Linear Genome Methodology for Analog Circuit Design

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Abstract

This paper describes a set of specialized GA methods for the analog circuit design, i.e., the component-list chromosome, the multi-staged evolution, and the size reducing pressure. In the several experiments, these methods have shown to achieve the robustness, the efficiency in time and the hardware consumption.

1 INTRODUCTION*

The purpose of this paper is to propose a set of GA methods in designing an analog circuit. This includes component-list chromosome, multi-staged evolution, and size reducing pressure. These methods are tested and evaluated through a set of simulated experiments.

There have been a few representation schemes proposed for analog electric circuit. This includes a matrix representation by Kitamura et al.[6] and a linear circuit-creating program by Lohn et al.[13]. There is also a major study of the circuit design using Genetic Programming, in which Koza et al. has generated circuit synthesis programs for various useful circuits [4].

The analog circuit synthesis is a subject in which the Evolvable Hardware is very useful. Hence the robustness of EHW system can compensate for the analog circuit's fragility to extrinsic environment. Murakawa et al. has developed an EHW chip for IF filter. In that study, the delicate tuning of component parameter resulted in significant increase in the yield rate [8].

Based upon these previous approaches, we propose the methods below for an analog circuit EHW system.

- List representation for analog circuit
- Multi-staged evolution
- Size-reducing pressure

We have conducted the following experiments to verify the efficacy of these methods:

- Noise and error absorption
- Comparison to other representation schemes
- Division of topology and parameter evolution
- Circuit pressurization

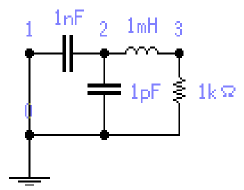
* The details of this paper is to be presented at CEC2000

2 GA ARCHITECHTURE

This section describes the details of the GA system we have used for implementing our methods and conducting the experiments.

2.1 CIRCUIT REPRESENTATION SCHEME

The circuits are coded into genes of analog components. A phenotype and the corresponding genotype are shown in Fig. 1.



N,0,1,0	C,1,2,1nF	R,0,3,1kΩ	L,2,3,1mH	C,0,2,1pF

Figure 1: Representation Scheme

2.2 FITNESS DEFINITION

Each individual is evaluated on the deviation between the ideal and actual response by frequency. The fitness function is defined as below.

$$fitness = \frac{1}{K}\sum_{f}^{K}\left|F_f - R_f\right|^2$$

This fitness is the mean of squared deviation between ideal gain F_f and obtained gain R_f at frequency f. The chromosomes with lower fitness are selected to reproduce according to the roulette wheel selection. We also used Evolutionary Strategy breeding of (μ+?)-ES.

2.3 MULTI-STAGED EVOLUTION

The Genetic Algorithms features the strong global search and quick convergence to a quasi-optimal solution. On the other hand, the stochastic search of GA can be inefficient from the quasi-optimal to the optimal solution.

Evolving an electric circuit from the scratch requires two different tasks, i.e., finding the rough layout of the circuit and adjusting precisely to the specification. The first task requires efficient topology search and the second requires fine-tuning of the parameters.

Though both the structure and parameters of the components are configurable in our component-list representation, it is inefficient to evolve them simultaneously.

At the earlier stage of the evolution, the parameter adjustment has relatively smaller affect on the circuit response and is less important compared to the topology alternation. Meanwhile, at the final stage of the evolution where a precise adjustment is required, modifying the topology changes the response so drastically that it may degrade the search. Thus, we have divided the evolution into two stages. At the first stage, the main objective is to acquire a proper topology and parameters will be fixed to pre-settled values. At the second stage, the objective is to realize a precise specification using the acquired layout as a fixed structure.

At the first stage or the structural stage, chromosomes shown in Fig.1 are used. At the second stage, or the parameter stage, arrays of s_i values are used as our chromosomes. The value of component s_i is adjusted according to eq.2. The s_i's are real numbers ranging from 1 to -1. Range of modification is kept small for the applicability in reconfigurable analog components of EHW.

$$Adjval = Val \times 10^{s_i}$$

Limiting the variables at each stage also results in better fitness, faster convergence, and less memory consumption. Section 5.2 describes the experimental results using this method.

2.4 PRESSURIZING CIRCUIT SIZE

One of the problems in Genetic Programming and GA with variable-length chromosome is the development of introns. At a certain point in the evolution, introns bloat up to huge amount and make the search awfully inefficient. Details on the effect of introns are described in [7].

In electric circuits, they appear as a set of components connected to the ground or a node. These introns are fatal to EHW application because it results in consuming a large amount of hardware resources.

There can be several measures to eliminate the introns. A method of multi-criteria evolution is used for the digital circuit evolution by Kalganova[5]. We have chosen to simply put a selective pressure on the circuit size. The fitness is adjusted as shown in eq.3, where *E* is the evaluation of the response and *P* is the penalty for the circuit size. *P* is defined as shown in eq.4, where *N* is the number of components in the circuit and represents the size factor, and *T* is the modulus to control the intensity of the pressure.

$$fitness = E + P$$

$$P = N \cdot T$$

Since introns have no effect on the circuit response, circuits with introns are subject to the elimination by the size factor.

This selective pressure can be impeditive to GA search when applied too excessively or too early. Eliminating introns too much causes crossover operation to be semantically destructive, and there are also dangers of abandoning diversity and deleting useful schema at the early stage of the evolution.

The intensity of the pressure is controlled using the modulus T, by properly setting the order of P and E in eq.3. At the early stage of evolution, the term E should be predominant. As the evolution proceeds and the value of *E* decreases, the selective pressure *P* should gain influence. Therefore unnecessary large circuits are eliminated or modified to the proper size.

A larger *T* value results in less accuracy because the large *P* overwhelms the small differences. Thus, the *T* has to be set according to the priority of the circuit size and required accuracy. We have used an empirical value for the following experiments described in section 7.

3 EXPERIMENTS

The following experiments are conducted using one or more of the methods described above.

4 ROBUST DESIGN OF ANALOG CIRCUIT

The design methods for various passive filters are well established. Yet, analog filters used in many devices are hard to manufacture. As we mentioned before, this is because the components' values vary from the one specified in the designing process.

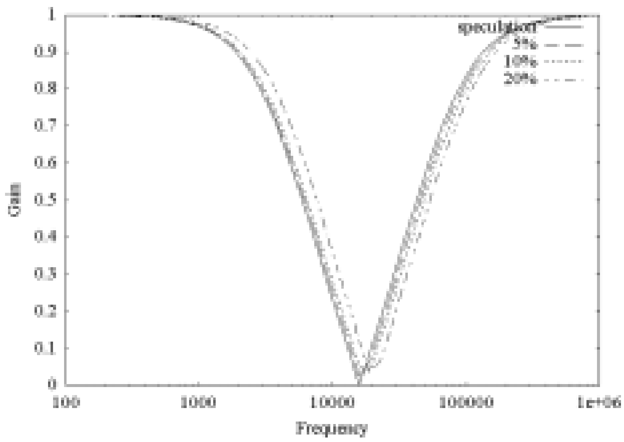


Figure 2: Ideal and Actual Response of the Band Elimination Filter

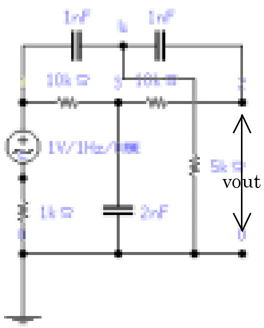


Figure 3: Band Elimination Circuit Design

The solid line in Fig. 2 shows the response of a band-eliminator filter designed as Fig. 3. However, when the circuit is manufactured from real components, because the components' values differ from the specification, the response would not be identical to the solid line.

Actual analog components like resistors and capacitors could contain errors up to 20% of the specified value. The dotted and broken lines in Fig. 2 show the response when each component in circuit of Fig. 3 randomly contained errors within 20%, 10%, and 5% of the designed values, respectively.

The difference caused by these errors is fatal in manufacturing precise analog devices. Therefore, we conducted a filter synthesis experiment under such a condition that components' values are not exactly as specified. This is to show how Evolutionary Analog Circuit can accommodate with preliminary errors.

4.1 SPECIFICATION AND RESULTS

The goal response is the band eliminating response shown as a solid line in Fig. 2. The central frequency of the stop band is 16kHz. The components used to compose this circuit are shown in Table 3

Table 1: Fitness of Band Elimination Filter

Noise	Sample circuit	200th generation	400th generation
5%	0.000242971	1.73174e-05	2.53538e-08
10%	0.00121551	1.54782e-05	1.48567e-07
20%	0.00521907	2.17895e-05	1.35741e-07

In EHW, the circuit is evaluated and modified based on its whole response, and not by the value of each component. Thus, the errors of the components are absorbed through the modification of topology and parameter applied to the components as a whole.

5 COMPARISON WITH OTHER REPRESENTATION SCHEMES

In this section, we show several filter syntheses using list chromosomes along with other representation schemes. To compare the results, we used the similar objective function and GA parameters.

5.1 SPECIFICATION

The experiment described here is based on "Synthesis of an Asymmetric Bandpass Filter" in Chap.31 of [4].

The objective is to acquire an asymmetric bandpass filter, which is difficult to design because of its stringent and highly asymmetric specification [4].

The ideal and allowable characteristics are defined as shown in Fig.4. The solid line labeled *ideal* indicates the bounds of ideal characteristics and the broken line labeled *allowable* indicates the allowable range. The circuit behavior is observed at 101 frequencies in the interval between 10kHz and 200kHz in equal increments on a logarithm scale. The fitness is defined as in eq.5

$$F = \sum_{0}^{100} \left[W_i \left(d\left(f_i \right) \right) \cdot d\left(f_i \right) \right]$$

Weight W_i is calculated from the difference between the response and the goal response at each observation point. The fitness is derived from the total product of the weight W_i and the difference d. W_i in the pass-band is 10 if allowable, 100 if else. In the stop-band, W_i is set to 1 if allowable, 10 if not. Detailed description is found in [4]. The GA parameters are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: GA Parameters

	Population	Generation	Crossover rate	Mutation rate
List	2000	400	0.99	0.001
GP**[4]**	640000	200	0.9	0.01

5.2 RESULT

The acquired response is shown in Fig. 4. The best response at the 400th generation is shown by the broken line labeled acquired. The dotted line labeled as GP indicates the response of the circuit obtained in [4].

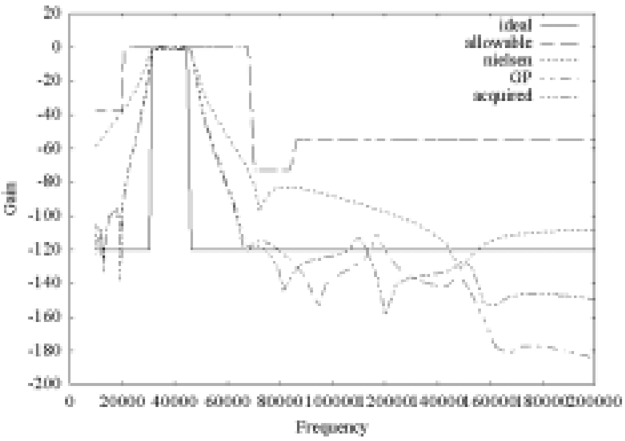


Figure 4: Acquired Asymmetric Bandpass Filter Response

The fitness of the best individuals was 2037.47 with the *acquired* and 2024.0 with the *GP*. Meanwhile, the dotted line of the label *Nielson* shows the response of a human designed prototype circuit. As can be seen in Fig. 4, the acquired response satisfies the allowable condition in every region, and obtained better response than the Nielson's heuristic method. In comparison with GP, we were able to obtain very close response at the pass-band, and equally acceptable characteristic in the cut-off region as well.

5.3 SPECIFICATION

Next experiment is conducted according to [6]. The objective is to acquire an ideal low-pass filter shown in Fig. 5. The pass-band ranges from 1Hz to 1300Hz and the stop-band is from 1300Hz to 100kHz, thus the cut-off frequency is 1300Hz.

The fitness is defined as given in eq.6. $d(f_i)$ is the difference between the goal gain $V_{goal}(f_i)$ and the actual gain $V_{out}(fi)$ at $F+1$ sample frequencies defined as eq.7. The weighted function W is defined by eq.8. The value of W_θ is set to 0.02 in this experiment. For details refer to [6].

$$Fitness = \sum_{i=0}^{F} W(d(f_i), f_i) \cdot d(f_i)$$

$$d(f_i) = \left| V_{goal}(f_i) - V_{out}(f_i) \right|$$

$$W(d(f_i), f_i) = \begin{cases} 1 & for \quad d(f_i) \le W_\theta \\ 10 & for \quad d(f_i) > W_\theta \end{cases}$$

$V_{goal}(fi)$ is 1V in the pass-band and 0V in the stop-band. Fitness was calculated from the total of 78 sample frequencies, i.e., 50 from the pass-band and 28 from stop-band. We used a population of 500 individuals, and 200 generations for each run as in [6]. Crossover ratio, mutation ratio, and replacement ratio are the same as shown in Table 2.

5.4 RESULT

The broken line in Fig. 5 shows the response of the best individual at 200th generation. The deviation from the specification remained within W_θ (=0.02V), and its fitness was 1.97615 while the fitness of the best individual obtained in [6] was 2.278. The phenotype of the best individual is shown in Fig. 6.

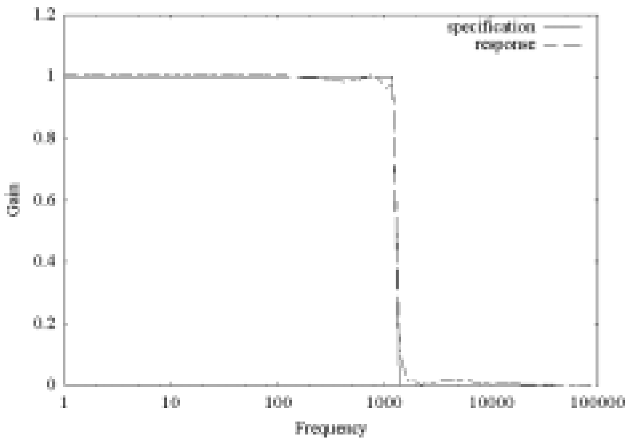


Figure 5: Specification and Acquired Response of Ideal Lowpass Filter

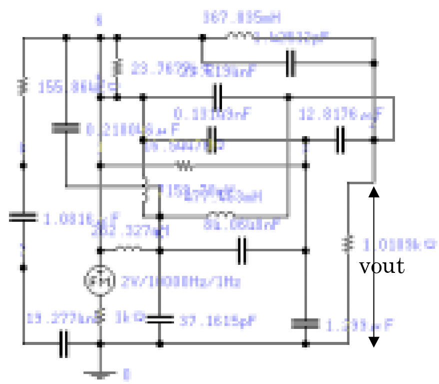


Figure 6: Acquired Lowpass Filter Circuit

6 MULTI-STAGE EVOLUTION

The experiment in this section shows the effect of dividing the evolution into the structural and parameter stages.

6.1 SPECIFICATION

The target response is an ideal high-pass filter depicted as a solid line in Fig. 7. The cut-off frequency is at 30kHz, and 14 observation points were taken at an interval of a geometric ratio ranging from 100kHz to 1MHz. In the structure evolution phase, the settled values were used as shown in Fig. 7. GA parameters are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Circuit Components Specification

Element type	Values
Resistances	10kΩ,1MΩ
Condensers	1nF,1pF
Coils	100 μ H,10mH

6.2 RESULT

Fig. 8 shows the fitness of the best individual in each generation. This fitness is averaged over 3 runs. The broken line labeled *single step* denotes one-stage evolution, in which the topology and the parameters were simultaneously evolved. And dotted line labeled *2step* indicates that of the multi-stage evolution. The arrow shows where the parameter evolution started. The responses acquired by two methods are shown in Fig. 7.

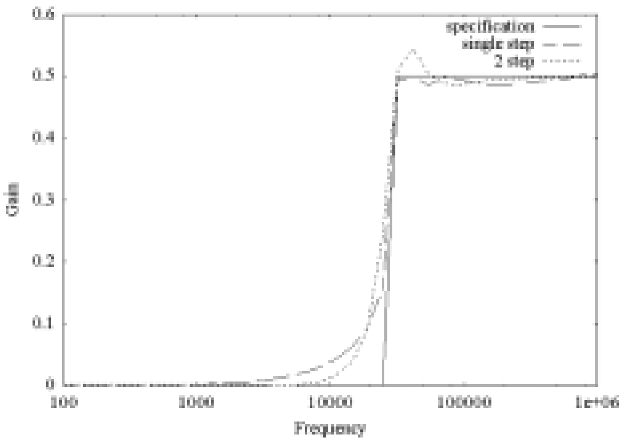


Figure 7: Specification and Acquired Response of High-pass Filter

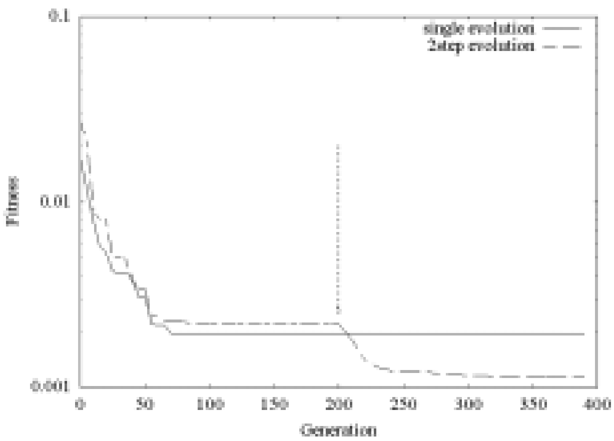


Fig. 8:Fitness by Generation for Highpass Filter Evolution

The response of the single-step evolution is given as the broken line labeled *single step*, whereas that of the two-stage evolution is provided by the dotted line labled as *2 step*. The achieved fitness was 0.00113213 for the multi-stage and 0.001955815 for the one-stage. It is perceived from Fig. 8 that while the simultaneous evolution converged after 100 generations, the multi-stage evolution resumed the search by entering the parameter evolution.

7 SELECTIVE PRESSURE ON THE CIRCUIT SIZE

7.1 SPECIFICATION

We have simulated a circuit evolution using the selective pressure described in section 2.4. The objective response is the bandpass filter shown in Fig. 9.

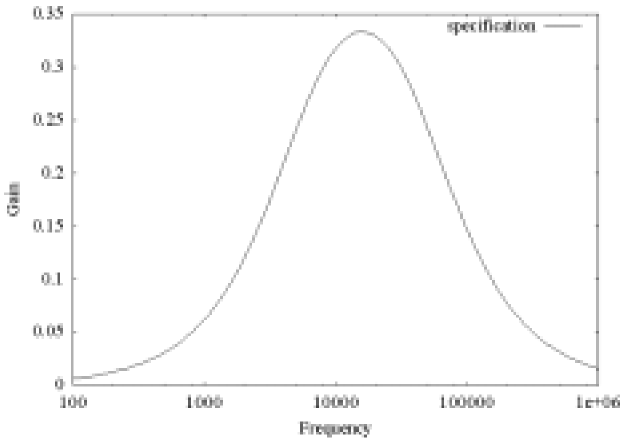


Fig. 9:Objective Bandpass Filter Response

Fitness definition was adjusted as in eq.3, and *T* modulous was set to be 10^{-6}. We have conducted 5 runs with a population of 500 and 200 genererations. Other parameters followed that of Table 2. Only the topology was modified in the course of evolution as the circuit size was fixed in the parameter evolution.

7.2 RESULT

The responses of the best individuals at the 40th and 150th generations for a typical trial are shown in. The phenotypes are shown in Fig.13 and 14. The fitness value at the final generation was 6.20766e-11. The fitness and circuit size with generations are shown in Fig. 11 and 12.

It can be seen from Fig. 10 that by the 40th generation, the response fullfilled the specification. At generation 40, while the influence of the pressure was inconsiderable, electrical introns were existent as shown in Fig. 13.

However, as the evolution proceeded, those portions were removed as seen in Fig. 14. Fig. 11 and Fig. 12 show that the adaption at the earlier stage of the evolution was done by aquiring the proper circuit and at the later stage, by getting rid of the unnecessary components.

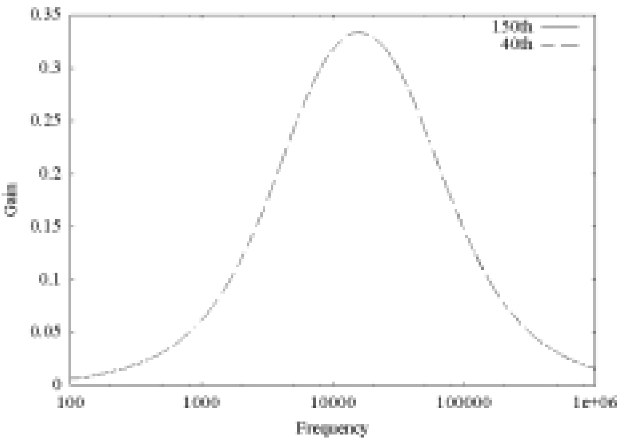


Fig. 10:Response of the Best Individuals at Generations 40 and 150

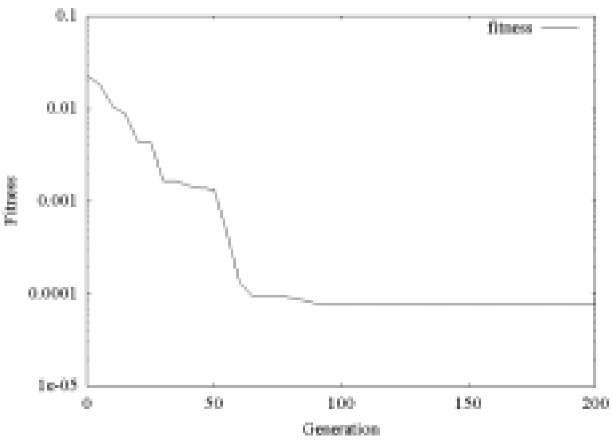


Fig. 11: Fitness by generation

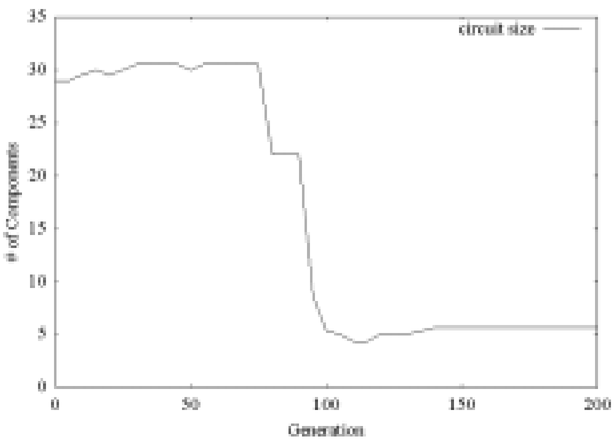


Figure 12: Circuit Size by Generation

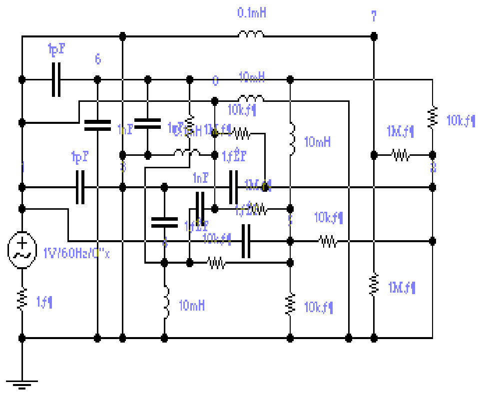


Figure 13: Best Individual at Generation 40

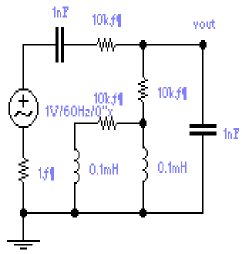


Figure 14: Best Individual at Generation 150

8 CONCLUSIONS

In the experiments we have shown, each of the proposed methods has respectively improved the efficiency in the circuit design. These methods are expected to work independently, but we plan to implement a system integrating all of the methods in the future.

The size reducing pressure has seemed to be effective in generating not only a smaller circuit but also a fitter circuit i.e., circuits with more accurate response. We plan to conduct an experiment to verify that point.

Since the size parameter is a very restricted factor in many existing re-configurable hardware, the size-reducing objective has not been studied as much. But as more elastic hardware develop; we believe that the method should become a major subject for EHW.

We have to note that the list-component genome is a very general circuit representation, and is not directly applicable to various types of the existing EHW hardware. However, proper restrictive settings could easily make this apt for many types of circuit generating systems.

The proposed multi-stage evolution was a specialized method for the analog circuit design. We expect it to be effective in many evolutionary circuit generation. In addition to the former experiment, we are planning pursue the mean fitness increase (or decrease) after crossovers and mutations in each evolutionary stage. The purpose is to compare the efficiency of genetic operations in single-staged evolution and the structural and parameter evolution.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Professor Shinzo Kitamura for providing us with precious and informative materials for the study. We also wish to show our gratitude to the EHW researching group of ETL including Dr.Tetsuya Higuchi, who has give us helpful advice and suggestions.

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