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C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris, Ser. I 342 (2006) 247–252

COMPTES RENDUS



MATHEMATIQUE

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Functional Analysis/Probability Theory

Lower estimates for the singular values of random matrices

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Received 10 October 2005; accepted 15 November 2005

Available online 4 January 2006

Presented by Gilles Pisier

Abstract

Let Γ be an $n \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent identically distributed (i.i.d.) random variables satisfying the subgaussian tail estimate. We obtain polynomial type lower estimates of the singular numbers of Γ , which hold with probability close to 1. We also show that if A is an $N \times n$ matrix with $N > n$, whose entries are i.i.d. subgaussian random variables, then with high probability the space $E = A\mathbb{R}^n$ satisfies the conditions of Kashin's theorem, i.e. the ℓ_2^N and ℓ_1^N norms are equivalent on E . Moreover the distance between these norms polynomially depends on $\delta = (N - n)/n$. **To cite this article:** M. Rudelson, C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris, Ser. I 342 (2006).

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Résumé

Minorations des valeurs singulières de matrices aléatoires. Soit Γ une matrice $n \times n$, ayant pour coefficients des variables aléatoires indépendantes et identiquement distribuées (i.i.d.) vérifiant une décroissance sous-gaussienne des queues. Dans ce travail, nous obtenons des minorations de type polynomial des valeurs singulières de Γ , valables avec une probabilité proche de 1. Nous montrons aussi que si A est une matrice $N \times n$ avec $N > n$, dont les coefficients sont des variables aléatoires sous-gaussiennes i.i.d., alors l'espace $E = A\mathbb{R}^n$ vérifie avec une grande probabilité les conditions du théorème de Kashin, c'est à dire les normes ℓ_2^N et ℓ_1^N sont équivalentes sur E . De plus la distance entre ces normes dépend polynomiallement de $\delta = (N - n)/n$. **Pour citer cet article :** M. Rudelson, C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris, Ser. I 342 (2006).

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Version française abrégée

Soit $N \geq n$ et soit A une matrice $N \times n$ ayant pour coefficients des variables aléatoires indépendantes et identiquement distribuées. Nous supposons que les coefficients ont pour moyenne 0 et vérifient une décroissance sous-gaussienne des queues. Plus précisément, une variable aléatoire β est dite sous-gaussienne si pour tout $t > 0$, $\mathbb{P}(|\beta| > t) \leq b_1 \exp(-b_2 t^2)$. Ici et dans la suite, C, C', c etc. désignent des constantes qui dépendent seulement des valeurs b_1, b_2 , dont la valeur peut changer d'une ligne à l'autre. La classe des variables aléatoires sous-gaussiennes contient plusieurs types de variables qui apparaissent de façon naturelle dans les applications, comme les variables

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¹ The research is partially supported by the NSF Grant DMS-0245380.

normales, les variables de Bernoulli etc. Notons par $s_k(A)$ la $k^{\text{ème}}$ valeur singulière de la matrice A , c'est à dire la $k^{\text{ème}}$ plus grande valeur propre de la matrice $(AA^*)^{1/2}$. Pour les matrices à coefficient des variables aléatoires sous-gaussiennes, la première valeur singulière $s_1(A) = \|A\|$ est fortement concentrée autour de $(1 + \sqrt{\alpha}) \cdot \sqrt{N}$, où $\alpha = n/N$, voir [3]. Estimer la plus petite valeur singulière $s_n(A)$ est un problème beaucoup plus délicat. Dans [2] Bai et Yin ont montré que si on considère une suite A_n de matrices aléatoires de taille $N \times n$, où $n \rightarrow \infty$ pendant que $\alpha = n/N < 1$ reste constant, alors la plus petite valeur singulière de A_n/\sqrt{N} converge presque sûrement vers $1 - \sqrt{\alpha}$. Cependant, ce résultat ne donne pas d'estimations pour N et n fixés. L'article [6] contient des estimations pour $s_n(A)$ dans le cas où $\delta = (N - n)/n \geq 1/\log n$, mais celles-ci dépendent exponentiellement de $1/\delta$. Plus tard, Sodin montra la concentration pour le résultat de Bai–Yin dans le cas où $\delta \geq cn^{-1/10}$ (voir [1]).

Dans cette Note, nous obtenons de telles estimations pour tout δ . Ces estimations dépendent polynomialement de δ et ont lieu avec une probabilité proche de 1. Notre résultat principal est le suivant.

Théorème 0.1. *Soient n, N des nombres entiers naturels vérifiant $n < N < 2n$. On note $\delta = (N - n)/n$. Soit β une variable aléatoire sous-gaussienne centrée ayant pour variance 1. Soit $A = A(\omega)$ une matrice $N \times n$ dont les coefficients sont des copies indépendantes de β . Alors pour tout t tel que $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} \leq t \leq \bar{c}\delta$*

$$\mathbb{P}(\omega \mid \exists x \in S^{n-1} \|Ax\|_1 < t\delta n) \leq C \exp(-cn) + (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}.$$

Ce théorème implique trois corollaires. Pour les formuler, nous avons besoin du lemme standard suivant (cf. [3] ou [9], Lemma 2.3).

Lemme 0.2. *Soient n, N, A comme décrits ci-dessus. Alors $\mathbb{P}(\|A\| > C\sqrt{N}) \leq \exp(-cN)$.*

En utilisant le Théorème 0.1 et le Lemme 0.2 nous montrons que

$$\forall x \in \mathbb{R}^n \quad t\delta n \|x\|_2 \leq \|Ax\|_1 \leq \sqrt{N} \|Ax\|_2 \leq C'n \|x\|_2 \quad (1)$$

avec une probabilité plus grande que $1 - C \exp(-cN) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}$. Ceci entraîne immédiatement les résultats suivants.

Corollaire 0.3. *Soient n, N, A, t comme précédemment. Alors la plus petite valeur singulière de A est minorée par $t\delta \cdot \sqrt{n}$ avec une probabilité d'au moins $1 - C \exp(-cN) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}$.*

Ce corollaire peut-être reformulé comme une estimation pour les valeurs singulières d'une matrice carrée aléatoire.

Corollaire 0.4. *Soit β une variable aléatoire sous-gaussienne centrée de variance 1. Soit $\Gamma = \Gamma(\omega)$ une matrice $n \times n$ ayant pour coefficients des copies indépendantes de β . Alors pour tout $1 \leq k \leq n$ et tout t tels que $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} \leq t \leq \bar{c}k/n$*

$$s_{n-k}(\Gamma) \geq (ctk/n) \cdot \sqrt{n}$$

avec une probabilité d'au moins $1 - C \exp(-cn) - (tn/\bar{c}k)^k$.

Un célèbre théorème de Kashin [5] affirme qu'une section aléatoire de l'octaèdre standard B_1^n de dimension $m \sim n$ est proche de la section de la boule inscrite $(1/\sqrt{n})B_2^n$. Les estimations optimales pour le diamètre d'une section aléatoire de l'octaèdre ont été obtenues par Garnaev et Gluskin [4]. Récemment l'attention se porta sur la question de savoir si les sections presque sphériques de l'octaèdre pouvaient être engendrées par des matrices aléatoires simples, en particulier par une matrice aléatoire à coefficients ± 1 . Un résultat général démontré dans [7,8] implique que si $N = (1 + \delta)n$ avec $\delta \geq c \log n/n$, alors une matrice aléatoire $N \times n$ dont les coefficients sont des variables aléatoires sous-gaussiennes indépendantes engendre une section de l'octaèdre B_1^N qui n'est pas loin de la boule avec une probabilité exponentiellement proche de 1. Pour les matrices aléatoires à coefficients ± 1 , ce résultat fut amélioré par Artstein, Friedland et Milman [1], qui ont montré une estimation de type polynomial pour le diamètre d'une section lorsque $\delta \geq Cn^{-1/10}$. En utilisant (1), nous obtenons une estimation polynomiale pour le diamètre des sections pour toutes les valeurs de δ .

Corollaire 0.5. Soient n, N des nombres entiers naturels vérifiant $n < N < 2n$. On note $\delta = (N - n)/n$, β une variable aléatoire sous-gaussienne centrée ayant pour variance 1. Soit $A = A(\omega)$ une matrice $N \times n$ ayant pour coefficients des copies indépendentes de β et soit $E = A\mathbb{R}^n$. Alors pour tout t tel que $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} \leq t \leq \bar{c}\delta$

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\omega \mid \forall y \in E, \|y\|_1 \leq \sqrt{N}\|y\|_2 \leq \frac{c}{t\delta}\|x\|_1\right) \geq 1 - C \exp(-cn) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}.$$

Notons que dans le cas $\delta \geq n^{-1/10}$, ce résultat améliore les estimations obtenues dans [1] pour le diamètre ainsi que pour la probabilité.

1. Introduction

Let $N \geq n$ and let A be an $N \times n$ matrix whose entries are independent identically distributed random variables. We assume that the entries have mean 0 and satisfy the subgaussian tail estimate. More precisely, a random variable β is called subgaussian if for any $t > 0$, $\mathbb{P}(|\beta| > t) \leq b_1 \exp(-b_2 t^2)$ for some constants $b_1, b_2 > 0$. Let C, C', c etc. denote constants depending only on b_1, b_2 , whose value can change from line to line. The class of subgaussian random variables includes many types of variables, which naturally arise in applications, such as normal variables, Bernoulli variables etc. Denote by $s_k(A)$ the k -th singular number of the matrix A , i.e. the k -th largest eigenvalue of the matrix $(AA^*)^{1/2}$. For matrices with subgaussian entries the first singular value $s_1(A) = \|A\|$ is strongly concentrated about $(1 + \sqrt{\alpha}) \cdot \sqrt{N}$, where $\alpha = n/N$, see [3]. Estimating the smallest singular value $s_n(A)$ is a much more delicate problem. In [2] Bai and Yin proved that if we consider a sequence of $N \times n$ random matrices A_n , where $n \rightarrow \infty$, while $\alpha = n/N < 1$ remains constant, then the smallest singular value of A_n/\sqrt{N} converges almost surely to $1 - \sqrt{\alpha}$. This result, however does not provide estimates for fixed N and n . The paper [6] contains estimates for $s_n(A)$ in the case when $\delta = (N - n)/n \geq c/\log n$, but these estimates are exponential in $1/\delta$. Later Sodin proved the concentration for Bai–Yin result for random ± 1 matrices if $\delta \geq cn^{-1/10}$ (see [1]).

In the present Note we obtain such estimates for all $\delta < 1$. These estimates are polynomial in δ and hold with probability close to 1. We prove the following main

Theorem 1.1. Let n, N be natural numbers such that $n < N < 2n$. Denote $\delta = (N - n)/n$. Let β be a centered subgaussian random variable of variance 1. Let $A = A(\omega)$ be an $N \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent copies of β . Then for any t such that $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} < t < \bar{c}\delta$

$$\mathbb{P}(\omega \mid \exists x \in S^{n-1} \|Ax\|_1 < t\delta n) \leq C \exp(-cn) + (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}.$$

Here $\bar{C} > 1$ and $\bar{c} < 1$ are constants depending only on b_1, b_2 from the definition of the subgaussian random variable. Notice that the definition of δ implies $\delta \geq 1/n$. In the case $N \geq 2n$ ($\delta \geq 1$) an estimate for the minimum of $\|Ax\|_1$ over $x \in S^{n-1}$ follows from the results of [7,8].

2. Singular values and Kashin's subspaces

To derive applications of Theorem 1.1 we need the following standard lemma (see e.g. [3] or [9], Lemma 2.3).

Lemma 2.1. Let n, N, A be as above. Then $\mathbb{P}(\|A\| > C\sqrt{N}) \leq \exp(-cN)$.

Combining Theorem 1.1 and Lemma 2.1 we show that

$$\forall x \in \mathbb{R}^n \quad t\delta n\|x\|_2 \leq \|Ax\|_1 \leq \sqrt{N}\|Ax\|_2 \leq C'n\|x\|_2 \tag{2}$$

with probability greater than $1 - C \exp(-cn) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}$. This immediately yields the following

Corollary 2.2. Let n, N, A, t be as above. Then the smallest singular number of A is bounded below by $t\delta \cdot \sqrt{n}$ with probability at least $1 - C \exp(-cn) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}$.

This corollary can be reformulated as an estimate for the singular numbers of a square random matrix.

Corollary 2.3. Let β be a centered subgaussian random variable of variance 1. Let $\Gamma = \Gamma(\omega)$ be an $n \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent copies of β . Then for any $1 \leq k \leq n$ and any t such that $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} \leq t \leq \bar{c}k/n$

$$s_{n-k}(\Gamma) \geq (ctk/n) \cdot \sqrt{n}$$

with probability at least $1 - C \exp(-cn) - (tn/\bar{c}k)^k$.

For $k = 1$ and $\varepsilon = t \cdot n \in [\bar{C}n^{-1/2}, \bar{c}]$ the lower bound for $s_{n-1}(\Gamma)$ has the same form as the estimate

$$\mathbb{P}(s_n(\Gamma) \geq c\varepsilon n^{-3/2}) \geq 1 - C \exp(-cn) - \varepsilon$$

obtained in [9]. Note that while the small ball probability estimates used in the proof of Theorem 1.1 are similar to those of [9], the crucial step of the proof requires an essentially different argument.

A celebrated theorem of Kashin [5] states that a random section of the standard octahedron B_1^n of dimension $m \sim n$ is close to the section of the inscribed ball $(1/\sqrt{n})B_2^n$. The optimal estimates for the diameter of a random section of the octahedron were obtained by Garnaev and Gluskin [4]. Recently the attention was attracted to the question whether the almost spherical sections of the octahedron can be generated by simple random matrices, in particular by a random ± 1 matrix. A general result proved in [7,8] implies that if $N = (1 + \delta)n$ with $\delta \geq c/\log n$, then a random $N \times n$ matrix with independent subgaussian entries generates a section of the octahedron B_1^N which is not far from the ball with probability exponentially close to 1. For random ± 1 matrices this result was improved by Artstein, Friedland and Milman [1], who proved a polynomial type estimate for the diameter of a section for $\delta \geq Cn^{-1/10}$. Using (2) we obtain a polynomial estimate for the diameter of sections for all values of δ .

Corollary 2.4. Let n, N be natural numbers such that $n < N < 2n$. Denote $\delta = (N - n)/n$. Let β be a centered subgaussian random variable of variance 1. Let $A = A(\omega)$ be an $N \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent copies of β and let $E = A\mathbb{R}^n$. Then for any t such that $\bar{C}n^{-3/2} \leq t \leq \bar{c}\delta$

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\omega \mid \forall y \in E, \|y\|_1 \leq \sqrt{N}\|y\|_2 \leq \frac{c}{t\delta}\|x\|_1\right) \geq 1 - C \exp(-cn) - (t/\bar{c}\delta)^{\delta n}.$$

Notice that in the case $\delta \geq Cn^{-1/10}$ this improves both the diameter and the probability estimates of [1].

To prove Theorem 1.1 we need the following elementary

Lemma 2.5. Let $m > n$ and let $A : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$ be a linear operator such that $\text{Ker}(A) = \{0\}$. Let $x \in S^{n-1}$ be a vector for which $\|Ax\|_1$ attains the minimal value. Then

$$|\text{supp}(Ax)| \leq m - n + 1.$$

3. Proof of Theorem 1.1

Let $E = A\mathbb{R}^n \subset \mathbb{R}^N$ and let $K = B_1^N \cap E$. Set $\Omega_0 = \{\omega \mid \|A : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^N\| > C\sqrt{N}\}$. By Lemma 2.1, $\mathbb{P}(\Omega_0) \leq e^{-cN}$.

We partition the sphere S^{n-1} as in [9]. We shall define two sets: V_P – the set of vectors, whose Euclidean norm is concentrated on a few coordinates, and V_S – the set of vectors whose coordinates are evenly spread. Let $r < 1 < R$ be the numbers to be chosen later. Given $x = (x_1, \dots, x_n) \in S^{n-1}$, set $\sigma(x) = \{i \mid |x_i| \leq R/\sqrt{n}\}$. Let P_I be the coordinate projection on the set $I \subset \{1, \dots, n\}$. Set

$$V_P = \{x \in S^{n-1} \mid \|P_{\sigma(x)}x\|_2 < r\},$$

$$V_S = \{x \in S^{n-1} \mid \|P_{\sigma(x)}x\|_2 \geq r\}.$$

Arguing like in [9], we can prove that with high probability $\|Ay\|_1$ is large for all $y \in V_P$. Namely, we have the following

Lemma 3.1. There exist absolute constants $r < 1 < R$ such that

$$\mathbb{P}(\exists x \in V_P \mid \|Ax\|_1 \leq Cn) \leq 2 \exp(-cn).$$

The set V_S in turn is partitioned into sets of singular and regular profile. Note that if $x \in V_S$, then at least $m = (r/2R)^2 \cdot n$ coordinates of $|x|$ fall into the interval $[\frac{r}{2\sqrt{n}}, \frac{R}{\sqrt{n}}]$.

Let $0 < \Delta < r/2\sqrt{n}$ be a number to be chosen later. We shall cover the interval $[\frac{r}{2\sqrt{n}}, \frac{R}{\sqrt{n}}]$ by $k_1 = \lceil \frac{R-r/2}{\sqrt{n}\Delta} \rceil$ consecutive intervals $(j\Delta, (j+1)\Delta]$, where $j = k_0, (k_0+1), \dots, (k_0+k_1)$, and k_0 is the largest number such that $k_0\Delta < r/2\sqrt{n}$. Then we shall decompose the set V_S in two subsets: one containing the points whose coordinates are concentrated in a few such intervals, and the other containing points with evenly spread coordinates. Note that if m coordinates of the vector $|x|$ are evenly spread among k_1 intervals, then each interval contains $\sim m/k_1 \sim n^{3/2}\Delta$ coordinates. This observation leads to the following

Definition 3.2. Let $\Delta > 0$ and let $Q > 1$. We say that a vector $x \in V_S$ has a (Δ, Q) -regular profile if there exists a set $I \subset \{1, \dots, n\}$ such that $|I| \geq m/2 = (r^2/8R^2) \cdot n$, $|x(i)| \in [\frac{r}{2\sqrt{n}}, \frac{R}{\sqrt{n}}]$ for all $i \in I$, and

$$\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} |\{i \in I \mid |x(i)| \in (k\Delta, (k+1)\Delta]\}|^2 \leq Qn^{5/2}\Delta.$$

If such set I does not exist, we call x a vector of (Δ, Q) -singular profile.

Note that $\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} |\{i \in I \mid |x(i)| \in (k\Delta, (k+1)\Delta]\}| = |I| \geq m/2$. Hence, if $\Delta < m^{-3/2}/2$, then every vector in V_S will be a vector of a (Δ, Q) -singular profile.

The following result is similar to Theorem 7.3 [9].

Theorem 3.3. There exists a constant Q_0 with the following property. Let $\Delta \geq Cn^{-3/2}$. Denote by Ω_Δ the event that there exists a vector $x \in V_S$ of (Δ, Q_0) -singular profile such that $\|Ax\|_1 \leq \frac{\Delta}{2}n^{3/2}$. Then

$$\mathbb{P}(\Omega_\Delta) \leq 3 \exp(-n).$$

Here, as before, the constant Q_0 can depend on b_1, b_2 from the definition of the subgaussian random variable. We shall use Theorem 3.3 with $\Delta = c \min((r/4\pi) \cdot n^{-1/2}, t)$. By Theorem 3.3 the lower bound for $\inf \|Ax\|_1$ over $x \in S^{n-1}$ reduces to the infimum over the set of vectors of the (Δ, Q_0) -regular profile. For these vectors we have a good estimate of the small ball probability (Lemma 6.1, [9]).

Lemma 3.4. Let $\Delta \leq \frac{r}{4\pi\sqrt{n}}$. Let $y \in V_S$ be a vector of (Δ, Q) -regular profile. Then for any $t \geq \Delta$ and for any $v \in \mathbb{R}$

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\left|\sum_{j=1}^n \beta_j y_j - v\right| < t\right) \leq CQ \cdot t.$$

We shall show that the minimum of $\|Ay\|_1$ over the sphere S^{n-1} is attained on a certain finite subset of it. To each subset $J \subset \{1, \dots, N\}$ of cardinality $N - n + 1$ corresponds a unique pair of extreme points x_J and $-x_J$ of K such that $\sum_{j \in J} |x_J(j)| = 1$ and $x_J(j) = 0$ whenever $j \notin J$. Let $A_{J'}$ be the matrix consisting of the rows of A , whose numbers belong to $J' = \{1, \dots, N\} \setminus J$.

Without loss of generality we may assume that for any J , $|J| = N - n + 1$, the rows of $A_{J'}$ are linearly independent with probability 1. Indeed, assume that the entries of A are copies of a random variable β . For $0 < \varepsilon < 1$ consider a new random variable $\beta_\varepsilon = \sqrt{1-\varepsilon^2}\beta + \varepsilon \cdot g$, where g is the standard normal random variable independent of β . Let A_ε be the $N \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent copies of β_ε . Then the aforementioned property holds for A_ε and we can finish the proof of Theorem 1.1 for A_ε . Since the inequality in Theorem 1.1 does not depend on ε , we can then pass to the limit as $\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$. The independence of the rows of $A_{J'}$ implies that

$$\dim\{y \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid \langle a_j, y \rangle = 0, j \in J'\} = 1.$$

Therefore, the vector $y_J \in S^{n-1}$ such that $Ay_J = tx_J$ for some $t > 0$ is uniquely defined by the matrix $A_{J'}$. By Lemma 2.5,

$$\min\{\|Ay\|_1 \mid y \in S^{n-1}\} = \min\{\|Ay_J\|_1 \mid J \subset \{1, \dots, N\}, |J| = N - n + 1\}.$$

Now we have to estimate $\|Ay_J\|_1$ from below. For $t \geq Cn^{-3/2}$ set

$$\Omega_J = \{\omega \mid \|Ay_J\|_1 < t\delta n\}$$

and denote

$$p = \mathbb{P}(\Omega_J \setminus (\Omega_0 \cup \Omega_\Delta) \mid A_{J'}).$$

This probability is the same for all J . If $\omega \notin \Omega_\Delta$, then from Theorem 3.3 follows that $\|Ay_J\| \geq \Delta n^{3/2}/2 \geq t\delta n$, whenever y_J is a vector of a (Δ, Q_0) -singular profile. Hence, to estimate p , we may assume that y_J is a vector of a (Δ, Q_0) -regular profile. As in [9], Lemma 3.4 implies the following

Theorem 3.5. *Let $\Delta \leq \frac{r}{4\pi\sqrt{n}}$. Let $y \in V_S$ be a vector of (Δ, Q) -regular profile. Let A_J be an $l \times n$ matrix, whose entries are independent copies of a centered subgaussian random variable β . Then for any $t \geq \Delta$*

$$\mathbb{P}(\|A_J y\|_1 < tl) \leq (CQ_0 t)^l.$$

Note that the matrix A_J is independent of $A_{J'}$. Therefore, taking $l = N - n + 1$ in Theorem 3.5, we get

$$p \leq (CQ_0 t)^{\delta n}.$$

Integrating over $A_{J'}$ we obtain $\mathbb{P}(\Omega_J \setminus (\Omega_0 \cup \Omega_\Delta)) \leq (CQ_0 t)^{\delta n}$. Hence,

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\bigcup_{|J|=N-n+1} \Omega_J \setminus (\Omega_0 \cup \Omega_\Delta)\right) \leq \binom{N}{N-n+1} \cdot (CQ_0 t)^{\delta n} \leq \left(e \cdot \left(1 + \frac{1}{\delta}\right)\right)^{\delta n} \cdot (CQ_0 t)^{\delta n}.$$

Finally,

$$\mathbb{P}(\exists y \in S^{n-1} \mid \|Ay_J\|_1 < t\delta n) \leq \mathbb{P}\left(\bigcup_{|J|=N-n+1} \Omega_J\right) + \mathbb{P}(\Omega_0) + \mathbb{P}(\Omega_\Delta) \leq \left(\frac{ct}{\delta}\right)^{\delta n} + e^{-cn} + 3e^{-n}.$$

Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to Asma Harcharras for translating the abridged version of the Note to French.

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