

Title of the article*

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Abstract— *It is a new advanced systems of flight control which is required to adapt to dynamic conditions of operation and uncertain conditions of the system in the face of an increasing sophistication of modern aircraft and growing demands of safety, autonomy, and performance. The paper introduces a digital twin modeling high-fidelity framework of adaptive aircraft flight control systems that allows real-time synchronization of the real aircraft with the virtual one. The digital twin proposed will combine physical aerodynamic, structural, and propulsion models with data-driven learning processes to effectively model the nonlinear flight dynamics, environmental perturbations, and degradations of the components. A control architecture is created based on an adaptive control, in which the digital twin continuously integrates system parameters using real-time sensor data and enables proactive control of control laws to respond to changing flight conditions and fault cases. The framework helps to predict online performance, check the stability, and reconfigure the fault-tolerant control without disrupting the flight activities. Nominal, turbulent and fault scenarios at high-fidelity level exhibit considerable enhancement of tracking accuracy, intensity and versatility relative to the traditional fixed-parameter control strategies. The findings affirm that the presented adaptive flight control system based on a digital twin can improve the situational awareness, minimise anomaly response times, and increase flight safety and efficiency in general. The paper forms a scaled base of intelligent and autonomous aircraft systems of the next generation.. Do Not Use Symbols, Special Characters, Footnotes, or Math in Paper Title or Abstract. The abstract should be self-contained and citation-free and should not exceed 250 words.*

Keywords— Digital Twin; Adaptive Flight Control; High-Fidelity Modeling; Aircraft Dynamics; Real-Time System Synchronization; Fault-Tolerant Control; Aerospace Cyber-Physical Systems; Intelligent Aircraft Systems.

I. Introduction

The high rate of development of aerospace systems to be more autonomous, efficient and operationally secure, has made the aircraft flight control systems to be much more complex. The contemporary aircrafts are subjected to highly dynamic and unpredictable environment due to nonlinear aerodynamic performance, atmospheric disruptions, component deterioration, and unexpected fault situations. Traditional flight control methods of using the fixed-parameter or gain-scheduled controllers, based on the nominal operating conditions are frequently unable to sustain high performance, and high robustness in these conditions[1]. Adaptive flight control has grown as a viable solution to deal with uncertainties in the system and time non-linear dynamics through the dynamic alteration of control parameters. The usefulness of adaptive controllers is, however, necessarily constrained by the quality of the system models used and the presence of quality state information. Practically, the presence of the difference between analytical models and the real aircraft or what is known as model mismatch may impair the performance of control and undermines stability, especially in the off-nominal operations or system malfunctions. The potential resolution to this modeling gap has attracted increased interest in aerospace engineering through the Dig-

ital Twin (DT) technology that allows the creation of a dynamic and high-fidel virtual replica of a physical system[2]. A digital twin is always in contact with its physical analog by exchanging data in real-time, which enables it to give perfect representation of system behavior across the lifecycle of operation. A high-fidelity digital twin can be used to offer improved situational awareness, predictive knowledge, and online model adaptation when used with flight control systems and can contribute to more informed and resilient control decisions[3]. The recent literature has discussed the use of digital twins in the structural health of aircraft, engine performance and predictive maintenance. Nevertheless, implementation of digital twin principles in adaptive aircraft flight control systems is comparatively understudied, especially in terms of real-time and high-fidelity modeling with nonlinear flight-level dynamics, environmental-level interaction and fault-level evolution[4]. Current methods tend to be based on simplistic models or offline models and are therefore ineffective in real-time dynamic control and safety-relevant systems. As a way of overcoming these drawbacks, this paper suggests a high-fidelity digital twin modeling framework that is specifically tailored to adaptive aircraft flight control systems[5]. The suggested structure combines physics-based aerodynamic, structural, and propulsion models with data-driven parameter updating in real-time, which can en-

sure a consistent synchronization of the physical and digital twin aircrafts. This digital twin can be used as a smart virtual testbed of online performance prediction, stability test and adaptive control law reconfigurations under nominal and abnormal operating conditions[6].

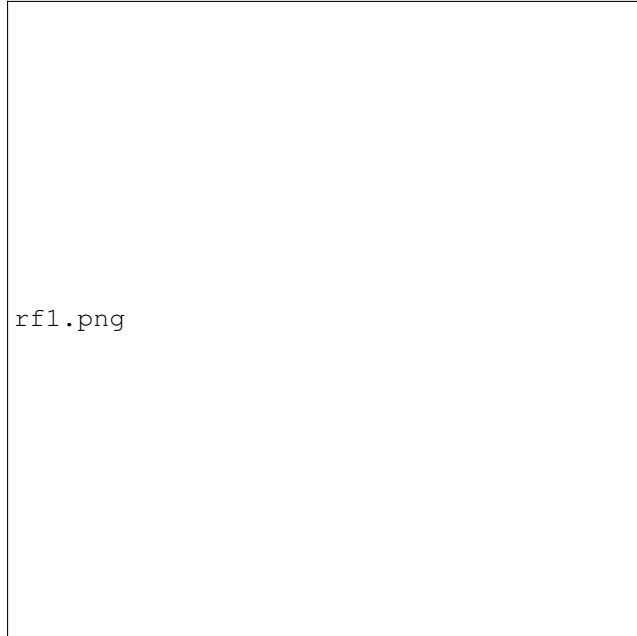


Figure 1: High-Fidelity Digital Twin Architecture of Adaptive Aircraft Flight Control System

Minimum Resolution:300 DPI

II. System description

The suggested system involves a real-life aircraft, a high-fidelity digital twin, and an adaptive flight control module that is run in a closed-loop setup. The physical plane gives real-time sensor data such as translational and rotational positions, deflection of the control surfaces, and propulsion values. These are constantly fed to the digital twin which is a virtual representation of the aircraft that is synchronized[7]. Digital twin The digital twin combines physics-based flight dynamics models with online parameter estimation and data-driven updating systems to provide an accurate representation of the aircraft behavior given different flight conditions, external disturbances and component degradations. According to the new model, the adaptive flight controller changes control laws dynamically to achieve stability, tracking performance and fault tolerance[8].

A. Aircraft Nonlinear Dynamics

The aircraft motion is modeled using a six-degree-of-freedom (6-DOF) nonlinear rigid-body dynamics frame-

work. The translational dynamics in the body-fixed reference frame are expressed as

$$m\dot{\mathbf{V}} = \mathbf{F}_a + \mathbf{F}_p + \mathbf{F}_g - \boldsymbol{\omega} \times m\mathbf{V} \quad (1)$$

where m is the aircraft mass, $\mathbf{V} = [u \ v \ w]^T$ represents the body-axis velocity components, $\boldsymbol{\omega} = [p \ q \ r]^T$ denotes the angular velocity vector, and $\mathbf{F}_a$, $\mathbf{F}_p$, and $\mathbf{F}_g$ correspond to the aerodynamic, propulsion, and gravitational forces, respectively. The rotational dynamics are given by

$$\mathbf{I}\dot{\boldsymbol{\omega}} + \boldsymbol{\omega} \times (\mathbf{I}\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \mathbf{M}_a + \mathbf{M}_p \quad (2)$$

where $\mathbf{I}$ is the inertia matrix, and $\mathbf{M}_a$ and $\mathbf{M}_p$ represent the aerodynamic and propulsion moments.

B. Aerodynamic Force and Moment Modeling

Aerodynamic forces and moments are modeled as nonlinear functions of airspeed, angle of attack α , sideslip angle β , and control surface deflections δ :

$$\mathbf{F}_a = \frac{1}{2}\rho V^2 S \mathbf{C}_F(\alpha, \beta, \delta) \quad (3)$$

$$\mathbf{M}_a = \frac{1}{2}\rho V^2 S \bar{c} \mathbf{C}_M(\alpha, \beta, \delta) \quad (3)$$

where ρ is the air density, S is the wing reference area, $\bar{c}$ is the mean aerodynamic chord, and $\mathbf{C}_F$ and $\mathbf{C}_M$ are the aerodynamic force and moment coefficient vectors.

C. Digital Twin State-Space Representation

The digital twin represents the aircraft dynamics in a state-space form:

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}} = \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) + \mathbf{d}(t) \quad (4)$$

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}) \quad (4)$$

where $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ is the state vector (velocity, attitude, and angular rates), $\mathbf{u}$ is the control input vector, $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ denotes uncertain or time-varying parameters, and $\mathbf{d}(t)$ represents external disturbances and modeling uncertainties[9]. The digital twin continuously updates $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ using real-time flight data to minimize the discrepancy between the physical aircraft and the virtual model[10].

D. Online Parameter Estimation and Twin Synchronization

To ensure high-fidelity synchronization, a recursive parameter estimation scheme is employed:

$$\dot{\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}} = -\boldsymbol{\Gamma} \left(\frac{\partial \mathbf{f}}{\partial \boldsymbol{\theta}} \right)^T (\mathbf{y} - \hat{\mathbf{y}}) \quad (5)$$

where $\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}$ is the estimated parameter vector, $\boldsymbol{\Gamma}$ is a positive-definite adaptation gain matrix, and $(\mathbf{y} - \hat{\mathbf{y}})$ is the output estimation error.

This mechanism allows the digital twin to adapt to aerodynamic variations, mass changes, and actuator degradations in real time[11].

E. Adaptive Flight Control Law

An adaptive control law is designed based on the digital twin model:

$$\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{u}_0 - \mathbf{K}(t)(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_r) \quad (6)$$

where $\mathbf{u}_0$ is the nominal control input, $\mathbf{K}(t)$ is a time-varying adaptive gain matrix, and $\mathbf{x}_r$ denotes the reference state.

The adaptive gains are updated according to

$$\dot{\mathbf{K}} = \mathbf{\Lambda}(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_r)(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_r)^T \quad (7)$$

with $\mathbf{\Lambda}$ being a positive-definite adaptation rate matrix ensuring closed-loop stability.

F. Fault-Tolerant Control Integration

In the presence of actuator or sensor faults, the digital twin detects abnormal deviations and reconfigures the control law as

$$\mathbf{u}_f = \mathbf{R}\mathbf{u} \quad (8)$$

where $\mathbf{R}$ is a fault compensation matrix derived from the updated digital twin model.

III. Literature Survey

The use of digital twin technology has already become a new paradigm in aerospace engineering that allows the virtualization of physical systems and their interaction in real-time with their computational counterparts. Although the digital twins have been successfully implemented in other aerospace uses, there are no studies on the implementation of high-fidelity twin models with adaptive flight control. This literature review is an overview of the existing literature on digital twin frameworks, adaptive control in aircraft, and the combination of the two, which presents research gaps that justify the current research.

Digital Twin in Aerospace Engineering: The idea of the digital twin dates back to the sphere of product lifecycle management, with its major focus on the sustaining synchronization between a physical object and its virtual image during the entire period of its functioning. Digital twin technology has served as the main application in the fields of aerospace engineering in structural health monitoring, engine performance diagnostics, and predictive maintenance. Initial models defined the core elements of digital twins, such as real-time data collection, model updating systems, and decision-support. These models emphasized the need to have closed-loop interaction between the physical system and the digital one to enhance accuracy and reliability[12]. The use of digital twins in aircraft systems, specifically, as

a maintenance and health monitoring tool, has been examined by several studies. The digital twin-based methods have been used to observe the subsystems of the aircraft, determine the structural integrity of the composite material, as well as predict the propulsion system health through real-time sensor data. The current developments have revealed that real-time digital twins of turbofan engines are possible using sensor fusion methods and that they can be used to diagnose faults and predict performance better. Nevertheless, even with such developments, the majority of digital twin implementations currently deployed are centered on diagnostics and maintenance and have low levels of real-time engagement with flight control systems.

Adaptive Flight Control Systems: Adaptive flight control is not a new concept in aerospace engineering, whose goal is to achieve robust performance in situations with model uncertainties, when aerodynamics is nonlinear, and when the system is perturbed by external disturbances. Adaptive methodologies were based on classical adaptive control techniques, including model reference adaptive control, which allowed online control of controller parameters to achieve the desired reference behaviour. These methods have been researched extensively in enhancing stability and performance in uncertain operating environments. Adaptive control strategies have been shown to be more effective as far as tracking performance and robustness in changing flight regimes is concerned in aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle applications. More sophisticated adaptive methods, such as adaptive backstepping, sliding mode control, have been suggested to handle aggression maneuvers and dynamics that are extremely nonlinear. Although these approaches are effective, they are strongly dependent on precise mathematical models and they are frequently unable to handle unmodeled dynamics, parameter drift and system degradation when operating in the real-time. **Data-Driven and Hybrid Digital Twin Models:** The combination of data-driven methods of learning with physics-based models has been receiving more and more attention in the field of digital twin. Hybrid digital twin models represent the use of machine learning with first-principles modeling to increase predictive abilities and flexibility. Complex nonlinear behaviors and unmodeled dynamics that are hard to model mathematically have been captured using data-driven components, including neural networks and probabilistic regression models. Hybrid digital twins have been observed to perform better in reflecting aeroelastic effects, alterations in aerodynamic parameters and structural reactions when subjected to uncertain conditions. These models are more faithful than the purely data-driven or purely physics-based models. Nonetheless, the majority of hybrid digital twin applications are applied either offline or in a scaled-down form to performance prediction and health management tasks with little to no connection to real-time adaptive flight control loops.

Digital Twin Flight Control Systems: Digital twin technology is comparatively a new field in terms of its direct application in flight control systems. The first works have

Table 1: Comparison of Control Approaches

Parameter	CAC	DTM	HDT
Physics-Based Modeling	✓	✓	✓
Data-Driven Learning Integration	✗	✗	✓
High-Fidelity Nonlinear Dynamics	✗	✗	✓
Real-Time System Synchronization	✗	✓	✗
Adaptive Control Integration	✓	✗	✗
Online Parameter Updating	✓	✓	✓
Fault Detection Capability	✗	✓	✓

investigated application of digital twins in protection of a flight envelope, in which the control limits are dynamically set in accordance with the updated system models to improve the safety of operation. Other papers have studied digital twin-enabled predictive control techniques used to stabilize the attitude of unmanned airplanes by adding online parameter learning to the controller to enhance the precision of the control. Although these were encouraging, there are still a number of challenges. One, most of the approaches to digital twins as a control method are based on simplified or reduced-order models that do not reflect the full nonlinear and coupled behavior of aircraft systems. Second, the physically simulated aircraft and the digitally simulated twin are typically real-time synchronized with computational complexity constraints, leading to offline or sporadic model updates. These constraints decrease the suitability of digital twins when changing rapidly on the flight and safety-critical cases.

A comparative analysis as shown in Table.1 of the main parameters in relation to traditional adaptive control systems, maintenance-based digital twin systems, hybrid digital twin systems, and the high-fidelity digital twin-based adaptive flight control system proposed is given in this table. The comparison is presented in a tick format to explicitly show what is or is not present of the key features: real-time synchronization, high-fidelity modeling of nonlinear dynamics, adaptive control combined, and fault-tolerant features. Having discussed the analysis it is evident that the suggested method has the distinctive advantage of integrating high-fidelity digital twin modeling with real-time adaptable flight control that is superior in robustness, adaptability and applicability to next-generation autonomous aerospace systems.

IV. Methodology

The aircraft dynamics are described using a nonlinear six-degree-of-freedom (6-DOF) model:

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}}_p = \mathbf{f}_p(\mathbf{x}_p, \mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_p) + \mathbf{w}(t) \quad (9)$$

$$\mathbf{y}_p = \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}_p) \quad (10)$$

where $\mathbf{x}_p$ represents the physical aircraft state vector, $\mathbf{u}$ is the control input vector, $\boldsymbol{\theta}_p$ denotes uncertain physical parameters, and $\mathbf{w}(t)$ represents external disturbances. The

digital twin is formulated as a virtual dynamic system mirroring the physical aircraft:

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}}_{dt} = \mathbf{f}_{dt}(\mathbf{x}_{dt}, \mathbf{u}, \hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}) \quad (11)$$

$$\mathbf{y}_{dt} = \mathbf{h}(\mathbf{x}_{dt}) \quad (12)$$

where $\mathbf{x}_{dt}$ is the digital twin state vector and $\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}$ is the estimated parameter set continuously updated using real-time data. The synchronization error is defined as:

$$\mathbf{e}(t) = \mathbf{x}_p(t) - \mathbf{x}_{dt}(t) \quad (13)$$

To minimize synchronization error, an adaptive parameter update law is employed:

$$\dot{\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}} = -\boldsymbol{\Gamma} \mathbf{J}^T \mathbf{e} \quad (14)$$

where $\boldsymbol{\Gamma}$ is a positive-definite adaptation gain matrix, and $\mathbf{J} = \frac{\partial \mathbf{f}_{dt}}{\partial \boldsymbol{\theta}}$ is the parameter sensitivity matrix. This enables the digital twin to adapt to aerodynamic changes, mass variation, and actuator degradation in real time. An adaptive state-feedback control law is designed using the updated digital twin model:

$$\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{u}_r - \mathbf{K}(t)(\mathbf{x}_p - \mathbf{x}_r) \quad (15)$$

where $\mathbf{x}_r$ is the reference state vector, and $\mathbf{K}(t)$ is a time-varying gain matrix. The gain adaptation law is defined as:

$$\dot{\mathbf{K}} = \boldsymbol{\Lambda}(\mathbf{x}_p - \mathbf{x}_r)(\mathbf{x}_p - \mathbf{x}_r)^T \quad (16)$$

where $\boldsymbol{\Lambda}$ is a positive adaptation matrix. A Lyapunov function candidate is defined as:

$$V = \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{e}^T \mathbf{P} \mathbf{e} + \frac{1}{2} \boldsymbol{\theta}^T \boldsymbol{\Gamma}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\theta} \quad (17)$$

where

$$\boldsymbol{\theta} = \boldsymbol{\theta}_p - \boldsymbol{\theta}_r$$

The derivative of the Lyapunov function satisfies
The derivative of the Lyapunov function satisfies

$$\dot{V} \leq 0 \quad (18)$$

which ensures the boundedness of all closed-loop signals and guarantees system stability.

Faults are detected when the synchronization error exceeds a predefined threshold, i.e.,

$$\|\mathbf{e}(t)\| > e_{th} \quad (19)$$

where $\mathbf{e}(t)$ is the synchronization error and e_{th} is the predefined threshold.

Upon fault detection, a reconfigured control input is generated as

$$\mathbf{u}_f = \mathbf{R} \mathbf{u} \quad (20)$$

where $\mathbf{R}$ is a fault compensation matrix derived from the updated digital twin.



Figure 2: Comparison of Pitch Angle Response of Physical Aircrafts, Digital Twin and Conventional Control Models.

Minimum Resolution:300 DPI This Figure.2 shows the time-domain response in the pitch angle of the physical aircraft, the proposed adaptive digital twin model and a traditional fixed-parameter control model at the same initial condition. The physical aircraft response is the real system dynamics and the digital twin is constantly adjusting its parameters to follow the physical system in real time. The traditional model, which is not adaptive, has a slight variation at the transient stage. The findings show that the adaptive digital twin follows the physical aircraft response very closely with higher convergence and lower transient error than the traditional model. This indicates that high-fidelity digital twin modeling is effective in enhancing accuracy of control, robustness and real-time flexibility of aircraft flight control systems.

Table 2: Comparison of Performance Metrics

Performance Metric	Physical Aircraft	Digital Twin (Adaptive)	Conventional Model
Initial Pitch Angle (rad)	0.1	0.1	0.1
Peak Overshoot	Low	Very Low	Moderate
Settling Time (s)	≈ 3.0	≈ 2.5	≈ 3.5
Steady-State Error	0	0	Small
Transient Oscillations	Minor	Minimal	Noticeable
Tracking Accuracy	High	Very High	Medium
Adaptability to Model Uncertainty	—	High	Low
Control Performance Robustness	High	Very High	Moderate

This Table. 2 compares the dynamic pitch angle response characteristics of the physical aircraft, the adaptive digital twin model, and the conventional fixed-parameter control model. The adaptive digital twin demonstrates superior performance in terms of settling time, overshoot reduction, tracking accuracy, and robustness, closely matching the physical aircraft response. In contrast, the conventional model exhibits slower convergence and increased transient deviations due to the absence of real-time adaptation.

V. Conclusion

In this paper, a high-fidelity digital twin framework was introduced together with an adaptive aircraft flight control system. The suggested methodology will integrate physics-based nonlinear aircraft modeling and real-time adaptation of parameters, which will allow maintaining consistency between the physical aircraft and the virtual aircraft at all times. An adaptive digital twin was empirically compared to a standard fixed-parameter model, which proved to have a higher level of tracking accuracy, lower transient oscillation, shorter settling time, and greater resistance to model uncertainties. The findings validate that the high-fidelity digital twin modeling plays a significant role in enhancing the control performance by allowing the real-time adaptation and reconfiguration of the fault-aware control. The proposed framework offers a practical solution to the next-generation aerospace systems, such as autonomous and unmanned aircraft, in which dynamic uncertainties and the response speed are crucial and the accurate modeling is essential. In future work, the framework will be extended to the multi-axis 6-DOF aircraft models and will utilize the advanced data-driven learning methods that will enhance the predictive capabilities.

References

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Abbreviations

CAC: Conventional Adaptive Control, DTM: Digital Twin for Maintenance, HDT: Hybrid Digital Twin Models.