

HAN Master Major Project

Major Project Plan

Using FANUC R-2000iC/210F (6-axis robot) for improved efficiency in FRC parts formation

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Background

Fiber-reinforced composite materials (FRC) are seeing a widespread use in a large number of applications ranging from aerospace systems over renewable energy production to automotive parts [5] [2]. These composite materials generally provide high specific strength and improved stiffness compared to other materials [3]. Through the combination of different materials, desirable mechanical properties like low weight with high stiffness can be achieved that would be hard or near impossible to recreate with single compound materials [7]. The attributes of an FRC can generally be described as the combination of three components [6]:

- The matrix, made of a polymer. This polymer can either be applied as a resin that hardens irreversible or a thermoplastic is used, that needs to be heated for application.
- The reinforcement component which consists of fibres with high strength and modulus. These days preferred materials are glass, carbon or polyethylene fibres.
- The fine interphase region. It's the interface between the matrix and the reinforcement that transfers the load between these.

FRCs can look back to a long history since the beginning of the 20th century with phenolic sheet Bakelite being the first fibre-reinforced plastic. Bakelite, a thermoset being the matrix was combined with different fibre materials like paper, cotton fabrics, or synthetic fabrics to create parts that can meet diverse mechanical, electrical and thermal requirements. [4]

In this project, a thermoplastic matrix will be used together with carbon or glass fibres. Besides the use of more modern polymers and fiber materials, new production techniques are incooperated. The mixed reinforced thermoplastic being supplied as pellets in various sizes for different properties is dried and then melted in an extruder through a continuous process. The material is then portioned into pieces by a guillotine and combined and stacked into assemblies by a delta robot. These assemblies are then brought to temperature again before being loaded into a hydraulic press with a mould by a FANUC R-2000iC/210F 1.1 industrial robot arm. [1]

Problem Definition

Assemblies of hot, formable Thermoplastic are delivered on a conveyor belt in varying positions after being reheated in an oven. Then they are kept in a warming area with an automatic hatch, that opens when material is needed. The assemblies then need to be picked up with a FANUC R-2000iC/210F 6-axis Industrial robot arm from the conveyor belt through a small window in a heat shield that keeps the assemblies warm. The Industrial robot then swings over to the press when it is open and the mould is free. The assemblies are then placed inside the mould at desired spots while making sure, the robot arm does not collide with any part of the press. After all parts are placed, and the robot arm has pulled back in a safe position, the press is activated and forms the parts with heat and pressure. When the forming process is finished, the press opens, the product is picked by the robot arm and placed on another conveyor belt for further processing. As the press is free, the cycle can repeat. [1] The overall goal of the Smart Production Cell is to drive down cycle time for these composite parts from ca. three minutes to one minute. Also the robot needs to cooperate with different parts of the process like the oven and the press and it plays a major role in synchronization between the subprocesses.



Figure 1.1: FANUC R-2000iC/210F 6-axis industrial robot arm

Project Objectives

The robot needs to be set up to work in cooperation with other subprocesses. Also a control strategy for the robotic arm with efficient movements guided by information from previous subprocesses needs to be implemented in Software.

Requirement Analysis

To deem the project a full success following requirements need to be fulfilled:

Software requirements

As the robot will be digitally twinned, certain goals in software need to be achieved:

Program Transfer The program transfer from Visual components to the R-30iA controller needs to be optimized and work seamlessly
LS or TP programs need to be exported from VC to the R-30iA controller without additional edits

Functional requirements:

The robot needs to be capable of fulfilling following functions:

- Movements** The robot needs to be able to execute all desired movements within its working range
The Robot needs to make a picking and placing movement for the press from and to conveyor belts
- Communication** The Robot needs to communicate to the PLC via Profinet.
The PLC and the robot need to have a handshake via Profinet
- Position tracking** The Robot needs to send its position via the PLC to Visual components
Position of the tool-head in XYZ need to be transmitted to VC
- Movement authority** The robot needs to receive movement authority from the PLC and apply the right action based on the given movement authority
The Robot should be started automatically in auto mode via the PLC with no manual pressing of the cycle start button and run a program chosen or given by the PLC

Safety requirements:

As the robot is used in a laboratory environment special precautions that differ from a standard production cell need to be set in place:

- Safety manual** A short and precise safety manual needs to be created for the robot in this specific laboratory environment
The safety manual needs to contain specific information for Programmers, Operators and other people working in the vicinity of the robot
- Acoustic or visual feedback** As the robot is used in a laboratory environment, where it cannot be guaranteed at any time that a person cannot get close to its working range, feedback needs to be given shortly before movements are executed.
A warning light or other feedback equipement needs to be activated when the robot starts moving

Security requirements:

All machinery in the production line will be connected to other systems via the internet. This throws up several security questions:

- Risks** Risks regarding external connectivity and the resulting threats need to be outlined
An Evalutaion of potential intrusion strategies needs to be worked out
- Firewall** If the machines are connected to the local network at SPC, a firewall solution needs to be set in place
A firewall needs to be set in place between the company network and the Perimeter Network + Fieldbus

Performance requirements:

The goal of the Production line is to minimize cycle time for FRC parts. This puts certain demands on the robot:

- Robot cycle time** Every minute one part has to be produced. The robot needs to fulfill all movements within that cycle time
An Control strategy with a maximum cycle time of 45 seconds needs to be found

Documentation requirements:

As the SPC is a flexible working environment with changing teams, good documentation is key for a good handover to following teams

Programmer manual Many configurations and Programs were tested on the robot. Following teams should have an easy start.
A Programmer manual with wiring, configuration and a quickstart guide needs to be made

Maintenance requirements:

As the robot is used in a laboratory setting, some parts are used more excessively than in a normal production setting

Brake inspection As the E-stop is used relatively often, they will need to be replaced earlier than usual
An annual inspection with FANUC needs to be scheduled.

Activities and Products

With regard to the goals, following activities need to be carried out which produce below mentioned Products.

Activities:

Mounting and Floorplan All parts involved in the process except from the press are not yet bolted to the ground. A floorplan needs to be developed based on simulations in Visual Components. Together with the SPC team and consultants from Quing this floorplan will be developed. Then the FANUC R-2000iC/210F together with all other components can be moved to their final position and bolted to the ground.

Wiring The FANUC R-2000iC/210F is not connected to power and to its accompanying R-30iB controller. Cables need to be connected to the robot and the controller.

Commissioning The FANUC R-2000iC/210F although being a second hand robot has never been put into operation at the SPC. The robot and its R-30iB controller need to be placed into operation step by step with several function tests.

Fieldbus - Hardware A Profinet fieldbus network needs to be designed and installed to connect all components with each other for exchange of data and commands. For this, an Industrial Ethernet network needs to be set up with a Profinet Stack. Twisted-Pair-Cables need to be cut in the right length and equipped with RJ45 connectors. Also additional network components like an industry grade switch for routing and Ethernet hubs as well as USB network adapters for package sniffing need to be selected and procured.

Fieldbus - Software To use Profinet, all involved network interfaces, input and output of data as well as global commands and flags need to be configured to make all devices communicate with each other.

Modelling To develop and test a controller for the FANUC R-2000iC/210F, a simulation in software will be made with the help of Visual Components. To get a deeper understanding of the robot arm, a kinematic modelling will be done.

Sensors All virtual and physical sensors necessary to guide the FANUC R-2000iC/210F will be identified, and connected to a Profinet member.

Control Scheme A control scheme for the FANUC R-2000iC/210F will be developed with the help of an iPendant connected to a R-30iB Plus controller and Karel Programming language in the software ROBOGUIDE to fulfill the desired tasks.

Programming Parts of the program for integration of the FANUC R-2000iC/210F robotic arm into the overall production line will run on a Siemens Simatic S7-1500 Programmable Logic Controller (PLC). This PLC is the brain of the plant where all information from different subprocesses comes together and is processed.

Testing After developing a program to control the robot, extensive testing is needed to verify safety and assure 24/7 operation.

Report A report will be made, and drafts will be sent to the supervisors for feedback.

Fine Tuning When all subprocesses work properly together, fine tuning can be applied based on observations to drive down the cycle time or reduce energy consumption.

Products:

Floorplan Floorplan including all major relevant components

Model and Simulation Model and simulation of the robot arm

Control Scheme Control scheme implemented in software

Presentation and Report Major project report and a real-life presentation of the movements of the Fanuc R-2000iC/210F

Safety plan A basic summary of procedures for safe operation of the robot

Organization

HAN Automotive has founded a Smart Production Center (SPC) in order to research the possibilities for improvement in mass production of lightweight automotive parts using Fibre Reinforced Thermoplastics (FRT). The SPC is located in the Mobility Innovation Center (MIC) in Industriepark Kleefse Waard (IPKW) in Arnhem.

The SPC provides a room for companies to collaborate with the HAN. Some of these companies interested in the project and inclined to help are located in the direct surroundings of the MIC building such as Quing who are involved with the simulations.

Peter Verschut, the Program Manager of Automated Composites and Didier Polling, researcher in lightweight structures, keep an overview over the activities of all students involved. Suzanne Ezendam is Project coordinator and head of the building and labs.

Master Level

This Thesis project demands creating a model of the robotic arm. The modelling of the 6 axis FANUC R-2000iC/210F will require knowledge from Systems Modelling. If parameters cannot be determined, they can be found with techniques from Systems Identification. Based on this model, a controller can be developed and a range of paths can be found through inverse kinematics. This controller is an extension of the subjects taught in the module Advanced Controller Design. The number of resulting paths can then be narrowed down further, for example based on safety restrictions or the desired working area of the robot. This will be a further development of the knowledge conveyed in Applied Control Strategy from the module Applied Control. This results in a control scheme that can be implemented in Matlab and simulated numerically, and probably also

graphically. The basics of implementation were shown in Controller Implementation from the module Applied Control

I will demonstrate my master level by understanding and simulating the dynamics of a 6 axis Robot arm.

Restrictions

Surrounding subprocesses To fully demonstrate all abilities of the FANUC R-2000iC/210F, all sub-processes (extruder with supply hopper, conveyors, delta robot with gripper, press with mould, robot gripper, oven with heat-shield) need to be in place and running on their own. Also test material will be needed that can be picked up and placed.

Gripper The robot arm currently does not have a gripper. To demonstrate the picking abilities in real life with test material, this gripper will need to be designed in time by another student at the SPC.

Temperature range of material For the Process to operate correctly, the material taken out of the oven needs to be hot enough to stay formable. This will also be a core point of the overall research to find an ideal oven-temperature in the range between 230 – 330°C .

Fieldbus An Ethernet network needs to be set up to host the communication via Profinet between the subprocesses.

Software For simulation Visual Components and for control ROBOGUIDE with Karol Programming Language as well as TIA Portal need to be made available, installed and configured.

Robot Placement The final placement of the robot is not yet determined and the robot needs to be bolted to the ground in its final position before it can be used.

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