

WHITNEY'S EMBEDDING THEOREM FOR PSEUDO-HOLOMORPHIC DISCS

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ABSTRACT. We prove an analog of Whitney's embedding theorem for pseudo-holomorphic discs.

1. Introduction

Thom's transversality theorem and Whitney's approximation theorem are useful tools in analysis and geometry. They are proved by local perturbations and use cut-off functions to obtain a global result. Since there is no holomorphic cut-off functions in complex analytic category, we might need a global perturbation in order to prove the corresponding results. Kaliman and Zaidenberg [3] proved the jet transversality theorem for any holomorphic mapping from a Stein manifold to a complex manifold if the domain of the initial map is shrunk. Forstnerič [4] proved the a similar result without shrinking the domain, but the target space is required to be either subelliptic or satisfies the Oka property. In almost complex category, Sukhov and Tumanov [1] proved the Thom's transversality theorem and Whitney's immersion theorem for pseudo-holomorphic discs. In this paper, we show Whitney's embedding theorem holds for pseudo-holomorphic discs.

THEOREM 1.1. *Let (M, J) be a C^∞ -smooth almost complex manifold with $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} M > 2$, fix $m \geq 0$ and let $f_0 : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ be a pseudo-holomorphic disc of class $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$. Then there exists a pseudo-holomorphic embedding $f : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ arbitrarily close to f_0 in $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$.*

2. Pseudo-holomorphic discs and Cauchy–Green integral

We first recall some basic results in several complex variables. Let \mathbb{D} be the unit disc in \mathbb{C} and let J_{st} be the standard almost complex structure of \mathbb{C}^n .

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Suppose (M, J) is an almost complex manifold, a smooth map $f : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ is called a *pseudo-holomorphic disc* if

$$df \circ J_{\text{st}} = J \circ df.$$

Fix a positive integer k and a real number $0 < \alpha < 1$. We denote by $C^\alpha(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ the space of functions on $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ satisfying the Hölder condition with Hölder index α . We denote

$$C^{k,\alpha}(\overline{\mathbb{D}}) = \{f \in C^k(\overline{\mathbb{D}}) \mid \text{the } k\text{th partial derivatives of } f \text{ is in } C^\alpha(\overline{\mathbb{D}})\}.$$

The main tool that we will use in this paper is the Cauchy–Green integral

$$Tu(\zeta) = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{\mathbb{D}} \frac{u(\omega) d\omega \wedge d\bar{\omega}}{\omega - \zeta}.$$

The following properties of the Cauchy–Green integral can be found in [2]:

COROLLARY 2.1.

- (1) Let $p > 2$. If $f \in L^p(\mathbb{D})$, then $\partial_{\bar{z}} T f = f$ in the sense of distribution, where $\zeta \in \mathbb{D}$.
- (2) Let $k \geq 0$ be an integer and $0 < \alpha < 1$, then $T : C^{k,\alpha}(\overline{\mathbb{D}}) \rightarrow C^{k+1,\alpha}(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ is bounded.

3. Surjectivity of the jet map

Let B_1, B_2 be $n \times n$ matrix functions on \mathbb{D} of class $L^p(\mathbb{D})$. Consider the solution of the equation

$$(1) \quad u_{\bar{z}} = B_1 u + B_2 \bar{u}.$$

Fix $\tau \in \mathbb{D}$, we define an operator

$$Pu = u - T(B_1 u + B_2 \bar{u}) + T(B_1 u + B_2 \bar{u})(\tau).$$

By using a similar proof in Theorem 3.1 of [1], with changing the evaluation point from the origin of \mathbb{D} to τ , we have the following:

THEOREM 3.1. Let B_1, B_2 be $n \times n$ matrices in $L^p(\mathbb{D})$, $p > 2$ and $\tau \in \mathbb{D}$.

- (1) Let w_1, \dots, w_d form a basis of $\ker P$ over \mathbb{R} and let $r > 2p(p-2)^{-1}$, then there exists holomorphic polynomial vectors p_1, \dots, p_d with $p_1(\tau) = \dots = p_d(\tau) = 0$ such that the operator $\tilde{P} : L^r(\mathbb{D}) \rightarrow L^r(\mathbb{D})$ defined by

$$\tilde{P}u = Pu + \sum_{j=1}^d (\text{Re}(u, w_j)) p_j$$

has trivial kernel. The polynomials p_j can be chosen to be arbitrarily small. (Here (\cdot, \cdot) means the inner product for $u = (u_1, \dots, u_n), v = (v_1, \dots, v_n)$)

$$(u, v) = \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{i}{2} \int_{\mathbb{D}} u_j \bar{v}_j d\zeta \wedge d\bar{\zeta}.$$

(2) If $B_1, B_2 \in C^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D}), 0 < \alpha < 1$ (resp. $W^{k,p}(\mathbb{D})$) then \tilde{P} is an invertible bounded operator in $C^{k+1,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ (resp. $W^{k+1,p}(\mathbb{D})$). The function $\phi = \tilde{P}u$ is holomorphic if and only if u satisfies equation (1).

Now we are going to prove the existence of solution of equation (1) with prescribed value at two given points.

THEOREM 3.2. *Let B_1, B_2 be $n \times n$ matrix functions on \mathbb{D} of class $C^{k-1,\alpha}(\mathbb{D}), k \geq 1, 0 < \alpha < 1$. Then for all $\zeta_1, \zeta_2 \in \mathbb{D}, a_1, a_2 \in \mathbb{C}^n$, there exists a solution u of equation (1) such that $u \in C^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ and*

$$u(\zeta_1) = a_1, \quad u(\zeta_2) = a_2.$$

Proof. By the Theorem 5.1 in [1], there exists $u_1 \in C^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ such that $u_1(\zeta_1) = a_1$. Let $u(\zeta) = u_1(\zeta) + (\zeta - \zeta_1)w(\zeta)$ where w has to be determined. If we require $B_1u + B_2\bar{u} = u_{\bar{\zeta}}$ and $u(\zeta_2) = a_2$, then w has to satisfy

$$(2) \quad B_1(\zeta)w(\zeta) + B_2(\zeta)\frac{\overline{\zeta - \zeta_1}}{\zeta - \zeta_1}w(\zeta) = w_{\bar{\zeta}}(\zeta)$$

and

$$w(\zeta_2) = \frac{a_2 - u_1(\zeta_2)}{\zeta_2 - \zeta_1} \triangleq \phi \quad \text{which is a constant vector.}$$

Note that $\widehat{B_2(\zeta)} = B_2(\zeta)\frac{\overline{\zeta - \zeta_1}}{\zeta - \zeta_1} \in L^p(\mathbb{D})$ for all $2 < p < \infty$, therefore we can apply Theorem 3.1 with $\tau = \zeta_2$ and $B_2 = \widehat{B_2}$. Set $w = \tilde{P}^{-1}(\phi)$, then we have $w \in W^{1,p}(\mathbb{D})$ for all $2 < p < \infty$, hence $w \in C^\alpha(\mathbb{D})$, therefore $\phi = \tilde{P}w(\zeta_2) = Pw(\zeta_2) = w(\zeta_2)$, and $\tilde{P}w = \phi$ implies $w_{\bar{\zeta}} = B_1w + \widehat{B_2}\bar{w}$.

It remains to show that u is in the class $C^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$. We first choose $0 < r < 1$ so that \mathbb{D}_r , the disc centered at the origin with radius r , satisfying $\mathbb{D}_r \subset \mathbb{D}$ and $\zeta_1 \in \mathbb{D}_r$. Note that the coefficient matrices $B_1, \widehat{B_2}$ is in $C^{k-1,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$ and it is proved that $w \in C^\alpha(\mathbb{D})$, so we can apply bootstrapping to the equation $\tilde{P}w = \phi$ to conclude that w is in $C^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$.

Note that the function $v(\zeta) = (\zeta - \zeta_1)w(\zeta)$ satisfies equation (1), then we have

$$(3) \quad v(z) = T(B_1v + B_2\bar{v})(z) + \psi(z)$$

for some vector $\psi(z)$ holomorphic on \mathbb{D} and in $C^\alpha(\mathbb{D})$. We claim that $\psi \in C^{k,\alpha}(\partial\mathbb{D})$: write $T(B_1v + B_2\bar{v})(z)$ as

$$\frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{\mathbb{D}_r} \frac{B_1v + B_2\bar{v}}{\zeta - z} d\zeta \wedge d\bar{\zeta} + \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r} \frac{B_1v + B_2\bar{v}}{\zeta - z} d\zeta \wedge d\bar{\zeta},$$

for which we understand it as an integration applied to each entry of the vector function. Now the first term is holomorphic on $\partial\mathbb{D}$ since the function $\frac{1}{\zeta - z}$ is holomorphic in z on $\partial\mathbb{D}$ whenever ζ is in \mathbb{D}_r , hence it is in $C^{k,\alpha}(\partial\mathbb{D})$. The

second term is in $\mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$ since $v \in \mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$ and $B_1, B_2 \in \mathcal{C}^{k-1,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$. Combining with the fact that $v \in \mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D} \setminus \mathbb{D}_r)$, we have $\psi \in \mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\partial\mathbb{D})$.

Now ψ is holomorphic in \mathbb{D} and in $\mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\partial\mathbb{D})$, hence by the regularity of Laplace operator we have $\psi \in \mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ (see, for example, [5]). By using $v \in \mathcal{C}^\alpha(\mathbb{D})$, we can apply bootstrapping to the equation

$$v = T(B_1v + B_2\bar{v}) + \psi$$

to conclude that v , and hence u , is in fact in $\mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$. □

4. Approximation by embedding pseudo-holomorphic discs

Given $f_0 : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ a pseudo-holomorphic disc of class $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$, we first use Theorem 1.1 in [1] to approximate f_0 by a $C^\infty(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ pseudo-holomorphic immersion $f_1 : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$, so that f_1 is close to f_0 in $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$.

For $0 < r < 1$, the function $z \mapsto f_{2,r}(z) = f_1(rz)$ is arbitrarily close to f_1 in $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ as r approaches 1: By Nash’s embedding theorem, we can assume $M = \mathbb{C}^N$ for some N sufficiently large, then the result can be easily proved by the fact that the i -derivative $f^{(i)}$ is uniformly continuous on $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$.

For all $\varepsilon > 0$, choose r_0 so that f_{2,r_0} is ε -close to f_1 in $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$, for simplicity denote f_{2,r_0} by f_2 . Note that f_2 is an immersed pseudo-holomorphic disc.

LEMMA 4.1. *Let*

$$R = \inf \{ |c_1 - c_2| : c_1, c_2 \in \overline{\mathbb{D}}, c_1 \neq c_2, f_2(c_1) = f_2(c_2) \},$$

then $R > 0$.

Proof. Suppose $R = 0$, then there exists two sequences c_1^n, c_2^n in $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ such that $|c_1^n - c_2^n| \rightarrow 0$ as $n \rightarrow \infty$, which means $c_j^n \rightarrow c_0 \in \overline{\mathbb{D}}$ for each $j = 1, 2$. Note that $r_0c_0 \in \mathbb{D}$ and f_1 is an immersion at r_0c_0 implies f_1 is injective on some neighborhood $N \subset \mathbb{D}$ of r_0c_0 . However for n large enough, all $r_0c_1^n, r_0c_2^n$ belong to N and we have $f_1(r_0c_1^n) = f_2(c_1^n) = f_2(c_2^n) = f_1(r_0c_2^n)$, a contradiction. Therefore, $R > 0$. □

Define

$$U = \left\{ (\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \in \overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}} : |\zeta_1 - \zeta_2| < \frac{R}{2} \right\}.$$

Let $\mathcal{V}^{k,\alpha}$ be the space of all solutions of equation (1) in the class $\mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\mathbb{D})$. For any function $f : X \rightarrow Y$, let $E_{\zeta_1, \zeta_2} f = Ef(\zeta_1, \zeta_2)$ be the 0-jet of $f \times f$ at $\zeta_1, \zeta_2 \in X$ defined by

$$E_{\zeta_1, \zeta_2} f = (\zeta_1, f(\zeta_1), \zeta_2, f(\zeta_2)).$$

By using the compactness argument as in Proposition 5.2 of [1], we have the following corollary.

COROLLARY 4.2. For $B_1, B_2 \in \mathcal{C}^{k-1, \alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ ($k \geq 1, 0 < \alpha < 1$), there exists a subspace $V \subset \mathcal{V}^{k, \alpha}$ with $\dim V < \infty$, such that for all $(\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \in (\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U$, the mapping $u \mapsto (u(\zeta_1), u(\zeta_2))$ is surjective from V onto \mathbb{C}^{2n} .

Before proving Theorem 1.1, we need some results from [1]. Assume for the moment that $f_2 : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ is a pseudo-holomorphic disc of class $\mathcal{C}^{k, \alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ where k is large and $0 < \alpha < 1$, the particular values of k and α are unimportant. For every point $p \in M$ there exists a chart $\psi : U \subset M \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^n$ such that $p \in U, \psi(p) = 0$, and for the push-forward $\psi_* J = d\psi \circ J \circ d\psi^{-1}$ we have $\psi_* J(0) = J_{st}$. It is proved in [1] that it is possible to choose such chart ψ^ζ for each $p = f_2(\zeta)$ and $\psi^\zeta \in \mathcal{C}^{k, \alpha}$ -smoothly depends on $\zeta \in \overline{\mathbb{D}}$. Furthermore, a map $f : \mathbb{D} \rightarrow M$ close to f_2 is in $\mathcal{C}^{k, \alpha}$ if and only if the map $\zeta \mapsto g(\zeta) \triangleq \psi^{r\zeta}(f(\zeta)) \in \mathbb{C}^n$ satisfies an equation of the form

$$(4) \quad g_{\bar{\zeta}} = A(\zeta, g)\bar{g}_{\bar{\zeta}} + b(\zeta, g),$$

where b is some smooth matrix function and $A(\zeta, \cdot)$ is the complex matrix of $\psi^{r\zeta} J$.

Let g_0 be a solution of (4) in $\mathcal{C}^{k, \alpha}(\mathbb{D})$ and put $A_0(\zeta) = A(\zeta, g_0(\zeta))$. For any other solution g of (4) in the same class, put $h = g - A_0\bar{g}$, so h and g is in one-to-one correspondence. By a direct computation equation, (4) can be written as

$$(5) \quad h_{\bar{\zeta}} = K_0\bar{h}_{\bar{\zeta}} + K_1h + K_2\bar{h} + q$$

for some matrix functions K_0, K_1, K_2, q . Put $h_0 = g_0 - A_0\bar{g}_0$. Equation (5) is equivalent to

$$h = T_0(K_0\bar{h}_{\bar{\zeta}} + K_1h + K_2\bar{h} + q) + \phi + \phi_0,$$

where ϕ is holomorphic, ϕ_0 is a fixed holomorphic function such that (5) holds with $h = h_0$ and $\phi = 0$.

Consider the C^∞ map

$$h \mapsto F_0(h) = \phi = h - T_0(K_0\bar{h}_{\bar{\zeta}} + K_1h + K_2\bar{h} + q) - \phi_0,$$

and let $P = F'_0(h_0)$. By Theorem 3.1, we can modify F_0 to get a new function $F : h \mapsto F(h)$ where

$$F(h) = h - T_0(K_0\bar{h}_{\bar{\zeta}} + K_1h + K_2\bar{h} + q) - \phi_0 + \sum_{j=1}^d \operatorname{Re}(w_j, h - h_0)p_j.$$

Note that the Fréchet derivative of F at h_0 has the form

$$F'(h_0)u = u - T_0(B_1u + B_2\bar{u}) + \sum_{j=1}^d \operatorname{Re}(w_j, u)p_j, \quad B_1, B_2 \in \mathcal{C}^{k-1, \alpha}(\mathbb{D}).$$

In fact $F'(h_0)$ is an isomorphism, hence by the inverse function theorem F gives a one-to-one correspondence between all solutions of (5) close to h_0 and all holomorphic functions ϕ close to 0 in $\mathcal{C}^{k, \alpha}(\mathbb{D})$.

As a conclusion we have a one-to-one correspondence $f \leftrightarrow h$ between pseudo-holomorphic disc f close to f_2 and solutions h of the equation (5) close to h_0 .

Proof of Theorem 1.1. Let $J_1 = \{0\text{-jet of } f \times f : (\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U \rightarrow M \times M \mid f \text{ is } J\text{-holo}\}$, $J_2 = \{0\text{-jet of } h \times h : (\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^{2n} \mid h \text{ satisfies (5)}\}$

The correspondence $f \leftrightarrow h$ gives rise to a diffeomorphism

$$\Psi : W \rightarrow \widetilde{W}$$

defined in the neighborhood $W \supset Ef_2((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U)$ in J_1 , $\widetilde{W} = \Psi(W)$ in J_2 . Let $\Delta = \{(\zeta_1, x, \zeta_2, x) \in \overline{\mathbb{D}} \times M \times \overline{\mathbb{D}} \times M \mid (\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \in (\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U, x \in M\}$ be a subset of J_1 , then Ef is transversal to Δ if and only if the corresponding Eh is transversal to $\widetilde{\Delta} = \Psi(\Delta)$. (Here, we only consider the case $\Delta \cap W \neq \emptyset$ and denote $\Delta \cap W$ by Δ again, otherwise $Ef \pitchfork \Delta$ for small perturbation of f_2 .)

Let u_1, \dots, u_N be the basis of $V \subset \mathcal{V}^{k,\alpha}$, the space of all solutions of $u_{\bar{z}} = B_1u + B_2\bar{u}$ in the class $\mathcal{C}^{k,\alpha}(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$. Let $\phi_j = F'(h_0)(u_j)$ and $\phi_s = \sum_l s_l \phi_l$ for $s = (s_1, \dots, s_N) \in \mathbb{R}^N$. The map

$$\begin{aligned} \Phi : ((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) \times \mathbb{R}^N &\rightarrow J_2, \\ (\zeta_1, \zeta_2, s) &\rightarrow EF^{-1}(\phi_s)(\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \end{aligned}$$

is defined for small $s \in \mathbb{R}^N$. By Proposition 4.2, the mapping is a submersion for $s = 0, (\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \in (\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U$, by shrinking the domain of s in \mathbb{R}^N , we see that Φ is a submersion. Hence by parametric transversality, there is $s \in \mathbb{R}^N$ arbitrarily close to 0 such that $Eh = {}^{(2)}jF^{-1}(\phi_s)$ is transversal to $\widetilde{\Delta}$, hence the corresponding Ef is transversal to Δ .

Now Ef is transversal to Δ implies $Ef((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) \cap \Delta = \emptyset$. To see this, first observe that $\dim_{\mathbb{R}}((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) = 4$, so

$$\dim_{\mathbb{R}} Ef((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) = 4, \quad \dim_{\mathbb{R}}((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) \times M = 4 + 2n$$

and

$$\dim_{\mathbb{R}}(\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times M \times \overline{\mathbb{D}} \times M) = 4 + 4n.$$

Therefore, if $Ef((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) \cap \Delta$ is nonempty, it will imply $4 + 4 + 2n \geq 4 + 4n$ which gives $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} M = n \leq 2$, a contradiction.

Finally, we need to check that f is injective on $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$, suppose there exists $\zeta_1 \neq \zeta_2$ in $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ with $f(\zeta_1) = f(\zeta_2)$, then $Ef((\overline{\mathbb{D}} \times \overline{\mathbb{D}}) \setminus U) \cap \Delta = \emptyset$ implies $(\zeta_1, \zeta_2) \in U$, which means $|\zeta_1 - \zeta_2| < \frac{R}{2}$, but this contradicts the definition of R . Hence, the immersed pseudo-holomorphic disc f is injective. Because $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ is compact, f is in fact an embedding. Therefore, we have found an embedded pseudo-holomorphic disc $f \in C^\infty(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ arbitrarily close to f_2 and hence to f_0 in $C^m(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$. The proof of Theorem 1.1 is complete. \square

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