

Physics Forum Problem in Linear Independence

Given

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{u} & \mathbf{v} & \mathbf{w} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

in \mathbb{R}^n is linearly independent, prove that

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v} & \mathbf{u} + \mathbf{w} & \mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w} \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

is also linearly independent. I gather it is. Suppose there exist scalars b_1, b_2, b_3 such that

$$b_1 [\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v}] + b_2 [\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{w}] + b_3 [\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w}] = \mathbf{0} \quad (3)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{u} & \mathbf{v} & \mathbf{w} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} b_1 + b_2 \\ -b_1 + b_3 \\ b_2 + b_3 \end{bmatrix} = \mathbf{0} \quad (4)$$

Since A is linearly independent, this equation is true if and only if

$$b_1 + b_2 = 0 \quad (5)$$

$$-b_1 + b_3 = 0 \quad (6)$$

$$b_2 + b_3 = 0 \quad (7)$$

As a matrix, this is

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ b_2 \\ b_3 \end{bmatrix} = \mathbf{0} \quad (8)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \sim \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad (9)$$

$$[\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{v}] - [\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{w}] + [\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{w}] = \mathbf{0} \quad (10)$$

That looks like a linear dependence relationship to me,

$$\begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ b_2 \\ b_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad (11)$$