Bivariate Spline Interpolation with Optimal Approximation Order*

O. Davydov[†], G. Nürnberger and F. Zeilfelder

Abstract

Let Δ be a triangulation of some polygonal domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ and let $S_q^r(\Delta)$ denote the space of all bivariate polynomial splines of smoothness r and degree q with respect to Δ. We develop the first Hermite type interpolation scheme for $S_q^r(\Delta)$, $q \geq 3r+2$, whose approximation error is bounded above by Kh^{q+1}, where h is the maximal diameter of the triangles in Δ, and the constant K only depends on the smallest angle of the triangulation and is independent of near-degenerate edges and near-singular vertices. Moreover, the fundamental functions of our scheme are minimally supported and form a locally linearly independent basis for a superspline subspace of $S_q^r(\Delta)$. This shows that the optimal approximation order can be achieved by using minimally supported splines. Our method of proof is completely different from the quasi-interpolation techniques for the study of the approximation power of bivariate splines developed in [7, 18].

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1 Introduction

Let $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ be a polygonal domain, and let Δ denote a regular triangulation of Ω. The space of bivariate polynomial splines of degree q and smoothness r with respect to Δ is defined by

$$S_q^r(\Delta) := \{s \in C^r(\Omega) \,:\, s_{|_T} \in \Pi_q \quad \text{for all} \quad T \in \Delta\}\,, \quad 0 \le r < q\,,$$

where

$$\Pi_q := \text{span}\,\{x^i y^j \,:\, i \ge 0,\ j \ge 0,\ i+j \le q\}$$

is the space of bivariate polynomials of total degree q.

In the literature, point sets that admit unique Lagrange and Hermite interpolation by spaces $S_q^r(\Delta)$ of splines of degree q and smoothness r were constructed for crosscut partitions Δ, in particular for Δ^1 and Δ^2-partitions [1, 6, 17, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28]. Results on the approximation order of these interpolation methods were given in [6, 12, 17, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28].

In the case of an abitrary triangulation Δ, standard finite-element techniques [9] provide a tool to construct Hermite type interpolation schemes for $S_q^r(\Delta)$ with optimal approximation order $\mathcal{O}(h^{q+1})$, where h is the maximal diameter of the triangles in Δ. However, as shown in [30], this method only works if $q \ge 4r+1$.

On the other hand, the approximation power of the spline space $S_q^r(\Delta)$ for $q \ge 3r+2$ was studied in [3, 7, 8, 18]. It was shown in [7] that for a sufficiently smooth function f,

$$\text{dist}\,(f, S_q^r(\Delta)) \le K h^{q+1}, \tag{1.1}$$

where K is a constant that depends only on f, r, q and the smallest angle θ_Δ in Δ. In the earlier constructions in [3, 8] the constant K is bounded under additional assumption that the triangulation has no near-singular vertices. Another proof of (1.1) was recently suggested in [18]. If $q < 3r+2$, then the optimal approximation order fails for certain triangulations (see [4]).

The problem of constructing a Hermite interpolation operator satisfying (1.1) was already brought up in [8]. However, the question if the constant K for such an operator could be bounded independently of near-singularities remained open.

It is the purpose of this paper to develop the first Hermite type interpolation scheme for $S_q^r(\Delta)$, $q \ge 3r+2$, that possesses optimal approximation order in the sense that the corresponding constant K in (1.1) is independent of near-degenerate edges and near-singular vertices. The details of our construction are given in Section 2, whereas the main result of the paper, Theorem 3.1 about the approximation order,

as well as its proof are presented in Section 3. Finally, Section 4 is devoted to an analysis of the fundamental functions of our scheme that form a basis for a superspline subspace of $S_q^r(\Delta)$.

We emphasize that our approach is completely different from that of [7] and [18]. In each of these papers a stable local basis for a superspline subspace of $S_q^r(\Delta)$ was constructed first by using Bernstein-Bézier techniques, and then the basis functions were used to build up a quasi-interpolation operator that yielded the optimal approximation order. In contrast to this, we argue directly with nodal functionals and develop a new approach that has its roots in the idea of "weak interpolation" introduced in [21] and further developed in [25] and [12]. Furthermore, we need a new description of C^r smoothness across edges in terms of nodal functionals (see Lemma 3.2). As a result, we manage to exploit linear dependencies between directional derivatives of smooth functions to suppress the instability of the minimally supported fundamental functions in the neighborhood of a near-singular vertex, see Lemma 3.3 and the discussion at the end of Section 4. Note that in [7, 18] much more complicated basis functions with larger supports were constructed in order to achieve stability.

Among other advantages of our approach is that the estimation of the approximation error (3.2) is completely local, *i.e.*, it involves only the local Sobolev norm of f on the triangle T on which the error is measured. Moreover, the result remains valid for any nonconvex polygonal domain Ω with the constant K independent of the Lipschitz constant of the boundary of Ω.

As a by-product of our construction, we get a nodal basis for the space of supersplines

$$S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta) := \{ s \in S_q^r(\Delta) \ : \ s \in C^\rho(v) \text{ for all vertices } v \text{ of } \Delta \},$$

where $\rho = r + \left[\frac{r+1}{2}\right]$ and $q \geq 3r+2$. The basis consists of the fundamental functions $s_1, \ldots, s_n$ of our interpolation scheme. Some properties of this basis are studied in Section 4. Namely, it is shown that $\{s_1, \ldots, s_n\}$ is *locally linearly independent* and thus *least supported* [5], *i.e.*, the supports of the basis functions s_i are as small as possible, which is not the case for the basis functions constructed in [7, 18]. Moreover, we show that $\{s_1, \ldots, s_n\}$ is *stable if* Δ *does not contain near-degenerate edges.*

We note that the support of each fundamental function s_i has at most one vertex of the triangulation in its interior, similar to the minimally supported basis functions for bivariate splines of degree $q \geq 3r+2$ constructed in [8, 15, 16]. Particularly, the supports of $s_1, \ldots, s_n$ coincide with the supports of the basis splines for $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ given in [16]. However, there are important differences between our basis and the

bases in [8, 15, 16]. Since the Bernstein-Bézier minimal determining sets used in [15, 16] cannot be directly transformed into a Hermite interpolation scheme, it does not seem possible to employ those bases in a proof of optimal approximation order in the presence of near-singularities. The main difference between our interpolation operator and the one presented in [8] is that we do not avoid using normal derivatives to the edges as nodal functionals. Therefore, we assign the nodal functionals to every vertex, edge and triangle in a more symmetric fashion.

2 Nodal Functionals

Given a regular triangulation Δ, we denote by N the number of triangles, by V the number of vertices, by V_I and V_B the number of interior and boundary vertices respectively, $V_I + V_B = V$, by E the number of edges, and by E_I and E_B the number of interior and boundary edges respectively, $E_I + E_B = E$. It is well known that

$$\begin{aligned} E_B &= V_B\,, \\ E_I &= 3V_I + V_B - 3\,, \\ N &= 2V_I + V_B - 2\,. \end{aligned} \tag{2.1}$$

In [16] it was shown that

$$\begin{aligned} \dim S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta) &= \tbinom{\rho+2}{2} V + \left(\tbinom{q-3r-1}{2} - 3\tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2} \right) N \\ &+ \frac{1}{2}(r+1)(2q-4\rho+r-2)E + \tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2}\sigma\,, \end{aligned} \tag{2.2}$$

with σ being the number of singular vertices of Δ, where a *singular vertex* v is a vertex which is formed by two lines which cross at v. It is easy to see that a vertex v is singular if and only if at least three edges are degenerate at v, where the degeneracy of an edge is defined as follows.

Definition 2.1 Suppose e_1, e_2, e_3 are three consecutive edges attached to a vertex v. The edge e_2 is said to be *degenerate* at v whenever the edges e_1 and e_3 are collinear. An edge e attached to v is said to be *nondegenerate* at v if it is either a boundary edge or an interior edge which fails to be degenerate.

In the finite element method piecewise polynomial trial functions are usually determined by their values and derivatives at some points, so-called nodal values (see,

e.g., [29, p. 101]). In [19, 11] and [26] this technique was applied to the study of spline spaces $S_q^1(\Delta)$, $q \geq 5$, and supersplines $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ with $\rho \geq 2r$ and $q \geq 2\rho + 1$, respectively.

We set

$$C^\mu(\Delta) := \{f \in C(\Omega) : \ f_{|_T} \in C^\mu(T) \text{ for all } T \in \Delta\}\,, \quad \mu = 0, 1, \ldots\,,$$

and denote by D_τ the derivative operator in the direction of a unit vector $\tau = (\tau_x, \tau_y)$ in the plane, so that

$$D_\tau f := \tau_x D_x f + \tau_y D_y f\,, \quad D_x f := \frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\,,\ D_y f := \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\,.$$

Definition 2.2 Given $f \in C^{\alpha+\beta}(\Delta)$, $\alpha, \beta \geq 0$, any number

$$\nu f = D_{\tau_1}^\alpha D_{\tau_2}^\beta (f_{|_T})(z)\,, \tag{2.3}$$

where $T \in \Delta$, $z \in T$, and τ_1, τ_2 are some unit vectors in the plane, is said to be a *nodal value* of f, and the linear functional $\nu : C^{\alpha+\beta}(\Delta) \to \mathbb{R}$ defined by (2.3) is a *nodal functional*, with $d(\nu) := \alpha + \beta$ being the *degree* of ν.

For some special choices of z, τ_1, τ_2 it is convenient to use the following simplified notation which goes back to [19]. 1) If v is a vertex of Δ and e is an edge attached to v, we set

$$D_e^\alpha f(v) := D_\tau^\alpha (f_{|_T})(v)\,, \quad \alpha \geq 1\,,$$

where τ is the unit vector in the direction of e away from v, and $T \in \Delta$ is one of the triangles with edge e. The notation is correct since in the case when there are two different triangles T_1, T_2 attached to e, $f_{|_{T_1}}$ and $f_{|_{T_2}}$ coincide along e, and hence

$$D_\tau^\alpha (f_{|_{T_1}})(v) = D_\tau^\alpha (f_{|_{T_2}})(v)\,.$$

2) If v is a vertex of Δ and e_1, e_2 are two consecutive edges attached to v, we set

$$D_{e_1}^\alpha D_{e_2}^\beta f(v) := D_{\tau_1}^\alpha D_{\tau_2}^\beta (f_{|_T})(v)\,, \quad \alpha, \beta \geq 1\,,$$

where $T \in \Delta$ is the triangle with vertex v and egdes e_1, e_2, and τ_i is the unit vector in the e_i direction away from v. 3) For every edge e of the triangulation Δ we choose a unit vector $\tau^\perp$ (one of two possible) orthogonal to e and set

$$D_{e^\perp}^\alpha f(z) := D_{\tau^\perp}^\alpha f(z)\,, \quad z \in e\,, \quad \alpha \geq 1\,,$$

provided $f \in C^\alpha(z)$.

We now associate with the superspline space $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$, with $q \geq 3r+2$ and

$$\rho = r + \left[\frac{r+1}{2}\right], \tag{2.4}$$

a set $\mathcal{N}$ of nodal functionals, as follows.

For every vertex v of Δ, let $T_v^1, \ldots, T_v^{n(v)}$ be all triangles attached to v and numbered counterclockwise (starting from a boundary triangle if v is a boundary vertex). Denote by e_i the common edge of T_v^{i-1} and T_v^i, $i = 2, \ldots, n(v)$. If v is an interior vertex, $e_1 = e_{n(v)+1}$ denote the common edge of T_v^1 and $T_v^{n(v)}$. Otherwise, e_1 and $e_{n(v)+1}$ are the boundary edges (attached to v) of T_v^1 and $T_v^{n(v)}$ respectively.

We define $\mathcal{N}(v)$ to be the set of nodal functionals assigning to every function $f \in C^\rho(v) \cap C^{2r}(\Delta)$ the following nodal values:

(v1) $D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha, \beta) \in A_1$, where

$$A_1 := \{(\alpha, \beta) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \,:\, \alpha \geq 0,\ \ \beta \geq 0,\ \ \alpha + \beta \leq \rho\}\,,$$

(v2) $D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha, \beta) \in A_2$, where

$$A_2 := \{(\alpha, \beta) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \,:\, \alpha \leq r,\ \ \beta \leq r,\ \ \alpha + \beta \geq \rho + 1\}\,,$$

and for each $i \in \{1, \ldots, n(v)\}$ such that e_i is nondegenerate at v,

(v3) $D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha, \beta) \in A_3$, where

$$A_3 := \{(\alpha, \beta) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \,:\, \alpha \geq r+1,\ \ 2\alpha + \beta \leq 3r+1,\ \ \alpha + \beta \geq \rho + 1\}\,,$$

and for each $i \in \{1, \ldots, n(v)\}$ such that e_i is degenerate at v,

(v4) $D_{e_1}^\alpha D_{e_2}^\beta f(v)$ and $D_{e_{n(v)+1}}^\alpha D_{e_{n(v)}}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha, \beta) \in A_3$ if v is a boundary vertex, and

(v5) $D_{e_1}^\alpha D_{e_2}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha, \beta) \in A_2$ if v is a singular vertex.

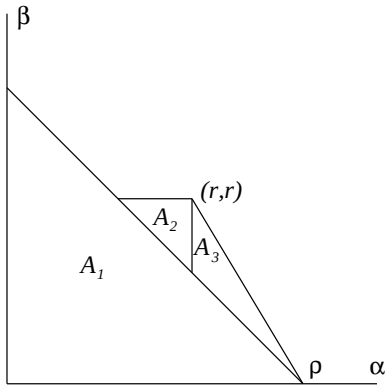

Fig. 2.1. The sets A_1, A_2 and A_3.

On every edge e of Δ, with vertices v_1 and v_2, we take points

$$z_e^{\mu,i} := v_1 + \tfrac{i}{\kappa_\mu+1}(v_2 - v_1)\,, \quad i = 1, \ldots, \kappa_\mu\,, \quad \mu = 0, \ldots, r\,, \tag{2.5}$$

where

$$\kappa_\mu := q - 3r - 1 - (r-\mu) \bmod 2 = q - 2r - 1 - \mu - 2\left[\tfrac{r+1-\mu}{2}\right]\,, \tag{2.6}$$

and define $\mathcal{N}(e)$ to be the set of nodal functionals assigning to every function $f \in C^r(\Omega)$ the following nodal values:

(e) $D^\mu_{e^\perp} f(z_e^{\mu,1}), \ldots, D^\mu_{e^\perp} f(z_e^{\mu,\kappa_\mu})$ for all $\mu = 0, \ldots, r$.

In every triangle $T \in \Delta$, with vertices v_1, v_2 and v_3, we take uniformly spaced points

$$z_T^{i,j,k} := (iv_1 + jv_2 + kv_3)/q\,, \quad i + j + k = q\,, \tag{2.7}$$

and define $\mathcal{N}(T)$ to be the set of nodal functionals assigning to every function $f \in C(\Omega)$ the following nodal values:

(t) $f(z_T^{i,j,k})$ for all i, j, k such that $i + j + k = q$ and $r < i, j, k < q - 2r$.

We set

$$\mathcal{N} := \bigcup_v \mathcal{N}(v) \cup \bigcup_e \mathcal{N}(e) \cup \bigcup_T \mathcal{N}(T)\,.$$

Lemma 2.3 *We have*

$$\operatorname{card}\mathcal{N} = \dim S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)\,. \tag{2.8}$$

Proof. It is easy to see that

$$\begin{aligned} &\operatorname{card} A_1 = \tbinom{\rho+2}{2}\,, \quad \operatorname{card} A_2 = \operatorname{card} A_3 = \tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2}, \\ &\operatorname{card}\mathcal{N}(e) = (r+1)(q-3r-1) - \left[\tfrac{r+1}{2}\right]\,, \quad \operatorname{card}\mathcal{N}(T) = \tbinom{q-3r-1}{2}\,. \end{aligned} \tag{2.9}$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \operatorname{card}\mathcal{N} &= \tbinom{\rho+2}{2}V + \left(\tbinom{q-3r-1}{2} + 3\tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2}\right) N + 2\tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2}V_B \\ &+ \left((r+1)(q-3r-1) + r - \rho\right) E + \tbinom{2r-\rho+1}{2}\sigma\,. \end{aligned}$$

The lemma now follows from (2.1), (2.2) and a simple computation. ■

3 Hermite Type Interpolation

Theorem 3.1 *Let $r \geq 1$, $q \geq 3r+2$ and $\rho = r + \left[\frac{r+1}{2}\right]$. Given $f \in C^{2r}(\Omega)$, there exists a unique spline $s_f \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ satisfying the following Hermite type interpolation conditions*

$$\nu s_f = \nu f \quad \textit{for all} \quad \nu \in \mathcal{N}\,, \tag{3.1}$$

where $\mathcal{N}$ is defined above. Moreover, if $f \in C^m(\Omega)$ ($m \in \{2r, \ldots, q+1\}$) and $T \in \Delta$, then

$$\|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (f - s_f)\|_{L_\infty(T)} \leq K\, h_T^{m-\alpha-\beta} \max_{0\leq\mu\leq m} \|D_x^\mu D_y^{m-\mu} f\|_{C(T)}\,, \tag{3.2}$$

for all $\alpha, \beta \geq 0$, $\alpha+\beta \leq m$, where h_T is the diameter of T, and K is a constant which depends only on r, q and the smallest angle θ_Δ in Δ.

We will prove Theorem 3.1 at the end of this section, after establishing several lemmas.

In the first two lemmas we consider a simple triangulation consisting of two triangles and establish some relations between nodal values of two polynomials defined on each triangle and joined together with C^r smoothness across a common edge of the triangles.

Let T_1 and T_2 be two triangles sharing a common edge $e = [v_1, v_2]$, and let $e_i \neq e$ be the other edge of T_i with endpoint v_1, $i = 1, 2$. Denote by τ, τ_1, τ_2 the unit

vectors applied at v_1 in the direction of edges e, e_1, e_2 respectively, and by θ_i the angle between τ and τ_i, $i = 1, 2$. (See Fig. 3.1.)

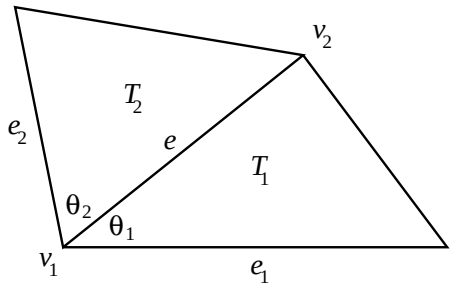

Fig. 3.1.

Furthermore, let s be a piecewise polynomial function on $T_1 \cup T_2$ such that

$$s_{|T_i} = p_i \in \Pi_q\,, \quad i = 1, 2\,.$$

Our first lemma characterizes C^r smoothness of s across e in terms of its nodal values. (See Lemma 2 in [8] for a similar characterization using barycentric coordinates.)

Lemma 3.2 *Let $r \le q$.*

1) If $\theta_1 + \theta_2 \neq \pi$, then $s \in C^r(T_1 \cup T_2)$ if and only if

$$\sin^\alpha\theta_1\, D^\alpha_{\tau_2} D^{\gamma-\alpha}_\tau p_2(v_1) = \sum_{\beta=0}^{\alpha} (-1)^\beta \binom{\alpha}{\beta} \sin^{\alpha-\beta}(\theta_1+\theta_2) \sin^\beta\theta_2\, D^\beta_{\tau_1} D^{\gamma-\beta}_\tau p_1(v_1), \tag{3.3}$$

for all $\alpha = 0, \ldots, r$ and $\gamma = \alpha, \ldots, q$.

2) If $\theta_1 + \theta_2 = \pi$, then $s \in C^r(T_1 \cup T_2)$ if and only if

$$D^\alpha_{\tau_2} D^{\gamma-\alpha}_\tau p_2(v_1) = (-1)^\alpha D^\alpha_{\tau_1} D^{\gamma-\alpha}_\tau p_1(v_1), \qquad \alpha = 0, \ldots, r, \quad \gamma = \alpha, \ldots, q\,. \tag{3.4}$$

Proof. Evidently, $s \in C^r(T_1 \cup T_2)$ if and only if for some unit vector τ' noncollinear with τ,

$$D^\mu_\tau D^\alpha_{\tau'} p_2(z) = D^\mu_\tau D^\alpha_{\tau'} p_1(z), \quad \text{for all } \alpha, \mu \ge 0,\ \alpha + \mu \le r, \text{ and all } z \in e.$$

Since $(D^\alpha_{\tau'} p_i)_{|_e}$, $i = 1, 2$, is a univariate polynomial of degree at most $q - \alpha$, this is equivalent to the condition

$$D^{\gamma-\alpha}_{\tau} D^\alpha_{\tau'} p_2(v_1) = D^{\gamma-\alpha}_{\tau} D^\alpha_{\tau'} p_1(v_1), \qquad \alpha = 0, \ldots, r, \quad \gamma = \alpha, \ldots, q.$$

We now choose $\tau' = \tau_2$. If $\theta_1 + \theta_2 = \pi$, then $\tau_1 = -\tau_2$, and we immediately get (3.4). Otherwise, if $\theta_1 + \theta_2 \neq \pi$, then the vectors τ, τ_1 and τ_2 stay in the relation

$$\tau \sin(\theta_1 + \theta_2) = \tau_1 \sin\theta_2 + \tau_2 \sin\theta_1 \,,$$

which implies

$$\sin^\alpha\theta_1 \, D^\alpha_{\tau_2} D^{\gamma-\alpha}_{\tau} p_1(v_1) = \sum_{\beta=0}^{\alpha} (-1)^\beta \tbinom{\alpha}{\beta} \sin^{\alpha-\beta}(\theta_1 + \theta_2) \sin^\beta\theta_2 \, D^\beta_{\tau_1} D^{\gamma-\beta}_{\tau} p_1(v_1),$$

and the first statement of the lemma follows. ■

Thus, the nodal values of $s \in C^r(T_1 \cup T_2)$ stay in relations (3.3). The same relations hold for every sufficiently smooth function f. By solving a linear system we can estimate some of the nodal values of $f - s$ at v_1 involved in (3.3) in terms of the others.

Lemma 3.3 *Suppose that s, as defined above, is in $C^r(T_1 \cup T_2)$, and let $f \in C^k(T_1 \cup T_2)$ for some $k \in \{\rho + 1, \ldots, 2r\}$. If $\theta_1 + \theta_2 \neq \pi$, then for every $\beta = 2k - 3r - 1, \ldots, k - r - 1$,*

$$\begin{aligned} |D^\beta_{\tau_1} D^{k-\beta}_{\tau} (f - p_1)(v_1)| \;\leq\; & K \Bigg(\max_{0 \leq \alpha \leq 2k-3r-2} |D^\alpha_{\tau_1} D^{k-\alpha}_{\tau} (f - p_1)(v_1)| \\ & + \; |\sin^{-r}(\theta_1 + \theta_2)| \max_{\substack{k-r \leq \alpha \leq r \\ i=1,2}} |D^\alpha_{\tau_i} D^{k-\alpha}_{\tau} (f - p_i)(v_1)| \Bigg) \,, \end{aligned} \tag{3.5}$$

where K depends only on r and θ_2.

Proof. Since $f \in C^k(v_1)$, we have

$$\sin^\alpha\theta_1 \, D^\alpha_{\tau_2} D^{k-\alpha}_{\tau} f(v_1) = \sum_{\beta=0}^{\alpha} (-1)^\beta \tbinom{\alpha}{\beta} \sin^{\alpha-\beta}(\theta_1 + \theta_2) \sin^\beta\theta_2 \, D^\beta_{\tau_1} D^{k-\beta}_{\tau} f(v_1)$$

for all $\alpha = 0, \dots, k$. This, together with (3.3), imply that

$$a_{2,\alpha} = \sum_{\beta=0}^{\alpha} (-1)^{\beta} \binom{\alpha}{\beta} a_{1,\beta}\,, \quad \alpha = 2k - 3r - 1, \dots, r\,, \tag{3.6}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} a_{1,\beta} &:= \sin^{-\beta}(\theta_1 + \theta_2) \sin^{\beta}\theta_2 \, D_{\tau_1}^{\beta} D_{\tau}^{k-\beta}(f - p_1)(v_1)\,, \\ a_{2,\beta} &:= \sin^{-\beta}(\theta_1 + \theta_2) \sin^{\beta}\theta_1 \, D_{\tau_2}^{\beta} D_{\tau}^{k-\beta}(f - p_2)(v_1)\,. \end{aligned}$$

Consider (3.6) as a system

$$Ax = b$$

of $4r - 2k + 2$ linear equations in $4r - 2k + 2$ unknowns

$$a_{i,\beta}\,, \quad \beta = 2k - 3r - 1, \dots, k - r - 1\,, \quad i = 1, 2\,.$$

Thus, we have

$$x = (a_{1,2k-3r-1}, \dots, a_{1,k-r-1}, a_{2,2k-3r-1}, \dots, a_{2,k-r-1})^t,$$

b is a $(4r - 2k + 2)$-vector whose components are some linear combinations of

$$\begin{aligned} &a_{1,\beta}\,, \quad \beta = 0, \dots, 2k - 3r - 2, \quad \text{and} \\ &a_{i,\beta}\,, \quad \beta = k - r, \dots, r, \quad i = 1, 2, \end{aligned}$$

and

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} B & -I \\ C & O \end{pmatrix},$$

where

$$C = \left((-1)^{r+j} \binom{n+i}{n-m+j} \right)_{i,j=1}^{m}, \quad \text{with } \; n := k - r - 1, \; m := 2r - k + 1,$$

I is an $m \times m$ identity matrix, O is an $m \times m$ zero matrix, and B is a certain $m \times m$ matrix. Since the determinant of C is a nonzero constant multiple of

$$\det \left(\frac{1}{(m+i-j)!} \right)_{i,j=1}^{m} \neq 0,$$

A is nonsingular. Therefore,

$$\|x\|_\infty \le \|A^{-1}\|_\infty \|b\|_\infty,$$

where $\|A^{-1}\|_\infty$ is bounded by a constant dependent only on r. Particularly, for all $\beta = 2k-3r-1, \ldots, k-r-1$,

$$|a_{1,\beta}| \le K_1 \left(\max_{0\le\alpha\le 2k-3r-2} |a_{1,\alpha}| + \max_{k-r\le\alpha\le r} |a_{1,\alpha}| + \max_{k-r\le\alpha\le r} |a_{2,\alpha}| \right),$$

where K_1 depends only on r.

Recalling the definition of $a_{i,\beta}$, $i = 1, 2$, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} |D^\beta_{\tau_1} D^{k-\beta}_\tau (f-p_1)(v_1)| &= |a_{1,\beta} \sin^\beta(\theta_1+\theta_2) \sin^{-\beta}\theta_2| \\ \le K_1 \Bigg(&\max_{0\le\alpha\le 2k-3r-2} |\sin^{\beta-\alpha}(\theta_1+\theta_2) \sin^{\alpha-\beta}\theta_2| |D^\alpha_{\tau_1} D^{k-\alpha}_\tau (f-p_1)(v_1)| \\ &+ \max_{k-r\le\alpha\le r} |\sin^{\beta-\alpha}(\theta_1+\theta_2) \sin^{\alpha-\beta}\theta_2| |D^\alpha_{\tau_1} D^{k-\alpha}_\tau (f-p_1)(v_1)| \\ &+ \max_{k-r\le\alpha\le r} |\sin^{\beta-\alpha}(\theta_1+\theta_2) \sin^{\alpha}\theta_1 \sin^{-\beta}\theta_2| |D^\alpha_{\tau_2} D^{k-\alpha}_\tau (f-p_2)(v_1)| \Bigg), \end{aligned}$$

and (3.5) follows. ■

We also need the following univariate "weak interpolation" lemma (compare [21, Remark 5ii] and [12, Lemma 4]).

Lemma 3.4 *Let $e \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ be an interval with endpoints v_1, v_2, and let $\mu \in \{0, \ldots, r\}$ and $m \in \{r + \left[\frac{r+1-\mu}{2}\right], \ldots, q+1-\mu\}$. Then for any $f \in C^m(e)$, any $p \in \Pi_{q-\mu}$ and every $\gamma = 0, \ldots, m$,*

$$\begin{aligned} \|D^\gamma_\tau (f-p)\|_{C(e)} \;\le\; & K h^{-\gamma} \Bigg(h^m \|D^m_\tau f\|_{C(e)} + \max_{1\le i\le\kappa_\mu} |(f-p)(z^{\mu,i}_e)| \\ &+ \max_{\substack{0\le\alpha\le r+\left[\frac{r+1-\mu}{2}\right] \\ i=1,2}} h^\alpha |D^\alpha_\tau (f-p)(v_i)| \Bigg), \end{aligned} \tag{3.7}$$

where h is the length of e, τ denotes the unit vector in the direction of e, $z^{\mu,i}_e$ and κ_μ are defined in (2.5) and (2.6), respectively, and K is a constant which depends only on q.

Proof. It is sufficient to consider the case $e = [0,h]$, *i.e.*, $v_1 = (0,0)$, $v_2 = (0,h)$. Then $\tau = (1,0)$, $D_\tau = D_x$, $z_e^{\mu,i} = (\frac{ih}{\kappa_\mu+1}, 0)$, $i = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu$.

Since $f \in C^m[0,h]$, we have

$$\|D_x^\gamma(f-\tilde{p})\|_{C[0,h]} \le \tfrac{h^{m-\gamma}}{(m-\gamma)!}\|D_x^m f\|_{C[0,h]}\,, \quad \gamma = 0,\ldots,m\,, \tag{3.8}$$

where $\tilde{p}$ is the (univariate) Taylor polynomial,

$$\tilde{p}(x) := \sum_{\nu=0}^{m-1} \tfrac{D_x^\nu f(0)}{\nu!} x^\nu\,.$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}\|D_x^\gamma(f-p)\|_{C[0,h]} &\le \|D_x^\gamma(f-\tilde{p})\|_{C[0,h]} + \|D_x^\gamma(\tilde{p}-p)\|_{C[0,h]}\\ &\le h^{m-\gamma}\|D_x^m f\|_{C[0,h]} + \|D_x^\gamma(\tilde{p}-p)\|_{C[0,h]},\end{aligned}$$

and we only need to estimate $\|D_x^\gamma(\tilde{p}-p)\|_{C[0,h]}$.

Let

$$\lambda_\mu := r + \left[\tfrac{r+1-\mu}{2}\right].$$

Since $\kappa_\mu + 2(\lambda_\mu+1) = q-\mu+1$, the following Hermite interpolation problem

$$g(z_e^{\mu,i}) = a_i, \quad i = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu, \quad D_x^\alpha g(v_j) = a_{j,\alpha}, \quad \alpha = 0,\ldots,\lambda_\mu,\ \ j = 1,2,$$

has a unique solution g among univariate polynomials of degree at most $q-\mu$, for any given data a_i, $i = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu$, and $a_{j,\alpha}$, $\alpha = 0,\ldots,\lambda_\mu$, $j = 1,2$. Then

$$(\tilde{p}-p)(t) = \sum_{i=1}^{\kappa_\mu}(\tilde{p}-p)(z_e^{\mu,i})L_{i,h}(t) + \sum_{j=1,2}\sum_{\alpha=0}^{\lambda_\mu} D_x^\alpha(\tilde{p}-p)(v_j)L_{j,\alpha,h}(t), \quad t \in [0,h],$$

where $L_{i,h}$, $i = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu$, and $L_{j,\alpha,h}$, $\alpha = 0,\ldots,\lambda_\mu$, $j = 1,2$, denote the fundamental polynomials of the above interpolation problem, *i.e.*, they are univariate polynomials of degree at most $q-\mu$, uniquely determined by the conditions

$$\begin{aligned}L_{i,h}(\tfrac{jh}{\kappa_\mu+1}) &= \delta_{i,j}, \quad i,j = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu,\\ D_x^\alpha L_{i,h}(0) = D_x^\alpha L_{i,h}(h) &= 0, \quad \alpha = 0,\ldots,\lambda_\mu, \quad i = 1,\ldots,\kappa_\mu,\end{aligned}$$

and

$$
\begin{aligned}
&L_{i,\alpha,h}(\tfrac{jh}{\kappa_\mu+1}) = 0, \quad j = 1,\dots,\kappa_\mu,\ \ \alpha = 0,\dots,\lambda_\mu,\ \ i = 1,2,\\
&D_x^\nu L_{1,\alpha,h}(0) = D_x^\nu L_{2,\alpha,h}(h) = \delta_{\alpha,\nu}, \quad \alpha,\nu = 0,\dots,\lambda_\mu,\\
&D_x^\nu L_{1,\alpha,h}(h) = D_x^\nu L_{2,\alpha,h}(0) = 0, \quad \alpha,\nu = 0,\dots,\lambda_\mu,
\end{aligned}
$$

respectively. By a uniqueness argument, it is easy to check that

$$
\begin{aligned}
D_x^\gamma L_{i,h}(t) &= h^{-\gamma} D_x^\gamma L_{i,1}(\tfrac{t}{h}), \quad t \in [0,h],\\
D_x^\gamma L_{j,\alpha,h}(t) &= h^{\alpha-\gamma} D_x^\gamma L_{j,\alpha,1}(\tfrac{t}{h}), \quad t \in [0,h],
\end{aligned}
$$

and, consequently,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|D_x^\gamma L_{i,h}\|_{C[0,h]} &= h^{-\gamma}\|D_x^\gamma L_{i,1}\|_{C[0,1]},\\
\|D_x^\gamma L_{j,\alpha,h}\|_{C[0,h]} &= h^{\alpha-\gamma}\|D_x^\gamma L_{j,\alpha,1}\|_{C[0,1]}.
\end{aligned}
$$

Therefore, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|D_x^\gamma(\tilde{p}-p)\|_{C[0,h]} &\le \sum_{i=1}^{\kappa_\mu} |(\tilde{p}-p)(z_e^{\mu,i})|\, h^{-\gamma}\|L_{i,1}\|_{C[0,1]}\\
&+ \sum_{j=1,2}\sum_{\alpha=0}^{\lambda_\mu} |D_x^\alpha(\tilde{p}-p)(v_j)|\, h^{\alpha-\gamma}\|L_{j,\alpha,1}\|_{C[0,1]},
\end{aligned}
$$

Since $\tilde{p}-p = (\tilde{p}-f)+(f-p)$, (3.8) implies

$$
\begin{aligned}
|(\tilde{p}-p)(z_e^{\mu,i})| &\le h^m\|D_x^m f\|_{C[0,h]} + |(f-p)(z_e^{\mu,i})|,\\
|D_x^\alpha(\tilde{p}-p)(v_j)| &\le h^{m-\alpha}\|D_x^m f\|_{C[0,h]} + |D_x^\alpha(f-p)(v_j)|,
\end{aligned}
$$

and the lemma follows because $\|L_{i,1}\|_{C[0,1]}$ and $\|L_{j,\alpha,1}\|_{C[0,1]}$ are bounded by a constant dependent only on q. ■

Since our interpolation scheme is based on nodal values involving partial derivatives in various directions, we need a tool to recast the (weak) interpolation conditions in such a form that their interaction becomes tractable. As a "common unit" we will use derivatives of the type $D_e^\gamma D_{e^\perp}^\mu(f-s)$. The next two lemmas provide estimations of these derivatives in terms of nodal values of our scheme.

Consider first a single triangle $T_1 \in \Delta$, and let e be one of its edges, with vertices v_1 and v_2. (Note that e may be a boundary edge of Δ.) Denote by $e_{1,1}$ and $e_{1,2}$ two other edges of T_1, attached to v_1 and v_2, respectively, and by $\theta_{1,i}$ the angle between e and $e_{1,i}$, $i = 1, 2$. (See Fig. 3.2.)

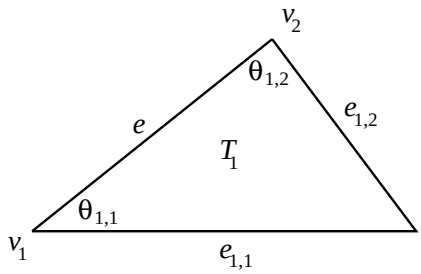

Fig. 3.2.

Lemma 3.5 *Let $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ and $f \in C^m(\Omega)$ ($m \in \{2r, \ldots, q+1\}$) be given. Then for all $\mu = 0, \ldots, r$ and $\gamma = 0, \ldots, m - \mu$,*

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|D_e^\gamma D_{e^\perp}^\mu (f-s)\|_{C(e)} \;\le\; & K h^{-\gamma-\mu} \Bigg(h^m \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu} \|D_e^{m-\mu'} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'} f\|_{C(e)} \\
& + \max_{\substack{0\le\mu'\le\mu \\ 0\le i\le\kappa_{\mu'}}} h^{\mu'} |D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'} (f-s)(z_e^{\mu',i})| \\
& + \max_{\substack{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_1\cup A_2\cup A_3 \\ \beta\le\mu,\ i=1,2}} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^\alpha D_{e_{1,i}}^\beta (f-s)(v_i)| \Bigg),
\end{aligned} \tag{3.9}
$$

where h is the length of e, the sets A_1–A_3 are defined above, and K depends only on q and $\min\{\theta_{1,1}, \theta_{1,2}\}$.

Proof. Since

$$
(\alpha, \mu) \in A_1 \cup A_2 \cup A_3 \Longleftrightarrow 0 \le \alpha \le r + \left[\tfrac{r+1-\mu}{2}\right], \quad \mu = 0, \ldots, r,
$$

Lemma 3.4 shows that there exists a constant K_1 dependent only on q, such that

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|D_e^\gamma (f-s)\|_{C(e)} \;\le\; & K_1 h^{-\gamma} \Bigg(h^m \|D_e^m f\|_{C(e)} + \max_{0\le i\le\kappa_\mu} |(f-s)(z_e^{0,i})| \\
& + \max_{\substack{(\alpha,0)\in A_1\cup A_2\cup A_3 \\ i=1,2}} h^\alpha |D_e^\alpha (f-s)(v_i)| \Bigg), \quad \gamma = 0, \ldots, m,
\end{aligned}
$$

which proves (3.9) for $\mu = 0$. Proceeding by induction on μ, we suppose that (3.9) holds for $0, \dots, \mu-1$. Again by Lemma 3.4, applied to $D^{\mu}_{e^\perp} f \in C^{m-\mu}(e)$ and $p = D^{\mu}_{e^\perp} s$, we get for all $\gamma = 0, \dots, m-\mu$,

$$\begin{aligned} \|D^{\gamma}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e^\perp}(f-s)\|_{C(e)} \;\le\; & K_1 h^{-\gamma} \Bigg(h^{m-\mu} \|D^{m-\mu}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e^\perp} f\|_{C(e)} + \max_{0\le i\le \kappa_\mu} |D^{\mu}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(z^{\mu,i}_e)| \\ & + \max_{\substack{(\alpha,\mu)\in A_1\cup A_2\cup A_3 \\ i=1,2}} h^{\alpha} |D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i)| \Bigg). \end{aligned}$$

Thus, we need to estimate $D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i)$ in terms of $D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\beta}_{e_{1,i}}(f-s)(v_i)$ with $\beta \le \mu$. To this end, we use the relation

$$\tau_{1,i} = \pm\tau \cos\theta_{1,i} \pm \tau^\perp \sin\theta_{1,i}\,, \quad i = 1, 2\,,$$

where $\tau_{1,i}$, τ and $\tau^\perp$ are the unit vectors in the directions of $e_{1,i}$, e and $e^\perp$ respectively, so that

$$D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e_{1,i}}(f-s)(v_i) = \sum_{\mu'=0}^{\mu} \pm\tbinom{\mu}{\mu'} \cos^{\mu-\mu'}\theta_{1,i} \sin^{\mu'}\theta_{1,i} D^{\alpha+\mu-\mu'}_{e} D^{\mu'}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i), \tag{3.10}$$

and hence,

$$\begin{aligned} |D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i)| \;\le\; & \left| D^{\alpha}_{e} D^{\mu}_{e_{1,i}}(f-s)(v_i) \right| \\ & + K_2 \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu-1} \left| D^{\alpha+\mu-\mu'}_{e} D^{\mu'}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i) \right|, \quad i = 1, 2, \end{aligned}$$

where K_2 depends only on μ and $\min\{\theta_{1,1}, \theta_{1,2}\}$. Furthermore, by the induction hypothesis,

$$\begin{aligned} \left| D^{\alpha+\mu-\mu'}_{e} D^{\mu'}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(v_i) \right| \;\le\; & K h^{-\alpha-\mu} \Bigg(h^{m} \max_{0\le\mu''\le\mu'} \|D^{m-\mu''}_{e} D^{\mu''}_{e^\perp} f\|_{C(e)} \\ & + \max_{\substack{0\le\mu''\le\mu' \\ 0\le i\le\kappa_{\mu''}}} h^{\mu''} |D^{\mu''}_{e^\perp}(f-s)(z^{\mu'',i}_e)| \\ & + \max_{\substack{(\alpha',\beta)\in A_1\cup A_2\cup A_3 \\ \beta\le\mu',\ i=1,2}} h^{\alpha'+\beta} |D^{\alpha'}_{e} D^{\beta}_{e_{1,i}}(f-s)(v_i)| \Bigg), \end{aligned}$$

and (3.9) follows. ■

Under the notations of Lemma 3.5, suppose that e is an interior edge of Δ and denote by T_2 the triangle in Δ that share e with T_1. Let $e_{2,1}$ and $e_{2,2}$ be two other edges of T_2, attached to v_1 and v_2, respectively, and let $\theta_{2,i}$ be the angle between e and $e_{2,i}$, $i = 1, 2$. (See Fig. 3.3.)

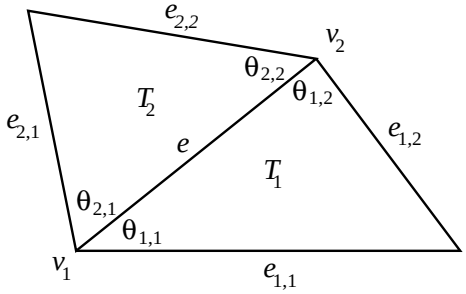

Fig. 3.3.

Furthermore, let h denote the length of e.

Lemma 3.6 *Let $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ and $f \in C^m(\Omega)$ ($m \in \{2r, \dots, q+1\}$) be given.*
1) If $\theta_{1,2} + \theta_{2,2} \neq \pi$, then for all $\mu = 0, \dots, r$ and $\gamma = 0, \dots, m - \mu$,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|D_e^\gamma D_{e^\perp}^\mu (f-s)\|_{C(e)} \le K h^{-\gamma-\mu} \Bigg(& h^m \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu} \|D_e^{m-\mu'} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'} f\|_{C(e)} \\
& + \max_{\substack{0\le\mu'\le\mu \\ 0\le i\le\kappa_{\mu'}}} h^{\mu'} |D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'}(f-s)(z_e^{\mu',i})| \; + \max_{\substack{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_1\cup A_2\cup A_3 \\ \beta\le\mu}} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^\alpha D_{e_{1,1}}^\beta (f-s)(v_1)| \\
& + \max_{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_1,\ \beta\le\mu} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^\alpha D_{e_{1,2}}^\beta (f-s)(v_2)| \\
& + |\sin^{-r}(\theta_{1,2}+\theta_{2,2})| \max_{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2,\ i=1,2} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^\alpha D_{e_{i,2}}^\beta (f-s)(v_2)| \Bigg),
\end{aligned}
\tag{3.11}
$$

where K depends only on q and $\min\{\theta_{1,1}, \theta_{1,2}, \theta_{2,2}\}$.
2) If both $\theta_{1,1} + \theta_{2,1} \neq \pi$ and $\theta_{1,2} + \theta_{2,2} \neq \pi$, then for all $\mu = 0, \dots, r$ and $\gamma = 0, \dots, m - \mu$,

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\|D_e^{\gamma} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu}(f-s)\|_{C(e)} \le K h^{-\gamma-\mu} \Bigg(h^m \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu} \|D_e^{m-\mu'} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'} f\|_{C(e)} \\
&+ \max_{\substack{0\le\mu'\le\mu \\ 0\le i\le\kappa_{\mu'}}} h^{\mu'} |D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'}(f-s)(z_e^{\mu',i})| \; + \max_{\substack{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_1, \\ j=1,2}} {}_{\beta\le\mu} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{1,j}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_j)| \\
&+ \max_{j=1,2} |\sin^{-r}(\theta_{1,j}+\theta_{2,j})| \max_{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2,\ i=1,2} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{i,j}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_j)| \Bigg),
\end{aligned} \tag{3.12}
$$

where K depends only on q and $\min\{\theta_{1,1},\theta_{1,2},\theta_{2,1},\theta_{2,2}\}$.

Proof. 1) The essential difference between (3.11) and the already established inequality (3.9) is that the terms

$$
h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_2)|, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_3, \quad \beta\le\mu,
$$

in the right hand side of (3.9) are substituted by

$$
|\sin^{-r}(\theta_{1,2}+\theta_{2,2})|\; h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{i,2}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_2)|, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_2, \quad i=1,2.
$$

If $\mu=0$, then $\{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_3 \,:\, \beta\le\mu\}=\emptyset$, and (3.11) is a straightforward consequence of (3.9). Moreover, in order to perform induction on μ, we only need an estimation of the form

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\max_{\substack{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_3 \\ \beta\le\mu}} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_2)| \le K_1 \Bigg(\max_{\substack{0\le\mu'\le\mu-1 \\ 0\le\gamma\le m-\mu'}} h^{\gamma+\mu'} \|D_e^{\gamma} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'}(f-s)\|_{C(e)} \\
&+ |\sin^{-r}(\theta_{1,2}+\theta_{2,2})| \max_{(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2,\ i=1,2} h^{\alpha+\beta} |D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{i,2}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_2)| \Bigg).
\end{aligned} \tag{3.13}
$$

To this end we employ Lemma 3.3, which gives for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_3$, with $\beta\le\mu$,

$$
\begin{aligned}
&|D_e^{\alpha} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_2)| \le K_2 \Bigg(\max_{0\le\beta'\le 2(\alpha+\beta)-3r-2} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\beta'} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\beta'}(f-s)(v_2)| \\
&+ |\sin^{-r}(\theta_{1,2}+\theta_{2,2})| \max_{\alpha+\beta-r\le\beta'\le r,\ i=1,2} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\beta'} D_{e_{i,2}}^{\beta'}(f-s)(v_2)| \Bigg).
\end{aligned}
$$

Since

$$
\beta' \le 2(\alpha+\beta)-3r-2 \Longrightarrow \beta' \le \mu-1,
$$

we obtain, by making use of (3.10),

$$\max_{0\le\beta'\le 2(\alpha+\beta)-3r-2} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\beta'} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\beta'}(f-s)(v_2)| \le \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu-1} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\mu'} D_{e_{1,2}}^{\mu'}(f-s)(v_2)|$$
$$\le K_3 \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu-1} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\mu'} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'}(f-s)(v_2)| \le K_3 \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu-1} \|D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\mu'} D_{e^\perp}^{\mu'}(f-s)\|_{C(e)}.$$

Furthermore, since

$$\alpha+\beta-r \le \beta' \le r \Longrightarrow (\alpha+\beta-\beta',\beta') \in A_2,$$

we have

$$\max_{\alpha+\beta-r\le\beta'\le r,\ i=1,2} |D_e^{\alpha+\beta-\beta'} D_{e_{i,2}}^{\beta'}(f-s)(v_2)| \le \max_{\substack{(\alpha',\beta')\in A_2 \\ \alpha'+\beta'=\alpha+\beta,\ i=1,2}} |D_e^{\alpha'} D_{e_{i,2}}^{\beta'}(f-s)(v_2)|,$$

and (3.13) follows.

2) This part can be established by exactly the same arguments, the only difference being that the terms

$$h^{\alpha+\beta}|D_e^\alpha D_{e_{1,1}}^\beta(f-s)(v_1)|, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_3, \quad \beta\le\mu,$$

now also have to be estimated. ■

Let $T\in\Delta$ and let v be a vertex of T. Then $T=T_v^i$ for some $i\in\{1,\dots,n(v)\}$, where $T_v^1,\dots,T_v^{n(v)}$ are all triangles attached to v and numbered counterclockwise, as in the definition of $\mathcal{N}(v)$ (see Section 2). We are going to define various subsets of $\mathcal{N}(v)$ and $\mathcal{N}$ that will be instrumental in the proof of Theorem 3.1 and the key Lemma 3.8.

We define $\mathcal{N}_T(v)\subset\mathcal{N}(v)$ to be the set of nodal functionals corresponding to the following nodal values:

(vt1) $D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_1$,

(vt2) $D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2$ if e_i is nondegenerate at v, or

$D_{e_{i-1}}^\alpha D_{e_i}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2$ if e_i is degenerate at v, but e_{i-1} is nondegenerate at v, or

$D_{e_{i-2}}^\alpha D_{e_{i-1}}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2$ if both e_i and e_{i-1} are degenerate at v, but e_{i-2} is nondegenerate at v, or

$D_{e_1}^\alpha D_{e_2}^\beta f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_2$ if v is a singular vertex,

(vt3) $D^{\alpha}_{e_{i+1}} D^{\beta}_{e_{i+2}} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_2$ if e_{i+1} is a nondegenerate at v interior edge, or

$D^{\alpha}_{e_{i+1}} D^{\beta}_{e_{i+2}} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_3$ if e_{i+1} is degenerate at v, or

$D^{\alpha}_{e_{i+1}} D^{\beta}_{e_i} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_3$ if e_{i+1} is a boundary edge, and

(vt4) $D^{\alpha}_{e_i} D^{\beta}_{e_{i+1}} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_3$ if either e_i is degenerate at v or e_i is a boundary edge, or

$D^{\alpha}_{e_{i-1}} D^{\beta}_{e_i} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_2$ if both e_i and e_{i-1} are nondegenerate at v, or

$D^{\alpha}_{e_{i-2}} D^{\beta}_{e_{i-1}} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_2$ if e_i is nondegenerate at v, e_{i-1} is degenerate at v, and e_{i-2} is again nondegenerate at v, or

$D^{\alpha}_{e_{i-3}} D^{\beta}_{e_{i-2}} f(v)$ for all $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_2$ if e_i is nondegenerate at v, both e_{i-1} and e_{i-2} are degenerate at v, and e_{i-3} is nondegenerate at v.

Furthermore, denote by

$$\mathcal{N}_{T,j}(v) \subset \mathcal{N}_T(v)\,, \quad j = 1,2,3,4\,,$$

the set of functionals corresponding to the nodal values listed in (vt1), (vt2), (vt3) and (vt4) respectively.

We also define

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v) \subset \mathcal{N}_T(v)$$

as follows: if each of two edges e_i and e_{i+1} is either degenerate or lies on the boundary, then $\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v) := \emptyset$, if e_{i+1} is an interior nondegenerate at v edge, but e_i is not, then $\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v) := \mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v) \cup \mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v)$, if, conversely, e_i is an interior nondegenerate at v edge, but e_{i+1} is not, then $\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v) := \mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v) \cup \mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)$, and, finally, if both e_i and e_{i+1} are interior nondegenerate at v edges, then $\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v) := \mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v) \cup \mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v) \cup \mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)$.

For every triangle $T \in \Delta$ with vertices v_1, v_2, v_3 and edges e_1, e_2, e_3, let

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{N}_T &:= \bigcup_{i=1}^{3} \mathcal{N}_T(v_i) \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{3} \mathcal{N}(e_i) \cup \mathcal{N}(T)\,, \\ \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T &:= \bigcup_{i=1}^{3} \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T(v_i)\,. \end{aligned}$$

Finally, we need a set of nodal functionals $\mathcal{N}_T^*$ of finite-element type. Let $T \in \Delta$, let v be a vertex of T, and let the edges e_1, e_2 of T be attached to v. Then $\mathcal{N}_T^*(v)$ is defined to be the set of nodal functionals corresponding to the nodal values

$$D_{e_1}^{\alpha} D_{e_2}^{\beta} f(v)\,, \text{ for all } (\alpha,\beta) \in A_1 \cup A_2 \cup A_3 \cup \widetilde{A}_3\,,$$

where

$$\widetilde{A}_3 := \{(\alpha,\beta) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 \,:\, (\beta,\alpha) \in A_3\}\,.$$

Furthermore, for every edge e of T we define $\mathcal{N}_T^*(e)$ to be the set of nodal functionals assigning to every function $f \in C^r(\Omega)$ the following nodal values:

$$D_{\tau'}^{\mu} f(z_e^{\mu,1}), \ldots, D_{\tau'}^{\mu} f(z_e^{\mu,\kappa_\mu}) \quad \text{for all} \quad \mu = 0, \ldots, r\,,$$

where $z_e^{\mu,i}$ and κ_μ are defined in (2.5) and (2.6) respectively, and τ' is the unit vector in the direction from the middle point of e to the vertex of T opposite to e.

For every triangle $T \in \Delta$ with vertices v_1, v_2, v_3 and edges e_1, e_2, e_3, we set

$$\mathcal{N}_T^* \;:=\; \bigcup_{i=1}^{3} \mathcal{N}_T^*(v_i) \cup \bigcup_{i=1}^{3} \mathcal{N}_T^*(e_i) \cup \mathcal{N}(T)\,.$$

Lemma 3.7 *We have*

$$\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T = \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^* = \tbinom{q+2}{2}\,. \tag{3.14}$$

Moreover, $\mathcal{N}_T^*$ is Π_q-unisolvent, i.e., for any real data a_ν, $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$, there exists a unique polynomial $p \in \Pi_q$ such that $\nu p = a_\nu$ for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$.

Proof. Obviously,

$$\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^* = 3 \operatorname{card} A_1 + 3 \operatorname{card} A_2 + 6 \operatorname{card} A_3 + 3 \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}(e) + \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}(T).$$

By (2.9) and some elementary computation, we obtain $\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^* = \binom{q+2}{2}$. Furthermore,

$$\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T(v) = \sum_{j=1}^{4} \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_{T,j}(v) = \operatorname{card} A_1 + 3 \operatorname{card} A_2 = \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^*(v).$$

Hence, $\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T = \operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^*$, which proves (3.14). Particularly, $\operatorname{card} \mathcal{N}_T^* = \dim \Pi_q$. Because of this, the second statement of the lemma will follow if we show that the

only polynomial satisfying $\nu p = 0$ for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$ is the zero function. Following the lines of the proof of Lemma 3.5, with $f \equiv 0$ and $s = p$, we get

$$\|D_{e_i}^{\gamma} D_{e_i^{\perp}}^{\mu} p\|_{C(e_i)} = 0, \quad i = 1, 2, 3,$$

for all $\mu = 0, \ldots, r$ and $\gamma = 0, \ldots, q - \mu$, and every edge e_i of T. Therefore,

$$p = (l_1 l_2 l_3)^{r+1} \tilde{p},$$

where l_1, l_2 and l_3 are linear polynomials such that $e_i \subset \{(x, y) : l_i(x, y) = 0\}$, and $\tilde{p}$ is a polynomial in Π_{q-3r-3}. Then $\nu \tilde{p} = 0$, for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}(T)$. Since $\mathcal{N}(T)$ is Π_{q-3r-3}-unisolvent, we have $\tilde{p} = 0$, and hence, $p = 0$. ■

We also need some local geometric characteristics of the triangulation.

Let e be any interior edge of the triangulation Δ, and let v and v' be its vertices. Denote by e_1 and e_2 the adjacent edges of e at v, and by θ_i the angle between e and e_i, $i = 1, 2$. We set

$$\theta_{e,v} := \min\{\theta_1, \theta_2\}, \quad \tilde{\theta}_{e,v} := |\pi - \theta_1 - \theta_2|.$$

If e is a boundary edge, then $\theta_{e,v}$ denotes the angle between e and its unique adjacent edge at v. Furthermore,

$$\theta_e := \min\{\theta_{e,v}, \theta_{e,v'}\},$$

and for an interior edge e,

$$\tilde{\theta}_e := \begin{cases} \tilde{\theta}_{e,v}, & \text{if } e \text{ is degenerate at } v', \\ \min\{\tilde{\theta}_{e,v}, \tilde{\theta}_{e,v'}\}, & \text{if } e \text{ is nondegenerate at both } v \text{ and } v'. \end{cases}$$

(We note that no edge can be degenerate at both endpoints simultaneously.)

For every triangle $T \in \Delta$ we denote by

$$\theta_T \quad \text{and} \quad \tilde{\theta}_T$$

the minimum of θ_e over all edges of T, and the minimum of $\tilde{\theta}_e$ over all edges of T lying in the interior of Ω, respectively. Thus, θ_T denotes the smallest angle around T, whereas $\tilde{\theta}_T$ measures the "near-degeneracy" of the edges of T. Certainly,

$$\theta_T \geq \theta_\Delta.$$

The following key lemma shows that the nodal functionals in $\mathcal{N}_T^*$ can be estimated in terms of those in $\mathcal{N}_T$. Moreover, only the contribution of $\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T$ to this estimation is influenced by $\tilde{\theta}_T$.

Lemma 3.8 *Let $T \in \Delta$, $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ and $f \in C^m(\Omega)$ ($m \in \{2r, \dots, q+1\}$). Then for any $\nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$*

$$
\begin{aligned}
|\nu^*(f-s)| \le K h_T^{-d(\nu^*)} \Bigg(& h_T^m \max_{0\le m'\le m} \|D_x^{m'} D_y^{m-m'} f\|_{C(\partial T)} \\
& + \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_T\setminus\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu(f-s)| + \sin^{-r}\tilde{\theta}_T \max_{\nu\in\widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu(f-s)| \Bigg) ,
\end{aligned} \tag{3.15}
$$

where h_T is the diameter of T, and K depends only on r, q and θ_T.

Proof. Since $\mathcal{N}(T) \subset \mathcal{N}_T^* \cap \mathcal{N}_T$, we do not need to estimate $|\nu^*(f-s)|$ for $\nu^* \in \mathcal{N}(T)$. Moreover, by simmetry, it is enough to consider $\mathcal{N}_T^*(v)$ for a vertex v of T, and $\mathcal{N}_T^*(e)$ for an edge e of T.

Let $T = T_v^i$ for some $i \in \{1, \dots, n(v)\}$. Then $\mathcal{N}_T^*(v)$ corresponds to the nodal values

$$
\nu^* g = D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta g(v) , \text{ for all } (\alpha,\beta) \in A_1 \cup A_2 \cup A_3 \cup \widetilde{A}_3 .
$$

We consider three cases.

Case 1: $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_1$.

Then

$$
\begin{aligned}
h_T^{\alpha+\beta} |D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta (f-s)(v)| &\le 2^{\alpha+\beta} h_T^{\alpha+\beta} \max_{\alpha'\ge 0,\ \beta'\ge 0,\ \alpha'+\beta'=\alpha+\beta} |D_x^{\alpha'} D_y^{\beta'} (f-s)(v)| \\
&\le 2^\rho \max_{(\alpha',\beta')\in A_1} h_T^{\alpha'+\beta'} |D_x^{\alpha'} D_y^{\beta'} (f-s)(v)| .
\end{aligned}
$$

Therefore.

$$
h_T^{\alpha+\beta} |D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta (f-s)(v)| \le 2^\rho \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu(f-s)| , \qquad (\alpha,\beta) \in A_1 , \tag{3.16}
$$

which proves (3.15).

Case 2: $(\alpha,\beta) \in A_2$.

If e_i is nondegenerate at v, then $\nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)$ and (3.15) trivially holds. If e_i is degenerate at v, but e_{i-1} is nondegenerate at v, then, by (3.4),

$$
h_T^{\alpha+\beta} |D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i+1}}^\beta (f-s)(v)| = h_T^{\alpha+\beta} |D_{e_i}^\alpha D_{e_{i-1}}^\beta (f-s)(v)| \le \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu(f-s)| .
$$

Similarly, if both e_i and e_{i-1} are degenerate at v, but e_{i-2} is nondegenerate at v, then a repeated application of (3.4) shows that

$$h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e_{i+1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v)| = h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_{i-2}}^{\alpha}D_{e_{i-1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v)| \le \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\,.$$

Finally, if v is singular, then in the same manner we can see that

$$h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e_{i+1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v)| \le \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\,, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_2\,, \tag{3.17}$$

which, hence, holds in either case and confirms (3.15).

Case 3: $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_3\cup\widetilde{A}_3$.

By simmetry, assume without loss of generality that $(\alpha,\beta)\in A_3$.

If either e_i is degenerate at v or e_i is a boundary edge, then $\nu^*\in\mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)$ and (3.15) trivially holds. If, otherwise, e_i is a nondegenerate at v interior edge, then analysis similar to that in Case 2 shows that

$$h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e_{i-1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v)| \le \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\,, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_2\,. \tag{3.18}$$

Let us denote by v_{i-1}, v_i and v_{i+1} the vertices of e_{i-1}, e_i and e_{i+1} different from v, respectively, by e'_{i+1} the edge between v_i and v_{i+1}, and by e'_{i-1} the edge between v_i and v_{i-1}. The same argumentation as in the above shows that

$$\begin{aligned} &h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e'_{i+1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_i)| \le 2^{\rho}\max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\,, \quad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_1\,,\\ &h_T^{\alpha+\beta}|D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e'_{i+1}}^{\beta}(f-s)(v_i)| \le \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\,, \quad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_2\,. \end{aligned} \tag{3.19}$$

If now e_i is nondegenerate at v_i, then by the definition of $\mathcal{N}_T$,

$$\mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v_i) = \{\nu g = D_{e_i}^{\alpha}D_{e'_{i-1}}^{\beta}g(v_i)\ :\ (\alpha,\beta)\in A_2\}\,. \tag{3.20}$$

In view of (3.16)–(3.20) and Lemma 3.6, 2), with $T_1 = T$ and $T_2 = T_v^{i-1}$, we have for every $\mu = 0,\dots,r$ and $\gamma = 0,\dots,m-\mu$,

$$\begin{aligned} h_T^{\gamma+\mu}\|D_{e_i}^{\gamma}D_{e_i^{\perp}}^{\mu}(f-s)\|_{C(e_i)} \le K_1\Bigg(& h_T^m \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu}\|D_{e_i}^{m-\mu'}D_{e_i^{\perp}}^{\mu'}f\|_{C(e_i)}\\ &+\max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_T(e_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \ +\max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\\ &+\sin^{-r}\tilde{\theta}_T \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v_i)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)|\Bigg)\,, \end{aligned} \tag{3.21}$$

where K_1 depends only on q and θ_T. Since

$$|\nu^*(f-s)| = |D^{\alpha}_{e_i} D^{\beta}_{e_{i+1}}(f-s)(v)| \le 2^{\beta} \max_{0\le\mu\le\beta} |D^{\alpha+\beta-\mu}_{e_i} D^{\mu}_{e_i^{\perp}}(f-s)(v)|\,, \tag{3.22}$$

(3.15) follows from (3.21).

If e_i is degenerate at v_i, then

$$\mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v_i) = \{\nu g = D^{\alpha}_{e_i} D^{\beta}_{e'_{i-1}} g(v_i) \,:\, (\alpha,\beta)\in A_3\}\,. \tag{3.23}$$

By (3.4),

$$|D^{\alpha}_{e_i} D^{\beta}_{e'_{i+1}} g(v_i)| = |D^{\alpha}_{e_i} D^{\beta}_{e'_{i-1}} g(v_i)|\,, \qquad (\alpha,\beta)\in A_3\,. \tag{3.24}$$

In view of (3.16)–(3.19), (3.23), (3.24) and Lemma 3.6, 1), with $T_1 = T$ and $T_2 = T_v^{i-1}$, we have for every $\mu = 0,\dots,r$ and $\gamma = 0,\dots,m-\mu$,

$$\begin{aligned} h_T^{\gamma+\mu}\|D^{\gamma}_{e_i} D^{\mu}_{e_i^{\perp}}(f-s)\|_{C(e_i)} \le K_2 \Bigg(& h_T^m \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu} \|D^{m-\mu'}_{e_i} D^{\mu'}_{e_i^{\perp}} f\|_{C(e_i)} \\ & + \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_T(e_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \;+ \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \\ & + \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v_i)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \;+\; \sin^{-r}\tilde{\theta}_T \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \Bigg)\,, \end{aligned} \tag{3.25}$$

with K_2 being dependent only on q and θ_T. Therefore, (3.15) follows from (3.22).

Finally, let e be one of the edges of T, say $e = e_i$. Then for any $\nu^*\in\mathcal{N}_T^*$,

$$|\nu^*(f-s)| = |D^{\mu}_{\tau'}(f-s)(z^{\mu,j}_{e_i})| \le 2^{\mu} \max_{0\le\mu'\le\mu} |D^{\mu-\mu'}_{e_i} D^{\mu'}_{e_i^{\perp}}(f-s)(z^{\mu,j}_{e_i})|\,, \tag{3.26}$$

and (3.15) follows from (3.21) or (3.25) if e_i is an interior edge of Ω. If, otherwise, e_i is a boundary edge, then, similar to the above, Lemma 3.5 implies that

$$\begin{aligned} h_T^{\gamma+\mu'}\|D^{\gamma}_{e_i} D^{\mu'}_{e_i^{\perp}}(f-s)\|_{C(e_i)} \le K_3 \Bigg(& h_T^m \max_{0\le\mu''\le\mu'} \|D^{m-\mu''}_{e_i} D^{\mu''}_{e_i^{\perp}} f\|_{C(e_i)} \\ & + \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_T(e_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \;+ \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,1}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \\ & + \max_{\nu\in\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,4}(v)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,2}(v_i)\cup\mathcal{N}_{T,3}(v_i)} h_T^{d(\nu)}|\nu(f-s)| \Bigg)\,, \end{aligned} \tag{3.27}$$

with K_3 being dependent only on q and θ_T, which, in view of (3.26), implies (3.15). ■

In the following lemma we use standard finite-element techniques to get an estimation of $\|s_{|T}\|_{C(T)}$ in terms of the nodal functionals $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$.

Lemma 3.9 *If $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ and $T \in \Delta$, then*

$$\|s_{|T}\|_{C(T)} \le K \max_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu s| \,, \tag{3.28}$$

where h_T is the diameter of T, and K depends only on q.

Proof. Let $\hat{T}$ be a fixed triangle in the plane, say, the triangle with vertices $\hat{v}_1 = (-\frac{1}{2}, 0)$, $\hat{v}_2 = (\frac{1}{2}, 0)$, $\hat{v}_3 = (0, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2})$. Although $\hat{T}$ may be not in Δ, it is easy to see that the set of nodal functionals $\mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*$ is well-defined for $\hat{T}$.

For every $T \in \Delta$, let $B_T : \mathbb{R}^2 \to \mathbb{R}^2$ be an affine mapping such that $B_T(\hat{T}) = T$. Then

$$B_T z = A_T z + b_T \,, \quad z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \,,$$

where $A_T : \mathbb{R}^2 \to \mathbb{R}^2$ is an invertible linear mapping and $b_T \in \mathbb{R}^2$. Since $\hat{T}$ contains a disk of radius $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{6}$,

$$\|A_T\| \le 2\sqrt{3}\, h_T \,. \tag{3.29}$$

For every $\hat{\nu} \in \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*$, say of the form

$$\hat{\nu} g = D_{\hat{\tau}_1}^{\alpha} D_{\hat{\tau}_2}^{\beta} g(\hat{z}_0) \,,$$

let us define ν by

$$\nu g := D_{\tau_1}^{\alpha} D_{\tau_2}^{\beta} g(z_0) \,,$$

where

$$\tau_i = \|A_T \hat{\tau}_i\|^{-1} A_T \hat{\tau}_i \,, \quad i = 1, 2 \,, \quad z_0 = B_T \hat{z}_0 \,.$$

Then it is easy to check that

$$\hat{\nu} \in \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^* \iff \nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^* \,. \tag{3.30}$$

Moreover, a standard computation shows that

$$D^{\alpha}_{\hat{\tau}_1} D^{\beta}_{\hat{\tau}_2} g(B_T \hat{z}_0) = \|A_T \hat{\tau}_1\|^{\alpha} \|A_T \hat{\tau}_2\|^{\beta} D^{\alpha}_{\tau_1} D^{\beta}_{\tau_2} g(z_0)\,. \tag{3.31}$$

By Lemma 3.7, $\mathcal{N}_T^*$ is Π_q-unisolvent. Therefore, for every $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$ there exists a unique fundamental polynomial $p_\nu \in \Pi_q$ such that

$$\nu^* p_\nu = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } \nu^* = \nu, \\ 0, & \text{if } \nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_T^* \setminus \{\nu\}. \end{cases}$$

Similarly, for every $\hat{\nu} \in \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*$ there exists a unique fundamental polynomial $\hat{p}_{\hat{\nu}} \in \Pi_q$ such that

$$\nu^* \hat{p}_{\hat{\nu}} = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } \nu^* = \hat{\nu}, \\ 0, & \text{if } \nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^* \setminus \{\hat{\nu}\}. \end{cases}$$

It follows from (3.31) that

$$p_\nu(B_T z) \equiv \|A_T \hat{\tau}_1\|^{\alpha} \|A_T \hat{\tau}_2\|^{\beta} \hat{p}_{\hat{\nu}}(z)\,. \tag{3.32}$$

We are now ready to prove (3.28). Since $s_{|T}$ is a polynomial in Π_q, we have

$$s_{|T} = \sum_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} (\nu s) p_\nu\,.$$

Therefore, by (3.32) and (3.29),

$$\begin{aligned} \|s_{|T}\|_{C(T)} &\le \sum_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} |\nu s| \cdot \|p_\nu\|_{C(T)} = \sum_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} |\nu s| \cdot \|p_\nu \circ B_T\|_{C(\hat{T})} \\ &\le \sum_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} |\nu s| \cdot \|A_T\|^{d(\nu)} \|\hat{p}_{\hat{\nu}}\|_{C(\hat{T})} \\ &\le \left(\sum_{\hat{\nu} \in \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*} \left(2\sqrt{3}\right)^{2r} \|\hat{p}_{\hat{\nu}}\|_{C(\hat{T})} \right) \max_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu s|\,, \end{aligned}$$

and (3.28) follows. ■

Remark 3.10 It is not difficult to see that the triples $(T, \Pi_q, \mathcal{N}_T^*)$, $T \in \Delta$, form an affine family of finite elements in the sense of [9, p. 87], and $(\hat{T}, \Pi_q, \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*)$ plays the role of the reference finite element for this family. Particularly, (3.30) shows that $(T, \Pi_q, \mathcal{N}_T^*)$ is affine-equivalent to $(\hat{T}, \Pi_q, \mathcal{N}_{\hat{T}}^*)$, with B_T being the corresponding affine mapping.

Proof of Theorem 3.1. It follows from Lemma 3.8 and Lemma 3.9 that the only spline $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ that satisfies $\nu s = 0$ for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}$, is the zero function. In view of (2.8), a standard linear algebra argument shows that for any real data a_ν, $\nu \in \mathcal{N}$, there exists a unique spline $s \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ such that $\nu s = a_\nu$ for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}$. Particularly, for every function $f \in C^{2r}(\Omega)$ the Hermite type interpolation problem

$$\nu s = \nu f \quad \text{for all} \quad \nu \in \mathcal{N}$$

has a unique solution $s_f \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$, which proves the first statement of the theorem.

Let us fix a function $f \in C^m(\Omega)$ and a triangle $T \in \Delta$. Without loss of generality assume that $(0,0) \in T$. Then for the Taylor polynomial

$$\tilde{p}(x,y) := \sum_{j=0}^{m-1} \sum_{j'=0}^{j} \frac{D_x^{j'} D_y^{j-j'} f(0,0)}{j'!(j-j')!} x^{j'} y^{j-j'}$$

we have

$$\|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (f - \tilde{p})\|_{C(T)} \le \frac{2^{m-\alpha-\beta}}{(m+1-\alpha-\beta)!}\, h_T^{m-\alpha-\beta} \max_{0 \le m' \le m} \|D_x^{m'} D_y^{m-m'} f\|_{C(T)} \tag{3.33}$$

for all $\alpha, \beta \ge 0,\ \alpha + \beta \le m$. As a consequence, for every $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$,

$$|\nu(f - \tilde{p})| \le K_1 h_T^{m-d(\nu)} \max_{0 \le m' \le m} \|D_x^{m'} D_y^{m-m'} f\|_{C(T)}, \tag{3.34}$$

where K_1 is a constant depending only on q.

We have

$$\|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (f - s_f)\|_{L_\infty(T)} \le \|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (f - \tilde{p})\|_{C(T)} + \|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (\tilde{p} - s_f)\|_{L_\infty(T)}\,. \tag{3.35}$$

By the bivariate Markov inequality (see, for example, [10]),

$$\|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta p\|_{C(T)} \le K_2 (h_T \sin\theta)^{-\alpha-\beta} \|p\|_{C(T)} \quad \text{for all} \quad p \in \Pi_q\,, \tag{3.36}$$

where h_T and θ are the diameter and the smallest angle of T, respectively, and K_2 depends only on q.

Since $\tilde{p} - s_f \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ and $(\tilde{p} - s_f)_{|T} \in \Pi_q$, it follows from (3.36) and Lemma 3.9 that

$$\begin{aligned} \|D_x^\alpha D_y^\beta (\tilde{p} - s_f)\|_{L_\infty(T)} &\le K_2 (h_T \sin\theta)^{-\alpha-\beta} \|(\tilde{p} - s_f)_{|T}\|_{C(T)} \\ &\le K_3 h_T^{-\alpha-\beta} \max_{\nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_T^*} h_T^{d(\nu^*)} |\nu^*(\tilde{p} - s_f)|\,, \end{aligned} \tag{3.37}$$

where K_3 depends only on q and θ_T. By (3.34) and Lemma 3.8, since $\nu(f - s_f) = 0$ for all $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T$, we have for every $\nu^* \in \mathcal{N}_T^*$

$$
\begin{aligned}
h_T^{d(\nu^*)} |\nu^*(\tilde{p} - s_f)| &\leq h_T^{d(\nu^*)} |\nu^*(\tilde{p} - f)| + h_T^{d(\nu^*)} |\nu^*(f - s_f)| \\
&\leq K_4 h_T^m \max_{0 \leq m' \leq m} \|D_x^{m'} D_y^{m-m'} f\|_{C(T)} ,
\end{aligned} \tag{3.38}
$$

where K_4 depends only on r, q and θ_T.

Since $\theta_T \geq \theta_\Delta$, now (3.35), (3.33), (3.37) and (3.38) imply (3.2). ■

Remark 3.11 It is easy to see from the above proof that Theorem 3.1 in fact holds with θ_T in place of θ_Δ.

4 A Basis for $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$

Let $\mathcal{N} = \{\nu_i\}_{i=1}^n$, where $n = \dim S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ in view of (2.8). For every $f \in C^{2r}(\Omega)$, it follows from Theorem 3.1 that the interpolating spline $s_f \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ satisfying (3.1) can be represented as

$$
s_f = \sum_{i=1}^n (\nu_i f) s_i , \tag{4.1}
$$

where the *fundamental functions* $s_i \in S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$, $i = 1, \ldots, n$, are uniquely determined by the conditions

$$
\nu_i s_j = \delta_{ij} , \quad i, j = 1, \ldots, n . \tag{4.2}
$$

Therefore, $\{s_1, \ldots, s_n\}$ is a basis for $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$. The following theorem establishes some useful properties of this basis.

Theorem 4.1 *The fundamental functions $s_1, \ldots, s_n$ form a basis for $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ such that*

1) *$\{s_1, \ldots, s_n\}$ is locally linearly independent, i.e., for every open $B \subset \Omega$ the subsystem $\{s_i : B \cap \operatorname{supp} s_i \neq \emptyset\}$ is linearly independent on B,*

2) *$\{s_1, \ldots, s_n\}$ is least supported, i.e., for every basis $\{b_1, \ldots, b_n\}$ of $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ there exists a permutation π of $\{1, \ldots, n\}$ such that*

$$
\operatorname{supp} s_i \subset \operatorname{supp} b_{\pi(i)}, \quad \textit{for all} \quad i = 1, \ldots, n,
$$

3) *for each* $i = 1, \dots, n$, $\operatorname{supp} s_i$ *is either a triangle or the union of some triangles sharing one common vertex,*

4) $K_1 h_i^{d(\nu_i)} \le \|s_i\|_{C(\Omega)} \le K_2 K_3\, h_i^{d(\nu_i)}$, *where*

$$h_i := \max_{T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i} h_T,$$

K_1, K_2 *depend only on* r, q *and* θ_Δ, *and*

$$K_3 = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } \nu_i \in \mathcal{N} \setminus \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}, \\ \sin^{-r} \tilde{\theta}_\Delta, & \text{if } \nu_i \in \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}, \end{cases}$$

with

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{N}} := \bigcup_{T \in \Delta} \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T, \qquad \tilde{\theta}_\Delta := \min_{T \in \Delta} \tilde{\theta}_T,$$

5) *the corresponding normalized basis* $\{s_1^*, \dots, s_n^*\}$, *with* $s_i^* := h_i^{-d(\nu_i)} s_i$, *is stable in the sense that*

$$K_4 \max_i |a_i| \le \| \sum_{i=1}^n a_i s_i^* \|_{C(\Omega)} \le \frac{K_5}{\sin^r \tilde{\theta}_\Delta} \max_i |a_i|, \tag{4.3}$$

where K_4 *and* K_5 *depend only on* r, q *and* θ_Δ.

Proof. 1) As shown in [11], a system of functions $\{s_1, \dots, s_n\} \subset S_q^r(\Delta) \setminus \{0\}$ such that $\Pi_q \subset \operatorname{span}\{s_1, \dots, s_n\}$ is locally linearly independent if and only if

$$\operatorname{card}\{i : T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i\} \le \binom{q+2}{2} = \dim \Pi_q, \qquad \text{for every } T \in \Delta. \tag{4.4}$$

Since $\Pi_q \subset S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$, we only have to check (4.4). Fix a triangle T in Δ. By applying consecutively Lemma 3.9 and Lemma 3.8 (the latter with $f \equiv 0$), we get

$$\|s_i|_T\|_{C(T)} \le K_6 \left(\max_{\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T \setminus \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu s_i| \;+\; \sin^{-r} \tilde{\theta}_T \max_{\nu \in \widetilde{\mathcal{N}}_T} h_T^{d(\nu)} |\nu s_i| \right), \tag{4.5}$$

where K_6 depends only on r, q and θ_T. Therefore, $s_i|_T \equiv 0$ if $\nu_i \notin \mathcal{N}_T$, so that (4.4) follows from (3.14).

2) Least supportedness of $\{s_1, \dots, s_n\}$ follows from its local linear independence in view of [5, Theorem 3.4].

3) As we have seen, $T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i$ implies $\nu_i \in \mathcal{N}_T$. Therefore, it suffices to show that for each fixed $\nu \in \mathcal{N}$ the set

$$\mathcal{T}_\nu := \{T \in \Delta : \nu \in \mathcal{N}_T\}$$

consists either of a single triangle or of some triangles sharing one common vertex. Since

$$\mathcal{N} = \bigcup_v \mathcal{N}(v) \cup \bigcup_e \mathcal{N}(e) \cup \bigcup_T \mathcal{N}(T)\,,$$

we consider several cases. First, if $\nu \in \mathcal{N}(T)$ for some $T \in \Delta$, then obviously $\mathcal{T}_\nu = \{T\}$. If $\nu \in \mathcal{N}(e)$ for some interior edge e of Δ, then $\mathcal{T}_\nu = \{T_1, T_2\}$, where T_1 and T_2 are the two triangels sharing the edge e. (If e is a boundary edge, then, of course, there is only one such triangle T, and $\mathcal{T}_\nu = \{T\}$.) Finally, assume that $\nu \in \mathcal{N}(v)$ for some vertex v of Δ. Then $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T$ implies $\nu \in \mathcal{N}_T(v)$. The latter is possible only for the triangles T that are attached to v. Hence, $\mathcal{T}_\nu \subset \{T \in \Delta : v \in T\}$.

4) By (4.5),

$$\|s_i\|_{C(\Omega)} = \max_{T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i} \|s_{i|_T}\|_{C(T)} \le K_6 K_3 \max_{T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i} h_T^{d(\nu_i)} = K_6 K_3\, h_i^{d(\nu_i)},$$

which gives the upper bound. Furthermore, by Markov inequality (3.36),

$$1 = |\nu_i s_i| \le K_7 h_T^{-d(\nu_i)} \|s_{i|_T}\|_{C(T)}, \qquad \text{for some } T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i\,,$$

where K_7 depends only on q and θ_Δ. It is not difficult to check that

$$\max_{T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i} h_T \le K_8 \min_{T \subset \operatorname{supp} s_i} h_T$$

where K_8 depends only on q and θ_Δ (see, *e.g.*, [18, Lemma 3.2]). Therefore,

$$\|s_i\|_{C(\Omega)} \ge K_7^{-1} K_8^{-2r} h_i^{d(\nu_i)},$$

and the lower bound is also shown.

5) We fix $\{a_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and set $s = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i s_i^*$. Let $z \in T \in \Delta$. By (4.4) and (4.5) we have

$$|\sum_{i=1}^n a_i s_i^*(z)| \le \max_i |a_i| \sum_{i=1}^n |s_i^*(z)| \le \max_i |a_i| \tbinom{q+2}{2} K_6 \sin^{-r} \tilde{\theta}_T,$$

which proves the upper bound for $\|s\|_{C(\Omega)}$. Moreover, let $|a_j| = \max_i |a_i|$. Then

$$\nu_j s = h_j^{-d(\nu_j)} a_j.$$

Therefore, in view of Markov inequality, we have for some $T' \subset \operatorname{supp} s_j$,

$$|a_j| = h_j^{d(\nu_j)} |\nu_j s| \le K_7 h_j^{d(\nu_j)} h_{T'}^{-d(\nu_j)} \|s_{\restriction T'}\|_{C(T')} \le K_7 K_8^{2r} \|s\|_{C(\Omega)},$$

which completes the proof. ■

Remark 4.2 A similar interpolation scheme can be done for the superspline space $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ with any ρ within the range

$$r + \left[\frac{r+1}{2}\right] \le \rho \le \min\left\{2r, \left[\frac{q-1}{2}\right]\right\}.$$

The only necessary change in the construction is that in the definition of $\mathcal{N}(e)$ one should take

$$\kappa_\mu := \min\left\{q - 2\rho - 1 + \mu\,,\ \ q - 3r - 1 - (r-\mu) \bmod 2\right\}\,.$$

All results of Section 3 and Section 4 remain valid.

We conclude the paper with a discussion of the results of Section 4.

First of all, it immediately follows from Theorem 3.1 that the norm of the interpolation operator $s_f : C^{2r}(\Omega) \to S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ is bounded by a constant which depends only on r, q and the smallest angle θ_Δ in Δ. On the other hand, it is easy to see that some of the fundamental functions s_i can grow unboundedly if the triangulation contains near-degenerate edges. (In Theorem 4.1 we could only estimate $\|s_i\|_{C(\Omega)}$ with a constant depending on $\tilde{\theta}_\Delta$.) This seems to be controversial at first glance. We will try to explain this phenomenon. Let v be a vertex of the triangulation Δ. The nodal values ν in the set $\mathcal{N}(v)$ are linearly independent, as we have shown, if they are considered as linear functionals on the spline space $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$. Contrary to this, the nodal values $\nu \in \mathcal{N}(v)$ corresponding to the partial derivatives of the same order k, with $\rho < k \le 2r$, do stay in a linear relation as linear functionals on the space $C^{2r}(\Omega)$. (Recall that $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ is not a subspace of $C^{2r}(\Omega)$.) Indeed, there exist exactly $k+1$ linearly independent partial derivatives $D_{\tau_1}^\alpha D_{\tau_2}^\beta(f)(v)$, with $\alpha + \beta = k$, for any

k-times differentiable function f, and we certainly have in $\mathcal{N}(v)$ more than $k+1$ nodal values of this type. As a consequence, the coefficients $\nu_i f$ in (4.1) satisfy some linear relations reflecting the fact that f is $2r$-times differentiable at each vertex. This leads to some cancellations in the sum and makes possible estimation (3.2).

Let us also remark that, according to Theorem 4.1, 2), our basis is best possible for the space $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ in regard to the size of the supports of the basis functions. As mentioned in Introduction, it shares this property with the basis for $S_q^{r,\rho}(\Delta)$ constructed in [16]. The bases in [7, 18] fail to be least supported, but they have the advantage that the stability inequality (4.3) holds for them without $\sin^r \tilde{\theta}_\Delta$ in the right hand side, *i.e.*, they enjoy stability even in the presence of near-degenerate edges.

Finally, we note that the property of local linear independence established for our basis in Theorem 4.1, 1), plays an important role in the theory of almost interpolation (see [11, 13, 14]).

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Oleg Davydov
Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, Mathematisches Institut
35392 Giessen, Germany
davydov@math.uni-dortmund.de

Günther Nürnberger and Frank Zeilfelder
Universität Mannheim, Fakultät für Mathematik und Informatik
68131 Mannheim, Germany
nuern@euklid.math.uni-mannheim.de
zeilfeld@fourier.math.uni-mannheim.de