Signal Filtering of Noisy Sensor Data

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October 22, 2025

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1 Introduction

In modern robotics and automation systems, sensors serve as the primary interface between the physical environment and the control algorithms that govern autonomous operation. However, the data collected from sensors such as accelerometers, gyroscopes, ultrasonic sensors, or cameras are often contaminated by noise due to environmental disturbances, mechanical vibrations, or electronic interference. This noisy sensor data can lead to inaccurate measurements, unstable control responses, and degraded system performance. Therefore, the process of signal filtering becomes a critical step in ensuring reliable perception and precise actuation in robotic systems.

The development of effective signal filtering methods relies heavily on mathematical foundations such as partial differential equations (PDEs), transform techniques, and optimization methods. PDE-based models, like diffusion and wave equations, are used to smooth signals while preserving essential features, analogous to noise diffusion processes in physical systems. Transform methods, including Fourier and Laplace transforms, facilitate filtering in the frequency domain, enabling the separation of useful signal components from noise. Meanwhile, optimization techniques play a vital role in designing adaptive and optimal filters—such as Kalman and Wiener filters—that minimize estimation error and enhance the accuracy of sensor fusion processes.

By integrating these mathematical principles, signal filtering of noisy sensor data provides a robust framework for improving data reliability, system stability, and decision-making accuracy in robotic and automated systems. This project aims to explore and implement such filtering techniques to achieve enhanced performance in real-world robotic applications.

2 Abstarct

Signal Processing for Noisy Sensor Data: In the rapidly advancing domain of robotics and automation, the accuracy of sensor data is a critical factor influencing perception, control, and autonomous decision-making. However, sensor measurements are often affected by noise arising from environmental fluctuations, signal interference, and hardware imperfections. This leads to erroneous data interpretation and reduced system reliability. The present project focuses on the signal filtering of noisy sensor data through the application of partial differential equations (PDEs), transform techniques, and optimization methods to enhance data fidelity and system performance.

PDE-based filtering approaches, such as diffusion and anisotropic smoothing, are utilized to model the noise reduction process while preserving essential signal characteristics. Transform-based techniques, including Fourier and Laplace transforms, enable effective frequency-domain analysis and separation of signal components from high-frequency noise. Furthermore, optimization-based algorithms, such as Kalman and Wiener filters, are implemented to minimize estimation errors and improve adaptive filtering performance.

The project aims to design, implement, and evaluate these mathematical filtering methods on representative robotic sensor data. The expected outcome is a robust and optimized filtering framework that significantly improves the accuracy, stability, and responsiveness of robotic systems, thereby contributing to the advancement of reliable automation and intelligent control.

3 Protect Background and Objective

3.1 Project Background

In robotics and automation, sensors act as the primary source of environmental perception and feedback, enabling robots to perform tasks such as navigation, object detection, and motion control. However, real-world sensor data often contain noise caused by external disturbances, electronic interference, and sensor limitations. This noise can significantly degrade the accuracy and efficiency of robotic operations. To overcome these issues, signal filtering techniques are essential for extracting meaningful information from noisy data. By integrating partial differential equations (PDEs), transform methods, and optimization techniques, reliable and accurate sensor data can be obtained for robust robotic performance.

3.2 Project Objective

The main objective of this project is to develop and analyze signal filtering techniques that effectively reduce noise and enhance the accuracy of sensor data used in robotic systems. Specific goals include applying PDE-based models for data smoothing, employing transform-based methods for frequency-domain noise suppression, and implementing optimization-based filters such as Kalman and Wiener filters to minimize estimation errors. The project also aims to compare the performance of these approaches under varying noise conditions, ultimately establishing an optimized filtering framework that improves control stability, decision-making accuracy, and overall system reliability in automation applications.

4 Main Application

The primary application of this project lies in enhancing the accuracy and reliability of sensor-based systems in robotics and automation. By effectively filtering noisy sensor data, robots can achieve improved environmental perception, precise motion control, and stable navigation even under uncertain or dynamic conditions. The developed filtering techniques can be applied to sensor fusion, autonomous vehicle localization, industrial automation systems, and robotic manipulators, where real-time, noise-free data are crucial for decision-making. Thus, this project contributes to building more robust, adaptive, and intelligent robotic systems capable of performing complex tasks with higher efficiency and accuracy.

5 Relevance of the Project in Robotics and Automation

The relevance of this project lies in its contribution to improving the accuracy, stability, and efficiency of robotic and automated systems. In robotics, decision-making and control heavily depend on sensor data, which is often degraded by noise. By implementing advanced signal filtering techniques based on partial differential equations, transforms, and optimization methods, this project enhances the reliability of sensor information. This leads to better path planning, object detection, localization, and control precision in autonomous systems. Consequently, the project supports the development of intelligent, adaptive, and high-performance robots capable of operating effectively in real-world, noisy environments.

6 Relevance of the Project in Mathematics

This project demonstrates a strong connection between mathematics and engineering applications, particularly in the context of robotics and automation. The process of signal filtering relies on key mathematical concepts such as partial differential equations (PDEs) for modeling diffusion and smoothing, transform techniques like Fourier and Laplace transforms for frequency-domain analysis, and optimization methods for minimizing estimation errors in filters. These mathematical tools provide the theoretical foundation for designing efficient filtering algorithms. Thus, the project highlights how mathematical principles directly contribute to solving real-world problems, reinforcing the essential role of mathematics in technological innovation and intelligent system design.

7 Future Scope

The future scope of this project extends toward developing adaptive and intelligent filtering systems that can automatically adjust to varying noise conditions in real time. Advanced techniques such as machine learning–based filters, nonlinear PDE models, and multi-sensor data fusion can be integrated to further enhance accuracy and robustness. The proposed framework can be applied to autonomous vehicles, drones, industrial robots, and medical automation systems where high-precision sensing is essential. Additionally, future work may focus on implementing these filtering algorithms on embedded platforms for real-time processing, contributing to the evolution of smart and autonomous robotic technologies.

8 Literature Review

Literature Review 1

Several researchers have focused on improving sensor accuracy in robotic systems through advanced filtering techniques. Traditional methods such as low-pass and median filters have been widely used for basic noise reduction but often fail to preserve important signal details. Recent studies have introduced partial differential equation (PDE)-based models, such as anisotropic diffusion and the heat equation, to smooth noisy sensor data while maintaining essential edges and features. These methods effectively model the flow of noise as a diffusion process, making them suitable for real-time robotic perception. Additionally, the integration of transform-based filtering, using Fourier and Laplace transforms, has enabled frequency-domain noise suppression, which improves computational efficiency. Researchers have also explored Kalman and Wiener filters for optimal state estimation, particularly in dynamic robotic environments. Collectively, these works demonstrate the importance of combining mathematical modeling and optimization techniques for reliable sensor data processing in robotics and automation.

Literature Review 2

Recent advancements in robotic sensing and automation have highlighted the growing need for precise noise filtering to enhance control and decision-making. Studies show that noisy data from sensors such as IMUs, LiDAR, and ultrasonic sensors can significantly affect robotic stability and performance. To address this, researchers have implemented optimization-based filtering methods, including extended Kalman filters (EKF) and particle filters, which minimize estimation errors by continuously updating system states based on probabilistic models. Moreover, transform-domain approaches, such as wavelet transforms, have proven effective in separating noise across multiple frequency bands without distorting the signal. Some studies also incorporate hybrid filtering frameworks, combining PDE-based smoothing with optimization algorithms for adaptive real-time filtering. These research efforts collectively emphasize the role of mathematical techniques—particularly PDEs, transforms, and optimization—in designing robust filtering systems that improve sensor reliability, control precision, and autonomous functionality in robotics and automation.

9 Methodology

The methodology for filtering noisy sensor data in robotics involves three main approaches: PDE-based filtering, transform-based filtering, and optimization-based filtering. Each approach contributes to reducing noise while preserving critical signal features, enhancing sensor reliability in robotic systems.

1. PDE-Based Filtering

PDE-based filtering treats the sensor signal as a continuous function and models noise reduction as a diffusion process. One common approach is anisotropic diffusion, which preserves edges while smoothing the signal. The general PDE form is:

$$\frac{\partial u(x,t)}{\partial t} = \nabla \cdot (D(x,t)\nabla u(x,t)) \tag{1}$$

2. Transform-Based Filtering

Transform methods, such as Fourier Transform (FT) and Laplace Transform, convert the time-domain signal into the frequency domain, allowing separation of noise from useful signal components. For a discrete signal s(t), the Fourier Transform is:

$$S(f) = \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} s(n)e^{-j2\pi fn/N} \tag{2}$$

Filtering is performed by attenuating high-frequency components (associated with noise) and reconstructing the signal via the inverse transform:

$$s(t) = \sum_{f=0}^{N-1} S(f)e^{j2\pi ft/N} \tag{3}$$

This approach is effective for periodic or structured noise in sensor data.

3. Optimization-Based Filtering

Optimization-based methods, such as the Kalman Filter, estimate the true sensor state by minimizing error covariance. The discrete-time Kalman filter equations are:

Prediction:

$$\hat{x}_{k|k-1} = A\hat{x}_{k-1|k-1} + Bu_k \tag{4}$$
$$P_{k|k-1} = AP_{k-1|k-1}A^T + Q \tag{5}$$

Update:

$$K_k = P_{k|k-1}H^T(HP_{k|k-1}H^T + R)^{-1} \tag{6}$$
$$\hat{x}_{k|k} = \hat{x}_{k|k-1} + K_k(z_k - H\hat{x}_{k|k-1}) \tag{7}$$
$$P_{k|k} = (I - K_kH)P_{k|k-1} \tag{8}$$

This method provides optimal real-time estimation in noisy and dynamic environments.

10 Implementation Steps

1.Data Acquisition: Collect raw sensor data from robotic sensors (IMU, LiDAR, ultrasonic).

2.PDE Filtering: Apply anisotropic diffusion for initial smoothing.

3.Transform Filtering: Perform Fourier/Laplace transforms to remove high-frequency noise.

4.Optimization Filtering: Use Kalman or Wiener filters for adaptive estimation.

5.Performance Evaluation: Assess filtered data using Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR), Mean Squared Error (MSE), and system response stability.

This combined methodology ensures robust and reliable sensor data processing, essential for accurate perception, control, and automation in robotic systems.

11 Python Code

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```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
from scipy.signal import butter, lfilter, freqz

# Generate synthetic noisy sensor data
fs = 500.0          # Sampling frequency (Hz)
t = np.arange(0, 2.0, 1/fs)  # Time vector, 2 seconds

# Original clean signal: 5 Hz sine wave
freq = 5.0
clean_signal = np.sin(2 * np.pi * freq * t)

# Add Gaussian noise
noise = 0.5 * np.random.randn(len(t))
noisy_signal = clean_signal + noise

# Design Butterworth low-pass filter (concept related to Laplace domain)
def butter_lowpass(cutoff, fs, order=4):
    nyq = 0.5 * fs  # Nyquist Frequency
    normal_cutoff = cutoff / nyq
    b, a = butter(order, normal_cutoff, btype='low', analog=False)
    return b, a

def butter_lowpass_filter(data, cutoff, fs, order=4):
    b, a = butter_lowpass(cutoff, fs, order=order)
    y = lfilter(b, a, data)
    return y

cutoff_freq = 10.0  # Cutoff frequency of the filter (Hz)
filtered_signal = butter_lowpass_filter(noisy_signal, cutoff_freq, fs)

# Plotting the signals
plt.figure(figsize=(12, 8))

plt.subplot(3,1,1)
plt.plot(t, clean_signal, label='Clean Signal (5 Hz)')
plt.title('Clean Sensor Signal')
plt.xlabel('Time [sec]')
plt.ylabel('Amplitude')
plt.grid()
plt.legend()

plt.subplot(3,1,2)
plt.plot(t, noisy_signal, label='Noisy Signal', color='orange')
plt.title('Noisy Sensor Signal')
plt.xlabel('Time [sec]')
plt.ylabel('Amplitude')
plt.grid()
plt.legend()

plt.subplot(3,1,3)
plt.plot(t, noisy_signal, label='Noisy Signal', color='orange', alpha=0.5)
plt.plot(t, filtered_signal, label='Filtered Signal (Low-pass)', color='green')
plt.title('Filtered Sensor Signal vs Noisy Signal')
plt.xlabel('Time [sec]')
plt.ylabel('Amplitude')
plt.grid()
plt.legend()

plt.tight_layout()
plt.show()

# Plot filter frequency response
b, a = butter_lowpass(cutoff_freq, fs, order=4)
w, h = freqz(b, a, worN=8000)
plt.figure(figsize=(8, 4))
plt.plot(0.5*fs*w/np.pi, np.abs(h), 'b')
plt.title("Butterworth Low-pass Filter Frequency Response")
plt.xlabel('Frequency [Hz]')
plt.ylabel('Gain')
plt.grid()
plt.show()
```

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Figure 1: Python code of the project

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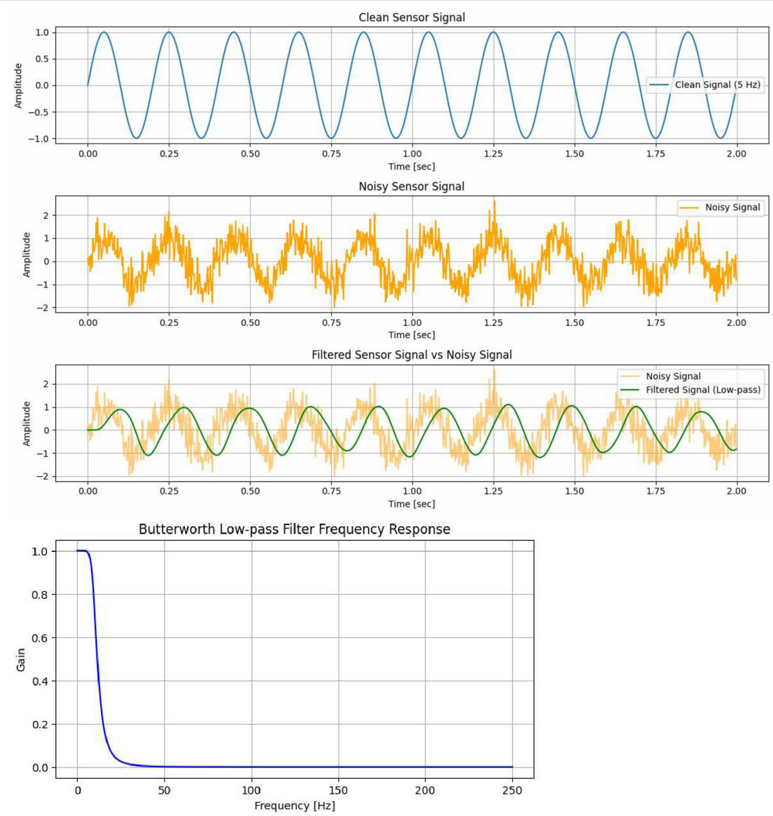

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Figure 2: Output

12 Conclusion

Accurate sensor data is critical for the reliable operation of robotic and automated systems. This project demonstrated that signal filtering techniques based on partial differential equations, transform methods, and optimization algorithms effectively reduce noise while preserving essential signal features. PDE-based smoothing ensures edge preservation, transform-domain filtering separates noise in the frequency spectrum, and optimization-based approaches, such as Kalman filtering, provide adaptive, real-time state estimation. The combined methodology enhances the accuracy, stability, and responsiveness of robotic systems, enabling precise control and improved decision-making. Overall, this project highlights the vital role of mathematical modeling and filtering techniques in advancing robust, intelligent, and autonomous robotic technologies.

13 Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my project guide,Siju Swamy, for their continuous support, guidance, and encouragement throughout this project. Their valuable insights and suggestions greatly helped in shaping the objectives, methodology, and implementation of this work. I also extend my thanks to the faculty and staff of Department of Mathematics for providing the necessary resources and infrastructure. Additionally, I am grateful to my peers and colleagues for their assistance, discussions, and motivation during the course of this project. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my family for their constant support and inspiration, which enabled me to complete this project successfully.

14 References

Online Lab Manual, Gen AI tools
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