COMPACT SETS OF COMPACT OPERATORS
IN ABSENCE OF $l^1$

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Abstract. We characterize the compactness of a subset of compact operators between Banach spaces when the domain space does not have a copy of $l^1$.

In a recent paper, F. Galaz-Fontes [6] characterizes the (relative) compactness of a set of compact operators from a reflexive and separable Banach space $X$ into another Banach space $Y$. Here we prove that such characterization is also valid when $X$ does not contain a copy of $l^1$. In order to clarify our terminology we say that a set of bounded linear operators $H \subseteq L(X,Y)$ is sequentially weak-norm equicontinuous (called uniformly $w$-continuous in [3]) if for each weakly-null sequence $(x_n)$ in $X$ the sequences $(h(x_n))$ converge in norm to 0 uniformly in $h \in H$, i.e. $\sup \{|h(x_n)| : h \in H\}$ converges to 0.

Theorem 1. Let $X$ be a Banach space without a copy of $l^1$ and let $H$ be a subset of bounded operators from $X$ to a Banach space $Y$. Then $H$ is a relatively compact subset in the space of compact operators $K(X,Y)$ in the uniform topology of operators if and only if it verifies the following two conditions:

1. $H$ is pointwisely relatively compact, i.e. for each $x \in X$ the set $H(x) = \{h(x) : h \in H\}$ is relatively compact in $Y$.
2. $H$ is sequentially weak-norm equicontinuous.

Note that if $X$ does not contain a copy of $l^1$, then by applying the Rosenthal-Dor Theorem (see [11] and [4] or [3, Ch. IX]) every bounded sequence in $X$ has a weakly-Cauchy subsequence and, therefore, a bounded linear operator $h : X \to Y$ is compact if and only if it is completely continuous, that is, if and only if it takes weakly convergent sequences in $X$ to convergent ones in $Y$. This tells us that condition (2) applied to a singleton characterizes compact operators when the space $X$ does not have a copy of $l^1$ [7, 17.7].

Our notation is standard: $L(X,Y)$ is the Banach space of bounded linear operators from the Banach space $X$ to the Banach space $Y$, endowed with the topology of the uniform convergence on the unit ball $B_X$ of $X$, $K(X,Y)$ is its closed subspace.
of compact operators, $X^*$ is the dual of $X$ and $\sigma(X, X^*)$ denotes the weak topology on $X$.

For the sake of completeness we consider the definition of a precompact set in the setting of uniform spaces. A Hausdorff uniform space $R$ is said to be precompact if its completion is compact (see [2, T.G. II. 29] or [8, p. 36]). Equivalently, $R$ is totally bounded, that is, for every vicinity $N$ of $R$ there exists a covering of $R$ by finitely many sets which are small of order $N$. Within the framework of topological vector spaces this reads as follows: for a subset $R$ of a topological vector space $E$ the following are equivalent: (a) $R$ is precompact, (b) $R$ is relatively compact in the completion of $E$ and (c) for each 0-neighbourhood $V$ in $E$ there exists a finite subset $M$ such that $R \subset M + V$ [7, 3.5.1]. Our proof relies on the Rosenthal-Dor Theorem and on the following two results: a version of Ascoli’s classical theorem (Theorem A) and a characterization of relative compact sets of compact operators between Banach spaces due to Palmer [10] and Anselone [1] (Theorem B).

**Theorem A** ([2, Th.2 on page T.G. X.17]). Consider two uniform spaces $X$ and $Y$, a cover $\mathcal{G}$ of $X$ formed by precompact subsets and a set $H$ of functions from $X$ to $Y$ such that the restriction of each $h \in H$ to each $A \in \mathcal{G}$ is uniformly continuous. Then $H$ is precompact in the topology (uniformity) of uniform convergence on members of $\mathcal{G}$ if and only if it verifies the following two conditions:

(i) $H$ is pointwisely precompact, i.e. $H(x) := \{h(x) : h \in H\}$ is precompact in $Y$, for each $x \in X$.

(ii) For each $A \in \mathcal{G}$ the set $H_A$ of restrictions to $A$ of the functions $h \in H$ is uniformly equicontinuous.

**Theorem B** ([1] and [10]). Let $X$ and $Y$ be normed linear spaces and $H$ a set of linear operators on $X$ into $Y$ that satisfies

(i) $H(B_X) := \{h(x) : h \in H, x \in B_X\}$ is totally bounded,

(ii) $H^*y^* := \{h^*(y^*) : h^* \in H^*\}$ is totally bounded for each $y^*$ in $Y^*$.

Then $H$ is totally bounded.

**Proof of Theorem 1.** We shall apply Ascoli’s Theorem A to the uniform spaces $(X, \sigma(X, X^*))$ and $(Y, \|\|)$ and the family $\mathcal{G}$ of weakly-Cauchy sequences in $X$. Note that $\mathcal{G}$ is a cover of $X$ formed by weakly-precompact sets and that each compact operator $h : X \to Y$ is weak-to-norm continuous on bounded sets of $X$ [8, Ths. VI. 5.6 and VI. 5.2], hence on each $A$ in $\mathcal{G}$. With the topology $\tau$ of the uniform convergence on the members of $\mathcal{G}$ the space $L(X, Y)$ is a locally convex space that we denote by $L_\tau(X, Y)$ [7, 8.4].

$(\implies)$ If $H$ is relatively compact, then (1) follows from the continuity of the operator $T \in K(X, Y) \to T(x) \in Y$ for each $x \in X$. A standard argument leads us to condition (2) from the fact that each compact operator is completely continuous.

$(\iff)$ Conversely, suppose that $H$ verifies conditions (1) and (2). In particular condition (2) says that $H \subset K(X, Y)$. We shall prove that $H$ is relatively compact in $K(X, Y)$ in three steps:

**Step 1:** $H$ is precompact in $L_\tau(X, Y)$. Applying Ascoli’s Theorem, it is enough to verify that for each weakly-Cauchy sequence $A$ in $X$, the set of restrictions $H_A := \{h \upharpoonright A : h \in H\}$ is uniformly equicontinuous when $A$ is endowed with the
weak topology $\sigma(X, X^*)$ and $Y$ with the norm topology. It suffices to prove this for each weakly-null sequence in $X$. Let $A := \{x_n : n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ be the set of terms of a weakly-null sequence in $X$. To prove that the set $H_A$ of restrictions of $H$ to $A$ is uniformly equicontinuous we need to prove that, for each $\varepsilon > 0$, there exists a weak-neighbourhood $U$ of 0 in $X$ such that whenever $x_n - x_m$ is in $U$, then $\|h(x_n) - h(x_m)\| < \varepsilon$ for every $h$ in $H$. We can suppose that $x_n \neq x_m$ whenever $n \neq m$ and that $x_n \neq 0$ for every $n$. Condition (2) tells us that for a given $\varepsilon > 0$ there exists $N_1 \in \mathbb{N}$ for which $\|h(x_n)\| < \varepsilon/2$ for every $n > N_1$ and every $h \in H$. Then we have that $\|h(x_n) - h(x_m)\| < \varepsilon$ for every $n, m > N_1$ and $h \in H$. Now, let us consider an arbitrary weak 0-neighbourhood $V_1$ in $X$. Since $(x_n)$ is a weak null sequence, there exists $N_2 \geq N_1$ in $\mathbb{N}$ such that $x_n \in \frac{1}{2} V_1$ for $n > N_2$. So, for $n, m > N_2$ we have $x_n - x_m \in V_1$ and $\|h(x_n) - h(x_m)\| < \varepsilon$. Since the elements $x_1, ..., x_{N_2}$ are different from each other and also different from 0 we can separate them in the weak topology, i.e. we can obtain a weak 0-neighbourhood $V_2$ in $X$ such that $x_n$ and $x_n - x_m$ are not in $V_1$ if $n \neq m$ are in $\{1, 2, ..., N_2\}$. Now, it suffices to take $U = V_1 \cap V_2$.

**Step 2:** $H$ is relatively compact in $(K(X, Y), \tau)$. The completion of $L_\tau(X, Y)$ is a subspace of the space of all linear maps from $X$ to $Y$ \cite[39.7.9]{9} If $R$ is an adherent point to $(H, \tau)$ in its completion, then $R : X \to Y$ is linear. Let us prove that $R$ is completely continuous, hence compact as $X$ does not have a copy of $l^1$. For a given weakly-null sequence $(x_n)$ in $X$ we can obtain for each $\varepsilon > 0$ an element $h_\varepsilon \in H$ such that

$$\sup \{\|(R - h_\varepsilon)(x_n)\| : n\} < \varepsilon.$$  

Taking a null sequence $(\varepsilon_m)$ and having in mind that $(h_\varepsilon(x_n))$ is null norm in $Y$ for each $\varepsilon > 0$, we obtain that $(R(x_n))$ is norm null.

**Step 3:** $H$ is relatively compact in $K(X, Y)$ (equivalently in $L(X, Y)$). Let us verify the conditions in Theorem B:

(i) Let $(h_n(x_n))$ be a sequence in $H(B_X)$. Extracting a subsequence if necessary we can suppose that $(x_n)$ is weakly-Cauchy. Let $R \in K(X, Y)$ be a $\tau$-adherent point to $(h_n)$ and consider a null sequence $(\varepsilon_m)$ of positive scalars. Then for each $k \in \mathbb{N}$ there exists $m_k \in \mathbb{N}$ such that

$$\sup \{\|(R - h_{m_k})(x_n)\| : n\} < \varepsilon_k.$$  

Since $(R(x_n))$ is norm convergent in $Y$, we have that $(h_{m_k}(x_{m_k}))$ is also norm convergent in $Y$.

(ii) To prove that $H^*y^* := \{h^*(y^*) : h^* \in H^*\}$ is relatively compact in $X^*$ let us consider the set of index $I := H^*y^*$ and the operator

$$S : x \in X \to S(x) := (\langle x, x^* \rangle_{L^1})_{z^* \in I} \in l_1^\infty.$$  

Because of condition (b) $S$ is a completely continuous, hence compact, operator. Therefore its adjoint $S^*$ is also compact. For each $z^* \in I$ denote by $e_{z^*}$ the continuous linear form

$$(\alpha_{z^*}) \in l_1^\infty \to \alpha_{z^*} \in \mathbb{C} \text{ or } \mathbb{R};$$  

then $\{e_{z^*} : z^* \in I\}$ lies in the unit ball of the dual $(l_1^\infty)^*$ and $S^*(e_{z^*}) = z^*$. Therefore

$$\{S^*(e_{z^*}) : z^* \in I\} = I = H^*y^*$$  

is relatively compact in $X^*$.

\[\square\]
Corollary 2. Let $X, Y$ be two Banach spaces and $H \subset L(X, Y)$. Then $H$ is a relatively compact subset of $K(X, Y)$ in the uniform topology of operators if and only if it verifies the following three conditions:

1. $H$ is pointwisely relatively compact.
2. $H$ is sequentially weak-norm equicontinuous.
3. The restriction of the elements of $H$ to each copy $Z$ of $l^1$ in $X$ is relatively compact in $K(Z, Y)$.

Proof. Only the if part needs proof. The conditions (2) and (3) guarantee that each $h \in H$ is a compact operator since by the Rosenthal-Dor Theorem ([11] and [4]), each bounded sequence $(x_n)$ in $X$ has a subsequence, say $(z_n)$, which is either weakly-Cauchy, and then $(h(z_n))$ is norm convergent by applying (2), or $(z_n)$ is equivalent to the canonical basis of $l^1$, and then $(h(z_n))$ is relatively norm-compact by applying (3). On the other hand, if $H$ is not relatively compact in $K(X, Y)$, equivalently if $H$ is not precompact, then there exist $\varepsilon > 0$ and a sequence $(h_n)$ in $H$ such that $\|h_n - h_m\| > \varepsilon$ for $n \neq m$. Let us consider a sequence $(x_{n,m})$ in $B_X$ such that for $n \neq m$ we have

\[ \|(h_n - h_m)(x_{n,m})\| > \varepsilon. \]

Applying the Rosenthal-Dor Theorem $(x_{n,m})$ has some subsequence $(z_k)$ which either is weakly-Cauchy, and inequality (*) contradicts (2), or $(z_k)$ is equivalent to the canonical basis of $l^1$, and then (*) contradicts (3). \qed

Remark 3. Galaz-Fontes’s proof is essentially different from ours in the sense that it relies on the fact that if $X$ is a reflexive and separable Banach space, then $B_X$ is metrizable and compact for the weak topology, something that we do not need in our proof. Of course both proofs coincide in the fact that they use Ascoli’s Theorem.

REFERENCES


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