

ECE1512 - Project A: Dataset Distillation: A Data-Efficient Learning Framework

Assigned: Wednesday, October 9, 1:00 PM EST.

Due: Wednesday, November 06, 5:00 PM EST.

1 Introduction

In order to reduce the high computational costs associated with deep learning models trained on large-scale datasets, the widely known term distillation was introduced by Hinton *et al.* [15]. Model distillation, as well as knowledge distillation, are the methods used to distill complex models into small ones. Wang *et al.* [44, 1] introduced another option to reduce computation cost-based model-space approach, which is **dataset distillation (DD)**. The result of dataset distillation is a distilled dataset or synthetic dataset of small size. Nevertheless, this small dataset still assures the same performance of the learned model compared to the model learned on the full dataset. Hence, the dataset distillation method can reduce the required memory and computation for a deep learning model. For example, a deep learning model can train on only 10 distilled images for 10 digits (1 image per class) and still achieve good performance instead of training on all 50,000 images in the MNIST dataset [23]. Unlike classical data compression, dataset distillation aims for a small synthetic dataset that still retains adequate task-related information so that models trained on it can generalize to unseen test data, as shown in Figure 1. Thus, the distilling algorithm must strike a delicate balance by heavily compressing information without completely obliterating the discriminative features.

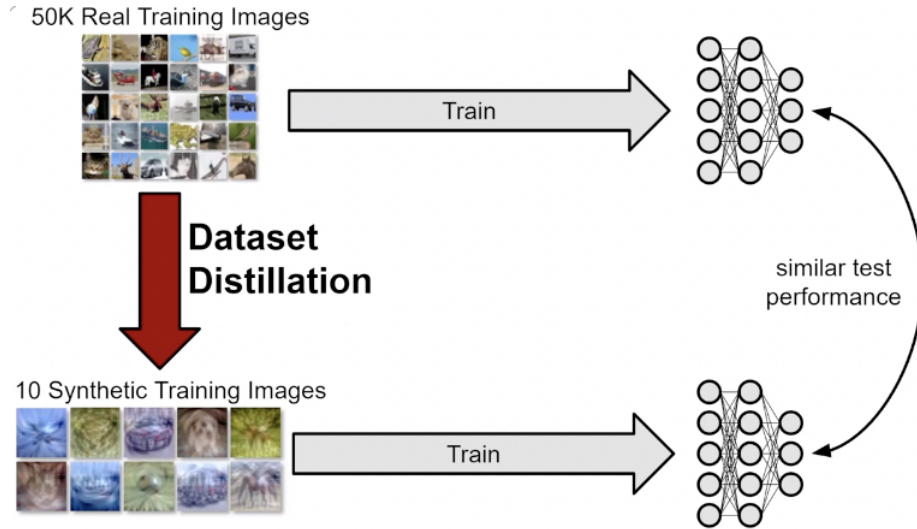


Figure 1: Dataset distillation aims to generate a small synthetic dataset for which a model trained on it can achieve a similar test performance as a model trained on the whole real training set [3].

To do this, dataset distillation methods attempt to discover exactly which aspects of the real data are critical for learning said discrimination. Mainly, the dataset distillation methods can be categorized into the following groups:

- a. **Meta-loss based Dataset Distillation:** These end-to-end training methods create a synthetic dataset by solving a meta-loss, bi-objective optimization problem [44, 31, 33, 34, 42, 53, 30, 54].
- b. **Gradient/Trajectory Matching Surrogate Objective:** These methods formulate the dataset distillation as a gradient/trajectory matching problem between the gradients of deep neural network weights that are trained on the original and the synthetic data [51, 48, 3, 24, 17, 13, 13, 7, 27].

- c. **Distribution/Feature Matching Surrogate Objective:** The methods that explicitly align real-feature distributions from the real and synthetic training data across various scales and sampled embedding spaces [49, 43, 36].
- d. **Distilled Dataset Parametrization:** These methods perform dataset distillation by taking into account efficient parametrization, data regularity, latent space factorization, and sharing [50, 21, 9, 20, 29, 35, 24, 4].

2 Objective

The goal of this project is to equip you with the tools and technologies required to create a synthetic small \mathcal{S} that has the most discriminative features of the original large-scale dataset \mathcal{T} . Specifically, the project will focus on the setting up of dataset distillation as a data compression technique. The project is divided into 2 tasks, (1) using the prior dataset distillation with Attention Matching as a data compression method for two popular computer vision classification datasets, namely “MNIST” [23] and “MHIST” [45]; (2) using two/one state-of-the-art methods to further explore the effect of dataset distillation framework on visual classification tasks. The detailed descriptions of the datasets and tasks are included in the next sections. To begin with this project, you must create a GitHub repository for Project A as follows:

1. Create a group (individual) project personal GitHub repository. Use a proper naming convention, *ECE1512_2024F_ProjectRepo_NameStudent(s)*.
2. Create a Project A sub-directory.
3. Populate your project A sub-directories with project-related material.

Datasets

The following is a detailed description of two datasets that you will need for Project A. Both datasets can be found in the *Project_A_Supp.zip* file, which has been uploaded to Quercus.

MNIST:

- **Paper:** Gradient-based learning applied to document recognition [23]: <http://yann.lecun.com/exdb/mnist/>
- **Description:** This dataset is a popular digit classification dataset which is a subset of a larger set available from NIST. The MNIST dataset is divided into 10 classes, each of which represents a digit between 0-9. The digits have been size-normalized and centered in a fixed-size image.
- **Availability:** Publicly available (for academic purposes).
- **Resources needed:** CPU
- **Data size:** 60000 train data + 10000 test data.

Minimalist HIsTopathology (MHIST):

- **Paper:** A Petri Dish for Histopathology Image Analysis [45]: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2101.12355>
- **GitHub link:** <https://bmirds.github.io/MHIST/>
- **Description:** MHIST is minimalist in that it comprises a straightforward binary classification task of fixed-size colorectal polyp images, a common and clinically significant task in gastrointestinal pathology. MHIST contains 3152 fixed-size images, each with a gold-standard label determined from the majority vote of seven board-certified gastrointestinal pathologists, that can be used to train a baseline model without additional data processing. MHIST is not an equally balanced dataset that contains different numbers of images per class: (a) 2162 images per class HP: hyperplastic polyp (benign), (b) 990 images per class SSA: sessile serrated adenoma (precancerous).

- **Availability:** Publicly available (for academic purposes).
- **Resources needed:** CPU
- **Data size:** 2175 train data + 977 test data.

Experimental Setup – What you need

1. Prerequisites:
 - (a) Python 3.X
 - (b) PyTorch
 - (c) Sci-kit-learn (suggested)
 - (d) NumPy (suggested)
 - (e) Matplotlib (suggested)
2. Download [Project_A_Supp.zip](#) from Quercus.
3. The [mhist_dataset](#) is a folder containing two subfolders, including the images and their corresponding annotations, for the MHIST dataset. All 3152 images are in [images.zip](#) file. Annotations are included in [annotations.csv](#). Note that this file includes each image file name and its corresponding majority-vote label and degree of annotator agreement expressed as the number of annotators who marked the image as SSA (e.g., 6 indicates 6/7 agreement with a ground truth of SSA and 2 would indicate 5/7 agreement with a ground truth of HP).
4. The [networks.ipynb](#) is a Python notebook that provides six different networks, including MLP, Convent [11], LeNet [23], AlexNet [22], VGG11 [38], and ResNet-18 [14]. You will use this file to learn synthetic dates on the MNIST and MHIST datasets.
5. The [utils.ipynb](#) is a Python notebook that provides utilities such as access to datasets, preprocessing, and data augmentation. You will use this file to learn synthetic dates on the MNIST and MHIST datasets.
6. The [Project_A_FAQs.pdf](#) is a list of frequently asked questions that try to shed light on (almost) all of your questions and concerns that you may have during Project A.

GPU Requirements

Note that you **do not need a GPU to successfully complete Project A. You should be able to train your models on your local (personal) machines.** However, if you so wish, you can use a GPU by accessing Google Colab. Following are the steps to enable a GPU using Colab:

1. Upload the code base to Colab using your Google Drive.
2. Navigate to *Runtime* → *Change runtime type* in the top bar.
3. Change runtime accelerator to *GPU* and click *Save*.
4. Use `device = torch.device("cuda:0")` after importing libraries and call `.to(device)` function to transfer your model and tensors to GPU. Make sure that model and tensor both are placed on GPU.

Task 1: Dataset Distillation with Attention Matching [20 Marks]

In this task, you will use the dataset distillation with attention matching [36] to learn a synthetically small dataset for the MNIST and MHIST datasets, train networks from scratch on the condensed images, and then evaluate them on the real testing data. This is one of the fundamental frameworks for dealing with dataset distillation in computer vision classification tasks while decreasing the computational costs. Please follow the instructions below to become acquainted with this algorithm.

1. **Basic Concepts.** Read the paper “Efficient Dataset Distillation with Attention Matching” [36] carefully, and then answer the following questions: [5 Marks]
 - (a) What is the purpose of using Dataset Distillation in this paper? [1 Marks]
 - (b) What are the advantages of their methodology over state-of-the-art? Explain your rationale. [1 Marks]
 - (c) What novelty did they contribute compared to their prior methods? [1 Marks]
 - (d) Explain in full detail the methodologies of the paper. [1 Marks]
 - (e) Explain the usefulness of the methodology in machine learning applications (at least two applications). [1 Marks]
2. **Dataset Distillation Learning.** Select one of the six architecture backbones provided in the *networks.ipynb* file and follow the below steps on the MNIST and MHIST datasets to implement Dataset Distillation with Attention Matching algorithm (Suggestion: Use ConvNet-3 and ConvNet-7 for MNIST and MHIST, respectively.): [10 Marks]
 - (a) Train the selected model with the original dataset and report the classification accuracy along with floating-point operations per second (FLOPs) for the test set. Use SGD as an optimizer with a cosine annealing scheduler with an initial learning rate of 0.01 for 20 epochs. (For more information on experimental setting, look at the implementation details of [51]) These scores give you the upper bound benchmark evaluation. [1 Marks]
 - (b) Learn the synthetic dataset \mathcal{S} using the selected model and Attention Matching algorithm. For initialization of condensed images, randomly select from real training images. The experimental setup can be found in Table 1. [4 Marks]

Table 1: Experimental setup for learning the synthetic dataset \mathcal{S} with Attention Matching algorithm. The hyper-parameters K , T , $\eta_{\mathcal{S}}$, $\zeta_{\mathcal{S}}$, η_{θ} , and ζ_{θ} denote the number of random weight initializations, number of iterations, the learning rate for the condensed samples, the number of optimization steps for the condensed samples, the learning rate for the model, and the number of optimization steps for the model, respectively. Attention Matching additionally introduces a task balance parameter λ , feel free to tweak this parameter for better performance – recommended setting around 0.01.

Dataset	K	T	$\eta_{\mathcal{S}}$	$\zeta_{\mathcal{S}}$	η_{θ}	ζ_{θ}	Optimizer	# images/class	minibatch size
MNIST	100	10	0.1	1	0.01	50	SGD	10	256
MHIST	200	10	0.1	1	0.01	50	SGD	50	128

- (c) Provide the visualization of condensed images per class for both MNIST and MHIST datasets. Do you think these condensed images are recognizable? Support your explanations. [1 Marks]
 - (d) Repeat parts 2b and 2c while the condensed images are initialized with Gaussian noise. Discuss in full detail the qualitative and quantitative results you have achieved. Are the results and visualizations are comparable with parts 2b and 2c? [2 Marks]
 - (e) Now that you have had a chance to understand, learn, and visualize the condensed dataset, we can train the selected network from scratch on the condensed images. Train the selected network on a learned synthetic dataset (with 100 training images), then evaluate it on the real testing data. Compare the test accuracy performance and the training time with part 2a. Explain your results. (For a fair comparison, you should use the exact same experimental setting as part 2a) [2 Marks]
3. **Cross-architecture Generalization.** Another key advantage of the dataset distillation approaches is that the condensed images learned using one architecture can be used to train another, unseen one. Here you learned the synthetic datasets for the MNIST and MHIST over the

selected model in part 2b. Once the condensed sets are synthesized, train another network from *networks.ipynb* file and evaluate its cross-architecture performance in terms of classification accuracy on the test sets. Were your condensed datasets successful in cross-architecture generalization on the MNIST and MHIST datasets? Support all your answers with detailed reasons and results. (Hint: use the *utils.ipynb* file) [2 Marks]

4. **Application.** Apply your synthetic small datasets to one of the machine learning applications you proposed in part 1e (These papers are helpful: [37, 5, 41, 6, 10, 26, 12, 52, 47, 32, 28, 39, 16, 19, 18, 40, 25, 46]). Discuss in full detail the qualitative and quantitative results you have achieved. [3 Marks]

Task 2: Comparison with State-of-the-arts Methods [20 Marks]

In this task, we would like to use one/two of the state-of-the-art methods described in the Introduction section 1 and compare them with the Attention Matching algorithm that you have used in Task 1 to further explore the effect of dataset distillation methods in visual classification tasks. The group with one student should use the paper ”**Prioritize Alignment in Dataset Distillation** ” [27, 2] – while the group with two students should use that paper along with another one from the shortlist containing the references for the state-of-the-art methods on page 2. **Further, considering the categorization provided in the introduction paragraph, you should not select the method from the category b..**

1. Read the papers and answer the following questions for each of them: (Groups of one and two students must choose one and two papers, respectively, as illustrated above—one student, one paper.) [5 Marks]
 - (a) What knowledge gap did your one/two chosen dataset distillation methods fill? [1 Marks]
 - (b) What novelty did they contribute compared to their prior methods? [1 Marks]
 - (c) Explain in full detail the methodologies of your selected methods. [1 Marks]
 - (d) Discuss the main advantages and disadvantages of your selected methods. Do you think these methods can concretely distill the original datasets? Do you think your selected methods can analyze and inspect the cases of large-scale datasets like ImageNet [8]? Why? [2 Marks]
2. Apply their methods to the selected architecture in part 2 on one of the MNIST or MHIST datasets. [15 Marks]
 - (a) Similar to Task 1, the learning pipeline has two stages: (1) learn the condensed images using the selected method(s); (2) train your network from scratch on the condensed images, then evaluate them on the real testing data. (Make sure the comparison is fair. You can use the default hyperparameter of the paper.) [10 Marks]
 - (b) Report your findings in both quantitative and qualitative manners and compare them with the results of Task 1. Discuss your results. Do you think the selected methods outperform the Attention Matching algorithm in terms of test accuracy? Explain the effect of the dataset distillation methods in terms of generalization and recognition abilities. [5 Marks]
3. **(Optional) Lossless Dataset Distillation.** Utilize the findings from the recent research presented in [13, 27] and put into practice the algorithm to determine the optimal number of images per class (IPCs). The objective is to configure this synthetic dataset in a manner that ensures the performance of the model trained on it matches or surpasses that of a model trained on the original dataset. The distillation and evaluation process will be conducted using the CovNet architecture. [Up to 5 Marks]

Notes

1. This project should be completed in groups of one or two students.
2. Coding is expected for this project, and your code must be included in your submitted report – use the Python programming language.
3. External code may be used only if properly cited.
4. Include as many data visualization results as possible – a good visual is worth more than a thousand words (as per your ECE1512 Lecture 1 handout – “One picture is worth more than ten thousand words” (anonymous))

What to submit & Evaluation

1. **Project evaluation will be based on a submitted written report.** You need to submit a written report (one per group) **in PDF format using the ECE1512 Quercus page submission utility.** Your report should be approximately **20 pages in IEEE style** (either one column or two columns). List any additional references you have used in your work. You need to provide the code, data, figures and any other auxiliary material) used in your work. To that end, your written report should include a link to your Project A GitHub repository.
2. **Project evaluation will include an examination of the code, notebooks, figures, and other auxiliary material posted on your GitHub repo.** It is highly recommended that you include a README document on your project’s GitHub page.
3. **Our original “plagiarism” scores** will be visible upon (report) submission, so make sure that you are not penalized for plagiarism in uncited text and code portions (if applicable).
4. Make sure your report submission is designed to be used simultaneously with the Github-Repo. To do this, use **Machine Learning Paper Reproducibility Checklist** that clearly acknowledge that the report and the code are two separate artefacts, each with their own checklist.
5. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

Resources

Certain concepts and methods used in this project may be unfamiliar to you. Refer to these online resources for more details (cite if code is used):

- Basic Concepts of Dataset Distillation
- Dataset Distillation with Attention Matching
- Dataset Distillation by Matching Training Trajectories
- A Review of Dataset Distillation for Deep Learning
- Awesome-Dataset-Distillation
- Dataset Condensation Benchmark: DCBench
- GitHub repo for Dataset Condensation Benchmark: DCBench
- PyTorch documentation
- Creation a GitHub repo
- Measuring FLOPs for a given model
- Training Machine Learning Models More Efficiently with Dataset Distillation
- Dataset Distillation using Neural Feature Regression
- Towards Lossless Dataset Distillation via Difficulty-Aligned Trajectory Matching
- Prioritize Alignment in Dataset Distillation

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