

EXPLICIT SOLUTION OF TIME
FRACTIONAL NONLOCAL HEAT EQUATION

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Abstract

We study a one-dimensional fractional diffusion equation with the Caputo time-derivative of order $\mu \in (0, 1]$. Applying spectral projectors, we find a series solution of the problem for a special choice of the initial function. Then, using operational calculus approach of Dimovski, we obtain an explicit representation of the solution in the general case. The expression obtained contains a non-classical convolution product of the particular solution and an arbitrary initial function. This result is an extension of the classical Duhamel principle, but for the space variable.

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1. Introduction

We consider the following initial-boundary value problem:

$$D_t^\mu u(x, t) - u_{xx}(x, t) = F(x, t), \quad 0 < x < 1, 0 < t, \quad (1)$$

$$u(x, 0) = f(x), \quad 0 \leq x \leq 1, \quad (2)$$

$$u(0, t) = 0, \quad 0 \leq t, \quad (3)$$

$$u_x(0, t) = u_x(1, t) + \alpha u(1, t), \quad 0 \leq t. \quad (4)$$

Here D_t^μ denotes the Caputo fractional derivative of order $\mu \in (0, 1]$, (4) is a nonlocal boundary condition involving a real parameter $\alpha \neq 0$. Problem (1-4) with $\mu = 1$ is introduced by Mokin in [9] and [10]. In [10] a representation of the solution in series is found. In Ali and Malik [8] it is obtained a series solution of problem (1-4) with fractional derivative of order $0 < \mu < 1$. Bazhlekova and Dimovski obtained explicit solution of Thornley's problem for one-dimensional fractional diffusion equation with the Caputo time-derivative of order $\mu \in (0, 1]$ and nonlocal boundary condition in [2]. Here we use the operational calculus approach of Dimovski, we obtain Duhamel representation of the solution.

2. Preliminaries

Let

$$\phi_\mu = \frac{t^{\mu-1}}{\Gamma(\mu)}, \quad t > 0, \quad \mu > 0,$$

where $\Gamma(\mu)$ is the Gamma function.

The operation

$$(f \overset{t}{*} g)(t) = \int_0^t f(t-\tau)g(\tau)d\tau, \quad f, g \in C[0, \infty), \quad (5)$$

bears the name of Duhamel convolution, but sometimes it is called either Borel, or Laplace convolution. The Riemann-Liouville fractional integral l_t^μ is defined on $C_{-1}(\bar{I})$ by

$$l_t^\mu f(t) = (\phi_\mu \overset{t}{*} f)(t). \quad (6)$$

The Caputo fractional derivative of order $\mu > 0$ is defined by

$$D_t^\mu g(t) = \begin{cases} (\phi_{m-\mu} \overset{t}{*} g^{(m)})(t), & m-1 < \mu < m, m \in \mathbb{N} \\ g^{(m)}(t), & \mu = m. \end{cases}$$

The Caputo derivative D_t^μ is a left inverse of l_t^μ : $D_t^\mu l_t^\mu f(t) = f(t)$, but in general, it is not a right inverse, since

$$l_t^\mu D_t^\mu f(t) = f(t) - \sum_{k=0}^{m-1} f^{(k)}(0)\phi_{k+1}(t), \quad m-1 < \mu < m. \quad (7)$$

For more details on fractional calculus operators, see e.g. [3], [1], [6], [7]

The Mittag-Leffler function is the entire function defined by

$$E_\mu(z) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{z^k}{\Gamma(\mu k + 1)}, \quad \mu > 0, \quad z \in \mathbb{C}.$$

The Cauchy problem for the ordinary fractional differential equation

$$D_t^\mu y(t) = \lambda y(t), \quad y(0) = y_0, \quad \mu \in (0, 1], \quad t > 0. \quad (8)$$

has a unique solution given by

$$y(t) = y_0 E_\mu(\lambda t^\mu). \quad (9)$$

3. One-dimensional spectral problem, connected with BVP (1) - (4)

In order to find the a series solution of (1) - (4), we are to consider the following non-local eigenvalue problem in $C^2[0, 1]$:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d^2}{dx^2}y(x) + \lambda^2 y(x) &= 0, \quad 0 < x < 1, \\ y(0) &= 0, \quad \Phi_\xi\{y(\xi)\} = 0, \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

where

$$\Phi_\xi\{y(\xi)\} = \frac{1}{\alpha}(\alpha y(1) + y'(1) - y'(0)) = 0. \quad (11)$$

The sine indicatrix of the functional Φ is

$$E(\lambda) = \Phi_\xi \left\{ \frac{\sin \lambda \xi}{\lambda} \right\} = \frac{1}{\alpha} \left(\alpha \frac{\sin \lambda}{\lambda} + \cos \lambda - 1 \right). \quad (12)$$

We obtain

$$\begin{aligned} E(\lambda) &= \frac{2}{\alpha} \sin \frac{\lambda}{2} \left(\frac{\alpha}{\lambda} \cos \frac{\lambda}{2} - \sin \frac{\lambda}{2} \right), \\ E'(\lambda) &= \frac{\alpha \lambda \cos \lambda - (\alpha + \lambda^2) \sin \lambda}{\alpha \lambda^2}. \end{aligned}$$

The zeros of $\sin \frac{1}{2}\lambda = 0$ are $\lambda_k = 2k\pi$, $k = 1, 2, 3, \dots$. The zeros γ_n of $\tan \frac{1}{2}\lambda = \frac{\alpha}{\lambda}$ satisfy $2\pi n < \gamma_n < 2\pi n + \pi$, $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$ (see [9] Lemma 1). All the zeros are simple and corresponding eigenfunctions are $\sin \lambda_k x$, $k = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ and $\sin \gamma_n x$, $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$ (Remark: 0 is not an eigenvalue.)

3.1. The spectral projectors. Let us consider the eigenvalues $-\lambda_k^2$, $k = 1, 2, \dots$. Then the spectral Riesz' projectors $P_{\lambda_k} : C[0, 1] \rightarrow \mathcal{E}_{\lambda_k} = \text{span}\{\sin \lambda_k x\}$ are

$$\begin{aligned} P_{\lambda_k}\{f\} &= \frac{1}{\pi i} \int_{\Gamma_{\lambda_k}} R_{-\mu^2} f(x) \mu d\mu \\ &= -\frac{2}{\alpha \lambda_k E'(\lambda_k)} \left(\int_0^1 \lambda_k \cos((1-\eta)\lambda_k) f(\eta) d\eta \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \alpha \int_0^1 \sin((1-\eta)\lambda_k) f(\eta) d\eta \right) \sin \lambda_k x, \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

where Γ_{λ_k} is a simple contour containing the zero λ_k only.

We have the same representation for $P_{\gamma_n}\{f\}$, but in (13) we have replaced λ_k with γ_n , and $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$.

Let $u_k(x, t) = P_{\lambda_k}\{u(x, t)\} = A_k(t) \sin \lambda_k x$, $k = 1, 2, 3, \dots$, where P_{λ_k} acts with respect to x . Analogically $u_n(x, t) = P_{\gamma_n}\{u(x, t)\} = B_n(t) \sin \gamma_n x$, $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$, where P_{γ_n} acts with respect to x .

DEFINITION 3.1. Let $f \in C[0, 1]$. The formal spectral expansion of $f(x)$ for eigenvalue problem (10) is the correspondence

$$f(x) \sim \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} P_{\lambda_k} + \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_{\gamma_n}. \quad (14)$$

This formal spectral expansion, in fact, is not completely formal, since it has the uniqueness property: if $P_{\lambda_k}\{f\} = 0$ for $k = 1, 2, \dots$ and $P_{\gamma_n}\{f\} = 0$ for $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$, then $f \equiv 0$. This follows immediately from a theorem of Bozhinov (see [11]). In general, it is not supposed the series in (14) to be convergent. If additionally it happens this series to be uniformly convergent on $[0, 1]$, then $f(x) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} P_{\lambda_k} + \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} P_{\gamma_n}$. A sufficient condition for absolute uniform convergence of the series is: $f \in C^2[0, 1]$ with $f(0) = 0$ and $\Phi_{\xi}\{f(\xi)\} = \frac{1}{\alpha}(\alpha f(1) + f'(1) - f'(0)) = 0$. Indeed, then, after integrating by parts in (13) one obtains: $|P_{\lambda_k}\{f\}| \leq \frac{M_1}{k^2}$, $k \gg 0$, $|P_{\gamma_n}\{f\}| \leq \frac{M_2}{n^2}$, $n \gg 0$, where M_1, M_2 are constants nondepending on k and n . This ensures, absolute and uniform convergence of the spectral expansion (14) of f and thus its sum to be a function from $C[0, 1]$. Applying the uniqueness property, it follows that the sum of the series (14) is exactly $f(x)$, since their spectral projectors coincide.

4. Nonclassical convolutions

THEOREM 4.1. (see Dimovski [4], p. 119) Let $f, g \in C[0, 1]$, then the operation

$$(f * g)(x) = -\frac{1}{2}\Phi_{\xi} \left\{ \int_0^{\xi} h(x, \zeta) d\zeta \right\} \quad (15)$$

with

$$\begin{aligned} & h(x, \zeta) \\ &= \int_x^{\zeta} f(\zeta + x - \eta)g(\eta)d\eta - \int_{-x}^{\zeta} f(|\zeta - x - \eta|)g(|\eta|)\text{sgn}(\eta(\zeta - x - \eta))d\eta \end{aligned}$$

is a bilinear, commutative and associative operation on $C[0, 1]$ such that

$$R_{-\lambda^2} f = \left\{ \frac{\sin \lambda x}{\lambda E(\lambda)} \right\} * f \quad (16)$$

and $Lf(x) = \{x\} * f$.

In [4] the corresponding theorem is stated for an arbitrary linear functional Φ in $C^1[0, 1]$. Next we will combine both the Duhamel convolution (5) and the Dimovski convolution (15) into a two-dimensional convolution in $C(G) = C([0, 1] \times [0, \infty))$.

THEOREM 4.2. *Let $u, v \in C(G)$. Then the operation*

$$(u \overset{x,t}{*} v)(x, t) = \int_0^t u(x, t - \tau) \overset{x}{*} v(x, \tau) d\tau,$$

is a bilinear, commutative and associative operation in $C(G)$, such that

$$l_t^\mu L_x u(x, t) = \{x \phi_\mu\} \overset{x,t}{*} u(x, t), \quad (17)$$

where $\phi_\mu = \frac{t^{\mu-1}}{\Gamma(\mu)}$, $t > 0$, $\mu > 0$.

For a proof, see [5] or [3].

5. Ring of the multiplier fractions

We consider the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$. Our direct operational calculus approach is based on the notion of a multiplier of the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$ (see Larsen [13]).

DEFINITION 5.1. (Larsen [13]) An operator $M : C(G) \times C(G)$ is said to be a multiplier of the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$ iff $M(u \overset{x,t}{*} v) = (Mu) \overset{x,t}{*} v$ for all $u, v \in C(G)$.

Here we will remind only some specific notations. The multipliers of the form $\{u(x, t)\} \overset{x,t}{*}$ will be denoted by $\{u\}$ or u and the result of the application of the operator $u \overset{x,t}{*}$ to a function $F \in C(D)$ will be denoted simply by $\{u\}F$ or uF .

LEMMA 5.1. *Let f be a function from $C[0, 1]$. The convolution operator $f \overset{x}{*}$, defined in $C(G)$ by $(f \overset{x}{*})u = f \overset{x}{*} u$ is a multiplier of the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$.*

LEMMA 5.2. *Let φ be a function from $C[0, \infty)$. The convolution operator $\varphi \overset{t}{*}$, defined in $C(G)$ by $(\varphi \overset{t}{*})u = \varphi \overset{t}{*} u$ is a multiplier of the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$.*

For proofs in more general situation, see [5].

DEFINITION 5.2. Let $f = f(x) \in C[0, 1]$ and $\varphi = \varphi(t) \in C[0, \infty)$, but both are considered as functions of $C(G)$. The operator $[f]_t$ defined by $[f]_t u = f \overset{x}{*} u$ is said to be a *partial numerical operator* with respect to t and the operator $[\varphi]_x u = \varphi \overset{t}{*} u$ is said to be *partial numerical operator* with respect to x .

In these notations, we have $L_x = [x]_t$ and $l_t^\mu = [\phi_\mu(t)]_x$.

The notion of numerical operator for Duhamel convolution is introduced in [14].

LEMMA 5.3. (Larsen [13]) *The set of all multipliers of the convolution algebra $(C(G), \overset{x,t}{*})$ is a commutative ring $\mathfrak{M}$.*

The multiplicative set $\mathfrak{N}$ of the non-zero non-divisors of 0 in $\mathfrak{M}$ is non-empty, since at least the operators $\{x\} \overset{x}{*} = [x]_t$ and $\{\phi_\mu\} \overset{t}{*} = [\phi_\mu]_x$ are non-divisors of 0.

Next we introduce the ring $\mathcal{M} = \mathfrak{N}^{-1}\mathfrak{M}$ of the multiplier fractions of the form $\frac{A}{B}$ where $A \in \mathfrak{M}$ and $B \in \mathfrak{N}$. The standard algebraic procedure of constructing of this ring, named “localization”, is described, e.g. in Lang [12]. Basic for our construction are the algebraic inverses $S_x = \frac{1}{L_x}$ and $s_t^\mu = \frac{1}{l_t^\mu}$ in $\mathcal{M}$, of the multipliers L_x and l_t^μ correspondingly. If $u \in C^2(G)$, then u_{xx} and $D_t^\mu u$ are connected with $S_x u$ and $s_t^\mu u$ but they in general, are different from them.

LEMMA 5.4. *Let u_{xx} , $D_t^\mu u$ be continuous on G . Then*

$$u_{xx} = S_x u + S_x \{(x\Phi\{1\} - 1)u(0, t)\} - [\Phi_\xi\{u(\xi, t)\}]_x, \quad (18)$$

$$D_t^\mu u(x, t) = s_t^\mu - [u(x, 0)]_t s_t^{\mu-1} = s_t^\mu (u(x, t) - u(x, 0)). \quad (19)$$

P r o o f. The relation (19) is similar to a corresponding relation in Mikusinski [14] and its proof in [3]. Let us prove (18). It is easy to verify the identity

$$L_x\{u_{xx}\} = u(x, t) + (x\Phi\{1\} - 1)u(0, t) - x\Phi_\xi\{u(\xi, t)\}.$$

It remains to multiply it by S_x and to use $S_x\{x\} = S_x L_x = 1$, in order to get (18). $\square$

6. Algebraization of boundary value problem (1) - (4)

Relations (18) and (19) allow to reduce both the equation (1) and BVCs (2) - (4) to a single linear algebraic equation for u . Indeed, substituting $D_t^\mu u(x, t)$ and u_{xx} from (18) and (19) in the equation $D_t^\mu u(x, t) - u_{xx}(x, t) = F(x, t)$, we get

$$\begin{aligned} & s_t^\mu u - [u(x, 0)]_t s_t^{\mu-1} - S_x u \\ & - S_x \{(x\Phi\{1\} - 1)u(0, t)\} + \Phi_\xi\{u(\xi, t)\} = F(x, t). \end{aligned}$$

Now using initial condition (2) and boundary value conditions (3) and (4), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} & s_t^\mu u - [f(x)]_t s_t^{\mu-1} - S_x u = F(x, t), \\ & (s_t^\mu - S_x)u = [f(x)]_t s_t^{\mu-1} + \{F(x, t)\}. \end{aligned} \quad (20)$$

Thus, we reduced BVP (1) - (4) to the single linear algebraic equation (20) for u in $\mathcal{M}$. It is reasonable to introduce the notation of a *weak solution* of BVP (1) - (4).

DEFINITION 6.1. A function $u \in C(G)$ is said to be a weak solution of BVP (1) - (4), if it is a solution of (20).

Let us consider the problem of uniqueness of the solution of (1) - (4). Equation (20) reduces it to the algebraic question, whether $s_t - S_x$ is a divisor of zero in $\mathcal{M}$ or not.

THEOREM 6.1. *The element $s_t^\mu - S_x$ is a nondivisor of zero in $\mathcal{M}$.*

P r o o f. Assume the contrary, i.e. that there exists a non-zero multiplier fraction $\frac{A}{B} \neq 0$ with $(s_t^\mu - S_x)\frac{A}{B} = 0$. The last relation is equivalent to $(s_t^\mu - S_x)A = 0$. Since $A \neq 0$, then there exist a function $v \in C(D)$ such that $Av = u \neq 0$. Then $(s_t^\mu - S_x)A = 0$ implies $(s_t^\mu - S_x)u = 0$. We multiply

the last equation by l_t^μ and obtain $u - S_x l_t^\mu u = 0$. If $t = 0$, then $u(x, 0) = 0$. Next we multiply $(s_t^\mu - S_x)u = 0$ by $\psi_k(x)$ and obtain $(s_t^\mu - S_x)v_k = 0$, where $v_k(x, t) = \alpha_k(t) \sin \mu_k x$, $k = 1, 2, \dots$. We find

$$s_t^\mu \{\alpha_k(t) \sin \mu_k x\} - S_x \{\alpha_k(t) \sin \mu_k x\} = 0.$$

Using (18) and (19) we find

$$D_t^\mu \alpha_k(t) \sin \mu_k x + \mu_k^2 \alpha_k(t) \sin \mu_k x + \alpha_k(t) \Phi_\xi \{\sin \mu_k \xi\} = 0.$$

But $\Phi_\xi \{\sin \mu_k \xi\} = 0$ and we get

$$D_t^\mu \alpha_k(t) + \mu_k^2 \alpha_k(t) = 0, \quad \alpha_k(0) = 0.$$

This initial problem has unique solution $\alpha_k(t) = 0$. We find $u(x, t) = 0$. $\square$

The solution of (20) in $\mathcal{M}$ is

$$u = \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{s_t^\mu - S_x} [f(x)]_t + \frac{1}{s_t^\mu - S_x} \{F(x, t)\}. \quad (21)$$

We may call (21) the formal (generalized) solution of problem (1)- (4).

7. Interpretation of the formal (generalized) solution of (1)- (4) as a function

Our next task is to interpret (if possible) (21) as a function of $C(D)$. To this end, we consider a special case of problem (1)- (4) for $F(x, t) \equiv 0$ and $f(x) = L_x \{x\} = L_x^2 = \frac{1}{S_x^2} = \frac{x^3}{6} - \frac{x(3 + \alpha)}{6\alpha}$. We denote its solution, if it exists, by $\Omega = \Omega(x, t)$. Having in mind that $L_x \{x\} = L_x^2 = \frac{1}{S_x^2}$, we have the following algebraic representation of this solution:

$$\Omega = \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{s_t^\mu - S_x} \left[\frac{x^3}{6} - \frac{x(3 + \alpha)}{6\alpha} \right]_t = \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{S_x^2 (s_t^\mu - S_x)}. \quad (22)$$

As for the special solution $\Omega(x, t)$, it can be found in an explicit series form, using the spectral projectors (13). Thus we obtain the following result.

LEMMA 7.1. *If $f(x) = \frac{x^3}{6} - \frac{x(3 + \alpha)}{6\alpha}$ and $F(x, t) \equiv 0$, then the solution $\Omega(x, t)$ of the BVP (1)-(4) is:*

$$\Omega(x, t) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} U_k(x, t) + \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} V_n(x, t), \quad (23)$$

where

$$U_k(x, t) = E_\mu(-\lambda_k^2 t^\mu) \frac{2 \sin \lambda_k x}{\lambda_k^4 E'(\lambda_k)},$$

$$V_n(x, t) = E_\mu(-\gamma_n^2 t^\mu) \frac{2 \sin \gamma_n x}{\gamma_n^4 E'(\gamma_n)},$$

$k = 1, 2, \dots, n = 0, 1, \dots$

The proof may be accomplished by a direct check, too.

The generalized solution of problem (1) - (4) for arbitrary $f(x)$ and $F(x, t)$ can be written in the form:

$$\begin{aligned} u &= \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{s_t^\mu - S_x} [f(x)]_t + \frac{1}{s_t^\mu - S_x} \{F(x, t)\} \\ &= S_x^2 \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{S_x^2 (s_t^\mu - S_x)} [f(x)]_t + \frac{S_x^2}{s_t^{\mu-1}} \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{S_x^2 (s_t^\mu - S_x)} F(x, t). \end{aligned} \quad (24)$$

By virtue of (22) and (18), we obtain for the first term in (24)

$$S_x^2 \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{S_x^2 (s_t^\mu - S_x)} [f(x)]_t = S_x^2 \Omega [f(x)]_t = \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} \left[\Omega^x * f(x) \right].$$

Now we can rewrite the second term in (24) as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{S_x^2}{s_t^{\mu-1}} \frac{s_t^{\mu-1}}{S_x^2 (s_t^\mu - S_x)} F(x, t) &= S_x^2 \frac{1}{s_t^{\mu-1}} \Omega F(x, t) = S_x^2 \frac{s_t}{s_t^\mu} \Omega F(x, t) \\ &= l_t^\mu \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial t} (\Omega^{x,t} * F)(x, t) + (\Omega^{x,t} * F)(x, t) \Big|_{t=0} \right] \\ &= l_t^\mu \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} \frac{\partial}{\partial t} (\Omega^{x,t} * F)(x, t). \end{aligned}$$

Under the corresponding assumptions for smoothness of the functions $f(x)$ and $F(x, t)$, the solution can be written as a function of the form

$$u = \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} \left[\Omega^x * f(x) + \frac{\partial}{\partial t} (\phi_\mu^t * \Omega^{x,t} * F(x, t)) \right]. \quad (25)$$

Then (25) gives the following Duhamel-type representation of the solution of (1) - (4).

THEOREM 7.1. *I) If $f(x) \in C^2[0, 1]$, $f(0) = 0$ and $\Phi_\xi\{f(\xi)\} = \frac{1}{\alpha}(\alpha f(1) + f'(1) - f'(0)) = 0$, then*

$$\begin{aligned} u &= \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} (\Omega(x, t) * f(x)) \\ &= \frac{1}{2\alpha} \int_0^1 \left(\alpha (\Omega_x(1-x-\eta, t) - \Omega_x(1+x-\eta, t)) \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \Omega_{xx}(1-x-\eta, t) - \Omega_{xx}(1+x-\eta, t) \right) f''(\eta) d\eta \end{aligned}$$

is a weak solution of (1) - (4) for $F(x, t) \equiv 0$.

II) If $F_{xx}(x, t) \in C(G)$, $F(0, t) = 0$ and

$$\Phi_{\xi}\{F(\xi, t)\} = \frac{1}{\alpha}(\alpha F(1, t) + F_x(1, t) - F_x(0, t)) = 0,$$

then

$$\begin{aligned} u &= \frac{\partial^4}{\partial x^4} \frac{\partial}{\partial t} (\phi_{\mu} \stackrel{t}{*} \Omega \stackrel{x,t}{*} F(x, t)) \\ &= \frac{1}{2\alpha} \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \int_0^1 \left(\alpha (\Omega_x(1-x-\eta, t) - \Omega_x(1+x-\eta, t)) \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \Omega_{xx}(1-x-\eta, t) - \Omega_{xx}(1+x-\eta, t) \right) \stackrel{t}{*} F_{xx}(\eta, t) \stackrel{t}{*} \phi_{\mu}(t) d\eta \end{aligned}$$

is a weak solution of (1) - (4) for $f(x) \equiv 0$.

The proof may be accomplished by a direct check, too.

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