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## Solvability for fractional order boundary value problems at resonance

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**Abstract**

In this paper, by using the coincidence degree theory, we consider the following boundary value problem for fractional differential equation

$$\begin{cases} D_0^\alpha x(t) = f(t, x(t), x'(t), x''(t)), & t \in [0, 1], \\ x(0) = x(1), & x'(0) = x''(0) = 0, \end{cases}$$

where  $D_0^\alpha$  denotes the Caputo fractional differential operator of order  $\alpha$ ,  $2 < \alpha \leq 3$ . A new result on the existence of solutions for above fractional boundary value problem is obtained.

**Mathematics Subject Classification (2000):** 34A08, 34B15.

**Keywords:** Fractional differential equations, boundary value problems, resonance, coincidence degree theory

**1 Introduction**

Fractional calculus is a generalization of ordinary differentiation and integration on an arbitrary order that can be noninteger. This subject, as old as the problem of ordinary differential calculus, can go back to the times when Leibniz and Newton invented differential calculus. As is known to all, the problem for fractional derivative was originally raised by Leibniz in a letter, dated September 30, 1695.

In recent years, the fractional differential equations have received more and more attention. The fractional derivative has been occurring in many physical applications such as a non-Markovian diffusion process with memory [1], charge transport in amorphous semiconductors [2], propagations of mechanical waves in viscoelastic media [3], etc. Phenomena in electromagnetics, acoustics, viscoelasticity, electrochemistry, and material science are also described by differential equations of fractional order (see [4-9]).

Recently, boundary value problems (BVPs for short) for fractional differential equations at nonresonance have been studied in many papers (see [10-16]). Moreover, Kosmatov studied the BVPs for fractional differential equations at resonance (see [17]). Motivated by the work above, in this paper, we consider the following BVP of fractional equation at resonance

$$\begin{cases} D_0^\alpha x(t) = f(t, x(t), x'(t), x''(t)), & t \in [0, 1], \\ x(0) = x(1), & x'(0) = x''(0) = 0, \end{cases} \quad (1.1)$$

where  $D_{0^+}^\alpha$  denotes the Caputo fractional differential operator of order  $\alpha$ ,  $2 < \alpha \leq 3$ .  $f : [0, 1] \times \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is continuous.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 contains some necessary notations, definitions, and lemmas. In Section 3, we establish a theorem on existence of solutions for BVP (1.1) under nonlinear growth restriction of  $f$ , basing on the coincidence degree theory due to Mawhin (see [18]). Finally, in Section 4, an example is given to illustrate the main result.

## 2 Preliminaries

In this section, we will introduce notations, definitions, and preliminary facts that are used throughout this paper.

Let  $X$  and  $Y$  be real Banach spaces and let  $L : \text{dom}L \subset X \rightarrow Y$  be a Fredholm operator with index zero, and  $P : X \rightarrow X$ ,  $Q : Y \rightarrow Y$  be projectors such that

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Im}P &= \text{Ker}L, & \text{Ker}Q &= \text{Im}L, \\ X &= \text{Ker}L \oplus \text{Ker}P, & Y &= \text{Im}L \oplus \text{Im}Q. \end{aligned}$$

It follows that

$$L|_{\text{dom}L \cap \text{Ker}P} : \text{dom}L \cap \text{Ker}P \rightarrow \text{Im}L$$

is invertible. We denote the inverse by  $K_P$ .

If  $\Omega$  is an open bounded subset of  $X$ , and  $\text{dom}L \cap \bar{\Omega} \neq \emptyset$ , the map  $N : X \rightarrow Y$  will be called  $L$ -compact on  $\bar{\Omega}$  if  $QN(\bar{\Omega})$  is bounded and  $K_P(I - Q)N : \bar{\Omega} \rightarrow X$  is compact. Where  $I$  is identity operator.

**Lemma 2.1.** ([18]) If  $\Omega$  is an open bounded set, let  $L : \text{dom}L \subset X \rightarrow Y$  be a Fredholm operator of index zero and  $N : X \rightarrow Y$   $L$ -compact on  $\bar{\Omega}$ . Assume that the following conditions are satisfied

- (1)  $Lx \neq \lambda Nx$  for every  $(x, \lambda) \in [(\text{dom}L \setminus \text{Ker}L)] \cap \partial\Omega \times (0, 1)$ ;
- (2)  $Nx \notin \text{Im}L$  for every  $x \in \text{Ker}L \cap \partial\Omega$ ;
- (3)  $\text{deg}(QN|_{\text{Ker}L}, \text{Ker}L \cap \Omega, 0) \neq 0$ , where  $Q : Y \rightarrow Y$  is a projection such that  $\text{Im}L = \text{Ker}Q$ .

Then the equation  $Lx = Nx$  has at least one solution in  $\text{dom}L \cap \bar{\Omega}$ .

**Definition 2.1.** The Riemann-Liouville fractional integral operator of order  $\alpha > 0$  of a function  $x$  is given by

$$I_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-1} x(s) ds,$$

provided that the right side integral is pointwise defined on  $(0, +\infty)$ .

**Definition 2.2.** The Caputo fractional derivative of order  $\alpha > 0$  of a continuous function  $x$  is given by

$$D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = I_{0^+}^{n-\alpha} \frac{d^n x(t)}{dt^n} = \frac{1}{\Gamma(n-\alpha)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{n-\alpha-1} x^{(n)}(s) ds,$$

where  $n$  is the smallest integer greater than or equal to  $\alpha$ , provided that the right side integral is pointwise defined on  $(0, +\infty)$ .

**Lemma 2.2.** ([19]) For  $\alpha > 0$ , the general solution of the Caputo fractional differential equation

$$D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = 0$$

is given by

$$x(t) = c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2 + \dots + c_{n-1} t^{n-1},$$

where  $c_i \in \mathbb{R}$ ,  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, n - 1$ ; here,  $n$  is the smallest integer greater than or equal to  $\alpha$ .

**Lemma 2.3.** ([19]) Assume that  $x \in C(0, 1) \cap L(0, 1)$  with a Caputo fractional derivative of order  $\alpha > 0$  that belongs to  $C(0, 1) \cap L(0, 1)$ . Then,

$$I_{0^+}^\alpha D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = x(t) + c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2 + \dots + c_{n-1} t^{n-1}$$

where  $c_i \in \mathbb{R}$ ,  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, n - 1$ ; here,  $n$  is the smallest integer greater than or equal to  $\alpha$ .

In this paper, we denote  $X = C^2[0, 1]$  with the norm  $\|x\|_X = \max\{\|x\|_\infty, \|x'\|_\infty, \|x''\|_\infty\}$  and  $Y = C[0, 1]$  with the norm  $\|y\|_Y = \|y\|_\infty$ , where  $\|x\|_\infty = \max_{t \in [0, 1]} |x(t)|$ . Obviously, both  $X$  and  $Y$  are Banach spaces.

Define the operator  $L : \text{dom}L \subset X \rightarrow Y$  by

$$Lx = D_{0^+}^\alpha x, \tag{2.1}$$

where

$$\text{dom}L = \{x \in X | D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) \in Y, x(0) = x(1), x'(0) = x''(0) = 0\}.$$

Let  $N : X \rightarrow Y$  be the Nemytski operator

$$Nx(t) = f(t, x(t), x'(t), x''(t)), \quad \forall t \in [0, 1].$$

Then, BVP (1.1) is equivalent to the operator equation

$$Lx = Nx, \quad x \in \text{dom}L.$$

### 3 Main result

In this section, a theorem on existence of solutions for BVP (1.1) will be given.

**Theorem 3.1.** Let  $f : [0, 1] \times \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be continuous. Assume that

( $H_1$ ) there exist nonnegative functions  $p, q, r, s \in C[0, 1]$  with  $\Gamma(\alpha - 1) - q_1 - r_1 - s_1 > 0$  such that

$$|f(t, u, v, w)| \leq p(t) + q(t)|u| + r(t)|v| + s(t)|w|, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1], (u, v, w) \in \mathbb{R}^3,$$

where  $p_1 = \|p\|_\infty$ ,  $q_1 = \|q\|_\infty$ ,  $r_1 = \|r\|_\infty$ ,  $s_1 = \|s\|_\infty$ .

( $H_2$ ) there exists a constant  $B > 0$  such that for all  $u \in \mathbb{R}$  with  $|u| > B$  either

$$uf(t, u, v, w) > 0, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1], (v, w) \in \mathbb{R}^2$$

or

$$uf(t, u, v, w) < 0, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1], (v, w) \in \mathbb{R}^2.$$

Then, BVP (1.1) has at least one solution in  $X$ .

Now, we begin with some lemmas below.

**Lemma 3.1.** Let  $L$  be defined by (2.1), then

$$\text{Ker}L = \{x \in X \mid x(t) = c_0, \quad c_0 \in \mathbb{R}, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1]\}, \tag{3.1}$$

$$\text{Im}L = \{y \in Y \mid \int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds = 0\}. \tag{3.2}$$

**Proof.** By Lemma 2.2,  $D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = 0$  has solution

$$x(t) = c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2, \quad c_0, c_1, c_2 \in \mathbb{R}.$$

Combining with the boundary value condition of BVP (1.1), one has (3.1) hold.

For  $y \in \text{Im}L$ , there exists  $x \in \text{dom}L$  such that  $y = Lx \in Y$ . By Lemma 2.3, we have

$$x(t) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds + c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2.$$

Then, we have

$$x'(t) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-1)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-2} \gamma(s) ds + c_1 + 2c_2 t$$

and

$$x''(t) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} \gamma(s) ds + 2c_2.$$

By conditions of BVP (1.1), we can get that  $y$  satisfies

$$\int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds = 0.$$

Thus, we get (3.2). On the other hand, suppose  $y \in Y$  and satisfies  $\int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds = 0$ . Let  $x(t) = I_{0^+}^\alpha \gamma(t)$ , then  $x \in \text{dom}L$  and  $D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = \gamma(t)$ . So that,  $y \in \text{Im}L$ . The proof is complete.

**Lemma 3.2.** Let  $L$  be defined by (2.1), then  $L$  is a Fredholm operator of index zero, and the linear continuous projector operators  $P : X \rightarrow X$  and  $Q : Y \rightarrow Y$  can be defined as

$$Px(t) = x(0), \quad \forall t \in [0, 1],$$

$$Qy(t) = \alpha \int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1].$$

Furthermore, the operator  $K_P : \text{Im}L \rightarrow \text{dom}L \cap \text{Ker}P$  can be written by

$$K_P \gamma(t) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-1} \gamma(s) ds, \quad \forall t \in [0, 1].$$

**Proof.** Obviously,  $\text{Im}P = \text{Ker}L$  and  $P^2x = Px$ . It follows from  $x = (x - Px) + Px$  that  $X = \text{Ker}P + \text{Ker}L$ . By simple calculation, we can get that  $\text{Ker}L \cap \text{Ker}P = \{0\}$ . Then, we get

$$X = \text{Ker}L \oplus \text{Ker}P.$$

For  $y \in Y$ , we have

$$Q^2y = Q(Qy) = Qy \cdot \alpha \int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} ds = Qy.$$

Let  $y = (y - Qy) + Qy$ , where  $y - Qy \in \text{Ker}Q = \text{Im}L$ ,  $Qy \in \text{Im}Q$ . It follows from  $\text{Ker}Q = \text{Im}L$  and  $Q^2y = Qy$  that  $\text{Im}Q \cap \text{Im}L = \{0\}$ . Then, we have

$$Y = \text{Im}L \oplus \text{Im}Q.$$

Thus,

$$\dim \text{Ker}L = \dim \text{Im}Q = \text{codim} \text{Im}L = 1.$$

This means that  $L$  is a Fredholm operator of index zero.

From the definitions of  $P, K_P$ , it is easy to see that the generalized inverse of  $L$  is  $K_P$ . In fact, for  $y \in \text{Im}L$ , we have

$$LK_P y = D_{0^+}^\alpha I_{0^+}^\alpha y = y. \tag{3.3}$$

Moreover, for  $x \in \text{dom}L \cap \text{Ker}P$ , we get  $x(0) = x'(0) = x''(0) = 0$ . By Lemma 2.3, we obtain that

$$I_{0^+}^\alpha Lx(t) = I_{0^+}^\alpha D_{0^+}^\alpha x(t) = x(t) + c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2, \quad c_0, c_1, c_2 \in \mathbb{R},$$

which together with  $x(0) = x'(0) = x''(0) = 0$  yields that

$$K_P Lx = x. \tag{3.4}$$

Combining (3.3) with (3.4), we know that  $K_P = (L|_{\text{dom}L \cap \text{Ker}P})^{-1}$ . The proof is complete.

**Lemma 3.3.** Assume  $\Omega \subset X$  is an open bounded subset such that  $\text{dom}L \cap \bar{\Omega} \neq \emptyset$ , then  $N$  is  $L$ -compact on  $\bar{\Omega}$ .

**Proof.** By the continuity of  $f$ , we can get that  $QN(\bar{\Omega})$  and  $K_P(I - Q)N(\bar{\Omega})$  are bounded. So, in view of the Arzelà-Ascoli theorem, we need only prove that  $K_P(I - Q)N(\bar{\Omega}) \subset X$  is equicontinuous.

From the continuity of  $f$ , there exists constant  $A > 0$  such that  $|(I - Q)Nx| \leq A$ ,  $\forall x \in \bar{\Omega}$ ,  $t \in [0, 1]$ . Furthermore, denote  $K_{P,Q} = K_P(I - Q)N$  and for  $0 \leq t_1 < t_2 \leq 1$ ,  $x \in \bar{\Omega}$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 & |(K_{P,Q}x)(t_2) - (K_{P,Q}x)(t_1)| \\
 & \leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \left| \int_0^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-1} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds - \int_0^{t_1} (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-1} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds \right| \\
 & \leq \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \left[ \int_0^{t_1} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-1} - (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-1} ds + \int_{t_1}^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-1} ds \right] \\
 & = \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha + 1)} (t_2^\alpha - t_1^\alpha), \\
 & |(K_{P,Q}x)'(t_2) - (K_{P,Q}x)'(t_1)| \\
 & = \frac{\alpha - 1}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \left| \int_0^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-2} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds - \int_0^{t_1} (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-2} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds \right| \\
 & \leq \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha - 1)} \left[ \int_0^{t_1} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-2} - (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-2} ds + \int_{t_1}^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-2} ds \right] \\
 & \leq \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha)} (t_2^{\alpha-1} - t_1^{\alpha-1})
 \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}
 & |(K_{P,Q}x)''(t_2) - (K_{P,Q}x)''(t_1)| \\
 & = \frac{(\alpha - 2)(\alpha - 1)}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \left| \int_0^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-3} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds - \int_0^{t_1} (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-3} (I - Q)Nx(s)ds \right| \\
 & \leq \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha - 2)} \left[ \int_0^{t_1} (t_1 - s)^{\alpha-3} - (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-3} ds + \int_{t_1}^{t_2} (t_2 - s)^{\alpha-3} ds \right] \\
 & \leq \frac{A}{\Gamma(\alpha - 1)} [t_1^{\alpha-2} - t_2^{\alpha-2} + 2(t_2 - t_1)^{\alpha-2}].
 \end{aligned}$$

Since  $t^\alpha$ ,  $t^{\alpha-1}$  and  $t^{\alpha-2}$  are uniformly continuous on  $[0, 1]$ , we can get that  $(K_{P,Q})'(\overline{\Omega}) \subset C[0, 1]$ ,  $(K_{P,Q})''(\overline{\Omega}) \subset C[0, 1]$  and  $(K_{P,Q})'''(\overline{\Omega}) \subset C[0, 1]$  are equicontinuous. Thus, we get that  $K_{P,Q} : \overline{\Omega} \rightarrow X$  is compact. The proof is completed.

**Lemma 3.4.** Suppose  $(H_1)$ ,  $(H_2)$  hold, then the set

$$\Omega_1 = \{x \in \text{dom}L \setminus \text{Ker}L \mid Lx = \lambda Nx, \quad \lambda \in (0, 1)\}$$

is bounded.

**Proof.** Take  $x \in \Omega_1$ , then  $Nx \in \text{Im}L$ . By (3.2), we have

$$\int_0^1 (1 - s)^{\alpha-1} f(s, x(s), x'(s), x''(s)) ds = 0.$$

Then, by the integral mean value theorem, there exists a constant  $\zeta \in (0, 1)$  such that  $f(\zeta, x(\zeta), x'(\zeta), x''(\zeta)) = 0$ . Then from  $(H_2)$ , we have  $|x(\zeta)| \leq B$ .

Then, we have

$$|x(t)| = \left| x(\xi) + \int_{\xi}^t x'(s) ds \right| \leq B + \|x'\|_{\infty}.$$

That is

$$\|x\|_{\infty} \leq B + \|x'\|_{\infty}. \tag{3.5}$$

From  $x \in \text{dom}L$ , we get  $x'(0) = 0$ . Therefore,

$$|x'(t)| = \left| x'(0) + \int_0^t x''(s) ds \right| \leq \|x''\|_{\infty}.$$

That is

$$\|x'\|_{\infty} \leq \|x''\|_{\infty}. \tag{3.6}$$

By  $Lx = \lambda Nx$  and  $x \in \text{dom}L$ , we have

$$x(t) = \frac{\lambda}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-1} f(s, x(s), x'(s), x''(s)) ds + x(0).$$

Then we get

$$x'(t) = \frac{\lambda}{\Gamma(\alpha-1)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-2} f(s, x(s), x'(s), x''(s)) ds$$

and

$$x''(t) = \frac{\lambda}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} f(s, x(s), x'(s), x''(s)) ds.$$

From (3.5), (3.6), and  $(H_1)$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} \|x''\|_{\infty} &\leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} |f(s, x(s), x'(s), x''(s))| ds \\ &\leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} [p(s) + q(s)|x(s)| + r(s)|x'(s)| + s(s)|x''(s)|] ds \\ &\leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} (p_1 + q_1 \|x\|_{\infty} + r_1 \|x'\|_{\infty} + s_1 \|x''\|_{\infty}) ds \\ &\leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-2)} \int_0^t (t-s)^{\alpha-3} [p_1 + q_1 B + (q_1 + r_1 + s_1) \|x''\|_{\infty}] ds \\ &\leq \frac{1}{\Gamma(\alpha-1)} [p_1 + q_1 B + (q_1 + r_1 + s_1) \|x''\|_{\infty}]. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, from  $\Gamma(\alpha - 1) - q_1 - r_1 - s_1 > 0$ , we obtain that

$$\|x''\|_\infty \leq \frac{p_1 + q_1 B}{\Gamma(\alpha - 1) - q_1 - r_1 - s_1} := M_1.$$

Thus, we get

$$\|x'\|_\infty \leq \|x''\|_\infty \leq M_1$$

and

$$\|x\|_\infty \leq B + \|x'\|_\infty \leq B + M_1.$$

Therefore,

$$\|x\|_X \leq \max\{M_1, B + M_1\}.$$

So  $\Omega_1$  is bounded. The proof is complete.

**Lemma 3.5.** Suppose  $(H_2)$  holds, then the set

$$\Omega_2 = \{x | x \in \text{Ker}L, Nx \in \text{Im}L\}$$

is bounded.

**Proof.** For  $x \in \Omega_2$ , we have  $x(t) = c$ ,  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ , and  $Nx \in \text{Im}L$ . Then, we get

$$\int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} f(s, c, 0, 0) ds = 0,$$

which together with  $(H_2)$  implies  $|c| \leq B$ . Thus, we have

$$\|x\|_X \leq B.$$

Hence,  $\Omega_2$  is bounded. The proof is complete.

**Lemma 3.6.** Suppose the first part of  $(H_2)$  holds, then the set

$$\Omega_3 = \{x | x \in \text{Ker}L, \lambda x + (1 - \lambda)QNx = 0, \quad \lambda \in [0, 1]\}$$

is bounded.

**Proof.** For  $x \in \Omega_3$ , we have  $x(t) = c$ ,  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ , and

$$\lambda c + (1 - \lambda)\alpha \int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} f(s, c, 0, 0) ds = 0. \tag{3.7}$$

If  $\lambda = 0$ , then  $|c| \leq B$  because of the first part of  $(H_2)$ . If  $\lambda \in (0, 1]$ , we can also obtain  $|c| \leq B$ . Otherwise, if  $|c| > B$ , in view of the first part of  $(H_2)$ , one has

$$\lambda c^2 + (1 - \lambda)\alpha \int_0^1 (1-s)^{\alpha-1} cf(s, c, 0, 0) ds > 0,$$

which contradicts to (3.7).

Therefore,  $\Omega_3$  is bounded. The proof is complete.



**Remark 3.1.** Suppose the second part of  $(H_2)$  hold, then the set

$$\Omega'_3 = \{x|x \in \text{Ker}L, -\lambda x + (1 - \lambda)QNx = 0, \lambda \in [0, 1]\}$$

is bounded.

**The proof of Theorem 3.1.** Set  $\Omega = \{x \in X \mid \|x\|_X < \max\{M_1, B, B + M_1\} + 1\}$ . It follows from Lemma 3.2 and 3.3 that  $L$  is a Fredholm operator of index zero and  $N$  is  $L$ -compact on  $\overline{\Omega}$ . By Lemma 3.4 and 3.5, we get that the following two conditions are satisfied

- (1)  $Lx \neq \lambda Nx$  for every  $(x, \lambda) \in [(\text{dom}L \setminus \text{Ker}L) \cap \partial\Omega] \times (0, 1)$ ;
- (2)  $Nx \notin \text{Im}L$  for every  $x \in \text{Ker}L \cap \partial\Omega$ .

Take

$$H(x, \lambda) = \pm\lambda x + (1 - \lambda)QNx.$$

According to Lemma 3.6 (or Remark 3.1), we know that  $H(x, \lambda) \neq 0$  for  $x \in \text{Ker}L \cap \partial\Omega$ . Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \deg(QN|_{\text{Ker}L}, \Omega \cap \text{Ker}L, 0) &= \deg(H(\cdot, 0), \Omega \cap \text{Ker}L, 0) \\ &= \deg(H(\cdot, 1), \Omega \cap \text{Ker}L, 0) \\ &= \deg(\pm I, \Omega \cap \text{Ker}L, 0) \neq 0. \end{aligned}$$

So that, the condition (3) of Lemma 2.1 is satisfied. By Lemma 2.1, we can get that  $Lx = Nx$  has at least one solution in  $\text{dom}L \cap \overline{\Omega}$ . Therefore, BVP (1.1) has at least one solution. The proof is complete.

#### 4 An example

**Example 4.1.** Consider the following BVP

$$\begin{cases} D_{0^+}^{\frac{5}{2}}x(t) = \frac{t}{16}(x - 10) + \frac{t^2}{16}e^{-|x'|} + \frac{t^3}{16}\sin[(x'')^2], & t \in [0, 1] \\ x(0) = x(1), & x'(0) = x''(0) = 0. \end{cases} \quad (4.1)$$

where

$$f(t, u, v, w) = \frac{t}{16}(u - 10) + \frac{t^2}{16}e^{-|v|} + \frac{t^3}{16}\sin(w^2).$$

Choose  $p(t) = \frac{10t+2}{16}$ ,  $q(t) = \frac{t}{16}$ ,  $r(t) = 0$ ,  $s(t) = 0$ ,  $B = 10$ . We can get that  $q_1 = \frac{1}{16}$ ,  $r_1 = 0$ ,  $s_1 = 0$  and

$$\Gamma\left(\frac{5}{2} - 1\right) - q_1 - r_1 - s_1 > 0.$$

Then, all conditions of Theorem 3.1 hold, so BVP (4.1) has at least one solution.

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#### Authors' contributions

All authors typed, read and approved the final manuscript.

### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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