
Data Reliability Scoring

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Outline

- What is data reliability score?
 - How can we define data reliability?
 - Gram Determinant score and main result
 - Experiments
-

Data reliability

POLITICS | POLICY

Trump Orders Firing of Bureau of Labor Statistics Chief

The president's move throws the quality of America's statistical apparatus into question

By *Justin Lahart* [Follow](#), *Alex Leary* [Follow](#) and *Matt Grossman* [Follow](#)

Updated Aug. 1, 2025 6:33 pm ET

Data reliability

[Econ Lett.](#) 2022 Apr; 213: 110348.

Published online 2022 Feb 7. doi: [10.1016/j.econlet.2022.110348](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2022.110348)

Data misreporting during the COVID19 crisis

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► [Perspect Health Inf Manag.](#) 2021 Oct 1;18(4):1f.

UPCODING MEDICARE: IS HEALTHCARE FRAUD AND ABUSE INCREASING?

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POLITICS | POLICY

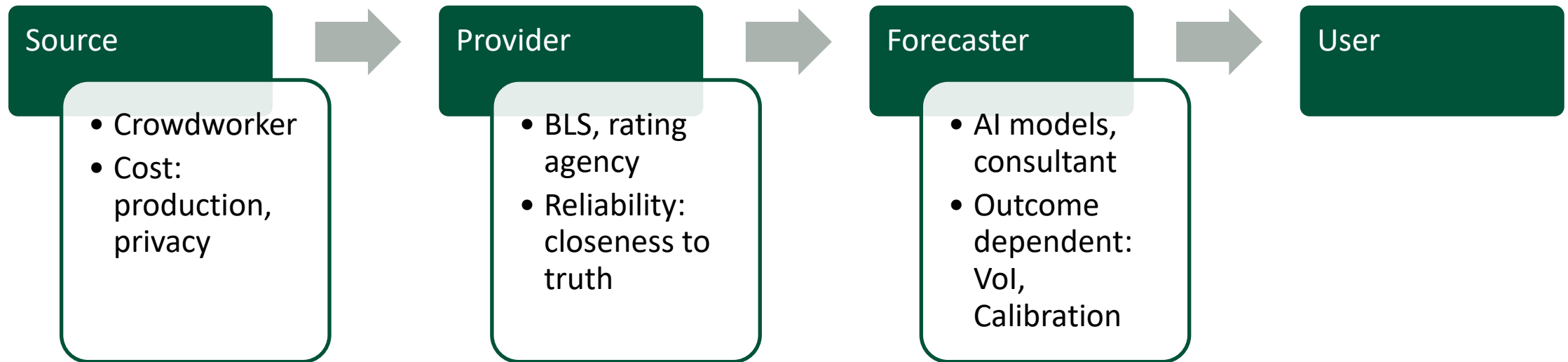
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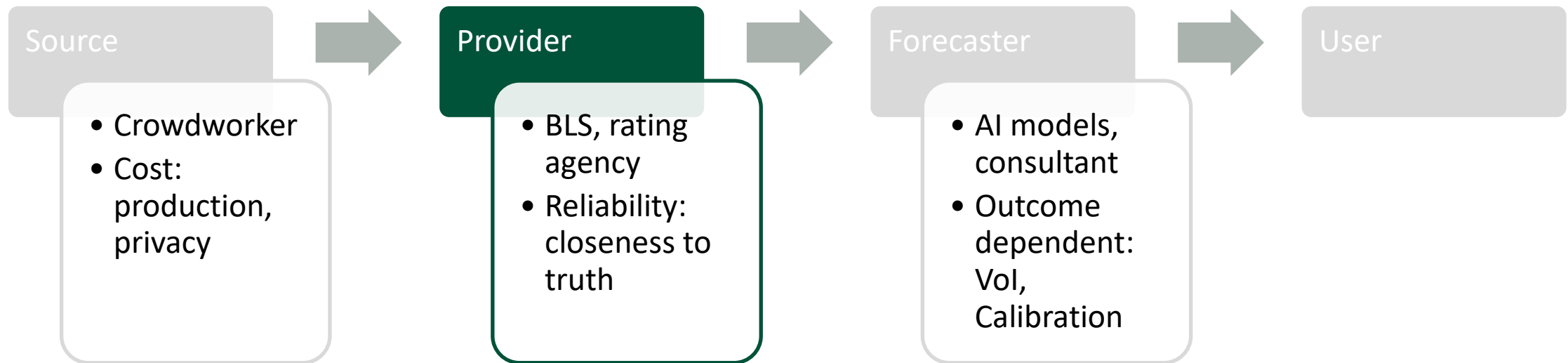
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Scores for Data



Data reliability score



Why difficult?

Unknown ground truth

True COVID-19
cases

True state of
patient's
disease

Correct image
labels

Data

Reported
COVID-19 case
number

Reported
diagnoses

Crowdsourced
image labels

Why promising?

Unknown ground truth

Data

Observations

True COVID-19
cases

Reported
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number

COVID-19
mortality data

True state of
patient's
disease

Reported
diagnoses

Blood test
results

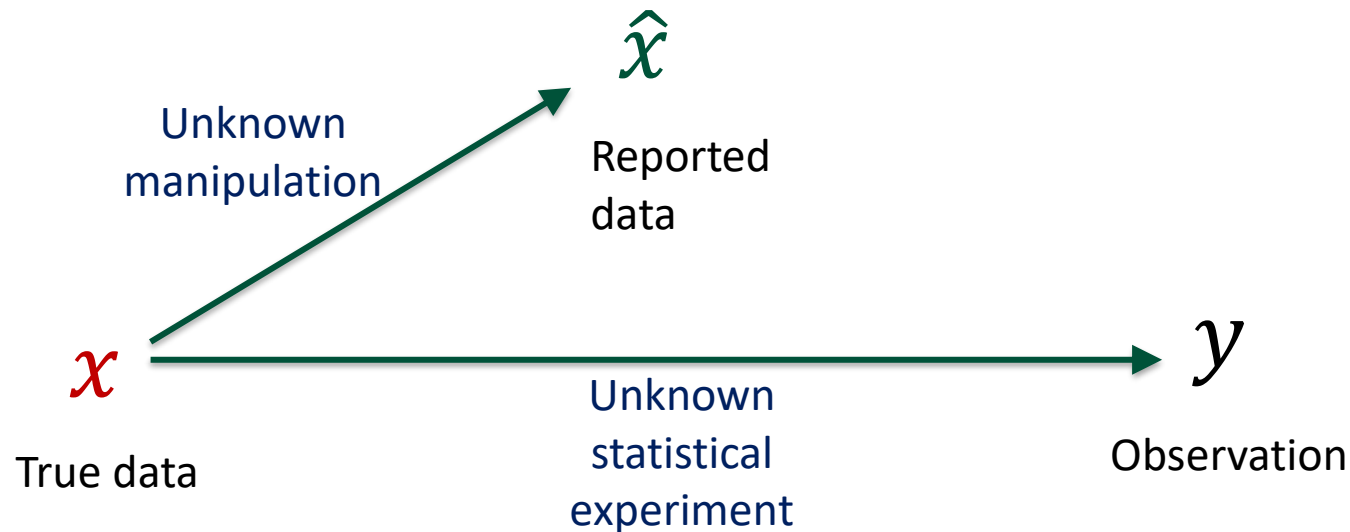
Correct image
labels

Crowdsourced
image labels

Encoder
representations

Research Question

- Can we design a reliability score $S(\hat{x}, y)$ that assigns a higher expected score to datasets that are **closer** to the ground truth?

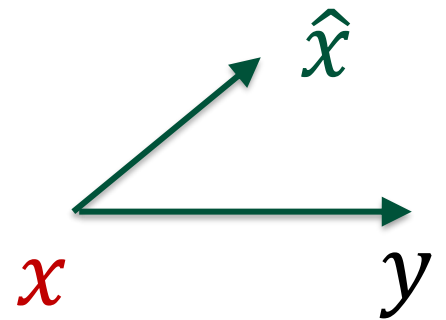


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- What is data reliability score?
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 - Gram determinant score and main result
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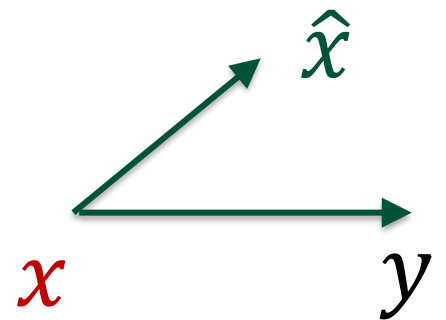
Reliability Ordering of Datasets

- To compare $\hat{x}$ and $\hat{x}'$ w.r.t. true data x , we propose partial orderings $>$
 - Exact match ordering: $\hat{x} >_{EXACT}^x \hat{x}'$ if $\hat{x} = x$ but $\hat{x}' \neq x$



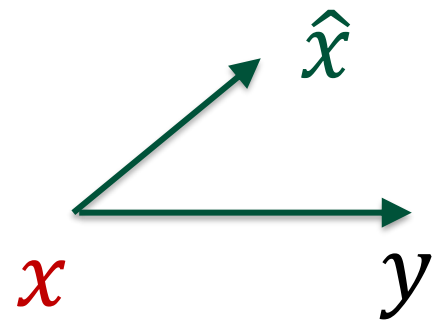
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 - Blackwell dominant ordering: one is a garbling of the other
 - Hamming ordering: $\hat{x}$ is closer to x than $\hat{x}'$ in Hamming distance



Scoring to Preserve Reliability Ordering

- To compare $\hat{x}$ and $\hat{x}'$ w.r.t. true data x , we propose partial orderings $>^{\cdot}$
 - Exact match ordering
 - Blackwell dominant
 - Hamming ordering
- A reliability score S **preserves** $>^{\cdot}$ if
$$\mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}, y)] > \mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}', y)] \text{ for all } \hat{x} >^x \hat{x}'$$



Problem Formulation

Design reliability score S preserves $\succ$ so that

$$\mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}, y)] > \mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}', y)] \text{ for all } \hat{x} \succ^x \hat{x}'$$

- Three datasets
 - (Hidden) true data $x = (x_1, \dots, x_N) \in [d]^N$
 - Reports $\hat{x} = (\hat{x}_1, \dots, \hat{x}_N) \in [d]^N$
 - Observation $y = (y_1, \dots, y_N) \in \mathcal{Y}^N$
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 - Assumption: $y_n \sim P(\cdot, x_n)$ independently for all i
-

Outline

- What is data reliability score?
 - How can we define data reliability?
 - **Gram Determinant score and main result**
 - Experiments
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Main Result

We introduce **Gram Determinant score (GDS)**

$$\det(\hat{G})$$

where $\hat{G}$ is the Gram matrix of report and observation

Main Result

We introduce **Gram Determinant score (GDS)**

$$\det(\hat{G})$$

which preserves

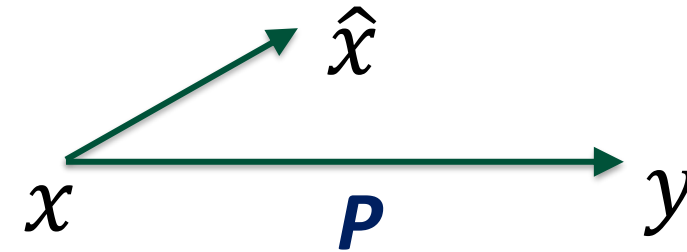
- Exact match ordering under $\mathcal{P}_{indep}$ and $\mathcal{Q}_{nonperm}$
- Blackwell ordering under $\mathcal{P}_{indep}$ and $\mathcal{Q}_{reg}$
- $\frac{1}{4L}$ —Hamming ordering under $\mathcal{P}_{indep}$ and $\mathcal{Q}_{L,K}$

Outline

- What is data reliability?
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Proof idea: GDS preserves Exact match
 - Experiments
-

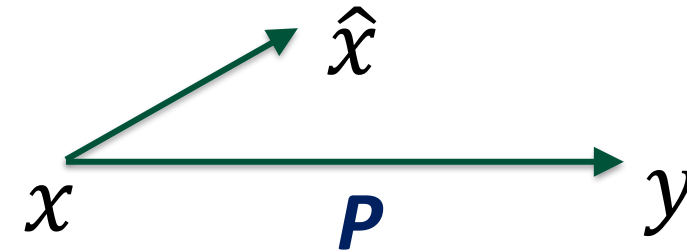
GDS=volume of $\hat{x}, y$ dist.

- Given three datasets $x, \hat{x}, y$,
 - Experiment $P \in \mathbb{R}^{y \times d}$ independently for all i
 - Misreport matrix $Q \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times d}$: $Q(i, j) = \frac{\#[x_n=i, \hat{x}_n=j]}{N}$
 - Joint distribution and $\hat{x}$ and y : $PQ = PQ_x Q_{\hat{x}|x}^T$
 - Gram matrix of $\hat{x}$ and y : $\hat{G} = (PQ)^T PQ$



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 - Gram matrix of $\hat{x}$ and y : $\hat{G} = (PQ)^T PQ$
- GDS $\det(\hat{G}) = \text{vol}(PQ)$ volume spanned by the joint distribution



GDS preserves Exact match

Claim: $\mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}', y)] < \mathbb{E}[S(x, y)]$ for all $\hat{x} \neq x$

- Three facts for $vol(A) := \det A^T A$
 1. $\det AB = \det A \det B$ and $\det B = \det B^T$
 2. $\det A = \prod eigen_i(A)$
 3. eigenvalue of stochastic matrix ≤ 1
-

GDS preserves Exact match

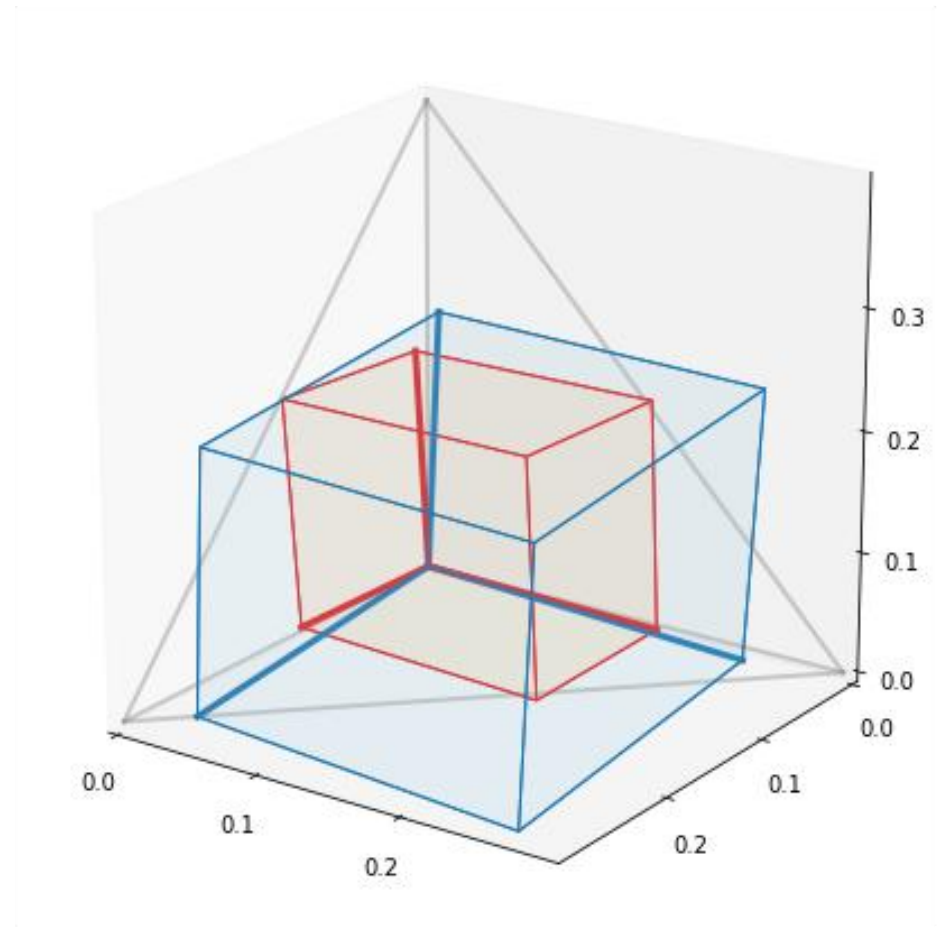
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1. $\det AB = \det A \det B$ and $\det B = \det B^T$
2. $\det A = \prod \text{eign}_i(A)$
3. eigenvalue of stochastic matrix ≤ 1

- Proof:

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbb{E}[S(\hat{x}, y)] &= \text{vol}(PQ_x Q_{\hat{x}|x}^T) \\ &= \text{vol}(PQ_x) \text{vol}(Q_{\hat{x}|x}) \\ &\leq \text{vol}(PQ_x) = \mathbb{E}[S(x, y)]\end{aligned}$$

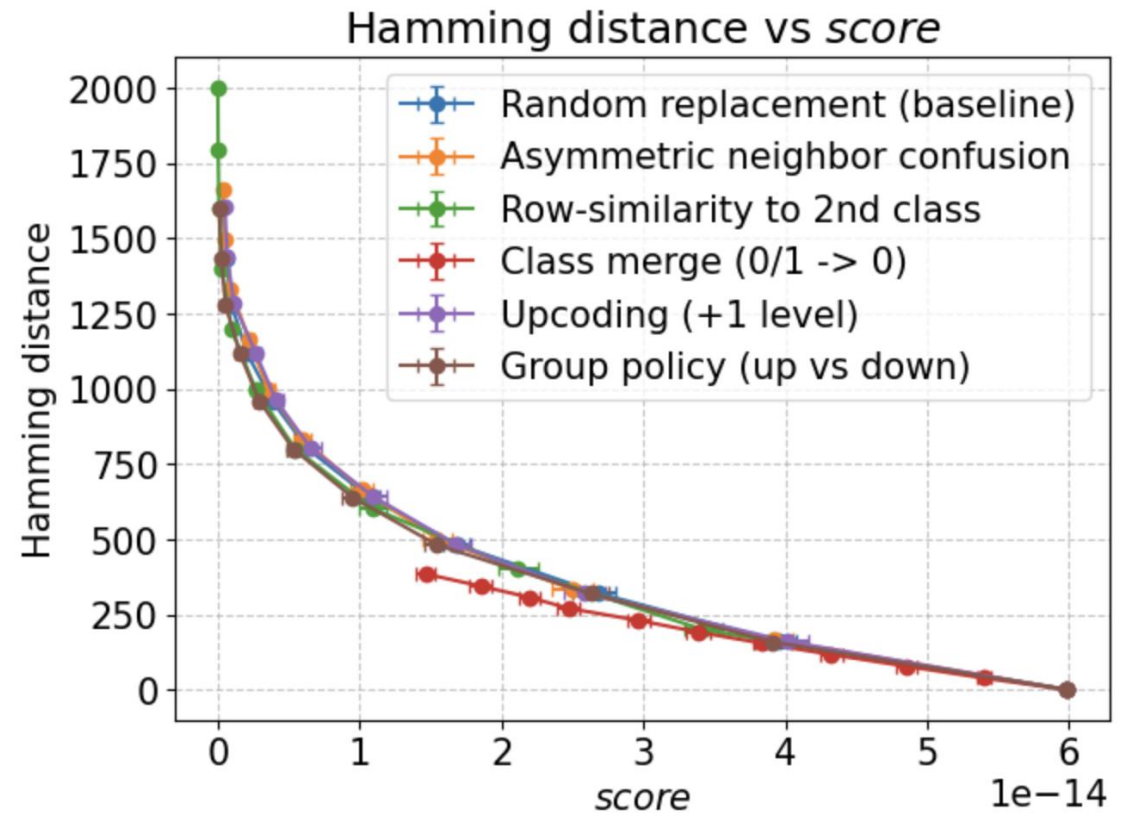
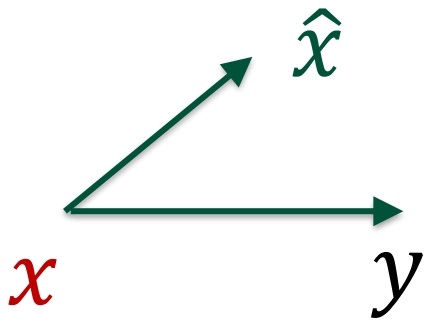


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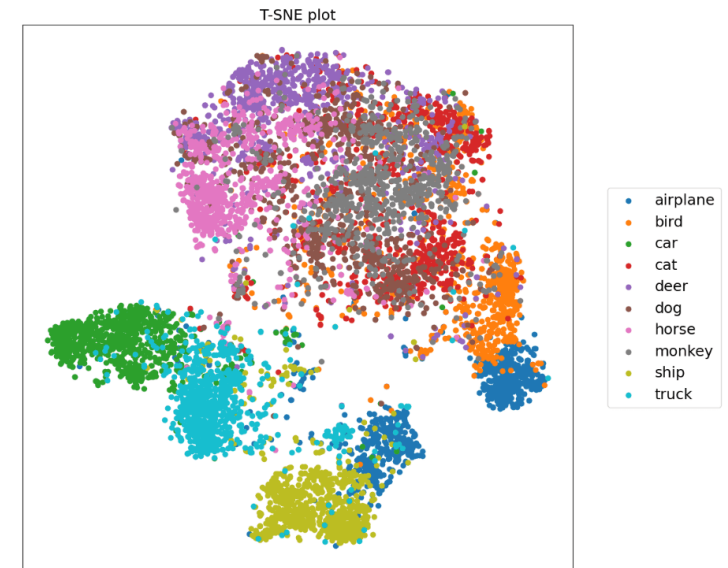
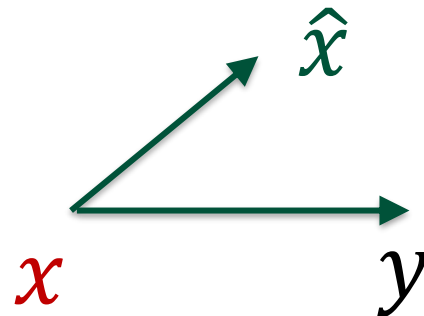
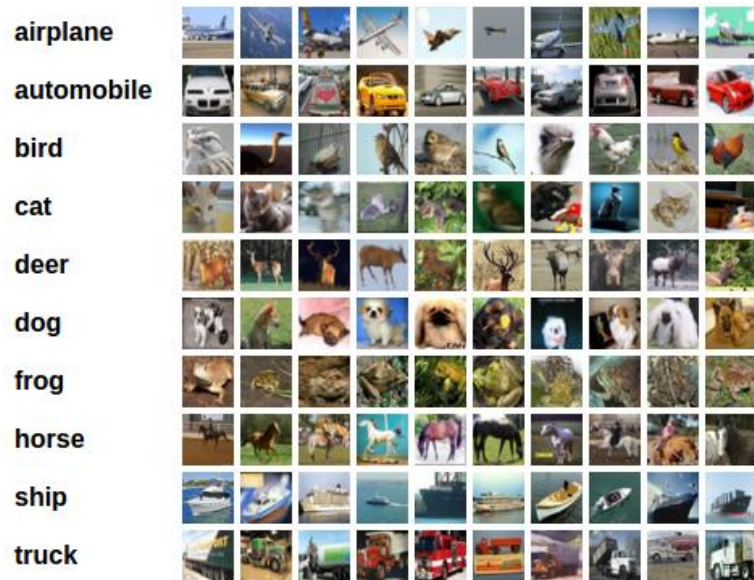
Empirical Results – Synthetic Data

- $x \sim \{0,1,2,3,4\}^N$ with $N = 4000$
- $\hat{x}$: noisy label
- y : random experiment $P \in [0,1]^{5 \times 5}$



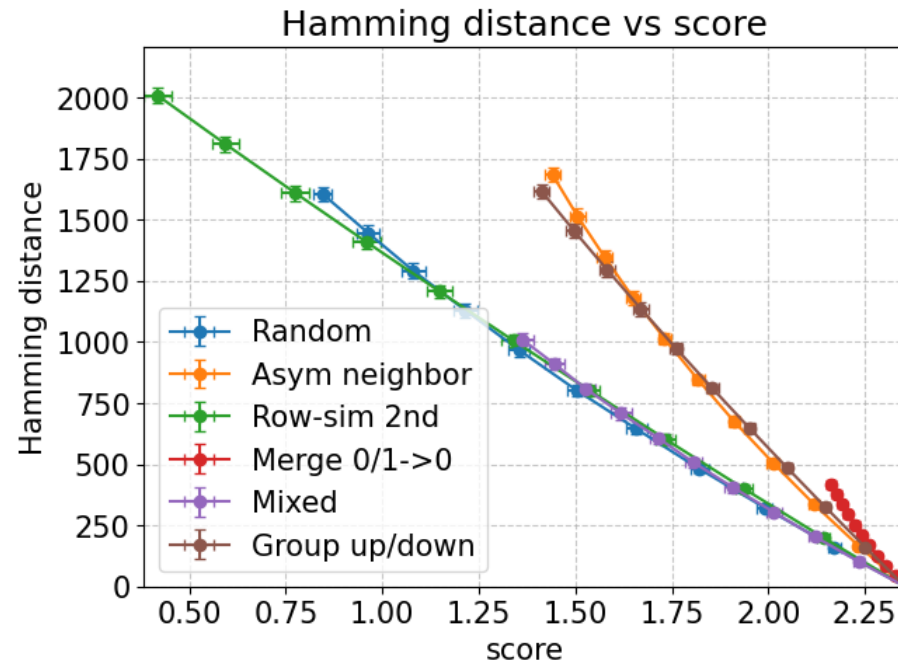
Empirical Results – CIFAR-10 data

- x : real label of image
- $\hat{x}$: noisy label
- y : feature embedding from contrastive learning



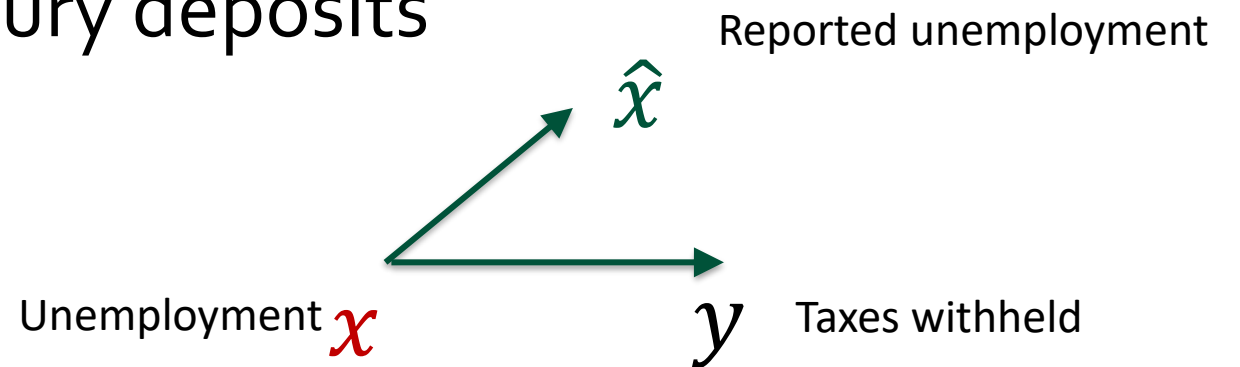
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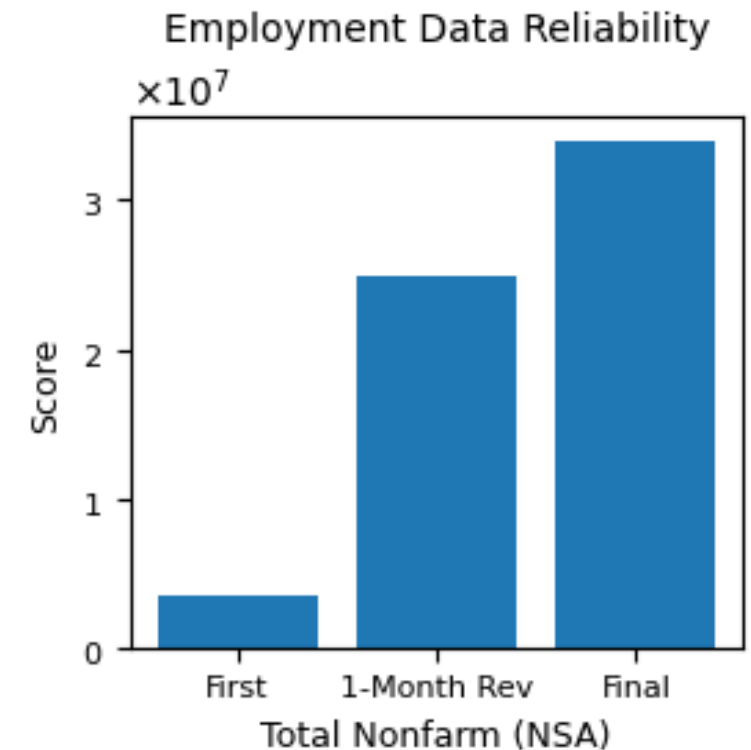
Unemployment data

- x : real unemployment number
- $\hat{x}$: reports
 - First report,
 - One month revision, and
 - Final revision
- y : Withheld Taxes from Treasury deposits



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Discussion

- Summary
 - Reliability ordering
 - GDS: respects several orderings and agonistic to experiment
 - Kernel treat for high dimensional Y
- Future directions:
 - How to score data without verification?
 - Time series data, or large signal space X
 - ordering vs testing
 - Empirical results