Real aspects of the problem of rank-one approximation

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Part 1. Rank-one approximations of general tensors

Framework and problem statement

$$\mathbb{R}^{\boldsymbol{n}} = \mathbb{R}^{n_1} \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathbb{R}^{n_d} = \left\{ \mathsf{T} = (t_{i_1 \dots i_d})_{i_j=1}^{n_j} : t_{i_1 \dots i_d} \in \mathbb{R} \right\}$$

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The Frobenius product and norm:

$$\langle \mathsf{T},\mathsf{S} \rangle = \sum_{i_j=1}^{n_j} t_{i_1\dots i_d} s_{i_1\dots i_d}, \quad \|\mathsf{T}\| = \sqrt{\langle \mathsf{T},\mathsf{T} \rangle}$$

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$$\|T - T^*\| = \min_{S \in S_n} \|T - S\|.$$

Remark: NP-hard to decide if T^* is a solution, already for d = 3.

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Left / Right singular vectors (columns of U / V): eigenvectors of $TT^{T} = U\Sigma\Sigma^{T}U^{T} : \mathbb{R}^{n_{1}} \to \mathbb{R}^{n_{1}} / T^{T}T = V\Sigma^{T}\Sigma V^{T} : \mathbb{R}^{n_{2}} \to \mathbb{R}^{n_{2}}.$

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Mirsky, 1960:
Matrix case (d = 2)

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Mirsky, 1960: T^{*} is a solution for a $O(n_1) \times O(n_2)$ -invariant norm.

A best rank-1 approximation to T

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A best rank-1 approximation to T minimizes the (squared) distance

$$\begin{split} & \mathsf{dist}_\mathsf{T}:\mathcal{S}_{\boldsymbol{n}} \ \rightarrow \ \mathbb{R}, \\ \mathsf{S} \ = \ \sigma \, \mathsf{x}^1 \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathsf{x}^d \ \mapsto \ \|\mathsf{T} - \mathsf{S}\|^2 \ = \ \|\mathsf{T}\|^2 - 2\sigma \langle \mathsf{T}, \mathsf{x}^1 \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathsf{x}^d \rangle + \sigma^2 \end{split}$$

It is a critical point of $dist_T$, that is,

$$\begin{split} \nabla_{\mathsf{x}^{j}}\mathcal{F}_{\mathsf{T}}(\mathsf{x}^{1},\ldots,\mathsf{x}^{d}) &= \sigma \, \mathsf{x}^{j}, \quad \text{where} \\ \mathcal{F}_{\mathsf{T}}(\mathsf{x}^{1},\ldots,\mathsf{x}^{d}) &:= \, \langle \mathsf{T},\mathsf{x}^{1}\otimes\cdots\otimes\mathsf{x}^{d} \rangle \;=\; \sum_{i_{j}=1}^{n_{j}} t_{i_{1}\ldots i_{d}}\mathsf{x}_{i_{1}}^{1}\ldots\mathsf{x}_{i_{d}}^{d} \end{split}$$

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retrieve a pair $(u, v) \in \mathbb{S}^{n_1-1} \times \mathbb{S}^{n_2-1}$ of singular vectors with singular value $\sigma = u^T T v$ (recall that $TV = \Sigma U$ and $T^T U = \Sigma^T V$).

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A generic $T \in \mathbb{R}^n$ has sv(n) (projective) singular vector tuples corresponding to non-zero singular values, where sv(n) is the coefficient of the monomial $\prod_{i=1}^d z_i^{n_i-1}$ in the polynomials

$$\prod_{j=1}^{d} \frac{(z_1 + \dots + z_{j-1} + z_{j+1} + \dots + z_d)^{n_j} - z_j^{n_j}}{(z_1 + \dots + z_{j-1} + z_{j+1} + \dots + z_d) - z_j}$$
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J. Draisma, E. Horobet, G. Ottaviani, B. Sturmfels and R. R. Thomas. *The Euclidean Distance Degree of an Algebraic Variety*. Foundations of Computational Mathematics, 16(1), 2013.

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$$\mathsf{EDdeg}(\mathcal{S}) \;=\; \# \left\{ \mathsf{s} \in \mathcal{S}^{\mathbb{C}} \setminus \mathcal{S}^{\mathbb{C}}_{\mathsf{sing}} \,:\, \mathsf{t} - \mathsf{s} \perp \, \mathcal{T}_{\mathsf{s}} \mathcal{S}^{\mathbb{C}} \right\}$$

Observation: EDdeg(S) gives an upper bound on the number of real critical of dist_t $|_{S \setminus S_{sing}}$ for a generic t $\in \mathbb{R}^n$.

J. Draisma, E. Horobet, G. Ottaviani, B. Sturmfels and R. R. Thomas. *The Euclidean Distance Degree of an Algebraic Variety*. Foundations of Computational Mathematics, 16(1), 2013.

The result of Friedland and Ottaviani gives a formula for the ED degree $EDdeg(S_n) = sv(n)$ of the Segre variety $S_n \subset \mathbb{R}^n$.

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$\boldsymbol{n}=(n_1,\ldots,n_d)$	sv(n)
(n_1, n_2)	$\min(n_1, n_2)$
$2^d = (2, \ldots, 2)$	<i>d</i> !
$(2, 2, n \ge 3)$	8
(2, 3, 3)	15
$(2, 3, n \ge 4)$	18
(3, 3, 3)	37
(3, 3, 4)	55
$(3, 3, n \ge 5)$	61
$n_d \ge 1 + \sum_{j=1}^{d-1} (n_j - 1)$	stabilizes

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$$\mathcal{F}(\theta_1,\ldots,\theta_d) = \sum_{\varepsilon \in \{-1,1\}^d} \left(\chi_\varepsilon \cos(\varepsilon_1 \theta_1 + \cdots + \varepsilon_d \theta_d) + \xi_\varepsilon \sin(\varepsilon_1 \theta_1 + \cdots + \varepsilon_d \theta_d) \right)$$

Rank-1 approximation problem in statistics

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Observation: $aEDdeg(S \cap H)$ gives an upper bound on the number of real critical points of $dist_t^H|_{(S \cap H) \setminus S_{sing}}$ for a generic $t \in H$.

Conjecturally, probability tensors have unique critical rank-one approximation Conjecturally, probability tensors have unique critical rank-one approximation $H = \left\{ \mathsf{T} \in \mathbb{R}^{n} : \sum_{i_{j}=1}^{n_{j}} t_{i_{1} \dots i_{d}} = 1 \right\} - \text{the affine span of } \Delta_{n-1}.$

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Part 2. Rank-one approximations of symmetric tensors

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Remark: (still) NP-hard to decide if T^* is a solution, when $d \ge 3$.

Critical symmetric rank-1 approximations to $\mathsf{T} \in \mathsf{Sym}^d(\mathbb{R}^n)$

Critical symmetric rank-1 approximations to $T \in Sym^d(\mathbb{R}^n)$ are critical points of the (squared) distance function

$$\begin{split} & \text{dist}_{\mathsf{T}}:\mathcal{V}_{d,n} \ \rightarrow \ \mathbb{R}, \\ & \mathsf{S} \ = \ \lambda \, \mathsf{x} \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathsf{x} \ \mapsto \ \|\mathsf{T} - \mathsf{S}\|^2 \ = \ \|\mathsf{T}\|^2 - 2\lambda \langle \mathsf{T}, \mathsf{x} \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathsf{x} \rangle + \lambda^2, \end{split}$$

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Characterization :

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Eigenvectors of tensors d = 2: x is a critical point of $f_T(x) = x^T T x$ on S^{n-1} with value $\lambda = f_T(x)$

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 has $ev(d, n) = \frac{(d-1)^n - 1}{d-2}$ eigenpoints in $\mathbb{P}^{n-1}_{\mathbb{C}}$.

 $ev(d, n) = EDdeg(\mathcal{V}_{d,n})$ is the ED degree of the Veronese variety. Eigenpoints of a generic T are *fixed points* of the endomorphism (holomorphic map) $\psi_{\mathsf{T}} : \mathbb{P}^{n-1}_{\mathbb{C}} \to \mathbb{P}^{n-1}_{\mathbb{C}}$, $[\mathsf{x}] \mapsto [\nabla_{\mathsf{x}^1} \mathcal{F}_{\mathsf{T}}(\mathsf{x}, \dots, \mathsf{x})]$.

Eigenvectors $x \in S^{n-1}$ are solutions to the system

$$(*) \quad \operatorname{rank} \begin{pmatrix} \sum_{i_j=1}^n t_{1i_2\ldots i_d} x_{i_2}\ldots x_{i_d} & \ldots & \sum_{i_j=1}^n t_{ni_2\ldots i_d} x_{i_2}\ldots x_{i_d} \\ x_1 & \ldots & x_n \end{pmatrix} \leq 1.$$

An eigenpoint of $T \in \mathbb{R}^{(n,...,n)}$ is any $[x] \in \mathbb{P}^{n-1}_{\mathbb{C}}$ that satisfies (*). The eigenconfiguration of T is the variety of its eigenpoints.

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$$(\Delta f)(\mathsf{x}) \;=\; rac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_1^2} + \cdots + rac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_n^2} \;=\; 0, \quad \mathsf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n.$$



Sketch of the proof (induction on *n*) n=2: the form $f(x_1, x_2) = \text{Re}(x_1 + ix_2)^d$

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<u>n=2</u>: the form $f(x_1, x_2) = \operatorname{Re}(x_1 + ix_2)^d$ (in polar coordinates $f(\cos \theta, \sin \theta) = \cos(d\theta)$) is the unique (up to rotations and scalar multiplications) harmonic. Trivially, $f|_{\mathbb{S}^1}$ has 2d critical points.

Suppose $f_{d,n}$ is such that $f_{d,n}|_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$ has $2 \operatorname{ev}(d, n)$ critical points.

For any point $y \in \mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ there exists a harmonic form $Z_{d,n}$ that is invariant under orthogonal transformations preserving y. Actually, $Z_{d,n}(x) = G_{d,n}(y^T x)$, where $\{G_{d,n}\}_{d\geq 0}$ is the family of orthogonal polynomials on [-1, 1] (called Gegenbauer polynomials).

Then for $\varepsilon \sim 0$ the (n+1)-variate form $f_{d,n+1} = Z_{d,n+1} + \varepsilon f_{d,n}$ has

$$2 + 2 \operatorname{ev}(d, n) (d - 1) = 2 \left(1 + \frac{(d - 1)^n - 1}{d - 2} (d - 1) \right)$$
$$= 2 \frac{(d - 1)^{n+1} - 1}{d - 2} = 2 \operatorname{ev}(d, n + 1)$$

critical points on the *n*-dimensional sphere \mathbb{S}^n .

Illustrative example (spherical plot)



 $Z_{3,3}$, a harmonic form $f_{3,2}$ with $2 \operatorname{ev}(3,2) = 6$ critical points on \mathbb{S}^1 and the perturbation $f_{3,3} = Z_{3,3} + \varepsilon f_{3,2}$ with $2 \operatorname{ev}_{3,3} = 14$ critical points on \mathbb{S}^2 .

Critical points of fixed index A smooth function $f: \mathbb{S}^{n-1} \to \mathbb{R}$ is Morse,

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How large can numbers $I_0(f)$, $I_1(f)$, ..., $I_{n-1}(f)$ be for a generic form $f \in \mathbb{R}[x_1, \ldots, x_n]$ of degree d?

Part 3. Quality of rank-one approximations

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$$T^{(k)} = T, \quad T^{(k+1)} = T^{(k)} - T^{(k)}_{4}$$
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A symmetric T minimizes the ratio $\|T\|_{\infty}/\|T\|$ iff it has the worst relative approximation ratio

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among all symmetric tensor in $\operatorname{Sym}^{d}(\mathbb{R}^{n})$.

Some known facts about $\mathcal{A}_{d,n}$ and $\mathcal{A}_{d,n}^{sym}$

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Agrachev, K., Uschmajew, 2019: for n = 2, $\frac{1}{\sqrt{2^{d-1}}} = \frac{\|T\|_{\infty}}{\|T\|}$ for $T \in \text{Sym}^d(\mathbb{R}^2)$

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The best rank-1 approximation ratio is of the same order of magnitude as the trivial lower bound when $n \to \infty$.

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Thank you!