

4.3 — MATRIX OF A LINEAR TRANSFORMATION

Definition 1. Let T be a linear transformation from a finite dimensional vector space V to itself. Let \mathfrak{B} be a basis of V . The \mathfrak{B} -matrix of the transformation T is the matrix B , which satisfies

$$B[f]_{\mathfrak{B}} = [T(f)]_{\mathfrak{B}}, \quad \text{for every } f \text{ in } V.$$

Theorem 2. Let T be a linear transformation from a finite dimensional vector space V to itself, let $\mathfrak{B} = \{f_1, \dots, f_n\}$ be a basis for V , and let B be the \mathfrak{B} -matrix for T . Then

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} [T(f_1)]_{\mathfrak{B}} & \cdots & [T(f_n)]_{\mathfrak{B}} \end{bmatrix}.$$

Example 3. Let T be the linear transformation from P_2 (the set of polynomials of degree at most 2) to P_2 defined by: $T(f) = f' + f''$. Determine the \mathfrak{B} -matrix of T with respect to the basis $\mathfrak{B} = \{1, x, x^2\}$.

Example 4. Let $V = \text{span}\{\cos(x), \sin(x)\}$, and let $T(f) = 3f + 2f' - f''$ be a linear transformation from V to V . Find the \mathfrak{B} -matrix of T with respect to the basis $\mathfrak{B} = \{\cos(x), \sin(x)\}$.

Definition 5. Let V be an n -dimensional vector space and let \mathfrak{A} and \mathfrak{B} be two bases for V . The *change of basis matrix* from the basis \mathfrak{B} to the basis \mathfrak{A} is the matrix S (sometimes denoted $S_{\mathfrak{B} \rightarrow \mathfrak{A}}$), which satisfies:

$$S[f]_{\mathfrak{B}} = [f]_{\mathfrak{A}}, \quad \text{for every } f \text{ in } V.$$

Moreover, if $\mathfrak{B} = \{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$, then

$$S = \begin{bmatrix} [b_1]_{\mathfrak{A}} & \cdots & [b_n]_{\mathfrak{A}} \end{bmatrix}.$$

Example 6. Let $V = \text{span}\{e^x, e^{-x}\}$, $\mathfrak{A} = \{e^x, e^{-x}\}$, and $\mathfrak{B} = \{e^x + e^{-x}, e^x - e^{-x}\}$. Compute the change of basis matrix $S_{\mathfrak{B} \rightarrow \mathfrak{A}}$.

Theorem 7. Let V be a finite dimensional vector space with bases \mathfrak{A} and \mathfrak{B} . Let S be the change of basis matrix from \mathfrak{B} to \mathfrak{A} . Let T be a linear transformation from V to V , and let A and B be the \mathfrak{A} - and \mathfrak{B} -matrix of T , respectively. Then A is similar to B , and $A = SBS^{-1}$.