

Lec 11 方向导数与梯度

11.1 方向导数

定义 11.1

设函数 $u = f(x, y)$ 定义在 $\bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$ 中, $M_t = (x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \cos \beta) \in \bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$, $\mathbf{l} = (\cos \alpha, \sin \alpha) = (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta)$, $\alpha + \beta = \frac{\pi}{2}$.

如果极限

$$\lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \cos \beta) - f(x_0, y_0)}{t}$$

存在, 那么称 $\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \right|_{M_0} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \sin \beta) - f(x_0, y_0)}{t}$ 为函数 $u = f(x, y)$ 在点 M_0 处沿方向 $\mathbf{l} = (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta)$ 的方向导数 (directional derivative), 表示 u 关于 \mathbf{l} 方向在 M_0 处的变化率.



例 11.1 若 $f'_x(M_0) = f'_x(x_0, y_0)$ 存在, 则 $u = f(x, y)$ 在 M_0 处沿 x 轴方向 $\mathbf{i} = (1, 0)$ 的方向导数为

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{i}} \right|_{M_0} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + \Delta x, y_0) - f(x_0, y_0)}{\Delta x} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + \Delta x, y_0) - f(x_0, y_0)}{\Delta x} = f'_x(x_0, y_0);$$

而 $u = f(x, y)$ 在 M_0 处沿 x 轴负向 $\mathbf{l} = (-1, 0) = -\mathbf{i}$ 的方向导数为

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial (-\mathbf{i})} \right|_{M_0} = \lim_{-\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + \Delta x, y_0) - f(x_0, y_0)}{-\Delta x} = - \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + \Delta x, y_0) - f(x_0, y_0)}{\Delta x} = -f'_x(M_0).$$

同理, 当 $f'_y(x_0, y_0) = B(\text{常数})$ 存在时, 则 $u = f(x, y)$ 在 M_0 处沿 y 轴正负方向都存在, 且

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{j}} \right|_{M_0} = f'_y(M_0), \quad \left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial (-\mathbf{j})} \right|_{M_0} = -f'_y(M_0).$$

这里 $\mathbf{j} = (0, 1)$, $-\mathbf{j} = (0, -1)$ 分别为 y 轴的正负向.

例 11.2 $u = f(x, y) = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2}$ 在 $(0, 0)$ 处连续, 但 $u = f(x, y)$ 在 $(0, 0)$ 处沿任何方向 $\mathbf{l}^0 = (\cos \alpha, \sin \alpha)$ 的方向导数均不存在,

这是由于

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}^0} \right| = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(0 + t \cos \alpha, 0 + t \sin \alpha) - f(0, 0)}{t} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{(t \cos \alpha)^2 + (t \sin \alpha)^2} - 0}{t} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{|t|}{t}.$$

$$\text{但 } \lim_{t \rightarrow 0^+} \frac{|t|}{t} = 1 \neq \lim_{t \rightarrow 0^-} \frac{|t|}{t} = -1$$

例 11.3 设函数 $u = f(x, y, z)$ 定义在 $\bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$ 中, $M_0(x_0, y_0, z_0)$, $M_t(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \cos \beta, z_0 + t \cos \gamma) = M_0 + t\mathbf{l} \in \bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$, $\mathbf{l} = (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta, \cos \gamma)$ 已知, 则定义

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \right| = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(M_t) - f(M_0)}{t} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \cos \beta, z_0 + t \cos \gamma) - f(x_0, y_0, z_0)}{t}.$$

当偏导数 $f'_x(x_0, y_0, z_0) = A(\text{常数})$ 存在时, $u = f(x, y, z)$ 在 M_0 处沿 x 轴正向 $\mathbf{i} = (1, 0, 0)$,

负向 $-\mathbf{i} = (-1, 0, 0)$ 的方向导数都存在, 且

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{i}} \right|_{M_0} = A, \quad \left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial (-\mathbf{i})} \right|_{M_0} = -A,$$

其余情况可类推.

定理 11.1

当 $u = f(x, y)$ 在点 $M_0(x_0, y_0)$ 处可微时, u 在点 M_0 处沿任何方向 $\mathbf{l}^0 = (\cos \alpha, \sin \alpha)$ 的方向导数都存在, 且

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}^0} \right|_{M_0} = f'_x(M_0) \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0) \sin \alpha = f'_x(M_0) \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0) \cos \beta, \quad (\alpha + \beta = \frac{\pi}{2}) \quad (11.1)$$



证明 设 $M_t(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \sin \alpha) \in \bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$, 则

$$f(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \sin \alpha) - f(x_0, y_0) = f'_x(M_0)t \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0)t \sin \alpha + o(\rho),$$

其中

$$\begin{aligned} \rho &= \rho(M_0, M_t) \\ &= \sqrt{(x_0 + t \cos \alpha - x_0)^2 + (y_0 + t \sin \alpha - y_0)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{(t \cos \alpha)^2 + (t \sin \alpha)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{t^2 \cos^2 \alpha + t^2 \sin^2 \alpha} \\ &= \sqrt{t^2} \\ &= |t| \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{而有 } \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{o(\rho)}{t} &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{o(|t|)}{t} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{o(|t|)}{|t|} \frac{|t|}{t} \\ \left| \frac{|t|}{t} \right| &= |\pm 1| = 1 \leq 1 \text{ 有界, } \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{o(|t|)}{|t|} = 0. \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{因此 } \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{o(\rho)}{t} = 0$$

$$\begin{aligned} \left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}^0} \right|_{M_0} &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + t \cos \alpha, y_0 + t \sin \alpha) - f(x_0, y_0)}{t} \\ &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f'_x(M_0)t \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0)t \sin \alpha + o(\rho)}{t} \\ &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \left(f'_x(M_0) \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0) \sin \alpha + \frac{o(\rho)}{t} \right) \\ &= f'_x(M_0) \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0) \sin \alpha \end{aligned}$$

例 11.4 设 $z = f(x, y) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^2 y^2}{(x^2 + y^2)^{\frac{3}{2}}}, & x^2 + y^2 \neq 0 \\ 0, & x^2 + y^2 = 0 \end{cases}, \mathbf{l} = (\cos \theta, \sin \theta), \theta \in [0, 2\pi),$

求 $f'_x(0,0), f'_y(0,0), \frac{\partial z}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{O(0,0)}$, 并证明在 $O(0,0)$ 处, $z = f(x,y)$ 不可微.

解

1.

$$\begin{aligned} f'_x(0,0) &= \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(0+\Delta x, 0) - f(0,0)}{\Delta x} \\ &= \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{(\Delta x)^2 0^2}{((\Delta x)^2 + 0^2)^{\frac{3}{2}}} - 0}{\Delta x} \\ &= \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{0}{\Delta x} \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

由对称性可知, $f'_y(0,0) = f'_x(0,0) = 0$

2.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial z}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{O(0,0)} &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(0+t\cos\theta, 0+t\sin\theta) - f(0,0)}{t} \\ &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{(t\cos\theta)^2(t\sin\theta)^2}{((t\cos\theta)^2 + (t\sin\theta)^2)^{\frac{3}{2}}}}{t} \\ &= \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{t^3 \cos^2\theta \sin^2\theta}{|t|^3} \end{aligned}$$

$\frac{t^3}{|t|^3} = \pm 1$ 有界, 但趋于零时极限不存在,

因此当且仅当 $\theta = 0, \frac{\pi}{2}, \pi, \frac{3\pi}{2}$ 时, $\cos^2\theta \sin^2\theta = 0$, $\frac{\partial z}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{O(0,0)} = 0$

即只在 $\theta = 0, \frac{\pi}{2}, \pi, \frac{3\pi}{2}$ 四个方向上存在方向导数, 且方向导数为 0, 其他方向上无方向导数.

3.

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{\rho \rightarrow 0} \frac{\Delta z - f'_x(0,0)\Delta x + f'_y(0,0)\Delta y}{\rho} &= \lim_{\substack{\Delta x \rightarrow 0 \\ \Delta y \rightarrow 0}} \frac{(\Delta x)^2(\Delta y)^2}{((\Delta x)^2 + (\Delta y)^2)^2} \\ &= \lim_{\substack{\Delta x \rightarrow 0 \\ \Delta y = k\Delta x}} \frac{k^2(\Delta x)^4}{((\Delta x)^2 + k^2(\Delta x)^2)^2} \\ &= \frac{k^2}{(1+k^2)^2} \neq 0 \end{aligned}$$

故不可微.

4. 不可微这一问依照定理 11.1 的结论直接可得:

若可微则应有 $\frac{\partial z}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{O(0,0)} = f'_x(0,0)\cos\theta + f'_y(0,0)\sin\theta = 0$, 即沿各个方向的方向导数都存在, 均为 0. 但这与第二问中我们求出来的结果矛盾, 故不可微.

同理, 当 $u = f(x,y,z)$ 在点 $M_0(x_0, y_0, z_0)$ 处可微时, u 在点 M_0 处沿任何方向

$\boldsymbol{l}^0 = (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta, \cos \gamma)$ 的方向导数都存在, 且

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right|_{M_0} = f'_x(M_0) \cos \alpha + f'_y(M_0) \cos \beta + f'_z(M_0) \cos \gamma \quad (11.2)$$

在 11.1 中称向量 $(f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0))$ 为函数 $u = f(x, y)$ 在点 $M_0(x_0, y_0)$ 处的梯度; 在 11.2 中称向量 $(f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0), f'_z(M_0))$ 为函数 $u = f(x, y, z)$ 在点 $M_0(x_0, y_0, z_0)$ 处的梯度, 记作

$$\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0) = (f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0)); \mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0) = (f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0), f'_z(M_0)).$$

或

$$\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0) = \left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} \right) \Big|_{M_0}; \mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0) = \left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial f}{\partial z} \right) \Big|_{M_0}.$$

$u = f(x, y, z)$ 在 $\bar{U}(M_0, \delta)$ 中任一点 M 的梯度记作

$$\mathbf{grad} f = \left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial f}{\partial z} \right) = \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \right) = \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right) u = \nabla u$$

其中 $\nabla = \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right)$ 称为微分向量算子, 也称为 Hamilton 算子, 此时 11.2 可改写为:

$$\begin{aligned} \left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right|_{M_0} &= (f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0), f'_z(M_0)) \cdot (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta, \cos \gamma) \\ &= \nabla u \cdot \boldsymbol{l}^0 \\ &= \mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0) \cdot \boldsymbol{l}^0 \\ &= |\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0)| |\boldsymbol{l}^0| \cos \left(\widehat{\mathbf{grad} f(M_0), \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right) \\ &\leq |\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0)| \\ &= |\nabla u(M_0)| \end{aligned}$$

等号当且仅当 \boldsymbol{l}^0 与 $\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)$ 一致时取到.

11.2 函数的梯度 (陡度, 倾斜度)

设 $u = f(x, y, z)$ 在点 $M_0(x_0, y_0, z_0)$ 处可微, 则 $f(x, y, z)$ 在 $M_0(x_0, y_0, z_0)$ 处的梯度

$$\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0) = (f'_x(M_0), f'_y(M_0), f'_z(M_0))$$

是一个向量. 这个向量的模 $|\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0)|$ 是 $f(x, y, z)$ 在点 M_0 处所有方向的方向导数中的最大值, 而梯度的方向即是 $f(x, y, z)$ 在点 M_0 处所有方向的方向导数中取最大值的方向.

$$\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right|_{M_0} = \mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0) \cdot \boldsymbol{l}^0 = |\mathbf{grad} f(x_0, y_0, z_0)| |\boldsymbol{l}^0| \cos \left(\widehat{\mathbf{grad} f(M_0), \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right) \leq |\nabla u(M_0)|$$

可知, 当 \boldsymbol{l}^0 与 $\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)$ 方向一致时, $\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right|_{M_0}$ 取最大值 $|\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)|$; 而当 \boldsymbol{l}^0 与 $\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)$

方向相反时, $\left. \frac{\partial u}{\partial \boldsymbol{l}^0} \right|_{M_0}$ 取最小值 $-|\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)|$;

即

$$\left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{M_0} \right)_{\max} = |\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)|, \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{M_0} \right)_{\min} = -|\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)|$$

换言之, 在点 M_0 处沿梯度 $\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)$ 的方向, $f(x, y, z)$ 的变化率是最大的, 而沿着 $-\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)$ 的方向, $f(x, y, z)$ 的变化率最小:

$$-|\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)| \leq \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{M_0} \leq |\mathbf{grad} f(M_0)|$$

并由 $\mathbf{grad} f(M_0) = \nabla u(M_0) = \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \right) \Big|_{M_0}$, 从而有

$$-|\nabla u(M_0)| \leq \frac{\partial u}{\partial \mathbf{l}} \Big|_{M_0} \leq |\nabla u(M_0)|$$

命题 11.1

求函数或数量场 u 的梯度是一种特定的微分运算, 设 $u_1 = f_1(x, y, z)$, $u_2 = f_2(x, y, z)$ 均可微, 或 $f_1, f_2 \in C^1$, 则必有:

1. $\nabla(c_1 u_1 + c_2 u_2) = c_1 \nabla u_1 + c_2 \nabla u_2$, c_1, c_2 为任意常数;
2. $\nabla(u_1 u_2) = u_2 \nabla u_1 + u_1 \nabla u_2$;
3. $\nabla f(u_1) = f'(u) \nabla u$, $\forall f \in C^1$.



证明

1. c_1, c_2 是常数

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla(c_1 u_1 + c_2 u_2) &= ((c_1 u_1 + c_2 u_2)'_x, (c_1 u_1 + c_2 u_2)'_y, (c_1 u_1 + c_2 u_2)'_z) \\ &= (c_1 (u_1)'_x + c_2 (u_2)'_x, c_1 (u_1)'_y + c_2 (u_2)'_y, c_1 (u_1)'_z + c_2 (u_2)'_z) \\ &= c_1 ((u_1)'_x, (u_1)'_y, (u_1)'_z) + c_2 ((u_2)'_x, (u_2)'_y, (u_2)'_z) \\ &= c_1 \nabla u_1 + c_2 \nabla u_2 \end{aligned}$$

- 2.

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla(u_1 u_2) &= ((u_1 u_2)'_x, (u_1 u_2)'_y, (u_1 u_2)'_z) \\ &= (u_2 (u_1)'_x + u_1 (u_2)'_x, u_2 (u_1)'_y + u_1 (u_2)'_y, u_2 (u_1)'_z + u_1 (u_2)'_z) \\ &= u_2 ((u_1)'_x, (u_1)'_y, (u_1)'_z) + u_1 ((u_2)'_x, (u_2)'_y, (u_2)'_z) \\ &= u_2 \nabla u_1 + u_1 \nabla u_2 \end{aligned}$$

- 3.

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla f(u) &= ((f(u))'_x, (f(u))'_y, (f(u))'_z) \\ &= (f'(u) u'_x, f'(u) u'_y, f'(u) u'_z) \\ &= f'(u) (u'_x, u'_y, u'_z) \\ &= f'(u) \nabla u \end{aligned}$$

从这三条性质可知, 哈密顿算子 ∇ 与微分算子 d 非常类似.

例 11.5 求解下列各题:

1. 求 $z = x^2 + y^2$ 在点 $M_0(1, 2)$ 处, 沿着 $(1, 2)$ 到 $(2, 2 + \sqrt{3})$ 方向的方向导数, 并求 $\left. \frac{\partial z}{\partial l} \right|_{M_0(1, 2)}$ 的最大值和最小值.
2. 求 $z = 1 - (\frac{x^2}{a^2} + \frac{y^2}{b^2})$ 在点 $M_0(\frac{a}{\sqrt{2}}, \frac{b}{\sqrt{2}})$ 处, 沿曲线 $L: \frac{x^2}{a^2} + \frac{y^2}{b^2} = 1$ 在这点的内法线方向的方向导数.
3. 求数量场 $\frac{m}{r}$ 所产生的梯度场 $\nabla \frac{m}{r}$, 其中 $m > 0$ 为常数, $r = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2 + z^2}$ 是向径 (x, y, z) 的模.

解

$$1. \quad l = (2 - 1, 2 + \sqrt{3} - 2) = (1, \sqrt{3}) \Rightarrow l^0 = \left(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \right) = (\cos \alpha, \cos \beta)$$

$$\nabla z(M_0) = (z'_x(M_0), z'_y(M_0)) = (2x, 2y) \Big|_{M_0(1, 2)} = (2, 4)$$

因此

$$\left. \frac{\partial z}{\partial l} \right|_{M_0(1, 2)} = (2, 4) \cdot \left(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \right) = 1 + 2\sqrt{3}$$

$$\text{而又有 } |\nabla z(M_0)| = |(2, 4)| = 2\sqrt{5}$$

因此

$$\left(\left. \frac{\partial z}{\partial l} \right|_{M_0(1, 2)} \right)_{\max} = 2\sqrt{5}, \quad \left(\left. \frac{\partial z}{\partial l} \right|_{M_0(1, 2)} \right)_{\min} = -2\sqrt{5}$$

2. L 有参数方程表示

$$\mathbf{r}(t) = (x(t), y(t)) = (a \cos t, b \sin t), t \in [0, 2\pi]$$

$$\text{因此 } M_0 = \mathbf{r}(t_0), t_0 = \frac{\pi}{4}.$$

$$\text{有 } r'(t) = (x'(t), y'(t)) \Big|_{M_0} = (-a \sin t, b \cos t) \Big|_{t=\frac{\pi}{4}} = \left(-\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}a, \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}b \right)$$

可取切向量 $\boldsymbol{\tau} = (-a, b)$, 则过 M_0 的外法向量为 $\mathbf{n} = (b, a)$, 因此过 M_0 的内法向量为

$$\mathbf{l} = -\mathbf{n} = (-b, -a) \Rightarrow \mathbf{l}^0 = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{a^2 + b^2}} (b, a),$$

$$\text{同时 } z'_x(M_0) = -\frac{2x}{a^2} \Big|_{M_0} = -\frac{2}{a^2} \frac{a}{\sqrt{2}} = -\frac{\sqrt{2}}{a}, \quad z'_y(M_0) = -\frac{2y}{b^2} \Big|_{M_0} = -\frac{2}{b^2} \frac{b}{\sqrt{2}} = -\frac{\sqrt{2}}{b}$$

故

$$\left. \frac{\partial z}{\partial l} \right|_{M_0} = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{a^2 + b^2}} \left(-\frac{\sqrt{2}}{a}, -\frac{\sqrt{2}}{b} \right) \cdot (b, a) = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{\sqrt{a^2 + b^2}} \left(\frac{b}{a} + \frac{a}{b} \right) = \frac{\sqrt{2(a^2 + b^2)}}{ab}$$

$$3. \quad \nabla \left(\frac{m}{r} \right) = \left(\left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_x, \left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_y, \left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_z \right).$$

$$\text{而 } \left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_x = m \left(\frac{1}{r} \right)'_x = -\frac{m}{r^2} r'_x = -\frac{m}{r^2} \frac{x}{r} = -\frac{mx}{r^3}.$$

$$\text{由对称性知 } \left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_y = -\frac{my}{r^3}, \quad \left(\frac{m}{r} \right)'_z = -\frac{mz}{r^3}$$

因此

$$\nabla \left(\frac{m}{r} \right) = -\frac{m}{r^3}(x, y, z)$$

令 $\mathbf{r}^0 = \frac{1}{r}(x, y, z)$, 则

$$\nabla \left(\frac{m}{r} \right) = -\frac{m}{r^2}\mathbf{r}^0 = -\frac{m \cdot 1}{r^2}\mathbf{r}^0 \quad (11.3)$$


11.3右端的力学解释: 位于原点 $O(0, 0, 0)$ 的质量为 m 的顶点, 对位于点 $M(x, y, z)$ 且质量为 1 的单位质点的引力, 该引力大小与两质点的质量乘积成正比, 而与它们的距离的平方成反比, 并且和这个引力的方向由点 M 指向原点.

在物理中, 称 $\nabla \left(\frac{m}{r} \right) = \frac{m \cdot 1}{r^2}(-\mathbf{r}^0)$ 为引力场, 这是一个向量场, 而称 $\frac{m}{r} = \frac{m}{\sqrt{x^2 + y^2 + z^2}}$ 为对应的引力势函数, 简称势函数.

因为引力场 $\frac{m}{r^2}(-\mathbf{r}^0) = -\frac{m}{x^2 + y^2 + z^2} \frac{(x, y, z)}{\sqrt{x^2 + y^2 + z^2}}$ 是通过势函数 $\frac{m}{r}$ 取梯度得到的, 因此, 也常成这个引力场为梯度场.

注 设 $\nabla = \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right)$, 则 $\nabla^2 = \nabla \cdot \nabla = \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right) \cdot \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right) = \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right)^2 = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial z^2} \triangleq \Delta$ ——Laplace 算子.

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial z^2} = 0 \Rightarrow \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial z^2} \right) u = 0 \Rightarrow \Delta u = 0$$

 **作业** ex9.2:21,22,23,24,36(2)(5),38.