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Linear Algebra (MT-1004)

Lecture # 36

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The Gram–Schmidt Process

We have seen that orthonormal bases exhibit a variety of useful properties. Our next theorem, which is the main result in this section, shows that every nonzero finite-dimensional vector space has an orthonormal basis. The proof of this result is extremely important since it provides an algorithm, or method, for converting an arbitrary basis into an orthonormal basis.

Theorem 6.3.5

Every nonzero finite-dimensional inner product space has an orthonormal basis.

The Gram–Schmidt Process

To convert a basis $\{\mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{u}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{u}_r\}$ into an orthogonal basis $\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{v}_r\}$, perform the following computations:

Step 1. $\mathbf{v}_1 = \mathbf{u}_1$

Step 2. $\mathbf{v}_2 = \mathbf{u}_2 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{v}_1 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|^2}\mathbf{v}_1$

Step 3. $\mathbf{v}_3 = \mathbf{u}_3 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{v}_1 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|^2}\mathbf{v}_1 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{v}_2 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|^2}\mathbf{v}_2$

Step 4. $\mathbf{v}_4 = \mathbf{u}_4 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_4, \mathbf{v}_1 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|^2}\mathbf{v}_1 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_4, \mathbf{v}_2 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|^2}\mathbf{v}_2 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_4, \mathbf{v}_3 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_3\|^2}\mathbf{v}_3$

$\vdots$

(continue for r steps)

Optional Step. To convert the orthogonal basis into an orthonormal basis $\{\mathbf{q}_1, \mathbf{q}_2, \ldots, \mathbf{q}_r\}$, normalize the orthogonal basis vectors.

EXAMPLE 8 | Using the Gram–Schmidt Process

Assume that the vector space R^3 has the Euclidean inner product. Apply the Gram–Schmidt process to transform the basis vectors

$$\mathbf{u}_1 = (1, 1, 1), \quad \mathbf{u}_2 = (0, 1, 1), \quad \mathbf{u}_3 = (0, 0, 1)$$

into an orthogonal basis $\{\mathbf{v}_1, \mathbf{v}_2, \mathbf{v}_3\}$, and then normalize the orthogonal basis vectors to obtain an orthonormal basis $\{\mathbf{q}_1, \mathbf{q}_2, \mathbf{q}_3\}$.

Solution

Step 1. $\mathbf{v}_1 = \mathbf{u}_1 = (1, 1, 1)$

Step 2. $\mathbf{v}_2 = \mathbf{u}_2 - \text{proj}_{W_1} \mathbf{u}_2 = \mathbf{u}_2 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{v}_1 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|^2}\mathbf{v}_1$

$$= (0, 1, 1) - \frac{2}{3}(1, 1, 1) = \left(-\frac{2}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}\right)$$

Step 3. $\mathbf{v}_3 = \mathbf{u}_3 - \text{proj}_{W_2} \mathbf{u}_3 = \mathbf{u}_3 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{v}_1 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|^2}\mathbf{v}_1 - \dfrac{\langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{v}_2 \rangle}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|^2}\mathbf{v}_2$

$$= (0, 0, 1) - \frac{1}{3}(1, 1, 1) - \frac{1/3}{2/3}\left(-\frac{2}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}\right)$$

$$= \left(0, -\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}\right)$$

Thus,

$$\mathbf{v}_1 = (1, 1, 1), \quad \mathbf{v}_2 = \left(-\frac{2}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}\right), \quad \mathbf{v}_3 = \left(0, -\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}\right)$$

form an orthogonal basis for R^3. The norms of these vectors are

$$\|\mathbf{v}_1\| = \sqrt{3}, \quad \|\mathbf{v}_2\| = \frac{\sqrt{6}}{3}, \quad \|\mathbf{v}_3\| = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$$

so an orthonormal basis for R^3 is

$$\mathbf{q}_1 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_1}{\|\mathbf{v}_1\|} = \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}\right), \quad \mathbf{q}_2 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_2}{\|\mathbf{v}_2\|} = \left(-\frac{2}{\sqrt{6}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}}\right),$$

$$\mathbf{q}_3 = \frac{\mathbf{v}_3}{\|\mathbf{v}_3\|} = \left(0, -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\right)$$

Theorem 6.3.7

QR-Decomposition

If A is an $m \times n$ matrix with linearly independent column vectors, then A can be factored as

$$A = QR$$

where Q is an $m \times n$ matrix with orthonormal column vectors, and R is an $n \times n$ invertible upper triangular matrix.

$$R = \begin{bmatrix} \langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle & \langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle & \cdots & \langle \mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle \\ 0 & \langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{q}_2 \rangle & \cdots & \langle \mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{q}_2 \rangle \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \langle \mathbf{u}_n, \mathbf{q}_n \rangle \end{bmatrix}$$

EXAMPLE 10 | *QR*-Decomposition of a 3 × 3 Matrix

Find a QR-decomposition of

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Solution The column vectors of A are

$$\mathbf{u}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{u}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{u}_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Applying the Gram–Schmidt process with normalization to these column vectors yields the orthonormal vectors (see Example 8)

$$\mathbf{q}_1 = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{q}_2 = \begin{bmatrix} -\frac{2}{\sqrt{6}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{q}_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix}$$

Thus, it follows from Formula (16) that R is

$$R = \begin{bmatrix} \langle \mathbf{u}_1, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle & \langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle & \langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{q}_1 \rangle \\ 0 & \langle \mathbf{u}_2, \mathbf{q}_2 \rangle & \langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{q}_2 \rangle \\ 0 & 0 & \langle \mathbf{u}_3, \mathbf{q}_3 \rangle \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{3}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{2}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \\ 0 & \frac{2}{\sqrt{6}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix}$$

from which it follows that a QR-decomposition of A is

$$\underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}}_{A} \underset{=}{=} \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} & -\frac{2}{\sqrt{6}} & 0 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix}}_{Q} \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} \frac{3}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{2}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \\ 0 & \frac{2}{\sqrt{6}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{bmatrix}}_{R}$$

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49. Find a QR-decomposition of the matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

In partitioned form, $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = [\mathbf{u}_1 \quad \mathbf{u}_2 \quad \mathbf{u}_3]$. By inspection, $\mathbf{u}_3 = \mathbf{u}_1 + 2\mathbf{u}_2$, so the column vectors of A are not linearly independent and A does not have a QR-decomposition.