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Master of Science in Electronics Engineering



## Design and Implementation of a Driver for In-Wheel Brushless Motors for Unmanned Vehicles

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#### COLOPHON

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To my family and friends:

Thanks for supporting me while I'm learning to fly

— Arturo



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---

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## ACRONYMS

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<b>BEMF</b>	Back Electromotive Force
<b>PMAC</b>	Permanent Magnet Alternating Current
<b>PMSM</b>	Permanent Magnet Synchronous Motor
<b>BLDC</b>	Brushless Direct Current
<b>PCB</b>	Printed Circuit Board
<b>FOC</b>	Field Oriented Control

<b>DC</b>	Direct Current
<b>PP</b>	Pole Pairs
<b>PWM</b>	Pulse Width Modulation

## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to study the architecture of a commercial brushless motor driving circuit proposed by Texas Instruments and implemented as an electronic speed board as an "open source" project available online, analysing the advantages and disadvantages of such design regarding the implementation of trapezoidal and sinusoidal motor driving and speed and current control techniques for an unmanned vehicle designed for robotic agriculture. After this, the implementation of such driving and control techniques was physically carried out and tested.

This thesis explains in details the most important parts regarding the physical implementation of a motor driving system in such a way that it can be fully replicated. Chapter 1 contains some initial information regarding the electric motor history and the motivation to realize this work. In Chapter 2, we explain more in detail the different reasons why this work was developed and the focus points that were stressed out. In Chapter 3, a simple but sufficient explanation about the theory behind the electric motor is given, explaining also the different existing technologies and their particular driving methods. In Chapter 4 we explain the study case of ROBI', a prototype mobile manipulator for agricultural applications, which uses the in-wheel motor for which the motor driver of this work was developed. In Chapter 5 we explain in deep detail all the work developed around the implementation of the motor driver, both in the software and the hardware fields. In Chapter 6 we explain the final results of the work, showing and comparing graphs and waveforms of the behaviour of the in-wheel motor driven by the system developed. Finally, on Chapter 7, we discuss the results of the work realized and propose a new system, based on the implementation of the researched architecture and the problems encountered while working on the project.



Lo scopo di questa tesi è quello di studiare l'architettura di un circuito di guida del motore brushless commerciale proposto da Texas Instruments e implementato come un tabellone elettronico come un progetto "open source" disponibile online, analizzando i vantaggi e gli svantaggi di tale progetto per quanto riguarda l'implementazione di guida a motore trapezoidale e sinusoidale e tecniche di controllo di velocità e corrente per un veicolo senza pilota progettato per l'agricoltura robotica. Successivamente, l'implementazione di tali tecniche di guida e controllo è stata effettuata e testata fisicamente.

Questa tesi spiega in dettaglio le parti più importanti riguardanti l'implementazione fisica di un sistema di guida del motore in modo tale da poter essere completamente replicato. Chapter 1 contiene alcune informazioni iniziali sulla storia del motore elettrico e la motivazione per realizzare questo lavoro. Nel capitolo 2, spieghiamo più in dettaglio i diversi motivi per cui questo lavoro è stato sviluppato e gli aspetti principali che sono stati evidenziati. In Chapter 3 viene fornita una spiegazione semplice ma sufficiente sulla teoria alla base del motore elettrico, che spiega anche le diverse tecnologie esistenti e i loro particolari metodi di guida. Nel capitolo 4 spieghiamo il caso di studio di ROBI', un prototipo di manipolatore mobile per applicazioni agricole, che utilizza il motore a ruote motrici per il quale è stato sviluppato il driver motorio di questo lavoro. In Chapter 5 spieghiamo dettagliatamente tutto il lavoro sviluppato attorno all'implementazione del driver del motore, sia nel campo del software che in quello dell'hardware. Nel capitolo 6 spieghiamo i risultati finali del lavoro, mostrando e confrontando grafici e forme d'onda del comportamento del motore a ruote motrici guidato dal sistema sviluppato. Infine, in Chapter 7, discutiamo i risultati del lavoro realizzato e proponiamo un nuovo sistema, basato sull'implementazione dell'architettura ricercata e sui problemi incontrati durante il lavoro sul progetto.



## PREFACE

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*Knowledge is only part of understanding.  
Genuine understanding comes from hands-on experience.*

— Seymour Papert *Constructionism* 1991

Motor control is a topic that must be experienced personally to be understood. This is a characteristic of many other engineering topics: they need to be experienced by the engineer or by the student to be fully understood. All the theory behind the movement of the shaft of the electric motor, which explains all the different phenomena interacting to create mechanical motion from electrical energy, should be experienced to fully understand everything that is involved. This is the reason why the practical implementation of theoretical topics is always interesting. Practical implementation makes us realize that there are always challenges that might not be taken into account while they are being studied from books, and they represent new opportunities to drive research and development for improvement.

This text was written with the idea of becoming a guide on the development of a motor controller for further projects, including the explanation of the basic physical phenomena that acts on electric motors and the important parameters to consider for the prediction of its motion, to the implementation of the hardware and software of a driving circuit and a detailed explanation on the most important factors to bring a motor controller alive and to successfully drive a permanent magnet motor. Even if the development of the work was intended for a specific project, all the information related to the development of the motor control systems can be applied to different projects, which is why this work can be useful also as a reference for projects not related to the robotic agriculture.

— Arturo Montúfar Arreola

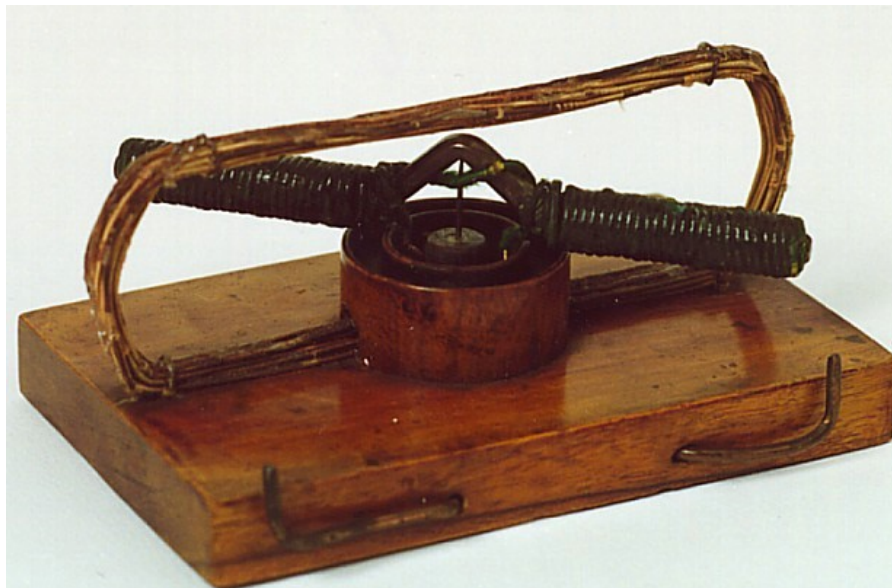
## INTRODUCTION

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*Electrical science, too, by its fascination, by its promises of immense realizations, of wonderful possibilities chiefly in humanitarian respects, has attracted the attention and enlisted the energies of the artist; for where is there a field in which his God-given powers would be of a greater benefit to his fellow-men than this unexplored, almost virgin, region, where, like in a silent forest, a thousand voices respond to every call?*

— Tesla *On Electricity* 1897

The electric motors made their first appearances in the middle of the XIX century right after the invention of the battery by the Italian physicist, chemist and inventor Alessandro Volta in 1800, the discovery of the generation of a magnetic field from an electric current by the Danish physicist and chemist Hans Christian Ørsted in 1820 and the invention of the electromagnet by the English physicist William Sturgeon in 1825 (Doppelbauer, 2012). After these foundations were laid, the development of a machine that generates mechanical power from electrical power has been improving day by day, and, along with that improvement, also its utility has been increasing.



**Figure 1.1:** Jedlik's "Electromagnetic Self-Rotor". The historic motor created by the Hungarian physicist Ányos Jedlik still works perfectly today in the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest.

Due to the reduction of the prices of metals and the improvement and automation of manufacture processes, electric motors became



available for a large range of applications, and not only as a research topic, up to the point that nowadays we interact with them in our daily life, sometimes without even noticing it. We have electric motors in all types of devices, from small applications like home appliances and hand-held gadgets, to large applications like robotics, cars and spaceships. As the complexity of the application increases, also the need for accuracy and efficiency does, leading to the development of more advanced electric motor technologies which lead to complex motion control techniques.

One of the most complex applications for motor control is robotics. The motion in a robotic system is part of its definition of automatic movement, therefore, a robotic system needs a predictable driving system to fulfil its purpose, which implies that most of the parameters of the motors inside the robot are known and that they can be controlled in a correct and precise way.

A challenging application regarding motors in robotics is the wheel driving, since it needs to be precise and powerful at the same time to transport the robotic system around large surfaces in an unmanned way, which means that there is no person on board and controlling the robot. For example, in robotic agriculture, which is one of the main reasons why this work was developed, a robot becomes an unmanned vehicle, which must transport itself around in farms, where the road represents harsh conditions for transportation, introducing the need for a precise drive to deal with small crops, a high torque to transport the robot in uneven grounds and a good range of speeds to displace itself in large field areas in the fastest way possible.

With aims to propose a solution for the land transportation in robotic agriculture projects, different types of motor technologies were studied a priori, finding out that in-wheel permanent-magnet brushless motors are one of the most suitable and currently used solutions to develop electric vehicles, since they don't need an external system for power transmission from the motor to the wheels, taking advantage of the high stall torque property of the electric motors and the reduction of the space and weight that having a motor inside a wheel represents (Bascetta, Baur, and Gruosso, 2017).

To correctly drive permanent-magnet brushless motors, it is necessary to apply a proper driving technique, which becomes a complex task when the goal is to achieve the desired characteristics mentioned previously: a good precision, a high torque and a large range of speed. Given such a challenge, the development of electric motor drives becomes one of the topics that draws the interest of many engineers and scientists, also due to the multidisciplinary approach needed to reach the speed, torque and efficiency required to drive the development that the inventions of tomorrow require. The approach to improve the motor drive in the electronics engineering field is directly related to the development of the driving circuit topology and to the imple-

mentation of complex control algorithms in embedded software that improve the performance of the different motor technologies available.

Since the brushless motor technology is quite recent in comparison with the rest, there is still a lot of development going on regarding its driving, with aims to reach the highest efficiency possible at the lowest cost. The objective of this work was to develop an electronic driver to control brushless motors, taking as a study case the in-wheel motors that transport a skid-steering robot designed for robotic agriculture. We studied the available electronic architectures to design a motor driver, the different approaches to drive brushless motors, like the trapezoidal and the sinusoidal drive and the peripherals needed to make these driving happen. After studying these topics, the motor driver was physically implemented and tested, and from this, a new architecture was proposed from the results and conclusions obtained from the implementation and testing of the circuit.



**Figure 1.2:** Rimac Automobili's electric supercar Concept S. Electric cars are becoming a trend and one of the main drivers for the development of technology related to electric motors.

This thesis explains in detail the most important information regarding the physical implementation of a motor driving system in such a way that it can be fully replicated. In Chapter 2, we explain more in detail the different reasons why this work was developed and the focus points that were stressed out. In Chapter 3, a simple but sufficient explanation about the theory behind the electric motor is given, explaining also the different existing technologies and their particular driving methods. In Chapter 4 we explain the study case of ROBI', a prototype mobile manipulator for agricultural applications, which uses the in-wheel motor for which the motor driver of this work was developed. In Chapter 5 we explain in deep detail all the work developed around the implementation of the motor driver, both

in the software and the hardware fields. In Chapter 6 we explain the final results of the work, showing and comparing graphs and waveforms of the behaviour of the in-wheel motor driven by the system developed. Finally, on Chapter 7, we discuss the results of the work realized and propose a new system, based on the implementation of the researched architecture and the problems encountered while working on the project.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

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As motion applications complexity increases, like in the robotics field, the need for a more complex and robust driving system arises, and with it, the need to make decisions regarding the technologies to be implemented for them. For example, when a robotics project begins, with the objective to implement a solution that hasn't been implemented before, one of the main concerns is the motion system. The selection of the motor that is going to be used in a project is not an easy task, since many details must be considered, like the speed and torque required by the application, which lead to the selection of the motor technology, which might be limited by the available power source, the computing power and the economic budget of the project. These aspects have a strong dependency between each other and choosing each one of them represents a trade-off that must be studied in detail to reach an optimal result for the desired application.

### 2.1 TECHNOLOGICAL TRADE-OFFS

One of the main goals in the technology research and development has always been to reduce the trade-offs between the most important parameters in different engineering applications, using the most suitable technologies available, depending on the application requirements. One of the fields of engineering that has a big focus on the reduction of trade-offs is the motor drive research, since their development is crucial to drive innovation in many engineering fields.

A complicated trade-off to deal with is the cost of a motor drive, which is one of the most limiting characteristics project developments, both for research activities and for industrial and consumer applications. If a project is not expected to generate an income after its development or it's not backed up by a research institute with resources, or if the product is expected to be kept at a low price for many different reasons (like accessibility for low income communities or the possibility of large expansion), the price of a motor drive might be the weak side in a trade-off analysis and the development of the project might not be optimal, since it might require more work to reach an acceptable result.

## 2.2 LEARNING CURVE

The cost of a project leads to another important trade-off on engineering research and development: the learning curve. In some areas like robotics, a professional engineering project requires thousands of hours of man-work to reach a desirable result. An important amount of the time available for these projects is used in learning theory regarding the technology related to the project and how the available tools for such technology work. This time consumed in learning all the information needed regarding a project is called “learning curve”. The amount of work necessary to reach a good result makes most of the engineering projects expensive and, in many cases, a big part of that time is consumed by the learning curve, time that could be used for developing another part of the project, increasing the speed of the development and, therefore, reducing its cost.

## 2.3 MOTOR DRIVER DEVELOPMENT

With the aim to solve these two important trade-off factors in motor driving systems, we decided to study the possibility to reduce the cost of a motor drive by using a driver based on a cheap architecture which can be easily modified and allows to understand in a fast way how the motor driver works, making the development around it faster and easier for future projects.

To set up the design specifications for the motor driver to be studied, we based the requirements in the drive characteristics of a robot designed for robotic agriculture designed by the engineering group of the AIRLab of the Politecnico di Milano called ROBI' (Bascetta, Baur, and Gruosso, 2017). This robot is driven by four in-wheel brushless motors that will be described in detail in Chapter 4.

## 2.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF FIELD ORIENTED CONTROL

Having the objective defined, we looked for an already available platform to develop a motor driver with aims to look for points to improve and define a platform that could be used for different projects involving Permanent Magnet Alternating Current (PMAC) motors, both Brushless Direct Current (BLDC) and Permanent Magnet Synchronous Motor (PMSM). With this aim, we found a board called VESC Board, developed by the Swedish engineer Benjamin Vedder, who made available all the files for its production, including the schematic circuits, the bill of materials, the Printed Circuit Board (PCB) layout files and the source code. Vedder's circuit was very appealing since it had many ports available and it was based on a technology that is easy to

study since it's based in a design proposed by Texas Instrument for three-phase motors.

Since this motor driver was needed to be used in robotics applications, we had the necessity to modify the source code of the microcontroller to apply motor control methods that would be different to the ones available for the VESC board since the code available was designed to drive an electric skateboard. For this aim, we decided to develop our own source code, this way we would have control over everything developed by us and the expansion of the code would follow up without the need of doing reverse engineering over the code that was already available.

Since the motors of the wheels of the robot are [PMSM](#), they have a sinusoidal configuration, and therefore, a sinusoidal waveform was needed to be applied into the motor to reach an optimal efficiency and to control the speed even in low speeds. This specification pointed us towards the implementation of the Field Oriented Control ([FOC](#)) method, which improves the torque capabilities of the motor at controlled low speeds as it will be explained in [Chapter 3](#).



## MOTOR CONTROL THEORY

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In this chapter, we will review some theoretical principles that concern us regarding motor control. First, we will review the physical principles that rule over the electric motors and we will explain the different motor technologies and its configurations, focusing in the Permanent Magnet Alternating Current (PMAC) motors. Later, we will review the motor drives, the configuration of a driver and the different driving techniques for the PMAC motors. Finally, we will explain the control methods that can be applied to them.

Most of the theory in this chapter was taken from the book *Tecnologie dei sistemi di controllo*, by Magnani, Ferretti, and Rocco, 2007 and from the compilation *Performance and Design of Permanent Magnet AC Motor Drives*, by Bose et al., 1989.

### 3.1 ELECTRIC MOTOR

An electric motor is an electric machine that transforms electrical power (product between voltage and current):

$$P_{electrical} = V \cdot I \quad (3.1)$$

into mechanical power (product between torque and angular speed):

$$P_{mechanical} = T \cdot \omega \quad (3.2)$$

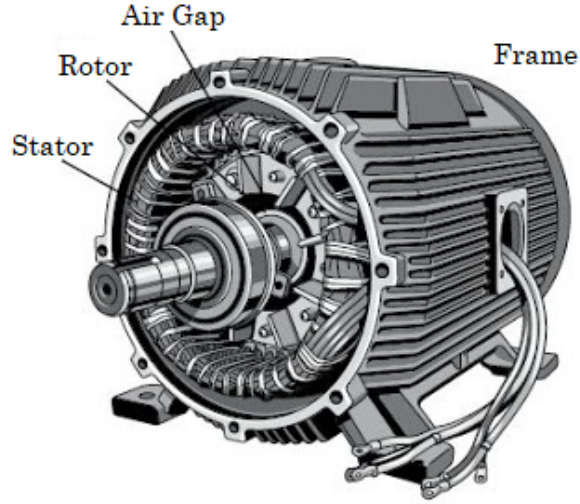
by means of the electromagnetic phenomena that takes place inside the motor, which is explained by the physical principles mentioned in this chapter.

#### 3.1.1 Physical Principles

The generation of torque in electric motors is based in the interaction of two magnetic fields, one generated by magnets or windings placed in the stator and the other one generated by magnets or windings placed in the rotor as seen in Figure 3.1.

The physical laws that rule over the electric motor are mainly four: The Lorentz's Law, which helps us define the torque generated by an electric charge moving inside a magnetic field; Faraday's Law of Electromagnetic Inductance and the Lenz's Law, which explain the generation of the Back Electromotive Force (BEMF) in the motor coils





**Figure 3.1:** Partially Assembled Motor. An electric motor consists mainly in three parts: a rotor, which moves due to the electromagnetic interaction; a stator, the body of the motor; and a frame, which holds the rotor and the stator together. The air gap is the space between the rotor and the stator, where the electromagnetic interaction takes place (*Electrical Motors Basic Components*, 2012).

depending on the speed of the rotor and the influence of the magnetic field generated due to this BEMF respectively; and the Ampere-Laplace Law, which allows us to calculate the magnetic field of a current loop and the mechanical interaction between two magnetic fields.

LORENTZ'S LAW defines a force  $F$ , which acts over an electric charge  $q$  moving with a speed  $v$  inside a magnetic field with intensity  $B$  as seen in Figure 3.2:

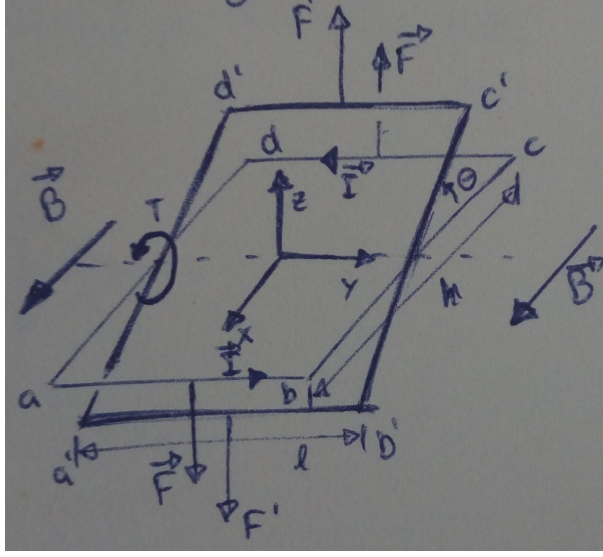
$$F = qv \times B \quad (3.3)$$

By defining a current  $I$  passing through a conductor with length  $l$  we can transform Equation 3.3 into Equation 3.4:

$$F = lI \times B \quad (3.4)$$

Considering the current  $I$  flowing through a conductive loop as the one in Figure 3.2 with sides lengths  $l$  and  $h$  we can see that there is a force  $F$  generated in the direction of the cross product of the current  $I$  and the magnetic field  $B$ . The maximum force  $F$  is generated in the sides of the loop where the direction of the current  $I$  is perpendicular to the direction of the magnetic field  $B$  ( $ab$  and  $cd$ ), while on the other two sides ( $ad$  and  $bc$ ) the forces

generated are cancelled with each other due to the direction of the current respect to the magnetic field.



**Figure 3.2:** Visual explanation of the interaction of the current  $I$  and the magnetic field  $B$  generating a force  $F$  and, consequently, a torque  $T$  around the  $y$  axis (Magnani, Ferretti, and Rocco, 2007).

Since the forces  $F$  generated on the sides  $ab$  and  $cd$  have the same magnitude but different direction, they create a torque  $T$  around the  $y$  axis defined by the magnetic field, the current and by the length of the sides of the loop as:

$$T = I l B \cos \theta \quad (3.5)$$

We can see in Figure 3.2 and in Equation 3.5 that when the angle  $\theta$  between the sides  $ad$  or  $bc$  and the direction of the magnetic field  $B$  is  $\pi/2$  radians, the torque  $T$  is zero and when the angle  $\theta$  is zero or  $\pi$  radians, the torque reaches its maximum possible value.

The dependency of the torque created by the interaction of the current and the magnetic field on the angle between these two physical quantities introduces the need of changing the direction of the magnetic field or the direction of the current, hence, the polarity of the loop, to maintain the loop spinning and a non-zero torque.

**FARADAY'S LAW OF ELECTROMAGNETIC INDUCTION** states that

In every circuit under the effect of a magnetic field, an electromotive force is induced equal to the derivative respect to the time of the magnetic flux passing through the circuit, with negative sign. (Jordan, 1968)

therefore, by indicating with  $E$  the electromotive force and with  $\phi_m$  the magnetic flux, we have:

$$E = -\frac{d\phi_m}{dt} \quad (3.6)$$

If we consider a case like the one in Figure 3.2 we can calculate the magnetic flux passing through the loop as:

$$\phi_m = B \cdot u_N S = B \cdot u_N h l = h l B \sin \theta \quad (3.7)$$

where  $S$  is the surface of the loop and  $u_n$  is the direction normal to the plane of the loop. Therefore, we get an induced electromotive force of:

$$E = -\omega h l B \cos \theta \quad (3.8)$$

where  $\omega$  is the angular speed of the loop. We can see, comparing Equation 3.8 and Equation 3.5, that the induced electromotive force depends on the angular speed in the same way than the acting torque depends on the current.

**LENZ'S LAW** can be explained after the explanation of the induced electromotive force. It states that the induced current in a loop has the direction that creates a magnetic field that opposes the change in magnetic flux through the area enclosed by the loop, therefore, the induced current tends to keep the magnetic flux  $\phi_m$  from changing in the circuit.

If the rotation of the loop is generated by the circulation of a current inside a magnetic field, the induced electromotive force will try to oppose to the pass of the current, that's why it's normally referred to as Back Electromotive Force (**BEMF**).

**AMPERE-LAPLACE LAW** is the last piece to understand the transformation of electrical energy into mechanical energy. It allows us to calculate the magnetic field generated by a closed loop conducting current in a point defined by a vector  $p$  as:

$$B(p) = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} \oint I \frac{u_t \times u_r}{r^2} dl \quad (3.9)$$

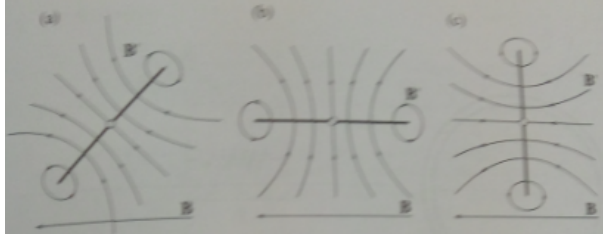
where  $\mu_0$  is the vacuum magnetic permeability constant,  $I$  is the current circulating through the loop,  $u_t$  is the versor with direction of the current in the infinitesimal element  $dl$  and  $u_r$

and  $r$  are versor and module that define the point  $p$  respect to the infinitesimal element of the loop.

Given that the magnetic fields can be generated both by permanent magnets and by current circulation, the electromechanical conversion is obtained due to the interaction of two magnetic fields according to the alignment principle:

“In a region of space which hosts two magnetic fields, there is a mechanical action that tends to align both fields. (Magnani, Ferretti, and Rocco, 2007)”

So, if we consider the loop from Figure 3.2 and Equation 3.9, we can see that there is a magnetic field generated around the loop as seen in Figure 3.3, and due to the alignment principle, we will get the strongest coupling torque when the magnetic fields are perpendicular to each other.



**Figure 3.3:** Visual explanation of the alignment principle. The alignment torque is the largest in the configuration of figure B and nule in the configuration of figure C.

In the case of electrical motors, there are two different magnetic fields generated in the airgap due to the permanent magnets or to the windings placed in the stator and the rotor which can be considered in radial direction, described by two magnetic fields  $B_r(\theta, t)$  and  $B_s(\theta, t)$ , from which interaction we get the electromechanical conversion, since we have the generation of a torque which tends to align the two fields angles where they have the largest intensity. The alignment torque will be an expression of the type:

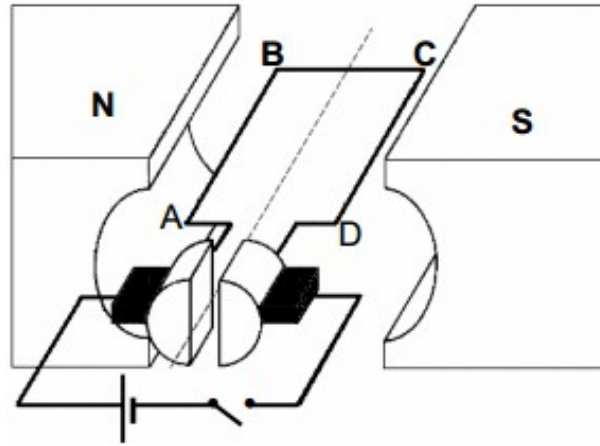
$$\tau_m = k B_r B_s \sin \delta \quad (3.10)$$

where  $\delta$  is the de-phasing angle between the two fields and the maximum torque will be when  $\delta = \pi/2$ .

In conclusion, by feeding the windings in the right way, we look forward to having a constant  $90^\circ$  de-phase between the two magnetic fields in aims to obtain the maximum torque generation.

In the case of the Direct Current (DC) motor, the perpendicularity condition is maintained by a polarity commutating structure attached

to the rotor which is connected to the windings that generate the rotor magnetic field that tries to align itself to the magnetic field of the permanent magnets attached to the stator. This commutating system is connected to the power supply by metallic brushes that energise the motor until it reaches a certain angular position and the commutating lead changes to the next one, changing the polarity of the windings. Therefore, the torque obtained is independent from the position of the rotor and it's proportional to the amplitude of the power source.



**Figure 3.4:** Basic schematic representation of the DC motor using the same loop represented in Figure 3.2

Brushless motors, which will be explained later in this chapter, the perpendicularity condition is maintained by feeding in the right time the windings in function of the angular position of the rotor  $\theta$ , which is one of the main goals to be achieved and explained in this work.

### 3.2 PMAC MOTORS

The Permanent Magnet Alternating Current (PMAC) motor is a kind of electrical motor that doesn't need the mechanical commutators mentioned in 3.1.1 to be driven as in the case of the DC motor, but its windings need to be energised in a specific way to function correctly. Since it doesn't need the mechanical commutators, it also doesn't need the brushes that energise the windings, so it can be said that it's a brushless motor. As seen in Figure 3.5, there are permanent magnets attached to its rotor and the coils are wound into its stator in a three-phase configuration.

These three phases are fed alternatively in such a way that the magnetic field, generated by the relative currents passing through the coils, should always be orthogonal and synchronous to the magnetic field generated by the rotor's permanent magnets. The characteristics mentioned above give the name to this kind of motors.

To maintain the synchronization, it's necessary to commute, by means of an inverter as the one represented in Figure 3.7, the cur-

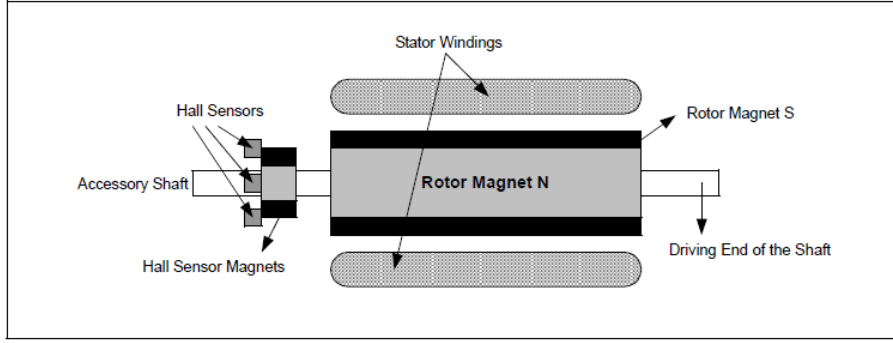


Figure 3.5: Brushless motor transverse section (microchip microchip).

rents in the windings of the stator, taking as a reference the angular position of the rotor, which must be obtained by a sensor.

The number of commutations needed to generate one revolution of the rotor is determined by the number of times that each phase coil is wound in the stator. For example, if each phase coil of the three phase system is wound only once, one commutation would be enough to generate one revolution, but if each phase coil is wound 6 times, we would need to commutate the power supply of the coils six times to generate one revolution. This ratio is called Pole Pairs ( $PP$ ). Normally, the PMAC motors have many  $PP$  (six or more) in order to have a lower torque ripple since the alignment of the magnetic fields would be every  $360^\circ / (PP \times \Phi_N)$  degrees of the rotor. For the study on the electromechanical conversion, the angular position of the rotor is substituted by an electrical angular position, which is controlled by the commutator and is defined by:

$$\theta_{electrical} = PP\theta_{mechanical} \quad (3.11)$$

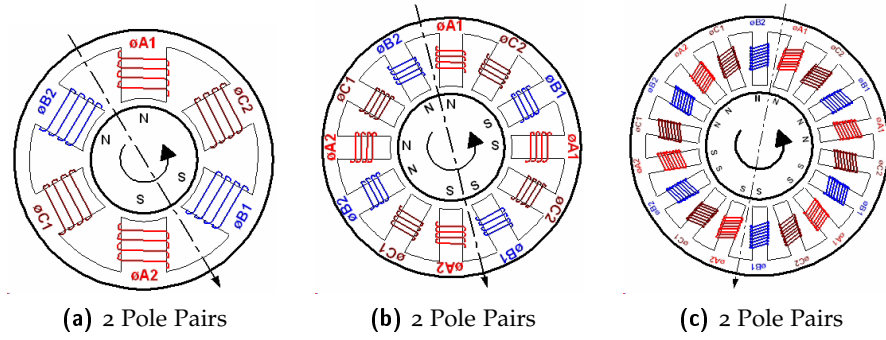
which also represents a relationship between the mechanical speed of the rotor and the electrical speed of commutation, which is defined by the commutation frequency:

$$\omega_{electrical} = f_{commutation} = PP\omega_{mechanical} \quad (3.12)$$

so, for example, if we have a motor with 6  $PP$  and we want to drive it at  $1kHz$ , we must commutate the polarity of the inverter at  $f_{commutation} = PP\omega_{mechanical} = (6)(1kHz) = 6kHz$ .

The main characteristics that make the brushless motor a better option for some applications than the DC motor are the following:

- better weight-to-power ratio,
- a more linear acceleration,
- a low inertia,



**Figure 3.6:** Different pole pair configurations

- a higher reliability,
- smaller dimension,
- reduced need for maintenance,
- high rotation speed,
- ideal for working in hostile environments

There are two disadvantages to this motor technologies: the first one is the need of a rotation sensor; the second one is the need of a complex logic to commutate the currents flowing through the coils. Both of these disadvantages are mainly reflected in a higher price respect to the [DC](#) motor.

It is possible to identify mainly two types of brushless motors. The first one is the Brushless Direct Current ([BLDC](#)) motor, which has a rotor position feedback that is not continuous, since the position of the rotor is given every 60 electrical degrees and its feed in blocks of 120 electrical degrees by simply alternating the voltage in the inverter, and due to these alimentation in blocks, the driving is rectangular, so the ideal [BEMF](#) is trapezoidal. The second type of brushless motors needs a continuous rotor position feedback to feed the motor with sinusoidal current, obtained by Pulse Width Modulation ([PWM](#)) of the [DC](#) bus, therefore the ideal [BEMF](#) is sinusoidal, which generates a lower torque ripple than the trapezoidal one, but needs a more complex control method.

### 3.2.1 *BLDC Motors*

The stator winding for each phase of the [BLDC](#) motor consists of a uniform distribution of turns over  $N = \text{PP}$  sectors of a width equal to  $60^\circ$ . The magnets attached to the stator cover an arc of  $180^\circ$ , and at any instant, each magnet interacts, for  $120^\circ$ , with an arc of stator conductor carrying current. Due to this discrete interaction every  $120^\circ$ , the three-phase switching between the currents of the stator should



happen when the edge of the magnet attached to the rotor reaches the boundary between windings every  $60^\circ$ .

The boundary of the rotor magnets with respect to the windings position is detected by three sensors, one every  $60^\circ$ , which send a signal to the driving circuit to change the polarity of the coils depending on the actual value of the three sensors and on the desired direction. The sensors to detect the angular position will be explained in 3.3 and the driving sequences will be explained in 3.4.

### 3.2.2 PMSM Motors

The stator is fitted with three-phase windings with  $N = PP$  turns of each phase distributed sinusoidally around the periphery. If the stator windings are fed by sinusoidal currents, there is a linear current density around the stator periphery

## 3.3 MOTOR DRIVES

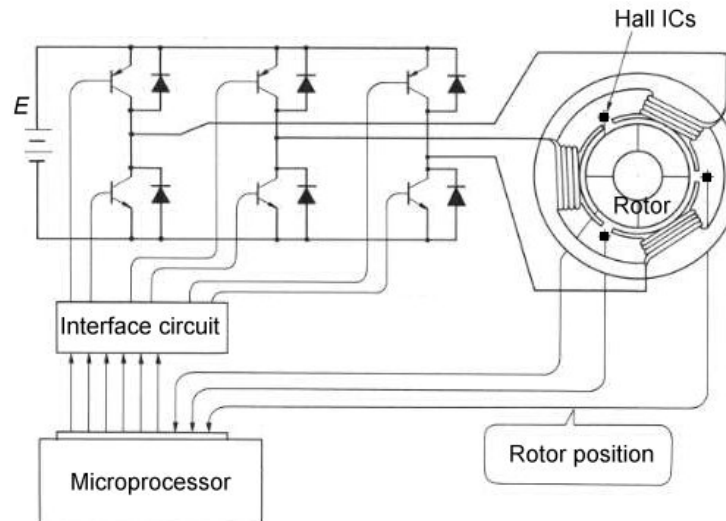
Some explanation about how motor drives are conformed...

### 3.3.1 Inverter

The commutation of the polarities in the windings of the PMAC motors is done by means of a three-phase inverter. The inverter used in PMAC motors and the use of recirculation diodes avoids the need of the mechanical commutation used in the DC motors, which creates sparks between the commutator and the brushes due to the discharge of the electromagnetic energy stored in the windings of the rotor. This characteristic limits the use of DC motors to applications where sparks don't represent a latent danger. Also the DC motors need constant maintenance since the brushes need to be replaced periodically, while brushless motors can run for years without the need of changing any component.

The use of recirculation diodes is necessary to avoid damage in the transistors due to the overvoltage generated by the current transients in the windings  $LdI/dt$  that takes place between the switches of a same branch of the inverter while switching from one state to another. For example, when a transistor is suddenly turned off, the current flowing through the coils doesn't instantly disappear, but instead it recirculates through the diodes until it vanishes.





**Figure 3.7:** Schematic representation of the three-phase inverter circuit needed to drive a brushless motor(**microchip microchip**).

### 3.3.2 Peripherals

## 3.4 PMAC MOTORS DRIVING METHODS

### 3.4.1 Trapezoidal Drive

### 3.4.2 Sinusoidal Drive

## 3.5 CONTROL METHODS

### 3.5.1 Speed Control

### 3.5.2 Torque Control

### 3.5.3 Field Oriented Control

### 3.5.4 Speed Control with Field Oriented Control

STUDY CASES

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(...)

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#### 4.1 ROBI

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#### 4.2 RC VEHICLE

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## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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(...)

### 5.1 HYPOTHESIS

(...)

### 5.2 VESC BOARD

The electric drive subject of this study is based on an open source project developed by the Swedish engineer Benjamin Vedder called VESC - Open Source ESC, which consists in the hardware design of a Printed Circuit Board (PCB) and the source code used to drive a BLDC motor.

The VESC board was conceived and designed to be used in electric skateboards with the intention to create one of the best electronic speed controllers available. Since it was planned to be used in a skateboard, it has a small form-factor and it can be used for different applications with similar power demand. The hardware can also be modified by changing specific components to drive motors with higher power demand or by modifying the PCB following the schematic design.

The board consists of the following blocks, which will be explained in detail in this chapter:

1. Power supply input
2. Power MOSFETs three-phase inverter
3. MOSFET driver
4. Microcontroller unit
5. Peripherals
  - a) Temperature sensors
    - i. Motor temperature sensor
    - ii. Board temperature sensor
  - b) Hall effect sensors
  - c) RC Servomotor Output

d) Debug LEDs

#### 6. Communication interfaces

- a) USB
- b) CAN
- c) USART
- d) SPI
- e) I2C

#### 5.2.1 *Power Supply Input*

#### IMAGE

##### 5.2.1.1 *Power Supply Range*

##### 5.2.1.2 *Bulk Electrolytic Capacitor*

1. The largest amount of current required by the motor
2. The capacitance of the power supply and its ability to source current
3. The parasitic inductance between the power supply and the motor
4. The acceptable voltage ripple
5. The type of motor

##### 5.2.1.3 *Power Supply Wiring*

#### FORMULA

#### 5.2.2 *Power MOSFET Three-Phase Inverter*

##### 5.2.2.1 *Voltage and Current Limits*

##### 5.2.2.2 *Switching Times*

#### 5.2.3 *MOSFET Driver*

#### 5.2.4 *Microcontroller Unit*

High-performance MCUs with DSP and FPU instructions ARM Cortex-M4-based Up to 180 MHz operating frequency Up to 2 Mbytes Flash Up to 384 kB RAM Ethernet IEEE 1588 SDIO 16 and 32-bit timers 2 CAN ports Camera SDRAM SPI 12-bit DAC and ADC USB 2.0 OTG

### 5.2.5 PCB Layout

(...)

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## 5.3 MEASUREMENT BOARD

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### 5.3.1 Voltage Measurement

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### 5.3.2 *Current Measurement*

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### 5.3.3 *Data acquisition*

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## 5.4 ANGULAR POSITION SENSOR

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## 5.5 MIOSIX

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## 5.6 TEST SETUP

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### 5.6.1 Robi Setup

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#### 5.6.1.1 Marelli Generator as Load

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#### 5.6.2 RC Vehicle Setup

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### 5.7 ALGORITHMS IMPLEMENTATION

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#### 5.7.1 6-Step Drive Implementation

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### 5.7.2 *Field Oriented Control Implementation*

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## 5.8 SIMULATION?

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## RESULTS

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### 6.1 BLDC

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#### 6.1.1 Voltage Waveforms

(...)

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feugiat magna. Nunc eleifend consequat lorem. Sed lacinia nulla vitae enim. Pellentesque tincidunt purus vel magna. Integer non enim. Praesent euismod nunc eu purus. Donec bibendum quam in tellus. Nullam cursus pulvinar lectus. Donec et mi. Nam vulputate metus eu enim. Vestibulum pellentesque felis eu massa.

#### 6.1.2 *Current Waveforms*

(...)

Quisque ullamcorper placerat ipsum. Cras nibh. Morbi vel justo vitae lacus tincidunt ultrices. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Integer tempus convallis augue. Etiam facilisis. Nunc elementum fermentum wisi. Aenean placerat. Ut imperdiet, enim sed gravida sollicitudin, felis odio placerat quam, ac pulvinar elit purus eget enim. Nunc vitae tortor. Proin tempus nibh sit amet nisl. Vivamus quis tortor vitae risus porta vehicula.

#### 6.1.3 *Voltage Control Plots*

(...)

Fusce mauris. Vestibulum luctus nibh at lectus. Sed bibendum, nulla a faucibus semper, leo velit ultricies tellus, ac venenatis arcu wisi vel nisl. Vestibulum diam. Aliquam pellentesque, augue quis sagittis posuere, turpis lacus congue quam, in hendrerit risus eros eget felis. Maecenas eget erat in sapien mattis porttitor. Vestibulum porttitor. Nulla facilisi. Sed a turpis eu lacus commodo facilisis. Morbi fringilla, wisi in dignissim interdum, justo lectus sagittis dui, et vehicula libero dui cursus dui. Mauris tempor ligula sed lacus. Duis cursus enim ut augue. Cras ac magna. Cras nulla. Nulla egestas. Curabitur a leo. Quisque egestas wisi eget nunc. Nam feugiat lacus vel est. Curabitur consectetur.

#### 6.1.4 *Current Control Plots*

(...)

Suspendisse vel felis. Ut lorem lorem, interdum eu, tincidunt sit amet, laoreet vitae, arcu. Aenean faucibus pede eu ante. Praesent enim elit, rutrum at, molestie non, nonummy vel, nisl. Ut lectus eros, malesuada sit amet, fermentum eu, sodales cursus, magna. Donec eu purus. Quisque vehicula, urna sed ultricies auctor, pede lorem egestas dui, et convallis elit erat sed nulla. Donec luctus. Curabitur et nunc. Aliquam dolor odio, commodo pretium, ultricies non, pharetra

in, velit. Integer arcu est, nonummy in, fermentum faucibus, egestas vel, odio.

## 6.2 PMSM

(...)

Sed commodo posuere pede. Mauris ut est. Ut quis purus. Sed ac odio. Sed vehicula hendrerit sem. Duis non odio. Morbi ut dui. Sed accumsan risus eget odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Pellentesque non elit. Fusce sed justo eu urna porta tincidunt. Mauris felis odio, sollicitudin sed, volutpat a, ornare ac, erat. Morbi quis dolor. Donec pellentesque, erat ac sagittis semper, nunc dui lobortis purus, quis congue purus metus ultricies tellus. Proin et quam. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos. Praesent sapien turpis, fermentum vel, eleifend faucibus, vehicula eu, lacus.

### 6.2.1 Voltage Waveforms

(...)

Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Donec odio elit, dictum in, hendrerit sit amet, egestas sed, leo. Praesent feugiat sapien aliquet odio. Integer vitae justo. Aliquam vestibulum fringilla lorem. Sed neque lectus, consectetur at, consectetur sed, eleifend ac, lectus. Nulla facilisi. Pellentesque eget lectus. Proin eu metus. Sed porttitor. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Suspendisse eu lectus. Ut mi mi, lacinia sit amet, placerat et, mollis vitae, dui. Sed ante tellus, tristique ut, iaculis eu, malesuada ac, dui. Mauris nibh leo, facilisis non, adipiscing quis, ultrices a, dui.

### 6.2.2 Current Waveforms

(...)

Morbi luctus, wisi viverra faucibus pretium, nibh est placerat odio, nec commodo wisi enim eget quam. Quisque libero justo, consectetur a, feugiat vitae, porttitor eu, libero. Suspendisse sed mauris vitae elit sollicitudin malesuada. Maecenas ultricies eros sit amet ante. Ut venenatis velit. Maecenas sed mi eget dui varius euismod. Phasellus aliquet volutpat odio. Vestibulum ante ipsum primis in faucibus orci luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curae; Pellentesque sit amet pede ac sem eleifend consectetur. Nullam elementum, urna vel imperdiet sodales, elit ipsum pharetra ligula, ac pretium ante justo a nulla. Cur-

abitur tristique arcu eu metus. Vestibulum lectus. Proin mauris. Proin eu nunc eu urna hendrerit faucibus. Aliquam auctor, pede consequat laoreet varius, eros tellus scelerisque quam, pellentesque hendrerit ipsum dolor sed augue. Nulla nec lacus.

#### 6.2.3 *Voltage Control Plots*

(...)

Suspendisse vitae elit. Aliquam arcu neque, ornare in, ullamcorper quis, commodo eu, libero. Fusce sagittis erat at erat tristique mollis. Maecenas sapien libero, molestie et, lobortis in, sodales eget, dui. Morbi ultrices rutrum lorem. Nam elementum ullamcorper leo. Morbi dui. Aliquam sagittis. Nunc placerat. Pellentesque tristique sodales est. Maecenas imperdiet lacinia velit. Cras non urna. Morbi eros pede, suscipit ac, varius vel, egestas non, eros. Praesent malesuada, diam id pretium elementum, eros sem dictum tortor, vel consectetur odio sem sed wisi.

#### 6.2.4 *Current Control Plots*

(...)

## CONCLUSION

---

(...)

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut purus elit, vestibulum ut, placerat ac, adipiscing vitae, felis. Curabitur dictum gravida mauris. Nam arcu libero, nonummy eget, consectetur id, vulputate a, magna. Donec vehicula augue eu neque. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris ut leo. Cras viverra metus rhoncus sem. Nulla et lectus vestibulum urna fringilla ultrices. Phasellus eu tellus sit amet tortor gravida placerat. Integer sapien est, iaculis in, pretium quis, viverra ac, nunc. Praesent eget sem vel leo ultrices bibendum. Aenean faucibus. Morbi dolor nulla, malesuada eu, pulvinar at, mollis ac, nulla. Curabitur auctor semper nulla. Donec varius orci eget risus. Duis nibh mi, congue eu, accumsan eleifend, sagittis quis, diam. Duis eget orci sit amet orci dignissim rutrum.

### 7.1 BLA BLA BLA

(...)

Nam dui ligula, fringilla a, euismod sodales, sollicitudin vel, wisi. Morbi auctor lorem non justo. Nam lacus libero, pretium at, lobortis vitae, ultricies et, tellus. Donec aliquet, tortor sed accumsan bibendum, erat ligula aliquet magna, vitae ornare odio metus a mi. Morbi ac orci et nisl hendrerit mollis. Suspendisse ut massa. Cras nec ante. Pellentesque a nulla. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Aliquam tincidunt urna. Nulla ullamcorper vestibulum turpis. Pellentesque cursus luctus mauris.

### 7.2 FUTURE WORK

(...)

Nulla malesuada porttitor diam. Donec felis erat, congue non, volutpat at, tincidunt tristique, libero. Vivamus viverra fermentum felis. Donec nonummy pellentesque ante. Phasellus adipiscing semper elit. Proin fermentum massa ac quam. Sed diam turpis, molestie vitae, placerat a, molestie nec, leo. Maecenas lacinia. Nam ipsum ligula, eleifend at, accumsan nec, suscipit a, ipsum. Morbi blandit ligula



feugiat magna. Nunc eleifend consequat lorem. Sed lacinia nulla vitae enim. Pellentesque tincidunt purus vel magna. Integer non enim. Praesent euismod nunc eu purus. Donec bibendum quam in tellus. Nullam cursus pulvinar lectus. Donec et mi. Nam vulputate metus eu enim. Vestibulum pellentesque felis eu massa.

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APPENDIX EXAMPLE: CODE LISTINGS

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*We have seen that computer programming is an art,  
because it applies accumulated knowledge to the world,  
because it requires skill and ingenuity, and especially  
because it produces objects of beauty.*

— Knuth, “Computer Programming as an Art,” 1974

A.1 THE `listings` PACKAGE TO INCLUDE SOURCE CODE

Source code is usually not part of the text of a thesis, but if it is an original contribution it makes sense to let the code speak by itself instead of describing it. The package `listings` provide the proper layout tools. Refer to its manual if you need to use it, an example is given in listing [A.1](#).

**Listing A.1:** Code snippet with the recursive function to evaluate the pdf of the sum  $Z_N$  of  $N$  random variables equal to  $X$ .

```

1  std::vector<int> values_of_x(number_of_values_of_x,
    min_value_of_x);
3  for (unsigned int i = 1; i < number_of_values_of_x; i++) {
    values_of_x[i] = values_of_x[i - 1] + 1;
5  }
    prob_x = 1.0 / number_of_values_of_x;
7  std::vector<std::vector<double>> > p_z;
    for (unsigned int idx = 0; idx < p_z.size(); idx++) {
9      p_z[idx] = std::vector<double>(
        (max_value_of_x * (idx + 1) - min_value_of_x
11         * (idx + 1)) + 1, INIT_VALUE);
    }
13
    double prob(int Z, int value_of_z) {
15     if (value_of_z < min_value_of_x * Z ||
        value_of_z > max_value_of_x * Z) {
17         return 0.0;
    }
19     if (value_of_z < min_value_of_z ||
        value_of_z > max_value_of_z) {
21         return 0.0;
    }
23     int idx_value_of_z = -(min_value_of_z - value_of_z);
    int idx_N = Z - 1;
25     if (p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z] == -2.0) {
        if (Z > 1) {
27             double pp = 0.0;
            for (unsigned int i = 0; i < number_of_values_of_x; i++) {
29                 pp += prob(Z - 1, value_of_z - values_of_x[i], p);
            }
31             p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z] = prob_x * pp;
        } else {
33             if (Z == 1) {
                for (unsigned int j = 0; j < number_of_values_of_x; j++)
                {
35                     if (value_of_z == values_of_x[j]) {
                        p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z] = prob_x;
37                         break;
                    }
                }
39             }
            if (p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z] == INIT_VALUE) {
41                 p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z] = 0.0;
43             }
        }
45     }
    return p_z[idx_N][idx_value_of_z];
47 }

```