

ADAPTIVE SLIDING MODE CONTROL WITH DISTURBANCE  
OBSERVER FOR A CLASS OF ELECTRO-HYDRAULIC ACTUATOR SYSTEM

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (Electrical Engineering)

Faculty of Electrical Engineering  
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MAY 2015

*This thesis is gratefully dedicated to my beloved family for their prayers and supports.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to thank Almighty Allah, who is the most Gracious, Merciful, Omniscient and Omnipotent for the continuous blessing and giving me the strength and opportunity in completing this study.

I wish to give my special thanks to both my project supervisor Prof. Dr. Mohd. Fua'ad Rahmat, and co-supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Abdul Rashid Husain who have given constant guidance, support and valuable advices with their brilliant ideas on many important occasions during the past few years.

I am incredibly grateful to my family. My beloved wife Ela Diana, my lovely sons Arga and Zyad, my parents Helmy and Asnah, my parents in law Zahrul Rabain and Arminiwati, my brothers and sister Elizan, Eli, Efigo, Efriadi, Epi and Ton who have given their unconditional love, emotional support, and patient during all these years.

I am also thankful to my colleagues Rozaimi, Sahazati, Ling, Najib, Noorhazirah and Siti Marhainis, and also my friends Cici, Fitra, Dedi, Faruq, Oky, Lily, Cica, Reiza, Iis and all PPI-UTM members for many valuable discussions, their important advice, their encouragement, and the fun times in the completion of this study.

## ABSTRACT

Position tracking control has become one of the most popular studies in the control of Electro-Hydraulic Actuator (EHA) systems. However, it deals with highly nonlinear behaviours, uncertainties and external disturbances, which significantly affect the control performance. In the class of nonlinear robust control, Sliding Mode Control (SMC) has become an effective approach for systems experiencing these issues due to its discontinuous nature. But, employing SMC as a stand-alone controller may not be effective for EHA systems with time-varying external disturbance, and integration is needed. Hence, the objective of this study is to formulate and implement a robust SMC in adaptive control form integrated with Nonlinear Disturbance Observer (NDO) to guarantee robustness, position tracking accuracy, and smoothness of the control actions to an EHA system in the presence of uncertainties and disturbances. The EHA system was modelled as a nonlinear system which contains nonlinearities, uncertainties and disturbances. The SMC was developed in integration with NDO, in which switching gain of the SMC is designed to be adaptive on the bounds of uncertainties and disturbances, and updated by the NDO through an adaptation mechanism. Stability of the SMC and the NDO are guaranteed by the Lyapunov function candidate. Simulation and experimental results show that capability of the integrated controller to improve the smoothness of the control actions is as good as the stand-alone adaptive SMC with varying boundary layers technique. Also, it is capable to maintain the tracking accuracy about 25% better than the stand-alone SMC. Integration of the NDO into the SMC offers a better compromise between position tracking accuracy and control actions smoothness in position tracking control technique based-SMC.

## ABSTRAK

Kawalan penjejakan posisi sudah menjadi salah satu kajian yang paling populer dalam kawalan sistem Aktuator Elektro-Hidraulik (EHA). Walau bagaimanapun, ia mempunyai isu-isu tingkah laku ketaklinearan yang tinggi, ketidakpastian dan gangguan luaran yang mempengaruhi prestasi kawalan. Dalam kelas kawalan tegap tidak linear, Kawalan Ragam Gelincir (SMC) adalah satu teknik yang paling berkesan untuk sistem yang mengalami isu-isu terbabit. Tetapi, penggunaan SMC sebagai sebuah pengawal tunggal tidak akan berkesan bagi sistem EHA dengan gangguan luaran berubah waktu, dan ia perlu berintegrasi dengan teknik lain. Oleh itu, tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk merumus dan menggunakan teknik kawalan tegap SMC dalam bentuk ubah suai bersepadu dengan Pencerap Gangguan Tidak Linear (NDO) bagi menjamin ketegapan, ketepatan penjejakan posisi dan kelicinan isyarat kawalan sistem EHA terhadap ketidakpastian dan gangguan. Sistem EHA dimodelkan sebagai sistem tidak linear yang beisikan unsur ketaklinearan, ketidakpastian dan gangguan-gangguan. SMC dibangun berintegrasi dengan NDO, di mana gandaan pensuisan pada SMC telah direka untuk menyesuaikan diri pada batas-batas ketidakpastian dan gangguan, dan dikemaskini oleh NDO melalui mekanisme penyesuaian. Kestabilan SMC dan NDO dijamin oleh fungsi Lyapunov. Hasil simulasi dan eksperimen menunjukkan bahawa kemampuan sistem kawalan yang berintegrasi dalam meningkatkan kelicinan tindakan kawalan sama baiknya dengan SMC yang menggunakan teknik lapisan sempadan berubah. Juga, ia mampu mengekalkan ketepatan penjejakan 25% lebih baik daripada SMC konvensional. Integrasi NDO ke dalam SMC menawarkan kompromi yang lebih baik antara ketepatan penjejakan posisi dan kelicinan isyarat kawalan dalam teknik kawalan penjejakan posisi berasaskan SMC.

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS

$A_1, A_2$	-	Cross section area of the two chambers ( $m^2$ )
$a_p$	-	Piston acceleration ( $m/s^2$ )
$C_d$	-	Discharge coefficient
$C_{v1}, C_{v2}$	-	Valve orifice coefficients
$d_i$	-	Lumped internal disturbance
$d_e$	-	External load disturbance
$\hat{D}$	-	Estimate of disturbance
$e$	-	Error trajectory
$e_D$	-	Nonlinear disturbance observer error
$f$	-	Nonlinear dynamics
$\hat{f}$	-	Nominal part of nonlinear dynamics
$\Delta f$	-	Uncertainties of nonlinear dynamics
$F_a$	-	Hydraulic actuating force (N)
$F_{ed}$	-	External load disturbance force (N)
$F_f$	-	Hydraulic friction force (N)
$f_d$	-	Lumped uncertain nonlinearities
$g$	-	Control gain
$g_{min}, g_{max}$	-	Lower and upper bounds of the control gain
$\hat{g}$	-	Control gain estimation
$k$	-	Spring constant (N/m)
$H$	-	Reaching time function
$k_a$	-	Servo valve gain (m/V)
$k_v$	-	Viscous friction (N s/m)
$k_{ed}$	-	Load disturbance spring constant

$L$	-	Disturbance observer gain
$m$	-	Total mass of the piston and load (kg)
$p_1, p_2$	-	Pressure in chambers 1 and 2 (Pa)
$p_s$	-	Supply pressure (Pa)
$K$	-	Discontinuous switching gain
$S$	-	Sliding surface
$u, u_{eq}, u_n$	-	Total, equivalent and nominal control (V)
$V$	-	Lyapunov function
$v_p$	-	Piston velocity (m/s)
$V_1, V_2$	-	Total volume in chambers 1 and 2 (m <sup>3</sup> )
$V_{i1}, V_{i2}$	-	Initial volume in chambers 1 and 2 (m <sup>3</sup> )
$V_l$	-	Pipelines volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
$V_t$	-	Volume between pump and valve (m <sup>3</sup> )
$w_1, w_2$	-	Spool valve area gradients 1 and 2 (m <sup>2</sup> )
$x_d$	-	Desired position (m)
$x_L$	-	Total stroke of piston (m)
$x_p$	-	Piston position (m)
$S_e$	-	Effective bulk modulus (Pa)
$W$	-	Thickness of boundary layer
...	-	Fluid mass density (kg/m <sup>3</sup> )

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ASMC	-	Adaptive Sliding Mode Control
DAQ	-	Data Acquisition System
DO	-	Disturbance Observer
DOBC	-	Disturbance Observer Based Control
EHA	-	Electro-Hydraulic Actuator
GPC	-	Generalized Predictive Control
LQG	-	Linear Quadratic Gaussian
LQR	-	Linear Quadratic Regulator
LVDT	-	Linear Variable Differential Transformer
MAP	-	Mean Positioning Accuracy
MRAC	-	Model Reference Adaptive Control
NDO	-	Nonlinear Disturbance Observer
NDOBC	-	Nonlinear Disturbance Observer Based Control
PID	-	Proportional-Integral-Derivative
QFT	-	Quantitative Feedback Theory
SMC	-	Sliding Mode Control
SMCF	-	Sliding Mode Controller and Filter
SSCI	-	Sum of Squared Control Input
SSTE	-	Sum of Squared Tracking Error
RI	-	Robustness Index
VSC	-	Variable Structure Control
VSF	-	Variable Structure Filter

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Electro-hydraulic actuator (EHA) systems have grown to be one of the most popular actuators in modern applications for several decades. EHA systems can be found easily in production assembly lines, robotics, automotive, aircraft, submarine operations, mining processes, etc. This is due to the fact that EHA systems have fast and smooth response characteristics and high power density. EHA systems also have excellent capability in positioning that gives a significant influence to the above applications especially in position tracking control issues. However, as introduced in Yao *et al.* (2000), EHA systems exhibit highly nonlinear behaviours, such as nonlinear servo valve flow-pressure characteristics, variations in control volumes, dead-band, stiffness, internal leakage, and associated friction. Apart from the nonlinear natures, parametric uncertainties, uncertain nonlinearities and disturbances also become large extent of EHA systems. Hence, consideration on these issues to obtain more accurate model in the modelling of EHA systems is essential.

In the effort to address the nonlinearities and uncertainties issues in the EHA systems, various control techniques have been proposed. The simplest approach is to

adopt the linear control techniques. However, due to the linearization on the systems, some significant dynamic properties are potentially lost. Therefore, nonlinear robust control method is one of the most suitable methods for EHA systems and has received a very large attention from researchers in the nonlinear control area. In the class of robust control, sliding mode control (SMC) is envisaged to be a realistic option for a class of nonlinear systems. It is competent to counteract uncertainties and disturbances when the states are constrained to the sliding surface which satisfies matching condition. It provides a systematic method to maintain the stability and satisfactory performance despite modelling imperfections. The main advantages of SMC include faster dynamic response, robust to parameter variations, simplicity in control design, and easy for implementation. Pertaining to these advantages, various approaches of SMC have been successfully proposed by Liu and Handroos (1999), Bonchis *et al.* (2001), Mihajlov *et al.* (2002), Chen *et al.* (2005), Guan and Pan (2008), Cerman and Husek (2012) and Zhang *et al.* (2014) for EHA systems.

Based on the fundamental idea of SMC in Utkin (1977) and continued by Gao and Hung (1993), a discontinuous control gain starts to work in discontinuous action on the sliding mode when trajectories of the system reach the sliding surface. The discontinuous gain which ensures a closed-loop system is robust to uncertainties and disturbances. For guaranteed stability, the discontinuous gain of SMC must be larger than the uncertainties and disturbances as stated by Yoo and Chung (1992). However, the control action displays high frequency oscillations that is well known as chattering, which is highly undesirable and leads to low control accuracy. Due to this fact, various approaches have been developed for chattering reduction. Slotine and Sastry (1983) and Kachroo and Tomizuka (1996) tried to solve the issue with a thin boundary layer. Bondarev *et al.* (1985) and Liu and Peng (2000) offered the observer-based method. Hassan *et al.* (2001) introduced a reaching law method. Bartolini *et al.* (1998) employed second order SMC. Chen *et al.* (2005) applied a simple varying boundary layers technique. Levant (2005) and Lee and Utkin (2007) proposed quasi-continuous high-order SMC and suppression method. Then, Tseng and Chen (2010) presented low-pass filtering for chattering with high-level measurement noise.

Selection of a constant value for the discontinuous gain of SMC may guarantee robustness of the controller, but it tends to result in a large switching control activity around the control signal. This excessive switching will lead to large control chattering. The first attempt to develop adaptation method for the discontinuous gain was by Bartolini *et al.* (1999). In the SMC with discontinuous gain adaptation method, the gain is calculated from the bounds of uncertainties and disturbances to guarantee a closed-loop system insensitive to the system uncertainties and disturbances. Consequently, magnitude of the discontinuous action will change linearly following variation of the uncertainties and disturbances. In the design of SMC for EHA systems, Bonchis *et al.* (2001), Mihajlov *et al.* (2002), Chen *et al.* (2005), Guan and Pan (2008), and Cerman and Husek (2012) have successfully proposed various discontinuous gain adaptation methods in robust adaptive SMC scheme, in which the uncertainties, the control gain and the disturbances were assumed to be bounded. Moreover, all of these schemes were developed as stand-alone SMC without the reaching law method.

Aside from the nonlinearities, the presence of external disturbance may cause EHA model to have more complex structure of disturbances. Due to the complexity of the structure, bounds of the uncertainties and disturbances may not be easily obtained. Over-estimation on the bounds may cause unnecessary large control activity and could possibly damage the actuators. Therefore, in some practical implementations the bounds have been assumed to be bounded to satisfy and meet the requirement of the designer. However, the structure of robust adaptive SMC with bounded uncertainties and disturbances would not be able to accommodate the uncertainties and disturbance that exceed the bound, which leads to instability and inaccurate tracking. Such that, integration of an observer based method into robust adaptive SMC through an adaptation mechanism would be a suitable approach for the problem.

Simple adaptation mechanisms for upper bounds estimation on the norm of the uncertainties with boundary layer in Leung *et al.* (1991) and Yoo and Chung (1992) were the early developments for robust adaptive SMC. In these adaptation

mechanisms, the discontinuous gain increases whenever the switching function does not converge to zero. To solve the unbounded growth of the discontinuous gain, a modified adaptation mechanism was developed by Wheeler *et al.* (1998). A unique adaptation mechanism using artificial neural network using 2-sigma network was also applied by Buckner (2002) to estimate upper and lower bounds of uncertainty. The bounds were provided to update the switching-gain in real-time. Similarity of those techniques is limitation of their capability to observe the existence of disturbances. Following this, uncertainty and disturbance estimator (UDE) was developed by Talole and Padke (2008) without discontinuous control and without requirement on the knowledge of uncertainties and disturbances or their bounds. Drawback of this adaptation mechanism is that the structure of the UDE was only prepared for a linear time invariant system. Another technique was the use of nonlinear disturbance observer (NDO) as proposed by Chen and Chen (2010), Yang *et al.* (2013), and Ginoya *et al.* (2014) with an appropriate gain function to approximate the unknown disturbance for a nonlinear system. However, structure of the NDO was designed and employed only for second order nonlinear system model.

For EHA systems that demonstrate strong effects of nonlinear behaviours and time-varying external disturbance, the NDO in Chen and Chen (2010) may be possible to be modified for EHA system model and integrated to the adaptive SMC by using adaptation mechanism. However, in the proposed NDO, integration of the NDO to the adaptive SMC was designed to provide the NDO to directly update the disturbance estimate function in equivalent control law of the SMC. This type of adaptation mechanism may be able to minimize the chattering effect and guarantee the stability of the asymptotic estimation, but it may lead the integrated controller into instability and less accurate tracking in large changes of external disturbance. In order to increase the stability, the adaptation mechanism can be designed to provide the NDO output to directly update the discontinuous gain of the SMC.



## 1.2 Problem Statement

Highly nonlinear behaviours, uncertain dynamics and disturbances have become the main problems in the development of an EHA system. Simplification on these problems in obtaining a model for the system may cause the obtained model potentially lost its significant dynamic properties and less accurate. Hence, further consideration on the nonlinear behaviours, uncertain dynamics and disturbances in modelling process of an EHA system is indispensable to improve accuracy of the EHA system model formulation and to gain the model to be more similar to the real system.

In the class of robust control, SMC has been employed by researchers for many years as an effective strategy to deal with nonlinearities, uncertainties and disturbances. However, chattering has still been the main problem in the development of SMC, which caused by the discontinuous action of SMC to counteract uncertainties and disturbances. The problem becomes more complex when the uncertainties and disturbances change in time. Hence, structure of SMC needs to be developed in adaptive form to reduce chattering and to adapt with the change of uncertainties and disturbances. Moreover, in the presence of external disturbance in EHA system, due to stability and tracking accuracy reasons, the system may not be possible to be controlled just by stand-alone adaptive SMC with bounded uncertainties and disturbances. Since the discontinuous gain of the SMC is calculated based on the bounds of the uncertainties and disturbances, the SMC needs to integrate with an observer to estimate the real values of the bounds through an adaptation mechanism to update the SMC gain.

The implementation of the proposed control strategy in the real system is another challenge in control system development. Capabilities of the proposed control strategy to improve the robustness, control action smoothness and position tracking performance of the EHA system need to be verified in the real system. The verification could be employed on the real EHA system test bed in the laboratory.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To formulate a good mathematical representation for an EHA system in nonlinear model in consideration of friction, internal leakage, actuator asymmetry, model uncertainties and disturbances.
- ii. To propose a new control strategy that integrates adaptive robust SMC and NDO through an adaptation mechanism to deal with the existence of slow-varying external disturbance in the EHA system.
- iii. To validate the real-time implementation of the proposed control strategy abilities on the real EHA system in terms of robustness, position tracking accuracy, and control action smoothness.

### **1.4 Research Scopes and Limitations**

The scopes and limitations of the study are as follows:

- i. Model formulation and simulation works on EHA system were developed based on the characteristics and behaviours of the existing EHA system in the test-bed including its limitations in terms of design and equipments.
- ii. The exact amount of the internal leakage was very difficult to obtain, so the internal leakage was assumed to be a constant positive value.
- iii. The external load disturbance was assumed to be known and linearly dependent to the piston position (displacement) in tracking reference trajectories, which were generated in slow-varying. Such that, the disturbance is recognized as slow-varying external disturbance.
- iv. Due to the limitation of the test-bed design, the test bed is available only to produce external disturbance until 75 mm positive displacement.
- v. Nonlinearities that were considered in the study include friction, internal leakage, actuator asymmetry and dead zone.

## **1.5 Significant Findings**

The significant findings of this study are as follows:

- i. A good representation of dynamics model of an EHA system under consideration on friction, internal leakage, actuator asymmetry, model uncertainties and disturbances.
- ii. Development of an adaptive robust control based-SMC to deal with an EHA system dynamics.
- iii. Development of an NDO that is available to estimate the external disturbance in the third order model of an EHA system.
- iv. A new integrated control strategy that combines the adaptive SMC and the NDO through an adaptation mechanism to deal with time-varying external disturbance.

## **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

Chapter 2 deals with literatures related to EHA systems and the development of control strategies for the system. It begins with a brief overview on EHA systems basic principle, main equipments and development. This is followed by a general review on behaviours and characteristics of EHA systems. Current works in EHA systems modelling also be part of this chapter. The chapter is ended with a complete review on existing control strategies for EHA systems, especially in position control area, and a critical review on relation of SMC and NDO in adaptive control form.

Chapter 3 presents the proposed model, simulation and experimental set-up, and model validation of the EHA system. The proposed model includes nonlinear behaviours of the system such as friction, internal leakage, actuator asymmetry and dead-zone. Design of the EHA system test bed, system parameters, reference

trajectories, and control performance indexes are part of the simulation and experimental set-up appear in the last part of the chapter.

In Chapter 4, the proposed control strategy based-SMC and its integration with NDO for the EHA system are offered. In the beginning an adaptive continuous-time SMC is introduced to improve the performance of the EHA system. The robustness and position tracking accuracy are the main concerns in evaluating the proposed control. At the end of the first part of the chapter, due to chattering phenomena consideration, a varying boundary layer technique is added to the proposed control for more accurate tracking and smoother control activities. Completing the initial proposed control strategy, in the second part of the chapter the NDO design is introduced to improve the performance of the initial proposed control strategy through an effective integration mechanism, which is the main contribution of the study. The effectiveness and capability of the NDO and the adaptation mechanism are examined for slow-varying external disturbance.

Results and discussion for the proposed model validation and the proposed control evaluation in both simulation and experiment appear in Chapter 5. The results are presented visually with graphs and quantitatively with performance indexes tables. The discussion goes step by step following the development of the proposed model and the proposed control strategy. At the end of this section, the simulation and the experimental results for the proposed control development are also summarized and compared for each reference trajectory.

Chapter 6 offers the conclusion of the discussion of this study. It is also completed with suggestions for future research.

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