

A NECESSARY AND SUFFICIENT CONDITION FOR CONVERGENCE OF ERROR PROBABILITY ESTIMATES IN K-NN DISCRIMINATION

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Abstract

Let (X, θ) be $R^d \times \{1, \dots, s\}$ -valued random vector, (X_j, θ_j) , $j=1, \dots, n$, be its observed values, $\theta_{nj}^{(k)}$ be the k -nearest neighbor estimate of θ_j , $R^{(k)}$ be the limit of error probability and $\hat{R}_{nk} \triangleq \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj}^{(k)})}$ be the error probability estimate. In this paper it is shown that $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ such that

$$P(|\hat{R}_{nk} - R^{(k)}| > \varepsilon) < ce^{-an}$$

if and only if there is no unregular atom of (X, θ) defined below and the various convergences $\hat{R}_{nk} \rightarrow R^{(k)}$ are equivalent.

Let (X, θ) , $(X_1, \theta_1), \dots, (X_n, \theta_n)$ be independent identically distributed random vectors from $R^d \times \{1, \dots, s\}$, where $d \geq 1$, $s \geq 2$ and $Z^n \triangleq \{(X_j, \theta_j), j=1, \dots, n\}$ are observed values of (X, θ) . Let μ be the probability measure of X and

$$P_i(x) \triangleq P(\theta = i | X = x), \text{ for } x \in R^d, i=1, \dots, s.$$

The k -nearest neighbor estimate $\theta_n^{(k)}$ of θ , introduced by E. Fix and J. L. Hodges^[1], is defined as follows: arrange $\|X_j - X\|$, $j=1, \dots, n$ in increasing order $\|X_{R_1} - X\| \leq \dots \leq \|X_{R_n} - X\|$, where $\|X_j - X\|$ is the usual Euclidean distance in R^d between X_j and X ; put $i < j$ when $\|X_{R_i} - X\| = \|X_{R_j} - X\|$ and $R_i < R_j$; set $\theta_n^{(k)}$ equal to the integer which has a majority vote among $\theta_{R_1}, \dots, \theta_{R_k}$; in the case of a voting tie, set $\theta_n^{(k)}$ equal, with same probability, to each integer which has a majority vote. We write the error probability $R_n^{(k)} \triangleq P(\theta_n^{(k)} \neq \theta)$ and the conditional error probability $L_n^{(k)} \triangleq P(\theta_n^{(k)} \neq \theta | Z^n)$.

It is known that there exists $R^{(k)} \triangleq \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} R_n^{(k)}$ and under some conditions there exists $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} L_n^{(k)} = R^{(k)}$ a. s. and $R^{(1)} = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^s E P_i^2(X)$ (See, for example, [2, 3] for $k=1$). The posterior error probability $L_n^{(k)}$ of $\theta_n^{(k)}$ for given Z^n is very interesting from a practical point of view, since one can only work with the "training sample" Z^n at his disposal. But it is impossible to get the exact probability distribution of $L_n^{(k)}$.

Manuscript received October 21, 1983.

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when that of (X, θ) is unknown. Many mathematicians have studied the convergence of the error probability estimate of $L_n^{(k)}$

$$\hat{R}_{nk} \triangleq \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj}^{(k)})},$$

where I_A is the indicator function of set A and $\theta_{nj}^{(k)}$ is the k -nearest neighbor estimate of θ_j based on $\{(X_i, \theta_i), i=1, \dots, n, i \neq j\}$. Recently, Doctor Bai Zhidong proved

Theorem. If μ is nonatomic, then $\forall \varepsilon > 0, \exists$ constants $a > 0, c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(|\hat{R}_{nk} - R^{(k)}| \geq \varepsilon) < ce^{-an}.$$

In this paper we introduce the following

Definition. A point $x \in R^d$ is called a regular atom of (X, θ) if x is an atom of μ and there exists a nonempty subset $\{i_1, \dots, i_{g(x)}\}$ of set $\{1, \dots, s\}$ such that

$$P(\theta = i_m | X = x) = \frac{1}{g(x)} \quad m=1, \dots, g(x).$$

The goal of the present paper is to prove

Theorem 1. The following conditions are equivalent each to other:

- (i) there is no unregular atom in the distribution of (X, θ) ,
- (ii) $\forall \varepsilon > 0, \exists$ constants $a > 0, c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(|\hat{R}_{nk} - R^{(k)}| \geq \varepsilon) < ce^{-an},$$

- (iii) $\hat{R}_{nk} \rightarrow R^{(k)}$ a. s. ($n \rightarrow \infty$),

- (iv) $\forall \alpha > 0 \quad \hat{R}_{nk} \xrightarrow{L_\alpha} R^{(k)} \quad (n \rightarrow \infty),$

- (v) $\exists \alpha > 0, \hat{R}_{nk} \xrightarrow{L_\alpha} R^{(k)} \quad (n \rightarrow \infty),$

- (vi) $\hat{R}_{nk} \xrightarrow{P} R^{(k)} \quad (n \rightarrow \infty),$

- (vii) \exists constant r such that $\hat{R}_{nk} \xrightarrow{F} r.$

In this paper we denote by a a positive constant and by c a finite constant. Both a and c are independent of n and take their own values in each formula. First we shall show the following

Lemma 1. Let X_1, \dots, X_n be iid R^d valued random vectors and $\rho > 0$. Then $\forall \varepsilon > 0, \exists$ constants $a > 0, c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P\left(\frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho\} > \varepsilon\right) < ce^{-an},$$

where $X_{nj}^{(k)}$ is the k -th nearest neighbor of X_j among $\{X_i, i=1, \dots, n, i \neq j\}$.

Proof of Lemma 1. $\forall \varepsilon > 0, \exists$ constant $M > 0$ such that $P(\|X_1\| > M) < \varepsilon/2$.

Since

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho\} &= \frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho, \|X_j\| > M\} \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho, \|X_j\| \leq M\} \triangleq \Sigma_1 + \Sigma_2, \quad (1) \end{aligned}$$

where $\#A$ denotes the number of elements of set A , by Hoeffding's inequality, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$\begin{aligned} P(\Sigma_1 > \varepsilon/2) &\leq P\left(\frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j\| > M\} > \varepsilon/2\right) \\ &\leq P\left(\left|\frac{1}{n} \# \{j \leq n: \|X_j\| > M\} - P(\|X_j\| > M)\right| \right. \\ &\quad \left. > \varepsilon/2 - P(\|X_j\| > M)\right) < ce^{-an}. \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

To consider Σ_2 we suppose that $j \leq n$, $\|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho$ and $\|X_j\| \leq M$. Write $B_j \triangleq \{x: \|x - X_j\| < \rho/2\}$. It is not difficult to see that each B_j intersects at most with $k-1$ of balls B_i , otherwise, it contradicts $\|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho$. Thus $\forall x: \|x\| \leq M$, there are at most k of balls B_j containing x . Clearly, each $B_j \subset \{x: \|x\| \leq M + \rho/2\}$. So

$$\# \{B_j: j \leq n, \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \rho, \|X_j\| \leq M\} \leq k \left[\left(\frac{M + \rho/2}{\rho/2} \right)^d \right]$$

and for sufficiently large n ,

$$\Sigma_2 \leq \varepsilon/2. \quad (3)$$

From (1)–(3) this lemma follows.

Proof of Theorem 1. Clearly, (ii) \Rightarrow (iii), (iv) \Rightarrow (v) \Rightarrow (vi) \Rightarrow (vii). Since $|\hat{R}_{nk}| \leq 1$, (iii) \Rightarrow (iv). Thus to complete the proof it remains to show that (i) \Rightarrow (ii) and (vii) \Rightarrow (i).

Step 1 (i) \Rightarrow (ii). For brevity of the proof, we may suppose $k=1$, without loss of generality, and this is to discuss the nearest neighbor discrimination. We denote by A, B respectively the set of regular atoms of (X, θ) with $g(x)=1$ and $g(x)>1$. $H \triangleq A \cup B$. Clearly, the set H is finite or denumerable. Write

$$A \triangleq \{a_1, a_2, \dots\}, B \triangleq \{b_1, b_2, \dots\} \text{ and } H \triangleq \{h_1, h_2, \dots\}.$$

Denote $P(X \in A)$, $P(X \in B)$, $P(X \in H)$ and $P(X=b)$ respectively by $P(A)$, $P(B)$, $P(H)$ and $P(b)$.

It is easy to see that

$$\begin{aligned} R \triangleq R^{(1)} &= 1 - \sum_{i=1}^s \left(\int_A + \int_B + \int_{R^d \setminus H} \right) P_i^2(x) d\mu \\ &= 1 - P(A) - \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \frac{P(b_m)}{g(b_m)} - \sum_{i=1}^s \int_{R^d \setminus H} P_i^2(x) d\mu, \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

$$\hat{R}_n \triangleq \hat{R}_{n1} = \frac{1}{n} \left(\sum_{x_j \in A} + \sum_{x_j \in B} + \sum_{x_j \in H} \right) I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{n1})} \triangleq \Sigma_3 + \Sigma_4 + \Sigma_5. \quad (5)$$

From now on we denote $\sum_{j=1}^n b_j \sum_j$.

In the case of $H = \emptyset$ Step 1 follows from Bai's theorem. So we may suppose $H \neq \emptyset$.

In the case of $A = \emptyset$, $\Sigma_3 = 0$. To consider Σ_3 , we may suppose that $A \neq \emptyset$. Then $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constant M such that $\sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=a_m) < \varepsilon/2$.

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} P(\Sigma_3 > \varepsilon) &\leq P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=1}^M \sum_{x_j=a_m} I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj})} > \varepsilon/2\right) + P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} \sum_{x_j=a_m} 1 > \varepsilon/2\right) \\ &\leq P\left(\frac{M}{n} > \varepsilon/2\right) + P\left\{\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} \sum_{x_j=a_m} 1 - \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=a_m)\right| \right. \\ &\quad \left. > \varepsilon/2 - \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=a_m)\right\}. \end{aligned}$$

The last inequality follows from the fact that by the definition of the regular atom of (X, θ) with $g(a_m)=1 \forall m$

$$\sum_{x_j=a_m} I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj})} \leq 1 \quad \text{a. s.}$$

So for sufficiently large n , $P\left(\frac{M}{n} > \frac{\varepsilon}{2}\right) = 0$ and by Hoeffding's inequality $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(\Sigma_3 > \varepsilon) < ce^{-an}. \quad (6)$$

In the case of $B = \emptyset$, $\Sigma_4 = 0$. To consider Σ_4 we may suppose that $B \neq \emptyset$. Similarly, $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constant M such that $\sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=b_m) < \varepsilon/4$. By Borel's strong law of large numbers, $j(m) \triangleq \min\{j: X=b_m\}$ is defined with probability one. Now in the case of $X_j=b_m$, $j \neq j(m)$ we have $\theta_{nj} = \theta_{j(m)}$ and

$$\begin{aligned} P(|\Sigma_4 - P'| > \varepsilon) &\leq P\left(\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=1}^M \sum_{x_j=b_m} I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj})} - \sum_{m=1}^M \frac{g(b_m)-1}{g(b_m)} P(X=b_m)\right| > \varepsilon/2\right) \\ &\quad + P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} \sum_{x_j=b_m} 1 > \varepsilon/4\right) \\ &\leq \sum_{m=1}^M P\left(\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_{x_j=b_m} I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{j(m)})} - \frac{g(b_m)-1}{g(b_m)} P(X=b_m)\right| > \frac{\varepsilon}{4M}\right) \\ &\quad + P\left(\frac{M}{n} > \frac{\varepsilon}{4}\right) + P\left\{\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} \sum_{x_j=b_m} 1 - \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=b_m)\right| \right. \\ &\quad \left. > \frac{\varepsilon}{4} - \sum_{m=M+1}^{\infty} P(X=b_m)\right\}, \end{aligned}$$

where $P' \triangleq \sum_{m=1}^M \frac{g(b_m)-1}{g(b_m)} P(b_m)$. So for sufficiently large n , $P\left(\frac{M}{n} > \frac{\varepsilon}{4}\right) = 0$ and by

Hoeffding's inequality $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(|\Sigma_4 - P'| > \varepsilon) < ce^{-an}. \quad (7)$$

To consider Σ_5 , we write

$$X' \triangleq \begin{cases} X, & X \in H, \\ h_1, & X \in H, \end{cases} \quad \text{and} \quad X'_j \triangleq \begin{cases} X_j, & X_j \in H, \\ h_1, & X_j \in H. \end{cases}$$

Clearly, (X', θ) , (X'_1, θ_1) , \dots , (X'_n, θ_n) are iid random vectors, and there is only one atom h_1 of X' and $P(X'=h_1)=P(H)$.

$$\Sigma_5 = \frac{1}{n} \left(\sum_{x'_j \neq h_1, x_n \neq h_1} + \sum_{x'_j \neq h_1, x_n = h_1} \right) I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_n)} \triangleq \Sigma_6 + \Sigma_7. \quad (8)$$

By Lemma 1 of [4], there exists constant m independent of n such that

$$\sum_7 \leq \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\substack{\theta_j' \neq h_1, \\ \theta_{nj}' = h_1}} 1 \leq \frac{m}{n}. \quad (9)$$

To consider \sum_8 we introduce random vectors (X'', θ'') , (X_1'', θ_1'') , \dots , (X_n'', θ_n'') as follows: write $B(\rho) \triangleq \{x: \|x - h_1\| < \rho\}$. By continuity of probability $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, $\exists \rho > 0$ such that

$$P(X' \in B(\rho)) \leq P(X' \in B(2\rho)) < P(H) + \varepsilon/2. \quad (10)$$

Write $(X'', \theta'') = (X', \theta)$ when $X' \in B(\rho)$, otherwise $\theta'' = 1$ and X'' is uniformly distributed in $B(\rho/2)$ and $P(X'' \in B(\rho/2)) = P(X' \in B(\rho))$. Similarly, we can define (X_j'', θ_j'') , $j=1, \dots, n$, based on (X_j', θ_j) , $j=1, \dots, n$, such that (X'', θ'') , (X_j'', θ_j'') , $j=1, \dots, n$, are iid. Now there is no atom of X'' and $P(X'' \in B(\rho) \setminus B(\rho/2)) = 0$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} |\sum_8 - R + P'| &\leq \left| \sum_8 - \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\substack{\|x_j' - x_{nj}'\| < \rho/2; \\ x_j', x_{nj}' \in B(\rho)}} I_{(\theta_j' \neq \theta_{nj}')} \right| + \left| \frac{1}{n} \sum_j I_{(\theta_j' \neq \theta_{nj}')} - R + P' \right| \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\|x_j' - x_{nj}'\| > \rho/2} 1 + \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\substack{\|x_j' - x_{nj}'\| < \rho/2; \\ x_j', x_{nj}' \in B(\rho)}} I_{(\theta_j' \neq \theta_{nj}')} \\ &= \sum_8 + \sum_9 + \sum_{10} + \sum_{11}. \end{aligned}$$

Since $\{j \leq n: \|X_j' - X_{nj}'\| < \rho/2; X_j', X_{nj}' \in B(\rho)\} \supset \{j \leq n: \|X_j' - X_{nj}'\| < \rho/2; X_j', X_{nj}' \in B(\rho)\}$ by Lemma 1 (for $k=1$) and Hoeffding's inequality $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$\begin{aligned} P(\sum_8 < \varepsilon) &\leq P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{\|x_j' - x_{nj}'\| > \rho/2} 1 > \frac{\varepsilon}{2}\right) + P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{x_j' \in B(2\rho) \setminus \{h_1\}} 1 > \varepsilon/2\right) \\ &\leq P\left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{\|x_j' - x_{nj}'\| > \rho/2} 1 > \varepsilon/2\right) + P\left\{\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_{x_j' \in B(2\rho) \setminus \{h_1\}} 1 - P(X' \in B(2\rho) \setminus \{h_1\})\right|\right. \\ &\quad \left. > \frac{\varepsilon}{2} - P(X' \in B(2\rho) \setminus \{h_1\}) \leq ce^{-an}\right\}. \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

Write $X' \sim \mu'$, $X'' \sim \mu''$. $R'' \triangleq 1 - \sum_{i=1}^s EP^2(\theta'' = i | X'')$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} |R'' - R + P'| &= \left| 1 - \sum_{i=1}^s \left(\int_{B(\rho)} + \int_{R^d \setminus B(\rho)} \right) P^2(\theta'' = i | X'' = x) d\mu'' - R + P' \right| \\ &= \left| 1 - P(X'' \in B(\rho)) - \sum_{i=1}^s \int_{R^d \setminus B(\rho)} P^2(\theta = i | X' = x) d\mu' - R + P' \right| \\ &\leq \left| 1 - P(H) - \sum_{i=1}^s \int_{R^d \setminus H} P_i^2(x) d\mu - R + P' \right| \\ &\quad + |P(H) - P(X'' \in B(\rho))| + P(X' \in B(\rho) \setminus \{h_1\}) < \varepsilon. \end{aligned}$$

Thus by Bai's theorem $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(\sum_9 > \varepsilon) \leq P\left(\left|\frac{1}{n} \sum_j I_{(\theta_j' \neq \theta_{nj}')} - R''\right| > \varepsilon - |R'' - R + P'|\right) < ce^{-an}. \quad (13)$$

By Lemma 1 $\forall \varepsilon > 0$, \exists constants $a > 0$, $c < \infty$ independent of n such that

$$P(\sum_{10} > \varepsilon) < ce^{-an}. \quad (14)$$

Since $P(X'' \in B(\rho) \setminus B(\rho/2)) = 0$ and in the case of $X_j'', X_{nj}'' \in B(\rho/2)$, we have

$$\theta_j'' = \theta_{nj}'' = 1, \sum_{11} = 0 \text{ a. s.} \quad (15)$$

By (5)–(9) and (11)–(15), taking the largest number c and the smallest

number a , we have $P(|\hat{R}_n - R| > 10\epsilon) < ce^{-an}$. This terminates the proof of Step 1.

Step 2 (vii) \Rightarrow (i). By contradiction.

Assume that there exists an unregular atom $w_0 \in R^d$ of (X, θ) , i_1, i_2 such that $P(\theta \neq i_1 | X = w_0) > P(\theta \neq i_2 | X = w_0) > 0$ and (vii) holds. Then

$$\hat{R}_{nk} = \frac{1}{n} \left(\sum_{X_j = w_0} + \sum_{X_j \neq w_0} \right) I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj}^{(k)})} = \Sigma_{12} + \Sigma_{13}. \quad (16)$$

Let $A_l \triangleq \{(X_j, \theta_j) = (w_0, i_l), j=1, \dots, k\}, l=1, 2$. Clearly,

$$\begin{aligned} P(A_1) &= \prod_{j=1}^k P(X_j = w_0) P(\theta_j \neq i_1 | X_j = w_0) \\ &> \prod_{j=1}^k P(X_j = w_0) P(\theta_j \neq i_2 | X_j = w_0) = P(A_2) > 0. \end{aligned}$$

Let $\delta \triangleq P(X = w_0) \{P(\theta \neq i_1 | X = w_0) - P(\theta \neq i_2 | X = w_0)\} > 0$.

By (vii), there exists a constant r such that $\hat{R}_{nk} \xrightarrow{F} r$. Thus there exists a subsequence $\hat{R}_{nmk} \rightarrow r$ a. s. Since $\theta_{nj}^{(k)} = i_l$ on A_l , when $X_j = w_0, j > k$. So by Borel's strong law of large numbers the corresponding subsequence $\Sigma_{12} \rightarrow P(X = w_0) P(\theta \neq i_l | X = w_0)$ a. s. Thus $\Sigma_{13} \rightarrow r - P(X = w_0) P(\theta \neq i_l | X = w_0)$ a. s. ($l=1, 2$). (17)

Denote $B \triangleq \{x: \Delta > \|x - w_0\| > 0\}$. Clearly, $\exists \Delta > 0$ such that $P(X \in B) < \frac{\delta}{3}$. We have

$$\Sigma_{13} = \frac{1}{n} \left(\sum_{X_j \in B} + \sum_{X_j \neq w_0, X_j \in B} \right) I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj}^{(k)})} \triangleq \Sigma_{14} + \Sigma_{15}, \quad (18)$$

$$\Sigma_{14} \leq \frac{1}{n} \sum_{X_j \in B} 1 \rightarrow P(X \in B) \text{ a. s. } (n \rightarrow \infty), \quad (19)$$

$$\Sigma_{15} = \frac{1}{n} \left(\sum_{X_j \neq w_0, X_j \in B, \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \Delta} + \sum_{X_j \neq w_0, X_j \in B, \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| < \Delta} \right) I_{(\theta_j \neq \theta_{nj}^{(k)})} \triangleq \Sigma_{16} + \Sigma_{17}. \quad (20)$$

By Lemma 1 $\Sigma_{16} \leq \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| > \Delta} 1 \leq \frac{\delta}{3}$ a. s. for n sufficiently large. (21)

For $(X_j, \theta_j) = (w_0, i_l), j=1, \dots, k$, we denote $g_{ln}(X_{k+1}, \dots, X_n; \theta_{k+1}, \dots, \theta_n) \triangleq \Sigma_{17}$ ($l=1, 2$). Since $X_{nj}^{(k)} \neq w_0$ for $X_j \neq w_0, X_j \in B, \|X_j - X_{nj}^{(k)}\| < \Delta, g_{1n} = g_{2n}$. (22)

By (18)–(22) the difference of values of Σ_{13} on A_1 and A_2 is less than $\frac{2\delta}{3}$ a. s. for n sufficiently large. This contradicts (17). Thus Step 2 is proved and the proof of Theorem 1 is completed.

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