


**Faculty of Engineering**

 *University of Technology, Sydney*

# **Dynamic Characterisation of the Impeller-Bearing- Pump Housing System of a Rotary Blood Pump via Experiment**



By:

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PhD 2005

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## **CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP / ORIGINALITY**

**I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.**

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**Michael Kai Hung Chung**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The research carried out for this thesis was financially supported jointly by the Australian Research Council (Grant No. C8992022), the University of Technology, Sydney and VentrAssist Pty. Ltd., Australia.

I would like to thank the following people who have assisted me during my research and the writing of my thesis:

To my supervisor Dr. Nong Zhang for giving me the opportunity to undertake this challenging research and assisting me in every possible way.

To my co-supervisor Dr. Geoff Tansley for also providing me with the opportunity and the assistance needed during the research period.

To Dr. Yasuhiro Mohri and Chris Chapman, the electronics and control guru's, for all your help with the electronic problems that I had throughout my research.

To all the staff at VentrAssist in Chatswood, in particular Dr. Martin Cook, Grant Pickering, Michael De Pyper, Mark Von Huben, Dr. Yi Qian, Peter Ayre, Steve Wheeler, Robert Tripodi and anyone I have missed. Thank you for making me feel welcomed.

To the people from UTS, you know who you are, that have been there to answer any questions that I had along the way.

To all my family, especially my parents, and friends who have supported and helped me whenever I needed you. Thank you so much.

And last but most definitely not least, to my loving wife Marianne and my son Jaylon, for your constant support and help during this important period of my life. Thank you for your understanding and encouragement when I needed it most. I love you both!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>CHAPTER 1</u> INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b><u>CHAPTER 2</u> LITERATURE RESEARCH .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1 BLOOD PUMPS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pulsatile and Positive Displacement Pumps .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Pulsatile VADs.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>External VADs .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Implantable VADs.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Clinical Experience with Pulsatile VADs.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<b>Total Artificial Hearts (TAH) .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Clinical Experience with TAHs.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<b>Pros and Cons of Pulsatile and Positive Displacement Pumps .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Rotary Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Centrifugal Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Axial Flow Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>External Rotary Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Implantable Rotary Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>Second Generation Implantable Rotary Blood Pump .....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Third Generation Implantable Rotary Blood Pump .....</i>	<i>36</i>
<b>Pros and Cons of Continuous Flow Rotary Blood Pumps .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>2.2 HUMAN BODY VIBRATIONS.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Walking .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Running.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Jumping.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Aerobic Dancing.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Vehicle Transportation.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Motor Vehicle Accidents.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Other Activities.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b><u>CHAPTER 3</u> CRITICAL SPEED EVALUATION.....</b>	<b>56</b>



<b>3.1 TEST COMPONENTS AND INSTRUMENTATION .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Pumping Fluid .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Experiment One .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Pump and Impeller .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Controller and Power Source.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Accelerometers and Computer Hardware and Software .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Experiment Two .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Pump and Impeller .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Controller.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Flow Meter, Pressure Monitor and Thermometer.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Accelerometers and Computer Hardware and Software .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.2 EXPERIMENT SETUP .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Experiment One .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>FFT &amp; Spectrum Analysis.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Experiment Two .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>FFT, Spectrum Analysis &amp; Measurements.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Natural Frequency of Suspension Systems .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>3.3 RESULTS.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Experiment One .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Natural Frequency .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Spectrum Analysis.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Experiment Two .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Natural Frequency .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Spectrum Analysis.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Other Measurements .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>3.4 DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Experiment One .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Experiment Two .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>3.5 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b><u>CHAPTER 4 DETERMINATION OF IMPELLER DISPLACEMENT .....</u></b>	<b>84</b>
<b>4.1 EXPERIMENT ONE – USING EDDY CURRENT SENSORS .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Test Components and Instrumentation .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Pump and Impeller .....</b>	<b>85</b>

<b>Pump Controller</b> .....	86
<b>Proximity Sensors</b> .....	86
<b>Pumping Medium</b> .....	91
<b>Experimental Setup</b> .....	91
<b>Calibration of Sensors</b> .....	91
<b>Pump Operating Conditions Investigated</b> .....	93
<b>Performing Measurements</b> .....	94
<b>Results</b> .....	96
<b>4.2 EXPERIMENT TWO – USING HALL EFFECT SENSORS</b> .....	100
<b>Test Components and Instrumentation</b> .....	100
<b>Pump and Impeller</b> .....	100
<b>Pump Controller</b> .....	102
<b>Hall-Effect Sensors</b> .....	103
<b>Pumping Medium</b> .....	107
<b>Experimental Setup</b> .....	107
<b>Calibration of Sensors</b> .....	107
<b>Pump Operating Conditions Investigated</b> .....	108
<b>Performing Measurements</b> .....	109
<b>Results</b> .....	110
<b>4.3 DISCUSSION OF EXPERIMENTS 1 &amp; 2</b> .....	113
<b>4.4 CONCLUSION</b> .....	116
<b>CHAPTER 5 IDENTIFICATION OF DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS</b> .....	117
<b>5.1 TEST COMPONENTS AND INSTRUMENTATION</b> .....	117
<b>Pump and Impeller</b> .....	117
<b>Hall-Effect Sensors</b> .....	118
<b>Pump Controller</b> .....	119
<b>Post-Processing of Measurements</b> .....	120
<b>Pumping Medium</b> .....	122
<b>5.2 EXPERIMENTAL SETUP</b> .....	122
<b>Calibration of Sensors</b> .....	122
<b>Pump Operating Conditions Investigated</b> .....	123
<b>5.3 RESULTS</b> .....	126
<b>5.4 DISCUSSION</b> .....	130

5.4 CONCLUSION.....	131
<b><u>CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION</u></b> .....	<b>133</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	
<b>APPENDIX 2</b>	
<b>APPENDIX 3</b>	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Generic electro-actuated pulsatile VAD .....	8
Figure 2.2: Thoratec system .....	9
Figure 2.3: Thoratec VAD in BiVAD application. ....	9
Figure 2.4: Various sizes of the Berlin Heart .....	10
Figure 2.5: Complete Berlin Heart System .....	10
Figure 2.6: Abiomed BVS 5000 complete system .....	11
Figure 2.7: Location of pumping chambers & cannulae .....	11
Figure 2.8: Novacor LVAS system .....	14
Figure 2.9: Complete HeartMate LVAD system implanted.....	15
Figure 2.10: Operation of HeartMate LVAD.....	15
Figure 2.11: Components of the LionHeart LVAD implanted .....	16
Figure 2.12: Jarvik-7 TAH.....	20
Figure 2.13: Complete CardioWest TAH .....	21
Figure 2.14: CardioWest TAH connected to natural atria and great vessels .....	21
Figure 2.15: Anatomy of the AbioCor TAH.....	22
Figure 2.16: Principle of undulation pump .....	23
Figure 2.17: Basic design of the undulation pump .....	23
Figure 2.18: Example of a centrifugal blood pump .....	27
Figure 2.19: Example of an axial flow blood pump .....	28
Figure 2.20: Fluid flow path of the Bio-Pump.....	29
Figure 2.21: Hemopump components.....	32
Figure 2.22: Placement of Hemopump in the heart .....	32
Figure 2.23: Components of the MicroMed DeBakey VAD .....	33
Figure 2.24: HeartMate II Percutaneous system .....	33
Figure 2.25: Jarvik 2000 VAD system.....	34
Figure 2.26: Schematic of Gyro VAD .....	35
Figure 2.27: Isometric View of Gyro VAD .....	35
Figure 2.28: Exploded view of Terumo pump.....	38
Figure 2.29: Anatomical placement of Terumo pump.....	38
Figure 2.30: CFVAD3 pump housing.....	39
Figure 2.31: Anatomical placement of CFVAD3 .....	39



Figure 2.32: HeartMate III LVAD system.....	40
Figure 2.33: Cut away view showing Streamliner components.....	42
Figure 2.34: Basic components of the Streamliner .....	42
Figure 2.35: Cross sectional drawing of Kriton pump.....	43
Figure 2.36: Anatomical placement of Kriton pump .....	43
Figure 2.37: Components of the CorAide Blood Pump System .....	44
Figure 2.38: Exploded view of CorAide Blood Pump.....	44
Figure 2.39: Main components of the VentrAssist IRBP .....	45
Figure 3.1: 1.3 model impeller .....	59
Figure 3.2: Set up of controlling system, power source and conditioning amplifier ....	60
Figure 3.3: Positioning of accelerometers on the pump casing.....	60
Figure 3.4: 2.8 Rotor.....	61
Figure 3.5: Pump Controller.....	62
Figure 3.6: EPROM's used for different conditions.....	62
Figure 3.7: Flow sensor clamped on tube.....	63
Figure 3.8: Transonic Flow Detection Unit.....	63
Figure 3.9: Hewlett Packard Pressure Monitor .....	63
Figure 3.10: Pressure Transducers .....	64
Figure 3.11: Pressure measuring points .....	64
Figure 3.12: Positions of accelerometers .....	64
Figure 3.13: Set up of experiment one.....	65
Figure 3.14: Pump loop.....	65
Figure 3.15: Suspension system.....	65
Figure 3.16: Pump set up in a closed loop with 30% aqueous glycerol.....	68
Figure 3.17: Elastic suspension system.....	69
Figure 3.18: Example of time domain used for logarithmic decrement analysis.....	71
Figure 3.19: Frequency domain analysis (rotor speed freq. @ 100 rev/min steps).....	74
Figure 3.20: Frequency domain analysis (blade pass freq. @ 100 rev/min steps).....	75
Figure 3.21: Frequency domain analysis (rotor speed freq. @ 100 rev/min steps) .....	77
Figure 3.22: Frequency domain analysis (blade pass freq. @ 100 rev/min steps).....	77
Figure 3.23: Frequency domain analysis (rotor speed freq.)- 2300 to 2800 rev/min.....	78
Figure 3.24: Frequency domain analysis (blade pass freq.) - 2300 to 2800 rev/min.....	78
Figure 3.25: Figure 3.21 and Figure 3.23 superimposed .....	79
Figure 3.26: Figure 3.22 and Figure 3.24 superimposed .....	79

Figure 4.1: 2.8 design rotor .....	86
Figure 4.2: Mounting positions for Eddy current sensors and laser sensors .....	87
Figure 4.3: Position of eddy-current and laser sensors on the pump.....	88
Figure 4.4: Co-ordinate planes of the pump .....	88
Figure 4.5: Control panel window for LabView program.....	89
Figure 4.6: Setup for validation of laser sensors .....	90
Figure 4.7: Normal distribution measurements for (a) laser #1 and (b) laser #2 .....	90
Figure 4.8: Benchman XT CNC machine .....	92
Figure 4.9: Calibration setup for eddy-current sensors .....	92
Figure 4.10: Calibration setup for laser sensor .....	92
Figure 4.11: Explanation of maximum angular displacement ( $\theta_{max}$ ).....	93
Figure 4.12: Pump orientation during measurements for experiment one .....	94
Figure 4.13: Pump loop with 30% aqueous glycerol .....	95
Figure 4.14: Complete setup of experiment one .....	95
Figure 4.15: Co-ordinate system of impeller and pump cover. ....	97
Figure 4.16: Radial excursion of impeller for experiment one .....	99
Figure 4.17: Average axial excursion for experiment one.....	99
Figure 4.18: Average displacement of impeller in 5 DOF for experiment one .....	100
Figure 4.19: Pole configuration for 2.8 impeller.....	102
Figure 4.20: Location of Hall effect sensors on the pump.....	103
Figure 4.21: Cover iron yoke with position of drilled holes.....	104
Figure 4.22: Circuit diagram of Hall effect sensor amplifier.....	105
Figure 4.23: Setup for validation of Hall effect sensor.....	106
Figure 4.25: Calibration setup for Hall effect sensors .....	108
Figure 4.26: Calibration setup inside CNC machine .....	108
Figure 4.27: Pump orientation during measurements for experiment two .....	109
Figure 4.28: Complete setup of experiment two .....	109
Figure 4.29: Radial excursion of the impeller for experiment two .....	112
Figure 4.30: Average axial excursion for experiment two .....	112
Figure 4.31: Average displacement of impeller in 5 DOF for experiment two.....	113
Figure 5.1: Titanium C-D pump housing and 2.8 impeller .....	118
Figure 5.2: Positioning of the Hall effect sensors on the pump .....	119
Figure 5.3: User inputs for the LabView program.....	120
Figure 5.4: Example of free decaying curve .....	121

Figure 5.5: Calibration setup on CNC machine. ....	123
Figure 5.6: Pump mounted on suspension system .....	125
Figure 5.7: Dynamic representation at a single blade .....	126
Figure 5.8: Stiffness coefficient of the hydrodynamic bearing system.....	129
Figure 5.9: Damping coefficient of the hydrodynamic bearing system.....	129

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 - History of clinically available pulsatile VAD systems.....	17
Table 2.2 - Clinical history of clinically available TAH systems .....	24
Table 2.3 - Advantages and disadvantages of different types of pulsatile and/or positive displacement artificial heart pumps .....	25
Table 2.4 - Clinical history of clinically available 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation rotary blood pumps ..	36
Table 2.5 - Clinical history of clinically available 3 <sup>rd</sup> generation rotary blood pumps ..	46
Table 2.6 - Advantages and disadvantages of different types of continuous flow rotary blood pumps .....	47
Table 2.7 - Peak-to-peak (p-p) & G force values for vertical acceleration on the human body during walking .....	50
Table 2.8 - GRF for high and low impact aerobic dancing.....	52
Table 2.9 - Vibration results for car and train transportation.....	52
Table 2.10 - NRMA- NCAP crash test data for motor vehicles .....	54
Table 2.11 - Acceleration results for non-everyday activities .....	55
Table 3.1 - Common equipment used for both experiments.....	57
Table 3.2 - Properties of 30% aqueous glycerol and 40% haematocrit blood .....	58
Table 3.3 - Equipment unique to experiment one .....	58
Table 3.4 - Equipment unique to experiment two.....	61
Table 3.5 - Parameters used for calculation of natural frequencies of suspension system for experiment one .....	73
Table 3.6 - Natural frequencies of the suspension system for experiment one .....	73
Table 3.7 - Parameters used for calculation of natural frequencies of suspension system for experiment two.....	75
Table 3.8 - Natural frequencies of the suspension system for experiment two .....	76



Table 3.9 - Fluid flow characteristics for changing pump speeds.....	80
Table 4.1 - Equipment used for experiment one .....	85
Table 4.2 - Validation parameters for laser sensor displacement measurements .....	90
Table 4.3 - Displacement of impeller in 5 DOF for different flow rates at 2400 rev/min .....	98
Table 4.4 - Equipment used for experiment two.....	100
Table 4.5 - Magnetic field strength ( $B$ ) for each blade of the 2.8 impeller.....	101
Table 4.6 - Validation parameters for Hall effect sensor displacement measurements	106
Table 4.7 - Displacement of impeller in 5 DOF for different flow rates at 2000 rev/min. ....	111
Table 5.1 - Dynamic characteristics of the suspension system – platform, complete pump and impact frame .....	127
Table 5.2 - Dynamic characteristics of the impeller-hydrodynamic bearing-housing system at sensor locations for changing flow rates at 2000 rev/min .....	127
Table 5.3 - Dynamic characteristics of the impeller-hydrodynamic bearing-housing system at sensor locations for changing flow rates at 2300 rev/min .....	128
Table 5.4 - Dynamic characteristics of the impeller-hydrodynamic bearing-housing system at sensor locations for changing flow rates at 2500 rev/min .....	128

## **ABSTRACT**

The VentrAssist implantable rotary blood pump (IRBP), intended for long term ventricular assist has been under development and tested for its rotor-dynamic stability. The pump consists of a shaftless impeller, which also acts as the rotor of the brushless DC motor. The impeller remains passively suspended in the pump cavity by hydrodynamic forces, which result from the small clearances between the outside surfaces of the impeller and the pump cavity. These small clearances range from approximately 50  $\mu\text{m}$  to 230  $\mu\text{m}$  in size in the version of pumps reported here.

The research presented in this thesis involved experimental investigations into the dynamic behaviour of the impeller/bearing/pump housing system. An initial experiment utilising an early pump and controlling system design was performed to analyse the critical speed of the system using Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) analysis. Results indicated that no critical speed was distinctly present during the operation of the pump.

Further to the initial experiment, a second experiment was performed to determine displacement of the shaftless impeller during operating conditions using Eddy-current and laser proximity sensors. The limitations encountered by the applications of the sensors provided for further investigation using Hall-effect sensors. The behaviour of the impeller/bearing/pump housing system as a whole was found to be in accordance with typical centrifugal pump behaviour.

Finally, by combining the two experimental methods, a final experimental investigation was carried out to determine the dynamic characteristics of the impeller/bearing/pump housing system of the rotary blood pump. Real-time measurements of the impeller's displacement were performed using Hall Effect sensors. A disturbance force was exerted onto the pump housing, causing the impeller to be displaced from its dynamic equilibrium position within the pump cavity. The impeller displacement was represented by a free decaying response curve, which indicated the impeller restoring to its equilibrium position. The free decaying response allowed for logarithmic decrement analysis to determine the damping ratio and eventually the damping coefficient of the impeller/bearing/pump housing system. Furthermore, the natural frequency and stiffness coefficient of the system were also determined.