

[2] Lemma Two: differentiating $\text{quantize}_k(r_{i_t})$ yields 1 under condition of Expectation of a Straight-Through Estimator.

Chromium OSX

<https://github.com/ppwwyyxx/tensorpack/issues/31#issuecomment-254919972>

- (1) Given $\text{quantize}_k(r_{i_t}) = (1 / (2^k - 1)) * \text{round}((2^k - 1)r_{i_t})$.
- (2) Consider $\sim\text{quantize}_k(r_{i_t}) := (1 / (2^k - 1)) * ((2^k - 1)r_{i_t}) = r_{i_t}$.
- (3) $\sim\text{quantize}'_k(r_{i_t}) = 1$.
- (4) Observation: in the absence of a $\text{round}()$ function the two scale factors cancel and the derivative is 1. Can we make the $\text{round}()$ function "disappear" in some justified fashion?
- (5) Note that the $\text{round}(r_{i_t})$ function adds some number $n \in [-0.5, 0.5]$ to r_{i_t} to round r_{i_t} to the nearest integer.
- (6) If $n = 0$, then $\text{quantize}'_k(r_{i_t}) = \sim\text{quantize}'_k(r_{i_t}) = 1$.
- (7) if $n \neq 0$, then our outer scale factor of $1/(2^k - 1)$ is technically multiplying the result of $(2^k - 1)(r_{i_t} + n)$, and thus the scale factors do not cancel.
- (8) Note that the probability of $n \neq 0$ is low, and so any individual call to $\text{quantize}_k()$ is unlikely to result in a case where we can ignore the $\text{round}()$ function.
- (8) However, under assumption that n is drawn uniformly and at random from $[-0.5, 0.5]$, the expectation $E(n) = 0$.
- (9) \therefore under expectation $E(n) = 0$, $\text{quantize}'_k(r_{i_t}) = \sim\text{quantize}'_k(r_{i_t}) = 1$.

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Firefox 49.0.2 OSX

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