

KTH ROYAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

MACHINE DEPARTMENT

Project Plan of IDIOM Group

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September 23, 2015

1 Preliminary Title

The preliminary title at this stage is *Convex Optimization for Holistic Mechatronic System Design*. The title should indicate both the research context and the mathematical tool used. Therefore *mechatronic system* and *convex optimization* should be included in the title. Since the research is mainly focused on the modification of optimization algorithms, *methodology* has not been included in the title. The design methodology used emphasizes on a holistic approach, which is why *holistic* shall be included.

2 Background and Problem Description

This section presents the background and purpose to the research. The research question is formulated in the end.

2.1 Background

The target of the research is to explore the possibility of increasing the efficiency of one specific mechatronic design method by introducing new algorithm into the IDIOM software. The background is divided into two sections, one focusing on the design method of mechatronic systems and one focusing on genetic as well as convex algorithms.

2.1.1 Integrated Design and Optimization of Mechatronic Products

The development process of mechatronic products is challenging because it involves multiple engineering domains. In order to deal with them in an integrated manner as early as possible, several generic methodologies have been created, such as *V-model* and *Ulrich and Eppinger's model*. V-model, presented in [1], features frequent verification and validation against the requirements during the integration phases. Ulrich and Eppinger's model can be adopted in accordance with an unique context [2].

Although these methods have different formats, they do share something in common. According to [1] and [2], the detailed design is carried out based on rather abstract design in early phase, which means if some problems occur, chances are

that the design in early stages needs to be modified as well. Moreover the lack of knowledge in early phase makes this kind of trace back inevitable [3]. To aid this issue, the *Integrated Design and Optimization of Mechatronic Products (IDIOM)* method has been created to explore the potential of concept design with limited information.

The IDIOM method treats the mechatronic system in a holistic pattern, integrating different domains in early design phase and optimizing parameters of designed structure with respect to one or multiple targets. Fredrik Roos contributed to the models of the method [4] and Malmquist et al. extended the capability of the method to attack several optimal objects at the same time. At this stage, controller has been included in the process to achieve true synergistic integration.

There has been a model library set up inside the IDIOM system with respect to both static and dynamic characteristics of those components. The approaches in different domains have been picked carefully to make the problem easy to solve under different configurations without too much lost detail. Therefore designers only need to pick and configure models from the model library and specify the design goal(s), the optimal solution of this specific design concept would be provided by the system [3].

2.1.2 Genetic Algorithm and Convex Optimization

The optimization algorithm used in IDIOM is *genetic algorithm (GA)*. A GA is one of the most common non-gradient methods. It mimics the process of natural selection by treating each solution as an individual. The solution set after each iteration is called a generations. The individuals with higher objective function values have higher chance to produce their offspring by crossover. Meanwhile mutation is used to keep the diversity of solutions. After the evaluation of several generations, the algorithm may find optimal or sub-optimal solution [5].

Although a GA is probably most commonly used evolutionary method, it cannot guarantee a true optimum. Besides it is computational intensive [4]. Therefore Convex Optimization method is introduced.

Convex Optimization refers to the technology used to solve convex optimization problems, in which the objective function and constraint functions are convex. The advantages of formulating an optimization problem as convex are significant [6].

With the help of reliable tools, such as *CVX* toolbox [7] for matlab, the problems can be solved efficiently. Non-convex as the objective functions in IDIOM system might be, it is expected those problems could be modified or simplified as convex since many objective functions can be treat as composition of convex functions.

2.2 Research Question

The proposed research question is as follows.

Could convex optimizations efficiently, in terms of computational speed and memory usage, replace genetic algorithms in mechatronic system design optimization without losing precision.

3 Method

The method used in this project is based on inductive reasoning. Case studies are to be performed on basic as well as advanced systems to determine if convex optimization performs better, in terms of e.g. computation speed and memory usage, than genetic algorithms when applied to mechatronic system design. Empiric data collected are used in the inductive reasoning process to arrive at a conclusion.

4 Timeplan

The time-plan related to the project is included in Appendix A. It specifies milestones as well as tasks that are to be completed during the project. The initial four weeks contain activities regarding individual literature studies and the writing of a common project plan. These weeks are followed up by two weeks of learning the basics of *CVX* toolbox found in MATLAB, and the IDIOM software. This knowledge will then be used in the next phase where three weeks are devoted to implement convex optimization of a basic case/system with volume as the target value. This phase is followed up by simultaneously working on a more advanced case as well as optimizing the basic case for another target value (e.g. cost). The research paper is going to be written concurrently during these activities. The

three week phase when looking at a basic example may take more than tree weeks. Then the following phases will be shortened.

5 Risk Analysis

In this section, risks of the project are obtained from brainstorming. They are analyzed from different angles and among which, critical risks will be assessed further.

5.1 Risk Analysis Methodology

The methodology adopted to conduct the risk analysis is described as following steps:

1. Identify potential risks;
2. Determine probability;
3. Determine Impact.

As long as all possible risks are identified after brainstorming, they will be assessed according to the probability and impact respectively. Each aspect has a scale of 1, 3, and 9. A bigger number implies that the risk is more likely to happen or has a more serious consequence. Those risks of interest will be analyzed further based on their risk rating, which is defined as the product of probability and impact. The risk matrix is shown in 5.1.

		Impact		
		Low(1)	Medium(3)	High(9)
Likelihood	High(9)	9	27	81
	Medium(3)	3	9	27
	Low(1)	1	3	9

A risk matrix is shown in Table 1. The risks that lies in the upper right in red exceeds the level of tolerance and needs to be made action plan for.

5.2 Risk Log

After the possible risks are identified, they are kept in table 2 following the priority of risk rating. The possible risks with high risk rating are marked in red and will be provided with an action plan below.

Table 1: Risk Log

No.	Priority Hazard	Prob. (1-9)	Imp. (1-9)	Risk Rating (Prob.× Imp.)
1	Estimates are inaccurate	9	9	81
2	Code error	3	9	27
3	Failure to follow the methodology	3	9	27
4	Preparation is inadequate	3	3	9
5	Knowledge integration	3	3	9
6	Info loss during communication	3	3	9
7	Ambiguous goal	1	9	9
8	Disagreement with the coa	1	9	9
9	Low morale (interests lost)	1	9	9
10	Tool selection problem	1	3	3
11	Software collapse	1	3	3
12	Misunderstand the requirement	1	3	3

5.3 Action Plan

An action plan is made for those risks with the highest likelihood and/or consequence. So the risks with risk rating above 9 are provided with the corresponding action plans. The following tables 2, 3 and 4 provide the action plans of items with high risk ratings.

Table 2: Action Plan for Item 1

Risk	Estimates are inaccurate
Location/Function	N/A
Summary (RECOMMENDED RESPONSE AND IMPACT)	
<p>Inaccurate estimation is a common project risk and especially happens frequently for rookies. This risk will cause a series of project failure and the results of the project almost cannot be achieved. Gaining more experience can be a solution to this problem.</p> <p>It is recommended to consult the coach and learning from previous cases when making then estimation.</p>	
1)Proposed Actions	<p>Make considerate estimates patiently</p> <p>Check the progress regularly</p> <p>Consult with the coach</p>
2)Resource Requirements	<p>Time of the coach</p> <p>Previous similar project case</p> <p>Planned schedule</p>
3)Responsibilities	The coach to be consulted about estimation rationality
4)Timing	<p>Present the estimation at the nearest meeting after it is made.</p> <p>Check the progress once a week</p>
5)Reporting/Monitoring	Each member has a milestone or individual schedule to achieve within given time

Table 3: Action Plan for Item 2

Risk	Code errors
Location/Function	Solver
Summary (RECOMMENDED RESPONSE AND IMPACT)	
Handling the code errors can be time-consuming. To ensure that the programmer familiar with the expected results and reflect the idea to the code accurately.	
1) Proposed Actions	Test the code by comparing the results with the expected ones Read through the code logically
2) Resource Requirements	Time of the programmer Computer with installed related software Data from the previous work
3) Responsibilities	Programmer within the group
4) Timing	Check the code segments while coding Test the code after finishing coding
5) Reporting/Monitoring	Data documentation of previous work The report of new data to be finished

Table 4: Action Plan for Item 3

Risk	Failure to follow the methodology
Location/Function	Methodology
Summary (RECOMMENDED RESPONSE AND IMPACT)	
To ensure that each member get the individual work done within the deadline To ensure that the work is formulated based on the methodology.	
1) Proposed Actions	Set reasonable milestones and regular deadlines Check the achievement according to the schedule Formulate the work by methodology
2) Resource Requirements	Methodology to be adopted
3) Responsibilities	Everyone
4) Timing	Get the work done before the deadline Set milestones after work formulation
5) Reporting/Monitoring	Schedule or milestone plan report

References

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Appendices

