

ON THE UNIFORM BEHAVIOUR OF THE
FROBENIUS CLOSURES OF IDEALS

BY

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Abstract. Let \mathfrak{a} be a proper ideal of a commutative Noetherian ring R of prime characteristic p and let $Q(\mathfrak{a})$ be the smallest positive integer m such that $(\mathfrak{a}^F)^{[p^m]} = \mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}$, where \mathfrak{a}^F is the Frobenius closure of \mathfrak{a} . This paper is concerned with the question whether the set $\{Q(\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}) : m \in \mathbb{N}_0\}$ is bounded. We give an affirmative answer in the case that the ideal \mathfrak{a} is generated by an u.s.d.-sequence c_1, \dots, c_n for R such that

- (i) the map $R/\sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j \rightarrow R/\sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j^2$ induced by multiplication by $c_1 \dots c_n$ is an R -monomorphism;
- (ii) for all $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1^j, \dots, c_n^j)$, $c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1$ is a $\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -filter regular sequence for $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ for $j \in \{1, 2\}$.

1. Introduction. Let R be a commutative Noetherian ring of prime characteristic p . The theory of tight closure was introduced by M. Hochster and C. Huneke [3], and many applications of it have been found (see [5]). For a proper ideal \mathfrak{a} of R , the *Frobenius closure* \mathfrak{a}^F of \mathfrak{a} , defined as

$$\mathfrak{a}^F := \{r \in R : \text{there exists } n \in \mathbb{N}_0 \text{ such that } r^{p^n} \in \mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]}\},$$

is an ideal relative to the theory of tight closure, where the n th Frobenius power $\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]}$ of \mathfrak{a} is the ideal of R generated by the p^n th powers of elements of \mathfrak{a} (we use \mathbb{N}_0 (respectively \mathbb{N}) to denote the set of non-negative (respectively positive) integers). Since \mathfrak{a}^F is finitely generated, $(\mathfrak{a}^F)^{[p^{n_0}]} = \mathfrak{a}^{[p^{n_0}]}$ for some $n_0 \in \mathbb{N}_0$. Let $Q(\mathfrak{a})$ be the smallest power of p with this property. An interesting question is whether the set $\{Q(\mathfrak{b}) : \mathfrak{b} \text{ is a proper ideal of } R\}$ of powers of p is bounded. A simpler question is whether, for a given proper ideal \mathfrak{b} of R , the set $\{Q(\mathfrak{b}^{[p^n]}) : n \in \mathbb{N}_0\}$ is bounded.

In [6], M. Katzman and R. Y. Sharp gave an affirmative answer to the latter question in case \mathfrak{b} is generated by a regular sequence. To do this they used the theory of modules of generalized fractions introduced by R. Y. Sharp

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and H. Zakeri in [11]. In fact they constructed a certain module of generalized fractions to which they applied the Hartshorne–Speiser–Lyubeznik theorem (Theorem 2.1). Following some ideas of [6], we are able to establish the following theorem.

THEOREM 1.1. *Suppose that the ideal \mathfrak{a} of R is generated by an u.s.d.-sequence c_1, \dots, c_n for R such that*

(i) *the map*

$$R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j \rightarrow R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j^2$$

induced by multiplication by $c_1 \dots c_n$ is an R -monomorphism;

(ii) *for all $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1^j, \dots, c_n^j)$, $c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1$ is a $\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -filter regular sequence for $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ for $j \in \{1, 2\}$.*

Then there exists $e \in \mathbb{N}_0$ such that $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^F)^{[p^e]} = (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^{[p^e]}$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$.

The proof employs the Hartshorne–Speiser–Lyubeznik theorem. The new point of view is the use of Koszul homology with respect to a generalized regular sequence.

Throughout the paper, A will denote a general commutative Noetherian ring and R will denote a commutative Noetherian ring of prime characteristic p . We shall always denote by $f : R \rightarrow R$ the Frobenius homomorphism, for which $f(r) = r^p$ for all $r \in R$. Our terminology follows the textbook [1] on local cohomology.

2. An ideal generated by an u.s.d.-sequence. In this paper, we shall work with the skew polynomial ring $R[x, f]$ associated to R and f in the indeterminate x over R . Recall that $R[x, f]$ is, as a left R -module, freely generated by $(x^i)_{i \in \mathbb{N}_0}$, and so consists of all polynomials $\sum_{i=0}^n r_i x^i$, where $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$ and $r_0, \dots, r_n \in R$; however, its multiplication is subject to the rule

$$xr = f(r)x = r^p x \quad \text{for all } r \in R.$$

Now, let Z be a left $R[x, f]$ -module. Then it is easy to see that the x -torsion submodule $\Gamma_x(Z)$ of Z , defined as

$$\Gamma_x(Z) := \{z \in Z : x^j z = 0 \text{ for some } j \in \mathbb{N}\},$$

is an $R[x, f]$ -submodule of Z (cf. [6, Lemma and Definition 1.2]).

Crucial to this paper is the following extension, due to G. Lyubeznik, of a result of R. Hartshorne and R. Speiser. It shows that, when R is local, an x -torsion left $R[x, f]$ -module which is Artinian (that is, “cofinite” in the terminology of Hartshorne and Speiser) as an R -module exhibits a certain uniformity of behaviour.

THEOREM 2.1 ([9, Proposition 4.4]; cf. [2, Proposition 1.11]). *Suppose that (R, \mathfrak{m}) is local, and let G be a left $R[x, f]$ -module which is Artinian as an R -module. Then there exists $e \in \mathbb{N}_0$ such that $x^e \Gamma_x(G) = 0$.*

Hartshorne and Speiser first proved this result in the case where R is local and contains its residue field which is perfect. Lyubeznik applied his theory of F -modules to obtain the result for any local ring R of characteristic p .

DEFINITION 2.2 (see [6, Definition 1.5]). Suppose that (R, \mathfrak{m}) is local, and let G be a left $R[x, f]$ -module which is Artinian as an R -module. By the Hartshorne–Speiser–Lyubeznik Theorem 2.1, there exists $e \in \mathbb{N}_0$ such that $x^e \Gamma_x(G) = 0$; we call the smallest such e the *Hartshorne–Speiser–Lyubeznik number*, or *HSL-number* for short, of G .

Let a_1, \dots, a_n be a sequence of elements of R . Set $\mathfrak{a} := Ra_1 + \dots + Ra_n$. Then the n th local cohomology module $H_{\mathfrak{a}}^n(R)$ can be interpreted as the direct limit of Koszul homology modules (cf. [1, Theorem 5.2.9]), and in the present situation we have

$$H_{\mathfrak{a}}^n(R) \cong \varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k$$

with the map

$$R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k \rightarrow R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{k+1}$$

induced by multiplication by $a_1 \dots a_n$. For each $t \in \mathbb{N}$, let

$$\Theta_t : R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^t \rightarrow \varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k$$

be the canonical homomorphism. We will show that the above direct limit has a structure of a left $R[x, f]$ -module. To do this we recall the following lemma.

LEMMA 2.3 ([6, Lemma 1.3]). *Let M be an R -module and $\tau : M \rightarrow M$ be a \mathbb{Z} -endomorphism of M such that $\tau(rm) = r^p \tau(m)$ for all $r \in R$ and $m \in M$. Then the R -module structure on G can be extended to a structure of a left $R[x, f]$ -module in such a way that $xm = \tau(m)$ for all $m \in M$.*

REMARK 2.4. In view of the above lemma, it is routine to check that $H_{\mathfrak{a}}^i(R)$ (and hence $\varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k$) has a natural structure of a left $R[x, f]$ -module (see [6, Reminder 2.1]). In the following lemma we determine precisely this structure.

LEMMA 2.5. *Let a_1, \dots, a_n be a sequence of elements of R . Then the module $\varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k$ has a structure of a left $R[x, f]$ -module with*

$$x\left(\Theta_t\left(r + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^t\right)\right) = \Theta_{pt}\left(r^p + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{pt}\right)$$

for all $r \in R$ and $t \in \mathbb{N}$.

Proof. Suppose that $r, u \in R$ and $t, s \in \mathbb{N}$ are such that

$$\Theta_t\left(r + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^t\right) = \Theta_s\left(u + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^s\right) \quad \text{in } \varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k.$$

Hence $r(a_1 \dots a_n)^{v-t} - u(a_1 \dots a_n)^{v-s} \in \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^v$ for some $v \in \mathbb{N}$ with $v \geq t$ and $v \geq s$. Application of the Frobenius homomorphism yields $r^p(a_1 \dots a_n)^{p(v-t)} - u^p(a_1 \dots a_n)^{p(v-s)} \in \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{pv}$. It follows that $\Theta_{pt}(r^p + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{pt}) = \Theta_{ps}(u^p + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{ps})$ and that there is a \mathbb{Z} -endomorphism τ of $\varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R / \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^k$ such that $\tau(\Theta_t(r + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^t)) = \Theta_{pt}(r^p + \sum_{j=1}^n Ra_j^{pt})$ for all $r \in R$ and $t \in \mathbb{N}$. Now the claim follows from Lemma 2.3.

Now we recall a certain generalization of the notion of regular sequence. Let M be an A -module. A sequence b_1, \dots, b_n of elements of an ideal \mathfrak{b} of A is said to be a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M if

$$\text{Supp}_A\left(\frac{(b_1, \dots, b_{i-1})M :_M b_i}{(b_1, \dots, b_{i-1})M}\right) \subseteq V(\mathfrak{b})$$

for all $i = 1, \dots, n$, where $V(\mathfrak{b})$ denotes the set of prime ideals of A containing \mathfrak{b} . The concept of a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M is a generalization of that of a filter regular sequence which has been studied in [10], [12], [7] and has led to some interesting results. Note that both concepts coincide if \mathfrak{b} is the maximal ideal in a local ring. Also note that b_1, \dots, b_n is a weak M -sequence if and only if it is an A -filter regular sequence for M . It is easy to see that the analogue of [12, Appendix 2(ii)] holds true whenever A is Noetherian, M is finitely generated and \mathfrak{m} is replaced by \mathfrak{a} ; so that, if b_1, \dots, b_n is a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M , then there is an element $b_{n+1} \in \mathfrak{b}$ such that b_1, \dots, b_n, b_{n+1} is a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M . Thus, for a positive integer n , there exists a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M of length n .

PROPOSITION 2.6 (see [7, Proposition 1.2]). *Let b_1, \dots, b_n ($n > 1$) be a \mathfrak{b} -filter regular sequence for M . Then*

$$H_{\mathfrak{b}}^i(M) \cong \begin{cases} H_{(b_1, \dots, b_n)}^i(M) & \text{for } 0 \leq i < n, \\ H_{\mathfrak{b}}^{i-n}(H_{(b_1, \dots, b_n)}^n(M)) & \text{for } n \leq i. \end{cases}$$

PROPOSITION 2.7. *Suppose that (R, \mathfrak{m}) is a local ring and $t \in \mathbb{N}$. Then $H_{\mathfrak{m}}^t(R)$ is an $R[x, f]$ -submodule of $H_{(r_1, \dots, r_t)}^t(R)$ for every \mathfrak{m} -filter regular sequence $r_1, \dots, r_t \in \mathfrak{m}$ for R .*

Proof. Let $r_1, \dots, r_t \in \mathfrak{m}$ be an \mathfrak{m} -filter regular sequence for R . If $\alpha \in H_{(r_1, \dots, r_t)}^t(R)$ is annihilated by \mathfrak{m}^h for a positive integer h , then $(\mathfrak{m}^h)^{[p]}x\alpha = 0$, and so, in view of Lemma 2.3 and Proposition 2.6, $\Gamma_{\mathfrak{m}}(H_{(r_1, \dots, r_t)}^t(R)) \cong H_{\mathfrak{m}}^t(R)$ is an $R[x, f]$ -submodule of $H_{(r_1, \dots, r_t)}^t(R)$.

The theory of d -sequences was introduced by Huneke in [4]. Let M be an A -module. The sequence a_1, \dots, a_n in A is called a d -sequence for M if, for each $i = 1, \dots, n - 1$, the equality

$$\left(\sum_{j=1}^i Aa_j\right)M :_M a_{i+1}a_k = \left(\sum_{j=1}^i Aa_j\right)M :_M a_k$$

holds for all $k \geq i + 1$ (this is actually a slight weakening of Huneke’s definition); it is an *unconditioned strong d -sequence* (u.s. d -sequence) for M if $a_1^{\alpha_1}, \dots, a_n^{\alpha_n}$ is a d -sequence in any order for all positive integers $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$. d -sequences are closely related to filter regular sequences. It is easy to see that if a_1, \dots, a_n is a d -sequence on M , then it is a $\sum_{i=1}^n Aa_i$ -filter regular sequence for M .

REMARK 2.8. Let \mathfrak{a} be an ideal of R and $i \in \mathbb{N}_0$. For any prime ideal \mathfrak{p} of R we have

- (i) $(\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F = (\mathfrak{a}^F)R_{\mathfrak{p}}$,
- (ii) $(\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^i]} = (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^i]})R_{\mathfrak{p}}$,
- (iii) if $(\mathfrak{a}^F)^{[p^i]} = \mathfrak{a}^{[p^i]}$, then $(\mathfrak{a}^F)^{[p^{i+j}]} = \mathfrak{a}^{[p^{i+j}]}$ for all $j \in \mathbb{N}$.

The proof of the following theorem relies heavily on ideas in M. Katzman and R. Y. Sharp’s proof of [6, Theorem 4.2].

THEOREM 2.9. *Suppose that the ideal \mathfrak{a} of R is generated by an u.s. d -sequence c_1, \dots, c_n for R such that*

- (i) *the map*

$$R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j \rightarrow R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j^2$$

induced by multiplication by $c_1 \dots c_n$ is an R -monomorphism;

- (ii) *for all $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2)$, $c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1$ is a $\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -filter regular sequence for $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ for $j \in \{1, 2\}$.*

Then there exists $e \in \mathbb{N}_0$ such that $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^F)^{[p^e]} = (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^{[p^e]}$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$.

Proof. First of all note that we can assume $\mathfrak{a} \neq 0$. Let $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1, \dots, c_n) \cup \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2)$. It is well known that the local cohomology module $H_{\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}})$ is an Artinian $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -module (cf. [1, Theorem 7.1.3]). Now, in view of Proposition 2.7, let $e_{\mathfrak{p}}$ be the HSL-number of $H_{\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}})$. Let $\{\text{ht } \mathfrak{p} : \mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1, \dots, c_n) \cup \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2)\} = \{h_1, \dots, h_w\}$, where $h_1 < \dots < h_w$. We define (for each $i = 1, \dots, w$)

$$e_i = \max\{e_{\mathfrak{p}} : \mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1, \dots, c_n) \cup \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2) \text{ and } \text{ht } \mathfrak{p} = h_i\},$$

and we claim that $e = \sum_{i=1}^w e_i$ has the desired property.

Now, let m be a positive integer such that $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]})^F)^{[p^e]} \neq (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]})^{[p^e]}$. Then choose $\mathfrak{q} \in \text{Ass}((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]})^F)^{[p^e]}/(\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]})^{[p^e]}$. Hence by Remark 2.8, $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{q}})^F)^{[p^e]} \neq (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{q}})^{[p^e]}$. Note that such a \mathfrak{q} has to be an associated prime of $(\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]})^{[p^e]}$. Since \mathfrak{a} can be generated by a u.s.d.-sequence c_1, \dots, c_n , in view of [8, Lemma 3], we have $\mathfrak{q} \in \text{ass}(c_1, \dots, c_n) \cup \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2)$. By using this observation, in conjunction with Remark 2.8, in order to establish our claim that e has the desired property, it is enough to show that, for each $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{ass}(c_1, \dots, c_n) \cup \text{ass}(c_1^2, \dots, c_n^2)$,

$$((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]}R_{\mathfrak{q}})^F)^{[p^{e_1+\dots+e_i}]} / (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]}R_{\mathfrak{q}})^{[p^{e_1+\dots+e_i}]} = 0$$

for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, where $\text{ht } \mathfrak{p} = h_i$. Suppose that this is not the case, and let \mathfrak{p} be a minimal counterexample. Set $\text{ht } \mathfrak{p} = h_l$; there must exist a positive integer m such that $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F)^{[p^{e_1+\dots+e_l}]} / (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e_1+\dots+e_l}]} \neq 0$. Set $e' := \sum_{\gamma=1}^{l-1} e_{\gamma}$ (interpreted as 0 if $l = 1$). By choice of \mathfrak{p} , each of the $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -modules $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F)^{[p^{e'}]} / (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e'}]}$ and $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F)^{[p^{e'+e_l}]} / (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e'+e_l}]}$ has $\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ as its only possible associated prime, because a smaller associated prime would contradict the minimality of \mathfrak{p} . Therefore, both $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -modules in the last display have finite length.

There exists $\varrho \in (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F$ such that $\varrho^{p^{e'+e_l}} \notin (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e'+e_l}]}$. Consider the element

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha &:= \Theta_{p^m}(\varrho + (c_1^{p^m}/1, \dots, c_n^{p^m}/1)) \\ &\in \varinjlim_{k \in \mathbb{N}} R_{\mathfrak{p}} / (c_1^k/1, \dots, c_n^k/1) \cong H_{(c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1)}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}}). \end{aligned}$$

By using Lemma 2.5, we have

$$\begin{aligned} x^{e'} \alpha &= x^{e'} \Theta_{p^m}(\varrho + (c_1^{p^m}/1, \dots, c_n^{p^m}/1)) \\ &= \Theta_{p^{e'+m}}(\varrho^{p^{e'}} + (c_1^{p^{e'+m}}/1, \dots, c_n^{p^{e'+m}}/1)). \end{aligned}$$

Since $\varrho^{p^{e'}} \in ((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F)^{[p^{e'}]}$ and the R -module

$$((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F)^{[p^{e'}]} / (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e'}]}$$

has finite length, it is routine to check that

$$x^{e'} \alpha \in \Gamma_{\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}}(H_{(c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1)}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}})).$$

Also, by assumption (ii) in conjunction with Proposition 2.6, we have the isomorphism

$$\Gamma_{\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}}(H_{(c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1)}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}})) \cong H_{\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}}).$$

Moreover $\alpha \in \Gamma_x(H_{(c_1/1, \dots, c_n/1)}^n(R_{\mathfrak{p}}))$ because $\varrho \in (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^F$. Now, since by

assumption (i), the map

$$R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j \rightarrow R / \sum_{j=1}^n Rc_j^2$$

induced by multiplication by $c_1 \dots c_n$ is an R -monomorphism and $\varrho^{p^{e'}+e_l} \notin (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^m]}R_{\mathfrak{p}})^{[p^{e'}+e_l]}$, in view of Lemma 2.5, it is routine to check that $x^{e_j}(x^{e'}\alpha) \neq 0$, which is the required contradiction. So the theorem is proved.

COROLLARY 2.10 ([6, Corollary 4.3]). *Suppose that the ideal \mathfrak{a} of R can be generated by a regular sequence. Then there exists $e \in \mathbb{N}_0$ such that $((\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^F)^{[p^e]} = (\mathfrak{a}^{[p^n]})^{[p^e]}$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}_0$.*

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