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REGULAR SYNTHESES AND SOLUTIONS TO DISCONTINUOUS ODES

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Abstract. In this paper we analyze several concepts of solution to discontinuous ODEs in relation to feedbacks generated by optimal syntheses. Optimal trajectories are called Stratified Solutions in case of regular synthesis in the sense of Boltyanskii–Brunovsky. We introduce a concept of solution called Krasowskii Cone Robust that characterizes optimal trajectories for minimum time on the plane and for general problems under suitable assumptions.

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1. Introduction

Given an optimal control problem $Pb(x)$ that depends on some free initial point x, one can provide a solution by means of an optimal synthesis. Roughly speaking, an optimal synthesis is a way of associating to every initial point x an optimal trajectory γ_x. Another way of describing the solution is to define a feedback control $u(x)$ such that the corresponding trajectories are optimal. However, in most cases one has to admit discontinuous feedbacks so facing the problem of defining solutions to discontinuous ODEs. In [17] it is shown that many concepts of solution lead to not optimal trajectories or do not include all optimal trajectories. Therefore, in general, a feedback does not describe properly the solution to the family of problems $Pb(x)$. However, for practical applications, the use of feedback controls is the most appropriate tool for solving many problems of different nature such as optimal stabilization [12,14], trajectory tracking [2] and motion planning [15]. Hence, it is of fundamental importance the question of providing a suitable definition of solution, to discontinuous ODEs, that determines exactly the set of optimal trajectories from the discontinuous feedback.

The difficulty of the problem is illustrated by the Example 5.3 in [17] exibiting an optimal synthesis whose corresponding feedback admits classical solutions (*i.e.* smooth solutions satisfying the equation at each time) that are not optimal, even worse, some of them do not reach the target. Hence any generalized concept of solution, for which classical solutions are admissible, is not proper.

We consider many concepts of solution to discontinuous ODEs, some already introduced in the literature and some new, and also analyze the concept of regular synthesis in the sense of Boltyanskii-Brunovsky (see [3,6]). The latter is based on the concept of stratification and is the more appropriate definition of synthesis to discuss the properties of the set of solutions to the corresponding discontinuous feedback. For reference about the construction of stratifications see [9] and [10]. In [17] a more general definition of synthesis is introduced, which is suitable for a general sufficiency theorem, but such syntheses are not necessarily generated by a feedback.

None of the introduced concepts of solution works properly for every optimal control problem. This is not too surprising since, even the description of optimal synthesis for smooth systems, is usually given only under generic assumptions, see [5,11,16]. If no generic assumption is taken, then any kind of singularity may occur

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in the optimal synthesis with no hope of controlling the behavior of generalized solutions to the corresponding discontinuous feedback. Therefore, we take the point of view of studying systems in generic position.

The first results regard minimum time for single input systems on the plane. The syntheses with point target were classified in [5,18]. Moreover, the set of extremals was studied in details in [4]. Under generic assumptions, only 5 types of singular curves and 17 types of singular points can appear, see [16]. Thus we can analyze the generic case thanks to this finite list of possible singularities. The results are summurized in Theorem 2, where we show that the concept of Krasowskii Cone Robust Solution, introduced in Section 3, individuates optimal trajectories. A Krasowskii solution is cone robust if it is robust with respect to perturbations of the initial point along some cone with nonempty interior. Notice that, the importance of Krasowskii Cone Robust Solutions is not bounded to the property of describing optimal trajectories, but shows up also in numerical implementation issues. Indeed, numerical schemes, introducing rounding errors, are able to generate only "observable" trajectories, that is trajectories robust with respect to perturbations of initial data.

We also describe a new definition of regular synthesis, already introduced in [13], that is modeled on Boltyanskii-Brunovsky definition, and conditions such that Krasowskii Cone Robust solutions coincide with solutions of the optimal synthesis. These conditions are again in the spirit of generic assumptions. Moreover, each assumption is discussed with examples that illustrate the effects on the shape of the optimal synthesis.

Section 2 is dedicated to basic definitions and to the definition of regular synthesis. In Section 3 we review some concepts of solutions to discontinuous ODEs and introduce new ones. Section 4 is dedicated to minimum time on the plane: we prove that Krasowskii Cone Robust Solutions coincide with optimal ones. Finally, in Section 5, we give sufficient conditions on a regular synthesis for a general system to have the same conclusion. Moreover we show the properties of Krasowskii extremal solutions.

2. Basic definitions

We indicate by B_n the unit ball in $\mathbb{R}^n$. Given a set $A \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ we denote by $\mathrm{cl}(A)$ the closure of A, by $\mathrm{Int}(A)$ its interior and by $\overline{\mathrm{co}}(A)$ the closed convex hull that is

$$\overline{\mathrm{co}}(A) \stackrel{\mathrm{def}}{=}3\mathrm{D} \left\{ \mathrm{cl} \sum \lambda_i x_i;\ x_i \in A,\ \lambda_i \in \mathbb{R},\ \lambda_i \geq 0,\ \sum \lambda_i =3\mathrm{D} 1 \right\}$$

A cone $\mathcal{K} \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ is a set such that for every $\lambda > 0$ we have $\lambda\mathcal{K} \subset \mathcal{K}$. A set $A \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ is convex if $\lambda x + (1-\lambda)y \in A$ for every $x, y \in A$ and $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$. A point x of a convex set A is said extremal if whenever $x =3\mathrm{D}\ \lambda y_1 + (1-\lambda)y_2$, with $y_1, y_2 \in A$ and $0 < \lambda < 1$, it follows $x =3\mathrm{D}\ y_1 =3\mathrm{D}\ y_2$.

A multifunction V is a map from a set A into the set of subsets of another set A', thus $V(x) \subset A'$ for every $x \in A$.

On the set of subsets of $\mathbb{R}^n$ we consider the Hausdorff distance $d(A, A') =3\mathrm{D} \sup\{d(x, A'), d(A, x') : x \in A, x' \in A'\}$, where $d(x, A') =3\mathrm{D} \inf\{d(x, x') : x' \in A'\}$ and similarly for $d(A, x')$. Assume V is a multifunction from $\mathbb{R}^n$ to $\mathbb{R}^{n'}$. Then V is continuous if it is continuous for the Hausdorff distance. We say that the multifunction V is upper semicontinuous at x if for every $\varepsilon > 0$ there exists $\delta > 0$ such that $V(y) \subset V(x) + \varepsilon B_{n'}$ for every $|y - x| < \delta$.

Given a multifunction V from $\mathbb{R}^n$ to $\mathbb{R}^n$ we consider the corresponding differential inclusion that is

$$\dot{x} \in V(x). \tag{1}$$

A solution (in Caratheodory sense) to (1) is an absolutely continuos function x such that the $\dot{x}(t) \in V(x(t))$ for almost every t in the domain of x. If V has convex values then we also consider the differential inclusion

$$\dot{x} \in \mathrm{ext}\, V(x),$$

where $\mathrm{ext}\, V(x)$ is the set of extremal points of $V(x)$.

We consider a minimization problem of the type:

$$Pb(\bar{x}) =3D \begin{cases} \dot{x} =3D f(x,u) \\ x(0) =3D \bar{x}, \qquad x(T) \in \mathcal{T}, \\ \min \int_0^T L(x(t),u(t)))\,\mathrm{d}t \ + \Phi(x(T)), \end{cases} \tag{2}$$

with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$, $u \in U$ where $U \subset \mathbb{R}^m$, compact, is the control set, $f : \mathbb{R}^n \times U \to \mathbb{R}^n$ is continuous and continuously differentiable w.r.t. x, $\bar{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ is the initial condition, $\mathcal{T} \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, smooth manifold, is the target, $L : \mathbb{R}^n \times U \to \mathbb{R}^n$, the Lagrangian, is continuous and continuously differentiable w.r.t. x and the final cost $\Phi : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^n$ is differentiable. An admissible control is a measurable map $u : [0,T] \to U$ such that $(t,x) \mapsto (f(x,u(t)), L(x,u(t)))$ has Jacobian w.r.t. x uniformly bounded on compact sets. The minimization is taken over all trajectories, corresponding to admissible controls, satisfying the boundary conditions $x(0) =3D \bar{x}$ and $x(T) \in \mathcal{T}$.

A way of describing a solution to the collection of problems $\{Pb(\bar{x}) : \ \bar{x} \in \Omega\}$, where Ω is a subset of $\mathbb{R}^n$, is to provide an optimal synthesis on Ω.

Definition 1. An optimal synthesis on Ω is a collection of trajectories $\{\gamma_x : \ x \in \Omega\}$ such that γ_x is optimal, *i.e.* solves the problem $Pb(x)$.

2.1. Regular synthesis

To define a regular synthesis we first need to recall the definition of Withney stratified set.

Definition 2. Let M be a subset of $\mathbb{R}^n$ and assume $M =3D \bigcup_{j\in J} M_j$, where $J \subset \mathbb{N}$ and M_j are disjoint nonemtpy connected embedded $\mathcal{C}^1$ submanifolds of $\mathbb{R}^n$. Then M is a Withney stratified set if the collection $\mathcal{P} :=3D \{M_j\}_{j\in J}$, called the stratification of M, is locally finite and the following holds.

- If $M_k \cap \mathrm{cl}(M_j) \neq 3D\ \emptyset$ ($j \neq 3D\ k$) then $M_k \subset \partial M_j$ and $\dim(M_k) < \dim(M_j)$.
- Let $x_n, y_n \in M_j$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $x_n, y_n \to \bar{x} \in M_k \subset \mathrm{cl}(M_j)$ and denote by ℓ_n the direction in $\mathbb{R}^n$ containing the segment joining x_n with y_n. If $T_{x_n}M_j \to T$ (in the Grassmannian) and $\ell_n \to \ell$, then $\ell \subset T$ and $T_{\bar{x}}M_k \subset T$.

We define the dimension of M by $\dim(M) =3D \max_j \dim(M_j)$.

We introduce the concept of regular synthesis that is modeled on the definitions given by Boltyanskii and Brunovsky, see [3, 6]. For simplicity, we consider the case of optimal synthesis with target a point that we may assume to be the origin.

Definition 3. Let Ω be an open set containing the origin. A regular synthesis on Ω is a 6–tuple Ξ =3D $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{P}_1, \mathcal{P}_2, \Pi, \Sigma, u)$ such that

(RS.1) Ω is a Withney stratified set with stratification $\mathcal{P}$. $\{0\} \in \mathcal{P}$. The elements of $\mathcal{P}$ are called "cells";

(RS.2) $\mathcal{P}\backslash\{\{0\}\}$ is the disjoint union of $\mathcal{P}_1$ (the set of "type I cells") and $\mathcal{P}_2$ (the set of "type II cells");

(RS.3) the feedback $u : \{x : \ x \in P_1 \in \mathcal{P}_1\} \to U$ and $\Pi : \mathcal{P}_1 \to \mathcal{P}$ are maps, $\Sigma : \mathcal{P}_2 \to \mathcal{P}_1$ is a multifunction, with non empty values, such that the following properties are satisfied:

(RS.A) The function u is of class $\mathcal{C}^1$ on each cell.

(RS.B) If $P_1 \in \mathcal{P}_1$ then $f(x,u(x)) \in T_xP_1$ (the tangent space to P_1 at x) for every $x \in P_1$. In addition, for each $x \in P_1$, if we let ξ_x be the maximally defined solution to the initial value problem

$$\dot{\xi} =3D f(\xi, u(\xi))\,, \ \ \xi(0) =3D x\,, \ \ \xi \in P \tag{3}$$

and define $t_x =3D \sup \mathrm{Dom}(\xi_x)$ then the limit $\xi_x(t_x-) \overset{\mathrm{def}}{=3D} \lim_{t\uparrow t_x} \xi_x(t)$ exists and belongs to $\Pi(P_1)$.

(RS.C) If $P_2 \in \mathcal{P}_2$, then for each $x \in P_2$ and $P \in \Sigma(P_2)$ there exists a unique curve $\xi_x^P : [0, t_x^P[\, \to \Omega$ such that the restriction of ξ_x^P to $]\,0, t_x^P\,[$ is a maximally defined integral curve of the vector field $f(\cdot, u(\cdot))$ on P, and $\xi_x^P(0) =3D x$.

(RS.D) On every cell $P_1 \in \mathcal{P}_1$, $x \to t_x$ is a continuously differentiable function, and $(t,x) \to \xi_x(t)$, $(t,x) \to u_x(t) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=}$3D $u(\xi_x(t))$ are continuously differentiable maps on the set

$$E(P) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=}\text{3D } \{(t,x) : x \in P, t \in [0,t_x]\}$$

in the sense that they can be prolonged to maps of class $\mathcal{C}^1$ on some open subset of $\mathbb{R} \times P_1$ containing $E(P_1)$. If $P_2 \in \mathcal{P}_2$ the same holds for every t_x^P, ξ_x^P, u_x^P, with $P \in \Sigma(P_2)$.

(RS.E) For every $x \in \Omega \setminus \{0\}$, if we let $\tilde{\xi}_x$ denote a curve, starting at x, obtained by piecing together the trajectories on every single cell, then $\tilde{\xi}_x$ ends at the origin in finite time.

Definition 4. The trajectories $\tilde{\xi}_x$ of $(RS3.E)$ are called Stratified Solutions of Ξ.

Remark. The original definitions of Boltyanskii and Brunovsky are different between them and from our definition. For a comparison of the two concepts we refer to [17]. In our definition we first ask a more restrictive assumption on the stratification of $\Omega \setminus \{0\}$, namely we ask the stratification of this set to be a Withney stratification. The definition of Brunovsky only asked for a stratification, that is only the first condition of Definition 2 is required, and the definition of Boltyanskii did not even ask for the partition $\mathcal{P}$ to be locally finite.

Another difference is that we do not ask for $\tilde{\xi}_x$ to have a finite number of switchings, that is to pass from one cell to another a finite number of times.

In Boltyanskii definition a set N exists such that from every point of N more than one optimal trajectory can start. This was done to include the case of overlaps (see Sect. 5.3). This set N was not a cell of type I or II. While in Brunovsky there is not such set and the overlaps are admitted as II cells for which we must decide which cell of type I we are going to enter. We choose not to have such a set N but we allow the map Σ of $(RS.3)$ to be multivalued (while in Boltyanskii and Brunovsky definitions it was single valued). So we have that overlaps are II cells but we allow all optimal trajectories to be included as Stratified solutions. Hence we introduce another concept of solution:

Definition 5. If we set the multifunction Σ of $(RS.3)$ of Definition 3 to be single valued then we call the corresponding trajectories $\tilde{\xi}_x$, of $(RS3.E)$, Brunovsky Stratified solutions to Ξ.

3. Solutions to discontinuous ODEs

In this section we describe various concepts of solution to discontinuous ODEs, which are used in the following sections for regular synthesis.

We consider an ODE with a discontinuous righthand side:

$$\dot{x} =\text{3D } v(x), \qquad x \in \mathbb{R}^n \tag{4}$$

where $v : \mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}^n$ is a measurable bounded function. In our case v denotes $f(x, u(x))$. We start recalling the definition of Caratheodory solution.

Definition 6. A Caratheodory solution to (4) is an absolutely continuous function $x : [0,T] \to \mathbb{R}^n$ that verifies (4) for almost every $t \in [0,T]$.

Next we use the theory of differential inclusions to introduce the concepts of Krasowskii and Filippov solution, see [8].