

COMONOTONE POLYNOMIAL APPROXIMATION IN $L_p[-1, 1]$, $0 < p \leq \infty$

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1. Introduction and main result

Let \mathbf{P}_n denote the set of all algebraic polynomials of degree $\leq n$, $L_p[a, b]$, $0 < p \leq \infty$, be the set of all measurable functions on $[a, b]$ such that the (quasi)norm $\|f\|_{L_p[a, b]}$ is finite, where as always,

$$\|f\|_{L_p[a, b]} := \left(\int_a^b |f(x)|^p dx \right)^{1/p}, \quad 0 < p < \infty,$$

and it is the sup-norm for $p = \infty$. Thus throughout the paper, $L_\infty[a, b]$ is understood to be $C[a, b]$ with the usual uniform norm. Also for brevity, we denote $\|\cdot\|_p := \|\cdot\|_{L_p[-1, 1]}$.

Let $Y_r := \{y_1, \dots, y_r | y_0 := -1 < y_1 < y_2 < \dots < y_r < 1 =: y_{r+1}\}$, $r \geq 0$. We denote by $\Delta^1(Y_r)$ the set of all functions f such that f is nondecreasing on $[y_{r-2k}, y_{r-2k+1}]$, and is nonincreasing on $[y_{r-2k-1}, y_{r-2k}]$, i.e., those that have $0 \leq r < \infty$ monotonicity changes at the points in Y_r and are nondecreasing near 1. Also, let $\Delta^1 := \Delta^1(Y_0)$ denote the set of all nondecreasing functions on $[-1, 1]$. Functions from the class $\Delta^1(Y_r)$ are said to be *comonotone* with one another.

Comonotone polynomial approximation is the approximation of a function $f \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$, by polynomials which are comonotone with it. For $f \in L_p[-1, 1] \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)$, $r \geq 0$, let

$$E_n^{(1)}(f, Y_r)_p := \inf_{P_n \in \mathbf{P}_n \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)} \|f - P_n\|_p,$$

be the degree of comonotone polynomial approximation of f . (In particular,

$$E_n^{(1)}(f)_p := E_n^{(1)}(f, Y_0)_p := \inf_{P_n \in \mathbf{P}_n \cap \Delta^1} \|f - P_n\|_p,$$

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is the degree of monotone approximation.)

Recall that the m -th order Ditzian–Totik modulus of smoothness $\omega_m^\varphi(f, \delta)_p$ (see [6]) is given by

$$(1) \quad \omega_m^\varphi(f, \delta)_p = \sup_{0 < h \leq \delta} \|\Delta_{h\varphi(\cdot)}^m(f, \cdot)\|_p,$$

where $\varphi(x) := \sqrt{1 - x^2}$, and

$$\Delta_\eta^m(f, x) := \begin{cases} \sum_{i=0}^m \binom{m}{i} (-1)^{m-i} f(x - \frac{m}{2}\eta + i\eta), & \text{if } x \pm \frac{m}{2}\eta \in [-1, 1], \\ 0, & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

is the symmetric m -th difference. (Note that if we set $\varphi(x) \equiv 1$, then (1) becomes the definition of the usual m -th modulus of smoothness $\omega_m(f, \delta)_p := \omega_m^1(f, \delta)_p$.)

The following result on comonotone approximation of continuous functions in the sup-norm (i.e., in the case when $p = \infty$) is known.

THEOREM A. *Let $f \in C[-1, 1] \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)$, $r \geq 1$. Then*

$$(2) \quad E_n^{(1)}(f, Y_r)_\infty \leq C^*(r, d(r)) \omega_2(f, n^{-1}), \quad n \geq 1,$$

and

$$(3) \quad E_n^{(1)}(f, Y_r)_\infty \leq C^{**}(r) \omega^\varphi(f, n^{-1}), \quad n \geq 1,$$

where

$$(4) \quad d(r) := \min\{y_1 + 1, y_2 - y_1, \dots, y_r - y_{r-1}, 1 - y_r\}.$$

Estimate (3) was first proved by Leviatan [10], with a constant $C^{**}(r, d_0)$, where $d_0 := \min\{y_1 + 1, 1 - y_r\}$. In its present form it appears in a recent paper by Leviatan and Shevchuk [11]. Estimate (2) is due to Shvedov [18] (see also Yu [20]). It was also shown by Shvedov [18] that the constant C^* in (2) cannot be replaced by one independent of $d(r)$ (if no extra conditions are put on n). Moreover, estimate (2) is exact in the sense that ω_2 cannot be replaced by ω_3 as follows immediately from a result of Zhou [21].

For other relevant results see the list of references.

The purpose of this paper is to prove the following generalization of Theorem A in L_p , $0 < p \leq \infty$.

THEOREM 1. *Let $f \in L_p[-1, 1] \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)$, $0 < p \leq \infty$. Then, for each $n > C(r)/d(r)$, where $d(r)$ is defined in (4),*

$$(5) \quad E_n^{(1)}(f, Y_r)_p \leq C(r)\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p.$$

The constant $C(r)$ depends on p when $p \rightarrow 0$.

We emphasize that the constant in (5) does not depend on Y_r . (This does not contradict the above mentioned negative result by Shvedov since (5) is valid only for $n > n(Y_r) = C(r)/d(r)$.)

PROOF. We are going to prove Theorem 1 in stages. We first approximate $f \in L_p[-1, 1] \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)$ by a continuous piecewise-linear spline $s \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$ such that $\|f - s\|_p \leq c\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p$. Then we will show how to approximate s by polynomials in $\Delta^1(Y_r)$.

We begin with the partition of the interval $[-1, 1]$ by the Chebyshev nodes $x_k := x_{kn} := \arccos \pi k/n$ which we augment with Y_r . Then we delete x_i and x_{i-1} for which there is a $y_j, j = 1, \dots, r$ such that $x_i \leq y_j < x_{i-1}$, and we end up with a new partition which we denote $Z_{r,n}$. Explicitly,

$$Z_{r,n} := Y_r \cup (\{x_k\}_{k=0}^n \setminus \{x_i, x_{i-1} : x_i \leq y_j < x_{i-1} \text{ for some } j = 1, \dots, r\}).$$

Now we have,

LEMMA 2. *Let a function $f \in L_p \cap \Delta^1(Y_r)$, $0 < p \leq \infty$, be given. Then for every $n \geq C(r)/d(r)$, there exists a continuous piecewise-linear spline $s \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$ on the knot sequence $Z_{r,n}$ satisfying*

$$(6) \quad \|f - s\|_p \leq C(r)\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p$$

and

$$(7) \quad \omega_2^\varphi(s, n^{-1})_p \leq C(r)\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p,$$

where $C(r)$ is as in Theorem 1.

Note first that (7) is stated here only for convenient reference as it follows immediately by (6) since

$$\omega_2^\varphi(s, n^{-1})_p^p \leq C\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p^p + C\|s - f\|_p^p.$$

Also, when $p = \infty$, then the construction of the spline s is trivial. Indeed, we can simply take s as the piecewise-linear interpolant to f on $Z_{r,n}$. For then $s \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$, and using Whitney's theorem (see [4, p. 183, Theorem 4.2]) we conclude that s satisfies (6). Therefore we will concentrate on proving (6) for the case $0 < p < \infty$.

PROOF. Assume $0 < p < \infty$. Then it is not difficult to construct a spline \tilde{s} which satisfies all of the conditions of the theorem except that it may be discontinuous at $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^r$. Moreover, \tilde{s} can be so chosen that, for every interval I of the partition $Z_{r,n}$, the restriction of \tilde{s} to I is a near-best linear approximant to f in $L_p(I)$. There are different ways to construct such a spline. In particular, it can be constructed by following the line of proof of [2, Theorem 3]. (The only difference is that in [2] a continuous piecewise-quadratic spline was constructed and this demanded a much more elaborate work.)

Our next step is to alter the spline \tilde{s} in the neighborhood of the y_j 's in order to obtain a continuous spline s satisfying all the requirements of the lemma. To simplify the notation we describe the construction of s in the neighborhood of a generic knot \tilde{y} , which will denote any of the y_j 's, and under the assumption that \tilde{s} is nondecreasing in some small neighborhood on the left of \tilde{y} and nonincreasing in some small neighborhood on the right. Let $\tilde{y} \in [x_i, x_{i-1})$, say and let $p_1(x)$ be the linear piece of \tilde{s} in $[x_{i+2}, x_{i+1}]$, while $p_2(x)$ be the linear piece of \tilde{s} in $[x_{i-2}, x_{i-3}]$. Note that n should be sufficiently large so that x_{i+2} and x_{i-3} are well defined. In fact we assume it is so large that p_1 is nondecreasing and p_2 is nonincreasing. This is the first occurrence where the dependence of n on $d(r)$, comes in. Now, we define s in $[x_{i+2}, x_{i-3}]$ as the piecewise-linear continuous spline $s(x) = \tilde{s}(x)$ for $x \notin (x_{i+1}, x_{i-2})$, and $s(\tilde{y}) = p_1(\tilde{y})$, if $p_2(x_{i-2}) \leq p_1(x_{i+1})$, or $s(\tilde{y}) = p_2(\tilde{y})$, if $p_2(x_{i-2}) > p_1(x_{i+1})$. Putting $s(x) := \tilde{s}(x)$ outside the neighborhoods of the y_j 's, we obtain a continuous piecewise-linear spline $s \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$.

It remains to verify that s satisfies (6). To this end it suffices to show that the degree of local approximation of f (near \tilde{y}) by s is not worse than that by \tilde{s} . We consider the case where $p_2(x_{i-2}) \leq p_1(x_{i+1})$, the other case is analogous. Since in this case $s|_{[x_{i+1}, \tilde{y}]} = \tilde{s}|_{[x_{i+1}, \tilde{y}]}$, all we have to show is that

$$(8) \quad \|f - s\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} \leq C \left(\|f - p_1\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} + \|f - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} \right).$$

Indeed,

$$\begin{aligned} \|s - p_2\|_{C[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} &= |s(\tilde{y}) - p_2(\tilde{y})| = |p_1(\tilde{y}) - p_2(\tilde{y})| \\ &\leq \|p_1 - p_2\|_{C[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} \leq Ch_i^{-1/p} \|p_1 - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]}. \end{aligned}$$

Thus,

$$\|s - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} \leq Ch_i^{1/p} \|s - p_2\|_{C[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]} \leq C \|p_1 - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]},$$

and

$$\|f - s\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]}^p \leq C \left(\|f - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]}^p + \|s - p_2\|_{L_p[\tilde{y}, x_{i-2}]}^p \right)$$

$$\leq C(\|f - p_1\|_{L_p[y, x_{i-2}]}^p + \|f - p_2\|_{L_p[\bar{y}, x_{i-2}]}^p). \quad \square$$

Lemma 2 implies that from now on, we may assume that the function f in the statement of Theorem 1 is a continuous piecewise-linear spline on the knot sequence $Z_{r,n}$. Evidently, this assumption considerably simplifies all subsequent considerations. Furthermore, replacing f by $f - f(y_1)$, we may assume without loss of generality, that $f(y_1) = 0$.

Hence, in the rest of the paper f is going to be a continuous piecewise-linear function on the knot sequence $Z_{r,n}$ which belongs to $\Delta^1(Y_r)$ and satisfies $f(y_1) = 0$.

Let $y_1 \in I_j := [x_j, x_{j-1}]$ and set $h_j := |I_j| = x_{j-1} - x_j$. We will show that

$$(9) \quad \|f\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1 + h_j/6]} \leq C\omega_2(f, h_j, J_j)_p,$$

where $J_j = [x_{j+2}, x_{j-2}]$.

Clearly, while $I_j \subset J_j$, we have $|J_j| \leq C|I_j| = Ch_j$, and for $n \geq C(r)/d(r)$ with a sufficiently large $C(r)$ we obtain

$$(10) \quad \omega_2(f, h_j, J_j)_p \leq C\omega_2^{\varphi}(f, n^{-1})_p.$$

In order to prove (9), we take L to be the straight line such that $L|_{[y_1, x_{j-2}]} = f|_{[y_1, x_{j-2}]}$, and we get

$$\begin{aligned} & \|f\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]} \leq \|f - L\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]} \\ & = \|f(\cdot) - L(\cdot) + (L(\cdot) - 2L(\cdot + h_j/6) + L(\cdot + h_j/3))\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]} \\ & = \|f(\cdot) - 2f(\cdot + h_j/6) + f(\cdot + h_j/3)\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]} \\ & = \|\Delta_{h_j/6}^2 f\|_{L_p[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]} \leq C\omega_2(f, h_j, J_j)_p, \end{aligned}$$

where in the first inequality we used the fact that $f \leq 0$ in $[y_1 - h_j/6, y_1]$, since it is nondecreasing there and $f(y_1) = 0$, while $L \geq 0$ in that interval because it is a nonincreasing straight line and $L(y_1) = f(y_1) = 0$.

Similarly, one can show that

$$\|f\|_{L_p[y_1, y_1 + h_j/6]} \leq C\omega_2(f, h_j, J_j)_p,$$

and, hence, (9) is satisfied.

We now define the flipped function

$$\hat{f}(x) := \begin{cases} -f(x), & \text{if } x < y_1, \\ f(x), & \text{if } x \geq y_1. \end{cases}$$

Then evidently, the function \hat{f} is a continuous piecewise-linear spline from the class $\Delta^1(Y_r \setminus \{y_1\})$, and (10) implies that for $n \geq C(r)/d(r)$,

$$\omega_2^\varphi(\hat{f}, n^{-1})_p \leq C\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p.$$

We can now apply the method from [1] and [10] (see also [9]) and prove Theorem 1 by induction on r . For $r = 0$ Theorem 1 becomes a theorem on monotone polynomial approximation in \mathbf{L}_p , $0 < p \leq \infty$, which was proved in [19] (see also [12]) for $1 \leq p \leq \infty$, and in [3] for $0 < p < 1$. To complete the proof it remains to show that if Theorem 1 is valid for $\hat{f} \in \Delta^1(Y_r \setminus \{y_1\})$, then it remains valid for $f \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$. We will use the construction from [9]. Namely, let $q_n \in \mathbf{P}_n$ be a polynomial which is comonotone with \hat{f} and such that

$$(11) \quad \|\hat{f} - q_n\|_p \leq C\omega_2^\varphi(\hat{f}, n^{-1})_p.$$

Similarly to [9] one can show that for sufficiently large $\mu = \mu(r)$ ($\mu = 15r$ will do), there exist polynomials $V_n(x)$ and $W_n(x)$ of degree $\leq C(r)n$ such that the polynomial

$$p_n(x) := (q_n(x) - q_n(y_1))V_n(x) + q_n(y_1)W_n(x)$$

is comonotone with f , and the following inequalities are satisfied:

$$|\operatorname{sgn}(x - y_1) - V_n(x)| \leq C(r)\psi_j^\mu(x),$$

and

$$|\operatorname{sgn}(x - y_1) - W_n(x)| \leq C(r)\psi_j^\mu(x),$$

where $\psi_j(x) := \frac{h_j}{|x - x_j| + h_j}$ (recall that $y_1 \in [x_j, x_{j-1})$).

To complete the proof it remains to show that

$$(12) \quad \|f - p_n\|_p \leq C(r)\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p.$$

Now,

$$\begin{aligned} \|f - p_n\|_p^p &= \|(\hat{f} - q_n)\operatorname{sgn}(\cdot - y_1) + q_n(\operatorname{sgn}(\cdot - y_1) - V_n(\cdot)) \\ &\quad + q_n(y_1)(V_n - W_n)\|_p^p \\ &\leq C\omega_2^\varphi(\hat{f}, n^{-1})_p^p + C \int_{-1}^1 |f(x)|^p \psi_j^{\mu p}(x) dx + C \int_{-1}^1 |q_n(y_1)|^p \psi_j^{\mu p}(x) dx \\ &=: I_1 + I_2 + I_3, \quad \text{say.} \end{aligned}$$

To estimate I_3 we observe that $\int_{-1}^1 \psi_j^{\mu p}(x) dx \leq Ch_j$ and that q_n is monotone near y_1 . Hence,

$$I_3 = \int_{-1}^1 |q_n(y_1)|^p \psi_j^{\mu p}(x) dx \leq Ch_j |q_n(y_1)|^p \leq C \|q_n\|_{L_p[y_1-h_j/6, y_1+h_j/6]}^p$$

$$\leq C \|q_n - \hat{f}\|_{L_p[y_1-h_j/6, y_1+h_j/6]}^p + C \|\hat{f}\|_{L_p[y_1-h_j/6, y_1+h_j/6]}^p \leq C \omega_2^{\varphi}(f, n^{-1})_p^p,$$

where we applied (9) and (10).

It remains to estimate I_2 , for which we need one more lemma.

LEMMA 3. Let $f \in \Delta^1(Y_r)$ be a continuous piecewise-linear spline on the knot sequence $Z_{r,n}$, $y_1 \in [x_j, x_{j-1})$, and $f(y_1) = 0$. Then for all $x \in [-1, 1]$,

$$(13) \quad |f(x)| \leq C \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right)^2 \delta_n(x, x_j)^{-1/p} \omega_2^{\varphi}(f, n^{-1})_p,$$

where $\delta_n(x, x_j) = \min \{ \Delta_n(x), \Delta_n(x_j) \}$.

PROOF. For the sake of convenience in notation set $Z_{r,n} = \{-1 - z_m < z_{m-1} < \dots < z_1 < z_0 = 1\}$ and $\hat{h}_i := z_{i-1} - z_i$. Then $\hat{h}_i \leq 12\hat{h}_{i\pm 1}$. Fix $x > y_1$ (the case $x \leq y_1$ is similar) and denote

$$Z_{r,n}(y_1, x) := \{i | z_i \in Z_{r,n} : y_1 \leq z_i \leq x\}.$$

Since f is piecewise linear, we have

$$|f(x)| = |f(x) - f(y_1)| \leq |f'(\xi)|(x - y_1)$$

for some $\xi \in (y_1, x)$. Now,

$$\begin{aligned} |f'(\xi)| &\leq |f'(\xi) - f'(y_1+)| + |f'(y_1+)| \\ &\leq |f'(\xi) - f'(y_1+)| + |f'(y_1+) - f'(y_1-)| \\ &\leq \sum_{i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, \xi)} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)| \leq \sum_{i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)| \\ &\leq C \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right) \max_{i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|, \end{aligned}$$

where in the second inequality we used the fact that $f'(y_1+)$ have opposite signs, and in the last inequality, that $\hat{h}_i \geq \delta_n(x, x_j)$, for all $i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)$. Therefore,

$$|f(x)| \leq C \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right) |x - x_j| \max_{i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|.$$

Thus, to complete the proof we need an estimate of $\max_{i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|$. To this end, let $i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)$ be fixed, and let f_1 be the linear function defined by $f_1|_{[z_{i+1}, z_i]} := f|_{[z_{i+1}, z_i]}$. We observe that with $\tilde{h} := 1/100n$ and $\alpha = 1/1000$, say, the set

$$A := \{x : z_{i+1} \leq x - \tilde{h}\varphi(x) < x < z_i \\ < (1 - \alpha)z_i + \alpha z_{i-1} \leq x + \tilde{h}\varphi(x) < z_{i-1}\},$$

is of measure $\text{meas } A \sim \hat{h}_i$, and for every $x \in A$,

$$|\Delta_{\tilde{h}\varphi(x)}^2(f, x)| = |f_1(x + \tilde{h}\varphi(x)) - f(x + \tilde{h}\varphi(x))| \\ \geq |f_1((1 - \alpha)z_i + \alpha z_{i-1}) - f((1 - \alpha)z_i + \alpha z_{i-1})| \\ = C\alpha\hat{h}_i|f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|.$$

This in turn implies,

$$\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p^p - \sup_{0 < h \leq n^{-1}} \int_{-1}^1 |\Delta_{h\varphi(x)}^2(f, x)|^p dx \geq \int_{-1}^1 |\Delta_{\tilde{h}\varphi(x)}^2(f, x)|^p dx \\ \geq C \text{meas } A \alpha^p \hat{h}_i^p |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|^p - C \hat{h}_i^{p+1} |f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)|^p.$$

Thus,

$$|f'(z_i+) - f'(z_i-)| \leq C \hat{h}_i^{(p+1)/p} \omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p,$$

and since $\hat{h}_i \geq \delta_n(x, x_j)$, $i \in Z_{r,n}(y_1, x)$, then

$$|f(x)| \leq C \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right) |x - x_j| \delta_n(x, x_j)^{-(p+1)/p} \omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p \\ \leq C \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right)^2 \delta_n(x, x_j)^{-1/p} \omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p.$$

The proof is complete. \square

We are ready to complete the proof of Theorem 1 by showing the proper estimate of I_2 . By the same arguments as in the proof of Lemma 3.4 of [7], we see that

$$\psi_j(x)^2 \leq C \frac{\delta_n(x, x_j)}{|x - x_j| + \delta_n(x, x_j)}.$$

Hence,

$$I_2 \leq C\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p^p \int_{-1}^1 \left(1 + \frac{|x - x_j|}{\delta_n(x, x_j)}\right)^{2p} \cdot \delta_n(x, x_j)^{-1} \left(\frac{\delta_n(x, x_j)}{|x - x_j| + \delta_n(x, x_j)}\right)^{\mu p/2} dx \leq C\omega_2^\varphi(f, n^{-1})_p^p.$$

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