

Classifying record pairs by means of Extreme Value Theory

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This document is a (practical) description of a procedure for Record Linkage by means of Extreme Value Theory (EVT). No training data are used, but user decisions are necessary for the selection of thresholds in a mean residual life plot. The amount of manual work is smaller compared to the classical Record Linkage procedure, where classification thresholds are set based on clerical review, and involves no review of record pairs.

In the following, the data set `RLdata500` will be used. As classification with EVT is weight-based, weights have to be calculated for the record pairs to classify.

```
> data(RLdata500)
> rpairs = compare.dedup(RLdata500, identity = identity.RLdata500,
+   blockfld = list(1, 3, 5, 6, 7), strcmp = 1:4)
> rpairs = emWeights(rpairs)
```

Calling `getParetoThreshold` opens a mean residual life (MRL) plot for the computed weights, as shown in figure 1. From this graph, a suitable interval has to be selected where the graph has a relatively long and approximately linear descent. Usually this can be found in the range between 0 and 20 for weights computed with `emWeights` or between 0.5 and 0.9 for weights computed with `epiWeights`. Figure 2 shows the same MRL plot with the appropriate segment marked.

The interval is selected by clicking on the endpoints of the desired segment of the graph. In some cases the right endpoint is identical to the edge of the graph, in this case only selection of the left endpoint is necessary. See the documentation of `identify` for more information on selecting points on a plot.

As an alternative to interactive selection, the interval can be given as argument to `getParetoThreshold`. The return value is in every case a threshold which can be used directly for classification.

```
> threshold = getParetoThreshold(rpairs,
+   interval = c(0.5, 17))
> result = emClassify(rpairs, threshold)
> summary(result)
```

Deduplication Data Set

500 records

18643 record pairs

50 matches

18593 non-matches

0 pairs with unknown status

Weight distribution:

[-30,-25]	(-25,-20]	(-20,-15]	(-15,-10]	(-10,-5]
13320	2505	1492	1079	175
(-5,0]	(0,5]	(5,10]	(10,15]	(15,20]
22	8	18	21	0
(20,25]	(25,30]			
0	3			

42 links detected

0 possible links detected

18601 non-links detected

alpha error: 0.160000

beta error: 0.000000

accuracy: 0.999571

Classification table:

classification				
true status	N	P	L	
FALSE	18593	0	0	
TRUE	8	0	42	

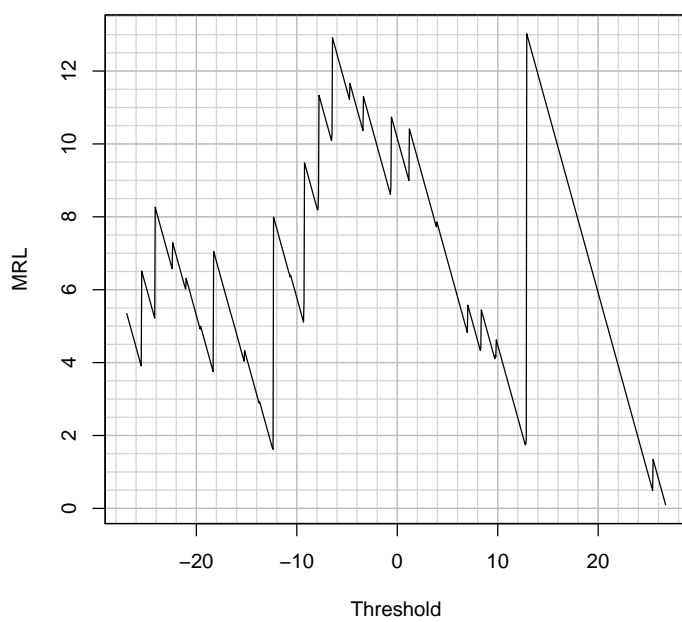


Figure 1: MRL plot

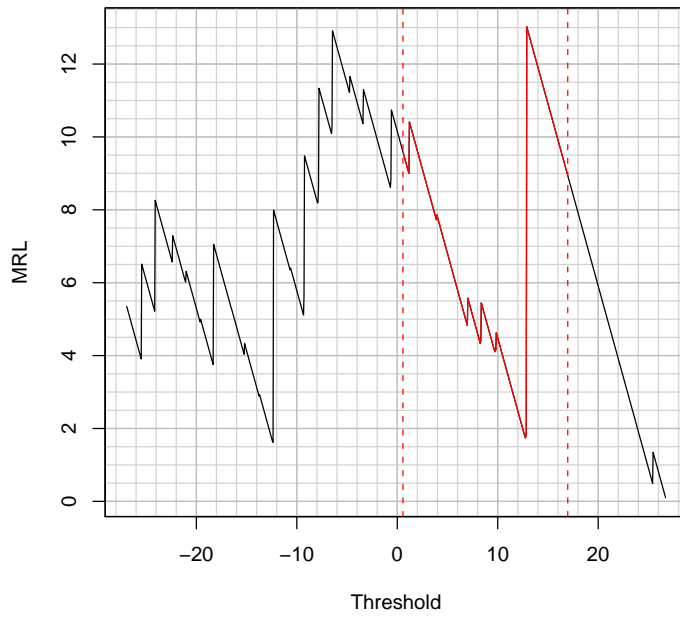


Figure 2: MRL plot with appropriate graph segment marked