

ISOMORPHIC EMBEDDING OF ℓ_p^n , $1 < p < 2$, INTO $\ell_1^{(1+\varepsilon)n}$

BY

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we partially answer a question posed by V. Milman and G. Schechtman by proving that ℓ_p^n , $(C \log n)^{\frac{1}{q}(1+\frac{1}{\varepsilon})}$ -embeds into $\ell_1^{(1+\varepsilon)n}$, where $1 < p < 2$ and $1/p + 1/q = 1$.

1. Introduction

In 1982 W. B. Johnson and G. Schechtman [J-S1], [J-S2], [M-S,1] proved that if $1 \leq p \leq 2$ then, for any positive ε , there exists a constant $C = C(\varepsilon)$ such that ℓ_p^n , $(1 + \varepsilon)$ -embeds into ℓ_1^{Cn} . (A generalization of this result was obtained by G. Pisier [P] in 1983.) The same result for $p = 2$ was proved in 1977 by T. Figiel, J. Lindenstrauss and V. Milman [F-L-M] who published a detailed investigation of Dvoretzky's theorem. In the same year, B. S. Kashin [K] proved that for any $0 < \theta < 1$ the space ℓ_1^n has a subspace of dimension θn which is $C(\theta)$ close to Euclidean space. An investigation of all large dimensional subspaces of ℓ_1^n was

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These results, together with the recent proofs of the isomorphic version of Dvoretzky's theorem ([M-S,2], [M-S,3]), led to the following question posed by V. Milman and G. Schechtman: Does there exist a universal constant $C(\varepsilon)$ such that ℓ_p^n can be $C(\varepsilon)$ -embedded into $\ell_1^{(1+\varepsilon)n}$? In other words, can we replace the constant C in the Johnson–Schechtman result by $1 + \varepsilon$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$, at the expense of changing the constant $1 + \varepsilon$ to some other (possibly large) universal constant (which depends on ε)? In this paper we prove the following weaker version:

THEOREM: *There is a universal constant C such that for every $\varepsilon > 0$ and every n there is a subspace Y of $\ell_1^{(1+\varepsilon)n}$ with $d(\ell_p^n, Y) < (C \log n)^{\frac{1}{q}(1+\frac{1}{\varepsilon})}$, where $1/p + 1/q = 1$ and $d(\cdot, \cdot)$ denotes the Banach–Mazur distance.*

All the proofs of the result [J-S1] use random embeddings $T: \ell_p^m \rightarrow \ell_1^n$. The main point is to prove a concentration result which states that if $\|b\|_p = 1$ then $P(|\|T(b)\|_1 - 1| > a)$ is exponentially small with respect to n . Such a result yields, by standard arguments, that if n/m is large enough then with high probability T would be a $\frac{1+a}{1-a}$ -embedding. If, however, we want n/m to be arbitrarily close to 1, we are forced to choose a large a . When $a > 1$, the estimate on $P(1 - \|T(b)\|_1 > a)$ is clearly meaningless, and we don't get any lower bound for $\|T(b)\|_1$.

In our proof we present a different approach. We still have a random embedding T (which is quite different from the embeddings used before), and we prove directly an estimate for $P(\|T(b)\|_1 < t\|b\|_p)$ — not via a concentration inequality. Unfortunately, we do not get a bound on $P(\|T(b)\|_1 > a\|b\|_p)$ which is exponential in n . We are therefore forced to use more complicated estimates than in the usual “net” argument, and this is the reason why the factor $\log n$ appears in the statement of the theorem.

2. The main lemmas

We will break the proof of the theorem into a few simple lemmas. The first lemma is an elementary probabilistic result.

LEMMA 1: *Let X_1, \dots, X_n be independent positive random variables with densities bounded by C . Then for every $t > 0$*

$$P\left(\sum_{k=1}^n X_k < t\right) \leq \frac{(Ct)^n}{n!}.$$

Proof: Let ϕ_k be the density of X_k . Then

$$\begin{aligned} \phi_{\sum_{k=1}^n X_k}(s) &= (\phi_1 * \cdots * \phi_n)(s) \\ &= \int_0^s \int_0^{s-u_1} \cdots \int_0^{s-u_1-\cdots-u_{n-2}} \phi_1(u_1) \cdots \phi_{n-1}(u_{n-1}) \\ &\quad \phi_n(s-u_1-\cdots-u_{n-1}) du_{n-1} \cdots du_1 \\ &\leq \int_0^s \int_0^{s-u_1} \cdots \int_0^{s-u_1-\cdots-u_{n-2}} C^n du_{n-1} \cdots du_1 = \frac{C^n s^{n-1}}{(n-1)!}. \end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$P\left(\sum_{k=1}^n X_k < t\right) = \int_0^t \phi_{\sum_{k=1}^n X_k}(s) ds \leq \int_0^t \frac{C^n s^{n-1}}{(n-1)!} ds = \frac{(Ct)^n}{n!}. \quad \blacksquare$$

Fix $1 < p < 2$ and let g be a normalized symmetric p -stable random variable. We will fix also $m < n$ and attempt to embed ℓ_p^m into ℓ_1^n .

Define a symmetric random variable X by

$$P(X < t) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } t < -n^{1/p}, \\ \frac{P(-n^{1/p} \leq g \leq t)}{P(|g| \leq n^{1/p})} & \text{if } |t| \leq n^{1/p}, \\ 1 & \text{if } t > n^{1/p}. \end{cases}$$

LEMMA 2: *There exists a constant $C = C_p$ such that for every (b_1, \dots, b_m) in the unit sphere of ℓ_p^m the density of $|\sum_{k=1}^m b_k X_k|$ is bounded pointwise by $C\phi_{|g|}$, where X_1, \dots, X_m are i.i.d. copies of X .*

Proof: Put $Y = \sum_{k=1}^m b_k X_k$. Since $\phi_{|Y|} \leq 2\phi_Y$ it is enough to prove that Y has a bounded density. Notice that the density of X satisfies

$$\phi_X \leq \frac{\phi_g}{P(|g| \leq n^{1/p})} \leq \frac{\phi_g}{1 - C/n}$$

for some universal constant $C = C_p$. The last inequality follows from known estimates of the tail distribution of a p -stable (see [D]).

Hence

$$\begin{aligned} \phi_Y &\leq \left(\frac{\phi_X\left(\frac{\cdot}{|b_1|}\right)}{|b_1|} \right) * \cdots * \left(\frac{\phi_X\left(\frac{\cdot}{|b_m|}\right)}{|b_m|} \right) \\ &\leq \frac{1}{\left(1 - \frac{C}{n}\right)^m} \left(\frac{\phi_g\left(\frac{\cdot}{|b_1|}\right)}{|b_1|} \right) * \cdots * \left(\frac{\phi_g\left(\frac{\cdot}{|b_m|}\right)}{|b_m|} \right) * \\ &\leq e^{2C} \phi_{\sum_{k=1}^m b_k g_k} = e^{2C} \phi_g, \end{aligned}$$

where g_1, \dots, g_m are i.i.d. copies of g and the last inequality follows from the fact that $\sum_{k=1}^m b_k g_k$ has the same distribution as g . ■

We will now define the random variables which will be the object of our study:

$$Z_b = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X_{ij} \right|,$$

where $b = (b_1, \dots, b_m) \in \ell_p^m$ and $\{X_{ij}\}_{i=1, j=1}^{n, m}$ are i.i.d. copies of X .

COROLLARY 1: *There is a universal constant $C = C_p$ such that for every $t > 0$ and $b \in \ell_p^m$*

$$P(Z_b < t) < \left(\frac{Ct}{\|b\|_p} \right)^n.$$

Proof: We can clearly assume that $\|b\|_p = 1$. By inverting the Fourier transform of ϕ_g we see that $\phi_g \leq C$ pointwise, for some universal constant C . Lemma 1 then implies that

$$P(Z_b < t) < \frac{(Cnt)^n}{n!} \leq \frac{(Cnt)^n}{\sqrt{2\pi n} n^n e^{-n}} \leq (C't)^n. \quad \blacksquare$$

We now pass to estimating $P(Z_b \geq a)$.

LEMMA 3: *For every $t > 0$*

$$\mathbb{E} e^{tX} \leq 1 + \frac{1}{n} \left(\cosh(Cn^{1/p}t) - 1 \right),$$

where $C = C_p$ depends only on p .

Proof: Using the known tail estimates of a p -stable we get that for every $k \geq 1$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E} X^{2k} &= \int_0^\infty 2kt^{2k-1} P(|X| > t) dt = \int_0^{n^{1/p}} 2kt^{2k-1} \frac{P(|g| > t)}{P(|g| \leq n^{1/p})} dt \\ &\leq \int_0^{n^{1/p}} 2kt^{2k-1} \frac{1}{(1 - C/n)} \frac{C}{t^p} dt \leq C' \frac{n^{2k/p}}{n}. \end{aligned}$$

Hence, since X is symmetric,

$$\mathbb{E} e^{tX} = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{t^{2k}}{(2k)!} \mathbb{E} X^{2k} \leq 1 + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{(Ctn^{1/p})^{2k}}{(2k)!} = 1 + \frac{1}{n} \left(\cosh(Cn^{1/p}t) - 1 \right). \quad \blacksquare$$

LEMMA 4: Set $Y_i = \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X_{ij}$, where $\|b\|_p = 1$. Then for $t > 0$

$$\mathbb{E}e^{t|Y_i|} \leq 1 + Ct + 2 \left(\exp \left(\frac{\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}\|b\|_\infty t) - 1) \right) - 1 \right),$$

where $C = C_p$ depends only on p .

Proof: By Lemma 2, $\phi_{|Y_i|} \leq C\phi_{|g|}$, which implies that $\mathbb{E}|Y_i| \leq C$. Using the elementary inequality

$$e^a \leq 1 + a + 2(\cosh a - 1)$$

we get that

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}e^{t|Y_i|} &\leq 1 + Ct + 2(\mathbb{E}e^{tY_i} - 1) = 1 + Ct + 2 \left(\prod_{j=1}^m \mathbb{E}e^{tb_j|X_j|} - 1 \right) \\ &\leq 1 + Ct + 2 \left(\prod_{j=1}^m \left(1 + \frac{1}{n} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}|b_j|t) - 1) \right) - 1 \right). \end{aligned}$$

Now, by convexity, for every j

$$\cosh(Cn^{1/p}|b_j|t) - 1 \leq \frac{|b_j|}{\|b\|_\infty} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}\|b\|_\infty t) - 1).$$

Hence

$$\begin{aligned} \prod_{j=1}^m \left(1 + \frac{1}{n} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}|b_j|t) - 1) \right) &\leq \exp \left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^m (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}|b_j|t) - 1) \right) \\ &\leq \exp \left(\frac{\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}\|b\|_\infty t) - 1) \right). \quad \blacksquare \end{aligned}$$

LEMMA 5: There is a universal constant C such that for all $a > C$ and $\|b\|_p = 1$

$$P(Z_b > a) \leq e^{-Ca \frac{n^{1/q}}{\|b\|_\infty}}.$$

Proof: For every $t > 0$ we have

$$\begin{aligned} P(Z_b > a) &= P(e^{tZ_b - ta} > 1) \leq e^{-ta} \mathbb{E}e^{tZ_b} = e^{-ta} (\mathbb{E}e^{tY_1/n})^n \\ &\leq e^{-ta} \left[1 + C \frac{t}{n} + 2 \left(\exp \left(\frac{\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} (\cosh(Cn^{1/p}\|b\|_\infty \frac{t}{n}) - 1) \right) - 1 \right) \right]^n \\ &\leq e^{-ta} \exp \left[Ct + 2n \left(\exp \left(\frac{\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} \exp(C \frac{\|b\|_\infty t}{n^{1/q}}) \right) - 1 \right) \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Take

$$t = \frac{n^{1/q}}{C\|b\|_\infty}.$$

Notice that then

$$\frac{\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} \exp\left(C \frac{\|b\|_\infty t}{n^{1/q}}\right) = \frac{e\|b\|_1}{n\|b\|_\infty} \leq e.$$

Since for all $0 \leq x \leq e$, $e^x - 1 \leq 6x$, we get that

$$\begin{aligned} P(Z_b > a) &\leq \exp\left[-ta + Ct + 12 \frac{\|b\|_1}{\|b\|_\infty} \exp\left(C \frac{\|b\|_\infty t}{n^{1/q}}\right)\right] \\ &= \exp\left[-(a - C) \frac{n^{1/q}}{C\|b\|_\infty} + \frac{12e\|b\|_1}{\|b\|_\infty}\right] \\ &\leq \exp\left[-(a - C) \frac{n^{1/q}}{C\|b\|_\infty} + \frac{36n^{1/q}}{\|b\|_\infty}\right] \leq e^{-Ca \frac{n^{1/q}}{\|b\|_\infty}}, \end{aligned}$$

for a big enough. \blacksquare

We will now prove a standard geometric result, the proof of which we include for the sake of completeness. Define a special set of points on the unit sphere of ℓ_p^m :

$$\mathcal{F} = \left\{ \frac{\epsilon 1_A}{|A|^{1/p}}; A \subseteq \{1, \dots, m\}, A \neq \emptyset \text{ and } \epsilon \in \{-1, 1\}^m \right\},$$

where the multiplication $\epsilon 1_A$ is pointwise.

LEMMA 6: *There is a constant $C = C_p$ such that for all m*

$$\text{conv}(\mathcal{F}) \supseteq \frac{C}{(\log m)^{1/q}} B(\ell_p^m).$$

Proof: Fix $b \in S(\ell_p^m)$ and assume that $b_1 \geq b_2 \geq \dots \geq b_m \geq 0$. Define

$$\alpha(b) = \sum_{k=1}^m [k^{1/p} - (k-1)^{1/p}] b_k$$

and put

$$\lambda_m = \frac{b_m}{\alpha(b)} m^{1/p} \quad \text{and} \quad \lambda_k = \frac{b_k - b_{k+1}}{\alpha(b)} k^{1/p}, \quad \text{for } 1 \leq k < m.$$

Clearly $\lambda_k \geq 0$, $\sum_{k=1}^m \lambda_k = 1$ and

$$b = \alpha(b) \sum_{k=1}^m \frac{\lambda_k}{k^{1/p}} \sum_{i=1}^k e_i.$$

Holder's inequality gives

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha(b) &\leq \left(\sum_{k=1}^m [k^{1/p} - (k-1)^{1/p}]^q \right)^{1/q} \left(\sum_{k=1}^m |b_k|^p \right)^{1/p} \\ &\leq \left(1 + \sum_{k=2}^m \left(\frac{1}{p(k-1)^{1/q}} \right)^q \right)^{1/q} = \left(1 + \frac{1}{p^q} \sum_{r=1}^{m-1} \frac{1}{r} \right)^{1/q} \leq C_p (\log m)^{1/q}. \end{aligned}$$

We proved that if $b_1 \geq b_2 \geq \dots \geq b_m \geq 0$, there exist $\alpha(b) > 0$ and $v \in \text{conv}(\mathcal{F})$ such that $b = \alpha(b)v$ and $\alpha(b) \leq C(\log m)^{1/q}$. Since \mathcal{F} is invariant under permutations and changes of sign, this shows that

$$B(\ell_p^m) \subseteq c(\log m)^{1/q} \text{conv}(\mathcal{F}). \quad \blacksquare$$

3. Proof of the theorem

We will first estimate

$$\begin{aligned} P(\exists v \in \mathcal{F}, Z_v > a) &\leq \sum_{v \in \mathcal{F}} P(Z_v > a) \leq \sum_{v \in \mathcal{F}} e^{-\frac{C a n^{1/q}}{\|v\|_\infty}} \\ &= \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{m}{k} 2^k e^{-C a n^{1/q} k^{1/p}} \leq \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{m}{k} 2^k e^{-C a m^{1/q} k^{1/p}} \\ &\leq \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{m}{k} e^{-C' a m^{1/q} k^{1/p}}, \end{aligned}$$

for a big enough.

If $k \geq m/2$ then

$$\binom{m}{k} e^{-C' a m^{1/q} k^{1/p}} \leq \binom{m}{[m/2]} e^{-C' a m^{1/q} (m/2)^{1/p}} \leq 4^{-m} e^{-C' a m} \leq e^{-C'' a m},$$

for a big enough.

When $k < m/2$ put $x = k/m$. Stirling's formula gives

$$\binom{m}{xm} \leq 2 \left(x^x (1-x)^{(1-x)} \right)^{-m}.$$

Hence

$$\binom{m}{k} e^{-C' a m^{1/q} k^{1/p}} \leq 2 e^{-m(x \log x + (1-x) \log(1-x) + C a x^{1/p})}.$$

Let $f(x) = x \log x + (1-x) \log(1-x) + C a x^{1/p}$. Using the elementary inequality $x^{1/q} \log(1/x) \leq q/e$ we get

$$x^{1/q} f'(x) = -x^{1/q} \log\left(\frac{1}{x} - 1\right) + \frac{C a}{p} \geq -x^{1/q} \log\left(\frac{1}{x}\right) + \frac{C a}{p} \geq -\frac{q}{e} + \frac{c a}{p}.$$

This shows that when a is big enough, $f(x)$ is increasing, hence

$$\begin{aligned} \binom{m}{k} e^{-C' a m^{1/q} k^{1/p}} &\leq 2 e^{-m(\frac{1}{m} \log \frac{1}{m} + (1-\frac{1}{m}) \log(1-\frac{1}{m}) + C a \frac{1}{(m)^{1/p}})} \\ &\leq 2 e^{\log m + (m-1) \log(1+\frac{1}{m-1}) - C a (m)^{1/q}} \leq e^{-C' a m^{1/q}}, \end{aligned}$$

which gives

$$P(\exists v \in \mathcal{F}, Z_v > a) \leq m e^{-Cam^{1/q}}.$$

Let \mathcal{N} be a δ -net in $S(\ell_p^m)$. Then $|\mathcal{N}| \leq \left(\frac{3}{\delta}\right)^m$. We get that for every $t > 0$

$$P(\exists b \in \mathcal{N}, Z_b < t) \leq \left(\frac{3}{\delta}\right)^m (Ct)^n < \frac{1}{2},$$

for $\delta = Ct^{n/m}$, where C is some fixed universal constant. This shows that, for a big enough, with positive probability there is an ω in our probability space such that for all $v \in \mathcal{F}$, $Z_v(\omega) \leq a$ and for all $b \in \mathcal{N}$, $Z_b(\omega) \geq t$. Fix such an ω and define $T: \ell_p^m \rightarrow \ell_1^n$ by

$$T(b) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\sum_{j=1}^m b_j X_{ij}(\omega) \right) e_i.$$

Then $\|T(b)\|_1 = Z_b(\omega)$ and the above remarks show that

$$\sup \left\{ \|T(b)\|_1; b \in \frac{C}{(\log(m))^{1/q}} B(\ell_p^m) \right\} \leq \sup \{ \|T(b)\|_1; b \in \text{conv}(\mathcal{F}) \} \leq a.$$

In other words, $\|T\| \leq Ca(\log m)^{1/q}$. Now, for any $x \in S(\ell_p^m)$ we can find some $b \in \mathcal{N}$ with $\|x - b\|_p \leq \delta = Ct^{n/m}$. Hence

$$\|T(x)\|_1 \geq \|T(b)\|_1 - \|T\|\delta = Z_b(\omega) - \|T\|\delta \geq t - Ca(\log m)^{1/q} t^{n/m}.$$

Optimizing over t choose $t = (Ca \log m)^{-\frac{1}{q}(\frac{1}{n/m-1})}$. We deduce that

$$\|T^{-1}\| \leq (K \log m)^{\frac{1}{q} \frac{1}{n/m-1}},$$

for some universal constant K , and this is the required result. ■

4. Remarks

In this section we would like to explain some of the inherent difficulties in our approach. Assume that for every $b \in \ell_p^m$ we have a random variable of the form

$$Z'_b = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X'_{ij} \right|,$$

where $\{X'_{ij}\}_{i=1, j=1}^{n, m}$ are i.i.d. copies of some symmetric random variable X' . If we somehow (for instance, via Lemma 1) get an estimate of the form $P(Z'_b < t) < (Ct)^n$ for $\|b\|_p = 1$, it follows that

$$\mathbb{E} \left| \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X'_{1j} \right| = \mathbb{E} Z'_b \geq \frac{C}{2} P \left(Z'_b \geq \frac{C}{2} \right) \geq \frac{C}{2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{2^n} \right) \geq C'.$$

Now,

$$C \leq \mathbb{E} \left| \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X'_{1j} \right| \leq \left(\mathbb{E} \left| \sum_{j=1}^m b_j X'_{1j} \right|^2 \right)^{1/2} = \|b\|_2 (\mathbb{E} |X'|^2)^{1/2}.$$

Since this is true for all $\|b\|_p = 1$, it follows that $\mathbb{E} |X'|^2 \geq Cn^{2/p-1}$. Hence, for all k , $\mathbb{E} |X'|^k \geq C^k n^{k/p-k/2}$. Now, by symmetry,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E} e^{t|\sum_{j=1}^m b_j X'_{1j}|} &\geq \mathbb{E} e^{t\sum_{j=1}^m |b_j| X'_{1j}} = \prod_{j=1}^m \mathbb{E} e^{t|b_j| X'} \\ &\geq \prod_{j=1}^m \cosh(Cn^{1/p-1/2} |b_j| t). \end{aligned}$$

If, for instance, $b = (1, 0, \dots, 0)$ then we deduce $\mathbb{E} e^{tZ'_b} \geq e^{Cn^{1/p-1/2}t}$, so that the tails of Z'_b cannot be exponential in n and a , and the usual “net” argument isn’t applicable. This is why we are forced to introduce concrete nets, such as the family \mathcal{F} . Moreover, for our specific Z_b , it is possible to show that if $b = (1, 0, \dots, 0)$ then the estimate in Lemma 5 is best possible, up to a $\log n$ factor in the exponent.

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