



Advanced Algorithmic Differentiation: Memory-reduced Calculation of Adjoints

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CWI Autumn School 2025 Artificial Intelligence in Natural Sciences







Outline

- Motivation
- Basics of Checkpointing
- Summary





Motivation



Starting Point: Adjoints are Great!

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BUT

$$\mathsf{MEM}(\bar{y}^{\top}F'(x)) \sim \mathsf{OPS}(F(x))$$

independent of chosen approach!







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- F(x) = time-stepping procedure
 - transient procedure, i.e., real time-dependent process
 - \Rightarrow checkpointing
 - pseudo time-stepping, e.g., aerodynamics, spin-up
 - = fixed point iterations
 - ⇒ adapted derivative calculation





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Gradient Calculation (Time Integration)

1 Forward integration: For given x_0

$$x_{i+1} = F_i(x_i, u_i), i = 0, ..., l-1$$

with x_i state, u_i control

number of time steps / might be not known a priori

- 2 Evaluation of target function J(x, u)
- Backward integration:

$$\bar{x}_{i-1} = \bar{F}_i(\bar{x}_i, x_{i-1}, u_{i-1}, u_i), i = 1, \ldots, 1$$

AD, discretization of continuous adjoint, hand coded. . . .

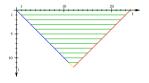
Gradient calculation





Idea of Checkpointing

Store-Everything Approach:





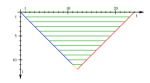




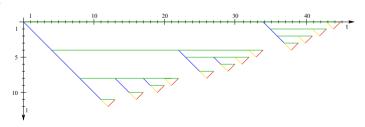


Idea of Checkpointing

Store-Everything Approach:



Checkpointing:









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Goal: Minimal number of recomputations for c checkpoints

Available results:

- I known, constant step costs (Griewank 1992), (Griewank, Walther 2000), (Kowarz, Walther 2007)
- I known, variable step costs (Walther 2000), (Hinze, Sternberg 2005)







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Theory for Binomial Checkpointing I

Theorem (Complexity Result I)

Given

= total number of time steps to be reversed

= number of checkpoints that can be used

= repetition number, i.e., unique integer satisfying

$$\beta(c,r-1) < I \leq \beta(c,r) \equiv {c+r \choose c}$$

Then: The minimal number of time step evaluations required equals

$$t(c, l) = rl - \beta(c + 1, r - 1) + 1$$

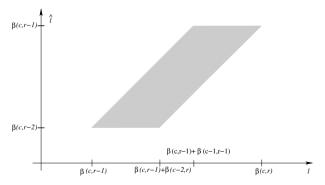






Theory for Binomial Checkpointing I

Place of next checkpoint \hat{I} :









Theory for Binomial Checkpointing II

Theorem (Complexity Result II)

Given

I = total number of time steps to be reversed

c = number of checkpoints that can be used

r = repetition number, i.e., unique integer satisfying

$$\beta(c,r-1) < I \leq \beta(c,r) \equiv \binom{c+r}{c}$$

Then: Among all checkpoint schedules satisfying the previous theorem the minimal number of times a current state is saved onto the stack of checkpoints is given by

$$q(l,r) = \begin{cases} \beta(c-1,r-1) & \text{if } l \leq \beta(c,r-1) + \beta(c-1,r-1) \\ l - \beta(c,r-1) & \text{if } l \geq \beta(c,r-1) + \beta(c-1,r-1) \end{cases}$$



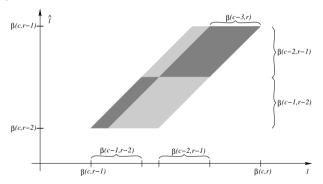
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Theory for Binomial Checkpointing II

Place of next checkpoint \hat{I} :

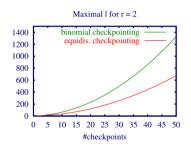


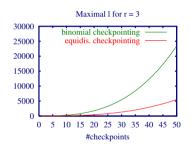






Repetition Number r vs Time Step Number /





[Walther, Griewank 2004]







The Checkpointing Routine revolve()

```
. . .
do
    whatodo = revolve()
    switch(whatodo)
       case advance: for old_state < i < next_state
       case takeshot: store(x, xstore, current_checkpoint)
       case firsturn: init(bar_x, bar_u)
                      reverse(bar_x, bar_u)
       case youturn: reverse(bar_x, bar_u)
                     restore(x, xstore, current_check)
       case restore:
while(whatodo <> terminate)
```

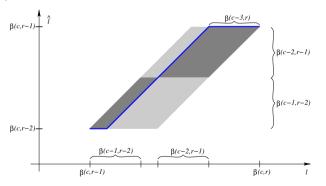






Current Strategy Chosen by revolve()

Place of next checkpoint \hat{I} :









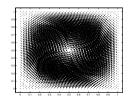
Test Case: Cavity Flow

joint work with Michael Hinze

Cost function of tracking typ, initial state:

$$y_0(x) = e \begin{bmatrix} (\cos 2\pi x_1 - 1)\sin 2\pi x_2 \\ -(\cos 2\pi x_2 - 1)\sin 2\pi x_1 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$\Omega := (0,1) \times (0,1), \ T = 1, \ \mathsf{Re} = 10, \ e = \mathsf{Euler} \ \mathsf{number}$$









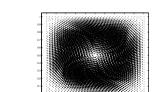
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, $T=1$, Re $=10$, $e=$ Euler number



Desired state:

$$z(x,t) = \begin{bmatrix} \varphi_{x_2}(x,t) \\ -\varphi_{x_1}(x,t) \end{bmatrix},$$

$$\varphi(x,t) = \theta(x_1,t)\theta(x_2,t),$$

$$\theta(y,t) = (1-y)^2(1-\cos kt),$$

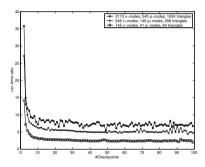
$$y \in [0,1].$$







Runtime Ratios, 1000 Time Steps

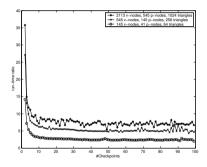








Runtime Ratios, 1000 Time Steps



- Run-time ratio between 2 and 7.
- Only a very small number of checkpoints required!







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- Exploit structure!







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 Two-phase approach "easy" to apply
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- Differentiation of Newton-like iterations OK
- Be careful when differentiating solvers like CG, GMRES, ...

