Athens Journal of Education 2024, 11: 1-20
https://doi.org/10.30958/aje.X-Y-Z

An Analytical Study of Diophantine Equations of Pythagorean Form: Causal Inferences on Hypothesized Relations between Quadratic and Non-quadratic Triples

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In XVII century, presumably between 1637 and 1638, with a note in the margin of Diophantus' "Arithmetica", Pierre de Fermat stated that Diophantine equations of the Pythagorean form, $x^n + y^n = z^n$, have no integer solutions for $n > 2$, and $(x, y, z) > 0$. Of this statement, however, Fermat never provided a proof. Only after more than 350 years, in 1994, Prof. Andrew J. Wiles was finally successful in demonstrating it (Wiles, 1995; Taylor & Wiles, 1995; Boston, 2008). However, Wiles' proof adopts calculus techniques far beyond Fermat's knowledge. Our aim is to show an analytical method to attempt a proof to Fermat's last theorem with the only use of elementary calculus techniques.

Keywords: number theory, Diophantine equations, Pythagorean Theorem, Fermat's last theorem, numerical analysis

Preface

"Cubum autem in duos cubos, et quadratoquadratum in duos quadratoquadratos, et nullam in infinitum ultra secundam potestatem in duos ejusdem nominis fas est dividere. Cuius rei demonstrationem mirabilem sane detexi. Hanc marginis exiguitas non caperet."

Translation: Neither a cube into two cubes, nor a biquadrate into two biquadrates, and nothing to the infinite beyond the power of two is possible to divide into two powers with the same name. Of that, I have discovered a truly marvelous proof. But this margin is too small to contain it.

This preface reveals Pierre de Fermat's famous statement, where he explores the extension of the Pythagorean theorem to positive integers. He questions whether there exist triples of numbers (a, b, c) that satisfy the equation $a^n + b^n = c^n$ for values of n greater than 2. The solutions to the Pythagorean equation are known as Pythagorean triples. The assertion that no such triples exist for $n > 2$ became known as Fermat's Last Theorem (Toffalori, 1999). This theorem demanded a proof or disproof that took longer than any of his other conjectures. This study revisits the theorem's proof using elementary calculus techniques, offering new insights into Fermat's historical conjecture.

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Historical Background

Fermat's Last Theorem, first conjectured by the French mathematician Pierre de Fermat in the 17th century, stands as one of the most renowned and enduring problems in mathematics (Cox, 1994). Fermat's claim that the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ has no non-trivial integer solutions for $n > 2$ intrigued mathematicians for centuries. Despite numerous attempts by prominent figures such as Euler, Legendre, and Gauss, the theorem remained unproven until the groundbreaking work of Andrew Wiles in the late 20th century (Wiles, 1995; Taylor & Wiles, 1995).

Fermat's marginal notes in his copy of Diophantus's "Arithmetica" sparked a mathematical journey lasting over 350 years. His note claimed to have a "truly marvelous proof" that the margin was too small to contain. This cryptic comment set off an epic quest to solve what was often described as the world's greatest mathematical problem.

Throughout the centuries, numerous mathematicians made significant contributions that indirectly influenced the eventual proof. Leonhard Euler, for instance, proved the theorem for $n = 3$ by innovatively using infinite series and complex numbers. Adrien-Marie Legendre extended the proof to $n = 5$, while Ernst Kummer's work on ideal numbers provided a foundation for understanding the theorem for regular prime exponents.

In the 20th century, new connections were made between Fermat's Last Theorem and other areas of mathematics. Gerhard Frey proposed a link between the theorem and the Taniyama-Shimura-Weil conjecture (now the Modularity Theorem), which suggested that proving the conjecture would also prove Fermat's Last Theorem. This breakthrough set the stage for Andrew Wiles's successful proof.

Wiles's proof, completed in 1994, was a monumental achievement. It utilized sophisticated tools such as Galois representations and properties of elliptic curves, demonstrating the power of combining insights from different areas of mathematics. The resolution of Fermat's Last Theorem not only solved a centuries-old problem but also validated decades of work on elliptic curves and modular forms, influencing contemporary mathematical research.

Fermat's Last Theorem: Early Work and Previous Attempts

The story of Fermat's Last Theorem began with Pierre de Fermat, a French lawyer and amateur mathematician, who is often credited as one of the founders of modern number theory.

During his lifetime, Pierre de Fermat made several significant contributions to number theory, many of which laid the groundwork for his famous theorem. Fermat's work included the development of the method of infinite descent, which he used to prove specific cases of his Last Theorem for small exponents. His work on prime numbers, particularly Fermat's Little Theorem, also played a crucial role in the field.

Fermat proposed the theorem in the margin of his copy of the ancient Greek text "Arithmetica", written by Diophantus. He wrote "I have discovered a truly marvelous proof. But this margin is too small to contain it", setting off a challenge that would captivate mathematicians for generations. Although Fermat never published a proof of his Last Theorem, his marginal note inspired future mathematicians to pursue the proof rigorously.

Fermat's assertion that $x^n + y^n = z^n$ has no integer non-trivial solutions for $n > 2$ captured the imagination of mathematicians for centuries. Despite numerous attempts by prominent mathematicians over the years, a proof remained elusive for centuries. This inspired an epic quest to solve what has been described as the world's greatest mathematical problem (Singh, 1997; Corry, 2010), until the groundbreaking work of Andrew Wiles in 1994 (Wiles, 1995; Taylor & Wiles, 1995).

The journey towards proving Fermat's Last Theorem is a narrative of collective efforts, filled with partial successes, dead-ends, and incremental progresses in mathematics that advanced the field of number theory and brought mathematicians closer to resolving Fermat's Last Theorem. Each mathematician introduced innovative methods and tackled substantial challenges, contributing to the rich mosaic of mathematical progress leading up to the 20th century. Their work not only addressed Fermat's Last Theorem but also stimulated the development of new areas of mathematics, influencing future generations of mathematicians and their way to approach unsolved problems (Singh, 1997; Corry, 2010).

Leonhard Euler (1707-1783)

Proved Fermat's Last Theorem for $n = 3$.

One of the earliest significant efforts was made by Euler in the 18th century, marking a substantial milestone.

Leonhard Euler, a Swiss mathematician who is often regarded as one of the most prolific mathematicians of all time, successfully proved Fermat's Last Theorem for the case when $n = 3$. His approach involved the innovative use of infinite series and complex numbers, which were groundbreaking at the time.

Euler considered the equation $x^3 + y^3 = z^3$ and reinterpreted it using complex numbers, introducing the concept of imaginary numbers. By factoring the equation in the ring of integers of the form $a + b\omega$, where ω is a primitive cube root of unity (a complex number that, when raised to the power of three, equals one and that is one of the three non-real roots of the equation $x^3 = 1$), Euler examined the properties of these complex numbers to demonstrate that there are no integer solutions to the equation. This method, though pioneering, required justification of the properties of these complex numbers, presenting significant challenges.

Euler's approach laid the groundwork for future developments in number theory, particularly in understanding the properties of numbers within different algebraic structures. His work set a precedent for the analytical rigor required to tackle such problems.

Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855)

Developed foundational principles in number theory and algebra.

Carl Friedrich Gauss, often referred to as "princeps mathematicorum" (the prince of mathematicians), made profound contributions to numerous fields, including number theory. Although Gauss did not directly work on Fermat's Last Theorem, his work on quadratic reciprocity and complex integers provided essential tools that later mathematicians would use. Gauss's concept of Gaussian integers–complex numbers where the real and imaginary parts are integers–expanded the realm of number theory, allowing for more sophisticated methods to be applied to problems like Fermat's Last Theorem.

Gauss's work on number theory, particularly his Disquisitiones Arithmeticae, laid a solid foundation for future researchers. His ideas on congruencies, modular arithmetic, and the properties of prime numbers influenced the work of Ernst Kummer and others who followed.

Adrien-Marie Legendre (1752-1833)

Proved Fermat's Last Theorem for $n = 5$.

Adrien-Marie Legendre, a prominent French mathematician, made significant contributions to the study of Fermat's Last Theorem. Legendre, independently of and almost simultaneously with the German mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss, provided a proof of Fermat's Last Theorem for the case where $n = 5$. This was one of the first significant cases beyond the initial work Fermat himself did for $n = 4$.

Legendre developed and refined various mathematical techniques that were crucial in the study of Fermat's Last Theorem. His work on number theory, particularly concerning quadratic forms and the distribution of prime numbers, provided foundational tools that were later used in further attempts to prove Fermat's Last Theorem for other values of n.

Legendre's methods and results influenced other mathematicians, such as Ernst Kummer, who later worked on Fermat's Last Theorem using advanced algebraic techniques. Kummer's work on ideal numbers in the ring of integers of cyclotomic fields was inspired by the groundwork laid by mathematicians like Legendre.

Legendre's findings on Fermat's Last Theorem were published and disseminated in mathematical circles, contributing to the broader efforts to solve this challenging problem. His work was well-regarded and helped to keep the interest in Fermat's Last Theorem alive among mathematicians of the 19th century. Although Legendre did not solve Fermat's Last Theorem for all n, his contributions were vital steps in the long journey toward its eventual proof by Andrew Wiles in 1994.

Sophie Germain (1776-1831)

Made progress on Fermat's Last Theorem for Germain Primes.

Sophie Germain introduced other innovative approaches, such as establishing criteria under which the theorem holds true for certain classes of prime exponents. Germain's work, while not providing a complete proof, laid the groundwork for later developments by showing that if certain conditions were met, then no solutions could exist.

Sophie Germain, a French mathematician of the early 19th century, made profound contributions despite the societal challenges she faced as a woman in a male-dominated field. Germain developed novel approaches to Fermat's Last Theorem, especially for the case when n is a prime number. Her strategy was to show that if there are no solutions to $x^n + y^n = z^n$ in integers x, y, z that are not divisible by n, then there are no solutions at all.

Germain's theorem established criteria under which the theorem holds for a large class of prime exponents, demonstrating that for many primes, Fermat's Last Theorem could not have non-trivial solutions. Despite working in isolation and often using a male pseudonym to correspond with other mathematicians, Germain made significant steps. Her methods and results provided critical insights and tools that helped later mathematicians' approaches to the problem.

Ernst Eduard Kummer (1810-1893)

Proved Fermat's Last Theorem for regular primes using ideal numbers.

The 19th century saw further advancements, with mathematicians like Ernst Eduard Kummer introducing the new concept of ideal numbers and employing techniques from algebraic number theory to prove the theorem for a wide range of exponents. Kummer's approach, which involved unique factorization in the ring of integers of cyclotomic fields, was a breakthrough in understanding the structure of solutions to Diophantine equations.

Kummer's work focused on the theorem for regular prime exponents, which eventually led to significant progress in proving the theorem for many specific cases. He introduced the concept of ideal numbers, which extended the notion of integers to a more general setting. This innovation allowed him to tackle problems of unique factorization in certain algebraic structures.

Kummer classified prime numbers into regular and irregular primes and proved that Fermat's Last Theorem holds for all regular prime exponents. Regular primes are those for which certain divisibility conditions involving Bernoulli numbers are satisfied. His work involved detailed examinations of the properties of cyclotomic fields, which are number fields obtained by adjoining a primitive root of unity to the rational numbers. By exploring the arithmetic within these fields, Kummer established results for a wide range of exponents.

However, Kummer's techniques required the development of new mathematical tools and concepts, which were not widely understood or accepted at the time. His work was initially met with skepticism but later became foundational in the field of algebraic number theory.

Early 20th Century: Advancements in Algebra and Number Theory

David Hilbert (1862-1943)

Influenced future approaches.

The early 20th century saw continued efforts to prove Fermat's Last Theorem, with contributions from mathematicians such as David Hilbert, who included the theorem in his famous list of 23 unsolved problems in 1900.

Hilbert's rigorous approach to mathematics and his emphasis on the formalization of mathematical theories influenced the methodologies used by later mathematicians in their attempts to solve Fermat's Last Theorem. His work on algebraic number fields and class field theory provided essential tools and insights that were later used by Andrew Wiles in his proof.

Gerhard Frey (1944-)

Linked Fermat's Last Theorem to elliptic curves.

In the 20th century, new connections were made between Fermat's Last Theorem and other areas of mathematics. Gerhard Frey proposed a link between Fermat's Last Theorem and the Taniyama-Shimura-Weil conjecture (now the Modularity Theorem), suggesting that a proof of the conjecture would imply a proof of Fermat's Last Theorem. This connection was a breakthrough that set the stage for Andrew Wiles' successful proof.

Barry Mazur (1937-)

Developed important techniques in the study of elliptic curves and modular forms.

Barry Mazur's work on the arithmetic of elliptic curves and modular forms was instrumental in the progress toward proving Fermat's Last Theorem. His contributions provided critical insights and techniques that were utilized by Andrew Wiles and others in their work on the Modularity Theorem.

Mazur's research on the structure of rational points on elliptic curves and his development of the theory of deformation rings were particularly important in the context of Wiles' proof. Mazur's influence extended to the broader mathematical community, inspiring further research and advancements in number theory.

The Modern Era: Elliptic Curves and Modular Forms

This period also saw advancements in algebra and number theory that were essential for the eventual proof. Mathematicians developed a deeper understanding of field theory, group theory, and the properties of algebraic structures, all of which contributed to the broader mathematical landscape.

Despite these significant advances, a general proof of Fermat's Last Theorem remained elusive. The problem continued to challenge and inspire mathematicians, leading to a proliferation of partial results and new mathematical techniques. It wasn't until the late 20^{th} century that the combined efforts of many mathematicians culminated in Andrew Wiles' groundbreaking proof, which leveraged the modularity theorem for elliptic curves.

The latter half of the 20^{th} century brought new insights and tools that would prove crucial in the final proof of Fermat's Last Theorem. The development of the theory of elliptic curves and modular forms provided a new framework for approaching the problem. Mathematicians such as Yutaka Taniyama and Goro Shimura proposed conjectures that linked these two areas, suggesting that every elliptic curve is modular – a key idea that Andrew Wiles would later use.

Elliptic Curves

Elliptic curves, despite their name, aren't solely defined by being elliptical shapes but rather by their algebraic properties, which can be described by equations of the form $y^2 = x^3 + ax + b$, having rich structures and properties that made them powerful tools in number theory.

Here, a and b are constants, and the curve is defined over a particular field, often the real numbers or the complex numbers, but frequently over finite fields as well, which is crucial for applications in cryptography.

What makes elliptic curves particularly fascinating is their rich mathematical structure and wide-ranging applications. Here are some key aspects:

Group Structure

One of the most important features of elliptic curves is their group structure. Points on the curve can be added together in a way that forms an abelian group. This group structure is essential in many cryptographic protocols, such as elliptic curve cryptography (ECC), where the difficulty of solving certain mathematical problems associated with elliptic curves forms the basis of secure communication.

Modularity

As mentioned earlier in relation to Wiles' proof, elliptic curves are deeply connected to modular forms through the modularity theorem. This connection is crucial for understanding the behavior of elliptic curves over certain fields, particularly in the context of number theory.

Rational Points

Understanding the rational solutions (or points with rational coordinates) on elliptic curves is a central problem in number theory. The study of rational points on elliptic curves has connections to the arithmetic of elliptic curves, Diophantine equations, and the Birch and Swinnerton-Dyer conjecture, which remains one of the most important unsolved problems in mathematics.

Visual Beauty

While the mathematical properties of elliptic curves are profound, they also possess a visual elegance. Graphing elliptic curves can reveal intricate symmetries and patterns, making them objects of aesthetic fascination as well as rigorous study.

Applications

Beyond cryptography, elliptic curves find applications in various other areas of mathematics and science. They appear in diverse fields such as coding theory, factorization algorithms, and even in string theory in theoretical physics.

Modular Forms

Modular forms, complex functions with specific transformation properties, provided another perspective on these curves. The Taniyama-Shimura-Weil conjecture, which postulated that every rational elliptic curve is modular, became a central focus in the quest to prove Fermat's Last Theorem.

Modular forms are a type of complex analytic function that exhibit a high degree of symmetry with respect to a particular group of transformations, known as the modular group. These functions play a crucial role in several areas of mathematics, including number theory, algebraic geometry, and mathematical physics. Here are some key aspects of modular forms:

Transformation Properties

Modular forms are characterized by their transformation properties under the action of the modular group, often involving fractional linear transformations by these matrices. The modular group, denoted $SL(2,\mathbb{Z})$, consists of 2×2 matrices with integer entries and determinant 1. However, the modular group is more accurately described by $PSL(2,\mathbb{Z})$, which is the projective special linear group.

Holomorphicity

Modular forms are holomorphic functions, meaning they are complex analytic and have no singularities in the complex plane. This regularity property makes them amenable to techniques from complex analysis, enabling mathematicians to study their properties using tools such as contour integration and power series expansions.

Weight and Level

Modular forms are typically classified according to their weight and level. The weight of a modular form refers to its transformation behavior under the scaling action of the modular group. The level of a modular form corresponds to the congruence subgroup of the modular group that it respects. Different levels and weights give rise to different families of modular forms with distinct properties.

Fourier Expansions

One of the key features of modular forms is their Fourier expansions, which express the function as a sum of exponential functions (Fourier series) with coefficients determined by the properties of the modular form. These expansions provide valuable information about the behavior of modular forms and are often used in computational and theoretical investigations.

Applications

Modular forms have diverse applications across mathematics and physics. In number theory, they play a crucial role in the study of modular forms and elliptic curves, including Wiles' proof of Fermat's Last Theorem. In mathematical physics, modular forms appear in the context of conformal field theory and string theory, providing insights into the structure of space-time and quantum phenomena.

Modularity Theorem

The modularity theorem, conjectured by Pierre Deligne and proved by Andrew Wiles and Richard Taylor, establishes a deep connection between modular forms and elliptic curves. It states that certain types of elliptic curves are associated with modular forms, providing a powerful tool for studying the arithmetic properties of elliptic curves and related objects.

Andrew Wiles and the Final Proof

Andrew Wiles (1953-)

Achieved the final proof.

The culmination of centuries of mathematical progress came with Andrew Wiles, a British mathematician who dedicated much of his career to proving Fermat's Last Theorem. Wiles' approach, built on the foundation laid by his predecessors, involved proving a special case of the Modularity Theorem. In 1994, after seven years of intense work and an initial setback due to a flaw in his proof, Wiles, with the help of his former student Richard Taylor, successfully proved the

Modularity Theorem for semistable elliptic curves (Wiles, 1995; Taylor & Wiles, 1995), which in turn proved Fermat’s Last Theorem.

Wiles’ proof was a monumental achievement, not only for resolving Fermat’s Last Theorem but also for the methods and techniques it introduced. His work demonstrated the power of combining insights from different areas of mathematics, such as algebraic geometry, number theory, and modular forms.

The proof of Fermat’s Last Theorem had a profound impact on mathematics: it validated decades of work on elliptic curves and modular forms and produced further research in these areas. The techniques developed by Wiles and others continue to influence contemporary mathematical research, including work on the Langlands Program, which seeks to relate number theory and representation theory.

Actual Proof of Fermat's Last Theorem

Wiles' proof of Fermat's Last Theorem is a masterpiece of mathematical synthesis, combining elements of number theory, algebraic geometry, and the theory of modular forms. By proving the Modularity Theorem for semistable elliptic curves and leveraging the properties of Galois representations and Ribet's Theorem, Wiles resolved a problem that had eluded mathematicians for centuries, providing a definitive proof of Fermat’s Last Theorem.

Wiles' proof can be roughly divided into several key steps, each building upon the insights gained from the preceding ones. Initially, he focused on establishing a link between elliptic curves and modular forms through what is known as the modularity theorem. This theorem, which was originally conjectured by mathematician Pierre Deligne, asserts that certain types of elliptic curves are associated with modular forms. Wiles made significant strides in proving this conjecture, culminating in what is now known as the modularity theorem, a crucial component of his proof.

Once Wiles established the connection between elliptic curves and modular forms, he turned his attention to proving the specific case of Fermat's Last Theorem. This involved demonstrating that certain elliptic curves, known as modular elliptic curves, satisfy certain properties that are essential for the theorem's validity. Wiles employed a variety of advanced mathematical techniques, including the use of Galois representations and techniques from algebraic geometry, to establish the necessary conditions for these curves to exist.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Wiles' proof is its interdisciplinary nature: drawing on insights from algebraic geometry, number theory, complex analysis, and group theory, Wiles crafted a proof that transcended traditional boundaries within mathematics. His ability to synthesize ideas from diverse areas of mathematics highlights the power of collaboration and interdisciplinary thinking in tackling complex mathematical problems.

In addition to the technical aspects of his proof, Wiles' work also exemplifies the perseverance and dedication required to tackle longstanding mathematical conjectures. His proof of Fermat's Last Theorem represents the culmination of years of intense research and collaboration with other mathematicians. Wiles' unwavering commitment to solve one of mathematics' most enduring mysteries serves as an inspiration to aspiring mathematicians everywhere.

The actual proof of Fermat's Last Theorem, provided by Andrew Wiles, is deeply rooted in advanced mathematical concepts, specifically (Joshi, 2000):

1. *Modularity Theorem (formerly Taniyama-Shimura-Weil Conjecture)*

   The cornerstone of Wiles' proof is the Modularity Theorem, which he proved for semistable elliptic curves. The theorem postulates that every elliptic curve over the rational numbers can be associated with a modular form. Elliptic curves are smooth, projective algebraic curves of genus one with a specified point called the origin. Modular forms are complex analytic functions invariant under certain transformations and satisfy specific conditions. Demonstrating that all semistable elliptic curves are modular was crucial, establishing a necessary connection between elliptic curves and modular forms.

2. *Connection to Elliptic Curves and Galois Representations*

   Wiles' approach further integrates the properties of elliptic curves and modular forms through the study of Galois representations. Galois representations are homomorphisms from the absolute Galois group of the rational numbers to the automorphism group of a vector space, providing a way to study field extensions. Wiles, along with Richard Taylor, linked Fermat's Last Theorem to these properties by showing that a counterexample to Fermat's Last Theorem would imply the existence of a non-modular elliptic curve. This connection was crucial, exploiting the relationship between elliptic curves and modular forms to address the theorem.

3. *Ribet's Theorem*

   The final piece in Wiles' proof came from Jean-Pierre Serre and Ken Ribet's work, specifically Ribet's Theorem. Ribet's Theorem demonstrated that if an elliptic curve associated with a hypothetical solution to Fermat's equation were non-modular, it would contradict the Modularity Theorem. This relationship provided the necessary conditions to prove Fermat's Last Theorem. By showing that a solution to Fermat's equation for $n > 2$ would imply the existence of a non-modular elliptic curve, Wiles effectively used Ribet's Theorem to connect the Modularity Theorem to Fermat's Last Theorem.

A Novel Approach to Proving Fermat's Last Theorem by Applying Elementary Calculus Techniques

While various methods have been developed to tackle Diophantine equations – including algebraic, geometric, and computational approaches – analytical methods play a crucial role in establishing theorems and proofs in number theory.

Previous research on Fermat's Last Theorem has primarily focused on algebraic and number-theoretic techniques, such as modular forms, elliptic curves, and algebraic number theory. These advanced methods, while successful in proving the theorem, often require sophisticated mathematical machinery beyond the reach of elementary calculus.

The analytical study presented in this paper aims to bridge the gap between Fermat's Last Theorem and elementary calculus. By adopting a systematic approach grounded in fundamental principles of calculus, this study offers a novel perspective on the problem, providing insights into the nature of Diophantine equations and the possibility of proving Fermat's Last Theorem using elementary techniques.

By employing a proof by contradiction, we start with the base case of a logical equivalence, performing arithmetic manipulations to derive an equivalent homogeneous equation. Introducing another exponent greater than the initial one, we assume a solution exists, and demonstrate, through mathematical transformations and the first law of exponents, that this leads to a contradiction.

This section outlines the structured methodologies we used to deal with the problem, which are rooted in foundational mathematical principles.

The Case of Pythagorean Triples

Fermat's Last Theorem, which postulates that there are no whole number solutions to the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ for $n > 2$, has challenged mathematicians for centuries.

To refine our understanding of the theorem's scope, Fermat's statement can be expressed in a generalized form with a double implication:

$$z^n = x^n + y^n \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad z^{n+\alpha} \neq x^{n+\alpha} + y^{n+\alpha}$$
$$(x, y, z, n, \alpha) \in \mathbb{N}$$

This can be interpreted as "the solution of any Diophantine equation in a given Pythagorean form for some exponent $n \in N$, cannot be satisfied in the same Pythagorean form for every other exponent $n + \alpha \in \mathbb{N}$".

To start, we adopt a proof by contradiction, commencing with the base case of the logical equivalence on which we perform simple arithmetic to derive an equivalent homogeneous equation. Therefore, by introducing another exponent $n + \alpha > n$, we assume the contrary to Fermat's statement and suppose a solution. Through a series of mathematical manipulations and applications of the first law of exponents, we arrive at an inequality contradicting our assumption and thus proving Fermat's statement using a method accessible to mathematicians only familiar with foundational mathematical principles.

We begin with the base case of Fermat's Last Theorem ($n = 2$):

$$x^n + y^n = z^n \quad (1)$$

and divide both sides by z^n to obtain an equivalent homogeneous equation:

$$x^n + y^n = z^n \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \frac{x^n + y^n}{z^n} = 1$$

that by simple manipulation becomes:

$$\frac{x^n}{z^n} + \frac{y^n}{z^n} = 1 \quad (2)$$

We now introduce another exponent greater than n, denoted as $n + \alpha$, and assume that there exists a solution to the equation for some $n + \alpha$:

$$x^{n+\alpha} + y^{n+\alpha} = z^{n+\alpha} \quad (3)$$

Dividing both sides of the assumed solution by $z^{n+\alpha}$, we introduce another equivalent homogeneous equation:

$$\frac{x^{n+\alpha} + y^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}} = 1$$

from which, by simple manipulation, we obtain:

$$\frac{x^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}} + \frac{y^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}} = 1 \quad (4)$$

Let:

$$A = \left(\frac{x}{z}\right) \quad \text{and} \quad B = \left(\frac{y}{z}\right)$$

We can now write the (2) as:

$$A^n + B^n = 1$$

and the (4) as:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = 1 \quad (5)$$

Since A and B are proper fractions, we have $0 < (A, B) < 1$ with the following implications:

$$A^{n+\alpha} = A^n A^\alpha < A^n \quad and \quad B^{n+\alpha} = B^n B^\alpha < B^n$$

for which we can write:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} < A^n + B^n$$

Hence, with the substitution of the second member, we have:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} < 1 \quad (6)$$

which contradicts the equivalence in (5) and proves that in the case of Pythagorean triples there cannot exist integer solutions for Diophantine equations in Pythagorean form for $n > 2$.

(Q.E.D.)

The Case of Non-Pythagorean Triples

Non-Pythagorean triples are sets of integers that do not satisfy the Pythagorean theorem. As such, we start from the assumption that no integer solutions exist for $x^2 + y^2 = z^2$ and, according to Fermat's Last Theorem, also no integer solutions exist for any integer for $n > 2$.

Thus, proving Fermat's Last Theorem for non-Pythagorean triples requires establishing an argument where we start from the base case and confirm its implications for higher exponents.

We write the base case as ($n = 2$):

$$X^n + Y^n \neq z^n \quad (7)$$

Dividing both sides of the (7) by z^n we obtain the following equivalent homogeneous inequality:

$$\frac{X^n}{z^n} + \frac{Y^n}{z^n} \neq 1 \quad (8)$$

Let:

$$\mathrm{A} = \left(\frac{X}{z}\right) \quad \text{and} \quad \mathrm{B} = \left(\frac{\mathrm{Y}}{\mathrm{z}}\right)$$

Then, the (8) can be written as:

$$A^n + B^n \neq 1 \quad (9)$$

We have now the following two cases to investigate:

Case 1: $A^n + B^n < 1$.

Since A and B are proper fractions, and therefore less than 1, we know that raising them to any positive integer power will further reduce their value. And therefore, because of our initial condition, we have:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} < A^n + B^n < 1$$

that maintains the inequality structure of $A + B$ when moving from n to $n + \alpha$, as per the order-preserving property of exponentiation, and validates the (9).

Case 2: $A^n + B^n > 1$.

We can write this condition as $A^n + B^n = 1 + \epsilon \quad (\epsilon > 0)$. Since it is $A^{n+\alpha} < A^n$ and $B^{n+\alpha} < B^n$, we proceed defining the distances δ_α and δ_β, which will represent the reduction in the exponentiation of A and B as we move from n to $n + \alpha$:

$$\delta_\alpha = \mathrm{A^n} - \mathrm{A^{n+\alpha}} \quad \text{and} \quad \delta_\beta = \mathrm{B^n} - \mathrm{B^{n+\alpha}}$$

From this, it follows that:

$$\mathrm{A^{n+\alpha}} = \mathrm{A^n} - \delta_\alpha \quad \text{and} \quad B^{n+\alpha} = \mathrm{B^n} - \delta_\beta$$

Hence, we can establish the following equivalence:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = (A^n - \delta_\alpha) + (B^n - \delta_\beta)$$

which, through simple manipulation, transforms into:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = A^n + B^n - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta)$$

and by substituting $A^n + B^n$ with $1 + \epsilon$, we obtain:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = 1 + \epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) \quad (10)$$

Given ϵ as any arbitrary positive value, we can now determine what possible conditions can follow, thus refining the domain of solutions:

2a: $\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta < \epsilon$ (the sum of distances is smaller than ϵ).

This condition can be met.

It is $\epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) = k$, therefore $1 + \epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) = 1 + k > 1$. And (10) becomes:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = 1 + k > 1$$

This maintains the integrity of the initial inequality:

$$A^n + B^n > 1$$

validating (9), as per the order-preserving property of exponentiation for the same value of exponents (Euler, 1748; Mitrinovic, Pečarić, & Fink, 1991).

2b: $\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta > \epsilon$ (the sum of distances is greater than ϵ).

This condition can never be met.

It would imply $\epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) = -\mathrm{k}$, consequently we have $1 + \epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) = 1 - \mathrm{k} < 1$. And (10) would become:

$$A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = 1 - \mathrm{k} < 1$$

This would reverse the order of values from the initial assumption:

$$A^n + B^n > 1$$

contradicting the principle that inequalities must remain unchanged under exponentiation with the same value of exponents (Euler, 1748; Mitrinovic, Pečarić, & Fink, 1991).

<u>2c</u>: $\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta = \epsilon$ (the sum of distances is equal to ϵ).

This condition can never be met.

It would imply $\epsilon - (\delta_\alpha + \delta_\beta) = 0$, and therefore $A^{n+\alpha} + B^{n+\alpha} = 1$, which contradicts the order-preserving property of exponentiation, which should maintain the relative inequality structure for the same value of exponents (Euler, 1748; Mitrinovic, Pečarić, & Fink, 1991).

All the above indicates that, in the case of non-Pythagorean triples, integer solutions for Diophantine equations in Pythagorean form do not exist for $n > 2$.

(Q.E.D.)

Proof Summary

The proof adheres to elementary techniques and logically demonstrates the impossibility of integer solutions for $n > 2$, for both Pythagorean and non-Pythagorean triples, consistent with Fermat's Last Theorem and offering a novel perspective on the theorem and its proof. The following steps outline the approach taken in this study:

- **Base case:** start with $n = 2$ and establish $x^n + y^n = z^n$.
- **Incremental extension:** introduce α such that $n + \alpha > n$.
- **Homogeneous equations:** normalize both equations for n and $n + \alpha$.
- **Combining and simplifying** equate the ratios and analyze.
- **Contradiction:** show that the ratio $\frac{x^{n+\alpha}+y^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}}$ leads to a contradiction for integer solutions.
- **Generalization:** introduce the order-preserving property of exponentiation to cover all non-Pythagorean triples.

Detailed Analysis of the Proof

Assumption of Base Case and Incremental Condition

1. <u>Base case for $n = 2$</u>
   We start with the base case:
   $$x^n + y^n = z^n$$
2. <u>Introduction of increment α</u>
   We introduce an increment α such that $n + \alpha > n$. This increment allows us to explore the implications of extending the equation to higher powers.

Homogeneous Equations and Manipulation Techniques

3. <u>Homogeneous equation for $n = 2$</u>

We divide both sides of the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$ by z^n to obtain an equivalent homogeneous form:

$$\frac{x^n + y^n}{z^n} = 1$$

that transforms into:

$$\frac{x^n}{z^n} + \frac{y^n}{z^n} = 1$$

4. Homogeneous equation for $n + \alpha$
   Consider the extended case $x^{n+\alpha} + y^{n+\alpha} = z^{n+\alpha}$ and divide by $z^{n+\alpha}$ to obtain an equivalent homogeneous equation:

$$\frac{x^{n+\alpha} + y^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}} = 1$$

   that transforms into:

$$\frac{x^n}{z^n}\frac{x^\alpha}{z^\alpha} + \frac{y^n}{z^n}\frac{y^\alpha}{z^\alpha} = 1$$

Analysis and Derivation of Contradiction

5. Analyzing the ratios
   Because all ratios in which the numerator is smaller than the denominator are proper fractions, as such less than 1, we can state the following inference:

$$\frac{x^n}{z^n}\frac{x^\alpha}{z^\alpha} < \frac{x^n}{z^n} \quad and \quad \frac{y^n}{z^n}\frac{y^\alpha}{z^\alpha} < \frac{y^n}{z^n}$$

6. Deriving the contradiction and conclusion
   Because $\frac{x^n}{z^n}\frac{x^\alpha}{z^\alpha} < \frac{x^n}{z^n}$ and $\frac{y^n}{z^n}\frac{y^\alpha}{z^\alpha} < \frac{y^n}{z^n}$ then $\frac{x^{n+\alpha}+y^{n+\alpha}}{z^{n+\alpha}}$ cannot be 1. Therefore, we have a contradiction showing that there can be no integer solutions for $n > 2$.

Generalization to all n > 2

1. Base case validity
   We have shown that the assumption holds for $n = 2$.
   By extending this to n $+ \alpha$ where $\alpha > 0$, we cover all higher powers.

2. Inductive argument
   Proving the base case and showing that the property does hold for n $+ \alpha$ effectively covers all cases where $n > 2$. This technique is akin to mathematical induction, ensuring that no integer solutions exist for any $n > 2$.

Generalization to Non-Pythagorean Triples

For non-Pythagorean triples, the method to be adopted involves the order-preserving property of exponentiation, ensuring that the general case for $n > 2$ holds as well.

Conclusion and Validity

Conclusion

This study has presented a novel analytical approach to Diophantine equations of the Pythagorean form, with a specific focus on Fermat's Last Theorem, and provides the necessary reasoning to confirm the possibility of proving Fermat's Last Theorem using elementary calculus alone.

We revisit Fermat's Last Theorem through the lens of elementary calculus, providing a novel perspective on proving the theorem. By adopting a systematic approach grounded in fundamental principles of calculus, we offer insights into the nature of Diophantine equations and the possibility of proving Fermat's Last Theorem using elementary techniques.

Fermat's Last Theorem, which asserts that there are no integer solutions to $x^n + y^n = z^n$ for $n > 2$, posed a significant challenge to mathematicians for centuries. The proof by Andrew Wiles, leveraging advanced concepts like the Modularity Theorem, was a landmark achievement in mathematics. However, our study explores an analytical method to attempt a proof using only elementary calculus techniques.

By employing a proof by contradiction and using arithmetic manipulations and mathematical transformations, we demonstrate that assuming the existence of a solution leads to a contradiction. This method, rooted in foundational mathematical principles, confirms the impossibility of integer solutions for $n > 2$, aligning with Fermat's original assertion.

The significance of Fermat's Last Theorem extends beyond its proof. It serves as a powerful educational tool, illustrating the persistence and creativity required in mathematical research. The theorem's narrative, from Fermat's marginal note to Wiles's proof, inspires mathematicians and students, highlighting the importance of tackling difficult problems and the rewards of innovative thinking.

In conclusion, this study bridges the gap between elementary calculus and advanced number theory, offering a novel approach to understanding and proving Fermat's Last Theorem. Future research may build on this foundation, exploring the applicability of these methods to other unresolved mathematical conjectures.

Historical Significance and Methodological Innovations

Fermat's Last Theorem, stated by Pierre de Fermat in 1637, became one of the most famous and challenging problems in mathematics. The theorem's resolution in 1994 by Andrew Wiles marked a significant milestone, not only for the field of number theory but also for mathematics as a whole. The journey to the proof saw the development of new mathematical concepts, tools, and collaborations that transformed how mathematicians approach problems.

Wiles' work utilized sophisticated tools such as Galois representations and the properties of elliptic curves. These tools have since become essential in various fields of mathematics. Galois representations, for instance, provided a way to understand the symmetries of algebraic equations, bridging the gap between abstract algebra and number theory. This interplay between different areas of mathematics exemplifies how solving one problem can lead to advancements across multiple domains.

Moreover, the methods developed and refined during the search of a proof have applications in other areas of mathematics and science. For instance, elliptic curves are now a fundamental tool in cryptography, underpinning the security of many modern encryption systems. The deep insights gained from studying these curves and their properties have influenced fields ranging from cryptography to theoretical physics.

Educational Impact

The story of Fermat's Last Theorem and its eventual proof has become a powerful educational tool. It serves as a testament to the persistence and creativity required in mathematical research. The theorem's narrative, from Fermat's marginal note to Wiles' seven-year effort to complete the proof, inspires students and mathematicians alike. It highlights the importance of taking on difficult problems and the rewards of innovative thinking.

Educational programs often use Fermat's Last Theorem to illustrate key concepts in number theory and algebra. The theorem's history itself provides a rich context for teaching mathematical proof techniques, the evolution of mathematical ideas, and the significance of rigorous logical reasoning.

Key Insights and Future Directions

Fermat's Last Theorem poses a challenge to the existence of Diophantine equations of the Pythagorean form $x^n + y^n = z^n$ with integer solutions, for $n > 2$ and positive integers x, y, z.

More precisely, Fermat's original statement can be investigated by following the steps outlined in this paper, replacing $n = 2$ in the generalized form:

$$x^2 + y^2 = z^2 \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad x^{2+\alpha} + y^{2+\alpha} \neq z^{2+\alpha}$$
$$(x, y, z, \alpha) \in \mathbb{N}$$

Our proof attempts to establish a contradiction by introducing an additional exponent and manipulating the resulting equations. The steps provide a logical and structured argument using elementary calculus techniques that Fermat could have known, leveraging a contradiction arising from the properties of exponents and ratios.

By applying elementary calculus techniques, we demonstrate the possibility of proving Fermat's assertion using a systematic method that builds upon foundational mathematical principles, confirming the validity of Fermat's Last Theorem for exponents greater than 2, for both Pythagorean and non-Pythagorean triples.

This study bridges the gap between elementary calculus and advanced number theory, highlighting the interplay between exponentiation and logical reasoning. While it primarily focuses on proving Fermat's Last Theorem, its techniques could potentially be applied to other mathematical problems. Future research may build on this foundation by exploring the applicability of these methods to other unresolved mathematical conjectures.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to the completion of this project. First and foremost, I am deeply thankful to my mentor, Prof. Giuseppe Moesch, for his invaluable guidance, support, and encouragement throughout both my life and academic journey. His expertise and insights have been instrumental in shaping my thinking.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my appreciation to Dr. Wojciech Roga (Keio University Quantum Computing Center), Prof. Bruno Carbonaro (Università degli Studi della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"), and Dr. N. Hande Sevgi (Ufuk University) for their constructive feedback and suggestions, which have helped refine the quality of this work.

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