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## Estimate for Norm of Solutions of Nonautonomous Equations in Hilbert Space

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Presented by P. Kenderov

A linear nonautonomous equation in Hilbert space is considered. The estimate for a norm of solutions is obtained, by the new inequality for operator-valued function. The estimate gives stability conditions. The possible application to fourth-order parabolic systems and integral-differential systems is discussed.

### 1. Introduction

Let  $H$  be a Hilbert space with inner product  $(\cdot, \cdot)$ , norm  $\|\cdot\|$ . And let  $S$  be a linear normal operator in  $H$ :  $S^*S = SS^*$ . Consider the equation

$$(1.1) \quad \dot{x} = A(t)x, \quad (\dot{\cdot} \equiv \frac{d}{dt}, \quad t \geq 0),$$

where  $A(t)$  is a linear variable operator in  $H$  with domain  $D(A(t))$ ;  $\sigma(A)$  denotes the spectrum of an operator  $A$ . Assume there is a map  $T(t, \mu)$  from  $\sigma(S) \times \mathbb{R}_+$  into the set  $B(H)$  of all bounded linear operators on  $H$ , such that

$$(1.2) \quad A(t)h = \int_{\sigma(S)} T(t, \mu) dE_\mu h \quad \text{and} \quad T(t, \mu)E_\mu = E_\mu T(t, \mu)$$

for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$  and  $h \in D(A(t))$ ,

where  $E_\mu$  is the spectral function of  $S$ , and the integral strongly converges.

Example 1. Consider the problem

$$(1.3) \quad \begin{aligned} \dot{u} &= b_2(t)\Delta^2 u + b_1(t)\Delta u + b_0(t)u \quad \text{in } \Omega, \\ \Delta u(x, t) &= u(x, t) = 0, \quad \text{on } \partial\Omega, \quad t \geq 0, \end{aligned}$$

where  $\Omega$  is some domain in Euclidean space with a smooth boundary  $\partial\Omega$ ,  $\Delta$  is the Laplacian,  $b_k(t)$  ( $k=1, n$ ) are  $n \times n$ -matrices.

Let,  $H = L^2(\Omega; \mathbb{R}^n)$ ,  $S = \Delta$ ,  $D(S) = \{h \in H : \Delta h \in H, h|_{\partial\Omega} = 0\}$ , then we can write (1.3) in the form (1.1), (1.2) with

$$T(t, \mu) = b_2(t)\mu^2 + b_1(t)\mu + b_0(t).$$

Example 2. Consider the problem

$$(1.4) \quad \begin{aligned} \dot{u}(x, t) &= \Delta u + \int_{\Omega} G(t, x-s) u(s, t) ds \text{ in } \Omega, \\ u &= 0 \text{ on } \partial\Omega, \end{aligned}$$

where  $G(t, x)$  is a  $n \times n$ -matrix  $\forall x \in \Omega, t \geq 0$ , with property  $\int_{\Omega} \int_{\Omega} \|G(t, x-s)\|^2 dx ds < \infty$ ,  $\Omega$  is the same as in example 1.

Denote the operator  $K(t)$  by

$$(K(t)h)(x) = \int_{\Omega} G(t, x-s) h(s) ds \quad (h \in L^2(\Omega, R^n)).$$

We arrive at (1.1), (1.2), when  $H = L^2(\Omega, R^n)$ ,  $S = \Delta$ ,  $T(t, \mu) = \mu + K(t)$ .

In this article we shall obtain the estimate for solutions of (1.1), under (1.2) and other conditions. The mentioned estimate gives the stability criterion. It is well known that finding a Lyapunov function for the investigation of the stability parabolic systems and integral-differential equations is usually difficult. Below we shall obtain the stability criterion in terms of some inequality.

Our results make corresponding well-known results (see [1, Ch. 7; 2] and references given therein) more precise in the case (1.2).

Denote by  $C_2$  the Hilbert-Schmidt's ideal of operators in  $H$ .

The following estimate plays a significant role hereafter

$$(1.5) \quad \|\exp(Bt)\| \leq p(B, t) \equiv \exp[\alpha(B)t] \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} v^k(B) \frac{t^k}{(k!)^{3/2}} \quad (t \geq 0)$$

for each  $B \in C_2$  [3, Ch 2 and Ch. 4] (see also [4, 5]). Here and below

$$(1.6) \quad \alpha(B) = \sup \operatorname{Re} \sigma(B), \quad v(B) = ((|B|_2)^2 - \sum_{k=1}^n |\lambda_k(B)|^2)^{1/2},$$

$|B|_2$  - Hilbert-Schmidt's norm of  $B$ ;  $\lambda_1(B), \lambda_2(B), \dots$  are eigenvalues of  $B$  with calculation of their multiplicity,  $n = n(B)$  the dimension of  $B$ .

Inequalities

$$(1.7) \quad v(B) \leq \sqrt{0.5} |B - B^*|_2$$

and

$$v^2(B) \leq (|B|_2)^2 - |\operatorname{Trace} B^2|$$

are valid (see [3]). If  $B \in C_2$  is a normal operator, then  $v(B) = 0$ . Surely,  $v(Be^{i\theta}) = v(B)$  for any real  $\theta$ .

## 2. Preliminaries

### 2.1. General estimate

Let  $X$  be Banach space with norm  $\|\cdot\|_X$ . Suppose  $A_0$  is a generator of a strongly continuous semigroup  $\exp(A_0 t)$  in  $X$ . Let also  $B(t)$  be a variable linear operator in  $X$ , satisfying

$$(2.1) \quad \int_{\tau}^t \|\exp[A_0(t-s)]B(s)\|_x ds \leq \varphi(t-\tau) \quad (p \leq \tau, t \leq T)$$

for a certain positive number  $T < \infty$  and a nonnegative continuous function  $\varphi$  with property  $\varphi(0) = 0$ . Denote

$$(2.2) \quad a = \sup \{ \|e^{A_0 t}\| : 0 \leq t \leq T \}.$$

Following F. Browder's terminology [1, p.55] a continuous solution  $x : [0, T] \rightarrow D(A(t))$  of the integral equation

$$(2.3) \quad u(t) = e^{A_0 t} u(0) + \int_0^t e^{A_0(t-s)} B(s) u(s) ds$$

is a solution of (1.1), as far as  $A(t) = A_0 + B(t)$ .

By the contraction mapping theorem (2.3) has unique solution with every  $u(0) \in D(A(0))$ .

We have from (2.3)

$$\|u(t)\|_x \leq a \|u(0)\|_x + \varphi(t) \sup_{0 \leq s \leq T} \|u(s)\|_x.$$

Thus, the condition  $\varphi(T) < 1$  implies

$$(2.4) \quad \|u(t)\|_x \leq \frac{a}{1 - \varphi(T)} \|u(0)\|_x \quad (0 \leq t \leq T).$$

## 2.2. Estimate for an integral with respect to a spectral function

Everywhere in this subsection the domain of the integration is  $\sigma(S)$ .

**Lemma 1.** *Let  $S$  be a normal operator in  $H$  with the spectral function  $E_\mu$  and let  $K(\mu)$  be a bounded operator-valued function defined on  $\sigma(S)$ , such that the integral  $K_0 \equiv \int K(\mu) dE_\mu$ , converges in the operator norm. If  $K(\mu) E_\mu = E_\mu K(\mu)$  ( $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ ), and*

$$C_0 \equiv \int \|K(\mu)\|^2 d(E_\mu h, h) < \infty.$$

Then  $\|K_0 h\|^2 \leq C_0$ .

*Proof.* We have

$$\|K_0 h\|^2 = \left( \int K(\mu) dE_\mu h, \int K(\lambda) dE_\lambda h \right) \quad (h \in H).$$

Since  $K(\mu)$  and  $E_\mu$  commute, we can write

$$\begin{aligned} \|K_0 h\|^2 &= \iint (K^*(\lambda) K(\mu) dE_\lambda h, dE_\mu h) \\ &= \int (K^*(\lambda) K(\lambda) dE_\lambda h, h). \end{aligned}$$

From here we arrive to the inequality

$$\|K_0 h\|^2 \leq \int \|K(\lambda)\|^2 (dE_\lambda h, h),$$

which proves the result.

**2.3. Representation of solutions**

Consider the ordinary equation

$$(2.5) \quad \dot{y} = T(t, \mu)y \quad (\mu \in \sigma(S), t \geq 0)$$

where  $T(t, \mu)$  is an operator-valued function of  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$  and  $t \in [0, T]$ . Denote by  $V(\mu, t)$  Cauchy operator of (2.5) i.e.  $V(\mu, t)y(0) = y(t)$  for a solution  $y$  of (2.5).

In this subsection we assume the existence of a unique solution of (2.5) with any initial condition for each  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ .

**Lemma 2.** *Suppose  $T(t, \mu)$  maps  $\sigma(S) \times R_+$  into  $B(H)$  and commutes with  $E_\mu$ . If*

$$(2.6) \quad \left\| \int_{\sigma(S)} T(t, \mu) V(\mu, t) dE_\mu x_0 \right\| < \infty$$

for given  $x_0 \in D(A(0))$  and all  $t \in [0, T]$ , then the following equality is valid:

$$(2.7) \quad x(t) = \int_{\sigma(S)} V(\mu, t) dE_\mu x(0)$$

for any solution  $x(t)$  of (1.1) with  $x(0) = x_0$ .

**Proof.** By definition of Cauchy operator

$$\frac{d}{dt} V(\mu, t) = T(t, \mu) V(\mu, t).$$

We have

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = \int_{\sigma(S)} T(t, \mu) V(\mu, t) dE_t x_0$$

differentiating both sides of (2.7) and taking into account (2.7).

On the other hand,

$$\begin{aligned} A(t)x(t) &= \int_{\sigma(S)} T(t, \tau) dE_\tau \int_{\sigma(S)} V(\mu, t) dE_\mu x_0 \\ &= \int_{\sigma(S)} T(t, \mu) V(\mu, t) dE_\mu x_0 \end{aligned}$$

i.e. (2.7) actually represents a solution of (1.1) Q. E. D.

Since

$$\int \|K(\mu)\|^2 d(E_\mu h, h) \leq \sup \{ \|K(\mu)\|^2 : \mu \in \sigma(S) \} \|h\|^2.$$

Lemmas 1 and 2 give

**Corollary 1.** *Suppose under hypothesis of Lemma 2  $\|V(\mu, t)\| \leq \varphi_0(t)$ , for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$  and  $t \geq 0$ , where  $\varphi_0$  is a positive function. Then  $\|x(t)\| \leq \varphi_0(t) \|x_0\|$  ( $t \geq 0$ ).*

**2.3. Estimate for solution of ordinary equation**

Consider the following equation in  $H$ :

$$(2.8) \quad \dot{x} = T_0 x + T_1(t)x \quad (t \geq 0),$$

where  $T_0$  doesn't depend on  $t$  and  $\|T(t)\| \leq q$  for all  $t \geq 0$ .

**Lemma 3.** Let  $T_0 \in U_2$ , besides  $\alpha(T_0) < 0$ . Assume

$$k = q \sum_{k=0}^{n_0-1} \frac{v^k(T_0)}{|\alpha(T_0)|^{k+1}} \sqrt{k!} < 1. \quad (n_0 = n(T_0)).$$

Then a solution of (2.8) satisfies the following estimate:

$$(2.9) \quad \|x(t)\| \leq a_0 \|x(0)\| (1-k)^{-1} \quad (t \geq 0).$$

Here  $a_0 = \sup_{t \geq 0} p(T_0, t)$ ,

$$p(T_0, t) = \exp[\alpha(T_0)t] \sum_{k=0}^{n_0-1} v^k(T_0) \frac{t^k}{(k!)^{3/2}} \quad (t \geq 0).$$

**Proof.** We have  $\|\exp[\alpha(T_0)t]\| \leq p(T_0, t)$  by (1.5). Hence,  $\|\exp[\alpha(T_0)t]\| \leq a_0$  ( $t \geq 0$ ). It is easy to see

$$\int_0^t \|\exp[(T_0(t-s)) T_2(s)]\| ds \leq q \int_0^\infty p(T_0, t) dt = k.$$

Now, (2.4) gives (2.9). Q. E. D.

### 3. Main results

Suppose

$$(3.1) \quad T(t, \mu) = T_0(\mu) + T_1(t, \mu),$$

where  $T_0(\mu)$  is a Hilbert-Schmidt operator for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ ,

$$(3.2) \quad E_\mu T_0(\mu) = T_0(\mu) E_\mu \quad (\mu \in \sigma(S)),$$

$T_1$  maps  $\sigma(S) \times R_+$  into  $B(H)$  and satisfies the inequality

$$(3.3) \quad \|T_1(t, \mu)\| \leq q(\mu) \quad \text{for all } \mu \in \sigma(S), t \geq 0,$$

where  $q(\mu)$  is a nonnegative function on  $R_+$ . Denote  $v_\mu = v(T_0(\mu))$ ,  $\alpha_\mu = \alpha(T_0(\mu))$ ,  $n(\mu) = n(T_0(\mu))$ .

**Theorem 1.** Let conditions (1.2), (3.1–3.3) be satisfied. Suppose  $T_0(\mu) \in C_2$ ,  $\alpha_\mu \leq \alpha_0 < 0$  and

$$(3.4) \quad k(\mu) \equiv q(\mu) \sum_{m=0}^{n(\mu)-1} \frac{v_\mu^m}{\sqrt{m!} |\alpha_\mu|^{m+1}} \leq k_0 < 1$$

for any  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . Then the domain  $D(A(t))$  of  $A(t)$  is constant:

$$(3.5) \quad D(A(t)) \equiv D(A_0), \text{ where } A_0 = \int_{\sigma(S)} T_0(\mu) dE_\mu.$$

Moreover, there exists a unique solution  $x(t)$  of (1.1) with any initial condition  $x(0) = x_0 \in D(A_0)$  and the following estimate is valid:

$$(3.6) \quad \|x(t)\| \leq b_0 (1 - k_0)^{-2} \|x_0\| \quad (t \geq 0).$$

Here

$$b_0 = \sup_{t \geq 0} \sup_{\mu \in \sigma(S)} p(T_0(\mu), t).$$

Proof. According to (1.5)

$$\|\exp(T_0(\mu)t)\| \leq p(T_0(\mu), t) \quad (t \geq 0).$$

At first, we prove that actually  $b_0 < \infty$ . In fact, let  $b_0 = \infty$  and let  $R$  be a sufficiently large number. Then there is the positive number  $z$  such that  $p(T_0(z), t) > R$  for some  $t \geq 0$ . Since  $p(T_0(\mu), t)$  is a continuous function with respect to  $t$ , we can write

$$k(z) = \int_0^\infty p(T_0(z), t) dt > 1.$$

This contradicts (3.4), i.e.  $b_0 < \infty$ .

Now, we prove relation (3.5). It is clear,

$$\|T_0^{-1}(\mu)\| = \left\| \int_0^\infty \exp(T_0(\mu)t) dt \right\| \leq \int_0^\infty \|\exp(T_0(\mu)t)\| dt.$$

Thus,

$$\|T_0^{-1}(\mu)\| \leq \int_0^\infty p(T_0(\mu), t) dt = \sum_{m=0}^{n(\mu)-1} \frac{v_\mu^m}{\sqrt{m!} |\alpha_\mu|^{m+1}}.$$

Hence,

$$\|T_1(t, \mu)\| \|T_0^{-1}(\mu)\| \leq k_\mu < 1.$$

Since

$$\|T_0(\mu)g\| \geq \|g\| \|T_0^{-1}(\mu)\|^{-1}, \quad (g \in H)$$

we come to the inequality  $\|T_0(\mu)g\| \geq \|T_1(t, \mu)g\|$  for any  $t \geq 0, \mu \in \sigma(S)$ . From here it follows

$$\|T(t, \mu)g\| \leq 2 \|T_0(\mu)g\| \quad (g \in H, \mu \in \sigma(S), t \geq 0).$$

Now, it is simple to show that this inequality implies the following inequality:  $\|A(t)g\| \leq 2 \|A_0g\|$  for any  $g \in D(A_0)$ . Thus (3.5) is proved.

The existence of solutions one can prove by arguments of Sec. 2.1. It remains to prove the estimate (3.6). Consider (2.5). By Lemma 3

$$\|y_\mu(t)\| \leq a_\mu (1 - k_\mu)^{-1} \|y_\mu(0)\| \quad (t \geq 0),$$

where  $y_\mu$  is a solution of (2.5),  $a_\mu = \sup\{p(T_0(\mu), t) : t \geq 0\} \leq b_0$ . Corollary 1 of Lemma 2 gives the required estimate. Q.E.D.

Denote

$$P(\lambda, \mu) = q(\mu) \sum_{m=0}^{n(\mu)-1} \frac{v_\mu^m}{\sqrt{m!}} \lambda^{n(\mu)-m-1}.$$

**Theorem 2.** Let conditions (1.2), (3.1–3.3) be satisfied and let  $T_0(\mu)$  be a finite dimension operator for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . Assume

$$(3.7) \quad \alpha(T_0(\mu)) + r(\mu) \leq \Lambda_0 < \infty \quad (\mu \in \sigma(S)),$$

where  $r(\mu)$  is the extreme right (unique positive and simple) root of the polynomial  $\lambda^{n(\mu)} - P(\lambda, \mu)$ . Then the following inequality is valid:

$$\|x(t)\| \leq C \exp(\Lambda_0 t) \|x(0)\| \quad (C = \text{const}, t \geq 0)$$

for any solution  $x(t)$  of (1.1) with  $x(0) = x_0 \in D(A_0)$ .

**Proof.** At first we assume  $\Lambda_0 < 0$ . Then  $r(\mu) < |\alpha_\mu|$ . We have

$$k_\mu \equiv q(\mu) \sum_{k=0}^{n(\mu)-1} \frac{v_\mu^k}{|\alpha_\mu|^{k+1} \sqrt{k!}} < q(\mu) \sum_{k=0}^{n(\mu)-1} \frac{v_\mu}{r_\mu^{k+1} \sqrt{k!}}.$$

We multiply this relation by  $r^n$ . We have  $r^n k_\mu \leq P(r, \mu)$ . The equality  $r^n = P(r, \mu)$  implies the inequality  $k_\mu < 1$ . Theorem 1 gives the estimate (3.6). The substitution  $x(t) = \exp(-\varepsilon t)y(t)$  into (1.1) gives under some  $\varepsilon > 0$ :

$$\dot{Y} = \varepsilon y + A(t)y. \quad \text{If } \varepsilon + \alpha_\mu + r_\mu < 0 \quad (\mu \in \sigma(S)),$$

then according to the estimate proved above,

$$\|y(t)\| \leq a_\varepsilon \|y(0)\|. \quad (t \geq 0)$$

From here the required estimate follows.

Now, let  $\Lambda_0 \geq 0$ . We substitute  $x(t) = \exp[(\Lambda_0 + \varepsilon)t]z(t)$  into (1.1). Under sufficiently large  $\varepsilon > 0$ , we can apply the estimate which is proved above. Q. E. D.

Denote by  $I$  the identity matrix in  $R^n$ .

**Corollary 1.** Let under conditions (1.2), (3.1–3.3)  $\zeta_\mu \equiv T_0(\mu) + r(\mu)I$  be a Harvitz's matrix (i.e.  $\text{Re } \sigma(\zeta_\mu) < 0$ ) for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . Then (1.1) is stable.

**Remark 1.** Theorem 2 is exact. In particular, (3.7) is the necessary stability condition, if  $T_0(\mu)$  is a normal matrix for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . In fact in this case  $v(T_0(\mu)) = 0$  (see above) and  $r(\mu) = q(\mu)$ . Selecting  $T_1(\mu, t) \equiv qI$  it is simple to show that (3.4) is actually the necessary stability condition.

### 4. Examples

In this section everywhere  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$

#### 4.1. Fourth-order parabolic system

Consider the problem (1.3) assuming  $b_k(t) = b_{0k} + b_{1k}(t)$ , where  $b_{0k}$  is independent on  $t$ , and

$$\|b_k(t)\|_{R^n} \leq q_k < \infty \quad (t \geq 0).$$

We may take

$$T_1(t, \mu) = \sum_{k=0}^2 b_{1k}(t) \mu^k, \quad T_0(\mu) \equiv \sum_{k=0}^2 b_{0k} \mu^k E(d\mu).$$

Hence,

$$\|T_1(t, \mu)\| \leq q_2 |\mu|^2 + q_1 |\mu| + q_0 \equiv q(\mu).$$

In this case  $S = \Delta = S^*$ , i.e.  $\text{Im } \sigma(S) = 0$ . By (1.7)

$$v(T_0(\mu)) \leq v_1(\mu) \equiv \mu^2 c_2 + |\mu| c_1 + c_0 \quad (\mu \in \sigma(S)),$$

where  $c_k = \sqrt{0.5} |b_{0k} - b_{0k}^*|_2$ . We can write



$$P(\lambda, \mu) \leq P_1(\lambda, \mu) \equiv q(\mu) \sum_{k=1}^{n-1} \frac{v_1^k(\mu)}{\sqrt{k!}} \lambda^{n-k-1} \quad (\lambda > \mu)$$

(1.3) is stable by Corollary 1 of Theorem 2 if  $T_0(\mu) + r_1(\mu)I$  is a Hurvitz's matrix for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . Here  $r_1(\mu)$  is the extreme right zero of  $\lambda^n - P_1(\lambda, \mu)$ .

In particular, let  $n=2$  and let  $T_0(\mu) = (t_{jk}(\mu))$  ( $j, k=1, 2$ ) be a real matrix. In this case we have

$$v_1(\mu) = \sqrt{0.5|t_{12} - t_{21}|}, \quad r_1(\mu) = q/2 + \sqrt{q^2/4 + qv_1(\mu)}$$

$$(q = q(\mu), \quad t_{jk} = t_{jk}(\mu)).$$

In particular, if

$$t_{11} + t_{22} + 2r_1 < 0, \quad (t_{11} + r_1)(t_{22} + r_1) > t_{12}t_{21},$$

( $r_1 = r_1(\mu)$ ) for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ , then matrix  $T_0(\mu) + r_1(\mu)I$  is a Hurvitz's one for all  $\mu \in \sigma(S)$ . Consequently, the equation (1.3) is stable.

**4.2. Integral-differential system**

Consider the problem (1.4), assuming that

$$G(t, x) = G_0(x) + G_1(t, x),$$

where  $G_0$  doesn't depend on  $t$ , and also

$$\left( \int_{\Omega} \int_{\Omega} \|G_1(t, x-s)\|_{R^n} dx ds \right)^{1/2} \leq q < \infty \quad (t \geq 0).$$

We may apply Theorem 1 with  $H = L^2(\Omega, R^n)$  and  $S, D(S)$  are same as at Example 1,

$$T_0(\mu) = E(d\mu)(\mu + K_0), \quad T_1(\mu, t) \equiv K_1(t),$$

where

$$(K_0 h)(t, x) = \int_{\Omega} G_0(x-s)h(s) ds$$

$$(K_1 h)(t, x) = \int_{\Omega} G_1(t, x-s)h(s) ds.$$

Since,  $\text{Im } \sigma(S) = 0$  we have according to (1.7)

$$v(T_0(\mu)) \leq v_2$$

$$= \sqrt{0.5|K_0 - K_0^*|_2} \equiv \left( \int_{\Omega} \int_{\Omega} \|G_0(x-s) - G_0^*(s-x)\|_{R^n}^2 h dx ds \right)^{1/2}.$$

It is clear  $\alpha(T_0(\mu)) = \mu + \alpha(K_0)$ ,  $\|T_1(\mu, t)\| \leq q$  ( $t \geq 0$ ). If  $\alpha(S) + \alpha(K_0) < 0$  and

$$q \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{v_2^k}{|\alpha(S) + \alpha(K_0)|^{k+1} \sqrt{k!}} < 1,$$

then (1.4) is stable by Theorem 1.

**Remark 2.** If  $\Omega$  is a canonical domain (sphere, parallelepiped, cylinder, etc.) the quantity  $\alpha(S) = \alpha(\Delta)$  is well known. For example,  $\alpha(\Delta) = -\pi^2 \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{(b_j - a_j)^2}$ , if  $\Omega$  is the parallelepiped  $\{a_j \leq x_j \leq b_j, j=1, m\}$ . If  $\Omega$  is not a canonical domain, then we may use the inequality  $\alpha(\Delta) \leq \alpha(\Delta_0)$  where  $\Delta_0$  is the Laplacian on a canonical domain  $\Omega_0 \supset \Omega$ .

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