

Variational Autoencoders

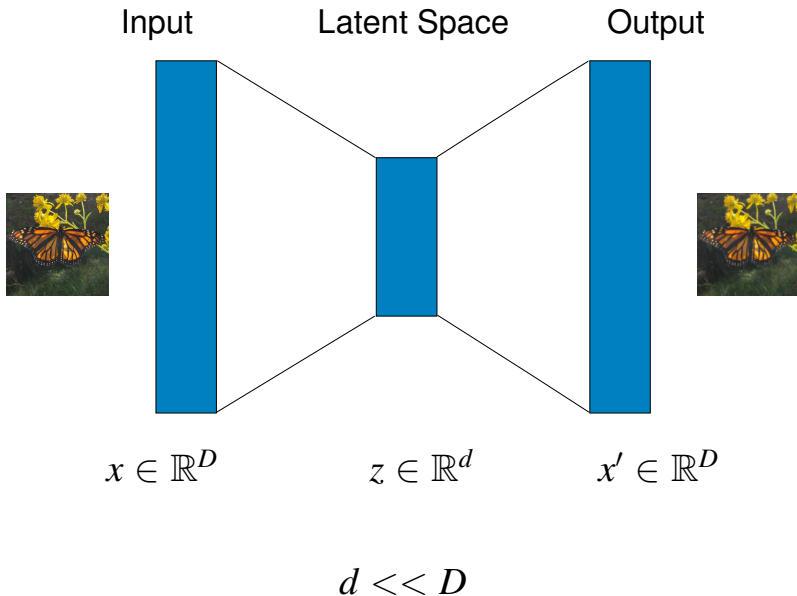
Geometry of Data

October 31, 2019

Talking about this paper:

Diederik Kingma and Max Welling, Auto-Encoding Variational Bayes, In *International Conference on Learning Representation (ICLR)*, 2014.

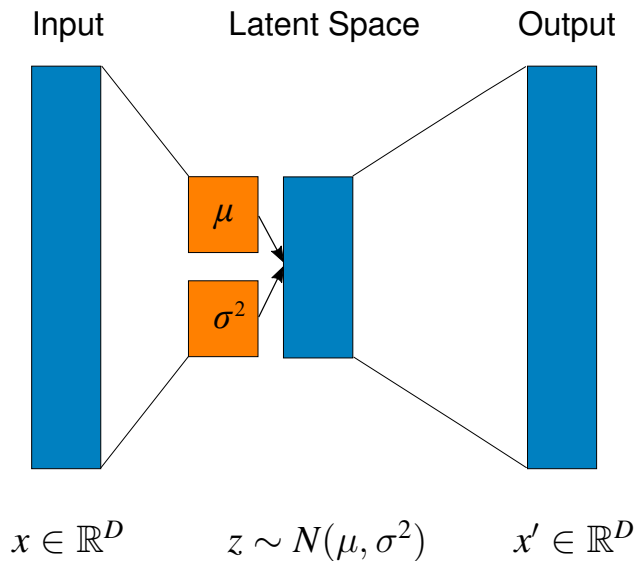
Autoencoders



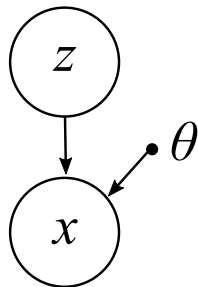
Autoencoders

- ▶ Linear activation functions give you PCA
- ▶ Training:
 1. Given data x , feedforward to x' output
 2. Compute loss, e.g., $L(x, x') = \|x - x'\|^2$
 3. Backpropagate loss gradient to update weights
- ▶ **Not** a generative model!

Variational Autoencoders



Generative Models



Sample a new x in two steps:

Prior: $p(z)$

Generator: $p_{\theta}(x \mid z)$

Now the analogy to the “encoder” is:

Posterior: $p(z \mid x)$

Bayesian Inference

Posterior via Bayes' Rule:

$$\begin{aligned} p(z \mid x) &= \frac{p_{\theta}(x \mid z)p(z)}{p(x)} \\ &= \frac{p_{\theta}(x \mid z)p(z)}{\int p_{\theta}(x \mid z)p(z)dz} \end{aligned}$$

Integral in denominator is (usually) intractable!

Could use Monte Carlo to approximate, but it's expensive

Kullback-Leibler Divergence

$$\begin{aligned} D_{\text{KL}}(q\|p) &= - \int q(z) \log \left(\frac{p(z)}{q(z)} \right) dz \\ &= E_q \left[-\log \left(\frac{p}{q} \right) \right] \end{aligned}$$

The average *information gained* from moving from q to p

Variational Inference

Approximate intractable posterior $p(z \mid x)$ with a manageable distribution $q(z)$

Minimize the KL divergence: $D_{\text{KL}}(q(z) \parallel p(z \mid x))$

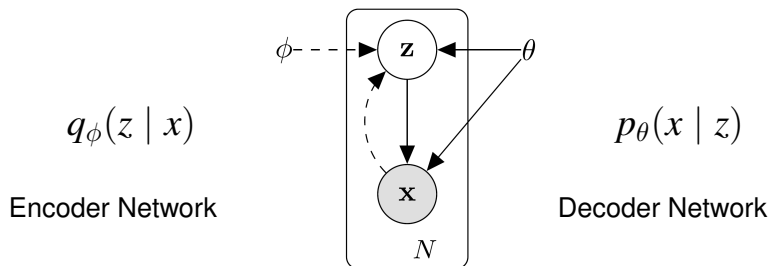
Evidence Lower Bound (ELBO)

$$\begin{aligned} D_{\text{KL}}(q(z) \| p(z \mid x)) \\ &= E_q \left[-\log \left(\frac{p(z \mid x)}{q(z)} \right) \right] \\ &= E_q \left[-\log \frac{p(z, x)}{q(z)p(x)} \right] \\ &= E_q[-\log p(z, x) + \log q(z) + \log p(x)] \\ &= -E_q[\log p(z, x)] + E_q[\log q(z)] + \log p(x) \end{aligned}$$

$$\log p(x) = D_{\text{KL}}(q(z) \| p(z \mid x)) + L[q(z)]$$

$$\text{ELBO: } L[q(z)] = E_q[\log p(z, x)] - E_q[\log q(z)]$$

Variational Autoencoder



Maximize ELBO:

$$\mathcal{L}(\theta, \phi, x) = E_{q_{\phi}}[\log p_{\theta}(x, z) - \log q_{\phi}(z | x)]$$

VAE ELBO

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{L}(\theta, \phi, x) &= E_{q_\phi}[\log p_\theta(x, z) - \log q_\phi(z | x)] \\&= E_{q_\phi}[\log p_\theta(z) + \log p_\theta(x | z) - \log q_\phi(z | x)] \\&= E_{q_\phi} \left[\log \frac{p_\theta(z)}{q_\phi(z | x)} + \log p_\theta(x | z) \right] \\&= -D_{\text{KL}}(q_\phi(z | x) || p_\theta(z)) + E_{q_\phi}[\log p_\theta(x | z)]\end{aligned}$$

Problem: Gradient $\nabla_\phi E_{q_\phi}[\log p_\theta(x | z)]$ is intractable!

Use Monte Carlo approx., sampling $z^{(s)} \sim q_\phi(z | x)$:

$$\nabla_\phi E_{q_\phi}[\log p_\theta(x | z)] \approx \frac{1}{S} \sum_{s=1}^S \log p_\theta(x | z) \nabla_\phi \log q_\phi(z^{(s)} | x)$$

Reparameterization Trick

What about the other term?

$$-D_{\text{KL}}(q_{\phi}(z \mid x) \parallel p_{\theta}(z))$$

Says encoder, $q_{\phi}(z \mid x)$, should make code z look like prior distribution

Instead of encoding z , encode parameters for a normal distribution, $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$

Reparameterization Trick

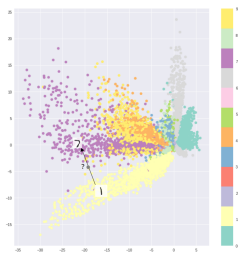
$$q_{\phi}(z_j \mid x^{(i)}) = N(\mu_j^{(i)}, \sigma_j^{2(i)})$$
$$p_{\theta}(z) = N(0, I)$$

KL divergence between these two is:

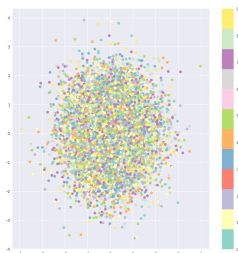
$$D_{\text{KL}}(q_{\phi}(z \mid x^{(i)}) \parallel p_{\theta}(z)) = -\frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^d \left(1 + \log(\sigma_j^{2(i)}) - (\mu_j^{(i)})^2 - \sigma_j^{2(i)} \right)$$

Why Do Variational?

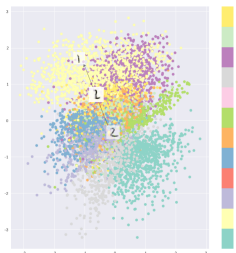
Example trained on MNIST:



Autoencoder
(reconstruction loss)



KL divergence only



VAE
(KL + recon. loss)

From: [this webpage](#)