

# On embeddings of locally finite metric spaces into $\ell_p$

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December 20, 2018

## Abstract

It is known that if finite subsets of a locally finite metric space  $M$  admit  $C$ -bilipschitz embeddings into  $\ell_p$  ( $1 \leq p \leq \infty$ ), then for every  $\varepsilon > 0$ , the space  $M$  admits a  $(C + \varepsilon)$ -bilipschitz embedding into  $\ell_p$ . The goal of this paper is to show that for  $p \neq 2, \infty$  this result is sharp in the sense that  $\varepsilon$  cannot be dropped out of its statement.

**Keywords.** Distortion of a bilipschitz embedding, isometric embedding, locally finite metric space, strictly convex Banach space

**2010 Mathematics Subject Classification.** Primary: 46B85; Secondary: 46B04.

## 1 Introduction and Statement of Results

During the last decades, the study of bilipschitz embeddings of metric spaces into Banach spaces has become a field of intensive research with a great number of applications. The latter are not restricted to the area of Functional Analysis, but also include Graph Theory, Group Theory, and Computer Science. We refer to

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[16, 17, 18, 24, 26]. This work is focused on the study of relations between the embeddability into  $\ell_p$  of an infinite metric space and its finite pieces. Let us recollect some needed notions.

**Definition 1.1.** A metric space is called *locally finite* if each ball of finite radius in it has finite cardinality.

**Definition 1.2.** Let  $(A, d_A)$  and  $(Y, d_Y)$  be metric spaces. Given,  $1 \leq C < \infty$ , a map  $f : A \rightarrow Y$ , is called a *C-bilipschitz embedding* if there exists  $r > 0$  such that

$$\forall u, v \in A \quad rd_A(u, v) \leq d_Y(f(u), f(v)) \leq rCd_A(u, v). \quad (1)$$

A map  $f$  is a *bilipschitz embedding* if it is  $C$ -bilipschitz for some  $1 \leq C < \infty$ . The smallest constant  $C$  for which there exists  $r > 0$  such that (1) is satisfied, is called the *distortion* of  $f$ .

Unexplained terminology can be found in [15, 24].

It has been known that the bilipschitz embeddability of locally finite metric spaces into Banach spaces is finitely determined in the sense described by the following theorem.

**Theorem 1.3** ([23]). *Let  $A$  be a locally finite metric space whose finite subsets admit bilipschitz embeddings with uniformly bounded distortions into a Banach space  $X$ . Then,  $A$  also admits a bilipschitz embedding into  $X$ .*

Theorem 1.3 has many predecessors, see [2, 3, 4, 21, 22]. Applications of this theorem to the coarse embeddings important for Geometric Group Theory and Topology are discussed in [23]. To expand on the theme, the argument of [23] yields a stronger result, namely the one stated as Theorem 1.4. In order to formulate Theorem 1.4, it is handy to employ the parameter  $D(X)$  of a Banach space  $X$  introduced in [20]. Let us recollect its definition. Given a Banach space  $X$  and a real number  $\alpha \geq 1$ , we write:

- $D(X) \leq \alpha$  if, for any locally finite metric space  $A$ , all finite subsets of which admit bilipschitz embeddings into  $X$  with distortions  $\leq C$ , the space  $A$  itself admits a bilipschitz embedding into  $X$  with distortion  $\leq \alpha \cdot C$ ;
- $D(X) = \alpha$  if  $\alpha$  is the least number for which  $D(X) \leq \alpha$ ;
- $D(X) = \alpha^+$  if, for every  $\varepsilon > 0$ , the condition  $D(X) \leq \alpha + \varepsilon$  holds, while  $D(X) \leq \alpha$  does not;
- $D(X) = \infty$  if  $D(X) \leq \alpha$  does not hold for any  $\alpha < \infty$ .

In addition, we use inequalities like  $D(X) < \alpha^+$  and  $D(X) < \alpha$  with the natural meanings, for example  $D(X) < \alpha^+$  indicates that either  $D(X) = \beta$  for some  $\beta \leq \alpha$  or  $D(X) = \beta^+$  for some  $\beta < \alpha$ .

**Theorem 1.4** ([23]). *There exists an absolute constant  $D \in [1, \infty)$ , such that for an arbitrary Banach space  $X$  the inequality  $D(X) \leq D$  holds.*

Recently, new estimates of the parameter  $D(X)$  for some classes of Banach spaces have been obtained in [20]. Recall that a family of finite-dimensional Banach spaces  $\{X_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$  is said to be *nested* if  $X_n$  is a proper subspace of  $X_{n+1}$  for every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . For such families, an estimate for  $D(X)$  from above is expressed by:

**Theorem 1.5** ([20, Theorem 1.9]). *Let  $1 \leq p < \infty$ . If  $\{X_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$  is a nested family of finite-dimensional Banach spaces, then  $D\left(\left(\bigoplus_{n=1}^\infty X_n\right)_p\right) \leq 1^+$ .*

The next assertion is an immediate consequence of Theorem 1.5:

**Corollary 1.6** ([20, Corollary 1.10]). *If  $1 \leq p < \infty$ , then  $D(\ell_p) \leq 1^+$ .*

It should be mentioned that the case where  $p = \infty$  was discarded because the classical result of Fréchet [9] implies that  $D(\ell_\infty) = 1$ . Observe also that it is a well-known fact that  $D(\ell_2) = 1$ . Although the paper [20] contains some estimates for  $D(X)$  from below, the following question was left open: whether  $D(\ell_p) = 1^+$  or  $D(\ell_p) = 1$  for  $1 \leq p < \infty$ ,  $p \neq 2$ ?

The main goal of this paper is to complete the picture by proving that  $D(\ell_p) \geq 1^+$  if  $p \in [1, \infty)$ ,  $p \neq 2$ . See Theorem 1.11 and Corollary 1.9. It is worth pointing out that our proofs for the cases  $p = 1$  and  $p > 1$  are different from each other.

**Definition 1.7** ([8, Fact 7.7, p. 335]). A Banach space  $X$  is called *strictly convex* if the condition  $\|x + y\| = \|x\| + \|y\|$  for  $x, y \in X \setminus \{0\}$  implies  $x = \lambda y$  for some  $\lambda > 0$ .

In the present work, it is shown that  $D(X) > 1$  for a large class of strictly convex Banach spaces  $X$  implying that  $D(X) = 1^+$  for all strictly convex Banach spaces satisfying the assumption of Theorem 1.5. To be more specific, the following statement will be proved (see Section 2):

**Theorem 1.8.** *Let  $X$  be a strictly convex Banach space such that all finite subsets of  $\ell_2$  admit isometric embeddings into  $X$ , but  $\ell_2$  itself does not admit an isomorphic embedding into  $X$ . Then  $D(X) > 1$ .*

With the help of Theorem 1.8, one derives:

**Corollary 1.9.** *Let  $p \in (1, \infty)$ ,  $p \neq 2$ . Then every strictly convex Banach space of the form  $X = \left(\bigoplus_{n=1}^\infty X_n\right)_p$ , where  $\{X_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$  is a nested sequence of finite-dimensional Banach spaces satisfies  $D(X) > 1$ .*

Combining Theorem 1.5 and Corollary 1.9 one obtains:

**Corollary 1.10.** *Let  $p \in (1, \infty)$ ,  $p \neq 2$ , and let  $\{X_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$  be a nested family of finite-dimensional strictly convex Banach spaces. Then, the space  $X = \left(\bigoplus_{n=1}^\infty X_n\right)_p$  satisfies  $D(X) = 1^+$ . The equality  $D(\ell_p) = 1^+$  for  $p \in (1, \infty)$ ,  $p \neq 2$ , follows as a special case of this result.*

The case  $p = 1$  is quite different because  $\ell_1$  is not strictly convex. This case is examined in Section 3, where we prove:

**Theorem 1.11.**  $D(\ell_1) > 1$ .

Juxtaposing this outcome with Theorem 1.5, we reach:

**Corollary 1.12.**  $D(\ell_1) = 1^+$ .

*Remark 1.13.* It should be mentioned that the above results are not the first known ones claiming  $D(X) > 1$ . Before now, results of this kind were obtained in [14, Theorem 2.9] and [20, Theorem 1.12] for some other Banach spaces and their classes.

## 2 Proof of Theorem 1.8

Prior to presenting the proof of Theorem 1.8, let us provide some auxiliary information. By developing the notion of a linear triple [6, p. 56], we introduce the following:

**Definition 2.1.** A collection  $r = \{r_i\}_{i=1}^n$ ,  $n \geq 3$ , of points in a metric space  $(A, d_A)$  is called a *linear tuple* if the sequence  $\{d_A(r_i, r_1)\}_{i=1}^n$  is strictly increasing and if, for  $1 \leq i < j < k \leq n$ , the equality below holds:

$$d_A(r_i, r_k) = d_A(r_i, r_j) + d_A(r_j, r_k). \quad (2)$$

A *linear triple* is a linear tuple with  $n = 3$ .

**Lemma 2.2.** *An isometric image of a linear tuple  $r = \{r_i\}_{i=1}^n$  in a strictly convex Banach space is contained in the line segment joining the images of  $r_1$  and  $r_n$ .*

*Proof.* It suffices to prove the lemma for linear triples, and then to use this result for all triples of the form  $\{r_1, r_i, r_n\}$ ,  $i = 2, \dots, n-1$ .

It may be assumed, without loss of generality, that the image of  $r_1$  is 0. Let  $0, x$ , and  $z$  be the images of the linear triple under an isometric embedding. Equality (2) and the assumption that the embedding is isometric imply that  $\|x\| + \|z - x\| = \|z\|$ . By Definition 1.7, this yields  $x = \lambda(z - x)$  for some  $\lambda > 0$ . The conclusion that  $x$  belongs to the line segment joining 0 and  $z$  follows.  $\square$

For the sequel, the next fact is needed (by  $B_Z$  we denote the unit ball of a Banach space  $Z$ ):

**Lemma 2.3.** *Let  $Z$  be a finite-dimensional Banach space and  $F$  be a Banach space. Then, for each  $\varepsilon > 0$ , there exists  $\delta = \delta(\varepsilon, Z, F) > 0$  such that if a  $\delta$ -net in  $B_Z$  admits an isometric embedding into  $F$ , then  $F$  contains a subspace whose Banach-Mazur distance to  $Z$  does not exceed  $(1 + \varepsilon)$ .*

Lemma 2.3 is an immediate consequence of Bourgain's discretization theorem [7]. It should be emphasized that this theorem provides a much stronger claim because Bourgain found an explicit estimate for  $\delta$  as a function of  $\varepsilon$  and the dimension of

$Z$ ; besides in Bourgain's theorem, the distortion of embedding of  $Z$  is estimated in terms of distortion of embedding of a  $\delta$ -net of  $B_Z$ . See [5, 10] for simplifications of Bourgain's proof, see also its presentation in [24, Section 9.2]. Meanwhile, the existence of  $\delta(\varepsilon, Z, F)$  can be derived from earlier results of Ribe [25] and Heinrich and Mankiewicz [11], see [10, p. 818].

*Proof of Theorem 1.8.* Denote the unit vector basis of  $\ell_2$  by  $\{e_i\}_{i=1}^\infty$ . Our intention is to find a locally finite subset  $M$  of  $\ell_2$  in such a way that:

- (A)  $M$  contains a  $\delta(\frac{1}{n}, \ell_2^n, X)$ -net  $M_n$  of a shifted unit ball  $y_n + B_{\ell_2^n}$ ,  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ ; and
- (B) There exists a sequence  $\{\alpha_i\}_{i=1}^\infty$  of positive numbers such that, if  $T : M \rightarrow X$  is an isometry and  $T(0) = 0$ , then the image of  $T(M_n)$  is contained in the linear span of  $\{T(\alpha_1 e_1), \dots, T(\alpha_n e_n)\}$ .

The following result is to be applied.

**Theorem 2.4** ([13]). *Let  $B$  be a normed linear space. Then, a necessary and sufficient condition that  $B$  be isomorphic to an inner product space is that there exists a constant  $k \geq 1$  such that, for each finite dimensional subspace  $J$  of  $B$ , there exists a linear mapping  $H_J$  of  $J$  into a Hilbert space satisfying  $(1/k)\|x\| \leq \|H_J x\| \leq k\|x\|$  for each  $x$  in  $J$ .*

Theorem 2.4 will be used to show that the existence of a set  $M$  satisfying both conditions (A) and (B) will prove Theorem 1.8, by whose assumption finite subsets of  $M$  admit isometric embeddings into  $X$ . What is left is to establish that  $M$  itself does not admit an isometric embedding into  $X$ .

In fact, such an embedding  $T$  could be assumed to satisfy  $T(0) = 0$ . Combining condition (A) with Lemma 2.3, one concludes that the subspace spanned by  $T(M_n)$  contains another one, which is  $(1 + \frac{1}{n})$ -isomorphic to  $\ell_2^n$ . By condition (B), the latter subspace has to coincide with the linear span of  $\{T(\alpha_1 e_1), \dots, T(\alpha_n e_n)\}$ .

Let  $B$  be the linear span of  $\{T(\alpha_i e_i)\}_{i=1}^\infty$ . By the conclusion of the previous paragraph, the normed linear space  $B$  satisfies the condition of Theorem 2.4 with  $k = 2$ . Thus, the closure of  $B$  in  $X$  is isomorphic to  $\ell_2$ , which is a contradiction.

Set

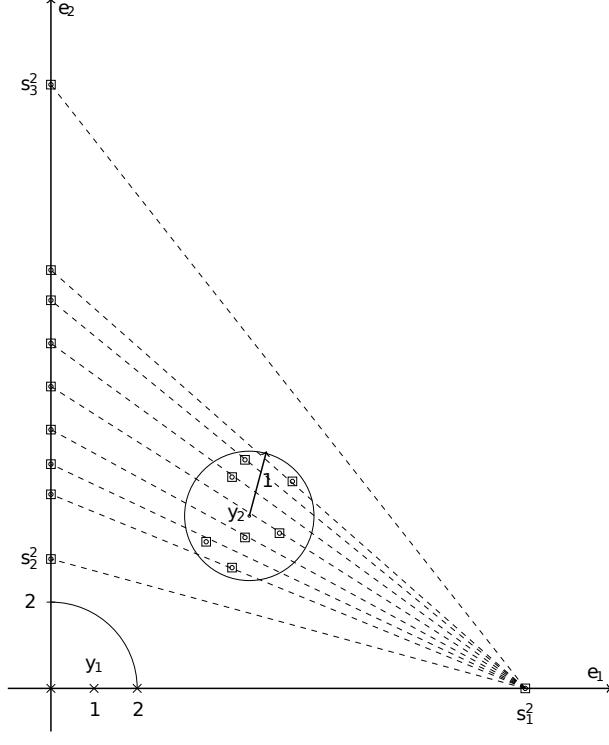
$$M = \left( \bigcup_{n=1}^{\infty} M_n \right) \bigcup \{0\},$$

where  $M_n$  are finite sets constructed in the way described hereinafter.

Denote by  $R_i, i \in \mathbb{N}$ , the positive rays generated by  $e_i$ , that is,  $R_i = \{\alpha e_i : \alpha \geq 0\}$ . Let  $M_1$  be the  $\delta(1, \ell_2^1, X)$ -net in the line segment  $[0, 2e_1]$ , where we assume that  $M_1$  includes  $e_1$ . It is clear that  $M_1$  satisfies (A).

For  $n > 1$  sets  $\{M_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$  will be constructed inductively. Suppose that we have already created  $M_1, \dots, M_{n-1}$ . To construct  $M_n$ , we pick points  $s_i^n \in R_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq n$ , and one more point,  $s_{n+1}^n \in R_n$  - so that  $R_n$  contains both  $s_n^n$  and  $s_{n+1}^n$  - in such a way that  $\text{conv}(\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1})$  is at distance at least  $n$  from the origin, and  $\text{conv}(\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1})$  contains a shift  $y_n + B_{\ell_2^n}$  of the unit ball (for some  $y_n$ ). This is clearly possible.

Next, we select a  $\delta(\frac{1}{n}, \ell_2^n, X)$ -net  $\mathcal{N}_n$  in this shifted unit ball  $y_n + B_{\ell_2^n}$  and include it in  $M_n$  together with  $\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ . At this point, it is evident that condition **(A)** is satisfied.



We use  $\times$  to mark elements of  $M_1$

We use  $\oplus$  to mark elements of  $M_2$

Figure 1:  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ .

To ensure that condition **(B)** is also satisfied - as it will be seen later - we add, for each element  $z \in \mathcal{N}_n$ , finitely many additional elements of  $\text{conv}(\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1})$  to  $M_n$  according to the procedure suggested below:

- If  $z \in \{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ , there is nothing to include. If  $z \notin \{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ , we find and include in  $M_n$  an element  $w_1(z)$  in a convex hull of an  $n$ -element subset  $W_1(z)$  of  $\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$  with  $z$  being on the line segment joining  $w_1(z)$  and  $s_i^n \in (\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1} \setminus W_1(z))$ . One of the ways of doing this for  $M_2$  is shown in Figure 1.
- If  $w_1(z) \in \{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ , there is nothing else to include. If  $w_1(z) \notin \{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ , we find and include in  $M_n$  an element  $w_2(z)$  in a convex hull of an  $(n-1)$ -element subset  $W_2(z)$  of  $\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$  such that  $w_1(z)$  is on the line segment joining  $w_2(z)$  and  $s_i^n \in (\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1} \setminus W_2(z))$ .
- We continue in an obvious way.

- If we do not terminate the process in one of the previous steps, we arrive at the situation when  $w_n(z)$  is in a convex hull of a 2-element subset of  $\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ , and hence it is on some line segment of the form  $[s_i^n, s_j^n]$ . At this point we stop.

It has already been stated that condition **(A)** is satisfied for  $M$ . Now, let us verify condition **(B)**. To do this, it suffices to prove that, for each isometry  $T : (M_n \cup \{0\}) \rightarrow X$  satisfying  $T(0) = 0$ , the image  $T(M_n)$  is contained in the linear span of  $\{T(s_1^n), \dots, T(s_n^n)\}$ . This condition looks slightly different from the one in **(B)**. However, defining  $\{\alpha_i\}_{i=1}^\infty$  by  $\alpha_1 = 1$  and  $\alpha_i e_i = s_i^n$  one can see that in essence the conditions are equivalent because, by Lemma 2.2, the images  $\{T(s_i^n)\}_{n=i}^\infty$  are multiples of each other.

To show that  $T(M_n)$  is contained in the linear span  $L$  of  $\{T(s_1^n), \dots, T(s_n^n)\}$ , the procedure outlined underneath is applied, where in each step Lemma 2.2 is used.

- Since  $0, s_n^n$ , and  $s_{n+1}^n$  form a linear triple, and  $T(0) = 0$ , we have  $T(s_{n+1}^n) \in L$ .
- Whenever  $w_n(z)$  is defined, one has  $T(w_n(z)) \in L$  because  $w_n(z) \in [s_i^n, s_j^n]$ .
- Likewise, for each  $z$  such that  $w_{n-1}(z)$  is defined, one obtains  $T(w_{n-1}(z)) \in L$  since  $w_{n-1}(z)$  is in the line segment joining  $w_n(z)$  and one of  $s_i^n$ .
- We proceed in a straightforward way until we get  $T(z) \in L$ .

In addition, it is easy to see that the assumption that  $\text{conv}(\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1})$  is at distance at least  $n$  from the origin together with the fact that each set  $M_n$  is finite and is contained in  $\text{conv}(\{s_i^n\}_{i=1}^{n+1})$ , implies that the set  $\bigcup_{n=1}^\infty M_n$  is locally finite.  $\square$

*Proof of Corollary 1.9.* To check that this  $X$  satisfies the conditions of Theorem 1.8 two well-known facts come in handy:

- (1) Each finite subset of  $L_p[0, 1]$  admits an isometric embedding into  $\ell_p$ , see [1].
- (2) The space  $L_p[0, 1]$  contains a subspace isometric to  $\ell_2$ , see [12, p. 16].

Combining (1) and (2) we conclude that all finite subsets of  $\ell_2$  are isometric to subsets of  $\ell_p$ , and, thence, to subsets of  $X$ . On the other hand, it is known that each infinite-dimensional subspace of  $X$  contains a subspace isomorphic to  $\ell_p$  (this can be done using a slight variation of the argument used to prove [15, Proposition 2.a.2]), and as such it is not isomorphic to  $\ell_2$ .  $\square$

*Remark 2.5.* The first part of the proof of Theorem 1.8 demonstrates that its statement can be strengthened by replacing the condition “ $\ell_2$  does not admit an isomorphic embedding into  $X$ ” by “there is  $\alpha > 1$  such that  $X$  does not contain a subspace whose Banach-Mazur distance to  $\ell_2$  does not exceed  $\alpha$ ”. It is known [19] that the latter condition is strictly weaker. In addition, it is not difficult to see that although Joichi did not formally state the pertinent modification of the main result of [13], it arises from the proof.

### 3 The case of $\ell_1$

*Proof of Theorem 1.11.* Recall [1] that each finite subset of  $L_1(-\infty, \infty)$  admits an isometric embedding into  $\ell_1$ . To prove Theorem 1.11 we construct in  $L_1(-\infty, \infty)$  a locally finite metric space  $M$  such that its isometric embeddability into  $\ell_1$  would imply that  $\ell_1$  contains a unit vector  $x$  which, for every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , can be represented as a sum of  $2^n$  vectors with pairwise disjoint supports and of norm  $2^{-n}$  each. This leads to a contradiction: consider the maximal in absolute value coordinate of the vector  $x$ , let it be  $\alpha$ . If, for some  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ ,  $|\alpha| > 2^{-n}$ , it is clearly impossible to partition the vector into  $2^n$  vectors of norm  $2^{-n}$  each with pairwise disjoint supports.

The starting point of the construction is the fact that the indicator function  $\mathbf{1}_{(0,1]}$  has, for each  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , a representation as a sum of  $2^n$  pairwise disjoint vectors of norm  $2^{-n}$ . To be specific, we adopt the writing:

- $\mathbf{1}_{(0,1]} = d_0 + d_1$ , where  $d_0 = \mathbf{1}_{(0, \frac{1}{2}]}$ ,  $d_1 = \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{1}{2}, 1]}$
- $\mathbf{1}_{(0,1]} = d_{00} + d_{01} + d_{10} + d_{11}$ , where  $d_{00} = \mathbf{1}_{(0, \frac{1}{4}]}$ ,  $d_{01} = \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{2}]} \cup \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{3}{4}, 1]}$ ,  $d_{10} = \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{3}{4}]} \cup \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{1}{2}, 1]}$ ,  $d_{11} = \mathbf{1}_{(\frac{3}{4}, 1]}$
- We carry on in an obvious way.

In the sequel, the following notation will be employed: let  $d = \mathbf{1}_{(0,1]}$  and denote the functions introduced above by  $d_\sigma$ , where  $\sigma$  is a finite string of 0's and 1's. Denote by  $\ell(\sigma)$  the length of the string  $\sigma$ . For each  $\sigma = \{\sigma_i\}_{i=1}^{\ell(\sigma)}$ , the subinterval  $I(\sigma)$  of  $(0, 1]$  is defined by:

$$I(\sigma) = \left( \sum_{i=1}^{\ell(\sigma)} \sigma_i 2^{-i}, 2^{-\ell(\sigma)} + \sum_{i=1}^{\ell(\sigma)} \sigma_i 2^{-i} \right].$$

With this notation  $d_\sigma = \mathbf{1}_{I(\sigma)}$  and the mentioned above representation of  $\mathbf{1}_{(0,1]}$  as a sum of  $2^n$  terms can be written as:

$$d = \sum_{\sigma, \ell(\sigma)=n} d_\sigma,$$

where the summands are disjointly supported. Now, denote by  $\mathcal{T}$  the set of all finite strings of 0's and 1's. It is obvious that  $\{d_\sigma\}_{\sigma \in \mathcal{T}}$  is not a locally finite set. Nonetheless, we can add to  $\{d_\sigma\}$  pairwise disjoint functions in such a way that a locally finite subset of  $L_1(-\infty, \infty)$  will be obtained, and the existence of an isometric embedding of this set into  $\ell_1$  would imply the existence in  $\ell_1$  of a vector  $x$  with the properties described at the beginning of the proof.

First, opt for an injective map  $\Psi$  from the collection of all finite strings of 0's and 1's into  $\mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\}$ .

Now, we consider the set  $M$  satisfying the conditions: It contains both functions  $d$  and 0, and, in addition, it includes all sums  $f_\sigma := d_\sigma + \ell(\sigma) \cdot \mathbf{1}_{(\Psi(\sigma), \Psi(\sigma)+1]}$ , where  $\sigma \in \mathcal{T}$ .

Since  $\ell(\sigma)$  is less than any fixed constant only for finitely many strings  $\sigma$ , this set is a locally finite subset of  $L_1(-\infty, \infty)$ . It has to be shown that isometric embeddability of this set into  $\ell_1$  implies the existence in  $\ell_1$  of a vector  $x$  with the properties stated in the first paragraph of the proof, thus resulting in a contradiction.

Indeed, if there is an isometric embedding of  $M$  into  $\ell_1$ , then there is an isometric embedding  $F$  which maps 0 to 0 and - as it will be proved - in such a case  $x = F(d)$  is the desired vector. More elaborately put, the existence of such an isometric embedding implies that there exist vectors  $\{x_\sigma\}_{\sigma \in \mathcal{T}}$  so that, for each  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , the vectors  $\{x_\sigma\}_{\ell(\sigma)=n}$  are disjointly supported, have norm  $2^{-n}$ , and

$$x = F(d) = \sum_{\sigma, \ell(\sigma)=n} x_\sigma.$$

Each element  $a = \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} a_i e_i$  of  $\ell_1$  can be considered as a possibly infinite union of intervals in the coordinate plane which join  $(i, 0)$  and  $(i, a_i)$ . The total length of all intervals is equal to  $\|a\|$ .

The proposed construction guarantees that if  $\ell(\sigma) = n$ , then  $\|f_\sigma - d\| = \|f_\sigma\| + \|d\| - 2 \cdot 2^{-n}$ . Since  $F$  is an isometry,  $F(0) = 0$ , and  $F(d) = x$ , this implies  $\|F(f_\sigma) - x\| = \|F(f_\sigma)\| + \|x\| - 2 \cdot 2^{-n}$ . Consequently, the total length of intersections of the intervals corresponding to  $x$  and to  $F(f_\sigma)$  is  $2^{-n}$  for  $\sigma \in \{0, 1\}^n$ .

On the other hand, if  $\sigma \neq \tau$  and  $\ell(\sigma) = \ell(\tau) = n$ , the functions  $f_\sigma$  and  $f_\tau$  are disjointly supported and, therefore,  $\|f_\sigma - f_\tau\| = \|f_\tau - 0\| + \|f_\sigma - 0\|$ . As a result,  $\|F(f_\sigma) - F(f_\tau)\| = \|F(f_\sigma)\| + \|F(f_\tau)\|$ . This means that the intersections of the intervals corresponding to  $F(f_\sigma)$  and  $F(f_\tau)$  have total length 0. It does not immediately imply that vectors  $F(f_\sigma)$  and  $F(f_\tau)$  are disjointly supported: one can imagine, for example, that  $F(f_\sigma)$  contains the interval joining  $(i, 0)$  and  $(i, \frac{1}{4})$  and  $F(f_\tau)$  contains the interval joining  $(i, 0)$  and  $(i, -\frac{1}{4})$ .

Let us define the vector  $x_\sigma$  for  $\sigma$  satisfying  $\ell(\sigma) = n$  as a vector for which the corresponding intervals are intersections of the intervals corresponding to  $x$  and to  $F(f_\sigma)$ . The previous paragraphs imply that  $x_\sigma$  and  $x_\tau$  satisfy  $\|x_\sigma\| = \|x_\tau\| = 2^{-n}$  and have disjoint supports when  $\ell(\sigma) = \ell(\tau) = n$  and  $\sigma \neq \tau$  (for the latter we use the fact that the interval corresponding to  $x$  at  $i$  can have ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ part, but not both).

Finally, let  $s = \sum_{\sigma, \ell(\sigma)=n} x_\sigma$ . With the preceding arguments, we conclude that  $\|s\| = 1$  and  $|s_i| \leq |x_i|$  for each  $i \in \mathbb{N}$ . Thus,  $s = x$ , and the desired decomposition of  $x$  is completed.  $\square$

## Acknowledgement

The second-named author gratefully acknowledges the support by National Science Foundation grant NSF DMS-1700176.

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the anonymous referee for the helpful suggestions.

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