

Notes – Linear Algebra

Zhijie Chen

January 17, 2025

Contents

<i>Vector Spaces</i>	3
<i>Linear Maps</i>	3
<i>Kernal and Image of Linear Maps</i>	3
<i>Products and Quotients of Vector Spaces</i>	3
<i>Duality</i>	4
<i>Polynomials</i>	6
<i>Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors</i>	7
<i>Invariant Subspaces</i>	7

Don't just read it; fight it!
Ask your own questions.
Look for your own examples.
Discover your own proofs.
Is the hypothesis necessary?
Is the converse true?
What happens in the classical special case?
What about the degenerate cases?
Where does the proof use the hypothesis?

—Paul Holmos

Vector Spaces

Definition 1. The complexification of V , denoted by $V_{\mathbb{C}}$, equals $V \times V$ with normal addition and real scalar multiplication for product space. But we write an element (u, v) of $V_{\mathbb{C}}$ as $u + iv$. Complex scalar multiplication is defined by

$$(a + bi)(u + iv) = (au - bv) + i(av + bu)$$

for all $a, b \in \mathbb{R}$ and all $u, v \in V$.¹

Lemma 2 (Linear dependence lemma). Suppose v_1, \dots, v_m is a linearly dependent set in V . Then there exists $k \in \{1, 2, \dots, m\}$ such that

$$v_k \in \text{span}(v_1, \dots, v_m).$$

Furthermore, removing the k^{th} term from the list does not change the span.²

Theorem 3. Any two bases of a finite-dimensional vector space have the same length.³

Proof. Suppose V is finite-dimensional. Let \mathcal{B}_1 and \mathcal{B}_2 be two bases of V . Considering \mathcal{B}_1 as an independent set and \mathcal{B}_2 as a spanning set leads to $\#\mathcal{B}_1 \leq \#\mathcal{B}_2$. Interchanging the roles of \mathcal{B}_1 and \mathcal{B}_2 and we have $\#\mathcal{B}_2 \leq \#\mathcal{B}_1$. Thus $\#\mathcal{B}_1 = \#\mathcal{B}_2$. \square

Linear Maps

Kernal and Image of Linear Maps

Exercise 4. Suppose U and V are finite-dimensional and $S \in \mathcal{L}(V, W)$ and $T \in \mathcal{L}(U, V)$. Prove that

$$\dim \ker ST \leq \dim \ker S + \dim \ker T.$$

Proof. Restrict to $Z = \ker ST$. By the fundamental theorem of linear maps,

$$\begin{aligned} \dim Z &= \dim T(Z) + \dim \ker T|_Z \\ &\leq \dim T(Z) + \dim \ker T \\ &= \dim ST(Z) + \dim \ker S|_{T(Z)} + \dim \ker T \\ &\leq \dim \ker S + \dim \ker T. \end{aligned} \quad \square$$

Corollary 5 (Sylvester's rank inequality). Suppose $A \in \mathbb{F}^{m,n}$ and $B \in \mathbb{F}^{n,p}$ are two matrices. Then⁴

$$\text{rank } A + \text{rank } B - n \leq \text{rank}(AB).$$

Products and Quotients of Vector Spaces

Notation 6. Suppose $T \in \mathcal{L}(V, W)$. Define $\tilde{T} : V + \ker V \rightarrow V$ by

$$\tilde{T}(v + \ker T) = Tv.$$

¹ Think of V as a subset of $V_{\mathbb{C}}$ by identifying $u \in V$ with $u + i0$. The construction of $V_{\mathbb{C}}$ from V can then be thought of as generalizing the construction of \mathbb{C}^n from \mathbb{R}^n .

² This lemma lays the foundation for a series of basic results for vector spaces.

³ This proposition ensures that the dimension of a vector space is well-defined.

⁴ There is a slicker proof for this inequality using block matrices. But the proof here using linear maps is more informative.

Exercise 7. Suppose V_1, \dots, V_m are vector spaces. Prove that $\mathcal{L}(V_1 \times \dots \times V_m, W)$ and $\mathcal{L}(V_1, W) \times \dots \times \mathcal{L}(V_m, W)$ are isomorphic vector spaces.

Proof. We construct an isomorphism T between the two vector spaces.

For every $\Gamma \in \mathcal{L}(V_1 \times \dots \times V_m, W)$, define $\varphi_k : V_k \rightarrow W$ for each k by

$$\varphi_k(v_k) = \Gamma(0, \dots, v_k, \dots, 0)$$

with v_k in the k^{th} slot and 0 in all other slots. It can be verified that $\varphi_k \in \mathcal{L}(V_k, W)$.

Define T by $T(\Gamma) = (\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m)$. It can be verified that T is a linear map. We prove T is an isomorphism by constructing its inverse linear map S .

For every $(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m) \in \mathcal{L}(V_1, W) \times \dots \times \mathcal{L}(V_m, W)$, let

$$S(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m)(v_1, \dots, v_m) = \varphi_1(v_1) + \dots + \varphi_m(v_m).$$

It can be shown that S is a linear map, and that $S \circ T = I$ and $T \circ S = I$. That proves T is indeed an isomorphism between the two vector spaces. \square

Proposition 8. A nonempty subset A of V is a translate of some subspace of V if and only if $\lambda v + (1 - \lambda)w \in A$ for all $v, w \in A$ and all $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}$.

Exercise 9. Suppose $A_1 = v + U_1$ and $A_2 = w + U_2$ for some $v, w \in V$ and some subspaces U_1, U_2 of V . Prove that $A_1 \cap A_2$ is either the empty set or a translate of some subspace of V .⁵

⁵ Recall Proposition 8.

Proposition 10. Suppose U is a subspace of V and $v_1 + U, \dots, v_m + U$ is a basis of V/U and u_1, \dots, u_n is a basis of U . Then $v_1, \dots, v_m, u_1, \dots, u_n$ is a basis of V . In other words, $V = \text{span}(v_1, \dots, v_m) \oplus U$.⁶

⁶ $V = \text{span}(v_1, \dots, v_m) \oplus U$ still holds without the hypothesis that U is finite-dimensional.

Exercise 11. Suppose U is a subspace of V such that V/U is finite-dimensional.

- Prove that if W is a finite-dimensional subspace of V and $V = U + W$, then $\dim W \geq \dim V/U$.
- Prove that there exists a finite-dimensional subspace W of V such that $V = U \oplus W$ and $\dim W = \dim V/U$.

Proof. Let $\bar{w}_1 + U, \dots, \bar{w}_m + U$ be a basis of V/U . Then by Proposition 10, we have $V = \text{span}(\bar{w}_1, \dots, \bar{w}_m) \oplus U$. Let $W_0 = \text{span}(\bar{w}_1, \dots, \bar{w}_m)$, then $V = U \oplus W_0$, as desired.

Now we prove that for each subspace W of V such that $V = U + W$, we have $\dim W \geq m = \dim V/U$.

For each $\bar{w}_i \in V$ above, by definition we have $\bar{w}_i = u_i + w_i$ for some $u_i \in U$ and $w_i \in W$. It can be shown from the linear independence of $\bar{w}_1 + U, \dots, \bar{w}_m + U$ that $\bar{w}_1 - u_1, \dots, \bar{w}_m - u_m$ are independent vectors in W . Hence $\dim W \geq m$. \square

Duality

Theorem 12. Suppose V and W are finite-dimensional and $T \in \mathcal{L}(V, W)$. Then

$$T \text{ is surjective} \iff T' \text{ is injective} \quad \text{and} \quad T \text{ is injective} \iff T' \text{ is surjective.}^7$$

⁷ This result can be useful because sometimes it is easier to verify that T' is injective (surjective) than to show directly that T is surjective (injective).

Proposition 13. Suppose V is finite-dimensional and U is a subspace of V . Then

$$U = \left\{ v \in V : \varphi(v) = 0 \text{ for every } \varphi \in U^0 \right\}.$$

Exercise 14. Suppose V is finite-dimensional and U and W are subspaces of V .

- (a) Prove that $W^0 \subseteq U^0$ if and only if $U \subseteq W$.
- (b) Prove that $W^0 = U^0$ if and only if $U = W$.⁸

⁸ Recall Proposition 13.

Exercise 15. Suppose V is finite-dimensional and U and W are subspaces of V .

- (a) Prove that $(U + W)^0 = U^0 \cap W^0$.
- (b) Prove that $(U \cap W)^0 = U^0 + W^0$.

Proposition 16. Suppose V is finite-dimensional and v_1, \dots, v_n is a basis of V . Then $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n \in V'$ is the dual basis of v_1, \dots, v_n if and only if

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathcal{M}(\varphi_1, (v_1, \dots, v_n)) \\ \vdots \\ \mathcal{M}(\varphi_n, (v_1, \dots, v_n)) \end{bmatrix} = I.$$

Exercise 17. Suppose V is finite-dimensional and $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$ is a basis of V' . Prove that there exists a basis of V whose dual basis is $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$.

Proof. We start from an arbitrary basis u_1, \dots, u_n of V . Let ψ_1, \dots, ψ_n be its dual basis. In this proof, we take standard basis e_1, \dots, e_n as the basis of \mathbb{F}^n .

Define $S, T \in \mathcal{L}(V, \mathbb{F}^n)$ by

$$T(v) = (\varphi_1(v), \dots, \varphi_n(v)), \quad S(v) = (\psi_1(v), \dots, \psi_n(v)).$$

Then by Proposition 16, $\mathcal{M}(S, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) = I$.

Let A be the change of basis matrix from ψ 's to φ 's, i.e.,

$$\begin{bmatrix} \varphi_1 & \cdots & \varphi_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \psi_1 & \cdots & \psi_n \end{bmatrix} A.$$

Then by the definition of change of basis matrix, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{M}(T, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) &= \begin{bmatrix} \mathcal{M}(\varphi_1, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) \\ \vdots \\ \mathcal{M}(\varphi_n, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) \end{bmatrix} = A^t \begin{bmatrix} \mathcal{M}(\psi_1, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) \\ \vdots \\ \mathcal{M}(\psi_n, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) \end{bmatrix} \\ &= A^t \cdot \mathcal{M}(S, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) = A^t. \end{aligned}$$

Consider basis v_1, \dots, v_n of V such that the change of basis matrix from u 's to v 's is $(A^t)^{-1}$.⁹ Thus

$$\mathcal{M}(T, (v_1, \dots, v_n)) = \mathcal{M}(T, (u_1, \dots, u_n)) \cdot \mathcal{M}(I, (v_1, \dots, v_n), (u_1, \dots, u_n)) = I.$$

Then by Proposition 16, the dual basis of v_1, \dots, v_n is precisely $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$, as desired. \square

⁹ The change of basis for $V' \rightarrow V'$ corresponds to the transpose of $V \leftarrow V$, where transpose and inverse both come from duality. That gives the idea of considering $(A^t)^{-1}$.

Exercise 18 (A natural isomorphism from primal space onto double dual space). Define $\Lambda : V \rightarrow V''$ by

$$(\Lambda v)(\varphi) = \varphi(v)$$

for each $v \in V$ and $\varphi \in V'$.

- (a) Prove that if $T \in \mathcal{L}(V)$, then $T'' \circ \Lambda = \Lambda \circ T$.
- (b) Prove that if V is finite-dimensional, then Λ is an isomorphism from V onto V'' .^{10,11}

Polynomials

Theorem 19. Suppose $p \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{F})$ is a nonconstant polynomial of degree m . Then $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}$ is a zero of p if and only if there exists a polynomial $q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{F})$ of degree $m - 1$ such that $p(z) = (z - \lambda)q(z)$ for every $z \in \mathbb{F}$.

Theorem 20. Suppose $p \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{F})$ is a nonconstant polynomial of degree m . Then p has at most m zeros in \mathbb{F} .^{12,13}

Theorem 21 (Division algorithm for polynomials). Suppose that $p, s \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{F})$, with $s \neq 0$. Then there exist unique polynomials $q, r \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{F})$ such that $p = sq + r$.

Proof. Let $n = \deg p$ and $m = \deg s$. The case where $n < m$ is trivial. Thus we now assume that $n \geq m$.

The list

$$1, z, \dots, z^{m-1}, s, zs, \dots, z^{n-m}s$$

is linearly independent in $\mathcal{P}_n(\mathbb{F})$. And it also has length $n + 1$. Hence the list is a basis of $\mathcal{P}_n(\mathbb{F})$.

Because $p \in \mathcal{P}_n(\mathbb{F})$, there exist unique constants $a_0, \dots, a_{m-1}, b_0, \dots, b_{n-m} \in \mathbb{F}$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} p &= a_0 + a_1z + \dots + a_{m-1}z^{m-1} + b_0s + b_1zs + \dots + b_{n-m}z^{n-m}s \\ &= (a_0 + a_1z + \dots + a_{m-1}z^{m-1}) + s(b_0 + b_1z + \dots + b_{n-m}z^{n-m}). \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

Theorem 22 (Fundamental theorem of algebra, first version). Every nonconstant polynomial with complex coefficients has a zero in \mathbb{C} .

Proof. Suppose $p \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{C})$ is a nonconstant polynomial with highest-order nonzero term $c_m z^m$. Then $|p(z)| \rightarrow \infty$ as $|z| \rightarrow \infty$. Thus the continuous function $z \mapsto |p(z)|$ has a global minimum at some $\zeta \in \mathbb{C}$. Assume that $p(\zeta) \neq 0$.

Consider polynomial $q(z) = p(z + \zeta)/p(\zeta)$. The function $z \mapsto |q(z)|$ has a global minimum at $z = 0$. Write

$$q(z) = 1 + a_k z^k + \dots + a_m z^m$$

where k is the smallest positive integer such that the coefficient of z_k is nonzero.

¹⁰ Suppose V is finite-dimensional. Then V and V' are isomorphic, but finding an isomorphism from V onto V' generally requires choosing a basis of V . In contrast, the isomorphism Λ from V onto V'' does not require a choice of basis and thus is more natural.

¹¹ Another natural isomorphism is $\pi' \in \mathcal{L}((V/U)', V')$ where π is the normal quotient map.

¹² This theorem implies that when a polynomial p has too many zeros, $p = 0$.

¹³ This theorem implies that the coefficients of a polynomial are uniquely determined. In particular, the *degree* of a polynomial is well-defined.

Let β be a k^{th} root of $-1/a_k$. There is a constant $c > 1$ such that if $t \in (0, 1)$, then

$$|q(t\beta)| \leq \left| 1 + a_k t^k \beta^k \right| + c t^{k+1} = 1 - t^k(1 - tc).$$

Thus taking t to be $1/(2c)$ leads to $|q(t\beta)| < 1$. The contradiction implies that $p(\zeta) = 0$, as desired. \square

Theorem 23 (Fundamental theorem of algebra, second version). *If $p \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{C})$ is a nonconstant polynomial, then p has a unique factorization of the form*

$$p(z) = c(z - \lambda_1) \cdots (z - \lambda_m),$$

where $c, \lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_m \in \mathbb{C}$.

Theorem 24 (Factorization of a polynomial over \mathbb{R}). *If $p \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{R})$ is a nonconstant polynomial, then p has a unique factorization of the form*

$$p(x) = c(x - \lambda_1) \cdots (x - \lambda_m)(x^2 + b_1x + c_1) \cdots (x^2 + b_Mx + c_M),$$

where $m, M \in \mathbb{N}$ and $c, \lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_m, b_1, \dots, b_M, c_1, \dots, c_M \in \mathbb{R}$, with $b_k^2 < 4c_k$ for each k .

Exercise 25. Suppose $p, q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{C})$ are nonconstant polynomials with no zeros in common. Let $m = \deg p$ and $n = \deg q$. Prove that there exist $r \in \mathcal{P}_{n-1}(\mathbb{C})$ and $s \in \mathcal{P}_{m-1}(\mathbb{C})$ such that $rp + sq = 1$.

Proof. Define $T : \mathcal{P}_{n-1}(\mathbb{C}) \times \mathcal{P}_{m-1}(\mathbb{C}) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_{m+n-1}(\mathbb{C})$ by $T(r, s) = rp + sq$. It can be shown that T is an injective linear map. Because the domain space and target space have the same dimension, T is surjective, completing the proof. \square

Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors

Invariant Subspaces

Theorem 26. *Suppose V is finite-dimensional, $T \in \mathcal{L}(V)$, and $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}$. Then the following are equivalent.¹⁴*

- (a) λ is an eigenvalue of T .
- (b) $T - \lambda I$ is not injective.
- (c) $T - \lambda I$ is not surjective.
- (d) $T - \lambda I$ is not invertible.

¹⁴ The equivalences are useful in that they allow identifying an eigenvalue without explicitly constructing an eigenvector.

Exercise 27. Suppose $T \in \mathcal{L}(V)$ has no eigenvalues and $T^4 = I$. Prove that $T^2 = -I$.

Proof. $(T^2 + I)(T + I)(T - I) = 0$. Because T has no eigenvalues, $T + I$ and $T - I$ are both invertible. Hence $T^2 + I = 0$. \square

Exercise 28. Suppose that $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n \in \mathbb{R}$ are pairwise distinct. Prove that the list $e^{\lambda_1 x}, \dots, e^{\lambda_n x}$ is linearly independent in $\mathbb{R}^{\mathbb{R}}$.

Proof. Let $V = \text{span}(e^{\lambda_1 x}, \dots, e^{\lambda_n x})$.¹⁵ Define $D \in \mathcal{L}(V)$ by $Df = f'$. Then $e^{\lambda x}$ is an eigenvector of D corresponding to λ . A list of eigenvectors corresponding to distinct eigenvalues is linearly independent. \square

¹⁵ Alternatively we can let V be the vector space of differentiable functions on \mathbb{R} .

Exercise 29. Suppose V is finite-dimensional, $T \in \mathcal{L}(V)$, and U is a subspace of V invariant under T . The *quotient operator* $T/U \in \mathcal{L}(V/U)$ is defined by

$$(T/U)(v + U) = Tv + U$$

for each $v \in V$. Prove that each eigenvalue of T/U is an eigenvalue of T .

Proof. It suffices to show that $T/U - \lambda I = (T - \lambda I)/U$ is not injective $\implies T - \lambda I$ is not injective. We prove that $T - \lambda I$ is invertible $\implies (T - \lambda I)/U$ is injective.

Suppose $T - \lambda I$ is invertible. U being invariant under T implies that U is invariant under $T - \lambda I$. Thus $(T - \lambda I)v \in U \iff v \in U$. Suppose $((T - \lambda I)/U)(v + U) = 0$. Then $(T - \lambda I)v \in U$, which implies that $v \in U$, i.e., $v + U = 0$. That proves the injectivity of $(T - \lambda I)/U$. \square