


numbers appear if ι is fixed. For example, the analogue of the de Moivre formula is true: $(\cos(\theta) + \iota \sin(\theta))^k = \cos(k\theta) + \iota \sin(k\theta)$. \square

 Quaternion components \leftrightarrow Euler angles

Using (2.33), the quaternion components can be expressed through Euler angles

$$\begin{aligned} q^0 &= \cos(\phi/2) \cos((\varphi_1 + \varphi_2)/2), & q^1 &= -\sin(\phi/2) \cos((\varphi_1 - \varphi_2)/2), \\ q^2 &= -\sin(\phi/2) \sin((\varphi_1 - \varphi_2)/2), & q^3 &= \cos(\phi/2) \sin((\varphi_1 + \varphi_2)/2). \end{aligned}$$

Again, the quaternion with the opposite sign represents the same rotation. From these relations we obtain the inverse formulas for the calculation of the Euler angles from the quaternion. Let $\chi := [((q^0)^2 + (q^3)^2)((q^1)^2 + (q^2)^2)]^{1/2} = (\sin \phi)/2$. If $\chi \neq 0$,

$$\begin{aligned} \cos \phi &= ((q^0)^2 + (q^3)^2) - ((q^1)^2 + (q^2)^2), \\ \cos \varphi_1 &= (-q^0 q^1 - q^2 q^3) / \chi, & \sin \varphi_1 &= (-q^0 q^2 + q^1 q^3) / \chi, \\ \cos \varphi_2 &= (-q^0 q^1 + q^2 q^3) / \chi, & \sin \varphi_2 &= (+q^0 q^2 + q^1 q^3) / \chi. \end{aligned}$$


If $\chi = 0$, there occurs $q^1 = 0 = q^2$ or $q^0 = 0 = q^3$. In the first case, we have

$$\phi = 0, \quad \cos(\varphi_1 + \varphi_2) = (q^0)^2 - (q^3)^2, \quad \sin(\varphi_1 + \varphi_2) = 2q^0 q^3.$$

In the second one, the angles are given by

$$\phi = \pi, \quad \cos(\varphi_1 - \varphi_2) = (q^1)^2 - (q^2)^2, \quad \sin(\varphi_1 - \varphi_2) = 2q^1 q^2.$$

Both instances correspond to singularities of Euler angles and only combinations of φ_1 and φ_2 are determinable. \square

 Quaternionic form of transformation of a vector

Based on (2.41), the transformation of Cartesian coordinates $x'_i = O_{ij} x_j$ can be expressed as

$$x'_i = ((q^0)^2 - q^k q^k) x_i + 2q^i q^j x_j - 2\varepsilon_{ijk} q^0 x_j q^k.$$

The same form has the i -th quaternion component of the product qxq^* where x is the "vector" quaternion $x = 0e_0 + x_1e_1 + x_2e_2 + x_3e_3$. Thus, with $x' = x'_i e_i$ ($i = 1, 2, 3$), the transformation can be written as


$$x' = q \diamond x \diamond q^{-1} = q \diamond x \diamond q^*. \tag{2.49}$$

This rule follows also from the interpretation of quaternions as elements of the Clifford algebra C_3^+ and (1.20).

The isomorphism between the group of unit quaternions and $SU(2)$ and the fact that the quaternions e_μ correspond to ζ_μ matrices allows us to write

$$X' = UXU^\dagger,$$

where the unitary matrix U is related to q by (2.36), $X = x_i \zeta_i$ and $X' = x'_i \zeta_i$. These vector transformation rules are similar to Eq.(2.16). \square

 Improper rotations and quaternions

One may ask about the possibility to represent improper rotations by quaternions. With quaternion algebra seen as a standing alone construct, it is natural to