

A Note on Pointwise Convergence for Expansions in Surface Harmonics of Higher Dimensional Euclidean Spaces

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Abstract. We study the Fourier-Laplace series on the unit sphere of higher dimensional Euclidean spaces and obtain a condition for convergence of Fourier-Laplace series on the unit sphere. The result generalizes Carleson's Theorem to higher dimensional unit spheres.

§1. Introduction

We start with reviewing the basic notations and results. Let $f \in L^1([-\pi, \pi])$, then the Fourier coefficients c_k are all well-defined by

$$c_k = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(t)e^{-ikt} dt, \quad k \in \mathbf{Z}, \quad (1)$$

where \mathbf{Z} denotes the set of all integers.

By $s_N(f)(x)$ we denote the partial sum

$$s_N(f)(x) = \sum_{|k| \leq N} c_k e^{ikx}, \quad x \in [-\pi, \pi], \quad N \in \mathbf{N}_0, \quad (2)$$

of the Fourier series of f , where \mathbf{N}_0 denotes the set of all natural numbers.

Then we have,

$$s_N(f)(x) = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(t)D_N(x-t)dt, \quad (3)$$

where

$$D_N(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{\sin(N+\frac{1}{2})x}{2\sin\frac{x}{2}} & \text{for } x \in [-\pi, \pi] \setminus \{0\}, \\ N + \frac{1}{2} & \text{for } x = 0, \end{cases}$$

is the N -th Dirichlet kernel.

Since $L^2([-\pi, \pi]) \subset L^1([-\pi, \pi])$, the Fourier coefficients of L^2 functions are also well-defined. The famous Carleson's Theorem is stated as follows.

Theorem 1.[Ca] If $f \in L^2([-\pi, \pi])$, then

$$s_N(f)(x) \rightarrow f(x) \quad a.e. \quad x \in [-\pi, \pi], \quad \text{as } N \rightarrow +\infty.$$

L. Carleson proved this theorem in 1966. The next year, R.A. Hunt[Hu] further extended this result to $f \in L^p([-\pi, \pi])$, $1 < p < \infty$.

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One naturally asks what is the analogous result for the unit sphere Ω_n in the n -dimensional Euclidean space \mathbf{R}^n ? For any $f \in L^2(\Omega_n)$, there is an associated *Fourier-Laplace series*:

$$f \sim \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} f_k, \quad (4)$$

where f_k is the homogeneous spherical harmonics of degree k . There has been literature for the study of convergence and summability of Fourier-Laplace series of various kinds on unit sphere of higher dimensional Euclidean spaces(see [Ro],[Ka],[WL]). However, except for the very lowest dimensional case, pointwise convergence, being the initial motivation of various summabilities, could be said to be very little known. The case $n = 2$ seems to be the only well studied case([Zy],[Ca]). Dirichlet ([Di]) gave the first detailed study on the case $n = 3$, on the so called Laplace series. Koschmieder([Ko]) studied the case $n = 4$. Roetman([Ro]) and Kalf([Ka]) considered the general cases, and, under certain conditions, reduced the convergence problem for $n = 2k + 2$ to $n = 2$; and $n = 2k + 3$ to $n = 3$. Among others, Meaney([Me]) addressed some related topics, including the L^p cases. In this note, we further study convergence of the series (4) in view of the classical Carleson's Theorem and the fundamental properties of Legendre polynomials. Based on the results obtained in [Ro] and [Ka], we further obtain a weaker condition that ensures the pointwise convergence of the Fourier-Laplace series of functions in Sobolev spaces. The result is a generalization of Carleson's Theorem to higher dimensional Euclidean spaces.

§2. Preliminaries

Referring the reader to Erdélyi([Er]), Müller([Mu]) and Roetman([Ro]) for details, we recall here some notations and main results for surface spherical harmonics that we shall need. Let (x_1, \dots, x_n) be the coordinates of a point of \mathbf{R}^n with norm

$$|x|^2 = r^2 = x_1^2 + \dots + x_n^2.$$

Then $x = r\xi$, where $\xi = (\xi_1, \dots, \xi_n)$ is a point on the unit sphere Ω_n in \mathbf{R}^n . Denote by A_n the total surface area of Ω_n and by $d\omega_n$ the usual Hausdorff surface measure on the $(n - 1)$ -dimensional unit sphere,

$$A_n = \int_{\Omega_n} d\omega_n.$$

If e_1, \dots, e_n denote the orthonormal basis vectors in \mathbf{R}^n , then we can represent the points of Ω_n by

$$\xi = te_n + (1 - t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\xi}, \quad (5)$$

where $-1 \leq t \leq 1$, $t = \xi \cdot e_n$ and $\tilde{\xi}$ is a vector in the subspace \mathbf{R}^{n-1} generated by e_1, \dots, e_{n-1} . In the coordinates (r, t, ξ) the surface measure has the form

$$d\omega_n = (1 - t^2)^{\lambda - \frac{1}{2}} dt d\omega_{n-1}, \quad (6)$$

where $\lambda = \frac{n-2}{2}$.

In accordance with (4), there associates a function $f \in L^2(\Omega_n)$ with a series of surface harmonics

$$S(f; n; \xi) \sim \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} Y_k(f; n; \xi), \quad (7)$$

where

$$Y_k(f; n; \xi) = \alpha_k(n) \int_{\Omega_n} P_k(n; \xi \cdot \eta) f(\eta) d\omega_n(\eta), \quad (8)$$

$P_k(n; s)$ are Legendre polynomials[Mu] defined by the generating relation

$$(1 + x^2 - 2xs)^{-\lambda} = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} c_k(n) x^k P_k(n; s),$$

where

$$c_k(n) = \frac{(n-2)N(n, k)}{2k+n-2}, \quad \alpha_k(n) = \frac{N(n, k)}{A_n},$$

and

$$N(n, k) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{for } k = 0, \\ \frac{(2k+n-2)\Gamma(k+n-2)}{\Gamma(k+1)\Gamma(n-1)} & \text{for } k \geq 1. \end{cases}$$

The Legendre polynomials of dimension $n > 3$ are related to the Gegenbauer polynomials by $C_k^\lambda(s) = c_k(n)P_k(n; s)$.

In particular, we have

$$N(2, k) = 2; \quad N(3, k) = 2k + 1, \quad k \in \mathbf{N}_0 \cup \{0\}; \quad (9)$$

and

$$P_k(2; t) = \cos(k \cos^{-1} t), \quad t \in [-1, 1], \quad (10)$$

being the well-known Chebyshev polynomial; and

$$P_k(3; t) = \frac{(-1)^k}{2^k k!} \left(\frac{d}{dt} \right)^k (1-t^2)^k \quad (11)$$

being the ordinary Legendre polynomial. For $n \geq 3$, Müller[Mu], p.15, gives that the Legendre polynomials are orthogonal polynomials in the sense

$$\int_{-1}^1 P_k(n; t) P_l(n; t) (1-t^2)^{\frac{n-3}{2}} dt = \frac{A_n}{A_{n-1}} \cdot \frac{1}{N(n, k)} \cdot \delta_{kl}. \quad (12)$$

Let $S_N(f; n; \xi)$ denote the partial sum through the term with index N for the series (7). Then

$$S_N(f; n; \xi) = \int_{\Omega_n} f(\eta) \left\{ \sum_{k=0}^N \alpha_k P_k(n; \xi \cdot \eta) \right\} d\omega_n(\eta). \quad (13)$$

One is interested in the convergence properties of $S_N(f; n; \xi)$ at ξ as N goes to infinity. Hold ξ fixed and write $\eta = t\xi + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\eta}$, where $\tilde{\eta}$ is orthogonal to ξ . Let $\Omega(\xi)$ denote the unit ball in the $(n-1)$ -dimensional space orthogonal to ξ . Equation (13) then yields

$$S_N(f; n; \xi) = \int_{-1}^1 \left\{ \sum_{k=0}^N \alpha_k A_{n-1} P_k(n; t) \right\} \Phi_\xi(t) (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt, \quad (14)$$

where

$$\Phi_\xi(t) = \frac{1}{A_{n-1}} \int_{\Omega(\xi)} f(t\xi + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\eta}) d\omega_{n-1}(\tilde{\eta}) \quad (15)$$

is the average of f over the $(n - 1)$ -sphere of radius $(1 - t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ centered at $t\xi$ in the hyperplane orthogonal to ξ .

By [Mu] and [Ro], we have

$$S_N(f; 2; \xi) = \int_{-1}^1 D_N(t) \Phi_\xi(t) (1 - t^2)^{-\frac{1}{2}} dt, \quad (16)$$

where

$$D_N(t) = \frac{\sin((N + \frac{1}{2}) \cos^{-1} t)}{\pi \sin \frac{1}{2} \cos^{-1} t} \quad (17)$$

is a substitution of the Dirichlet kernel (see section 1 or [ZY]),

and if $n = 2l + 2$, $l \in \mathbf{N}_0$,

$$\begin{aligned} S_N(f; 2l + 2; \xi) &= \frac{2^{-l}}{\sqrt{\pi} \Gamma(l + \frac{1}{2})} \\ &\cdot \int_{-1}^1 \frac{d^{l+1}}{dt^{l+1}} \left[\frac{1}{N+l} P_{N+l}(2; t) + \frac{1}{N+l+1} P_{N+l+1}(2; t) \right] \Phi_\xi(t) (1 - t^2)^{l-\frac{1}{2}} dt; \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$

$$S_N(f; 3; \xi) = \int_{-1}^1 K_N(t) \Phi_\xi(t) dt, \quad (19)$$

where

$$K_N(t) = \frac{1}{2} (P'_N(3; t) + P'_{N+1}(3; t)), \quad (20)$$

and if $n = 2l + 3$, $l \in \mathbf{N}_0$,

$$\begin{aligned} S_N(f; 2l + 3; \xi) &= \frac{2^{-l-1}}{\Gamma(l + 1)} \\ &\cdot \int_{-1}^1 \frac{d^{l+1}}{dt^{l+1}} [P_{N+l}(3; t) + P_{N+l+1}(3; t)] \Phi_\xi(t) (1 - t^2)^l dt. \end{aligned} \quad (21)$$

§3. Main Results

Let $n > 3$. We use $W^{[\frac{n-1}{2}]}([-1, 1])$ for the Sobolev space

$$W^{[\frac{n-1}{2}]}([-1, 1]) = \{g \in L^2([-1, 1]; d\mu(t)) \mid \frac{d^l}{dt^l} g \in L^{2-\mu}([-1, 1]; d\mu(t)), l = 1, 2, \dots, [\frac{n-1}{2}]\},$$

where $d\mu(t) = (1 - t^2)^{-\frac{\mu}{2}} dt$, μ is defined by the relation $1 - \mu = n \bmod 2$, i.e., μ equals to 0 or 1. This definition is also valid when n is 2 or 3, ($l = 0$).

Then we have our main theorem,

Theorem 2. Let $\Phi_\xi(t) \in W^{\lfloor \frac{n-1}{2} \rfloor}([-1, 1])$, if $\Phi_\xi(1) = \lim_{t \rightarrow 1} \Phi_\xi(t)$ exists, then

$$\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} S_N(f; n; \xi) = \Phi_\xi(1).$$

If, in particular, f is continuous at ξ , then

$$\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} S_N(f; n; \xi) = f(\xi).$$

Proof. Define on $-1 \leq t \leq 1$

$$\Psi_\xi^\mu(t) = \frac{(-1)^l \Gamma(\frac{\mu}{2}) 2^{-l}}{\Gamma(l+1-\frac{\mu}{2})} (1-t^2)^{\frac{\mu}{2}} \frac{d^l}{dt^l} [\Phi_\xi(t) (1-t^2)^{l-\frac{\mu}{2}}], \quad (22)$$

By integration by parts, the partial sums of (18) and (21) reduce to

$$S_N(f; 2l+2; \xi) = \int_{-1}^1 D_{N+l}(t) \Psi_\xi^1(t) (1-t^2)^{-\frac{1}{2}} dt \quad (23)$$

and

$$S_N(f; 2l+3; \xi) = \int_{-1}^1 K_{N+l}(t) \Psi_\xi^0(t) dt. \quad (24)$$

Now we distinguish two cases.

a) **n even.** Let $n = 2l + 2$, $l \in \mathbf{N}_0$. From (22), we have

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi_\xi^1(t) &= \frac{(-1)^l \Gamma(\frac{1}{2})}{2^l \Gamma(l + \frac{1}{2})} (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \frac{d^l}{dt^l} [\Phi_\xi(t) (1-t^2)^{l-\frac{1}{2}}] \\ &= \frac{(-1)^l \Gamma(\frac{1}{2})}{2^l \Gamma(l + \frac{1}{2})} (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \Phi_\xi(t) \frac{d^l}{dt^l} (1-t^2)^{l-\frac{1}{2}} + \sum_{j=1}^l C_l^j \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(t) \frac{d^{l-j}}{dt^{l-j}} (1-t^2)^{l-\frac{1}{2}} \right\} \\ &= \Phi_\xi(t) t^l + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \sum_{j=1}^l C_l^j \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(t) (1-t^2)^{j-\frac{1}{2}} P_{l-j}(t) \\ &= \Phi_\xi(t) t^l + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \sum_{j=1}^l \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(t) (1-t^2)^{j-\frac{1}{2}} Q_{l-j}(t), \end{aligned}$$

where $P_{l-j}(t)$ and $Q_{l-j}(t)$ are polynomials of degree $\leq l-j$.

Then (23) becomes

$$\begin{aligned} S_N(f; 2l+2; \xi) &= \int_{-1}^1 D_{N+l}(t) \Phi_\xi(t) t^l (1-t^2)^{-\frac{1}{2}} dt \\ &\quad + \int_{-1}^1 D_{N+l}(t) \sum_{j=1}^l \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(t) (1-t^2)^{j-\frac{1}{2}} Q_{l-j}(t) dt \\ &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^\pi \frac{\sin(N+l+\frac{1}{2})\theta}{\sin \frac{1}{2}\theta} \Phi_\xi(\cos \theta) (\cos \theta)^l d\theta \\ &\quad + \frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^l \int_0^\pi \sin(N+l+\frac{1}{2})\theta \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(\cos \theta) (\sin \theta)^{2j-1} Q_{l-j}(\cos \theta) \cos \frac{1}{2}\theta d\theta. \end{aligned}$$

Since $\Phi_\xi(t) \in W^{[\frac{n-1}{2}]([-1, 1])}$, then

$$\Phi_\xi(\cos \theta) \in L^2([0, \pi]) \text{ and } \Phi_\xi^{(j)}(\cos \theta) \in L^1([0, \pi]), \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, l.$$

Further,

$$\Phi_\xi(\cos \theta)(\cos \theta)^l \in L^2([0, \pi])$$

and

$$\Phi_\xi^{(j)}(\cos \theta)(\sin \theta)^{2j-1} Q_{l-j}(\cos \theta) \cos \frac{1}{2}\theta \in L^1([0, \pi]), \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, l.$$

Therefore, using Carleson's Theorem for the first part of the above expression and using Riemann-Lebesgue Lemma for the second part, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} S_N(f; 2l+2; \xi) &= \Phi_\xi(\cos 0)(\cos 0)^l + 0 \\ &= \Phi_\xi(1). \end{aligned}$$

b) n odd. Let $n = 2l + 3$, $l \in \mathbf{N}_0$. From (22), we have

$$\Psi_\xi^0(t) = \frac{(-1)^l}{2^l \Gamma(l+1)} \frac{d^l}{dt^l} [\Phi_\xi(t)(1-t^2)^l].$$

Let $G_\xi(t) = \Phi_\xi(t)(1-t^2)^l$, then (24) becomes

$$S_N(f; 2l+3; \xi) = \frac{(-1)^l}{2^{l+1} \Gamma(l+1)} \int_{-1}^1 [P'_{N+l}(3; t) + P'_{N+l+1}(3; t)] G_\xi^{(l)}(t) dt.$$

Since $\Phi_\xi(t) \in W^{[\frac{n-1}{2}]}$, i.e. $\frac{d^k}{dt^k} \Phi_\xi(t) \in L^2([-1, 1])$, $k = 0, 1, \dots, l+1$.

Then

$$\frac{d^k}{dt^k} G_\xi(t) \in L^2([-1, 1]), \quad k = 0, 1, \dots, l+1.$$

Thus, we can integrate the above integral by parts to obtain

$$\begin{aligned} S_N(f; 2l+3; \xi) &= \frac{(-1)^l}{2^{l+1} \Gamma(l+1)} \{ [P_{N+l}(3; t) + P_{N+l+1}(3; t)] G_\xi^{(l)}(t) \Big|_{-1}^1 \\ &\quad - \int_{-1}^1 [P_{N+l}(3; t) + P_{N+l+1}(3; t)] G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t) dt \} \\ &= \Phi_\xi(1) - \frac{(-1)^l}{2^{l+1} \Gamma(l+1)} \int_{-1}^1 [P_{N+l}(3; t) + P_{N+l+1}(3; t)] G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t) dt. \end{aligned}$$

So, the assertion of the theorem follows if we can show

$$\int_{-1}^1 |P_m(3; t) G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t)| dt \rightarrow 0, \quad \text{as } m \rightarrow \infty.$$

From (12) we have

$$\int_{-1}^1 |P_m(3; t)|^2 dt = \frac{2}{2m+1}, \quad m \in \mathbf{N}_0.$$

By Hölder's inequality, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{-1}^1 |P_m(3; t)G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t)| dt &\leq \left(\int_{-1}^1 |P_m(3; t)|^2 dt \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \cdot \left(\int_{-1}^1 |G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t)|^2 dt \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \\ &= \|G_\xi^{(l+1)}\|_{L^2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{2}{2m+1}}. \end{aligned}$$

Owing to the assumption of $\Phi_\xi(t)$, we have $G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t) \in L^2([-1, 1])$, then

$$\lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} \int_{-1}^1 |P_m(3; t)G_\xi^{(l+1)}(t)| dt = 0.$$

Thus,

$$\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} S_N(f; 2l+3; \xi) = \Phi_\xi(1). \quad \square$$

Remark 1. The above proof of Theorem 2 is also valid for $n = 2$ and, in fact, directly reduced to Carleson's Theorem. It is observed that for $n = 2$, i.e., $l = 0$. In the first part of Theorem 2, the average $\Phi_\xi(t)$ becomes simply evaluation at two endpoints of the interval $(-\cos^{-1} t, \cos^{-1} t)$,

$$\Phi_\xi(t) = \frac{1}{2}[f(\theta_\xi + \cos^{-1} t) + f(\theta_\xi - \cos^{-1} t)],$$

where θ_ξ is the angle between ξ and e_1 . The required Sobolev space reduces to L^2 space. From the condition of Theorem 2, let $t = \cos \theta$, the Dirichlet kernel is just the same as the one in the complex plane, and $\Phi_\xi \in L^2([0, \pi])$ if and only if $\frac{1}{2}[f(\theta_\xi + \theta) + f(\theta_\xi - \theta)] \in L^2([0, \pi])$. In particular, if $\xi = 1$, Theorem 2 reduces to the classical Carleson's Theorem.

Remark 2. By the result of R.A. Hunt[Hu], we can obviously extend the first part of Theorem 2, which n is an even number, to L^p cases, $1 < p < \infty$.

Remark 3. We prefer to impose the condition on the average of f , but not on f , since the former is weaker than the latter. By the definition of $\Phi_\xi(t)$ and the Whitney's extension theorem(see [Wh] or [Ro]), the continuity property of $\Phi_\xi(t)$ can be inherited from f . But the L^2 -bounded property can not. In general, $f \in L^p(\Omega_n)$, $p \geq 1$, implies $\Phi_\xi(t) \in L^p([-1; 1]; (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt)$, in fact, by Jensen's Inequality, since x^p , $p \geq 1$, is a convex function when $x \geq 0$,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{-1}^1 |\Phi_\xi(t)|^p (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt &= \int_{-1}^1 \left| \int_{\Omega(\xi)} f(t\xi + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\eta}) d\omega_{n-1}(\tilde{\eta}) / A_{n-1} \right|^p (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt \\ &\leq \int_{-1}^1 \left(\int_{\Omega(\xi)} |f(t\xi + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\eta})| d\omega_{n-1}(\tilde{\eta}) / A_{n-1} \right)^p (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt \\ &\leq \int_{-1}^1 \int_{\Omega(\xi)} |f(t\xi + (1-t^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}\tilde{\eta})|^p d\omega_{n-1}(\tilde{\eta}) / A_{n-1} (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt \\ &= \int_{\Omega_n} |f(\eta)|^p d\omega_n(\eta). \end{aligned}$$

In particular, when $n = 3$, for any $p \geq 1$, $f \in L^p(\Omega_n)$ implies $\Phi_\xi(t) \in L^p([-1; 1])$ since $\lambda - \frac{1}{2} = 0$ in the case. Note that, $\Phi_\xi(t) \in L^p([-1; 1])$ implies $\Phi_\xi(t) \in L^p([-1; 1]; (1-t^2)^{\lambda-\frac{1}{2}} dt)$ for any $p \geq 1$, but not vice versa.

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