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2002/12

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Printed in Italy in April 2002
Università degli Studi dell'Insubria
Via Ravasi 2, 21100 Varese, Italy

Mean value theorem for continuous vector functions by smooth approximations

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Abstract

In this note a mean value theorem for continuous vector functions is introduced by mollified derivatives and smooth approximations.

1 Preliminary definitions

In this paper, a generalized mean value theorem for continuous vector functions is proved. This result involves generalized derivatives, defined by smooth approximations, following the approach introduced by Craven and Ermoliev, Norkin, Wets ([3, 4]). In particular, when local lipschitzianity is assumed, our mean value theorem reduces to the well known mean value theorem expressed by means of Clarke's generalized Jacobian [2].

We will make use of the following classical definitions and results of Functional Analysis.

Definition 1.1. A sequence of *mollifiers* is any sequence of functions $\{\phi_\epsilon\} : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}_+$, $\epsilon \downarrow 0$, such that:

- $supp\phi_\epsilon := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n, \mid \phi_\epsilon(x) > 0\} \subseteq \rho_\epsilon clB,\ \rho_\epsilon \downarrow 0$,
- $\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \phi_\epsilon(x)dx = 1$,

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where B is the unit ball in $\mathbb{R}^n$, clX means the closure of the set X and dx denotes Lebesgue measure.

Example 1.1. [4] Let ϵ be a positive number.

(i) The functions:

$$\phi_\epsilon(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\epsilon^n}, & \max_{1,\dots,n} |x_i| \leq \frac{\epsilon}{2} \\ \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

are called Steklov mollifiers.

(ii) The functions:

$$\phi_\epsilon(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{C}{\epsilon^n} \exp\left(\frac{\epsilon^2}{\|x\|^2-\epsilon^2}\right), & \|x\| < \epsilon \\ \\ 0, & \|x\| \geq \epsilon \end{cases}$$

with $C \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \phi_\epsilon(x)dx = 1$, are called standard mollifiers.

It is easy to check that the second family of functions is smooth.

Definition 1.2. [4] Given a locally integrable function $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^m$ and a sequence of bounded mollifiers, define the functions $f_\epsilon(x)$ through the convolution:

$$f_\epsilon(x) := \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f(x-z)\phi_\epsilon(z)dz = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f(z)\phi_\epsilon(x-z)dz.$$

The sequence $f_\epsilon(x)$ is said a sequence of *mollified functions*.

Remark 1.1. There is no loss of generality in considering $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^m$. The results in this paper remain true also if f is defined on an open subset of $\mathbb{R}^n$.

Proposition 1.1. *[4] Let $f \in C(\mathbb{R}^n)$. Then f_ϵ converges continuously to f, i.e. $f_\epsilon(x_\epsilon) \to f(x)$ for all $x_\epsilon \to x$. In fact f_ϵ converges uniformly to f on every compact subset of $\mathbb{R}^n$ as $\epsilon \downarrow 0$.*

Mollified functions have also some differentiability properties, under suitable regularity assumptions on f and the associated mollifiers, as stated in the following:

Proposition 1.2. *[5] Let $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^m$ be locally integrable. Whenever the mollifiers ϕ_ϵ are of class C^k, so are the associated mollified functions. Furthermore if ϕ_ϵ are of class $C^{k,1}$, that is k-times differentiable with locally lipschitzian Jacobians, then so are the associated mollified functions.*

By means of mollified functions it is possible to define generalized directional derivatives for a nonsmooth function f. Such an approach has been deepened by several authors (see e.g. [3, 4]) in the scalar case.

Definition 1.3. Let $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^m$ be a locally integrable function, let $\epsilon_n \downarrow 0$ as $n \to +\infty$ and consider the sequence $f_n := f_{\epsilon_n}$ of mollified functions with associated mollifiers $\phi_{\epsilon_n} \in C^1$. Given $x, d \in \mathbb{R}^n$ we define the following sets:

$$\partial f(x_0; d) = \{l = \lim_{n \to +\infty} \nabla f_n(x_n)d, x_n \to x_0\}$$

$$\partial_\infty f(x_0; d) = \{l = \lim_{n \to +\infty} t_n \nabla f_n(x_n)d, x_n \to x_0, t_n \downarrow 0^+\} \backslash \{0\}.$$

Proposition 1.3.

- *$\partial f(x_0; d)$ is a closed subset of $\mathbb{R}^m$.*
- *$\partial_\infty f(x_0; d)$ is a closed cone of $\mathbb{R}^m$.*
- *$\xi \partial f(x_0; d) \subseteq \partial(\xi f)(x_0; d)$, $\forall \xi \in \mathbb{R}^m$. If f is locally lipschitzian then the equality holds.*

Proof. Omitted since trivial. □

Proposition 1.4. *If f is locally lipschitzian then $\partial f(x_0; d) \subseteq \partial_C f(x_0)d$, where $\partial_C f(x_0)$ is Clarke's generalized Jacobian of f at x_0 [2].*

Proof. In fact, $\forall \xi \in \mathbb{R}^m$, the following inclusion holds [4]:

$$\partial(\xi f)(x_0; d) \subseteq \partial_C(\xi f)(x_0)d.$$

Hence:

$$\xi \partial f(x_0; d) \subseteq \xi \partial_C f(x_0)d$$

and then the thesis follows by a standard separation argument. □

Corollary 1.1. *If f is C^1 then $\partial f(x_0; d) = \nabla f(x_0)d$.*

Proof. If f is C^1, then $\partial_C f(x_0)d = \nabla f(x_0)d$ [2] and then the thesis follows from the previous proposition. □

2 Generalized mean value theorem

Theorem 2.1. *Let $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^m$ be a given continuous function. Then the following mean value theorem holds:*

$$f(x) - f(y) \in \left\{\text{conv}_{\,\delta\in[x,y]}\partial f(\delta; x-y) + \text{conv}_{\,\delta\in[x,y]}\partial_\infty f(\delta; x-y) \cup \{0\}\right\} \bigcup$$

$$\text{conv}_{\,\delta\in[x,y]} \left\{\partial_\infty f(\delta; x-y) + f(x) - f(y)\right\}.$$

where $\text{conv}_{\,\delta\in[x,y]}A(\delta)$ *denotes the convex hull of the sets $A(\delta)$, $\delta \in [x, y]$.*

Proof. In fact, for the scalar function ξf_n, we have:

$$\xi f_n(x) - \xi f_n(y) = \xi \nabla f_n(\delta_n(\xi))(x-y)$$

where $\xi \in \mathbb{R}^m$ and $\delta_n(\xi) \in (x, y)$. So we have:

$$\xi f_n(x) - \xi f_n(y) \in \xi A_n$$

where $A_n = \{\nabla f_n(\delta)(x-y), \delta \in [x, y]\}$ and obviously A_n is compact. So by a standard separation argument, we have:

$$f_n(x) - f_n(y) \in \text{conv}\, A_n$$

where conv stands for the convex hull of A_n. Let now $l_n = f_n(x) - f_n(y)$. For all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, by Charatheodory theorem, we have:

$$l_n = \sum_{j=1}^{m+1} \lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n},$$

where $\sum_{j=1}^{m+1} \lambda_{j,n} = 1$, $\lambda_{j,n} \geq 0$, $j = 1, \ldots, m+1$, $a_{j,n} \in A_n$. Then:

$$l_n = \sum_{j\in I_1} \lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n} + \sum_{j\in I_2} \lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n} + \sum_{j\in I_3} \lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n}$$

where:

- for all $j \in I_1$ the sequence $a_{j,n}$ is bounded and it converges to $a_{j,0}$. Since $a_{j,n} \in A_n$, $\forall n \in \mathbb{N}$, then $a_{j,n} = \nabla f_n(\delta_{j,n})(x-y)$, $\delta_{j,n} \in [x, y]$. Eventually by extracting a subsequence, we have $\delta_{j,n} \to \delta_j \in [x, y]$ and then:

$$a_{j,0} = \lim_{n\to+\infty} a_{j,n} = \lim_{n\to+\infty} \nabla f_n(\delta_{j,n})(x-y) \in \partial f(\delta_j; d).$$

- for all $j \in I_2$, the sequence $a_{j,n}$ is unbounded but the sequence $\lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n}$ is bounded and it converges to $a_{j,*}$.
- for all $j \in I_3$, the sequence $\lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n}$ is unbounded but there exists $j_0 \in I_3$ such that the sequence $\frac{\lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n}}{\|\lambda_{j_0,n} a_{j_0,n}\|}$ converges to $a_{j,\infty}$, $\forall j = 1, \ldots, m+1$.

We now consider the case in which I_3 is not empty. Then:

$$0 = \lim_{n \to +\infty} \frac{l_n}{\|\lambda_{j_0,n} a_{j_0,n}\|} =$$

$$\lim_{n \to +\infty} \sum_{j \in I_3} \frac{\lambda_{j,n} a_{j,n}}{\|\lambda_{j_0,n} a_{j_0,n}\|} = \sum_{j \in \ I_3} a_{j,\infty},$$

with $a_{j_0,\infty} \neq 0$. Since $a_{j,n} = \nabla f_n(\delta_{j,n})(x-y)$, $\delta_{j,n} \to \delta_j$, $\frac{\lambda_{j,n}}{\|\lambda_{j_0,n} a_{j_0,n}\|} \to 0$ for every $j \in I_3$, we have $a_{j,\infty} \in \partial_\infty f(\delta_j; d) \cup \{0\}$. Furthermore $a_{j_0,\infty} \neq 0$ and then:

$$0 \in \text{conv}_{\,\delta \in [x,y]} \partial_\infty f(\delta; x-y).$$

We now consider the case in which I_3 is empty. Eventually extracting subsequences, let $\lambda_{j,0} = \lim_{n \to +\infty} \lambda_{j,n}$. Then, we have $\lambda_{j,0} = 0 \ \forall j \in I_2$, $\sum_{j \in I_1} \lambda_{j,0} = 1$ and $a_{j,*} \in \partial_\infty f(\delta_j; x-y) \cup \{0\}$. So:

$$l = \lim_{n \to +\infty} l_n = \sum_{j \in I_1} \lambda_{j,0} a_{j,0} + \sum_{j \in I_2} a_{j,*}$$

Obviously $\sum_{j \in I_2} a_{j,*} \in \text{conv}_{\,\delta \in [x,y]} \partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y) \cup \{0\}$. So we have:

$$f(x) - f(y) \in \left\{ \text{conv}_{\,\delta \in [x,y]} \partial f(\delta, x-y) + \text{conv}_{\,\delta \in [x,y]} \partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y) \cup \{0\} \right\} \bigcup$$

$$\text{conv}_{\,\delta \in [x,y]} \left\{ \partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y) + f(x) - f(y) \right\}.$$

□

Corollary 2.1. *Let $f : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}$. If we define a generalized upper derivative as:*

$$Df(x; d) = \limsup_{n \to +\infty, x_n \to x_0} \nabla f_n(x_n) d$$

then the following mean value theorem holds:

$$f(x) - f(y) \leq Df(\xi; x-y)$$

where $\xi \in [x, y]$.

Proof. We only consider the case in which $Df(s, x-y) < +\infty$ $\forall s \in [x,y]$ (if $\exists \xi \in [x,y]$ such that $Df(s,x-y) = +\infty$ the thesis is trivial). Then $\partial_\infty f(s,x-y) \subset (-\infty, 0)$, $\forall s \in [x,y]$. If, ab absurdo, $f(x)-f(y) \in \text{conv}_{\delta \in [x,y]} \{\partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y) + f(x) - f(y)\}$ then $\exists \xi \in [x,y]$ such that $f(x)-f(y) \in (-\infty,0)+f(x)-f(y)$ that is $0 \in (-\infty, 0)$. So $f(x) - f(y) \in \text{conv}_{\delta\in[x,y]}\partial f(\delta, x-y) + \text{conv}_{\delta\in[x,y]}\partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y)$. Then $f(x)-f(y) = a + b$ where $a \in \text{conv}_{\delta\in[x,y]}\partial f(\delta, x-y)$ and $b \in \text{conv}_{\delta\in[x,y]}\partial_\infty f(\delta, x-y)$. Then $\exists \xi \in [x,y]$ such that $a \leq \sup_{l\in\partial f(\xi,x-y)} l$, that is $a \leq Df(\xi, x-y)$, and $b \leq 0$. So the thesis follows. □

Corollary 2.2. *If f is locally Lipschitz, then we have:*

$$f(x) - f(y) \in \text{conv}_{\delta\in[x,y]}\partial_C f(\delta)(x-y).$$

Proof. We know that (proposition 1.4) at any point δ, $\partial f(\delta; x-y) = \partial_C(\delta)(x-y)$. furthermore, form the Lipschitz hypothesis it follows easily that $\partial_\infty f(\delta; x-y) = \emptyset$, whenever δ. So the thesis follows. □

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