SELF-ADJOINTNESS OF SCHRÖDINGER OPERATORS WITH SINGULAR POTENTIALS

ROSTYSLV O. HRYNYV AND YAROSLAV V. MYKYTYUK

Dedicated to the memory of A. G. Kostyuchenko

Abstract. We study one-dimensional Schrödinger operators \( S \) with real-valued distributional potentials \( q \) in \( W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) and prove an extension of the Povzner–Wienholtz theorem on self-adjointness of bounded below \( S \) thus providing additional information on its domain. The results are further specified for \( q \in W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{unif}}(\mathbb{R}) \).

1. Introduction and main results

In the Hilbert space \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \), we consider a Schrödinger operator

\[
S = -\frac{d^2}{dx^2} + q
\]

with potential \( q \) that is a real-valued distribution from the space \( W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \). Recall that \( W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) is the dual space to the space \( W^{1,2}_{2,\text{comp}}(\mathbb{R}) \) of functions in \( W^{1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) with compact support and that every real-valued \( q \in W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) can be represented as \( \sigma' \) for a real-valued function \( \sigma \) from \( L^2_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \). The operator \( S \) can then be rigorously defined e.g. by the so-called regularization method that was used in [2] in the particular case \( q(x) = 1/x \) and then developed for generic distributional potentials in \( W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) by Savchuk and Shkalikov [20, 21]; see also recent extensions to more general differential expressions in [9,10]. Namely, the regularization method suggests to define \( S \) via

\[
Sf = \ell(f) := -(f' - \sigma f)' - \sigma f'
\]

on the natural maximal domain

\[
\text{dom } S = \{ f \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) | f, f' - \sigma f \in AC_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}), \ell(f) \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) \};
\]

here \( AC_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) is the space of functions that are locally absolutely continuous. It is straightforward to see that \( Sf = -f'' + qf \) in the sense of distributions, so that the above definition is independent of the particular choice of the primitive \( \sigma \in L^2_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \).

One can also introduce the minimal operator \( S_0 \), which is the closure of the restriction \( S'_0 \) of \( S \) onto the set of functions of compact support, i.e., onto

\[
\text{dom } S'_0 = \{ f \in L^2_{2,\text{comp}}(\mathbb{R}) | f, f' - \sigma f \in AC_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}), \ell(f) \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) \}.
\]

The operator \( S'_0 \) (and hence \( S_0 \)) is symmetric; moreover, in a standard manner [18] one proves that \( S \) is the adjoint of \( S_0 \), so that \( S \) is the so-called maximal operator.

An important question preceding any further analysis of the operator \( S \) is whether it is self-adjoint. Recently, this question has attracted attention in the literature in the particular case where the distributional potential \( q \in W^{-1,2}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) contains the sum of Dirac delta-functions [11,13,16] or is periodic [18] (complex-valued periodic \( q \) are...
discussed in \cite{7}), or belongs to the space $W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ \cite{12}. We recall \cite{12} that any $q \in W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ can be represented (not uniquely) in the form $q = \sigma' + \tau$, where $\sigma$ and $\tau$ belong to $L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})$ and $L_{1, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})$, respectively, i.e.,

$$
\|\sigma\|_{2, \text{unif}}^2 := \sup_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \int_{t}^{t+1} |\sigma(s)|^2 ds < \infty,
$$

$$
\|\tau\|_{1, \text{unif}} := \sup_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \int_{t}^{t+1} |\tau(s)| ds < \infty,
$$

and the derivative is understood in the sense of distributions. Given such a representation, the operator $S$ is defined as

\begin{equation}
Sf = -(f' - \sigma f)' - \sigma f' + \tau f
\end{equation}

on the domain (2); this definition is again independent of the particular choice of $\sigma$ and $\tau$ above.

Theorem 3.5 of our paper \cite{12} claims that for real-valued $q \in W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ the operator $S$ as defined by (3) and (2) is self-adjoint and coincides with the operator $T$ constructed by the form-sum method. However, as was pointed out in \cite{18} and \cite{8}, the proof given in \cite{12} is incomplete: namely, it establishes the inclusion $T \subset S$ but then derives the equality $S = T$ taking for granted that $S$ is symmetric. However, since $S_0$ is symmetric, symmetry of $S$ would immediately imply its self-adjointness, and only the claim that $S = T$ in Theorem 3.5 of \cite{12} would remain non-trivial.

The fact that $S$ is indeed self-adjoint is rigorously justified in the paper \cite{18} for the particular case where $q \in W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ is periodic. The authors prove therein that $S_0$, $S$, $T$, and the Friedrichs extension of $S_0$ all coincide; however, the arguments heavily use periodicity of $q$ and thus are not applicable for generic real-valued $q \in W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$.

Recently, Albeverio, Kostenko and Malamud \cite{1} extended the Povzner–Wienholtz theorem stating that boundedness below of the minimal operator implies its self-adjointness (see \cite{3} and the references therein) to the class of arbitrary distributional potentials in $W_{2, \text{loc}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$. The proof of Theorem I.1 in \cite{1} is for the half-line and for the particular case where $q = q_0 + \sum_k \alpha_k \delta(-x_k)$, where $q_0 \in L_{1, \text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})$, $\alpha_k$ and $x_k$ are real numbers, and $\delta$ is the Dirac delta-function; however, Remark III.2 explains that the same proof works in the more general situation of $q \in W_{2, \text{loc}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$. In particular, for $q \in W_{2, \text{unif}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ the minimal operator $S_0$ is shown in \cite{12} to be bounded below; therefore, the operator $S_0 = S$ is then self-adjoint by the above extension of the Povzner–Wienholtz theorem. This fills out the gap in the proof of Theorem 3.5 of our paper \cite{12}.

The aim of this note is to give an alternative proof of the Povzner–Wienholtz theorem for distributional potentials $q \in W_{2, \text{loc}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$. Our approach has several merits: namely, it gives the representation of a positive operator $S$ in the von Neumann form $A^*A$ for some first order differential operator $A$ and provides additional information on the domain of $S$. For regular $q$, possibility of such a representation is known to follow from disconjugacy of $S$ on the whole line, i.e., from the Jacobi condition in the variational problem for the corresponding quadratic form of $S$, see \cite{11} Ch. XI.10,11]. We also mention that the factorization of $S$ as $A^*A$ is of basic importance for the Darboux transformation method, also called Darboux–Crum, or single commutation method, see \cite{3, 6, 17}.

Namely, assume that a real-valued distribution $q \in W_{2, \text{loc}}^{-1}(\mathbb{R})$ is such that the minimal operator $S_0$ is bounded below. Adding a constant to $q$ as necessary, we can make
Theorem 1. Assume that a real-valued distribution \(q\) is absolutely continuous. This representation suggests that \(S\) is the differential operator of first order given by
\[
\ell := -\frac{d^2}{dx^2} + q = -\left(\frac{d}{dx} + r\right)\left(\frac{d}{dx} - r\right).
\]
This representation suggests that \(\ell\) is also related to a differential operator \(A^*A\), where \(A\) is the differential operator of first order given by
\[
Af = f' - rf
\]
on the maximal domain
\[
\text{dom } A = \{ f \in L_2(\mathbb{R}) | f' - rf \in L_2(\mathbb{R}) \}.
\]
The derivative \(f'\) for \(f \in \text{dom } A\) is understood in the sense of distributions; observe, however, that \(f' = rf + Af\) is locally integrable so that every \(f \in \text{dom } A\) is locally absolutely continuous.

Our extension of the Povzner–Wienholtz theorem reads now as follows.

**Theorem 1.** Assume that a real-valued distribution \(q \in W^{-1}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})\) is such that the minimal operator \(S_0\) is positive and denote by \(r \in L_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})\) a Riccati representative of \(q\). Then \(S_0\) is self-adjoint; moreover, \(S_0 = S = A^*A\), and for every \(f \in \text{dom } S\) it holds that \(f' - rf \in L_2(\mathbb{R})\).

This theorem can further be specified if \(q \in W^{-1}_{2,\text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})\). As we mentioned above, the operator \(S_0\) is then automatically bounded below and thus self-adjoint; moreover, we can characterize its domain as follows.

**Corollary 2.** Assume that a real-valued \(q \in W^{-1}_{2,\text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})\) is written as \(q = \sigma' + \tau\) with some \(\sigma \in L_{2,\text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})\) and \(\tau \in L_{1,\text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})\). Then the corresponding maximal Schrödinger operator \(S\) is self-adjoint; moreover, \(\text{dom } S \subset W^1_2(\mathbb{R})\) and \(y' - \sigma y \in L_2(\mathbb{R})\) for every \(y \in \text{dom } S\).

We observe that Proposition 12 of [14] shows that if \(q \in W^{-1}_{2,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})\) is periodic, then the three statements:

(a) \(S\) is self-adjoint;
(b) \(\text{dom } S \subset W^1_2(\mathbb{R})\);
(c) for every \(y \in \text{dom } S\), \(y' - \sigma y \in L_2(\mathbb{R}) \cap AC_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})\)

are equivalent.

2. Proofs

We start with the following simple observation.

**Lemma 3.** The operator \(A\) defined in (4)–(5) is closed.

*Proof.* Let \(y_n \in \text{dom } A\) be such that \(y_n \to y\) and \(g_n := Ay_n \to g\) in \(L_2(\mathbb{R})\) as \(n \to \infty\). Since convergence in \(L_{1,\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R})\) yields convergence in the space of distributions \(\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R})\), we conclude that \(y_n \to y, ry_n \to ry,\) and \(g_n \to g\) in \(\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R})\). Therefore, \(y_n' = ry_n + g_n \to ry + g\) in \(\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R})\) as \(n \to \infty\); on the other hand, \(y_n' \to y'\) in \(\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R})\) since differentiation is a continuous operation in \(\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R})\). It follows that \(y' = ry + g\), whence \(y \in \text{dom } A\) and \(Ay = g\) as required. \(\square\)
The von Neumann theorem [15] Thm. V.3.24] yields now the following result.

**Corollary 4.** The operator \( S_F := A^*A \) is self-adjoint on the domain
\[
\text{dom } S_F := \{ f \in L_2(\mathbb{R}) \mid Af \in \text{dom } A^* \}.
\]

Clearly, \( S_F \) is a self-adjoint extension of the minimal operator \( S_0 \). It turns out that \( S_F \) is the Friedrichs extension of \( S_0 \), see Chapter VI of Kato’s classic book [15] for all relevant definitions.

**Lemma 5.** The operator \( S_F \) is the Friedrichs extension of \( S_0 \).

**Proof.** We recall that the Friedrichs extension of \( S_0 \) is the self-adjoint operator associated with the closure \( s_0 \) of the quadratic form of \( S_0 \) (defined initially on \( \text{dom } S_0 \)) via the first representation theorem [15] Thm. VI.2.1]. The quadratic form \( s_F \) of \( S_F \) is an extension of \( s_0 \), and to prove that \( s_0 = s_F \) it suffices to show that \( \text{dom } S_0 \) is a core for \( s_F \).

It is straightforward to see that \( s_F \) coincides with \( \text{dom } A \) and that \( s_F \)-convergence is equivalent to the \( A \)-convergence. Therefore it suffices to show that \( \text{dom } S_0 \) is a core for \( A \). By the von Neumann theorem [15] Thm. V.3.24] \( A^*A \) is a core for \( A \), and it suffices to show that \( \text{dom } S_0 \) is dense in \( \text{dom } A^*A \) in the graph topology of \( A \).

To this end let \( f \in \text{dom } A^*A \) be arbitrary. Take \( \chi \in C_c^\infty \) such that \( 0 \leq \chi \leq 1 \) and \( \chi \equiv 1 \) on \((-1,1)\), and set \( \chi_n := \chi(\cdot/n) \) and \( f_n := \chi_n f \). Then \( f_n \to f \) and \( Af_n = \chi_n(Af) + f \chi'_n \to Af \) in \( L_2(\mathbb{R}) \) as \( n \to \infty \), i.e., \( f_n \) converge to \( f \) in the graph topology of \( A \). Since \( Af \in \text{dom } A^* \), we see that \( Af_n = f_n' - rf_n \) is absolutely continuous. Recalling that \( r' + r^2 = \sigma' \), we conclude that \( r - \sigma \) is locally absolutely continuous, whence \( f_n' - \sigma f_n \) is absolutely continuous as well. Thus \( f_n \) belong to the domain of \( S_0' \), which is henceforth dense in \( \text{dom } A^*A \) in the graph topology of \( A \), and the proof is complete. \( \square \)

Now we study the maximal operator \( S \). The first observation is as follows.

**Lemma 6.** For every \( y \in \text{dom } S \), the quasi-derivative \( y^{[1]} := y' - ry \) belongs to \( L_2(\mathbb{R}) \).

**Proof.** Set \( g := Sy \) and assume that \( y^{[1]} = y' - ry \) is not in \( L_2(\mathbb{R}^+) \). Integrating \( \ell(y)\overline{y} = g\overline{y} \) by parts from 0 to \( x \), we find that
\[
\int_0^x g(t)\overline{y}(t) \, dt = \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt - y^{[1]}(x)\overline{y}(x) + y^{[1]}(0)\overline{y}(0).
\]
It follows that
\[
\frac{1}{T} \int_0^T \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt \, dx - \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T y^{[1]}(x)\overline{y}(x) \, dx = \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T \int_0^x g(t)\overline{y}(t) \, dt \, dx - y^{[1]}(0)\overline{y}(0)
\]
remains bounded as \( T \to \infty \); since \( \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt \) grows to +\( \infty \) as \( x \to \infty \) by assumption, we conclude that
\[
\frac{1}{T} \left| \int_0^T y^{[1]}(x)\overline{y}(x) \, dx \right| \to \infty
\]
as \( T \to \infty \) and, moreover, that
\[
\text{(6)} \quad 2 \left| \int_0^T y^{[1]}(x)\overline{y}(x) \, dx \right| \geq \int_0^T \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt \, dx
\]
for all \( T \) large enough. In view of the Cauchy–Bunyakovsky–Schwarz inequality
\[
\left| \int_0^T y^{[1]}(x)\overline{y}(x) \, dx \right| \leq \|y\| \left( \int_0^T |y^{[1]}(x)|^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2},
\]
that yields
\[ \int_0^T |y^{[1]}(x)|^2 \, dx \geq \frac{1}{4\|y\|^2} \left( \int_0^T \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt \, dx \right)^2. \]

Set \( I(T) := \int_0^T \int_0^x |y^{[1]}(t)|^2 \, dt \, dx \); then the above inequality can be written as
\[ I'(T) \geq \frac{1}{4\|y\|^2} I^2(T), \]

and, upon integration, yields
\[ \frac{1}{I(T_0)} - \frac{1}{I(T)} \geq \frac{T - T_0}{4\|y\|^2} \]

for every positive \( T \) and \( T_0 \) such that \( T > T_0 \) and \( I(T_0) > 0 \). However, the assumption that \( y^{[1]} \notin L_2(\mathbb{R}^+) \) implies that \( I(T) \to \infty \) as \( T \to \infty \), which is in contradiction with (7). Therefore \( y^{[1]} \in L_2(\mathbb{R}^+) \); the fact that \( y^{[1]} \in L_2(\mathbb{R}^-) \) is proved analogously. □

Remark 7. Similar arguments were used in [11, Lemma XI.7.1] and [14, Lemma 4.1] in the study of the Riccati equation.

Proof of Theorem 4. By Lemma 6 dom \( S \subset \text{dom} \ A \). Further, \( \text{dom} \ A = \text{dom} s_F \), where \( s_F \) is the quadratic form of \( S_F \), the Friedrichs extension of \( S_0 \). By the extremal property of the Friedrichs extension [15, Thm. VI.2.11] we conclude that every self-adjoint restriction of \( S \), i.e., every self-adjoint extension of \( S_0 \), coincides with \( S_F \). This implies that the minimal operator \( S_0 \) is itself self-adjoint and that \( S_0 = S_F = S \) as claimed. □

It was proved in [12] that if \( q \in W^{-1, \text{unif}}_2(\mathbb{R}) \), then the operator \( S_0 \) is bounded below. Assuming that \( S_0 \) is already positive, we have as before \( q = r' + r^2 \) for some \( r \in L_{2, \text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \).

It turns out that the function \( r \) in this representation has some special properties.

Lemma 8. Assume that real-valued \( q \in W^{-1, \text{unif}}_2(\mathbb{R}) \) and \( r \in L_{2, \text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) satisfy the equation \( r' + r^2 = q \) in the sense of distributions. Then \( r \in L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R}) \).

Proof. We set
\[ a_n := \int_n^{n+1} r^2(t) \, dt, \quad n \in \mathbb{Z}, \]

and prove that \( \sup_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} a_n \) is finite.

Denote by \( \phi \) the function in \( W^1_2(\mathbb{R}) \) with support equal to \([-1, 2]\) and defined via
\[ \phi(x) = \begin{cases} 1 + x & x \in [-1, 0], \\ 1 & x \in [0, 1], \\ 2 - x & x \in (1, 2]. \end{cases} \]

We also set \( \phi_\xi := \phi(\cdot - \xi) \) and notice that \( \|\phi_\xi\|_{L^\infty} = \|\phi'_\xi\|_{L^\infty} = 1 \). Denoting by \( \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \) the pairing between \( W^{-1}_2,_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}) \) and \( W^1_2,_{\text{comp}}(\mathbb{R}) \), we find that
\[ -\langle r, \phi'_\xi \rangle + \langle r^2, \phi_\xi \rangle = \langle q, \phi_\xi \rangle. \]

As \( q = \sigma + \tau \) with some \( \sigma \in L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R}) \) and \( \tau \in L_{1, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R}) \), the right-hand side of this equality admits the uniform estimate
\[ |\langle q, \phi_\xi \rangle| \leq |\langle \sigma, \phi'_\xi \rangle| + |\langle \tau, \phi_\xi \rangle| \leq 3\|\sigma\|_{2, \text{unif}} + 3\|\tau\|_{1, \text{unif}} := C; \]

we assume that \( C > 0 \) as otherwise \( q \equiv r \equiv 0 \) and there is nothing to prove. The inequalities
\[ \langle r^2, \phi_n \rangle \geq a_n, \quad |\langle r, \phi'_n \rangle| \leq a_{n-1}^{1/2} + a_{n+1}^{1/2}. \]
combined with (8) and (9) lead to the relation

\[ a_n \leq a_{n-1}^{1/2} + a_{n+1}^{1/2} + C. \]  

We shall prove below that

\[ \liminf_{n \to -\infty} a_n \leq C/2, \quad \liminf_{n \to +\infty} a_n \leq C/2, \]

so that there exist sequences \( (n_k^-)_{k \in \mathbb{N}} \) and \( (n_k^+)_{k \in \mathbb{N}} \) tending respectively to \(-\infty\) and \(+\infty\) such that \( a_{n_k^\pm} < C \) for all \( k \in \mathbb{N} \). Given this, the proof is concluded as follows. We have either \( a_n \leq C \) for all \( n \in \mathbb{Z} \), or otherwise \( a_m > C \) for some \( m \in \mathbb{Z} \). In the latter case, for every \( k \) so large that \( m \in (n_k^-, n_k^+) \) the maximum

\[ C_k := \max\{a_j \mid j = n_k^-, \ldots, n_k^+\} \]

is assumed for some index \( m_k \) strictly between \( n_k^- \) and \( n_k^+ \). Inequality (10) for \( n = m_k \) then yields

\[ C_k \leq 2C_k^{1/2} + C, \]

whence \( C_k \leq 2C + 4 \). Therefore in both cases \( \sup_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} a_n \) is finite thus implying that \( r \in L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R}) \) as claimed.

It remains to establish (11). To this end we take \( a < b \) so that \( b - a > 3 \) and integrate (8) in \( \xi \) over \( (a, b) \). As

\[ \int_a^b \phi'_\xi(t) \, d\xi = \int_a^b \phi'(t - \xi) \, d\xi = \phi_a(t) - \phi_b(t), \]

the Fubini theorem yields

\[ -\int_a^b \langle r, \phi'_\xi \rangle \, d\xi = \langle r, \phi_b \rangle - \langle r, \phi_a \rangle. \]  

Similarly,

\[ \int_a^b \langle r^2, \phi_\xi \rangle \, d\xi = \langle r^2, \psi \rangle \]

with

\[ \psi(t) := \int_a^b \phi_\xi(t) \, d\xi. \]

Observing that \( \text{supp} \, \psi = [a - 1, b + 2] \), that \( \psi(t) = 2 \) for \( t \in [a + 2, b - 1] \) and that \( \psi(t) \geq \frac{1}{2} \phi_a^2(t) \) for \( t \in [a - 1, a + 2] \) and \( \psi(t) \geq \frac{1}{2} \phi_b^2(t) \) for \( t \in [b - 1, b + 2] \), we get

\[ \langle r^2, \psi \rangle \geq 2 \int_{a+2}^{b-1} r^2(t) \, dt + \frac{1}{2} \langle r^2, \phi_a^2 \rangle + \frac{1}{2} \langle r^2, \phi_b^2 \rangle. \]

On the other hand, relations (8), (9), and (12) imply the inequality

\[ \langle r^2, \psi \rangle \leq \left| \int_a^b \langle q, \phi_\xi \rangle \, d\xi \right| + \int_a^b \langle r, \phi_\xi \rangle \, d\xi \leq C(b - a) + |\langle r, \phi_a \rangle| + |\langle r, \phi_b \rangle|. \]

Noticing that \( |\langle r, \phi_\xi \rangle| \leq 2\langle r^2, \phi_\xi^2 \rangle^{1/2} \) by the Cauchy–Bunyakovsky–Schwarz inequality and that \( 2x - \frac{1}{2} x^2 \leq 2 \) for \( x \in \mathbb{R} \), we conclude that

\[ 2 \int_{a+2}^{b-1} r^2(t) \, dt \leq C(b - a) + 2\langle r^2, \phi_a^2 \rangle^{1/2} - \frac{1}{2} \langle r^2, \phi_a^2 \rangle + 2\langle r^2, \phi_b^2 \rangle^{1/2} - \frac{1}{2} \langle r^2, \phi_b^2 \rangle \]

\[ \leq C(b - a) + 4. \]

This estimate yields (11) in a straightforward manner, and the proof is complete. \( \square \)
Proof of Corollary 2. We may again assume that the operator $S$ is positive and denote by $r \in L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})$ the corresponding solution of the Riccati equation $r' + r^2 = q$ and by $A$ the differential operator of \( (11) \). By Lemma \( (13) \) the domain of $S$ is contained in $\text{dom } A$, so that it suffices to show that $\text{dom } A \subset W^1_2(\mathbb{R})$.

Take an arbitrary $y \in \text{dom } A$; thus $y$ and $y' - ry = g$ are in $L_2(\mathbb{R})$. Set $\Delta_n := [n, n+1)$, $g_n := (\int_{\Delta_n} |g(t)|^2 \, dt)^{1/2}$, and choose $\xi_n \in \Delta_n$ such that

$$|y(\xi_n)| \leq \left( \int_{\Delta_n} |g(t)|^2 \, dt \right)^{1/2} =: y_n.$$  

For every $x \in \Delta_n$, we integrate the equality $y' = ry + g$ from $\xi_n$ to $x$ to get the estimates

$$|y(x)| \leq |y(\xi_n)| + \int_{\Delta_n} |r(t)y(t)| \, dt + \int_{\Delta_n} |g(t)| \, dt \leq y_n + y_n \|r\|_{2, \text{unif}} + g_n =: b_n$$

and

$$\int_{\Delta_n} |r(t)y(t)|^2 \, dt \leq b_n^2 \|r\|_{2, \text{unif}}^2.$$  

Since the sequence $(b_n)$ belongs to $\ell_2(\mathbb{Z})$, it follows that $ry \in L_2(\mathbb{R})$; thus $y' = ry + g \in L_2(\mathbb{R})$, and $y \in W^1_2(\mathbb{R})$.

Further, it was proved in \( (12) \) that $y \in W^1_2(\mathbb{R})$ and $\sigma \in L_{2, \text{unif}}(\mathbb{R})$ imply that $\sigma y \in L_2(\mathbb{R})$, whence the quasi-derivative $y' - \sigma y$ belongs to $L_2(\mathbb{R})$ as well. The proof is complete. \qed

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(R.H.) INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PROBLEMS OF MECHANICS AND MATHEMATICS, 3b NAUKOVA st., 79601 LVIV, UKRAINE

E-mail address: rhryniv@iapmm.lviv.ua

(Ya.M.) LVIV NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, 1 UNIVERSYTETSKA st., 79602 LVIV, UKRAINE

E-mail address: yamykytyuk@yahoo.com