

## A UNIMODAL PROPERTY OF PURELY IMAGINARY ZEROS OF BESSEL AND RELATED FUNCTIONS

C. G. KOKOLOGIANNAKI, M. E. MULDOON AND P. D. SIAFARIKAS

ABSTRACT. We show, among other things, that, for  $n = 0, 1$ , the negative of the square of a purely imaginary zero of  $J_\nu^{(n)}(x)$  is unimodal on  $(n - 2, n - 1)$ . One of the important tools in the proof is the Mittag-Leffler partial fractions expansion of  $J_{\nu+1}(z)/J_\nu(z)$ .

**1. Introduction.** For  $n = 0, 1, 2$  the smallest positive zero of  $J_\nu^{(n)}(x)$  decreases to 0 as  $\nu$  decreases to  $n - 1$ . For  $n = 0, 1$ , this is a classical result [14, Chapter 15], while for  $n = 2$  it is very recent; see [10], [12], [13], [15]. As  $\nu$  decreases below  $n - 1$  the zero becomes purely imaginary first moving away from the origin and then returning to the origin (along the imaginary axis) as  $\nu$  approaches  $n - 2$ . This behaviour was observed numerically by Kerimov and Skorokhodov ([8] and [9]). It can be described by saying that the negative of the square of such a purely imaginary zero is *unimodal* on  $(n - 2, n - 1)$ . Curiously, this was proved analytically [4] first for the case  $n = 2$ , *i.e.*, for a purely imaginary zero of  $J_\nu''(x)$  on  $(0, 1)$ . Our main purpose here is to deal with the cases  $n = 0, 1$ , *i.e.*, to prove the corresponding properties of the purely imaginary zeros of  $J_\nu(x)$  and  $J_\nu'(x)$  on  $(-2, -1)$  and  $(-1, 0)$  respectively. We also give a slightly simpler version of the proof in the case  $n = 2$ . The case  $n = 0$  is illustrated in Figure 1.

We will have need of the Bessel differential equation

$$(1.1) \quad z^2 J_\nu''(z) + z J_\nu'(z) + (z^2 - \nu^2) J_\nu(z) = 0,$$

the recurrence relations [14, p. 45]

$$(1.2) \quad J_{\nu-1}(z) + J_{\nu+1}(z) = \frac{2\nu}{z} J_\nu(z),$$

and

$$(1.3) \quad z J_\nu'(z) - \nu J_\nu(z) = -z J_{\nu+1}(z),$$

as well as the Mittag-Leffler type expansion [14, p. 498]

$$(1.4) \quad \frac{J_{\nu+1}(z)}{J_\nu(z)} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{2z}{J_{\nu n}^2 - z^2},$$

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where  $\{\pm j_{\nu n}\}$  is the sequence of zeros of the entire function  $z^{-\nu}J_{\nu}(z)$ . We note that these zeros are all real if  $\nu > -1$ , and according to the conventional notation [14, p. 497],  $0 < j_{\nu 1} < j_{\nu 2} < \dots$ .

We use the method of the last part of [4], *i.e.*, we prove the unimodality of a function by showing that it is concave down at every turning point, hence there can be only one turning point.

**2. A general function.** All of the functions which we deal with can be subsumed in the general formula

$$f_{\nu}(z) = (cz^2 + f(\nu))J_{\nu}(z) - azJ_{\nu+1}(z) + bzJ_{\nu-1}(z).$$

The most important special cases are:

- (i)  $f_{\nu}(z) = zJ_{\nu-1}(z)$ , got by taking  $b = 1, a = c = f(\nu) = 0$ ;
- (ii)  $f_{\nu}(z) = zJ'_{\nu}(z)$ , got by taking  $a = 1, b = c = 0, f(\nu) = \nu$  and using (1.3);
- (iii)  $f_{\nu}(z) = \alpha J_{\nu}(z) + zJ'_{\nu}(z)$ , got by taking  $a = 1, b = c = 0, f(\nu) = \alpha + \nu$ ;
- (iv)  $f_{\nu}(z) = -z^2J''_{\nu}(z)$ , got by taking  $a = c = 1, b = 0, f(\nu) = \nu - \nu^2$  and using (1.1) and (1.3).

**THEOREM 2.1.** *Let  $\nu > -1$  and let  $ip$  be a purely imaginary zero of  $f_{\nu}(z)$ . Then*

$$(2.1) \quad \lambda(\nu) \frac{d\rho^2}{d\nu} = \mu(\nu),$$

where

$$(2.2) \quad \lambda(\nu) = -\frac{f(\nu) + 2b\nu}{\rho^2} - 2(b + a) \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\rho^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2},$$

or

$$(2.3) \quad \lambda(\nu) = -c + 2(b + a) \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu,n}^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2},$$

and

$$(2.4) \quad \mu(\nu) = 4(b + a)\rho^2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu,n}dj_{\nu n}/d\nu}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} - f'(\nu) - 2b.$$

For those values of  $\nu$  for which  $d\rho^2/d\nu = 0$ , we have

$$(2.5) \quad \lambda(\nu) \frac{d^2\rho^2}{d\nu^2} = \rho^2\mu_1(\nu),$$

where

$$(2.6) \quad \mu_1(\nu) = 4(b + a) \left[ \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu,n}d^2j_{\nu n}/d\nu^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(dj_{\nu n}/d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} - 4 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(j_{\nu n}dj_{\nu n}/d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^3} \right] - f''(\nu)/\rho^2.$$

PROOF. The equation

$$f_\nu(z) = (cz^2 + f(\nu))J_\nu(z) - azJ_{\nu+1}(z) + bzJ_{\nu-1}(z) = 0$$

can be put in the form

$$cz^2 + f(\nu) - az \frac{J_{\nu+1}(z)}{J_\nu(z)} + bz \frac{J_{\nu-1}(z)}{J_\nu(z)} = 0,$$

except at the zeros of  $J_\nu(z)$ .

Using (1.2) and (1.4) this becomes

$$cz^2 + f(\nu) - 2(b+a) \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{z^2}{j_{\nu k}^2 - z^2} + 2b\nu = 0.$$

For  $z = i\rho$  we get

$$(2.7) \quad c - \frac{f(\nu) + 2b\nu}{\rho^2} = 2(b+a) \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{j_{\nu k}^2 + \rho^2}.$$

Differentiating this equation with respect to  $\nu$  and multiplying by  $\rho^2$ , we get (2.1), with  $\lambda(\nu)$  given by (2.2) and  $\mu(\nu)$  by (2.4). Then, using (2.7), we can express  $\lambda(\nu)$  in the form (2.3). Differentiating (2.1) and using  $d\rho^2/d\nu = 0$ , we get (2.5), where  $\mu_1(\nu)$  is given by (2.6).

In order to justify the term-by-term differentiation we have to verify that the differentiated series or, equivalently, all the infinite series in (2.3), (2.4) and (2.6), converge uniformly in  $\nu$ , in any closed subinterval  $[\nu_0, \nu_1]$  of  $(-1, \infty)$ . In the case of the series in (2.3), (2.4) and the second and third series in (2.6), this is a consequence of the inequality [11, p. 471]

$$(2.8) \quad (\nu + 1) \frac{dj_{\nu k}}{d\nu} \leq j_{\nu k}$$

and the convergence of

$$\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} j_{\nu k}^{-2}.$$

To deal with the first infinite series in (2.6), we use the representation [1, p. 87]

$$(2.9) \quad j'' = 2 \int_0^\infty K_0(2j \sinh t) e^{-2\nu t} I(\nu, t) dt$$

where

$$(2.10) \quad I(\nu, t) = 2\nu j' \tanh t + j' \tanh^2 t - 2jt.$$

Here we are using the notation  $j = j_{\nu k}$  and the primes denote differentiation with respect to  $\nu$ . For the uniform convergence of the first infinite series in (2.6), it is sufficient to show that

$$(2.11) \quad \frac{d^2 j_{\nu k}}{d\nu^2} < F(\nu) j_{\nu k}, \quad \nu_0 \leq \nu \leq \nu_1,$$

where  $F(\nu)$  is bounded on  $\nu_0 \leq \nu \leq \nu_1$ . Now, from (2.10),  $j''$  is bounded by

$$(2.12) \quad j'(2|\nu| + 1)2 \int_0^\infty K_0(2j \sinh t)e^{-2\nu t} dt + 4j \int_0^\infty K_0(2j \sinh t)e^{-2\nu t} t dt.$$

Using [14, p. 508],

$$(2.13) \quad j' = 2j \int_0^\infty K_0(2j \sinh t)e^{-2\nu t} dt,$$

and (2.8), we find that the first term here is bounded by  $(2|\nu| + 1)(\nu + 1)^{-2}j$ . Using  $j_{\nu k} > \nu + 1$ ,  $\sinh t > t$  and the decreasing character of  $K_0(t)$  as a function of  $t$ ,  $t > 0$ , we find that the second term is bounded by

$$4j \int_0^\infty K_0(2(\nu + 1)t)e^{-2\nu t} t dt.$$

Thus (2.11) holds and this completes the verification of the validity of the differentiation and the proof of Theorem 2.1.

**3. Zeros of  $J_\nu(z)$ .** We first deal with the case  $f_\nu(z) = zJ_{\nu-1}(z)$ , got by taking  $b = 1$ ,  $a = c = f(\nu) = 0$ . It is well known [14, p. 483] that, for  $-2 < \nu < -1$ ,  $J_\nu(z)$  has a pair of purely imaginary zeros.

**THEOREM 3.1.** *Let  $\pm ip$  be the purely imaginary zeros of  $J_\nu(z)$  for  $-2 < \nu < -1$ . Then  $\rho^2$  is unimodal on  $(-2, -1)$ .*

**PROOF.** We will actually work with the zeros of  $J_{\nu-1}(z)$  on  $(-1, 0)$ . From §2, we have (2.1) with

$$(3.1) \quad \lambda(\nu) = 2 \sum_{n=1}^\infty \frac{j_{\nu,n}^2}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2},$$

and

$$(3.2) \quad \mu(\nu) = 4\rho^2 \sum_{n=1}^\infty \frac{j_{\nu,n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu}{(j_{\nu,n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} - 2.$$

**CASE (i):**  $-1 < \nu \leq -0.8$ . In this range we will show that  $d\rho^2/d\nu > 0$ , so that  $\rho^2$  is increasing. Since  $\lambda(\nu) > 0$ , we need to show that  $\mu(\nu) > 0$  for this range of values of  $\nu$ . We will need the following results [5]:

$$(3.3) \quad j_{\nu n} \frac{dj_{\nu n}}{d\nu} > 4 - \frac{8(\nu + 1)(\nu + 3)}{j_{\nu n}^2} + \frac{32(\nu + 1)^2(\nu + 2)^2}{j_{\nu n}^4}, \quad \nu > -1;$$

$$(3.4) \quad 4(\nu + 1) < j_{\nu 1}^2 < 4(\nu + 1)(\nu + 2), \quad \nu > -1.$$

We also need inequalities for  $j_{\nu 1}^2$  in the case  $-2 < \nu < -1$ , when it is negative. Some simple bounds in this case are [7]

$$(3.5) \quad 2(\nu + 1)(\nu + 3) < j_{\nu 1}^2 < 4(\nu + 1)(\nu + 2), \quad -2 < \nu < -1.$$

or, in terms of our present notation,

$$(3.6) \quad -4\nu(\nu + 1) < \rho^2 < -2\nu(\nu + 2), \quad -1 < \nu < 0.$$

We have

$$(3.7) \quad \mu(\nu) = -2 + 4\rho^2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu,n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu}{j_{\nu,n}^4} \left[ 1 + \frac{\rho^2}{j_{\nu n}^2} \right]^{-2}.$$

Clearly

$$\left[ 1 + \frac{\rho^2}{j_{\nu n}^2} \right]^{-1} > \left[ 1 + \frac{\rho^2}{j_{\nu 1}^2} \right]^{-1} > 1 - \frac{\rho^2}{j_{\nu 1}^2} > 1 + \frac{2\nu(\nu + 2)}{j_{\nu 1}^2} > 1 + \frac{\nu(\nu + 2)}{2(\nu + 1)},$$

where we have used the upper bound in (3.6) and the lower bound in (3.4). On the other hand, from (3.3),

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu}{j_{\nu n}^4} > 4\sigma_{\nu}^{(2)} - 8(\nu + 1)(\nu + 3)\sigma_{\nu}^{(3)} + 32(\nu + 1)^2(\nu + 2)^2\sigma_{\nu}^{(4)}.$$

Here we have used the notation

$$\sigma_{\nu}^{(n)} = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} j_{\nu k}^{-2n}$$

and the closed form expressions for these sums in [14, p. 502]. This gives

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu}{j_{\nu n}^4} > \frac{5\nu + 11}{8(\nu + 1)^2(\nu + 3)(\nu + 4)}.$$

Using the above bounds and the lower bound for  $\rho^2$  in (3.6), we get from (3.7)

$$\mu(\nu) > -2 - \frac{\nu(\nu^2 + 4\nu + 2)^2(5\nu + 11)}{2(\nu + 1)^3(\nu + 3)(\nu + 4)},$$

and it is easy to check that this is positive for  $-1 < \nu \leq -0.8$ .

CASE (ii):  $-0.8 < \nu < 0$ . Here we show that  $d^2\rho^2/d\nu^2$  is negative at the turning points of  $\rho^2$ . In the present case (2.6) can be written

$$(3.8) \quad \mu_1(\nu) = 4 \left[ \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu n} d^2 j_{\nu n} / d\nu^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(dj_{\nu n} / d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} - 4 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(j_{\nu n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^3} \right].$$

Now the first term on the right here is negative [1] and the sum of the two remaining terms will certainly be negative provided that

$$(3.9) \quad \rho^2 - 3j_{\nu 1}^2 < 0.$$

But

$$\rho^2 - 3j_{\nu 1}^2 < -2(\nu^2 + 8\nu + 6)$$

from (3.4) and (3.6) and this is certainly negative in case  $-0.8 < \nu < 0$ . Thus the second derivative of  $\rho^2$  with respect to  $\nu$  is negative at points where the first derivative is 0; hence there can be only one such point and it is a relative maximum. This proves the unimodal property and completes the proof of Theorem 3.1.

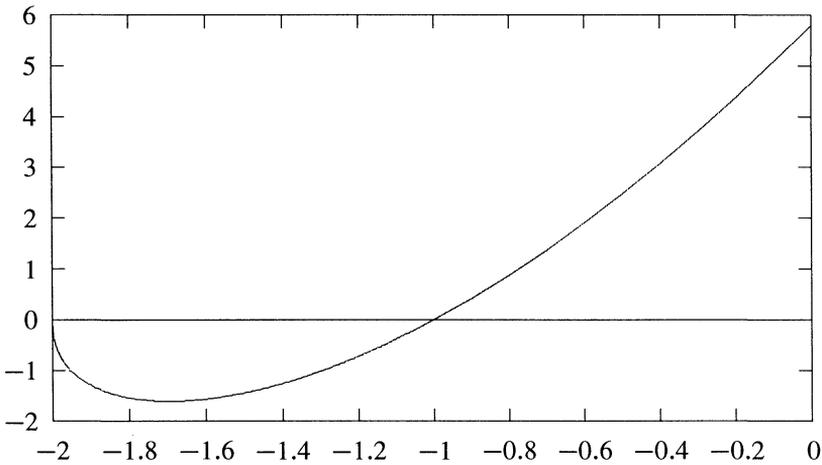


FIGURE 1:  $j_{\nu,1}^2$  vs.  $\nu$

In Figure 1, we give the graph of  $j_{\nu,1}^2$  versus  $\nu$  for  $-2 \leq \nu \leq 0$ . This graph, based on a computation described in [7], suggests strongly that  $j_{\nu,1}^2$  is convex on  $-2 < \nu < 0$ . It is shown [2] that it is convex on  $(0, \infty)$  and conjectured that the convexity extends to  $(-1, \infty)$ .

A numerical calculation indicates that the smallest value of  $j_{\nu,1}^2$  is  $-1.6075$  to 5 digit accuracy and it occurs for  $\nu$  between  $-1.698$  and  $-1.697$ .

**4. Dini functions and derivatives of Bessel functions.** Here we deal with the case  $f_{\nu}(z) = H_{\nu}(z) = \alpha J_{\nu}(z) + zJ'_{\nu}(z)$ , got by taking  $a = 1, b = c = 0, f(\nu) = \alpha + \nu$ . We call these Dini functions because they arise in expansions due to Dini [14, Chapter 18]. In the special case  $\alpha = 0$ , we are, of course, dealing with the zeros of  $J'_{\nu}(z)$ . There do not appear to be many results in the literature on the monotonicity of purely imaginary zeros  $\pm i\rho$  of  $H_{\nu}(z)$ , though it is shown in [6, pp. 78–79] that if  $\alpha < 0$ , then  $\rho^2$  is decreasing on  $(0, -\alpha)$ . We will prove:

**THEOREM 4.1.** *Let  $H_{\nu}(z, \alpha) = \alpha J_{\nu}(z) + zJ'_{\nu}(z)$ , where  $-1/2 \leq \alpha < 1$  and  $-1 < \nu < -\alpha$ .  $H_{\nu}(z, \alpha)$  has a pair of purely imaginary zeros  $\pm i\rho(\nu, \alpha)$ .  $\rho^2(\nu, \alpha)$  is unimodal on  $(-1, -\alpha)$ , i.e., there exists a number  $\nu_0(\alpha)$  such that  $\rho^2(\nu, \alpha)$  increases on  $(-1, \nu_0(\alpha))$  and decreases on  $(\nu_0(\alpha), -\alpha)$ .*

**COROLLARY.** *If  $\pm i\rho$  are purely imaginary zeros of  $J'_{\nu}(z)$  then  $\rho^2$  is unimodal on  $(-1, 0)$ .*

PROOF OF THEOREM 4.1. The question of existence of such zeros is equivalent to the question of whether equation (2.7) which is, in this case,

$$(4.1) \quad -(\nu + \alpha) = 2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{j_{\nu n}^2 / \rho^2 + 1},$$

can be satisfied. The right-hand side here increases from 0 to  $\infty$  as  $\rho$  increases from 0 to  $\infty$ , whereas the left-hand side remains constant and positive. Thus the existence of  $\rho(\nu, \alpha)$  is clear. It is also clear from

$$(4.2) \quad \rho^2 < -\frac{\alpha + \nu}{2 + \alpha + \nu} j_{\nu 1}^2$$

[6, (3.2)] that  $\rho(\nu, \alpha)$  vanishes as  $\nu \rightarrow -\alpha^-$  and, since  $j_{\nu 1} \rightarrow 0$ , it also vanishes as  $\nu \rightarrow -1^+$ . In the present case, (2.5) holds with  $\lambda(\nu)$  and  $\mu_1(\nu)$  given by (3.1) and (3.8), but with  $\rho$  interpreted as in the current section. Now, as in §3, the first term on the right of (3.8) is negative [1] and the sum of the two remaining terms will certainly be negative provided that

$$(4.3) \quad \rho^2 - 3j_{\nu 1}^2 < 0.$$

But this follows from (4.2). Thus the second derivative of  $\rho^2$  with respect to  $\nu$  is negative at points where the first derivative is 0; hence there can be only one such point and it is a relative maximum. This proves the unimodal property.

Unfortunately, it does not seem to be possible to handle the case where  $\alpha < -1/2$  in this way. The problem is that the inequality (4.3) seems to break down in this case. This is because  $j_{\nu 1}^2 \sim 4(\nu + 1)$  and  $\rho^2 \sim -4(\nu + 1)(\alpha - 1)/(\alpha + 1)$  as  $\nu \rightarrow -1^+$  [7].

With regard to the Corollary, it is of interest to point out that if  $j'_{\nu 1}$  denotes the purely imaginary zero of  $J'_\nu(x)$ , then the smallest value of  $j_{\nu 1}^2$  is  $-0.60602$  to 5 digit accuracy and it occurs for  $\nu$  between  $-0.5699$  and  $-0.5696$ .

REMARK. Since the purely imaginary zeros of  $J_\nu(z)$  are real zeros of  $I_\nu(z)$ , we may restate the results on  $j'_{\nu 1}$  in the following way: *The unique positive zero of  $I'_\nu(x)$  increases from 0 to  $i_0$  ( $= 0.7759$  to four digits) as  $\nu$  increases from  $-1$  to  $\nu_0(0)$  ( $-0.5699 < \nu_0(0) < -0.5697$ ) and then decreases again to 0 as  $\nu$  increases from  $\nu_0(0)$  to 0.*

5. Zeros of  $J''_\nu(z)$ . Here we discuss the case  $f_\nu(z) = -z^2 J''_\nu(z)$ , got by taking  $a = c = 1$ ,  $b = 0$  and  $f(\nu) = \nu - \nu^2$ . In this situation, we have (2.1) and (2.5) where it is better to leave  $\lambda(\nu)$  in the form given by (2.2):

$$(5.1) \quad \lambda(\nu) = \frac{\nu^2 - \nu}{\rho^2} - 2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\rho^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2},$$

and the function  $\mu_1(\nu)$  in (2.5) is given by

$$(5.2) \quad \mu_1(\nu) = 4 \left[ \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{j_{\nu n} d^2 j_{\nu n} / d\nu^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(dj_{\nu n} / d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2} - 4 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(j_{\nu n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^3} \right] + \frac{2}{\rho^2}.$$

We note that  $\lambda(\nu) < 0, 0 < \nu < 1$ , so in order to get the unimodality of  $j_{\nu 1}''^2$ , we need to show that  $\mu_1(\nu) > 0$  in this interval. Apart from a change in notation ( $\nu$  being replaced by  $-\nu$ ) the approach and formulas here agree with those in [4]. However, we can simplify the proof given in [4] by noting that the first two terms in (5.2), when combined, are equal to

$$2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(d^2 j_{\nu n}^2 / d\nu^2)}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^2}$$

which is clearly positive since  $d^2 j_{\nu n}^2 / d\nu^2 > 0, \nu > 0$  [2]. Thus it remains to show that the sum of the remaining two terms is positive, *i.e.*, that

$$(5.3) \quad 8 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(j_{\nu n} dj_{\nu n} / d\nu)^2}{(j_{\nu n}^2 + \rho^2)^3} < \frac{1}{\rho^2}.$$

But from [3, (1.5)], we have

$$(5.4) \quad \frac{1}{\rho^2} > \frac{2\nu + 1}{2\nu(1 - \nu^2)}.$$

while the inequality (2.8) and the Rayleigh sum [14, p. 502]

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} j_{\nu n}^{-2} = 1/[4(\nu + 1)]$$

show that the left-hand side of (5.3) is  $< 2/(\nu + 1)^3$ . It is a simple matter to show that

$$\frac{2}{(\nu + 1)^3} < \frac{2\nu + 1}{2\nu(1 - \nu^2)}$$

for  $0 < \nu < 1$ , so we find that  $\mu_1(\nu) > 0, 0 < \nu < 1$  and this completes the proof.

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*Department of Mathematics*  
*University of Patras*  
*261 10 Patras*  
*Greece*

*Department of Mathematics and Statistics*  
*York University*  
*North York, Ontario*  
*M3J 1P3*

*Department of Mathematics*  
*University of Patras*  
*261 10 Patras*  
*Greece*