

# Counterexample for Sharp Trace Theorem

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The purpose of this note is to disprove the following trace theorem:

**Theorem 1.** *For all  $f \in C_c^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ , the following holds :*

$$\int |u(t, 0, 0)|^2 dt \leq C \int |\nabla u(t, x)|^2 dt dx \quad (1)$$

The main idea is to use scaling in the  $x$  variable to reduce (1) to the  $H^1(\mathbb{R}^2) \subset L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^2)$  Sobolev embedding, which we know is false.

For our function  $f$ , take the tensor product

$$f(t, x) = g(t)h(x)$$

where  $g$  is any nonzero  $C_c^\infty(\mathbb{R})$  function, and  $h \in C_c^\infty(\mathbb{R}^2)$  satisfies

$$h(0) = 1. \quad (2)$$

With this  $f$ , (1) can be written as

$$\int |g(t)|^2 dt \leq C \left( \int |\partial_t g(t)|^2 dt \int |h(x)|^2 dx + \int |g(t)|^2 dt \int |\partial_x h(x)|^2 dx \right)$$

Now rescale  $h(x)$  by  $h_\lambda(x) = h(x/\lambda)$ . Then we have

$$\int |g(t)|^2 dt \leq C \left( \lambda \int |\partial_t g(t)|^2 dt \int |h_\lambda(x)|^2 dx + \int |g(t)|^2 dt \int |\partial_x h_\lambda(x)|^2 dx \right)$$

So if we take  $\lambda \rightarrow 0$ , then we get

$$\begin{aligned} \int |g(t)|^2 dt &\leq C \int |g(t)|^2 dt \int |\partial_x h_\lambda(x)|^2 dx \\ \therefore 1 &\leq C \int |\partial_x h_\lambda(x)|^2 dx \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

Therefore, to disprove (1) we only need to be able to make the integral in the RHS smaller than any  $C > 0$ . If the Sobolev embedding were to hold, then we would run into trouble because (2) will imply  $\|h_\lambda\|_{L^\infty} \geq 1$ , which in turn would give an lower bound on the integral on the RHS which is essentially  $\|h_\lambda\|_{H^1}$ . Luckily, this Sobolev embedding fails, so using the counterexample for that we can easily manufacture a counterexample to (3), which disproves (1)