

Inverse Nodal Problems for Impulsive Sturm-Liouville Equation with Boundary Conditions Depending on the Parameter

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Abstract In this work, the Sturm–Liouville problem with boundary conditions depending rationally on the spectral parameter is studied. We give a uniqueness theorem and algorithm to reconstruct the potential of the problem from nodal points (zeros of eigenfunctions).

Keywords: Sturm-Liouville equation, inverse nodal problem, parameter dependent boundary condition, discontinuity condition.

1 Introduction

We consider the boundary value problem L generated by the regular Sturm–Liouville equation

$$\ell y := -y'' + q(x)y = \lambda y, \quad x \in (0, 1) \tag{1}$$

subject to the boundary conditions

$$U(y) := a(\lambda)y'(0) - b(\lambda)y(0) = 0 \tag{2}$$

$$V(y) := c(\lambda)y'(1) - d(\lambda)y(1) = 0 \tag{3}$$

and the jump conditions

$$\begin{cases} y(\frac{1}{2} + 0) = \alpha y(\frac{1}{2} - 0) \\ y'(\frac{1}{2} + 0) = \alpha^{-1}y'(\frac{1}{2} - 0), \end{cases} \tag{4}$$

where λ is the spectral parameter; $q(x)$ is a real-valued function from the class $L_2(0, 1)$; α is a positive real constant; $a(\lambda)$, $b(\lambda)$, $c(\lambda)$ and $d(\lambda)$ are real polynomials such that

$$a(\lambda) = \sum_{j=0}^m a_j \lambda^j, \quad b(\lambda) = \sum_{j=0}^m b_j \lambda^j, \\ c(\lambda) = \sum_{j=0}^r c_j \lambda^j, \quad d(\lambda) = \sum_{j=0}^r d_j \lambda^j,$$

Without loss of generality, we assume that $a_m = c_r = 1$ and $\int_0^1 q(x)dx = 0$, and define $f = \frac{a(\lambda)}{b(\lambda)}$.

The values of the parameter λ for which L has nonzero solutions, are called eigenvalues and the corresponding nontrivial solutions are called eigenfunctions.

Spectral problems for various differential equation with the eigen-dependent-boundary conditions have been well studied. Inverse problems for the special case when f is an affine function on λ were solved in [11]. The case when f is a more general rational function of λ is difficult. In [1]-[4], [8], [16], [13], [19] and [23], various spectral problems with rational conditions were studied.

Inverse spectral problems for Sturm-Liouville operator with the discontinuity conditions, like (4), were studied in [7], [12] and references therein.

The inverse nodal problem, which is different from the classical inverse spectral theory of Gelfand and Levitan [10], was initiated by McLaughlin [15]. Later, Hald and McLaughlin [13] and Browne and

Sleeman [5] proved that it is sufficient to know the nodal points to uniquely determine the potential function of the regular Sturm–Liouville problem. Yang gave an algorithm to recover q from dense subset of nodal points [20]. Recently, the inverse nodal Sturm–Liouville problems has been investigated by several authors [5], [6], [13], [15], [17], [18], [21] and [22].

In the present paper, we investigate an impulsive Sturm–Liouville operator and give a uniqueness theorem to reconstruct the potential of the problem from nodal points.

2 Preliminaries

Let $\varphi(x, \lambda)$ be the solution of (1), satisfying the initial conditions

$$\varphi(0, \lambda) = a(\lambda), \quad \varphi'(0, \lambda) = b(\lambda) \quad (5)$$

and the jump conditions (4). Moreover, the following integral equations of the solution hold for $x < \frac{1}{2}$

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(x, \lambda) = & a(\lambda) \cos \sqrt{\lambda}x + b(\lambda) \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}x}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \\ & + \int_0^x \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}(x-t)}{\sqrt{\lambda}} q(t) \varphi(t, \lambda) dt, \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

for $x > \frac{1}{2}$

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(x, \lambda) = & \alpha^+ \left[a(\lambda) \cos \sqrt{\lambda}x + b(\lambda) \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}x}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \right] \\ & + \alpha^- \left[a(\lambda) \cos \sqrt{\lambda}(1-x) + b(\lambda) \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}(1-x)}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \right] \\ & + \int_0^{1/2} \left[\alpha^+ \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}(x-t)}{\sqrt{\lambda}} + \alpha^- \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}(1-x-t)}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \right] q(t) \varphi(t, \lambda) dt \\ & + \int_{1/2}^x \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}(x-t)}{\sqrt{\lambda}} q(t) \varphi(t, \lambda) dt \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

where $\alpha^\pm = \frac{1}{2} \left(\alpha \pm \frac{1}{\alpha} \right)$. Using these equations, we prove that the following asymptotic relations are valid for $|\lambda| \rightarrow \infty$, for $x < \frac{1}{2}$

$$\varphi(x, \lambda) = \lambda^m \left\{ \cos \sqrt{\lambda}x + \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda}x}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \left(b_m + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^x q(t) dt \right) + o \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{\lambda}} \exp \tau x \right) \right\}, \quad (8)$$

for $x > \frac{1}{2}$

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(x, \lambda) = & \lambda^m \left\{ \alpha^+ \cos \sqrt{\lambda}x + \alpha^- \cos \sqrt{\lambda}(1-x) \right\} + \\ & + \lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \alpha^+ I_1(x) \sin \sqrt{\lambda}x + \alpha^- I_2(x) \sin \sqrt{\lambda}(1-x) \right\} \\ & + o \left(\lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \exp \tau x \right) \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} I_1(x) = & b_m + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^x q(t) dt, \\ I_2(x) = & b_m + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^{1/2} q(t) dt - \frac{1}{2} \int_{1/2}^x q(t) dt. \end{aligned}$$

and $\tau = \left| Im\sqrt{\lambda} \right|$.

Consider the function

$$\Delta(\lambda) := c(\lambda)\varphi'(1, \lambda) - d(\lambda)\varphi(1, \lambda). \tag{10}$$

$\Delta(\lambda)$ is called characteristic function of the problem L . It is obvious that $\Delta(\lambda)$ is an entire function and its zeros, namely $\{\lambda_n\}_{n \geq 0}$, are eigenvalues of the problem L . Moreover, the following relation holds.

$$\Delta(\lambda) = -\alpha^+ \lambda^{m+r} \left\{ \sqrt{\lambda} \sin \sqrt{\lambda} - w_1 \cos \sqrt{\lambda} + w_2 + o(\exp \tau) \right\}. \tag{11}$$

It can be shown using classical methods in the similar studies that the sequence $\{\lambda_n\}_{n \geq 0}$ satisfies the following asymptotic relation for $n \rightarrow \infty$:

$$\sqrt{\lambda_n} = (n - m - r)\pi + \frac{(w_1 - (-1)^{n-m-r}w_2)}{(n - m - r)\pi} + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \tag{12}$$

where $w_1 = I_1(1) - dr$ and $w_2 = \frac{\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} (I_2(1) + d_r)$.

Let $\varphi(x, \lambda_n)$ be the eigenfunction corresponding to the eigenvalue λ_n .

Lemma 2.1. $\varphi(x, \lambda_n)$ has exactly $n - m - r$ nodes $\{x_n^j : j = \overline{0, n - m - r - 1}\}$ in $(0, 1)$ for sufficiently large n . The numbers $\{x_n^j\}$ satisfy the following asymptotic formulae

for $x_n^j \in (0, \frac{1}{2})$

$$x_n^j = \begin{cases} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{I_1(x_n^j)}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} - \frac{(w_1-w_2)}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} \\ \quad + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right), \text{ for } n - m - r = 2k \\ \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{I_1(x_n^j)}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} - \frac{(w_1+w_2)}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} \\ \quad + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right), \text{ for } n - m - r = 2k + 1 \end{cases} \tag{13}$$

and for $x_n^j \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1)$

$$x_n^j = \begin{cases} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{w_1-w_2}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{1}{2(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \int_0^x q(t)dt \\ \quad + \frac{\rho_0}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right), \text{ for } n - m - r = 2k \\ \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{w_1+w_2}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \frac{(j+1/2)}{n-m-r} + \frac{1}{2(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} \int_0^x q(t)dt \\ \quad + \frac{\rho_1}{(n-m-r)^2\pi^2} + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right), \text{ for } n - m - r = 2k + 1 \end{cases} \tag{14}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_0 &= \frac{\alpha^-}{2\alpha^+} \left(\int_{1/2}^1 q(t)dt - \int_0^{1/2} q(t)dt - 2d_r \right) + \frac{\alpha^+ - \alpha^-}{\alpha^+} b_m, \\ \rho_1 &= \frac{\alpha^-}{2\alpha^+} \left(\frac{\alpha^+ + \alpha^-}{\alpha^+ - \alpha^-} \right) \left(\int_0^{1/2} q(t)dt - \int_{1/2}^1 q(t)dt + 2d_r \right) + \frac{(\alpha^+)^2 - (\alpha^-)^2}{(\alpha^+ - \alpha^-)\alpha^+} b_m. \end{aligned}$$

Proof. It can be seen from (8), (9) and oscillation theorem that the function $\varphi(x, \lambda_n)$ has exactly $n - m - r$ zeros in the interval $(0, 1)$ for sufficiently large n . Using (8) and (9) again, we get the following asymptotic formulae

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(x, \lambda_n) &= \lambda_n^m \left\{ \cos \sqrt{\lambda_n}x + \frac{\sin \sqrt{\lambda_n}x}{\sqrt{\lambda_n}} I_1(x) + o\left(\frac{\exp \tau_n x}{\sqrt{\lambda_n}}\right) \right\} \text{ for } x < \frac{1}{2}, \\ \varphi(x, \lambda_n) &= \lambda_n^m \left\{ \alpha^+ \cos \sqrt{\lambda_n}x + \alpha^- \cos \sqrt{\lambda_n}(1-x) \right\} \\ &\quad + \lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \alpha^+ I_1(x) \sin \sqrt{\lambda_n}x + \alpha^- I_2(x) \sin \sqrt{\lambda_n}(1-x) \right\} \\ &\quad + o\left(\lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \exp \tau_n x\right) \text{ for } x > \frac{1}{2}. \end{aligned} \tag{15}$$

From

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= \varphi(x_n^j, \lambda_n) \\ &= \lambda_n^m \left\{ \alpha^+ \cos \sqrt{\lambda_n} x_n^j + \alpha^- \cos \sqrt{\lambda_n} (1 - x_n^j) \right\} \\ &\quad + \lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \left\{ \alpha^+ I_1(x_n^j) \sin \sqrt{\lambda_n} x_n^j + \alpha^- I_2(x_n^j) \sin \sqrt{\lambda_n} (1 - x_n^j) \right\} + o\left(\lambda^{m-\frac{1}{2}} \exp \tau_n x_n^j\right), \end{aligned}$$

we get

$$\begin{aligned} &\tan(\sqrt{\lambda_n} x - \frac{\pi}{2}) \\ &= \frac{(-1)^{n-m-r} (w_1 - (-1)^{n-m-r} w_2) \alpha^- + \alpha^+ I_1(x) - (-1)^{n-m-r} \alpha^- I_2(x)}{(\alpha^+ + (-1)^{n-m-r} \alpha^-) (n - m - r) \pi} + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right), \end{aligned}$$

for $x_n^j > \frac{1}{2}$. Taylor’s formula for the arctangent yields

$$\begin{aligned} x_n^j &= \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} + \frac{w_1 - (-1)^{n-m-r} w_2}{(n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} \\ &\quad + \frac{(-1)^{n-m-r} (w_1 - (-1)^{n-m-r} w_2) \alpha^- + \alpha^+ I_1(x_n^j) - (-1)^{n-m-r} \alpha^- I_2(x_n^j)}{(\alpha^+ + (-1)^{n-m-r} \alpha^-) (n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right). \end{aligned}$$

The last equality is the proof of (14). The equation (13) can be proved similarly.

Let $X = X_0 \cup X_1$ be the set of nodal points such that $X_0 = \{x_n^j : n - m - r = 2s, s \in \mathbb{Z}\}$, $X_1 = \{x_n^j : n - m - r = 2s + 1, s \in \mathbb{Z}\}$. For each fixed $x \in [0, 1]$ and $k \in \{0, 1\}$, there exists a sequence $(x_n^{j(n)}) \subset X_k$ which converges to x . Therefore, from Lemma 2.1, we can show the following limits ~~are~~ exist and finite

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (n - m - r)^2 \pi^2 \left(x_n^{j(n)} - \frac{(j(n) + \frac{1}{2}) \pi}{n - m - r} \right) = f_k(x), \tag{16}$$

where

$$f_k(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} \int_0^x q(t) dt - (w_1 - (-1)^k w_2) x + b_m & \text{for } x < \frac{1}{2}, \\ \frac{1}{2} \int_0^x q(t) dt - (w_1 - (-1)^k w_2) x + \rho_k & \text{for } x > \frac{1}{2}. \end{cases}$$

Theorem 2.2. The given nodal sets X_0 or X_1 uniquely determine the potential $q(x)$, a.e. on $(0, 1)$ and the coefficients b_m and d_r of the boundary conditions. The potential $q(x)$ and the constants b_m and d_r can be constructed by the following formulae:

- 1- For each fixed $x \in [0, 1]$, choose a sequence $(x_n^{j(n)}) \subset X$ such that $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} x_n^{j(n)} = x$;
- 2- Find the function $f_k(x)$ from the equation (16) and calculate

$$q(x) = 2 \left[f'_k(x) - f_k(1) + f_k(0) + f_k\left(\frac{1}{2} + 0\right) - f_k\left(\frac{1}{2} - 0\right) \right] \tag{17}$$

$$b_m = f_k(0) \tag{18}$$

$$d_r = f_k(1) - f_k\left(\frac{1}{2} + 0\right) + f_k\left(\frac{1}{2} - 0\right) \tag{19}$$

$$- (-1)^k \frac{\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} \left(b_m + \int_0^{1/2} q(t) dt \right)$$

Proof. Direct calculations in (13), (14) and (16) yield

$$\begin{aligned}
 b_m &= f_k(0), \\
 q(x) &= 2 [f'_k(x) - (w_1 - (-1)^k w_2)], \\
 w_1 - (-1)^k w_2 &= f_k(1) - c_k \\
 c_k &= f_k(\frac{1}{2} + 0) - f_k(\frac{1}{2} - 0) + b_m, \\
 d_r &= f_k(1) - f_k(\frac{1}{2} + 0) + f_k(\frac{1}{2} - 0) + \\
 &\quad - (-1)^k \frac{\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} \left(b_m + \int_0^{1/2} q(t) dt \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

This completes the proof.

Example 2.3. Consider the BVP

$$L : \begin{cases} \ell y := -y'' + q(x)y = \lambda y, & x \in (0, 1), \\ a(\lambda)y'(0) - b(\lambda)y(0) = 0, \\ c(\lambda)y'(1) - d(\lambda)y(1) = 0, \\ y(\frac{1}{2} + 0) = \alpha y(\frac{1}{2} - 0), \\ y'(\frac{1}{2} + 0) = \alpha^{-1}y'(\frac{1}{2} - 0) \end{cases}$$

where $q(x) \in L_2(0, 1)$ and $a(\lambda), b(\lambda), c(\lambda)$ and $d(\lambda)$ are unknown coefficients of the problem L . Let $\Omega = \{x_n^j\} \subset X_0$ be the dense subset of nodal points in $(0, 1)$ satisfies the following asymptotics

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{If } x_n^j \in (0, \frac{1}{2}), \\
 x_n^j &= \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} + \frac{2 + \sin \pi(\frac{j+1/2}{n-m-r})}{2(n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} + \\
 &+ \frac{2\alpha^-}{\alpha^+ (n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right),
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{If } x_n^j \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1), \\
 x_n^j &= \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} + \frac{\sin \pi(\frac{j+1/2}{n-m-r})}{2(n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} \\
 &+ \frac{2\alpha^-}{\alpha^+ (n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} \frac{(j + 1/2)}{n - m - r} + \frac{1 - \frac{3\alpha^-}{\alpha^+}}{(n - m - r)^2 \pi^2} + o\left(\frac{1}{n^2}\right).
 \end{aligned}$$

It can be calculated that

$$f_0(x) = \begin{cases} 1 + \frac{1}{2} \sin \pi x + \frac{2\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} x, & \text{for } x < \frac{1}{2}, \\ \frac{1}{2} \sin \pi x + \frac{2\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} x + 1 - \frac{3\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} & \text{for } x > \frac{1}{2}, \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
q(x) &= 2 \left[f_0'(x) - f_0(1) + f_0(0) + f_0\left(\frac{1}{2} + 0\right) - f_0\left(\frac{1}{2} - 0\right) \right] \\
&= \pi \cos \pi x, \\
b_m &= f_0(0) = 1, \\
d_r &= f_0(1) - f_0\left(\frac{1}{2} + 0\right) + f_0\left(\frac{1}{2} - 0\right) \\
&\quad - \frac{\alpha^-}{\alpha^+} \left(b_m + \int_0^{1/2} q(t) dt \right) = 1.
\end{aligned}$$

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