Sum-of-squares proofs for logarithmic Sobolev inequalities

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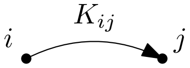
Markov chains

- $K : \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{S} \to \mathbb{R}$ transition matrix

$$K_{ij} \geq 0, \qquad \sum_{j \in \mathcal{S}} K_{ij} = 1 \;\; \forall i \in \mathcal{S}$$



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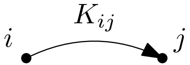

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- Continuous-time Markov process ("heat equation")

$$\frac{d p(t)}{dt} = -p(t) L$$

where $L = I - K$ is *Laplacian*. $p(t) \in \mathbb{R}^{\mathcal{S}}$ distribution at time t

- Q: How fast does $p(t)$ converge to π?

Spectral theory / Poincaré inequality

$$\mathcal{E}(x, y) = \langle x, Ly \rangle_\pi \qquad \text{(“Dirichlet form”)}$$

Spectral gap/Poincaré inequality:

$$\mathcal{E}(x, x) \geq \lambda \|x\|_\pi^2 \ \ \forall x : \mathbf{E}_\pi[x] = 0.$$

Convergence based on spectral gap:

$$\mathrm{Var}(x(t)) \leq \mathrm{Var}(x(0)) e^{-2\lambda t}$$

where

- $x(t) = p(t)/\pi$ density of $p(t)$ wrt π
- $\mathrm{Var}(x) = \mathbf{E}_\pi[(x - \mathbf{E}_\pi x)^2]$

Functional inequalities

- Logarithmic-Sobolev inequality:

$$\mathcal{E}(x,x) \;\geq\; \alpha \sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 \log(x_i^2) \qquad \forall x : \sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 = 1.$$

- Largest α for which this inequality holds is the logarithmic Sobolev constant

- Controls convergence of $p(t)$ to π in the *relative entropy* sense

$$D(p(t)\|\pi) \;\leq\; D(p(0)\|\pi)e^{-4\alpha t} \quad \text{where} \quad D(p\|q) := \sum_{i\in\mathcal{S}} p_i \log(p_i/q_i).$$

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- Advantage is that $D(p(0)\|\pi) \ll \mathrm{Var}(x(0))$
  Example: if $p(0) = \delta_i$ and $\pi = \mathbf{1}/|\mathcal{S}|$ (uniform) then $D(p(0)\|\pi) = \log(|\mathcal{S}|)$ and $\mathrm{Var}(x(0)) \approx |\mathcal{S}|$
- Compared to λ (Poincaré constant), α is much harder to compute

Computing α

Lectures on finite Markov chains

Laurent Saloff-Coste
CNRS & Université Paul Sabatier, UMR 55830

École d'été de probabilités de St Flour 1996

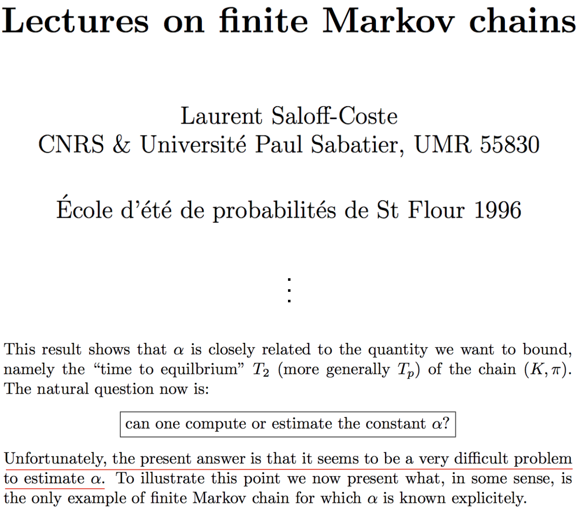
⋮

This result shows that α is closely related to the quantity we want to bound, namely the "time to equilbrium" T_2 (more generally T_p) of the chain (K, π). The natural question now is:

can one compute or estimate the constant α?

Unfortunately, the present answer is that it seems to be a very difficult problem to estimate α. To illustrate this point we now present what, in some sense, is the only example of finite Markov chain for which α is known explicitely.

Computing α



This talk: Computational method to produce formal lower bounds on α

Log-Sobolev inequality and sums of squares

$$\mathcal{E}(x,x) - \alpha B(x) \geq 0 \qquad \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^n : S(x) = 0$$

where

- $\mathcal{E}(x,x) = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{ij} \pi_i K_{ij}(x_i - x_j)^2$
- $B(x) = \sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 \log(x_i^2)$
- $S(x) = \sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 - 1.$

Main problem: $B(x)$ is not a polynomial.

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Main problem: $B(x)$ is not a polynomial.

Approach: Find $\hat{B}(x)$ polynomial such that $B(x) \leq \hat{B}(x)$ and attempt to prove instead

$$\mathcal{E}(x,x) - \alpha \hat{B}(x) \geq 0 \qquad \forall x : S(x) = 0$$

using sums of squares. **How to choose $\hat{B}(x)$?**

Approach 1: Taylor bound

Simple fact: Let p_{2d-1}^{Taylor} be the degree $2d-1$ Taylor expansion of $t^2\log(t)$ at $t=1$. Then

$$p^{\text{Taylor}}(t) \geq t^2\log(t) \;\; \forall t \geq 0.$$

Consequence

$$\hat{B}(x) = 2\sum_i \pi_i p^{\text{Taylor}}(x_i) \geq B(x).$$

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Semidefinite programming lower bound on α:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \max\limits_{\hat{\alpha}, s(x), h(x)} & \hat{\alpha} \\ \text{s.t.} & \mathcal{E}(x,x) - 2\hat{\alpha}\sum_i \pi_i p^{\text{Taylor}}(x_i) = s(x) + h(x)(\sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 - 1) \\ & s \text{ sum of squares}, \deg(s) = 2k \\ & h \text{ arbitrary polynomial}, \deg(h) = 2k-2. \end{array}$$

- Solution of SDP gives formal lower bound on α
- Simple approach already gives nontrivial results, e.g., for two-point space

Approach 2: Searching for the best polynomial bound

- We want the optimization program to *search for the best polynomial upper bound* on $B(x)$, i.e., we want to solve:

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\max\limits_{\hat{\alpha}, s(x), h(x), \hat{p}} & \hat{\alpha} \\
\text{s.t.} & \mathcal{E}(x,x) - 2\hat{\alpha}\sum_i \pi_i \hat{p}(x_i) = s(x) + h(x)(\sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 - 1) \\
& s \text{ sum of squares}, \deg(s) = 2k \\
& h \text{ arbitrary polynomial}, \deg(h) = 2k-2 \\
& \hat{p}(t) \geq t^2 \log(t) \;\; \forall t \geq 0, \;\; \deg(\hat{p}) = \ell.
\end{array}
$$

- Need a tractable formulation of the convex set

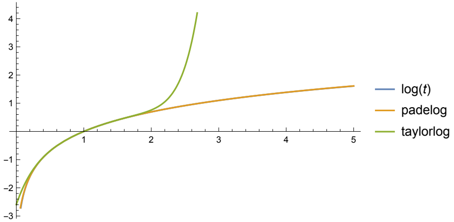
$$\left\{ \hat{p} \in \mathbb{R}[t], \deg(\hat{p}) = \ell \text{ s.t. } \hat{p}(t) \geq t^2 \log(t) \; \forall t > 0 \right\}$$

- We use rational approximations of log

Padé approximations

- The (m, n) Padé approximation of $f(t)$ at $t = t_0$ is a rational function P/Q with $\deg P = m, \deg Q = n$ so that around $t = t_0$

$$f(t) - P(t)/Q(t) = O((t - t_0)^{m+n+1})$$



Padé (4,3) vs Taylor of order 7 of log around $t = 1$

Padé upper bound on log

Proposition: For any integer m, the $(m+1, m)$ Padé approximant P_m/Q_m of log at $t = 1$ is an *upper bound* on log. Furthermore $Q_m(t) > 0$ for all $t > 0$

Thus a sufficient condition for $\hat{p}(t) \geq t^2 \log(t)$ is $\hat{p} \geq t^2 P_m/Q_m$, which we can impose via sum-of-squares as

$$Q_m \hat{p} - t^2 P_m \text{ is a sum-of-squares}$$

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Theorem: The solution of the following sum-of-squares program is a lower bound on the log-Sobolev constant of (K, π):

$$\begin{array}{ll} \max\limits_{\hat{\alpha}, s(x), h(x), \hat{p}} & \hat{\alpha} \\ \text{s.t.} & \mathcal{E}(x,x) - 2\hat{\alpha} \sum_i \pi_i \hat{p}(x_i) = s(x) + h(x)(\sum_i \pi_i x_i^2 - 1) \\ & s \text{ sum of squares}, \deg(s) = 2k \\ & h \text{ arbitrary polynomial}, \deg(h) = 2k-2 \\ & Q_m(t)\hat{p}(t) - t^2 P_m \;\text{ sum-of-squares}, \;\; \deg(\hat{p}) = \ell. \end{array}$$

Implementation

- **Formal proofs from floating-point solutions:** Semidefinite programs are solved with floating-point arithmetic

  $\rightarrow$ To obtain formal proofs, we have to round the solution of the SDP to the rationals, while ensuring *exact* feasibility, and positivity of the Gram matrix [Peyrl-Parrilo]

- Solve slightly perturbed SDP, and round the solution of the perturbed SDP

- All of this implemented in the Julia language, available at

  `https://github.com/oisinfaust/LogSobolevRelaxations`

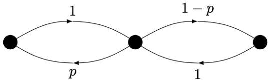
Examples

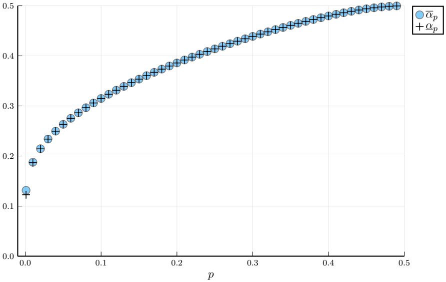
- Simple walk on the complete graph K_n
- Exact value known $\alpha = \frac{n-2}{(n-1)\log(n-1)}$ [Diaconis-Saloff-Coste]

n	$\hat{\alpha}$	ϵ_{rel}
3	0.72134751987	7.96×10^{-10}
4	0.6068261485	4.25×10^{-9}
5	0.541010629	2.16×10^{-8}
6	0.497067908	7.95×10^{-8}
7	0.46509209	2.22×10^{-7}
8	0.44048407	5.06×10^{-7}
9	0.4207856	1.02×10^{-6}
10	0.4045500	1.85×10^{-6}
11	0.3908638	3.13×10^{-6}
12	0.3791184	5.06×10^{-6}
13	0.3688909	7.81×10^{-6}

Using Padé approach with $m = 5$

3-point stick





The cycle

- Simple walk on $\mathbb{Z}_n$: $K_{i,i\pm1} = 1/2$ for $i \in \mathbb{Z}_n$.
- It is known that $\alpha = \frac{\lambda}{2} = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2\pi/n))$ for all even n and $n = 5$.
  [Chen-Sheu],[Chen-Liu-Saloff-Coste]
- Open question: is $\alpha = \lambda/2$ for all odd $n \geq 5$?
- **We give formal proofs that**

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2\pi/n)) \;\; \forall n \in \{5, 7, 9, \ldots, 21\}$$

Several ingredients:

- Relaxation based on the Taylor upper bound of degree 5
- Symmetry reduction reduces SDP from a large block of size $\sim 3n^2/2$ to smaller blocks of size $\sim 3n/2$
- Rounding in $\mathbb{Q}[\cos(2\pi/n)]$ (instead of just $\mathbb{Q}$)

Conclusion

Paper at `arXiv:2101.04988`

Open directions

- Fastest Mixing Markov Chain: can use the relaxation to search for a Markov chain with the largest log-Sobolev constant. Compare with Markov chains with largest Poincaré constant [Boyd-Diaconis-Xiao].
- Modified log-Sobolev constant
- Quantum (modified) log-Sobolev constant?

Thank you!