

Body Sensor Networks

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Editor

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Second Edition

 Springer

Editor

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ISBN 978-1-4471-6373-2 ISBN 978-1-4471-6374-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-4471-6374-9
Springer London Heidelberg New York Dordrecht

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014937397

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Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Preface

Use body as the medium, inspiration and a source of energy to provide continuous sensing, monitoring and intervention

Since the first edition of this book, the field of Body Sensor Networks (BSNs) has advanced rapidly. The original motivation of BSN was to harness allied technologies that underpin the development of pervasive sensing for healthcare, wellbeing, sports and other applications that require “ubiquitous” and “pervasive” monitoring of physical, physiological, and biochemical parameters in any environment without activity restriction and behaviour modification. The ultimate aim of BSN is therefore to provide a truly personalised monitoring platform that is pervasive, intelligent and context-aware, yet “invisible”, with applications ranging from managing patients with chronic disease and care for the elderly, to general well-being monitoring and performance evaluation in sports. To ensure its widespread use, there are many technical challenges that need to be tackled. These include the need for better sensor design, MEMS integration, biocompatibility, power source miniaturisation, low power wireless transmission, context awareness, secure data transfer and integration with smart therapeutic systems.

In this second edition of the book, we have updated the chapters with the latest developments in the field, addressing sensor design, micro-electronics and information processing aspects of the system. Since its inception, the development of BSN has been focussed on both wearable and implantable sensors. In the last few decades, we have seen rapid advances in both chemical and biosensor developments. The emergence of new biological sensing modalities is fundamentally changing the way we apply biomeasurements in vivo. In terms of implantable sensing, many of the issues associated with the extension of biosensor technology from in vitro to in vivo applications have long been appreciated, and a number of practical issues are addressed in this book. In a BSN with limited bandwidth and power constraints, the conventional method of data acquisition and analogue-to-digital data conversion with signal processing taking place after transmission is no longer optimal. A BSN represents a prime candidate for bio-inspired local processing to take place at the sensor front-end before transmission. This processing

could include spatial and temporal averaging for drift and failure tolerance. The key principle of bio-inspired engineering in this application area is that biology does not often deal in absolute values, but in relative changes from a given norm.

From a sensor data processing and inferencing point of view, the development of the BSN has introduced a whole range of challenging research issues in pattern recognition, behaviour profiling and machine learning. The pursuit of low-power, miniaturised, smart sensing embodied either as a wearable or implantable device has also imposed significant challenges on integrating information from what is often heterogeneous, incomplete and error-prone sensor data. In practice, it is therefore desirable to rely on sensors with redundant or complementary data to maximise the information content and reduce both systematic and random errors.

One important aspect of the book is the introduction of bio-inspired concepts both for hardware design and for developing software components that possess the self-* properties of autonomic sensing. We have discussed the use of artificial neural networks for performing context-aware sensing, and the use of autonomic principles of self-healing, self-organisation and self-protection for developing BSNs with effective fault tolerance and self-protection.

As mentioned in the first edition of this book, advances in science and medicine are intimately linked. In current clinical practice, ranging from prevention to complex intervention, we rely heavily on early, accurate and complete diagnosis followed by close monitoring of the results. Attempts so far, however, are still limited to a series of snapshots of physiological, biomechanical and biochemical data. Transient abnormalities cannot always be reliably captured. The concept of BSN is therefore an important ingredient for the future development of pervasive healthcare because technological developments in sensing and monitoring devices will not only change chronic disease management in a home or community setting, but also reshape the general practice of clinical medicine.

With demographic changes associated with the aging population and the increasing number of people living alone, the social and economic structure of our society is also changing rapidly. In a population consisting of several vulnerable groups, such as those with chronic disease and the elderly, the need for effective individualised health monitoring and delivery is the primary motivation for the development of BSNs. There is little doubt that for the development of the BSN, a panoply of technologies will need to be combined in new and previously unsuspected ways. However, the rewards for success, in terms of the quality and duration of life in the case of many of those suffering from chronic conditions, will be substantial.

There has been tremendous effort from all contributors of this book in making this 2nd edition possible. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the contributing authors. Without their enthusiasm, support, and flexibility in managing the tight publishing schedule, this book would not have become possible. In particular, I would like to thank Su-Lin Lee, Emily Yang, Benny Lo, and Surapa Thiemjarus, for all their hard work in providing essential editorial support, as well as being actively involved in the preparation of some of the technical chapters. I would also like to thank the editorial staff of Springer, the publisher of

this volume. In particular, I am grateful to Helen Desmond and her colleagues in helping with the editorial matters.

This work would not have been possible without the financial support from all the funding bodies that supported our work, particularly the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), UK. Their generous support has allowed us to establish and promote this exciting field of research – a topic that is so diversified, and yet brings so many challenges and innovations to each of the disciplines involved.

I do hope this book will act as a valuable resource to a very wide spectrum of readers interested in, or inspired by, this multifaceted and exciting topic.

London
November 2013

Guang-Zhong Yang

About the Editor



Guang-Zhong Yang (PhD, FREng) is Director and Co-founder of the Hamlyn Centre, Deputy Chairman of the Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College London, UK. Professor Yang also holds a number of key academic positions at Imperial College – he is Director and Founder of the Royal Society/Wolfson Medical Image Computing Laboratory, co-founder of the Wolfson Surgical Technology Laboratory, Chairman of the Centre for Pervasive Sensing. He is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng), fellow of IEEE, IET, MICCAI, AIMBE, IAMBE, City of Guilds and a recipient of the Royal Society Research Merit Award and The Times Eureka ‘Top 100’ in British Science.

Professor Yang’s main research interests are in medical imaging, sensing and robotics. In imaging, he is credited for a number of novel MR phase contrast velocity imaging and computational modelling techniques that have transformed in vivo blood flow quantification and visualization. These include the development of locally focused imaging combined with real-time navigator echoes for resolving respiratory motion for high-resolution coronary-angiography, as well as MR dynamic flow pressure mapping for which he received the ISMRM I. I. Rabi Award. He pioneered the concept of perceptual docking for robotic control, which represents a paradigm shift of learning and knowledge acquisition of motor and perceptual/cognitive behaviour for robotics, as well as the field of Body Sensor Network (BSN) for providing personalized wireless monitoring platforms that are pervasive, intelligent, and context-aware. Professor Yang is a Distinguished Lecturer for IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society and Editor-in-Chief, *IEEE Journal of Biomedical and Health Informatics*.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
	Guang-Zhong Yang, Omer Aziz, Richard Kwasnicki, Robert Merrifield, Ara Darzi, and Benny Lo	
1.1	Wireless Sensor Networks	1
1.2	BSN for Healthcare and Wellbeing	6
1.2.1	Monitoring Patients with Chronic Disease	7
1.2.2	Monitoring Hospital Patients	9
1.2.3	Monitoring Elderly Patients	11
1.2.4	Life Style and Wellbeing	12
1.3	The Need for Pervasive Health Monitoring	13
1.4	Technical Challenges Facing BSN	17
1.4.1	Improved Sensor Design	18
1.4.2	MEMS and BioMEMS	19
1.4.3	Biocompatibility, Integratability and Resorbability	21
1.4.4	Energy Supply and Demand	23
1.4.5	Wireless Data-Paths, Antenna Design, System Security and Reliability	29
1.4.6	Context Awareness	31
1.4.7	Integrated Therapeutic Systems	33
1.5	From Wellbeing to Personalised Healthcare	34
1.6	Finding the Ideal Architecture for BSN	36
1.7	The Future: Going from “Micro” to “Nano”	38
1.8	The Scope of the Book	42
	References	46
2	Biosensors and Sensor Systems	55
	Danny O’Hare	
2.1	Introduction	55
2.2	Bioanalysis	57
2.2.1	Some Jargon	57

2.2.2	Bioanalysis – What Does Chemical Concentration Mean in Biology?	59
2.3	Molecular Recognition	61
2.4	Electrochemical Sensors	65
2.4.1	Potentiometry	66
2.4.2	Amperometry and Voltammetry	79
2.4.3	Instrumentation	94
2.4.4	Signal Processing and Data Analysis	97
2.5	Multiple Sensors and Microsensor Arrays	99
2.5.1	Microelectrode Arrays for Primary Mammalian Cell Culture	101
2.5.2	Assessing Biocompatibility	102
2.6	New Materials	106
2.7	Future Perspectives and Research Challenges	108
	References	109
3	Biosensor Design with Molecular Engineering and Nanotechnology	117
	Thao T. Le, Christopher J. Johnson, Jakub Trzebinski, and Anthony E.G. Cass	
3.1	Introduction	117
3.2	Biomolecular Engineering for Biosensors	118
3.2.1	Engineering Proteins by Rational Design	118
3.2.2	Engineering Proteins by Evolutionary Design	121
3.2.3	Nucleic Acid Aptamers	121
3.3	Biosensor Applications	123
3.3.1	The Signal Transduction Module	124
3.3.2	The Molecular Recognition Module	125
3.3.3	Immobilisation Module	127
3.4	Nanotechnology	130
3.4.1	Miniaturisation and Scaling Laws: Nanoscale Devices and Performance Enhancements of Biosensors	131
3.4.2	Graphene	134
3.4.3	Nanoelectrochemical Sensors	136
3.4.4	Graphene Electrochemical Sensors	139
3.5	Biocompatibility and Implantable Biosensors	141
3.6	Conclusions	147
	References	148
4	Wireless Communication	155
	Henry Higgins	
4.1	Introduction	155
4.2	Inductive Coupling	156
4.3	RF Communication in the Body	157

4.4	Implanted Transceiver	159
4.5	Antenna Design	161
4.6	Antenna Testing	165
4.6.1	Antenna Impedance and Radiation Resistance Measurement	165
4.6.2	Quarter Wave Line Impedance Measurement	166
4.7	Matching Network	168
4.7.1	Transmitter Tuning	168
4.7.2	The L Network	170
4.7.3	The π Network	171
4.7.4	The T and π – L Networks	172
4.7.5	Parasitic Effects	173
4.7.6	Network Choice	174
4.7.7	Radio Frequency Losses in Components and Layout Issues	175
4.7.8	Receiver Tuning	176
4.7.9	Base Station Antennas	177
4.8	Propagation	177
4.9	Materials	179
4.10	Environment	180
4.11	External Transceiver (Base Station)	180
4.12	Power Considerations	181
4.13	Miniaturised Construction	181
4.13.1	Battery Challenges	182
4.14	Defibrillation Pulse and X-rays	183
4.15	Link Budget	184
4.16	Electro-stimulation: A Non-MICS Example	184
4.17	Conclusions	187
	References	187
5	Network Topologies, Communication Protocols, and Standards	189
	Javier Espina, Thomas Falck, Athanasia Panousopoulou, Lars Schmitt, Oliver Mülhens, and Guang-Zhong Yang	
5.1	Network Topologies	189
5.2	Body Sensor Network Application Scenarios	192
5.2.1	Stand-Alone Body Sensor Networks	192
5.2.2	Pervasive Sensor Networks	195
5.2.3	Global Healthcare Connectivity	197
5.3	The Standardisation of Wireless Personal and Body Area Networking	198
5.3.1	The Wireless Regulatory Environment	199
5.3.2	Wireless Communication Standards	201
5.3.3	IEEE 802.15.1: Medium-Rate Wireless Personal Area Networks	202

5.3.4	IEEE P802.15.3: High-Rate Wireless Personal Area Networks	207
5.3.5	IEEE 802.15.4: Low-Rate Wireless Personal Area Networks	208
5.3.6	IEEE 802.15.6: Wireless Body Area Networks	215
5.3.7	Comparison of Technologies	220
5.4	Interference and Coexistence	222
5.5	Healthcare System Integration	225
5.5.1	ISO/IEEE 11073 Personal Health Device Communication	226
5.5.2	Continua Health Alliance	230
5.6	Conclusions	231
	References	232
6	Energy Harvesting and Power Delivery	237
	Eric Yeatman and Paul Mitcheson	
6.1	Introduction	237
6.1.1	Sensor Node Power Requirements	238
6.1.2	Batteries and Fuel Cells for Sensor Nodes	240
6.1.3	Ambient Energy Sources	241
6.2	Inertial Energy Harvesters: Principles and Performance Limits	242
6.2.1	Energy Extraction Mechanisms for Inertial Generators	242
6.2.2	Performance Limits	247
6.3	Inertial Energy Harvesters: Practical Examples	251
6.3.1	Electrostatic Harvesters	251
6.3.2	Electromagnetic Harvesters	256
6.3.3	Piezoelectric Harvesters	256
6.4	Power Electronics for Energy Harvesters	258
6.4.1	Electrostatic Harvester Interfaces	259
6.4.2	Electromagnetic Harvester Interfaces	260
6.4.3	Piezoelectric Energy Harvester Interfaces	261
6.5	Wireless Power Delivery	262
6.5.1	Near Field Inductive Power Transfer	263
6.5.2	Ultrasonic Power Delivery	266
6.5.3	Radiative Power Transfer	267
6.6	Discussion and Conclusions	268
6.6.1	What Is Achievable in Body-Sensor Energy Harvesting?	268
6.6.2	Future Prospects and Trends	269
	References	270

7	Towards Ultra-low Power Bio-inspired Processing	273
	Leila Shepherd, Timothy G. Constandinou, and Chris Toumazou	
7.1	Introduction	273
7.2	Bio-inspired Signal Processing	274
7.3	Analogue Versus Digital Signal Processing	275
7.3.1	Quantised Data/Time vs. Continuous Data/Time	275
7.3.2	Analogue/Digital Data Representation	276
7.3.3	Linear Operations	278
7.3.4	Non-linear Operations	278
7.3.5	Hybrid System Organisation	279
7.4	CMOS-Based Biosensors	280
7.4.1	Ion-Sensitive Field-Effect Transistor (ISFET)	282
7.4.2	ISFET-Based Biosensors	284
7.4.3	Towards Biochemically-Inspired Processing with ISFETs	286
7.4.4	An ISFET-Based ASIC for Rapid Point-of-Care Gene Detection	290
7.5	Future Outlook	294
	References	296
8	Multi-sensor Fusion	301
	Guang-Zhong Yang, Javier Andreu-Perez, Xiaopeng Hu, and Surapa Thiemjarus	
8.1	Introduction	301
8.1.1	Information Interaction	302
8.1.2	Levels of Processing	303
8.2	Direct Data Fusion	305
8.2.1	Optimal Averaging for Sensor Arrays	305
8.2.2	Source Recovery	307
8.3	Feature-Level Fusion	312
8.3.1	Feature Detection	314
8.3.2	Distance Metrics	315
8.3.3	Instance-Based Learning	316
8.3.4	Distance-Based Clustering	317
8.4	Dimensionality Reduction	320
8.4.1	Multidimensional Scaling (MDS)	321
8.4.2	Locally Linear Embedding (LLE)	322
8.4.3	Laplacian Eigenmaps	323
8.4.4	Isometric Mapping (Isomap)	324
8.5	Feature Selection	326
8.5.1	Feature Relevance	330
8.5.2	Feature Relevance Based on ROC Analysis	333
8.5.3	Feature Selection Based on ROC Analysis	335
8.5.4	Multi-objective Feature Selection	338
8.5.5	Feature Redundancy	341

8.6	Decision-Level Fusion	343
8.7	Methods for Computing with Large Datasets	345
8.8	Fusing Datasets in Parallel Using MapReduce	346
8.9	Alternatives and Beyond MapReduce	347
8.10	Conclusions	347
	References	350
9	Context Aware Sensing	355
	Surapa Thiemjarus and Guang-Zhong Yang	
9.1	Introduction	355
9.2	Application Scenarios	357
9.3	Preprocessing for Context Sensing	360
	9.3.1 Sources of Signal Variations	360
	9.3.2 Data Normalisation	361
	9.3.3 Information Granularity	362
9.4	Context Recognition Techniques	363
	9.4.1 Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs)	363
	9.4.2 Hidden Markov Models (HMMs)	373
	9.4.3 Factor Graphs (FGs)	380
	9.4.4 Other Techniques	383
9.5	From Context Sensing to Behaviour Profiling	385
	9.5.1 Behaviour Profiling	385
	9.5.2 Transitional Activities	387
	9.5.3 Concurrent and Interleaving Contexts	390
	9.5.4 A Distributed Inferencing Model for Context Recognition	391
9.6	Conclusions	395
	References	397
10	Autonomic Sensing	405
	Benny Lo, Athanasia Panousopoulou, Surapa Thiemjarus, and Guang-Zhong Yang	
10.1	Introduction	405
10.2	Autonomic Sensing	409
10.3	Fault Detection and Self-Healing	411
	10.3.1 Belief Networks	412
	10.3.2 Belief Propagation Through Message Passing	414
	10.3.3 Self-Healing with Hidden Node	420
10.4	Networking and Self-Organisation	424
	10.4.1 Medium Access Control Sub-layer	425
	10.4.2 Network Layer	431
	10.4.3 Application Layer	434
10.5	Security and Self-Protection	439
	10.5.1 Bacterial Attacks	439
	10.5.2 Viral Infection	442

10.5.3	Secured Protocols	444
10.5.4	Self-Protection	451
10.6	Conclusions	455
	References	456
11	Wireless Sensor Microsystem Design: A Practical Perspective	463
	Lei Wang, David R.S. Cumming, Paul A. Hammond, Jonathan M. Cooper, Erik A. Johannessen, and Kamen Ivanov	
11.1	Introduction	463
11.2	The Endoscopic Capsule	465
11.3	Applications for Wireless Capsule Devices	469
11.4	Technology	471
11.4.1	Design Constraints	471
11.4.2	Microsystem Design	472
11.4.3	Integrated Sensors	474
11.5	Electronics System Design	478
11.5.1	Analogue Electronic Front-End Acquisition Design	479
11.5.2	Digital System Design	481
11.6	Wireless Transmission	482
11.7	Power Sources	484
11.8	Packaging	487
11.9	Conclusions	489
	References	489
12	Wearable Sensor Integration and Bio-motion Capture: A Practical Perspective	495
	Zhiqiang Zhang, Athanasia Panousopoulou, and Guang-Zhong Yang	
12.1	Introduction	495
12.1.1	Optical Tracking Systems	495
12.1.2	Mechanical-Based Tracking Systems	497
12.1.3	Wearable Inertial-Sensor Based Tracking Systems	498
12.2	Orientation Representation: Quaternion	500
12.2.1	Quaternion Definition	500
12.2.2	Quaternion Algebra	501
12.2.3	Quaternion and Rotation Matrix	503
12.2.4	Quaternion Integration	505
12.3	Bayesian Fusion for Orientation Estimation	506
12.3.1	Bayesian Fusion Theory	507
12.3.2	Dynamic and Measurement Model	508
12.3.3	Kalman Filtering	510
12.3.4	Temporary Interference and Processing	513

12.4	Human Body Motion Reconstruction	515
12.4.1	Human Biomechanical Model	517
12.4.2	Posture Estimation	518
12.5	Applications of Bio-motion Analysis	519
12.6	Network and Quality-of-Service for Bio-motion Analysis	521
12.7	Conclusions	524
	References	524
	Appendix A: Wireless Sensor Development Platforms	527
	Benny Lo and Guang-Zhong Yang	
A.1	Introduction	527
A.2	System Architecture	528
A.2.1	Processor	537
A.2.2	Wireless Communication	537
A.2.3	Memory	538
A.2.4	Sensor Interface	538
A.2.5	Power Supply	539
A.3	Conclusions	540
	References	540
	Appendix B: BSN Software and Development Tools	543
	Joshua Ellul, Benny Lo, and Guang-Zhong Yang	
B.1	Introduction	543
B.2	BSN Requirements and Issues	544
B.3	Operating Systems for BSNs	545
B.4	BSNOS – An Operating System for BSN	547
	References	550
	Index	551

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