

# SHARP ERROR ESTIMATES FOR INTERPOLATORY APPROXIMATION ON CONVEX POLYTOPES

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**Abstract.** Let  $\mathfrak{P}$  be a convex polytope in the  $d$ -dimensional Euclidean space. We consider an interpolation of a function  $f$  at the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  and compare it with the interpolation of  $f$  and its derivative at a fixed point  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ . The two methods may be seen as multivariate analogues of an interpolation by secants and tangents, respectively. For twice continuously differentiable functions, we establish sharp error estimates with respect to a generalized  $L^p$  norm for  $1 \leq p \leq \infty$ . The case  $p = 1$  is of special interest since it provides analogues of the midpoint rule and the trapezoidal rule for approximate integration over the polytope  $\mathfrak{P}$ . In the case where  $\mathfrak{P}$  is a simplex and  $p > 1$ , this investigation covers recent results by S. Waldron [8] and by M. Stämpfle [6].

**Key words.** Interpolation on convex polytopes, sharp error estimates, approximation of functions, approximate integration, approximation of functionals

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**1. Introduction and Notation.** Denote by  $\mathcal{P}_1$  the class of all polynomials in  $d$  real variables of degree at most 1, also called the class of *affine functions* on  $\mathbb{R}^d$ . Let  $\mathfrak{P} \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  be a convex polytope of positive measure with vertices  $v_1, \dots, v_n$ , and let  $B_1, \dots, B_n$  be an associated system of continuous functions on  $\mathfrak{P}$  with the following properties:

*Non-negativity.* For  $i = 1, \dots, n$ , we have

$$(1.1) \quad B_i(x) \geq 0 \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P}).$$

*Linear precision.* For every  $\lambda \in \mathcal{P}_1$ , we have

$$(1.2) \quad \lambda(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n \lambda(v_i) B_i(x).$$

Warren [10] showed that  $B_1, \dots, B_n$  can be chosen as rational functions, which are uniquely determined if one requires that each  $B_i$  have minimal degree. Furthermore, for an arbitrary convex polytope, he presented an algorithm for constructing these functions  $B_1, \dots, B_n$  in a finite number of steps.

Since vertices of a convex polytope are extremal points, it is easily deduced from the “linear precision” that

$$(1.3) \quad B_i(v_j) = \delta_{ij} \quad (i, j \in \{1, \dots, n\}),$$

where we use Kronecker’s delta. As a consequence of (1.2) and (1.3), the functions  $B_1, \dots, B_n$  are linearly independent and span an  $n$ -dimensional linear space  $\mathcal{R}_n$  which contains  $\mathcal{P}_1$  as a subspace.

By  $C(\mathfrak{P})$ ,  $C^1(\mathfrak{P})$ , and  $C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ , we denote the spaces of functions which are defined on  $\mathfrak{P}$  and are continuous, continuously differentiable, and twice continuously differentiable, respectively.

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Next, let  $\mathcal{L}$  be a positive linear functional on  $C(\mathfrak{P})$ . The positivity means that  $\mathcal{L}(f) > 0$  for every nontrivial non-negative function  $f \in C(\mathfrak{P})$ .

Examples of such functionals are weighted integrals

$$(1.4) \quad \mathcal{L}(f) := \int_{\mathfrak{P}} w(x)f(x)dx \quad (f \in C(\mathfrak{P})),$$

where  $w$  is integrable and positive on  $\mathfrak{P}$  except for a set of measure zero.

For  $f \in C(\mathfrak{P})$ , we introduce

$$(1.5) \quad \|f\|_p := (\mathcal{L}(|f|^p))^{1/p} \quad (1 \leq p < \infty)$$

and

$$(1.6) \quad \|f\|_{\infty} := \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} |f(x)|,$$

which define norms on  $C(\mathfrak{P})$ . When  $\mathcal{L}$  is given by (1.4) and  $w = 1$ , then  $\|\cdot\|_p$  is the familiar  $L^p$  norm. For general  $\mathcal{L}$ , we may think of  $\mathfrak{P}$  as being equipped with a mass distribution such that  $\mathcal{L}(1)$  is the total mass of  $\mathfrak{P}$ . The possibility of having an arbitrary  $\mathcal{L}$  is of interest mainly in our applications of the case  $p = 1$  (see Section 4). For this reason, we do not use a weighted supremum norm.

By  $\|\cdot\|$ , *without* any subscript, and by  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ , we want to denote the Euclidean norm and the standard inner product in  $\mathbb{R}^d$ .

In this paper, we shall study the linear interpolation operator  $\Lambda^v$ , defined by

$$(1.7) \quad \Lambda^v[f] := \sum_{i=1}^n f(v_i)B_i \quad (f \in C(\mathfrak{P})),$$

which interpolates  $f$  at the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$ , and shall compare it with

$$(1.8) \quad \Lambda_y[f] := f(y) + Df(y)(\cdot - y) \quad (f \in C^1(\mathfrak{P})),$$

where  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ . Clearly,  $\Lambda_y[f]$  interpolates  $f$  at  $y$  and the same holds for the first derivative.

As regards our notation, we want to follow the convention that a superscript in roman type indicates an abbreviation for a word while a subscript in italic type is a mathematical quantity. In particular, the superscript  $v$  shall always refer to interpolation at the *vertices*. Similarly, we shall use the superscripts  $sb$  for *smallest ball* and  $cm$  for *center of mass*.

**2. Auxiliary Results.** For convenient reference, we first state some properties of the operators  $\Lambda_y$  and  $\Lambda^v$  as lemmas.

LEMMA 2.1. *For  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ , the operator  $\Lambda_y$  has the following properties.*

- (i) *It maps  $C^1(\mathfrak{P})$  into  $\mathcal{P}_1$ .*
- (ii) *It reproduces functions from  $\mathcal{P}_1$ .*
- (iii) *It approximates convex functions from below.*

*Proof.* The properties (i) and (ii) are obvious. Property (iii) is a well known fact about differentiable, convex functions; see [5, p. 98, Theorem A].  $\square$

LEMMA 2.2. *The operator  $\Lambda^v$  has the following properties.*

- (i) *It maps  $C(\mathfrak{P})$  into  $\mathcal{R}_n$ .*
- (ii) *It reproduces functions from  $\mathcal{R}_n$ .*

(iii) *It approximates convex functions from above.*

(iv) *If  $f, g \in C(\mathfrak{P})$  and  $f(v_i) \leq g(v_i)$  for  $i = 1, \dots, n$ , then  $\Lambda^v[f] \leq \Lambda^v[g]$ .*

*Proof.* Since  $\{B_1, \dots, B_n\}$  is a basis of  $\mathcal{R}_n$ , the properties (i) and (ii) are obvious consequences of the definition of  $\Lambda^v$ .

Next, it follows from (1.2) that

$$x = \sum_{i=1}^n v_i B_i(x) \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P}),$$

which is a representation of  $x$  as a convex combination of the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$ . Hence, for a convex function  $f$ ,

$$f(x) = f\left(\sum_{i=1}^n v_i B_i(x)\right) \leq \sum_{i=1}^n f(v_i) B_i(x) = \Lambda^v[f](x) \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P}),$$

and so statement (iii) is verified.

Finally, recalling (1.1), we see that, under the hypothesis of statement (iv),

$$\Lambda^v[f] = \sum_{i=1}^n f(v_i) B_i \leq \sum_{i=1}^n g(v_i) B_i = \Lambda^v[g].$$

This completes the proof.  $\square$

It will turn out that the constants in our error estimates are determined by the interpolation error of the quadratic function  $\|\cdot\|^2$ . We therefore introduce the (non-negative) functions

$$(2.1) \quad e_y := \|\cdot\|^2 - \Lambda_y[\|\cdot\|^2],$$

where  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ , and

$$(2.2) \quad e^v := \Lambda^v[\|\cdot\|^2] - \|\cdot\|^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \|v_i\|^2 B_i - \|\cdot\|^2.$$

Representations, interrelations, and estimates for these functions are stated in the following lemma.

LEMMA 2.3. *The functions  $e_y$  and  $e^v$  are non-negative and vanish at the interpolation points of  $\Lambda_y$  and  $\Lambda^v$ , respectively. They satisfy the equations*

$$(2.3) \quad e_y = \|\cdot - y\|^2,$$

$$(2.4) \quad e^v = \sum_{i=1}^n \|\cdot - v_i\|^2 B_i,$$

$$(2.5) \quad e^v + e_y = \sum_{i=1}^n e_y(v_i) B_i.$$

Furthermore, denoting by

$$(2.6) \quad \mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}} =: \{x \in \mathbb{R}^d : \|x - x^{\text{sb}}\| \leq r^{\text{sb}}\}$$

the smallest ball that contains  $\mathfrak{P}$ , we have

$$(2.7) \quad e^v(x) \leq (r^{\text{sb}})^2 - \|x - x^{\text{sb}}\|^2 \leq (r^{\text{sb}})^2$$

for all  $x \in \mathfrak{P}$ .

For notational simplicity, we write

$$(2.8) \quad \Lambda^{\text{sb}} := \Lambda_y \quad \text{and} \quad e^{\text{sb}} := e_y \quad \text{if } y = x^{\text{sb}}.$$

*Proof.* From the definition of the functions  $e_y$  and  $e^v$ , it is clear that they vanish at the interpolation points of  $\Lambda_y$  and  $\Lambda^v$ , respectively. Since  $\|\cdot\|^2$  is a convex function, the statements (iii) of Lemmas 2.1 and 2.2 show that  $e_y$  and  $e^v$  are non-negative.

Next, from the definition of  $e_y$ , we deduce that

$$e_y(x) = \|x\|^2 - (\|y\|^2 + 2\langle y, x - y \rangle) = \|x\|^2 + \|y\|^2 - 2\langle y, x \rangle = \|x - y\|^2,$$

which is (2.3).

Since  $e^v + e_y$  belongs to  $\mathcal{R}_n$ , statement (ii) of Lemma 2.2 shows that, for any  $x \in \mathfrak{P}$ , we have

$$(2.9) \quad e^v(x) + e_y(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n (e^v(v_i) + e_y(v_i)) B_i(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n e_y(v_i) B_i(x),$$

which is (2.5).

Substituting  $y = x$  in (2.9) and using (2.3), we obtain (2.4).

For a proof of (2.7), we first note that  $x^{\text{sb}} \in \mathfrak{P}$ , as a consequence of the convexity of  $\mathfrak{P}$ . Since

$$(2.10) \quad h^{\text{sb}} := (r^{\text{sb}})^2 - \|\cdot - x^{\text{sb}}\|^2$$

is non-negative on  $\mathfrak{P}$ , while  $e^v$  vanishes at *all* the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$ , we clearly have

$$h^{\text{sb}}(v_i) - e^v(v_i) \geq 0 \quad (i = 1, \dots, n).$$

Therefore statement (iv) of Lemma 2.2 implies that  $\Lambda^v[h^{\text{sb}} - e^v] \geq 0$ . Furthermore, using (2.3), (2.5), and the notation (2.8), we find that

$$(2.11) \quad h^{\text{sb}} - e^v = (r^{\text{sb}})^2 - e^{\text{sb}} - e^v = (r^{\text{sb}})^2 - \sum_{i=1}^n e^{\text{sb}}(v_i) B_i,$$

which obviously belongs to  $\mathcal{R}_n$ . Hence statement (ii) of Lemma 2.2 allows us to conclude that

$$(2.12) \quad h^{\text{sb}} - e^v = \Lambda^v[h^{\text{sb}} - e^v] \geq 0,$$

which gives (2.7) immediately.  $\square$

REMARK 2.4. Inequality (2.7) is of interest for the following reason. As we shall see, the best constants in our error estimates for  $\Lambda^v[f]$  are determined by norms of  $e^v$ . If  $e^v$  is complicated, then we may use the simpler function (2.10) instead and obtain a constant which is possibly somewhat worse, but which may still be good enough for practical applications. In the case where  $\mathfrak{P}$  is a simplex, it can even be shown that

$$\sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} e^v(x) = \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} h^{\text{sb}}(x) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2;$$

see [6, Lemma 4.2].

**3. Approximation of Functions.** We are mainly interested in approximation of functions from  $C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . However, in the case where  $\mathcal{P}$  is a simplex, Stämpfle [6, Theorem 4.1, statements (i)–(iv)] also presented results for functions belonging to lower regularity classes. These statements extend to  $\Lambda^v$  by exactly the same arguments as in [6]. We only mention a result for a Lipschitz class which is more general than the one considered in [6].

For  $\alpha \in (0, 1]$  and  $L > 0$ , we write  $f \in \text{Lip}_L(\alpha, \mathfrak{P})$  and say that  $f$  satisfies a *Lipschitz condition of order  $\alpha$  with Lipschitz constant  $L$*  on  $\mathfrak{P}$  if  $f \in C(\mathfrak{P})$  and

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq L \|x - y\|^\alpha \quad (x, y \in \mathfrak{P}).$$

**THEOREM 3.1.** *Let  $f \in \text{Lip}_L(\alpha, \mathfrak{P})$ . Then*

$$(3.1) \quad |f(x) - \Lambda^v[f](x)| \leq L (e^v(x))^{\alpha/2} \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P})$$

and, for each  $p \in [1, \infty]$ ,

$$(3.2) \quad \|f - \Lambda^v[f]\|_p \leq L \|(e^v)^{\alpha/2}\|_p.$$

*Proof.* From (1.2) and the definition of  $\Lambda^v$ , it is clear that

$$f(x) - \Lambda^v[f](x) = \sum_{i=1}^n (f(x) - f(v_i)) B_i(x),$$

and so, by the triangle inequality and the Lipschitz condition,

$$(3.3) \quad |f(x) - \Lambda^v[f](x)| \leq L \sum_{i=1}^n \|x - v_i\|^\alpha B_i(x).$$

Next, using Hölder's inequality with  $p := 2/\alpha$  and  $q := 2/(2 - \alpha)$ , which is an admissible pair of exponents, and recalling (1.2) and (2.4), we find that

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i=1}^n \|x - v_i\|^\alpha B_i(x) &= \sum_{i=1}^n \|x - v_i\|^\alpha B_i(x)^{1/p} \cdot B_i(x)^{1/q} \\ &\leq \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \|x - v_i\|^{\alpha p} B_i(x) \right)^{1/p} \cdot \left( \sum_{i=1}^n B_i(x) \right)^{1/q} \\ &= \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \|x - v_i\|^2 B_i(x) \right)^{\alpha/2} = (e^v(x))^{\alpha/2}. \end{aligned}$$

Combining this with (3.3), we obtain (3.1). Clearly, (3.2) is an immediate consequence of (3.1).  $\square$

For twice differentiable functions  $f : \mathfrak{P} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , we denote by

$$H[f](x) := \left( \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} (x) \right)_{i,j=1,\dots,d}$$

the Hessian matrix of  $f$  at  $x$  and introduce

$$(3.4) \quad |D^2 f| := \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} \sup_{\substack{y \in \mathbb{R}^d \\ \|y\|=1}} |y^\top H[f](x)y|,$$

agreeing that the elements of  $\mathbb{R}^d$  are column vectors so that  $y^\top$ , which denotes the transpose of  $y$ , becomes a row vector. Clearly,  $|D^2 f| = 0$  for  $f \in \mathcal{P}_1$  and  $|D^2 f| = 2|c|$  for  $f = c\|\cdot\|^2$ .

Subsequently, we shall often refer to the space

$$(3.5) \quad \mathcal{F}_2 := \left\{ f := \lambda + c\|\cdot\|^2 : \lambda \in \mathcal{P}_1, c \in \mathbb{R} \right\}.$$

The following theorem for  $\Lambda_y$  is not more than an easy exercise in calculus. We formulate it as a theorem only in order to compare it with the corresponding result for  $\Lambda^\vee$ .

**THEOREM 3.2.** *Let  $f \in C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . Then,*

$$(3.6) \quad |f(x) - \Lambda_y[f](x)| \leq \frac{1}{2} \|x - y\|^2 |D^2 f| \quad (x, y \in \mathfrak{P}).$$

Furthermore, for each  $p \in [1, \infty]$ ,

$$(3.7) \quad \|f - \Lambda_y[f]\|_p \leq c_{y,p} |D^2 f|,$$

where

$$(3.8) \quad c_{y,p} := \frac{1}{2} \|e_y\|_p.$$

Both inequalities are sharp. Equality is attained for every  $f \in \mathcal{F}_2$ .

*Proof.* By the Taylor formula of order two, we have

$$f(x) - \Lambda_y[f](x) = \frac{1}{2} (x - y)^\top H[f](y + \theta(x - y))(x - y)$$

for some  $\theta \in (0, 1)$ . Now the definition of  $|D^2 f|$ , given in (3.4), shows that (3.6) holds. Inequality (3.7) is an immediate consequence of (3.6). Finally, the case of equality is easily verified.  $\square$

**THEOREM 3.3.** *Let  $f \in C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . Then,*

$$(3.9) \quad |f(x) - \Lambda^\vee[f](x)| \leq \frac{1}{2} e^\vee(x) |D^2 f| \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P}).$$

Furthermore, for each  $p \in [1, \infty]$ ,

$$(3.10) \quad \|f - \Lambda^\vee[f]\|_p \leq c_p^\vee |D^2 f|,$$

where

$$(3.11) \quad c_p^\vee := \frac{1}{2} \|e^\vee\|_p.$$

Both inequalities are sharp. Equality is attained for every  $f \in \mathcal{F}_2$ .

*Proof.* Inequality (3.6) may be rewritten as

$$(3.12) \quad -\frac{1}{2} \|x - y\|^2 \left| D^2 f \right| \leq f(x) - \Lambda_y[f](x) \leq \frac{1}{2} \|x - y\|^2 \left| D^2 f \right| \quad (x, y \in \mathfrak{P}).$$

Next, from statement (iv) of Lemma 2.2, it follows that inequalities between continuous functions on  $\mathfrak{P}$  are preserved when the operator  $\Lambda^\vee$  is applied on both sides. Moreover, statement (i) of Lemma 2.1 together with statement (ii) of Lemma 2.2 show that

$$\Lambda^\vee[\Lambda_y[f]] = \Lambda_y[f].$$

Hence (3.12) implies that

$$-\frac{1}{2} \Lambda^\vee[\|\cdot - y\|^2](x) \left| D^2 f \right| \leq \Lambda^\vee[f](x) - \Lambda_y[f](x) \leq \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^\vee[\|\cdot - y\|^2](x) \left| D^2 f \right|.$$

Now, taking  $y = x$  and noting that  $\Lambda_x[f](x) = f(x)$  and, by (2.4),

$$\Lambda^\vee[\|\cdot - x\|^2](x) = \sum_{i=1}^n \|v_i - x\|^2 B_i(x) = e^\vee(x),$$

we obtain

$$-\frac{1}{2} e^\vee(x) \left| D^2 f \right| \leq \Lambda^\vee[f](x) - f(x) \leq \frac{1}{2} e^\vee(x) \left| D^2 f \right|,$$

which is equivalent to (3.9). Inequality (3.10) is an immediate consequence of (3.9). The statement on the occurrence of equality is easily verified by a calculation.  $\square$

**REMARK 3.4.** Since  $\Lambda^\vee$  is a positive operator which reproduces affine functions, inequality (3.9) can also be deduced from [9, Theorem 1.4] in conjunction with the above Lemma 2.3.

The operator  $\Lambda_y$  has just one interpolation point, which is of multiplicity two. Such an interpolation can be described by  $d + 1$  scalar equations. The interpolation of the operator  $\Lambda^\vee$ , which has  $n$  simple interpolation points, can be described by  $n$  scalar equations. Since  $n \geq d + 1$ , we may expect that the operator  $\Lambda^\vee$  is at least as precise as  $\Lambda_y$ . In the following proposition, we compare the constants (3.8) and (3.11) when  $p = \infty$ .

**PROPOSITION 3.5.** *For  $p = \infty$ , the constants (3.8) and (3.11) satisfy the relations*

$$(3.13) \quad c_\infty^\vee \leq c_{y,\infty} \quad (y \in \mathfrak{P})$$

and

$$(3.14) \quad \inf_{y \in \mathfrak{P}} c_{y,\infty} = \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{2}$$

the infimum being attained for  $y = x^{\text{sb}}$ , where  $r^{\text{sb}}$  and  $x^{\text{sb}}$  specify the smallest ball  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$  which contains  $\mathfrak{P}$ , as introduced in (2.6).

*If all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  lie on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ , then*

$$(3.15) \quad c_\infty^\vee = \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{2}.$$

*Proof.* It follows from (2.5) that

$$(3.16) \quad e^v(x) \leq \sum_{i=1}^n e_y(v_i) B_i(x) \leq \max_{1 \leq i \leq n} e_y(v_i) \quad (x \in \mathfrak{P}),$$

which implies (3.13).

Since a convex function, defined on a convex set, attains its supremum at an extreme point (see for example [4, p. 91]), we have

$$(3.17) \quad \max_{1 \leq i \leq n} e_y(v_i) = \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} e_y(x) = 2c_{y,\infty}.$$

This shows that  $c_{y,\infty}$  attains its smallest value at a point where

$$\phi(y) := \max_{1 \leq i \leq n} e_y(v_i) = \max_{1 \leq i \leq n} \|y - v_i\|^2$$

attains its minimum. Clearly, this is the center of the smallest ball  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$  that contains  $\mathfrak{P}$ , and so

$$\min_{y \in \mathfrak{P}} \phi(y) = \phi(x^{\text{sb}}) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2.$$

Thus (3.14) is verified.

If *all* the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  lie on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ , then  $\|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\| = r^{\text{sb}}$  for  $i = 1, \dots, n$ . Therefore, by (2.4),

$$e^v(x^{\text{sb}}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\|^2 B_i(x^{\text{sb}}) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2 \sum_{i=1}^n B_i(x^{\text{sb}}) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2,$$

which shows that  $c_\infty^v \geq (r^{\text{sb}})^2/2$ . Combining this inequality with (3.13) and (3.14), we obtain (3.15).  $\square$

In the univariate case, where  $\mathfrak{P}$  is an interval  $[a, b]$ , it is known and also seen from (3.15) that, for  $y = (b + a)/2$ , we have

$$c_\infty^v = c_{y,\infty} = \frac{(b - a)^2}{8}.$$

Moreover, the mean value

$$\frac{1}{2} (\Lambda_y[f] + \Lambda^v[f]) \quad \left( y = \frac{a + b}{2} \right)$$

gives an approximation whose constant in the error bound is  $(b - a)^2/16$ . A generalization is given in the following proposition.

**PROPOSITION 3.6.** *Let  $f \in C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . Then, for every  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$  and  $\alpha \in [0, 1]$ , we have*

$$(3.18) \quad \|f - \alpha \Lambda_y[f] - (1 - \alpha) \Lambda^v[f]\|_\infty \leq c(\alpha, y) \mathbf{|} D^2 f \mathbf{|},$$

where

$$(3.19) \quad c(\alpha, y) := \frac{1}{2} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} (\alpha e_y(x) + (1 - \alpha) e^v(x)).$$



Furthermore,

$$(3.20) \quad \inf_{0 \leq \alpha \leq 1} \inf_{y \in \mathfrak{P}} c(\alpha, y) \leq \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{4} = c\left(\frac{1}{2}, x^{\text{sb}}\right),$$

where  $r^{\text{sb}}$  and  $x^{\text{sb}}$  are the radius and the center of the smallest ball  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$  that contains  $\mathfrak{P}$ . Equality occurs in (3.20) if all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  lie on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ . In this case, inequality (3.18) is sharp when  $\alpha = 1/2$  and  $y = x^{\text{sb}}$ , and equality is attained for every function  $f \in \mathcal{F}_2$ .

*Proof.* The estimates (3.6) and (3.9) may be rewritten as

$$-\frac{1}{2}e_y(x) \lfloor D^2 f \rfloor \leq f(x) - \Lambda_y[f](x) \leq \frac{1}{2}e_y(x) \lfloor D^2 f \rfloor$$

and

$$-\frac{1}{2}e^v(x) \lfloor D^2 f \rfloor \leq f(x) - \Lambda^v[f](x) \leq \frac{1}{2}e^v(x) \lfloor D^2 f \rfloor.$$

Multiplying the first inequalities by  $\alpha$  and the second by  $1 - \alpha$ , and adding the results, we obtain

$$\left| f(x) - \alpha \Lambda_y[f](x) - (1 - \alpha) \Lambda^v[f](x) \right| \leq \frac{1}{2} (\alpha e_y(x) + (1 - \alpha) e^v(x)) \lfloor D^2 f \rfloor.$$

This implies (3.18).

Next, using (2.5) and the notation (2.8), we find that

$$c\left(\frac{1}{2}, x^{\text{sb}}\right) = \frac{1}{4} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} (e^v(x) + e^{\text{sb}}(x)) = \frac{1}{4} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} \sum_{i=1}^n \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\|^2 B_i(x).$$

If  $v_j$  is a vertex on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ , then, by (1.1), (1.3), (2.11), and (2.12),

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\|^2 B_i(v_j) = \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_j\|^2 = (r^{\text{sb}})^2 \geq \sum_{i=1}^n \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\|^2 B_i(x)$$

for all  $x \in \mathfrak{P}$ . This shows that

$$\sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} \sum_{i=1}^n \|x^{\text{sb}} - v_i\|^2 B_i(x) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2$$

and completes the proof of (3.20).

Using (3.19), we deduce that

$$c(\alpha, y) \geq \frac{1 - \alpha}{2} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} e^v(x) = (1 - \alpha) c_\infty^v \geq \frac{c_\infty^v}{2} \quad \text{if } \alpha \in [0, \frac{1}{2}]$$

and, in conjunction with (3.14),

$$c(\alpha, y) \geq \frac{\alpha}{2} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} e_y(x) = \alpha c_{y, \infty} \geq \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{4} \quad \text{if } \alpha \in [\frac{1}{2}, 1].$$

Under the hypothesis that all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  lie on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ , we know from Proposition 3.5 that

$$c_{\infty}^{\vee} = \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{2}.$$

Hence

$$c(\alpha, y) \geq \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{4} \quad (\alpha \in [0, 1], y \in \mathfrak{P}),$$

which shows that equality occurs in (3.20).

Finally, we have to verify the statement on the occurrence of equality for functions  $f$  from the class  $\mathcal{F}_2$ . For this, it is clearly enough to consider the function  $f := \|\cdot\|^2$  only.

Using the notation (2.8), we may rewrite (2.1) and (2.2) as

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) - \Lambda^{\text{sb}}[f](x) &= e^{\text{sb}}(x), \\ f(x) - \Lambda^{\vee}[f](x) &= -e^{\vee}(x). \end{aligned}$$

Therefore,

$$f(x) - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\text{sb}}[f](x) - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\vee}[f](x) = \frac{1}{2} (e^{\text{sb}}(x) - e^{\vee}(x))$$

and consequently,

$$\left\| f - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\text{sb}}[f] - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\vee}[f] \right\|_{\infty} = \frac{1}{2} \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} |e^{\text{sb}}(x) - e^{\vee}(x)|.$$

If all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{P}$  lie on the boundary of  $\mathfrak{B}^{\text{sb}}$ , then

$$\sup_{x \in \mathfrak{P}} |e^{\text{sb}}(x) - e^{\vee}(x)| \geq |e^{\text{sb}}(x^{\text{sb}}) - e^{\vee}(x^{\text{sb}})| = e^{\vee}(x^{\text{sb}}) = (r^{\text{sb}})^2,$$

where the last equation follows from (2.4) and (1.2), and so

$$\left\| f - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\text{sb}}[f] - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\vee}[f] \right\|_{\infty} \geq \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{2}.$$

On the other hand, (3.18) and (3.20) show that

$$\left\| f - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\text{sb}}[f] - \frac{1}{2} \Lambda^{\vee}[f] \right\|_{\infty} \leq \frac{(r^{\text{sb}})^2}{2}.$$

Hence equality occurs for  $f = \|\cdot\|^2$ .  $\square$

**4. Approximation of Linear Functionals.** In the case  $p = 1$ , Theorems 3.1–3.3 provide an approximation of  $\mathcal{L}(f)$ , defined in (1.4), by the values of  $f$  (and possibly of  $Df$ ) at the interpolation points of  $\Lambda_y$  and  $\Lambda^{\vee}$ , respectively. Indeed, if  $\Lambda$  is any of the two operators  $\Lambda_y$  and  $\Lambda^{\vee}$ , and  $I(f) := \mathcal{L}(\Lambda[f])$ , then, using that  $\mathcal{L}$  is linear and positive, we have

$$|\mathcal{L}(f) - I(f)| = |\mathcal{L}(f - \Lambda[f])| \leq \mathcal{L}(|f - \Lambda[f]|) = \|f - \Lambda[f]\|_1.$$

Let us now turn to details. Denoting by  $\text{id}$  the identity mapping on  $\mathfrak{P}$  and observing that  $\mathcal{L}(\text{id})$  is a mapping from  $\mathfrak{P}$  into  $\mathbb{R}^d$ , we shall consider the operators

$$(4.1) \quad I_y(f) := \mathcal{L}(\Lambda_y[f]) = \mathcal{L}(1) \left[ f(y) + Df(y) \left( \frac{\mathcal{L}(\text{id})}{\mathcal{L}(1)} - y \right) \right]$$

and

$$(4.2) \quad I^v(f) := \mathcal{L}(\Lambda^v[f]) = \sum_{i=1}^n f(v_i) \mathcal{L}(B_i).$$

In the case  $p = 1$ , the constants (3.8) and (3.11) can be expressed as

$$(4.3) \quad c_{y,1} = \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{L}(e_y) \quad \text{and} \quad c_1^v = \frac{1}{2} (I^v(e_y) - \mathcal{L}(e_y)).$$

Note that the last equation, which is deduced with the help of (2.5), is independent of  $y$ . Now Theorems 3.2 and 3.3 imply the following corollaries.

**COROLLARY 4.1.** *Let  $f \in C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . Then, for any  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ , we have*

$$|\mathcal{L}(f) - I_y(f)| \leq \frac{\mathcal{L}(e_y)}{2} |D^2 f|.$$

*Equality is attained for every  $f \in \mathcal{F}_2$ .*

**COROLLARY 4.2.** *Let  $f \in C^2(\mathfrak{P})$ . Then, for any  $y \in \mathfrak{P}$ , we have*

$$|\mathcal{L}(f) - I^v(f)| \leq \frac{I^v(e_y) - \mathcal{L}(e_y)}{2} |D^2 f|.$$

*Equality is attained for every  $f \in \mathcal{F}_2$ .*

**REMARK 4.3.** The conclusions of Corollaries 4.1 and 4.2 can be refined when, in addition,  $f$  is known to be a convex function. In fact, in this case, we also have

$$I_y(f) \leq \mathcal{L}(f) \leq I^v(f)$$

as a consequence of the statements (iii) of Lemmas 2.1 and 2.2.

The ‘‘cubature rule’’  $I^v(f)$  may be seen as a multivariate analogue of the trapezoidal rule. As (4.1) shows, the ‘‘cubature rule’’  $I_y(f)$  simplifies and does not depend on  $Df$  if  $y$  is chosen as

$$x^{\text{cm}} := \frac{\mathcal{L}(\text{id})}{\mathcal{L}(1)}.$$

In this case,  $I_y(f)$  is a multivariate analogue of the midpoint rule.

The point  $x^{\text{cm}}$  will be called the *center of mass* of  $\mathfrak{P}$  with respect to the functional  $\mathcal{L}$ . Note that  $x^{\text{cm}}$  always belongs to  $\mathfrak{P}$ . Indeed, if  $x^{\text{cm}}$  were outside  $\mathfrak{P}$ , then there would exist a separating hyperplane

$$\lambda(x) := a + \langle b, x \rangle = 0,$$

where  $a \in \mathbb{R}$  and  $b \in \mathbb{R}^d$ , such that  $\lambda(x) > 0$  for  $x \in \mathfrak{P}$  and  $\lambda(x^{\text{cm}}) < 0$ . Since  $\mathcal{L}$  is positive, we would have  $\mathcal{L}(\lambda) > 0$ . On the other hand, the linearity of  $\mathcal{L}$  implies that

$$\mathcal{L}(\lambda) = a\mathcal{L}(1) + \langle b, \mathcal{L}(\text{id}) \rangle = a\mathcal{L}(1) + \langle b, \mathcal{L}(1)x^{\text{cm}} \rangle = \mathcal{L}(1)\lambda(x^{\text{cm}}) < 0,$$

which is a contradiction.

For notational simplicity, we now write

$$(4.4) \quad \Lambda^{\text{cm}} := \Lambda_y, \quad I^{\text{cm}} := I_y, \quad e^{\text{cm}} := e_y, \quad c_p^{\text{cm}} := c_{y,p} \quad \text{if } y = x^{\text{cm}}.$$

Since

$$e_y(x) = \|x - y\|^2 = \|x - x^{\text{cm}}\|^2 + \|x^{\text{cm}} - y\|^2 + 2\langle x - x^{\text{cm}}, x^{\text{cm}} - y \rangle,$$

we find, using the definition of  $x^{\text{cm}}$ , that

$$c_{y,1} = \mathcal{L}(e_y) = \mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}}) + \mathcal{L}(1)\|x^{\text{cm}} - y\|^2.$$

This shows that the constant in the error estimate of Corollary 4.1 becomes smallest if and only if  $y = x^{\text{cm}}$ .

REMARK 4.4. It may be interesting to compare the operators  $I^{\text{cm}}$  and  $I^v$ . Recalling that  $c_1^v$  in (4.3) does not depend on  $y$ , we may take  $y = x^{\text{cm}}$ . Then Corollaries 4.1 and 4.2 show that the quotient

$$(4.5) \quad \kappa := \frac{\mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}})}{I^v(e^{\text{cm}})}$$

indicates which one of the two operators  $I^{\text{cm}}$  and  $I^v$  has the smaller constant in its error estimate. We see that  $c_1^{\text{cm}} < c_1^v$  if and only if  $\kappa \in (0, 1/2)$ . Since, for convex functions,  $I^v$  approximates  $\mathcal{L}$  from above, we always have  $\kappa \in (0, 1)$ . In all the standard examples considered by us, we found that  $\kappa \in (0, 1/2)$ . However,  $\kappa \in [1/2, 1)$  will occur when  $\mathcal{L}$  is of the form (1.4) and the weight function  $w$  is large near the vertices.

**5. Examples.** We illustrate our results by considering three special classes of convex polytopes for which interpolation and approximation problems have been studied in the literature.

**5.1. Intervals (the univariate case).** Let  $d := 1$ ,  $\mathfrak{P} := [a, b]$ , and  $\mathcal{L}(f) := \int_a^b f(x) dx$ . Then  $x^{\text{sb}} = x^{\text{cm}} = \frac{1}{2}(a + b)$ ,

$$\Lambda^{\text{cm}}[f](x) = f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right) + f'\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right)\left(x - \frac{a+b}{2}\right),$$

and

$$\Lambda^v[f](x) = \frac{b-x}{b-a}f(a) + \frac{x-a}{b-a}f(b).$$

Moreover,  $\|D^2 f\| = \sup_{a \leq x \leq b} |f''(x)|$ . For the constants (3.8) with  $y = x^{\text{cm}}$  and (3.11), we find that

$$c_p^{\text{cm}} = \frac{1}{2} \left[ \frac{(b-a)^{2p+1}}{2^{2p}(2p+1)} \right]^{1/p} \quad (1 \leq p < \infty)$$

and

$$c_p^v = \frac{1}{2} [B(p+1, p+1)(b-a)^{2p+1}]^{1/p} \quad (1 \leq p < \infty),$$

where

$$B(s, t) := \int_0^1 x^{s-1} (1-x)^{t-1} dx$$

is the beta function. Furthermore,

$$c_\infty^{\text{cm}} = c_\infty^{\text{v}} = \frac{(b-a)^2}{8}.$$

It can be shown that  $c_p^{\text{cm}} < c_p^{\text{v}}$  for  $1 \leq p < \infty$ . In particular,  $c_1^{\text{v}}/c_1^{\text{cm}} = 2$ , which expresses the well known fact that the constant in the error term of the trapezoidal rule is twice as large as that of the midpoint rule.

**5.2. Multidimensional simplices.** Let  $\mathfrak{S} \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  be a non-degenerate simplex with vertices  $v_0, \dots, v_d$ . The uniquely determined rational basis functions  $B_0, \dots, B_d$  of minimal degree are the classical barycentric coordinates, which may be constructed as follows. Let  $\lambda_i(x) = 0$  be the equation of a hyperplane that contains all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{S}$  other than  $v_i$ . Then

$$B_i(x) = \frac{\lambda_i(x)}{\lambda_i(v_i)} \quad (i = 0, \dots, d).$$

For  $\mathcal{L}(f) := \int_{\mathfrak{S}} f(x) dx$ , we obtain

$$x^{\text{cm}} = \frac{1}{|\mathfrak{S}|} \int_{\mathfrak{S}} x dx = \frac{1}{d+1} \sum_{i=0}^d v_i,$$

where we write  $|\mathfrak{S}|$  for the  $d$ -dimensional volume of  $\mathfrak{S}$ . This gives a representation of  $e^{\text{cm}}$  in terms of the vertices, which, via (4.4) and (3.17), leads us to

$$c_\infty^{\text{cm}} = \frac{1}{2(d+1)^2} \max_{0 \leq i \leq d} \left\| \sum_{j=0}^d (v_i - v_j) \right\|^2.$$

Since the basis functions  $B_i$  belong to  $\mathcal{P}_1$ , the function  $e^{\text{v}}$ , defined in (2.2), is now of the form  $e^{\text{v}} = \lambda - \|\cdot\|^2$ , where  $\lambda \in \mathcal{P}_1$ . Therefore  $e^{\text{v}}(x) = 0$  is the equation of the uniquely defined sphere that contains all the vertices of  $\mathfrak{S}$  (see e. g., Stämpfle [6, Proposition 3.1]). Thus  $e^{\text{v}}$  can be represented as

$$e^{\text{v}}(x) = \hat{r}^2 - \|x - \hat{x}\|^2$$

for some  $\hat{r} > 0$  and  $\hat{x} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ .

The case of the approximation by  $\Lambda^{\text{v}}$  with respect to the norm  $\|\cdot\|_\infty$  is covered by the papers of Waldron [8, Theorem 2.1] and Stämpfle [6, Theorem 4.1]; also see de Boor [1]. Clearly,  $c_\infty^{\text{v}} = \hat{r}^2/2$  when  $\hat{x} \in \mathfrak{S}$ . Otherwise, it can be shown that  $c_\infty^{\text{v}} = \frac{1}{2}(\hat{r}^2 - \rho^2)$ , where  $\rho$  is the distance of  $\hat{x}$  from  $\mathfrak{S}$ . Geometrically,  $2c_\infty^{\text{v}}$  may be interpreted as the square of the radius of the smallest ball that contains  $\mathfrak{S}$  (see [6, Lemma 4.2]).

For the standard unit simplex of dimension  $d \geq 2$ , a straightforward calculation gives

$$c_\infty^{\text{cm}} = \frac{d^2 + d - 1}{2(d+1)^2} \quad \text{and} \quad c_\infty^{\text{v}} = \frac{d-1}{2d},$$

and so

$$\frac{c_\infty^v}{c_\infty^{\text{cm}}} = 1 - \frac{1}{d(d^2 + d - 1)} < 1.$$

For the calculation of the constants (4.3) for  $y = x^{\text{cm}}$ , we first determine  $\mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}})$  with the help of a cubature rule which is exact for all polynomials of degree less or equal to two, taken from the book of Stroud [7, p. 307, formula  $T_n : 2-2$ ]. It gives

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}}) = \int_{\mathfrak{G}} e^{\text{cm}}(x) \, dx &= \frac{(2-d)|\mathfrak{G}|}{(d+2)(d+1)} \sum_{i=0}^d e^{\text{cm}}(v_i) \\ &+ \frac{4|\mathfrak{G}|}{(d+2)(d+1)} \sum_{0 \leq i < j \leq d} e^{\text{cm}}(v_{ij}), \end{aligned}$$

where  $v_{ij} = \frac{1}{2}(v_i + v_j)$ . Simplifying the second sum by making use of the special form of  $e^{\text{cm}}$ , we arrive at

$$\mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}}) = \frac{|\mathfrak{G}|}{(d+2)(d+1)} \sum_{i=0}^d e^{\text{cm}}(v_i).$$

Since the basis functions  $B_0, \dots, B_d$  belong to  $\mathcal{P}_1$ , we conclude that

$$\mathcal{L}(B_i) = \mathcal{L}(1)B_i(x^{\text{cm}}) = \frac{\mathcal{L}(1)}{d+1} = \frac{|\mathfrak{G}|}{d+1} \quad (i = 0, \dots, d)$$

and therefore

$$I^v(e^{\text{cm}}) = \frac{|\mathfrak{G}|}{d+1} \sum_{i=0}^d e^{\text{cm}}(v_i).$$

Thus, by (4.3), the definition of  $e^{\text{cm}}$  in (4.4), and the representation in (2.3), we have

$$c_1^{\text{cm}} = \frac{|\mathfrak{G}|}{2(d+2)(d+1)} \sum_{i=0}^d \|v_i - x^{\text{cm}}\|^2$$

and

$$c_1^v = \frac{|\mathfrak{G}|}{2(d+2)} \sum_{i=0}^d \|v_i - x^{\text{cm}}\|^2.$$

These values for  $c_1^{\text{cm}}$  and  $c_1^v$  also follow from [3, Corollary 6.2, formulae (6.4) and (6.5)]. We see that  $c_1^v = (d+1)c_1^{\text{cm}}$  and  $\kappa = 1/(d+2)$  in (4.5).

**5.3. Hyperrectangles.** Let

$$\mathfrak{R} := [a_1, b_1] \times \dots \times [a_d, b_d]$$

be a rectangle in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  with vertices

$$v_i := (v_{i1}, \dots, v_{id}) \quad (i = 1, \dots, 2^d).$$

To each vertex  $v_i$ , there exists exactly one vertex of maximal distance, which we call the *diametrically opposite* vertex and which we denote by  $\bar{v}_i := (\bar{v}_{i1}, \dots, \bar{v}_{id})$ . Any

two vertices  $v_i$  and  $v_j$  have at least one common component unless they are a pair of diametrically opposite vertices. Therefore

$$B_i(x) := \prod_{j=1}^d \frac{x_j - \bar{v}_{ij}}{v_{ij} - \bar{v}_{ij}} \quad (i = 1, \dots, 2^d),$$

where  $x = (x_1, \dots, x_d)$ , are the rational basis functions of smallest degree. They span a polynomial space of dimension  $2^d$ , which contains  $\mathcal{P}_1$  as a subspace.

For  $\mathcal{L}(f) := \int_{\mathfrak{R}} f(x) dx$ , the center of mass is

$$x^{\text{cm}} = \frac{1}{2}(a_1 + b_1, \dots, a_d + b_d).$$

With this, we find that

$$e^{\text{cm}}(v_i) = \frac{1}{4} \sum_{i=1}^d (a_i - b_i)^2 =: (r^{\text{cm}})^2 \quad (i = 1, \dots, 2^d).$$

Therefore (2.5) implies that

$$e^{\text{cm}}(x) + e^{\text{v}}(x) = (r^{\text{cm}})^2$$

for all  $x$ . Consequently,

$$\sup_{x \in \mathfrak{R}} e^{\text{cm}}(x) = \sup_{x \in \mathfrak{R}} e^{\text{v}}(x) = (r^{\text{cm}})^2,$$

or equivalently,

$$c_{\infty}^{\text{cm}} = c_{\infty}^{\text{v}} = \frac{(r^{\text{cm}})^2}{2}.$$

For determining the best constants in the case  $p = 1$ , we first calculate

$$\mathcal{L}(e^{\text{cm}}) = \int_{\mathfrak{R}} \|x - x^{\text{cm}}\|^2 dx = \frac{(r^{\text{cm}})^2}{3} |\mathfrak{R}|,$$

where  $|\mathfrak{R}| = \prod_{i=1}^d (b_i - a_i)$ , and note that

$$I^{\text{v}}(e^{\text{cm}}) = (r^{\text{cm}})^2 |\mathfrak{R}|.$$

Hence (4.3) with  $y = x^{\text{cm}}$  implies that

$$c_1^{\text{cm}} = \frac{(r^{\text{cm}})^2}{6} |\mathfrak{R}| \quad \text{and} \quad c_1^{\text{v}} = \frac{(r^{\text{cm}})^2}{3} |\mathfrak{R}|.$$

Thus,  $c_1^{\text{v}}/c_1^{\text{cm}} = 2$  and  $\kappa = 1/3$ , as in the univariate case.

In the literature, analogues of the trapezoidal rule for hyperrectangles have been studied in the context of tensor product rules (see, e.g., [2, § 8.2]).

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