

Locking-free mixed finite element methods for thin-walled and nearly incompressible nonlinear continuum mechanics

Michael Neunteufel¹

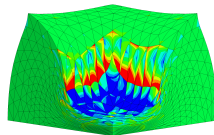
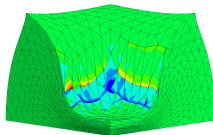
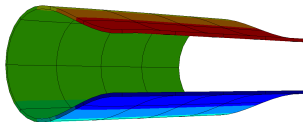
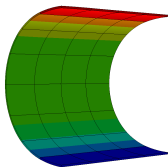
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FWF Austrian
Science Fund

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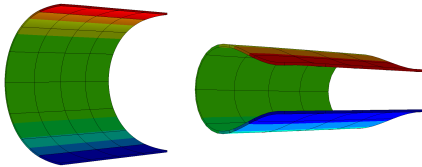
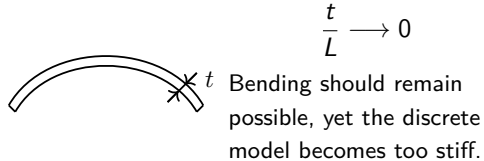


MS052 - Treatment of Locking Across Discretization Techniques

Dedicated to Prof. Ekkehard Ramm on the occasion of his 85th birthday



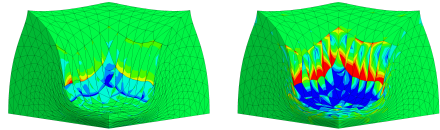
Geometric limit: thin structures



Material limit: incompressibility

$$\frac{\kappa}{\mu} \rightarrow \infty, \quad J = \det \mathbf{F} \rightarrow 1$$

Volume should be preserved, yet the discrete model becomes too stiff or unstable.



Same symptom: artificial stiffness from discrete over-constraint

Bending-dominated thin-shell limit

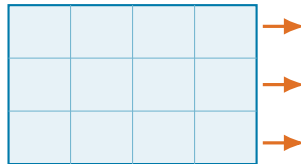
$$\Pi_t(\mathbf{u}) = \frac{1}{t^2} \mathcal{U}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}) + \mathcal{U}_{\text{bend}}(\mathbf{u}) - \ell(\mathbf{u}), \quad t \rightarrow 0$$

$$\mathcal{U}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}) = 0 \quad \not\Rightarrow \quad \mathcal{U}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}_h) = 0.$$

The limiting motion exists, but the discrete kinematics may not contain it.

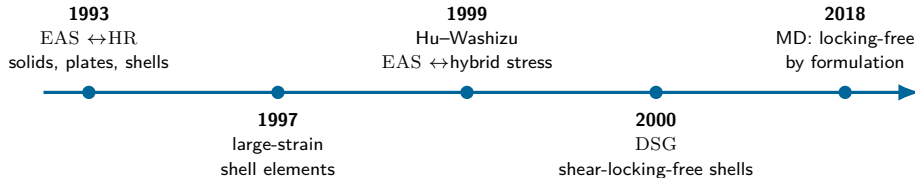
Incompressible limit

$$J(\mathbf{F}) = 1, \quad \frac{\kappa}{\mu} \rightarrow \infty$$



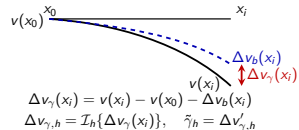
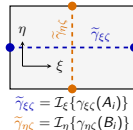
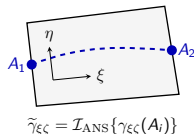
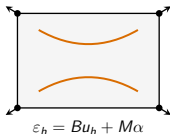
too many volume constraints
for the available modes

Locking is a mismatch between a physical limiting constraint and its discrete representation



Kinematic route

Enrich, sample, project, or reconstruct the strain field: EAS, ANS, MITC, DSG.



Dual route

Introduce independent stress fields and weak compatibility: Hellinger–Reissner, hybrid stress, Hu–Washizu.



Hu–Washizu functional

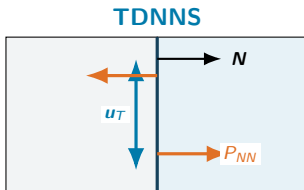
$$\mathcal{L}(\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{F}, \mathbf{P}) = \int_{\Omega} \psi(\mathbf{F}) \, dV - \left\langle \mathbf{F} - \underbrace{(\mathbf{I} + \nabla_{\mathbf{X}} \mathbf{u})}_{\nabla_{\mathbf{X}} \Phi}, \mathbf{P} \right\rangle - W_{\text{ext}}(\mathbf{u})$$

$\mathbf{u}$: global kinematics and boundary conditions

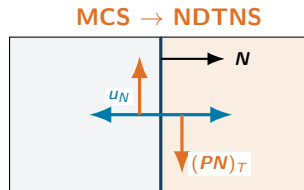
$\mathbf{F}$: regular tensor passed to the material law

$\mathbf{P}$: compatibility multiplier and interface force

Linear starting points: choose continuity from interface work



tangential displacement u_T
nominal normal stress P_{NN}

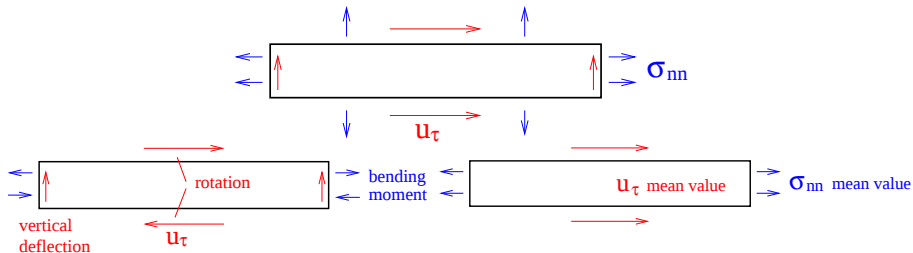


normal displacement u_N
nominal tangential traction $(PN)_T$

$$\begin{aligned} \Pi_T &= I - N \otimes N, & u_N &= u \cdot N, & u_T &= \Pi_T u, \\ P_{NN} &= N \cdot PN, & (PN)_T &= \Pi_T PN, & (PN) \cdot \delta u &= P_{NN} \delta u_N + (PN)_T \cdot \delta u_T. \end{aligned}$$

Complementary choices: TDNNS keeps (u_T, P_{NN}) , NDTNS keeps $(u_N, (PN)_T)$

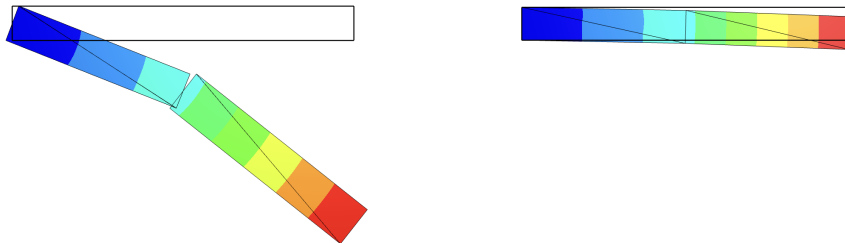
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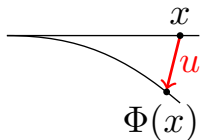
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Linear starting points: choose continuity from interface work

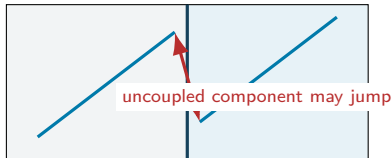


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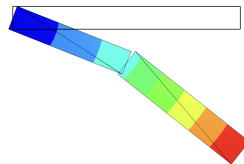
Complementary choices: TDNNS keeps (u_T, P_{NN}) , NDTNS keeps $(u_N, (P N)_T)$



$$\mathbf{F} = \mathbf{I} + \nabla_x \mathbf{u}, \quad \mathbf{P} = \partial_{\mathbf{F}} \Psi(\mathbf{F})$$



element derivatives are regular;
the global derivative also contains
interface contributions



If u_N jumps, the global gradient is a distribution. Nonlinear products of that distribution are undefined. The elementwise gradient alone omits the jump kinematics.

Keep the locking-free continuity $\Rightarrow$ lift the kinematics

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{F}, \mathbf{P}) = \int_{\Omega} \Psi(\mathbf{F}) \, dV - \langle \mathbf{F} - \mathbf{I} - \nabla_X \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{P} \rangle - W_{\text{ext}}(\mathbf{u})$$

$$\begin{cases} \nabla_X \mathbf{u} = (\nabla_X \mathbf{u})_K + \llbracket u_N \rrbracket \delta_F \mathbf{N} \otimes \mathbf{N} \\ \llbracket P_{NN} \rrbracket = 0 \end{cases}$$

Material law

$$\mathbf{P} = \partial_{\mathbf{F}} \Psi(\mathbf{F})$$

The constitutive routine sees a regular local $\mathbf{F}$.

Compatibility

$$\mathbf{F} \simeq \mathbf{I} + \nabla_X \mathbf{u}$$

The stress multiplier enforces the relation weakly.

Equilibrium

$$-\text{Div } \mathbf{P} = \mathbf{B}$$

Interface work supplies the physically correct coupling.

Three variants of the lifting idea:

F-based: lift $\mathbf{F} = \nabla_X \Phi$; use $\Psi(\mathbf{F})$

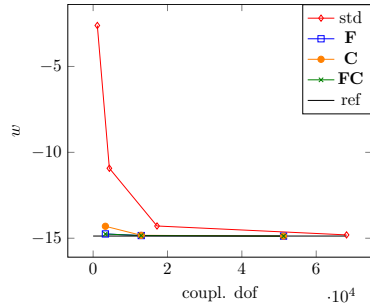
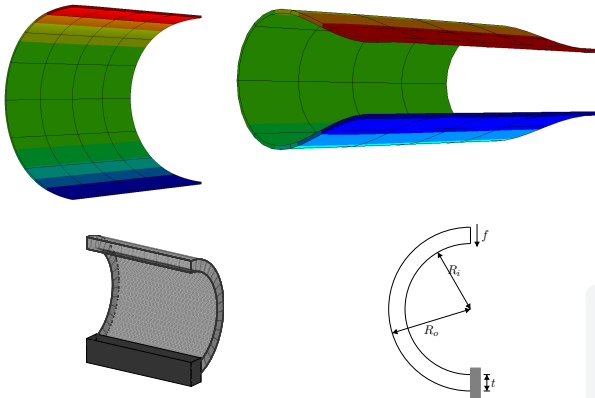
C-based: lift $\mathbf{C} = \mathbf{F}^\top \mathbf{F}$; use $\hat{\Psi}(\mathbf{C})$

FC-based: lift $\mathbf{F}$, then project $\mathbf{F}^\top \mathbf{F}$ to independent $\mathbf{C}$

local: $\mathbf{F}$, hybridized $\mathbf{P}$

static
condensation

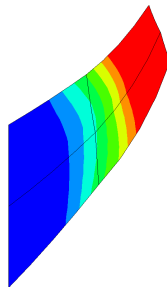
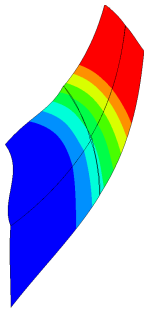
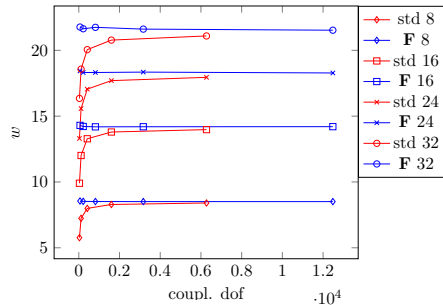
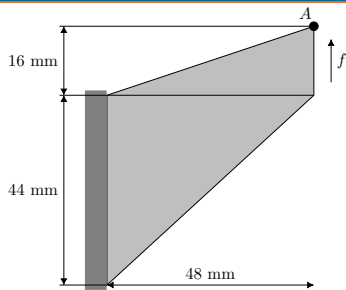
global: $\mathbf{u}_T$, facet $\hat{u}_N$



Vertical displacement w_A , $t = 0.2$ mm, $p = 2$

method	coupled dofs	w_A
standard	1,125	-2.613
<i>F</i> -based	3,300	-14.749
standard	68,157	-14.806

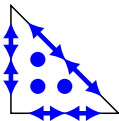
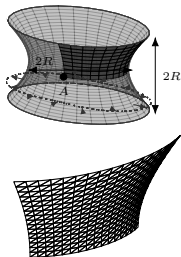
Reference: $w_A \approx -14.9$ (standard $p = 4$, finest grid)



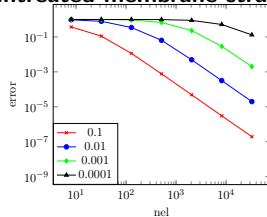
$$\mathbf{E}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}_h) \Rightarrow \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}} \mathbf{E}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}_h)$$

Constraint count ($p = 2$)

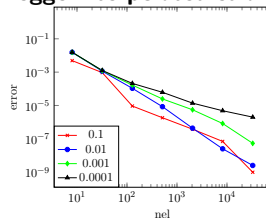
$$\frac{\# \text{dofs}}{\# \text{constraints}} = \frac{3\#V + 3\#E}{2\#E + 3\#T} = 1 = \frac{3}{3}$$



untreated membrane strain



Regge-interpolated strain



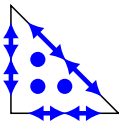
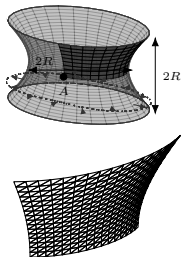
Relative radial-deflection error for $t = 10^{-1}, \dots, 10^{-4}$ and $p = 2$

Regge interpolation has a MITC tying-point relation

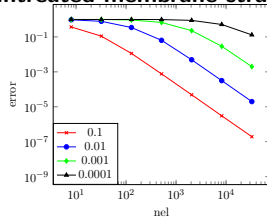
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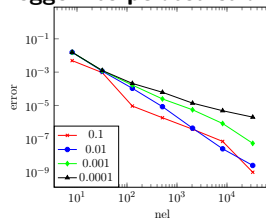
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Regge-interpolated strain



Relative radial-deflection error for $t = 10^{-1}, \dots, 10^{-4}$ and $p = 2$

Regge interpolation has a MITC tying-point relation

Thin limit: incompatible discrete kernel

$$\begin{aligned}\gamma(w, \theta) &= \nabla w - \theta, \\ \mathcal{E}_t(w, \theta) &= \frac{1}{2} a(\theta, \theta) + \frac{\lambda}{2t^2} \|\gamma(w, \theta)\|_0^2 - \ell(w), \\ t \rightarrow 0 : \gamma &= 0, \quad \nabla W_h \not\subset \Theta_h \Rightarrow \text{locking}\end{aligned}$$

MITC: compatible $H(\text{curl})$ shear

$$\begin{aligned}\gamma_h^{\text{raw}} &= \nabla w_h - \theta_h, \\ \tilde{\gamma}_h &= R_h \gamma_h^{\text{raw}} \in \Gamma_h, \\ \mathcal{E}_{\text{shear}, h} &\sim t^{-2} \|\tilde{\gamma}_h\|_0^2, \quad \Gamma_h : \text{tangential continuous}\end{aligned}$$

Three compatible choices make the reduction locking-free

1. Stable rotation pair (Θ_h, Q_h) 2. Commuting reduction R_h

3. Curl-free displacement kernel

$$\inf_{q_h \in Q_h} \sup_{\eta_h \in \Theta_h} \frac{(q_h, \text{rot } \eta_h)}{\|q_h\|_0 \|\eta_h\|_1} \geq \beta > 0$$

β independent of h

$$\begin{aligned}R_h : [H^1]^2 &\rightarrow \Gamma_h, \\ \pi_h(\text{rot } \eta) &= \text{rot}(R_h \eta)\end{aligned}$$

Nédélec / rotated Raviart–Thomas

$$\nabla W_h = \{\gamma_h \in \Gamma_h : \text{rot } \gamma_h = 0\}$$

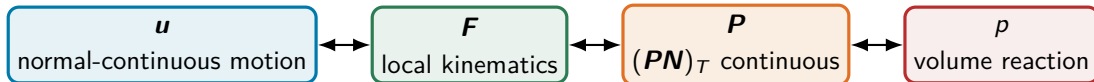
Gradients are represented exactly in Γ_h

$$\text{Plate: } \gamma_h^{\text{raw}} \xrightarrow{R_h} \Gamma_h \text{ (tangential trace)} \iff \text{shell: } E_{\text{mem}}(u_h) \xrightarrow{\mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}} \text{Regge}_h \text{ (tangential–tangential trace)}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_\kappa(\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{F}, \mathbf{P}, p) = \int_\Omega \left[\Psi(\mathbf{F}) - p(J(\mathbf{F}) - 1) - \frac{p^2}{2\kappa} \right] dV - \langle \mathbf{F} - \mathbf{I} - \nabla_X \mathbf{u}, \mathbf{P} \rangle - W_{\text{ext}}(\mathbf{u})$$

$$\begin{cases} \nabla_X \mathbf{u} = (\nabla_X \mathbf{u})_K + \llbracket \mathbf{u}_T \rrbracket \delta_{\mathbf{F}} \mathbf{N} \otimes \boldsymbol{\Pi}_T \\ \llbracket (\mathbf{P}\mathbf{N})_T \rrbracket = 0 \end{cases}$$

$J - 1 + p/\kappa = 0$, the limit $\kappa \rightarrow \infty$ gives exact incompressibility



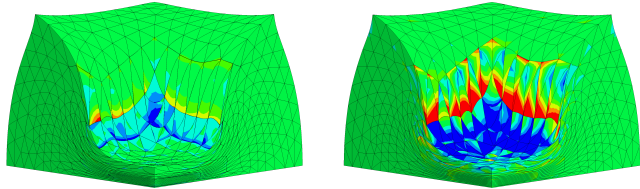
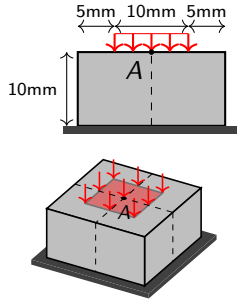
What comes from MCS?

Normal-displacement / tangential-traction continuity and a robust incompressible small-strain limit.

What does Hu–Washizu add?

A regular finite-strain $\mathbf{F}$ for the material law and the nonlinear volume constraint.

Jacobian determinant J on the deformed configuration at final load $f = 1000$



Pointwise J : NDTNS 0.503 – 1.406, STP –1.189 – 4.140.

Nonlinear robustness

NDTNS and STP reach $f = 1000$.

Taylor–Hood-type method fails earlier when negative Jacobians appear.

Projected volume ratio J_0 , 4189 tetrahedra

method	min J_0	max J_0
NDTNS	0.9733	1.025
STP	0.7241	1.294

1

Different approaches to tackle locking

Hu–Washizu formulation as powerful tool to design and relate methods

2

Extend TDNNS and MCS to finite elasticity

Beneficial properties analyzed in linear setting carry over to nonlinear setting

3

Regge interpolation to avoid membrane locking

Relations to MITC, similarities to shear locking in Reissner–Mindlin plates

4

Physics of fields important to design robust methods

Investigate similarities between different methods and locking phenomena

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Physics of fields important to design robust methods

Investigate similarities between different methods and locking phenomena

Thank You for Your attention!

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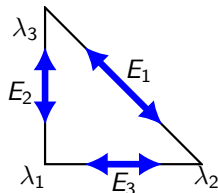
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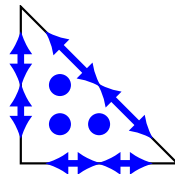
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$$\text{Reg}_h^p := \{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]_{\text{sym}}^{d \times d} \mid \llbracket \boldsymbol{\tau}^\top \boldsymbol{\varepsilon} \boldsymbol{\tau} \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all edges } E\}$$



$$\boldsymbol{\varphi}_{E_i} = \nabla \lambda_j \odot \nabla \lambda_k, \quad \boldsymbol{\tau}_j^\top \boldsymbol{\varphi}_{E_i} \boldsymbol{\tau}_j = c_i \delta_{ij},$$



$$\boldsymbol{\varphi}_{T_i} = \lambda_i \nabla \lambda_j \odot \nabla \lambda_k$$

Canonical Regge interpolant

$$\mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^p : C^0(\Omega) \rightarrow \text{Reg}_h^p$$

$$\int_E \boldsymbol{\tau}^\top (\mathbf{G} - \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^p \mathbf{G}) \boldsymbol{\tau} q \, dA = 0 \text{ for all } q \in \mathcal{P}^p(E)$$

$$\int_K (\mathbf{G} - \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^p \mathbf{G}) : \mathbf{Q} \, dV = 0 \text{ for all } \mathbf{Q} \in \mathcal{P}^{p-1}(K, \mathbb{R}_{\text{sym}}^{2 \times 2})$$

TDNNS

$$\mathbf{u} \in \text{Ned}_h^p, \quad \llbracket \mathbf{u}_T \rrbracket = 0$$

$$\boldsymbol{\sigma} \in \text{HHJ}_h^p, \quad \llbracket \sigma_{NN} \rrbracket = 0$$

The duality pairing $\langle \sigma, \nabla \mathbf{u} \rangle$ may be written elementwise as

$$\sum_K \int_K \boldsymbol{\sigma} : \nabla \mathbf{u} \, dV - \sum_F \int_F \sigma_{NN} \llbracket u_N \rrbracket \, dA.$$

$$\text{Ned}_h^p := \{ \mathbf{u} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]^d \mid \llbracket \boldsymbol{\tau}^\top \mathbf{u} \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all edges } E, \llbracket \mathbf{u}_T \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all facets } F \}$$

$$\text{HHJ}_h^p := \{ \boldsymbol{\sigma} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]_{\text{sym}}^{d \times d} \mid \llbracket \sigma_{NN} \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all facets } F \}$$

$$\text{BDM}_h^p := \{ \mathbf{u} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]^d \mid \llbracket u_N \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all facets } F \}$$

$$\text{MCS}_h^p := \{ \boldsymbol{\sigma} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]^{d \times d} \mid \llbracket (\boldsymbol{\sigma} \mathbf{N})_T \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all facets } F \}$$

MCS / NDTNS

$$\mathbf{u} \in \text{BDM}_h^p, \quad \llbracket u_N \rrbracket = 0$$

$$\boldsymbol{\sigma} \in \text{MCS}_h^p, \quad \llbracket (\boldsymbol{\sigma} \mathbf{N})_T \rrbracket = 0$$

The normal displacement couples directly.
The tangential displacement is recovered through hybrid/interface variables.

Targeted strain reconstruction

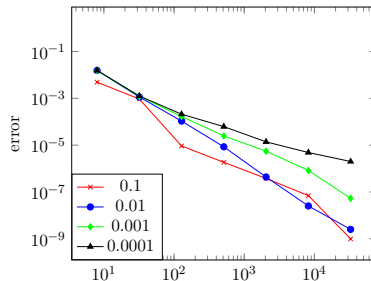
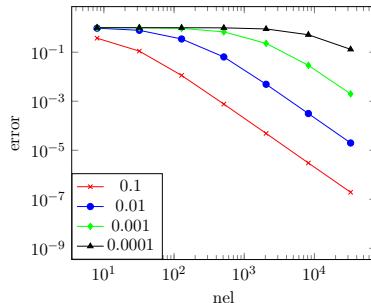
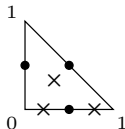
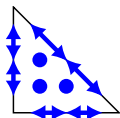
$$\mathbf{E}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}_h) \mapsto \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^{p-1} \mathbf{E}_{\text{mem}}(\mathbf{u}_h).$$

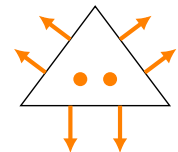
The canonical interpolant preserves tangential–tangential strain moments on edges:

$$\int_E \boldsymbol{\tau}^\top (\mathbf{E} - \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^k \mathbf{E}) \boldsymbol{\tau} q \, dA = 0, \quad q \in \mathcal{P}^k(E),$$

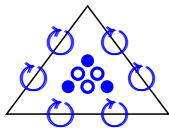
$$\int_K (\mathbf{E} - \mathcal{I}_{\text{Regge}}^k \mathbf{E}) : \mathbf{Q} \, dV = 0, \quad \mathbf{Q} \in \mathcal{P}^{k-1}(K, \mathbb{R}_{\text{sym}}^{2 \times 2}).$$

Closely connected to MITC-type strain interpolation.
Extendable to quadrilateral and mixed meshes.

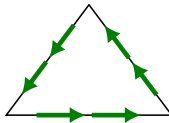




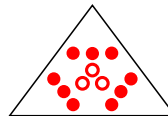
$\mathbf{u}$: normal-continuous



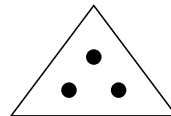
$\mathbf{P}$: $(\mathbf{PN})_T$ continuous



$\hat{\mathbf{u}}_T$: hybrid facet field



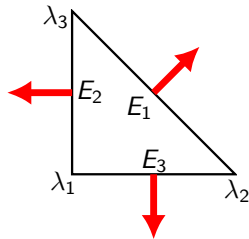
local $\mathbf{F}$



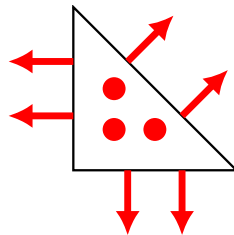
local pressure p

- Hybridization makes all stress degrees of freedom local
- The trace-free split avoids lifting the already regular divergence of the displacement
- The local fields $\mathbf{F}$, $\mathbf{P}$, and p are condensed, global system contains displacement-type unknowns only

$$\text{HHJ}_h^p := \{\boldsymbol{\sigma} \in [\mathcal{P}^p(\mathcal{T}_h)]_{\text{sym}}^{d \times d} \mid \llbracket \boldsymbol{\sigma}_{NN} \rrbracket = 0 \text{ for all facets } F\}$$



$$\varphi_{E_i} = \nabla^\perp \lambda_j \odot \nabla^\perp \lambda_k, \quad \mathbf{N}_j^\top \varphi_{E_i} \mathbf{N}_j = c_i \delta_{ij},$$



$$\varphi_{T_i} = \lambda_i \nabla^\perp \lambda_j \odot \nabla^\perp \lambda_k$$

