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## The Growth of Polynomials Outside of a Compact Set – the Bernstein-Walsh Inequality Revisited

Klaus Schiefermayr\*

## Abstract

In this paper, we present a new and simple proof of the classical Bernstein-Walsh inequality. Based on this proof, we give some improvements for this inequality in the case that the corresponding compact set is real.

Mathematics Subject Classification: 30C10, 30E10, 41A17, 41A50, 30C85 Keywords: Bernstein-Walsh inequality, Green function, Logarithmic capacity, Inverse polynomial image

## 1 The Bernstein-Walsh Inequality

Let K be a compact set in the complex plane  $\mathbb{C}$  with logarithmic capacity cap K > 0. Without loss of generality, we assume that K is such that  $\overline{\mathbb{C}} \setminus K$  is connected, where  $\overline{\mathbb{C}} := \mathbb{C} \cup \{\infty\}$  denotes the extended complex plane. Let  $g_K(z)$  denote the Green function (with pole at  $\infty$ ) for  $\overline{\mathbb{C}} \setminus K$  and define  $g_K(z) := 0$  for  $z \in K$ . Furthermore, let  $\mathbb{P}_n$  denote the set of all polynomials of degree n with complex coefficients and let  $\|\cdot\|_K$  denote the supremum norm on K. Then the *Bernstein-Walsh inequality* (sometimes called *Bernstein-Walsh lemma* or *Bernstein lemma*), see [8, Theorem 5.5.7] or [11, Lemma 3.7] or [7, Section 12.1], reads as follows.

**Theorem 1** (Bernstein-Walsh inequality). For any polynomial  $Q_n \in \mathbb{P}_n$ ,

$$\frac{|Q_n(z)|}{\|Q_n\|_K} \le e^{n \cdot g_K(z)} \qquad (z \in \mathbb{C} \setminus K).$$
(1)

Note that inequality (1) is obviously also true for  $z \in K$ . Inequality (1) gives a very general upper bound for the modulus of a polynomial outside a compact set K with respect to its maximum value on K in terms of the corresponding Green function (which only depends on K). It is also common to consider inequality (1) with the notion of the level sets of the Green function  $g_K(z)$ . For each  $R \geq 1$ , let

$$\Gamma_R(K) := \left\{ z \in \mathbb{C} : g_K(z) = \log R \right\}$$
(2)

define the *level set with index* R for the Green function  $g_K(z)$  (note that  $\Gamma_R(K) = K$  for R = 1). Then inequality (1) reads as

$$\frac{Q_n(z)|}{\|Q_n\|_K} \le R^n \qquad (z \in \Gamma_R(K)).$$
(3)

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