

Study of the Flagellar Movement in Biology with Applications in MEMS and Micro Robotics

Constantin, Alexandru (School: Tudor Vianu National High School of Computer Science)

Euglena viridis is a protist with an elongated, navicular body, sharpened at both ends. One end is extended with a long and thin flagellum. The root of the flagellum is bifurcated and each branch ends with a small, round corpuscle, called the basal corpus. This is the center of the movement, where the motion begins. *Euglena* moves actively and very efficiently at micro-scale at speeds from 20 up to 60 $\mu\text{m} / \text{s}$. This specific locomotion is due to the progressive wave like movement of the flagellum. In order to achieve similar movement I proposed three types of synthetic fibrils and after a comparative evaluation of different types of actuators, I started prototyping first models using DC micro vibration motors (up to 24000 rpm) and a copper lamel structure to mimic the flagellum. A few prototypes manifested potential into achieving high speeds and low power consumption with this non-conventional type of movement. The practical applications for this type of robot may vary from small maintenance systems for lakes and ponds to microtunnels.

Awards Won:

