



Applied and Numerical Harmonic Analysis

Gabor Analysis and Algorithms

Applied and Numerical Harmonic Analysis

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**Gabor Analysis
and Algorithms**
Theory and Applications

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Foreword

In his paper *Theory of Communication* [Gab46], D. Gabor proposed the use of a family of functions obtained from one Gaussian by time- and frequency-shifts. Each of these is well concentrated in time and frequency; together they are meant to constitute a complete collection of building blocks into which more complicated time-dependent functions can be decomposed. The application to communication proposed by Gabor was to send the coefficients of the decomposition into this family of a signal, rather than the signal itself. This remained a proposal—as far as I know there were no serious attempts to implement it for communication purposes in practice, and in fact, at the critical time-frequency density proposed originally, there is a mathematical obstruction; as was understood later, the family of shifted and modulated Gaussians spans the space of square integrable functions [BBGK71, Per71] (it even has one function to spare [BGZ75] . . .) but it does not constitute what we now call a *frame*, leading to numerical instabilities. The Balian-Low theorem (about which the reader can find more in some of the contributions in this book) and its extensions showed that a similar mishap occurs if the Gaussian is replaced by any other function that is “reasonably” smooth and localized. One is thus led naturally to considering a higher time-frequency density.

Interestingly, the same time-frequency lattice of functions was also proposed in an entirely different context by von Neumann [vN55], and became subsequently known as the von Neumann lattice, and lived an essential parallel life among quantum physicists (witness [BBGK71, Per71, BGZ75]). In addition, there is also a very clear connection to the short-time Fourier transform or windowed Fourier transform, used extensively in electrical engineering. Here too, the need to go to *overcritical sampling*, corresponding to the higher time-frequency density mentioned above, was discovered, independently.

Of course, in order to be useful practically, a transform must not only have good mathematical properties; it must also go hand-in-hand with efficient discrete algorithms, and for the Gabor transform these were developed extensively in the last decade.

Yet, despite this long history, and a lot of work by mathematicians, physicists and engineers alike, there are still many interesting and useful aspects of the Gabor transform to be explored and exploited. This book is an illustration of the continuing vigor of research on the Gabor transform, with mathematical developments, as well as approaches to numerical algorithms and a variety of applications.

Ingrid Daubechies
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Preface

This is the first book devoted to the subject of *Gabor analysis*. Since Dennis Gabor's fundamental paper of 1946, half a century has passed, but only in the last 10–15 years Gabor expansions have gained popularity in the signal processing community and under mathematicians. A number of basic questions has been put on firm mathematical grounds, and on the practical side efficient algorithms for numerical implementations have been developed, not to mention the variety of applications presented over the years.

The editors have asked a team of authors to cover the wide range of problems and methods coming together in Gabor analysis, and to give readers a survey of the present state of the field. We believe that the field has reached a first stage of maturity, which suggests summarizing existing results, trying to unify terminology and prepare ground for further investigations.

In this sense we also anticipate hope that this book will become a widely used general reference, and that it will motivate further research in the field and stimulate communication between mathematicians, engineers, and other scientists. We also hope to demonstrate through this book that Gabor analysis is not just “the unimportant, old-fashioned uncle” of the wavelet transform, but a fascinating field of mathematics and signal analysis, still offering high potential for further applications.

The book is addressing a broad audience, such as mathematicians looking for interesting problems with relevance to signal processing, as well as the engineering community or computer scientists, who care for efficient algorithms, and to applied scientists looking for powerful methods of signal analysis. The book is also supposed to provide rich material for graduate seminars and courses on Gabor analysis.

Due to the diversity of topics covered in the different chapters, the required background to fully appreciate their content varies. Because this book is written by scientists from different fields, most readers will find it appropriate to start with the topic of their main interest, and collect relevant (mostly mathematical) background by following the cross connections to other chapters. The book is sufficiently self-contained in order to allow

a reader with a general background in signal analysis (or alternatively just the corresponding concepts of mathematical analysis) to profit from it and to use it as a guide toward a better understanding of Gabor analysis.

We encourage all readers, in particular those who would like to send some constructive criticism, to contact the editors by email or through the *Gabor Digest*, located at <http://tyche.mat.univie.ac.at>. This forum may be used by the readers of this book to find out about comments on the articles, updates, hints to recent publications, and further valuable information.

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