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Efficient Data Valuation Approximation in Federated Learning: A Sampling-based Approach

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- Background
- Problem Statement
- Our Solutions
- Experiments
- Conclusion

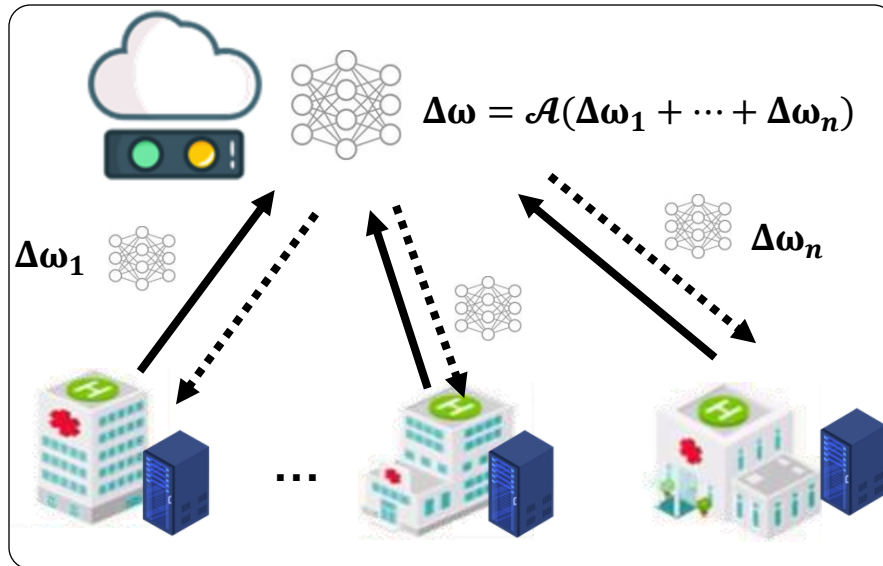
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Federated Learning

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- What is Federated Learning (FL) ?

A distributed learning paradigm using datasets across data owners (eg. hospitals) without accessing raw data [1,2]



Major Features:

- ① Keeping the private data local
- ② Only sharing the parameters
- ③ Data quality are heterogenous

Data owners may be reluctant to share high-quality datasets unless the their data value are fairly measured

[1] Federated Machine Learning: Concept and Applications. ACM TIST 2019

[2] Advances and open problems in federated learning. Found. Trends Mach. Learn. 2021.

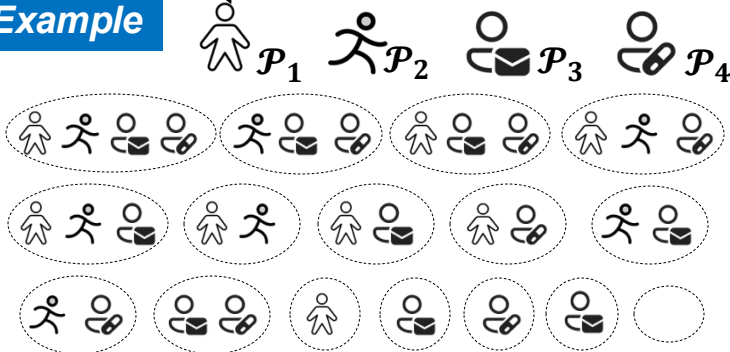
Why Shapley value (SV) ?

The SV is a classical concept for measuring contributions in a cooperation, which holds several essential fairness properties

$$\phi_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{S \in \mathcal{N} \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(S \cup \{i\}) - U(S)}{\binom{|S|}{n-1}}$$

Assign contribution for players

Example



By assessing all 2^n combinations of players

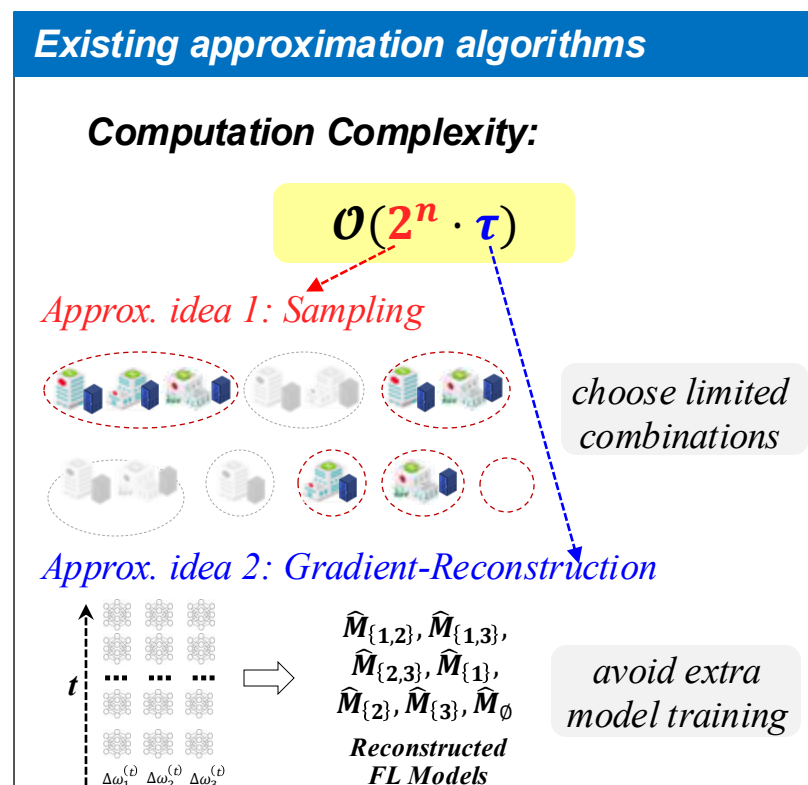
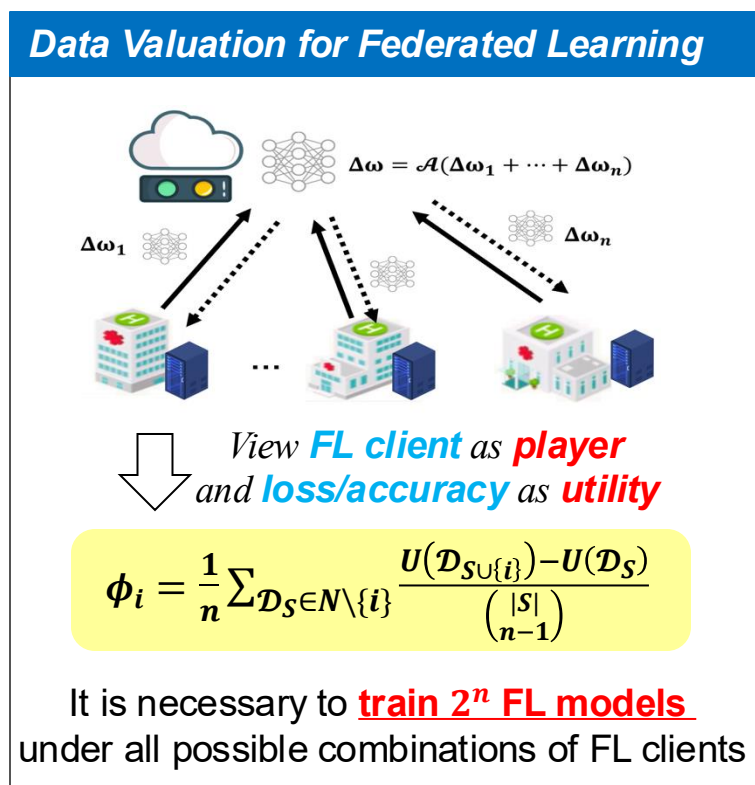
The Essential Fairness Properties of SV

- (i) **Null Player:** Player $\mathcal{P}_i$ without impact on utility has zero contribution in the cooperation, i.e., $\phi_i = 0$
- (ii) **Symmetric Fairness:** If two players $\mathcal{P}_i, \mathcal{P}_j$ can be alternatives for each other in the game, they will be assigned with the same contribution, i.e., $\phi_i = \phi_j$
- (iii) **Group Rationality:** The sum of contributions of all players in the game is exactly equal to the utility with all players, i.e., $\sum_{i \in \mathcal{N}} \phi_i = U(N)$

The Shapley Value has been widely considered as the standard metric in both DB and AI community [3,4]

- Challenges of SV-based Data valuation solution

If we calculate the SV-based data valuation directly in FL, the computational cost can be prohibited due to following reasons:



Objective: how to effectively approximate the SV-based data valuation for the FL scenario ?

Shapley Value meets Federated Learning 7

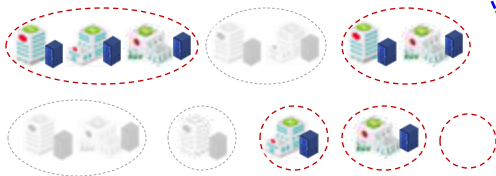
- Limitation of existing solutions:

Existing approximation algorithms

Computation Complexity:

$$\mathcal{O}(2^n \cdot \tau)$$

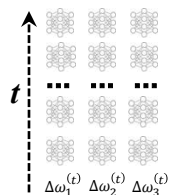
Approx. idea 1: Sampling



choose limited combinations

SIGMOD24, ICDE 22, AISTATS, ICML 19, etc

Approx. idea 2: Gradient-Reconstruction



$\hat{M}_{\{1,2\}}, \hat{M}_{\{1,3\}},$
 $\hat{M}_{\{2,3\}}, \hat{M}_{\{1\}},$
 $\hat{M}_{\{2\}}, \hat{M}_{\{3\}}, \hat{M}_{\emptyset}$
Reconstructed
FL Models

avoid extra
model training

ACM TIST24, FLPI 20, Big Data19, etc

Limitation 1:

Ignoring selecting the suitable computation scheme of Shapley Value.

$$\sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_S)}{n \cdot \binom{n-1}{|S|}}$$

Marginal Contribution Based

or

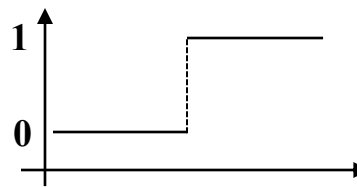
$$\sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_{N \setminus (S \cup \{i\})})}{n \cdot \binom{n-1}{|S|}}$$

Complementary Contribution Based

Limitation 2:

Ignoring utilizing intrinsic properties of utility function in federated learning.

e.g., majority game



federated learning



Can we design more effective approximation algorithms ?

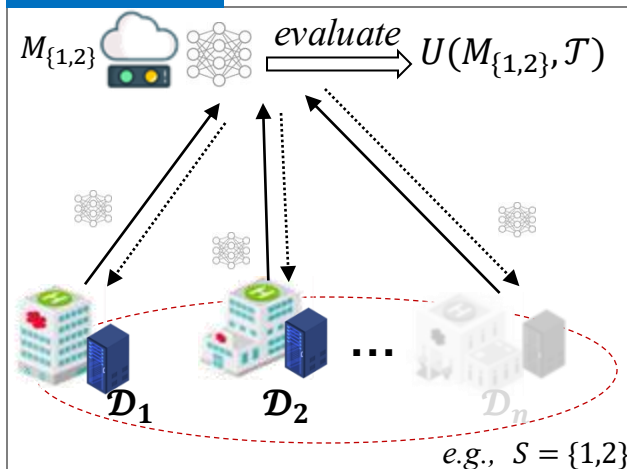
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• Data Valuation for FL

Given n FL clients with datasets $\mathcal{D}_N = \{\mathcal{D}_1, \dots, \mathcal{D}_n\}$, and a FL algorithm $\mathcal{A}$, the federation trains model $M_S(\mathcal{A})$ under a subset of clients $S \subseteq N$, and evaluates it utility $U(M_S)$ on test dataset $\mathcal{T}$.

Then, data valuation problem is to qualify contribution of dataset $\mathcal{D}_i$ as $\phi(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{D}_N, \mathcal{T}, \mathcal{D}_i)$ (ϕ_i for short) with following properties:

Example



Three desirable properties

① Null-Player

$$\bullet \forall S \subseteq N, U(M_S) = U(M_{S \cup \{j\}}) \Rightarrow \phi_j = 0$$

② Symmetric-Fairness

$$\bullet \forall S \subseteq N \setminus \{i, j\}, U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) = U(M_{S \cup \{j\}}) \Rightarrow \phi_i = \phi_j$$

③ Linear-Additivity

$$\bullet \mathcal{T}_1 \cap \mathcal{T}_2 = \emptyset \Rightarrow \forall i \in N, \phi_i(\mathcal{T}_1 \cup \mathcal{T}_2) = \phi_i(\mathcal{T}_1) + \phi_i(\mathcal{T}_2)$$

Shapley Value based data valuation naturally inherits its fairness properties and ensures above desirable properties

• The SV-based Data Valuation Schemes

There are two commonly used equivalent Shapley value expression and each provides a computation scheme for the data valuation.

1. Marginal Contribution SV based Computation Scheme (MC-SV)

$$\phi(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{D}_N, \mathcal{T}, \mathcal{D}_i) = \sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_S)}{n \cdot \binom{|S|}{n-1}}$$

2. Complementary Contribution SV based Computation Scheme (CC-SV) [5]

$$\phi(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{D}_N, \mathcal{T}, \mathcal{D}_i) = \sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_{N \setminus (S \cup \{i\})})}{n \cdot \binom{|S|}{n-1}}$$

Example with 3 FL clients

S	$\emptyset$	$\{1\}$	$\{2\}$	$\{3\}$	$\{1, 2\}$	$\{1, 3\}$	$\{2, 3\}$	$\{1, 2, 3\}$
$U(M_S)$	0.10	0.50	0.70	0.60	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.96

Take ϕ_1 as an example

- 1) For $|S| = 0$, compute $U(\{1\}) - U(\emptyset) = 0.40$
 - 2) For $|S| = 1$, compute $U(\{1, 2\}) - U(\{2\}) = 0.10$, $U(\{1, 3\}) - U(\{3\}) = 0.30$
 - 3) For $|S| = 2$, compute $U(\{1, 2, 3\}) - U(\{2, 3\}) = 0.06$
- Then, based on MC-SV, $\phi_1 = (0.4 \div 1 + (0.1 + 0.3) \div 2 + 0.06 \div 1) \div 3 = 0.22$

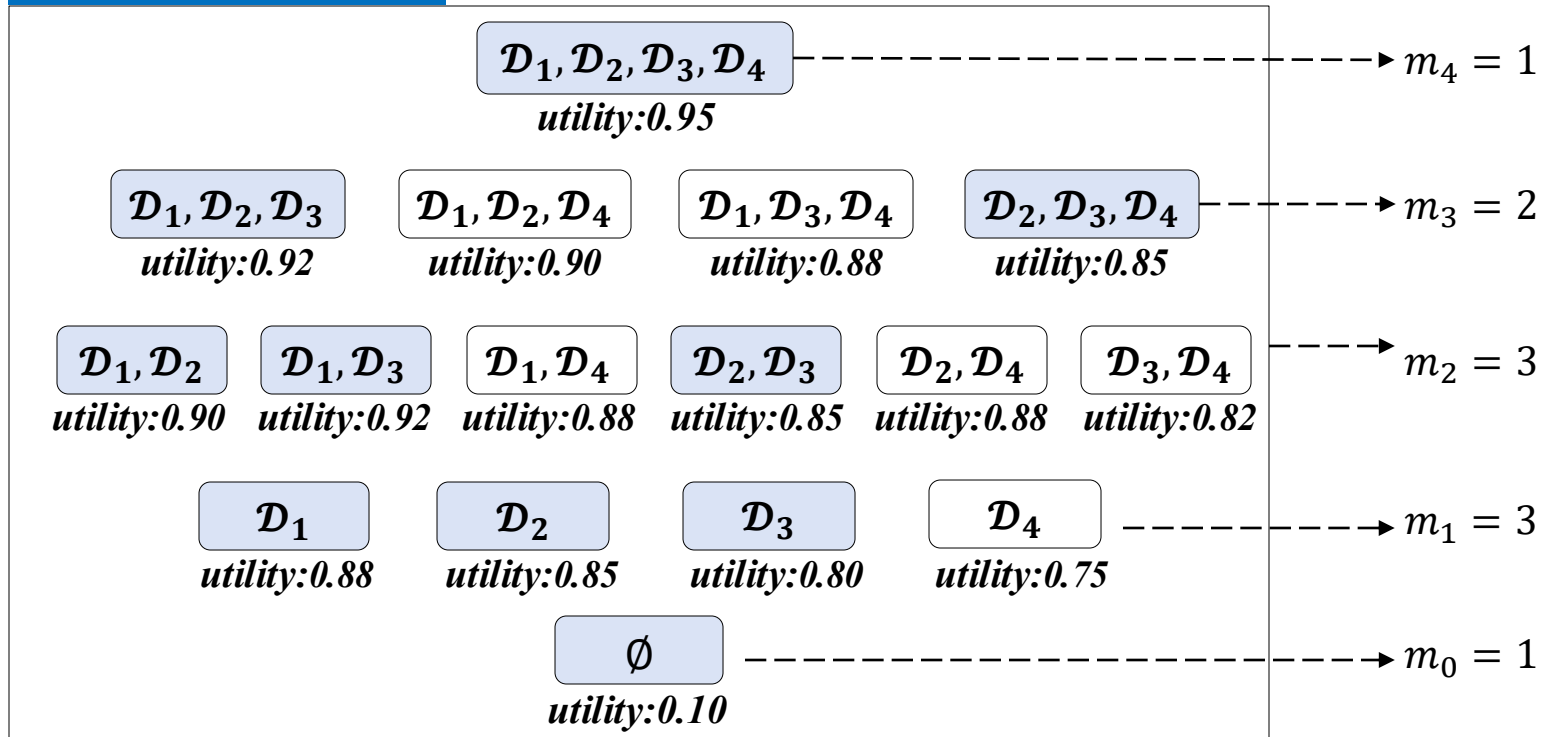
As both the MC-SV and CC-SV based scheme requires $O(2^n)$ FL models, **efficient and accurate** approximation algorithm is expected

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- Overview:

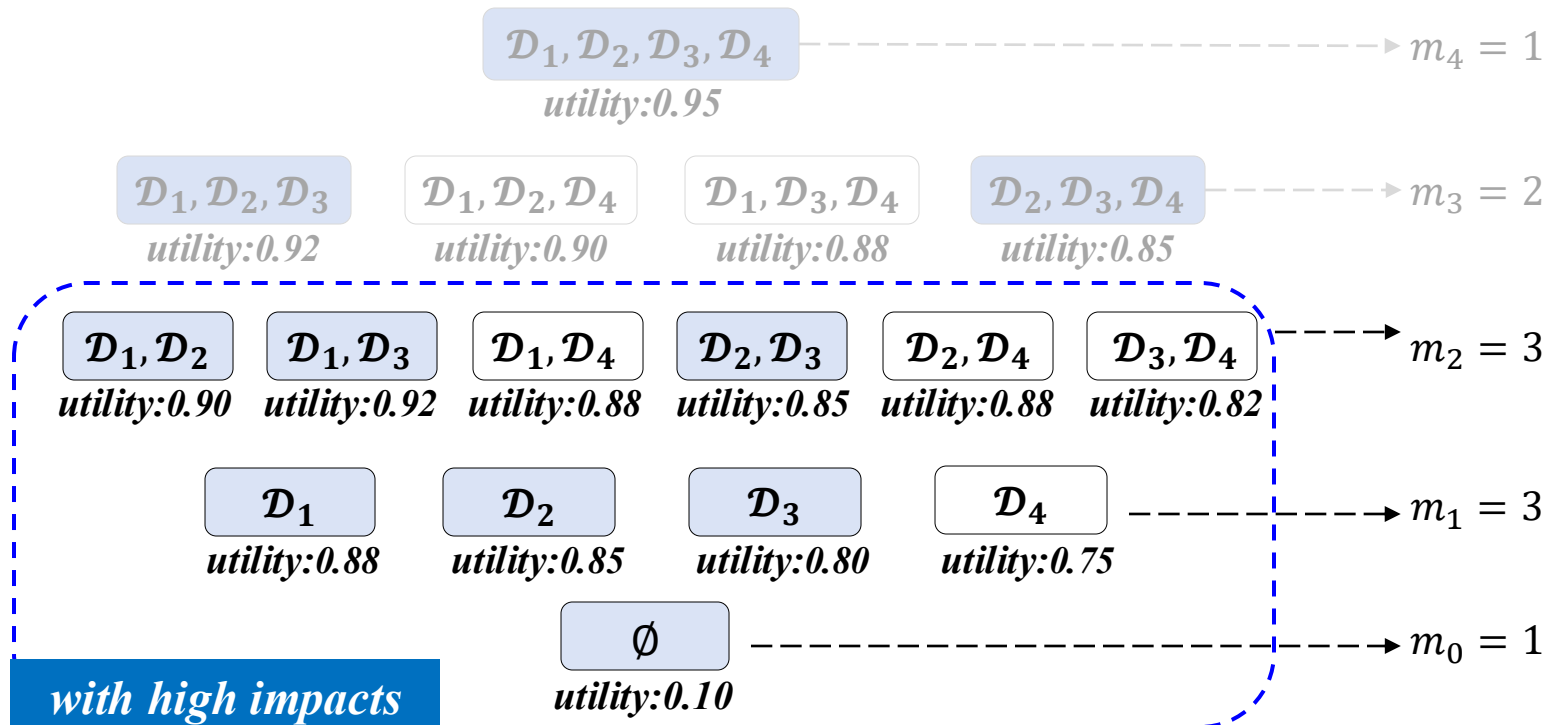
① We propose a ***unified stratified sampling*** framework to support both the MC-SV and CC-SV and then find MC-SV is more appropriate for the proposed approximating framework through theoretical analysis.

Naturally Stratified



- Overview:

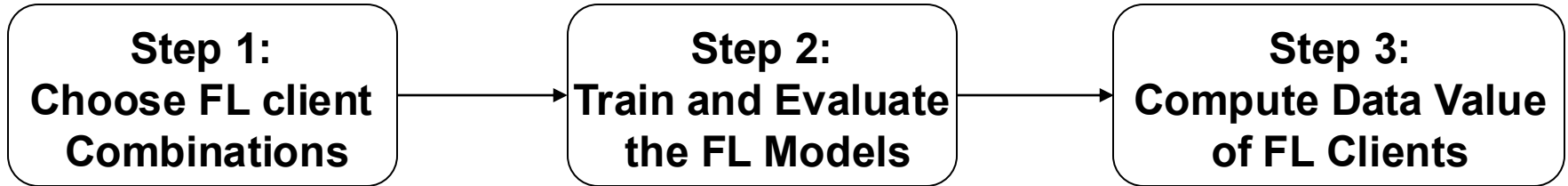
- ① We propose a ***unified stratified sampling*** framework to support both the MC-SV and CC-SV and then find MC-SV is more appropriate for the proposed approximating framework through theoretical analysis.
- ② We observe a key insight for MC-SV, i.e., ***only limited dataset combinations highly affect the final data values*** under loss/acc utility.



Our solution: Framework

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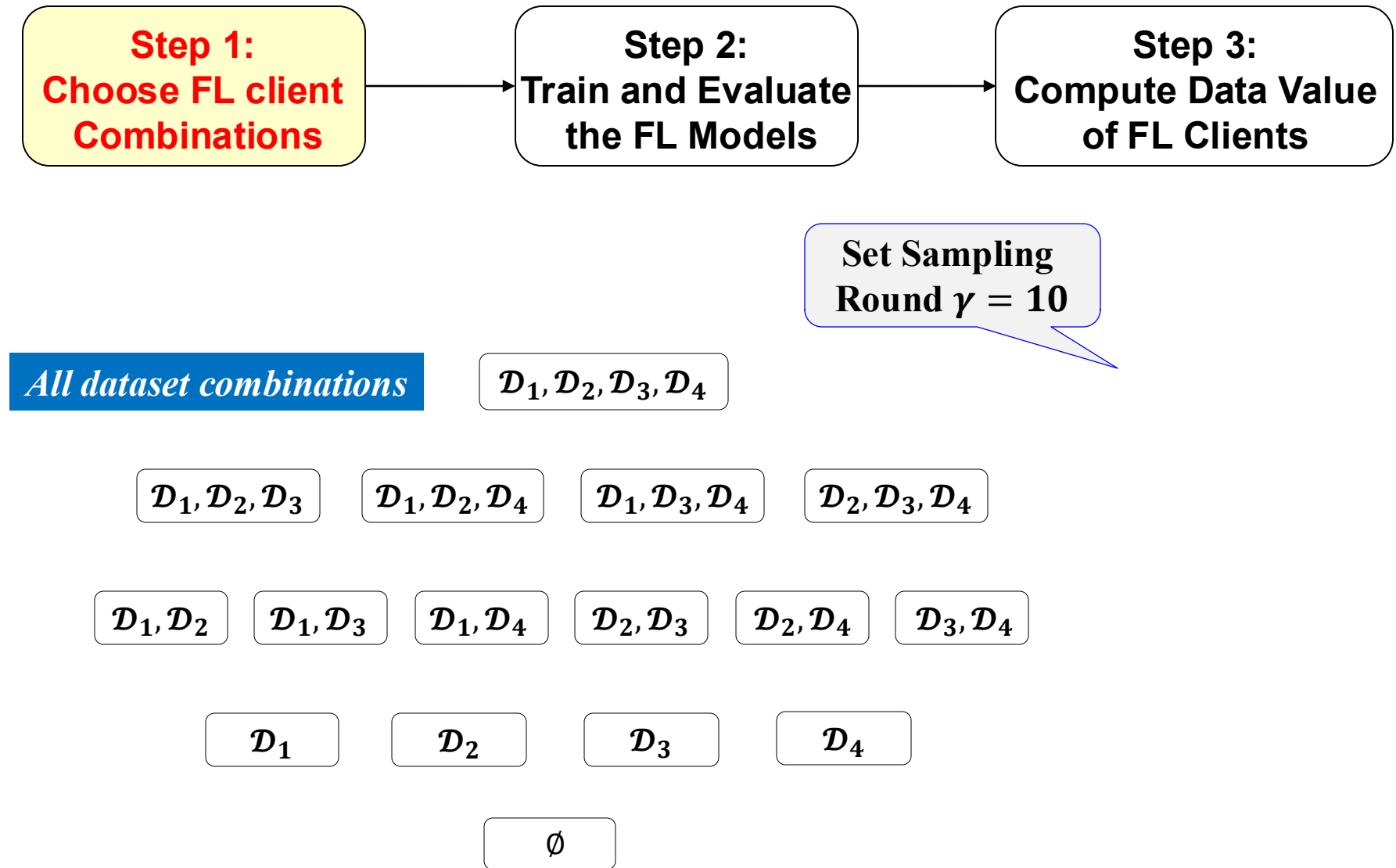
- **Unified Stratified Sampling Framework**



Our solution: Framework

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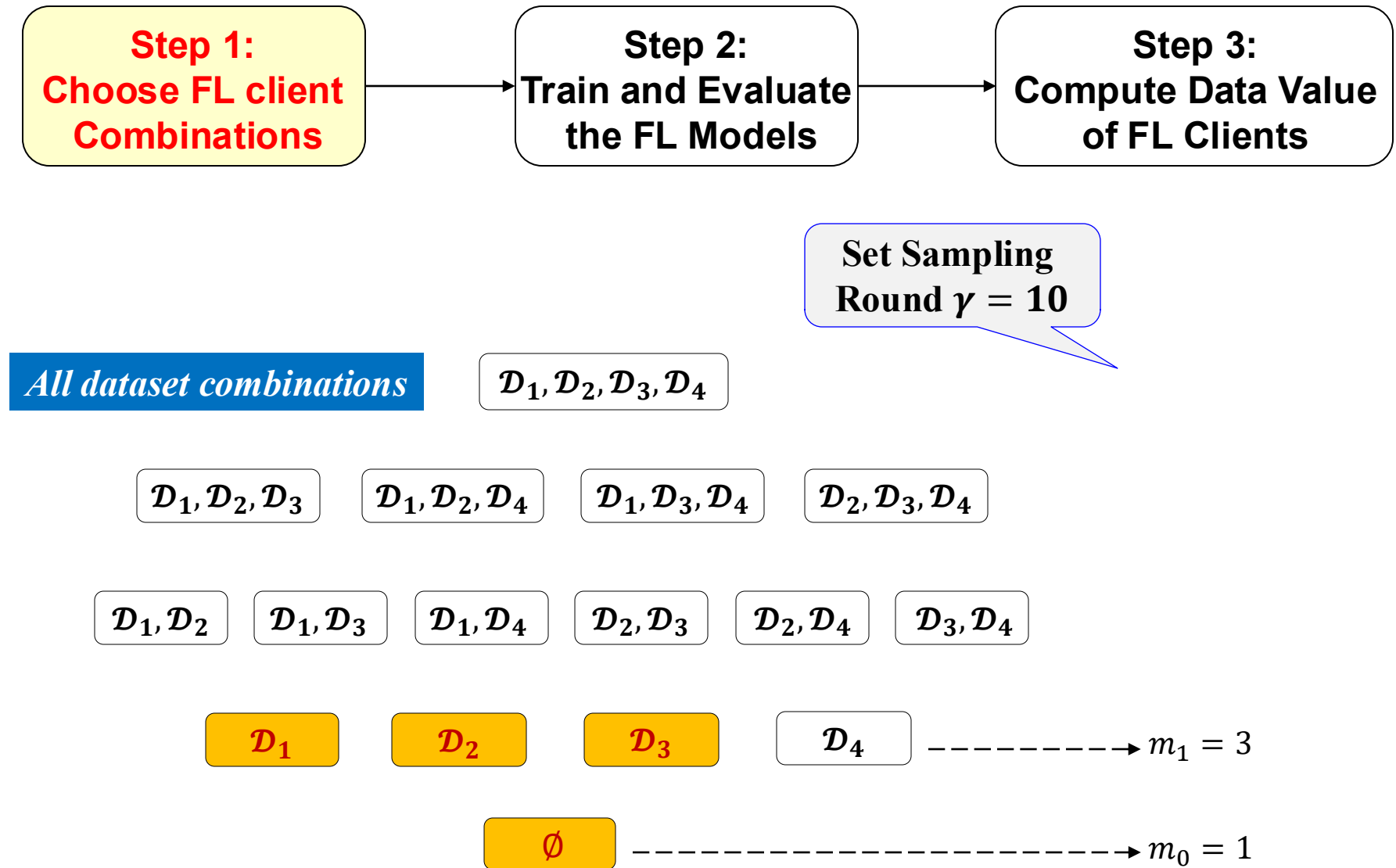
- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



Our solution: Framework

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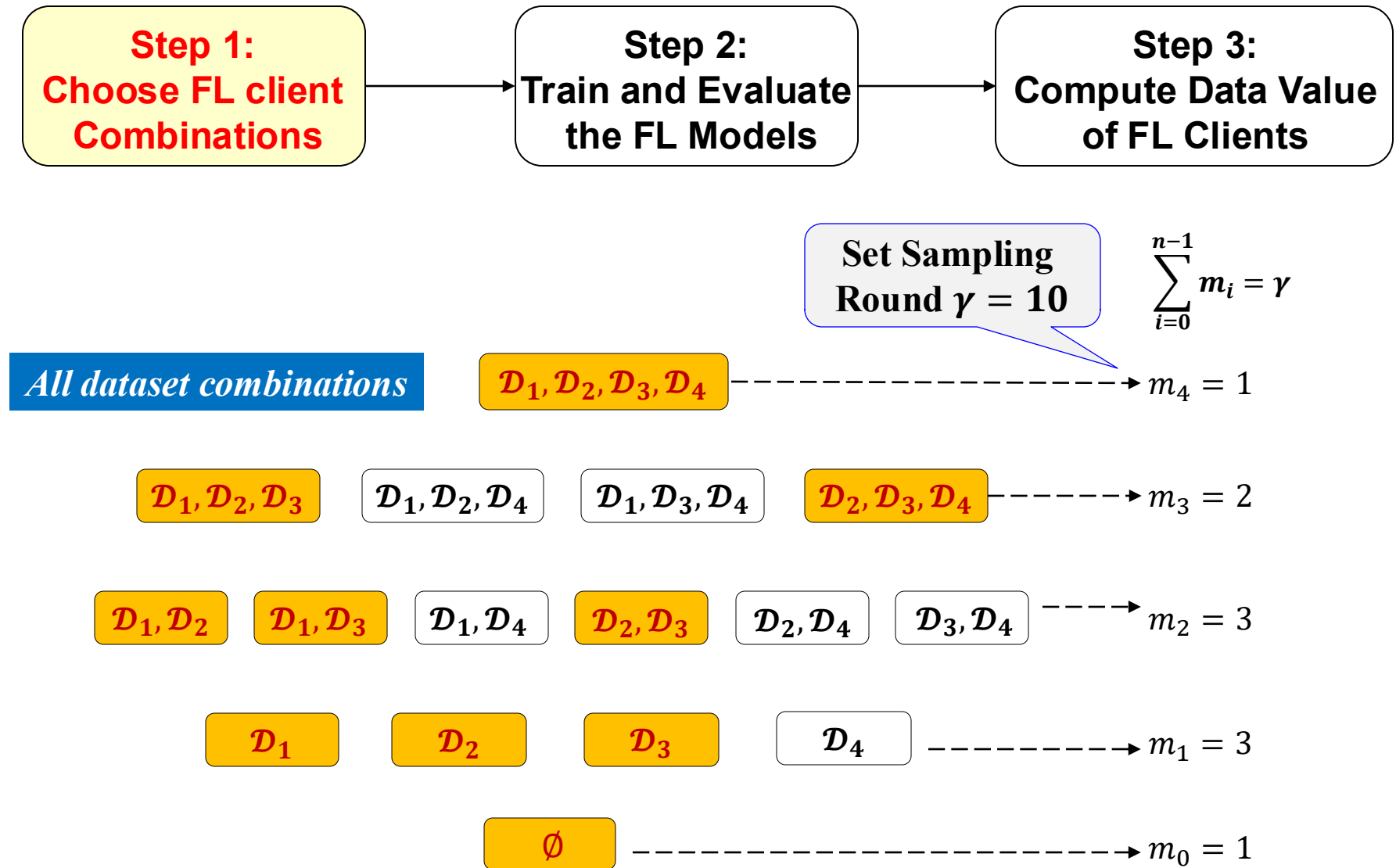
- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



Our solution: Framework

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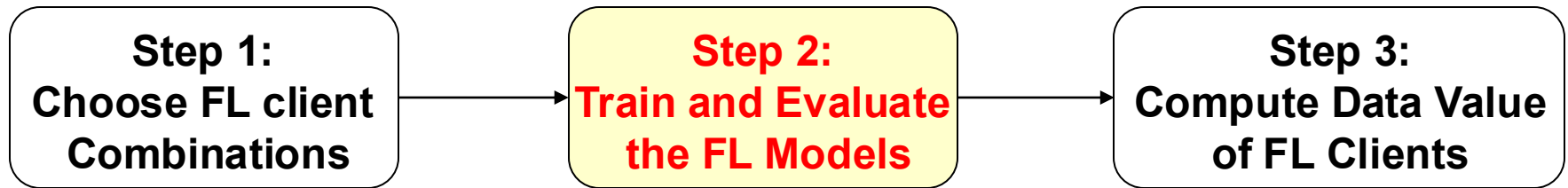
- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



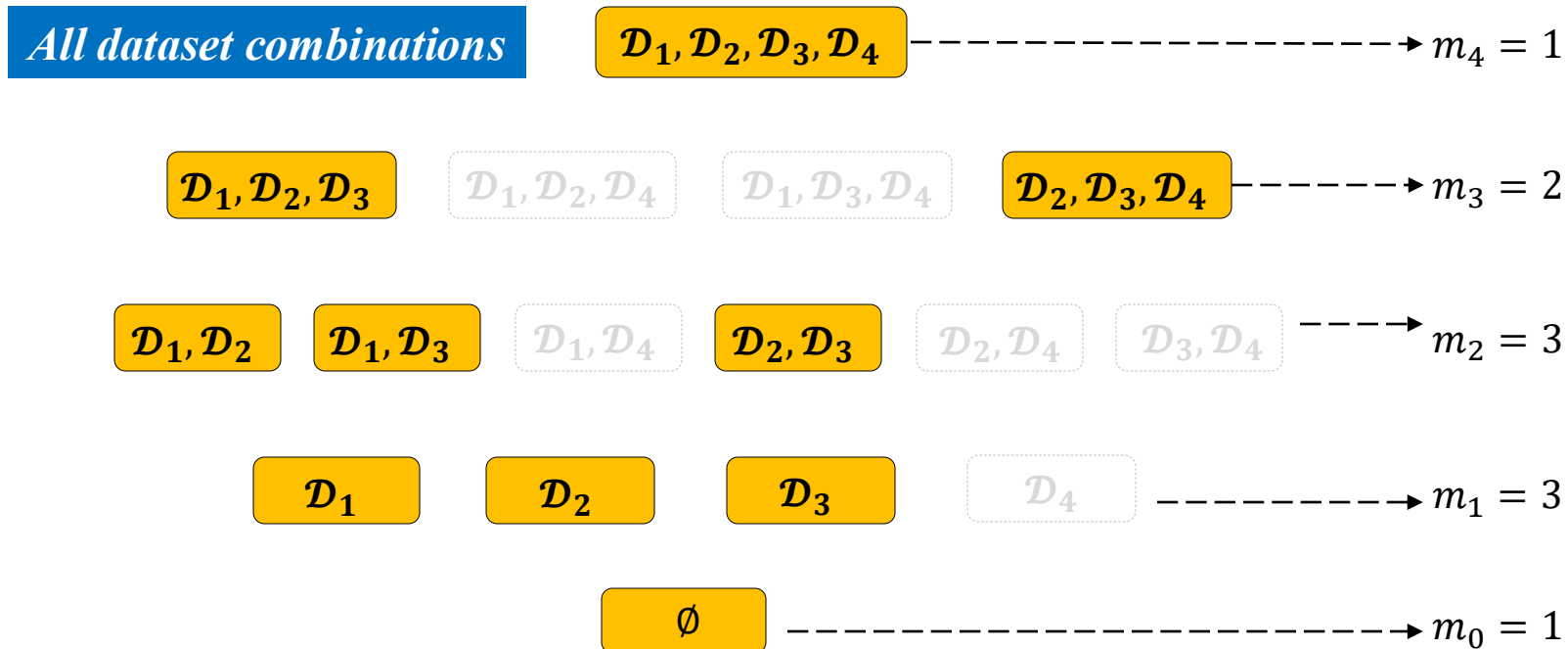
Our solution: Framework

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- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



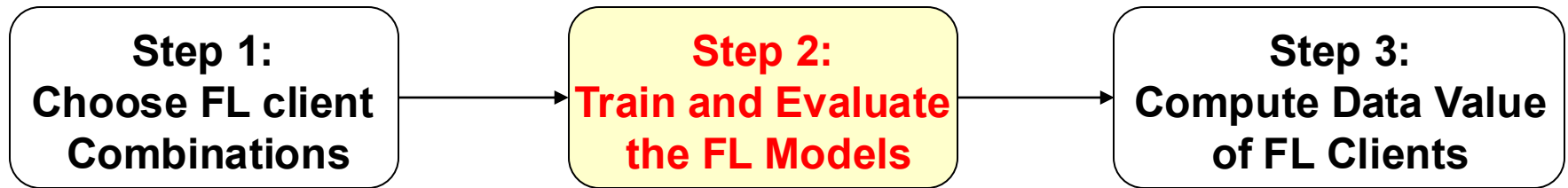
Train and evaluate FL models M_S with chosen combinations: $S \in \{\emptyset, \{\mathcal{D}_1\}, \{\mathcal{D}_2\}, \{\mathcal{D}_3\}, \{\mathcal{D}_1, \mathcal{D}_2\}, \{\mathcal{D}_1, \mathcal{D}_3\}, \{\mathcal{D}_2, \mathcal{D}_3\}, \{\mathcal{D}_1, \mathcal{D}_2, \mathcal{D}_3\}, \{\mathcal{D}_2, \mathcal{D}_3, \mathcal{D}_4\}, \{\mathcal{D}_1, \mathcal{D}_2, \mathcal{D}_3, \mathcal{D}_4\}, \}$



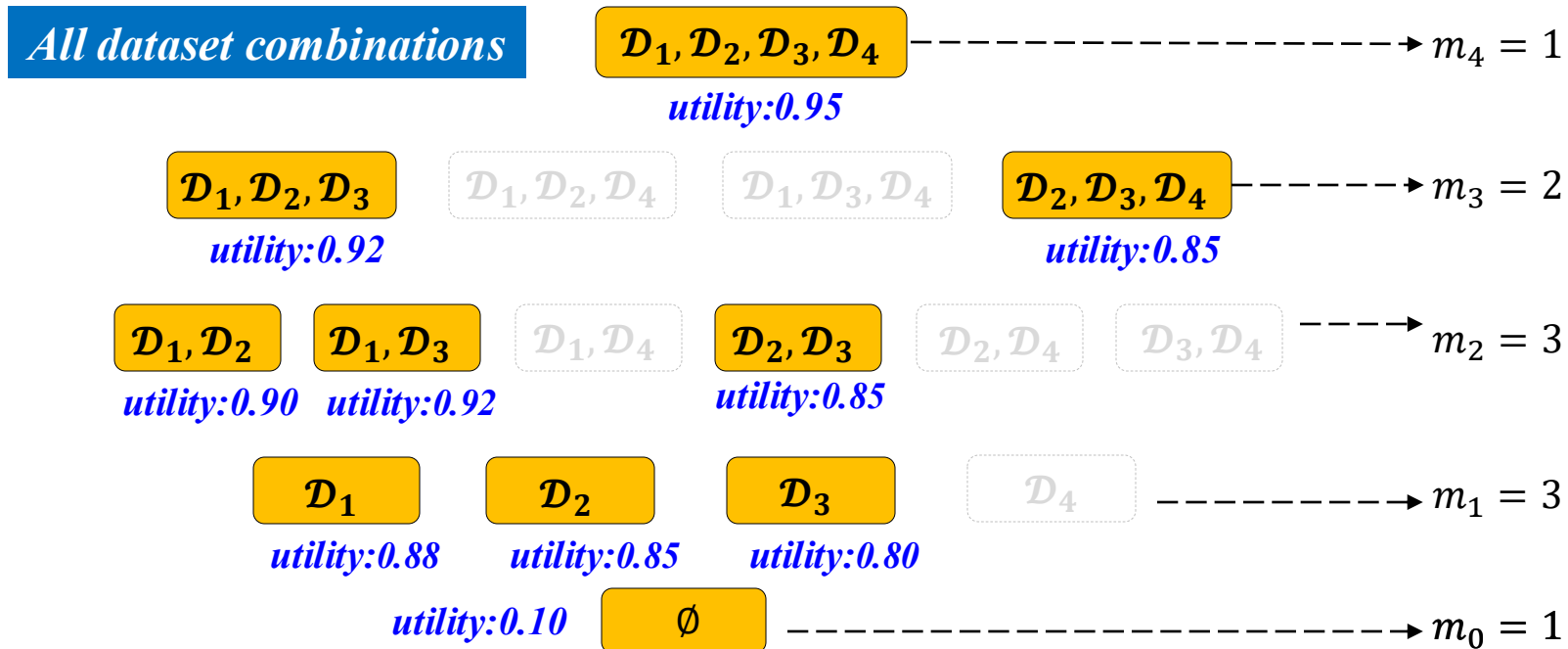
Our solution: Framework

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- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



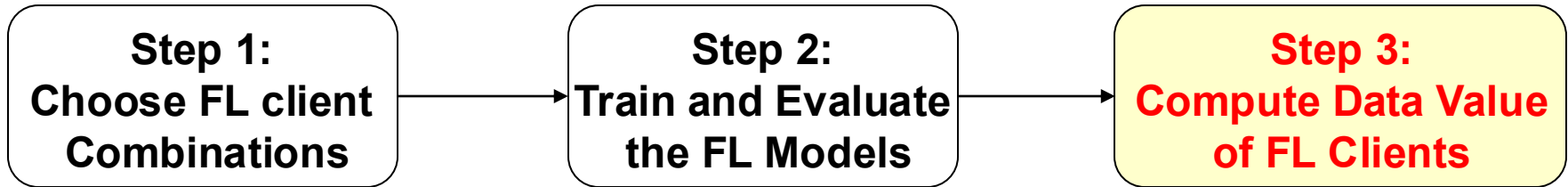
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Our solution: Framework

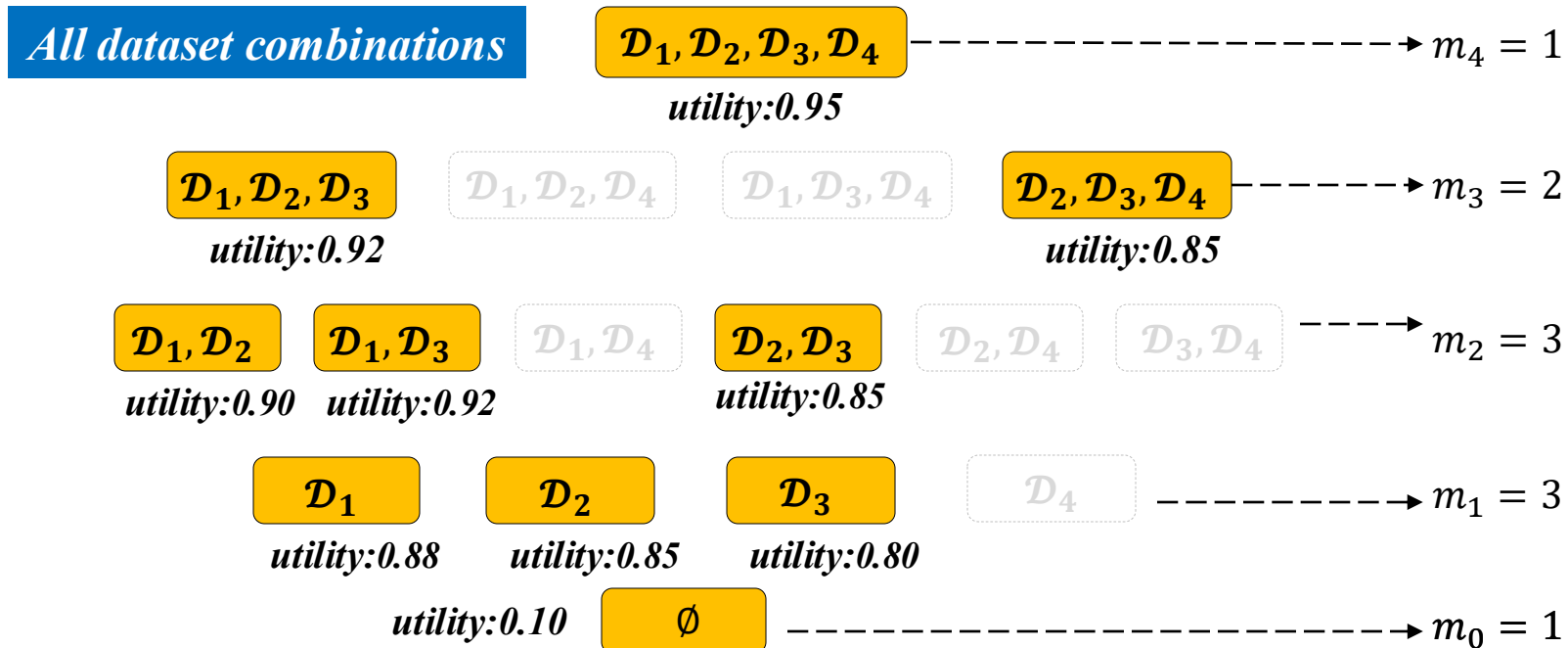
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- Unified Stratified Sampling Framework



$$\widehat{\phi}_i \leftarrow \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{\sum_{S, \bar{S} \in \mathcal{S}} U(M_S) - U(M_{\bar{S}})}{m_{i,k}}$$

Unify the MC-SV and CC-SV by setting $\bar{S}$ to be $S \setminus \{i\}$ or $N \setminus S$



Our solution: Framework

• Analysis of the stratified sampling framework

$$\hat{\phi}_i \leftarrow \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{\sum_{S, \bar{S} \in \mathcal{S}} U(M_S) - U(M_{\bar{S}})}{m_{i,k}} \quad \text{Unify the MC-SV and CC-SV by setting } \bar{S} \text{ to be } S \setminus \{i\} \text{ or } N \setminus S$$

Expectation Analysis

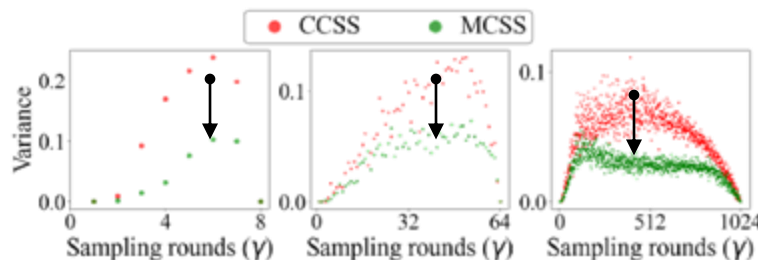
Theorem 1. The SS framework can provide unbiased estimation of SV in expectation for both the MC-SV and CC-SV based scheme

$$\mathbb{E}[\hat{\phi}_i^{MC}] = \mathbb{E}[\hat{\phi}_i^{CC}] = \sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \frac{U(M_S) - U(M_{\bar{S}})}{n \cdot \binom{|S|}{n-1}} = \phi_i$$

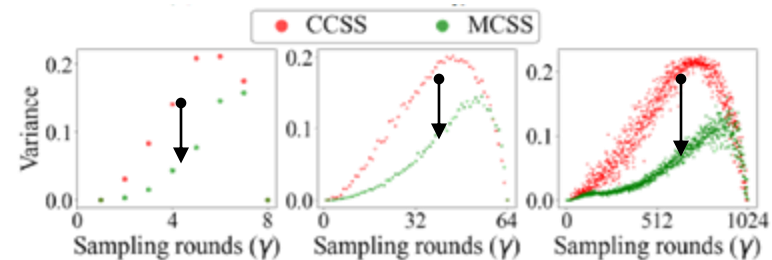
Variance Analysis

Theorem 2. For any sampling strategy using CC-SV based scheme, using MC-SV based scheme can yield lower estimation variance

$$\mathbb{V}[\hat{\phi}_i^{MC}] - \mathbb{V}[\hat{\phi}_i^{CC}] \geq \sum_{k=1}^n \sum_S \frac{1}{n^2 \cdot m_{i,k}^2} |D_S|^2 \sigma^2 > 0$$



(a) Client #3~#10 using MLP model



(b) Client #3~#10 using CNN model

Experimental results on FEMNIST show that MC-SV *variance is clearly lower* than CC-SV.

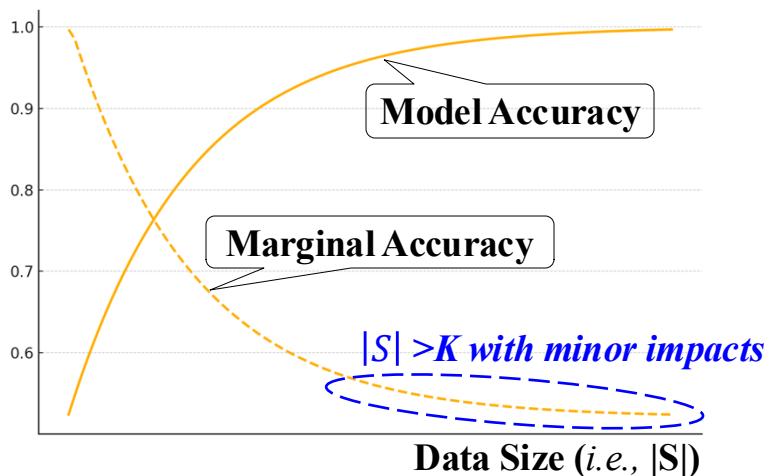
Takeaway: MC-SV is more appropriate for proposed framework

Our solution: Optimization

- Key Observations on MC-SV based Scheme

$$\phi_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{S \in (N \setminus \{i\})} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_S)}{\binom{n-1}{|S|}}$$

Observation 1: As size of data combination $|S|$ increases, marginal contribution decreases noticeably.

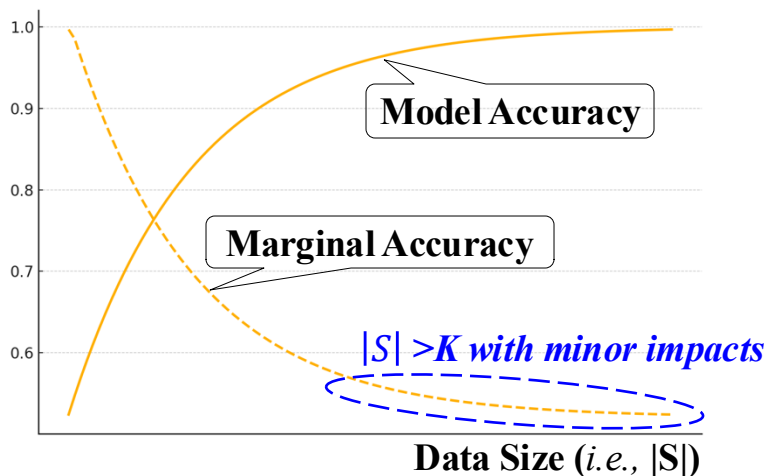


Our solution: Optimization

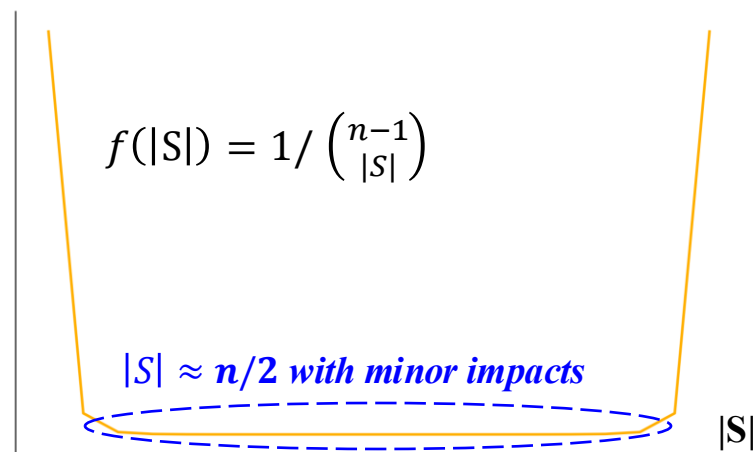
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Observation 1: As size of data combination $|S|$ increases, marginal contribution decreases noticeably.



Observation 2: Different datasets combinations S have varying impacts on the final computed data value.

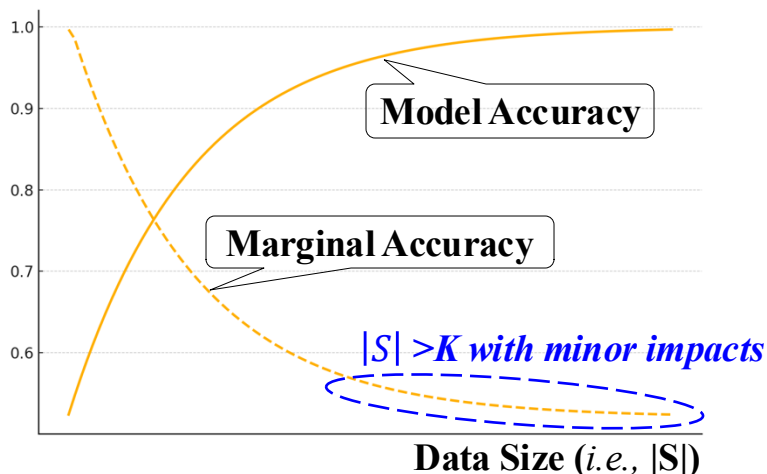


Our solution: Optimization

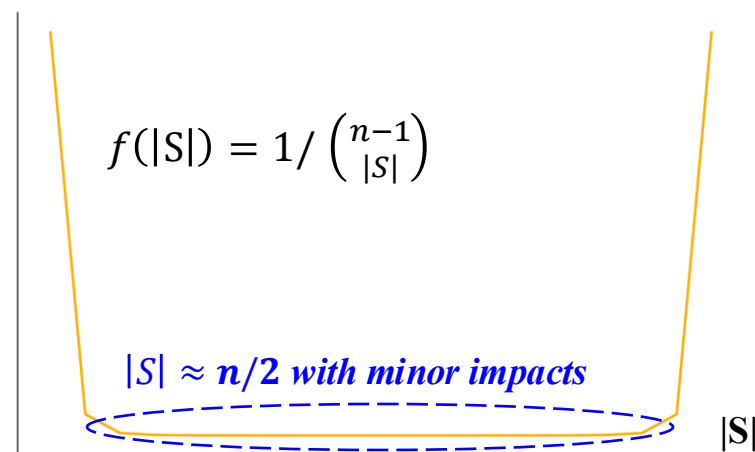
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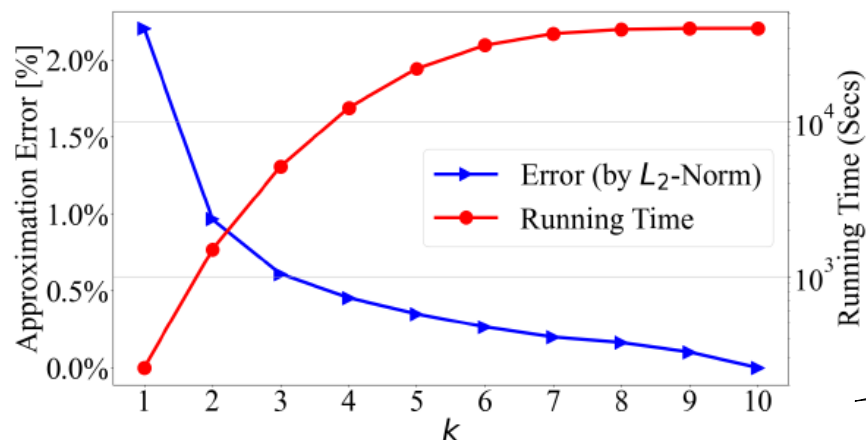
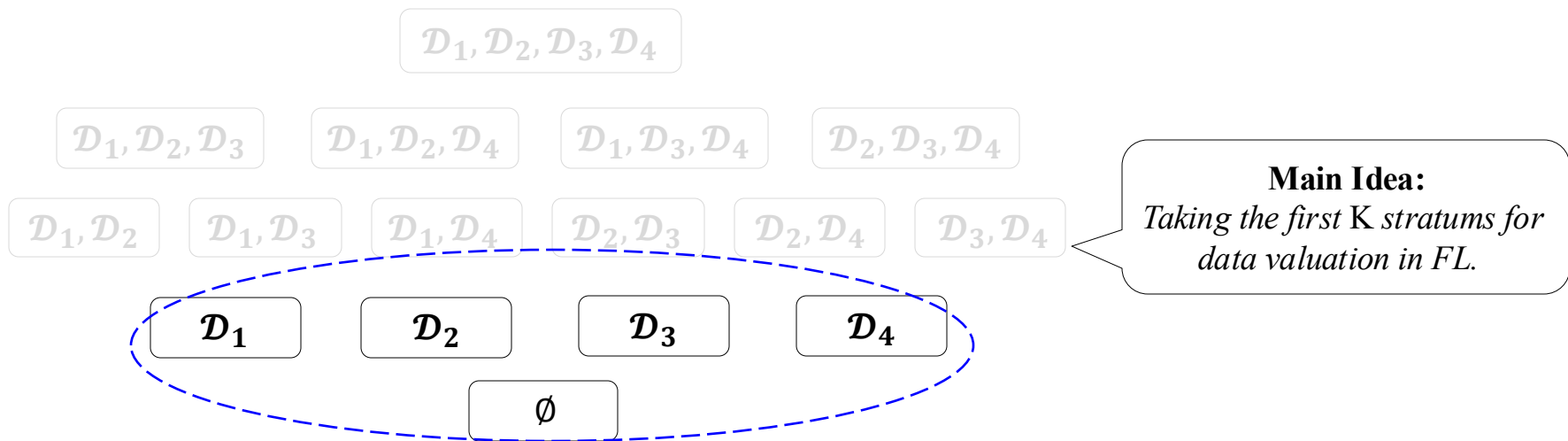
Observation 2: Different datasets combinations S have varying impacts on the final computed data value.



Key Insights: Only combinations with small $|S|$ have high impacts

Our solution: Optimization

- Empirical study of the above insights

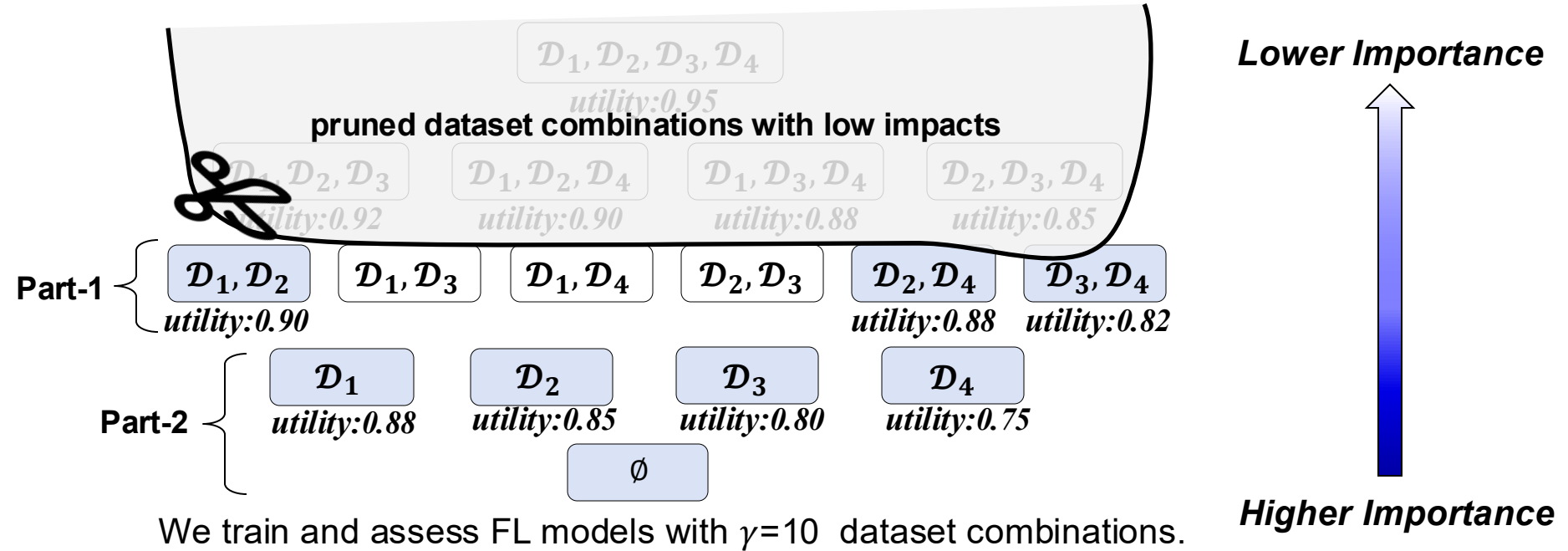


Experimental Setups:

- FEMNIST dataset
- FedAvg algorithm
- 10 FL clients

Observation: The approximation error decrease quickly when K increases, ($K \geq 2$, $\text{Error} \leq 1.5\%$)

Importance-Pruned Stratified Sampling (IPSS)



Sampling and Evaluation

Part-1: $k^* \leftarrow \max\{k \mid \sum_{j=0}^k \binom{n}{j} \leq \gamma\}$

The first k^* stratum will be selected

Part-2: dataset combinations $\mathcal{P}$ in $k^* + 1$ stratum

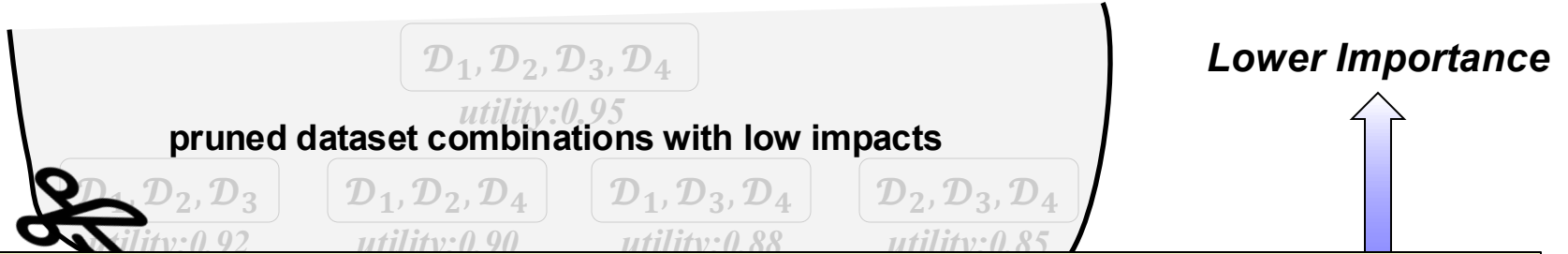
(1) $|\mathcal{P}| \leq \gamma - k^*$ (2) $\forall S \in \mathcal{P}, |S| = k^* + 1$

(3) $\forall i, j \in N, C_i = C_j$, where $C_k = \sum_{S \in \mathcal{P}} \mathbb{I}[k \in S]$

MC-SV based data valuation

$$\widehat{\phi}_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{S \subseteq (N \setminus \{i\}), |S| < k^*} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_S)}{\binom{n-1}{|S|}} + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{S \subseteq (N \setminus \{i\}), (S \cup \{i\}) \in \mathcal{P}} \frac{U(M_{S \cup \{i\}}) - U(M_S)}{\binom{n-1}{|S|}}$$

• Importance-Pruned Stratified Sampling (IPSS)



Time Complexity: $\mathcal{O}(\tau \cdot \gamma)$

γ : total sampling round, τ : time to train and evaluate an FL model

Approximation error: $\mathcal{O}\left(\frac{n-k^*}{k^*nt}\right)$

k^* : $\max\{k \mid \sum_{j=0}^k \binom{n}{j} \leq \gamma\}$, n : number of all FL clients, t : training samples of an FL client

Sampling and Evaluation

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- **Synthetic Dataset:**

- MNIST *with 60,000+ training samples and 10,000+ testing samples*
- *Five experimental setups* following [7,8]
 - *1. FL clients with same data size and same distribution*
 - *2. FL clients with same data size and different distribution*
 - *3. FL clients with different data size and same distribution*
 - *4. FL clients with same data size, same distribution, and noise on label*
 - *5. FL clients with same data size, same distribution, and noise on feature*

- **Real-world Datasets:**

- FEMNIST (*image data*) *with 805,000+ training samples from 3500+ users*
- ADULT (*tabular data*) *with 48,800+ training samples and 14 features*

- **Learning Models:**

- Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP)
- Convolutional neural network (CNN)
- XGBoost (XGB)

- **Implementation:**

- TensorFlow 2.4 and TensorFlow Federated 0.18
- multi-processing simulation using the gRPC protocol

- **Evaluation Metrics:**

- *Running Time.*

- *Approximation Error: $l_2(\hat{\phi}, \phi) = \frac{\|\hat{\phi} - \phi\|_2}{\|\phi\|_2} = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (\hat{\phi}_i - \phi_i)^2} / \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n \phi_i^2}$*

- **Nine Compared Algorithms:**

- **Perm-Shapley** [definition]: *it directly calculates data value of clients in FL according to the definition of the permutation based Shapley value.*

- **MC-Shapley** [definition]: *it directly calculates the data value through the MC-SV based computation scheme.*

- **DIG-FL** [ICDE'22]: *it efficiently approximates the data value in FL, which only needs to evaluate $O(n)$ numbers of dataset combinations under certain assumptions.*

- **Extended-TMC** [ICML'19]: *it is an extension of widely-adopted data valuation scheme for general machine learning based on Truncated Monte Carlo algorithm.*

- **Extended-GTB** [AISTATS'19]: *it is also an extension of a representative data valuation scheme, which use the group testing-based estimation techniques.*

- **OR** [BigData'19]: *it takes gradients within the FL process with all clients the same as gradients under other combinations to avoids extra training of FL models.*

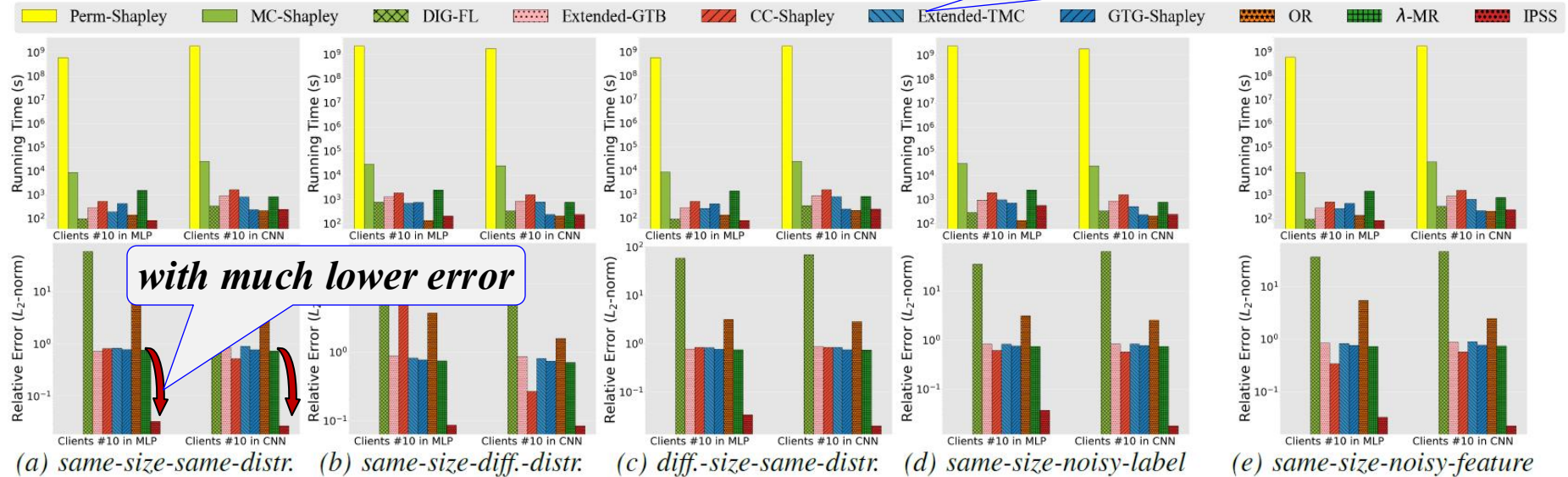
- **λ -MR** [FLPI'20]: *it takes the MC-SV-based scheme and estimates data value in each training round of FL and aggregate them as the final results.*

- **CC-Shapley** [SIGMOD'23]: *it is one of the **state-of-the-art** sampling methods to approximate the SV which estimates data value using the CC-SV-based schemes.*

- **GTG-Shapley** [TIST'22]: *it also approximates the data value using gradients and Monte Carlo sampling approach to reduce number of reconstructed FL models.*

Results on Synthetic datasets

Set same total sampling round γ



- *IPSS achieves the much lower approximation error with similar time cost*
- *The results is consistent over various data size, distribution and noise*
- *IPSS shows similar performance on both MLP and CNN models*

Results on FEMNIST

	n	Metrics	Perm-Shap.	MC-Shap.	DIG-FL	Ext-TMC	Ext-GTB	CC-Shap.	GTG-Shap.	OR	λ -MR	IPSS
MLP	3	Time(s)	3729	842	584	568	807	1021	47	12	29	258
		Error(l_2)	-	-	5.01	0.79	0.59	0.35	0.90	2.46	0.88	0.06
	6	Time(s)	9.1×10^6	6496	1077	843	1120	2020	161	89	228	329
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.70	0.96	0.90	1.93	0.89	3.13	0.87	0.49
	10	Time(s)	6.8×10^9	95985	1695	3061	4129	5988	1086	1414	3764	568
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.77	0.82	0.85	1.16	0.85	3.09	0.83	0.02
CNN	3	Time(s)	1629	372	230	231	352	413	26	7	22	142
		Error(l_2)	-	-	95.14	0.81	0.60	0.02	0.87	0.46	0.73	0.01
	6	Time(s)	3.6×10^5	2783	407	352	484	667	108	47	154	211
		Error(l_2)	-	-	78.25	0.91	0.70	0.40	0.76	0.35	0.73	0.02
	10	Time(s)	2.8×10^9	40134	655	1220	1612	2553	680	641	2504	257
		Error(l_2)	-	-	98.42	0.83	0.87	2.60	0.75	0.76	0.71	0.02

IPSS has lowest error

IPSS is fastest when $n \geq 6$

Experiments

Results on FEMNIST

	n	Metrics	Perm-Shap.	MC-Shap.	DIG-FL	Ext-TMC	Ext-GTB	CC-Shap.	GTG-Shap.	OR	λ -MR	IPSS
MLP	3	Time(s)	3729	842	584	568	807	1021	47	12	29	258
		Error(l_2)	-	-	5.01	0.79	0.59	0.35	0.90	2.46	0.88	0.06
	6	Time(s)	9.1×10^6	6496	1077	843	1120	2020	161	89	228	329
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.70	0.96	0.90	1.93	0.89	3.13	0.87	0.49
	10	Time(s)	6.8×10^9	95985	1695	3061	4129	5988	1086	1414	3764	568
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.77	0.82	0.85	1.16	0.85	3.09	0.83	0.02
CNN	3	Time(s)	1629	372	230	231	352	413	26	7	22	142
		Error(l_2)	-	-	95.14	0.81	0.60	0.02	0.87	0.46	0.73	0.01
	6	Time(s)	3.6×10^5	2783	407	352	484	667	108	47	154	211
		Error(l_2)	-	-	78.25	0.91	0.70	0.40	0.76	0.35	0.73	0.02
	10	Time(s)	2.8×10^9	40134	655	1220	1612	2553	680	641	2504	257
		Error(l_2)	-	-	98.42	0.83	0.87	2.60	0.75	0.76	0.71	0.02

IPSS has lowest error

IPSS is fastest when $n \geq 6$

Results on ADULT

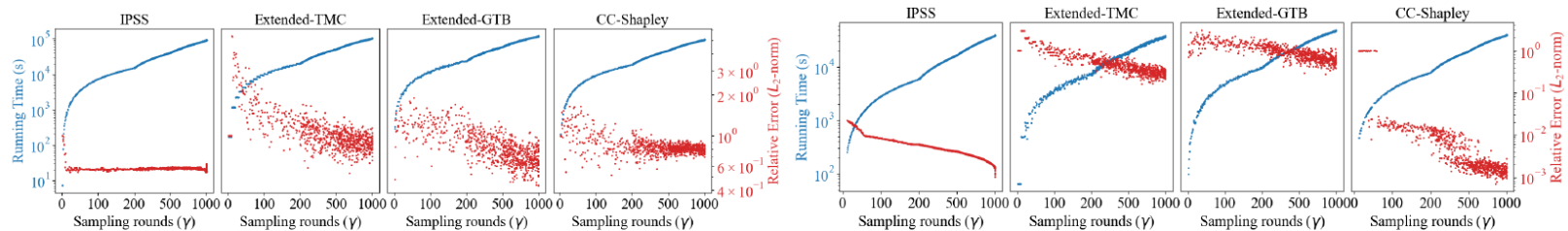
	n	Metrics	Perm-Shap.	MC-Shap.	DIG-FL	Ext-TMC	Ext-GTB	CC-Shap.	GTG-Shap.	OR	λ -MR	IPSS
MLP	3	Time(s)	720	164	94	95	138	199	59	13	48	69
		Error(l_2)	-	-	1.02	1.46	1.89	0.09	5.30	1.00	2.93	0.05
	6	Time(s)	3.3×10^5	2820	252	220	306	530	271	74	347	146
		Error(l_2)	-	-	1.12	2.30	2.02	0.18	3.65	1.00	3.21	0.13
	10	Time(s)	2.1×10^9	28983	454	732	1152	1850	1428	1127	5575	206
		Error(l_2)	-	-	1.23	2.19	1.97	0.09	3.95	0.99	3.83	0.08
XGB	3	Time(s)	29.2	6.5	4.7	not applicable				\	\	1.8
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.9					\	\	0.04
	6	Time(s)	13308	96	19	14	22	25	25	\	\	3
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.98	2.16	1.77	0.13	0.13	\	\	0.07
	10	Time(s)	1.7×10^8	2256	50	81	111	151	151	\	\	5
		Error(l_2)	-	-	0.98	1.41	1.59	0.13	0.13	\	\	0.12

IPSS achieves the best accuracy and efficiency when FL client number ≥ 3

Experiments: In-depth analysis

34

1) Impacts of varying the sampling rounds



(a) Results of using the MLP as FL model.

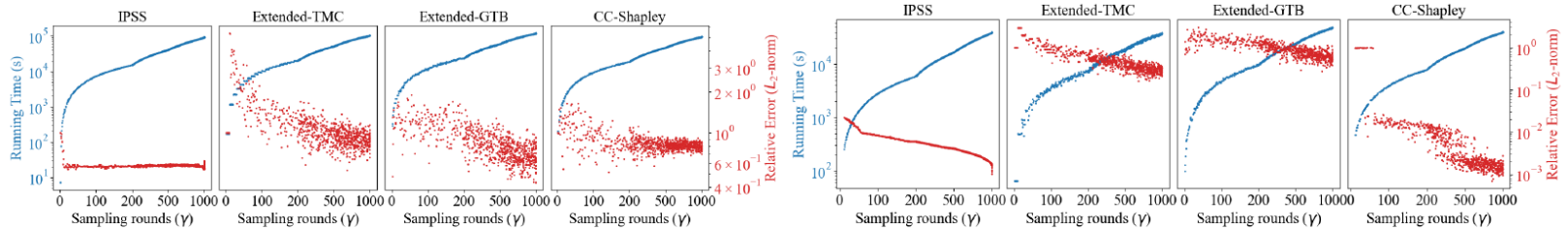
(b) Results of using the CNN as FL model.

IPSS has lower error using smaller sampling rounds

Experiments: In-depth analysis

35

1) Impacts of varying the sampling rounds

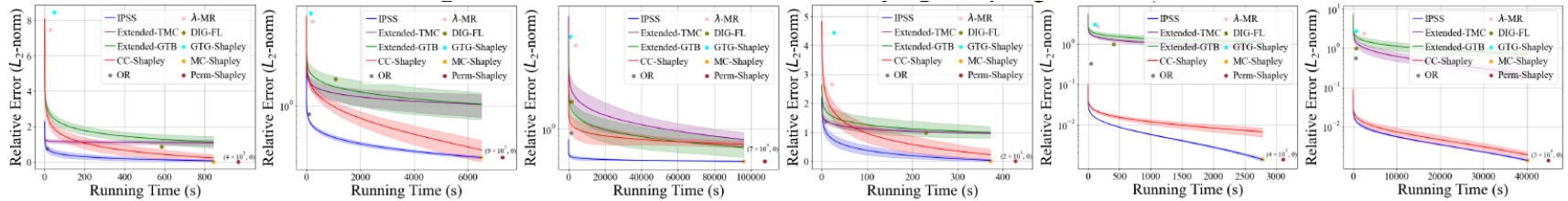


(a) Results of using the MLP as FL model.

(b) Results of using the CNN as FL model.

IPSS has lower error using smaller sampling rounds

2) Pareto curves for time-error trade-off



(a) Client#3+MLP

(b) Client#6+MLP

(c) Client#10+MLP

(d) Client#3+CNN

(e) Client#6+CNN

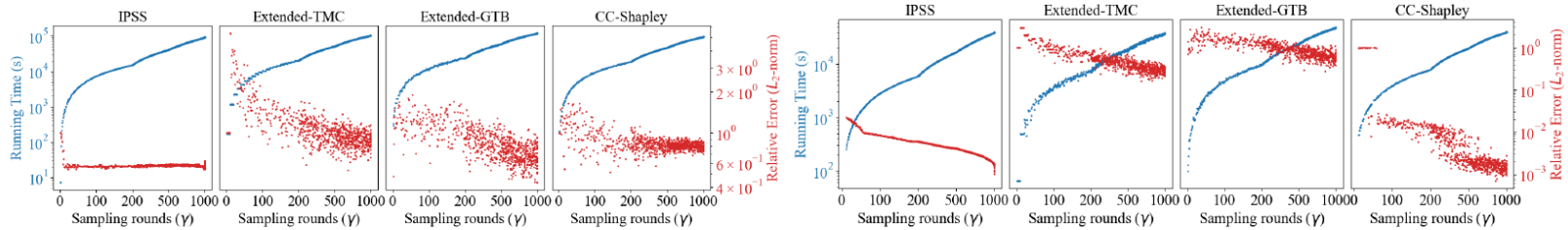
(f) Client#10+CNN

IPSS achieves Pareto optimal for efficiency and accuracy

Experiments: In-depth analysis

36

1) Impacts of varying the sampling rounds

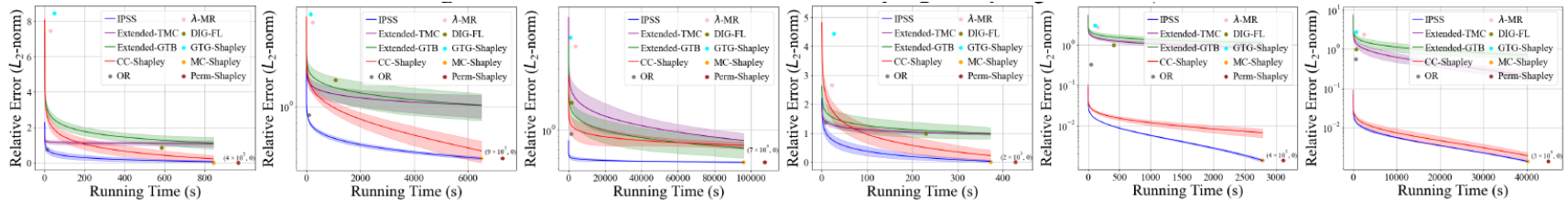


(a) Results of using the MLP as FL model.

(b) Results of using the CNN as FL model.

IPSS has lower error using smaller sampling rounds

2) Pareto curves for time-error trade-off



(a) Client#3+MLP

(b) Client#6+MLP

(c) Client#10+MLP

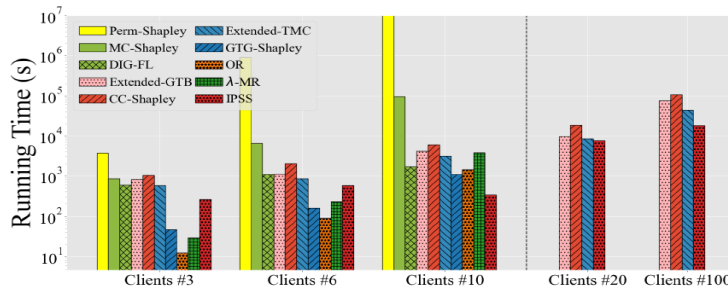
(d) Client#3+CNN

(e) Client#6+CNN

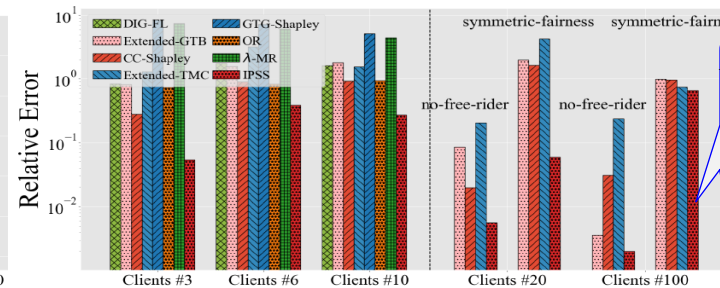
(f) Client#10+CNN

IPSS achieves Pareto optimal for efficiency and accuracy

3) Scalability test for more FL clients (up to 100 FL clients)



(a) Time cost of varying the client number.



(b) Approximation error of varying the client number.

IPSS still performs better for a larger number of clients

- Background and Motivation
- Problem Statement
- Our Solutions
- Experiments
- Conclusion

- *We propose a unified stratified sampling-based approximation framework that seamlessly integrates both the MC-SV-based and CC-SV-based computation schemes.*
- *We identify a crucial phenomenon, where only limited dataset combinations highly impact final data value results in FL.*
- *We propose a practical approximation algorithm, IPSS, which significantly improves the efficiency with high accuracy.*
- *We conduct extensive evaluations on real and synthetic datasets to validate that the proposed IPSS algorithm outperforms nine representative baselines in efficiency and effectiveness.*

Q & A

THANK YOU

Hong Kong SAR, China | May 19 – 23, 2025

if you have further problems, feel free to email
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source codes are available at
<https://github.com/t0ush1/Shapley-Data-Valuation>