



# Acoustic Local Positioning Systems

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Enero 2018



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- Long-history University (founded in 1499 by Cardinal Cisneros)
- It was declared by UNESCO a World Heritage Site in December 1998







## Smart Spaces and Intelligent Transport Research Group

Faculty members: 24
 Non-permanent staff: 42 (currently)





## RF&US Subgroup

- Faculty members: 7
- Non-permanent staff: 12





### **GEINTRA RESEARCH GROUP**









### Introduction to ALPS

- Positioning
- Particularities of APS
- Implementation of ALPS
- Experimental Results
- Simultaneous Calibration and Navigation (SCAN)
- Conclusions





- APS: Any system that makes use of mechanical waves to determine the location of a person/object.
- First APSs were developed in the 60s of the former century in underwater environments...



Nuclear bomb recovered in 1966 by the US Navy in the Spanish coast, after a B-52 crash





 Since then, underwater APS have been widely used in a variety of applications:

Marine archaeology, gas exploration, salvage operations...

 The high popularity of underwater APS is a consequence of the difficulty to use EM signals is seawater:

 $S \approx 4 \text{ S/m} \rightarrow a \approx 0.004 \sqrt{f} \text{ Np/m}$ 

Frequency	35 dB Penetration depth
10 kHz (VLF)	31.6 m
1 MHz (AM)	1 m
100 MHz (FM)	0.1 m
2.4 GHz (WiFi)	0.02 m

An acoustic 10 kHz signal would have an equivalent penetration depth ≈ 34.3 km!





- Nevertheless, our interest here is focused on airborne APS.
- These systems started being developed in the late 80s of the former century...

ACTIVE BAT (AT&T Labs Cambridge, 2001)

Centralized Spherical lateration (TOA) A 433 MHz RF signal is used to request the US emission of a bat (40 kHz for 50 us) Update rate of 50 Hz



Source: www.uk.research.att.com/bat/





# **Narrowband Ultrasonic LPSs**

- 1st: Lincoln Wand, MIT, Roberts 1966.
  - Pen with an ultrasonic emitter to create a wide bandwidth pulse of sound (20 kHz to 100 kHz). TOF to four microphones.
- Constellation, MIT & Intersense, 1998
  - Ultrasonic LPS + inertial monitoring unit
  - Virtual Reality head tracker application
  - 161 citations
  - 2mm
- Bats, AT&T, 1999
  - Office application, MD is emitter
  - 1250 citations
  - 9 cm
- Cricket, MIT, 2000
  - "The Cricket Location-Support System"
  - 2691 citations
  - 2 cm







### **Introduction to ALPS**



### CRICKET (MIT, 2005)

Loosely centralized Spherical lateration (TOA) Independent beacons transmit a 433 MHz RF signal to inform about their position together with a 40 kHz US pulse of 125 us Specific algorithmic is developed to eliminate interference.





Source: http://nms.csail.mit.edu/papers/bodhi-thesis.pdf





 All these systems are now considered narrow-frequency systems, based on envelope detection:



- Common drawbacks:
  - Low accuracy
  - Low robustness against in-band noise
  - Low update rate





# **Ultrasonic Transducers**

### Air Ultrasonic Ceramic Transducers

250ST/R160

### Sensitivity/Sound Pressure Level: Tested under 10Vrms @30cm

Specification | Acoustic Performance | Temperature Character | Dimensions | Download | Back | Home



#### Features

- · Compact and light weight
- High sensitivity and sound pressure level
- Excellent temperature and humidity durability
- Low cost

#### Applications

- Remote control devices
- Robotics
- Intrusion Alarms
- Energy saving equipments



#### Beam Angle: Tested at 25.0KHz







# **Range Finder**

- Tx: Electrical pulse => ultrasonic pulse or "ping"
- Rx: ultrasonic pulse => electrical pulse => threshold detect



"Ultrasonic tracking localization system based on DSP"





Ranging



• Ranging is based on:

$$\hat{r} = \frac{1}{2}(t_a - t_e)c$$

 $\hat{r}$  = estimated range  $t_a$  = Time Of Arrival (TOA) of signal  $t_e$  = Time Of Emission (TOE) of signal  $t_f = t_a - t_e$  = Time Of Flight (TOF) of signal c = speed of signal

• For sound:

- c = 343 m/sc = 299,792,458 m/s
- For light & radio signals:

 For a given time precision, ultrasonic signals give a much better range precision.



**Introduction to ALPS** 



# **Ultrasonic Range Finders**



© 2010 Chipkin Automation Systems Inc.

### Level Sensors



### Car Reverse Parking Radar



### Parking Sensor



**Introduction to ALPS** 



# **Commercial Narrowband LPSs**

## Sonitor Technologies

- Scientific American: A Positioning System That Goes Where GPS Can't, January, 2008
- Sonitor Technologies: now at more than 30 hospitals in the US
  - Patient tracking
  - Equipment tracking



## **RFID vs Ultrasound**



- Ultrasonic Identification (USID)
- Researching infectious disease surveillance





 These problems are overcome by introducing spread-spectrum techniques already applied in radar systems.







# Wideband Ultrasonic Transducers

- EMFi
  - high polarization voltages => power consumption issues
- Piezoelectric film (polyvinylidene flouride) (PVDF)
  - E.g. MSI US40KT-01 40kHz centre frequency 8kHz bandwidth
  - E.g. Hazas and Ward, "A Novel Broadband Ultrasonic Location System", 2002.
  - Custom, can be expensive









 At the beginning of this century, the first broadband systems begin to develop.

### UNIV. CAMBRIDGE, 2002

Centralized system (Privacy-oriented in 2003) 511-bit Gold code BPSK modulated with 2.5 cycles of a 50 kHz carrier (25.6 ms)

Spherical lateration

Accuracy around 2 cm



Source: http://comp.eprints.lancs.ac.uk/1610/1/Hazas02\_ANovelBULS.pdf





 At the beginning of this century, the first broadband systems begin to develop.

### UAH & CSIC & UEX, 2007

Privacy oriented

255-bit Kasami codes BPSK modulated with 1 cycle of a 50 kHz carrier (5.1 ms)

Hyperbolic Lateration

Reported errors in the range of mm







- The current tendency is oriented to the design of APS for portable devices (smartphones/tablets)
- This objective has two main implications: shifting down the operation frequency and adapting the signal processing algorithms to the limited computing capability of these devices.









 The current tendency is oriented to the design of APS for portable devices (smartphones/tablets)

### GISS-UEx, 2016

Privacy oriented iPad Air 2 63 bit Kasami codes BPSK modulated with 1 cycle of a 16 kHz carrier (3.9 ms) Hyperbolic lateration Multipath and MAI cancellation algorithms Accuracy around 8 cm







- Today acoustic systems are considered a classical solution within LPS.
- Although not majority, it is an important technology in the field.



Source: R. Mautz, Indoor Positioning Technologies, Institute of Geodesy and Photogrammetry, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, ETH Zurich, 2012.





### Introduction to ALPS

### Positioning

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- Typical observables used to compute the user position are:
  - Power (RSS)
  - Time of Arrival (TOA)
  - Time Difference of Arrival (TDOA)
  - Angle of Arrival (AOA)
  - Proximity (Cell ID)
  - Fingerprinting
- From all of them, those typically used in APS are
  - Time of Arrival (TOA): Trilatelation or Spherical lateration
  - Time Difference of Arrival (TDOA): Multilateration or Hyperbolic Lateration





### **TOAs-based positioning: Spherical Lateration**

- TOAs are converted into absolute distances to the reference points (beacons):  $d_i = c \cdot (TOA_i - t_{TX})$
- Location is then obtained as the intersection of the spherical surfaces defined by these distances:

$$d_i = \|\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}\| = \sqrt{(x_i - x)^2 + (y_i - y)^2 + (z_i - z)^2}$$



Source: ORPALIS

- In 3D geometry, a minimum of 3 TOAs are neccessary to narrow the possible locations down to two (from which only one is usually coherent)
- The problem of this positioning method is that the receiver must know the precise moment of emission, and TX-RX clocks must be synchronized.





### **TDOAs-based positioning: Hyperbolic Lateration**

- TDOAs are converted into differential distances to pairs of reference points (beacons):  $d_{ii} = c \cdot TDOA_{ii}$
- Location is then obtained as the intersection of the hyperbolic surfaces defined by these differential distances:

$$\begin{aligned} d_i - d_j &= \|\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}\| - \|\vec{r}_j - \vec{r}\| = \P \\ &= \sqrt{(x_i - x)^2 + (y_i - y)^2 + (z_i - z)^2} - \sqrt{(x_j - x)^2 + (y_j - y)^2 + (z_j - z)^2} \end{aligned}$$

- In 3D geometry, a minimum of 3 TDOAs (4 beacons) are necessary to narrow the possible locations down to two (from which only one is usually coherent)
- In this positioning method only emitters must be synchronized.

TDOF B2 TDOF B3

**B**2





### **Positioning Equations Solutions**

 In both lateration methods, the position is given by the solution of a system of non-linear equations:

$$d_{1} = \|\vec{r}_{1} - \vec{r}\| = \sqrt{(x_{1} - x)^{2} + (y_{1} - y)^{2} + (z_{1} - z)^{2}}$$
  

$$d_{2} = \|\vec{r}_{2} - \vec{r}\| = \sqrt{(x_{2} - x)^{2} + (y_{2} - y)^{2} + (z_{2} - z)^{2}}$$
  

$$d_{3} = \|\vec{r}_{3} - \vec{r}\| = \sqrt{(x_{3} - x)^{2} + (y_{3} - y)^{2} + (z_{3} - z)^{2}}$$

• There are two main strategies to solve this type of systems:

Method	Linarization strategy	Advantages	Disadvantages
Closed-solution	Introduction of new unknowns	Fast	<ul><li>Less precise</li><li>Needs more beacons</li></ul>
Iterative	Linearization from an initial estimate	More precise	<ul><li>Slower</li><li>Needs an initial estimation</li></ul>





### Closed solution methods: the Bancroft method

- Squaring the previous equations we hay  $d_i^2 = (x_i x)^2 + (y_i y)^2 + (z_i z)^2$
- Rearranging terms:  $d_i^2 x_i^2 y_i^2 z_i^2 = -2x_ix 2y_iy 2z_iz + x^2 + y^2 + z^2$
- And introducing the new variable B = x<sup>2</sup>+y<sup>2</sup>+z<sup>2</sup> we obtain the following system of 4 linear equations for the 4 unknowns (x, y, z, B)

$$\begin{bmatrix} -2x_1 - 2y_1 - 2z_1 + 1 \\ -2x_1 - 2y_1 - 2z_1 + 1 \\ -2x_1 - 2y_1 - 2z_1 + 1 \\ -2x_1 - 2y_1 - 2z_1 + 1 \end{bmatrix} \times \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \\ B \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} d_1^2 - x_1^2 - y_1^2 - z_1^2 \\ d_2^2 - x_2^2 - y_2^2 - z_2^2 \\ d_3^2 - x_3^2 - y_3^2 - z_3^2 \\ d_4^2 - x_4^2 - y_4^2 - z_4^2 \end{bmatrix}$$

 Note that by squaring the equations we also square the noise contribution, thus causing a lack in precision.



# Iterative methods: the Gauss-Newton algorithm (spherical case)

 $(bx_i, by_i, bz_i)$ 

 $r_i$ 



### Initial Data:

- Estimated Mobile Position (**emp**):  $(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z})$
- Beacon positions:
- Measured Distances from the beacons:

**Goal:** To minimize the mean quadratic error of distances:  $F(x, y, z) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} (\hat{r}_i - r_i)^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} [f_i(x, y, z)]^2$ with  $f_i(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z}) = \sqrt{(bx_i - \hat{x})^2 + (by_i - \hat{y})^2 + (bz_i - \hat{z})^2} - r_i$ 

### Obtaining:

 $\mathbf{A} \cdot \Delta \mathbf{X} = \mathbf{B}$ 

or  $r_i$   $r_i$   $r_i$   $\hat{r}_i$   $\hat{r}_i$ 

Solving by LMS:  $\Delta \mathbf{X} = \left(\mathbf{A}^T \cdot \mathbf{A}\right)^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{A}^T \cdot \mathbf{B}$ And iterating:  $\mathbf{emp}_{k+1} = \mathbf{emp}_k - \Delta \mathbf{X}_k$ 



# Iterative methods: the Gauss-Newton algorithm (hyperbolic case)



### **Initial Data:**

Reference  $(bx_i, by_i, bz_i)$  Estimated Mobile Position (emp):  $(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z})$ Beacon (i=1) Beacon positions:  $(bx_i, by_i, bz_i)$ • Measured Increment of Distances from the  $\Delta r_i$ beacons (using one as reference):  $\Delta \hat{r}_i$  $\Delta r_{\rm c}$ To minimize the mean quadratic Goal: error Ot incremental distances:  $F(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z}) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( \Delta \hat{r}_i - \Delta r_i \right) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left[ f_i(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z}) \right]^2$ *estimated* with  $(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z})$  $f_i(\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z}) = \left(\sqrt{(bx_i - \hat{x})^2 + (by_i - \hat{y})^2 + (bz_i - \hat{z})^2} - \sqrt{(bx_1 - \hat{x})^2 + (by_1 - \hat{y})^2 + (bz_1 - \hat{z})^2}\right) - \Delta r_i$ real х Obtaining:

$$\mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{\Delta} \mathbf{X} = \mathbf{B}$$

$$\mathbf{\Delta} \mathbf{X} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial F}{\partial \hat{x}} \\ \frac{\partial F}{\partial \hat{y}} \\ \frac{\partial F}{\partial \hat{z}} \end{bmatrix}; \quad \mathbf{A} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial \hat{x}} & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial \hat{y}} & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial \hat{z}} \\ \frac{\partial f_2}{\partial \hat{x}} & \frac{\partial f_2}{\partial \hat{y}} & \frac{\partial f_2}{\partial \hat{z}} \\ \frac{M}{\partial f_n} & \frac{M}{\partial f_n} & \frac{M}{\partial \hat{z}} \end{bmatrix}; \quad \mathbf{B} = \begin{bmatrix} f_1 \\ f_2 \\ \mathbf{M} \\ f_n \end{bmatrix} \quad where \quad f_i = (\Delta \hat{r}_i - \Delta r_i)$$

Solving by LMS:  $\Delta \mathbf{X} = \left(\mathbf{A}^T \cdot \mathbf{A}\right)^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{A}^T \cdot \mathbf{B}$ And iterating:  $\mathbf{emp}_{k+1} = \mathbf{emp}_k - \Delta \mathbf{X}_k$ 





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1. High absorption, strongly dependent on Frequency, Temperature and Humidity (ISO-9613)

$$\alpha \ (Np/m) = f^{2} \left\{ 18.4 \cdot 10^{-12} \left( \frac{P}{P_{r}} \right)^{-1} \left( \frac{T}{T_{20}} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} + \left( \frac{T}{T_{20}} \right)^{\frac{-5}{2}} \left[ 0.01275 \frac{e^{-2239.1/T}}{f_{ro} + f^{2}/f_{ro}} + 0.1068 \frac{e^{3352/T}}{f_{ro} + f^{2}/f_{ro}} \right] \right\}$$

f =40 kHz

	Air (T=20, H=50%)	Seawater (T=8°C, S=35 ppt)
Absorption	1.31 dB/m	11.3 dB/km
35dB penetration depth	26.6 m	3.1 km





2. Low propagation speed, strongly dependent on Temperature:

$$c = 331.23 \times \sqrt{1 + \frac{T}{273.15}}$$
 m/s  $c = 343$  m/s  $(T = 20^{\circ}C)$ 



d = 1 cm  $\rightarrow \Delta \text{TDV-US} \approx 29 \text{ } \mu\text{s}$   $\Delta \text{TDV-RF} \approx 33 \text{ } \text{ps}$ 





### 2. Low propagation speed, strongly dependent on Temperature:

$$c = 331.23 \times \sqrt{1 + \frac{T}{273.15}} \text{ m/s} \qquad c = 343 \text{ m/s} \quad (T = 20^{\circ} \text{ C})$$
Strong Doppler shift:
  
Radar
$$Alpha$$

$$ALPS$$





3. Very low acoustic impedance of the propagation medium:

Material	Acoustic impedance (Rayls)
Air	413
Wood	1.57·10 <sup>6</sup>
Brick	7.40·10 <sup>6</sup>
Marble	10.5·10 <sup>6</sup>
Glass	13.0·10 <sup>6</sup>













### 4. High directionality of acoustic transducers:



Big Brown Bat (Eptesicus Fuscus)











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- Design of an U-LPS with wide coverage using coding techniques
  - Decentralized ULPS without emitter-receiver synchronism
  - Coverage improvement
  - Beacons' emissions based on multi-access techniques
    - CDMA
    - Combined CDMA with TDMA
  - Improvement of immunity to:
    - ISI, MAI, noise
    - Near-far effect
    - Multi-path
  - Real-time operation





module



### **General Overview**



Code 5 Processing







### Beacons architecture and emitter control unit



Five beacons (Prowave 328ST160) distributed in a 71 x 71 cm square structure to cover 30  $m^2$  with a carrier frequency of 41.67 kHz.

Emitter control unit:

- Based on a LPC1768 uC that provides a wireless link to an external PC to configure different parameters.
- Only one DAC  $\rightarrow$  Need to multiplex all the signals in the time domain





- Five ultrasonic transducers Prowave 328S160
  - Great bandwidth (≈10kHz)
  - Suitable phase response
  - Wide coverage area (emission pattern with ±80°)
  - BPSK Modulation carrier of 40kHz with a bandwidth of 18kHz
- Beacon unit installed at a height of 2.78m, approximated coverage area of 30m<sup>2</sup>











## **TIME-OF-FLIGHT (TOF) DETERMINATION**



### Signal encoding:

- Improve SNR
- Improve the sensitivity
- Detect overlapped echoes
- Improve the operating frequency
- Simultaneous transmission (multi-mode)

### Access scheme for ultrasonic beacons

- Time multiplexing (TDMA)
- Frequency multiplexing (FDMA)  $\rightarrow$  difficult due to transducer bandwidth
- Code multiplexing (CDMA) → mobile communications, GPS









### **Emission scheme: TCDMA protocol**





### **IMPLEMENTATION**



### **Receiver module**



Includes a MEMS SPU0414HR5H-S microphone, a high bandwidth amplifier and an internally configurable high-pass filter.

Based on a STM32F103 uC, incoming signals are sampled at 100 Ks/s and stored in a buffer whose size (10 000 samples) ensures the acquisition of all emissions in a period.

USB powered and features high speed data transfer to a Host device (computer, smartphone,...)





### Emission scheme: TCDMA protocol Signal processing





### **RECEIVER DESIGN**









 Detection of the sequences assigned to each beacon using GCC-PHAT



### **GCC-PHAT**







- Simulation of the simultaneous detection process for the case of two beacons: CC vs GCC-PHAT
  - High SNR is required for a good performance







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### **TEST ENVIRONMENT A**



- Influence from the sequence type
- Different test positions have been evaluated in the real environment
  - Carrier frequency 41.6kHz
  - 1023-bit Kasami code
  - 1151-bit LS codes







### **TEST ENVIRONMENT A**







## **TEST ENVIRONMENT A**



- 1151-bit LS and T-ZCZ codes
- LS codes and T-ZCZ are more robust to multipath and near-far effect than Kasami ones









- Influence from the correlation algorithm
- Results obtained in a circular path (r=2.35 m) on the floor with the beacons at 3.5m high
  - Multipath
  - Noise









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### Simultaneous Calibration and Navigation (SCAN)

### Conclusions





- Study the positioning and navigation of a mobile robot in an Extensive ULPS in degraded conditions
  - Some distance measurements are not available
- ULPS: Ultrasonic Local Positioning System
  - Composed of 4-5 ultrasonic emitters located at the ceiling and receivers on the mobile robots
  - Coverage area of about 30-40m<sup>2</sup>
- Extensive ULPS:
  - Composed of several single ULPS
  - Coverage area of hundred/thousand m<sup>2</sup>
- Mobile Robot
  - Integrate information from odometers and ULPS
  - Navigates on the floor (2D positioning)







- A globally referenced ULPS at the input/output points to a wide space
- Some locally referenced ULPS may exist inside the wide space
- Coverage areas can overlap





### **ULPS NAVIGATION**





Flowchart





**58** 





### 1023-bit Kasami codes









### Coverage areas do not overlap: only navigation







 Using the structure proposed previously, the objective is the calibration of the non-known LRULPS beacons while the mobile robot is navigating







### Deterministic method













- Coverage areas overlap
  - Beacon calibration, comparison of different integration filters







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- ALPSs are an alternative to positioning systems used from the 1990's.
- First prototypes used to be with narrow band transducers. And, after, broadband systems were introduced.
- Important issues: coverage-beacons' distribution, positioning algorithms (espherical or hyperbolic), coding, multimode access, channel and propagation effects (MAI, ISI, Doppler, near-far, ...)
- Extensive ULPS to cover a large area in a building. Beacons' calibration, as well as navigation algorithms must be considered.
- In order to merge the odometer and the ULPS information, when it is available, different kinds of filters can be implemented (H<sub>∞</sub>, EKF, UKF, PF, …)
- Experimental results





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