Double Turán Problem

Ray Tsai

May 12, 2025

Overview

- Turán Problem
- 2 Double Turán Problem
- 3 Induced Double Turán Problem
- Proof of Theorem B
- Proof of Theorem C
- Concluding Remarks



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Turán Problem

Turán Problem

Given a graph F, how many edges can an n-vertex graph have while containing no copy of F as a subgraph?

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Turán Number

$$ex(n, F) := max\{e(G) : |V(G)| = n \text{ and } F \not\subseteq G\}$$

Turán Problem

Turán's Theorem [Tur41]

For $r + 1 \ge 3$,

$$\operatorname{ex}(n,K_{r+1})=e(T_r(n)),$$

with equality for graph G only if $G = T_r(n)$.

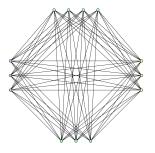
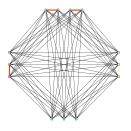


Figure: $T_4(13)$

Erdős-Stone Theorem

Erdős-Stone Theorem [ES46], Simonovits' Theorem [ES66]

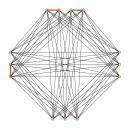
Let F be any graph of chromatic number $r+1\geq 2$. Then $ex(n,F)=e(T_r(n))+o(n^2)$ as $n\to\infty$.



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Let F be any graph of chromatic number $r+1 \geq 2$. Then $ex(n,F) = e(T_r(n)) + o(n^2)$ as $n \to \infty$.



Supersaturation Theorem [ES83]

For all $\epsilon > 0$, there exists $\delta > 0$ such that if G is a n-vertex graph with $\operatorname{ex}(n,F) + \epsilon n^2$ edges, then G contains $\delta n^{v(F)}$ copies of F.

What is the double Turán problem?

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Let G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_m be graphs on [n] with $E(F) \not\subseteq E(G_i) \cap E(G_j)$ for distinct $i, j \in [m]$.

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Is this tight?

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Theorem A

Let $n \geq 1$ and F be a non-bipartite graph. Then as $m \to \infty$

$$\phi(m, n, F) = (1 + o(1))m \cdot ex(n, F).$$

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$$\phi(3, n, K_3) = \binom{n}{2} + \lfloor n/2 \rfloor$$

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The case for $F = K_r$ can be reduced to a finite computation.

$$\phi(3, n, K_3) = \binom{n}{2} + \lfloor n/2 \rfloor$$

But

$$\lim_{n\to\infty}\frac{\phi(4,n,K_3)}{\binom{n}{2}+3\lfloor n/4\rfloor}>1$$

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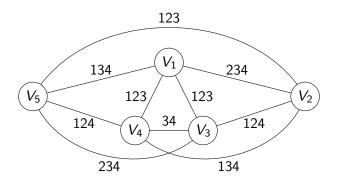


Figure: Construction for four graphs not containing a double- K_3

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Theorem B (Wilson)

Let F be a graph. If there exists an extremal F-free n-vertex graph with maximum degree at most \sqrt{n}/m^2 , then

$$\phi(m,n,F) = \binom{n}{2} + \binom{m}{2} \exp(n,F).$$

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By the Erdős-Stone theorem, this only applies to certain bipartite graphs.

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e.g. The extremal graph for P_2 is a matching, which has maximum degree 1 and $ex(n, P_2) = \lfloor n/2 \rfloor$.





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Double Turán problems are closely related to Turán problems for 3-uniform hypergraphs H through link graphs.

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Link Graph

For $i \in V(H)$, define graph H_i with

$$V(H_i) = V(H) \setminus \{i\}$$
 and $E(H_i) = \{\{j, k\} : \{i, j, k\} \in E(H)\}.$

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Example: Octahedron-free 3-uniform hypergraph H



Figure: Octahedron $K_{2,2,2}^{(3)}$

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Conjecture [Erd64]

$$ex(n, K_{2,2,2}^{(3)}) = \Theta(n^{11/4})$$

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H is octahedron-free $\implies H_1, H_2, \dots, H_n$ are double $K_{2,2}$ -free.

$$\exp(n, K_{2,2,2}^{(3)}) \le \phi(n, n, K_{2,2})$$

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Induced Graphs

We call graphs G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_m induced if each G_i is an induced subgraph of $\bigcup_{i=1}^m G_i$.

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In other words, if $\{u, v\} \in E(G_i)$ and $u, v \in V(G_j)$, then $\{u, v\} \in E(G_j)$.

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Let graphs G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_m be induced and double F-free.

Induced Double Turán Problem

What is the value of $\phi^*(m, n, F) = \max \sum_{i=1}^m e(G_i)$?

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Induced Double Turán Problem: Definition

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$$\phi(m,n,F) \geq \phi^*(m,n,F)$$



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Induced Double Turán Problem: Conjecture

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$$\phi^*(m,n,F) \ge \max \left\{ \binom{n}{2} + \binom{v(F)-1}{2}(m-1), \ m \cdot \operatorname{ex}(n,F) \right\}.$$

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Conjecture

Let F be any non-empty graph and $m, n \ge 1$. Then

$$\phi^*(m, n, F) = \Theta(m \cdot \operatorname{ex}(n, F) + n^2).$$

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Induced Double Turán Problem: Main Results

Theorem C

For $m \ge 3$ and non-bipartite F, if n is large enough, then

$$\phi^*(m, n, F) = m \cdot ex(n, F),$$

with equality only for identical extremal n-vertex F-free graphs.

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For $F = K_r$, this theorem applies for all n.

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Generalized Turán problem

What is the maximum number $ex(n, F, K_3)$ of triangles in an *n*-vertex F-free graph G?

Studied by Alon and Shikhelman [AS16] and Kostochka, Mubayi and Verstraete [KMV15; MM23; MV16].

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Ex. Octahedron-free graph G.

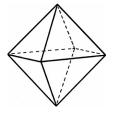


Figure: Octahedron

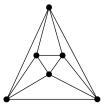


Figure: Octahedron Graph $K_{2,2,2}$

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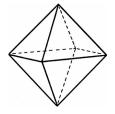


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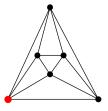


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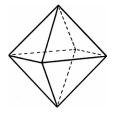


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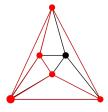


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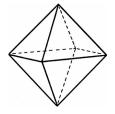


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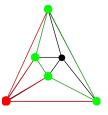


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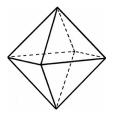


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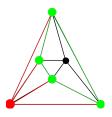


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$$G$$
 is $K_{2,2,2}$ -free $\implies G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_n$ are induced and double $K_{2,2}$ -free.

$$\exp(n, K_{2,2,2}, K_3) \le \phi^*(n, n, K_{2,2})$$

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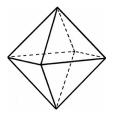


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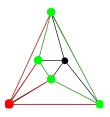


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$$ex(n, K_{2,2,2}, K_3) = \Theta(\phi^*(n, n, K_{2,2}))$$

Conjecture,

Let F be any non-empty graph and $m, n \ge 1$. Then

$$\phi^*(m, n, F) = \Theta(m \cdot \operatorname{ex}(n, F) + n^2).$$

Conjecture implies

$$ex(n, K_{2,2,2}, K_3) = \Theta(\phi^*(n, n, K_{2,2})) = \Theta(n^{5/2}).$$

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Main Results

Theorem D

Let P be a path with two edges. Then $\phi(n, n, P) = \Omega(n^{5/2})$, whereas $\phi^*(n, n, P) = o(n^{5/2})$, as $n \to \infty$. In particular,

$$\lim_{n\to\infty}\frac{\phi^*(n,n,P)}{\phi(n,n,P)}=0.$$



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This shows that $\phi(m, n, F)$ and $\phi^*(m, n, F)$ can be very different problems.



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Theorem B (Wilson)

Let F be a graph. If there exists an extremal F-free n-vertex graph with maximum degree at most \sqrt{n}/m^2 , then

$$\phi(m,n,F) = \binom{n}{2} + \binom{m}{2} \exp(n,F).$$

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We need to show

$$\phi(m, n, F) \leq {n \choose 2} + \exp(n, F) {m \choose 2}.$$

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Let E_S be the set of edges in exactly $\{G_i\}_{i \in S}$.

$$\implies \sum_{i=1}^m e(G_i) = \sum_{S\subseteq [m]} |S||E_S| \le \binom{n}{2} + \sum_{S\subseteq [m], |S| \ge 2} (|S|-1)|E_S|.$$

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$$\sum_{\substack{S\subseteq[m]\\|S|\geq 2}}(|S|-1)|E_S|=\sum_{\substack{S\subseteq[m],\\|S|=2}}\sum_{T\supseteq S}\frac{(|T|-1)|E_T|}{{|T|\choose 2}}\leq \sum_{\substack{S\subseteq[m],\\|S|=2}}\sum_{T\supseteq S}|E_T|,$$

as each $T \in [m]$ with $|T| \ge 2$ is counted $\binom{|T|}{2}$ times.



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Observation: If $|S| \ge 2$, the edge set $\bigcup_{T \supset S} E_T$ is *F*-free.

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$$\implies \sum_{\substack{S\subseteq[m]\\|S|\geq 2}}(|S|-1)|E_S|\leq \sum_{\substack{S\subseteq[m],\\|S|=2}}\sum_{T\supseteq S}|E_T|\leq \binom{m}{2}\mathrm{ex}(n,F)$$

This proves the upper bound.

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For $1 \le i < j \le m$, let H_{ij} be an extremal F-free graph on [n] with maximum degree $\Delta(H_{ij}) \le \sqrt{n}/m^2$



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We need to show

$$\phi(m, n, F) \ge \binom{n}{2} + \exp(n, F) \binom{m}{2}.$$

For $1 \le i < j \le m$, let H_{ii} be an extremal F-free graph on [n] with maximum degree $\Delta(H_{ii}) \leq \sqrt{n}/m^2$

 \implies We can pack these $\binom{m}{2}$ H_{ii} 's into [n] s.t. $E(H_{i_1i_1}) \cap E(H_{i_2i_2}) = \emptyset$

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For
$$i \in [m]$$
, put

$$G_i = H_{1i} \cup H_{2i} \cup \cdots \cup H_{im}$$



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Then
$$G_i \cap G_j = H_{ij} \implies F$$
-free

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For $i \in [m]$, put

$$G_i = H_{1i} \cup H_{2i} \cup \cdots \cup H_{im}$$

Then $G_i \cap G_j = H_{ij} \implies F$ -free

Add edges not in any of H_{ij} to G_1 .

$$\sum_{i=1}^{m} e(G_i) = 2 \underbrace{\sum_{\binom{m}{2} \in (H_{ij})}}_{\binom{m}{2} \in x(n,F)} + \underbrace{\left| E(K_n) \setminus \bigsqcup_{\binom{n}{2} - \binom{m}{2} \in x(n,F)}}_{\binom{n}{2} - \binom{m}{2} \in x(n,F)} = \binom{n}{2} + \binom{m}{2} \exp(n,F)$$

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Theorem C: Complete Graph Case

Let $m, n, r \geq 3$. Then

$$\phi^*(m,n,K_r)=m\cdot e(T_{r-1}(n)),$$

with equality for induced K_r -free graphs G_1, G_2, \ldots, G_m only if $G_1 = G_2 = \cdots = G_m = T_{r-1}(n)$.



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Theorem C: Complete Graph Case

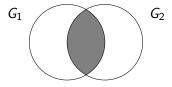
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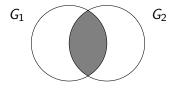
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IDEA: Reduce to m = 2.

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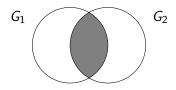


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 $G_1 \cap G_2$ (gray area) is double K_r -free.

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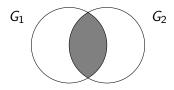


 $G_1 \cap G_2$ (gray area) is double K_r -free.

If G_1 , G_2 intersects in t vertices, then

$$e(G_1) + e(G_2) \le {n-t \choose 2} + (n-t)t + 2T_{r-1}(t)$$

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 $G_1 \cap G_2$ (gray area) is double K_r -free.

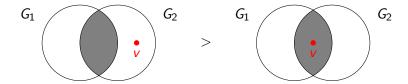
If G_1 , G_2 intersects in t vertices, then

$$e(G_1) + e(G_2) \le {n-t \choose 2} + (n-t)t + 2T_{r-1}(t)$$

 \implies we are done if the unique maximum occurs at t = n.

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Put
$$f(t,r) := \binom{n-t}{2} + (n-t)t + 2T_{r-1}(t)$$

For example, if r = 4,

$$f(t+1,4) - f(t,4) = -t + 1 + 2[\underbrace{T_3(t+1) - T_3(t)}_{t - \lceil \frac{t}{2} \rceil}] = t + 1 - 2 \lceil \frac{t}{2} \rceil > 0$$

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⇒ The larger the intersection, the larger the sum of edges.

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⇒ The larger the intersection, the larger the sum of edges.

 \implies The best we can do is $G_1 = G_2 = T_3(n)$.

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Concluding Remarks: Induced Double Turán Problem

Conjecture

Let F be any non-empty graph and $m, n \ge 1$. Then

$$\phi^*(m,n,F) = \Theta(m \cdot \operatorname{ex}(n,F) + n^2).$$

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Concluding Remarks: Induced Double Turán Problem

Conjecture

Let F be any non-empty graph and $m, n \ge 1$. Then

$$\phi^*(m, n, F) = \Theta(m \cdot ex(n, F) + n^2).$$

This conjecture is broadly open for bipartite graphs.



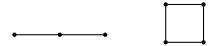
Concluding Remarks: Induced Double Turán Problem

Conjecture

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$$\phi^*(m, n, F) = \Theta(m \cdot ex(n, F) + n^2).$$

This conjecture is broadly open for bipartite graphs.



Solving the conjecture would give a solution to $ex(n, K_{2,2,2}, K_3)$.

Concluding Remarks: Double Turán Problem

For non-bipartite F, $\phi(m, n, F)$ case is likely intractable.

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Concluding Remarks: Double Turán Problem

For non-bipartite F, $\phi(m, n, F)$ case is likely intractable.

We only know $\phi(3, n, K_3) = \binom{n}{2} + \lfloor n/2 \rfloor$. The rest is open.

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Concluding Remarks: Double Turán Problem

For non-bipartite F, $\phi(m, n, F)$ case is likely intractable.

We only know $\phi(3, n, K_3) = \binom{n}{2} + \lfloor n/2 \rfloor$. The rest is open.

$$\lim_{n\to\infty}\frac{\phi(4,n,K_3)}{m\binom{n}{2}}=??$$

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