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A Novel Wearable Assistive Device for Jaw Motion Disability Rehabilitation

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
in
Engineering**

at
Massey University, Auckland
New Zealand

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2014.07

Abstract

Temporomandibular disorder (TMD) is a group of dysfunctions in the masticatory system that cause muscle stiffness and weakened masticatory ability. TMD is commonly suffered by a considerable percentage of the population, impairs oral hygiene and brings inconveniences to a great number of patients. The therapeutic exercise with significant efficacy is widely advised among patients in the treatment of the mandibular hypomobility to reduce pain and increase the inter-incisal opening of the mouth. This thesis proposes a novel wearable device to passively assist to deliver the mandibular movement.

The mandible, attached to the skull via masticatory muscles and pivoted at the condyles at the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), can be simplified as moving in the two-dimensional sagittal plane. A planar four-bar linkage was synthesized to reproduce the specified normal jaw motion in terms of incisor and condyle trajectory on the coupler point to meet the kinematic specification. Adjustable lengths of the links were used to achieve a group of trajectories of any possibility. The prototype of the linkage has been fabricated, integrated with the sensory units and electronic hardware into a Mechatronic system.

The dynamics of the entire system was analyzed, along with the model thoroughly built up in Simulink, to facilitate further controller design. A closed-loop control scheme based on the device was proposed, and it is able to achieve the accurate position control to the crank to ensure the position of the jaw to be notified. A series of experiments with the device has been carried to evaluate the performance of the controller, with the control algorithm implemented into a micro-controller based board.

The exoskeleton was then evaluated in terms of the kinematic and dynamic interaction in the hybrid human-machine system, in which the condyle movement was recorded by AG500 tracking machine. Simulation and experimental methods were respectively developed to investigate the joint force which is in-vivo inaccessible. Simulation was conducted by adding the dynamic model of the mandible into the linkage model with controller. A test-rig was designed to mount the skull and the jaw replicas which simulated the counterparts in human body. Experiments were carried to evaluate the joint force and the performance of the controller; results obtained from both simulations and experiments have indicated the force level inside the TMJ is rather small compared with the one in the circumstance where maximum chewing force is applied.

Acknowledgement

At the moment of approaching to the completion of the PhD study, looking over what's been going through in the past four years, memories during the whole doctoral journey all crowded into my mind, full of best and worst scenes. From losing direction at the beginning, to the struggling whilst getting in the research till the persistence to the last moment, they showed up in silence to me every time when I came across difficulty. It would likely not finish the thesis without the help and support from people around me, to some of whom it is only possible to mention here.

First and foremost I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. Peter Xu, A/Prof. Johan Potgieter and Prof Olaf Diegel, for their valuable guidance along the whole pathway to my completion of doctorate research, for their encouragement to every my unconfident attempt across the study, for their patience and tolerance to my occasional stagnation with a problem, and also for their concern for my life.

This thesis was partly funded by Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST), New Zealand. I would like to thank the opportunity that was given to me in participating into this competitive team.

To staff at SEAT labs, Mr. Paul Thornton and Mr. Joe Wang, I am grateful for your kindly assistance in fabricating the mechanical parts and electronic boards, in purchasing the materials and parts. My gratitude also goes to the staff, Hongyan Yao, at IFNHH, Massey University, who provides rewardless help to me in the operation of the tracking machine.

Last but not least, I wish to thank my parents, who are living thousands of miles away in China. Their love provided my inspiration and was my driving force. I owe them everything and wish I could show them just how much I love and appreciate them. Special gratitude goes to my husband, Jing Chen, whose love and encouragement allowed me to finish this journey. He already has my heart so I will just give him a heartfelt "thanks." I also want to thank to my in-laws for their unconditional support.

One must choose in life between boredom and suffering. Thanks to the doctoral experience, which always reminds me the last perseverance I am still striving on.

Declaration

The author declares that this is her own work except where due acknowledgement has been given. It is being submitted for the PhD in Engineering to Massey University, New Zealand.

This thesis describes the research carried out by the author at School of Engineering and Advanced Technology, Massey University, New Zealand from February 2009 to November 2013, supervised by Prof. Peter Xu, A/Prof. Johan Potgieter and Prof. Olaf Diegel.

List of Publications

Wang, X., Xu, W., Potgieter, J., & Diegel, O. (2010). "A jaw exoskeleton for jaw motion disability rehabilitation: System conceiving and mechanism synthesis," in Proceedings of the 25th International Conference on CAD/CAM, Robotics and Factories of the Future (CARs&FOF), 2010. (pp. 1 - 12).

X. Y. Wang, W. L. Xu, K. Etzel, J. Potgieter, and O. Diegel, "Mechanism design and analysis of a wearable device for rehabilitation of temporomandibular disorder," in Robotics and Biomimetics (ROBIO), 2010 IEEE International Conference on, 2010, pp. 1674-1679.

X. Wang, P. Xu, J. Potgieter, and O. Diegel, "Review of the biomechanics of TMJ," in Mechatronics and Machine Vision in Practice (M2VIP), 2012 19th International Conference, 2012, pp. 381-386.

X. Y. Wang, J. Potgieter, W. L. Xu, and O. Diegel, " Development of Jaw Exoskeleton for Rehabilitation of Temporomandibular Disorders " in Robot Intelligence Technology and Applications, The 2nd International Conference on, 2013.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgement.....	ii
Declaration	iii
List of Publications.....	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Figures.....	x
List of Tables	xv
Definitions and Abbreviations	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 The Concept of Wearable Assistive Robot	1
1.2 Background of the Jaw Disability.....	2
1.2.1 Description of Disabled Jaw Movement.....	2
1.2.2 Jaw Etiology	3
1.2.3 Rationales for Disabled Jaw Rehabilitation	4
1.2.4 Efficacy of Therapeutic Exercise	6
1.3 Motivation and Research Challenges	7
1.4 Aims and Objectives	8
1.5 Significance and Major Contributions	9
1.6 Organization of the Thesis	10
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	13
2.1 The Mandibular Kinematics.....	13
2.1.1 Human Masticatory System.....	14
2.1.2 Description of the Mandibular Movement.....	17
2.1.3 Mandible Movement Range and Its Boundary.....	24
2.1.4 Features of Condylar Movement.....	25
2.2 Dynamics of the Masticatory System	27
2.2.1 Dynamic Model of the Masticatory System	27
2.2.2 Chewing Force	29
2.3 Biomechanical Investigation.....	30
2.3.1 Mechanics of the Masticatory System Components.....	31
2.3.2 TMJ loadings	33
2.3.3 Stress Distribution on the TMJ	34

2.3.4	Biomechanics of Articular Disc.....	36
2.3.5	Discussion.....	36
2.4	The State-of-the-Art of Jaw Movement Simulators.....	37
2.4.1	Bio-inspired Chewing Devices	38
2.4.2	Quasi-anthropomorphic Devices for Medical Purpose.....	43
2.4.3	Force-oriented Imitation for Food Evaluation	46
2.4.4	Discussions	48
2.5	Mechanism Structure Synthesis.....	49
2.5.1	Construction of Objective Function	50
2.5.2	Optimization Algorithms	51
2.5.3	General Procedure in Dimensional Synthesis	52
2.6	Control Strategy in Exoskeleton.....	53
2.6.1	Lower-level Control Algorithm.....	54
2.6.2	Higher-level Control Algorithm	56
2.7	Biomechanical Study Methodology	56
2.8	Summary	58
Chapter 3:	Mechanism Modeling and Identification	61
3.1	Planar Kinematics of the Jaw	61
3.1.1	General Model of the TMJ	62
3.1.2	Workspace on the Incisor	64
3.1.3	Workspace on the Condyle	72
3.1.4	Functional Analysis.....	74
3.2	Mechanism Design Specification	77
3.2.1	Mandible Movement Pattern	78
3.2.2	Typical Trajectories	81
3.2.3	Rigid-body Guidance Movement	83
3.2.4	Specifications in System Realization	85
3.3	Possible Design Approach	86
3.4	Dimensional Synthesis in Motion Generation	88
3.4.1	Objective Function of Motion Generation.....	88
3.4.2	Consideration in the Application.....	93
3.4.3	Results and Comparisons	94
3.5	Kinematic Simulation of the Mechanism	96
3.5.1	Trajectories Comparison and Verification	96

3.5.2	Interactive GUI for Linkage Adjustment	99
3.6	Chapter Summary	100
Chapter 4:	Mechatronic Construction of Jaw Exoskeleton	101
4.1	Systematic Conceiving	101
4.2	Mechanical Design.....	104
4.2.1	Four-bar Linkage	104
4.2.2	Mounting Accessories.....	107
4.2.3	Passive Compliance Design.....	109
4.2.4	The Entire Jaw Exoskeleton Assembly	111
4.3	Sensory Subsystem Design	112
4.3.1	Tilt Angle Measurement Unit	113
4.3.2	Force Measurement Unit.....	117
4.3.3	Hall-effect Sensor Unit.....	119
4.3.4	Self-Test of Sensory Subsystem	120
4.4	Construction of the Electronic Subsystem	126
4.4.1	Specifications of the Electronic Subsystem	126
4.4.2	The Architecture of the Integrated Hardware.....	128
4.4.3	Key Interfaces Configuration	129
4.5	Evaluation of Jaw Exoskeleton	132
4.5.1	Stress and Strain Analysis	132
4.6	Chapter Summary	135
Chapter 5:	Dynamic Analysis and Motion Control	137
5.1	Dynamics of the Linkage System	137
5.1.1	Kinematic Analysis	139
5.1.2	Dynamic Analysis	141
5.1.3	Validation of the Dynamic Analysis	144
5.1.4	SimMechanics Model of Linkage System.....	153
5.2	Simulation of the Control System.....	156
5.2.1	Model of DC Motor and Simulation.....	156
5.2.2	Simulation of the Control System.....	159
5.3	CPG-based Control Strategy	163
5.3.1	Control Strategy Description	164
5.3.2	Matsuoka Oscillator.....	167
5.4	Experimental Implementation and Trials	171

5.4.1	Embedded Circuitry Implementation.....	172
5.4.2	Experimental Scenarios and Results	174
5.5	Discussions	182
Chapter 6:	Evaluation of Human-Machine System.....	183
6.1	Evaluation Criteria for the Interaction	183
6.1.1	Potential Influence to Wearers.....	184
6.2	Mathematical Model of the Masticatory System	185
6.2.1	Model Definition	185
6.2.2	The Mandible	185
6.2.3	The Muscular Force.....	187
6.2.4	The Passive Element.....	190
6.2.5	Complete Model	194
6.3	Simulation of Human-Machine Interaction	194
6.3.1	Model Verification	195
6.3.2	Simulation and Results.....	196
6.4	Experimental-rig Construction and Set-up.....	198
6.4.1	Requirement for Test-rig Construction	198
6.4.2	The Test-rig Construction.....	199
6.5	Trajectory Tracking Experiment.....	201
6.5.1	Experimental Set-up and Configuration.....	202
6.5.2	Position Tracking Experiments.....	204
6.5.3	Post-processing of the Experimental Data.....	204
6.5.4	Results Comparison and Discussion.....	206
6.6	Trials of Force Measurement	211
6.6.1	Trial Set-up.....	211
6.6.2	Results of Joint Force Test.....	212
6.6.3	Results in Control Performance	213
6.7	Discussions	215
6.7.1	Systematic Influence of the Method.....	215
6.7.2	Comparison of Results	216
Chapter 7:	Conclusion and Future Expectations.....	219
7.1	Conclusion.....	219
7.2	Future Work	220
References	221

Chapter 8:	Appendix.....	233
8.1	Figures of Electronic Parts	233
8.2	Figures of Complete Model in SimMechanics	235

List of Figures

Figure 1-1 The jaw’s 3D orientation and position [10]	3
Figure 2-1 Bones of skull and mandible in lateral view [52]	14
Figure 2-2 Muscles of mastication [52].....	15
Figure 2-3 The temporomandibular joint in (A) mouth closing position (B) mouth opening position [52]	16
Figure 2-4 The anatomical planes demonstrated on the mandible.....	18
Figure 2-5 Mandible movement described with non-orthogonal floating axis [65].....	20
Figure 2-6 Illustration of terminal hinge movement [69]	20
Figure 2-7 Schematic drawing of ICR [70].....	21
Figure 2-8 Schematic drawing of Kinematic Center [76]	22
Figure 2-9 Schematic view of helical axis at (A) symmetric movement and (B) unilateral movement [78]	23
Figure 2-10 Posselt envelope in (A) the sagittal plane (B) the frontal plane (C) the horizontal plane [81]	25
Figure 2-11 Typical sagittal trace of the kinematic center at (A) non-load and (B) low load [76]	27
Figure 2-12 Vento-lateral view of masticatory system [55]	28
Figure 2-13 Four-mode Maxwell model to represent TMJ disc mechanical property [120]	33
Figure 2-14 Front view of the machine [135]	38
Figure 2-15 Muscular actuator mounted on the JSN/2A [137].....	39
Figure 2-16 Block diagram of the impedance control scheme [137].....	40
Figure 2-17 WJ robot (A) kinematic model of jaw movement and (B) alignment of AMA in WJ-2 [138]	41
Figure 2-18 Parallel mechanism of the robotic jaw: (A) 3D kinematic sketch and (B) the photo [145]	42
Figure 2-19 Dento-Munch Robo-Simulator (A) based on a parallel mechanism and (B) of complete CAD assembly [147]	43
Figure 2-20 Jaw exercisers	44
Figure 2-21 WY dental robot.....	45
Figure 2-22 Constructed chewing robot [146].....	47
Figure 2-23 3D prototype of the chewing simulator [154]	48
Figure 3-1 Kinematic representation of the TMJ	62
Figure 3-2 Size illustration of the mandible	64
Figure 3-3 The interpolated Posselt envelope plotted in the MATLAB	66
Figure 3-4 illustration of jaw coordinate frame established based on the recorded data	68
Figure 3-5 The sagittal-plane workspace recorded in vivo	69
Figure 3-6 The planeness on the z-axis after transformation.....	70
Figure 3-7 A GUI developed for AG data processing	70
Figure 3-8 The scattered points within incisor point border	71
Figure 3-9 The condyle trajectories	74
Figure 3-10 The interplay between the mandible and the maxilla during occlusion	75
Figure 3-11 Incisor workspace under two extreme configurations	76

Figure 3-12 Stepwise Phases of the mandible movement on the sagittal plane	81
Figure 3-13 Condyle trajectories enumerations	82
Figure 3-14 Incisor trajectories enumerations	83
Figure 3-15 A typical pair of synchronous trajectories on the CP and IP	84
Figure 3-16 Locational Correlation between IP and CP	85
Figure 3-17 Dyad illustration (A) original position (B) other positions	89
Figure 3-18 The ICR of the coupler	93
Figure 3-19 General area of the ICR	94
Figure 3-20 Schematic diagram of the linkage	95
Figure 3-21 ICR trajectory of current four-bar linkage	96
Figure 3-22 Comparison between generated trajectories	97
Figure 3-23 Link configuration in SimMechanics	97
Figure 3-24 Incisor trajectories	98
Figure 3-25 Condyle trajectories	98
Figure 3-26 GUI for adjusting size of the links in the four-bar linkage	99
Figure 4-1 The hardware integrated scheme	102
Figure 4-2 The basic design of four-bar linkage	105
Figure 4-3 Assembly of four-bar linkage	105
Figure 4-4 Adjustable follower link	106
Figure 4-5 The moment corresponded to a velocity profile	107
Figure 4-6 Chin attachment on the jaw	108
Figure 4-7 Helmet connection	109
Figure 4-8 Passive compliance	110
Figure 4-9 Compliant components design	110
Figure 4-10 The configuration of double four-bar linkage	111
Figure 4-11 Linkage prototype	111
Figure 4-12 Overview of the whole assembly in SolidWorks	112
Figure 4-13 Two axes application (adapted from product manual)	114
Figure 4-14 Tilt measurement unit circuit	117
Figure 4-15 Amplifier circuit simulation in the Simulink	118
Figure 4-16 <i>Flexiforce</i> circuit	119
Figure 4-17 Hall-effect switch circuit (A) and circuit board (B)	120
Figure 4-18 Experimental-rig to calibrate the <i>Flexiforce</i> sensor	123
Figure 4-19 The voltage acquired during calibration versus the theoretical one	123
Figure 4-20 The tilt angle after calibration	124
Figure 4-21 Calibration of the force sensors	125
Figure 4-22 Schematic diagram of the hardware system	129
Figure 4-23 Voltage circuit of 3.3 V	131
Figure 4-24 ADC circuitry	131
Figure 4-25 Peripheral circuitry board	132
Figure 4-26 The stress analysis of the whole device	133
Figure 4-27 Displacement of the deformation of the whole device	133
Figure 4-28 Safety factor based analysis of the whole device	134
Figure 4-29 The stress analysis of the coupler group	134
Figure 4-30 Deformation analysis of the coupler group	135

Figure 4-31 The safety factor based analysis of the whole device	135
Figure 5-1 Block diagram of the entire linkage complex	138
Figure 5-2 Attachment displacement during spring stretch	142
Figure 5-3 Gear in equivalent reduction	144
Figure 5-4 Motion profile of the crank as the input	145
Figure 5-5 Angular displacement of the coupler	146
Figure 5-6 Angular displacement of the follower	147
Figure 5-7 Angular velocity of the coupler.....	147
Figure 5-8 Angular velocity of the follower	148
Figure 5-9 Angular acceleration of the crank.....	148
Figure 5-10 Angular acceleration of the coupler	149
Figure 5-11 Angular acceleration of the follower	149
Figure 5-12 The velocity on the point in horizontal direction	150
Figure 5-13 The velocity on the point in vertical direction	150
Figure 5-14 External force varying in direction.....	151
Figure 5-15 Consumed torque measured on the crank without load	152
Figure 5-16 Consumed torque measured on the crank with invariant upright load	152
Figure 5-17 Machine model of the whole mechanism	154
Figure 5-18 Hard stop virtually set-up in SimMechanics	154
Figure 5-19 Joint and body reaction	155
Figure 5-20 Crank joint configuration in SimMechanics	155
Figure 5-21 Resistance virtually set-up in SimMechanics	156
Figure 5-22 DC motor simplified electromechanical system	157
Figure 5-23 Mathematical model of DC motor	157
Figure 5-24 Physical model of DC motor in SimScape	158
Figure 5-25 Motor response	158
Figure 5-26 The control scheme of the linkage in Simulink	159
Figure 5-27 Four-bar linkage mechanism modified after conversion from SolidWorks.....	160
Figure 5-28 Inverse dynamics unit	160
Figure 5-29 Motion profile pre-defined in a GUI	160
Figure 5-30 Speed profile as the input.....	161
Figure 5-31 Configuration of the actuator	161
Figure 5-32 Results with ideal actuator	162
Figure 5-33 PID tuner and the applied parameters	162
Figure 5-34 Results with actual actuator	163
Figure 5-35 Overview of the control architecture	166
Figure 5-36 Two-neuron composed Matsuoka oscillator	168
Figure 5-37 Matsuoka oscillator built in Simulink (A) single neuron (B) the entire oscillator ..	168
Figure 5-38 GUI for investigation of neural oscillator.....	169
Figure 5-39 Acquisition of the waveform features	170
Figure 5-40 Parameter influence on the output	170
Figure 5-41 The integrated flowchart of the controller	173
Figure 5-42 UI coded in the LM3S.....	173
Figure 5-43 Fixed-point configuration	174
Figure 5-44 Motion profile for five cycles as illustration	175

Figure 5-45 Simulation with the controller (A) before and (B) after PID tuning	176
Figure 5-46 Scenario one in open-loop setup	177
Figure 5-47 Scenario two in open-loop setup	178
Figure 5-48 Scenario three in open-loop setup.....	179
Figure 5-49 Scenario one in closed-loop setup	180
Figure 5-50 Scenario two in closed-loop setup	181
Figure 5-51 Scenario three in closed-loop setup.....	181
Figure 6-1 Representation of mandible in the model	186
Figure 6-2 Condyle pathway guidance	187
Figure 6-3 Subsystems of sarcomere length (A) and passive force (B)	189
Figure 6-4 Passive Force on involved muscles.....	189
Figure 6-5 Muscle model built in Simulink	190
Figure 6-6 Ligament model built in Simulink.....	191
Figure 6-7 Elasticity implemented in the Simulink.....	192
Figure 6-8 Unit response by the passive control model.....	192
Figure 6-9 Maxwell model implemented in the Simulink	193
Figure 6-10 Unit response by the passive control model.....	193
Figure 6-11 Contact configuration.....	194
Figure 6-12 The overall model built in Simulink for dynamic study.....	194
Figure 6-13 Passive force used actively.....	195
Figure 6-14 Y-axis displacement when only passive force exists	196
Figure 6-15 Joint force at scenario 1	197
Figure 6-16 Joint force at scenario 2	197
Figure 6-17 3D printed (A) Jaw and (B) maxilla	200
Figure 6-18 Articulograph AG500 [142].....	202
Figure 6-19 Sensor locations (A) of the overall view (B) at fossa and left condyle (C) at right condyle (D) at incisor	203
Figure 6-20 Comparison of data before and after filtering	206
Figure 6-21 Condyle trajectory in trial 1.....	207
Figure 6-22 Condyle trajectory in trial 1.....	208
Figure 6-23 Condyle trajectory in trial 1.....	208
Figure 6-24 Condyle trajectory in trial 4.....	209
Figure 6-25 Condyle trajectory in trial 5.....	209
Figure 6-26 Incisor trajectory in trial 1	210
Figure 6-27 Incisor trajectory in trial 1	210
Figure 6-28 Measured joint force in one cycle	212
Figure 6-29 Measured joint force in continuous movement	213
Figure 6-30 Simulation trial	214
Figure 6-31 Experimental trial one	214
Figure 6-32 Experimental trial two.....	215
Figure 8-1 The break-out circuit board of accelerometer	233
Figure 8-2 Installation of the tilt angle board on the coupler	233
Figure 8-3 <i>Flexiforce</i> sensor	234
Figure 8-4 <i>Flexiforce</i> sensor break-out circuit boards	234
Figure 8-5 Circuit board of force sensor in operation	234

Figure 8-6 Data acquisition with USB 6210.....235
Figure 8-7 LM3S1968 board235
Figure 8-8 Overall linkage model built in SimMechanics236
Figure 8-9 Converted block diagram in SimMechanics.....237

List of Tables

Table 2-1 Mechanical properties of TMJ components	31
Table 3-1 Qualitative specifications of the device.....	77
Table 3-2 Mandible movement rhythms on the sagittal plane	80
Table 3-3 Mechanism design specifications	86
Table 3-4 Result of precise synthesis.....	95
Table 3-5 Simulation scenarios for adjustable linkage	98
Table 4-1 General requirement for the exoskeleton system	103
Table 4-2 Specifications of the required sensor	113
Table 4-3 Specification of the ADXL203.....	114
Table 4-4 Selected sensor specifications (partially quoted from manual)	117
Table 4-5 ADC resolution with different amount of bit.....	127
Table 5-1 Representation of linkage symbols in the diagram of the four-bar linkage.....	138
Table 5-2 Values of all linkage parameters.....	145
Table 5-3 Linkage parameter in SimMechanics.....	153
Table 5-4 Parameters in the motor	157
Table 6-1 Physical properties of the mandible	186
Table 6-2 Muscle properties.....	188
Table 6-3 Accuracy required in the sensory unit.....	199
Table 6-4 The physical properties of the 3D printed jaw replica	200
Table 6-5 Specifications of the AG500.....	201
Table 6-6 Sensor Positions.....	203
Table 6-7 Simulation scenarios for adjustable linkage	204

Definitions and Abbreviations

2D	two-dimensional	HMI	human-machine interaction
3D	three-dimensional	HMS	human-machine system
ADC	analog-digital converter	ICR	instantaneous center of rotation
AG	articulograph	IDE	integrated development environment
CMP	continuous passive motion	IP	incisor point
CNS	central nervous system	KC	kinematic center
CP	condylar point	LSB	least significant bit
CPG	central pattern generator	LSQ	least square
CS	coordinate system	MCU	microcontroller unit
CSA	cross-sectional area	MDA	multi-body dynamic analysis
CVA	cerebrovascular accident	MRI	magnetic resonance image
DAC	digital-analog converter	PCSA	physiological cross-sectional areas
DAQ	data acquisition	ROM	range of motion
DLC	dimeric link chain	STD	standard deviation
DOF	degree of freedom	TMD	temporomandibular joint disorders
EMG	electromyography	TMJ	temporomandibular joint
FEA	finite element analysis	UI	user interface
FHA	Finite helical axis	VR	virtual reality
GUI	graphic user interface	WAD	wearable assistive device