COLLOQUIUM MATHEMATICUM

Online First version

COMPLETE SPACE-LIKE SELF-EXPANDERS IN THE MINKOWSKI SPACE

BY

ZHI LI, YUAN MI and GUOXIN WEI

Abstract. We study complete space-like self-expanders in the Minkowski space. By using a maximum principle of Omori–Yau type, we obtain rigidity theorems on n-dimensional complete space-like self-expanders in the Minkowski space $\mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$. For dimensions 2 and 3, we also classify them under the assumption of constant squared norm of the second fundamental form.

1. Introduction. An n-dimensional smooth immersed hypersurface $x : M^n \to \mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$ is called a *self-expander* of the mean curvature flow if its mean curvature vector $\vec{H}$ satisfies the equation

$$\vec{H} = x^{\perp}, \tag{1.1}$$

where $\vec{H} = He_{n+1}$, while x and e_{n+1} denote the position vector and the inward unit normal field, respectively. If we denote by $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ the standard inner product on $\mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$, then equation (1.1) is equivalent to

$$H = -\langle x, e_{n+1} \rangle, \quad \langle e_{n+1}, e_{n+1} \rangle = -1. \tag{1.2}$$

Self-expanders are self similar solutions of the mean curvature flow, that is, the family of hypersurfaces $x_t = \sqrt{2t}x$, $t > 0$, satisfying the equation of mean curvature flow. Self-expanders are important as they model the behavior of a mean curvature flow coming out of a conical singularity [3] and also model the long time behaviors of the flows starting from entire graphs [11]. There are many classification results on self-expanders. Ishimura [13] and Halldorsson [12] have classified self-expander curves in $\mathbb{R}^2$. In [12], Halldorsson states that each of the complete self-expander curves immersed in $\mathbb{R}^2$ is convex, properly embedded and asymptotic to the boundary of a cone with vertex at the origin. In 2018, Cheng and Zhou [7] studied some properties of complete properly immersed self-expanders. Recently, Ancari and Cheng [2] studied immersed self-expander hypersurfaces whose mean curvatures have

2020 *Mathematics Subject Classification*: Primary 53E10; Secondary 53C40.
Key words and phrases: self-expander, maximum principle, second fundamental form.
Received 12 October 2024; revised 3 June 2026.
Published online 10 November 2026.

DOI: 10.4064/cm9506-7-2026 © Instytut Matematyczny PAN, 2026

some linear growth controls and obtained a rigidity property of hyperplanes as self-expanders in Euclidean space. Further results about self-expanders have been obtained (cf. [4, 8–10, 14–16]).

In this paper, by using a maximum principle of Omori–Yau type, we obtain a classification of complete space-like self-expanders in the Minkowski space $\mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$.

THEOREM 1.1. *Let $x : M^n \to \mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$ be a complete space-like self-expander with the constant squared norm S of the second fundamental form. If $\inf H^2 > 0$, then $S = 1$ and $x(M^n)$ is the hyperbolic space $\mathbb{H}^n(\sqrt{n})$ or the hyperbolic cylinder $\mathbb{H}^k(\sqrt{k}) \times \mathbb{R}^{n-k}$, $1 \le k \le n-1$.*

When $n = 2$, we completely classify complete self-expanders with constant squared norm of the second fundamental form in the Minkowski space $\mathbb{R}_1^3$.

THEOREM 1.2. *Let $x : M^2 \to \mathbb{R}_1^3$ be a 2-dimensional complete space-like self-expander in $\mathbb{R}_1^3$. If the squared norm S of the second fundamental form is constant, then $x : M^2 \to \mathbb{R}_1^3$ is either the space-like affine plane $\mathbb{R}^2$ through the origin, the hyperbolic cylinder $\mathbb{H}^1(1) \times \mathbb{R}^1$ or the hyperbolic space $\mathbb{H}^2(\sqrt{2})$.*

REMARK. In fact, using the proof method of Theorem 1.1, we can also classify complete self-expanders in the Euclidean space $\mathbb{R}^3$ under the condition of the constant squared norm of the second fundamental form, and the classification yields only the plane $\mathbb{R}^2$ through the origin, which shows that the conclusion of Ancari and Cheng [2] still holds without the assumption on the scalar curvature.

For higher dimensions n, it is not easy to classify space-like self-expanders in the Minkowski space with constant squared norm S. Next, under the assumption that f_3 is constant, by considering the supremum and the infimum of H, we give a complete classification of 3-dimensional complete space-like self-expanders in $\mathbb{R}_1^4$ with constant squared norm S. Specifically, we prove

THEOREM 1.3. *Let $x : M^3 \to \mathbb{R}_1^4$ be a 3-dimensional complete space-like self-expander with the constant squared norm S of the second fundamental form in $\mathbb{R}_1^4$. If f_3 is constant, then $x(M^3)$ is isometric to one of the following:*

(1) *the space-like hyperplane $\mathbb{R}^3$ through the origin,*
(2) *the hyperbolic cylinder $\mathbb{H}^1(1) \times \mathbb{R}^2$,*
(3) *the hyperbolic cylinder $\mathbb{H}^2(\sqrt{2}) \times \mathbb{R}^1$,*
(4) *the hyperbolic space $\mathbb{H}^3(\sqrt{3})$.*

In particular, S must be 0 or 1 and f_3 must be 0, 1, $\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$ or $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$, where $S = \sum_{i,j} h_{ij}^2$ and $f_3 = \sum_{i,j,k} h_{ij} h_{jk} h_{ki}$.

REMARK. Obviously, if $S \equiv 0$, then $x(M^n)$ is isometric to the space-like hyperplane $\mathbb{R}^n$ through the origin. Therefore, from now on, we always assume that S is a non-zero constant.

2. Preliminaries. Let $x : M^n \to \mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$ be an n-dimensional space-like hypersurface immersed in the $(n+1)$-dimensional Minkowski space $\mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$. We choose a local orthonormal frame field $\{e_A\}_{A=1}^{n+1}$ in $\mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$, with dual coframe field $\{\omega_A\}_{A=1}^{n+1}$, such that, restricted to M^n, $e_1, \ldots, e_n$ are tangent to M^n. In this paper, we make the following conventions on the ranges of indices:

$$1 \le i, j, k, l \le n.$$

Then we have the structure equations

$$dx = \sum_i \omega_i e_i, \qquad de_i = \sum_j \omega_{ij} e_j + \omega_{i\,n+1} e_{n+1},$$

$$de_{n+1} = \omega_{n+1\,i} e_i, \qquad \omega_{n+1\,i} = \omega_{i\,n+1},$$

where ω_{ij} is the Levi-Civita connection of the hypersurface.

By restricting these forms to M, we get

$$\omega_{n+1} = 0. \tag{2.1}$$

Taking exterior derivatives of (2.1), we obtain

$$\omega_{i\,n+1} = \sum_j h_{ij}\omega_j, \qquad h_{ij} = h_{ji}. \tag{2.2}$$

Here

$$h = \sum_{i,j} h_{ij}\omega_i \otimes \omega_j, \qquad H = \sum_i h_{ii}$$

are called the *second fundamental form* and the *mean curvature* of $x : M \to \mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$, respectively. Let $S = \sum_{i,j}(h_{ij})^2$ be the squared norm of the second fundamental form of $x : M \to \mathbb{R}_1^{n+1}$. The Gauss equations are given by

$$R_{ijkl} = -(h_{ik}h_{jl} - h_{il}h_{jk}). \tag{2.3}$$

Defining the covariant derivative of h_{ij} by

$$\sum_k h_{ijk}\omega_k = dh_{ij} + \sum_k h_{ik}\omega_{kj} + \sum_k h_{kj}\omega_{ki}, \tag{2.4}$$

we obtain the Codazzi equations

$$h_{ijk} = h_{ikj}. \tag{2.5}$$

By taking the exterior derivative of (2.4), and setting

$$\sum_l h_{ijkl}\omega_l = dh_{ijk} + \sum_l h_{ljk}\omega_{li} + \sum_l h_{ilk}\omega_{lj} + \sum_l h_{ijl}\omega_{lk}, \tag{2.6}$$

we obtain the Ricci identities

$$h_{ijkl} - h_{ijlk} = \sum_m h_{mj}R_{mikl} + \sum_m h_{im}R_{mjkl}. \tag{2.7}$$

Setting

$$\sum_m h_{ijklm}\omega_m = dh_{ijkl} + \sum_m h_{mjkl}\omega_{mi} + \sum_m h_{imkl}\omega_{mj} + \sum_m h_{ijml}\omega_{mk} + \sum_m h_{ijkm}\omega_{ml} \tag{2.8}$$

and taking the exterior derivative of (2.6), we get

$$h_{ijklq} - h_{ijkql} = \sum_m h_{mjk}R_{milq} + \sum_m h_{imk}R_{mjlq} + \sum_m h_{ijm}R_{mklq}. \tag{2.9}$$

Let V be a tangent C^1-vector field on M^n and denote by $Ric_V := Ric - \frac{1}{2}L_V g$ the Bakry–Émery Ricci tensor with L_V standing for the Lie derivative along the vector field V. Define a differential operator

$$\mathcal{L}f = \Delta f + \langle V, \nabla f\rangle,$$

where Δ and ∇ denote the Laplacian and the gradient operator, respectively. The following maximum principle of Omori–Yau type concerning the operator $\mathcal{L}$ will be used in this paper. It was proved by Chen and Qiu [5].

LEMMA 2.1. *Let (M^n, g) be a complete Riemannian manifold, and V a C^1 vector field on M^n. If the Bakry–Émery Ricci tensor Ric_V is bounded from below, then for any $f \in C^2(M^n)$ bounded from above, there exists a sequence $\{p_t\} \subset M^n$ such that*

$$\lim_{t\to\infty} f(p_t) = \sup f, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} |\nabla f|(p_t) = 0, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} \mathcal{L}f(p_t) \le 0.$$

We next suppose that $x : M \to \mathbb{R}^{n+1}_1$ is a self-expander, that is, $H = -\langle x, e_{n+1}\rangle$. By a simple calculation, we have the following basic formulas:

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla_i H &= -\sum_k h_{ik}\langle x, e_k\rangle, \\ \nabla_j\nabla_i H &= -\sum_k h_{ijk}\langle x, e_k\rangle - h_{ij} + H\sum_k h_{ik}h_{kj}. \end{aligned} \tag{2.10}$$

In this paper, we shall always take $V = x^\top$ in all formulas. Using (2.10) and the Ricci identities, we obtain the following lemmas.

LEMMA 2.2. *Let $x : M^n \to \mathbb{R}^{n+1}_1$ be an n-dimensional complete space-like self-expander in $\mathbb{R}^{n+1}_1$. We have*

$$\mathcal{L}H = H(S-1), \tag{2.11}$$

$$\frac{1}{2}\mathcal{L}S = \sum_{i,j,k} h^2_{ijk} + S(S-1), \tag{2.12}$$

$$\frac{1}{3}\mathcal{L}f_3 = 2\sum_{i,j,k,l} h_{ijl}h_{jkl}h_{ki} + f_3(S-1). \tag{2.13}$$

LEMMA 2.3. *Let $x : M^n \to \mathbb{R}^{n+1}_1$ be an n-dimensional complete space-like self-expander in $\mathbb{R}^{n+1}_1$. If S is constant, we have*

$$\sum_{i,j,k,l}(h_{ijkl})^2 = (2-S)\sum_{i,j,k}(h_{ijk})^2 + 6\sum_{i,j,k,l,p} h_{ijk}h_{il}h_{jp}h_{klp} - 3\sum_{i,j,k,l,p} h_{ijk}h_{ijl}h_{kp}h_{lp}. \tag{2.14}$$

3. Proof of the main result. For an arbitrary point p in M^n, we always choose a local frame field $\{e_i\}_{i=1}^n$ such that

$$h_{ij} = \lambda_i\delta_{ij}, \quad S = \sum_i \lambda_i^2, \quad H^2 \le nS,$$

and equality holds in the above inequality if and only if $\lambda_1 = \cdots = \lambda_n$. Taking the exterior derivative of $S = \sum_{i,j}(h_{ij})^2$, we find that

$$\sum_{i,j} h_{ij}h_{ijk} = 0, \quad \sum_{i,j} h_{ij}h_{ijkl} + \sum_{i,j} h_{ijk}h_{ijl} = 0, \quad k,l = 1,\dots,n. \tag{3.1}$$

On the other hand, from the Ricci identities (2.7), we obtain

$$h_{ijkl} - h_{ijlk} = -(\lambda_i\lambda_j\lambda_k\delta_{il}\delta_{jk} - \lambda_i\lambda_j\lambda_l\delta_{ik}\delta_{jl} + \lambda_i\lambda_j\lambda_k\delta_{ik}\delta_{jl} - \lambda_i\lambda_j\lambda_l\delta_{il}\delta_{jk}).$$

That is,

$$h_{iijj} - h_{jjii} = -\lambda_i\lambda_j(\lambda_i - \lambda_j), \quad h_{iikl} - h_{iilk} = 0, \quad k \ne l. \tag{3.2}$$

In 2015, Cheng and Peng [6] obtained some rigidity theorems on complete self-shrinkers without the assumption on polynomial volume growth. Motivated by the above work, we establish Theorem 1.1

Proof of Theorem 1.1. For any unit vector $e \in TM^n$, we can choose a local tangent orthonormal frame field $\{e_i\}_{i=1}^n$ such that $e = e_i$. Then by the definition of self-expander, direct computation gives

$$\begin{aligned} Ric_{x^\top}(e_i,e_i) &= Ric(e_i,e_i) - \frac{1}{2}L_{x^\top}g(e_i,e_i) \\ &= -\Big(Hh_{ii} - \sum_j h_{ij}^2\Big) - (1 - Hh_{ii}) \\ &= \sum_j h_{ij}^2 - 1 \ge -1. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the Bakry–Émery Ricci curvature $Ric_{x^\top}$ is bounded from below and the maximum principle of Omori–Yau type holds on $x(M^n)$. For the constant S, (2.12) yields

$$\sum_{i,j,k} h_{ijk}^2 + S(S-1) = 0. \tag{3.3}$$

Since $\inf H^2 > 0$, without loss of generality we can assume that $\inf H > 0$. By the maximum principle of Omori–Yau type for the operator $\mathcal{L}$ applied to the function $-H$, there exists a sequence $\{p_t\} \in M^2$ such that

$$0 \leq \lim_{t\to\infty} \mathcal{L}H(p_t) = \inf H(S-1).$$

It is obvious that $S = 1$ and $\sum_{i,j,k} h_{ijk}^2 = 0$ from (3.3). Namely, the second fundamental form of $x(M^n)$ is parallel and H is constant. It follows from (2.10) that $\lambda_i(H\lambda_i - 1) = 0$, $1 \leq i \leq n$. Then we infer that λ_i equals 0 or $1/H$ for any $1 \leq i \leq n$, which indicates that the number of distinct principal curvatures is at most two. If $x(M^n)$ has only one principal curvature, that is, $x(M^n)$ is totally umbilic, then $x(M^n)$ is the hyperbolic space $\mathbb{H}^n(\sqrt{n})$. If $x(M^n)$ has just two distinct constant principal curvatures, by the congruence theorem of Abe, Koike and Yamaguchi [1], $x(M^n)$ is the hyperbolic cylinder $\mathbb{H}^k(\sqrt{k}) \times \mathbb{R}^{n-k}$, $1 \leq k \leq n-1$. ∎

In order to prove Theorem 1.2, we need the following proposition.

PROPOSITION 3.1. *Let $x : M^2 \to \mathbb{R}^3_1$ be a complete space-like self-expander with the non-zero constant squared norm S of the second fundamental form. Then* $\inf H^2 > 0$.

Proof. We argue by contradiction. If we had $\inf H^2 = 0$, there would exist a sequence $\{p_t\}$ in M^2 such that

$$\lim_{t\to\infty} H^2(p_t) = \inf H^2 = \bar{H}^2 = 0.$$

By (2.12), (2.14) and S being constant, we know that $\{h_{ij}(p_t)\}$, $\{h_{ijk}(p_t)\}$ and $\{h_{ijkl}(p_t)\}$ are bounded sequences, and so one can assume that

$$\lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ij}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ij} = \bar{\lambda}_i\delta_{ij}, \quad \lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ijk}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ijk},$$
$$\lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ijkl}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ijkl}, \quad i,j,k,l = 1,2.$$

It follows from (2.10) that

$$\bar{h}_{11i} + \bar{h}_{22i} = -\bar{\lambda}_i \lim_{t\to\infty} \langle x, e_i\rangle(p_t), \quad i = 1,2, \tag{3.4}$$

and

$$\bar{h}_{11ij} + \bar{h}_{22ij} = -\sum_k \bar{h}_{ijk} \lim_{t\to\infty} \langle x, e_k\rangle(p_t) - \bar{\lambda}_i\delta_{ij}, \quad i,j = 1,2. \tag{3.5}$$

Using (3.1), we obtain

$$\bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{11k} + \bar{\lambda}_2\bar{h}_{22k} = 0, \quad k = 1,2, \tag{3.6}$$

and

$$\bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{11kl} + \bar{\lambda}_2\bar{h}_{22kl} = -\sum_{ij} \bar{h}_{ijk}\bar{h}_{ijl}, \quad k,l = 1,2. \tag{3.7}$$

Next, (3.2) yields

$$\bar{h}_{1112}-\bar{h}_{1121}=0,\qquad \bar{h}_{2221}-\bar{h}_{2212}=0. \tag{3.8}$$

Since $\bar{H}^2=0$ and S is a non-zero constant, we see that

$$\bar{\lambda}_1=-\bar{\lambda}_2\neq 0,\qquad S=2\bar{\lambda}_1^2.$$

Then (3.4) and (3.6) yield

$$\bar{h}_{11k}=\bar{h}_{22k},\qquad \lim_{t\to\infty}\langle x,e_k\rangle(p_t)=-\frac{2\bar{h}_{11k}}{\bar{\lambda}_k},\qquad k=1,2. \tag{3.9}$$

It follows from (3.5), (3.7) and (3.9) that

$$\begin{aligned}
&\bar{h}_{1111}+\bar{h}_{2211}=\frac{2(\bar{h}_{111}^2-\bar{h}_{112}^2)}{\bar{\lambda}_1}-\bar{\lambda}_1,\\
&\bar{h}_{1122}+\bar{h}_{2222}=\frac{2(\bar{h}_{111}^2-\bar{h}_{112}^2)}{\bar{\lambda}_1}+\bar{\lambda}_1,\\
&\bar{h}_{1112}+\bar{h}_{2212}=0
\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}
&\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{1111}-\bar{h}_{2211})=-2\bar{h}_{111}^2-2\bar{h}_{112}^2,\\
&\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{1122}-\bar{h}_{2222})=-2\bar{h}_{111}^2-2\bar{h}_{112}^2,\\
&\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{1112}-\bar{h}_{2212})=-4\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{112}.
\end{aligned}$$

Thus,

$$\begin{cases}
\bar{h}_{1111}=-\frac{2\bar{h}_{112}^2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}-\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2},\quad \bar{h}_{2211}=\frac{2\bar{h}_{111}^2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}-\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2},\\
\bar{h}_{1122}=-\frac{2\bar{h}_{112}^2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}+\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2},\quad \bar{h}_{2222}=\frac{2\bar{h}_{111}^2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}+\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2},\\
\bar{h}_{1112}=-\frac{2\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{112}}{\bar{\lambda}_1},\quad \bar{h}_{2212}=\frac{2\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{112}}{\bar{\lambda}_1}.
\end{cases} \tag{3.10}$$

It follows from (2.12) that

$$\sum_{i,j,k}h_{ijk}^2=S(1-S),\qquad \sum_{i,j,k}\bar{h}_{ijk}\bar{h}_{ijkl}=0,\qquad l=1,2. \tag{3.11}$$

Specifically,

$$\begin{aligned}
&\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{1111}+\bar{h}_{222}\bar{h}_{2221}+3\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{1121}+3\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{2211}=0,\\
&\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{1112}+\bar{h}_{222}\bar{h}_{2222}+3\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{1122}+3\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{2212}=0.
\end{aligned}$$

Then, from (3.8) and (3.9), we conclude that

$$\begin{aligned}
&\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{1111}+\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{2212}+3\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{1112}+3\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{2211}=0,\\
&\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{1112}+\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{2222}+3\bar{h}_{112}\bar{h}_{1122}+3\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{2212}=0.
\end{aligned} \tag{3.12}$$

Combining (3.10) with (3.12), we get

$$\bar{h}_{111}(3\bar{h}_{111}^2-3\bar{h}_{112}^2-\bar{\lambda}_1^2)=0,\qquad \bar{h}_{112}(3\bar{h}_{111}^2-3\bar{h}_{112}^2+\bar{\lambda}_1^2)=0. \tag{3.13}$$

If $\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{112} \neq 0$, (3.13) implies that $\bar{\lambda}_1^2 = S = 0$. This is a contradiction. If $\bar{h}_{111}\bar{h}_{112} = 0$, we also obtain contradictions. In fact, we may assume that $\sum_{i,j,k} \bar{h}_{ijk}^2 \neq 0$. Otherwise, we know that $\bar{h}_{ijkl} = 0$ for $i, j, k, l = 1, 2$ from (2.14). Then, using (3.10), we infer that $\bar{\lambda}_1 = 0$, a contradiction. Assuming $\bar{h}_{111} \neq 0$, we get $\bar{h}_{112} = 0$. From the first equation of (3.11) and (3.13), it follows that

$$\bar{h}_{111}^2 = \frac{1}{4}S(1-S), \quad \bar{h}_{111}^2 = \frac{1}{3}\bar{\lambda}_1^2 = \frac{1}{6}S.$$

Then

$$S = \frac{1}{3}, \quad \bar{\lambda}_1^2 = \frac{1}{6}, \quad \bar{h}_{111}^2 = \frac{1}{18}. \tag{3.14}$$

Consequently, the relations

$$\begin{aligned} &\bar{h}_{1111} = -\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2}, \quad \bar{h}_{2211} = \frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{6}, \quad \bar{h}_{1122} = \frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{2}, \\ &\bar{h}_{2222} = \frac{7\bar{\lambda}_1}{6}, \quad \bar{h}_{1112} = \bar{h}_{2212} = 0 \end{aligned} \tag{3.15}$$

can be derived by a simple calculation from (3.10).

It follows from (2.14), (3.14) and (3.15) that

$$\sum_{i,j,k,l} (\bar{h}_{ijkl})^2 = \bar{h}_{1111}^2 + \bar{h}_{2222}^2 + 3\bar{h}_{1122}^2 + 3\bar{h}_{2211}^2 + 4\bar{h}_{1112}^2 + 4\bar{h}_{2212}^2 = \frac{11}{27}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i,j,k,l} (\bar{h}_{ijkl})^2 &= (2-S)\sum_{i,j,k} (\bar{h}_{ijk})^2 + 6\sum_{i,j,k} \bar{\lambda}_i\bar{\lambda}_j\bar{h}_{ijk}^2 - 3\sum_{i,j,k} \bar{\lambda}_k^2\bar{h}_{ijk}^2 \\ &= 4(2-S)\bar{h}_{111}^2 - 12\bar{\lambda}_1^2\bar{h}_{111}^2 = \frac{7}{27}. \end{aligned}$$

This is impossible. Assuming that $\bar{h}_{111} = 0$ and $\bar{h}_{112} \neq 0$ we similarly obtain contradictions. ∎

Proof of Theorem 1.2. If $S = 0$, we know that $x : M^2 \to \mathbb{R}_1^3$ is a space-like affine plane $\mathbb{R}^2$. If $S \neq 0$, it is obvious that $x(M^2)$ is either $\mathbb{H}^1(1) \times \mathbb{R}^1$ or $\mathbb{H}^2(\sqrt{2})$ from Theorem 1.1 and Proposition 3.1. ∎

For the constant S, if $S \geq 1$, we get $S = 1$ from (2.12). Then, from Theorem 1.1, we obtain the conclusion of Theorem 1.3. Thus, we only need to consider the case $0 < S < 1$.

PROPOSITION 3.2. *For a 3-dimensional complete space-like self-expander $x : M^3 \to \mathbb{R}_1^4$ with constant squared norm S of the second fundamental form and constant f_3, if $0 < S < 1$, then either $\sup H = \frac{3f_3}{2S}$ or $\sup H = \frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}$ with $f_3^2 = (1-S^2)^2$ and $3S^3 + S^2 - S - 1 = 0$.*

Proof. For an arbitrary fixed point $p \in M^3$, we choose a local frame field $\{e_i\}_{i=1}^3$ such that

$$h_{ij} = \lambda_i \delta_{ij}, \qquad S = \sum_i \lambda_i^2, \qquad H^2 \leq 3S.$$

The proof of Theorem 1.1 states that the Bakry–Émery Ricci curvature $Ric_{x^\top}$ is bounded from below. By the maximum principle of Omori–Yau type for the operator $\mathcal{L}$ applied to the function H, there exists a sequence $\{p_t\}$ in M^3 such that

$$\lim_{t\to\infty} H(p_t) = \sup H, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} |\nabla H|(p_t) = 0, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} \mathcal{L}H(p_t) \leq 0. \tag{3.16}$$

For the constant S, by (2.12) and (2.14), we know that $\{h_{ij}(p_t)\}$, $\{h_{ijk}(p_t)\}$ and $\{h_{ijkl}(p_t)\}$ are bounded sequences for $i,j,k,l = 1,2,3$. Hence, one can assume that

$$\begin{aligned}
&\lim_{t\to\infty} H(p_t) = \bar{H}, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ij}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ij} = \bar{\lambda}_i \delta_{ij},\\
&\lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ijk}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ijk}, \qquad \lim_{t\to\infty} h_{ijkl}(p_t) = \bar{h}_{ijkl}, \qquad i,j,k,l = 1,2,3.
\end{aligned}$$

Taking the exterior derivative of H, we get

$$\bar{H}_{,i} = \bar{h}_{11i} + \bar{h}_{22i} + \bar{h}_{33i} = 0, \qquad i = 1,2,3. \tag{3.17}$$

Also, (3.1) yields

$$\bar{H}_{,i} = \bar{h}_{11i} + \bar{h}_{22i} + \bar{h}_{33i} = -\bar{\lambda}_i \lim_{t\to\infty} \langle x, e_i\rangle(p_t), \qquad i = 1,2,3, \tag{3.18}$$

and

$$\bar{H}_{,ij} = -\sum_k \bar{h}_{ijk} \lim_{t\to\infty} \langle x, e_k\rangle(p_t) - \bar{\lambda}_i \delta_{ij} + \bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_i^2 \delta_{ij}, \qquad i,j = 1,2,3. \tag{3.19}$$

Since S is constant, we obtain

$$\bar{\lambda}_1 \bar{h}_{11k} + \bar{\lambda}_2 \bar{h}_{22k} + \bar{\lambda}_3 \bar{h}_{33k} = 0, \qquad k = 1,2,3, \tag{3.20}$$

and

$$\sum_i \bar{\lambda}_i \bar{h}_{iikl} = -\sum_{i,j} \bar{h}_{ijk} \bar{h}_{ijl}, \qquad k,l = 1,2,3. \tag{3.21}$$

Since f_3 is constant, Lemma 2.2 gives

$$\bar{\lambda}_1^2 \bar{h}_{11k} + \bar{\lambda}_2^2 \bar{h}_{22k} + \bar{\lambda}_3^2 \bar{h}_{33k} = 0, \qquad k = 1,2,3 \tag{3.22}$$

and

$$\sum_i \bar{\lambda}_i^2 \bar{h}_{iikl} = -2\sum_{i,j} \bar{\lambda}_i \bar{h}_{ijk} \bar{h}_{ijl}, \qquad k,l = 1,2,3. \tag{3.23}$$

Using the above equations, we now prove that if $0 < S < 1$, then either

$$\sup H = \bar{H} = \frac{3f_3}{2S}$$

or

$$\sup H = \bar{H} = \frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}, \qquad f_3^2 = (1-S^2)^2, \qquad 3S^3 + S^2 - S - 1 = 0.$$

In fact, if $\bar{\lambda}_1 = \bar{\lambda}_2 = \bar{\lambda}_3$, from (3.21) and (3.23) we have

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii11} = -(\bar{h}_{111}^2 + \bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{331}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{112}^2 + \bar{h}_{113}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii22} = -(\bar{h}_{112}^2 + \bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{332}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii33} = -(\bar{h}_{113}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2 + \bar{h}_{333}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{331}^2 + \bar{h}_{332}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2) \end{cases}$$

and

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1^2 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii11} = -2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{111}^2 + \bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{331}^2) - 4\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{112}^2 + \bar{h}_{113}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii22} = -2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{112}^2 + \bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{332}^2) - 4\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2 \sum_i \bar{h}_{ii33} = -2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{113}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2 + \bar{h}_{333}^2) - 4\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{331}^2 + \bar{h}_{332}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2). \end{cases}$$

Thus, we infer that

$$\bar{h}_{ijk} = 0, \qquad i,j,k = 1,2,3.$$

Then it follows that $S = 1$ from (2.12). This contradicts the hypothesis.

If two of $\bar{\lambda}_1$, $\bar{\lambda}_2$ and $\bar{\lambda}_3$ are equal, without loss of generality we assume that $\bar{\lambda}_1 \neq \bar{\lambda}_2 = \bar{\lambda}_3$. Then we deduce from (3.20) and (3.22) that

$$\bar{h}_{11k} = 0, \qquad \bar{h}_{22k} + \bar{h}_{33k} = 0, \qquad k = 1,2,3. \tag{3.24}$$

When $\bar{\lambda}_1 = 0$, we know that $\bar{\lambda}_2 = \bar{\lambda}_3 \neq 0$ since $S \neq 0$. By use of (3.21), (3.23) and (3.24), we obtain

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2211} + \bar{h}_{3311}) = -2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2222} + \bar{h}_{3322}) = -2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2) \end{cases}$$

and

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2211} + \bar{h}_{3311}) = -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2222} + \bar{h}_{3322}) = -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2) - 2\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2). \end{cases}$$

Thus,

$$\bar{h}_{221} = \bar{h}_{123} = 0, \qquad \bar{h}_{222} = \bar{h}_{223} = 0.$$

Consequently,

$$\bar{h}_{ijk} = 0, \qquad i,j,k = 1,2,3.$$

Then $S = 1$ from (2.12). This contradicts the hypothesis.

When $\bar{\lambda}_1 \neq 0$, $\bar{\lambda}_2 = \bar{\lambda}_3 = 0$, it follows from (3.21), (3.23) and (3.24) that

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1 \bar{h}_{1111} = -2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1 \bar{h}_{1122} = -2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2) \end{cases}$$

and

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1^2 \bar{h}_{1111} = 0, \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2 \bar{h}_{1122} = -2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2). \end{cases}$$

Thus,

$$\bar{h}_{221} = \bar{h}_{123} = 0, \quad \bar{h}_{222} = \bar{h}_{223} = 0.$$

Consequently,

$$\bar{h}_{ijk} = 0, \quad i,j,k = 1,2,3.$$

Then $S = 1$ from (2.12). This contradicts the hypothesis.

When $\bar{\lambda}_1 \neq 0$, $\bar{\lambda}_2 = \bar{\lambda}_3 \neq 0$, (3.17) and (3.18) yield

$$\lim_{t\to\infty} \langle x, e_k \rangle(p_t) = 0, \quad k = 1,2,3. \tag{3.25}$$

Using (3.19) and (3.25), we can rewrite (3.21), (3.23) and (3.24) as

$$\begin{cases} \bar{h}_{1111} + \bar{h}_{2211} + \bar{h}_{3311} = -\bar{\lambda}_1 + \bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_1^2, \\ \bar{h}_{1122} + \bar{h}_{2222} + \bar{h}_{3322} = -\bar{\lambda}_2 + \bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2^2, \\ \bar{h}_{1112} + \bar{h}_{2212} + \bar{h}_{3312} = 0, \\ \bar{h}_{1113} + \bar{h}_{2213} + \bar{h}_{3313} = 0, \end{cases} \tag{3.26}$$

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1111} + \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2211} + \bar{h}_{3311}) = -2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1122} + \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2222} + \bar{h}_{3322}) = -2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2) - 2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1112} + \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2212} + \bar{h}_{3312}) = -2(\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{222} + \bar{h}_{223}\bar{h}_{123}), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1113} + \bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{2213} + \bar{h}_{3313}) = -2(\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{223} - \bar{h}_{222}\bar{h}_{123}) \end{cases} \tag{3.27}$$

and

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1^2\bar{h}_{1111} + \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2211} + \bar{h}_{3311}) = -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2\bar{h}_{1122} + \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2222} + \bar{h}_{3322}) = -2(\bar{\lambda}_1 + \bar{\lambda}_2)(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2) \\ \qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2\bar{h}_{1112} + \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2212} + \bar{h}_{3312}) = -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{222} + \bar{h}_{223}\bar{h}_{123}), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1^2\bar{h}_{1113} + \bar{\lambda}_2^2(\bar{h}_{2213} + \bar{h}_{3313}) = -4\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{223} - \bar{h}_{222}\bar{h}_{123}). \end{cases} \tag{3.28}$$

Combining (3.27) and (3.28), we obtain

$$\begin{cases} \bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2 - \bar{\lambda}_1)\bar{h}_{1111} = 2\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2), \\ \bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2 - \bar{\lambda}_1)\bar{h}_{1122} = 2\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2) + 2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2). \end{cases} \tag{3.29}$$

Next, (3.26) gives

$$\bar{h}_{2212} + \bar{h}_{3312} = -\bar{h}_{1112}, \quad \bar{h}_{2213} + \bar{h}_{3313} = -\bar{h}_{1113}. \tag{3.30}$$

Inserting (3.30) into (3.27) and (3.28), we conclude that

$$\bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{222} + \bar{h}_{223}\bar{h}_{123} = 0, \quad \bar{h}_{221}\bar{h}_{223} - \bar{h}_{222}\bar{h}_{123} = 0,$$

which yields $\bar{h}_{221}^2 + \bar{h}_{123}^2 = 0$ or $\bar{h}_{222}^2 + \bar{h}_{223}^2 = 0$.

When $\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}=0$ and $\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}=0$, we get $\bar{h}_{ijk}=0$, $i,j,k=1,2,3$. Thus, $S=1$ from (2.12). This contradicts the hypothesis.

When $\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}\neq 0$ and $\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}=0$, (3.29) implies

$$\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1)\bar{h}_{1111}=2\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}),$$
$$\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1)\bar{h}_{1122}=2\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}).$$

Then

$$\bar{h}_{1111}=\frac{2\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1)}(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}),\qquad \bar{h}_{1122}=\frac{2}{\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1}(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}). \tag{3.31}$$

It follows from $(3.26)_2$, (3.27) and (3.31) that

$$\begin{aligned}-2(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123})&=\bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1122}+\bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_2+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2^2-\bar{h}_{1122})\\&=\bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_2+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2^2)+(\bar{\lambda}_1-\bar{\lambda}_2)\bar{h}_{1122}\\&=-\bar{\lambda}_2^2(1-\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2)-2(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}).\end{aligned}$$

Then

$$\bar{\lambda}_2=\frac{1}{\bar{H}}. \tag{3.32}$$

By use of $(3.26)_1$, (3.27), (3.31) and (3.32), we get

$$\begin{aligned}-2(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123})&=\bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1111}+\bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_1+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_1^2-\bar{h}_{1111})\\&=\bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_1+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_1^2)+(\bar{\lambda}_1-\bar{\lambda}_2)\bar{h}_{1111}\\&=-\bar{\lambda}_1\bar{\lambda}_2\left(1-\frac{\bar{\lambda}_1}{\bar{\lambda}_2}\right)-\frac{2\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}(\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}),\end{aligned}$$

which implies

$$\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}=-\bar{\lambda}_1^2/2.$$

This is impossible.

When $\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}=0$ and $\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}\neq 0$, (3.29) yields

$$\bar{h}_{1111}=0,\qquad \bar{h}_{1122}=\frac{2\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1)}(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}). \tag{3.33}$$

Noting that $\bar{h}_{1111}=0$ and using $(3.27)_1$, we get

$$\bar{h}_{2211}+\bar{h}_{3311}=0,\qquad \bar{H}_{,11}=0.$$

Hence, in view of $(3.26)_1$,

$$\bar{\lambda}_1=\frac{1}{\bar{H}}. \tag{3.34}$$

From $(3.26)_2$, (3.27), (3.33) and (3.34), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}-2(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}) &= \bar{\lambda}_1\bar{h}_{1122}+\bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_2+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2^2-\bar{h}_{1122})\\ &= \bar{\lambda}_2(-\bar{\lambda}_2+\bar{H}\bar{\lambda}_2^2)+(\bar{\lambda}_1-\bar{\lambda}_2)\cdot\frac{2\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1(\bar{\lambda}_2-\bar{\lambda}_1)}(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223})\\ &= -\bar{\lambda}_2^2\left(1-\frac{\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}\right)-\frac{2\bar{\lambda}_2}{\bar{\lambda}_1}(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}),\end{aligned}$$

which implies

$$\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}=\frac{\bar{\lambda}_2^2}{2}. \tag{3.35}$$

Since $\bar{h}^2_{221}+\bar{h}^2_{123}=0$, using (3.24) we get

$$\sum_{i,j,k}\bar{h}^2_{ijk}=4(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}),\qquad 2\sum_{i,j,k,l}\bar{h}_{ijl}\bar{h}_{jkl}\bar{h}_{ki}=8\bar{\lambda}_2(\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}).$$

It follows from (2.12) and (2.13) that

$$\sum_{i,j,k}\bar{h}^2_{ijk}=S(1-S),\qquad 2\sum_{i,j,k,l}\bar{h}_{ijl}\bar{h}_{jkl}\bar{h}_{ki}=f_3(1-S).$$

Then

$$\bar{h}^2_{222}+\bar{h}^2_{223}=\frac{S(1-S)}{4},\qquad \bar{\lambda}_2=\frac{f_3}{2S}. \tag{3.36}$$

Combining (3.35) with (3.36), we infer that

$$\bar{\lambda}_2^2=\frac{S(1-S)}{2},\qquad f_3^2=2S^3(1-S). \tag{3.37}$$

From (3.34), (3.36) and (3.37) we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}&S=\bar{\lambda}_1^2+2\bar{\lambda}_2^2=\frac{1}{\bar{H}^2}+S(1-S),\qquad \bar{H}^2=\frac{1}{S^2},\\ &\bar{H}=\bar{\lambda}_1+2\bar{\lambda}_2=\frac{1}{\bar{H}}+\frac{f_3}{S},\qquad \bar{H}=\frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3},\qquad f_3^2=(1-S^2)^2.\end{aligned}$$

Consequently,

$$\bar{H}=\frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3},\qquad f_3^2=(1-S^2)^2,\qquad 3S^3+S^2-S-1=0,$$

where the last equation comes from the second equation of (3.37).

If $\bar{\lambda}_1$, $\bar{\lambda}_2$ and $\bar{\lambda}_3$ are distinct, it follows from (3.17), (3.20) and (3.22) that

$$\bar{h}_{11k}=\bar{h}_{22k}=\bar{h}_{33k}=0,\qquad k=1,2,3,$$

and

$$\sum_{i,j,k}\bar{h}^2_{ijk}=6\bar{h}^2_{123},\qquad 2\sum_{i,j,k,l}\bar{h}_{ijl}\bar{h}_{jkl}\bar{h}_{ki}=4\bar{H}\bar{h}^2_{123}.$$

Then, combining (2.12) and (2.13), we get

$$6\bar{h}^2_{123} = S(1-S), \quad 4\bar{H}\bar{h}^2_{123} = f_3(1-S),$$

Hence,

$$\bar{H} = \frac{3f_3}{2S}. \blacksquare$$

By the maximum principle of Omori–Yau type for the operator $\mathcal{L}$ applied to the function $-H$, we obtain

PROPOSITION 3.3. *For a 3-dimensional complete space-like self-expander $x : M^3 \to \mathbb{R}^4_1$ with non-zero constant squared norm S of the second fundamental form, if f_3 is constant, then either* $\inf H = \frac{3f_3}{2S}$ *or* $\inf H = \frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}$, *where* $f_3^2 = (1-S^2)^2$, $3S^3 + S^2 - S - 1 = 0$.

Proof of Theorem 1.3. If $S = 0$, we know that $x : M^3 \to \mathbb{R}^4_1$ is the space-like hyperplane $\mathbb{R}^3$ through the origin. If $0 < S < 1$, we know that $\frac{3f_3}{2S}$ and $\frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}$ cannot be equal since $f_3^2 = (1-S^2)^2$ and $3S^3 + S^2 - S - 1 = 0$. In fact, if $\frac{3f_3}{2S} = \frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}$, then $3f_3^2 = 2(1-S^2)$. Then from $f_3^2 = (1-S^2)^2$, we infer that $S = \sqrt{3}/3$. This is a contradiction since $3S^3 + S^2 - S - 1 = 0$. Thus, from Propositions 3.2 and 3.3, we obtain $\sup H = \inf H = \frac{3f_3}{2S}$ or $\sup H = \inf H = \frac{1-S^2}{Sf_3}$, which shows that the mean curvature H is constant. Then, by (2.11), we know that $H = 0$ and $x(M^3)$ is isometric to the space-like hyperplane $\mathbb{R}^3$, which contradicts the relation $0 < S < 1$. This completes the proof of the main theorem. $\blacksquare$

Funding. The first author was partially supported by the NSFC grant No. 12401060 and the Natural Science Foundation of Henan grant No. 262300421232. The third author was partly supported by NSFC grant No. 12171164.

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Zhi Li (corresponding author), Yuan Mi
School of Mathematics and Statistics
Henan Normal University
Xinxiang, 453007, Henan, P. R. China
E-mail: lizhihnsd@126.com
17734703305@163.com

Guoxin Wei
School of Mathematical Sciences
South China Normal University
Guangzhou, 510631, Guangdong, P. R. China
E-mail: weiguoxin@tsinghua.org.cn