Introduction to Longitudinal Data Analysis with Linear Mixed Models (LMM)



Additional Reading:

- Linear Mixed Models for Longitudinal Data; Verbeke and Molenberghs; Springer; 2000.
- Longitudinal Data Analysis, Hedeker and Gibbons, Wiley, 2006, Chapters 4-7.
- Applied Longitudinal Analysis, Fitzmaurice, Laird and Ware, Wiley, 2011, Chapters 8-9.
- https://m-clark.github.io/mixed-models-with-R/
- https://biostatisticsryangoslingreturns.tumblr.com

Overview

- Linear Mixed Models
 - 2 time points per persons
 - Paired t-test
 - Linear regression
 - Random intercept model
 - Notation
 - Linear mixed models with a random intercept

https://github.com/SharonLutz/LEAD

Repeated Measures

- The terms "repeated measurements" or "repeated measures" are sometimes used as rough synonyms for "longitudinal data"
 - o However, there are sometimes slight differences in the meaning of these terms
- Repeated measures are also multiple measurements on each of several individuals
 - But they are not necessarily through time
 - o For example: Measurements of chemical concentration in the leaves of a plant taken at different locations (low, medium and high on the plant)
- Repeated measures could also be viewed as multiple measurements on a unit
 - For example: Standardized test scores from students in the same classroom in same school
- In all cases, however, we are referring to multiple measurements on a given subject or unit of observation

Longitudinal Data

- Longitudinal data consist of observations (i.e., measurements) taken repeatedly through time on a sample of experimental units (i.e., individuals, subjects)
- The experimental units or subjects can be human patients, animals, agricultural plots, etc
- Typically, the terms "longitudinal data" and "longitudinal study" refer to situations in which data are collected through time under controlled or uncontrolled circumstances
 - o For example: dental measurements at 4 ages
 - Measure the ramus bone in lower jaw in mm
 - On 20 boys at four fixed ages: 8, 8.5, 9 & 9.5
 - Prospective study that has existed for over 40 years
 - Used by dentists to establish a growth curve for the ramus
- Longitudinal data are often contrasted with cross-sectional data
 - Cross-sectional data contains measurements on a sample of subjects at only one point in time

Advantages of Longitudinal Data

- Although time effects can be investigated in cross-sectional studies in which different subjects are examined at different time points
 - o Only longitudinal data gives information on individual patterns of change
- Longitudinal studies economize on subjects
 - o In investigating time effects in a longitudinal design or treatment effects in a crossover design, each subject can "serve as his or her own control"
 - o Comparisons can be made within a subject rather than between subjects
 - This eliminates between-subjects sources of variability from the experimental error
 - This makes inferences more efficient/powerful
- Since the same variables are measured repeatedly on the same subjects, the reliability of those measurements can be assessed

Disadvantages of Longitudinal Data

- For longitudinal data, it is typically reasonable to assume independence across units
 - o But repeated measures within a unit are almost always correlated
 - This may complicate the analysis
- Longitudinal data are often unbalanced or partially incomplete (involve missing data)
 - Loss to follow-up
 - Some subjects move away, die, miss appointments, etc.
 - o For other types of clustered data, the cluster size may vary
 - Family data, where family size varies
 - This may complicate the analysis
- As a practical matter, methods and/or software may not exist or may be complex, so obtaining results and interpreting them may be difficult

Simple Longitudinal Data Analysis Example (Treatment Difference)

- 2 roughly normally distributed measurements per person at 2 equally spaced visits
 - Visit 1: Serum cholesterol measurements (mcg/dl) on standard American diet
 - Visit 2: Serum cholesterol measurements on vegan diet one month later
- Solutions for Simple Longitudinal Data:
 - o 1. Change-score model: $\Delta = Y_{post} Y_{pre}$ as outcome
 - o Fit the linear regression model with just intercept: $E[\Delta_i] = E[Y_{post_i} Y_{pre_i}] = \beta_0$
 - $OH_0: \beta_0 = 0$ (mean cholesterol difference=0)
 - (1) Fit with linear regression or (2) paired t-test
 - \circ 2. Baseline-as-covariate model: outcome= Y_{post} and covariate= Y_{pre}
 - Fit the linear regression model: $E[Y_{post_i}] = \alpha_0 + \alpha_b Y_{pre_i}$
 - $O(H_0: \alpha_b = 0 \text{ (mean post cholesterol is not associated with pre cholesterol levels)}$
 - \circ 3. Hybrid model: $\Delta = Y_{post} Y_{pre}$ as outcome and covariate= Y_{pre}
 - o Fit the linear regression model $E[\Delta_i] = E[Y_{post_i} Y_{pre_i}] = \gamma_0 + \gamma_b Y_{pre_i}$
 - Slope γ_b indicates whether change in cholesterol related to base line value

Article: Glymour et al. When Is Baseline Adjustment Useful in Analyses of Change? An Example with Education and Cognitive Change. AJE. 2005 Discusses when not to adjust for baseline value

- o 4. Linear Mixed Model
 - o Random Intercept- allows for time varying covariates

Simple Longitudinal Data Analysis Example (Time Difference)

- 2 roughly normally distributed measurements per person
 - o Measurements taken at 2 visits (2nd visit is 5 years later)
 - o Not a difference in treatment, but a difference of time (i.e. FEV₁ at visit 1 & 2)
- Solutions:
 - \circ 1. Model the average of Y_{visit2} and Y_{visit1} as the outcome
 - May NOT be appropriate given the question of interest
 - o 2. Model Y_{visit2} as outcome, with Y_{visit1} as a covariate using linear regression
 - \circ 3. Consider $\Delta = Y_{visit2} Y_{visit1}$ as outcome
 - o Y_{visit1} may be included as a covariate in this model
 - Slope indicates whether changes over time are related to base line value
 - o 4. Longitudinal model for the data (i.e. general linear mixed models)
 - Outcome= both base line and follow-up measurements
 - Able to model time sensitive covariates
 - Example: Random intercept model
- Solutions 1-4: can include covariates for precision or to account for confounders
- Solutions 1-3: Not able to estimate variances at each time or correlation between time points

You need to consider the question of interest first, before deciding on the methods!!!

Linear Mixed Models

- Linear mixed model methods are methods for analyzing clustered data
 - o When the outcome variable is continuous and approximately normally distributed
 - Useful for analyzing repeated measures and longitudinal data
 - o Both SAS and R can be used to fit linear mixed models
- If the outcome is not 'approximately normal', one of the following might be considered:
 - o Transform the outcome
 - o Mixture distribution model
 - Non-normal outcome model
- A mixed model may have random as well as fixed effects
- Mixed models allow for more complicated error covariance structures
 - o Unlike simpler general linear models

Linear regression in matrix notation

Y = **X**β+ε where
$$\varepsilon_i \sim N(0, \sigma^2 I_{nxn})$$

$$\mathbf{Y}_{n\times 1} = \begin{pmatrix} Y_1 \\ Y_2 \\ \vdots \\ Y_n \end{pmatrix}, \quad \boldsymbol{\beta}_{(p+1)\times 1} = \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\beta}_0 \\ \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \\ \vdots \\ \boldsymbol{\beta}_p \end{pmatrix}, \quad \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}_{n\times 1} = \begin{pmatrix} \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}_1 \\ \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}_2 \\ \vdots \\ \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}_n \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\mathbf{X}_{n \times (p+1)} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & x_{11} & x_{12} & \cdots & x_{1p} \\ 1 & x_{21} & x_{22} & \cdots & x_{2p} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ 1 & x_{n1} & x_{n2} & \cdots & x_{np} \end{pmatrix}$$

Note that the first column of the **X** matrix of independent variables contains only 1's. This is the general convention used for any regression model containing an intercept (i.e., a constant term β_0).

$$\begin{pmatrix} Y_{1} \\ Y_{2} \\ \vdots \\ Y_{n} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & x_{11} & x_{12} & \cdots & x_{1p} \\ 1 & x_{21} & x_{22} & \cdots & x_{2p} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ 1 & x_{n1} & x_{n2} & \cdots & x_{np} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \beta_{0} \\ \beta_{1} \\ \beta_{2} \\ \vdots \\ \beta_{n} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} \varepsilon_{1} \\ \varepsilon_{2} \\ \vdots \\ \varepsilon_{n} \end{pmatrix} \Rightarrow Var(Y) = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma^{2} & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \sigma^{2} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & \sigma^{2} \end{pmatrix} = \sigma^{2} I_{nxn}$$

$$Y_{i} = \beta_{0} + \beta_{1}x_{i1} + \beta_{2}x_{i2} + \dots + \beta_{p}x_{ip} + \varepsilon_{i} \Rightarrow E[Y_{i} \mid X_{i}] = \beta_{0} + \beta_{1}x_{i1} + \beta_{2}x_{i2} + \dots + \beta_{p}x_{ip}$$

$$Var(Y_{i}) = cov(Y_{i}, Y_{i}) = \sigma^{2} \text{ and } cov(Y_{i}, Y_{i}) = 0 \quad \forall i \neq j$$

Linear Mixed Model

• The general linear mixed model can be defined as:

 $Y = X\beta + Zb + \varepsilon$

Y is the vector that contains the responses

X is a known matrix (design matrix)



 β is the vector that contains the overall mean and all the fixed effects parameters

Z is a known matrix (the design matrix for the random effects)

b is the vector that contains all the random-effects variables

 ${m \epsilon}$ is the vector that contains the random errors

and

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{\epsilon} \end{pmatrix} \sim N \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{G} & 0 \\ 0 & \mathbf{R} \end{pmatrix}$$

We can specify G and/or R to account for the correlation between measurements.

So that,

$$V = Var(\mathbf{Y}) = \mathbf{ZGZ'} + \mathbf{R}$$
Specified by SAS
RANDOM statement.

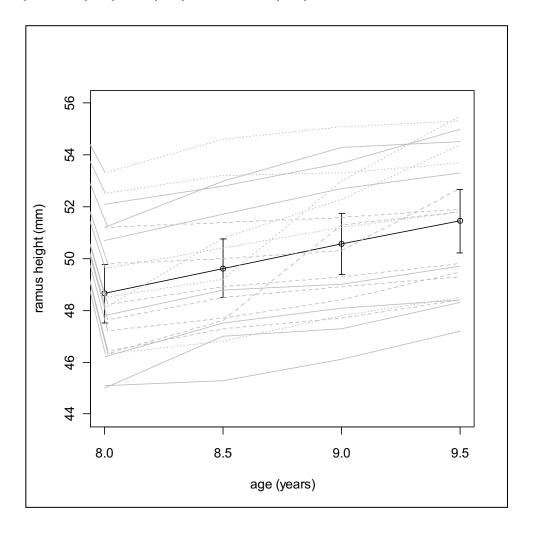
Specified by SAS
REPEATED statement.

Linear Mixed Models with a Random Intercept

- Special case of linear mixed models: random intercept model
 - o A general linear model with an additional random effect called a random intercept
 - This random intercept can be defined for any cluster unit, but here we consider it for subjects
 - o This model offers one simple way to account for longitudinal data
- Considering longitudinal studies, a random intercept term for subjects will
 - Account for between-subject variability
 - Induce a correlation structure for the responses
 - Often over simplistic for longitudinal data
 - But generally an improvement over no correlation structure at all

Ramus Data Example

- Ramus bone in lower jaw was measured on 20 boys at four fixed ages: 8, 8½, 9 & 9½
 - o Prospective study that has existed for over 40 years
 - o Used by dentists to establish a growth curve for the ramus
 - \circ Ages 8 (h1), $8\frac{1}{2}$ (h2), 9 (h3) and $9\frac{1}{2}$ (h4) in mm



Consider a Random Intercept model for the Dental Measurements Example

- 20 boys at four fixed ages: 8, 8½, 9 & 9½
- Subject-time level: (i= 1,..,n subjects, j=1,..,4 ages) $Y_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_{age} age_{ij} + b_i + \varepsilon_{ij}$ Where $\varepsilon_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma_{\varepsilon}^2)$ and $b_i \sim N(0, \sigma_b^2)$
- Then for full or complete data level $\mathbf{Y} = \mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\beta} + \mathbf{Z}\mathbf{b} + \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}$

$$\mathbf{Y}_{4(20)\times 1} = \begin{bmatrix} Y_{(1)1} \\ Y_{(1)2} \\ Y_{(1)3} \\ Y_{(1)4} \\ \vdots \\ Y_{(n)1} \\ Y_{(n)2} \\ Y_{(n)3} \\ Y_{(n)4} \end{bmatrix} = , \mathbf{X}_{4(20)\times (1+1)} = \begin{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age2 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age4 \\ age4 \end{bmatrix} , \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age4 \end{bmatrix} , \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3ge1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age3 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age3 \\ age4 \end{bmatrix} , \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3ge1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age1 \\ age3 \\ age4 \end{bmatrix} , \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3ge1 \\ 3ge4 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age4 \\ 3ge4 \end{bmatrix} , \\ \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 3ge1 \\ 3ge4 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} age4 \\ 3ge4 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$V = Var(\mathbf{Y}) = \mathbf{Z}\mathbf{G}\mathbf{Z}' + \mathbf{R}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{b} \\ \mathbf{\epsilon} \end{pmatrix} \sim N \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{G} & 0 \\ 0 & \mathbf{R} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$Var(\mathbf{Y})_{4(20)\times4(20)} = \mathbf{Z}_{4(20)\times20} \mathbf{G}_{20\times20} \mathbf{Z}^{T}_{20\times4(20)} + \mathbf{R}_{80\times80} = \mathbf{Z}_{4(20)\times20} \mathbf{G}_{20\times20} \mathbf{Z}^{T}_{20\times4(20)} + \sigma_{e}^{2} \mathbf{I}_{80\times80}$$

Different forms of the Cov(Y)

- Different structures for the variance covariance matrix
 - Allow for random intercept and random slope
 - Allow for different covariance structures
 - o RMANOVA

- Then a Random Intercept model is equivalent to the
 - -Covariance Structure Model (fitting the same fixed effects) with TYPE = CS
 - Similar to the Repeated Measures ANOVA model for categorized variables
 - -If there are no covariates included
 - -Spherecity is similar to the assumptions made for CS
- Adding a random slope allows for a linear increase in the variance/covariance over time.
- How does this change the Var(Y)?

• How does this change the Var(Y)?
$$Z_{4(27)\times2(27)}G_{2(27)\times2(27)}Z_{2(27)\times4(27)}^{T} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 8 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 10 & & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 12 & & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 14 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & 8 \\ 0 & 0 & & 1 & 10 \\ 0 & 0 & & & 1 & 12 \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & 14 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{I}^{2} & \sigma_{IS} & & 0 \\ \sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{S}^{2} & & & \\ & \ddots & & & & \\ & & & \sigma_{IS}^{2} & \sigma_{IS} \\ & & & & & \sigma_{IS}^{2} & \sigma_{S}^{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{I}^{2} + 8\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 8\sigma_{S}^{2} & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 10\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 10\sigma_{S}^{2} & 0 & 0 \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 12\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 12\sigma_{S}^{2} & 0 & 0 \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 14\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 14\sigma_{S}^{2} & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 8\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 8\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 10\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 10\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ 0 & 0 & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 12\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 12\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 12\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 12\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 14\sigma_{IS} & \sigma_{IS} + 14\sigma_{S}^{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$= 27 B locks_{4\times4} \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{I}^{2} + 16\sigma_{IS} + 64\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 18\sigma_{IS} + 80\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 20\sigma_{IS} + 96\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 112\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 20\sigma_{IS} + 100\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 120\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 24\sigma_{IS} + 140\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 24\sigma_{IS} + 144\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 26\sigma_{IS} + 168\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 28\sigma_{IS} + 196\sigma_{S}^{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

• Adding a random slope allows for a linear increase in the variance/covariance over time.

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{b} \\ \varepsilon \end{pmatrix} \sim N \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{G} & 0 \\ 0 & \Sigma \end{pmatrix} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$Var(Y)_{4(27)\times4(27)} = Z_{4(27)\times2(27)}G_{2(27)\times2(27)}Z_{2(27)\times4(27)}^{T} + \Sigma_{108\times108} = Z_{4(27)\times2(27)}G_{2(27)\times2(27)}Z_{2(27)\times4(27)}^{T} + \sigma_{e}^{2}I_{108\times108}$$

$$\Rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_{I}^{2} + 16\sigma_{IS} + 64\sigma_{S}^{2} + \sigma_{e}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 18\sigma_{IS} + 80\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 20\sigma_{IS} + 96\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 112\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 18\sigma_{IS} + 80\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 20\sigma_{IS} + 100\sigma_{S}^{2} + \sigma_{e}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 120\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 24\sigma_{IS} + 140\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 20\sigma_{IS} + 96\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 120\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 24\sigma_{IS} + 144\sigma_{S}^{2} + \sigma_{e}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 26\sigma_{IS} + 168\sigma_{S}^{2} \\ \sigma_{I}^{2} + 22\sigma_{IS} + 112\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 24\sigma_{IS} + 140\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 26\sigma_{IS} + 168\sigma_{S}^{2} & \sigma_{I}^{2} + 28\sigma_{IS} + 196\sigma_{S}^{2} + \sigma_{e}^{2} \end{pmatrix}_{4\times4}$$

Formula: ~1 | boy

StdDev:

Fitting a Random Intercept Model in R

• Using lme

```
library(nlme)
ramus= read.table("C:/strand_folders/...ramus_uni.csv", header = T, sep = ",",skip = 0)
results<-lme(height~factor(age),random=~1|boy,data=ramus)
results

> results
Linear mixed-effects model fit by REML
Data: ramus
Log-restricted-likelihood: -134.3059
Fixed: height ~ factor(age)
(Intercept) factor(age)8.5 factor(age)9 factor(age)9.5
48.655 0.970 1.915 2.795

Random effects:
```

Residual

0.837226

(Intercept)

2.467705

Fitting a Random Intercept and Slope Model in R

• Use AIC to compare

Recap: Longitudinal Data Analyses

- Linear mixed models can be used for longitudinal data analyses
 - o A lot more options than explored here
 - Covariance structure models for balanced data (SAS)
- Models may not converge
 - Need to estimate both random and fixed effects
 - o Certain models not possible: random intercept and slope on 2 time points
- Considered code in R
 - o SAS has more choices and flexibility
 - More tutorials
 - https://m-clark.github.io/mixed-models-with-R/