Notes

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Abstract

These notes are taken from things I've read. None of this work is my own. I have made small edits in the way of phrasing, and I have attempted to make certain statements and/or arguments more transparent.

Contents

§ 1 Correlation bounds for fields and matroids

[HSW21] [Annotated copy]

This paper of Huh, Schröter, and Wang gives new bounds on the correlation for bases of matroids. It also proves a new bound on the correlation constant of fields. This paper leverages the Hodge theory for matroids developed by Adiprasito, Huh, and Katz.

1.1 Introduction

Motivated by Kirchoff's work on electrical networks and some conjectures by Mason, we seek to show that, for some Matroid M and basis B, the correlation between events $i \in B$ and $j \in B$ is negative. More specifically, given some weight w_e on elements of a matroid's ground set and the supposition $\mathbb{P}(b = B) \propto \prod_{e \in b} w_e$, we wish to show that

$$\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \in B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \notin B) \leq \mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \notin B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \in B).$$

We are able to show the following results:

Theorem 5

If M is a rank d matroid, then

$$\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \in B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \notin B) \leq 2\left(1 - \frac{1}{d}\right)\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \notin B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \in B).$$

Theorem 6

If M is a rank d matroid and i, j are free elements, then

$$\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \in B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \notin B) \leq \left(1 - \frac{1}{d}\right)\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \notin B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \in B).$$

Theorem 7

If $\mathbb{F}$ is a field, then the correlation constant $\alpha_{\mathbb{F}} = \sup\{\alpha(M)\}$ (where the supremum is taken over all matroids representable over $\mathbb{F}$) satisfies

$$8/7 \leq \alpha_{\mathbb{F}} \leq 2.$$

Theorems 5 and 6 follow from constructing a matrix whose determinant leverages the condition $\mathbb{P}(b = B) \propto \prod_{e \in b} w_e$ to show the appropriate bounds. Theorem 7's upper bound follows from Theorem 5, and the lower bound is given by construction.

These theorems prove a conjecture of Mason as a corollary, as well as yielding new bounds for the asymptotic entropy of I_m, the number of independent sets of size m.

1.2 Theorem 5

Before we begin, we summarize the proof of Theorem 5:

> We will construct an element y_e of the Chow ring that vanishes under products unless the es are basis elements. This will allow us to construct an element L_{ij} of the Chow ring whose image under deg is proportional to the probability of elements i and j being in a basis or not. This element L_{ij} has a natural description as being attached to a submodular function on $2^{\overline{E}}$, which will allow us to apply the Hodge-Riemann relations to a symmetric matrix whose determinant yields the result.

Let M be a matroid of rank d and $\overline{M}$ the matroid given by adding 0 as a coloop. We define

$$y_e \triangleq \sum_{0 \in \overline{F}, e \notin \overline{F}} x_{\overline{F}} \in A(\overline{M})$$

where our sum is over all proper flats $\overline{F}$ containing zero and not containing e. By the fact that this sum lives in the Chow ring we have that

$$y_e = \sum_{0 \in \overline{F}, e \notin \overline{F}} x_{\overline{F}} = \sum_{0 \notin \overline{F}, e \in \overline{F}} x_{\overline{F}}. \tag{1}$$

Further, we have that

$$x_{\overline{F}} \cdot y_e = 0 \tag{2}$$

for any $\overline{F}$ containing exactly one of 0 or e. In particular, $y_e^2 = 0$. We refer to (1) and (2) as the "xy relations." We first prove a number of results regarding these elements and their image under the deg isomorphism given in [AHK18].

Lemma 14

For any dependent set J,

$$\prod_{e \in J} y_e = 0.$$

Proof. Without loss of generality we suppose that J is a circuit. Let I be a maximal independent set in J, and pick some $f \in I$ and $g \in J \setminus I$. Then $(I \setminus f) \cup g$ is a maximal independent set of J as well. The set of flats containing $(I \setminus f) \cup 0$ and not containing f is equivalent to the set of flats containing $(I \setminus f) \cup 0$ and not containing g, as adding either would increase the rank of $(I \setminus f) \cup 0$. Therefore

$$\prod_{e \in I} y_e = y_f \prod_{e \in I \setminus f} y_e = y_g \prod_{e \in I \setminus f} y_e.$$

Therefore we may write

$$\prod_{e \in J} y_e = \prod_{e \in I} y_e \prod_{e \in J \setminus I} y_e = 0.$$

△

Lemma 15

If B is a d-element set of M, then

$$\deg\left(\prod_{e \in B} y_e\right) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } B \text{ is a basis,} \\ 0 & \text{if } B \text{ is not a basis.} \end{cases}$$

Proof. Note that the dependent case follows by Lemma 14. Now suppose B is a basis and without loss of generality write $B = \{1, \ldots, d\}$. Let $\overline{F}_k$ be the smallest flat containing $0, 1, \ldots, k-1$. Because B is a basis $\overline{F}_k$ is the only flat of M containing $0, 1, \ldots, k-1$, not containing k, and comparable to $\overline{F}_{k-1}$. Then we have by the xy relations,

$$\begin{aligned} y_1 y_2 \ldots y_{d-2} y_{d-1} y_d &= y_1 y_2 \ldots y_{d-2} y_{d-1} x_{\overline{F}_d} \\ &= y_1 y_2 \ldots y_{d-2} x_{\overline{F}_{d-1}} x_{\overline{F}_d} = \cdots = x_{\overline{F}_1} \ldots x_{\overline{F}_d}, \end{aligned}$$

and [AHK18] tells us that $\deg(x_{\overline{F}_1} \ldots x_{\overline{F}_d}) = 1$. △

Now we will define an element

$$L_{ij} = L_{ij}(w) = \sum_{e \neq i, e \neq j} w_e y_e$$

and prove some nice properties about it. Let $\mathcal{B}^{ij}$ be the set of bases not containing i and j, $\mathcal{B}^i_j$ the set of bases containing j and not containing i, and $\mathcal{B}_{ij}$ the set of bases containing both i and j. Firstly,

$$\begin{aligned} \deg\left(L_{ij}^d\right) &= \deg\left(\left(\sum_{e \neq i, e \neq j} w_e y_e\right)^d\right) \\ &= d! \sum_{B \in \mathcal{B}^{ij}} \prod_{e \in B} w_e \end{aligned}$$

The last equality can be seen by noting that, in the product, any term whose corresponding collection of elements (i.e. $y_1 y_2$ corresponds to $\{1, 2\}$) is not a basis goes to zero by Lemma 15. Any term whose corresponding collection of elements does form a basis will be mapped to the product of the weights, and for each of these we will have $d!$ copies as there are $d!$ ways to order the basis elements, all of which will occur in the product.

We have the following equalities by similar arguments:

$$\deg\left(y_i L_{ij}^{d-1}\right) = (d-1)! \sum_{B \in \mathcal{B}^j_i} \prod_{e \in B} w_e,$$

$$\deg\left(y_i y_j L_{ij}^{d-2}\right) = (d-2)! \sum_{B \in \mathcal{B}_{ij}} \prod_{e \in B} w_e.$$

If $\mathcal{B}^{ij}$ or $\mathcal{B}_{ij}$ are empty, we have that $\mathbb{P}(i \in B, j \in B)\mathbb{P}(i \notin B, j \notin B) = 0$ and so Theorem 5 holds. Suppose now that both are nonempty.

Let L be any element of $A^1(\overline{M})$ (the first graded component of the Chow ring) associated to a strictly submodular function on $2^{\overline{E}}$. To L_{ij} we may associate a submodular function (see annotated text), and from this we see that we may apply the Hodge-Riemann relations to the element $L_{ij} + \varepsilon L$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$. These Hodge-Riemann relations imply that the matrix associated to the symmetric bilinear form

$$A^1(\overline{M}) \times A^1(\overline{M}) \to \mathbb{R}, \quad (\eta_1, \eta_2) \mapsto \deg\left(\eta_1 \eta_2 (L_{ij} + \varepsilon L)^{d-2}\right)$$

has exactly one positive eigenvalue. Then by continuity we also have that the matrix representing the symmetric bilinear form

$$A^1(\overline{M}) \times A^1(\overline{M}) \to \mathbb{R}, \quad (a_1, a_2) \mapsto \deg\left(a_1 a_2 L_{ij}^{d-2}\right)$$

also has at most one positive eigenvalue. Now consider the symmetric matrix

$$H_{ij} \;]\!\!= [$$

1.3 Theorem 6

1.4 Theorem 7

§ 2 Hyperbolicity and stable polynomials in combinatorics and probability

[Pem12] [Annotated copy]

2.1 Definitions and properties

A (homogeneous) polynomial is *hyperbolic* in direction $\mathbf{x}$ if it satisfies $p(\mathbf{x} + i\mathbf{y}) \neq 0$ for all $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^d$. We care mostly about the homogeneous case.

Related to this notion is stability. A polynomial is *stable* if it is nonzero on the upper half-plane. In fact, we have the following relationship between the two:

Proposition 1.3.

A real homogeneous polynomial p is stable if and only if it is hyperbolic in direction ξ for all ξ in the positive orthant.

So stability is just hyperbolicity across the entire positive orthant.

2.1.1 Homogeneous hyperbolic polynomials

Hyperbolicity is equivalent to the following "real-rootedness" property:

Proposition 2.2.

The homogeneous polynomial p is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$ if and only if for any $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ the univariate polynomial $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$ has only real roots.

Proof. Homogeneity yields that for any nonzero λ, $p(\lambda \mathbf{z}) = 0$ if and only if $p(\mathbf{z}) = 0$. Letting $\lambda = is$ for real s we find that

$$\text{“}p(\mathbf{x} + i\mathbf{y}) \neq 0 \text{ for all } \mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^d\text{”}$$

is equivalent to

$$\text{“}p(\mathbf{y} + is\mathbf{x}) \neq 0 \text{ for all } y \in \mathbb{R}^d \text{ and all nonzero real } s,\text{”}$$

as we may simply scale by λ and then rescale $\mathbf{y}$ appropriately. △

This reformulation, where we write $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$, will prove useful in our study of hyperbolic polynomials. Indeed, let us see that this polynomial gives us a useful narrowing of our object of study.

Denoting by $t_k(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y})$ the roots of $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$, we may write

$$p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x}) = p(\mathbf{x}) \prod_{k=1}^{m} (t - t_k(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y})).$$

Proposition 2.2 shows us that these roots must all be real if p is to be hyperbolic. Therefore $p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})/p(\mathbf{x})$ is a real polynomial, and so we may restrict our discussion to polynomials with real coefficients without loss of generality.

Now we present two ways to construct new hyperbolic polynomials from old ones.

Proposition 2.5.

(i) If q_1 and q_2 are hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$, then so is $q_1 q_2$.

(ii) Let p be a homogeneous polynomial of degree m that is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$. Denote by $p_0, \ldots, p_m$ the coefficients of $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$, as below:

$$p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{k=0}^{m} p_k(\mathbf{y}) t^k.$$

Then p_k is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$.

Proof. The first claim follows by definition. For the second claim, first we will show that if p is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$, then so is its directional derivative, $D_{\mathbf{x}}(p)$.

Note that if f has only real roots, then so does f'. Now we see that if $f(t) = p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$, then $f'(t)$ given by $t \mapsto D_{\mathbf{x}}(p)(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$ has only real roots for all $\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{R}^d$. Therefore $D_{\mathbf{x}}(p)$ is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$.

Now recall the expansion of $p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x})$ into homogeneous parts,

$$p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x} = \sum_{k=0}^{m} p_k(\mathbf{y} t^k.$$

Each part is given by

$$p_k(\mathbf{y}) = \frac{1}{k!} \left(\frac{d}{dt} \right)^k \Bigg|_{t=0} p(\mathbf{y} + t\mathbf{x}) = (D_{\mathbf{x}})^k (p)(\mathbf{y}).$$

As we already noted, the directional derivative preserves hyperbolicity, and so we find that each p_k is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$. △

2.1.2 Cones of hyperbolicity for homogeneous polynomials

Hyperbolic polynomials are not just hyperbolic in one direction. In fact, by deleting the hyperplane on which they are zero we form a number of connected components of $\mathbb{R}^d$ on which the polynomial may or may not be hyperbolic.

Proposition 2.6.

Suppose p is a homogeneous polynomial hyperbolic in direction ξ. Dividing by a real multiple of $p(\xi)$ we may suppose that p is real and that $p(\xi) = 1$. Let $K(p, \xi)$ denote the connected component of the set $\mathbb{R}^d \setminus \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^d \mid p(\mathbf{x}) = 0\}$ that contains ξ.

(i) p is hyperbolic in direction $\mathbf{x}$ for all $\mathbf{x} \in K(p, \xi)$.

(ii) The set $K(p, \xi)$ is an open convex cone (the *cone of hyperbolicity for* p)

(iii) $K(p, \xi)$ is equal to the set $\mathcal{K}$ of vectors $\mathbf{x}$ for which all roots of $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{x} + t\xi)$ are real and negative.

Proof. We first note that the condition

"the roots of $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{x} + t\xi)$ are all real and negative"

is equivalent to the condition

"no root of $t \mapsto p(\mathbf{x} + t\xi)$ is real and nonnegative."

This is because hyperbolicity of p in direction ξ gives us that the roots are always real (Proposition 2.2.), so negativity is the only condition that can be violated.

By continuity of a polynomial with respect to its coefficients, $\mathcal{K}$ must be open. We can also immediately see that $\xi \in \mathcal{K}$, as $p(\xi + t\xi) = (1+t)^m p(\xi)$ where m is the degree of p.

Suppose that $\mathbf{x}$ is in the closure $\overline{\mathcal{K}}$. Then by the continuity of △

§ 3 Negative dependence and the geometry of polynomials

[BBL08] [Annotated copy]

Reference sheet

A polynomial is said to be *multi-affine* if it has degree at most one in each variable.

A measure μ is said to satisfy the *negative lattice condition* (NLC) if

$$\mu(S)\mu(T) \geq \mu(S \cup T)\mu(S \cap T),$$

and a (multi-affine) polynomial is said to be NLC if it is the generating polynomial of an NLC measure. In fact, there is a 1-1 correspondence between measures on the boolean algebra on n elements and multi-affine polynomials in n variables.

A measure is said to be *symmetric* if for all $\sigma \in \mathfrak{S}_n$ we have $\sigma(\mu) = \mu$. Equivalently, the generating polynomial g_μ is symmetric. A measure is *almost-symmetric* if g_μ is symmetric in all but at most one variable.

A collection of subsets $\mathcal{A} \subseteq 2^{[n]}$ is an *increasing event* if it is closed upwards under containment.

A measure is *pairwise negatively correlated* (p-NC) if $\mu(X_i)\mu(X_j) \geq \mu(X_i X_j)$ whenever $1 \leq i \neq j \leq n$. This is the weakest negative dependence property.

A measure satisfies the *hereditary negative lattice condition* (h-NLC) if every projection of that measure is NLC. The *strong hereditary negative lattice condition* (h-NLC+) is satisfied by a measure if imposing any external field results in an h-NLC measure.

A polynomial $f \in \mathcal{P}_n$ (the space of all multi-affine polynomials in n variables with nonnegative coefficients satisfying $f(\mathbf{1}) = 1$) is said to be *Rayleigh* if

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial z_i}(x)\frac{\partial f}{\partial z_j}(x) \geq \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial z_i \partial z_j}(x) f(x)$$

for all $1 \leq i, j \leq n$ and all $x \in \mathbb{R}^n_+$.

> **Proposition 2.2**
>
> A measure in $\mathfrak{B}_n$ or a polynomial in $\mathcal{P}_n$ is Rayleigh if and only if it is h-NLC+.

§ 4 Polynomials with the half-plane property and matroid theory

[Brä07] [Annotated copy]

This paper of Brändén proves a number of results that relate the support of multi-affine polynomials satisfying the half-plane property to matroid theory, resolving a conjecture of Choe, Oxley, Sokal, and Wagner.

4.1 Delta-matroids and jump systems

Delta-matroids, introduced by Bouchet, generalize the exchange axioms for independent sets. A *delta-matroid* is a pair $(\mathcal{F}, E)$ where $\mathcal{F}$ is a collection of subsets of a finite set E satisfying

(a) $\bigcup_{A\in\mathcal{F}} A = E$

(b) (Symmetric exchange axiom) For any $A, B \in \mathcal{F}$ and $x \in A\Delta B$, there exists some $y \in A\Delta B$ such that $A\Delta\{x, y\} \in \mathcal{F}$.

Above we write $A\Delta B = (A \cup B) \setminus (A \cap B)$ for the symmetric difference operator. Delta-matroids whose elements of $\mathcal{F}$ are hereditary (i.e. $A \in \mathcal{F},\ B \subseteq A \implies B \in \mathcal{F}$) are independent sets of some matroid, and requiring that all elements of $\mathcal{F}$ be the same size results in a delta-matroid whose family $\mathcal{F}$ is a family of bases for some matroid.

Bouchet and Cunningham introduced jump systems as further generalizations of delta-matroids. Let $\alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{Z}^n$ and define

$$|\alpha| \triangleq \sum_{i=1}^{n} |\alpha_i|.$$

Also define the *set of steps from α to β* by

$$\mathrm{St}(\alpha, \beta) \triangleq \{\sigma \in \mathbb{Z}^n \mid |\sigma| = 1, |\alpha - \beta + \sigma| = |\alpha - \beta| - 1\}.$$

Jump systems are subsets of $\mathbb{Z}^n$ satisfying the *two-step axiom*:

If $\alpha, \beta \in \mathcal{F}$, $\sigma \in \mathrm{St}(\alpha, \beta)$, and $\alpha + \sigma \notin \mathcal{F}$ then there is $\tau \in \mathrm{St}(\alpha + \sigma, \beta)$ such that $\alpha + \sigma + \tau \in \mathcal{F}$.

As a quick note, delta-matroids are precisely the jump systems satisfying $\mathcal{F} \subseteq \{0, 1\}^n$. We may view the vectors here as indicator vectors.

4.2 The support of polynomials with the half-plane property

We say a polynomial has the *half-plane propety* if it is nonzero on some open half-plane in $\mathbb{C}$ whose boundary contains the origin. We also refer to these polynomials as being H-stable for some half-plane H. If a polynomial is H-stable on the right half-plane, we say it is *Hurwitz stable*.

Proposition 3.1

Let $f \in \mathbb{C}[z_1, \ldots, z_n]$ be H-stable. Then either $\partial f/\partial z_1 = 0$ or $\partial f/\partial z_1$ is H-stable.

§ 5 Semimatroids and their Tutte polynomials

[Ard04] [Annotated copy]

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