

Ideals generated by linear forms and symmetric algebras*

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Abstract

We consider ideals generated by linear forms in the variables X_1, \dots, X_n in the polynomial ring $R[X_1, \dots, X_n]$, being R a commutative, Noetherian ring with identity. We investigate when a sequence a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m of linear forms is an s -sequence, in order to compute algebraic invariants of the symmetric algebra of the ideal $I = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m)$.

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1 Introduction

Let M be a finitely generated module on a commutative ring R with identity. Let $A = (a_{ij})$ be a $n \times m$ matrix, with entries in R , $I_k(A)$ the ideal generated by the $k \times k$ minors of A , $1 \leq k \leq \min(m, n)$, and let $\varphi : R^m \rightarrow R^n$ be a module homomorphism. We denote by $I_k(\varphi)$ the ideal $I_k(A)$, where $A = (a_{ij})$ is the $n \times m$ matrix associated to φ , for an appropriate choice of the bases.

Let

$$R^m \xrightarrow{\varphi} R^n \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0 \tag{1}$$

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be a free presentation of the module M . If we consider the symmetric algebras of the modules in (1), the presentation ideal J of $\text{Sym}_R(M)$ is generated by the linear forms in the variables Y_j , $1 \leq j \leq n$:

$$a_i = \sum_{j=1}^n a_{ji} Y_j, \quad 1 \leq i \leq m$$

The theory of s -sequences has been recently introduced by Herzog, Restuccia, Tang ([4]) and it permits to compute the invariants of $\text{Sym}_R(M)$ starting from the main algebraic invariants of quotients of R , via the initial ideal $\text{in}_<(J)$, with respect to a suitable term order, introduced in $R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$, where n is the number of elements in a minimal system of generators of M . In this paper we are interested to the case the ideal J is generated by an s -sequence. The problem is part of a wider context, precisely:

Given an ideal $I = (a_1, \dots, a_m) \subset R[X_1, \dots, X_n]$ generated by linear forms in the variables X_1, \dots, X_n , we want to study when I is generated by an s -sequence and to compute the standard invariants of $\text{Sym}_R(I)$ in terms of the corresponding invariants of special quotients of the ring R .

Standard invariants of $\text{Sym}_R(I)$ are Krull dimension, multiplicity, depth and regularity, denoted respectively by $\dim(\text{Sym}_R(I))$, $e(\text{Sym}_R(I))$, $\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_R(I))$ with respect to the maximal graded ideal, $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_R(I))$. The first three invariants are classical. For the last invariant, we recall that $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_R(I))$ is the Castelnuovo-Mumford regularity of the graded module I . Its importance is briefly explained in Eisenbud-Goto theorem which is an interesting description of regularity in terms of graded Betti numbers of M ([3]). In general the problem is hard, but if I is generated by an s -sequence, our approach gives some interesting results. In Section 1, we recall some results obtained about ideals generated by linear forms as relation ideals of special symmetric algebras. At the end of the section, we consider some basic properties about s -sequences and, additionally, we recall how to compute the invariants ([7], [8]). In Section 2, for the classes of ideals studied in the previous section, we find sufficient and necessary conditions so that they are generated by s -sequences. In this direction a main result is:

Theorem *Let $J = (a_1, \dots, a_m) \subset S = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$, be an ideal generated by m linear forms, $a_i = \sum_{j=1}^n a_{ij} Y_j$, $a_{ij} \in R$, $1 \leq i \leq m$, $1 \leq j \leq n$. If $\text{depth}(I_k(\varphi)) \geq m - k + 1$, $1 \leq k \leq m$, then*

- (i) J is generated by an s -sequence of m elements;
- (ii) $\text{Sym}_S(J) \cong S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/K$, where K is an ideal generated by linear forms in the variables Z_j , $1 \leq j \leq m$ and $\text{in}_<K = (J_1 Z_1, J_2 Z_2, \dots,$

$J_m Z_m)$, where J_1, \dots, J_m are the annihilator ideals of the sequence a_1, \dots, a_m ;

(iii) $J_{i-1} : (a_i) = J_{i-1}$ with $J_{i-1} = (a_1, \dots, a_{i-1})$.

2 Notations and basic results

This section deals with ideals generated by linear forms of a polynomial ring $R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$ over a commutative, noetherian ring R with identity. We are interested in ideals that are kernels of epimorphisms of symmetric algebras, in particular they are ideals of relations of symmetric algebras of finitely generated modules on R . We give a list of results that will be useful in the following.

Definition 2.1. Let $\underline{a} = \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ be a sequence of elements of R . The sequence \underline{a} is called a d -sequence if \underline{a} is a minimal generating system for the ideal (a_1, \dots, a_n) and $(a_1, \dots, a_i) : a_{i+1}a_k = (a_1, \dots, a_i) : a_k$ for all $i = 0, \dots, n-1, k \geq i+1$.

Definition 2.2. Let I be an ideal of the ring R . I is an almost complete intersection if the number of its generators is $\text{depth}(I) + 1$.

Let $A = (a_{ij})$ be a $m \times n$ matrix, $I_k(A)$ the ideal generated by all $k \times k$ minors of the matrix A , $1 \leq k \leq \min(m, n)$. By definition, we have

$$I_0(A) = R \quad \text{and} \quad I_k(A) = 0 \quad \text{for } k > \min(m, n)$$

Let $R^m \xrightarrow{\varphi=(a_{ij})} R^n$ an homomorphism between free modules. We denote by $I_k(\varphi)$ the ideal $I_k(A)$, where A is the matrix associated to φ , for a convenient choice of the bases. Let

$$R^m \xrightarrow{\varphi=(a_{ij})} R^n \longrightarrow M \longrightarrow 0$$

be a free presentation of the module M .

The following results are known. The kernel of the canonical epimorphism

$$S = \text{Sym}_R(R^n) \rightarrow \text{Sym}_R(M) \rightarrow 0$$

is a complete intersection if and only if

$$\text{depth}(I_k(\varphi)) \geq m - k + 1, \quad 1 \leq k \leq m$$

Proof. See [1], Proposition 3. □

The kernel of the canonical epimorphism

$$S = \text{Sym}_R(R^n) \rightarrow \text{Sym}_R(M) \rightarrow 0$$

is an almost complete intersection with $\text{depth}(a_1, \dots, a_{m-1}) = m - 1$ if and only if

$$\text{depth}(I_k(\varphi')) \geq (m - 1) - k + 1, \quad 1 \leq k \leq m - 1$$

where

$$\varphi = \varphi' + \varphi'', \quad \varphi' : R^{m-1} \rightarrow R^m$$

such that

$$\varphi'(f_1) = a_1, \dots, \varphi'(f_{m-1}) = a_{m-1},$$

where f_1, \dots, f_{m-1} form a standard basis for R^{m-1} . Moreover, the kernel can be generated by a d -sequence if and only if

$$Z_1 \cap IK = B_1$$

where Z_1 and B_1 are respectively the 1-cycle and the 1-boundary of the Koszul complex K over a_1, \dots, a_m and I is an ideal of R .

Proof. See [8], Theorem 6. □

Let M be a finitely generated module on R , with generators f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n . We denote by $(a_{ij})_{\substack{i=1, \dots, m \\ j=1, \dots, n}}$ the relation matrix, by $\text{Sym}_i(M)$ the i -th symmetric power of M , and by $\text{Sym}_R(M) = \bigoplus_{i \geq 0} \text{Sym}_i(M)$ the symmetric algebra of M . Note that

$$\text{Sym}_R(M) = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]/J,$$

where

$$J = (g_1, \dots, g_m), \quad \text{and } g_i = \sum_{j=1}^n a_{ij} Y_j.$$

We consider $S = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$ a graded ring by assigning to each variable Y_i the degree 1 and to the elements of R the degree 0. Then J is a graded ideal and the natural epimorphism $S \rightarrow \text{Sym}_R(M)$ is a homomorphism of graded R -algebras.

Let $<$ be a monomial order on monomials in Y_1, \dots, Y_n with $Y_1 < Y_2 < \dots < Y_n$. We call admissible such an order. For any polynomial $f \in$

$R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n], f = \sum_{\alpha} a_{\alpha} Y^{\alpha}$, we put $\text{in}_{<}(f) = a_{\alpha} Y^{\alpha}$ where Y^{α} is the largest monomial in f with respect to $<$ with $a_{\alpha} \neq 0$, and we set

$$\text{in}_{<}(J) = (\text{in}_{<}(f) : f \in J).$$

For $i = 1, \dots, n$ we set $M_i = \sum_{j=1}^i Rf_j$, and let I_i be the colon ideal $M_{i-1} : \langle f_i \rangle$. In other words, I_i is the annihilator of the cyclic module M_i/M_{i-1} and so $M_i/M_{i-1} \cong R/I_i$. For convenience we also set $M_0 = 0$.

Definition 2.3. The colon ideals $I_i, 1 \leq i \leq n$, are called annihilator ideals of the sequence f_1, \dots, f_n .

Notice that $(I_1 Y_1, I_2 Y_2, \dots, I_n Y_n) \subseteq \text{in}_{<}(J)$, and the ideals coincide in degree 1.

Definition 2.4. The generators f_1, \dots, f_n of M are called an s -sequence (with respect to an admissible order $<$), if

$$\text{in}_{<}(J) = (I_1 Y_1, I_2 Y_2, \dots, I_n Y_n)$$

If in addition $I_1 \subset I_2 \subset \dots \subset I_n$, then f_1, \dots, f_n is called a strong s -sequence.

The invariants of the symmetric algebra of a module which is generated by an s -sequence can be computed by the corresponding invariants of quotients of R . We have

Proposition 2.1. Let M be generated by an s -sequence f_1, \dots, f_n , with annihilator ideals I_1, \dots, I_n . Then

$$1. d := \dim(\text{Sym}_R(M)) = \max_{\substack{0 \leq r \leq n, \\ 1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_r \leq n}} \{ \dim(R/(I_{i_1} + \dots + I_{i_r})) + r \};$$

$$2. e(\text{Sym}_R(M)) = \sum_{\substack{0 \leq r \leq n, 1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_r \leq n \\ \dim(R/(I_{i_1} + \dots + I_{i_r})) = d-r}} e(R/(I_{i_1} + \dots + I_{i_r})).$$

and, if f_1, \dots, f_n is a strong s -sequence, then

$$1'. d = \max_{0 \leq r \leq n} \{ \dim(R/I_r) + r \};$$

$$2'. e(\text{Sym}_R(M)) = \sum_{\substack{r \\ \dim(R/I_r) = d-r}} e(R/I_r).$$

If $R = K[X_1, \dots, X_m]$ and we assume that M is generated by a strong s -sequence of elements of the same degree, with annihilator ideals $I_1 \subset \dots \subset I_n$, we have

- 3. $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_R(M)) \leq \max\{\text{reg}(I_i) : i = 1, \dots, n\}$;
- 4. $\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_R(M)) \geq \min\{\text{depth}(R/I_i) + i : i = 0, 1, \dots, n\}$.

Proof. See [4], Proposition 2.4., 2.6. □

3 Relation ideals generated by d -sequences

The aim of this section is to study ideals generated by linear forms that are relation ideals of symmetric algebras and to describe their invariants via the s -sequence theory. Let J be the ideal of relations of the symmetric algebra $\text{Sym}_R(M)$ of a module M .

Let $J = (a_1, \dots, a_m) \subset S = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$ be an ideal generated by m linear forms $a_i = \sum_{j=1}^n a_{ji}Y_j$ on the variables Y_j . If $\text{depth}(I_k(\varphi)) \geq m - k + 1$, $1 \leq k \leq m$, then

- (i) J is generated by an s -sequence of m elements;
- (ii) $\text{Sym}_S(J) \cong S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/K$, where K is an ideal generated by linear forms on the variables Z_j and $\text{in}_<(K) = (J_1Z_1, \dots, J_mZ_m)$, where J_1, \dots, J_m are the annihilator ideals of the s -sequence generating the ideal J ;
- (iii) $J_{i-1} : (a_i) = J_{i-1}$, $J_i = (a_1, \dots, a_{i-1})$, $i = 2, \dots, m$ and J is generated by a strong s -sequence.

Proof. (i) By Theorem 2, J is generated by a regular sequence, then it is generated by an s -sequence with respect to the reverse lexicographic order on the monomials in the variables Y_j with $Y_n > \dots > Y_1$.

(ii) Since J is generated by a strong s -sequence, the ideal K has a Gröbner basis that is linear in the variables Z_1, \dots, Z_m , then $\text{in}_<(K) = (J_1Z_1, J_2Z_2, \dots, J_mZ_m)$.

(iii) Since a_1, \dots, a_m is a regular sequence, by definition we have

$$J_1 = 0 : (a_1) = (0),$$

$$J_i = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_{i-1}) : (a_i) = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_{i-1}) \quad i = 2, \dots, m$$

then the assertion holds. Now, it results $J_{i-1} \subsetneq J_i$, $i = 2, \dots, m$, and the s -sequence is strong. □

The assertion (ii) of the theorem 3 gives information about the initial ideal of the relation ideal of the first syzygy module of the ideal J .

Let $J = (a_1, \dots, a_m) \subset R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n] = S$ be an ideal generated by linear forms in the variables Y_i that form a regular sequence. Then:

- (i) $\dim(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \dim R + n + 1$; If $R = K[X_1, \dots, X_t]$ and we suppose that $\deg a_i = a$ for all i , then
- (ii) $e(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \sum_{i=1}^m a^{i-1}$.
- (iii) If R is the polynomial ring $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \leq (m-1)(a-1) + 1$;
- (iv) $\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \text{depth}(S) + 1$, if R is Cohen-Macaulay.

Proof. Since J is generated by a strong s -sequence, we can compute the standard invariants, using Proposition 2.1, then

- (i) $\dim(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \max_{0 \leq r \leq m} \{\dim(S/J_r) + r, r = 0, \dots, m\} = \dim(S/(a_1, \dots, a_{m-1})) + m = \dim(S) - m + 1 + m = \dim(S) + 1$.
- (ii) $e(\text{Sym}_R(J)) = \sum_{0 \leq r \leq m} e(R/J_r)$, being J_r generated by a regular sequence. It follows that $e(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \sum_{i=1}^m a^{i-1}$, where a is the degree of the generators of J_i .
- (iii) $\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \geq \min_{0 \leq r \leq m} \{\text{depth}(S/J_r) + r, r = 0, \dots, m\} = \min\{\text{depth}(S) - m + 1 + m\} = \text{depth}(S) + 1$.
If R is Cohen-Macaulay, $\dim(S) = \text{depth}(S)$, then
 $\text{depth}(S) + 1 \leq \text{depth}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \leq \dim(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \dim(S) + 1 = \text{depth}(S) + 1$.
- (iv) $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \leq (m-1)(a-1) + 1$, being a the degree of any generator of J ([7], Proposition 1).

□

(i) follows from $\text{Sym}_R(J) = \mathcal{R}(J)$, since J is generated by a regular sequence and $\dim(\mathcal{R}(J)) = \dim(R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]) + 1$ ([2], [9]).

Let $J = (a_1, \dots, a_{m-1}, a_m) \subset S = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$ be an ideal generated by m linear forms. Suppose that:

$$\text{depth}(a_1, \dots, a_{m-1}) = m - 1, \quad Z_1 \cap JK = B_1, \quad J = (a_1, \dots, a_{m-1})$$

Then we have

- (i) J is generated by a d -sequence;
- (ii) $\text{Sym}_S(J) \cong S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/K$, where K is an ideal generated by linear forms in the variables Z_j , $\text{in}_<K = (J_1 Z_1, \dots, J_m Z_m)$, J_1, \dots, J_m are the annihilator ideals of the sequence a_1, \dots, a_m ;

(iii) The annihilator ideals of J are such that

$$J_{i-1} : (a_i) = J_{i-1}, \quad i = 1, \dots, m-1$$

and $J_{m-1} : (a_m) = J_m$, the last annihilator ideal.

Proof. (i) By theorem 2, the elements a_1, \dots, a_m form a d -sequence and then a strong s -sequence with respect to the reverse lexicographic order on the monomials in the variables Z_i and with $Z_m > Z_{m-1} > \dots > Z_1$.

(ii) $\text{Sym}_S(J) = S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/K$ and $\text{in}_<(K) = (J_2Y_2, J_3Y_3, \dots, J_{m-1}Y_{m-1}, J_mY_m)$ and $J_i = (a_1, \dots, a_{i-1})$ for $i = 2, \dots, m-1$. □

Let $J = (a_1, \dots, a_{m-1}, a_m) \subset S = R[Y_1, \dots, Y_m]$ be an ideal generated by linear forms that are an almost complete intersection d -sequence. Put $J_m = (a_1, \dots, a_{m-1}) : (a_m)$. Then

(i) $\dim(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \max\{\dim S + 1, \dim(S/J_m) + m\};$

(ii) $\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \geq \min\{\text{depth}(S/J_m), \text{depth}(R) + n + 1\}$, with the equality if S is Cohen-Macaulay; If $R = K[X_1, \dots, X_t]$ and $\text{deg}a_i = a$ for all i , then

(iii) $e(\text{Sym}_S(J)) = \sum_{i=1}^{m-1} a^{i-1} + e(S/J_m);$

(iv)

$$\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \leq \max\{(m-2)(a-1) + 1, \text{reg}(S/J_m)\}.$$

Proof. (i) The ideal J is generated by a strong s -sequence, because it is generated by a d -sequence and

$$(0) = J_1 \subset J_2 \subset \dots \subset J_{m-1} \subset J_m.$$

(ii) The assertion follows by [4].

$$\begin{aligned} \text{(iii)} \quad \dim(\text{Sym}_S(J)) &= \dim(S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/J) = \dim(S[Z_1, \dots, Z_m]/\text{in}_<(J)) = \\ &= \max\{\dim(S/J_r) + r, r = 0, \dots, m\} \\ &= \max\{\dim(S/J_{m-1}) + m - 1, \dim(S/J_m + m)\} = \\ &= \max\{\dim(S) - m + 2 + m - 1, \dim(S/J_m) + m\} \\ &= \max\{\dim(S) + 1, \dim(S/J_m) + m\}. \end{aligned}$$

- (iv) Since $\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_S(J)) \leq \max\{(m-2)(a-1)+1, \text{reg}(S/J_m)\}$, the assertion follows from [7], Proposition 1. \square

Let $f = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i Y_i$ be a linear form, $f \in R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n]$. Suppose that $(0 : f) = (0 : f^2)$, then we have:

- (i) $I = (f)$ is generated by an s -sequence;
 (ii) $\text{Sym}_S(I) = S[Z]/J$, and $\text{in}_<(J) = (I_1 Z)$, $I_1 = (0 : f)$ the annihilator ideal of the sequence $\{f\}$;

Proof. By the condition $(0 : f) = (0 : f^2)$, the sequence $\{f\}$ is a d -sequence, then $\{f\}$ is an s -sequence ([4], Corollary 3.3.), using the reverse lexicographic order on the monomials in the unique variable Y . In this case $I_0 = (0)$, $I_1 = (0 : f) = (0 : f^2)$ is the unique annihilator ideal of I . \square

Let $f = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i Y_i$ be a linear form, $f \in R[Y_1, \dots, Y_n] = S$, $(0 : f) = (0 : f^2)$ and let $I = (f)$. We have:

- (i) $\dim(\text{Sym}_S(I)) = \dim(R) + n + 1$;
 (ii) $e(\text{Sym}_S(I)) = e(S/(0 : f))$;
 (iii) If $R = K[X_1, X_2, \dots, X_m]$, then

$$\text{depth}(\text{Sym}_S(I)) \geq \text{depth}(S/(0 : f)) + 1;$$

- (iv) If $R = K[X_1, X_2, \dots, X_m]$, then

$$\text{reg}(\text{Sym}_S(I)) \leq \text{reg}(S/(0 : f)) + 1.$$

Proof. (i) $\dim(S/I_0) = \dim(S)$ and $\dim(S/(0 : f)) = \dim(S)$, hence $\dim(\text{Sym}_S(I)) = \dim(S) + 1$, by Proposition 2.1.

- (ii) Using Proposition 2.1, the sum in (ii) has only one summand $e(S/I_1)$
 (iii) $\text{depth}(S/I_0) = \text{depth}(S)$, and $\text{depth}(S/(0 : f)) \leq \text{depth}(S)$, by Proposition 2.1.

- (iv) See [7], Theorem 2. \square

Sequences of linear forms that are d -sequences are the simplest examples besides the regular sequences, that generate relation ideals of symmetric algebras and provide a fertile testing ground for general results. In particular, if $R = K[X_1, \dots, X_n]$ and $I = (X_1^a, \dots, X_n^a)$, then $\text{Sym}(I) = \mathcal{R}(I) = K[X_1, \dots, X_n]/J$, where J is the ideal generated by all 2×2 minors $[i, j]$, $i = 1, \dots, n$, $j = 1, 2, \dots$, of the matrix $\begin{pmatrix} X_1^a & \cdots & X_n^a \\ Y_1 & \cdots & Y_n \end{pmatrix}$, a integer, $a \geq 1$, that are linear forms in the variables Y_1, \dots, Y_n . Therefore: Let J be as before and let the minors be ordered lexicographically $[1, 2] > [1, 3] > \dots > [n-1, n]$. Then J is generated by an s -sequence of linear forms in the variables Y_1, \dots, Y_n with respect to the reverse lexicographic order.

Proof. Any d -sequence is an s -sequence, then the assertion follows. \square

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