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Трета меѓународна конференција ЕТИМА Third International Conference ETIMA

PREFACE

The Third International Conference "Electrical Engineering, Technology, Informatics, Mechanical Engineering and Automation – Technical Sciences in the Service of the Economy, Education and Industry" (ETIMA'25), organized by the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the "Goce Delchev" University – Shtip, represents a significant scientific event that enables interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge and experience among researchers, professors, and experts in the field of technical sciences. The conference was held in an online format and brought together 78 authors from five different countries.

The ETIMA conference aims to establish a forum for scientific communication, encouraging multidisciplinary collaboration and promoting technological innovations with direct impact on modern life. Through the presentation of scientific papers, participants shared the results of their research and development activities, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and practice in relevant fields. The first ETIMA conference was organized four years ago, featuring 40 scientific papers. The second conference took place in 2023 and included over 30 papers. ETIMA'25 continued this scientific tradition, presenting more than 40 papers that reflect the latest achievements in electrical engineering, technology, informatics, mechanical engineering, and automation.

At ETIMA'25, papers were presented that addressed current topics in technical sciences, with particular emphasis on their application in industry, education, and the economy. The conference facilitated fruitful discussions among participants, encouraging new ideas and initiatives for future research and projects.

ETIMA'25 reaffirmed its role as an important platform for scientific exchange and international cooperation. The organizing committee extends sincere gratitude to all participants for their contribution to the successful realization of the conference and its scientific value.

We extend our sincerest gratitude to all colleagues who, through the presentation of their papers, ideas, and active engagement in discussions, contributed to the success and scientific significance of ETIMA'25.

The Organizing Committee of the Conference

ПРЕДГОВОР

Третата меѓународна конференција "Електротехника, Технологија, Информатика, Машинство и Автоматика — технички науки во служба на економијата, образованието и индустријата" (ЕТИМА'25), организирана од Електротехничкиот факултет при Универзитетот "Гоце Делчев" — Штип, претставува значаен научен настан кој овозможува интердисциплинарна размена на знаења и искуства меѓу истражувачи, професори и експерти од техничките науки. Конференцијата се одржа во онлајн формат и обедини 78 автори од пет различни земји.

Конференцијата ЕТИМА има за цел да создаде форум за научна комуникација, поттикнувајќи мултидисциплинарна соработка и промовирајќи технолошки иновации со директно влијание врз современото живеење. Преку презентација на научни трудови, учесниците ги споделуваат резултатите од своите истражувања и развојни активности, придонесувајќи кон унапредување на знаењето и практиката во релевантните области.

Првата конференција ЕТИМА беше организирана пред четири години, при што беа презентирани 40 научни трудови. Втората конференција се одржа во 2023 година и вклучи над 30 трудови. ЕТИМА 25 продолжи со истата научна традиција, презентирајќи повеќе од 40 трудови кои ги отсликуваат најновите достигнувања во областа на електротехниката, технологијата, информатиката, машинството и автоматиката.

На ЕТИМА 25 беа презентирани трудови кои обработуваат актуелни теми од техничките науки, со посебен акцент на нивната примена во индустријата, образованието и економијата. Конференцијата овозможи плодна дискусија меѓу учесниците, поттикнувајќи нови идеи и иницијативи за идни истражувања и проекти.

ЕТИМА'25 ја потврди својата улога како значајна платформа за научна размена и интернационална соработка. Организациониот одбор упатува искрена благодарност до сите учесници за нивниот придонес кон успешната реализација на конференцијата и нејзината научна вредност. Конференцијата се одржа онлајн и обедини седумдесет и осум автори од пет различни земји.

Изразуваме голема благодарност до сите колеги кои со презентирање на своите трудови, идеи и активна вклученост во дискусиите придонесоа за успехот на ЕТИМА'25 и нејзината научна вредност.

Организационен одбор на конференцијата

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APPLICATION OF A ROBOTIC ARM IN A SIMPLE PICK-AND-DROP OPERATION

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Abstract

The robotic arm is one of the most significant innovations in the field of robotics and automation, offering numerous opportunities for improving efficiency and precision in industrial processes. This paper focuses on the application of robotic arms in the industry for the automation of various tasks, such as transferring materials from one place to another, assembling products, welding, painting, packaging and quality control, etc. Through an analysis of modern technologies and trends, the paper explores the benefits of introducing robotic arms into production lines, including increased productivity, reduced costs and improved worker safety. It also discusses the challenges associated with implementation, such as the high initial investment, the need for specialized personnel and ethical issues. In the practical part of the paper, we use the DOBOT MG400 robotic arm to transfer work material from one point to another in a production process.

Key words

robotic arm, industrial automation, productivity, precision, efficiency.

1.Introduction

Industrial robotics is a key component in the process of automating production. Robots are used to perform various tasks that require precision, repeatability, and speed, reducing dependence on human labor. Simple robotic systems such as DOBOT have proven ideal for use in educational institutions, where students can gain hands-on experience with programming and robot control. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the application of the DOBOT robotic arm through the implementation of a Pick and Place operation using DobotStudio software. The DOBOT MG400 offers repeat positioning precision of \pm 0.05mm and a maximum load of 500g. It is a product that combines the advantages of industrial and educational robots.

The field of robotics is interdisciplinary and holds great promise for education [9]. To appreciate its concept, it demands various fields of knowledge. In recent years, as it was reported in [1], we saw a growing presence of Robots in the educational market, not only as tools to motivate students to explore STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) areas, but eventually as actual curriculum elements to teach content. In fact, a number of attempts have been made throughout the world to establish robotics in elementary science and technology education, i.e., in elementary schools and high schools [2]. It can be

taught in class, as projects or even by competition as it encourages the students to develop

solutions to tasks [3].



Figure 1. DOBOT MG400 robotic arm

2. Application of Industrial Robots in Modern Manufacturing

In modern industry, the most commonly used robots are robotic arms. The term "robotic arms" refers to manipulators that mimic human arms. They are made up of a framework made up of links that are both structurally sound and connected by either translating or rotating joints. Therefore, a robotic arm is a kind of mechanically connected or joined arm that performs tasks akin to those of a human arm [5] and is controlled by programmable orders. It could be a component of a larger, more intricate robot or the sum of the mechanism links.

The parts of a typical robotic arm are including the following:

- Joints and links
- End-effector;
- Actuators:
- Controller

A link is a rigid body that establishes the connection between two of a manipulator's corresponding joint axes. The rigid links that make up manipulators are joined by joints that permit the matching links to move relative to one another.

Actuators transform stored energy into movement energy [5], much like the muscles in a human arm do. The manipulator joints of a robot are moved by means of actuators. These days, modern robots typically use three different kinds of actuators: electrical, hydraulic, and pneumatic.

Actuators powered by electric motors move more smoothly, are incredibly dependable, and can be precisely controlled. However, compared to hydraulic actuators of similar mass, mechanical actuators are unable to produce as much power. However, electrical actuators are frequently chosen for low power actuator applications. Stepper motors, servo motors, and direct current (DC) motors are the several kinds of electric motors used as actuators in robotic applications. The primary component of a robot that interprets data and executes commands is the controller [6]. It serves as the "brain" of the robot and directs its actions. Typically, some sort of computer is utilized to store data on the robot and its operation as well as run programs that control the robot. It has programs, data algorithms, logic analysis, and other processing operations that let the robot do what it's supposed to do. An end-effector is a tool used to interact with the outside environment that is attached to the end of a robotic arm [5]. The robot's application determines

the precise nature of its performance. Gripping, pushing and tugging, twisting, utilizing tools, making insertions, welding, and other kinds of assembly tasks are typical end-effector functions. [4]

Industrial robots are used in a wide range of applications: welding, cutting, packaging, palletizing, assembly, quality control, etc. In recent years, there has been a growing trend in the use of small and flexible robots for simple tasks in smaller production facilities. Their use leads to increased efficiency, error reduction, and resource optimization. One of the most common types of applications is Pick and Place, enabling precise transfer of objects from one position to another [10].

Industrial automation with robotic arms offers not only productivity improvements but also the ability to perform repetitive or hazardous tasks with consistent quality. The integration of robots can also improve traceability in manufacturing by logging each step digitally. This allows for better data collection and process optimization.

3.DOBOT Robotic Arm – Features and Tools

The The DOBOT robotic arm distinguishes itself as a compact, precise, and accessible solution [8] for both educational and light industrial use. Designed with flexibility and ease of integration in mind, it bridges the gap between academic training and practical automation tasks.

DOBOT offers several key functionalities:

- End-effector versatility: The robot supports a vacuum suction cup or mechanical gripper, enabling handling of a variety of object types.
- Visual programming interface: Through the Blockly environment in DobotStudio [8], users can develop complex sequences without prior coding experience.
- Command flexibility: The software supports motion control, input/output configuration, time delays, logical operations, custom functions, and variable manipulation.

Specifically, the DOBOT MG400 model provides the following technical specifications:

- Payload capacity: up to 500 grams, suitable for lightweight components or materials.
- Repeatability: ±0.05 mm, ensuring high precision in repeated cycles.
- Reach: 440 mm maximum, enabling interaction with components placed across small workspaces.
- Compact footprint: Designed for benchtop use in classrooms or small automation cells.
- Windows OS compatibility: Seamless operation on standard personal computers.

The DobotStudio platform enhances usability through its drag-and-drop block-based programming approach. Key features of the software include:

- Real-time control and monitoring of the robotic arm.
- Simulation environment for offline development and testing.
- Built-in calibration tools to optimize performance.
- Support for transitioning to advanced programming via Python, LUA, or C APIs.

Overall, the DOBOT system enables scalable learning: from introductory robotics to integration with vision systems, conveyors, and sensors. It represents a practical entry point into the field of robotics, blending intuitive software with robust mechanical design.

4. Programming the Pick and Place Operation for DOBOT MG400 in DobotStudio software

Robotic arms are excellent for performing Pick and Place operations, their use in industry is in processes such as placing small electronic components on boards, as well as large boxes on pallets. To perform the Pick and Place operation, it is necessary to define at least 5 positions:

- Starting position
- Position above the object to be lifted
- Position of the object itself to be lifted
- Position above the place where the object is to be left
- Position at the place of leaving

In the following, we will look at how to program the robot to perform the Pick and Place operation using blocks. In the program itself, we will look at how to program the robot's movement and how to turn the vacuum on and off on the robotic arm. First, we start the DobotStudio software, Figure 2 shows the initial screen that is displayed after starting the program.

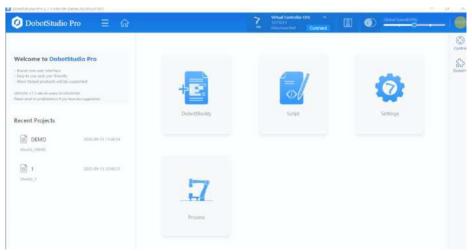


Figure 2. Initial screen of DobotStudio software

On the home screen itself, we can choose whether we want to start with a new file, or we can select an existing file that has been previously saved and upgrade it. To select an existing file, we click and select it from the Recent Projects section; to create a new file we click on the DobotBlockly icon. After clicking on the DobotBlockly icon, a new window opens in which we can start adding blocks that represent commands for the robotic arm.

As we have already mentioned, it is important to first determine the positions themselves, that is, the coordinates along the x, y and z axes, which are used to obtain the position of the robotic arm. The easiest way to determine the coordinates is to put the robotic arm in manual mode and freely move it to the place we want it to reach. In the DobotStudio software itself, we see the movement of the robotic arm in real time, so after manually moving the robotic arm, we can also see the coordinates of the desired position.

Figure 3 shows the part of the software where we can read the values of the coordinates along the x, y and z axes.



Figure 3. Values of the coordinates along the x, y and z axes.

After we have determined all the coordinates or positions that the robotic arm needs to reach, we can start adding the blocks to the program. The block that is used to move the robotic arm is located in the Move commands category, from where we select it and add it to the section where we create the program. Each program begins with the Start block and the remaining blocks are specified in the following. After adding the Move to block, we need to add the coordinates along the x, y and z axes to which we want the robotic arm to be moved. Figure 4 shows the Move block and the part where we enter the coordinates of the position itself.



Figure 4. Move to block setup

Once the robotic arm reaches the position above the object to be lifted, it is necessary to add the block that will activate the vacuum on the end element itself so that the desired object can be lifted. This block is located in the I/O category. Once the robotic arm reaches the position where the object itself should be left, the vacuum needs to be turned off to lower the object to the desired position. Figure 5 shows the block program for picking up two objects from a certain position and placing them in another position, one on top of the other.

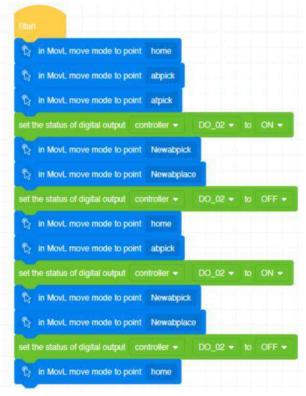


Figure 5. Block program for picking and place operation

5. Implementation and Results

The Pick and Place operation was successfully implemented include the following:

- The arm moves above the object
- The vacuum is activated and the object is picked up
- The arm moves to the new location
- The vacuum is deactivated and the object is placed
- The process is repeated for a second object

In the actual application, two objects were picked and stacked one over the other at the final position. Coordinate precision and timing intervals were crucial for successful implementation. The program was tested multiple times, showing stable behavior with no errors in positioning or actuator control.



Figure 6. Pick and Place operation with DOBOT MG400

6. Discussion

The DOBOT system demonstrates high stability and ease of programming, making it suitable for beginner applications. Key advantages include:

- Fast setup
- Intuitive programming
- Expandability with sensors
- Built-in safety limits and emergency stop features

A limitation is the restricted range of motion and payload capacity, which confines it to lightweight applications. The MG400 model, for instance, is ideal for training environments and light materials but not suitable for heavy-duty tasks. However, for educational purposes and demonstrations of automation, it is an excellent choice.

The system is scalable through integration with conveyor belts, color sensors, and vision modules, which can simulate more realistic industrial environments. Students can also transition from Blockly to scripting languages (e.g., Python, LUA) supported by DOBOT SDK for more advanced development.

7. Conclusion

The DOBOT robotic arm was successfully applied for the implementation of a Pick and Place task using visual programming in DobotStudio. By defining coordinates and controlling the vacuum actuator, a stable operation was achieved that can serve as a foundation for further development of automated systems. This type of robot holds significant potential in education and entry-level automation. The platform encourages experiential learning and offers a practical gateway [9] toward understanding industrial robotics. Future enhancements may include integration with external PLCs and industrial networks to simulate real-world industrial scenarios.

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