Existence of soliton solutions for a quasilinear Schrödinger equation involving critical exponent in $\mathbb{R}^N$

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Abstract

Mountain pass in a suitable Orlicz space is employed to prove the existence of soliton solutions for a quasilinear Schrödinger equation involving critical exponent in $\mathbb{R}^N$. These equations contain strongly singular nonlinearities which include derivatives of the second order. Such equations have been studied as models of several physical phenomena. The nonlinearity here corresponds to the superfluid film equation in plasma physics.

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1 Introduction

We study the existence of standing wave solutions for quasilinear Schrödinger equations of the form

$$i\partial_t z = -\epsilon \Delta z + W(x)z - l(|z|^2)z - k\epsilon \Delta h(|z|^2)h'(|z|^2)z, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^N, N > 2,$$  (1)

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where $W(x)$ is a given potential, $k$ is a real constant and $l$ and $h$ are real functions that are essentially pure power forms. Quasilinear equations of the form (1) have been established in several areas of physics corresponding to various types of $h$. The superfluid film equation in plasma physics has this structure for $h(s) = s$, (Kurihura in [7]). In the case $h(s) = (1+s)^{1/2}$, equation (1) models the self-channeling of a high-power ultra short laser in matter, see [19]. Equation (1) also appears in fluid mechanics [7,8], in the theory of Heidelberg ferromagnetism and magnus [9], in dissipative quantum mechanics [6] and in condensed matter theory [13].

We consider the case $h(s) = s$, $l(s) = \mu s^{\frac{p-1}{2}}$ and $k > 0$. Setting $z(t, x) = \exp(-iFt)u(x)$ one obtains a corresponding equation of elliptic type which has the formal variational structure:

$$-\epsilon \Delta u + V(x)u - k(\Delta(|u|^2))u = \mu |u|^{p-1}u, \quad u > 0, x \in \mathbb{R}^N, \quad (2)$$

where $V(x) = W(x) - F$ is the new potential function.

Note that $p + 1 = 22^* = \frac{4N}{N-2}$ behaves like a critical exponent for the above equation [12, Remark 3.13]. For the subcritical case $p + 1 < 22^*$ the existence of solutions for problem (2) was studied in [10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16] and it was left open for the critical exponent case $p + 1 = 22^*$ [12; Remark 3.13]. In the present paper, the existence of solutions is proved for $p + 1 = 22^*$ whenever the potential function $V(x)$ satisfies some geometry conditions. It is well-known that for the semilinear case ($k = 0$), $p + 1 = 2^*$ is the critical exponent. In this case there are many results about the existence of solutions for the subcritical and the critical exponent (e.g. [1, 4, 5, 17, 20]).

In the case $k > 0$, for a family of parameter $\mu$, the existence of a nonnegative solution is proved for $N = 1$ by Poppenberg, Schmitt and Wang in [16] and for $N \geq 2$ by Liu and Wang in [11]. In [12] Liu and Wang improved these results for any $\mu > 0$ by using a change of variables and treating the new problem in an Orlicz space. The author in [14], using the idea of the fibering method, studied this problem in connection with the corresponding eigenvalue problem for the laplacian $-\Delta u = V(x)u$ and proved the existence of multiple solutions for problem (2). It is established in [10], the existence of both one-sign and nodal ground states of soliton type solutions by the Nehari method. They also established some regularity of the positive solutions.

In this paper, we assume that the potential function $V$ is radial, that is $V(x) = V(|x|)$, and satisfies the following conditions:
There exist $0 < R_1 < r_1 < r_2 < R_2$ and $\alpha > 0$ such that

$$V(x) = 0, \quad \forall x \in \Omega := \{ x \in \mathbb{R}^N : r_1 < |x| < r_2 \}, \quad (A_1)$$

$$V(x) \geq \alpha, \quad \forall x \in \Lambda^c, \quad (A_2)$$

where $\Lambda = \{ x \in \mathbb{R}^N : R_1 < |x| < R_2 \}$.

Here is our main Theorem.

**Theorem 1.1.** There exists $\epsilon_0 > 0$, such that for all $\epsilon \in (0, \epsilon_0)$ problem (2) has a nonnegative solution $u_\epsilon \in H_1^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ with $u_\epsilon^2 \in H_1^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ and

$$u_\epsilon(x) \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{as} \quad |x| \rightarrow +\infty.$$

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we reformulate this problem in an appropriate Orlicz space. In Section 3, we prove the existence of a solution for a special deformation of problem (2). Theorem 1.1 is proved in Section 4.

### 2 Reformulation of the problem and preliminaries

Denote by $H_{r}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ the space of radially symmetric functions in

$$H^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) = \{ u \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N) : \nabla u \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N) \}.$$

Denote by $C_{0,r}^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$ the space of radially symmetric functions in $C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$ and by $D^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N)$ the following space,

$$D^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) := \{ u \in L^{2^*}(\mathbb{R}^N) : \nabla u \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N) \}.$$

Without loss of generality, one can assume $k = 1$ in problem (2). We formally formulate problem (2) in a variational structure as follows

$$J_\epsilon(u) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (1 + u^2) \|
abla u\|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x) u^2 dx - \frac{1}{22^*} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |u|^{22^*} dx$$

on the space

$$X = \{ u \in H_{r}^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) : \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x) u^2 dx < \infty \},$$

which is equipped with the following norm,

$$\| u \|_X = \left\{ \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla u|^2 dx + \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x) u^2 dx \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}.$$
Liu and Wang in [12] for the subcritical case, i.e.

\[ J_\epsilon(u) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (1+u^2)|\nabla u|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)u^2 dx - \frac{1}{p+1} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |u|^{p+1} dx, \quad (2 < p+1 < 2^{*}), \]

by making a change of variables treated this problem in an Orlicz space. Following their work, we consider this problem for the critical exponent case \((p+1 = 2^{*})\) in the same Orlicz space. To convince the reader we briefly recall some of their notations and results that are useful in the sequel.

First, we make a change of variables as follows,

\[ dv = \sqrt{1+u^2} du, \quad v = h(u) = \frac{1}{2} u \sqrt{1+u^2} + \frac{1}{2} \ln(u + \sqrt{1+u^2}) \]

Since \(h\) is strictly monotone it has a well-defined inverse function: \(u = f(v)\). Note that

\[
\begin{align*}
    h(u) &\sim \begin{cases} 
        u, & |u| \ll 1 \\
        \frac{1}{2} u |u|, & |u| \gg 1,
    \end{cases} \\
    h'(u) &\sim \frac{1}{\sqrt{1+u^2}},
\end{align*}
\]

and

\[
\begin{align*}
    f(v) &\sim \begin{cases} 
        v, & |v| \ll 1 \\
        \sqrt{\frac{2}{|v|}}, & |v| \gg 1,
    \end{cases} \\
    f'(v) &= \frac{1}{h'(u)} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1+u^2}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1+f(v)^2}}.
\end{align*}
\]

Also, for some \(C_0 > 0\) it holds

\[
G(v) = f(v)^2 \sim \begin{cases} 
        v^2, & |v| \ll 1, \\
        2|v|, & |v| \gg 1,
    \end{cases} \\
G(2v) \leq C_0 G(v),
\]

\(G(v)\) is convex, \(G'(v) = \frac{2f(v)}{\sqrt{1+f(v)^2}}, \ G''(v) = \frac{2}{(1+f(v)^2)^{3/2}} > 0.\)

Using this change of variable, we can rewrite the functional \(J_\epsilon(u)\) as

\[
\tilde{J}_\epsilon(v) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla v|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)f(v)^2 dx - \frac{1}{22^{*}} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |f(v)|^{22^{*}} dx.
\]

\(\tilde{J}_\epsilon\) is defined on the space

\[
H_{G}^{1}(\mathbb{R}^N) = \{v \mid v(x) = v(|x|), \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla v|^2 dx < \infty, \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)G(v) dx < \infty\}.
\]

We introduced the Orlicz space (e.g.[18])

\[
E_{G}(\mathbb{R}^N) = \{v \mid \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)G(v) dx < \infty\}
\]

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equipped with the norm

\[ |v|_G = \inf_{\zeta > 0} \zeta (1 + \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (V(x)G(\zeta^{-1}v(x))dx), \]

and define the norm of \( H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \) by

\[ \|v\|_{H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N)} = |\nabla v|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N)} + |v|_G \]

Here are some related facts.

**Proposition 2.1.**

(i) \( E_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \) is a Banach space.

(ii) If \( v_n \to v \) in \( E_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \), then \( \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)|G(v_n) - G(v)|dx \to 0 \) and \( \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)|f(v_n) - f(v)|^2dx \to 0 \).

(iii) If \( v_n \to v \) a.e. and \( \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)G(v_n)dx \to \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)G(v)dx \), then \( v_n \to v \) in \( E_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \).

(iv) The dual space \( E^*_G(\mathbb{R}^N) = L^\infty \cap L^2_V = \{w | w \in L^\infty, \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)w^2dx < \infty\} \).

(v) If \( v \in E_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \), then \( w = G'(v) = 2f(v)f'(v) \in E^*_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \), and \( |w|_{E^*_G} = \sup_{\phi \in C^1} (w, \phi) \leq C_1 (1 + \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)G(v)dx) \), where \( C_1 \) is a constant independent of \( v \).

(vi) For \( N > 2 \) the map: \( v \to f(v) \) from \( H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \) into \( L^q(\mathbb{R}^N) \) is continuous for \( 2 \leq q \leq 22^* \) and is compact for \( 2 < q < 22^* \).

(vii) Suppose \( B_k \) is the ball with center at the coordinate origin and radius \( k > 0 \). Let \( r < s \) and \( Q = B_s \setminus B_r \). The map: \( v \to f(v) \) from \( H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \) into \( L^q(Q) \) is compact for \( q \geq 2 \).

**Proof.** See Propositions (2.1) and (2.2) in [12] for the proof of parts (i) to (vi). We prove part (vii). Set \( u = f(v) \). It is easy to check that \( \|u\|_{X} \leq \|v\|_{H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N)} \). It is standard that the embedding from \( H^1_r(\mathbb{R}^N) \) to \( L^q(Q) \) is compact for \( q \geq 2 \) (e.g. [1]). Hence, we obtain the map: \( v \to f(v) \) from \( H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N) \) into \( L^q(Q) \) is compact for \( q \geq 2 \). \( \square \)

Hence forth, \( \int, H^1, H^1_r, H^1_G, E_G, L^1 \) and \( \| \cdot \| \) stand for \( \int_{\mathbb{R}^N}, H^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N), H^1_r(\mathbb{R}^N), H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N), E_G(\mathbb{R}^N), L^1(\mathbb{R}^N) \) and \( \| \cdot \|_{H^1_G(\mathbb{R}^N)} \) respectively. In the following we use \( C \) to denote any constant that is independent of the sequences considered.
3 Auxiliary Problem

In this section, we shall show some results needed to prove Theorem 1.1. Indeed, we first consider a special deformation \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) (See (3) in the following) of \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \). Then, we show that the functional \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) satisfies all the properties of the Mountain Pass Theorem. Consequently, \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) has a critical point for each \( \epsilon > 0 \). We shall use this to prove Theorem 1.1 in the next section. In fact, we will see that the functionals \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \) and \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) will coincide for the small values of \( \epsilon \). This idea was explored by Del Pino and Felmer [5].

To do this, we shall consider constants \( \theta, k \) and \( \beta \) satisfying

\[
4 < \theta < 22^*, \quad k > \frac{\theta}{\theta - 2}, \quad \beta = \left( \frac{\alpha}{k} \right)^{\frac{1}{2(2^* - 1)}}, \quad (\alpha \text{ is introduced in } A_2)
\]

and functions

\[
\gamma(s) = \begin{cases} 
    s^{22^*-1}, & s > 0, \\
    0, & s \leq 0
\end{cases},
\]

\[
\bar{\gamma}(s) = \begin{cases} 
    \gamma(s), & s \leq \beta, \\
    \left( \frac{\alpha}{k} \right)s, & s > \beta,
\end{cases}
\]

\[
w(x, s) = \chi_\Lambda(x)\gamma(s) + (1 - \chi_\Lambda(x))\bar{\gamma}(s),
\]

where \( \chi_\Lambda \) denotes the characteristic function of the set \( \Lambda \). Set \( W(x, t) = \int_0^t w(x, \zeta)d\zeta \). It is easily seen that the function \( w \) satisfies the following conditions,

\[
0 \leq \theta W(x, t) \leq w(x, t)t, \quad \forall x \in \Lambda, t \geq 0, \quad (g_1)
\]

\[
0 \leq 2W(x, t) \leq w(x, t)t \leq \frac{1}{k}V(x)t^2, \quad \forall x \in \Lambda^c, t \in \mathbb{R}. \quad (g_2)
\]

Now, we study the existence of solutions for the deformed equation, i.e.

\[-\epsilon \Delta u + V(x)u - \epsilon(\Delta(|u|^2))u = w(x, u), \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^N.
\]

which correspond to the critical points of

\[
H_\epsilon(u) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} \int (1 + u^2) |\nabla u|^2 + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x)u^2 - \int W(x, u)dx.
\]

As in Section (2), we can rewrite the functional \( H_\epsilon(u) \) as a new functional \( \bar{H}_\epsilon(v) \) with \( u = f(v) \) as follows,

\[
\bar{H}_\epsilon(v) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} \int |\nabla v|^2dx + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x)f(v)^2dx - \int W(x, f(v))dx. \quad (3)
\]
The functional $\tilde{H}(v)$ is defined on the Orlicz space $H^G_1$. To simplify the writing in this section, we shall assume $\epsilon = 1, H_1 = H$ and $\tilde{H}_1 = \tilde{H}$.

The following Proposition states some properties of the functional $\tilde{H}$.

Proposition 3.1. (i) $\tilde{H}$ is well-defined on $H^G_1$.

(ii) $\tilde{H}$ is continuous in $H^G_1$.

(iii) $\tilde{H}$ is Gauteaux-differentiable in $H^G_1$.

Proof. The proof is similar to the proof of Proposition (2.3) in [12] by some obvious changes. □

Here is the main result in this section.

Theorem 3.2. $\tilde{H}$ has a critical point in $H^G_1$, that is, there exists $0 \neq v \in H^G_1$ such that

$$\int \nabla v \cdot \nabla \phi dx + \int V(x)f(v)f'(v)\phi dx - \int w(x,f(v))f'(v)\phi dx = 0,$$

for every $\phi \in H^G_1$.

We use the Mountain Pass Theorem (see [2], [17]) to prove Theorem 3.2. First, let us define the Mountain Pass value,

$$C_0 := \inf_{\gamma \in \Gamma} \sup_{t \in [0,1]} \tilde{H}(\gamma(t)),$$

where

$$\Gamma = \{ \gamma \in C([0,1],H^G_1)|\gamma(0) = 0, \tilde{H}(\gamma(1)) \leq 0, \gamma(1) \neq 0 \}.$$ 

The following Lemmas are crucial for the proof of Theorem 3.2.

Lemma 3.3. The functional $\tilde{H}$ satisfies the Mountain Pass Geometry.

Proof. We need to show that there exists $0 \neq v \in H^G_1$ such that $\tilde{H}(v) \leq 0$. Let $e \in C^\infty_0(\mathbb{R}^N)$ with $e \neq 0$ and $\text{supp}(e) \subset \Omega$. It is easy to see that $H(te) \leq 0$ for the large values of $t$. Consequently $\tilde{H}(v) < 0$ where $v = h(te)$. □

Lemma 3.4. $C_0$ is positive.
Proof. Set
\[ S_\rho := \{ v \in H^1_G | \int |\nabla v|^2 dx + \int V(x) f(v)^2 dx = \rho^2 \}. \]
For \( z = f(v)\lvert f(v) \rvert \) with \( v \in S_\rho \), we have
\[ \int |\nabla z|^2 dx = \int \frac{4f^2(v)}{1 + f^2(v)} |\nabla v|^2 dx \leq 4 \rho^2 \]
from which, we obtain
\[ \int |f(v)|^{2\ast} dx = \int |z|^{2\ast} dx \leq C(\int |\nabla z|^2 dx)^{\frac{2\ast}{4}} \leq C \rho^{2\ast}. \] (4)

Also, it follows from \((g_1)\) and \((g_2)\) that
\[
\int W(x, f(v)) dx = \int_\Lambda W(x, f(v)) dx + \int_{\Lambda^c} W(x, f(v)) dx \\
\leq \frac{1}{\theta} \int |f(v)|^{2\ast} dx + \frac{1}{2k} \int V(x) f(v)^2 dx. \] (5)

Considering (4), (5) and the fact that \( v \in S_\rho \), we obtain
\[
\bar{H}(v) = \frac{1}{2} \int |\nabla v|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x) f(v)^2 dx - \int W(x, f(v)) dx \\
\geq \frac{1}{2} \rho^2 - C \rho^{2\ast} - \frac{1}{2k} \rho^2 = \left( \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2k} \right) \rho^2 - C \rho^{2\ast} \geq \frac{k-1}{4k} \rho^2,
\]
when \( 0 < \rho \leq \rho_0 \ll 1 \) for some \( \rho_0 \). Hence, for \( v \in S_\rho \) with \( 0 < \rho \leq \rho_0 \) we have
\[
\bar{H}(v) \geq \frac{k-1}{4k} \rho^2. \] (6)

If \( \gamma(1) = v \) and \( \bar{H}(\gamma(1)) < 0 \) then it follows from (6) that
\[
\int |\nabla v|^2 dx + \int V(x) f(v)^2 dx > \rho_0^2,
\]
thereby giving
\[
\sup_{t \in [0,1]} \bar{H}(\gamma(t)) \geq \sup_{\gamma(t) \in S_{\rho_0}} \bar{H}(\gamma(t)) \geq \frac{k-1}{4k} \rho_0^2.
\]

Therefore \( C_0 \geq \frac{k-1}{4k} \rho_0^2 > 0 \). \( \square \)

The Mountain Pass Theorem guarantees the existence of a \((PS)_{C_0}\) sequence \( \{v_n\} \), that is, \( \bar{H}(v_n) \rightarrow C_0 \) and \( \bar{H}'(v_n) \rightarrow 0 \). The following Lemma states some properties of this sequence.

**Lemma 3.5.** Suppose \( \{v_n\} \) is a \((PS)_{C_0}\) sequence. The following statements hold.
(i) \( \{v_n\} \) is bounded in \( H^1_G \).

(ii) For each \( \delta > 0 \), there exists \( R > 4R_2 \), \((R_2\) is introduced in \((A_1)\) and \((A_2)\)) such that
\[
\limsup_{n \to +\infty} \int_{B_R} (|\nabla v_n|^2 + V(x)f(v_n)^2)dx < \delta.
\]

(iii) If \( v_n \) converges weakly to \( v \) in \( H^1_G \), then
\[
\lim_{n \to +\infty} \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx = \int w(x, f(v))f(v)dx.
\]

(iv) If \( v_n \geq 0 \) converges weakly to \( v \) in \( H^1_G \), then for every nonnegative test function \( \phi \in H^1_G \) we have
\[
\lim_{n \to +\infty} \langle \bar{H}'(v_n), \phi \rangle = \langle \bar{H}'(v), \phi \rangle.
\]

**Proof.** Since \( \{v_n\} \) is a \((PS)_{C_0}\) sequence, we have
\[
\bar{H}(v_n) = \frac{1}{2} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx - \int W(x, f(v_n))dx
= C_0 + o(1),
\]
and
\[
\langle \bar{H}'(v_n), \phi \rangle = \int \nabla v_n \cdot \nabla \phi dx + \int V(x)f(v_n)f'(v_n)\phi dx - \int w(x, f(v_n))f'(v_n)\phi dx
= o(\|\phi\|) \tag{8}
\]
For part (i), pick \( \phi = \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} = \sqrt{1 + f(v_n)^2}f(v_n) \) as a test function. One can easily deduce that \( |\phi|_G \leq C|v_n|_G \) and
\[
|\nabla \phi| = (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n| \leq 2|\nabla v_n|,
\]
which implies \( \|\phi\| \leq C\|v_n\| \). Substituting \( \phi \) in (8), gives
\[
\langle \bar{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} \rangle = \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx
- \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx
= o(\|v_n\|). \tag{9}
\]

It follows from \((g_1)\) and \((g_2)\) that
\[
- \int W(x, f(v_n))dx + \frac{1}{\theta} \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx \geq \frac{1}{k} (\frac{1}{\theta} - \frac{1}{2}) \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx \tag{10}
\]
Taking into account (7), (9) and (10), we have

\[ C_0 + o(1) + o(\|v_n\|) = \bar{H}(v_n) - \frac{1}{\theta} \langle \bar{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} \rangle \]

\[ = \frac{1}{2} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx - \int W(x, f(v_n)) dx \]

\[ - \frac{1}{\theta} \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n|^2 dx - \frac{1}{\theta} \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx \]

\[ + \frac{1}{\theta} \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) dx \]

\[ = \int (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta}(1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2}))|\nabla v_n|^2 dx + (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta}) \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx \]

\[ + \int (\frac{1}{\theta}w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) - W(x, f(v_n))) dx \]

\[ \geq (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{2}{\theta}) \int |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta})(1 - \frac{1}{k}) \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx. \]

Since, \( \frac{1}{2} - \frac{2}{\theta} > 0 \) and \( (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta})(1 - \frac{1}{k}) > 0 \) it follows from the above that \( \int |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx \) is bounded. It proves part (i).

For part (ii), let \( \eta_R \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R}) \) be a function satisfying \( \eta_R = 0 \) on \( B_{\frac{R}{2}} \), \( \eta_R = 1 \) on \( B_R \) and \( |\nabla \eta_R(x)| \leq \frac{C}{R} \). It follows from part (i) that \{ \( v_n \) \} is bounded. Hence, from (8) we have

\[ \langle \bar{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} \eta_R \rangle = o(1), \]

thereby giving

\[ \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n|^2 \eta_R dx + \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 \eta_R dx \]

\[ + \int \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} \nabla v_n \cdot \nabla \eta_R dx = \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \eta_R dx + o(1). \]

By \((g_2)\), we get

\[ w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \leq \frac{V(x)}{k} f(v_n)^2, \quad \forall x \in B_{\frac{R}{2}}. \]

Therefore,

\[ \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n|^2 \eta_R dx + \int (1 - \frac{1}{k})V(x)f(v_n)^2 \eta_R dx \]

\[ \leq \frac{C}{R} \int \frac{|f(v_n)|}{f'(v_n)} |\nabla v_n| dx + o(1) \]

\[ \leq \frac{C}{R} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \frac{C}{R} \int (|f(v_n)|^2 + |f(v_n)|^4) dx + o(1). \quad (11) \]
Also, it follows from part (vi) of Proposition 2.1 that \( \{ f(v_n) \} \) is a bounded sequence in \( L^2(\mathbb{R}^N) \cap L^{2^*}(\mathbb{R}^N) \). Hence, \( \int (|f(v_n)|^2 + |f(v_n)|^4)dx \) is bounded. Therefore, it follows from (11) that
\[
\limsup_{n \to \infty} \int_{B_R^c} (|\nabla v_n|^2 + V(x)f(v_n)^2)dx < \delta, \quad (R > 4R_2).
\]
It proves part (ii).

For part (iii), note first that from part (ii) of the present Lemma for each \( \delta > 0 \) there exists \( R > 4R_2 \) such that
\[
\limsup_{n \to \infty} \int_{B_R^c} (|\nabla v_n|^2 + V(x)f(v_n)^2)dx < \frac{k\delta}{4}. \tag{12}
\]
Since \( B_R^c \subseteq \Lambda^c \), it follows from \((g_2)\) that
\[
w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \leq \frac{V(x)}{k}f(v_n)^2 \quad \forall x \in B_R^c
\]
which together with (12) imply that
\[
\limsup_{n \to \infty} \int_{B_R^c} w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx \leq \frac{\delta}{4}, \tag{13}
\]
and consequently
\[
\int_{B_R^c} w(x, f(v))f(v)dx \leq \frac{\delta}{4}.
\]

It follows from (13) and the above inequality that
\[
\left| \int_{B_R^c} w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx - \int_{B_R^c} w(x, f(v))f(v)dx \right|
\leq \frac{\delta}{2} + \left| \int_{B_{R_1}} [w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) - w(x, f(v))f(v)]dx \right|
\leq \left| \int_{B_{R_1}} [w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) - w(x, f(v))f(v)]dx \right|. \tag{14}
\]

Since \( B_{R_1} \subseteq \Lambda^c \), we have
\[
w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \leq \frac{V(x)}{k}f(v_n)^2, \quad \forall x \in B_{R_1}
\]
Then, by the compact theorem embedding and Lebesgue Theorem, we obtain a subsequence still denoted by \( \{v_n\} \), such that
\[
\int_{B_{R_1}} w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n)dx \longrightarrow \int_{B_{R_1}} w(x, f(v))f(v)dx. \tag{15}
\]
Also, it follows from part (vii) of Proposition 2.1 that the map \( v \rightarrow f(v) \) from \( H^1_G \) into \( L^q(B_R \setminus B_{R_1}) \) is compact for every \( q \geq 2 \), hence
\[
\int_{B_R \setminus B_{R_1}} w(x, f(v_n)) f(v_n) dx \rightarrow \int_{B_R \setminus B_{R_1}} w(x, f(v)) f(v) dx. \tag{16}
\]
Considering (15) and (16), it follows from (14) that
\[
\limsup_{n \to \infty} \left| \int w(x, f(v_n)) f(v_n) dx - \int w(x, f(v)) f(v) dx \right| \leq \frac{\delta}{2},
\]
for every \( \delta > 0 \). Consequently
\[
\int w(x, f(v_n)) f(v_n) dx \rightarrow \int w(x, f(v)) f(v) dx,
\]
as \( n \to \infty \). It proves part (iii).

To prove part (iv), note first that \( f \) is increasing and \( f(0) = 0 \), hence \( f(v_n) \geq 0 \) and \( f(v) \geq 0 \).

For the second term on the right hand side of (8), we have
\[
V(x) f(v_n) f'(v_n) \phi \leq V(x) f(v_n) \phi,
\]
and since \( v_n \rightharpoonup v \) weakly in \( H^1_G \), for the right hand side of the above inequality we have
\[
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int V(x) f(v_n) \phi dx = \int V(x) f(v) \phi dx.
\]
Hence by the dominated convergence theorem and the fact that \( v_n \to v \) a.e. we obtain
\[
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int V(x) f(v_n) f'(v_n) \phi dx = \int V(x) f(v) f'(v) \phi dx. \tag{17}
\]
For the third term on the right hand side of (8), we have
\[
w(x, f(v_n)) f'(v_n) \phi \leq \frac{V(x)}{k} f(v_n) \phi, \quad \forall x \in \Lambda_c,
\]
and similarly by the dominated convergence theorem, we obtain
\[
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int_{\Lambda_c} w(x, f(v_n)) f'(v_n) \phi dx = \int_{\Lambda_c} w(x, f(v)) f'(v) \phi dx. \tag{18}
\]
Also, note that
\[
w(x, f(v_n)) f'(v_n) \phi \leq f(v_n)^{22r-2} \phi \quad \forall x \in \Lambda,
\]
and from part (vii) of Proposition 2.1 that the map \( v \to f(v) \) from \( H^1_G \) into \( L^q(\Lambda) \) is compact for every \( q \geq 2 \), hence it follows again from the dominated convergence theorem that
\[
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int_{\Lambda} w(x, f(v_n)) f'(v_n) \phi dx = \int_{\Lambda} w(x, f(v)) f'(v) \phi dx. \tag{19}
\]
It follows from (8) and (17)-(19) that
\[
\lim_{n \to +\infty} \langle \tilde{H}'(v_n), \phi \rangle = \langle \tilde{H}'(v), \phi \rangle.
\]
It proves part (iv). □

**Lemma 3.6.** If \( \{v_n\} \) is a \((PS)_{C_0}\) sequence, then \( v_n \) converges to \( v \in H^1_G \). Consequently \( \tilde{H}(v) = \lim_{n \to +\infty} \tilde{H}(v_n) \) and \( \tilde{H}'(v) = 0 \).

**Proof.** It follows from part (i) of Lemma 3.5 that \( v_n \) is a bounded sequence in \( H^1_G \). Hence, there exists \( v \in H^1_G \) such that, up to a subsequence, \( v_n \rightharpoonup v \) weakly in \( H^1_G \) and \( v_n \to v \) a.e. in \( \mathbb{R}^N \). Since we may replace \( v_n \) by \( |v_n| \), we assume \( v_n \geq 0 \) and \( v \geq 0 \). Since, \( \{v_n\} \) is a \((PS)_{C_0}\) sequence we have

\[
o(||v_n||) = \langle \tilde{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v_n)}{f'(v_n)} \rangle
= \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2}) |\nabla v_n|^2 dx + \int V(x)f(v_n)^2 dx - \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) dx
\]

and

\[
o(||v||) = \langle \tilde{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v)}{f'(v)} \rangle. \tag{21}
\]

It follows from part (iv) of Lemma 3.5 and (21) that

\[
\langle \tilde{H}'(v_n), \frac{f(v)}{f'(v)} \rangle = \langle \tilde{H}'(v), \frac{f(v)}{f'(v)} \rangle + o(||v||)
= \int (1 + \frac{f(v)^2}{1 + f(v)^2}) |\nabla v|^2 dx + \int V(x)f(v)^2 dx - \int w(x, f(v))f(v) dx + o(||v||) \tag{22}
\]

In this step, we show that

\[
\int \frac{f(v)^2 |\nabla v|^2}{1 + f(v)^2} dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} dx.
\]

Set \( u_n = f(v_n) \) and \( u = f(v) \). A direct computation shows that

\[
\int |\nabla u_n|^2 dx = 4 \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} dx \leq 4 ||v_n||^2.
\]

Set \( w_n = u_n^2 \). It follows from the above that \( \{w_n\}_n \) is a bounded sequence in \( D^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) \). Hence, up to a subsequence \( w_n \rightharpoonup w \) weakly in \( D^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) \) and \( w_n \to w \) a.e. in \( \mathbb{R}^N \). It follows \( w = u^2 \). Also, by the lower semi continuity of the norm in \( D^{1,2}(\mathbb{R}^N) \), we obtain

\[
\int |\nabla w|^2 dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla w_n|^2 dx.
\]
Plug $w_n = u_n^2$ and $w = u^2$ in this inequality to get

$$
\int |\nabla w|^2 \, dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla u_n|^2 \, dx.
$$

Substituting $u_n = f(v_n)$ and $u = f(v)$ in the above inequality gives

$$
\int \frac{f(v)^2 |\nabla v|^2}{1 + f(v)^2} \, dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} \, dx. \tag{23}
$$

Also, lower semi continuity and Fatou’s Lemma imply

$$
\int |\nabla v|^2 \, dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx, \tag{24}
$$

$$
\int V(x)G(v) \, dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \int V(x)G(v_n) \, dx. \tag{25}
$$

Up to a subsequence one can assume

$$
\liminf_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx \tag{26}
$$

$$
\liminf_{n \to \infty} \int V(x)G(v_n) \, dx = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int V(x)G(v_n) \, dx. \tag{27}
$$

$$
\liminf_{n \to \infty} \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} \, dx = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} \, dx. \tag{28}
$$

It follows from (23)-(28) that there exist nonnegative numbers $\delta_1, \delta_2$ and $\delta_3$ such that

$$
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx = \int |\nabla v|^2 \, dx + \delta_1 \tag{29}
$$

$$
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int V(x)G(v_n) \, dx = \int V(x)G(v) \, dx + \delta_2. \tag{30}
$$

$$
\lim_{n \to \infty} \int \frac{f(v_n)^2 |\nabla v_n|^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2} \, dx = \int \frac{f(v)^2 |\nabla v|^2}{1 + f(v)^2} \, dx + \delta_3. \tag{31}
$$

Now, we show that $\delta_1 = \delta_2 = \delta_3 = 0$. It follows from part $(iii)$ of Lemma 3.5 that

$$
\int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \, dx \longrightarrow \int w(x, f(v))f(v) \, dx.
$$

which together with (20) and (22) imply

$$
\lim_{n \to \infty} \left\{ \int (1 + \frac{f(v_n)^2}{1 + f(v_n)^2})|\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx \right\} = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int w(x, f(v_n))f(v_n) \, dx
$$

$$
= \int w(x, f(v))f(v) \, dx
$$

$$
= \int (1 + \frac{f(v)^2}{1 + f(v)^2})|\nabla v|^2 \, dx + \int V(x)f(v)^2 \, dx
$$
Taking into account (29), (30) and (31) the above limit implies \( \delta_1 = \delta_2 = \delta_3 = 0 \). Therefore, it follows from (29) and (30) that

\[
\int |\nabla v|^2 \, dx = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int |\nabla v_n|^2 \, dx
\]

\[
\int V(x)G(v) \, dx = \lim_{n \to \infty} \int V(x)G(v_n) \, dx.
\]

By Proposition 2.1, \( v_n \rightarrow v \) in \( E_G \) and we have \( \nabla v_n \rightarrow \nabla v \) in \( L^2 \). Hence \( v_n \rightarrow v \) in \( H^1_G \).

\[ \square \]

**Proof of Theorem 3.2.** The proof is a direct consequence of Lemmas 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5. \[ \square \]

### 4 Proof of Theorem 1.1

To prove Theorem 1.1, note first that every critical point of the functional \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \) corresponds to a weak solution of problem (2). Thus, we need to find a critical point for the functional \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \).

To do this, we shall show that the functionals \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \) and \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) will coincide for the small values of \( \epsilon \). Hence, every critical point of \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) will be a critical point of \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \). Also, it follows from Theorem 3.2 that \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) has a nontrivial critical point for every \( \epsilon > 0 \).

Without loss of generality, we may assume \( \epsilon^2 \) instead of \( \epsilon \) in the functionals \( \bar{H}_\epsilon \) and \( \bar{J}_\epsilon \), i.e.

\[
\bar{H}_\epsilon(v) = \frac{\epsilon^2}{2} \int |\nabla v|^2 + \frac{1}{2} \int V(x)f(v)^2 \, dx - \int W(x, f(v)) \, dx,
\]

and

\[
\bar{J}_\epsilon(v) = \frac{\epsilon^2}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla v|^2 \, dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} V(x)f(v)^2 \, dx - \frac{1}{22^*} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |f(v)|^{22^*} \, dx.
\]

It follows from Theorem 3.2 that there exists a critical point \( v_\epsilon \in H^1_G \) of \( \bar{H}_\epsilon(v) \) for each \( \epsilon > 0 \). Set \( u_\epsilon = f(v_\epsilon) \).

The following Lemmas are crucial for the proof of Theorem 1.1.

**Lemma 4.1.** The sequence \( \{u_\epsilon\}_{\epsilon > 0} \) is strongly convergent to 0 when \( \epsilon \to 0 \), in \( H^1(\mathbb{R}^N) \), i.e.

\[
\|u_\epsilon\|_{H^1} \to 0 \quad \text{as} \quad \epsilon \to 0.
\]
Proof. Let $0 \not\equiv \phi \in C^\infty_0(\mathbb{R}^N)$ be a non-negative function with $\text{supp}(\phi) \subset \Omega$ and $H_1(\phi) \leq 0$. Set $\gamma_1(t) := h(t \phi)$. Hence, we have

$$\bar{H}_\varepsilon(\gamma_1(1)) = \bar{H}_\varepsilon(h(\phi)) = H_\varepsilon(\phi) \leq H_1(\phi) \leq 0.$$ 

It follows from the definition of the Mountain Pass value that

$$\bar{H}_\varepsilon(v_\varepsilon) = \inf_{\gamma \in \Gamma} \sup_{t \in [0,1]} \bar{H}_\varepsilon(\gamma(t)) \leq \sup_{t \in [0,1]} \bar{H}_\varepsilon(\gamma_1(t)) \leq \sup_{t \in [0,1]} \bar{H}_\varepsilon(h(t \phi)) = \sup_{t \in [0,1]} H_\varepsilon(t \phi).$$

Therefore, we obtain

$$\bar{H}_\varepsilon(v_\varepsilon) \leq \sup_{t \in [0,1]} H_\varepsilon(t \phi) \leq \sup_{t \in [0,1]} \frac{e^2t^2}{2} \int |\nabla \phi|^2 + \frac{e^2t^4}{2} \int |\phi|^2 |\nabla \phi|^2 - \frac{t^{22^*}}{22^*} \int |\phi|^{22^*} dx \leq \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{22^*} \varepsilon^{22^*-1} A(\phi)$$

where $A(\phi) = \left(\frac{\int (1 + |\phi|^2 |\nabla \phi|^2 dx}{\int |\phi|^{22^*} dx}\right)^{\frac{1}{22^*}}$. Now, as in the proof of part $(i)$ of Lemma 3.5 we obtain

$$\bar{H}_\varepsilon(v_\varepsilon) = \bar{H}_\varepsilon(v_\varepsilon) - \frac{1}{\theta} \langle \bar{H}'(v_\varepsilon), v_\varepsilon \rangle \geq e^2 \left(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta} \right) \int |\nabla v_\varepsilon|^2 dx + (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta})(1 - \frac{1}{k}) \int V(x) f(v_\varepsilon)^2 dx.$$  

(33)

Combining (32) and (33), we get

$$\varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{2}{\theta} \right) \int |\nabla v_\varepsilon|^2 dx + (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta})(1 - \frac{1}{k}) \int V(x) f(v_\varepsilon)^2 dx \leq (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{22^*}) \varepsilon^{22^*-1} A(\phi).$$

Therefore

$$\left(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{2}{\theta} \right) \int |\nabla v_\varepsilon|^2 dx + (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{\theta})(1 - \frac{1}{k}) \int V(x) f(v_\varepsilon)^2 dx \leq (\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{22^*}) \varepsilon^{22^*-1} A(\phi).$$

(34)

Hence, substituting $u_\varepsilon = f(v_\varepsilon)$ in (34) implies

$$\int (1 + |u_\varepsilon|^2) |\nabla u_\varepsilon|^2 dx + \int V(x) |u_\varepsilon|^2 dx \leq C \varepsilon^{\frac{22^*-1}{22^*}} A(\phi).$$

Therefore

$$\|u_\varepsilon\|_{H^1} \longrightarrow 0 \quad \text{as} \quad \varepsilon \longrightarrow 0.$$ 

□

The following Lemma is standard (e.g [20]).
Lemma 4.2. Let $N > 2$. There is a constant $C = C_N$, such that

$$|u(x)| \leq \frac{C}{|x|^\frac{N-2}{2}} \|u\|_{H^1(\mathbb{R}^N)} \quad \forall x \neq 0,$$

for any $u \in H^1_0(\mathbb{R}^N)$.

Lemma 4.3. For every compact set $Q \subset \mathbb{R}^N$ such that $0 \notin Q$, $\|u_\epsilon\|_{L^\infty(Q)} \rightarrow 0$ as $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$.

Proof. For each $\epsilon > 0$, it follows from Lemma 4.2 that

$$0 \leq u_\epsilon(x) \leq \frac{C}{|x|^\frac{N-2}{2}} \|u_\epsilon\|_{H^1(\mathbb{R}^N)} \quad \forall x \neq 0,$$

which together with the result of Lemma 4.1 obviously means

$$\|u_\epsilon\|_{L^\infty(Q)} \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{as} \quad \epsilon \rightarrow 0.$$

□

Proof of Theorem 1.1. By Lemma 4.3 we have

$$M_\epsilon := \max_{x \in \Lambda} f(v_\epsilon) \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{as} \quad \epsilon \rightarrow 0. \quad (35)$$

From (35) there exists $\epsilon_0 > 0$ such that $\max_{x \in \Lambda} f(v_\epsilon) < \beta$ for every $0 < \epsilon < \epsilon_0$. Using the test function $\phi = \frac{(f(v_\epsilon) - \beta)_+}{f(v_\epsilon)}$, we get

$$0 = \langle \bar{H}_\epsilon(v_\epsilon), \phi \rangle = \int_F \epsilon^2 (1 + \frac{f(v_\epsilon)^2}{1 + f(v_\epsilon)^2}) |\nabla v_\epsilon|^2 + \int_{\mathbb{R}^N \setminus \tilde{A}} V(x) f(v_\epsilon)(f(v_\epsilon) - \beta)_+ \, dx$$

$$- \int_{\mathbb{R}^N \setminus \tilde{A}} w(x, f(v_\epsilon))(f(v_\epsilon) - \beta)_+ \, dx$$

where $F = (\mathbb{R}^N \setminus \tilde{A}) \cap \{x| f(v_\epsilon) \geq \beta \}$. From $(g_2)$, we have

$$V(x) f(v_\epsilon)(f(v_\epsilon) - \beta)_+ - w(x, f(v_\epsilon))(f(v_\epsilon) - \beta)_+ \geq 0, \quad \forall x \in \Lambda^c.$$

Thus,

$$\epsilon^2 \int_F (1 + \frac{f(v_\epsilon)^2}{1 + f(v_\epsilon)^2}) |\nabla v_\epsilon|^2 \, dx = 0,$$

from which we obtain

$$f(v_\epsilon) \leq \beta, \quad \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^N \setminus \tilde{A}.$$

Therefore

$$w(x, f(v_\epsilon)) = f(v_\epsilon)^{22^* - 1}, \quad \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^N \setminus \tilde{A},$$
and we conclude that
\[ \epsilon^2 \int \nabla v \cdot \nabla \xi \, dx + \int V(x) f(v) f'(v) \xi \, dx = \int f'(v) \xi \, dx \]
for every \( \xi \in H^1_G \) and \( \epsilon \in (0, \epsilon_0) \). Therefore, \( \tilde{J}_\epsilon(v) \) has a critical point \( v_\epsilon \) in \( H^1_G \) for every \( \epsilon \in (0, \epsilon_0) \). \( \square \)

**Remark 4.4.** Note that, as in the argument in the proof of Theorem 1.1, it seems the smallness of \( \epsilon \) is required for technical reasons. In fact, the smallness of \( \epsilon \) ensures that the deformed functional \( H_\epsilon \) and the main functional \( J_\epsilon \) coincide and in result they have the same critical points. However, we don’t know if solutions exist for large values of \( \epsilon \). Indeed, even for the semilinear case \((k = 0)\), i.e.
\[ -\epsilon \Delta u + V(x)u = \mu |u|^{p-1}u, \quad u > 0, x \in \mathbb{R}^N, p + 1 = 2^*, \quad (36) \]
the existence of solutions depends on the graph topology of coefficient \( V(x) \) and the smallness of \( \epsilon \). In fact, even for this simpler case, it is not quite clear if solutions exist for large values of \( \epsilon \).

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