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# SOLVING CUBIC EQUATIONS USING CARDANO'S METHOD WITH SOFTWARE

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## Abstract

This thesis is devoted to the study of the method for solving cubic equations using Cardano's formula. The thesis provides a detailed algorithm for solving a third-degree equation using this method, and describes working with software for solving cubic equations.

**Keywords:** Algorithm solution, 3rd-degree equation, software.

## 1 Introduction

Cubic equations are third-degree equations of the form:

$$ax^3+bx^2+cx+d=0, a \neq 0$$

Solving such equations is an important part of algebra and mathematical analysis courses. One of the first effective methods for their solution was proposed by the Italian mathematician Gerolamo Cardano in the 16th century. His work *Ars Magna* (1545) marked a turning point in the history of algebra, where he presented a way to find the roots of cubic equations using radicals.

In modern times, this method has not lost its value: thanks to software, it can be applied quickly and accurately even for complex equations.

## 2 Reduction to Canonical Form

The general form of a cubic equation is:

$$ax^3+bx^2+cx+d=0$$

First, we divide the equation by the coefficient  $a$  to bring it to a normalized form:

$$x^3+(b/a)x^2+(c/a)x+d/a=0$$

Then, a variable substitution is made:



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$$x=y-b/3a$$

The purpose of this substitution is to eliminate the  $x^2$  term. As a result, the equation takes on the canonical form:

$$y^3+py+q=0$$

where:

$$p = \frac{3ac - b^2}{3a^2}, \quad q = \frac{2b^3 - 9abc + 27a^2d}{27a^3}$$

### 3 Discriminant and Nature of Roots

The discriminant of the equation is used for root analysis:

$$\Delta=(q/2)^2+(p/3)^3$$

Three cases are considered:

- If  $\Delta>0$  – one real root and two complex conjugate roots.
- If  $\Delta=0$  – three real roots, two of which are identical.
- If  $\Delta<0$  – three distinct real roots.

### 4 Cardano's Formulas

If  $\Delta>0$ , the roots of the equation are found by the following formulas:

$$y = \sqrt[3]{-\frac{q}{2} + \sqrt{\Delta}} + \sqrt[3]{-\frac{q}{2} - \sqrt{\Delta}}$$

If  $\Delta<0$ , trigonometric formulas or complex roots of cubic roots are used, which makes manual calculations cumbersome — this is where software becomes especially useful.

### 5 Example of Solution Using Software

Consider the equation:

$$x^3+3x^2+4x+2=0$$

Step 1: Reduce to canonical form using the substitution:

$$x=y-3/3=y-1$$

Substituting into the original equation and simplifying, we get:

$$y^3+py+q=0, \quad p=1, q=2$$

Calculate the discriminant:

$$\Delta=(2/2)^2+(1/3)^3=1+1/27>0$$



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one real and two complex roots.

Using software (for example, Python with the SymPy library or WolframAlpha) we get:

$$y_1=0, y_2=i, y_3=-i$$

Returning to the variable  $x$ :

$$x_1=y_1-1=-1, x_2=i-1, x_3=-i-1$$

Answer:  $x=-1, -1+i, -1-i$

## **6 Conclusion**

Cardano's method remains a powerful and systematic tool for solving cubic equations. Despite the complexity of manual calculations in the general case, modern mathematical software allows for quickly obtaining accurate results, analyzing roots, and visualizing them in the complex plane. The use of programs like Mathematica, Matlab, Maple, SageMath, or Python (SymPy, NumPy) makes learning and applying the method more accessible and illustrative for students in technical and mathematical fields.

## **7 Student Reflections**

Studying Cardano's method, I realized how important it is to understand not only the mathematical algorithms themselves but also their historical and practical significance. This method, developed over 400 years ago, shows how a complex equation can be transformed step by step into a sequence of understandable operations. It is especially interesting to see how ancient approaches are integrated into modern technologies.

Software, such as Python or WolframAlpha, allows us not only to find the roots of equations in a matter of seconds but also to delve deeper into the logic of the method, trace all intermediate steps, and visualize the result. This eliminates routine calculations and leaves more room for analysis and understanding the essence of mathematical processes.

For me as a student, this is especially valuable — I learn not just to "get the answer," but to understand where it comes from. Mastering Cardano's method is not only a step towards better knowledge of algebra but also the development of mathematical thinking and confidence in using digital tools in learning.



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