

## Lecture 3a: Neural Operator methods

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## Some papers/books to look at

- Courant and Hilbert *Methods of mathematical physics Volumes 1,2*
- Stuart et. al. *Fourier Neural Operator for PDEs*
- Kovachi et. al. *Operator learning: algorithms and analysis*
- Boullé and Townsend *Learning elliptic PDEs*
- Halko et. al. *Finding structure with randomness*

## Motivation: Solution Operators

Have studied using PINNS and DRMs to solve PDE problems of the form

$$u_t = F(x, u, \nabla u, \nabla^2 u) \quad \text{with BC,}$$

$$u(0, x) = u_0(x)$$

At time  $T$  we have the solution  $u_T(x) \equiv u(x, T)$ .

Solution  $u(x, t)$  for all  $x$  and  $t$  is obtained by minimising a function directly associated with the PDE eg. residual.

## Neural Operator methods take a different approach

- Consider  $u_T$  as a function  $F$  of  $u_0$ .  $u_T = F(u_0)$
- $F$  is an operator mapping one infinite dimensional function space to another  $F : A \rightarrow B$ . eg.  $A, B = H^1(\Omega)$
- Train a Neural Operator NN to approximate this operator note infinite dimensions
- Train it by generating a (large) set of solution pairs  $(u_0^i, u_T^i)$

Can generate solution pairs using a (conventional) numerical method eg.  
Finite Element, Pseudo-Spectral, Symplectic.

eg. ERA5 data for 24 hour weather forecasts.

## Example 1: A finite dimensional problem [Halko et. al.]

- Have an  $n \times n$  matrix  $B$
- Have a **random set** of  $N$  vectors  $\mathbf{x}_i \in R^n$
- Compute the  $N$  (noisy) matrix vector products

$$B \mathbf{x}_i = \mathbf{y}_i \in R^n$$

Challenge: Construct the matrix  $B$  from the set of  **$N$  solution pairs**  $(\mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{y}_i)$

Methodology:

- Let  $X = [\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2, \dots, \mathbf{x}_N]$ ,  $Y = [\mathbf{y}_1, \mathbf{y}_2, \dots, \mathbf{y}_N]$
- Find  $B = Y X^+$  using the **SVD/Moore-Penrose pseudo-inverse**.

## Example 2: A linear ODE system

Consider the linear ODE

$$\frac{d\mathbf{u}}{dt} = A \mathbf{u}, \quad \mathbf{u}(0) = \mathbf{u}_0, \quad \mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{R}^n.$$

Solution

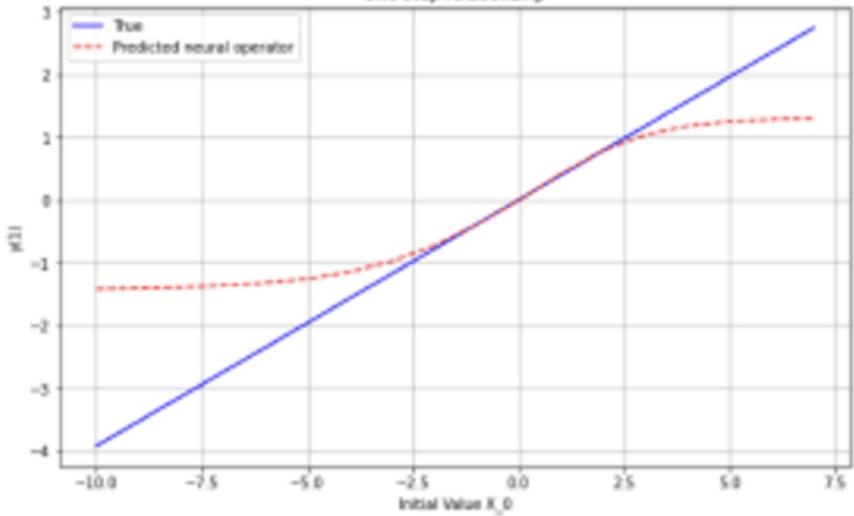
$$\mathbf{u}(T) = e^{AT} \mathbf{u}_0 \equiv B \mathbf{u}_0$$

$$B \equiv e^{AT} = I + AT + \frac{A^2 T^2}{2!} + \frac{A^3 T^3}{3!} + \dots$$

# Properties of the solution operator

- Operator  $B$  is linear
- Operator is continuous over any subset of  $R^n$
- Can easily learn the matrix  $B$  from data pairs if we assume that the operator is linear in advance!
- If we learn  $B$  from a subset of the data pairs then we can extrapolate this to ALL data pairs
- This is NOT true if don't make the linearity assumption. Many NN methods will locally approximate the operator to be linear, but will not give this as a global approximation.

One step relationship



## Example 3: Parabolic PDEs

Consider the **parabolic PDE** [picture]

$$u_t = u_{xx} + f(x), \quad x \in [0, 2\pi], \quad u(0, x) = u_0(x), \quad \text{periodic BC}$$

We can express  $u(x, t)$  in terms of **convolutional integral operators**:

$$u(x, t) = G*u_0 + H*f \equiv \int_0^{2\pi} G(x-y, t)u_0(y) dy + \int_0^{2\pi} H(x-y, t)f(y) dy$$

These operators act on the **infinite dimensional space**  $L^2[0, 2\pi]$ .

Can find  $G(z, t)$  and  $H(z, t)$  **explicitly** using a **Fourier series**.

This methodology motivates the construction of the **Fourier Neural Operator (FNO)**

## The FNO: In general

The **FNO architecture** is based on the process of solving the linear heat equation, but also works for **nonlinear problems**. The FNO constructs a 'Neural Map'  $\Psi$  parametrised by  $\theta$  as follows:

$$\Psi(a, \theta)_{FNO} \equiv Q \circ \mathcal{L}_L \circ \dots \circ \mathcal{L}_2 \circ \mathcal{L}_1 \circ P(a).$$

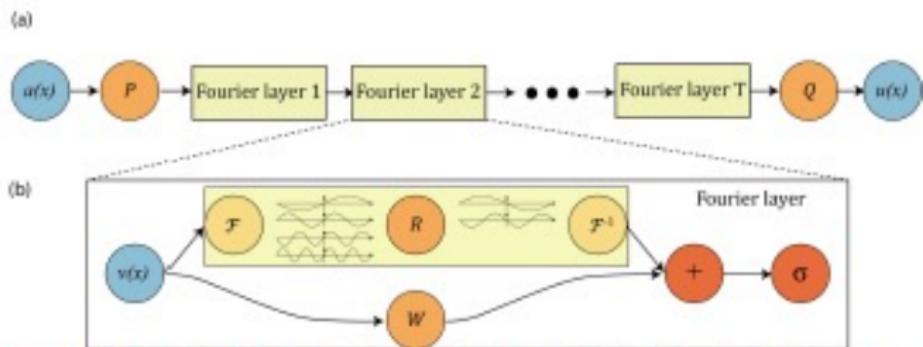
$$\mathcal{L}_n(v)(x, \theta) = \sigma(W_n v(x) + b_n + K(v))$$

Here  $W$  is a **pointwise linear local map**.  $K(v)$  is a **global convolutional integral operator**, kernel  $G_n(\theta)$ . Evaluate  $Kv$  using an **FFT** via

$$FFT(Kv) = FFT(G_n) FFT(v).$$

FFT restricted to  $M$  modes. Nonlinearity and **higher order modes** introduced via the **activation function**  $\sigma$ .

# Figure from FNO paper



(a) **The full architecture of neural operator:** start from input  $v$ . 1. Lift to a higher dimension channel space by a neural network  $P$ . 2. Apply four layers of integral operators and activation functions. 3. Project back to the target dimension by a neural network  $Q$ . Output  $u$ . (b) **Fourier layers:** Start from input  $v$ . On top: apply the Fourier transform  $\mathcal{F}$ ; a linear transform  $R$  on the lower Fourier modes and filters out the higher modes; then apply the inverse Fourier transform  $\mathcal{F}^{-1}$ . On the bottom: apply a local linear transform  $W$ .

Figure 2: top: The architecture of the neural operators; bottom: Fourier layer.

## FNO in detail

- Input  $a_j(x) \in \mathcal{A}$  output  $u_j(x) = N(a_j) \in \mathcal{U}$  are **functions** on  $x \in D \subset \mathbb{R}^d$
- Assume have access to pointwise observations of  $a$  only at points in  $x_i \in D_j \subset D$ . **Output  $u$  does not depend on  $D_j$ : super-resolution**
- **Lift**  $a$  to a higher dimensional representation  $v_0(x) = P(a(x))$  by a shallow NN.
- Calculate a series of updates  $v_n \rightarrow v_{n+1}$  via the local  $W_n$  and global (integral)  $K_n$  operators:

$$v_{n+1}(x) = \sigma(W_n v_n(x) + (K_n(\theta) v_n))(x).$$

- For example  $\sigma = \text{ReLU}$ : This introduces **nonlinearity** into the map in a slightly uncontrolled way
- **Project**  $v_L \rightarrow u(x) = Q(v_L)$
- **Learn**  $P, Q, W_n, K_n$  from the data pairs

# Training

- Assume input  $a \in \mathcal{A}$
- In the original FNO paper take  $a_j$  as an i.i.d sequence from  $\mathcal{A}$ .
- Construct pairs  $(a_j, N(a_j))$  using an accurate solver eg. pseudo-spectral method
- In FNO paper take  $N = 1000$  training and 200 training instances. Adam optimiser to find parameters  $\theta$  via:

$$\min_{\theta} E_{a \sim \mu} [\|\psi(a, \theta) - N(a)\|]$$

- Can significantly improve training by a more careful selection of input and output pairs [Liu, B, et. al.]

# FNO online 1

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window with the URL <https://github.com/neuraloperator/neuraloperator/tree/main>. The page displays the README file for the NeuralOperator library. The README content includes a brief description of the library as a comprehensive PyTorch implementation for Fourier Neural Operators and Tensorized Neural Operators, and highlights its resolution-invariant nature. It also provides installation instructions via git clone and pip install, and a quickstart guide for training operators.

**Contributors** 31

**Deployments** 211

**Languages**

**Python** 100.0%

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[https://neuraloperator.github.io/dev/auto\\_examples/index.html](https://neuraloperator.github.io/dev/auto_examples/index.html)

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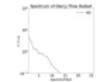
Installing NeuralOperator User Guide API reference Examples Data Layers Losses Models Training and Meta-Algorithms NeuralOperator Developer's Guide menu

A gallery of interactive examples that showcase how the tools we provide in `neuraloperator` can be applied to a variety of problems. Check out the [User Guide](#) for more detailed information on the theory behind neural operators.

**Data**

Examples of NO layers in action.

 A simple Darcy-Flow dataset

 A simple Darcy-Flow spectrum analysis

**Layers**

Examples of individual layers which comprise operators or parts of operators for composition into end-to-end models.

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Examples

Data  
Layers  
Losses  
Models  
Training and Meta-Algorit

# FNO online 3

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User Guide

https://neuraloperator.github.io/dev/user\_guide/index.html

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Installing NeuralOperator

User Guide

- Intro to operator learning
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- Interactive examples with code

API reference

Examples

NeuralOperator Developer's Guide

User Guide

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User Guide

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## User Guide

NeuralOperator provides all the tools you need to easily use, build and train neural operators for your own applications and learn mapping between function spaces, in PyTorch.

### Intro to operator learning

To get a better feel for the theory behind our neural operator models, see [Neural Operators: an Introduction](#). Once you're comfortable with the concept of operator learning, check out specific details of our Fourier Neural Operator (FNO) in [Fourier Neural Operators](#). Finally, to learn more about the model training utilities we provide, check out [Training neural operator models](#).

### NeuralOperator library structure

Here are the main components of the library:

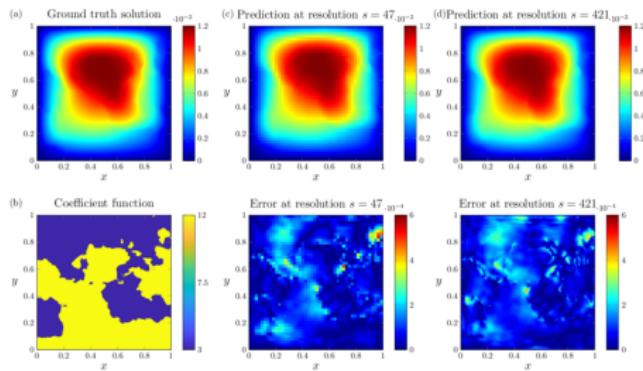
Module	Description
<code>neuralop</code>	Main library
<code>neuralop.models</code>	Full ready-to-use neural operators
<code>neuralop.layers</code>	Individual layers to build neural operators
<code>neuralop.data</code>	Convenience PyTorch data loaders for PDE datasets

## Example 4: The Darcy Problem

The Darcy problem relates a permeability  $a(x)$  to a velocity field  $u(x)$

$$-\nabla \cdot (a(x) \nabla u) = f(x) \quad x \in \Omega, \quad u = 0 \quad x \in \partial\Omega.$$

This induces a (nonlinear) map  $N : a \rightarrow u$ ,  $N : L^2(\Omega) \rightarrow H_0^1(\Omega)$



We can approximate this map using the Finite Element Method

$$u(x) \approx U(x) = \sum U_i \phi_i(x).$$

$$-\nabla \cdot (a(x)\nabla u) = f \implies \int a(x)\nabla u(x) \cdot \nabla \phi_i(x) dx = \int f(x)\phi_i(x) dx \equiv f_i$$

Giving the linear system

$$A\mathbf{U} = \mathbf{f}, \quad \mathbf{U}_i = U_i, \quad \mathbf{f}_i = f_i, \quad A_{ij} = \int a(x) \nabla \phi_i \cdot \nabla \phi_j dx.$$

Hence we can approximate the nonlinear map via:

$$\mathbf{U} = A^{-1} \mathbf{f}$$

And ...

We can **LEARN** this map by

- Doing lots of finite element calculations to find solution pairs  $(a(x), u(x))$
- Learn the operator between these pairs using an FNO

Methods such as FNO work as much as possible in the infinite-dimensional function space.

They Construct and train Neural Operators which are approximations to the true operator (or its inverse) which are independent of the resolution of the underlying function/image

# Convergence [Kovachi et. al.]

- FNO and DeepONet can approximate a wide variety of operators
- Assume that input space  $\mathcal{U}$  is a separable Banach space and the map  $N$  is compact
- Prove convergence on any finite dimensional set using the universal approximation theorem
- Take an appropriate limit (approximation theory of Banach spaces which applies to the sets over which PDEs are typically formulated)

# Nonlinear problems and a warning

Consider now the **nonlinear parabolic PDE**

$$u_t = u_{xx} + f(x, u), \quad u(0) = u(1) \quad u(0, x) = u_0(x)$$

This does not always induce a continuous map from  $u(0, x) \rightarrow u(1, x)$ .

- If  $f(x, u)$  is **Globally Lipschitz** in  $x$  and  $u$  then all is OK
- If not then we may have problems
- See Case Study!

## Example

Let

$$f(x, u) = u^2, \quad u_0(x) = \gamma > 0$$

Then

$$u(1, x) = \frac{\gamma}{1 - \gamma}.$$

Map is only continuous on the interval  $\gamma \in [0, 1)$

If we train only on data with  $\gamma < 1$  we will get a false result if we try to extend to  $\gamma > 1$ .

## Areas for improvement and research on FNO

- Observe poor conservation laws at the moment
- Generating a **good training set** is crucial and can be **slow**. How to make it good and fast?
- FNO struggles away from the training set. This is OK for MCMC emulators for UQ.
- BUT Need to broaden its scope and extend the theorems on its convergence
- NONE of this theory applies, for example, to the **nonlinear** heat equation

$$u_t = u_{xx} + u^2.$$