

Discrete choice and pseudo-random errors in MATSim

Sebastian Hörl

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Repository

- Code is at <https://github.com/sebhoerl/matsim-pseudo-random-errors>
- Latex is at `/latex`
- Notebook for running + plots is at `Analysis.ipynb`

1 Introduction

- Currently, no taste variation in MATSim
- MATSim based on utility maximization
- Aim 1: Explain in detail how choice process in MATSim works and how it is different from discrete choice models
- Aim 2: Present a way to bring DCM and MATSim closer to each other with pseudo-random errors terms

2 MATSim choice process

Toy example:

- Point X and Point Y
- N agents with a plan that consists of an activity at X and an activity at Y , connected by a trip
- The trip can either by mode A (e.g. car) or mode B (e.g. pt)
- Initially, the trip is teleported with the same speed and distance factor, i.e. the two options are equal. We start with 100% of the trips with mode A
- The simulation uses a selection startegy (BestScore or ChangeExpBeta) and an innovation strategy (ChangeLeg-Mode)
- Each experiment we run 20 times with different random seeds.

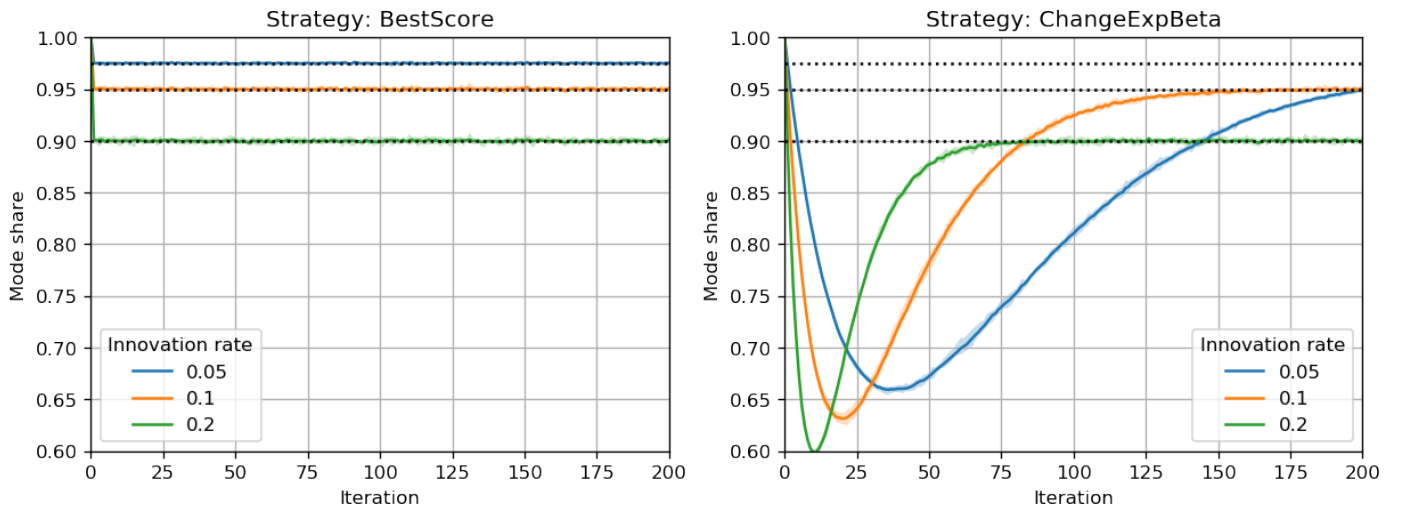


Figure 1: Standard behaviour

- We start with a per-trip scoring. A A trip gives a score of -1.0 , a B trip gives a score of -2.0 .
- Figure 2 shows the standard MATSim behaviour with two different replanning strategies (BestScore and ChangeExpBeta) for different innovation rates. They show the mode share of mode A . First, it starts with 100%, then it goes down and for the ChangeExpBeta we make jumps back (in the agent memory of three plans). Eventually, we stabilize over the iterations at a mode share that represents the replanning rate.
- Because the score of A is better, the agents select usually this mode. Only in the case when they do a ChangeLegMode B is chosen, so the share of B equals $\frac{1}{2}\rho$ with ρ being the replanning rate.
- NOTE: The ChangeLegMode strategy was modified here, because in the current MATSim version it only proposes modes, which are NOT currently chosen. In that case innovation from A would always lead to B and the other way round. In essence, one then has a mode share of exactly ρ for B .

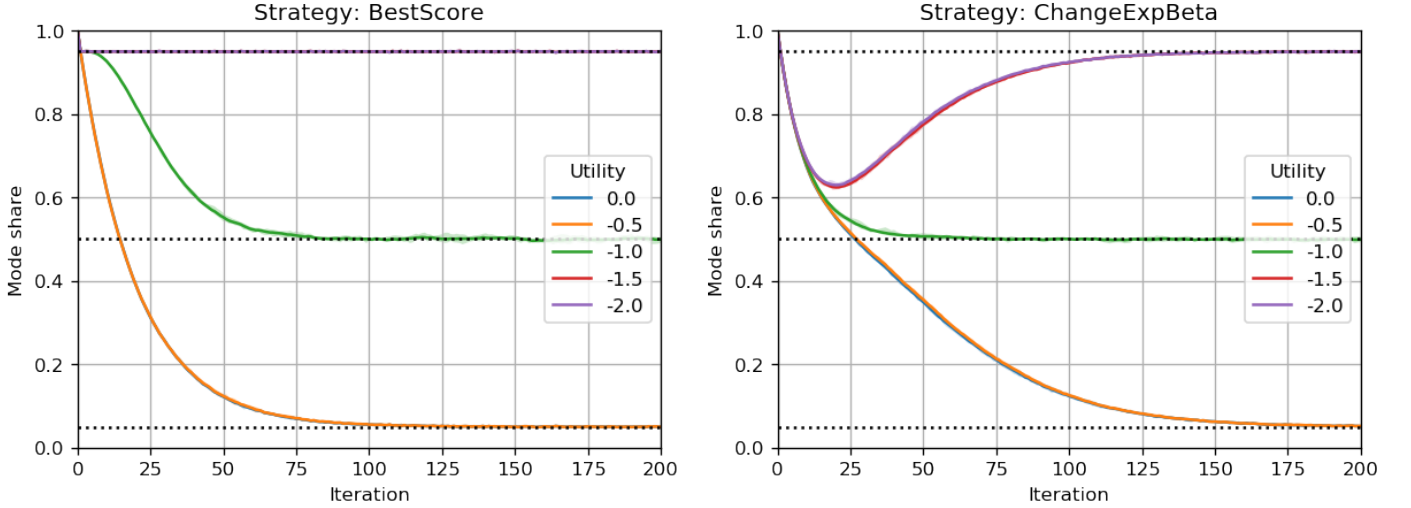


Figure 2: Varying scores with utility maximization

- In Figure 2 the experiment is repeated with an innovation rate of 10%. Clearly, the mode share goes again to 95%, but here we vary the scores. One mode has a score of -1.0 here while the score for the other mode is varied. The plot shows nicely that the magnitude of the value does not matter when looking where the system converges, the only thing that matters is which mode is the better one.
- The experiment could probably be improved by choosing lower magnitudes in general, I suppose that then we would see a difference in convergence speed for ChangeExpBeta.
- In any case, the experiment shows the big difference to choice models. A choice modeller working with MATSim who sees the parameters (which are not called utility parameters, but scoring parameters, to be fair!) would probably expect that changing these values would substantially influence the mode share. Clarifying this is one aim of this paper.
- But this also shows that one can not easily port utility parameters from a discrete choice model to MATSim, because the magnitude of the values does not vary.

This would be the point here to discuss constrained cases. One may see more diverse mode choices when parameters from a discrete choice model are applied, but they would stem from constraints that are built into the simulation. Most importantly, agents who have generally better parameters for car would potentially not use the car, because of congestion and select another mode of transport. It would then be interesting to discuss how those constraints translate to the discrete choice model.

From our analyses with a pure DMC implementation in MATSim we saw that we can usually take trip-based discrete choice models and they would produce a good fit with reference mode shares if (and only if) we add sensible constraints such as vehicle continuity.

3 Adding pseudo-random errors

- MNL models (and other close form choice models) are based on formulations somewhat like $k^* = \arg \max_k \{u_1, \dots, u_k, \dots\}$ between different alternatives with different utilities. The utilities would then be separable into a deterministic part and a random part as $u_k = v_k + \sigma\epsilon$. Clearly, here the variability in choice (and taste) is directly included in the model.

- When we look at mode shares, we are interested in the population-wide mode shares, so we look at a share over all persons. We can then assume that the errors for one combination of person, trip and mode are always the same, i.e. they are following a certain distribution if looked at from above over the whole population, but they are fixed on the individual level.
- Above we have established that MATSim tries to maximize the score of the agents plans. In the DCM one wants to find the maximum utility alternative, given the deterministic and random part. So MATSim basically already provided all that is necessary to perform the optimization part, it is only missing the error terms to exactly replicate a DCM.

3.1 Cryptographic hash functions

- In cryptography, hash functions $O = H(I)$ are used which get a variable length series of bits as input and return a fixed-size series of bits as output. The idea is that whenever the same input I is provided, the same output O is generated. At the same time, the input I should not be possible to reconstruct from the output O . This way, websites would “hash” the password of their users and only save the output O in their database. It would then not be possible to reconstruct the password, but when the user provides the password again to log in, it can be tested whether he or she entered the correct password by hashing it again and comparing the two hashes.
- Many cryptographic hash functions (like SHA-256) are constructed around the “avalanche effect” which says that if only one bit in the input changes, more than 50% of the output bits should change. Given a ground set of inputs I_1, \dots, I_N this means that the hashes in their output domain (for 4 bit hashes this would be 0000 to 1111) are uniformly distributed.
- Hence, given a combination of values, we can hash them and obtain uniformly distributed random variables.

3.2 Application to MATSim

- We can define an input string $I = (PersonId, TripIndex, Mode)$ and convert it to a byte array in Java. Java also readily provides cryptographic hashing functions, here we use SHA-256. Given the output O we can divide the output by the maximum number of its output domain of 256 bit (which is not completely straightforward as a normal `long` in Java only has 64bit).
- All that remains then is to add an additional component to the `SumScoringFunction` of MATSim and add an error to the score of an ongoing plan whenever a trip is performed.
- Here, we obtain a uniformly distributed sample u through the hashing function and then transform it to a Gumbel-distributed variable through linear transformation.
- Figure 3.2 shows the simulation outcome. Again, for one mode the (deterministic) score per trip is varied. Clearly, we now replicate the mode shares that a discrete choice model like $P(k) = \exp(-beta_k) / (\exp(-beta_A) + \exp(-beta_B))$ would produce.
- This is a sensible way of integrating parameters from a discrete choice model into MATSim.
- HOWEVER: Note that the reference values (shown as dashed lines) in Figure 3.2 are corrected from the discrete choice model. Given the share for mode A from the model as P_A it is altered through the innovation process of MATSim. In fact, the mode shares in the simulation do not show P_A , but $P_A \cdot \rho + \frac{1}{2}\rho$. Nevertheless, we can this way establish a connection between the theory and practice of discrete choice models and MATSim.
- The influence of the innovation rate is also shown in Figure 3.2. Here, one mode has score -1.0 while the other has score -2.0 . Clearly, with a very high replanning rate of 50% the expected share is strongly modified by MATSim, but the resulting value can be predicted analytically.

4 To be continued ...

- Repeat the experiments in a constrained case (i.e. road capacity for one of the modes)
- Explore relationship between choice models and constraints in MATSim
- Generalize to departure time choice / location choice / route choice

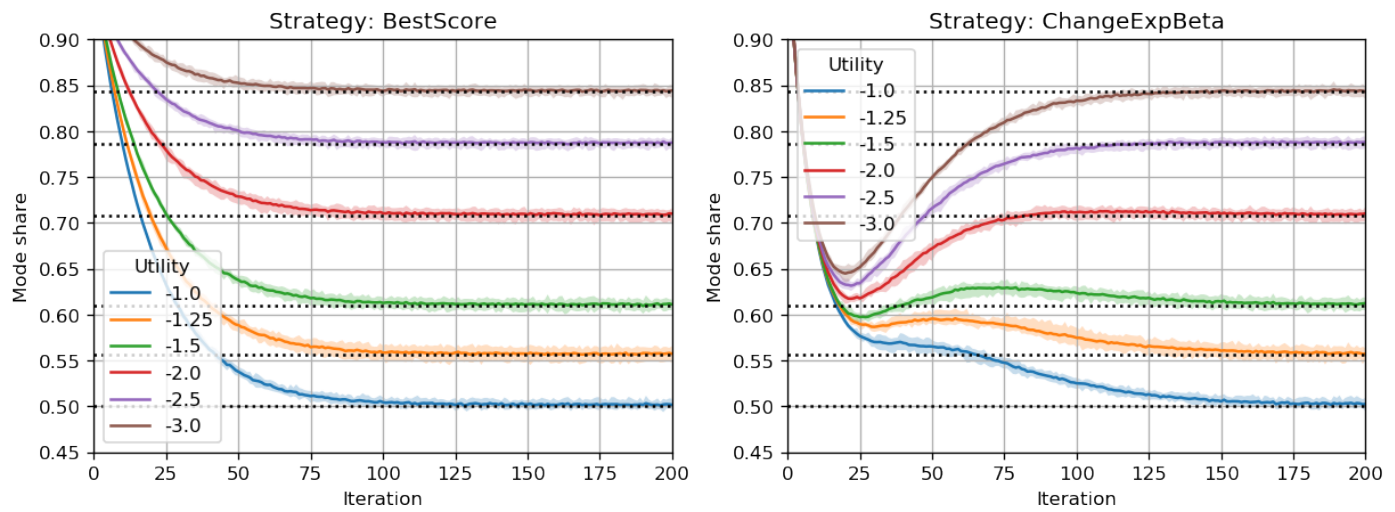


Figure 3: Pseudo-random errors

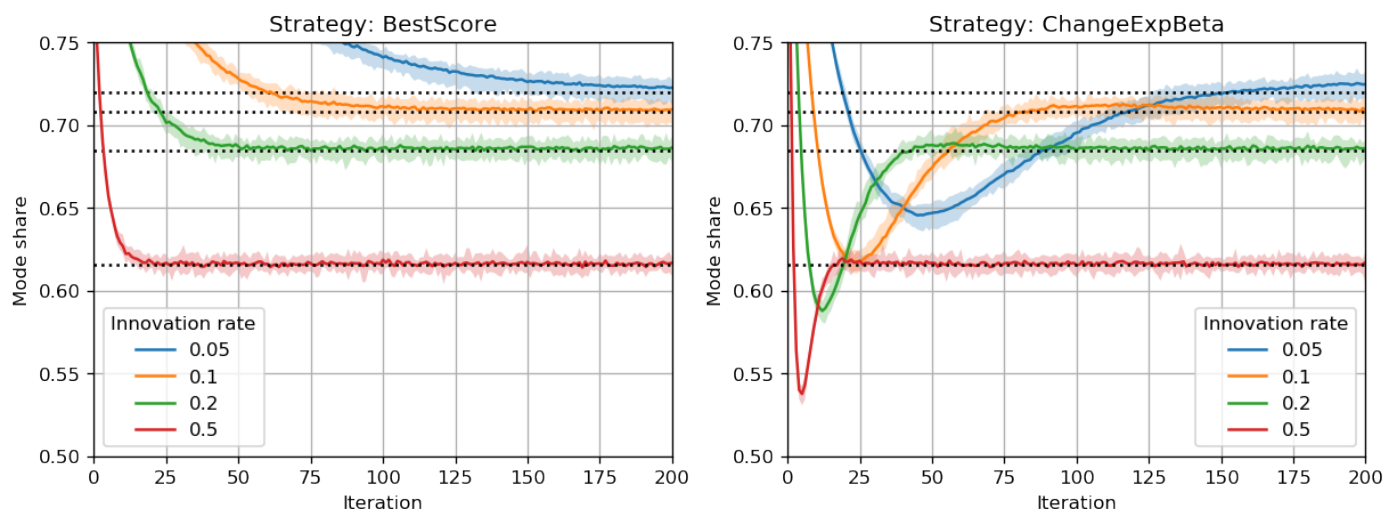


Figure 4: Different replanning rates for pseudo-random errors