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The Strict AKNS Hierarchy: Its Structure and Solutions

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We discuss an integrable hierarchy of compatible Lax equations that is obtained by a wider deformation of a commutative algebra in the loop space of $\text{sl}_2$ than that in the AKNS case and whose Lax equations are based on a different decomposition of this loop space. We show the compatibility of these Lax equations and that they are equivalent to a set of zero curvature relations. We present a linearization of the system and conclude by giving a wide construction of solutions of this hierarchy.

1. Introduction

Integrable hierarchies often occur as the evolution equations of the generators of a deformation of a commutative subalgebra inside some Lie algebra $\mathfrak{g}$. The deformation and the evolution equations are determined by a splitting of $\mathfrak{g}$ in the direct sum of two Lie subalgebras, like in the Adler-Kostant-Symes Theorem (see [1]). This gives then rise to a compatible set of Lax equations, a so-called hierarchy, and the simplest nontrivial equation often determines the name of the hierarchy. The hierarchy we discuss here corresponds to a somewhat different splitting of an algebra of $\text{sl}_2$ loops that with respect to the usual decomposition yields the AKNS hierarchy. Following the terminology used in similar situations (see [2]), we use the name strict AKNS hierarchy for the system of Lax equations corresponding to this different decomposition.

The letters AKNS refer to the following fact: Ablowitz et al. showed (see [3]) that the initial value problem of the following system of equations for two complex functions $q$ and $r$ depending on the variables $x$ and $t$

\begin{align}
    i \frac{\partial}{\partial t} q(x,t) &= i q_t = -\frac{1}{2} q_{xx} + q^2 r, \\
    i \frac{\partial}{\partial t} r(x,t) &= r_t = \frac{1}{2} r_{xx} - qr^2
\end{align}

could be solved with the Inverse Scattering Transform and that is why this system (1) is called the AKNS equations. It can be rewritten in a zero curvature form for $2 \times 2$-matrices as follows: consider the matrices

\begin{align}
P_1 &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & q \\ r & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \]
P_2 &= \begin{pmatrix} -\frac{i}{2} q r & \frac{i}{2} q_x \\ \frac{i}{2} r_x & \frac{i}{2} q r \end{pmatrix}.
\end{align}

A direct computation shows that the following identities hold for them:

\begin{align}
\frac{\partial}{\partial x} (P_2) &= \begin{pmatrix} i/2 (q_x r + qr_x) & i/2 q_{xx} \\ -i/2 r_{xx} & -i/2 (q_x r + qr_x) \end{pmatrix}, \\
[P_2, P_1] &= \begin{pmatrix} i/2 (q_x r + qr_x) & iq^2 r \\ -iqr^2 & -i/2 (q_x r + qr_x) \end{pmatrix}.
\end{align}

By combining them, one sees that the AKNS equations are equivalent to

\begin{align}
\frac{\partial}{\partial t} (P_1) - \frac{\partial}{\partial x} (P_2) - [P_2, P_1] = 0.
\end{align}

In the next section, we will show that (4) is the simplest compatibility condition of a system of Lax equations that
consequently carries the name AKNS hierarchy (see [4]). Besides that, we introduce here also another system of Lax equations for a more general deformation of the basic generator of the commutative algebra. It relates to a different decomposition of the relevant Lie algebra. Since its analogue for the KP hierarchy is called the strict KP hierarchy, we use in the present context the term strict AKNS hierarchy. We show first of all that this new system is compatible and equivalent with a set of zero curvature relations. Further, we describe suitable linearizations that can be used to construct solutions of both hierarchies. We conclude by constructing solutions of both hierarchies.

2. The AKNS Hierarchy and Its Strict Version

We present here an algebraic description of the AKNS hierarchy and its strict version that underlines the deformation character of these hierarchies as pointed out in Introduction. At (4), one has to deal with $2 \times 2$ matrices whose coefficients were polynomial expressions of a number of complex functions and their derivatives with respect to some parameters. The same is true for the other equations in both hierarchies. We formalize this as follows: our starting point is a commutative complex algebra that should be seen as the source from which the coefficients of the $2 \times 2$-matrices are taken. We will work in the Lie algebra $sl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$ consisting of all elements

$$X = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} X_i z^i,$$

with all $X_i \in sl_2(R)$ (5)

and the bracket

$$[X, Y] = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} \sum_{j=-\infty}^{M} X_j z^j \sum_{i=-\infty}^{\infty} Y_i z^i \sum_{i=-\infty}^{\infty} z^{i-j}.$$ (6)

We will also make use of the slightly more general Lie algebra $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$, where the coefficients in the $z$-series from (5) are taken from $gl_2(R)$ and the bracket is given by the same formula. In the Lie algebra $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$, we decompose elements in two ways. The first is as follows:

$$X = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} X_i z^i = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{-1} X_i z^i + \sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} X_i z^i = (X)_{>0} + (X)_{<0}.$$ (7)

and this induces the splitting

$$gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}] = gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0} \oplus gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0},$$ (8)

where the two Lie subalgebras $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0}$ and $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$ are given by

$$gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0} = \left\{ X \in gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}] \mid X = (X)_{>0} = \sum_{i=0}^{N} X_i z^i \right\},$$

$$gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0} = \left\{ X \in gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}] \mid X = (X)_{<0} = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} X_i z^i \right\}.$$ (9)

By restriction, it leads to a similar decomposition for $sl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$, which is relevant for the AKNS hierarchy. The second way to decompose elements of $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$ is

$$X = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} X_i z^i = \sum_{i=1}^{N} X_i z^i + \sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} X_i z^i$$ (10)

This yields the splitting

$$gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}] = gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0} \oplus gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}.$$ (11)

By restricting it to $sl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$, we get a similar decomposition for this Lie algebra, which relates, as we will see further on, to the strict version of the AKNS hierarchy. The Lie subalgebras $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0}$ and $gl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$ in (11) are defined in a similar way.

Both hierarchies correspond to evolution equations for deformations of the generators of a commutative Lie algebra in the first component. Denote the matrix $(\begin{smallmatrix} a & b \\ 0 & c \end{smallmatrix})$ by $Q_0$. Inside $sl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0}$, this commutative complex Lie subalgebra $C_0$ is chosen to be the Lie subalgebra with the basis $(Q_0 z^m \mid m \geq 0)$ and in $sl_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$, our choice will be the Lie subalgebra $C_1$ with the basis $(Q_0 z^m \mid m \geq 1)$. In the first case that we work with $C_0$, we assume that the algebra $R$ possesses a set of commuting $C$-linear derivations $\partial_m: R \to R$, where each $\partial_m$ should be seen as the derivation corresponding to the flow generated by $Q_0 z^m$. The data $(R, \{\partial_m \mid m \geq 0\})$ is also called a setting for the AKNS hierarchy. In the case that we work with the decomposition (11), we merely need a set of commuting $C$-linear derivations $\partial_m: R \to R$, $m > 1$, with the same interpretation. Staying in the same line of terminology, we call the data $(R, \{\partial_m \mid m \geq 1\})$ a setting for the strict AKNS hierarchy.

Example 1. Examples of settings for the respective hierarchies are the algebra of complex polynomials $C[t_m]$ in the variables $\{t_m \mid m \geq 0\}$ and $\{t_m \mid m \geq 1\}$, respectively, or the
formal power series $C[[t_m]]$ in the same variables, with both algebras equipped with the derivations $\partial_m = \partial/\partial t_m$, $m \geq 0$, in the AKNS setup or $\partial_m = \partial/\partial m$, $m \geq 1$, in the strict AKNS case.

We let each derivation $\partial_m$ occurring in some setting act coefficient-wise on the matrices from $\text{gl}_2(R)$ and that defines then a derivation of this algebra. The same holds for the extension to $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$ defined by

$$\partial_m (X) := \sum_{j=-\infty}^{N} \partial_m (X_j) z^j. \quad (13)$$

We have now sufficient ingredients to discuss the AKNS hierarchy and its strict version. In the AKNS case, our interest is in certain deformations of the Lie algebra $C_0$ obtained by conjugating with elements of the group corresponding to $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$. At the strict version, we are interested in certain deformations of the Lie algebra $C_0$ obtained by conjugating with elements from a group linked to $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$.

Note that for each $X \in \text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$ the exponential map yields a well-defined element of the form

$$\exp (X) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} X^k = \text{Id} + Y, \quad Y \in \text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}, \quad \quad \quad (14)$$

and with the formula for the logarithm one retrieves $X$ back from $Y$. One verifies directly that the elements of the form (14) form a group with respect to multiplication and this we see as the group $G_{<0}$ corresponding to $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$.

In the case of the Lie subalgebra $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$, one cannot move back and forth between the Lie algebra and its group. Nevertheless, one can assign a proper group to this Lie algebra. A priori, the exponential $\exp(Y)$ of an element $Y \in \text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$ does not have to define an element in $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$. That requires convergence conditions. However, if it does, then it belongs to

$$G_{<0} = \left\{ K = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} K_j z^{-j} \mid \text{all } K_j \in \text{gl}_2(R), K_0 \right\}, \quad \quad \quad (15)$$

where $\text{gl}_2(R)^*$ denotes the elements in $\text{gl}_2(R)$ that have a multiplicative inverse in $\text{gl}_2(R)$. It is a direct verification that $G_{<0}$ is a group and we see it as a proper group corresponding to the Lie algebra $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$. In fact, $G_{<0}$ is isomorphic to the semidirect product of $G_{<0}$ and $\text{gl}_2(R)^*$.

Now there holds the following.

**Lemma 2.** The group $G_{<0}$ acts by conjugation on $\text{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$.

**Proof.** Take first any $g \in G_{<0}$. Then, there is an $X \in \text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}](\gamma)$ such that $g = \exp (X)$. Now there holds for every $Y \in \text{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$

$$gYg^{-1} = \exp (X) Y \exp (-X) = e^{\text{ad}(X)} (Y) = Y + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k!} \text{ad} (X)^k (Y) \quad (16)$$

and this shows that the coefficients for the different powers of $z$ in this expression are commutators of elements of $\text{gl}_2(R)$ and $\text{sl}_2(R)$ and that proves the claim for elements from $G_{<0}$. Since conjugation with an element from $\text{gl}_2(R)^*$ maps $\text{sl}_2(R)$ to itself, the same holds for $\text{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$. This proves the full claim.

Next we have a look at the different deformations. The deformations of $C_0$ by elements of $G_{<0}$ are determined by that of $Q_0$. Therefore, we focus on that element and we consider for some $g = \exp (X) = \exp (\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} X_i z^{-i}) \in G_{<0}$ the deformation

$$Q = g Q_0 g^{-1} = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} Q_i z^{-i} \quad (17)$$

of $Q_0$. From this formula, we see directly that if each $X_i = (-\alpha_i \beta_i, \gamma_i \alpha_i)$, $i = 1, 2, \ldots$, then

$$Q_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 2i \beta_1 \\ -2i \gamma_1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad Q_2 = \begin{pmatrix} q_{11} & q_{12} \\ q_{21} & q_{22} \end{pmatrix} \quad (18)$$

where $\text{gl}_2(R)^*$ denotes the elements in $\text{gl}_2(R)$ that have a multiplicative inverse in $\text{gl}_2(R)$. It is a direct verification that $G_{<0}$ is a group and we see it as a proper group corresponding to the Lie algebra $\text{gl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$. In fact, $G_{<0}$ is isomorphic to the semidirect product of $G_{<0}$ and $\text{gl}_2(R)^*$.

In particular, we get in this way that $q_{11} = -i(q_{r2}/2)$ and $q_{22} = i(q_{r2}/2)$. Since $Q$ is the deformation of $Q_0$ and $\text{Id} z$ is central, the deformation of each $Q_0 z^m$, $m \in Z$, is given by $Q z^m$. The deformation of the Lie algebra $C_i$ by elements from $G_{<0}$ is basically determined by that of the element $Q_0 z$. So we focus on the deformation of this element. Using the same notations as at the deformation of $Q_0$ by $G_{<0}$, we get that the deformation of $Q_0 z$ by a $Kg \in G_{<0}$, with $K \in \text{gl}_2(R)^*$, and $g \in G_{<0}$, looks like

$$Z = K g Q_0 zg^{-1} k^{-1} := \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} K Q_i K^{-1} z^{-i} = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} Z_i z^{-i} \quad (19)$$

Consequently, the corresponding deformation of each $Q_0 z^m$, $m \geq 1$, is $z Z z^{-1}$. 

\[ Z = Z_0 z + [K X_1 K^{-1}, Z_0] + \cdots. \]
Now we are looking for deformations $Q$ of the form (17) such that the evolution with respect to the $\partial_m$ satisfies the following: for all $m \geq 0,$

$$\partial_m(Q) = \left([Qz^m]_{>0}, Q\right) - \left([Qz^m]_{<0}, Q\right).$$

(20)

where the second identity follows from the fact that all $[Qz^m]$ commute. Equations (20) are called the Lax equations of the AKNS hierarchy and the deformation $Q$ satisfying these equations is called a solution of the hierarchy. Note that $Q = Q_0$ is a solution of the AKNS hierarchy and it is called the trivial one. AKNS equation (4) occurs among the compatibility equations of this system, as we will see further on. Note that (20) for $m = 0$ is simply $\partial_0(Q) = [Q_0, Q].$ Therefore, if $\partial_0 = \partial/\partial t_0$ and both $e^{t_0}$ and $e^{z^2}$ belong to the algebra $R$ of matrix coefficients, then we can introduce the loop $\tilde{Q} \in \mathfrak{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]$ given by

$$\tilde{Q} = \exp(-t_0Q_0)Q \exp(t_0Q_0) = \sum_{k \geq 0} \exp(-t_0Q_0)Q_k \exp(t_0Q_0)z^k,$n (21)

which is easily seen to satisfy $\partial_0(Q) = 0.$ This handles then the dependence of $Q$ of $t_0.$

Among the deformations $Z$ of the form (19), we look for $Z$ such that their evolution with respect to $\partial_m$ satisfies the following: for all $m \geq 1,$

$$\partial_m(Z) = \left([Zz^{m-1}]_{>0}, Z\right) - \left([Zz^{m-1}]_{<0}, Z\right),$$

(22)

where the second identity follows from the fact that all $[Zz^{m-1}]$ commute. Since (22) correspond to the strict cut-off (10), they are called the Lax equations of the strict AKNS hierarchy and the deformation $Z$ is a solution of this hierarchy. Again there is at least one solution $Z = Q_0z.$ It is called the trivial solution of the hierarchy.

For both systems (20) and (22), one can speak of compatibility. Namely, there holds the following result.

**Proposition 3.** Both sets of Lax equations (20) and (22) are the so-called compatible systems; that is, the projections $[B_m := (Qz^m)]_{>0} | m \geq 0$ of a solution $Q$ to (20) satisfy the zero curvature relations

$$\partial_{m_1}(B_{m_2}) - \partial_{m_2}(B_{m_1}) - [B_{m_1}, B_{m_2}] = 0$$

(23)

and the projections $[C_m := (Zz^{m-1})]_{>0} | m \geq 1$ corresponding to a solution $Z$ to (22) satisfy the zero curvature relations

$$\partial_{m_1}(C_{m_2}) - \partial_{m_2}(C_{m_1}) - [C_{m_1}, C_{m_2}] = 0.$$ (24)

**Proof.** The idea is to show that the left-hand side of (23) and (24), respectively, belongs to

$$\text{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{>0} \cap \text{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$$

(25)

and thus has to be zero. We give the proof for $[C_m]$; that for $[B_m]$ is similar and is left to the reader. The inclusion in the first factor is clear as both $C_m$ and $\partial_0(C_m)$ belong to the Lie subalgebra $\mathfrak{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}.$ To show the other one, we use Lax equations (22). Note that the same Lax equations hold for all $[z^n Z | N \geq 0]:$

$$\partial_m(z^n Z) = \left((Zz^{m-1})_{>0}, z^n Z\right).$$ (26)

By substituting $C_m = z^{-m-1}Z - (z^{-m-1}Z)_{<0},$ we get the identities for

$$\partial_{m_1}(C_{m_2}) - \partial_{m_2}(C_{m_1})$$

$$= \partial_{m_1}((z^{-m_1-1}Z) - \partial_{m_1}((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0})$$

$$- \partial_{m_2}((z^{-m_2-1}Z) + \partial_{m_2}((z^{-m_2-1}Z)_{<0})$$

$$= [C_{m_1}, z^{-m_2-1}Z] - [C_{m_1}, z^{-m_2-1}Z]$$

$$- \partial_{m_1}((z^{-m_2-1}Z)_{<0}) + \partial_{m_2}((z^{-m_2-1}Z)_{<0})$$

and

$$[C_{m_1}, C_{m_2}]$$

$$= [z^{-m_1-1}Z - (z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}, z^{-m_1-1}Z - (z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}]$$

$$= - \left((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}, z^{-m_1-1}Z\right)$$

(28)

$$+ \left((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}, z^{-m_1-1}Z\right)$$

$$+ \left((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}, (z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}\right).$$

Taking into account the second identity in (22), we see that the left-hand side of (24) is equal to

$$- \partial_{m_1}((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}) + \partial_{m_2}((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0})$$

$$- \left((z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}, (z^{-m_1-1}Z)_{<0}\right).$$ (29)

This element belongs to the Lie subalgebra $\mathfrak{sl}_2(R)[z, z^{-1}]_{<0}$ and that proves the claim.

Reversely, we have the following.

**Proposition 4.** Suppose we have a deformation $Q$ of the type (17) or a deformation $Z$ of the form (19). Then, there holds the following:

1. Assume that the projections $[B_m := (Qz^m)]_{>0} | m \geq 0$ satisfy the zero curvature relations (23). Then, $Q$ is a solution of the AKNS hierarchy.

2. Similarly, if the projections $[C_m := (Zz^{m-1})]_{>0} | m \geq 1$ satisfy the zero curvature relations (24), then $Z$ is a solution of the strict AKNS hierarchy.
Proof. Again we prove the statement for $Z$; that for $Q$ is shown in a similar way. So, assume that there is one Lax equation (22) that does not hold. Then, there is an $m \geq 1$ such that
\[
\partial_m(Z) - [C_m, Z] = \sum_{j \leq k(m)} X_j z^j, \quad \text{with } X_{k(m)} \neq 0.
\] (30)

Since both $\partial_m(Z)$ and $[C_m, Z]$ are of order smaller than or equal to one in $z$, we know that $k(m) \leq 1$. Further, we can say that for all $N \geq 0$
\[
\partial_m(z^N Z) - [C_m, z^N Z] = \sum_{j \leq k(m)} X_j z^{j+N},
\] (31)

with $X_{k(m)} \neq 0$

and we see by letting $N$ go to infinity that the right-hand side can obtain any sufficiently large order in $z$. By the zero curvature relation for $N$ and $m$, we get for the left-hand side
\[
\partial_m(z^N Z) - [C_m, z^N Z]
= \partial_m(C_N) - [C_m, C_N] + \partial_m((z^N Z)_0) - [C_m, (z^N Z)_0],
\] (32)

and this last expression is of order smaller or equal to $m$ in $z$. This contradicts the unlimited growth in orders of $z$ of the right-hand side. Hence, all Lax equations (22) have to hold for $Z$. □

Because of the equivalence between Lax equations (20) for $Q$ and the zero curvature relations (23) for $\{B_m\}$, we call this last set of equations also the zero curvature form of the AKNS hierarchy. Similarly, the zero curvature relations (24) for $\{C_m\}$ are called the zero curvature form of the strict AKNS hierarchy.

Besides the zero curvature relations for the cut-off’s $\{B_m\}$ and $\{C_m\}$, respectively, corresponding to, respectively, a solution $Q$ of the AKNS hierarchy and a solution $Z$ of the strict AKNS hierarchy, also other parts satisfy such relations. Define
\[
A_m = B_m - Q z^m, \quad m \geq 0,
\]
\[
D_m = C_m - Z z^{m-1}, \quad m \geq 1.
\] (33)

Then, we have the following result.

**Corollary 5.** The following relations hold:

(i) The parts $\{A_m \mid m \geq 0\}$ of a solution $Q$ of the AKNS hierarchy satisfy
\[
\partial_m(A_m) - \partial_m(A_m) - [A_m, A_m] = 0.
\] (34)

(ii) The parts $\{D_m \mid m \geq 0\}$ of a solution $Z$ of the strict AKNS hierarchy satisfy
\[
\partial_m(D_m) - \partial_m(D_m) - [D_m, D_m] = 0.
\] (35)

Proof. Again we show the result only in the strict case. Note that $\{Z z^{m-1}\}$ satisfy Lax equations similar to $Z$:
\[
\partial_l(Z z^{m-1}) = [D_l, Z z^{m-1}], \quad l \geq 1.
\] (36)

Now we substitute in the zero curvature relations for $\{C_m\}$ everywhere the relation $C_m = D_m + Z z^{m-1}$ and use the Lax equations above and the fact that all $\{Z z^{m-1}\}$ commute. This gives the desired result.

To clarify the link with the AKNS equation, consider relation (23) for $m_1 = 2$ and $m_2 = 1$:
\[
\partial_2 (Q_0 z + Q_1) = \partial_1 (Q_0 z^2 + Q_1 z + Q_2) + [Q_2, Q_0 z + Q_1].
\] (37)

Then, this identity reduces in sl($R$)[z, z$^{-1}$]$_{>0}$, since $Q_0$ is constant, to the following two equalities:
\[
\partial_1 (Q_1) = [Q_0, Q_2],
\]
\[
\partial_2 (Q_1) = \partial_1 (Q_2) + [Q_2, Q_1].
\] (38)

The first gives an expression of the off-diagonal terms of $Q_2$ in the coefficients $q$ and $r$ of $Q_1$; that is,
\[
q_{12} = \frac{i}{2} \partial_1 (q),
\]
\[
q_{21} = -\frac{i}{2} \partial_1 (r),
\] (39)

and the second equation becomes AKNS equations (4), if one has $\partial_1 = \partial/\partial x$ and $\partial_2 = \partial/\partial t$.

3. The Linearization of Both Hierarchies

The zero curvature form of both hierarchies points at the possible existence of a linear system of which the zero curvature equations form the compatibility conditions. We present here such a system for each hierarchy. For the AKNS hierarchy, this system, the linearization of the AKNS hierarchy, is as follows: take a potential solution $Q$ of the form (17) and consider the system
\[
Q \psi = \psi Q_0,
\]
\[
\partial_m(\psi) = B_m \psi, \quad \forall m \geq 0, \quad B_m = (Q z^m)_{>0}.
\] (40)

Likewise, for a potential solution $Z$ of the strict AKNS hierarchy of the form (19), the linearization of the strict AKNS hierarchy is given by
\[
Z \varphi = \varphi Q_0 z,
\]
\[
\partial_m(\varphi) = C_m \varphi, \quad \forall m \geq 1, \quad C_m = (Z z^{m-1})_{>0}.
\] (41)

Before specifying $\psi$ and $\varphi$, we show the manipulations needed to derive the Lax equations of the hierarchy from their linearization. We do this for the strict AKNS hierarchy; for the
AKNS hierarchy one proceeds similarly. Apply $\partial_m$ to the first equation in (41) and use both equalities in (41) in the sequel:

$$\partial_m (Z\varphi - \varphi Q_0 z) = \partial_m (Z) \varphi + Z \partial_m (\varphi) - \partial_m (\varphi) Q_0 z = 0 = \partial_m (Z) \varphi + Z C_m \varphi - C_m \varphi Q_0 z \quad (42)$$

where

$$[\partial_m (Z) - [C_m, Z]] \varphi = 0.$$

Hence, if we can scratch $\varphi$ from (42), then we obtain the Lax equations of the strict AKNS hierarchy. To get the proper setup where all these manipulations make sense, we first have a look at the linearization for the trivial solutions $Q = Q_0$ and $Z = Q_0 z$. In the AKNS case, we have then

$$Q_0 \psi_0 = \psi_0 Q_0, \quad \partial_m (\psi_0) = Q_0 z^m \psi_0, \quad \forall m \geq 0 \quad (43)$$

and for its strict version

$$Q_0 z \psi_0 = \varphi_0 Q_0 z, \quad \partial_m (\psi_0) = Q_0 z^m \psi_0, \quad \forall m \geq 1. \quad (44)$$

Assuming that each derivation $\partial_m$ equals $\partial/\partial t_m$, one arrives for (43) at the solution

$$\psi_0 = \psi_0 (t, z) = \exp \left( \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} t_m Q_0 z^m \right), \quad (45)$$

where $t$ is the short hand notation for $\{t_m \mid m \geq 0\}$, and for (44) it leads to

$$\varphi_0 = \varphi_0 (t, z) = \exp \left( \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} t_m Q_0 z^m \right), \quad (46)$$

with $t = \{t_m \mid m \geq 1\}$.

In general, one needs in the linearizations ($\psi$) and ($\varphi$), respectively, a left action with elements like $Q, B_m, \text{ and } Z, C_m$ from $gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$, respectively, an action of all the $\partial_m$, and a right action of $Q_0 \text{ and } Q_0 z$, respectively. This can all be realized in suitable $gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$ modules that are perturbations of the trivial solutions $\psi_0 \text{ and } \varphi_0$. Consider in a AKNS setting

$$\mathcal{M}_0 = \left\{ (g(z)) \psi_0 = \left\{ \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} g_i z^i \right\} \psi_0 \mid g(z) \right\}, \quad (47)$$

and in a strict AKNS setting

$$\mathcal{M}_1 = \left\{ (g(z)) \varphi_0 = \left\{ \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} g_i z^i \right\} \varphi_0 \mid g(z) \right\}, \quad (48)$$

where the products $\{g(z)\} \psi_0 \text{ and } \{g(z)\} \varphi_0$ should be seen as formal and both factors should be kept separate. On both $\mathcal{M}_0 \text{ and } \mathcal{M}_1$, one can define the required actions: for each $h(z) \in gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$, define

$$h(z) \cdot \{g(z)\} \psi_0 := \{h(z) g(z)\} \psi_0 \quad (49)$$

respectively $h(z) \cdot \{g(z)\} \varphi_0 := \{h(z) g(z)\} \varphi_0$.

We define the right-hand action of $Q_0 \text{ and } Q_0 z$, respectively, by

$$\{g(z)\} \psi_0 Q_0 = \{g(z) Q_0\} \psi_0 \quad (50)$$

and the action of each $\partial_m$ by

$$\partial_m \{g(z)\} \psi_0 = \left\{ \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} \partial_m (g_i) z^i + \left\{ \sum_{i=-\infty}^{N} g_i Q_0 z^{i+m} \right\} \right\} \psi_0, \quad (51)$$

Analogous to the terminology in the scalar case (see [5]), we call the elements of $\mathcal{M}_0 \text{ and } \mathcal{M}_1$ oscillating matrices. Note that both $\mathcal{M}_0 \text{ and } \mathcal{M}_1$ are free $gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$ modules with generators $\psi_0 \text{ and } \varphi_0$, respectively, because for each $h(z) \in gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$ we have

$$h(z) \cdot \psi_0 = h(z) \cdot \{1\} \psi_0 = \{h(z)\} \psi_0, \quad (52)$$

respectively $h(z) \cdot \varphi_0 = h(z) \cdot \{1\} \varphi_0 = \{h(z)\} \varphi_0$.

Hence, in order to be able to perform legally the scratching of $\psi = \{h(z)\} \psi_0$ or $\varphi = \{h(z)\} \varphi_0$, it is enough to find oscillating matrices such that $h(z)$ is invertible in $gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$. We will now introduce a collection of such elements that will occur at the construction of solutions of both hierarchies.

For $m = (m_1, m_2) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$, let $\delta(m) \in gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$ be given by

$$\delta(m) = \begin{pmatrix} z^{m_1} & 0 \\ 0 & z^{m_2} \end{pmatrix} \quad (53)$$

Then, $\delta(m)$ has $\delta(-m)$ as its inverse in $gl_2 (R) [z, z^{-1}]$ and the collection $\Delta = \{\delta(m) \mid m \in \mathbb{Z}^2\}$ forms a group. An element $\psi \in \mathcal{M}_0$ is called an oscillating matrix of type $\delta(m)$ if it has the form

$$\psi = \{h(z) \delta(m)\} \psi_0, \quad \text{with } h(z) \in G_{<0}. \quad (54)$$

These oscillating matrices are examples of elements of $\mathcal{M}_0$ for which the scratching procedure is valid. Let $Q$ be a potential solution of the AKNS hierarchy of the form (17). If there is an oscillating function $\psi$ of type $\delta(m)$ such that for $Q$ and $\psi$
(40) hold, then we call \( \psi \) a wave matrix of the AKNS hierarchy of type \( \delta(m) \). In particular, \( Q \) is then a solution of the AKNS hierarchy and the first equation in (40) implies

\[
Q h(z) \delta(m) = h(z) Q_0 \delta(m) \implies Q = h(z) Q_0 h(z)^{-1} ;
\]

(55)

in other words, the solution \( Q \) is totally determined by the wave matrix. Similarly, we call an element \( \varphi \in \mathcal{M}_1 \) an oscillating matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) if it has the form

\[
\varphi = \{ h(z) \delta(m) \} \varphi_0 , \quad \text{with } h(z) \in G_{\varepsilon_0} .
\]

(56)

This type of oscillating matrices are examples of elements of \( \mathcal{M}_1 \) for which the scratching procedure is valid. Let \( Z \) be a potential solution of the strict AKNS hierarchy of the form (19). If there is an oscillating function \( \varphi \) of type \( \delta(m) \) in \( \mathcal{M}_1 \) such that for \( Z \) and \( \varphi \) (41) hold, then we call \( \varphi \) a wave matrix of the strict AKNS hierarchy of type \( \delta(m) \). In particular, \( Z \) is then a solution of the strict AKNS hierarchy and the first equation in (41) implies

\[
Z h(z) \delta(m) = h(z) Q_0 z \delta(m) \implies Z = h(z) Q_0 z h(z)^{-1} ,
\]

(57)

so that also here the wave matrix fully determines the solution.

For both hierarchies, there is a milder condition that is to be satisfied by oscillating matrices of a certain type, in order that they become a wave matrix of that hierarchy.

**Proposition 6.** Let \( \psi = \{ h(z) \delta(m) \} \psi_0 \) be an oscillating matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) in \( \mathcal{M}_0 \) and \( Q = h(z) Q_0 h(z)^{-1} \) the corresponding potential solution of the AKNS hierarchy. Similarly, let \( \varphi = \{ h(z) \delta(m) \} \varphi_0 \) be such a matrix in \( \mathcal{M}_1 \) with potential solution \( Z = h(z) Q_0 z h(z)^{-1} \).

(a) If there exists for each \( m \geq 0 \) an element \( M_m \in gl_2(R) \) such that

\[
\partial_m(\psi) = M_m \psi ,
\]

then each \( M_m = (Q z^m)_0 \) and \( \psi \) is a wave matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) for the AKNS hierarchy.

(b) If there exists for each \( m \geq 1 \) an element \( N_m \in gl_2(R) \) such that

\[
\partial_m(\varphi) = N_m \varphi ,
\]

then each \( N_m = (Z z^{m-1})_0 \) and \( \varphi \) is a wave matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) for the strict AKNS hierarchy.

Proof. We give the proof again for the strict AKNS case; the other one is similar. By using the fact that \( \mathcal{M}_1 \) is a free \( gl_2(R) \) module with generator \( \varphi_0 \) we can translate the relations \( \partial_m(\varphi) = N_m \varphi \) into equations in \( gl_2(R) \). This yields

\[
\partial_m(h(z))(h(z)) h(z)^{-1} + Z z^{m-1} = N_m .
\]

(60)

Projecting the right-hand side on \( gl_2(R) \) gives us the identity

\[
(Z z^{m-1})_0 = N_m
\]

(61)

we are looking for.

In the next section, we produce a context where we can construct wave matrices for both hierarchies in which the product is real.

### 4. The Construction of the Solutions

In this section, we will show how to construct a wide class of solutions of both hierarchies. This is done in the style of [6]. We first describe the group of loops we will work with. For each \( 0 < r < 1 \), let \( A_r \) be the annulus

\[
\{ z \mid z \in \mathbb{C}, \ r \leq |z| \leq 1/r \} .
\]

(62)

Following [7], we use the notation \( L_{an} GL_2(C) \) for the collection of holomorphic maps from some annulus \( A_r \) into \( GL_2(C) \). It is a group with respect to pointwise multiplication and contains in a natural way \( GL_2(C) \) as a subgroup as the collection of constant maps into \( GL_2(C) \). Other examples of elements in \( L_{an} GL_2(C) \) are the elements of \( \Delta \). However, \( L_{an} GL_2(C) \) is more than just a group; it is an infinite dimensional Lie group. Its manifold structure can be read off from its Lie algebra \( L_{an} gl_2(C) \) consisting of all holomorphic maps \( \gamma : U \rightarrow gl_2(C) \), where \( U \) is an open neighborhood of some annulus \( A_r \), \( 0 < r < 1 \). Since \( gl_2(C) \) is a Lie algebra, the space \( L_{an} GL_2(C) \) becomes a Lie algebra with respect to the pointwise commutator. Topologically, the space \( L_{an} gl_2(C) \) is the direct limit of all the spaces \( L_{an} gl_2(C) \), where this last space consists of all \( \gamma \) corresponding to the fixed annulus \( A_r \).

This Fourier expansion is used to make two different decompositions of the Lie algebra \( L_{an} gl_2(C) \). The first is the analogue for the present Lie algebra \( L_{an} gl_2(C) \) of decomposition (8) of \( gl_2(R) \) that lies at the basis of the Lax equations of the AKNS hierarchy. Namely, consider the subspaces

\[
L_{an} gl_2(C)_\gamma = \left\{ \gamma \mid \gamma \in L_{an} gl_2(C) , \ \gamma = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} y_k z^k \right\} ,
\]

where the \( z \) are some loop in \( H \).
Both are Lie subalgebras of $L_{\text{an}} \mathfrak{gl}_2(C)$ and their direct sum equals the whole Lie algebra. The first Lie algebra consists of the elements in $L_{\text{an}} \mathfrak{gl}_2(C)$ that extend to holomorphic maps defined on some disk $|z| < 1$. 

Both $P_-$ and $U_-$ are easily seen to be subgroups of $L_{\text{an}} \mathfrak{gl}_2(C)$. Since the direct sum of their Lie algebras is $L_{\text{an}} \mathfrak{gl}_2(C)$, their product $P_+ U_-$ is open and because $P_+ = GL_2(C) U_+$ and $P_- = GL_2(C) U_- = U_+ GL_2(C)$ and $P_+ = GL_2(C) U_- = U_+ GL_2(C)$, this gives the equality

$$P_+ U_- = \Omega = U_- P_+$$

The next two subgroups of $L_{\text{an}} \mathfrak{gl}_2(C)$ correspond to the exponential factors in both linearizations. The group of commuting flows relevant for the AKNS hierarchy is the group

$$\Gamma_0 = \left\{ \gamma_0(t) = \exp \left( \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} t_i Q_0 z^i \right) \mid \gamma_0 \in P_+ \right\}$$

and, similarly, for the strict AKNS hierarchy, we use the commuting flows from

$$\Gamma_1 = \left\{ \gamma_1(t) = \exp \left( \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} t_i Q_0 z^i \right) \mid \gamma_1 \in U_+ \right\}.$$
functions \( R \) that we associate with the point \((g, \delta(m)) \in S_0\) and for the commuting derivations of \(R_0(g, \delta(m))\) we choose \( \partial_i = \partial_i \delta t_i, i \geq 0 \). By property (77), we have for all \( \gamma_i(t) \in \Gamma_0(g, \delta(m)) \)

\[ \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) g \gamma_i(t)^{-1} \delta(-m) \]

(87)

with \( u_-(g, \delta(m)) \in U_- , p_-(g, \delta(m)) \in P_- . \) Then, all the matrix coefficients in the Fourier expansions of the elements \( u_-(g, \delta(m)) \) and \( p_-(g, \delta(m)) \) belong to the algebra \( R_0(g, \delta(m)) \). It is convenient to write relation (78) in the form

\[ \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} = u_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \]

(79)

\[ = p_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) g^{-1} \]

\[ = q_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) g^{-1} \]

\[ = \quad \text{with } q_-(g, \delta(m)) \in P_- . \]

Clearly, \( \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \) is an oscillating matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) in \( M_0 \), where all the products in the decomposition \( u_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \) are no longer formal but real. This is our potential wave matrix for the AKNS hierarchy.

To get the potential wave function for the strict AKNS hierarchy, we proceed similarly; only this time, we use the decomposition \( \Omega = P \cup U_+ \). Consider again the product \( L_{an} \mathbb{G} (C) \times \Delta \) and the subset \( S_1 \) of pairs \( (g, \delta(m)) \) such that there exists a \( \gamma_i(t) \in \Gamma_1 \) satisfying

\[ \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) g \gamma_i(t)^{-1} \delta(-m) \in \Omega = P \cup U_+ . \]

(80)

For such a pair \( (g, \delta(m)) \), we define \( \Gamma_1(g, \delta(m)) \) as the set of all \( \gamma_i(t) \) (satisfying condition (77)). This is an open nonempty subset of \( \Gamma_1 \). Let \( R_1(g, \delta(m)) \) be the algebra of analytic functions \( \Gamma_1(g, \delta(m)) \rightarrow C \). This is the algebra of functions \( R \) that we associate with the point \((g, \delta(m)) \in S_1\) and for the commuting derivations of \( R_1(g, \delta(m)) \) we choose \( \partial_i = \partial_i \delta t_i, i > 0 \). By property (80), we have for all \( \gamma_i(t) \in \Gamma_1(g, \delta(m)) \)

\[ \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) g \gamma_i(t)^{-1} \delta(-m) \]

(81)

\[ = p_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) g^{-1} \]

\[ = q_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) g^{-1} \]

\[ = \quad \text{with } q_+(g, \delta(m)) \in P_+ . \]

Clearly, \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \) is an oscillating matrix of type \( \delta(m) \) in \( M_1 \) where all the products in the decomposition \( p_+(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \) are no longer formal but real.

To show that \( \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \) is a wave matrix for the AKNS hierarchy of type \( \delta(m) \) and \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \) one for the strict AKNS hierarchy, we use the fact that it suffices to prove the relations in Proposition 6. We treat first \( \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \). In (79), we presented two different decompositions of \( \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \), that we will use to compute \( \partial_i (\Psi_{g, \delta(m)}) \). With respect to \( u_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \), there holds

\[ \partial_i (\Psi_{g, \delta(m)}) \]

\[ = \{ \partial_i (u_- (g, \delta(m))) u_- (g, \delta(m))^{-1} + z^j \} \]

(83)

\[ \cdot u_-(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \in \Omega = P \cup U_+ . \]

\[ = \{ \partial_i (q_+ (g, \delta(m))) q_+ (g, \delta(m))^{-1} \} \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \]

(84)

\[ = \{ \partial_i (q_+ (g, \delta(m))) q_+ (g, \delta(m))^{-1} \} \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \]

with \( \partial_i (q_+ (g, \delta(m))) q_+ (g, \delta(m))^{-1} \) of the form \( \sum q_j z^j \), with all \( q_j \in \mathbb{G} (R(g, \delta(m))) \). As \( \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \) is invertible, we obtain

\[ M_i = \sum q_j z^j \] and thus \( M_i = \sum q_j z^j \) and that is the desired result.

We handle the case of \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \) in a similar way. Also in (79), you can find two different decompositions of \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \) that we will use to compute \( \partial_i (\Phi_{g, \delta(m)}) \). With respect to the expression \( p_+(g, \delta(m)) \delta(m) \gamma_i(t) \) we get for all \( i \geq 1 \)

\[ \partial_i (\Phi_{g, \delta(m)}) \]

\[ = \{ \partial_i (w_+ (g, \delta(m))) w_+ (g, \delta(m))^{-1} \} \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \]

(86)

Since the zeroth order term of \( w_+(g, \delta(m)) \) is \( Id \), we note that the element \( \partial_i (w_+ (g, \delta(m))) w_+ (g, \delta(m))^{-1} \) has the form \( \sum w_j z^j \), with all \( w_j \in \mathbb{G} (R_1(g, \delta(m))) \). As \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \) is also invertible, we obtain

\[ N_i = \sum w_j z^j \] and thus \( N_i = \sum w_j z^j \) and that is the result we were looking for in the strict case.

The abovementioned constructions are not affected seriously by a number of transformations. For example, if we write \( \delta = \delta((1,1)) \), then all \( \delta^k \), \( k \in \mathbb{Z} \), are central elements and we have for all \( (g, \delta(m)) \in S_0 \) and \( S_1 \) respectively and all \( k \in \mathbb{Z} \)

\[ \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \delta^k = \Psi_{g, \delta(m)} \delta^k \]

(87)

respectively \( \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \delta^k = \Phi_{g, \delta(m)} \delta^k \).
Also for any $p_1 \in P_+$, each $\gamma_0^c(s) \in \Gamma_0$, and all $(g, \delta(m)) \in S_0$, we see that the element $(\gamma_0^c(s)g\delta(-m)p_1\delta(m), \delta(m))$ also belongs to $S_0$, for

$$\delta(m) y_0(t) \gamma_0^c(s) g\delta(-m) p_1 \delta(m) y_0(t)^{-1} \delta(-m) = \gamma_0^c(s) u^{-1} p_1 y_0(t) p_1 y_0(t)^{-1}. \quad (88)$$

In particular, we see that

$$\Psi_{\gamma_0^c(s)g\delta(-m)p_1\delta(m), \delta(m)} = u_{\gamma_0^c(s)u^{-1} p_1 \gamma_0^c(s) u^{-1} p_1 \gamma_0^c(s)^{-1} \delta(m) \gamma_0^c(s) \delta(m)}. \quad (89)$$

Its analogue in the strict case is as follows: for any $u_1 \in U_+$, each $\gamma_1^c(s) \in \Gamma_1^c$, and all $(g, \delta(m)) \in S_1$, the element $(\gamma_1^c(s)g\delta(-m)u_1\delta(m), \delta(m))$ also belongs to $S_1$ and there holds

$$\Phi_{\gamma_1^c(s)g\delta(-m)u_1\delta(m), \delta(m), \delta(m)} = p_{\gamma_1^c(s)u_1 \gamma_1^c(s)^{-1} \delta(m) \gamma_1^c(s) \delta(m)}. \quad (90)$$

We resume the foregoing results in the following theorem.

**Theorem 7.** Consider the product space $\Pi = L_{an GL_2(C)} \times \Delta$. Then, the following holds:

(a) For each point $(g, \delta(m)) \in \Pi$ that satisfies condition (77), we have a wave matrix of type $\delta(m)$ of the AKNS hierarchy $\Psi_{g, \delta(m)}$, defined by (79), and this determines a solution $Q_{g, \delta(m)} = u_{\gamma_0^c(s)g\delta(-m)u_1\delta(m), \delta(m)\delta(m)^{-1}}$ of the AKNS hierarchy. For each $p_1 \in P_+$, every $\gamma_0^c(s) \in \Gamma_0$, and all powers of $\delta$, one has

$$Q_{\gamma_0^c(s)g\delta(-m)p_1\delta(m), \delta(m)\delta(m)^{-1}} = Q_{g, \delta(m)}. \quad (91)$$

(b) For each point $(g, \delta(m)) \in \Pi$ that satisfies condition (80), we have a wave matrix of type $\delta(m)$ of the strict AKNS hierarchy $\Phi_{g, \delta(m), \delta(m)}$, defined by (82), and it determines a solution $Z_{g, \delta(m)} = p_{\gamma_1^c(s)g\delta(-m)u_1\delta(m), \delta(m)\delta(m)^{-1}}$ of the strict AKNS hierarchy. For each $u_1 \in U_+$, every $\gamma_1^c(s) \in \Gamma_1^c$, and all powers of $\delta$, one has

$$Z_{\gamma_1^c(s)g\delta(-m)u_1\delta(m), \delta(m)\delta(m)^{-1}} = Z_{g, \delta(m)}. \quad (92)$$

**Competing Interests**

The author declares that they have no competing interests.

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