

More Reeb Graphs

Lecture 17 - CMSE 890

Prof. Elizabeth Munch

Michigan State University

::

Dept of Computational Mathematics, Science & Engineering

Thurs, Nov 6, 2025

Check-in

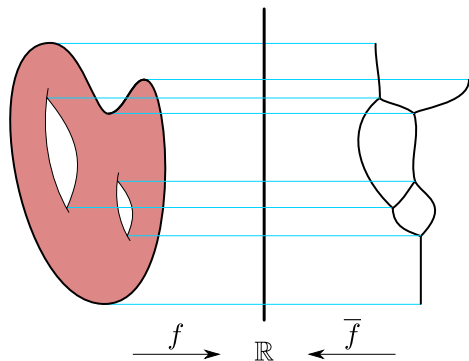
Goals for today:

- 7.1 More Reeb Graph Definitions
- 7.3 Reeb Graph Metrics

Section 1

Reeb graphs

Reeb graph definition

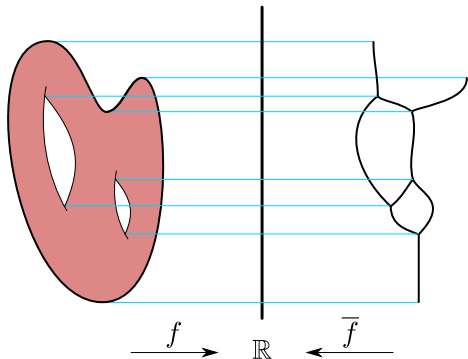


Given a function $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$.

Define an equivalence relation $\sim$ by $s \sim y$ iff

- $f(x) = f(y) = \alpha$
- x and y are in the same connected component of the level set $f^{-1}(\alpha)$.
- Let $[x]$ denote the equivalence class of $x \in X$.
- The Reeb graph R_f of $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is the quotient space $X / \sim$.
- Let $\Phi : X \rightarrow R_f$, $x \rightarrow [x]$ be the quotient map.

Induced map $\tilde{f} : R_f \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$



Lazy notation: Just write $f : R_f \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

What I mean by a Reeb graph....

Discrete vs continuous viewpoints

Quotient Space $X/\sim$ **with**
function $\bar{f} : [a] \rightarrow f(a)$

Graph (V, E) **with function**

$$f : V \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$$

- For any edge uv , $f(u) \neq f(v)$

Up and down degree

Given a node $x \in V$ in the vertex set $V := V(R_f)$ of the Reeb graph R_f ,

- up-degree of x is the number of edges (xu) incident to x with $f(u) > f(x)$
- down-degree of x is the number of edges (xu) incident to x with $f(u) < f(x)$

Regular vs critical node

A node is

- regular if both of its up-degree and down-degree equal to 1
- critical otherwise.

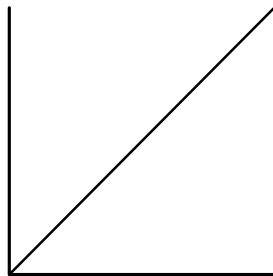
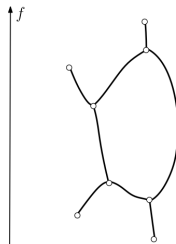
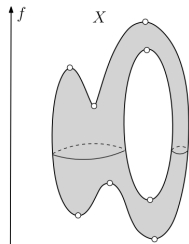
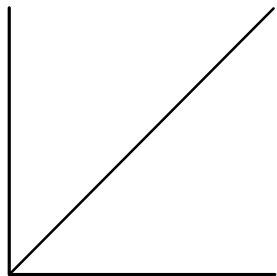
Types of critical points

A critical point is a

- a minimum if it has down-degree 0
- a maximum if it has up-degree 0
- a down-fork if it has down-degree larger than 1
- an up-fork if it has up-degree larger than 1

Warning: a critical point can be denegenerate, i.e. have more than one type of criticality

Comparing the sublevelset persistence diagrams



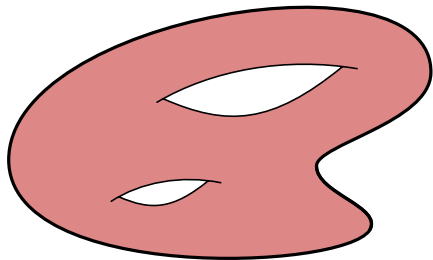
Relationship between Betti numbers

Theorem

For a tame function $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, $\beta_0(X) = \beta_0(R_f)$ and $\beta_1(X) \geq \beta_1(R_f)$.

A note on contractible X

A Reeb graph is dependent on the function



What if X is a 2-manifold

Theorem

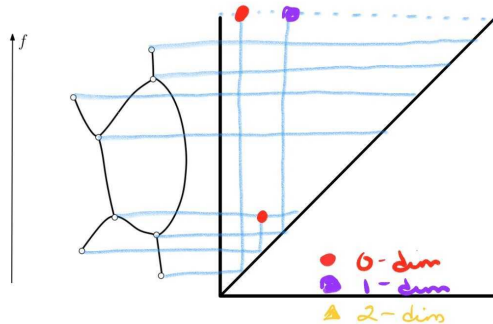
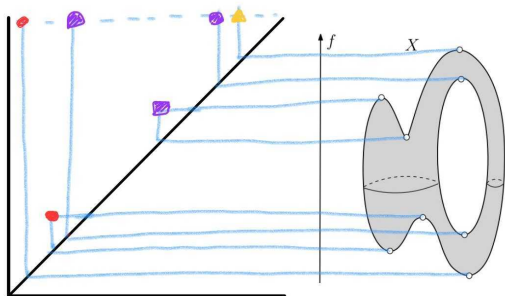
Let $f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a Morse function on a connected, compact 2-manifold.

- If X is orientable, $\beta_1(R_f) = \beta_1(X)/2$
- If X is not orientable, $\beta_1(R_f) \leq \beta_1(X)/2$

Note that this is independent of the function!

Back to that example

Unsatisfying loss of information



Section 2

Reeb Graph Metrics

Distances Between Reeb Graphs

Definition

A metric on a set M is a function $d : M \times M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ such that

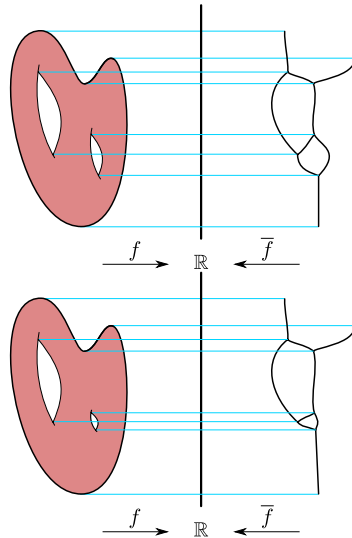
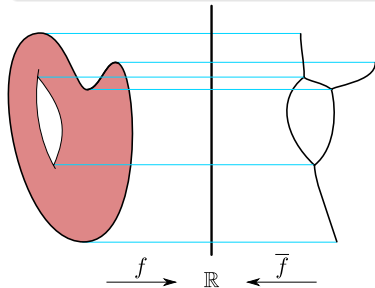
- $d(x, y) \geq 0$ and
 $d(x, y) = 0$ iff $x = y$
- $d(x, y) = d(y, x)$
- $d(x, z) \leq d(x, y) + d(y, z)$

Reeb graph metrics

Goal

Create and study Reeb graph metrics:

- $d((G, f), (G', f')) = 0$ iff
 $G \cong G'$ and $f = f'$



Reeb graph metrics

Metrics for Reeb graphs

d_I interleaving

d_{FD} functional distortion

d_G edit

d_B bottleneck

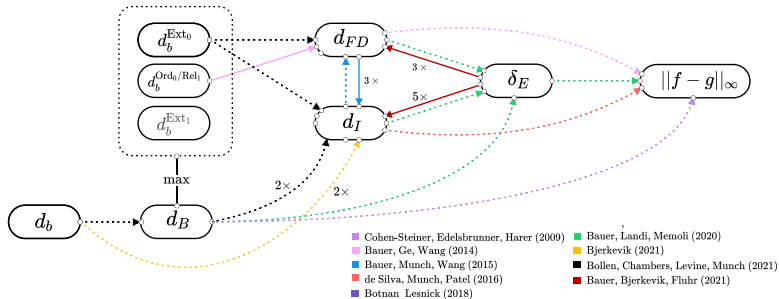


Figure inspired by U. Bauer's talk, SoCG 2020;
Drawn by Brian Bollen, arXiv:2110.05631

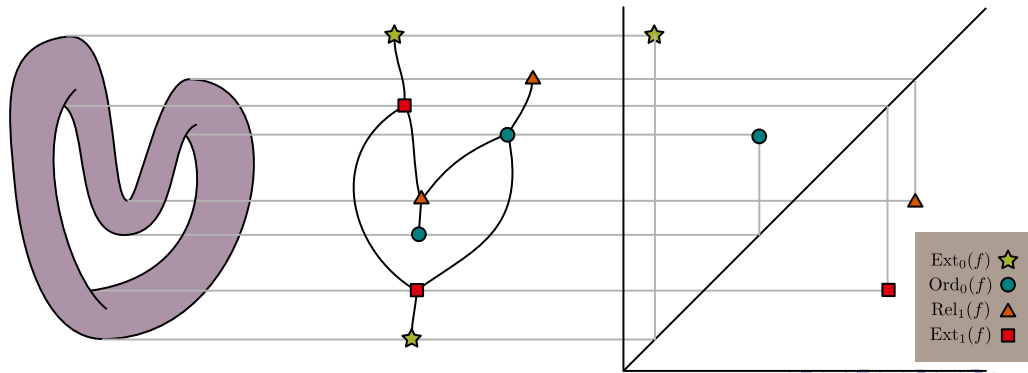
Section 3

Bottleneck distance

Extended Persistence

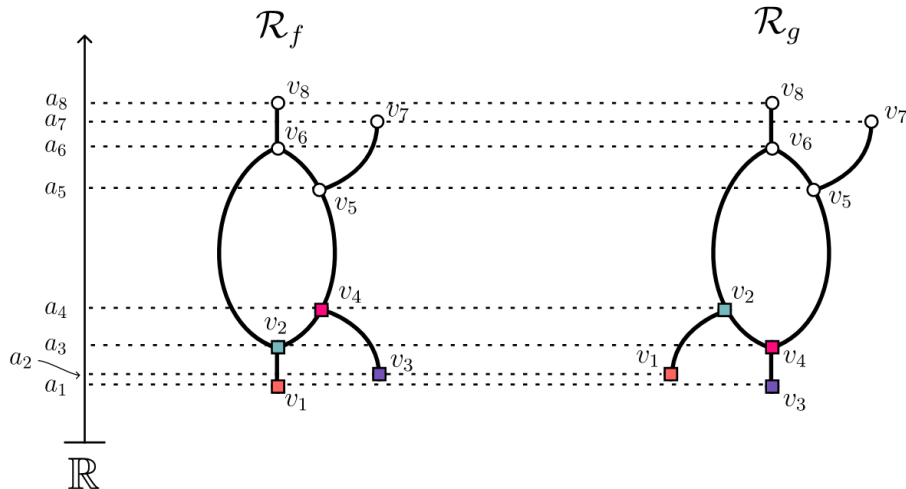
Represent your Reeb graph as its extended persistence diagram
Compute (label preserving) bottleneck distance

$$d_B(R_f, R_g) := d_B(Dgm(R_f), Dgm(R_g))$$



Not a perfect representation

Two Reeb graphs with the same extended persistence diagram



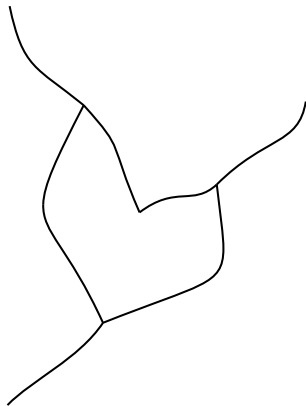
Pros & Cons

Section 4

Interleaving Distance

Smoothing Reeb Graphs: S_ε

Definition by example



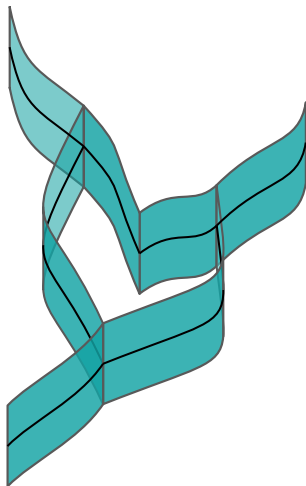
- Given Reeb graph (G, f)
- Thicken:

$$\begin{aligned} f_\varepsilon : G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon] &\longrightarrow \mathbb{R} \\ (x, t) &\longmapsto f(x) + t \end{aligned}$$

- Take Reeb graph of $(G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon)$

Smoothing Reeb Graphs: S_ε

Definition by example



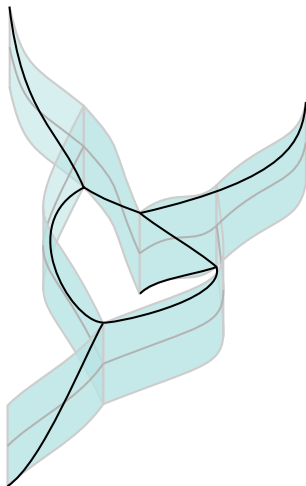
- Given Reeb graph (G, f)
- Thicken:

$$\begin{aligned} f_\varepsilon : G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon] &\longrightarrow \mathbb{R} \\ (x, t) &\longmapsto f(x) + t \end{aligned}$$

- Take Reeb graph of $(G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon)$

Smoothing Reeb Graphs: S_ε

Definition by example



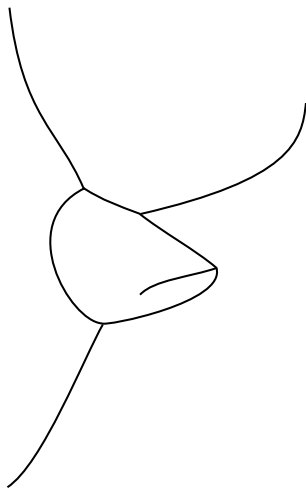
- Given Reeb graph (G, f)
- Thicken:

$$\begin{aligned} f_\varepsilon : G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon] &\longrightarrow \mathbb{R} \\ (x, t) &\longmapsto f(x) + t \end{aligned}$$

- Take Reeb graph of $(G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon)$

Smoothing Reeb Graphs: S_ε

Definition by example

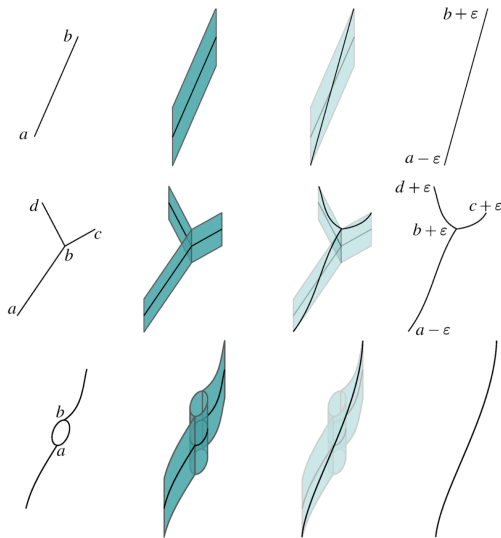


- Given Reeb graph (G, f)
- Thicken:

$$\begin{aligned} f_\varepsilon : G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon] &\longrightarrow \mathbb{R} \\ (x, t) &\longmapsto f(x) + t \end{aligned}$$

- Take Reeb graph of $(G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon)$

More Smoothing Examples



Smoothing definition

Definition

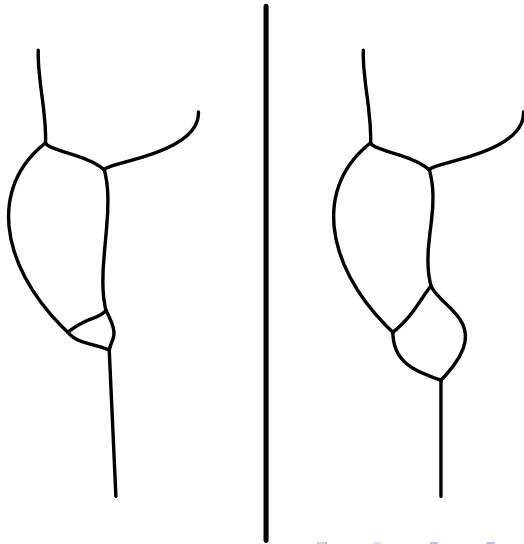
The ε -smoothed Reeb graph of (G, f) is the Reeb graph of $(G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon)$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & (G \times [-\varepsilon, \varepsilon], f_\varepsilon) & \\ (\text{Id}_G, 0) \nearrow & & \searrow q \\ (G, f) & \xrightarrow{\eta} & S_\varepsilon(G, f) \end{array}$$

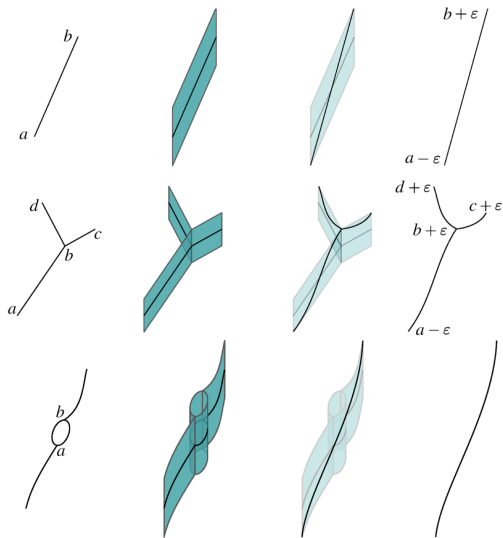
Function Preserving Maps

Definition

A morphism $\varphi : (G, f) \rightarrow (H, g)$ is a map $\varphi : G \rightarrow H$ which is function preserving ($f = g \circ \varphi$).



Smoothings Automatically Come With Morphisms



Reeb-interleaving

Definition

Let $(G, f), (H, g)$ be given.

An ε -interleaving consists of two morphisms

$$\varphi: (G, f) \rightarrow S_\varepsilon(H, g); \psi: (H, g) \rightarrow S_\varepsilon(G, f)$$

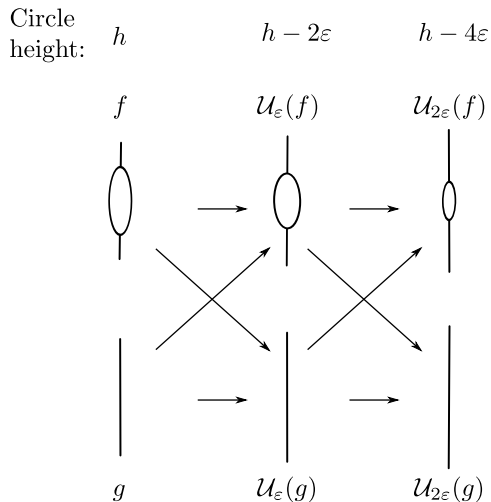
such that

The diagram illustrates the commutativity of the interleaving. It consists of two rows of objects and two columns of objects. The top row objects are (G, f) , $S_\varepsilon(G, f)$, and $S_{2\varepsilon}(G, f)$. The bottom row objects are (H, g) , $S_\varepsilon(H, g)$, and $S_{2\varepsilon}(H, g)$. The first column objects are (G, f) and (H, g) . The second column objects are $S_\varepsilon(G, f)$ and $S_\varepsilon(H, g)$. The third column objects are $S_{2\varepsilon}(G, f)$ and $S_{2\varepsilon}(H, g)$. Solid black horizontal arrows connect $(G, f) \rightarrow S_\varepsilon(G, f)$, $(H, g) \rightarrow S_\varepsilon(H, g)$, $S_\varepsilon(G, f) \rightarrow S_{2\varepsilon}(G, f)$, and $S_\varepsilon(H, g) \rightarrow S_{2\varepsilon}(H, g)$. A red diagonal arrow labeled φ goes from (G, f) to $S_\varepsilon(H, g)$. A blue diagonal arrow labeled ψ goes from (H, g) to $S_\varepsilon(G, f)$. Dashed red diagonal arrows labeled $S_\varepsilon[\varphi]$ go from $S_\varepsilon(G, f)$ to $S_{2\varepsilon}(H, g)$ and from $S_\varepsilon(H, g)$ to $S_{2\varepsilon}(G, f)$. Dashed blue diagonal arrows labeled $S_\varepsilon[\psi]$ go from $S_\varepsilon(G, f)$ to $S_{2\varepsilon}(H, g)$ and from $S_\varepsilon(H, g)$ to $S_{2\varepsilon}(G, f)$.

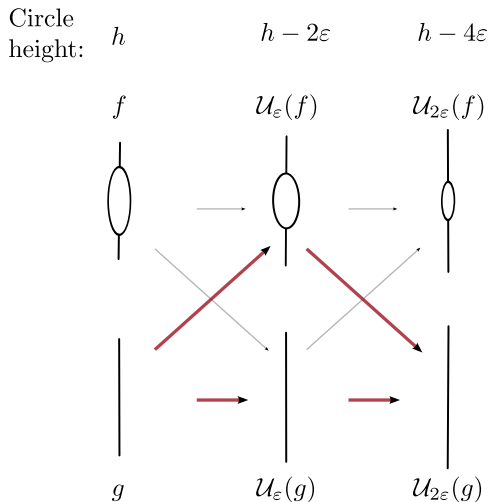
commutes. The interleaving distance is defined to be

$$d_I((G, f), (H, g)) = \inf\{\varepsilon \mid (G, f) \text{ and } (H, g) \text{ are } \varepsilon\text{-interleaved}\}.$$

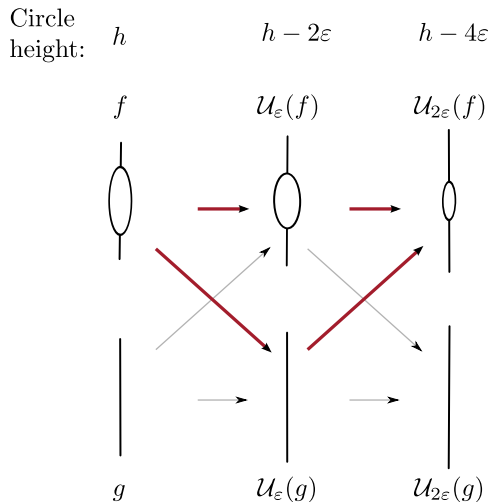
Building an interleaving



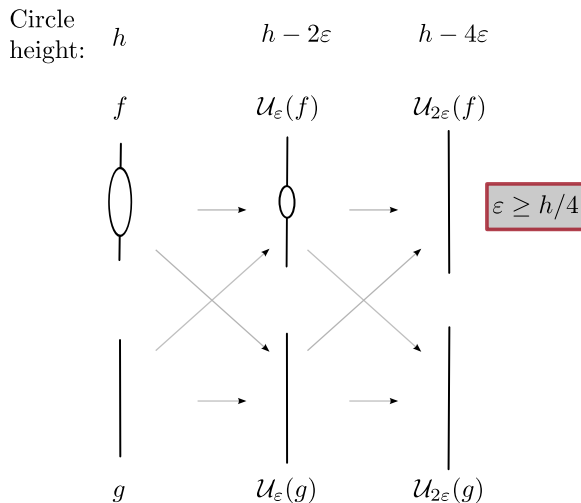
Building an interleaving



Building an interleaving



Building an interleaving



Theorem (de Silva, EM, Patel 2016)

*The interleaving distance is an **extended metric**.*

$$\begin{aligned} d_I((G, f), (H, g)) < \infty \\ \Leftrightarrow \\ \beta_0(G) = \beta_0(H) \end{aligned}$$

Theorem (de Silva, EM, Patel 2016)

*The interleaving distance is an **extended metric**.*

$$\begin{aligned} d_I((G, f), (H, g)) < \infty \\ \Leftrightarrow \\ \beta_0(G) = \beta_0(H) \end{aligned}$$

Theorem (dS, EM, P 2016)

*Given $f, g : G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, the interleaving distance is **stable**, i.e.*

$$d_I(\mathcal{R}(G, f), \mathcal{R}(G, g)) \leq \|f - g\|_\infty.$$

Pros & Cons

Section 5

Functional Distortion Distance

Distance in the Reeb graph

Definition

Let $u, v \in \mathcal{R}_f$ (not necessarily vertices) and let π be a continuous path between u and v , denoted $u \rightsquigarrow v$.

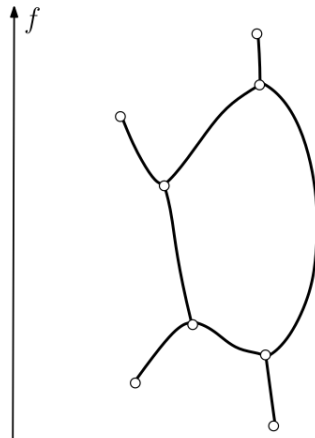
$$\text{range}(\pi) = [\min_{x \in \pi} f(x), \max_{x \in \pi} f(x)].$$

$$\text{height}(\pi) = \max_{x \in \pi} f(x) - \min_{x \in \pi} f(x)$$

Distance between u and v :

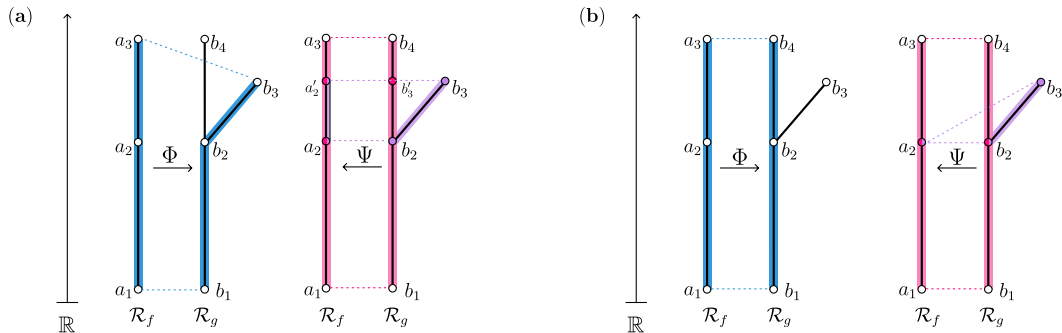
$$d_f(u, v) = \min_{\pi: u \rightsquigarrow v} \text{height}(\pi),$$

where π ranges over all continuous paths from u to v .



Continuous maps

$\Phi : \mathcal{R}_f \rightarrow \mathcal{R}_g$, $\Psi : \mathcal{R}_f \rightarrow \mathcal{R}_g$ continuous maps (not necessarily function preserving).

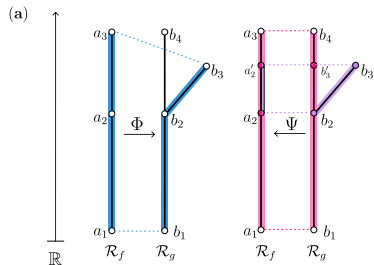


$$G(\Phi, \Psi) = \{(x, \Phi(x)) \mid x \in \mathcal{R}_f\} \cup \{(\Psi(y), y) \mid y \in \mathcal{R}_g\}$$

Definition

The **point distortion** λ between $(x, y), (x', y') \in G(\Phi, \Psi)$ is defined as

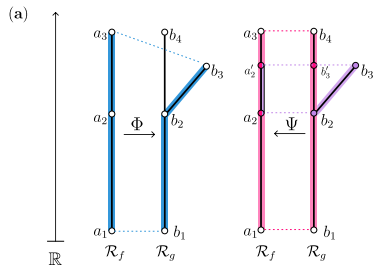
$$\lambda((x, y), (x', y')) = \frac{1}{2} |d_f(x, x') - d_g(y, y')|.$$



Definition

The **map distortion** $D(\Phi, \Psi)$ between $\mathcal{R}_f$ and $\mathcal{R}_g$ is the supremum of point distortions ranging over all possible pairs in the supergraph $G(\Phi, \Psi)$. That is,

$$D(\Phi, \Psi) = \sup_{(x,y), (x',y') \in G(\Phi, \Psi)} \lambda((x,y), (x',y')).$$



Definition

The **functional distortion distance** is defined as

$$d_{FD}(\mathcal{R}_f, \mathcal{R}_g) = \inf_{\Phi, \Psi} \max\{D(\Phi, \Psi), \|f - g \circ \Phi\|_\infty, \|f \circ \Psi - g\|_\infty\},$$

where Φ and Ψ range over all continuous maps between $\mathcal{R}_f$ and $\mathcal{R}_g$.

Pros & Cons

Metrics for Reeb graphs

d_I interleaving

d_{FD} functional distortion

d_G edit

d_B bottleneck

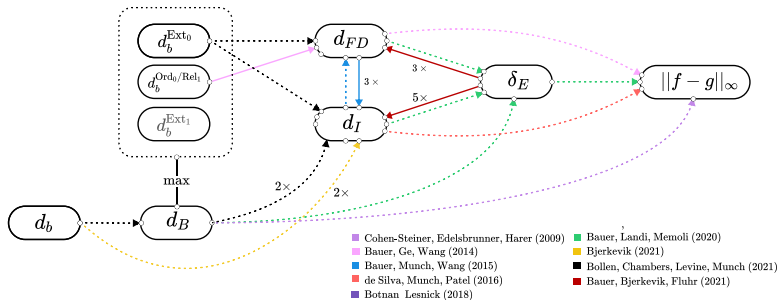


Figure inspired by U. Bauer's talk, SoCG 2020;
 Drawn by Brian Bollen, arXiv:2110.05631