Time-Frequency Representations





1. Introduction

a) Transform theory

• It is well known that a discrete-time signal x(n) can be represented as linear combination of a set of discrete-time (synthesis) vectors $b_i(n)$

$$x(n) = \sum_{i} c_i b_i(n) \tag{1}$$

This is known as the *synthesis equation*. The c_i are the weights of the vectors, which are generated by computing the inner product of the signal and a set of analysis vectors $a_i(n)$

$$c_i = \langle x(n), a_i(n) \rangle \tag{2}$$

These weights are elements of a vector C, which is called the transform of a signal.

$$C(i) = \sum x(n)a_i(n) \tag{3}$$

This equation is known as the *analysis equation*

- ***** Transforms are important for many reasons:
 - 1. New information is provided about the signal

Example: The Fourier transform provides information on the frequency content of a signal

2. Processing a signal in the transform domain can be simpler or implemented more efficiently.

Example: Convolution becomes multiplication in the Fourier domain, which is easier to perform.

3. The signal may be represented by fewer numbers in the transform domain, i.e., some $c_i = 0$.

Example: The Discrete Cosine Transform (DCT) is widely used in speech and image compression because it does a good job of decorrelationg these types of signals (makes many $c_i = 0$).

Combining the analysis and synthesis equations yields: $x^{n} = \sum \langle x(n), a_{i}(n) \rangle b_{i}(n)$

$$\hat{X} = BAX \tag{5}$$

(4)

Where **A** and **B** are the analysis and synthesis matrices respectively, and \hat{x} is the reconstructed signal. To get $\hat{x} = x$, $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{A}^{-1}$.

• We may break this class of invertible transforms into three groups:

1. Orthogonal/Unitary

$$B = A^{H} \quad \text{where } A^{H} = A^{-1}$$

$$b_{i}(n) = a_{i}^{*}(n) \tag{6}$$

Example - DFT:

$$b_{i}^{*}(n) = \left| \begin{pmatrix} \frac{j2\pi k}{N} \\ e \end{pmatrix}^{*} = e^{\frac{-j2\pi k}{N}} = a(n)$$
(7)

2. Biorthogonal $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{A}^{-1}$ (8) (9) $\langle a_i(n), b_i(n) \rangle = \delta_{j=i}$ 3. Non-orthogonal transform $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{A}^+$, where \mathbf{A}^+ is the pseudoinverse. (10)*Example* - Lapped Orthogonal Transform (LOT) Frames \clubsuit A frame is a set of functions, call them Ψ , such that a linear expansion can be performed, i.e., the set of functions spans $L^2(R)$, which is the space of finite energy signals. Hence, a signal can be represented as $x = A^{-1} \sum_{j} \langle x, \Psi_{j} \rangle \tilde{\Psi_{j}}$ (11)



- If A = B = 1, then we have a "normal" tight frame, or "energy-preserving" tight frame. A tight frame may add energy in the form of a non-unity A and B. Clearly, an orthonormal set preserves the energy of the signal (it is *isometric*). We may obtain a normal tight frame from a tight frame by dividing the frame bound equation by either A or B. This is equivalent to scaling each vector by its norm (length) so that they all have unit length. A tight frame behaves as an orthonormal basis, even if the basis functions are not linearly independent.
- In general, frames are not orthonormal, do not satisfy the Parseval Identity (does not preserve energy), and the expansion using frames is not unique.

Orthonormal Basis Functions

 \Box A basis is a special case of a tight frame in which the vectors Ψ not only span the space, but are also *linearly independent*. If the vectors are, in addition, orthonormal to each, meaning

$$\langle \Psi_k, \Psi_l \rangle = \delta_{kl} \quad \text{or}$$
 (13)

$$\langle \Psi_{k}, \Psi_{l} \rangle = \begin{cases} 1 & k = l \\ 0 & k \neq l \end{cases}$$
(14)

then we may say that the set of vectors Ψ form an *orthonormal basis* of the space. An orthogonal (or biorthogonal) transform is a mapping from a space defined by one orthonormal basis to another space defined by a new orthonormal basis. In addition, this transformation is unique.

□ When we are dealing with time signals, we use the standard Euclidean basis vectors, which in matrix form is the Identity matrix I. Hence, when we apply an orthogonal transform like the (Discrete) Fourier Transform, we are projecting the signal from the Euclidean basis vectors to a new orthonormal basis, which are the vectors of the transform matrix.



Here, a biorthogonal basis is one in which the synthesis basis is different, yet orthogonal to, the analysis basis (as in a biorthogonal transform).

b) Time-Frequency Representations

Transforms are limited in the sense that only one view of the signal is allowed at a time. For example with the Fourier transform, we may either view how the signal varies in time or how it varies in frequency, but not both. This is shown pictorially below in *figure 2*. Transforms do not allow for a combination of the two domains. This is acceptable for stationary signals, i.e., signals whose components do not change in time. However, transforms are quite unacceptable for nonstationary signals, since we often wish to know when different frequency components occur in time



☐ Time Frequency Representations (TFRs) provide this combination of domains. TFRs map a one-dimensional (continuous) signal in time (or frequency) into a two-dimensional (continuous) function in time and frequency.

 $x(t) \leftrightarrow T_x(t, f)$

- **T** This domain is often called the time-frequency (TF) plane.
- □ To demonstrate the importance of TFRs, consider the two signals in *figure 3* and their spectra. Due to the fact that time information is lost, the spectra appear identical. Ideally, we would like the TFR to display data as in *figure 4*

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2. Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT)

One of the most common TFRs is the short-time, or windowed, Fourier transform. It is defined as:

$$STFT_{x}(\tau, f) = \int_{t} x(t)w^{*}(t-\tau)e^{-j2\pi ft} dt$$
(15)

where w(t) is some window function. This is equivalent to computing the Fourier transform of a windowed segment of data.

- The window w(n) can be any standard window function, such as Boxcar(rectangular), Hamming, or Bartlett window. The Gabor expansion uses the Gaussian function as window. The window plays a critical role in STFT analysis, and different windows will lead to different TFRs.
- The discretized version of the STFT can be defined as:

$$STFT(m, k) = \sum_{n} [x(n)w(n-m)]e^{-j2\pi nk/N}$$
(16)

where N is the window length. Note that this is equivalent to computing the Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT) of a length N block of the signal x(n). The discrete STFT uniformly samples the continuous STFT, as in *figure 5*.

Time-Frequency resolution trade-off.

Without loss of generality, let's use a rectangular window on the data. According to the DFT, the number of frequency bins in the transformation is equal to the number of data points in the block, which in turn is equal to the length of the time window.

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- □ Let's consider two cases:
 - 1. Two sinusoids that are closely spaced in frequency:



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From the figures below, we see that with a large time window, the two impulses may be combined into one if the DFT is performed on both signals (since the energy of both is spread over all frequencies).



- □ Hence, an uncertainty exists in that we cannot simultaneously know the instantaneous time occurrence and frequency of a signal component. This uncertainty is parallel to the Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle in quantum mechanics with position and momentum of an electron.
- □ This uncertainty is due to the inherent relationship between the time and frequency domains. A signal that is shorter in time is longer in frequency, and vice verse. A clear example is the FT of a delta, which is unity. In this case, we have perfect time resolution and infinite frequency resolution. Another example is the sinuosoid, which is infinite in time and has perfect frequency resolution. This important theorem is known as the *Balian-Low Theorem*, which states that there is a bound to the amount of resolution that can exist, which can be quantitatively expressed as:

$$(\Delta t)(\Delta f) \ge \frac{1}{4\pi} \tag{17}$$

where Δt and Δf are the time and frequency resolutions, and are defined as

$$\Delta t^{2} = \frac{\int t^{2} |x(t)|^{2} dt}{\int |x(t)|^{2} dt} \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta f^{2} = \frac{\int f^{2} |X(f)|^{2} df}{\int |X(f)|^{2} df}$$
(18)



Time-Frequency Representations



Similarly we can create a composite basis vector

$$\Psi(n) = w(n)e^{\frac{-j2\pi nk}{N}}$$

which results in

$$STFT_{x}(m, k) = \sum_{n} x(n)\Psi(n-m)$$
⁽¹⁹⁾

 \square By windowing the basis vectors, we are creating a new basis for the entire TF plane. The number of basis vectors increases from *N* to

 $N \times (\text{number of blocks}) = N \times (L/N) = L$

Hence, if we have a length L = 64 signal, then by windowing the basis functions we create a set of 64 basis functions for the TF plane. This value is also the dimension of the space that we are trying to characterize. Remember that if we have more than these 64 vectors, we have a redundant expansion and the orthonormal basis becomes a frame (B/A > 1). If we have less than 64 vectors, the system is undetermined and the transform is noninvertible.

Let's apply the Uncertainty principle and Balian-Low Theorem to this idea of windowing the basis functions. To obtain perfect resolution in frequency, the basis functions must be of infinite length. This is due to the Balian-Low Theorem which states that a long signal in one domain(time) is short in another(frequency). Once we window these infinite length functions, we are effectively truncating the signal. This truncation will cause a spread in frequency (due to convolution with a sinc function in the case of a rectangular window). The amount of spreading is directly proportional to the amount of truncation of the time waveform: the more the truncation the more the spreading. This is another way to view the Uncertainty principle in action.







□ Hence, the second way we may compute a TFR is to find a basis for the TF plane of a dimension equal to the signal length (dimension), and then compute the inner product of the entire signal and each basis function. This is equivalent to projecting the signal onto a new L dimensional space.

<u>Note</u>: Each tile has a minimum area of $1/4\pi$ due to the Balian-Low Theorem. This area can be calculated by multiplying $\Delta t = t_2 - t_1$ and $\Delta f = f_2 - f_1$.

3. Applying a bank of frequency selective filters

The Fourier transform of the STFT equation yields:

$$STFT_{x}(n, l) = \sum_{k} X(k) W(k-l) e^{-\frac{j2\pi nk}{N}}$$

$$= \sum_{k} X(k) \Psi(k-l)$$
(20)

□ The quantity W(k) is the Fourier transform of the time window w(n). If the time window is a bandpass filter, i.e., the frequency response is limited to a finite, non-piecewise band, we may view W(k) as a "frequency window". Hence, we may view TFR generation as applying a frequency window, or filter, to the data

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3. The Short-Time Fourier Transform(STFT)

Steps in finding STFT of a signal

- 1. Multiply the signal x(n) with a window w(n).
- 2. Compute the Fourier transform of the product x(n)w(n)
- 3. Shift the window w(n) in time
- 4. Go to step 1.

This operation results in a separate Fourier transformation for each location m of the

center of the window. In other words, we obtain a function $X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m)$ of two variables *w* and *m*. The frequency variable *w* is continuous, and takes the usual range. The shift variable *m* is typically an integer multiple of some fixed integer *K*. For any fixed *m*, the window captures the features of the signal x(n) in the local region around *m*. The window therefore helps to localize the time domain data, before obtaining the frequency domain information.

The short-time Fourier transform can be written mathematically as

$$X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m) = \sum_{n = -\infty} x(n)w(n-m)e^{-j\omega n}$$
(21)

for w(n) = 1, this reduces the traditional Fourier transform for any choice of m.

4. Interpretation using bandpass filters.

a) Traditional Fourier transform as a bank of filters

The evaluation of $X(e^{j\omega})$ at fixed frequency ω_0 can be represented as shown in *figure 17*

fig 17. Representation of Fourier transform in terms of linear systems

This can be considered as a cascade of two systems

- 1. The modulator $e^{-j\omega_0 n}$ It shifts the Fourier transform towards the left by an amount ω_0 so that the zero frequency value of $S(e^{j\omega})$ is equal to $X(e^{j\omega})$.
- 2. The LTI system $H(e^{j\omega})$ This has an impulse response h(n) = 1 for all n. Its frequency response is given as

This is a linear system with two parts. The first is an LTI filter with impulse $j\omega_0 n$ $-j\omega_0 n$. This is followed by the modulator *e* response w(-n)e. The output $y_0(n)$ of this system is now a function of n. For any specific value of n, say n = m, this output represents the Fourier transform of x(n), in the neighbourhood of m, because m represents the location of the window w(k) in the time domain. For the special case where w(k) = 1 for all k, this output becomes a constant (equal to the traditional Fourier transform) for all *n*. The window w(n) has a lowpass transform $W(e^{j\omega})$ and so does w(-n). $-j(\omega - \omega_0)$ The modulated version represents a bandpass filter W(e)The output sequence is therefore, the output of a bandpass filter, whose passband is centered around ω_0 . $-i\omega_0 n$ \Box The modulator *e* re-centers the center frequency around zero frequency. For every frequency ω_0 the STFT performs the filtering operation to produce an output sequence $X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega_0}, m)$. So, the STFT can be looked upon as filter bank, with infinite number of filters (one per frequency). In practice, we are interested in computing the Fourier transform at a discrete set of frequencies

 $0 \le \omega_0 < \omega_1 < \ldots < \omega_{M-1} < 2\pi$. In this case the STFT reduces to a filter bank with M bandpass filters H(z) with responses $H(e_k^{j\omega}) = W(e^{-j(\omega - \omega_k)})$ and followed by modulators as shown in the figure 19.

If the frequencies ω_k are uniformly spaced, then the above system becomes the uniform DFT bank. For this case the M filters are related as

$$H_k(z) = H_0(zW^k) \qquad 0 \le k \le M - 1 \text{ where } W = e^{-j2\pi/M}$$

This implies that the uniform DFT bank is a device to compute the short-time Fourier transform at uniformly spaced frequencies.

Choice of w(n), and Time-frequency tradeoff

The STFT is not uniquely defined unless the window w(n) is specified. The choice of w(n) governs the tradeoff between time localization and frequency resolution. The signal $y_0(m)$ represents the evolution of the Fourier transform of x(n), evaluated around frequency ω_0 . Thus $y_0(m)$ represents the local information, around time m and around frequency ω_0 . As $W(e^{j\omega})$ becomes narrower, the bandpass filters get narrower, so the information in the frequency domain is more localized. However as $W(e^{j\omega})$ becomes narrower, the window w(n) gets wider (uncertainity principle) so that the localization of information in the time domain is compromised. Similarly by making the window w(n) narrower, the time domain information is more localized, while the frequency domain information is compromised.

Time-frequency representation and decimation

Instead of moving the window one sample at a time, if we move it by M samples then it is equivalent to decimating the outputs $y_0(n)$ by M. Figure 20 shows the decimated STFT system with the modulators moved past the decimators.

fig 20. An analysis bank with decimators and modulators

Since the filters have equal bandwidth, the decimation ratios can be taken to be equal. With $n_k = M$ (number of filters) we obtain a maximally decimated analysis bank.

5. Inversion of the STFT.

 \square As $X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m)$ is the Fourier transform of x(n)w(n-m), we have

$$x(n)w(n-m) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{0}^{2\pi} X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m) e^{j\omega n} d\omega$$
(26)

If we set n = m, then we obtain the STFT inversion formula as

$$x(n)w(0) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{0}^{2\pi} X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m) e^{j\omega m} d\omega$$
(27)

so that we can obtain x(n) for all m as long as w(0) is not equal to zero.

 $\Box \text{ A second inversion formula is given by}$ $x(n) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{0}^{2\pi} \int_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} X_{STFT}(e^{j\omega}, m) w^{*}(n-m) e^{j\omega n} d\omega \qquad (28)$ provided $\sum |w(m)|^{2} = 1$ (29)

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7. Generalization of the STFT

An arbitrary signal x(n) can be recovered from its decimated STFT coefficients, provided the analysis and the synthesis filter banks satisfy the perfect reconstruction(PR) property. However, the analysis filters are derived from a single prototype w(n) by modulation, the PR condition in turn will restrict the coefficients of w(n) severely. By relaxing this condition, we can obtain more flexibility. This generalized system is not derivable from a single sliding window system and is usually called "spectrum analyser".

The STFT pair can be written as

$$x_{k}(n) = \sum_{\substack{m = -\infty \\ M-1}} x(m)h_{k}(n_{k}n - m)$$
(30)

and
$$x(n) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} x_k(m) f_k(n - n_k m)$$
 (31)

k is the filter number and *m* is the time shift

 \square The analysis filters $H_k(z)$ and synthesis fitlers $F_k(z)$ satisfy the PR condition.

The decimators n_k are inversely proportional to the passband widths fo the filters $H_k(z)$.

- **I** From an analogy of Fourier transform, we see that
 - $f_k(n-n_km)$ play the role of basis functions in equation (31)

For orthonormal basis, $f_k(n) = h_k^*(-n)$.

8. Passing from STFT to Wavelets

step 1. Nonuniform filter banks

☐ The bandpass filters that we used for STFT have equal bandwidth as they are obtained by modulation of a single filter. As a first step, we give up this modulation scheme, and obtain filters $h_k(t)$ as

$$h_k(t) = a^{-k/2} h(a^{-k}t) \qquad \text{where } a > 1, \text{ and } k = integer \qquad (32)$$

In the frequency domain this can be written as

$$H_k(j\Omega) = a^{k/2} H(ja^k \Omega)$$
(33)

Thus all the responses are obtained by frequency-scaling (unlike frequency shift for STFT) of a prototype response $H(j\Omega)$

The scale factor $a^{-k/2}$ is meant to ensure that the energy $\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} |h_k(t)|^2 dt$ is independent of k. This can be regarded as normalizing convention.

Step 2. Nonuniform decimation

□ Since the bandwidth of $H_k(j\Omega)$ is smaller for large k, we can sample its output at a corresponding lower rate. In time domain this can be seen as a large step size for large widths of $h_k(t)$. The step size for window movement is a_kT and it increases with k, that is, increases as the center frequency Ω_k (hence bandwidth) of the filter decreases.

Therefore, we can write the wavelet transform as

$$X_{DWT}(k, n) = a^{-k/2} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} x(t)h(nT - a^{-k}t)dt \qquad \text{where } k, n \text{ are integers}$$
(34)

By making the above changes, the wavelet transform can be obtained using a filter bank as shown in *figure 22*

