Manipulator Control by Exact Linearization

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1. Abstract.

Comments on the application to rigid link manipulators of Geometric Control Theory, Resolved Acceleration Control, Operational Space Control, and Nonlinear Decoupling Theory are given, and the essential unity of these techniques for exactly linearizing and decoupling end effector dynamics is discussed. Exploiting the fact that the mass matrix of a rigid link manipulator is positive definite—a consequence of rigid link manipulators belonging to the class of natural physical systems—it is shown that a necessary and sufficient condition for a locally externally linearizing and output decoupling feedback law to exist is that the end effector Jacobian matrix be nonsingular. Furthermore, this linearizing feedback is easy to produce.

2. Introduction.

Because of the difficulty in controlling rigid link manipulators, along with a primary concern in controlling end effector (EF) motions, it is natural to ask if a nonlinear feedback law exists which will make an EF behave as if it has linear and decoupled dynamics. It has been known at least since the early 1970s [1]-[5] that exact linearization of manipulators in joint space is readily accomplished by the so-called inverse or Computed Torque Technique. Efforts to accomplish decoupled linearization of EF motions directly in task space began soon thereafter as is evident in the work of [6]-[14].

The work of [6], although concerned only with controlling the tip location of a three-link manipulator in the plane, is surprisingly present in its approach in that it proceeds by the three explicit steps of 1) decoupled linearization of tip behavior; 2) stabilization of the resulting tip dynamics; followed by 3) trajectory control of the now linearly behaving tip. Such clarity of approach will only be retrieved in the latter work of [19]-[22]. The work [6] also presages future work in its dealing with the problems of manipulator redundancy and actuator saturation.

With hindsight, the work [6] can also be viewed as a direct precursor to the development of the Resolved Acceleration Control (RAC) approach to the end effector tracking problem [7][8]. RAC essentially extends the work of [6] to the case of a full six dof manipulator yielding linearized EF positional error dynamics and almost linearized EF attitude error dynamics (the extent to which attitude error dynamics are “almost” linearized will be discussed below). The work of [7][8], however, did not make clear the three steps of [6] and consequently appears to have not been appreciated as a technique for performing decoupled exact linearization of EF motions, but rather as a technique for end effector tracking which has (almost) linear tracking error dynamics. The fact that the attitude error dynamics are not completely linearized also apparently obscured the appreciation of RAC as an exactly linearizing control technique.

The work of [9]-[11] applies Nonlinear Decoupling Theory (NDT) to provide decoupled linearization of a manipulator EF with simultaneous pole placement of the linearized EF dynamics. The abstract formulation of this approach has apparently discouraged serious consideration with other approaches, the notable exception being [12] where correspondences to RAC and the Computed Torque technique have been noted. The simultaneous pole placement and linearization of EF dynamics represents a blurring of the distinct steps 1 and 2 described above for the approach [6].

In [12]-[14], manipulator dynamics are expressed in the task space, or Operational Space of the EF. The resulting nonlinear effective end effector dynamics are then linearized by the Computed Torque method. Thus, the Operational Space Control (OSC) of [12]-[14] can also be viewed as a Generalized Computed Torque technique. In [12] correspondences to RAC and the Computed Torque technique have been noted.

Recently, Geometric Control Theory (GCT) based techniques for exactly externally linearizing and decoupling general affine-in-the-input nonlinear systems have been developed [15]-[19]. These techniques provide constructive sufficient conditions for local decoupled external linearization which, if satisfied, produces the linearizing feedback law. GCT has been applied to exactly linearizing end effector motions in [19]-[22]. The work of [19]-[22] also provides a clear and mature control perspective which keeps the following steps distinct: 1) Exactly linearize and decouple end effector dynamics to a canonical decoupled double integrator form, i.e., to Brunovsky Canonical Form (BCF); 2) Effect a stabilizing loop (pole placement step); 3) Perform feedforward precompensation to obtain nominal model following performance; 4) Institute an LQR error correcting feedback loop. Unfortunately, to understand the theoretical underpinnings of GCT requires...
It can be shown that all of the above seemingly quite different approaches lead to the same linearising control law for exact external linearisation and decoupling of EF motions [24]. (This equivalence is specific to the nonlinear systems considered here, viz. systems dynamically similar to rigid link manipulators. NDT and GCT apply to a much larger class than this, and so the equivalence to RAC and OBC holds for systems restricted to this class but not in general.) Recognising this equivalence enables us to give a simple necessary and sufficient condition for local decoupled external linearisation and to give a simple form for the linearising control which is applicable to a broad class of so-called natural physical dynamical systems [25] [26] of which a serial link manipulator is but a special case. For brevity we do not discuss actuated redundant arms - for discussion of these cases, see [24].

3. Dynamics of Finite Dimensional Natural Systems.

Many physical systems have finite dimensional nonlinear dynamics of the form [25][26]:

\[ N(q)\ddot{q} + V(q,\dot{q}) = \tau; \ q \in \mathbb{R}^n; \ \dot{q}, q \in \mathbb{R}^n; \]

where \( N(q) \) is positive definite and autonomous, \( U \) is a conservative potential function, \( Q = \tau + F \) are generalised forces, and \( F \) are dissipative or constraint forces. This is exactly how manipulator dynamics are obtained and hence manipulator dynamics are precisely of the form (1). Systems which arise in this way are known as natural systems [25][26]. It is known that for natural systems not only is \( M(q) \) positive definite, but \( V(q,\dot{q}) \) of (1) has terms which depend on \( M(q) \) in a very special way [27][29]. In fact, natural systems are nongeneric in the class of all affine-in-the-input nonlinear systems [38][39]. Although we shall only exploit the fact that \( M(q) \) is positive definite for any \( q \), it is worth noting that the nongeneric structure of (1) has recently enabled important statements to be made on the existence of time optimal control laws [38]-[40], on the existence of globally stable control laws [27]-[33], on the existence of robust exponentially stable control laws [34], and on the existence of stable adaptive control laws [35]-[37] for the natural system (1).

Recognising the special properties of the system (1), it is not surprising that results yielding external linearising behavior can be obtained much more easily than by application of NDT or GCT - theories which apply to the whole general class of smooth affine-in-the-input nonlinear systems.

4. End Effector Kinematics and Control After Linearization.

The system (1) is assumed to have a read-out map of either the form

\[ y = h(q) \in \mathbb{R}^m, \ \dot{V} = \dot{J}(q)\dot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^m, \ J(q) = \frac{\partial h}{\partial q} \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n} \]

or of the more general form

\[ y = h(q) \in \mathbb{R}^m, \ \dot{V} = \dot{J}(q)\dot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^m, \ J(q) \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n} \]

where \( Jdq/dt - \dot{\alpha}dt \) is a general, perhaps nonintegrable, Pfaffian form [25][26], \( h(\cdot) \) is \( C^2 \) [44][47] and defined on \( \mathbb{R}^n, \mathbb{R}^m \) is some \( m \) dimensional output manifold, \( J \) or \( J_0 \) is \( C^1 \) and in general \( m \) and \( n \) have different values. Often \( h(\cdot) \) is smooth (i.e. \( C^\infty \)) or even a diffeomorphism when the domain is suitably restricted. In subsequent discussion \( \dot{V} = \dot{J}(q)\dot{q} \) will mean that \( J \) can be either \( J \) or \( J_0 \). Let the state of system (1) be \( (q,\dot{q}) \). Then for \( y = h(q) \), \( \dot{V} = \dot{J}(q)\dot{q} \) will be called the "velocity associated with the output \( y \)." Note that (2) is a special case of (3) where \( \dot{V} \) and \( \dot{J}(q) \dot{q} \) will be called the "velocity associated with the output \( y \)." Note that (2) is a special case of (3) where (2) is a special case of (3) where (2) is a special case of (3).
For rigid link manipulators moving in Euclidean 3-space, typically \( \mathbf{v} = (\dot{x}) \in \mathbb{R}^6 \), where \( x \in \mathbb{R}^3 \) gives the EF location, \( \dot{x} \) the EF linear velocity, and \( \omega \in \mathbb{R}^3 \) the EF angular rate of change. It is well known that \( \omega \) is not the time derivative of any minimal (i.e., 3-dimensional) representation of attitude, so that \( \mathbf{v} = (\dot{x}) = \mathbf{J}_0(q) \dot{q} \) as in (3). In this case, we call \( \mathbf{J}_0(q) \) the "Standard Jacobian." It is also common to represent EF attitude by a proper orthogonal matrix \( \mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{R}^{3x3} \),

\[
\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{SO}(3) = \{ \mathbf{A} | \mathbf{A}^T \mathbf{A} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{A}^T = \mathbf{I}, \det \mathbf{A} = +1 \},
\]

where the columns of \( \mathbf{A} \) determine EF fixed body axes in the usual way. It is well known that \( \mathbf{A} = \mathbf{R} \) where \( \mathbf{R} = (\dot{\mathbf{R}}) \) for all \( v \in \mathbb{R}^3 \). Thus EF location and kinematics are often given by

\[
y = (x,v) = (\dot{x}) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \times \mathbb{SO}(3), \quad \mathbf{v} = (\dot{x}) = \mathbf{J}_0(q) \dot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^6, \quad \dot{\mathbf{A}} = \dot{\mathbf{R}}, \quad \mathbf{J}_0(q) \in \mathbb{R}^{6x3},
\]

which should be compared to (3). Alternatively, we can take (cf. (2))

\[
y = (\dot{x}) = \mathbf{h}(q) \in \mathbb{R}^6, \quad \mathbf{v} = \dot{\mathbf{y}} = \left( \begin{array}{c} \dot{x} \\ \dot{\mathbf{q}} \end{array} \right) = \mathbf{J}(q) \dot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^6, \quad \mathbf{B} \in \mathbb{O}_C \mathbb{R}^3.
\]

\( \mathbf{B} \in \mathbb{O}_C \mathbb{R}^3 \) is a minimal representation of EF attitude (i.e., of the rotation group \( \mathbb{SO}(3) \)). In general \( \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{A}) \) for some function \( \mathbf{f}(-) \) which is many-to-one or undefined if the domain of \( \mathbf{f}(-) \) on \( \mathbb{SO}(3) \) is not properly restricted. That is, because \( \mathbb{SO}(3) \) cannot be covered by a single coordinate chart, \( \mathbf{B} \) is not valid for all possible EF orientations and there will be singularity of attitude representation unless we restrict EF attitude to the region of \( \mathbb{SO}(3) \) for which \( \mathbf{B} \) is valid [25] [41]-[42]. This restriction then forces \( \mathbf{B} \) to be defined in the image of admissible attitudes, namely in some \( \mathbb{O}_C \mathbb{R}^3 \). It may be true, however, that \( \mathbf{B} = \mathbb{R}^3 \) as in the case of Euler-Rodrigues parameters where singularity of attitude representation corresponds to \( \| \mathbf{B} \| = 0 \) [42]). Typical \( \mathbf{B}'s \) are roll-pitch-yaw angles, axis-angle variables, Euler angles, Euler parameters, and Euler-Rodrigues parameters [25], [41]-[43]. The kinematical relationship between \( \mathbf{B} \) and \( \mathbf{A} \) is given by

\[
\dot{\mathbf{B}} = \mathbf{P}(\mathbf{B}) \dot{\mathbf{A}}
\]

where \( \mathbf{P} \in \mathbb{R}^{3x3} \) will lose rank, i.e., become singular, precisely when \( \mathbf{B} \) becomes a singular representation of EF attitude. Note from (3)-(6) that

\[
\dot{\mathbf{B}} = \mathbf{P}(\mathbf{B}) \dot{\mathbf{A}}
\]

Generally, the standard Jacobian matrix \( \mathbf{J}_0 \) will become singular only at a manipulator kinematical singularity, in which case \( \mathbf{J} \) will also be singular. Furthermore, \( \mathbf{J} \) will be singular when \( \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{B}(q) \) gives a singularity of EF attitude representation. This compounds the trajectory planning problem for EF motions, since now we must plan trajectories which avoid manipulator kinematical singularities and also ensure that \( \dot{\mathbf{B}}(q) \neq \mathbf{0} \).

Henceforth the system (1), (2) or (1), (3) will be said to be exactly externally linearized and decoupled if

\[
\dot{\mathbf{y}} = \mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{R}^6.
\]

This is somewhat of an abuse of notation as a consideration of the system (1), (4) shows. For \( \mathbf{u} = (\mathbf{u}_1) \), \( \dot{\mathbf{y}} = \mathbf{u} \) yields

\[
\dot{x} = u_1 \in \mathbb{R}^3, \quad \dot{v} = u_2 \in \mathbb{R}^3, \quad \dot{A} = \mathbf{r} \mathbf{A}.
\]

Although EF positional dynamics are decoupled and linearized to \( \ddot{x} = \mathbf{u} \), attitude dynamics are nonlinear and given by \( \dot{\mathbf{B}} = \mathbf{u}_2, \quad \mathbf{A} = \mathbf{R} \). Eq. (8) is precisely the sense in which RAC can be said to achieve "exactly externally linearise and decouple" attitude error dynamics as was discussed in the introduction. In the case of the system (1), (5), \( \dot{\mathbf{y}} = (\mathbf{u}_2) \) gives

\[
\dot{x} = u_1 \in \mathbb{R}^3, \quad \ddot{x} = u_2 \in \mathbb{R}^3, \quad \mathbf{B} \in \mathbb{O}_C \mathbb{R}^3.
\]
which can indeed be said to be exactly externally linearized and decoupled. Drawbacks to using (9) are that \( \mathbf{B} \) must always be controlled to remain in \( \mathcal{Q} \), trajectories involving \( \mathbf{B} \) may be difficult to visualize, and the generalized force, \( u_2 \), which drives \( \mathbf{B} \) may be nonintuitive. On the other hand, it is obvious how to obtain stable attitude tracking from (9). The advantage to using (8) is that \( u \) and \( \mathbf{A} \) are easily visualized entities, while \( u_2 \) is the ordinary torque that we are all familiar with. Fortunately, despite the nonlinear attitude dynamics, it is possible to use (8) to perform BF attitude tracking with asymptotically vanishing attitude error [7][8].

Note that once (8) is obtained, it is easy to get (9) by use of the relationship (6). If we have \( \dot{\mathbf{B}} = \mathbf{u}_2 \), \( \dot{\mathbf{B}} = \mathbf{B}(\mathbf{u}) \), and \( \mathbf{B} \in \mathcal{Q} \) so that \( \Pi^{-1}(\mathbf{u}) \) exists, then use of

\[
\dot{\mathbf{u}} = \mathbf{u}, \quad \mathbf{u} = \Pi^{-1}(\mathbf{B}) (\mathbf{V} - \Pi(\mathbf{B}) \mathbf{u})
\]

(10)

gives

\[
\ddot{\mathbf{u}} = \Pi(\mathbf{B}) \dot{\mathbf{u}} + \Pi(\mathbf{B}) \mathbf{u} = \mathbf{V}.
\]

(11)

Therefore, having (8), we can perform attitude control directly on \( \dot{\mathbf{u}} = \mathbf{u}_2 \), \( \dot{\mathbf{A}} = \mathbf{B} \) or we can transform to \( \ddot{\mathbf{u}} = \mathbf{u}_2 \)

and then control.

5. Comparison of GCT, NDT, and OSC.

For brevity, we consider the non-redundant manipulator case, taking \( n = 6 \) in (1), and we omit derivations. A more detailed discussion is given in [24].

Note that the system (1), (5) can be written as

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} q \\ \dot{q} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{M}^{-1} & 0 \\ 0 & \mathbf{M}^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \dot{q} \\ \ddot{q} \end{pmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{y} = h(q)
\]

(12)

or, taking \( Z = (q, \dot{q}) \),

\[
\frac{d}{dt} Z = \mathbf{A}(Z) + \mathbf{B}(Z) \tau, \quad \mathbf{y} = \mathbf{H}(Z)
\]

(13)

where the definitions of \( \mathbf{A}, \mathbf{B}, \) and \( \mathbf{H} \) are obvious. GCT asks: does there exist (i) a nonlinear feedback \( \tau = Q(Z) + B(Z)u \) and (ii) a nonlinear change of basis \( \mathbf{x} = X(Z) \) such that (12) is placed into BCF?

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{y} \\ \dot{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & I \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{y} \\ \dot{y} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ I \end{pmatrix} u \Rightarrow y = u.
\]

(14)

The constructive sufficient conditions of [19]-[22] can be applied and give the following linearizing and decoupling feedback law:

\[
\tau = -M^{-1} \partial J \dot{q} + V = M^{-1} u
\]

where

\[
\partial J = \sum_{k=1}^{n} \frac{\partial J_{1k}}{\partial q_j} q_k.
\]

Although \( \partial J \neq J \), it is true that \( \partial J \dot{q} = J \dot{q} \) giving

\[
\tau = -M^{-1} J \dot{q} + M \dot{q} u + V.
\]

(15)

Note that \( J \) must be nonsingular for (15) to exist. This is consistent with the theory of [19]-[22] which provides sufficient conditions for local linearization. Note also that to implement (15), explicit expressions for \( M, J^{-1}, \) and \( V \) are required.

328
The NDT approach of [11], constructs the linearizing feedback in the following way. For the system (13) define

$$G(Z) = \frac{3}{2Z} \left( \frac{D}{E} C(Z) \right) A(Z), \quad D^*(Z) = G(Z)B(Z), \quad C^*(Z) = G(A)A(Z). \quad (16)$$

The use of

$$\tau = -DA^{-1}(Z)C^*(Z) + DA^{-1}(Z)u \quad (17)$$

will transform (12), (13) to $y = u$, i.e. to (14).

It is straightforward to show that, for $A$, $B$, and $C$ as in (12) and (13), eq. (17) is precisely eq. (15). Note that in (13) we take $Z = (1)$ and not $Z = (q_1, q_1, \ldots, q_n, \dot{q}_n)^T$. The latter choice for $Z$ is taken in [11] and serves to obscure the final result - namely that (17) and (15) are equivalent.

Now consider the OSC approach of [12]-[14]. In (1) let $V = B - G$ where $B$ is the coriolis forces and $G$ the gravity forces. Restrict the domain of the system (1), (5) to ensure that $h(\cdot)$ is a bijection (and consequently det $J(q) \neq 0$ on this restriction). This restriction means that, as for DGC and NDT, the following gives a local result for external linearization. In [12]-[14], the effective EF dynamics are determined to be

$$A(y) \ddot{y} + C(y, \dot{y}) = f, \quad \tau = J^T f, \quad A = J^{-T}M, \quad C = U - P, \quad (18)$$

$$P = J^{-1}Q, \quad U = J^{-7} - A \dot{q}, \quad q = h^{-1}(y), \quad \dot{q} = J^{-1} \dot{y} \quad (19)$$

Recall that for the system (1), $\ddot{y} + B(q, \dot{y})$, the Computed Torque technique is to take $\tau = M \dot{q} + V$, yielding $M(q, \dot{q}) = 0 \Rightarrow \dot{y} = u$, since $M(q) > 0, \forall q$. Similarly, in (18) $A(y) > 0$ for every $y = h(q)$ where $q$ is on the restricted domain. Therefore a choice of

$$F = A(y)u + C(y, \dot{y}), \quad \tau = J^Tf \quad (20)$$

in (18) yields $A(y)(\ddot{y} - u) = 0 \Rightarrow \ddot{y} = u$. In this sense the work in [12]-[14] can be viewed as a Generalized Computed Torque technique. From (18) and (19) it is straightforward to determine that $\tau$ of (19) is exactly $\tau$ of eq. (15).

b. Derivation of a Feedback Law for Local Exact Decoupled External Linearization and Its Relationship to RAC and CCT.

Recall that the system (1), (7) or (1), (3) is of the form

$$\begin{align*}
M(q) \ddot{q} + V(q, \dot{q}) &= \tau; \quad q \in \mathbb{R}^n; \quad \dot{q}, \ddot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^n \\
y &= h(q) + M^T; \quad h(\cdot) \text{ is } C^2; \quad V = J(q) \dot{q} \in \mathbb{R}^n; \quad J(q) \text{ is } C^1; \\
M(q) &\in \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}; \quad M(q) = M(q)^T > 0, \quad q \in \mathbb{N}^n \quad (21)
\end{align*}$$

where in general, it may be that $n \not= n, \mathbb{R}^n \not= \mathbb{R}^n, \not= \dot{y}$, and $J \not= J = 3h/3q$.

It is assumed that a necessary and sufficient condition for $h(q)$ to be onto some neighborhood of $y = h(q)$ in $\mathbb{R}^n$ is that the mapping $J(q)$ be onto $\mathbb{R}^n$, i.e. we assume that $J(q)$ is onto $\mathbb{R}^n$ if and only if $J(q) = 3h(q)/3q$ is onto $\mathbb{R}^n$. This is a reasonable assumption; for example, when $\mathbb{R}^n = \mathbb{R}^2, V = \dot{y} = J(q)q \in \mathbb{R}^2$, and $J \not= J = 3h/3q$ this is trivially true. For the case $y = h(q) = (x, A) \in \mathbb{R}^n \times \text{SO}(3)$ and $J \not= J$ where $J \not= J = J_0(q)q$, the fact that $E T_2 J_0 = E^2$ and $A = \omega A \in T_A \text{SO}(3)$ means that for $J_0(q)$ onto, we can fill out a neighborhood of $(x, A)$ and otherwise we cannot. (A general element of $T_A \text{SO}(3)$ is precisely the form $\omega A$, $\omega \in \mathbb{R}^{3 \times 3}$ skew-symmetric, so that if $\omega = u(q)$ can be mapped onto $E^2$, $\omega A$ can be mapped onto $T_A \text{SO}(3)$ [44][47].)

Definition LEL: The system (20) can be locally exactly linearized and decoupled (LEL) over an open neighborhood $B^m(y') \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ of $y' = h(\mathbb{N}^n)$ if $h(y')$ in the configuration $q' \in h^{-1}(y')$ if there is an open neighborhood of $q'$, $B^n(q') \subset \mathbb{N}^n$, such that $B^m(y') = h(B^n(q'))$ and if for any $u \in \mathbb{R}^n$ and $q \in B^n(q')$ there exists
a nonlinear feedback \( \tau = F(q, q, u) \) such that \( \mathcal{N} \), the velocity associated with \( y = h(q) \in \mathbb{R}^n \), obeys \( \dot{q} = u \).

Note that for an ES to be LEL at \( y' \) it must be true that \( y' \) be in the range of \( h(\cdot) \), i.e. \( y' \) must be a physically attainable ES position. Also for a given ES location, \( y' \in h(\mathbb{R}^n) \), a manipulator can physically be in only one of the possible configurations \( h^{-1}(y') \). Thus we can interpret \( q' \in h^{-1}(y') \) to be the actual physical configuration of a manipulator. If the system (20) is not LEL at \( y' \) in the configuration \( q' \in h^{-1}(y') \) it may be LEL at a different configuration \( q' \in h^{-1}(y') \).

**Theorem LEL:** A necessary and sufficient condition for (20) to be LEL at \( y' \in h(\mathbb{R}^n) \) in the configuration \( q' \in h^{-1}(y') \) is that \( J(q') \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n} \) be onto, which is true iff \( m \le n \) and rank \( J(q') = m \). Furthermore, the locally exactly linearizing and decoupling feedback is given by

\[ \tau = \mathbf{M}(q) \xi + V(q, q) \]  

(21)

where \( \xi \) is any solution to

\[ J(q)\xi = -\dot{J}(q)q + u. \]  

(22)

When \( m = n \) this gives

\[ \tau = -\mathbf{M}(q)\dot{J}(q)^{-1}\dot{J}(q)q + \mathbf{M}(q)\dot{J}(q)^{-1}u + V(q, q). \]  

(23)

\( \square \)

**Proof.** Necessity: Suppose that \( \dot{V} = J(q')q'\dot{q}' + \dot{J}(q')q' = u \) can be made to hold regardless of the value of \( u \in \mathbb{R}^m \). This means that there must exist \( \xi \in \mathbb{R}^n \) such that

\[ J(q')\xi = -\dot{J}(q')q' + u. \]  

(24)

If \( \dot{J}(q') \) is not onto, then \( \mathbb{R}^m \supseteq \text{Im} \dot{J}(q') \) and \( \text{Im} \dot{J}(q') \neq \mathbb{R}^m \). Let \( u \) be such that

\[ -\dot{J}(q')q' + u \notin \text{Im} \dot{J}(q'). \]

Then there is no \( q' \) for which (24) holds, yielding a contradiction. Sufficiency: By assumption \( \dot{J}(q') \) is full rank and onto, \( \Rightarrow J(q') = \mathbf{h}(q')/\dot{q}' \) is full rank and onto. Since \( J \) and \( J \) are \( C^1 \), there exists neighborhoods \( B^n(y') \) and \( B^n(q') \), \( y' = h(q') \), such that \( B^n(y') = h(B^n(q')) \) and \( \dot{J} \) is full rank and onto when restricted to \( B^n(q') \). Now consider any \( q \in B^n(q') \) and its associated \( y = h(q) \in B^n(y') \). Then, \( \dot{V} = J(q)\dot{q} + \dot{J}(q)q = \dot{V} \).

(25)

Let \( \xi \) be any solution to (22). \( \xi \) is guaranteed to exist since \( \mathbb{R}^m \supseteq \text{Im} \dot{J}(q) = \mathbb{R}^m \). Take \( \tau \) to be (21), then

\[ \mathbf{M}(q) + V = \xi = \mathbf{M}(q) + V \Rightarrow \mathbf{M}(q - \xi) = 0 \Rightarrow q = \xi, \]

which with (22) and (25) gives \( \dot{V} = u \). \( \square \)

**Comments:**

1) Note that this result applies to all systems of the form (20), of which rigid link manipulators are a special case.

2) Note that with \( y \in \mathbb{R}^n \) and \( \tau \in \mathbb{R}^n \), the fact that we need \( m \le n \) can be interpreted to mean that there must be at least as many inputs as outputs.

3) When \( \dot{J} = J = \mathbf{h}/\dot{q}, \dot{V} = \dot{\gamma} \), and \( m = n \) we have that \( \tau = -\mathbf{M}^{-1}Jq + \mathbf{M}^{-1}u + V = \dot{\gamma} = u \) when \( \text{det} J \neq 0 \). This is the same result provided by GCT, NDT, and OCS as seen in the last section.

4) Note that in the proof we force \( q' = \xi \) precisely like \( q = u \) is forced to happen in the Computed Torque method. In fact, for \( y = q \) we have \( J = 1 \) and \( J = 0 \) giving \( \xi = u \). Thus the exact linearizing control of (21), (22) is seen to be a generalization of the Computed Torque method in a somewhat different, and perhaps more illuminating, way than OCS.
Let us consider the case of EF control given by the system\(^1\),\(^2\). Here \( J = J_o \) where \( \Psi = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{\xi} \\ \eta \end{pmatrix} = J_o \tilde{q} \).

In this case, when \( m = n \), (23) is

\[
\tau = -M^{-1}J_o \tilde{q} + M^{-1}u + V.
\]  

(26)

When \( \det J_o \neq 0 \), use of \( \tau \) yields \( \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{x} \\ \tilde{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \). This is precisely RAC \([7], [8]\). Theorem LEL can be interpreted as an extension of RAC to the redundant arm case which allows for the use of a minimal representation of EF attitude \([24]\). The more general case \( m \leq n \) is given by

\[
\tau = M_u + V, \quad J_o \xi = -J_o \tilde{q} + u.
\]  

(27)

By using the indirect form (27), \( \tau \) can be obtained, after \( \xi \) has been found, by use of the Newton-Euler recursion \([45]\). Furthermore \( \xi \) can be obtained recursively - either directly \([46]\), or by first recursively obtaining \( J_o \) and \( J_o \) and then solving for \( F \) by Gaussian Elimination. The major point to be drawn here, is that (27) shows us how to perform exact external linearization without the need for an explicit manipulator model. After exactly linearizing to \( \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{x} \\ \tilde{y} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} \) one can perform EF tracking at this stage \([7],[8]\), or one can continue to the form (11) by the use of \([10]\).

When using (26) or (27), the only way that rank \( J_o < m \) can occur for \( m \leq n \) is when the manipulator is at a mechanically singular configuration. Recall (section 4) that in the case when a minimal representation of EF attitude is used, the resulting Jacobian matrix \( J \) will be rank deficient not just for a manipulator singularity, but at a configuration which leads to a singularity of attitude presentation. Thus rank deficiency of \( J_o \) is kinematically cleaner to understand. The necessity that rank \( J_o = m \) in order to use (26) or (27) allows two obvious, but important statements to be made: i) For a manipulator with a workspace boundary (ignoring joint stops), as in the case of a FUMA-type manipulator, exact linearization at the boundary is impossible; ii) For a nonredundant (6 dof) manipulator with workspace interior singularities, there cannot be exact linearization throughout the workspace interior. For a redundant manipulator with workspace interior singularities, it may be possible to avoid workspace interior configurations which cannot be exactly linearized by the use of self motions as described in \([48],[49]\). This is related to the multiplicity of solutions available for \( \xi \) in (27).

It is interesting to ask just how the control (23) fulfills the aim of GCT as stated in (12)-(14). We have the nonlinear feedback (taking \( \Psi = \tilde{y} \) and \( J = J \)) \( \tau = Q(2) + B(2)u = (V - MJ^{-1})\tilde{q} + (MJ^{-1})u \) which when applied to (12), (13) gives

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -J^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -l \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -l \end{pmatrix} u.
\]  

(28)

Consider the local nonlinear change of basis given by

\[
\begin{pmatrix} \tilde{y} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} = h(q) \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix}, \quad h^{-1}(y) = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}.
\]

The fact that \( \tilde{y} = J\tilde{q} \) and \( \tilde{\eta} = J\tilde{\eta} + J\tilde{q} \) gives

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix}.
\]

Writing (28) as

\[
\begin{pmatrix} J & 0 \\ J & J \end{pmatrix} \frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{q} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 1 & J \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} h^{-1}(\tilde{y}) \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 1 & J \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} u
\]

we obtain the BCF

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{y} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{y} \\ \tilde{\eta} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} u, \quad \Rightarrow \tilde{y} = u.
\]

Of course we are benefiting from the hindsight provided us by GCT \([15],[19]\).

331
7. Concluding Remarks

Recognizing the fundamental unity of RAC, CCT, OCS, and NDT [7]-[22] for exact linearization of manipulators, we can focus on their true differences — namely differences in implementation detail and design philosophy. With the awareness that they all produce essentially the same linearizing feedback, we can ask why this particular feedback form is appropriate for manipulator-like systems.

OCS and RAC exploit the specific structure of such systems. Not surprisingly, the solutions arrived at, reflecting the philosophies and implementation perspectives of the researchers involved, are quite distinct in their flavor and presentation. Yet, since the properties specific to manipulator dynamics ultimately forced the solution, they are fundamentally the same. (Actually, apparently only OCS worked with a perspective directed specifically towards decoupled EF motions, RAC is content to stop at a point just shy of the goal. It is also interesting that [12] apparently shows an awareness of the relationship between OCS and RAC, and the degree to which RAC can be said to decouple and linearize EF motions.) The important point here is that researchers consciously exploited the specific properties of a system of interest, but without pin-pointing precisely what these properties were which made the system amenable to linearizing control.

GCT and NDT provide techniques for exactly linearizing general smooth affine-in-the-input dynamical systems. These techniques ignore any specific nongeneric structural properties that a system might have and as a consequence the solutions obtained are much less transparent than those of OCS or RAC. The strength of these approaches, particularly GCT, is that they can provide necessary and sufficient conditions for a system to be exactly linearizable and constructive sufficient conditions which produce the linearizing feedback when satisfied. These techniques can be applied to systems which defy our abilities to intuit or comprehend — such as manipulators coupled to complex electromechanical actuation devices. Interestingly, when applied to the problem of manipulator exact linearization the solutions obtained can be shown to be equivalent to those of RAC and OCS. Again the structural properties of the system forced the solution. Once a solution is known to exist, it is reasonable to attempt to produce it from more physical arguments knowing now that the search is not fruitless. This leads to a reexamination of OCS and RAC.

The work of [17]-[22] stresses a perspective which serves to enable a clearer comparison between competing techniques for external linearization: Place the system in a standard linear canonical form before additional control efforts are made — this ensures that the process of linearizing the system is not mixed up with, and confused with, the process of stabilizing and controlling it. This perspective greatly aided the comparison of GCT, OCS, RAC, and NDT which resulted in [24]. In turn, this comparison focuses attention on the structural properties of manipulators.

Much current research makes it apparent that systems dynamically similar to rigid link manipulators have important structural properties which can be exploited to achieve results which are quite strong when compared to those available for general smooth affine-in-the-inputs nonlinear systems [25]-[40]. Here we have seen that exploiting the nongeneric second order form of system (1) with an everywhere positive definite mass matrix and a G^2 locally onto readout map enables a simple form for the linearizing feedback.

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9. References


