

Distributed convex optimization: a consensus-based Newton-Raphson approach

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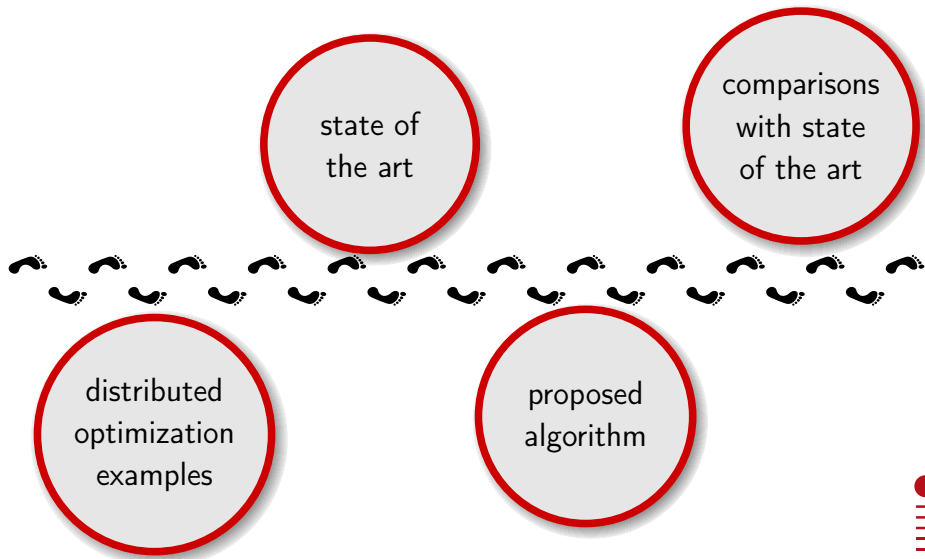
July 5th, 2011



DIPARTIMENTO
DI INGEGNERIA
DELL'INFORMAZIONE



This talk



This talk

state of
the art

comparisons
with state
of the art

distributed
optimization
examples

proposed
algorithm



Distributed optimization and its importance

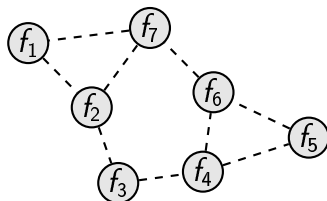
Problem formulation

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize} && f(x) = \sum_{i=1}^N f_i(x) \\ & \text{subject to} && g(x) \leq 0 \\ & && x \in \mathcal{X} \end{aligned}$$

under
convexity
assumptions

Multi-agents scenario

Networked system
where neighbors
cooperate to find the
optimum



Distribution optimization - Example 1

Regression in sensor networks

(e.g. when estimation = optimization of a cost function)

Residuals minimization

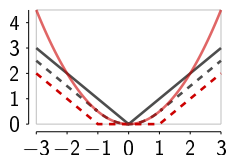
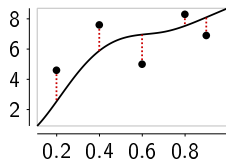
$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\theta} \quad & \sum_{i=1}^N \phi(y_i - \hat{y}_i) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \hat{y}_i = \theta^T x_i \end{aligned}$$

$$\phi(r) = |r|^2 \quad (\text{least squares})$$

$$\phi(r) = |r| \quad (\text{least abs. deviations})$$

$$\phi(r) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } |r| < 1 \\ |r| - 1 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (\text{Vapnik})$$

$$\phi(r) = \begin{cases} |r|^2 & \text{if } |r| < 1 \\ 2(|r| - 1) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (\text{Huber})$$



Distribution optimization - Example 2

Classification in sensor networks

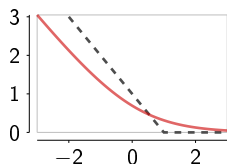
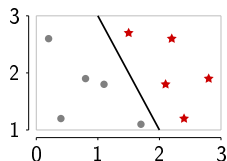
(e.g. when classification = optimization of a cost function)

Support Vector Machine Classification

$$\min_{w, w_0} \sum_{i=1}^N [1 - y_i (wx_i + w_0)]_+ + \lambda \|w\|^2$$

↓ (smooth approximation)

$$\min_{w, w_0} \sum_{i=1}^N \log [1 + e^{-y_i (wx_i + w_0)}] + \lambda \|w\|^2$$



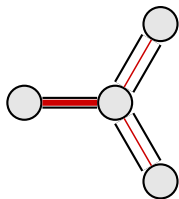
Distribution optimization - Example 3

Resource allocation in wireless systems

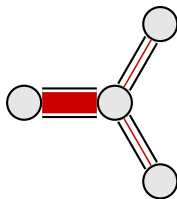
(e.g. when optimal allocation = optimization of a cost function)



Links capacity allocation [Johansson 2008]

suboptimal allocation



optimal allocation



 's width = allocated link capacity
 's width = data flux

Update

state of
the art

comparisons
with state
of the art



distributed
optimization
examples

proposed
algorithm



State of the art

Distributed optimization methods: 3 main categories

- Primal decompositions methods
(e.g. distributed subgradients)
- Dual decompositions methods
(e.g. alternating direction method of multipliers)
- Heuristic methods
(e.g. swarm optimization, genetic algorithms)



Primal decomposition methods (centralized)

Subgradient methods [Kiwiel 2004]

$$x_{k+1} = \mathcal{P}_{\mathcal{X}} [x_k + \alpha_k \cdot g(x_k)]$$

with

- $g(x_k) :=$ subgradient of $f(\cdot)$ at x_k
- $\alpha_k :=$ stepsize
- $\mathcal{P}_{\mathcal{X}}[\cdot] :=$ projector on \mathcal{X}

Convergence properties

- α_k typically needs to be diminishing for non-smooth f
- $g(\cdot)$ may be required to be bounded
- ...

Primal decomposition methods (distributed)

Distributed subgradient methods [Nedić Ozdaglar 2009]

$$x_i(k+1) = \mathcal{P}_X \left[\sum_{j=1}^N a_{ij}(k)x_j(k) + \alpha_i(k)g_i(x_i(k)) \right]$$

with

- $\sum_{j=1}^N a_{ij}(k)x_j(k) :=$ aver. consensus step on **local** estimates $x_j(k)$
- $g_i(x_i(k)) :=$ **local** subgradient of **local** cost $f_i(\cdot)$ at $x_i(k)$
- $\alpha_i(k) :=$ **local** stepsize

Convergence properties [Nedić Ozdaglar (2007)]

E.g., for *bounded subgradients* and $\alpha_i(k) = \alpha$ then

$$\liminf_{k \rightarrow +\infty} f(x_i(k)) = f^* + \text{small constant}$$

Dual decomposition methods (centralized)

Method of Multipliers [Bertsekas 1982]

Primal reformulation:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize} && f(x) + \frac{\rho}{2} \|Ax - b\|_2^2 \\ & \text{subject to} && Ax = b \end{aligned}$$

yields to

- 1 $x_{k+1} = \arg \min_x \left(f(x) + \lambda_k^T (Ax - b) + \frac{\rho}{2} \|Ax - b\|_2^2 \right)$
- 2 $y_{k+1} = y_k + \rho(Ax_k - b)$

Convergence properties

- convergence to the optimum under mild assumptions (milder than for original dual ascent [Boyd et al. (2010)])

Dual decomposition methods (distributed)

Alternating Direction Method of Multipliers [Bertsekas Tsitsiklis 1997]

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize} && f_1(x_1) + f_2(x_2) \\ & \text{subject to} && A_1x_1 + A_2x_2 - b = 0 \end{aligned}$$

Augmented
Lagrangian:

$$L_\rho(x_1, x_2, \lambda) := f_1(x_1) + f_2(x_2) + \lambda^T (A_1x_1 + A_2x_2 - b) + \frac{\rho}{2} \|A_1x_1 + A_2x_2 - b\|_2^2$$

Algorithm

- 1 $x_1(k+1) = \arg \min_{x_1} L_\rho(x_1, x_2(k), \lambda(k))$
- 2 $x_2(k+1) = \arg \min_{x_2} L_\rho(x_1(k+1), x_2, \lambda(k))$
- 3 $\lambda(k+1) = \lambda(k) + \rho (A_1x_1 + A_2x_2 - b)$

Dual decomposition methods (distributed)

Second-order dual descents [Bertsekas (2011)]

idea: use Newton-like procedures in the dual ascent step



usually involve graphs' Laplacian

Algorithms

Strategies to estimate Laplacians:

(usually based on matrices splitting strategies)

- [Zargham et al. (2011)] → Taylor expansions of Hessians
- [Jadbabaie et al. (2009)] → consensus-based iterative scheme

Drawbacks of the considered algorithms

Primal based strategies

- may be slow
- may not converge to the optimum

Dual based strategies

- may be computationally expensive
- require topological knowledge
- implementation to handle time-varying graphs, time delays, etc. may require effort

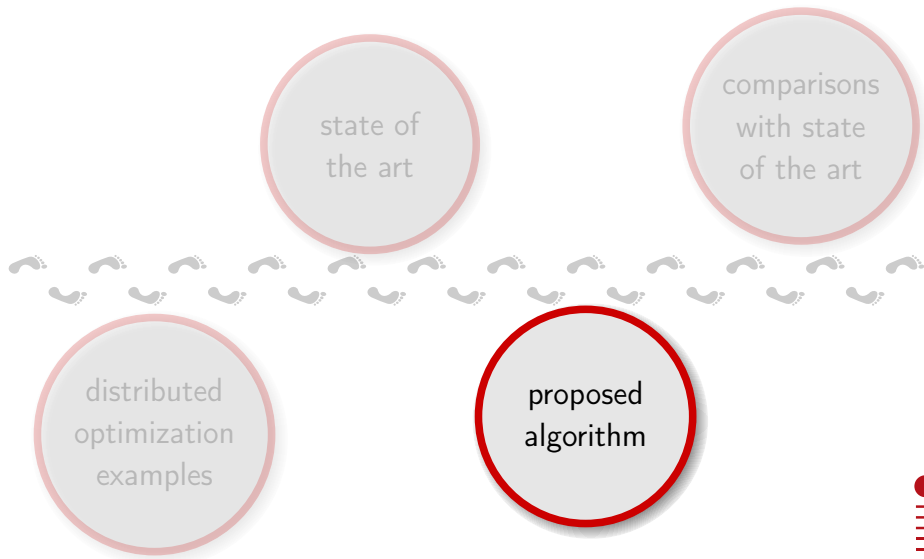
Motivations for our method

The algorithm that we want:

- 1 easy to be implemented
- 2 with small computational requirements
- 3 does not require synchronization or topology knowledge
- 4 assured to converge to global optimum
- 5 inheriting good properties of standard consensus
convergence proofs, robustness, . . .



Update



Our position in literature

How the proposed algorithm relates to other techniques?

- primal decomposition method
- unconstrained convex optimization
- uses second-order approximations
- strong assumptions on the cost functions
(all other algorithms can work under our hypotheses)

**our contribute: better convergence speed
for primal methods**



Illustrative example: quadratic local cost functions

Derivation of the algorithm - step 1 on 3

Simplified scalar scenario

$$f_i(x) = \frac{1}{2} a_i (x - b_i)^2 + c_i \quad a_i > 0$$

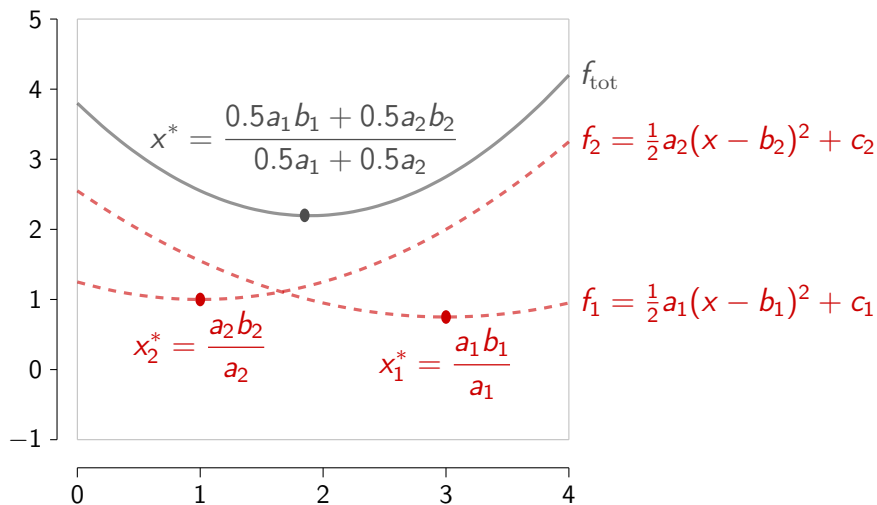
Corresponding solution

$$x^* = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N a_i b_i}{\sum_{i=1}^N a_i} = \frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N a_i b_i}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N a_i}$$

i.e. ***parallel of 2 average consensi!***

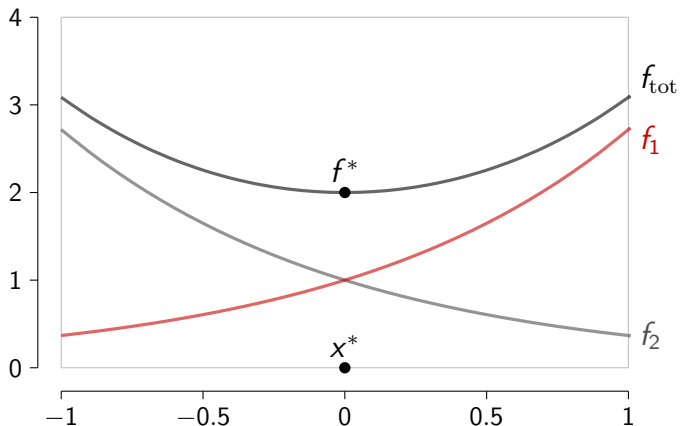
Illustrative example: quadratic local cost functions

Derivation of the algorithm - step 1 on 3 - graphical interpretation



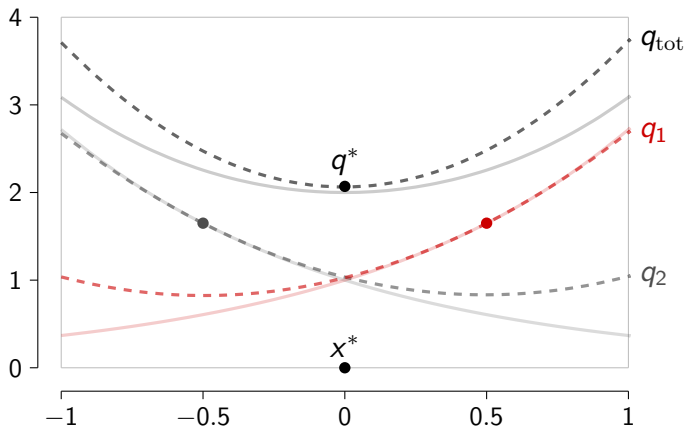
And for generic convex local cost functions?

Derivation of the algorithm - step 1 on 3



And for generic convex local cost functions?

Derivation of the algorithm - step 1 on 3



The initial idea

Derivation of the algorithm - step 2 on 3

For quadratics ...

$$x^* = \frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N a_i b_i}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N a_i}$$

with

- $a_i b_i = f_i''(x_i) x_i - f_i'(x_i)$
- $a_i = f_i''(x_i)$

Does it imply that, for generic functions, ...??

$$x^* = \frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (f_i''(x_i) x_i - f_i'(x_i))}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i)}$$

The initial idea

Derivation of the algorithm - step 2 on 3

The algorithm with the previous intuitions

- 1 initialize as before:
 - $y_i(0) := f_i''(x_i(0))x_i(0) - f_i'(x_i(0))$
 - $z_i(0) := f_i''(x_i(0))$
- 2 run 2 *average consensi* (P doubly stochastic):
 - $y_i(k+1) = Py_i(k)$
 - $z_i(k+1) = Pz_i(k)$
- 3 locally compute $x_i(k) = \frac{y_i(k)}{z_i(k)}$

remember: for quadratics $x^* = \frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (f_i''(x_i)x_i - f_i'(x_i))}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i)}$



The initial idea

Derivation of the algorithm - step 3 on 3

Is this the algorithm?

$$\begin{cases} y_i(k+1) &= P y_i(k) \\ z_i(k+1) &= P z_i(k) \\ x_i(k) &= \frac{y_i(k)}{z_i(k)} \end{cases} \quad \begin{cases} y_i(0) := f_i''(x_i(0))x_i(0) - f_i'(x_i(0)) \\ z_i(0) := f_i''(x_i(0)) \end{cases}$$

No, *must provide 2 little modifications*:

- x_i changes \Rightarrow must track the changing $f_i'(x_i)$ and $f_i''(x_i)$
- $x_i(k) = \frac{y_i(k)}{z_i(k)}$ too aggressive!! Should make it milder



The complete algorithm

Definitions

- $g_i(x_i(k)) = f_i''(x_i(k))x_i(k) - f_i'(x_i(k))$
- $h_i(x_i(k)) = f_i''(x_i(k))$
- bold font = vectorization

Main procedure

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{y}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{y}(k) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{z}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{z}(k) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{x}(k+1) = (1 - \varepsilon)\mathbf{x}(k) + \varepsilon \frac{\mathbf{y}(k+1)}{\mathbf{z}(k+1)} \end{cases}$$

Initialization

$$\mathbf{x}(0) = \mathbf{y}(0) = \mathbf{z}(0) = \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(-1)) = \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(-1)) = \mathbf{0}$$

Convergence property

Hypotheses

- $f_i \in \mathcal{C}^2(\mathbb{R})$
- f_i' and f_i'' bounded
- f_i strictly convex
- $x^* \neq \pm\infty$
- *null initial conditions*

Thesis

- there is a positive $\bar{\varepsilon}$ s.t. if $\varepsilon < \bar{\varepsilon}$ then, exponentially,

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \mathbf{x}(k) = x^* \mathbf{1}$$

Robustness property

Additional hypothesis

- not-null initial conditions, but s.t.

$$\alpha := \mathbf{1}^T (\mathbf{v}(0) - \mathbf{y}(0))$$

$$\beta := \mathbf{1}^T (\mathbf{w}(0) - \mathbf{z}(0))$$

Thesis

- there are positive $\bar{\varepsilon}, \bar{\alpha}, \bar{\beta}$ s.t. if $\varepsilon < \bar{\varepsilon}, \alpha < \bar{\alpha}, \beta < \bar{\beta}$ then, exponentially,

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \mathbf{x}(k) = \phi(\alpha, \beta) \mathbf{1}$$

where $\phi(\alpha, \beta)$ is continuous and $\phi(0, 0) = \mathbf{x}^*$

Sketch of the proof

**importance of the proof:
gives insights on key properties**

- 1 transform the algorithm in a continuous-time system
- 2 recognize the existence of a two-time scales dynamical system
- 3 analyze separately fast and slow dynamics
(standard singular perturbation model analysis approach
[Khalil (2002)])



1) transformation in a continuous-time system

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{y}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{y}(k) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{z}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{z}(k) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{x}(k+1) = (1 - \varepsilon)\mathbf{x}(k) + \varepsilon \frac{\mathbf{y}(k+1)}{\mathbf{z}(k+1)} \end{cases}$$

1) transformation in a continuous-time system

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{y}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{y}(k) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{z}(k+1) = P^M [\mathbf{z}(k) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k)) - \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(k-1))] \\ \mathbf{x}(k+1) = (1 - \varepsilon)\mathbf{x}(k) + \varepsilon \frac{\mathbf{y}(k+1)}{\mathbf{z}(k+1)} \end{cases}$$

$$\downarrow \quad M=1 \quad P := I - K$$

$$\begin{cases} \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{v}}(t) = -\mathbf{v}(t) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{w}}(t) = -\mathbf{w}(t) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{y}}(t) = -K\mathbf{y}(t) + (I - K) [\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{v}(t)] \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{z}}(t) = -K\mathbf{z}(t) + (I - K) [\mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{w}(t)] \\ \dot{\mathbf{x}}(t) = -\mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{\mathbf{y}(t)}{\mathbf{z}(t)} \end{cases}$$



2) two-time scales dynamical system

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{v}}(t) = -\mathbf{v}(t) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{w}}(t) = -\mathbf{w}(t) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{y}}(t) = -K\mathbf{y}(t) + (I - K)[\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{v}(t)] \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{z}}(t) = -K\mathbf{z}(t) + (I - K)[\mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{w}(t)] \end{array} \right.$$

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}}(t) = -\mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{\mathbf{y}(t)}{\mathbf{z}(t)}$$

Intuition: if ε is sufficiently small ...

- first subsystem is much faster than second one
- first subsystem is globally exponentially stable

3) analysis of the fast dynamics ($\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$)

$$\begin{cases} \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{v}}(t) = -\mathbf{v}(t) + \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{w}}(t) = -\mathbf{w}(t) + \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{y}}(t) = -K\mathbf{y}(t) + (I - K)[\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{v}(t)] \\ \varepsilon \dot{\mathbf{z}}(t) = -K\mathbf{z}(t) + (I - K)[\mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) - \mathbf{w}(t)] \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{1}^T \dot{\mathbf{y}}(t) = \mathbf{1}^T \dot{\mathbf{v}}(t) \\ \mathbf{1}^T \dot{\mathbf{z}}(t) = \mathbf{1}^T \dot{\mathbf{w}}(t) \end{cases} \Longrightarrow \begin{cases} \mathbf{v}(t) \rightarrow \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \mathbf{w}(t) \rightarrow \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}(t)) \\ \mathbf{y}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N g_i(\mathbf{x}_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \\ \mathbf{z}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N h_i(\mathbf{x}_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \end{cases}$$

3) analysis of the fast dynamics ($\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$)

The tracking mechanism


$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{y}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N g_i(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \\ \mathbf{z}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N h_i(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \end{cases}$$


means

$$\begin{cases} \mathbf{y}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(t)) x_i(t) - f_i'(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \\ \mathbf{z}(t) \rightarrow \left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1} \end{cases}$$



And the slow dynamics? ($\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$)

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}}(t) = -\mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{\mathbf{y}(\mathbf{x}(t))}{\mathbf{z}(\mathbf{x}(t))}$$


$$\dot{\mathbf{x}}(t) \approx -\mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{\left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(t)) x_i(t) - f_i'(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1}}{\left[\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(t)) \right] \mathbf{1}}$$


$$\dot{x}_{\text{ave}} \approx -\frac{f'_{\text{global}}(x_{\text{ave}})}{f''_{\text{global}}(x_{\text{ave}})}$$

i.e. a *continuous-time Newton-Raphson strategy*



Recap

- 1 intuition: $\frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i) x_i - f_i'(x_i)}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i)}$ and x^* are related
- 2 construct a system s.t.
 - $y_i(k) \rightarrow \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(k)) x_i(k) - f_i'(x_i(k))$
 - $z_i(k) \rightarrow \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i(k))$
- 3 discover that
 - $x_i(k) \rightarrow x_{\text{ave}}(k)$
 - $x_{\text{ave}}(k)$ evolution driven by a Newton-Raphson algorithm



Properties

Good qualities

- easy to be implemented
- “small” computational requirements
- inherits good qualities of consensus:
 - small topological knowledge requirements
 - robust to numerical error and communication noise

Bad qualities

Up to now, requires strong assumptions:

- $f_i \in \mathcal{C}^2(\mathbb{R})$
- f_i strictly convex
- f_i' and f_i'' bounded

On the necessity of the requirements

$$f_i \in \mathcal{C}^2$$

needed for the existence of f_i' and f_i''

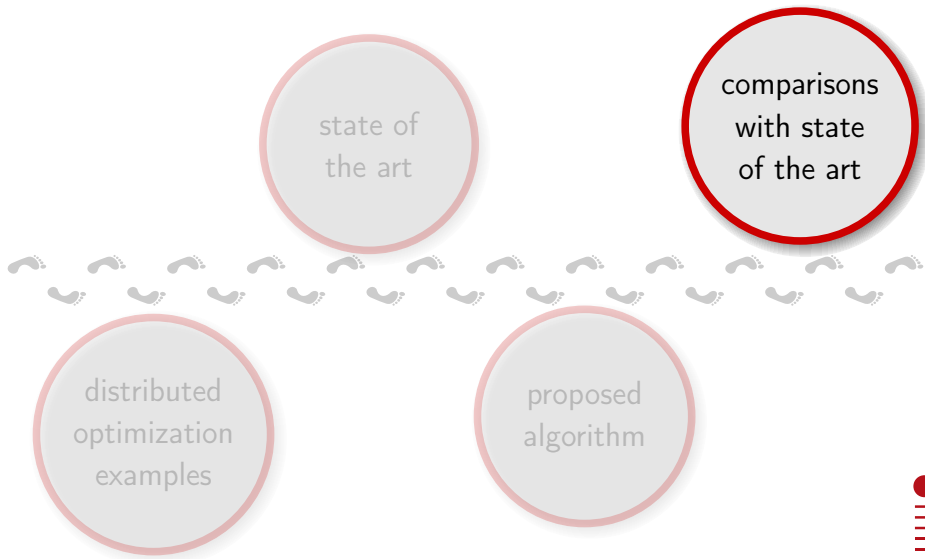
f_i strictly convex

needed to assure
$$\frac{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i) x_i - f_i'(x_i)}{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N f_i''(x_i)} \neq \text{NaN}$$

f_i' and f_i'' bounded

assure non-pathological Newton-Raphson evolutions

Update

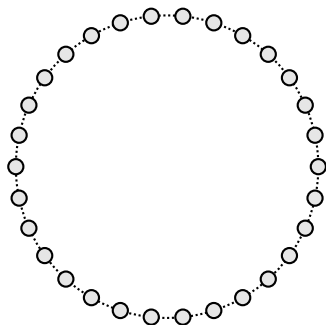


Experiments description

- circulant graph, $N = 30$

$$\bullet P = \begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 0.25 & & & 0.25 \\ 0.25 & 0.5 & 0.25 & & \\ & & \ddots & \ddots & \ddots \\ & & & 0.25 & 0.5 & 0.25 \\ 0.25 & & & 0.25 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix}$$

- $f_i = \text{sum of exponentials}$

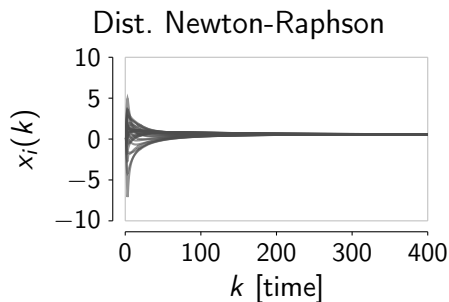
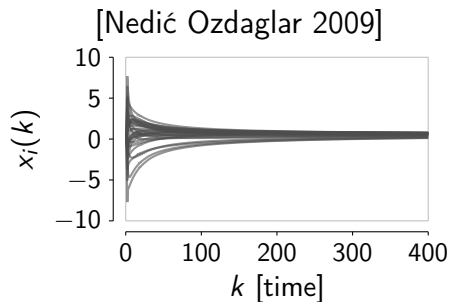


Comparisons with a Distributed Subgradient

Algorithm from [Nedić Ozdaglar 2009]

- 1 $\mathbf{x}^{(c)}(k) = P\mathbf{x}(k)$ (consensus step)
- 2 $x_i(k+1) = x_i^{(c)}(k) - \frac{\rho}{k} f'_i \left(x_i^{(c)}(k) \right)$ (local gradient descent)

Numerical comparison

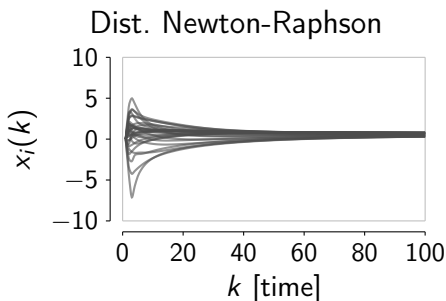
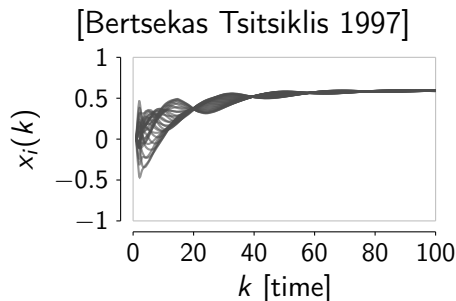


Comparisons with an ADMM (first-order)

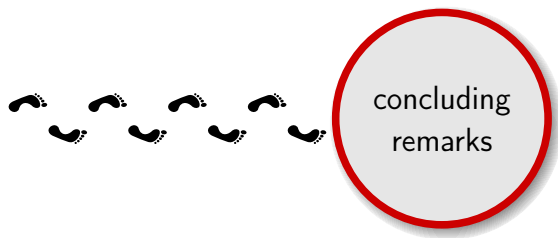
Algorithm from [Bertsekas Tsitsiklis 1997]

$$L_\rho := \sum_i \left[f_i(x_i) + y_i^{(\ell)}(x_i - z_{i-1}) + y_i^{(c)}(x_i - z_i) + y_i^{(r)}(x_i - z_{i+1}) + \frac{\delta}{2} |x_i - z_{i-1}|^2 + \frac{\delta}{2} |x_i - z_i|^2 + \frac{\delta}{2} |x_i - z_{i+1}|^2 \right]$$

Numerical comparison



Update



Conclusions and future works

The algorithm we proposed ...

- is a distributed Newton-Raphson strategy (+)
- requires minimal network topology knowledge (+)
- requires minimal agents synchronization (+)
- extremely simple to be implemented (+)
- converges to global optimum under convexity and smoothness assumptions (+ / -)
- numerically faster than subgradients (+) but slower than ADMM (-)



Conclusions and future works

Currently working on (or already performed)

- extension to multi-dimensional problems
- extension to modified Newton strategies
- analytical characterization of the convergence speed for quadratic functions and specific graphs
(with comparisons to other methods)



Conclusions and future works

Plans for the future

- relax the assumptions
(strict convexity, \mathcal{C}^2 , ...)
- find automatic stepsizes tuning strategies
- propose quasi-Newton strategies





K. C. Kiwiel (2004)

Convergence of approximate and incremental subgradient methods for convex optimization

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entirely written in **TEX_{2.ε}** using **Beamer** and **TikZ**

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