

Dynamically Stable Walking For Humanoid Bipedal Robots Based On Walking Patterns

**Bachelors's Thesis
of**

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1 Introduction

motivation, and a bit of overview of humanoid walking. I recommend to leave it for later, start with the sections that you feel its easier to write (usually, the ones that have more content).

- motivation:
 - navigating in human environments
- walking in humans:
 - CoM movement, gait phases, differences to what we do here
- static vs. dynamic walking
- overview of models used for dynamic walking

2 Models for humanoid walking

2.1 The Linear Inverted Pendulum Model

A simple model for describing the dynamics of a bipedal robot during single support phase is the 3D inverted pendulum. We reduce the body of the robot to a point-mass at the center of mass and replace the support leg by a mass-less telescopic leg which is fixed at a point on the supporting foot. Initially this will yield non-linear equations that will be hard to control. However by constraining the movement of the inverted pendulum to a fixed plane, we can derive a linear dynamic system. This model called the 3D linear inverted pendulum model (short *3D-LIPM*).

Use different name for CoM, p will be rather used for the ZMP, maybe c ?
picture of 3D-LIPM

2.1.1 The inverted pendulum

To describe the dynamics of the inverted pendulum we are mainly interested in the effect a given actuator torque has on the movement of the pendulum.

For simplicity we assume that the base of the pendulum is fixed at the origin of the current cartesian coordinate system. Thus we can describe the position inverted pendulum by a vector $p = (x, y, z)$. We are going to introduce an appropriate (generalized) coordinate system $q = (\theta_R, \theta_P, r)$ to get an easy description of our actuator torques: Let m be the mass of the pendulum and r the length of the telescopic leg. θ_P and θ_R describe the corresponding roll and pitch angles of the pose of the pendulum.

add image with angles here

Now we need to find a mapping between forces in the cartesian coordinate system and the generalized forces (the actuator torques). Let $\Phi : \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3, (\theta_R, \theta_P, r) \mapsto (x, y, z)$ be a function that maps the generalized coordinates to the cartesian coordinates. Then the jacobian $J_\Phi = \frac{\partial p}{\partial q}$ maps the *generalized velocities* to *cartesian velocities*. Furthermore we know that the transpose J_Φ^T maps *cartesian forces* $F = m(\ddot{x}, \ddot{y}, \ddot{z})$ to *generalized forces* (τ_r, τ_p, f) .

We write x , y and z in terms of our generalized coordinates to compute the corresponding jacobian J_Φ . From the fact that the θ_P is the angle between the projection of p onto the xz -plane and p and θ_R the angle between p and the projection onto the yz plane we can derive the following equations :

reference paper

$$\begin{aligned} x &= r \cdot \sin \theta_P & &=: r \cdot s_P \\ y &= -r \cdot \sin \theta_R & &=: -r \cdot s_R \\ z &= \sqrt{r^2 - x^2 - y^2} = r \cdot \sqrt{1 - s_P^2 - s_R^2} \end{aligned} \quad (2.1)$$

From which we can compute the jacobian by partial derivation:

$$J = \frac{\partial p}{\partial q} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & r \cdot c_P & s_P \\ -r \cdot c_R & 0 & s_P \\ \frac{2 \cdot r \cdot s_P c_P}{\sqrt{1 - s_P^2 - s_R^2}} & \frac{2 \cdot r \cdot s_R c_R}{\sqrt{1 - s_P^2 - s_R^2}} & \sqrt{1 - s_P^2 - s_R^2} \end{pmatrix} \quad (2.2)$$

Using the equation of motion as given by

$$\begin{aligned} F &= \\ m \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \ddot{x} \\ \ddot{y} \\ \ddot{z} \end{pmatrix} &= (J^T)^{-1} \begin{pmatrix} \tau_R \\ \tau_P \\ f \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ -m \cdot g \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned} \quad (2.3)$$

and equations 2.2 and 2.1 we can derive the following equations:

$$m(-z\ddot{y} + y\ddot{z}) = \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_R} \cdot \tau_R + mgy \quad (2.4)$$

$$m(z\ddot{x} - x\ddot{z}) = \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_P} \cdot \tau_P + mgx \quad (2.5)$$

Observe that the terms of the left-hand side are not linear. To remove that non-linearity we are going to use the *linear* inverted pendulum model.

2.1.2 Linearization

In a man-made environment it is fair to assume that the ground a robot will walk on can be approximate by a slightly sloped plane. In most cases it can even assumed that there is no slope at all.

The basic assumption in the next section will be that the CoM will have a *constant displacement* with regard to our ground plane. Thus we can constrain the movement of the CoM to a plane that is parallel to the ground plane. Note that this assumption is, depending on the walking speed, only approximately true for human walking as shown by Orendurff et. al. For slow to fast walking (0.7 m/s and 1.6 m/s respectively) the average displacement in z -direction was found to be between 2.7cm and 4.81 cm. While the walking patterns generated based on the LIP-model will guarantee dynamic stability, they might not look natural with regard to human walking.

We are going to constrain the z coordinate of our inverted pendulum to a plane with normal vector $(k_x, k_y, -1)$ and z -displacement z_c :

$$z = k_x \cdot x + k_y \cdot y + z_c \quad (2.6)$$

Subsequently the second derivative of z can be described by:

$$\ddot{z} = k_x \cdot \ddot{x} + k_y \cdot \ddot{y} \quad (2.7)$$

Substituting 2.6 and 2.7 into the equations 2.4 and 2.5 yields the following equations:

$$\ddot{y} = \frac{g}{z_c} y - \frac{k_x}{z_c} (x\ddot{y} - \ddot{x}y) - m z_c \cdot \tau_R \cdot \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_R} \quad (2.8)$$

$$\ddot{x} = \frac{g}{z_c} x + \frac{k_y}{z_c} (x\ddot{y} - \ddot{x}y) + m z_c \cdot \tau_P \cdot \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_P} \quad (2.9)$$

The term $x\ddot{y} - \ddot{x}y$ that is part of both equations is still causing the equations to be non-linear. To make this equations linear we will assume that our ground plane has no slope, thus $k_x = k_y = 0$ and the non-linear terms will vanish.

Another problem is that the actuator torques τ_R and τ_P both have non-linear factors $\frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_R}$ and $\frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_P}$ respectively. This can be solved by substituting with the following *virtual inputs*:

$$\tau_P \cdot \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_P} = u_P \quad (2.10)$$

$$\tau_R \cdot \frac{\sqrt{1-s_P^2-s_R^2}}{c_R} = u_R \quad (2.11)$$

Which yields our final description of the dynamics:

$$\ddot{y} = \frac{g}{z_c} y - \frac{u_R}{m z_c} \quad (2.12)$$

$$\ddot{x} = \frac{g}{z_c} x + \frac{u_R}{m z_c} \quad (2.13)$$

2.2 The Zero Moment Point

A very popular approach to humanoid walking are schemes based on the Zero Moment Point. One reason for that might be that it is very simple to describe constraints for dynamic stability using this reference point. As long as the following condition is met we will have full ground contact of our support foot and thus can realize dynamically stable walking: *The ZMP is strictly inside the support polygon of the support foot.*

For flat ground contact of our support foot with the floor the ZMP corresponds with the position of the center of pressure (CoP). Indeed, some author (notably Pratt) prefer to use the term CoP instead of ZMP.

The CoP of an object in contact with the ground can be computed as the sum of all contact points p_1, \dots, p_n weighted by the forces in z -direction f_{1z}, \dots, f_{nz} that is applied:

$$p := \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N p_i f_{iz}}{\sum_{i=1}^N f_{iz}} \quad (2.14)$$

An important fact (and the origin of its name) is that there are no torques around the x and y axis at the ZMP:

$$\tau = \sum_{i=1}^N (p_i - p) \times f_i \quad (2.15)$$

Splitting that up into each component using the definition of the cross product yields:

$$\tau_x = \sum_{i=1}^N (p_{iy} - p_y) f_{iz} - \overbrace{(p_{iz} - p_z) f_{iy}}^{=0} \quad (2.16)$$

$$\tau_y = \sum_{i=1}^N \overbrace{(p_{iz} - p_z) f_{ix}}^{=0} - (p_{ix} - p_x) f_{iz} \quad (2.17)$$

$$\tau_z = \sum_{i=1}^N (p_{ix} - p_x) f_{iy} - (p_{iy} - p_y) f_{ix} \quad (2.18)$$

Since we have flat ground contact, all contact points have the same z -coordinate as the ZMP, thus we can simplify τ_x and τ_y to:

$$\tau_x = \sum_{i=1}^N (p_{iy} - p_y) f_{iz} = \sum_{i=1}^N (p_{iy} f_{iz}) - \left(\sum_{i=0}^N f_{iz} \right) \cdot p_y \quad (2.19)$$

$$\tau_y = \sum_{i=1}^N -(p_{ix} - p_x) f_{iz} = \sum_{i=1}^N -(p_{ix} f_{iz}) + \left(\sum_{i=0}^N f_{iz} \right) \cdot p_x \quad (2.20)$$

Furthermore we can use the corresponding components p_x and p_y from the definition of the ZMP 2.14 and substitute in the equations 2.19 and 2.20.

This will yield: $\tau_x = \tau_y = 0$.

Please note that τ_z will in general not be zero, nonetheless in case of straight walking it is often assumed to be zero as well.

include pattern generation just based on 3D-LIPM, I don't understand how they derived the controller

2.3 The table-cart model

The table-cart model is equivalent to the 3D-LIPM model discussed before, but somewhat more intuitive for computing the resulting ZMP from an CoM motion. The model consists of an (infinitely) large mass-less table of height z_c , while the foot of the table has the shape of the support polygone. Given a frictionless cart with mass m that moves on the table we can compute the resulting ZMP in the support foot. Please note that the 3D-dimensional model is equivalent to having two independent tables with two carts each in the xz and yz -plane respectively. First of all, lets compute the torque τ_x and τ_y around the x -axis and y -axis at the ZMP on the support foot.

$$\tau_y = \overbrace{-mg(c_x - p_x)}^{\text{torque due to gravity}} + \overbrace{m\ddot{x} \cdot z_c}^{\text{torque due to acceleration of cart}} \quad (2.21)$$

$$\tau_x = -mg(c_y - p_y) + m\ddot{y} \cdot z_c \quad (2.22)$$

Please note the similarity to the equations 2.12 and 2.13 when assuming the base of the pendulum is located at p . If we now use the property of the ZMP that the torque around the x and y -axis is zero, we can solve for the ZMP position p :

$$p_x = c_x - \frac{z_c}{g} \ddot{c}_x \quad (2.23)$$

$$p_y = c_y - \frac{z_c}{g} \ddot{c}_y \quad (2.24)$$

2.4 Simulating rigid body dynamics

Maybe describe the full-body methode to compute the ZMP short introduction how that works and some problems with the approach

3 Pattern generator

To generate a walking pattern for a bipedal robot two basic approaches are common:

1. Generate (or modify) foot trajectories that realize a prescribed trajectory of the CoM
2. Generate a CoM trajectory for prescribed foot trajectories

The first approach is generally used for implementing pattern generators solely based on the 3D-LIPM model.

The second approach is the more versatile one, since it is easy to incorporate constraints of our environment (e.g. only limited foot holds) in the input of the pattern generator. However care must be taken while choosing adequate step width and step length parameters for the foot trajectory, so that they can actually be realized by the robot.

The pattern generator proposed by Kajita et al. based on Preview Control realizes the second approach. We will discuss the theoretical background of this pattern generator here in more detail, since all pattern that we used were generated that way.

citation needed

add citation

3.1 Computing the CoM from a reference ZMP

As we saw in the section 2.3 it is easy to compute the resulting ZMP given the CoM and its acceleration. However for generating the walking pattern, we want to compute the CoM trajectory from a given ZMP. If you rearrange the equations 2.23 and 2.24 you see that we have to solve a second order differential equations:

$$c_x = \frac{z_c}{g} \cdot \ddot{c}_x + p_x \quad (3.1)$$

$$c_y = \frac{z_c}{g} \cdot \ddot{c}_y + p_y \quad (3.2)$$

There are several ways to solve these differential equations, for example by transforming them to the frequency-domain. This however would mean, the ZMP trajectory needs to be transformed to the frequency domain as well, e.g. using Fast Fourier Transformation. This has two main problems:

1. It has a significant computational overhead. (For FFT the additional runtime would be in $O(n \log n)$)
2. We need to know the whole ZMP trajectory in advance.

Instead Kajita et al. chose to define a dynamic system in the time domain that describes the CoM movement.

3.1.1 Pattern generation as dynamic system

For simplicity we will only focus on the dynamic description of one dimension, as the other one is analogous. To transform the equations to a strictly proper dynamical system, we need to determine the state vector of our system. For the table-cart model it suffices to know the position, velocity and acceleration of the cart. Thus the state-vector is defined as $x = (c_x, \dot{c}_x, \ddot{c}_x)$. We can define the evolution of the state vector as follows:

maybe do a formal introduction into dynamic system and the state space approach

$$\frac{d}{dt} \begin{pmatrix} c_x \\ \dot{c}_x \\ \ddot{c}_x \end{pmatrix} = \overbrace{\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}}^{=:A_0} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} c_x \\ \dot{c}_x \\ \ddot{c}_x \end{pmatrix} + \overbrace{\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}}^{=:B_0} u \quad (3.3)$$

As you can see the jerk of the CoM was introduced as an input $u_x = \frac{d}{dt}\ddot{c}_x$ into the dynamic system.

We use equation 2.23 to calculate the actual output of the dynamic system the resulting zmp, that will be controlled:

$$p_x = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & \frac{-z_c}{g} \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} c_x \\ \dot{c}_x \\ \ddot{c}_x \end{pmatrix} \quad (3.4)$$

Using this formulation of the dynamic system we need to derive the evolution of our state vector using the state-transition matrix. Since our input ZMP trajectory will consist of discrete samples at equal time intervals T we define the discrete state as $x[k] := x(k \cdot T)$. Please note that this system is a linear time-invariant system (LTI), and both matrices A_0 and B_0 are constant. We can therefore use the standart approach to solve this system using the equation:

$$x(t) = e^{A_0 \cdot (t-\tau)} x(\tau) + \int_{\tau}^t e^{A_0 \cdot (t-\lambda)} B_0 u(\lambda) d\lambda \quad (3.5)$$

In our discrete case that becomes:

$$x[k+1] = e^{A_0 \cdot ((k+1)T-kT)} x[k] + \int_{kT}^{(k+1)T} e^{A_0 \cdot ((k+1)T-\lambda)} B_0 u(\lambda) d\lambda \quad (3.6)$$

$$= e^{A_0 \cdot T} x[k] + \left(\int_{kT}^{(k+1)T} e^{A_0 \cdot ((k+1)T-\lambda)} d\lambda \right) \cdot B_0 u[k] \quad (3.7)$$

$$= e^{A_0 \cdot T} x[k] + \left(\int_T^0 e^{A_0 \cdot \lambda} d\lambda \right) \cdot B_0 u[k] \quad (3.8)$$

Keep in mind that $u(\lambda) = u[k], \lambda \in (kT, (k+1)T)$ so we can move it outside of the integral. Let us first compute a general solution for the matrix exponential $e^{A_0 \cdot t}$. It is easy to see that A_0 is nilpotent and $A_0^3 = 0$, thus the computation simplifies to the following:

$$e^{A_0 t} := \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \frac{(A_0 \cdot t)^i}{i!} = I + A_0 \cdot t + A_0^2 \cdot \frac{t^2}{2} + 0 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & t & \frac{t^2}{2} \\ 0 & 1 & t \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \quad (3.9)$$

Using this solution computing the integral in 3.6 is quite easy:

$$\int_T^0 e^{A_0 \cdot \lambda} d\lambda = - \int_0^T \begin{pmatrix} 1 & t & \frac{t^2}{2} \\ 0 & 1 & t \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} dt = - \begin{pmatrix} t & \frac{t^2}{2} & \frac{t^3}{6} \\ 0 & t & \frac{t^2}{2} \\ 0 & 0 & t \end{pmatrix} \Big|_0^T = \begin{pmatrix} T & \frac{T^2}{2} & \frac{T^3}{6} \\ 0 & T & \frac{T^2}{2} \\ 0 & 0 & T \end{pmatrix} \quad (3.10)$$

Substituting the results in 3.6 yields:

$$x[k+1] = \overbrace{\begin{pmatrix} T & \frac{T^2}{2} & \frac{T^3}{6} \\ 0 & T & \frac{T^2}{2} \\ 0 & 0 & T \end{pmatrix}}^{=:A} x[k] + \overbrace{\begin{pmatrix} \frac{T^3}{6} \\ \frac{T^2}{2} \\ T \end{pmatrix}}^{=:B} \cdot u_x[k] \quad (3.11)$$

3.1.2 Controlling the dynamic system

To control this dynamic system we need to determine an adequate control input u_x to realize the reference ZMP trajectory. A performance index J_x for a given control input u_x is needed to formalize what a “good” control input would be. A naive performance index could be:

$$J_x[k] := (p_x^{ref}[k] - p_x[k])^2 \quad (3.12)$$

To minimize it, we need to find u_x for which $p_x = p_x^{ref}$. By substituting $p_x[k]$ with 3.4 and $x[k]$ with 3.11 this yields:

$$u_x[k] = \frac{p_x^{ref}[k+1] - C \cdot A \cdot x[k]}{C \cdot B} = \frac{p_x^{ref}[k+1] - (1, T, \frac{1}{2}T^2 - \frac{z_c}{g}) \cdot x[k]}{\frac{1}{6}T^3 - \frac{z_c}{g}T} = \frac{p_x^{ref}[k+1] - p_x[k] - T\dot{c}_x[k] - \frac{1}{2}T^2\ddot{c}_x[k]}{\frac{1}{6}T^3 - \frac{z_c}{g}T} \quad (3.13)$$

To analyse the behaviour of this control law for u_x we simulate the rapid change of reference ZMP when changing the support foot.

As you can see the reference ZMP is perfectly tracked. However, the CoM does not behave as expected. To achieve the required ZMP position the CoM will be *accelerated indefinitely* in the opposite direction. Clearly this is not desired and will lead to falling on a real robot. A more sophisticated performance index is needed. To eventually reach a stable state at which the CoM comes to rest, the performance index should include a state feedback. Also note the large jerk that is applied to the system when the reference ZMP position changes rapidly. In a real mechanical system large jerks will lead to oscillations, which will disturb the system. Thus the performance index should also try to limit the applied jerk.

Another problem is caused by the very nature of a controller: The controller starts to act *after* we have a deviation from our reference ZMP trajectory. Trying to make this lag as small as possible can lead to very high velocities, which might not be realizable by motors of a robot. However we have at least limited knowledge of the future reference trajectory. This knowledge can be leveraged by using Preview Control, which considers the next N timesteps for computing the performance index.

Kajita et. al. use a performance index proposed by Katayama et. al. to solve all of the problems above:

$$J_x[k] = \sum_{i=k}^{\infty} Q_e e[i]^2 + \Delta x[i]^T Q_x \Delta x[i] + R \Delta u_x[i]^2 \quad (3.14)$$

Q_e is the error gain, Q_x a symmetric non-negative definite matrix (typically just a diagonal matrix) to weight the components of $\Delta x[i]$ differently and $R > 0$. Conveniently Katayama also derived an optimal controller for this performance index, which is given by:

$$u[k] = -G_i \sum_{i=0}^k e[i] - G_x x[k] - \sum_{j=1}^N G_p p_x^{ref}[k+j] \quad (3.15)$$

The gains G_i, G_x, G_p , can be derived from the parameters of the performance index. Since the calculation is quite elaborate we refer to the cited article by Katayama p. 680 for more details.

3.2 Implementation

To generate walking patterns based on the ZMP preview control method, the approach from Kajita was implemented in a shared library. A front-end was developed to easily change parameters, visualize and subsequently export the trajectory to the MMM format. The implementation was built on a previous implementation, which was refactored, extended and tuned with respect to results from the dynamics simulation.

insert plot

add citation
katayama

block diagram
of architecture

The pattern generator makes extensive usage of Simoxs VirtualRobot, for providing a model of the robot and the associated task of computing the forward- and inverse kinematics.

Generating a walking pattern consists of multiple steps. First the foot positions are calculated. These are used to derive the reference ZMP trajectory which is feed into the zmp preview controller. From that the CoM trajectory is computed. The CoM trajectory and feet trajectories are then used to compute the inverse kinematics. The resulting joint trajectory is displayed in the visual front-end and can be exported. Each step is contained in dedicated modules that can be easily replaced, if needed. We will outline the implementation of each module seperately.

3.2.1 Generating foot trajectories

To generate the foot trajectories several parameters are needed:

Step height h Maximum distance between the foot sole and the floor

Step length l Distance in anterior direction (y -Axis) between the lift-off point and the touch-down point

Step width w Distance in lateral directoin (x -Axis) between both TCP on the feet

Single support duration t_{ss} Time the weight of the robot is only support by exactly one foot

Dual support duratoin t_{ds} Time the weight of the robot is supported by both feet

Walking straight

Since the foot trajectories of a humanoid walking have a cyclic nature, we only need three different foot trajectories that can be composed to arbitrarily long trajectories: Two transient trajectories for the first and last step respectively and a cyclic motion that can be repeated indefinetly. We can use the same trajectories for both feet, as they are geometrically identical. Each foot trajectory starts with swing phase and a resting phase. The trajectory in y and z direction is computed by a 5th order polynomial that assures the velocities and accelerations are approaching zero at the lift-off and touch-down point. The first and last step only have half of the normal step length, since the trajectory is starting and ending from a dual support stance, where both feet are placed parallel to eachother. Each trajectory is encoded as a $6 \times N$ matrix, each column containing cartesian coordinates and roll, pitch and yaw angles.

Walking on a circle

Much of the general structure of the foot trajectory remains the same as for walking straight. However instead of specifying the step length, it is implicitly given by the segment of the cricle that should be traversed and the number of steps. So extra care needs to be taken to specify enough steps so that the generated foot positions are still. Each foot needs to move on a circle with radius $r_{inner} = r - \frac{w}{2}$ or $r_{outer} = r + \frac{w}{2}$ depending which foot lies in the direction of the turn. The movement in z -direction remains unaffected. However the movement in the xy -plane is transformed to follow the circle for the specific foot. The same polynomial that was previously used for the y -direction is now used to compute the angle on the corresponding circle and the x and y coordinates are calculated accordingly. The foot orientation is computed from the tangential (y -Axis) and normal (x -Axis) of circle the foot follows.

Balancing on one foot

To test push recovery from single support stance a special pattern was needed. To generate this another footstep planer was implemented that generates a trajectory for standing on one foot. Starting from dual support stance, the swing leg is moved in vertical direction until the usual step height is achieved. Additionally the foot is moved in lateral direction to half the step width. This reduces the necessary upper body tilt to compensate the inbalance. For the last step the inverse movement is performed to get back into dual support stance. This methode could be extended to walk by setting the next support foot

table with used
parameters

Current imple-
mentation does
effectively that,
but is actually
a hack. Needs
seperate tra-
jectories for
left/right

in a straight line before the current support foot. The swing foot would need to be moved in an arc in lateral direction to avoid self-collisions.

It is easy to extend this: DO IT.

3.2.2 ZMP reference generation

As an input for the ZMP preview control, we need a reference ZMP movement that corresponds with the foot trajectory. The reference generator receives a list of intervals associated with the desired support stance and foot positions as input. In single support phase, the reference generator places the ZMP in the center of the support polygone of the corresponding foot. Since the support polygone is convex, the center is the point furthest away from the border of the polygone. Thus it should guarantee a maximum of stability with regard to possible ZMP errors. In dual support phase, the reference generator shifts the ZMP from the previous support foot to the next support foot. Kajita et. al. suggest using a polynomial to interpolate the ZMP positions between the feet. However a simple step function $\sigma(t) = \begin{cases} p_1 & t \leq t_0 \\ p_2 & t > t_0 \end{cases}$ seems to suffice as well. Since the touch-down of the swing foot might have a small lag, it is important that t_0 is the middle of the dual support phase. This assures we do not start to move the ZMP too early.

3.2.3 ZMP Preview Control

This module implements the method described by Kajita et. al. and uses the method outlined by Katayama et. al. to compute the optimal control input $u[k]$. Since it is computationally feasible, the preview period consists of the full reference trajectory. For an online usage of this method, this could be reduced to a much smaller sample size. Using the system dynamics described by 3.11 the CoM trajectory, velocity and acceleration can be computed. The implementation makes heavy use of Eigen, a high performance linear algebra framework that uses SIMD instructions to speed up calculations. Thus thus a calculation time of **FIXME: calculation time** could be achieved.

Add timings, implement configurable preview periode

3.2.4 Inverse Kinematics

Using the foot trajectories and CoM trajectory the actual resulting joint angles need to be calculated. Since the kinematic model that is used has a total of **FIXME: DOF** degrees of freedom, we need to reduce the number of joints that are used to a sensible value. For walking only the joints of the legs and both the torso roll and pitch joints are used. All other joints are constrained to static values that will not cause self-collisions (e.g. the arms are slightly extended and do not touch the body). For computing the IK additional constraints were added, to make sure the robot has a sensible pose: The chest should always have an upright position and the pelvis should always be parallel to the floor. To support non-straight walking, the pelvis and chest orientation should also follow the walking direction. Thus the following method to compute the desired chest and pelvis orientation is used:

1. Compute walking direction y' as normed mean of y-Axis of both feet: $y' := \frac{y_{left} + y_{right}}{|y_{left} + y_{right}|}$
2. Both should have an upright position $z' := (0, 0, 1)^T$
3. Compute x' as the normal to both vectors: $x' := y' \times z'$
4. Pose R' is given by $R' = (x', y', z')$

A special property of the model that was used for computing the inverse kinematics, is that TCP of the left leg was chosen as root node. Since we can specify the root position freely, that removes the need of solving for the left foot pose. Thus the following goals need to be satisfied by the inverse kinematics:

1. Chest orientation
2. Pelvis orientation

3. CoM position
4. Right foot pose

To solve the inverse kinematics a hierarchical solver was used to solve for that goals in the given order. It was observed that specifying a good target height for the CoM is of utmost importance for the quality of the IK. Specifying the CoM height too height or too low can lead to the effective loss of degrees of freedom.

3.2.5 Trajectory Export

The trajectory was exported in open MMM trajectory format. The format was extended to export additional information useful for debugging and controlling the generated trajectory. That means besides the joint values and velocities the trajectory also includes the CoM and ZMP trajectory that was used to derive them. Also information about the current support phase is saved. For convenience the pose of chest, pelvis, left and right foot are exported as homogenous matrices as well. This was done to save the additional step of computing them again from the exported joint trajectory for the stabilizer and also reduce an additional error source.

3.3 Dynamic simulation

To evaluate the generated trajectories a simulator for the dynamics was developed. The simulator was build on the SimDynamics framework that is part of Simox. SimDynamics uses Bullet Physics as underlying physics framework. A big part of the work on the simulator was spend on configuring the parameters and finding flaws in the physics simulation. Thus the simulator includes a extensive logging framework that measures all important parameters of the simulation. For visulizing and analysing the measurement the Open Source tools IPython, numpy and pandas where used.

3.3.1 Practical challenges of physics simulation

While walking only the feet of the robot are in contact with the ground. Thus the stability of the whole robots depends on the contact of the feet with the floor. Especially in single support phase that area is very small with regard to the size of the robot. For that reason the accuracy of ground contact forces and friction is of utmost importance for the quality of the simulation. In general three classes of errors need to be eliminated to get a good simulation:

1. Incorrectly configured parameters, such as frictions coefficient and contact thresholds
2. Numerical errors
3. Inherent errors of the methode

As outline in the section about discrete time dynamic simulation, the physics of the system are formulated as input forces and constraints that need to be solved for the constraint forces. Since bullet uses an iterative approach that solves each constraint independently, it is of utmost importance to use a sufficient amount of iterations for each simulation step. Another important parameter is the timestep of each simulation step. Through experimental evaluation a simulation with 2000 solver iterations and a timestep size of 1ms was sufficiently stable. However since the number of iterations is very high and a lot of timesteps are calculated during the simulation, numeric errors become significant. That made it necessary to enable using double precision floating point numbers for the values used during simulation.

To decide which contact constraints are active for which points, Bullet must solve for object collisions. Depending on the objects involved different algorithms are used to calculate the contact points. Major gains in accuracy could be observed by replacing the feet and the floor with simple box shapes, instead using mesh based models.

Maybe a more theoretical explanation?

Maybe doing the FK now would be better and more versatile, since we could feed normal MMM trajectories in the stabilizer

3.3.2 Simulating walking patterns

The simulator was designed to load arbitrary motions in the MMM format and replay them. Additional stabilization algorithms can be applied depending on additional information provided in the MMM motions.

Even during simple playback of a trajectory, the dynamics need to be taken into account. Simply applying the joint values at the given point in time, will lead to large velocity impulses, which will in turn cause large accelerations and jerks. This will cause large oscillations, which in turn result in destabilizing disturbances. Thus interpolation between the joint angles of two frames is needed. This was implemented using cubic splines, that also ensure that the velocity is continuous. Disturbances due to the simulation will cause position errors in the joints. To fix that PID based motor controllers were added to SimDynamics that control the motor velocities to compensate position errors.

Make sure you
can really load
vanilla MMM
trajectories
without crashing

4 Controllers to stabilize a trajectory

Theory Implementation Evaluation

5 Push recovery

Theory Implementation Evaluation

6 Results

Make sure that somewhere, either here or in the evaluation sections, you show how you plotted the desired vs. real zmp, even the phantom robot if you want, and the graphics that you generated.

7 Conclusions

things to improve summary of work done and results

Bibliography