

How to project onto the intersection of a closed affine subspace and a hyperplane

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Abstract

Let A be a closed affine subspace and let B be a hyperplane in a Hilbert space. Suppose we are given their associated nearest point mappings P_A and P_B , respectively. We present a formula for the projection onto their intersection $A \cap B$. As a special case, we derive a formula for the projection onto the intersection of two hyperplanes. These formulas provides useful information even if $A \cap B$ is empty. Examples and numerical experiments are also provided.

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1 Introduction

Throughout, we assume that

$$X \text{ is a real Hilbert space with inner product } \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle : X \times X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad (1)$$

and induced norm $\| \cdot \|$. We also assume that

$$A \text{ is a closed affine subspace of } X \text{ with parallel space } U := A - A. \quad (2)$$

Denote the nearest point mapping associated with A by P_A , and set $a_0 := P_A(0)$. Then $a_0 \in U^\perp$ and $P_A(x) = a_0 + P_U(x)$. This formula allows us to move back and forth between P_A and P_U as needed. Furthermore, we assume that B is a hyperplane given by

$$B := \{x \in X \mid \langle x, v \rangle = \beta\}, \text{ where } v \in X \text{ and } \|v\| = 1, \quad (3)$$

which in turn yields $B = \beta v + \{v\}^\perp$ and $P_B: x \mapsto x - (\langle x, v \rangle - \beta)v$.

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The aim of this note is to present and prove a formula for $P_{A \cap B}$ that relies on P_A and P_B .

Indeed, we have:

Theorem 1.1 (main result). *Suppose that $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$, and let $x \in X$. Then exactly one of the following holds:*

(i) *If $P_U(v) = 0$, then $P_{A \cap B}(x) = P_A(x)$.*

(ii) *If $P_U(v) \neq 0$, then $P_{A \cap B}(x) = P_A(x) + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} P_U(v)$.*

The analysis we carry out will reveal useful information *even if $A \cap B = \emptyset$.*

Organization of the paper. In [Section 2](#), we analyze the case when $P_U(v) = 0$. In [Section 3](#), we turn to the situation when $P_U(v) \neq 0$. A utility version of our main result as well as the special case of two hyperplanes is discussed in [Section 4](#). In [Section 5](#), we outline a numerical application.

2 The case when $P_U(v) = 0$

Throughout this section, we assume that

$$P_U(v) = 0. \quad (4)$$

Note that this assumption allows the following additional characterizations:

$$v \in U^\perp \Leftrightarrow \mathbb{R}v \subseteq U^\perp \Leftrightarrow U \subseteq \{v\}^\perp. \quad (5)$$

We shall not impose that $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$. In order to handle this case, we will define

$$g := P_{B-A}(0) \text{ and } E := A \cap (B - g) \neq \emptyset. \quad (6)$$

Note that $B - A = (U + \{v\}^\perp) + (\beta v - a_0)$. Because $\{v\}^\perp$ is codimension 1, the Minkowski sum $U + \{v\}^\perp$ is closed by combining [[3](#), Theorem 9.35 and Corollary 9.37]. Hence $B - A$ is a closed affine subspace which makes the vector g not only well-defined but it also yields $E \neq \emptyset$. Moreover, [[2](#), Example 2.2] yields

$$g = P_{U^\perp \cap \mathbb{R}v}(b - a) \in U^\perp \cap \mathbb{R}v \quad (7)$$

no matter how $(a, b) \in A \times B$ is chosen. Note that

$$\text{if } A \cap B \neq \emptyset, \text{ then } g = 0 \text{ and so } E = A \cap B; \quad (8)$$

consequently, E can be thought of as the *generalized* intersection of A and B . Finally, by [[1](#), Lemma 2.2.(i)], the generalized intersection E has also a description that does not involve the gap vector g :

$$E = \text{Fix}(P_A P_B) := \{x \in X \mid x = P_A(P_B(x))\}. \quad (9)$$

We now prove

Theorem 2.1. *The assumption that $P_U(v) = 0$ implies $A \subseteq B - g$ and so $E = A$.*

Proof. Take $e \in E = A \cap (B - g)$. Then $e = P_A(e) = a_0 + P_U(e)$ and $e = \beta v + v^\perp - g$ for some $v^\perp \in \{v\}^\perp$. Using the linearity of P_{U^\perp} , the fact that $a_0 \in U^\perp$, (5), and (7), we obtain $a_0 = P_{U^\perp}(e) = \beta P_{U^\perp}(v) + P_{U^\perp}(v^\perp) - P_{U^\perp}(g) = \beta v + v^\perp - P_U(v^\perp) - g$. Therefore, using (5) again,

$$A = a_0 + U = \beta v + v^\perp - P_U(v^\perp) - g + U \quad (10a)$$

$$= \beta v + v^\perp + (U - P_U(v^\perp)) - g \quad (10b)$$

$$= \beta v + v^\perp + U - g \quad (10c)$$

$$\subseteq \beta v + \{v\}^\perp + \{v\}^\perp - g \quad (10d)$$

$$= (\beta v + \{v\}^\perp) - g \quad (10e)$$

$$= B - g, \quad (10f)$$

as claimed. Because $E = A \cap (B - g)$, it now follows that $E = A$. ■

Corollary 2.2. *The assumption that $P_U(v) = 0$ yields $P_E = P_A$. Let $x \in X$. Then exactly one of the following holds:*

(i) $P_A(x) \in B$, $g = 0$, $E = A \cap B \neq \emptyset$, and $P_{A \cap B}(x) = P_A(x)$.

(ii) $P_A(x) \notin B$, $g \neq 0$, $E \neq A \cap B = \emptyset$, and $P_E(x) = P_A(x)$.

Proof. This is a direct consequence of [Theorem 2.1](#). ■

Remark 2.3. *Note that [Corollary 2.2\(i\)](#) yields [Theorem 1.1\(i\)](#).*

3 The case when $P_U(v) \neq 0$

Throughout this section, we assume that

$$P_U(v) \neq 0. \quad (11)$$

Then

$$0 < \|P_U(v)\|^2 = \langle P_U(v), v \rangle. \quad (12)$$

Now set

$$Q: X \rightarrow X: x \mapsto P_A(x) + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} P_U(v) \in A + U = A. \quad (13)$$

Proposition 3.1. *The assumption that $P_U(v) \neq 0$ implies $\text{ran } Q \subseteq A \cap B$; hence, $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$.*

Proof. Let $x \in X$. Using (13) and (12), we have $Q(x) \in A$ and

$$\langle Q(x), v \rangle = \langle P_A(x), v \rangle + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} \langle P_U(v), v \rangle \quad (14a)$$

$$= \langle P_A(x), v \rangle + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} \|P_U(v)\|^2 \quad (14b)$$

$$= \beta. \quad (14c)$$

Hence $Q(x) \in B$ and we are done. ■

Proposition 3.2. *The assumption that $P_U(v) \neq 0$ implies*

$$(A \cap B) - c = U \cap \{v\}^\perp, \quad (15)$$

$$((A \cap B) - c)^\perp = U^\perp + \mathbb{R}v. \quad (16)$$

for every $c \in A \cap B$.

Proof. By [Proposition 3.1](#), $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$. Let $c \in A \cap B$. Then

$$(A \cap B) - c = (A - c) \cap (B - c) = U \cap \{v\}^\perp, \quad (17)$$

which is [\(15\)](#). Hence, using also [\[3, Theorem 9.35 and Corollary 9.37\]](#), we see that

$$((A \cap B) - c)^\perp = (U \cap \{v\}^\perp)^\perp = \overline{U^\perp + \mathbb{R}v} = U^\perp + \mathbb{R}v. \quad (18)$$

Therefore, [\(16\)](#) is verified and we are done. ■

Theorem 3.3. *The assumption that $P_U(v) \neq 0$ implies $Q = P_{A \cap B}$.*

Proof. Let $x \in X$. By [Proposition 3.1](#),

$$Q(x) \in A \cap B. \quad (19)$$

Using [\(13\)](#), we have

$$x - Q(x) = x - P_A(x) - \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} P_U(v) \quad (20a)$$

$$= (P_U(x) + P_{U^\perp}(x)) - (a_0 + P_U(x)) - \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} (v - P_{U^\perp}v) \quad (20b)$$

$$= \left(P_{U^\perp}(x) - a_0 + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} P_{U^\perp}(v) \right) - \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} v \quad (20c)$$

$$\in U^\perp + \mathbb{R}v. \quad (20d)$$

Now [\(19\)](#), [\(16\)](#), and [\(20\)](#) yield

$$x - Q(x) \in ((A \cap B) - Q(x))^\perp. \quad (21)$$

Combining [\(19\)](#) and [\(21\)](#), we conclude that $P_{A \cap B}(x) = Q(x)$. ■

Remark 3.4. *Note that [Theorem 3.3](#) and [\(13\)](#) imply [Theorem 1.1\(ii\)](#).*

4 A utility version of the main result and the case of two hyperplanes

The analysis in the previous section was simplified because of our assumption that $\|v\| = 1$. It is worthwhile to record our results when we drop this normalization requirement.

Theorem 4.1 (trichotomy). *Let A be as in [\(2\)](#) and let H be a hyperplane given by*

$$H := \{x \in X \mid \langle x, c \rangle = \gamma\}, \quad (22)$$

where $c \in X \setminus \{0\}$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$. Let $x \in X$. Then exactly one of the following holds:

- (i) $P_U(c) = 0$, $\langle P_A(x), c \rangle = \gamma$, $A \cap H \neq \emptyset$, and $P_{A \cap H}(x) = P_A(x)$.

(ii) $P_U(c) = 0$, $\langle P_A(x), c \rangle \neq \gamma$, $A \cap H = \emptyset$, and $P_{\text{Fix}(P_A P_H)}(x) = P_A(x)$.

(iii) $P_U(c) \neq 0$, $A \cap H \neq \emptyset$, and $P_{A \cap H}(x) = P_A(x) + \frac{\gamma - \langle P_A(x), c \rangle}{\|P_U(c)\|^2} P_U(c)$.

Proof. Suppose that

$$v = \frac{c}{\|c\|} \quad \text{and} \quad \beta = \frac{\gamma}{\|c\|}. \quad (23)$$

Then $H = B$ (see (3)). Note that

$$P_U(v) = \frac{P_U(c)}{\|c\|}, \quad (24)$$

which shows that $P_U(v) = 0 \Leftrightarrow P_U(c) = 0$.

(i): This is clear from [Corollary 2.2\(i\)](#). (ii): Combine [Corollary 2.2\(ii\)](#) with (9). (iii): Combining [Theorem 3.3](#), (13), and (23) yields

$$P_{A \cap B}(x) = P_A(x) + \frac{\beta - \langle P_A(x), v \rangle}{\|P_U(v)\|^2} P_U(v) \quad (25a)$$

$$= P_A(x) + \frac{\gamma / \|c\| - \langle P_A(x), c / \|c\| \rangle}{\|P_U(c / \|c\|)\|^2} P_U(c / \|c\|) \quad (25b)$$

$$= P_A(x) + \frac{\gamma - \langle P_A(x), c \rangle}{\|P_U(c)\|^2} P_U(c), \quad (25c)$$

as claimed. ■

Corollary 4.2 (two hyperplanes). *Suppose that*

$$H_1 := \{x \in X \mid \langle x, c_1 \rangle = \gamma_1\} \quad \text{and} \quad H_2 := \{x \in X \mid \langle x, c_2 \rangle = \gamma_2\}, \quad (26)$$

where c_1, c_2 lie in $X \setminus \{0\}$, and γ_1, γ_2 belong to \mathbb{R} . Let $x \in X$. Then the following hold:

(i) If $\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2 = \|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2$ and $\|c_1\|^2 (\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \gamma) = \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)$, then $H_1 = H_2$ and

$$P_{H_1 \cap H_2}(x) = P_{H_1}(x) = x - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1. \quad (27)$$

(ii) If $\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2 = \|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2$ and $\|c_1\|^2 (\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \gamma) \neq \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)$, then H_1 and H_2 are parallel but distinct ($H_1 \cap H_2 = \emptyset$), and

$$P_{\text{Fix}(P_{H_1} P_{H_2})}(x) = P_{H_1}(x) = x - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1. \quad (28)$$

(iii) If $\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2 \neq \|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2$, then $H_1 \cap H_2 \neq \emptyset$ and

$$P_{H_1 \cap H_2}(x) = x + \frac{\|c_2\|^2 (\gamma_1 - \langle x, c_1 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \gamma_2)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} c_1 \quad (29a)$$

$$+ \frac{\|c_1\|^2 (\gamma_2 - \langle x, c_2 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} c_2. \quad (29b)$$

Proof. We apply [Theorem 4.1](#) with $A = H_1$, $H = H_2$, $c = c_2$, and $\gamma = \gamma_2$. We have

$$P_A(x) = P_{H_1}(x) = x - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1, \quad (30)$$

$U = \{c_1\}^\perp$, and so

$$P_U(c) = P_{\{c_1\}^\perp}(c_2) = c_2 - P_{\mathbb{R}c_1}(c_2) = c_2 - \frac{\langle c_2, c_1 \rangle}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1. \quad (31)$$

Therefore, (31) implies

$$\|P_U(c)\|^2 = \left\| c_2 - \frac{\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1 \right\|^2 \quad (32a)$$

$$= \|c_2\|^2 - \frac{2\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2}{\|c_1\|^2} + \frac{\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2}{\|c_1\|^4} \|c_1\|^2 \quad (32b)$$

$$= \|c_2\|^2 - \frac{\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2}{\|c_1\|^2}. \quad (32c)$$

Hence

$$P_U(c) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \|P_U(c)\|^2 = 0 \Leftrightarrow \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2 = \|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2. \quad (33)$$

Next, (30) implies

$$\langle P_A(x), c \rangle = \langle P_{H_1}(x), c_2 \rangle = \langle x, c_2 \rangle - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle. \quad (34)$$

Thus

$$\langle P_A(x), c \rangle = \gamma \Leftrightarrow \|c_1\|^2 (\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \gamma_2) = \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1). \quad (35)$$

(i): The hypothesis in this case corresponds to $P_U(c) = 0$ and $\langle P_A(x), c \rangle = \gamma$. By [Theorem 4.1\(i\)](#), $A \cap H \neq \emptyset$ which means the gap vector $g = 0$ by [Corollary 2.2\(i\)](#). By [Theorem 2.1](#), $H_1 \subseteq H_2$. Because both H_1 and H_2 are hyperplanes, we have $H_1 = H_2 = H_1 \cap H_2$.

(ii): The hypothesis in this case corresponds to $P_U(c) = 0$ and $\langle P_A(x), c \rangle \neq \gamma$. The conclusion now follows from [Theorem 4.1\(ii\)](#).

(iii): Using (33), [Theorem 4.1\(iii\)](#), (30), (34), (32), and (31), we have $H_1 \cap H_2 = A \cap H \neq \emptyset$ and

$$P_{H_1 \cap H_2}(x) = x - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1 + \frac{\gamma_2 - \left(\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle \right)}{\|c_2\|^2 - \frac{\langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2}{\|c_1\|^2}} \left(c_2 - \frac{\langle c_2, c_1 \rangle}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1 \right) \quad (36a)$$

$$= x - \frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1 \quad (36b)$$

$$+ \frac{\|c_1\|^2 (\gamma_2 - \langle x, c_2 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} \left(c_2 - \frac{\langle c_2, c_1 \rangle}{\|c_1\|^2} c_1 \right) \quad (36c)$$

$$= x + \frac{\|c_1\|^2 (\gamma_2 - \langle x, c_2 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} c_2 \quad (36d)$$

$$- \left(\frac{\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1}{\|c_1\|^2} + \frac{\|c_1\|^2 (\gamma_2 - \langle x, c_2 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} \frac{\langle c_2, c_1 \rangle}{\|c_1\|^2} \right) c_1 \quad (36e)$$

$$= x + \frac{\|c_1\|^2 (\gamma_2 - \langle x, c_2 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_1 \rangle - \gamma_1)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} c_2 \quad (36f)$$

$$+ \frac{\|c_2\|^2 (\gamma_1 - \langle x, c_1 \rangle) + \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle (\langle x, c_2 \rangle - \gamma_2)}{\|c_1\|^2 \|c_2\|^2 - \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^2} c_1, \quad (36g)$$

as announced. ■

Remark 4.3. Having just found a formula for the projection onto the intersection of two hyperplanes, it is in principle possible to present a formula for the intersection of three (or more) hyperplanes; however, the result would of course be significantly more complicated than the formulas presented in [Corollary 4.2](#).

We conclude this section with the following limiting example which shows that there does not appear to exist a straightforward extension of the main result in [Theorem 1.1](#). Indeed, [Example 4.4](#) below verifies that [Theorem 1.1](#) does not generalize when we replace A by a cone K . Observe that in this case $a_0 = 0$, hence U is replaced by K as well.

Example 4.4. Suppose that $X = \mathbb{R}^2$, and that $K = \mathbb{R}_+^2 := \{(\xi_1, \xi_2) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid \xi_1 \geq 0, \xi_2 \geq 0\}$. Let $v_1 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(-1, -1)$, let $v_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(1, 1)$, let $\beta_1 = 0$ and let $\beta_2 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$. Set $(\forall i \in \{1, 2\}) B_i := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid \langle x, v_i \rangle = \beta_i\}$. Then the following hold:

(i) Let $x \in K \setminus \{(0, 0)\}$. Then:

- (a) $K \cap B_1 = \{(0, 0)\}$.
- (b) $P_K(v_1) = (0, 0)$.
- (c) $P_{K \cap B_1} \equiv (0, 0)$.
- (d) $(0, 0) = P_{K \cap B_1}(x) \neq P_K(x) = x$.

(ii) Set $S := \{(\xi, 0) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid \xi > \sqrt{2}\}$ and set $\tilde{Q} := P_K + \frac{\beta_2 - \langle P_K(\cdot), v_2 \rangle}{\|P_K(v_2)\|^2} P_K(v_2)$. Then:

- (a) $K \cap B_2 = \text{conv}\{(1, 0), (0, 1)\}$.
- (b) $P_K(v_2) = v_2 \neq (0, 0)$.
- (c) $\tilde{Q} = P_K + \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} - \langle P_K(\cdot), v_2 \rangle\right) v_2$.
- (d) $(\forall (\xi, 0) \in S) P_{K \cap B_2}(\xi, 0) = (1, 0)$.
- (e) $(\forall (\xi, 0) \in S) \tilde{Q}((\xi, 0)) = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{2} + \xi, \sqrt{2} - \xi) \notin K$.

5 A numerical experiment

In this section we provide a numerical experiment to evaluate the performance of the formula developed in [Corollary 4.2](#) when employed to find the projection onto the intersection of finitely many hyperplanes.

We randomly generate 100 matrices M each of size 10×50 . For each matrix M , we randomly generate $\bar{x} \in \mathbb{R}^{50}$ and set $b = M\bar{x}$. This guarantees that the underdetermined system of equations $Mx = b$ is consistent, i.e., it has a solution. For each random instance of the matrix M we randomly generate 100 starting points. Because the i^{th} row in each of the randomly generated systems of equation $Mx = b$ defines a hyperplane, namely $H_i := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^{50} \mid \langle m_i, x \rangle = b_i\}$, we set

$$P := P_{H_{10}} P_{H_9} \cdots P_{H_2} P_{H_1} \quad (37)$$

and

$$Q := P_{H_{10} \cap H_9} P_{H_8 \cap H_7} \cdots P_{H_2 \cap H_1}. \quad (38)$$

For each of the randomly generated problems with data (M, b) , and for a randomly generated starting point x_0 , let $x^* = P_C(x_0)$, where $C = M^{-1}(b)$. We generate then two sequences via

$$(\forall n \in \mathbb{N}) \quad p_n := P^n x_0 \quad \text{and} \quad q_n := Q^n x_0. \quad (39)$$

Both $(p_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ and $(q_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ are incarnations of the method of *cyclic projections*, and thus both sequences converge to x^* , by e.g., [3, Theorem 9.27] or [4, Chapter 3]. At each iteration index n , we measure the decibel (dB) value of the proximity function which we choose to be the relative distance of the iterate to the solution x^* :

$$20 \log_{10} \frac{\|p_n - x^*\|}{\|p_0 - x^*\|} \quad \text{and} \quad 20 \log_{10} \frac{\|q_n - x^*\|}{\|q_0 - x^*\|}. \quad (40)$$

Figure 1 reports the progress of the proximity function of both sequences as a function of the iteration index where the median is calculated over all 100 instances of the matrix M and then over 100 randomly generated starting points, resulting in 10,000 numerical scenarios. We observe a notable improvement in the speed of convergence using Corollary 4.2 — this suggests that experimenting with this result may improve performance of projection algorithms involving hyperplanes.

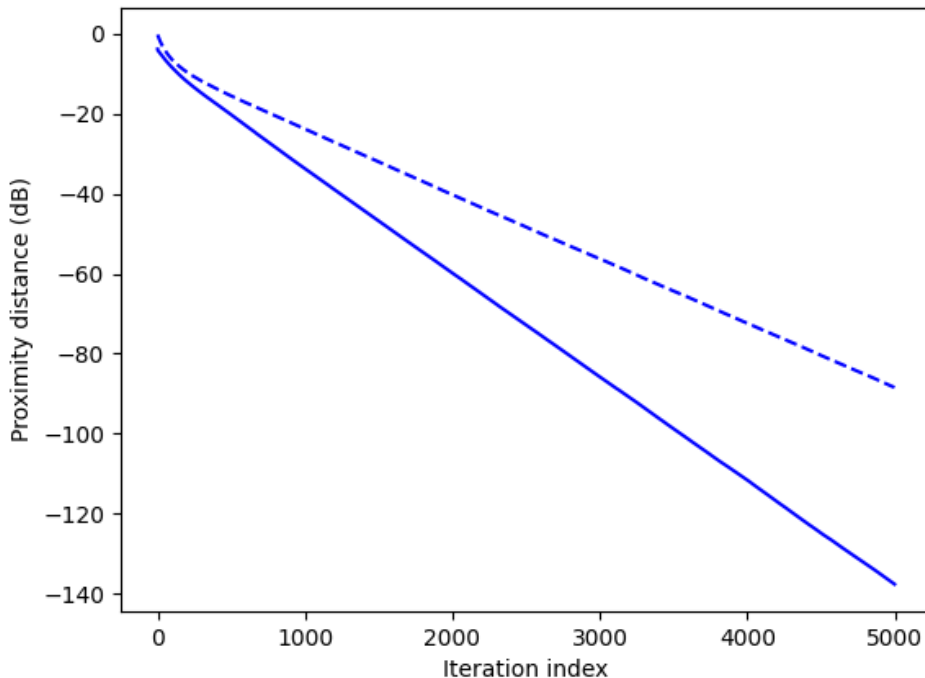


Figure 1: Plot of the decibel (dB) value of the median of the proximity function for the sequences $(p_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ (the dashed curve) and $(q_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ (the solid curve).

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

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