Neural Tangent Kernel

High-Dimensional Probability Analysis

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Emergence

- **Dynamics** of training infinitely wide NNs ≈ **convex optimization** in RKHS
- For $f_\theta : \mathbb{R}^d \to \mathbb{R}$ (NN), GD training induces:

$$\underbrace{\Theta(\theta)}_{\text{NTK}} \in \mathbb{R}^{n\times n}, \quad \Theta(\theta)_{i,j} := \nabla_\theta f_\theta(x_i)^\top \nabla_\theta f_\theta(x_j)$$

- **Asymptotic Property**: $\Theta(\theta^{(0)}) \to \Theta^\infty$ as width $\to \infty$

Regression Case

$$\partial_t f_t = -\Theta^{\infty}(f_t - y) \quad \text{(grad flow ODE)}$$
$$f_t = e^{-\Theta^{\infty} t} f_0 + \left(I - e^{-\Theta^{\infty} t}\right) y,$$

- **Feature Learning Gap**: NTK regime $\neq$ real NNs (finite-width trains via $\nabla\Theta \neq 0$)
- **Deep vs Shallow**: Depth induces **spectral bias** (eigenvalue decay of Θ^{∞})

Good News:

- Global convergence
- Linear rate for $\lambda_{\min}(\Theta^{\infty}) > 0$

Bad News:

- No feature learning
- Fails for transformers/attention

- Research focused on more practical assumptions.
- Two-layer ReLU network $f_{\mathbf{W},\mathbf{a}}(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{m}} \sum_{r=1}^{m} a_r \mathrm{ReLU}(\mathbf{w}_r^\top \mathbf{x})$
- Least Squares Regression $C(W) := \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{n} (y_i - f_{\mathbf{W},\mathbf{a}}(\mathbf{x}_i))$
- Resulting NTK gram matrix:

$$\mathbf{H}_{ij}^{\infty} = \mathbb{E}\mathbf{w} \sim \mathcal{N}(0,\mathbf{I}) \left[\mathbf{x}_i^\top \mathbf{x}_j \mathbb{I}\left\{\mathbf{w}^\top \mathbf{x}_i \geq 0, \mathbf{w}^\top \mathbf{x}_j \geq 0\right\}\right] \tag{1}$$

$$= \frac{\mathbf{x}_i^\top \mathbf{x}_j \left(\pi - \arccos(\mathbf{x}_i^\top \mathbf{x}_j)\right)}{2\pi}, \quad \forall i,j \in [n]. \tag{2}$$

- If H^∞ is positive definite $\lambda_0 := \lambda_{\min}(H^\infty) > 0$, GD converges to 0 training loss if m is sufficiently large $\Omega(\frac{n^6}{\lambda_0^4})$.

- Eigen-decomposition $H^\infty = \sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_i v_i v_i^\top$,.
- Suppose $\lambda_0 = \lambda_{\min}(H^\infty) > 0$, $\kappa = O\left(\frac{\epsilon_0 \delta}{\sqrt{n}}\right)$, $m = \Omega\left(\frac{n^7}{\lambda_0^4 \kappa^2 \delta^4 \epsilon^2}\right)$, $\eta = O\left(\frac{\lambda_0}{n^2}\right)$. Then with probability at least $1-\delta$ over the random initialization, for all $k = 0, 1, 2, \ldots$ we have

$$\|y - u(k)\|_2 = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n \left(1 - \eta \lambda_i\right)^{2k} \left(v_i^\top y\right)^2} \pm \epsilon. \tag{8}$$

- A distribution D over $\mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}$ is called (λ_0, δ, n)-*non-degenerate* if for n i.i.d. samples $\{(x_i, y_i)\}_{i=1}^n$ from D, with probability at least $1-\delta$ we have

$$\lambda_{\min}\left(H^\infty\right) \geq \lambda_0 > 0.$$

Fix a failure probability $\delta \in (0,1)$. Suppose our data $S = \{(x_i, y_i)\}_{i=1}^n$ are i.i.d. samples from a $(\lambda_0, \delta/3, n)$-non-degenerate distribution D, and let

$$\kappa = O\left(\frac{\lambda_0 \delta}{n}\right), \quad m \geq \kappa^{-2} \operatorname{poly}\left(n, \lambda_0^{-1}, \delta^{-1}\right).$$

Consider any loss function $\ell : \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R} \to [0,1]$ that is 1-Lipschitz in its first argument and satisfies $\ell(y,y) = 0$. Then with probability at least $1-\delta$ (over the random initialization *and* the training samples), the two-layer neural network $f_{\mathbf{W}(k),a}$ trained by gradient descent for

$$k \geq \Omega\left(\frac{1}{\eta \lambda_0} \log \frac{n}{\delta}\right) \quad \text{iterations}$$

has population loss

$$L_D(f_{\mathbf{W}(k),a}) = \mathbb{E}_{(x,y)\sim D}\left[\ell\left(f_{\mathbf{W}(k),a}(x), y\right)\right] \leq \sqrt{\frac{2 y^\top (H^\infty)^{-1} y}{n}} + O\left(\sqrt{\frac{\log\left(\frac{n}{\lambda_0 \delta}\right)}{n}}\right). \tag{9}$$

- We can see that the bound depends on:
  - Distribution $(x, y) \sim \mathscr{D}$ such that,
  - $\mathbf{y}^\top H^\infty \mathbf{y} \leq \|(H^\infty)^{-1}\| \|\mathbf{y}\|_2 = \lambda_{\min}(H^\infty) \|\mathbf{y}\|_2$
- To be able to provably learn (e.g. PAC-Learning), the bound must converge to 0 as $n \to \infty$.
- The paper mentions the case of $y = g(x)$ for some function g.
- We focus on bounding $\lambda_{\min}(H^\infty)$ and $\|\mathbf{y}\|_2$

- Data scaling assumption. The data distribution P_X satisfies the following properties:
  1. $\int \|x\|_2 \, dP_X(x) = \Theta(\sqrt{d})$.
  2. $\int \|x\|_2^2 \, dP_X(x) = \Theta(d)$.
  3. $\int \left\|x - \int x' \, dP_X(x')\right\|_2^2 dP_X(x) = \Omega(d)$.
- These are just scaling conditions on the data vector x or its centered counterpart $x - \mathbb{E}x$. We remark that the data can have any scaling, but in this paper we fix it to be of order d for convenience. We further assume the following condition on the data distribution.

- Lipschitz concentration assumption. The data distribution P_X satisfies the Lipschitz concentration property. Namely, for every Lipschitz continuous function $f : \mathbb{R}^d \to \mathbb{R}$, there exists an absolute constant $c > 0$ such that, for all $t > 0$,

$$\mathbb{P}\left(|f(x) - \int f(x')\, dP_X(x')| \; > \; t \right) \; \leq \; 2\, e^{-c\, t^2 / \|f\|^2_{\mathrm{Lip}}}.$$

- In general, this assumption covers the whole family of distributions that satisfy the log-Sobolev inequality with a dimension-independent constant (or distributions with log-concave densities).

Theorem (Smallest eigenvalue of limiting NTK)

Let $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^N$ be a set of i.i.d. data points from P_X, where P_X has zero mean and satisfies Assumptions 2.1 and 2.2. Let $K^{(L)}$ be the limiting NTK recursively defined in (9). Then, for any even integer constant $r \geq 2$, we have with probability at least

$$1 - N e^{-\Omega(d)} - N^2 e^{-\Omega\left(d N^{-2/(r-0.5)}\right)}$$

that

$$\mathrm{LO}(d) \geq \lambda_{\min}\left(K^{(L)}\right) \geq \mu_r(\sigma)^2\, \Omega(d),$$

where $\mu_r(\sigma)$ is the r-th Hermite coefficient of the ReLU function given by (8).

Gershgorin Circle Theorem

Statement: Let $A = [a_{ij}]$ be an $n \times n$ matrix. The eigenvalues of A lie within the union of disks D_i in the complex plane, centered at a_{ii} with radius $\sum_{j \neq i} |a_{ij}|$:

$$D_i = \left\{ z \in \mathbb{C} : |z - a_{ii}| \leq \sum_{j \neq i} |a_{ij}| \right\}.$$

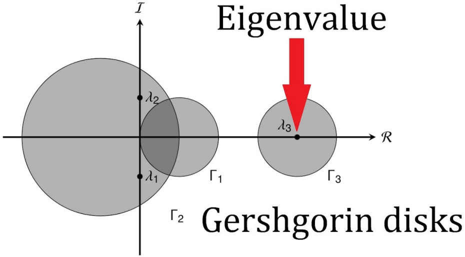

Figure 1: Gershgorin Circle Theorem

- Most papers and our main reference assume $\|x\| = 1$ and $|y| \leq 1$, for simplicity.
- Therefore, the diagonal $H^{\infty}_{ii} = \frac{1}{2}$.
- Now denote $\rho = \max_{i,j \neq i} |x_i^\top x_j|$. since $f(x) = \frac{x(\pi - \arccos(x))}{2\pi}$, is as below, we get:

$$H^{\infty}_{i,j\neq i} \leq \frac{\rho(\pi - \arccos(\rho))}{2\pi} \leq \frac{1}{2}$$

- We can use the **Gershgorin circle** theorem and get

$$|\lambda_{\min}(H^{\infty}) - \frac{1}{2}| \leq (n-1)\frac{\rho(\pi - \arccos(\rho))}{2\pi}$$

- Thus, the bound depends on the maximum "correlation" between two distinct i.i.d x_i in a sample of size n. This will depend on the distribution of x on S^{d-1}.

- So the bound is good when x_i are almost orthogonal with high probability. We can show the following examples:
- $x_i \sim \mathrm{Unif}(S^{d-1})$:

$$\max_{1\le i<j\le n} \left|\langle X_i, X_j\rangle\right| \le C\sqrt{\frac{\log(\frac{n}{\delta})}{d}}.$$

- x_i are isotropic, mean-zero, sub-Gaussian vectors:

$$\max_{1\le i<j\le n} |\langle X_i, X_j\rangle| \le C\sqrt{\frac{\log(\frac{n}{\delta})}{d}} \max_{1\le i\le n} \|X_i\| .$$

Weyl's Inequality

Weyl's Inequality provides bounds on the eigenvalues of the sum of two Hermitian matrices.

Statement: Let A and B be $n \times n$ Hermitian matrices with eigenvalues $\lambda_1 \leq \cdots \leq \lambda_n$ for A and $\mu_1 \leq \cdots \leq \mu_n$ for B. Then the eigenvalues ν_i of the matrix $A + B$ satisfy:

$$\lambda_i + \mu_j \leq \nu_{i+j-1} \leq \lambda_i + \mu_j \quad \text{for all} \quad 1 \leq i, j \leq n.$$

Define:

$$A = H - \mathbb{E}[H]$$

- Note that it can be shown that:

$$\mathbb{E}[H] = (\frac{1}{2} - s_d)\mathbf{1} + s_d J$$

  and hence $\lambda_{\min}(\mathbb{E}[H]) = \frac{1}{2} - s_d$.
- Now we can take adventage of Weyl's inequality to bound the smallest eigenvalue of H^∞ via:

$$\lambda_{\min}(H^\infty) \geq \lambda_{\min}(A) + \lambda_{\min}(\mathbb{E}[H]) = \lambda_{\min}(A) + \frac{1}{2} - s_d$$

Main Observations

- Let $\mathbb{P}\left[|H-\mathbb{E}[H]|_{op} \geq t\right] \leq \delta_t$. Then, with probability at least $1-\delta_t$, we have:

$$\lambda_{\min}(H^{\infty}) \geq -t + \frac{1}{2} - s_d$$

or equivalently:

$$\lambda_{\min}(H^{\infty}) \geq max\left\{-t + \frac{1}{2} - s_d, 0\right\}$$

- We know that $|H-\mathbb{E}[H]|_{op}$ grows linearly with N. Hence we can make a simple observation that one should have $O(d)$ samples to have a non-zero lower bound on the smallest eigenvalue of H^{∞}.