

Deformations of space curves lying on a del Pezzo surface

Hirokazu Nasu

Tokai University

June 12, 2025

2025 Algebraic Geometry Conference in Jeonju Hanok Village



Today's slide

Plan of Talk

- 1 Hilbert schemes and deformation of flags
- 2 Kleppe-Ellia conjecture and its generalization (Main result)
(cf. [arXiv:2501.15788](https://arxiv.org/abs/2501.15788))
- 3 Applications and Examples

§1 Hilbert schemes and deformation of flags

the Hilbert scheme

Given a projective scheme X , and given Hilbert polynomial P ,

$$\mathbf{Hilb}_P X = \{C \subset X \mid \text{closed subscheme of } P(C) = P\}$$

is called the **Hilbert scheme** of X . The Hilbert scheme has the following nice properties:

- fine moduli scheme, i.e. it has a **universal family** $\mathcal{C} \subset X \times \mathbf{Hilb}_P X$ such that every deformation of C in X derived from \mathcal{C}
- **projective** ($\mathbf{Hilb}_P X \hookrightarrow \mathbf{Gr}$)
- existence of nice **deformation theories**, e.g., if C is a loc. c.i., then $H^0(N_{C/X})$ and $H^1(N_{C/X})$ resp. represent the tangent and obstruction spaces at $[C]$.

while it also has “not so nice” properties: e.g.

- it may have **bad singularities** (e.g. non-reduced components),
- may be **highly reducible** (for some P).

Hilbert-flag scheme

Given a sequence $C \subset S \subset X$ of closed subscheme, Hilbert-flag scheme represents

$$\mathbf{HF} X = \{(C, S) \mid C \subset S \subset X\} \subset \mathbf{Hilb} X \times \mathbf{Hilb} X.$$

Let

$$N_{(C,S)} := N_{C/X} \times_{N_{S/X}|_C} N_{S/X}$$

be the normal sheaf of (C, S) in X .

$$H^i(N_{(C,S)/X}) = 0 \text{ for all } i > 0 \implies \mathbf{HF} X \text{ is nonsingular at } (C, S)$$

and of expected dimension.

Stable degeneration

Let $C \subset S \subset X$ a sequence of closed subvarieties with $H^i(N_{(C,S)/X}) = 0$ for all $i > 0$.

Definition 1

We say C is **stably degenerate** or **stably contained in S** , if for every small global deformation C' of C in X , there exists a global deformation S' of S in X such that S' containing C' .

We have the following implications:

$$(1) \implies (2) \implies (3)$$

where

- ① $H^1(I_{C/S} \otimes_S N_{S/X}) = 0$.
- ② $pr_1 : \mathbf{HF} X \rightarrow \mathbf{Hilb} X, (C', S') \mapsto [C']$ is smooth at (C, S) .
- ③ C is stably degenerate

§2 Kleppe-Ellia conjecture and its generalization

Kleppe-Ellia conjecture

He proposed a conjecture, which can be reformulated as follows:

Conjecture (Kleppe'87, modified by Ellia'87)

Let $C \subset S_3 \subset \mathbb{P}^3$ be a smooth curve of degree $d \geq 14$ and genus g lying on a smooth cubic surface $S_3 \subset \mathbb{P}^3$. Then C is stably degenerate if

- ① $\chi(I_C(3)) \geq 1$ ($\Leftrightarrow g \geq 3d - 18$),
- ② C is linearly normal, and
- ③ C is general in $[C] \in \text{Pic } S_3$.

K-E conj. is non-trivial only if C is not 3-normal ($\Leftrightarrow H^1(I_C(3)) \neq 0$). In fact, otherwise, $pr_1 : \mathbf{HF} \mathbb{P}^3 \rightarrow \mathbf{Hilb} \mathbb{P}^3$ is smooth at (C, S) by

$$H^0(N_{(C,S)/\mathbb{P}^3}) \xrightarrow{p_1} H^0(N_{C/\mathbb{P}^3}) \rightarrow \underbrace{H^1(N_{S/\mathbb{P}^3}(-C))}_{\simeq H^1(I_C(3))} \rightarrow 0.$$

Moreover, the first two assumptions are necessary for the conclusion.

Some remarks

K-E conjecture is Known to be true if

- C is not **3**-normal and $g \gg d$ (Kleppe'87 and Ellia'87), or
- C is **2**-normal, i.e. $H^1(I_C(2)) = 0$ (N'23)

Del Pezzo surfaces

Definition 2

A smooth projective surface S is called **del Pezzo** if $-K_S$ is ample.

Every del Pezzo surface S is isomorphic to a blow-up of \mathbb{P}^2 (at $9 - n$ points) or $\mathbb{P}^1 \times \mathbb{P}^1$. The number $n = (-K_S)^2$ is called the *degree* of S , and $1 \leq n \leq 9$.

Example 1 (del Pezzo surfaces)

degree n	a description of S_n	$-K_S$
\vdots	\vdots	
3	cubic surface $S_3 \subset \mathbb{P}^3$	v.a.
4	quartic c.i. $S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$	
5	lin. section $[\text{Gr}(2, 5) \hookrightarrow \mathbb{P}^9] \cap \mathbb{L}^{(5)}$	
\vdots	\vdots	

Why on del Pezzo?

Proposition 3 (smoothness of flag-scheme)

Let $C \subset S = S_n \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ be a smooth curve of degree d and genus g lying on a del Pezzo surface S_n ($n \geq 3$). Then the Hilbert-flag scheme $\mathbf{HF} \mathbb{P}^n$ is nonsingular at (C, S) of expected dimension

$$\chi(N_{(C,S)/\mathbb{P}^n}) = d + g + n^2 + 9,$$

and $H^i(N_{(C,S)/\mathbb{P}^n}) = 0$ for all $i > 0$.

Generalized Kleppe-Ellia conjecture

Toward a generalization, we study the deformations of space curves lying on a del Pezzo surface of degree.

Conjecture (generalized K-E conj.)

Let $C \subset S_n \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ be a smooth connected curve lying on a smooth del Pezzo surface $S_n \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ of degree $n \geq 3$. Then C is *stably degenerate* if

- 1 $\chi(N_{S/\mathbb{P}^n}(-C)) \geq 0$,
- 2 C is **linearly normal**,
- 3 $\deg(C) > 9$ for $n = 3$ and $\deg(C) > 2n$ for $n \geq 4$, and C is general in $[C] \in \text{Pic } S_n$.

Remark 4

$$(1) \iff \chi(N_{(C,S)/\mathbb{P}^n}) \geq \chi(N_{C/\mathbb{P}^n}).$$

Main result

We focus on the case $n = 4$, i.e. $S \simeq S_4$ is a **smooth complete intersection**

$$S_{2,2} = (2) \cap (2) \subset \mathbb{P}^4.$$

We see that $N_{S/\mathbb{P}^4} \simeq \mathcal{O}_S(2)^{\oplus 2} \simeq \mathcal{O}_S(-2K_S)^{\oplus 2}$ and hence

$$H^1(N_{S/\mathbb{P}^4}(-C)) \simeq H^1(\mathcal{O}_S(-C - 2K_S))^{\oplus 2} \simeq H^1(I_C(2))^{\oplus 2}.$$

Then it follows from a general theory that C is stably degenerate if C is 2-normal.

Theorem 5 (N'25)

Let $C \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ be a smooth connected curve of degree $d > 8$ contained in a smooth c.i. $S = S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$. Then

- ① If C is 2-normal, then C is **unobstructed and stably degenerate**.
- ② If $\mathcal{O}_C(2)$ is non-special and C is not 2-normal, then C is **unobstructed**, but not stably degenerate.
- ③ If $h^1(\mathcal{O}_C(2)) \geq h^1(I_C(2)) = 1$ and C is general in $[C] \in \mathbf{Pic} S$, then C is **obstructed and stably degenerate**.

Applications

Corollary 6

Generalized K-E conjecture holds to be true, if $n = 4$ and $h^1(I_C(2)) = 1$.

Let $C \subset S = S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ be as in Theorem 5, and $\mathcal{W}_{C,S}$ the irreducible component of $\mathbf{HF} \mathbb{P}^4$ passing through (C, S) , and put

$$W_{C,S} := pr_1(\mathcal{W}_{C,S}) \cap \mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^4.$$

Then we have the following 3 possibilities for $W_{C,S}$:

degeneration of C	Is C obstructed?	$W_{C,S} \subset \mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^4$
stable	NO	gen.smooth component
stable	YES	gen.non-reduced component
unstable	YES/NO	not a component

Analogy of Mumford's example

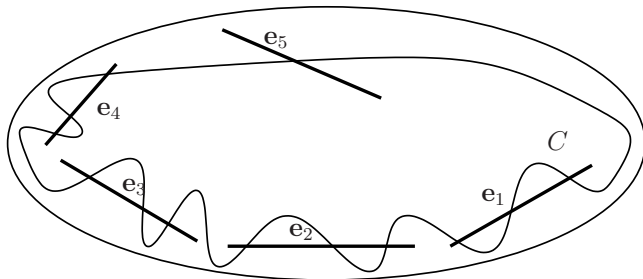
Example 2

$\mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^4$ contains a **generically non-reduced** irreducible component W whose general member C satisfies

- ① C is contained in a **smooth c.i.** $S = S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$,
- ② there exists a **line** E on S such that C belongs to a complete linear system $\Lambda := |-3K_S + 2E| (\simeq \mathbb{P}^{29})$ on S , and
- ③ $\dim W = 55$, $h^0(C, N_{C/\mathbb{P}^4}) = 57$, and C is of degree 14 and genus 16.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 C & \in & W^{(55)} & \subset & \mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^4 \\
 \downarrow & & \downarrow \mathbb{P}^{29}\text{-b'dle} & & \\
 (E, S) & \in & U^{(26)} & \subset & G \times G(2, H^0(\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^4}(2))) \\
 \downarrow & & \downarrow G(2, 12)\text{-b'dle} & & \downarrow \\
 E & \in & G(2, 5)^{(6)} & = & \{\text{lines in } \mathbb{P}^4\}.
 \end{array}$$

Curves on $S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ (analogy of Mumford's ex.)

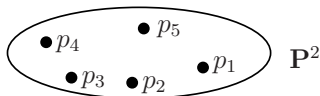


$$S_{2,2} = \text{Bl}_{p_1, \dots, p_5} \mathbb{P}^2$$

$$[C] = (9; 3, 3, 3, 3, 1) \in \text{Pic} S_{2,2} = \mathbb{Z}^6$$

$$d = 3 \cdot 9 - 3 - 3 - 3 - 3 - 1 = 14$$

$$g = \frac{(9-1)(9-2)}{2} - 3 - 3 - 3 - 3 = 16$$



Standard coordinate

Let D be a divisor on a smooth c.i. $S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$, i.e., a quartic del Pezzo surface. Then there exists a suitable blow-up $\varepsilon : S_{2,2} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^2$ such that

$$[D] = a\mathbf{l} - \sum_{i=1}^5 b_i \mathbf{e}_i,$$

in $\mathbf{Pic} S_{2,2} \simeq \mathbb{Z}^6$, where $\mathbf{l} = [\varepsilon^* \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^2}(1)]$ and \mathbf{e}_i 's are 5 exceptionals, and such that

$$b_1 \geq \cdots \geq b_5 \quad \text{and} \quad a \geq b_1 + b_2 + b_3. \quad (1)$$

Then the set of 6-tuples $(a; b_1, \dots, b_5)$ of integers is called **standard coordinate** of $[D]$ in $\mathbf{Pic} S_{2,2}$.

A criterion

Theorem 7 (N'25)

Let $C \subset S_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ be a smooth curve of degree $d \geq 10$ of genus $g \geq 2d - 12$, contained in a smooth c.i. $S_{2,2}$ in \mathbb{P}^4 . Let $(a; b_1, \dots, b_5)$ be the standard coordinate of $[C]$ in $\text{Pic } S_{2,2} \simeq \mathbb{Z}^6$. Then

- 1 If $b_5 \geq 2$, then C is unobstructed and stably degenerate.
- 2 If $b_5 = 1$ and $b_4 \geq 2$, then C is obstructed and stably degenerate.
- 3 If $b_5 = 0$, then C is not stably degenerate.

Examples

Table: curves on $S_{2,2}$ and stable degeneration

(d, g)	$(a; b_1, b_2, b_3, b_4, b_5)$	$W(a; b_1, b_2, b_3, b_4, b_5)$
(14, 16)	(8; 2, 2, 2, 2, 2)	unobstructed and stab.degenerate
(14, 16)	(9; 4, 3, 2, 2, 2)	unobstructed and stab.degenerate
(14, 16)	(9; 3, 3, 3, 3, 1)	obstructed and stab.degenerate
(15, 18)	(9; 4, 2, 2, 2, 2)	unobstructed and stab.degenerate
(15, 18)	(9; 3, 3, 3, 2, 1)	obstructed and stab.degenerate
⋮	⋮	⋮
(18, 24)	(9; 2, 2, 2, 2, 1)	obstructed and stab.degenerate
(18, 24)	(10; 4, 3, 3, 1 , 1)	unknown ($h^1(\mathcal{I}_C(2)) = 2$)
(18, 24)	(10; 3, 3, 3, 3, 0)	not stab.degenerate ($h^1(\mathcal{I}_C(2)) = 3$)
(18, 24)	(11; 6, 3, 2, 2, 2)	unobstructed and stab.degenerate
⋮	⋮	⋮

further questions

- 1 Deformations of curves lying on del Pezzo $S_n \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ of degree $n \geq 5$.
- 2 Deformation of degenerate curves on del Pezzo manifold of higher dimension (> 3).
- 3 Study the relation to other examples of obstructed curves $C \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ (or non-reduced components of $\mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^n$).
[Y. Choi–H. Iliev–S. Kim'24] have recently proved the existence of many non-reduced components of $\mathbf{Hilb}^{sc} \mathbb{P}^n$ of higher dimensional projective space \mathbb{P}^n by using ruled surfaces.
- 4 ...

References



D. Mumford.

Further pathologies in algebraic geometry.
Amer. J. Math., 84:642–648, 1962.



S. Mukai and H. Nasu.

Obstructions to deforming curves on a 3-fold, I: A generalization of Mumford's example and an application to Hom schemes.
J. Algebraic Geom., 18(4):691–709, 2009.



H. Nasu,

Obstructions to deforming curves on a 3-fold, II: Deformations of degenerate curves on a del Pezzo 3-fold,
Annales de L'Institut Fourier, 60(2010), no. 4, 1289–1316.



H. Nasu.

Obstructions to deforming curves on a 3-fold, III: Deformations of curves lying on a $K3$ surface.
Internat. J. Math., 28(13):1750099, 30, 2017.



H. Nasu.

Obstructions to deforming space curves lying on a smooth cubic surface.
Manuscripta Math., 172 (2023), pp.31-55.