Lab 7 – Quantization

Objectives: In this lab, we will

- use Matlab to quantize *continuous-valued* signals, compute SQNR •
- study effect of quantization on the quality of reconstructed signal.

7.1 Quantization

Quantization involves discretization and encoding of samples of a signal. In this task we will take a closer look at discretization and how it effects the signal values. The encoding part which maps these levels to appropriately chosen binary code words is not considered here. For a discrete-time signal $x[n]$, quantization and quantization error are given by

$$x_q[n] = Q(x[n])$$

$$e_q[n] = x[n] - x_q[n].$$

The quantization function $Q(.)$ maps any real input to a point from discrete set of values. There are numerous quantization functions used in practice. We implement a non-uniform quantizer in the function below.

>> Write a Matlab function `y = quadratic_quant(x,B,a)` with inputs

- x – input signal as a vector
- B – number of bits used to decide quantization levels (positive integer)
- a – positive real number such that [-a,a) forms the range for quantization.

The function should produce an output y, which is the quantized version of the input signal. For purpose of this function, assume that the input signal x itself is not quantized (though this is not true). We wish to implement a *quadratic non-uniform quantizer* as discussed below.

>> For the range $[0, a)$: To implement the above function, divide the interval $[0,1]$ into $L = 2^{B-1}$ equal sized intervals. Let $0 = r_0 < r_1 \ldots < r_{L-1} < r_L = 1$ be edge points of these intervals. Then the quantizer should map values in the interval $[ar_i^2, ar_{i+1}^2)$ to its mid-point. Repeat the process symmetrically for the range $[-a, 0)$. Make sure your quantizer has a total of 2^B levels in the interval $[-a, a)$.

As an example, if a = 1 and B = 2, then the $2^B = 4$ quantizer intervals are $[-1, -0.25)$; $[-0.25,0)$; $[0,0.25)$; $[0.25,1)$ and the quantization follows
if $x[i] \in [-1, -0.25),\ y[i] = -0.625$, if $x[i] \in [0,0.25),\ y[i] = 0.125$

and so on. This is only an example; the code should consider general inputs 'a' and B. For inputs outside the interval $[-a, a)$ you should quantize them to the end points of your quantized set of values.

>> Write a matlab script which does the following tasks:

a) Consider the analog signal $x(t) = \sin(2\pi f_0 t)$ with $f_0 = 10\ Hz$. Sample a 1 second portion of this signal (in the time interval $t \in [0,1]$) at a sampling frequency of $F_s = 5\ KHz$ to obtain the discrete-time signal $x[n]$. Use the function above to obtain the quantised signal $x_q[n]$.
b) Create a figure with 3x1 subplot grid and plot the sampled signal and quantised signal in the first two subplots (use proper labelling). Use a = 1 and B = 4.
c) Compute and plot the quantization error in the remaining panel of the figure.
d) In a different figure, plot histogram of the quantization error using the matlab function `histogram()` with 15 bins (see documentation). Repeat for B = 3 and compare the histograms.
e) Repeat above processing for B = 1:8 (do not repeat the figures). In another figure, plot a graph with B on X-axis and maximum absolute quantization error (over the complete signal duration) on Y-axis and comment on your observations.
f) Experimentally measured SQNR is defined as the ratio of signal power to quantization noise power:

$$SQNR = \frac{\sum_n |x[n]|^2}{\sum_n |e_q[n]|^2}$$

In another figure, plot a graph with B on X-axis and Signal to Quantization Noise Ratio (SQNR) on Y-axis and comment on your observations.

g) What can you say about accuracy of the above non-uniform quantizer in various regions of the interval $[-a, a)$? How would this compare with say a uniform quantizer which instead considers intervals of the form $[ar_i, ar_{i+1})$?

7.2 Quantization of Audio signals

For this section, use one of the audio file from part 6.5 (previous lab) and write a matlab script.

>> Load .wav file in Matlab. Quantize this signal using your quantization function with B = 3

and a = 1. Listen to the original signal and the quantized signal using the `sound()` command. How does the sound quality of these two signals compare?

>> Perform quantization for different levels (B = 1:8) in a for-loop. Play the quantized signal in the for-loop with a pause of 2 seconds added after every call to the `sound()` command. Note your observations as levels increases and comment on quality of sound by hearing them.

>> How does quantization affect the frequency content of the quantized signal compared to that of the input signal? How does B play a role in this?