

# The Bayesian Learning Rule

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# **How to make AI that can adapt quickly?**

And continue to do so throughout its life

# Continual Lifelong Adaptation in Machine Learning

- Even a small change may need full retraining
  - Huge amount of resources only few can afford (costly & unsustainable) [1,2, 3]
  - Difficult to apply in “dynamic” settings (robotics, epidemiology, climate science etc)
- Fix and improve deep learning

1. Diethe et al. Continual learning in practice, arXiv, 2019.

2. Paleyes et al. Challenges in deploying machine learning: a survey of case studies, arXiv, 2021.

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hx7BXih7zx8&t=897s>

# Bayesian Learning Rule [1]

- Bridge DL & Bayesian learning [2-5]
  - SOTA on GPT-2 and ImageNet [5]
- Improve other aspects of DL [5-7]
  - Calibration, memory, lifelong learning
- Towards human-like quick adaptation

1. Khan and Rue, The Bayesian Learning Rule, JMLR (2023).
2. Khan, et al. Fast and scalable Bayesian deep learning by weight-perturbation in Adam, ICML (2018).
3. Osawa et al. Practical Deep Learning with Bayesian Principles, NeurIPS (2019).
4. Lin et al. Handling the positive-definite constraints in the BLR, ICML (2020).
5. Shen et al. Variational Learning is Effective for Large Deep Networks, Under review.
6. Daheim et al. Model merging by uncertainty-based gradient matching, ICLR (2024).
7. Nickl, Xu, Tailor, Moellenhoff, Khan, The memory-perturbation equation, NeurIPS (2023)



# The Bayesian Learning Rule

$$\min_{\theta} \ell(\theta) \quad \text{vs} \quad \min_{q \in \mathcal{Q}} \mathbb{E}_{q(\theta)}[\ell(\theta)] - \mathcal{H}(q)$$

$\uparrow$   
Posterior approximation (expo-family)

Entropy

Bayesian Learning Rule [1,2] (natural-gradient descent)

Natural and Expectation parameters of  $q$

$$\lambda \leftarrow \lambda - \rho F(\lambda)^{-1} \nabla_{\lambda} \left\{ \mathbb{E}_q[\ell(\theta)] - \mathcal{H}(q) \right\}$$

Many well-known algorithms are special-instances obtained by choosing approximation to  $q$  and natural-gradients.

1. Khan and Rue, The Bayesian Learning Rule, JMLR, 2023

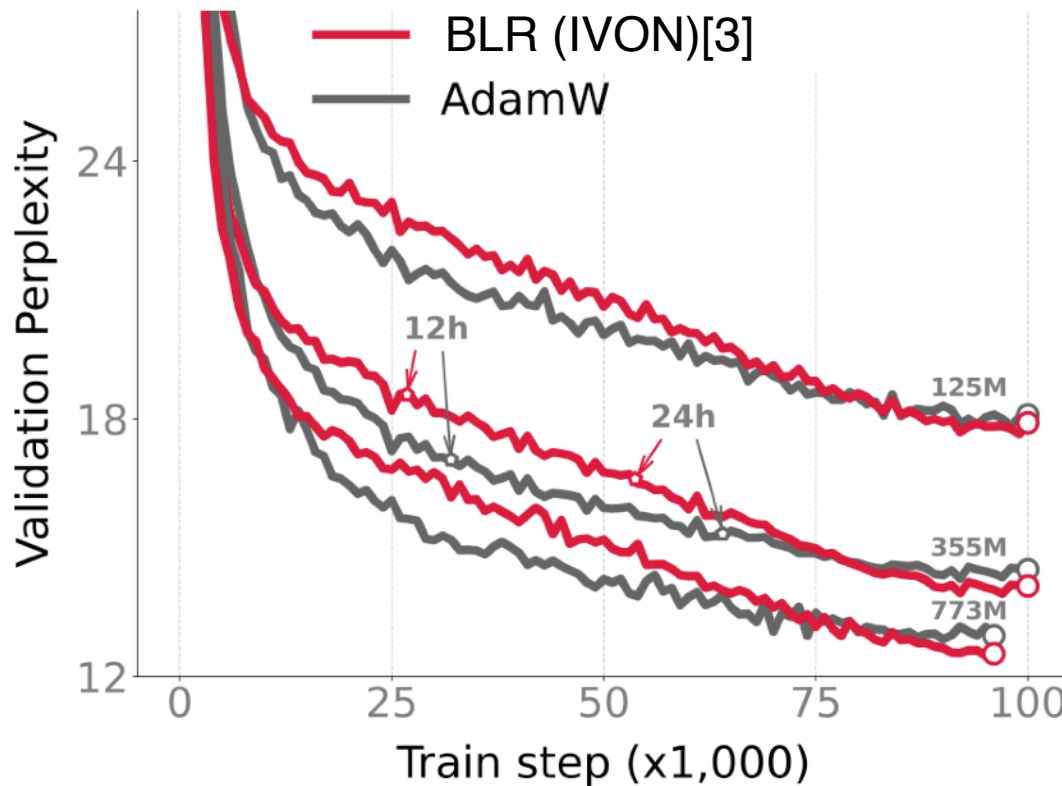
2. Khan and Lin. "Conjugate-computation variational inference..." Alstats, 2017

# List of algorithms as a special case of the BLR

Learning Algorithm	Posterior Approx.	Natural-Gradient Approx.	Sec.
<b>Optimization Algorithms</b>			
Gradient Descent	Gaussian (fixed cov.)	Delta method	1.3
Newton's method	Gaussian	——“——	1.3
Multimodal optimization <sub>(New)</sub>	Mixture of Gaussians	——“——	3.2
<b>Deep-Learning Algorithms</b>			
Stochastic Gradient Descent	Gaussian (fixed cov.)	Delta method, stochastic approx.	4.1
RMSprop/Adam	Gaussian (diagonal cov.)	Delta method, stochastic approx., Hessian approx., square-root scaling, slow-moving scale vectors	4.2
Dropout	Mixture of Gaussians	Delta method, stochastic approx., responsibility approx.	4.3
STE	Bernoulli	Delta method, stochastic approx.	4.5
Online Gauss-Newton (OGN) <sub>(New)</sub>	Gaussian (diagonal cov.)	Gauss-Newton Hessian approx. in Adam & no square-root scaling	4.4
Variational OGN <sub>(New)</sub>	——“——	Remove delta method from OGN	4.4
BayesBiNN <sub>(New)</sub>	Bernoulli	Remove delta method from STE	4.5
<b>Approximate Bayesian Inference Algorithms</b>			
Conjugate Bayes	Exp-family	Set learning rate $\rho_t = 1$	5.1
Laplace's method	Gaussian	Delta method	4.4
Expectation-Maximization	Exp-Family + Gaussian	Delta method for the parameters	5.2
Stochastic VI (SVI)	Exp-family (mean-field)	Stochastic approx., local $\rho_t = 1$	5.3
VMP	——“——	$\rho_t = 1$ for all nodes	5.3
Non-Conjugate VMP	——“——	——“——	5.3
Non-Conjugate VI <sub>(New)</sub>	Mixture of Exp-family	None	5.4

# GPT-2 with Bayesian Learning Rule [1]

Better performance & uncertainty at the same cost [2]



Trained on OpenWebText data (49.2B tokens).

On 773M, we get a gain of 0.5 in perplexity.

On 355M, we get a gain of 0.4 in perplexity.

1. Khan and Rue, The Bayesian Learning Rule, JMLR (2023).

2. Shen et al. "Variational Learning is Effective for Large Deep Networks." Under review (2024)

# BLR for large deep networks

RMSprop/Adam

BLR [1] variant called IVON [5]  
(Improved Variational Online Newton)

```
1  $\hat{g} \leftarrow \hat{\nabla} \ell(\theta)$   
2  $\hat{h} \leftarrow \hat{g}^2$   
3  $h \leftarrow (1 - \rho)h + \rho \hat{h}$   
4  $\theta \leftarrow \theta - \alpha(\hat{g} + \delta m) / (\sqrt{h} + \delta)$   
5
```

```
1  $\hat{g} \leftarrow \hat{\nabla} \ell(\theta)$  where  $\theta \sim \mathcal{N}(m, \sigma^2)$   
2  $\hat{h} \leftarrow \hat{g} \cdot (\theta - m) / \sigma^2$   
3  $h \leftarrow (1 - \rho)h + \rho \hat{h} + \rho^2 (h - \hat{h})^2 / (2(h + \delta))$   
4  $m \leftarrow m - \alpha(\hat{g} + \delta m) / (h + \delta)$   
5  $\sigma^2 \leftarrow 1 / (N(h + \delta))$ 
```

Only tune initial value of h (a scalar)

Check out the blog: <https://team-approx-bayes.github.io/blog/ivon/>

1. Khan and Rue, The Bayesian Learning Rule, JMLR (2023).
2. Khan, et al. "Fast and scalable Bayesian deep learning by weight-perturbation in Adam." *ICML* (2018).
3. Osawa et al. "Practical Deep Learning with Bayesian Principles." *NeurIPS* (2019).
4. Lin et al. "Handling the positive-definite constraints in the BLR." *ICML* (2020).
5. Shen et al. "Variational Learning is Effective for Large Deep Networks." Under review (2024)

# Drop-in replacement of Adam

<https://github.com/team-approx-bayes/ivon>

```
import torch
+import ivon

train_loader = torch.utils.data.DataLoader(train_dataset)
test_loader = torch.utils.data.DataLoader(test_dataset)
model = MLP()

-optimizer = torch.optim.Adam(model.parameters())
+optimizer = ivon.IVON(model.parameters())

for X, y in train_loader:

+   for _ in range(train_samples):
+       with optimizer.sampled_params(train=True):
           optimizer.zero_grad()
           logit = model(X)
           loss = torch.nn.CrossEntropyLoss(logit, y)
           loss.backward()

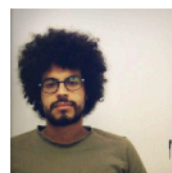
optimizer.step()
```

# IVON [3] got 1st prize in NeurIPS 2021 Approximate Inference Challenge

Watch **Thomas Moellenhoff's** talk at  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQInIN5EU7E>.

## Mixture-of-Gaussian Posteriors with an Improved Bayesian Learning Rule

Thomas Möllenhoff<sup>1</sup>, Yuesong Shen<sup>2</sup>, Gian Maria Marconi<sup>1</sup>  
Peter Nickl<sup>1</sup>, Mohammad Emtiyaz Khan<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Approximate Bayesian Inference Team  
RIKEN Center for AI Project, Tokyo, Japan

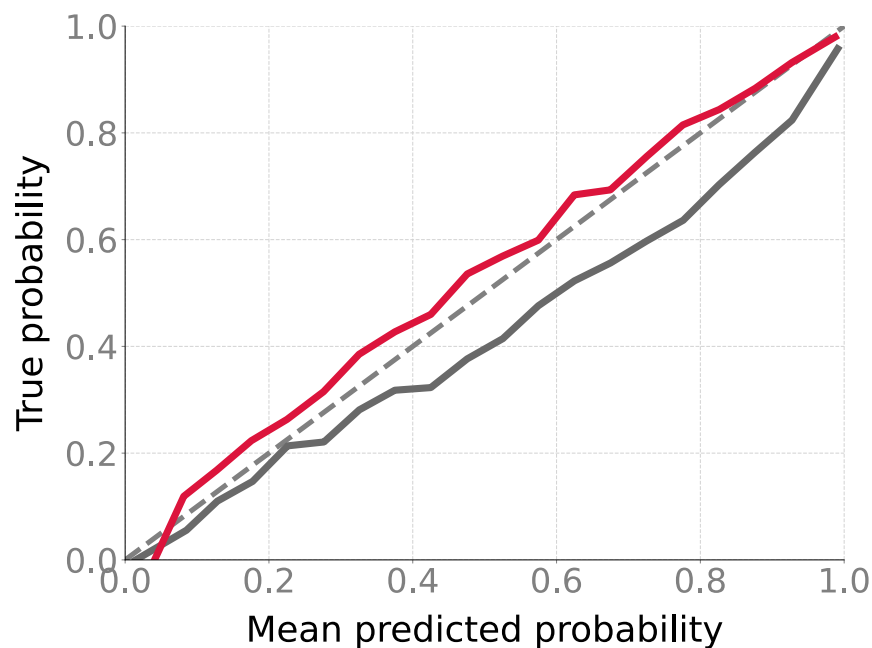
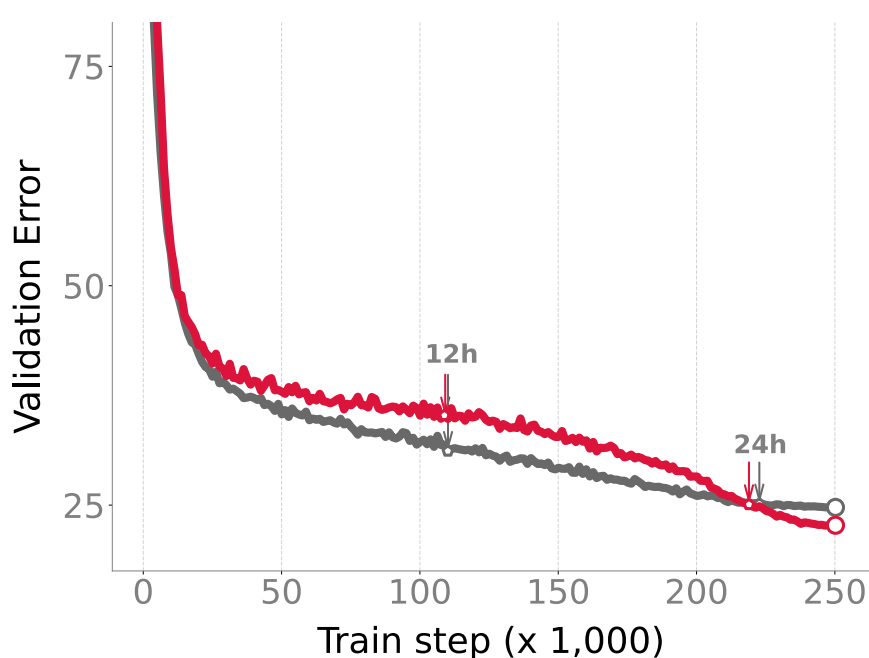
<sup>2</sup> Computer Vision Group  
Technical University of Munich, Germany

Dec 14th, 2021 — NeurIPS Workshop on Bayesian Deep Learning

1. Khan, et al. "Fast and scalable Bayesian deep learning by weight-perturbation in Adam." *ICML* (2018).
2. Osawa et al. "Practical Deep Learning with Bayesian Principles." *NeurIPS* (2019).
3. Lin et al. "Handling the positive-definite constraints in the BLR." *ICML* (2020).

# ImageNet on ResNet-50 (25.6M)

2% better accuracy over AdamW and 1% over SGD. Better calibration (ECE of 0.022 vs 0.066)



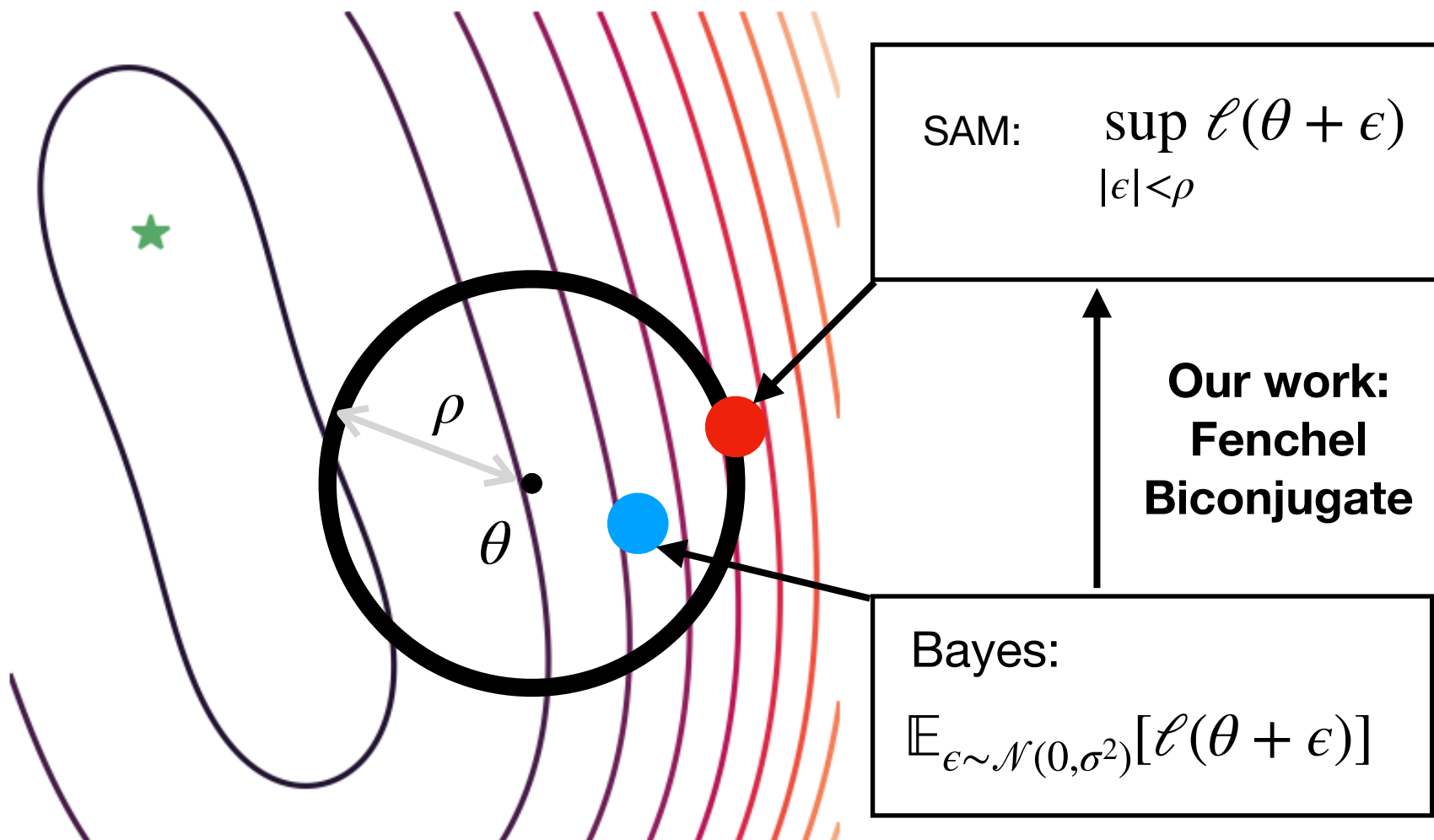
# ImageNet on ResNet-50 (25.6M)

No severe overfitting like AdamW while improving accuracy over SGD consistently & better uncertainty

Dataset & Model	Epochs	Method	Top-1 Acc. $\uparrow$	Top-5 Acc. $\uparrow$	NLL $\downarrow$	ECE $\downarrow$	Brier $\downarrow$
ImageNet-1k ResNet-50 (25.6M params)	100	AdamW	74.56 $\pm$ 0.24	92.05 $\pm$ 0.17	1.018 $\pm$ 0.012	0.043 $\pm$ 0.001	0.352 $\pm$ 0.003
		SGD	<b>76.18</b> $\pm$ 0.09	<b>92.94</b> $\pm$ 0.05	<b>0.928</b> $\pm$ 0.003	0.019 $\pm$ 0.001	<b>0.330</b> $\pm$ 0.001
		IVON@mean	<b>76.14</b> $\pm$ 0.11	92.83 $\pm$ 0.04	0.934 $\pm$ 0.002	0.025 $\pm$ 0.001	<b>0.330</b> $\pm$ 0.001
		IVON	<b>76.24</b> $\pm$ 0.09	<b>92.90</b> $\pm$ 0.04	<b>0.925</b> $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.015</b> $\pm$ 0.001	<b>0.330</b> $\pm$ 0.001
	200	AdamW	+2% 75.16 $\pm$ 0.14	92.37 $\pm$ 0.03	1.018 $\pm$ 0.003	0.066 $\pm$ 0.002	0.349 $\pm$ 0.002
		SGD	+1% 76.63 $\pm$ 0.45	93.21 $\pm$ 0.25	0.917 $\pm$ 0.026	0.038 $\pm$ 0.009	0.326 $\pm$ 0.006
		IVON@mean	77.30 $\pm$ 0.08	93.58 $\pm$ 0.05	0.884 $\pm$ 0.002	0.035 $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.316</b> $\pm$ 0.001
		IVON	<b>77.46</b> $\pm$ 0.07	<b>93.68</b> $\pm$ 0.04	<b>0.869</b> $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.022</b> $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.315</b> $\pm$ 0.001
TinyImageNet ResNet-18 (11M params, wide)	200	AdamW	+15% 47.33 $\pm$ 0.90	71.54 $\pm$ 0.95	6.823 $\pm$ 0.235	0.421 $\pm$ 0.008	0.913 $\pm$ 0.018
		SGD	+1% 61.39 $\pm$ 0.18	82.30 $\pm$ 0.22	1.811 $\pm$ 0.010	0.138 $\pm$ 0.002	0.536 $\pm$ 0.002
		IVON@mean	<b>62.41</b> $\pm$ 0.15	<b>83.77</b> $\pm$ 0.18	1.776 $\pm$ 0.018	0.150 $\pm$ 0.005	0.532 $\pm$ 0.002
		IVON	<b>62.68</b> $\pm$ 0.16	<b>84.12</b> $\pm$ 0.24	<b>1.528</b> $\pm$ 0.010	<b>0.019</b> $\pm$ 0.004	<b>0.491</b> $\pm$ 0.001
TinyImageNet PreResNet-110 (4M params, deep)	200	AdamW	+10% 50.65 $\pm$ 0.0*	74.94 $\pm$ 0.0*	4.487 $\pm$ 0.0*	0.357 $\pm$ 0.0*	0.812 $\pm$ 0.0*
		AdaHessian	55.03 $\pm$ 0.53	78.49 $\pm$ 0.34	2.971 $\pm$ 0.064	0.272 $\pm$ 0.005	0.690 $\pm$ 0.008
		SGD	+2% 59.39 $\pm$ 0.50	81.34 $\pm$ 0.30	2.040 $\pm$ 0.040	0.176 $\pm$ 0.006	0.577 $\pm$ 0.007
		IVON @mean	<b>60.85</b> $\pm$ 0.39	<b>83.89</b> $\pm$ 0.14	1.584 $\pm$ 0.009	0.053 $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.514</b> $\pm$ 0.003
		IVON	<b>61.25</b> $\pm$ 0.48	<b>84.13</b> $\pm$ 0.17	<b>1.550</b> $\pm$ 0.009	<b>0.049</b> $\pm$ 0.002	<b>0.511</b> $\pm$ 0.003
CIFAR-100 ResNet-18 (11M params, wide)	200	AdamW	+11% 64.12 $\pm$ 0.43	86.85 $\pm$ 0.51	3.357 $\pm$ 0.071	0.278 $\pm$ 0.005	0.615 $\pm$ 0.008
		SGD	+7% 74.46 $\pm$ 0.17	92.66 $\pm$ 0.06	1.083 $\pm$ 0.007	0.113 $\pm$ 0.001	0.376 $\pm$ 0.001
		IVON@mean	74.51 $\pm$ 0.24	92.74 $\pm$ 0.19	1.284 $\pm$ 0.013	0.152 $\pm$ 0.003	0.399 $\pm$ 0.002
		IVON	<b>75.14</b> $\pm$ 0.34	<b>93.30</b> $\pm$ 0.19	<b>0.912</b> $\pm$ 0.009	<b>0.021</b> $\pm$ 0.003	<b>0.344</b> $\pm$ 0.003



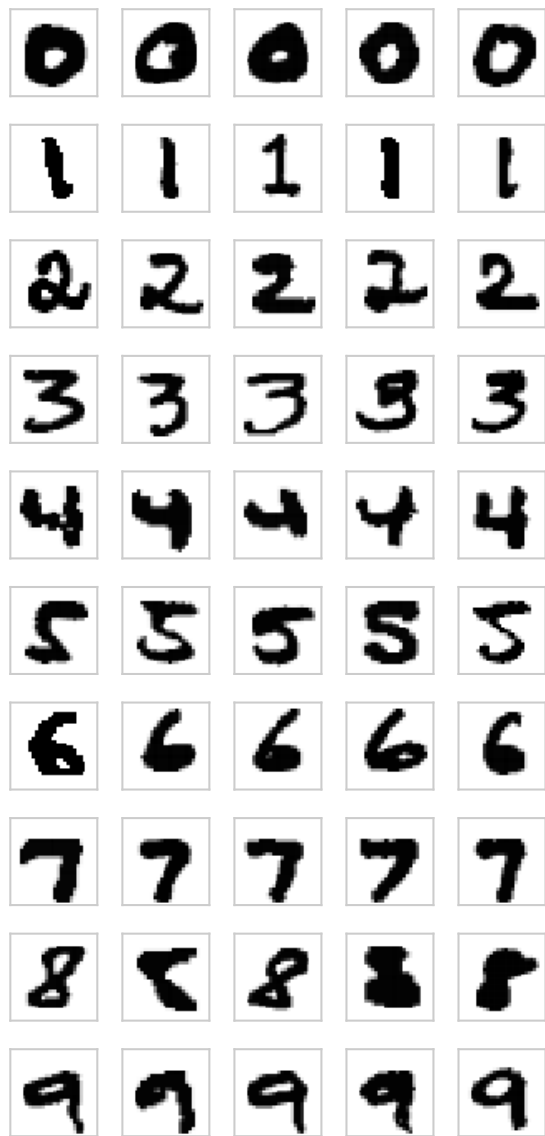
# Sharpness-Aware Minimization (SAM) from BLR



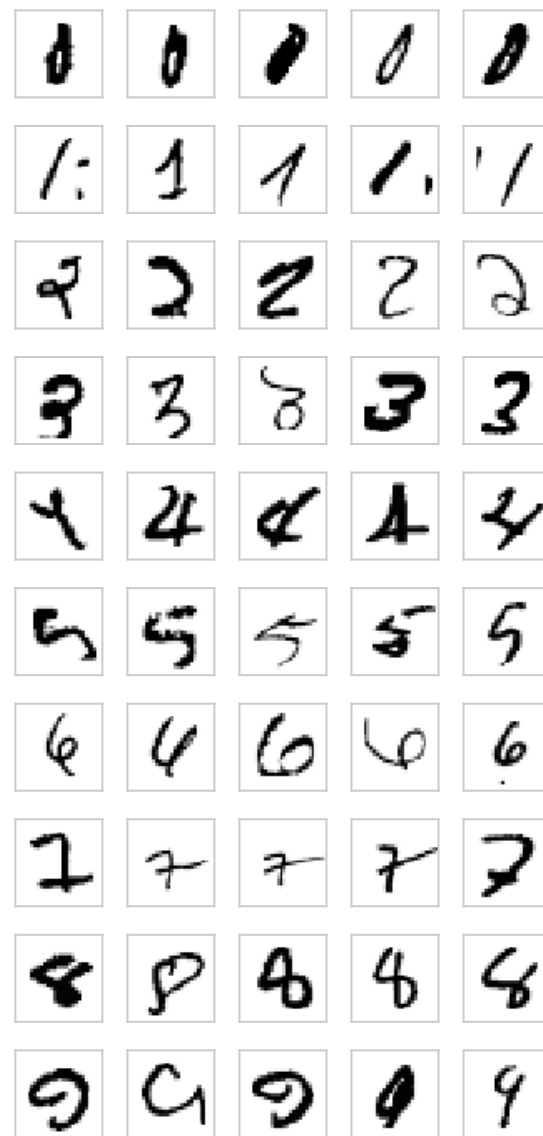
1. Foret et al. Sharpness-Aware Minimization for Efficiently Improving Generalization, ICLR, 2021
2. Moellenhoff and Khan, SAM as an Optimal Relaxation of Bayes, Under review, 2022

# Characterizing memory through sensitivity

Low Sensitivity

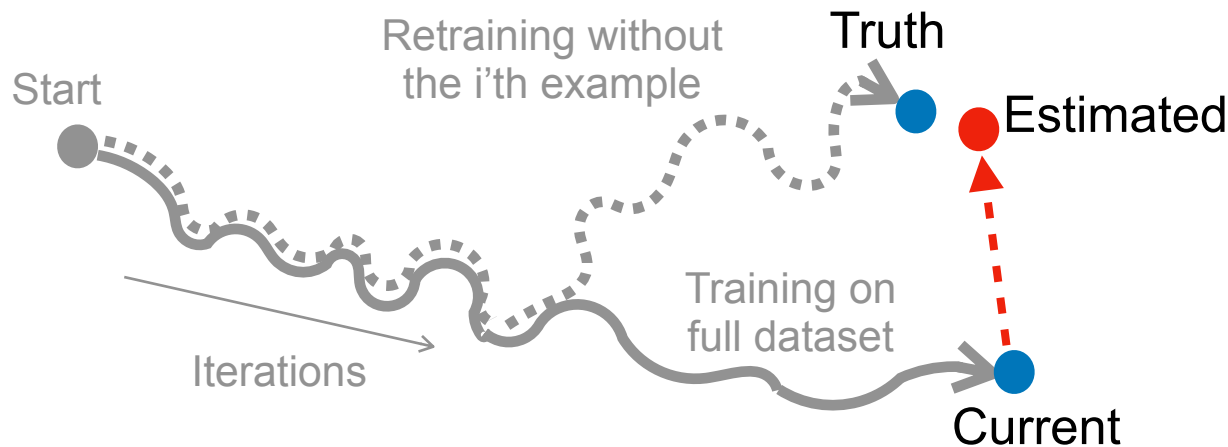


High Sensitivity



# Memory Perturbation Equation

Past that has the most influence on the present



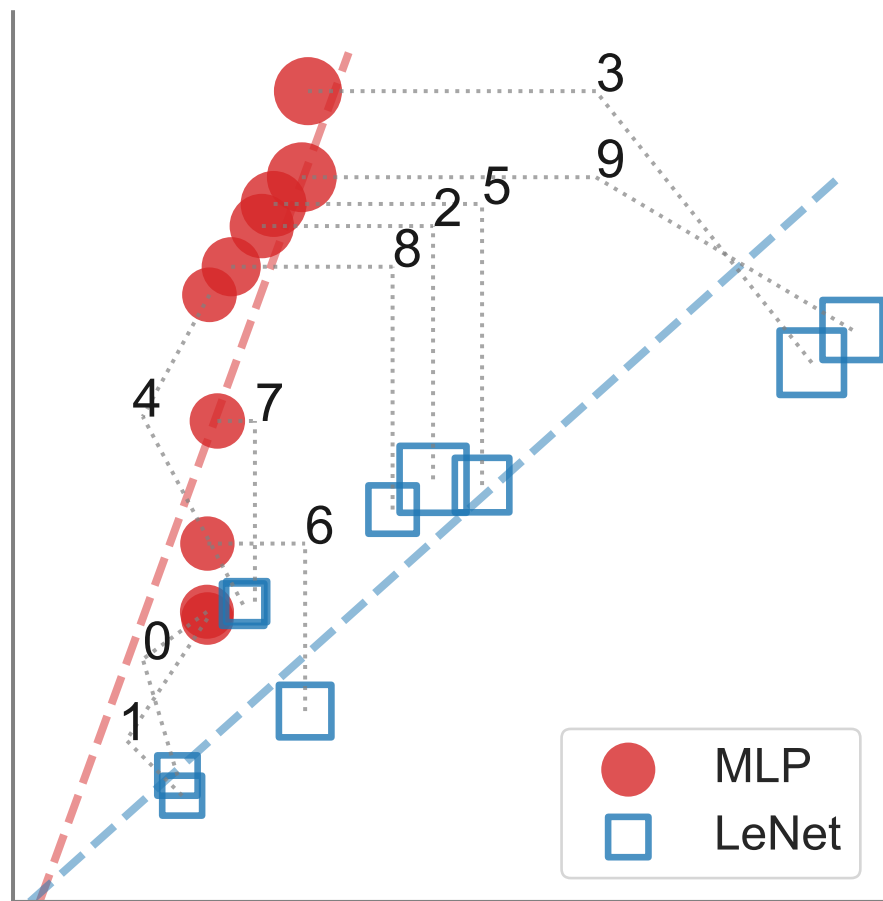
Estimating it without retraining: Using the BLR, we can recover all sorts of influence criteria used in literature.

$$\text{Influence} = \text{predictError} \times \text{predictVariance}$$

# Answering “What-If” Questions

What if we removed a class from MNIST?

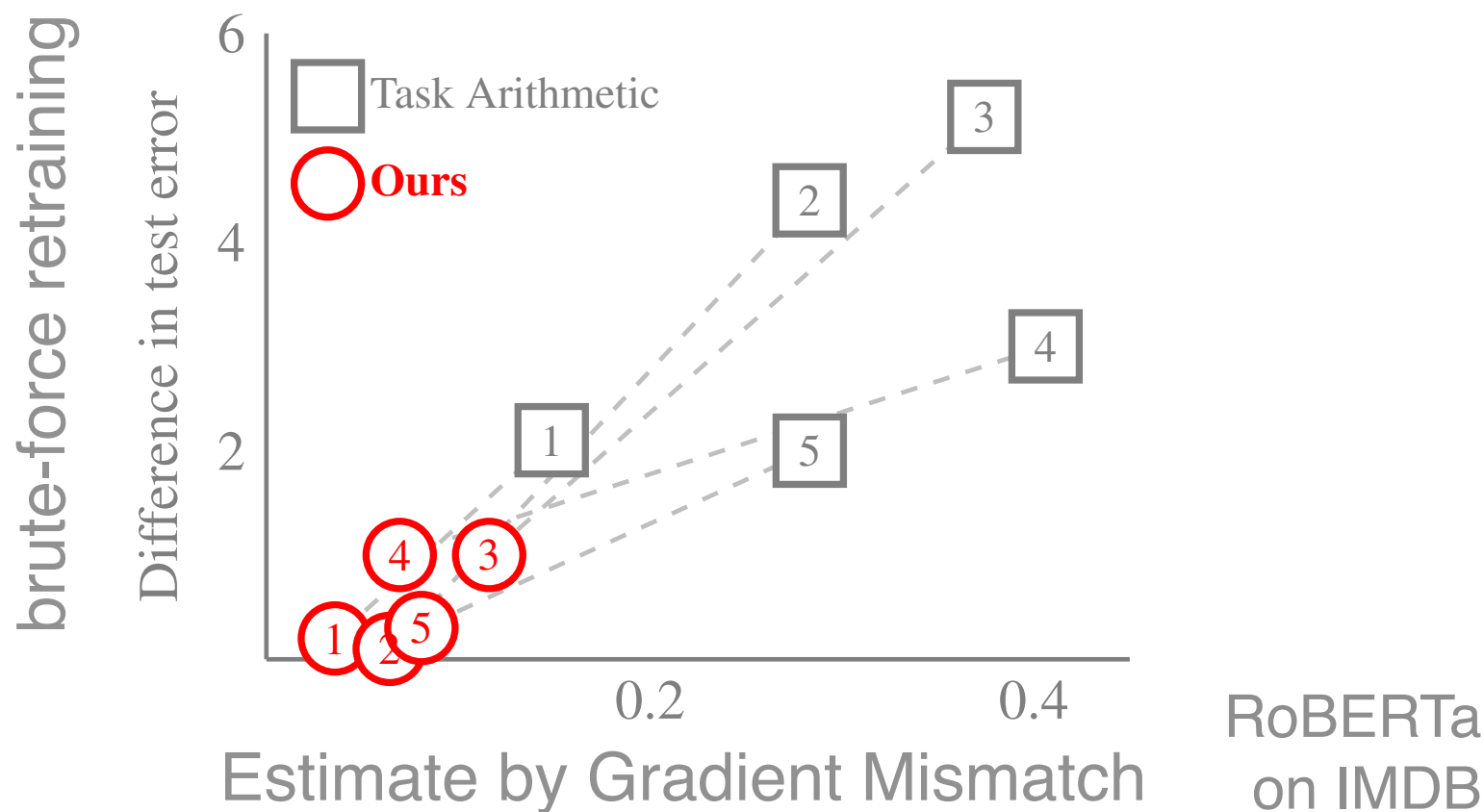
Estimates on training data (no retraining)



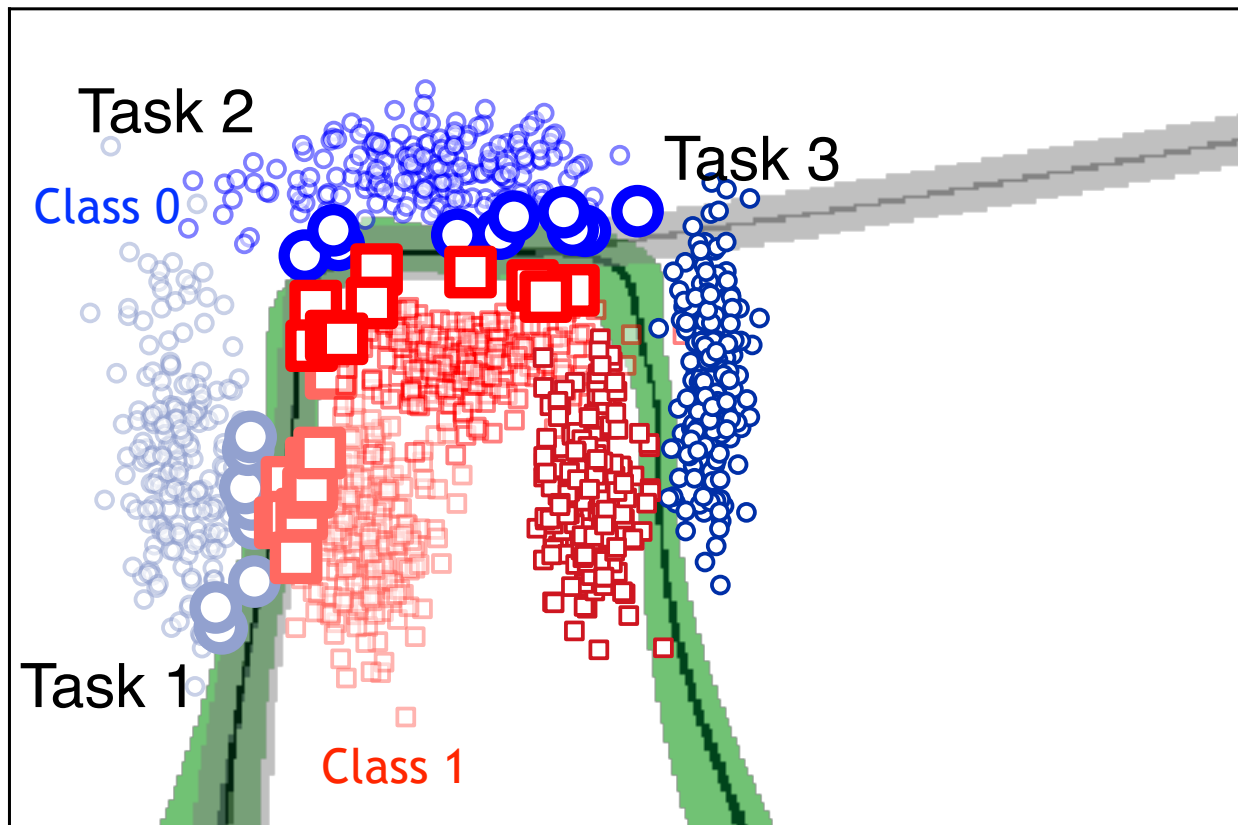
Test Performance (NLL) by  
brute-force retraining

# Answering “What-If” Questions

What if we merge fine-tuned large-language models?



# Functional Regularization of Memorable Examples [2]



1. Khan et al. Approximate Inference Turns Deep Networks into Gaussian Process, NeurIPS, 2019
2. Pan et al. Continual Deep Learning by Functional Regularisation of Memorable Past, NeurIPS, 2020

# Functional Regularization of Memorable Past (FROMP)

Weight-regularizer (EWC) [1]

$$(\theta - \theta_{\text{old}})^\top \underset{\substack{\uparrow \text{Weight uncertainty}}}{F_{\text{old}}} (\theta - \theta_{\text{old}})$$

Functional regularizer (FROMP) [2]

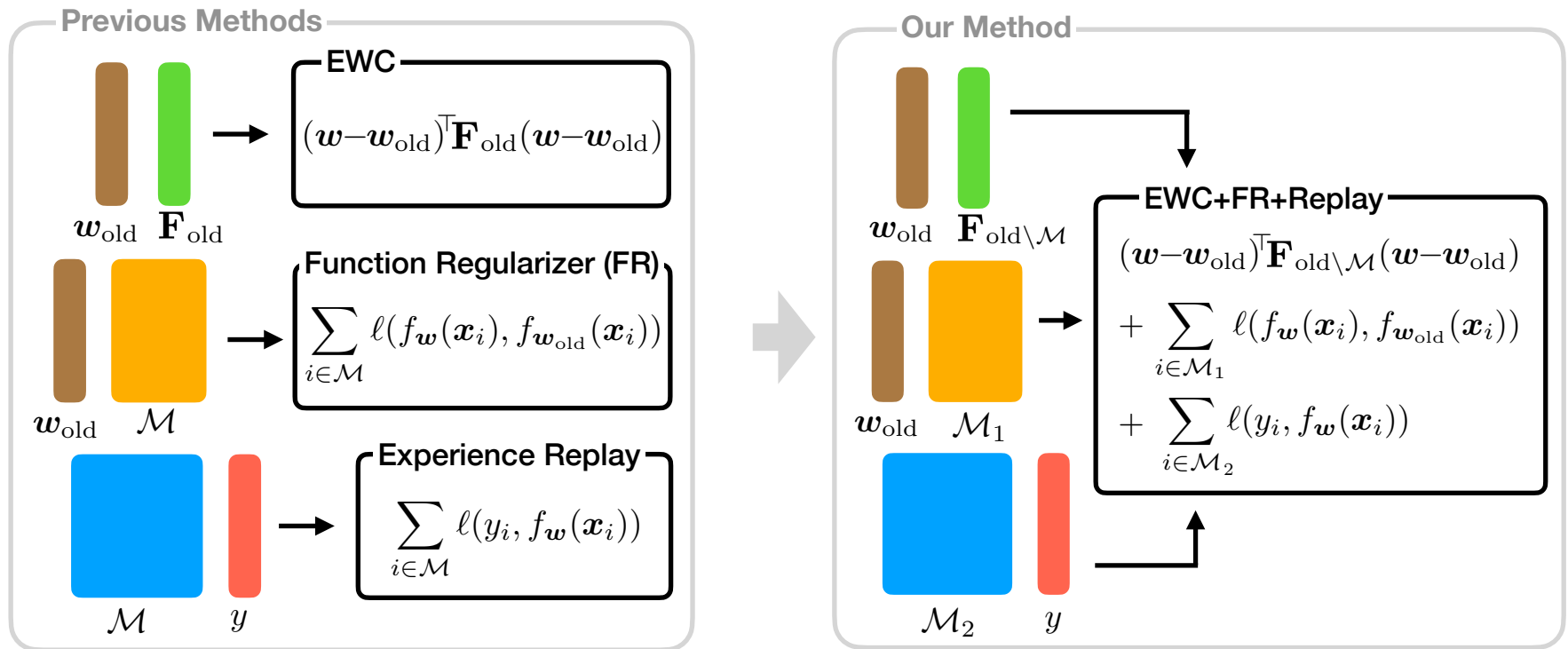
$$[\sigma(\mathbf{f}(\theta)) - \sigma(\mathbf{f}_{\text{old}})]^\top \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{Uncertainty}}}{K_{\text{old}}^{-1}} [\sigma(\mathbf{f}(\theta)) - \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{Predictions}}}{\sigma(\mathbf{f}_{\text{old}})}]$$

Why does this work? It is a way to replay past gradients, which leads to the idea of **K-priors**.

1. Kirkpatrick, James, et al. "Overcoming catastrophic forgetting in neural networks." *PNAS* 2017
2. Pan et al. Continual Deep Learning by Functional Regularisation of Memorable Past, NeurIPS, 2020

# How to combine EWC + FR + Replay

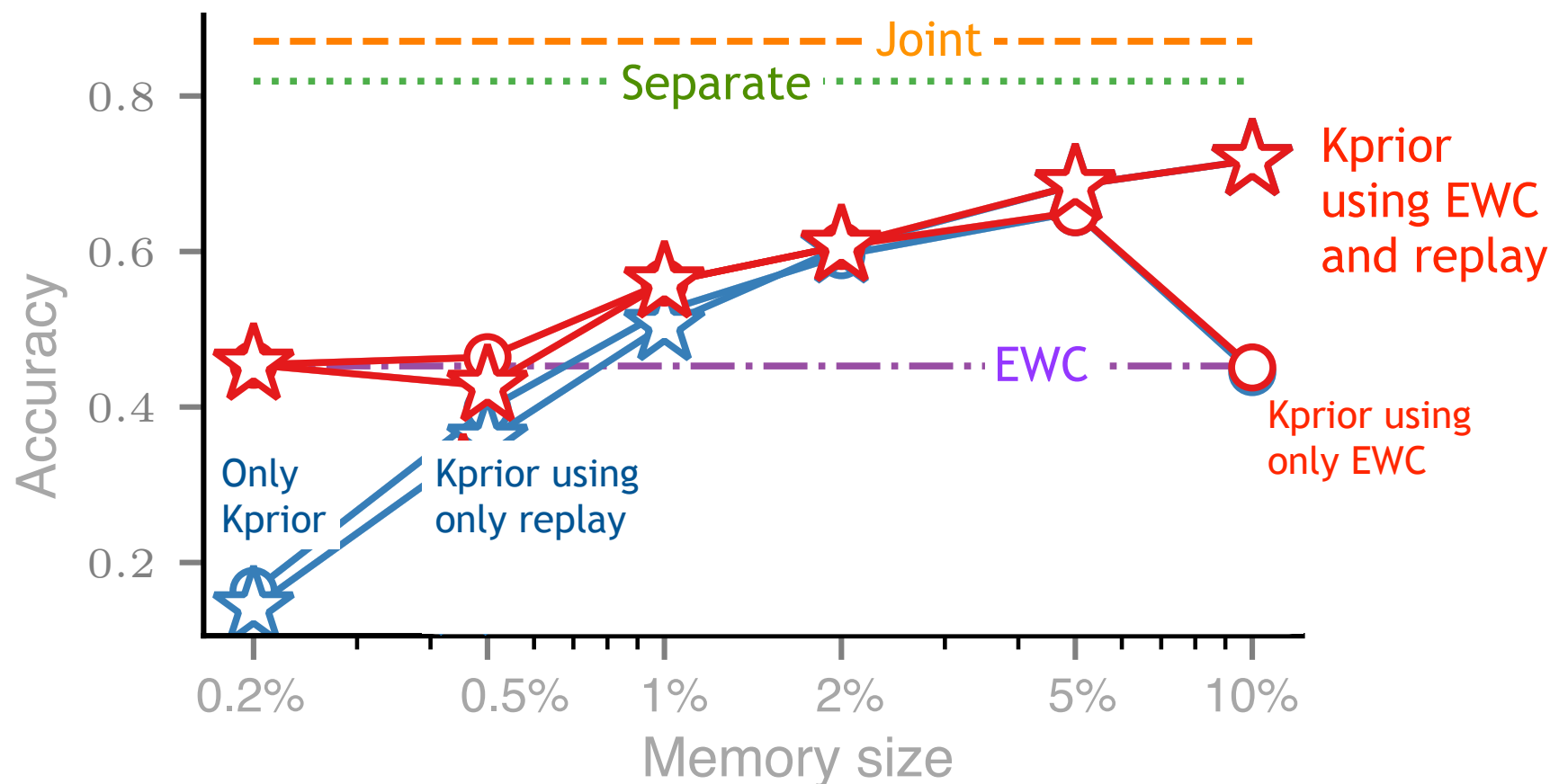
Combine to reduce grad-replay error





# Continual Learning on ImageNet

K-prior allows us to optimally combine model and data to get good accuracy with little memory.



# Bayesian Learning Rule [1]

- Bridge DL & Bayesian learning [2-5]
  - SOTA on GPT-2 and ImageNet [5]
- Improve DL [5-7]
  - Calibration, uncertainty, memory etc.
  - Understand and fix model behavior
- Towards human-like quick adaptation

1. Khan and Rue, The Bayesian Learning Rule, JMLR (2023).
2. Khan, et al. Fast and scalable Bayesian deep learning by weight-perturbation in Adam, ICML (2018).
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6. Daheim et al. Model merging by uncertainty-based gradient matching, ICLR (2024).
7. Nickl, Xu, Tailor, Moellenhoff, Khan, The memory-perturbation equation, NeurIPS (2023)

# The Bayes-Duality Project

Toward AI that learns adaptively, robustly, and continuously, like humans



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Research director  
(Japan side)

Approx-Bayes team at  
RIKEN-AIP and OIST



**Julyan Arbel**

Research director  
(France side)

Statify-team, Inria  
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**Kenichi Bannai**

Co-PI (Japan side)

Math-Science Team at  
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University



**Rio Yokota**

Co-PI  
(Japan side)

Tokyo Institute of  
Technology

Received total funding of around **USD 3 million** through JST's CREST-ANR (2021-2027) and Kakenhi Grants (2019-2021).

# Team Approx-Bayes

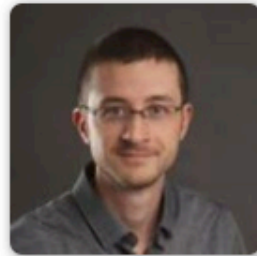
<https://team-approx-bayes.github.io/>



**Emtiyaz Khan**  
Team Leader



**Thomas Möllenhoff**  
Research Scientist



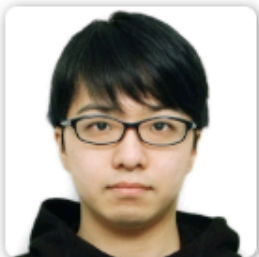
**Geoffrey Wolfer**  
Special  
Postdoctoral  
Resesarcher



**Hugo Monzón Maldonado**  
Postdoctoral  
Researcher

Many thanks to our group members and collaborators (many not on this slide).

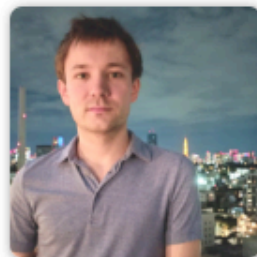
We are always looking for new collaborations.



**Keigo Nishida**  
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**Zhedong Liu**  
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**Dharmesh Tailor**  
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