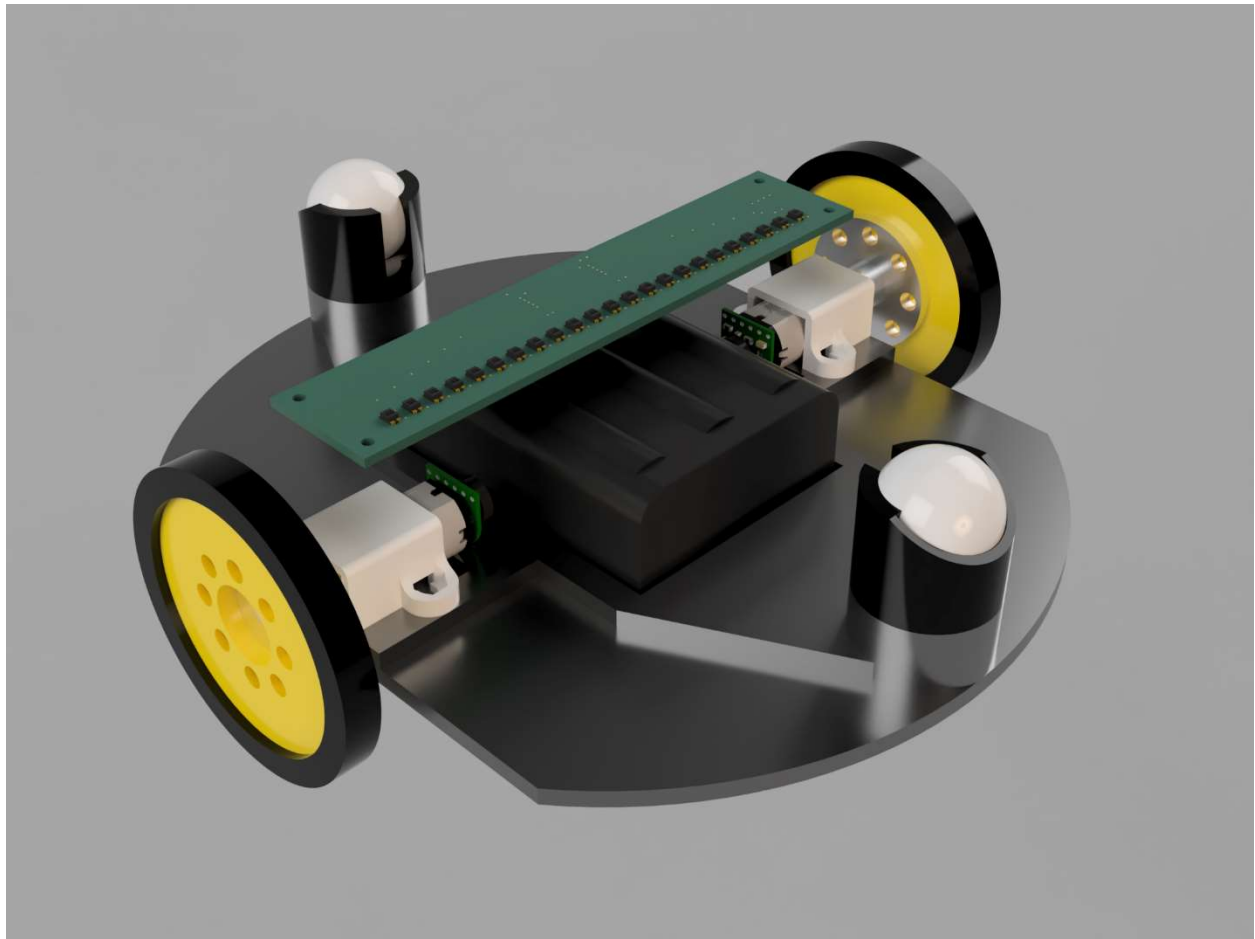


## Line sensor

### 1. Overview

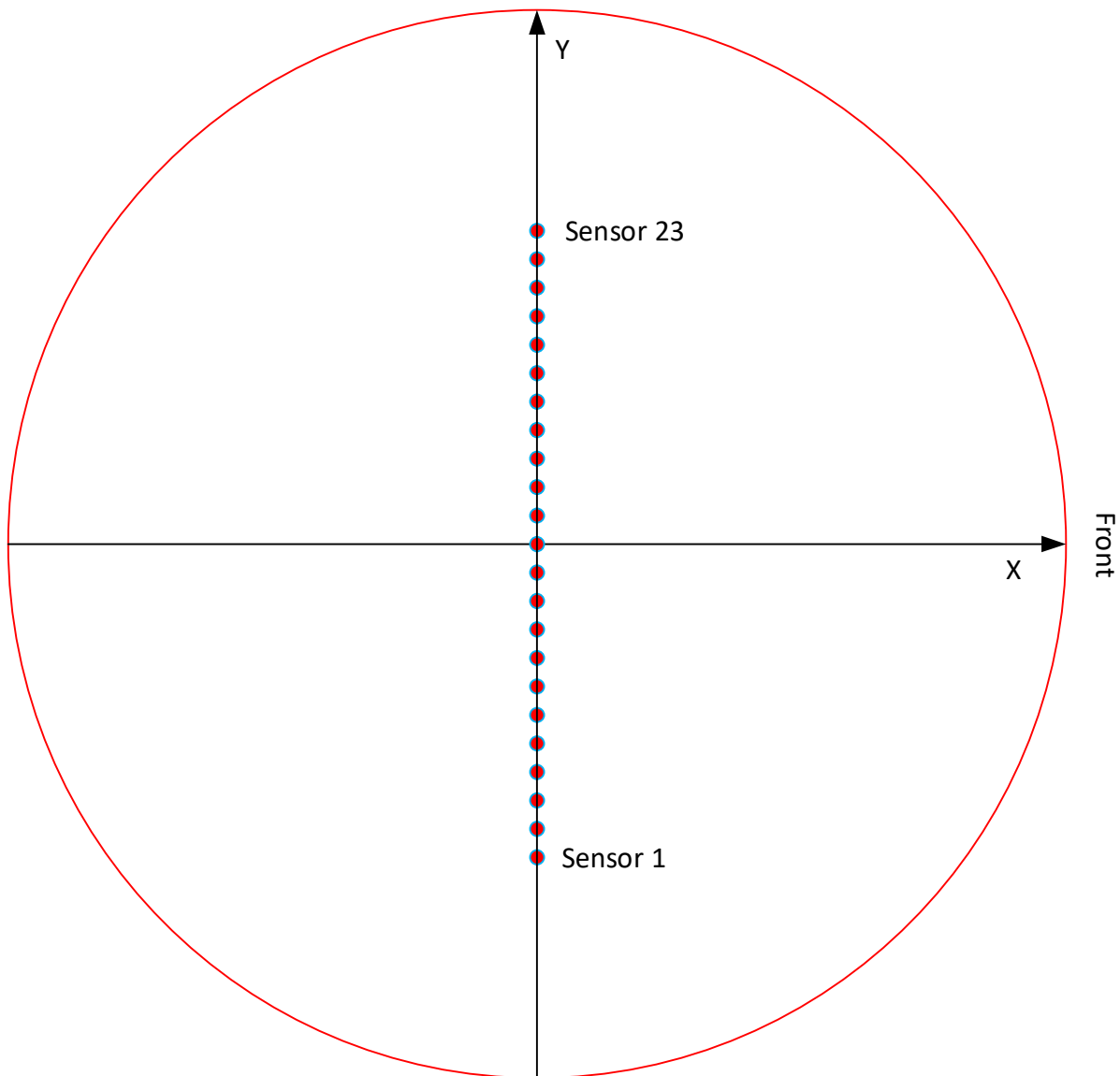
For the Mazebot to escape the maze it needs to be able to follow the line and determine maze features, like line intersection types. These two goals are fulfilled by the line sensor. It is located at the bottom of the robot and is placed only a couple of millimeters away from the floor / surface (see Figure 1) to avoid interference from other infrared sources which can be present in a competition environment (this is out of our control).



*Figure 1 Line sensor placement (bottom side of the robot). Sensor is in green.*

## 2. High level design

All line sensor receivers are located on robot's y-axis (for all sensors, x coordinate is equal to 0) and have 4 mm spacing between them. Sensor 11 has coordinates in robot frame of (0, 0), sensor 1 has coordinates of (0, -0.044 m), sensor 23 has coordinates of (0, 0.044 m). See Figure 2 for more information.



*Figure 2 Robot coordinate frame and sensors placement.*

Line sensor is designed with 23 units which allows deviation of +/- of 0.044 meters from the line robot is following. This allows robot to have more aggressive control system design to bring robot back to the line and allows for more aggressive turning. One more reason why number 23 was chosen is that MCU has 25 ADCs (plus FPU and a decent performance).

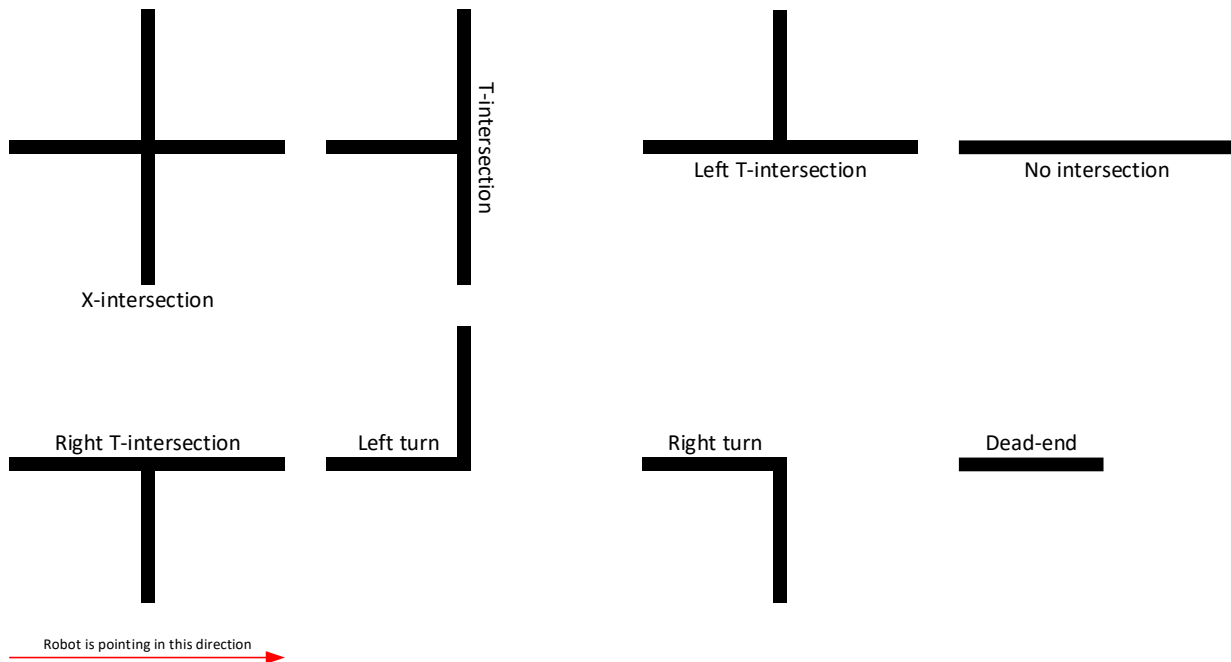


Figure 3 Intersection types

When robot is moving along the line and meets an intersection, it must cross intersection completely before it can determine the type of an intersection (see Figure 3) and decide what to do next. If robot chooses to continue moving straight ahead all it needs to do is to continue following the line. If robot chooses to make a left / right turn or to execute a U-turn then things get more complicated. At this point we already crossed the intersection and we are still moving at top speed along the line. To execute the turn and not to lose track of the line robot has to make a sharp 90- or 180-degree turn (see Figure 4 for depiction of ideal world turn) which is hard as we have to overcome inertia of moving forward. Experiments shows that robot overshoots intersection by approximately 0.015-0.03 meters while moving at top speed (see Figure 5).

After executing the turn (which won't be exactly 90 or 180 degrees even though we use gyroscope) robot will be offset from the line in "y" direction by some amount, and this is where we can use extra sensors, as even if robot is 0.03 meters away from the line we still have some leeway to bring it back (sensors allow +/- 0.044 meters displacement). In general, the following factors contribute to the amount of overshoot:

- Sensors have lag of detecting change in reflected light
- ADC hardware will take some time to read changed sensor value
- MCU has to receive values from ADC
- Robot brain code running on MCU, runs at some frequency (1.6kHz in our case) and will take some time to process the information and issue commands to motors
- Motors will take some time to slow down (due to inertia, etc.)
- But the most important factor here is robot inertia. Robot will slide forward a bit (around 10-30mm) before it loses all the kinetic energy in that direction.

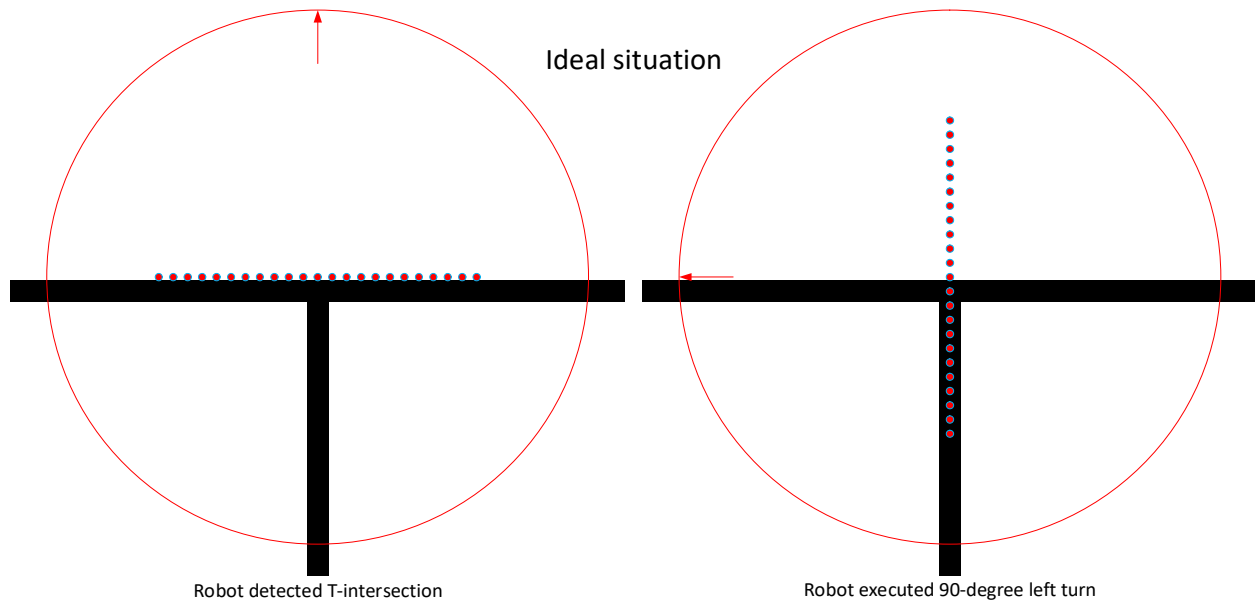


Figure 4 Robot turn in an ideal world

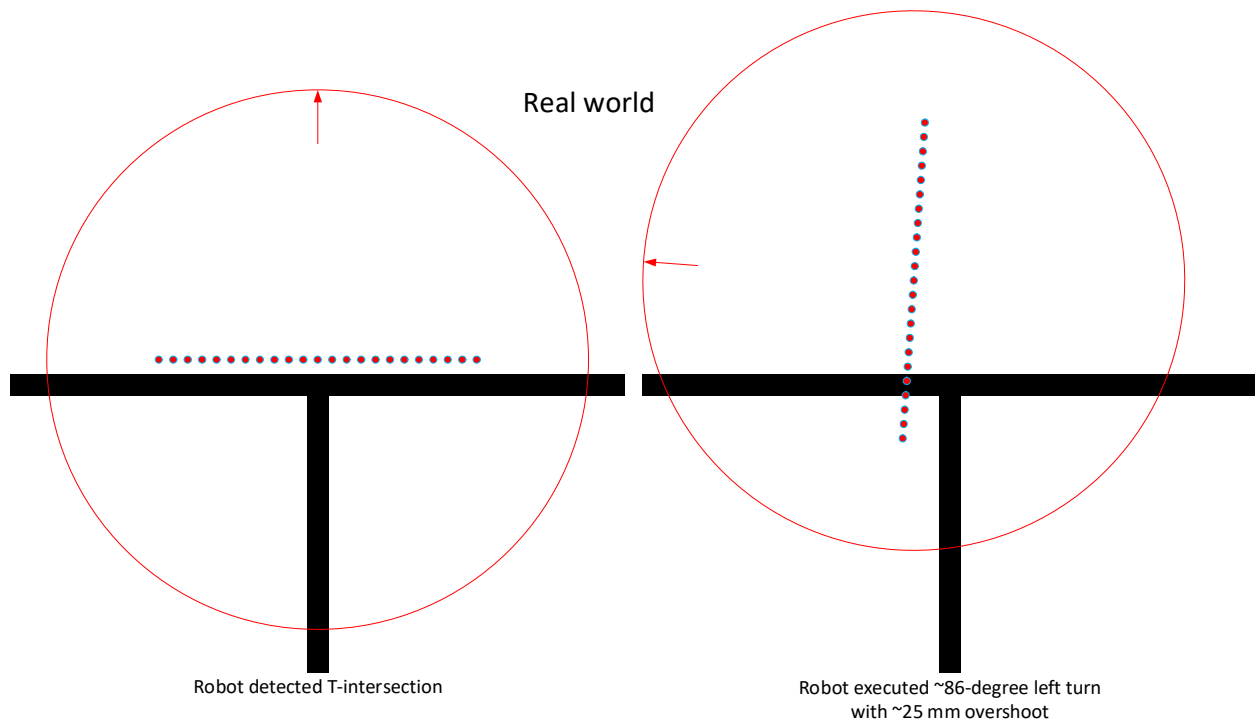


Figure 5 Robot turn in real world

### 3. Line sensor model

For now, we are going to talk about single line sensor unit let's say sensor 11 (one pair of infrared emitter and detector), and we are going to call it a sensor unit. Sensor unit can cross line in 2 directions "y" and "x". As always positive "x" axis points in the direction of robot movement, positive "y" axis

points left. As robot moves along the line and only encounters perpendicular lines once it comes across the intersection, we are going to simplify our model and handle only “y” displacement of the sensor unit.

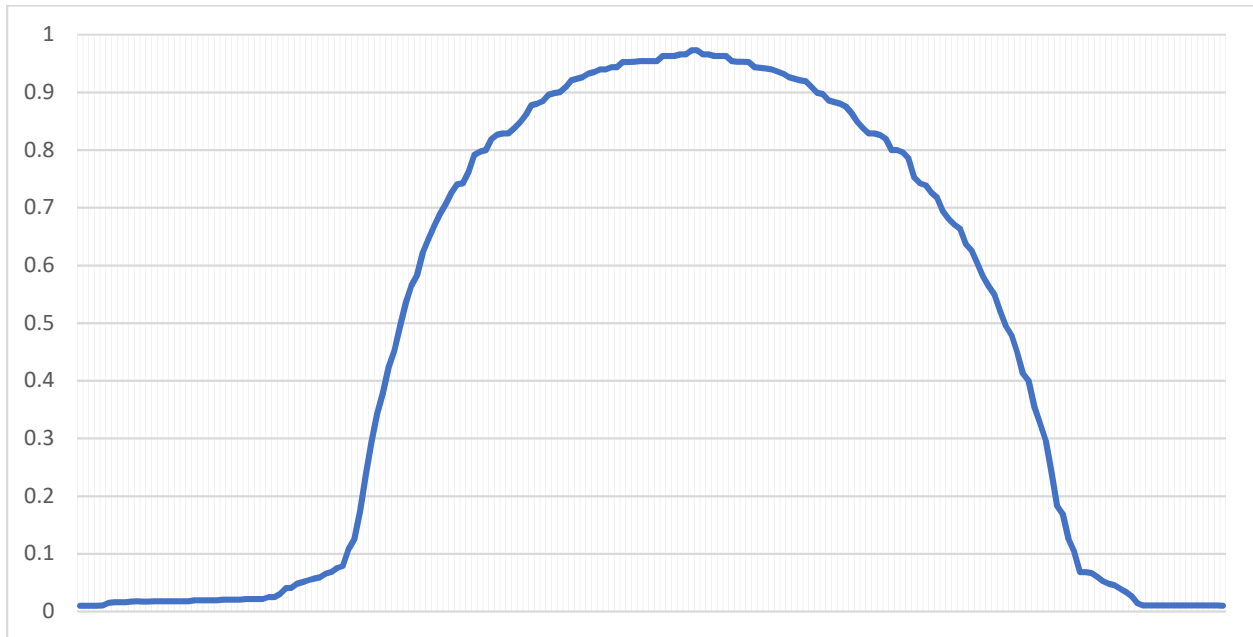


Figure 6 Sensor output when crossing the line (non-canted sensor placement)

Figure 6 shows sensor unit reading you are going to get if you position robot parallel to the line and then move robot across this line from left to right. As you can see reading looks approximately as a parabola, it is a bit skewed which is the result of emitter and detector not being on the same axis but being slightly displaced vertically (0.52 mm, see Figure 7). In “x” direction model looks similar but even more skewed as emitter and detector are displaced even more along x axis (1.4 mm).

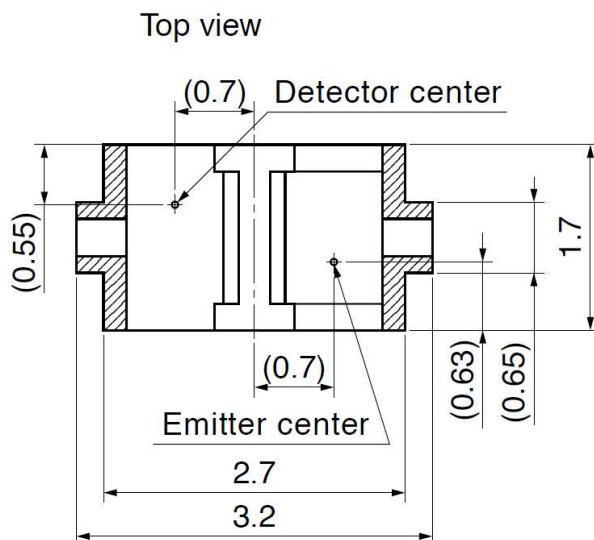


Figure 7 Sensor unit top view (this is from Sharp GP2S60 specification).

All sensors will be modeled using the following formula:

$$\text{sensor\_value}(y) = a_n * y^2 + b_n * y + c_n$$

Where  $a_n$ ,  $b_n$ ,  $c_n$  are sensor unit specific coefficients. In this section we are going to assume that  $\text{sensor\_value}$  is normalized to  $[0...1]$  and is filtered to remove noise. Filter design and value clamping will be discussed later.

We will use Figure 8 in the upcoming discussion of the model. Sensor unit model has 2 regions. First one is blue region where we have values from 2 sensor units. In this region it is easy to pick a correct  $y$  value. If  $N-1$  sensor unit value isn't zero then we use smaller value, if  $N+1$  sensor unit value isn't zero we use larger value. We will handle cases where both neighbor sensor units have non-zero values later.

Second grey region is when we only have non-zero value from one sensor unit in this case there is no way to decide which  $y$  value to pick and we will simply use sensor unit center “ $y$ ” position. Grey region can be reduced or even eliminated if we decrease distance between sensor units, but it will either reduce deviation or we will need more sensor units if we want to keep the same deviation value.

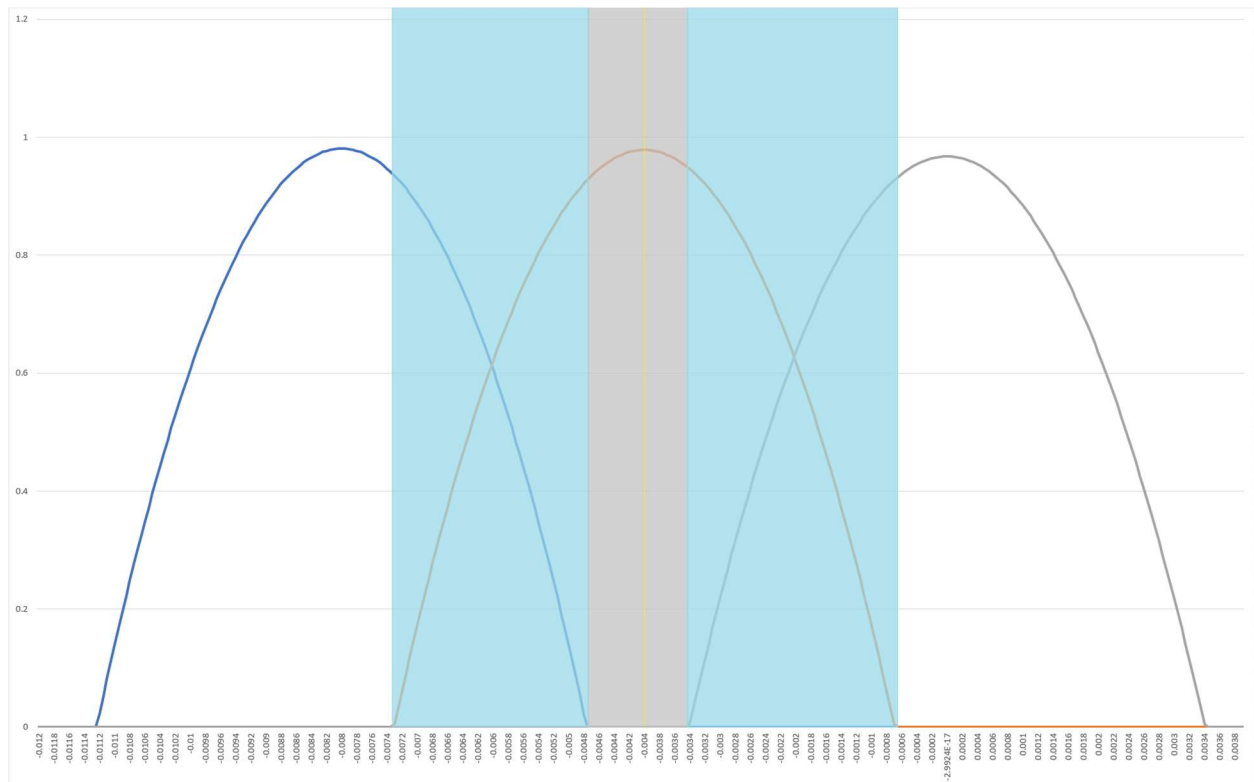


Figure 8 Sensor unit model (with neighboring sensor units included)

Now for the case where more than 2 sensors have non-zero values. In the following discussion group is one or more sensor units where all units in the group have non-zero values. There are 4 possible cases here (also see Figure 9).

- Case 1. All sensor units with non-zero values form a group in the middle
- Case 2. All sensor units with non-zero values form a group on the left
- Case 3. All sensor units with non-zero values form a group on the right

- Case 4. All sensor units with non-zero values form multiple groups

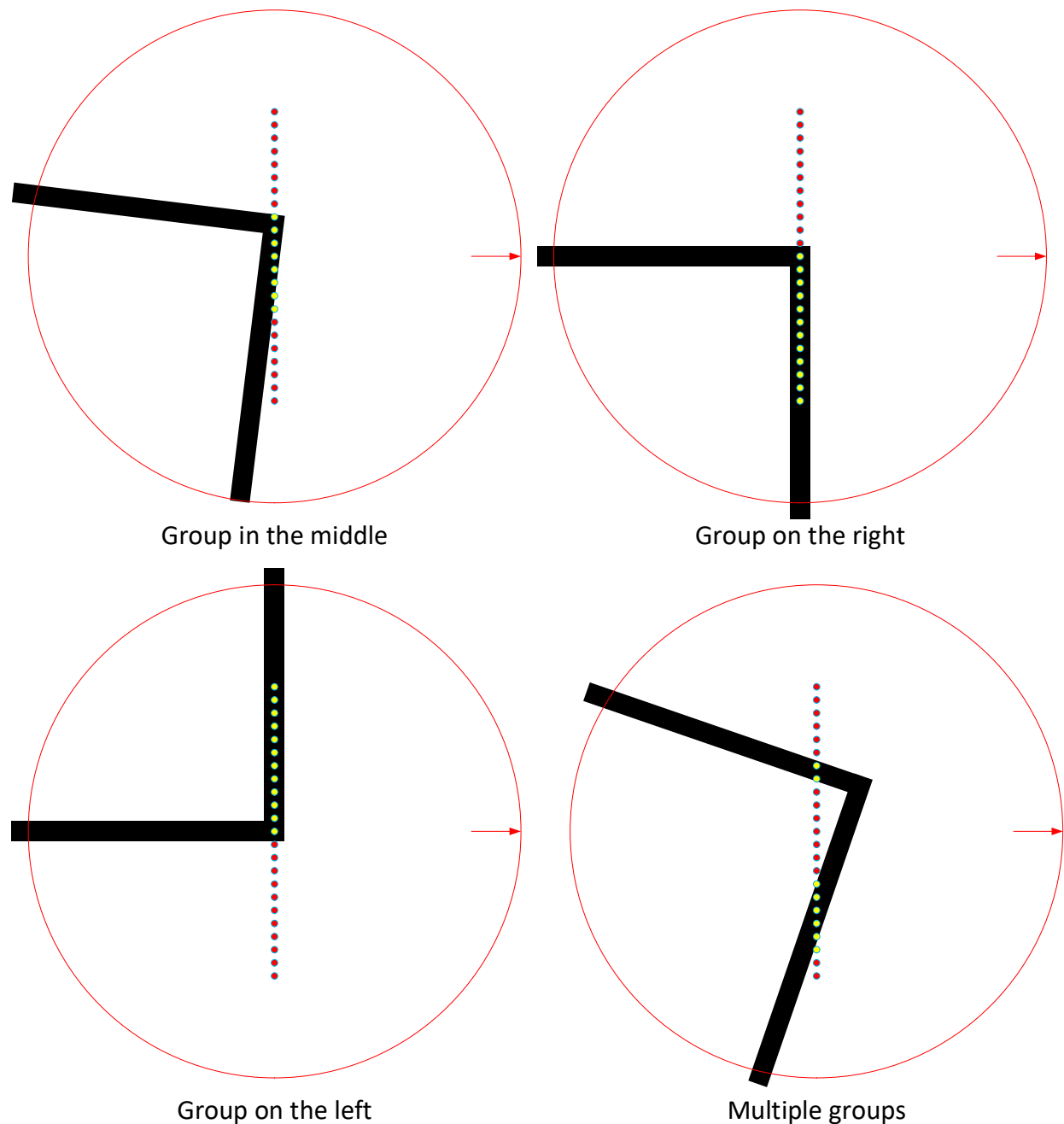


Figure 9 Cases with more than two sensor units having non-zero values

At the start of the run we know where robot is, and it is easy to figure out the “y” position of the group. For all future cases we need to figure out min and max y coordinate for each group. To do this we can use left and right sensor units in the group and use algorithm described above (for  $\leq 2$  non-zero sensor units). After this we can calculate probability of robot being in all those ranges given previous “y” position, yaw angle, odometry data, and gyroscope data. See Kalman filtering chapter for detailed design of the algorithm used for robot position and orientation estimation.

Figure 10 shows “y” position calculation (no Kalman filtering) using the model described above when robot is moving at a slight angle to the line and crosses it from left to right. Horizontal sections are places where we couldn’t figure out which value of “y” to use as only 1 sensor has non-zero value.

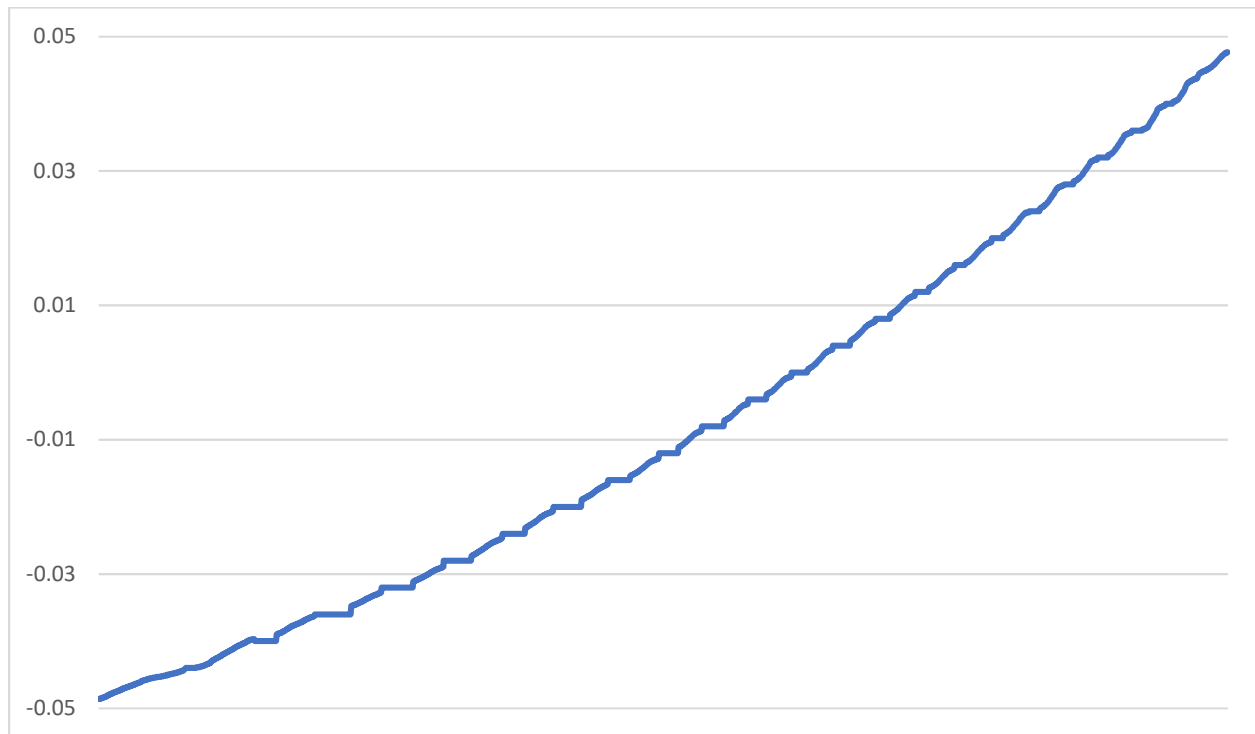


Figure 10 Robot position estimation using sensor model

#### 4. Intersection type detection

TODO

#### 5. ADC data filter design

TODO

#### 6. Calibration

TODO

#### 7. Model parameters calculation

TODO

#### 8. Hardware & schematic

Figure 11 shows schematic for the sensor unit. It is based on schematics from <http://www.pololu.com> (lots of awesome boards which can be used in robot building and prototyping) and from the book Practical Electronics for Inventors by Paul Scherz and, Simon Monk.

Resistor values were chosen so black is close to 3.3V as well as to reduce power consumption. As sensor is very close to the sensed object, we don't need a lot of infrared light from the emitter, in fact having



too much light causes whiteout and difference in voltage between black and white gets smaller. This can be observed on first and last sensor units, both are only lit from one side (they only have one neighbor) and difference in voltage between black and white for those sensor units is higher compared to any other units.

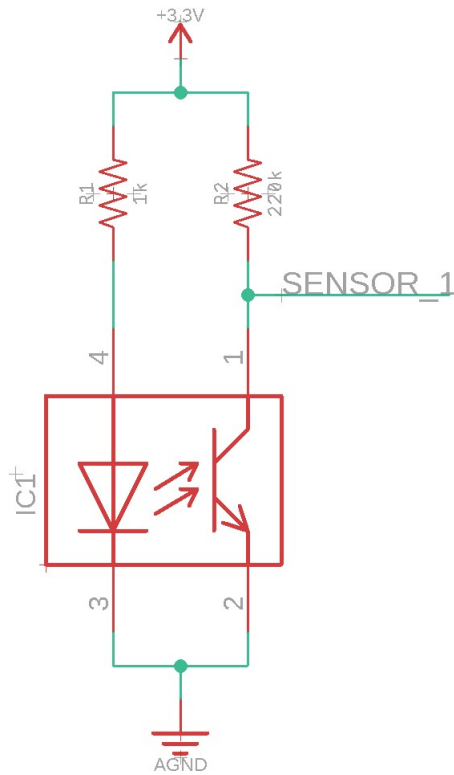


Figure 11 Sensor unit schematic