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## Validation of Proposed Test Set Reduction Hybrid Compaction Schemes for FPGA-Based Designs

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**Abstract:** Recently, the density and intricacy of Very Large-Scale Integration (VLSI) circuits are grown, and the number of test vectors has increased drastically. Owing to this, the cost of testing is a significant component for consideration. The two main factors that measure the cost of the test are the size of the test vector sets and test data volume. Compression and compaction are the two approaches used to reduce the aforementioned factors. Compaction is a primary process in the test generation procedure, and there are two classes for it, i.e., dynamic and static compaction approaches. In this paper, the author performs testing and obtains the compact test vectors for various FPGA-based designs. The RASP-FIT fault injection testing tool provides the ATPG testing framework. In this paper, the testing is performed on various FPGA benchmark designs written in Verilog HDL, and the results are validated. The ATPG method developed under the RASP-FIT tool contains new hybrid compaction techniques that calculate compaction and fault coverage for the designs. This work is also compared with the previous work and found that the proposed compaction scheme is better at compacting the test vectors.

**Keywords:** compression, dynamic compaction, static compaction, test generation, test vector size.

## 基于 FPGA 设计的拟议测试集减少混合压缩方案的验证

**摘要：**最近，超大规模集成（超大规模集成电路）电路的密度和复杂性都在增加，测试载体的数量也急剧增加。由于这个原因，测试成本是需要考虑的一个重要组成部分。衡量测试成本的两个主要因素是测试向量集的大小和测试数据量。压缩和压实是用于减少上述因素的两种方法。压实是测试生成程序中的一个主要过程，它有两类，即动态和静态压实方法。在本文中，作者对各种基于 FPGA 的设计进行了测试并获得了紧凑的测试向量。锉刀配合故障注入测试工具提供了 ATPG 测试框架。在本文中，对用高密度脂蛋白语言编写的各种 FPGA 基准设计进行了测试，并对结果进行了验证。在锉刀配合工具下开发的 ATPG 方法包含新的混合压实技术，计算设计的压实度和故障覆盖率。这项工作还将结果与以前的工作进行了比较，发现所提出的压实方案在压实测试向量方面效果更好。

**关键词：**压缩，动态压实，静态压实，测试生成，测试向量大小。

## 1. Introduction

The complexity of Very Large-Scale Integration (VLSI) designs is continuously growing with the significant development in science and technology and shrinking transistor feature size. The probability of faults occurring also increases with the increasing density and complexity of the models. Digital design testing is, therefore, necessary to ensure the fault-free operation of devices [1]. The testing cost for such systems is also increasingly growing because of the complexity of VLSI circuits [2]. Several methods for analyzing digital systems have been proposed and are widely known as methods of producing test patterns. The primary objective of testing approaches is to confirm the device free from faults or defects, to comply with the claimed requirements, and to improve the yields of the device [3]. The test procedure generates test vectors for automated test equipment, and they should be compacted for memory efficiency. Two techniques, compression and compaction, are used to decrease the test set size [4]. Compression of the set of test vectors is a hardware-based technique.

It compresses and decompresses the test stimuli and test responses, respectively, using the on-chip hardware [4]. To save test data, various test compaction techniques are used to decrease the test pattern count (while the value of Fault Coverage (FC) is maintained). These techniques are named as dynamic and static compaction schemes [5].

During the last few decades, Hardware Description Languages (HDLs) have been actively participating in enhancing different methods of designing and testing digital systems. Because of HDLs, the design and test engineers work closely as it improves the coordination between the methods and techniques used by them. The design engineers may review and test the designs during the initial phase of the design flow in HDL. In addition, the designs are tested without translating into any compatible format [6]. Digital system testing is done at the beginning so that the time to market, cost, and effort is reduced in the designing process. To perform Fault Injection (FI) testing, the test engineer requires two modules,

- A golden reference module (aka fault-free circuit)
- A faulty module (in which faults are introduced deliberately aka defective design/circuit)

Test engineers need at least the following steps to test the System under Test (SUT). These steps are given in the sequel:

- To develop a mechanism to generate a faulty module from the original golden module.
- To inject faults in all possible locations of the design.

- A mechanism that both randomly or sequentially selects and activates the injected faults in the target design.

- Finally, perform fault injection testing and calculate many parameters such as fault coverage (FC) and compaction ratio (C).

To meet the following conditions, a simple test pattern generation is needed for the FPGA designs. Hence, a new automatic method is developed and presented in our previous work [3], [6]–[8]. This ATPG test method proposes hybrid compaction methods to minimize the test vector count and to obtain compact test vectors for FPGA-based systems. The test method should contain the proposed dynamic compaction scheme, whereas, the proposed static compaction is developed under the RASP-FIT tool [6]. In this paper, the main objective is to validate the claims made for the proposed test and compaction techniques under the RASP-FIT tool developed previously in the continuation of this research [8].

The whole paper is further structured as follows: Section 1 discusses state-of-the-art techniques for dynamic and static compaction approaches developed in the last few decades. The proposed dynamic and static techniques are described in Section 2 in detail. The ATPG method with the proposed compaction schemes is applied to various benchmark designs, and the results are evaluated. Section 3 discusses the results. After that, Section 4 compares the results presented in this paper with the state-of-the-art research available in the literature. Section 5 concludes the paper and recommends the next steps for advanced research.

## 2. Related Work

Compact test sets are highly suitable for modern VLSI designs to decrease test implementation time and memory usage. Recently, high-quality test sets are receiving great attention for increasing test quality and performance. The International Technology Roadmap for Semiconductors (ITRS) predicts the requirement of compression and described a thousand times the compression factor needed till 2020. Test compaction techniques are therefore necessary to obtain a highly qualified test vector [9]. Test generation methods are primarily used to acquire fewer test vectors for the maximum coverage of faults, and it is called the test compaction procedure. These procedures or algorithms minimize the test set size. Therefore, reducing the time of application of the test and the volume of test data [8], [10].

The main objective is to reduce the memory requirement for Automated Test Equipment (ATE). Due to this, we achieve faster operation of ATE. For

this function, two techniques are usually used: compression and compaction [3], [5]. In this research work, the compaction method is carried out, which is further categorized into two and explained briefly in the sequel:

- Dynamic Compaction
- Static Compaction

### 2.1. Dynamic Compaction Schemes

The dynamic compaction techniques are part of an ATPG process that means it is a technique or method that generates the compact test vector during the ATPG process. Various techniques are available in the literature that try achieving the compact test vectors such as separate fault sets and their compatibility [11]–[13], reverse -order fault simulation [14], double detection [15], Reverse Order Test COmpaction (ROTCO), forward-looking reverse order fault simulation [16], and rotating back-trace [8], [17].

Xiang et al. [18] presented the work on a new dynamic test compaction approach. They proposed a new calculation that estimates the impact inputs of a transition fault, a subset of inputs that can be defined to detect the transition fault, which is used by the dynamic test compaction scheme. This attempts to compress experiments into this test with as many defects as possible. Authors in [1], and [4] indicate an incremental dynamic compaction technique. A cube merging technique is used with dynamic compaction in this process.

The Parallel Order Dynamic Test Compaction (PODTC) technique shows that the order of secondary faults is vital for test compaction within a single test generation. This method launches parallel ATPG and selects the best pattern that found the critical faults [9]. A new method for checking compaction has recently been proposed by [10] under a transparent scan.

### 2.2. Static Compaction Schemes

In the static compaction method, the quantity of test vectors is diminished after they are created. The static compaction strategies applied after the generation of test vectors. Therefore, these techniques are executed as an independent project and are free of ATPG approaches. These techniques are effortlessly consolidated into a test environment [19].

Static compaction [20]–[21] is, therefore, less expensive than that dynamic compaction. For combinational circuit test compaction, several techniques are available. These techniques are used in combination to implement a test compaction program for combinational circuits, namely,

- Redundant Test Vector Elimination Method
- Test Vector Merging
- Test Subset Merging
- A Multi-cut Test Set Merging
- Test Vector Modification
- Reverse Order Fault Simulation

### • Proposed Compaction Schemes

Several methods for analyzing the FPGA-based digital systems have been proposed and are widely known as methods of producing test patterns. The object of these methods of testing is to ensure that the device is free of defects, to comply with the claimed requirements and to boost yields. The key objectives of the TPG are [22]:

- To find compact test vectors;
- To obtain a memory efficient solution;
- To achieve faster operation by fastening the test procedure;
- To be a cost-effective method.

The hybrid compaction schemes were developed under the RASP-FIT fault injection tool. The author developed this tool at the University of Kassel, Germany. More details about the tool are given in [3], [6], [7], [23].

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Proposed Dynamic Compaction

As described earlier, the dynamic compaction technique is part of the ATPG method. The implementation of the proposed dynamic compaction scheme and its Verilog HDL code is generated by the RASP-FIT tool. This code is added to the top\\_file automatically [3], [6]. The dynamic compaction scheme introduces a concept based on the set-point value. The set-point value is a number that is the mean of observation points obtained during fault injection experiments. For more information on how to find the set-point values, refer to [24].

#### 3.1.1. Memory Unit

After the dynamic compaction is performed, the test vectors are stored in the memory unit defined in the Verilog HDL code by the RASP-FIT tool. The parameters are added to the “top file” that decides the size of the memory. The memory unit consists of columns and rows. The columns show the total number of faults injected in the design using the fault injection experiment, whereas the rows show the test vector count obtained during the dynamic compaction process. The resulting data is stored in the text (\*.txt) file and applied to the result analyzer, developed under the RASP-FIT tool, for static compaction.

### 3.2. Proposed Static Compaction

As described earlier, static compaction is not a part of the ATPG system. It decreases the number of test vectors further after their generation. Inside the RASP-FIT tool, developed by the author [8], a simple static compaction scheme was proposed, which is memory-efficient and fast. It is written in MATLAB, which takes a few input parameters, and data files and works on that data. The proposed scheme measures the coverage and compaction of faults and reduces the number of test

vectors. The tab for static compaction is shown in Figure 1. All input parameters needed for compact test

vector calculation and fault coverage are defined briefly as follows [25]:

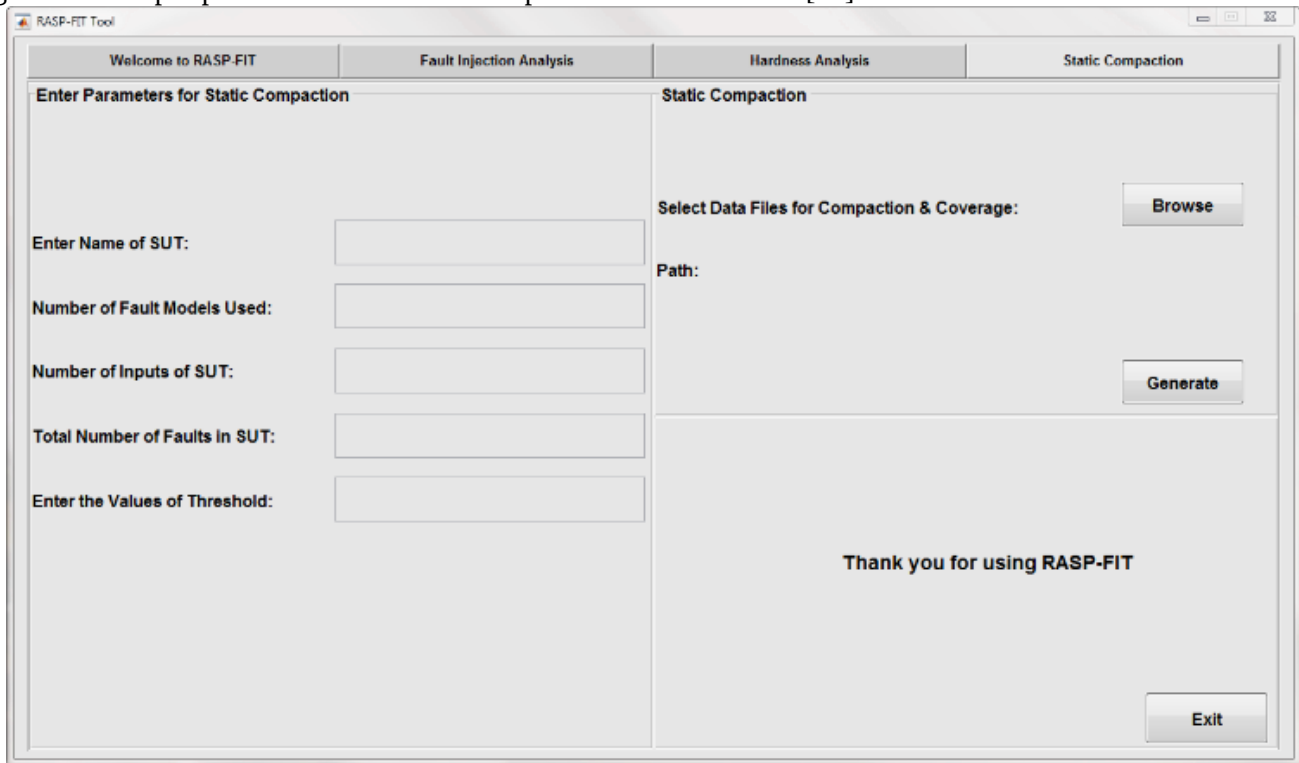


Fig. 1 Static compaction tab under RASP-FIT tool [8]

- The name of the SUT: This parameter takes the name of the file that contains generated data after static compaction is successfully run.
- Number of fault models used: This parameter requires the total number of fault models used (e.g., 3).
- The number of inputs of SUT: This parameter requires information about the number of inputs of the design under investigation.
- The total number of faults in SUT: How many faults are injected in the SUT? This information is critical for the entire procedure.
- The threshold value: The user specifies threshold values to separate the vulnerable positions into hard-to-find and most commonly found.

The data files are loaded for static compaction into the RASP-FIT tool. These files were used during the data generation process to further decrease the number of test vectors. The fault coverage and compaction ratio are also computed by the static compaction. The static compaction scheme in the RASP-FIT tool reads the \*.txt file and positions the data in a matrix form, as given in Eq. 1.

$$FM = \begin{bmatrix} P_1 & F_{1,1} & \cdots & F_{N,1} \\ P_2 & F_{2,1} & \cdots & F_{N,2} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ P_i & F_{i,1} & \cdots & F_{N,i} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

where  $P_1$ — $P_i$  represent the qualified test pattern obtained after dynamic compaction, and the  $F_{N,i}$  is the fault detection value for the  $N^{th}$  fault on an  $i^{th}$  qualified pattern. The value is '1' for  $F_{N,i}$  shows the detection of faults and otherwise, it is not detected. This matrix is used to obtain compact test vectors for the maximum

FC in static compaction. The following steps describe the main components of static compaction in detail [3], [7].

### 3.2.1. Fault Counting

Data are formatted as the pattern and fault detection array, as shown in Eq. 1. Input pattern length is provided as an input to the RASP-FIT tool, which removes the input pattern from the data.

For each fault array, the number of fault detection (the value, which is '1' in the fault matrix) are counted and the sum is indexed as a column vector.

### 3.2.2. Sorting

In the previous step, we counted the number of faults found in each pattern. In this step, sorting occurs. The sorted numbers are placed in descending order.

### 3.2.3. Merging

Merging is the process to combine two vectors. Sorted patterns are stored in a memory. After the sorting step, the first vector has the highest fault detection count, and the proposed merger method performs a logical OR operation with the next vector below it. This step continues till all the vectors obtained during the fault injection testing with dynamic compaction are checked.

## 3.3. Fault Coverage Computation

Each time, the FC is computed and compared with its previous value. After the comparison, it decides whether the test vector should be considered for the

inclusion in the compact test vector list or not. If the value of FC is increased from its previous value, it will be added to the list. In another case, this test vector is removed. Fault coverage is computed mathematically as,

$$FC (\%) = \frac{F_D}{F_T} \times 100 \quad (2)$$

where FC stands for Fault Coverage, FD shows the fault detection count, and FT represents the total injected faults.

### 3.4. Compaction Ratio Computation

By definition, the compaction ratio is defined as “the minimum number of vectors obtained to reach the maximum FC of a circuit”.

$$C (\%) = \left(1 - \frac{T_{static\_compact}}{T_q}\right) \times 100 \quad (3)$$

where C stands for the compaction,  $T_{static\_compact}$  represents a number of compact test vectors, and  $T_q$

represents the qualified test vectors (dynamic compaction scheme).

## 4. Results and Discussion

The proposed test approach with its compaction schemes is applied to various benchmark circuits written at different abstraction levels such as gate level, data flow level, and behavioral level. The results are presented in Table 1, which shows the total number of injected faults by the automatic fault injection tool, i.e., RASP-FIT. Also, the test method gives a fault detection count, and the fault coverage is then evaluated by Eq. (2) [3], [8]. The compaction ratio is also evaluated for all systems under test by Eq. (3) for the benchmark designs and the results are presented in Table 2. The more value of the compaction ratio gives a smaller number of test vectors.

Table 1 Fault detection and fault coverage for FPGA (Verilog HDL) designs

| FPGA Design           | Total Fault Injected ( $T_F$ ) | Faults Detected ( $F_D$ ) | Fault Coverage (%) |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| ISCAS Circuit-17      | 12                             | 12                        | 100                |
| ISCAS Circuit-432     | 336                            | 333, 328, 324             | 99.1,97.6,96.4     |
| ISCAS Circuit-499     | 408                            | 406                       | 99.5               |
| ISCAS Circuit-880     | 729                            | 729                       | 100                |
| ISCAS Circuit-1355    | 1064                           | 1064, 1046, 1030          | 100, 98.3, 96.8    |
| ISCAS Circuit-1908    | 1498                           | 1430, 1395, 1367          | 95.4, 93.1, 91.2   |
| ISCAS Circuit-2670    | 2152                           | 2110, 2074, 1941          | 98.05, 96.3, 90.2  |
| EPFL Adder            | 2040                           | 2036                      | 99.85              |
| EPFL Shifter (Barrel) | 6672                           | 6669                      | 99.96              |
| EPFL Sine ckt         | 10832                          | 9867,9401,8976            | 91.86,7.82.8       |
| EPFL ALU Unit         | 349                            | 346                       | 98.85              |
| EPFL Decoder ckt      | 608                            | 602,599,230               | 99.98,5.38         |
| Integer-to-Float      | 520                            | 337,264,196               | 64.50,7.37.6       |
| EPFL IIC Controller   | 2699                           | 2206,2071,1936            | 81.7,76.7,71.3     |
| EPFL Priority Encoder | 1956                           | 1550,1359,1410            | 79.2,69.4,72.09    |
| EPFL Coding-Cavlc     | 1386                           | 1380                      | 99.5               |
| Circuit Bitwise       | 09                             | 09                        | 100                |
| Boolean ckt           | 10                             | 10                        | 100                |
| Adder (32-bit)        | 194                            | 194                       | 100                |
| Mux case              | 24                             | 24                        | 100                |

Table 2 Hybrid compaction for FPGA designs in Verilog HDL

| FPGA Design           | Compaction (Dynamic) | Compaction (Static) | Compaction (%)<br>Bit-flip,SA-1,SA-0 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ISCAS Circuit-17      | 32                   | 2, 5, 7             | 93.8, 84.5, 78.13                    |
| ISCAS Circuit-432     | 100                  | 28, 42, 59          | 72, 58, 41                           |
| ISCAS Circuit-499     | 100                  | 11, 14, 42          | 89, 86, 58                           |
| ISCAS Circuit-880     | 100                  | 30, 47, 63          | 70, 53, 37                           |
| ISCAS Circuit-1355    | 100                  | 28, 38, 39          | 72, 62, 61                           |
| ISCAS Circuit-1908    | 100                  | 53, 40, 50          | 47, 60, 50                           |
| ISCAS Circuit-2670    | 100                  | 38, 43, 60          | 62, 57, 40                           |
| EPFL Adder            | 100                  | 12,20,27            | 88,80,73                             |
| EPFL Shifter (Barrel) | 100                  | 23,34,54            | 77,66,46                             |
| EPFL Sine ckt         | 100                  | 57,86,83            | 43,14,17                             |
| EPFL ALU Unit         | 100                  | 20,23,34            | 80,77,66                             |
| EPFL Decoder ckt      | 100                  | 22,38,63            | 78,62,37                             |
| Int-to-Flt            | 100                  | 6,6,10              | 94,94,90                             |
| EPFL I2C Controller   | 100                  | 50,52,85            | 50,48,15                             |
| EPFL Priority Encoder | 100                  | 44,59,34            | 54,41,66                             |
| Coding-Cavlc          | 100                  | 71,94,75            | 29,6,25                              |
| Circuit Bitwise       | 100                  | 2                   | 98                                   |
| Boolean ckt           | 100                  | 2,3,3               | 98,97,98                             |
| Adder (32-bit)        | 100                  | 2                   | 98                                   |
| Mux case              | 100                  | 3,5,4               | 97,95,96                             |

Table 3 Comparison between state-of-the-art works with the proposed tool

| System Under Test  | Work 1 [18] |      | Work 2 [7] |    | Work 3 [4] |      | Work 4 [28] |       | Proposed Work |                   |
|--------------------|-------------|------|------------|----|------------|------|-------------|-------|---------------|-------------------|
|                    | TV          | FC   | TV         | FC | TV         | FC   | TV          | FC    | TV            | FC                |
| ISCAS Circuit-17   | 30          | 100  | 6          | -  | -          | -    | 7           | 100   | 2,5,7         | 100               |
| ISCAS Circuit-432  | 360         | 96.6 | 57         | -  | 32         | 98.7 | 54          | 99.24 | 28,42,59      | 99.1,97.6,96.4    |
| ISCAS Circuit-499  | 340         | 97.6 | 67         | -  | 52         | 98.6 | 53          | 100   | 22,29,42      | 99.5              |
| ISCAS Circuit-880  | 600         | 97.3 | 66         | -  | 25         | 100  | 60          | 100   | 30,47,63      | 100               |
| ISCAS Circuit-1355 | 500         | 96.2 | 96         | -  | 84         | 99.5 | 85          | 100   | 28,39,39      | 100, 98.3, 96.8   |
| ISCAS Circuit-1908 | 500         | 91.6 | 142        | -  | -          | -    | 114         | 99.89 | 53,40,50      | 95.4, 93.1, 91.2  |
| ISCAS Circuit-2670 | 600         | 82   | 259        | -  | -          | -    | 107         | 98.84 | 38,43,60      | 98.05, 96.3, 90.2 |

The results on various FPGA designs are compared with previous test methods available in the literature and compared in Table 3. The results are compared with the state-of-the-artwork such as the simulation-based method presented in [26]. Another work is SAT {SATisfiability}-ATPG with a dynamic test vector compaction approach, which was presented in [27].

Similarly, [28] and [29] are presented for some benchmark designs. The last columns of the table show that the proposed methodology achieved fewer test vectors for the more significant value of fault coverage [8]. No comparison is available for the other benchmark designs in the literature. From the results presented in Table 3, it is clearly shown that the proposed compaction method has achieved better results compared to other work in terms of fault coverage and the number of test vectors.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, the proposed hybrid compaction schemes under the RASP-FIT fault injection tool are validated. This tool is designed to perform the ATPG approach and obtains the compact test vectors for Verilog designs (e.g., FPGA designs). The main findings of this research are to obtain the compact test vectors for various FPGA designs and to validate the proposed compaction schemes. The compaction of test vectors is an utmost important issue for the memory efficiency of automatic test equipment (ATE). The fault injection technique injects faults at every abstraction level of the design process, i.e., automatically modifies the Verilog code during the test pattern generation step. Many FPGA designs are tested, and compact test vectors are obtained. Comparison with other studies showed that this work is better than the state-of-the-art research available in the literature and found that our proposed method performed better compaction. In future research, it is recommended that other fault models must be developed and tested.

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