Statistical Learning Theory and Brain-Machine Interface Design

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What is a BCI/BMI?

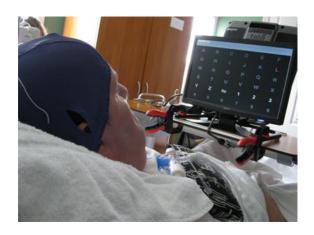
- "A system which takes a biosignal measured from a person and predicts (in real time / on a single-trial basis) some abstract aspect of the person's cognitive state."
 - Biosignal: EEG, ECoG, MEG, ... (+ possibly non-brain data)
 - Abstract aspect of cognitive state: "type of limb movement imagined", "degree of surprisal", "type of vowel imagined"
 - (doesn't have to be properly defined for the BCI to work)







• **Clinical**: Communication and control devices for the severely disabled





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- HCI: User-state monitoring, intelligent assistive systems





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- Entertainment: Computer game controllers



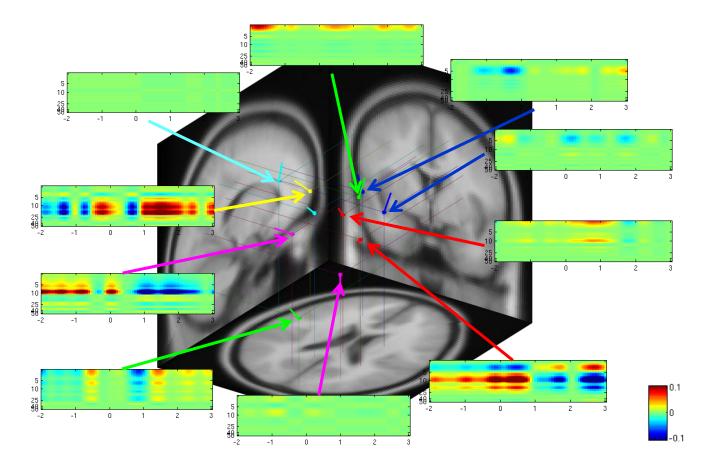


- **Clinical**: Communication and control devices for the severely disabled
- HCI: User-state monitoring, intelligent assistive systems
- Entertainment: Computer game controllers
- Neuroscience: Brain feedback experiments





• Neuroscience: also, *decoding models* of brain dynamics (exploratory research)





How does a BCI work?

Mathematical mapping

$$y = f(X); \quad X = \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}$$

y= "left hand" (-1) "right hand" (+1)

• Functional form

e.g., y = sign(var(WX) + b)

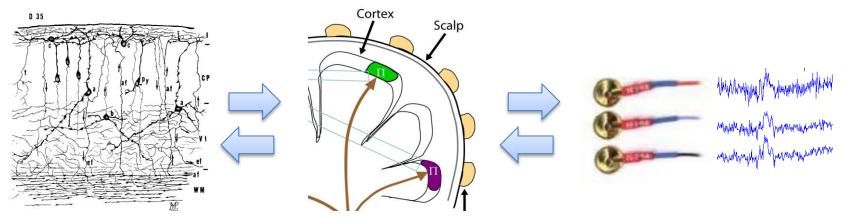
• Unknown parameters!

e.g., **W**, b, ...



Functional Form?

- Reflects the relationship between observation (data segment X) and desired output (cognitive state parameter y)
- Based on some assumed generative mechanism (forward model) or ad hoc

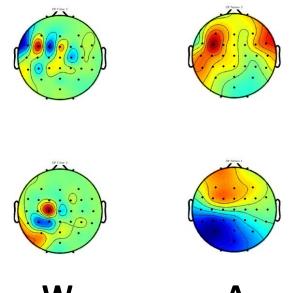


• Note: Functional form is the inverse mapping!



Basic Ingredient: Spatial Filter

- Linear inverse of volume conduction effect
 - X = AS (forward)
 - S = WX (inverse)
- Two examples filters and forward projections:





Further Ingredients

• Inverse mapping from source time courses to latent cognitive state, e.g.:

$$y = \theta \operatorname{vec}(WX) + b$$
 (linear)

$$y = \theta \operatorname{vec}(|(WX)T|) + b$$
 (nonlinear...)



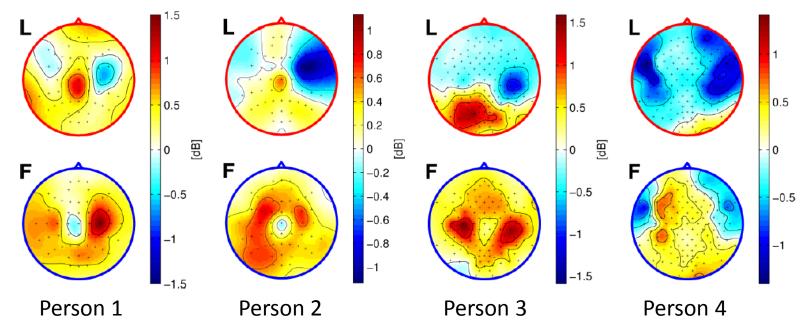
Unknown Parameters?

- for most BCI questions and implementations, the parameters leading to best accuracy (**W**,b, ...) are *a priori* unknown!
 - Depend on hard-to-measure factors (e.g., brain functional map)
 - Depend on expensive-to-measure factors (e.g., brain folding)
 - Depend on highly variable factors
 (e.g., sensor placement, subject state)
 - Different for every person, task, montage, etc.



Unknown Parameters?

• Example per-channel parameters across four subjects:

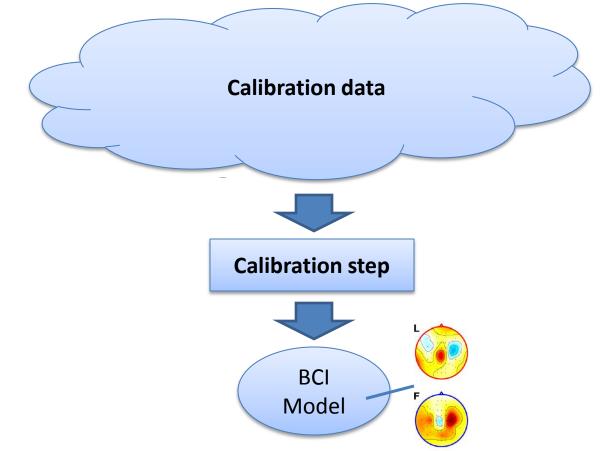


(image: Blankertz et al. 2007)



Model Calibration

• Need *calibration / training data* to estimate parameters from, and a separate *calibration step*





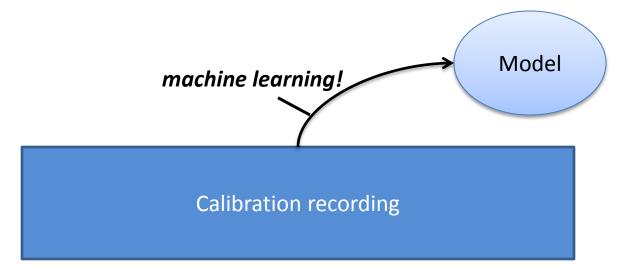
Model Calibration

 In theory many possibilities (e.g. MR scanner data + Beamforming)



Model Calibration

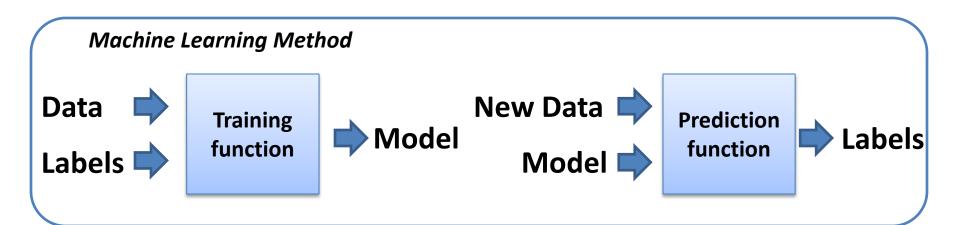
- In theory many possibilities (e.g. MR scanner data + Beamforming)
- Modern standard approach: utilize data where both the BCI input (e.g. EEG) and desired output (cognitive state) is known and adapt BCI parameters using *machine learning* techniques





Machine Learning

- Large field with 100s of algorithms
- Most methods conform to a common framework of a *training function* and a *prediction function*
- Model parameters heta capture the learned relationship
- Data $X \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times F}$ and Labels / target values $y \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times D}$ N = #trials, F = #features, D = #output dims.





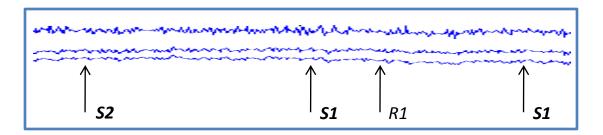
Required Calibration Recording

- Standard psychological experiment
 - continuous EEG (or other)
 - multiple trials/blocks (capturing variation)
 - randomized (eliminating confounds)



Required Calibration Recording

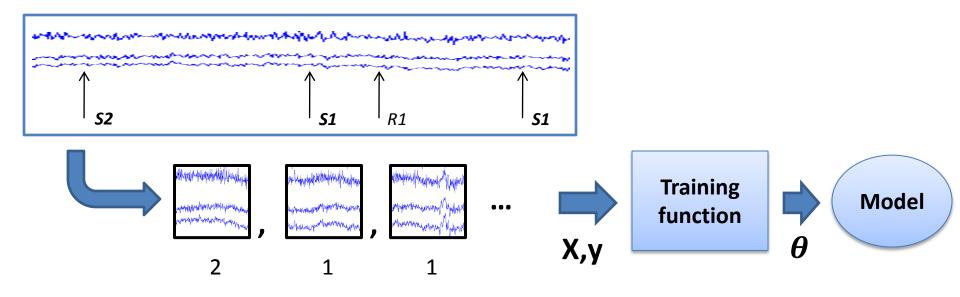
- Standard psychological experiment
 - continuous EEG (or other)
 - multiple trials/blocks (capturing variation)
 - randomized (eliminating confounds)
 - event markers to encode timing and type of cognitive state conditions of interest, e.g., stimuli/responses ("target markers" in BCILAB)





Using Machine Learning

• Often, one trial segment (sample) is extracted for every target marker in the calibration recording (length depends on timing of related phenomena)

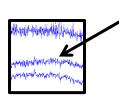




Detour: Feature Extraction

- **Caveat:** Off-the-shelf machine learning methods often do not work very well when applied to raw signal segments of the calibration recording
 - too high-dimensional (too many parameters to fit)
 - too complex structure to be captured (too much modeling freedom)
 - (but note: different story for custom methods)

1000s of degrees of freedom





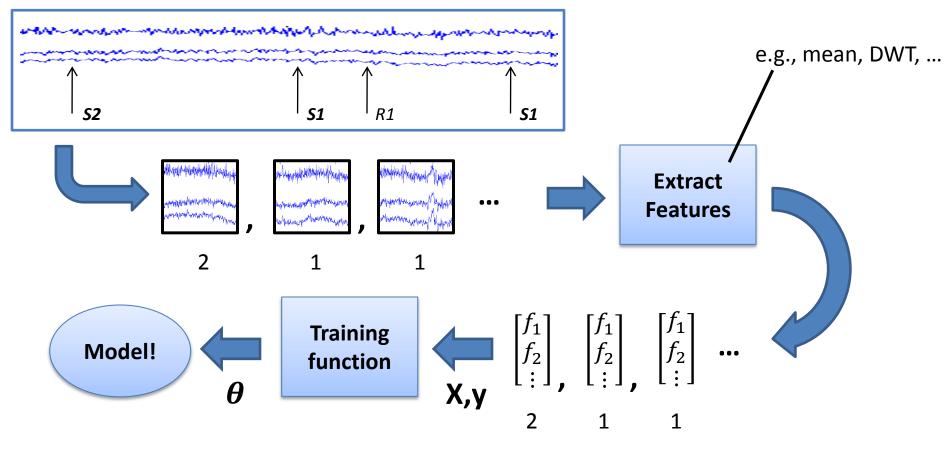
Detour: Feature Extraction

- Solution: Introduce additional mapping (called *"feature extraction")* from raw signal segments onto feature vectors
 - output is often of lower dimensionality
 - hopefully better distributed in the feature space (easy to handle for machine learning)



Using Machine Learning

 Including feature extraction, the analysis process is as follows:

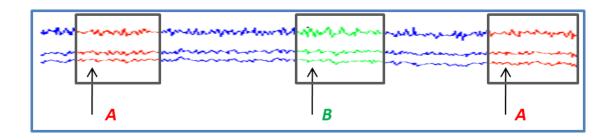


Two Major Analysis Pathways



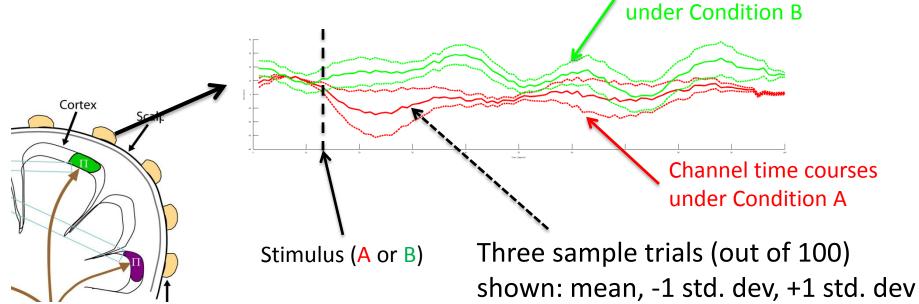
Simple Case: ERP-like Patterns

 Suppose a calibration recording with 100 stimuli of type A and 100 stimuli of type B



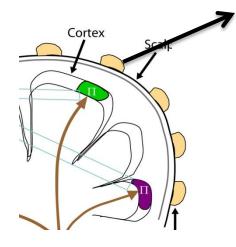


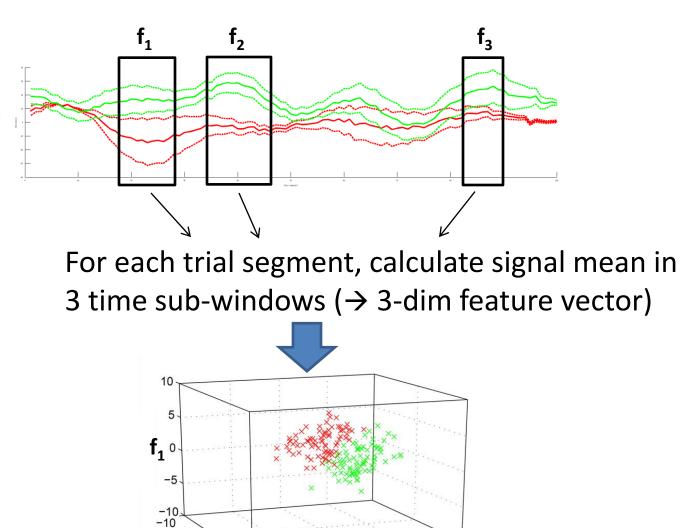
Resulting Segments





Extracting Key Features





2

T2

0

10

Τ2

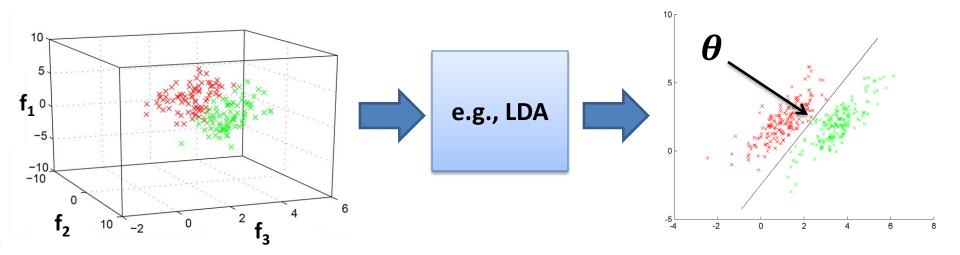
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Using Machine Learning

• The feature vectors are passed on to a machine learning function (e.g., Linear Discriminant Analysis)



(Note: actually, this space has 3x #channels dimensions)

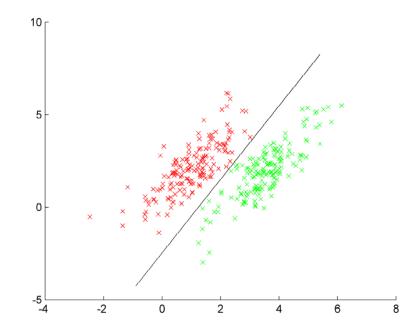


LDA In a Nutshell

• Given trial segments x_k (in vector form) in \mathcal{C}_1 and \mathcal{C}_2 ,

$$\boldsymbol{\mu}_i = \frac{1}{|\mathcal{C}_i|} \sum_{k \in \mathcal{C}_i} \boldsymbol{x}_k, \qquad \Sigma_i = \sum_{k \in \mathcal{C}_i} (\boldsymbol{x}_k - \boldsymbol{\mu}_i) (\boldsymbol{x}_k - \boldsymbol{\mu}_i)^{\mathsf{T}}$$

 $\boldsymbol{\theta} = (\Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2)^{-1} (\boldsymbol{\mu}_2 - \boldsymbol{\mu}_1), \qquad \mathbf{b} = \boldsymbol{\theta}^{\mathsf{T}} (\boldsymbol{\mu}_1 + \boldsymbol{\mu}_2)/2$





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- **Caveat**: θ often high-dimensional but only few trials available
- Can use a regularized estimator instead, here using shrinkage; instead of Σ_i, we use Σ̃_i above:

$$\tilde{\Sigma}_i = (1 - \lambda)\Sigma_i + \lambda I$$



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• Given trial segments x_k (in vector form) in \mathcal{C}_1 and \mathcal{C}_2 ,

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• Corresponding prediction function is linear in X:

$$y = sign(\theta vec(X) - b)$$

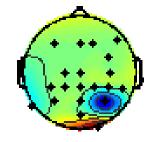


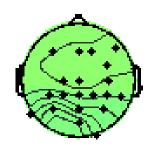
Linear Weights Visualized

• Color-coded linear weights topographies, 22 channels, 6 time windows, data from ERP task

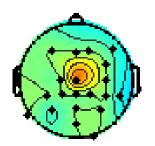
Window1 (0.25s to 0.3s) Window2 (0.3s to 0.35s) Window3 (0.35s to 0.4s)







Window4 (0.4s to 0.45s) Window5 (0.45s to 0.5s) Window6 (0.5s to 0.55s)



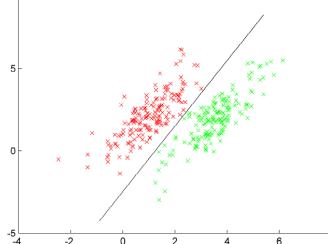






Does it Make Sense?

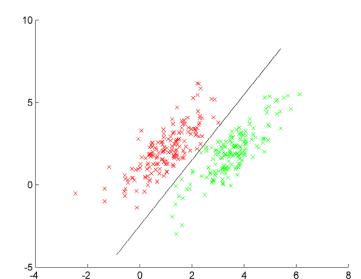
- Source activation S can be recovered from sensor measurements by a linear mapping if (linear) volume conduction is invertible (S = WX)
- Assuming a jointly Gaussian noise process and a noise distribution that is independent of the condition (A/B), LDA recovers the optimal linear mapping





Does it Make Sense?

- Linear classifiers like LDA can operate implicitly on source ERPs, but:
 - EEG variation is often *not* Gaussian
 - Data variation *can* depend significantly on condition
 - For limited data samples, LDA is not necessarily optimal
 - Does not yield directly interpretable results





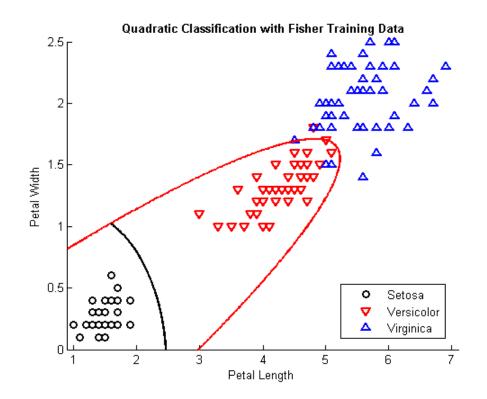
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 - EEG variation is often *not* Gaussian
 - Data variation can depend significantly on condition
 - For limited data samples, LDA is not necessarily optimal
 - Does not yield directly interpretable results
- Also in the linear framework:
 - Using the full source activation segments instead of their mean features
 - Using source wavelet features



Digression: Alternatives

• Omitting the assumption of condition-independent noise yields Quadratic Discriminant Analysis (QDA)

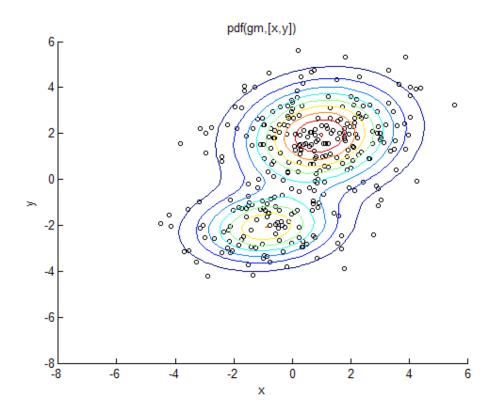


(image: The Mathworks)



Digression: Alternatives

• Fitting multiple Gaussians for each condition instead of one yields Gaussian Mixture Models



(image: The Mathworks)



Complex Case

- Nonlinear operation in play, on *source* signals
- Due to, e.g., shift indeterminacy of source waveforms (no precise time-locking / jitter / high-frequency time course / ...)
- Oscillatory processes: e.g., determining the amplitude of source oscillations

$$S = W^*X$$
 $F = abs(DFT(S))$ $y = \theta^*F - b$

 Nonlinear and discards phase information (If done on channels, source spectral properties cannot be recovered)



Complex Case

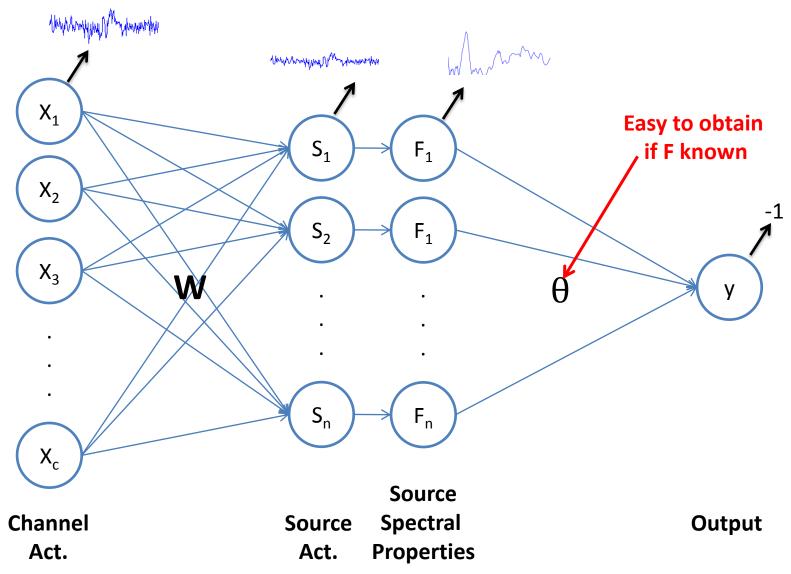
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S = W*X F =
$$abs(DFT(S))$$
 y = θ *F - b
nonlinear

 Nonlinear and discards phase information (If done on channels, source spectral properties cannot be recovered)



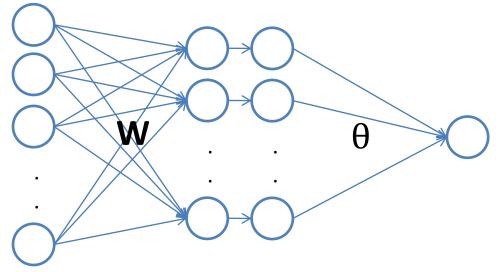
Latent Variable Viewpoint





Latent Variable Viewpoint

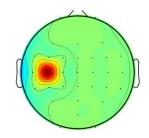
- How to learn W?
 - "top-down" (using X & y) gradient descent / NN backprop, ...
 - "bottom-up" (using only X) ICA, dictionary learning, ...
 - both? possibly supervised ICA, Bayesian inference, …
 - via direct observations (MR image, FW model) Beamforming, ...
 - using additional constraints (e.g., Gaussian signals) CSP, DAL, ...



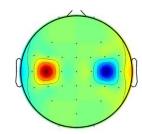


Fixed Filters

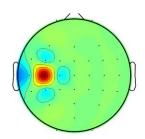
- Simple a priori filters (of historical interest)
 - raw channels, common average ref.



- bipolar derivations



- surface Laplacian



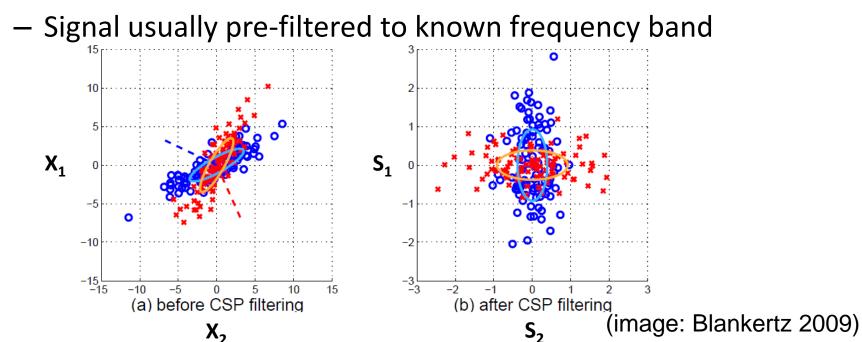


Unsupervised Bottom-Up

- ICA, AMICA
 - unsupervised: need to make sure that filters recover the *desired* sources
 - yields localizable sources: enables interpretability, enables cortical coregistration, can link to anatomical / functional data (more later)
 - slow: problematic between calibration & online use
 - possible enhancements: supervised? overcomplete?



- Common Spatial Patterns
 - Most popular algorithm in BCI field
 - Assumption: Gaussian Signal, variance features, orthogonal sources (thus all structure captured by signal covariance)





Common Spatial Patterns

Given signal covariance matrix Σ_i under condition i, find the simultaneous diagonalizer V of Σ_1 and Σ_2

$$V^{\mathsf{T}} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_1 V = \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_1, \\ V^{\mathsf{T}} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_2 V = \boldsymbol{\Lambda}_2,$$

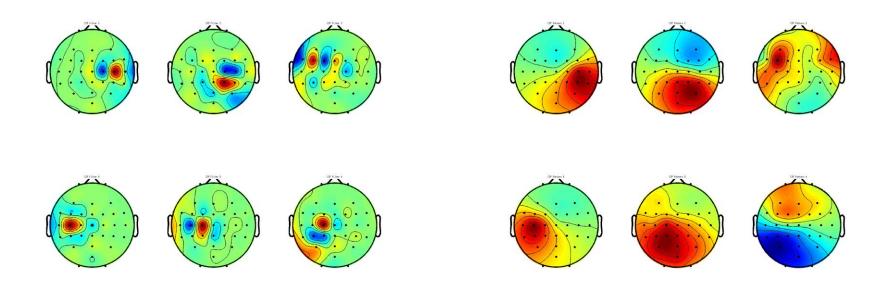
(with Λ_i diagonal) such that $\Lambda_1 + \Lambda_2 = I$. This yields a generalized eigenvalue problem of the form

$$V^{\mathsf{T}} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_1 V = \boldsymbol{D} \wedge V^{\mathsf{T}} (\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_1 + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_2) V = \boldsymbol{I}$$

The k smallest and largest eigenvalues in **D** correspond to directions in **V** (spatial filters) that yield smallest (largest) variance in class 1 and simultaneously largest (smallest) variance in class 2.



• Produces well-adapted filters (left) and occasionally roughly dipolar filter inverses (right)





- Many variations of CSP:
 - Filter-Bank CSP (FBCSP): multiple bands/windows
 - Diagonal Loading CSP (DLCSP): cov. shrinkage
 - Composite CSP (CCSP): covariance prior
 - Tikhonov-regularized CSP (TRCSP): filter shrinkage
 - ...
- Complete CSP functional form:

$$y = \operatorname{sign}(\boldsymbol{\theta} \log(\operatorname{var}(\boldsymbol{W}\boldsymbol{X})) + b)$$

Usually learned

/ia | D4

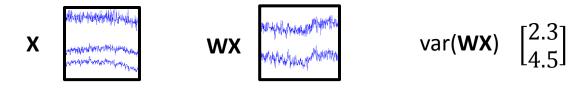


• Consideration: Given a zero-mean trial $X \in \mathbb{R}^{C \times T}$ with covariance $\Sigma \in \mathbb{R}^{C \times C}$, spatial filters $W \in \mathbb{R}^{S \times C}$, linear weights $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^{S}$ and bias b



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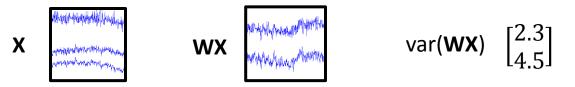
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- Omitting the log from CSP, we have:

$$y = b + \theta \operatorname{var}(WX)$$



• Rewriting in terms of individual spatial filters W_k :

$$y = b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \operatorname{var}(\boldsymbol{W}_{k}\boldsymbol{X})$$

 The variance term can be expressed using the covariance matrix Σ of segment X:

$$y = b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \operatorname{var}(\boldsymbol{W}_{k}\boldsymbol{X}) = b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \left(\boldsymbol{W}_{k}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}\boldsymbol{W}_{k}^{\mathsf{T}}\right)$$

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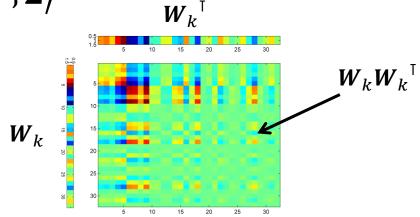
• And $W_k \Sigma W_k^{\mathsf{T}}$ can be replaced by the inner product between two matrices $\langle W_k W_k^{\mathsf{T}}, \Sigma \rangle$

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• And $W_k \Sigma W_k^{T}$ can be replaced by the inner product between two matrices $\langle W_k W_k^{T}, \Sigma \rangle$

$$b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \left\langle \boldsymbol{W}_{k} \boldsymbol{W}_{k}^{\mathsf{T}}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \right\rangle$$



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$$y = b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \operatorname{var}(\boldsymbol{W}_{k}\boldsymbol{X}) = b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \left(\boldsymbol{W}_{k}\boldsymbol{\Sigma}\boldsymbol{W}_{k}^{\mathsf{T}}\right)$$

• And $W_k \Sigma W_k^{\mathsf{T}}$ can be replaced by the inner product between two matrices $\langle W_k W_k^{\mathsf{T}}, \Sigma \rangle$, and regrouped:

$$b + \sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \langle \boldsymbol{W}_{k} \boldsymbol{W}_{k}^{\mathsf{T}}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \rangle = b + \left(\sum_{k=1}^{S} \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k} \boldsymbol{W}_{k} \boldsymbol{W}_{k}^{\mathsf{T}}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \right)$$
$$= b + \langle \boldsymbol{\Theta}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \rangle$$

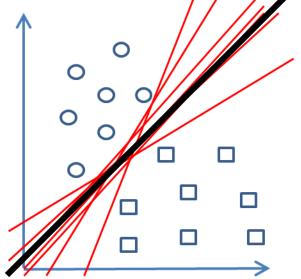
• Thus this form is linear in the *covariance matrix* of X:

$$y = b + \langle \boldsymbol{\Theta}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma} \rangle = \boldsymbol{b} + \widetilde{\boldsymbol{\Theta}} \operatorname{vec}(\boldsymbol{\Sigma})$$

- Could again learn $\tilde{\theta}$ using a simple linear method (e.g., LDA), but *very* high-dimensional (#parameters= C^{2^2})
- Need a method suitable for large-scale problems

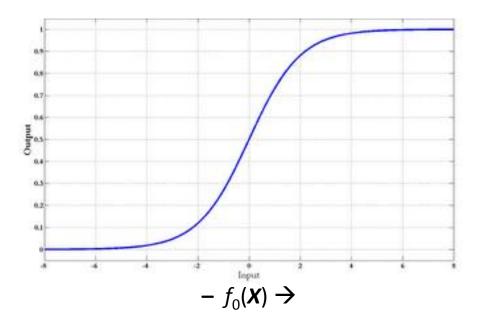


- Discriminative learning approaches like Support Vector Machines (SVMs) and Generalized Linear Models (GLMs) are well-adapted to high-dimensional / large-scale problems
- These directly optimize the parameters $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ given the data





• Logistic Regression is a GLM that maps onto binary outputs via a logistic "link function" $q_{\theta}(Y = y|X) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-yf_{\theta}(X)}}, (y \in \{-1, +1\})$



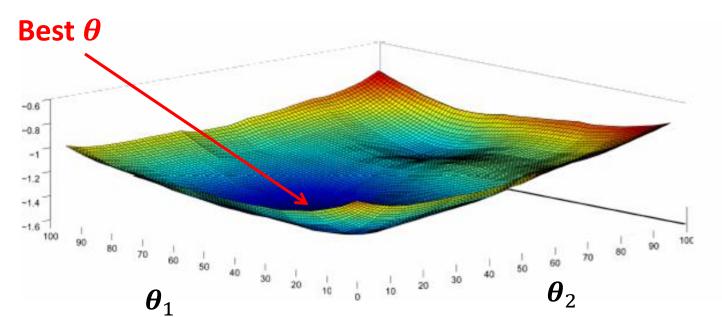


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- ... and linear function $f_{\theta}(X)$ $f_{\theta}(X) = \theta X + b$



 Trick: *θ* can be obtained via off-the-shelf convex optimization methods (such as CVX) by solving the problem

$$\min_{\theta} \log \left(1 + e^{-y f_{\theta}(X)} \right)$$





 For large problems, solution is still prone to over-fitting – need to plug in *additional assumptions*

$$\min_{\boldsymbol{\theta}} \log(1 + e^{-yf_{\boldsymbol{\theta}}(\boldsymbol{X})}) + \lambda \Omega(\boldsymbol{\theta})$$

- Many choices for regularization term $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$
 - $-\Omega(\boldsymbol{\theta}) = \|\boldsymbol{\theta}\|_2$ encourages small weights

 $-\Omega(\boldsymbol{\theta}) = \|\boldsymbol{\theta}\|_1 = |\boldsymbol{\theta}_1| + |\boldsymbol{\theta}_2| + \cdots$ encourages sparsity

- can also get sparsity on groups of weights
- combinations thereof, ...

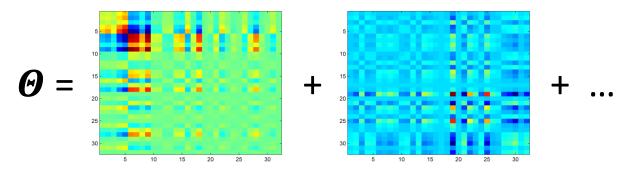


Large-Scale Learning Applied

• In the previous supervised oscillatory model $y = b + \langle \Theta, \Sigma \rangle$, the matrix-shaped Θ allows for a special matrix norm regularization: $rank(\Theta)$

$$\min_{\boldsymbol{\Theta}} \log(1 + e^{-yf_{\boldsymbol{\Theta}}(\boldsymbol{X})}) + \lambda \sum_{k=1}^{\prime} \sigma_{k}(\boldsymbol{\Theta})$$

This encourages a low-rank structure in Θ, i.e.





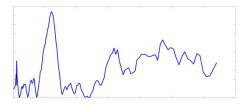
Back to ICA

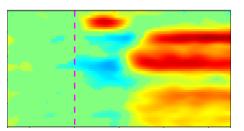
- ICA can learn spatial filters W explicitly, yields meaningful source activations S
- Can use any spectral measure on trial segments of S to extract oscillatory structure
- Can learn relationship between oscillatory structure and cognitive state using simple or complex approaches...

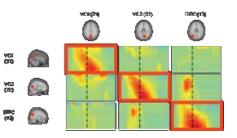


Some Spectral Measures

- Band-power
 - Band-pass (e.g., FIR, IIR, ...) + (log-)variance
- Fourier spectrum
 - Windowed DFT/FFT (e.g., Hann)
 - Welch method
 - Multi-taper method
- Time/Frequency representations
 - Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT)
 - Continuous Wavelet Transform (CWT)
 - Discrete wavelet transform (DWT)
- Coherence, Effective Connectivity, ...



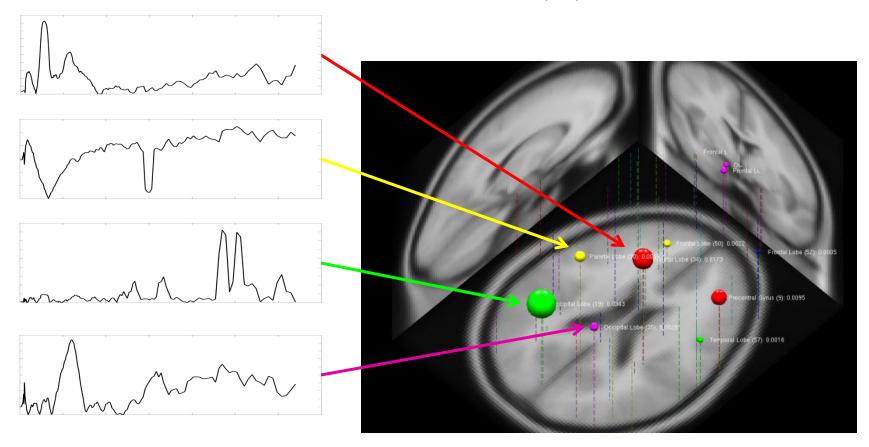






Source-Space Modeling

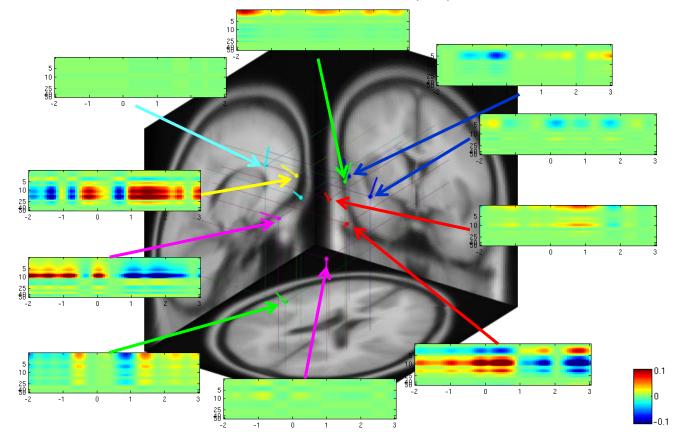
 If IC sources are localized using, e.g., dipole fitting or NFT, parameters (θ) have a location





Source-Space Modeling

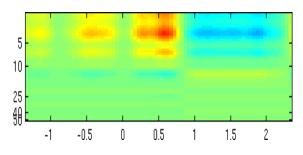
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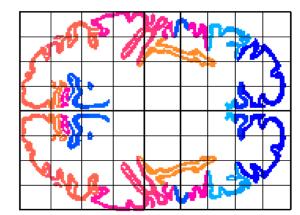


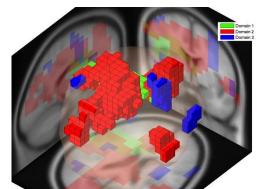


Source-Space Modeling

- Structural prior knowledge
 - can be introduced as side assumptions in the model (e.g. smoothness, sparsity, group sparsity, low rank, ...)



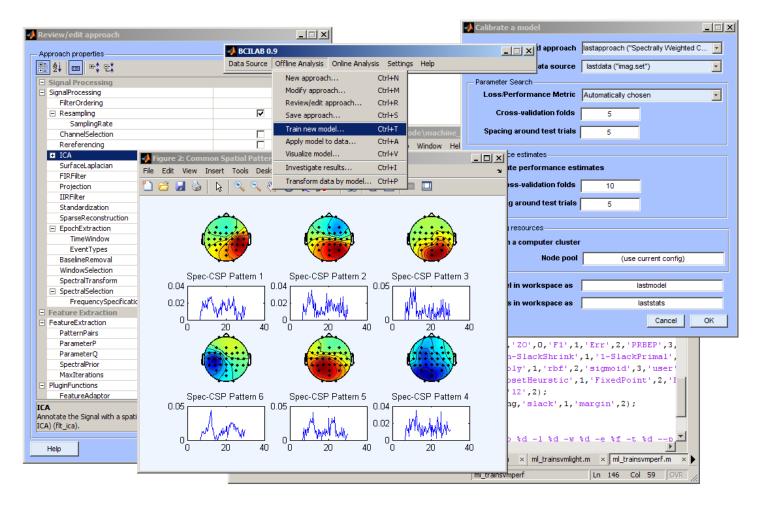




- Quantitative prior knowledge
 - Structure atlases (Talairach, LONI, ...)
 can supply information about the *a* priori relevance of a brain process
 - Can adapt the per-parameter penalty
- Empirical data
 - Data collected from other subjects can be co-registered/aligned and yield empirical prior distributions



Next: BCILAB Practicum



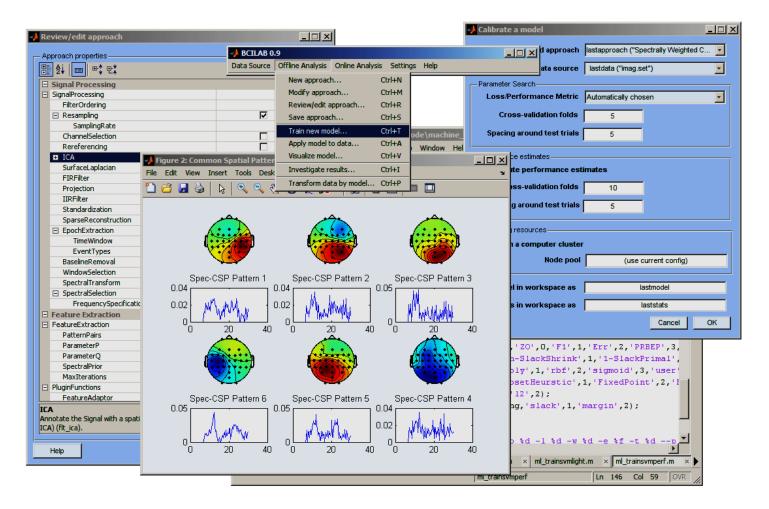
http://sccn.ucsd.edu/wiki/BCILAB



Thanks! Questions?



BCILAB Briefing



http://sccn.ucsd.edu/wiki/BCILAB



Idea & Purpose

- Like EEGLAB, but for BCI (and/or cognitive state assessment)
 - Seeding a community
 - Strengthening links between BCI and Neuroscience
- SCCN's in-house tool for BCI problems
 - Main focus: Advanced cognitive monitoring
 - Part of a large US research program (CaN CTA)
 - Funded by ARL (and ONR, Swartz Foundation, ...)





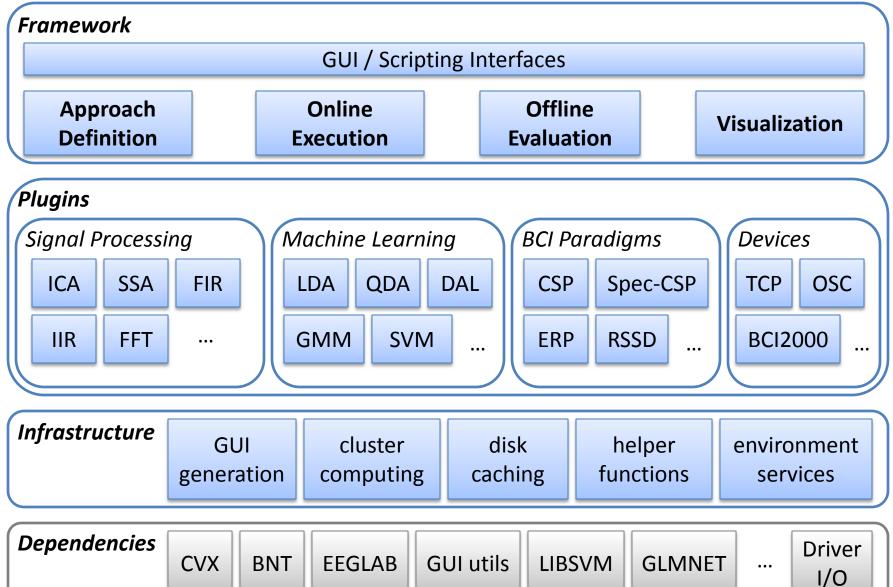
BCILAB Specialty

- State of the art
- Largest collection of machine learning & signal processing components in any open-source BCI package
 - Many standard components (CSP, LDA, SVM, ...)
 - Many modern components (SBL, SSA, AMICA, HKL, DPGMM, LR-DAL, ...)
 - Some novel components (OSR, RSSD, SSB, ...)
- Next-generation framework
 - Fully probabilistic
 - Model inference from data corpora*
 - Anatomical priors, other neuroscience-aware features
 - Processing of parallel streams

(*: not yet in the current release)



BCILAB Components





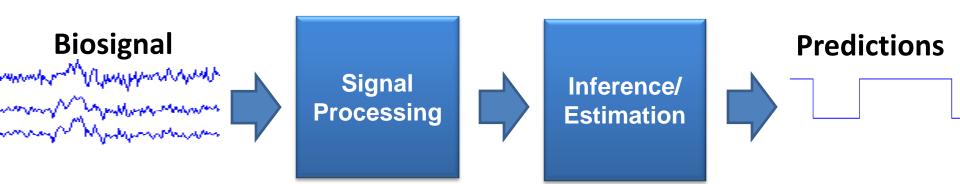
Signal Processing?

 Some signal-level computations can be done more efficiently than window-by-window (esp. when successive windows overlap a lot)



Signal Processing?

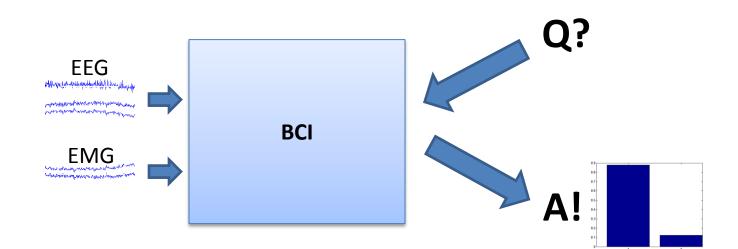
- Some signal-level computations can be done more efficiently than window-by-window (esp. when successive windows overlap a lot)
- Room for good DSP use (e.g., frequency filter, spatial filter, ...) before actual prediction
- Also, can assemble approaches from existing components





BCI Behavior

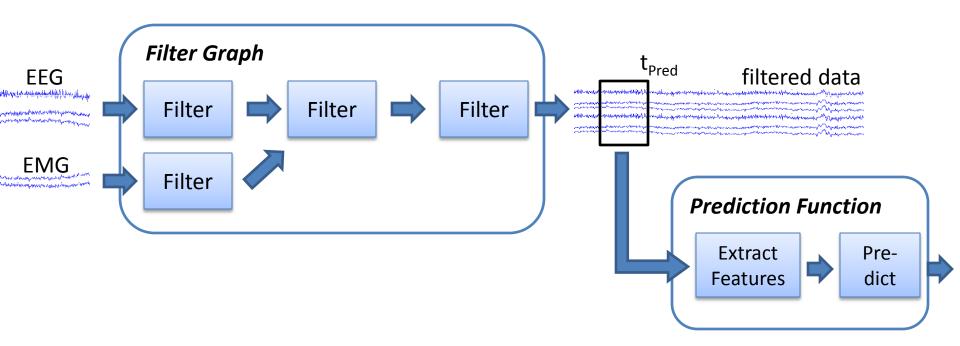
 BCIs in BCILAB are acting as an oracle that consumes one or more biosignals and can respond to (predefined) queries about cognitive state





Online Data Flow

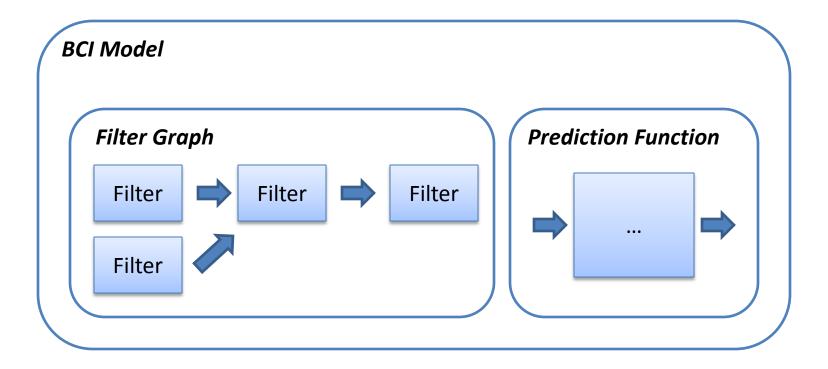
- A filter graph receives all input samples and produces pre-filtered data
- The prediction function may be queried on demand on the filter graph's outputs





BCI Models

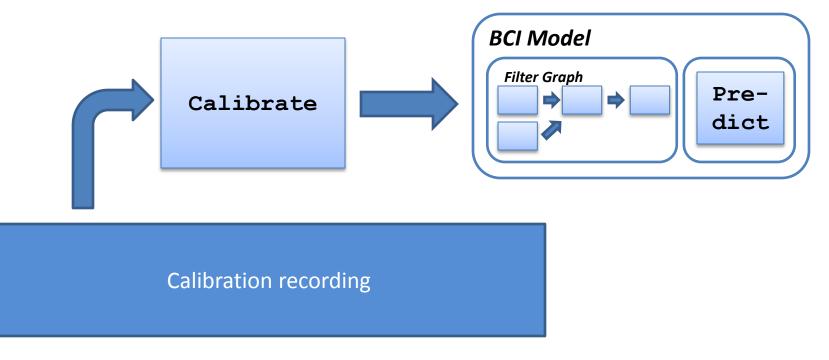
 BCIs are described by "BCI models" that specify both the *filter graph* and the *prediction function* (incl. parameters)





BCI Paradigms

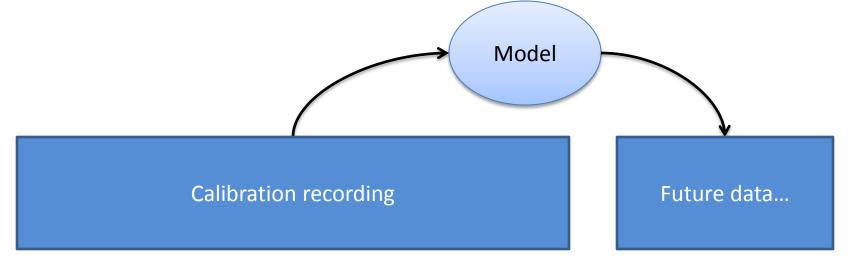
- BCI paradigms are the coarsest plugin type in BCILAB and tie all parts of a BCI approach together
- They are seeds for new BCI designs and cornerstones of BCILAB usage





Offline Evaluation

- Given calibration data
- Estimate model parameters (spatial filters, statistics)
- Apply the model to new data (online / single-trial)
- Optionally: compare outputs with known state, compute loss statistics for the model / approach (e.g., misclassification rate)





Offline Evaluation

Evaluation of computational approaches on a single data set?

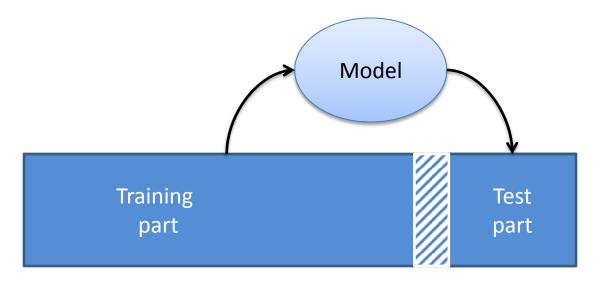


Calibration recording



Offline Evaluation

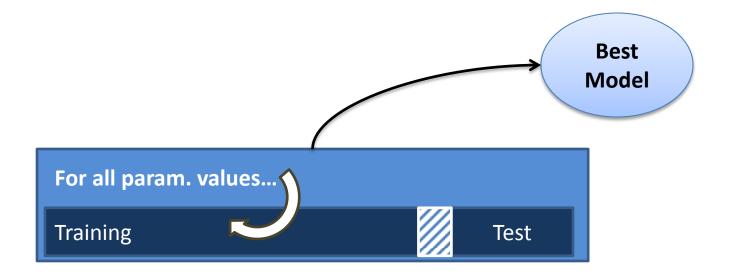
- Evaluation of computational approaches on a single data set?
 - Can not test on the training data! (always on separate data)
 - Instead can split data set repeatedly into training/test blocks systematically, a.k.a. cross-validation





Resolving Free Parameters

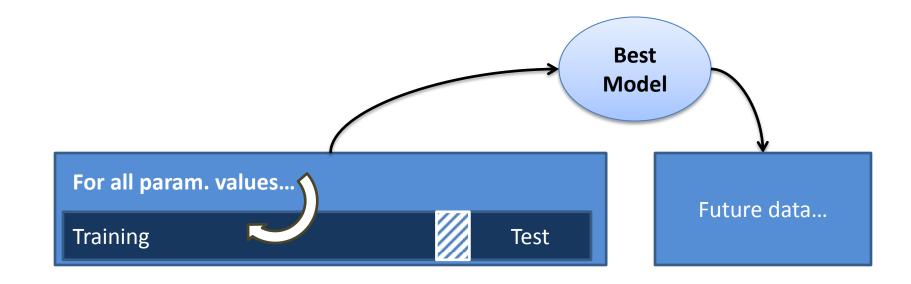
- Can be done using cross-validation in a grid search (try all values of free parameters)
- Caveat: Resulting "optimal" numbers are non-reportable (cherry-picked!)





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- Can be done using cross-validation in a grid search (try all values of free parameters)
- Caveat: Resulting "optimal" numbers are non-reportable (cherry-picked!)
- But may test resulting best model on separate data
- **Or** run grid search *within* an outer cross-validation ("nested cross-validation")

