

ACTUATOR FAULT-TOLERANT CONTROL DESIGN BASED ON RECONFIGURABLE REFERENCE INPUT

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Abstract. The prospective work reported in this paper explores a new approach in order to enhance the performance of an Active Fault Tolerant Control System. This proposed technique is based on a modified recovery/trajectory control system which considered a reconfigurable reference input when performance degradation occurs on system due to faults in actuators dynamics. The added value of this work is to reduce the energy spent to achieve desired closed-loop performance. The feasibility of this work is illustrated using a three-tank system for slowly varying reference inputs corrupted by actuators faults.

Keywords. Fault tolerant control (FTC), Actuator fault accommodation, Reconfigurable reference input.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sensor or actuator failures, equipment fouling, feedstock variations, product changes and seasonal influences may affect controller performance and as many as 60% of industrial control problem (Harris *et al.*, 1999). The objective of Fault Tolerant Control System (FTCS) is to maintain current performances close to the desirable performances and preserve stability conditions in the presence of component and/or instrument faults; in some circumstances reduced performance could be accepted as a trade-off (Zhang and Jiang, 2003a).

In fact, many FTC methods have been recently developed (Patton, 1997), (Noura *et al.*, 2000), (Blanke *et al.*, 2003). Almost all the methods can be categorized into two groups (Zhang and Jiang, 2003b): passive and active approaches. Passive FTC deals with a presumed set of system component failures based on the actuator redundancy

at the controller design stage. The resulting controller usually has fixed structure and parameters. However, the main drawback of a passive FTCS is that as the number of potential failures and the degree of system redundancy increase, controller design could become very complex, and the performance of the resulting controller (if exists) could become significantly conservative. Moreover, if an unanticipated failure occurs, passive FTC cannot ensure system stability and cannot reach again nominal performance of the system. Controllers switching underlines the fact that many faulty system representations had to be identified so as to synthesize off-line pre-computed and stabilized controllers. These requirements are sometimes difficult to obtain and it is restrictive.

Active FTCS is characterized by an on-line FDI process and control reconfiguration mechanism. According to the FDI module, a control reconfiguration mechanism is designed in order to take into account the possibility of fault occurrence (Theilliol *et al.*, 2002). Advanced and sophisticated controllers have been developed with fault accommodation and tolerance capabilities, in order to meet pre-fault reliability and performance requirements as proposed by (Gao and Antsaklis, 1991) (Jiang, 1994) for model matching approaches or by (Gao and Antsaklis, 1992) to track trajectory but also with degraded ones as suggested by (Jiang and Zhang, 2006). Moreover, the importance of improving the system behaviour during the fault accommodation delay has been, recently, considered by (Staroswiecki *et al.*, 2007) in order to reduce the loss of performance. This paper addresses a new approach in order to increase the performance of an Active Fault Tolerant Control System. This novel technique consists on taking into account a modified recovery/trajectory control system when performance degradation occurs on system due to faults in actuators dynamics. The developed method preserves the system performance through an appropriate reconfigurable reference in order to preserve the output dynamic properties and to limit the energy of control inputs as well.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 recalls the actuator fault representation and the controller synthesis for LTI system. Section 3 is devoted both to remind a classical fault tolerant controller considered in this paper and to define the novel reconfigurable reference input technique. A simulation example of a well-know three-tank system with slowly varying reference inputs subject to actuators faults has been used, in Section 4, to illustrate the effectiveness and performance of active fault tolerant control system. Conclusions and further work are discussed in Section 5.

2. Basic Concept

2.1. Control system synthesis

Consider the discrete linear system given by the following state space representation:

$$\begin{cases} x_{k+1} &= Ax_k + Bu_k \\ y_k &= C_r x_k \\ w_k &= Cx_k \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where $A \in R^{n \times n}$, $B \in R^{n \times p}$, $C \in R^{m \times n}$ and $C_r \in R^{h \times n}$ are the state, the control, the output and tracking output matrices, respectively. $x \in R^n$ is the state vector, $u \in R^p$ is the control input vector, $w \in R^m$ corresponds to the measured output vector and $y \in R^h$ represents the system outputs that will track the reference inputs $r \in R^h$. It can notice that, in order to maintain controllability, the number of outputs h that can track a reference input vector r , cannot exceed the number of control inputs $p \geq h$.

The study considered in this paper is suitable, not only in regulation, but also in the tracking control problem. The eigenstructure assignment (EA) or the linear quadratic regulators (LQR) are among the most popular controller design techniques for multi-input and multi-output systems. Since the feedback control, $-K_{feedback}^{nom} x_k$ can only guarantee the stability and the dynamic behaviour of the closed loop system, a complementary controller is required to cause the output vector y to track the reference input vector r in the sense that the steady state response is:

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} y = r \quad (2)$$

To achieve steady-state tracking of the reference input, different techniques have developed. Among them, a feedforward control law based on a command generator tracker (Zhang and Jiang, 2002) can be considered such as:

$$u_k^{nom} = -K_{forward}^{nom} r_k - K_{feedback}^{nom} x_k \quad (3)$$

where the feedforward gain $K_{forward}^{nom}$ is synthesized based on the closed-loop model-following principle.

As proposed by (D'Azzo and Houpis, 1995), another solution to track the reference input consists of adding a vector comparator and integrator ($z^{nom} \in R^h$) that satisfies:

$$\begin{aligned} z_{k+1}^{nom} &= z_k^{nom} + T_s (r_k - y_k) \\ &= z_k^{nom} + T_s (r_k - C_r x_k) \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

Therefore, the state feedback control law is computed by:

$$u_k^{nom} = -K_{forward}^{nom} z_k^{nom} - K_{feedback}^{nom} x_k \quad (5)$$

where the feedforward gain $K_{forward}^{nom}$ (different from (3)) is synthesized based on an augmented state space representation with a desired behaviour of a plant in closed loop.

In the following, matrix C is assumed to be equal to an identity matrix: the outputs are the state variables. However, the control law could be computed using the estimated state variables.

2.2. Actuator fault model

In most conventional control systems, controllers are designed for fault-free systems without taking into account the possibility of fault occurrence. Let us recall the faulty representation.

Due to abnormal operation or material aging, actuator faults can occur in the system. An actuator can be represented by additive and/or multiplicative faults as follows:

$$u_j^f = \alpha_k^j u_j + u_{j0} \quad (6)$$

where u_j and u_j^f represent the j^{th} normal and faulty control actions. u_{j0} denotes a constant offset when actuator is jammed and/or $0 \leq \alpha_k \leq 1$ denotes a gain degradation of the j^{th} component $\forall j \in [1 \dots p]$ (constant or variable). In this paper, only the reduction in effectiveness is considered i.e.:

$$u_j^f = \alpha_k^j u_j \text{ with } 0 < \alpha_k^j \leq 1 \quad (7)$$

Such modelling can be viewed as multiplicative faults which affect matrix B as:

$$B \begin{bmatrix} u_1^f & u_j^f & u_p^f \end{bmatrix}^T = B \begin{bmatrix} \alpha_k^1 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & \alpha_k & \ddots & 0 \\ \vdots & \ddots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & \alpha_k^p \end{bmatrix} u = B^f u \quad (8)$$

Matrix B^f represents the actuator fault distribution matrix relates to the nominal constant control input matrix B . Therefore, the discrete state space representation defined in (1) with actuator faults modelled by control effectiveness factors becomes as:

$$\begin{cases} x_{k+1} = Ax_k + B^f u_k \\ w_k = Cx_k \end{cases} \quad (9)$$

or in a faulty case, if $\forall j \in [1 \dots p]$ equation (7) is rewritten such as $u_j^f = u_j + (1 - \alpha_k^j) u_j$ with $0 < \alpha_k^j \leq 1$. According to (8), equation (1) is described based on an alternative representation following an additive representation:

$$\begin{cases} x_{k+1} &= Ax_k + Bu_k + F_a f_k^a \\ w_k &= Cx_k \end{cases} \quad (10)$$

where $F_a \in R^{n \times p}$ represents the actuator fault distribution matrix ($F_a = B$) and $f^a \in R^p$ is the faulty vector.

In the presence of actuator faults, the faulty actuators corrupt the closed-loop behaviour. Moreover, the controller aims at cancelling the error between the measurement and its reference input based on fault-free conditions. In this case, the controller gain is away from the “optimal” one and may drive the system to its physical limitations or even to instability.

Under the assumption that an efficient fault diagnosis module is integrated in the reconfigurable control to provide sufficient information, an active fault tolerant control system based on the fault accommodation principles is developed in the next section in order to preserve the output dynamic properties and to limit the energy of control inputs.

3. Actuator fault tolerant control design

3.1. Actuator fault accommodation: Reconfigurable control gain synthesis or fault compensation principle

In order to annihilate the actuator fault effect which appears at sample $k = k_f$ on the system, various methods have been proposed to recover as close as possible the performance of the pre-fault system according to the considered fault representation. Among methods, two main classical approaches have been developed. One is based on a model matching principle where the control gain is completely re-synthesised on-line and the other method is based on fault compensation added to the nominal control law.

Based on multiplicative fault representation, defined in (9), some extensions of the classical Pseudo-Inverse Method (PIM) have been proposed to guarantee both the performance and the stability of the pre-fault system. Using constrained optimization (Gao and Antsaklis, 1991) and (Staroswiecki, 2005) have synthesized a suitable feedback control $K_{feedback}^{accom}$. Moreover, (Zhang and Jiang, 2002) and (Guenab *et al.*, 2006) have proposed to compute a reconfigurable feedforward gain $K_{forward}^{accom}$ controller in order to eliminate the steady-state tracking error in faulty case. Therefore, the control signal applied to the system at sample $k = k_r > k_f$ is represented such as:

$$u_k^{FTC} = -K_{forward}^{accom} r_k - K_{feedback}^{accom} x_k \quad (11)$$

However, under an additive faulty representation, defined in (10), (Noura *et al.*, 2000), (Theilliol *et al.*, 2002) and (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2007) have proposed to add a new control law u^{acc} to the nominal control law synthesised as presented in §2.1. The total control signal to be applied to the system at sample $k = k_r > k_f$ is represented as follows:

$$u_k^{FTC} = \left(u_k^{nom} \right) + u_k^{acc} = \left(-K_{forward}^{nom} z_k^{nom} - K_{feedback}^{nom} x_k \right) + u_k^{acc} \quad (12)$$

According to the new control law in (12), the discrete state space representation defined in (10) becomes as:

$$\begin{cases} x_{k+1} &= Ax_k + Bu_k^{nom} + Bu_k^{acc} + F_a f_k^a \\ w_k &= Cx_k \end{cases} \quad (13)$$

whereupon, the additional control law u^{acc} must be computed such that the faulty system is as close as possible to the nominal one, therefore:

$$Bu_k^{acc} + F_a f_k^a = 0 \quad (14)$$

Using the estimation of the fault magnitude \hat{f}_k^a obtained from the fault diagnosis module, the solution of (14) can be obtained by the following relation if matrix B is of full row rank:

$$u_k^{acc} = -B^+ F_a \hat{f}_k^a \quad (15)$$

where B^+ is the pseudo-inverse of matrix B .

In both cases, a fault tolerant controller has been designed to compensate faults by computing a new control law in order to minimize the effects on the system performance, and consequently to achieve the desired dynamic and stability performance of the faulty closed-loop system. Furthermore, the reconfigurable control mechanism requires some adjustments of the control inputs and consequently reduces the “life-span” of various components from a reliability point of view.

3.2. Actuator fault accommodation: recovery/trajectory control system

From control point of view, in the tracking assumption, the reconfigurable control mechanism requires more energy to reach the target and to guarantee steady-state performance. Thus, the energy variable E_k associated to the accommodated control law is defined as:

$$E_k = \sum_{\tau=0}^k u_{\tau} \times (u_{\tau})^T = \sum_{\tau=0}^k u_{\tau}^{FTC} \times (u_{\tau}^{FTC})^T \quad (16)$$

In order to reduce E_k , the proposed technique is to modify, during the reconfiguration transient, the reference input vector r . To achieve this goal, when the fault is

detected and reconfigured at sample $k = k_r$, the error ε_{k_r} between r_{k_r} and output vector y_{k_r} is considered as an impulse which excites a non-periodic system. The dynamic behaviour of this system is chosen according to the criteria to reach the nominal reference as well as to reduce E_k . This recovery/trajectory control reference r^{acc} is defined as follows:

$$r_k^{acc} = r_k - g_k(\varepsilon_{k_r}) \quad \forall k \geq k_r \quad (17)$$

where $g_k(\varepsilon_{k_r})$ presents an impulse response according to the error ε_{k_r} between r and output vector y at sample $k = k_r$.

When the fault is detected and controller is reconfigured, the new reference r^{acc} has been considered. For $k > k_r$, the fault accommodation control signal applied to the system based on the reconfigurable gain synthesis is computed such as:

$$u_k^{RFTC} = -K_{forward}^{accom} r_k^{acc} - K_{feedback}^{accom} x_k \quad (18)$$

or if the fault compensation principle is considered, the fault accommodation control signal, defined in (12), becomes to:

$$u_k^{RFTC} = (u_k^{recon}) + u_k^{acc} = (-K_{forward}^{nom} z_k^{acc} - K_{feedback}^{nom} x_k) + u_k^{acc} \quad (19)$$

where z^{acc} corresponds to the integrator vector defined as:

$$z_{k+1}^{acc} = z_k^{acc} + T_s(r_k^{acc} - y_k) \quad (20)$$

A reconfigurable control mechanism has been proposed to limit the drawback of a fault accommodation strategy which requires more energy to reach the target and to guarantee steady-state performance. To demonstrate the effectiveness of the prospective work, the well-known three-tank system (Join *et al.*, 2005) has been considered around one operating point. In the presence of actuator fault, the nominal controller (NL), the fault accommodation principle without (FTC) and with (RFTC) reconfigurable reference input have been evaluated and compared.

4. An illustrative example

4.1. Process description

The process is composed of three cylindrical tanks with identical cross section S . The tanks are coupled by two connecting cylindrical pipes with a cross section S_n and an outflow coefficient μ_{13} . The nominal outflow is located at tank 2, it also has a circular cross section S_n and an outflow coefficient μ_2 . Two pumps driven by DC motors supply tanks 1 and 2. The flow rates through these pumps are defined by the calculation of flow per rotation. All three tanks are equipped with sensors for measuring the levels of the liquid (l_1, l_2, l_3).

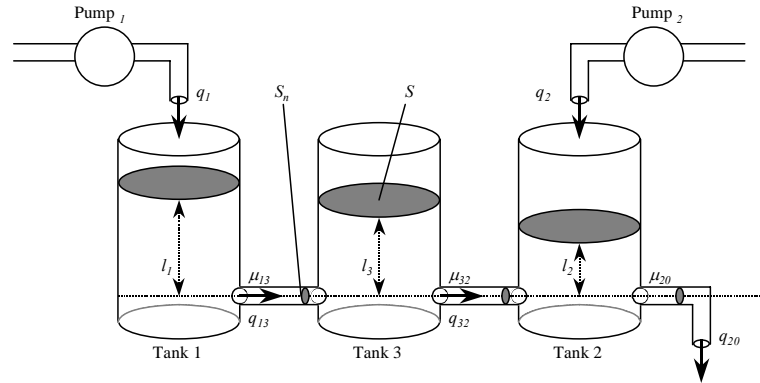


Fig. 1. Synoptic of the three-tank-system

4.2. Plant modelling

The non-linear system can be simulated conveniently using Matlab/Simulink by means of non-linear mass balance equations.

As all the three liquid levels are measured by level sensors, the output vector is $\underline{y} = [l_1 \ l_2 \ l_3]^T$. The control input vector is $\underline{u} = [q_1 \ q_2]^T$. The purpose is to control the system around an operating point. Thus, it has been linearized around an operating point which is given by $\underline{y}_0 = [0.4 \ 0.2 \ 0.3]^T$ (m) and $\underline{u}_0 = [0.35 \ 0.33]^T 10^{-4}$ (m^3/s).

Using the Torricelli rule, for $l_1 > l_3 > l_2$, the linearized system can then be described by a discrete state space representation with a sampling period $T_s = 1\text{s}$ with:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0.988 & 0.0001 & 0.0112 \\ 0.0001 & 0.9781 & 0.0111 \\ 0.0112 & 0.0111 & 0.9776 \end{bmatrix}, B = \begin{bmatrix} 64.568 & 0.0014 \\ 0.0014 & 64.22 \\ 0.3650 & 0.3637 \end{bmatrix} \text{ and } C \text{ is an identity matrix.}$$

Levels l_1 and l_2 have to follow reference input vector $r \in R^2$. These outputs are controlled using the multivariable control law described previously. Control matrix pair of the augmented plant is controllable, and the nominal tracking control law, designed by a $LQ+I$ technique conducts to a feedback/forward gain matrices equal to:

$$K_{feedback}^{nom} = \begin{bmatrix} 21.6 & 3 & -5 \\ 2.9 & 19 & -4 \end{bmatrix} \times 10^{-4} \quad (21a)$$

$$K_{forward}^{nom} = \begin{bmatrix} -0.95 & -0.32 \\ -0.3 & -0.91 \end{bmatrix} \times 10^{-4} \quad (21b)$$

4.3. Results and comments

The validation of the tracking control with the linearized model is shown in Fig. 2 where step responses with respect to set-point changes are considered for a range of 3000s. Reference inputs r are step changes of 12.5% for l_1 (and l_2 - not presented here) of their corresponding operating values. The dynamic responses demonstrate that a tracker is synthesized correctly (NL - fault-free case in Fig. 2).

Then, in a similar way, an actuator fault has been applied. A gain degradation of pump 1 (clogged or rusty pump, ...) is considered and appears abruptly at sample $k = k_f = 1000s$ on the system during the steady-state operation. To do so without breaking the system, the control input applied to the system is equal to the control input computed by the controller multiplied by a constant system ($\alpha_1 = 0.2$ and $u_{10} = 0$). Since an actuator fault acts on the system as a perturbation, and due to the presence of the integral error in the controller, the system outputs reach again their nominal values (NL - faulty case in Fig. 2).

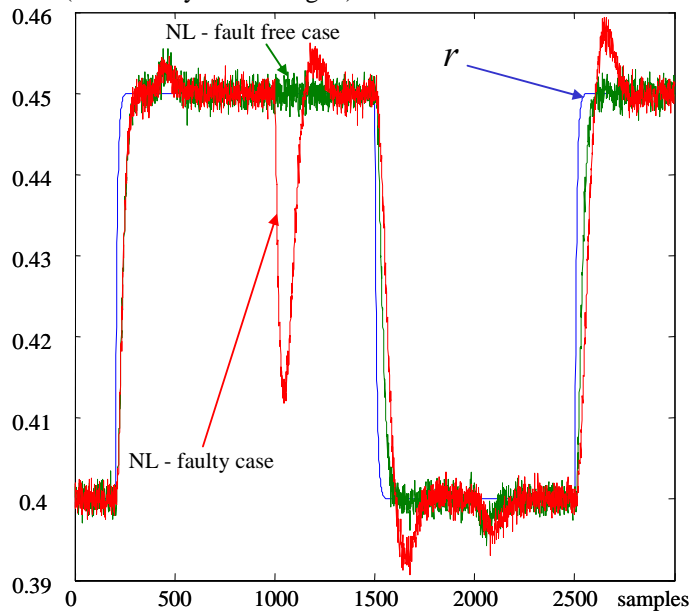


Fig. 2. Level l_1 in fault-free case and with fault on pump 1

Under the assumption that a fault detection, isolation and estimation module will provide to the FTC system the information about the occurrence of the actuator fault at sample $k = k_r > k_f = 1010s$, the re-adjusted control reference r^{acc} is defined following the technique proposed in Section 3.2. A second-order impulse response is chosen to modify the initial reference r on level l_1 . This level is corrupted by the faulty pump associated to the tank 1. The second-order impulse response is considered with a natural frequency ω and damping ratio ξ calculated in a discrete form with a sampling period $T_s = 1s$ based on the following classical transfer function:

$$G(s) = \frac{\omega^2}{s^2 + 2\omega\xi s + \omega^2} \quad (22)$$

where s is a Laplace variable.

As shown in Fig. 3 for a specific $\xi = 10.5$, the re-adjusted control reference input r^{acc} is “revised” just after the occurrence of the fault and finally returned to the initial reference input r after a short period.

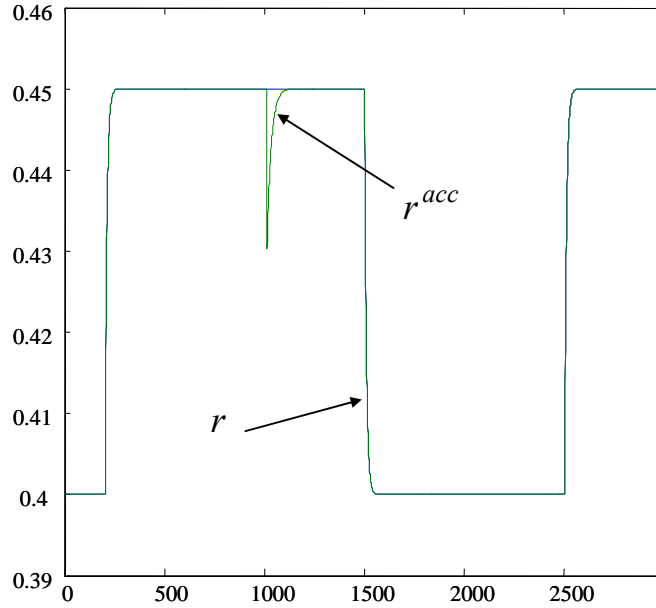


Fig. 3. Reference input for level l_I in fault-free case and recovery principle

The compensation control law is computed in order to reduce the fault effect on the system. Indeed, since an actuator fault acts on the system as a perturbation ($k = k_f = 1000s$), the system outputs reach again their nominal values, as illustrated in Fig. 4. With the fault accommodation methods (FTC or RTFC with $\xi = 10.5$), the output decrease less than the case of a classical control law (NL), then they reach the nominal values quicker because the fault is estimated and the new control law is able to compensate for the fault effect at instant $k = k_r > k_f = 1010s$ when the fault is isolated. It can be easily seen that after the fault occurrence, the time response and the dynamic behaviour of the compensated outputs in both FTC and RTFC cases are not similar and completely different from the fault-free case.

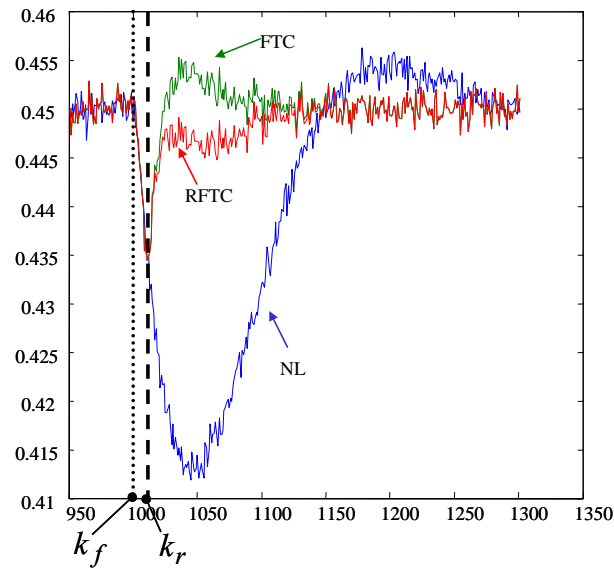


Fig. 4. Zoom on level l_1 with fault on pump 1 with nominal control law (NL), fault accommodation without FTC and with RFTC recovery reference input.

These results can be confirmed by the examination of control input q_1 (Fig. 5). In the classical law (NL), the control input increases slowly trying to compensate for the fault effect on the system. In the accommodation approach, the RFTC control input increases quickly and enables rapid fault compensation on the controlled system outputs in similar way than with the FTC control input.

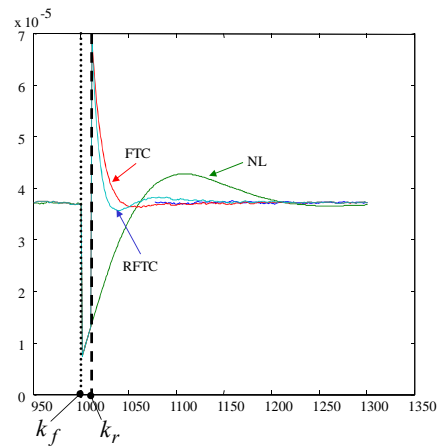


Fig. 5. Zoom on flow rate q_1 with fault on pump 1 and with nominal control law (NL), fault accommodation without FTC and with RFTC recovery reference input.

The computation of the tracking error norm ($\|e_l\|_2 = \|r - y\|_2$) emphasizes the performance of the approach as presented in Table 1. With two fault accommodation methods (RFTC and FTC), tracking error norms for outputs l_1 and l_2 are very close and slightly larger than the nominal one but it is still significantly smaller than the case with classical control law (NL) under the fault condition.

Table 1. Norms of tracking error computed between $k=2000s$ and $k=2400s$.

with	Fault free case	Faulty case		
	NL	NL	FTC	RFTC
$\ e_{l_1}\ _2$	0.0211	0.2989	0.0514	0.0540
$\ e_{l_2}\ _2$	0.0197	0.1087	0.0223	0.0219

Effectiveness of the reconfiguration strategy based on a novel recovery/trajectory control is highlighted in Table 2 where the energy (13) associated to flow rate δq_1 around the reference r on level l_1 is calculated between $k=2000s$ and $k=2400s$. In view of the above figures and the energy computation illustrated in Table 2 for the experiments, it appears clearly that the RFTC preserves the output dynamic properties and limits the energy of control inputs compared to the classical FTC.

Table 2. Variation of energy computed between $k=2000s$ and $k=2400s$.

with	Fault free case	Faulty case		
	NL	NL	FTC	RFTC
$\Phi \times 10^{-4}$	0	1.3048	1.1432	1.0624

As discussed previously, the performances of a novel recovery/trajectory control are linked to the damping ratio ξ . As illustrated in Fig. 6, the tracking error norm $\|e_{l_i}\|_2$ and the energy associated to the first actuator Φ_{q_1} is established with different damping ratio ξ .

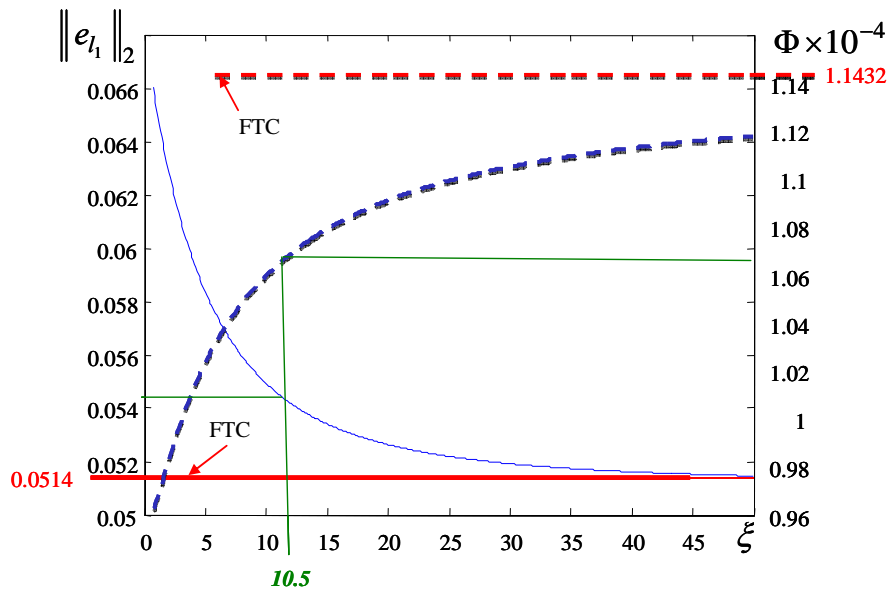


Fig. 6. Performance indexes $\|e_i\|_2$ (—) and Φ_{q_1} (---) vs. damping ratio ξ for RFTC.

The computation of the two performance indexes is realized for a time period around the fault occurrence started at $k=2000s$ and finished at $k=2400s$. The data provided in the two previous tables are included in Fig. 6 ($\xi=10.5$). It is interesting to note that for a large value of damping ratio ξ the performance indexes are closed to a classical fault accommodation (FTC): the second order impulse response is closed to zero when the damping ratio ξ increases. Consequently, an optimal damping ratio ξ needs to be found in order to preserve the output dynamic properties and to limit the energy of control inputs.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has presented an active fault tolerant control system design strategy which takes into account a modified trajectory/reference input for system reconfiguration. Classical fault accommodation methods have been considered to design the fault tolerant controller. The design of an appropriate recovery/trajectory control reference input provides to the fault accommodation controller the capabilities to, simultaneously, reach their nominal dynamic and steady-state performances and to preserve the reliability of the components (Finkelstein, 1999). The application of this method to the well-known three tank system example gives encouraging results. Future work concerns the theoretical definition of the optimal impulse response for flatness control (Fliess *et al.*, 1995) in the FTC framework (Mai *et al.*, 2006).

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