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## **TOWARDS EXPLAINABILITY IN KNOWLEDGE ENHANCED NEURAL NETWORKS**

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# Abstract

19 Research on Deep Learning has achieved remarkable results in recent years, mainly thanks  
20 to the computing power of modern computers and the increasing availability of large data  
21 sets. However, deep neural models are universally considered black boxes: they employ sub-  
22 symbolic representations of knowledge, which are inherently opaque to human beings trying  
23 to derive explanations. In this work, we first give a survey on the research field of Explainable  
24 AI, providing more rigorous definitions of the concepts of interpretability and explainability.  
25 We then delve deeper in the research field of Neural Symbolic Integration, which tackles the  
26 task of integrating the statistical learning power of machine learning with the symbolic and ab-  
27 stract world of logic. Specifically, we analyze Knowledge Enhanced Neural Networks (KENN)  
28 [1], a special kind of residual layer for neural architectures which makes it possible to inject  
29 symbolic logical knowledge inside a neural network. We describe and analyze experimental re-  
30 sults on relational data on the task of collective classification, and study how KENN is able to  
31 automatically learn the importance of logical rules from the training data. We finally review  
32 explainability methods for KENN, proposing ways to extract explanations for the predictions  
33 provided by the model.



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# Listing of acronyms

142	<b>ML</b> .....	Machine Learning
143	<b>XAI</b> .....	Explainable Artificial Intelligence
144	<b>NN</b> .....	Neural Network
145	<b>KENN</b> .....	Knowledge Enhanced Neural Networks
146	<b>TBF</b> .....	<i>t</i> -conorm Boost Function
147	<b>CE</b> .....	Clause Enhancer
148	<b>KE</b> .....	Knowledge Enhancer
149	<b>SBR</b> .....	Semantic Based Regularization
150	<b>LTN</b> .....	Logic Tensor Networks
151	<b>RNM</b> .....	Relational Neural Machines
152	<b>NeSy</b> .....	Neural Symbolic Integration



# 1

## Introduction

Deep Learning (DL) research has been moving faster and faster in recent years. Deep models continue to deliver state-of-the-art results in a wide variety of AI applications, large companies are investing huge amounts of money on DL research, the general reputation of deep learning continues to grow, and the enthusiasm towards data-driven AI only seems likely to increase with time. However, the limitations of this approach have already been identified and criticized [4]: in fact, while the remarkable results achieved by deep neural models are undeniable, their limitations are often underestimated or ignored.

The first critical aspect of DL is its exclusive dependence on data: this learning framework has proven to be very effective for many specific tasks; however, without enough data, DL models still lack the ability to learn even basic concepts, due to their inability to reason in symbolic and abstract terms. For example, if you verbally describe a unicorn to a 5-year-old child, he will likely be able to recognize it on a television program, to explain others what a unicorn is, and perhaps even to produce a representation of what he has learned in a drawing. In contrast, to teach an NN what a unicorn is, one would have to provide it with hundreds or thousands of pictures, each with a label that tells it whether that is a unicorn or not. In simple terms, DL models have not yet been fully integrated with symbolical reasoning and prior knowledge.

Another critical aspects of DL models is their black-box nature: deep NNs have millions or even billions of parameters that can't be directly examined and interpreted by humans. While model transparency is not always necessary, this opaqueness can be dangerous in some critical domains such as medical and financial ones, and poses the risk of heavily biased models, as

175 pointed out in [5].

176 This and many other critical aspects of DL motivate this work of thesis, which will be focused  
177 around two specific research fields. The first is Explainable AI (XAI): it focuses on the task of  
178 deriving explanations from ML systems with the aim of achieving more transparent models  
179 and of boosting trust towards data-driven AI. We will then delve deeper in the field of Neural  
180 Symbolic Integration, which tackles the challenge of integrating logical knowledge inside NNs.

181 This work of thesis was conducted during my internship at the Bruno Kessler Foundation  
182 in Trento, Italy. During this experience, I worked alongside researcher Alessandro Daniele and  
183 professor Luciano Serafini on experiments and further research on Knowledge Enhanced Neu-  
184 ral Networks [1], a special kind of model designed to inject logical knowledge inside a Neural  
185 Network, in order to improve its predictive capabilities.

186 This thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter 2 we will discuss in depth the concept of ex-  
187 plainability in Machine Learning and report the last developments in the field of XAI. In Chap-  
188 ter 3 we will focus on KENN. Specifically, in Section 3.1 we'll describe the theoretical framework  
189 behind the model. In Section 3.2 we'll see the architecture of KENN. In Section 3.5 we will re-  
190 port results of the experiments performed on relational data, on the collective classification task.  
191 Finally, in Section 3.6 will discuss about the explainability of KENN and devise ways to derive  
192 explanations from it.



## Explainability in Machine Learning

195 In recent years, research on Deep Learning (DL) has achieved remarkable results in a wide vari-  
 196 ety of domains, going from image recognition, speech recognition, machine translation, play-  
 197 ing games, and many others, [in some cases even outperforming human capabilities](#) [6, 7, 8].  
 198 Although DL is not a new research topic [9, 10], its popularity and capabilities skyrocketed  
 199 only in the last decade: this has been possible mostly thanks to the always growing availability  
 200 of new data, together with the increase in computational power of modern machines. Despite  
 201 the quick and huge success, researchers in the field have already shown some perplexities and  
 202 moved some critiques towards this approach [4, 11]: is DL really the future of Artificial Intelli-  
 203 gence (AI)? Will Neural Networks (NN) be able to give a good approximation of the human  
 204 brain? Leaving aside such overwhelming questions, we should still be interested in what DL  
 205 is capable to do at the moment, and what capabilities it still lacks. One particular aspect for  
 206 which DL has been criticized is its lack of transparency: in fact, [deep models have millions or](#)  
 207 [even billions of learnable parameters, which are not characterizable in any human interpretable](#)  
 208 [way](#). This results in opaque models where no human supervisor can, ultimately, interpret what  
 209 the model has learned by simply inspecting its internal structure. To refer to this undesirable  
 210 property of deep NNs, the term “black box” is commonly used. DL models also present other  
 211 critical and perplexing issues: in [12] the authors made a neural network misclassify an image by  
 212 applying an hardly perceptible perturbation, found by maximizing the network’s prediction er-  
 213 ror. Such adversarial examples have also been found to be somewhat universal and not just the  
 214 result of overfitting [13]. Similarly, authors in [14] show how deep neural networks are easily

215 fooled into misclassifying inputs with no resemblance to their true category. This kind of issues  
216 pose serious doubts about the ability of NN to learn general representations: indeed, if such  
217 networks can generalize well, how can they be confused by what we see as nearly indistinguish-  
218 able images? Adversarial examples are not confined to the field of computer vision: natural  
219 language networks can also be fooled as shown in [15, 16]. Furthermore, it has been found that  
220 in several applications, DL models present strong biasedness. One example is reported in [17],  
221 where the authors show how word embeddings trained on Google News articles exhibit strong  
222 female/male gender stereotypes due to biases in the training data. Susceptibility to unintuitive  
223 errors remains therefore a pervasive problem in DL and no robust solution has been found for  
224 them so far. Such issues contribute to generate mistrust, and threaten to slow down or even  
225 hinder the prevalence of AI in some applications, due to the high potential of unexpected be-  
226 havior and lack of verifiability of solutions. In light of such problems, Explainable Artificial  
227 Intelligence (XAI) has become an area of interest in the research community: it tackles the  
228 important problem that complex machines and algorithms often cannot provide insights into  
229 their behavior and thought processes. The need for XAI is now even more urgent: the renewed  
230 EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) could require AI providers to provide users  
231 with explanations of the results of ML systems based on their personal data. This clearly affects  
232 the industry in a huge way: indeed, the GDPR may hinder or even prohibit the use of “black  
233 box” models which don’t offer explanations for their decisions, when based on users’ personal  
234 data (think for example to recommender systems). This is also referred to as the “right to ex-  
235 planation” [18]. The need for XAI has been also expressed by the statement on algorithmic  
236 transparency and accountability released by the Association for Computing Machinery [19],  
237 and by the XAI program launched by DARPA in 2017 [20].

238 Even though the general aim for XAI is well understood as the achievement of *interpretabil-*  
239 *ity*, or *explainability*, for ML models, few articulate precisely what those terms mean or why  
240 they are important. In this chapter, we try to provide a more rigorous definition for such terms,  
241 by reviewing what has been done in the literature so far.

## 242 2.1 WHY DO WE NEED EXPLAINABILITY

243 Before determining a good definition for *explainability* or *interpretability*, we must have a good  
244 understanding of what the real world objectives of XAI research are. More specifically, what are  
245 the desiderata of XAI which are still not being satisfied by the current ML tools and practices.  
246 Consider a supervised learning scenario: a lot of evaluation metrics are used to assess the quality

of a model, accuracy probably being the most common one. The computation of such metrics require the presence of model predictions, together with ground truth labels, in order to produce a score which is computed in order to answer in a quantitative way to some questions, like “how good is Model A able to generalize with respect to Model B?”, or “what is the probability that Model A will misclassify an unseen sample?”. This evaluation framework provides satisfactory answers for some kinds of questions, but still fails to answer other ones, especially those demanding qualitative information, with questions like “why did the model predict sample  $x$  to belong to class  $k$ ?”. This kind of questions are the ones sought by XAI research. However, we argue that a rigorous definition for the desiderata of XAI cannot consist in a list of potential questions: this approach is qualitative and already tackled by philosophical works [21]. We therefore need to express such needs in other forms other than simple questions.

Lipton [22] suggests that the need for explainability arises “when our real world objectives are difficult to encode as simple real-valued functions”: in this sense, *interpretations* are useful to achieve objectives which are important for us, but which we struggle to model in a formal way. Other mentioned motivating aspects are causality, transferability, informativeness and fair and ethical decision making. The authors in [23] refer to this same concept as *incompleteness* in the problem formalization. In such situations, explanations can act as a bridge between the model and the human supervisor, who can evaluate the predictions based on the provided explanations and decide whether they meet certain criteria that the machine alone could not understand. Some examples of such scenarios would be:

- **Scientific Understanding:** humans learn about the world around them in the form of knowledge, which is still difficult to formalize in the same way in which it works inside our brains. For this reason, we might look for explanations from ML models, which in turn we can interpret and transform into human interpretable knowledge.
- **Safety:** in complex tasks, rigorous and complete testing is almost never feasible and it is not possible to formally model all the wrong or dangerous decisions that a model could make. For this reason, when decisions from a ML system can pose a threat to others, explanations can help humans to evaluate safety conditions and to boost trust towards AI.
- **Ethics:** for us humans, evaluating the fairness of a decision is often easy, in the same way in which we have a clear idea of how we would want our model to be ethical (for example, we could desire a “fair” classifier for loan approval). However, this kind of properties are not easy to encode in ML systems and, at the same time, biases in the data can often lead to unethical decisions if not treated properly.

Some papers [24, 25] also motivate the need for explainability and interpretability in light of the need for trust by domain experts: indeed trust is fundamental if one plans to act based on a prediction, therefore ML systems must be able to communicate with highly skilled human experts to leverage their expertise and share useful information or patterns from the data.

## 2.2 WHEN DO WE NEED EXPLAINABILITY

Explainability is important in a lot of domains, but not in all of them. There are applications, e.g. aircraft collision avoidance, in which algorithms have been functioning from years without giving any explanations and without any human interaction. It is clear, then, that ML systems can be used without any need for interpretations in real world applications, at least in those cases where their raw performance in terms of accuracy suffices, or when the risk of error doesn't pose any serious threat to the end users. Therefore, domains that demand explainability are generally characterized by the critical nature of decisions which need to be made, where mistakes could have severe consequences. Authors in [26] provide a fairly exhaustive list of domains in need for explainability:

- **Medical Domain/Health-Care:** when the lives of humans are at stake, the need for explanations and knowledge are of paramount importance; take as an example a model used from [doctors in order to associate to each patient a risk of suffering a certain disease. Such a model should not only be accurate, but intelligible: in this way, doctors could understand the underlying causes for such a disease, effectively introducing new scientific knowledge in the medical domain;](#)
- **Judicial System:** machine learning systems have also been explored for the automatic decision of judgement results [27]. Such systems should help judges and lawyers to take decisions, but in order to do so their decision must be well motivated;
- **Banking/Finance:** typical examples of automatic decision making in the banking domain are automatic credit approval systems. Since banks are legally obliged to provide customers with motivations when their credit request is denied, the usage of explainable models is required;
- **Automobile Industry:** autonomous driving systems are one of the most common and popular applications in DL research. Such autonomous agents are responsible for any accident that could take place on the road: for this reason explanations for each of the agent's decision must be provided, both for legal and security reasons, so that the system can be quickly fixed and improved;

- **Recommender Systems:** explainable recommendations boost the trustworthiness and effectiveness of recommender systems [28]. Furthermore, regulations like the aforementioned GDPR are currently requiring models that use users' personal data to provide predictions, to also provide explanations.

Examples of other domains requiring explainability include bio-informatics, marketing, election campaigns, precision agriculture or expert systems for the military.

## 2.3 WHAT IS EXPLAINABILITY

Several research works attempt to describe rigorously the meaning of explainability in the context of XAI. In the literature, such word is often used interchangeably or substituted by “interpretability”, even though some try to make a distinction. In [29], for example, the authors claim that explainability is a property of a model that implies interpretability, but not viceversa. More specifically they provide definitions that, we argue, are the most agreed upon in the literature. For clarity, from now on we will interpret those two terms with the following meanings:

**Definition 2.3.1** (Interpretability). We define *interpretability* in the context of supervised ML as the generic property of a model which makes its individual components, as well as its functioning as a whole, understandable by a human being. Examples of interpretable models are simple linear regression or decision trees. Examples of not interpretable models are deep neural networks.

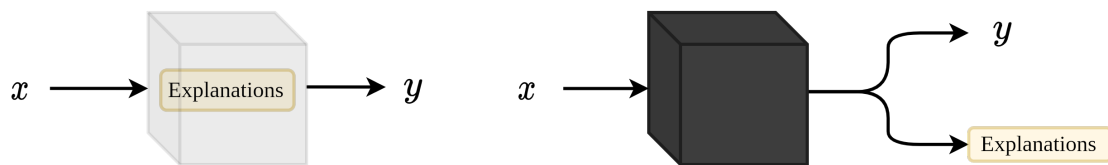
**Definition 2.3.2** (Explainability). We define *explainability* in the context of supervised ML as the generic process by which we extract any kind of explanation from a model. This can be done by exploiting the natural properties of the model (in which case, such a model can be called *explainable*), or by devising techniques to extract explanations from any model.

Explanations, according to the authors, can be evaluated in two ways: according to their intelligibility (that is, its understandability by a human being) and their completeness (that is, the accuracy of the description). Under this definitions, the challenge of XAI is in creating explanations that are both interpretable and complete, even though such characteristics are often opposed to one another. These two features of explanations resemble two important properties of ML models and suggest a similitude: on one hand, the user would desire a simple model with few parameters and at the same time a model able to capture really well the structure

343 of the training data. While both the properties are desirable, they are almost never achievable  
344 at the same time. Indeed, as we train simple models, we will probably underfit the data: in  
345 the same way, really easy explanations often fail to capture the complexities behind the internal  
346 workings of our algorithms. On the other hand, as we add parameters to our model and make it  
347 more complex, it will begin to better fit the data: in the same way a really complete explanation  
348 will describe accurately the operations of the systems, but will probably result more difficult  
349 to understand to a human being. This comparison suggests that, even for explanations, one  
350 should allow for a *tradeoff* between interpretability and completeness. The author also suggests  
351 that the explanation methods should be evaluated according to how such explanations behave  
352 on the curve from maximum interpretability to maximum completeness. This approach is  
353 followed in depth in [25], where the authors devise an explanation technique able to work for  
354 any classifier, by optimizing the intelligibility-completeness tradeoff. More information about  
355 this work is provided in Section 2.3.2.

356 In [23] interpretability is defined as the “ability to explain or to present in understandable  
357 terms to a human” (qui gli autori riportano una definizione letterale da un dizionario, quindi  
358 forse è meglio lasciare “present” come hanno fatto loro, mettendo anche tra virgolette. Con  
359 “present” penso semplicemente intendano presentare nel senso di esplicitare/far comprendere).  
360 According to [26], instead, *interpretability* is most often used in terms of comprehending how  
361 the prediction model works as a whole, while *explainability*, in contrast, is used to indicate  
362 the capability of models to give explanations about their decision, but keeping their black box  
363 nature. In the particular context of generating explanations for DL models, the authors of [30]  
364 define an explanation as the collection of features of an interpretable domain (i.e. pixel values  
365 on images), that have contributed for a given example to produce a decision (e.g. classification  
366 or regression). We can see that none of the aforementioned definitions are specific enough to  
367 enable one universal formalization: indeed they implicitly depend on the context or the aim of  
368 the research work.

369 (Qui ho un po’ cambiato quello che avevo scritto la scorsa volta; effettivamente il fatto che  
370 explainable  $\Rightarrow$  interpretable non è affatto ovvio, quindi ho cercato di metterla sotto una luce  
371 diversa.) Going back to our definitions, we could be tempted to consider an inherently ex-  
372 plainable model generally more desirable with respect to an interpretable model. Indeed, inter-  
373 pretability implies an active effort on the part of the human supervisor to dig inside the model,  
374 understand the internal mechanisms and infer the model motivations. On the other hand, this  
375 process is simplified if the model provides explanations directly, allowing us to immediately  
376 have more insights about its decision process. While this may often be true, this certainly does



**Figure 2.1:** Intuitive representation of explanations coming from transparent models (left) vs. explanations coming from post-hoc interpretability techniques (right). Transparent models are inherently interpretable by their design; they can be inspected and explanations can be deduced from them. Post-hoc interpretability, on the other hand, refers to a wide range of techniques with which explanations are extracted by any already trained model.

not constitute a rule. For example, think about the human brain: while we are able to give really detailed and motivated reasons behind our decision processes, our brain is not an interpretable model. Indeed, we don't know every single aspect of how our brains works, and yet we (often) trust the explanations that other human beings provide when asked why they took a certain decision. This offers an interesting point of view to the discussion: we should be careful not to trust certain explanations only by the fact that they look plausible and convincing. To this regard, Herman [31] warns its readers, making a clear distinction between descriptive and persuasive explanations: indeed implicit cognitive biases of the human brain could mislead us to trust wrong explanations (for example, humans naturally tend to prefer simpler descriptions). To avoid falling in this problem, one should always keep in mind the intelligibility-completeness tradeoff mentioned above.

It is clear that, even after providing some sort of definitions, the meanings of interpretability and explainability are still very generic and slippery. Nevertheless, the volume of research in XAI is quickly expanding, making the number of available methodologies continuously grow. One fundamental problem in XAI is the definition of specific properties, which make models explainable or interpretable. In the literature, two paradigms are often distinguished [32, 22]:

- **Transparency**, or integrated interpretability: it is mostly a feature of *interpretable* models. A transparent model can be interpreted by a human thanks to its own easy to understand design.
- **Post-hoc** interpretability: refers to that approach with which explanations are extracted from already trained models. Such models can be transparent, or retain their black box structure.

An intuitive illustration of those two concepts are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

### 2.3.1 TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is one of the properties that can enable interpretability and it implies some sort of understanding of the mechanism by which the model works. It can also be seen as the direct opposite to the concept of *black box*. Lipton [22] goes into even more details, by subdividing transparency in different levels:

1. **Simulatability:** it's the highest level of abstraction of the concept of transparency. Lipton refers to simulatability as the property of the model that makes it understandable by a person "at once". Specifically, this means that a human could, given the input data and all the necessary parameters, produce a prediction by making all the computations in a reasonable time. This notion of transparency is not very applicable to modern machine learning techniques and is often disregarded.
2. **Decomposability:** it's the transparency considered at the level of the single components of the model. Specifically, one model can be considered decomposable if each part of the model (weights, modules, computations...) admits an intuitive explanation.
3. **Algorithmic Transparency:** this notion of transparency refers to the learning algorithm itself. For example, we know that in the case of linear regression the shape of the loss function is known, as well as an analytical form for the solution for the problem. This means a maximum degree of algorithmic transparency. On the other hand, modern deep learning lacks this notion of transparency: in fact, even if a lot of powerful optimization algorithms give empirically excellent results, there is no guarantee that those will work on any new problem. The same holds for the shape of the error function, which is almost never known.

It's interesting to notice that the human brain, as noted previously, doesn't exhibit any of those features. In fact, human thinking is not transparent to us and justifications in the form of explanations may differ from the actual decision mechanism. Transparent models are fascinating, but recent research in DL has proven that predictive performances rise when building deeper models, and not vice-versa. [For this reason, in recent years, a lot of attention has been put on the research of post-hoc explainability methods.](#)

### 2.3.2 POST-HOC INTERPRETATIONS

With post-hoc interpretability we refer to those methods with which we generate explanations from already trained models, without caring about their internal mechanisms. The advantage of this approach is that it does not impact on the performances of the model, which is treated as



432 a black box. Unlike transparency, this kind of interpretability is the one that applies to humans.  
 433 Lipton [22] summarizes post-hoc explainability methods into the following categories.

#### 434 VISUALIZATION

435 Another popular approach for post-hoc interpretations is to provide visualizations in order to  
 436 have a qualitative idea of what the model has learned. For example, when models learn em-  
 437 beddings in high dimensional vector spaces, one popular technique to visualize them is t-SNE  
 438 [33], which provides 2D or 3D visualization of high dimensional data points, in such a way  
 439 that nearby samples are likely to appear closer together. In the field of computer vision, several  
 440 papers have investigated the internal representations of visual concepts in CNNs. In [2], the  
 441 authors try to build “prototypes” of certain objects starting from already trained image classi-  
 442 fication models. Specifically, starting from a white noise image, they tweak it in such a way  
 443 that the activation of a certain neuron (in this case, the output neuron corresponding to the se-  
 444 lected object) is maximized. This process can be replicated also starting from an existing image,  
 445 a process which produces really peculiar visual effects (see Figure 2.2).



**Figure 2.2:** Process of image manipulation shown in [2]. From an intuitive point of view, starting from existing real images, the network is asked to enhance the features of the image that resemble the desired object (in this case, starting from an image of a tree, start looking for features that resemble buildings). This process is then repeated, creating a positive feedback loop. As a result, the features of the desired objects appear seemingly out of nowhere.

446 This process is also known as *Activation Maximization*: consider a deep NN classifier which  
 447 maps an input tensor (in this case an image)  $x$  to a set of classes  $\{\omega_i\}_{i=1}^m$ . In a classification

scenario, we know that the  $i$ -th output neuron encodes the modeled class probability  $p(\omega_i|x)$ . The basic idea is that the *prototype*  $x_i^*$ , representative of class  $\omega_i$  can be found as follows:

$$x_i^* = \max_x \log p(\omega_i|x) - \lambda \|x\|^2.$$

The proposed definition doesn't yield good results in practice: although producing strong class response, they often look unnatural. This problem is solved in several ways, for example by adding regularization via a data density model, or imposing prior constraints which are common in real images, such as high correlation among neighboring pixels. Again, a similar approach is found in [34], where the authors investigate the amount of information retained in the hidden representations of CNNs. They manage to reconstruct the original images with good accuracy even from high level representations by performing gradient descent on white noise inputs.

#### LOCAL EXPLANATIONS

With visualization techniques, one aims to understand what the model learned from a global point of view: for example, the activation maximization technique described earlier will reflect the "internal representation" that the model has of a particular class. With local explanations, instead, one aims at giving explanations in the context of a specific example. One popular approach is the computation of saliency maps, or relevance scores [35, 30, 36]. Specifically, given a data point  $x \in \mathbb{R}^k$ , and given the learned function  $f$ , the predicted class for point  $x$  will be  $f(x)$ ; this approach aims to assign to each feature a score  $R(x)_i$ , representing a measure of how relevant the feature  $x_i$  is for explaining  $f(x)$ . One simple approach to obtain the relevance scores is *sensitivity analysis*: it consists on finding the input features for which the output is more sensitive, meaning the ones that best contribute to increase the value of the output. In mathematical terms, it is defined as:

$$R(x)_i = \left( \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_i} \right)^2,$$

where the gradient is then evaluated on  $x$ . Such relevance scores can then be visualized: for example, in images they can be represented as a mask. We should note a subtle detail: this method gives us an explanation of the *variation* of  $f(x)$ , not of the value of  $f(x)$  itself. In other terms, this method does not answer the question "*what parts of  $x$  make it belong to class  $y$ ?*", but instead it answers "*what parts of  $x$  make it belong more/less to class  $y$ ?*".

While the relevance scores can be seen as a way of extracting explanations, those can also be used in different ways. An interesting approach can be found in [37], where the authors explicitly train the relevance scores in a supervised manner, in such a way to make them conform to some manually curated notion of where the attention should be put. Following this approach, the authors aim to train a model which is “right for the right reason”. The motivation is that, if the assumption that relevance score faithfully describes the model’s underlying behavior, then constraining such relevance scores in order to match domain knowledge would result in a model that, in some way, will use that domain knowledge to take decisions.

Another interesting approach for generating local explanations is from Ribeiro et al. [25]: they propose an explanation technique called LIME (Local Interpretable Model-agnostic Explanations), which purpose is to locally approximate complex models with simpler, interpretable models, following the completeness-interpretability tradeoff mentioned by Gilpin in [29]. More specifically, they define an explanation as an interpretable model  $g \in G$ , where  $G$  is a set of models which, with the right conditions, can be considered interpretable (e.g. decision trees). In fact, the authors note that even those that are considered transparent models, will not be considered interpretable by a human supervisor if the model relies on thousands of features to make the prediction. This means that there should be a measure of complexity that determines how much a “potentially interpretable” model  $g$  is actually interpretable. They denote such measure of complexity as  $\Omega(g)$  (e.g. for decision trees, this could represent the depth of the tree). Then, they denote with  $f : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  the model to be approximated, and with  $\pi_x(z)$  a proximity measure between a feature vector  $x$  and  $z$ . Finally,  $\mathcal{L}(f, g, \pi_x)$  is defined as a measure of how badly the model  $g$  approximates  $f$  near the input sample  $x$ . With this setup, one can find a model  $g$  which is maximally interpretable, and which best explains the original model, near a specific input. Specifically, this model is the output of LIME, which is defined as follows:

$$\xi(x) = \underset{g \in G}{\operatorname{argmin}} \mathcal{L}(f, g, \pi_x) + \Omega(g).$$

Another recent technique which provides local explanations is the attention mechanism (ho capito l’osservazione sul fatto che forse dovrebbe essere sulla transparency, ma in realtà i modelli con attenzione sono comunque integrati in reti neurali deep, e quindi sicuramente non hanno la algorithmic transparency.. allo stesso modo non hanno la simulatability, e in generale quando si parla di transparency si parla di modelli di cui è facile capire il funzionamento.. e non mi sembra proprio il caso dell’attenzione. Poi siccome danno local explanations, mi sem-

506 **brava questa la sezione migliore in cui metterli.. tutte queste motivazioni le riporto sotto)** [38],  
507 which, in recent years, has proven to be very successful mostly in machine translation [39] and  
508 computer vision [40]. Despite not being explicitly designed to provide explanations, they can  
509 do so by visualizing their internal attention scores, which highlight sections of the input data  
510 which were most influential for the classification. It is interesting to note that this kind of ex-  
511 planations are almost identical to the ones provided by saliency maps, discussed above. The  
512 core difference is that, for the attention mechanism, the attention scores are directly computed  
513 by the model at inference time, while the saliency maps are obtained after inference via back-  
514 propagation. It is interesting to know that datasets depicting how humans distribute attention  
515 have been created [41, 42]: this can allow us to evaluate attention-based models according to  
516 how much their attention patterns conform with the human ones. **Notice how this particular**  
517 **framework differs a bit from standard post-hoc explainability methods; indeed, since the atten-**  
518 **tion weights are jointly trained with the model, there is no need for any extra step after training**  
519 **to obtain them, they just need to be extracted from the trained model. This might lead us to**  
520 **put them in the set of transparent models, but it should be noted that models based on atten-**  
521 **tion are often very deep, are largely made up of standard NN layers, and the attention weights**  
522 **are trained jointly with all the other parameters of the model via backpropagation. Thus, they**  
523 **definitely lack both the simulatability and algorithmic transparency aspects. In the end, these**  
524 **models don't perfectly fall into any category, but since they only provide local explanations, we**  
525 **argue that this is the most appropriate way to describe them.**

## 526 EXPLANATION BY EXAMPLE

527 A common way in which humans justify their decisions is by offering analogies between the  
528 current object in study, and similar objects. For example, to decide the best treatment for a  
529 medical condition, doctors often refer to previous similar case studies. This kind of explanation  
530 is referred to explanation by example. The first approach with this method was proposed in  
531 [43]: the authors aim to generate explanations in the form of a collection of elements from  
532 the training set, returned by the model (in this case, a neural network) together with the actual  
533 prediction. To do this, they generate a distance metric directly from the model: in this way it  
534 is possible, at inference time, to scan the entire training set and look for the data points which,  
535 by the model's point of view, are the most similar to the current one being classified. Given  $x$   
536 the current sample being predicted and given  $y$  any element of the training set, this metric is  
537 defined as the euclidean distance between the hidden representations of  $y$  and  $x$ .

## 2.4 NEURAL SYMBOLIC INTEGRATION

Despite the attempts in the literature to give rigorous definitions of explainability and interpretability, those remain slippery concepts: interpretations may vary depending on the application domain and type of task to be performed. The need for explainability is mostly due to the black box nature of ML models, which is universally agreed upon. Indeed, differently from humans, ML models employ only sub-symbolic representations of concepts, meaning that everything inside the model is encoded as tensors of real values, which are inherently opaque to humans. Furthermore, classic ML systems learn everything from data, which is a radically different paradigm from the one humans use for learning. This has been identified as one of their major flaws [4]: NNs can offer outstanding performances when the problem is confined inside a specific domain (e.g. recognize spoken words in a short audio clip), but have nothing to offer when it comes to trivial tasks like commonsense reasoning. One possible way to extend the range of applications of NNs, could be to equip them with the ability to reason with abstract symbolic terms. Indeed, the introduction of symbolic language inside neural networks could also help in the process of encoding general knowledge inside them, a problem for which the formulation is still considered incomplete (cfr. Section 2.1). Furthermore, the integration of the statistical nature of learning with the logical nature of reasoning has been already identified as one of the most important research challenges in computer science [44].

One of the first proposed ML models able to handle uncertainty and logic simultaneously are Markov Logic Networks [45]. The authors, motivated by the growing interest in Statistical Relational Learning, propose a simple and effective representation able to combine the power of probabilistic graphical models with logic. Specifically, a MLN is defined as a set of pairs  $(F_i, w_i)$ , where  $F_i$  is a First Order Logic (FOL) formula, and  $w_i$  is its corresponding weight. Those, together with a set of constants  $C = \{c_1, \dots, c_{|C|}\}$ , are used as a template to build a Markov Random Field [46], which models the distribution over all the possible worlds as follows:

$$P(X = x) = \frac{1}{Z} \exp \left( \sum_i w_i n_i(x) \right),$$

where  $n_i(x)$  is the number of true groundings of the  $i$ -th formula, in the current world. This simple and elegant hybrid approach makes it possible to handle the randomness and uncertainty of real-world problems together with the power of logic. However, MLNs can only handle discrete variables and features, which is a big limitation for real use cases. For this reason, an extension of MLNs has been proposed in [47], which can also deal with continuous

561 variables.

562     However, with the recent success of DL models, a great interest has arisen in the integra-  
563 tion of neural architectures with logic. The area of research that addresses the problem of inte-  
564 grating symbolical knowledge with neural architectures is known as Neural Symbolic Integra-  
565 tion (NeSy). The intuition that motivates NeSy as field of research goes beyond explainability:  
566 while neural networks give good evidence to be a good modeling framework for the human  
567 mind (e.g. parallelization and adaptive learning from the environment) they completely lack  
568 the ability to reason in symbolic terms [48]. Indeed, works in NeSy argue that logic is the best  
569 tool to represent general knowledge, and their first aim is to build systems capable of dealing  
570 with both symbolic and sub-symbolic representations.

571     In the next chapter, we delve in the details of Knowledge Enhanced Neural Networks (KENN)  
572 [1], a neural network layer designed to integrate logical knowledge in NNs. We will also give a  
573 short summary of other notable methods in NeSy and provide a comparison of experimental  
574 results on the task of collective classification.

# 3

## Knowledge Enhanced Neural Networks

Knowledge Enhanced Neural Networks (KENN) [1] is a special type of NN layer, designed for injecting logical knowledge into a pre-existing base NN. More specifically, it is a residual layer designed to be stacked after the last layer of any NN, in order to boost its predictive performances via the addition of a Prior Knowledge in the form of first order logic clauses. In this chapter we will describe the theory behind KENN, its architecture, and experimental results.

### 3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

We present here the theoretical framework behind KENN. The first step will be to rigorously define the symbolic language and how to link it with the theoretical framework of NNs, which consists in defining a semantic for the language. Next, we will describe the process with which the truth value of a clause can be increased, and how to integrate this method inside NNs.

#### 3.1.1 PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE SEMANTIC

**Definition 3.1.1** (Prior Knowledge). The Prior Knowledge is defined as a collection of formulas of a function-free FO language  $\mathcal{L}$  whose signature is defined with a set of constants  $\mathcal{C} = \{a_1, \dots, a_l\}$  and a set of predicates  $\mathcal{P} = \{p_1, \dots, p_q\}$ . A predicate is a symbol, which can take in input a number of constants  $k \geq 1$ . If  $k = 1$ , the predicate represents a property

of the input constant; if  $k > 1$ , it represents a relation between the input constants.  $k$  is called the *arity* of the predicate.

**Definition 3.1.2** (Clause). A clause is defined to be of the following form:

$$c := \bigvee_{i=1}^k l_i, \quad l_i \neq l_j \quad \forall i \neq j. \quad (3.1)$$

In this equation,  $l_i$  is a literal, i.e. a formula constituted only by a  $n$ -ary predicate, or its negation. Specifically, when writing  $l_i \neq l_j$ , we mean that those two literals never share their constituting predicate. For example, the clause  $A(x) \vee \neg B(x)$  is considered an acceptable clause, while  $A(x) \vee B(x) \vee \neg A(x)$  is not. Also clauses have an arity, which is by definition the number of variables given in input to the clause.

One example of a clause could be the following:

$$c(x, y) = \neg \text{Smoker}(x) \vee \neg \text{Friends}(x, y) \vee \text{Smoker}(y), \quad (3.2)$$

which, in classical logic, is equivalent to the clause  $\text{Smoker}(x) \wedge \text{Friends}(x, y) \Rightarrow \text{Smoker}(y)$ , but expressed as a disjunction of literals. Such a clause is constituted by two predicates:  $\text{Smoker}(x)$ , a unary predicate expressing the statement “ $x$  is a smoker”, and  $\text{Friends}(x, y)$ , a binary predicate which expresses the statement “ $x$  and  $y$  are friends”. Therefore, this clause expresses the rule “if  $x$  is a smoker and  $x$  and  $y$  are friends, then also  $y$  is a smoker”. Note that the variables  $x$  and  $y$  are supposed to be universally quantified, since our aim is to express general knowledge. We now give another definition:

**Definition 3.1.3** (Grounding of a clause). The grounding of an  $n$ -ary clause  $c$ , denoted as  $c[x_1/k_1, \dots, x_n/k_n]$ , is the clause obtained by substituting  $k_i$  to  $x_i, \forall i = 1, \dots, n$ .

Going back to the example of before, assume that  $a$  and  $b$  are two specific persons. Then, the grounding of clause (3.2) will be

$$c(x/a, y/b) = c(a, b) = \neg \text{Smoker}(a) \vee \neg \text{Friends}(a, b) \vee \text{Smoker}(b).$$

The next step is to build a semantic for the formal language  $\mathcal{L}$ , that is, how to interpret the symbols that we are working with. In practice, this will consist on defining a way to map constants towards a domain, and predicates to functions that go from such domain to a truth



value. To clarify, consider the following example: let  $a$  be a constant and let  $P$  be a predicate, such that  $P(x)$  expresses the statement “ $x$  is a prime number”. In this case, there is a natural way to define an interpretation for our symbols, that is to map constants to the domain of natural numbers and to map  $P$  to the function  $f : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ , where  $f(n) = 1$  if  $n$  is prime, and 0 otherwise. Now, we define the semantic of  $\mathcal{L}$ .

**Definition 3.1.4** (Semantic of  $\mathcal{L}$ ). The semantic of  $\mathcal{L}$  is defined by means of a pair of functions  $(\mathcal{I}_C, \mathcal{I}_P)$ , that, together, define an *interpretation* for the symbols of our language and are defined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{I}_C : \mathcal{C} &\rightarrow \mathbb{R}^l & \mathcal{I}_P : \mathcal{P} &\rightarrow (\mathbb{R}^{n_l} \rightarrow [0, 1]) \\ c &\mapsto x, & P &\mapsto f \end{aligned} \tag{3.3}$$

Where  $n$  is the arity of the predicate  $P$  and  $f$  is a function that takes in input the concatenation of the interpretations of  $n$  constant symbols,  $\mathcal{I}_C(c_1), \dots, \mathcal{I}_C(c_n)$  and returns the truth value of  $P(c_1, \dots, c_n)$ . Note that, to make the notation lighter, we will omit the subscript when it’s clear whether the argument of the interpretation is a literal or a constant term.

With those definitions, we can already see how this theoretical framework is suitable to describe a NN. In fact, each constant symbol  $c$  is mapped to a  $l$ -dimensional real vector, which can be seen as the feature vector characterizing the real world object identified by  $c$ . Another important detail is that the truth value of each literal, in our setup, is not determined by a hard assignment of 0 or 1, but is represented by a real number in the interval  $[0, 1]$ . This is a crucial point: indeed, the truth value in our semantic is trying to represent predictions by a NN, which, for classification tasks, are always expressed in terms of values in the interval  $[0, 1]$ . The natural consequence of this choice is that, from this point on, we will have to rely on the rules of Fuzzy Logic [49], which is a generalization of the standard Boolean logic where the truth value of variables can take the value of any real number between 0 and 1.

### 3.1.2 $t$ -CONORM FUNCTIONS

With our definition of a semantic for  $\mathcal{L}$ , we can now give an interpretation for constants and predicates. The next step is to find a way to interpret clauses, or, more specifically, a way to determine the truth value of a grounded clause. We saw that, by definition, a clause is a disjunction of literals: this means that we only need a way to define the interpretation of a negated predicate and of the disjunction of two predicates. As stated above, since we are allowing truth

values in the range  $[0, 1]$ , we will need to use the rules of Fuzzy Logic. For computing the truth value of a negated predicate, the standard way in Fuzzy Logic is to use the Lukasiewicz Negation.

**Definition 3.1.5** (Lukasiewicz Negation). If  $P \in \mathcal{P}$  is a predicate, then:

$$\mathcal{I}(\neg P) = 1 - \mathcal{I}(P)^* \quad (3.4)$$

So for example if the truth value of a predicate is  $\mathcal{I}(P)(x) = 0.8$ , the truth value of its negated copy would be  $\mathcal{I}(\neg P)(x) = 0.2$ . It is worth noting that this definition is equivalent to the Boolean negation when  $\mathcal{I}(P) = 0$  or  $\mathcal{I}(P) = 1$ .

With this tool we are now able to compute the truth value of any literal. There remains to see how to define the interpretation of a disjunction of literals. To do this, we introduce the concept of  $t$ -conorm functions.

**Definition 3.1.6** ( $t$ -conorm). A  $t$ -conorm is a function  $\perp: [0, 1]^2 \rightarrow [0, 1]$  that satisfies the following properties:

1.  $\perp(a, b) = \perp(b, a)$
2.  $\perp(a, b) \leq \perp(c, d)$  if  $a \leq c$  and  $b \leq d$
3.  $\perp(a, \perp(b, c)) = \perp(\perp(a, b), c)$
4.  $\perp(a, 0) = a$

By definition,  $\perp$  takes values in  $[0, 1]^2$ , but can be easily extended to  $[0, 1]^n$  for any  $n$ , by defining:

$$\perp(a_1, \dots, a_n) := \perp(a_1, \perp(a_2, \dots, \perp(a_{n-1}, a_n))).$$

In Fuzzy Logic,  $t$ -conorm functions are used to represent the concept of logical disjunction, and will be the tool employed to represent the interpretation of a disjunction of literals. Specifically:

$$\mathcal{I}(l_1 \vee \dots \vee l_n) = \perp(\mathcal{I}(l_1), \dots, \mathcal{I}(l_n)). \quad (3.5)$$

---

\*Writing  $1 - \mathcal{I}(P)$  is a slight abuse of notation since  $\mathcal{I}(P)$  is a function. To be more precise one should write  $\mathcal{I}(\neg P)(\mathcal{I}(c)) = 1 - \mathcal{I}(P)(\mathcal{I}(c)), \forall c$ .

With the given definitions, we have all that is needed to compute the truth value of any grounded clause. From a practical point of view, the only remaining step would be to choose a specific  $t$ -conorm function. KENN uses the Gödel  $t$ -conorm function, which is also known as the Maximum  $t$ -conorm and is defined as

$$\perp_{max}(a, b) = \max\{a, b\},$$

which, as above, can be extended like follows:

$$\perp_{max}(t) = \max_{i=1, \dots, l} t_i, \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}^l.$$

We are now finally ready to fully understand how this theoretical framework is able to describe the predictions of a NN. Suppose that we have a dataset  $\mathcal{X} = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$ ,  $x_i \in \mathbb{R}^l$ , where each  $x_i$  belongs to one or more classes  $(P_1, \dots, P_m)$ . The task in which the NN must learn to classify each input into one or more output classes is known in Machine Learning as a multilabel classification problem. To tackle this kind of task, a NN architecture will present, in the last layer,  $m$  output units, each of which will be finally subject to a sigmoidal activation function. After training, the NN will have learned to approximate a function  $h(x_i) = y_i \in \mathbb{R}^m$ , where  $(y_i)_j = \mathbb{P}(x_i \text{ belongs to class } j)$ . Now, if we consider:

1.  $\mathcal{P} = \{P_1, \dots, P_m\}$  to be predicates defined as  $P_i(x) = \text{"}x \text{ belongs to class } P_i\text{"}$ ;
2.  $\{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$  to be the interpretations of the constants  $\mathcal{C} = \{c_1, \dots, c_n\}$ , which represent the real-world objects of our dataset,

it is clear that the entries of  $y_i$  can be seen as truth values of the predicates  $\{P_1, \dots, P_m\}$ . More formally:

$$(y_i)_j = \mathcal{I}_{NN}(P_j)(x_i), \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, n, \forall j = 1, \dots, m. \quad (3.6)$$

Hence, the whole NN defines an interpretation for each predicate  $P_i$ , which we denoted as  $\mathcal{I}_{NN}$ . Therefore, given a clause  $c := \bigvee_{i=1}^k l_i$  and given a collection of feature vectors  $\{x_1, \dots, x_d\}$  (where  $d$  is the arity of  $c$ ), then the truth value of the grounded clause predicted by the NN will be  $\perp((y_c)_1, \dots, (y_c)_k)$ , where:

$$y_c \in \mathbb{R}^k, \quad (y_c)_i = \begin{cases} \mathcal{I}_{NN}(l_i) & \text{if } l_i \text{ is not a negated predicate} \\ 1 - \mathcal{I}_{NN}(l_i) & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \quad (3.7)$$

676 The intuition behind KENN is very simple: given the vector  $y$  of predictions of the NN, a  
 677 new layer is added at its end with the aim to modify  $y$  and obtain a new vector of predictions  
 678  $y'$ , of the form  $y' = y + \delta$ , such that  $y'$  improves the truth value of each clause present in  
 679 the base knowledge and, at the same time, keeps the quantity  $\|y' - y\|_2$  minimal. It is worth  
 680 noticing that this new layer introduced by KENN, called Knowledge Enhancer (KE), is a kind  
 681 of residual layer, since it learns to represent the quantity  $\delta = y' - y$ .

### 682 3.1.3 $t$ -CONORM BOOST FUNCTIONS

683 The next problem is to understand how to improve the truth value of a single clause. Since this  
 684 truth value is represented by a  $t$ -conorm function, this involves finding a way to let the value  
 685 of  $\perp$  ( $y$ ) rise by manipulating the value of  $y$ . To do this, we define a new class of functions.

**Definition 3.1.7** ( $t$ -conorm Boost Function (TBF)). A function  $\delta : [0, 1]^n \rightarrow [0, 1]^n$  is a  $t$ -conorm Boost Function (TBF) if:

$$0 \leq t_i + \delta(t)_i \leq 1 \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N} \quad \forall t \in [0, 1]^n.$$

686 Let  $\Delta$  denote the set of all TBFs.

687 From the definition follows a simple but essential result.

**Lemma 3.1.1.** Given any  $t$ -conorm  $\perp$  and  $\delta \in \Delta$ , it holds that:

$$\perp(t) \leq \perp(t + \delta(t)).$$

*Proof.* By definition of TBF,  $\delta(t)_i \geq 0$ . This implies that

$$t_i \leq t_i + \delta(t)_i, \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, n.$$

688 By the monotonicity of  $t$ -conorms, it follows that  $\perp(t) \leq \perp(t + \delta(t))$ . □

689 The purpose of such TBF  $\delta$  is to update the NN predictions  $y \in \mathbb{R}^m$  to a new vector in  
 690 such a way that the truth value of the clause increases. The problem is now how to choose such  
 691 a TBF. It is clear that not all the  $\delta \in \Delta$  would be useful: for example, one could choose the  
 692 function  $\delta(y)_i = 1 - y_i, \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, n$ . In this way, we would obtain an updated truth  
 693 value of 1 for any literal, independently of  $y$ . This of course would be pointless, and would

render the predictions of the base NN useless. For this reason another requirement for  $y'$  is needed. Specifically, as we already mentioned, KENN is built in such a way that the learnt  $\delta$  improves the  $t$ -conorm value in a minimal way. To be more rigorous, we will now formally define the concept of a minimal TBF.

**Definition 3.1.8** (Minimal TBF). A function  $\delta \in \Delta$  is minimal with respect to a norm  $\|\cdot\|$  and a  $t$ -conorm  $\perp$  if and only if:

$$\|\delta'(t)\| < \|\delta(t)\| \Rightarrow \perp(t + \delta'(t)) < \perp(t + \delta(t)), \quad \forall \delta' \in \Delta, \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N}, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1]^n.$$

As mentioned above, KENN works with the Gödel  $t$ -conorm function and the  $L_p$  norm  $\|x\|_p = (\sum_{i=1}^n |x_i|^p)^{\frac{1}{p}}$ . The next step at this point is to find such a minimal TBF. In the following result, we present a possible form that a minimal TBF can assume.

**Theorem 3.1.2.** For any function  $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  we define  $\delta^f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$  as

$$\delta^f(t)_i = \begin{cases} f(t) & \text{if } i = \arg \max_{j=1}^n t_j \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Let  $f : [0, 1]^n \rightarrow [0, 1]$  satisfying  $0 \leq f(t) \leq 1 - \max_{j=1}^n t_j$ . Then,  $\delta^f$  is a minimal TBF for the Gödel  $t$ -conorm function and the  $L_p$  norm.

*Proof.*  $\delta^f$  is a TBF. Indeed  $\delta^f(t) \geq 0$  and  $0 \leq t_i + \delta^f(t)_i \leq 1$  because  $f(t) \leq 1 - \max_j t_j$ . Therefore we only need to prove that  $\delta^f$  is minimal. Take  $\delta \in \Delta$ , with  $\|\delta(t)\|_p < \|\delta^f(t)\|_p$ . We have to show that

$$\perp(t + \delta(t)) < \perp(t + \delta^f(t)).$$

Now define  $j = \arg \max_k (t_k + \delta(t)_k)$ . By definition of the Gödel  $t$ -conorm we can immediately derive that:

$$\perp(t + \delta(t)) = t_j + \delta(t)_j. \quad (3.8)$$

Now, defining  $i = \arg \max_k t_k$ , using the same reasoning and exploiting the definition of  $\delta^f$  it follows that:

$$\perp(t + \delta^f(t)) = t_i + f(t). \quad (3.9)$$

By combining (3.8) and (3.9) and noting that by definition  $t_i \geq t_j$ , the last step is to prove that  $f(t) > \delta(t)_j$ . To do this we exploit the definition of  $L_p$  norm as follows:

$$\delta(t)_j = (|\delta(t)_j|^p)^{\frac{1}{p}} \leq \left( \sum_{k=1}^n |\delta(t)_k|^p \right)^{\frac{1}{p}} = \|\delta(t)\|_p < \|\delta^f(t)\|_p = f(t).$$

709 Where the last inequality follows from the definition of  $\delta^f(t)$ .

710

□

### 711 3.1.4 APPLYING TBFs TO PREACTIVATIONS

There is a problem with the definition of  $\delta^f$ : there is a specific constraint  $f(t) \leq 1 - \max_i t_i$  that limits the number of candidates for  $f$ . Indeed, this is imposed to ensure that the final output  $y' = y + \delta^f(y)$  will be in  $[0, 1]$ . There is a natural way to solve this impracticality: since we are assuming a multilabel classification scenario, the final  $m$  output units of the NN will pass through a sigmoidal activation function. More specifically,  $y_i$  will be of the form:

$$y_i = \sigma(z_i) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-z_i}}, \forall i = 1, \dots, m.$$

712 For this reason, KENN exploits the fact that  $\sigma$  takes only values in  $[0, 1]$  by applying the TBF  
 713 directly on the preactivations  $z \in \mathbb{R}^m$ . In fact, it is clear from an intuitive point of view that  
 714 one can apply any delta to the preactivations vector, and at the same time always be sure that the  
 715 final output  $y$  will be in  $[0, 1]$ . In this way, the constraint on  $f$  is no longer needed. The next  
 716 theorem proves formally that applying a minimal TBF on the preactivations  $z$  is equivalent to  
 717 applying a minimal TBF on the output of the NN  $y$ .

718 **Theorem 3.1.3.** For all  $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , the function:

$$\delta^g(y) = \sigma(z + \delta^f(z)) - \sigma(z) \tag{3.10}$$

719 is a minimal TBF under the Gödel  $t$ -conorm and the  $L_p$  norm.

*Proof.* By definition we know that  $z = \sigma^{-1}(y)$ , hence we can rewrite equation (3.10) as:

$$y + \delta^g(y) = \sigma(z + \delta^f(z)).$$

From the definition of sigmoid activation function it easily follows that  $0 \leq y + \delta^g(y) \leq 1$ . To prove that  $\delta^g$  is a TBF we have to show that  $\delta^g(y) \geq 0$ . We note a few details:  $\sigma$  is monotonic

increasing, which means that:

$$\operatorname{argmax}_{j=1}^n \sigma(z_j) = \operatorname{argmax}_{j=1} z_j.$$

Another implication of the monotonicity of  $\sigma$  is that:

$$f(z) \geq 0 \Rightarrow \sigma(z_i + f(z)) \geq \sigma(z_i)$$

This implies that  $\delta^g(y) = \sigma(z + \delta^f(z)) - \sigma(z) \geq 0$ . We now define the function  $g(y) = \sigma(z_i + f(z)) - \sigma(z_i)$ , where  $i = \operatorname{argmax}_j z_j$ . It's easy to see that this  $g$  is the function associated to our  $\delta^g$ . In fact:

$$\begin{aligned} \delta^g(y)_i &= \sigma(z + \delta^f(z))_i - \sigma(z)_i \\ &= \begin{cases} g(y) & \text{if } i = \operatorname{argmax}_j y_j \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, Theorem 3.1.2 guarantees that  $\delta^g(y)$  is a minimal TBF under the Gödel  $t$ -conorm and the  $L_p$  norm.

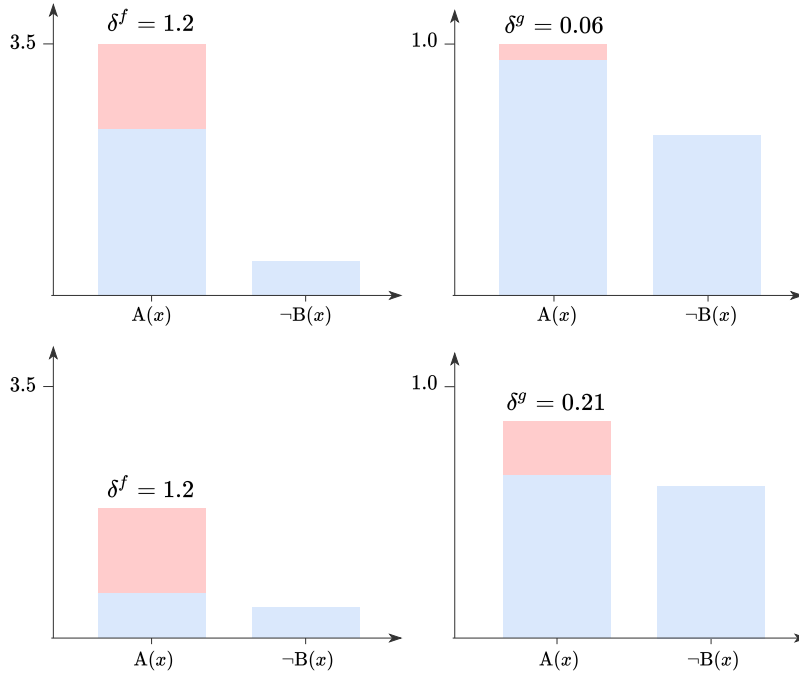
□

Note that  $\delta^g(y)$  is not directly used in KENN but it's indirectly induced by using  $\delta^f(z)$  on the preactivations.

Applying the TBF directly on the preactivations has also another remarkable advantage. Indeed, it is known that it is possible to interpret the value of the preactivation of the  $i$ -th output neuron as the “confidence” of the NN that the current feature vector is to be classified in the  $i$ -th class. This “confidence” is not yet a probability, but a generic scalar value  $z \in \mathbb{R}$ ; it will become a probability when transformed with the sigmoid activation function:  $\sigma(z) \in [0, 1]$ . More specifically we know that:

- $z \gg 0$  means high confidence of being classified in the  $i$ -th class. This follows from the fact that  $\lim_{z \rightarrow +\infty} \sigma(z) = 1$ ;
- $z \ll 0$  means high confidence of *not* being classified in the  $i$ -th class. This follows from the fact that  $\lim_{z \rightarrow -\infty} \sigma(z) = 0$ ;
- $z \approx 0$  corresponds to a highly uncertain decision. This follows from the fact that  $\sigma(z) \approx 0.5$  if  $z \approx 0$ .

By observing the shape of the sigmoid activation function we can notice that when  $|z| \gg 0$  (high confidence in the NN predictions), even large deltas on the preactivations produce very small changes. More rigorously,  $\lim_{|z| \rightarrow \infty} |\sigma(z + \delta^f(z)) - \sigma(z)| = 0$ . On the contrary, when  $z \approx 0$ , even small deltas on the preactivations produce high modification at the activation level. This will result in the following behavior: if the NN is highly confident of its decision, then logical rules will not modify too much the result of the NN predictions. On the contrary, in the cases where the NN is uncertain of its decision, our base knowledge will intervene and give higher modifications on the final predictions. This conforms to the intuition that KENN should produce minimal changes in the original predictions. These key concepts are further illustrated in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1:** On the left, example preactivations for the clause  $A(x) \vee \neg B(x)$  are shown. For both the examples, the same delta ( $\delta^f$ ) is applied to these preactivations. In the first example, the NN has a high confidence, while in the second one it is much lower. We can see how, when applying the activation function, the actual delta ( $\delta^g$ ) is much smaller in the first case and larger in the second. This is due to the shape of the sigmoid activation function itself.

As we already mentioned, the minimal TBF directly modeled by KENN is the one we called  $\delta^f(z)$ . From its definition, we know that the magnitude of the produced delta is determined by the definition of  $f$ . One of the most important features of KENN is that, by design, it learns to give the proper *importance* to each clause in the base knowledge: this precise feature



of the model gives also a way to find such function  $f$ . Specifically, for each clause  $c$  a learnable parameter  $w_c$  is defined so that the produced delta for  $c$  is:

$$\delta^{w_c}(z)_i = \begin{cases} w_c & \text{if } i = \arg \max_{j=1}^n z_j \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

747 From this definition it's now clear that the function  $f$  we were looking for is not actually the  
 748 same for all the clauses in the base knowledge, but it is defined for each different clause and it's  
 749 equal to the constant function  $f_c(z) = w_c$ ,  $w_c \in [0, \infty]$ . There is one last problem: while  
 750 it's true that the function  $\delta^{w_c}$  is a minimal TBF, the implementation of this kind of functions  
 751 inside a NN is unfeasible since they are not differentiable. For this reason KENN uses a soft  
 752 approximation of  $\delta^{w_c}$ , defined as:

$$\delta_s^{w_c}(z)_i = w_c \cdot \text{softmax}(z)_i = w_c \cdot \frac{e^{z_i}}{\sum_{j=1}^n e^{z_j}}. \quad (3.11)$$

There are still, however, some steps to describe in order to fully understand how KENN produces a vector of deltas. Recall our notation: we defined with  $y \in \mathbb{R}^m$  the vector of predictions from the NN. Specifically, we now define with  $y_A$  the truth value relative to  $A$ , where  $A$  is a generic grounded predicate of our language. We also define  $z_A = \sigma^{-1}(y_A)$ . Now, we note that equation (3.11), tells us that the produced  $\delta$  is always  $m$ -dimensional, where  $m$  is the number of output classes. This however is not desirable: in fact, in general, not all the clauses in our base knowledge contain all the predicates of our language. For example, given  $\mathcal{P} = \{A, B, C\}$ , the clause  $c = A \vee \neg B$  contains only two of the three predicates in the language. Therefore, we would like this specific clause to not modify in any way  $z_C$ . Another problem is that we don't know how to express the preactivation of a negated literal, i.e. we don't know how to derive  $z_{\neg A}$  from  $z_A$ . In fact, recall that in equation (3.4) we defined the interpretation of a negated predicate, where we knew that the truth values were well defined in the interval  $[0, 1]$ . Now we are dealing with preactivations, which cannot be considered truth values in the Fuzzy Logic theoretical framework. However, this problem can be easily solved by exploiting the following property of the sigmoid activation function:

$$1 - \sigma(x) = \sigma(-x).$$

Now it's easy to see that, since  $y_{\neg A} = 1 - y_A$ , we can define:

$$z_{\neg A} = -z_A.$$

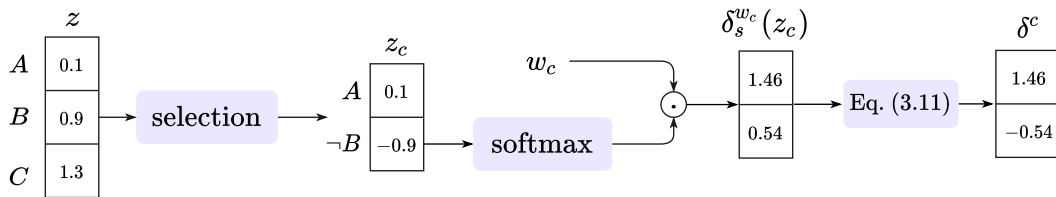
753 Notice that we are not introducing any new concepts: instead we are just redefining quantities  
 754 that were already mentioned at the activation level, to the preactivation level. We finally define  
 755  $z_c = (z_{l_1}, \dots, z_{l_k})$  for every clause  $c := \bigvee_{i=1}^k l_i$  of the knowledge. We refer to the process of  
 756 transforming from  $z$  to  $z_c$  as the *selection* step. This new vector contains only the preactivations  
 757 of literals present in  $c$ , and is the one that we actually want to use to produce the delta relative to  
 758 clause  $c$ . Now, let  $\mathcal{K}$  be the set of clauses in our knowledge, and  $\{w_c\}_{c \in \mathcal{K}}$  their corresponding  
 759 weights. For every clause  $c \in \mathcal{K}$  we want to obtain a new delta, namely  $\delta^c \in \mathbb{R}^m$ , which  
 760 contains one value for each predicate in the clause and is defined as follows:

$$\delta_A^c = \begin{cases} \delta_s^{w_c}(z_c)_A & \text{if } A \in c \\ -\delta_s^{w_c}(z_c)_{\neg A} & \text{if } \neg A \in c, \quad \forall A \in c \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (3.12)$$

761 This newly defined delta,  $\delta^c$ , will be the delta obtained from clause  $c$  and will be summed to  $z$   
 762 to obtain the updated prediction. More specifically:

$$y' = \sigma(z + \delta^c)$$

763 In Figure 3.2, an example of computation of the  $\delta^c$  vector is provided.



**Figure 3.2:** Example with all the steps needed to compute  $\delta^c$  for the clause  $A \vee \neg B$  starting from the vector of preactivations  $z$ ; for this example  $w_c = 2$ . We refer to this process as *clause enhancement*.

### 3.1.5 INCREASING THE SATISFACTION OF THE KNOWLEDGE

In the previous section we found out how KENN produces a vector of changes  $\delta$  to be applied to the original NN predictions, but only considering a single clause. That would suffice in the cases where the knowledge is constituted only by a single clause, but in real applications a higher number of logical rules will be desirable. Therefore, the next and final problem is to understand how KENN takes all the deltas from all the clauses and produces a single vector of changes. This particular step of aggregation is critical, as it constitutes one of the best features of KENN, but at the same time one of its bigger inaccuracies. This is because, to aggregate the contributions from all the clauses  $c \in \mathcal{K}$ , KENN just sums the contributions. Specifically, the final prediction is defined as follows:

$$y' = \sigma(z + \sum_{c \in \mathcal{K}} \delta^c). \quad (3.13)$$

This particular choice makes KENN really fast at inference and learning time, increasing scalability. At the same time, though, this makes the risk of inconsistencies higher. For example, the same predicate can appear negated in one clause, and not negated in another clause: in this way the delta for the first one will be negative while it will be positive for the second one. In this way, the two deltas may cancel out rendering the contributions of the two clauses less effective.

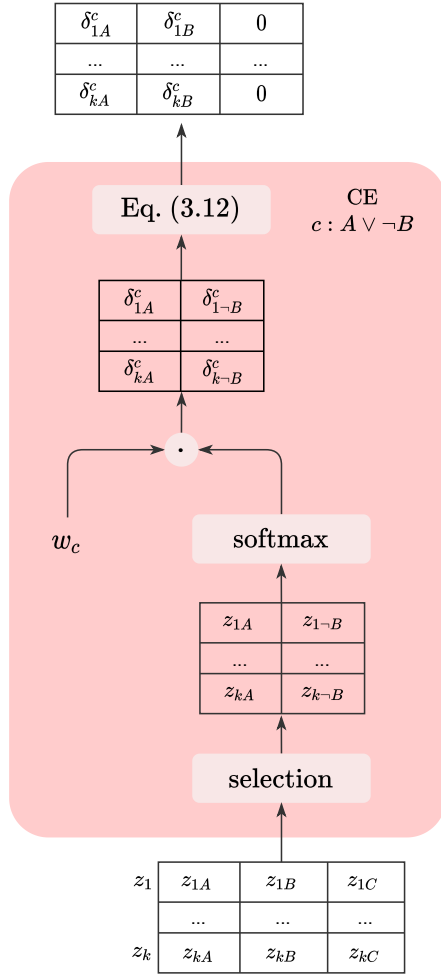
## 3.2 KENN ARCHITECTURE

In this section we describe the architecture of the KENN layer in details. KENN can work with clauses of any arity, but first we will describe the basic functioning for unary clauses. Then, in Section 3.3, we will describe how KENN is able to handle binary clauses. All the contents of this section have been implemented as a Python 3 package, based on TensorFlow 2 [50] and all the source code is publicly available on Github<sup>†</sup>.

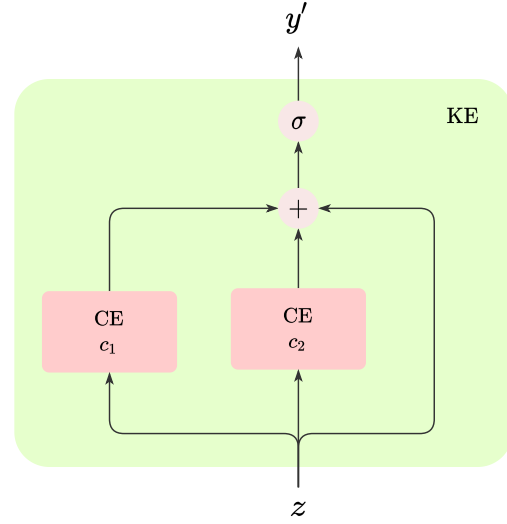
As described above, the core functionality of KENN is the *clause enhancement*, i.e. the creation of a vector  $\delta$  which, summed to the vector of predictions  $y$ , produces a modified vector of predictions  $y'$  which increases the truth value of the relative clause. The architecture that takes care of this task is the Clause Enhancer (CE): this submodule takes in input the full vector of preactivations from the original NN and computes the vector of deltas described in equation (3.12). For each clause in the base knowledge, a CE will be instantiated. Note how the CE does

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<sup>†</sup><https://github.com/DanieleAlessandro/KENN2>



(a) The Clause Enhancer (CE) module.



(b) The Knowledge Enhancer (KE) module.

**Figure 3.3:** Illustration of the KENN architecture. Images are replications of the illustrations provided in [1].

not take in input a single vector of preactivations at a time, but works in parallel taking in input mini-batches of data. The details of the architecture of the CE are described in Figure 3.3a. Specifically, the CE takes in input the mini-batch of preactivations  $\{z_1, \dots, z_k\}$  coming from the base NN, and for each sample in the mini-batch performs the following operations:

1. Performs the *selection* step;
2. Computes the vector of deltas according to equation (3.11);
3. Transforms the delta vector according to equation (3.12)

Once every CE has produced a vector of deltas, the next step is to aggregate them by summing them up. The module that performs this operation is called the *Knowledge Enhancer* (KE), which is shown in Figure 3.3b. More specifically, the KE performs the following operations:

1. Takes as inputs all the  $\delta^c$  for each clause  $c$  in the Base Knowledge and sums them;
2. It sums the obtained delta with the original preactivations vector;
3. Applies the sigmoid activation function.

These steps produce the final vector of modified predictions  $y'$ . Notice that the KE is the implementation of equation (3.13).

### 3.3 KENN FOR RELATIONAL DATA

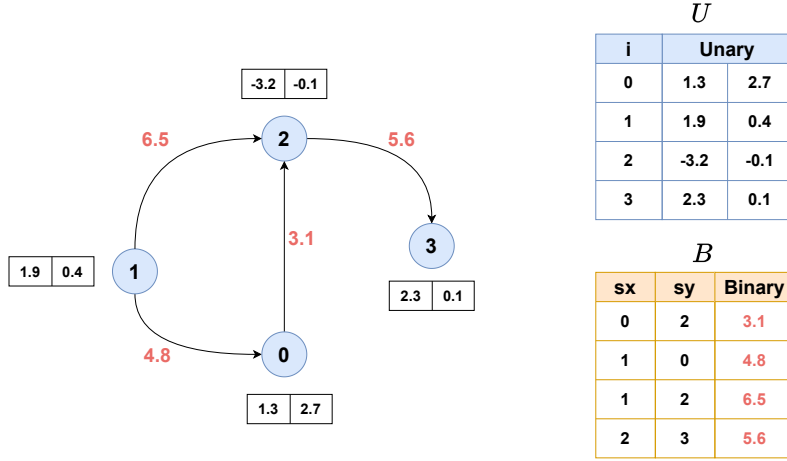
As we said, KENN can also handle relational data; specifically, thanks to its general approach, KENN can handle clauses with any arity. Nevertheless, for simplicity, we will just describe the binary case. In order to integrate binary clauses, the first step is to split the base knowledge into two complementary subsets of clauses  $\mathcal{K}_U$  and  $\mathcal{K}_B$ , containing the unary and binary clauses respectively. In this way, the set of all the clauses constituting the Prior Knowledge is denoted as  $\mathcal{K} = \mathcal{K}_U \cup \mathcal{K}_B$ . The intuition at the base of KENN remains the same: starting from initial predictions  $z$ , we will need to produce a vector of deltas  $\delta$ . The only difference, is that  $\delta$  will be the sum of two different deltas, one produced just by unary clauses and the other just by binary clauses. More simply, this consists in modifying equation (3.13) as follows:

$$y' = \sigma(z + \sum_{c \in \mathcal{K}_U} \delta^c + \sum_{c \in \mathcal{K}_B} \delta^c). \quad (3.14)$$

Note that the procedure to compute the quantity  $\sum_{c \in \mathcal{K}_U} \delta^c$  is the one we described before, since it deals just with unary clauses. The only thing left to define is how to compute a delta vector starting from a binary clause.

#### TABLE REPRESENTATION OF BINARY DATA

In order to deal with binary clauses, KENN represents truth values of every grounded predicate inside two different matrices:  $U$  and  $B$ . Matrix  $U$  has one row for each constant object, one column for each unary predicate and an additional column containing an identifier for each object.



**Figure 3.4:** Representation of relational data inside KENN. Specifically, objects and relations can be seen as nodes and edges of a directed graph. The preactivations of each grounded predicate are represented in tables  $U$  and  $B$ . In this example, two unary predicates and one binary predicate are present. Note that in matrix  $B$  only the object pairs such that there is a relation between them are reported.

Matrix  $B$ , instead, has one row for each couple of objects: specifically, for each pair of objects such that there is a binary relation between them. The first two columns of  $B$  contain the identifier indices of the pair of objects, while the remaining columns contain the preactivations for each binary predicate, grounded on that pair of objects. So, in the case of  $n$  unary predicates,  $m$  binary predicates,  $p$  total objects and  $q$  couples of objects,  $U$  and  $B$  will have dimensions  $p \times (n + 1)$  and  $q \times (m + 2)$  respectively. Figure 3.4 shows an example with a visualization of  $U$  and  $B$ . With those newly defined matrices, equation (3.14) can be implemented as follows:

$$\begin{cases} y_u = \sigma(U + \delta U) \\ y_b = \sigma(B + \delta B), \end{cases}$$

where  $y_u$  and  $y_b$  are the final predictions for the unary and binary predicates respectively, and  $\delta U$  and  $\delta B$  are the delta matrices that need to be computed.

## THE JOIN OPERATION

At this stage, we have two matrices,  $U$  and  $B$ , containing preactivations of unary and binary predicates respectively. However, recall that the CE module takes in input a single matrix containing all the preactivations, in order to compute the deltas. The fact is that, given any binary clause, we must be able to access the preactivation value of any of its atoms, from a single matrix.

827 Take as an example the grounded clause  $A(c_1) \vee B(c_1, c_2) \vee \neg A(c_2)$ . The preactivations of  
 828  $A(c_1)$  and  $A(c_2)$  can be accessed from matrix  $U$ , but the one for  $B(c_1, c_2)$  can be accessed only  
 829 from  $B$ . For this reason, we need a way to merge both the binary and unary preactivations into  
 830 a single matrix. KENN does this with the JOIN operation.

**Definition 3.3.1** (JOIN). Given  $n$  unary predicates,  $m$  binary predicates and their respective matrices  $U$  and  $B$ , the JOIN operation is defined as follows:

$$\text{JOIN}(U, B) = M$$

where the  $i$ -th row of the matrix  $M$  is:

$$M_i = (s^x, s^y, U_{s^x 2}, \dots, U_{s^x (n+1)}, U_{s^y 2}, \dots, U_{s^y (n+1)}, B_{i3}, \dots, B_{i(m+2)}),$$

where  $s^x = B_{i1}, s^y = B_{i2}$ .

831 More simply,  $M$  has the same number of rows as matrix  $B$  and shares its two first columns;  
 832 additionally, it also contains the preactivations of all the unary predicates for both the first and  
 833 second index of each row, together with all the preactivations for the binary predicates.

834 From this new matrix, the CE can access the preactivations for any atom of any grounded  
 835 binary clause and can compute a delta matrix, which we will call  $\delta M$ .

### 836 THE GROUP BY AND SELECT OPERATIONS

837 As we saw with our previous example, binary clauses can also contain unary predicates. This  
 838 implies that the delta vectors generated from binary clauses can actually modify the preactiva-  
 839 tions of both unary and binary predicates. More specifically, this means that the matrix  $\delta M$   
 840 contains some information that is supposed to go both inside matrices  $\delta U$  and  $\delta B$ . KENN  
 841 extracts the unary deltas from  $\delta M$  with the GROUP BY operation, and does the same for the  
 842 binary deltas with the SELECT operation.

843 **Definition 3.3.2** (GROUP BY). The GROUP BY (GB) operation takes in input the matrix  
 844 of deltas  $\delta M$  and an index ( $x$  or  $y$ ), and is defined as follows:

$$\begin{cases} \text{GB}(\delta M, x) = \delta U_x \\ \text{GB}(\delta M, y) = \delta U_y \end{cases}$$

845 where

$$\begin{cases} (\delta U_x)_i = \left( i, \sum_{j \in J_x} \delta M_{j3}, \dots, \sum_{j \in J_x} \delta M_{j(2+n)} \right) \\ (\delta U_y)_i = \left( i, \sum_{j \in J_y} \delta M_{j(n+3)}, \dots, \sum_{j \in J_y} \delta M_{j(2n+2)} \right) \\ J_x := \{j : \delta M_{j1} = i\} \\ J_y := \{j : \delta M_{j2} = i\} \end{cases}$$

846 In simple terms, the GROUP BY operation extracts the deltas for the unary predicates from  
 847 the delta matrix  $\delta M$ , by aggregating the results for each object identifier. This is exactly equiv-  
 848 alent to a GROUP BY query in a relational database.

**Definition 3.3.3** (SELECT). The SELECT operation simply extracts the preactivations of the binary atoms from the  $\delta M$  matrix. Specifically:

$$\text{SELECT}(\delta M) = \delta B$$

where:

$$\delta B_i = (\delta M_{i1}, \delta M_{i2}, \delta M_{i(2n+3)}, \dots, \delta M_{i(2n+m+2)}) .$$

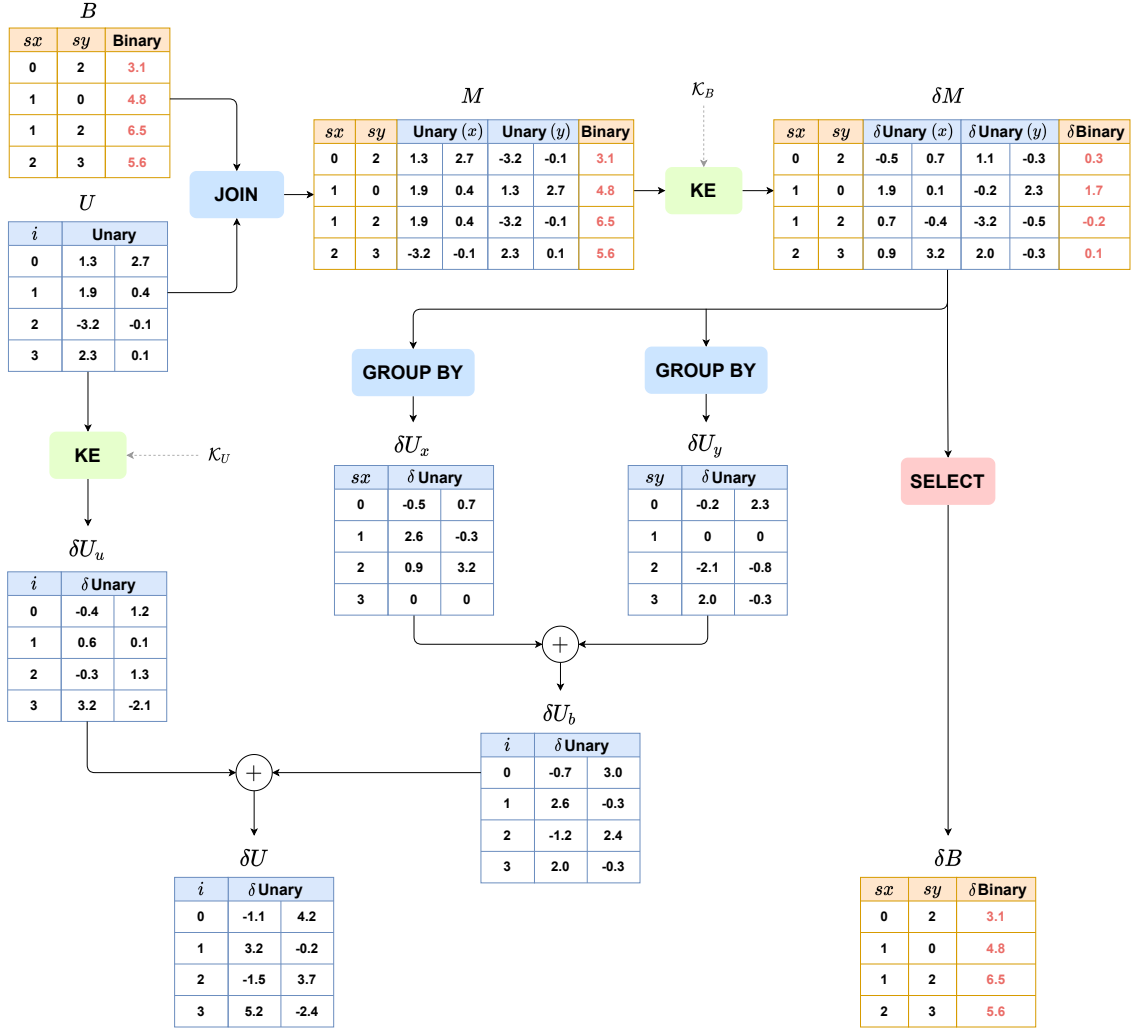
#### 849 COMPUTING THE DELTA MATRICES

850 Now that all the necessary tools have been defined, we are ready to describe the process to com-  
 851 pute the matrices  $\delta U$  and  $\delta B$ . KENN uses two different KEs to generate delta matrices: one  
 852 ( $\text{KE}_u$ ) takes in input the matrix  $U$ , and returns a delta matrix  $\delta U_u$ , using the standard procedure  
 853 for unary predicates described in the previous section. The other ( $\text{KE}_b$ ) takes in input a matrix  
 854  $M = \text{JOIN}(U, B)$ , and returns a delta matrix  $\delta M$ . Afterwards, the following operations are  
 855 performed:

- 856 1. The final delta matrix for binary predicates is obtained as follows:  $\delta B = \text{SELECT}(\delta M)$ ;
- 857 2. Two matrices  $\delta U_x = \text{GB}(\delta M, x)$  and  $\delta U_y = \text{GB}(\delta M, y)$  are computed;
- 858 3.  $\delta U_x$  and  $\delta U_y$  are summed together, obtaining matrix  $\delta U_b$ ;
- 859 4. The final delta matrix for unary predicates is obtained as follows:  $\delta U = \delta U_u + \delta U_b$ .

860 In Figure 3.5, we report an example with the whole process.





**Figure 3.5:** This figure shows an example with all the necessary computations to compute the final delta matrices  $\delta U$  and  $\delta B$  (in the bottom), starting from matrices  $U$  and  $B$  (top left).

## 861 3.4 RELATED WORK

862 As already introduced at the end of Chapter 2, the integration of statistical learning with logical  
863 symbolic knowledge is one of the key challenges in the research on artificial intelligence, specif-  
864 ically for the field of NSI. Authors of [1, 51] subdivide NSI systems into three main groups,  
865 based on their different objectives:

- 866 1. **Differentiable Reasoning** : research on this subfield aims at developing models capable  
867 of logical reasoning, meaning capable to derive logical knowledge, given a base of ground  
868 truth logical facts (axioms). (non sono sicurissimo sia questa la definizione...)
- 869 2. **Inductive Logic Programming** : here the goal is to extract logical knowledge from  
870 data, or to refine an existing one;
- 871 3. **Knowledge Guided Learning**: here the goal is learning in classical ML sense, where the  
872 knowledge has the role of a supervisor, meaning that the machine should learn according  
873 to the base knowledge.

874 We are interested in Knowledge Guided Learning (KGL), the class of models where KENN  
875 belongs. The objective is to improve the performance of a NN model, by providing a Prior  
876 Knowledge which is expressed in terms of logical formulas and which acts as a supervisor for  
877 the learning process. At present, two main ways of injecting knowledge inside NN have been  
878 employed. The first one involves the usage of a regularization term in the loss function. Indeed,  
879 logical rules can be interpreted as constraints for the weights in the learning process; in ML, the  
880 natural way to introduce constraints in learning is to add a penalization term in the loss func-  
881 tion, which represents in some way the satisfaction of the logical rules. The second approach,  
882 adopted by KENN, is to directly modify the network architecture: in this way, logical rules are  
883 enforced at the level of the network topology.

### 884 3.4.1 REGULARIZATION APPROACHES

885 In KGL, regularization approaches enforce the satisfaction of the knowledge by defining a spe-  
886 cial penalization term to be applied to the loss function. Here we briefly mention two impor-  
887 tant examples of regularization based approaches: Logic Tensor Networks and Semantic Based  
888 Regularization.

890 Logic Tensor Networks (LTN) [51] is a notable example of a method capable of integrating  
 891 logical knowledge inside a NN by directly modifying the loss function. To do this, the authors  
 892 define a differentiable first-order logic language called Real Logic, with which they manage to  
 893 represent common deep learning tasks, such as clustering, multi-label classification, relational  
 894 learning, regression, embedding learning and many others. In simple terms, the role of Real  
 895 Logic is to act as a bridge between the purely symbolic world of logic, and the sub-symbolic  
 896 world of neural systems. We give a brief summary of the core definitions in Real Logic, in order  
 897 to understand how learning is possible.

Real Logic is defined over a first order language  $\mathcal{L}$  with a signature containing a set of constant symbols (or objects)  $\mathcal{C}$ , a set of variable symbols  $\mathcal{X}$ , a set of functional symbols  $\mathcal{F}$  and a set of relational symbols (or predicates)  $\mathcal{P}$ . We refer to the set  $\mathcal{S} = \mathcal{C} \cup \mathcal{X} \cup \mathcal{F} \cup \mathcal{P}$  as the set of symbols of  $\mathcal{L}$ . Each symbol of the language can belong to different domains (i.e. can be of different types): for example the constant  $c_1 \in \mathcal{C}$  can represent a specific person, while the constant  $c_2 \in \mathcal{C}$  can represent a specific city. The same concept applies to functions and predicates. To represent the domain of each symbol, it is assumed that there exists a non-empty set  $\mathcal{D}$ , containing all the domains, which are in turn symbols. Then, to properly assign each symbol to its corresponding domain, the functions  $\mathbf{D}$ ,  $\mathbf{D}_{\text{in}}$  and  $\mathbf{D}_{\text{out}}$  are defined:

$$\mathbf{D} : \mathcal{X} \cup \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D} \qquad \mathbf{D}_{\text{in}} : \mathcal{F} \cup \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}^* \qquad \mathbf{D}_{\text{out}} : \mathcal{F} \rightarrow \mathcal{D},$$

898 where  $\mathcal{D}^*$  is the set of all finite sequences of symbols in  $\mathcal{D}$ . The point where the symbolic  
 899 language meets the subsymbolic world of neural networks is in the definition of grounding,  
 900 which is the process in which each symbol is given its numeric representation. Indeed, in Real  
 901 Logic, each domain is interpreted as sets of tensors in the real field. In the same way, each  
 902 constant, variable and term of the language is interpreted as a tensor of real values, and function  
 903 symbols are interpreted as functions between tensors. Predicates, are interpreted as functions  
 904 that map tensors into the interval  $[0, 1]$ . So, given  $s$  any symbol of  $\mathcal{L}$ , its grounding is denoted  
 905 as  $\mathcal{G}(s)$ . The authors then define how to compute the grounding of formulas, by using the  
 906 semantics of first-order fuzzy logic. The way in which learning becomes possible is by defining  
 907 parametric definition of grounding for symbols: given a symbol  $s$ , the parametric grounding of  
 908  $s$  is a grounding which is not known in advance, and can be computed exclusively by knowing a  
 909 set of parameters. It is denoted as  $\mathcal{G}(s|\theta_s)$ , where  $\theta_s$  is the set of parameter values that uniquely  
 910 determines the value of the grounding. It's interesting to note that, based on what kind of

911 symbol we are learning the grounding for, one can identify a corresponding task in machine  
912 learning:

- 913 • If  $s \in \mathcal{C}$ , corresponds to learning an embedding;
- 914 • If  $s \in \mathcal{F}$ , it corresponds to learning regression tasks;
- 915 • If  $s \in \mathcal{P}$ , it corresponds to learning a classification task.

916 For the simple case of binary classification, for example, the parametric grounding can be  
917 defined as  $\mathcal{G}(A|\theta) : x \rightarrow \sigma(\text{MLP}_\theta(x))$ , where MLP denotes a multi layer perceptron. manca  
918 ancora spiegare come viene modificata la loss.... forse viene un po' troppo lunga la parte su LTN  
919 cosi? togliere del tutto o espanderla ancora un po' per renderla completa?

## 920 SEMANTIC BASED REGULARIZATION

Semantic Based Regularization (SBR) is a general learning framework designed to integrate domain specific background knowledge in the form of first-order logic (FOL) clauses. To enforce the satisfaction of all the clauses, SBR introduces special regularization terms in the loss function, which represent the satisfaction of the knowledge. Specifically, given a background knowledge represented by set of  $H$  clauses, the satisfaction of the  $h$ -th clause can be represented by the quantity denoted by  $0 \leq \phi_h(f) \leq 1$ , where  $f$  is the vector function learned by the model. From here, the regularization term to be added to the loss function is defined as

$$\sum_{h=1}^H \lambda_h (1 - \phi_h(f)),$$

921 where  $\lambda_h$  is the weight associated to the  $h$ -th constraint. A higher value of  $\lambda_h$  will increase the  
922 cost of not satisfying the constraint, meaning that the importance of the corresponding rule  
923 will increase. The conversion of FOL clauses into differentiable functions is made possible by  
924 considering fuzzy generalizations of FOL logic, similarly to how it is done in KENN. This is  
925 a natural approach for machine learning tasks, but a major disadvantage over KENN is that,  
926 since the clause weights are introduced at the level of the loss function, those cannot be learned  
927 and are required to be known in advance. This, of course, is unlikely to happen in real scenarios  
928 and it is much more desirable to learn the weights together with the other learnable parameters  
929 of the model.

### 930 3.4.2 MODEL BASED APPROACHES

An example of model based approach for the integration of logic in NNs is represented by Relational Neural Machines (RNM) [3]. A RNM models a probability distribution over a set of  $m$  output variables, given the predictions provided by one (or more) base NN, and a set of model parameters. Specifically, differently from a standard NN, each forward pass in RNM is performed in two separate stages: in the first one, the predictions from the NN are obtained from the input data; the second is a *semantic* stage, where the logical constraints are enforced over the output. More precisely, this second stage is performed by an undirected graphical model. RNM defines a conditional probability distribution of the exponential family over the output variables, which is defined as follows:

$$p(y|f, \lambda) = \frac{1}{Z} \exp \left( \sum_{x \in S} \Phi_0(f(x), y(x)) + \sum_c \lambda_c \Phi_c(y) \right),$$

931 where  $Z$  is the partition function,  $f$  is the prediction from the NN,  $\lambda$  is the set of parameters  
 932 driving the semantic stage,  $\Phi_0$  is a potential function which enforces the supervised learning  
 933 paradigm,  $S$  is the subset of supervised input vectors and  $\Phi_c$  is a potential associated to  $c$ , a  
 934 FOL formula part of the base knowledge. Specifically,  $\Phi_c$  enforces the satisfaction of the clause  
 935  $c$ , while  $\lambda_c$  determines the weight of such clause.

936 The approach used by RNM is similar to the one used in KENN: a base NN (or any learner)  
 937 is used as a foundation which provides initial predictions: on those, the model performs a post  
 938 elaboration step, enforcing logical rules and improving the predictions. Also, like in KENN,  
 939 the clause weights are trained together with the whole model, which is a desirable thing in real  
 940 use cases. However, one significant drawback of RNM is that, for each training step, and also  
 941 at inference time, an optimization problem must be solved. In comparison, KENN is much  
 942 more efficient since it is implemented as an actual layer of the NN architecture, which is then  
 943 trainable end-to-end, together with the clause weights.

## 944 3.5 EXPERIMENTS

945 In this section we describe in detail the experiments performed with KENN. We tested the  
 946 ability of KENN of working with relational data, in the context of Collective Classification [52],  
 947 both with the inductive and transductive learning paradigm.

948 **Definition 3.5.1** (Collective Classification). Consider a directed graph, consisting in a set of  
 949 nodes  $V$  and a set of edges  $E$ . Each  $v \in V$  is described with a vector of features  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and  
 950 belongs to one of  $k$  classes  $\{\omega_i\}_{i=1}^k$ . The set of nodes  $V$  is further divided in two subsets of  
 951 nodes:  $X$ , the set of nodes for which the correct label is known (Training Set), and  $Y$ , the set  
 952 of nodes for which it is unknown (Test Set). The task of Collective Classification is to correctly  
 953 predict the labels of nodes in  $Y$ , given the feature vectors of  $X$  and the topology structure  
 954 determined by  $E$ .

955 Two learning paradigms can be defined:

- 956 • **Inductive Learning:** two separate graphs are used:  $G_x = (X, E_x)$  for training and  
 957  $G_y = (Y, E_y)$  for testing, where  $E_x = \{(u, v) | u, v \in X\}$  and  $E_y = \{(u, v) | u, v \in$   
 958  $Y\}$ . In other words, the edges of nodes between train and test set are not considered.
- 959 • **Transductive Learning:** a single graph is considered, with both training and test nodes:  
 960 the network can use the information coming from the relations from the Test set even  
 961 during training, but the actual supervision will come only from training nodes. Com-  
 962 pared with the inductive paradigm, here the network has more available information,  
 963 and for this reason we can expect better results.

964 We also provide a comparison of our results with the ones from SBR and RNM, reported  
 965 on [3], on the same dataset and using the same learning paradigms. All the experiments were  
 966 carried out with Python 3 and TensorFlow 2 [50]. All the code is publicly available on Github<sup>‡</sup>.

### 967 3.5.1 CITESEER DATASET

968 The experiments were conducted on the Citeseer Dataset [53]: it consists in a citation network  
 969 with 4732 citations (directed links) between 3312 scientific publications (nodes), belonging  
 970 to 6 different classes which represent the topic of the paper. Each node in the dataset is repre-  
 971 sented by a 0/1 valued feature vector, where each entry indicates the absence or presence of the  
 972 corresponding word in the dictionary, which is constituted by 3703 unique words.

### 973 3.5.2 THE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

The knowledge that we want to use in order to improve the predictions from the NN is the  
 intuitive fact that, if a paper cites another paper, it is probably true that they are of the same

---

<sup>‡</sup><https://github.com/rmazzier/KENN-Citeseer-Experiments>

topic. If we denote with  $T_i(x)$  the truth value that node  $x$  belongs to the  $i$ -th output class, this fact can be encoded in terms of a logical clause as follows:

$$\forall x \forall y \quad T_i(x) \wedge \text{Cite}(x, y) \rightarrow T_i(y), \quad i = 1, \dots, 6$$

974 meaning that the this clause is repeated one time for each different output class. Inside KENN,  
975 this clause is represented as a disjunction of literals as follows:

$$\forall x \forall y \quad \neg T_i(x) \vee \neg \text{Cite}(x, y) \vee T_i(y), \quad i = 1, \dots, 6$$

### 976 3.5.3 EXPERIMENTAL SETUP

977 The aim of these experiments was to obtain comparable results to those reported in [3]. For  
978 this reason we used the same base NN that was used there, which consists in a fully connected  
979 dense NN with three hidden layers, each of which using 50 hidden units and the ReLu activa-  
980 tion function. Specifically, the NN takes in input only the features of each document in the  
981 dataset, meaning that it will be blind to the relations between them. For this reason, we can  
982 already observe that the predictions of the NN will not be influenced in any way by the choice  
983 of the learning paradigm. Specifically, we used the same random seed for both the tasks, so the  
984 the predictions of the NN are exactly the same between the two paradigms. The relational in-  
985 formation (i.e. the citations between the papers) is introduced only at the level of the KE, and is  
986 treated as base knowledge. Note that this is a very specific case: KENN, in general, is designed  
987 to be able to learn both unary and binary predicates. In this case instead, relational knowledge  
988 acts just as a supervisor, and the only learned predicates are the unary ones. Specifically, the  
989 forward pass is constituted by the following steps:

- 990 1. The base NN takes in input the matrix of features for the current batch of data, and  
991 returns the matrix of unary preactivations  $U$  (without the column containing the object  
992 identifiers, which is left implicit);
- 993 2. The matrix of binary predicates  $B$  is derived directly from the data, according to the cur-  
994 rent learning paradigm being considered. Since there is just a binary predicate, namely  
995 the Cite predicate, matrix  $B$  will have just three columns, two for the indices of the  
996 object pairs, and one for the truth value of the binary predicate.
- 997 3. KENN takes in input  $U$  and  $B$ , and produces deltas  $\delta U$  and  $\delta B$ , as described in Section  
998 3.3. Since we are just interested in learning unary predicates, we just keep  $\delta U$ , while  $\delta B$   
999 is discarded;

4. Differently from the standard case where the sigmoidal activation function is applied in the KE module, here the KE uses the softmax activation function. This is because for these experiments we are considering a multi-class classification task where each object can belong exclusively to one class. Specifically, the output of the KENN layer is obtained as follows:

$$y' = \text{softmax}(U + \delta U).$$

1000 In Figure 3.6 an example with all the listed steps is reported. Additionally, note that the truth  
 1001 values of the connections for this dataset are hard, meaning that nodes can be either connected  
 1002 or not connected, with no other alternative. For this reason pairs of connected objects are as-  
 1003 signed a very high value, in this case 500<sup>§</sup>. Also notice that only the pairs of connected objects  
 1004 are reported in  $B$ . In fact, it would be useless to consider also the pairs of not connected nodes  
 1005 (thus having a preactivation value equal to  $-500$  for the Cite predicate), since for those cases  
 1006 the grounded clauses of our knowledge would be automatically satisfied<sup>¶</sup>, and KENN would  
 1007 not apply any change. Thus, the number of rows of matrix  $B$  will be equal to the number of  
 1008 edges in the training graph.

1009 In our model architecture, we also stack three KENN layers instead of only one: this choice  
 1010 is motivated by the fact that a single layer would consider only the neighbors of each node. By  
 1011 adding three layers, instead, we allow for a propagation of the changes to farther nodes. This  
 1012 intuition was confirmed by empirically better results with respect to ones using a single KENN  
 1013 layer.

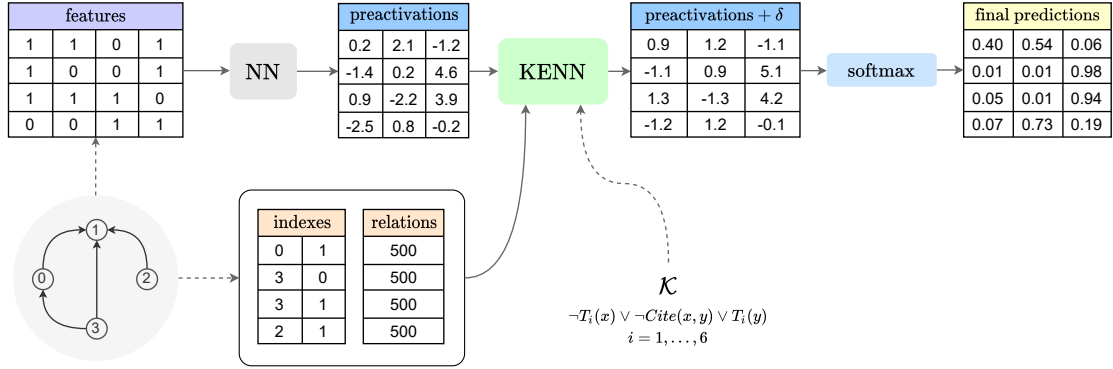
1014 In addition to considering two different learning paradigms, we also evaluate our model on  
 1015 splits of different sizes, in order to see the impact of the dataset size on the final results. Specifi-  
 1016 cally, for each learning paradigm, the model is trained on 10%, 25%, 50%, 75%, 90% splits of  
 1017 the whole dataset. Additionally, to have statistically relevant results, for each training percent-  
 1018 age the dataset was trained for 500 times, where each time the training data is randomly picked  
 1019 in such a way that the class balance between train validation and test sets is preserved. Such a  
 1020 high number was motivated by the fact that, when training on always different splits, variance  
 1021 of the results can be very high, especially in the cases where the training set constitutes a small  
 1022 percentage of the whole dataset. In [3], the same procedure has been adopted, with the only dif-  
 1023 ference that the number of training runs for each split percentage was 10 instead of 500. This  
 1024 was probably due to much longer training times: recall that in the case of SBR and RNM an

---

<sup>§</sup>There is not a specific reason for the choice of this number. The only important thing is that, when applying the sigmoidal activation function, the resulting truth value is close to 1.

<sup>¶</sup>Take  $c_1$  and  $c_2$  two nodes in the graph which are not connected; given the clause  $\neg T(c_1) \vee \neg \text{Cite}(c_1, c_2) \vee T(c_2)$ , its truth value will be always  $\approx 1$ , since  $\mathcal{I}(\neg \text{Cite}(c_1, c_2)) \approx 1$ .





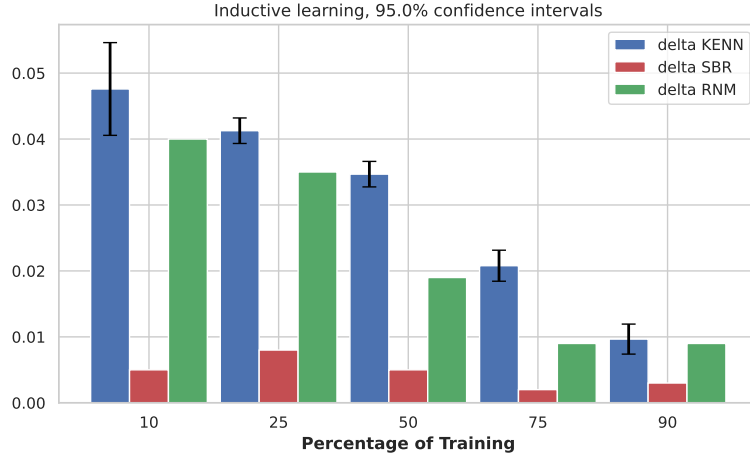
**Figure 3.6:** Simple example showing how the relational knowledge is injected in the NN for the Citeseer experiments. In this toy example, features are 4-dimensional vectors and there are 3 unary predicates; in the actual experiments, feature vectors have 3703 components and the output classes are 6.

optimization problem must be solved at each training step and also at inference time. Indeed, this fact highlights how one of the main advantages of KENN is its efficiency and scalability. Due to the different number of training runs, results won't be exactly comparable to the ones provided in [3]; nevertheless, our results will have a strong statistical significance. Additionally, we also provide 95% confidence intervals for each test set accuracy, as well as p-values with respect to the null hypothesis that the mean test set accuracy of KENN is the same as the one of the base NN.

### 3.5.4 RESULTS

#### INDUCTIVE LEARNING

In Table 3.1 we report the results of the experiments for the inductive case. Specifically, each column contains the mean of all the test set accuracies from the different runs. The results for SBR and RNM are the ones reported in [3]. Also note that since we were not able to perfectly replicate the results for the base NN accuracies reported in [3], we report the ones obtained by our base NN, and use the relative improvements as the main evaluation metric. The relative improvements are also visualized in Figure 3.7, together with 95% confidence intervals, with a comparison with those from SBR and RNM. Finally in Figure 3.8, we report histograms showing the distribution of the test set accuracies of both our base NN and KENN, together with the distribution of the relative improvements for all the runs. The p-values for every training percentage were extremely small and well below the 0.05 threshold: for completeness, they are reported in Table 3.3. This means that, for both the training paradigms, we can safely reject the



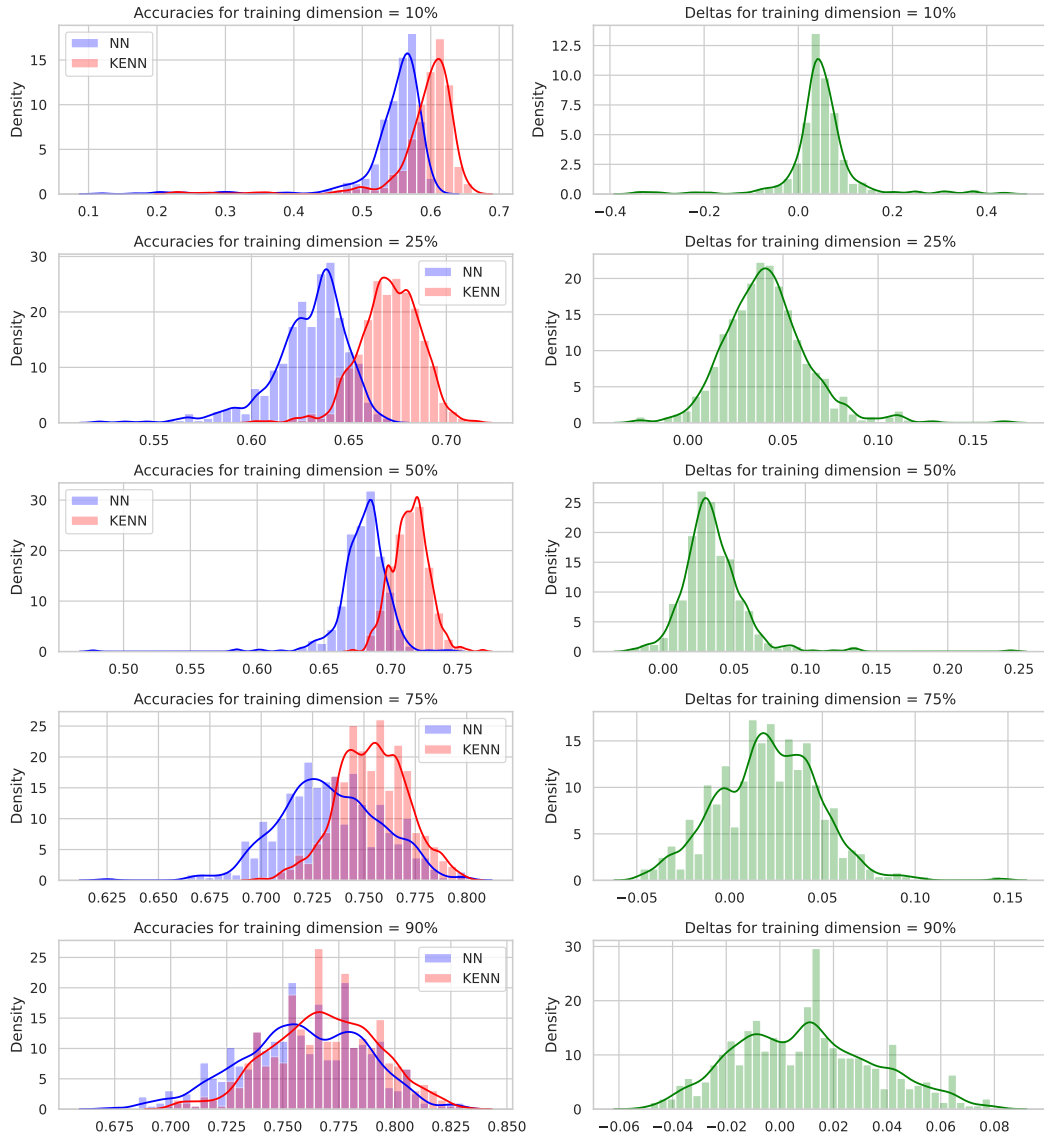
**Figure 3.7:** Relative improvements for the inductive learning task. 95% confidence intervals are provided for our results.

1045 null hypothesis and be almost sure that the improvements provided by KENN are not a result  
of random perturbations due to the different choice of the training splits. As we can observe,

**Table 3.1:** Test set accuracies obtained with the inductive paradigm. The columns for SBR and RNM show the results reported in [3]. The quantities between parentheses denote the relative improvement with respect to the base NN.

% training	NN	SBR	RNM	NN	KENN
10	0.645	0.650 (+0.005)	<b>0.685</b> (+0.040)	0.544	0.601 (+0.048)
25	0.674	0.682 (+0.008)	<b>0.709</b> (+0.035)	0.629	0.671 (+0.041)
50	0.707	0.712 (+0.005)	<b>0.726</b> (+0.019)	0.680	0.714 (+0.034)
75	0.717	0.719 (+0.002)	0.726 (+0.009)	0.733	<b>0.754</b> (+0.021)
90	0.723	0.726 (+0.003)	0.732 (+0.009)	0.759	<b>0.768</b> (+0.010)

1046 KENN outperforms both RNM and SBR for each training percentage. Additionally, we can  
1047 see how the relative improvement becomes smaller as the training percentage increases. This  
1048 makes sense from an intuitive point of view: when disposing of few data, NNs struggle to give  
1049 good results and the prior knowledge plays a more important role, providing more improve-  
1050 ments. On the other hand, when the NN is trained on a lot of data, the knowledge becomes  
1051 less important: indeed the NN has now access to much more information and, in some sense,  
1052



**Figure 3.8:** Histograms showing the distribution of the accuracies for all the different 500 runs, for the inductive case. On the left, the accuracies of the base NN vs accuracies of KENN. On the right the distribution of the relative improvements.

can learn the rules on its own from the patterns in the data. In this sense, RNM shows a similar behavior with respect to KENN, even if providing less relative improvement overall.

#### TRANSDUCTIVE LEARNING

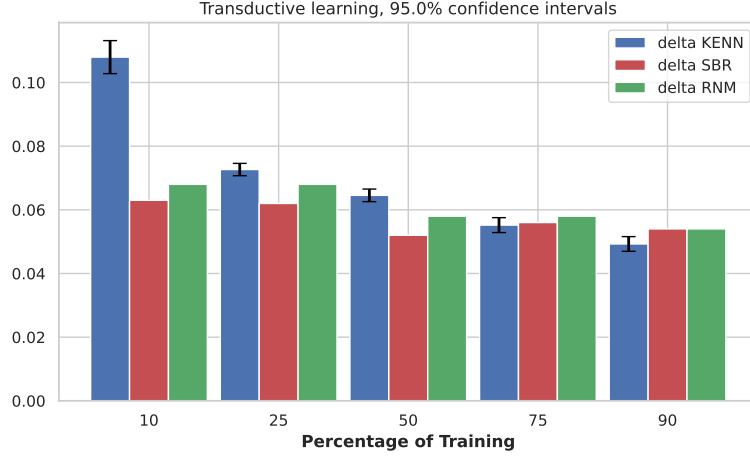
We report the same results for the transductive case in Table 3.2, Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10 respectively. Note that the results of our NN are exactly same of the ones from the inductive paradigm; this is because we used the same random seed for both the paradigms, and, as already mentioned, the base NN is blind to the learning paradigm. On the other hand, results of the NN from [3] report different results. Looking at the relative improvements, we can observe how all the three methods provide similar results for all the training dimensions, the only exception being the 10% training percentage, where KENN shows a much higher relative improvement. KENN still seem to outperform SBR and RNM for the 10%, 25% and 50% training percentages, but the difference is far less pronounced. However, recalling how the results from [3] are the average of just 10 runs, the comparison cannot be considered very reliable.

**Table 3.2:** Test set accuracies obtained with the transductive paradigm. The columns for SBR and RNM show the results reported in [3]. The quantities between parentheses denote the relative improvement with respect to the base NN.

% training	NN	SBR	RNM	NN	KENN
10	0.640	0.703 (+0.063)	<b>0.708</b> (+0.068)	0.544	0.652 (+0.108)
25	0.667	0.729 (+0.062)	<b>0.735</b> (+0.068)	0.629	0.702 (+0.073)
50	0.695	0.747 (+0.052)	<b>0.753</b> (+0.058)	0.680	0.744 (+0.065)
75	0.708	0.764 (+0.056)	0.766 (+0.058)	0.733	<b>0.788</b> (+0.055)
90	0.726	0.780 (+0.054)	0.780 (+0.054)	0.759	<b>0.808</b> (+0.049)

#### 3.5.5 CLAUSE WEIGHTS AND SATISFACTION OF THE RULES

One of the best features of KENN is its capability to learn the clause weights. This is a fundamental property, since it allows the model to automatically boost the importance of useful rules, and to ignore useless ones. However, to actually verify that KENN is able to correctly



**Figure 3.9:** Relative improvements for the transductive learning task. 95% confidence intervals are provided for our results.

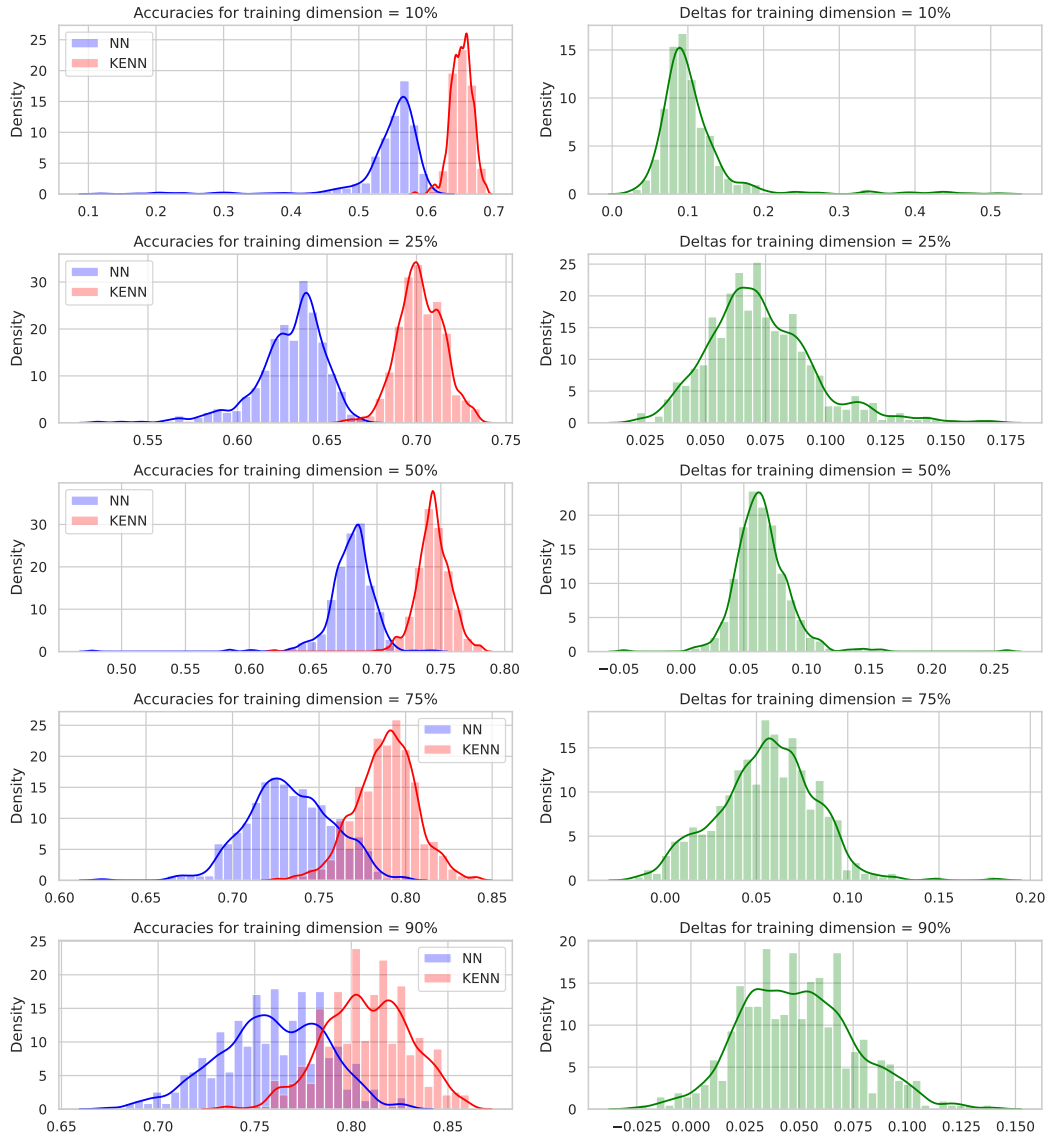
**Table 3.3:** p-values computed for each learning paradigm and for each training percentage. Values below  $10^{-100}$  are reported as 0.

% training	p-value Inductive	p-value Transductive
10	$3.22 \cdot 10^{-36}$	0
25	0	0
50	0	0
75	$2.25 \cdot 10^{-48}$	0
90	$2.87 \cdot 10^{-9}$	0

learn these weights, we analyzed them after training and investigated on the reasons that lead to their growth or shrinkage.

Specifically, what we care about is to have an empirical evidence that, if a certain clause is particularly important, KENN is able to increase its respective clause weight. We quantify the importance of a specific clause by defining the *clause compliance*, a metric which expresses how much a clause is satisfied on the training data.

**Definition 3.5.2** (Clause Compliance). Let  $G := (V, E, T)$  be the current training graph, where  $V$  is the set of nodes,  $E$  is the set of edges and  $T : V \rightarrow \{1, \dots, 6\}$  is the function that maps each node to its ground truth class. Given one of the output classes  $k \in \{1, \dots, 6\}$  and the corresponding clause  $c_k : \neg k(x) \vee \neg \text{Cite}(x, y) \vee k(y)$ , we define the clause compliance



**Figure 3.10:** Histograms showing the distribution of the accuracies for all the different 500 runs, for the transductive case. On the left, the accuracies of the base NN vs accuracies of KENN. On the right the distribution of the relative improvements.

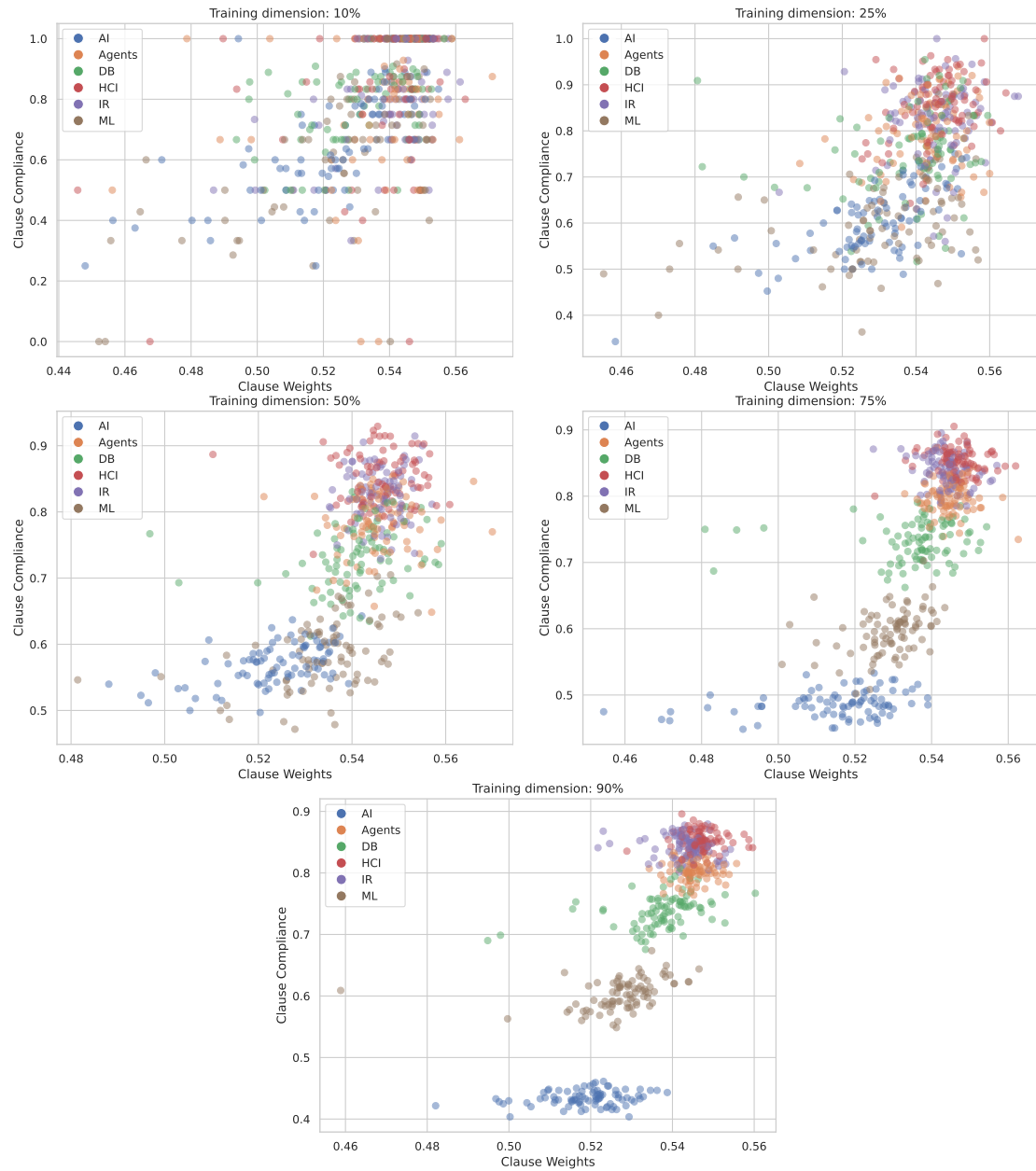
1081 of  $c_k$  in  $G$  as:

$$C(G, c_k) = \frac{\sum_{v \in T_k} \sum_{u \in \mathcal{N}(v)} \mathbf{1}(u \in T_k)}{\sum_{v \in T_k} |\mathcal{N}(v)|} \quad (3.15)$$

1082 where  $T_k$  is the set of nodes of topic  $k$ ,  $\mathcal{N}(v)$  is the number of nodes cited by  $v$ , and  $\mathbf{1}(u \in$   
1083  $T_k)$  is equal to 1 if  $u \in T_k$  or 0 otherwise. In simpler terms,  $C(G, c_k)$  is the ratio between  
1084 the number of citations from papers of topic  $k$  to papers of topic  $k$  and the total number of  
1085 citations coming from papers of topic  $k$ . It is equal to 1 when always satisfied, and is equal to  
1086 0 when never satisfied. To investigate whether KENN is capable to associate higher weights to  
1087 clauses with a high clause compliance, we perform 85 different training runs, and inspect the  
1088 learned weights for each clause against its clause compliance. We repeat this process for each  
1089 percentage of the training set. Results are visualized in Figure 3.11: by looking at the obtained  
1090 plots, we can observe that there is a strong correlation between the two variables, which gets  
1091 more pronounced as the size of the training set increases. Another interesting fact is that, as the  
1092 clause compliance decreases, an higher variance in the values of the clause weights is observed.  
1093 For example, looking at the 90% case, we can see that the clause associated to the topic “AI” has  
1094 a mean clause compliance slightly smaller than 0.5, meaning that this rule is satisfied slightly less  
1095 than half of the times. By looking at all the values assumed by its clause weight throughout the  
1096 runs, we can indeed see that the results are very variable with respect to the other topics. This  
1097 behavior goes against our intuition in some way: if a rule is not useful (like in this case), then  
1098 the clause weights should monotonically decrease during training, leading to low and tightly  
1099 packed values for the learned clause weights. In reality, we found that as the compliance of the  
1100 rules in the data decreases, the learning of their clause weights becomes more randomic: this  
1101 could be due to a variety of factors, which do not appear to have an obvious or easy explanation.  
1102 One possible interpretation could be that different randomic initializations of the base NN  
1103 could lead less compliant clauses to actually produce positive changes, in turn leading KENN  
1104 to believe that the importance of such a clause should be boosted.

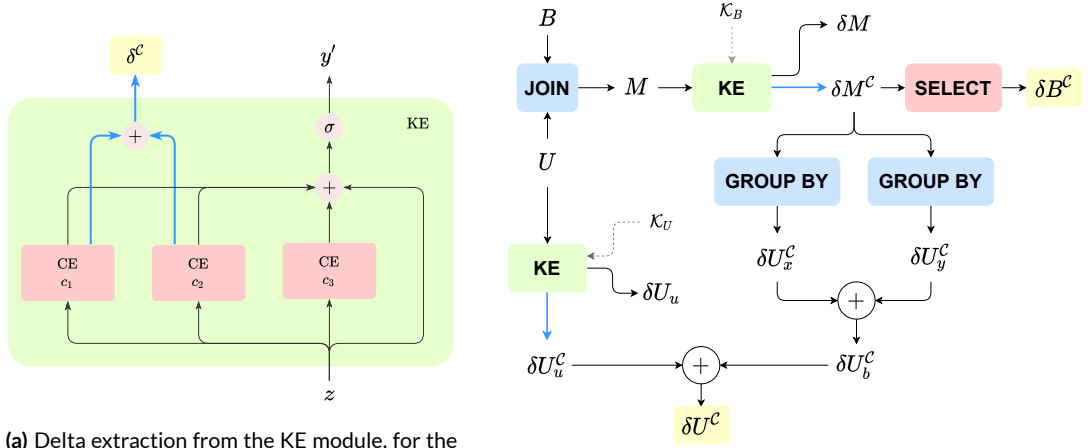
## 1105 3.6 EXPLAINABILITY IN KENN

1106 In this section, we study how to obtain explanations from KENN. In Chapter 2 we studied dif-  
1107 ferent kinds of approaches for interpretability and explainability in ML, specifically for the case  
1108 of NNs. We also analyzed the important distinction between transparent models and post-hoc  
1109 explainability methods, together with their advantages and disadvantages. As we know, KENN



**Figure 3.11:** Scatterplots showing the relation between clause weight and clause compliance, for each clause from 85 different runs, for each different training percentage. We can observe how, as the training dimension increases, KENN learns to adjust the clause weights according on how much that clause is satisfied in the training set. Each dot in the scatterplots corresponds to a clause in a specific run; the colour of the dot denotes the topic related to that clause.



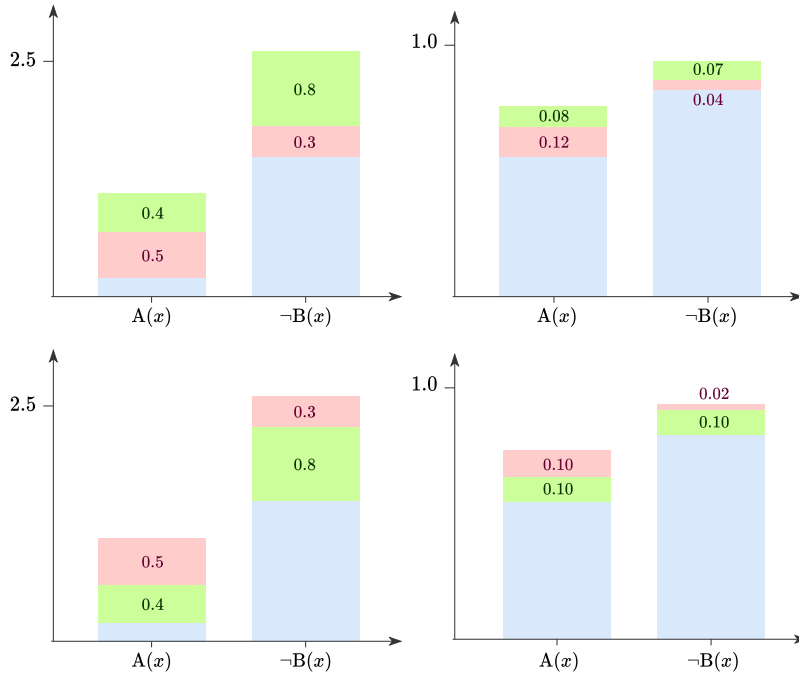


(a) Delta extraction from the KE module, for the clauses subset  $\mathcal{C} = \{c_1, c_2\}$ .

(b) Delta extraction for the binary case. Blue arrows denote the extraction operation depicted on Figure 3.12a.

**Figure 3.12:** Process for extracting deltas relative to the clauses in  $\mathcal{C} \subset \mathcal{K}$ . The output deltas are highlighted in yellow for both the unary case (a) and binary case (b).

can't work on its own: it needs a base NN classifier which has the task of providing the initial predictions. For this reason, KENN can't be considered a completely transparent model just because it is designed to work alongside a standard NN architecture, which is inherently hard to interpret and explain. However, once the initial predictions from the base NN are provided, everything that happens inside the KE can be interpreted; for this reason, KENN can be considered a partially transparent model. Indeed, if we restrict just to the phase where the rules from the knowledge are enforced, there is a straightforward way to visualize how KENN modified the predictions of the NN, that is to inspect the delta vectors. Specifically, this process can happen at different levels of precision: for example, at inference time, we might want to study the changes caused by the whole base knowledge, or we might desire to isolate the effects of a single clause on a subset of input samples. More precisely, given a base knowledge  $\mathcal{K}$ , and given a subset of clauses  $\mathcal{C} \subset \mathcal{K}$  for which we want to observe the effects, the delta vector we are looking for is the sum of all the vectors  $\delta_c, \forall c \in \mathcal{C}$ . However, note that the KE module is designed to compute  $\sum_{\mathcal{K}} \delta^c$ , while we are interested in  $\sum_{\mathcal{C}} \delta^c$ : for this reason we will need to intercept the deltas just as they are returned by their respective CEs. Figure 3.12 provides a visualization of this process for the unary and binary case. We can also extract the deltas caused by different non overlapping subsets of clauses. Note however that the exact contribution from each different subset can be visualized only when working at the level of preactivations. Indeed, we know that the actual delta at the activation level (denoted in Section 3.1.4 as  $\delta^g$ ) will change



**Figure 3.13:** The Figure shows an example where we apply deltas for two different clauses, in different orders, at the preactivation level (left), and the resulting deltas at the activation level (right). The deltas from each clause are represented by different colors, while the predictions from the base NN are shown in blue. On the right, the deltas at the activation level are shown: note how, when changing the order of application of the same deltas at the preactivation level, the deltas at the activation level change.

based on the preactivations values, even if the initial delta applied at the preactivation level (denoted in previous section as  $\delta^f$ ) is the same. Recall that we already illustrated this fact in Figure 3.1. This implies that, when cumulating more deltas from different clauses, we can visualize the exact contribution from each clause at the preactivation level, but we lose this information at the activation level, where the only thing we can observe is the aggregated contribution of all the clauses. In other words, the contribution of each clause at the activation level depends on the order in which the clauses apply their contribution at the preactivation level, which is not defined since all the deltas are applied simultaneously. A simple example showing this problem is reported in Figure 3.13.

Another nice property of KENN is the possibility to quantify at inference time how much the contributions from the Base Knowledge improved (or worsened) the predictions of the base NN for the current sample being classified. For example, we can define the following metric:

**Definition 3.6.1** (Improvement Score). Given an input sample  $x$  to be classified into  $m$  dif-

ferent classes, given the vector of deltas  $\delta^{\mathcal{C}} \in \mathbb{R}^m$  coming from clauses belonging to  $\mathcal{C} \subset \mathcal{K}$  and given vector of ground truth labels  $l \in \{-1, 1\}^m$ , where entries corresponding to the positive class are equal to 1 and  $-1$  otherwise, then the improvement score for sample  $x$  with respect to  $\mathcal{C}$  is defined as follows:

$$IS(x, \mathcal{C}) = \sum_{i=1}^m -\delta_i^{\mathcal{C}} \cdot l_i = -\delta^{\mathcal{C}\top} \cdot l. \quad (3.16)$$

Specifically, the improvement score quantifies the positive contribution of the KENN layer for the current prediction.

In simple terms, what happens in equation (3.16) is that each term of the delta vector will produce a positive contribution only when its sign is the same as the corresponding ground truth label.

Additionally, recall that KENN aggregates the deltas of all the clauses by simply summing the individual deltas: this is very convenient since it makes KENN fast and scalable. However, we saw that this kind of aggregation may be too simplistic, and may cause inconsistencies in the case where multiple clauses disagree on how certain truth values should be changed. In order to diagnose this kind of behavior on a trained KENN model, we can use the following score.

**Definition 3.6.2** (Disagreement Score). Using the previously defined notation, the disagreement score for sample  $x$  with respect to the subset of clauses  $\mathcal{C}$  is defined as follows:

$$DS(x, \mathcal{C}) = \sum_{c \in \mathcal{C}} |\delta_c| - \left| \sum_{c \in \mathcal{C}} \delta_c \right|. \quad (3.17)$$

This score quantifies the amount of inconsistencies and disagreement among the clauses belonging to  $\mathcal{C}$ : a score of 0 implies perfect agreement between all the clauses, while an higher score reflects an higher disagreement.

These defined metrics can be useful for different situations, like during debugging or for the model evaluation phase. For example, we might want to analyze the predictions for which KENN gave the most improvements or, viceversa, we might want to see where KENN has actually provided worse results with respect to the base NN. In general, explanations extracted from KENN can be useful mostly to evaluate the impact of the knowledge, and can allow the user to refine it, by adding or removing rules that proved to be useful or damaging. We remark, however, that this transparency is just partial and limited to the knowledge enforcement

<sup>1168</sup> stage: indeed, the base NN remains an opaque component of the whole model, even if used in  
<sup>1169</sup> conjunction with KENN.

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1172 WIP

# 4

## Conclusion



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