Chapter 4 - Linear Model Interpretation

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To open this information in an interactive Colab notebook, click the Open in Colab graphic below.

```
if(!require(palmerpenguins, quietly = TRUE)) {
   install.packages("palmerpenguins", repos = "https://cran.rstudio.com/")
   library(palmerpenguins)
}

if(!require(car, quietly = TRUE)) {
   install.packages("car", repos = "https://cran.rstudio.com/")
   library(car)
}

if(!require(effects, quietly = TRUE)) {
   install.packages("effects", repos = "https://cran.rstudio.com/")
   library(effects)
}
```

lattice theme set by effectsTheme() See ?effectsTheme for details.

Interpretation of coefficients

The standard approach to interpreting the coefficients of a fitted linear model is to consider the expected change in the response in relation to changes in the regressors in the model.

Consider the typical multiple linear regression model of the response

$$Y=\beta_0+\beta_1X_1+\ldots+\beta_{p-1}X_{p-1}+\epsilon.$$

- We treat the values of our regressor variables as being fixed, known values
- The error term is treated as a random variable
- Consequently, the response variable is also a random variable.

Random Error Assumption

We assume that the errors all have mean 0, conditional on the values of the regressor variables.

$$E(\epsilon \mid X_1, X_2, \dots, X_{p-1}) = 0.$$

Or, using alternative notation:

$$E(\epsilon \mid \mathbb{X}) = 0.$$

Expected Value of Response

Using the assumption of mean zero errors, we have:

$$\begin{split} &E(Y\mid X_{1},X_{2},\ldots,X_{p-1})\\ &=E(Y\mid \mathbb{X})\\ &=E(\beta_{0}+\beta_{1}X_{1}+\ldots+\beta_{p-1}X_{p-1}+\epsilon\mid \mathbb{X})\\ &=E(\beta_{0}+\beta_{1}X_{1}+\ldots+\beta_{p-1}X_{p-1}\mid \mathbb{X})+E(\epsilon\mid \mathbb{X})\\ &=\beta_{0}+\beta_{1}X_{1}+\ldots+\beta_{p-1}X_{p-1}. \end{split}$$

Note: All the coefficient β_i terms are fixed, non-random.

Interpretation for simple linear regression

Suppose we have a simple linear regression model, so that

$$E(Y \mid X) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X.$$

The interpretations of the coefficients are:

- β_0 is the expected response when the regressor is 0, i.e., $\beta_0 = E(Y \mid X = 0)$.
- β_1 is the expected change in the response when the regressor increases 1 unit, i.e., $\beta_1 = E(Y \mid X = x^* + 1) E(Y \mid X = x^*)$, where x^* is a fixed, real number.

Interpretation of Intercept

The intercept term β_0 is the expected value of the response when X=0.

$$E(Y \mid X = 0) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot 0$$
$$= \beta_0.$$

Interpretation of Slope

Similarly, for β_1 , we notice that

$$\begin{split} E(Y \mid X = x^* + 1) - E(Y \mid X = x^*) &= [\beta_0 + \beta_1(x^* + 1)] - [\beta_0 + \beta_1 x^*] \\ &= \beta_1. \end{split}$$

Thus, β_1 literally equals the change in the expected response when the regressor increases by 1 unit.

It may not make sense to say "we increase X by 1 unit" or "when X increases by 1 unit". For example??

To illustrate the interpretations given above, we interpret the simple linear regression model fit to the penguins data. The fitted simple linear regression model of body_mass_g regressed on body_mass_g is

$$\hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g}) = 26.9 + 0.004 \, \texttt{body_mass_g}.$$

Some basic interpretations of the coefficients are:

- Intercept: The expected bill length of a penguin with a body mass of 0 grams is 26.9 mm.
- body_mass_g: A penguin 1 gram heavier than another penguin is expected to have a bill length 0.004 mm longer than the smaller penguin.

Rescaling Predictors to aid Interpretation

- A weight difference of 1 gram is negligible in the context of penguin weights.
- A bill length change of 0.004 mm is unlikely to be noticed.

In the code below, we divide the body_mass_g variable by 1000 to convert the variable from grams to kilograms.

We then fit the model regressing bill_length_mm on body_mass_kg and extract the estimated coefficients.

```
# load penguins data
data(penguins, package = "palmerpenguins")
# transform body mass variable from g to kg
penguins <- penguins |> transform(body_mass_kg = body_mass_g/1000)
# fit model with body_mass_kg
slmod_scaled <- lm(bill_length_mm ~ body_mass_kg, data = penguins)
# extract coefficients
coefficients(slmod_scaled)

(Intercept) body_mass_kg
26.898872     4.051417</pre>
```

Question

• How do we reinterpret the model in the context of kilograms?

Dividing body_mass_g by 1000 resulted in the estimated coefficient changing by a factor of 1000.

More generally, if $\hat{\beta}_j$ is the estimated coefficient for X_j , then the regressor $(X_j + a)/c$ will have an estimated coefficient of $c\hat{\beta}_j$, where a and c are fixed, real numbers and assuming nothing else in the fitted model changes.

Interpretation for first-order multiple linear regression models

Suppose we have a multiple linear regression model with p-1 numeric regressors, so that

$$E(Y \mid X_1, \dots, X_{p-1}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \dots + \beta_{p-1} X_{p-1}.$$

Relying on the definition of \mathbb{X} , we denote the set of regressors without X_j as $\mathbb{X}_{-j} = \mathbb{X}$ $\{X_j\}$. The interpretations of the coefficients from the model in Equation are:

- β_0 is the expected response when all regressors are 0, i.e., $\beta_0 = E(Y \mid X_1 = 0, \dots, X_{p-1} = 0)$.
- β_j , $j=1,\ldots,p-1$, represents the expected change in the response when regressor j increases 1 unit and the other regressors stay the same, i.e., $\beta_j=E(Y\mid \mathbb{X}_{-j}=\mathbf{x}_{-j}^*, X_{j+1}=x_j^*+1)-E(Y\mid \mathbb{X}_{-j}=\mathbf{x}_{-j}^*, X_{j+1}=x_j^*)$ where $\mathbf{x}_{-j}^*=[x_1^*,\ldots,x_{j-1}^*,x_{j+1}^*,\ldots,x_{p-1}^*]\in\mathbb{R}^{p-2}$ is a vector with p-2 fixed values (the number of regressors excluding X_j) and x_j^* is a fixed real number. The non-intercept coefficients of a multiple linear regression model are known as partial slopes.

Regarding the interpretation of β_0 , from the regression model:

$$\begin{split} E(Y \mid X_1 = 0, \dots, X_{p-1} = 0) &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot 0 + \dots + \beta_{p-1} \cdot 0 \\ &= \beta_0. \end{split}$$

Question:

- Does the interpretation of the intercept always make sense?
- What if X_1 was heart rate?

Issues Interpreting Polynomial Models

In multiple regression models, a single predictor can be used more than once in the model. E.g., in the 2nd-degree polynomial regression model:

$$E(Y \mid X) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 X^2,$$

X is used in both the second and third terms.

Questions

- How does this affect the interpretation of β_1 ?
- Is is possible to increase X while keeping X^2 fixed?

The standard interpretation we discussed is applicable to first-order linear regression models.

First-order linear regression model: no regressor is a function of any other regressor.

Penguins Example Revisited

We interpret the first-order multiple linear regression model fit to the penguins data. The fitted multiple linear regression model is:

$$\begin{split} & E(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g}, \texttt{flipper_length_mm}) \\ &= -3.44 + 0.0007 \, \texttt{body_mass_g} + 0.22 \, \texttt{flipper_length_mm}. \end{split}$$

Some basic interpretations of the coefficients are:

- *Intercept:* We expect a penguin with a body mass of 0 grams and a flipper length of 0 mm to to have a bill length of -3.44 mm.
- body_mass_g: If we increase body mass by 1 gram, we expect bill length to increase 0.0007 mm holding all else constant.
- flipper_length_mm: If we increase flipper length by 1 mm, we expect the bill length to increase 0.22 mm holding all else constant.

Roles of regressor variables

Did you notice that the estimated coefficients for the intercept and the body_mass_g regressor changed between the simple model and the multiple regression model?

Regression Model	Intercept Coef.	Body Mass Coef.
Simple Linear	26.90	0.004
Multiple	-3.44	0.0007

• Why?

The role a regressor plays in a regression model depends on what other regressors are in the model.

• Generally, we can't provide a definitive interpretation of a regressor's role in a fitted model without knowing what other regressors are in the model.

• When interpreting a regressor, it is common to include something like after accounting for the other variables in the model.

If our model had different variables, then our interpretation would be different!

Mathematically, why do the estimated coefficients change as we add or remove regressors from a model?

- If a regressor is correlated with other regressors in a model, then adding or removing that regressor will impact the estimated coefficients in the new model.
- The more correlated the regressors are, the more they tend to affect each others' estimated coefficients.
- A regressor will impact the estimated coefficients of the other regressors in a model unless it is *orthogonal* to the other regressors.

Note: Orthogonality is related to correlation, but there are important differences.

Effect plots

An effect plot is a visual display that aids in helping us intuitively interpret the impact of a predictor in a model. As stated by Fox et al. (2020):

Summarization of the effects of predictors using tables of coefficient estimates is often incomplete. Effects, and particularly plots of effects, can in many instances reveal the relationship of the response to the predictors more clearly. This conclusion is especially true for models with linear predictors that include interactions and multiple-coefficient terms such as regression splines and polynomials

An effect plot is a plot of the estimated mean response as a function of a focal predictor with the other predictors being held at "typical values".

Recall: the difference between predictors and regressors.

- A predictor variable is a variable available to model the response variable.
- A regressor variable is a variable used in our regression model, whether that is an unmodified predictor variable, some transformation of a predictor, some combination of predictors, etc.

First-Order	Model	Effects	Plot
-------------	-------	---------	------

In a first-order linear model, none of the regressors interact, i.e., none of the regressors are functions of each other. Fox et al. (2020) use the terminology fixed group to refer to the group of predictors that do not interact with the focal predictor.

To create our effect plot, we must first find the equation for the estimated mean response as a function of a focal predictor while holding the other predictors at their "typical" values. We set numeric fixed group predictors equal to their sample means when finding this function.

We now construct effect plots for the estimated regression model of the penguins data that regressed bill_length_mm on body_mass_g and flipper_length_mm. The fitted model is

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \texttt{body\_mass\_g}, \texttt{flipper\_length\_mm}) \\ = -3.44 + 0.0007 \, \texttt{body\_mass\_g} + 0.22 \, \texttt{flipper\_length\_mm}. \end{split}
```

We fit this model in R below.

There are two predictors in the model, so we can create effect plots for both variables using the sample mean as a reference value.

```
colMeans(mlmod$model)
```

```
bill_length_mm body_mass_g flipper_length_mm
43.92193 4201.75439 200.91520
```

The effect plot for body_mass_g (on the response bill_length_mm) is a plot of

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \texttt{body\_mass\_g}, \texttt{flipper\_length\_mm} &= 200.92) \\ &= -3.44 + 0.0007 \, \texttt{body\_mass\_g} + 0.22 \cdot 200.92 \\ &= 41.14 + 0.0007 \, \texttt{body\_mass\_g} \end{split}
```

as a function of body_mass_g.

Note: we used exact values in the calculation above. The intercept will be 40.76 instead of 41.14 if we use the rounded values. Similarly, the effect plot for flipper_length_mm is a plot of

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \texttt{body\_mass\_g} &= 4201.75, \texttt{flipper\_length\_mm}) \\ &= -3.44 + 0.0007 \cdot 4201.75 + 0.22\,\texttt{flipper\_length\_mm} \\ &= -0.65 + 0.22\,\texttt{flipper\_length\_mm} \end{split}
```

as a function of flipper_length_mm.

The effects R package can be used to generate effect plots for the predictors of a fitted linear model.

- We use the effects::predictorEffect function to compute the information needed to draw the plot.
- We use the plot function to display the information.

The predictorEffect function computes the estimated mean response for different values of the focal predictor while holding the other predictors at their typical values. The main arguments of predictorEffect are:

- predictor: the name of the predictor we want to plot. This is the "focal predictor".
- mod: the fitted model. The function works with 1m objects and many other types of fitted models.

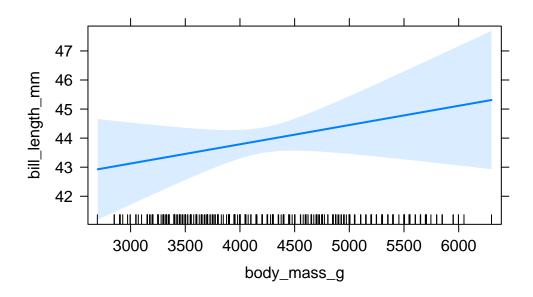
We load the **effects** package.

```
library(effects)
```

We now draw the effects plot for body_mass_g. ::: {.cell}

```
plot(predictorEffect("body_mass_g", mlmod))
```

body_mass_g predictor effect plot



:::

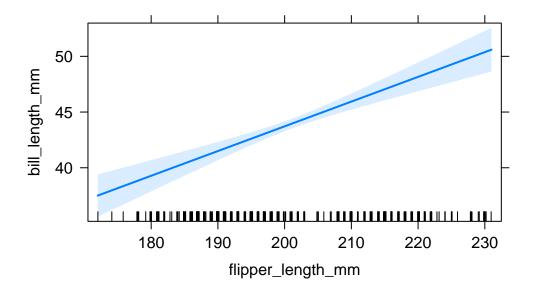
There is a clear positive association between body_mass_g and bill_length_mm after accounting for the flipper_length_mm variable.

The shaded area indicates the 95% confidence interval bands for the estimated mean response.

We next create an effect plot for flipper_length_mm using the code below.

```
plot(predictorEffect("flipper_length_mm", mlmod))
```

flipper_length_mm predictor effect plot

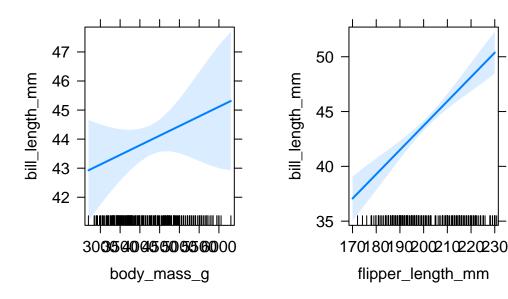


There is a clear positive association between flipper_length_mm and bill_length_mm after accounting for body_mass_g.

Alternatively, we could use effects::allEffects to compute the necessary effect plot information for all predictors simultaneously, but it is harder to control figure sizing.

plot(allEffects(mlmod))

body_mass_g effect plot flipper_length_mm effect plot



Interpretation for categorical predictors

Coefficient interpretation for parallel lines models

Consider a parallel lines model with numeric regressor X and categorical predictor C with levels L_1 , L_2 , and L_3 . Predictor C must be transformed into two indicator variables, D_2 and D_3 , for category levels L_2 and L_3 , to be included in our linear model. L_1 is the reference level. The parallel lines model is formulated as

$$E(Y\mid X,C) = \beta_{int} + \beta_X X + \beta_{L_2} D_2 + \beta_{L_3} D_3$$

We replaced the usual β_0 , β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 with notation the indicates the regressor each coefficient is associated with.

When an observation has level L_1 and X=0, then the expected response is

$$\begin{split} E(Y|X=0,C=L_1) &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X \cdot 0 + \beta_{L_2} \cdot 0 + \beta_{L_3} \cdot 0 \\ &= \beta_{int}. \end{split}$$

Thus, β_{int} is the expected response for an observation with level L_1 when X=0.

When an observation has a fixed level L_j and X increases from x^* to $x^* + 1$, then the change in the expected response is

$$E(Y|X = x^* + 1, C = L_i) - E(Y|X = x^*, C = L_i) = \beta_X.$$

Thus, β_X is the expected change in the response for an observation with fixed level L_j when X increases by 1 unit.

When an observation has level L_2 , the expected response is

$$\begin{split} E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_2) &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X x^* + \beta_{L_2} \cdot 1 + \beta_{L_3} \cdot 0 \\ &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X x^* + \beta_{L_2}. \end{split}$$

Thus,

$$\begin{split} E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_2) - E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_1) \\ &= (\beta_{int} + \beta_X x^* + \beta_{L_2}) - (\beta_{int} + \beta_X x^*) \\ &= \beta_{L_2}. \end{split}$$

Thus, β_{L_2} is the expected change in the response for a fixed value of X when comparing on observation having level L_1 to level L_2 of predictor C. More specifically, β_{L_2} indicates the distance between the estimated regression lines for observations having levels L_1 and L_2 .

To summarize, assuming categorical predictor C has K levels instead of 3:

- β_{int} represents the expected response for observations having the reference level when the numeric regressor X=0.
- β_X is the expected change in the response when X increases by 1 unit for a fixed level of C.
- β_{L_j} , for $j=2,\ldots,K$, represents the expected change in the response when comparing observations having level L_1 and L_j with X fixed at the same value.

We previously fit a parallel lines model to the penguins data that used both body_mass_g and species to explain the behavior of bill_length_mm. Letting D_C denote the indicator variable for the Chinstrap level and D_G denote the indicator variable for the Gentoo level, the fitted parallel lines model was

$$\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g}, \texttt{species}) \\ &= 24.92 + 0.004 \texttt{body_mass_g} + 9.92 D_C + 3.56 D_G. \end{split}$$

In the context of this model:

- The expected bill length for an Adelie penguin with a body mass of 0 grams is 24.92 mm.
- If two penguins are of the same species, but one penguin has a body mass 1 gram larger, then the larger penguin is expected to have a bill length 0.004 mm longer than the smaller penguin.
- A Chinstrap penguin is expected to have a bill length 9.92 mm longer than an Adelie penguin, assuming their body mass is the same.
- A Gentoo penguin is expected to have a bill length 3.56 mm longer than an Adelie penguin, assuming their body mass is the same.

Effect plots for fitted models with non-interacting categorical predictors

How do we create an effect plot for a numeric focal predictor when a non-interacting categorical predictor is in the model (such as for the parallel lines model we have been discussing)?

- First, determine the fitted model as a function of the focal predictor for each level of the categorical predictor.
- Then, we compute the weighted average of the equation with the weights being proportional to the number of observations in each group.

Let's construct an effect plot for the body_mass_g predictor in the context of the penguins parallel lines model discussed in the previous section. We previously determined that the fitted parallel lines model simplified to:

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g}, \text{species} &= \text{Adelie}) \\ &= 24.92 + 0.004 \text{body\_mass\_g} \\ \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g}, \text{species} &= \text{Chinstrap}) \\ &= 34.84 + 0.004 \text{body\_mass\_g} \\ \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g}, \text{species} &= \text{Gentoo}) \\ &= 28.48 + 0.004 \text{body\_mass\_g}. \end{split}
```

We recreate the fitted model producing these equations in R using the code below.

```
# refit the parallel lines model
lmodp <- lm(bill_length_mm ~ body_mass_g + species, data = penguins)
# double-check coefficients
coef(lmodp)</pre>
```

(Intercept)	body_mass_g	${\tt speciesChinstrap}$	${ t species Gentoo}$
24.919470977	0.003748497	9.920884113	3.557977539

The code below determines the number of observations with each level of species for the data used in the fitted model lmodp.

```
table(lmodp$model$species)
```

```
Adelie Chinstrap Gentoo
151 68 123

print(paste('Total:', length(lmodp$model$species)))

[1] "Total: 342"
```

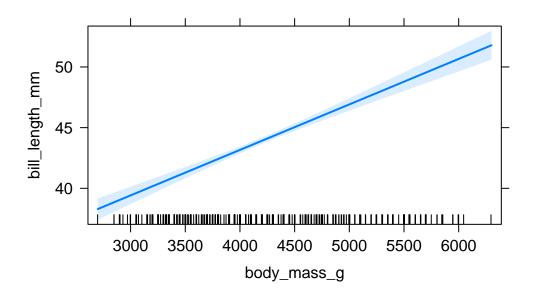
The equation used to create the effect plot of body_mass_g is the weighted average of the response, with weights proportional to the number of observational having each level of the categorical predictor. Specifically,

$$\begin{split} \hat{E}(\text{bill_length_mm} \mid \text{body_mass_g}, \text{species} &= \text{typical}) \\ &= \frac{151}{342}(24.92 + 0.004 \text{body_mass_g}) \\ &+ \frac{68}{342}(34.84 + 0.004 \text{body_mass_g}) \\ &+ \frac{123}{342}(28.48 + 0.004 \text{body_mass_g}) \\ &= 28.17 + 0.004 \text{body_mass_g}. \end{split}$$

The following code produces the effect plot for body_mass_g for the fitted parallel lines model. The association between bill_length_mm and body_mass_g is positive after accounting for species.

```
# draw effect plot for body_mass_g
plot(predictorEffect("body_mass_g", lmodp))
```

body_mass_g predictor effect plot



An effect plot for a categorical predictor, assuming all other predictors in the model are non-interacting numerical predictors (i.e., fixed group predictors), is a plot of the estimated mean response for each level of the categorical variable when the fixed group group predictors are held at their sample mean. The sample mean is:

```
# sample mean of body_mass_g variable used to fit lmodp
mean(lmodp$model$body_mass_g)
```

[1] 4201.754

The estimated mean for the Adelie species when body_mass_g is fixed at 4201.75 is

$$\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g} &= 4201.75, \texttt{species} = \texttt{Adelie}) \\ &= 24.92 + 0.004 \cdot 4201.75 \\ &= 40.67. \end{split}$$

Similarly,

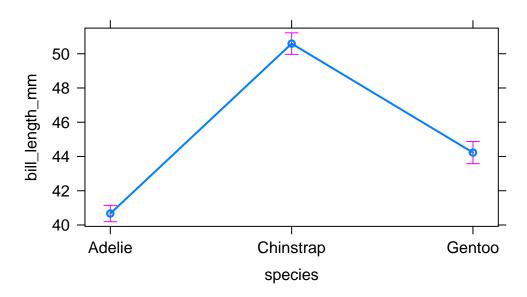
$$\hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g} = 4201.75, \texttt{species} = \texttt{Chinstrap}) = 50.59$$

And,

$$\hat{E}(exttt{bill_length_mm} \mid exttt{body_mass_g} = 4201.75, exttt{species} = exttt{Gentoo}) = 44.23$$

The code below produces the effect plot for species. The confidence bands for the estimated mean response are shown by the vertical bars.

species predictor effect plot



Coefficient interpretation for separate lines models

Consider a separate lines model with numeric regressor X and categorical predictor C with levels L_1 , L_2 , and L_3 . The predictor C will be transformed into two indicator variables, D_2 and D_3 , for category levels L_2 and L_3 , with L_1 being the reference level. The separate lines model is formulated as:

$$E(Y \mid X, C) = \beta_{int} + \beta_X X + \beta_{L_2} D_2 + \beta_{L_3} D_3 + \beta_{XL_2} X D_2 + \beta_{XL_3} X D_3$$

When an observation has level L_1 and $X = x^*$, then the expected response is

$$\begin{split} E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_1) \\ &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X \cdot x^* + \beta_{L_2} \cdot 0 + \beta_{L_3} \cdot 0 + \beta_{XL_2} \cdot x^* \cdot 0 + \beta_{XL_3} \cdot x^* \cdot 0 \\ &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X x^*. \end{split}$$

We can verify that:

$$\begin{array}{l} \bullet \ \ \, \beta_{int} = E(Y \mid X=0, C=L_1). \\ \bullet \ \ \, \beta_X = E(Y \mid X=x^*+1, C=L_1) - E(Y \mid X=x^*, C=L_1). \end{array}$$

Similarly, when $C = L_2$,

$$\begin{split} E(Y|X = x^*, C = L_2) \\ &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X \cdot x^* + \beta_{L_2} \cdot 1 + \beta_{L_3} \cdot 0 + \beta_{XL_2} \cdot x^* \cdot 1 + \beta_{XL_3} \cdot x^* \cdot 0 \\ &= \beta_{int} + \beta_X x^* + \beta_{L_2} + \beta_{XL_2} x^* \\ &= (\beta_{int} + \beta_{L_2}) + (\beta_X + \beta_{XL_2}) x^* \end{split}$$

Following this same pattern, when $C = L_3$ we have

$$E(Y|X = x^*, C = L_3) = (\beta_{int} + \beta_{L_2}) + (\beta_X + \beta_{XL_2})x^*$$

We can verify that for j = 2, 3,

$$\beta_{L_i} = E(Y \mid X = 0, C = L_i) - E(Y \mid X = 0, C = L_1)$$

And,

$$\begin{split} \beta_{XL_j} &= [E(Y \mid X = x^* + 1, C = L_j) - E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_j)] \\ &- [E(Y \mid X = x^* + 1, C = L_1) - E(Y \mid X = x^*, C = L_1)]. \end{split}$$

To summarize the interpretation of the coefficients in separate lines models, assuming categorical predictor C has K levels instead of 3:

- β_{int} represents the expected response for observations having the reference level when the numeric regressor X = 0.
- β_{L_j} , for $j=2,\ldots,K$, represents the expected change in the response when comparing observations having level L_1 and L_j with X=0.
- β_X represents the expected change in the response when X increases by 1 unit for observations having the reference level.

• $\beta_X L_j$, for $j=2,\ldots,K$, represents the difference in the expected response between observations having the reference level in comparison to level L_j when X increases by 1 unit. More simply, these terms represent the difference in the rate of change for observations having level L_j compared to the reference level.

We illustrate these interpretation using the separate lines model to the **penguins** data. The fitted separate lines model was,

$$\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g}, \texttt{species}) \\ &= 26.99 + 0.003 \texttt{body_mass_g} + 5.18 D_C - 0.25 D_G \\ &+ 0.001 D_C \texttt{body_mass_g} + 0.0009 D_G \texttt{body_mass_g}. \end{split}$$

In the context of this model:

- The expected bill length for an Adelie penguin with a body mass of 0 grams is 26.99 mm.
- If an Adelie penguin has a body mass 1 gram larger than another Adelie penguin, then the larger penguin is expected to have a bill length 0.003 mm longer than the smaller penguin.
- A Chinstrap penguin is expected to have a bill length 5.18 mm longer than an Adelie penguin when both have a body mass of 0 grams.
- A Gentoo penguin is expected to have a bill length 0.25 mm shorter than an Adelie penguin when both have a body mass of 0 grams.
- For each 1 gram increase in body mass, we expect the change in bill length by Chinstrap penguins to be 0.001 mm larger than the corresponding change in bill length by Adelie penguins.
- For each 1 gram increase in body mass, we expect the change in bill length by Gentoo penguins to be 0.0009 mm larger than the corresponding change in bill length by Adelie penguins.

Effect plots for interacting categorical predictors

We now discuss construction of effect plots for a separate lines model, which has an interaction between a categorical and numeric predictor.

Fox et al. (2020) also discuss predictors in the *conditioning group*, which is the set of predictors that interact with the focal predictor.

When some predictors interact with the focal predictor, the effect plot of the focal predictor is a plot of the estimated mean response when the fixed group predictors are held at their

typical values and the conditioning group predictors vary over different combinations of discrete values.

By default, to compute the estimated mean response as a function of the focal predictor, we:

- Hold the numeric fixed group predictors at their sample means.
- Average the estimated mean response equation across the different levels of a fixed group categorical predictor, with weights equal to the number of observations with each level.
- Compute the estimated mean response function for 5 discrete values of numeric predictors in the conditioning group.
- Compute the estimated mean response function for different levels of a categorical predictor in the conditioning group.

We provide examples of the effect plots for the body_mass_g and species predictors for the separate lines model fit to the penguins data. We first run the code below to fit the separate lines model we previously fit:

```
# fit separate lines model
  lmods <- lm(bill_length_mm ~ body_mass_g + species + body_mass_g:species,</pre>
               data = penguins)
  # extract estimated coefficients
  coef(lmods)
                  (Intercept)
                                                body_mass_g
                26.9941391367
                                               0.0031878758
            speciesChinstrap
                                              speciesGentoo
                5.1800537287
                                              -0.2545906615
body_mass_g:speciesChinstrap
                                 body_mass_g:speciesGentoo
                0.0012748183
                                               0.0009029956
```

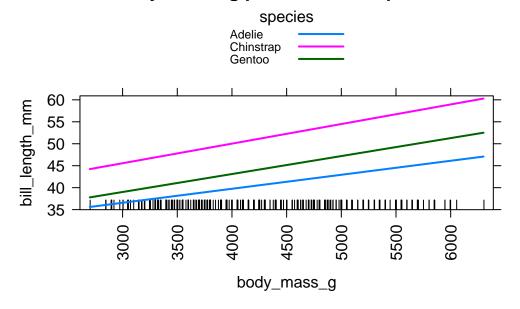
We previously determined that the model simplifies depending on the level of species:

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g, species} &= \text{Adelie}) \\ &= 26.99 + 0.003 \text{body\_mass\_g,} \\ \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g, species} &= \text{Chinstrap}) \\ &= 31.17 + 0.004 \text{body\_mass\_g,} \\ \hat{E}(\text{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \text{body\_mass\_g, species} &= \text{Chinstrap}) \\ &= 26.74 + 0.004 \text{body\_mass\_g.} \end{split}
```

The effect plot of body_mass_g for the separate lines model is displayed using the code below.

- The axes argument to rotates the x-axis labels (otherwise the text overlaps)
- The lines argument displays all three lines in one graphic instead of a separate panel for each level of species.

body_mass_g predictor effect plot



Interpretation:

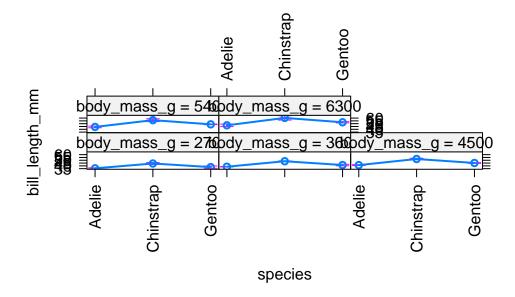
- Chinstrap penguins tend to have the largest bill lengths for a given value of body mass and the bill lengths increase more quickly as a function of body mass then for the Adelie and Gentoo penguins.
- Adelie penguins tend to have the smallest bill length for a fixed value of body mass and the bill length tends to increase more slowly as body mass increases compared to the other two types of penguins.

The effect plot of species for the separate lines model will be a plot of the estimated mean response for each level of species when varying body_mass_g over 5 discrete values.

By specifying lines = list(multiline = TRUE), the estimated mean responses for each level of species are connected for each discrete value of body_mass_g.

This plot allows us to determine the effect of species on bill_length_mm when we vary body_mass_g over 5 discrete values.

species predictor effect plot



Interpretation: When varying body_mass_g across the values 2700, 3600, 4500, 5300, and 6300 g, we see greater changes in the estimated mean of bill_lengh_mm for Chinstrap penguins in comparison to Adelie and Gentoo penguins.

For more details about how to construct effect plots, run the following code to access the "vignette".

```
vignette("predictor-effects-gallery", package = "effects")
```

Added-variable and leverage plots

Added-variable plots

As we saw before, an *effect plot* is a plot of the estimated mean relationship between the response and a focal predictor while holding the model's predictors at typical values,

An added-variable plot or partial regression plot displays the marginal effect of a regressor on the response after accounting for the other regressors in the model. An added-variable plot is a plot of two sets of residuals against one other.

We create an added-variable plot for regressor X_i in the following way:

- 1. Compute the residuals of the model regressing the response Y on all regressors except X_j . We denote these residuals $\hat{\epsilon}(Y \mid \mathbb{X}_{-j})$. These residuals represent the part of the response variable not explained by the regressors in \mathbb{X}_{-j} .
- 2. Compute the residuals of the model regressing the regressor X_j on all regressors except X_j . We denote these residuals $\hat{\epsilon}(X_j \mid \mathbb{X}_{-j})$. These residuals represent the part of the X_j not explained by the regressors in \mathbb{X}_{-j} . Alternatively, these residuals represent the amount of additional information X_j provides after accounting for the regressors in \mathbb{X}_{-j} .
- 3. The added-variable plot for X_j is a plot of $\hat{\epsilon}(Y \mid \mathbb{X}_{-j})$ on the y-axis and $\hat{\epsilon}(X_j \mid \mathbb{X}_{-j})$ on the x-axis.

Added-variable plots allow us to visualize the impact a regressor has when added to an existing regression model. We can use the added-variable plot for X_j to visually estimate the partial slope $\hat{\beta}_j$. The simple linear regression line that minimizes the RSS for the added-variable plot of X_j will have slope $\hat{\beta}_j$.

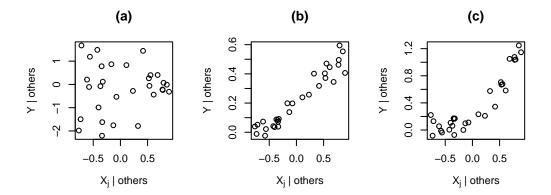
We can use an added-variable plot in several ways:

- 1. To assess the marginal relationship between X_j and Y after accounting for all of the other variables in the model.
- 2. To assess the strength of this marginal relationship.
- 3. To identify deficiencies in our fitted model.
- 4. To identify outliers and observations influential in determining the estimated partial slope.

In regards to point 1 and 2:

• If the added-variable plot for X_j is essentially a scatter of points with slope zero, then X_j can do little to explain Y after accounting for the other regressors.

- If the points in an added-variable plot for X_j have a linear relationship, then adding X_j to the model regressing Y on \mathbb{X}_{-j} is expected to improve our model's ability to predict the behavior of Y.
- If the points in an added-variable plot for X_j are curved, it indicates that that there is a deficiency in the fitted model (likely because we need to include one or more additional regressors to the model).



Question

• What do the three plots tell us about our model?

From the **car** package, the avPlot function will produce an added-variable plot for a single regressor while the avPlots function will produce added-variable plots for one or more regressors.

The main arguments to the avPlot function are:

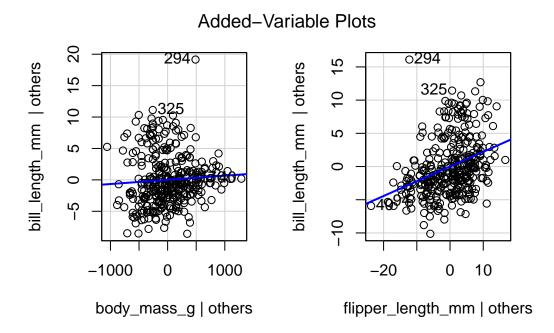
- model: the fitted lm (or glm) object.
- variable: the regressor for which to create an added-variable plot.
- id: a logical value indicating whether unusual observations should be identified. By default, the value is TRUE, which means the 2 points with the largest residuals and the 2 points with the largest partial leverage are identified, though this can be customized.

The avPlots function replaces the variable argument with the terms argument.

The terms argument should be a one-sided formula to indicate the regressors for which we want to construct added-variable plots (one plot for each term).

We now create and interpret added-variable plots for the model regressing bill_length_mm on body_mass_g and flipper_length_mm.

```
library(car)
# create added-variable plots for all regressors in mlmod
avPlots(mlmod)
```



The blue line is the simple linear regression model that minimizes the RSS of the points.

Question:

• Which variable seems to have more explanatory power?

To create the added-variable plots for all regressors in the parallel lines model from **penguins** data, we use the fitted model:

$$\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill_length_mm} \mid \texttt{body_mass_g}, \texttt{species}) \\ &= 24.92 + 0.004 \texttt{body_mass_g} + 9.92 D_C + 3.56 D_G, \end{split}$$

where D_C and D_G are indicator variables for the Chinstrap and Gentoo penguin species (Adelie penguins are the reference species).

avPlots(lmodp)

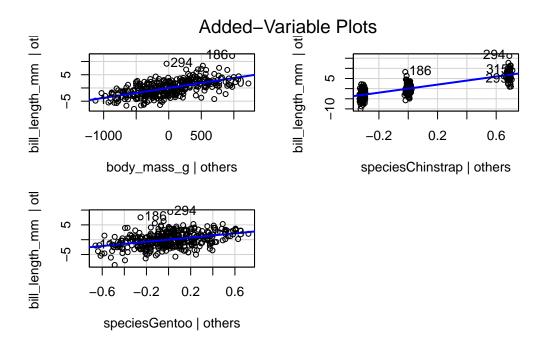


Figure 1: The added-variable plots for all regressors in the parallel lines model fit to the penguins data.

Question:

- How should we interpret the relative strength of the linear relationships?
- Is there any clustering apparent?

Leverage Plots

It sometimes doesn't make sense to talk about the effect of adding a single regressor when all of the other regressors are in the model.

• When we add a categorical predictor to our model, we simultaneously add K-1 indicator variables as regressors; we do not add the indicator variables one-at-a-time.

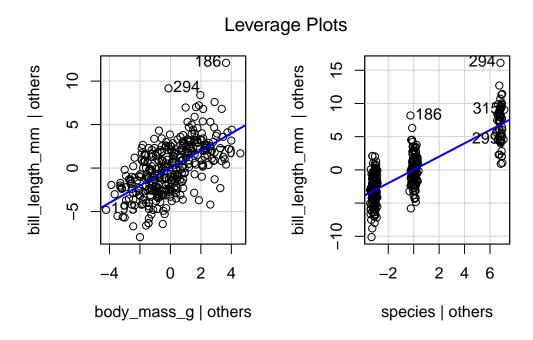
We refer to regressors with this behavior as "multiple degrees-of-freedom terms".

- A categorical variable with 3 or more levels is the most basic multiple degrees-of-freedom term.
- We could also consider regressors related to the interaction between two or more predictors, polynomial regressors, etc.

A leverage plot allows us to visualize the impact of multiple degrees-of-freedom terms. The interpretation of leverage plots is similar to the interpretation of added-variable plots, though we refer to "predictors" or "terms" instead regressors (which may be combined into one plot).

The leveragePlot and leveragePlots functions in the car package produce single or multiple leverage plots, respectively, with arguments similar to the avPlot and avPlots functions.

leveragePlots(lmodp)



Interpretation:

- The leverage plot for body_mass_g has a moderate linear relationship, so we expect body_mass_g to have moderate value in explaining the behavior of bill_length_mm after accounting for species
- The points in the leverage plot for species have a moderately strong linear relationship, so we expect species to have moderate value in explaining the behavior of bill_length_mm after accounting for body_mass_g.

We next examine the leverage plot for the separate lines model fit to the **penguins** data. The fitted separate lines model is:

```
\begin{split} \hat{E}(\texttt{bill\_length\_mm} \mid \texttt{body\_mass\_g}, \texttt{species}) \\ &= 26.99 + 0.003 \texttt{body\_mass\_g} + 5.18 D_C - 0.25 D_G \\ &+ 0.001 D_C \texttt{body\_mass\_g} + 0.0009 D_G \texttt{body\_mass\_g}, \end{split}
```

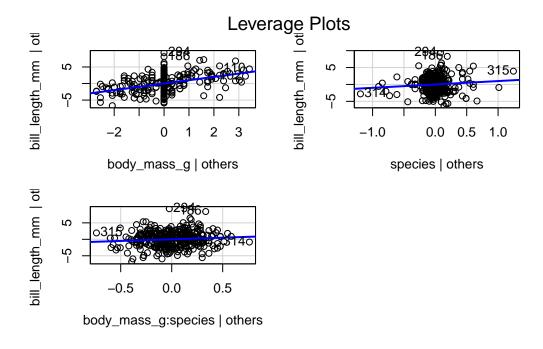
There are 6 estimated coefficients, but the fitted model has only 3 non-intercept terms. Recall the formula we fit for the separate lines model:

```
# function call for separate lines model
lm(formula = bill_length_mm ~ body_mass_g + species + body_mass_g:species,
    data = penguins)
```

Thus, we have terms for $body_mass_g$, species, and the interaction term $body_mass_g:species$.

We use the code below to create the leverage plots:

leveragePlots(lmods)



Interpretation:

- The leverage plot for body_mass_g has a moderate linear relationship, so we expect body_mass_g to have moderate additional value in explaining the behavior of bill_length_mm after accounting for species and the interaction term body_mass_g:species.
 - It is unlikely we would include the body_mass_g:species term in our model prior to including body_mass_g, so philosophically, this plot provides little useful information.
- Interpreting the leverage plot for species has limited utility because the leverage plot includes the influence of the interaction term body_mass_g:species.
 - We are unlikely to fit a model that includes the interaction term without also including the species term directly. Instead it makes more sense to judge the utility of adding species to the model regressing bill_length_mm on body_mass_g alone, which we already considered.
- Examining the leverage plot for the interaction term body_mass_g:species, we see the points have only a weak linear relationship. Thus, we expect limited utility in adding the interaction term body_mass_g:species to the parallel lines regression model that regresses bill_length_mm on body_mass_g and species.

Going deeper

Orthogonality

Let

$$\mathbf{X}_{[j]} = [x_{1,j}, \dots, x_{n,j}]$$

denote the $n \times 1$ column vector of observed values for regressor X_j . (We can't use the notation \mathbf{x}_j because that is the $p \times 1$ vector of regressor values for the jth observation). Regressors $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ and $\mathbf{X}_{[k]}$ are orthogonal if $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}^T\mathbf{X}_{[k]} = 0$.

Let $1_{n\times 1}$ denote an $n\times 1$ column vector of 1s. The definition of orthogonal vectors above implies that $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ is orthogonal to $1_{n\times 1}$ if

$$\mathbf{X}_{[j]}^T \mathbf{1}_{n \times 1} = \sum_{i=1}^n x_{i,j} = 0,$$

i.e., if the values in $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ sum to zero.

Let $\bar{x}_j = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n x_{i,j}$ denote the sample mean of $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ and $\bar{\mathbf{x}}_j = \bar{x}_j \mathbf{1}_{n \times 1}$ denote the column vector that repeats \bar{x}_j n times.

Centering $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ involves subtracting the sample mean of $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ from $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$, i.e., $\mathbf{X}_{[j]} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}_{j}$.

Regressors $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ and $\mathbf{X}_{[k]}$ are uncorrelated if they are orthogonal after being centered, i.e., if

$$(\mathbf{X}_{[j]} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}_j)^T (\mathbf{X}_{[k]} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}_k) = 0.$$

Note that the sample covariance between vectors $\mathbf{X}_{[j]}$ and $\mathbf{X}_{[k]}$ is

$$\begin{split} \widehat{\operatorname{cov}}(\mathbf{X}_{[j]}, \mathbf{X}_{[k]}) &= \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_{i,j} - \bar{x}_j) (x_{i,k} - \bar{x}_k) \\ &= \frac{1}{n-1} (\mathbf{X}_{[j]} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}_j)^T (\mathbf{X}_{[k]} - \bar{\mathbf{x}}_k). \end{split}$$

Thus, two centered regressors are orthogonal if their covariance is zero.

It is a desirable to have orthogonal regressors in our fitted model because they simplify estimating the relationship between the regressors and the response. Specifically:

If a regressor is orthogonal to all other regressors (and the column of 1s) in a model, adding or removing the orthogonal regressor from our model will not impact the estimated regression coefficients of the other regressors.

Since most linear regression models include an intercept, we should assess whether our regressors are orthogonal to other regressors and the column of 1s.

We consider a simple example with n = 5 observations to demonstrate how orthogonality of regressors impacts the estimated regression coefficients. In the code below:

- y is a vector of response values.
- ones is the column vector of 1s.
- X1 is a column vector of regressor values.
- X2 is a column vector of regressor values chosen to be orthogonal to x1 but not to ones.
- X3 is a column vector of regressor values orthogonal to both x1 and ones.
- X4 is a column vector of regressor values orthogonal to ones, x1, and x3, but not x2.
- X5 is a column vector of regressor values orthogonal to ones and x1, but not the other regressor vectors.

In the code below, we define vectors y, X1, and X2.

```
y \leftarrow c(1, 4, 6, 8, 9) # create an arbitrary response vector X1 <- c(7, 5, 5, 7, 7) # create regressor 1 X2 <- c(-1, 2, -3, 1, 5/7) # create regressor 2 to be orthogonal to x1
```

Note that the crossprod function computes the cross product of two vectors or matrices, so that crossprod(A, B) computes $\mathbf{A}^T B$, where the vectors or matrices must have the correct dimension for the multiplication to be performed.

The regressor vectors X1 and X2 are orthogonal since their cross product $\mathbf{X}_{[1]}^T \mathbf{X}_{[2]}$ (in R, crossprod(X1, X2)) equals zero, as shown in the code below.

```
# cross product is zero, so X1 and X2 are orthogonal
crossprod(X1, X2)

[,1]
[1,] 0
```

In the code below, we regress y on x1 without an intercept (lmod1). The estimated coefficient for X1 is $\hat{\beta}_1 = 0.893$. Next, we then regress y on X1 and X2 without an intercept (lmod2). The estimated coefficients for X1 and X2 are $\hat{\beta}_1 = 0.893$ and $\hat{\beta}_2 = 0.221$, respectively. Because X1 and X2 are orthogonal (and because there are no other regressors to consider in the model), the estimated coefficient for X1 stays the same in both models.

The previous models ($1 \mod 1 \mod 2$) neglect an important characteristic of a typical linear model: we usually include an intercept coefficient (a columns of 1s as a regressor) in our model. If the regressors are not orthogonal to the column of 1s in our X matrix, then the coefficients for the other regressors in the model will change when the regressors are added or removed from the model because they are not orthogonal to the column of 1s.

However, neither X1 nor X2 is orthogonal with the column of ones. We define the vector ones below, which is a column of 1s, and compute the cross product between ones and the two

regressors. Since the cross products are not zero, X1 and X2 are not orthogonal to the column of ones.

We create $1 \mod 3$ by adding adding a column of ones to $1 \mod 2$ (i.e., if we include the intercept in the model). The the coefficients for both X1 and X2 change when going from $1 \mod 2$ to $1 \mod 3$ because these regressors are not orthogonal to the column of 1s. Comparing the coefficients $1 \mod 2$ above and $1 \mod 3$, $\hat{\beta}_1$ changes from 0.893 to 0.397 and $\hat{\beta}_2$ changes from 0.221 to 0.279.

```
x1     x2
0.8934010 0.2210526

# y regressed on X1 and X2 with an intercept
lmod3 <- lm(y ~ x1 + x2)
coef(lmod3) # coefficients for lmod3

(Intercept)     x1     x2
3.1547101 0.3969746 0.2791657</pre>
```

For orthogonality of our regressors to be most impactful, the model's regressors should be orthogonal to each other and the column of 1s. In that context, adding or removing any of the regressors doesn't impact the estimated coefficients of the other regressors. In the code below, we define centered regressors x3 and x4 to be uncorrelated, i.e., x3 and x4 have sample mean zero and are orthogonal to each other.

```
X3 \leftarrow c(0, -1, 1, 0, 0) # sample mean is zero X4 \leftarrow c(0, 0, 0, 1, -1) # sample mean is zero cov(X3, X4) # 0, so X3 and X4 are uncorrelated and orthogonal
```

[1] 0

If we fit linear regression models with any combination of ones, X3, or X4 as regressors, the associated regression coefficients will not change. To demonstrate this, we consider all possible combinations of the three variables in the models below. We do not run the code to save space, but we summarize the results below.

```
coef(lm(y ~ 1))  # only column of 1s
coef(lm(y ~ x3 - 1))  # only x3
coef(lm(y ~ x4 - 1))  # only x4
coef(lm(y ~ x3))  # 1s and x3
coef(lm(y ~ x4))  # 1s and x4
coef(lm(y ~ x3 + x4 - 1)) # x3 and x4
coef(lm(y ~ x3 + x4))  # 1s, x3, and x4
```

We simply note that in each of the previous models, because all of the regressors (and the column of 1s) are orthogonal to each other, adding or removing any regressor doesn't impact the estimated coefficients for the other regressors in the model. Thus, the estimated coefficients were $\hat{\beta}_0 = 5.6$, $\hat{\beta}_3 = 1.0$, $\hat{\beta}_4 = -0.5$ when the relevant regressor was included in the model.

The easiest way to determine which vectors are orthogonal to each other and the intercept is to compute the cross product of the X matrix for the largest set of regressors we are considering. Consider the matrix of cross products for the columns of 1s, x1, x2, x3, and x4.

```
crossprod(model.matrix(~ X1 + X2 + X3 + X4))
```

```
(Intercept)
                                     X2 X3
                                                  X4
                          Х1
(Intercept)
              5.0000000
                          31 -0.2857143
                                         0 0.0000000
Х1
             31.0000000 197
                             0.0000000 0 0.0000000
Х2
             -0.2857143
                          0 15.5102041 -5 0.2857143
ХЗ
              0.0000000
                          0 -5.0000000 2 0.0000000
Х4
              0.0000000
                          0 0.2857143 0 2.0000000
```

Consider the sequence of models below.

```
coef(lm(y \sim 1))
```

```
(Intercept) 5.6
```

The model with only an intercept has an estimated coefficient of $\hat{\beta}_{int} = 5.6$. If we add the X1 to the model with an intercept, then both coefficients change because they are not orthogonal to each other.

If we add X2 to lmod4, we might think that only $\hat{\beta}_0$ will change because X1 and X2 are orthogonal to each other. However, because X2 is not orthogonal to all of the other regressors in the model (X1 and the column of 1s), both $\hat{\beta}_0$ and $\hat{\beta}_1$ will change. The easiest way to realize this is to look at lmod2 above with only x1 and x2. When we add the column of 1s to lmod2, both $\hat{\beta}_1$ and $\hat{\beta}_2$ will change because neither regressor is orthogonal to the column of 1s needed to include the intercept term.

```
coef(lm(y ~ x1 + x2))

(Intercept) x1 x2
3.1547101 0.3969746 0.2791657
```

However, note that X3 is orthogonal to the column of 1s and X1. Thus, if we add X3 to lmod4, which includes both a column of 1s and X1, X3 will not change the estimated coefficients for the intercept or X1.

```
coef(lm(y ~ x1 + x3))

(Intercept) x1 x3
2.5 0.5 1.0
```

Additionally, since X4 is orthogonal to the column of 1s, x1, and x3, adding X4 to the previous model will not change the estimated coefficients for any of the other variables already in the model.

```
coef(lm(y ~ x1 + x3 + x4))
```

```
(Intercept) x1 x3 x4
2.5 0.5 1.0 -0.5
```

Lastly, if we can partition our \mathbf{X} matrix such that $\mathbf{X}^T\mathbf{X}$ is a block diagonal matrix, then none of the blocks of variables will affect the estimated coefficients of the other variables.

Define a new regressor X5 below. X5 is orthogonal to the column of 1s and X1, but not X4.

```
X5 <- c(1, 0, 0, -1, 0) # orthogonal to ones, x1, not x4
# note block of 0s
crossprod(cbind(ones, X1, X4, X5))</pre>
```

```
ones X1 X4 X5
ones 5 31 0 0
X1 31 197 0 0
X4 0 0 2 -1
X5 0 0 -1 2
```

Note the block of zeros in the lower left and upper right corners of the cross product matrix above. The block containing ones and X1 is orthogonal to the block containing X4 and X5. This means that if we fit the model with only the column of 1s and X1, the model only with X4 and X5, and then fit the model with the column of 1s, x1, x4, and x5, then the coefficients $\hat{\beta}_0$ and $\hat{\beta}_1$ are not impacted when X4 and X5 are added to the model. Similarly, $\hat{\beta}_4$ and $\hat{\beta}_5$ are not impacted when the column of 1s and X1 are added to the model with X4 and X5. See the output below.

Call:

```
lm(formula = y \sim x1)
```

Coefficients:

```
(Intercept) x1
2.5 0.5
```

```
lm(y \sim x4 + x5 - 1) # model with x4 and x5 only
```

Call:

 $lm(formula = y \sim x4 + x5 - 1)$

Coefficients:

x4 x5

-3 -5

$$lm(y \sim x1 + x4 + x5)$$
 # model with 1s, x1, x4, x5

Call:

 $lm(formula = y \sim x1 + x4 + x5)$

Coefficients:

(Intercept) x1 x4 x5 2.5 0.5 -3.0 -5.0