



A General Iterative Shrinkage and Thresholding Algorithm for Non-convex Regularized Optimization Problems

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Non-convex sparsity-inducing penalties have recently received considerable attentions in sparse learning. Recent theoretical investigations have demonstrated their superiority over the convex counterparts in several sparse learning settings. However, solving the non-convex optimization problems associated with non-convex penalties remains a big challenge. A commonly used approach is the Multi-Stage (MS) convex relaxation (or DC programming), which relaxes the original non-convex problem to a sequence of convex problems. This approach is usually not very practical for large-scale problems because its computational cost is a multiple of solving a single convex problem. In this paper, we propose a General Iterative Shrinkage and Thresholding (GIST) algorithm to solve the nonconvex optimization problem for a large class of non-convex penalties. The GIST algorithm iteratively solves a proximal operator problem, which in turn has a closed-form solution for many commonly used penalties. At each outer iteration of the algorithm, we use a line search initialized by the Barzilai-Borwein (BB) rule that allows finding an appropriate step size quickly. The paper also presents a detailed convergence analysis of the GIST algorithm. The efficiency of the proposed algorithm is demonstrated by extensive experiments on large-scale data sets.

Subjects: **Learning (cs.LG)**; Numerical Analysis (cs.NA); Computation (stat.CO); Machine Learning (stat.ML)

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