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# Comparison study of industrial robots for high-speed machining

Alexandr Klimchik<sup>1</sup>, Alexandre Ambiehl<sup>2,3,4</sup>, Sebastien Garnier<sup>2,3</sup>,  
Benoit Furet<sup>2,3</sup> and Anatol Pashkevich<sup>2,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Innopolis University, Universitetskaya St, 1, Innopolis, Tatarstan, 420500, Russia

<sup>2</sup>Institut de Recherches en Communications et en Cybernétique de Nantes,  
UMR CNRS 6597, 1 rue de la Noe, 44321 Nantes, France

<sup>3</sup>Université de Nantes, Chemin de la Censive du Tertre, 44300 Nantes, France

<sup>4</sup>Gébé 2 Productique, Parc Activite Vendée Sud Loire, 85600 Boufféré, France

<sup>5</sup>Ecole des Mines de Nantes, 4 rue Alfred-Kastler, 44307 Nantes, France

[a.klimchik@innopolis.ru](mailto:a.klimchik@innopolis.ru)

**Abstract.** The paper presents methodology for comparison of industrial robots used for high-speed machining. Particular attention is paid to the robot accuracy in milling operation and evaluation robot capacity to perform the task with desired precision. In contrast to other works, the robot performance is evaluated using an industrial standard that is based on the distortion of the circular shape. The developed approach is applied to four industrial robots of KUKA family, which have been compared with respect to the machining precision.

**Keywords:** Robot-based machining, circularity index, industrial robot, stiffness model, compliance errors, robot comparison.

## 1 Introduction

High-speed machining is quite a new application of industrial robots. As follows from related study (Chen and Dong, 2013), the machining segment represents less than 5% of the total market of the industrial robots, but this share is continuously increasing. So, replacement of conventional CNC machines by more competitive industrial robots becomes more and more attractive. The main restraint here is rather limited knowledge of robotics by potential customers and lack of competence of the of robotic cell end-users. On the other side, the research labs have already confirmed that CNC machines replacement by robots gives essential benefits, which must be clarified for practicing engineers. For this reason, this paper proposes an industry oriented technique for evaluation of the robot capacities in machining, which can be used as the base for the related comparison study.

In contrast to conventional CNC machines, robots are able to process complex bulky 3D shapes and provide large and easily extendable workspace that can be modified by adding extra axes. Besides, the same workspace can be shared by several robots. However, the robot trajectory generation is much more complex task compared to the Cartesian machines since mapping from the actuator space to the operational space is highly non-linear. Another difficulty arises because of robot

redundancy with respect to the technological process. In fact, conventional machining process requires 5 dof only while most of industrial robots have 6 actuators. This redundancy can be used to optimize the tool path, to improve the trajectory smoothness (Zargarbashi et al., 2012a) or to minimize the impact of machining forces (Zargarbashi et al., 2012b, Vosniakos and Matsas, 2010).

Another difficulty of robot application in machining is related to non-negligible compliance of robotic manipulators. In some cases the end-effector deflections due to the influence of the cutting forces may overcome 10 mm (Matsuoka et al., 1999). To reduce them, robot manufactures pay particular attention to the manipulator stiffness and compensation of the compliance errors. To improve the manipulator rigidity, designers are obliged either to increase the link cross-sections or to use advanced composite materials. The first solution leads to increasing of moving masses and consequent reduction of dynamic properties. Utilization of composite materials essentially influences on the robot price and decreases its market competitiveness. Nevertheless, both ways improve the link stiffness only, while the major manipulator elasticity is often concentrated in the actuator gears (Dumas et al., 2012) and can be hardly improved in practice. Another method of the compliance error reduction is based on the mechanical gravity compensators. However, this solution does not allow compensating the impact of the machining forces. To overcome the problem of elastic deformations in the actuator gears, robot manufactures tends to use secondary encoders attached to the motor shaft (Devlieg, 2010) that allow to modify the actuator input in order to compensate the gear compliance. It is obvious that this approach also increases the robot price. According to our experience, the double encoders enable compensating about 65% of the compliance errors. The main reason for this is that the robot link deformations are outside of the double encoder observability. It is clear that for the high-speed milling, where the cutting forces are high enough to cause deflection of several millimeters, such level of error compensation is insufficient. In this case, it is reasonable to apply the off-line error compensation technique (Klimchik et al., 2013a, Chen et al., 2013) based on the modifying the reference trajectory used as the controller input. As follows from our previous research, this approach is very efficient. In particular, the off-line technique based on the simple (reduced) manipulator stiffness model allows user to compensate 85-90% of the end-effector deflections (Klimchik et al., 2012), while the complete stiffness model ensures the compensation level of about 95% (Klimchik et al., 2015). However, robot manufactures usually do not provide customers with the manipulator stiffness parameters, so they must carry out dedicated experimental study (Abele et al., 2007, Nubiola and Bonev, 2013). In this paper, the above mentioned problem will be also considered.

To advance robot application in machining, end-user should be provided with clear and efficient tool allowing to evaluate the final product quality expressed via the level of the end-effector deflections caused by the manipulator elasticity. It is evident that usual approach based on different performance measures extracted from the Cartesian stiffness matrix (Guo et al., 2015, Nagai and Liu, 2008) are not suitable here. For this reason, this paper proposes an industry oriented technique allowing to examine particular robot suitability for a give machining task and to compare several robot-based implementations.

## 2 Robot-based machining

Machining with robots is an intersection of two engineering fields: conventional machining and robotics. Machining sector usually prefers for these operations Cartesian CNC machines that provide end-users with high repeatability ( $2\ \mu\text{m}$ ) and good precision ( $5\ \mu\text{m}$ ). Traditionally, they are used for processing of metal parts from parallelepiped-like crude products with high material removal rate. Contemporary CNC machines possess quite large workspace allowing essentially increase an application area. Besides, their efficiency was also proved for processing of composite materials that are utilized more and more due to perfect mass-to-strength ratio. In addition to milling, finishing and trimming operations can be also performed by CNC machines. Nevertheless, in spite of numerous advantages, the CNC machines remain very expensive and their workspace is limited and cannot be extended, which is crucial for aeronautic and shipbuilding. This motivates users to find an alternative solution.

One of the promising ways to overcome the above mentioned difficulties is replacing the CNC machines by industrial robots, whose cost is competitive and workspace can be easily extended (by adding extra actuated axes). An example for such an application is presented in Fig. 1. Traditionally, the market of industrial robots is shared between handling, pick and place, assembling and welding. The processing (including machining), represents insignificant part of the market, less than 5%. According to PWC study (McCutcheon and Pethick, 2014) these shares will remain the same in the nearest future. Nevertheless, the share of robot-based machining is continuously growing. Large part of this market share corresponds to trimming that was traditionally a high-qualified manual work, but nowadays the robots become competitive here due to increasing of their accuracy. For machining, robots are attractive due to their large and extendable workspace and competitive price that makes them a cost-effective solution for machining of large dimension parts. However, the main obstacle for robots' utilization in machining is their relatively low accuracy (about  $0.7\ \text{mm}$ ) and repeatability (about  $0.2\ \text{mm}$ ) compared to the CNC machines. Nevertheless, there are a number of efficient solutions to reduce manipulator positioning errors that were discovered in research labs and progressively applied in industrial environment. The latter allows robots to compete with CNC machines in terms of accuracy, while providing essentially larger workspace.



**Fig. 1.** Example of machining process with robot

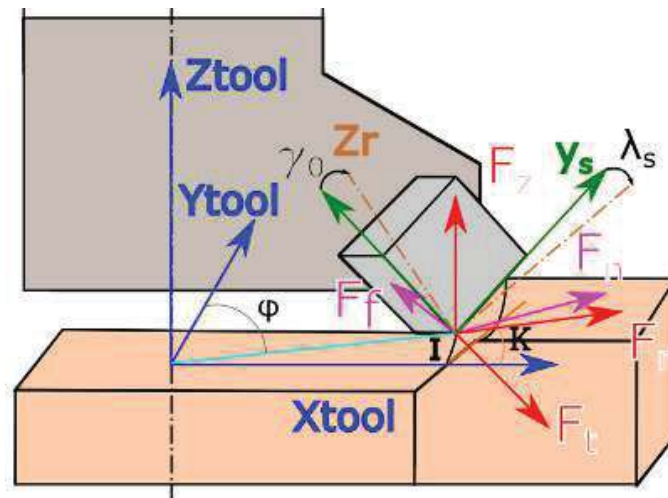
The problem of the machining process modeling has been known since pioneer work (Merchant, 1945), where Merchant used principle of minimum angle to develop an analytical 1D cutting force model based on chip thickness and material removal behavior. Latter, this model has been extended to the cases of 2D and 3D (Doi and Kato, 1955). The further advances in this area lead to mechanistic models (Koenigsberger and Sabberwal, 1961). These models explain the machining process as the function of the cutting tool geometry and process parameters (such as feed rate, spindle speed, etc). Further, the cutting force model was integration in the commercial software (Weck et al., 1994, Shirase and Altıntaş, 1996). These models were able to predict deformation of the tool during machining and adapt cutting conditions (Wan et al., 2014, Araujo et al., 2015, Ali et al., 2013).

For the face milling application, the carbide insert tool cutting force model is the most advanced one allowing analyzing the path of each teeth and to predict corresponding force (Cheng et al., 1997). The geometry of technological process and corresponding cutting forces are given in Fig. 2. In the tool coordinate system, the instantaneous force  $\mathbf{F}^i = [F_n^i, 0, F_f^i]^T$  is defined by the normal force  $F_n$  acting perpendicular to the tool face and the friction force  $F_f$  acting along the face. Here, the superscript “ $i$ ” indicates the nature of the force, i.e. instantaneous. It should be noted that the friction force  $F_f^i$  depends on normal force  $F_n^i$  and friction coefficient  $k_f$ , i.e.  $F_f^i = k_f \cdot F_n^i$ . The normal force  $F_n^i$  depends on the engagement angle  $\varphi$ , feed rate  $f_z$  and the cut depth  $a_p$

$$F_n^i(\varphi) = K_n \cdot f_z \cdot a_p \cdot \sin \varphi \quad (1)$$

where  $K_n$  is a specific cutting coefficient, which depends on the material properties and the cutting tool.

The instantaneous force  $\mathbf{F}^i$  is usually presented in the cylindrical coordinate system as  $\mathbf{F}_0^i = [F_r^i, F_t^i, F_z^i]^T$ , where  $F_r, F_t, F_z$  are the radial, tangential and axial forces, respectively. The correspondence between this forces are defined by the rotation matrix  $\mathbf{R}(\kappa, \lambda_s, \gamma_0)$  that depends on the tool orientation, i.e. the entering angle  $\kappa$ , the helix angle  $\lambda_s$  and the cutting angle  $\gamma_0$



**Fig. 2.** Cutting force in the machining process

$$\mathbf{F}_0^i = \mathbf{R}(\kappa, \lambda_s, \gamma_0) \cdot \mathbf{F}^i \quad (2)$$

Using cylindrical coordinate system, it is possible to project the cutting force to the workpiece frame,

$$\mathbf{F}_C^i = \mathbf{R}_z(\varphi) \cdot \mathbf{F}_0^i \quad (3)$$

where  $\mathbf{F}_C$  is the cutting force in the Cartesian space,  $\mathbf{R}_z$  is the homogeneous rotation matrix and  $\varphi$  is the engagement angle. The cutting force varies with the engagement angle  $\varphi$ , so in practice the force usually is evaluated for the complete tool revolution and can be computed as

$$F_n = \int_{\varphi_s}^{\varphi_E} F_n^i d\varphi \quad (4)$$

where  $\varphi_s$  and  $\varphi_E$  are the start and end angles for the tool engagement. The engagement angles  $\varphi_s, \varphi_E$  are defined by the technological task and cutting tool diameter.

Similarly, the cutting force in the Cartesian coordinate system can be computed as

$$\mathbf{F}_C = \int_{\varphi_s}^{\varphi_E} \mathbf{R}_z(\varphi) \cdot \mathbf{R}(\kappa, \lambda_s, \gamma_0) \cdot \mathbf{F}_0^i d\varphi \quad (5)$$

Taking into account that  $\mathbf{F} = F_n \cdot \mathbf{C}$  with  $\mathbf{C} = [1, 0, k_f]^T$ , one can rewrite the cutting force expression in the following form

$$\mathbf{F}_C = \int_{\varphi_s}^{\varphi_E} F_n(\varphi) \cdot \mathbf{R}_z(\varphi) d\varphi \cdot \mathbf{R}(\kappa, \lambda_s, \gamma_0) \cdot \mathbf{C} \quad (6)$$

The latter can be used to compute the cutting force that is applied to the robot end-effector.

Once the cutting force is known, it is possible to estimate the torques generated by the cutting force at the tool reference frame  $\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{F}_0$ . Here,  $\mathbf{r} = [r \cos \varphi, r \sin \varphi, 0]^T$ ,  $r$  is the tool radius. In this case, the torque with respect to the tool contact point can be computed as

$$\mathbf{M} = F_n \cdot (\mathbf{r} \times) \cdot \mathbf{R}(\kappa, \lambda_s, \gamma_0) \cdot \mathbf{C} \quad (7)$$

where  $(\mathbf{r} \times)$  is the skew-symmetric matrix based on the vector  $\mathbf{r}$ . Further, this torque can be transferred to the robot end-effector taking into account the tool and spindle geometry.



### 3 Compliance errors and their estimation

#### 3.1 Manipulator positioning errors under the loading

In robotics, manipulator stiffness is usually described by the Cartesian stiffness matrix  $\mathbf{K}_C$  that allows user to compute the end-effector deflections  $\Delta \mathbf{t}$  as

$$\Delta \mathbf{t} = \mathbf{K}_C^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{F} \quad (8)$$

for given external force  $\mathbf{F}$ . Using the VJM-based technique (Pashkevich et al., 2011), the stiffness model of a typical industrial robot is presented as a serial chain containing rigid links separated by actuators and virtual springs (Kövecses and Angeles, 2007) as shown in Fig. 3.

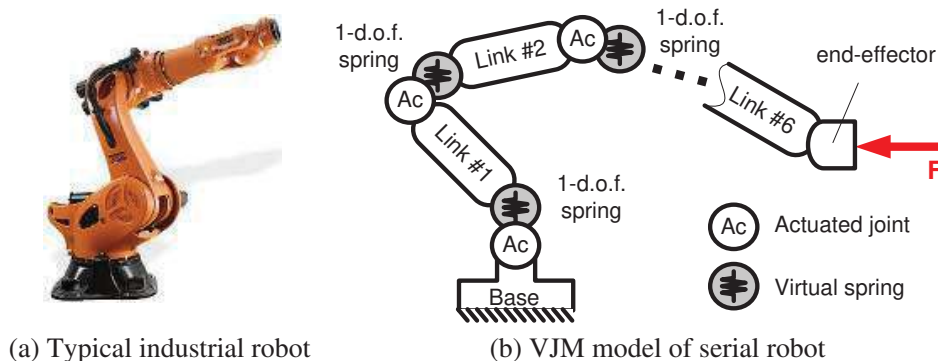
To compute the Cartesian stiffness matrix, it is necessary to consider simultaneously the extended geometric model  $\mathbf{t} = \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$  and static equilibrium equation  $\mathbf{J}_\theta^T \cdot \mathbf{F} = \mathbf{K}_\theta \cdot \boldsymbol{\theta}$ . The first of them allows computing the end-effector location  $\mathbf{t}$  for given actuator coordinates  $\mathbf{q}$  and virtual joint deflections  $\boldsymbol{\theta}$  caused by the loading  $\mathbf{F}$ . The static equilibrium equation allows finding relation between the external force and the deflections of the virtual joints. It includes the matrix  $\mathbf{K}_\theta$  describing the virtual joint elasticities and the Jacobian of the extended geometric model  $\mathbf{J}_\theta = \partial \mathbf{g}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) / \partial \boldsymbol{\theta}$ . Simultaneous solution of the above mentioned equations leads to the following expression for the desired Cartesian stiffness matrix

$$\mathbf{K}_C = (\mathbf{J}_\theta \cdot \mathbf{K}_\theta^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{J}_\theta^T)^{-1} \quad (9)$$

In more general case, when the external loading  $\mathbf{F}$  is rather high, the Cartesian stiffness matrix also depends on the Hessian  $\mathbf{H}_{\theta\theta}$  (Klimchik et al., 2014a). So, the above equation is replaced by.

$$\mathbf{K}_C = (\mathbf{J}_\theta \cdot (\mathbf{K}_\theta - \mathbf{H}_{\theta\theta})^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{J}_\theta^T)^{-1} \quad (10)$$

where  $\mathbf{H}_{\theta\theta} = \partial^2 (\mathbf{g}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) \cdot \mathbf{F}) / \partial \boldsymbol{\theta}^2$  describes modification of manipulator elasticity due to applied loading.



**Fig. 3.** Typical industrial robot and its VJM-based stiffness model.

The above expressions for the Cartesian stiffness matrix were derived assuming that joint stiffness matrix  $\mathbf{K}_0$  is constant. However, if the manipulator includes the gravity compensators, the equivalent joint stiffness coefficients become configuration dependent and the joint stiffness matrix is presented as a sum

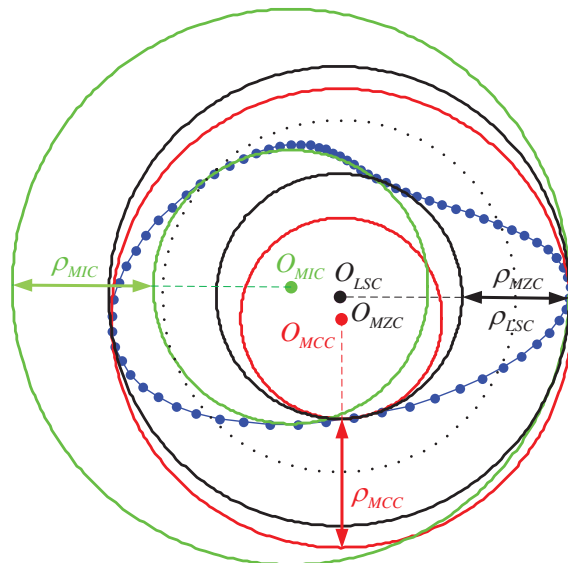
$$\mathbf{K}_0 = \mathbf{K}_0^0 + \mathbf{K}_0^{GC}(\mathbf{q}) \quad (11)$$

where the first term  $\mathbf{K}_0^0$  is constant and corresponds to the manipulator without compensator; and the second term  $\mathbf{K}_0^{GC}(\mathbf{q})$  depends on the manipulator configuration and describes equivalent elasticity of the gravity compensator with respect to the virtual joints. More details concerning computing of these matrices are given in our previous work (Klimchik et al., 2013b).

### 3.2 Evaluation of machining accuracy using circularity

In the industrial practice, there exist different norms to evaluate the final product quality. For example, ISO 12780 and 12781 define the path straightness, the surface flatness and the path roundness that in some cases is also called as the *circularity*. From our experience, the circularity index is the best one for evaluating the machining process quality, since for linear trajectories the force magnitude/direction are constant and their impact can be easily compensated in the control program (Feng et al., 2015). In contrast, for the circular path the cutting force direction varies and may lead to irregular path distortion that can be hardly compensated. For this reason, the circularity index will be used to evaluate the capacity of industrial robot to perform the machining task.

According to ISO 12181, the circularity evaluation includes two steps: obtaining a reference circle and estimation of the path deviations with respect to this circle. There are four methods to define the reference circle: Minimum Circumscribed Circle (MCC), Maximum Inscribed Circle (MIC), Minimum Zone Circles (MZC) and Least Squares Circle (LSC). They are illustrated by Fig. 4. For all of them, the circularity evaluates the distance between two circles in accordance with the equation



**Fig. 4.** Circularity evaluation using different industrial norms.



$$\rho = r_{\max} - r_{\min} \quad (12)$$

where  $r_{\max}$  and  $r_{\min}$  are the radii of the circumscribed and inscribed circles, respectively. The principal difference is related to the circle centers that are computed using different methods. For example, for MIC the center point is computed for the maximum inscribed circle and it is also used for the minimum circumscribed one. In the MCC method, the center is computed for the minimum circumscribed circle and the inscribed circle is build using the same center point. In the case of LSC, the inscribed and circumscribed circles are found for the center point obtained for the least square circle. In contrast, the MZC method uses a center point for which the distance between the inscribed and circumscribed circles is minimal. In practice, MIC and MCC methods are rarely used if the tool path is essentially distorted and corresponding center points are essentially different (Fig. 4). In the latter case, it is preferable to use either MZC or LSC index. Since there is no considerable difference between MZC or LSC, practicing engineers prefer LSC to evaluate the trajectory circularity.

In the frame of the LSC method, the circle center is obtained as a solution of the following optimization problem

$$\sum_{i=1}^n (\sqrt{(x_i - x_0)^2 + (y_i - y_0)^2} - r)^2 \rightarrow \min_{x_0, y_0, r} \quad (13)$$

where  $(x_i, y_i)$  are the measured tool path coordinates,  $(x_0, y_0)$  is the circle center and  $r$  is its radius. This optimization problem is highly non-linear and cannot be solved analytically. For this reason, a Newton–Raphson method is used.

Using the LSC center point, the circularity is computed in straightforward way in accordance with (12), where

$$r_{\max} = \max(|\mathbf{p}_i - \mathbf{O}_{LS}|, i = \overline{1, n}); \quad r_{\min} = \min(|\mathbf{p}_i - \mathbf{O}_{LS}|, i = \overline{1, n}) \quad (14)$$

Here  $\mathbf{p}_i = (x_i, y_i)^T$  is measured tool path points and  $\mathbf{O}_{LS} = (x_0, y_0)^T$  is the center of corresponding LS circle.

Assuming that all geometric and elastostatic parameters of the manipulator are known, the resulting tool path for the desired circular trajectory can be computed and evaluated the above presented index. For the set of machining tasks considered in this paper, a benchmark trajectory is a circle of radius 100 mm. For each task and for each path point, there were computed the cutting wrenches  $\mathbf{W} = [\mathbf{F}_C^T, \mathbf{M}^T]^T$  which include both the force and the torque components. It is worth mentioning, that the wrench magnitude is constant here, while its direction varies along the path depending on the rotation angle  $\varphi$ . Using this data, the resulting tool path can be computed in the following way

$$\mathbf{p}_i = \mathbf{p}_0 + \mathbf{R} \mathbf{r} + \mathbf{J}_\theta^{(p)} \cdot \mathbf{K}_\theta^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{J}_\theta^{(p)T} \mathbf{R} \mathbf{F}_C + \mathbf{J}_\theta^{(p)} \cdot \mathbf{K}_\theta^{-1} \cdot \mathbf{J}_\theta^{(\varphi)T} \mathbf{R} \mathbf{M} \quad (15)$$

where  $\mathbf{p}_0$  is the center of the reference circle,  $r$  is its radius,  $\mathbf{r}$  defines the radius vector of the circle for  $\varphi=0$ , the matrix  $\mathbf{R}(\varphi_i)$  takes into account rotation of the target point by the angle  $\varphi_i$ , the superscripts  $(p)$  and  $(\varphi)$  indicate the position and orientation part of the Jacobian matrix presented as  $\mathbf{J}_\theta = [\mathbf{J}_\theta^{(p)T}, \mathbf{J}_\theta^{(\varphi)T}]^T$ . It should be stressed that dynamics also affects the circularity; however, its influence is much lower comparing to the compliance errors caused by cutting forces.

Based on this approach, it is possible to evaluate robot accuracy with respect to the circularity index for the entire workspace and to determine the region in which machining accuracy is the best (from the circularity point of view).

## 4 Experimental result

The technique developed in this paper has been applied to the comparison study of four industrial robots of Kuka family. There were compared with respect to the circular machining task of 100 mm radius that was placed in different workspace points. Some details concerning the examined robots and their principal parameters are given in Table 1. These robots have similar kinematics and provide comparable repeatability/accuracy without loading. However, their payload capacities and workspace size are different. Elastostatic parameters of the examined robots have been identified using dedicated experimental study using methodology developed in our previous works (Klimchik et al., 2013b, Klimchik et al., 2014b). Corresponding results are presented in Table 2.

In the experimental study, it was used the cutting tool of the radius  $R=5\text{mm}$  with three teeth ( $z=3$ ). Its machining parameters are the following:  $\kappa=90^\circ$ ,  $\gamma_0=7^\circ$ ,  $\lambda_s=45^\circ$ ,  $f_z=0.08\text{ mm/rev}$ ,  $a_p=5\text{ mm}$ ,  $K_n=750\text{ N/mm}^2$ . It is assumed that cutting tool is completely engaged ( $\varphi=180^\circ$ ) along the trajectory. This corresponds the cutting force  $\mathbf{F}_C=[-440\text{N}, -1370\text{N}, -635\text{N}]$  and cutting torque  $\mathbf{M}=[0\text{Nm}, 3\text{Nm}, 10.5\text{Nm}]$ . These vectors are rotating while the tool is moving along the circular trajectory.

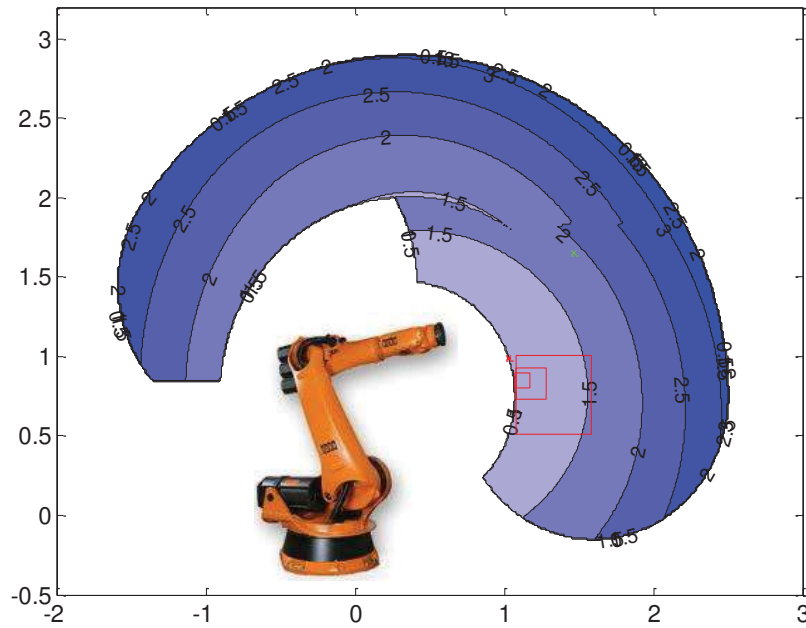
**Table 1.** Principal characteristics of examined robots.

| Robot            | Repeatability | Workspace volume   | Working radius, | Maximum payload |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>KR 100 HA</i> | 0.05 mm       | 46 m <sup>3</sup>  | 2.6 m           | 100 kg          |
| <i>KR270</i>     | 0.06 mm       | 55 m <sup>3</sup>  | 2.7 m           | 270 kg          |
| <i>KR360</i>     | 0.08 mm       | 118 m <sup>3</sup> | 3.3 m           | 360 kg          |
| <i>KR500</i>     | 0.08 mm       | 68 m <sup>3</sup>  | 2.8 m           | 500 kg          |

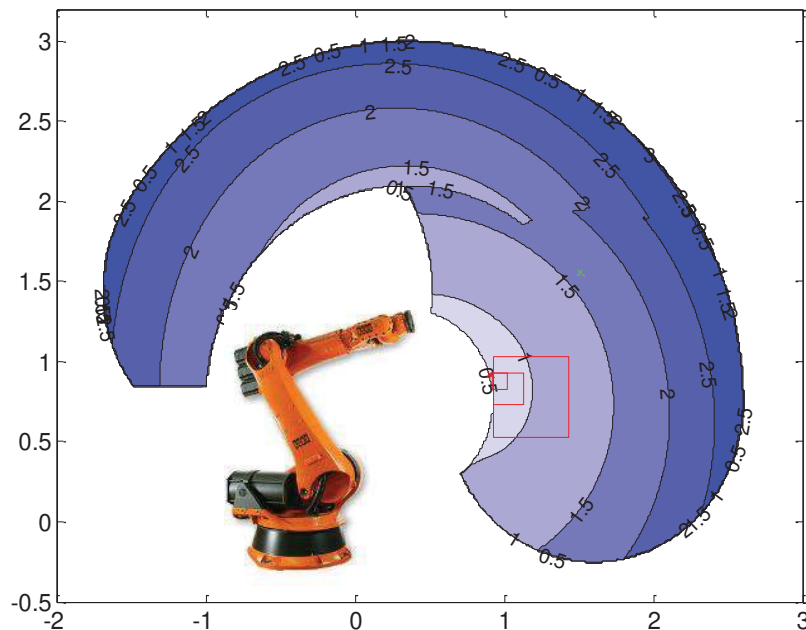
**Table 2.** Stiffness parameters of examined robots.

| Robot           | Equivalent joint compliances, $\mu\text{m/N}$ |       |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                 | $k_1$   | $k_2$ | $k_3$ | $k_4$ | $k_5$ | $k_6$ |
| <i>KR100 HA</i> | 1.92  | 0.34  | 0.56  | 3.31  | 3.83  | 5.42  |
| <i>KR270</i>    | 0.54  | 0.29  | 0.42  | 2.79  | 3.48  | 2.07  |
| <i>KR360</i>    | 0.86  | 0.17  | 0.25  | 2.17  | 1.47  | 2.96  |
| <i>KR500</i>    | 0.47  | 0.14  | 0.19  | 0.72  | 0.95  | 1.44  |

In our study it was assumed that the reference circular trajectory was located in the plane of joint  $q_2$  and  $q_3$  movements (XOZ if  $q_1=0$ ), which is the most critical one for all articulated robots in machining application. For these conditions, the circularity maps have been computed for all examined manipulators. Relevant results are presented in Figures 5-8. In addition, these figures contain the optimal regions for locating the machining tasks of size  $100\times 100$ ,  $200\times 200$  and  $500\times 500$  mm. Summary of circularity indices for different machining task is given in Table 3. It should be stressed that in the case of machining task different from the considered one, the results should be scaled according to cutting force magnitude.



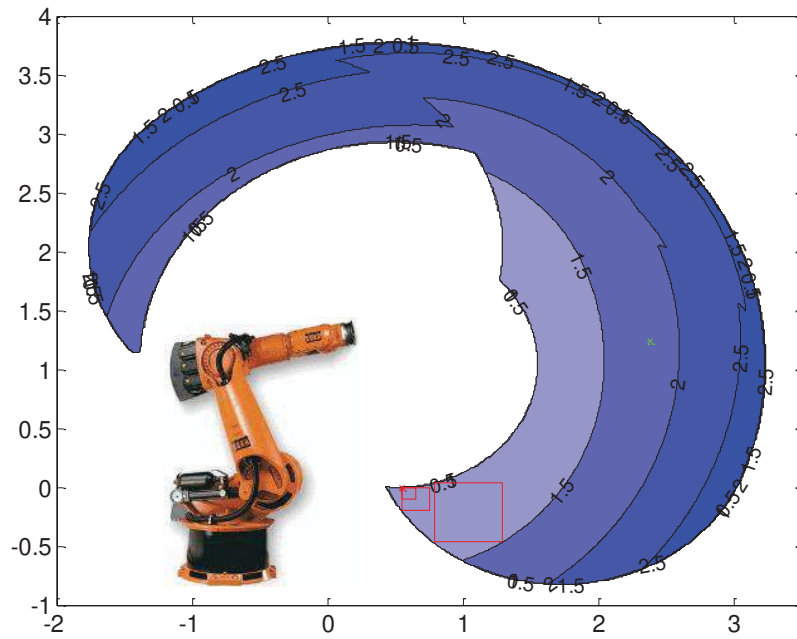
**Fig. 5.** Circularity maps for robot KR 100 HA.



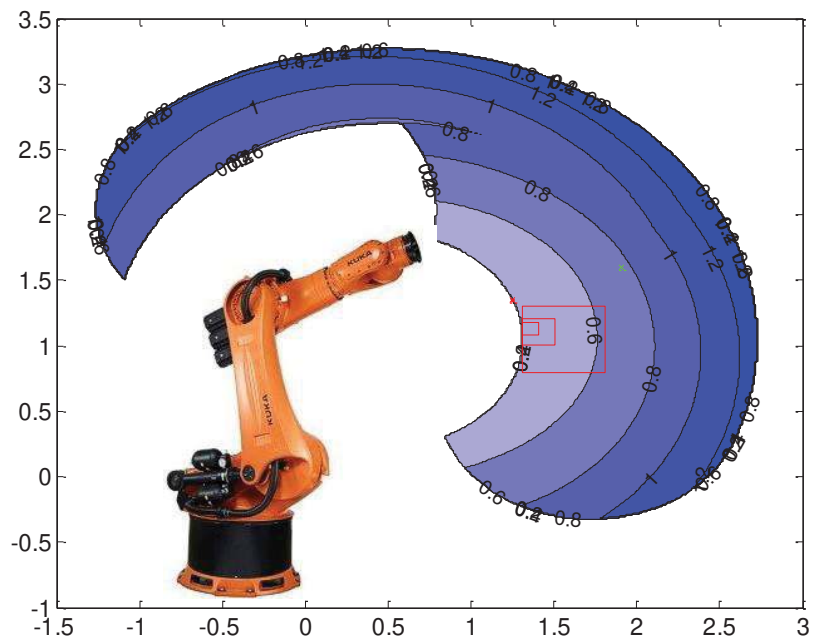
**Fig. 6.** Circularity maps for robot KR 270.

**Table 3.** Circularity indices for examined robots, mm.

| Robot            | min  | max  | Middle |
|------------------|------|------|--------|
| <i>KR 100 HA</i> | 1.03 | 3.36 | 1.91   |
| <i>KR270</i>     | 0.84 | 3.13 | 1.64   |
| <i>KR360</i>     | 1.02 | 2.81 | 1.80   |
| <i>KR500</i>     | 0.41 | 1.42 | 0.76   |



**Fig. 7.** Circularity maps for robot KR 360.



**Fig. 8.** Circularity maps for robot KR 500.

**Table 4.** Suitability of examined robots for different machining tasks (without compensation).

| Circularity   | Force magnitude |        |        |        |
|---------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
|               | 500N            | 1000N  | 2000N  | 3000N  |
| <i>0.2 mm</i> | KR 500          |        |        |        |
| <i>0.5 mm</i> | KR100           | KR 270 | KR 500 |        |
|               | KR 270          | KR 500 |        |        |
|               | KR 360          |        |        |        |
|               | KR 500          |        |        |        |
| <i>1.0 mm</i> | KR 100          | KR100  | KR 270 | KR 500 |
|               | KR 270          | KR 270 | KR 360 |        |
|               | KR 360          | KR 360 | KR 500 |        |
|               | KR 500          | KR 500 |        |        |
| <i>1.5 mm</i> | KR100           | KR 100 | KR 270 | KR 500 |
|               | KR 270          | KR 270 | KR 360 |        |
|               | KR 360          | KR 360 | KR 500 |        |
|               | KR 500          | KR 500 |        |        |
| <i>2.0 mm</i> | KR 100          | KR 100 | KR 270 | KR 360 |
|               | KR 270          | KR 270 | KR 360 | KR 500 |
|               | KR 360          | KR 360 | KR 500 |        |
|               | KR 500          | KR 500 |        |        |

As follows from the presented results, robot Kuka KR500 ensures the best performance for the considered technological task. This advantage is achieved due to less complaint actuators, which obviously affect the robot price. In general, all examined robots ensure circularity level about 3 mm within entire workspace (without compensation). So, if this accuracy is sufficient, the robot can be chosen taking into account the workspace and payload properties. It should be stressed that robot KR100 cannot be used for machining of hard materials because of the payload limitation. However, because of its lower price comparing to other examined robots, it is competitive for machining if the cutting force magnitude is less than 1kN and the desired circularity is about 1 mm. On the other hand, robot KR360 is competitive for large-dimensional tasks only and for milling with forces higher than 2.5kN. Otherwise, KR270 is preferable that may ensure better performance within its workspace. The obtained results are also summarized in Table 4 that presents robots suitable for machining with desired accuracy (in terms of the circularity) for different force magnitudes. The latter allows practicing engineers to justify robot selection for given machining task.

## 5 Conclusions

The paper presents an industry oriented technique for evaluation of robot capacity to perform machining operations. It proposes methodology for evaluation of the circularity widely used in industrial practice. Obtained theoretical results have been applied to the experimental study that provides comparison analysis of four industrial robots with respect to their accuracy in machining. In future, this methodology will be applied to a wider set of industrial robots, technological tools and materials.

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