## AN APPLICATION OF REGULARLY VARYING FUNCTIONS

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ABSTRACT. Let  $\mathcal{K}_M'$  be the space of distributions growing no faster than  $e^{M(cx)}$  for some constant c, where M is a suitably defined function. We assume that the dual of M in the sense of Young is regularly varying at zero and infinity with positive indices of variation. We prove that two necessary conditions for a convolution operator to be hypoelliptic in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$  are also sufficient.

**0. Introduction.** D.H. Pahk [2] studied hypoelliptic convolution equations in spaces  $\mathcal{K}_M'$  of distributions growing no faster than  $e^{M(cx)}$  for some positive constant c. Here M is a function defined on  $[0, \infty)$  by

$$(0.1) M(x) = \int_0^x \mu(t) dt$$

where  $\mu$  is a continuous, increasing function on  $[0, \infty)$  such that  $\mu(0) = 0$  and  $\mu(t) \to \infty$  as  $t \to \infty$ . We will also consider the extension of M, which we also denote by M, to all of  $\mathbf{R}^n$  by M(x) = M(|x|).

Pahk proved that the Fourier transform  $\hat{S}$  of a distribution S which is a hypoelliptic convolution operator in  $\mathcal{K}'_M$  satisfies the following conditions:

 $(H_r)$  There exist positive constants  $A_1$  and  $B_1$  such that

$$|\hat{S}(\xi)| \ge |\xi|^{-A_1}$$
, if  $\xi \in \mathbf{R}^n$  and  $|\xi| \ge B_1$ .

 $(H_c)$   $(N(\eta)/\log |\zeta|) \to \infty$ , if  $\zeta = \xi + i\eta \in \mathbb{C}^n$ ,  $|\zeta| \to \infty$  and  $\hat{S}(\zeta) = 0$ , where N is the dual of M in the sense of Young.

On the other hand, a convolution operator S in  $\mathcal{K}'_M$  is hypoelliptic in  $\mathcal{K}'_M$  if its Fourier transform  $\hat{S}$  satisfies the seemingly stronger condition:

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(H) Given  $\varepsilon > 0$ , we can find a positive constant B such that, for every integer  $m \geq 0$ , there exists a constant  $C_m$  with the property that

$$\frac{1}{|\hat{S}(\zeta)|} \leq |\zeta|^B e^{\varepsilon N(\eta)},$$
 if  $\zeta = \xi + i\eta \in \mathbf{C}^n$ ,  $N(\eta) \leq m \log |\zeta|$  and  $|\zeta| \geq C_m$ .

The question whether conditions  $(H_r)$  and  $(H_c)$  imply (H) was left open. However, it is known [3, Theorem 8] that they are equivalent in the case where  $M(x) = x^p/p$  for p > 1.

In this paper we prove that conditions  $(H_r)$  and  $(H_c)$  are indeed equivalent to (H), if we assume that the function N is regularly varying at zero and at infinity with positive indices of variation. The notion of regular variation at infinity was first introduced by J. Karamata [1] for application in probability theory.

In Section 1 we recall the basic facts concerning the space  $\mathcal{K}_M'$  and the space  $\mathcal{O}_c'(\mathcal{K}_M':\mathcal{K}_M')$  of convolution operators in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$ . In Section 2 we discuss some properties of regularly varying functions. Section 3 contains the fundamental lemma and Section 4 is devoted to the proof of our main result.

1. Preliminaries. Let M and N be functions on  $[0,\infty)$  defined as in equation (0.1) by means of  $\mu$  and  $\nu$ , respectively. We say that M and N are dual in the sense of Young if  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  are mutual inverses. For example,  $x^p/p$  and  $x^q/q$  are dual in the sense of Yong when p>1 and 1/p+1/q=1. If  $x,\eta\in\mathbf{R}^n$ , we set M(x)=M(|x|) and  $N(\eta)=N(|\eta|)$ . We denote by  $\mathcal{K}_M$  the space of all  $C^\infty$ -functions on  $\mathbf{R}^n$  such that

$$(1.1) p_k(\varphi) = \sup_{x \in \mathbf{R}^n, |\alpha| \le k} e^{M(kx)} |D^{\alpha}\varphi(x)| < \infty, \quad k = 1, 2, \dots,$$

where, as usual,  $|\alpha| = \alpha_1 + \alpha_2 + \alpha_3 + \cdots + \alpha_n$  and  $D^{\alpha} = \prod_{j=1}^n (i^{-1}(\partial/\partial x_j))^{\alpha_j}$ .

The topology in  $\mathcal{K}_M$  is defined by the seminorms (1.1).

The dual  $\mathcal{K}_{M'}$  of  $\mathcal{K}_M$  can be identified with a subspace of the space  $\mathcal{D}'$  of distributions on  $\mathbf{R}^n$ . A distribution  $u \in \mathcal{D}'$  is in  $\mathcal{K}_{M'}$  if and only if there exists an integer  $m \geq 0$ , a constant  $c \geq 0$ , and a bounded

continuous function f on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with

$$u = \frac{\partial^{mn}}{\partial x_1^m \cdots \partial x_n^m} [e^{M_c} f], \qquad \text{where } M_c(x) = M(cx).$$

Because of this property we call  $\mathcal{K}_M'$  the space of distributions which "grow no faster than  $e^{M(cx)}$ " for some c>0.

If  $S \in \mathcal{K}_M'$  and the function  $g(y) = \langle S_x, \varphi(y-x) \rangle$  is in  $\mathcal{K}_M$  for every  $\varphi \in \mathcal{K}_M$ , then S is a convolution operator in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$ . In this case one can define the convolution S \* u of S with every distribution  $u \in \mathcal{K}_M'$ . We denote by  $\mathcal{O}_c'(\mathcal{K}_M' : \mathcal{K}_M')$  the space of all convolution operators in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$ . If  $S \in \mathcal{O}_c'(\mathcal{K}_M' : \mathcal{K}_M')$  then the Fourier transform  $\hat{S}$  of S is an entire function having the following Paley-Wiener type property:

(PW) For every  $\varepsilon > 0$  there exist positive constants  $A_2$  and  $B_2$  such that

$$|\hat{S}(\zeta)| \le |\zeta|^{B_2} e^{\varepsilon N(\eta)}, \quad \text{if } \zeta = \xi + i\eta \in \mathbf{C}^n \quad \text{and} \quad |\zeta| \ge A_2,$$

where N is the dual to M in the sense of Young.

We denote by  $\mathcal{E}_M$  the space of all  $C^{\infty}$ -functions f on  $\mathbf{R}^n$  such that

$$D^{\alpha}f(x) = O(e^{M(ax)})$$
 as  $|x| \to \infty$ ,

for all multi-indices  $\alpha$  and some constant  $a \geq 0$  depending on f. If  $S \in \mathcal{O}'_c(\mathcal{K}'_M : \mathcal{K}'_M)$  and  $u \in \mathcal{E}_M$  then  $S * u \in \mathcal{E}_M$ . The distribution S is said to be hypoelliptic in  $\mathcal{K}'_M$  if every solution  $u \in \mathcal{K}'_M$  of the convolution equation S \* u = v is in  $\mathcal{E}_M$  whenever  $v \in \mathcal{E}_M$ .

**2.** Regularly varying functions. We consider real-valued, increasing functions  $\psi$  defined on  $[0, \infty)$  with  $\psi(0) = 0$ .

**Definition.** The function  $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity if, for each x > 0 and for some  $\rho \in \mathbf{R}$ ,

(2.1) 
$$\lim_{r \to \infty} \frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} = x^{\rho}.$$

The number  $\rho$  is called the index of regular variation at infinity.

The function  $\psi$  is regularly varying at zero if  $\psi(x^{-1})$  is regularly varying at infinity. In other words,  $\psi$  is regularly varying at zero if, for each x > 0 and some  $\sigma \in \mathbf{R}$  we have

(2.2) 
$$\lim_{r \to 0^+} \frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} = x^{\sigma}.$$

We call  $\sigma$  the index of regular variation at zero.

Remark 1. Since  $\psi$  is increasing and positive for x > 0, it is regularly varying at infinity if we assume only that the limit in (2.1) exists and is finite for two positive values of x, say  $x_1$  and  $x_2$ , such that  $x_1 \neq 1$  and  $x_2 \neq 1$  and  $\log x_1/\log x_2$  is irrational, see [4, Theorem 1.8].

One of the fundamental theorems on regularly varying functions concerns uniform convergence.

Uniform convergence theorem [4, Theorem 1.1]. If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity (or at zero), then for every interval [a,b],  $0 < a < b < \infty$ , the convergence in (2.1) (in (2.2), respectively) is uniform for  $x \in [a,b]$ .

Another useful result concerns the growth of a regularly varying function at infinity.

**Theorem** [4, p. 18]. If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity with index  $\rho$ , then for every  $\varepsilon > 0$ ,

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} x^{-\rho - \varepsilon} \psi(x) = 0.$$

In particular, if  $p > \rho$ , then there is a constant C such that

(2.3) 
$$\psi(x) \le C(1+x^p), \quad 0 \le x < \infty.$$

If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity with index  $\rho > 0$ , we can improve the uniform convergence theorem in the following way.

**Theorem 1.** If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity with index  $\rho > 0$ , then, for every h > 0 the convergence in (2.1) is uniform for  $x \in [0, h]$ .

*Proof.* For a given  $\varepsilon > 0$ , choose  $x_0 > 0$  so that  $x_0^{\rho} < \varepsilon/3$ . Next, choose  $r_0$  such that

$$\left|\frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)}-x^{\rho}\right|<\frac{\varepsilon}{3}\qquad\text{for }x_{0}\leq x\leq h\quad\text{and}\quad r\geq r_{0}.$$

This is possible by the uniform convergence theorem. It follows that

$$\frac{\psi(rx_0)}{\psi(r)} \le \left| \frac{\psi(rx_0)}{\psi(r)} - x_0^{\rho} \right| + x_0^{\rho} < \frac{\varepsilon}{3} + \frac{\varepsilon}{3} = \frac{2\varepsilon}{3} \quad \text{for } r \ge r_0,$$

and so

$$\psi(rx_0)<rac{2arepsilon}{3}\psi(r) \qquad ext{for } r\geq r_0.$$

Since  $\psi$  is increasing, we have

$$\psi(rx) \le \psi(rx_0) < \frac{2\varepsilon}{3}\psi(r)$$
 for  $0 \le x \le x_0$  and  $r \ge r_0$ .

Also, since  $\rho > 0$ ,

$$x^{\rho} \le x_0^{\rho} < \frac{\varepsilon}{3}$$
 for  $0 \le x \le x_0$ .

Therefore,

(2.5) 
$$\left| \frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} - x^{\rho} \right| \leq \frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} + x^{\rho} < \frac{2\varepsilon}{3} + \frac{\varepsilon}{3} = \varepsilon$$

for  $0 \le x \le x_0$  and  $r \ge r_0$ .

Now, combining (2.4) and (2.5), we obtain

$$\left| rac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} - x^p 
ight| < arepsilon \qquad ext{for } 0 \leq x \leq h \quad ext{and} \quad r \geq r_0,$$

which proves the theorem.

In a similar way we can extend the uniform convergence theorem for functions regularly varying at zero.

**Theorem 2.** If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at zero with index  $\sigma > 0$ , then, for every h > 0 the convergence in (2.2) is uniform for  $x \in [0, h]$ .

**Corollary 1.** If  $\psi$  is regularly varying at both zero and infinity with positive indices of variation, then, for any h > 0,  $\psi(rx)/\psi(r)$  is bounded when  $0 \le x \le h$  and  $0 < r < \infty$ .

*Proof.* By Theorem 2, there are  $\sigma > 0$  and  $r_1 > 0$  such that

$$\frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} \le 1 + x^{\sigma} \le 1 + h^{\sigma} \quad \text{for } 0 \le x \le h \quad \text{and} \quad 0 < r < r_1.$$

Similarly, by Theorem 1, there are  $\rho > 0$  and  $r_2 > r_1$  such that

$$\frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} \le 1 + x^{\rho} \le 1 + h^{\rho} \quad \text{for } 0 \le x \le h \quad \text{and} \quad r \ge r_2.$$

If we have  $r_1 \leq r \leq r_2$ , then

$$\frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} \le \frac{\psi(r_2x)}{\psi(r_1)} \le \frac{\psi(r_2h)}{\psi(r_1)} \quad \text{for } 0 \le x \le h.$$

Consequently,

$$\frac{\psi(rx)}{\psi(r)} \le \max\left\{1 + h^{\sigma}, 1 + h^{\rho}, \frac{\psi(r_2h)}{\psi(r_1)}\right\}$$

for  $0 \le x \le h$  and  $0 < r < \infty$ .

So far we have only assumed that  $\psi$  is an increasing function on  $[0,\infty)$  with  $\psi(0)=0$ . Now suppose that  $\psi$  is also continuous on  $[0,\infty)$ . Then, given h>0 and  $r_0>0$ ,  $r\to r_0$  implies that  $\psi(r)\to\psi(r_0)>0$  and  $\psi(rx)\to\psi(r_0x)$  uniformly for  $x\in[0,h]$ . We therefore have the following.

**Corollary 2.** If  $\psi$  is continuous and regularly varying at both zero and infinity with positive indices of variation, and if  $\psi(rx)/\psi(r) \rightarrow L(x)$  as  $r \rightarrow 0^+$ , or  $r \rightarrow \infty$ , or  $r \rightarrow r_0$ ,  $0 < r_0 < \infty$ , then  $L(x) \leq C(1+x^p)$ ,  $0 \leq x < \infty$  for some positive constants C and p.

*Proof.* If  $r \to 0^+$  or  $r \to \infty$ , the conclusion follows immediately from the definition of regular variation of  $\psi$  at zero or infinity. Also, since

 $\psi$  is regularly varying at infinity, there are positive constants C and p such that

$$\psi(x) \le C(1+x^p)$$
 for  $0 \le x < \infty$ ,

by (2.3). Hence, if  $r \to r_0$ ,  $0 < r_0 < \infty$ , we have

$$L(x) = \frac{\psi(r_0 x)}{\psi(r_0)} \le C^*(1 + x^p), \quad 0 \le x < \infty,$$

where  $C^* = (C(1 + r_0^p)/\psi(r_0)).$ 

**3. The basic lemma.** We assume that  $\psi$  is a continuous, increasing function on  $[0,\infty)$  with  $\psi(0)=0$ , and we extend  $\psi$  to  $\mathbf R$  by setting  $\psi(-x)=\psi(x)$  for x>0.

**Lemma.** Let  $\psi$  be regularly varying at both zero and infinity with positive indices of variation. Then, for given positive constants A, B and b, we can find a constant H such that, if u is a harmonic function for  $x^2 + y^2 < R^2$  and satisfies the inequalities

$$u(x,0) \le 0$$
 and  $u(x,y) \ge -a\psi(r) - B\psi(r)$ ,  $x^2 + y^2 < R^2$ ,

it follows that

$$u(x,y) \le a\psi(y) + (B+b)\psi(r), \quad x^2 + y^2 < r^2,$$

provided that 0 < a < A and 0 < r < R/H.

*Proof.* Assume the lemma is false. Then we can find positive constants A, B and b, sequences of numbers  $a_n, R_n$  and  $r_n$  with  $0 < a_n < A$  and  $R_n/r_n \ge n$ , and a sequence of harmonic functions  $u_n$  such that

(3.1) 
$$u_n(x,0) \le 0$$
 and  $u_n(x,y) \ge -a_n \psi(r_n) - B \psi(r_n)$ ,

$$x^2 + y^2 < Rn^2,$$

and

(3.2) 
$$u_n(x_n, y_n) > a_n \psi(y_n) + (B+b)\psi(r_n),$$

for some  $(x_n, y_n) \in \mathbb{R}^2$  with  $x_n^2 + y_n^2 < r_n^2$ .

We now set

$$v_n(x,y) = u_n(r_n x, r_n y)/\psi(r_n), \qquad x_n^* = x_n/r_n, \qquad y_n^* = y_n/r_n.$$

Since  $R_n/r_n \ge n$ , it follows from (3.1) and (3.2) that

$$(3.3) \ \ v_n(x,0) \leq 0 \quad \text{and} \quad v_n(x,y) \geq -a_n \frac{\psi(r_n y)}{\psi(r_n)} - B, \quad x^2 + y^2 < n^2,$$

and

(3.4) 
$$v_n(x_n^*, y_n^*) > a_n \frac{\psi(r_n y_n^*)}{\psi(r_n)} + B + b.$$

By assumption,  $\psi$  is regularly varying at zero and at infinity with positive indices of variation. Therefore, given any h>0, the functions  $\psi(r_ny)/\psi(r_n)$  are uniformly bounded for  $|y|\leq h$  by Corollary 1. Accordingly, from (3.3) and Harnack's inequality, it follows that the sequence  $\{v_n\}$  is uniformly bounded on every compact set in  $\mathbf{R}^2$ . Applying the "compactness theorem" for harmonic functions, we can select a subsequence  $\{v_n'\}$  of  $\{v_n\}$  which converges to a harmonic function v uniformly on every compact subset of  $\mathbf{R}^2$ . Since  $(x_n^*)^2+(y_n^*)^2\leq 1, 0< a_n< A$  and  $0< r_n<\infty$ , we can choose the subsequence  $\{v_n'\}$  of  $\{v_n\}$  so that the sequences  $\{x_n^{**}\},\{y_n^{**}\},\{r_n'\}$  and  $\{a_n'\}$  have limits  $x_0,y_0,r_0$  and  $a_0$ , respectively, where  $r_0$  may be  $\infty$ . Then, by Theorems 1 and 2, Remark 2 and Corollary 2,  $\psi(r_n'y)/\psi(r_n')$  converges uniformly on every interval  $|y|\leq h$  to a function L(y) such that

$$0 \le L(y) \le C(1 + |y|^p), \quad y \in \mathbf{R},$$

for some constants C and p. In particular,  $\psi(r'_n y_n^*)/\psi(r'_n)$  converges to  $L(y_0)$ .

Thus, we have

$$(3.6) v(x,y) \le 0, v(x,y) \ge -a_0 L(y) - B, (x,y) \in \mathbf{R}^2,$$

and

$$(3.7) v(x_0, y_0) \ge a_0 L(y_0) + B + b.$$

We apply Harnack's inequality again and infer from (3.5) and (3.6) that  $(1+|y|^p)^{-1}v(x,y)$  is bounded on  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . Hence, v is a harmonic polynomial that does not depend on x, and so it must be a linear function of y. Suppose that v(x,y) = cy + d. Then  $d \leq 0$ , by the first inequality in (3.6) and, from (3.6) and (3.7), it follows that

(3.8) 
$$a_0 L(y) + cy + B + d \ge 0$$

and

$$(3.9) a_0 L(y_0) - cy_0 + B + b - d \le 0.$$

In particular, setting  $y = -y_0$  in (3.8), we obtain

$$a_0L(y_0) - cy_0 + B + d \ge 0,$$

which contradicts the inequality (3.9) since b > 0 and  $d \le 0$ . Thus, the lemma is proved.  $\Box$ 

4. Application to the hypoellipticity problem in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$ . As stated in Section 1, every distribution  $S \in \mathcal{O}_C'(\mathcal{K}_M' : \mathcal{K}_M')$  can be characterized in its Fourier transform  $\hat{S}$  by the Paley-Wiener type condition (PW). If S is hypoelliptic in  $\mathcal{K}_M'$ , then  $\hat{S}$  also satisfies conditions  $(H_r)$  and  $(H_c)$ . Note that the function N appearing in conditions  $(H_r)$  and (PW) is the dual to M in the sense of Young. Therefore, N is continuous and increasing on  $[0,\infty)$  with N(0)=0. We now prove our main result.

**Theorem.** Suppose that the function N is regularly varying at zero and infinity with positive indices of variation. Then conditions  $(H_r)$ ,  $(H_c)$  and (PW) imply condition (H).

*Proof.* Let  $\zeta = \xi + i\eta \in \mathbf{C}$  be such that  $0 < N(\eta) < m \log |\zeta|$ . We define an analytic function of one complex variable z by

$$F_{\zeta}(z) = \hat{S}\left(\xi + z\frac{\eta}{|\eta|}\right),$$

for all z with  $N(|z|) < m_0 \log |\zeta|$ , where  $m_0$  is a constant to be determined later. If  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large, then  $F_{\zeta}(z) \neq 0$ , in view

of  $(H_c)$ . Applying condition  $(H_r)$  and the fact that  $N(x)/x \to \infty$  as  $x \to \infty$ , for  $x \in \mathbf{R}$ , we obtain

$$(4.1) F_{\zeta}(x) \ge (2|\zeta|)^{-B_1}, \text{if } x \in \mathbf{R} \text{ and } N(x) < m_0 \log |\zeta|,$$

provided that  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large.

Also, by condition (PW), for a given  $\varepsilon > 0$ , we have (4.2)

$$|F_{\zeta}(z)| \leq (2|\zeta|)^{B_2} e^{\varepsilon N(y)}, \quad \text{if } z \in \mathbf{C} \quad \text{and} \quad N(|z|) < m_0 \log |\zeta|$$

when  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large.

We consider the function

$$u_{\zeta}(x,y) = \log\{(2|\zeta|)^{-B_1}|F_{\zeta}(z)|^{-1}\}, \qquad z = x + iy,$$

which is harmonic when  $N(|z|) < m_0 \log |\zeta|$  and when  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large. Moreover, from (4.1) and (4.2), it follows that

$$u_{\zeta}(x,0) \leq 0$$
 if  $N(x) < m_0 \log |\zeta|$ 

and

$$u_{\zeta}(x,y) \ge -\varepsilon N(y) - (B_1 + B_2) \log(2|\zeta|)$$
  
 
$$\ge -\varepsilon N(y) - (B_1 + B_2 + 1) \log(|\zeta|),$$

if  $N(|z|) < m_0 \log |\zeta|$ . In both inequalities, we assume that  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large.

We now apply the basic lemma with  $A=1+\varepsilon$ ,  $B=(B_1+B_2+1)/(m+1)$ , b=1/(m+1),  $r=N^{-1}[(m+1)\log|\zeta|]$  and  $\psi=N$ . Let H be the constant in that lemma. Since N is regularly varying at zero and at infinity, there is a constant h>0 such that N(Hx)< hN(x),  $0 \le x < \infty$ . Hence  $N^{-1}(x) < N^{-1}(hx)/H$ ,  $0 \le x < \infty$ . If we set  $m_0=h(m+1)$ , then from the lemma it follows that

(4.3) 
$$u_{\zeta}(x,y) \leq \varepsilon N(y) - (B_1 + B_2 + 2) \log(|\zeta|)$$

if 
$$N(|z|) < (m+1) \log |\zeta|$$
.

Since  $N(\eta) < m \log |\zeta| < (m+1) \log |\zeta|$ , we may substitute  $z = i\eta$  in (4.3), which yields

$$\log \left\{ \frac{(2|\zeta|)^{-B_1}}{|\hat{S}(\zeta)|} \right\} \le \varepsilon N(\eta) + (B_1 + B_2 + 2) \log |\zeta|.$$

Hence, we conclude that

$$\frac{1}{|\hat{S}(\zeta)|} \le |\zeta|^{(B_1 + B_2 + 3)} e^{\varepsilon N(\eta)}, \quad \text{if } N(\eta) < m \log |\zeta|,$$

when  $|\zeta|$  is sufficiently large. This completes the proof of the theorem.  $\Box$ 

**Corollary.** If N is regularly varying at zero and at infinity with positive indices of variation, the condition (H) is necessary for the hypoellipticity of S in  $\mathcal{K}'_M$ .

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