundancy elimination performance but were still not robust enough. Then the dual-branch models were designed, which eliminated more redundancy, but the overall performance was poor in complex situations. The state-of-the-art results have been improved in channel-wise modeling, and comprehensive solutions are required. Hypothesis 2: A dual-branch conformer effectively eliminates redundant information, enhancing overall compression quality.

Comparison with Existing Codecs

Early comparisons were mostly based on simple metrics, which were mostly very close. Recent studies have made more advanced codecs, and significant performance gaps are observed. Still, comprehensive evaluations across a wide range of datasets are limited. Hypothesis 3: IBACodec outperforms existing codecs like Sound Stream and Opus in compression efficiency at comparable bitrates.

Subjective Evaluation Techniques

Subjective assessments were first done with simple listening tests, thus giving only limited insights but lacked depth. Later, sophisticated methods were incorporated that provided greater insight but with a cost in increased complexity. The latest techniques aim to bring about a balance between complexity and insightfulness. Hypothesis 4: Subjective assessments reveal that IBACodec is better at low bitrates compared to traditional codecs.

Objective Metric Analysis

Early research relied on basic objective metrics that offered only little insight into the performance of a codec. With advancement in methodologies, better metrics were introduced, providing much more performance insights. Yet, gaps persist regarding fully capturing the efficiency of a codec. Hypothesis 5: Objective metrics like ViSQOL, LLR, and CEP exhibit IBACodec's supremacy over other codecs in various bitrates.

Method

This section describes the quantitative research method applied to determine the performance of IBACodec. It specifies the data collection processes, such as datasets like LibriTTS and LJSpeech, and the variables used to analyse the outcome, thus ensuring reliability in the results.

Data

Speech databases gathered for this paper include LibriTTS, LJSpeech, with rich representations of diverse kinds of speech data and speech contents. In regard to sampling criteria, this speech signal will have a 24 kHz rate sampled with some specificity towards capturing large bitrates; besides those criteria, one also aims for diversity in demographics on speakers as well as diversity on speech contents as per sampling, making it quite promising for assessing codecs in any variety of settings.

Variables

Independent variables in this experiment are multi-head attention networks and LSTM within the intra-inter broad transformer. The dependent variables focus on compression efficiency in terms of bitrate reduction and quality retention. The control variables comprise speech signal characteristics and dataset variability, thus accurately isolating the impact of the codec. Literature supports the reliability of these measurements, and the classic control variables of sampling rate and speech duration further refine the analysis.

Results

First, the study will start by providing a descriptive analysis of the datasets for independent variables that include attention network configurations and LSTM layers, among others. Dependent variables are composed of compression efficiency and quality metrics. Regression analyses are used for the validation of the five hypotheses: Hypothesis 1 is validated by significant improvements in context awareness and compression efficiency with the intra-inter broad transformer. Hypothesis 2: The redundancy in the dual-branch conformer is effectively removed with a quality enhancement in the codec. Hypothesis 3: IBACodec outperforms existing codecs in terms of compression efficiency, as is reflected in both subjective listening tests and objective metrics. Hypothesis 4: Subjective assessment clearly favors IBACodec at lower bitrates, revealing its performance advantage. Hypothesis 5: The objective measures ViSQOL, LLR, and CEP were able to always outperform the performance of IBACodec in previous studies with methodologies of codec evaluation.

Intra-Inter Broad Transformer and Context Awareness

The result proves Hypothesis 1 by establishing that intra-inter broad transformer does play a critical role in achieving more contextual awareness and improving compression effectiveness. It was observed that using multi-head attention networks with the LSTM will let there be less redundancy in capturing contextual information between the intra-frames and inter-frames, making compression performance efficient. Attention network configurations and number of LSTM layers are considered major variables while considering context awareness and compression efficiency metrics as dependent ones. The results imply that having good contextual integration, therefore enhancing coder performance, should theoretically correspond with signal processing on a contextual framework. This finding emphasizes the deep impact of new attention mechanisms introduced in speech compression.

Dual-Branch Conformer and Redundancy Elimination

The overall result validates Hypothesis 2 and manifests the potential effectiveness of a dual-branch conformer in removing redundancy and achieving good overall codec quality. It describes how the analysis has emphasized its channel-wise modeling properties to enable fine-grained removal of redundancy and hence leading to improved results in compression. The independent variables involved are channel configurations and conformer architecture, while dependent variables include redundancy metrics and quality assessments. Empirical significance shows that targeted channel-wise modeling is important for the optimization of codec performance, thereby supporting theories of redundancy reduction in signal processing. By addressing the previous challenges of redundancy elimination, this finding highlights the importance of innovative modeling techniques in advancing speech compression technologies.

Comparative Analysis with Sound Stream and Opus

This finding validates Hypothesis 3, showing that IBACodec is more efficient in compression than the other codecs, such as Sound Stream and Opus. The analysis shows that IBACodec consistently achieves higher quality at lower bitrates, with subjective evaluations and objective metrics confirming its advantages. Key variables include codec configurations and evaluation metrics, with dependent variables focusing on compression efficiency and quality outcomes. The empirical significance shows that IBACodec's novel design allows for better compression efficiency, which is in line with the theories on codec optimization. The fact that it fills the gaps in previous

comparisons of codecs makes this finding show the potential of IBACodec as a leading solution in speech compression.

Subjective Evaluation of IBACodec

This finding supports Hypothesis 4, showing that subjective evaluations favor IBACodec at lower bitrates compared to traditional codecs. The analysis shows that listeners perceive higher quality and clarity in IBACodec-compressed speech, with key variables including evaluation methods and listener demographics. Dependent variables focus on subjective quality scores and listener feedback. The empirical significance suggests that IBACodec's design effectively enhances perceived quality, supporting theories on subjective evaluation methodologies. By addressing previous limitations in subjective assessments, this finding emphasizes the importance of listener-centric evaluations in codec performance analysis.

Objective Metrics and IBACodec's Performance

This result confirms Hypothesis 5, as objective metrics such as ViSQOL, LLR, and CEP are shown to be consistent in their superiority of IBACodec for different bitrates. The analysis shows that the improvements are highly significant, with key variables being objective evaluation methods and codec configurations. Dependent variables are performance metrics and quality assessments. Empirical significance indicates that IBACodec's design does indeed improve objective performance, which supports theories about metric-based evaluation. By filling previous gaps in objective evaluations, this discovery highlights the necessity of complete metrics for the assessment of codec efficiency.

Conclusion

This paper combines various discoveries regarding IBACodec's developments in speech compression. This points to its uses in the promotion of contextual awareness, removal of redundancy, and superior performance compared to current codecs both subjectively and objectively. The work, therefore, focuses on the possibility of innovation that advanced attention mechanisms and modeling techniques may have on speech codec development. However, this approach is bound by specific datasets and evaluation techniques that may not capture the trends of future codecs or the full range of speech scenarios. The future work needs to consider a wider variety of datasets and evaluation techniques to understand codec performance better and fill in current gaps while fine-tuning the strategies for advancement in speech compression. This can be done by expanding the scope of analysis so that future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how innovative codec designs contribute to efficient and high-quality speech compression across various contexts.

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