Sections 5.2-5.3

Characteristic Equation and Diagonalization

Powers of Diagonal Matrices

- Taking *powers of diagonal* matrices is easy!
- Working with *diagonalizable matrices* is also easy.

If D is diagonal

Then D^n is also diagonal, the diagonal entries of D^n are the *nth powers of the diagonal* entries of D

Example

$$D = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 3 \end{pmatrix} \qquad M = \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{2} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{3} \end{pmatrix},$$

$$D^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 4 & 0 \\ 0 & 9 \end{pmatrix} \qquad M^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{4} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{9} \end{pmatrix},$$

$$\vdots \qquad \vdots$$

$$D^n = \begin{pmatrix} 2^n & 0 \\ 0 & 3^n \end{pmatrix} \qquad M^n = \begin{pmatrix} (-1)^n & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{2^n} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{3^n} \end{pmatrix}.$$

Diagonalizable Matrices

Definition

An $n \times n$ matrix A is **diagonalizable** if it is similar to a diagonal matrix:

$$A = PDP^{-1} \quad \text{for } D \text{ diagonal.}$$

Important

$$\text{If } A = PDP^{-1} \text{ for } D = \begin{pmatrix} d_{11} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & d_{22} & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & d_{nn} \end{pmatrix} \text{ then}$$

$$A^k = PD^K P^{-1} = P \begin{pmatrix} d_{11}^k & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & d_{22}^k & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & d_{nn}^k \end{pmatrix} P^{-1}.$$

So diagonalizable matrices are *easy to raise to any power*.

Diagonalization

The Diagonalization Theorem

An $n \times n$ matrix A is **diagonalizable** if and only if A has n *linearly independent eigenvectors*.

In this case, $A = PDP^{-1}$ for

$$P = \begin{pmatrix} | & | & & | \\ v_1 & v_2 & \cdots & v_n \\ | & | & & | \end{pmatrix} \qquad D = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \lambda_n \end{pmatrix},$$

where $v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n$ are linearly independent eigenvectors, and $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \ldots, \lambda_n$ are the *corresponding eigenvalues* (in the same order).

The Characteristic Polynomial

Last section we learn that for a square matrix A:

$$\lambda \text{ is an eigenvalue of } A \iff \det(A - \lambda I) = 0.$$

Compute Eigenvalues

The *eigenvalues* of A are **the roots** of $\det(A - \lambda I)$, which is the characteristic polynomial of A.

Definition

Let A be a square matrix. The **characteristic polynomial** of A is

$$f(\lambda) = \det(A - \lambda I).$$

The **characteristic equation** of A is the equation

$$f(\lambda) = \det(A - \lambda I) = 0.$$

Question: What are the eigenvalues of the *rabbit population matrix*

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 6 & 8 \\ \frac{1}{2} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{2} & 0 \end{pmatrix}?$$

Answer: First we find the characteristic polynomial:

$$\begin{aligned} f(\lambda) &= \det(A - \lambda I) = \det \begin{pmatrix} -\lambda & 6 & 8 \\ \frac{1}{2} & -\lambda & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{2} & -\lambda \end{pmatrix} \\ &= 8\left(\frac{1}{4} - 0 \cdot -\lambda\right) - \lambda\left(\lambda^2 - 6 \cdot \frac{1}{2}\right) \\ &= -\lambda^3 + 3\lambda + 2. \end{aligned}$$

Already know one *eigenvalue is $\lambda = 2$*, check : $f(2) = -8 + 6 + 2 = 0$.

Doing polynomial long division, we get:

$$\frac{-\lambda^3 + 3\lambda + 2}{\lambda - 2} = -\lambda^2 - 2\lambda - 1 = -(\lambda + 1)^2.$$

Hence $f(\lambda) = -(\lambda + 1)^2(\lambda - 2)$ and so $\lambda = -1$ *is also* an eigenvalue.

Algebraic Multiplicity

Definition

The **algebraic multiplicity** of an eigenvalue λ is its *multiplicity as a root* of the characteristic polynomial.

Example

In the rabbit population matrix, $f(\lambda) = -(\lambda - 2)(\lambda + 1)^2$. The algebraic multiplicities are

$$\lambda = \begin{cases} 2 & \text{multiplicity } 1, \\ -1 & \text{multiplicity } 2 \end{cases}$$

Definition

Let λ be an eigenvalue of a square matrix A. The **geometric multiplicity** of λ is the *dimension of the λ-eigenspace*.

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &\leq (\text{the geometric multiplicity of } \lambda) \\ &\leq (\text{the algebraic multiplicity of } \lambda). \end{aligned}$$

Problem: Show that $A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ is **not diagonalizable**.

The *characteristic polynomial* is

$$f(\lambda) = \det(A - \lambda I) = (\lambda - 1)^2.$$

Let's compute the 1-eigenspace:

$$(A - I)x = 0 \iff \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} x = 0.$$

A basis for the 1-eigenspace is $\begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$; solution has only one free variable!

Conclusion:

- All eigenvectors of A are multiples of $\begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$.
- So A has only one linearly independent eigenvector
- If A was diagonalizable, there would be *two linearly independent eigenvectors*!

Poll

Poll

Which of the following matrices *are diagonalizable*, and why?

A. $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ B. $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$ C. $\begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$ D. $\begin{pmatrix} 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$

Matrix D is *already diagonal*!

Matrix B is *diagonalizable* because it has two distinct eigenvalues.

Matrices A and C are *not diagonalizable*: Same argument as previous slide:

All eigenvectors are multiples of $\begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$.

Example

The matrix $A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ has characteristic polynomial $f(\lambda) = (\lambda - 1)^2$.

We showed before that the *1-eigenspace has dimension 1* and A was **not diagonalizable**. The geometric multiplicity is smaller than the algebraic.

Eigenvalue	Geometric	Algebraic
$\lambda = 1$	1	2

The Diagonalization Theorem (Alternate Form)

Let A be an $n \times n$ matrix. The following are equivalent:

1. A is **diagonalizable**.
2. The *sum of the geometric multiplicities* of the eigenvalues of A equals n.
3. The sum of all algebraic multiplicities is n. And for each eigenvalue, the *geometric and algebraic* multiplicity are equal.

How to **diagonalize a matrix** A:

1. *Find the eigenvalues* of A using the characteristic polynomial.
2. *Compute a basis* $\mathcal{B}_\lambda$ for each λ-eigenspace of A.
3. If there are fewer than n total vectors in the union of all of the eigenspace bases $\mathcal{B}_\lambda$, then the matrix is not diagonalizable.
4. *Otherwise*, the n vectors $v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n$ in your eigenspace bases are linearly independent, and $A = PDP^{-1}$ for

$$P = \begin{pmatrix} | & | & & | \\ v_1 & v_2 & \cdots & v_n \\ | & | & & | \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad D = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \lambda_n \end{pmatrix},$$

where λ_i is the eigenvalue for v_i.

Problem: Diagonalize $A = \begin{pmatrix} 4 & -3 & 0 \\ 2 & -1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$.

The *characteristic polynomial* is

$$f(\lambda) = \det(A - \lambda I) = -\lambda^3 + 4\lambda^2 - 5\lambda + 2 = -(\lambda - 1)^2(\lambda - 2).$$

Therefore the *eigenvalues are* 1 *and* 2, with respective multiplicities 2 and 1.

First compute the 1-eigenspace:

$$(A - I)x = 0 \iff \begin{pmatrix} 3 & -3 & 0 \\ 2 & -2 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} x = 0 \xrightarrow{\text{rref}} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} x = 0$$

The parametric vector form is $\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix} = y \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} + z \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$.

Hence a basis for the 1-eigenspace is

$$\mathcal{B}_1 = \{v_1, v_2\} \quad \text{where} \quad v_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad v_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Now let's compute the 2-eigenspace:

$$(A-2I)x = 0 \iff \begin{pmatrix} 2 & -3 & 0 \\ 2 & -3 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & -1 \end{pmatrix} x = 0 \xrightarrow{\text{rref}} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -3 \\ 0 & 1 & -2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} x = 0$$

The parametric form is $x = 3z, y = 2z$, so an eigenvector with eigenvalue 2 is

$$v_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 3 \\ 2 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Note that v_1, v_2 form a basis for the 1-eigenspace, and v_3 has a distinct eigenvalue. Thus, the eigenvectors v_1, v_2, v_3 are linearly independent and the Diagonalization Theorem says

$$A = PDP^{-1} \quad \text{for} \quad P = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 3 \\ 1 & 0 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \qquad D = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}.$$

In this case: there are 3 linearly independent eigenvectors and only 2 distinct eigenvalues.

Similarity

Two $n \times n$ matrices A and B are **similar** if there is an $n \times n$ matrix C such that

$$A = CBC^{-1}.$$

The intuition

C keeps record of a basis $\mathcal{C} = \{v_1, \ldots, v_n\}$ of $\mathbf{R}^n$.

B transforms the $\mathcal{C}$-coordinates of x: $B[x]_{\mathcal{C}} = [Ax]_{\mathcal{C}}$ in *the same way that* A transforms the standard coordinates of x

Fact

If A and B are **similar**,
then they have the *same characteristic polynomial*.

Consequence:
similar matrices have the *same eigenvalues*! Though different eigenvectors in general.

Why? Suppose $A = CBC^{-1}$. We can show that $\det(A - \lambda I) = \det(B - \lambda I)$.

Applications to Difference Equations

Let $D = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1/2 \end{pmatrix}$.

Start with a vector v_0, and let $v_1 = Dv_0$, $v_2 = Dv_1, \dots, v_n = D^n v_0$.

Question: What happens to the v_i*'s* for different starting vectors v_0?

Answer: Note that D is diagonal, so

$$D^n \begin{pmatrix} a \\ b \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1^n & 0 \\ 0 & 1/2^n \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} a \\ b \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a \\ b/2^n \end{pmatrix}.$$

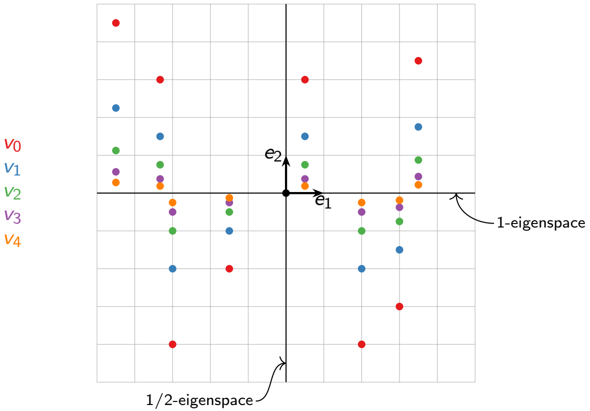
If we start with $v_0 = \begin{pmatrix} a \\ b \end{pmatrix}$, then

- the x-coordinate equals the initial coordinate,
- the y-coordinate gets halved every time.

Applications to Difference Equations

Picture

$$D\begin{pmatrix}a\\b\end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix}1 & 0\\0 & 1/2\end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix}a\\b\end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix}a\\b/2\end{pmatrix}$$



So all vectors get *"collapsed into the x-axis"*, which is the 1-eigenspace.

Let $A = \begin{pmatrix} 3/4 & 1/4 \\ 1/4 & 3/4 \end{pmatrix}$.

Start with a vector v_0, and let $v_1 = Av_0$, $v_2 = Av_1, \ldots, v_n = A^n v_0$.

Question: What happens to the v_i*'s* for different starting vectors v_0?

Matrix Powers: This is a diagonalization question. Bottom line: $A = PDP^{-1}$ for

$$P = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \qquad D = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1/2 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Hence $v_n = PD^nP^{-1}v_0$.
Details: The characteristic polynomial is

$$f(\lambda) = \lambda^2 - \mathrm{Tr}(A)\,\lambda + \det(A) = \lambda^2 - \frac{3}{2}\lambda + \frac{1}{2} = (\lambda - 1)\left(\lambda - \frac{1}{2}\right).$$

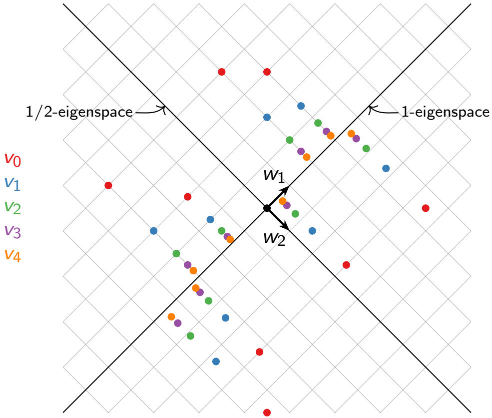
We compute eigenvectors with eigenvalues 1 and 1/2 to be, respectively,

$$w_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \qquad w_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Applications to Difference Equations

Picture of the more complicated example

$A^n = PD^nP^{-1}$ acts on the usual coordinates of v_0 in the same way that D^n acts on the $\mathcal{B}$-coordinates, where $\mathcal{B} = \{w_1, w_2\}$.



So all vectors get *"collapsed into the 1-eigenspace"*.