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# Aircraft engine noise scattering by fuselage and wings: a computational approach

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# Abstract

The paper presents a time-domain method for computation of sound radiation from aircraft engine sources to the far field. The effects of non-uniform flow around the aircraft and scattering of sound by fuselage and wings are accounted for in the formulation. The approach is based on the discretization of the inviscid flow equations through a collocation form of the discontinuous Galerkin spectral element method. An isoparametric representation of the underlying geometry is used in order to take full advantage of the spectral accuracy of the method. Large-scale computations are made possible by a parallel implementation based on message passing. Results obtained for radiation from an axisymmetric nacelle alone are compared with those obtained when the same nacelle is installed in a generic configuration, with and without a wing. © 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

# 1. Introduction

One of the main sources of aircraft noise is the engine. Most of the measurements and modelling regarding engine noise have been done for an isolated engine [1,2]. The farfield engine noise of an aircraft is, however, influenced both by the flow around the wings and fuselage and by scattering of sound from aircraft surfaces. Ideally, one would like to be able to compute the radiated noise field that takes into account these effects. One of the motivations behind this is to explore the possibility of reducing the aircraft noise footprint by taking advantage of engine and wing location and by manipulating the non-uniform mean flow around the fuselage. This paper presents a spectral method suitable for large-scale simulations of engine noise propagation in a realistic configuration and flow environment around an aircraft.

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Recent advances both in computer architecture and computing methods have already prompted researchers to address the fan tone noise problem using computational aeroacoustics (CAA) timedomain techniques [3–5]. A treatment of the acoustic liner boundary condition, which is not obvious in this context since the liner impedance data is usually available in the frequency domain, was recently proposed by Ozyoruk and Long [6] and Ozyoruk [7]. Stanescu et al. [5] used a multi-domain spectral method for fan tone noise radiation and showed that accurate results can be obtained with a relatively small (between four and five, depending on the highest polynomial degree) number of points per wavelength. The spectral multi-domain method is geometrically flexible, as it only requires finite-element-type grids that can be generated for usual aircraft configurations with commercially available packages. Although this fact makes practical three-dimensional problems tractable, the computer resources needed for frequencies typical of those encountered in fan noise are still very large. Such problems can only be solved if a proper parallelization strategy is used in order to make best use of the modern distributed memory computers available.

The discontinuous Galerkin (DG) method for hyperbolic systems of conservation laws has been studied by Cockburn and Shu [8] in detail. A spectral element implementation was proposed by Kopriva et al. [9], and several studies have been performed on its dissipation and dispersion properties [10–12]. These studies demonstrate clearly its advantages in terms of accuracy when applied to wave propagation problems. The DG method is otherwise completely similar to the multi-domain spectral method [5] both in formulation and implementation, and has therefore been considered as the discretization technique for this work. Through a proper choice of the flux computation points, the method only requires communication between elements that have common faces, and is therefore very well suited for parallelization using message passing. In this setting, an initial ordering of the elements pertaining to each processor allows communication of data for elements on partition, thus minimizing the impact of communication on the overall performance.

The present paper is organized as follows. The next section briefly describes the DG method and its numerical implementation. Issues related to geometry representation, grid generation and parallelization strategy are all addressed. The numerical results section then presents computations of the sound field generated by a single spinning mode propagating around an axisymmetric nacelle, and compares the results with those obtained for propagation of the same mode when the nacelle is mounted in a generic fuselage–pylon–nacelle configuration, both with and without a wing. The conclusions section ends the paper.

# 2. DG spectral element method

#### 2.1. Governing equations

The three-dimensional, non-linear Euler equations of gas dynamics in conservation form,

$$\frac{\partial \tilde{Q}}{\partial t} + \sum_{d=1}^{3} \frac{\partial \tilde{F}_d}{\partial x_d} = 0, \tag{1}$$

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are considered here to model the noise propagation process. The components of the state and flux vector are

$$\tilde{Q} = \begin{pmatrix} \rho \\ \rho v_1 \\ \rho v_2 \\ \rho v_3 \\ \rho E \end{pmatrix}, \quad \tilde{F}_d = \begin{pmatrix} \rho v_d \\ \rho v_1 v_d + p \delta_{1d} \\ \rho v_2 v_d + p \delta_{2d} \\ \rho v_3 v_d + p \delta_{3d} \\ (\rho E + p) v_d \end{pmatrix}, \quad (2)$$

where  $\rho$  is the fluid density,  $v_i$ , i = 1, 2, 3 the fluid velocity components in the three Cartesian directions, p the pressure, E the total internal energy per unit mass, and  $\delta_{ij}$  the Kronecker delta symbol.

# 2.2. DG discretization

The computational domain is divided into non-overlapping general hexahedral elements that can have curved boundaries. Each element is then individually mapped onto the master element  $\Omega_M = [-1, 1]^3$  using an isoparametric transformation. Under the mapping, Eq. (1) becomes

$$\frac{\partial Q}{\partial t} + \sum_{d=1}^{3} \frac{\partial F_d}{\partial \xi_d} = 0,$$
(3)

where the new variables are the transformed components of the state and flux vector

$$Q = J\tilde{Q}, \quad F_d = J \sum_{m=1}^3 \frac{\partial \xi_d}{\partial x_m} \tilde{F}_m$$
 (4)

and J is the Jacobian of the transformation

$$J = \det\left(\frac{\partial(x_1, \dots, x_3)}{\partial(\xi_1, \dots, \xi_3)}\right).$$
(5)

The computational space co-ordinates will be denoted here by both  $(\xi_1, \xi_2, \xi_3)$  and  $(\xi, \eta, \zeta)$  for convenience.

Let the space of polynomials of degree N in  $\xi \in [-1, 1]$  be denoted by  $P_N$ . A basis for this space can be constructed using the Lagrange interpolating polynomials

$$h_{i}(\xi) = \prod_{j=0, j \neq i}^{N} \frac{(\xi - \xi_{j})}{(\xi_{i} - \xi_{j})}, \quad h_{i}(\xi_{j}) = \delta_{ij}$$
(6)

through the N + 1 Gauss-Legendre [13] quadrature nodes  $\xi_i$ , i = 0, 1, ..., N. The threedimensional solution Q is searched in a trial space obtained as the tensor product of onedimensional degree N polynomials for each co-ordinate direction,  $P_N^3 = P_N(\xi) \times P_N(\eta) \times P_N(\zeta)$ , hence it takes the form

$$Q(t,\xi,\eta,\zeta) = \sum_{i=0}^{N} \sum_{j=0}^{N} \sum_{k=0}^{N} Q_{ijk}(t) h_i(\xi) h_j(\eta) h_k(\zeta),$$
(7)

where  $Q_{ijk}(t)$  denote pointwise values of Q at time t. In view of a Galerkin discretization, the residual is required to be orthogonal to the same trial space within each element. Thus, the DG spectral element method looks for a solution of the system

$$(Q_t, \phi_{ijk}) + (\nabla_{\xi} \cdot F, \phi_{ijk}) = 0 \tag{8}$$

to be satisfied for all i, j, k = 0, 1, ..., N. Here  $(\cdot, \cdot)$  represents the usual  $L^2$  inner product, and  $\phi_{ijk} = h_i(\xi)h_j(\eta)h_k(\zeta)$  are the basis functions of  $P_N^3$ . Using the divergence theorem, the equation is recast as

$$(Q_t, \phi_{ijk}) + \int_{\partial \Omega_M} \phi_{ijk} F \cdot n \, \mathrm{d}S = (F, \nabla_{\xi} \phi_{ijk}).$$
(9)

In order to solve these equations efficiently, the integrals are computed using Gauss quadrature:

$$\int_{-1}^{1} f(\xi) \, \mathrm{d}\xi = \sum_{m=0}^{N} f(\xi_m) w_m \quad \forall f \in P_{2N+1}, \tag{10}$$

 $w_m$  being the Gauss weights. This replacement is exact for elements with straight edges, in which case J is a polynomial of degree one. In the general case of elements with curved boundaries, a discretization error is incurred in the use of the numerical quadrature rule of Eq. (10).

Expanding the boundary integral and performing some algebraic manipulation, the final discrete form of the equations governing each variable at the Legendre–Gauss points can be found to be

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}Q_{ijk}}{\mathrm{d}t} = -[D^{\xi} + D^{\eta} + D^{\zeta}]F,\tag{11}$$

where the right-hand side is a sum of discrete differential operators acting on the flux values of an element, which include values on the element faces. Defining the contribution due to the volume term on the right-hand side of Eq. (9) as

$$d^{\xi}F = \sum_{m=0}^{N} F_{1}^{mjk} (h'_{i}, h_{m})_{N}, \qquad (12)$$

where the discrete inner product  $(u, v)_N = \sum_{n=0}^N u_n v_n w_n$  was introduced, the differential operator for  $\xi$  for example can be written as

$$D^{\xi}F = \frac{1}{w_i}[F_1^*(1,\eta_j,\zeta_k)h_i(1) - F_1^*(-1,\eta_j,\zeta_k)h_i(-1) - d^{\xi}F]$$
(13)

and the remaining two follow by obvious permutations. In this equation, the notation  $F^*$  denotes a common face flux as explained below. The position of the Gauss-Legendre points inside the element, as well as the position of the corresponding flux points on the element faces where  $F^*$ must be evaluated, is shown in Fig. 1, drawn for one  $\zeta = \text{const plane and } N = 2$ .

It is important to note that the operation in Eq. (12) is actually a one-dimensional operation that is expressed in the computer code as the multiplication of a matrix of entries  $d_{im} = (h'_i, h_m)_N$ with a vector of size N + 1 containing the values of the  $F_1$  flux component at the Legendre–Gauss points on a line i = const inside the element. These flux values can be computed directly from the values of the state vector which are readily available. The values of the state vector at the face points of each element, i.e.,  $Q(1, \eta_i, \zeta_k)$  and  $Q(-1, \eta_i, \zeta_k)$  for the  $\zeta = \text{const faces}$ , are obtained by

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Fig. 1. A  $\zeta$  = const plane through the master element, showing the position of the Gauss–Legendre points inside the element and the position of the flux points on the element faces.

evaluating the interpolating polynomial based on the Gauss-Legendre points at  $\xi = \pm 1$ , again a one-dimensional (implemented as a vector dot product) operation. However, these values cannot be used directly in computing the pointwise flux values on the element faces, as they are not uniquely defined. Indeed, for each face point, two different values are obtained for the value of the state vector Q, one from each of the two neighboring elements. In order to define a unique flux, a Riemann problem [14] is solved at each flux face point with the two different states as initial data, just as in the finite volume method. Letting the superscripts L and R denote the two (left and right) neighboring elements of a face, the application of the Riemann solver can be written as

$$F_d^*(\cdot) = F_d^*(Q^R(\cdot), Q^L(\cdot)) \tag{14}$$

and completes the evaluation of the right-hand side of Eq. (11). Upon this, it becomes on ordinary differential equation which is integrated in time using a low-storage Runge–Kutta scheme optimized for wave propagation [15].

The computer code thus obtained can be used for computing both a steady mean flow, when appropriate inflow/outflow boundary conditions are specified at the fan face and the far field, and the propagation of acoustic waves superposed on such a mean flow previously obtained. For acoustic computations, once the mean flow is known, the boundary condition on acoustic source surfaces is allowed to become a function of time (corresponding to a source term in the governing equations), and the acoustic pressure is obtained as the difference between the computed value of p and the mean flow pressure. Radiation boundaries are treated by a damping layer approach, similar to Stanescu [5]. The damping layer is activated only for acoustic computations. This precludes the need for a time-dependent radiation boundary condition, i.e., the boundary condition at the exterior limit of the damping layer is the same inflow/outflow characteristic boundary condition that can be used to compute the steady mean flow field.

# 2.3. Isoparametric elements

To obtain an accurate representation of the underlying geometry, the ICEMCFD Hexa [16] commercial package has been used for hexagonal grid generation around the configurations of interest. Once an unstructured grid of hexahedra was obtained, a new feature of this package

allows for the generation of points along each of the edges of the hexahedral mesh according to a prescribed distribution, which can be either a Legendre–Lobatto or a Chebyshev–Lobatto distribution in arclength, for a specified polynomial degree N. The resulting points are written to a data file which can be read in a computer code and used to define the geometry with the same accuracy as the solution. All the necessary point coordinates can then be computed by interpolation based on the spectral interpolants along the edges (to obtain co-ordinates at the Gauss points from the Lobatto points on the edges) followed by three-dimensional transfinite interpolation [17] on the faces and inside the elements. The intermediary use of the Lobatto points is found necessary because they include the eight corners of the hexahedra (and hence the end points for each edge of the grid) which can thus be guaranteed to have a unique position. This would not be the case if their co-ordinates were created by interpolation from data at Gauss points (they would be different due to interpolation and truncation errors).

#### 2.4. Parallel implementation

The DG spectral element method is particularly well suited for a parallel implementation through message passing as the computation is naturally structured by elements, with most of the work done inside the element, i.e., evaluation of derivatives in Eq. (11). Here a brief description of the parallel implementation is given. The program starts with a preprocessing step wherein the underlying hexahedral mesh is decomposed in as many partitions as the number of processors using the multi-level graph partitioning techniques in METIS [18]. Each processor creates the connectivity for its grid partition, which includes a list of elements ("cut elements" henceforth) having one or more "cut faces" in common with elements in neighboring partitions.

One stage of the Runge–Kutta time integration scheme for the parallel DG algorithm can then be described as follows:

- Compute state vector values at the face flux points through interpolation for all cut elements.
- Post non-blocking send/receive for the state vector values on the cut faces. Each processor sends the values interpolated from the cut elements it owns to the corresponding neighboring partition.
- Compute state vector values at the face flux points through interpolation in the regular elements inside each partition.
- Compute unique fluxes through the Riemann solver for regular faces; Eq. (14).
- Test for completed send/receive.
- Compute unique face fluxes through the Riemann solver for cut faces; Eq. (14).
- Compute residual and update the state vector according to Eq. (11).

The parallel performance of this algorithm has been tested on several architectures, for various grid sizes and polynomial degrees N. Results obtained for two grid sizes are presented here. The first one is a small grid of 884 elements with polynomial degree N = 12, which has been run on an IBM SP3 machine with 375 MHz Power3 processors, each with 512 MB of memory. The second one is a medium-size (17370 elements) grid used for the fuselage–nacelle configuration, run with N = 4 on an SGI Origin2000 machine with 250 MHz R10000 processors. Both cases could be run



Fig. 2. Actual wall-clock time parallel performance for two test cases on up to 16 processors: ideal (full line), 17370element grid on Origin2000 ( $\times$ ), 884-element grid on SP3 (+).

on a single processor, and Fig. 2 shows the performance on up to 16 processors as obtained by comparing the wall-clock time with the single processor run.

# 3. Numerical examples

The methodology described above has been validated by comparison with both analytical solutions and experiments in Ref. [5]. The computations presented below have been performed in order to study the feasibility of the method for large-scale computations, its parallel performance, the eventual problems raised by such computations, as well as to gain some initial physical insight into the influence of the fuselage and/or other surfaces on the sound field of a nacelle. Only inlet noise radiation of a single mode is computed in the cases presented here. The incoming pressure perturbation is specified as a circular duct eigensolution [19]

$$p'(x, r, \theta, t) = A_{m\mu} \mathbf{J}_m(k_{m\mu} r) \cos(k_x x + m\theta + \phi_{m\mu} - \omega t), \tag{15}$$

where *m* is the azimuthal order of the spinning mode,  $J_m$  the Bessel function of the first kind,  $\phi_{m\mu}$  is the phase and  $A_{m\mu}$  the modal amplitude. The density and velocity perturbations are obtained from the equations of motion. To keep the paper at a reasonable length, results are presented only for a stationary medium. Mean flow effects will be discussed in a subsequent work.

*Remarks on non-dimensionalization.* In all cases, lengths were non-dimensionalized using the radius of the inlet duct as reference value. The same amplitude of the incoming acoustic wave was used for all computations. The pressure amplitude of the incoming acoustic modes at the fan face was set to  $A_{m\mu} = 141.6 \text{ N/m}^2$ , and the sound pressure level (SPL) is reported in decibels relative to the usual reference pressure  $p_{ref} = 2 \times 10^{-5} \text{ N/m}^2$ .

# 3.1. Nacelle alone

The first computation was performed for the sound field radiated from an axisymmetric bellmouth nacelle. The radius of the leading edge of the bell mouth has been chosen to be  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the radius of the inlet duct, and no center-body (hub) was added. Radiation of the (2, 1) spinning mode at reduced frequency  $\omega = 8.0$  in a quiescent fluid has been modelled on a grid made of E = 9919 elements. The polynomial degree used was N = 6, leading to an average of about five points per wavelength (largest element edge length is 1.06). There are a total of 3 402 217 Gauss– Legendre points in the domain. The nacelle casing extends on the x-axis (the symmetry axis) from x = -1.25 to 3.0, and the domain extends from x = -15 to 8, with a damping layer width of 3 in each direction. Incoming acoustic waves are specified on the source surface which is the circular disk with center at (0,0,0) and unitary radius.

Fig. 3 shows the SPL contours on the surface of the nacelle and in a plane that cuts the nacelle through its symmetry axis. Since no scattering surfaces other than the engine exist, the radiation is symmetric with respect to the engine axis. Fig. 4 shows the contours in the plane z = -4. This computation was also used as an initial test of the radiation boundary conditions, which perform quite well in this case (very little waviness of the SPL contours is noticeable towards the interior limits of the damping layer). The main radiation lobe makes an angle of about  $\theta = 46^{\circ}$  with the x-axis, a value significantly different from  $\theta = 57^{\circ}$  obtained using the analytical formula derived by Rice [20] for infinitely thin cylindrical ducts

$$\cos\theta = \sqrt{1 - \frac{k_{m\mu}^2}{\omega^2}},\tag{16}$$

where  $k_{m\mu} = 6.70613$  is the circular duct eigenvalue for this mode. This difference is most probably caused by the large thickness of the nacelle lip (half of the inlet duct radius).



Fig. 3. SPL contours for radiation of spinning mode (2, 1) at  $\omega = 8$  from an axisymmetric bell-mouth nacelle alone. Nacelle surface and plane z = 0 through its axis is shown. Contour increment  $\Delta = 3$ .

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Fig. 4. SPL contours for radiation of spinning mode (2, 1) at  $\omega = 8$  from an axisymmetric bell-mouth nacelle alone. Plane z = -4 is shown. Trace of mesh decomposition shown on nacelle surface.

#### 3.2. Fuselage–nacelle configuration

The second case considered a configuration obtained by joining the same nacelle with a cylindrical fuselage through an elliptic cylinder pylon. The cylinder representing the fuselage has a radius of 4.5 and its center is situated at y = -7. The grid is made up of E = 17370 elements of the same order N = 6 (5957910 Gauss-Legendre points). The minimum and maximum values of the co-ordinates are (-18, -7, -9) and (8, 10, 8), respectively, and the damping layer has the same width as in the previous case, with the difference that the plane y = -7 does not have an adjacent damping layer in the direction perpendicular on it. Instead, a zero normal acoustic velocity boundary condition is used on this plane to simulate the effect of a symmetric configuration with engines in opposite phase on both parts of the fuselage.

As can be seen in Fig. 5, the presence of the fuselage creates a series of secondary radiation lobes due to the reflection of the nacelle lobes from the surface and to the various interferences that occur. The structure of the radiated sound field becomes thus quite complex. The presence and extent of the footprint of the SPL = 98 contour level in this plane is a measure of the effect of the fuselage in increasing the noise levels compared to the nacelle alone case. The figure also shows the trace of mesh decomposition on the solid surfaces defining the geometry.

## 3.3. Fuselage-wing-nacelle configuration

The geometry of the previous case was augmented with a wing of elliptic cross-section, slightly swept and mounted below the nacelle. The center of the ellipse defining the cross-section of the



Fig. 5. SPL contours for the radiation of spinning mode (2,1) at  $\omega = 8$  in the fuselage-pylon-nacelle configuration inplane z = -4. Trace of mesh decomposition is shown on the solid surfaces. Contour increment  $\Delta = 4$ .

wing is situated in the plane z = -3. A grid of E = 22843 elements was generated in this case (for N = 6 this corresponds to 7 835 149 discretization points). In all other respects, the definition of the domain is similar to the previous case. Shown in Fig. 6 are the SPL contours on the solid surfaces defining the geometry for this case. The presence of the wing is responsible for a complex, considerably asymmetric, sound field due to sound scattering from its leading and trailing edges. A clear picture of the effect of the wing can be obtained from Fig. 7, which shows the SPL levels in the plane y = 0. In this plane, the leading and trailing edge of the wing are situated at x = -7.2and -1.5, respectively. As can be expected, although in the plane z = 0 (above the wing) the noise levels are, at most locations, higher than in the preceding case, in a plane below the wing the noise levels are remarkably lower, due to the upward reflection of the sound field by the wing surface, the difference immediately below the wing lying in the 10-15 dB range. The corresponding contour plots are given in Figs. 8 and 9. It can be noticed in these figures that the damping layer region is not large enough to eliminate all reflections from the boundaries, as the contours are jagged towards the limits of the domain. The directivity at 12 nacelle radii from the center of the source disk for this case is compared with the nacelle alone data in Fig. 10. The shielding effect of the wing below the nacelle (negative  $\theta$  values) is clearly visible.

For a quantitative comparison of the three cases, SPL data was extracted in the field along several lines. Two such cases, representative for the increasing complexity of the sound field, are presented in Figs. 11 and 12. The interference patterns and various scattering effects that can be identified from these plots render good predictions based on simple analytical methods extremely difficult, if not impossible.



Fig. 6. SPL contours for the radiation of spinning mode (2,1) at  $\omega = 8$  in the complete configuration with wing. Solid surfaces are shown only. Contour increment  $\Delta = 4$ .



Fig. 7. SPL contours for the radiation of spinning mode (2,1) at  $\omega = 8$  in the complete configuration with wing. Plane y = 0 is shown only.



Fig. 8. SPL contours for the radiation of spinning mode (2,1) at  $\omega = 8$  in the complete configuration with wing. Plane z = 0 and trace of mesh decomposition on solid surfaces are shown.



Fig. 9. SPL contours for the radiation of spinning mode (2,1) at  $\omega = 8$  in the complete configuration with wing. Plane z = -4 and trace of mesh decomposition on solid surfaces are shown.

# 4. Conclusions

The results presented here show that a more complete and accurate modelling of tone noise radiated from aircraft engines, including the effect of scattering from wing and fuselage, is now possible on the large distributed memory parallel computers available nowadays. This can have



Fig. 10. Directivity in the plane y = 0 for the complete configuration with wing (dashed line) compared with the nacelle alone case (full line).



Fig. 11. SPL (dB re.  $2 \times 10^{-5} \text{ N/m}^2$ ) variation on the line y = z = 0 for the three configurations: nacelle (full line), fuselage (+), and wing (×).

major impact in the design stage, in terms of affecting the noise footprint of the aircraft by changing the relative engine/wing positioning and altering the wing planform. The paper discusses a time-domain methodology that is being developed to perform such studies. The reduced frequency for which results are presented here is lower than the usual values encountered at approach flight in current turbofans. However, it is our opinion that the parallelization strategy



Fig. 12. SPL (dB re.  $2 \times 10^{-5}$  N/m<sup>2</sup>) variation on the line y = 0, z = -4 for the three configurations: nacelle (full line), fuselage (+), and wing (×).

adopted for this method makes the study of the usual range of blade passage frequency values feasible on the supercomputers available nowadays. Further work, including the effect of mean flow and the sound radiated from the bypass exhaust, will be presented in the near future.

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