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1 Week 7 Module 5: Sampling and Quantization

Interpolation describes the process of building a continuous-time signal $\mathbf{x(t)}$ from a sequence of samples $\mathbf{x[n]}$. In other words, interpolation allows moving from the discrete-time world to the continuous-time world. Interpolation raises two interesting questions:

The first one is how to interpolate between samples?

- In the case, of two samples, this is simple enough and there is there is a straight line that goes between these two samples.
- In the case of three samples, similarly, you have a parabola that goes through these 3 samples.
- If you have many samples, you can try to do the same and go through all samples but you see this is a trickier issue compared to what we have done with two or three samples.

The second question is:

- is there a minimum set of values you need to measure the function at so that you can perfectly reconstruct it.

Later on in the module, we are going to study sampling, i.e. the process of moving from a continuous-time signal to a sequence of samples. In other words, sampling allows moving from the continuous-time world to the discrete-time world. Suppose we take equally-spaced samples of a function $\mathbf{x(t)}$. The question is when is there a one-to-one relationship between the continuous-time function and its samples, i.e. when do the samples form a unique representation of the continuous-time function? To answer this question, we are going to use all the tools in the toolbox that we have looked at so far:

- Hilbert spaces
- projections

- filtering
- sinc functions
- and so on.

Everything comes together in this module to develop a profound and very useful result, the **sampling theorem**.

Before moving to the heart of the topic, let us briefly review its history. The Shannon sampling theorem has a very interesting history which goes back well before Shannon. Numerical analysts were concerned about interpolating tables of functions and the first one to proove a version of the sampling theorem was Whittaker in England in 1915. Harry Nyquist at Bell Labs came up with the Nyqvist criterion, namely that a function that has a maximum frequency F0F$_{0F0}$ could be sampled at 2F02F$_{02F0}$. In the Soviet Union, Kotelnikov proved a sampling theorem. The son of the first Whittaker further proved results on the sampling theorem. Then Herbert Raabe in Berlin wrote his PhD thesis about a sampling theorem that, wrong time wrong city, he got zero credit for. Denis Gabor worked on a version of the sampling theorem in the mid 1940s. Then Claude Shannon, the inventor of information theory, wrote a beautiful paper that is in the further reading for this class where the Shannon sampling theorem appears in the form that we use today. Last but not least, in 1949 Someya in Japan also proved the sampling theorem. You can see that it's a very varied history, it's a fundamental result where many people independently came up with this result.

1.1 The Continous-Time World

1.1.1 Introduction

The continuous-time world is the world we live in, the physical reality of the world, in contrast with the discrete-time world, the world inside a computer. We are first going to look at models of the world and compare digital with analog views of the world. Then we are going to study continuous-time signal processing in greater details. Furthermore, we will introduce the last form of Fourier transform we have not yet encountered in this class, the continuous-time Fourier transform.

1.1.2 The continous-time paradigm

Table 1: Two views of the world

Digital World	**Analog World**
countable integer index n	real-valued time t [sec]
sequences $x[n] \in \ell_2(\mathbb{Z})$	function $x(t) \in L_2(\mathbb{R})$
frequency $\omega \in [-\pi, \pi]$	frequency $\Omega \in \mathbb{R}(rad/sec)$
DTFT: $\ell_2(\mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow L_2[-\pi, \pi]$	FT: $L_2(\mathbb{R}) \rightarrow L_2(\mathbb{R})$