

A note about the deterministic property of characteristic functions

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Abstract. We study an extension property for characteristic functions $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ of probability measures. More precisely, let f be the characteristic function of a probability density φ on \mathbb{R}^n , and let $U_\sigma = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \min_k |x_k| > \sigma\}$, $\sigma > 0$, be a neighborhood of infinity. We say that f has the σ -deterministic property if for any other characteristic function g such that $f = g$ on U_σ , it follows that $f \equiv g$. A sufficient condition on f to have the σ -deterministic property is given. We also discuss the question about how precise our sufficient condition is? These results show that the σ -deterministic property of f depends on an arithmetic structure of the support of φ .

Keywords: characteristic function, density function, entire function, probability measure, Bernstein space.

1 Introduction

Let $M(\mathbb{R}^n)$ be the family of finite complex-valued regular Borel measures on \mathbb{R}^n . Given a measure $\mu \in M(\mathbb{R}^n)$, we define its Fourier transform by

$$\widehat{\mu}(x) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(x,t)} d\mu(t),$$

$x \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Here and subsequently, (x, t) denotes the scalar product $\sum_{k=1}^n x_k t_k$ of vectors $x, t \in \mathbb{R}^n$. If the norm in $M(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is given by the total variation of $\mu \in M(\mathbb{R}^n)$, then this allows us to identify the usual Lebesgue Banach space $L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)$ with the closed ideal in $M(\mathbb{R}^n)$ of all measures, which are absolutely continuous with respect to the Lebesgue measure $dt = dt_1 \cdots dt_n$ on \mathbb{R}^n .

Assume that $\mu \in M(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is a positive measure. If, in addition, $\|\mu\| = 1$, then in the language of probability theory, this μ and the function $f(x) := \widehat{\mu}(-x)$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$, are called a probability measure and its characteristic function, respectively. In particular, if $\mu = \varphi dt$ with $\varphi \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)$ such that $\|\varphi\|_{L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)} = 1$ and $\varphi \geq 0$ on \mathbb{R}^n , then φ is called the probability density function of μ , or the probability density for short. Let us note that

if φ is a measurable function on \mathbb{R}^n , then we write here and in the sequel $\varphi \geq 0$ on \mathbb{R}^n if $\varphi \geq 0$ dt -almost everywhere on \mathbb{R}^n .

For a characteristic function f and a subset U of \mathbb{R}^n , we study the problem: is it true that there exists a characteristic function g on \mathbb{R}^n such that $g = f$ on U but $g \neq f$? Our interest to this question is initiated by a similar problem posed by N.G. Ushakov in [9, p. 276]: Is it true that for any neighborhoods of infinity $U \subset \mathbb{R}$ with $0 \notin U$, there exists the characteristic function g such that $g \neq e^{-x^2/2}$ but $g(x) = e^{-x^2/2}$ for all $x \in U$? A positive answer to this question was given by Gneiting [1, p. 360]:

Theorem 1. *Let $f : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be the characteristic function of a distribution with a continuous and strictly positive density. Then there exists, for each $\sigma > 0$, a characteristic function g such that $f(x) = g(x)$ if $x = 0$ or $|x| \geq \sigma$ and $f(x) \neq g(x)$ otherwise.*

Moreover, in [1, p. 361], the author also conjectured that the same statement holds for any characteristic function with an absolutely continuous component. This conjecture was disproved in [3]. Indeed, for $a > 0$,

$$\varphi(t) = \begin{cases} \frac{2(a-2|t|)}{a^2}, & |t| \leq \frac{a}{2}, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

is the density of the usual triangular probability distribution. Let $\sigma > 0$ and assume that g is a characteristic function such that $g(x) = \widehat{\varphi}(-x)$ for $|x| > \sigma$. If

$$a\sigma \leq \pi, \tag{2}$$

then $g(x) = \widehat{\varphi}(-x)$ for all $x \in \mathbb{R}$ (see [3, Ex. 1]).

In this paper, a problem of uniqueness for extensions of characteristic functions of several variables is studied. More precisely, given a characteristic function $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$, we consider characteristic extensions of f in a manner indicated by the above mentioned Ushakov’s problem, from a neighborhoods U of infinity to the whole \mathbb{R}^n . In particular, we obtain that estimate (2) can be weakened. Our Theorems 2 and 3 show that the exact estimate in (2) is $a\sigma \leq 2\pi$. Any characteristic function $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ satisfies $f(-x) = \overline{f(x)}$ for each $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Hence, it is enough to study the extensions only from symmetric neighborhoods U . For $\sigma > 0$, set $Q_\sigma^n = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : |x_k| \leq \sigma, k = 1, \dots, n\}$. Then

$$U_\sigma = \mathbb{R}^n \setminus Q_\sigma^n$$

denotes such a neighborhood. Also, we say that f has the σ -deterministic property if there exists no other characteristic function g such that $f(x) = g(x)$ for all $x \in U_\sigma$.

Let $\tau \in \mathbb{R}$, and let A and B be subsets of \mathbb{R}^n . Then $A + B$ and τA denote the sets $\{a + b : a \in A, b \in B\}$ and $\{\tau a : a \in A\}$, respectively. If, in addition, A is measurable, then we denote the Lebesgue measure of A by $|A|$. Given a measurable function $\varphi : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, we denote by S_φ the essential support of φ . By definition, a point $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ belongs to S_φ if for any $\delta > 0$, the set

$$(x + Q_\delta^n) \cap \{t \in \mathbb{R}^n : |\varphi(t)| > 0\}$$

has positive Lebesgue measure. Note that if φ is continuous on \mathbb{R}^n , then S_φ coincides with the usual support of φ . As usual, \mathbb{Z}^n is the n -dimensional integer lattice.

The following theorem is the main result of this paper.

Theorem 2. *Let $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be the characteristic function of a probability density φ . Assume that there exist $a \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $\varrho > 0$ and $\tau > 0$ such that*

$$|S_\varphi \cap (a + Q_\varrho^n + \tau\mathbb{Z}^n)| = 0. \quad (3)$$

If

$$\sigma\tau \leq 2\pi, \quad (4)$$

then f has the σ -deterministic property.

Note that if a pair of positive numbers ϱ and τ satisfy (3), then it is necessary that

$$\varrho < \frac{\tau}{2}. \quad (5)$$

Indeed, in the converse case, we have that $Q_\varrho^n + \tau\mathbb{Z}^n = \mathbb{R}^n$. On the other hand, it is clear that, for any probability density φ , we have $|S_\varphi| > 0$. Hence, $|S_\varphi \cap (a + Q_\varrho^n + \tau\mathbb{Z}^n)| > 0$ contrary to condition (3).

The statement of Theorem 2 is sharp in the sense that the right-hand side of (4) cannot be replaced by $2\pi + \varepsilon$ for any positive ε . This follows from the next theorem.

Theorem 3. *For any positive σ and τ such that*

$$\sigma\tau > 2\pi, \quad (6)$$

there exist $\varrho > 0$ and a probability density φ such that (3) is satisfied but the characteristic function of φ has no the σ -deterministic property.

We conclude this section by presenting our previous paper [4], where a similar extension problem was studied in the case of continuous density functions of one variable. The main result of [4] states that if φ is a continuous probability density on \mathbb{R} such that there exist lattices $A_j = \tau_j + \alpha_j\mathbb{Z}$, $\tau_j \in \mathbb{R}$, $\alpha_j > 0$, $\alpha_j\sigma \leq 2\pi$, $j = 1, 2$, $A_1 \cap A_2 = \emptyset$, and φ vanishes on $A_1 \cup A_2$, then, for any characteristic function $g : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ such that it coincides on U_σ with the characteristic function f of φ , we have that $g \equiv f$. It is easy to see that for continuous density φ , this statement is more general than our Theorem 2. On the other hand, the formulation of this statement (as also its proof) uses substantially the property that φ is continuous.

2 Preliminaries and proofs

As usual, we write $S(\mathbb{R}^n)$ for the Schwartz space of test functions on \mathbb{R}^n and $S'(\mathbb{R}^n)$ for the dual space of tempered distributions. We define the inverse Fourier transform

$$\check{\chi}(t) = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^n} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{i(t,x)} \chi(x) dx$$

so that the inversion formula $\widehat{\widehat{\chi}} = \chi$ holds for suitable $\chi \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)$. Given a closed subset $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, a function $\omega : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ is called bandlimited to Ω if $\widehat{\omega}$ vanishes outside Ω . Note that here we understand $\widehat{\omega}$ in a distributional sense.

Let $B(\mathbb{R}^n) = \{\widehat{\mu} : \mu \in M(\mathbb{R}^n)\}$ denote the Fourier–Stieltjes algebra with the usual pointwise multiplication. The norm in $B(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is inherited from $M(\mathbb{R}^n)$, in such a way,

$$\|\widehat{\mu}\|_{B(\mathbb{R}^n)} := \|\mu\|_{M(\mathbb{R}^n)}.$$

Note that the Fourier algebra $A(\mathbb{R}^n) = \{\widehat{\varphi} : \varphi \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)\}$ is an ideal in $B(\mathbb{R}^n)$.

The closed subspace B_Ω^p in $L^p(\mathbb{R}^n)$, $1 \leq p \leq \infty$, of all $F \in L^p(\mathbb{R}^n)$ such that F is bandlimited to Ω , is called the Bernstein space. The Banach space B_Ω^p is equipped with the norm

$$\|F\|_p = \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |F(x)|^p dx \right)^{1/p}, \quad 1 \leq p < \infty,$$

and $\|F\|_\infty = \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^n} |F(x)|$. By the Paley–Wiener–Schwartz theorem (see [2, p. 181]), if Ω is a compact subset of \mathbb{R}^n , then any $F \in B_\Omega^p$ is infinitely differentiable on \mathbb{R}^n and has an extension onto the complex space \mathbb{C}^n to an entire function. For $a > 0$ and each $F \in B_{Q_\sigma^p}$, $1 \leq p < \infty$, there exists a positive number M such that the Plancherel–Polya–Nikol’skii-type inequality

$$\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} |F(x + ak)|^p \leq M \|F\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^n)}^p \tag{7}$$

is satisfied for all $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ (see [8, p. 19]). If $F \in B_{Q_\sigma^1}$, then the Poisson summation formula

$$\sum_{\omega \in \mathbb{Z}^n} F(x + \nu\omega) = \frac{1}{\nu^n} \sum_{\theta \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \widehat{F}\left(\frac{2\pi}{\nu}\theta\right) e^{2\pi i(x,\theta)/\nu} \tag{8}$$

holds for all $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ and each $\nu > 0$ (see, e.g., [5, p. 166]).

Proof of Theorem 2. We start with the simple observation that we can consider, without loss of generality, condition (3) with $a = 0$, i.e., the case if S_φ , Q and τ satisfy

$$|S_\varphi \cap (Q_\rho^n + \tau\mathbb{Z}^n)| = 0. \tag{9}$$

Indeed, define $\varphi_a(x) := \varphi(x + a)$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Then φ_a is a probability density and satisfies (9) if and only if φ satisfies (3). Moreover,

$$\widehat{\varphi}_a(-x) = e^{-i(a,x)} \widehat{\varphi}(-x)$$

for $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Hence, $\widehat{\varphi}_a$ has the σ -deterministic property if $\widehat{\varphi}$ also has this property.

Assume that g is any characteristic function such that $g = f$ on U_σ . It remains to prove that $f \equiv g$. Our proof starts with the observation that this g is also the characteristic function of a probability density. Indeed, let $g(x) = \widehat{\mu}(-x)$ for certain probability measure μ . Take any $u \in S(\mathbb{R}^n)$ such that $u(x) = 1$ for all $x \in Q_\sigma^n$. Then

$$\widehat{\mu} - \widehat{\varphi} \equiv u(\widehat{\mu} - \widehat{\varphi}). \tag{10}$$

Since $S(\mathbb{R}^n) \subset A(\mathbb{R}^n)$ and $A(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is an ideal in $B(\mathbb{R}^n)$, we conclude from (10) that $\widehat{\mu} \in A(\mathbb{R}^n)$. Hence, there is a probability density ψ such that $g(x) = \widehat{\psi}(-x)$.

Define

$$\xi = \varphi - \psi. \quad (11)$$

Using the fact that $\text{supp}(f - g) \subset Q_\sigma^n$, we see that $\xi \in B_{Q_\sigma^n}^1$. Moreover, from (11) it follows that

$$\xi \leq \varphi \quad (12)$$

almost everywhere on \mathbb{R}^n and

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \xi(x) dx = 0. \quad (13)$$

Now we claim that (9) implies

$$\int_{Q_\varrho^n} \xi(x) dx = 0. \quad (14)$$

To that end, we write E_k for the set $Q_\varrho^n + \tau k$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}^n$. According to (9) and (12), we have that

$$\int_{E_k} \xi(x) dx \leq 0 \quad (15)$$

for all $k \in \mathbb{Z}^n$. Since $\xi \in B_{Q_\sigma^n}^1$, the Poisson summation formula (8) holds for $F = \xi$, $\nu = \tau$ and all $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$:

$$\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \xi(x + \tau k) = \frac{1}{\tau^n} \sum_{\theta \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \widehat{\xi}\left(\frac{2\pi}{\tau}\theta\right) e^{2\pi i(x, \theta)/\tau}. \quad (16)$$

$\widehat{\xi}$ is continuous on \mathbb{R}^n , and $\text{supp } \widehat{\xi} \subset Q_\sigma^n$. Hence, condition (4) implies that

$$\widehat{\xi}\left(\frac{2\pi}{\tau}\theta\right) = 0$$

for all $\theta \in \mathbb{Z}^n \setminus \{0\}$. Moreover, from (13) it follows that also $\widehat{\xi}(0) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \xi(x) dx = 0$. Altogether, (16) reduces to

$$\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \xi(x + \tau k) = 0, \quad (17)$$

$x \in \mathbb{R}^n$. From (7) it follows that this series converges absolutely on \mathbb{R}^n . Also, if we consider (16) only for $x \in Q_\tau^n$, i.e., on Q_τ^n , then the left-hand side of (17) converges in the norm of $L^1(Q_\tau^n)$ (see [7, p. 251]). According to (5), we see that the left-hand side of (17) converges also in the norm of $L^1(Q_\varrho^n)$. Then

$$0 = \int_{Q_\varrho^n} \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \xi(x + \tau k) dx = \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \int_{Q_\varrho^n} \xi(x + \tau k) dx = \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}^n} \int_{E_k} \xi(x) dx.$$

Combining this with (15) gives $\int_{E_k} \xi(x) dx = 0$ for all $k \in \mathbb{Z}^n$. Hence, this proves our claim (14) since $Q_\varrho^n = E_0$.

Next, we claim that

$$\xi(x) = 0 \tag{18}$$

for all $x \in Q_\varrho^n$. Indeed, set

$$I_{(+)} = \{x \in Q_\varrho^n : \xi(x) > 0\}, \quad I_{(-)} = \{x \in Q_\varrho^n : \xi(x) < 0\}$$

and

$$I_0 = \{x \in Q_\varrho^n : \xi(x) = 0\}.$$

Take into account (9) and (12), we obtain

$$\int_{I_{(+)}} \xi(x) dx \leq \int_{I_{(+)}} \varphi(x) dx \leq \int_{Q_\varrho^n} \varphi(x) dx = 0.$$

Since ξ is continuous on \mathbb{R}^n , it follows that $I_{(+)}$ is an open subset of \mathbb{R}^n . Hence, $I_{(+)} = \emptyset$. Using the obvious equality $\int_{I_0} \xi(x) dx = 0$ and (14), we get $\int_{I_{(-)}} \xi(x) dx = 0$. Hence, $I_{(-)} = \emptyset$. This completes the proof of claim (18).

On the other hand, (18) shows that the entire function ξ vanishes on the nonempty and open subset Q_ϱ^n in \mathbb{R}^n . In particular, this implies that the function ξ vanishes at $z = 0$ together with all its partial derivatives. Thus, by the uniqueness theorem for analytic functions (see, e.g., [6, p. 21]), we have that ξ is the zero function. Hence, $\varphi \equiv \psi$. Thus $f \equiv g$. Theorem 2 is proved. \square

Proof of Theorem 3. According to (6), we may take a number θ such that

$$\frac{2\pi}{\sigma} < \theta < \tau. \tag{19}$$

Next, let ϱ be any positive number, which satisfies

$$\varrho < \frac{\tau - \theta}{2}. \tag{20}$$

Take an arbitrary continuous on \mathbb{R}^n probability density φ with

$$S_\varphi = B_{\theta\sqrt{n}/2}^n, \tag{21}$$

where B_r^n denotes the ball $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \sum_{k=1}^n x_k^2 \leq r^2\}$. Combining (6) with (20) and (21), it is a simple calculation to see that for these θ, ϱ, φ and

$$a = \left(\frac{\tau}{2}, \frac{\tau}{2}, \dots, \frac{\tau}{2}\right) \in \mathbb{R}^n,$$

condition (3) is satisfied.

The next step of our proof consists in the construction of a function $\xi \in B_{Q_\sigma}^1$, $\xi \neq 0$, satisfying (12) and (13). Put

$$\omega_1(t) = \left(\frac{\sigma}{2\pi} \cos \frac{\pi t}{\sigma} \right) \cdot \chi_{[-\sigma/2, \sigma/2]}(t) \quad (22)$$

and

$$\omega_2(t) = \left(\frac{i}{2} \sin \frac{\pi t}{\sigma} \right) \cdot \chi_{[-\sigma/2, \sigma/2]}(t), \quad (23)$$

where χ_A is the indicator function of the subset $A \subset \mathbb{R}$. It is straightforward to verify that

$$\widehat{\omega}_1(x) = \frac{\cos \frac{\sigma x}{2}}{\left(\frac{\pi}{\sigma}\right)^2 - x^2} \quad (24)$$

and

$$\widehat{\omega}_2(x) = x \widehat{\omega}_1(x). \quad (25)$$

According to our definitions of the Fourier transform and its inverse transform, the following Plancherel formula holds

$$2\pi \|\gamma\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})}^2 = \|\widehat{\gamma}\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})}^2$$

for each $\widehat{\gamma} \in L^2(\mathbb{R})$. Hence, using (22) and (23), we get

$$\|\widehat{\omega}_1\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})}^2 = 2\pi \|\omega_1\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})}^2 = \frac{\sigma^2}{2\pi} \int_{-\sigma/2}^{\sigma/2} \cos^2 \frac{\pi t}{\sigma} dt = \frac{\sigma^3}{4\pi} \quad (26)$$

and

$$\|\widehat{\omega}_2\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})}^2 = \frac{\pi}{2} \int_{-\sigma/2}^{\sigma/2} \sin^2 \frac{\pi t}{\sigma} dt = \frac{\pi\sigma}{4} \quad (27)$$

since $\omega_k \in L^2(\mathbb{R})$, $k = 1, 2$.

For $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$, let us define

$$\begin{aligned} \xi_0(x) &= \frac{\pi^2 n}{\sigma^2} \prod_{k=1}^n \widehat{\omega}_1^2(x_k) - \sum_{k=1}^n \left[\widehat{\omega}_2^2(x_k) \cdot \prod_{j=1, j \neq k}^n \widehat{\omega}_1^2(x_j) \right] \\ &= \prod_{k=1}^n \left(\frac{\cos \frac{\sigma x_k}{2}}{\left(\frac{\pi}{\sigma}\right)^2 - x_k^2} \right)^2 \left[\frac{\pi^2 n}{\sigma^2} - \sum_{k=1}^n x_k^2 \right]. \end{aligned} \quad (28)$$

Obviously, $\xi_0 \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^n)$. On the other hand, from (22), (23), (24) and (25) it follows that $\widehat{\xi}_0$ is supported on $[-\sigma, \sigma]^n = Q_\sigma^n$. Hence, $\xi_0 \in B_{Q_\sigma}^1$.

We claim that there exists $\varepsilon > 0$ such that the function

$$\xi := \varepsilon \cdot \xi_0 \tag{29}$$

satisfies (12) and (13). Indeed, using (26), (27) and (28), we get

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \xi_0(x) \, dx \\ &= \frac{\pi^2 n}{\sigma^2} \prod_{k=1}^n \int_{\mathbb{R}} \widehat{\omega}_1^2(x_k) \, dx_k - \sum_{k=1}^n \left[\int_{\mathbb{R}} \widehat{\omega}_2^2(x_k) \, dx_k \cdot \prod_{j=1, j \neq k}^n \int_{\mathbb{R}} \widehat{\omega}_1^2(x_j) \, dx_j \right] \\ &= \frac{\pi^2 n}{\sigma^2} \left(\frac{\sigma^3}{4\pi} \right)^n - n \frac{\pi \sigma}{4} \left(\frac{\sigma^3}{4\pi} \right)^{n-1} = \left(\frac{\sigma^3}{4\pi} \right)^{n-1} \left[\frac{\pi^2 n}{\sigma^2} \cdot \frac{\sigma^3}{4\pi} - n \frac{\pi \sigma}{4} \right] = 0. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \xi(x) \, dx = 0$.

Next, from (19) it follows that

$$B_{\pi\sqrt{n}/\sigma}^n \subsetneq B_{\theta\sqrt{n}/2}^n.$$

This implies that we can take a continuous probability density φ such that it satisfies (21) and also the following additional condition:

$$\min\{\varphi(x) : x \in B_{\pi\sqrt{n}/\sigma}^n\} > 0.$$

Then, since ξ (see formula (29)) is also continuous on \mathbb{R}^n , we have that there exists $\varepsilon > 0$ in (29) such that (12) is satisfied for this ξ and all $x \in B_{\pi\sqrt{n}/\sigma}^n$. On the other hand, from (28) and (29) it follows that ξ is nonpositive on $\mathbb{R}^n \setminus B_{\pi\sqrt{n}/\sigma}^n$. Therefore, ξ satisfies (12) for all $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$.

Finally, if we set $\psi := \varphi - \xi$, then (12) and (13) show that ψ is a probability density. Moreover, we have that $\widehat{\psi} = \widehat{\varphi}$ on U_σ but $\psi \neq \varphi$. Theorem 3 is proved. \square

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