

A Walk Along Models for Count Data in Microbial Ecology



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joint work with Julien Chiquet and Stéphane Robin



Shandong University Summer School, Weihai, 2021, July 20-23



Julien Chiquet, M.M., Stéphane Robin,
Variational inference for probabilistic Poisson PCA
<http://doi.org/10.1214/18-AQAS1177> (*Annals of Applied Statistics*, 2019)



Julien Chiquet, M.M., Stéphane Robin,
Variational inference for network inference with count data
<http://proceedings.mlr.press/v97/chiquet19a/chiquet19a.pdf> (*ICML19*)



Julien Chiquet, M.M., Stéphane Robin,
The Poisson-lognormal model as a versatile framework for the joint analysis of species abundances
<http://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2021.588292> (*Frontiers in Ecol. and Evol.*, 2021)



PLNmodels package, development version on github
`devtools::install_github("pln-team/PLNmodels", build_vignettes=TRUE)`
<https://pln-team.github.io/PLNmodels/>



- 1 Tentative Syllabi
- 2 Motivation
- 3 Multinomial Models
- 4 Log-Normal Models
- 5 Applications

Multivariate models

- L1:** Overview of the concepts
- L2:** Review of multivariate models based on multinomial distributions
- L3:** Review of other multivariate count models
- L4:** Log-normal models: MLN and PLN

PLN models

- L5:** Estimation in the PLN model
- L6:** PLN-PCA for dimension reduction
- L7:** PLN-LDA and PLNmixture for classification and clustering
- L8:** PLNnetwork for network inference

Outline

- 1 Tentative Syllabi
- 2 Motivation**
- 3 Multinomial Models
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Data from [MBE⁺15].

- $n = 155$ samples (= 31 piglets at 5 times)
- $p = 1038$ bacterial species (OTUs) with prevalence ≥ 0.05
- Some covariates (sex, sire, etc)
- Offsets: $o_i =$ offset for sample i (sequencing depth)



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Aim: Study impact of **weaning** on gut microbiota

A look at the data

Metabarcoding data from [MBE⁺15]

- **count** matrix with $n = 155$ piglets, $p = 1038$ species

```
mach_counts[1:2, c(3, 9, 12, 15)]  
##           5982 347 349 5854  
## SF0901    0 23  3  0  
## SF0902    8  0  4  0
```

- $d = 8$ **covariates** (sex, mother, weaning status, ...)

```
mach_covariates[1:2, ]  
##           Run Project Time Bande sex           mere Weaned  
## SF0901    3 Kinetic  D14  1105  1 17MAG101814  TRUE  
## SF0902    3 Kinetic  D36  1105  1 17MAG101814  FALSE
```

- **Sampling effort** in each sample

```
mach_offsets[1:2, c(1:4, 48:51)]  
##           16342  164 5982 5980 10413 6307 8949  346  
## SF0901    3084 3084 3084 3084  3084 3084 3084 3084  
## SF0902    2182 2182 2182 2182  2182 2182 2182 2182
```




Data from [JFS⁺16].

- $n = 116$ oak leaves = samples
- $p = 114$ microbial species
 - $p_1 = 66$ bacterial species (OTUs, based on the 16S)
 - $p_2 = 48$ fungal species (OTUs, based on the ITS)
- covariates: tree (resistant, intermediate, susceptible), height, distance to trunk, ...
- offsets: $o_{i1} \neq o_{i2}$ = offset for bacteria, fungi



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```
offsets[1:2, c(1:4, 48:51)]  
##      f_1  f_2  f_3  f_4 E_alphitoides b_1045 b_109 b_1093  
## [1,] 2488 2488 2488 2488          2488  8315  8315  8315  
## [2,] 2054 2054 2054 2054          2054   662   662   662
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```

Aim. Understand the interaction between the species, including the oak mildew pathogene *E. alphitoides*.

Data tables: $\mathbf{Y} = (Y_{ij}), n \times p$; $\mathbf{X} = (X_{ik}), n \times d$; $\mathbf{O} = (O_{ij}), n \times p$

- Y_{ij} = abundance (read counts) of species j in sample i
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Need for multivariate analysis to help deciphering the ecosystem

- exhibit **patterns of diversity**
↪ summarize the information from \mathbf{Y} (PCA, clustering, ...)
- understand **between-species interactions**
↪ 'Network' inference (variable/covariance selection)
- correct for technical and **confounding effects**
↪ account for covariables and sampling effort

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↪ need a generic framework to **model dependencies between count variables**

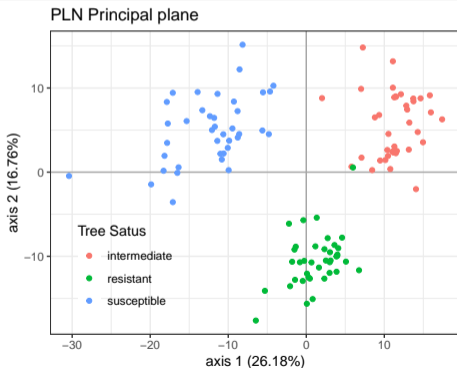
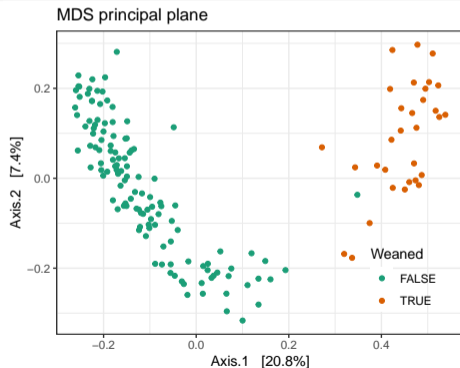
- 1 Apply your favorite **distance** (Jaccard, Bray-Curtis, UniFrac, weighted UniFrac, etc)

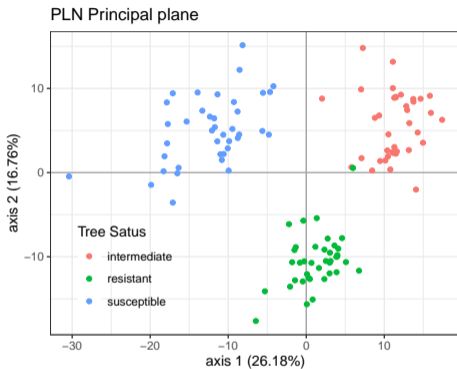
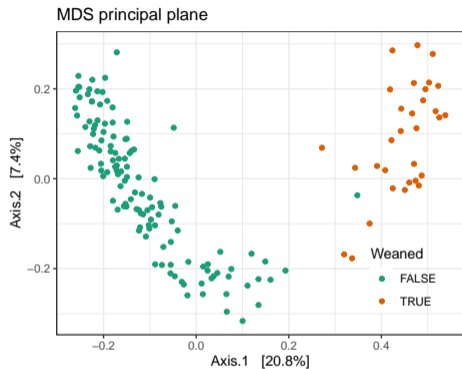
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Microbial Ecology 101

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- 3 Plot resulting *graph*
- 4 *Et voilà!*





- 1 Perfect for **finding** structure...
- 2 But not for **modeling** it

What kind of generic models?

What kind of generic framework for multivariate count data?

What kind of generic models?



My Wish List to Santa

We want a family of **generative** models that are:

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- **Flexible** enough to:
 - model average communities;
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- **interpretable**;
- **fast and easy** to fit to data;
- **good fits** to data (e.g. simulate **realistic** samples).

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 - Multinomial
 - Mixture of Multinomials
 - (Mixture of) Dirichlet-Multinomial
 - Latent Dirichlet Allocation
- 4 Log-Normal Models
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3 **Multinomial Models**

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Intuition

- There are p species with proportions $\boldsymbol{\pi} = (\pi_1, \dots, \pi_p)$ in the species
- You pick N (sequencing depths) individuals with replacement

Multinomial Models

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Mathematical Model

$$\mathbf{Y} \sim \mathcal{M}(N, \boldsymbol{\pi})$$

Multinomial Models

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Mathematical Model

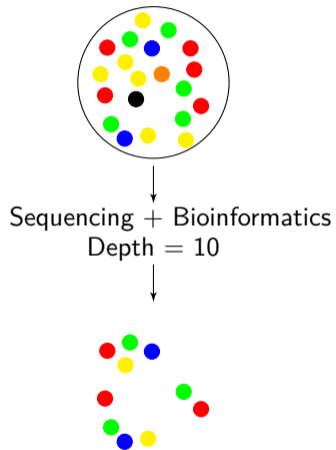
$$\mathbf{Y} \sim \mathcal{M}(N, \boldsymbol{\pi})$$

Inference is easy

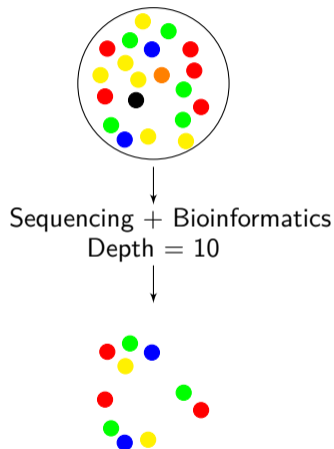
$$\hat{\pi}_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Y_{ij}}{\sum_{i=1}^n N_i}$$

with Y_{ij} the abundance of species j in sample i and N_i the depth of sample i .

Multinomial distribution: draw balls (with replacement) from a box

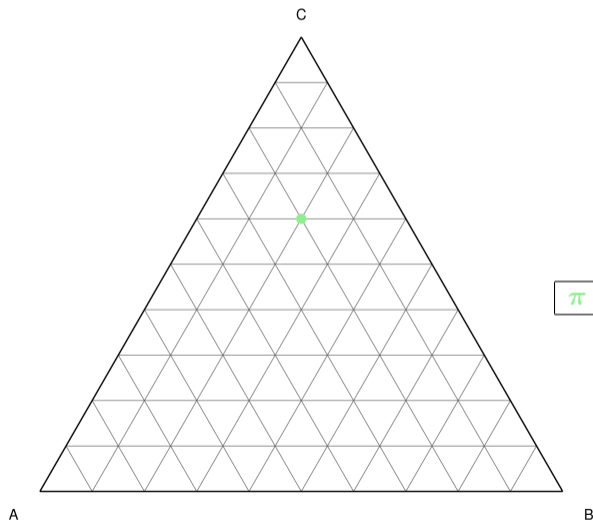


Multinomial distribution: draw balls (with replacement) from a box



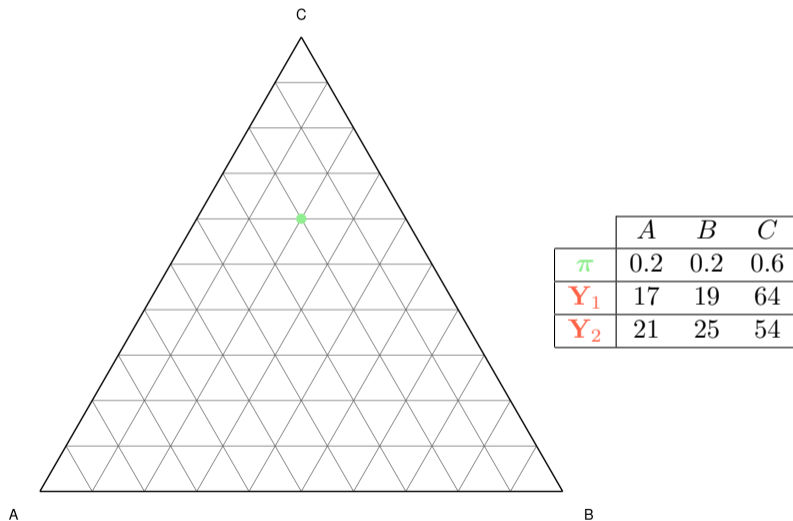
	●	●	●	●	●	●
Prop.	0.25	0.30	0.25	0.05	0.10	0.05
Counts	3	2	3	0	2	0
Obs. Prop.	0.3	0.2	0.3	0	0.2	0

Multinomial Model

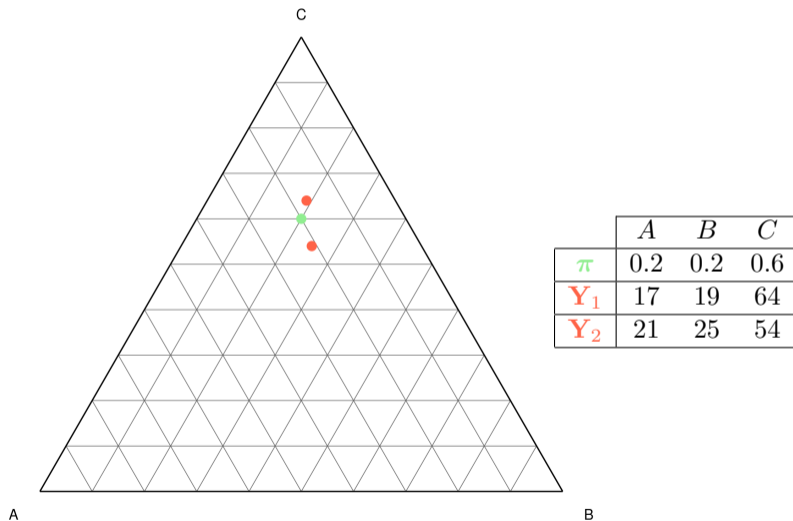


	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>
π	0.2	0.2	0.6

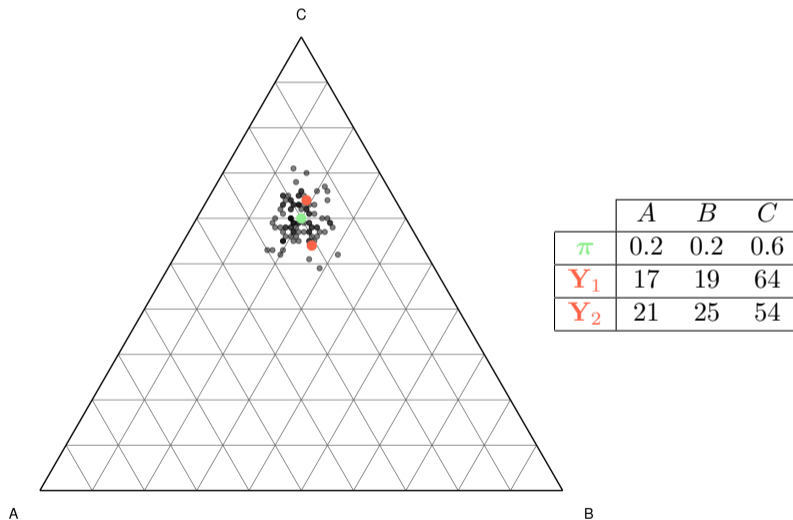
Multinomial Model



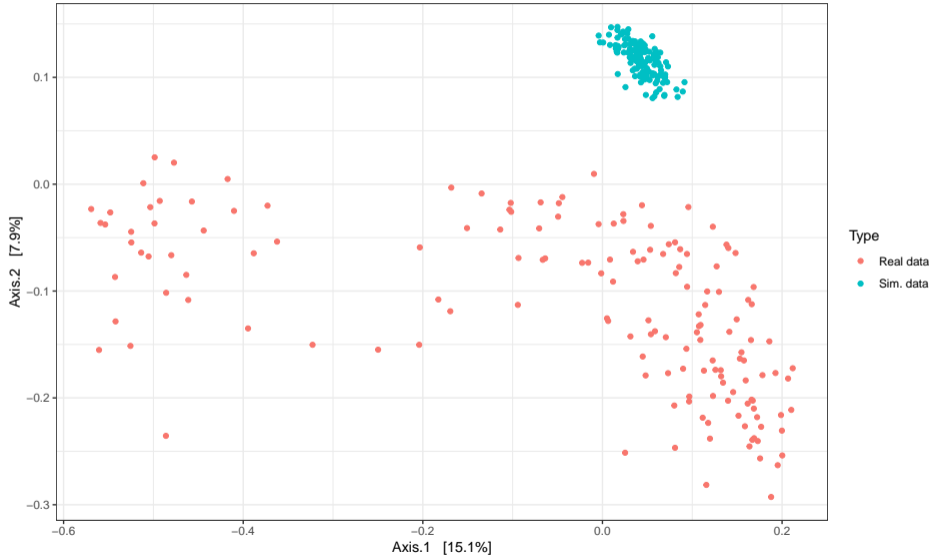
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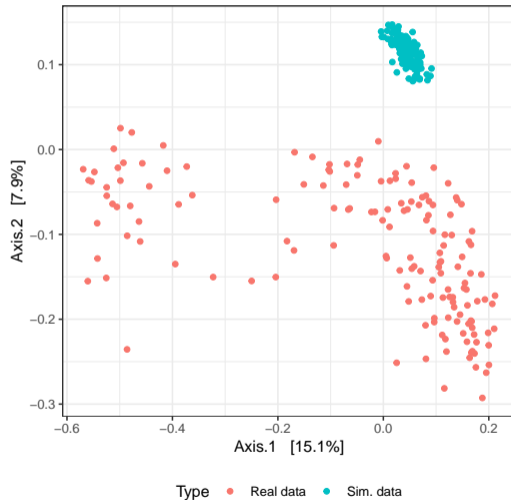


Example of Multinomial Model



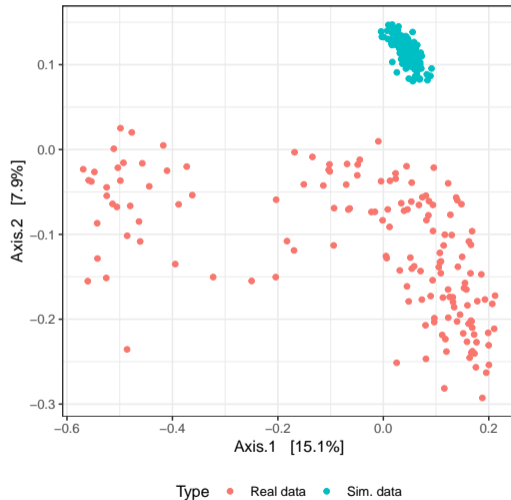
Heterogeneity

- Lack of heterogeneity



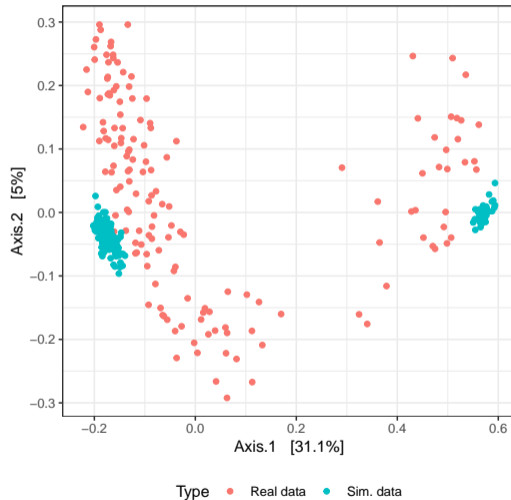
Heterogeneity

- Lack of heterogeneity
↳ Fit only part of the data



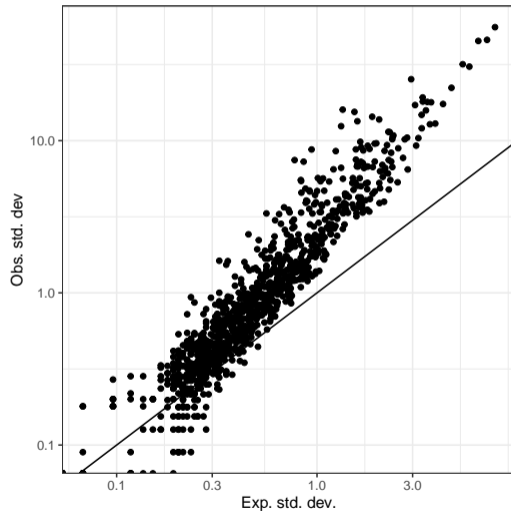
Heterogeneity

- Lack of heterogeneity
 ~> Fit only part of the data
- Lack of variance



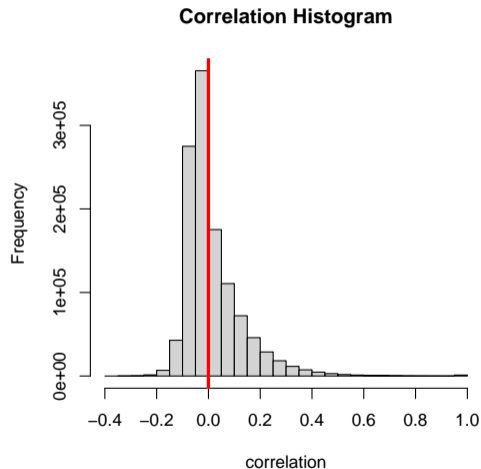
Heterogeneity

- Lack of heterogeneity
↪ Fit only part of the data
- Lack of variance
- Small dispersion



Heterogeneity

- Lack of heterogeneity
 ~> Fit only part of the data
- Lack of variance
- Small dispersion
- Wrong correlations



Pros

- + Parsimonious model: $p - 1$ parameters to model p abundances
- + Easy to estimate
- + interpretable parameter

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Cons

- Bad for heterogeneity
- Bad for dispersion around average composition (\simeq biological variability)
- Bad for correlations between OTUs

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Intuition

- Each sample belongs to one of K groups
- Group k is characterized by its composition π_k
- A sample from group k has composition π_k
- Reads are sampled according to a multinomial process

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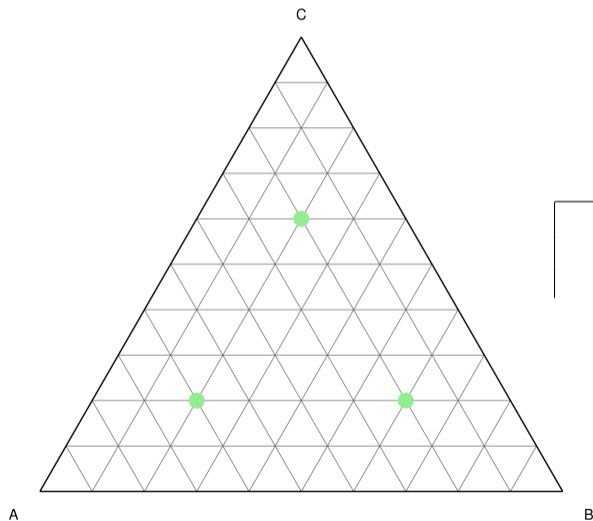
Hierarchical Model

$$Z \sim \mathcal{M}(1, \alpha)$$
$$Y|Z = k \sim \mathcal{M}(N, \pi_k)$$

where

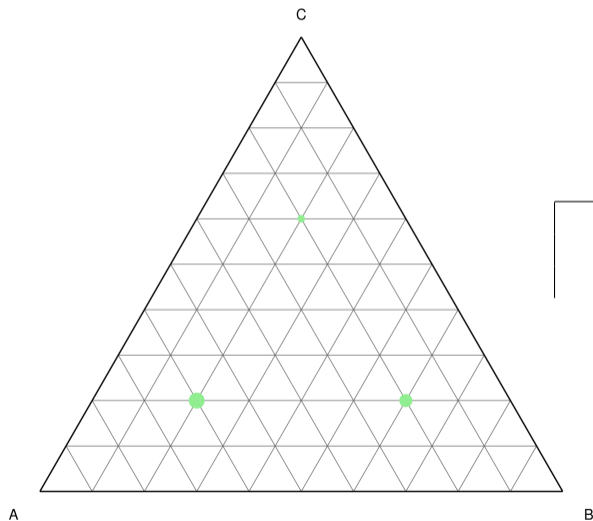
- $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_K)$ are the proportions of the K groups,

Mixture of Multinomial



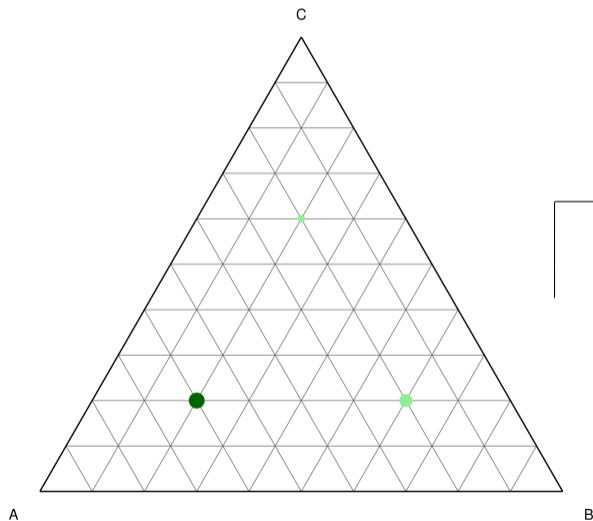
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	α
π_1	0.6	0.2	0.2	
π_2	0.2	0.6	0.2	
π_3	0.2	0.2	0.6	

Mixture of Multinomial



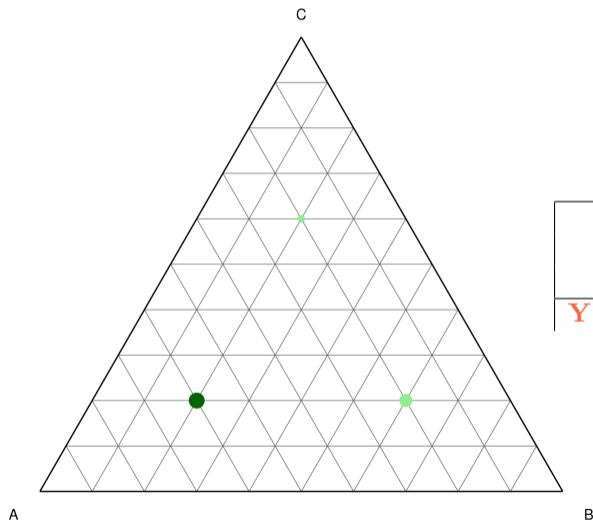
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	α
π_1	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.5
π_2	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.4
π_3	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.1

Mixture of Multinomial



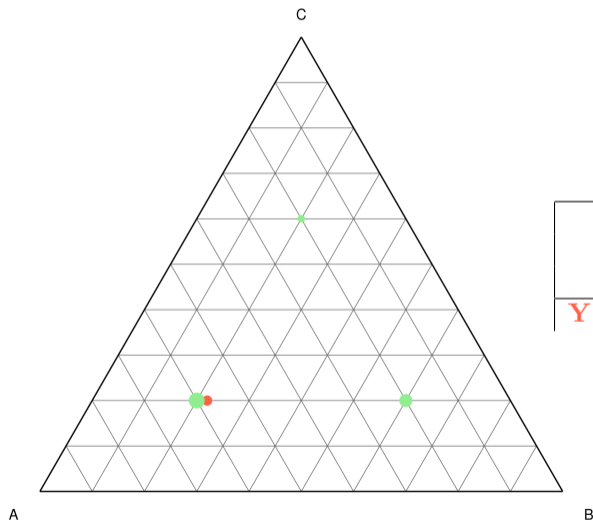
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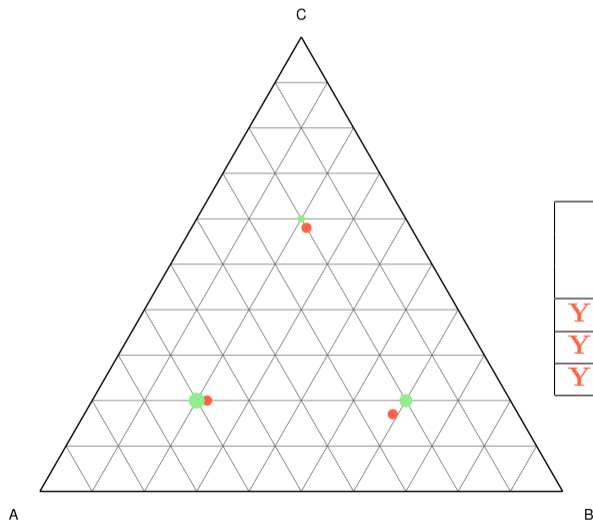
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$Y Z=1$	58	22	20	

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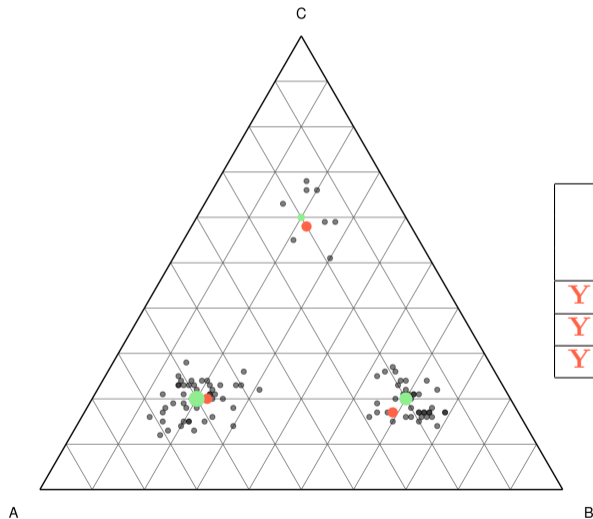
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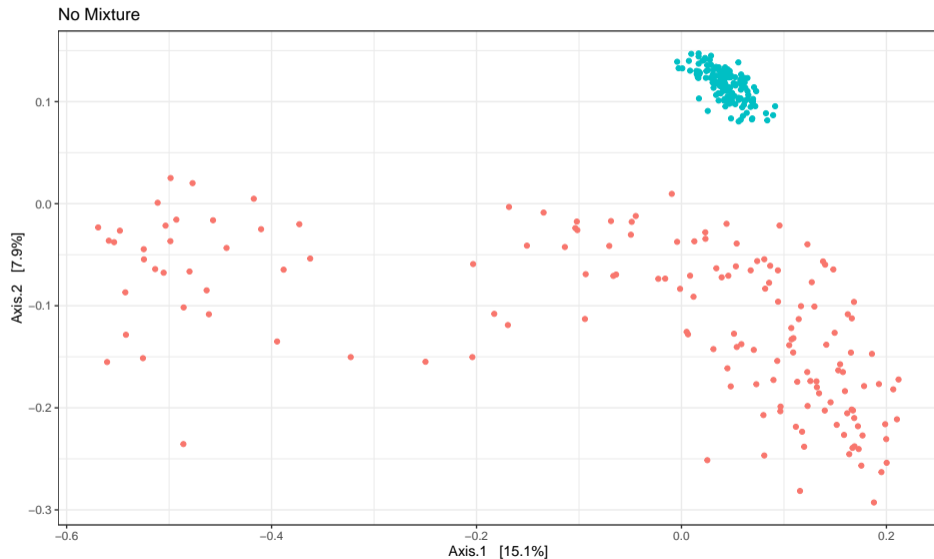
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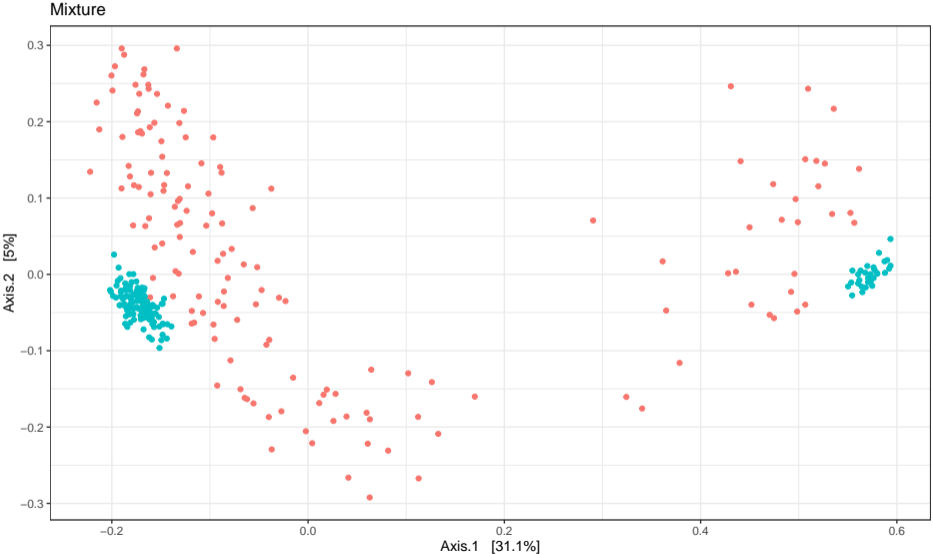


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Example of Mixture Models



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Pros

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Cons

- Inference is more involved when groups are unknown
 \rightsquigarrow iterative EM algorithm
- Bad for **dispersion**
- Bad for **correlations** between OTUs

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- N_i reads are sampled from π_i according to a multinomial \rightsquigarrow **Technical** / **Sampling** variability

Dirichlet - Multinomial

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Hierarchical Model

π	Ecosystem average composition
$\pi_i \sim \mathcal{D}(\kappa\pi)$	Sample average composition
$\mathbf{Y}_i \sim \mathcal{M}(N_i, \pi_i)$	Observed counts

where $1/\kappa$ models the **level of variability** (large $1/\kappa \rightsquigarrow$ large variability)

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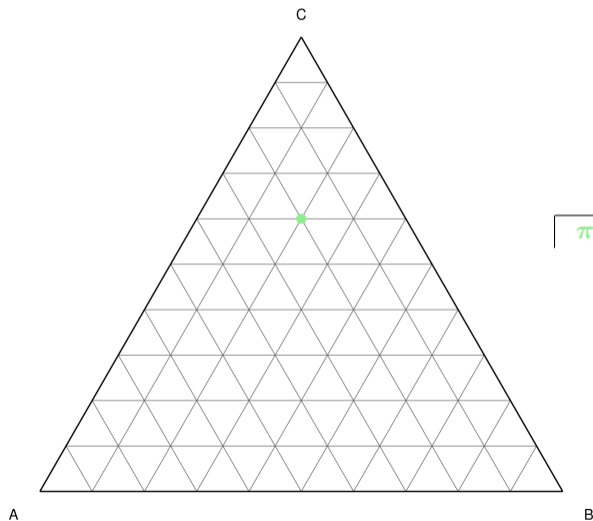
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Mixture Layer

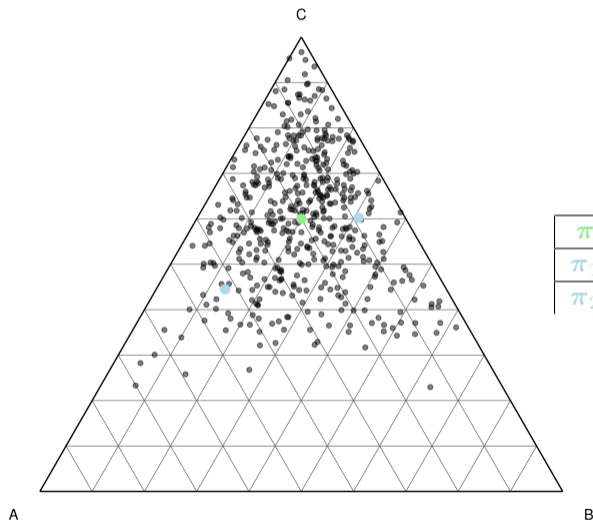
Can be **combined** with a mixture model

Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution



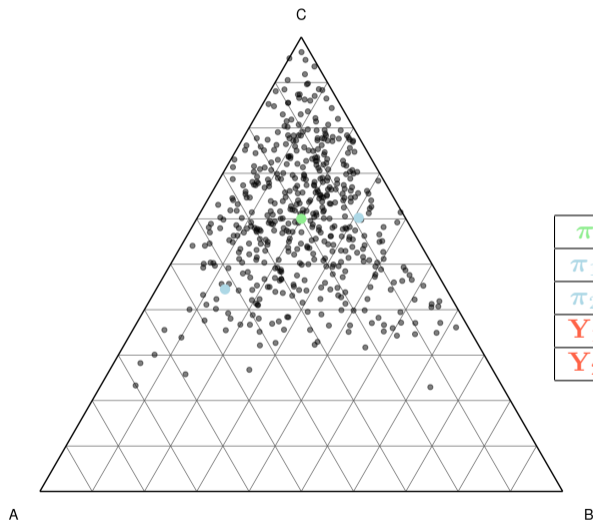
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π	0.2	0.2	0.6

Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution



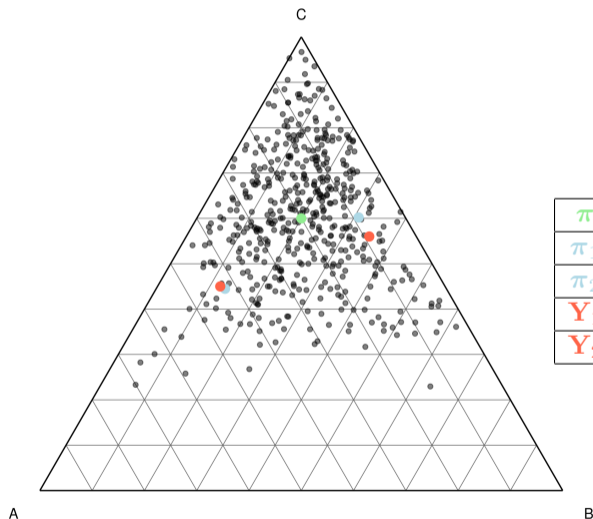
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π_1	0.089	0.309	0.602
π_2	0.423	0.132	0.445

Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution



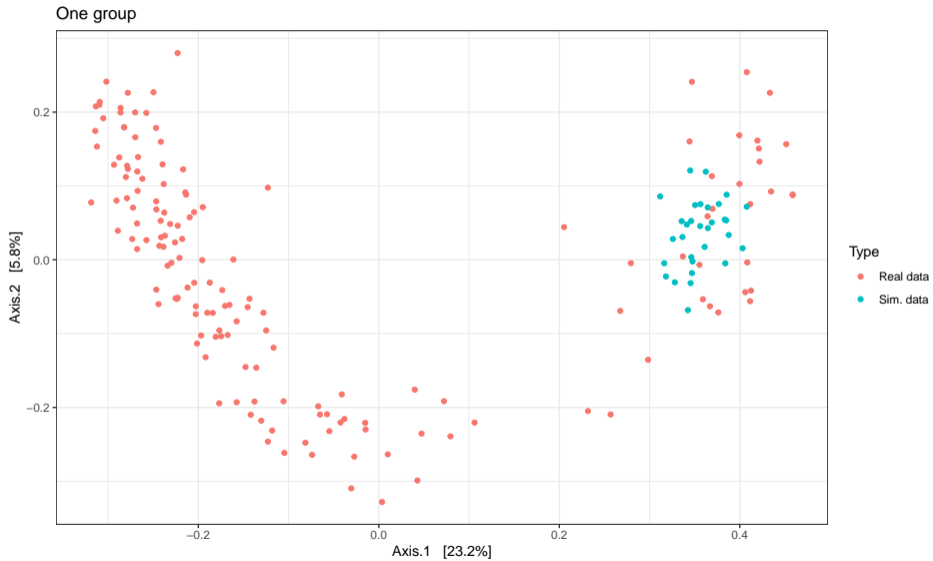
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Y_1	9	35	56
Y_2	43	12	45

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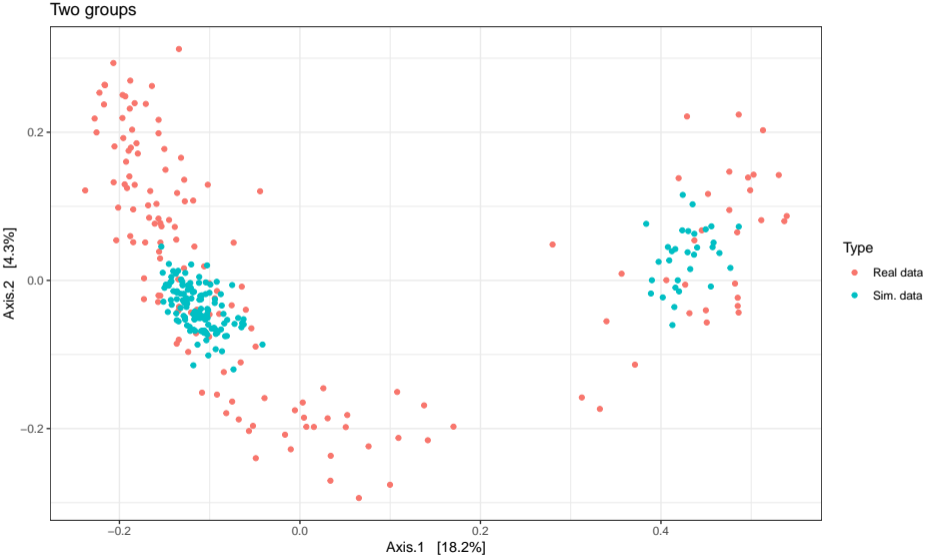


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Example of Dirichlet-Multinomial



Example of Dirichlet-Multinomial (Cont'd)



Pros

- + Good for **heterogeneity**
- + So-so of OK for **dispersion**
- + **Parcimonious**: $K(p + 1) - 1$ parameters for K groups

Pros

- + Good for **heterogeneity**
- + So-so of OK for **dispersion**
- + **Parcimonious**: $K(p + 1) - 1$ parameters for K groups

Cons

- **Inference** is more involved
Known groups \rightsquigarrow gradient descent
Unknown groups \rightsquigarrow Iterative EM algorithm + gradient descent
- Bad for **correlations** between OTUs

Outline

1 Tentative Syllabi

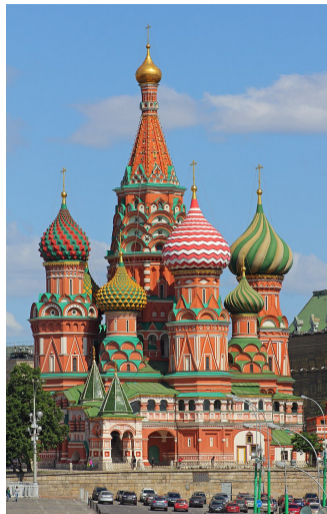
2 Motivation

3 **Multinomial Models**

- Multinomial
- Mixture of Multinomials
- (Mixture of) Dirichlet-Multinomial
- **Latent Dirichlet Allocation**

4 Log-Normal Models

5 Applications



Intuition

- There are K **archetype** ecosystems $1, \dots, K$

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- Each archetype has its own **composition** π_k

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Latent Dirichlet Allocation

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Hierarchical Model

$$\pi_1, \dots, \pi_K$$

Archetypes average compositions

$$\boldsymbol{\theta} \sim \mathcal{D}(\kappa \boldsymbol{\alpha})$$

Proportion of archetypes in sample

$$\tilde{\pi}_k \sim \mathcal{D}(\kappa_k \pi_k)$$

Noisy version of π_k

$$z_i \sim \mathcal{M}(1, \boldsymbol{\theta})$$

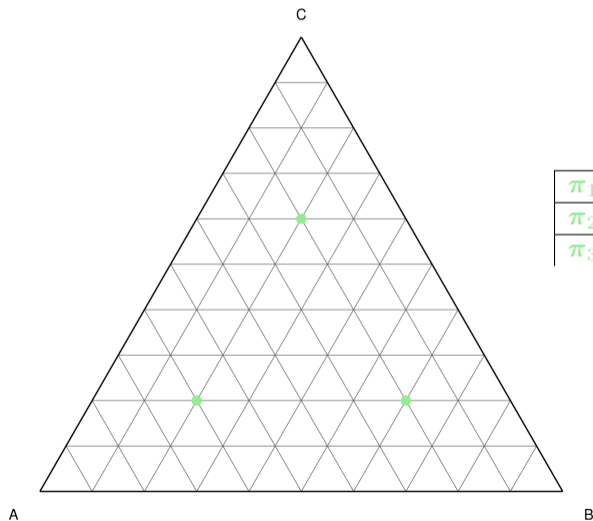
Archetype of origin of read i

$$w_i | z_i = k \sim \mathcal{M}(1, \tilde{\pi}_k)$$

OTU of read i

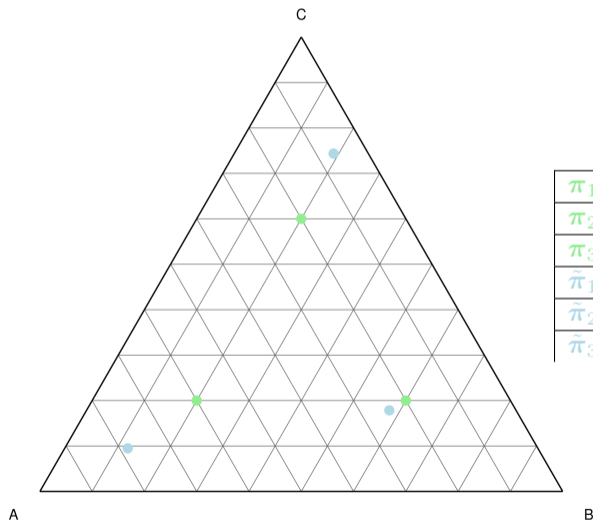
where κ and the κ_k control noise levels.

Latent Dirichlet Allocation



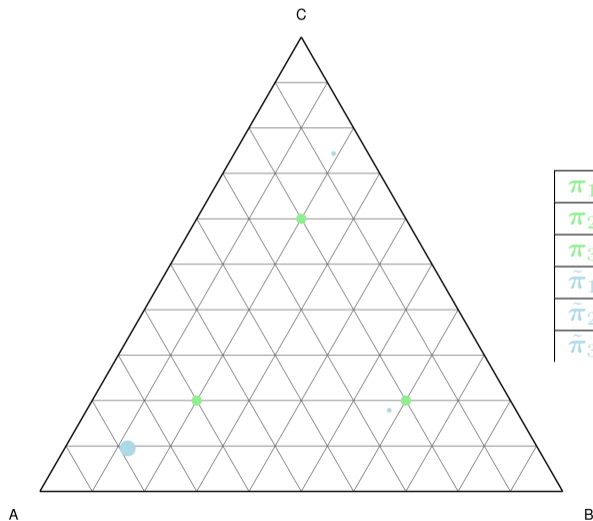
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	θ
π_1	0.6	0.2	0.2	
π_2	0.2	0.6	0.2	
π_3	0.2	0.2	0.6	

Latent Dirichlet Allocation



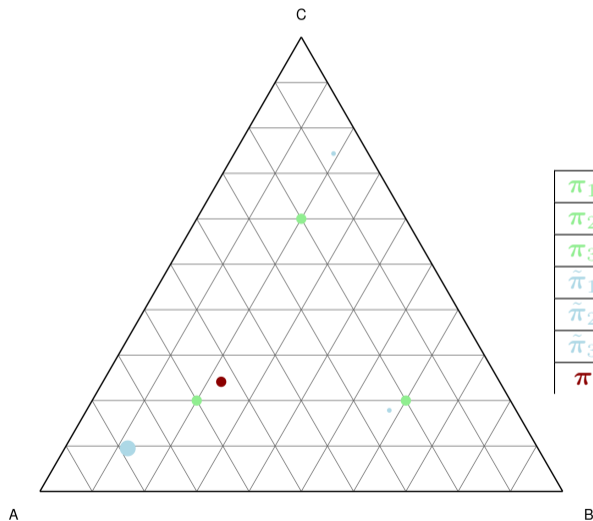
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	θ
π_1	0.6	0.2	0.2	
π_2	0.2	0.6	0.2	
π_3	0.2	0.2	0.6	
$\tilde{\pi}_1$	0.784	0.121	0.095	
$\tilde{\pi}_2$	0.242	0.579	0.179	
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Latent Dirichlet Allocation



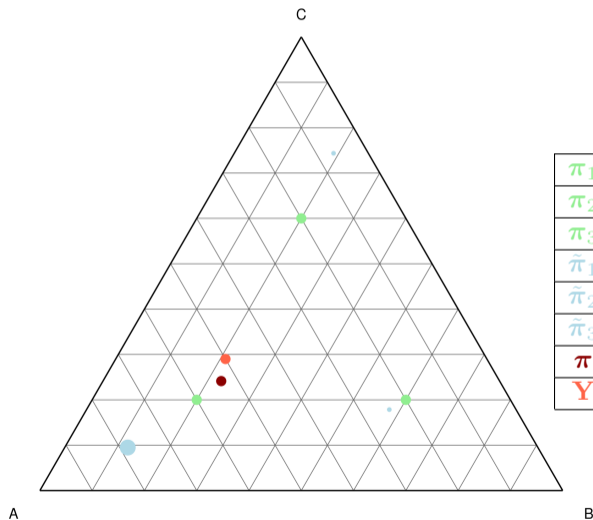
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Latent Dirichlet Allocation



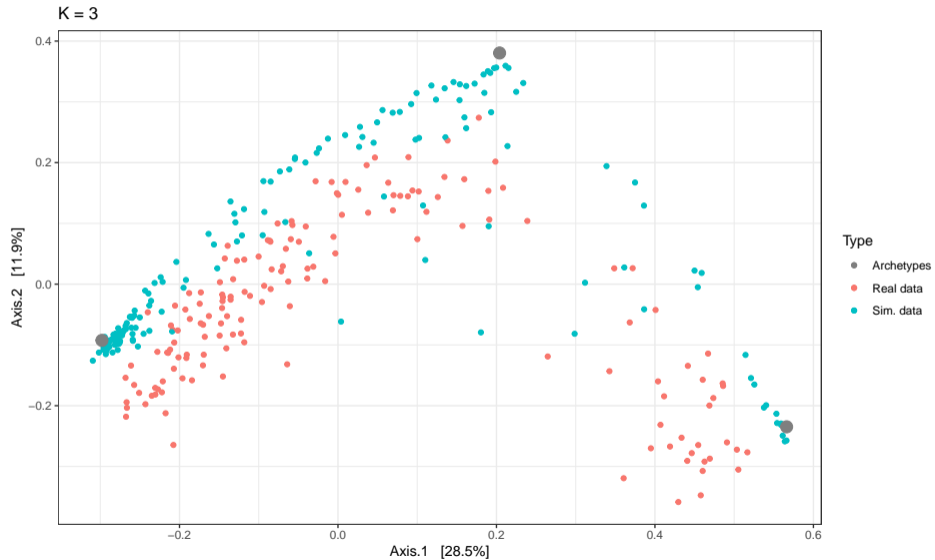
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π	0.532	0.226	0.241	

Latent Dirichlet Allocation

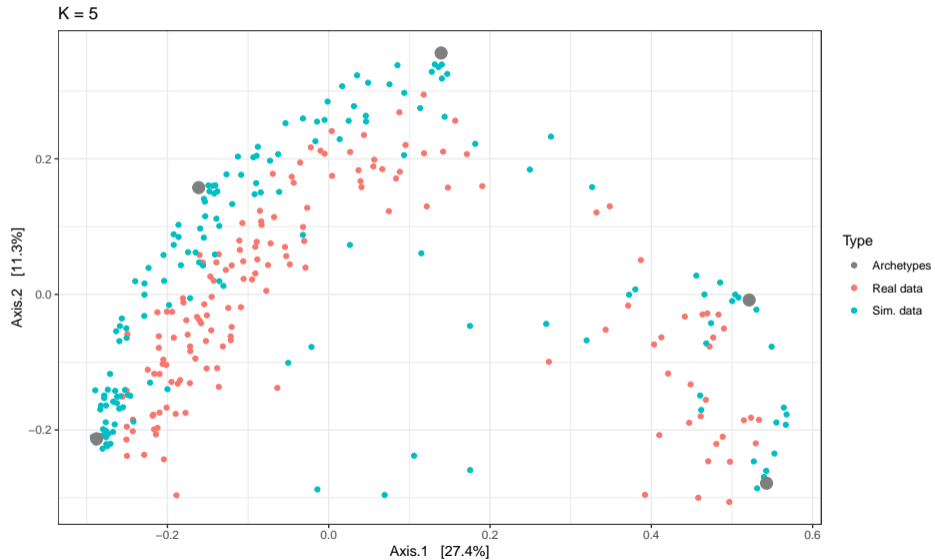


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π	0.532	0.226	0.241	
Y	54	18	28	

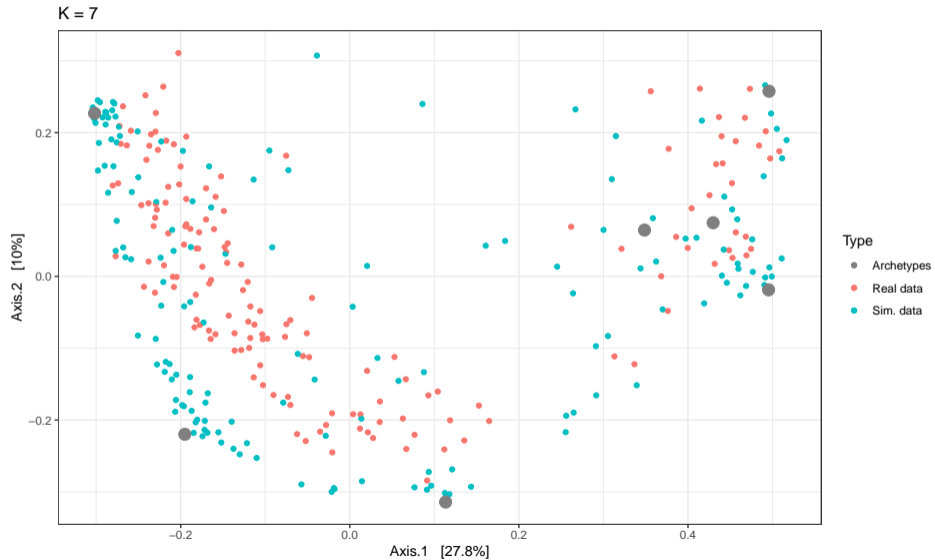
Example of Latent Dirichlet Allocation



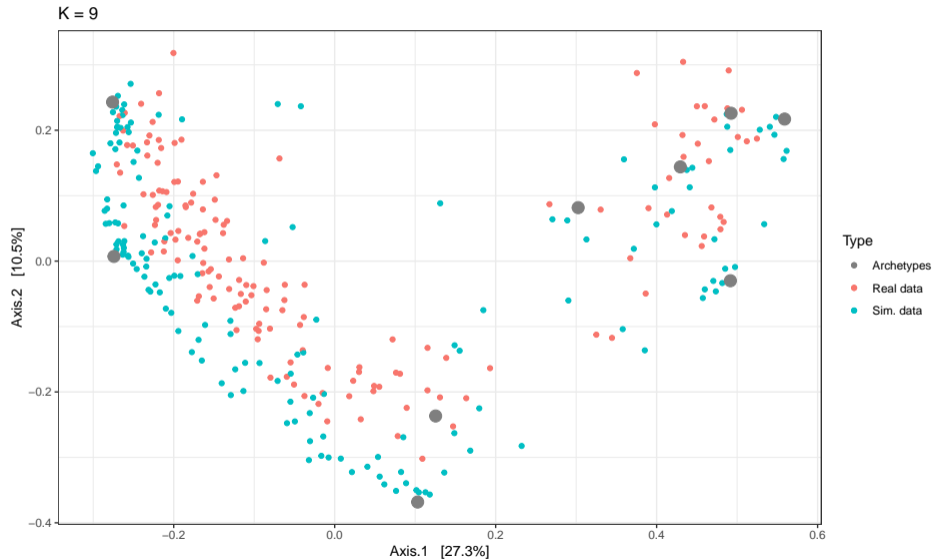
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- + Good for **heterogeneity**
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- + Good for **heterogeneity**
- + Good for **dispersion**
- + **Parcimonious**: $K(p + 1)$ parameters for K archetypes

Cons

- **Inference** is very involved
↔ gradient descent + EM algorithm / Gibbs sampling
- **Interpretation** is complex ↔ archetypes are **not groups**
- Bad for **correlations** between OTUs

Multinomial-based models are **good** at

- modeling **compositions**;
- modeling **dispersion** around average compositions;
- modeling **heterogeneity**;
- using (relatively) few parameters

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Multinomial models are **bad** at

- modeling **interactions** between covariates;
- accounting for **covariates**;
- Integrating datasets from **different sources** (e.g. 16S, ITS)

Outline

- 1 Tentative Syllabi
- 2 Motivation
- 3 Multinomial Models
- 4 Log-Normal Models**
 - Multinomial Log-Normal
 - Poisson Log-Normal
- 5 Applications

Multivariate Gaussian models are the *de facto* distribution to model correlations.

Modeling Correlations

Multivariate Gaussian models are the *de facto* distribution to model correlations.

For continuous variables

- The p variables \mathbf{Y}_i (e.g. species abundances) are explained
- by the values of the d covariates \mathbf{X}_i and the p offsets \mathbf{O}_i

$$\mathbf{Y}_i = \underbrace{\mathbf{X}_i \mathbf{B}}_{\text{accounts for covariates}} + \underbrace{\mathbf{O}_i}_{\text{accounts for sampling effort}} + \varepsilon_i, \quad \varepsilon_i \sim \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{0}_p, \underbrace{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}_{\text{dependencies between species}})$$

+ null covariance \Leftrightarrow independence \rightsquigarrow uncorrelated species do not interact

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But abundances are not gaussian...

Use a **latent variable models** with a gaussian latent layer and a count observed layer

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4 **Log-Normal Models**

- **Multinomial Log-Normal**
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Intuition

- The latent layer models so-called **basis abundances** \mathbf{z}

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Multinomial Log-Normal

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Hierarchical Model

$$\mathbf{z} \sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma})$$

Abundance basis

$$\boldsymbol{\pi} | \mathbf{z} = \left(\frac{e^{z_j}}{\sum_{j'} e^{z_{j'}}} \right)_j$$

Average composition

$$\mathbf{Y} \sim \mathcal{M}(N, \boldsymbol{\pi})$$

Observed composition

Multinomial Log-Normal

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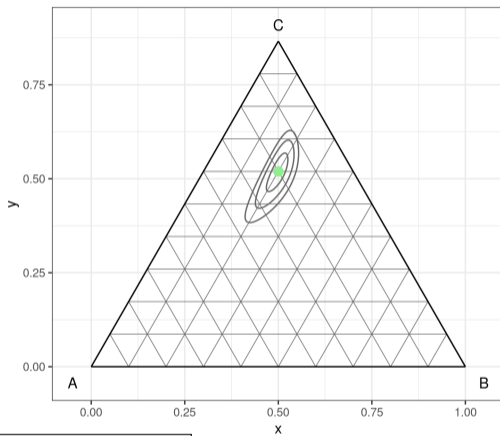
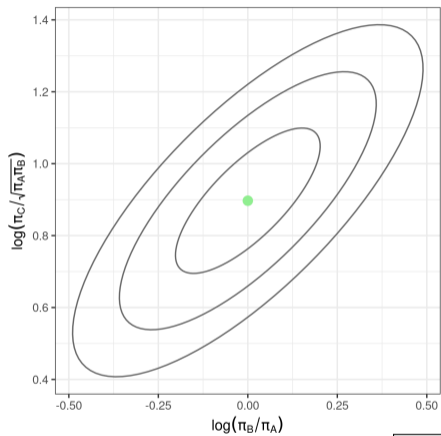
$$\mathbf{Y} \sim \mathcal{M}(N, \boldsymbol{\pi})$$

Observed composition

Mixture Layer

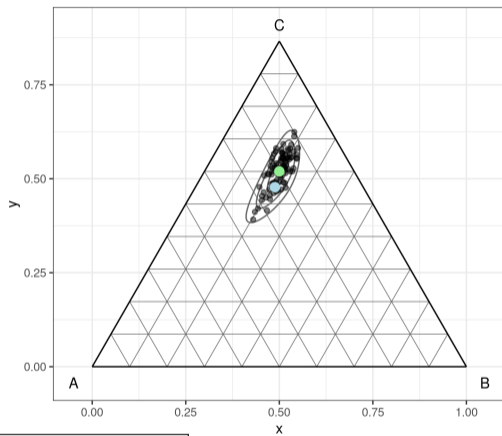
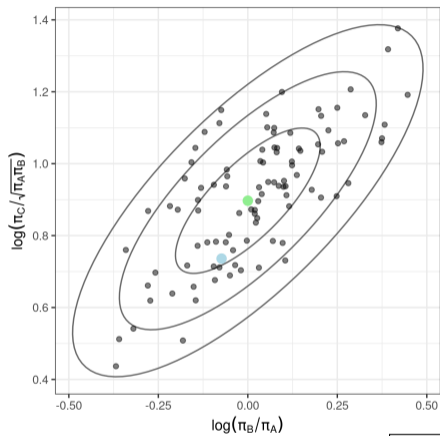
Can be combined with a mixture model

Multinomial Log-Normal



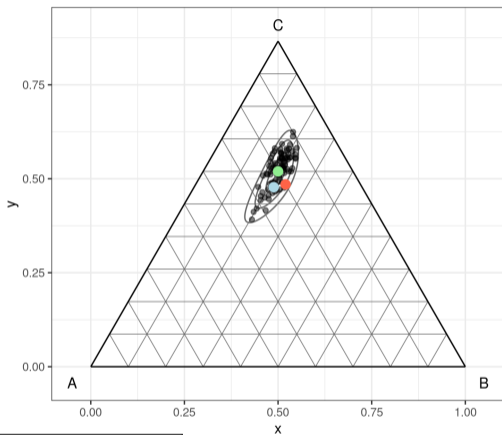
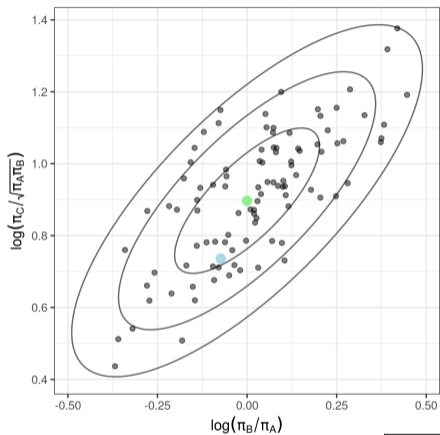
	A	B	C
π	0.2	0.2	0.6

Multinomial Log-Normal



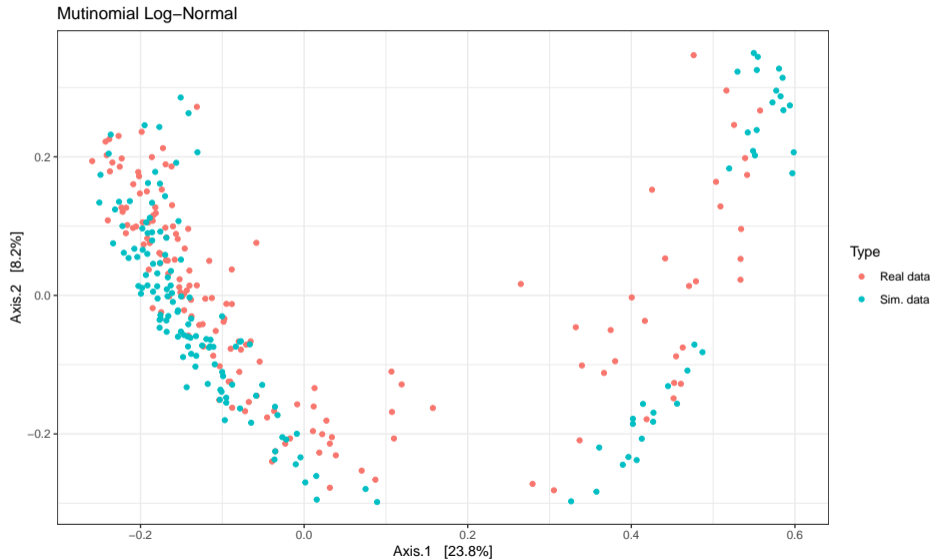
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π_1	0.235	0.213	0.552

Multinomial Log-Normal



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π	0.2	0.2	0.6
π_1	0.235	0.213	0.552
Y	20	24	56

Example of Multinomial Log-Normal



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Pros and Cons

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- The model is not **parsimonious**: $p(p + 3)/2$ parameters
- **Inference** is involved
 - ↪ iterative EM algorithm
- Modeling is done at the **proportion** level

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Hierarchical Model

$$\mathbf{z} \sim \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma})$$

$$\lambda_j | \mathbf{z} = e^{z_j}$$

$$\mathbf{Y}_j | \mathbf{z} \sim \mathcal{P}(e^{z_j})$$

Basis

Average count of species j

Observed count of species j

Poisson-log normal (PLN) distribution [AH89]

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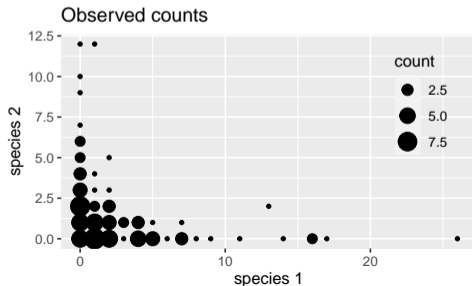
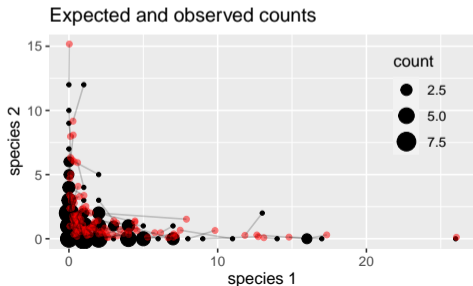
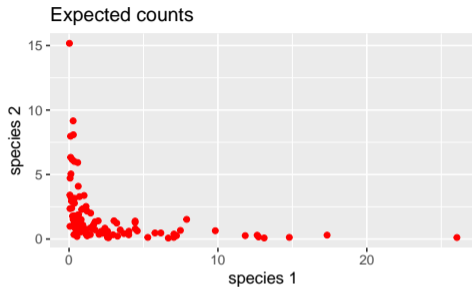
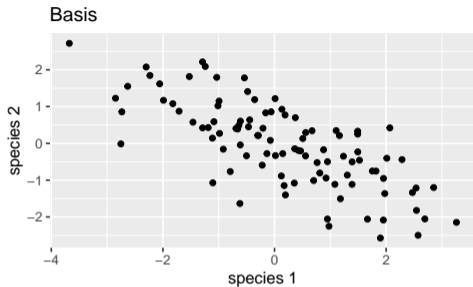
$$\mathbf{Y}_j | \mathbf{z} \sim \mathcal{P}(e^{z_j})$$

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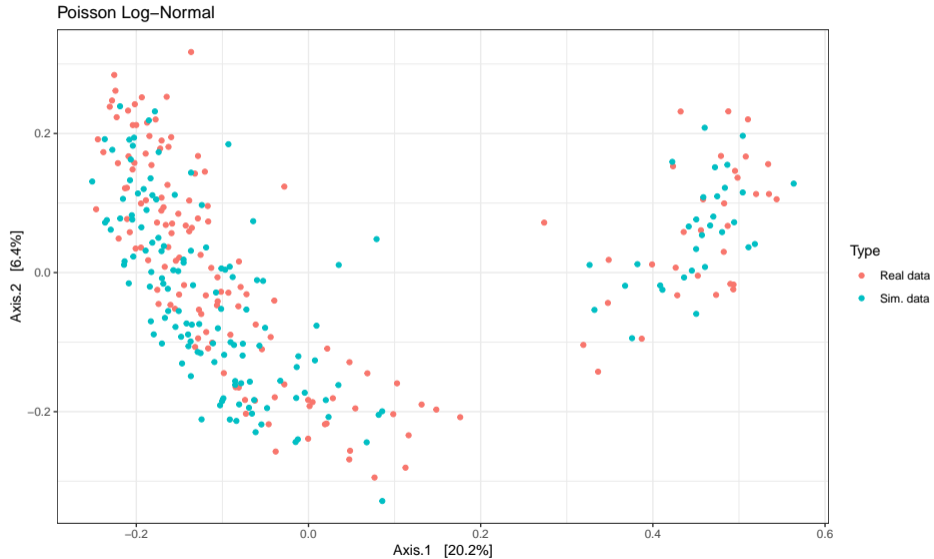
Mixture Layer

Can be combined with a mixture model

Geometrical view



Example of Poisson Log-Normal



Pros

- + Good for **heterogeneity**
- + Good for **dispersion**
- + Good for **correlations** between OTUs
- + Modeling done at the **count** level
 - ↪ counts can be on **different scales** and **come from different sources**

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Cons

- The model is not **parsimonious**: $p(p + 3)/2$ parameters
- **Inference** is quite involved
 - ↪ iterative EM algorithm + gradient descent
- Sequencing depths are only controlled on **average**

Log-Normal models are **good** at

- modeling **compositions**;
- modeling **dispersion** around average compositions;
- modeling **heterogeneity**;
- modeling **interactions** between OTUs;
- accounting for **covariates** through the linear model.

Partial Summary

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- MLN results are easier to interpret (proportions)
- PLN allows to mix data from **different sources** (16S, ITS, etc.)

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 - PCA
 - Linear Discriminant Analysis

PLN: a flexible models accounting for:

- Heterogeneity and average compositions (\simeq first order moments)
- Dispersion and correlation between OTUs (\simeq second order moments)
- Structuring covariates
- Counts coming from dfferent data sources

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- Heterogeneity and average compositions (\simeq first order moments)
- Dispersion and correlation between OTUs (\simeq second order moments)
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Allows for *traditional* multivariate analysis:

Idea: put additional constraints in the model

- **PCA** \rightsquigarrow small rank Σ
- **Linear Discriminant Analysis** \rightsquigarrow known group structure on μ
- **Network Inference** \rightsquigarrow sparse/tree-like Σ^{-1}
- **Mixture Models** \rightsquigarrow unknown group structure on μ
- *etc.*

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PLN-PCA: summarize information

Dimension reduction and vizualization. Typical task in multivariate analysis

$$\mathbf{Z}_i \text{ iid } \sim \mathcal{N}_p(\mathbf{0}_p, \Sigma), \quad \text{rank}(\Sigma) = q \ll p$$
$$\mathbf{Y}_i | \mathbf{Z}_i \sim \mathcal{P}(\exp\{\mathbf{O}_i + \mathbf{X}_i\beta + \mathbf{Z}_i\})$$

↪ Find a low-dimensional base (PCA axes) to represent the latent covariance

Fit the PLNPCA models with offsets and various covariates.

```
Qmax = 30; Q <- 1:Qmax;

## Model with offset
models.offset <- PLNPCA(counts ~ 1 + offset(log(offsets)), ranks=Q)

## Models with offset and covariates (tree + orientation)
formula <- counts ~ 1 + covariates$tree + covariates$orientation + offset(log(offsets))
models.tree.orientation <- PLNPCA(formula, ranks=Q) # approx 10 mn
```

PCA: vizualization

PLN PCA separates well the kind of tree

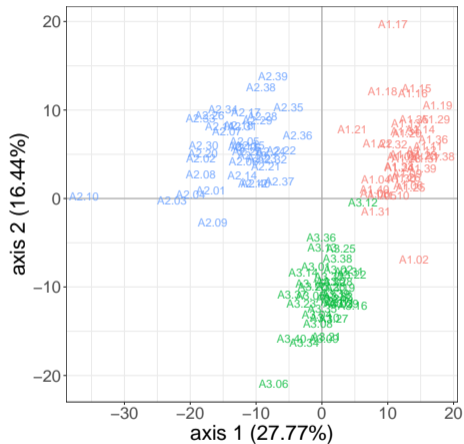
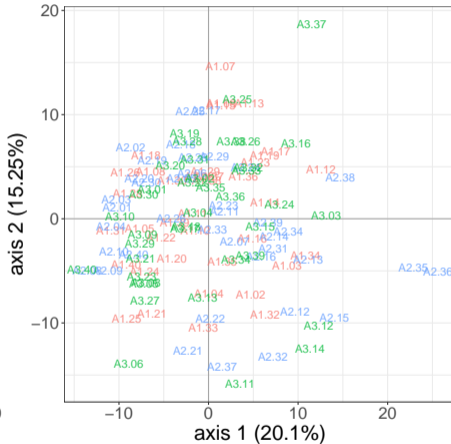


Figure: offset only



offset + covariates

tree
a intermediate
a resistant
a susceptible

PCA: vizualization II

Introduction of covariates unravels hidden patterns

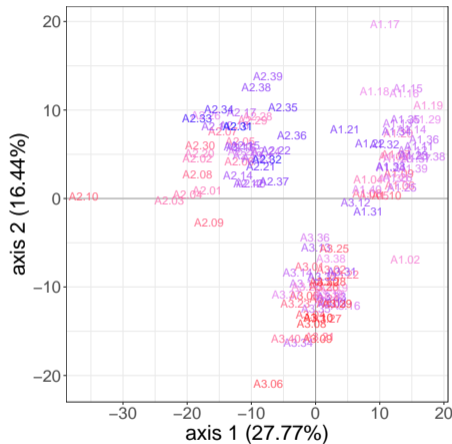
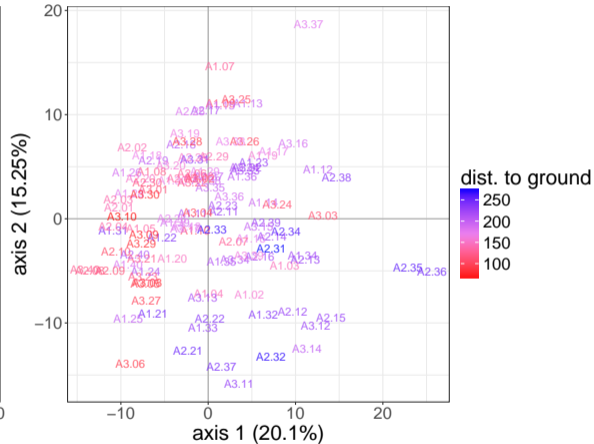


Figure: offset only



offset + covariates

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Fit the PNLDA models

find the linear combination that separates the grouping

Fit the model with offsets, and various covariates

```
myLDA_tree <- PNLDA(Abundance ~ offset(log(Offset)), grouping = tree, data = oaks)
```

```
##  
## Performing discriminant Analysis...  
## DONE!
```

```
myLDA_tree$plot_LDA()
```


Prediction error (10 fold cross-validation)

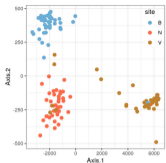
	susceptible	intermediate	resistant
intermediate	0	38	0
resistant	0	0	39
susceptible	39	0	0

Summary PLN = generic model for multivariate counts

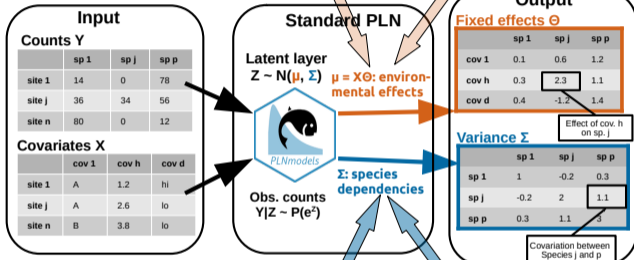
- Corrects for covariates and offset (\simeq sequencing depths)
- Flexible statistical modeling
- `PLNmodels` R-package

Additional extensions

- Add technical/biological "zeros" (zero-inflation)
- Extensions: sparse PCA, mixture models
- Confidence interval and tests
- Missing data...



Classification accuracy: 94.3%
(work with S. Even)



PLN-LDA: compare sites
Goal: find systematic differences between sites in different classes.
Constraint: $\mu = \mu_k$ if site in known class k

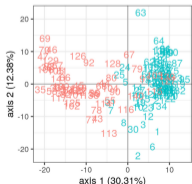
PLN-mixture: find groups
Goal: cluster sites into homogeneous groups
Constraint: $\mu = \mu_k$ if site in unknown group k

Constrain species abundances μ

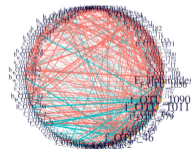
Constrain species dependencies Σ

PLN-PCA: find structure
Goal: find few structuring factors governing species dependencies
Model: force Σ to have low rank

PLN-network: find interactions
Goal: find pairs of species in direct interaction
Model: force $\Omega^{-1} = \Sigma$ to be sparse



Work with N. Peyrard and M.-J. Cros



Work with C. Vacher



John Aitchison and CH Ho.

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