18. $E(t) = \begin{cases} 100\,(t - t^2) & \text{if} \quad -\pi < t < 0 \\ 100\,(t + t^2) & \text{if} \quad 0 < t < \pi \end{cases}$

19. $E(t) = 200t(\pi^2 - t^2) \quad (-\pi < t < \pi)$

20. CAS EXPERIMENT. Maximum Output Term. Graph and discuss outputs of $y'' + cy' + ky = r(t)$ with $r(t)$ as in Example 1 for various c and k with emphasis on the maximum C_n and its ratio to the second largest $|C_n|$.

11.4 Approximation by Trigonometric Polynomials

Fourier series play a prominent role not only in differential equations but also in **approximation theory**, an area that is concerned with approximating functions by other functions—usually simpler functions. Here is how Fourier series come into the picture.

Let $f(x)$ be a function on the interval $-\pi \leqq x \leqq \pi$ that can be represented on this interval by a Fourier series. Then the ***N*th partial sum** of the Fourier series

$$f(x) \approx a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx) \tag{1}$$

is an approximation of the given $f(x)$. In (1) we choose an arbitrary N and keep it fixed. Then we ask whether (1) is the "best" approximation of f by a **trigonometric polynomial of the same degree N**, that is, by a function of the form

$$F(x) = A_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (A_n \cos nx + B_n \sin nx) \qquad (N \text{ fixed}). \tag{2}$$

Here, "best" means that the "error" of the approximation is as small as possible.

Of course we must first define what we mean by the **error** of such an approximation. We could choose the maximum of $|f(x) - F(x)|$. But in connection with Fourier series it is better to choose a definition of error that measures the goodness of agreement between f and F *on the whole interval* $-\pi \leqq x \leqq \pi$. This is preferable since the sum f of a Fourier series may have jumps: F in Fig. 278 is a good overall approximation of f, but the maximum of $|f(x) - F(x)|$ (more precisely, the *supremum*) is large. We choose

$$E = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} (f - F)^2 \, dx. \tag{3}$$

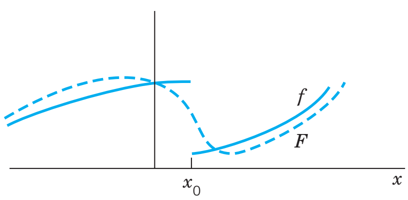

Fig. 278. Error of approximation

This is called the **square error** of F relative to the function f on the interval $-\pi \leqq x \leqq \pi$. Clearly, $E \geqq 0$.

N being fixed, we want to determine the coefficients in (2) such that E is minimum. Since $(f - F)^2 = f^2 - 2fF + F^2$, we have

$$E = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f^2\,dx - 2\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} fF\,dx + \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} F^2\,dx. \tag{4}$$

We square (2), insert it into the last integral in (4), and evaluate the occurring integrals. This gives integrals of $\cos^2 nx$ and $\sin^2 nx$ $(n \geqq 1)$, which equal π, and integrals of $\cos nx$, $\sin nx$, and $(\cos nx)(\sin mx)$, which are zero (just as in Sec. 11.1). Thus

$$\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} F^2\,dx = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \left[A_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (A_n \cos nx + B_n \sin nx)\right]^2 dx$$
$$= \pi(2A_0^2 + A_1^2 + \cdots + A_N^2 + B_1^2 + \cdots + B_N^2).$$

We now insert (2) into the integral of fF in (4). This gives integrals of $f \cos nx$ as well as $f \sin nx$, just as in Euler's formulas, Sec. 11.1, for a_n and b_n (each multiplied by A_n or B_n). Hence

$$\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} fF\,dx = \pi(2A_0 a_0 + A_1 a_1 + \cdots + A_N a_N + B_1 b_1 + \cdots + B_N b_N).$$

With these expressions, (4) becomes

$$\begin{aligned} E = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f^2\,dx &- 2\pi\left[2A_0 a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (A_n a_n + B_n b_n)\right] \\ &+ \pi\left[2A_0^2 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (A_n^2 + B_n^2)\right]. \end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

We now take $A_n = a_n$ and $B_n = b_n$ in (2). Then in (5) the second line cancels half of the integral-free expression in the first line. Hence for this choice of the coefficients of F the square error, call it E^*, is

$$E^* = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f^2\,dx - \pi\left[2a_0^2 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} (a_n^2 + b_n^2)\right]. \tag{6}$$

We finally subtract (6) from (5). Then the integrals drop out and we get terms $A_n^2 - 2A_n a_n + a_n^2 = (A_n - an)^2$ and similar terms $(B_n - b_n)^2$:

$$E - E^* = \pi\left\{2(A_0 - a_0)^2 + \sum_{n=1}^{N} [(A_n - a_n)^2 + (B_n - b_n)^2]\right\}.$$

Since the sum of squares of real numbers on the right cannot be negative,

$$E - E^* \geqq 0, \qquad \text{thus} \qquad E \geqq E^*,$$

and $E = E^*$ if and only if $A_0 = a_0, \cdots, B_N = b_N$. This proves the following fundamental minimum property of the partial sums of Fourier series.

THEOREM 1

Minimum Square Error

The square error of F in (2) (with fixed N) relative to f on the interval $-\pi \leqq x \leqq \pi$ is minimum if and only if the coefficients of F in (2) are the Fourier coefficients of f. This minimum value E^* is given by (6).

From (6) we see that E^* cannot increase as N increases, but may decrease. Hence *with increasing N the partial sums of the Fourier series of f yield better and better approximations to f*, considered from the viewpoint of the square error.

Since $E^* \geqq 0$ and (6) holds for every N, we obtain from (6) the important **Bessel's inequality**

$$2a_0^2 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n^2 + b_n^2) \leqq \frac{1}{\pi}\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x)^2\, dx \tag{7}$$

for the Fourier coefficients of any function f for which integral on the right exists. (For F. W. Bessel see Sec. 5.5.)

It can be shown (see [C12] in App. 1) that for such a function f, **Parseval's theorem** holds; that is, formula (7) holds with the equality sign, so that it becomes **Parseval's identity**[3]

$$2a_0^2 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n^2 + b_n^2) = \frac{1}{\pi}\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x)^2\, dx. \tag{8}$$

EXAMPLE 1 **Minimum Square Error for the Sawtooth Wave**

Compute the minimum square error E^* of $F(x)$ with $N = 1, 2, \cdots, 10, 20, \cdots, 100$ and 1000 relative to

$$f(x) = x + \pi \qquad (-\pi < x < \pi)$$

on the interval $-\pi \leqq x \leqq \pi$.

Solution. $F(x) = \pi + 2\left(\sin x - \frac{1}{2}\sin 2x + \frac{1}{3}\sin 3x - + \cdots + \frac{(-1)^{N+1}}{N}\sin Nx\right)$ by Example 3 in Sec. 11.3. From this and (6),

$$E^* = \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} (x+\pi)^2\, dx - \pi\left(2\pi^2 + 4\sum_{n=1}^{N}\frac{1}{n^2}\right).$$

Numeric values are:

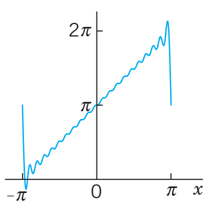

Fig. 279. F with $N = 20$ in Example 1

N	E^*	N	E^*	N	E^*	N	E^*
1	8.1045	6	1.9295	20	0.6129	70	0.1782
2	4.9629	7	1.6730	30	0.4120	80	0.1561
3	3.5666	8	1.4767	40	0.3103	90	0.1389
4	2.7812	9	1.3216	50	0.2488	100	0.1250
5	2.2786	10	1.1959	60	0.2077	1000	0.0126

[3]MARC ANTOINE PARSEVAL (1755–1836), French mathematician. A physical interpretation of the identity follows in the next section.

$F = S_1, S_2, S_3$ are shown in Fig. 269 in Sec. 11.2, and $F = S_{20}$ is shown in Fig. 279. Although $|f(x) - F(x)|$ is large at $\pm\pi$ (how large?), where f is discontinuous, F approximates f quite well on the whole interval, except near $\pm\pi$, where "waves" remain owing to the "Gibbs phenomenon," which we shall discuss in the next section.

Can you think of functions f for which E^* decreases more quickly with increasing N? ■

PROBLEM SET 11.4

1. CAS Problem. Do the numeric and graphic work in Example 1 in the text.

2–5 MINIMUM SQUARE ERROR

Find the trigonometric polynomial $F(x)$ of the form (2) for which the square error with respect to the given $f(x)$ on the interval $-\pi < x < \pi$ is minimum. Compute the minimum value for $N = 1, 2, \cdots, 5$ (or also for larger values if you have a CAS).

2. $f(x) = x \quad (-\pi < x < \pi)$

3. $f(x) = |x| \quad (-\pi < x < \pi)$

4. $f(x) = x^2 \quad (-\pi < x < \pi)$

5. $f(x) = \begin{cases} -1 & \text{if} \quad -\pi < x < 0 \\ 1 & \text{if} \quad 0 < x < \pi \end{cases}$

6. Why are the square errors in Prob. 5 substantially larger than in Prob. 3?

7. $f(x) = x^3 \quad (-\pi < x < \pi)$

8. $f(x) = |\sin x| \quad (-\pi < x < \pi)$, full-wave rectifier

9. Monotonicity. Show that the minimum square error (6) is a monotone decreasing function of N. How can you use this in practice?

10. CAS EXPERIMENT. Size and Decrease of E^*. Compare the size of the minimum square error E^* for functions of your choice. Find experimentally the factors on which the decrease of E^* with N depends. For each function considered find the smallest N such that $E^* < 0.1$.

11–15 PARSEVALS'S IDENTITY

Using (8), prove that the series has the indicated sum. Compute the first few partial sums to see that the convergence is rapid.

11. $1 + \dfrac{1}{3^2} + \dfrac{1}{5^2} + \cdots = \dfrac{\pi^2}{8} = 1.233700550$

Use Example 1 in Sec. 11.1.

12. $1 + \dfrac{1}{2^4} + \dfrac{1}{3^4} + \cdots = \dfrac{\pi^4}{90} = 1.082323234$

Use Prob. 14 in Sec. 11.1.

13. $1 + \dfrac{1}{3^4} + \dfrac{1}{5^4} + \dfrac{1}{7^4} + \cdots = \dfrac{\pi^4}{96} = 1.014678032$

Use Prob. 17 in Sec. 11.1.

14. $\displaystyle\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos^4 x \, dx = \frac{3\pi}{4}$

15. $\displaystyle\int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \cos^6 x \, dx = \frac{5\pi}{8}$

11.5 Sturm–Liouville Problems. Orthogonal Functions

The idea of the Fourier series was to represent general periodic functions in terms of cosines and sines. The latter formed a *trigonometric system.* This trigonometric system has the desirable property of orthogonality which allows us to compute the coefficient of the Fourier series by the Euler formulas.

The question then arises, can this approach be generalized? That is, can we replace the trigonometric system of Sec. 11.1 by other *orthogonal systems* (*sets of other orthogonal functions*)? The answer is "yes" and will lead to generalized Fourier series, including the Fourier–Legendre series and the Fourier–Bessel series in Sec. 11.6.

To prepare for this generalization, we first have to introduce the concept of a Sturm–Liouville Problem. (The motivation for this approach will become clear as you read on.) Consider a second-order ODE of the form