Uniqueness of the blow-up boundary solution of logistic equations with absorption

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Abstract

Let $\Omega$ be a smooth bounded domain in $\mathbb{R}^N$. Assume $f \in C^1[0, \infty)$ is a non-negative function such that $f(u)/u$ is increasing on $(0, \infty)$. Let $a$ be a real number and let $b \geq 0$, $b \equiv 0$ be a continuous function such that $b \equiv 0$ on $\partial \Omega$. We study the logistic equation $\Delta u + au = b(x)f(u)$ in $\Omega$. The special feature of this work is the uniqueness of positive solutions blowing-up on $\partial \Omega$, in a general setting that arises in probability theory. To cite this article: F.-C. Cîrstea, V. Rădulescu, C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris, Ser. I 335 (2002) 447–452. © 2002 Académie des sciences/Éditions scientifiques et médicales Elsevier SAS

Unicité de la solution explosant au bord pour équations logistiques avec absorption

Résumé

Soit $\Omega$ un domaine borné et régulier de $\mathbb{R}^N$. On suppose que $f \in C^1[0, \infty)$ est une fonction non-negative telle que $f(u)/u$ soit strictement croissante sur $(0, +\infty)$. Soit $a$ un réel et $b \geq 0$, $b \equiv 0$ une fonction continue sur $\Omega$. On étudie l’équation logistique $\Delta u + au = b(x)f(u)$ sur $\Omega$. Le but de cette Note est de montrer l’unicité de la solution explosant au bord de $\Omega$ dans un contexte général, qui apparaît en théorie des probabilités. Pour citer cet article : F.-C. Cîrstea, V. Rădulescu, C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris, Ser. I 335 (2002) 447–452. © 2002 Académie des sciences/Éditions scientifiques et médicales Elsevier SAS

Version française abrégée

Soit $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^N$ $(N \geq 3)$ un domaine borné et régulier, $a$ un paramètre réel et $b \in C^{0,\mu}(\Omega)$, $\mu \in (0, 1)$, $b \geq 0$, $b \equiv 0$ dans $\Omega$. On considère l’équation logistique

$$\Delta u + au = b(x)f(u) \quad \text{dans } \Omega,$$

où $f \in C^1[0, \infty)$ satisfait

$$f \geq 0 \text{ et } f(u)/u \text{ est strictement croissante sur } (0, +\infty). \quad (A1)$$

Soit

$$\Omega_0 := \text{int}\{x \in \Omega: b(x) = 0\}$$

et on suppose que $\partial \Omega_0$ est régulier (éventuellement vide), $\Omega_0 \subset \Omega$ et $b > 0$ sur $\Omega \setminus \Omega_0$. On désigne par $\lambda_{\infty,1}$ la première valeur propre (avec conditions de Dirichlet) de l’opérateur $(-\Delta)$ dans $\Omega_0$, avec la convention $\lambda_{\infty,1} = +\infty$ si $\Omega_0 = \emptyset$. 

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On dit que \( u \) est une solution \textit{large} (explosive) de (1) si \( u \geq 0 \) dans \( \Omega \) et \( u(x) \to \infty \) si \( d(x) := \text{dist}(x, \partial \Omega) \to 0 \).

Soit \( D > 0 \) et \( R : [D, \infty) \to (0, +\infty) \) une fonction mesurable. On dit que \( R \) a une \textit{variation régulière} d’indice \( \rho \in \mathbb{R} \) (notation : \( R \in \mathbb{R}_\rho \)) si \( \lim_{\xi \to \infty} R(\xi u)/R(u) = \xi^\rho \), pour chaque \( \xi > 0 \) (voir [11]).

Soit \( K \) l’ensemble des fonctions \( k : (0, v) \to (0, +\infty) \) (pour un certain \( v \)), de classe \( C^1 \), croissantes, telles que \( \lim_{v \to 0^+} (\int_0^v k(s) \, ds/k(t))^{(i)} := \xi_i \), pour \( i = 0, 1 \).

On démontre le résultat suivant.

\[ \text{THÉORÈME 1. – Supposons que la fonction } f \text{ satisfait la condition (A)}_1 \text{ et que } f' \text{ est une fonction à variation régulière d’indice } \rho \neq 0. \text{ De plus, on suppose que le potentiel } b \text{ vérifie } \]
\[ b(x) = ck^2(d(x)) + o(k^2(d(x))) \quad \text{si } d(x) \to 0, \text{ avec } c > 0 \text{ et } k \in K. \tag{B} \]

Alors, pour chaque \( a \in (-\infty, \lambda_{-\infty}, 1) \), l’équation (1) admet une unique solution explosive \( u_a \). On a, de plus,

\[ \lim_{d(x) \to 0} \frac{u_a(x)}{h(d(x))} = \xi_0, \quad \text{où } \xi_0 = \left( \frac{2 + \xi_1}{c(2 + \rho)} \right)^{1/\rho} \]

et la fonction \( h \) est définie par

\[ \int_0^\infty \frac{ds}{h(s)/2F(s)} = \int_0^1 k(s) \, ds, \quad \forall t \in (0, v). \]

Let \( \Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^N \) \((N \geq 3)\) be a smooth bounded domain. Consider the semilinear elliptic equation

\[ \Delta u + au = b(x)f(u) \quad \text{in } \Omega, \tag{1} \]

where \( a \) is a real parameter and \( b \in C^0(\Omega) \), for some \( \mu \in (0, 1) \), such that \( b \geq 0, b \neq 0 \) in \( \Omega \).

Suppose that \( f \in C^1(0, \infty) \) satisfies

\[ f \geq 0 \text{ and } f(u)/u \text{ is increasing on } (0, \infty). \tag{A}_1 \]

In the study of positive solutions for (1), subject to the homogeneous Dirichlet boundary condition, an important role is played by the zero set (see [1])

\[ \Omega_0 := \text{int} \{ x \in \Omega : b(x) = 0 \}. \]

We shall assume throughout that \( \Omega_0 \) is smooth (possibly empty), \( \overline{\Omega_0} \subset \Omega \), and \( b > 0 \) in \( \Omega \setminus \overline{\Omega_0} \).

By a \textit{large} (explosive) solution of (1) we mean a solution \( u \) of (1) such that \( u \geq 0 \) in \( \Omega \) and \( u(x) \to \infty \) as \( d(x) := \text{dist}(x, \partial \Omega) \to 0 \). In [3,4] we study the existence of large solutions for (1) and also deduce several existence and unicity results for a related problem. Note that any large solution of (1) is \textit{positive} and it can exists only if the Keller–Osserman condition holds (see [4])

\[ \int_1^\infty \frac{dr}{\sqrt{F(r)}} < \infty, \quad \text{where } F(t) = \int_0^t f(s) \, ds. \tag{A}_2 \]

Let \( H_\infty \) define the Dirichlet Laplacian on the set \( \Omega_0 \subset \Omega \) as the unique self-adjoint operator associated to the quadratic form \( \psi(u) = \int_{\Omega} |\nabla u|^2 \, dx \) with form domain

\[ H_\infty^0(\Omega_0) = \{ u \in H_0^1(\Omega) : u(x) = 0 \text{ for a.e. } x \in \Omega \setminus \Omega_0 \}. \]

If \( \partial \Omega_0 \) satisfies an exterior cone condition, then \( H_\infty^0(\Omega_0) \) coincides with \( H_0^1(\Omega_0) \) and \( H_\infty \) is the classical Laplace operator with Dirichlet condition on \( \partial \Omega_0 \).

Let \( \lambda_{\infty, 1} \) be the first Dirichlet eigenvalue of \( H_\infty \) in \( \Omega_0 \). We understand \( \lambda_{\infty, 1} = +\infty \) if \( \Omega_0 = \emptyset \).

The main result in [3] asserts that Eq. (1) has a large solution if and only if \( a \in (-\infty, \lambda_{\infty, 1}) \).

The special feature of this paper is the uniqueness of large solutions of (1) in a general framework for \( f \) and \( b \), under the restriction \( b \equiv 0 \) on \( \partial \Omega \), inherited from the logistic equation (see [6]).

We start with
DEFINITION 1 ([11]). – A positive measurable function $R$ defined on $[D, \infty)$, for some $D > 0$, is called *regularly varying (at infinity) with index $q \in \mathbb{R}$*, written $R \in \mathbb{R}_q$, if for all $\xi > 0$

$$\lim_{u \to \infty} R(\xi u)/R(u) = \xi^q.$$ 

When the index of regular variation $q$ is zero, we say that the function is *slowly varying*.

Remark 1. – Any function $R \in \mathbb{R}_q$ can be written in terms of a slowly varying function. Indeed, set $R(u) = u^q L(u)$. From Definition 1 we easily derive that $L$ varies slowly.

The canonical $q$-varying function is $u^q$. The functions $\ln(1 + u)$, $\ln(\exp(u))$, $\exp((\ln u)^\alpha)$, $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ vary slowly, as well as any measurable function on $[D, \infty)$ with positive limit at infinity.

In what follows $L$ denotes an arbitrary slowly varying function and $D > 0$ a positive number. For details on Properties 1–4 stated below, we refer to Seneta [11] (pp. 7, 18, 53 and 78).

Property 1. – For any $m > 0$, $u^m L(u) \to \infty$, $u^{-m} L(u) \to 0$ as $u \to \infty$.

Property 2. – Any positive $C^1$-function on $[D, \infty)$ satisfying $u L'_1(u)/L_1(u) \to 0$ as $u \to \infty$ is slowly varying. Moreover, if the above limit is $q \in \mathbb{R}$, then $L_1 \in \mathbb{R}_q$.

Property 3. – Assume $R : [D, \infty) \to (0, \infty)$ is measurable and Lebesgue integrable on each finite subinterval of $[D, \infty)$. Then $R$ varies regularly if and only if there exists $j \in \mathbb{R}$ such that

$$\lim_{u \to \infty} \frac{u^{j+1} R(u)}{\int_u^\infty R(x) \, dx}$$

exists and is a positive number, say $a_j + 1$. In this case, $R \in \mathbb{R}_q$ with $q = a_j - j$.

Property 4 (Karamata Theorem, 1933). – If $R \in \mathbb{R}_q$ is Lebesgue integrable on each finite subinterval of $[D, \infty)$, then the limit defined by (2) is $q + j + 1$, for every $j > -q - 1$.

**Lemma 1.** – Assume $(A_1)$ holds. Then we have the equivalence

(a) $f' \in \mathbb{R}_\rho \iff (b) \lim_{u \to \infty} u f'(u)/f(u) := \vartheta < \infty \iff (c) \lim_{u \to \infty} (F/f)'(u) := \gamma > 0$.

Remark 2. – Let (a) of Lemma 1 be fulfilled. The following assertions hold

(i) $\rho$ is non-negative. Indeed, if $\rho < 0$ then Property 1 and Remark 1 would contradict $(A_1)$;
(ii) $\gamma = 1/(\rho + 2) = 1/(\vartheta + 1)$ (see the proof of Lemma 1);
(iii) If $\rho \neq 0$, then $(A_2)$ holds (use $\lim_{u \to \infty} f(u)/u^\rho = \infty$, $\forall \rho \in (1, 1 + \rho)$). The converse implication is not necessarily true (take $f(u) = u \ln^\gamma(u + 1)$). However, there are cases when $\rho = 0$ and $(A_2)$ fails so that (1) has no large solutions. This is illustrated by $f(u) = u \ln u + 1$.

Inspired by the definition of $\gamma$, we denote by $\mathcal{K}$ the set of all positive, increasing $C^1$-functions $k$ defined on $(0, \nu)$, for some $\nu > 0$, which satisfy

$$\lim_{t \to 0^+} \left( \frac{\int_0^t k(s) \, ds}{k(t)} \right) = \ell_i, \quad i = 0, 1.$$ 

It is easy to see that $\ell_0 = 0$ and $\ell_1 \in (0, 1]$, for every $k \in \mathcal{K}$. Our next result gives examples of functions $k \in \mathcal{K}$ with $\lim_{t \to 0^+} k(t) = 0$, for every $\ell_1 \in [0, 1]$.

**Lemma 2.** – Let $S \in C^1[D, \infty)$ be such that $S' \in \mathbb{R}_q$ with $q > -1$. Hence the following hold:

(a) If $k(t) = \exp(-S(1/t))$, $\forall t \leq 1/D$, then $k \in \mathcal{K}$ with $\ell_1 = 0$;
(b) If $k(t) = 1/S(1/t)$, $\forall t \leq 1/D$, then $k \in \mathcal{K}$ with $\ell_1 = 1/(q + 2) \in (0, 1)$;
(c) If $k(t) = 1/\ln S(1/t)$, $\forall t \leq 1/D$, then $k \in \mathcal{K}$ with $\ell_1 = 1$.

Remark 3. – If $S \in C^1[D, \infty)$, then $S' \in \mathbb{R}_q$ with $q > -1$ if and only if for some $m > 0$, $C > 0$ and $B > D$ we have $S(u) = Cu^m \exp(\int_0^u \frac{S'(t)}{t} \, dt)$, $\forall u \geq B$, where $y \in C(B, \infty)$ satisfies $\lim_{u \to \infty} y(u) = 0$. In this case, $S' \in \mathbb{R}_q$ with $q = m - 1$. This is a consequence of Properties 3 and 4.
Our main result is

**Theorem 1.** Let \( A_1 \) hold and \( f' \in \mathbb{R}_p \) with \( \rho > 0 \). Assume \( b \equiv 0 \) on \( \partial \Omega \) satisfies

\[
b(x) = \alpha (d(x)) + o(k^2(d(x))) \quad \text{as} \quad d(x) \to 0,
\]
for some constant \( c > 0 \) and \( k \in \mathcal{K} \). \( \text{(B)} \)

Then, for any \( a \in (-\infty, \lambda_{\infty,1}) \), Eq. (1) admits a unique large solution \( u_a \). Moreover,

\[
\lim_{t \to 0+} \frac{u_a(t)}{h(d(x))} = \xi_0, \quad \text{where} \quad \xi_0 = \left( \frac{2 + \ell_1 \rho}{c(2 + \rho)} \right)^{1/\rho}
\]

and \( h \) is defined by

\[
\int_{h(t)}^{\infty} \frac{ds}{2\sqrt{F(s)}} = \int_0^f k(s) \, ds, \quad \forall t \in (0, v).
\]

By Remark 3, the assumption \( f' \in \mathbb{R}_p \) with \( \rho > 0 \) holds if and only if there exist \( p > 1 \) and \( B > 0 \) such that \( f(u) = Cu^p \exp\left(\int_0^u \frac{du}{t^{1/\rho}}\right) \), for all \( u \geq B \) (as before and \( p = \rho + 1 \)). If \( B \) is large enough \((\gamma > -\rho \text{ on } [B, \infty))\), then \( f(u)/u \) is increasing on \([B, \infty)\). Thus, to get the whole range of functions \( f \) for which our Theorem 1 applies we have only to “paste” a suitable smooth function on \([0, B]\) in accordance with \((A_1)\).

A simple way to do this is to define \( f(u) = u^p \exp\left(\int_0^u \frac{du}{t^{1/\rho}}\right) \), for all \( u \geq 0 \), where \( z \in C[0, \infty) \) is non-negative such that \( \lim_{t \to 0+} z(t)/t \in [0, \infty) \) and \( \lim_{t \to \infty} z(u) = 0 \). Clearly, \( f(u) = u^p \), \( f(u) = u^p \ln(u+1) \), and \( f(u) = u^p \arctan(u) \) for \( u > 1 \) fall into this category.

Lemma 2 provides a practical method to find functions \( k \) which can be considered in the statement of Theorem 1. Here are some examples: \( k(t) = \exp(-1/t^{\rho}) \), \( k(t) = \exp(-\ln(1 + t^{1/\rho})) \), \( k(t) = \exp(-\arctan(1/t))/t^\rho \), \( k(t) = -1/(\ln t) \), \( k(t) = t^\rho/(\ln(1 + 1/t)) \), \( k(t) = t^\rho \), for some \( \alpha > 0 \).

As we shall see, the uniqueness lies upon the crucial observation (3), which shows that all explosive solutions have the same boundary behaviour. Note that the only case of Theorem 1 studied so far is \( f(u) = u^p \) \((p > 1)\) and \( k(t) = t^\rho \) \((\alpha > 0)\) (see [6]). For related results on the uniqueness of explosive solutions (mainly in the cases \( b = 1 \) and \( a = 0 \)) we refer to [2,5,8,9,12].

**Proof of Lemma 1.** From Property 4 and Remark 2(i) we deduce \((a) \Rightarrow (b)\) and \( \theta = \rho + 1 \). Conversely, \((b) \Rightarrow (a)\) follows by Property 3 since \( \theta > 1 \) cf. \((A_1)\).

\((b) \Rightarrow (c)\) Indeed, \( \lim_{u \to \infty} u f(u)/F(u) = 1 + \theta = 1 + \rho \), which yields \( \frac{\alpha}{1+\rho} = \lim_{u \to \infty} \left[ 1 - (f/f')'(u) \right] = 1 - \gamma \).

\((c) \Rightarrow (b)\) Choose \( s_1 > 0 \) such that \( (F/f)'(u) \geq \frac{\gamma}{2}, \forall u \geq s_1 \). So, \( (F/f)(u) \geq (u - s_1)/2 + (F/f)(s_1) \), \( \forall u \geq s_1 \). Passing to the limit \( u \to \infty \), we find \( \lim_{u \to \infty} F(u)/f(u) = \infty \). Thus, \( \lim_{u \to \infty} u f(u)/(f(u)) = \frac{1}{\gamma} \). Since \( 1 - \gamma := \lim_{u \to \infty} F(u)/(f(u))^{2}(u) \), we obtain \( \lim_{u \to \infty} u f(u)/(f(u)) = (1 - \gamma)/\gamma \). \( \Box \)

**Proof of Theorem 2.** Since \( \lim_{u \to \infty} u S'(u) = \infty \) cf. \( \text{Property 1} \), from Karamata Theorem we deduce \( \lim_{u \to \infty} u S'(u)/S(u) = q + 1 > 0 \). Therefore, in any of the cases \(a), (b), (c)\), \( \lim_{u \to \infty} k(t) = 0 \) and \( k \) is an increasing \( C^1\)-function on \((0, v)\), for \( v > 0 \) sufficiently small.

\((a)\) It is clear that \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} tk'(t)/k(t) \ln k(t) = \lim_{u \to 0^+} (S'(1/t)/S(1/t)) = -(q + 1) \). By l’Hospital’s rule, \( \ell_0 = \lim_{u \to 0^+} tk'(t)/k(t) = 0 \) and \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} (\int_0^u k(s) \, ds)/\ln k(t)/tk(t) = -1/(q + 1) \). So, \( 1 - \ell_1 := \lim_{u \to 0^+} (\int_0^u k(s) \, ds)/tk(t) = 1 \).

\((b)\) We see that \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} tk'(t)/k(t) = \lim_{u \to 0^+} (S'(1/t)/S(1/t)) = q + 1 \). By l’Hospital’s rule, \( \ell_0 = 0 \) and \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} \int_0^u k(s) \, ds/\ln k(t)/tk(t) = 1/(q + 2) \). So, \( \ell_1 = 1 - \lim_{u \to 0^+} \int_0^u k(s) \, ds/\ln k(t)/tk(t) = 1/(q + 2) \).

\((c)\) We have \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} tk'(t)/k(t) = \lim_{u \to 0^+} (S'(1/t)/S(1/t)) = q + 1 \). By l’Hospital’s rule, \( \lim_{u \to 0^+} \int_0^u k(s) \, ds/\ln k(t)/tk(t) = 1 \). Thus, \( \ell_0 = 0 \) and \( \ell_1 = 1 - \lim_{u \to 0^+} \int_0^u k(s) \, ds/\ln k(t)/tk(t) = 1 \). \( \Box \)

**Proof of Theorem 1.** Fix \( a \in (-\infty, \lambda_{\infty,1}) \). By [3, Theorem 1], (1) has at least a large solution.

If we prove that (3) holds for an arbitrary large solution \( u_a \) of (1), then the uniqueness is a consequence of [3, Lemma 3]. Indeed, if \( u_1 \) and \( u_2 \) are two arbitrary large solutions of (1), then (3) yields

450
\[
\lim_{d(x) \to 0^+} u_1(x)/u_2(x) = 1. \text{ Hence, for any } \varepsilon \in (0, 1), \text{ there exists } \delta = \delta(\varepsilon) > 0 \text{ such that}
\]
\[
(1 - \varepsilon)u_2(x) \leq u_1(x) \leq (1 + \varepsilon)u_1(x), \quad \forall x \in \Omega \text{ with } 0 < d(x) \leq \delta.
\]
Choosing eventually a smaller \( \delta > 0 \), we can assume that \( \overline{\Omega}_0 \subset C_\delta \), where \( C_\delta := \{ x \in \Omega : d(x) > \delta \} \).

It is clear that \( u_1 \) is a positive solution of the boundary value problem
\[
\Delta \phi + a \phi = b(x) f(\phi) \quad \text{in } C_\delta, \quad \phi = u_1 \quad \text{on } \partial C_\delta.
\]
By (A1) and (5), we see that \( \phi^- = (1 - \varepsilon)u_2 \) (resp., \( \phi^+ = (1 + \varepsilon)u_2 \)) is a positive sub-solution (resp., super-solution) of (6).

By the sub- and super-solutions method, (6) has a positive solution \( \phi_1 \) satisfying \( \phi^- \leq \phi_1 \leq \phi^+ \) in \( C_\delta \). Since \( b > 0 \) on \( C_\delta \setminus \overline{\Omega}_0 \), by [3, Lemma 3] we derive that (6) has a unique positive solution, i.e., \( u_1 \equiv \phi_1 \) in \( C_\delta \). This yields \( (1 - \varepsilon)u_2(x) \leq u_1(x) \leq (1 + \varepsilon)u_2(x) \) in \( C_\delta \), so that (5) holds in \( \Omega \).

Passing to the limit \( \varepsilon \to 0^+ \), we conclude that \( u_1 \equiv u_2 \).

In order to prove (3) we state some useful properties about \( h \):

\( h \) in \( C^2(0, \nu) \), \( \lim_{t \to 0^+} h(t) = \infty \) (straightforward from (4)).

(2)
\[ \lim_{t \to 0^+} h''(t)/k^2(t) f(h(t)) h(t) = \frac{1}{2 \nu} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{F(h(t))}}{(F(h(t)))^{1/2}} \leq 0 \text{ for } t \in (0, \nu) \text{ small enough}. \]

(3) \( \lim_{t \to 0^+} h(t)/h''(t) = \lim_{t \to 0^+} h''(t)/h''(t) = 0 \).

We check (h2) for \( \varepsilon = 1 \) only, since \( f \in \mathcal{R}_{\rho+1} \). Clearly, \( h'(t) = -k(t) \sqrt{F(h(t))} \) and
\[
F(h(t)) = \frac{k^2(t)}{2} f(h(t)) \left( 1 - 2 \frac{k(t)^2}{k(t)} \frac{F(h(t))}{(h(t))^{1/2}} \right) \forall t \in (0, \nu). \tag{7}
\]

We see that \( \lim_{u \to \infty} \sqrt{F(u)}/f(u) = 0 \). Thus, from Hospital’s rule and Lemma 1 we infer that
\[
\lim_{u \to \infty} \frac{\sqrt{F(u)}}{f(u)} \int_u^\infty [F(s)]^{-1/2} \, ds = \frac{1}{2} - \gamma = \frac{\rho}{2(\rho + 2)}. \tag{8}
\]

Using (7) and (8) we derive (h2) and also
\[
\lim_{t \to 0^+} h'(t)/h''(t) = \lim_{t \to 0^+} \frac{h'(t)}{k(t)} = \lim_{u \to \infty} \frac{\sqrt{F(u)}}{f(u)} \int_u^\infty [F(s)]^{-1/2} \, ds = \frac{-\rho \varepsilon_0}{2 + \varepsilon_1 \rho} = 0. \tag{9}
\]

From (h1) and (h2), \( \lim_{t \to 0^+} h'(t)/h''(t) = 0. \) So, Hospital’s rule and (9) yield \( \lim_{t \to 0^+} h(t)/h''(t) = 0. \) This and (9) lead to \( \lim_{t \to 0^+} h(t)/h''(t) = 0 \) which proves (h3). \( \square \)

Proof of (3). – Fix \( \varepsilon \in (0, c/2) \). Since \( b \equiv 0 \) on \( \partial \Omega \) and \( (B) \) holds, we take \( \delta > 0 \) so that

(i) \( d(x) \) is a \( C^2 \)-function on the set \( \{ x \in \mathbb{R}^N : d(x) < 2\delta \} \);

(ii) \( k^2(t) \) is increasing on \( (0, 2\delta) \);

(iii) \( (c - \varepsilon)k^2(d(x)) < b(x) < (c + \varepsilon)k^2(d(x)), \forall x \in \Omega \text{ with } 0 < d(x) < 2\delta \);

(iv) \( h''(t) > 0 \forall t \in (0, 2\delta) \) from (h2).

Let \( \sigma 
(0, \delta) \) be arbitrary. We define \( \xi^\pm = [(2 + \varepsilon_1 \rho)/(c + 2\varepsilon_2))(2 + \rho)]^{1/2} \) and \( v^\pm_m(x) = h(d(x) + \sigma)\xi^\pm \),
for all \( x \) with \( d(x) + \sigma < 2\delta \) resp., \( v^\pm_m(x) = h(d(x) - \sigma)\xi^\pm \), for all \( x \) with \( \sigma < d(x) < 2\delta \).

Using (i)-(iv), when \( \sigma < d(x) < 2\delta \) we obtain (since \( |\nabla d(x)| = 1 \))
\[
\Delta v^+_\sigma + av^+_\sigma - b(x) f(v^+_\sigma) \leq \xi^+ h''(d(x) - \sigma) \left( h'(d(x) - \sigma)/h''(d(x) - \sigma) \Delta d(x) + a h'(d(x) - \sigma)/h''(d(x) - \sigma) + 1 \right.
\]
\[
- (c - \varepsilon) k^2(d(x) - \sigma) \left( h''(d(x) - \sigma) f(h'(d(x) - \sigma)\xi^+) \right).
\]

Similarly, when \( d(x) + \sigma < 2\delta \) we find
\[
\Delta v^-_\sigma + av^-_\sigma - b(x) f(v^-_\sigma) \geq \xi^- h''(d(x) + \sigma) \left( h'(d(x) + \sigma)/h''(d(x) + \sigma) \Delta d(x) + a h'(d(x) + \sigma)/h''(d(x) + \sigma) + 1 \right.
\]
\[
- (c + \varepsilon) k^2(d(x) + \sigma) \left( h''(d(x) + \sigma) f(h'(d(x) + \sigma)\xi^-) \right).
\]

Using (h2) and (h3) we see that, by diminishing \( \delta \), we can assume

451
\[ \Delta u_+^\sigma(x) + av_+^\sigma(x) - b(x)f(v_+^\sigma(x)) \leq 0 \quad \forall x \text{ with } \sigma < d(x) < \Delta; \\
\Delta u_0^\sigma(x) + av_0^\sigma(x) - b(x)f(v_0^\sigma(x)) \geq 0 \quad \forall x \text{ with } d(x) + \sigma < \Delta. \]

Let \( \Omega_1 \) and \( \Omega_2 \) be smooth bounded domains such that \( \Omega \subseteq \Omega_1 \subseteq \Omega_2 \) and the first Dirichlet eigenvalue of \((-\Delta)\) in the domain \( \Omega_1 \setminus \overline{\Omega_2} \) is greater than \( \sigma \). Let \( p \in C^{0,1}(\overline{\Omega_2}) \) satisfy \( 0 < p(x) \leq b(x) \) for \( x \in \Omega \setminus C_{2\delta} \), \( p = 0 \) on \( \overline{\Omega_2 \setminus \Omega} \) and \( p > 0 \) on \( \Omega_2 \setminus \overline{\Omega_1} \). Denote by \( w \) a positive large solution of
\[ \Delta w + aw = p(x)f(w) \quad \text{in } \Omega_2 \setminus \overline{C_{2\delta}}. \]
The existence of \( w \) is ensured by Theorem 1 in [3].

Suppose that \( u_\sigma \) is an arbitrary large solution of (1) and let \( v := u_\sigma + w \). Then \( v \) satisfies
\[ \Delta v + av - b(x)f(v) \leq 0 \quad \text{in } \Omega \setminus \overline{C_{2\delta}}. \]

Since \( v|_{\partial \Omega_1} = \infty > v_0^\sigma|_{\partial \Omega_1} \) and \( v|_{\partial C_{2\delta}} = \infty > v_0^\sigma|_{\partial C_{2\delta}} \), Lemma 1 in [3] implies
\[ u_\sigma + w \geq v_0^\sigma \quad \text{on } \Omega \setminus \overline{C_{2\delta}}. \tag{10} \]

Similarly,
\[ v_0^+ + w \geq u_\sigma \quad \text{on } \overline{C_{2\delta}}. \tag{11} \]

Letting \( \sigma \to 0 \) in (10) and (11), we deduce \( h(d(x))\xi^+ + 2w \geq u_\sigma + w \geq h(d(x))\xi^-, \) for all \( x \in \Omega \setminus \overline{C_{2\delta}} \).

Since \( w \) is uniformly bounded on \( \partial \Omega \), we have
\[ \xi^- \leq \liminf_{d(x) \to 0} \frac{u_\sigma(x)}{h(d(x))} \leq \limsup_{d(x) \to 0} \frac{u_\sigma(x)}{h(d(x))} \leq \xi^+. \]

Letting \( \varepsilon \to 0^+ \) we obtain (3). This concludes the proof of Theorem 1. \( \Box \)

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