



**THE DESIGN, MANUFACTURE AND PRELIMINARY TESTS OF A
LINEAR CAR SYSTEM FOR ROBOTIC APPLICATIONS**

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DEPARTMENT OF MECHATRONICS ENGINEERING

M.Sc. Thesis in

MECHATRONICS ENGINEERING



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ABSTRACT

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M.Sc. in Mechatronics Engineering

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In the thesis, the design, manufacture and initial tests of the Linear Car (LC) and Linear Rail (LR) systems, which provided the movement of robots on them, were presented. The LC consists of rollers to carry the load on the plate on which the robotic system is mounted. The design and selection procedures of the components of the systems, including the finite element modeling and analysis, were mentioned. The LR's lateral and vertical run-out and deflection were introduced with no load and load conditions. The manufacturing processes, materials selections and assembly procedures were given. The initial test results revealed that the LC and LR systems could be used successfully in the movement of the robots.

Keywords: Linear car, linear rail, design, manufacture, test.

ÖZET

ROBOT UYGULAMALARI İÇİN LİNEER ARABA SİSTEMİ TASARIMI, ÜRETİMİ VE ÖN TESTLERİ

ŞENOL GÖZÜTOK, Demet

Mekatronik Mühendisliği Yüksek Lisans

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Can ÇOĞUN

Aralık 2022, 45 sayfa

Bu tezde robotların üzerinde hareket etmesini sağlayan lineer araba ve lineer ray sistemlerinin tasarım, üretim ve test süreçleri sunulmuştur. Lineer araba, robotik sisteme monte edilen plaka üzerindeki yükü taşımak için silindir parçalardan oluşmaktadır. Sonlu elemanlar modellemesi, analizi ve sistem bileşenlerinin tasarım ve seçim prosedürlerine değinilmiştir. Lineer rayın yüksüz ve yüklü olarak yanal ve dikeyde salgı ve sehim koşulları sunulmuştur. Üretim süreçleri, malzeme seçimleri ve montaj prosedürleri verilmiştir. İlk test sonuçları, lineer araba ve lineer ray sistemlerinin robotların hareketlerinde başarılı bir şekilde kullanılabileceğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Lineer araba, lineer ray, tasarım, üretim, test.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 LINEAR CAR SYSTEM

A linear rail (LR) is a machine element that provides cushioning to ensure movement on an axis and a linear car (LC) is the machine element that makes the linear motion on the LR [1]. LR provides silent and precise operation by decreasing friction. Linear guides (LG), composed of an LC and LR, are essential to precision machining equipment, such as computer numerical control (CNC) machine tools. Motion errors of LGs directly affect the machining accuracy [2]. An LG permits linear movement with the aid of rolling elements. An LG can attain a precise linear movement by using balls or rollers between the rail and the car.

Although a servo motor, step motor or asynchronous motor is sufficient for movement in LG systems, the motion can also be provided manually. There are different sizes of LRs and LCs according to the load to be carried. According to market data, the Hiwin brand [3] is the most widely used LG type. The LGs are primarily preferred in robotic systems. According to the system's load capacity, suitable LCs, slides and rails could be selected. International companies such as Hiwin, Nadella, Ina, Rexroth and Güdel are the leading linear motion system equipment manufacturers. The Rexroth brand LCs and LRs are used mainly in the robotic system (Figure 1.1.1).



Figure 1.1.1: LG Parts [4]

Leading companies in the linear guide market have achieved high movement accuracy with the adaptation of ball sliders. Ball transition vibrations can be reduced by 1/3 compared to standard models. Product developments have been achieved with high load capacity and low friction tests [14].

The main aim of this thesis is to design, construct, test and implement an LG system. The general information about the thesis, whereas this thesis is one of its parts, is given in Table 1.1. The expected performance output from the design at the first stage is its proper functionality. Additional targets of this thesis are;

- a) 1-ton load for 2 LCs opposite each other,
- b) reduced cost,
- c) local design and production,
- d) low repair and maintenance costs,
- e) long handling life,
- f) high-speed motion,
- g) low friction.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN PHASE

2.1 GENERAL STRUCTURE

The LC design carried out in the study is shown in Figure 2.1.1. The following data were taken into account in the design calculations.

- Material Selection
- Movement and Direction
- Links
- Sensibility
- Strengths in the whole system

The designed car is composed of the car body (3), top rollers (1), bottom rollers (4), vertical roller (2), covers (5), scrapers (6), bearings (7) and mounting bolts (8, 9). The overall system consists of 2 car bodies, ten rollers, ten covers, four scrapers, two rails and one slider (Figure 2.1). The design data is given in Appendix A. The system is expected to move linearly on a slider. It works automatically with the help of the integrated motor. The maximum load capacity is the basis of the LC system design. When the load of the robotic system is above the design load, more than one LC could be used to carry the system.

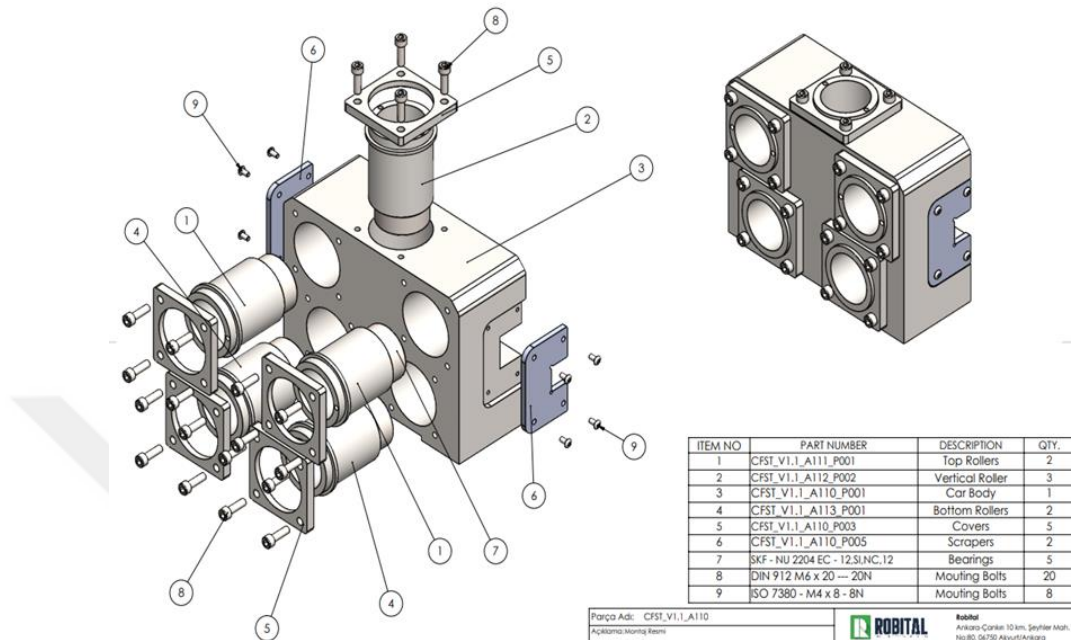


Figure 2.1.1:The Parts and Assembled LC Design

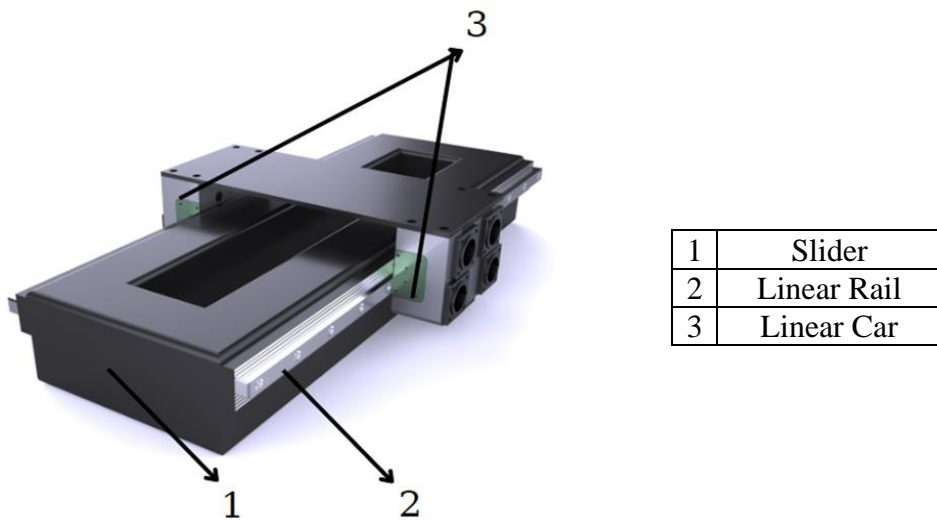


Figure 2.1.2:The LC System

2.2 MATERIAL SELECTIONS

The cost, wear resistance, hardness, machinability and heat treatability characteristics were considered when selecting the materials of the LC system components. The SAE 1040 steel, which has high allowable strength values, toughness, abrasion resistance and heat treatability (hardening), was used in designing and manufacturing the prototype LC system.

2.3 SELECTIONS AND LIFE EXPECTANCY OF BEARINGS

The most appropriate bearing is selected by considering the expected bearing performance and functions (such as application, number of revolutions, expected life, load (magnitude, direction and type), vibration, working temperature, assembly-disassembly conditions, the possibility of lubrication, and methods) among different bearing types [7].

The maximum LC system load was 10000 N. This value is determined by considering used robots and systems. So, the radial load on each roller (Figure 2.1.1, numbers 1 and 4) bearing was $10000/8=1250$ N. The expected life of the system was 300 hours. The maximum linear speed of the table was 1 m/s, corresponding to the rollers' rotational speed of 400 rpm. The system works 8 hr/day in a vibration-free medium at a maximum of 50°C. The selected bearings for the top and bottom rollers (Figure 2.1.1) were The ORS 62204-A-2RSR ball bearing. The bearing selection calculation is given below:

This bearing selection was determined by considering flexural strength under concentrated load and dimensional property. One of the essential factors in bearing selection is bearing life. The most common way to determine bearing life is to use bearing load ratings and the required loads of the application. The standard measure is "L₁₀" life. It is defined as the number of turns just before metal fatigue first appears in 10% of bearings in a large group of bearings of the same type. This corresponds to the "basic life value" or "fatigue life" [7].

The formulas we use for life calculations are;

L₁₀: Basic rating life [millions of revolutions] [9]

L_{10h}: Basic rating life [operating hours]

C: Dynamic load rating= 12.7 kN

P: Equivalent dynamic bearing load= 1250 N

n: Rotational speed [rpm]= 9400

p: Exponent of the life equation= 3 [10]

$$L_{10} = \left(\frac{C}{P}\right)^p \quad (2.1)$$

$$L_{10} = (12.7 \div 1250)^3 = 0.01 \quad (2.2)$$

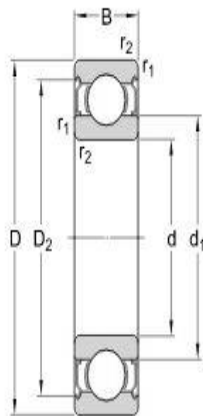
If the speed is constant;

$$L_{10h} = \frac{10^6}{60 n} L_{10} \quad (2.3)$$

$$L_{10h} = (10^6 \div (60 \times 9400)) \times 0.01 = 1.7 \quad (2.4)$$

Dimensions are given in Table 2.1. After the selection of bearings, outer rings, bolts and camber head bolts were determined and supplied.

Table 2.3.1:The ORS 62204-A-2RSR Ball Bearing Dimensions



d	20	mm
D	47	mm
B	14	mm
d ₁	≈ 28.8	mm
D ₂	≈ 40.59	mm
r _{1,2}	min. 1	mm

Table 2.3.2: The Life Testing Information Sent to ORS Company

Property	Value
Type of material	1040 steel
Total axial load	10000 N
Rotational speed	400 rpm
Working speed	1m/s
Daily working hour	8 hr
Vibration	Absent
Surface roughness	Ra 1.6 micrometer
Operation Temperature	50 °C
Environment cleaning	Less dusty (there is a scraper in the system) and oily environment.
Sound level	Lower than 85 dB.

The life test requested from the Ors company (Table 2.2) revealed that the life of the selected bearing under the selected conditions was between 400-500 hours.

2.4 MOTOR TORQUE AND SPEED CALCULATIONS

The gearbox, motor selections and calculations were made for a maximum 1 m/s LC linear speed. The gearbox and motor selections were made by examining the products of the contracted brands using specific catalog values.

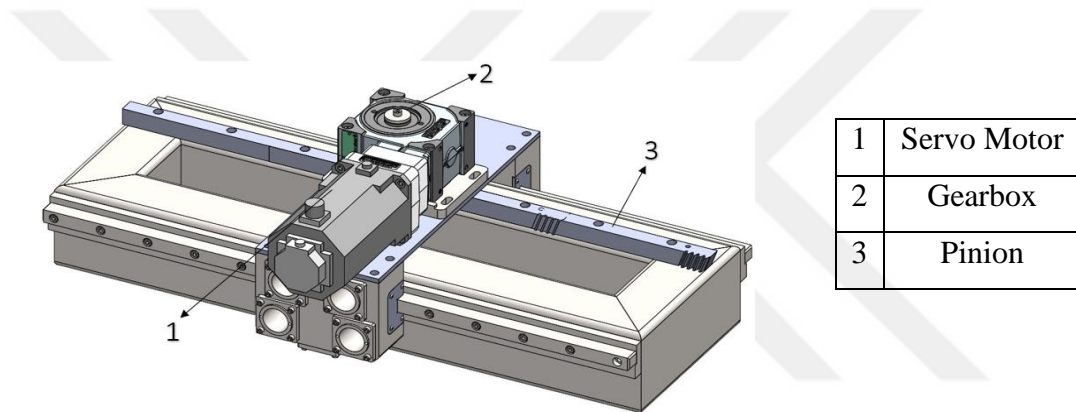


Figure 2.4.1: The LG Modular System

The data, symbols, and units used in the calculations are presented in the table below.[15]

Table 2.4.1: Nomenclature Used in the Analysis of Motor Torque and Speed

Definition	Symbol
LG Mass	m (kg)
LC speed	V (m/s)
Time	t (s)
Gravity	g (m/s ²)
Friction coefficient between LC and LR	μ
Pinion diameter of the gearbox (for system movement)	d
Load factor	K_A
Operation time factor	b_B
Security factor	S
Gearbox input speed	n_1 (rpm)
Gearbox efficiency	η
LC acceleration	a (m/s ²)
Force of LG system	F (N)
Required minimum torque value for the system	T (Nm)
Torque available of LG system	T_2 (Nm)
Servo motor output torque	T_{motor}
Gearbox output speed	n_2 (rpm)
Gearbox ratio	i
Recommended gearbox ratio	I

The Atlanta gearbox and Fanuc servo motor products were chosen in compliance with the system's needs. The following data from the datasheets (Appendix B) were used to calculate the LC's final velocity.

- From the Atlanta model's catalog, a 9.25 ratio gearbox [16].
- From the Fanuc model's catalog, a 3000 rpm gearbox [15].
- From the Atlanta model's catalog, a 63.66 mm pinion diameter [17].

The system's gravity and friction values were considered while calculating the force. The desired values were chosen in addition to the fixed coefficient values specified in the computations above.

The system's motor and gearbox choice is heavily influenced by output torque. The ideal values were presented after the catalogs' motor and reducer value was tested. There was no limitation to the system's operation in the values that the calculations produced.

LC acceleration;

$$a = V \div t$$

$$a = 1 \div 1$$

$$a = 1 \text{ m/s}^2$$

(2.1)

Force of LG system;

$$F = m \times g \times \mu + m \times a$$

$$F = 1000 \times 9.81 \times 0.003 + 1000 \times 1$$

$$F = 1029.43 \text{ N}$$

(2.2)

Required minimum torque value for the system;

$$T = F \times d \div 2000$$

$$T = 1029.4 \times 63.6 \div 2000$$

$$T = 32.7 \text{ Nm}$$

(2.3)

Torque available of LG system;

$$T_2 = T_2 \div K_A \times b_B \times S$$

$$T_2 = 74 \div 1.25 \times 1.2 \times 1.3$$

$$T_2 = 37.9 \text{ Nm}$$

(2.4)

Servo motor output torque;

$$T_{motor} = T_2 \div I$$

$$T_{motor} = 37.9 \div 14.5$$

$$T_{motor} = 2.6 \text{ Nm}$$

(2.5)

Gearbox output speed;

(2.6)

$$n_2 = V \div d \times \pi \times 60000$$

$$n_2 = 1 \div 63.66 \times 3.14 \times 60000$$

$$n_2 = 300 \text{ rpm}$$

Recommended gearbox ratio;

(2.7)

$$I = n_1 \div n_2$$

$$I = 3000 \div 300$$

$$I = 10 \text{ rpm}$$

2.5 FINITE ELEMENT MODELLING AND ANALYSES

Finite element modeling (FEM) and analysis of stresses and deformations in the LR and LC systems (Figure 2.5.1) were performed [11]. The Ansys software package (2022 R1) was used in the FEM. In FEM, the following data was used [11]: A total of 10000 N load was applied to the red surfaces of the cars (Figure 2.5.2). SAE1040 material (Table 2.5.1) was used in the LR and LC components. Mesh settings were initially evaluated using the default value of the Ansys software package. Then, various mesh size ratios, such as to enhance the number of observations in the mesh structure analysis, various mesh size ratios, such as 2, 5, and 8 was attempted. The resolutions have been investigated at various sizes. Since the default resolution provided by the Ansys software package is ideal, this resolution is used in the analyses (Figure 2.5.3).

The finite element analysis revealed the following findings. The maximum deformation value of the LC was 0.04 mm (Figure 2.5.4). The regions in red (upper and lower sections of the LC body) were exposed to more deformations. The value is acceptable for the robotic operations performed on the LC system. The maximum Von-Mises stress value was 104.43 MPa between LR surfaces and bearings (Figure 2.5.5). The stresses on the LC for the static loading condition were around 100 MPa (Figure 2.5.6). The maximum equivalent stresses were observed in the regions where the bearings operate and on the surfaces where LC force is applied to the rail (Figure 2.5.6). Since the yield strength of the SAE 1040 steel (250 MPa) is much above the findings of the analysis and maximum deformation is tolerable, the design is safe.

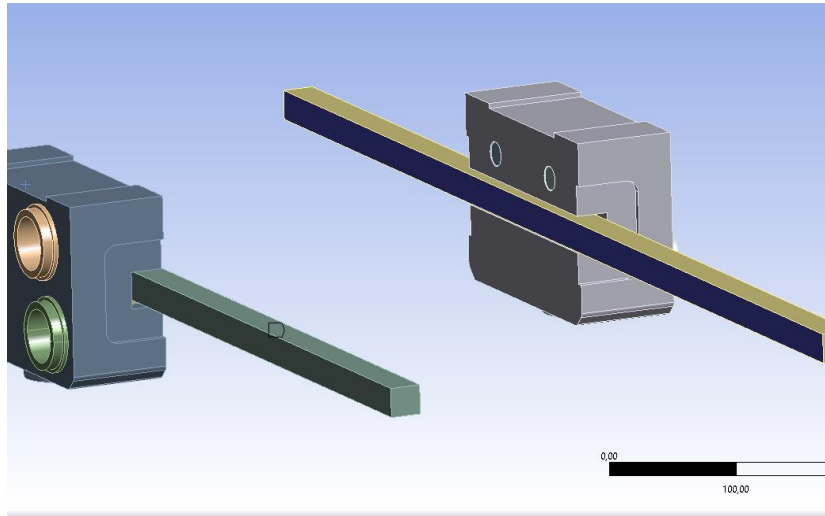


Figure 2.5.1: FEM of the LC and LR

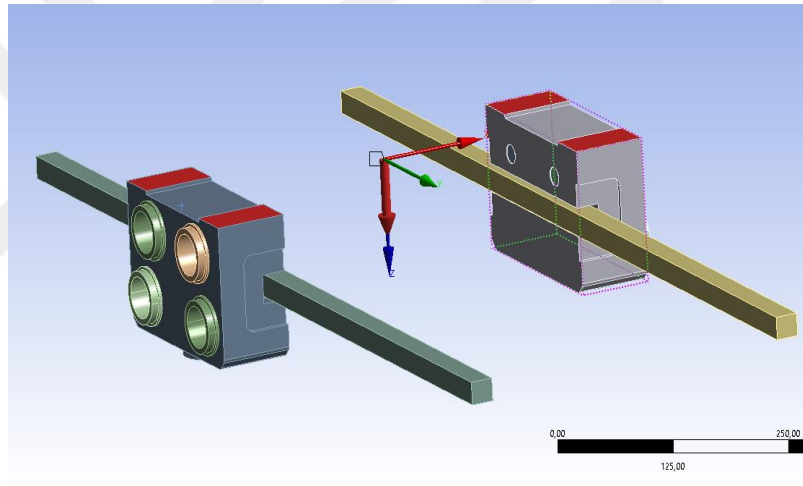


Figure 2.5.2: Axial Load Acting Surfaces on the LC and LR

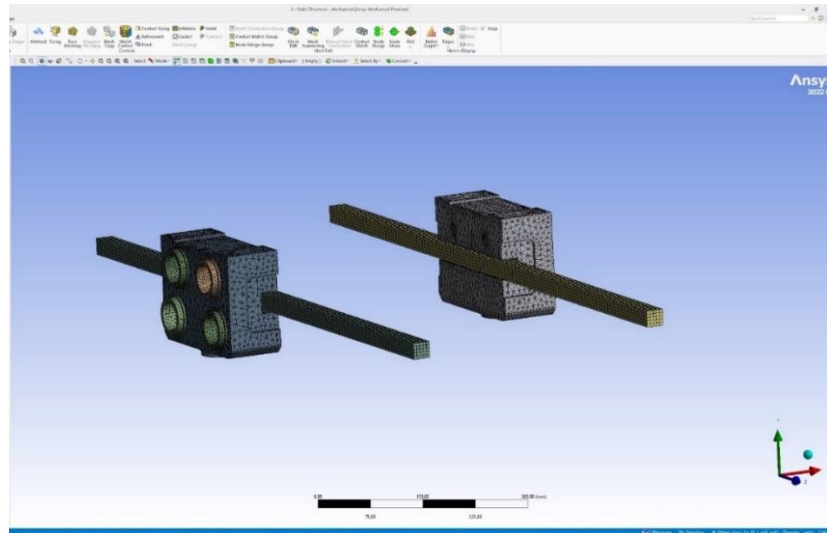
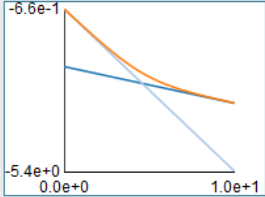
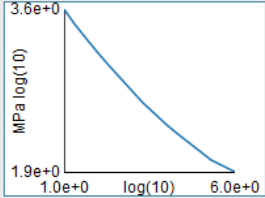


Figure 2.5.3: Meshing of the LC and LR



Table 2.5.1: SAE 1040 steel Properties Input to Ansys Software

Structural	
▼ Isotropic Elasticity	
Derive from	Young's Modulus and Poisson's Ratio
Young's Modulus	2e+05 MPa
Poisson's Ratio	0,30000
Bulk Modulus	1,6667e+05 MPa
Shear Modulus	76923 MPa
Isotropic Secant Coefficient of Thermal Expansion	1,2e-05 1/°C
Compressive Ultimate Strength	0 MPa
Compressive Yield Strength	250,00 MPa
Strain-Life Parameters	
S-N Curve	
Tensile Ultimate Strength	460,00 MPa
Tensile Yield Strength	250,00 MPa
Thermal	
Isotropic Thermal Conductivity	0,060500 W/mm·°C
Specific Heat Constant Pressure	4,34e+05 mJ/kg·°C
Electric	
Isotropic Resistivity	0,00017000 ohm-mm
Magnetic	
Isotropic Relative Permeability	10000

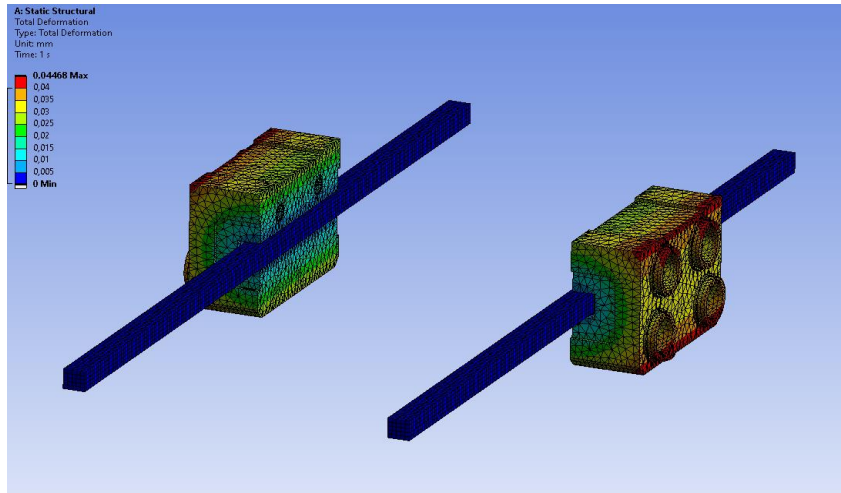


Figure 2.5.4: Deformation at Static Condition

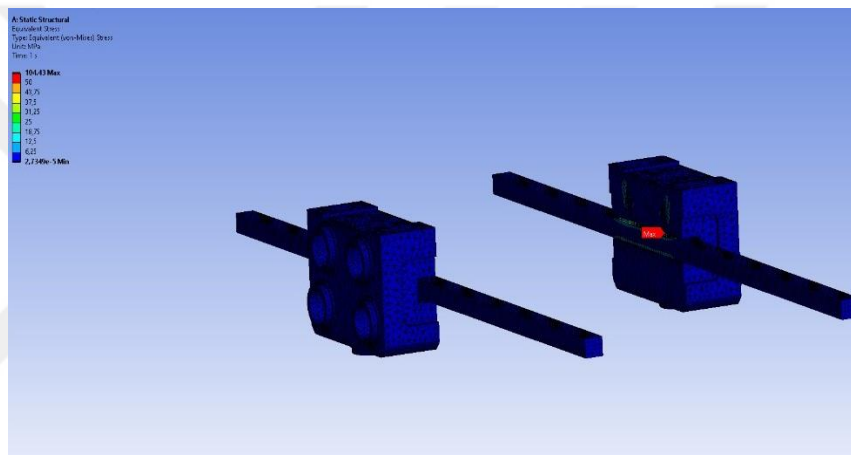


Figure 2.5.5: Von-Mises Stresses

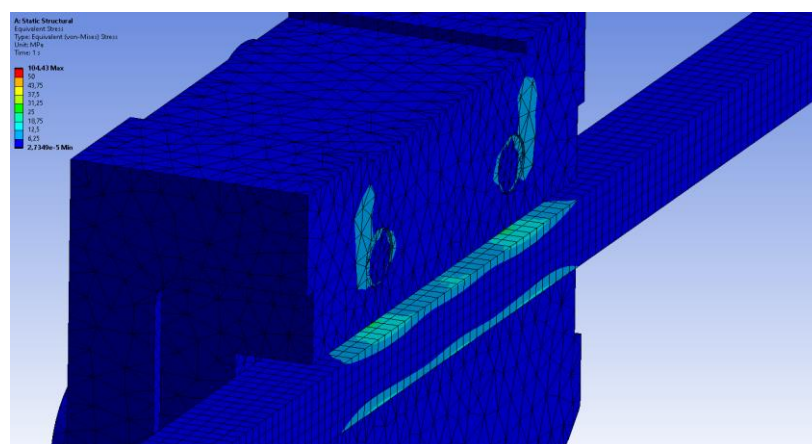


Figure 2.5.6: Stress Analysis (High Equivalent Stress Regions)

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL AND METHOD

3.1 MANUFACTURE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE LC AND LR COMPONENTS

The manufacturing methods and systems were chosen to reduce the machining cost at an acceptable dimensional accuracy and product repeatability. LG body (Figure 3.1.1) was machined with Deckel Maho DMU 60T (2021) 5-axis machine. The rough gauge of the rail was machined on the Haas VF6 40 M2001 machining center and sent to the grinding machine for finishing (Figure 3.1.2). Caps and scrapers (Figure 3.1.2) were machined in the same machining center. The rollers were machined with Topper(2008) lathe. Since 3 of the five rollers in the system are eccentric, attention has been paid to this eccentricity in processing.

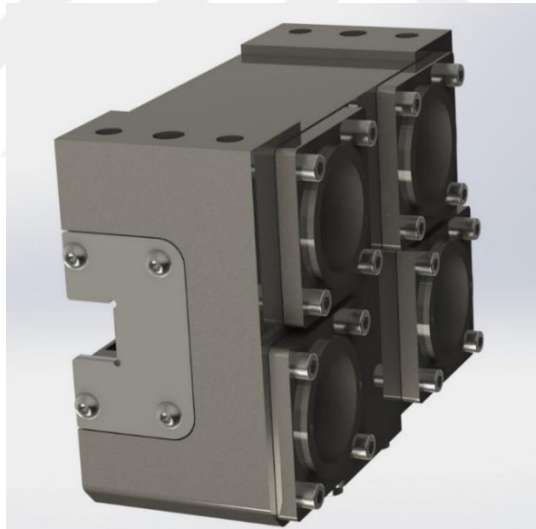


Figure 3.1.1: Linear Car

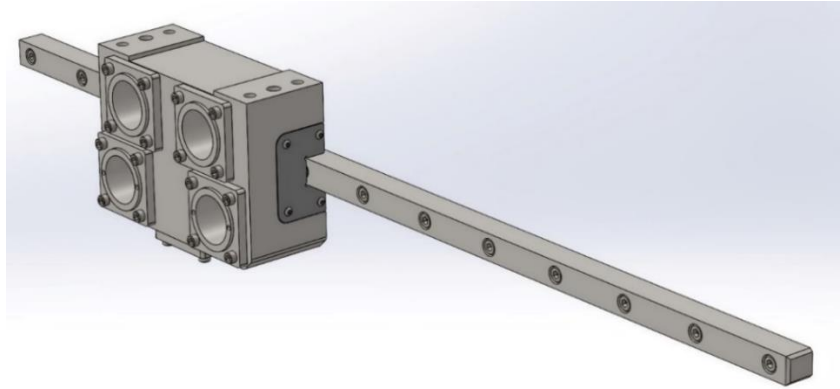


Figure 3.1.2: LC and LR

3.2 ASSEMBLY

First, the bearings were assembled into the roller sleeves (Figure 3.2.1). Afterward, the rollers with bearings were mounted to the car body (Figure 3.2.2). Finally, the body assembly was completed by attaching the cover screws (Figure 3.2.3). The system after the assembly operations is shown in Figure 3.2.4.



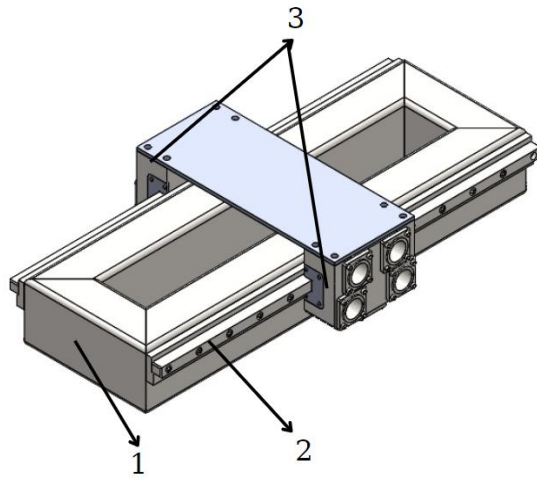
Figure 3.2.1: Assembly of Bearings to the Rollers



Figure 3.2.2: Assembly of Rollers with Bearings



Figure 3.2.3: Screwing Cover Screws



1	Slider
2	Linear Rail
3	Linear Car

(a)



(b)

Figure 3.2.4: LC and LR Systems After Assembly, a) Schematic View, b) Photographic Image

CHAPTER IV

PRELIMINARY FUNCTIONALITY TESTS

The tests generally used in LG systems are as follows [12][13];

- Loading Tests
- Comparator Test
- Fatigue Test
- Abrasion Test
- Corrosion test

In this thesis, we applied loading and comparator tests. Fatigue and abrasion tests continue to be looked at in the long term. A corrosion test was not required due to the application area.

4.1 LOADING TESTS (MANUEL OPERATION)

In this thesis, several loading tests were applied to understand the behavior of a system under normal operation and maximum load conditions. The most critical requirement for the system (Figure 4.2.1) is that it works under the desired load capacity. As aforementioned, the maximum load capacity has been determined as 1 ton, and each car body has a load capacity of 5000 N. Some 400 N dead weights were placed on the 8 mm thick plate, which integrates the cars. During the manual operation, no LC or LR deformation and noise problems were detected in the system up to 5000 N load. For the weights above 5000 N, deformations occurred in the plate. So, the tests were successful for 15 mm and 20 mm thick plates. For the durability and rigidity of the LG system, the 20 mm thick plate was assembled for the LC system.

4.2 LOADING TESTS (MANUEL OPERATION)

4.2.1 LR Tests With no Load

A dial gauge was used to measure the run-out (out-of-parallelism) of the LR in the lateral and vertical directions, respectively. In the LR lateral test, the dial gauge was moved all along the length of the LR lateral surface using the machining head of the universal milling machine (Figure 4.2.1). The LC was stationary. The test aimed to determine the amount of run-out of the LR due to machining inaccuracies and deformation of the LR during the assembly process. The lateral LR test yielded a maximum of 0.8 mm. The same test was repeated by placing the dial gauge probe on the LC lateral surface (Figure 4.2.2). This time the LC moved through the length of the LR. The tests were done with no load condition. The test yielded a maximum of 0.05 mm deflection. The lower deflection observed when the measurement was taken from the LC lateral surface was attributed to the two rails guiding effect on the LC in the lateral direction.

In the LR vertical deformation test under 4000 N load, the dial gauge was moved all along the length of the LR top surface (Figure 4.2.3). Higher loads than the 4000 N were not experienced since most robotic operations exert a load lower than this value (including the weight of the robot itself). The test yielded a maximum of 0.10 mm deflection at about the mid-position of the LC on the LR (Figure 4.2.3).

The tests revealed that the lateral movement of the rail under no load (0.05 mm) and vertical movement of the LR under 4000 N load (0.10 mm) were at acceptable limits.



Figure 4.2.1: LR Lateral Run-Out Test With No Load

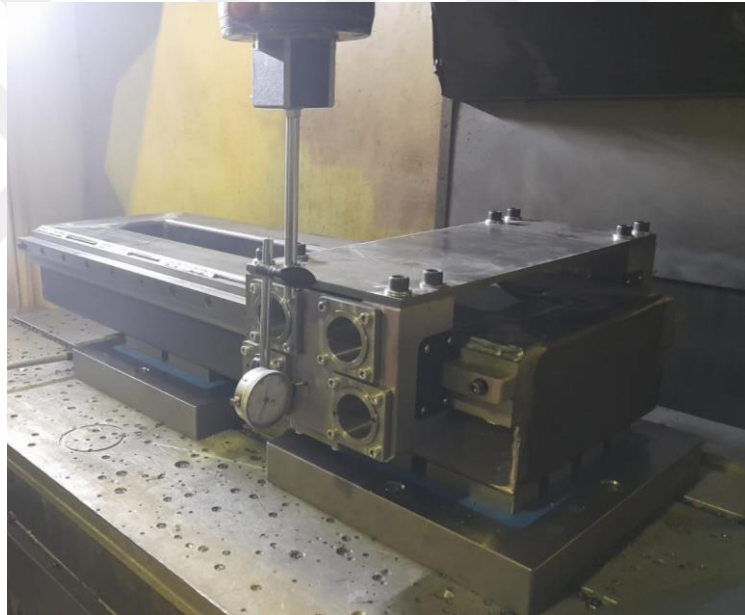


Figure 4.2.2: LR Lateral Run-Out Test With No Load (Measurement Taken From the LC Lateral Surface)



Figure 4.2.3: LR Vertical Deformation Under 4000 N Load

CHAPTER V

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

5.1 GENERAL

The SAE 1040 steel, which has high allowable strength values, toughness, abrasion resistance and heat treatability (hardening), was used in designing and manufacturing the prototype LC system.

The ORS 62204-A-2RSR ball bearing was selected to support the rollers of the LC for 10000 N maximum load on the car, 1250 N radial load on each roller, a 300 hours expected life, 1 m/s LC speed (corresponds to the rollers' 400 rpm rotational speed). The FEA revealed that the maximum deformation of the LC was 0.04 mm. This value is acceptable for the robotic operations performed on the LC system. The maximum equivalent stress on the LC for the static loading condition around 100 MPa was lower than the yield strength of the used SAE 1040 steel.

The LG body, the rough and finish machining of the LR, and the machinings of caps and scrappers were performed with CNC machine tools. The rollers were machined with a universal lathe.

During the manual operation, no LC or LR deformation and noise problems were detected in the system up to 10000 N load.

The tests revealed that the lateral movement of the rail under no load (0.05 mm) and vertical movement of the LR under 4000 N load (0.10 mm) were at acceptable limits.

5.2 FUTURE WORKS

The automatic brake system, which could be added as a design innovation, is the most critical research and development qualification issue. An automatic braking system could be equipped with acceleration and proximity sensors. The braking system performance of LC should be tested at the operating speed range.

The dimensional reductions of the LR and LC should be tried for a minimalist design. In doing so, high-strength materials like SAE 4140 and SAE 2379 could be selected.

The effect of the servo motor integrated drive system on the dynamic and deflection characteristics of the LC must be investigated. The stable operation speed range of the LC system should be determined. The braking system performance of LC should be tested at the operating speed range.

Design studies are carried out for the braking system, considering the current load and speed capacities. The primary target is to operate the system within the stipulated requirements before the braking system.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the thesis, the design, manufacture and initial tests of the Linear Car (LC) and Linear Rail (LR) systems, which provided the movement of robots on them, were presented. Although the typical characteristics of the LC and LR were a 300-hour expected life, 1 m/s LC speed (corresponds to the rollers' 400 rpm rotational speed), 4000 N load on the LC (500 N load on each roller), the FEA for the static loading were made for 10000 N peak load (1250 N load on each roller). The FEA revealed that the SAE 1040 steel was suitable material for manufacturing the prototype LC system since the maximum equivalent stress for the static loading condition around 100 MPa was lower than the yield strength of the material. Moreover, the FEA indicated that the maximum deformation of the LC was 0.04 mm, which is acceptable for the robotic operations performed on the LC system.

It is found that the components of the LC and LR systems should be machined with precision CNC machine tools to get better motion sensitivity, smooth operation and stable dynamic characteristics.

During the manual operation, no LC or LR deformation and noise problems were detected in the system up to 10000 N load. However, the LC and LR systems should be re-tested after being equipped with servo motors for driving and brake systems for braking. The manual tests revealed that the lateral movement of the rail under no load (0.05 mm) and vertical movement of the LR under 4000 N load (0.10 mm) were at acceptable limits.

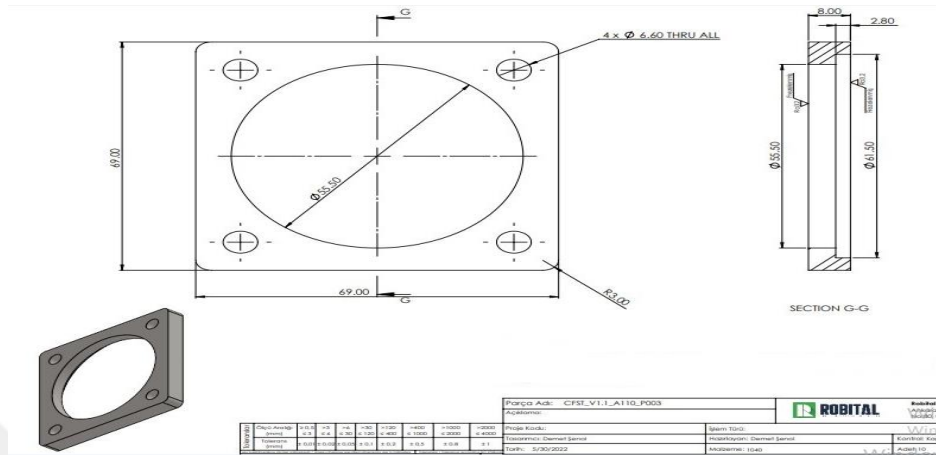
The initial test results revealed that the LC and LR systems could be used effectively in the movement of the robots after i) integrating servo motors to drive the LC system, ii) the automatic brake system, iii) reducing the weight by using higher strength materials, and iv) determination of dynamically stable operating conditions (like speed, braking deceleration).

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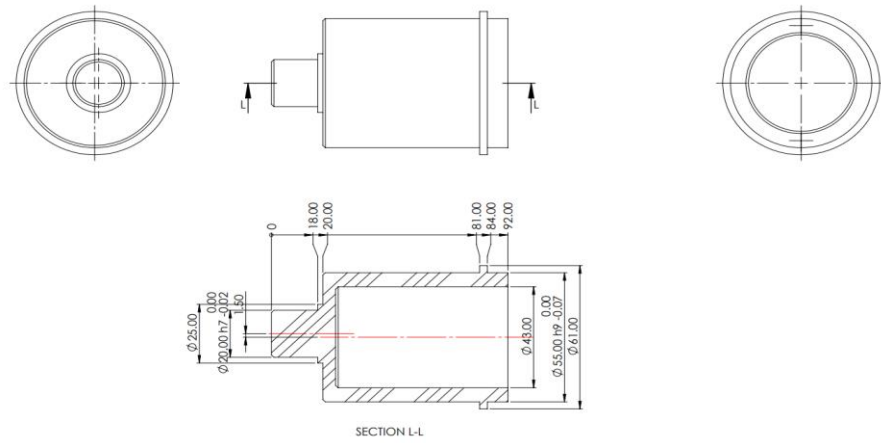
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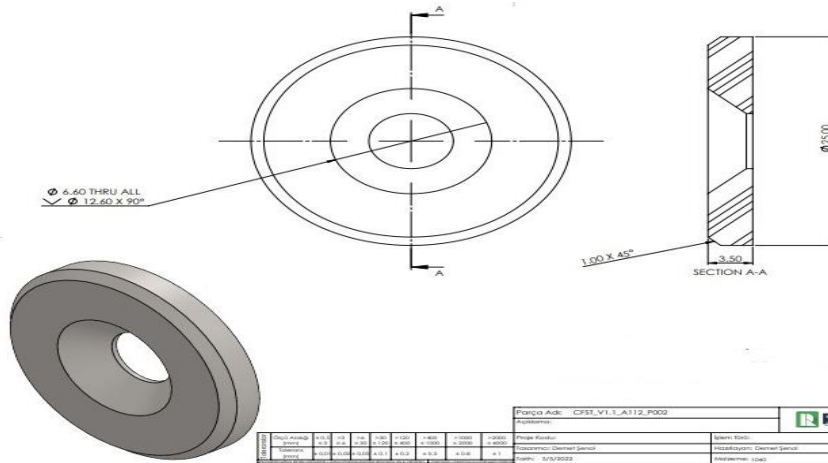
Covers



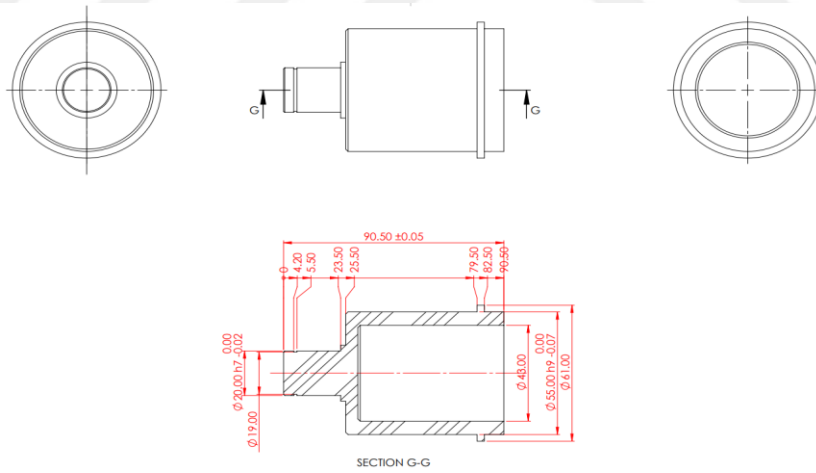
Vertical Roller



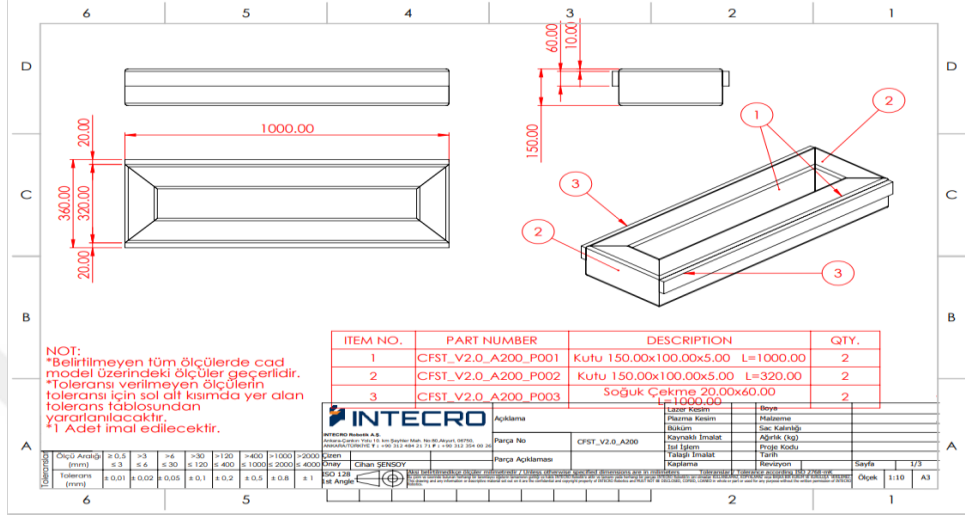
Front Bearing



Bottom Roller



Slider



APPENDIX B: THE MOTOR AND GEARBOX DATA

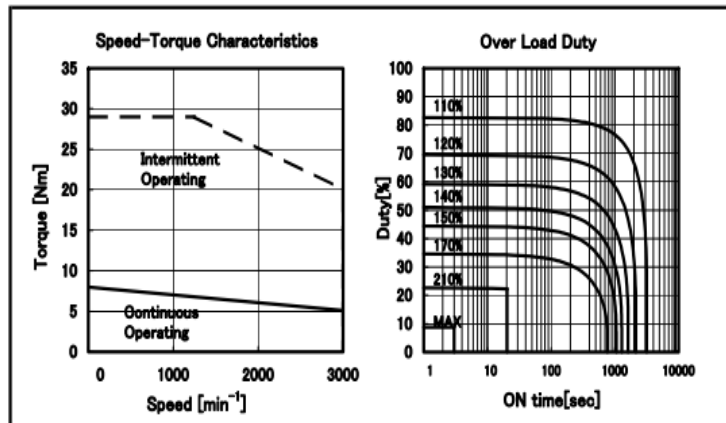
Motor Data

B-65262EN/06

6.SPECIFICATIONS

Model αi F 8/3000

Specification A06B-0227-B□□□



Data sheet

Parameter	Symbol	Value	Unit
Stall Torque (*)	Ts	8,0	Nm
		82	kgfcm
Stall Current (*)	Is	8,4	A (rms)
Rated Output (*)	Pr	1,6	kW
		2,1	HP
Rating Speed	Nr	3000	min^{-1}
Maximum Speed	Nmax	3000	min^{-1}
Maximum Torque (*)	Tmax	29	Nm
		296	kgfcm
Rotor Inertia	Jm	0,00257	kgm^2
		0,0262	kgfcm^2
Rotor Inertia (with Brake)	Jm	0,00264	kgm^2
		0,0269	kgfcm^2
Torque constant (*)	Kt	0,95	Nm/A (rms)
		9,7	kgfcm/A (rms)
Back EMF constant (1 phase) (*)	Ke	33	V (rms)/1000 min^{-1}
		Kv	0,32
Armature Resistance (1 phase) (*)	Ra	0,51	Ω
Mechanical time constant	tm	0,004	s
Thermal time constant	tt	30	min
Static friction	Tf	0,3	Nm
		3	kgfcm
Weight	w	12,3	kg
Weight (with Brake)	w	14,5	kg
Max. Current of Servo Amp.	Imax	40	A (peak)

(*) The values are the standard values at 20°C and the tolerance is $\pm 10\%$.

The speed-torque characteristics vary depending on the type of software, parameter setting, and input voltage of the digital servo software. (The above figures show average values.)

