

A DESIGN METHOD OF FAULT TOLERANT CONTROL SYSTEMS USING FAULT ESTIMATOR FOR MULTI-PLANT SYSTEMS

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Received March 2024; revised June 2024

ABSTRACT. *This paper proposes a simple design method for fault tolerance control based on fault estimator. The tolerance is formulated as a fault in one of the correlated two plants, or, in other words, the system is under an uncertain state. To estimate the system under an uncertain state, the fault estimator that detects the difference in output in both normal and post-faults is proposed. To design the fault estimator, we also clarify the parameterization of all fault estimators. Using a fault estimator, the system will be effectively recovered by compensating for lost outputs via a newly designated feedback parameter, in the case where system fault is detected. The proposed technique offers simplicity in the self-recovery of fault tolerance controls in an unstable system.*

Keywords: Multi-plant control system, Fault tolerant control, Fault estimator

1. Introduction. Component fault in control systems can lead to instability and degraded performance, making it essential for control systems to prevent faults from intensifying into full system faults while maintaining performance and stability [1]. This requirement is crucial in multi-plant systems and environments demanding high reliability, such as production plants and human-interactive systems [2, 3, 4, 5]. For instance, next-generation steer-by-wire vehicle systems require superior fault tolerance compared to traditional steering systems [6]. To address this need, many researchers have focused on developing fault-tolerant control systems [1, 7, 8].

Blanke and Jørgensen introduced methods for fault handling based on fault mode analysis [9], while Alwi and Edwards proposed sliding mode-based fault-tolerant control [10]. The use of electronically controlled actuators and force feedback to enhance safety and adaptability in steering systems has been highlighted by Tian et al. [11]. However, redundancy in sensors, actuators, and microprocessors, as emphasized by Ito and Hayakawa,

often increases costs and weight [12]. Takahashi's self-repairing control system using a discontinuous fault detection filter exemplifies efforts to enhance reliability [13].

Typically, fault-tolerant control approaches are classified into active and passive types. Active fault-tolerant control involves real-time fault detection and system adjustment [1, 14], but poses challenges like the time required for fault diagnosis and implementation of new control schemes [8]. In contrast, passive fault-tolerant control designs controllers to maintain stability despite faults, though this often results in conservative designs and reduced performance [14].

On the other hand, as fault is often regarded as the perturbation of components in the system, disturbance observers have been proposed. Theoretically, disturbance observers maintain steady-state error close to zero by appropriately adjusting plant parameters [15, 16]. These features have led researchers to explore fault-tolerant control using disturbance observers [17, 18, 19]. Sun et al. proposed a composite fault-tolerant control with a disturbance observer for stochastic systems with disturbances and faults [17]. Han et al. developed disturbance and fault estimation observers for fuzzy systems with local non-linear models and external disturbances [18]. Kwon et al. introduced a fault-tolerant control scheme for active suspension systems in vehicles, using a suspension state observer and a disturbance observer to determine feedback control inputs [19]. Anjum et al. proposed a disturbance observer-based composite fixed-time trajectory tracking control method, integrating fixed-time non-singular fast terminal sliding control and disturbance observer information to achieve fixed-time convergence despite uncertainties, disturbances, and actuator faults [20]. However, most designs using disturbance observers focus on estimating perturbations rather than faults, leading to complex system designs.

To address this issue, we propose a design method for fault-tolerant control based on a fault estimator. Our method is motivated by the need for a simpler and more effective solution that can handle catastrophic faults, where the system becomes unstable due to component fault, by detecting faults and compensating for lost outputs. The proposed method involves a control system that detects faults and stabilizes the system by compensating for lost output due to component malfunctions in multi-plant control systems. Unlike existing complex techniques, our fault-tolerant control system based on a fault estimator simplifies the design process. The fault estimator operates similarly to a disturbance observer, treating all errors as disturbances within a feedback loop. To stabilize the system and compensate for output under uncertain conditions, additional techniques such as stable controllers, parameterization, or compound H_∞ controllers may be required [21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30]. This paper addresses the stability of control systems with uncertain states, building on the results of previous studies like [21]. Our proposed fault-tolerant control system offers a simpler and more effective solution compared to conventional methods using disturbance observers.

By simplifying the design and focusing on direct fault estimation, our approach aims to enhance system reliability and performance without the drawbacks of existing methods. This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 outlines the problem and defines the fault estimator. Section 3 details the parameterization of fault estimators. Section 4 presents our design method. Section 5 provides a numerical example, and Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. Problem Formulation. Consider the control system in Figure 1, where $G(s) \in R^{1 \times 2}(s)$ is the plant, $u(s) \in R^{2 \times 1}(s)$ is the input, $y(s) \in R(s)$ is the output and $r(s) \in R^2$ is a reference input. $F_1(s) \in RH_\infty^{1 \times 2}$ and $F_2(s) \in RH_\infty$ are to estimate the fault and $\hat{F}(s) \in R^2(s)$ is the controller for fault. $\hat{d}(s)$ represents the fault estimator and written by

$$\hat{d}(s) = F_1(s)u(s) + F_2(s)y(s). \tag{1}$$

From Figure 1, $G(s) \in R^{1 \times 2}(s)$ and $u(s) \in R^{2 \times 1}(s)$, we can denote $y(s)$ as

$$y(s) = G(s)u(s) = \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s) & G_2(s) \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} u_1(s) \\ u_2(s) \end{bmatrix}. \tag{2}$$

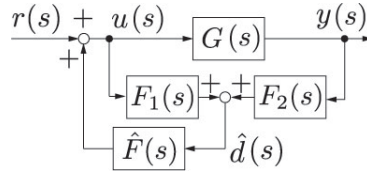


FIGURE 1. Control system

It is assumed that when the plant $G(s)$ is normal,

$$G_1(s) \neq 0. \tag{3}$$

Conversely, when the plant is broken,

$$G_1(s) = 0. \tag{4}$$

When the plant is broken, we denote the plant $\hat{G}(s)$, that is,

$$\hat{G}(s) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & G_2(s) \end{bmatrix}, \tag{5}$$

and the output $\hat{y}(s)$ in response to the same input $u(s)$ is given by

$$\hat{y}(s) = \hat{G}(s)u(s). \tag{6}$$

It is desired that the response of the system when the plant is normal should be the same as the response when the plant is broken. In other words, we generate the input $u(s)$ that satisfies the following condition:

$$\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} (y(t) - \hat{y}(t)) = 0. \tag{7}$$

To achieve this, we need to estimate the difference between the outputs $y(s)$ and $\hat{y}(s)$. If the plant is normal, we do not need to estimate this difference, and the input $u(s)$ satisfies

$$\hat{d}(s) = 0. \tag{8}$$

On the other hand, if the plant is broken, we need to estimate the difference between the outputs, and the input $u(s)$ must satisfy

$$\hat{d}(s) = \left(G(s) - \hat{G}(s) \right) u(s) = G_1(s)u_1(s). \tag{9}$$

We can find the fault occurs using $\hat{d}(s)$. Thus, we call $\hat{d}(s)$ a fault estimator if (8) and (9) are satisfied.

3. Fault Estimator. In this section, we explain the parameterization of all fault estimator $\hat{d}(s)$ in Figure 1.

The parameterization of all $F_1(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ that satisfy (8) is summarized in the following theorem.

Theorem 3.1. All $F_1(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ that satisfy (8) are given by

$$F_1(s) = \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s)(1 + Q(s)) & G_2(s)(1 + Q(s)) \end{bmatrix} \tag{10}$$

and

$$F_2(s) = -1 - Q(s), \tag{11}$$

respectively.

The proof of this theorem requires the following lemma.

Lemma 3.1. [31] Assume that $A(s) \in RH_\infty^{m \times n}$, $B(s) \in H_\infty^{q \times p}$, $C(s) \in RH_\infty^{m \times p}$ and

$$\text{rank} \begin{bmatrix} A^T(s) & B^T(s) \end{bmatrix} = \gamma \quad (12)$$

are satisfied. There exist $X(s) \in RH_\infty$ and $Y(s) \in RH_\infty$ satisfying

$$X(s)A(s) + Y(s)B(s) = C(s), \quad (13)$$

if and only if there exists $U(s) \in \mathcal{U}$ satisfying

$$\begin{bmatrix} A(s) \\ B(s) \\ C(s) \end{bmatrix} = U(s) \begin{bmatrix} A(s) \\ B(s) \\ O \end{bmatrix}. \quad (14)$$

When $X_0(s) \in RH_\infty$ and $Y_0(s) \in RH_\infty$ are solutions to (13), then all solutions to (13) are given by

$$\begin{bmatrix} X(s) & Y(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} X_0(s) & Y_0(s) \end{bmatrix} + Q(s) \begin{bmatrix} W_1(s) & W_2(s) \end{bmatrix}, \quad (15)$$

where $W_1(s)$ and $W_2(s)$ satisfy

$$W_1(s)A(s) + W_2(s)B(s) = 0 \quad (16)$$

and

$$\text{rank} \begin{bmatrix} W_1(s) & W_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = n + q - \gamma \quad (17)$$

and $Q(s) \in RH_\infty^{p \times (N+q-\gamma)}$ is any function.

We show proof of Theorem 3.1 using Lemma 3.1.

Proof: When the plant is normal, from (8), we have

$$F_1(s)u(s) + F_2(s)y(s) = 0. \quad (18)$$

From (7), (18) is rewritten by the form in

$$(F_1(s) + F_2(s)G(s))u(s) = 0. \quad (19)$$

From the assumption that (19) is satisfied for any control input $u(s)$, we have

$$F_1(s) + F_2(s)G(s) = 0. \quad (20)$$

Since $F_1(s) \in RH_\infty^{1 \times 2}$, (20) is rewritten by

$$\begin{bmatrix} F_{11}(s) + F_2(s)G_1(s) & F_{12}(s) + F_2(s)G_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = 0, \quad (21)$$

where $F_{11}(s)$ and $F_{12}(s)$ are a function denoted by

$$F_1(s) = \begin{bmatrix} F_{11}(s) & F_{12}(s) \end{bmatrix}. \quad (22)$$

Using Lemma 3.1, we obtain the parameterization of all $F_{11}(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ satisfying (21), and given by

$$\begin{bmatrix} F_{11}(s) & F_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s) & -1 \end{bmatrix} + Q(s) \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s) & -1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad (23)$$

where $Q(s) \in RH_\infty$ is any function.

In a similar way, from Lemma 3.1 and (21), the parameterization of all $F_{12}(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ is written by

$$\begin{bmatrix} F_{12}(s) & F_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} G_2(s) & -1 \end{bmatrix} + Q'(s) \begin{bmatrix} G_2(s) & -1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad (24)$$

where $Q'(s) \in RH_\infty$ is any function. From (23) and (24), it is necessary to satisfy

$$Q(s) = Q'(s). \quad (25)$$

Thus, the parameterization of all $F_1(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ is written by (10) and (11), respectively.

We have thus proved Theorem 3.1. \square

In the case that the plant has broken, from (9), we have

$$F_1(s)u(s) + F_2(s)\hat{y}(s) = \left(G(t) - \hat{G}(t)\right) u(t). \tag{26}$$

Substitution of (6) to (26) gives

$$\left(F_1(s) + F_2(s)\hat{G}(s)\right) u(s) = \left(G(s) - \hat{G}(s)\right) u(s). \tag{27}$$

For any $u(s)$, (27) needs to be satisfied, that is,

$$F_1(s) + F_2(s)\hat{G}(s) = G(s) - \hat{G}(s). \tag{28}$$

Equation (28) is rewritten by

$$\left[\begin{array}{cc} F_{11}(s) & F_{12}(s) + F_2(s)G_2(s) \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{cc} G_1(s) & 0 \end{array} \right]. \tag{29}$$

From this equation and Theorem 3.1, $Q(s)$ in (10) and (11) is given by

$$Q(s) = 0. \tag{30}$$

From Theorem 3.1 and (30), we have the following theorem.

Theorem 3.2. All $F_1(s)$ and $F_2(s)$ that satisfy (8) and (9) are given by

$$F_1(s) = \left[\begin{array}{cc} G_1(s) & G_2(s) \end{array} \right] \tag{31}$$

and

$$F_2(s) = -1, \tag{32}$$

respectively.

Proof: The proof is obvious from Theorem 3.1 and (30). \square

4. Design Method for Control System. In this section, we present a design method for control system in Figure 1.

For safety, even if the system is broken, the output $\hat{y}(t)$ is better to be equivalent to $y(t)$. If

$$\hat{G}(s)\hat{F}(s)\hat{d}(s) = \left(G(s) - \hat{G}(s)\right) u(s) \tag{33}$$

is satisfied, then the output $\hat{y}(s)$ is equivalent to $y(s)$. In this case, even if the system is broken, the output $\hat{y}(t)$ is equivalent to $y(t)$. From simple manipulation, if

$$\hat{F}(s) = \left[\begin{array}{c} \hat{F}_1(s) \\ \hat{F}_2(s) \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \frac{1}{G_2(s)} \end{array} \right], \tag{34}$$

then (33) is satisfied. However, in general, $1/G_2(s)$ is improper. Therefore, we present a design method of $\hat{F}(s)$ as

$$\hat{F}(s) = \left[\begin{array}{c} \hat{F}_1(s) \\ \hat{F}_2(s) \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} 0 \\ \frac{q(s)}{G_2(s)} \end{array} \right], \tag{35}$$

where $q(s) \in RH_\infty$ is low-pass filter to make $q(s)/G_2(s)$ proper.

5. Numerical Example. In this section, we illustrate a numerical example to show the effectiveness of the proposed method.

The plant $G^{1 \times 2}(s)$ and $\hat{G}^{1 \times 2}(s)$ are written by

$$G(s) = \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s) & G_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{s+3}{(s+1)(s+2)} & \frac{s+6}{(s+4)(s+5)} \end{bmatrix} \quad (36)$$

and

$$\hat{G}(s) = \begin{bmatrix} G_1(s) & G_2(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & \frac{s+6}{(s+4)(s+5)} \end{bmatrix}, \quad (37)$$

respectively. The reference input is

$$r(t) = \begin{bmatrix} r_1(t) \\ r_2(t) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \sin(0.4\pi t) \\ \sin(0.4\pi t) \end{bmatrix}. \quad (38)$$

From (31) and (36), $F_1(s)$ is designed by

$$F_1(s) = \begin{bmatrix} F_{11}(s) & F_{12}(s) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{s+3}{(s+1)(s+2)} & \frac{s+6}{(s+4)(s+5)} \end{bmatrix}. \quad (39)$$

From (32), $F_2(s)$ is

$$F_2(s) = -1. \quad (40)$$

First, when the plant is normal, we confirm the relationship between $\hat{d}(t)$ and $G_1(s)u_1(s)$ as shown in Figure 2. Here, the solid line shows the response of $\hat{d}(t)$ and the dotted line shows that of $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$. From Figure 2, $\hat{d}(t) = 0$ anytime. Next, when the plant is broken, we confirm the relationship between $\hat{d}(t)$ and $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$ as shown in Figure 3. Here, the solid line shows the response of $\hat{d}(t)$ and the dotted line shows that of $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$. From Figure 3, $\hat{d}(t) = \mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$ anytime.

$\hat{F}(s)$ is designed by (35), where

$$q(s) = \frac{1}{0.01s+1}. \quad (41)$$

The relationship between $y(t)$ and $\mathcal{L}^{-1}G_2(s)u_2(s)$ will be explained. Assume that the system is normal until $t = 10$ [s]. When $t > 10$ [s], the system is broken. The response of

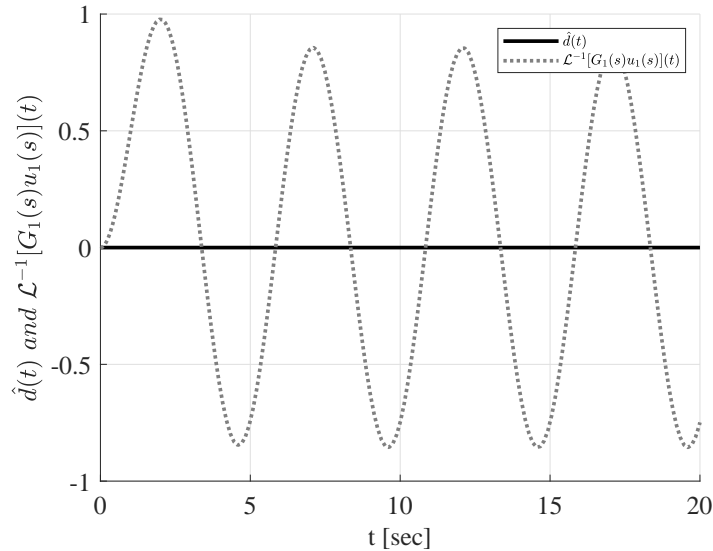


FIGURE 2. $\hat{d}(t)$ and $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$ when plant is normal

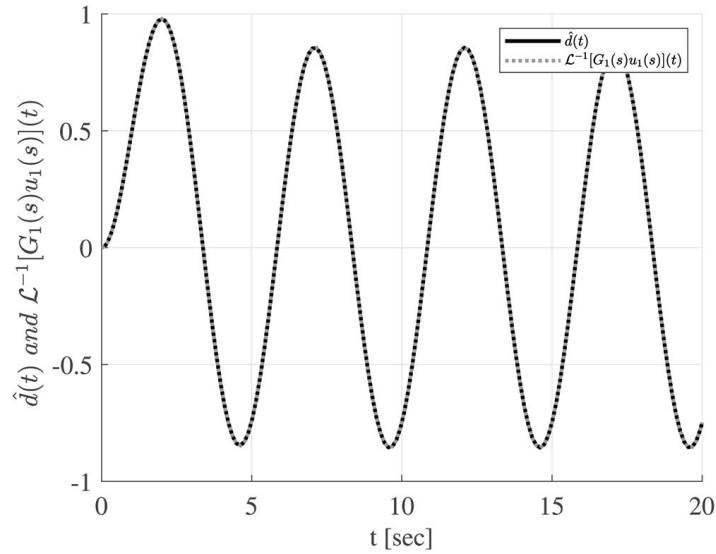


FIGURE 3. $\hat{d}(t)$ and $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_1(s)u_1(s)](t)$ in the case that the plant is broken

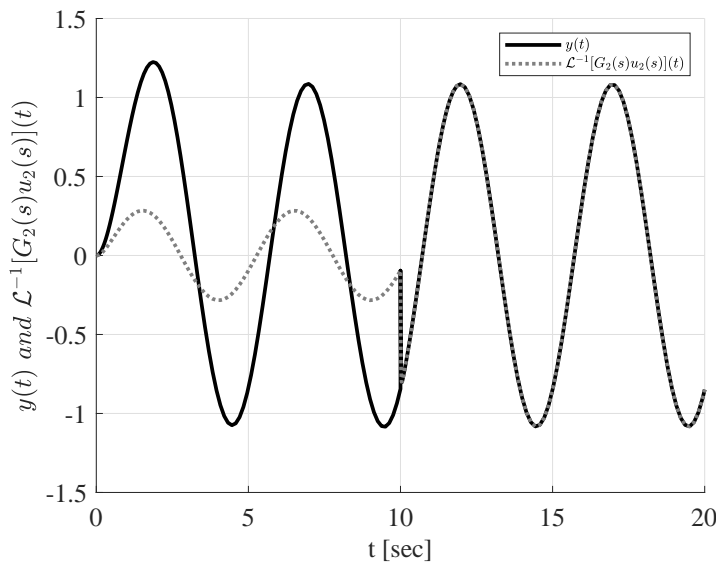


FIGURE 4. $y(t)$ and $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_2(s)u_2(s)](t)$ in the case that the plant is broken at $t = 10[s]$

$y(t)$ is shown in Figure 4. Here, the solid line shows the response of $y(t)$ and the dotted line shows that of $\mathcal{L}^{-1}[G_2(s)u_2(s)](t)$. From Figure 4, we confirmed that $y(t)$ is equal to $\hat{y}(t)$ even if the plant is broken.

In comparison to existing methods, such as those described in [12], our proposed design method for fault-tolerant control is more straightforward and generic. [12] presents a complex approach to fault-tolerant control that relies heavily on redundancy and disturbance observers. Our method simplifies the design process by using a fault estimator to treat all errors as disturbances within a feedback loop, providing robust control under uncertainty with reduced complexity. Specifically, our method addresses the limitations of [12] by eliminating the need for extensive redundancy and focusing on a fault estimator that ensures system stability and performance through direct compensation of lost outputs. This approach not only simplifies the implementation but also enhances the system's ability

to handle catastrophic faults efficiently. We have demonstrated through numerical examples that our method effectively maintains system stability and performance post-fault, showcasing its practical applicability and robustness compared to existing methods.

6. Conclusions. In this paper, we have proposed a design method for a fault-tolerant control system using a fault estimator. First, we presented the structure for the fault estimator and the necessary conditions for the fault estimator. Next, the parameterization of all fault estimators is clarified. In addition, even if the plant is broken, it is clarified the condition that the control input $u(t)$ is equivalent to that of $u(t)$ before the plant broken. Using this parameterization, we developed a design method for control systems. A numerical example is provided to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed method.

The proposed method is applied to stable plants. Design methods for unstable plants will be described in another article. In addition, in the future, we aim to solidify the proposed method's practicality and applicability, contributing to the advancement of fault-tolerant control systems in various high-reliability applications.

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