

# M3M3 Partial Differential Equations

## Solutions to problem sheet 3/4

**1\* (i)** Show that the second order linear differential operators  $L$  and  $M$ , defined in some domain  $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ , and given by

$$L\phi = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n a_{ij} \frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} + \sum_{i=1}^n b_i \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial x_i} + c\phi \quad (1)$$

$$M\phi = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} a_{ij} \phi - \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{\partial}{\partial x_i} b_i \phi + c\phi \quad (2)$$

where  $a_{ij}$ ,  $b_i$ , and  $c$  are differentiable functions of  $\mathbf{x}$ , are formally adjoint, in the sense that:

$$\langle u, Lv \rangle - \langle Mu, v \rangle = Q \quad (3)$$

where  $Q$  is some expression involving only terms evaluated on  $\partial\Omega$ .

**(ii)** Show that if  $L$  is self-adjoint, that is  $L = M$ , then

$$L\phi = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial}{\partial x_i} a_{ij} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \phi + c\phi \quad (4)$$

where  $a_{ij}$  is symmetric. Find also the general expression for differential operators, of the form (1), to be skew-adjoint, that is satisfying  $L = -M$ .

**Solution (i)** Since  $\frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial x_i \partial x_j}$  is symmetric, the antisymmetric part of  $a_{ij}$  is irrelevant. Take  $a_{ij} = a_{ji}$ .

$M$ , the adjoint of  $L$ , and  $L$  itself must satisfy:

$$uLv - vMu = \sum_{i=1}^n w_i,$$

for some local expressions  $w_i$ . When we integrate over the volume  $\Omega$ , this divergence then integrates to a local expression on the boundary  $\partial\Omega$ . We find here:

$$uLv - vMu = \quad (5)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n (ua_{ij} \partial_i \partial_j v - v \partial_i \partial_j a_{ij} v) \quad (6)$$

$$+ u \sum_{i=1}^n b_i \partial_i v + v \sum_{i=1}^n \partial_i b_i u = \quad (7)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \partial_i \left( \sum_{j=1}^n (ua_{ij} \partial_j v - v \partial_j a_{ij} u) + b_i uv \right), \quad (8)$$

as required.

(ii) Expanding  $Mu$  and equating with  $Lu$ , for self-adjointness, we find the coefficient of  $u$  gives

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2 a_{ij}}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{\partial b_i}{\partial x_i}$$

and the coefficient of  $\partial_i u$  gives

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \frac{\partial(a_{ij} + a_{ji})}{\partial x_i} = 2b_i.$$

Since  $a_{ij}$  is symmetric,  $b_i = \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial a_{ij}}{\partial x_j}$ . Expression (4) follows.

**2i** *Unseen and **unexamined** - Green's functions for hyperbolic equations*

Show that if the Riemann (or Riemann-Green) function  $v(x, y; \xi, \eta)$  for a hyperbolic partial differential operator  $L$ , with adjoint  $L^\dagger$ ,

$$L = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x \partial y} + a(x, y) \frac{\partial}{\partial x} + b(x, y) \frac{\partial}{\partial y} + c(x, y) \quad (9)$$

is defined by

$$L^\dagger v = 0, \quad \xi > x, \quad \text{and} \quad \eta > y, \quad (10)$$

$$v_y = av, \quad x = \xi, \quad (11)$$

$$v_x = bv, \quad y = \eta \quad (12)$$

$$v = 0, \quad \xi < x \quad \text{or} \quad \eta < y \quad (13)$$

$$v(\xi, \eta) = 1 \quad (14)$$

then, for all  $x, y$

$$L^\dagger v = \delta(x - \xi) \delta(y - \eta). \quad (15)$$

Hint: write  $v(x, y) = w(x, y)H(\xi - x)H(\eta - y)$ , where  $H$  is the Heaviside function, whose derivative is the  $\delta$ -function, and  $w$  is a smooth function.

**Solution 2(i)** *Substitute  $v = w(x, y)H(\xi - x)H(\eta - y)$  into the adjoint pde*

$$Mv = \delta(x - \xi) \delta(y - \eta)$$

. This gives terms in  $H(\xi - x)H(\eta - y)$ , implying that  $w$  and hence  $v$  satisfy the pde if  $\xi > x$  and  $\eta > y$ . The conditions on  $\xi = x$  and  $\eta = y$  come from matching the coefficients of  $\delta(\xi - x)H(\eta - y)$  and  $H(\xi - x)\delta(\eta - y)$  respectively. The coefficient of  $\delta(\xi - x)\delta(\eta - y)$  gives the condition at the singular point  $\xi = x, \eta = y$ .

(ii) *Here  $v$  must satisfy*

$$v_{xy} - \partial_x \frac{v}{x+y} - \partial_y \frac{v}{x+y} = 0, \quad (16)$$

$$v_x = v/(x+y) \quad y = \eta \quad (17)$$

$$v_y = v/(x+y) \quad x = \xi \quad (18)$$

$$v(\xi, \eta) = 1. \quad (19)$$

Clearly, taking  $v = (x+y)/(\xi+\eta)$  achieves this. Put  $L = \partial_x \partial_y + 1/(x+y)(\partial_x + \partial_y)$ , and  $L^\dagger$  is its adjoint. Integrate

$$vLu - uL^\dagger v$$

over the triangle  $\Delta$  bounded by  $x = y$ ,  $x = \xi$ ,  $y = \eta$ . The integrand vanishes, as  $Lu = L^\dagger v = 0$ . However, it can also be written as a divergence

$$\partial_x \left( \frac{1}{2} (v \partial_y u - u \partial_y v) + uv/(x+y) \right) + \partial_y \left( \frac{1}{2} (v \partial_x u - u \partial_x v) + uv/(x+y) \right) = \phi_x + \psi_y,$$

say. Thus we get

$$0 = \int \int_{\Delta} \phi_x + \psi_y dx dy = \int_{\partial\Delta} \phi dy - \psi dx.$$

Now on  $x = y$ , we have  $u = 0$ ,  $u_x = f(x)$ , and also  $u_y = -f(x)$ , for  $u_x dx + u_y dy = du = 0$ . Integrating anticlockwise, along  $x = y$ ,  $x = \xi$ , and  $y = \eta$ , we get, using the boundary conditions on  $u$  and on  $v$ ,

$$u(\xi, \eta) = \frac{2}{\xi + \eta} \int_{\xi}^{\eta} x f(x) dx.$$

**3\*** Using the maximum property for harmonic functions, prove the uniqueness of the solution to the Dirichlet problem for Poisson's equation.

**Solution 3** *The difference  $v$  between any two solutions of Poisson's equation with the same Dirichlet data is a harmonic function which vanishes at the boundary. Being harmonic, this function takes its maximum (and minimum) values on the boundary; hence it vanishes everywhere. (4 marks)*

**4i\*** Show that the solution of Helmholtz' equation in 3 dimensions with Dirichlet boundary conditions:

$$\nabla^2 u + \lambda u = f(\mathbf{x}), \quad \mathbf{x} \in D \quad (20)$$

$$u = g(\mathbf{x}), \quad \mathbf{x} \in \partial D, \quad (21)$$

is unique provided  $\lambda \leq 0$ .

**ii** With  $\lambda = k^2 > 0$ , a constant, find the radially symmetric solution  $u(r)$  of the Dirichlet BVP in the ball  $0 < r < a$ , which satisfies:

$$\nabla^2 u + k^2 u = r^{-2} \frac{d}{dr} r^2 \frac{du}{dr} + k^2 u = 0, \quad 0 < r < a, \quad (22)$$

$$u = \frac{1}{4\pi a}, \quad r = a, \quad (23)$$

$$u \simeq -\frac{1}{4\pi r} + O(1), \quad \text{as } r \rightarrow 0. \quad (24)$$

It will be helpful to put  $u(r) = v(r)/r$  and to find the ode satisfied by  $v(r)$ . Hence show directly that the solution is not unique if  $k = \pi/a$ .

**Solution 4** *The difference between 2 solutions with the same Dirichlet data satisfies*

$$\nabla^2 u + \lambda u = 0, \quad \mathbf{x} \in D \quad (25)$$

$$u = 0, \quad \mathbf{x} \in \partial D. \quad (26)$$

*Multiply the pde by  $u$ , and integrate over  $D$ . There is a vanishing boundary term, together with*

$$\int_D -|\nabla u|^2 + \lambda u^2 dV.$$

*If  $u$  satisfies the pde, then this must vanish; however if  $\lambda < 0$ , and  $u$  is not identically zero, this is strictly negative. Hence  $u$  must be zero throughout  $D$ .*

*For finite domains, this result is not the best possible; rather the solution is unique if  $\lambda < \lambda_0$ , the smallest eigenvalue of  $-\nabla^2$  in  $D$ . So in the cube of side  $a$ , in 3 dimensions,  $\lambda_0 = 3(\pi/a)^2$ .*

**ii** *In the ball of radius  $a$ , with  $\lambda = k^2$ , the radially symmetric solution satisfies:*

$$r^{-2} \frac{d}{dr} r^2 \frac{du}{dr} + k^2 u = 0, \quad 0 < r < a. \quad (27)$$

*Put  $u(r) = v(r)/r$ . So*

$$\frac{d^2 v}{dr^2} + k^2 v = 0, \quad 0 < r < a. \quad (28)$$

*The b.c.'s are  $v(0) = -1/(4\pi)$ , so  $u$  is close to the free space Green's function for the Laplace equation, as  $r \rightarrow 0$ , and  $v(a) = 1/(4\pi)$ , so*

$$v = -1/(4\pi) \cos(kr) + A \sin(kr) \quad (29)$$

with

$$v(a) = -1/(4\pi) \cos(ka) + A \sin(ka) = 1/(4\pi). \quad (30)$$

Thus

$$A = 1/(4\pi) \frac{\cos(ka) + 1}{\sin(ka)}. \quad (31)$$

*This obviously fails if  $k = \pi/a$ , when numerator and denominator both vanish; any value for  $A$  will do in this case.*

**5** Show how the method of images may be used to solve the Dirichlet problem for Laplace's equation in a two-dimensional wedge-shaped domain between two straight lines meeting at an angle  $\alpha$ , for certain values of  $\alpha$ .

**Hint** - it is necessary to use multiple images. What values of  $\alpha$  can be treated in this way?

What image systems would be needed if instead we had Neumann conditions on one or both lines?

Hence solve Laplace's equation in the quarter-plane  $x > 0, y > 0$ , with Dirichlet conditions on the two axes and infinity:

$$u = 1 \quad \text{on } y = 0, \quad 0 < x < 1 \quad (32)$$

$$u = 0 \quad \text{otherwise.} \quad (33)$$

$$u \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{as } (x^2 + y^2) \rightarrow \infty. \quad (34)$$

**Solution 5** In polar coordinates, with the origin at the vertex, if the free-space Green's function is

$$G_0(r, \theta, r', \theta')$$

we introduce images by repeated reflection in the two half-lines  $\theta = 0, \theta = \alpha$ . These reflections are given by the two maps  $\theta \rightarrow -\theta$ , and  $\theta \rightarrow 2\alpha - \theta$  respectively.

These images give

$$G(r, \theta, r', \theta') = G_0(r, \theta, r', \theta') \quad (35)$$

$$-G_0(r, -\theta, r', \theta') - G_0(r, 2\alpha - \theta, r', \theta') \quad (36)$$

$$+G_0(r, 2\alpha + \theta, r', \theta') + G_0(r, -2\alpha + \theta, r', \theta') \dots \quad (37)$$

The sum is periodic in  $\theta$  with period  $2\alpha$ , corresponding to a double reflection, but also periodic with period  $2\pi$ . Hence, if we are to ensure that the system of images is finite, without images in the original wedge, we find  $2\pi$  must be an even integer multiple of  $\alpha$ ,  $\alpha = \pi/n$  say. (3 marks)

Neumann problems can be treated in the same way, but the sum must then be even under each reflection, so each term has a plus sign. (2 marks)

In the quarter-plane,  $n = 2$  and we need 3 images. The Green's function we need here is

$$G(x', y', z'; x, y, 0) = \frac{1}{4\pi} (\ln((x - x')^2 + (y - y')^2) - \ln((x + x')^2 + (y - y')^2)) \quad (38)$$

$$- \ln((x - x')^2 + (y + y')^2) + \ln((x + x')^2 + (y + y')^2)) \quad (39)$$

The first term is the free-space Green's function, the second and third are its reflections under  $x \rightarrow -x$  and  $y \rightarrow -y$ , while the fourth term is the double reflection in both planes. The solution of the given problem is then

$$u(x', y') = \int_0^1 \frac{\partial G}{\partial n}(x', y', x, 0) dx, \quad (40)$$

Then, with

$$\frac{\partial G}{\partial n} \Big|_{y=0} = \frac{y'}{\pi} \left( \frac{1}{(x - x')^2 + y'^2} - \frac{1}{(x + x')^2 + y'^2} \right) \quad (41)$$

*we get*

$$u(x', y') = \frac{1}{\pi} \left( \tan^{-1} \left( \frac{y'}{x' - 1} \right) - 2 \tan^{-1} \left( \frac{y'}{x'} \right) + \tan^{-1} \left( \frac{y'}{x' + 1} \right) \right)$$

*It can easily be checked geometrically that this satisfies the boundary conditions.  
(4 marks)*

**6** Using the method of images, construct the Green's function of the Neumann problem for Laplace's equation in the half-space  $D = \{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 : z > 0\}$ . Hence solve

$$\nabla^2 u = 0, \quad \mathbf{x} \in D \quad (42)$$

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial z} = 1 - x^2 - y^2, \quad x^2 + y^2 < 1, \quad z = 0 \quad (43)$$

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial z} = 0, \quad x^2 + y^2 > 1, \quad z = 0, \quad (44)$$

and evaluate the resulting integral on the  $z$ -axis.

**Solution 6** *The Neumann Green's function is:*

$$G(x, y, z; x', y', z') =$$

$$-\frac{1}{4\pi} \left( \frac{1}{\sqrt{(x-x')^2 + (y-y')^2 + (z-z')^2}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{(x-x')^2 + (y-y')^2 + (z+z')^2}} \right)$$

which is even in  $z$ . Integrate  $u\nabla^2 G - G\nabla^2 u$  over the upper half-space  $z > 0$ , getting  $u(x', y', z')$ . By the divergence theorem, this is equal to the surface integral

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u \frac{\partial G}{\partial n} - G \frac{\partial u}{\partial n} \quad dx dy$$

Now  $\partial/\partial n = -\partial/\partial z$ , and  $\partial G/\partial z|_{z=0} = 0$ . Thus

$$u(x', y', z') = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} G(x, y, 0; x', y', z') \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \quad dx dy.$$

Hence

$$\begin{aligned} u(0, 0, z') &= \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} G(x, y, 0; 0, 0, z') \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \quad dx dy. \\ &= -\frac{1}{4\pi} \int_{\theta=0}^{2\pi} \int_{r=0}^1 \frac{2}{\sqrt{r^2 + z'^2}} \quad r dr d\theta \\ &= -\int_{r=0}^1 \frac{1}{\sqrt{r^2 + z'^2}} \quad r dr \\ &= -\int_{\rho=0}^1 \frac{1}{2\sqrt{\rho + z'^2}} \quad d\rho \\ &= -[\sqrt{\rho + z'^2}]_0^1 = -(\sqrt{1 + z'^2} - z'). \end{aligned}$$

This plainly has the correct  $z'$  derivative at  $z'=0$ .

7 Solve the heat equation

$$u_t = u_{xx} \quad (45)$$

with Neumann (insulating) boundary conditions  $u_x = 0$  on the ends of the interval  $[0, \pi]$ , and initial condition

$$u(x, 0) = \delta(x - \pi/2), \quad (46)$$

in two different ways,

- (i) in terms of Green's functions, using the method of images, and
- (ii) in terms of a Fourier cosine series, by separation of variables.

Write these solutions in terms of two of the four theta functions, defined by:

$$\theta_4(s, q) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n q^{n^2} \cos(2ns), \quad (47)$$

and

$$\theta_2(s, q) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} q^{(n+1/2)^2} \cos((2n+1)s), \quad (48)$$

where  $q$  is chosen appropriately in each case. Hence, using the uniqueness theorem, derive the *Jacobi imaginary transformation* formula which relates  $\theta_2$  and  $\theta_4$  for different values of  $q$ . Such formulae are important in the theory of elliptic functions, as these may be written as quotients of theta functions.

*See Lawden: Elliptic Functions and Applications, or other texts on elliptic functions, for further information.*

**Solution 7** This heat equn can be solved in 2 ways. (i)By separation of variables: the solution must be a sum of terms like  $X(x)T(t)$ , satisfying

$$T_t/T = X_{xx}/X = \text{constant}. \quad (49)$$

Now  $X$  must be  $\cos(2nx)$ ,  $n$  integer, to satisfy the Neumann boundary conditions at  $x = 0$  and  $x = \pi$ , and we get

$$u(x, t) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n \cos(2nx) \exp(-4n^2t). \quad (50)$$

At  $t = 0$  we get

$$\delta(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (a_n \cos(2nx)), \quad (51)$$

so on multiplying by  $\cos(2nx)$  or 1, and integrating, we find  $a_n\pi/2 = \cos(n\pi) = (-1)^n$ , and  $b_n = 0$ , and  $a_0\pi = 1$ .

Thus

$$u(x, t) = \frac{1}{\pi} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n \cos(2n)x \exp(-4n^2t) = \frac{1}{\pi} \theta_4(x, t). \quad (52)$$

(ii) Alternatively, using Green's functions and the method of images, letting each image of the  $\delta$ -function evolve into a copy of the free-space Green's function centred at  $(2n + 1)\pi/2$ , we have:

$$\begin{aligned}
u(x, t) &= \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \exp(-(x - (2n + 1)\pi/2)^2/4t)/\sqrt{4\pi t} \\
&= \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \exp(-x^2 + (2n + 1)\pi x - (2n + 1)^2\pi^2/4)/\sqrt{4\pi t} \\
&= \exp(-x^2/4t) \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \exp\left(\frac{(2n + 1)x\pi}{4t}\right) \exp\left(-\left(n + \frac{1}{2}\right)^2\pi^2/t\right)/\sqrt{4\pi t} \\
&= \exp(-x^2/4t) \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \cosh\left(\frac{(2n + 1)x\pi}{4t}\right) \exp\left(-\left(n + \frac{1}{2}\right)^2\pi^2/t\right)/\sqrt{4\pi t} \\
&= \exp(-x^2/4t)/\sqrt{4\pi t} \theta_2\left(\frac{-ix\pi}{4t}, \frac{\pi^2}{4t}\right),
\end{aligned}$$

where we have used the evenness of cosh to symmetrise the sum in the last step. Since these 2 expressions solve the same equation with the same boundary

conditions, they must be equal by the uniqueness theorem. This gives the transformation formula required, which relates values of  $\theta_3$  for large and small values of its second argument.

**8\*** Solve

$$u_t = u_{xx} \quad (53)$$

**i** on the line with the initial condition:

$$u(x, 0) = \frac{1}{2a}, \quad |x| < a, \quad (54)$$

$$u(x, 0) = 0, \quad |x| > a, \quad (55)$$

and describe the limit  $a \rightarrow 0$ ;

**ii** and, on the half-line  $x > 0$ , with the boundary and initial conditions:

$$u(x, 0) = 0, \quad (56)$$

$$u(0, t) = 1. \quad (57)$$

**Solution 8\* (i)** As in notes, using the Green's function  $G(x, t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{4\pi t}} \exp(-x^2/(4t))$ , we get

$$u(x, t) = \quad (58)$$

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} u(x', 0)G(x - x', t)dx' = \quad (59)$$

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{4\pi t}} \int_{-a}^a \frac{1}{2a} \exp(-(x - x')^2/4t)dx' = \quad (60)$$

$$\frac{1}{2a} \frac{1}{\sqrt{4\pi t}} \int_{-(x+a)}^{(a-x)} \exp(-(x')^2/4t)dx' = \quad (61)$$

$$\frac{1}{2a\sqrt{\pi}} (\operatorname{erf}((a - x)/\sqrt{4t}) - \operatorname{erf}(-(a + x)/\sqrt{4t})), \quad (62)$$

where  $\operatorname{erf}(x) = 2/\sqrt{\pi} \int_0^x \exp(-t^2)dt$ . As  $a \rightarrow 0$ ,  $u(x, t) \rightarrow G(x, t)$ .

**(ii)** Here we need  $G(x, x', t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{4\pi t}} (\exp(-(x - x')^2/(4t)) - \exp(-(x + x')^2/(4t)))$ , so that:

$$u(x, t) = \int_0^{\infty} u(x', 0)G(x - x', t)dx' - \int_0^t u(0, t') \frac{\partial G(x, t - t')}{\partial x} = \quad (63)$$

$$\int_0^t \frac{1}{\sqrt{4\pi}} \frac{x}{(t - t')^{3/2}} \exp(-\frac{x^2}{4(t - t')}) dt'. \quad (64)$$

Now put  $\tau = x/(2\sqrt{t - t'})$ ; the result becomes:

$$\int_{\tau=x/(2\sqrt{t})}^{\infty} \frac{2}{\sqrt{\pi}} \exp(-\tau^2) d\tau,$$

that is

$$u = (1 - \operatorname{erf}(\frac{x}{2\sqrt{t}})).$$

9 Consider the nonlinear diffusion equation

$$u_t = u^n u_{xx}, \quad (65)$$

in the domain  $t > 0$ ,  $0 < x < 1$ , with the initial and boundary conditions:

$$u(x, 0) = f(x), \quad (66)$$

$$u(0, t) = u(1, t) = 0. \quad (67)$$

If  $n$  is a positive integer, and  $f(x)$  is square-integrable, show that if

$$E = \int_0^1 u^2 dx, \quad (68)$$

then

$$\frac{dE}{dt} \leq 0, \quad (69)$$

provided that  $n$  is even. Discuss why the problem may not be well-posed for odd  $n$ ; show that  $E(t)$  can increase in this case. Discuss the generalisation to more than one space dimension.

**Solution 9** Multiply the equation by  $2u$ , so that:

$$(u^2)_t = 2u^{n+1}u_{xx} \quad (70)$$

Hence on integrating by parts, over the interval  $0 < x < 1$ ,

$$\frac{dE}{dt} = -2(n+1) \int_0^1 u^n u_x^2 dx. \quad (71)$$

If  $n$  is even, the rhs is negative, and  $E$  is a decreasing function of time. However the sign of the integrand on the right is not definite for odd  $n$ . In the latter case,  $E$  may increase if  $u$  is somewhere negative; indeed, linearising about some negative constant  $u_0$ , with  $u = u_0 + \epsilon u_1$ , where  $0 < \epsilon \ll 1$ , we see that  $u_1$  satisfies a *backwards* heat equation, which is ill-posed. We would expect solutions to grow without bound in this case, in any region where  $u$  is negative. Analogous results can be obtained using the divergence theorem in more than one space dimension.

**10** *Self-similar solutions* Find  $m, n$  such that the ansatz  $u(x, t) = t^m f(xt^n)$  satisfies Burger's equation:

$$u_t + uu_x = u_{xx}. \quad (72)$$

Find the ordinary differential equation satisfied by  $f$ , and hence solve Burger's equation with

$$u(0, t) = -2/(\pi t)^{1/2} \quad (73)$$

$$u \rightarrow 0, \quad x \rightarrow \infty. \quad (74)$$

**Solution 10** Put  $\xi = xt^n$ ,  $u = t^m f(xt^n)$ , in the equation; we get:

$$mt^{m-1}f + nxt^{m+n-1}f' + t^{2m+n}ff' = t^{m+2n}f''. \quad (75)$$

Rearranging,

$$mf + n\xi f' + t^{m+n+1}ff' = t^{2n+1}f''. \quad (76)$$

Equate coefficients of  $t$  to get  $n = m = -1/2$ .

$$u(x, t) = f(x/t^{1/2})/t^{1/2}. \quad (77)$$

Then

$$f'' - ff' + 1/2\xi f' + 1/2f = 0 \quad (78)$$

Integrating, with  $f \rightarrow 0$  as  $x \rightarrow \infty$ :

$$f' - f^2/2 + 1/2\xi f = 0. \quad (79)$$

Put  $f = -2\psi'/\psi$  so that

$$\psi'' + 1/2\xi\psi' = 0, \quad (80)$$

giving  $\psi' = \exp(-\xi^2/4)$ . The constant of integration is irrelevant here. Hence

$$\psi = \sqrt{\pi}\text{erf}(\xi/2) + A. \quad (81)$$

Thus we get

$$f = -2 \frac{\exp(-\xi^2/4)}{\sqrt{\pi}\text{erf}(\xi/2) + A}. \quad (82)$$

At  $\xi = 0$ , this reduces, with the condition on  $x = 0$ , to  $f = -2/A = -2/\sqrt{\pi}$ . Finally, we obtain

$$u = -\frac{2}{\sqrt{t}} \frac{\exp(-x^2/(4t))}{\sqrt{\pi}\text{erf}(\xi/2) + \sqrt{\pi}}. \quad (83)$$