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Design and analysis of multi-level numerical experiments, with application to fire safety

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Abstract

To assess the conformity of a building in case of fire, fire engineers use numerical simulations. A popular software for fire simulations is Fire Dynamics Simulator (FDS). It is based on a finite difference method that takes into account the random behavior of the fire. Thus, the response of FDS is stochastic. The mesh size used in the numerical scheme can be chosen by the user. When the mesh size decreases, the accuracy and the computation time of simulations increase. At low accuracy, one simulation takes a few minutes to run, whereas it can be several weeks at high accuracy.

We consider the problem of estimating the behavior of fine-mesh simulations (high-fidelity) using a combination of fine- and coarse-mesh simulations (low-fidelity). This approach is called multi-fidelity. We propose to extend the Bayesian multi-fidelity models proposed by Picheny and Ginsbourger [2013] and Tuø et al. [2014] to the case of stochastic simulators.

Fire Dynamics Simulator

FDS has two main characteristics:
- finite difference methods \( \Rightarrow \) mesh size can be tuned;
- random behavior of fire \( \Rightarrow \) stochastic simulator.

Objectives: build a (meta-)model of FDS at high-fidelity from low-fidelity results:
- combining results from different levels of accuracy \( \Rightarrow \) multi-fidelity;
- using Gaussian process \( \Rightarrow \) Bayesian framework.

Proposed model

Data:
- inputs: \((x, t) \in X \times T \subset \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^c\), where \(t\) stands for the mesh size;
- outputs: \((z) \subset \mathbb{R}.

Likelihood:

\[ (z) \sim_{\text{Gaussian}} \mathcal{N}(x, t); \text{diag}(\lambda(x, t)) \] (1)

Prior:

1. \(x\) is a Gaussian process:

\[ x \sim \mathcal{GP}(m(x, t); k(x, t), (x', t)) \] (2)

2. \(x\) converges when \(t\) tends to 0:

\[ x(t) = \lim_{\nu \to 0} x(t). \] (3)

Models are validated by comparing:
- predictions (posterior mean) with observations,
- distributions of normalized residual with the standard normal distribution.

Conclusion

- Contribution
  - A Bayesian model for multi-fidelity stochastic simulators has been proposed.
  - Our model has been shown to provide, in a numerical experiment with FDS, a good quantification of uncertainty on predictions.
  - Future work
    - fully Bayesian inference for hyper-parameters,
    - sequential design of experiments.

References

