[Very Quick] Introduction to Computational Fluid Dynamics Theory

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How much CFD theory can you cover in 20 minutes?

• This presentation will **NOT**:  
  – Cover everything you need to know to be an expert in CFD.  
  – Replace textbooks, graduate level classes, and years of industry experience.

• This presentation **WILL**:  
  – Introduce the some of the theory behind CFD & numerical settings.  
  – Provide some vocabulary to help you understand the information available in textbooks, online, and in coursework.  
  – Help you troubleshoot logically.  
  – Make CFD more than just a ‘black box’.
Outline

• Equations of Fluid Motion
• Numerical Methods
  – The CFL number
  – Related Vocabulary
• Conclusions & Further Reading
Equations of Fluid Motion

Conservation Equations: conservation law//divergence law form

**Mass/continuity:**
\[
\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial \rho u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial \rho v}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial \rho w}{\partial z} = 0
\]

**Momentum:**
\[(x\text{-direction})\]
\[
\frac{\partial \rho u}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial (\rho u^2 + \sigma_x)}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial (\rho uv + \tau_{xy})}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial (\rho uw + \tau_{xz})}{\partial z} = 0
\]

**Energy:**
\[
\frac{\partial e}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial ((e + \sigma_x)u + v\tau_{yx} + w\tau_{zx} - k \frac{\partial T}{\partial x})}{\partial x} + \ldots = 0
\]
Equations of Fluid Motion

Conservation Equations: conservation law/divergence law form

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Momentum: (x-direction) \[ \frac{\partial \rho u}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial (\rho u^2 + \sigma_x)}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial (\rho uv + \tau_{xy})}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial (\rho uw + \tau_{xz})}{\partial z} = 0 \]

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Total energy per unit volume, e(T)
Equations of Fluid Motion

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Total energy per unit volume, \(e(T)\)

Viscous stresses & pressure

... + equation of state, equations for viscous stresses ...
Equations of Fluid Motion

Conservation Equations: conservation law/divergence law form

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Equations of Fluid Motion

\[ F = \{ \rho u, \rho u^2 + \sigma_x, (e + \sigma_x)u + \ldots \}^T \]

\[ U = \{ \rho, \rho \bar{u}, e \}^T \]

Conservation Equations: conservation law/divergence law form

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Conservation Equations: conservation law/divergence law form

\[ \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial F}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial G}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial H}{\partial z} = Q \]
Equations of Fluid Motion

State vector

Flux vectors

Source term

Conservation Equations: conservation law/divergence law form

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Equations of Fluid Motion

Conservation Equations: integral form

\[ \int_{V} \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} \, dV + \int_{V} \vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{F} \, dV = \int_{V} Q \, dV \]
Equations of Fluid Motion

Conservation Equations: integral form

... apply Gauss’ Theorem

\[ \int_V \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} \, dV + \frac{1}{V} \int_S \vec{F} \cdot \vec{d}s - \frac{1}{V} \int Q \, dV \]
Equations of Fluid Motion

Discretization ... 

\[ \int_V \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} dV + \frac{1}{V} \int_S \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{s} - \frac{1}{V} \int Q dV \]
Equations of Fluid Motion

Discretization:

\[ \int_{V_i} \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} dV + \sum_{j \in N(i)} \tilde{F}_{ij} \Delta S_{ij} - Q |V_i| = \int_{V_i} \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} dV + R_i(U) = 0 \]

Each of these terms will be expressed in terms of the values at vertices of the mesh. Several methods exist for how to approximate the flux vectors and gradients.

Numerical residual
In SU2: Res_Flow[0]
Equations of Fluid Motion

Discretization:

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Iterations of the solution for the state vector \( U \) (finite volume formulation):

\[ U_{i}^{n+1} = U_{i}^{n} - \frac{\Delta t}{V_{i,j}} f(\tilde{F}_{i,j}^{n}, \Delta S_{i,j}) \quad j \in N(i) \]
Equations of Fluid Motion

\[ \int_{V_i} \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} dV + \sum_{j \in N(i)} \tilde{F}_{ij} \Delta S_{ij} - Q|V_i| = \int_{V_i} \frac{\partial U}{\partial t} dV + R_i(U) = 0 \]

**Discretization:**

\[ U_{i}^{n+1} = U_{i}^{n} - \Delta t \left( \frac{D \cdot F_{i,j}^{n}}{\Delta x} + \frac{D \cdot G_{i,j}^{n}}{\Delta y} \right), \quad j \in N(i) \]
Numerical Methods

- Start from some initial guess of the solution $U_i$ at the points in the mesh.
- Update the value of $U_i$ based on approximations to the flux vectors between $i$ and all its neighbors $j$.
- Continue until the residual approaches 0.
- How well flux is approximated, and how quickly the residual will approach 0 depends on the choice of numerical methods, the mesh refinement, and other options.
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What happens when the solution diverges?
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What happens when the solution diverges?
The CFL Number

- The Courant, Friedrichs and Lewy (CFL) number is a condition of stability for explicit time-backwards in space difference method.
  - Explicit in time: depends only on the solution at time $n$
  - Implicit in space: depends on the solution at multiple locations $i$
  - Derivation from von Neumann stability analysis applied to numerical algorithms. For more detail, see textbooks on CFD and numerical methods.

- $\text{CFL} = \left| \frac{c \Delta t}{\Delta x} \right|

- For time-implicit methods, CFL does not need to be less than 1 to be stable – no strict limit, dependent on the problem being solved and the numerical methods chosen.
- $\Delta X$ is controlled by the mesh
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\[
u_{i}^{n+1} = u_{i}^{n} - \frac{c \Delta t}{\Delta x} (u_{i}^{n} - u_{i-1}^{n})
\]

Substituting a Fourier component, one can find the method is stable for $\text{CFL} \leq 1$
In SU2, a primal-dual mesh is used, which constructs control volumes based on connecting the midpoints and centroids of all the edges and faces of the cells of the initial grid. This allows fluxes to be computed over the edges defined in the primal grid.

Numerical Methods: Related Vocabulary

• Examples: Roe, JST, Lax-Friedrich, CUSP, AUSM, ...
  – Described in detail in many references.
  – Actual implementation may vary between flow solvers.
• **Difference operators**/ derivative approximations: what points do you use for the Taylor Series, and what order terms do you keep? Forward difference, backwards difference, central difference, higher order...
• **Truncation error**: how large were the terms you dropped from the Taylor series?
• **Dissipation**: how much will the even-ordered neglected Taylor series terms round out sharp features of the flow?
• **Flux-splitting schemes**: do you use a different difference operator depending on what direction the information is moving.
• **PDE classification** for fluid flows: **Elliptic** where locally subsonic, **Hyperbolic** where locally supersonic.
  – Elliptic: characteristics go in different directions, smooth solutions.
  – Hyperbolic: characteristics go at different speeds in the same direction, solutions can have discontinuities.
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Controlled by: [FLOW, FEM] NUMERICAL METHOD DEFINITION section in the SU2 config file
Conclusions

Further Reading:
- Numerical methods:
  - Various textbooks by Anderson, Hoffman & Chiang, Thompson
  - Graduate level CFD coursework
  - Journal papers
- SU2 settings: appropriate numerical methods and CFL numbers
  - Tutorial files & test cases
- More help:
  - Cfd-online.com: wiki and forums
  - Turbulence modeling resource

Acknowledgments
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