

## ON GENERALIZED BERTRAND CURVES IN EUCLIDEAN 3-SPACE

Demet Demir<sup>1</sup> and Kazım İlarıslan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Sciences and Arts, Department of Mathematics,  
Kırıkkale University, 71450 Kırıkkale, Türkiye

**Abstract.** In this paper, we generalize the notion of Bertrand curve in Euclidean 3-space analogously as in Minkowski 3-space. According to this generalization, the Bertrand curve conditions of a given space curve are obtained and the relations between Frenet vectors and curvature functions are revealed. A curve that meets the given condition is constructed as an example.

**Keywords:** Bertrand curve, Euclidean 3-space, Frenet vectors, curvature functions.

### 1. Introduction

In the theory of curves in Euclidean space, one of the important and interesting problems is characterization of a regular curve. In the solution of the problem, the curvature functions  $k_1$  (or  $\kappa$ ) and  $k_2$  (or  $\tau$ ) of a regular curve have an effective role. For example: if  $k_1 = 0 = k_2$ , then the curve is a geodesic or if  $k_1 = \text{constant} \neq 0$  and  $k_2 = 0$ , then the curve is a circle with radius  $1/k_1$ , etc. Another way in the solution of the problem is the relationship between the Frenet vectors and Frenet planes of the curves [6, 10]. An interesting example of relations between Frenet vectors belonging to pairs of space curves is Bertrand curves.

A Bertrand curve is a curve in the Euclidean space such that its principal normal is the principal normal of the second curve [2, 12]. The study of this kind of curves has been extended to many other ambient spaces. In [9], Pears studied this problem

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Corresponding Author: Demet Demir, Faculty of Sciences and Arts, Department of Mathematics, Kırıkkale University, 71450 Kırıkkale, Türkiye | E-mail: demet\_uzunyol\_13@hotmail.com  
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for curves in the  $n$ -dimensional Euclidean space  $\mathbb{E}^n$ ,  $n > 3$ , and showed that a Bertrand curve in  $\mathbb{E}^n$  must belong to a three-dimensional subspace  $\mathbb{E}^3 \subset \mathbb{E}^n$ . This result is restated by Matsuda and Yorozu [8]. They proved that there was not any special Bertrand curves in  $\mathbb{E}^n$  ( $n > 3$ ) and defined a new kind, which is called (1, 3)-type Bertrand curves in 4-dimensional Euclidean space. Bertrand curves and their characterizations were studied by many researchers in Minkowski 3-space and Minkowski space-time [1, 3, 5] as well as in Euclidean space. In addition, (1, 3)-type Bertrand curves were studied in semi-Euclidean 4-space with index 2 [11].

A new generalization for Bertrand curves is given by Zhang and Pei in 2020 [13]. In this study, instead of classical condition for Bertrand curves, generalized Bertrand curves are defined such that the principal normal of a given curve belongs to a normal space of another curve.

In this paper, we generalize the notion of Bertrand curve in Euclidean 3-space analogously as in Minkowski 3-space. According to this generalization, the Bertrand curve conditions of a given space curve are obtained and the relations between Frenet vectors and curvature functions are revealed. An example of a curve is constructed that satisfies the given conditions.

## 2. Preliminaries

In this section, we give some well known results from Euclidean geometry [4, 7]. Let  $\mathbb{E}^3$  be the 3-dimensional Euclidean space equipped with the inner product  $\langle X, Y \rangle = x_1y_1 + x_2y_2 + x_3y_3$ , where  $X = (x_1, x_2, x_3)$  and  $Y = (y_1, y_2, y_3) \in \mathbb{E}^3$ . The norm of  $X$  is given by  $\|X\| = \sqrt{\langle X, X \rangle}$  and the vector product is given by

$$X \times Y = \begin{pmatrix} e_1 & e_2 & e_3 \\ x_1 & x_2 & x_3 \\ y_1 & y_2 & y_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

where  $\{e_1, e_2, e_3\}$  is the canonical basis of  $\mathbb{E}^3$ .

Let  $I$  be an interval of  $\mathbb{R}$  and let  $\gamma : I \rightarrow \mathbb{E}^3$  be a regular space curve, that is,  $\gamma'(t) \neq 0$  for all  $t \in I$ , where  $\gamma'(t) = \frac{d\gamma}{dt}(t)$ . We say that  $\gamma$  is nondegenerate condition if  $\gamma'(t) \times \gamma''(t) \neq 0$  for all  $t \in I$ . If we take the arc-length parameter  $s$ , that is,  $\|\gamma'(s)\| = 1$  for all  $s$ , then the tangent vector, the principal normal vector, and the binormal vector are given by

$$\begin{aligned} T(s) &= \gamma'(s), \\ N(s) &= \frac{\gamma''(s)}{\|\gamma''(s)\|}, \\ B(s) &= T(s) \times N(s) \end{aligned}$$

where  $\gamma'(s) = \frac{d\gamma}{ds}(s)$ . Then  $\{T(s), N(s), B(s)\}$  is a moving frame of  $\gamma(s)$  and we have the Frenet-Serret formula:

$$(2.1) \quad \begin{bmatrix} T' \\ N' \\ B' \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & \kappa(s) & 0 \\ -\kappa(s) & 0 & \tau(s) \\ 0 & -\tau(s) & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} T \\ N \\ B \end{bmatrix}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \kappa(s) &= \|\gamma''(s)\|, \\ \tau(s) &= \frac{\det(\gamma'(s), \gamma''(s), \gamma'''(s))}{\kappa^2(s)}. \end{aligned}$$

If we take general parameter  $t$ , then the tangent vector, the principal normal vector and the binormal vector are given by

$$\begin{aligned} T(t) &= \frac{\dot{\gamma}(t)}{\|\dot{\gamma}(t)\|}, \\ N(t) &= B(t) \times T(t), \\ B(t) &= \frac{\dot{\gamma}(t) \times \ddot{\gamma}(t)}{\|\dot{\gamma}(t) \times \ddot{\gamma}(t)\|} \end{aligned}$$

where  $\dot{\gamma}(t) = \frac{d\gamma}{dt}(t)$ . Then  $\{T(t), N(t), B(t)\}$  is a moving frame of  $\gamma(t)$  and we have the Frenet-Serret formula:

$$(2.2) \quad \begin{bmatrix} \dot{T}(t) \\ \dot{N}(t) \\ \dot{B}(t) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & \|\dot{\gamma}(t)\| \kappa(t) & 0 \\ -\|\dot{\gamma}(t)\| \kappa(t) & 0 & \|\dot{\gamma}(t)\| \tau(t) \\ 0 & -\|\dot{\gamma}(t)\| \tau(t) & 0 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} T(t) \\ N(t) \\ B(t) \end{bmatrix}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \kappa(t) &= \frac{|\dot{\gamma}(t) \times \ddot{\gamma}(t)|}{|\dot{\gamma}(t)|^3}, \\ \tau(t) &= \frac{\det(\dot{\gamma}(t), \ddot{\gamma}(t), \ddot{\gamma}'(t))}{|\dot{\gamma}(t) \times \ddot{\gamma}(t)|^2}. \end{aligned}$$

### 3. Generalized Bertrand curves in Euclidean 3-space

In this section, generalized Bertrand curve concept given by Zhang and Pein (see [13]) Minkowski 3-space will be defined in 3-dimensional Euclidean space  $\mathbb{E}^3$  and generalized Bertrand curve conditions will be obtained for a curve in this space.

**Definition 3.1.** Let  $\alpha(s)$  and  $\alpha^*(s^*)$  be two curves in 3-dimensional Euclidean space. If the principal normal  $N(s)$  of  $\alpha(s)$  lies in the normal plane of  $\alpha^*(s^*)$  and the angle between  $N(s)$  and  $N^*(s^*)$  is  $\theta$  at the corresponding points, then we call  $\alpha(s)$  a generalized Bertrand curve,  $\alpha^*(s^*)$  is a generalized Bertrand mate of  $\alpha(s)$ . Also  $(\alpha(s), \alpha^*(s^*))$  is called a pair of generalized Bertrand curves.

According to the above definition if  $\alpha(s)$  is a generalized Bertrand Curve in  $\mathbb{E}^3$  then the following holds :

$$\begin{aligned} (i) \quad & N = \cos \theta N^*(s^*) + \sin \theta B^*(s^*), \\ (ii) \quad & \langle N(s), N^*(s^*) \rangle = \cos \theta = \text{constant} \end{aligned}$$

where  $N^*$  and  $B^*$  are principal normal and binormal vectors of  $\alpha^*$ .

**Theorem 3.1.** *Let  $\alpha(s)$  be a generalized Bertrand curve in Euclidean 3-space, parametrized by its arc-length  $s$  and  $\alpha^*(s^*)$  be the generalized Bertrand mate curve of  $\alpha(s)$  in  $\mathbb{E}^3$  such that the principal normal  $N(s)$  of  $\alpha(s)$  lies in the normal plane spanned by  $\{N^*, B^*\}$  and the angle between  $N$  and  $N^*$  is  $\theta$  at the corresponding points. The curvatures and Frenet vector of  $\alpha$  and  $\alpha^*$  are related as follows:*

$$\begin{aligned} T^* &= \left( \frac{1 - \lambda\kappa}{f'} \right) T + \frac{\lambda\tau}{f'} B, \\ N^* &= eT + \cos \theta N + hB, \\ B^* &= \frac{D_1}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}} T + \frac{D_2}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}} N + \frac{D_3}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}} B \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\kappa^*(s^*) = \frac{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}{[(1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2\tau^2] \cos \theta}, \quad \tau^*(s^*) = \frac{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}}{f'}$$

where  $\cos \theta \neq 0$  and  $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}_0$ ,  $(f')^2 = (1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2\tau^2$ ,

$$e = \frac{-\cos \theta \left( \lambda\kappa' + \frac{f''}{f'} (1 - \lambda\kappa) \right)}{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}, \quad h = \frac{\cos \theta \left( \lambda\tau' + \frac{f''}{f'} \lambda\tau \right)}{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}$$

and

$$D_1 = e' - \kappa \cos \theta + \kappa^* (1 - \lambda\kappa), \quad D_2 = e\kappa - h\tau, \quad D_3 = \tau \cos \theta + h' + \kappa^* \lambda\tau.$$

*Proof.* Assume that there exists the generalized Bertrand curve  $\alpha$  in  $\mathbb{E}^3$  and its  $\alpha^*$  generalized Bertrand mate  $\alpha^*$  in  $\mathbb{E}^3$ . Then  $\alpha^*$  can be parametrized by

$$(3.1) \quad \alpha^*(s^*) = \alpha(s) + \lambda(s)N(s)$$

where  $s^* = s^*(s)$ . Differentiating equation (3.1) with respect to  $s$  and using Frenet frame (2.1), we get

$$T^* f' = (1 - \lambda\kappa)T + \lambda' N + \lambda\tau B.$$

By taking the inner product of the last relation by  $N = \cos \theta N^* + \sin \theta B^*$ , we have  $\lambda' = 0$ . Substituting this in the last relation, we find

$$(3.2) \quad T^* f' = (1 - \lambda\kappa)T - \lambda\tau B.$$

From equation (3.2), we obtain

$$(3.3) \quad \langle T^* f', T^* f' \rangle = (f')^2 = (1 + \lambda\kappa)^2 + (\lambda\tau)^2.$$

Differentiating equation (3.2) with respect to  $s$  and using Frenet frame (3.2), we obtain

$$(3.4) \quad \kappa^* N^* (f')^2 + f'' T^* = (-\lambda\kappa')T + (\kappa - \lambda\kappa^2 - \lambda\tau^2)N + (\lambda\tau')B.$$

By taking the inner product of the last relation with  $N = \cos\theta N^* + \sin\theta B^*$ , we get

$$(3.5) \quad \kappa^* (f')^2 \cos\theta = \kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2).$$

Then, by using equation (3.3), we find

$$(3.6) \quad \kappa^* = \frac{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}{\left[ (1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2\tau^2 \right] \cos\theta}.$$

Putting the equations (3.2) and (3.6) in (3.4), we get

$$(3.7) \quad N^* = eT + \cos\theta N + hB$$

where,  $e = \frac{-\cos\theta \left( \lambda\kappa' + \frac{f''}{f'} (1 - \lambda\kappa) \right)}{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}$  and  $h = \frac{\cos\theta \left( \lambda\tau' + \frac{f''}{f'} \lambda\tau \right)}{\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)}$ .

Differentiating (3.7) with respect to  $s$  and using Frenet frame (2.1), we obtain

$$(3.8) \quad (-\kappa^* T^* + \tau^* B^*) f' = (e' - \kappa \cos\theta)T + (e\kappa - h\tau)N + (\tau \cos\theta + h')B.$$

By using (3.2) and (3.8), we get

$$(3.9) \quad \tau^* B^* = \frac{D_1}{f'} T + \frac{D_2}{f'} N + \frac{D_3}{f'} B$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} D_1 &= e' - \kappa \cos\theta + \kappa^* (1 - \lambda\kappa), \\ D_2 &= e\kappa - h\tau, \\ D_3 &= \tau \cos\theta + h' + \kappa^* \lambda\tau. \end{aligned}$$

By taking the inner product of equation (3.9) with itself, we get

$$(3.10) \quad T^* = \frac{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}}{f'}.$$

By using equation (3.10) in equation (3.9), we obtain

$$(3.11) \quad B^* = \frac{D_1}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}}T + \frac{D_2}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}}N + \frac{D_3}{\sqrt{D_1^2 + D_2^2 + D_3^2}}B.$$

This completes the proof.  $\square$

**Theorem 3.2.** *Let  $\alpha$  be a unit speed curve with  $N$  principal normal vector in  $\mathbb{E}^3$ .  $\alpha^*$  be a regular curve with  $N^*$  principal normal vector, then  $(\alpha, \alpha^*)$  is a pair of generalized Bertrand curve if and only if the curvature  $\kappa(s)$  and torsion  $\tau(s)$  of  $\alpha(s)$  satisfy;*

$$(3.12) \quad \kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2) = \cos \theta \frac{\left\{ [\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)]^2 [\lambda^2 \tau^2 + (1 - \lambda\kappa)^2] + [\lambda\tau' - \lambda^2(\kappa\tau' - \kappa'\tau)]^2 \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}}{[(1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2 \tau^2]^{\frac{1}{2}}},$$

where  $\theta$  is the angle between the vectors  $N(s)$ ,  $N^*(s^*)$  and  $\lambda$  is a non-zero constant,  $\kappa' = \frac{d\kappa}{ds}$  and  $\tau' = \frac{d\tau}{ds}$ .

*Proof.* We assume that  $(\alpha, \alpha^*)$  is a pair of generalized Bertrand curve in  $\mathbb{E}^3$ , then we have

$$(3.13) \quad \alpha^*(s^*) = \alpha(s) + \lambda(s)N(s).$$

From Theorem 1, we get

$$(3.14) \quad T^* f' = (1 - \lambda\kappa)T + \lambda\tau B$$

and we have known,

$$(3.15) \quad N = \cos \theta N^* + \sin \theta B^*.$$

Differentiating (3.14) with respect to  $s$  and using Frenet frame (2.1), we find

$$(3.16) \quad -\kappa T + \tau B = -\kappa^* \cos \theta T^* f' - \tau^* \sin \theta N^* f' + \tau^* \cos \theta B^* f'.$$

By inner product (3.16) with (3.14), we reached

$$(3.17) \quad \kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2) = \kappa^* \cos \theta (f')^2.$$

The curvature  $\kappa^*(s^*)$  of the curve  $\alpha^*(s^*)$  is

$$\kappa^*(s^*) = \frac{\|\alpha^{*'} \times \alpha^{*''}\|}{\|\alpha^{*'}\|^3}$$

where,  $\alpha^{*'} = \frac{d\alpha^*}{ds^*} \frac{ds^*}{ds} = \frac{d\alpha^*}{ds}$ ,  $\|\alpha^{*'}\| = \left\| \frac{d\alpha^*}{ds} \right\| = \|f'\|$ .

By using the last relations in (3.17), we easily get

$$(3.18) \quad \kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2) = \frac{\|\alpha^{*'} \times \alpha^{*''}\|}{\|\alpha^{*'}\|} \cos \theta.$$

Also we have

$$\alpha^{*'} = (1 - \lambda\kappa)T + \lambda\tau B$$

and differentiating the last relation with respect to  $s$ , we get

$$\alpha^{*''} = \lambda\kappa' T + [\kappa - (\kappa^2 + \tau^2)] N + \lambda\tau' B.$$

Then if we calculate  $\|\alpha^{*'}\|$  and  $\|\alpha^{*'} \times \alpha^{*''}\|$ , we get

$$(3.19) \quad \begin{aligned} \|\alpha^{*'}\| &= [(1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2\tau^2]^{\frac{1}{2}}, \\ \|\alpha^{*'} \times \alpha^{*''}\| &= \left\{ \lambda^2\tau^2 [\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)]^2 + [\lambda\tau' - \lambda^2(\kappa\tau' - \kappa'\tau)]^2 + \right. \\ &\quad \left. [(1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 [\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)]^2] \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}. \end{aligned}$$

We put equations (3.19) in (3.18), we get equation (3.12).

Conversely, we will prove that if  $\kappa(s)$  and  $\tau(s)$  satisfy equation (3.12), the principal normal and binormal of  $\alpha^*$  generated by the equation

$$(3.20) \quad \alpha^*(s^*) = \alpha(s) + \lambda(s)N(s)$$

are coplanar with the principal normal of  $\alpha(s)$ , where  $s^* = s^*(s)$ . The angle between  $N$  and  $N^*$  is  $\theta$  in equation (3.12), we have known that  $\lambda$  is a non-zero constant. Then from (3.20) differentiating with respect to  $s$  we easily get

$$(3.21) \quad T^* f' = (1 - \lambda\kappa)T + \lambda\tau B.$$

By taking the inner product of equation (3.21) with  $N$ , we get

$$\langle T^*, N \rangle = 0$$

which means that;  $N$  is coplanar with  $N^*$  and  $B^*$ .

Then we prove that

$$\langle N, N^* \rangle = \cos \theta.$$

We assume that

$$(3.22) \quad N = aN^* + bB^* \quad a, b \in \mathbb{R}.$$

Differentiating equation (3.22) with respect to  $s$ , we find

$$(3.23) \quad -\kappa T + \tau B = -\kappa^* a T^* f' - \tau^* b N^* f' + \tau^* a B^* f'.$$

By taking product equation (3.23) with equation (3.21), we get

$$(3.24) \quad \kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2) = \kappa^* a (f')^2.$$

From equation (3.24) and (3.17) we easily obtain  $\cos \theta = a$ .

From equation (3.22) we get

$$\langle N, N^* \rangle = a = \cos \theta.$$

This completes the proof.  $\square$

**Remark 3.1.** In Theorem 2, when  $\theta = 0$ , we have  $\cos \theta = 1$ . Then we have

$$\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2) = \frac{\left\{ [\kappa - \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)]^2 [\lambda^2 \tau^2 + (1 - \lambda\kappa)^2] + [\lambda\tau' - \lambda^2(\kappa\tau' - \kappa'\tau)]^2 \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}}{[(1 - \lambda\kappa)^2 + \lambda^2 \tau^2]^{\frac{1}{2}}}.$$

Squaring both sides of this equation, we find

$$[\lambda\tau' - \lambda^2(\kappa\tau' - \kappa'\tau)] = 0.$$

Therefore ,

$$\begin{aligned} \tau'(\lambda\kappa - 1) &= \lambda\kappa'\tau \\ \frac{d\tau}{\tau} &= \frac{d(\lambda\kappa - 1)}{(\lambda\kappa - 1)} \\ \lambda_1\tau + \lambda_2\kappa &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

where  $\lambda$  is a constant. The equation  $\lambda_1\tau + \lambda_2\kappa = 1$  is the necessary and sufficient condition for a curve to be a Bertrand curve in Euclidean 3-space.



**Example 3.1.** Let us take  $\theta = \frac{\pi}{4}$ ,  $\lambda = 2$  and  $\kappa = 1$  in Theorem 2, then we obtain

$$\tau = \frac{3 \tanh\left(\sqrt{\frac{5}{2}}s\right)}{\sqrt{10 - 4 \tanh\left(\sqrt{\frac{5}{2}}s\right)^2}}.$$

Thus we have generalized Bertrand curve  $\alpha$  with curvatures  $\kappa = 1$  and  $\tau = \frac{3 \tanh\left(\sqrt{\frac{5}{2}}s\right)}{\sqrt{10 - 4 \tanh\left(\sqrt{\frac{5}{2}}s\right)^2}}$  in Euclidean 3-space. It is easily check that  $\alpha$  is a

Salkowski curve.

**Remark 3.2.** If we take  $\theta = \frac{\pi}{2}$  in equation 3.15, we get  $N = B^*$  which means that  $\alpha$  is a Mannheim curve and  $(\alpha, \alpha^*)$  is a pair Mannheim curve. Also from Theorem 2, we get  $\kappa = \lambda(\kappa^2 + \tau^2)$ . This equation also shows that  $\alpha$  is a Mannheim curve .

**Remark 3.3.** We know that curves with constant curvatures (circular helix) are Bertrand curves. The equation (3.12) satisfies the circular helix if and only if  $\theta = 0$  or  $\theta = \pi$ . In this case, circular helices are not generalized by Bertrand curves but only by classical Bertrand curves.

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