# Mitigating the Learning Bias towards Repetition by Self-Contrastive Training for Open-Ended Generation

Jian Guan, Minlie Huang\*

The CoAI Group, DCST, Institute for Artificial Intelligence, State Key Lab of Intelligent Technology and Systems, Beijing National Research Center for Information Science and Technology, Tsinghua University, Beijing 100084, China j-guan19@mails.tsinghua.edu.cn, aihuang@tsinghua.edu.cn

### Abstract

Despite the huge progress in myriad generation tasks, pretrained language models (LMs) such as GPT2 still tend to generate repetitive texts with maximization-based decoding algorithms for open-ended generation. We attribute their overestimation of token-level repetition probabilities to the learning bias: LMs capture simple repetitive patterns faster with the MLE loss. We propose self-contrastive training to penalize the output of a premature checkpoint of the same model when it incorrectly predicts repetition, which is shown to mitigate repetition effectively while maintaining fluency on two datasets. Furthermore, we find that LMs use longer-range dependencies to predict repetitive tokens than non-repetitive ones, which may be the cause of sentence-level repetition loops<sup>1</sup>.

### 1 Introduction

Existing LMs prefer to generate repetitive texts for open-ended generation with greedy decoding or beam search (Welleck et al., 2020a). Even largescale pretrained LMs such as GPT3 (Brown et al., 2020) still generate redundant sentences (Dou et al., 2022). Despite many solutions proposed from the perspective of both training (Welleck et al., 2020b) and decoding (Holtzman et al., 2020), the cause of preference for repetition still needs to be clarified.

By analyzing the training dynamics of LMs regarding (non-)repetitive tokens, we reveal the learning bias towards repetition: LMs capture simple repetitive patterns first, which dominate the output distribution throughout the input space, and then learn more non-repetitive patterns during training. We show that the repetition problem can be mitigated by only training more steps (i.e., allowing over-fitting), although the coherence with inputs will be impacted. Conversely, when trained insufficiently, LMs will overestimate repetition probabilities even for golden prefixes. We propose selfcontrastive training (SELFCONT), which exploits the contrast with a premature checkpoint of the same model by penalizing its output when it incorrectly predicts repetition. Experiments on two datasets show that SELFCONT effectively alleviates repetition while maintaining fluency by factoring out the undesired repetition behaviors highlighted by the premature checkpoint.

Besides the above analysis about overestimating token-level repetition probabilities during training, we also find that LMs use longer-range dependencies to predict repetitive tokens than non-repetitive ones. It may explain why LMs tend to fall into repetition loops (Xu et al., 2022). The problem may be solved by improving the modeling of long-range dependencies (e.g., increasing model sizes), which are left to future work.

## 2 Related Work

Regarding the cause of the repetition problem, Fu et al. (2021) theoretically derived bounds of repetition probabilities of the first-order Markov LM, although it is difficult to extend the bounds to general LMs. Another line of works attributed repetition to error accumulation during generation (Welleck et al., 2020b; Arora et al., 2022), while LMs still prefer repetition given golden prefixes.

We divide recent works that alleviate repetition into training- and decoding-based methods: (1) **Training-based Methods.** Welleck et al. (2020b) proposed unlikelihood training (UL) to reduce the probabilities of repetitive generations. Lin et al. (2021) and Xu et al. (2022) further extended the framework at the token and sequence level, respectively. SELFCONT focuses on token-level modeling, which is orthogonal with sequence-level methods. Xi et al. (2021) adopted additional modules to learn repetition patterns and control repetition explicitly. (2) Decoding-based Methods.

<sup>\*</sup>Corresponding author

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The code is available at https://github.com/ thu-coai/SelfCont

One straightforward solution to repetition is blocking repetitive *n*-grams generations (Paulus et al., 2018) or penalizing probabilities of repetitive candidates (Keskar et al., 2019). Li et al. (2022) selected candidates that maximize the probability difference between different-sized models. Sampling-based decoding methods are also shown effective in avoiding repetition, such as temperature sampling (Ficler and Goldberg, 2017), Top-*k* sampling (Fan et al., 2018), nucleus sampling (Holtzman et al., 2020), and typical sampling (Meister et al., 2022). Although these methods reduce superficial repetition, it is unclear whether they utilize the underlying long-range dependencies to maintain coherence.

#### **3** Empirical Analysis

Neural networks (NNs) are highly expressive to approximate arbitrary input-output mappings. Using Fourier analysis, Rahaman et al. (2019) showed the *spectral bias* of NNs: they learn low-frequency components faster during training, which are less complex and vary globally without local fluctuation. Our key hypothesis is that simple repetitive patterns may be such low-frequency components and learned by LMs early. In this section, we first formulate LMs (§3.1), and then investigate the training dynamics (§3.2) and the ability to model long-range dependencies (§3.3) of LMs.

#### 3.1 Language Models

LMs aim to fit the mapping  $x_t = f(x_{1:t-1})$  defined by a training corpus, where  $x_{1:t}$  is a sequence from the corpus. To this end, they are usually trained by minimizing the following cross-entropy loss:

$$\mathcal{L} = -\mathbf{x}_t^{\mathrm{T}} \cdot \log[\operatorname{softmax}(f_{\theta}(x_{1:t-1}))], \quad (1)$$

where  $\mathbf{x}_t \in \{0, 1\}^{|\mathcal{V}|}$  is the one-hot representation of  $x_t$  indicating its index in the vocabulary  $\mathcal{V}$ , and  $f_{\theta}(x_{1:t-1}) \in \mathbb{R}^{|\mathcal{V}|}$  is the output logits of the LM parameterized by  $\theta$ . Predictably, with more training steps,  $\operatorname{argmax}(f_{\theta})$  is closer to the target function f. Early stopping (Morgan and Bourlard, 1989) is a commonly used regularization technique to avoid over-fitting, e.g., stopping training when the validation loss reaches the minimum. Since NNs prioritize learning low-complexity components, early stopping may result in unexpected generations. We are inspired to investigate whether simple repetitive patterns in human-written texts are learned first, thus dominating the generations.

#### 3.2 Training Dynamics

We randomly sample 1k sequences containing 512 tokens from the Wikitext-103 dataset (Merity et al., 2016) and train GPT2<sub>base</sub> from scratch for 100 epochs<sup>2</sup>. Given a golden prefix  $x_{1:t-1}$ , we regard the model prediction  $\hat{x}_t = \operatorname{argmax}(f_{\theta}(x_{1:t-1}))$  as correct if  $\hat{x}_t = x_t$ . We call  $x_t$  or  $\hat{x}_t$  repetitive if it is included in  $x_{1:t-1}$ , and non-repetitive otherwise.



Figure 1: **Top**: Ratios of positions where  $x_t$  or  $\hat{x}_t$  is repetitive or not, given golden prefixes of the test set. **Bottom**: Ratios of tokens that appear in previous l tokens, in model-generated texts with greedy decoding.

Figure 1 plots the training curves, revealing the learning bias of the LM: (1) The initially learned components prefer to copy input tokens throughout the input space, as indicated by predicting repetitive tokens at  $\sim 90\%$  of positions for both golden and generated prefixes. (2) With golden prefixes, at those positions where  $x_t$  is repetitive, the LM predicts repetition almost constantly during training. When  $x_t$  is non-repetitive, the LM predicts more non-repetitive tokens with more training steps. The repetition ratio also gradually decreases in modelgenerated texts. (3) The token prediction accuracy improves faster when  $x_t$  is repetitive, indicating that the LM learns repetitive patterns more easily. Moreover, we notice that the validation loss rises at the 1,500th step, where the LM predicts much more repetitive tokens than the ground truth. At the end of the training, the generation has a closer token repetition ratio to the ground truth. But manual

 $<sup>^{2}</sup>$ We use only 1k samples because we expect to over-fit these samples to observe how repetition in generated texts changes with the fitting degree, considering that it will be very time-consuming to fit the whole Wikitext-103 dataset.



Figure 2: Perplexity scores computed on *all, repetitive* or *non-repetitive* tokens with different prefix lengths. The scores marked with  $\bigcirc$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\bigtriangledown$  and  $\triangle$  means that the *p*-values compared with the score when the prefix length is 250 fall in the following intervals: [0, 0.001), [0.001, 0.01), [0.01, 0.05) and [0.05, 1], respectively.

inspection finds the coherence with inputs is poor due to over-fitting. Appendix A.1 shows several generation cases.

#### 3.3 Modeling Long-Range Dependencies

Figure 1 (Top) shows that LMs are still able to predict non-repetitive tokens conditioned on golden prefixes. However, it is still unclear why they get into repetition loops during generation and do not generate any non-repetitive tokens. To shed light on this behavior, we further investigate how LMs learn and utilize long-range dependencies. We finetune GPT2<sub>base</sub> on the training set of Wikitext-103, and examine the effect of prefix lengths on the perplexity of tokens that have appeared in the previous 250 tokens (called *repetitive*) or not on the original test set and model-generated texts.

Figure 2 indicates (1) The LM only learns dependencies within ~100 tokens overall. When the prefix length is larger than 100, the perplexity on golden tokens no longer drops significantly  $(p \ge 0.05)$ . (2) The LM learns and utilizes longer-range dependencies to predict repetitive tokens than non-repetitive ones. The perplexity on golden repetitive/non-repetitive tokens plateaus when the prefix length is larger than 160/50, respectively. The case is similar for generated texts. (3) The LM uses short-range contexts to predict non-repetitive tokens regardless of decoding algorithms. Contexts beyond 100 tokens hardly help predict non-repetitive tokens, implying samplingbased decoding reduces repetition through randomness instead of using long-range dependencies.

Based on the above observation, we conjecture that the LMs keep repeating the same sentence with maximization-based decoding (Xu et al., 2022) because they rarely learn long-range non-repetitive patterns beyond the sentence level. When generating long texts, LMs may struggle to maintain non-repetitive within a long range. To test the idea, we train GPT2<sub>base</sub> from scratch on three datasets constructed from the training set of Wikitext-103: (1)  $\mathcal{D}_{\text{original}}$ , where examples are directly sampled from the original training set; (2)  $\mathcal{D}_{\text{random}}$ , where each example contains 30 randomly sampled sentences; (3)  $\mathcal{D}_{\text{norept}}$ , where each example also contains 30 random sentences, but there is at most one token overlapping between any adjacent 5 sentences (generally the period "."). Each dataset consists of 20k examples. We then generate texts using greedy decoding conditioned on the first 50 tokens in the original test set and compute the ratio of texts which fall into loops (Holtzman et al., 2020).

Training Sets	$\mathcal{D}_{ ext{original}}$	$\mathcal{D}_{\rm random}$	$\mathcal{D}_{\rm norept}$
Ratios (%) $\downarrow$	60.42	96.04	1.67

Table 1: Ratios of texts which get stuck into loops generated by LMs trained on different training sets.

As shown in Table 1, compared to  $\mathcal{D}_{original}$ , the LM trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{random}$  has higher repetition ratios because it learns shorter-range non-repetitive patterns only within one sentence. Besides, although sentences in each  $\mathcal{D}_{random}$  example are unrelated, they can contain repetitive tokens<sup>3</sup>, making the LM learn spurious long-range repetitive patterns to get into repetition loops. In contrast, the LM trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$  rarely gets into loops since it learns both repetitive and non-repetitive patterns almost within one sentence. Specifically, any adjacent five sentences in each  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$  example are unrelated and hardly share tokens. These findings empirically support our hypothesis. Appendix A.2 shows more details.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>The ratios of tokens that have appeared in previous 128 tokens are 12.52% and 32.05% for the training sets of  $\mathcal{D}_{\rm original}$  and  $\mathcal{D}_{\rm random}$ , respectively.  $\mathcal{D}_{\rm random}$  has even more repetition than  $\mathcal{D}_{\rm original}$  possibly because random sentences repeat high-frequency words than human-written sentences.

Models	PPL	MAUVE R-16	R-32	R-128 D-3	D-4    PPL	MAUVE R-16	R-32	R-128   D-3	D-4
Greedy		Datase	t: Wikitext-	103		Dataset:	WritingPro	ompts	
MLE UL ScaleGrad	2.55 3.20 <u>4.61</u>	3.29         41.23           7.16         33.91           7.66         29.82	70.18 61.90 <u>50.69</u>	83.28         19.27           76.89         25.13 <u>66.14</u> <u>36.96</u>	$\begin{array}{c ccccc} 23.95 & 1.76 \\ 31.90 & 2.01 \\ \underline{47.34} & \underline{2.87} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccc} 0.61 & 71.08 \\ 1.63 & 59.43 \\ \underline{11.17} & \underline{52.29} \end{array}$	87.20 81.63 <u>69.53</u>	89.43         9.61           85.89         11.66 <u>76.16</u> <u>18.16</u>	11.40 14.30 <u>24.40</u>
SELFCONT	6.47	17.34 23.29	39.41	62.46 46.71	57.66    3.30	20.05 35.13	53.69	74.09   23.30	31.52
Nucleus		Dataset: Wikitext-103				Dataset: WritingPrompts			
MLE UL ScaleGrad	20.66 15.54 12.41	$\begin{array}{c cccc} 21.09 & 19.40 \\ 21.78 & \underline{18.45} \\ \underline{25.69} & 18.59 \end{array}$	30.22 29.57 <b>29.24</b>	48.11         71.92           46.69         69.63           45.19         66.35	84.75         18.68           82.87         19.39           80.23         14.14	$\begin{array}{c c} \underline{88.54} \\ 81.49 \\ 77.82 \end{array} \begin{array}{c} 20.95 \\ \underline{18.36} \\ 18.62 \end{array}$	32.53 27.98 <u>27.80</u>	48.87         60.38 <b>42.65 63.92</b> <u>41.22</u> 56.74	81.55 82.93 77.27
SELFCONT	19.02	34.37   16.45	<u>26.47</u>	45.10 <b>72.02</b>	<u>84.78</u>    <b>19.86</b>	89.84 17.56	26.98	43.39 <u>63.33</u>	83.51
Ground Truth	h    18.31	100 17.38	27.92	46.29 72.34	84.20    24.01	100 16.36	26.47	42.30 74.49	90.01

Table 2: Automatic evaluation results with greedy and nucleus decoding on Wikitext-103 and WritingPrompts.

#### 4 Self-Contrastive Training

We denote the premature checkpoint as  $f_{\theta_0}$ , which frequently predicts repetitive tokens. Formally, the SELFCONT algorithm is formulated as follows:

$$f_{\theta} = f_{\theta_1} + \mathrm{sg}(wf_{\theta_0}), \tag{2}$$

$$w = \lambda \mathbb{1}(x_t \notin x_{1:t-1}) \mathbb{1}(\hat{x}_t \in x_{1:t-1})$$
(3)

$$\hat{x}_t = \operatorname{argmax}(f_{\theta_0}(x_{1:t-1})), \qquad (4)$$

where  $sg(\cdot)$  means stopping back-propagation of gradients,  $\lambda$  is a tunable hyper-parameter to control the extent of repetition penalty, and  $\mathbb{1}$  is the indicator function.  $f_{\theta_1}$  is the target LM initialized from  $f_{\theta_0}$ , and we optimize  $f_{\theta}$  using Eq. 1 until the validation loss converges to the minimum. The gradient for each token  $u \in \mathcal{V}$  has changed to:

$$\nabla_u \mathcal{L} = \frac{\exp(f_{\theta_1}|_u)}{\sum_{v \in \mathcal{V}} w_{v,u} \exp(f_{\theta_1}|_v)} - \mathbb{1}(u = x_t), \quad (5)$$

$$w_{v,u} = \exp\left(w(f_{\theta_0}|_v - f_{\theta_0}|_u)\right),\tag{6}$$

where  $f_{\theta_1}|_u$  is the output of  $f_{\theta_1}$  at the *u*-th dimension. If *w* is 0,  $w_{v,u}$  is always 1 and  $\nabla_u \mathcal{L}$  degenerates to the same as the vanilla LM. If *w* is not 0 and *u* is not  $x_t$ , tokens with high logits under  $f_{\theta_0}$  will receive larger gradients than the vanilla LM since  $w_{v,u}$  is mostly smaller than 1 with different *v*. As for  $u = x_t$  ( $w \neq 0$ ), it may also be penalized with a positive gradient if  $f_{\theta_0}|_u$  is large enough, which usually means a dull token. By penalizing components that excessively prefer repetitive or dull tokens highlighted by  $f_{\theta_0}$ ,  $f_{\theta_1}$  can utilize more complex patterns learned later to generate texts.

#### **5** Experiments

**Datasets** We conduct experiments on Wikitext-103 (Merity et al., 2016) and WritingPrompts (Fan

et al., 2018). The prompt and story in each Writing-Prompts example are concatenated as a sequence. We set the maximum sequence length to 512 and take the first 50 tokens as input to generate the rest. Table 3 presents the detailed statistics.

Datasets	Train	Validation	Test	Avg. Len
Wikitext-103	201,632	448	480	512
WritingPrompts	272,600	15,620	15,138	439

Table 3: Statistics of the datasets.

**Baselines** We compare SELFCONT to three baselines: MLE, token-level UL (Welleck et al., 2020b) and ScaleGrad (Lin et al., 2021). Since SELFCONT focuses on token-level modeling, we do not compare it to sentence-level methods that directly penalize repetition loops, e.g., DITTO (Xu et al., 2022).

**Implementation** All baselines are implemented based on GPT2<sub>base</sub>. We set the batch size to 16, the learning rate to 1e-4, and  $\lambda$  in Eq. 3 to 4.0. For SELFCONT, we fine-tune GPT2<sub>base</sub> for one epoch using MLE and take the checkpoint as  $f_{\theta_0}$ for both datasets. We use different p for different models based on the performance on the validation set. Appendix B shows more details.

**Metrics** We use perplexity (PPL) under GPT2<sub>xl</sub> to evaluate fluency, MAUVE (Pillutla et al., 2021) to measure the similarity between golden and generated distributions, the token repetition ratios (R-*l*) to measure the ratio of tokens that appear in previous *l* tokens (Welleck et al., 2020b), and distinct (D-n) (Li et al., 2016) to evaluate the *n*-gram diversity. The closer scores to the ground truth mean better quality for all metrics.

**Results** As shown in Table 2, SELFCONT outperforms baselines in all metrics using greedy decoding. However, the high R-128 score shows it can still generate repetition loops due to the disability of small-scale LMs to model long-range dependencies. Using nucleus decoding, we see that different baselines can achieve similar repetition ratios and diversity to the truth by tuning p, while SELFCONT has better fluency and higher MAUVE scores.

## 6 Conclusion

We present empirical studies on LMs' preference for repetition by analyzing the training dynamics, which highlights their learning bias towards simple repetitive patterns. We propose penalizing outputs of a premature checkpoint during training, which effectively mitigates repetition while maintaining fluency. We also provide insight into why LMs easily fall into repetition loops by showing their disability to model long-range dependencies. Sampling-based decoding reduces repetition through randomness but not utilizing long-range dependencies. We believe that maximization-based decoding can also generate coherent texts without repetition by improving the modeling of long-range dependencies, which is left to future work.

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## 7 Limitations

The limitations of this paper mainly lie in the following folds: (1) We do not provide any theoretical analysis for the correlation between long-range dependencies and repetition loops, as well as solutions to avoid repetition loops with maximizationbased decoding. (2) We do not discuss the source of LMs' learning bias, which may be caused by multiple factors, such as the Transformer architecture (Vaswani et al., 2017), the MLE loss, or the auto-regressive generation manner. (3) We conduct experiments based on GPT2 due to resource limitations. The conclusions may differ for extra-large LMs (such as GPT3). (4) We do not experiment with RNN-based models, which are also shown to prefer repetition (Elman, 1990). (5) We do not perform the manual evaluation to compare SELFCONT with baselines since we focus on repetition in this

paper, which can be automatically evaluated reliably. Perplexity and mauve scores are also shown to correlate highly with manual evaluation for evaluating fluency and overall quality, respectively.

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## A Details for Empirical Analysis

#### A.1 Training Dynamics

Table 4 shows several cases generated by the LM with greedy decoding at different training steps. We summarize the findings as follows: (1) In the beginning, the LM keeps repeating the high-frequency word "<eos>," indicating that it does not capture phrase-level dependencies yet. (2) At the 1500th step, the LM first generates a few fluent sentences and then gets stuck into the repetition of "the building," showing that it learns long-range dependencies conditioned on the golden prefix while the repetitive patterns dominate the probability distributions conditioned on the generated prefix. This case suggests the global tendency towards repetition for out-of-distribution inputs. (3) At the 6000th step, the LM can generate long, fluent texts without repetition. However, it is difficult for the LM to maintain coherence with inputs due to over-fitting. For example, in the generated first sentence, "she had begun in 1962," "she" conflicts with "he" in the input.

#### A.2 Long-Range Dependencies

**Observation** For the experiment in Figure 2, we generate texts with three decoding algorithms conditioned on the first 50 tokens on the test set. Ancestral decoding means directly sampling tokens from the original probability distribution. For nucleus decoding, we set p to 0.9. Figure 3 shows the performance of GPT2<sub>large</sub>, which shows similar results with GPT2<sub>base</sub> in Figure 2.



Table 4: Generation cases with greedy decoding at different training steps to investigate the training dynamics. The inputs are highlighted in **bold**.



Figure 3: Perplexity scores computed on *all, repetitive* or *non-repetitive* tokens with different prefix lengths based on GPT2<sub>large</sub>. The scores marked with  $\bigcirc$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\bigtriangledown$  and  $\triangle$  means that the *p*-values compared with the score when the prefix length is 250 fall in the following intervals: [0, 0.001), [0.001, 0.01), [0.01, 0.05) and [0.05, 1], respectively.

**Verification** For the experiment in Table 1, we use the same approach to construct the corresponding validation sets of 480 examples for  $\mathcal{D}_{\text{original}}$ ,  $\mathcal{D}_{\mathrm{random}}$  and  $\mathcal{D}_{\mathrm{norept}},$  and train three LMs until the best validation performance. Table 5 shows several generation cases with greedy decoding. The LMs trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{original}$  and  $\mathcal{D}_{random}$  fall into repetition loops. Although the LM trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$ also generates sentences that have previously appeared, it does not get stuck into loops. We further investigate whether the three LMs show the selfreinforcement effect: the more times a sentence is repeated in the context, the higher the probability of continuing to generate that sentence (Holtzman et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2022). Figure 4 indicates that the LMs trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{original}$  and  $\mathcal{D}_{random}$  show the above effect, while the LM trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$ 

does not. The results suggest that longer-range repetitive patterns biased LMs to fall into repetition loops through the self-reinforcement effect whether such patterns are true or spurious. The LM trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$  always generate sentences in a limited set due to greedy decoding which aims to find the global maxima of probability distributions, instead of the preference for repetition loops.

#### **B** Hyper-Parameters

We decide the hyper-parameters  $\lambda$  in Eq. 3 and p for nucleus sampling by searching for the value that makes the R-64 score of generated texts closest to the ground truth on the validation set. We search  $\lambda$  in the range {1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0}, and p in the range {0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, 0.6, 0.7, 0.8, 0.9}. Table 6 shows the settings of p for different models.

Training Set	Cases
$\mathcal{D}_{ ext{original}}$	<ecos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film, television and theatre actor. He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000. He has appeared in several films, including the television series The Bill, The Bill Goes to Washington, and The Bill Goes to Washington. He has also appeared in several films, including The Bill Goes to Washington, The Bill Goes to Washington, and The Bill Goes to Washington. He has also appeared in several films, including The Bill Goes to Washington, The Bill Goes to Washington, and The Bill Goes to Washington. <cos> Boulter was born in London, England, on 23 May 1986. He is the third child of actor and actress Robert Boulter and his wife, Susan. He is the third of five children born to his wife Susan and their three children, Robert, Roberta, Roberta. Robert Boulter 's father, Robert Boulter and in sim core as film director and producer. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was also the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He was the first actor to be cast in a television series. He wa</cos></cos></cos></ecos>
$\mathcal{D}_{\mathrm{random}}$	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first of these was the <unk> , a small , rectangular structure that was built in the late 19th century . The first</unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></unk></cos></cos></cos>
$\mathcal{D}_{\mathrm{norept}}$	<ecos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film, television and theatre actor. He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000. The first two were built by the British Royal Navy. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It is also possible that he was a member of the royal family. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. @ 5 m ) wide and 2 feet (0 @. The song was written by producer and songwriter David Gilmour. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It is also possible that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the Tunes Store on September 28, 2010. It is also possible that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. He also said that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It is also possible that he would not be returning to the team. It was also released on the iTunes Store on September 28, 2010. It is also possible that be would no</cos></cos></ecos>

Table 5: Cases generated by three LMs trained on different training sets with greedy decoding. The inputs are highlighted in **bold**.



Figure 4: Average per-token perplexity scores of texts generated by LMs trained on  $\mathcal{D}_{original}$ ,  $\mathcal{D}_{random}$  and  $\mathcal{D}_{norept}$  with greedy decoding. We compute their respective perplexity scores using the corresponding LMs.

Models	Wikitext-103	WritingPrompts
MLE	0.9	0.9
UL	0.7	0.8
ScaleGrad	0.5	0.6
SelfCont	0.6	0.7

Table 6: Settings of p for nucleus sampling.

As for baselines, we follow the original papers to set  $\alpha$  to 1.0 for UL and  $\gamma$  to 0.2 for ScaleGrad.

As for the choice of  $f_{\theta_0}$ , we empirically choose

the checkpoint after training for one epoch, which allows enough training steps for self-contrastive training. We use the premature checkpoint of the same model instead of other models since different models may have different biases. It costs about 24 hours to train SELFCONT on Wikitext-103 ( $\sim$ 10 epochs) or CNN News ( $\sim$ 6 epochs). The results are based on one NVIDIA Tesla V100 (32GB memory) with a random single run.

### C Modeling Token-Level Repetition

We compare SELFCONT with baselines in terms of the performance for modeling token-level repetition. As shown in Table 7, SELFCONT achieves higher overall accuracy, higher F1 score on nonrepetitive tokens, and comparable F1 score on repetitive tokens.

### **D** Case Study

Table 8 and Table 9 show the cases generated by different models on Wikitext-103 with greedy decoding and nucleus decoding, respectively. We see that SELFCONT can still get stuck into loops with greedy decoding since it hardly learns longer-range dependencies than standard LMs. Although sam-

Models	Repetitive			Non-Repetitive			
Widdels	Acc	P	R	F1	Р	Ŕ	F1
MLE	78.9	67.4	87.0	75.9	90.2	73.9	81.2
UL	80.5	70.9	83.0	76.5	88.2	78.9	83.3
ScaleGrad	81.6	75.9	76.1	76.0	85.2	85.0	85.1
SELFCONT	82.3	78.5	73.9	76.1	84.4	87.4	85.9

Table 7: Repetition prediction performance on the test set of Wikitext-103. Acc is the overall accuracy of predicting whether the next token is repetitive. We regard the model-predicted token (with the maximum probability) as repetitive if it has appeared in the previous 64 tokens (non-repetitive otherwise). **P**, **R** and **F1** means the precision, recall and F1 on the class of (non-)repetitive tokens.

pling helps reduce superficial repetition, it does not utilize underlying long-range dependencies to maintain long-range coherence. Therefore, it is important to improve the modeling of long-range dependencies to essentially solve the repetition problem in future work.

Models	Cases (Greedy Decoding)
MLE	<eos> = Robert Boulter = <eos> <eos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . He has also appeared in the television series The Bill 2. The Bill and The Bill 3 . <eos> Boulter was born in London , England , and grew up in the United States . He studied at the University of California , Berkeley , and the University of California , Berkeley , He was a member of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) in 2001 . He has appeared in several television series , Including The Bill 2. The Bill 3 . <eos> Boulter was born in London , England , and grew up in the University of Elevision Arts (BAFTA) in 2001 . He has appeared in several television series , Including The Bill 7. The Bill 2. The Bill 3 . The Bill 9 , The Bill 9 , The Bill 9 , The Bill 10 , The Bill 11 , The Bill 12 , The Bill 12 , The Bill 3 . The Bill 13 . The Bill 13 . The Bill 13 . The Bill 14 . The Bill 15 , The Bill 13 . The Bill 3 . The Bill 34 . The Bill 35 . The Bill 35 . The Bill 35 . The Bill 30 . The Bill 31 . The Bill 31 . The Bill 31 . The Bill 34 . The Bill 34 . The Bill 35 . The Bill 35 . The Bill 30 . The Bill 40 . The Bill 40</eos></eos></eos></eos></eos>
UL	<eos> = Robert Boulter = <eos> <eos> Robert Boulter is an English film, television and theatre actor. He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000. He has also appeared in several films, including the comedy @-@ drama The Man Who Would Be King (2002), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2004), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2006), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2006), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2012), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2012), the science fiction film The Man Who Would Be Super (2012), the science fiction film The Day After Tomorrow (2013), the science fiction film The Day After Tomorrow (2014), the science fiction film The Day After Tomorrow (2015), the science fiction film The Day After Tomorrow (2017), t</eos></eos></eos>
ScaleGrad	<eos> = Robert Boulter = <eos> <eos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . In 2002 he appeared as a character in the BBC 's crime drama series The Secret Service . He has also worked as a consultant for several films including The Man Who Would Be King (2004 ), The Man Who Would Never DE (2007 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 3 (2011 ), The Man Who Would Never DE King 5 (2014 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 5 (2014 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 3 (2011 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2015 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 1 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 2 (2017 ), The Man Who Would Never Be King 3 (2017 ), The M</eos></eos></eos>
SelfCont	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . Boulter appeared in two episodes of the British comedy @-@ drama Oz in 2001 , playing an American businessman who helps an Italian woman (Joanna Cassidy ) escape from her abusive husband (Michael Sheen ). He also played a character in the 2004 film Heat , which was directed by Michael Medvedev . Boulter appeared in two episodes of the British comedy @-@ drama Body of Proof in 2005 , playing a retired police officer who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ). He appeared in two episodes of the British television drama Body of Proof in 2006 , playing a retired judge who defends his client , Simon Ashdown (Stephen Fry ). Boulter also appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor – Motion Picture Musical or Comedy , but lost to Hugh Grant for the role of Seamus Heaney . In 2010 , he appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor – Motion Picture Musical or Comedy , but lost to Hugh Grant for the role of Seamus Heaney . In 2010 , he appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ) . He also appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ) . He also appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ) . He appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ) . He also appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of murdering his wife (Christine Fay ) . He also appeared in the Australian television series The X Factor in 2010 , playing a retired judge who is accused of m</cos></cos></cos>

Table 8: Cases generated by different models with greedy decoding on Wikitext-103. The inputs are highlighted in **bold**.

Models	Cases (Nucleus Decoding)
MLE	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . Since 1994 , he has appeared in a wide range of productions . He has played Crocodile Hunter , a domestic terrorist in A Change Is Gonna Come . His first feature film role was in a 1983 film , The Perfect Numbers , written by Ridley Scott _ A science fiction parody of the British mafia , his next film role was the horror comedy The Imperfect Poople . The film was a box office thi and has been named one of the greatest movies ever made . <cos> Boulter portrayed a divorcee living in Chicago , Illinois , from the start of its development in 1986 , when he met Hollywood agent Kevin De Matos . The two became very close and married on August 29 , 1988 . He has become a great fan of James Cameron 's 1999 film Avatar . In December 2011 , he started as a roadie who stands in a line at a restaurant . <cos> Coss&gt; Coss&gt; Robert Boulter was born in Dundee , Scotland . He attended Eales College , Dundee . He received an MBE for his work at Eales as a schoolteacher in 1973 , and graduated from Dundee University in 1974 . After teaching history to three young teenagers , he acted in numerous short films . <cos> = Carer = = <cos> <cos> + Coss&gt; <coss> = Carer = = <cos> <cos> + Coss&gt; <coss <cos="" =="" carer="="> <coss +="" <cos="" <coss="" carer="="> <coss +="" <cos="" carer="="> <coss +="" <cos="" carer="="> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" <cos="" carer="="> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" <cos="" carer="="> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos"> <coss +="" <cos="" carer="="> <coss +="" carer="&lt;cos" carer<="" td=""></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></coss></cos></cos></coss></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos>
UL	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000. He starred as the title character in 2008 's A Charlie Brown Christmas, directed by Adam Mickiewicz. Boulter has also played a variety of other roles over the years , including as the titluar character on aunk&gt; USA in 2002 , in the <unk> anthology series Blood 's Wild in 2007 , as the protagonist on the murder mystery A Beautiful Guy in 2009 , and as the love interest for the titluar character on Queen 's College in 2012. Boulter has also played the supporting roles of Richard VIII and Queen Elizabeth in various media including television , film , and video games. He won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in King George V. <cos> Born in Carlisle , Lancashire , Boulter grew up in Manchester. He has been involved in theatre since he was eight years old . His only film role came in 2000 , when he played Jack Leppard in Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. A second appearance came in 2001 , when he played the young Severus Snape in Romeo and Juliet . He has worked on television shows including , Steven Soderbergh 's From Russia , with Love , Watchmen , Dawson 's Creek , Ealing Studios and the British Channel 7 documentary series Ghost Hunters . <cos> Boulter has made four appearances on television : seven as Colin Rudge in Star Trek : Voyager (1995 – 1997 ); 13 as Ian Frazier in The Sarah Jane Adventures (1997 – 1999 ); and 16 as Scott Reid in Michael Bay's Robin Hood : How the Legend Was Won (1999 ). He was nominated for a Laurence Olivier Award in 2001 . <cos> <cos> = Early life = <cos> <cos> Boulter was born on 12 April 1979 in Carlisle , Lancashire , England . His father is a retired pilot . He attended Elgin Grammar School , where he earned an academic degree . After leaving school , he worked in retail at an engineering firm in Manchester . <cos> Boulter was born on 12 April 1979 in Carlisle , Lancashire , Engla</cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></unk></cos></cos></cos>
ScaleGrad	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000. In 2004 he starred as the character Sherlock Holmes in the BBC medical drama Holby City . Boulter made his screen debut with the comedy series Chitty Chitty Bang Bang , which was broadcast in 2006. He then played Lord Stanley in The Lord of the Rings trilogy and in Pirates of the Caribbean : At World's End. In 2007 he portrayed David Marrinon in the film adaptation of A Midsummer Night's Dream . <cos> He appeared in the Britts film Downton Abbey (2008) , which won him a Golden Globe Award for Best Actor . He also starred in Steven Spielberg 's fantasy film , The Wrestler , as the title character . <cos> In 2010 , Boulter portrayed Leonardo DiCaprio in the directorial debut of Woody Allen 's The Wrestler . The film tells the story of two men who live in Los Angeles , California , who have been feuding over money and power . The film recived mixed reviews from critics . <cos> <cos> = Early life = <cos> <cos> Soulter was born in Leicester , England , on 3 October 1963 . His father , John , is a chemical engineer and designer . His mother , Mary ( née <unk> ), is a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church . He grew up in Loughborough , Leicester . He was educated at Eton College and then St Thomas 's School , Northamptonshire . His older brother , Liam , plays football for Leicester City . <ul> <li>etarly lipsif soutball for Leicester City . <ul> <li>etarly lipsif obstall for Leicester City , but he left the club after one season because of disciplinary problems . Boulter diadut din do tatend Brentford 's youth team , but took up playing football for them . During his time at Brentford , he played for several clubs including Chesterfield , Rochdale , Oldham Athletic , St James ' Park , Scarboorough and Lewes . He made his debut for the club aged 15 in 1971 , an</li> </ul></li></ul></unk></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos>
SELFCONT	<cos> = Robert Boulter = <cos> <cos> Robert Boulter is an English film , television and theatre actor . He had a guest @-@ starring role on the television series The Bill in 2000 . He also appeared in a 2000 episode of Syfy 's Geneva Live . <cos> Boulter is an accomplished box @-@ office actor and one of the best known box @-@ office draws in the history of British television . Boulter appeared in over 20 films and received many awards , including four Academy Awards , including Bust Actor and Best Supporting Actor , and the BAFTA Award for Best British Actor . He was nominated for six other BAFTAs , winning three , for his work on the television series and the 1997 film . He starred in The Bill in 2001 and again in 2002 . In 2005 , he appeared in The Gleason Room , the 2005 science fiction film about rediscovery of woolly alien relics , and in the 2006 biographical drama Brand New Eyes . In 2010 , he starred in the stage production of Minor Threat and the 2007 psychological thriller Victoria 's Secret . <cos> Boulter 's stage and film career began with his performance in the 1997 romantic comedy Hamlet . In 2000 , he was cast as Jonathan Simeone in the German @-@ language dramatisation of French novelist Raymond Lebowski 's epic play . The Professionals . He took on the role of " Troy " , an obsessive person who attempts to prove himself to a courtiers . Although he enjoyed playing Troy , he took " enormous risks " , in the words of theatre critic Graham McCann , who wrote that " there was nothing to lose in playing a man like Troy ." He co @-@ starred in The Professionals with Julianne Moore and Kim Novak . He portrayed the criminal Tammi Martineau in the 2004 biographical film Asterisk and appeared in several films and television shows . In 2005 , he starred as Garth Snow in the Fox crime drama Dangerous Liaisons . <cos> Boulter is known for his film work in Hungary and abroad . He has also worked with Brandon Thomas and Sacha Baron Cohen . In 2011 , he was nominated for a Laurence Olivier Award for Best</cos></cos></cos></cos></cos></cos>

Table 9: Cases generated by different models with nucleus decoding on Wikitext-103. The inputs are highlighted in **bold**, while the incoherent sentences are <u>underlined</u>.

## ACL 2023 Responsible NLP Checklist

## A For every submission:

- A1. Did you describe the limitations of your work? *Section 7*
- □ A2. Did you discuss any potential risks of your work? *Not applicable. Left blank.*
- A3. Do the abstract and introduction summarize the paper's main claims? *Abstract and Section 1*
- A4. Have you used AI writing assistants when working on this paper? *Left blank.*

## **B ☑** Did you use or create scientific artifacts?

Section 3 and Section 5.

- B1. Did you cite the creators of artifacts you used? Section 3 and Section 5.
- B2. Did you discuss the license or terms for use and / or distribution of any artifacts? Section 3 and Section 5.
- B3. Did you discuss if your use of existing artifact(s) was consistent with their intended use, provided that it was specified? For the artifacts you create, do you specify intended use and whether that is compatible with the original access conditions (in particular, derivatives of data accessed for research purposes should not be used outside of research contexts)? Section 3 and Section 5.
- B4. Did you discuss the steps taken to check whether the data that was collected / used contains any information that names or uniquely identifies individual people or offensive content, and the steps taken to protect / anonymize it?
   Not applicable. Left blank.
- B5. Did you provide documentation of the artifacts, e.g., coverage of domains, languages, and linguistic phenomena, demographic groups represented, etc.?
   Not applicable. Left blank.
- B6. Did you report relevant statistics like the number of examples, details of train / test / dev splits, etc. for the data that you used / created? Even for commonly-used benchmark datasets, include the number of examples in train / validation / test splits, as these provide necessary context for a reader to understand experimental results. For example, small differences in accuracy on large test sets may be significant, while on small test sets they may not be. Section 5.

# C ☑ Did you run computational experiments?

Section 3 and Section 5.

 C1. Did you report the number of parameters in the models used, the total computational budget (e.g., GPU hours), and computing infrastructure used?
 Section 3, Section 5, Appendix Section B

The Responsible NLP Checklist used at ACL 2023 is adopted from NAACL 2022, with the addition of a question on AI writing assistance.

- ✓ C2. Did you discuss the experimental setup, including hyperparameter search and best-found hyperparameter values?
   Section 3, Section 5, Appendix Section B
- $\checkmark$  C3. Did you report descriptive statistics about your results (e.g., error bars around results, summary statistics from sets of experiments), and is it transparent whether you are reporting the max, mean, etc. or just a single run? *Section B*
- C4. If you used existing packages (e.g., for preprocessing, for normalization, or for evaluation), did you report the implementation, model, and parameter settings used (e.g., NLTK, Spacy, ROUGE, etc.)? Section 5

# **D** Z Did you use human annotators (e.g., crowdworkers) or research with human participants? *Left blank.*

- □ D1. Did you report the full text of instructions given to participants, including e.g., screenshots, disclaimers of any risks to participants or annotators, etc.? *No response.*
- □ D2. Did you report information about how you recruited (e.g., crowdsourcing platform, students) and paid participants, and discuss if such payment is adequate given the participants' demographic (e.g., country of residence)? *No response.*
- □ D3. Did you discuss whether and how consent was obtained from people whose data you're using/curating? For example, if you collected data via crowdsourcing, did your instructions to crowdworkers explain how the data would be used? No response.
- □ D4. Was the data collection protocol approved (or determined exempt) by an ethics review board? *No response.*
- D5. Did you report the basic demographic and geographic characteristics of the annotator population that is the source of the data?
   *No response.*