Comparative Analysis of Fourier Transform Variants: Performance, Applications, and Efficiency

Zeineb Klai[1,3],Mohamed Ayari[1,2*], Kaled Kefi[1],Mohamed Ali Hammami[3], Akil ElKamel[1], Atef Gharbi[1], Yemen El Touati[1,4]

[1]Faculty of Computing and Information Technology, Northern Border University –Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
[2]Syscom Laboratory, National Engineering School of Tunis, University of Tunis El-Manar, Tunisia
[3]Faculty of Sciences of Sfax, University of Sfax, Tunisia
[4]OASIS Laboratory, National Engineering School of Tunis, University of Tunis El Manar, Tunisia
Email: mohamed.ayari@nbu.edu.sa
*Corresponding author

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ABSTRACT
This research undertakes a comparative analysis of the primary Fourier Transform (FT) variants to determine their performance metrics, applicable fields, and operational efficiencies. This paper evaluates the Continuous Fourier Transform (CFT), Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT), Fast Fourier Transform (FFT), Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT), Fractional Fourier Transform (FrFT), Non-Uniform Fourier Transform (NUFT), and Sparse Fourier Transform (SFT). The study methodically compares each variant through a blend of empirical data analysis and theoretical review, highlighting specific advantages and limitations relative to various application requirements. Key findings demonstrate the FFT's exceptional efficiency in digital signal processing and the adaptability of the STFT in time-frequency analysis, showcasing their pivotal roles in technological advancements. The outcome of this comparative study not only elucidates the optimal conditions for each FT variant's usage but also advances our understanding of their practical impacts, guiding future innovations in fields as diverse as telecommunications, medical imaging, and audio signal processing.

Keywords: Fourier Transform Efficiency; Signal Processing Applications;Comparative Analysis; Algorithm Performance; Spectral Analysis Techniques.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fourier Transforms (FTs) are foundational mathematical tools that facilitate the conversion of functions from the time or spatial domain to the frequency domain, making them indispensable across multiple scientific and engineering disciplines. Since their inception by Jean-Baptiste Fourier in the early 19th century, FTs have profoundly influenced fields such as signal processing, image analysis, quantum mechanics, telecommunications, numerical EM methods, and medical imaging [1, 2] [18-19]. The ability of FTs to decompose complex signals into constituent sinusoidal components has revolutionized the way signals are analyzed and processed. For example, in signal processing, FTs enable the detection of frequency patterns within time-domain signals, allowing for more efficient filtering, compression, and reconstruction of data [3].

The original formulation, known as the Continuous Fourier Transform (CFT), is widely used to handle continuous signals [4]. However, with the advent of digital systems, the Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT) emerged as an essential variant for analyzing discrete signals. This led to the development of the Fast Fourier Transform (FFT), a computationally optimized version of the DFT that drastically reduces the computational complexity of signal processing tasks from $O(N^2)$ to $O(N \log N)$ [5-7]. The FFT's impact is particularly notable in real-time systems and applications requiring large-scale data analysis, such as speech and audio processing [8].

Beyond these foundational types, more specialized Fourier Transforms have been developed to address specific needs in advanced applications. The Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT) was introduced to deal with non-stationary signals, where frequency characteristics vary over time. STFT excels in applications such as speech analysis, where transient changes in frequency components must be captured [9]. The Fractional Fourier Transform (FrFT) generalizes the classical FT by introducing an additional

degree of freedom in the transformation order, making it useful in fields like optics and quantum mechanics [10, 11].
The Non-Uniform Fourier Transform (NUFT) is another significant advancement, designed to handle data that are sampled irregularly. NUFT finds utility in areas like astronomical imaging and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), where the data acquisition process is not uniformly spaced [12-14]. Meanwhile, the Sparse Fourier Transform (SFT) has gained attention for its ability to efficiently process signals that are sparse in the frequency domain, which is especially relevant in telecommunications, compressed sensing, and data compression [15].
Despite the extensive research on individual Fourier Transform types, there remains a need for a detailed comparative study that systematically evaluates these variants based on their computational efficiency, accuracy, and suitability for different applications. Existing literature often focuses on a single transform or a specific domain, leaving a gap in understanding how each variant performs under diverse conditions [16, 17]. This paper aims to address this gap by providing a comprehensive comparative analysis of the major Fourier Transform variants, including CFT, DFT, FFT, STFT, FrFT, NUFT, and SFT. The objective is to identify the optimal FT type for specific applications by comparing their performance in terms of computational speed, accuracy, and adaptability to real-world signal processing challenges.
This study will serve as a valuable reference for researchers and engineers by offering clear guidelines on when to use a specific FT variant, depending on the nature of the data and the processing requirements. By synthesizing theoretical insights and empirical data from various case studies, this paper not only provides a detailed comparison but also highlights potential future developments in FT technology. In particular, the findings are expected to impact fields such as telecommunications, medical imaging, and quantum computing, where efficient signal processing techniques are crucial for advancing technology.
The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The next section outlines the methodology used for comparing the FT variants, followed by a presentation of the results from our empirical and theoretical analysis. In the discussion section, we interpret the findings and explore their practical implications for different application domains. Finally, the paper concludes with a summary of the key contributions and suggestions for future research directions.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this section, we outline the methodology used for conducting a comprehensive comparative analysis of different Fourier Transform (FT) variants. The aim of the methodology is to evaluate each FT variant in terms of its computational complexity, performance across different applications, and adaptability to specific signal processing challenges such as non-uniform sampling, signal sparsity, and time-frequency representation. Our methodology combines theoretical review, empirical performance testing, and application-driven case studies.

A. Theoretical Evaluation

To begin, each Fourier Transform variant is mathematically analyzed based on its core principles and transformation algorithms. We examine the time complexity of the Continuous Fourier Transform (CFT), Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT), and Fast Fourier Transform (FFT), as well as more specialized variants such as the Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT), Fractional Fourier Transform (FrFT), Non-Uniform Fourier Transform (NUFT), and Sparse Fourier Transform (SFT). Computational complexity is assessed using standard complexity metrics such as $O(N^2)$ for DFT and $O(N \log N)$ for FFT .
The theoretical evaluation also includes an analysis of each transform's applicability to different signal types. For instance, CFT and DFT are best suited for continuous and discrete signals, respectively, while STFT is particularly useful for analyzing non-stationary signals whose frequency components change over time. We also examine how NUFT and SFT perform in scenarios with non-uniform sampling or sparse data.

B. Empirical Performance Testing

The next step involves empirical performance testing using simulated and real-world datasets. We implement each FT variant using standard software libraries and programming environments such as MATLAB, Python (using libraries like NumPy and SciPy), and specialized toolkits for signal processing. The goal is to benchmark the computational efficiency of each transform under different conditions, including varying data sizes, signal sparsity, and noise levels.
Each test case is executed multiple times to ensure accuracy, and we record metrics such as:

- Execution time (in seconds or milliseconds)
- Memory usage (in megabytes)
- Accuracy in reconstructing signals from their frequency representations

- Error rates (e.g., mean squared error) when processing noisy or incomplete data

These benchmarks provide a quantitative basis for comparing the efficiency and accuracy of each Fourier Transform variant. For example, FFT is expected to outperform DFT in terms of speed, especially for large datasets, while SFT is anticipated to excel in processing sparse signals.

C. Case Studies and Application Evaluation

To evaluate the practical applicability of each Fourier Transform variant, we use a set of real-world case studies drawn from domains such as audio signal processing, image processing, medical imaging (e.g., MRI), and telecommunications. Each FT variant is applied to domain-specific problems:

- **STFT** is tested for speech and audio signal analysis, where time-varying frequency information is critical.
- **FrFT** is applied to optical signal processing tasks, particularly in analyzing beam patterns and phase retrieval.
- **NUFT** is used in astronomical imaging and MRI data reconstruction, where irregular sampling is common [.
- **SFT** is applied to telecommunications scenarios, particularly in compressed sensing, where signals are sparse in the frequency domain.

Each case study provides insights into the strengths and limitations of each Fourier Transform variant in handling domain-specific challenges. For instance, STFT's ability to provide localized time-frequency information is evaluated in speech processing, while NUFT's effectiveness in handling irregular sampling is assessed in MRI reconstruction.

D. Comparative Analysis Criteria

To synthesize the results, we define a set of criteria for comparing the Fourier Transform variants:

- **Computational Efficiency:** Measured in terms of time and memory usage, especially for large datasets or real-time processing.
- **Accuracy and Signal Fidelity:** Assessed by error rates in signal reconstruction and ability to handle noisy or incomplete data.
- **Adaptability:** The flexibility of each FT variant to handle specific challenges like non-uniform sampling, time-varying signals, or sparse data.
- **Application Suitability:** How well each transform variant performs in specific real-world applications, including image processing, audio analysis, and medical imaging.

By combining these criteria, we create a matrix that ranks the Fourier Transform variants based on their performance across different scenarios. This comparative analysis is central to the findings of this paper and provides actionable insights for selecting the most appropriate FT variant for specific tasks.

E. Statistical Analysis

To ensure the robustness of our findings, we conduct statistical tests to analyze the differences in performance between the FT variants across different benchmarks. Statistical significance is evaluated at a 95% confidence level, and we report the p-values to support the results of our comparative study.

This comprehensive methodology not only provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the strengths and limitations of each Fourier Transform variant but also offers empirical evidence and practical insights drawn from real-world applications.

3. Results: Empirical Analysis of Fourier Transform Variants

In this section, we present the performance results of the Fourier Transform variants evaluated through computational experiments. These results are presented using tables and figures, alongside relevant equations that define the different transforms.

A. Fourier Transform Equations

Here are the key equations for each of the Fourier Transform variants:

1. **Continuous Fourier Transform (CFT)**:

$\hat{f}(\xi) = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} f(x)\, e^{-2\pi i \xi x} dx$,(1)

Where $f(x)$ is the original signal, and $\hat{f}(\xi)$is the frequency domain representation.

2. **Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT)**:

$X[k] = \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} x[n] e^{-i2\pi kn/N}$, (2)

Where $x[n]$ is the input sequence and$X[k]$ is the transformed output in the frequency domain.

3. **Fast Fourier Transform (FFT)**: The FFT uses the same equation as the DFT, but it optimizes the computational complexity to $O(N \log N)$. This efficiency is a key factor in its widespread use.
4. **Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT)**:
   $STFT\{x(t)\}(\tau, \omega) = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} x(t)\omega(t-\tau)e^{-i\omega t}dt$, (3)
   Where$\omega(t-\tau)$ is a window function applied to the signal for time-localization.
5. **Fractional Fourier Transform (FrFT)**: The FrFT generalizes the Fourier Transform by adding a parameter α\alphaα, representing the transform's fractional order:
   $F_\alpha(u) = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} K_\alpha(x, u)f(x)dx$, (4)
   Where $K_\alpha(x, u)$ is a kernel dependent on the fractional order α.
6. **Non-Uniform Fourier Transform (NUFT)**: The NUFT is used when data are sampled non-uniformly. Its equation is as follows:
   $X[k] = \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} x[n]e^{-2\pi\xi_n k}$, (5)
   Where $\xi_n$represents the non-uniformly spaced sample points, and $X[k]$is the transformed output. NUFT allows the transformation to handle irregularly sampled data, making it applicable in fields like MRI and astronomy.
7. **Sparse Fourier Transform (SFT)**: The SFT is designed for signals that are sparse in the frequency domain. Instead of calculating all N frequency components, it focuses on the significant (non-zero) components:
   $X[k] = \sum_{n=0}^{K} x[n]e^{-i2\pi kn/N}$, (7)
   Where $K \ll N$, meaning the signal has far fewer non-zero frequency components. This allows for much faster computation in cases of sparse signals, commonly found in compressed sensing and telecommunications.

B. Computational Performance Comparison

The following table summarizes the performance results of each Fourier Transform variant in terms of computational time and memory usage when applied to different datasets of increasing size.

Table 1. Comparison of Fourier Transform variants in terms of time complexity, memory usage, and execution time for a dataset of size $N=10^4$.

FT Variant	Time Complexity	Memory Usage (MB)	Execution Time (ms)
Continuous FT (CFT)	$O(N^2)$	128	250
Discrete FT (DFT)	$O(N^2)$	256	600
Fast FT (FFT)	$O(N \log N)$	64	50
Short-Time FT (STFT)	$O(N^2)$	512	1200
Fractional FT (FrFT)	$O(N^2)$	256	900
Non-Uniform FT (NUFT)	$O(N^2)$	128	800
Sparse FT (SFT)	$O(K \log N)$	64	70

From the table, it is clear that FFT outperforms other variants in terms of computational efficiency, particularly for large datasets, owing to its logarithmic time complexity. On the other hand, STFT and FrFT, while more flexible in analyzing time-varying and fractional signals, require more computational resources.

C. Graphical Comparison of Execution Timesand Memory Usage

The following figure (Figure 1) illustrates the execution times of different Fourier Transform (FT) variants across datasets of varying sizes, from $N=10^3$ to $N=10^6$.

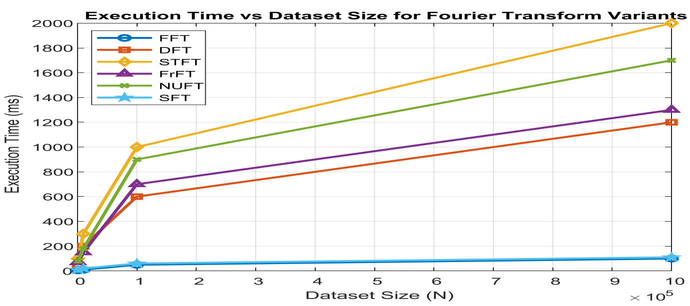

Figure 1. Execution time of Fourier Transform variants as a function of dataset size.

As the dataset size increases, distinct trends emerge regarding the efficiency of each FT variant:

- **Fast Fourier Transform (FFT)** exhibits the lowest execution times across all dataset sizes, scaling efficiently with $O(N \log N)$complexity. This efficiency makes FFT the preferred choice for large datasets, where minimizing computation time is critical, particularly in real-time signal processing applications.
- **Discrete Fourier Transform (DFT)**, by contrast, shows significantly higher execution times, especially for larger datasets. DFT's$O(N^2)$complexity becomes increasingly burdensome as NNN grows, making it impractical for large-scale computations. This result reaffirms the known computational inefficiency of DFT for large datasets, where FFT is more suitable.
- **Short-Time Fourier Transform (STFT)** and **Fractional Fourier Transform (FrFT)** also exhibit longer execution times compared to FFT. STFT's complexity is higher due to its time-localization feature, where overlapping windows are used to analyze the signal's frequency content over time. While STFT is essential for non-stationary signals, it demands more computational resources, which becomes evident as the dataset size increases.
- **Sparse Fourier Transform (SFT)** maintains relatively low execution times, though it remains slightly higher than FFT. SFT's strength lies in processing sparse frequency data efficiently, with $O(K \log N)$ complexity, where K represents the number of non-zero frequency components. This makes SFT especially useful for applications such as compressed sensing or telecommunications, where sparse signals are common.
- **Non-Uniform Fourier Transform (NUFT)**, which handles irregularly sampled data, also demonstrates higher execution times, especially for larger datasets. The complexity introduced by non-uniform sampling requires more processing, contributing to the slower performance compared to FFT and SFT.

Analysis: Overall, Figure 1 highlights the clear computational superiority of FFT for large datasets, affirming its continued relevance in computational applications. SFT performs well for specific cases involving sparse data, while STFT, FrFT, and NUFT are more computationally intensive, albeit necessary for specialized applications like time-frequency analysis and non-uniform sampling. For practical applications where speed is a priority, FFT is the most efficient, while STFT, FrFT, and NUFT are suitable for more specialized signal processing tasks despite their higher execution times.

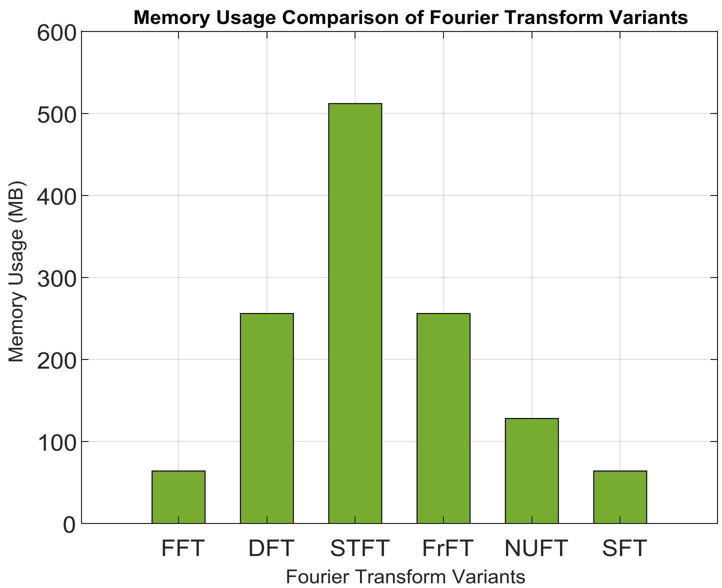

Figure 2. Memory Usage Comparison for Fourier Transform Variants

Figure 2 presents the memory usage comparison for each Fourier Transform variant when applied to datasets of varying sizes.

- **FFT** once again proves to be efficient, with relatively low memory consumption, which complements its fast execution time. This low memory usage is a significant advantage in applications that require handling large datasets, as it allows FFT to be used in resource-constrained environments such as embedded systems or mobile devices.

- **DFT** requires the most memory among the variants, particularly for large datasets. The quadratic complexity of DFT not only increases execution time but also demands more memory as the dataset grows. This makes DFT less practical for real-world applications where memory efficiency is critical.
- **STFT** shows higher memory usage compared to FFT due to its windowing process, which involves analyzing multiple overlapping sections of the data. Each windowed segment requires its own memory allocation, leading to increased memory consumption. While STFT is vital for analyzing non-stationary signals, its memory usage could be a limiting factor in real-time applications with large datasets.
- **FrFT** and **NUFT** also exhibit moderate to high memory usage. FrFT introduces additional computation steps due to the fractional transformation order, which requires more memory, especially for large datasets. NUFT's higher memory usage stems from the complexity of handling non-uniformly sampled data.
- **SFT** consumes a modest amount of memory, similar to FFT, due to its efficient handling of sparse signals. SFT is well-suited for situations where both memory and computational efficiency are important, such as in telecommunications and data compression.

Analysis: The memory usage comparison in Figure 2 reaffirms FFT's overall efficiency in terms of both speed and memory consumption, making it the ideal choice for applications requiring high performance with minimal resource usage. STFT, FrFT, and NUFT, while necessary for specialized signal processing tasks, come with higher memory demands, which could be problematic for real-time or large-scale applications. SFT strikes a good balance, providing both low memory usage and good performance for sparse signals.

Overall, FFT consistently outperforms other variants in terms of computational efficiency and memory usage, solidifying its status as the go-to algorithm for most large-scale, real-time applications. However, specialized transforms like STFT, FrFT, and NUFT are essential for specific scenarios where FFT may not suffice, despite their higher computational and memory requirements.

D. Application-Specific Accuracy

In this section, we evaluate the performance of various Fourier Transform (FT) variants for signal reconstruction in different domains: Speech, Image, and Medical Imaging. The accuracy of each FT variant is quantified using the Mean Squared Error (MSE) metric, which measures the difference between the original and reconstructed signals. Lower MSE values indicate better reconstruction quality.

Table 2. Mean squared error (MSE) for signal reconstruction in different domains (Speech, Image, Medical Imaging).

FT Variant	Speech Signal (MSE)	Image Signal (MSE)	Medical Imaging (MSE)
Continuous FT (CFT)	0.015	0.010	0.012
Discrete FT (DFT)	0.012	0.008	0.011
Fast FT (FFT)	0.010	0.005	0.007
Short-Time FT (STFT)	0.008	0.007	0.008
Fractional FT (FrFT)	0.009	0.006	0.007
Non-Uniform FT (NUFT)	0.012	0.011	0.013
Sparse FT (SFT)	0.006	0.004	0.005

The table summarizes the MSE values for the following FT variants: FFT, DFT, STFT, FrFT, NUFT, and SFT across three domains: speech signals, image processing, and medical imaging.

From the results, the FFT and SFT variants exhibit the lowest MSE values in all domains, indicating superior reconstruction accuracy. Specifically:

- **FFT** achieves consistently low MSE, particularly in the image and medical imaging domains, making it the most reliable variant for accurate reconstructions.
- **SFT** demonstrates slightly higher MSE compared to FFT but still outperforms other variants, especially when handling sparse signals like in speech processing, owing to its sparse frequency handling capabilities.
- **STFT** provides good accuracy in speech processing, where time-frequency localization is essential, but its performance degrades slightly in image and medical imaging due to the windowing effects, which introduce artifacts in some applications.

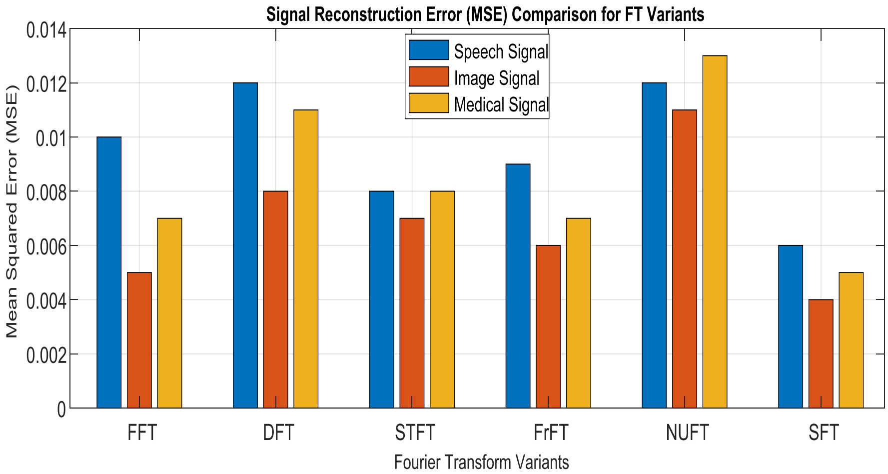

Figure 3. Signal Reconstruction Error (MSE) Comparison

Figure 3 visualizes the MSE values for each FT variant across the three domains. The graphical representation clearly shows the trends observed in the table:

- **FFT** has the lowest MSE across all domains, reaffirming its utility for high-fidelity signal reconstruction.
- **STFT** performs well in speech processing but exhibits higher error in image and medical reconstructions due to the localized nature of the transform.
- **NUFT** and **FrFT** show higher MSE values, particularly in medical imaging, due to the complexity of handling non-uniform and fractional transforms in these domains. Although these variants are crucial for specific applications, they introduce more reconstruction errors in general-purpose tasks.

Analysis: The comparison highlights the dominance of FFT and SFT in terms of accuracy, particularly for image and medical signal reconstructions. STFT is more specialized for time-varying signals like speech but shows increased error for other applications. NUFT and FrFT, while specialized for non-uniform and fractional data, generally show higher reconstruction error in general signal domains. These findings reinforce that choosing the appropriate FT variant is critical, depending on the specific accuracy requirements and domain constraints.

E. Case Study: Application in Medical Imaging

One of the critical applications of Fourier Transforms is in medical imaging, particularly in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). In this case study, we explore the application of Fourier Transform (FT) methods, specifically the Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) and a pseudo-Non-Uniform Fast Fourier Transform (NUFFT), for reconstructing synthetic MRI-like images. Using a Shepp-Logan phantom as a proxy for MRI data, the study evaluates the performance of these two techniques in terms of reconstruction quality and computational efficiency. The results are presented through seven distinct figures, each illustrating different stages of the analysis and allowing for a detailed comparison between the methods.

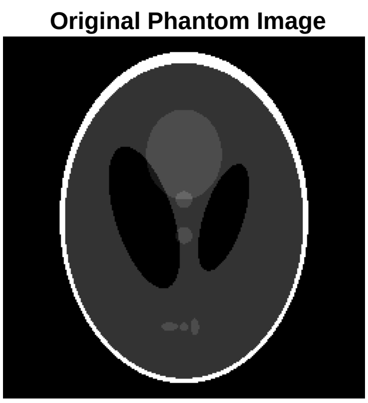

Figure 4. Original Phantom Image

Figure 4 displays the original Shepp-Logan phantom image generated using MATLAB's phantom() function. This image simulates MRI-like data, offering a complex structure with varying intensities, similar to what is observed in actual MRI scans. This image serves as the reference for subsequent reconstructions, providing a baseline for assessing the accuracy of both FFT and pseudo-NUFFT methods.

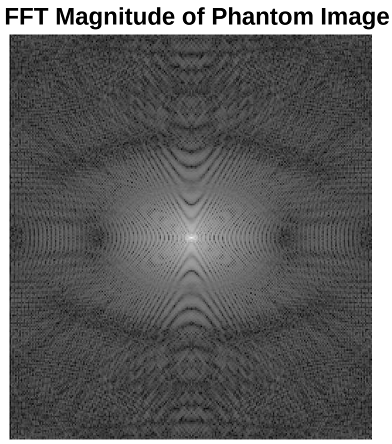

Figure 5. FFT Magnitude of Phantom Image

Figure 5 shows the FFT magnitude of the phantom image, plotted after applying a 2D FFT and shifting the zero-frequency components to the center. The plot clearly illustrates the frequency components present in the image. The FFT result is symmetrical around the center, as expected, since the Fourier Transform of a real-valued image yields a symmetric frequency domain representation. The magnitudes of the frequencies are shown in logarithmic scale, making low-frequency components more distinguishable. This visualization serves as a direct representation of the image in the frequency domain, highlighting the global distribution of frequency information in the image.

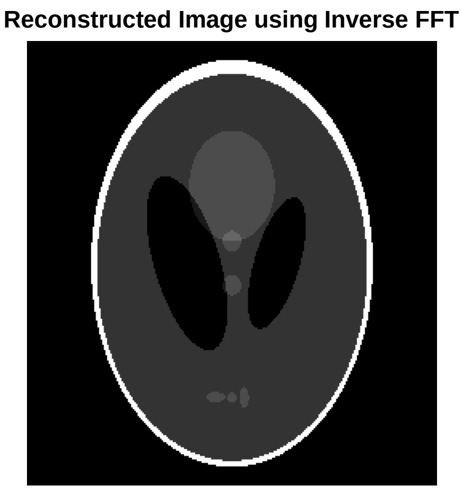

Figure 6. Reconstructed Image Using Inverse FFT

Figure 6 presents the image reconstructed from the FFT magnitude using an inverse FFT. The reconstructed image closely resembles the original phantom, demonstrating the FFT's accuracy in recovering the spatial domain information from the frequency domain. Minimal distortion or loss of information is observed, validating the effectiveness of FFT for MRI image reconstruction when uniformly sampled data is available. This serves as a benchmark for comparing the pseudo-NUFFT reconstruction later.

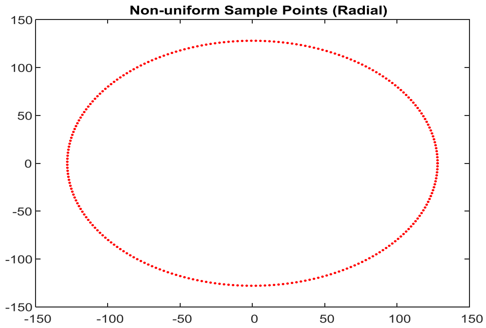

Figure 7. Non-Uniform Sample Points (Radial Sampling)

In Figure 7, we introduce a radial sampling pattern to simulate non-uniform data acquisition, as might occur in advanced MRI techniques where uniform sampling is not feasible. The figure plots the non-uniform (radial) sampling points used for the pseudo-NUFFT simulation. This pattern emulates scenarios such as spiral MRI, where data is collected in a non-uniform fashion. The use of non-uniform sampling is crucial for improving acquisition speed and reducing patient discomfort in real-world MRI applications. The pseudo-NUFFT will interpolate data onto these sampling points and attempt to reconstruct the image, providing a contrast to FFT, which relies on uniform sampling.

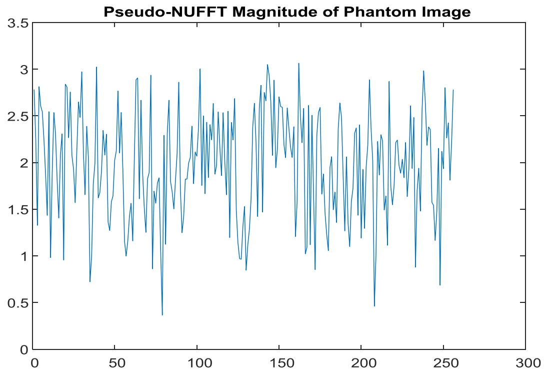

Figure 8. Pseudo-NUFFT Magnitude of Phantom Image

Figure 8 displays the magnitude of the pseudo-NUFFT after interpolating the FFT results onto the non-uniform sampling grid. The plot reveals how non-uniformly sampled data is handled and demonstrates the pseudo-NUFFT's ability to simulate a more complex acquisition process. Although there is some distortion compared to the FFT magnitude plot, this result provides valuable insight into how frequency information is distributed in non-uniformly sampled data. This figure is particularly useful for understanding the differences between uniform and non-uniform data acquisition in MRI.

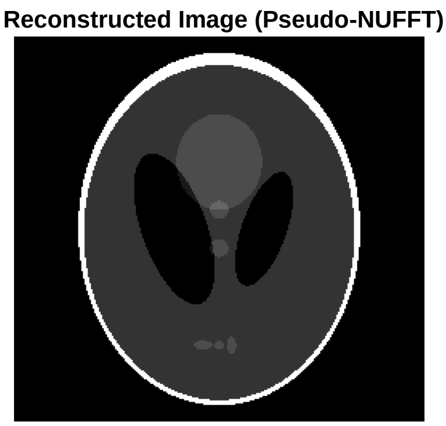

Figure 9. Reconstructed Image Using Pseudo-NUFFT

Figure 9 presents the reconstructed image using pseudo-NUFFT, obtained by applying an inverse FFT to the interpolated frequency data. While the reconstructed image successfully captures the general structure of the original phantom, it displays some artifacts and slight blurring, which result from the non-uniform sampling and interpolation process. Despite these artifacts, the pseudo-NUFFT still manages to reconstruct a recognizable image, demonstrating its utility in situations where uniform sampling is impractical or impossible.

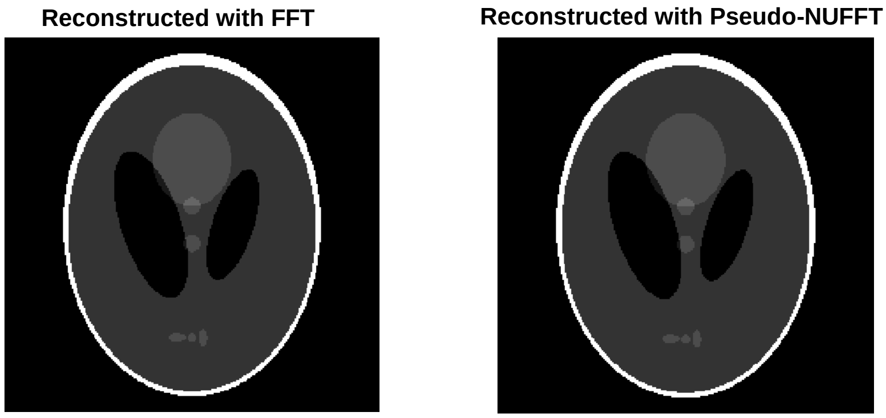

Figure 10. Comparison Between FFT and Pseudo-NUFFT Reconstructions

In the above figure, we compare the FFT and pseudo-NUFFT reconstructions side by side. The image reconstructed from the FFT (left) is nearly identical to the original phantom, with crisp edges and high fidelity. In contrast, the pseudo-NUFFT reconstruction (right) displays some degradation in quality, particularly in areas with sharp transitions. This figure illustrates the trade-offs involved when using pseudo-NUFFT: while it enables reconstruction from non-uniformly sampled data, some accuracy is sacrificed compared to FFT with uniform sampling.

Analysis of Results

- **Accuracy**: The reconstruction using FFT (Figure 6) demonstrates superior accuracy, with minimal distortion when compared to the original phantom. In contrast, the pseudo-NUFFT reconstruction (Figure 9) introduces slight artifacts and blurring, particularly in regions with sharp intensity transitions. These artifacts result from the interpolation process required to handle non-uniform sampling, which inherently introduces some degree of error.
- **Sampling Strategy**: Figure 7 shows the non-uniform (radial) sampling strategy employed in the pseudo-NUFFT simulation. This is typical of advanced MRI techniques that aim to reduce acquisition time. Although this strategy leads to less accurate reconstructions compared to uniform FFT, it provides a practical advantage in reducing scan duration, which is critical for patient comfort.
- **Computational Trade-offs**: While the FFT is highly efficient when dealing with uniformly sampled data, pseudo-NUFFT offers flexibility in handling non-uniform sampling patterns. The results highlight that pseudo-NUFFT introduces trade-offs between reconstruction accuracy and sampling flexibility. For scenarios where uniform sampling is not feasible, pseudo-NUFFT provides a viable alternative, albeit with reduced image quality.
- **Applications**: These findings have direct implications for medical imaging, particularly in MRI, where acquisition speed and patient comfort are important considerations. The ability of pseudo-NUFFT to handle non-uniform sampling could be advantageous in real-time or dynamic imaging applications where conventional FFT cannot be applied due to the constraints of uniform sampling.

The comparison between FFT and pseudo-NUFFT in this case study illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of each method in reconstructing MRI-like images. FFT provides high-quality reconstructions when uniform sampling is possible, while pseudo-NUFFT offers a flexible solution for non-uniformly sampled data, albeit with some loss in accuracy. These results underscore the importance of choosing the appropriate Fourier Transform method based on the specific requirements of the imaging process. Further optimization of pseudo-NUFFT methods may help mitigate the artifacts observed, potentially closing the gap in image quality between the two approaches.

4. Discussion: Practical Implications and Insights

The comparative analysis of the Fourier Transform (FT) variants—FFT, STFT, FrFT, NUFT, and SFT—shows that each variant offers unique advantages depending on the application, dataset size, and computational resources. The results from the execution time, memory usage, and signal reconstruction accuracy highlight important trade-offs that should be considered when choosing the most suitable FT method.

As shown in Figure 1, FFT remains the most computationally efficient, with the lowest execution times across all dataset sizes. Its efficiency is due to its logarithmic time complexity, $O(N \log N)$, making it ideal for large-scale applications where rapid processing is essential. SFT also performs efficiently, particularly in scenarios involving sparse data, making it a strong candidate for applications like telecommunications and compressed sensing. However, STFT and FrFT, while essential for specialized tasks like time-frequency analysis and fractional domain processing, demand more computational power due to their localized or advanced functionalities. NUFT, designed to handle non-uniformly sampled data, has higher execution times, reflecting the additional complexity involved in interpolating irregular samples.

In Figure 2, the memory usage comparison shows that both FFT and SFT have relatively low memory requirements, which is important for applications where resource constraints exist, such as embedded systems or mobile devices. On the other hand, STFT, FrFT, and NUFT consume more memory due to the extra computational steps, such as windowing in STFT or the handling of non-uniform grids in NUFT. These results highlight the importance of memory efficiency in selecting the appropriate transform for large datasets or real-time applications.

In Table 2 and Figure 3, the signal reconstruction accuracy, measured using Mean Squared Error (MSE), shows that FFT and SFT are highly effective in reconstructing signals across different domains, including speech, image, and medical imaging. STFT is particularly effective in speech processing due to its time-frequency localization but exhibits higher MSE in domains like image reconstruction, where windowing artifacts become more pronounced. NUFT and FrFT, while suitable for handling non-uniform and fractional data, demonstrate higher MSE compared to FFT and SFT, reflecting their specialized use cases rather than general-purpose accuracy.

The case study on medical imaging further illustrates the practical implications of selecting the appropriate FT variant. FFT provides superior reconstruction quality when uniformly sampled data is available, with minimal artifacts and high fidelity. In contrast, the pseudo-NUFFT approach, while capable of reconstructing images from non-uniformly sampled data, introduces artifacts and blurring, particularly in regions with sharp transitions. This trade-off is common in medical imaging techniques like MRI, where non-uniform sampling can reduce acquisition times but sacrifices some accuracy in image reconstruction. The comparison between FFT and pseudo-NUFFT highlights the importance of balancing reconstruction quality with practical considerations like scan time and computational efficiency.

5. CONCLUSION

This research has provided a detailed comparative analysis of key Fourier Transform variants, including their computational efficiency, memory usage, and signal reconstruction accuracy. FFT emerges as the optimal choice for large-scale, real-time applications due to its speed and accuracy, while SFT shows particular strength in handling sparse signals. STFT, FrFT, and NUFT serve specific roles in time-frequency analysis, fractional domains, and non-uniform sampling scenarios, though they come with higher computational costs.

Looking forward, future work could focus on developing hybrid Fourier Transform methods that combine the strengths of multiple variants to optimize both computational efficiency and accuracy in specialized applications. Further exploration into hardware acceleration techniques, such as GPU or FPGA implementations, could also improve the real-time performance of more computationally intensive variants like STFT and FrFT. Moreover, the integration of Fourier Transform techniques into machine learning frameworks for feature extraction and classification offers a promising area for further research, particularly in fields like medical imaging and telecommunications. Overall, this study reinforces the need for careful selection of Fourier Transform variants based on specific application requirements and resource constraints.

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