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Adaptive Approximation

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I. INTRODUCTION. The purpose of this paper is to describe a general class of
    adaptive methods for determining approximations. These methods are primarily
    of interest for piecewise polynomial approximation in L_p norms ($1 \leq p \leq \infty$),
    but are not necessarily so restricted. They are applicable to a broad
    class of functions including any that are likely to occur in practice. We
    analyze the rate of convergence of these methods and show that they have
    maximum degree of convergence.

    We mention concrete realizations of these methods which allow one to
    compute smooth approximations rapidly. Fast methods for unsmooth (e.g. only
    continuous) approximations have been known for some time although they are
    not described in the literature and their convergence properties have not
    been analyzed formally.

    We also point out that these results provide simpler and more constructive
    proofs of some earlier results on the degree of convergence for nonlinear
    spline approximation.

    Finally, for the sake of completeness, we note that the term adaptive
    approximation (for piecewise polynomials) has been used for a completely
    different approach by Dodson [4].

II. PRELIMINARIES. An adaptive approximation method involves a local approxima-
    tion operator T_I which associates with $f(x)$ an approximation $A_I(f,x)$ on the
    interval I, i.e.

$$T_I : f(x) \rightarrow A_I(f,x)$$

A simple example of this is linear interpolation at the end points of the
interval I. Associated with the adaptive method is a tolerance $\varepsilon > 0$ and
an interval I is active if

$$||f(x) - A_I(f,x)||_I = ||(1-T_I)f||_I \geq \varepsilon$$

otherwise it is discarded. The subscript on the norm indicates restriction
to the interval I. The number ε is not necessarily the desired approxima-
tion accuracy.

Adaptive Approximation Method:

1. Initially we are given f(x), the interval [0,1], a tolerance $\varepsilon > 0$, a local approximation operator T_I and a norm $||\ ||$. The collection of active intervals initially consists of [0,1].

2. Choose an active interval I and subdivide it into two parts IL and IR. Find $T_{IL}f$ and $T_{IR}f$.

3. Discard IL or IR if $||(1-T_{IL})f||_{IL} < \varepsilon$ or $||(1-T_{IR})f||_{IR} < \varepsilon$, otherwise return them to the collection of active intervals.

4. Return to step 2 as long as there are any active intervals.

When the adaptive method terminates, we know that the local error of approximation on each interval is less than ε and this allows one to estimate the global error depending on the nature of the norm used. The global approximation is, of course, just the collection of local approximations $A_I(f,x)$. For simplicity, we assume that each interval is halved and thus each interval is of the form $[x, x+2^{-k}]$ for some value of k and we may represent it by the pair (x,k). For specific local approximation operators and suitable function f(x) we have a bound on the error $||(1-T_I)f||_I$ and we denote this by ERROR(x,k). In actual use of an adaptive method the decision to discard an interval is based on ERROR(x,k) rather than the exact value of $||(1-T_I)f||_I$ which may be difficult (or impossible) to compute. In a typical situation we would assume that f(x) belongs to some smoothness class parameterized by a number n (say piecewise in C^n) and then we would know that

$$\text{ERROR}(x,k) \leq K(x)(2^{-k})^r$$

where r is simply related to n (say $r = n$ or $n+1$) and K(x) is perhaps the value of some derivative of f(x) or $||f^{(n)}(x)||_I$. The objective of this paper is to analyze the rate of convergence of adaptive approximation methods in such situations.

The convergence proofs draw heavily on results about an interval partition algorithm previously established in [7]. This algorithm is as follows:

PARTITION ALGORITHM:

1. Initialization: We are given

    A. Numbers γ, $\beta < 1$ and $\varepsilon > 0$.

    B. An empty set M' and a set M of intervals I with associated numbers $\eta(I)$. M contains a distinguished interval I*.

    C. A process P:I → (IL,IR) which divides an interval I into left and right subintervals such that

(i) If $I = I*$ then $\eta(IL) = \eta(IR) = \beta*\eta(I)$

and $I* \leftarrow IL$ or $I* \leftarrow IR$.

(ii) If $I \neq I*$ then $\eta(IL) = \eta(IR) = \gamma*\eta(I)$

2. Operation:

For $I\epsilon M$ do

$\quad$ P: $I \rightarrow (IL, IR)$

$\quad$ If $(\eta(IL) < \epsilon)$ then $IL\epsilon M'$ else $IL\epsilon M$

$\quad$ If $(\eta(IR) < \epsilon)$ then $IR\epsilon M'$ else $IR\epsilon M$.

The following results are established in [7].

THEOREM 1. Consider the Partition Algorithm with β, M and $\eta(I)$ for $I\epsilon M$ specified. Let $F(\gamma,\epsilon)$ be the size of M' when the algorithm terminates and then we have

$$F(\gamma,\epsilon) = \mathscr{O}\,(\epsilon^{\frac{1}{\log_2 \gamma}})$$

COROLLARY 1. If the Partition Algorithm is modified so that each interval is divided into m parts or less and if there are k distinguished intervals then the conclusion of Theorem 1 becomes

$$F(\gamma,\epsilon) = \mathscr{O}\,(\epsilon^{\frac{1}{\log_m \gamma}})$$

COROLLARY 2. Consider a real valued function g defined on intervals with the property that $I_1 \subseteq I_2$ implies $g(I_1) \leq g(I_2)$. Suppose that in the interval division process P the factors γ and β are replaced by $\gamma*g(IR)$, $\gamma*g(IL)$, $\beta*g(IR)$ and $\beta*g(IL)$ as appropriate. Then the conclusion of Theorem 1 remains valid.

III. TCEBYCHEFF APPROXIMATION. We use the norm

$$||f(x)||_I = \max_{x\epsilon I} |f(x)| = ||f(x)||_{I,\infty}$$

and consider the functions f(x) which satisfy the following assumption:

ASSUMPTION 1. Assume f(x) has singularities

$$S = \{s_i | i = 1,2,\ldots,R < \infty\}$$

and set

$$w(x) = \prod_{i=1}^{R} (x-s_i).$$

(i) <u>If $x_0 \notin S$ then $f^{(n)}(x)$ is continuous in a neighborhood of x_0</u>
   <u>with $n \geq 1$.</u>

(ii) <u>There are constants K and α so that</u>

$$\left| f^{(n)}(x) \right| \leq K |w(x)|^{\alpha-n}$$

This assumption states that $f(x)$ has n continuous derivatives except for a finite number R of algebraic singularities.

We consider local approximation operators T_I which satisfy:

ASSUMPTION 2. <u>Let s denote a point of singularity of $f(x)$ and set</u>

$$F_n(x,k) = \max_{t \in [x, x+2^{-k}]} \left| f^{(n)}(t) \right|$$

<u>There are constants n, K and α (the same as in Assumption 1) so that:</u>
(i) <u>ERROR$(x,k) \leq KF_n(x,k)2^{-kn}$ if $[x,x+2^{-k}]$ contains no singularity.</u>
(ii) <u>ERROR$(x,k) \leq K2^{-k}$ if $s \in [x,x+2^{-k}]$.</u>

Note that the second part of this assumption implies that most common local approximation operators must be modified for intervals containing singularities. A little thought shows that even very crude modifications suffice to satisfy this part of the assumption.

THEOREM 2. <u>Assume $f(x)$ satisfies Assumption 1 with $\alpha > 0$. Consider</u> <u>an adaptive algorithm whose local operator satisfies Assumption 2. Then</u> <u>the global approximation $A(x)$ obtained when the algorithm terminates</u> <u>satisfies</u>

$$\left\| f(x) - A(x) \right\|_{[0,1],\infty} = \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{1}{N^n}\right)$$

<u>where N is the number of pieces comprising $A(x)$.</u>

Proof: The interval collection is initialized with $[0,1]$ and the distinguished intervals are those that contain a singularity. One singularity may produce two distinguished intervals in case it is an end point of a subdivision, but clearly there are at most 2R distinguished intervals. The numbers associated with the intervals are governed by Corollary 2 where $g[x,x+2^{-k}]$ is $F_n(x,k)$ as defined in Assumption 2. The values of γ and β of the partition algorithm are

$$\gamma = 2^{-n} \qquad\qquad \beta = 2^{-\alpha}$$

Since $\alpha > 0$ we have that γ, $\beta < 1$. It follows from Theorem 1 and its corollaries that the number D of discarded intervals is the order of $\epsilon^{-1/n}$. But D is the number N of pieces that comprise the final global approximation, so we have

$$N = \mathcal{O}(\epsilon^{-1/n})$$

On the other hand, the global error is simply the maximum of the local errors and each of these is less than ϵ. Thus we have

$$||f(x) - A(x)||_{[0,1],\infty} \leq \epsilon$$

One may eliminate ϵ from these two relations to establish the theorem.

IV. $\underline{L_p \text{ APPROXIMATION, } 1 \leq p < \infty}$. We use the norm

$$||f(x)||_I = [\int_I |f(x)|^p dx]^{1/p} = ||f(x)||_{I,p}$$

and consider the same class of functions as before. The assumption about the approximation errors of the local operators is changed slightly to

ASSUMPTION 3. With the notation of Assumption 2 we have

(i) $\text{ERROR}(x,k) \leq K F_n(x,k) 2^{-k(n+1/p)}$ $\underline{\text{if}}$ $[x, x+2^{-k}]$ $\underline{\text{contains no singularity}}$

(ii) $\text{ERROR}(x,k) \leq K 2^{-(\alpha+1/p)}$ $\underline{\text{if}}$ $s \epsilon [x, x+2^{-k}]$

Recall that $\text{ERROR}(x,k)$ is a bound on $||(1-T_I)f||_{I,p}$. We now determine the rate of convergence of the adaptive method.

THEOREM 3. $\underline{\text{Assume that } f(x) \text{ satisfies Assumption 1 with } \alpha > -1/p.}$ $\underline{\text{Consider an adaptive algorithm whose local operator satisfies Assumption 3.}}$ $\underline{\text{Then the global approximation } A(x) \text{ obtained when the algorithm terminates}}$ $\underline{\text{satisfies}}$

$$||f(x) - A(x)||_{[0,1],p} = \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{1}{N^n}\right)$$

$\underline{\text{where N is the number of pieces comprising } A(x).}$

Proof. As in the proof of Theorem 2, there are at most 2R distinguished intervals which contain a singularity. The values if γ and β of the partition algorithm are

$$\gamma = 2^{-(n+1/p)} \qquad\qquad \beta = 2^{-(\alpha+1/p)}$$

Since $\alpha > -1/p$ we have that γ, $\beta < 1$. It follows from Theorem 1 and its corollaries that the number N of discarded intervals is the order of

$$N = \mathcal{O}(\epsilon^{\frac{-1}{n+1/p}})$$

To estimate the global error we note that

$$\int_0^1 |f(x) - A(x)|^P dx = \sum_I \int_I |(1-T_I)f|^P dx$$

when the sum is over all the intervals generated when the algorithm terminates. We have from the discard mechanism that

$$\int_I |(1-T_I)f|^P dx \leq \varepsilon^P$$

and thus the global error is bounded from

$$\int_0^1 |f(x) - A(x)|^P dx \leq N\varepsilon^P$$

which implies

$$||f(x) - A(x)||_{[0,1],p} \leq N^{1/P}\varepsilon$$

If we eliminate ε from this relationship and the one relating N and ε, we obtain the conclusion of the theorem and this concludes the proof.

V. <u>DEGREE OF CONVERGENCE RESULTS FOR SPLINE APPROXIMATION.</u> The first degree of convergence results for nonlinear spline approximation [5] involved essentially the same class of functions as defined by Assumption 1. We note that the main theorems of [5] are direct corollaries of Theorems 2 and 3 of this paper using the same local spline operator. The present results do not, however, allow one to establish the more general and much deeper degree of convergence results of Burchard and Hale [3].

There are two advantages of the present approach over the earlier one. First, the present proofs are somewhat simpler (a good deal of the complexity is buried in the theorem used from [7]). More significantly, the present proof is completely constructive without any a priori knowledge about f(x). The earlier proofs are also constructive but they require that one know both the exact location of all the singularities of f(x) and an upper bound on the strength α of the singularities.

The results of this paper may be used to establish degree of convergence results for other nonlinear piecewise approximation schemes (e.g. using generalized splines of various types) but we have not carried out the

details of exhibiting the appropriate local approximation operators.

VI. LOCAL OPERATORS FOR SMOOTH APPROXIMATION. In an earlier paper [6] we pointed
out the need for computational methods for general purpose approximation which
 a. are fast to compute
 b. give high accuracy
 c. give smooth approximations.

At that time no   methods were known with all three of these attributes
although methods with any two of them were known. The adaptive methods of this
paper allow such computational methods to be constructed by using appropriate
local piecewise polynomial approximation operators. We describe three classes
of such operators with various values of smoothness and rate of convergence.
We let r indicate the smoothness (i.e. A(x) is in $C^{(r)}[0,1]$) and N (the
number of knots) and n (the polynomial degree) govern the convergence proper-
ties and computational complexity.

   A. Local Hermite Approximation Operators. These operators include
linear interpolation (r=0, n=1) and cubic Hermite approximation (r=1, n=3).
In general we have n=2r+1 and the polynomial approximation $A_I(f,x)$ on the
interval I=[s,t] is determined by

(1) $$\frac{d^k A_I(f,x)}{dx^k} = \frac{d^k f(x)}{dx^k} \qquad \begin{array}{l} \text{for } x = s,t \\ k = 0,1,2,\ldots,r \end{array}$$

If s and/or t are singularities of $f^{(k)}(x)$ then the operator T_I is modified
by deleting the conditions involving infinite derivatives and reducing the
polynomial degree a corresponding amount. These local operators lead to
approximations $A(x)\epsilon C^{(r)}[0,1]$ with

$$||f - A(x)|| = \mathscr{O}\left(\frac{1}{N^n}\right)$$

where N is the number of knots and n is the polynomial degree.

   B. Local Hermite Approximation Operators with Expanded Degree. These
operators are simple extensions of the preceding ones which increase the
polynomial degree while keeping the smoothness fixed. Let n = 2r+1+q and
then $A_I(f,x)$ on I = [s,t] is determined by the conditions (1) above plus

(2) $A_I(f,x_j) = f(x_j)$ $j = 1,2,\ldots,q$

where $s < x_1 \le x_2 \le \cdots \le x_q < t$ (repeated values in the sequence x_j imply
interpolation of appropriate derivatives). For example, if f(x) has five
derivatives and one only needs A(x) to have continuous slope, then one can

keep r=1 and use piecewise quintic polynomials by introducing two inter-
polation points bewteen the knots.

C. Local Spline Approximation by Quasi-Interpolants and Moments. The
quasi-interpolant operators introduced by de Boor and Fix [2] are generaliza-
tions of the operator introduced earlier by Birkhoff [1]. The quasi-interpo-
lant is of the form

$$A_I(x) = T_I f = \sum_\pi (\lambda_j f) B_{j,n}(x) \qquad \text{for } x \epsilon I$$

where π is a partition of $[0,1]$, $\{B_{j,n}(x)\}_{j=1}^{N+n+2}$ is the B-spline basis for
splines on the partition π and λ_j is a certain linear functional. This is a
local operator because only n+1 of the $B_{j,n}(x)$ are different from zero on I.
A vast variety of linear functionals λ_j may be used and we refer the reader
to [2] for an exposition. The nature of the possibilities is illustrated by
the following concrete example for cubic splines. Let $\pi = \{t_j = jh\}_{j=0}^N$ be
an equispaced partition and $I = [t_i, t_{i+1}]$ then

$$A_I(x) = \sum_{j=i-1}^{i+2} [f(t_j) - h^2/6 \; f''(t_j)]B_{i,3}(x)$$

Slightly more complicated formulas exist for non-uniform partitions. One
of the main results of [2] is that if $f(x)\epsilon C^{(r)}[0,1]$ then

$$||(1 - T_I)f||_{[0,1],\infty} \leq K\omega(f^{(n)}, |\pi|)|\pi|^n$$

where ω is the modulus of continuity and $|\pi|$ is the maximum mesh length.
One can easily modify this to conclude that

$$||(1 - T_I)f||_{I,\infty} \leq KF_r(I)|I|^r$$

where $|I|$ is the maximum length of the interval I and its 6 neighboring
intervals and $F_r(I)$ is the maximum of $F_r(x,k)$ for the same intervals.

The obvious advantage of these operators is that one has r = n-1 =.2. The
obvious disadvantage is that the adaptation computations are more complex.
This is because

    a. Subdividing an interval affects the approximations in the 6
neighboring intervals. This is because the B-splines $B_{j,3}(x)$ change.

    b. The effect of a singularity extends over 7 intervals rather than
just one. Appropriate modifications must be made in all of them.

    c. The value of ERROR(x,k) is more complicated to estimate.

We also note that minor extensions of the proofs must be made in order to actually cover this case.

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