

POLYNOMIAL APPROXIMATION AND INTERPOLATION II

(APPROXIMATION WITH EVENLY SPACED POINTS)

Dr. Gabriel Obed Fosu

Department of Mathematics

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=ZJfCMYQAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

ResearchGate ID: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gabriel_Fosu2



Lecture Outline

- 1 Finite difference operators
- 2 Relations between differences and derivatives
- 3 Relation between Divided, Forward, and Backward differences
- 4 Newton's Forward Difference Interpolation Formula
- 5 Newton's Backward Difference Interpolation Formula



Introduction

- 1 Let the data $(x_i, f(x_i))$ be given with uniform spacing, that is, the nodal points are given by $x_i = x_0 + ih; i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, n$.
- 2 In this case, Lagrange and Newton's divided difference interpolation polynomials can also be used for interpolation.
- 3 However, we can derive simpler interpolation formulas for the uniform mesh case.
- 4 We define finite difference operators



Some Operators

We begin by defining the following five difference operators

- 1 Shift operator E
- 2 Forward difference operator Δ
- 3 Backward difference operator ∇
- 4 Central difference operator δ
- 5 Mean operator μ



Shift operator E

Definition (Shift operator (E))

The shift operator is denoted as E and when applied on $f(x)$ shifts it to the value at the next nodal point. When the operator E is applied on $f(x_i)$, we obtain

$$Ef(x_i) = f(x_i + h) = f(x_{i+1}) \quad (1)$$

Example

$$Ef(x_0) = f(x_0 + h) = f(x_1), \quad (2)$$

$$Ef(x_1) = f(x_1 + h) = f(x_2) \quad (3)$$

$$\vdots = \quad \vdots \quad \quad \vdots$$

Shift operator E

2nd Order

$$E^2 f(x_i) = E[Ef(x_i)] = E[f(x_i + h)] \quad (4)$$

$$= f(x_i + 2h) = f(x_{i+2}) \quad (5)$$

k_{th} Order

$$E^k f(x_i) = f(x_i + kh) = f(x_{i+k}); \quad k \in \mathbb{R} \quad (6)$$

when $k = 1/2$

$$E^{1/2} f(x_i) = f\left(x_i + \frac{h}{2}\right) = f_{i+1/2} \quad (7)$$

Forward difference operator Δ

Definition

When the operator Δ is applied on $f(x_i)$, we obtain

$$\Delta f(x_i) = f(x_i + h) - f(x_i) = f_{i+1} - f_i \quad (8)$$

These differences are called the **first forward differences**.

Example

$$\Delta f(x_0) = f(x_0 + h) - f(x_0) = f(x_1) - f(x_0) \quad (9)$$

$$\Delta f(x_1) = f(x_1 + h) - f(x_1) = f(x_2) - f(x_1) \quad (10)$$

$$\vdots = \quad \quad \quad \vdots \quad \quad \quad \vdots$$

Forward difference operator Δ

The second forward difference is defined by

$$\Delta^2 = \Delta[\Delta f(x_i)] = \Delta[f(x_i + h) - f(x_i)] = \Delta f(x_i + h) - \Delta f(x_i) \quad (11)$$

$$= [f(x_i + 2h) - f(x_i + h)] - [f(x_i + h) - f(x_i)] \quad (12)$$

$$= f(x_i + 2h) - 2f(x_i + h) + f(x_i) \quad (13)$$

$$= f_{i+2} - 2f_{i+1} + f_i. \quad (14)$$

The third forward difference is defined by

$$\Delta^3 f(x_i) = \Delta[\Delta^2 f(x_i)] = \Delta f(x_i + 2h) - 2\Delta f(x_i + h) + \Delta f(x_i) \quad (15)$$

$$= f_{i+3} - 3f_{i+2} + 3f_{i+1} - f_i \quad (16)$$

The Relation between the Shift Operator E and The Forward difference operator Δ

From the definitions above

$$\Delta f(x_i) = f(x_i + h) - f(x_i) = Ef_i - f_i = (E - 1)f_i \quad (17)$$

Comparing, we obtain the operator relation

$$\Delta = E - 1, \quad \text{or} \quad E = 1 + \Delta \quad (18)$$

Moreover, we can write the n_{th} forward difference of $f(x_i)$ as

$$\Delta^n f(x_i) = (E - 1)^n f(x_i) = \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \frac{n!}{k!(n-k)!} f_{i+n-k} \quad (19)$$

Forward Difference Table

x	$f(x)$	Δf	$\Delta^2 f$	$\Delta^3 f$
x_0	$f(x_0)$			
x_1	$f(x_1)$	$\Delta f_0 = f_1 - f_0$	$\Delta^2 f_0 = \Delta f_1 - \Delta f_0$	$\Delta^3 f_0 = \Delta^2 f_1 - \Delta^2 f_0$
x_2	$f(x_2)$	$\Delta f_1 = f_2 - f_1$	$\Delta^2 f_1 = \Delta f_2 - \Delta f_1$	
x_3	$f(x_3)$	$\Delta f_2 = f_3 - f_2$		



Backward difference operator (∇)

Definition

When the operator ∇ is applied on $f(x_i)$, we obtain

$$\nabla f(x_i) = f(x_i) - f(x_i - h) = f_i - f_{i-1} \quad (20)$$

These differences are called the **first backward differences**.

Example

$$\nabla f(x_1) = f(x_1) - f(x_0) \quad (21)$$

$$\nabla f(x_2) = f(x_2) - f(x_1) \quad (22)$$

$$\vdots = \vdots$$

Backward difference operator ∇

The second backward difference is defined by

$$\nabla^2 f(x_i) = \nabla[\nabla f(x_i)] = \nabla[f(x_i) - f(x_i - h)] = \nabla f(x_i) - \nabla f(x_i - h) \quad (23)$$

$$= [f(x_i) - f(x_i - h)] - [f(x_i - h) - f(x_i - 2h)] \quad (24)$$

$$= f(x_i) - 2f(x_i - h) + f(x_i - 2h) \quad (25)$$

$$= f_i - 2f_{i-1} + f_{i-2} \quad (26)$$

The third backward difference is defined by

$$\nabla^3 f(x_i) = \nabla[\nabla^2 f(x_i)] = \nabla f(x_i) - 2\nabla f(x_i - h) + \nabla f(x_i - 2h) \quad (27)$$

$$= f_i - 3f_{i-1} + 3f_{i-2} - f_{i-3} \quad (28)$$

The Relation between the Shift Operator E and The Backward difference operator ∇

From the above equations

$$\nabla f(x_i) = f(x_i) - f(x_i - h) = f_i - E^{-1}f_i = (1 - E^{-1})f_i \quad (29)$$

Comparing, we obtain the operator relation

$$\nabla = 1 - E^{-1}, \quad \text{or} \quad E^{-1} = 1 - \nabla, \quad \text{or} \quad E = (1 - \nabla)^{-1} \quad (30)$$

Moreover, we can write the n_{th} backward difference of $f(x_i)$ as

$$\nabla^n f(x_i) = (1 - E^{-1})^n f(x_i) = \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \frac{n!}{k!(n-k)!} f_{i-k} \quad (31)$$

Backward Difference Table

x	$f(x)$	∇f	$\nabla^2 f$	$\nabla^3 f$
x_0	$f(x_0)$			
x_1	$f(x_1)$	$\nabla f_1 = f_1 - f_0$		
		$\nabla f_2 = f_2 - f_1$	$\nabla^2 f_2 = \nabla f_2 - \nabla f_1$	
x_2	$f(x_2)$		$\nabla^2 f_3 = \nabla f_3 - \nabla f_2$	$\nabla^3 f_3 = \nabla^2 f_3 - \nabla^2 f_2$
x_3	$f(x_3)$	$\nabla f_3 = f_3 - f_2$		

Remarks

From the two difference Tables, we note that the numbers (values of differences) in all the columns in the two tables are same. Some examples are

$$\Delta f_0 = \nabla f_1, \quad \Delta f_1 = \nabla f_2, \quad \Delta f_2 = \nabla f_3, \dots, \Delta^3 f_0 = \nabla^3 f_3 \quad (32)$$

Central difference operator (δ)

Definition

When the operator δ is applied on $f(x_i)$, we obtain

$$\delta f(x_i) = f\left(x_i + \frac{h}{2}\right) - f\left(x_i - \frac{h}{2}\right) \quad (33)$$

$$= f_{i+1/2} - f_{i-1/2} \quad (34)$$

These differences are called the **first central differences**.

Note

$$\delta f\left(x_i + \frac{h}{2}\right) = \delta f_{i+1/2} = f(x_i + h) - f(x_i) = f_{i+1} - f_i \quad (35)$$

That is, $\delta f_{1/2} = f_1 - f_0$, $\delta f_{3/2} = f_2 - f_1$ etc.

Central difference operator δ

The second central difference is defined by

$$\delta^2 f(x_i) = \delta[\delta f(x_i)] = \delta[f_{i+1/2} - f_{i-1/2}] = \delta f_{i+1/2} - \delta f_{i-1/2} \quad (36)$$

$$= [f_{i+1} - f_i] - [f_i - f_{i-1}] \quad (37)$$

$$= f_{i+1} - 2f_i + f_{i-1} \quad (38)$$

The third central difference is defined by

$$\delta^3 f(x_i) = \delta[\delta^2 f(x_i)] = \delta f_{i+1} - 2\delta f_i + \delta f_{i-1} \quad (39)$$

$$= (f_{i+3/2} - f_{i+1/2}) - 2(f_{i+1/2} - f_{i-1/2}) + (f_{i-1/2} - f_{i-3/2}) \quad (40)$$

$$= f_{i+3/2} - 3f_{i+1/2} + 3f_{i-1/2} - f_{i-3/2} \quad (41)$$

All the odd central differences contain non-nodal values and the even central differences contain nodal values.



The Shift Operator E and The Central difference operator δ

From the equations above

$$\delta f(x_i) = f_{i+1/2} - f_{i-1/2} = E^{1/2} f_i - E^{-1/2} f_i = (E^{1/2} - E^{-1/2}) f_i \quad (42)$$

Comparing, we obtain the operator relation

$$\delta = (E^{1/2} - E^{-1/2}) \quad (43)$$

Using this relation, we can write the n_{th} central difference of $f(x_i)$ as

$$\delta^n f(x_i) = (E^{1/2} - E^{-1/2})^n f(x_i) = \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \frac{n!}{k!(n-k)!} f_{i+(n/2)-k} \quad (44)$$

Central Difference Table

x	$f(x)$	δf	$\delta^2 f$	$\delta^3 f$
x_0	$f(x_0)$			
		$\delta f_{1/2} = f_1 - f_0$		
x_1	$f(x_1)$		$\delta^2 f_1 = \delta f_{3/2} - \delta f_{1/2}$	
		$\delta f_{3/2} = f_2 - f_1$		$\delta^3 f_{3/2} = \delta^2 f_2 - \delta^2 f_1$
x_2	$f(x_2)$		$\delta^2 f_2 = \delta f_{5/2} - \delta f_{3/2}$	
		$\delta f_{5/2} = f_3 - f_2$		
x_3	$f(x_3)$			



Mean operator μ

Definition


When the operator μ is applied on $f(x_i)$, we obtain

$$\mu f(x_i) = \frac{1}{2} \left[f\left(x_i + \frac{h}{2}\right) + f\left(x_i - \frac{h}{2}\right) \right] \quad (45)$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} [f_{i+1/2} + f_{i-1/2}] \quad (46)$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} [E^{1/2} + E^{-1/2}] f_i \quad (47)$$

Deductively, the mean operator and the shift operator are related by the equation

$$\mu = \frac{1}{2} [E^{1/2} + E^{-1/2}] \quad (48)$$


Relation between The Shift Operator and derivatives

Recall from lecture 1:

$$f(x+h) = \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{f^{(k)}(x)}{k!} h^k + E_{n+1} \quad \text{and} \quad e^x = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{x^n}{n!} = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2!} + \frac{x^3}{3!} + \frac{x^4}{4!} + \dots$$

$$Ef(x) = f(x+h) \tag{49}$$

$$= f(x) + hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2!} f''(x) + \dots \tag{50}$$

$$= \left[1 + h \frac{f'(x)}{f(x)} + \frac{h^2}{2!} \frac{f''(x)}{f(x)} + \dots \right] f(x) \tag{51}$$

$$= \left[1 + hD + \frac{h^2}{2!} D^2 + \dots \right] f(x); \quad \frac{f'(x)}{f(x)} = D, \quad \frac{f''(x)}{f(x)} = D^2, \quad \frac{f^{(k)}(x)}{f(x)} = D^k \tag{52}$$

$$= e^{hD} f(x) \tag{53}$$



Relation between Forward difference, & derivatives (1st)

The forward difference of $f(x)$ is defined as:


$$\Delta f(x) = f(x+h) - f(x) \quad (54)$$

Using the Taylor series expansions, we get

$$\Delta f(x) = \left[f(x) + hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2!}f''(x) + \cdots \right] - f(x) \quad (55)$$

$$= hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2!}f''(x) + \cdots \quad (56)$$

Neglecting the higher order terms, we get the approximation

$$\Delta f(x) \approx hf'(x) \implies f'(x) \approx \frac{1}{h}\Delta f(x) \quad (57)$$


The error term is given by

$$f'(x) - \frac{1}{h}\Delta f(x) = -\frac{h}{2}f''(x) + \dots \quad (58)$$

So, we call the approximation eq. (57) as a **first order approximation** or of order $\mathcal{O}(h)$.




Relation between Forward difference, & derivatives (2nd)

$$\Delta^2 f(x) = f(x+2h) - 2f(x+h) + f(x) \quad (59)$$

$$= \left[f(x) + 2hf'(x) + \frac{4h^2}{2}f''(x) + \frac{8h^3}{6}f'''(x) + \dots \right] - \quad (60)$$

$$2 \left[f(x) + hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}f''(x) + \frac{h^3}{6}f'''(x) + \dots \right] + f(x) \\ = h^2 f''(x) + h^3 f'''(x) + \dots \quad (61)$$

Neglecting the higher order terms, we get the approximation

$$\Delta^2 f(x) \approx h^2 f''(x) \implies f''(x) \approx \frac{1}{h^2} \Delta^2 f(x) \quad (62)$$


The error term is given by

$$f''(x) - \frac{1}{h^2} \Delta^2 f(x) = -h f'''(x) + \dots \quad (63)$$

We call the approximation eq. (62) as a **first order approximation** or of order $\mathcal{O}(h)$.



Relation between Backward differences and 1st, 2nd derivatives

Similarly, we have the following results for backward differences.

$$\nabla f(x) \approx h f'(x) \implies f'(x) \approx \frac{1}{h} \nabla f(x) \quad (64)$$

$$\nabla^2 f(x) \approx h^2 f''(x) \implies f''(x) \approx \frac{1}{h^2} \nabla^2 f(x) \quad (65)$$

These are also **first order approximation** or of order $\mathcal{O}(h)$.



Relation between Central difference, & derivatives (1st)


$$\delta f(x) = f\left(x + \frac{h}{2}\right) - f\left(x - \frac{h}{2}\right) \quad (66)$$

$$= \left[f(x) + \frac{h}{2}f'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}f''(x) + \frac{h^3}{48}f'''(x) + \dots \right] - \quad (67)$$

$$\left[f(x) - \frac{h}{2}f'(x) + \frac{h^2}{8}f''(x) - \frac{h^3}{48}f'''(x) + \dots \right]$$

$$= hf'(x) + \frac{h^3}{24}f'''(x) + \dots \quad (68)$$

Neglecting the higher order terms, we get the approximation

$$\delta f(x) \approx hf'(x) \implies f'(x) \approx \frac{1}{h}\delta f(x) \quad (69)$$


Relation between Central difference, & derivatives (1st)

The error term is given by

$$f'(x) - \frac{1}{h}\delta f(x) = -\frac{h^2}{24}f'''(x) + \dots \quad (70)$$

So, we call the approximation eq. (69) as a **second order approximation** or of order $\mathcal{O}(h^2)$.



Relation between Central difference, & derivatives (2nd)

$$\delta^2 f(x) = f(x+h) - 2f(x) + f(x-h) \quad (71)$$

$$= \left[f(x) + hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2!} f''(x) + \dots \right] - 2f(x) +$$

$$\left[f(x) - hf'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2!} f''(x) - \dots \right] \quad (72)$$

Neglecting the higher order terms, we get the approximation

$$\delta^2 f(x) \approx h^2 f''(x) \implies f''(x) \approx \frac{1}{h^2} \delta^2 f(x) \quad (73)$$

The error term is given by

$$f''(x) - \frac{1}{h^2} \delta^2 f(x) = -\frac{h^2}{12} f''''(x) + \dots \quad (74)$$

So, we call the approximation eq. (73) as a **second order approximation** or of order $\mathcal{O}(h^2)$.



Relation between Divided, Forward, and Backward differences

1st divided difference

$$f[x_i, x_{i+1}] = \frac{f(x_{i+1}) - f(x_i)}{x_{i+1} - x_i} = \frac{1}{h} \Delta f_i = \frac{1}{h} \nabla f_{i+1} \quad (75)$$

Similarly, the 2nd divided difference is

$$f[x_i, x_{i+1}, x_{i+2}] = \frac{f[x_{i+1}, x_{i+2}] - f[x_i, x_{i+1}]}{x_{i+2} - x_i} = \frac{(1/h)\Delta f_{i+1} - (1/h)\Delta f_i}{2h} \quad (76)$$

$$= \frac{1}{2!h^2} \Delta^2 f_i = \frac{1}{2!h^2} \nabla^2 f_{i+2} \quad (77)$$

Generally, the nth divided difference is

$$f[x_0, x_1, \dots, x_n] = \frac{1}{n!h^n} \Delta^n f_0 = \frac{1}{n!h^n} \nabla^n f_n \quad (78)$$

Newton's Forward Difference Interpolation Formula

Let h be the step length in the given data. In terms of the divided differences, we have the interpolation formula as

$$f(x) = f(x_0) + (x - x_0)f[x_0, x_1] + (x - x_0)(x - x_1)f[x_0, x_1, x_2] + \dots \quad (79)$$

But

$$f[x_0, x_1, \dots, x_n] = \frac{1}{n!h^n} \Delta^n f_0 = \frac{1}{n!h^n} \nabla^n f_n \quad (80)$$

Substituting eq. (80) into eq. (79), we have

$$f(x) = f(x_0) + (x - x_0) \frac{\Delta f_0}{1!h} + (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \frac{\Delta^2 f_0}{2!h^2} + \dots \\ + (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \dots (x - x_{n-1}) \frac{\Delta^n f_0}{n!h^n} \quad (81)$$

This relation (81) is called the **Newton's forward difference interpolation formula**.



- 1 The Newton's forward difference formula has the permanence property.
- 2 Suppose we add a new data value $(x_{n+1}, f(x_{n+1}))$ at the end of the given table of values.
- 3 Then, the $(n+1)_{th}$ column of the forward difference table has the $(n+1)_{th}$ forward difference.
- 4 Then, the Newton's forward difference formula becomes

$$f(x) = f(x_0) + (x - x_0) \frac{\Delta f_0}{1!h} + (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \frac{\Delta^2 f_0}{2!h^2} + \cdots$$

$$+ (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \cdots (x - x_n) \frac{\Delta^{n+1} f_0}{(n+1)!h^{n+1}} \quad (82)$$



Example

For the data construct the forward difference formula. Hence, find $f(0.5)$.

x	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$f(x)$	15	5	1	3	11	25

x	$f(x)$	Δf	$\Delta^2 f$	$\Delta^3 f$
-2	15			
-1	5	-10		
0	1	-4	6	0
1	3	2	6	0
2	11	8	6	0
3	25	14		



From the table, we conclude that the data represents a quadratic polynomial. We have $h = 1$. The Newton's forward difference formula is given by

$$f(x) = f(x_0) + (x - x_0) \frac{\Delta f_0}{1!h} + (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \frac{\Delta^2 f_0}{2!h^2} \quad (83)$$

$$= 15 + (x + 2)(-10) + (x + 2)(x + 1) \frac{6}{2} \quad (84)$$

$$= 15 - 10x - 20 + 3x^2 + 9x + 6 \quad (85)$$

$$= 3x^2 - x + 1. \quad (86)$$

Therefore,

$$f(0.5) = 3(0.5)^2 - 0.5 + 1 = 0.75 - 0.5 + 1 = 1.25. \quad (87)$$



Newton's Backward Difference Interpolation Formula

Similarly, the Newton's backward difference interpolation formula is given as

$$f(x) = f(x_n) + (x - x_n) \frac{\nabla f(x_n)}{1!h} + (x - x_n)(x - x_{n-1}) \frac{\nabla^2 f(x_n)}{2!h^2} + \dots$$

$$+ (x - x_n)(x - x_{n-1}) \cdots (x - x_1) \frac{\nabla^n f(x_n)}{n!h^n} \quad (88)$$

Note

We use the forward difference interpolation when we want to interpolate near the **top** of the table and backward difference interpolation when we want to interpolate near the **bottom** of the table.



Remark

- 1 As in divided differences, given a table of values, we can determine the degree of the forward/ backward difference polynomial using the difference table.
- 2 The k_{th} column of the difference table contains the k_{th} forward/ backward differences.
- 3 If the values of these differences are same, then the $(k+1)_{th}$ and higher order differences are zero.
- 4 Hence, the given data represents a k_{th} degree polynomial.



Example

For the following data, calculate the differences and obtain the Newton's forward and backward difference interpolation polynomials.

- 1 Are these polynomials different?
- 2 Interpolate at $x = 0.25$ and $x = 0.35$

x	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5
$f(x)$	1.40	1.56	1.76	2.00	2.28



x	$f(x)$	∇f	$\nabla^2 f$
0.1	1.40		
0.2	1.56	0.16	
0.3	1.76	0.20	0.04
0.4	2.00	0.24	0.04
0.5	2.28	0.28	0.04

The step length is $h = 0.1$. Since, the third and higher order differences are zero, the data represents a quadratic polynomial. The third column represents the first forward/ backward differences and the fourth column represents the second forward/ backward differences.



The forward difference polynomial is given by

$$f(x) = f(x_0) + (x - x_0) \frac{\Delta f_0}{1!h} + (x - x_0)(x - x_1) \frac{\Delta^2 f_0}{2!h^2} \quad (89)$$

$$= 1.4 + (x - 0.1) \frac{0.16}{0.1} + (x - 0.1)(x - 0.2) \frac{0.04}{0.02} \quad (90)$$

$$= 2x^2 + x + 1.28 \quad (91)$$

The backward difference polynomial is given by

$$f(x) = f(x_n) + (x - x_n) \frac{\nabla f_n}{1!h} + (x - x_n)(x - x_{n-1}) \frac{\nabla^2 f_n}{2!h^2} \quad (92)$$

$$= 2.28 + (x - 0.5) \frac{0.28}{0.1} + (x - 0.5)(x - 0.4) \frac{0.04}{0.02} \quad (93)$$

$$= 2x^2 + x + 1.28 \quad (94)$$

Both the polynomials are identical, since the interpolation polynomial is unique.

$$f(0.25) = 2(0.25)^2 + 0.25 + 1.28 = 1.655 \quad (95)$$

$$f(0.35) = 2(0.35)^2 + (0.35) + 1.28 = 1.875 \quad (96)$$



Exercise

- 1 Using the Newton's forward difference formula, find the polynomial $f(x)$ satisfying the following data. Hence, evaluate y at $x = 5$.

x	4	6	8	10
y	1	3	8	10

- 2 A third degree polynomial passes through the points $(0, -1)$, $(1, 1)$, $(2, 1)$ and $(3, -2)$. Determine this polynomial using Newton's forward interpolation formula. Hence, find the value at 1.5.

- 3 Using the Newton's backward interpolation formula, find the cubic polynomial which takes the following values. Hence, find $y(4)$.

x	0	1	2	3
y	1	2	1	10



END OF LECTURE
THANK YOU

