

DEVELOPMENT OF A GENETIC ALGORITHM CONTROLLER
FOR CARTESIAN ROBOT

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DEVELOPMENT OF A GENETIC ALGORITHM CONTROLLER
FOR CARTESIAN ROBOT

SESI PENGAJIAN: 2008/2009

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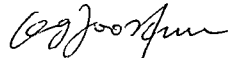
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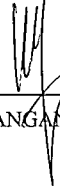
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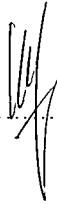
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Thesis submitted as a partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
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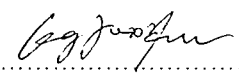
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This thesis is especially dedicated to my beloved parents.

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It is my hope that this thesis would contribute to the organizations in furthering their research.

ABSTRACT

In some daily tasks such as drilling, laser marking or spot welding application, the Cartesian robot is requested to reach with its hand tip to a desired target location. Such tasks become more complex if it has to handle multiple points in shortest travelling time and space. It is with these reasons that this study was conducted with the primary objective to develop a computational intelligent system that would contribute towards encouraging a productive and quality way of material handling and processing. The objective of this project is to design, develop and optimize the performance of a Cartesian robotic arm in terms of its positioning and speed to perform spot welding application. The genetic algorithm (GA) will be introduced, it will be able to look for the optimum sequences to solve its path planning via evolutionary solutions. GA will determine the best combination paths in order to minimize the total motion of welding time in shortest travel distance. The new algorithm is tested and implemented in this Cartesian robot. Laser pointer will replace the spot welding torch for the demonstration purpose in this project. This project involves in developing a machine learning system that is capable of performing independent learning capability for a given tasks. The design and development of this project will involve two major sections. First section concerns about the hardware construction, wiring and testing. Second section involves software design to control the movement of the robot for the spot welding. The hardware design can be categorized into two aspects i.e. the electrical design and mechanical design. The electrical design involves wiring of control components such as the stepper motor controller, input and output devices as well as the power supply and the safety devices. Finally, the developed algorithm will be tested and implemented into in this Cartesian robot system.

ABSTRAK

Untuk tugas harian seperti penggerudian, '*laser mark*' atau aplikasi kimpalan titik, robot kartesian adalah disuruh untuk mencecah objek pada lokasi tertentu dengan menggunakan tip pada lengannya. Tugas itu akan menjadi rumit jika ia hendak mengendalikan pelbagai kerja jenis titik pada masa yang singkat dan jarak yang terdekat. Untuk tujuan ini, kajian ini dijalankan dengan matlamat utama untuk menghasilkan sebuah sistem pintar komputasi yang dapat menyumbang kepada peningkatan produktiviti dalam pengendalian dan pemprosesan bahan yang berkualiti. Secara umumnya, objektif kajian adalah untuk merekacipta, membina dan mengoptimumkan prestasi sistem kartesian robot untuk kedudukan dan kelajuannya dalam mengendalikan aplikasi kimpalan titik. Algoritma genetik (GA) akan diperkenalkan dan ianya berkeupayaan untuk mengoptimumkan jujukan robot dalam menyelesaikan rancangan pergerakan robot melalui penyelesaian evolusi. GA akan menentukan kombinasi pergerakan yang paling baik demi meminimumkan jumlah masa kimpalan dalam jarak yang terdekat. Algoritma baru ini diuji dan dilaksanakan untuk kartesian robot ini. Penunjuk laser yang menggantikan alat kimpalan titik telah digunakan dalam projek ini untuk tujuan demonstrasi. Projek ini melibatkan pembangunan sistem mesin belajar yang berupaya untuk menunjukkan kebolehan untuk ditugaskan belajar secara tersendiri. Rekacipta dan pembangunan projek ini melibatkan dua bahagian. Bahagian pertama melibatkan pembangunan perkakasan, pendawaian dan ujian. Bahagian kedua melibatkan rekaan perisian untuk mengawal pergerakan paksi robot untuk melakukan kimpalan titik. Rekaan perkakasan dikategorikan kepada dua bahagian iaitu rekabentuk elektrik dan mekanikal. Rekaan elektrik melibatkan pendawaian komponen seperti kawalan stepper motor, peranti masukan dan keluaran, sistem bekalan kuasa dan peranti keselamatan. Akhirnya, algoritma yang dibangunkan ini telah diuji dan berjaya dilaksanakan dalam sistem kartesian robot.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	CONTENTS	PAGE
	THESES STATUS CONFIRMATION	
	SUPERVISOR'S CONFIRMATION	
	TITLE	i
	TESTIMONY	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xii
	LIST OF TABLES	xv
CHAPTER I	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Problem Statement	2
	1.3 Project Aims and Objectives	4
	1.4 Project Scope	5
	1.5 Overview of the Project	6
	1.6 Project Contributions	7
	1.7 Thesis Layout	8

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	9
2.2	Modern Technology of Robots	9
2.3	Applications of Robot	11
2.4	Laws of Robots	12
2.5	Classification of Robots	13
2.6	Robot Configurations	14
2.7	Literature Review for Similar Cartesian Robot	16
2.8	Drive Technology	16
	2.8.1 Stepper Motor	17
2.9	Electro-Pneumatic System	19
2.10	Types of Robot Controller and Programming Software	20
2.11	Literature Review for Similar Projects	20
	2.11.1 Offline Path Planning of Cooperative Manipulators Using Co-evolutionary Genetic Algorithm	20
	2.11.2 Cartesian Path Generation of Robot Manipulators Using Continuous Genetic Algorithms	21
2.12	Other Intelligent Control Techniques	22
	2.12.1 Neural Networks	22
	2.12.2 Hill Climbing	23
	2.12.3 Simulated Annealing	24
2.13	Overview of Genetic Algorithm (GA)	25
	2.13.1 Encoding	29
	2.13.2 Initial Population Generation	30
	2.13.3 Selection Criteria	30
	2.13.3.1 Methods of Selection	31
	2.13.4 Genetic Algorithm Operators	33
	2.13.4.1 Crossover	34
	2.13.4.2 Mutation	35

	2.13.5	Fitness Evaluation	36
2.14		Genetic Algorithm Parameters	37
	2.14.1	Crossover Rate	37
	2.14.2	Mutation Rate	38
	2.14.3	Population Size	38
2.15		Advantages of Genetic Algorithms	39
2.16		Summary of Literature Review	40

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

3.1		Introduction	41
3.2		Hardware Development	43
3.3		Electrical Design	44
	3.3.1	Electrical Protection System	44
	3.3.2	Power Distribution System	45
	3.3.3	Main Controller	46
	3.3.4	Input and Output Module	48
		3.3.4.1 Optical Micro Sensor	48
		3.3.4.2 LED Equipped Reed Switch	48
	3.3.5	Electro-Pneumatic System Design for End Effector (Z Axis)	50
	3.3.6	Control of Stepper Motors	53
	3.3.7	Encoder	54
3.4		Mechanical Design	55
	3.4.1	Mechanical Drives	55
	3.4.2	Leadscrew Driven Load	56
		3.4.2.1 Movement Profile	58
		3.4.2.2 Acceleration Torque	59
3.5		Software Development	64
	3.5.1	Simulation Package	64
	3.5.2	GUI Control System	66
	3.5.3	Machine Learning and Database	68

3.5.4	GA and Database	72
3.5.5	Genetic Algorithm Optimization Method	72
3.5.5.1	Genetic Algorithm Operation	73
3.5.5.2	Population	76
3.5.5.3	Crossover Operation	79
3.5.5.4	Mutation Method	81
3.5.5.5	GA Optimization Result	83
3.6	Machine Synchronization Method	84

CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1	Overview	86
4.2	Cartesian Robot Arm Kinematics	87
4.3	XY Axes Move Module	88
4.4	Parts Fabrication	90
4.5	Machine Performance Results	91
4.6	Comparison of GA and Random	92
4.7	Efficiency of GA Operators	95
4.8	Effect of GA Control Parameters	96
4.8.1	Number of Maximum Generation	96
4.8.2	Population Size	97
4.8.3	Effect of Crossover Rate	98
4.8.4	Effect of Mutation Rate	98

CHAPTER V	CONCLUSION	
5.1	Conclusion	100
5.2	Recommendations	102
	REFERENCES	104
	APPENDICES	108

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	A typical genetic algorithm control system for Cartesian robot	5
1.2	Cartesian robot for laser marking / spot welding application	6
1.3	Block diagram of genetic algorithm controller for Cartesian robot	7
2.1	Components of a robot system	10
2.2	Sensor and control system	11
2.3	Comparison chart of leading robot applications	12
2.4	Classification of robots	14
2.5	Robot configurations	15
2.6	Stepper motor movements	18
2.7	Electro-pneumatic drive system	19
2.8	A simple feedforward neural network	23
2.9	Flow chart of genetic algorithm	27
2.10	General structure of genetic algorithm	28
2.11	Situation before ranking (graph of fitnesses)	33
2.12	Situation after ranking (graph of order numbers)	33
2.13	Illustration of crossover operation	34
2.14	Mutation operator	35
3.1	Flow chart of the developed Cartesian robot system	42
3.2	Block diagram of the robotic system design	43
3.3	Circuit breaker and noise filter	44
3.4	Wiring diagram for electrical protection system	45
3.5	Power supply distributions	45

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
3.6	OEM750X micro stepping drive/controller and wiring connections	47
3.7	Photo micro sensor for limit and home signal	49
3.8	Reed switch	49
3.9	Signal flow diagram and pneumatic elements	50
3.10	Pneumatic system	51
3.11	Electronic control circuit diagram	52
3.12	The use of limit switches	53
3.13	Operating pattern of detecting home position	54
3.14	Incremental encoder (Omron E6B2-CWZ6C)	55
3.15	Leadscrew drive system	56
3.16	Basic motion system	59
3.17	Move profile	60
3.18	The generated XY axes report	61-63
3.19	Basic system software architecture	65
3.20	Simulation package for Cartesian robot system control	65
3.21	VB form layout window	67
3.22	VB source code for opening and reading data from Excel file	68
3.23	Conceptual design of the machine learning process	69
3.24	Machine learning database	70
3.25	Block diagram of machine learning	71
3.26	Visual Basic code for rank based selection	74
3.27	Genetic algorithm operation program	75
3.28	Population with permutation encoding chromosomes	76
3.29	Random numbers for 9 coordinates points	77
3.30	Ranked population	77
3.31	Evaluation subroutine for population	78
3.32	Sorting subroutine	79
3.33	Crossover operation	81
3.34	Mutation subroutine	82
3.35	Resultant of mutation	82
3.36	Resultant of genetic algorithm optimization	83
3.37	Machine synchronization method	84

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
3.38	Daisy chain configuration for PC communication with controller	85
4.1	The developed Cartesian robot with laser head	87
4.2	Denavit-Hartenberg (D-H) transformation matrix for Cartesian robot	88
4.3	Velocity graph for stepper motor axis #1 & #2	89
4.4	Torque graph for stepper motor axis #1 & #2	89
4.5	Performance curves for XY axes using S57-102-MO stepper motor	90
4.6	VB source code for XY axes motion and laser marking	91
4.7	Step angle accuracy	92
4.8	Distance comparison between GA and random	93
4.9	Real time control for GA and random	93
4.10	Random search	94
4.11	GA optimization	95
4.12	Percentage of each operator in searching the best solution	96
4.13	Graph of difference versus number of maximum generation	97
4.14	Graph of difference versus population size	97
4.15	Graph of difference versus crossover rate	98
4.16	Graph of difference versus mutation rate	99

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Number of possible solutions	3
2.1	Explanation of genetic algorithm terms	25
2.2	Various encoding methods	29
3.1	OEM750X micro stepping drive/controller's performance parameter	46
3.2	Leadscrew coefficient of friction and typical efficiencies	56
4.1	Performance parameters	91

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

A Cartesian coordinate robot is an industrial robot whose one or more principal axes of control are linear. They move in a straight line rather than rotate. Among other advantages is that this mechanical arrangement simplifies the robot control arm solution. Cartesian robots are being widely employed in industrial applications such as automobile spot welding or assembling lines that handle a variety of car models. In order to avoid the risk factor in spot welding application, various steps can be taken. One of the prominent method is by substituting the human hands with the robotic arm in handling these dangerous and hazardous environments.

It is with these reasons that this study was conducted with the primary objective to design and develop a new low-cost, high-efficiency Cartesian robotic arm for application such as spot welding. A new evolutionary computation method using Genetic Algorithm (GA) to control and optimize the system performance in terms of its positioning and speed that would contribute towards encouraging a productive and quality process will be developed. GA operates on populations of candidate controllers, initially selected from some distribution. This population of

candidate controller is repeatedly grown according to crossover, mutation and other GA operators and then culled according to the fitness function.

The competition between different companies regarding price and performance of the Cartesian robot and control system has been the most important motivation. In case of cost saving on robotics equipments, the solution is an alternative. It also to aware national interest in science and technology and this constitutes a prerequisite for an inventive society.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem can be stated as: Given a Cartesian robot with a spot welding torch (laser head as replacement of torch), a set of known fixed coordinates with the initial and final configurations, find a coordinated motion plan for the laser head from its initial to final configuration and optimizing the overall time taken for the laser head to perform the spot welding.

To give an idea of the complexity of the problem, let's consider a number of n coordination points and one origin points for the laser head to be fixed at positions (x_0, y_0) . For this application, the search space is a discrete space and there are $(n!)$ permutation scheme of the close routes or path that this robot has to go through. GA will be the search algorithm to find the best or approximate optimization solution for the shortest path and time in this problem.

The above mentioned problem is actually the same as the well-known "Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP)" that of finding the shortest closed tour through a given set of cities visiting each city exactly once. The objective function is the sum of the Euclidian lengths of all edges among the salesman's route. The Euclidean [40] distance between points $P (p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n)$ and $Q (q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n)$ in Euclidean n -space is defined as:

$$\sqrt{(p_1 - q_1)^2 + (p_2 - q_2)^2 + \dots + (p_n - q_n)^2} = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (p_i - q_i)^2} \quad (1.1)$$

The developed Cartesian robot is scheduled of a route for the spot welder to perform welding on a work piece. In this robotic application, the "cities" are points to weld, and the "cost of travel" includes the time for retooling the robot (single machine job sequencing problem).

Thus, given a set of points $C = \{c_1, c_2, \dots, c_k\}$, for each pair (c_i, c_j) , $i \neq j$, let $d(c_i, c_j)$ be the distance between point c_i and c_j . Solving the TSP entails finding a permutation π' of the points $(c_{\pi'(1)}, \dots, c_{\pi'(k)})$, such that

$$\sum_{i=1}^k d(c_{\pi'(i)}, c_{\pi'(i+1)}) \leq \sum_{i=1}^k d(c_{\pi(i)}, c_{\pi(i+1)}) \quad \forall \pi \neq \pi', (k+1) \equiv 1 \quad (1.2)$$

The size of the solution space, q is given in equation 1.2 for $n > 2$, where n is the number of points. This is the number of Hamiltonian cycles in a complete graph of n nodes, that is, closed paths that visit all nodes exactly once.

$$q = \frac{1}{2}(n-1)! \quad (1.3)$$

For a laser head with n number of coordination points, the numbers of possible solutions / routes are $n!$ where n = the number of points are given in Table 1.1. Therefore, an evolutionary solution such as genetic algorithm is introduced to optimize the performance and solve the path planning sequences problem in shortest time.

No. of Points (n)	Number of Solutions
5	120
10	3628800
50	3.04E+64

Table 1.1: Number of possible solutions

1.3 Project Aims and Objectives

The main objective of this project is to design and develop a new low-cost, high efficiency Genetic Algorithm (GA) controller used in Cartesian robotic arm for spot welding application. To achieve this objective, the following works will be carried out during the research period:

1. To design and develop the hardware of the proposed robotic system. This includes both its electrical and mechanical components.
 - (a) The electrical components consist of two Parker Compumotor OEM750X micro stepping drive/controller as the main controller, an electrical protection system, a power distribution system, input/output modules, an electro-pneumatic-based Z axis, two stepper motors with encoder feedback system and a laser pointer that will replace the spot welding torch for demonstration purpose in this project.
 - (b) The mechanical components of the proposed robotic system consist of two lead screw drive systems for both X and Y axes, a jig and fixture module and a mechanical base.
2. To develop a machine-learning system and program via a new genetic algorithm that is capable of performing the following analysis:
 - (a) Reliably and consistently learn and repeat a given tasks.
 - (b) Ability to look for the optimum sequences via genetic algorithm evolutionary solutions.
3. To develop a PC-based control simulator for the proposed system using Visual Basic and Microsoft Excel as the database to simulate and evaluate the possible solution for path planning process. Simulation package consists of a graphical user interface (GUI) where it links and directs the flow of the working process. It is a medium to allow interaction between the hardware, GA control system and database. In this simulation package, the input data will be stored and learned in the database. The data from database can be extracted to be processed and executed via the hardware. This simulator is capable to control the I/O module, robot learning module, a manual output trigger module, a home routine and a process module.