

# 修 士 論 文

## A Research on Cross-Domain Recommendation under Non-Overlapping Settings by Integrating Gaussian Mixture User Preference Distributions and Optimal Transport

非重複設定下におけるガウス混合モデルユーザ嗜好分布と  
最適輸送を統合したクロスドメイン推薦に関する研究

指導教員



鈴木 豊太郎 教授

東京大学大学院 情報理工学系研究科  
電子情報学専攻

氏 名

48-246453 肖 子吟

提 出 日

2026 年 1 月 23 日

## Abstract

Recommendation systems are essential tools for helping users discover items of interest in various domains, such as e-commerce, streaming services, and social media. With the rapid growth of online platforms, the need for effective recommendation systems has become increasingly important.

However, traditional recommendation systems often face challenges such as data sparsity and cold-start problems, which can limit their effectiveness. Cross-domain recommendation has emerged as a promising approach to address these challenges by leveraging information from multiple domains to improve recommendation accuracy. Nevertheless, existing cross-domain recommendation methods often assume overlapping users or items between domains, which may not hold in many real-world scenarios. Also, they usually represent user preferences as point estimates, which may not capture the full complexity of user behavior.

To address these limitations, in this thesis, we propose a novel framework that models user preferences as Gaussian Mixture Models (GMMs) and integrates optimal transport techniques for cross-domain recommendation under non-overlapping settings. By representing user preferences as distributions, our approach can capture the uncertainty and diversity of user behavior more effectively and fine-grainedly. The use of optimal transport allows us to align user preference distributions across domains, facilitating knowledge transfer even in the absence of overlapping users or items.

We evaluate our proposed method on Amazon datasets across multiple domains, comparing its performance against state-of-the-art cross-domain recommendation techniques and traditional single-domain methods. We also conduct ablation studies to assess the effectiveness of representing user preferences as distributions and the impact of boosting target domain recommendation performance using source domain information. The experimental results demonstrate that our approach significantly outperforms existing methods in terms of recommendation accuracy, highlighting the effectiveness of modeling user preferences as distributions and leveraging optimal transport for cross-domain knowledge transfer.

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# Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 Background

These days, information overload has become a significant challenge for users in various online platforms, such as e-commerce websites, streaming services, and social media[1, 2, 3]. Recommender systems play a crucial role in addressing this challenge by providing personalized guidance to users by selecting items with the highest predicted utility from a large space of options.[4, 5, 6] By analyzing user-item interactions, recommender systems can help users discover relevant content, products, or services, thereby enhancing user satisfaction and engagement. Besides improving user experience, recommender systems also benefit businesses by increasing sales, customer retention, and overall platform activity[7]. As the volume of online content continues to grow, the importance of effective recommender systems becomes even more pronounced. Despite their significance, recommender systems face several challenges that can hinder their performance. One of the primary challenges is data sparsity, where users interact with only a small fraction of the available items, making it difficult to accurately model user preferences. This issue is particularly prevalent in new or niche platforms with limited user interactions. Another challenge is the cold-start problem, which occurs when new users or items are introduced to the system. In such cases, there is insufficient data to make reliable recommendations, leading to suboptimal user experiences. Both data sparsity and cold-start problems are caused by the limited availability of user-item interaction data, which can significantly impact the effectiveness of recommender systems. To address these challenges, cross-domain recommendation has emerged as a promising approach that leverages information from multiple domains to improve recommendation accuracy. Cross-domain recommendation aims to enhance the performance of recommender systems by transferring knowledge from a source domain to a target domain. This approach is particularly useful in scenarios where the target domain suffers from data sparsity or cold-start issues. By utilizing user-item interactions from a related source domain, cross-domain recommendation can help alleviate these challenges and provide more accurate recommendations. However, existing cross-domain recommendation methods often assume overlapping users or items between the source and target domains, and rely on these overlaps to build connections between the two domains in the training stage. However, in many real-world scenarios, such overlaps may not exist, limiting the applicability of these

methods. Additionally, traditional recommender systems typically represent user preferences as point estimates, which may not capture the full complexity and uncertainty of user behavior. To overcome these limitations, there is a need for novel approaches that can effectively model user preferences and facilitate knowledge transfer between non-overlapping domains during the training process. In this thesis, we propose a novel framework that models user preferences as Gaussian Mixture Models (GMMs) and integrates optimal transport techniques for cross-domain recommendation under non-overlapping settings. By representing user preferences as distributions, our approach can capture the uncertainty and diversity of user behavior more effectively. The use of optimal transport allows us to align user preference distributions across domains, facilitating knowledge transfer even in the absence of overlapping users or items. The proposed framework consists of two main components: (1) modeling user preferences as GMMs to capture the complexity of user behavior, and (2) employing optimal transport to align these distributions between the source and target domains. This combination enables our method to leverage information from the source domain to enhance recommendation accuracy in the target domain, even when there are no overlapping users or items.

## 1.2 Contributions

The main contributions of this thesis are as follows:

- We introduce a novel framework for cross-domain recommendation under non-overlapping settings by modeling
- We propose representing user preferences as Gaussian Mixture Models (GMMs) to capture the uncertainty and diversity of user behavior more effectively.
- We integrate optimal transport techniques to align user preference distributions across domains, enabling knowledge transfer
- We conduct extensive experiments on Amazon datasets across multiple domains to evaluate the performance of our proposed method. The results demonstrate that our approach significantly outperforms existing cross-domain recommendation techniques and traditional single-domain methods in terms of recommendation accuracy.
- We perform ablation studies to assess the effectiveness of representing user preferences as distributions and the impact of boosting target domain recommendation performance using source domain information.
- We provide insights into the benefits of modeling user preferences as distributions and leveraging optimal transport for cross-domain knowledge transfer, highlighting the potential of our approach for addressing challenges in recommender systems.

## 1.3 Thesis Organization

The remainder of this thesis is organized as follows:

- In Chapter 2, we provide an overview of the fundamental concepts and techniques relevant to this research, including recommender systems, cross-domain recommendation, Gaussian Mixture Models, and optimal transport.
- In Chapter 3, we review related work on recommender systems, cross-domain recommendation, and optimal transport techniques.
- In Chapter 4, we present our proposed framework for cross-domain recommendation under non-over
- In Chapter 5, we describe the experimental setup, datasets, and evaluation metrics used to assess the performance of our proposed method.
- In Chapter 6, we present and discuss the experimental results, including comparisons with existing methods and ablation studies.
- Finally, in Chapter 7, we summarize the main findings of this thesis and discuss potential directions for future research.



# Chapter 2

## Preliminaries

### 2.1 Recommender Systems

Recommender systems can be mathematically modeled as a function  $R : U \times I \rightarrow S$ , where  $U$  is the set of users,  $I$  is the set of items, and  $S$  is the set of possible scores or ratings. The goal of a recommender system is to predict the score  $s \in S$  that a user  $u \in U$  would give to an item  $i \in I$ . This prediction can be represented as  $\hat{s} = R(u, i)$ . The final task of recommender systems is to generate a ranked list of items for each user based on the predicted scores.

### 2.2 Cross-Domain Recommendation

Cross-domain recommendation aims to leverage user preferences and behaviors from one or more source domains to improve recommendation performance in a target domain. Formally, let  $D_s$  be the source domain with user set  $U_s$  and item set  $I_s$ , and  $D_t$  be the target domain with user set  $U_t$  and item set  $I_t$ . The objective is to learn a recommendation function  $R_t : U_t \times I_t \rightarrow S$  for the target domain by utilizing information from the source domain(s)  $D_s$ . The information that can be transferred from the source domain to the target domain includes user-item interactions, user profiles, item attributes, and latent factors learned from the source domain. The challenge in cross-domain recommendation lies in effectively transferring knowledge while addressing issues such as domain heterogeneity, data sparsity, and cold-start problems.

### 2.3 Gaussian Mixture Models

A Gaussian Mixture Model (GMM) is a probabilistic model that assumes data is generated from a mixture of several Gaussian distributions. Formally, a GMM can be represented as:

$$p(x) = \sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k \mathcal{N}(x | \mu_k, \Sigma_k) \quad (2.1)$$

where  $K$  is the number of Gaussian components,  $\pi_k$  are the mixture weights satisfying  $\sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k = 1$ , and  $\mathcal{N}(x|\mu_k, \Sigma_k)$  is the Gaussian distribution with mean  $\mu_k$  and covariance matrix  $\Sigma_k$ .

## 2.4 Optimal Transport

Optimal transport is a mathematical framework for comparing and transforming probability distributions. Given two probability distributions  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  defined on spaces  $X$  and  $Y$ , respectively, the optimal transport problem seeks to find a mapping  $T : X \rightarrow Y$  that minimizes the cost of transporting mass from  $\mu$  to  $\nu$ . The cost function  $c(x, y)$  quantifies the expense of moving mass from point  $x \in X$  to point  $y \in Y$ . The optimal transport problem can be formulated as:

$$\min_T \int_X c(x, T(x)) d\mu(x) \quad (2.2)$$

subject to the constraint that the pushforward measure  $T_{\#}\mu = \nu$ . Optimal transport has been widely used in various applications, including image processing, machine learning, and economics, due to its ability to capture the geometric structure of probability distributions. In our proposed method, we are not using optimal transport in the standard sense above, but using a related concept called Wasserstein distance to measure the distance between two probability distributions. The Wasserstein distance is defined as:

$$W_p(\mu, \nu) = \left( \inf_{\gamma \in \Pi(\mu, \nu)} \int_{X \times Y} c(x, y)^p d\gamma(x, y) \right)^{1/p} \quad (2.3)$$

where  $\Pi(\mu, \nu)$  is the set of all joint distributions (couplings) with marginals  $\mu$  and  $\nu$ , and  $c(x, y)$  is the cost function. The Wasserstein distance provides a meaningful way to compare probability distributions, taking into account the underlying geometry of the data. With the distance between two probability distributions defined, we can replace the conventional pointwise distance (e.g., Euclidean distance) between vectors with the Wasserstein distance between the corresponding distributions in our proposed method.

## Chapter 3

# Related Work

## Chapter 4

# Distributional User Preferences for Cross-Domain Recommendation via Optimal Transport

## Chapter 5

# Experiments

## Chapter 6

# Results

## Chapter 7

## Conclusion

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- [7] Dietmar Jannach and Michael Jugovac. Measuring the business value of recommender systems. *ACM Trans. Manage. Inf. Syst.*, Vol. 10, No. 4, December 2019.



# Appendix

## A Graph-Enhanced EEG Foundation Models

# Publications

- 王 力敏, 脇 聡志 and 鈴木 豊太郎. 大規模マルチモーダルモデルを用いたグラフィックレイアウトの自動生成に向けて. 2024 年度人工知能学会全国大会. 2024.
- Limin Wang, Toyotaro Suzumura, and Hiroki Kanezashi. Graph-Enhanced EEG Foundation Model. AAAI-25 Workshop on Large Language Models and Generative AI for Health. 2025.

# Acknowledgment

This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant JP23H03408, JP21K17749 and JP23K28098.

In addition to funding, the completion of this master's thesis was made possible through the guidance and support from many individuals, to whom I would like to express my deepest gratitude.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Toyotaro Suzumura, my academic advisor, for his extensive guidance and support throughout my research. He provided me with invaluable advice and direction in deciding on a research theme, selecting conferences and managing my schedule. His insights and suggestions on how to present my research in a clear and compelling manner were particularly helpful. I also appreciate his efforts to foster a positive atmosphere in the lab and a productive research environment, and his willingness to review my papers despite his busy schedule.

I would also like to thank Dr. Hiroki Kanezashi, a Research Scientist in our laboratory, for his numerous contributions to my research. He provided me with technical support, helped me with presentations, and reviewed my papers. His practical tips on how to conduct experiments efficiently were especially helpful, and his advice on how to improve my results was invaluable. I appreciate his kindness and willingness to help me with various tasks, from setting up computational environments to handling travel arrangements.

I am also profoundly grateful to Dr. Masatoshi Hanai, an Assistant Professor in our laboratory, for his guidance and support. His suggestions on how to approach my research and his valuable insights on the research topics were particularly helpful. I also appreciate his comprehensive support, from helping me set up the research environment and equipments, to engaging in daily conversations that were both enjoyable and informative, which has greatly enhanced my research experience.

Furthermore, I would like to thank Satoshi Waki, a senior alumnus of our laboratory, for his mentorship and guidance. He provided me with valuable advice on how to choose a research topic and how to find directions, and his insights on how to conduct research were particularly helpful. His willingness to engage in discussions and provide feedback on my ideas was invaluable, and his advice on the research life and the future career goals was especially helpful.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to acknowledge the unwavering support and encouragement of my family, without whom I would not have been able to complete my research.

Once again, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout my research life. I am deeply grateful for your kindness, guidance, and encouragement, and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with such a wonderful group of people. Thank you.