VSB	TECHNICAL	FACULTY OF ELECTRICAL	DEPARTMENT
Щ	UNIVERSITY	ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER	OF COMPUTER
	OF OSTRAVA	SCIENCE	SCIENCE

Data Visualization

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- Vector field $\boldsymbol{v}: D \to \mathbb{R}^n$
- *D* is typically 2D planar surface or 2D surface embedded in 3D
- n = 2 fields tangent to 2D surface
- n = 3 volumetric fields
- When visualizing vector fields, we have to:
 - Map D to 2D screen (like with scalar fields)
 - Then we have 1 pixel for 2 or 3 scalar values (only 1 for scalar fields)



A wind tunnel model of a Cessna 182 showing a wingtip vortex Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cessna_182_model-wingtip-vortex.jpg

- We can compute derived scalar quantities from vector fields and use already known methods for these:
- **Divergence** ($\mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}$) degree of field's convergence or divergence



Problems With Differential Definition of Divergence

A conventional centered difference always underestimate the true derivative

- Divergence ($\mathbb{R}^n \to \mathbb{R}$)
- Informally, the divergence of a field is the difference between how much of the field enters and leaves a control volume
- In case of incompressible flow, the divergence of the velocity field is 0



Source: Eric Shaffer, Vector Field Visualization



• rot v is axis of the rotation and its magnitude is magnitude of rotation

• Curl (rotor, vorticity) ($\mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$)



• 2D fluid flow simulated by NSE and visualized using vorticity

Source: A Simple Fluid Solver based on the FFT, J. Stam, J. of Graphics Tools 6(2), 2001, 43-52

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Approximating Derivatives

- Analytical functions
 - Ideally we are given a function in a closed form and we can (probably) compute previous derivatives analytically
 - Sometimes the given function is too complicated
 - We compute the derivatives numerically via differentiation
- Discretely sampled data
 - The best approach is to fit a function to the data and compute analytical derivatives
- Numerical evaluation may be faster than analytical

Approximating Derivatives

• Central-difference formulas of Order $O(h^2)$:

$$f'(x_0) \approx \frac{f_1 - f_{-1}}{2h}$$

$$f''(x_0) \approx \frac{f_1 - 2f_0 + f_{-1}}{h^2}$$

$$f^{(3)}(x_0) \approx \frac{f_2 - 2f_1 + 2f_{-1} - f_{-2}}{2h^3}$$

$$f^{(4)}(x_0) \approx \frac{f_2 - 4f_1 + 6f_0 - 4f_{-1} + f_{-2}}{h^4}$$

Approximating Derivatives

• Central-difference formulas of Order $O(h^4)$:

$$f'(x_0) \approx \frac{-f_2 + 8f_1 - 8f_{-1} + f_{-2}}{12h}$$

$$f''(x_0) \approx \frac{-f_2 + 16f_1 - 30f_0 + 16f_{-1} - f_{-2}}{12h^2}$$

$$f^{(3)}(x_0) \approx \frac{-f_3 + 8f_2 - 13f_1 + 13f_{-1} - 8f_{-2} + f_{-3}}{8h^3}$$

$$f^{(4)}(x_0) \approx \frac{-f_3 + 12f_2 - 39f_1 + 56f_0 - 39f_{-1} + 12f_{-2} - f_{-3}}{6h^4}$$

For an overview of how to approximate the derivative to any order of accuracy see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finite_difference_coefficient

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Alternative notation of 1st order DE is F(t, y(t), y'(t)) = 0, where y'(t) will explicitly appear in the eq. although t and y(t) need not

• First-order differential equation (initial value problem)

$$y'(t) = f(t, y(t)), y(t_0) = y_0$$

y ... unknown function

- We want to find an approximation of a nearby point on the trajectory y of an object placed in the vector field f by moving a short distance along a line tangent to the trajectory of this point
- We replace the derivative y'(t) by the finite difference approximation (forward difference) $y'(t) \approx (y(t + \Delta t) y(t))/\Delta t$ yielding

$$y(t + \Delta t) \approx y(t) + y'(t)\Delta t = y(t) + f(t, y(t))\Delta t$$

• First order Euler method:

$$\mathbf{x}(t + \Delta t) = \mathbf{x}(t) + \mathbf{v}(t, \mathbf{x}(t))\Delta t, \mathbf{x}(t_0) = \mathbf{x}_0$$

- *x* ... represents spatial position
- v ... vector field
- Δt ... integration time step
- x_0 ... initial position
- Fast but not very accurate
- Higher methods available

• Second order Runge-Kutta method:

$$\mathbf{x}(t + \Delta t) = \mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{1}{2}(K_1 + K_2)$$

where

•
$$K_1 = \boldsymbol{v}(\boldsymbol{x}(t))\Delta t$$

• $K_2 = \boldsymbol{\nu}(\boldsymbol{x}(t) + K_1)\Delta t$

• Fourth order Runge-Kutta method (aka RK4):

$$\mathbf{x}(t + \Delta t) = \mathbf{x}(t) + \frac{1}{6} (K_1 + 2K_2 + 2K_3 + K_4)$$

where

•
$$K_1 = v(\mathbf{x}(t))\Delta t$$

•
$$K_2 = v(x(t) + \frac{1}{2}K_1)\Delta t$$

- $K_3 = v(x(t) + \frac{1}{2}K_2)\Delta t$
- $K_4 = \boldsymbol{\nu}(\boldsymbol{x}(t) + K_3)\Delta t$
- There are many other methods (e.g. Verlet integration)

Glyphs

- Icons or signs for visualizing vector fields
 - Placed by (sub)sampling the dataset domain
 - Attributes (scale, color, orientation) map vector data at sample points
- Simplest glyph: Line segment (hedgehog plots)
 - Line from x to x + kv
 - Optionally color map |v|

Glyphs

• Simplest glyph: Line segment (hedgehog plots)



Source: Eric Shaffer, Vector Field Visualization

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Glyphs

- Another variant: 3D cone and 3D arrow glyphs
- Shows orientation better than lines



• Use shading to separate overlapping glyphs

Source: Eric Shaffer, Vector Field Visualization

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Glyphs Related Problems

- No interpolation in glyph space (unlike for scalar plots)
- A glyph take more space than a pixel (clutter)
- Complicated visual interpolation of arrows
- Scalar plots are dense, glyph plots are sparse
 - Glyph positioning is important:
 - Uniform grid
 - Rotated grid
 - Random samples (generally best solution)



- Important approaches of characteristic lines in a vector field:
 - (1a) Stream line (proudnice) curve everywhere tangential to the instantaneous vector (velocity) field (time independent vector field)

 $\mathbf{S}(S)$ –

- Local technique initiated from one or a few particles
- Trace of the direction of the flow at one single time step
- Represents the direction of the flow at a given fixed time
- Curves can look different at each time for unsteady flows
- The scene becomes cluttered when the number of streamlines is increased
- Computationally expensive

 $\times v(s) = 0$

- Important approaches of characteristic lines in a vector field:
 - (1b) Stream tubes all stream lines of a stream together form the stream tube surface
 - There is flow through the tube but there is no flow either inward or outward across its surface



- There are three extensions of stream lines for time-varying data:
 - (2) Path lines trajectories of massless particles in the flow
 - Trace of a single particle in continuous time (at multiple snapshots in time)
 - The path line shows how the particle moves in the fluid



- (3) Streak lines trace of dye that is released into the flow at a fixed position
 - Curve that connects the position of all the particles which are initiated at the certain point but at different times



• In steady flow a path line = streak line = stream line

• (3) Time lines – propagation of a line of massless particles in time



Characteristic Lines Example



The red particle moves in a flowing fluid; its *pathline* is traced in red; the tip of the trail of blue ink released from the origin follows the particle, but unlike the static pathline (which records the earlier motion of the dot), ink released after the red dot departs continues to move up with the flow. (This is a *streakline*.) The dashed lines represent contours of the velocity field (*streamlines*), showing the motion of the whole field at the same time.

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strea mlines,_streaklines,_and_pathlines

Streamlines Example



Magnetic fields shown as streamlines over a visible light and X-ray composite image of the M77 galaxy from the HST

Source:

https://www.nasa.gov/imagefeature/shaping-a-spiral-galaxy-0

Line Integral Convolution

- LIC is a technique for representing two-dimensional vector fields
- The idea is to produce a texture which is highly correlated in the direction of the vector field but not correlated across the vector field
- The basic technique ignores both the magnitude of the vector field and its sign



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Further Reading

- http://crcv.ucf.edu/projects/streakline_eccv
- http://www.zhanpingliu.org/research/flowvis/lic/lic.htm

Exercise

- Try to create the visualization of time-varying vector field representing fluid flow
- Hedgehogs show velocities of flow field at uniform grid vertices
- Background color reflects local velocities
- Euler ODE solver used for tracking of randomly scattered green particles
- Rotation of vector field shown by diverging color scheme

