ROCO503 IMU Report

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# Introduction:

This report details solutions to the tasks set out in the “ROCO503 IMU Coursework 2017-18” document.  
Each task is broken down into four sections:

* Problem statement – Outlines the task boundaries and interpretation
* Hypothesis – Provides a theoretical assessment of the problem and the expected results of the task
* Methodology – Details the step-by-step procedures performed to collect the data for analysis
* Results – Assesses the collected data, comparing and contrasting where appropriate

Finally, the report is concluded with a summary of the tasks performed by each team member, and a brief overview of what has been accomplished.

# Task 1: Noise Analysis

## Problem Statement:

* Quantification of noise present within the Phidget 21 Spatial 1044 along all 3 axes for the accelerometer and gyroscope sensors.
* Identification of dominant frequency bands causing aforementioned noise.
* Demonstrate the effects of filtering with respect to dead-reckoned positional data, contrasting against the stationary ground truth.

## Hypothesis:

### Theoretical Assessment:

MEMS accelerometers and MEMS gyroscopes are subject to various sources of error. A non-exhaustive list of such errors being:

* Manufacturing quality, manifesting as systematic errors such as a DC bias; non-uniform scaling between sensors; non-linearity in measurements and susceptibility to other error sources
* Flicker noise, or bias random walk, acting as a low frequency component
* Thermo-mechanical white noise, providing high frequency components
* Temperature & pressure, causing numerous mechanical, geometrical and fluid dynamic properties to change; can be represented as a DC or low frequency offset, and modelled as a polynomial function
* Power supply noise can cause artefacts in the signal across the frequency spectrum; depending on the severity, such as electro-static discharges or power surges, it may also cause damage to the sensor
* The Earth, causing effects such as a DC offset within gyroscope as the Earth’s rotation is measured; scaling issues across large distances due to the non-uniform gravitational pull; additional noise depending on how much cosmic radiation is absorbed by the atmosphere or focussed by the Earth’s magnetic field

The IMU used for these experiments also happens to be a digital IMU, meaning the data has been discretised. This results in two more sources of error, specifically the quantisation error of the signal and the quantisation error of the timestamp for that signal.

### Null Hypotheses:

* Dead-reckoned position and orientation will closely match the ground truth over a period of 2 minutes
* The frequency response for a stationary system will comprise solely of low frequency or DC components within all three axes for both the accelerometer and gyroscope sensors
* Filtering the raw data will provide no significant improvement in system performance

## Methodology:

For each accelerometer axis:

* Align the accelerometer axis with gravity and clamp the IMU to a sturdy table
* Collect data for 2 minutes and 30 seconds and discard the first 30 seconds worth of data using a shielded cable for data transfer

Using the collected data, for each accelerometer and gyroscope axis:

* Apply a low pass filter at 0.1Hz to observe the bias random walk
* Average all of the data to approximate the DC bias
* Generate a standard deviation for all of the data to quantify the spread of the noise
* Perform a Fourier transform and identify any major frequency peaks for filtering
  + Compare filtered data with unfiltered data
* Observe dead-reckoned position, velocity and orientation over time, comparing filtered to unfiltered data

## Results:

# Task 2: Filtering Effects

## Problem Statement:

* Observe differences in dead-reckoned positional data with respect to known motion patterns, specifically:
  + Pendulum motion with known mass and length
  + Vertical motion up and down, aided with a pulley system
  + Z-based motion along a horizontal plane, aided with a smooth table
* Compare and contrast aforementioned positional data for filtered and unfiltered datasets

## Hypothesis:

### Theoretical Assessment:

Task 1 provided insight into how noise filtering affects system reliability for a stationary setup. However, IMU’s are often used for mobile systems, such as within smartphones and other such tracking devices. To begin assessing the efficacy of the filters it is necessary to analyse the system for constrained motions.

Each of the three motions provides a test bed for approximating the direction of gravity. When averaged over a large enough timeframe, all three setups can be modelled as a stationary point. As such, when compared the frequency responses to task one, any additional frequency components will be related to desirable motion to be detected.

### Null Hypotheses:

* For a time period of 2 minutes, averaged gyroscope and accelerometer data will not be similar to the stationary setup
* Dead-reckoned data with filtering will show no significant difference when compared to dead-reckoned data without filtering

## Methodology:

### Pendulum:

The setup in FIGURE XXX is comprised of a single axis rotary joint levelled such that no translational movements occur whilst it is swinging. Additional mass was added such that the pendulum section weighs 500grams. The centre of mass is approximately XXX centimetres below the hinge joint. The system was left to swing until it stopped.

### Vertical Motion Pulley:

The setup in FIGURE XXX is comprised of a single axis translation joint with constrained rotations. A pulley is used to move the system up and down vertically for 2 minutes.

### Z-Shaped Horizontal Movement:

Masking tape was used to outline the Z-shape to be moved over. The IMU was, whilst secured to solid cuboidal object, translated by hand over the masking tape for 2 minutes.

### Data Collection & Analysis:

For all three setups described above, and for each accelerometer axis:

* Align the selected accelerometer axis with gravity whilst securing the IMU to the setup appropriately
* Connect a flexible, shielded cable between the IMU and computer; the flexibility is used to limit any adverse effects caused to the system model by the cable
* Calibrate the IMU before running the experiment and collecting data

For all of the data collected along each axis:

* Average all of the data to determine expected orientation and compare DC bias offset terms
* Perform a Fourier transform and identify any major frequency peaks for filtering
  + Compare filtered data with unfiltered data
* Observe dead-reckoned position, velocity and orientation over time, comparing filtered to unfiltered data

## Results:

# Task 3: Comparison with Ground Truth Data

## Problem Statement:

* Perform Task 2 measurements again whilst capturing ground truth data
* Compare and contrast dead-reckoned positional data for filtered and ground-truth datasets

## Hypothesis:

### Theoretical Assessment:

Task 2 provided an assessment of the noise characteristics within a moving system, and a comparison of the effects filtering has on the dead-reckoned data. However, it is difficult to properly assess that data without also having a ground-truth to compare against. From this it is possible to determine the rate of change of system error over time.

### Null Hypotheses:

* The system error for the dead reckoned data is negligible
* The system error will either stay the same or decrease over time

## Methodology:

For each of the setups described in task 2, a coloured marker was added at an appropriate location. The experiments should then be repeated and filmed, using a camera with a fast shutter speed to reduce motion blur. This camera feed should then be used in an object tracking software package, providing a ground-truth measurement of the actual motion of the IMU.

Camera-based positions to IMU-based positions should then be synchronised, and the camera-based data interpolated appropriately. A comparison between camera and IMU based positions should then be made, and a measure of error over time established.

## Results:

# Task 4: Complementary Filter

## Problem Statement:

* Implement a complimentary filter as set out in the coursework specification document
* Perform Task 3 measurements again with application of the complementary filter
* Compare and contrast dead-reckoned positional data for filtered; complementary filtered and ground-truth datasets

## Hypothesis:

### Theoretical Assessment:

It is well known that gyroscopes suffer from significant bias drift, or angle random walk, over time. These artefacts are typically low frequency, however. Accelerometers on the other hand are very sensitive to sudden movements, whilst being under the constant influence of gravity. Both sensor sets can also provide a measure of the IMU’s orientation, with the notable exception of rotations about the z-axis (yaw) for the accelerometer datum.

Thus, a sensor fusion between the low-frequency components of the accelerometers measure, and high frequency components of the gyroscopes measure, can provide an overall more accurate representation of the IMU’s orientation. This allows for an improved separation of the gravity component and, hence, improved system performance.

### Null Hypothesis:

* The complementary filter will show no significant improvement in the system error or its rate of change

## Methodology:

The experiments of task 3 should be repeated once more, with application of a complimentary filter to the filtered data. Comparisons between the ground truth, filtered and complementary filtered data should then be assessed.

## Results:

# Task 5: Extended Assessments

## Problem Statement:

* Assess the performance of the system for dead-reckoning the position of the IMU in real time:
  + In 3D space, aka not limited to axial or planar movements
  + Over larger distances
  + Under variable IMU orientation
* Assess efficacy of alternative complementary filter setups

## Hypothesis:

### Theoretical Assessment:

The previous tasks have honed in towards an optimal system setup for dead reckoning with the IMU. However, previous experiments have been limited to point, axial or planar motion, over a limited range of translations and orientations. To more fully test the capabilities of the system experiments over larger distances, varying orientations and compounded motions in 3D space.

### Null Hypotheses:

* The system will not be able to reliably dead-reckon under varying orientations for any extended period of time
* The system will not be able to reliably dead-reckon over large distances for any extended period of time
* The system will not be able to reliably dead-reckon in a volumetric, 3D space for any extended period of time

## Methodology:

### Large Distance Movements:

The tiles within the Smeaton 303 lab are precisely 0.5x0.5 metres in size. Using these as an accurate measure of distance, the IMU should be secured to a mobile platform and moved over a pre-set path. This path should include translations in two axes and rotations around the Z-axis.

### 3D Volumetric Movements:

Four points organised such that they represent corners of a triangular-based pyramid, as shown in FIGURE XXX, are set up. The IMU is moved from point to point, stopping for 3 seconds at each location, in a repetitive motion.

### Varying Orientation:

The pendulum setup is repurposed to provide two points on the surface of a cylinder with which the IMU can be translated between repetitively. At each point the IMU is left for 3 seconds before being moved again. This should be performed for various starting orientations of the IMU.

### Data Collection & Analysis:

For all three setups described above:

* Align a selected accelerometer axis with gravity whilst securing the IMU appropriately
* Connect a flexible, shielded cable between the IMU and computer
* Calibrate the IMU before running the experiment and collecting data

For all of the data collected:

* Known positions / paths should be plotted
* IMU-based positions should be plotted for the complementary filtered data to assess performance over each of the setups

## Results:

# Conclusion: