

Course: Topics in Stochastic Analysis: BSDE
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Lecture 2

THE LIPSCHITZ THEORY

The goal of this lecture is to define a class of BSDEs and to study their existence and uniqueness properties under Lipschitz or linear-growth-type conditions on the driver. We assume throughout the lecture that the filtration is Brownian, i.e., generated by a d -dimensional Brownian motion. We also pick and fix an integer $m \in \mathbb{N}$ - a dimension of the process $\{Y_t\}_{t \in [0, T]}$ defined below. Finally, a **time horizon** $T > 0$ is picked.

Remark 2.1 In order to fit into the notation introduced in Lecture 1, we assume that all processes are defined on $[0, \infty)$, but their values are set to 0 (for integrators) or kept constant (for semi-martingales) after T . This way, for example, one inherits the right notion of a local martingale on $[0, T]$, namely, the one which requires the stopping times to *stabilize* at 0 (as opposed to merely converge there).

Definition 2.2 Let $\xi \in \mathbb{L}_m^2(\mathcal{F}_T, \mathbb{R}^m)$ be a random vector, and let $g : \Omega \times [0, T] \times \mathbb{R}^m \times \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$ be a $(\mathcal{P} \otimes \mathcal{B}(\mathbb{R}^n) \otimes \mathcal{B}(\mathbb{R}^{m \times d}), \mathcal{B}(\mathbb{R}^m))$ -measurable function, where \mathcal{P} denotes the progressive σ -algebra on $\Omega \times [0, T]$.

A pair of processes $(Y, Z) \in \mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$ is said to be a **solution to a BSDE** (g, ξ) if

$$(2.1) \quad Y_t = \xi + \int_t^T g(u, Y_u, Z_u) du - \int_t^T Z_u dB_u, \text{ for all } t \in [0, T], \text{ a.s.}$$

Remark 2.3

- (1) It is, implicitly, a part of the definition that the first integral in (2.1) converges for all t , a.s.
- (2) The function f is called the **driver** of the BSDE (f, ξ) and the random variable ξ its **terminal condition**.

2.1. Lipschitz Drivers

The existence proof in the Lipschitz case is rather standard; it rephrases the BSDE as a fixed point and uses Banach's fixed-point theorem. It appears that the good choice of a function space is $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$, equipped with a *weighted norm*

$$\|(Y, Z)\|_\beta^2 = \|w_\beta Y\|_{\mathcal{S}_m^2}^2 + \|w_\beta Z\|_{\mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2}^2 = \mathbb{E} \left[\sup_{t \in [0, T]} e^{\beta t} |Y_t|^2 \right] + \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^t e^{\beta t} |Z_t|^2 dt \right],$$

where $w_\beta(t) = e^{\frac{1}{2}\beta t}$; the parameter $\beta > 0$ will be determined in the course of the proof. It is standard to see that $\|\cdot\|_\beta$ is indeed a norm, under which $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$ is a Banach space.

Our first task is to establish the existence in a special, in a sense trivial, case.

Proposition 2.4 (Existence and estimates in the “trivial” case) Suppose that there exists a process $\{G_t\}_{t \in [0, T]} \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$ such that

$$g(\omega, t, y, z) = G_t(\omega), \text{ for all } \omega, t, y, z.$$

Then, the BSDE (g, ξ) admits a unique solution (Y, Z) and there exists a constant C , which depends only on T, m and d , such that

$$(2.2) \quad \|(Y, Z)\|_\beta^2 \leq C \left(e^{\beta T} \|\xi\|_{\mathbb{L}_m^2}^2 + \frac{1}{\beta} \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |G_u|^2 du \right] \right).$$

PROOF. (Note: The letter C will denote a generic constant which depends only on T, m or d , and may change from line to line.)

Let the martingale $\{M_t\}_{t \in [0, T]}$ be defined by

$$M_t = \mathbb{E}[\zeta | \mathcal{F}_t] - \mathbb{E}[\zeta], \quad t \in [0, T], \text{ where } \zeta = \xi + \int_0^T G_u du,$$

so that, thanks to the conditions $\xi \in \mathbb{L}_m^2$ and $G \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$, we have $M \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$. According to the martingale-representation theorem, there exists $Z \in \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$ such that

$$M_t = \int_0^t Z_u dB_u, \text{ for } t \in [0, T],$$

Consequently, the pair (Y, Z) , where $\{Y_t\}_{t \in [0, T]}$ is given by $Y_t = M_t - \int_0^t G_u du$ satisfies

$$Y_t + \int_t^T Z_u dB_u = \xi + \int_t^T G_u du.$$

Since $G \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$, we have $\zeta \in \mathbb{L}_m^2$; hence M is a square-integrable martingale. By the maximal inequality, we have $\|M_T^*\|_{\mathbb{L}_m^2} \leq C \|\xi\|_{\mathbb{L}_m^2}$. At the same time, $\left| \int_t^T G_u du \right| \leq (\int_0^T G_u^2 du)^{1/2} \in \mathbb{L}_m^2$, and so $Y \in \mathcal{S}_m^2$, i.e., $|Y_T^*| \in \mathbb{L}^2$. Consequently, (Y, Z) is a solution of the BSDE (g, ξ) , as described in Definition 2.2.

Next, we prove the estimate (2.2); thanks to linearity uniqueness will follow directly from it. We start by applying Itô's formula to the process $\{e^{\beta t} |Y_t|^2\}_{t \in [0, T]}$ on $[t, T]$, and remind the reader that $(\cdot)^\tau$ denotes transposition:

$$(2.3) \quad e^{\beta T} |Y_T|^2 = e^{\beta t} |Y_t|^2 + \int_t^T \beta e^{\beta u} |Y_u|^2 du + 2 \int_t^T e^{\beta u} Y_u^\tau (Z_u dB_u - G_u du) + \int_t^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du.$$

Using the simple inequality $-\beta y^2 + 2yg \leq \frac{1}{\beta} g^2$, valid for all $y, g \in \mathbb{R}$ and $\beta > 0$, we get

$$(2.4) \quad e^{\beta t} |Y_t|^2 + \int_t^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du \leq e^{\beta t} |\xi|^2 + \frac{1}{\beta} \int_t^T e^{\beta u} |G_u|^2 du + 2(N_T - N_t),$$

where $N_t = \int_0^t e^{\beta u} Y_u^\tau Z_u dB_u$. Taking a supremum over $t \in [0, T]$ yields

$$(2.5) \quad \sup_{t \in [0, T]} e^{\beta t} |Y_t|^2 + \int_0^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du \leq e^{\beta T} |\xi|^2 + \frac{1}{\beta} \int_0^T |G_u|^2 du + 4N_T^*.$$

By the BDG inequality and the fact that $Cab \leq \frac{1}{4}a^2 + C^2b^2$, we get

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathbb{E}[N_T^*] &\leq C\mathbb{E}\left[\sqrt{\langle N \rangle_T}\right] = C\mathbb{E}\left[\sqrt{\int_0^T e^{2\beta u} |Y_u^T Z_u|^2 du}\right] \\
 (2.6) \quad &\leq C\mathbb{E}\left[\left(\sup_{t \in [0, T]} e^{\beta u} |Y_u|^2\right)^{1/2} \left(\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du\right)^{1/2}\right] \\
 &\leq \frac{1}{4}\mathbb{E}\left[\sup_{t \in [0, T]} e^{\beta t} |Y_2|^2\right] + C^2\mathbb{E}\left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du\right]
 \end{aligned}$$

We have already established that $\sup_{t \in [0, T]} |Y_u|^2 \in \mathbb{L}^1$, so we can combine (2.5) and (2.6) to obtain

$$(2.7) \quad \|(Y, Z)\|_{\beta}^2 \leq C \left(e^{\beta T} \|\xi\|_{\mathbb{L}_m^2} + \frac{1}{\beta} \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |G_u|^2 du \right] + \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du \right] \right)$$

On the other hand, since $M \in \mathcal{H}_1^1$, we have $\mathbb{E}[M_T - M_t] = 0$ and so, by taking the expectation in (2.4) and disregarding $|Y_0|$, we obtain the following estimate:

$$(2.8) \quad \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |Z_u|^2 du \right] \leq e^{\beta T} \mathbb{E} \left[|\xi|^2 \right] + \frac{1}{\beta} \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} |G_u|^2 du \right]$$

Finally, (2.2) follows from (2.7) and (2.8). ■

We are now ready to state and prove our central existence-and-uniqueness theorem for BSDE with Lipschitz generators. Hypothesis 2.5 lists a standard set of assumptions under which our method works:

Hypothesis 2.5 (Lipschitz continuity)

- (1) $\xi \in \mathbb{L}_m^2$,
- (2) $g(\cdot, \cdot, 0, 0) \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$, and
- (3) there exists a constant $K \geq 0$ such that

$$|g(\omega, t, y_2, z_2) - g(\omega, t, y_1, z_1)| \leq K \left(|y_2 - y_1| + |z_2 - z_1| \right),$$

for all $(\omega, t) \in \Omega \times [0, T]$ and all $y_1, y_2 \in \mathbb{R}^m$, $z_1, z_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times d}$.

Theorem 2.6 (Existence with Lipschitz Drivers) *Under Hypothesis 2.5, the BSDE (g, ξ) admits a unique solution.*

PROOF. For $(\hat{Y}, \hat{Z}) \in \mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$, let (Y, Z) be the unique solution to the BSDE

$$Y_t = \xi + \int_t^T g(u, \hat{Y}_u, \hat{Z}_u) du - \int_t^T Z_u dB_u.$$

Thanks to (the last two parts of) Hypothesis 2.5, we have

$$\left| g(t, \hat{Y}_t, \hat{Z}_t) \right| \leq |g(t, 0, 0)| + \left| g(t, \hat{Y}_t, \hat{Z}_t) - g(t, 0, 0) \right| \leq |g(t, 0, 0)| + K(|\hat{Y}_t| + |\hat{Z}_t|) \in \mathcal{H}_1^2.$$

Therefore, Proposition 2.4 applies and the map Φ , given by

$$\Phi(\hat{Y}, \hat{Z}) = (Y, Z)$$

maps $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$ into itself.

Next, we pick $(Y^{(1)}, Z^{(1)})$ and $(Y^{(2)}, Z^{(2)})$ in $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$, and note the their difference $(\delta Y, \delta Z) = (Y^{(2)} - Y^{(1)}, Z^{(2)} - Z^{(1)})$ solves the BSDE

$$\delta Y_t = 0 + \int_t^T G_u du - \int_t^T \delta Z_u dB_u, \text{ where } G_t = g(t, Y_t^{(1)}, Z_t^{(1)}) - g(t, Y_t^{(2)}, Z_t^{(2)}).$$

The estimate (2.2) now implies that

$$\begin{aligned} \|\Phi(Y^{(1)}, Z^{(1)}) - \Phi(Y^{(2)}, Z^{(2)})\|_\beta^2 &\leq \frac{C}{\beta} \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T e^{\beta u} \left| g(t, Y_t^{(1)}, Z_t^{(1)}) - g(t, Y_t^{(2)}, Z_t^{(2)}) \right|^2 du \right] \\ &\leq \frac{CK^2}{\beta} \|(\delta Y, \delta Z)\|_\beta^2. \end{aligned}$$

If we choose $\beta = 2CK^2$, the map Φ becomes a $\|\cdot\|_\beta$ -contraction on the Banach space $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$. Consequently, by the Banach fixed-point theorem, it admits a unique fixed point (Y, Z) . It follows now immediately from the definition of the map Φ , that (Y, Z) is the unique solution to the BSDE (g, ξ) . ■

In addition to uniqueness, the fact that the Banach fixed-point theorem applies yields another interesting property of the solutions of BSDEs:

Proposition 2.7 (Picard Iterations) *Given a pair (g, ξ) which satisfies Hypothesis 2.5, let $(Y^{(i)}, Z^{(i)})$, $i \in \mathbb{N}_0$ be a sequence in $\mathcal{S}_m^2 \times \mathcal{H}_{m \times d}^2$ defined as follows*

- $Y^{(0)} = 0$ and $Z^{(0)} = 0$;
- $(Y^{(i+1)}, Z^{(i+1)})$ is the solution of the BSDE

$$Y_t^{(i+1)} = \xi + \int_t^T g(u, Y_u^{(i)}, Z_u^{(i)}) du - \int_t^T Z_u^{(i+1)} dB_u.$$

Then, we have

$$\sup_{t \in [0, T]} |Y_t^{(i)} - Y_t| + \sqrt{\int_0^T |Z_u^{(i)} - Z_u|^2 du} \rightarrow 0, \text{ a.s., in and } \mathbb{L}^2,$$

as well as $Z^{(i)} \rightarrow Z$, $dt \otimes d\mathbb{P}$ -a.e.

PROOF. The \mathbb{L}^2 -convergence follows directly from the convergence in the Banach fixed-point theorem. One also gets the a.s.-convergence by observing that

$$\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \|(Y^{(i+1)}, Z^{(i+1)}) - (Y^{(i)}, Z^{(i)})\|_\beta < \infty,$$

for large-enough $\beta > 0$, and that the norms $\|\cdot\|_\beta$ and $\|\cdot\|_0$ are uniformly equivalent. ■

The following estimate, reminiscent of that in Proposition 2.4, now follows immediately from the above considerations:

Corollary 2.8 (Well-posedness of BSDEs) Under Hypothesis 2.5, the solution (Y, Z) of the BSDE (g, ξ) satisfies

$$\mathbb{E}[\sup_{t \in [0, T]} |Y_t|^2] + \mathbb{E}[\int_0^T |Z_u|^2 du] \leq C \left(\|\xi\|_{\mathbb{L}_m^2}^2 + \|g(t, 0, 0)\|_{\mathbb{H}_m^2}^2 \right),$$

where the constant C depends only on m, d and T .

2.2. Dimension 1

In the case $m = 1$, one can prove existence of a solution to the BSDE (g, ξ) under considerably weaker hypotheses. The difference between dimension 1 and higher dimensions, is that in the 1-dimensional case, we have the so-called *comparison principle* on our disposal. Note how only one of the drivers needs to be Lipschitz; the other is quite general.

Theorem 2.9 (A comparison principle) Let (Y, Z) and (Y', Z') be solutions to the BSDEs (g, ξ) and (g', ξ') , respectively. Suppose that

- $m = 1$,
- (g, ξ) satisfy the conditions of Hypothesis 2.5,
- $g'(t, Y'_t, Z'_t) \in \mathbb{H}_1^2$.

and that

$$(2.9) \quad \xi \leq \xi', \text{ a.s., and } g(t, y, z) \leq g'(t, y, z), \text{ for all } (t, y, z) \in [0, T] \times \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^d, \text{ a.s.}$$

Then, $Y_t \leq Y'_t$, for all $t \in [0, T]$, a.s.

PROOF. We set

$$\delta_t = Y_t - Y'_t, \quad I_t = \mathbf{1}_{\{Y_t \geq Y'_t\}}, \quad \Delta_t = g(t, Y_t, Z_t) - g'(t, Y'_t, Z'_t) \text{ and } D_t = e^{\beta t} (\delta_t^+)^2,$$

so that, by the Itô-Tanaka formula, we get

$$dD_t = \beta \delta_t^2 I_t dt + 2e^{\beta t} I_t \delta_t d\delta_t + e^{\beta t} I_t d\langle \delta \rangle_t = e^{\beta t} (R_t dt + dM_t)$$

where

$$R_t = \beta I_t \delta_t^2 - 2I_t \delta_t \Delta_t + I_t (Z_t - Z'_t)^2 \text{ and } M_t = 2 \int_0^t \delta_u I_u (Z_u - Z'_u) dW_u.$$

We first note that $M \in \mathcal{H}_1^1$; this the fact that $\delta \in S_1^2$ and $Z - Z' \in \mathbb{H}_1^2$. Next, we observe that on $Y_t \geq Y'_t$ we have

$$\begin{aligned} \delta_t \Delta_t &= (Y_t - Y'_t)^+ \left(g(t, Y_t, Z_t) - g(t, Y'_t, Z'_t) + g(t, Y'_t, Z'_t) - g'(t, Y'_t, Z'_t) \right) \\ &\leq K (Y_t - Y'_t)^+ \left(|Y_t - Y'_t| + |Z_t - Z'_t| \right). \end{aligned}$$

and so

$$R_t \geq I_t \left((\beta - 2K) \delta_t^2 - 2K \delta |Z' - Z_t| + |Z_t - Z'_t|^2 \right),$$

which is nonnegative if β is large enough ($\beta \geq (K + 1)^2$). It follows that, for large enough β , D_t is a submartingale with $D_T = 0$. Therefore, $D_t \leq 0$, for all $t \in [0, T]$, a.s., i.e., $Y_t \leq Y'_t$, for all $t \in [0, T]$, a.s. ■

The proof of the comparison principle above relies on the Itô-Tanaka formula, which is available only in dimension 1. That alone does not preclude the possibility of having a comparison principle in higher dimensions. What does preclude it, though, is the following example: One application of the comparison principle is the following existence result for solutions to one-dimensional BSDE whose drivers have at-most linear growths, but are not necessarily Lipschitz continuous. An approximation via so-called **inf-convolution**, described in the next proposition, is the main idea behind the proof.

Proposition 2.10 (Regularizing properties of the inf-convolution) *Let $g : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a continuous function of at-most linear growth, i.e., such that $g(x) \leq C(1 + |x|)$, for some $C \geq 0$. For $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n > C$, we define*

$$g_n(x) = \inf_{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^d} (g(\xi) + n|x - \xi|).$$

Then

- (1) The sequence $\{g_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ is non-decreasing and $|g_n(x)| \leq C(1 + |x|)$, for all $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$.
- (2) g_n is Lipschitz with the Lipschitz constant at most n .
- (3) If $\{x_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \rightarrow x$, then $g_n(x_n) \rightarrow g(x)$, (i.e., $g_n \rightarrow g$, locally uniformly).

PROOF. Without loss of generality, we assume that $C < 1$ so that the sequence g_n takes only finite values for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$. It is clear that $g_n(x) \leq g_{n+1}(x)$ for all x , $n \in \mathbb{N}$, so that

$$C(1 + |x|) \geq g(x) \geq g_n(x) = \inf_{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^d} (g(\xi) + n|x - \xi|) \geq \inf_{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^d} (-C(1 + |\xi|) + n|\xi - x|) = -C(1 + |x|),$$

and (1) follows. To show (2), we simply note that, g_n is an infimum of a family of Lipschitz functions with Lipschitz constant n ; it follows that g_n is itself Lipschitz with Lipschitz constant at most n .

Finally, for (3), we define take a sequence $\{x_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ with $x_n \rightarrow x$, and assume, contrary to the statement, that $g_n(x_n) \not\rightarrow g(x)$. By the upper semicontinuity of g , we have

$$g(x) \geq \limsup_n g(x_n) \geq \limsup_n g_n(x_n),$$

so that, without loss of generality, we can assume that $\{x_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ is such that

$$g_n(x_n) \rightarrow h = g(x) - \delta,$$

for some $\delta \in (0, \infty]$.

For $n \in \mathbb{N}$, let ξ_n be such that $g_n(x_n) \geq g(\xi_n) + n|x_n - \xi_n| - \delta/2$. Thanks to the linear growth of g , the sequence $\{\xi_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ is bounded; without loss of generality, we assume that it converges towards some $\xi \in \mathbb{R}^d$. The function g is lower semicontinuous, which leads to the following contradiction

$$g(\xi) \leq \liminf_n g(\xi_n) \leq \liminf_n (g_n(x_n) - n|x_n - \xi_n| - \delta/2) \leq \begin{cases} -\infty, & \xi \neq x, \\ g(\xi) - \delta/2, & x = \xi. \end{cases} \quad \blacksquare$$

The set of hypothesis under which one-dimensional BSDEs have solutions is given below:

Hypothesis 2.11 (Linear growth)

- (1) $\xi \in \mathbb{L}_m^2$,
- (2) $g(\cdot, \cdot, 0, 0) \in \mathcal{H}_m^2$, and

(3) $(y, z) \mapsto g(\omega, t, z, y)$ is continuous, $dt \otimes d\mathbb{P}$ -a.e.

(4) there exists a constant $K \geq 0$ such that

$$|g(\omega, t, y, z)| \leq |g(\omega, t, 0, 0)| + K(|y| + |z|),$$

for all $(\omega, t) \in \Omega \times [0, T]$ and all $y \in \mathbb{R}^m, z \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times d}$.

Theorem 2.12 (Existence with $m = 1$ and linear growth) *Suppose that $m = 1$ and let the BSDE (g, ξ) satisfy the conditions of Hypothesis 2.11. Then, (g, ξ) admits a minimal and a maximal solution.*

PROOF (SKETCH). Set $b(y, z) = K(|y| + |z|)$, and denote by U^+ and U^- the solutions of the BSDEs (b, ξ) and $(-b, \xi)$. For $n \in \mathbb{N}$, let the function g_n be given by the inf-convolution of g and $n|\cdot|$, i.e.,

$$g_n(\omega, t, y, z) = \inf_{(\xi_y, \xi_z) \in \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^d} \left(g(\omega, t, \xi_y, \xi_z) + n |(\xi_y, \xi_z) - (y, z)| \right).$$

Proposition 2.10 applies to the sequence g_n , $dt \otimes d\mathbb{P}$ -a.e., and we will use its conclusions without special mention. In particular, solutions $(Y^{(n)}, Z^{(n)})$ to the BSDE (g_n, ξ) exist in the appropriate spaces. Due to the comparison principle (Theorem 2.9), the sequence $\{Y^{(n)}\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ is pointwise monotone and $U^- \leq Y^{(n)} \leq U^+$. From there, one shows that the sequences $\{Y^{(n)}\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ and $\{Z^{(n)}\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ are Cauchy in \mathcal{H}_1^2 and \mathcal{H}_d^2 , and that the limits Y , and Z satisfy the limiting BSDE. While the above are the main ideas, there are several highly nontrivial subtleties involved in the proof; we point the reader to the original paper [LSM97]. ■

REFERENCES

[LSM97] J. P. Lepeltier and J. San Martin, *Backward stochastic differential equations with continuous coefficient*, Statist. Probab. Lett. **32** (1997), no. 4, 425–430.