User Manual v1.1 for DVA v3.12

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1 How to run DVA: getting started

To run DVA, the command line syntax is the following:

dva <source> -m <model dir> [options]

where source is the input to be processed, which can be either:

- a video file
- a folder containing a collection of frames
- a device identifier, for example a webcam id, an rtp stream, ...

and model dir is the folder where the model and all the options and configurations will be saved.

There are many options which can be used when running the software, and the next sections will describe them in detail. For a quick start, one option which we suggest to include in the first attempts to use DVA is -o <output dir>, which specifies the directory where DVA will save the output of video processing (such as feature maps and predictions) and which is necessary for visualizing the results (using the DVA Viewer). A basic command can therefore be the following one:

dva /path/to/your/video -m model -o output

NOTE – If the model and/or output directories does not exist, they will be created by DVA. If the model directory already exists, DVA tries to load configurations and parameters from data in such directory, and if they are not found, an error will occur. If the output directory already exists, DVA will append the produced files to the existing content. Note that the -o switch is optional, and DVA can be executed without producing any outputs.

2 The produced output

Once started, DVA will display on standard output a log of the operations it is performing. In addition, it will save the model parameters in the directory indicated by the -m switch, and the output in the directory indicated by the -o switch (which is not mandatory).

2.1 Model

Within the model directory, DVA saves the employed options (folder options), and all the parameters which are needed in case of stopping and re-starting an experiment. For example, for each layer and each category in the model (subfolders of the model directory), the MEE parameters are saved (the matrix of coefficients M, the data matrix Q, ...), as well as a set of files containing the current status of the agent (including, for example, all the adaptive parameters). Also the DOG (Developmental Object Graphs) and the SCM (Support Constraint Machine) are saved, in the subfolder with their respective acronyms. Moreover, in two distinct subfolders, the supervision files which allow the communications between the DVA Viewer and the agent are saved. All these files should normally not be used by users, except for a specific analysis of some aspects of the agent's behavior (see Appendix B).

2.2 Output

The output folder will contain all the information which is produced by the agent, and which will be necessary in order to display its behavior while processing video data, using the DVA Viewer (see next section). The list of the produced outputs includes the following subfolders:

- S, the feature maps
- T, the transformations maps
- 0, the optical flow

which are organized per-layer and per-category, containing one file per processed frame (grouped in subfolders of 1000 files each). The format can be read using the DVA Viewer or the I/O-tools. The other subfolders, which are not organized per-layer, but which contain output which are proper of the whole deep architecture of the agent, are the following:

- regions, the pixel-to-region association map
- nodes, the region-to-DOG-node association map
- descriptors, the descriptor vectors of all nodes
- predictions, the pixel-to-predicted-function association map

3 Using the DVA Viewer

The DVA Viewer is provided as a .jar file, and can be launched with the simple Java¹ command:

The user has to first choose the model and output paths of the experiment he wants to monitor. It is also necessary to specify whether the experiment is in local, or on a remote machine, in which case the communication protocol has to be chosen, as well as the IP address of the remote machine. For MacOSX and Linux users, we recommend sshfs protocol, while for Windows users only JSch (a library for managing ssh-based remote communications) is available.

Once the viewer has established a communication with the experiment, the user can choose what to monitor. As a default, four panels are showed, but any grid can be organized by the user, by choosing the apposite grid-selection in the top command panel. For each panel, a C button allows to choose what has to be shown in that panel. Options include: features, transformations, regions, nodes, predictions, optical flow, frames, supervisions (both on user and DVA initiative). On the top-right corner of the command panel of the viewer, some pre-arranged templates can be chosen, associated to different scenarios.

4 DVA basic options

The basic options which can be used for DVA include:

- -o <output dir> (the directory where output data will be saved)
- -op <output dir> (only predictions will be saved: no features, transformation, optical flow)
- -ok <output dir> (also the keypatches associated to feature filters will be saved)
- -o<p|k>r <output dir> (only recent output frames will be saved)
- -reset <model|output|all> (delete existing model, output, both)
- -reset <layerX|layerX,proj|layerX,catY> (reset layer related data)
- -reset <copf | dog | sup | scm > (reset different model portions)
- -p<layer number><layer option name> <option value> (set an option for a layer)
- -p<deep net or all-layers option name> <option value> (set an option for the whole net)

¹Note that Java VM 1.7 or superior is required.

```
-highlevels <on|off> (enable higher levels, default on)
-sleeptimes <hh:mm-hh:mm> (suspend on a time range)
-sleepdays <day-day> (suspend on a weekday range, e.g. sun-wed)
```

If -or instead of -o is used (or -opr or -okr), then DVA will continuously automatically remove the oldest files and folders, maintaining on disk storage only the output associated to the last processed 1000-2000 frames, approximately.

The -reset switch allows to either delete existing model and/or output folders content, or to load some portions of a model, while resetting the others. For example, if -reset dog is used, the computation will load all the layers and categories, the copf frequencies, but will clear all the dog nodes, therefore restarting the learning process from that level.

The -p case is particularly important, as it allows the user to control almost any detail within the DVA architecture. This switch allows to set both those options which are proper of the deep network, and those options which are proper of the single layers. If a number x is specified after the -p switch, then the subsequent option will be set only for the x-th layer; otherwise, it is set for all the layers (in case of layer-options) or for the deep network.

We list here three examples of this -p command switch, which follows a name/value syntax:

1. architecture with three layers

```
dva /path/to/your/video -m model -o output -pnum_layers 3
```

2. architecture with three layers, all having 30 features

```
dva /path/to/your/video -m model -o output -pnum_layers 3 -pd 30
```

3. architecture with three layers, all having 30 features, except 10 for layer 0

```
dva /path/to/your/video -m model -o output -pnum_layers 3 -pd 30 -p0d 10
```

Note that, if -reset option is used, then DVA will possibly try to load (some portions of) the model present in the model directory. If some parameters are specified through the -p option, a conflict may happen with the existing loaded parameters, and a warning message will be shown.

The -highlevels <on/off> switch allows to enable/disable the higher levels of the DVA architecture (default: enabled). Those levels include common pairs of features (COPF), DOG, and SCM. If DVA is executed with

```
dva /path/to/your/video -m model -o output -highlevels off
```

then DVA only extract low-level features from the input stream.

5 DVA main options

We now discuss a list of the main parameters which the user will need to change most probably in order to test different agents. For an exhaustive list, see Appendix A. In the next section, the more common problems which can be encountered when running a DVA experiment will be listed, together with some useful tips in order to solve them.

SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE AND GENERAL PARAMETERS

- num_layers is the number of layers in the deep architecture;
- c [def. 1] is the number of spatial categories to be used for each layer;
- ct [def. 0] is the number of temporal categories to be used for each layer;
- d [def. 50] is the number of features to be used for each layer, to be divided by the total number of categories (i.e., c + ct): the agent will try to equally split the features among all the categories, leaving to the last category a possible remainder;
- w and h [def. -1] are the desired width and height for the processed video: if the video has a larger/smaller resolution, it is consequently subsampled/enlarged; if they are set to -1, the video is not rescaled;
- repeat [def. 1] is the number of times the input will be cyclically processed by DVA;
- threads [def. 1] is the number of threads which DVA is allowed to use;
- mem [def. 512] is the total amount of memory (in MB) which DVA is allowed to use.

FEATURE EXTRACTION

- xi_tol [def. 0.25] is the threshold for duplicate detection within Q set: the smaller the value, the higher the number of ξ elements which will be stored in Q (and the slower the computation); this is one of the parameters which mostly affect the computational cost of DVA, since a too large Q set (for example of the order of magnitude of thousands of elements) will produce an unbearable computational cost;
- kernelparam [def. 0.5] is the kernel parameter to be used for rbf (or poly) kernels within the MEE. Typically a value larger (i.e., twice) than xi_tol should be used;
- xk_gridsize [def. 25] is the width of the receptive field: a value of 9 indicates a 3 × 3 grid, while 25 indicates a 5 × 5 grid, and so on;

- sigma_min and sigma_max [def. 1,3] indicate the minimum and maximum value for the scale parameter which are allowed for each layer. Typically larger values should be used for higher layers in the hierarchy, and in fact sigma_min has a default value of 2 starting from the second layer;
- sigma_gridsize [def. 3] indicates the number of possible scales which the algorithm will test to preserve scale invariance (the larger this value, the higher the computational cost);
- angle1_gridsize [def. 8] indicates the number of possible in-plane rotation angles which the algorithm will test to preserve in-plane rotation invariance (the larger this value, the higher the computational cost);
- angle2_gridsize [def. 1] indicates the number of possible tilt angles which the algorithm will test to preserve tilt invariance (the larger this value, the higher the computational cost);
- const_tol [def. 0.01] indicates the threshold on standard deviation, below which a receptive field is considered to be constant;
- mu_min [def. 0.333] is the minimum blurring factor which is always applied to the input frame, even once the temporal blurring process has been completed;
- transf_unrolling [def. 1] indicates whether the vector of features should be expanded (unrolled) by using the information of the transformation parameters associated to each pixel; basically, the overall number of features is multiplied by the number of transformation combinations, so that features are differentiated also by the associated angle and scale parameters;
- stride [def. 2] is the downsampling factor for average pooling between two layers (the default value indicates that no pooling is performed).

COMMON PAIRS OF FEATURES (COPF)

- copf_stability [def. 1e-3] is a threshold for evaluating the stability of copf frequencies: the lower the value, the more time will be necessary to copf frequencies to become stable;
- copfdesc_rho [def. 0.5] is a parameter which controls the role of color and copf within the descriptor of a region: if equal to
- copf_rho [def. 0.0] controls the impact (the higher, the stronger) of copf within the pixel similarity function;
- copf_descriptor [def. 0] decides whether hierarchical features or copf should be used for the node descriptor. 0, only the color is considered, while if equal to 1 only copf are considered, and color information is ignored.

AGGREGATION LEVEL

- rg_threshold [def. 0.005] is the threshold within the region-growing algorithm which allows to influence the tendency to build larger or smaller regions, by acting within the similarity function: the higher the value, the larger the regions which will be generated;
- min_region_size [def. 0.002] is the minimum region size which can be found, as a percentage of the input image (a post-processing phase in the region-growing algorithm merges smaller regions with larger neighbors): the multiplicative inverse is therefore the maximum number of regions which the algorithm can return;
- of_rho [def. 0.1] controls the impact (the higher, the stronger) of optical flow within the pixel similarity function;

DEVELOPMENTAL OBJECT GRAPH AND SUPPORT CONSTRAINT MACHINES

- dog_tol [def. 0.1] is the threshold for duplicate detection between descriptors within the Developmental Object Graph: the smaller the value, the higher the number of nodes stored within the DOG;
- scm_kernelparam [def. 0.2] is the kernel parameter to be used within the SCM: it should typically be larger than dog_tol;
- scm_lambda [def. 1e-3] is the regularization parameter for SCM;
- scm_lap_lambda [def. 1e-4] is the weighting parameter for the contribution of spatio-temporal manifold regularization;
- scm_lap_alpha [def. 0.5] is the parameter weighting the contribution of the two (spatial and temporal) manifold: a value of 0 will only consider the temporal manifold, while a value of 1 will only consider the spatial manifold;
- dog_lap_prune [def. 0.8] is the threshold for adding an edge in the spatial Laplacian: the larger the value, the fewer will be the edges in the graph;
- dog_lapo_prune [def. 0.01] is the threshold for adding an edge in the temporal Laplacian; the larger the value, the fewer will be the edges in the graph (note that this threshold, due to normalization procedures, should be much lower than the previous one in order to be effective: we suggest a default value equal to 0.01).

6 Useful tips for solving most common problems

DVA has been running for hours, and it is still developing the X-th layer

There are several possible reasons for this behavior. First, you may have fed DVA with a video having a too high resolution: in this case, use the -pw and -ph options to downsample the video (in the first experiments we suggest to use resolutions not greater than 320×240). Another possibility is that the X-th layer has been storing too many ξ elements, and exhaustive searches have become too expensive: you can check this by reading in the log file the rows containing the Q size of the layer, and if such number is of the order of magnitude of thousands, then you should increase the value of xi_tol for that layer. Please note that, if you are using the rbf kernel and decide to change the xi_tol parameter, you will probably need to accordingly change kernelparam, as the two options are strictly related. A reasonable value for kernelparam might be twice the value of xi_tol.

One of the layers has finished developing the features, but these are fluctuating between some different configurations

The Minimal Entropy Encoder, which is the clustering algorithm responsible of developing the features, seems not to have converged to a stable solution. One possible workaround is to increase the regularization parameter lambda. Note that, acting on lambda will have impact also on the number of features which will be developed for that layer. If with the new value of the regularization parameter, all the features are used by the encoder, it might be necessary to change also the d parameter for that layer.

The learning of the second layer seems to start slowly: very few ξ elements have been added in many frames

When a new layer is enabled, the blurring scheme is activated for that layer: it is therefore a normal behavior that, during the first frames processed by the layer, very few ξ elements are added to the memory. If this happens even after the blurring has terminated, then it is probably necessary to lower the value of xi_tol for that layer. Please note that the values of xi_tol for different layers do not necessarily have to be the same: we observed experimentally that typically higher layers should have higher values of xi_tol. Also, note that there is a minimum blurring, which is always applied to the input image, which is defined by parameter mu_min.

All layers have finished the development, but I cannot see the regions

If you are using the copf (common pairs of features) for creating the regions (copf_rho > 0), then the region-growing algorithm is activated only when the frequencies of the copf have reached some stability. If it takes too long to activate the regions, you can either lower parameter copf_stability, which is the threshold for assessing when copf frequencies can be considered stable, or lower one of the parameters copfon_frames and copfon_secs, which allow to specify the number of consecutive frames (or seconds) during which the estimator of copf frequencies has to be below copf_stability

threshold.

The regions identified by the agent are too large

The two parameters controlling the size of regions are rg_threshold and min_region_size: the first is a threshold for the aggregation of two regions, while the second is the dimension (relative to the input dimension) of the smallest region that can be detected (for example, the default value of 0.001 means that the smallest region may be at least as big as one thousandth of the original image). Higher values for rg_threshold will tend to produce larger regions, while smaller values will detect regions even for small details.

Everything is working fine, but DVA is too slow. How can I get some rough results more quickly?

DVA makes many computations for each frame, and many parameters affect this computational cost. In order to obtain some results more quickly, one can act on several parameters (although this may produce worse results in terms of scene understanding): you can decide to use larger threshold for xi_tol (therefore having fewer ξ elements stored in memory, and hence faster exhaustive searches), fewer features (then lower the d parameter), fewer scales and rotations to be tested (then lower sigma_gridsize and angle1_gridsize, or even fewer layers and categories.

How can I understand whether the spatio-temporal manifold regularization has having effect on SCM ?

In the log file, a row containing the lettering Avg connections per-node on Laplacians indicates how many edges per-node are present in both the spatial and the temporal Laplacians. A value of 0 there would indicate that the Laplacians are emtpy, and the manifold regularization is having no effect: in that case, the two parameters dog_lap_prune and dog_lapo_prune have to be lowered accordingly.

How can I understand from the log file when I can start giving supervisions?

You can start giving supervisions as soon as the copf have become stable, so that the region-growing algorithm is performed, and the DOG is started being filled.

How many threads is DVA using? It seems it is using more threads than the ones I have specified with -pthreads option

DVA follows a complex policy for splitting the computation among different threads. The number of threads specified by the -pthreads option indicates how many threads can be used for the forward computation of the network: for the MEE and SCM learning phase, DVA instantiate separate asyncrhonous threads which synchronize with the network every sync_frames frames.

A List of all available parameters

The exhaustive list of all the available parameters within DVA software is quite extensive. We report in Table 1 the list of all options proper of the deep architecture, while Table 2 contains all options which can be set for layers.

B Reading model binary files

The dva executable allows to read those binary files which are produced during the execution of the program. This is the syntax:

```
dva -print_bin <double|...|uchar> <bin data file>
```

where
 sin data file> is the input file to be read, which has to be preceded by the type of data it contains. For example, feature maps S are float, so the command for reading a feature map file is the following:

dva -print_bin float output/S/layer_0/cat_0/000005/S_0252.bin

Parameter	Meaning	Range	Default
w	Width sampling of the video (in pixels)		-1
h	Height sampling of the video (in pixels)		-1
framerate	Frame rate to be adopted		-1
frame_min	Starting frame		-1
frame_max	Ending frame		-1 -1
sec_min	Starting second		-1
sec_max repeat	Ending second Number of repetitions of the video		1
num layers	Number of layers		2
keyframe secs	Seconds every which a keyframe is computed		-1
keyframe frames	Frames every which a keyframe is computed		200
savemod secs	Seconds every which the model is saved		-1
savemod frames	Frames every which the model is saved		5
sync secs	Number of seconds every which MEE and SCM are synchronized		-1
sync frames	Number of frames every which MEE and SCM are synchronized		200
saveout secs	Seconds every which the output is saved		-1
saveout_frames	Frames every which the output is saved		1
sortdata_secs	Seconds every which data in Q are sorted		60
sortdata_frames	Frames every which data in Q are sorted		-1
threads	Number of threads to be used		1
layerpipe	Process layers in a parallel pipeline		0
layerpar	Process categories in parallel		0
mem	MB of memory given available to DVA	[0.1]	512
rg_threshold	Threshold for the region growing algorithm: larger values produce larger regions	[0,1]	0.005
rg_layers	Number of region-growing layers		5.0
rg_scaler min region size	Scaler factor to be used within the hierarchical construction of regions Minimum size of regions, as a percentage of the input	[0,1]	0.002
copf lambda	Regularizer for the copf optimization problem	[0,1]	0.002
copf rho	Parameter adjusting the impact of copf on the similarity score, wrt color	[0,1]	0.1
copfdesc rho	Parameter adjusting the impact of copf on the descriptor, wrt color	[0,1]	0.5
copf stability	Threshold for accepting stability on copf frequency matrix	[~,-]	1e-3
copfon frames	Frames of invariance to be waited before assessing copf stability		10
copfon secs	Seconds of invariance to be waited before assessing copf stability		-1
of rho	Parameter adjusting the impact of optical flow on the similarity score		0.001
dog tol	Radius of the ball surrounding ξ samples, for duplicate matching		0.2
dog_ms_budget	Time (in ms) to be spent by DOG for processing a single frame		-1
dog_lap_sigma	Sigma of the spatial Laplacian		0.4
dog_lap_prune	Threshold for adding an edge in the spatial Laplacian		0.9
dog_lapo_prune	Threshold for adding an edge in the temporal Laplacian		0.01
dog_max_nodes	Maximum number of nodes to be stored within the DOG		3000
scm_kernelparam	Kernel parameter within the rbf kernel in SCM		0.4
scm_bias	Bias in SCM		-1 1e-3
scm_lambda scm lap lambda	Regularization parameter in SCM Regularization parameter for the spatial and temporal Laplacian terms in SCM		1e-3
scm lap alpha	Balancing parameter between temporal (0) and spatial (1) Laplacian terms in SCM	[0,1]	0.5
scm_nap_aipna scm_maxiter	Max number of SCM iterations per frame	[0,1]	50
scm mingradnorm	Minimum gradient norm to stop SCM optimization		1e-6
scm cg	Whether to use conjugate gradient in SCM	0/1	1
cat max xis	Maximum number of ξ elements to be stored in Q for each category	- / =	2000
cat max frame xis	Maximum number of ξ elements to be added to Q at each frame		-1
copf descriptor	Whether to use hierarchical features (0) or copf (1) for the descriptor	{0,1}	0
transf unrolling	Whether to expand the vector of features with transformation information	$\{0,1\}$	1
stride	Stride to be employed for pooling between two layers (1 means no pooling)		2
tweak_input	Prepare input to the first layer by using greyscale levels		gray
framediff	Threshold to be used to state whether two consecutive frames are different		0.005
gw	Gaussian approximation (2 or 3 in $3\mu\sigma$)	{2,3}	3
max_kw	Maximum width (horizontal) of a not-approximated (spatial) Gaussian kernel		21
nipals_samples	Samples to be used by nipals to extract principal components	_	123
nipals_frames	Number of frames for the duration of the nipals algorithm	0 /3	200
scm_exact_ls	Whether to use exact line search in SCM	0/1	1
scm_lr	Starting learning rate for approximate line search		0.01
scm_lrinc	Learning rate percentage increment for approximate line search		1.2 0.5
scm_lrdec scm_lrmin	Learning rate percentage decrement for approximate line search Minimum learning rate for approximate line search		1e-20
scm_lrmin	Maximum learning rate for approximate line search		1e-20 1e+5
dog split	Number of splits into which divide DOG nodes (to speed up computation)		-1
dog_spint	Threshold on DOG hits for asking a supervision: it is a percentage of the total number of nodes		0.05
dog_ask_mts	Minimum number of supervisions per function to avoid request		5
dog_ask_frames	Frames to be waited before asking a supervision (on DVA initiative)		-1
dog ask secs	Seconds to be waited before asking a supervision (on DVA initiative)		60
dog rem hits	Threshold on DOG hits for removing a node: it is a percentage of the total number of nodes		0.01
dog rem frames	Frames to be waited before removing a node in the DOG		-1
			1
dog_rem_secs palette dim	Seconds to be waited before removing a node in the DOG Number of colors in the palette (should be a cube of an integer number)	{1,8,27,64,125}	60 -1

Table 1: Summary of Deep Networks parameters. Bottom: rarely used parameters.

Parameter	Meaning	Range	Default
С	Number of spatial (non-temporal) categories		1
ct	Number of temporal categories		0
$^{\mathrm{d}}$	Number of features (to be split into the categories)		50
di	Number of dimensions into which features are projected		3
mu min	Minimum blurring		-1
mu max	Maximum blurring		-1
blur secs	Blurring duration in seconds		-1
blur frames	Blurring duration in frames		200
sigma min	Minimum value for scale		1 or 2
sigma max	Maximum value for scale		4
sigma gridsize	Number of elements in the scale grid		3
mut min	Minimum temporal blurring		-1
mut max	Maximum temporal blurring		-1
blurt secs	Temporal blurring duration in seconds		-1
blurt frames	Temporal blurring duration in frames		200
sigmat min	Minimum value for temporal scale (in seconds)		-1
sigmat max	Maximum value for temporal scale (in seconds)		2
sigmat gridsize	Number of elements in the temporal scale grid		5
angle1 gridsize	Number of elements into which the in-plane rotation angle is split	{ 4, 8, 16, 32 }	8
angle2 gridsize	Number of elements into which the tilt angle is split	(-, -,,)	ı i
angle2 max	Max value for the tilt angle		60
angle3 delta	Delta interval for angle3 computation		100
xk gridsize	Width of the receptive field		25
xkt gridsize	Width of the temporal receptive field		3
lambda	Regularization parameter for MEE		0.001
eta	Balancing parameters for MEE between conditional and global entropies	[0,1]	0.7
lr	Initial learning rate for MEE	[0,2]	0.001
lrinc	Percentage increment of learning rate for MEE		1.2
lrdec	Percentage decrement of learning rate for MEE		0.5
m0 min	Minimum initialization value for m parameters in MEE		-0.1
m0 max	Maximum initialization value for m parameters in MEE		0.1
xi tol	Threshold for storing ξ elements (the lower, the larger will be Q)		0.25
xit tol	The shold for storing temporal ξ elements (the lower, the larger will be Qt)		1.0
axi tol	Threshold for storing ξ elements (the lower, the larger win be $\xi(t)$)		-1
axit tol	Threshold for storing temporal ξ elements (expressed as an angle)		-1
const tol	Threshold for standard deviation, under which a spatial ℓ is considered to be constant		0.01
constt tol	Threshold for standard deviation, under which a temporal ξ is considered to be constant		0.02
track maxdisp	Maximum displacement between pixels that is tracked by optical flow		-1
track_minratio	Minimum ratio between dot-products of pixel-to-field association during optical flow tracking		0.9
pivots	Number of pivots to be used for spherical nearest neighbor		-1
ms budget	Time (in ms) to be spent for processing a single frame		-1 -1
kernel	Kernel function for MEE	{ linear, rbf, poly }	linear
kernelparam	Kernel parameter for MEE (q for rbf, d for poly)	t innear, rbi, poly	0.5
maxiter	Maximum number of iterations per frame for MEE		1000
mingradnorm	Minimum gradient norm to stop gradient descent in MEE		1000 1e-6
qsplit	Number of splits for Q set		-1
qspiit tsplit	Number of splits for transformations set		-1 -1
ьърпь	Number of spitts for transformations set		-1

Table 2: Summary of Layer parameters.