Section 10.9: Convergence of Taylor Series

Taylors Theorem: In the last section, we asked when a Taylor Series for a function can be expected to that (generating) function. That question is answered by the following theorem:

If $f(x)$ and its first n derivatives $f'(x)$, $f''(x)$, $\ldots$, $f^{(n)}(x)$ are continuous on the closed interval between a and b, and $f^{(n)}(x)$ is differentiable on the open interval between a and b, then there exists a number c between a and b such that

$$f(b) = f(a) + f'(a)(b-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(b-a)^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(b-a)^n + \frac{f^{(n+1)}(c)}{(n+1)!}(b-a)^{n+1}.$$

Interesting Fact: Taylor's Theorem is a generalisation of the Mean Value Theorem!

Taylor's Formula: If $f(x)$ has derivatives of all orders in a n open interval I containing a, then for each positive integer n and for each $x \in I$,

$$f(x) = f(a) + f'(a)(x-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(x-a)^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(x-a)^n + R_n(x),$$

where

$$R_n(x) = \frac{f^{(n+1)}(c)}{(n+1)!}(x-a)^{n+1}$$

for some c between a and x.

Stating Taylor's Theorem in this way says that for each $x \in I$,

$$f(x) = P_n(x) + R_n(x),$$

where the function $R_n(x)$ is determined by the value of the $(n+1)^{\text{st}}$ derivative $f^{(n+1)}(x)$ at a point c that depends on both a and x, and that it lies somewhere between them.

Definitions: The second equation is called **Taylor's formula**. The function $R_n(x)$ is called the ______________________

______________________or the ______________________ for the approximation of $f(x)$ by $P_n(x)$ over I.

If $R_n(x) \longrightarrow 0$ as $n \longrightarrow \infty$ for all $x \in I$, we say that the Taylor Series generated by $f(x)$ at $x = a$ **converges** to $f(x)$ on I, and we write

$$f(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(x-a)^n.$$

Often we can estimate $R_n(x)$ without knowing the value of c.

Example 1: Show that the Taylor Series generated by $f(x) = e^x$ at $x = 0$ converges to $f(x)$ for every value of x.

The Remainder Estimation Theorem: If there is a positive constant M such that $\left|f^{(n+1)}(t)\right| \leq M$ for all t between x and a, inclusive, then the remainder term $R_n(x)$ in Taylor's Theorem satisfies the inequality

$$|R_n(x)| \leq M \frac{|x-a|^{n+1}}{(n+1)!}.$$

If this inequality holds for every n and the other conditions of Taylor's Theorem are satisfied by $f(x)$, then the series converges to $f(x)$.

Example 2: Show that the Taylor Series generated by $f(x) = \sin(x)$ at $a = 0$ converges to $\sin(x)$ for all x.

Using Taylor Series: Since every Taylor series is a power series, the operations of adding, subtracting and multiplying Taylor series are all valid on the intersection of their intervals of convergence.

Example 3: Using known series, find the first few terms of the Taylor series for

$$\frac{1}{3}(2x + x\cos(x))$$

using power series operations.

Example 4: For what values of x can we replace $\sin(x)$ by the polynomial $x - \frac{x^3}{3!}$ with an error of magnitude no greater than 3×10^{-4}?