Linear algebra in less than 30 minutes

Min-Yen Kan / National University of Singapore

Eigenvalues & Eigenvectors

- **Eigenvectors** (for a square $m \times m$ matrix $\mathbf{S}$)

$$\mathbf{S}\mathbf{v} = \lambda \mathbf{v}$$

(right) eigenvector — eigenvalue

$$\mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{R}^m \neq \mathbf{0} \qquad \lambda \in \mathbb{R}$$

Example

$$\begin{pmatrix} 6 & -2 \\ 4 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 4 \end{pmatrix} = 2 \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix}$$

- **How many eigenvalues** are there at most?

$$\mathbf{S}\mathbf{v} = \lambda \mathbf{v} \iff (\mathbf{S} - \lambda \mathbf{I})\,\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{0}$$

only has a non-zero solution if $|\mathbf{S} - \lambda \mathbf{I}| = 0$

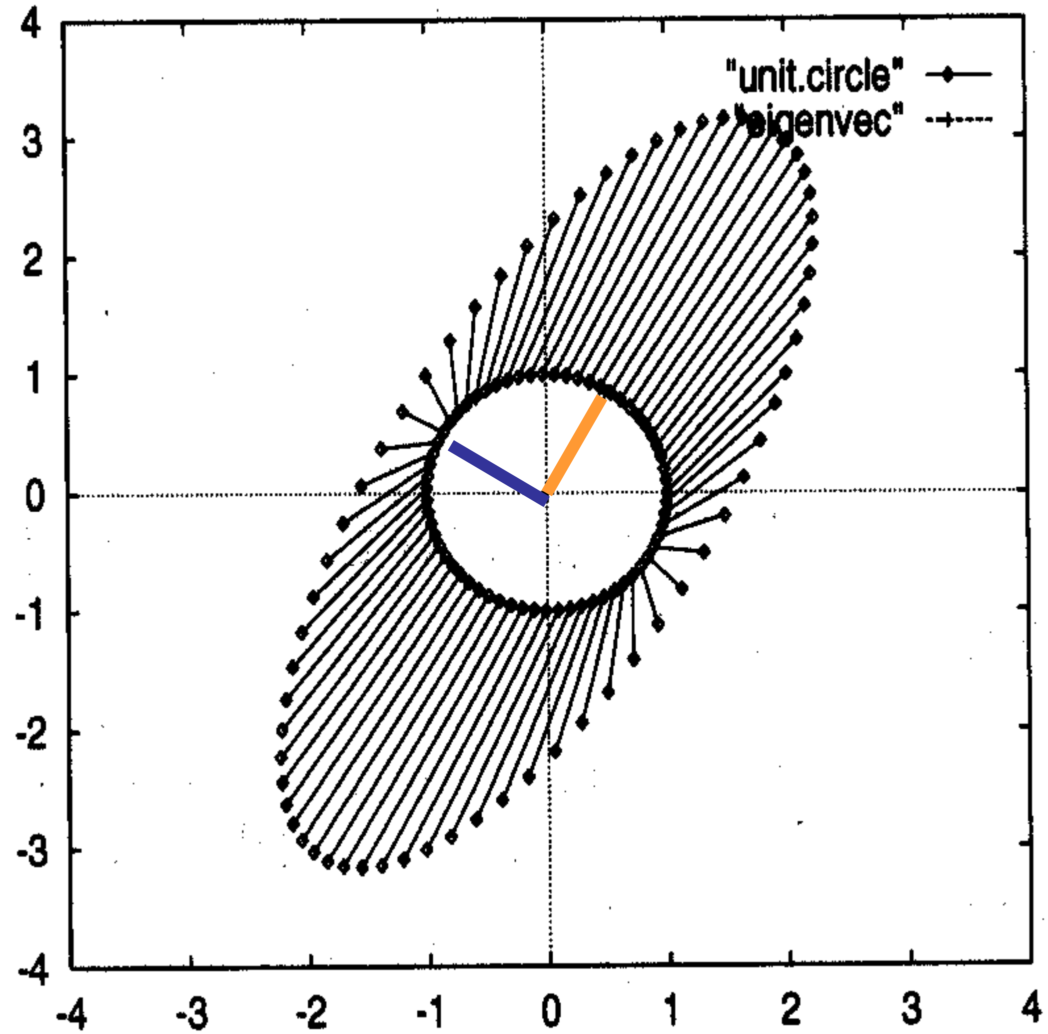
this is a m-th order equation in λ which can have **at most m distinct solutions** (roots of the characteristic polynomial) – <u>can be complex even though **S** is real.</u>

Illustration of Eigenvectors

Matrix $A = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$

describes an affine transformation

$x \mapsto Ax$



Eigenvector
x1 = $(0.52\ \ 0.85)^T$
for Eigenvalue $\lambda 1=3.62$

Eigenvector
x2 = $(0.85\ \ -0.52)^T$
for Eigenvalue $\lambda 2=1.38$

Matrix-vector multiplication

$$S = \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

has eigenvalues 3, 2, 0 with corresponding eigenvectors

$$v_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \qquad v_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \qquad v_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

On each eigenvector, S acts as a multiple of the identity matrix: but as a different multiple on each.

Any vector (say $x = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 4 \\ 6 \end{pmatrix}$) can be viewed as a combination of the eigenvectors: $x = 2v_1 + 4v_2 + 6v_3$

Matrix vector multiplication

- Thus a matrix-vector multiplication such as *Sx* (*S*, *x* as in the previous slide) can be rewritten in terms of the eigenvalues/vectors:

$$Sx = S(2v_1 + 4v_2 + 6v_3)$$

$$Sx = 2Sv_1 + 4Sv_2 + 6Sv_3 = 2\lambda_1 v_1 + 4\lambda_2 v_2 + 6\lambda_3 v_3$$

- Even though *x* is an arbitrary vector, the action of *S* on *x* is determined by the eigenvalues/vectors.
- Suggestion: the effect of “small” eigenvalues is small.

Eigenvalues & Eigenvectors

For symmetric matrices, eigenvectors for distinct eigenvalues are **orthogonal**

$$Sv_{\{1,2\}} = \lambda_{\{1,2\}} v_{\{1,2\}}, \text{ and } \lambda_1 \neq \lambda_2 \Rightarrow v_1 \bullet v_2 = 0$$

All eigenvalues of a real symmetric matrix are **real**.

$$\text{for complex } \lambda, \text{ if } |S - \lambda I| = 0 \text{ and } \mathrm{S} = \mathrm{S}^{\mathrm{T}} \Rightarrow \lambda \in \Re$$

All eigenvalues of a positive semidefinite matrix are **non-negative**

$$\overbrace{\forall w \in \Re^n, w^T S w \geq 0}, \text{ then if } \mathrm{Sv} = \lambda \mathrm{v} \Rightarrow \lambda \geq 0$$

Example

- Let $S = \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$

Real, symmetric.

- Then $S - \lambda I = \begin{bmatrix} 2-\lambda & 1 \\ 1 & 2-\lambda \end{bmatrix} \Rightarrow (2-\lambda)^2 - 1 = 0.$

- The eigenvalues are 1 and 3 (nonnegative, real).
- The eigenvectors are orthogonal (and real):

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Plug in these values and solve for eigenvectors.