

Lecture 19 - Inhomogeneous boundary conditions

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2 Inhomogeneous boundary conditions

- Simplest case: inhomogeneous BCs are constants
- General strategy: inhomogeneous BCs are functions
- Example

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→ Review

- Previously, we solved **homogeneous** and **inhomogeneous parabolic PDEs**
- ... with **simple** (i.e. homogeneous) boundary conditions
- but there are parabolic PDE problems with **more elaborated boundary conditions** (i.e. **inhomogeneous**).

How do we solve them ? (← Today's Lecture)

- Don't get confused: the PDE and/or the BCs can be **independently** homogeneous or inhomogeneous.

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→ Inhomogeneous boundary conditions

The (homogeneous) **heat equation**

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \kappa^2 \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}$$

is straightforward to solve when simple boundary conditions (BCs) are imposed. **But** the problem with inhomogeneous BCs:

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \kappa^2 \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}; \quad y(0, t) = f_0(t), \quad y(1, t) = f_1(t)$$

Inhomogeneous BCs means RHS of BC is not 0 ↗



for known $f_0(t)$, $f_1(t)$ is **much harder to solve**.

Simplest case: inhomogeneous BCs are constants

- Simplest problem with inhomogeneous boundary conditions (BCs) is:

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}; \quad y(0, t) = T_0, \quad y(1, t) = T_1.$$

Inhomogeneous BCs means RHS of BC is not 0 ↗ ↗

where T_0 and T_1 are constants (this is why it is the simplest case).

- Our standard separation of variables *ansatz* is often of not much use in these cases...
- Instead, consider the steady state (i.e. $\partial_t y = 0$) \Rightarrow PDE simplifies:

$$\frac{\partial y(x, t)}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 y(x, t)}{\partial x^2} \Leftrightarrow 0 = \frac{d^2 y(x)}{dx^2} \implies y(x) = (T_1 - T_0)x + T_0 \equiv y_P(x)$$

This is a **particular solution** $y_P(x)$ of the problem.

Using our particular solution

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}, \quad y_P = (T_1 - T_0)x + T_0.$$

If we **define**: [\searrow we can always "replace" an unknown function $y(x, t)$ by another unknown function $v(x, t)$!!]

$$y(x, t) = v(x, t) + y_P(x) \quad (1)$$

$$\Rightarrow \begin{cases} \frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial v}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial y_P}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial v}{\partial t} \\ \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 y_P}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2} \end{cases} \quad \begin{cases} y(0, t) = T_0 \Leftrightarrow v(0, t) + y_P(0) = T_0 \Leftrightarrow v(0, t) + \cancel{T_0} = \cancel{T_0} \Leftrightarrow v(0, t) = 0, \\ y(1, t) = T_1 \Leftrightarrow v(1, t) + y_P(1) = T_1 \Leftrightarrow v(1, t) + \cancel{T_1} = \cancel{T_1} \Leftrightarrow v(1, t) = 0 \end{cases}$$

then the **new auxiliary variable** $v(x, t)$ obeys the (homogeneous) heat equation and homogeneous Dirichlet boundary conditions,

$$\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2}; \quad v(0, t) = 0, \quad v(1, t) = 0.$$

So we can **solve for $v(x, t)$** as we have been doing!

... and then insert it into (1) to find $y(x, t)$.

General strategy: inhomogeneous BCs are functions

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \kappa^2 \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}; \quad y(0, t) = f_0(t), \quad y(1, t) = f_1(t)$$

In general we cannot find a particular solution. However, we can consider the **(time-dependent, spatially linear) “solution”**

$$y_P(x, t) = \left[f_1(t) - f_0(t) \right] x + f_0(t). \quad \leftarrow \text{does not need to be real solution!}$$

If we again set **$y(x, t) = v(x, t) + y_P(x, t)$** then $v(x, t)$ satisfies **homogeneous Dirichlet** boundary conditions. But this time (unlike previous simple case), it satisfies the **inhomogeneous heat equation**

$$\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} = \kappa^2 \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2} \quad \underbrace{- \left[\dot{f}_1(t) - \dot{f}_0(t) \right] x - \dot{f}_0(t)}_{\text{Forcing term } F(x, t) \text{ of Lecture 18}}.$$

which is not so easy to solve...but we can still solve it using the techniques of the last Lecture 18 to solve for $v(x, t)$ and then $y(x, t)$.

Example

Consider the **(homogeneous) diffusion equation**
with **inhomogeneous BCs** and **initial data** given by:

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}; \quad y(0, t) = \overbrace{\frac{1}{2}[1 - \cos(t)]}^{f_0(t)}, \quad y(1, t) = \overbrace{0}^{f_1(t)}; \quad y(x, 0) = 0.$$

We have: \swarrow Previous slide: $y_P(x, t) = [f_1(t) - f_0(t)]x + f_0(t)$

$$y_P = \frac{1}{2}(1 - x)[1 - \cos(t)] \Rightarrow \dot{y}_P = \frac{1}{2}(1 - x)\sin(t),$$

Change of variable, $y(x, t) = v(x, t) + y_P(x, t) \Rightarrow v$ satisfies:

$$\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2} - \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}(1 - x)\sin(t)}_{\text{Forcing term } F(x, t)}; \quad \underbrace{v(0, t) = 0, \quad v(1, t) = 0}_{\text{Homogeneous (Dirichlet) BCs}}; \quad v(x, 0) = 0.$$

Solving the problem

$$\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial x^2} - \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}(1-x)\sin(t)}_{\text{Forcing term } F(x,t)}; \quad \underbrace{v(0,t)=0, \quad v(1,t)=0}_{\text{Homogeneous (Dirichlet) BCs}}; \quad v(x,0)=0.$$

The *educated guess* is:

[✓ From slide 8 of Lecture 18. [Review it!](#)]

$$v(x,t) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} T_n(t) \sin(n\pi x); \quad \underbrace{-\frac{1}{2}(1-x)\sin(t)}_{F(x,t)} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} F_n(t) \sin(n\pi x).$$

FS in x , ie $\sin(t)$ is "to be interpreted as a constant" here ✓

This is the **sine Fourier series** (FS) in x of $F(x,t) = -\frac{1}{2}(1-x)\sin(t)$ (i.e. the FS of the odd extension of $F(x,t)$ with period 2ℓ , $\ell=1$). So, apply the associated **Euler formulae** to find $F_n(t)$ [revisit slide 11 of Lecture 6 with $b_n \equiv F_n(t)$]:

$$F_n(t) = \frac{2}{\ell} \int_0^{\ell} F(x,t) \sin(n\pi x) dx = 2 \int_0^1 \left[-\frac{1}{2}(1-x)\sin(t) \right] \sin(n\pi x) dx = \dots = -\frac{\sin(t)}{n\pi}$$

Equation for $T_n(t)$ is (1) of slide 11 Lecture 18 ([Review it!](#)): $\dot{T}_n + (n\pi)^2 T_n = -\frac{\sin(t)}{n\pi}.$

$$\dot{T}_n + (n\pi)^2 T_n = -\frac{\sin(t)}{n\pi} \quad \checkmark \quad (*) \quad T_n(t) = e^{-(\kappa n\pi)^2 t} \left[C_n + \int e^{+(\kappa n\pi)^2 t} F_n(t) dt \right] \quad \checkmark \quad \kappa = 1$$
$$T_n = C_n e^{-(n\pi)^2 t} + \frac{\cos(t) - (n\pi)^2 \sin(t)}{(n\pi)[1 + (n\pi)^4]} \leftarrow \begin{cases} e^{-(n\pi)^2 t} \int e^{+(n\pi)^2 t} F_n(t) dt \\ = e^{-(n\pi)^2 t} \int \underbrace{e^{+(n\pi)^2 t}}_u \underbrace{\left(-\frac{\sin(t)}{n\pi}\right)}_{dv} dt \\ = \frac{\cos(t) - (n\pi)^2 \sin(t)}{(n\pi)[1 + (n\pi)^4]} \quad [\text{Exercise: check it!}] \end{cases}$$
$$v(x, t) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} T_n(t) \sin(n\pi x)$$

$$v(x, t) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left[C_n e^{-(n\pi)^2 t} + \frac{\cos(t) - (n\pi)^2 \sin(t)}{(n\pi)(1 + (n\pi)^4)} \right] \sin(n\pi x). \quad (2)$$

$C_n = ??$ \rightarrow The **initial data** gives (after evaluating (2) at $t = 0$):

$$v(x, 0) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left[C_n + \frac{1-0}{(n\pi)(1+(n\pi)^4)} \right] \sin(n\pi x) = 0 \Leftrightarrow C_n = -\frac{1}{(n\pi)[1+(n\pi)^4]}.$$

General solution for $y(x, t)$

Putting together the solution for $v(x, t)$ (including the values for C_n) and $y_P(x, t)$ one gets, from slide 9, the solution for original function $y(x, t)$:

$$y(x, t) = v(x, t) + y_P(x, t)$$

$$y(x, t) = v(x, t) + \frac{1}{2}(1-x)[1 - \cos(t)]$$

$$y(x, t) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left[\cos(t) - (n\pi)^2 \sin(t) - e^{-(n\pi)^2 t} \right] \frac{\sin(n\pi x)}{(n\pi) [1 + (n\pi)^4]} + \frac{1}{2}(1-x)[1 - \cos(t)].$$

In this case the **inhomogeneous boundary condition dominates the behaviour** (sine & cosines of t contributions); the **transient behaviour** (ie the exp decay contribution $e^{-(n\pi)^2 t}$ from homogeneous PDE with homogeneous BCs) is comparatively small.

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- Separation of variables does not work if **inhomogeneous boundary conditions** are imposed on the PDE.
- We can however use a **particular “solution”** y_P that is compatible with the boundary conditions. It does **not** need to be a genuine solution of the equation!
- By **changing variable** $y \rightarrow v$ we recover a problem with **homogeneous boundary conditions**, but it **may** add an **inhomogeneous source term**.
- This problem for v can be solved using the techniques of the previous lecture 18; from that and y_P we find the original solution $y(x, t)$.

Exercise: Homework

1) Find/check, using Euler formula, the Fourier coefficients of slide 10:

$$\begin{aligned} F_n(t) &= 2 \int_0^1 \left[-\frac{1}{2}(1-x) \sin(t) \right] \sin(n\pi x) dx \\ &= -\sin(t) \int_0^1 \overbrace{(1-x)}^u \overbrace{\sin(n\pi x)}^{dv} dx \\ &= -\sin(t) \left\{ \left[-(1-x) \frac{\cos(n\pi x)}{n\pi} \right]_0^1 - \int_0^1 \frac{\cos(n\pi x)}{n\pi} dx \right\} \\ &= -\sin(t) \left[-(1-x) \frac{\cos(n\pi x)}{n\pi} - \frac{\sin(n\pi x)}{(n\pi)^2} \right]_0^1 \\ &= -\frac{\sin(t)}{n\pi}. \end{aligned}$$

2) Use integration by parts to obtain the integral of slide 11