

# Intertwining operator and $C_2$ -cofiniteness of modules

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## Abstract

Let  $V$  be a vertex operator algebra and  $T$  a  $V$ -module. We show that if there are  $C_2$ -cofinite  $V$ -modules  $U$  and  $W$  and a surjective (logarithmic) intertwining operator  $\mathcal{Y}$  of type  $\binom{T}{U \quad W}$ , then  $T$  is also  $C_2$ -cofinite. So, when  $V$  is simple and  $V' \cong V$ , then if one of  $V$ -modules is  $C_2$ -cofinite, then so is  $V$ .

## 1 Introduction

A vertex algebra was introduced by axiomatizing the concept of a Chiral algebra in conformal field theory by Borchers [1]. It is a triple  $(V, Y, \mathbf{1})$  satisfying the several axioms, where  $V$  is a graded vector space  $V = \bigoplus_{i \in \mathbb{Z}} V_i$  over the complex number field  $\mathbb{C}$ ,  $Y(v, z) = \sum_{m \in \mathbb{Z}} v_m z^{-m-1} \in \text{End}(V)[[z, z^{-1}]]$  denotes a vertex operator of  $v \in V$  on  $V$ ,  $\mathbf{1} \in V_0$  is a specified element called the vacuum. When  $V$  has another specified element  $\omega \in V_2$  and  $V$  has a lower bound of weights and all homogeneous subspaces are of finite dimensional, then we call  $V$  a vertex operator algebra. We set  $Y(\omega, z) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} L(n)z^{-n-1}$ .

For a VOA  $V$ -module  $W$ , we define  $C_2(W) = \{v_{-2}u \mid v, u \in V, \text{wt}(v) \geq 1\}$ . When  $C_2(W)$  has a finite co-dimension in  $W$ ,  $W$  is called to be  $C_2$ -cofinite. A concept of  $C_2$ -cofiniteness is originally introduced by Zhu [8] as a technical assumption to prove a modular invariance property of the space of the trace functions on modules. However, we are now recognizing the real meaning and the importance of  $C_2$ -cofiniteness. For example,  $V$  is  $C_2$ -cofinite if and only if all  $V$ -modules are  $\mathbb{N}$ -gradable. (See [2] and [7] for the proof.) We will use this fact frequently in this paper.

Our main result in this paper is the following:

**Theorem 1** *Let  $U$  be a vertex operator algebra of CFT-type. Let  $A, B, C$  be simple  $\mathbb{N}$ -graded  $U$ -modules and  $\mathcal{I}$  a surjective (formal power series) intertwining operator of type  $\binom{C}{A \quad B}$ . If both of  $A$  and  $B$  are  $C_h$ -cofinite as  $U$ -modules for  $h = 1, 2$ , then so is  $C$ .*

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## 2 Preliminary

From the axiom of VOAs, for  $v \in V_r$  and  $u \in V_n$ , we have  $v_m u \in V_{r-m-1+n}$ . Hence there is an integer  $N$  such that  $v_s u = 0$  for any  $s > N$ . This property is called a truncation property. In this paper, we will say that “ $v$  is truncated at  $u$ ” to simplify the terminology,

Set  $V^* = \text{Hom}(V, \mathbb{C})$  and define a pairing  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$  on  $V^* \times V$  by  $\langle \xi, v \rangle = \xi(v)$  for  $\xi \in V^*$  and  $v \in V$ . For  $T \subseteq V$ ,  $\text{Ann}(T)$  denotes an annihilator of  $T$ , that is,  $\text{Ann}(T) = \{\xi \in V^* \mid \langle \xi, t \rangle = 0 \text{ for all } t \in T\}$ . For  $v \in V$  and  $m \in \mathbb{Z}$ , an action  $v_m^*$  on  $V^*$  is defined by

$$\left\langle \left( \sum_{m \in \mathbb{Z}} v_m^* z^{-m-1} \right) \xi, w \right\rangle = \langle \xi, Y(e^{L(1)z} (-z^{-2})^{L(0)} v, z^{-1}) w \rangle$$

for  $w \in V$  and  $\xi \in \text{Hom}(V, \mathbb{C})$ , where  $Y^*(v, z) = \sum_{m \in \mathbb{Z}} v_m^* z^{-m-1}$  is called an adjoint operator of  $v$ . An important fact is that  $(\oplus_{m \in \mathbb{Z}} \text{Hom}(V_m, \mathbb{C}), Y^*)$  becomes a  $V$ -module as they proved in [3]. This module is called a restricted dual of  $V$  and denoted by  $V'$ . In particular,  $Y^*(\cdot, z)$  satisfy the Borcherds identity:

$$\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \binom{m}{i} (u_{r+i}^* v^*)_{m+n-i} \xi = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} (-1)^i \binom{r}{i} \{ u_{r+m-i}^* v_{n+i}^* \xi - (-1)^r v_{r+n-i}^* u_{m+i}^* \xi \} \quad (2.1)$$

for any  $m, n, r \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,  $v, u \in V$ ,  $\xi \in V'$ . We note  $V' = \oplus_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} V_n$  and  $V^* = \prod_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} V_n$ . Therefore we can express  $\xi \in V^*$  by  $\prod_n \xi_n$  with  $\xi_n \in \text{Hom}(V_n, \mathbb{C})$ . We call that  $\xi \in V^*$  is “ $L(0)$ -free” if  $\dim \mathbb{C}[L(0)]\xi = \infty$ , that is,  $\xi_m \neq 0$  for infinitely many  $m$ . We note that any  $\mathbb{N}$ -gradable module does not contain any  $L(0)$ -free elements.

Let go back to (2.1). If  $\xi \in \text{Hom}(V_t, \mathbb{C})$ , then all terms in (2.1) have the same weight  $\text{wt}(a) + \text{wt}(b) - r - m - n - 2 + t$  and so the Borcherds' identity is also well-defined on  $V^*$ , as Li has pointed out in [5]. However,  $V^*$  is not a  $V$ -module because of failure of truncation properties. In order to find a  $V$ -module in  $V^*$ , we will start our arguments from one point  $\xi$  in  $V^*$ .

**Lemma 2** *If  $u$  and  $v$  are truncated at  $\xi$ , then  $v_m u$  is also truncated at  $\xi$  for any  $m$ . In particular, if all elements in  $\Omega$  of  $V$  are truncated at  $\xi$  and  $\langle \Omega \rangle_{VA} = V$ , then all elements in  $V$  are truncated at  $\xi$ , where  $\langle \Omega \rangle_{VA}$  denotes a vertex subalgebra generated by  $\Omega$ .*

**[Proof]** By the assumption, there is an integer  $N$  such that  $u_n \xi = v_n \xi = u_n v = 0$  for  $n \geq N$ . We assert that for  $s \in \mathbb{N}$  and  $n \geq 2N + s$ , we have  $(u_{N-s} v)_n \xi = 0$ . Suppose false and let  $s$  be a minimal counterexample. Substituting  $r = N - s$ ,  $n = N + s + p$ ,  $m = N + q$  in (2.1) with  $p, q \geq 0$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} [\text{LeftSide}] &= \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \binom{N+q}{i} (u_{N-s+i} v)_{2N+q+s+p-i} \xi = \sum_{i=0}^s \binom{N+q}{i} (u_{N-(s-i)} v)_{2N+s-i+p+q} \xi \\ &= (u_{N-s} v)_{2N+s+p+q} \xi \end{aligned}$$

by the minimality of  $s$ . On the other hand, we have:

$$[\text{RightSide}] = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} (-1)^i \binom{N-s}{i} (u_{2N-s+q-i} v_{N+s+p+i} \xi - (-1)^{N-s} v_{2N-s+p-i} u_{N+q+i} \xi) = 0,$$

which contradicts the choice of  $s$ . ■

Since  $v_n u_m \xi = u_m v_n \xi + \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \binom{n}{i} (v_i u)_{n+m-i} \xi$ , the above lemma also implies:

**Lemma 3** *If  $v$  and  $u$  are truncated at  $\xi$ , then  $v$  is truncated at  $u_m \xi$  for any  $m$ . In particular, if all elements of  $V$  are truncated at  $\xi$ , then  $\langle u_{m_1}^1 \cdots u_{m_k}^k \xi \mid u^i \in V, m_i \in \mathbb{Z} \rangle_{\mathbb{C}}$  is a  $V$ -module.*

As Buhl has shown in [2], if  $V$  is  $C_2$ -cofinite, then all  $V$ -modules are  $\mathbb{N}$ -gradable and so there are no  $L(0)$ -free elements at which all elements in  $V$  are truncated. Namely, we have proved the following, which we will frequently use.

**Lemma 4** *Let  $V$  be a  $C_2$ -cofinite vertex operator algebra and  $\xi \in V^*$ . If  $\Omega \subseteq V$  generates  $V$  as a vertex subalgebra and all elements of  $\Omega$  are truncated on  $\xi$ , then  $\xi$  is not  $L(0)$ -free.*

For  $A, B \subseteq V$ , we will often use the notation  $A_{(m)}B$  to denote a subspace spanned by  $\{a_m b \mid a \in A, b \in B\}$ . We note that if  $A$  is a  $\mathbb{C}[L(-1)]$ -module, then  $A_{(-2-m)}B \subseteq A_{(-2)}B$  for  $m \in \mathbb{N}$  since  $(L(-1)a)_{-m}b = ma_{-m-1}b$  for  $a \in A$  and  $b \in B$ . Not only  $V$ , we use this notation for a pair  $(U, W)$  of a VOA  $U$  and its module  $W$ . For example, we set  $C_2(W) = U_{(-2)}^+ W$ , where  $U^+ = \bigoplus_{k=1}^{\infty} U_k$ . We also set  $C_1(W) = U_{(-1)}^+ W$ . We say that  $W$  is  $C_h$ -cofinite as a  $U$ -module if  $\dim W/C_h(W) < \infty$  for  $h = 1, 2$ . We note any VOA  $U$  is  $C_1$ -cofinite as a  $U$ -module and so this definition is not equal to the ordinary  $C_1$ -cofiniteness.

We start the proof of Theorem 1. Namely, we will prove:

**Theorem 1** *Let  $U$  be a vertex operator algebra of CFT-type. Let  $A, B, C$  be simple  $\mathbb{N}$ -graded  $U$ -modules and  $\mathcal{I}$  a surjective (formal power series) intertwining operator of type  $\begin{pmatrix} C \\ A \ B \end{pmatrix}$ . If both of  $A$  and  $B$  are  $C_h$ -cofinite as  $U$ -modules for  $h = 1, 2$ , then so is  $C$ .*

We note that if  $U$  is of CFT-type and an  $\mathbb{N}$ -graded  $U$ -module  $A = \bigoplus_{k=0}^{\infty} A_{r+k}$  is  $C_1$ -cofinite, then  $\dim A_{r+k} < \infty$  for any  $k$  since  $A_{r+k} \cap C_1(A) = \sum_{s=1}^{k-1} (U_s)_{-1} A_{r+k-s}$  has a finite codimension in  $A_{r+k}$ .

In the remainder part of this section, we assume the hypotheses of Theorem 1. Since  $A$  and  $B$  are  $C_h$ -cofinite, there are finite dimensional subspaces  $F^1 \subseteq A$  and  $F^2 \subseteq B$  such that  $A = U_{(-h)}^+ A + F^1$  and  $B = U_{(-h)}^+ B + F^2$ . Let  $c_A$  and  $c_B$  be conformal weights of  $A$  and  $B$ , respectively. We may assume that there is an integer  $N$  such that  $F^1 = \bigoplus_{k=0}^N A_{c_A+k}$  and  $F^2 = \bigoplus_{k=0}^N B_{c_B+k}$ . Fix bases  $\{p^i \mid i \in I\}$  of  $F^1$  and  $\{q^j \mid j \in J\}$  of  $F^2$ . In order to prove Theorem 1, we prove the following lemma by applying an idea in [4] to  $(C/U_{(-h)}^+ C)^*$ .

**Lemma 5** *For  $p \in A, q \in B$  and  $\theta \in \text{Ann}_h(U_{(-h)}^+ C) \cap C'$ ,*

$$F(\theta, p, q; z) := \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p, z)q \rangle$$

*is a linear combination of  $\{F(\theta, p^i, q^j; z) \mid i \in I, j \in J\}$  with coefficients in  $\mathbb{C}[z, z^{-1}]$  and we may choose these coefficients independently of the choice of  $\theta$ .*

**[Proof]** We will prove the assertion by the induction on the total weight  $\text{wt}(p) + \text{wt}(q)$ . If  $\text{wt}(p) > N + c_B$ , then  $p = \sum_k u^k a^k$  for some  $u^k \in U$  and  $a^k \in A$ . We note this expression does not depend on the choice of  $\theta$ . So we may assume  $p = u_{-h}a$  with  $u \in U$  and  $a \in A$ . Then for  $\theta \in \text{Ann}(U_{(-h)}^+C)$ , we have:

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p, z)q \rangle &= \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(u_{-h}a, z)q \rangle \\ &= \langle \theta, Y^-(L(-1)^{h-1}u, z)\mathcal{I}(a, z)q + \mathcal{I}(a, z)Y^+(L(-1)^{h-1}u, z)q \rangle \\ &= \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(a, z)Y^+(L(-1)^{h-1}u, z)q \rangle, \end{aligned}$$

where  $Y^-(v, z) = \sum_{m < 0} v_m z^{-m-1}$  and  $Y^+(v, z) = \sum_{m \geq 0} v_m z^{-m-1}$ . This is a reduction on the sum of weights because  $Y^+(L(-1)^{h-1}u, z)q$  is a sum of finite terms and all weights of the coefficients are less than  $\text{wt}(u) + \text{wt}(q)$ .

Similarly, if  $\text{wt}(q) > N + c_B$ , then we may assume  $q = u_{-h}b$  with  $u \in U$  and  $b \in B$  and

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p, z)q \rangle &= \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p, z)u_{-h}b \rangle \\ &= \langle \theta, u_{-h}\mathcal{I}(p, z)b \rangle + \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \binom{-h}{i} z^{-h-i} \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(u_i p, z)b \rangle \\ &= \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \binom{-h}{i} z^{-h-i} \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(u_i p, z)b \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Again, these process do not depend on the choice of  $\theta$  and this is also a reduction on the weights because  $\text{wt}(u_i p) + \text{wt}(b) < \text{wt}(u_{-h}b) + \text{wt}(p)$  for  $i \geq 0$ . Therefore,  $\langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p, z)q \rangle$  is a linear combination of  $\{\langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p^i, z)q^j \rangle \mid i \in I, j \in J\}$  with coefficients in  $\mathbb{C}[z, z^{-1}]$ . We note the coefficients do not depend on the choice of  $\theta$ . ■

Now we are able to prove Theorem 1. By the proof of the above lemma,

$$\frac{d}{dz} F(\theta, p^s, q^t; z) = F(\theta, L(-1)p^s, q^t; z)$$

is a linear combination of  $\{F(\theta, p^i, q^j; z) \mid i \in I, j \in J\}$  with coefficients in  $\mathbb{C}[z, z^{-1}]$  for any  $s \in I, t \in J$  and all coefficients do not depend on the choice of  $\theta$ . Therefore, there is a differential linear equation such that  $F(\theta, p^s, q^t)$  are all its solutions for any  $s \in I, t \in J$  and  $\theta$ . Furthermore, since  $\{\mathcal{I}(p, z)q \mid p \in A, q \in B, z \in \mathbb{Z}\}$  spans  $C$  modulo  $U_{(-h)}^+C$  and  $\langle \theta, \mathcal{Y}(p, z)q \rangle$  are a linear sum of  $\langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p^i, z)q^j \rangle$ ,  $\theta \in C' \cap \text{Ann}(U_{(-2)}^+C) \rightarrow \prod_{i \in I, j \in J} \langle \theta, \mathcal{I}(p^i, z)q^j \rangle$  is injective. Therefore, we have  $\dim C/U_{(-h)}C < \infty$ . This completes the proof of Theorem 1.

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