

## Module 4: Coping with Multiple Predictors

# Multidimensional Splines Recap

STAT/BIOSTAT 527, University of Washington

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May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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## What you need to know

- Nothing is conceptually hard about multivariate  $x$
- In practice, nonparametric methods struggle from curse of dimensionality
- Options considered:
  - Thin plate splines
  - Tensor product splines
  - Generalized additive models
  - Combinations (to model some interaction terms)

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# Curse of Dimensionality

- To maintain a fixed level of accuracy for a given nonparametric estimator, the sample size must increase exponentially in  $d$

- Set  $MSE = \delta$   
 $n \propto \left(\frac{c}{\delta}\right)^{\frac{d}{4}}$  \*

- Why? Using data in local nbhd

- In high dim, few points in any nbhd

everything is far away in high dim

- Consider example with  $n$  uniformly distributed points in  $[-1, 1]^d$

- $d=1$ :  $\ln[-0.1, 0.1]$ ,  $\approx \frac{n}{10}$  obs. in interval

- $d=10$ :  $\ln[-0.1, 0.1]^d$

roughly  $n \left(\frac{0.2}{2}\right)^{10} = \frac{n}{10,000,000,000}$

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Figure from Yoshua Bengio's website

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# Natural Thin Plate Splines

$$\min_f \sum_{i=1}^n \{y_i - f(x_i)\}^2 + \lambda J(f)$$

$d=2$  ↓

$$J(f) = \int \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \left[ \left(\frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_1^2}\right)^2 + 2 \left(\frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_1 \partial x_2}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_2^2}\right)^2 \right] dx_1 dx_2$$

"bending energy"

$x_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$

- Solution: natural thin plate spline with knots at the  $x_{ij}$
- For general  $\lambda$ , solution is a linear basis expansion of the form

with

$$\beta_0 + \beta^T x + \sum_{j=1}^n b_j h_j(x)$$

RBF

- Interpretation: We take an elastic flat plate that interpolates points  $(x_i, y_i)$  and penalize its "bending energy"

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# Tensor Product Splines

- We use this tensor product basis

*j=2 example*  

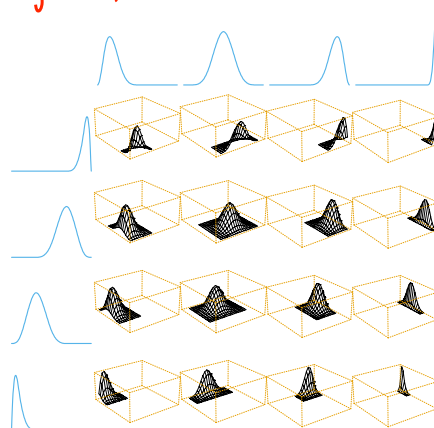
$$g_{jk}(x) = h_{1j}(x_1)h_{2k}(x_2)$$
*univariate basis*  

$$j=1, \dots, M_1 \quad k=1, \dots, M_2$$

to model  $f(x)$

$$f(x) = \sum_{j=1}^{M_1} \sum_{k=1}^{M_2} \theta_{jk} g_{jk}(x)$$

- This formulation extends (in theory) to any dimension  $d$
- Note that the dimension of the basis grows exponentially with the input dimension  $d$



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# Generalized Additive Models

- Both for computational reasons and added interpretability, models that assume an additive structure are very popular
- Assuming a GLM framework:

$$g(\mu(x)) = \alpha + f_1(x_1) + \dots + f_d(x_d)$$

- Is this model identifiable? No, can change  $\alpha$  and shift  $f_j$ 's to compensate  $\rightarrow$  exactly same  $g(\mu)$ .

Fix: Constrain  $\sum_{i=1}^n f_j(x_{ij}) = 0$

- Can model  $f_j(x_j)$  using any smoother

*many, many choices here  
 (see all of module 2)  
 or GP...*

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# Backfitting Algorithm

**Algorithm 9.1** *The Backfitting Algorithm for Additive Models.*

1. Initialize:  $\hat{\alpha} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N y_i$ ,  $\hat{f}_j \equiv 0, \forall i, j$ .
2. Cycle:  $j = 1, 2, \dots, p, \dots, 1, 2, \dots, p, \dots$ ,

$$\hat{f}_j \leftarrow S_j \left[ \left\{ y_i - \hat{\alpha} - \sum_{k \neq j} \hat{f}_k(x_{ik}) \right\}_1^N \right],$$

numerical reasons

$$\hat{f}_j \leftarrow \hat{f}_j - \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \hat{f}_j(x_{ij}).$$

partial res.  
smoother chosen for  $x_j$   
fit using partial res.

until the functions  $\hat{f}_j$  change less than a prespecified threshold.

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# Other GAM formulations

- Semiparametric models:

$$g(\mu) = X^T \beta + \alpha + f(z)$$

model linearly

model nonparam.

- ANOVA decompositions:

$$f(x) = \alpha + \sum_j f_j(x_j) + \sum_{j,k} f_{jk}(x_j, x_k) + \dots$$

combination of standard GAMs + (low-dim) multivar models

Choice of:

- Maximum order of interaction
- Which terms to include
- What representation

main effects

capture interactions

- reg. splines + tensor product for interaction or thin plate ...

- Tradeoff between full model and decomposed model

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## Connection with Thin Plate Splines

- Recall formulation that lead to natural thin plate splines:

$$\min_f \sum_{i=1}^n \{y_i - f(x_i)\}^2 + \lambda J(f)$$
$$J(f) = \int \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \left[ \left( \frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_1^2} \right)^2 + 2 \left( \frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_1 \partial x_2} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial^2 f(x)}{\partial x_2^2} \right)^2 \right] dx_1 dx_2$$

- There exists a  $J(f)$  such that the solution has the form

$$f(x) = f_1(x_1) + \dots + f_d(x_d)$$

- However, it is more natural to just assume this form and apply

$$J(f) = J(f_1 + f_2 + \dots + f_d) = \sum_{j=1}^d \int f_j''(t_j)^2 dt_j$$

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## Module 4: Coping with Multiple Predictors

### Multidimensional Kernel Methods

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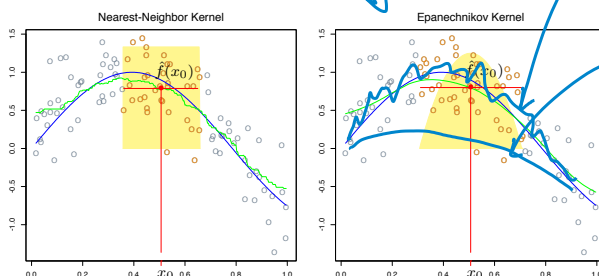
# Nadaraya-Watson Estimator

$$\hat{f}(x_0) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) y_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(x_0, x_i)}$$

- Example:

- Boxcar kernel → local avgs
- Epanechnikov
- Gaussian typical

- Often, choice of kernel matters much less than choice of  $\lambda$



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# Local Linear Regression

- Locally weighted averages can be badly biased at the boundaries because of asymmetries in the kernel

- Reinterpretation:

$$\hat{f} = \operatorname{argmin}_a \sum (y_i - a)^2$$

$$\rightarrow \hat{f} = \bar{y}$$

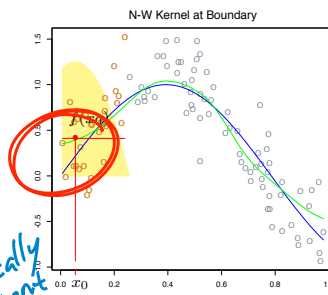
$$\hat{f}(x) = \operatorname{argmin}_a \sum w_i(x) (y_i - a)^2$$

$$\rightarrow \hat{f}(x) = \frac{\sum w_i(x) y_i}{\sum w_i(x)}$$

$w_i(x) = k\left(\frac{|x_i - x|}{\lambda}\right)$

← const. ←

restrict to locally constant



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- Equivalent to the Nadaraya-Watson estimator
- Locally constant estimator obtained from weighted least squares

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# Local Linear Regression

- Consider locally weighted linear regression instead
- Local linear model around fixed target  $x_0$ :

$$\beta_{0x_0} + \beta_{1x_0}(x - x_0)$$

*local linear model*

- Minimize:

$$\min_{\beta_{x_0}} \sum_i K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) (y_i - \beta_{0x_0} - \beta_{1x_0}(x_i - x_0))^2$$

- Return:  $\hat{f}(x_0) = \hat{\beta}_{0x_0} \leftarrow$  fit at  $x_0$

*Note: not equivalent to fitting a local constant!*

- Fit a new local polynomial for every target  $x_0$   
*Corrects bias up to 1st order*

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# Local Polynomial Regression

- Consider local polynomial of degree  $d$  centered about  $x_0$

$$P_{x_0}(x; \beta_{x_0}) = \beta_{0x_0} + \beta_{1x_0}(x - x_0) + \beta_{2x_0} \frac{(x - x_0)^2}{2!} + \dots + \beta_{dx_0} \frac{(x - x_0)^d}{d!}$$

- Minimize:  $\min_{\beta_{x_0}} \sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) (y_i - P_{x_0}(x; \beta_{x_0}))^2$

- Equivalently:

$$\min_{\beta_{x_0}} (Y - X_{x_0} \beta_{x_0})^T W_{x_0} (Y - X_{x_0} \beta_{x_0})$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & x_1 - x_0 & \dots & \frac{(x_1 - x_0)^d}{d!} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1 & x_n - x_0 & \dots & \frac{(x_n - x_0)^d}{d!} \end{bmatrix}$$

- Return:  $\hat{f}(x_0) = \hat{\beta}_{0x_0}$

- Bias only has components of degree  $d+1$  and higher

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# Local Polynomial Regression

## Rules of thumb:

- Local linear fit helps at boundaries with minimum increase in variance
- Local quadratic fit doesn't help at boundaries and increases variance
- Local quadratic fit helps most for capturing curvature in the interior
- Asymptotic analysis →  
local polynomials of odd degree dominate those of even degree  
(MSE dominated by boundary effects)
- Recommended default choice: local linear regression ★

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# Local Polynomial Regression

- Kernel smoothing and local regression extend straightforwardly to the multivariate  $x$  scenario  $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$

$$\min_{\beta_{x_0}} \sum_{i=1}^n K_{\lambda}(x_0, x_i) (y_i - P_{x_0}(x; \beta_{x_0}))^2$$

*multivar local polynomial*

- Need  $d$ -dimensional kernel.

$$K_{\lambda}(x_0, \cdot) : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \quad \text{kernel weights}$$

- Nadaraya-Watson kernel smoother fits locally constant model
- Local linear regression fits local hyperplane via weighted LS
- ...

## Challenges:

- Defining kernel
- Curse of dimensionality

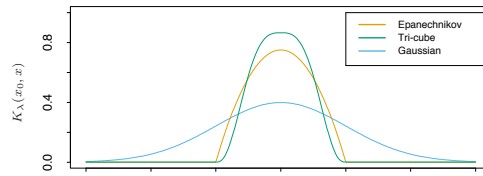
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## Example Univariate Kernels $x \in \mathbb{R}$

- **Gaussian**  $K(x) = \frac{1}{2\pi} e^{-\frac{x^2}{2}}$
  - **Epanechnikov**  $K(x) = \frac{3}{4}(1-x)^2 I(x)$
  - **Tricube**  $K(x) = \frac{70}{81}(1-|x|^3)^3 I(x)$
  - **Boxcar**  $K(x) = \frac{1}{2} I(x)$
- ind. on  $[-1, 1]$*



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## Multivariate Kernels

- Many choices, even more than in 1d

- Examples:

- Radial basis kernels

$$K_\lambda(x_0, x) = K\left(\frac{\|x_0 - x\|}{\lambda}\right)$$

*just compute distance in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  and apply kernel as before*

E.g., radial Epanechnikov, tricube, squared exponential (Gaussian)

$$\text{SE } K_\lambda(x_0, x) = e^{-\frac{\|x_0 - x\|^2}{2\lambda}}$$

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# Multivariate Kernels

- Many choices, even more than in 1d

- Examples:

- Product kernels

$$K_{\lambda_1, \lambda_2}(x_0, x) = K_1\left(\frac{x_{01} - x_1}{\lambda_1}\right) K_2\left(\frac{x_{02} - x_2}{\lambda_2}\right)$$

- Choices:

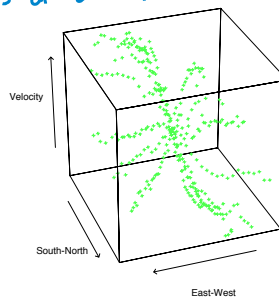
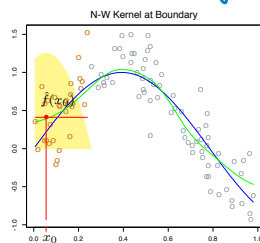
- Form
- Kernel(s)  $k_i$
- Bandwidth(s)  $\lambda_i$

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# Motivating Local Linear Regression

- Nadaraya-Watson smoothing can be applied to multivariate  $x$
- However, boundary issues are even worse in higher dimensions
  - Messy to correct for boundary even in 2d (esp. for irregular boundaries)
  - Fraction of points close to the boundary increases with dimension
- Local polynomial regression corrects boundary errors up to desired order *regardless of dim d*



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# Local Linear Regression

- Assume a RBF kernel  $K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) = K\left(\frac{\|x_0 - x_i\|}{\lambda}\right) \triangleq w_i(x_0)$
- For each target location  $x_0$ , goal is to minimize
 
$$\min_{\beta_{x_0}} \sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) \left( y_i - \beta_{0x_0} - \sum_{j=1}^d \beta_{jx_0} (x_{ij} - x_{0j}) \right)^2$$
- Equivalently,
 
$$\min_{\beta_{x_0}} (y - X_{x_0} \beta_{x_0})^T W_{x_0} (y - X_{x_0} \beta_{x_0})$$

$\left[ \begin{array}{cc} x_{11} - x_{01} & x_{1d} - x_{0d} \\ \vdots & \vdots \\ x_{n1} - x_{01} & x_{nd} - x_{0d} \end{array} \right]$ 
 $\text{diag}(w_1(x_0), \dots, w_n(x_0))$

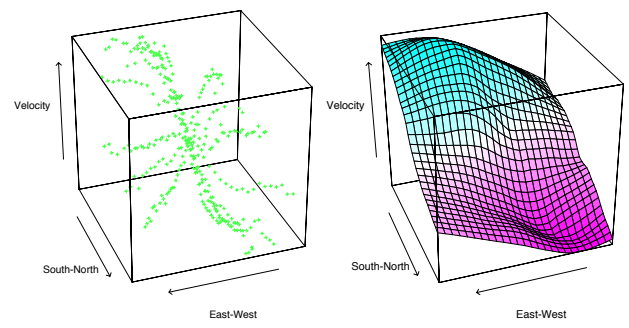
local linear model
- Solution:  $\hat{\beta}_{x_0} = (X_{x_0}^T W_{x_0} X_{x_0})^{-1} X_{x_0}^T W_{x_0} y$
- Return:  $\hat{f}(x_0) = \hat{\beta}_{0x_0}$

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# Local Linear Example

- Astronomical study
  - Response = velocity measurements on a galaxy
  - Predictors = two positions
- Note the unusual star-shaped design → very irregular boundary
  - Must interpolate over regions with very few observations near boundary



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## Motivating Local Polynomial

- One way to think about motivating local polynomials is as follow
- Consider 2d example for simplicity
- For a suitably smooth function  $f(x) = f(x_1, x_2)$ , we can approximate it for values  $x = [x_1, x_2]$  in a nbhd of  $x_0 = [x_{01}, x_{02}]$  as

$$f(x) \approx f(x_0) + (x_1 - x_{01}) \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_{01}} + (x_2 - x_{02}) \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_{02}} + (x_1 - x_{01})^2 \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_{01}^2} + (x_1 - x_{01})(x_2 - x_{02}) \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_{01} \partial x_{02}} + (x_2 - x_{02})^2 \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_{02}^2}$$

*2<sup>nd</sup> order Taylor expansion*

- Suggests the use of a local polynomial. *interaction terms*

$$P_{x_0}(x; \beta_{x_0}) = \beta_0 x_0 + (x_1 - x_{01}) \beta_1 x_0 + (x_2 - x_{02}) \beta_2 x_0 + \frac{1}{n} (x_1 - x_{01})^2 \beta_3 x_0 + \dots \text{ (all other terms above)}$$

- Then,  $\min_{\beta_{x_0}} \sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(x_0, x_i) (y_i - P_{x_0}(x; \beta_{x_0}))^2$

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## Scaling to High Dimensions

- Local regression becomes less useful in dimensions greater than 2 or 3
  - Impossible to maintain localness (low bias) and large sample size (low variance) without the total sample size increasing exponentially in  $d$
- Again, curse of dimensionality
  - Sparsity of data \*
  - Points concentrate at boundaries \*
- Visualization of the fitted function is also hard in high dimensions, and visualization is often a key goal in smoothing

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## Boundary Effects



- Everything is far away in high dimensions
- Consider  $n$  data points uniformly distributed in a  $d$ -dimensional unit ball
- Example task: Consider nearest neighbor estimate at origin
- Median distance to closest data point is  $\left(1 - \frac{1}{2}\right)^{1/n}$ 
  - For  $n=500$  and  $d=10$ , distance  $\approx 0.52$
  - Closest point is likely more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  way to the boundary

*Most pts are closer to boundary of sample than to any other data pt*
- Prediction is harder near the edges of the sample boundary

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## Boundary Effects II

- Another way to think of this effect is in terms of volume
- We want to compute the fraction of volume that lies between radius  $R = 1 - \epsilon$  and  $R = 1$

- The volume of a sphere is proportional to  $V(R) \propto R^d$

- The volume fraction is therefore:

$$\frac{V_d(1) - V_d(1 - \epsilon)}{V_d(1)} = 1 - (1 - \epsilon)^d \rightarrow 1$$

*as  $d$  grows, even for small  $\epsilon$*

- Most of the volume of a sphere is concentrated in a thin shell near the surface

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# Structured Local Regression

- As we have seen before, when faced with data scarcity relative to model complexity, assume structure
- Structured kernels
  - Place more or less importance on certain dimensions (or combinations thereof) by modifying the kernel
- Structured regression functions
  - Just as with splines, decompose the target regression function
  - E.g., ANOVA decompositions and fit low-dim terms with local regression

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# Structured Kernels

- In many scenarios, RBF or *spherical* kernels are considered

$$k_\lambda(x_0, x) = K \left( \frac{\|x_0 - x\|}{\lambda} \right)$$

- Places equal weight on all dimensions of  $x$ 
  - Typically, standardize data so all dimensions have unit variance

- More generally, can consider structured kernels

$$K_{\lambda, A}(x_0, x) = K \left( \frac{(x - x_0)^T A (x - x_0)}{\lambda} \right)$$

*modifies distance metrics*  
*A: dxd matrix*

*e.g., SE*  $e^{-(x_0 - x)^T \Sigma^{-1} (x_0 - x)}$

- Choices for  $A$

- Diagonal →
- Low rank →
- General

*increase, decrease, or omit influence of  $x_j$  via  $A_{jj}$*

*useful in presence of corr. pred.*

$$A = U^T U \quad \text{keed}$$

$$Z = UX \Rightarrow$$

$$X^T A X = Z^T Z$$

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# Projection Pursuit Regression

- To help deal with high-dimensional *nonparam.* regression, consider

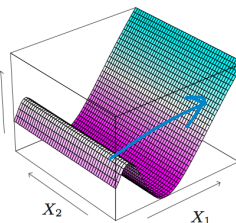
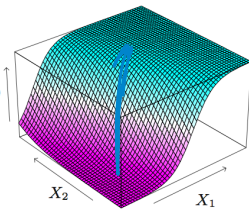
$$f(x_1, \dots, x_d) = \alpha + \sum_{m=1}^M f_m(w_m^T x)$$

Projection of  $X$  into subspace

- $\|w_m\| = 1$  for  $m=1, \dots, M$

- Seek  $w_m$  so the model fits well

$w = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(1, 1)^T$   
so only varying in  $X_1 + X_2$



$w = (1, 0)$   
only varying in  $X_1$  dir

"ridge fun" in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  only varies in direction  $w_m$

additive model, but in terms of derived features  $V_m = w_m^T x$  rather than  $x$  itself

*nonparam.*

dyl unit vector

want

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# PPR Comments

$$f(x_1, \dots, x_d) = \alpha + \sum_{m=1}^M f_m(w_m^T x)$$

- If  $M$  is arbitrarily large, and for appropriate choice of  $f_m$ , PPR can approximate any continuous function in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  arbitrarily well
- Interpretation can be hard
- $M=1$  "single index model" in econometrics  $\rightarrow$  interpretable
- Goal:** Seek to minimize over  $\{f_m, w_m\}$

"universal approximator"

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \left( y_i - \sum_{m=1}^M f_m(w_m^T x_i) \right)^2$$

how?  
First, choose smoother  $S(\cdot)$  for  $f_m$

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# PPR Fitting Algorithm

- Direction vectors  $w_m$  chosen in a forward-stagewise procedure to minimize the fraction of unexplained variance
- Start by standardizing data to 0 mean and scale each covariate to have the same variance

- Set  $\hat{\alpha} = \text{avg}(y_i)$
- Initialize  $\hat{\epsilon}_i = y_i, i = 1, \dots, n$  and  $m = 0$
- Find the direction (unit vector)  $w^*$  that <sup>max</sup>minimizes

$$I(w) = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (\hat{\epsilon}_i - S(w^T x_i))^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n \hat{\epsilon}_i^2}$$

- Set  $\hat{f}_m(w^{*T} x_i) = S(w^{*T} x_i)$
- Set  $m = m + 1$  and update the residuals:

$$\hat{\epsilon}_i \leftarrow \hat{\epsilon}_i - \hat{f}_m(w^{*T} x_i)$$

If  $m=M$ , stop.

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# PPR Fitting Algorithm Comments

$$f(x_1, \dots, x_d) = \alpha + \sum_{m=1}^M f_m(w_m^T x)$$

- Algorithm considered is a greedy forward-wise procedure
- After each step, the  $f_m$ 's from the previous steps can be readjusted using backfitting
- Can lead to fewer terms, but unclear if it improves predictions
- Typically the  $w_m$ 's are not readjusted
- Choice of  $M$  can be based on a threshold in improvement of fit or using CV

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# Structured Regression Functions

- Often, instead of structuring the kernel, it makes sense and is simpler to structure the regression function itself

- Just as with splines, we can consider ANOVA decompositions

*ANOVA*:  $f(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_d) = \alpha + \sum_j f_j(x_j) + \sum_{k < l} f_{kl}(x_k, x_l) + \dots$

*Structure = eliminate some of the higher order terms*  
or, more simply, standard GAMs

$$f(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p) = \alpha + \sum_j f_j(x_j)$$

- Can use **1d (or low-dim) local regression** as the smoother for each term and fit using backfitting algorithm *S<sub>j</sub>(·)*

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# Varying Coefficient Models

- Special case of a structured model
- Divide the set of  $d$  covariates into two sets

*$((x_1, \dots, x_q), (z_1, \dots, z_{d-q}))$   $q < d$*

- Consider a **conditionally linear** model

$$f(x) = \alpha(z) + \beta_1(z)x_1 + \dots + \beta_q(z)x_q$$

*linear given  $z$ , but coeff. vary w/ $z$ .*

- Due to its local nature, it's natural to fit such a model using locally weighted LS

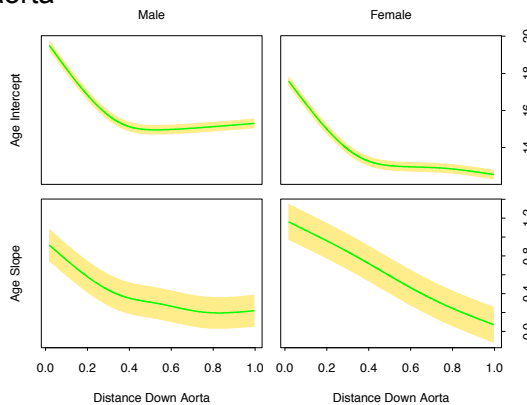
$$\min_{\alpha(z_0), \beta(z_0)} \sum_{i=1}^n K_\lambda(z_0, z_i) (y_i - \alpha(z_0) - x_{1i}\beta_1(z_0) - \dots - x_{qi}\beta_q(z_0))^2$$

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# Varying Coefficient Models

- Example = Human aorta data
- Response = diameter of aorta
- Covariates
  - Linear in "age"
  - Coefficients vary in "gender" and "depth"
- Separate model for M/F
- Results:
  - Aorta thickens with age
  - Relationship is less clear for larger depth



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# Varying Coefficient Models

- Alternatively, one can use splines instead of local regression as a smoother for the varying coefficient functions  $\beta_j(z)$
- Consider penalized linear splines with  $L$  knots
  - For univariate  $x$  and  $z$ , for simplicity, we have

$$E[y | x, z] = \underbrace{\alpha_0^{(0)} + \alpha_1^{(0)} z + \sum_{\ell=1}^L b_{\ell}^{(0)}(z - \xi_{\ell})}_{\beta_0(z)} + \left( \underbrace{\alpha_0^{(1)} + \alpha_1^{(1)} z + \sum_{\ell=1}^L b_{\ell}^{(1)}(z - \xi_{\ell})}_{\beta_1(z)} \right) x$$

↑ what we want to model nonparam.  
 ↑ linear in  $x$  given  $z$

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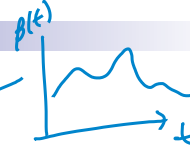
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## Example: Time-Varying Coeff

- Let  $z$  correspond to time  $t$ , a simple case being:

$$y_t = \alpha + \beta(t)X_t + \epsilon_t$$

no time variation, but could have that



- This model directly relates to (Bayesian) dynamic linear models

$$y_t = \alpha + z_t\beta_t + \epsilon_t \quad \epsilon_t \sim N(0, \sigma_\epsilon^2)$$

$$\beta_t = \beta_{t-1} + \nu_t \quad \nu_t \sim N(0, \sigma_\nu^2)$$

varying coef. model w/ smoothing via a 1<sup>st</sup> order Markov model



See West and Harrison 1997

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## What you need to know

- As with splines:
  - Nothing is conceptually hard about multivariate  $x$
  - In practice, nonparametric methods struggle from curse of dimensionality
- For multivariate kernel methods, need multivar kernel
  - Radial basis kernels
  - Product kernels
  - Structured kernels, including learning like projection pursuit
- Methods:
  - Local polynomial regression
  - Local polynomial regression in structured regression like GAMs
  - KDE

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# Readings

- Wakefield – 12.4-12.6
- Hastie, Tibshirani, Friedman – 6.3-6.4, 11.2
- Wasserman – 5.12, 6.5