

# Adaptive Leader-follower Formation Control of Mobile Robots with Unknown Skidding and Slipping Effects

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**Abstract:** This paper investigates an adaptive leader-follower formation control problem of multiple mobile robots in the presence of unknown skidding and slipping. First, we employ the concept of virtual robots to achieve the desired formation and derive the kinematics of the virtual leader and follower robots considering skidding and slipping effects. Then, we design an adaptive formation controller based on a two-dimensional error surface where the adaptive technique is used for compensating the unknown skidding and slipping effects that influence the follower robots. From Lyapunov stability theorem, we show that all errors of the closed-loop system are uniformly ultimately bounded, and thus the desired formation is successfully achieved regardless of the presence of unknown skidding and slipping effects. Simulation results are provided to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed formation control scheme.

**Keywords:** Adaptive control, formation control, leader-follower approach, mobile robots, skidding and slipping effects.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the past few years, many studies have been conducted on mobile robots with focus on solving various control problems, such as the tracking problem at the kinematic level [1,2], the tracking problem at the dynamic level [3,4], the tracking problem at the actuator level [5], and the unified tracking and stabilization problem [6,7]. All these studies assumed that the wheels of mobile robots purely roll and do not slip. However, in practice, this assumption may not be reasonable owing to environmental factors such as the road condition (i.e., an icy or wet road) and the tire deformation. Thus, the application of the controllers developed for solving the above-listed control problems to mobile robots with skidding and slipping may be problematic. Motivated by this observation, the control problem in the presence of skidding and slipping effects has been regarded as an attractive research topic [8-13]. In [10], the models of wheeled mobile robots considering both the skidding and the slipping of the wheels were proposed and the controllability according to the maneuverability of mobile robots was analyzed. Further, the authors of [11,12] designed path following and tracking controllers

for mobile robots by considering skidding and slipping effects. In [13], the author considered an adaptive control problem in order to address unknown skidding and slipping effects. However, all these works [8-13] allowed for the control of only single mobile robots with skidding and slipping effects. In other words, the results cannot be applied to the formation control of multiple mobile robots due to the coupling problems in the formation dynamics when considering the skidding and slipping effects.

On the other hand, the formation control of multiple mobile robots has gained an increasing interest from the control theory community owing to various applications such as cooperative transportation, reconnaissance, search, and so on. In the literature, popular formation control methods are fourfold: behavior-based control [14,15], graph theory [16,17], virtual structure [18-20], and leader-follower approach [21,22]. Among these approaches, the leader-follower approach has been largely studied by many researchers because it is easy to understand mathematically and shows good scalability. In its early days of research on mobile robots, the studies were performed at the kinematic level of mobile robots [21]. The formation control systems including collision avoidance were proposed in [23,24] and the adaptive leader-follower formation controller in the absence of the leader's velocity information was designed in [25]. The distributed formation control law which does not use global position measurements was proposed in [26]. For more practical applications, many studies have been conducted at the dynamic level of mobile robots. The sliding mode formation controller was proposed in [27,28] and the neural network control method was used for the leader-follower-based robot formations [29-31]. Moreover, a formation control design considering the actuator dynamics was presented in [32,33]. However, none of all these works related to the leader-follower

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formation control addressed the skidding and slipping effects of wheels of mobile robots. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no research results available on the leader-follower-based formation control problem of mobile robots in the presence of skidding and slipping effects.

Accordingly, we propose an adaptive leader-follower formation control approach for a class of multiple mobile robots with unknown skidding and slipping. In order to design the formation controller, a leader-follower model considering skidding and slipping effects is newly derived. Then, a two-dimensional error surface consisting of position and orientation errors is presented to design the formation controller. In the controller design, the adaptive technique is successfully applied to compensate the unknown skidding and slipping effects that influence the follower robots, regardless of the coupling problems among model nonlinearities and the skidding and slipping effects. From Lyapunov stability theorem, it is proved that all error signals of the closed-loop system are uniformly ultimately bounded, all point tracking errors converge to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin. Furthermore, the convergence of the orientation error is analyzed from the relationship between the robots' velocities and the skidding velocity. Finally, simulation results are included to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed formation control scheme.

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we introduce the kinematics and dynamics of mobile robots in the presence of skidding and slipping, and derive a leader-follower model considering skidding and slipping. In Section 3, an adaptive formation controller for multiple mobile robots is designed in the presence of unknown skidding and slipping, and the stability of the proposed control system is analyzed. Simulation results are discussed in Section 4. Finally, Section 5 gives some conclusions. Throughout this paper, the following notations are used: 1)  $\|\cdot\|$  stands for the Euclidean norm of a vectors; 2) the subscripts 'l' and 'f' represent the leader and the follower, respectively; and 3)  $\text{diag}[\cdot]$  denotes the diagonal matrix.

## 2. PROBLEM FORMULATION

### 2.1. Mobile robot model in the presence of skidding and slipping effects

The kinematics and dynamics of mobile robots in the presence of skidding and slipping effects are described by the following equations [13]

$$\dot{\mathbf{q}} = \mathbf{J}(\mathbf{q})(\mathbf{z} - \boldsymbol{\rho}) + \boldsymbol{\varphi}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu}), \quad (1)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{q})\dot{\mathbf{z}}, &= \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{q})\dot{\boldsymbol{\rho}} - \mathbf{F}_1(\mathbf{q}, \dot{\mathbf{q}})(\mathbf{z} - \boldsymbol{\rho}) - \mathbf{F}_2(\mathbf{q})\dot{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu}) \\ &\quad - \mathbf{F}_3(\mathbf{q})\boldsymbol{\varphi}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu}) + \boldsymbol{\tau}, \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

where

$$\mathbf{J}(\mathbf{q}) = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta & 0 \\ \sin \theta & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{q}) &= (\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{q}))^{-1}\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{M}(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{J}(\mathbf{q}), \\ \mathbf{F}_1(\mathbf{q}, \dot{\mathbf{q}}) &= (\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{q}))^{-1} \\ &\quad \times \mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})(\mathbf{M}(\mathbf{q})\dot{\mathbf{J}}(\mathbf{q}) + \mathbf{C}(\mathbf{q}, \dot{\mathbf{q}})\mathbf{J}(\mathbf{q})), \end{aligned}$$

$$\mathbf{F}_2(\mathbf{q}) = (\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{q}))^{-1}\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{M}(\mathbf{q}),$$

$$\mathbf{F}_3(\mathbf{q}) = (\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{q}))^{-1}\mathbf{J}^T(\mathbf{q})\mathbf{C}(\mathbf{q}, \dot{\mathbf{q}}),$$

$$\mathbf{M}(\mathbf{q}) = \begin{bmatrix} m & 0 & md \sin \theta \\ 0 & m & -md \cos \theta \\ md \sin \theta & -md \cos \theta & I \end{bmatrix},$$

$$\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{q}) = \frac{1}{r} \begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta & \cos \theta \\ \sin \theta & \sin \theta \\ b & -b \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{C}(\mathbf{q}, \dot{\mathbf{q}}) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & md\dot{\theta} \cos \theta \\ 0 & 0 & md\dot{\theta} \sin \theta \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix},$$

$$m = m_c + 2m_w, \quad I = m_c d^2 + 2m_w b^2 + I_c + 2I_m.$$

In these expressions,  $2b$  is the width of the mobile robot,  $r$  is the radius of the wheel, and  $d$  is the distance between the center of mass of the mobile robot and the mid point between the left and right wheels. Further,  $m_c$  and  $m_w$  are masses of the body and wheel with a motor, respectively.  $I_c$ ,  $I_w$ , and  $I_m$  are moments of inertia of the body about the vertical axis, of the wheel with a motor about the wheel axis, and of the wheel with a motor about the wheel diameter, respectively.  $\mathbf{q} = [x, y, \theta]^T$ ;  $(x, y)$  are the coordinates of the midpoint between the two driving wheels, and  $\theta$  is the heading angle of the mobile robot,  $\mathbf{z} = [v, \omega]^T$ ;  $v$  and  $\omega$  are the linear velocity and the angular velocity, respectively, of the mobile robot,  $\boldsymbol{\rho} = [\rho_1, \rho_2]^T$ ;  $\rho_1$  is the longitudinal slip velocity and  $\rho_2$  is the yaw rate perturbation due to the slippage of the wheels  $\boldsymbol{\varphi}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu}) = [-\mu \sin \theta, \mu \cos \theta, 0]^T$ ;  $\mu$  is the lateral skidding velocity, and  $\boldsymbol{\tau}$  is the control torque applied to the wheels.

**Assumption 1:** The skidding and slipping perturbations  $\rho_1$ ,  $\rho_2$ , and  $\boldsymbol{\varphi}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu})$  are bounded as  $|\rho_1| < \zeta_1$ ,  $|\rho_2| < \zeta_2$ , and  $\|\boldsymbol{\varphi}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu})\| = |\mu| < \zeta_3$  where  $\zeta_i$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ ) are *unknown* positive constants, and their first derivatives are bounded as  $|\dot{\rho}_1| < \zeta_{d1}$ ,  $|\dot{\rho}_2| < \zeta_{d2}$ , and  $\|\dot{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}(\mathbf{q}, \boldsymbol{\mu})\| < \zeta_{d3} + \zeta_3(|\dot{\omega}| + \zeta_2)$  with  $|\dot{\mu}| < \zeta_{d3}$  where  $\zeta_{di}$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ ) are *unknown* positive constants.

**Remark 1:** Assumption 1 is reasonable owing to Property 2 reported in [10]. Unlike the approach in [10], our approach does not require knowledge of the bounds of the skidding and slipping perturbations for designing the formation controller because the unknown bounds are estimated by the adaptive technique. These bounds are only used to prove the stability of the proposed control system.

### 2.2. Leader-follower model considering skidding and slipping

In this section, we derive the leader-follower model in the presence of skidding and slipping effects and present the adaptive formation control problem based on the leader-follower configuration as shown in Fig. 1. In order

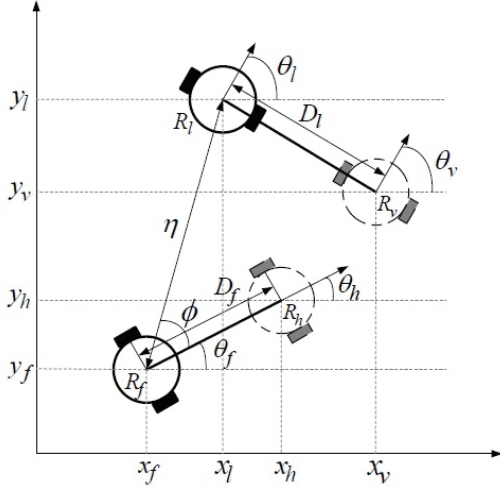


Fig. 1. Leader-follower configuration of two robots.

to achieve the desired formation, we employ the concept of virtual robots instead of using actual robots. In other words, the position  $\mathbf{q}_v = [x_v, y_v, \theta_v]^T$  of the virtual leader  $R_v$ , which is located at a distance  $D_l$  from the center  $\mathbf{q}_l = [x_l, y_l, \theta_l]^T$  of the actual leader  $R_l$ , is defined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} x_v &= x_l + D_l \sin \theta_l, \\ y_v &= y_l - D_l \cos \theta_l, \\ \theta_v &= \theta_l, \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

where  $D_l = \eta_d \sin \phi_d$ ;  $\eta_d$  and  $\phi_d$  are, respectively, the desired distance and angle of the follower with respect to the leader. Then, using the kinematic (1) in the presence of skidding and slipping, the derivative of (3) is obtained as

$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{x}_v \\ \dot{y}_v \\ \dot{\theta}_v \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta_l & D_l \cos \theta_l \\ \sin \theta_l & D_l \sin \theta_l \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v_l - \rho_{1l} \\ \omega_l - \rho_{2l} \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} -\mu_l \sin \theta_l \\ \mu_l \cos \theta_l \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (4)$$

Similarly, the position  $\mathbf{q}_h = [x_h, y_h, \theta_h]^T$  of the virtual follower  $R_h$  which is located at a distance  $D_f$  from the center  $\mathbf{q}_f = [x_f, y_f, \theta_f]^T$  of the actual follower  $R_f$ , is expressed as

$$\begin{aligned} x_h &= x_f + D_f \cos \theta_f, \\ y_h &= y_f + D_f \sin \theta_f, \\ \theta_h &= \theta_f, \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

where  $D_f = \eta_d \cos \phi_d$ . The derivative of (5) is also represented by

$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{x}_h \\ \dot{y}_h \\ \dot{\theta}_h \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta_f & -D_f \sin \theta_f \\ \sin \theta_f & D_f \sin \theta_f \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v_f - \rho_{1f} \\ \omega_f - \rho_{2f} \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} -\mu_f \sin \theta_f \\ \mu_f \cos \theta_f \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (6)$$

**Assumption 2:** The velocities of the leader robot  $v_l > 0$ ,  $\omega_l$ , and its first derivatives are available and

bounded.

**Remark 2:** Notice that Assumption 2 on the boundedness of the leader's velocity is general and reasonable in the field of leader-follower formation control [23]. In the leader-follower formation scheme, since the leader robot plays the role of a reference robot for the follower robots the follower robot cannot track the leader robot if the leader robot's velocity is not bounded. In addition,  $v_l > 0$  means that this study only focuses on the desired formation tracking problem, i.e., we do not consider the problem of stabilization.

The *control objective* is to steer the virtual follower so that it follows the virtual leader, which implies that the actual follower maintains the desired distance and angle with respect to the actual leader in the presence of unknown skidding and slipping effects.

### 3. MAIN RESULTS

In order to design an adaptive formation controller for mobile robots with skidding and slipping, let us define the tracking errors between  $R_v$  and  $R_h$  as

$$x_e = x_v - x_h, \quad y_e = y_v - y_h, \quad \theta_e = \theta_v - \theta_h. \quad (7)$$

Then, we consider an error surface  $\mathbf{s} = [s_1, s_2]^T$  as follows:

$$\mathbf{s} = \begin{bmatrix} s_1 \\ s_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} -s_x \cos \theta_f - s_y \sin \theta_f \\ s_x \sin \theta_f - s_y \cos \theta_f \end{bmatrix}, \quad (8)$$

where  $s_x = \dot{x}_e + kx_e$  and  $s_y = \dot{y}_e + ky_e$ ;  $k > 0$  is a design constant. By applying (3)–(6), the derivative of the error dynamics is given by

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\mathbf{s}} &= \begin{bmatrix} \dot{v}_f - \dot{v}_l \cos \theta_e - \dot{\omega}_l D_l \cos \theta_e + \alpha_1 + \beta_1 + \gamma_1 \\ \dot{\omega}_f D_f - \dot{v}_l \sin \theta_e - \dot{\omega}_l D_l \sin \theta_e + \alpha_2 + \beta_2 + \gamma_2 \end{bmatrix} \\ &= \mathbf{P}\dot{\mathbf{z}}_f - \mathbf{P}\mathbf{Q}\dot{\mathbf{z}}_l + \boldsymbol{\alpha} + \boldsymbol{\beta} + \boldsymbol{\gamma}, \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

where

$$\boldsymbol{\alpha} = [\alpha_1, \alpha_2]^T, \quad \boldsymbol{\beta} = [\beta_1, \beta_2]^T, \quad \boldsymbol{\gamma} = [\gamma_1, \gamma_2]^T,$$

$$\mathbf{P} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & D_f \end{bmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{Q} = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta_e & D_l \cos \theta_e \\ \frac{\sin \theta_e}{D_f} & \frac{D_l \sin \theta_e}{D_f} \end{bmatrix},$$

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha_1 &= (v_l \omega_l + \omega_l^2 D_l - \omega_f v_l - \omega_f \omega_l D_l) \sin \theta_e \\ &\quad - k(v_l + \omega_l D_l) \cos \theta_e \\ &\quad + k(x_e \omega_f \sin \theta_f - y_e \omega_f \cos \theta_f + v_f), \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha_2 &= (-v_l \omega_l - \omega_l^2 D_l + \omega_f v_l + \omega_f \omega_l D_l) \cos \theta_e \\ &\quad + k(D_f \omega_f + x_e \omega_f \cos \theta_f + y_e \omega_f \sin \theta_f) \\ &\quad - k(v_l + \omega_l D_l) \sin \theta_e, \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \beta_1 &= (\rho_{1l} \rho_{2l} - \rho_{1l} \omega_l - \rho_{2l} v_l + \rho_{2l}^2 D_l - 2\omega_l \rho_{2l} D_l + \dot{\mu}_l \\ &\quad - \rho_{1l} \rho_{2f} + \rho_{2f} v_l - \rho_{2f} \rho_{2l} D_l \\ &\quad + \rho_{2f} \omega_l D_l + k\mu_l) \sin \theta_e \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& -\dot{\rho}_{1f} - k\rho_{1f} + (\dot{\rho}_{1l} + \dot{\rho}_{2l}D_l + \mu_l(\omega_l - \rho_{2l}) \\
& + \rho_{2f}\mu_l + k\rho_{1l} + k\rho_{2l}D_l)\cos\theta_e, \\
\beta_2 = & (-\rho_{1l}\rho_{2l} + \rho_{1l}\omega_l + \rho_{2l}v_l + 2\rho_{2l}\omega_l D_l - \rho_{2l}^2 - \dot{\mu}_l \\
& - \rho_{2f}v_l + \rho_{2f}\rho_{1l} - \rho_{2f}\omega_l D_l \\
& + \rho_{2f}\rho_{2l}D_l - k\mu_l)\cos\theta_e \\
& - \dot{\rho}_{2f}D_f + \dot{\mu}_f - kD_f\rho_{2f} + k\mu_f \\
& + (\dot{\rho}_{1l} + \dot{\rho}_{2l}D_l + \mu_l(\omega_l - \rho_{2l} + \rho_{2f}) \\
& + k\rho_{1l} + kD_l\rho_{2l})\sin\theta_e, \\
\gamma_1 = & (\rho_{1l} + \rho_{2l}D_l)\omega_f \sin\theta_e - kx_e\rho_{2f} \sin\theta_f \\
& + ky_e\rho_{2f} \cos\theta_f, \\
\gamma_2 = & -(\rho_{1l} + \rho_{2l}D_l)\omega_f \cos\theta_e - kx_e\rho_{2f} \cos\theta_f \\
& - ky_e\rho_{2f} \sin\theta_f - \mu_l\omega_f \sin\theta_e.
\end{aligned}$$

Here,  $\gamma$  is expressed by the vector form  $\gamma = W\Phi$  where  $\Phi = [\omega_f, x_e, y_e]^T$  and

$$W = \begin{bmatrix} \varrho \sin\theta_e & -k\rho_{2f} \sin\theta_f & k\rho_{2f} \cos\theta_f \\ -\varrho \cos\theta_e - \mu_l \sin\theta_e & -k\rho_{2f} \cos\theta_f & k\rho_{2f} \sin\theta_f \end{bmatrix}$$

with  $\varrho = \rho_{1l} + \rho_{2l}D_l$ .

**Remark 3:** In (9),  $\alpha$  is the known vector, and  $\beta$  and  $W$  in  $\gamma$  are unknown bounded vector and matrix, respectively, resulting from the unknown skidding and slipping effects of both the leader and the follower robots. Therefore, the vector  $\beta$  and the matrix  $W$  in  $\gamma$  are tuned by the adaptive technique.

The control input  $\tau_f$  of the follower robot is chosen as

$$\begin{aligned}
\tau_f &= H(q_f)u_f, \\
u_f &= N_1 z_f + Qz_l - P^{-1}\alpha - Rs - N\hat{\delta},
\end{aligned} \tag{10}$$

where

$$N = \left[ \frac{N_1 N_1^T s}{2\epsilon}, \frac{N_2 N_2^T s}{2\epsilon}, \frac{N_3 N_3^T}{2\epsilon}, \frac{s}{2\epsilon}, \frac{s \|\Phi\|^2}{2\epsilon} \right],$$

$$N_1 = H^{-1}(q_f)F_1(q_f, \dot{q}_f), \quad N_2 = H(q_f)^{-1}F_2(q_f),$$

$$N_3 = H(q_f)^{-1}F_3(q_f), \quad R = \text{diag}[r_1, r_2] > 0,$$

$\epsilon$  is a positive constant, and  $\hat{\delta} = [\hat{\delta}_1, \hat{\delta}_2, \hat{\delta}_3, \hat{\delta}_4, \hat{\delta}_5]^T$  is the estimate of  $\delta = [\delta_1, \delta_2, \delta_3, \delta_4, \delta_5]^T$ . Here,

$$\begin{aligned}
\delta_1 &= \zeta_{1f}^2 + \zeta_{2f}^2, \quad \delta_2 = \zeta_{d3f} + \zeta_{3f}(|\omega_f| + \zeta_{2f}), \\
\delta_3 &= \zeta_{3f}, \quad \delta_4 = (\zeta_{d1f} + (1/D_f)\bar{\beta}_1)^2 + (\zeta_{d2f} + \bar{\beta}_2)^2
\end{aligned}$$

with  $|\beta_1| \leq \bar{\beta}_1$  and  $|\beta_2| \leq \bar{\beta}_2$ , and

$$\begin{aligned}
\delta_5 &= 2(k\zeta_{2f})^2(1/D_f^2 + 1) + (1/D_f^2)(\zeta_{1l} + \zeta_{2l}D_l)^2 \\
& + (\zeta_{1l} + \zeta_{2l}D_l + \zeta_{3l})^2.
\end{aligned}$$

The adaptive parameter vector  $\hat{\delta}$  is tuned by the following adaptive law

$$\dot{\hat{\delta}} = \Lambda N^T s - \sigma \Lambda \hat{\delta}, \tag{11}$$

where  $\Lambda = \text{diag}[\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3, \lambda_4, \lambda_5] > 0$  and  $\sigma$  is a positive small gain for the  $\sigma$ -modification [34].

**Remark 4:** The term  $P^{-1}$  in the control input (10) has the singularity problem when  $\phi_d = \pm\pi/2$ . To avoid this problem, we use the following perturbed version instead of  $\phi_d$  for this special circumstance:

$$\bar{\phi}_d = \phi_d + \varepsilon, \tag{12}$$

where  $\varepsilon \neq 0$  is a sufficiently small constant. This version is generally used in the field of formation control using the concept of a virtual leader and follower [23].

**Theorem 1:** Consider the follower mobile robot (1) and (2) with unknown skidding and slipping that is controlled by the proposed controller (10) with the adaptive law (11). If the proposed control system satisfies Assumptions 1 and 2, then the point tracking errors  $(x_e, y_e)$  converge to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin and the orientation error satisfies  $\lim[\sin\theta_e - (D_f\dot{\theta}_f + \mu_f)/(v_l + D_l\dot{\theta}_l - \rho_{1l} + \mu_l)] \leq \varpi$  where  $\varpi$  is a constant that can be arbitrarily small. Further, if the follower robot does not rotate (i.e.,  $\dot{\theta}_f = 0$ ) and its lateral skidding velocity  $\mu_f$  is  $\mu_f = 0$ , the orientation error  $\theta_e$  converges to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin, while all signals of the controlled closed-loop system are uniformly ultimately bounded. Thus, the formation errors  $x_e$ ,  $y_e$ , and  $\theta_e$  are bounded and the desired formation is achieved successfully.

**Proof:** From the dynamics (2) for the follower robot, we can obtain the following equation

$$\dot{z}_f = \dot{\rho}_f - N_1(z_f - \rho_f) - N_2\dot{\rho}_f - N_3\varphi_f + u_f. \tag{13}$$

Substituting (13) into (9) yields

$$\begin{aligned}
\dot{s} &= P(\dot{\rho}_f - N_1(z_f - \rho_f) - N_2\dot{\rho}_f - N_3\varphi_f + u_f) \\
& - PQz_l + \alpha + \beta + W\Phi.
\end{aligned} \tag{14}$$

Consider the following Lyapunov function candidate

$$V = \frac{1}{2}(s^T P^{-1}s + \tilde{\delta}^T \Lambda^{-1}\tilde{\delta}), \tag{15}$$

where  $\tilde{\delta} = \delta - \hat{\delta}$ .

The time derivative of (15) along with (14) is

$$\begin{aligned}
\dot{V} &= s^T P^{-1}\dot{s} - \tilde{\delta}^T \Lambda^{-1}\dot{\tilde{\delta}} \\
&= s^T \{\dot{\rho}_f - N_1(z_f - \rho_f) - N_2\dot{\rho}_f - N_3\varphi_f \\
& + u_f - Qz_l + P^{-1}(\alpha + \beta + W\Phi)\} - \tilde{\delta}^T \Lambda^{-1}\dot{\tilde{\delta}}.
\end{aligned} \tag{16}$$

Using (10), (11), and Young's inequality, (16) can be rewritten as

$$\begin{aligned}
\dot{V} &= s^T \{\dot{\rho}_f + N_1\rho_f - N_2\dot{\rho}_f - N_3\varphi_f - Rs - N\hat{\delta} \\
& + P^{-1}(\beta + W\Phi)\} - \tilde{\delta}^T \{N^T s - \sigma\hat{\delta}\}
\end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}
&\leq -s^T \mathbf{R}s + \|s^T N_1\| \|\rho_f\| + \|s^T N_2\| \|\dot{\phi}_f\| \\
&\quad + \|s^T N_3\| \|\varphi_f\| + \|s\| \|\dot{\rho}_f + \mathbf{P}^{-1}\beta\| \\
&\quad + \|s^T \mathbf{P}^{-1} \mathbf{W}\Phi\| - s^T \mathbf{N}\hat{\delta} - \tilde{\delta}^T \{N^T s - \sigma \hat{\delta}\} \\
&\leq -s^T \mathbf{R}s + \delta_1 \frac{s^T N_1 N_1^T s}{2\epsilon} + \delta_2 \frac{s^T N_2 N_2^T s}{2\epsilon} \\
&\quad + \delta_3 \frac{s^T N_3 N_3^T s}{2\epsilon} + \delta_4 \frac{s^T s}{2\epsilon} + \delta_5 \frac{\|s\|^2 \|\Phi\|^2}{2\epsilon} - s^T \mathbf{N}\hat{\delta} \\
&\quad - \tilde{\delta}^T \{N^T s - \sigma \hat{\delta}\} + \frac{5}{2}\epsilon \\
&\leq -s^T \mathbf{R}s - \frac{\sigma}{2} \tilde{\delta}^T \tilde{\delta} + \frac{\sigma}{2} \|\delta\|^2 + \frac{5}{2}\epsilon \\
&\leq -2c_1 V + c_2,
\end{aligned}$$

where  $0 < c_1 < \min\{r_1, D_f r_2, (\sigma/2)\Lambda_{\min}\}$ ,  $c_2 = (\sigma/2)\|\delta\|^2 + (5/2)\epsilon$ , and  $\Lambda_{\min}$  is a minimum eigenvalue of  $\Lambda$ . Multiplying  $e^{2c_1 t}$  and integrating it over  $[0, t]$  yield

$$0 \leq V(t) \leq \frac{c_2}{2c_1} + \left[ V(0) - \frac{c_2}{2c_1} \right] e^{-2c_1 t}. \quad (18)$$

In (18),  $V(t)$  is bounded by  $(c_2/2c_1)$  as time goes to infinity. Therefore, all error signals  $s$  and  $\tilde{\delta}$  are uniformly ultimately bounded. Moreover, the bound  $(c_2/2c_1)$  can be made arbitrarily small by adjusting  $\mathbf{R}$ ,  $\Lambda$ ,  $\sigma$ , and  $\epsilon$ . This means that  $x_e$ ,  $y_e$ ,  $\dot{x}_e$ , and  $\dot{y}_e$  converge to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin.

Now, we prove the boundedness of  $\theta_e$ . From (4) and (6), we can obtain the following equations

$$\begin{aligned}
\sin \theta_f \dot{x}_e &= (v_l \cos \theta_l + D_l \omega_l \cos \theta_l - \rho_{1l} \cos \theta_l \\
&\quad - \mu_l \sin \theta_l - D_l \rho_{2l} \cos \theta_l - v_f \cos \theta_f \\
&\quad + \omega_f D_f \sin \theta_f + \rho_{1f} \cos \theta_f \\
&\quad - \rho_{2f} D_f \sin \theta_f + \mu_f \sin \theta_f) \sin \theta_f,
\end{aligned} \quad (19)$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\cos \theta_f \dot{y}_e &= (v_l \sin \theta_l + D_l \omega_l \sin \theta_l - \rho_{1l} \sin \theta_l \\
&\quad + \mu_l \cos \theta_l - D_l \rho_{2l} \sin \theta_l - v_f \sin \theta_f \\
&\quad - \omega_f D_f \cos \theta_f + \rho_{1f} \sin \theta_f \\
&\quad + \rho_{2f} D_f \cos \theta_f - \mu_f \cos \theta_f) \cos \theta_f.
\end{aligned} \quad (20)$$

From (19) and (20),  $\omega_f$  is defined as

$$\omega_f = \frac{v_l}{D_f} \sin \theta_e + \frac{D_l \omega_l}{D_f} \sin \theta_e + f_1 + \rho_{2f}, \quad (21)$$

where

$$\begin{aligned}
f_1 &= (-\rho_{1l} \sin \theta_e + \mu_l \cos \theta_e - D_l \rho_{2l} \sin \theta_e - \mu_f \\
&\quad + \dot{x}_e \sin \theta_f - \dot{y}_e \cos \theta_f) / D_f.
\end{aligned}$$

Then, the dynamics of  $\theta_e$  is derived as

$$\dot{\theta}_e = -\frac{v_l}{D_f} \sin \theta_e + f_2, \quad (22)$$

where  $f_2 = (1 - (D_l/D_f) \sin \theta_e) \omega_l - f_1 - \rho_{2l}$  and  $v_l/D_f > 0$ . Since  $\dot{x}_e$  and  $\dot{y}_e$  are bounded,  $f_2$  is bounded from Assumptions 1 and 2, that is, there exists a set  $\Upsilon_{f_2}$  such that  $f_2 \in \Upsilon_{f_2}$  where  $t \geq 0$ . Then, let us consider the positive definite function  $\Omega = 1 - \cos \theta_e$ . Substituting (22) into the time derivative of  $\Omega$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\dot{\Omega} &= -\frac{v_l}{D_f} \sin^2 \theta_e + f_2 \sin \theta_e \\
&\leq -c_3 \Omega + c_4,
\end{aligned} \quad (23)$$

where  $c_3 = \min_{v_l \in \Upsilon_{v_l}} v_l / \eta_d$  and  $c_4 = 2c_3 + \max_{f_2 \in \Upsilon_{f_2}} |f_2|$ ;  $\Upsilon_{v_l}$  is a set satisfying  $v_l \in \Upsilon_{v_l}$  where  $t \geq 0$ . Therefore,  $\theta_e$  is bounded from (23).

From (21), we hold  $(v_l + D_l \omega_l - D_l \rho_{2l} - \rho_{1l} + \mu_l) \sin \theta_e + D_f \rho_{2f} - D_f \omega_f - \mu_f = -\dot{x}_e \sin \theta_f + \dot{y}_e \cos \theta_f$ . Since the derivatives of the point tracking errors  $(\dot{x}_e, \dot{y}_e)$  can be reduced to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin,  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} [\sin \theta_e - (D_f \dot{\theta}_f + \mu_f) / (v_l + D_l \dot{\theta}_l - \rho_{1l} + \mu_l)] \leq \varpi$  is satisfied. Here, we can see that if the follower robot does not rotate (i.e.,  $\dot{\theta}_f = 0$ ) and its lateral skidding velocity  $\mu_f$  is  $\mu_f = 0$ , the orientation error  $\theta_e$  converges to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin.

**Remark 5:** The previous papers [9-11] considering skidding and slipping effects require the accurate measurement of skidding and slipping using sensors, but use of sensors may cause the performance degradation because of sensor noise. In addition, the results [9-11] can be applied only to single mobile robots. However, the controller proposed in this paper does not require sensor information because the adaptive control technique (10) is employed to compensate unknown skidding and slipping effects in both the leader and the follower robots. Moreover, this study extends the unknown skidding and slipping problem to the formation control of multiple mobile robots.

**Remark 6:** In this paper, the obstacle avoidance problem in the leader-follower formation control is not considered. However, multiple obstacles commonly exist in real world applications. In future work, it will be interesting to address the leader-follower formation tracking problem by considering obstacle avoidance for multiple mobile robots in the presence of unknown skidding and slipping effects.

#### 4. SIMULATION RESULTS

In this section, one leader and two followers are considered to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed control system in maintaining the desired formation under skidding and slipping effects. The matrices for the dynamic model of the leader and followers employed in this simulation have been taken from [35].

The initial postures for the leader and the two followers are  $(x_l, y_l, \theta_l) = (0, 0, 0)$ ,  $(x_{f1}, y_{f1}, \theta_{f1}) = (0, 4,$

0), and  $(x_{f2}, y_{f2}, \theta_{f2}) = (0, -4, 0)$ , respectively. The desired relative positions of the followers with respect to the leader are  $\eta_{d,f1} = 2$  m,  $\phi_{d,f1} = -\pi/3$  rad, and  $\eta_{d,f2} = 2$  m,  $\phi_{d,f2} = \pi/3$  rad, respectively. The velocity of the reference robot, which is used to generate the reference trajectory of the leader robot, is chosen as  $v_r = 0.8$  m/s and  $\omega_r = 0.07$  rad/s. With the aim of observing the performance of the proposed formation controller when the leader robot skids and slips, this robot is controlled by a controller designed without considering skidding and slipping as proposed in [36]. For practical purposes, we use the skidding and slipping effects that were measured experimentally in [37]. In other words,  $\rho_2$  and  $\mu$  are chosen as Gaussian random variables with mean 0.05 and standard deviation 0.03, and with mean 0 and standard deviation 0.03, respectively. Here,  $\rho_1$  is set to zero. These skidding and slipping effects influence the leader and follower robots from  $t = 20$  s to  $t = 60$  s. In addition, we consider the measurement errors with Gaussian random variables as discussed in [37]. The controller parameters are chosen as  $k = 1$ ,  $r_1 = r_2 = 9$ ,  $\sigma = 0.1$ ,  $\varepsilon = 0.1$ , and  $\lambda_1 = \lambda_2 = 2$ .

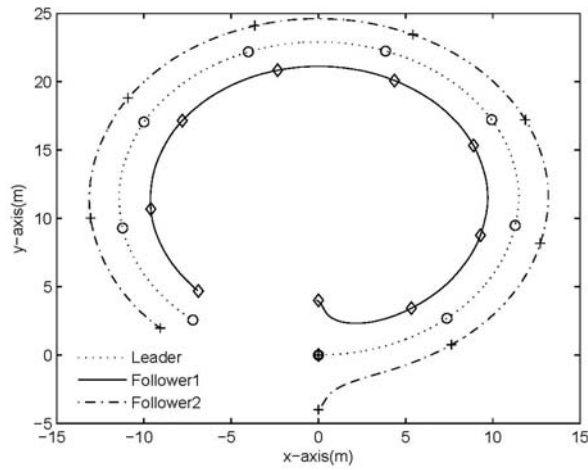
Fig. 2(a) shows the formation tracking result of the proposed control system. The tracking errors  $x_e$  and  $y_e$  are shown in Figs. 2(b) and 2(c), respectively. As shown in Fig. 2(d), the orientation errors of the follower robots are bounded and converge to  $\theta_e \approx \arcsin((D_f \dot{\theta}_f + \mu_f) / (v_l + D_l \dot{\theta}_l - \rho_{l1} + \mu_l)) = 5.9195^\circ$  and  $4.3578^\circ$ , respectively, as stated in Theorem 1. In addition, Figs. 2(e) and 2(f) show the tracking errors of the leader robot in the presence of the skidding and slipping effects. These figures reveal that the proposed adaptive formation control scheme can achieve the desired formation tracking regardless of the presence of unknown Gaussian skidding and slipping effects and the leader robot's skidding and slipping.

## 5. CONCLUSION

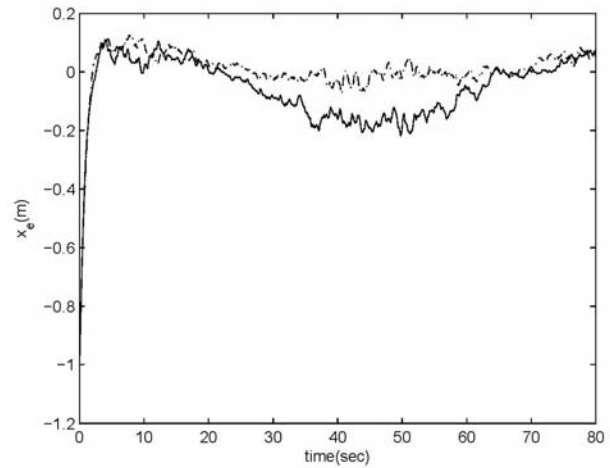
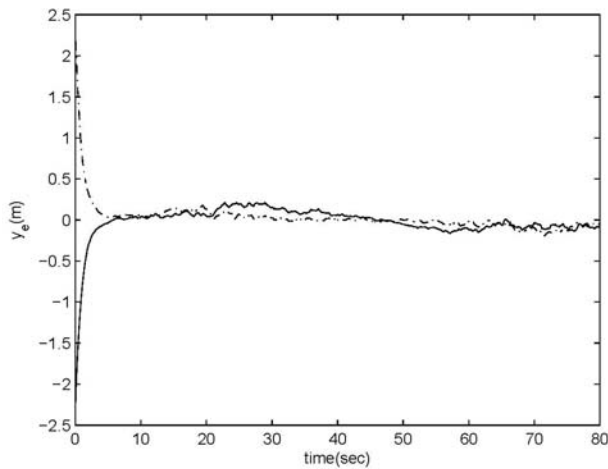
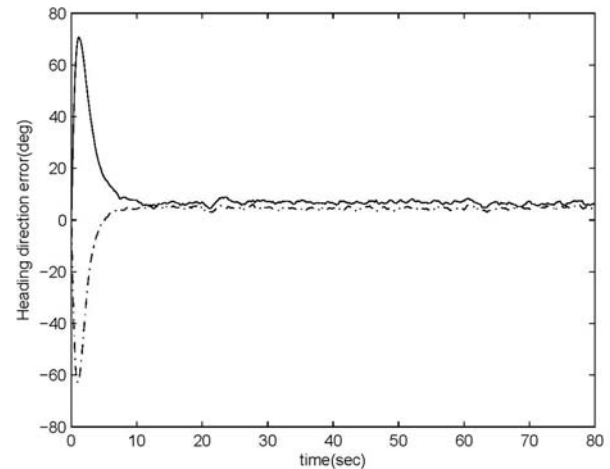
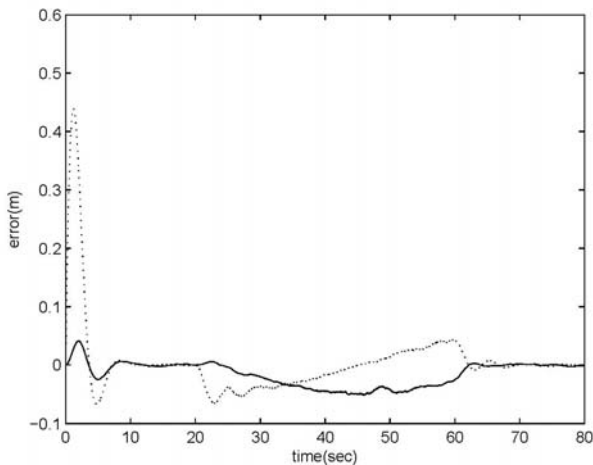
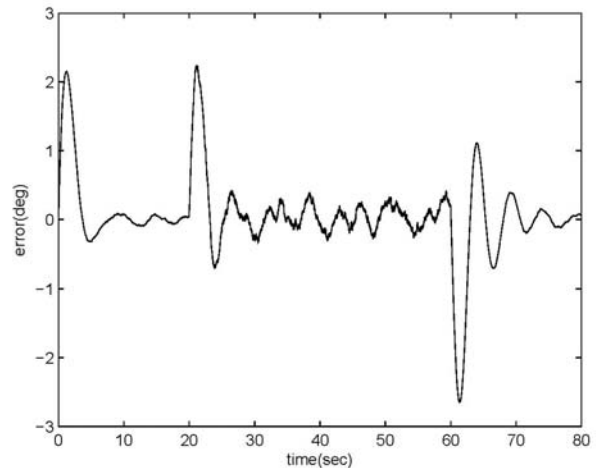
In this paper, an adaptive formation controller for mobile robots with unknown skidding and slipping has been presented. Virtual robots have been used to design the proposed control system instead of using actual robots, and the kinematics of the virtual robots has been derived in the presence of slipping and skidding effects. The adaptive formation controller for the derived robot model has been designed based on the leader-follower approach and the adaptive technique has been used to compensate unknown skidding and slipping effects. From the Lyapunov stability theorem, we have proved that all signals of the closed-loop system are uniformly ultimately bounded, and the point tracking errors for the desired formation also converge to an adjustable neighborhood of the origin. Thus, we can guarantee that the proposed formation control scheme maintains the desired formation successfully regardless of the presence of unknown skidding and slipping effects.

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(a) Trajectory.

(b)  $x_e$  (solid : follower 1, dash-dot : follower 2).(c)  $y_e$  (solid : follower 1, dash-dot : follower 2).(d)  $\theta_e$  (solid : follower 1, dash-dot : follower 2).(e) The position errors of the leader robot (solid :  $x_l$ , dotted :  $y_l$ ).

(f) The heading error of the leader robot.

Fig. 2. Formation control results and errors.

formation control for multirobot teams," *IEEE Trans. Robot. Automat.*, vol. 14, no. 6, pp. 926-939, 1998.

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