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MR Elastomers for Structural Control

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

Master of Engineering – Research

Yang ZHOU

Faculty of Engineering, University of Wollongong

June 2009

Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia

CERTIFICATION

I, Yang ZHOU, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Engineering – research, in the School of Civil, Mining and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Yang ZHOU

18th June 2009

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on a basic understanding of the behaviour of Magnetorheological elastomers (MREs) and their application as MRE bearings for vibration controlling the structural systems. MREs are an important member of the group of smart materials and as such have attracted increasing interest because their modulus can be controlled by an external magnetic field.

Because MRE based devices usually work in a dynamic mode, the study of MRE properties under these conditions is essential for its practical application. The relationship between the dynamic shear stress and shear strain in various magnetic fields, including different strain amplitudes and frequencies, were measured. The stress-strain data forms elliptical curves which show that MRE behaves as if it possessed linear viscoelastic properties.

Based on these experimental results, a viscoelastic solid model with four parameters was proposed to predict the performance of MRE. In this model a spring element was placed in parallel with a 3-parameter standard viscoelastic solid model. A MATLAB optimization algorithm was used to identify the four parameters under various working conditions (magnetic field, strain amplitude and frequency). A comparison between the experimental results and the model predictions proved that the four-parameter viscoelastic model can accurately predict the performance of MRE.

A building model, three stories high, was constructed using MATLAB SIMULINK to evaluate the performance of an MRE device in structural control. Three controllers, passive on, passive off and bang-bang control strategy were used to compare the response of each storey to displacement and acceleration. In addition, the performance of an MRF damper and an MRE device in structural control, where the resultant peak force was selected as a criterion in the evaluation process, was compared and discussed. The effectiveness of an MRE bearing in structural control was well justified.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF FIGURE CAPTIONS	vi
LIST OF TABLE CAPTIONS	ix
LIST OF SYMBOLS	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION	1
1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
1.3 THESIS OUTLINE	2
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	4
2.1 INTRODUCTION	4
2.2 MRE MATERIALS	4
2.2.1 MRE Material components	4
2.2.2 Fabrication a sample of MRE	6
2.3 MRE PROPERTY	7
2.3.1 Steady-state and dynamic properties of MRE	7
2.3.2 Influence factors of MRE	8
2.4 MODEL STUDIES OF MREs	12
2.4.1 Dipole model	12
2.4.2 Equivalent linear model	15
2.4.3 Phenomenological model	16
2.5 APPLICATIONS OF MRE	18
2.6 CONCLUSION	19
CHAPTER 3 STUDY OF THE VISCOELASTIC PROPERTIES OF MREs	20
3.1 INTRODUCTION	20

3.2 EXPERIMENTAL	20
3.2.1 Materials	20
3.2.2 Magneto-rheological Measurement	21
3.2.3 Experimental results	23
3.3 MODELLING MR ELASTOMERS	27
3.4 SYSTEM IDENTIFICATION	30
3.4.1 Parameter Identification	30
3.4.2 Comparison between experimental results and modelling predictions	32
3.5 CONCLUSION	38
CHAPTER 4 PHENOMENOLOGICAL MODEL OF MRE BEARINGS	39
4.1 INTRODUCTION	39
4.2 EXPERIMENTAL	39
4.2.1 Design and fabrication of MRE bearings	39
4.2.2 Experimental setup	40
4.2.3 Results and discussion	42
4.3 PHENOMENOLOGICAL MODEL	45
4.3.1 Modelling analysis	45
4.3.2 Parameter Identification	47
4.3.3 A comparison between experimental and model	50
4.3.4 Discussion of the MRE device	51
4.4 CONCLUSION	53
CHAPTER 5 SIMULATED EVALUATION OF AN MRE BEARING FOR STRUCTURAL CONTROL	54
5.1 INTRODUCTION	54
5.2 THREE STOREY BUILDING MODEL INCORPORATING AN MRE BEARING	54
5.2.1 Model of multi-storied structures	54
5.2.2 A three-storied benchmark model incorporating an MRE bearing	56
5.3 SIMULINK IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS	59
5.3.1 External seismic excitations	59

5.3.2 Three controllers	61
5.3.3 Performance evaluation	63
5.3.4 Discussion	78
5.4 CONCLUSION	80
CHAPTER 6 A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MRF DAMPER AND MRE ISOLATOR	81
6.1 INTRODUCTION	81
6.2 STUDY OF AN MRF DAMPER	81
6.3 SIMULATING AN MRE DEVICE	83
6.4 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	86
6.4.1 Dissipated energy of an MRF damper and MRE device	86
6.4.2 Structural responses evaluation	88
6.5 DISCUSSION	95
6.6 CONCLUSION	97
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK	98
7.1 SUMMARY	98
7.1.1 An experimental study of a multi-layer MRE bearing	98
7.1.2 A four-parameter viscoelastic phenomenological model	98
7.1.3 A simulation program for building structures	99
7.1.4 Performance evaluation	99
7.2 FUTURE WORK	100
REFERENCES	101
Appendix A: The Stress-Strain relationship of 1% and 5% amplitude input	108
Appendix B: MATLAB Program of four-parameter viscoelastic model	109
Appendix C: The relationship between magnetic flux density and current intensity	110
Appendix D: The simulation program of a three-storey building model	111
Appendix E: Peak response of building structure due to Northridge earthquake	112

LIST OF FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 2.1 The dipole model	13
Figure 2.2 Particle saturation model	13
Figure 2.3 Hysteresis loop of MRE bearing in a different magnetic flux density	16
Figure 2.4 MRE phenomenological model	17
Figure 3.1 A diagram of the experimental setup	21
Figure 3.2 Plot of magnetic flux density (B_{MRE}) versus current (I) for the samples of MRE	22
Figure 3.3 Strain-stress curve of sample in different magnetic fields	24
Figure 3.4 Stress-Strain relationship of 10% amplitude input	25
Figure 3.5 Stress-Strain relationships for different strain amplitudes in 1000mA	26
Figure 3.6 Stress-Strain relationships for different frequency inputs in 1000mA	27
Figure 3.7 Four-parameter viscoelastic model for MR elastomers	28
Figure 3.8 A comparison between experimental data with model-predicted results (Strain)	33
Figure 3.9 A comparison between experimental data with model-predicted results (Frequency)	34
Figure 3.10 The relationship of current inputs with the storage and loss modulus	36
Figure 3.11 The relationship of frequency inputs with the storage and loss modulus	37
Figure 4.1 Schematic cross-section of the MR elastomers bearing	40
Figure 4.2 Schematic of experiment setup for MRE devices	41
Figure 4.3 Photograph of experiment setup for MRE devices	41
Figure 4.4 Relationship of displacement and force for MRE devices	42
Figure 4.5 Relationship of effective stiffness and effective viscous damping constant with external magnetic flux density	44
Figure 4.6 The four-parameter viscoelastic model for the MRE device	45
Figure 4.7 The relationship of four parameters with magnetic flux density inputs	48

Figure 4.8 Comparison of experimental results and analytical model results	51
Figure 4.9 The relationship of the real part and the imaginary part with magnetic flux density inputs	52
Figure 5.1 Idealised structural model	55
Figure 5.2 Schematic of a three storied building model incorporating an MRE bearing	57
Figure 5.3 Time-scaled ground acceleration of a typical seismic excitation record	60
Figure 5.4 The bang-bang control logic schematic for building	63
Figure 5.5 Displacement for each floor with an MRE device for passive off control logic	64
Figure 5.6 Acceleration for each floor with an MRE device for passive off control logic	66
Figure 5.7 Displacement for each floor with an MRE device for passive on control logic	69
Figure 5.8 Acceleration for each floor with an MRE device for passive on control logic	70
Figure 5.9 Displacement for each floor with an MRE device for Bang-bang control logic	73
Figure 5.10 Acceleration for each floor with an MRE device for Bang-bang control logic	75
Figure 6.1 A simple mechanical model of an MR damper	82
Figure 6.2 The relationship between displacement and force for an MR damper	83
Figure 6.3 The relationship between K_1 and K_2 with different frequency inputs for an MRE device	84
Figure 6.4 The relationship between displacement and force for an MRE device	86
Figure 6.5 The relationship between displacement and force for an MRF damper and MRE device	87
Figure 6.6 Displacement for each floor with an MRE device for passive off control logic	89

Figure 6.7 Acceleration for each floor with an MRE device for passive off control logic	90
Figure 6.8 Displacement for each floor with an MRE device for passive on control logic	92
Figure 6.9 Acceleration for each floor with an MRE device for passive on control logic	93

LIST OF TABLE CAPTIONS

Table 2.1 Parameters of an MRE phenomenological model	17
Table 3.1 Identified parameters	31
Table 3.2 Parameters identified for different frequencies with strain amplitude of 10%	32
Table 4.1 Four parameters at different magnetic flux density inputs	47
Table 4.2 Identification of the function parameters for the viscoelastic model	50
Table 5.1. Structural model parameters	58
Table 5.2 Peak responses due to the El Centro earthquake (Passive Off)	68
Table 5.3 Peak responses due to the El Centro earthquake (Passive On)	72
Table 5.4 Peak responses due to the El Centro earthquake (Bang-bang)	77
Table 5.5 Peak responses due to the El Centro earthquake	78
Table 6.1 Parameters of linear exploration for K_1 and K_2	85
Table 6.2 K_1 and K_2 of MRE device at 2.5 Hz frequency input	85
Table 6.3 Dissipation energy of an MRF damper and MRE device	88
Table 6.4 Peak response due to the El Centro earthquake (MRF)	88
Table 6.5 Peak response due to the El Centro earthquake (MRE)	95
Table 6.6 A comparison between an MRF damper and MRE device	95

LIST OF SYMBOLS

A	test displacement amplitude
B	magnetic flux density
C	damping matrices of structure
c_b	damping coefficient of MREs bearing without control current
c_e	effective viscous damping constant
c_n	viscous damping coefficient for the n^{th} storey
E_{loop}	energy dissipation per cycle of loading
F^+	experimental positive forces
F^-	experimental negative forces
F_{MRE}	control force of MREs bearing
G	pre-yield modulus
G_1	storage modulus
G_2	loss modulus
I	external intensity current inputs
I_{max}	maximum value of the input current
I_{min}	minimum value of the input current
J_p	dipole moment magnitude per unit particle volume
J_s	saturation polarization of the particles
K	stiffness matrices of structure
k_b	stiffness of MREs bearing without control current
k_e	effective stiffness
k_n	elastic stiffness coefficient for the n^{th} storey
M	total mass of the base
m_n	mass of the n^{th} storey
m_b	mass of MRE bearing
M	mass matrices of structure
N	experimental number of one loop

V_i	volume of particle
u_l	relative permeability of the medium
u_0	vacuum permeability
x_0	amplitude of displacement
x_n	displacement of the n^{th} storey
σ	shear stress of MRE sample
ω	angle frequency of shear strain
ε_0	amplitude of shear strain
ε	shear strain of MRE sample
ϕ	phase angle
Δ^+	experimental positive displacement
Δ^-	experimental negative displacement
η	damping loss factor for structure