

# Safety Multiclass Incremental Learning From Biased Source

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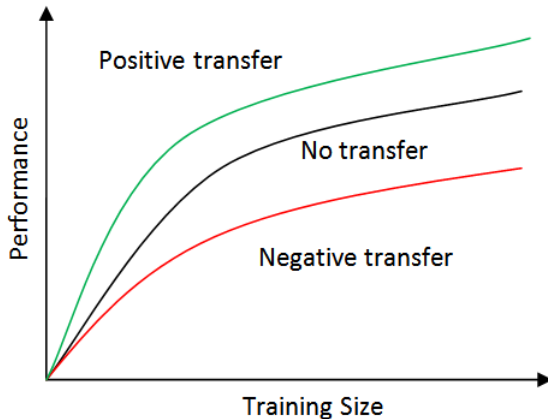


Fig. 1: Positive transfer VS Negative transfer. Relying on unrelated priors could lead to negative transfer.

*Abstract—*

## I. INTRODUCTION

## II. RELATED WORKS

The motivation of transfer knowledge between different domains is to apply the previous information from the source domain to the target one, assuming that there exists certain relationship, explicit or implicit, between the feature space of these two domains [1]. Technically, previous work can be concluded into solving the following three issues: what, how and when to transfer [2].

**What to transfer.** Previous work tried to answer this question from three different aspects: selecting transferable instances, learning transferable feature representations and transferable model parameters. Instance-based transfer learning assume that part of the instances in the source domain could be re-used to benefit the learning for the target domain. Lim et al. proposed a method of augmenting the training data by borrowing data from other classes for object detection [3]. Learning transferable features means to learn common feature that can alleviate the bias of data distribution in target domain. Recently, Long et al. proposed a method that can learn transferable features with deep neural network and showed some impressive results on the benchmarks [4]. Parameter transfer approach assumes that the parameters of the model for

the source task can be transferred to the target task. Yang et al. proposed Adaptive SVMs by transferring parameters by incorporating the auxiliary classifier trained from source domain [5]. On top of Yang's work, Ayatar et al proposed PMT-SVM that can determine the transfer regularizer according to the target data automatically [6]. Tommasi et al. proposed Multi-KT that can utilize the parameters from multiple source models for the target classes [2]. Kuzborskij et al. proposed a similar method to learn new categories by leveraging over the known source [7].

**When and how to transfer.** The question *when to transfer* arises when we want to know if the information acquired from previous task is relevant to the new one (i.e. in what situation, knowledge should not be transferred). In some extreme situation, where the source domain and target one are not relevant, brutal-force transferring the knowledge between them could even degrade the performance of the classifier in target domain. This is often referred to as negative transfer. *How to transfer* the prior knowledge effectively should be carefully designed to prevent inefficient and negative transfer. Some previous work consists in using generative probabilistic method [8] [9] [10]. Bayesian learning methods can predict the target domain by combining the prior source distribution to generate a posterior distribution. Alternatively, some previous max margin methods show that it is possible to learn from a few examples by minimizing the Leave-One-Out (LOO) error for the training model [7] [11]. Previous work shows that there is a closed-form implementation of LOO cross-validation that can generate unbiased model estimation for LS-SVM [12].

Our work correspond to the context above. In this paper, we propose a method based on parameter transfer approach with max margin classifier. We address our work on how to prevent negative transfer when we are not sure whether the prior knowledge is relevant to our target task. We mathematically proof that, without any data distribution assumption, the superior bound of the training loss for our transfer method is the loss of a method learning directly (i.e. without using any prior knowledge). This indicates that when the prior knowledge hurts the transfer procedure, our method can avoid negative transfer automatically.

## III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Our method works in the following scenario. There is a image dataset (source data) containing  $N$  categories and

a classifier trained from this dataset to distinguish these  $N$  categories. This (source) classifier and the features used to learn it is publicly accessible while the dataset itself is private (unknown distribution). Now we collect our own image dataset (target data) coming from  $N+1$  categories. This target dataset consists of  $N$  identical categories to the source data and one new category related to the previous  $N$  categories. In order to train a new classifier for our new task, we would expect our classifier to get better results with respect to

- Maximize positive transfer. Since we know that these two task share some information, our classifier should transfer useful information as much as possible.
- Minimize negative transfer. The data distribution of the source data is unknown. In the extreme situation, the data distribution of the two task could be totally different. Then these irrelevant prior knowledge should be considered as irrelevant and disposed.

In this paper, we focus our work on transferring the knowledge with LS-SVM as the classifier for multi-class transfer problem. In the following we briefly introduce the mathematical setting of our problem and show

#### A. LS-SVM Setting and Definition

Here we introduce the notations used in the rest of the paper. We use any letter with apostrophe to denote the information from the source data, e.g. if  $f(x)$  denotes the model for the target task,  $f'(x)$  denotes the model for the source one.

TABLE I: useful notations in this paper

$f'(x)$	binary function for source task
$f(x)$	binary function for target task
$\phi(x)$	function mapping the input sample into a high dimensional feature space.
$K(x, x)$	kernel matrix with $\phi(x_i) \cdot \phi(x_j)$ corresponding to its element $(i, j)$
$X$	instance matrix with each row representing one instance
$W$	$(N+1)$ -column hyperplane matrix for target task. Each column represents one hyperplane of a binary model
$W'$	hyperplane matrix for the source task
$a'$	the Lagrangian multiplier matrix for source problem. Each column represents a set of
$a$	the Lagrangian multiplier matrix for target problem
$b', b$	the bias vector for source and target task
$a_i, w_i$	$i_{th}$ column of matrix $a$ and $w$
$d_\gamma$	diagonal matrix with $[\gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_N]$ in its main diagonal
$\beta$	row vector $[\beta_1, \dots, \beta_N]$ to control the prior knowledge for the new category
$\varepsilon_{ny_i}$	loss parameter. $\varepsilon_{ny_i} = 1$ if $n = y_i$ and 0 otherwise

Assume that, for our  $(N+1)$ -category target task,  $x \in \mathcal{X}$  and  $y \in \mathcal{Y} = \{1, 2, \dots, N+1\}$  are the input vector and output for the learning task respectively. Meanwhile, we have a set of binary linear classifiers  $f'_n(x) = \phi(x)w'_n + b'_n$ , for  $n = 1, \dots, N$  trained from an unknown distribution with One-Versus-All (OVA) strategy. Now we want to learn a set of new classifier  $f_n(x) = \phi(x)w_n + b_n$ ,  $n = 1, \dots, N+1$ , so that example  $x$  is assigned to the category  $j$  if  $j \equiv \arg \max_{n=1, \dots, N+1} \{f_n(x)\}$ . In LS-SVM, the solution of the model parameters  $(w_n, b_n)$  can be found by solving the following optimization problem:

$$\min R(w_n) + \frac{C}{2} \sum_i^l (Y_{i,n} - \phi(x_i)w_n - b_n)^2$$

Where  $R(w_n)$  is the regularization term to guarantee good generalization performance and avoid overfitting.  $Y$  is a encoded label matrix so that  $Y_{i,n} = 1$  if  $y_i = n$  and  $-1$  otherwise.

In classic LS-SVM setting, the regularization term is set to  $\frac{1}{2} \|w_n\|^2$  and the optimal  $w_n = \phi(X)^T \alpha_n$  while the parameters  $(\alpha_n, b_n)$  can be found by solving

$$\begin{bmatrix} K(X, X) + \frac{1}{C}I & \mathbf{1} \\ \mathbf{1}^T & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_n \\ b_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} Y_n \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad (1)$$

Here  $I$  is the identity matrix and  $\mathbf{1}$  is a column vector with all its elements equal to 1.

Now our task can be divided into two separate part: learning the  $N$  overlapped categories and the new category. We know that the source and target share  $N$  categories. From previous work [5], the regularization term can be written as  $\frac{1}{2} \|w_n - \gamma_n w'_n\|^2$ . Here,  $\gamma_n$  is the regularization parameter controlling the amount of transfer. For the task for new category, we can use multi-source kernel learning strategy in [2]

So the multi-class transfer problem can be solved by optimizing the following objective function:

$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & \frac{1}{2} \sum_{n=1}^N \|w_n - \gamma_n w'_n\|^2 + \frac{1}{2} \left\| w_{N+1} - \sum_{k=1}^N w'_k \beta_k \right\|^2 \\ & \frac{C}{2} \sum_{n=1}^{N+1} \sum_{i=1}^l e_{i,n}^2 \\ \text{subject to} \quad & e_{i,n} = Y_{i,n} - \phi(x_i)w_n - b_n \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

The closed-form of the optimal solution to Eq. (2) is:

$$\begin{aligned} w_n &= \gamma_n w'_n + \sum_i^l \alpha_{in} \phi(x_i) \quad n = 1, \dots, N \\ w_{N+1} &= \sum_k^N \beta_k w'_k + \sum_i^l \alpha_{i(N+1)} \phi(x_i) \end{aligned}$$

Here  $\alpha_{ij}$  is the element  $(i, j)$  in  $\alpha$ .

Let  $\psi$  denotes the first term of left-hand side in Eq. (1) and let:

$$\psi \begin{bmatrix} \alpha' \\ b' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} Y \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad \psi \begin{bmatrix} \alpha'' \\ b'' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} X(W')^T \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad (3)$$

We have:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha \\ b \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \alpha' \\ b' \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} \alpha'' \\ b'' \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} d_\gamma & \beta^T \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad (4)$$

From Eq. (4) we can see that, the solution of Eq. (1) is completed once  $\gamma = [\gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_N]$  and  $\beta$  are set.

#### B. Optimize $\gamma$ and $\beta$

introduce LOO error estimation From above, we can see that the hyperplane for the target problem is determined by  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ . Negative transfer happens when the model aggressively leverage over irrelevant prior knowledge, i.e. set a large value to  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ . However, aggressive leverage over informative priors can improve the performance of the transfer model

greatly. Inspired by some previous works [2] [7], we proposed our method that can minimize the affect of negative transfer from irrelevant priors.

As we mentioned above, another important advantage of LS-SVM over the other model is that we can get unbiased LOO error in closed form [12]. The unbiased LOO estimation for sample  $x_i$  can be written as:

$$\hat{Y}_{i,n} = Y_{i,n} - \frac{\alpha_{in}}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} \text{ for } n = 1, \dots, N+1 \quad (5)$$

Here  $\psi^{-1}$  is the inverse of matrix  $\psi$  and  $\psi_{ii}^{-1}$  is its  $i$ th diagonal element.

Let us call  $\xi_i$  the loss of our multi-class prediction for example  $x_i$ , and  $\xi_i$  can be defined as [13]:

$$\xi_i(\gamma, \beta) = \max_{n \in \{1, \dots, N+1\}} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \hat{Y}_{in}(\gamma, \beta) - \hat{Y}_{iy_i}(\gamma, \beta) \right] \quad (6)$$

Where  $\varepsilon_{ny_i} = 1$  if  $n = y_i$  and 0 otherwise.  $\xi_i(\gamma, \beta) > 0$  if example  $x_i$  is misclassified. The intuition behind this loss function is to enforce the distance between the true class and other classes to be at least 1.

Then we define our objective function as:

$$\begin{aligned} \min \quad & \frac{\lambda_1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^N \|\gamma_j\|^2 + \frac{\lambda_2}{2} \sum_{j=1}^N \|\beta_j\|^2 + \sum_{i=1}^l \xi_i \\ \text{subject to} \quad & 1 - \varepsilon_{ry_i} + \hat{Y}_{ir}(\gamma, \beta) - \hat{Y}_{iy_i}(\gamma, \beta) \leq \xi_i; \\ & \lambda_1, \lambda_2 \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

Here  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$  are two regularization parameters to prevent overfitting. More importantly, by adding these L2 regularization terms, we can guarantee that the optimal  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$  can eliminate the effect of negative transfer (for more details, see Theorem 1).

By adding a dual set of variables, one for each constraint, we get the Lagrangian of the optimization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \max \quad & L(\gamma, \beta, \xi, \eta) = \frac{\lambda_1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^N \|\gamma_j\|^2 + \frac{\lambda_2}{2} \sum_{j=1}^N \|\beta_j\|^2 + \sum_{i=1}^l \xi_i \\ & + \sum_{i,r} \eta_{i,r} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ry_i} + \hat{Y}_{ir}(\gamma, \beta) - \hat{Y}_{iy_i}(\gamma, \beta) - \xi_i \right] \\ \text{subject to} \quad & \forall i, r \quad \eta_{i,r} \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

For simplification,

Algorithm for optimizaition, convex-non-differentiable

### C. Analysis

#### Convergence analysis

#### Superior bound analysis

*Theorem 1:* Assume that  $\bar{\xi}_i$  is the multi-class loss of example  $x_i$  when  $\gamma = \beta = \mathbf{0}$ . Let  $\gamma^*, \beta^*$  be the optimal solution for Eq. (8) and  $\xi_i^*$  be the multi-class loss with respect to example  $x_i$ . Then for every example  $x_i \in \mathcal{X}$ , we have:

$$\sum_i \xi_i \leq \sum_i \bar{\xi}_i$$

### Algorithm 1 $\gamma$ optimization

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**Input:**  $\psi, \alpha', \alpha'', T, \psi$ ,  
**Output:**  $\gamma = \{\gamma^1, \dots, \gamma^n\}, \beta$

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1:  $\beta \leftarrow \mathbf{0}, \gamma \leftarrow \mathbf{1}$ 
2: for  $iter = 1$  to  $T$  do
3:    $\hat{Y} \leftarrow Y - (\psi \circ I)^{-1} (\alpha' - [\alpha'' d_\gamma \quad \alpha'' \beta^T])$ 
4:    $\Delta_\gamma = \mathbf{0}, \Delta_\beta = \mathbf{0}$ 
5:   for  $i = 1$  to  $l$  do
6:      $\Delta_\gamma \leftarrow \Delta_\gamma + \lambda_1 \gamma$ 
7:      $\Delta_\beta \leftarrow \Delta_\beta + \lambda_2 \beta$ 
8:     for  $r = 1$  to  $N+1$  do
9:        $l_{ir} = 1 - \varepsilon_{y_i r} + \hat{Y}_{ir} - \hat{Y}_{iy_i}$ 
10:      if  $l_{ir} > 0$  then
11:        if  $y_i, r \in \{1, \dots, N\}$  then
12:           $\Delta_\gamma^{y_i} \leftarrow \Delta_\gamma^{y_i} - \frac{\alpha_{iy_i}'}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
13:           $\Delta_\gamma^r \leftarrow \Delta_\gamma^r + \frac{\alpha_{ir}'}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
14:        else if  $y_i = N+1$  then
15:           $\Delta_\beta \leftarrow \Delta_\beta - \frac{\alpha_{iy_i}''}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
16:           $\Delta_\gamma^r \leftarrow \Delta_\gamma^r + \frac{\alpha_{ir}'}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
17:        else
18:           $\Delta_\gamma^{y_i} \leftarrow \Delta_\gamma^{y_i} - \frac{\alpha_{iy_i}''}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
19:           $\Delta_\beta \leftarrow \Delta_\beta + \frac{\alpha_{iy_i}'}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}}$ 
20:        end if
21:      end if
22:    end for
23:  end for
24:   $\beta \leftarrow \beta - \frac{\Delta_\beta}{l \times iter}$ 
25:   $\gamma \leftarrow \gamma - \frac{\Delta_\gamma}{l \times iter}$ 
26: end for
```

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*Proof:* When  $\gamma = \beta = \mathbf{0}$ , from Eq. (6) we can get:

$$\bar{\xi}_i = \max_n \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \frac{(\alpha'_{iy_i} - \alpha'_{in})}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} \right]$$

To obtain the optimal value of  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ , we have to seek the saddle point of the Lagrangian problem in (8) by finding the minimum for the prime variables  $\{\gamma, \beta, \xi\}$  and the maximum for the dual variables  $\eta$ . To find the minimum of the primal problem, we require:

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial \xi_i} = 1 - \sum_n \eta_{in} = 0 \rightarrow \sum_n \eta_{in} = 1$$

Similarly, for  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ , we require:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial L}{\partial \gamma_n} &= \lambda_1 \gamma_n + \sum_i \eta_{in} \theta_{in} - \sum_{i,n=y_i} \left( \sum_q \eta_{iq} \right) \theta_{in} \gamma_n \\ &= 1 - \lambda_1 \gamma_n + \sum_i \eta_{in} \theta_{in} - \sum_i \varepsilon_{ny_i} \theta_{in} = 0 \\ \Rightarrow \quad \gamma_n^* &= \frac{1}{\lambda_1} \sum_i (\varepsilon_{ny_i} - \eta_{in}) \theta_{in} \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

In =<sub>1</sub> we use the facts that  $\sum_n \eta_{in} = 1$  and use  $\varepsilon_{ny_i}$  to replace

it.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \beta_n} &= \lambda_2 \beta_n + \left[ \sum_{i,n} \frac{\eta_{in} \alpha''_{in}}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} (\delta_n - \delta_{y_i}) \right] = 0 \\ \Rightarrow \beta_n^* &= \frac{1}{\lambda_2} \sum_{i,n} \frac{\eta_{in} \alpha''_{in}}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} (\delta_{y_i} - \delta_n)\end{aligned}\quad (10)$$

As the strong duality holds, the primal and dual objectives coincide. Plug Eq (9) and (10) into Eq. (8), we have:

$$\sum_{i,n} \eta_{in} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \hat{Y}_{in}(\gamma^*, \beta^*) - \hat{Y}_{iy_i}(\gamma^*, \beta^*) - \xi_i^* \right] = 0$$

Expand the equation above, we have:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{i,n} \eta_{in} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \frac{(\alpha'_{iy_i} - \alpha'_{in})}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} - \xi_i \right] \\ = \lambda_1 \sum_r \|\gamma_r^*\|^2 + \lambda_2 \sum_r \|\beta_r^*\|^2 \geq 0\end{aligned}$$

Rearranging the above, we obtain:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{i,n} \eta_{in} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \frac{(\alpha'_{iy_i} - \alpha'_{in})}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} \right] \\ \geq \sum_{i,n} \eta_{in} \xi_i = \sum_i \xi_i\end{aligned}\quad (11)$$

The left-hand side of Inequation (11) can be bounded by:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{i,n} \eta_{in} \left[ 1 - \varepsilon_{ny_i} + \frac{(\alpha'_{iy_i} - \alpha'_{in})}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} \right] \\ \leq \sum_i \left( \sum_n \eta_{in} \max_r \left\{ 1 - \varepsilon_{ry_i} + \frac{(\alpha'_{iy_i} - \alpha'_{ir})}{\psi_{ii}^{-1}} \right\} \right) \\ = \sum_i \left( \sum_n \eta_{in} \bar{\xi}_i \right) = \sum_i \bar{\xi}_i\end{aligned}\quad (12)$$

When setting  $\gamma = \beta = \mathbf{0}$ , we don't utilize any knowledge from previous task (see Eq. (2)). From Theorem ?? we can conclude **our method can always outperform the method learning directly.**

**discuss  $\lambda$**

#### IV. EXPERIMENT

In this section, we show empirical results of our algorithm on different transferring situations on two datasets: AwA<sup>1</sup> [14] and Caltech-256<sup>2</sup> [15]. We design the following **3 sets of experiments: learning from informative prior, irrelevant prior and mixed prior**, to show the effectiveness of our algorithm.

<sup>1</sup>The features of AwA dataset is available from <http://attributes.kyb.tuebingen.mpg.de/>

<sup>2</sup>Images for Caltech-256 is available from [http://www.vision.caltech.edu/Image\\_Datasets/Caltech256/](http://www.vision.caltech.edu/Image_Datasets/Caltech256/)

#### A. Dataset & Settings

Caltech-256 contains 30607 images from 256 categories. We select the following 10 categories: *bat, bear, dolphin, giraffe, gorilla, horse, leopard, raccoon, skunk, zebra* as our dataset.

AwA dataset consists of 50 animal categories. Its source images is not publicly accessible and we can only access the six pre-extracted feature representations for each image. This property makes it natural as the unknown distribution source dataset to train the prior knowledge. We choose the identical 10 categories as those in Caltech-256 as the source dataset.

#### B. Baselines

We compare our algorithm with two kinds of baselines. The first one is methods without leveraging any prior knowledge (no transfer baselines). The second consists of some methods with transfer techniques. Here are the no transfer baselines.

**0+T(target):** LS-SVM trained only on target data. This baseline can be the indicator as the best performance in the **bad oracle experiment**.

**S(source)+T(target):** **This baseline is only used in good oracle experiment.** We combined the source and target data, assuming that we have fully access to all data, to train the LS-SVM. The result of this baseline might be considered as the best performance achieved in the experiment as well as an important reference for assessing the models with transfer learning methods.

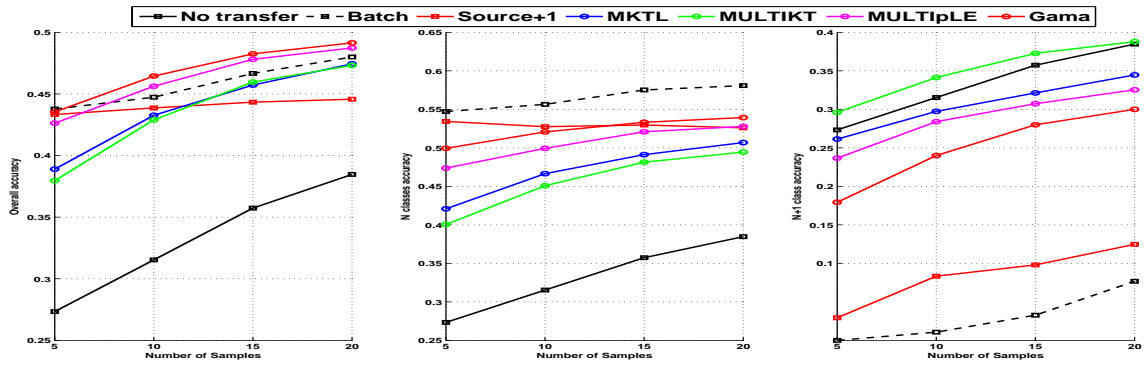
**S(source)+1:** This method only train a new binary LS-SVM for the new category. For the rest of the classes, we use the predictions of the classifiers trained from source data directly. This is arguably the easiest way for transfer learning. **In some of our experiments, it is a good indicator when negative transfer happens.**

We select the following 3 methods as our transfer baselines. The general property of these 3 methods is that they all try to leverage multiple prior knowledge to benefit the transfer procedure.

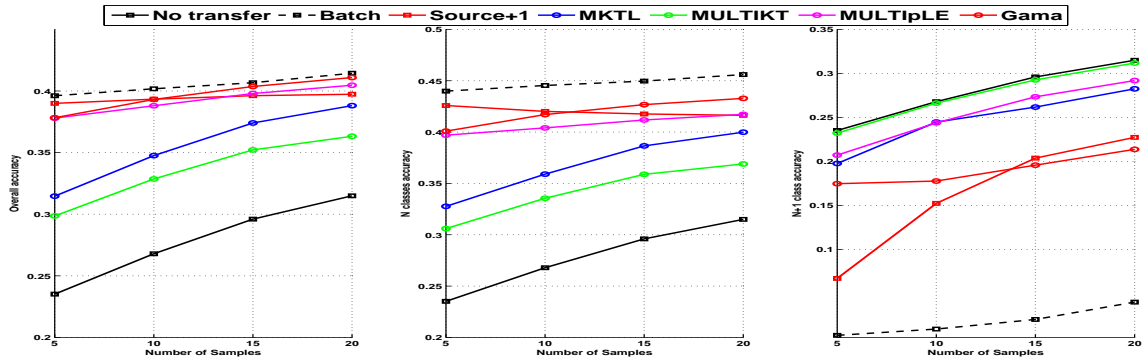
**MKTL [16]:** This method uses the output of prior models as extra feature inputs, and automatically determine from which prior models to transfer and how much to transfer.

**Multi-KT [2]:** This method has similar idea with MKTL. It uses LOO error to determine how much to transfer from prior models and convert it into solving the convex optimization problem.

**MULTIPLE [7]:** The basic setting of this method is similar like ours. It is designed to balance the performance between learning the new category and preserving the model from prior knowledge.



(a) Results on Caltech dataset



(b) Results on AWA dataset

Fig. 2: Acc for good oracle

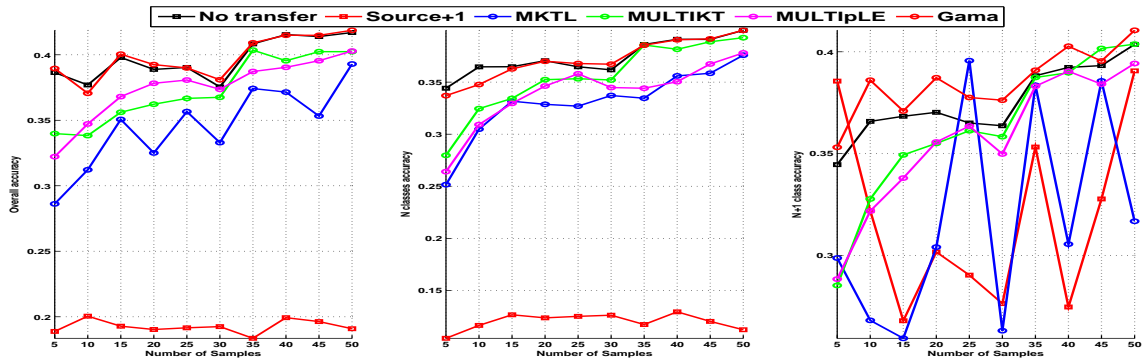


Fig. 3: Acc for bad oracle

C. transfer from good oracle

D. from bad oracle

E. mixed

## V. CONCLUSION

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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