
Domain Adaptation for Measurements of Strong Gravitational Lenses

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Abstract

Upcoming surveys are predicted to discover galaxy-scale strong lenses on the order of 10^5 , making deep learning methods necessary in lensing data analysis. Currently, there is insufficient real lensing data to train deep learning algorithms, but the alternative of training only on simulated data results in poor performance on real data. Domain Adaptation may be able to bridge the gap between simulated and real datasets. We utilize domain adaptation for the estimation of Einstein radius (Θ_E) in simulated galaxy-scale gravitational lensing images with different levels of observational realism. We evaluate two domain adaptation techniques - Domain Adversarial Neural Networks (DANN) and Maximum Mean Discrepancy (MMD). We train on a source domain of simulated lenses and apply it to a target domain of lenses simulated to emulate noise conditions in the Dark Energy Survey (DES). We show that both domain adaptation techniques can significantly improve the model performance on the more complex target domain dataset. This work is the first application of domain adaptation for a regression task in strong lensing imaging analysis. Our results show the potential of using domain adaptation to perform analysis of future survey data with a deep neural network trained on simulated data.

1 Introduction

Strong gravitational lensing is a powerful probe of astrophysics, as well as cosmology. Galaxy-scale strong lensing systems in the Sloan Lens ACS (SLACS) [5] survey gave insights into the dark and baryonic matter profiles in massive elliptical galaxies [6, 8]. In cosmology, strong lensing systems have been used as an independent probe of the Hubble constant through time delays in multiple images in the system [28, 10] and for constraining the dark energy equation of state [15, 27].

Upcoming large-scale astronomical surveys, including the Rubin Observatory’s Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST)[22], the Hyper Suprime-Cam Subaru Strategic Program (HSC)[3], Euclid[24], and the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope ¹, will observe an unprecedented number

¹<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/missions/the-nancy-grace-roman-space-telescope>

of lensed systems. Collett [14] predicted that $> 10^5$ galaxy scale strong lensing systems will be observed by LSST and Euclid. The large amount of data from these surveys will require much more efficient analysis techniques, such as those utilizing machine learning (ML) techniques. Currently discovered lensing systems are on the order of a thousand, which is inadequate to train many ML algorithms, forcing researchers to use simulated datasets of various forms, such as in [33, 25, 31]. For classification tasks, it has been shown that the inevitable gap between training and testing data causes complex, large-parameter ML models trained on labeled simulation data to perform poorly (i.e., systematic biases) on new, unlabeled observational data [e.g., 7]. The same issues with classification are present in regression tasks, requiring an advancement to mitigate biases in deep learning analyses.

Domain adaptation (DA) is a class of techniques used when the distribution of training data differs from that of the testing data [16]. In DA, the training distribution of data is the source data, while the data it will be tested on is the target data. We are specifically evaluating unsupervised domain adaptation [26], which is the problem scenario where one has access to labeled source data, but target data is unlabeled. Unsupervised DA techniques adjust training to include unlabeled target data, detect the difference between the source and the target domain distributions, and aim to minimize it. DA has been applied to multiple scenarios of classification in astronomy [e.g., 11, 13, 12, 4, 29]) and in regression in one scenario [20].

We apply two DA techniques to strong gravitational lensing analysis in this work: adversarial training using Domain Adversarial Neural Networks (DANNs) [19] and a distance-based method called Maximum Mean Discrepancy (MMD)[21]. We apply both techniques to the task of estimating the Einstein radius (Θ_E) of galaxy-scale gravitational lensing systems. Both source and target domain data are simulated using *deeplenstronomy*² [23]. The source data is simulated strong lenses, with no noise. For target data, the same strong lenses are simulated, but with emulated Dark Energy Survey (DES)[1] conditions. We show that both techniques improve the model performance on the target domain, demonstrating the capacity of using DA to bridge the gap between simulated and real data.

Our manuscript is organized as follows. In Section 2 we describe the two DA methods utilized in this work; in Section 3 we describe the data; in Section 4 we describe the neural network model; and in Section 5 we present and discuss our results.

2 Methods

Both DA approaches used are unsupervised techniques: while they require labeled data from the source domain, they leverage only unlabeled data from the target domain. This mirrors the problem setting of training on labeled simulated data, while only having access to unlabeled real data. We assume that the two domains have the same conditional probability distributions of a label y , given some data x , $p_s(y|x) = p_t(y|x)$, but that the marginal probability distribution of the data x within the domains themselves is not equal: $p_s(x) \neq p_t(x)$. This is known as a covariate shift between domains [18]. Under this assumption, feature-based DA techniques such as DANN and MMD aim to close the gap by learning a transformation that maps source data into target data [18]. DANN and MMD find this transformation by utilizing domain invariant features. In practice, a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) feature extractor learns to produce invariant features that are identical between the two domains.

We use a total loss: $\mathcal{L}_{Total} = \mathcal{L}_{MSE} + \lambda_{DA}\mathcal{L}_{DA}$, where $\mathcal{L}_{MSE}$ is the Mean Squared Error (MSE) loss used to minimize the error on the task the model is trained to perform (estimate the Einstein radius of a gravitational lens). $\mathcal{L}_{DA}$ is either the MMD loss or the DANN loss, and it minimizes the variance of extracted features between domains. In MMD, this loss is weighted by constant λ_{DA} .

DANN [19] uses a two-headed network, with an adversarial approach to find invariant features. All data is fed into a feature extractor made of convolutional layers, which is then forwarded to the two heads, both made of linearly connected layers. The first head is the label predictor, which takes features and makes predictions of the labels associated with them. This head is only trained with features extracted from labeled source data and minimizes $\mathcal{L}_{MSE}$. The second head is the domain classifier, which takes features from both domains and makes predictions as to which domain those features came from. We use a Negative Log-Likelihood Loss function (NLL) loss as $\mathcal{L}_{DA}$. With DANNs, the goal is to learn domain-invariant features, which will maximize $\mathcal{L}_{DA}$ loss and confuse

²<https://github.com/deepsbies/deepenstronomy>

the domain classifier. To simultaneously optimize the the feature extractor to find features that will enable classification of labeled data in the label predictor head, and confuse the domain classifier head (rendering it unable to differentiate between the domains), a gradient reversal layer is used in between the feature extractor and the domain classifier. This layer does not affect the data in forward propagation, but multiplies the gradient by -1 in back propagation, flipping the gradient.

MMD [21] is a distance-based domain adaptation method that identifies invariant features by minimizing the distance between the source and target domain distributions. We employ kernel methods to calculate MMD distance, which we use as our DA loss:

$$\mathcal{L}_{DA} = \frac{1}{N(N-1)} \sum_{i \neq j} k(x_s(i), x_s(j)) - k(x_s(i), x_t(j)) - k(x_t(i), x_s(j)) + k(x_t(i), x_t(j)),$$

where k is a kernel between samples x_s from the source domain and samples x_t from the target domain, and N is the total number of samples across both domains. We follow [34, 11] and use a combination of multiple Gaussian Radial Basis Functions (RBF) kernels.

3 Data

We use the `deeplens` [23] package, which is built on `lenstronomy` [9], to generate galaxy-scale strong lens datasets with 40×40 -pixel images in a source domain and in a target domain. For the source domain, we generate images with no pixel noise. For the target domain, we add noise based on DES[1] observing conditions, which include sky brightness and seeing, drawn from empirical distributions of these values [2]. Both domains contain 50,000 lenses with Einstein radius varying from 0.5 arc seconds to 3.0 arc seconds drawn from a uniform distribution. We divide the dataset into training, validation, and testing with a ratio of 70%:20%:10%. Figure 1 provides example lensing systems from the source and target domain datasets.

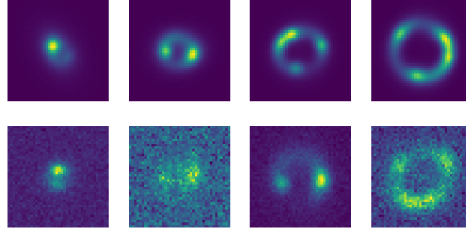


Figure 1: Examples of our source (top) and target (bottom) domain images. The Einstein radius increases from left to right.

4 Neural Network Architecture

We employ a baseline CNN with three convolution layers (each layer followed by ReLu activation, batch normalization, and max pooling) and two linear layers. Details of the CNN architecture are in Table 2 in the appendix. MSE loss is used for the main regression task, and DA is performed using a DANN or MMD loss. For both the DANN and MMD variations, latent space features are gathered after the final max pooling layer. For the DANN, we use a gradient reversal layer followed by the same two-linear layer architecture for the domain classifier. A softmax activation is applied to the domain classifier’s output and NLL is used as the domain classifier loss. We use the Adam optimizer for both the DANN and the MMD. Optimal hyperparameters were found through cross-validation. For all models, the batch size is fixed at 32. For training without DA we used a learning rate of 10^{-5} , while both DANN and MMD used a learning rate of 6×10^{-5} . For MMD, we found $\lambda_{DA} = 1.0$ to work optimally, meaning the DA loss did not need to be re-weighted. For the model without DA and for DANN, convergence was reached after 30 epochs, while MMD converged after 15 epochs.

To evaluate the performance of the CNN, we use the R-squared (R^2) score [32]. It is defined as $R^2 = 1 - \frac{SS_{Regression}}{SS_{Total}}$, where $SS_{Regression} = \sum (\hat{y}_i - y_i)^2$ and $SS_{Total} = \sum (\bar{y} - y_i)^2$. Here, $\hat{y}_i$

	Source Domain	Target Domain
No DA	0.98	0.50
DANN	0.97	0.94
MMD	0.98	0.95

Table 1: R^2 score for training without DA in the top, with DANN in the middle, and with MMD in the bottom row.

is the model’s prediction, y_i is the corresponding true value, and $\bar{y}$ is the mean of all true values. This metric shows how well the model can predict a dependent variable (Einstein radius). A larger R^2 indicates a better fit of the data, with a perfect fit of $R^2 = 1.0$.

5 Results

We report the R^2 scores in the source and target test sets in Table 1. Furthermore, in Figure 2 we visualise predictions against actual values, as well as fractional residuals, which are calculated by $Residual_{fract} = (\Theta_{E,Predicted} - \Theta_{E,True}) / \Theta_{E,Predicted}$. The fractional residuals help visualize how each prediction is potentially biased.

Figure 2 and the R^2 scores in Table 1 show that both the DANN and MMD are able to significantly improve model performance on a more complex target domain when trained with a simpler source domain (up to 0.45 improvement in target R^2 scores, making both source and target scores close to 1). The fractional residuals in Figure 2 support these results, with both DANN and MMD attaining target domain fractional residuals substantially smaller in magnitude than the model without DA. It should also be noted from the residuals that both DANN and MMD struggle the most with lower values of Einstein radius in the target domain. The model without DA and MMD similarly struggle on the low end of Einstein radius in the source domain, while DANN alone performs similarly across the whole source domain. With the inclusion of DA, DANN suffers a small trade-off in accuracy on the source domain, while MMD does not lose accuracy on the source data, compared to regular training without DA.

Overall, these results show that both of the tested DA-based methods have the potential to facilitate the analysis of real survey data in the future – i.e., reducing bias when using labeled simulated data for training and new unlabeled real data as the test set. However, a further investigation into domain shifts beyond DES-survey emulation is needed to ensure the gap from simulated to real data can be closed. Both DANN and MMD would likely struggle to overcome the domain shift caused by differences in data distributions of the parameters the network is trying to infer. For instance, if the source and target domain lenses are drawn from different distribution of Einstein radii, the network may have difficulty estimating this parameter correctly. This calls for investigation into other domain adaptation techniques, such as instance-based techniques [18][17], which will be a topic of our future investigations.

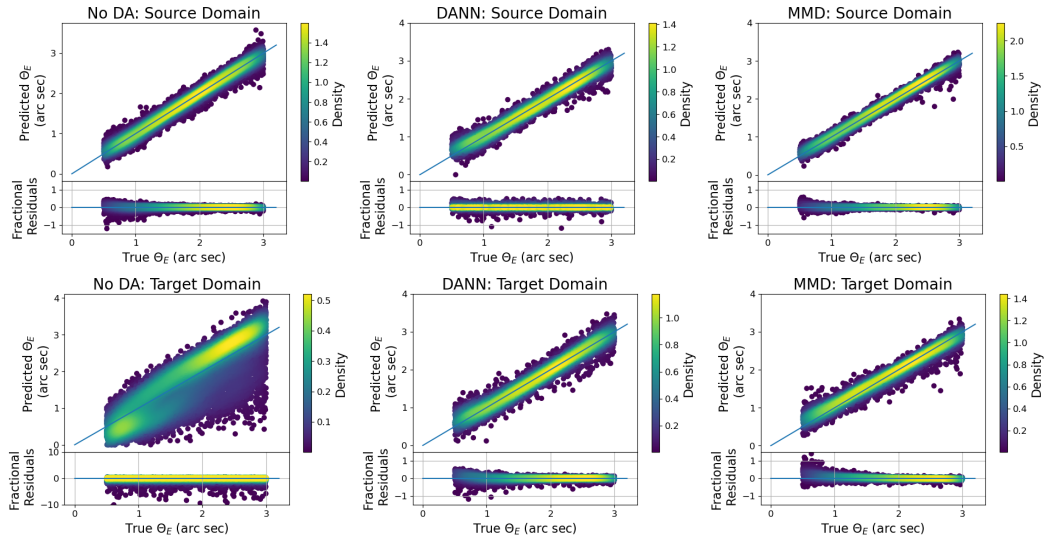


Figure 2: Predictions against actual values of test data sampled from the source domain (top row) and target domain (bottom row). Below each plot are the fractional residuals for visualization. Brighter color represents a higher density of samples, found using a kernel-density estimate with Gaussian kernels [30]. Results are given without DA (left panels), with DANN (middle panels), and with MMD (right panels).

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6 Appendix

Layers	Properties	Stride	Padding	Output Shape	Parameters
input	1*40*40	-	-	(1, 40, 40)	0
Convolution (2D)	Filters: 8 Kernel: 3 3 Activation: ReLu	1	2	(8, 42, 42)	80
Batch Normalization	-	-	-	(8, 42, 42)	16
MaxPooling	Kernel: 2 2	2	0	(8, 21, 21)	0
Convolution (2D)	Filters: 16 Kernel: 3 3 Activation: ReLu	1	1	(16, 21, 21)	1,168
Batch Normalization	-	-	-	(16, 21, 21)	32
MaxPooling	Kernel: 2 2	2	0	(16, 10, 10)	0
Convolution (2D)	Filters: 32 Kernel: 3 3 Activation: ReLu	1	1	(32, 10, 10)	4,640
Batch Normalization	-	-	-	(32, 10, 10)	64
MaxPooling	Kernel: 2 2	2	0	(32, 5, 5)	0
Flatten	-	-	-	(800)	-
Fully Connected	Activation: ReLu	-	-	(120)	96,120
Fully Connected	Activation: ReLu	-	-	(1)	121

Table 2: CNN architecture