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# WASSERSTEIN GRADIENT FLOW OF TWO-LAYERS RELU NETWORKS

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## 1 DIRECT RESULT

Minimization of a linear combination of ('neurons'  $\{\phi(\theta)\}_{\theta \in \Theta}$ ) through an unknown measure  $\mu$ :  $J^* = \min_{\mu \in \mathcal{M}(\Theta)} J(\mu) = R(\int \phi d\mu) + G(\mu)$

With  $R$  a convex loss function and  $G$  a convex regularizer,  $\mathcal{M}(\Theta)$  the set of signed measures on the parameter space  $\Theta$ .

Discretize the measure into  $m$  particles:  $\min_{w \in \mathbb{R}^m} \min_{\theta \in \Theta^m} J_m(w, \theta) = J(\frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m w_i \delta_{\theta_i})$

Proved: if WGF cvg, it cvg to global minimizer. If  $(w^{(m)}(t), \theta^{(m)}(t))_{t>0}$  are gradient flows for  $J_m$  then, with the corresponding measure  $\mu_{m,t} = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m w_i^{(m)}(t) \sigma_{\theta_i^{(m)}(t)}$  (a WGF),  $J(\mu_{m,t})$  cvg (with  $m, t \rightarrow \inf$ ) to global minimizer of  $J$ .

p-Wasserstein distance between two measures  $\mu, \nu \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R}^d)$ :  $W_p(\mu, \nu)^p = \min_{\gamma \in \Pi(\mu, \nu)} \int |y - x|^p d\gamma(x, y)$

## 2 SIMPLE RESULT

Cast the parameters  $w \in \mathcal{W}^{d+1}$  into  $r \in \mathbb{R}, \eta \in \mathcal{S}^d = w \in \mathbb{R}^{d+1}, \|w\|_2 = 1$  with  $w = r \eta$ . The two flows will have exactly the same dynamics.

Then measure  $\nu = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^m r_j^2 \sigma_{\nu}$  satisfy this PDE :  $\partial_t \nu_t(\eta) = -4J(\eta|\nu_t) + \text{div}(\nu_t(\eta) \nabla J(\eta|\nu_t))$  (so it's a WGF)

Prediction functions :  $h = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^m \psi(w_j) = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^m r_j^2 \psi(\nu_j)$

Theorem 1: if by taking  $m \leftarrow \inf$  at  $t = 0$ ,  $\nu$  converges to  $\nu_0$ , then for any  $t$ ,  $\nu_{m,t}$  cvg to the unique WGF  $\nu_t$ .

Theorem 2: Take a  $\nu_0$  with a support that includes all directions at initialization, if WGF  $\nu_t$  cvg, it's to a global optimum.

## 3 MATH INTRODUCTION

### 3.1 GRADIENT FLOW

Given a smooth function  $a \rightarrow F(a)$ , the gradient flow is gradient descent algorithm

$$a^{l+1} = a^l - \gamma \nabla F(a^l)$$

with a small enough  $\gamma$ . If  $F$  is not smooth, the gradient flow is the proximal-point algorithm

$$a^{l+1} = \text{Prox}_{\gamma F}^{\|\cdot\|}(a^{(l)}) = \arg \min_a \frac{1}{2} \|a - a^{(l)}\|^2 + \gamma F(a)$$

with a small enough  $\gamma$ .

If  $F$  is defined on histograms, it makes sense to use the wasserstein distance  $W^p$

## 4 GRADIENT FLOW VS WASSERSTEIN GF

Take a two layer ReLU network with  $m$  neurons. Each neuron has a trainable parameter  $w_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$  and a fixed output sign  $\alpha_i \in \{-1, 1\}$ . Each of the  $n$  data points of dimension  $d - 1$  are augmented with a 1, so each sample is of dimension  $n$ . Each sample  $x_j$  is stored as a row  $X \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$  and is associated with a scalar label  $y_j \in \mathbb{R}$ .

The output of one neuron is:  $x \in \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \max(0, \langle w_i, x \rangle) \alpha_i$ , shorthand  $\langle w_i, x \rangle_+ \alpha_i$ .

The output of a network of  $m$  neurons on one data point is  $f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^m \max(0, \langle w_i, x \rangle) \alpha_i$

We store the neuron trainable parameter  $w_i$  as the columns of  $W \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times m}$ . The loss for  $n$  data points

$$F(W) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n (f(x_j) - y_j)^2$$

Discretized, unregularized gradient descent with  $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}^+$  stepsize: (resolving the non differentiable points  $\max(0, 0)$  with 0 as gradient)

$$W^{t+1} = W^t - \lambda \nabla F(W^t)$$

Taking  $\lambda \rightarrow 0$ , we get the gradient flow.

Explicit discret gradient:

$$\frac{\partial F}{\partial w_i^t} = \frac{\alpha_i^t}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n e_j^t s_{i,j}^t x_j$$

With real  $e_j^t = f(W^t) - y_j$  the "signed error on input  $j$ "

With boolean  $s_{i,j}^t = \mathbb{1}_{\langle w_i^t, x_j \rangle > 0}$  the "is neuron  $i$  activating on datapoint  $j$ ". The vector  $s_i^t \in \{0, 1\}^n$  would be the activation pattern of neuron  $i$  at time  $t$ .

Remark: the gradient of a neuron is a linear combination of the data points it activates.

Discretized wasserstein prox step:

$$W^{t+1} = \arg \min_{W \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times m}} F(W) + \frac{1}{2\gamma} W_p(W; W^t)$$

EMD(POT library), d=squareeuclidian

$$\begin{aligned} W_2^2(W; W^t) &= \min_{\gamma} \langle \gamma, M \rangle_F \\ \text{s.t. } \gamma \mathbf{1} &= W \\ \gamma^\top \mathbf{1} &= W^t \\ \gamma &\geq 0 \\ M_{i,j} &= \|w_i - w_j\|_2^2 \end{aligned}$$

## 5 3 POINTS EXAMPLE

- Data: slope :  $a = 2$
- Data:  $\begin{pmatrix} X_1 \\ X_2 \\ X_3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x_1 & 1 \\ x_2 & 1 \\ x_3 & 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \\ 4 \end{pmatrix}$ ,  $Y = \begin{pmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \\ y_3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} ax_1^1 \\ ax_2^1 \\ ax_3^1 \end{pmatrix}$
- Loss:  $F(W) = \frac{1}{2n} \sum_{j=1}^n \left( \max(0, \langle w_1, X_j \rangle \alpha_1 - y_j) \right)^2$
- Gradient:  $\nabla F(W) = \left( \frac{\partial F}{\partial w_1} \right) = \frac{\alpha_1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n e_j s_{1,j} X_j$
- Algo:  $W^{t+1} = W^t - \nabla F(W^t)$
- Initialization:  $W^0 = (w_1) = (1 \ 0)$ ,  $\alpha = (\alpha_1) = (1)$

Run gradient descent:

- Iteration 0:
  - $W^0 = (1 \ 0)$
  - $s_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$
  - $e = \begin{pmatrix} \langle w_1, x_1 \rangle \alpha_1 - y_1 \\ \langle w_1, x_2 \rangle \alpha_1 - y_2 \\ \langle w_1, x_3 \rangle \alpha_1 - y_3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \langle (1 \ 0), (1 \ 1) \rangle - 2 \\ \langle (1 \ 0), (2 \ 1) \rangle - 4 \\ \langle (1 \ 0), (4 \ 1) \rangle - 8 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1-2 \\ 2-4 \\ 4-8 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} -1 \\ -2 \\ -4 \end{pmatrix}$
  - $e_j = \langle w_1, X_j \rangle \alpha_1 - y_j = w_1^1 x_j + w_1^2 - ax_j = x_j(w_1^1 - a) + w_1^2$
  - $W^1 = \begin{pmatrix} w_1^1 & w_1^2 \end{pmatrix} - \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^3 (x_j(w_1^1 - a) + w_1^2) X_j$

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$$\begin{aligned}
- W^1 &= \begin{pmatrix} w_1^1 & w_1^2 \end{pmatrix} - \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^3 \begin{pmatrix} x_j^2(w_1^1 - a) + x_j w_1^2 & x_j(w_1^1 - a) + w_1^2 \end{pmatrix} \\
- W^1 &= \begin{pmatrix} w_1^1 - \frac{w_1^2}{n}(x_1 + x_2 + x_3) - \frac{(w_1^1 - a)}{n}(x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2) & ok \end{pmatrix} \\
- b &= \frac{x_1 + x_2 + x_3}{n} = 7/3, c = \frac{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}{n} = 21/3 = 7 \\
- W^1 &= \begin{pmatrix} w_1^1 - w_1^2 b - (w_1^1 - a)c & w_1^2 - (w_1^1 - a)b + w_1^2 \end{pmatrix} \\
- W^1 &= \begin{pmatrix} w_1^1 - w_1^2 b - w_1^1 c + ac & w_1^2 - w_1^1 b + w_1^2 + ab \end{pmatrix} \\
- W^1 &= (1 - 0 - 7 + 14 \quad 0 - 7/3 + 0 + 14/3) = (8 \quad 7/3) \\
- W^1 &= W^0 + 7 \begin{pmatrix} 1 & \frac{1}{3} \end{pmatrix} \\
- X_1 + 2X_2 + 4X_3 &= (1 + 4 + 16 \quad 1 + 2 + 4) = (21 \quad 7) = 7 \times 3 \begin{pmatrix} 1 & \frac{1}{3} \end{pmatrix}
\end{aligned}$$

## 6 SIMPLE EXAMPLE 2D SETTING, GRID JKO

From one dimensional data, we add a dimension filled with ones to act as a bias for the first layer. The output of one ReLU neuron for one data point  $(x, 1) \in \mathbb{R}^2$ :

$$w, b, \alpha \in \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \max(0, wx + b)\alpha$$

The loss against labels  $y_j \in \mathbb{R}$  using squared loss of the whole network of neurons is the double sum:

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{j=1}^n \left( \left( \sum_{i=1}^m \max(0, w_i x_j + b_i) \alpha_i \right) - y_j \right)^2$$

The mean-field limit of this network requires taking an infinite-width ReLU network where parameters are described by a measure  $\mu$ , and its output by an integral:

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^2} m((w, b); x) d\mu((w, b))$$

To simplify things, we restrict  $\alpha_i$  to  $\{-1, 1\}$  and to not be a trainable parameter anymore. We keep the same expressivity (as long as we provide both a positive ( $\alpha_i = 1$ ) and negative ( $\alpha_i = -1$ ) version of the neuron) but this change will slightly alter the training dynamic in some cases. For example, we can match the output of one neuron (of the original network) by simply scaling the first layer by the second layer ( $\alpha$ ):

$$\max(0, w_i x + b_i) \alpha_i = \max(0, |\alpha_i| (w_i x + b_i)) \text{sign}(\alpha_i)$$

Our network with restricted  $\alpha_i$  would describe this neuron using only two trainable parameters:  $(|\alpha_i| w_i, |\alpha_i| b_i)$  and fix its sign in the output.

The measure is on the parameter space. In order to do simulations we discretize the parameter space, by taking a uniform grid in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  centered on  $(0, 0)$ :  $(w_i, b_i)_{i=1, \dots, m}$

We can see that we have the same output and expressivity as the regular ReLU network by taking a measure  $\mu = \sum_{i=1}^m p_i \delta_{\theta_i = w_i}$  with  $(\sum_i p_i = 1)$  and  $m((w_i, b_i); x) = \max(0, w_i x + b_i) \alpha_i$ , we have this equality:

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^2} m((w, b); x) d\mu((w, b)) = \sum_{i=1}^m \max(0, w_i x + b_i) \alpha_i p_i$$

In this case, the first layer is fixed: the change of direction ( $\frac{-b_i}{w_i}$ ) and slope ( $w_i$ ) of a neuron is described by a mass displacement from point A to point B.

The movement is described by a PDE and simulated on a grid. Each point  $i$  of the grid has a weight  $p_i \in \mathbb{R}$ , and as a whole  $p \in \mathbb{R}^m$  is the discretized distribution.

The same wasserstein gradient flow can be computed by this step:

$$\mu(t+1) = \arg \min_{\mu \in \mathcal{M}(\Theta)} F(\mu) + \frac{1}{2\gamma} W_2(\mu; \mu(t))$$

We tried different ways of computing the Wasserstein Gradient Flow.

- JKO stepping: entropic approximation on a fixed grid. Pros: not very dependant on dimension  $d$ . Cons: add another loop and more parameters to fine tune, introduce diffusion.
- Sliced Wasserstein: Pros: midly dependant on  $d$  without diffusion. Differentiable with pytorch. Cons: Parameters to tune, distance to true WS distance has to be studied
- Direct EMD distance from POT library. Pros: differentiable with pytorch. Cons: Might be slow with  $d$

Preliminary results using the EMD distance indicate no particular differences between the gradient flow and the wasserstein gradient flow.

## 6.1 JKO STEPPING WITH DYKSTRA'S ALGORITHM

$$\begin{aligned} p_{t+1} &:= \text{Prox}_{\tau f}^{W_\gamma}(p_t) \\ &= \arg \min_{p \in \text{simplex}} W_\gamma(p, q) + \tau f(p) \\ &= \arg \min_{p \in \text{simplex}} \left( \min_{\pi \in \Pi(p, q)} \langle c, \pi \rangle + \gamma E(\pi) \right) + \tau f(p) \end{aligned}$$

Where  $\pi$  is a mapping,  $c$  the ground cost for every point on the grid. When the ground cost between two points in the euclidian space is  $c_{i,j} = \|x_i - x_j\|^2$ , (and  $\gamma = 0$ ,  $f$  smooth...), this scheme formaly discretize the above mentionned PDE.

To do the step above, we'll use a bregman splitting approach that replace the single implicit  $W_\gamma$  proximal step by many iterative KL implicit proximal steps. Specifically(?) Dykstra's algorithm for JKO stepping. This involve using the gibbs kernel:  $\xi = e^{-\frac{c}{\gamma}} \in \mathbb{R}_{+,*}^{N \times N}$

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### Algorithm 1 JKOSTep

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1:  $p \leftarrow p_0 \in \mathbb{R}^m$ 
2:  $q_{\text{norm}} \leftarrow \|p\|^2$ 
3:  $a, b \leftarrow \mathbf{1}, \mathbf{1} \in \mathbb{R}^m$  ▷ Initialize vectors with ones
4: for  $i \leftarrow 1$  to  $T$  do
5:    $p \leftarrow \text{prox}_{\tau/\gamma}^{\text{KL}}(\xi b)$ 
6:    $a \leftarrow p/(\xi b)$ 
7:    $\text{ConstrEven} \leftarrow \frac{\|b \cdot (\xi a) - q\|}{q_{\text{norm}}}$ 
8:    $b \leftarrow q/(\xi a)$ 
9:    $\text{ConstrOdd} \leftarrow \frac{\|a \cdot (\xi b) - p\|}{q_{\text{norm}}}$ 
10:  if  $\text{ConstrOdd} < \text{tol}$  and  $\text{ConstrEven} < \text{tol}$  then
11:    break
12:  end if
13: end for
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## 7 CLASSIC SETUP

Data  $x_j \in \mathbb{R}^d$  and labels  $y_j \in \mathbb{R}$ ,  $j = 1, \dots, n$

First layer  $w_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$ , second layer  $\alpha_i \in \mathbb{R}$ ,  $i = 1, \dots, m$

$\gamma > 0$  step-size,  $\beta$  regularization

$$\mathcal{L}(W, \alpha) = \underbrace{\sum_{j=1}^n \left( \sum_{i=1}^m \max(0, w_i^\top x_j) \alpha_i - y_j \right)^2}_{\text{Network's Output}} + \underbrace{\lambda \sum_{i=1}^m \|w_i\|_2^2 + \alpha_i^2}_{\text{Weight Decay}}$$

### Discret time.

Full-batch gradient descent

$$(W, \alpha)_{t+1} = (W, \alpha)_t - \gamma \nabla \mathcal{L}((W, \alpha)_t)$$

Implicit

$$\theta_{t+1} = \arg \min_{\theta} \mathcal{L}(\theta) + \frac{1}{2\gamma} \|\theta - \theta_t\|^2$$

### Continuous time.

Taking  $\gamma \rightarrow 0$ , we get the gradient flow:  $\frac{d\theta_t}{dt} = -\nabla \mathcal{L}(\theta_t)$ . We make ReLU differentiable with  $\sigma'(0) = 0$  as justified in (Boursier et al.).

## 8 INFINITE WIDTH, USING A MEASURE: MEAN-FIELD

**Mean-field limit**(Chizat & Bach): For a sufficiently large width, the training dynamics of a NN can be coupled with the evolution of a probability distribution described by a PDE.

If [...] converges, with  $m \rightarrow \infty$  (many-particle limit), our particles of interest converges to a Wasserstein gradient flow of F:

$$\partial \mu_t = -\text{div}(v_t \mu_t) \text{ where } v_t \in -\partial F'(\mu_t)$$

$$\int_{\Theta} m(\theta; x) d\mu(\theta) = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m \langle w_i, x \rangle_+ \alpha_i$$

Different ways to use a measure to represent the neurons of a two layer network:

- $\Theta = \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}$ , measure  $\mu = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m \delta_{\theta_i=(w_i, \alpha_i)}$ , output of one neuron  $m(\theta = (w, \alpha); x) = \langle x, w \rangle_+ \alpha$ : (works, output matches discrete)
- $\Theta = \mathbb{R}^d$ , measure  $\mu = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i \delta_{\theta_i=w_i}$  output of one neuron  $m(\theta = w; x) = \langle x, w \rangle_+$  (works)
- $\Theta = \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d$ , output of one neuron  $m(\tilde{w}_+, \tilde{w}_-, x) = \langle \tilde{w}_+, x \rangle - \langle \tilde{w}_-, x \rangle$  (works, separate neg and positive)
- $\Theta = (S^{d-1} \times \mathbb{R})$ , output of one neuron  $m((d, \tilde{\alpha}); x) = \tilde{\alpha} \langle d, x \rangle = \tilde{\alpha} \mathbb{1}_{\langle d, x \rangle > 0}$  (works), mapping:  $d = \frac{w}{\|w\|}$  and  $\tilde{\alpha} = \|w\| \alpha$ . Gradient are not equal to discrete.

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### 8.1 ALGORITHM, DISCRETIZE THE MEASURE'S SPACE

Take a grid of  $N$  points in  $\Theta$ , we can match the notation above by taking a neuron for each point of the grid  $m = N$ .

$$\mu(t+1) = \arg \min_{\mu \in \mathcal{M}(\Theta)} F(\mu) + \frac{1}{2\gamma} W_2(\mu; \mu(t))$$

### 8.2 JKO

What we compute by using the entropic JKO flow iterations.

$$\begin{aligned} \forall t > 0, p_{t+1} &:= \text{Prox}_{\tau f}^{W_\gamma}(p_t) \\ &= \arg \min_{p \in \text{simplex}} W_\gamma(p, q) + \tau f(p) \\ &= \arg \min_{p \in \text{simplex}} \left( \min_{\pi \in \Pi(p, q)} \langle c, \pi \rangle + \gamma E(\pi) \right) + \tau f(p) \end{aligned}$$

- [Meta Optimal Transport \(paper\)](#) and [\(code git\)](#): InputConvexNN to predict solution of OT problem
- [JKOnet \(paper\)](#) and [\(code git\)](#):
  - [/models](#) -> sinkhorn loss defined in loss.py, differentiable loop in fixed point.py
  - next step: trying to create the right [Geometry](#) object from OTT library, which is what's used for sinkhorn

### 8.3 PAPERS

[The algo we try to implement](#)

Paper with a [specific case that doesn't match ours](#):

In the future, [large-scale wasserstein gradient flows](#)

#### 8.3.1 GRID PROBLEMS

The grid currently dictate the neuron's scale, giving multiple choices. One solution: duplicate each neuron, make one with a small scale and one with a very big scale.

## REFERENCES

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