



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**VIRTUAL TRAINING IN MOBILE PLANT FOR TURBOCHARGER IN OIL
AND GAS INDUSTRY IN KUWAIT**

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AND GAS INDUSTRY IN KUWAIT**

By

MAJED GH A H ALSHAMMAR

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
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Philosophy**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

VIRTUAL TRAINING IN MOBILE PLANT FOR TURBOCHARGER OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY IN KUWAIT

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April 2019

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Virtual maintenance training or virtual reality (VR) in the industrial and energy industry has been a topic of discussion inside recent years. All major oil and gas companies in recent years have advocated design and develop virtual maintenance training system for the greater benefit of the humanity and the environment focusing on sustainable development. Oil and gas industry often requires people to work in hazardous environments, these environments are constantly increasing in size and complexity as companies look for new more cost effective ways of doing training and maintenance. In this project, a head-based fully immersive virtual reality application is developed in Unity 3D for virtual reality training in industrial equipment maintenance for oil and gas industry. The overall research is done at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in which to analyse the crucial part that affecting the production line in oil and gas industry. Turbocharger is an essential link in the oil and gas market, helping industries reduce turnaround times and increase productivity across all spheres of operation. The scopes of works are focused on the development of turbocharger parts. The aim of this project is to design and develop virtual reality (VR) system for turbocharger maintenance training in oil and gas industry, evaluate the efficiency of the implementation of training through the Virtual Reality (VR) system and compare between the process performances data in conventional method. Virtual Reality (VR) application development of a turbocharger has been done by using 3D modelling software, animation software and Unity platform software. The effectiveness of the developed VR training platform was also studied. Experiments were done to evaluate the effectiveness and acceptance level of a virtual reality application in inspection and maintenance compared to conventional turbocharger maintenance training. Validation on this developed virtual reality maintenance training application is done based on five aspects which are functionality, reliability, usability, efficiency, maintainability and portability. VR software developed was evaluated by 20 experts in the oil and gas industry. Result from app validation shows that the functionality aspect offer the best value with 56% and followed

by usability with 52%. Respondents verified that they gain beneficial input and experience in VR training platform compared to the manual maintenance method. The results obtained from this study, support the application of learning and training method of using VR system for a particular assembly task and the implemented is expected to highly benefit the industries and maintenance sectors. The possibility of implementing this technology, especially in industrial and maintenance sectors would lead and benefit both organizations in training new procedure or task.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

LATIHAN VIRTUAL DI DALAM WOKSYOP BAGI TURBOCHARGER UNTUK INDUSTRI MINYAK DAN GAS DI KUWAIT

Oleh

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Latihan penyelenggaraan maya atau realiti maya (VR) dalam industri perindustrian dan tenaga telah menjadi topik perbincangan yang hangat dalam beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini. Kebanyakan syarikat minyak dan gas utama dalam beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini telah menganjurkan reka bentuk dan membangunkan sistem latihan penyelenggaraan maya untuk manfaat yang lebih besar dari manusia dan alam sekitar yang memberi tumpuan kepada pembangunan mampan. Industri minyak dan gas seringkali menghendaki orang ramai untuk bekerja dalam persekitaran yang berbahaya, persekitaran ini sentiasa meningkat dalam saiz dan kerumitan. Oleh sebab yang demikian, syarikat giat mencari cara yang lebih efektif untuk melakukan latihan dan penyelenggaraan. Dalam projek ini, aplikasi sebenar realiti maya berasaskan kepala dibangunkan dalam Unity 3D untuk latihan realiti maya dalam penyelenggaraan peralatan industri untuk industri minyak dan gas. Penyelidikan keseluruhan dilakukan di Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) di mana untuk menganalisis bahagian penting yang mempengaruhi garisan pengeluaran dalam industri minyak dan gas. Turbocharger adalah pautan penting dalam pasaran minyak dan gas, membantu industri mengurangkan masa pemulihan dan meningkatkan produktiviti dalam semua bidang operasi. Skop kerja difokuskan pada pembangunan bahagian turbocharger. Matlamat projek ini adalah untuk merekabentuk dan membangunkan sistem realiti maya (VR) bagi latihan penyelenggaraan turbocharger dalam industri minyak dan gas, menilai kecekapan pelaksanaan latihan melalui sistem Realiti Maya (VR) dan membandingkan antara proses prestasi data dalam kaedah konvensional. Pembangunan aplikasi Virtual Reality (VR) bagi turbocharger telah dibangunkan dengan menggunakan perisian pemodelan 3D, perisian animasi dan perisian platform Unity. Keberkesanan platform latihan VR yang maju juga dikaji. Eksperimen dilakukan untuk menilai tahap keberkesanan dan penerimaan aplikasi realiti maya dalam pemeriksaan dan penyelenggaraan berbanding latihan penyelenggaraan turbocharger konvensional. Pengesahan mengenai aplikasi latihan pemeliharaan realiti maya yang dibangunkan ini

dilakukan berdasarkan lima aspek iaitu cara ia berfungsi, kebolehpercayaan, kebolehgunaan, kecekapan, pemeliharaan dan kemudahan. Perisian VR yang dibangunkan dinilai oleh 20 pakar dalam industri minyak dan gas. Hasil dari pengesahan aplikasi menunjukkan bahawa aspek cara ia berfungsi menawarkan nilai terbaik dengan 56% dan diikuti dengan kebolehgunaan dengan 52%. Responden mengesahkan bahawa mereka mendapat input dan pengalaman yang bermanfaat dalam platform latihan VR berbanding dengan kaedah penyelenggaraan manual. Keputusan yang diperoleh daripada kajian ini, menyokong penerapan kaedah pembelajaran dan latihan menggunakan sistem VR untuk tugas pemasangan tertentu dan yang dilaksanakan diharapkan dapat memberi manfaat yang besar kepada sektor industri dan penyelenggaraan. Kemungkinan pelaksanaan teknologi ini, terutamanya dalam sektor perindustrian dan penyelenggaraan akan membawa dan memberi manfaat kepada kedua-dua organisasi dalam latihan prosedur atau tugas baru.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

2D	Two Dimensions
3D	Three Dimensional
AR	Augmented Reality
CAD	Computer Aided Design
CATIA	Computer-Aided Three-Dimensional Interactive Application
CBM	Condition Based Maintenance
EEG	Electroencephalogram
FEED	Front End Engineering Design
HMD	Head Mounted Display
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
KOC	Kuwait Oil Company
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
GPS	Global Positioning System
MOW	Matching Objects and Words
NURBS	Non-Uniform Rational B-Splines
OSVR	Open Source Virtual Reality
OTS	Operator Training Simulator
Pre-test	Virtual test
Post-test	Actual (live) test
SD	Standard Deviation
SDK	Software Development Kit
SPSS	Statistics Package for the Social Sciences
TCT	Task Completion Time
TROV	Telepresence-controlled Remotely Operated underwater Vehicle
VE	Virtual Environment
VR	Virtual Reality
VRC	Virtual Reality Centers
2D	Two Dimensions
3D	Three Dimensional
AR	Augmented Reality
CAD	Computer Aided Design
CATIA	Computer-Aided Three-Dimensional Interactive Application
CBM	Condition Based Maintenance
EEG	Electroencephalogram
FEED	Front End Engineering Design
HMD	Head Mounted Display
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
KOC	Kuwait Oil Company
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminaries

This chapter provides a brief overview of the research presented in this thesis. The background work of this research area is first reviewed. The research statement, objectives and hypotheses are then outlined. Finally, the layout of the remaining structure of the thesis is presented.

1.2 Research Background

Interactive 3D technology is a flexible way to represent and experience safely complex, potentially hazardous processes or environments regardless of the geography or industry. Virtual Reality, can be described as translation of envionring information into mental image. That helps explain complex ideas simply, because virtual way of perceiving information is more convenient and simple for human beings. With Virtual Reality technology, engineers are able to analyse risky scenarios and minimize potential incident-prone areas, with safe virtual environments; the ability to make and learn from mistakes while performing complicated procedures and instructions is a hallmark of the way to designs training and educational solutions. Within this 'learning by doing' approach, a user can quickly identify a problem, ask questions, or receive just-in-time mentoring about any consequences of his actions. The objective of all operators training is to improve a skill set as rapidly and effectively as possible. The realism associated with Virtual Reality training greatly accelerates learning and skill acquisition. In fact, the combination of VR and traditional training has been proven (Kozlak et al., 2013).

A great advantage of the virtual training platform is that it can be separated from the real world in space and time and in such a way it does not disturb the work operations, and there is no need to physically build expensive training areas (Montecuccio et al., 2014). It could be argued that the greatest benefit of AR and VR training scenarios and exercise play is that it can be stored digitally. This allows an evaluation to be carried out more effectively with the ability to view individual elements of the exercise. The ability of these platforms to support data and video capture of time and critical action elements is an invaluable tool for the analysis of the individual and the training provider itself. This can be used to more accurately gather lessons learned and develop corrective actions necessary for the after-action review process.

Oil and Gas are the most important commodities in the world. The industry has become more complex than ever before. This is due to the growing demand for oil and gas, the complication of production conditions, the reduction in the

number of skilled workers, tough security regulations, and desire to cut costs and improve production rate. New technologies can provide a proper solution to these challenges. Virtual Reality here is a bridge between industry complexity, hi-tech innovations and increase of business value.

Due to today's heavy competition environment, oil and gas companies have to employ new emerging technologies to increase productivity, reduce production costs, improve product quality, and shorten lead time (Ji., 2002). With the increasing improvement of science and technology in equipment, the structure of device is becoming more and more complex, leading to a higher cost and longer training spend. The application of Virtual Reality (VR from now on) technologies in training processes has been shown as an interested topic in the industrial environment.

In first place, VR technologies try to provide realistic representations of real world, so they are shown as a cheaper solution to currently training based on real mock-up models. In second place, the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) has become generalized in the industrial environment last years. This implies that 3D models are available and so, a lot of work is ready in order to build VR environments. Finally, 3D representation of the model and interactivity with it seems to be a more natural learning media than plain documents, blueprints or fixed videos, making interaction between the student and the model richer (Oliveira et al., 2007).

VR technologies involve several knowledge fields, allowing different levels of implementations which fit to different user requirements. So, VR systems can run on a VR stereoscopic cave with a haptic interface or can be run in a simple desktop computer driven by a mouse. It all depends on the intended actions to be carried out. Independently of the chosen environment, which will determine the level of user immersion in the system, the interaction and simulation of the models is a very powerful tool from early design stages to final customer training systems. Note that these last features of VR systems, interactivity and simulation, are what make them different from directly using the CAD tools. There is a third feature of VR systems to take into account: simplicity. A VR tool, within the context stated above, must be very simple and usable by non-special trained personnel. By the fact of being working with a realistic model and using an intuitive interface (just the user hands) the user has the sensation of being almost in the real world (Oliveira et al., 2007).

1.3 Problem Statement

Upstream oil and gas is the segment of the petroleum industry that finds and extracts crude oil and natural gas via a network of wells and pumps. Some of the major challenges to this industry are the inefficiencies and equipment failures that occur when wells are operated in a less than optimal way as well as the production that is temporarily stalled as parts and equipment fail and await repair. Turbochargers are easily defected in short time interval of time

because Turbochargers have a high infant mortality rate, meaning they often fail early in their functional lives. This is primarily due to dirt and foreign contamination left in the chambers after rebuild or installation.

Turbochargers is easily defected in short time interval of time due to excessive boost pressure, increased exhaust gas temperature that can affect the turbocharger in a number of ways, including problems with efficiencies, oil leaks, carbonization of oil within the turbo and exhaust gas leaks from the turbo, so they need to be maintained four times a year. The preventive and corrective maintenance schedules of turbocharger include removing the bearing parts manually which involves high-risk tasks; accidents involving high temperature parts maintenance can be lethal. A study conduct by Pantelidis (2010), stated that 20 – 25 % (Gavish et al., 2015) of mistakes made by the learner or trainee using the real thing could be devastating and demoralizing to the learner, harmful to the environment, capable of causing unintended property damage, capable of causing damage to equipment, and could be costly.

The replacement of turbocharger parts requires four to six highly skilled technicians which can be costly. Furthermore, the effects of unplanned shutdowns or changes to schedules can have a profound impact not only on the company operating the facility but also on the wider economy. In case of power loss in pipeline due to turbocharger shut down, pipeline station become out of control and will suffer risk of production loss (Islam et al., 2017).

Due to the rapidly changing technology used in the oil industry, providing adequate training programs to enhance employees' capabilities to handle day-to-day activities plays an essential role in the entire energy sector. According to a recent survey conducted by Society of Petroleum Engineers, the majority of the survey's participants indicated that appropriate training was critical to employees' development. In particular, approximately 60 percent of the respondents indicated that technical training is the most vital training needed in the oil and gas industry, followed by management/finance training, and soft-skills development training. As a result, oil companies have increased the percentage of their budget spent on training and development programs in order to retain and reward most qualified employees (SPE Research, 2012). For example, in 2012, ExxonMobil spent \$88 million to train its 76,000 employees, a 10 percent increase from 2011. Going forward, oil companies are expected to continue to increase spending related to training programs in order to enhance employees' operational and business skills (Exxonmobil, 2012).

Interactive 3D technology is a flexible way to represent and experience safely complex, potentially hazardous processes or environments regardless of the geography or industry. With VR technology, engineers are able to analyze risky scenarios and minimize potential incident-prone areas, with safe virtual environments; the ability to make and learn from mistakes while performing complicated procedures and instructions is a hallmark of the way to designs

training and educational solutions. A safety application was developed by i3D for Oil and Gas industry. This 'learning by doing' approach, a user can quickly identify a problem, ask questions, or receive just-in-time mentoring about any consequences of his actions (Kozlak et al., 2013). The objective of all operators training is to improve a skill set as rapidly and effectively as possible. The realism associated with Virtual Reality training greatly accelerates learning and skill acquisition (Banaszek et al., 2017).

1.4 Research Objective

The overall objective of this work is to design a virtual reality system to assist technicians in inspection process to be more organized and to speed up the overall process of an inspection.

The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the component which cause less efficiency in mobile plant workshop.
2. To develop a virtual reality training system for workshop maintenance.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of virtual reality training for turbo charger maintenance in oil and gas industry compared to normal training courses.

1.5 Significance of Study

As oil and gas companies continue striving to find better ways to meet a growing demand for clean, reliable, and affordable energy, virtual reality and 3D visualization provides a path to success. Oil and gas companies are leading the way in creating virtual decision-making centres including collaborative team rooms, integrated operations centres, and advanced training facilities designed to enable new ways to discover, collaborate, and share information. Leveraging advanced visualization technology ensures:

- Streamlined operations and reduced costs
- More precise and accurate placement of drill sites
- Consistent training and safety procedures

By considering safety in every action, oil and gas companies see positive impacts in cost savings, increased retention, and a positive public opinion. However, ensuring consistent training requirements can be challenging to maintain among changing oil and gas technicians, expensive training exercises, and disruptions to everyday on-site work. Virtual reality and 3D simulations allow employees to be trained safely off-site without disrupting normal work routines in consistent and safe environments. This translates to enormous cost savings, improved accuracy, and reduced risk.

1.6 Scope of Work

The overall research is done at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in which to analyze the important parts that affecting the production line in oil and gas industry. Main problem in turbo machinery work plant that has been identified as turbocharger thus the scope of works are focused on the development of turbocharger parts. Turbochargers are used in transportation and energy production to improve overall engine performance. Turbochargers work as a high-performance, and low-cost energy recovery solution for low-pressure systems that reduces the required boost to high-pressure pumps thereby minimizing energy consumption. After the main problem has been identified, the Virtual Reality (VR) application development is been done by using 3D modelling software, animation software and Unity platform software. In addition, as industrial compressors they play an important role in the oil and gas industry. Lastly experiments are done to evaluate the effectiveness and acceptance level of virtual reality turbocharger maintenance training in oil and gas compared to normal conventional turbocharger maintenance training.

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Journal

Shammar, M., & Aziz, F. A. (2018). Virtual Reality Application in Oil and Gas Industry. *Journal of Fundamental and Applied Sciences*, 10(5s), 746-752.

Aziz, F. A., Alshammar, M., & Ariffin, M. K. A. (2018). Using Virtual Reality for Equipment Maintenance in Oil and Gas Industry. *Journal of Computational and Theoretical Nanoscience*, 15(4), 1090-1094.

Conference

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