

Design of Variable Fractional-Delay FIR Differentiators

Jong-Jy Shyu, Soo-Chang Pei and Min-Han Chang

Abstract—In this paper, the least-squares design of variable fractional-delay (VFD) finite impulse response (FIR) digital differentiators is proposed. The used transfer function is formulated so that Farrow structure can be applied to realize the designed system. Also, the symmetric characteristics of filter coefficients are derived, which leads to the complexity reduction by saving almost a half of the number of coefficients. Moreover, all the elements of related vectors or matrices for the optimal process can be represented in closed forms, which make the design easier. Design example is also presented to illustrate the effectiveness of the proposed method.

Keywords—Differentiator, variable fractional-delay filter, FIR filter, least-squares method, Farrow structure.

I. INTRODUCTION

DIGITAL differentiators are generally used to calculate the instantaneous rate of change of digital signals, and have wide applications in instrument and measurement, biomedical engineering and signal processing [1]–[4] etc. For the past decade, several techniques have been proposed to design digital differentiators, including eigenfilter approach, quadratic optimization, maxflat technique, Simpson integration rule, Newton-Cotes formula, bilinear transformation and semi-infinite programming approach [5]–[15] etc. Also, there is a branch of trend concerning the design of variable fractional-delay (VFD) digital filters which are applied to where the delay characteristic need to be adjustable online without designing a new filters [16]–[24].

In this paper, the design of VFD FIR differentiators is proposed. First, the used transfer function is formulated such that the differentiators can be implemented by Farrow structure [16]. Then the symmetry on filter coefficients is analyzed, and it is found that each of the subfilters in Farrow structure can be designed by the conventional linear-phase FIR filters with symmetric/antisymmetric coefficients. In this paper, a least-squares method is used to the optimal design of VFD FIR differentiators, and all of the elements of related vectors or matrices can be represented in closed forms. Finally, a design example is presented to demonstrate the efficiency of the

proposed method. Also, it is found that although the existing iterative weighted-least-squares method such as the technique in [25] can be applied to minimize the peak absolute error of variable frequency response, but it is not recommended because the delay responses are very sensitive to the variation of magnitude responses around d.c. frequency.

II. PROBLEM FORMULATION AND DESIGN EXAMPLE

Conventionally, for designing a differentiator the desired frequency response is generally given by

$$H_c(\omega) = j\omega e^{-jI\omega}, \quad |\omega| \leq \omega_p \quad (1)$$

where I is the prescribed delay and ω_p is the cutoff frequency. In this paper, it is extended to design a VFD FIR differentiator, and the desired variable frequency response becomes

$$H_d(\omega, p) = j\omega e^{-j(I+p)\omega}, \quad |\omega| \leq \omega_p, \quad -0.5 \leq p \leq 0.5 \quad (2)$$

where p is a adjustable parameter which is used to control the delay of a differentiator online.

In this paper, the used transfer function can be characterized by

$$H(z, p) = \sum_{n=0}^N h_n(p) z^{-n} \quad (3)$$

where the coefficients $h_n(p)$ are expressed as the polynomials of p

$$h_n(p) = \sum_{m=0}^M h(n, m) p^m, \quad (4)$$

hence (3) can be formulated into

$$\begin{aligned} H(z, p) &= \sum_{n=0}^N \sum_{m=0}^M h(n, m) p^m z^{-n} \\ &= \sum_{m=0}^M G_m(z) p^m \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

where the subfilters $G_m(z)$ are given by

$$G_m(z) = \sum_{n=0}^N h(n, m) z^{-n}, \quad 0 \leq m \leq M \quad (6)$$

and the transfer function can be implemented by Farrow structure [16].

Notice that (2) can be further represented by

Jong-Jy Shyu is with Department of Electrical Engineering, National University of Kaohsiung, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, ROC (e-mail: jshyu@nuk.edu.tw).

Soo-Chang Pei is with Department of Electrical Engineering, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC (e-mail: pei@cc.ee.ntu.edu.tw).

Min-Han Chang is with Department of Electrical Engineering, National University of Kaohsiung, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, ROC (e-mail: m0975116@mail.nuk.edu.tw).

$$\begin{aligned}
 H_d(\omega, p) &= e^{-j\omega} (\omega \sin(p\omega) + j\omega \cos(p\omega)) \\
 &= e^{-j\omega} j\omega \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-jp\omega)^m}{m!} \\
 &\cong \sum_{m=0}^M (-1)^m \frac{(j\omega)^{m+1}}{m!} e^{-j\omega} p^m \tag{7}
 \end{aligned}$$

for sufficient large M . Comparing (5) and (7), it can be found that the frequency response of the subfilter $G_m(z)$ is inherently used to approximate $(-1)^m (j\omega)^{m+1} e^{-j\omega} / m!$, for $0 \leq m \leq M$. So it is reasonable to choose the impulse response of $G_m(z)$ to be antisymmetric for even m and symmetric for odd m , and the frequency response of (5) for even N can be formulated into

$$\begin{aligned}
 H(e^{j\omega}, p) &= \sum_{m=0}^{M_e} \left[\sum_{n=0}^N h(n, 2m) e^{-jn\omega} \right] p^{2m} + \sum_{m=0}^{M_o} \left[\sum_{n=0}^N h(n, 2m+1) e^{-jn\omega} \right] p^{2m+1} \\
 &= e^{-j\frac{N}{2}\omega} \left[j \sum_{m=0}^{M_e} \sum_{n=1}^{N/2} a(n, m) p^{2m} \sin(n\omega) + \sum_{m=0}^{M_o} \sum_{n=0}^{N/2} b(n, m) p^{2m+1} \cos(n\omega) \right] \tag{8}
 \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\begin{cases} M_e = M_o + 1 = \frac{M}{2}, & \text{for even } M, \\ M_e = M_o = \frac{M-1}{2}, & \text{for odd } M \end{cases} \tag{9}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}
 a(n, m) &= 2h\left(\frac{N}{2} - n, 2m\right) = -2h\left(\frac{N}{2} + n, 2m\right), \\
 1 \leq n \leq \frac{N}{2}, \quad 0 \leq m \leq M_e \tag{10a}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$b(n, m) = \begin{cases} h\left(\frac{N}{2}, 2m+1\right), & n=0, \quad 0 \leq m \leq M_o, \\ 2h\left(\frac{N}{2} - n, 2m+1\right) \\ = 2h\left(\frac{N}{2} + n, 2m+1\right), & 1 \leq n \leq \frac{N}{2}, \quad 0 \leq m \leq M_o. \end{cases} \tag{10b}$$

It is noted that $h\left(\frac{N}{2}, 2m\right) = 0$ for $0 \leq m \leq M_e$, and obviously $I = N/2$. Also, the case for odd N can be extended in the same manner.

Define

$$\mathbf{a} = \left[a(1, 0), \dots, a\left(\frac{N}{2}, 0\right), \dots, a(1, M_e), \dots, a\left(\frac{N}{2}, M_e\right) \right]^T, \tag{11a}$$

$$\mathbf{b} = \left[b(0, 0), \dots, b\left(\frac{N}{2}, 0\right), \dots, b(0, M_o), \dots, b\left(\frac{N}{2}, M_o\right) \right]^T, \tag{11b}$$

$$\mathbf{s}(\omega, p) = \left[\sin(\omega), \dots, \sin\left(\frac{N}{2}\omega\right), \dots, p^{2M_e} \sin(\omega), \dots, p^{2M_e} \sin\left(\frac{N}{2}\omega\right) \right]^T \tag{11c}$$

and

$$\mathbf{c}(\omega, p) = \left[p, \dots, p \cos\left(\frac{N}{2}\omega\right), \dots, p^{2M_o+1}, \dots, p^{2M_o+1} \cos\left(\frac{N}{2}\omega\right) \right]^T \tag{11d}$$

where the superscript T denotes the transpose operator, Eq.(8) can be further represented by

$$H(e^{j\omega}, p) = e^{-j\frac{N}{2}\omega} (j\mathbf{a}^T \mathbf{s}(\omega, p) + \mathbf{b}^T \mathbf{c}(\omega, p)). \tag{12}$$

In this paper, the objective error function is given by

$$\begin{aligned}
 e(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b}) &= \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |H_d(\omega, p) - H(e^{j\omega}, p)|^2 d\omega dp \\
 &= \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |\omega \sin(p\omega) + j\omega \cos(p\omega) \\
 &\quad - j\mathbf{a}^T \mathbf{s}(\omega, p) - \mathbf{b}^T \mathbf{c}(\omega, p)|^2 d\omega dp \\
 &= e(\mathbf{a}) + e(\mathbf{b}) \tag{13}
 \end{aligned}$$

where

$$e(\mathbf{a}) = \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |\omega \cos(p\omega) - \mathbf{a}^T \mathbf{s}(\omega, p)|^2 d\omega dp \tag{14a}$$

and

$$e(\mathbf{b}) = \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |\omega \sin(p\omega) - \mathbf{b}^T \mathbf{c}(\omega, p)|^2 d\omega dp. \tag{14b}$$

Eq.(14a) can be further represented by

$$e(\mathbf{a}) = s_a + \mathbf{r}_a^T \mathbf{a} + \mathbf{a}^T \mathbf{Q}_a \mathbf{a} \tag{15}$$

where

$$s_a = \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega^2 \cos^2(p\omega) d\omega dp, \tag{16a}$$

$$\mathbf{r}_a = -2 \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega \cos(p\omega) \mathbf{s}(\omega, p) d\omega dp \tag{16b}$$

and

$$\mathbf{Q}_a = \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \mathbf{s}(\omega, p) \mathbf{s}^T(\omega, p) d\omega dp. \tag{16c}$$

By the Taylor series expansion of cosine function,

$$\begin{aligned}
 s_a &= \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega^2 \left[\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} \cos(2p\omega) \right] d\omega dp \\
 &= \frac{\omega_p^3}{6} + \frac{1}{2} \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega^2 \left[\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} (-1)^k \frac{(2p\omega)^{2k}}{(2k)!} \right] d\omega dp \\
 &\cong \frac{\omega_p^3}{6} + \sum_{k=0}^K \frac{(-4)^k}{(2k)!} \frac{0.5^{2k+1} \omega_p^{2k+3}}{2k+1} \tag{17a}
 \end{aligned}$$

and the elements of \mathbf{r}_a and \mathbf{Q}_a can be derived as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 r_a(i) &= -2 \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega \cos(p\omega) p^{2m} \sin(n\omega) d\omega dp \\
 &= -2 \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} p^{2m} \omega \sin(n\omega) \left[\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} (-1)^k \frac{(p\omega)^{2k}}{(2k)!} \right] d\omega dp \\
 &\cong -4 \sum_{k=0}^K \frac{(-1)^k}{(2k)!} \frac{0.5^{2m+2k+1} \omega_p^{2k+3}}{2m+2k+1} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega^{2k+1} \sin(n\omega) d\omega, \\
 0 \leq i \leq \frac{N}{2} (M_e + 1) - 1, \tag{17b}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{Q}_a(i, l) &= \int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} p^{2m} \sin(n\omega) p^{2\hat{m}} \sin(\hat{n}\omega) d\omega dp \\ &= \frac{0.5^{2m+2\hat{m}+1}}{2m+2\hat{m}+1} \left[\frac{\sin((n-\hat{n})\omega_p)}{n-\hat{n}} - \frac{\sin((n+\hat{n})\omega_p)}{n+\hat{n}} \right], \\ 0 \leq i, l &\leq \frac{N}{2} (M_e + 1) - 1. \end{aligned} \tag{17c}$$

In(17), $n = \text{mod}(i, \frac{N}{2}) + 1$, $m = \lfloor \frac{i}{N/2} \rfloor$, $\hat{n} = \text{mod}(l, \frac{N}{2}) + 1$ and $\hat{m} = \lfloor \frac{l}{N/2} \rfloor$ where $\text{mod}(x, y)$ denotes the remainder when the integer x is divided by the integer y , and $\lfloor u \rfloor$ denotes the largest integer less than or equal to the real number u . Also, the K in (17) must be chosen large enough as in [22], and $K = 10$ is used in this paper.

Similarly,

$$\mathbf{e}(\mathbf{b}) = \mathbf{s}_b + \mathbf{r}_b^T \mathbf{b} + \mathbf{b}^T \mathbf{Q}_b \mathbf{b} \tag{18}$$

where

$$\mathbf{s}_b \cong \frac{\omega_p^3}{6} - \sum_{k=0}^K \frac{(-4)^k}{(2k)!} \frac{0.5^{2k+1}}{2k+1} \frac{\omega_p^{2k+3}}{2k+3} \tag{19a}$$

and the elements of \mathbf{r}_b and \mathbf{Q}_b are given by

$$\begin{aligned} r_b(i) &\cong -4 \sum_{k=0}^K \frac{(-1)^k}{(2k+1)!} \frac{0.5^{2m+2k+3}}{2m+2k+3} \int_0^{\omega_p} \omega^{2k+2} \cos(n\omega) d\omega, \\ 0 \leq i &\leq (\frac{N}{2} + 1)(M_o + 1) - 1, \end{aligned} \tag{19b}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{Q}_b(i, l) &= \frac{0.5^{2m+2\hat{m}+3}}{2m+2\hat{m}+3} \left[\frac{\sin((n-\hat{n})\omega_p)}{n-\hat{n}} + \frac{\sin((n+\hat{n})\omega_p)}{n+\hat{n}} \right], \\ 0 \leq i, l &\leq (\frac{N}{2} + 1)(M_o + 1) - 1. \end{aligned} \tag{19c}$$

In (19), $n = \text{mod}(i, \frac{N}{2} + 1)$, $m = \lfloor \frac{i}{N/2+1} \rfloor$, $\hat{n} = \text{mod}(l, \frac{N}{2} + 1)$

and $\hat{m} = \lfloor \frac{l}{N/2+1} \rfloor$.

Once (17) and (19) are found, the coefficient vectors \mathbf{a} and \mathbf{b} can be determined by differentiating (13) with respect to \mathbf{a} and \mathbf{b} ,

$$\frac{\partial e(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b})}{\partial \mathbf{a}} = \frac{\partial e(\mathbf{a})}{\partial \mathbf{a}} = \mathbf{r}_a + 2\mathbf{Q}_a \mathbf{a}, \tag{20a}$$

$$\frac{\partial e(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b})}{\partial \mathbf{b}} = \frac{\partial e(\mathbf{b})}{\partial \mathbf{b}} = \mathbf{r}_b + 2\mathbf{Q}_b \mathbf{b} \tag{20b}$$

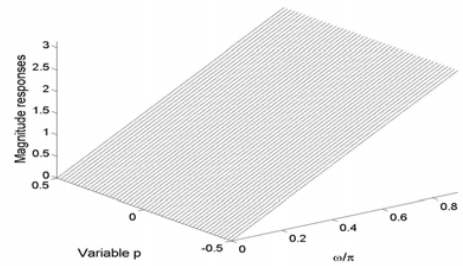
and then setting the above results to zeros, which yields

$$\mathbf{a} = -\frac{1}{2} \mathbf{Q}_a^{-1} \mathbf{r}_a \tag{21a}$$

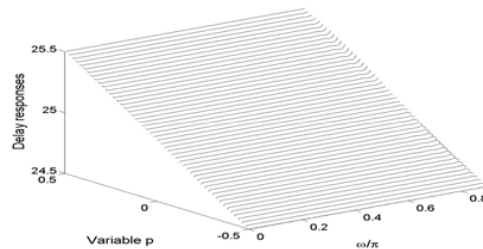
and

$$\mathbf{b} = -\frac{1}{2} \mathbf{Q}_b^{-1} \mathbf{r}_b. \tag{21b}$$

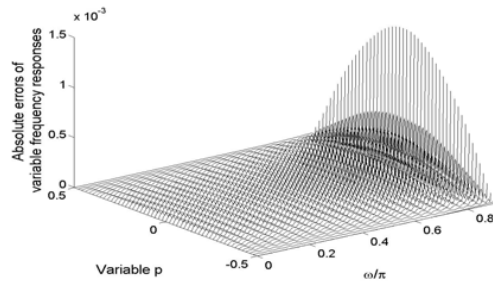
To evaluate the performance of the designed method, the



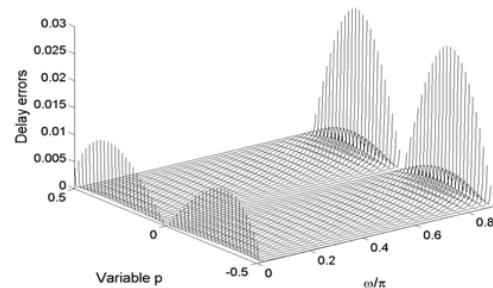
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Fig. 1 Design of an $N = 50$, $M = 7$, $\omega_p = 0.9\pi$ VFD FIR differentiator. (a) Magnitude responses. (b) Delay responses. (c) Absolute errors of variable frequency responses. (d) Absolute delay errors.

normalized root-mean-squares error of the variable frequency response, the maximum absolute error of variable frequency response and the maximum absolute delay error are defined by

$$\mathcal{E}_2 = \left[\frac{\int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |H_d(\omega, p) - H(e^{j\omega}, p)|^2 d\omega dp}{\int_{-0.5}^{0.5} \int_0^{\omega_p} |H_d(\omega, p)|^2 d\omega dp} \right]^{1/2} \times 100\%, \tag{22a}$$

$$\varepsilon_m = \max \left\{ \left| H_d(\omega, p) - H(e^{j\omega}, p) \right|, 0 \leq \omega \leq \omega_p, -0.5 \leq p \leq 0.5 \right\} \quad (22b)$$

and

$$\varepsilon_r = \max \left\{ \left| \tau_d(\omega, p) - \tau(\omega, p) \right|, 0 < \omega \leq \omega_p, -0.5 \leq p \leq 0.5 \right\}, \quad (22c)$$

respectively, where $\tau_d(\omega, p)$ and $\tau(\omega, p)$ are the ideal delay response and the actual delay response of the designed VFD FIR differentiator. To compute (22b) and (22c), the frequency ω and the parameter p are uniformly sampled at the step sizes $\omega_p/400$ and $1/50$, respectively. Notice that the delay errors for $\omega=0$, $-0.5 \leq p \leq 0.5$ are not included in (22c) because the magnitude responses over that area are almost zero.

Example: This example deals with the design of an $N = 50$, $M = 7$, $\omega_p = 0.9\pi$ VFD FIR differentiator, and the magnitude responses and delay responses are shown in Fig.1(a) and (b), respectively, while Fig.1(c) and (d) present the absolute errors of variable frequency responses and the absolute delay errors, respectively. The related errors are list as below:

$$\begin{aligned} \varepsilon_2 &= 0.00503772\% \\ \varepsilon_m &= 0.0014095 \\ \varepsilon_r &= 0.02612531. \end{aligned}$$

For the VFD FIR differentiator design, it is not recommended to incorporate a weighting function in (13) such that the peak absolute error of variable frequency responses can be minimized, because the delay responses near $\omega=0$ are very sensitive to the variation of magnitude responses. For example, if the iterative weighted-least-squares method in [25] is applied, about five iterations are needed to minimize the maximum absolute error of variable frequency responses, and $\varepsilon_m = 0.0003173$ which is much smaller than that shown above, but the maximum absolute delay error becomes $\varepsilon_r = 0.05014075$ which is much larger than that shown above.

III. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, the proposed least-squares method has been successfully applied to the design of VFD FIR differentiators. It can be found that the dominant difference between general VFD FIR digital filters [22] and VFD FIR differentiators is that only the middle coefficient of the first subfilter is required for the former but not for the latter. Although the proposed system can be replaced by cascading a differentiator with a variable fractional-delay filter, but however, which will leads to a larger delay. Obviously, the technique proposed in this paper can also be applied to the design of VFD higher-order or fractional-order FIR differentiators.

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Jong-Jy Shyu was born in Taiwan, on March 7, 1960. He received the B.S. degree in electrical engineering from Tatung University, Taipei, Taiwan in 1983 and the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from National Taiwan University, Taipei in 1988 and 1992, respectively.

He was with the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Tatung University as an Associate Professor in 1992 and a Professor in 1996. From 1997 to 2000, he was with the Department of Computer and Communication Engineering, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. He is currently with the Department of Electrical Engineering, National University of Kaohsiung, Kaohsiung. His research interests include the design and implementation of digital filters, and digital signal processing.

Soo-Chang Pei was born in Soo-Auo, Taiwan, in 1949. He received the B.S.E.E. degree from National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan, in 1970 and the M.S.E.E. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, Santa Barbara, in 1972 and 1975, respectively.

He was an Engineering Officer with the Chinese Navy Shipyard from 1970 to 1971. From 1971 to 1975, he was a Research Assistant with the University of California. He was a Professor with and the Chairman of the Department of Electrical Engineering, Tatung Institute of Technology, and National Taiwan University, from 1981 to 1983 and 1995 to 1998, respectively. He is currently the Dean of the College of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and a Professor of the Department of Electrical Engineering and the Graduate Institute of Communication Engineering, National Taiwan University. His research interests include digital signal processing, image processing, optical information processing, and laser holography.

Dr. Pei received the National Sun Yet-Sen Academic Achievement Award in Engineering in 1984, the Distinguished Research Award from the National Science Council from 1990 to 1998, the Outstanding Electrical Engineering Professor Award from the Chinese Institute of Electrical Engineering in 1998; the Academic Achievement Award in Engineering from the Ministry of Education in 1998, the Pan Wen-Yuan Distinguished Research Award in 2002, and the National Chair Professor Award from the Ministry of Education in 2002. He was the President of the Chinese Image Processing and Pattern Recognition Society in Taiwan from 1996 to 1998 and is a member of the IEEE, Eta Kappa Nu and the Optical Society of America. He became an IEEE Fellow in 2000 for his contributions to the development of digital eigenfilter design, color image coding, and signal compression and to electrical engineering education in Taiwan.

Min-Han Chang received the B.S degree in Electrical Engineering from National University of Kaohsiung, Taiwan, in 2007, where he is currently working toward the M.S. degree. His research interests include filter design and digital signal processing.