

On the Regularization Method for Solving Ill-Posed Problems with Unbounded Operators

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Abstract

Let $A : D(A) \subset X \rightarrow Y$ be a linear, closed, and densely defined unbounded operator, where X and Y are Hilbert spaces. Assume that A is not boundedly invertible. Suppose the equation $Au = f$ is solvable, and instead of knowing exactly f only know its approximation f_δ satisfies the condition:

$\|f_\delta - f\| \leq \delta, 0 < \delta \rightarrow 0$. In this paper, we are interested a regularization method to solve the approximation solution of this equation. This approximation is a unique global minimizer $u_{\alpha, \delta}$ of the functional $F_\delta(u) := \|Au - f_\delta\|^2 + \alpha \|u\|^2$, for any $f_\delta \in Y$, defined as follows: $u_{\alpha, \delta} = A^*(AA^* + \alpha I_X)^{-1} f_\delta$. We also study the stability of this method when the regularization parameter is selected a priori and a posteriori. At the same time, we give an application of this method to the weak derivative operator equation in Hilbert space $H = L^2[0, 1]$.

Keywords

Ill-Posed Problem, Regularization Method, Unbounded Linear Operator

1. Introduction

Let $A : D(A) \subset X \rightarrow Y$ be a linear, closed, densely defined unbounded operator, where X and Y are Hilbert spaces. Consider the equation

$$Au = f \quad (1)$$

Problem-solving solution of Equation (1) is called ill-posed [1] if A is not boundedly invertible. This may happen if the null space $N(A) = \{u : Au = 0\}$ is not trivial, *i.e.* A is not injective, or if A is injective but A^{-1} is unbounded, *i.e.* the range of A , $R(A)$ is not closed [2].

If $\|A\| < \infty$, problem-solving stable solution of Equation (1) has been extensively studied in the literature in detail ([2] [3] [4] [5] [6] and references therein).

If f_δ , the noisy data, are given

$$\|f_\delta - f\| \leq \delta \tag{2}$$

is a stable approximation to the unique minimal norm solution to Equation (1) was constructed by several methods (variational regularization, quasi solution, iterative regularization, ... [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] and references therein).

If A is a linear, closed, densely defined unbounded operator, problem (1) has been some recent research [2] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11], however, there are still many open problems such as parameter choice rules of regularization method with the linear closed, densely defined unbounded operator $A: D(A) \subset X \rightarrow Y$.

Our aim is to study problem-solving stable approximation solution of Equation (1) when operator A is a linear, closed, and densely defined from space Hilbert X into space Hilbert Y . We shall present the regularization method for solving the problem (1), we shall present a priori and a posteriori parameter choice rules of regularization; at the same time give an application to the weak derivative operator equation.

The paper structure consists of 3 sections: Section 1 the introduction briefly summarizes the recent research results and come up with the problem that needs to be studied; Section 2 presents some main results; Section 3 presents an application of this method.

2. Some Main Results

Lemma 1. [2] Let $A: D(A) \subset X \rightarrow Y$ be a linear, closed, densely defined operator, where X and Y are Hilbert spaces, then

- 1) the operators $T = A^*A$ and $Q = AA^*$ are densely defined, self-adjoint;
- 2) A^* is closed, densely defined and $A^{**} = A$;
- 3) the operators $\tilde{A} := (I_X + A^*A)^{-1}: X \rightarrow X$, $A\tilde{A}: X \rightarrow Y$ are both defined on all of X and are bounded, $\sigma(\tilde{A}) \subseteq [0, 1]$. Also, \tilde{A} is self-adjoint;
- 4) the operator $\hat{A} := (I_Y + AA^*)^{-1}: Y \rightarrow Y$ is bounded and self-adjoint and $A^*\hat{A}: X \rightarrow X$ is bounded.

Lemma 2. Let $A: D(A) \subset X \rightarrow Y$ be a linear, closed, densely defined operator, where X and Y are Hilbert spaces. If $f = Ay$, $y \perp N(A)$ then y is unique.

Proof. Suppose y_1 , and y_2 satisfy $f = Ay_1$, $y_1 \perp N(A)$, and $f = Ay_2$, $y_2 \perp N(A)$ then $A(y_1 - y_2) = 0$. Thus $y_1 - y_2 \in N(A)$. There exists $u \in N(A)$ such that $y_1 - y_2 = u$ imply $\langle y_1 - y_2, u \rangle = \langle y_1, u \rangle - \langle y_2, u \rangle = 0 = \langle u, u \rangle$. Thus $u = 0$, it follows that $y_1 = y_2$.

Theorem 1. For any $f \in Y$, the problem

$$F(u) = \|Au - f\|^2 + \alpha \|u\|^2 \rightarrow \min, \alpha = \text{const} > 0, \tag{3}$$

has a unique solution $u_\alpha = A^*(AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f$, where I_Y is the identity operator on Y .

Proof. Consider the equation

$$(AA^* + \alpha I_Y)w_\alpha = f, \alpha = \text{const} > 0 \tag{4}$$

which is uniquely solvable $w_\alpha = (AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f$ (Lemma 1). Let $u_\alpha = A^* w_\alpha$ then

$$\begin{aligned} Au_\alpha &= AA^* (AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f \\ &= (AA^* + \alpha I_Y) (AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f - \alpha I_Y (AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f \\ &= f - \alpha w_\alpha, \end{aligned}$$

or

$$Au_\alpha - f = -\alpha w_\alpha.$$

We have

$$F(u+v) = \|Au - f\|^2 + \alpha \|u\|^2 + \|Av\|^2 + \alpha \|v\|^2 + 2\operatorname{Re}[(Au - f, Av) + \alpha(u, v)], \quad (5)$$

for any $v \in D(A)$. If $u = u_\alpha$, then

$$\begin{aligned} (Au_\alpha - f, Av) + \alpha(u_\alpha, v) &= -\alpha(w_\alpha, Av) + \alpha(u_\alpha, v) \\ &= -\alpha(A^* w_\alpha, v) + \alpha(u_\alpha, v) = 0. \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

Thus Equation (6) implies

$$F(u_\alpha + v) = F(u_\alpha) + \|Av\|^2 + \alpha \|v\|^2 \geq F(u_\alpha) \quad (7)$$

and $F(u_\alpha + v) = F(u_\alpha)$ if and only if $v = 0$, so u_α is the unique minimier of $F(u)$.

Theorem 1 is proved.

Theorem 2. If $f = Ay$, $y \perp N(A)$ then

$$\lim_{\alpha \rightarrow 0} \|u_\alpha - y\| = 0, u_\alpha = A^* (AA^* + \alpha I)^{-1} f. \quad (8)$$

Proof. It follows from Lemma 2, y is unique. Write Equation (4) as $A(A^* w_\alpha - y) = -\alpha w_\alpha$. Apply A^* , which is possible because $w_\alpha \in D(A^*)$, we obtain

$$A^* A(u_\alpha - y) = -\alpha u_\alpha. \quad (9)$$

Multiply Equation (9) by $u_\alpha - y$, we obtain

$$(A^* A(u_\alpha - y), u_\alpha - y) = -\alpha(u_\alpha, u_\alpha - y)$$

or

$$\|A(u_\alpha - y)\|^2 = -\alpha(\|u_\alpha\|^2 - (u_\alpha, y)). \quad (10)$$

Since $\alpha > 0$ this implies

$$\|u_\alpha\|^2 \leq (u_\alpha, y),$$

so

$$\|u_\alpha\| \leq \|y\|, \forall \alpha > 0.$$

Therefore one may assume (taking a subsequence) that u_α weakly converges to an element z , $u_n := u_{\alpha_n} \rightharpoonup z$, as $\alpha_n \rightarrow 0$.

It follows from Equation (10) that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|A(u_n - y)\| = 0, \text{ i.e. } \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|Au_n - f\| = 0.$$

We shall prove that $z = y$.

Let γ run through the set such that $\{A^*A\gamma\}$ is dense in N^\perp , where $N := N(A)$. Note that $N(T) = N(A)$, where $T = A^*A$. Because of the formulas $X = \overline{R(T)} \oplus N(T)$ the $\{\gamma\} = D(T)$ is dense in X , and the set $\{T\gamma\}$ is dense in N^\perp .

Multiply the equation $T(u_\alpha - y) = -\alpha u_\alpha$ by γ and pass to the limit $\alpha \rightarrow 0$. We obtain

$$(z - y, T\gamma) = 0.$$

We have assume $y \perp N$. If $z \perp N$, then $z - y \perp N$ and $z - y \perp N^\perp$, so $z - y = 0$.

One may always assume that $z \perp N$ because $Tu_\alpha = Tu_\alpha$, where u_α is the orthogonal projection of u_α onto N^\perp .

Thus, we have $u_n := u_{\alpha_n} \uparrow z$, $\|u_n\| \leq \|y\|$. Thus implies $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|u_n - y\| = 0$.

For convenience for the reader we prove this claim. Since $u_n := u_{\alpha_n} \uparrow z$, one gets $\|y\| \leq \varliminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|u_n\|$. The inequality $\|u_n\| \leq \|y\|$ implies $\overline{\lim}_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|u_n\| \leq \|y\|$. Therefore $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|u_n\| = \|y\|$. This and the weakly converge $u_n := u_{\alpha_n} \uparrow z$ imply strong convergence

$$\|u_n - y\|^2 = \|u_n\|^2 + \|y\|^2 - 2\text{Re}(u_n - y) \rightarrow 0, \text{ as } n \rightarrow \infty.$$

Theorem 2 is proved.

Theorem 3. If $\|f_\delta - f\| \leq \delta$, $f = Ay$, $y \perp N(A)$ and

$$F_\delta(u) = \|Au - f_\delta\|^2 + \alpha \|u\|^2 = \min, \tag{11}$$

then there exists a unique global minimier $u_{\alpha,\delta}$ to (11) and $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$, where $u_\delta := u_{\alpha(\delta),\delta}$ and $\alpha(\delta)$ is properly chosen, in particular $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$.

Proof. It follows from Lemma 2, y is unique. The existence and uniqueness of the minimizer $u_{\alpha,\delta}$ of $F_\delta(u)$ follows from Theorem 1 and

$u_{\alpha,\delta} = A^*(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1} f_\delta$. We have

$$\|u_{\alpha,\delta} - y\| \leq \|u_{\alpha,\delta} - u_\alpha\| + \|u_\alpha - f\|.$$

By Theorem 2, $\|u_\alpha - f\| := \eta(\alpha) \rightarrow 0$, as $\alpha \rightarrow 0$.

Let us estimate

$$\|u_{\alpha,\delta} - u_\alpha\| = \|A^*(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}(f_\delta - f)\| \leq \delta \|A^*(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}\|.$$

By the polar decomposition theorem [12], one has $A^* = UQ^{1/2}$, where U is a partial isometry, so $\|U\| \leq 1$. One has,

$$\begin{aligned} \|A^*(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}\| &= \|UQ^{1/2}(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}\| \leq \|Q^{1/2}(Q + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}\| \\ &= \max_{\lambda \geq 0} \frac{\lambda^{1/2}}{\lambda + \alpha} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{\alpha}}, \end{aligned}$$

where the spectral representation for Q was used.

Thus

$$\|u_{\alpha, \delta} - y\| \leq \frac{\delta}{2\sqrt{\alpha}} + \eta(\alpha). \tag{12}$$

For a fixed small $\delta > 0$, choose $\alpha = \alpha(\delta)$ which minimizes the right side of

$$\text{Equation (12). Then } \lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0 \text{ and } \lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \left(\frac{\delta}{2\sqrt{\alpha(\delta)}} + \eta(\alpha(\delta)) \right) = 0.$$

Theorem 3 is proved.

Remark 1. We can also choose $\alpha(\delta) = c\delta^k$, with any $k < 2$ and $c = \text{const} > 0$. The constant c can be arbitrary.

We can also choose $\alpha(\delta)$ by a discrepancy principle. For example, consider the equation for finding $\alpha(\delta)$:

$$\|Au_{\alpha, \delta} - f_\delta\| = c\delta, \quad c = \text{const} > 1.$$

We assume that $\|f_\delta\| > c\delta$.

That is the content of the following theorem.

Theorem 4. The equation

$$\|Au_{\alpha, \delta} - f_\delta\| = c\delta, \quad c = \text{const} > 1, \quad \|f_\delta\| > c\delta, \tag{13}$$

has a unique solution $\alpha = \alpha(\delta) > 0$, $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$, and if $u_\delta := u_{\alpha(\delta), \delta}$, then $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$.

Proof. Let us prove that Equation (13) has a unique root $\alpha(\delta) > 0$, $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$. Indeed, using the spectral theorem [12], one gets

$$\begin{aligned} \|Au_{\alpha, \delta} - f_\delta\|^2 &= \left\| [AA^*(Q + \alpha I)]^{-1} f_\delta \right\|^2 = \int_0^\infty \left| \frac{s}{s + \alpha} - 1 \right|^2 d(E_s, f_\delta, f_\delta) \\ &= \alpha^2 \int_0^\infty \frac{d(E_s, f_\delta, f_\delta)}{(s + \alpha)^2} := g(\alpha, \delta), \end{aligned}$$

where E_s is the resolution of the identity of Q .

One has $g(\infty, \delta) = \|f_\delta\|^2 > c^2\delta^2$, and $g(+0, \delta) = \|P_{N^*} f_\delta\|^2$, where P_{N^*} is the orthoprojector onto the subspace $N^* = N(Q) = N(A^*) = R(A)^\perp$.

Since $f \in R(A)$ and $\|f_\delta - f\| \leq \delta$, it follows that $\|P_{N^*} f_\delta\| \leq \delta$, so $g(+0, \delta) \leq \delta^2$. The function $g(\alpha, \delta)$ for a fixed $\delta > 0$ is a continuous strictly increasing function of α on $[0, \infty)$. Therefore there exists a unique $\alpha = \alpha(\delta) > 0$ which solves Equation (13) if $\|f_\delta\| > c\delta$ and $c > 1$. Clearly $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$, because $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} c\alpha(\delta) = 0$ and the relation $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha^2(\delta) \int_0^\infty \frac{d(E_s, f_\delta, f_\delta)}{(s + \alpha(\delta))^2} = 0$ implies

$\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$. The function $\alpha = \alpha(\delta)$ is a monotonically growing function of

δ with $\alpha(+0) = 0$.

Let us prove that $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$, where $u_\delta := u_{\alpha(\delta), \delta}$, and $\alpha(\delta)$ solves Equation (13). By the definition of u_δ , we get

$$\|Au_\alpha - f_\delta\|^2 + \alpha(\delta)\|u_\delta\|^2 \leq \|Ay - f_\delta\|^2 + \alpha(\delta)\|y\|^2 = \delta^2 + \alpha(\delta)\|y\|^2.$$

Since $\|Au_\alpha - f_\delta\|^2 = c^2\delta^2 > \delta^2$, it follows that $\|u_\delta\| \leq \|y\|$. Thus $u_\delta \rightharpoonup z$, and, as in the proof of Theorem 2, we obtain $z = y$ and $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$.

Theorem 4 is proved.

Remark 2. Theorems 1 - 4 are well known in the case of a bounded operator A .

If A is bounded, then a necessary condition for the minimum of the functional $f(u) = \|Au - f\|^2 + \alpha\|u\|^2$ is the equation

$$A^*Au + \alpha u = A^*f. \tag{14}$$

Hence in this case conditions are required $f \in D(A^*)$.

If A is unbounded, then f does not necessarily belong to $D(A^*)$, so Equation (14) may have no sense. Therefore, some changes in the usual theory are necessary. The changes are given in this paper. We prove, among other things, that for any $f \in Y$, in particular for $f \notin D(A^*)$, the element $u_\alpha = A^*(AA^* + \alpha I_Y)^{-1}f$ is well defined for any $\alpha = \text{const} > 0$, provided that A is a closed, linear, densely defined operator in Hilbert space (Theorem 1).

3. Applications

As a simple concrete example of this type of approximation, consider differentiation in $H = L^2[0,1]$.

We define the operator $A : D(A) \subset H \rightarrow H$ as follows

$$Af = \frac{df}{dx}, f \in D(A),$$

with $D(A) = \{f \in H : f \text{ is absolutely continuous on } [0,1] \text{ and } f'(x) \in H\}$.

Then $D(A)$ is dense in H since it contains the complete orthonormal set $\{\sin n\pi x\}_{n=1}^\infty$.

Clearly, A is a linear operator.

We show that A is a closed operator in Hilbert space H . Indeed, for suppose $\{f_n\} \subset D(A)$ and $f_n \rightarrow f$ and $f'_n \rightarrow g$, in each case the convergence being in the $L^2[0,1]$ norm. Since

$$f_n(x) = f_n(0) + \int_0^x f'_n(t) dt,$$

we see that the sequence of constant functions $\{f_n(0)\}$ converges in $L^2[0,1]$ and hence the numerical sequence $\{f_n(0)\}$ converges to some real number C .

Now define $h \in D(A)$ by $h(x) = C + \int_0^x g(t) dt$. Then, for any $x \in [0,1]$, we have by of the Cauchy-Schwarz inequality

$$\begin{aligned} |f_n(x) - h(x)| &= \left| f_n(0) - C + \int_0^x (f'_n(t) - g(t)) dt \right| \\ &\leq |f_n(0) - C| + \int_0^x |f'_n(t) - g(t)| dt \\ &\leq |f_n(0) - C| + \|f'_n - g\| \end{aligned}$$

and hence $f_n \rightarrow h$ uniformly. Therefore, $f = h \in D(A)$ and $Af = f' = h' = g$, verifying that the operator A is closed, linear, densely defined in $L^2[0,1]$.

Let

$$D^* = \{g \in D(A) : g(0) = g(1) = 0\}.$$

Then for $f \in D(A)$ and $g \in D^*$, we have

$$\langle Af, g \rangle = \int_0^1 f'(t)g(t)dt = f(t)g(t)|_0^1 - \int_0^1 f(t)g'(t)dt = \langle f, -g' \rangle$$

Therefore $D^* \subset D(A^*)$ and $A^*g = -g'$, for $g \in D^*$.

On the other hand, if $g \in D(A^*)$, let $g^* = A^*g$. Then

$$\langle Af, g \rangle = \langle f, g^* \rangle$$

for all $f \in D(A)$. In particular, for $f \equiv 1$, we find that $\int_0^1 g^*(t)dt = 0$.

Now let

$$h(t) = -\int_0^t g^*(s)ds.$$

Then $h \in D^*$ and $A^*h = g^* = A^*g$ and hence $h - g \in N(A^*)$. Therefore, $\langle Af, h - g \rangle = 0$, for all $f \in D(A)$. But $R(A)$ contains all continuous function and hence $g = h \in D^*$.

We conclude that

$$D(A^*) = D^*, \text{ and } A^*g = -g'.$$

According to Theorem 1, for any $f \in Y = L^2[0,1]$, the problem

$$F(u) = \|Au - f\|^2 + \alpha\|u\|^2 \rightarrow \min, \alpha = \text{const} > 0,$$

has a unique solution $u_\alpha = A^*(AA^* + \alpha I)^{-1}f$, where I is the identity operator on $Y = L^2[0,1]$. $f \in Y = L^2[0,1]$ does not necessarily belong to $D(A^*)$.

It follows from Theorem 2, that if $f = Ay$, $y \perp N(A)$ then

$$\lim_{\alpha \rightarrow 0} \|u_\alpha - y\| = 0, u_\alpha = A^*(AA^* + \alpha I)^{-1}f.$$

It follows from Theorem 3, that if $\|f_\delta - f\| \leq \delta$, $f = Ay$, and

$$F_\delta(u) = \|Au - f_\delta\|^2 + \alpha\|u\|^2 = \min, \tag{15}$$

then there exists a unique global minimier $u_{\alpha,\delta}$ to Equation (15) and $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$, where $u_\delta := u_{\alpha(\delta),\delta}$ and $\alpha(\delta)$ is properly chosen, in particular $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$.

It follows from Theorem 4, that the equation

$$\|Au_{\alpha,\delta} - f_\delta\| = c\delta, c = \text{const} > 1, \|f_\delta\| > c\delta,$$

has a unique solution $\alpha = \alpha(\delta) > 0$, $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \alpha(\delta) = 0$, and if $u_\delta := u_{\alpha(\delta),\delta}$, then $\lim_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \|u_\delta - y\| = 0$.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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