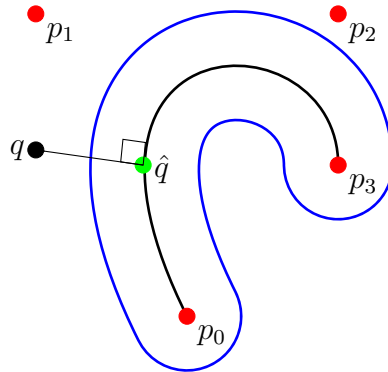# Procedurally Generated Handwriting

To model a handwritten language we assume the hand draws curves with thickness ϵ which may change based on physical attributes of the curve. For a fountain pen, the thickness of the stroke depends on the minimum and maximum widths of the nib, the angle of the nib to the paper, and tangent of the stroke with the angle of the nib. For brushes, the amount of ink on the bristles and the force with which the brush is pressed also have an effect. Of course, there are many other factors so in general we define a function T which returns a value in $[0, \infty)$. We denote ϵ the output of this function. The T used for in [Figure 1] is a constant function.

To model each stroke (or part of a stroke), we define a Bézier curve $B(t)$ for $t \in [0, 1]$ over four control points p_0, p_1, p_2, $p_3 \in \mathbb{R}^2$. For our purposes, the control points are in $[0, 1]^2$. To clarify notation, $B(t) = \begin{bmatrix} B_u(t) & B_v(t) \end{bmatrix}^T$

To determine whether this point lies inside or outside the region, we must first express $B(t)$ implicitly. We define

$$B(t) = (1 - t)^3 p_0 + 3(1 - t)^2 t p_1 + 3(1 - t)t^2 p_2 + t^3 p_3$$

where $p_i = (u_i, v_i)$, the coordinates of each control point.

Next, we determine if a given point $q = (u, v)$ lies inside of the stroke. That is, there exists some $\hat{q} = B(\hat{t})$ such that $||q - \hat{q}||_2 < T(\hat{t})$. One way to accomplish this is to find the nearest point to q on B, denoted $\hat{q} = (\hat{u}, \hat{v})$. Since B is a parametrized curve there exists a $\hat{t}$ such that $B(\hat{t}) = \hat{q}$. Then, q is contained in the stroke if and only if $||q - \hat{q}||_2 < \epsilon$ for some $\hat{t} \in [0, 1]$. Notice that both the $\hat{q}$ and $\hat{t}$ may not be unique. This is unimportant since every $\hat{q}$ is the same distance from q. We find this $\hat{q}$ by observing the vector $\hat{q} - q$ is orthogonal to dB/dt. Notice there may exist multiple $\hat{t} \in [0, 1]$ such that $B(\hat{t}) = \hat{q}$. Of these, we choose the $\hat{t}$ such that $||q - \hat{q}||_2$ is minimized. So we solve for t in

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= \hat{q} \cdot \frac{dB}{dt} \\ &= B_u(t)\frac{dB_u}{dt}(t) + B_v(t)\frac{dB_v}{dt}(t) \end{aligned}$$

which amounts to finding the real roots of a fifth-order polynomial. For the exact formula of this polynomial see the attached Python code.

Sam Pollard

1   Connecting Characters

Many forms of handwriting and calligraphy join the individual characters. For example, each letter of the Arabic alphabet has a different form depending on if there are other letters preceding or succeeding it. Since each character is defined in its own $[0, 1]$ box, we overlay each character vertically and horizontally to allow characters to more easily connect and to spill over. Typographically, this is adjusting the spacing and the kerning.