Algebraic Sum of Unbounded Normal Operators and the Square Root Problem of Kato

By Toka Diagana

Abstract: We prove that the algebraic sum of unbounded normal operators satisfies the square root problem of Kato under appropriate hypotheses. As application, we consider perturbed Schrödinger operators.

1. Introduction

Let $C$ be a normal operator (not necessarily bounded) in a (complex) Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}$. Using the spectral theorem for unbounded normal operators, it is well-known that $C$ can be expressed as

$$C = C_1 - iC_2$$

(1.1)

with $C_1, C_2$ unbounded selfadjoint operators on $\mathcal{H}$ (see, e.g [13, pp. 348-355]). If one supposes $C_1, C_2$ to be nonnegative operators, then $iC$ is m-accretive (see, e.g, [12, Corollary 4.4, p. 15]).

Let $A, B$ be normal operators on $\mathcal{H}$. Recall the algebraic sum $S = A + B$ of $A$ and $B$ is defined as

$$\forall u \in D(S) = D(A) \cap D(B), \quad Su = Au + Bu$$

(1.2)

1Howard University, Department of Mathematics, 2441 6th Street, N.W - Washington, D.C 20059 - USA / E-Mail: tdiagana@howard.edu

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In this paper we are concerned with the square root problem of Kato for the sum of operators $A$ and $B$.

In section 2, we prove that the algebraic sum $S$ satisfies the square root problem of Kato under suitable hypotheses, that is:

\[(1.3) \quad D(S^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D(A^\frac{1}{2}) \cap D(B^\frac{1}{2}) = D(S^{*\frac{1}{2}})\]

Also, since the algebraic sum $S$ is is not always defined (see, e.g., [5, 8]). We shall define a "generalized" sum $A \oplus B$ of $A$ and $B$. One can then prove that such a "generalized" sum satisfies the square root problem of Kato under suitable hypotheses. As application we shall consider perturbed Schrödinger operators.

Recall that more details about the well-known square root problem of Kato can be found in [1, 4, 7, 9, 11].

Throughout this paper we assume that $A$ and $B$ can be decomposed as $A = A_1 - iA_2$ and $B = B_1 - iB_2$. We denote by $\Omega = \Omega(A) \cap \Omega(B)$ where

\[\Omega(A) = D(|A|^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D(A^{\frac{1}{2}}_1) \cap D(A^{\frac{1}{2}}_2), \quad \Omega(B) = D(|B|^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D(B^{\frac{1}{2}}_1) \cap D(B^{\frac{1}{2}}_2)\]

The following assumptions will be made

\[(H_1) \quad A_k, \quad B_k \quad \text{are nonnegative} \quad (k = 1, 2)\]
\[(H_2) \quad \overline{D(A) \cap D(B)} = \mathcal{H}\]
\[(H_3) \quad \text{there exists} \quad c > 0, \quad < A_2u, u > \leq c < A_1u, u >, \quad \forall u \in \Omega(A)\]
\[(H_4) \quad \text{there exists} \quad c' > 0, \quad < B_2u, u > \leq c' < B_1u, u >, \quad \forall u \in \Omega(B)\]
\[(H_5) \quad \overline{\Omega} = \mathcal{H}\]
\[(H_6) \quad \Omega \quad \text{is closed in the interpolation space} \quad [\Omega, \mathcal{H}]^{\frac{1}{2}}\]

Consider the sesquilinear forms associated with $A$ and $B$:

\[\phi(u, v) = < A_1^{\frac{1}{2}}u, A_1^{\frac{1}{2}}v > - i < A_2^{\frac{1}{2}}u, A_2^{\frac{1}{2}}v >, \quad \forall u, v \in \Omega(A)\]
\[ \psi(u, v) = \langle B_1^\frac{1}{2}u, B_2^\frac{1}{2}v \rangle - i \langle B_2^\frac{1}{2}u, B_2^\frac{1}{2}v \rangle \quad \forall \ u, v \in \Omega(B) \]

Set

(1.4) \[ \xi(u, v) = \phi(u, v) + \psi(u, v), \quad \forall u, v \in \Omega \]

According to Bivar-Weinholtz and Lapidus (see, e.g., [2, pp. 451]) the "Generalized" sum \( A \oplus B \) of \( A \) and \( B \) is defined with the help of the sesquilinear form \( \xi \) as follows: \( u \in D(A \oplus B) \) iff \( v \rightarrow \xi(u, v) \) is continuous for the \( \mathcal{H} \)-Topology, and \( (A \oplus B)u \) defined to be the vector of \( \mathcal{H} \) given by the Riesz-Representation theorem

(1.5) \[ \langle (A \oplus B)u, v \rangle = \xi(u, v) \quad \forall v \in \Omega \]

Applying \((H_2)\) to (1.4), we see that \( \xi \) admits the following representation

(1.6) \[ \xi(u, v) = \langle (A + B)u, v \rangle, \quad \forall u \in D(A) \cap D(B), \quad \forall v \in \Omega \]

2. Square Root Problem of Kato

In this section we show the algebraic sum \( S = A + B \) satisfies the square root problem of Kato under suitable conditions. We also show the same conclusion still holds if we consider the square root problem of Kato for the "generalized" sum defined above.

We have

**Theorem 2.1.** Let \( A = A_1 - iA_2 \) and \( B = B_1 - iB_2 \) be unbounded normal operators on \( \mathcal{H} \). Assume that assumptions \((H_1)\), \((H_2)\), \((H_3)\), and \((H_4)\) are satisfied and that the operator \( A + B \) is maximal. Then we have

\[ D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D(A^{\frac{1}{2}}) \cap D(B^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) \]
Proof. Consider the sesquilinear form $\xi = \phi + \psi$ given by (1.6). Let $\Omega_\xi = (\Omega, \| \cdot \|_\xi)$ be the pre-Hilbert space $\Omega$ equipped with the inner product given as

$$<u, v>_{\xi} = <u, v>_{\mathcal{H}} + \Re\xi(u, v), \quad \forall u, v \in \Omega$$

Since the sum form $A_1 \oplus B_1$ is a nonnegative selfadjoint operator. It easily follows that $\Omega_\xi$ is a Hilbert space, and therefore $\xi$ is a closed sesquilinear form. Moreover, $D(\xi) = \Omega$ is dense on $\mathcal{H}$ ( $D(A) \cap D(B) \subset \Omega$ and $\overline{D(A)} \cap \overline{D(B)} = \mathcal{H}$). Thus $\xi$ is a closed densely defined sesquilinear form.

Assumptions ($H_3$) and ($H_4$) clearly imply that: there exists a constant $\text{const.} = \max(c, c') > 0$ such that

$$|\Im m\xi(u, u)| \leq \text{const.} \Re\xi(u, u), \quad \forall u \in \Omega$$

Therefore $\xi$ is a sectorial sesquilinear form. In summary, $\xi$ is a closed densely defined sectorial form. According to Kato’s first representation theorem (see, e.g., [9, Theorem 2.1, pp. 322]): there exists a unique m-sectorial operator associated with $\xi$ (m-sectorial extension of $A + B$). Since $A + B$ is maximal and $\xi$ is sectorial. Then $\overline{A + B}$ is m-sectorial, and it is the m-sectorial operator associated with $\xi$. Since $D(A) = D(A^*)$ and $D(B) = D(B^*)$. It easily follows that $D((A + B)^*) \subset D((A + B)^*)$. Therefore $D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) \subset D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}})$. According to [10, Theorem 5.2, p. 238], we have

$$(2.1) \quad D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) \subset D(\xi) \subset D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$

In the same way, for the conjugate $\xi^*$ of $\xi$ we have

$$(2.2) \quad D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) \subset D(\xi^*) \subset D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$

Since $D(\xi) = D(\xi^*) = \Omega$ and from (2.1), (2.2). It follows that

$$D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) = \Omega = D((A + B)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$
We now consider our investigation related to the square root problem of Kato for the "generalized" sum of operators defined above. We show that the same conclusion still holds under appropriate assumptions.

We have

**Theorem 2.2.** Let $A = A_1 - iA_2$ and $B = B_1 - iB_2$ be unbounded normal operators on $\mathcal{H}$. Assume that assumptions $(H_1)$, $(H_3)$, $(H_4)$, $(H_5)$, and $(H_6)$ are satisfied. Then there exists a unique $m$-sectorial operator $A \oplus B$ satisfying the square root problem of Kato:

$$D((A \oplus B)^{\frac{1}{2}}) = \Omega(A) \cap \Omega(B) = D((A \oplus B)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$

Also $A \oplus B$ and $\overline{A + B}$ coincide if $A + B$ is maximal.

Proof. Consider the sesquilinear form $\xi = \phi + \psi$ given by (1.4). Clearly $\xi$ is a closed densely defined sesquilinear form. Also since $\Re \xi(u, u) = \|(A_1 \oplus B_1)^{\frac{1}{2}}u\|^2 \forall u \in \Omega$ and $\Im \xi(u, u) = -(A_2 \oplus B_2)^{\frac{1}{2}}u\|^2 u \in \Omega$. It easily follows $\xi$ is a sectorial sesquilinear form. Thus there exists a $\text{const} = \max(c, c') > 0$ such that $|\Im \xi(u, u)| \leq \text{const}. \Re \xi(u, u)$. According to Kato’s first representation theorem: there exists a unique $m$-sectorial operator $A \oplus B$ associated with $\xi$ such that

$$\xi(u, v) = (A \oplus B)u, v > u \in D(A \oplus B), \ v \in \Omega$$

and in addition $D(A \oplus B), \ D((A \oplus B)^*) \subset D(\xi) = \Omega = \Omega_\xi$. Since $\Omega$ is closed in $[\Omega, \mathcal{H}]^\frac{1}{2}$. Then we conclude using a result of Lions (see, e.g., [11, Theorem, 6.1, p. 238]), that $A \oplus B$ satisfies the square root problem of Kato. It is not hard to see that $A \oplus B = \overline{A + B}$ if $\overline{A + B}$ is maximal. Indeed if $\overline{A + B}$ is maximal and since $A \oplus B$ is an $m$-sectorial extension of it. Then they coincide everywhere.
3. Applications

In this section we give an application related to the algebraic sum case. Consider the algebraic sum given by a perturbation of the Schrödinger operator $S_Z = -Z\Delta + V$ with $Z$ a complex number and $V$ is a singular complex potential. Let $X \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ be an open set and assume that our Hilbert space $\mathcal{H} = L^2(X)$. Let $\Phi$ be the sesquilinear form given by

\begin{equation}
\Phi_Z(u, v) = \int_X Z\nabla u \nabla v dx, \quad \forall \ u, v \in D(\Phi) = H^1_0(X)
\end{equation}

where $Z = \alpha - i\beta$ is a complex number satisfying the following conditions: $\alpha > 0$, $\beta > 0$, and $\beta \leq \alpha$. The previous conditions on $Z$ clearly that the sesquilinear form $\Phi$ is sectorial.

Let $V$ be a measurable complex function and let $\Psi$ be the sesquilinear form given as

\begin{equation}
\Psi(u, v) = \int_X V u v dx, \quad \forall \ u, v \in D(\Psi)
\end{equation}

with $D(\Psi) = \{ u \in L^2(X) : |Vu|^2 \in L^1(X) \}$. Throughout this section we assume that the potential $V \in L^1_{loc}(X)$ and that there exists $\theta \in (0, \frac{\pi}{2})$ such that

\begin{equation}
|\arg(V(x))| \leq \theta, \quad \text{almost everywhere}
\end{equation}

From (3.3) we have

\begin{equation}
|3m\Psi(u, u)| \leq \tan \theta \Re \Psi(u, u), \quad \forall \ u \in D(\Psi)
\end{equation}

In other words, the sesquilinear form $\Psi$ is sectorial. Under the previous assumptions $\Phi$ and $\Psi$ are closed densely defined sectorial forms. The operators associated with both $\Phi$ and $\Psi$ are given as

\[ D(A_Z) = \{ u \in H^1_0(X) : Z\Delta u \in L^2(X) \}, \quad A_Z u = -Z\Delta u, \quad \forall \ u \in D(A_Z) \]

\[ D(B) = \{ u \in L^2(X) : Vu \in L^2(X) \}, \quad B u = Vu, \quad \forall \ u \in D(B) \]
It is not hard to see that $A_Z$, $B$ are unbounded normal operators in $L^2(X)$. One can decompose them as $A_Z = A_Z^1 - iA_Z^2$ where $A_Z^1 = -\alpha \Delta$ and $A_Z^2 = -\beta \Delta$ are nonnegative selfadjoint operators, and $B = B_V^1 - iB_V^2$ where $B_V^1$, $B_V^2$ are nonnegative selfadjoint operators (that is justified by (3.3)). Now one assumes that $X = \mathbb{R}^d$. Thus the operator associated with $\Xi = \Phi + \Psi$ (by the first representation theorem of Kato) is the closure of the algebraic sum $S_Z$ (i.e., $-Z\Delta + V$) and it is m-sectorial (see, e.g., [3]). In fact such an operator is defined as

$$D(-Z\Delta + V) = \{u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^d) : V|u|^2 \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^d) \text{ and } -Z\Delta u + Vu \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)\} \quad -Z\Delta + Vu = -Z\Delta u + Vu, \ \forall u \in D(-Z\Delta + V)$$

Let us notice that $D(A_Z) = H^2(\mathbb{R}^d)$, $D(B) = \{u \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^d) : Vu \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)\}$, and their intersection is dense in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)$. Therefore applying Theorem 2.1 to the operators $A_Z$ and $B$. It easily follows that

$$D((-Z\Delta + V)^{\frac{1}{2}}) = H^1(R^d) \cap D(B^{\frac{1}{2}}) = D((-Z\Delta + V)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$

For instance considering the case $d = 1$. Then we have

$$D((-Z\Delta + V)^{\frac{1}{2}}) = H^1(R) = D((-Z\Delta + V)^{\frac{1}{2}})$$

**Remark 3.1.** We may illustrate theorem 2.2 by considering both $A_Z$ and $B$ defined above and by assuming that the potential $V \neq 0$ satisfies: (3.3) and the following

(3.5) \quad V \in L^1(\mathbb{R}^d), \quad V \notin L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^d)

In such a case, it is not hard to show that $D(A_Z) \cap D(B) = \{0\}$ (see, e.g., [5, 8]). Therefore the algebraic sum $S_Z = -Z\Delta + V$ is not defined. Nevertheless, consider the sum $\Xi = \Phi + \Psi$. Clearly $\Xi$ is a closed densely defined sectorial form ($C^\infty_c(\mathbb{R}^d) \subset D(\Phi) \cap D(\Psi)$). According to the first representation theorem of Kato: there exists a unique m-sectorial operator $(-Z\Delta \oplus V)$ associated with $\Xi$. Thus theorem 2.2 can applied to $A_Z$ and $B$. Therefore
it easily follows the operator $(-Z\Delta \oplus V)$ satisfies the square root problem of Kato.

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