

Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya
Facultat de Matemàtiques i Estadística

Degree in Mathematics
Bachelor's Degree Thesis

A Learning Approach To The FOM Problem

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April, 2017

Thanks to Alberto Rodriguez for his tutoring, for providing me with the required tools and financial support to undertake this project and for hosting me in his laboratory, to Maria Alberich for her supervision and tutoring, to Francois Hogan for his ideas and the introduction he gave me to his previous work, to Maria Bauza for her insights in Machine Learning, to all the members of the MCube Lab for their thoughts on the project and their support, to Centre de Formacio Interdisciplinaria Superior for offering me the possibility and the financial support to take part in this project, to Massachusetts Institute of Technology for providing the required facilities required to develop this project and to Generalitat de Catalunya for their financial support.

Abstract

The family of modes (FOM) approach to solving model predictive control (MPC) problems is a novel heuristic technique developed at MIT to solve the time complexity of traditional MPC solving techniques. This study addresses some of the issues associated with the previous formulations of this technique by increasing the sequential robustness of the FOM and providing methodologies to choose the parameters required for the heuristic. A general simulation interface is developed together with techniques to score and compare the obtained trajectories. Then an statistics and machine learning based methodology is developed to tune the parameters is proposed and the results are compared with the original ones. Finally, experimental procedures are developed to validate the results.

Keywords

Manipulation, Online Control, MPC, FOM, Underactuation, Hybridness

1. Introduction. On the mechanics of pushing.

Traditionally, one of the main focus of interest of the manipulation community has been the mechanics of stable grasping: finding stable grasping points, encapsulation, etc. [add citations and some examples, Alberto's work, M. Mason, etc.]. But some drift towards the study of the mechanics of pushing started to appear at least as far as Mason's work on 1980's [6]. Some of the motivations for this new focus of interest were to allow the proper understanding of the internal mechanics of general grasping (by viewing it as a special case of multi-contact-point pushing) to address some of the issues found with stable grasping [TODO: Add some of the things mentioned in Mason(1986): Humans example, multiple objects handling, ...].

Goyal et al. [3] [4] applied concepts of classical plastic theory to describe planar sliding, deriving the concepts of limit surfaces for dry contact manipulation.

Planar pushing has been widely studied since, both by its simpler model as compared to free 3D pushing as for its similarity to simple in-hand repositioning operations [TODO: add citation].

1.1 Coulomb Friction

One of the usual assumptions in the robotics community is considering dry Coulomb contact forces. This model separates friction into two possible states (static and dynamic or kinetic friction) and the set of rules which describe it are a combination the work of Amonton [TODO: cite] and Coulomb [TODO: cite]:

- Amonton's first law: The force of friction is directly proportional to the applied load.
- Amonton's second law: The force of friction is independent of the apparent area of contact.
- Coulomb's law: Kinetic friction is independent of the sliding velocity.

Mason cites prior statements by Da Vinci[TODO: Cite] and experimental verification by Truesdell and Guilmor [TODO: Cite] and I would like to add the work of Euler[TODO: Cite], who first distinguished between static and kinetic friction.

1.2 Friction Cone

A common and useful geometric interpretation of Coulombs law (according to Mason first constructed by Moseley[TODO: Cite]) is widely used in the robotics community. Given a point on a surface interacting with it with total contact force \mathbf{f} , we decompose it into its normal f_n and tangential f_t components with respect to the contact surface. Coulomb friction compact formulation states that $f_t \leq \mu f_n$, where μ is the proportionality factor usually called friction coefficient [TODO: Add note on why only one coefficient is used], where the equality holds on dynamic friction. Letting α be the angle between \mathbf{f} and f_n (or, alternatively, the normal of the surface on the point of contact), Coulomb's law is equivalent to If we construct the normal to the surface, then Coulombs law is equivalent to $\alpha \leq \tan^{-1} \frac{f_t}{f_n}$. So, the set of feasible contact forces lies inside a closed cone with aperture 2α . [TODO: Add image]

1.3 Maximum Power Inequality, Limit Curve and Limit Surface

Goyal's work can be generalised to friction models which are more general but, for clarity, the main concepts will be introduced with the special case of isotropic Coulomb friction (as was presented in their original paper).

Given rigid body sliding over a surface with a known normal force (or pressure distribution) and assuming that, at each point of contact, the frictional force depends only on the normal force, the slider's orientation and it's direction of slipping, isotropic Coulomb friction law allows us to obtain two important properties.

1. $|f| \leq K$, where f is the frictional force vector and K is a constant. Furthermore,

The maximum-power inequality is introduced with which a convex limit curve describes the forces arising during slip of a point of contact. The limit curves for Coulomb friction (a circle), for an ideal wheel (a straight line), and for some less ideal wheels are given as examples. The load-motion inequality for the overall body is then derived and the resulting concept of a limit surface is introduced and illustrated with two somewhat artificial examples (a body with two points of Coulombic support, and a ring of ratcheted wheels). The moment function is then presented. We conclude with a discussion of some facts and results related to limit surfaces and to the moment function.

1.4 Motion Cone and Limit Surfaces

1.5 Quasi static formulation

1.6 Data driven approach

Work on how to link it with previous things (maybe some paper on problems of the model driven approach)

1.7 Hybridness

The study of the mechanics of pushing led to the concept of hybridness, inherent in the dynamical properties of traditional rigid body Coulomb contact

Feedback is hard/requires effort. All the teams in the ARC used open loop systems (as of the 2nd edition of the competition) [add reference]

Feedback is important. Robots fall because control in hybrid systems still has a long way to go.

TODO: UNDERACTUATION

This allowed to tackle problems as state hybridness (ADD COMPLEMENTARITY CONSTRAINTS AND HYBRID PROBLEMS). This allowed further progress into the planning branch of these problems. Unluckily, the complexity of the traditional formulations for these problems requires discretization of the time space of the problem and the algorithmic cost of the used solvers usually grows exponentially with the number of considered time steps. This has been translated into a relatively lower progress of the correspondent online control branch.

2. Prior Work

2.1 Pushing

2.2 Complementarity Constraints

[TODO: Read Nima's paper].

The Complementarity constraint formulation [TODO: INSERT REFERENCES] presented a systematic way of formulating hybrid system problems and the work of Anitescu and Potra [1] guaranteed a solution for this formulation on multi-rigid-body Coulomb friction contact problems and impact problems with friction and nonzero restitution coefficient. However, the complementarity constraints are generally non convex and using them in practical problems without further treatment makes the problem non-computable.

2.3 Model Predictive Control

To tackle the computing cost of complementarity constraints, model predictive control(MPC) is usually used. This formulation defines a discrete set of positions (x_1, \dots, x_n) and control inputs (u_0, \dots, u_{n-1}) and assumes that the hybrid state the system is in time t_i cannot change until time t_{i+1} . Given convex dynamics and cost function and fixing the state the system is during each time transition, the optimization problem on the control inputs is convex [TODO: Citation]. Thus, the global problem can be solved by addressing each of the convex fixed hybrid state sub-problems. As the number of sub-problems grows exponentially with the number of time steps, a mixed integer programming (MIP) strategy is usually adopted. The drawbacks of MIP is that it doesn't escalate well with the number of possible hybrid states and, even with a small number of states, the optimizers aren't generally fast enough to solve the problem online, as required in control problems.

[TODO: Add this: Es pot representar el conjunt de possibles problemes de programacio lineal que s'han de resoldre a traves d'un arbre. Cada node representa un dels tres estats possibles. L'arrel de l'arbre es un node buit i a cada pas de la trajectoria l'arbre es ramifica 3 nodes (un per cada possible estat). Cada cami des de l'arrel fins a una de les fulles defineix de manera unica un problema a solucionar.]

2.4 MIP and MIQP

2.5 Family of Modes

Recently, Hogan and Rodriguez [5] proposed an heuristic based procedure to solve MPC problems online called Family of Modes (FOM). In their work, they assume a finite horizon MPC problem. Periodically, the heuristic method explores the optimization problem over only a small set of all the possible combinations of hybrid states to decide the instantaneous controller policy. This policy is then recomputed frequently to take into account new information as the finite horizon advances in time as well as to tackle external interference with the system and errors in the dynamic model.

FOM is applied to solve a planar system formed by a point pusher and a square slider supported on a board. The contact between the pusher and the slider is modelled as a single point Coulomb contact. Three possible hybrid states are considered with regards to this contact point: pushing without sliding and pushing while sliding in each of the two possible directions. The contact between the slider and the board

is modelled by deriving the limit surface of the slider [TODO: Citation]. The motion and cone constraints are obtained by assuming a quasi-static formulation and linearising the motion equations and the motion cone [TODO: explain more and explain why we use full dynamics on the first step]. By exploring only three pre-chosen modes at every step their controller is able to successfully track a straight trajectory or pass through a set of waypoints even under external perturbations or perturbations on the dynamical model used. [TODO: add this:(per exemple, podriem estar esperant que en un pas el dit robotic es mantingues adherit, pero el coeficient de fricció pot ser diferent a la zona on esta en aquell moment i lliscar en comptes de mantenir-se adherit)]

However, the method depends on the chosen modes to explore. In this simple case a good set of modes could be derived intuitively or by trial and error, but for more complex and higher dimensional problems, this may not be possible. Furthermore, adding more modes to consider into this heuristic doesn't generally translate into better results and, in some cases, it may lead to results far worse than the original one. So even guessing a good set of modes doesn't provide an easy or systematic way of improving the obtained result.

In this study the FOM heuristic is reinforced to provide non-worsening local solutions to the optimization problem as new modes are added into the family and a systematic way of choosing the initial modes. Finally, a generalized method is proposed to track complex trajectories. [TODO: Explain better].

2.6 Nomenclature

From here on:

- (1) `hybrid state` or `state`: Each of the possible dynamic states the system can be in. [TODO: further define]
- (2) `hybrid mode` or `mode`: Ordered set of states. It defines a finite horizon convex optimization program.
- (3) `family of modes` or `family`: Unordered set of modes. Corresponds to each of the convex problems explored at each iteration of the FOM heuristic. [TODO: Formally define to avoid any kind of ambiguities]

2.7 Sequential Properties

Let's cite [\[2\]](#)

3. My Work. TODO: Change name

- State:
- Mode: Basic modes are S , U_n and D_n
- Family:
- Control iteration:
- Optimization iteration:

4. Simulation Tool

The simulations of the previous study were mainly designed for an specific choice of modes and a specific trajectory to follow. In this study, we wanted to study general properties of the FOM problem, to generalize the results to more complex pusher-slider systems and trajectories, and to compare our different FOM strategies to solve the MPC problem with other conventional methods as MIQP. In order to satisfy this needs, we decided to implement a general simulation tool. The code is added in appendix A but the main structure is explained here.

An abstract state interface is implemented to provide the dynamics and cone constraints of the state as well as their linearized versions at a certain objective state space and control input. To define a certain experimental problem, the dynamics function and constraint equations are derived depending on a general state space variable \mathbf{x} and controller action \mathbf{u} and the necessary state instances are implemented and a mode is then defined by a vector of state handles. An MPC solver class it's also implemented to get an initial condition and an objective trajectory and return a control input. Each MPC solver implementation can include its own member states or modes (as well as other optimization setup variables) and internally decides how to handle them.

At the same time, an Euler integration simulator is implemented. This simulator uses it's own state classes to describe the dynamics of the pusher slider system. These states are independent from the optimization ones so that discrepancies between model and reality can be simulated (for example the MPC solver can use linearized dynamics or cone constraints while the Euler integrator uses the nonlinearized version, which is more similar to the real experimental setup than using linearized dynamics in both places). The Euler integration class also holds a member MPC solver that returns the control input to be applied. The integrator then computes the value of the state variable derivative $\dot{\mathbf{x}}$ and uses a simple quadrature to approximate the next state variable value.

4.1 Global Cost Function

During the previous work at MCubelab, there was no systematic and objective way to evaluate the global trajectory resulting from the FOM control law, the exit or failure of an experiment was mainly determined in a subjective binary way. If the pusher slider didnt show appreciable divergence (at the naked eye) from the planned trajectory it was considered a success, otherwise it was a failure. In a similar fashion if the system was perturbed (by an external interaction), the success lied in recovering the original trajectory in a reasonable time determined subjectively. The main goal of the study was just to demonstrate that FOM could effectively control the pusher slider system to track previously planned trajectories, and that all this process could be done online. Because of this proof-of-concept nature, this approach was sufficient.

In this thesis we want to optimize the performance of the FOM and this requires a certain notion of metric or score for the result obtained. We decided to ignore the cost of the controller and we adopted a quadratic cost on the state variables. To keep consistent with the local problem we used the same cost matrix Q as in the MPC obtaining $S = \sum_{i=0}^N \mathbf{x}_i^T Q \mathbf{x}_i$.

4.2 Chameleon Mode

In the previous FOM study there was no guarantee of improvement in the obtained trajectory by considering new modes in a previously used family. It needs to be clarified that, even if in the previous study there was no global score function implemented, this effect could be so big that it could be observed with the naked eye. An illustrative example would be the following. A family containing only the sticking mode $F_1 = S$ would greatly outperform the extended family $F_2 = S \cup D_2$. On the other side a further extension $F_3 = F_2 \cup D_1$ would outperform the two previous families TODO: ADD PHOTOS OR VIDEOS OF THIS.

The performance decrease experienced in F_2 can be explained by the fact that the FOM optimizer can choose optimal trajectories that will never be able to be applied. For example, the optimal control solution at a certain optimization iteration can be to stick for one time step to then slide up for another time step and finally stick for the rest of the finite time horizon prediction. The control law for the controller is to execute the first step of the optimal trajectory, so it the pusher will move without sliding for one time step and then the control law will be recomputed. The problem lies in the fact that no mode starts with a sliding up state, so the trajectory planned in the previous iteration is no longer considered. If the first sliding step of the trajectories obtained from S and D_2 are similar there will be no appreciable but the solution of D_2 may sometimes rely on the possibility of sliding to follow a more aggressive control trajectory that would have a smaller TODO: FINISH THIS.

The conclusion these experiences led us to was that, using [TODO: Cite] terminology, there was no sequential improvement property when adding new modes. Solving the MPC using the FOM approach has similarities with their study: Each of the modes can be considered a heuristic and the strategy of recomputing the control policy at a certain frequency by using the same heuristics can be viewed as a rollout technique. It's important to note that the concepts of sequential consistency or optimality cannot be applied to our case without some previous modifications, because of the existence of a receding finite time horizon, but for every FOM problem we can formulate an associated Full Horizon Family of Modes (FFOM) as follows: TODO: Define it.

If we take the family F_1 of the previous example and we consider it's associated FFOM problem, we can see that, in an ideal problem (TODO: define it in nomenclature), it's clearly sequentially consistent (and so, sequentially improving): Consider that at a certain control iteration there's a full horizon of N steps to reach the end of the trajectory. Then the S mode will get the optimal path to reach the goal while keeping the sticking contact at all times, obtaining a sequence of position states $\mathbf{x}(\mathbf{x}_0)^* = (x_1^*, x_2^*, \dots, x_N^*)$ and control inputs $\mathbf{u}(\mathbf{x}_0)^* = (u_0^*, u_1^*, \dots, u_{N-1}^*)$ for the optimal path from the initial position to the goal. Then, the controller will execute u_0 for one control step and the pusher slider system will be in position x_1 . The only heuristic it will consider in the next optimization step is to stick until reaching the goal, so the optimal trajectory obtained will be $\mathbf{x}(\mathbf{x}_1)^* = (x_2^*, x_3^*, \dots, x_N^*)$ and $\mathbf{u}(\mathbf{x}_1)^* = (u_1^*, u_2^*, \dots, u_{N-1}^*)$, being sequentially consistent. In a similar way, it can be shown that no sequential consistency nor improvement can be guaranteed for family F_2 : if mode D_2 is chosen at a certain time step, giving an optimal trajectory $\mathbf{x}_0(\mathbf{x}_0)^* \mathbf{u}_0(\mathbf{x}_0)^*$, a mode D_1 is required in the family to consider the continuation of the previous optimal trajectory $\mathbf{x}_0(\mathbf{x}_1)^*$, $\mathbf{u}_0(\mathbf{x}_1)^*$ again. As it is not the case, the new optimal trajectory has no relation with the previous one and consistency and improvement cannot be guaranteed. On the other hand sequential improvement is guaranteed for family F_3 because, following the previous reasoning, including the mode D_1 in the rollout allows to continue considering optimal trajectories from a previous step of a D_2 mode and the S mode considering the ones obtained from a D_1 mode.

We considered important to guarantee sequential improvement for the FFOM problem even taking into account that our problem is not in the ideal world (modelling errors and different frequencies for the

optimization problem and the controller can lead the state obtained when applying u_0 to x_0 to be different from x_1) and that we don't have a full horizon. It was not a sufficient condition to obtain an overall improvement when adding modes to a family, but it was a required one. Another important motivation to try to guarantee it was that the simulation results showed that families that guaranteed improvement in the FFOM problem outperformed the ones that did not.

In order to guarantee it we decided first decided to only use families that would always compare the current possible trajectories to the immediately previous optimal one (in the FFOM problem). The problem with this approach is that for any mode $M = (S_1, \dots, S_N)$ you add include in the family you need to include any suffix of it extended to length N ($S_i, \dots, S_N, S_{N+1}, \dots, S_{N+i-1}$) and suffixes of the newly added modes would also be required. Given certain mode patterns and adding simple extension tails formed by $i - 1$ copies of the same mode may keep the number of modes low. For an S mode no extra modes are required and for a D_n one you only need to extend the family with an S mode and all the D_i modes for $i \in (1, n - 1)$. Even taking this into account, we considered adopting this strategy constrained the problem of family design more than we wanted to and added more extra nodes that was strictly necessary, so we decided to change from static families to dynamical ones instead.

The dynamical adjustment we added consisted in including a dynamic mode that would force the algorithm into considering the previously chosen path to guarantee sequential improvement. This mode, that we called chameleon mode, simply includes the maximal suffix [TODO: add definition] of the previously selected mode extended with a single sticking state. TODO: Add something.

The chameleon mode functionality was added in the simulation interface and it's performance was tested in simulation. As we expected, there was a great improvement in families that didn't have a sequentially improving structure without it. TODO: Add figures with comparison and some comment.

With the chameleon mode, an improvement when adding modes could be observed to a certain extent, as will be discussed in 5.1.

Given the good properties of the chameleon mode, we decided to include it in the FOM formulation. From now on, unless specified otherwise, we will use FOM to refer to the family of modes with chameleon mode implementation.

4.3 MIQP and Clustered MIQP

We wanted to compare the solutions provided by FOM with traditional MPC solving techniques. In order to do that we decided to implement the MIQP technique using the commercial solver Gurobi. This solver was already used in Hogan's work in a force-based formulation prior to the final velocity-based one (TODO: Cite) and it was able to run in an average of 3Hz. It should be mentioned that the execution time at every control iteration could range between few miliseconds to 10 seconds, because MIP algorithms depend on the geometry of the problem. This is not a problem for simulation, but in a real control environment the frequency at which you can update the controller cannot be higher that the frequency at which you can solve the worst case scenarios in the optimization problem. Otherwise the controller may try to update the control input before it is computed by the optimizer. There may be solutions to this effect in other formulations, but for the one used in Hogan's work an MIQP controller could not be run at more than 0.1Hz.

We were expecting a similar behavior in the velocity-based formulation, but it took several orders of magnitude more to solve. In order to simulate 500 control iterations (a trajectory of 5 seconds controlled at 100Hz) with a finite horizon of 7 steps it took around 6 hours of execution time. We were expecting to have an "ideal" MIQP result to compare FOM with and try to get similar results with FOM with less

computational effort, but the results obtained with 7 steps of the MIQP were worse than the FOM and we couldn't afford to increase the horizon further.

We looked at techniques to speed up the MIQP execution (TODO: Add where did I find the information) and we found out that our current big-M formulation worked better (both in execution time and in quality of the obtained trajectory) than the indicator constraints formulations as smaller the M parameter was. As explained in 2.4 each M parameter used in a scalar equality $Ax \leq b + M(1 - z)$ must be greater than $\max_{x \in D} (Ax - b)$, for a the x variable domain D, so that the inequality is rendered redundant when $z = 0$. We implemented a version of MIQP that given a vectorial constraint as the ones used in Hogan's formulation $A\vec{x} \leq \vec{b} + M(1 - z) \cdot (1, \dots, 1)^T$ replaces the arbitrary constant M by a vector \vec{M} where each component's value is $M_i = \max_{x_i \in D} (A_i x_i - b_i)$. We were not able to improve the execution time, but we were able to obtain better results for the MIQP. TODO: add indicator constraints somewhere.

In order to compare FOM to other methods using a longer time horizon, we implemented another MPC solving method based on MIQP that we called Clustered MIQP. Given a standard MPC formulation, this method works in the following way:

- Consider a clustering factor c, a finite horizon Nc and a set of h hybrid states $\{H_1, \dots, H_h\}$.
- The finite horizon is then divided into N clusters of c steps: (C_1, \dots, C_N) .
- The state space is extended with 3 binary variables per step (s_i, d_i, u_i) for a total of $3N$ variables.
- Each variable s_i d_i and u_i is associated with the hybrid state of the cluster C_i (sticking, sliding down and sliding up respectively).
- The constraint $s_i + d_i + u_i = 1$ is enforced
- The problem constraints are formulated with big M notation or indicator constraints and the problem is fed into an MIQP solver.

This way we can reduce the dimensionality of the optimization problem by keeping the same state during all the steps of the same cluster. The execution time of this new problem is similar to the execution time of a MIQP problem of N steps but the controller inputs can be different at each of the Nc steps.

We intended to use this method to approximate MIQP problems with long horizons (around 35 steps) by using few clusters (around 5) and we expected to obtain a better trajectory than the ones obtained with FOM. As will be discussed later, the results of this MIQP approximation were worse than the results obtained in FOM with a good choice of few modes.

4.4 Simulation Conclusions

We were able to compare both MIQP and FOM with a small finite horizon of 5 steps and we were able to observe the expected behaviour: Some families gave poor results when compared to MIQP, but the result could be iteratively improved by adding new modes. The obtained trajectories did not strictly follow an increasing sequence, but

4.5 Systematic Protocol to Choose the Modes of the Family

Initially, a single trajectory tracking learning protocol was devised. A single euler integration step of the controlling policy was executed with a lot of initial conditions homogeneously distributed in a four dimensional ball centered around the expected initial conditions. This guaranteed enough generality to represent any possible situation in a static trajectory (either a line or a circle). The cost for every initial condition and hybrid mode was recorded. The cost was normalized for every experiment across all the hybrid states and then the k modes with highest normalized mean were chosen.

After testing it, the same procedure was applied to a wide range of circular trajectories as well as a line trajectory and the best modes for each curvature were chosen.

Finally, at every iteration of the controlling policy, the local curvature is computed and the adequate family is used.

5. Learning

5.1 Simple trajectory learning

5.2 Dynamic FOM

TODO: Explain that chameleon can keep sequential optimality even in this situation.

6. Experiments

7. Conclusion and Discussion

1. MIQP takes too long, it's execution time depends on the geometry of the problem (different time at each iteration). The results may depend on the implementation chosen. If you don't have a software that allows you to tune everything it is too complicated to implement. Clustered MIQP is no better. We should try MIQP with tail (we expect good results but bad time)

8. TODO stuff

I have to talk about close loops and about manipulation. then first approach to the family of modes. Then sequential consistency, improvement.

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10. Environments

In this section you can see examples of different environments.

10.1 Theorem-like environments

Theorem 10.1. *This is an example of a theorem, numbered with the section number.*

Proposition 10.2. *This is a proposition, numbered the same way. You can reference theorems and propositions using the labels, see for instance Theorem 10.1.*

Lemma 10.3. *This is a lemma, numbered the same way.*

Corollary 10.4. *This is a corollary, numbered the same way.*

Conjecture 10.5. *This is a conjecture, numbered the same way.*

If you need any other environment, you can add it to the preamble following the examples.

10.2 Definition-like environments

Definition 10.6. This is a definition. Notice that the style is different than in theorems.

Example 10.7. This is an example. Same style as definitions.

10.3 Remark-like environments

Remark 10.8. This is a remark.

Remark. This is a remark with no numbered label. You may create other environments with no numbered label by copying from this example.

11. Figures

Please include figures using the graphics package uploaded. Fancy options can be found for example in

<http://www.kwasan.kyoto-u.ac.jp/solarb6/usinggraphicx.pdf>



Figure 1: The caption of this figure is “Newton’s method of a cubic polynomial”.

12. Mathematics and packages

By default, the following packages are uploaded:

- (1) `enumerate`: It allows you to make list with specific somehow arbitrary labels, like this one.
- (2) `amsthm`: To make environments with different styles.
- (3) `amsmath`, `amssymb`, `amsfonts`: Multiple mathematics symbols and fonts.
- (4) `graphicx`: To include figures in a simple and intuitive way.
- (5) `amscd`: To make commutative diagram with horizontal and vertical arrows. See below.
- (6) `xy`: To make really fancy commutative arrows. See below.
- (7) `booktabs`: To make fancy tables.

You may add other standard packages if you need them but try to avoid it if at all possible.

If you need to use them, you will find information about these packages in the usual internet places.

Here are examples of two commutative diagrams, one made with the package `amscd` and the other one with `xy`.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{g} & B \\ \downarrow \pi & & \downarrow \pi \\ X & \xrightarrow{f} & Y \end{array}$$

13. Bibliography

You may include your references by hand using the `bibliography` (see an example below) or, alternatively, you may use a `.bib` file and use BibTeX. In any case, we ask you to use a reasonable **consistent** format for all your references. Our recommendation is using BibTeX with the style `"plain"` or `"amsalpha"`.

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A. Simulation Interface Code

You can include here an appendix with details that can not be included in the core of the document. You should reference the sections in this appendix in the core document.

B. Title of the appendix

Second appendix.