Inverted Pendulum Project

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Base Model

The base model for Rocky is an inverted pendulum. It is approximated to a long rod of an effective length l_{eff}. Also, it has two wheels and an axle at the bottom, which are connected to a motor. The motor is controlled by a control system, which takes in the angle (displacement) of the system and outputs a rotational force on the axle, preferably one that helps the inverted pendulum stabilize itself.

We have two main measures for determining the success of our control system.

1. Rocky should not fall if given a disturbance of 30° or less. This disturbance would have a magnitude of $< 30°$ degrees and last about 0.1 seconds. We believe this is an achievable goal and should protect Rocky from most common disturbances in the environment.
2. Rocky should stabilize to an oscillation no greater than 1° 2 seconds after a disturbance. This would prove that Rocky can effectively reach a steady state in a short period of time.

Parameter Specifications

Gyroscope Test

A gyroscope test was conducted to determine some physical characteristics of the rocky system. The "Rocky" was hung from its top and swung as a (non-inverted) pendulum to observe its oscillation frequency and effective length.

Natural Frequency

A standard pendulum oscillates with a natural frequency of $\sqrt{\frac{g}{l}}$, where g is acceleration due to gravity and l is the length of the pendulum. Our team determined the period of oscillation of Rocky as if it were a standard pendulum by observing how much time elapsed between each oscillation, represented by the elapsed time from the local maxima on a graph of angle versus time.

The value of ω_n, or natural frequency, is the mean of the elapsed times between each peak, or 4.4142 rad/s

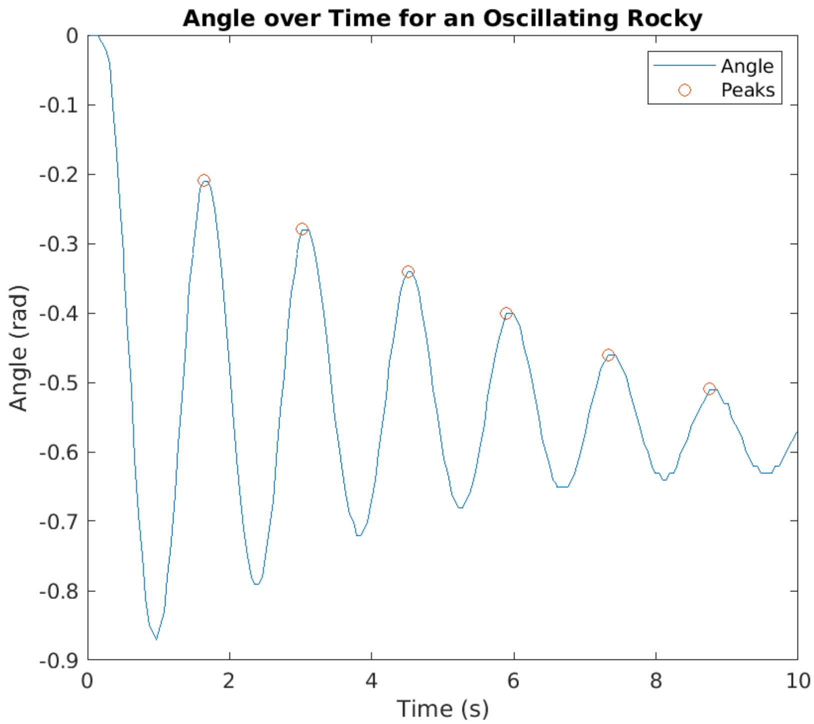

Figure 1: Angle over Time for an Oscillating Rocky

This is the natural frequency at which Rocky oscillates as a normal pendulum.

Effective Length

Now that we have the natural frequency of the pendulum, the length can be calculated using $\omega_n = \sqrt{\frac{g}{l_{eff}}}$. Since we know $\omega_n = 4.4142$ rad/s, simplifying the equation reveals that $l_{eff} = 0.5035$ m, which is almost 20"

Motor Test

The motor test is designed to determine the characteristics of the motor and inverted pendulum system. This specific test is a step response for Rocky comparing an input motor signal to the output velocity. The characteristics of this motion help determine the motor gain K and time constant τ.

Motor Gain

The motor's gain is the ratio of an input motor signal to an output velocity response. In this test, the input signal has a magnitude of 200 and we must solve for the steady state response.

The input signal is constant, and similar to charging a capacitor, the velocity over time exponentially approaches the steady state response as shown: $v(t) = -200K(1 - e^{-t/\tau})$. Note that since K is the ratio of the output and input signals, the input signal multiplied by K is the magnitude of the output signal, or velocity. An exponential fit in this form determines the velocity as a function of time to be about $-200 \cdot (0.0017) \cdot (1 - e^{-\frac{t}{0.0611}})$, shown in Figure 2.

This means that the magnitude of the gain, K is about 0.0017.

Time Constant

Using the same data as above, we can determine how fast the inverted pendulum approaches the steady state by extracting τ from the line of best fit. In this case, $\tau = 0.0611$ s.

PI Control

To control the feedback loop, we implemented a proportional integral controller. To find the two gain values, we first chose the desired poles of our system. The four chosen poles were $-1 \pm \omega_n i$ and two poles at $-\omega_n$. The first two poles were chosen to quickly damp oscillations at the robot's natural frequency, which is a frequency likely to be present. The second poles were chosen to have the robot damp all oscillations more quickly while letting the first two dominate the response.

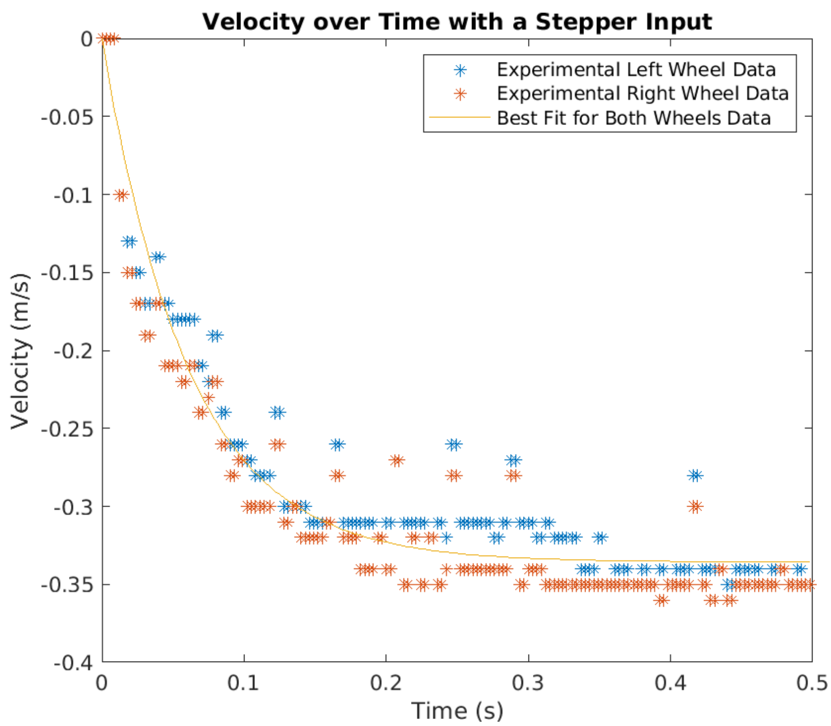

Figure 2: Velocity over Time with a Stepper Input

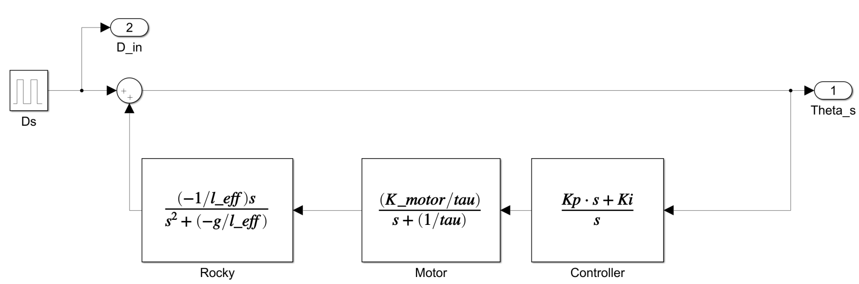

Figure 3: Base System Diagram

Enhanced Model

For our enhanced model, we decided to control the rotation of the robot by controlling its desired angle. We wanted the robot to oscillate back and forth without losing its ability to remain upright. For our oscillations, we chose a formula of $\theta_d = 0.1 \sin(2\pi \cdot t) \sin(20 \cdot 2\pi \cdot t)$, although any reasonably sized input could be used. To ensure the robot would not lose any stability, we implemented a switch to set the desired angle to zero if the measured angle of the robot was larger than 0.25 rad. This allows the robot to only do the desired oscillations when it's approximately upright.

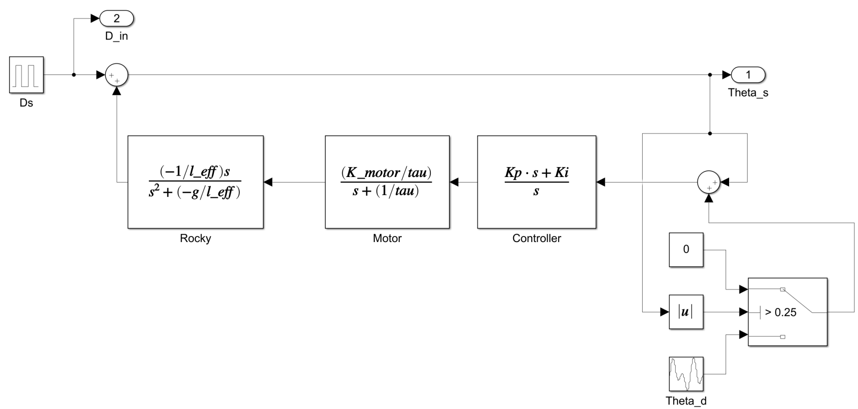

Figure 4: Enhanced System Diagram