

Stability analysis of a landing gear mechanism with torsional degree of freedom

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Abstract

In this study, stability of a landing gear mechanism with torsional degree of freedom is analyzed. Derivation of the equations of motion of the model with torsional degree of freedom and the von Schlippe tire model are presented. Nonlinear model is linearized and Routh-Hurwitz criterion is applied. Stability analysis is conducted in the e-v plane for different values of the torsional spring rate c and in the k-v plane for different values of the relaxation length τ and vertical force F_z . Percentages of the stable regions are computed. Effects of the variation of the caster length e , half contact length a and their ratio on stable regions are analyzed. Results and conclusions about the variation of stability are presented and constructive recommendations are given. GJRE-D Classification: FOR Code: 090199 Stability analysis of a landing gear mechanism with torsional degree of freedom Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Index terms— mechanism, torsional, criterion, Schlippe, Hurwitz, criterion

1 INTRODUCTION

Vibration of aircraft steering systems has been a problem of great concern since the production of first airplanes. Shimmy is an oscillatory motion of the landing gear in lateral and torsional directions, caused by the interaction between the dynamics of the tire and the landing gear, with a frequency range of 10-30 Hz. Though it can occur in both nose and main landing gear, the first one is more common. Shimmy is a dangerous condition of self-excited oscillations driven by the interaction between the tires and the ground that can occur in any wheeled vehicle. Problem of shimmy occurs in ground vehicle dynamics and aircraft during taxiing and landing. In other words, shimmy takes places either during landing, take-off or taxi and is driven by the kinetic energy of the forward motion of the aircraft. It is a combined motion of the wheel in lateral, torsional and longitudinal directions.

2 II.

3 SHIMMY

Shimmy can occur in steerable wheels of cars, trucks and motorcycles, as well as trailers and tea carts. In vehicle dynamics, shimmy is the unwanted oscillation of a rolling wheel about a vertical axis. It can occur in taxiing aircraft, as well. In the case of a shopping cart wheel, it is caused by the coupling between transverse and pivot degrees of freedom of the wheel. In the case of landing gear, shimmy is the result of the coupling between tire forces and landing gear bending and Author : Istanbul Technical University, Department of Aeronautical Engineering, Maslak, Istanbul, Turkey. E-mail : anli@itu.edu.tr, ozkol@itu.edu.tr torsion. In other words, basic cause of shimmy is energy transfer from tire-ground contact force and vibration modes of the landing gear system. Shimmy is an unstable phenomenon and it occurring with a certain combination of parameters such as mass, elastic quantities, damping, geometrical quantities, speed, excitation forces and nonlinearities such as friction and freeplay. It is difficult to determine shimmy analytically since it is a very complex phenomenon, due to factors

5 LITERATURE SURVEY

42 such as wear and ground conditions that are hard to model. Small differences in physical conditions can lead
43 to extremely different results. For example, it is reported in [1] that a new small fighter aircraft whose name is
44 withheld, has displayed to vibrations during low and high speed taxi tests and first several landings and take
45 -offs, but shimmy vibrations with frequencies in the range 22-26 Hz were experienced during next several landings
46 and take-offs at certain speeds, especially during landing. This demonstrates the effect of wear on landing gear
47 shimmy. In the reported case, it was seen that tightening the rack too tight against the pinion prevented the
48 wheel from turning, while tightening it less tight caused the vibration to disappear but reappear in the following
49 flights.

50 Ground control of aircraft is extremely important since severe shimmy can result in loss of control or fatigue
51 failure of landing gear components. Vibration of aircraft steering systems deserves and has gained attention since
52 shimmy is one of the most important problems in landing gear design. Shimmy is reported to be due to the
53 forces produced by runway surface irregularities and nonuniformities of the wheels [2][3][4][5]. Modeling of aircraft
54 tires presents similar challenges to those involved in modeling automotive tires in ground vehicle dynamics, on a
55 much larger scale in terms size and loads on the tire [6]. Shimmy is a complex phenomenon influenced by many
56 parameters. Causes of shimmy can be listed as follows [2],[7][8][9][10].

57 Insufficient overall torsional stiffness of the gear about the swivel axis Inadequate trail, since positive trail
58 reduces shimmy Improper wheel mass balancing about the swivel axis Excessive torsional freeplay Low torsional
59 stiffness of the strut Flexibilities in the design of the suspension Surface irregularities Nonuniformities of the
60 wheels III.

61 4 DETECTION AND SUPPRESSION OF SHIMMY

62 Shimmy is a great concern in aircraft landing gear design and maintenance. Prediction of nose landing gear
63 shimmy is an essential step in landing gear design because shimmy oscillations are often detected during the taxi
64 or runway tests of an aircraft, when it is no longer feasible to make changes on the geometry or stiffness of the
65 landing gear. Although shimmy was observed in earlier aircraft as well, there were no extra shimmy damping
66 equipments installed. Historically, France and Germany tended to deal with shimmy in the design phase, while
67 in United States, the trend was to solve the problem after its occurrence. Currently, the general methodology
68 is to employ a shimmy damper and structural damping. A shimmy damper, acting like a shock absorber in a
69 rotary manner, is often installed in the steering degree of freedom to damp shimmy. It is a hydraulic damper with
70 stroke limited to a few degrees of yaw. A shimmy damper restrains the movement of the nose wheel, allowing the
71 wheel to be steered by moving it slowly, but not allowing it to move back and forth rapidly. It consists of a tube
72 filled with hydraulic fluid causing velocity dependent viscous damping forces to form when a shaft and piston
73 are moved through the fluid. Oleo-pneumatic shock absorbers are the most common shock absorber system in
74 medium to large aircraft, since they provide the best shock absorption ability and effective damping. Such an
75 absorber has two components: a chamber filled with compressed gas, acting as a spring and absorbing the vertical
76 shock and hydraulic fluid forced through a small orifice, forming friction, slowing the oil and causing damping.
77 Another common cure is to replace the tires even though they may not be worn out [10][11][12].

78 Shimmy started being investigated in 1920's both theoretically and experimentally and soon it became clear
79 that it is caused not by a single parameter but by the relationships between parameters. Effects of acceleration
80 and deceleration on shimmy have been reported to be examined, and the accelerating system is found to be
81 slightly less stable [13]. Number of publications available in literature on landing gear shimmy is limited because
82 many developments are proprietary and are not published in literature.

83 IV.

84 5 LITERATURE SURVEY

85 Many papers have been published addressing shimmy as a vehicle dynamics problem. In that perspective, tire
86 is the most important item, and tire models have been investigated. [13] examines the wheel shimmy problem
87 and its relationship with investigation of tire parameter variations in wheel shimmy, by considering the shimmy
88 resulting from the elasticity of a pneumatic tire, particularly in taxiing aircraft. [14] is on the application of
89 perturbation methods to investigate the limit cycle amplitude and stability of the wheel shimmy problem. [7]
90 deals with the shimmy stability of twin-wheeled cantilevered aircraft main landing gear. The objective in [15]
91 is to develop software on assessing shimmy stability of a general class of landing gear designs using linear and
92 nonlinear landing gear shimmy models. [16] studies the periodic shimmy vibrations and chaotic vibrations of
93 a simplified wheel model using bifurcation theory. [17] is on tire dynamics and is a development to deal with
94 large camber angles and inflation pressure changes. [18] is another study on tire dynamics, where stability charts
95 show the behavior of the system in terms of certain parameters such as speed, caster length, damping coefficient
96 and relaxation length. [19] is an experimental study on wheel shimmy where system parameters are identified,
97 stability boundaries and vibration frequencies are obtained on a test rig for an elastic tire. Dependence of shimmy
98 oscillations in the nose landing gear of an aircraft on tire inflation pressure are investigated in [20]. The model
99 derived in [21] is used and it is concluded that landing gear is less susceptible to shimmy oscillations at inflation
100 pressures higher than the nominal.

101 Transverse vibrations of landing gear struts with respect to a hull of infinite mass have been studied
 102 theoretically in [22]. Similarly, [23] presents a nonlinear model describing the dynamics of the main gear wheels
 103 relative to the fuselage.

104 Lateral dynamics of nose landing gear shimmy models has gained some attention. Lateral response of a nose
 105 landing gear has been investigated in [10] where nonlinearities arise due to torsional freeplay. In [24], lateral
 106 response to ground-induced excitations due to runway roughness is taken into consideration as well. Lateral
 107 stability of a nose landing gear with a closed loop hydraulic shimmy damper is presented in [12]. Closed form
 108 analytical expressions for shimmy velocity and shimmy frequency are derived in regard to the lateral dynamics
 109 of a nose landing gear in [25].

110 A dynamic model of an aircraft nosegear is developed in [9] and effects of design parameters such as energy
 111 absorption coefficient of the shimmy damper, the location of the center of gravity of the landing gear, shock strut
 112 elasticity, tire compliance, friction between the tire and the runway surface and the forward speed on shimmy
 113 are investigated. It is shown in [26] that dry friction is one of the principal causes of shimmy. Bifurcation
 114 analysis of a nosegear with torsional and Stability analysis of a landing gear mechanism with torsional degree of
 115 freedom longitudinal tire forces, vehicle motions and normal load oscillations. [8] compares different dynamic tire
 116 models for the analysis of shimmy instability. [3] is an lateral degrees of freedom is performed in [21]. Similarly,
 117 bifurcation analysis of a nosegear with torsional, lateral and longitudinal modes is performed in [27].(D D D D
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119 In a more mathematical study, incremental harmonic balance method is applied to an aircraft wheel shimmy
 120 system with Coulomb and quadratic damping [28] and amplitudes of limit cycles are predicted.

121 Theoretical research on shimmy has a long history, with the initial focus on tire dynamic behavior because tires
 122 play an important role in causing shimmy instability. Theories on tire models can be divided into stretched string
 123 models and point contact models. In the stretched string model proposed by von Schlippe, the tire centerline is
 124 represented as a string in tension, the tire sidewalls are represented by a distributed spring where the string rests
 125 and the wheel is represented by a rigid foundation for the spring. Pacejka has proposed replacing the string by a
 126 beam. The point contact method assumes the effects of the ground on the tire act at a single contact point and
 127 is much easier to implement in an analytical model.

128 V.

129 6 MATHEMATICAL MODEL a) Landing gear model

130 In this study, stability of a landing gear model with torsional degree of freedom is analyzed. The nonlinear
 131 mathematical shimmy model presented in [11], [29] and [30] describes the torsional dynamics of the lower parts of
 132 a landing gear mechanism and stretched string tire model. Figures 1 a and b show the physical and mathematical
 133 nose landing gear models. Dynamics of the lower part of the landing gear is described by a second order ordinary
 134 differential equation for the yaw angle about the vertical axis z, while the dynamics of the tire modeled with
 135 respect to the stretched string tire model is described by a first order ordinary differential equation for the lateral
 136 tire deflection y. b. shimmy dynamics model [29].

137 Where I_z is the moment of inertia about the z axis, M_1 is the linear spring moment between the turning
 138 tube and the torque link, $4.321 M M M M I_z + + + = ?$ (1)

139 M_2 is the combined damping moment from viscous friction in the bearings of the oleo-pneumatic 2 shock
 140 absorber and from the shimmy damper, M_3 is the tire moment about the z axis and M_4 is the tire damping
 141 moment due to tire tread width. M_1 and M_4 are external moments. M_3 and M_4 are caused by lateral tire
 142 deformations due to side slip. M_3 is composed of M_z , tire aligning moment about the tire center, and tire
 143 cornering moment eF_y . F_y is the wheel cornering force or the sideslip force acting with caster e as lever arm.

144 Stability analysis of a landing gear mechanism with torsional degree of freedom Where k is the torsional spring
 145 rate, c is the torsional damping constant, v is the taxiing velocity and l is the tread width moment constant defined
 146 as [29] F_y and M_z depend on the vertical force F_z and slip angle δ . Tire sideslip characteristics are nonlinear.
 147 Cornering force F_y and vertical force F_z are related as Where δ_{lim} is the limiting slip angle or the limit angle of tire
 148 force and sign is the sign function defined as Slip angle may be caused by either pure yaw or pure sideslip. Pure
 149 yaw occurs when the yaw angle is allowed to vary while the lateral deflection y is held at zero. Pure sideslip, on
 150 the other hand, occurs when the lateral deflection y is allowed to vary as the yaw angle is held at zero [11].? k
 151 $M = 1 (2) ? c M = 2 (3) y z e F M M ? = 3 (4) ? ? v M =$

152 Where B, C, D and E are functions of the wheel load, slip angle, slip ratio and camber. B and E are related
 153 to vertical force F_z , C is the shape factor and D is the peak value of the curve.

154 Aligning moment M_z is defined using a half-Where g the limiting angle of tire moment. b) Tire model Tire
 155 is modeled using the elastic string theory. Lateral deflection of the tire is described as [11,29] Ground forces are
 156 transmitted to the wheel through the tire, and these forces acting on the tire footprint deflect the tire. Elastic
 157 string theory states that lateral deflection y of the leading contact point of the tire with respect to tire plane can
 158 be described as a first order differential equation given by (13). This equation is derived as follows. Tire sideslip
 159 velocity V_t is expressed as Where t is the time constant, l is the relaxation length, which is the ratio of the slip
 160 stiffness to longitudinal force stiffness. $z F F c a ? ? 2 15 . 0 ? = (6) ? ? F z y c F F = , \text{ for } ? ? ? (7) () ? ? ?$
 161 $\text{sign } c F F F z y = , \text{ for } ? ? > (8) () ? ? > = ? ? ? ? ? \text{ if } , 1 \text{ if } , 1 \text{ sign } (9) () () \{ \} [] ? ? ? ? B B E B C D$
 162 $F y \arctan \arctan \sin ? ? = (10)$

221 A 10 % decrease in the half contact length a from 0.1 m to 0.09 m leads to a further increase in the stable
222 region in the $e-v$ plane, as seen by inspecting table ???. As was the case for a half contact length of 0.095 m, there
223 are almost no instabilities in the $e-v$ plane for a high torsional spring rate c and there is a greater increase in the
224 stable region for large values of the torsional spring rate c .

225 The following table quantifies the amounts of increments and decrements in the stability of the $e-v$ plane for
226 variations of the half contact length a . Values given for a half contact length of 0.1 m show how much of the
227 analyzed region in the $e-v$ plane is stable.

228 Values given in the following lines for half contact lengths of 0.105 m, 0.11 m, 0.095 m and 0.09 m show how
229 much of the analyzed region are stable and how much increment or decrement exists with respect to the stability
230 of the system having a half contact length of 0.1 m.

231 Table ??? : Effect of variation of the half contact length on stability in the $e-v$ plane.

232 A 10 % increase in the half contact length a from 0.1 m to 0.11 m leads to a further increase in the unstable
233 region in the $e-v$ plane, as can be seen by inspecting table ???. As was the case for a half contact length of 0.105
234 m, there is a greater increase in the unstable region for large values of the torsional spring rate c . ii. Effects of
235 the caster length e and half contact length a on stability boundaries in the $k-v$ plane This part of the stability
236 analysis of the linear model is conducted in the $k-v$ plane. Effects of the caster length e , half contact length a
237 and their ratio on stability of the model will be analyzed. Effects of 5 % and 10 % increase and decrease of e and
238 a and variation of their ratio are also analyzed. e/a effect of the half contact length a is already contained since
239 3a. For this reason, effect of the caster length e on stability of the model will be analyzed. Effects of 5 % and 10
240 % increase and decrease of e are analyzed in this section.

241 A 5 % increase in the caster length e from 0.1 m to 0.105 m leads to an increase in the stable region in

242 the $k-v$ plane, as can be seen by inspecting table 10. It is observed that there is a smaller increase in the
243 stable region for large values of the relaxation length λ . Increase in the stable region is almost unnoticeable for
244 relaxation lengths above 0.12 m.

245 A 10 % increase in the caster length e from 0.1 m to 0.11 m leads to a further increase in the stable region in
246 the $k-v$ plane, as can be seen by inspecting table 10. As was the case for a caster length of 0.095 m, there is a
247 smaller increase in the stable region for large values of relaxation length and the increase in the stable region is
248 almost unnoticeable for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m.

249 A 5 % decrease in the caster length e from 0.1 m to 0.095 m leads to an increase in the unstable region in the
250 $k-v$ plane, especially for low velocities, as seen from table 10. It is observed that there is a smaller increase in
251 the unstable region for large values of the relaxation length λ . Increase in the stable region is almost unnoticeable
252 for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m.

253 A 10 % decrease in the caster length e from 0.1 m to 0.09 m leads to a further increase in the unstable region
254 in the $k-v$ plane, especially for low velocities, as seen from table 10. As was the case for a caster length of 0.095
255 m, there is a smaller increase in the unstable region for large values of relaxation length and the increase in the
256 unstable region is almost unnoticeable for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m. Table 6 quantifies the amount of
257 increments and decrements in the stability of the $k-v$ plane for variations of the caster length e . Values given for
258 a caster length of 0.1 m show how much of the analyzed region in the $k-v$ plane is stable. Values given in the
259 following lines for half caster lengths of 0.105 m, 0.11 m, 0.095 m and 0.09 m show how much of the analyzed
260 region are stable and how much increment or decrement exists with respect to the stability of the system having
261 a caster length of 0.1 m. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS 1. Results and conclusions about the variation of
262 stability in the $e-v$ plane and recommendations A 5 % increase in the half contact length a leads to an increase
263 in the unstable region in the $e-v$ plane.

264 A 10 % increase in the half contact length a leads to a further increase in the unstable region in the $e-v$ plane.

265 A 5 % decrease in the half contact length a leads to an increase in the stable region in the $e-v$ plane.

266 For the parameters considered, there were no instabilities in the $e-v$ plane for a high torsional spring Rate c .

267 A 10 % decrease in the half contact length a leads to a further increase in the stable region in the $e-v$ plane.

268 For the parameters considered, there were no instabilities in the $e-v$ plane for a high torsional spring rate c .

269 The increments in the stable and unstable regions are greater for large values of the torsional spring rate c .

270 Increments in the half contact length lead to increments in the unstable region in the $e-v$ plane.

271 In other words, increasing the half contact length decreases stability. Decrements in the half contact length
272 lead to increments in the stable region in the $e-v$ plane. In other words, decreasing the half contact length
273 increases stability.

274 2. Results and conclusions about the variation of stability in the $k-v$ plane and recommendations A 5 %
275 increase in the caster length e leads to an increase in the stable region in the $k-v$ plane.

276 There is a smaller increase in the stable region for large values of the relaxation length such that the increase
277 in the stable region is almost negligible for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m.

278 A 10 % increase in the caster length e leads to a further increase in the stable region in the $k-v$ plane. There is
279 a smaller increase in the stable region for large values of relaxation length and the increase in the stable region is
280 almost negligible for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m. A 5 % decrease in the caster length e leads to an increase
281 in the unstable region in the $k-v$ plane, especially for low velocities. There is a smaller increase in the unstable
282 region for large values of the relaxation length such that the increase in the stable region is almost negligible for
283 relaxation lengths above 0.12 m.

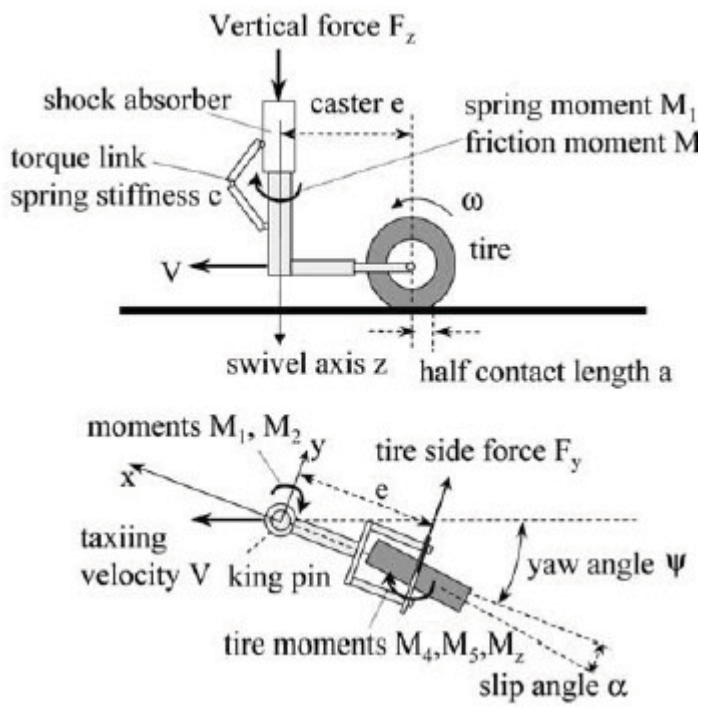
284 A 10 % decrease in the caster length e from leads to a further increase in the unstable region in the $k v$ plane,
285 especially for low velocities. There is a smaller increase in the unstable region for large values of relaxation length
286 and the increase in the unstable region is almost negligible for relaxation lengths above 0.12 m. Increments in the
287 stable and unstable regions are smaller for large values of the relaxation length . Increments in the caster length
288 lead to increments in the stable region in the $k v$ plane. In other words, increasing the caster length increases
289 stability. Decrements in the half contact length lead to increments in the unstable region in the $k v$ plane.

In other words, decreasing the caster length decreases stability. ¹



Figure 1: Figure 1 :

290



45

Figure 2: 4 (5)

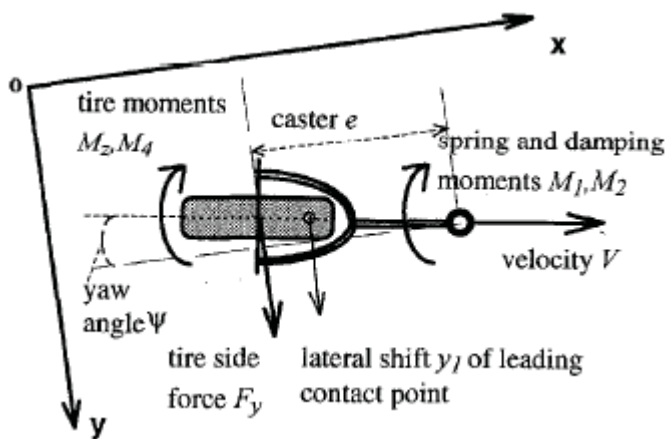


Figure 3:

1

Parameter	Description	Value	Unit
v	velocity	0?80	m/s
a	half contact length	0.1	m
e	caster length	0.1	m
I z	moment of inertia	1	kg m ²
z F	vertical force	9000	N
c	torsional spring rate	-100000	Nm/rad
c F ?	side force derivative	20	1/rad
c M ?	moment derivative	-2	m/rad
k ? ?	= a torsional damping constant tread width moment	0?-50	Nm/rad/s
	3 constant relaxation length	-270 0.3	Nm ² /rad m
? g	limit angle of tire moment	10	deg
?	limit angle of tire force	5	deg

Figure 4: Table 1 :

2

Percentage of stable region

Figure 5: Table 2 :

3

	Percentage of stable region
=0.02 m	78.3 % stable
=0.07 m	65.4 % stable
=0.12 m	61.3 % stable
=0.17 m	60.7 % stable
=0.22 m	61.4 % stable
=0.27 m	62.9 % stable
=0.32 m	64.4 % stable

Figure 6: Table 3 :

4

	Percentage of stable region	
$F_z = 0 \text{ N}$	72.5 % stable	
$F_z = 5000 \text{ N}$	58.5 % stable	
$F_z = 10000 \text{ N}$	45.1 % stable	
$F_z = 15000 \text{ N}$	32.5 % stable	
3. Effects of t	he caster length	and half con- tact
length on stability boundaries		

Figure 7: Table 4 :

6

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Figure 8: Table 6 :

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$a_e / = 1$

Figure 9: table 7 .Table 7 :

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