

# SUFFICIENT AND NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR SEMIDEFINITE REPRESENTABILITY OF CONVEX HULLS AND SETS

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ABSTRACT. A set  $S \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is called to be *Semidefinite (SDP) representable* if  $S$  equals the projection of a set in higher dimensional space which is describable by some Linear Matrix Inequality (LMI). Clearly, if  $S$  is SDP representable, then  $S$  must be convex and semialgebraic (it is describable by conjunctions and disjunctions of polynomial equalities or inequalities). This paper proves sufficient conditions and necessary conditions for SDP representability of convex sets and convex hulls by proposing a new approach to construct SDP representations.

The contributions of this paper are: **(i)** For bounded SDP representable sets  $W_1, \dots, W_m$ , we give an explicit construction of an SDP representation for  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$ . This provides a technique for building global SDP representations from the local ones. **(ii)** For the SDP representability of a compact convex semialgebraic set  $S$ , we prove sufficient: the boundary  $\partial S$  is nonsingular and positively curved, while necessary is:  $\partial S$  has nonnegative curvature at each nonsingular point. In terms of defining polynomials for  $S$ , nonsingular boundary amounts to them having nonvanishing gradient at each point on  $\partial S$  and the curvature condition can be expressed as their strict versus nonstrict quasi-concavity of at those points on  $\partial S$  where they vanish. The gaps between them are  $\partial S$  having or not having singular points either of the gradient or of the curvature's positivity. A sufficient condition bypassing the gaps is when some defining polynomials of  $S$  satisfy an algebraic condition called sos-concavity. **(iii)** For the SDP representability of the convex hull of a compact nonconvex semialgebraic set  $T$ , we find that the critical object is  $\partial_c T$ , the maximum subset of  $\partial T$  contained in  $\partial \text{conv}(T)$ . We prove sufficient for SDP representability:  $\partial_c T$  is nonsingular and positively curved, and necessary is:  $\partial_c T$  has nonnegative curvature at nonsingular points. The gaps between our sufficient and necessary conditions are similar to case (ii). The positive definite Lagrange Hessian (PDLH) condition, which meshes well with constructions, is also discussed.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Semidefinite programming (SDP) [1, 9, 10, 14] is one of the main advances in convex optimization theory and applications. It has a profound effect on combinatorial optimization, control theory and nonconvex optimization as well as many other disciplines. There are effective numerical algorithms for solving problems presented in terms of Linear Matrix Inequalities (LMIs). One fundamental problem in semidefinite programming and linear matrix inequality theory is what sets can be presented in semidefinite programming. This paper addresses one of the most classical aspects of this problem.

A set  $S$  is said to have an *LMI representation* or be *LMI representable* if

$$S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : A_0 + A_1 x_1 + \dots + A_n x_n \succeq 0\}$$

for some symmetric matrices  $A_i$ . Here the notation  $X \succeq 0$  ( $\succ 0$ ) means the matrix  $X$  is positive semidefinite (definite). If  $S$  has an interior point,  $A_0$  can be assumed to be positive definite without loss of generality. Obvious necessary conditions for  $S$  to be LMI representable are that  $S$  must be convex and *basic closed semialgebraic*, i.e.,

$$S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$$

where  $g_i(x)$  are multivariate polynomials. It is known that not every convex basic closed semialgebraic set can be represented by LMI (e.g., the set  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : x_1^4 + x_2^4 \leq 1\}$  is not LMI representable [7]). If

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*Key words and phrases.* convex set, convex hull, irredundancy, linear matrix inequality (LMI), nonsingularity, positive curvature, semialgebraic set, semidefinite (SDP) representation, (strictly) quasi-concavity, singularity, smoothness, sos-concavity, sum of squares (SOS).

the convex set  $S$  can be represented as the projection to  $\mathbb{R}^n$  of

$$(1.1) \quad \hat{S} = \left\{ (x, u) \in \mathbb{R}^{(n+N)} : A_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n A_i x_i + \sum_{j=1}^N B_j u_j \succeq 0 \right\} \subset \mathbb{R}^{(n+N)},$$

that is  $S = \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \exists u \in \mathbb{R}^n, (x, u) \in \hat{S} \right\}$ , for some symmetric matrices  $A_i$  and  $B_j$ , then  $S$  is called *semidefinite representable* or *SDP representable*. Sometimes we refer to a semidefinite representation as a *lifted LMI representation* of the convex set  $S$  and to the LMI in (1.1) as a *lifted LMI for  $S$* , and to  $\hat{S}$  as the *SDP lift of  $S$* .

If  $S$  has an SDP representation instead of LMI representation, then  $S$  might not be basic closed semialgebraic, but it must be semialgebraic, i.e.,  $S$  is describable by conjunctions or disjunctions of polynomial equalities or inequalities [3]. Furthermore, the interior  $\overset{\circ}{S}$  of  $S$  is a union of *basic open semialgebraic sets* (Theorem 2.7.2 in [3]), i.e.,  $\overset{\circ}{S} = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k$  for sets of the form

$$T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_{j_1}(x) > 0, \dots, g_{j_{m_k}}(x) > 0\}.$$

Here  $g_{i_j}$  are all multivariate polynomials. For instance, the set

$$\left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \exists u \geq 0, \begin{bmatrix} x_2 & x_1 - u \\ x_1 - u & 1 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0 \right\}$$

is not a basic semialgebraic set. When  $S$  is SDP representable,  $S$  might not be closed, but its closure  $\bar{S}$  is a union of basic closed semialgebraic sets (Proposition 2.2.2 and Theorem 2.7.2 in [3]). For example, the set

$$\left\{ x \in \mathbb{R} : \exists u, \begin{bmatrix} x & 1 \\ 1 & u \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0 \right\} = \{x \in \mathbb{R} : x > 0\}$$

is not closed, but its closure is a basic closed semialgebraic set. The content of this paper is to give sufficient conditions and (nearby) necessary conditions for SDP representability of convex semialgebraic sets or convex hulls of nonconvex semialgebraic sets.

**History** Nesterov and Nemirovski ([9]), Ben-Tal and Nemirovski ([1]), and Nemirovsky ([10]) gave collections of examples of SDP representable sets. Thereby leading to the fundamental question which sets are SDP representable? In §4.3.1 of his excellent ICM 2006 survey [10] Nemirovsky wrote “this question seems to be completely open”. Obviously, to be SDP representable,  $S$  must be convex and semialgebraic. What are the sufficient conditions that  $S$  is SDP representable? This is the main subject of this paper.

When  $S$  is a basic closed semialgebraic set of the form  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$ , there is recent work on the SDP representability of  $S$  and its convex hull. Parrilo [11] and Lasserre [8] independently proposed a natural construction of lifted LMIs using moments and sum of squares techniques with the aim of producing SDP representations. Parrilo [11] proved the construction gives an SDP representation in the two dimensional case when the boundary of  $S$  is a single rational planar curve of genus zero. Lasserre [8] showed the construction can give arbitrarily accurate approximations to compact  $S$ , and the constructed LMI is a lifted LMI for  $S$  by assuming *almost all* positive affine functions on  $S$  have SOS representations with uniformly bounded degree. Helton and Nie [6] proved that this type of construction for compact convex sets  $S$  gives the exact SDP representation under various hypotheses on the Hessians of the defining polynomials  $g_i(x)$ , and also gave other sufficient conditions for  $S$  to be SDP representable. Precise statements of most of the main theorems in [6] can be seen here in this paper in later sections where they are used in our proofs, see Theorems 3.1, 5.2 and 5.3.

**Contributions** In this paper, we prove sufficient and (nearby) necessary conditions for the SDP representability of convex sets and convex hulls of nonconvex sets. To obtain these conditions we give

a new and different construction of SDP representations, which we combine with those discussed in [6, 8, 11]. The following are our main contributions.

*First*, consider the SDP representability of the convex hull of union of sets  $W_1, \dots, W_m$  which are all SDP representable. When every  $W_k$  is bounded, we give an explicit SDP representation of  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$ . When some  $W_k$  is unbounded, we show that the closure of the projection of the constructed SDP lift is exactly the closure of  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$ . This is Theorem 2.2. It provides a new approach for constructing global SDP representations from local ones, and plays a key role in proving our main theorems in Sections §3 and §4.

*Second*, consider the SDP representability of a compact convex semialgebraic set  $S = \cup_{k=1}^m T_k$ . Here  $T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m^k(x) \geq 0\}$  are defined by polynomials  $g_i^k$ ; note each  $T_k$  here is not necessarily convex. Denote by  $Z(g)$  the zero set of a polynomial  $g$ . Our main result for everywhere nonsingular boundary  $\partial S$  is approximately:

*Assume each  $T_k$  has interior near  $\partial T_k \cap \partial S$  and its boundary is nonsingular (the defining polynomials  $g_i^k$  at every point  $u \in \partial S \cap Z(g_i^k)$  satisfy  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$ ). Then sufficient for  $S$  to be SDP representable is: every  $\partial S \cap Z(g_i^k)$  has positive curvature (i.e.  $g_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\partial S \cap Z(g_i^k)$ ), and necessary is: every irredundant  $Z(g_i^k)$  has nonnegative curvature on  $\partial S$  (i.e.  $g_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$  whenever  $Z(g_i^k)$  is irredundant at  $u \in \partial S \cap Z(g_i^k)$ ).*

The notion of positive curvature we use is the standard one of differential geometry, the notion of quasi-concave function is the usual one and all of this will be defined formally in §3. To have necessary conditions on a family  $F$  of defining functions for  $S$  we need an assumption that  $F$  contains no functions irrelevant to the defining of  $S$ . Our notion of irredundancy plays a refinement of this role. The gaps between our sufficient and necessary conditions are  $\partial S$  having positive versus nonnegative curvature and singular versus nonsingular points. A case bypassing the gaps is that  $g_i^k$  is sos-concave, i.e.,  $-\nabla^2 g_i^k(x) = W(x)^T W(x)$  for some possibly nonsquare matrix polynomial  $W(x)$ . Also when  $\partial S$  contains singular points  $u$  we have additional conditions which are sufficient: for example, adding  $-\nabla^2 g_i^k(u) \succ 0$  where  $\nabla g_i^k(u) = 0$  to the hypotheses of the statement above guarantees SDP representability. We emphasize that our conditions here concern only the quasi-concavity properties of defining polynomials  $g_i^k$  on the boundary  $\partial S$  instead of on the whole set  $S$ . See Theorems 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.9 for details.

*Third*, consider the SDP representability of the convex hull of a compact nonconvex set  $T = \cup_{k=1}^m T_k$ . Here  $T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, f_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$  are defined by polynomials  $f_i^k(x)$ . To obtain sufficient and necessary conditions, we find that the critical object is the *convex boundary*  $\partial_c T$ , the maximum subset of  $\partial T$  contained in  $\partial \text{conv}(T)$ . Our main result for  $\partial_c T$  having everywhere nonsingular boundary is approximately:

*Assume each  $T_k$  has nonempty interior near  $\partial_c T$  and the defining polynomials  $f_i^k$  are nonsingular at every point  $u \in \partial_c T \cap Z(f_i^k)$  (i.e.  $\nabla f_i^k(u) \neq 0$ ). Then sufficient for  $\text{conv}(T)$  to be SDP representable is: every  $\partial_c T \cap Z(f_i^k)$  has positive curvature (i.e.  $f_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\partial_c T \cap Z(f_i^k)$ ), and necessary is: every irredundant  $Z(f_i^k)$  has nonnegative curvature on  $\partial S$  (i.e.  $f_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$  whenever  $f_i^k$  is irredundant at  $u \in \partial_c T \cap Z(f_i^k)$ ).*

This generalizes our second result (above) concerning SDP representability of compact convex semialgebraic sets. Also (just as before) we successfully weaken the hypothesis in several directions, which covers various cases of singularity. For example, one other sufficient condition allows  $f_i^k$  to be sos-concave. When  $T_k$  has empty interior, we prove that a condition called the *positive definite Lagrange Hessian (PDLH) condition* is sufficient. See Theorems 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 for details.

Let us comment on the constructions of lifted LMIs. In this paper we analyze two different types of constructions. One is a fundamental moment type relaxation due to Lasserre-Parrilo which builds LMIs (discussed in §4), while the other is a localization technique introduced in this paper. The second result stated above is proved in two different ways, one of which gives a refined result: *Given a basic closed semialgebraic set  $S = \text{closure of } \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) > 0, \dots, g_m(x) > 0\}$  with*

nonempty interior. If  $S$  is convex and its boundary  $\partial S$  is positively curved and nonsingular, then there exists a certain set of defining polynomials for  $S$  for which a Lasserre-Parrilo type moment relaxation gives the lifted LMI for  $S$ .

See §5 for the proof. A very different construction of lifted LMI is also given in §4 using the localization technique plus a Lasserre-Parrilo type moment construction.

**Notations and Outline** The following notations will be used. A polynomial  $p(x)$  is said to be a *sum of squares (SOS)* if  $p(x) = w(x)^T w(x)$  for some column vector polynomial  $w(x)$ . A matrix polynomial  $H(x)$  is said to be SOS if  $H(x) = W(x)^T W(x)$  for some possibly nonsquare matrix polynomial  $W(x)$ .  $\mathbb{N}$  denotes the set of nonnegative integers,  $\mathbb{R}^n$  denotes the Euclidean space of  $n$ -dimensional space of real numbers,  $\mathbb{R}_+^n$  denotes the nonnegative orthant of  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .  $\Delta_m = \{\lambda \in \mathbb{R}_+^m : \lambda_1 + \cdots + \lambda_m = 1\}$  is the standard simplex. For  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ ,  $\|x\| = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2}$ .  $B(u, r)$  denotes the open ball  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \|x - u\| < r\}$  and  $\bar{B}(u, r)$  denotes the closed ball  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \|x - u\| \leq r\}$ . For a given set  $W$ ,  $\bar{W}$  denotes the closure of  $W$ , and  $\partial W$  denotes its topological boundary. For a given matrix  $A$ ,  $A^T$  denotes its transpose.  $I_n$  denotes the  $n \times n$  identity matrix.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the SDP representation of the convex hull of union of SDP representable sets. Section 3 discusses the SDP representability of convex semialgebraic sets. Section 4 discusses the SDP representability of convex hulls of nonconvex semialgebraic sets. Section 5 presents a similar version of Theorem 3.3 and gives a different but more geometric proof based on results of [6]. Section 6 concludes this paper and makes a conjecture.

## 2. THE CONVEX HULL OF UNION OF SDP REPRESENTABLE SETS

It is obvious the intersection of SDP representable sets is also SDP representable, but the union might not be because the union may not be convex. However, the convex hull of the union of SDP representable sets is a convex semialgebraic set. Is it also SDP representable? This section will address this issue.

Let  $W_1, \dots, W_m \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  be convex sets. Then their Minkowski sum

$$W_1 + \cdots + W_m = \{x = x_1 + \cdots + x_m : x_1 \in W_1, \dots, x_m \in W_m\}$$

is also a convex set. If every  $W_k$  is given by some lifted LMI, then a lifted LMI for  $W_1 + \cdots + W_m$  can also be obtained immediately by definition. Usually the union of convex sets  $W_1, \dots, W_m$  is no longer convex, but its convex hull  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$  is convex again. Is  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$  SDP representable if every  $W_k$  is? We give a lemma first.

**Lemma 2.1.** *If  $W_k$  are all nonempty convex sets, then*

$$\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right) = \bigcup_{\lambda \in \Delta_m} (\lambda_1 W_1 + \cdots + \lambda_m W_m)$$

where  $\Delta_m = \{\lambda \in \mathbb{R}_+^m : \lambda_1 + \cdots + \lambda_m = 1\}$  is the standard simplex.

*Proof.* This is a special case of Theorem 3.3 in Rockafellar [12]. □

Based on Lemma 2.1, given SDP representable sets  $W_1, \dots, W_m$ , it is possible to obtain a SDP representation for the convex hull  $\text{conv}(\cup_{k=1}^m W_k)$  directly from the lifted LMIs of all  $W_k$  under rather weak conditions. This is summarized in the following theorem.

**Theorem 2.2.** *Let  $W_1, \dots, W_m$  be nonempty convex sets given by SDP representations*

$$W_k = \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \exists u^{(k)}, A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} u_j^{(k)} C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0 \right\}$$

for some symmetric matrices  $A^{(k)}, B_i^{(k)}, C_j^{(k)}$ . Define a new set

$$(2.1) \quad \mathcal{C} = \left\{ \sum_{k=1}^m x^{(k)} : \exists \lambda \in \Delta_m, \exists u^{(k)}, \lambda_k A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i^{(k)} B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} u_j^{(k)} C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0, 1 \leq k \leq m \right\}.$$

Then we have the inclusion

$$(2.2) \quad \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right) \subseteq \mathcal{C}$$

and the equality

$$(2.3) \quad \overline{\mathcal{C}} = \overline{\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)}.$$

In addition, if every  $W_k$  is bounded, then

$$(2.4) \quad \mathcal{C} = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right).$$

*Remark:* When some  $W_k$  is unbounded,  $\mathcal{C}$  and  $\text{conv}(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k)$  might not be equal, but they have the same interior, which is good enough for solving optimization problems over  $\text{conv}(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k)$ .

*Proof.* First, by definition of  $\mathcal{C}$ , (2.2) is implied immediately by Lemma 2.1.

Second, we prove (2.3). By (2.2), it is sufficient to prove

$$\mathcal{C} \subseteq \overline{\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)}.$$

Let  $x = x^{(1)} + \dots + x^{(m)} \in \mathcal{C}$ ; then there exist  $\lambda \in \Delta_m$  and  $u^{(k)}$  such that

$$(2.5) \quad \lambda_k A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i^{(k)} B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} u_j^{(k)} C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0, \quad 1 \leq k \leq m.$$

Without loss of generality, assume  $\lambda_1 = \dots = \lambda_\ell = 0$  and  $\lambda_{\ell+1}, \dots, \lambda_m > 0$ . Then for  $k = \ell+1, \dots, m$ , we have  $\frac{1}{\lambda_k} x^{(k)} \in W_k$  and

$$x^{(\ell+1)} + \dots + x^{(m)} = \lambda_{\ell+1} \frac{1}{\lambda_{\ell+1}} x^{(\ell+1)} + \dots + \lambda_m \frac{1}{\lambda_m} x^{(m)} \in \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right).$$

Since  $W_k \neq \emptyset$ , there exist  $y^{(k)} \in W_k$  and  $v^{(k)}$  such that

$$A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n y_i^{(k)} B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} v_j^{(k)} C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0.$$

For this and (2.5), for arbitrary  $\epsilon > 0$  small enough, we have

$$(2.6) \quad \epsilon A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i^{(k)} + \epsilon y_i^{(k)}) B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} (u_j^{(k)} + \epsilon v_j^{(k)}) C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0, \quad \text{when } 1 \leq k \leq \ell$$

$$(2.7) \quad \frac{1 - \ell\epsilon}{1 + (m - \ell)\epsilon} \left\{ (\lambda_k + \epsilon) A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i^{(k)} + \epsilon y_i^{(k)}) B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} (u_j^{(k)} + \epsilon v_j^{(k)}) C_j^{(k)} \right\} \succeq 0, \quad \ell + 1 \leq k \leq m.$$

Now we let

$$x^{(k)}(\epsilon) := x^{(k)} + \epsilon y^{(k)} \quad (1 \leq k \leq \ell), \quad x^{(k)}(\epsilon) := \frac{1 - \ell\epsilon}{1 + (m - \ell)\epsilon} (x^{(k)} + \epsilon y^{(k)}) \quad (\ell + 1 \leq k \leq m),$$

$$\lambda_k(\epsilon) = \epsilon \quad (1 \leq k \leq \ell), \quad \lambda_k(\epsilon) = \frac{1 - \ell\epsilon}{1 + (m - \ell)\epsilon} (\lambda_k + \epsilon) \quad (\ell + 1 \leq k \leq m).$$

In this notation (2.6)(2.7) become

$$(2.8) \quad \lambda_k(\epsilon)A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i^{(k)}(\epsilon)B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} \tilde{u}_j^{(k)}(\epsilon)C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0, \quad 1 \leq k \leq m$$

with  $\tilde{u}_j^{(k)}(\epsilon) := (u_j^{(k)} + \epsilon v_j^{(k)})$ . Obviously  $\lambda(\epsilon) \in \Delta_m$  and  $0 < \lambda_k(\epsilon) < 1$  for every  $1 \leq k \leq m$ . From LMI (2.8) and from  $\lambda_k(\epsilon) > 0$  we get  $\frac{1}{\lambda_k(\epsilon)}x^{(k)}(\epsilon) \in W_k$  for all  $k$ . Let  $x(\epsilon) := x^{(1)}(\epsilon) + \cdots + x^{(m)}(\epsilon)$ ; then we have

$$x(\epsilon) = \lambda_1(\epsilon)\frac{1}{\lambda_1(\epsilon)}x^{(1)}(\epsilon) + \cdots + \lambda_m(\epsilon)\frac{1}{\lambda_m(\epsilon)}x^{(m)}(\epsilon) \in \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right).$$

As  $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$ ,  $x(\epsilon) \rightarrow x$ , which implies  $x \in \overline{\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)}$ .

Third, we prove (2.4). When every  $W_k$  is bounded, it suffices to show  $\mathcal{C} \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)$ . Suppose  $x = x^{(1)} + \cdots + x^{(m)} \in \mathcal{C}$  with some  $\lambda \in [0, 1]$  and  $u^{(k)}$ . Without loss of generality, assume  $\lambda_1 = \cdots = \lambda_\ell = 0$  and  $\lambda_{\ell+1}, \dots, \lambda_m > 0$ . Obviously, for every  $k = \ell + 1, \dots, m$ , we have  $\frac{1}{\lambda_k}x^{(k)} \in W_k$  and

$$x^{(\ell+1)} + \cdots + x^{(m)} = \lambda_{\ell+1}\frac{1}{\lambda_{\ell+1}}x^{(\ell+1)} + \cdots + \lambda_m\frac{1}{\lambda_m}x^{(m)} \in \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right).$$

Since  $W_k \neq \emptyset$ , there exist  $y^{(k)}$  and  $v^{(k)}$  such that

$$A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n y_i^{(k)}B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} v_j^{(k)}C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0.$$

Combining the above with (2.5) and observing  $\lambda_1 = \cdots = \lambda_\ell = 0$ , we obtain that

$$A^{(k)} + \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i^{(k)} + \alpha x_i^{(k)})B_i^{(k)} + \sum_{j=1}^{N_k} (v_j^{(k)} + \alpha u_j^{(k)})C_j^{(k)} \succeq 0, \quad \forall \alpha > 0, \quad \forall 1 \leq k \leq \ell.$$

Hence, we must have  $x^{(k)} = 0$  for  $k = 1, \dots, \ell$ , because otherwise

$$y^{(k)} + [0, \infty)x^{(k)}$$

is an unbounded ray in  $W_k$ , which contradicts the boundedness of  $W_k$ . Thus

$$x = x^{(\ell+1)} + \cdots + x^{(m)} \in \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)$$

which completes the proof.  $\square$

**Example 2.3.** When some  $W_k$  is unbounded,  $\mathcal{C}$  and  $\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right)$  might not be equal, and  $\mathcal{C}$  might not be closed. Let us see some examples.

(i) Consider  $W_1 = \left\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \begin{bmatrix} x_1 & 1 \\ 1 & x_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\}$ ,  $W_2 = \{0\}$ . The convex hull  $\text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}_+^2 : x_1 + x_2 = 0 \text{ or } x_1 x_2 > 0\}$ . However,

$$\mathcal{C} = \left\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \exists 0 \leq \lambda_1 \leq 1, \begin{bmatrix} x_1 & \lambda_1 \\ \lambda_1 & x_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\} = \mathbb{R}_+^2.$$

$\mathcal{C}$  and  $\text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2)$  are not equal.

(ii) Consider  $W_1 = \left\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \begin{bmatrix} x_1 & 1 + x_2 \\ 1 + x_2 & 1 + u \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\}$  and  $W_2 = \{0\}$ . We have  $\text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : x_1 > 0, \text{ or } x_1 = 0 \text{ and } -1 \leq x_2 \leq 0\}$  and  $\overline{\text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2)} = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : x_1 \geq 0\}$ . But  $\mathcal{C} = \text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2)$  is not closed.

**Example 2.4.** Now we see some examples showing that the boundedness of  $W_1, \dots, W_m$  is not necessary for (2.4) to hold.

(a) Consider the special case that each  $W_k$  is homogeneous, i.e., i.e.,  $A^{(k)} = 0$  in the SDP representation of  $W_k$ . Then by Lemma 2.1, we immediately have

$$\mathcal{C} = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m W_k\right).$$

(b) Consider  $W_1 = \left\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \begin{bmatrix} -x_1 & 1 \\ 1 & x_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\}$ ,  $W_2 = \left\{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \begin{bmatrix} x_1 & 1 \\ 1 & x_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\}$ . It can be verified that  $\text{conv}(W_1 \cup W_2)$  is given by

$$\mathcal{C} = \left\{x + y \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \exists \lambda \in \Delta_2, \begin{bmatrix} -x_1 & \lambda_1 \\ \lambda_1 & x_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0, \begin{bmatrix} y_1 & \lambda_2 \\ \lambda_2 & y_2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0\right\} = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : x_2 > 0\}.$$

### 3. SUFFICIENT AND NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR SDP REPRESENTABLE SETS

In this section, we present sufficient conditions and necessary conditions for SDP representability of a compact convex semialgebraic set  $S$ . As we will see, these sufficient conditions and necessary conditions are very close with the main gaps being between the boundary  $\partial S$  having positive versus nonnegative curvature and between the defining polynomials being singular or not on the part of the boundary where they vanish. A case which bypasses the gaps is when some defining polynomials are sos-concave, i.e., their negative Hessians are SOS.

Our approach is to start with convex sets which are basic semialgebraic, and to give weaker sufficient conditions than those given in [6]: the defining polynomials are either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on the part of the boundary  $\partial S$  where they vanish (not necessarily on the whole set). And then we give similar sufficient conditions for convex sets that are *not* basic semialgebraic. Lastly, we give necessary conditions for SDP representability: the defining polynomials are quasi-concave on nonsingular points on the part of the boundary of  $S$  where they vanish.

Let us begin with reviewing some background about curvature and quasi-concavity. The key technique for proving the sufficient conditions is to localize to small balls containing a piece of  $\partial S$ , use the strictly quasi-concave function results (Theorem 1.2 in [6]) to represent these small sets, and then to apply Theorem 2.2 to patch all of these representations together, thereby obtaining an SDP representation of  $S$ .

#### 3.1. Curvature and quasi-concavity

We first review the definition of *curvature*. For a smooth function  $f(x)$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , suppose the zero set  $Z = Z(f) := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) = 0\}$  is nonsingular at a point  $u \in Z$ , i.e.,  $\nabla f(u) \neq 0$ . Then  $Z$  is a smooth hypersurface near the point  $u$ .  $Z$  is said to have *positive curvature* at the nonsingular point  $u \in Z$  if its *second fundamental form* is positive definite, i.e.,

$$(3.1) \quad -v^T \nabla^2 f(u) v > 0, \quad \forall 0 \neq v \in \nabla f(u)^\perp$$

where  $\nabla f(u)^\perp := \{v \in \mathbb{R}^n : \nabla f(u)^T v = 0\}$ . For a subset  $V \subset Z$ , we say  $Z$  has *positive curvature on  $V$*  if  $f(x)$  is nonsingular on  $V$  and  $Z$  has positive curvature at every  $u \in V$ . When  $>$  is replaced by  $\geq$  in (3.1), we can similarly define  $Z$  has *nonnegative curvature* at  $u$ . We emphasize that this definition applies to any zero sets defined by smooth functions on their nonsingular points. This is needed in §5. We refer to Spivak [13] for more on curvature and the second fundamental form.

The definition of curvature has geometrical meaning. When the gradient  $\nabla f(u) \neq 0$ , the function  $\phi$  whose graph corresponds to  $Z(f)$  in an *appropriate* coordinate system is convex (resp. strictly convex) at the origin if and only if  $Z(f)$  has nonnegative (resp. positive) curvature at  $u$ . Here we define a

function to be convex (resp. strictly convex) at some point if its Hessian is positive semidefinite (resp. definite) at that point. To be more specific, let us make the affine linear coordinate transformation

$$(3.2) \quad x - u = [\nabla f(u) \quad G(u)]^T \begin{bmatrix} y \\ x' \end{bmatrix}$$

where  $(y, x') \in \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^{n-1}$  are new coordinates and  $G(u)$  is an orthogonal basis for subspace  $\nabla f(u)^\perp$ . By the Implicit Function Theorem, since  $\nabla f(u) \neq 0$ , in some neighborhood of the origin,  $y = \phi(x')$  is a smooth function of  $x'$ . For simplicity, we reuse the letter  $f$  and write  $f(x', y) = f(x', \phi(x')) = 0$ . Since  $\nabla f(u)$  is orthogonal to  $G(u)$ , we have  $f_y(0, 0) = 1$  and  $\nabla_{x'}\phi(0) = 0$ . Twice differentiating  $f(x', y) = 0$  gives

$$\nabla_{x'x'}f + \nabla_{x'y}f\nabla_{x'}\phi^T + \nabla_{x'}\phi\nabla_{x'y}f^T + f_{yy}\nabla_{x'}\phi\nabla_{x'}\phi^T + f_y\nabla_{x'x'}\phi = 0.$$

Evaluate the above at the origin in the new coordinates  $(y, x')$ , to get

$$\nabla_{x'x'}\phi(0) = -\nabla_{x'x'}f(u).$$

So we can see  $Z(f)$  has positive (resp. nonnegative) curvature at  $u$  if and if the function  $y = \phi(x')$  is strictly convex (resp. convex) at  $u$ .

We mention that positive curvature above is defined in the circumstance such that the superlevel set  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) \geq f(u)\}$  is convex near  $u$ . For example, the boundary of the unit disk  $\bar{B}(0, 1)$  is the unit sphere, a manifold with positive curvature by standard convention and  $\bar{B}(0, 1)$  can be expressed as  $\{x : f(x) \geq 0\}$  where  $f(x) = 1 - \|x\|^2$ ; note  $-\nabla^2 f(x) \succ 0$ . On the other hand, if we want to define the positive curvature when the sublevel sets  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) \leq f(u)\}$  are convex near  $u$ , then the minus sign in front of the quadratic form in (3.1) should be removed. So, if we use  $\tilde{f}(x) = -(1 - \|x\|^2)$  and define  $\tilde{B}(0, 1)$  as the sublevel set  $\{x : \tilde{f}(x) \leq 0\}$ , then note  $\nabla^2 \tilde{f}(x) \succ 0$ .

We remark that the definition of positive curvature for some hypersurface  $Z$  at a nonsingular point is independent of the choice of defining functions. Suppose  $f$  and  $g$  are smooth defining functions such that  $Z \cap B(u, \delta) = Z(f) \cap B(u, \delta) = Z(g) \cap B(u, \delta)$ ,  $\nabla f(u) \neq 0 \neq \nabla g(u)$  for some  $\delta > 0$  and

$$(3.3) \quad \{x \in B(u, \delta) : f(x) \geq 0\} = \{x \in B(u, \delta) : g(x) \geq 0\}.$$

Then the second fundamental form in terms of  $f$  is positive definite (resp. semidefinite) at  $u$  if and only if the second fundamental form in terms of  $g$  is positive definite (resp. semidefinite) at  $u$ . To see this, note that  $\nabla f(u) = \alpha \nabla g(u)$  for some scalar  $\alpha \neq 0$ , because  $\nabla f(u)$  and  $\nabla g(u)$  are perpendicular to the boundary of  $Z$  at  $u$ . Also  $\alpha > 0$  because of (3.3). Then in the new coordinate system  $(y, x')$  defined in (3.2), as we have seen earlier,  $Z$  has nonnegative (resp. positive) curvature at  $u$  if and only if the function  $y = \phi(x')$  is convex (resp. strictly convex) at  $u$ , which holds if and only if either one of  $f$  and  $g$  has positive definite (resp. semidefinite) second fundamental form. So the second fundamental form of  $f$  and  $g$  are simultaneously positive definite or semidefinite.

The smooth function  $f(x)$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  is said to be *strictly quasi-concave at  $u$*  if the condition (3.1) holds. When  $\nabla f(u)$  vanishes, we require  $-\nabla^2 f(u) \succ 0$  in order for  $f(x)$  to be strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ . For a subset  $V \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ , we say  $f(x)$  is *strictly quasi-concave on  $V$*  if  $f(x)$  is strictly quasi-concave on every point on  $V$ . When  $\succ$  is replaced by  $\geq$  in (3.1), we can similarly define  $f(x)$  to be *quasi-concave*. We remark that our definition of quasi-concavity here is slightly less demanding than the usual definition of quasi-concavity in the existing literature (see Section 3.4.3 in [2]).

Recall that a polynomial  $g(x)$  is said to be *sos-concave* if  $-\nabla^2 g(x) = W(x)^T W(x)$  for some possibly nonsquare matrix polynomial  $W(x)$ . The following theorem gives sufficient conditions for SDP representability in terms of sos-concavity or strict quasi-concavity.

**Theorem 3.1.** (*Theorem 1.2 [6]*) *Suppose  $S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is a compact convex set defined by polynomials  $g_i(x)$  and has nonempty interior. For each  $i$ , if  $g_i(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on  $S$ , then  $S$  is SDP representable.*

### 3.2. Sufficient and necessary conditions on defining polynomials

In this subsection, we give sufficient conditions as well as necessary conditions for SDP representability for both basic and nonbasic convex semialgebraic sets. These conditions are about the properties of defining polynomials on the part of the boundary where they vanish, instead of the whole set. This is different from the conditions given in [6]. Let us begin with a proposition which is often used later.

**Proposition 3.2.** *Let  $S$  be a compact convex set. Then  $S$  is SDP representable if and only if for every  $u \in \partial S$ , there exists some  $\delta > 0$  such that  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* “ $\Rightarrow$ ” Suppose  $S$  has SDP representation

$$S = \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^n : A + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i B_i + \sum_{j=1}^N u_j C_j \succeq 0 \right\}$$

for symmetric matrices  $A, B_i, C_j$ . Then  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  also has SDP representation

$$\left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^n : A + \sum_{i=1}^n x_i B_i + \sum_{j=1}^N u_j C_j \succeq 0, \begin{bmatrix} I_n & x - u \\ (x - u)^T & \delta^2 \end{bmatrix} \succeq 0 \right\}.$$

“ $\Leftarrow$ ” Suppose for every  $u \in \partial S$  the set  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u)$  has SDP representation for some  $\delta_u > 0$ . Note that  $\{B(u, \delta_u) : u \in \partial S\}$  is an open cover for the compact set  $\partial S$ . So there are a finite number of balls, say,  $B(u_1, \delta_1), \dots, B(u_L, \delta_L)$ , to cover  $\partial S$ . Note that

$$S = \text{conv}(\partial S) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L (\partial S \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k))\right) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L (S \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k))\right) \subseteq S.$$

The sets  $S \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k)$  are all bounded. By Theorem 2.2, we know

$$S = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L S \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k)\right)$$

has SDP representation. □

When the set  $S$  is basic closed semialgebraic, we have the following sufficient condition for SDP representability, which strengthens Theorem 3.1.

**Theorem 3.3.** *Assume  $S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is a compact convex set defined by polynomials  $g_i$  and has nonempty interior. If for every  $u \in \partial S$  and  $i$  for which  $g_i(u) = 0$ ,  $g_i$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ , then  $S$  is SDP representable.*

*Remarks:* (i) This result is stronger than Theorem 1.2 of [6] which requires each  $g_i$  is either *sos-concave* or strictly quasi-concave on the whole set  $S$  instead of only on the boundary. (ii) The special case that some of the  $g_i$  are linear is included in sos-concave case. (iii) Later we will present a slightly weaker version of Theorem 3.3 by using conditions on the curvature of the boundary and give a very different but more geometric proof based on Theorems 1.3 and 1.4 in [6]. This is left in §5.

*Proof.* For any  $u \in \partial S$ , let  $I(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq m : g_i(u) = 0\}$ . For every  $i \in I(u)$ , if  $g_i(x)$  is not sos-concave,  $g_i(x)$  is strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ . By continuity, there exist some  $\delta > 0$  such that  $g_i(x)$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$ . Note  $g_i(u) > 0$  for  $i \notin I(u)$ . So we can choose  $\delta > 0$  small enough such that

$$g_i(x) > 0, \forall i \notin I(u), \forall x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta).$$

Therefore, the set  $S_u := S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  can be defined equivalently by only using active  $g_i$ , namely,

$$S_u = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) \geq 0, \forall i \in I(u), \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0\}.$$

For every  $i \in I(u)$ , the defining polynomial  $g_i(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on  $S_u$ . Obviously  $S_u$  is a compact convex set with nonempty interior. By Theorem 3.1,  $S_u$  is SDP representable. And hence by Proposition 3.2,  $S$  is also SDP representable.  $\square$

Now we turn to the SDP representability problem when  $S$  is not basic semialgebraic. Assume  $S = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k$  is compact convex. Here each  $T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$  is basic closed semialgebraic but not necessarily convex. Similar sufficient conditions on  $T_k$  for the SDP representability of  $S$  can be established.

**Theorem 3.4** (Sufficient conditions for SDP representability). *Suppose  $S = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k$  is a compact convex semialgebraic set with each*

$$T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$$

*being defined by polynomials  $g_i^k(x)$ . If for every  $u \in \partial S$ , and each  $g_i^k$  satisfying  $g_i^k(u) = 0$ ,  $T_k$  has interior near  $u$  and  $g_i^k(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ , then  $S$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Proposition 3.2, it suffices to show that for each  $u \in \partial S$  there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that the intersection  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  is SDP representable. For each  $u \in \partial S$ , let  $I_k(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq m_k : g_i^k(u) = 0\}$ . By assumption, for every  $i \in I_k(u)$ , if  $g_i^k(x)$  is not sos-concave,  $g_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ . By continuity,  $g_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$  for some  $\delta > 0$ . Note  $g_i^k(u) > 0$  for all  $i \notin I_k(u)$ . So  $\delta > 0$  can be chosen sufficiently small so that

$$g_i^k(x) > 0, \forall i \notin I_k(u), \forall x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta).$$

Then we can see

$$T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i^k(x) \geq 0, \forall i \in I_k(u), \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0\}.$$

For every  $i \in I_k(u)$ , the defining polynomial  $g_i^k(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on  $T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u)$ . Hence, the intersection  $T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u)$  is a compact convex set with nonempty interior. By Theorem 3.1,  $T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u)$  is SDP representable. Therefore, by Theorem 2.2, we know

$$S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta) = \text{conv}(S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)\right) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m (T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))\right)$$

is also SDP representable.  $\square$

If the defining polynomials of a compact convex set  $S$  are either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on the part of the boundary of  $S$  where they vanish, Theorem 3.4 tell us  $S$  is SDP representable. If  $S$  is the convex hull of the union of such convex sets, Theorem 2.2 tells us that  $S$  is also SDP representable. We now assert that this is not very far from the necessary conditions for  $S$  to be SDP representable.

We now need give a short review of smoothness of the boundary of a set. Let  $S = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k$  and  $T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$  with  $\partial S$  and  $\partial T_k$  denoting their topological boundaries. For any  $u \in \partial T_k(u)$ , the active constraint set  $I_k(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq m_k : g_i^k(u) = 0\}$  is nonempty.

We say  $u$  is a *nonsingular point* on  $\partial T_k$  if  $|I_k(u)| = 1$  and  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$  for  $i \in I_k(u)$ .  $u$  is called a *corner point* on  $\partial T_k$  if  $|I_k(u)| > 1$ , and is nonsingular if  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$  for every  $i \in I_k(u)$ . For  $u \in \partial S$  and  $i \in I_k(u) \neq \emptyset$ , we say the defining function  $g_i^k$  is *irredundant at  $u$  with respect to  $\partial S$*  (or just *irredundant at  $u$*  if the set  $S$  is clear from the context) if there exists a sequence of nonsingular points  $\{u_N\} \subset Z(g_i^k) \cap \partial S$  such that  $u_N \rightarrow u$ ; otherwise, we say  $g_i^k$  is *redundant at  $u$* . We say  $g_i^k$  is *nonsingular at  $u$*  if  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$ . Geometrically, when  $g_i^k$  is nonsingular at  $u \in \partial S$ ,  $g_i^k$  being redundant at  $u$  means that the constraint  $g_i^k(x) \geq 0$  could be removed without changing  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  for  $\delta > 0$  small enough. A corner point  $u \in \partial T_k$  is said to be *nondegenerate* if  $g_i^k$  is both irredundant and nonsingular at  $u$  whenever  $i \in I_k(u) \neq \emptyset$ .

The following gives necessary conditions for SDP representability.

**Theorem 3.5.** (Necessary conditions for SDP representability) *If the convex set  $S$  is SDP representable, then the following holds:*

(a) *The interior  $\overset{\circ}{S}$  of  $S$  is a finite union of basic open semialgebraic sets, i.e.,*

$$\overset{\circ}{S} = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k, \quad T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) > 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) > 0\}$$

*for some polynomials  $g_i^k(x)$ .*

(b) *The closure  $\bar{S}$  of  $S$  is a finite union of basic closed semialgebraic sets, i.e.,*

$$\bar{S} = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k, \quad T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$$

*for some polynomials  $g_i^k(x)$  (they might be different from those in (a) above).*

(c) *For each  $u \in \partial\bar{S}$  and  $i \in I_k(u) \neq \emptyset$ , if  $g_i^k$  from (b) is irredundant and nonsingular at  $u$ , then  $g_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$ .*

*Remarks:* (i) The proof of Theorem 3.5 only depends on the fact that  $S$  is a convex semialgebraic set with nonempty interior, and does not use its SDP representation. (ii) The polynomials  $g_i^k(x)$  in item (b) might be different from the polynomials  $g_i^k(x)$  in item (a). We use the same notations for convenience.

*Proof.* (a) and (b) can be seen immediately from Theorem 2.7.2 in [3].

(c) Let  $u \in \partial\bar{S} \cap \partial T_k$ . Note that  $\bar{S}$  is a convex set and has the same boundary as  $S$ .

First, consider the case that  $u$  is a smooth point. Since  $\bar{S}$  is convex,  $\partial\bar{S}$  has a supporting hyperplane  $u + w^\perp = \{u + x : w^T x = 0\}$ .  $\bar{S}$  lies on one side of  $u + w^\perp$  and so does  $T_k$ , since  $T_k$  is contained in  $\bar{S}$ . Since  $u$  is a smooth point,  $I_k(u) = \{i\}$  has cardinality one. For some  $\delta > 0$  sufficiently small, we have

$$T_k \cap B(u, \delta) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i^k(x) \geq 0, \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 > 0\}.$$

Note  $u + w^\perp$  is also a supporting hyperplane of  $T_k$  passing through  $u$ . So, the gradient  $\nabla g_i^k(u)$  must be parallel to  $w$ , i.e.,  $\nabla g_i^k(u) = \alpha_i^k w$  for some nonzero scalar  $\alpha_i^k \neq 0$ . Thus, for all  $0 \neq v \in w^\perp$  and  $\epsilon > 0$  small enough, the point  $u + \frac{\epsilon}{\|v\|}v$  is not in the interior of  $T_k \cap B(u, \delta)$ , which implies

$$g_i^k(u + \frac{\epsilon}{\|v\|}v) \leq 0, \quad \forall 0 \neq v \in w^\perp = \nabla g_i^k(u)^\perp.$$

By the second order Taylor expansion, we have

$$-v^T \nabla^2 g_i^k(u) v \geq 0, \quad \forall 0 \neq v \in \nabla g_i^k(u)^\perp,$$

that is,  $g_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$ .

Second, consider the case that  $u \in \partial\bar{S}$  is a corner point. By assumption that  $g_i^k$  is irredundant and nonsingular at  $u$ , there exists a sequence of smooth points  $\{u_N\} \subset Z(g_i^k) \cap \partial\bar{S}$  such that  $u_N \rightarrow u$  and  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$ . From the above, we know that

$$-v^T \nabla^2 g_i^k(u_N) v \geq 0, \quad \forall 0 \neq v \in \nabla g_i^k(u_N)^\perp.$$

Since  $\nabla g_i^k(u) \neq 0$ , the subspace  $\nabla g_i^k(u_N)^\perp$  converges to  $\nabla g_i^k(u)^\perp$ , i.e.,  $\nabla g_i^k(u_N) \rightarrow \nabla g_i^k(u)$  as  $N$  goes to infinity. By continuity, we have

$$-v^T \nabla^2 g_i^k(u) v \geq 0, \quad \forall 0 \neq v \in \nabla g_i^k(u)^\perp,$$

that is,  $g_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$ . □

We point out that in (c) of Theorem 3.5 the condition that  $g_i^k$  is irredundant can not be dropped. For a counterexample, consider the set

$$S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : g_1^1(x) := 1 - x_1^2 - x_2^2 \geq 0, g_2^1(x) := (x_1 - 2)^2 + x_2^2 - 1 \geq 0\}.$$

Choose  $u = (1, 0)$  on the boundary. Then  $g_2^1$  is redundant at  $u$ . As we can see,  $g_2^1$  is not quasi-concave at  $u$ .

By comparing Theorem 3.4 and Theorem 3.5, we can see the presented sufficient conditions and necessary conditions are pretty close. The main gaps are between the defining polynomials being positive versus nonnegative curvature and between the defining polynomials being singular or not on the part of the boundary where they vanish. A case which bypasses the gaps is when some defining polynomials are sos-concave.

As is obvious, the set of defining polynomials for a semialgebraic set is not unique, e.g., the set remains the same if each defining polynomial is replaced by its cubic power. However, as we can imagine, if we use some set of defining polynomials, we can prove the SDP representability of the set, but if we use some other set of defining of polynomials, we might not be able to prove that. A simple example is that the set  $\{x : g(x) := (1 - \|x\|^2)^3 \geq 0\}$  is obviously SDP representable but none of our earlier theorems using  $g(x)$  only can show this set is SDP representable. This is because, so far, we have discussed the SDP representability only from the view of the defining polynomials, instead of from the view of the geometric properties of the convex sets. Sometimes, we are more interested in the conditions on the geometry of convex sets which is independent of defining polynomials. This leads us to the next subsection of giving conditions on the geometric properties.

### 3.3. Sufficient and necessary conditions on the geometry

In this subsection, to address the SDP representability of convex semialgebraic sets, we give sufficient conditions and necessary conditions on the geometry of the sets instead of on their defining polynomials.

A subset  $V \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  is a *variety* if there exist polynomials  $p_1(x), \dots, p_m(x)$  such that  $V = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : p_1(x) = \dots = p_m(x) = 0\}$ . Given a variety  $V$ , define the ideal  $I(V)$  as

$$I(V) = \{p \in \mathbb{R}[x] : p(u) = 0 \text{ whenever } u \in V\}.$$

Let the ideal  $I(V)$  be generated by polynomials  $q_1, \dots, q_k$ . A point  $u \in V$  is said to be a *nonsingular point* if the matrix  $[\frac{\partial q_i}{\partial x_j}(u)]$  has full rank.  $V$  is said to be a *nonsingular variety* if every point of  $V$  is a nonsingular point. Note that if two varieties  $V_1, V_2$  are both nonsingular at a certain point  $u$ , then their intersection variety  $V_1 \cap V_2$  might be singular at  $u$ . A set  $Z \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  is said to be *Zariski open* if its complement in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  is a variety. We refer to [3, 4] for more on algebraic varieties.

**Lemma 3.6.** *Let  $S \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  be a compact convex semialgebraic set with nonempty interior. Then*

- (i) *The interior  $\overset{\circ}{S}$  is the union of basic open semialgebraic sets, i.e.,*

$$\overset{\circ}{S} = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k, \quad T_k := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) > 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) > 0\}$$

*where  $g_i^k(x)$  are polynomials. Each  $T_k$  is bounded and its closure has boundary  $\partial T_k$ .*

- (ii) *The Zariski closure  $\mathcal{V}^k$  of each  $\partial T_k$  is the union  $\mathcal{V}^k = \mathcal{V}_1^k \cup \mathcal{V}_2^k \cup \dots \cup \mathcal{V}_{L_k}^k$  of irreducible varieties of dimension  $n - 1$  such that  $\mathcal{V}_i^k \cap \partial T_k \not\subseteq (\cup_{j \neq i} \mathcal{V}_j^k) \cap \partial T_k$ . We can write these as  $\mathcal{V}_i^k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_i^k(x) = 0\}$  for some irreducible polynomials  $f_i^k(x)$  such that the ideal  $I(\mathcal{V}_i^k)$  is generated by  $f_i^k(x)$ . Furthermore, if every  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  containing  $u \in \partial T_k$  is nonsingular at  $u$  (i.e.,  $\nabla f_i^k(u) \neq 0$ ), then for  $r > 0$  sufficiently small we have*

$$(3.4) \quad \overline{T_k} \cap \bar{B}(u, r) = \left( \bigcap_{1 \leq i \leq L_k} \mathcal{V}_i^{k+} \right) \cap \bar{B}(u, r), \quad \mathcal{V}_i^{k+} := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_i^k(x) \geq 0\}.$$

- (iii) *For  $u \in \partial S \cap \partial T_k \cap \mathcal{V}_i^k$ , we say  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is irredundant at  $u$  if there exists a sequence  $\{u_N\} \subset \partial S$  converging to  $u$  such that  $S \cap B(u_N, \epsilon_N) = \mathcal{V}_i^{k+} \cap B(u_N, \epsilon_N)$  for some  $\epsilon_N > 0$ . If  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is nonsingular and irredundant at  $u$ , then the curvature of  $\mathcal{V}_i$  at  $u$  is nonnegative.*

- (iv) *The nonsingular points in  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  form a Zariski open subset of  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  and their complement has a lower dimension than  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  does.*

In the above lemma, the irreducible varieties  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  are called the *intrinsic varieties* of  $\partial S$ , and the corresponding polynomials  $f_i^k$  are called the *intrinsic polynomials* of  $S$ . The intrinsic variety  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is called *irredundant* if it is irredundant at every  $u \in \partial S \cap \partial T_k \cap \mathcal{V}_i^k$ .  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is called *redundant* at  $u \in \partial S \cap \partial T_k \cap \mathcal{V}_i^k$  if it is not irredundant at  $u$ . The set  $\mathcal{B} = \{\mathcal{V}_i^k : 1 \leq k \leq m, 1 \leq i \leq L_k\}$  of irreducible varieties in (ii) above is called a *boundary sheet* of  $S$ . We remark that the boundary sheet  $\mathcal{B}$  of  $S$  is not unique.

**Example 3.7.** Consider the compact convex set  $S = \{x \in \bar{B}(0, 1) : x_2 \geq x_1^2 \text{ or } x \in \mathbb{R}_+^2\}$ . Define irreducible varieties  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  as follows

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{V}_1^1 &= \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : 1 - \|x\|^2 = 0\}, \quad \mathcal{V}_2^1 = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : x_2 - x_1^2 = 0\} \\ \mathcal{V}_1^2 &= \mathcal{V}_1^1, \quad \mathcal{V}_2^2 = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : x_2 = 0\}, \quad \mathcal{V}_3^2(a) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : x_1 - ax_2 = 0\} \quad (0 \leq a \leq 1). \end{aligned}$$

They are the intrinsic varieties of  $\partial S$ . For any  $0 \leq a \leq 1$ ,  $\mathcal{B}(a) = \{\mathcal{V}_1^1, \mathcal{V}_2^1, \mathcal{V}_1^2, \mathcal{V}_2^2, \mathcal{V}_3^2(a)\}$  is a boundary sheet of  $S$ . It is not unique.  $\mathcal{V}_1^1, \mathcal{V}_2^1, \mathcal{V}_1^2, \mathcal{V}_2^2$  are all irredundant, while  $\mathcal{V}_3^2(a)$  is redundant at the origin.

*Proof of Lemma 3.6.* Note that  $S$  is the closure of its interior. Pick any point  $u \in \partial S$  and pick an interior point  $o$  to  $S$ . The interior points of the interval joining  $o$  to  $u$  must lie in the interior of  $S$  and can approach its vertex  $u$ .

- (i) This is the claim (a) of Theorem 3.5.  
(ii)  $T_k$  is a component of

$$\check{T}_k := \{x : g^k(x) > 0\}$$

where  $g^k := g_1^k g_2^k \cdots g_{m_k}^k$  and is what [7] calls an algebraic interior. In other words, any bounded basic open semialgebraic set is an algebraic interior. Lemma 2.1 of [7] now tells us that a minimum degree defining polynomial  $\tilde{g}^k$  for  $T_k$  is unique up to a multiplicative constant. Also it says that any other defining polynomial  $h$  for  $T_k$  equals  $p\tilde{g}^k$  for some polynomial  $p$ . Thus  $\tilde{g}^k(v) = 0$  and  $\nabla \tilde{g}^k(v) = 0$  implies  $\nabla h(v) = 0$ . So the singular points of  $h$  on  $\partial T_k$  contain the singular points of  $\partial T_k$ . Lemma 2.1 of [7] characterizes the boundary of algebraic interiors. The third and fourth paragraphs in the proof of Lemma 2.1 of [7] show that the Zariski closure of  $\partial T_k$  is a union of irreducible varieties  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  each of dimension  $n - 1$  which satisfy all requirements of (ii) except equation (3.4). Without loss of generality, the sign of  $f_i^k$  can be chosen such that  $f_i^k(x)$  is nonnegative on  $T_k$ . When every  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is nonsingular at  $u \in \partial T_k \cap \mathcal{V}_i^k$ , there exists  $r > 0$  small enough such that every  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is a smooth hypersurface on  $\bar{B}(u, r)$ . So on  $\bar{B}(u, r)$ , a point  $v$  is on the boundary of  $T_k$  if and only if all  $f_i^k(v) \geq 0$  and at least one  $f_i^k(v) = 0$ ; on the other hand,  $v$  is in the interior of  $T_k$  if and only if all  $f_i^k(v) > 0$ . Therefore equation (3.4) holds.

- (iii) This is implied by item (c) of Theorem 3.5.

(iv) The  $\mathcal{V}_i$  above are irreducible algebraic varieties. Thus by Proposition 3.3.14 of [3] the desired conclusions on the nonsingular points follows.  $\square$

In terms of intrinsic varieties, our main result about SDP representability is

**Theorem 3.8.** *Let  $S$  be a compact convex semialgebraic set with nonempty interior, and  $\mathcal{B} = \{\mathcal{V}_i^k : 1 \leq k \leq m, 1 \leq i \leq L_k\}$  be a boundary sheet of  $S$  as guaranteed by Lemma 3.6. Assume every  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  in  $\mathcal{B}$  is nonsingular on  $\mathcal{V}_i^k \cap \partial S$ , and has positive curvature at  $u \in \mathcal{V}_i^k \cap \partial S$  whenever  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  is redundant at  $u$ . Then  $S$  is SDP representable if (resp. only if) for each  $u \in \partial S \cap \mathcal{V}_i^k$  the intrinsic variety  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  has positive (resp. nonnegative) curvature at  $u$ .*

*Proof.* The necessary side is (iii) of Lemma 3.6. Let us prove the sufficient side. By Proposition 3.2, it suffices to show that for every  $u \in \partial S$  there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  is SDP representable. Let  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  and  $f_i^k$  be given by Lemma 3.6. Fix an arbitrary point  $u \in \partial S$  and let  $I_k(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq L_k : u \in \mathcal{V}_i^k\}$ . By the assumption of nonsingularity of  $\mathcal{V}_i^k$  on  $\mathcal{V}_i^k \cap \partial S$  and equation (3.4) in Lemma 3.6, there is some  $\delta > 0$  small enough such that

$$S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta) = \bigcup_{k=1}^m \overline{T_k} \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$$

$$\overline{T_k} \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_i^k(x) \geq 0, \forall i \in I_k(u), \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0\}.$$

Note that  $f_i^k$  are irreducible polynomials and nonsingular (their gradients do not vanish) on  $\mathcal{V}_i^k \cap \partial S$ . So the positive curvature hypothesis implies that each  $f_i^k(x)$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$  (we can choose  $\delta > 0$  small enough to make this true). Obviously  $T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  is a bounded set. By Theorem 3.1 and Theorem 2.2, we know  $S \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  is SDP representable.  $\square$

In terms of intrinsic polynomials, the above theorem can be reformulated as

**Theorem 3.9.** *Let  $S$  be a compact convex semialgebraic set with nonempty interior, and  $f_i^k$  ( $1 \leq k \leq m, 1 \leq i \leq L_k$ ) be intrinsic polynomials of  $S$  as guaranteed by Lemma 3.6. Assume every  $f_i^k$  is nonsingular on  $Z(f_i^k) \cap \partial S$ , and strict quasi-concave at  $u \in Z(f_i^k) \cap \partial S$  whenever  $f_i^k$  is redundant at  $u$ . Then  $S$  is SDP representable if (resp. only if) for each  $u \in \partial S$  and  $f_i^k$  satisfying  $f_i^k(u) = 0$  the intrinsic polynomial  $f_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave (resp. non-strictly quasi-concave) at  $u$ .*

*Remarks:* (i) In the above two theorems, we assume intrinsic varieties (resp. intrinsic polynomials) are positively curved (resp. strictly quasi-concave) on the part of the boundary where they are redundant. This assumption is reasonable, because redundant intrinsic varieties (resp. intrinsic polynomials) are usually not unique and there is a freedom of choosing them. (ii) As mentioned in the introduction, under the nonsingularity assumption, the gap between sufficient and necessary conditions is the intrinsic varieties being positively curved versus nonnegatively curved or the intrinsic polynomials being strictly quasi-concave versus nonstrictly quasi-concave. A case bypassing the gap is the intrinsic polynomials being sos-concave, as shown in Theorem 3.4. Thus, in Example 3.7, we know the compact set there is SDP representable. (iii) In Theorems 3.8 and 3.9, to prove the necessary conditions, we have only used the convexity of  $S$  and its nonempty interior, instead of the SDP representability of  $S$ . Thus the necessary conditions in Theorems 3.8 and 3.9 are still true when  $S$  is a convex semialgebraic set with nonempty interior.

#### 4. CONVEX HULLS OF NONCONVEX SEMIALGEBRAIC SETS

In this section, we consider the problem of finding the convex hull of a nonconvex semialgebraic set  $T$ . The convex hull  $\text{conv}(T)$  must be convex and semialgebraic (Theorem 2.2.1 in [3]). By Theorem 2.7.2 in [3], the closure of  $\text{conv}(T)$  is a union of basic closed semialgebraic sets. A fundamental problem in convex geometry and semidefinite programming is to find the SDP representation of  $\text{conv}(T)$ . This section will address this problem and prove the sufficient conditions and necessary conditions for the SDP representability of  $\text{conv}(T)$  summarized in the Introduction.

Let  $T$  be a compact nonconvex set with boundary  $\partial T$ . Obviously  $\text{conv}(T)$  is the convex hull of the boundary  $\partial T$ . Some part of  $\partial T$  might be in the interior of  $\text{conv}(T)$  and will not contribute to  $\text{conv}(T)$ . So we are motivated to define the *convex boundary*  $\partial_c T$  of  $T$  as

$$(4.1) \quad \partial_c T = \left\{ u \in T : \ell^T u = \min_{x \in T} \ell^T x \text{ for some } \ell \in \mathbb{R}^n \text{ with } \|\ell\| = 1 \right\} \subseteq \partial T.$$

Geometrically,  $\partial_c T$  is the maximum subset of  $\partial T$  contained in  $\partial \text{conv}(T)$ , and the convex hull of  $\partial_c T$  is still  $\text{conv}(T)$ .

**Proposition 4.1.** *If  $T$  is compact, then  $\text{conv}(\partial_c T) = \text{conv}(T)$  and  $\partial_c T$  is also compact.*

*Proof.* Obviously  $\text{conv}(\partial_c(T)) \subseteq \text{conv}(T)$ . We need to prove  $\text{conv}(\partial_c(T)) \supseteq \text{conv}(T)$ . It suffices to show, for any  $u \notin \text{conv}(\partial_c T)$ , then  $u \notin \text{conv}(T)$ . For any  $u \notin \text{conv}(\partial_c T)$ , by the Convex Set Separation Theorem, there is a vector  $\ell$  of unit length and a positive number  $\delta > 0$  such that

$$\ell^T u < \ell^T x - \delta, \quad \forall x \in \text{conv}(\partial_c T).$$

Let  $v \in T$  minimize  $\ell^T x$  over  $T$ , which must exist due to the compactness of  $T$ . Then  $v \in \partial_c T$  and hence

$$\ell^T u < \ell^T v - \delta = \min_{x \in T} \ell^T x - \delta.$$

Therefore,  $u \notin \text{conv}(T)$ .

Clearly  $\partial_c T$  is bounded and closed by its definition. So  $\partial_c T$  is compact.  $\square$

*Remark:* If  $T$  is not compact, then Proposition 4.1 might not be true. For instance, for set  $T = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \|x\|^2 \geq 1\}$ , the convex boundary  $\partial_c T = \emptyset$ , but  $\text{conv}(T)$  is the whole space. When  $T$  is not compact, even if  $\text{conv}(\partial T) = \text{conv}(T)$ , it is still possible that  $\text{conv}(\partial_c T) \neq \text{conv}(T)$ . As a counterexample, consider the set

$$W = \{(0, 0)\} \cup \{x \in \mathbb{R}_+^2 : x_1 x_2 \geq 1\}.$$

It can be verified that  $\text{conv}(W) = \text{conv}(\partial W)$ ,  $\partial_c W = \{(0, 0)\}$  and  $\text{conv}(\partial_c W) \neq \text{conv}(W)$ .

Note that every semialgebraic set is a finite union of basic semialgebraic sets (Proposition 2.1.8 in [3]). To find the convex hull of a semialgebraic set  $T$ , by Theorem 2.2, it suffices to find the SDP representation of the convex hull of each basic semialgebraic subset of  $T$ .

**Theorem 4.2.** *Let  $T_1, \dots, T_m$  be bounded semialgebraic sets. If each  $\text{conv}(T_k)$  is SDP representable, then the convex hull of  $\cup_{k=1}^m T_k$  is also SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Theorem 2.2, it suffices to prove that

$$\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k\right) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m \text{conv}(T_k)\right).$$

Obviously, the left hand side is contained in the right hand side. We only prove the converse. For every  $j = 1, \dots, m$ , we have

$$\text{conv}(T_j) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k\right).$$

Now taking the union of left hand side for  $j = 1, \dots, m$ , we get

$$\bigcup_{j=1}^m \text{conv}(T_j) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k\right).$$

Taking the convex hull of the above on both sides results in

$$\text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{j=1}^m \text{conv}(T_j)\right) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k\right),$$

which implies the equality at the beginning of this proof.  $\square$

**Proposition 4.3.** *Let  $T$  be a compact semialgebraic set. Then  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable if for every  $u \in \partial_c T$ , there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* Suppose for every  $u \in \partial_c T$  the set  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u))$  has SDP representation for some  $\delta_u > 0$ . Note that  $\{B(u, \delta_u) : u \in \partial_c T\}$  is an open cover of the compact set  $\partial_c T$ . So there are a finite number of balls, say,  $B(u_1, \delta_1), \dots, B(u_L, \delta_L)$ , to cover  $\partial_c T$ . Noting

$$\text{conv}(\partial_c T) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L \partial_c T \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k)\right) \subseteq \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L \text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k))\right) \subseteq \text{conv}(T),$$

by Proposition 4.1, we have

$$\text{conv}(T) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L \text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k))\right).$$

The sets  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u_k, \delta_k))$  are all bounded. By Theorem 2.2, we know  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable.  $\square$

*Remark:* By Proposition 4.3, to find the SDP representation of the convex hull of a compact set  $T$ , it is sufficient to find the SDP representations of convex hulls of the intersections of  $T$  and small balls near the convex boundary  $\partial_c T$ . This gives the bridge between the global and local SDP representations of convex hulls.

In the following two subsections, we prove some sufficient conditions and necessary conditions for the SDP representability of convex hulls. They are essentially generalizations of Section 3 and the results in [6].

#### 4.1. Sps-concavity or quasi-concavity conditions

In Section 3, we have proven some sufficient conditions and necessary conditions for the SDP representability of compact convex sets. In this subsection, we prove similar conditions for the convex hulls of nonconvex sets. Throughout this subsection, consider the semialgebraic sets which have nonempty interior (then there are no equality defining polynomials). We begin with basic semialgebraic sets, and then consider more general semialgebraic sets.

**Theorem 4.4.** *Assume  $T = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, f_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is a compact set defined by polynomials  $f_i(x)$  and has nonempty interior near  $\partial_c T$ , i.e., for every  $u \in \partial_c T$  and  $\delta > 0$  small enough, there exists  $v \in B(u, \delta)$  such that  $f_i(v) > 0$  for all  $i = 1, \dots, m$ . If for each  $u \in \partial_c T$  and  $i$  for which  $f_i(u) = 0$ ,  $f_i(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ , then  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Proposition 4.3, we only need prove for every  $u \in \partial_c T$  the set  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable for some  $\delta > 0$ . For an arbitrary  $u \in \partial_c T$ , and let  $I(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq m : f_i(u) = 0\}$ . For any  $i \in I(u)$ , if  $f_i(x)$  is not sos-concave,  $f_i$  is strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ . By continuity,  $f_i$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$  for some  $\delta > 0$ . Note  $f_i(u) > 0$  for all  $i \notin I(u)$ . Therefore, by continuity, the number  $\delta > 0$  can be chosen small enough that  $f_i(x) > 0$  for all  $x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  and  $i \notin I(u)$ . Then we can see

$$T_u := T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_i(x) \geq 0, \forall i \in I(u), \quad \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0\}.$$

For every  $i \in I(u)$ , the polynomial  $f_i(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on  $T_u$ . Clearly,  $T_u$  is a compact convex set with nonempty interior. By Theorem 3.1, we know  $\text{conv}(T_u) = T_u$  is SDP representable, since  $T_u$  is convex.  $\square$

Now we consider nonbasic semialgebraic sets and give similar sufficient conditions.

**Theorem 4.5** (Sufficient conditions for SDP representability of convex hulls). *Assume  $T = \bigcup_{k=1}^L T_k$  is a compact semialgebraic set with  $T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, f_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\}$  being defined by polynomials  $f_i^k(x)$ . If for each  $u \in \partial_c T$  and  $f_i^k$  for which  $f_i^k(u) = 0$ ,  $T_k$  has interior near  $u$  and  $f_i^k$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ , then  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Proposition 4.3, it suffices to prove for each  $u \in \partial_c T$ , there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable. Fix an arbitrary  $u \in \partial_c T$ , and let  $I_k(u) = \{1 \leq i \leq m_k : f_i^k(u) = 0\}$ . By assumption, if  $i \in I_k(u)$  and  $f_i^k(x)$  is not sos-concave,  $f_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave at  $u$ . Thus, by continuity, there exists  $\delta > 0$  so that  $f_i^k$  is strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$ . Note that  $f_i^k(u) > 0$  for all  $i \notin I_k(u)$ . So  $\delta > 0$  can be chosen small enough such that  $f_i^k(x) > 0$  for all  $x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta)$  and  $i \notin I_k(u)$ . Then we can see that

$$T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_i^k(x) \geq 0, \forall i \in I_k(u), \delta_u^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0\}$$

is a compact convex set with nonempty interior. And, for every  $i \in I_k(u)$ ,  $f_i^k(x)$  is either sos-concave or strictly quasi-concave on  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$ . By Theorem 3.1, the set  $T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta_u)$  is SDP representable. By Theorem 2.2,

$$\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)) = \text{conv}\left(\bigcup_{k=1}^L T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)\right)$$

is also SDP representable.  $\square$

For the converse side of Theorems 4.4 and 4.5, we can apply Theorem 3.5 to get similar necessary conditions on the defining polynomials.

**Theorem 4.6** (Necessary conditions for SDP representability of convex hulls). *Suppose the convex hull of the semialgebraic set  $T$  is defined by polynomials  $g_i^k$*

$$\overline{\text{conv}(T)} = \bigcup_{k=1}^m T_k, \quad T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1^k(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_{m_k}^k(x) \geq 0\},$$

and  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable. For each  $u \in \partial_c T$  and  $i \in I_k(u) \neq \emptyset$ , if  $g_i^k$  is nonsingular and irredundant at  $u$  with respect to  $\partial \text{conv}(T)$ , then  $g_i^k$  is quasi-concave at  $u$ .

*Proof.* Note that the set  $\overline{\text{conv}(S)}$  is convex and SDP representable. The sets  $T_k$  are basic closed semialgebraic subsets of  $\overline{\text{conv}(T)}$  and  $\partial_c T \subseteq \partial \overline{\text{conv}(T)}$ . Consider  $\text{conv}(T)$  as the set  $S$  in Theorem 3.5. Then the proof is a direct application of Theorem 3.5.  $\square$

## 4.2. The PDLH condition

In the previous subsection, the nonconvex semialgebraic sets are assumed to have nonempty interior near the convex boundary  $\partial_c T$ , and so there can be no equality defining polynomials. Now, in this subsection, we consider the more general nonconvex semialgebraic sets which might have empty interior and equality defining polynomials. Then the sufficient conditions in the preceding subsection do not hold anymore. We need another kind of sufficient condition: *the positive definite Lagrange Hessian (PDLH) condition*. As in earlier sections, begin with basic semialgebraic sets.

Assume  $T$  is a compact basic semialgebraic set of the form

$$T = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_1(x) = \dots = f_{m_1}(x) = 0, h_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, h_{m_2}(x) \geq 0\}.$$

Let  $\partial T$  be the boundary of  $T$ . For  $u \in \partial T$ , we say  $T$  satisfies the *positive definite Lagrange Hessian (PDLH) condition* at  $u$  if there exists  $\delta_u > 0$  such that, for every unit length vector  $\ell \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and every  $0 < \delta \leq \delta_u$ , the first order optimality condition holds at any global minimizer for the optimization problem

$$(4.2) \quad \begin{aligned} & \min_{x \in \mathbb{R}^n} \ell^T x \\ & \text{s.t.} \quad f_1(x) = \dots = f_{m_1}(x) = 0 \\ & \quad \quad h_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, h_{m_2}(x) \geq 0 \\ & \quad \quad \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2 \geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

and the Hessian of the associated Lagrange function is positive definite on the ball  $\bar{B}(u, \delta)$ . To be more precise, let  $m = m_2 + 1$  and  $h_m(x) = \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2$ . The associated Lagrange function of (4.2) is

$$\mathcal{L}(x) = \ell^T x - \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i f_i(x) - \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j h_j(x)$$

where  $\mu_1 \geq 0, \dots, \mu_m \geq 0$ . Let  $v$  be a global minimizer of problem (4.2). Then the PDLH condition requires

$$\ell = \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i \nabla f_i(v) + \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \nabla h_j(v)$$

for some  $\lambda_i$  and  $\mu_j \geq 0$ , and the Hessian of the Lagrange function satisfies

$$\nabla^2 \mathcal{L}(x) = - \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i \nabla^2 f_i(x) - \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \nabla^2 h_j(x) \succ 0, \forall x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta).$$

*Remark:* The defined PDLH condition here is stronger than the PDLH condition defined in [6]. This is because the PDLH condition in [6] is defined for convex sets described by concave functions. However, in this paper, the set  $T$  here is nonconvex. We need stronger assumptions.

The next theorem is an extension of Theorem 1.1 in [6] to give sufficient conditions assuring the SDP representability of  $\text{conv}(T)$ .

**Theorem 4.7.** *Let  $T = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_1(x) = \dots = f_{m_1}(x) = 0, h_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, h_{m_2}(x) \geq 0\}$  be a compact set defined by polynomials. If the PDLH condition holds at every  $u \in \partial_c T$ , then  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Proposition 4.3, we only need prove for every  $u \in \partial_c T$ , there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable. Let  $\delta = \delta_u > 0$  be given by the PDLH condition and define  $T_u = T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)$ . We now prove  $\text{conv}(T_u)$  is SDP representable.

First, we construct the lifted LMI for  $T_u$ . Let  $m = m_2 + 1$  and  $h_m(x) = \delta^2 - \|x - u\|^2$ . For integer  $N$ , define the monomial vector

$$[x^N] = [1 \quad x_1 \quad \dots \quad x_n \quad x_1^2 \quad x_1 x_2 \quad \dots \quad x_n^N]^T.$$

Define new polynomials  $h^\nu(x) = h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \dots h_m^{\nu_m}(x)$ , where  $\nu = (\nu_1, \dots, \nu_m) \in \mathbb{Z}_+^m$ . Let  $d_\nu = \lceil \deg(h_1^{\nu_1} \dots h_m^{\nu_m})/2 \rceil$  and  $d_k = \lceil \deg(f_k)/2 \rceil$ . For a fixed integer  $N \geq d_\nu, d_k$ , define

$$M_{N-d_\nu}(h^\nu y) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} h^\nu(x) [x^{N-d_\nu}] [x^{N-d_\nu}]^T d\mu(x) = \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} A_\alpha^\nu y_\alpha$$

$$M_{N-d_k}(f_k y) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f_k(x) [x^{N-d_k}] [x^{N-d_k}]^T d\mu(x) = \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} B_\alpha^k y_\alpha.$$

Here  $\mu(\cdot)$  can be any nonnegative measure such that  $\mu(\mathbb{R}^n) = 1$ ,  $y_\alpha = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} x^\alpha d\mu(x)$  are the moments and  $A_\alpha^\nu, B_\alpha^k$  are symmetric matrices such that

$$\begin{aligned} h^\nu(x) [x^{N-d_\nu}] [x^{N-d_\nu}]^T &= \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} A_\alpha^\nu x^\alpha \\ f_k(x) [x^{N-d_k}] [x^{N-d_k}]^T &= \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} B_\alpha^k x^\alpha. \end{aligned}$$

If  $\text{supp}(\mu) \subseteq T$ , then we have  $y_0 = 1$  and

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \forall \nu \in \{0, 1\}^m, \quad M_{N-d_\nu}(h^\nu y) &\succeq 0 \\ \forall 1 \leq k \leq m, \quad M_{N-d_k}(f_k y) &= 0 \end{aligned} \right\}.$$

Let  $e_i$  denote the standard  $i$ -th unit vector in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ . If we set  $y_0 = 1$  and  $y_{e_i} = x_i$  in the above LMI, then it becomes the LMI

$$(4.3) \quad \left. \begin{aligned} \forall \nu \in \{0, 1\}^m, \quad & A_0^\nu + \sum_{1 \leq i \leq n} A_{e_i}^\nu x_i + \sum_{1 < |\alpha| \leq 2N} A_\alpha^\nu y_\alpha \succeq 0 \\ \forall 1 \leq k \leq m, \quad & B_0^k + \sum_{1 \leq i \leq n} B_{e_i}^k x_i + \sum_{1 < |\alpha| \leq 2N} B_\alpha^k y_\alpha = 0 \end{aligned} \right\}.$$

Obviously, the projection of LMI (4.3) to  $x$ -space contains  $\text{conv}(T_u)$ .

Second, we prove that every polynomial nonnegative on  $T_u$  has an SOS representation with uniform degree bound. Given any  $\ell \in \mathbb{R}^n$  with  $\|\ell\| = 1$ , let  $\ell^*$  be the minimum value of  $\ell^T x$  over  $T_u$  and  $v \in T_u$  be a global minimizer. By the PDLH condition, there exist Lagrange multipliers  $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_{m_1}$  and  $\mu_1 \geq 0, \dots, \mu_m \geq 0$  such that

$$\ell = \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i \nabla f_i(v) + \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \nabla h_j(v)$$

and the Hessian of the Lagrange function satisfies

$$\nabla^2 \mathcal{L}(x) = - \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i \nabla^2 f_i(x) - \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \nabla^2 h_j(x) \succ 0, \forall x \in \bar{B}(u, \delta).$$

Since the Lagrange multipliers  $\lambda_i$  and  $\mu_j$  are continuous functions of  $\ell$  on the unit sphere, there must exist constants  $M > \epsilon > 0$  such that for all  $x \in B(u, \delta)$

$$MI_n \succeq \int_0^1 \int_0^t \nabla^2 \mathcal{L}(v + s(x-v)) ds dt \succeq \epsilon I_n.$$

By Theorem 4.2 in [6], there exist SOS matrix polynomials  $G_\nu(x)$  such that

$$\int_0^1 \int_0^t \nabla^2 \mathcal{L}(v + s(x-v)) ds dt = \sum_{\nu \in \{0,1\}^m} h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x) G_\nu(x)$$

and the degrees of summand polynomials are bounded by

$$\deg(h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x) G_\nu(x)) \leq \Omega\left(\frac{M}{\epsilon}\right).$$

Here  $\Omega(\cdot)$  is a function depending on  $T_u$ . Let  $f_\ell(x) = \mathcal{L}(x) - \ell^*$ . Then  $f_\ell(v) = 0$  and  $\nabla f_\ell(v) = 0$ . By Taylor expansion, we have

$$\begin{aligned} f_\ell(x) &= (x-v)^T \left( \int_0^1 \int_0^t \nabla^2 \mathcal{L}(v + s(x-v)) ds dt \right) (x-v) \\ &= \sum_{\nu \in \{0,1\}^m} \phi_\nu(x) h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x) \end{aligned}$$

where  $\phi_\nu(x) = (x-v)^T G_\nu(x) (x-v)$  are SOS scalar polynomials. Since  $\mu_j \geq 0$ , let

$$\sigma_\nu(x) = \phi_\nu(x) + \begin{cases} \mu_j & \text{if } \nu = e_j \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

be new SOS polynomials. Then we have

$$\ell^T x - \ell^* = \sum_{\nu \in \{0,1\}^m} \sigma_\nu(x) h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x).$$

There is a uniform bound  $N$  independent of  $\ell$  such that

$$(4.4) \quad \deg(f_k(x)), \deg(h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x) \sigma_\nu(x)) \leq 2N.$$

Third, we will show that (4.3) is an SDP representation for  $\text{conv}(T_u)$  when  $N$  is given by (4.4). In the above, we have actually shown that a property called *Schmüdgen's Bounded Degree Nonnegative*

*Representation (S-BDNR)* (see Helton and Nie [6]) holds, i.e., every affine polynomials  $\ell^T x - \ell^*$  nonnegative on  $T$  belongs to the preordering generated by the  $f_i$ 's and  $h_j$ 's with uniform degree bounds. This implies a weaker property called the *Schmüdgen's Bounded Degree Representation (S-BDR)* (see Lasserre [8]) holds, i.e., almost every affine polynomials  $\ell^T x - \ell^*$  positive on  $T$  belongs to the preordering generated by the  $f_i$ 's and  $h_j$ 's with uniform degree bounds. So Theorem 2 in [8] can be applied to show that the LMI (4.3) is a SDP representation of  $\text{conv}(T)$ . For the convenience of readers, we give the direct proof here. Since the projection of (4.3) to  $x$ -space contains  $\text{conv}(T_u)$ , it is sufficient to prove the converse. In pursuit of a contradiction, suppose there exists a vector  $(\hat{x}, \hat{y})$  satisfying (4.3) such that  $\hat{x} \notin \text{conv}(T_u)$ . By the Hahn-Banach Separation Theorem, there must exist a unit length vector  $\ell$  such that

$$(4.5) \quad \begin{aligned} \ell^T \hat{x} < \ell^* = \min \quad & \ell^T x \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & f_1(x) = \cdots = f_{m_1}(x) = 0 \\ & h_1(x) \geq 0, \cdots, h_m(x) \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

Let  $v$  be the minimizer of  $\ell^T x$  on  $T_u$ ; of course  $v \in \partial T_u$ . By the PDLH condition, there exist Lagrange multipliers  $\lambda_1, \cdots, \lambda_{m_1}$  and  $\mu_1, \cdots, \mu_m \geq 0$  such that

$$\ell = \sum_{i=1}^{m_1} \lambda_i \nabla f_i(v) + \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \nabla h_j(v), \quad \mu_j h_j(v) = 0, \quad \forall j = 1, \cdots, m.$$

As we have proved earlier, the identity

$$\ell^T x - \ell^* = \sum_{k=1}^{m_1} f_k(x) + \sum_{\nu \in \{0,1\}^m} \sigma_\nu(x) h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x)$$

holds for some SOS polynomials  $\sigma_\nu(x)$  with uniform degree bound

$$\deg(\sigma_\nu(x) h_1^{\nu_1}(x) \cdots h_m^{\nu_m}(x)) \leq 2N.$$

Thus we can write  $\sigma_\nu(x) = [x^{N-d_\nu}]^T W_\nu [x^{N-d_\nu}]$  for some symmetric positive semidefinite matrix  $W_\nu u \succeq 0$ . In the above identity, replace each monomial  $x^\alpha$  by  $\hat{y}$ , then we get

$$\ell^T \hat{x} - \ell^* = \sum_{k=1}^{m_1} \lambda_k \text{Trace} \left( \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} B_\alpha^k \hat{y}_\alpha \right) + \sum_{\nu \in \{0,1\}^m} \text{Trace} \left( W_\nu \cdot \left( \sum_{0 \leq |\alpha| \leq 2N} A_\alpha^i \hat{y}_\alpha \right) \right) \geq 0,$$

which contradicts (4.5).  $\square$

**Theorem 4.8.** *Let  $T = \bigcup_{k=1}^L T_k$  be a compact semialgebraic set where*

$$T_k = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f_{k,1}(x) = \cdots = f_{k,m_{k,1}}(x) = 0, h_{k,1}(x) \geq 0, \cdots, h_{k,m_{k,2}}(x) \geq 0\}.$$

*If for each  $T_k$ , the PDLH condition holds at every  $u \in \partial_c T \cap \partial T_k$ , then  $\text{conv}(T)$  is SDP representable.*

*Proof.* By Proposition 4.3, it suffices to prove for each  $u \in \partial_c T$ ,  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable for some  $\delta > 0$ . Fix an arbitrary  $u \in \partial_c T$ . Let  $I(u) = \{1 \leq k \leq L : u \in \partial T_k\}$ . Then, by assumption, the PDLH condition holds at  $u$  for every  $T_k$  with  $k \in I(u)$ , and thus the radius  $\delta > 0$  required in the PDLH condition can be chosen uniformly for all  $k \in I(u)$  since  $I(u)$  is finite. Hence we have

$$\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)) = \text{conv} \left( \bigcup_{k \in I(u)} T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta) \right) = \text{conv} \left( \bigcup_{k \in I(u)} \text{conv}(T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta)) \right).$$

By Theorem 4.7, the set  $\text{conv}(T_k \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is SDP representable. Therefore, by Theorem 2.2,  $\text{conv}(T \cap \bar{B}(u, \delta))$  is also SDP representable.  $\square$

## 5. A MORE GEOMETRIC PROOF OF THEOREM 3.3

For which set  $S$  does there exist a set of defining polynomials for which the Lasserre-Parrilo type moment relaxations produce an SDP representation of  $S$ ? The major challenge is that while  $S$  may be presented to us by polynomials for which the Lasserre-Parrilo type constructions fail, there might exist another set of defining polynomials for which such a construction succeeds. This requires us to be able to find a set of defining polynomials such that the Lasserre-Parrilo type constructions work.

This section presents a very different approach to proving a similar version of Theorem 3.3, since what we did there used the localization technique heavily. We shall show here that the Lasserre-Parrilo type moment construction gives one SDP representation by using a certain set of defining polynomials. The proof we shall give, based on Theorems 1.3 and 1.4 of Helton and Nie [6] and on the proof of a theorem of Ghomi [5] (on smoothing boundaries of convex sets), is also very geometrical.

**Theorem 5.1.** *Assume  $S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is a compact convex set defined by polynomials  $g_i$  and has nonempty interior. Also assume  $g_i(x) > 0$  whenever  $x \in S$  lies in the interior of  $S_i = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) \geq 0\}$  and  $\nabla g_i(u) \neq 0$  whenever  $u \in \partial S_i \cap S$ . If for each  $u \in \partial S$  and every  $i$  such that  $g_i(u) = 0$  we have either  $g_i$  is sos-concave or  $Z_i = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) = 0\}$  has positive curvature at  $u$ , then  $S$  is SDP representable. Moreover, there is a certain set of defining polynomials for  $S$  for which the Lasserre-Parrilo moment construction (5.4) and (5.6) given in [6] gives the SDP representation.*

## 5.1. Background from [6]

First we review some results of [6] with slight modification of notation used in the original version. For a smooth function  $f(x)$ , the set  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) \geq 0\}$  is called *poscurv-convex* if it is compact convex, and its boundary  $\partial T$  equals  $Z(f) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) = 0\}$  which is smooth ( $\nabla f(x)$  does not vanish on  $\partial T$ ) and positively curved at every point  $u \in Z(f)$ . When  $f(x)$  is restricted to be a polynomial, the set  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : f(x) \geq 0\}$  is said to be *sos-convex* if  $f(x)$  is sos-concave.

**Theorem 5.2.** *(Theorem 1.3 [6]) Given polynomials  $g_i$ , suppose  $S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is compact convex and has nonempty interior. If each  $S_i := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) \geq 0\}$  is either sos-convex or poscurv-convex, then  $S$  is SDP representable.*

We turn now to more general cases. We say  $S_i = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) \geq 0\}$  is *extendable poscurv-convex with respect to  $S$*  if  $g_i(x) > 0$  whenever  $x \in S$  lies in the interior of  $S_i$  and there exists a poscurv-convex set  $T_i = \{x : f_i(x) \geq 0\} \supseteq S$  such that  $\partial T_i \cap S = \partial S_i \cap S$ . In other words,  $Z_i \cap \partial S$  can be extended to become the boundary of a poscurv-convex set.

**Theorem 5.3.** *(Theorem 1.4 [6]) Given polynomials  $g_i$ , suppose  $S = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_1(x) \geq 0, \dots, g_m(x) \geq 0\}$  is compact convex and has nonempty interior. If each  $S_i$  is either sos-convex or extendable poscurv-convex with respect to  $S$ , then  $S$  is SDP representable.*

We re-emphasize that the proofs of these theorems produce a new set of defining polynomials for  $S$  (possibly bigger than the original set) for which the Lasserre-Parrilo type moment constructions (5.4) and (5.6) given in [6] also produce SDP representations of  $S$ .

To insure an easy interface with [6] for those who are interested, we mention a distinction between the set up in [6] and here. In [6] a prevailing hypothesis was: the zero set  $Z_i = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : g_i(x) = 0\}$  has positive curvature on  $Z_i \cap S$ . If we define positive curvature to have a meaning in the case when  $\nabla g_i(u) = 0$ , i.e, like what we have done for defining quasi-concavity in §3, the main effect of positive curvature hypothesis in [6] is to exclude  $Z_i$  from intersecting the interior of  $S$ . So here we have included this as an additional hypothesis.

Comparing Theorems 5.3 and 5.1, we can see that Theorem 5.3 implies Theorem 5.1 if we can show  $S_i$  is *extendable poscurv-convex with respect to  $S$*  provided  $Z_i$  has positive curvature on  $S$ . The main

task of this section is to prove this point and what is new to the proof is mostly in the facts about convex sets which we now turn to.

## 5.2. Smoothing Boundaries of Convex Sets

The next lemma produces the extendability property of “pieces” of the boundary of a convex set.

**Lemma 5.4.** *Suppose  $S$  is convex compact. Fix an index  $i$ . Assume  $\nabla g_i(u)$  is nonzero for all  $u \in Z_i \cap \partial S$  and that the curvature is positive at all  $u$  there. Then  $S_i$  is extendable poscurv-convex with respect to  $S$ , i.e., there exists a convex set  $T$  such that*

- (i) *The boundary  $\partial T$  is nonsingular (so is smooth) and has positive curvature everywhere.*
- (ii)  *$T$  is compact,  $S \subseteq T$  and  $Z_i \cap \partial S = \partial T \cap \partial S = \partial T \cap S$ .*

*Proof.* The proof we shall give is almost the same as Proposition 3.3 in Ghomi [5]. We begin with the construction of a set  $K$ . This is just as in the proof of Proposition 3.3 [5] but our  $K$  is constructed in a bit different way. Let  $U$  be an open subset of  $Z_i$  containing  $Z_i \cap \partial S$ , having positive curvature and such that  $\bar{U}$  is compact. Let  $\nu : \bar{U} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}^{n-1}$  be the Gauss map, the map given by the outward normal. For any small  $t \geq 0$ , define

$$\bar{U}_t := \{p_t := p - t\nu(p) | p \in \bar{U}\}.$$

Note that  $\bar{U}_0 = \bar{U}$ . Let  $\partial\bar{U}$  be the relative boundary of  $\bar{U}$  in  $Z_i$ , and for  $0 < t \leq r$  let

$$\partial\bar{U}_t := \{p_t := p - t\nu(p) | p \in \partial\bar{U}\}.$$

Clearly,  $\partial\bar{U}_0 \cap S = \emptyset$  and hence  $\partial\bar{U}_t \cap S = \emptyset$  for all  $0 < t \leq r$  when  $r > 0$  is small enough. Define

$$R := \bigcup_{0 \leq t \leq r} \bar{U}_t$$

Now, since  $\partial\bar{U}_t \cap S = \emptyset$  whenever  $0 \leq t \leq r$ , we have that

$$(5.1) \quad \partial R \cap S \subset \bigcup_{0 \leq t \leq r} [\partial\bar{U}_t \cap S] \cup \bar{U}_0 \cup \bar{U}_r \subset \bar{U}_0 \cup \bar{U}_r.$$

Let  $W = S \setminus R$ .  $W$  must be nonempty if  $r > 0$  is small enough, since  $S$  has nonempty interior. We claim  $W$  is convex. To see this, let  $p, q \in W$ , then since  $S$  is convex

$$rp + (1-t)q \in S \quad t \in [0, 1].$$

Now we are going to proceed by contradiction. Assume that there is a  $\tilde{t} \in [0, 1]$  such that

$$\tilde{t}p + (1-\tilde{t})q \notin W.$$

Then there exists  $t_0 \leq \tilde{t} \leq t_1$  such that  $t_0p + (1-t_0)q, t_1p + (1-t_1)q \in \partial R$ ,

$$(5.2) \quad tp + (1-t)q \in R \quad \forall t \in [t_0, t_1];$$

thus  $t_0p + (1-t_0)q \in \partial R \cap S \subset \bar{U}_0 \cup \bar{U}_r$ . From the fact that  $U_0 = U \subset Z_i$  and  $U$  is chosen to have positive curvature, we conclude that  $t_0p + (1-t_0)q \notin \bar{U}_0$ , so

$$t_0p + (1-t_0)q \in \bar{U}_r.$$

Analogously  $t_1p + (1-t_1)q \in \bar{U}_r$ . Since the curvature of  $U_r$  depends continuously on  $r$  and  $\bar{U}$  is compact,  $U_r$  also has positive curvature for  $r > 0$  small enough (Here  $U_r$  having positive curvature means that for any point  $p \in U_r$ , there exists an open neighborhood  $\mathcal{O}$  such that  $U_r \cap \mathcal{O}$  lies on the graph of a convex function having positive definite Hessian over the supporting hyperplane of  $U_r$  at  $p$ ). Thus we have that

$$tp + (1-t)q \notin R \quad \forall t \in (t_0, t_1)$$

which contradicts (5.2). Therefore  $W$  is convex. For  $r > 0$  small enough, define

$$K = \bar{W} + \bar{B}(0, r),$$

then  $K$  is compact, convex and

$$\partial K \cap \partial S = Z_i \cap \partial S.$$

To see this last fact, first observe  $\partial K = \{b : \text{dist}(b, \bar{W}) = r\}$  which implies  $\partial K \supset \bar{U}_0 \cap S$ , so  $\partial K \cap \partial S \supset Z_i \cap \partial S$ . The reverse containment can be seen from  $a \in \partial S$  implies  $a \in \partial W$  (making  $a \in \partial K$  impossible because of the distance formula) or  $a \in R \cap \partial S$ . Now we show the later forces a point  $a$  in  $\partial K$  to be in  $Z_i \cap \partial S$  as desired. By definition of  $R$ , we have either  $a \in \bar{U}_0 \subseteq Z_i$  or  $a \in \bar{U}_t$  for some  $0 < t \leq r$ . By the distance formulae for  $\partial K$ ,  $a$  does not belong to  $\bar{U}_t$  for all  $0 < t \leq r$ , and hence  $a \in \bar{U}_0 \subseteq Z_i$ .

The proof from here on is essentially the same in Proposition 3.3 [5], so we could refer to that but include here a slightly annotated version for convenience. The next step is to define a set  $K^\epsilon$  which is a small perturbation of  $K$  and which we shall prove has the properties our lemma requires. Let  $V \subset U$  be an open set with  $Z_i \cap \partial S \subset V \subset U$ . Set  $U' = \nu(U)$ , and  $V' = \nu(V)$ . Then  $U'$  and  $V'$  are open in  $\mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ , because, since the second fundamental form of  $U$  is nondegenerate,  $\nu$  is a local diffeomorphism. Let  $\bar{\phi} : \mathbb{S}^{n-1} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a smooth function with support  $\text{supp}(\bar{\phi}) \subset U'$ , and  $\bar{\phi}|_{V'} \equiv 1$ . Let  $\phi$  be the extension of  $\bar{\phi}$  to  $\mathbb{R}^n$  given by  $\phi(0) = 0$  and  $\phi(p) := \bar{\phi}(p/\|p\|)$ , when  $p \neq 0$ . Define  $\bar{h} : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  by

$$\bar{h}^\epsilon(p) := \tilde{h}^\epsilon(p) + \phi(p)(h(p) - \tilde{h}^\epsilon(p)),$$

where  $h$  is the support function of  $K$ , that is,

$$h(p) := \sup_{x \in K} \langle p, x \rangle$$

and  $\tilde{h}^\epsilon$  is the *Schneider transform* of  $h$

$$\tilde{h}^\epsilon(p) := \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} h(p + \|p\|x) \theta_\epsilon(\|x\|) dx.$$

Note that  $\tilde{h}^\epsilon$  is a convex function (see Ghomi [5]). Here  $\theta_\epsilon : [0, \infty) \rightarrow [0, \infty)$  is a smooth function with  $\text{supp}(\theta_\epsilon) \subset [\epsilon/2, \epsilon]$  and  $\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \theta_\epsilon(\|x\|) dx = 1$ .  $\tilde{h}^\epsilon$  supports the convex set

$$\bar{K}^\epsilon := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : \langle x, p \rangle \leq \bar{h}^\epsilon(p), \forall p \in \mathbb{R}^n\}.$$

We claim  $T = \bar{K}^\epsilon$  works for this lemma when  $\epsilon > 0$  is sufficiently small.

(i). We show  $\bar{K}^\epsilon$  is a convex body with support function  $\bar{h}^\epsilon$ . To see this, it suffices to check that  $\bar{h}^\epsilon$  is positively homogeneous and convex. By definition,  $\bar{h}^\epsilon$  is obviously homogeneous. Thus to see convexity, it suffices to show that  $\nabla^2 \bar{h}^\epsilon(p)$  is nonnegative semidefinite for all  $p \in \mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ . Since  $\bar{h}^\epsilon|_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1} - U'} = \tilde{h}^\epsilon$ , and  $\tilde{h}^\epsilon$  is convex, we need to check this only for  $p \in U'$ . To this end, note that, for each  $p \in U'$ ,  $\nabla^2(h|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}) \succ 0$ . Here  $T_p$  denotes the tangent plane at  $p$ . Further, by construction,

$$\|h - \bar{h}^\epsilon\|_{C^2(\bar{U}')} \rightarrow 0.$$

So, for every  $p \in \bar{U}'$ , there exists an  $\epsilon(p) > 0$  such that  $\bar{h}^\epsilon|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$  has strictly positive Hessian. Since  $\bar{U}'$  is compact and  $\epsilon(p)$  depends on the size of the eigenvalues of the Hessian matrix of  $\bar{h}^\epsilon|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$ , which in turn depend continuously on  $p$ , it follows that there is an  $\epsilon > 0$  such that  $\nabla^2(\bar{h}^\epsilon|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}) \succ 0$  for all  $p \in \bar{U}'$ .

Next we show that  $\partial \bar{K}^\epsilon$  is nonsingular (hence smooth) and positively curved. By Lemma 3.1 in Ghomi [5], we only need check  $\nabla^2(\bar{h}^\epsilon|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}) \succ 0$  for all  $p \in \mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ . For  $p \in U'$ , this was verified above. For  $p \in \mathbb{S}^{n-1} - U'$ , note that  $\bar{h}^\epsilon = \tilde{h}^\epsilon$  on the cone spanned by  $\mathbb{S}^{n-1} - U'$ . So it is enough to check that  $\nabla^2(\tilde{h}^\epsilon|_{T_p \mathbb{S}^{n-1}}) \succ 0$ . By Lemmas 3.2 and 3.1 of Ghomi [5], this follows from the boundedness of the radii of curvature from below.

(ii). Obviously  $T$  is compact. Then we need show  $Z_i \cap \partial S \subset \partial \bar{K}^\epsilon$ . Since  $Z_i \cap \partial S \subset U$ , which is smooth in  $\partial K$ , we have  $h(p) = \langle \nu^{-1}(p), p \rangle$ , for all  $p \in U'$ . Apply the fact  $\nabla h(p) = \nu^{-1}(p)$  to get

$$\nu^{-1}(p) = \nabla h(p) = \nabla \bar{h}^\epsilon(p) = \bar{\nu}^{-1}(p)$$

for all  $p \in V'$ , where  $\bar{\nu}$  is the Gauss map of  $\partial\bar{K}^\epsilon$ . So  $Z_i \cap \partial S \subset \bar{\nu}^{-1}(V') \subset \partial\bar{K}^\epsilon$ . The  $\partial S \setminus Z_i$  is contained in the interior of  $K$ . Since  $\bar{K}^\epsilon \rightarrow K$  as  $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$ ,  $\partial S \setminus Z_i$  is also contained in the interior of  $\bar{K}^\epsilon$  when  $\epsilon > 0$  is small enough. Therefore, from  $Z_i \cap \partial S \subset \partial\bar{K}^\epsilon$  and  $\partial S = (Z_i \cap \partial S) \cup (\partial S \setminus Z_i)$ , we know  $S$  is contained in  $\bar{K}^\epsilon$  for  $\epsilon > 0$  sufficiently small, due to the compactness and convexity of  $S$ .  $\square$

### 5.3. Proof of Theorem 5.1

Given  $u \in \partial S$ , pick a  $g_i$  for which  $g_i(u) = 0$ . By assumption, if  $g_i$  is not sos-concave, then each  $Z_i$  has positive curvature at all  $u$  in  $Z_i \cap \partial S$  and  $\nabla g_i(u) \neq 0$ . By Lemma 5.4,  $S_i$  is extendable poscurve-convex with respect to  $S$ . Apply Theorem 5.3, noting that they produce the desired Lasserre-Parrilo type moment construction, to finish the proof.  $\square$

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

For compact convex semialgebraic sets, this paper proves the sufficient condition for semidefinite representability: each component of the boundary is nonsingular and has positive curvature, and the necessary condition: the boundary components have nonnegative curvature when nonsingular. We can see that the only gaps between them are the boundary has singular points or has zero curvature somewhere. Compactness is required in the proof for the sufficient condition, but it is not clear whether the compactness is necessary in the general case. So far, there is no evidence that SDP representable sets require more than being convex and semialgebraic. In fact, we conjecture that

*Every convex semialgebraic set in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  is semidefinite representable.*

The results of this paper are mostly on the theoretical existence of semidefinite representations. One important and interesting future work is to find concrete conditions guaranteeing efficient and practical constructions of lifted LMIs for convex semialgebraic sets and convex hulls of nonconvex semialgebraic sets.

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