

OSCILLATION CRITERIA FOR A CLASS OF SECOND-ORDER NONLINEAR DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS

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Abstract: By using the classical variational principle and averaging technique, several oscillation criteria are established for nonlinear second-order equations of the form

$$\left(r(t) |u'|^{p-2} u'\right)' + g(t, u, u')u' + a(t)f(u) = e(t),$$

where $p > 1$ is a real constant.

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1. Introduction

In the present paper we investigate the oscillation behavior for a class of second-order nonlinear differential equations of the form

$$\left(r(t) |u'|^{p-2} u'\right)' + g(t, u, u')u' + a(t)f(u) = e(t), \quad (1.1)$$

where

- $p > 1$ is a real constant;
- $r, a \in C^1(\mathbb{R}_+, (0, \infty))$;
- $g \in C(\mathbb{R}_+ \times \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}, \mathbb{R}_+)$;
- $f \in C(\mathbb{R}, \mathbb{R})$, and $e \in C(\mathbb{R}_+, \mathbb{R})$;

and where \mathbb{R}_+ denotes the set of all nonnegative real numbers. Throughout the paper we shall also assume that the following conditions are true for p, f, g :

(C₁) $xf(x) > 0$ for $x \neq 0$ and

(C₂) there exists a continuous function $p(t)$ such that

$$\frac{g(t, x, y)y}{f(x)} \geq \frac{p(t)|y|^{p-2}y}{f(x)} \quad \text{for } x \neq 0, y \neq 0.$$

By a solution of (1.1), we mean a function $u \in C^1[T_u, \infty)$, $T_u \geq t_0$, which has the property

$$r(t)|u'|^{p-2}u' \in C^1[T_u, \infty)$$

and satisfies Eq. (1.1). We restrict our attention only to the nontrivial solutions of Eq. (1.1), i.e., to the solutions $u(t)$ such that

$$\sup \{|u(t)| : t \geq T\} > 0$$

for all $T \geq T_u$. A nontrivial solution of Eq. (1.1) is called *oscillatory* if it has arbitrarily large zeros; otherwise, it is said to be *nonoscillatory*. Eq. (1.1) is said to be *oscillatory* if all its solutions are oscillatory.

The class of equations we are working with can be considered as a natural generalization of the class of Emden–Fowler-type equations of the form

$$\left(r(t)|u'|^{p-2}u'\right)' + c(t)|u'|^{p-2}u' + a(t)|u|^{p-2}u = e(t), \quad (1.2)$$

and of the class of the Lienard-type equations of the form

$$u'' + \Phi(u, u')u' + h(u) = e(t). \quad (1.3)$$

As in the literature, we will use an auxiliary function $H(t, s) \in C(D, \mathbb{R})$ having the following properties:

- (i) $H(t, t) = 0$, $H(t, s) > 0$ for $t > s$,

(ii) H has partial derivatives $\frac{\partial H}{\partial t}$ and $\frac{\partial H}{\partial s}$ on D such that

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} = h_1(t, s)\sqrt{H(t, s)}, \quad \frac{\partial H}{\partial s} = -h_2(t, s)\sqrt{H(t, s)},$$

where $D = \{(t, s) : t_0 \leq s \leq t < \infty\}$, $h_1, h_2 \in L_{loc}(D, \mathbb{R}_+)$.

2. $f(x)$ is Monotone Increasing

In this section, we shall deal with the oscillation for Eq. (1.1) under the assumptions (C_1) , (C_2) , and the following assumption

(C_3) $f'(x)$ exists and

$$\frac{f'(x)}{|f(x)|^{(p-2)/(p-1)}} \geq \gamma > 0,$$

for some nonnegative constant γ and for all $x \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$.

Theorem 2.1. *Suppose that the conditions (C_1) , (C_2) and (C_3) are all true and for any $T \geq t_0$ there exist $T \leq a_1 < b_1 \leq a_2 < b_2$ such that*

$$e(t) \begin{cases} \leq 0, & t \in [a_1, b_1] \\ \geq 0, & t \in [a_2, b_2] \end{cases}. \quad (2.1)$$

If there exist some $c_i \in (a_i, b_i)$, where $i = 1, 2$, a function $H(t, s)$ satisfying (i)–(ii) and a positive function $\rho \in C^1([t_0, \infty), \mathbb{R})$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{H^p(c_i, a_i)} \int_{a_i}^{c_i} [H^p(s, a_i) a(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i)] ds \\ & + \frac{1}{H^p(b_i, c_i)} \int_{c_i}^{b_i} [H^p(b_i, s) a(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(b_i, s)] ds > 0 \end{aligned} \quad (2.2)$$

for $i = 1, 2$, where

$$\begin{aligned} \Phi &= \frac{[(p-1)]^{p-1}}{(\gamma p)^{p-1} p}, \\ H_1(t, s) &= \left| p h_1(t, s) \sqrt{H(t, s)} + H(t, s) \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)} \right) \right|, \\ H_2(t, s) &= \left| p h_2(t, s) \sqrt{H(t, s)} + H(t, s) \left(\frac{\rho'(s)}{\rho(s)} - \frac{p(s)}{r(s)} \right) \right|, \end{aligned}$$

then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

Proof. Suppose, towards a contradiction, that $u(t)$ is a nonoscillatory solution of Eq. (1.1), say, $u(t) \neq 0$ on $[T_0, \infty)$ for some sufficiently large $T_0 \geq t_0$. Define

$$w(t) = \rho(t) \frac{r(t) |u'(t)|^{p-2} u'(t)}{f(u(t))}, \quad t \geq T_0. \quad (2.3)$$

Then differentiating (2.3) and making use of Eq. (1.1), assumptions (C_1) , (C_2) and (C_3) , we have

$$\begin{aligned} w'(t) &= -a(t)\rho(t) + \frac{e(t)}{f(u(t))}\rho(t) - \rho(t) \frac{g(t, u, u')u'}{f(u(t))} \\ &\quad - \rho(t)r(t) \frac{f'(u(t))}{f^2(u(t))} |u'(t)|^p + \frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} w(t) \\ &\leq -a(t)\rho(t) + \frac{e(t)}{f(u(t))}\rho(t) - \rho(t)p(t) \frac{|u'(t)|^{p-2} u'(t)}{f(u(t))} \\ &\quad - \rho(t)r(t) \frac{f'(u(t))}{f^2(u(t))} |u'(t)|^p + \frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} w(t) \\ &\leq -a(t)\rho(t) + \frac{e(t)}{f(u(t))}\rho(t) - \gamma (\rho(t)r(t))^{1/(1-p)} |w(t)|^{p/(p-1)} \\ &\quad + \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)} \right) w(t). \end{aligned} \quad (2.4)$$

By the conditions of the theorem, we can choose $a_i, b_i \geq T_0$ for $i = 1, 2$ such that $e(t) \leq 0$ on the interval $I_1 = [a_1, b_1]$ and $u(t) > 0$, or $e(t) \geq 0$ on the interval $I_2 = [a_2, b_2]$ and $u(t) < 0$.

By (2.4),

$$\begin{aligned} w'(t) &\leq -a(t)\rho(t) - \gamma (\rho(t)r(t))^{1/(1-p)} |w(t)|^{p/(p-1)} \\ &\quad + \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)} \right) w(t). \end{aligned} \quad (2.5)$$

on both intervals I_1 and I_2 .

On one hand, multiplying $H^p(t, s)$ through (2.5) and integrating it (with t replaced by s) over $[c_i, t]$ for $t \in [c_i, b_i]$, $i = 1, 2$, by using hypotheses (i), (ii), we have for $s \in [c_i, t]$

$$\int_{c_i}^t H^p(t, s) a(s) \rho(s) ds \leq - \int_{c_i}^t H^p(t, s) w'(s) ds$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& + \int_{c_i}^t H^p(t, s) \left[\left(\frac{\rho'(s)}{\rho(s)} - \frac{p(s)}{r(s)} \right) w(s) - \gamma (\rho(s)r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)} \right] ds \\
& = H^p(t, c_i) w(c_i) - \int_{c_i}^t p H^{p-1}(t, s) h_2(t, s) \sqrt{H(t, s)} w(s) ds \\
& + \int_{c_i}^t H^p(t, s) \left[\left(\frac{\rho'(s)}{\rho(s)} - \frac{p(s)}{r(s)} \right) w(s) - \gamma (\rho(s)r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)} \right] ds \\
& \leq H^p(t, c_i) w(c_i) + \int_{c_i}^t [H^{p-1}(t, s) H_2(t, s) |w(s)| \\
& \quad - \gamma H^p(t, s) (\rho(s)r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)}] ds. \tag{2.6}
\end{aligned}$$

Given t and s , set

$$F(v) := H^{p-1} H_2 v - \gamma H^p (\rho r)^{1/(1-p)} v^{p/(p-1)},$$

where $v > 0$.

Since

$$F'(v) = H^{p-1} H_2 - \frac{\gamma p}{p-1} H^p (\rho r)^{1/(1-p)} v^{1/(p-1)},$$

$F(v)$ attains the maximum value at

$$v = r \rho \left(\frac{(p-1) H_2}{\gamma p H} \right)^{p-1},$$

and since

$$F(v) \leq F_{\max} = \Phi r \rho H_2^p, \tag{2.7}$$

we get, using (2.7),

$$\begin{aligned}
& \int_{c_i}^t H^p(b_i, s) a(s) \rho(s) ds \leq H^p(b_i, c_i) w(c_i) \\
& + \Phi \int_{c_i}^{b_i} r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(b_i, s) ds. \tag{2.8}
\end{aligned}$$

Letting $t \rightarrow b_i^-$ in (2.6), we obtain

$$\int_{c_i}^{b_i} H^p(t, s) a(s) \rho(s) ds \leq H^p(t, c_i) w(c_i) + \Phi \int_{c_i}^t r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(t, s) ds. \quad (2.9)$$

On the other hand, multiplying again by H^p both parts of (2.5), and integrating (with t replaced by s) over $(t, c_i]$ for $t \in (a_i, c_i]$, $i = 1, 2$, instead, by using hypotheses (i)–(ii), we yield for $s \in (t, c_i]$

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_t^{c_i} H^p(s, t) a(s) \rho(s) ds \leq - \int_t^{c_i} H^p(s, t) w'(s) ds \\ & + \int_t^{c_i} H^p(s, t) \left[\left(\frac{\rho'(s)}{\rho(s)} - \frac{p(s)}{r(s)} \right) w(s) - \gamma (\rho(s) r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)} \right] ds \\ & = -H^p(c_i, t) w(c_i) + \int_t^{c_i} p H^{p-1}(s, t) h_1(s, t) \sqrt{H(s, t)} w(s) ds \\ & + \int_t^{c_i} H^p(s, t) \left[\left(\frac{\rho'(s)}{\rho(s)} - \frac{p(s)}{r(s)} \right) w(s) - \gamma (\rho(s) r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)} \right] ds \\ & \leq -H^p(c_i, t) w(c_i) + \int_t^{c_i} [H^{p-1}(s, t) H_1(s, t) |w(s)| \\ & \quad - \gamma H^p(s, t) (\rho(s) r(s))^{1/(1-p)} |w(s)|^{p/(p-1)}] ds \\ & \leq -H^p(c_i, t) w(c_i) + \Phi \int_t^{c_i} r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, t) ds. \end{aligned} \quad (2.10)$$

We get the last inequality in (2.10) by following the proof of (2.8). Letting $t \rightarrow a_i^+$ in (2.10) leads to

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{a_i}^{c_i} H^p(s, a_i) a(s) \rho(s) ds \leq -H^p(c_i, a_i) w(c_i) \\ & + \Phi \int_{a_i}^{c_i} r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i) ds. \end{aligned} \quad (2.11)$$

Finally, dividing (2.9) and (2.11) by $H^p(b_i, c_i)$ and $H^p(c_i, a_i)$, respectively, and then adding them, we obtain the inequality

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{H^p(c_i, a_i)} \int_{a_i}^{c_i} H^p(s, a_i) a(s) \rho(s) ds + \frac{1}{H^p(b_i, c_i)} \int_{c_i}^{b_i} H^p(b_i, s) a(s) \rho(s) ds \\ & \leq \frac{1}{H^p(c_i, a_i)} \Phi \int_{a_i}^{c_i} r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i) ds \\ & \quad + \frac{1}{H^p(b_i, c_i)} \Phi \int_{c_i}^{b_i} H_2^p(b_i, s) a(s) \rho(s) ds, \end{aligned} \quad (2.12)$$

which contradict (2.2). The proof of Theorem 2.1 is completed. \square

The following result is an easy corollary of Theorem 2.1.

Corollary 2.2. *Suppose that the hypotheses in Theorem 2.1 hold and a function $H(t, s)$ satisfies the conditions (i)–(ii). If there exist some $c_i \in (a_i, b_i)$, $i = 1, 2$, and some positive function $\rho \in C^1([t_0, \infty), \mathbb{R})$ such that*

$$\int_{a_i}^{c_i} [H^p(s, a_i) a(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i)] ds > 0 \quad (2.13)$$

$$\int_{c_i}^{b_i} [H^p(b_i, s) a(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(b_i, s)] ds > 0 \quad (2.14)$$

for $i = 1, 2$, where γ , H_1 , H_2 , Φ are similar to ones in Theorem 2.1, then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

Specifically, if a function $H := H(t, s) \in C(D, \mathbb{R})$ which satisfies (i)–(ii) is such that the following additional condition

$$(iii) \quad h_1(t - s) = h_2(t - s),$$

is true for H . Then denoting $h_k(t - s)$ where $k = 1, 2$ by $h(t - s)$, and assuming that $\rho(t) \equiv 1$, we derive one more useful corollary from Theorem 2.1:

Corollary 2.3. Suppose that for any $T \geq t_0$, there exist $T \leq a_1 < 2c_1 - a_1 \leq a_2 < 2c_2 - a_2$ such that

$$e(t) \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \leq 0, \quad t \in [a_1, 2c_1 - a_1] \\ \geq 0, \quad t \in [a_2, 2c_2 - a_2] \end{array} \right\}. \quad (2.15)$$

If there exists a function $H := H(t - s)$ having the form described above and satisfying the inequality

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{a_i}^{c_i} H^p(s - a_i) [a(s) + a(2c_i - s)] ds \\ & > \Phi \int_{a_i}^{c_i} [r(s) + r(2c_i - s)] \left(h(s - a_i) \sqrt{H(s - a_i)} \right)^p ds, \end{aligned} \quad (2.16)$$

for $i = 1, 2$ and γ , and if all other hypotheses listed in Theorem 2.1 are true, then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

The proof of the corollary is similar to the proof of Theorem 2.2 in [4], so we skip it.

Remark 2.4. It can be verified that we can replace the hypothesis concerning the function e in Theorem 2.1 with the hypothesis

$$e(t) \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \geq 0, \quad t \in [a_1, b_1] \\ \leq 0, \quad t \in [a_2, b_2] \end{array} \right\}.$$

3. $f(x)$ is not Monotone Increasing

In this section, we shall mainly consider the oscillation problem for Eq. (1.1), assuming as before the conditions (C_1) and (C_2) and the condition stating that

(C_4) $f(x)$ satisfies

$$\frac{f(x)}{x} \geq K |x|^{q-2},$$

for $x \neq 0$, where $K > 0$ and $q > 1$ be constant.

Lemma 3.1 (Hölder's inequality). *If A and B are nonnegative real numbers, then*

$$\frac{1}{p}A^p + \frac{1}{q}B^q \geq AB, \text{ for } \frac{1}{p} + \frac{1}{q} = 1.$$

Theorem 3.2. *Suppose the conditions (C_1) , (C_2) , (C_3) , and (C_4) are all true for the function*

$$f(x) = |x(t)|^{p-2}x(t)$$

and that for any $T \geq t_0$, there exist $T \leq a_1 < b_1 \leq a_2 < b_2$ such that (2.1) holds and $a(t) \geq 0$ for $t \in [a_1, b_1] \cup [a_2, b_2]$.

If there exist some $c_i \in (a_i, b_i)$ for $i = 1, 2$, $H(t, s)$ satisfying (i)–(ii) and a positive function $\rho \in C^1([t_0, \infty), \mathbb{R})$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{H^p(c_i, a_i)} \int_{a_i}^{c_i} [H^p(s, a_i) Q(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i)] ds \\ & + \frac{1}{H^p(b_i, c_i)} \int_{c_i}^{b_i} [H^p(b_i, s) Q(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(b_i, s)] ds > 0 \end{aligned} \quad (3.1)$$

for $i = 1, 2$, where H_1, H_2, Φ are defined as in Theorem 2.1 and $Q(t) = [Ka(t)]^{p/q} |e(t)|^{(q-p)/q}$, then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

Proof. Suppose otherwise: let $u(t)$ be a nonoscillatory solution of Eq. (1.1), say $u(t) \neq 0$ on $[T_0, \infty)$ for some sufficiently large $T_0 \geq t_0$. Define

$$v(t) = \rho(t) \frac{r(t) |u'(t)|^{p-2} u'(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2} u(t)}, \quad t \geq T_0. \quad (3.2)$$

Then differentiating (3.2) and making use of Eq. (1.1) and assumptions (C_3) – (C_4) , we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} v'(t) &= \frac{e(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2} u(t)} \rho(t) - \rho(t) \frac{g(t, u, u') u'}{|u(t)|^{p-2} u(t)} - \rho(t) \frac{a(t) f(u)}{|u(t)|^{p-2} u(t)} \\ &\quad - (p-1) \rho(t) r(t) \frac{|u'(t)|^p}{|u(t)|^p} + \frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} v(t) \\ &\leq \frac{e(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2} u(t)} \rho(t) + \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)} \right) v(t) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& -K\rho(t)a(t)|u(t)|^{q-p} - (p-1)\rho(t)r(t)\frac{|u'(t)|^p}{|u(t)|^p} \\
& \leq -\rho(t)\left(-\frac{e(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2}u(t)} + Ka(t)|u(t)|^{q-p}\right) \\
& - (p-1)[\rho(t)r(t)]^{1/(1-p)}|v(t)|^{p/(p-1)} + \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)}\right)v(t). \quad (3.3)
\end{aligned}$$

By the hypotheses, we can choose $a_i, b_i \geq 0$ for $i = 1, 2$ such that $e(t) \leq 0$ on the interval $I_1 = [a_1, b_1]$ with $a_1 < b_1$ and $u(t) > 0$; or $e(t) \geq 0$ on the interval $I_2 = [a_2, b_2]$ with $a_2 < b_2$ and $u(t) < 0$. Thus, by Hölder's inequality, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
& -\frac{e(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2}u(t)} + Ka(t)|u(t)|^{q-p} = \frac{|e(t)|}{|u(t)|^{p-1}} + Ka(t)|u(t)|^{q-p} \\
& \geq \frac{q-p}{q} \left[\frac{|e(t)|^{(q-p)/q}}{|u(t)|^{(p-1)(q-p)/q}} \right]^{q/(q-p)} \\
& + \frac{p}{q} \left[(Ka(t))^{p/q} u^{(p-1)(q-p)/q} \right]^{q/p} \geq Q(t) \quad (3.4)
\end{aligned}$$

on the interval $I_1 = [a_1, b_1]$. Similarly,

$$\begin{aligned}
& -\frac{e(t)}{|u(t)|^{p-2}u(t)} + Ka(t)|u(t)|^{q-p} = \frac{|e(t)|}{|u(t)|^{p-1}} + Ka(t)|u(t)|^{q-p} \\
& \geq \left[Ka(t)^{p/q} e(t)^{(q-p)/q} \right] = Q(t). \quad (3.5)
\end{aligned}$$

on the interval $I_2 = [a_2, b_2]$.

It follows from (3.4), (3.5), and (3.3) that the function $v(t)$ satisfies

$$\begin{aligned}
v'(t) & \leq -\rho(t)Q(t) - (p-1)[\rho(t)r(t)]^{1/(1-p)}|v(t)|^{p/(p-1)} \\
& + \left(\frac{\rho'(t)}{\rho(t)} - \frac{p(t)}{r(t)}\right)v(t). \quad (3.6)
\end{aligned}$$

on both intervals I_1 and I_2 .

The rest of the proof is similar to that of Theorem 2.1 and hence omitted. \square

The following two corollaries are similar to Corollaries 2.2–2.3.

Corollary 3.3. Suppose that all hypotheses in Theorem 3.2 hold and $H(t, s)$ is a function satisfying the conditions (i)–(ii).

If there exist some $c_i \in (a_i, b_i)$, $i = 1, 2$, and some positive function $\rho \in C^1([t_0, \infty), \mathbb{R})$ such that

$$\int_{a_i}^{c_i} [H^p(s, a_i) Q(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_1^p(s, a_i)] ds > 0 \quad (3.7)$$

$$\int_{c_i}^{b_i} [H^p(b_i, s) Q(s) \rho(s) - \Phi r(s) \rho(s) H_2^p(b_i, s)] ds > 0 \quad (3.8)$$

for $i = 1, 2$, where γ , H_1 , H_2 , and Φ are similar to that ones in Theorem 3.2, then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

The second corollary is an analog of Corollary 2.3.

Corollary 3.4. Suppose that for any $T \geq t_0$, there exist $T \leq a_1 < 2c_1 - a_1 \leq a_2 < 2c_2 - a_2$ such that (2.15) holds for the function e , and $\rho \equiv 1$.

If there exists a function $H := H(t - s)$ satisfying the conditions (i)–(iii) such that

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{a_i}^{c_i} H^p(s - a_i) [Q(s) + Q(2c_i - s)] ds \\ & > \Phi \int_{a_i}^{c_i} [r(s) + r(2c_i - s)] \left(h(s - a_i) \sqrt{H(s - a_i)} \right)^p ds, \end{aligned} \quad (3.9)$$

for $i = 1, 2$, then Eq. (1.1) is oscillatory.

Remark 3.5. Likewise, we can replace the condition (2.15) in for the function e in Corollary 2.3 to the condition in Remark 2.4.

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