

Mahalanobis Distance Example:

Suppose you have data for five people, and each person vector has a height, score on some test and an age:

X	Y	Z	$x - \bar{x}$	$y - \bar{y}$	$z - \bar{z}$
height	score	Age			
64	580	29	-4	-20	-11
66	570	33	-2	-30	-7
68	590	37	0	-10	-3
69	660	46	1	60	6
73	600	55	5	0	15
\bar{x}	\bar{y}	\bar{z}			

$n=5$

Question:

Suppose you want to know how far

another person $v = (66, 640, 44)$ is from this data. It

turns out the Mahalanobis distance is 5.33 (no units)

$$Z = \begin{bmatrix} -4 & -20 & -11 \\ -2 & -30 & -7 \\ 0 & -10 & -3 \\ 1 & 60 & 6 \\ 5 & 0 & 15 \end{bmatrix}$$

Find covariance matrix:

$$C = \frac{1}{N-1} Z^t Z$$

$$= \frac{1}{4} \begin{bmatrix} -4 & -20 & 0 & 1 & 5 \\ -20 & -80 & -10 & 60 & 0 \\ -11 & -7 & -3 & 6 & 15 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -4 & -20 & -11 \\ -2 & -30 & -7 \\ 0 & -10 & -3 \\ 1 & 60 & 6 \\ 5 & 0 & 15 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{bmatrix} 16+4+0+1+25 & 80+60+0+60+0 & 44+14+0+6+75 \\ 80+60+0+60+0 & 400+900+100+3600+0 & 220+210+30+360+0 \\ 44+14+0+6+75 & 220+210+30+360+0 & 121+49+9+36+225 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$= \frac{1}{4} \begin{bmatrix} 46 & 200 & 139 \\ 200 & 5000 & 820 \\ 139 & 820 & 440 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\Sigma = \begin{bmatrix} 11.50 & 50 & 34.75 \\ 50 & 1250 & 205 \\ 34.75 & 205 & 110 \end{bmatrix}$$

To find Σ^{-1}

$$\Sigma^{-1} = \begin{bmatrix} 3.6885 & 0.0627 & -1.2821 \\ 0.0627 & 0.0022 & -0.0240 \\ -1.2821 & -0.0240 & 0.4588 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\boxed{A^{-1} = \frac{\text{adj}(A)}{|A|}}$$

$$= (h_q - h_t)^T A - (h_q - h_t)$$

$$= (h_q - h_t)^T \Sigma^{-1} (h_q - h_t)$$

$$= (68-66 \quad 600-640 \quad 40-44)$$

$$= \begin{pmatrix} -2 & 40 & 4 \end{pmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 3.6885 & 0.0627 & -1.2821 \\ 0.0627 & 0.0022 & -0.0240 \\ -1.2821 & -0.0240 & 0.4588 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -2 \\ 40 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$= \begin{bmatrix} -9.9964 & -0.1825 & 3.4413 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} -2 \\ 40 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$= \sqrt{28.4573}$$

$$= 5.33$$