Empirical Process Monitoring Via On-line Analysis of Complex Process Measurement Data

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Abstract On-line process monitoring schemes are designed to give early warnings of process faults. In the artificial intelligence and machine learning fields, reliable approaches have been utilized, such as kernel-based nonlinear techniques. This work presents a kernel-based empirical monitoring scheme with a small sample problem. The measurement data of normal operations are easy to collect, whereas special events or faults data are difficult to collect. In such situations, noise filtering techniques can be helpful in enhancing the process monitoring performance. This can be achieved by the preprocessing of raw process data and eliminating unwanted variations of data. In this work, the performance of several monitoring schemes was demonstrated using three-dimensional batch process data. The results showed that the monitoring performance was improved significantly in terms of the detection success rate.

Keywords : Monitoring, Nonlinear methods, Noise filtering, Process data, Quality improvement

1. Introduction

Process monitoring methods have been extensively studied as one of essential topics of statistical process control. This is largely due to the fact that most of manufacturing or production processes are susceptible to unexpected abnormalities such as process faults, breakdowns and malfunctions[1]. Unfortunately, these special or uncommon events are apt to give a negative impact on final product quality. Thus the main goal of process monitoring is to detect the occurrence of a fault[2]. Among industrial processes, batch process monitoring is quite difficult to implement because these processes have challenging issues like nonlinear process behavior, finite duration of operation time, etc. A batch process operation includes a set of tasks like
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charging ingredients, processing them under controlled conditions, and discharging final product[3].

Recent reports showed that the development of monitoring schemes depends on the use of multivariate statistical methods due to the availability of real-time and historical process data. Nonlinear kernel techniques based on Fisher discriminant analysis, principal component analysis, and partial least squares have been extensively used in practical monitoring problems[4-6]. Such empirical models are preferred because of widespread sensor and data measurement technology in production processes.

When monitoring a process using process measurement data, data sets for specific classes may be under-sampled or not enough to build empirical monitoring models. Frequently, measurement data of normal operations without faults are easy to gather, but the measurement data of out-of-control states or faults are expensive to collect. Such an unbalanced measurement data can be covered by adopting the appropriate method which depends mainly on normal data. Support vector data description (SVDD) is quite helpful in describing samples of high density areas of normal operating conditions. This is able to adapt to the real shape of normal samples and seeks to find flexible boundary with a minimum volume.

This work presents the utilization of an empirical model-based quality monitoring approach to batch processes. The monitoring scheme is combined with nonlinear representation of raw process data. In addition, preprocessing or filtering schemes are implemented for better monitoring performance. The nonlinear representation of finite and three-way batch data is applied. Prior to building empirical monitoring models, filtering of the data is performed to trim the irrelevant information of the process data. In this work, several monitoring schemes are evaluated, in which two filtering techniques are also tested. Due to the characteristics of batch data, the selection of estimation approaches for future observation is also discussed with the comparison of monitoring performance. The performance of the proposed process monitoring schemes is demonstrated using batch process data. This paper is organized as follows: an introduction of multivariate statistical techniques followed by monitoring performance comparison using batch process data. Finally, concluding remarks are given.

2. Method

A linear version of principal component representation (PCA), is used to decompose correlated original variables into an uncorrelated set of linear principal components. In most cases, only several components are enough to explain the data variability. It seeks to decompose the data matrix $X$ into the sum of the outer products of score vectors $(t)$ and loading vectors $(p)$ plus a residual matrix $(E)$:

$$X = \sum_{r=1}^{k} t_r p_r^\top + E$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

On the other hand, the goal of linear Fisher discriminant analysis (FDA) is to find certain directions in original variables, along which hidden groups are discriminated as clearly as possible [6]. As an extension of linear FDA, nonlinear kernel FDA (KFDA) executes linear FDA in the feature space $F$. As a result, the discriminant weight vector is determined by maximizing between-class scatter matrix while minimizing total scatter matrix, which are defined in feature space:

$$S^b = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{i=1}^{c} c_i (m_i^b - \bar{m}^b) (m_i^b - \bar{m}^b)^\top$$  \hspace{1cm} (2)

$$S^w = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{i=1}^{c} c_i (m_i^w - \bar{m}^w) (m_i^w - \bar{m}^w)^\top$$  \hspace{1cm} (3)

By maximizing following Fisher criterion the optimal discriminant vectors can be obtained.

$$J^*(\psi) = \frac{\psi^\top S^w \psi}{\psi^\top S^b \psi}$$  \hspace{1cm} (4)

As one of filtering techniques, orthogonal signal correction (OSC) is a PLS-based solution which removes unwanted variation. In this work, the OSC
method is used so that a coding is introduced where each column in Y matrix contains information about class memberships of samples. The binary Y matrix has a structure where each row sums to unity. The first step of an OSC is to calculate the first PC score vector, and actual correction vector is produced:

$$t' = (1 - Y(Y^T Y)^{-1} Y^T) t.$$  \(5\)

Then PLS weight vector w is computed such that \(Xw = t'\), which is followed by the calculation of a new score vector \(t = Xw\). Finally, a loading vector p is computed and the correction term \(tp^T\) is subtracted from \(X\), giving the residual. The next components can be calculated in a similar way. An alternative approach is discriminant partial least squares (PLS), which is the classical PLS algorithm applied to classification problems.

Based on the optimal decision function non-separable problems are solved by a dual problem:

$$L_d = \sum \alpha_i - 1/2 \sum \alpha_i \alpha_j y_i y_j \Phi(x_i) \Phi(x_j)$$ \(7\)

Training SVM is to find \(\alpha_i, b\), and support vectors with given kernel function parameters and C.

Support vector data description (SVDD) is a one-class classification method to envelop samples or objects within a high-dimensional space with the volume as small as possible[4]. It is necessary to find \(\mu\) and \(R\) that has the minimum volume of hyper-sphere containing all samples. In the end the minimization problem can be denoted as follows:

$$F(R, \mu) = R^2 + C \sum_{i=1}^{2} \xi_i$$ \(8\)

Here, the parameter C represents the trade-off between the volume of the sphere and the number of samples outside it, and thus it should be minimized with the following constraints:

$$\|x_i - \mu\|^2 \leq R^2 + \xi_i, \xi_i \geq 0$$ \(9\)

To obtain more flexible boundaries, inner products of samples are replaced by a kernel function.

3. Results

This part demonstrates the monitoring performance of the proposed scheme which utilizes nonlinear kernel method combined with preprocessing techniques for three dimensional process data. The test process is a polyvinyl chloride batch process. Here a straight resin polymerization process is initiated by vinyl chloride monomer. This process contains a polymerization reactor, reflux condenser, agitator, and cooling jacket. Eleven process variables are automatically measured on-line. A total of 170 batches are used in building nonlinear kernel monitoring models.
In order to overcome the limitation of three-way characteristics of batch process data, as stated before, future observations of a new batch, i.e., unmeasured data parts of current batch operation, should be estimated appropriately as shown in Figure 2. It is due to the fact that a new batch operation is not complete until the end of its operation.

A filtering or preprocessing of process data is performed prior to main model building in order to obtain monitoring results using several monitoring schemes. To evaluate difference the monitoring performance based on several multivariate projection methods, the two representation techniques were applied. In addition, two filtering methods for the test process are tested. That is, discriminant partial least squares and orthogonal signal correction are considered.

Table 1. Monitoring rates (%) with library values

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<td>Avg.</td>
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As reported in Table 1, the Model4 monitoring scheme showed the best monitoring performance in that it yielded the highest monitoring accuracy for all test batches. The Model4 monitoring method produced the best monitoring performance, i.e., average monitoring success rate of 94.1%. Meanwhile, it is observed that the average monitoring success rate values of Model1, Model2, and Model3 are 84, 88, and 91, respectively.

It should be noted that the overall monitoring
performance of using KFDA, i.e., Model3 and Model4, outperforms those of using KPCA, i.e., Model1 and Model2, irrespective of preprocessing techniques used. Consequently, using KFDA monitoring methods has significantly improved the monitoring performance for this test process. It may be meaningful to operating personnel, who have to take remedial actions using the monitoring results.

As executed in Table 1, monitoring results are obtained using the same monitoring models such as Model1 through Model4 monitoring schemes, which are given in Table 2 and Table 3. On the other hand, the difference between Table 1 and these two tables is which estimation approaches to use in estimating future observations of the batch process.

Table 2. Monitoring rates (%) with PCA values

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Table 3. Monitoring rates (%) with current deviation approach

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Specifically, results of Table 1 were obtained using the future value estimation of fault library approach [4]. On the other hand, PCA projection-based estimation method was used for Table 2 whilst current deviation method was applied to produce the monitoring results in Table 3. For more information about the current deviation approach this is illustrated as shown in Figure 3. As shown in Table 2 and Table 3, overall observations of monitoring results are quite similar to Table 1 in that the Model4 produced the best monitoring accuracy in all the faults tested.

As shown in Table 2, for example, the Model4 yielded maximum success rates. As analyzed in Table 1, in case of comparing the effect of different estimation methods, fault library method of Table 1 outperformed performance of Table 2 and Table 3. In particular, the difference between PCA-based estimation method and current deviation method can be seen by comparing these tables. On the other hand, the use of KFDA improved monitoring performance significantly when compared to using KPCA.

![Fig. 4. Comparison of monitoring results](image)

As shown in Figure 4, relative performance of the overall results can be easily distinguished graphically. Here upper one shows the results of using library values while lower of current deviation approach.
4. Conclusion

This work proposed the use of nonlinear kernel representation of complex process measurement data. It also utilized the filtering techniques in order to provide reliable quality monitoring performance for batch processes. In this work a case study on the batch process has been executed with different monitoring schemes. It has shown that the use of appropriate nonlinear and filtering techniques produced reliable monitoring results on the test process. It turned out that KFDA outperformed KPCA in monitoring nonlinear complex processes. In terms of future values, the three estimation methods were tested, and the fault library approach showed the best performance in Model4. Taking into accounts of frequent use of batch processes, kernel-based nonlinear technique is quite helpful to make monitoring decision in an on-line basis.

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<Research Interests>
Intelligent Process Monitoring, Data Mining