

When a rigid-body rotates (with possibly time-variable orientation and angular velocity) its orientation, angular velocity, angular momentum and moment of inertia tensor are coordinate dependent, and may be given in two distinct frames of reference:

- inertial, space or world frame of reference
- non-inertial, body-fixed or rotational frame of reference

Equation (7.47)

Here, the time derivative of the orientation quaternion is expressed in *inertial* (world) frame of reference as

$$\dot{q} = \frac{dq}{dt} = \mathbf{T}(q) \boldsymbol{\omega} \quad \text{Eq. (7.47)} \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \dot{q} = \frac{1}{2} \omega^{\text{world}} q$$

where $\omega = (0, \boldsymbol{\omega})$ is angular velocity quaternion in world coordinates (inertial frame) and $\mathbf{T}(q)$ is a matrix according to (7.48) that corresponds to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the right side multiplication with quaternion q , i.e. since

$$\begin{pmatrix} w & -x & -y & -z \\ x & w & z & -y \\ y & -z & w & x \\ z & y & -x & w \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \omega w \\ \omega x \\ \omega y \\ \omega z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} w \omega w - x \omega x - y \omega y - z \omega z \\ x \omega w + w \omega x + z \omega y - y \omega z \\ y \omega w - z \omega x + w \omega y + x \omega z \\ z \omega w + y \omega x - x \omega y + w \omega z \end{pmatrix} = \omega q$$

which holds for any two quaternions $\omega = (\omega w, \omega x, \omega y, \omega z)$ and $q = (w, x, y, z)$.

Similarly, the time derivative of the orientation can be expressed in a *body-fixed* frame as

$$\dot{q} = \frac{dq}{dt} = \frac{1}{2} \omega^{\text{world}} q = \frac{1}{2} (q \omega^{\text{body}} q^*) q = \frac{1}{2} q \omega^{\text{body}} \quad \text{i.e.} \quad \dot{q} = \frac{1}{2} q \omega^{\text{body}}$$

Equation (7.56), Euler's equation

This equation is the major source of confusion, since Euler's equation is actually specified in **body-fixed** (non-inertial frame, see [1]), as it follows from the general proposition

$$\left(\frac{d\mathbf{A}}{dt} \right)^{\text{world}} = \left(\frac{d\mathbf{A}}{dt} \right)^{\text{body}} + \boldsymbol{\omega}^{\text{body}} \times \mathbf{A}^{\text{body}}$$

which is valid for any vector \mathbf{A} (also for \mathbf{L} in particular). Thus, Eq. (7.56)

$$\dot{\mathbf{L}} = \mathbf{I} \dot{\boldsymbol{\omega}} + \boldsymbol{\omega} \times (\mathbf{I} \boldsymbol{\omega}) = \boldsymbol{\tau}$$

means

$$\dot{\mathbf{L}}^{\text{world}} = \dot{\mathbf{L}}^{\text{body}} + \boldsymbol{\omega}^{\text{body}} \times \mathbf{L}^{\text{body}} = \boldsymbol{\tau}^{\text{world}}$$

i.e.

$$\dot{\mathbf{L}}^{\text{body}} = \boldsymbol{\tau}^{\text{world}} - \boldsymbol{\omega}^{\text{body}} \times (\mathbf{I}^{\text{body}} \boldsymbol{\omega}^{\text{body}})$$

where $\mathbf{I}^{\text{body}} = \mathbf{I}'$ is principal moment of inertia, which is *constant* in the body-fixed frame.

To make all this more clear, different flavors of the algorithm for rigid body motion in 3D are summarized in the following table, depending whether $\boldsymbol{\omega}$, \mathbf{L} or \mathbf{I} are specified in the world or the body-fixed reference frame, and whether gyroscopic effect is accounted for (included) or ignored (ignored as to increase stability of the algorithm for low-order integrator methods).

Inertial (space or world) frame		Body-fixed (rotational) frame	
with gyroscopic effect included	with gyroscopic effect ignored	with gyroscopic effect included	with gyroscopic effect ignored
<i>Linear part (specified always in inertial frame since attached to barycenter that does not rotate):</i>			
$\mathbf{p}_{n+1} = \mathbf{p}_n + h \mathbf{f}_n$ and $\mathbf{x}_{n+1} = \mathbf{x}_n + h \mathbf{v}_{n+1}$ where the velocity is derived quantity $\mathbf{v}_n = m^{-1} \mathbf{p}_n$			
<i>Angular part (frame dependent):</i>			
$\mathbf{L}_{n+1} = \mathbf{L}_n + h \boldsymbol{\tau}_n$	$\mathbf{L}_{n+1} = \mathbf{L}_n + h (\boldsymbol{\tau}_n + \boldsymbol{\omega}_n \times \mathbf{L}_n)$	$\mathbf{L}_{n+1} = \mathbf{L}_n + h (\boldsymbol{\tau}'_n - \boldsymbol{\omega}_n \times \mathbf{L}_n)$	$\mathbf{L}_{n+1} = \mathbf{L}_n + h \boldsymbol{\tau}'_n$
$\dot{q}_{n+1} = \frac{1}{2} \omega_{n+1} q_n$ where $\omega_{n+1} = (0, \boldsymbol{\omega}_{n+1})$		$\dot{q}_{n+1} = \frac{1}{2} q_n \omega_{n+1}$ where $\omega_{n+1} = (0, \boldsymbol{\omega}_{n+1})$	
$q_{n+1} = q_n + h \dot{q}_{n+1}$			
$\boldsymbol{\tau}_n$ is in inertial frame		$\boldsymbol{\tau}'_n$ in body-fixed frame is $\boldsymbol{\tau}'_n = q^* \boldsymbol{\tau}_n q$	
<i>Derived quantities:</i>			
$\boldsymbol{\omega}_n = \mathbf{I}_n^{-1} \mathbf{L}_n$		$\boldsymbol{\omega}_n = \mathbf{I}_n^{-1} \mathbf{L}_n$	
$\mathbf{I}_n^{-1} = \mathbf{R}(q_n) \mathbf{I}_n'^{-1} \mathbf{R}(q_n)^T$		$\mathbf{I}_n^{-1} = \mathbf{I}_n'^{-1} = const$	
$E_n^k = \frac{1}{2} m^{-1} \mathbf{p}_n^2 + \frac{1}{2} \mathbf{I}_n^{-1} \mathbf{L}_n^2$			
<i>Notes:</i> To transform any vector \mathbf{x}' from body-fixed frame to \mathbf{x} in inertial frame do $\mathbf{x} = q \mathbf{x}' q^*$. E.g. the relation between the total torque $\boldsymbol{\tau}_n$ in inertial frame and $\boldsymbol{\tau}'_n$ in body-frame is $\boldsymbol{\tau}_n = q \boldsymbol{\tau}'_n q^*$. Note also that the orientation quaternion q is the same in both frames of reference, since $q = q q q^*$.			

References:

- [1] Taylor, John R. – *Classical Mechanics*, University Science Books, 2005, pp. 394-396
- [2] Severin, M. – *Notes on Discrete Mechanics*, April 18, 2011