

# Estimates of $O(p^\alpha)$ Type for the Condition Number of Matrices in the p-Version of the Finite Element Method

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## Abstract

We give general results on condition numbers of matrices in the p-version of the finite element method for elliptic problems. For the conform p-version approximation of  $H_0^m(\Omega)$ ,  $\Omega \subset R^d$ , general m, we use a basis generalizing that used for m=1, and study the condition number  $\kappa(\cdot)$  of the elementary matrices  $A_d^{m,k}$  corresponding to the Sobolev scalar product  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{k,\Omega}$ ,  $k \leq m$ , and to the internal modes. We prove (theorem 2.1) that  $\kappa(A_d^{m,k}) = O(p^{4(md-k)})$  for every  $(d, m, k)$ ,  $0 \leq k \leq m$ . For  $m = 1, 2$ , we prove moreover that these estimations are optimal and that the condition number after diagonal preconditioning is equivalent to  $p^{2(md-k)}$ . Finally, we compare these results with those obtained with the spectral element method associated with Gauss-Lobatto quadrature.

**Key words:** condition number, finite element, high degree.

**AMS subject classifications:** 65F35, 65M60, 65N22, 65N35.

## 1 Introduction

For problems of order  $2m$ , we can use similar resolution methods as for problems of order 2 (see [1, 3]): Gaussian internal modes elimination or block diagonal preconditioning where each block corresponds to a geometrical part

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of the mesh (for example in 2 dimension: vertices, sides, interiors). In each case, it appears internal systems corresponding to an homogeneous Dirichlet problem on the reference element  $\Omega = ]-1, 1[^d$ , the condition number of which we study here.

We consider an elliptic problem of order  $2m$  with homogeneous boundary conditions:  $\frac{\partial^j u}{\partial n^j} = 0$  on  $\partial\Omega$  for all  $j$ ,  $0 \leq j \leq m-1$ . The functional space associated with this problem is

$$H_0^m(\Omega) = \left\{ v \in H^m(\Omega), \frac{\partial^j u}{\partial n^j} \Big|_{\partial\Omega} = 0, \forall 0 \leq j \leq m-1 \right\}.$$

We define by  $Q_p^{m,0}(\Omega) = Q_p(\Omega) \cap H_0^m(\Omega)$  the approximation space of polynomials of degree  $p$  in each variable which vanish on  $\partial\Omega$ .

**Definition 1.1** For  $Q_p^{m,0}(\Omega)$ , we choose the basis  $\{\mathcal{H}_{i_1}^m \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{H}_{i_d}^m\}_{2m \leq i_1, \dots, i_d \leq p}$ , which is made up of tensorial products of the 1-d basis  $\{\mathcal{H}_i^m\}_{2m \leq i \leq p}$  where the  $\mathcal{H}_i^m$ , deduced from the Legendre polynomials by  $\mathcal{H}_i^m(t) = \int_{-1}^t \int_{-1}^{t_1} \dots \int_{-1}^{t_{m-1}} \frac{L_{i-m}(s)}{\|L_{i-m}\|_{0,(-1,1)}} ds dt_{m-1} \dots dt_1$ , are orthonormal for the Sobolev scalar product  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{m,\Omega}$ . □

These  $m^{th}$  Legendre polynomial integrals induce very sparse matrices and generalize the most used basis for problem of order 2 ( $m=1$ ) (see [2, 3, 8, 10] for example).

**Definition 1.2** Denoting by  $D_\alpha$  the derivation operator  $D_\alpha = \frac{\partial^\alpha}{\partial x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots \partial x_d^{\alpha_d}}$  for  $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_d)$  and  $|\alpha| = \sum_{i=1}^d \alpha_i$ , we consider for  $0 \leq k \leq m$ , the Sobolev scalar product:  $(u, v)_{k,\Omega} = \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} (D_\alpha u, D_\alpha v)_{L^2(\Omega)}$ , and the associated matrix  $A_d^{m,k}$  for the basis  $\{\mathcal{H}_{i_1}^m \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{H}_{i_d}^m\}_{2m \leq i_1, \dots, i_d \leq p}$  of  $Q_p^{m,0}(\Omega)$ . □

**Definition 1.3** With a tensorial numbering, we define the canonical scalar product of  $R^{(p+1-2m)^d}$  by:

$$(u, v)_d = \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_d=2m}^p u_{i_1, \dots, i_d} v_{i_1, \dots, i_d}. \quad \square$$

**Definition 1.4** For any matrix M, similar to a symmetric positive definite one, we define  $\kappa(M)$  by  $\kappa(M) = \frac{\lambda_{max}(M)}{\lambda_{min}(M)}$ .  $\square$

## 2 Majoration of condition numbers

We begin by a short lemma showing that the matrices  $A_d^{m,k}$  of the d-dimensional case can be expressed in function of the only  $A_1^{m,k}$  of the 1-dimensional case.

**Lemma 2.1** The matrix  $A_d^{m,k}$  associated with the  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{k, \Omega}$  scalar product can be deduced from the  $A_1^{m, \alpha}$  matrices, for  $0 \leq \alpha \leq k$ , associated with the  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{\alpha, ]-1, 1[}$  scalar product, by:

$$(1) \quad (A_d^{m,k})_{i_1, \dots, i_d, j_1, \dots, j_d} = \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} \prod_{n=1}^d (A_1^{m, \alpha_n})_{i_n, j_n}$$

**Proof** We have

$$\begin{aligned} & (A_d^{m,k})_{i_1, \dots, i_d, j_1, \dots, j_d} \\ &= \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} (D_\alpha(\mathcal{H}_{i_1}^m \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{H}_{i_d}^m), D_\alpha(\mathcal{H}_{j_1}^m \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{H}_{j_d}^m)) \\ &= \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} \prod_{n=1}^d \int_{-1}^1 \frac{d^{\alpha_n} \mathcal{H}_{i_n}^m}{dt^{\alpha_n}} \frac{d^{\alpha_n} \mathcal{H}_{j_n}^m}{dt^{\alpha_n}} dt, \text{ which proves (1). } \square \end{aligned}$$

Now, we can give the main result on the condition numbers  $\kappa(\cdot)$ :

### Theorem 2.1

For  $A_d^{m,k}$ , the matrix associated with the  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{k, \Omega}$  ( $0 \leq k \leq m$ ) scalar product and corresponding to the basis (definition 1.1) built for the homogeneous elliptic problems of order  $2m$  on  $] -1, 1[^d$ , we have:

$$\kappa(A_d^{m,k}) = O(p^{4(md-k)}), \forall (d, m, k), 0 \leq k \leq m.$$

**Proof** The following inverse inequality ([5]) and Poincare type inequality

$$\begin{aligned} & \forall v \in Q_p^{1,0}([-1, 1]) \quad , \quad \forall (k, l), 0 \leq k \leq l \\ & \quad \quad \quad \|v\|_{k, (-1, 1)}^2 \leq C_2 \|v\|_{l, (-1, 1)}^2 \\ (2) \quad & \quad \quad \quad \text{and} \\ & \quad \quad \quad \|v\|_{l, (-1, 1)}^2 \leq C_1 p^{4(l-k)} \|v\|_{k, (-1, 1)}^2 \end{aligned}$$

give for the matrices ( $l=m$ ):

$$\begin{aligned} \forall x \in R^{p+1-2m}, (A_1^{m,k} x, x) & \leq C_2 (A_1^{m,m} x, x) \\ \text{and } (A_1^{m,m} x, x) & \leq C_1 p^{4(m-k)} (A_1^{m,k} x, x). \end{aligned}$$

Since  $A_1^{m,m} = I$ , we deduce  $\lambda_{min}(A_1^{m,k}) \geq C_1^{-1} p^{4(k-m)}$  and  $\lambda_{max}(A_1^{m,k}) \leq C_2$  so that  $\kappa(A_1^{m,k}) \leq C p^{4(m-k)}$ . This proves the result for  $d=1$  which can be extended to general  $d$  thanks to lemma 2.1 and to the following result, the proof of which will be given in the appendix.

**Lemma 2.2** Let  $(B^k)_{1 \leq k \leq d}$  be  $d$  symmetric definite matrices of dimension  $n$ , then we have for all  $\theta \in R^n$ :

$$\begin{cases} \theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d} \leq \prod_{k=1}^d \lambda_{max}(B^k)(\theta, \theta)_d \\ \theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d} \geq \prod_{k=1}^d \lambda_{min}(B^k)(\theta, \theta)_d \end{cases}$$

We apply this lemma to each term of the sum  $\sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} \prod_{n=1}^d (A_1^{m, \alpha_n})_{i_n, j_n}$ . Then, we obtain for  $\lambda_{min}$  for example:

$$\theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{n=1}^d (A_1^{m, \alpha_n})_{i_n, j_n} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d} \geq \prod_{n=1}^d \lambda_{min}(A_1^{m, \alpha_n})(\theta, \theta)_d.$$

Since  $\lambda_{min}(A_1^{m, \alpha_n}) \geq C p^{4(\alpha_n - m)}$ ,

and  $\lambda_{min}(A_d^{m,k}) \geq \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} \prod_{n=1}^d \lambda_{min}(A_1^{m, \alpha_n})$ , we have

$$\lambda_{min}(A_d^{m,k}) \geq C \sum_{\alpha, |\alpha|=k} \prod_{n=1}^d p^{4(\alpha_n - m)} = C p^{4(k-md)},$$

so that  $\lambda_{min}(A_d^{m,k}) \geq C(k) p^{4(k-md)}$ .

We get also  $\lambda_{max}(A_d^{m,k}) \leq C$ , and the theorem is proved  $\square$

## 3 Cases $m=1$ and $m=2$

### 3.1 Equivalence of condition numbers

We have proved for  $m=1$  (see [6]) and for  $m=2$  (see [7]), that the condition numbers  $\kappa(A_d^{m,k})$  are equivalent to  $p^{4(md-k)}$ . We precise these results in the following theorem.

#### Theorem 3.1

For  $A_d^{m,k}$ , the matrix associated with the  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{k, \Omega}$  ( $0 \leq k \leq m$ ) scalar product and corresponding to the basis (definition 1.1) built for the homogeneous elliptic problems of order  $2m$ ,  $m=1$  or  $m=2$ , on  $] -1, 1[^d$ , we have:

$$\kappa(A_d^{m,k}) \sim p^{4(md-k)}, \forall (d, k), 0 \leq k \leq m.$$

**Proof** For  $m=1$ , we have simple relations between the extreme eigenvalues of  $A_d^{1,k}$  and  $A_1^{1,0}$ , given below without proof

**Lemma 3.1** For  $m=1$ , the extreme eigenvalues of the  $d$ -dimensional mass and stiffness matrices can be expressed in function of those of the only 1-dimensional mass matrix by:

$$\begin{aligned}\lambda_{max}(A_d^{1,0}) &= \lambda_{max}(A_1^{1,0})^d \\ \lambda_{min}(A_d^{1,0}) &= \lambda_{min}(A_1^{1,0})^d \\ \lambda_{max}(A_d^{1,1}) &= \lambda_{max}(A_1^{1,0})^{d-1} \\ \lambda_{min}(A_d^{1,1}) &= \lambda_{min}(A_1^{1,0})^{d-1}.\end{aligned}$$

Thanks to these results, the proof of the optimality of the bounds in theorem 2.1 has only to be done for the 1-d mass matrix  $A_1^{1,0}$ . For that we have to find a particular vector for which the Raleigh quotient attains the bound.

For the maximal eigenvalue, we have  $\lambda_{max}(A_1^{1,0}) \leq C$  ( $C$  independent of  $p$ ) from the proof of theorem 2.1, and we have for the particular vector  $\gamma$  corresponding to the first basis function (the same for every  $p$  due to the hierarchical character of the basis):

$$(A_1^{1,0}\gamma, \gamma)_1 = C(\gamma, \gamma)_1,$$

where  $C$  is independent of  $p$ .

For the minimal eigenvalue, we give without proof the following result:

**Lemma 3.2** The function  $\psi_p = L_{p+2}'' - \frac{(p+3)(p+4)}{4} L_{p+1}'$  of  $Q_p^{1,0}([-1, 1])$  satisfies:

$$40 \|\psi_p\|_{1,(-1,1)}^2 \sim p^4 \|\psi_p\|_{0,(-1,1)}^2$$

This lemma shows that there exists a particular vector  $\tilde{\theta}$  in  $R^{p-1}$  such that:

$$(A_1^{1,0}\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_1 \leq Cp^{-4}(\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_1,$$

that is  $\lambda_{min}(A_1^{1,0}) \sim p^{-4}$  thanks to theorem 2.1, which proves theorem 3.1 for  $m=1$  thanks to lemma 3.1.

For the maximal eigenvalue ( $m=2$ ), we have  $\lambda_{max}(A_d^{2,k}) \leq C$  (independent of  $p$ ) from the proof of theorem 2.1, and we have for the particular vector  $\gamma$  corresponding to the basis function  $\mathcal{H}_4^2$ :

$$(A_1^{2,k}\gamma, \gamma)_1 = C(k)(\gamma, \gamma)_1, k = 1, 2,$$

where  $C(k)$  is independent of  $p$ . So, from Rayleigh quotient of  $\Gamma$  associated to  $\mathcal{H}_4^2 \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{H}_4^2$ , we obtain  $\lambda_{max}(A_d^{2,k}) \geq C(k)$ .

For the minimal eigenvalue of  $(A_d^{2,k})$ , it is more technical. We give the following lemma without proof:

**Lemma 3.3** The function

$\phi_p = L_{p+3}''' - \frac{(p+5)(p+6)}{4} L_{p+2}'' + \frac{(p+3)(p+4)(p+5)(p+6)}{48} L_{p+1}'$  of  $Q_p^{2,0}([-1, 1])$  satisfies:

$$\begin{aligned}\|\phi_p\|_{2,(-1,1)}^2 &\sim p^8 \|\phi_p\|_{0,(-1,1)}^2, \\ \|\phi_p\|_{1,(-1,1)}^2 &\sim p^4 \|\phi_p\|_{0,(-1,1)}^2, \\ \|\phi_p\|_{0,(-1,1)}^2 &\sim p^{10}.\end{aligned}$$

This lemma proves that there exists a particular vector  $\tilde{\theta}$  in  $R^{p-3}$  such that:

$$(A_1^{2,0}\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_1 \leq Cp^{-8}, \quad (A_1^{2,1}\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_1 \leq Cp^{-4}.$$

Considering the Rayleigh quotient of the vector

$$\tilde{\Theta}_{i_1, \dots, i_d} = \prod_{n=1}^d \tilde{\theta}_{i_n},$$

and using theorem 2.1, we can prove the equivalences of theorem 3.1.  $\square$

## 3.2 Equivalence of condition numbers with diagonal preconditioning

**Definition 3.1** We note  $\tilde{A}_d^{m,k}$ , the scaled matrix:

$$\tilde{A}_d^{m,k} = \text{diag}(A_d^{m,k})^{-1/2} A_d^{m,k} \text{diag}(A_d^{m,k})^{-1/2},$$

and  $\tilde{\kappa}(A_d^{m,k}) = \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_d^{m,k}) / \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_d^{m,k})$  the condition number of  $\tilde{A}_d^{m,k}$ .  $\square$

We prove for  $m=1$  (see [6]) and for  $m=2$  (see [7]), that the condition number after diagonal preconditioning  $\tilde{\kappa}(A_d^{m,k})$  of  $A_d^{m,k}$  is equivalent to  $p^{2(md-k)}$ . We precise this result in the following theorem.

### Theorem 3.2

For  $A_d^{m,k}$ , the matrix associated with the  $(\cdot, \cdot)_{k,\Omega}$  ( $0 \leq k \leq m$ ) scalar product and corresponding to the basis (definition 1.1) built for the homogeneous elliptic problems of order  $2m$ ,  $m=1$  or  $m=2$ , on  $]-1, 1[^d$ , we have:

$$\tilde{\kappa}(A_d^{m,k}) \sim p^{2(md-k)}, \forall (d, k), 0 \leq k \leq m.$$

**Proof** For  $m=1$ , we have again simple relations between the extreme eigenvalues of  $\tilde{A}_d^{1,k}$  and  $A_1^{1,0}$ , given in the following lemma:

**Lemma 3.4** For  $m=1$ , the extreme eigenvalues of the  $d$ -dimensional diagonal preconditioned mass and stiffness matrix can be expressed in function of those of the only 1-dimensional diagonal preconditioned mass matrix by:

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_d^{1,0}) &= \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0})^d \\ \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_d^{1,0}) &= \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0})^d \\ \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_d^{1,1}) &= \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0})^{d-1} \\ \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_d^{1,1}) &= \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0})^{d-1}. \end{aligned}$$

**Proof** The scaled matrix  $\tilde{A}_1^{1,0}$  is the mass matrix corresponding to the  $L^2$  normalized basis  $\{\tilde{\phi}\}_{2 \leq i \leq p}$  with  $\tilde{\phi}_i = \frac{\phi_i}{\|\phi_i\|_{L^2(-1,1)}}$ . Thus we can apply lemma 3.1 here too and obtain the result for the mass matrices  $\tilde{A}_d^{1,0}$ .

From

$$(A_d^{1,1})_{i_1, \dots, i_d, j_1, \dots, j_d} = \sum_{k=1}^d \delta_{i_k, j_k} \prod_{l=1, l \neq k}^d (A_1^{1,0})_{i_l, j_l},$$

where  $\delta$  is the Kronecker symbol, we see that  $(A_d^{1,1}\theta, \theta)_d$  is made up of  $d$  terms. Each term is of the type  $(A_{d-1}^{1,0}\beta, \beta)_{d-1}$  where  $\beta$  is for example  $\beta_{i_2, \dots, i_d} = \theta_{i_1, i_2, \dots, i_d}$ , and can be bounded as follows:

$$(A_d^{1,1}\theta, \theta)_d \leq \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_{d-1}^{1,0})(diag(A_{d-1}^{1,0})\beta, \beta)_{d-1},$$

since  $diag(A_{d-1}^{1,0})^{-1}A_{d-1}^{1,0}$  and  $\tilde{A}_{d-1}^{1,0}$  have the same eigenvalues.

Summing the  $d$  terms and identifying the diagonal of  $A_d^{1,1}$ , we obtain:

$$(A_d^{1,1}\theta, \theta)_d \leq \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_{d-1}^{1,0})(diag(A_d^{1,1})\theta, \theta)_d.$$

In the same way, we can prove:

$$(A_d^{1,1}\theta, \theta)_d \geq \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_{d-1}^{1,0})(diag(A_d^{1,1})\theta, \theta)_d.$$

The preceding inequalities imply an upper (resp. lower) bound for  $\tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0})$  (resp.  $\tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0})$ ). To prove that these bounds are attained, we exhibit the special  $\tilde{\theta}$  defined by:

$$\tilde{\theta}_{i_1, \dots, i_d} = \prod_{k=1}^d \frac{v_{i_k}}{m_{i_k}^{1/2}}$$

where  $v$  is an eigenvector of the matrix  $\tilde{A}_1^{1,0}$  associated with  $\tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0})$  (resp.  $\tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0})$ ) and  $m_{i_k} = (A_1^{1,0})_{i_k, i_k}$ .

Thus we have for example:

$$(A_d^{1,1}\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_d = \left\{ \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0}) \right\}^{d-1} (diag(A_d^{1,1})\tilde{\theta}, \tilde{\theta})_d.$$

□

For the one dimensional scaled mass matrix, we have ( $m=1$ ):

**Lemma 3.5** For  $m=1$ , the extreme eigenvalues of the 1-d mass matrix preconditioned by its diagonal satisfy

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{\lambda}_{max}(A_1^{1,0}) &\sim 1 \\ \tilde{\lambda}_{min}(D^{-1}A_1^{1,0}) &\sim p^{-2}. \end{aligned}$$

**Proof** The explicit knowledge of the mass matrix  $A_1^{1,0}$  permits to explicit  $\tilde{A}_1^{1,0}$  as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} (\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,i} &= 1, \forall 2 \leq i \leq p \\ (\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,i+2} &= \frac{-1}{2} \sqrt{\frac{(2i-3)(2i+5)}{(2i-1)(2i+3)}}, \forall 2 \leq i \leq p-2 \\ (\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,i-2} &= (\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i-2,i}, \forall 4 \leq i \leq p-2 \end{aligned}$$

By Gerschgorin theorem one has:

$$\max_{4 \leq i \leq p-2} \left\{ \sum_{j=2, j \neq i}^p |(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,j}| \right\} \leq 1 - \frac{6}{(2p-1)(2p+9)}$$

and then  $\lambda_{max}(D^{-1}A_1^{1,0}) \leq 2$ .

The scaled matrix  $\tilde{A}_1^{1,0}$  is diagonal dominant, although  $A_1^{1,0}$  is not, since:

$$|(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,i+2}| \leq \frac{1}{2} - \frac{3}{(2i-1)(2i+3)} < \frac{1}{2}.$$

Thus we can use again Gerschgorin theorem to obtain:

$$\tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0}) \geq \frac{6}{(2p-1)(2p-9)} \geq \frac{3}{2p^2}.$$

Since  $\lambda_{max}(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0}) \geq \max_{2 \leq i \leq p} \{(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})_{i,i}\} = 1$ , we have the lower bound of  $\lambda_{max}(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})$ .

For  $\lambda_{min}(\tilde{A}_1^{1,0})$ , we have the following upper bound:

$$\tilde{\lambda}_{min}(A_1^{1,0}) \leq \frac{\lambda_{min}(A_1^{1,0})}{\lambda_{min}(Diag(A_1^{1,0}))}$$

where

$$\lambda_{min}(Diag(A_1^{1,0})) = (A_1^{1,0})_{p,p} = \frac{2}{(2p+1)(2p-3)}$$

and

$$\lambda_{min}(A_1^{1,0}) \sim p^{-4}. \quad \square$$

We have given the proof of theorem 3.2 only for the case  $m=1$ .

For  $m=2$ , the proof can be done with similar techniques (see [7]).

□

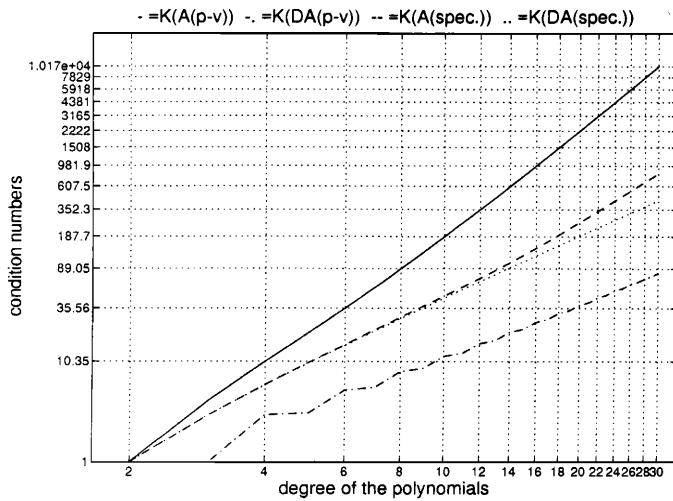


Figure 1: Comparison in 2-D

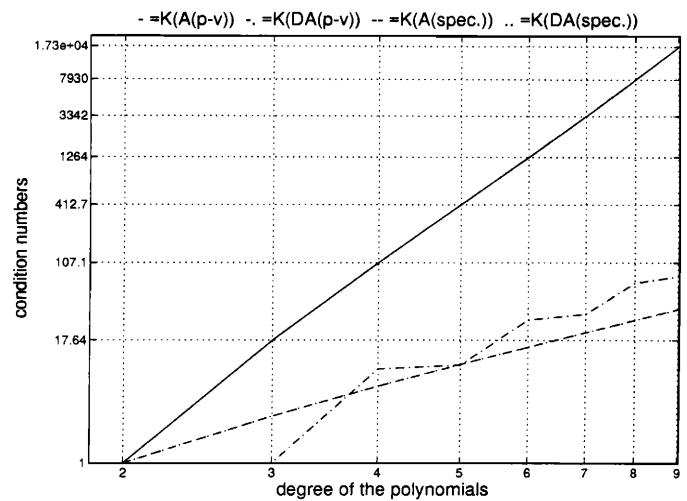


Figure 2: Comparison in 3-D

## 4 Comparison with the spectral element matrices

For the spectral element method, the condition number for the matrix built with bubble functions on the reference element  $[-1, 1]^d$  have been studied by C. Bernardi and Y. Maday, which have given the following result:

### Theorem 4.1

For  $d = 1$  to 3, the condition number of the stiffness matrix  $A_d^{spec.}$  obtained with Gauss-Lobatto numerical quadrature, and built with the Lagrangian interpolants on  $p-1$  Gauss-Lobatto interior points satisfies

$$\kappa(A_d^{spec.}) \sim p^3$$

For  $A_d^{spec.}$ , we have no theoretical results for the diagonal preconditioning.

Following figures give, in 2-d and 3-d, a numerical comparison between p-version (p-v) and spectral (spec.) element for the condition number of the stiffness matrix with (DA) or without (A) diagonal preconditioning.

**Remark 4.1** In 2-d, we see that, the condition number of the stiffness matrix for the p-version is better (resp. worse) with (resp. without) diagonal preconditioning than for the spectral element. Moreover we note that diagonal preconditioning is efficient for all degrees in p-version, but only for degrees greater than ten for the spectral element method.

**Remark 4.2** In 3-d, we remark that the condition number of the spectral element method is lower than that of the p-version with or without diagonal preconditioning.

## 5 Conclusion

We have proved that in the p-version of the finite element method, the condition numbers grow as a power of the degree  $p$ , the power of  $p$  depending of the dimension  $d$  of the problem. Moreover, we have proved that for all matrices obtained for problem of order 2 or 4, the diagonal preconditioning divides by 2 the power of  $p$  in the condition numbers.

## Appendix

We present a proof of lemma 2.2 which can be considered as a generalization of one given in [9].

We shall denote by  $I$  the identity matrix on  $R^n$  and use for the sums the convention of the repeated indices.

We make  $d$  successive linear variable transformations by  $(B^j)^{1/2}$  in order to simplify the central term of lemma 2.2, and note  $\theta(k)$  the vector obtained after  $k$  such transformations.

With

$$\theta(1)_{..j_2, \dots, j_d} = (B^1)^{1/2} \theta_{..j_2, \dots, j_d}, \quad \forall 1 \leq j_2, \dots, j_d \leq n,$$

we obtain :

$$\theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d} =$$

$$((B^1)^{-1/2})_{i_1, r} \theta(1)_{r, i_2, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} ((B^1)^{-1/2})_{j_1, s}$$

$$\theta(1)_{s, j_2, \dots, j_d}.$$

Since

$$((B^1)^{-1/2})_{i_1, r} (B^1)_{i_1, j_1} ((B^1)^{-1/2})_{j_1, s}$$

$$= ((B^1)^{-1/2})_{i_1, r} ((B^1)^{1/2})_{i_1, s}$$

$$= ((B^1)^{-1/2})_{i_1, r} ((B^1)^{1/2})_{s, i_1} = I_{s, r},$$

we have

$$\theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d}$$

$$= \theta(1)_{i_1, i_2, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=2}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta(1)_{i_1, j_2, \dots, j_d},$$

because of the identity

$$\theta(1)_{r, i_2, \dots, i_d} I_{s, r} \theta(1)_{s, j_2, \dots, j_d} = \theta(1)_{i_1, i_2, \dots, i_d} \theta(1)_{i_1, j_2, \dots, j_d}.$$

For  $\theta(2)$ , we have for all  $1 \leq j_3, \dots, j_d \leq n$ ,

$$\theta(2)_{i_1, \dots, j_3, \dots, j_d} = (B^2)^{1/2} \theta(1)_{i_1, \dots, j_3, \dots, j_d},$$

which gives :

$$\theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d}$$

$$= \theta(2)_{i_1, i_2, i_3, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=3}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta(2)_{i_1, i_2, j_3, \dots, j_d}.$$

We obtain finally:

$$\theta_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \prod_{k=1}^d (B^k)_{i_k, j_k} \theta_{j_1, \dots, j_d} = (\theta(d), \theta(d))_d.$$

Now, we return successively to  $(\theta, \theta)_d$  :

$$(\theta(d), \theta(d))_d = \theta(d)_{i_1, \dots, i_d} \theta(d)_{i_1, \dots, i_d}$$

$$= ((B^d)^{1/2})_{i_d, r} \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, r}$$

$$((B^d)^{1/2})_{i_d, s} \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, s},$$

$$(\theta(d), \theta(d))_d =$$

$$= (B^d)_{r, s} \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, r} \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, s}$$

$$= ((B^d) \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, \cdot}, \theta(d-1)_{i_1, \dots, i_{d-1}, \cdot})_1,$$

so that

$$\lambda_{\min}(B^d)(\theta(d-1), \theta(d-1))_d \leq (\theta, \theta)_d,$$

$$\lambda_{\max}(B^d)(\theta(d-1), \theta(d-1))_d \geq (\theta, \theta)_d.$$

The final result follows recursively.

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