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ScienceDirect

Procedia Engineering 176 (2017) 296 – 300

Procedia Engineering

www.elsevier.com/locate/procedia

Dynamics and Vibroacoustics of Machines (DVM2016)

The investigation of the work-fluid characteristics of precision hydraulic active vibration control module

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Abstract

Vibration control in the systems of precise positioning is an important problem that nanotechnology sector is facing. This problem challenges the engineers to develop advance positioning mechanisms such as hydraulic magnetorheological (MR) actuators or MR modules. These modules combine the characteristics of hydraulic systems and electromagnetic control because of the use of magnetorheological fluids instead of traditional hydraulic fluid. This allows to avoid using inertial valves that results in higher accuracy and dynamic characteristics as compared with conventional systems. The main element of a MR valve is a solenoid that creates a magnetic field to control viscosity and rheological behavior of the fluid due to structuring of the disperse phase of magnetic particles in magnetic field.

The positioning error of the MR module depends, to great extent, on the minimum current which should be applied to the coil to start the motion. This work is aimed at the experimental study of the response of the MR module on the applied current. The response was measured as the pressure drop in the fluid at the exit of the MR module.

It was found that the maximum magnetic field in the working gap of the module of 0.04 T corresponded to the pressure drop 0.12 MPa. The results form the base for design of MR modules of automatic control systems operating under semi-active and active vibration control modes.

Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of the international conference on Dynamics and Vibroacoustics of Machines

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Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of the international conference on Dynamics and Vibroacoustics of Machines
doi:10.1016/j.proeng.2017.02.325

Keywords: hydraulic module, magnetorheological fluid, active vibration control

1. Introduction

Vibrations from different sources such as neighboring equipment and road transport is a serious problem for precise technological equipment in various sectors including microelectronics and nanotechnology [6]. Vibration amplitude in buildings can be as high as 200 μm [7] in the frequency range from 0.2 to 200 Hz [10] while the required positioning accuracy is in nanometer range. This problem challenges the engineers to find a radical advancement in vibration suppression by using different principles and phenomena.

Vibration control can be classified into three groups: passive, semi-active and active [8]. In semi-active vibration control systems a damper changes the vibration absorption properties (damping properties) according to the characteristics of external vibrations. An example of such system is a car shock absorber with magnetorheological fluid (MRF) [3,9]. Active vibration control systems are most effective at low frequencies and large amplitudes of vibrations. The active vibration control systems reduce and compensate disturbing force (or vibration displacement) by the additional energy source (or actuator). These systems are usually used positioning mechanisms (actuators). These actuators compensate vibration displacement due to closed-loop control system with feedback. For stationary technological equipment the effective vibration damping can be achieved through combination of passive and active systems.

Among various types of actuators which can potentially be used for active vibration isolation [10] the systems based smart-materials including piezoelectric, magnetostrictive, shape memory alloys materials, MRF, elecrorheological (ER) fluids (ERF), MR elastomers and ER elastomers [13] are the most promising.

A MR actuator is a hydraulic actuator in which MRF is used instead of hydraulic fluid. MRF properties are controlled by external magnetic field [5,12] that changes the properties of MRF directly without any moving inertial elements [2]. MR actuator has low object positioning error (<0.1 μm) and low response time (<200 ms) [11]. It can perform vibration control in the frequency range from 0.2 to 5 Hz. MRF is a suspension in the carrier fluid like organic mineral oil of magnetic particles of reduced iron, pure iron, cobalt, carbonyl iron, nickel, chromium dioxide, etc., 10...30 μm in size .

MR elastomer is a solid-state analog of the MRF [10]. It consists of magnetic particles distributed in silicone rubber. Magnetic powder is usually magnetite (Fe_3O_4) with a particle size of 0.2...0.3 μm and iron with a particle size of 1...5 μm. The elastomer may include both soft and hard magnetic particles [14].

In this work a three-coordinate hydraulic positioning actuator with MR control (or MR module) [12] was studied. The main control element of MR module is a MR valve. And the main element of a MR valve is a solenoid that creates a magnetic field to control viscosity and rheological behavior of the fluid in work gap of the valve due to structuring of the disperse phase of magnetic particles in external magnetic field.

According to [4,15] the positioning error of the MR module depends, to great extent, on the minimum current which should be applied to the coil to start the motion (“pickup current”). This current determines the magnitude of external magnetic field applied to the MRF, and the strength of the structure of the disperse phase of magnetic particles formed in the gap of the MR valve. The higher strength of the structure, the greater pressure drop valve is held.

Using the [16], in the case of MR valve with cylindrical work gap the differential pressure is determined as follows:

$$\Delta P = \frac{9.21\varphi\mu_0 M_s^{1/2} H^{3/2} D_{mid} L}{(\mathrm{D}_{out}^2 - \mathrm{D}_{in}^2)} , \tag{1}$$

where φ - volume concentration disperse phase of magnetic particles in MRF, M_s - magnetic particles saturation magnetization, H - magnetic field, L - work gap length, D_{mid} , D_{out} , D_{in} - middle, outer, inner diameter of cylindrical MR valve work gap respectively.

This work is aimed at the experimental study of the response of the MR valve on the applied current. The response was measured as the pressure drop in the fluid at the work gap of the MR valve.