

Products of Lipschitz-free spaces and applications

by

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Abstract. We show that, given a Banach space X , the Lipschitz-free space over X , denoted by $\mathcal{F}(X)$, is isomorphic to $(\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(X))_{\ell_1}$. Some applications are presented, including a nonlinear version of Pełczyński's decomposition method for Lipschitz-free spaces and the identification up to isomorphism between $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ and the Lipschitz-free space over any compact metric space which is locally bi-Lipschitz embeddable into \mathbb{R}^n and which contains a subset that is Lipschitz equivalent to the unit ball of \mathbb{R}^n . We also show that $\mathcal{F}(M)$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$ for all separable metric spaces M which are absolute Lipschitz retracts and contain a subset which is Lipschitz equivalent to the unit ball of c_0 . This class includes all $C(K)$ spaces with K infinite compact metric (Dutrieux and Ferenczi (2006) already proved that $\mathcal{F}(C(K))$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$ for those K using a different method).

1. Introduction. Let $(M, d, 0)$ be a pointed metric space (that is, a distinguished point 0 in M , called a *base point*, is chosen), and consider the Banach space $\text{Lip}_0(M)$ of all real-valued Lipschitz functions on M which vanish at 0 , equipped with the norm

$$\|f\|_{\text{Lip}} := \inf_{x, y \in M, x \neq y} \frac{|f(x) - f(y)|}{d(x, y)}.$$

On the closed unit ball of $\text{Lip}_0(M)$, the topology of pointwise convergence is compact, so $\text{Lip}_0(M)$ admits a canonical predual, which is called the *Lipschitz-free space over M* and denoted by $\mathcal{F}(M)$. This space is the closure in $\text{Lip}_0(M)^*$ of $\text{span}\{\delta_x : x \in M\}$, where δ_x is the evaluation functional defined by $\delta_x(f) = f(x)$. It is readily verified that $\delta : x \mapsto \delta_x$ is an isometry from M into $\mathcal{F}(M)$. Given $0' \in M$, it is clear that $T : \text{Lip}_0(M) \rightarrow \text{Lip}_{0'}(M)$ defined by $T(f) := f - f(0')$ is a weak*-to-weak* continuous isometric isomorphism, thus the choice of different base points yields isometrically isomorphic Lipschitz-free spaces. We refer to [15] for a study of Lipschitz function spaces,

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and to [15] and [5] for an introduction to Lipschitz-free spaces and their basic properties.

One of the main properties of Lipschitz-free spaces is that they permit one to interpret Lipschitz maps between metric spaces from the linear point of view:

PROPOSITION 1.1. *Let M and N be pointed metric spaces, let δ^M and δ^N be the isometries that assign to each $x \in M$ (respectively, $x \in N$) the corresponding evaluation functional δ_x^M on $\mathcal{F}(M)$ (respectively, δ_x^N on $\mathcal{F}(N)$), and suppose that $L : M \rightarrow N$ is a Lipschitz function such that $L(0_M) = 0_N$. Then there is a unique linear map $\hat{L} : \mathcal{F}(M) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(N)$ such that $\hat{L} \circ \delta^M = \delta^N \circ L$, that is, the following diagram commutes:*

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 M & \xrightarrow{L} & N \\
 \delta^M \downarrow & & \downarrow \delta^N \\
 \mathcal{F}(M) & \xrightarrow{\hat{L}} & \mathcal{F}(N)
 \end{array}$$

Moreover, $\|\hat{L}\| = \|L\|_{\text{Lip}}$.

In particular, if M and N are Lipschitz equivalent (that is, there is a bi-Lipschitz bijection between M and N) then $\mathcal{F}(M)$ and $\mathcal{F}(N)$ are isomorphic. The converse is not true, even if M and N are assumed to be Banach spaces: if K is an infinite compact metric space, then $\mathcal{F}(C(K))$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$, even though $C(K)$ is not Lipschitz equivalent to c_0 in general (recall that if $C(K)$ is uniformly homeomorphic to c_0 , then it is isomorphic to c_0 ; see [8]). This first counterexample for the Banach space case was presented by Dutrieux and Ferenczi [3].

Despite the simplicity of the definition of Lipschitz-free spaces, many fundamental questions about their structure remain unanswered. Godard [4] characterized the metric spaces M such that $\mathcal{F}(M)$ is isometrically isomorphic to a subspace of L^1 as exactly those that are isometrically embeddable into \mathbb{R} -trees (that is, connected graphs with no cycles, with the graph distance); on the other hand, Naor and Schechtman [13] have shown that $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{Z}^2)$ (thus also $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^2)$) is not isomorphic to any subspace of L^1 . This prompts the natural question of characterizing the metric spaces M such that $\mathcal{F}(M)$ is (nonisometrically) isomorphic to L^1 . Godefroy and Kalton [5] showed that a Banach space X has the bounded approximation property if and only if $\mathcal{F}(X)$ does, and recently Hájek and Pernecká [7] proved that $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ admits a Schauder basis, refining a result from [10], and raised the natural (and still unanswered) question of whether $\mathcal{F}(F)$ admits a Schauder basis for any given closed subset $F \subset \mathbb{R}^n$. Nor is it known to this author whether $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^m)$ for distinct $m, n \geq 2$.

In this context, we continue the exploration of what could be considered basic properties of Lipschitz-free spaces and their relation to the underlying metric spaces. We will show, for instance, that for any given Banach space X , $\mathcal{F}(X)$ is isomorphic to $(\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(X))_{\ell_1}$ (Theorem 3.1). This provides in particular a kind of nonlinear version of Pełczyński’s decomposition method (Corollary 3.2), which in turn can be used to obtain the above mentioned example by Dutrioux and Ferenczi of non-Lipschitz equivalent Banach spaces sharing the same Lipschitz-free space. In fact, we show that $\mathcal{F}(M)$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$ for a wider class of metric spaces (Corollary 3.4). We will also show that, for compact metric spaces M which are locally bi-Lipschitz embeddable in \mathbb{R}^n , $\mathcal{F}(M)$ admits a complemented copy in $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$; when moreover the euclidean ball $B_{\mathbb{R}^n}$ is bi-Lipschitz embeddable in M , $\mathcal{F}(M)$ and $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ are actually isomorphic (Theorem 3.7). The class of metric spaces satisfying both properties includes all n -dimensional compact Riemannian manifolds. We also show that, as a consequence of the construction in the proof of Theorem 3.1, the Lipschitz-free spaces over any Banach space and over its unit ball are isomorphic; this provides in particular a partial answer to Hájek and Pernecká’s aforementioned question (see the remark after Corollary 3.5).

1.1. Notation. We say that two metric spaces M and N are C -Lipschitz equivalent, for some constant $C > 0$, if there is a bi-Lipschitz onto map $\varphi : M \rightarrow N$ satisfying $\|\varphi\|_{\text{Lip}} \|\varphi^{-1}\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq C$. Hence M and N are Lipschitz equivalent if they are C -Lipschitz equivalent for some $C > 0$; in that case we also write $M \stackrel{L}{\sim} N$. Given two Banach spaces X and Y , we write $X \cong Y$ when X and Y are isometrically isomorphic, $X \stackrel{c}{\hookrightarrow} Y$ when there is a complemented (isomorphic) copy of X in Y , and $X \simeq Y$ when X and Y are isomorphic. If X and Y are isomorphic, the *Banach–Mazur distance* between X and Y is defined by

$$d_{\text{BM}}(X, Y) := \inf \{ \|T\| \cdot \|T^{-1}\| : T \text{ is an isomorphism from } X \text{ onto } Y \}.$$

$\|T\| \cdot \|T^{-1}\|$ is called the (*linear*) *distortion* of T . When $d_{\text{BM}}(X, Y) \leq C$ for some $C > 0$, we say that X is isomorphic to Y with distortion bounded by C .

$\text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ denotes the set of linear extension operators for Lipschitz functions, and $\text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$ is the set of pointwise-to-pointwise continuous elements of $\text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ (see Subsection 2.1).

1.2. Structure of this work. In Section 2, we present some background results on linear extension operators for Lipschitz functions and some ways to decompose the Lipschitz-free space over a metric space using metric quotients. In Section 3 we show that, for every Banach space X , $\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq (\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(X))_{\ell_1}$, and derive some consequences. In Section 4 we show that, for every Banach space X , $d_{\text{BM}}(\mathcal{F}(X), \mathcal{F}(X) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(X)) \leq 4$.

2. Linear extensions of Lipschitz functions and the Lipschitz-free space over metric quotients

2.1. Linear extensions of Lipschitz functions. Given a pointed metric space $(M, d, 0)$ and a subset F containing 0, let $\text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ denote the set of all extensions $E : \text{Lip}_0(F) \rightarrow \text{Lip}_0(M)$ which are linear and continuous (E being an extension means that $E(f)|_F = f$ for all $f \in \text{Lip}_0(F)$). It is immediate to see that if we choose another base point $0'$ contained in F , for each element $E \in \text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ there is a corresponding $E' \in \text{Ext}_{0'}(F, M)$, defined by $E'(f) := E(f - f(0')) + f(0')$, which satisfies $\|E'\| = \|E\|$, so generally it is not important which base point is chosen. Recall that there are always continuous but not necessarily linear extensions from $\text{Lip}_0(F)$ to $\text{Lip}_0(M)$; for example the infimum convolution

$$E(f)(x) := \inf_{y \in F} \{f(y) + \|f\|_{\text{Lip}} d(x, y)\}$$

is such an extension, and it is an isometry, although in most cases it fails to be linear. It is possible, though, to have $\text{Ext}_0(F, M) = \emptyset$; Brudnyi and Brudnyi [2, Theorem 2.18] provide an example of a two-dimensional Riemannian manifold M , equipped with its geodesic metric, which admits a subset F satisfying that condition.

We will be particularly interested in the subset $\text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$ of $\text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ consisting of the pointwise-to-pointwise continuous elements. The fact that on bounded sets of $\text{Lip}_0(F)$ the weak* and the pointwise topologies coincide implies that any element of $\text{Ext}_0(F, M)$ is weak*-to-weak* continuous if and only if it belongs to $\text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$. Therefore, any $E \in \text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$ admits a preadjoint $P : \mathcal{F}(M) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(F)$, which is a (continuous) canonical projection, in the sense that $P(\mu) = \mu|_F$ for all finitely supported $\mu \in \mathcal{F}(M)$. In particular, $\mathcal{F}(F)$ is complemented in $\mathcal{F}(M)$. Conversely, given a continuous projection $P : \mathcal{F}(M) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(F)$ such that $P(\mu) = \mu|_F$ for all finitely supported $\mu \in \mathcal{F}(M)$, we have $P^* \in \text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$.

Even when M is a Banach space and F is a closed linear subspace, we might not get this complementability condition. Consider, for example, c_0 and let X be a subspace of c_0 which fails to have the bounded approximation property. As mentioned in the introduction, a Banach space Y has the bounded approximation property if and only if $\mathcal{F}(Y)$ does. Since this property is inherited by complemented subspaces, $\mathcal{F}(X)$ cannot be isomorphic to a complemented subspace of $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$. One can still ask whether or not $\text{Ext}_0(X, c_0)$ is empty.

On the other hand, we have the following positive example:

PROPOSITION 2.1 (Lee and Naor [12]). *There exists $C > 0$ such that, for each $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and each subset F of \mathbb{R}^n containing 0, there exists $E \in \text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, \mathbb{R}^n)$ satisfying $\|E\| \leq C\sqrt{n}$.*

Actually, the fact that the extension operator E constructed by Lee and Naor is pointwise-to-pointwise continuous was pointed out by Lancien and Pernecká [10, Proposition 2.3], who used it to study approximation properties of free spaces over subsets of finite-dimensional Banach spaces.

2.2. Metric quotients and Lipschitz-free spaces. We turn our attention to a special kind of metric quotient. Given a pointed metric space $(M, d, 0)$ and a subset F of M containing 0 , let \sim be the equivalence relation which collapses \overline{F} to a point (that is, the equivalence classes are either singletons or \overline{F}). We define the *metric quotient* of M by F , denoted by M/F , as the pointed metric space $(M/\sim, \tilde{d}, [0])$, where \tilde{d} is defined by

$$(2.1) \quad \tilde{d}([x], [y]) = \min\{d(x, y), d(x, F) + d(y, F)\}.$$

The space $\text{Lip}_{[0]}(M/F)$ can be interpreted as the closed linear subspace of $\text{Lip}_0(M)$ consisting of all of its functions which are null in F . Depending on how F is placed in M , we can have the following decomposition for $\mathcal{F}(M)$:

LEMMA 2.2. *Let $(M, d, 0)$ be a pointed metric space and F be a subset containing 0 , and suppose that there exists $E \in \text{Ext}_0^{\text{pt}}(F, M)$. Then*

$$\mathcal{F}(M) \simeq \mathcal{F}(F) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(M/F),$$

with distortion bounded by $(\|E\| + 1)^2$.

Proof. Define $\Phi : \text{Lip}_0(F) \oplus_\infty \text{Lip}_0(M/F) \rightarrow \text{Lip}_0(M)$ by $\Phi(f, g) \doteq E(f) + g$. It is straightforward that Φ is an onto isomorphism with $\|\Phi\| \leq \|E\| + 1$, that Φ is pointwise-to-pointwise continuous and that its inverse $\Phi^{-1} : h \mapsto (h|_F, h - E(h|_F))$ has norm also bounded by $\|E\| + 1$. It follows that Φ is the adjoint of an isomorphism Ψ between $\mathcal{F}(M)$ and $\mathcal{F}(F) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(M/F)$ satisfying the desired distortion bound. ■

3. Products of Lipschitz-free spaces. In this section we will show that $\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq (\sum_{n=1}^\infty \mathcal{F}(X))_{\ell_1}$ for any Banach space X , and derive some consequences. To this end we will use the following construction by Kalton [9]. Let $(M, d, 0)$ be a pointed metric space, denote by B_r the closed ball centered at 0 and with radius $r > 0$ and consider, for each $k \in \mathbb{Z}$, the linear operator $T_k : \mathcal{F}(M) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}})$ defined by

$$T_k \delta_x := \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } x \in B_{2^{k-1}}, \\ (\log_2 d(x, 0) - k + 1) \delta_x & \text{if } x \in B_{2^k} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}}, \\ (k + 1 - \log_2 d(x, 0)) \delta_x & \text{if } x \in B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^k}, \\ 0 & \text{if } x \notin B_{2^{k+1}}. \end{cases}$$

Lemma 4.2 from [9] says that for each $\gamma \in \mathcal{F}(M)$ we have $\gamma = \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} T_k \gamma$

unconditionally and

$$(3.1) \quad \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \|T_k \gamma\|_{\mathcal{F}} \leq 72 \|\gamma\|_{\mathcal{F}}.$$

Lemma 4.1 of [9] states that, given $r_1, \dots, r_n, s_1, \dots, s_n \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $r_1 < s_1 < r_2 < \dots < s_n$ and $\gamma_k \in \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{s_k}} \setminus B_{2^{r_k}})$, if $\theta := \min_{k=1, \dots, n-1} \{r_{k+1} - s_k\}$, then

$$(3.2) \quad \|\gamma_1 + \dots + \gamma_n\|_{\mathcal{F}} \geq \frac{2^\theta - 1}{2^\theta + 1} \sum_{k=1}^n \|\gamma_k\|_{\mathcal{F}}.$$

THEOREM 3.1. *Let X be a Banach space. Then*

$$\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \left(\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(X) \right)_{\ell_1}.$$

Proof. Note that $S : (\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}}))_{\ell_1} \ni (\gamma_k) \mapsto \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \gamma_k \in \mathcal{F}(X)$ is linear, continuous and onto, and from (3.1) we infer that $T : \mathcal{F}(X) \ni \gamma \mapsto (T_k \gamma) \in (\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}}))_{\ell_1}$ is a well defined one-to-one continuous linear operator. Thus $T \circ S$ is a continuous projection from $(\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}}))_{\ell_1}$ onto the isomorphic copy $T(\mathcal{F}(X))$ of $\mathcal{F}(X)$.

Denote $M := \bigcup_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} (B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}})$, and consider $E \in \text{Ext}_0(M \cup \{0\}, X)$ which extends each element of $\text{Lip}_0(M \cup \{0\})$ linearly on each radial segment $[2^{2k-1}, 2^{2k}]x$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$, $x \in S_X$. One readily verifies that E is indeed bounded (with $\|E\| \leq 6$) after writing down the expression for $E(f)(x)$, where $f \in \text{Lip}_0(M \cup \{0\})$ and $x \in [2^{2k-1}, 2^{2k}]S_X$, which reads

$$E(f)(x) = \frac{\|x\| - 2^{2k-1}}{2^{2k-1}} f\left(2^{2k} \frac{x}{\|x\|}\right) + \frac{2^{2k} - \|x\|}{2^{2k-1}} f\left(2^{2k-1} \frac{x}{\|x\|}\right).$$

Clearly E is also pointwise-to-pointwise continuous, thus it is the adjoint of some bounded projection $P : \mathcal{F}(X) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(M \cup \{0\})$ satisfying $P(\mu) = \mu|_M$ for all finitely supported $\mu \in \mathcal{F}(X)$. Note that $\mathcal{F}(M \cup \{0\}) \cong \mathcal{F}(M)$, since $0 \in \overline{M}$. Now by (3.2), the natural identification $\text{Id} : \mathcal{F}(M) \rightarrow (\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}}))_{\ell_1}$ is an isomorphism. So there is a complemented copy of $(\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}}))_{\ell_1}$ in $\mathcal{F}(X)$.

Note that, by Proposition 1.1, rescalings of any metric space give rise to isometrically isomorphic Lipschitz-free spaces. Thus all spaces $\mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}})$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$, are isometrically isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1)$ and all spaces $\mathcal{F}(B_{2^{k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{k-1}})$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$, are isometrically isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(B_4 \setminus B_1)$, which in turn is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1)$. It follows that

$$\mathcal{F}(X) \xrightarrow{c} \left(\sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1) \right)_{\ell_1} \quad \text{and} \quad \left(\sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1) \right)_{\ell_1} \xrightarrow{c} \mathcal{F}(X).$$

Since $(\sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1))_{\ell_1}$ is isomorphic to its ℓ_1 -sum, by the standard

Pełczyński decomposition method (see [14]) we have

$$(3.3) \quad \mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \left(\sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \mathcal{F}(B_2 \setminus B_1) \right)_{\ell_1},$$

and the conclusion follows immediately. ■

Recall that a subset F of a metric space M is called a *Lipschitz retract* of M if there is a Lipschitz map from M onto F which coincides with the identity on F ; in case such a map exists, it is called a *Lipschitz retraction*. As a direct consequence of Theorem 3.1 and Proposition 1.1, we get the following nonlinear version of Pełczyński’s decomposition method for Lipschitz-free spaces.

COROLLARY 3.2. *Let X be a Banach space and M be a metric space, and suppose that X and M admit Lipschitz retracts N_1 and N_2 , respectively, such that X is Lipschitz equivalent to N_2 and M is Lipschitz equivalent to N_1 . Then $\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \mathcal{F}(M)$.*

Proof. $\mathcal{F}(X)$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(N_2)$, which in turn is a complemented subspace of $\mathcal{F}(M)$. Analogously, $\mathcal{F}(M)$ is isomorphic to a complemented subspace of $\mathcal{F}(X)$. The conclusion follows by applying the standard Pełczyński decomposition method. ■

COROLLARY 3.3. *Let X be a Banach space. Then*

$$\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \mathcal{F}(B_1).$$

Proof. Since B_1 is a Lipschitz retract of X , it follows that $\mathcal{F}(X)$ contains a complemented copy of $\mathcal{F}(B_1)$. In the proof of Theorem 3.1 we have shown that $\mathcal{F}(X)$ is isomorphic to $(\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}}))_{\ell_1}$, which is clearly isomorphic to $(\sum_{k < 0} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}}))_{\ell_1}$ since all summands are isometrically isomorphic. Let $N := \bigcup_{k < 0} (B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}})$. Again by (3.2), $(\sum_{k < 0} \mathcal{F}(B_{2^{2k+1}} \setminus B_{2^{2k}}))_{\ell_1}$ is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(N)$, which is complemented in $\mathcal{F}(B_1)$ since there is a pointwise-to-pointwise continuous element in $\text{Ext}_0(N \cup \{0\}, B_1)$. The conclusion follows by an application of Pełczyński’s decomposition method. ■

A metric space is said to be an *absolute Lipschitz retract* if it is a Lipschitz retract of every metric space containing it. Given any metric space M , the space $C_u(M)$ of real-valued bounded and uniformly continuous functions on M , equipped with the uniform norm, is an example of a Banach space which is an absolute Lipschitz retract (see e.g. [1, Theorem 1.6]). This class includes all $C(K)$ spaces for K a compact metric space, in particular it includes c_0 . Since all separable metric spaces are bi-Lipschitz embeddable in c_0 (see [1, Theorem 7.11]), we obtain the following class of metric spaces M with $\mathcal{F}(M) \simeq \mathcal{F}(c_0)$:

COROLLARY 3.4. *Let M be a separable metric space containing a Lipschitz retract which is Lipschitz equivalent to the unit ball of c_0 , and suppose that M is an absolute Lipschitz retract. Then $\mathcal{F}(M) \simeq \mathcal{F}(c_0)$. In particular, if K is an infinite compact metric space, then $\mathcal{F}(C(K)) \simeq \mathcal{F}(c_0)$.*

Proof. It is straightforward by Proposition 1.1 and Corollary 3.3 that there is a complemented copy of $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$ in $\mathcal{F}(M)$. The space M is Lipschitz equivalent to some subset F of c_0 , and F is an absolute Lipschitz retract since this property is preserved by Lipschitz equivalences. Thus F is a Lipschitz retract of c_0 , and again by Proposition 1.1 this implies that $\mathcal{F}(F)$ (and thus $\mathcal{F}(M)$) admits a complemented copy in $\mathcal{F}(c_0)$. The conclusion follows from Theorem 3.1 and an application of Pełczyński's decomposition method. ■

COROLLARY 3.5. *Let F be a subset of \mathbb{R}^n with nonempty interior. Then $\mathcal{F}(F) \simeq \mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$.*

Proof. By Proposition 2.1, there is a complemented copy of $\mathcal{F}(F)$ in $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$. Taking any closed ball $B \subset F$, it is easy to see that there is a Lipschitz retraction from F onto B ; thus by Proposition 1.1 and Corollary 3.3 there is also a complemented copy of $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ in $\mathcal{F}(F)$. The result follows from Theorem 3.1 and an application of Pełczyński's decomposition method. ■

REMARK. As mentioned in the introduction, Hájek and Pernecká [7] have shown that $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ admits a Schauder basis, and raised the natural question of whether the same holds true for $\mathcal{F}(F)$, where F is any closed subset of \mathbb{R}^n . Note that, by Corollary 3.5, the problem is reduced to the case where F has empty interior.

In order to study Lipschitz-free spaces of locally euclidean metric spaces, alongside the corollaries of Theorem 3.1, the following result becomes handy:

THEOREM 3.6 (Lang and Plaut [11]). *Let M be a compact metric space such that each point of M admits a neighborhood which is bi-Lipschitz embeddable in \mathbb{R}^n . Then M is bi-Lipschitz embeddable in \mathbb{R}^n .*

THEOREM 3.7. *Let M be a compact metric space such that each $x \in M$ admits a neighborhood which is bi-Lipschitz embeddable in \mathbb{R}^n . Then there is a complemented copy of $\mathcal{F}(M)$ in $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$.*

If moreover the unit ball of \mathbb{R}^n is bi-Lipschitz embeddable into M , then $\mathcal{F}(M) \simeq \mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$. In particular, the Lipschitz-free space over any n -dimensional compact Riemannian manifold equipped with its geodesic metric is isomorphic to $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$.

Proof. The first part follows directly from Lang and Plaut's result and the fact that the Lipschitz-free space over any subset of \mathbb{R}^n admits a complemented copy in $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}^n)$.

For the second part, note that the closed unit ball of \mathbb{R}^n is an absolute Lipschitz retract, and recall that that property is preserved by Lipschitz equivalences. The result then follows from Corollary 3.5, Theorem 3.1 and an application of Pełczyński's decomposition method. ■

REMARK. Note that the compactness condition in Theorem 3.7 is necessary, even if we have uniformity of the embeddings into \mathbb{R}^n . For example, $\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R}$ is locally isometric to line segments, but $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R})$ is not isomorphic to a subspace of $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R}) \cong L^1$, by Naor and Schechtman's result mentioned in the introduction.

4. $\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \mathcal{F}(X)^2$ with low distortion. Let X be a Banach space. By Theorem 3.1, $\mathcal{F}(X) \simeq \mathcal{F}(X)^2$. In this section we will show that we have the uniform bound $d_{\text{BM}}(\mathcal{F}(X), \mathcal{F}(X) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(X)) \leq 4$; we will do this via an elementary construction based on the metric properties of X .

We start by recalling some definitions and results on quotient metric spaces which are of a more general kind than the ones presented in Section 2. For details, we refer to Weaver's book [15]. Let (M, d) be a complete metric space, and let \sim be an equivalence relation on M . The element of M/\sim containing $x \in M$ will be denoted by either \tilde{x} or $[x]_\sim$. Define a pseudometric \tilde{d} on M/\sim by

$$(4.1) \quad \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) := \inf \sum_{j=1}^n d(x_j, y_j),$$

where the infimum is taken over all $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and all $x_1, \dots, x_n, y_1, \dots, y_n$ satisfying $x \sim x_1, y_j \sim x_{j+1}$ ($j = 1, \dots, n - 1$), $y_n \sim y$. This pseudometric can be roughly interpreted in the following way: it is the length of the shortest discrete path from x to y when we are allowed to teleport between equivalent elements. An equivalent way to define \tilde{d} , which will be useful for further constructions, is the following:

$$(4.2) \quad \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) = \sup |f(x) - f(y)|,$$

where the supremum is taken over all 1-Lipschitz $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ which are constant on each $\tilde{z} \in \tilde{M}$.

On M we define yet another equivalence relation \approx which identifies all $x, y \in M$ satisfying $\tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) = 0$, and on M/\approx we define the metric $\tilde{\tilde{d}}(\tilde{\tilde{x}}, \tilde{\tilde{y}}) = \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y})$. We define M_\sim , the *metric quotient* (or just *quotient*) of M with respect to \sim , as the completion of M/\approx . Note that, for a given complete metric space $(M, d, 0)$ and an equivalence relation \sim on M , by (4.2) there is a canonical isometric isomorphism between $\text{Lip}_0(M_\sim)$ and the closed subspace of $\text{Lip}_0(M)$ consisting of all functions that are constant in each class $\tilde{x} \in M/\sim$.

We recall some definitions concerning path metric spaces. Let (M, d) be a pseudometric space, and let $\varphi : I \rightarrow M$ be a curve (that is, I is an interval and φ is continuous). The *length* of φ is $\ell(\varphi) := \sup\{\sum_{j=1}^n d(\varphi(x_{j-1}), \varphi(x_j))\}$, where the supremum is taken over $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $x_j \in I, x_0 < \dots < x_n$. (M, d) is said to be a *path metric space* if d is a metric and $d(x, y) = \inf\{\ell(\varphi) : \varphi \text{ is a curve in } M \text{ having endpoints } x \text{ and } y\}$. A *minimizing geodesic* in a path metric space is any curve $\varphi : I \rightarrow M$ such that $d(\varphi(t), \varphi(s)) = |t - s|$ for all $t, s \in I$; (M, d) is said to be *geodesic* if any two elements of M are joined by a minimizing geodesic.

PROPOSITION 4.1. *Let (M, d) be a path metric space. Then each metric quotient of M is a path metric space.*

Proof. Fix an equivalence relation \sim on M . Let $x, y \in M$, and for each $k \in \mathbb{N}$ consider pairs $(x_1^k, y_1^k), \dots, (x_{n_k}^k, y_{n_k}^k)$ of elements of M such that

$$x \sim x_1^k, \quad y_j^k \sim x_{j+1}^k \quad (j = 1, \dots, n_k - 1), \quad y_{n_k}^k \sim y$$

and $\sum_{j=1}^{n_k} d(x_j^k, y_j^k) \xrightarrow{k} \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y})$. Since (M, d) is a path metric space, there exist, for each $k \in \mathbb{N}$ and $j = 1, \dots, n_k$, curves φ_j^k with endpoints x_j^k and y_j^k , respectively, and such that

$$\sum_{j=1}^{n_k} \ell(\varphi_j^k) < \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) + 1/k.$$

Concatenating these we get a curve $\tilde{\varphi}^k$ in M/\sim with endpoints \tilde{x} and \tilde{y} satisfying $\ell(\tilde{\varphi}^k) < \tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) + 1/k$. Since for any curve $\tilde{\varphi}$ in M/\sim with endpoints \tilde{x} and \tilde{y} we have $\tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) \leq \ell(\tilde{\varphi})$, it follows that

$$\tilde{d}(\tilde{x}, \tilde{y}) = \inf\{\ell(\tilde{\varphi}) : \tilde{\varphi} \text{ is a curve in } M/\sim \text{ having endpoints } \tilde{x} \text{ and } \tilde{y}\},$$

and then clearly the same holds for M/\approx and thus for M_\sim . ■

REMARK. In Proposition 4.1 we cannot substitute *path metric space* by *geodesic metric space*:

PROPOSITION 4.2. *There is a geodesic metric space M which admits a metric quotient that is not a geodesic path metric space.*

Proof. Let e_j be the standard unit vectors of ℓ_1 and consider the metric subspace of ℓ_1 defined by $M := \bigcup_{j=1}^\infty [0, 1]e_j$. Let $F := \bigcup_{j=1}^\infty \{e_j\}$ and suppose that \sim is the equivalence relation which collapses F to a point. Note that, in this case, $M/\sim = M_\sim$, the M_\sim -distance between $\tilde{0}$ and $\tilde{e}_1 = F$ is 1, and there are minimizing geodesics with endpoints $\tilde{0}$ and \tilde{e}_1 going through each segment $[0, 1]e_j$.

Let

$$F_j := \left[\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{2^{2+j}}, \frac{3}{4} - \frac{1}{2^{2+j}} \right] e_j$$

be interpreted as subsets of M , and consider on M the equivalence relation \equiv that collapses each F_j to a point, and the respective quotient metric space $(M/\equiv, d)$ (again, in this case we have $M_{\equiv} = M/\equiv$). Then $d([\tilde{0}]_{\equiv}, [\tilde{e}_1]_{\equiv}) = 1/2$ and there are curves φ_j in M/\equiv with endpoints $[\tilde{0}]_{\equiv}$ and $[\tilde{e}_1]_{\equiv}$ with $\ell(\varphi_j) \xrightarrow{j} 1/2$, even though there is no minimizing geodesic in M/\equiv with endpoints $[\tilde{0}]_{\equiv}$ and $[\tilde{e}_1]_{\equiv}$. ■

LEMMA 4.3. *Let M be a path metric space, N a metric space, $f : M \rightarrow N$ and $C > 0$. Then f is C -Lipschitz if and only if it is locally C -Lipschitz.*

Proof. To prove the nontrivial implication, fix $\delta > 0$, let $x, y \in M$ and let $\varphi : I \rightarrow M$ be a curve with endpoints x and y satisfying

$$\ell(\varphi) < d_M(x, y) + \delta.$$

For each $t \in I$, by hypothesis there exists $\epsilon_t > 0$ such that $f|_{\varphi([t-\epsilon_t, t+\epsilon_t])}$ is C -Lipschitz. Since I is compact, there are $t_1 < \dots < t_n$ such that $\bigcup_{j=1}^n [t_j - \epsilon_{t_j}, t_j + \epsilon_{t_j}] \supset I$. We can then easily find φ -consecutive points z_1, \dots, z_m in $\varphi(I)$ satisfying

$$\begin{aligned} d_N(f(x), f(y)) &\leq d_N(f(x), f(z_1)) + d_N(f(z_1), f(z_2)) + \dots + d_N(f(z_m), f(y)) \\ &\leq C(d_M(x, z_1) + d_M(z_1, z_2) + \dots + d_M(z_m, y)) \\ &\leq C(d_M(x, y) + \delta). \end{aligned}$$

Since δ was arbitrary, the conclusion follows. ■

Let $(X, \|\cdot\|)$ be a Banach space. We now construct a pair X_L and X_R of metric quotients of X which have properties useful for studying products of $\text{Lip}_0(X)$ (see Proposition 4.6). Let $\alpha, \beta : [0, \infty) \rightarrow [0, \infty)$ be the continuous functions defined in each $[2^m, 2^{m+1}]$, $m \in \mathbb{Z}$, by

$$\alpha(t) := \begin{cases} t - 2^{m-1} & \text{if } 2^m \leq t \leq 2^{m-1} + 2^m, \\ 2^m & \text{if } 2^{m-1} + 2^m \leq t \leq 2^{m+1}, \end{cases}$$

$$\beta(t) := \begin{cases} 2^{m-1} & \text{if } 2^m \leq t \leq 2^{m-1} + 2^m, \\ t - 2^m & \text{if } 2^{m-1} + 2^m \leq t \leq 2^{m+1}. \end{cases}$$

Consider the equivalence relations \sim_L and \sim_R on X defined by

$$\begin{aligned} x \sim_L y &\Leftrightarrow x = y \text{ or } (x = \lambda y \text{ with } \lambda > 0, \text{ and } \alpha \text{ is constant in } [\|x\|, \|y\|]), \\ x \sim_R y &\Leftrightarrow x = y \text{ or } (x = \lambda y \text{ with } \lambda > 0, \text{ and } \beta \text{ is constant in } [\|x\|, \|y\|]), \end{aligned}$$

and denote by $X_L = (X_L, d_L)$ and $X_R = (X_R, d_R)$ the corresponding quotient metric spaces.

To prove the next lemma we use Hopf–Rinow’s Theorem which states that in a complete and locally compact path metric space, each pair of points are joined by a minimizing geodesic (see e.g. [6]).

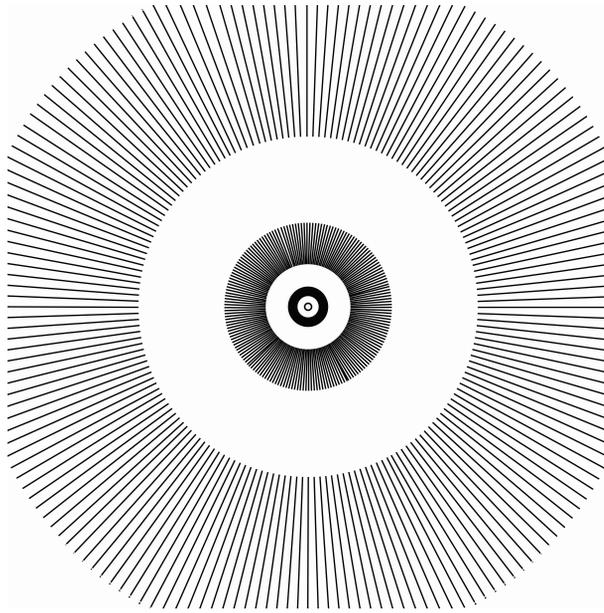


Fig. 1. This is what X_L looks like. The represented radial segments are collapsed to points. X_R looks the same, up to a factor two rescaling.

LEMMA 4.4. X_L and X_R are geodesic.

Proof. For any $x, y \in X$, the metric space $(\text{span}_X\{x, y\}/\sim_R, d_R)$ satisfies the assumptions of Hopf–Rinow’s Theorem, thus there is a minimizing geodesic γ in $(\text{span}_X\{x, y\}/\sim_R, d_R)$ (thus also in X_R) with endpoints \tilde{x} and \tilde{y} . The same argument holds for X_L . ■

LEMMA 4.5. There exist onto bi-Lipschitz mappings $L : X \rightarrow X_L$ and $R : X \rightarrow X_R$ with $\|L\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 1$, $\|L^{-1}\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 4/3$, $\|R\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 3/2$ and $\|R^{-1}\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 1$.

Proof. Denote $C_m := B_{2^{m+1}} \setminus B_{2^m}, N \in \mathbb{N}$, and for each $x \in X \setminus \{0\}$ let $m_x \in \mathbb{Z}$ be such that $\|x\| \in C_{m_x}$. Define a bicontinuous mapping $R : X \setminus \{0\} \rightarrow X_R \setminus \{0\}$ by

$$R(x) := \left(\left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x}}{\|x\|} \right) x \right)^{\sim R}.$$

What R does is to squeeze each crown C_m to the thinner crown $R(C_m) = (B_{2^{m+1}} \setminus B_{2^{m+2^{m-1}}})^{\sim R}$. For $x \in X \setminus \{0\}$, let V_x be a neighborhood of x such that, for each $y \in V_x$, $\|x - y\| \leq 2^{m_x - 1}$ and $d_R(R(x), R(y)) \leq 2^{m_x - 2}$. This implies that, for any $y \in V_x$, we have $|m_x - m_y| \leq 1$, the line segment with endpoints x and y intersects at most two crowns C_m and a minimizing geodesic with endpoints $R(x)$ and $R(y)$ intersects at most two crowns $R(C_m)$.

We shall show that

$$\|x - y\| \leq d_R(R(x), R(y)) \leq \frac{3}{2}\|x - y\|, \quad x \in X \setminus \{0\}, y \in V_x.$$

The fact that X and X_R are geodesic will allow us then to assert, by Lemma 4.3, that the above inequality holds without the restriction $y \in V_x$, and thus that R is bi-Lipschitz, $\|R\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 3/2$ and $\|R^{-1}\|_{\text{Lip}} \leq 1$.

Indeed, let $x, y \in X \setminus B_m$ with $\|x - y\| \leq 2^{m-1}$ and $d_R(R(x), R(y)) \leq 2^{m-2}$. Assume without loss of generality that $\|x\| \leq \|y\|$. Then one of the following conditions is true:

1. $m_x = m_y$, and $d_R(R(x), R(y)) = \|R(x) - R(y)\|$;
2. $m_x < m_y$;
3. $m_x = m_y$, and there is a minimizing geodesic with endpoints $R(x)$ and $R(y)$ passing through $R(C_{m_x-1})$.

If (1) is true, then $1/2 + 2^{m_x}/\|y\| \leq 1/2 + 2^{m_x}/\|x\|$, and

$$(4.3) \quad \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x}}{\|y\|}\right)\|x - y\| \leq \|R(x) - R(y)\| \leq \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x}}{\|x\|}\right)\|x - y\|,$$

thus

$$(4.4) \quad \|x - y\| \leq d_R(R(x), R(y)) \leq \frac{3}{2}\|x - y\|.$$

If (2) is true, suppose that $\|x\| < 2^{m_x+1}$ (if $\|x\| = 2^{m_x+1}$, then x and y satisfy (1)) and let z be the intersection point of the line segment $[x, y]$ and $S_{2^{m_x+1}}$. Then the pairs x, z and z, y satisfy (1), and by (4.4) we have

$$\begin{aligned} d_R(R(x), R(y)) &\leq d_R(R(x), R(z)) + d_R(R(z), R(y)) \\ &\leq \frac{3}{2}(\|x - z\| + \|z - y\|) = \frac{3}{2}\|x - y\|. \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, let \tilde{z} be the intersection of $R(S_{2^{m_x+1}})$ with a minimizing geodesic with endpoints $R(x)$ and $R(y)$. Then we have $d_R(R(x), \tilde{z}) = \|R(x) - \tilde{z}\|$ and $d_R(\tilde{z}, R(y)) = \|\tilde{z} - R(y)\|$, and thus by (4.4),

$$\begin{aligned} \|x - y\| &\leq \|x - R^{-1}(\tilde{z})\| + \|R^{-1}(\tilde{z}) - y\| \leq d_R(R(x), \tilde{z}) + d_R(\tilde{z}, R(y)) \\ &= d_R(R(x), R(y)). \end{aligned}$$

For the remaining case (3), we can obtain the desired inequalities by taking a convenient point on a minimizing geodesic with endpoints $R(x)$ and $R(y)$ and reducing the problem to case (2).

The Lipschitz equivalence between X and X_L is given by the mapping $L : X \setminus \{0\} \rightarrow X_L \setminus \{\tilde{0}\}$ defined by

$$L(x) := \left(\left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x-1}}{\|x\|} \right) x \right)^{\sim L},$$

which squeezes each C_m to the thinner crown $L(C_m) = (B_{2^{m+2^{m-1}}} \setminus B_{2^m})^{\sim L}$. To show this and obtain the Lipschitz constants, simply follow the same steps

taken for R . The only difference will appear when getting to (4.3), which will read

$$\left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x-1}}{\|y\|}\right)\|x - y\| \leq \|L(x) - L(y)\| \leq \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2^{m_x-1}}{\|x\|}\right)\|x - y\|,$$

and thus (4.4) will read

$$\frac{3}{4}\|x - y\| \leq d_L(L(x), L(y)) \leq \|x - y\|.$$

Following analogous steps, we get the conclusion. ■

We are now ready to prove the main result of this section:

PROPOSITION 4.6. *Let X be a Banach space. Then*

$$d_{\text{BM}}(\mathcal{F}(X), \mathcal{F}(X) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(X)) \leq 4.$$

Proof. Recall that, by (4.2), $\text{Lip}_0(X_L) \cong Y_L$ and $\text{Lip}_0(X_R) \cong Y_R$, where Y_L and Y_R are the closed subspaces of $\text{Lip}_0(X)$ defined by

$$Y_L := \{f \in \text{Lip}_0(X) : f \text{ is constant in each equivalence class of } X_L\},$$

$$Y_R := \{f \in \text{Lip}_0(X) : f \text{ is constant in each equivalence class of } X_R\}.$$

Let $\Phi : Y_L \oplus_\infty Y_R \rightarrow \text{Lip}_0(X)$ be defined by $\Phi(f, g) := f + g$. Then Φ is linear with norm $\|\Phi\| \leq 2$. Moreover, Φ admits an inverse defined by

$$(\Phi^{-1}h)(x) = \left(\frac{\alpha(\|h(x)\|)}{\|h(x)\|}h(x), \frac{\beta(\|h(x)\|)}{\|h(x)\|}h(x)\right).$$

Since $x \mapsto \frac{\alpha(\|x\|)}{\|x\|}x$ and $x \mapsto \frac{\beta(\|x\|)}{\|x\|}x$ are 1-Lipschitz, it follows that $\|\Phi^{-1}\| \leq 1$. Now Lemma 4.5 yields an isomorphism Ψ from $\text{Lip}_0(X) \oplus_\infty \text{Lip}_0(X)$ onto $Y_L \oplus_\infty Y_R$ satisfying $\|\Psi\| \cdot \|\Psi^{-1}\| \leq \frac{4}{3} \cdot \frac{3}{2} = 2$. Then $\Phi \circ \Psi$ is an isomorphism from $\text{Lip}_0(X) \oplus_\infty \text{Lip}_0(X)$ onto $\text{Lip}_0(X)$ satisfying $\|\Phi \circ \Psi\| \cdot \|(\Phi \circ \Psi)^{-1}\| \leq 4$. Since Φ and Ψ are pointwise-to-pointwise continuous, $\Phi \circ \Psi$ induces an isomorphism $T : \mathcal{F}(X) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(X) \oplus_1 \mathcal{F}(X)$ satisfying $T^* = \Phi \circ \Psi$ and $\|T\| \cdot \|T^{-1}\| \leq 4$. ■

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