



École nationale  
de la statistique  
et de l'administration  
économique

université  
PARIS-SACLAY

# Next Wave Challenge 2019: My Approach

**Presentation: France final**  
**EY**

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# Plan

- 1 Stylized facts
- 2 Feature Engineering
- 3 Earlier experiments
- 4 Best Regression
- 5 Best Classification
- 6 Conclusions & Perspectives

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# stylized facts

- **Many short trips:** More than **60%** of the trips last less than 1 minute 20 seconds

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## stylized facts

- **Many short trips:** More than **60%** of the trips last less than 1 minute 20 seconds
- **Strong** stationarity: people tend to remain in the region of interest if they trip start in it and conversely:

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  - **fact:** trips that covered roughly the same distance are associated with a wide range of speeds

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  - **Explanation:** Trips or people movement are constrained by natural barriers that are overlooked by 2D or 3D coordinates.

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- **significant autocorrelation** with our target variable and its past up to lag 4 (F-score always greater than 0.68)
- our target average by hour tends to confirm the existence of **specific hour effect**

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# Feature Engineering (1)

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# stylized facts

Based on what has been said in the *stylized facts* we proceeded as follows in the feature engineering.

- **initial speed measurements:**

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Based on what has been said in the *stylized facts* we proceeded as follows in the feature engineering.

- **initial speed measurements:**
  - we **drop** these variables since we couldn't find relevant data to account for the natural barrier effect mentioned above.

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  - we convert entry and exit time into seconds
  - we compute *trip duration* in seconds



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  - we initially try to **impute** these features by regression but it didn't work very well.
- **time:**
  - we convert entry and exit time into seconds
  - we compute *trip duration* in seconds
  - we also extract trip departure hour and trip arrival.

# Feature Engineering (2)

- **proximity:**

⇒ Notice that the so-called forward variables should be lagged to prevent data leakage

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## Feature Engineering (2)

- **proximity:**

- create dummy variable capturing if trip starts in the region of interest (ROI, hereafter)

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## Feature Engineering (2)

- **proximity:**

- create dummy variable capturing if trip starts in the region of interest (ROI, hereafter)
- create dummy variable to capture *strange trip* of duration zero where the people are (*approximately*) thus stuck at the same place.

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- create dummy variable capturing if trip starts in the region of interest (ROI, hereafter)
- create dummy variable to capture *strange trip* of duration zero where the people are (*approximately*) thus stuck at the same place.
- compute the distance between the initial coordinates and the center of the region of interest (both L1 and L2)

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- **trip dynamics (forward variables):**

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- **trip dynamics (forward variables):**

- compute the same distance as above but with the arrival coordinates

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- **trip dynamics (forward variables):**

- compute the same distance as above but with the arrival coordinates
- compute associate *synthetic* speed based on both distances.

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## Feature Engineering (3)

- **Region encoding:** it is based on L1 distance.

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## Feature Engineering (3)

- **Region encoding:** it is based on L1 distance.
  - If the limits of the ROI are given by  $x_{min}$ ,  $x_{max}$ ,  $y_{min}$ ,  $y_{max}$

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## Feature Engineering (3)

- **Region encoding:** it is based on L1 distance.
  - If the limits of the ROI are given by  $x_{min}, x_{max}, y_{min}, y_{max}$
  - A 2D point  $(x, y)$  is encoded by  $(x^*, y^*)$  as follows:

$$(w^*, y^*) = \arg \min |x - x'| + |y - y'| \quad \text{s.c.}$$

$$\text{with } x_{min} \leq x' \leq x_{max}, y_{min} \leq y' \leq y_{max}$$

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- these features are computed both for arrival and departure coordinates. *Again those features related to arrival coordinates should be lagged.*

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  - we downloaded weather data that we finally didn't use.

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- **data processing:**
  - we downloaded weather data that we finally didn't use.
  - The 2D coordinates are divided by  $10^6$  to narrow the variation range of coordinates

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- these features are computed both for arrival and departure coordinates. *Again those features related to arrival coordinates should be lagged.*
- **data processing:**
  - we downloaded weather data that we finally didn't use.
  - The 2D coordinates are divided by  $10^6$  to narrow the variation range of coordinates
  - the file `makedata.py` performs the feature engineering while `getfeatures.py` adds the lags and **pads** the devices recording few trips for our RNN.

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# Models without lags

Number of features = 24

## Earlier experiments (1/2)

- **MLP Regression** with one hidden layer of 10 neurons: we train a simple MLP to predict the arrival coordinates and test if the prediction was in the ROI. It scored around  $\approx 0.76$ , and the MSE  $\approx 8 \cdot 10^{-4}$

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  - *Intuition 1*: the target is generated by the tests  
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  - *Intuition 1*: the target is generated by the tests  $x_{min} \leq x' \leq x_{max}, y_{min} \leq y' \leq y_{max}$  is tree of depth 4
  - *Intuition 2*: using the tree in the second step will correct at some extent some systematic errors made by the first step MLP regressor.

## Model with lags (up to 4)

Number of features = 120

### Earlier experiments (2/2)

- **LSTM Regression:** It scored  $\approx 0.848$

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## Model with lags (up to 4)

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### Earlier experiments (2/2)

- **LSTM Regression:** It scored  $\approx 0.848$
- **LSTM classification:** It scored  $\approx 0.884$

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## Model with lags (up to 4)

Number of features = 120

### Earlier experiments (2/2)

- **LSTM Regression:** It scored  $\approx 0.848$
- **LSTM classification:** It scored  $\approx 0.884$
- **Tree:** It scored  $\approx 0.882$

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# best regression

- Here we try to address the observation made in the beginning, since every point of the plane cannot be predicted as an arrival point

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# best regression

- Here we try to address the observation made in the beginning, since every point of the plane cannot be predicted as an arrival point
- We first estimate the most likely arrival points by the **mean shift algorithm**. We got 1632 potential modes that we called **anchor points**

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- The final prediction is then the **weighted mean** of the anchors with estimated probability as weights.

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- We first estimate the most likely arrival points by the **mean shift algorithm**. We got **1632** potential modes that we called **anchor points**
- We use an LSTM architecture **to predict the probability** of a trip to end near our anchors.
- The final prediction is then the **weighted mean** of the anchors with estimated probability as weights.
- If we reduce MSE by 50% from  $\approx 8.10^{-4}$  to  $\approx 3.5 \times 10^{-4}$ , the F1-score remains  $\approx 0.865$

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# best classification

## Best Classification

- This is a slight modification of the LSTM presented above, except that we graft another network to learn specific embeddings for all the categorical variables

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- A part of the network learn the embeddings, another processed the time series through LSTM and merge their outputs to generate the final predictions

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- A part of the network learn the embeddings, another processed the time series through LSTM and merge their outputs to generate the final predictions
- It scored  $\approx 0.894$

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# Final thoughts

- In this challenge we were left a little bit frustrated. Many other approaches that we attempted didn't better our performances.

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- The main failure of our approach is that it didn't cope well with the two kinds of trips that we observed (short and long)
  - speed data are obviously more important for long trips. Unfortunately we dropped it because we didn't know how to properly impute them.
  - When we tried a specific model for long trips, we lost power since we surrender 66% of the sample while neural networks require large samples to learn.

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*THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
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