

Lax-Milgram Theorem

Let E be a Hilbert space. Let $a : E \times E \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be a sesquilinear form¹ such that

continuity : $\exists C > 0$ s. t. $\forall x, y \in E$ one has $|a(x, y)| \leq C \|x\| \|y\|$,

coercivity : $\exists \alpha > 0$ s. t. $\forall x \in E$ one has $\operatorname{Re} a(x, x) \geq \alpha \|x\|^2$.

Let $\ell : E \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be an anti-linear form² continuous on E .³ Then there exists a unique $x \in E$ such that for any $y \in E$, $a(x, y) = \ell(y)$. If a is **hermitian**, then x is characterized by

$$\frac{1}{2}a(x, x) - \ell(x) = \inf \left\{ \frac{1}{2}a(z, z) - \operatorname{Re} \ell(z), z \in E \right\}.$$

¹For any $x, x' \in E$, $y, y' \in E$, $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$, we have

$$a(x + x', y) = a(x, y) + a(x', y), \quad a(\lambda x, y) = \lambda a(x, y),$$

$$a(x, y + y') = a(x, y) + a(x, y'), \quad a(x, \lambda y) = \bar{\lambda} a(x, y).$$

²For any $x, x' \in E$, $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$, one has $\ell(x + x') = \ell(x) + \ell(x')$ et $\ell(\lambda x) = \bar{\lambda} \ell(x)$.

³There exists $C > 0$ such that for any $x \in E$, one has $|\ell(x)| \leq C \|x\|$.

Proof

Hermitian case. Apply Riesz' theorem with norm $N(x) = \sqrt{a(x, x)}$, noting that N and $\|\cdot\|$ are equivalent norms on E .

General case. $y \in E \mapsto a(x, y) \in \mathbb{C}$ is a anti-linear form on E . Riesz' theorem allows us to define

$$\begin{aligned} A: E &\longrightarrow E \\ x &\longmapsto Ax \end{aligned}$$

such that

$$a(x, y) = (Ax, y).$$

Check that $A \in \mathcal{L}(E)$ with $\|A\| \leq C$. Similarly Riesz' theorem identifies ℓ with a vector $f \in E$: for any $y \in E$

$$\ell(y) = (f, y), \quad \|f\| = \|\ell\|.$$

The problem becomes

$$\text{To find } x \in E \text{ such that } y \in E, (Ax - f, y) = 0.$$

We search for $x \in E$ such that $Ax = f$.

Proof, ctn'd

Let

$$\begin{aligned} T : E &\longrightarrow E \\ x &\longmapsto x - \rho(Ax - f) \end{aligned}$$

with $\rho > 0$ to be determined.

Idea: x , solution of $Ax = f$, is found as a fixed point fixe of T .

We have

$$\begin{aligned} &\|T(x) - T(x')\|^2 \\ &= \|x - \rho(Ax - f) - x' + \rho(Ax' - f)\|^2 = \|x - x' - \rho A(x - x')\|^2 \\ &= \|x - x'\|^2 + \rho^2 \|A(x - x')\|^2 \\ &\quad - \rho((x - x', A(x - x')) + (A(x - x'), x - x')) \\ &= \|x - x'\|^2 + \rho^2 \|A(x - x')\|^2 - 2\rho \operatorname{Re}(A(x - x'), x - x') \\ &= \|x - x'\|^2 + \rho^2 \|A(x - x')\|^2 - 2\rho \operatorname{Re} a(x - x', x - x') \\ &\leq \|x - x'\|^2(1 + \rho^2 \|A\|^2 - 2\rho\alpha). \end{aligned}$$

For $\rho(\rho\|A\|^2 - 2\alpha) < 0$, T is a contraction. Banach's theorem tells us that T has a unique fixed point.

Hermitian case

Let $\mathcal{J}(x) = \frac{1}{2}a(x, x) - \operatorname{Re}(f, x) \in \mathbb{R}$. Note that $A = A^*$ since $a(x, y) = (Ax, y) = (x, A^*y) = \overline{a(y, x)} = \overline{(Ay, x)} = (x, Ay)$.
Hence

$$\mathcal{J}(x + h) = \mathcal{J}(x) + \operatorname{Re}(Ax - f, h) + \frac{1}{2}a(h, h)$$

where $a(h, h) \geq \alpha \|h\|^2 \geq 0$. If x vérifie $Ax = f$, then $\mathcal{J}(x + h) \geq \mathcal{J}(x)$. Reciprocally, if x minimizes \mathcal{J} then with $h = \pm \alpha k$ and $h = \pm i \alpha k$, $\alpha > 0$ going to 0, we obtain $Ax = f$.

A crucial remark

Let $x \in E$ solution of $a(x, y) = \ell(y)$ for any $y \in E$. Choosing $y = x$ we get

$$\alpha \|x\| \leq \|f\| = \|\ell\|.$$

We can define the inverse operator $A^{-1} : E \rightarrow E$ par $A^{-1}f = x$.
We have $A^{-1} \in \mathcal{L}(E)$ with

$$\|A^{-1}\| \leq 1/\alpha.$$

Estimates for elliptic equations

We go back to the model problem

$$\lambda u - \nabla \cdot (A \nabla u) = f$$

with Dirichlet b. c.

The matrix valued function A is supposed to have bounded coefficients such that $A(x)\xi \cdot \xi \geq \alpha|\xi|^2$ for some $\alpha > 0$.

Variational formulation: for any $v \in H_0^1$,

$$\lambda \int uv \, dx + \int A \nabla u \cdot \nabla v \, dx = \int fv \, dx.$$

In particular, we can use this with $v = u$. It leads to

$$\lambda \|u\|_{L^2}^2 + \alpha \|\nabla u\|_{L^2}^2 \leq \|f\|_{L^2} \|u\|_{L^2}.$$

In any case (including $\lambda = 0$ with Poincaré's inequality), it yields

$$\|u\|_{H^1} \leq C \|f\|_{L^2}.$$

Consequence: the operator $f \mapsto u$ is compact on L^2 .

Maximum principle: Stampacchia's method

We can find further useful estimates. Idea: work with $v = \Phi(u)$ with suitable Φ .

Lemma. *Let $\Phi \in C^1(\mathbb{R})$ with $\Phi(0) = 0$ and $|\Phi'(z)| \leq M$ for any $z \in \mathbb{R}$. For any $u \in H^1$, we have*

$$\Phi(u) \in H^1, \quad \nabla \Phi(u) = \Phi'(u) \nabla u.$$

Since $|\Phi(u)| \leq M|u|$ and $|\Phi'(u) \nabla u| \leq |\nabla u|$, these two functions belong to L^2 . Consider a sequence u_n of functions in C_c^∞ which converges to u in H^1 and a. e.. For any $\psi \in C_c^\infty$, we have

$$\int \Phi(u_n) \nabla \psi \, dx = - \int \Phi'(u_n) \nabla u_n \psi \, dx$$

Then, by dominated convergence $\Phi(u_n)$ and $\Phi'(u_n) \nabla u_n$ converge to $\Phi(u)$ and $\Phi(u) \nabla u$ in L^2 , respectively, which allows us to identify $\nabla \Phi(u)$.

The statement still applies with Φ uniformly lipschitzian ($\Phi \in W^{1,\infty}$).

Maximum principle: Stampacchia's method

The idea is to work with $v = \Phi(u)$.

Claim: if $f \geq 0$ then $u \geq 0$.

Work with $\Phi(z) = 0$ when $z \geq 0$, $\Phi(z) < 0$ when $z < 0$, Φ non decreasing. (Ex.: typically $[z]_- = \min(z, 0)$).

We get

$$\lambda \int u \Phi(u) \, dx + \int \Phi'(u) A \nabla u \cdot \nabla u \, dx = \int f \Phi(u) \, dx \leq 0.$$

In the LHS all terms are ≥ 0 . If $\lambda > 0$, we can conclude directly: $u \Phi(u)$ vanishes a. e. which means $u \geq 0$ a. e. Otherwise, we should work with

$$\Psi(z) = \int_0^z \sqrt{\Phi'(s)} \, ds$$

We have $\nabla \Psi(u) = 0$ and $\Psi(u) \in H_0^1$ so that $\Psi(u) = 0$ a. e., hence $u \geq 0$.

Application: homogeneization in 1D

$$-\frac{d}{dx}\left(a(x)\frac{d}{dx}u(x)\right) = f(x), \quad x \in]0, 1[\quad (1)$$

with Dirichlet b. c.

$$u(0) = 0 = u(1). \quad (2)$$

Suppose

$$a, f \in C^0([0, 1]), \quad 0 < a_* \leq a(x) \leq a^* < \infty.$$

We integrate by hand

$$u(x) = \int_0^x \frac{1}{a(y)} \left(C - \int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy,$$

$$C = \int_0^1 \frac{1}{a(y)} \left(\int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy \times \left(\int_0^1 \frac{1}{a(y)} dy \right)^{-1}.$$

Application: homogeneization in 1D, ctn'd

Consider a **sequence** $0 < a_\star \leq a_n(x) \leq a^\star < \infty$.

The sequences $u_n(x)$ and $u'_n(x) = \frac{d}{dx} u_n(x)$ are uniformly bounded wrt $x \in [0, 1]$ and $n \in \mathbb{N}$ by a constant depending only on a_\star, a^\star and $\sup_{x \in [0, 1]} |f(x)|$.

By Arzela-Ascoli's theorem we can extract a subsequence $(u_{n_k})_{k \in \mathbb{N}}$ which converges uniformly to u on $[0, 1]$.

What is the eq. satisfied by the limit $u(x)$?

The variational framework provides directly L^2 estimates (by virtue of Poincaré's lemma):

$$a_\star \|u'_n\|_{L^2} \leq C \|f\|_{L^2}$$

u_n is bounded in H_0^1 , u'_n is bounded in L^2 . We can assume, for a subsequence, that $u_n \rightarrow u$ strongly and $u'_n \rightharpoonup u'$ weakly in L^2 .

Naive guess

u could satisfy the same equation with the constant coefficient $\int_0^1 \alpha(y) dy$, an intuition based on

Lemma. Let $b_n(x) = \beta(nx)$ where β is bounded and 1-périodique. Let $\bar{\beta} = \int_0^1 \beta(y) dy$. Then, for any $\varphi \in C_c^0(]0, 1[)$ we have

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_0^1 b_n(x) \varphi(x) dx = \int_0^1 \bar{\beta} \varphi(x) dx.$$

b_n converges weakly to $\bar{\beta}$

cf. Riemann-Lebesgue theorem: $e^{i2\pi nx}$ converges weakly to 0 in $L^2((0, 1))$.

Proof

We have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^1 a_n(x) \varphi(x) dx - \bar{\alpha} \int_0^1 \varphi(x) dx &= \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \int_{k/n}^{(k+1)/n} (\alpha(nx) - \bar{\alpha}) \varphi(x) dx \\ &= \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \int_0^1 (\alpha(y) - \bar{\alpha}) \varphi((y+k)/n) dy/n \\ &= \int_0^1 (\alpha(y) - \bar{\alpha}) \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \varphi((y+k)/n) dy. \end{aligned}$$

Observe that

$$\frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \varphi((y+k)/n) - \int_0^1 \varphi(z) dz = \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \int_{k/n}^{(k+1)/n} (\varphi((y+k)/n) - \varphi(z)) dz$$

is dominated, for φ in C^1 , by

$$\sup_{\xi \in (0,1)} |\varphi'(\xi)| \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \int_{k/n}^{(k+1)/n} |y/n + k/n - z| dz \leq 2 \sup_{\xi \in (0,1)} |\varphi'(\xi)|/n.$$

This quantity thus tends to 0 as $n \rightarrow \infty$ and is dominated. ◀ ▶ ≡ 🔍 ↺

A product lemma

Let $(v_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ and $(w_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ be two sequences of continuous functions, uniformly bounded. Assume that v_n converges weakly to v and w_n converges uniformly to w . Then $v_n w_n$ converges weakly to vw .

Indeed, we have

$$\int_0^1 (v_n w_n - vw) \varphi(x) dx = \int_0^1 (v_n - v) w \varphi(x) dx + \int_0^1 v_n (w_n - w) \varphi(x) dx$$

The 1st integral tends to 0 as $n \rightarrow \infty$ since $v_n \rightharpoonup v$ the 2nd is dominated by $\sup_m \|v_m\|_{L^\infty} \|w_n - w\|_{L^\infty} \|\varphi\|_{L^1}$, which equally tends to 0.

Similar conclusion with strong L^2 convergence instead of uniform convergence.

Passage to the limit

This statement does not apply for our purposes: neither $(a_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ nor $(u'_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ converge uniformly.

Idea: consider $w_n(x) = a_n(x)u'_n(x)$

The equation tells us it satisfies Arzela-Ascoli's criterion. We can thus suppose (subsequence) that $(w_{n_k})_{k \in \mathbb{N}}$ converges uniformly to some w on $[0, 1]$. We get

$$u'_{n_k}(x) = \frac{1}{a_{n_k}(x)} w_{n_k}(x) \text{ converges weakly to } \int_0^1 \frac{dy}{\alpha(y)} w(x).$$

Effective coefficient

Let $\varphi \in C_c^\infty((0, 1))$.

$$\int_0^1 u'_n \varphi(x) dx = - \int_0^1 u_n \varphi'(x) dx$$

tends to

$$\int_0^1 \overline{1/\alpha} w(x) \varphi(x) dx = - \int_0^1 u \varphi'(x) dx.$$

Set $U(x) = \int_0^x \overline{1/\alpha} w(y) dy \in C^1([0, 1])$ so that

$$\int_0^1 (u(x) - U(x)) \varphi'(x) dx = 0.$$

It holds for any $\varphi \in C_c^\infty((0, 1))$, and we deduce $u(x) = U(x)$ a. e.
 $u'(x) = \overline{1/\alpha} w(x)$.

Similarly, letting $k \rightarrow \infty$ in the eq. yields

$$-w'(x) = f(x) = -\frac{d}{dx} \left(a_{\text{eff}} \frac{d}{dx} u(x) \right), \quad a_{\text{eff}} = \left(\int_0^1 \frac{dy}{\alpha(y)} \right)^{-1}$$

Continuous and L^2 framework

In dimension $N = 1$, we can also go back to the explicit formula

$$u_n(x) = \int_0^x \frac{1}{a_n(y)} \left(C_n - \int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy,$$

$$C_n = \int_0^1 \frac{1}{a_n(y)} \left(\int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy \times \left(\int_0^1 \frac{1}{a_n(y)} dy \right)^{-1}.$$

We remark that C_n tends to

$$C = \int_0^1 \int_0^1 \frac{dy}{a(y)} \left(\int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy \times \left(\int_0^1 \frac{1}{a(y)} dy \right)^{-1}.$$

and we can directly check that u_n converges to

$$u(x) = \int_0^x \int_0^1 \frac{dy'}{a(y')} \left(C - \int_0^y f(z) dz \right) dy.$$

This being said, we verify that this u satisfies

$$-\frac{d}{dx} \left(a_{\text{eff}} \frac{d}{dx} u \right) = f$$

Continuous and L^2 framework

The proof presented here uses “elementary” functional arguments. The proof can be adapted to the L^2/H^1 framework, using weak and strong convergences in L^2 instead on weak and uniform convergence.

This cannot be avoided in higher dimensions.

Homogeneization in higher dimensions

$$-\nabla \cdot (A_n \nabla u_n) = f \text{ and Dirichlet b. c.}$$

where $\sup_{i,j,x} |[A_n]_{ij}(x)| \leq a^*$ and $A(x)\xi \cdot \xi \geq a_* |\xi|^2$,
 $0 < a_* < a^* < \infty$.

We still have $\|\nabla u_n\|_{L^2} \leq C\|f\|_{L^2}$. We can thus assume that

$$u_n \rightarrow u, \quad \nabla u_n \rightharpoonup \nabla u.$$

Compensated Compactness

Let $U_n = (U_n^1, \dots, U_n^N)$ and $V_n = (V_n^1, \dots, V_n^N)$ be sequences of \mathbb{R}^N vector fields with components bounded in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)$. We assume that

$$U_n^i \rightharpoonup U^i, \quad V_n^i \rightharpoonup V^i \quad \text{weakly in } L^2(\mathbb{R}^N), \text{ for any } i \in \{1, \dots, N\}.$$

Then, we address the question of the behavior of the **inner product** $U_n \cdot V_n = \sum_{i=1}^N U_n^i V_n^i$.

Of course, by using the Rellich theorem, the limit is $U \cdot V$ when we have additional bounds on the whole derivative of one of the vector fields, say $\partial_j U_n^i$ bounded in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)$ for any $i, j \in \{1, \dots, N\}$. In such a very favorable case, we actually have convergence componentwise $U_n^i V_n^i \rightharpoonup U^i V^i$ in $\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^N)$.

The div-curl lemma needs information on certain first order derivatives of U_n combined with, in some sense complementary, (first order) derivatives of V_n , so that the inner product passes to the limit, even if convergences do not hold componentwise.

Compensated Compactness

Let us define the scalar quantity

$$\operatorname{div}(U_n) = \sum_{i=1}^N \partial_i U_n^i$$

and the matrix valued quantity

$$(\operatorname{curl}(V_n))_{ij} = \partial_i V_n^j - \partial_j V_n^i.$$

Lemma [F. Murat and L. Tartar]. Suppose furthermore that

$$\operatorname{div}(U_n) \text{ and } \operatorname{curl}(V_n) \text{ are compact in } H^{-1}(\mathbb{R}^N).$$

Then, $U_n \cdot V_n \sum_{i=1}^N U_n^i V_n^i \rightharpoonup \sum_{i=1}^N U^i V^i = U \cdot V$ in $\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^N)$.

The proof is actually very simple by means of Fourier transform where we see how oscillations compensates. Without loss of generality, we can suppose that $U = 0 = V$.

Proof

Then, our task is to show that, given $\psi \in C_c^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$,

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} U_n \cdot V_n \psi \, dx = 0.$$

Let us denote I_n the integral under consideration. Pick $\varphi \in C_c^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$ such that $0 \leq \varphi(x) \leq 1$ on \mathbb{R}^N with $\varphi(x) = 1$ on $\text{supp}(\psi)$, so that

$$I_n = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} U_n \varphi \cdot V_n \psi \, dx.$$

Let us set $\tilde{U}_n = U_n \varphi$ and $\tilde{V}_n = V_n \psi$ that both tend weakly to 0 in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)$ and are compactly supported. We deduce that the Fourier transform

$$\widehat{\tilde{U}_n}(\xi) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} e^{-ix \cdot \xi} U_n(x) \, dx \xrightarrow[n \rightarrow \infty]{} 0 \quad a.e$$

with the uniform estimate

$$|\widehat{\tilde{U}_n}(\xi)| \leq \|U_n\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)} \text{meas}(\text{supp}(\varphi)) \leq C < \infty.$$

Similar conclusions hold for $\widehat{\tilde{V}_n}$.

Proof

Then, by the Plancherel formula, I_n can be recast as

$$I_n = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \widehat{U}_n(\xi) \cdot \overline{\widehat{V}_n(\xi)} d\xi.$$

Now, the additional assumption means for any $i, j \in \{1, \dots, N\}$,

$$\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N \xi_i \widehat{U}_n^i}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\xi_i \widehat{V}_n^j - \xi_j \widehat{V}_n^i}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} \xrightarrow{n \rightarrow \infty} 0 \quad \text{strongly in } L^2(\mathbb{R}^N).$$

We write

$$\begin{cases} I_n &= J_n + K_n, \\ J_n &= \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \frac{1}{1 + |\xi|^2} \widehat{U}_n(\xi) \cdot \overline{\widehat{V}_n(\xi)} d\xi, \\ K_n &= \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \frac{|\xi|^2}{1 + |\xi|^2} \widehat{U}_n(\xi) \cdot \overline{\widehat{V}_n(\xi)} d\xi \end{cases}$$

Then, we split $J_n = \int_{|\xi| \leq R} \dots d\xi + \int_{|\xi| \geq R} \dots d\xi.$

Proof

We readily show that J_n tends to 0 as $n \rightarrow \infty$, since on the one hand

$$\left| \int_{|\xi| \geq R} \dots d\xi \right| \leq \|\psi\|_{L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)} \frac{\|U_n\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)} \|V_n\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)}}{1 + R^2} \leq \frac{C}{1 + R^2}$$

can be made arbitrarily small by choosing R large enough, while, for any fixed $0 < R < \infty$, the pointwise convergences and bounds discussed above yield

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_{|\xi| \leq R} \dots d\xi = 0,$$

by virtue of the Lebesgue theorem.

Proof

Next, we get

$$\begin{aligned} K_n &= \sum_{i,j=1}^N \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \frac{\xi^i \xi^j \widehat{U}_n^j \overline{\widehat{V}_n^j}}{1 + |\xi|^2} \\ &= \sum_{i,j=1}^N \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \frac{\xi^i}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} \widehat{U}_n^j \frac{\xi^j \overline{\widehat{V}_n^j} - \xi^j \overline{\widehat{V}_n^i}}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} d\xi \\ &\quad + \sum_{i=1}^N \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \frac{\xi^i}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} \frac{\sum_{j=1}^N \xi^j \widehat{U}_n^j}{\sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2}} \overline{\widehat{V}_n^i} d\xi \end{aligned}$$

Then, the integrand in both integral of the right hand side reads as the product of the bounded quantity $\xi^i / \sqrt{1 + |\xi|^2} \in L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$ times a sequence that is bounded in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)$ times a sequence that **converges strongly** to 0 in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)$. Accordingly, K_n goes to 0 as $n \rightarrow 0$, which ends the proof.