



Dynamic Power State Estimation with Asynchronous Measurements

Preprint

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Dynamic Power Network State Estimation with Asynchronous Measurements

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Abstract—The operation of distribution networks is becoming increasingly volatile, due to fast variations of renewables and, hence, net-loading conditions. To perform a reliable state estimation under these conditions, this paper considers the case where measurements from meters, phasor measurement units, and distributed energy resources are collected and processed in real time to produce estimates of the state at a fast time scale. Streams of measurements collected in real time and at heterogeneous rates render the underlying processing asynchronous, and poses severe strains on workhorse state estimation algorithms. In this work, a real-time state estimation algorithm is proposed, where data are processed on the fly. Starting from a regularized least-squares model, and leveraging appropriate linear models, the proposed scheme boils down to a linear dynamical system where the state is updated based on the previous estimate and on the measurement gathered from a few available sensors. The estimation error is shown to be always bounded under mild condition. Numerical simulations are provided to corroborate the analytical findings.

I. INTRODUCTION

The integration of renewables, electric vehicles, and other power-electronics-interfaced distributed energy resources (DERs) are leading to net-loading conditions in distribution network that are less predictable and highly variable [1]. In these conditions, recent efforts are looking at revisiting Distribution System State Estimation (DSSE) – a fundamental task for distribution systems operators (DSOs) – to provide estimates of the state at faster time scales. Examples of DSSE include the Bayesian linear state estimator [2] and approaches based on Kalman filtering (suitable for the when a dynamical model of the network is available) [3], [4]. Current industrial and utility practices rely on approaches that produce state estimates at the minute scale (or even every 15 minutes). However, measurements from meters, phasor measurement units (PMUs) [5], [6], and distributed energy resources (DERs) could in principle be processed in real time to produce estimates at a faster time scale. Towards this end, a challenge is

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related to the fact that measurements provided by these devices are generally not synchronized and the difference between measurement times can be significant [7], [8]; moreover, due to the limited available bandwidth, sensors do not transmit data to the DSO all at the same time; rather, data are gathered *asynchronously*. As a consequence, the number of measurements is smaller than the number of state variables at every time step, and hence traditional state estimation algorithms cannot be straightforwardly applied. One possible strategy is to treat synchronization errors as an additional source of uncertainty and errors [9]. In [8], the measurement variances are adjusted based on the idea that measurements become less reliable as time passes, presuming that load variations can be modeled as Gaussian random variables. A robust Kalman Filter approach able to deal with bad data has been proposed in [4], [10].

To handle asynchronous measurements effectively, this paper proposes a real-time algorithm that, by leveraging a linearized distribution grid model, updates the distribution grid state estimate iteratively processing measurements as they come in. In the proposed strategy, the new estimate is computed as the solution of a strictly convex optimization problem, aiming at minimizing the sum of a weighted least square term capturing the new data and a regularizer that introduces “memory” on the estimate; this momentum term is critical for our scheme to ensure a consistent estimate even in the presence of asynchronous measurements. It turns out that the state estimate follows a standard dynamical linear system, having as an input the measurements gathered by the DSO. The estimation error is shown to be in general always finite and upper bounded when the measurement noise and the grid state variability are limited. A similar approach was adopted in [11], where a *prediction-correction* method is applied to DSSE. The scheme proposed here does not require a prediction step and can handle asynchronous measurements.

Notation. lower- (upper-) case boldface letters denote vectors (matrices). Calligraphic symbols are reserved for sets. Vectors \mathbf{e}_m , $\mathbf{1}$, and $\mathbf{0}$ are the m -th canonical vector, the all-one vectors, and the all-zero vector of suitable dimension. Matrices \mathbf{I}_N and $\mathbf{0}_N$ represent the identity matrix and the square matrix whose entries are all zero of dimension N . Given a vector \mathbf{x} , $\|\mathbf{x}\|$ denotes the ℓ_2 -norm and $\text{dg}(\mathbf{x})$ the matrix whose diagonal is \mathbf{x} ; given a symmetric positive-definite matrix \mathbf{R} , $\|\mathbf{x}\|_{\mathbf{R}-1}^2$ is the weighted squared norm $\mathbf{x}^\top \mathbf{R}^{-1} \mathbf{x}$. Given a set of matrices

$\{\mathbf{X}_i\}_{i=1}^T$, $\text{bdg}(\{\mathbf{X}_i\}_{i=1}^T)$ is the block diagonal matrix having the \mathbf{X}_i 's as blocks in the diagonal. The eigenvalues of a matrix \mathbf{X} are collected in the set $\text{eig}(\mathbf{X})$.

II. DISTRIBUTION NETWORK MODEL

A radial power distribution grid having $N + 1$ buses can be modeled by a graph $\mathcal{G}_o = (\mathcal{N}, \mathcal{L})$. Nodes in $\mathcal{N} := \{0, \dots, N\}$ represent grid buses, and the edges in \mathcal{L} correspond to the L distribution lines. The active and the reactive power injection at bus n are denoted by p_n and q_n , while its voltage magnitude and its voltage phase as v_n and θ_n . The substation bus is indexed by $n = 0$ and it is modeled as a *slack bus* whose voltage is fixed at $v_0 = 1$ and $\theta_0 = 0$. Every other bus n is modeled as a constant power or P-Q bus. Powers corresponding to loads (generators) are such that $p_n \leq 0$ ($p_n \geq 0$). The voltage magnitudes, voltage angles and power injections at all buses excluding the substation are collected in the vectors $\mathbf{v}, \boldsymbol{\theta}, \mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q} \in \mathbb{R}^N$. Let $r_\ell + ix_\ell$ be the impedance of line ℓ , and collect all the impedances in vector $\mathbf{r} + ix$. The grid connectivity is captured by the branch-bus incidence matrix $\tilde{\mathbf{A}} \in \{0, \pm 1\}^{L \times (N+1)}$ that can be partitioned into its first and the rest of its columns as $\tilde{\mathbf{A}} = [\mathbf{a}_0 \ \mathbf{A}]$. The *reduced bus admittance matrix* $\mathbf{Y} \in \mathbb{C}^{N \times N}$ is defined as $\mathbf{Y} := \mathbf{A}^\top \text{dg}(\mathbf{r} + ix)^{-1} \mathbf{A}$; \mathbf{Y} is symmetric, positive semi-definite and, if the network is connected, invertible. Power injections are non-linearly related to nodal voltage phasors; however, after linearizing complex power injections around the flat voltage profile $\mathbf{1} + j\mathbf{0}$, the bus voltage deviations $\tilde{\mathbf{v}} := \mathbf{v} - \mathbf{1}$ and the bus voltage angles can be approximated by [12]

$$\begin{bmatrix} \tilde{\mathbf{v}} \\ \boldsymbol{\theta} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R} & \mathbf{X} \\ \mathbf{X} & -\mathbf{R} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{p} \\ \mathbf{q} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

where $\mathbf{R} := (\text{real}(\mathbf{Y}))^{-1}$, $\mathbf{X} := (\text{imag}(\mathbf{Y}))^{-1}$. Trivially, from (1) it follows that

$$\begin{bmatrix} \tilde{\mathbf{v}} \\ \boldsymbol{\theta} \\ \mathbf{p} \\ \mathbf{q} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{R} & \mathbf{X} \\ \mathbf{X} & -\mathbf{R} \\ \mathbf{I}_N & \mathbf{0}_N \\ \mathbf{0}_N & \mathbf{I}_N \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{p} \\ \mathbf{q} \end{bmatrix} = \boldsymbol{\Phi} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{p} \\ \mathbf{q} \end{bmatrix}. \quad (2)$$

where we introduced the matrix $\boldsymbol{\Phi} \in \mathbb{R}^{4N \times 2N}$.

In our work, we assume that two kinds of metering devices are used: conventional smart meters, able to measure power injections and voltage magnitudes, and PMUs, able to measure power injections and both voltage magnitudes and angles. Buses endowed with smart meters are collected in the set \mathcal{M}_{SM} , while buses endowed with PMUs in the set \mathcal{M}_{PMU} . Let $\{t_k\}_{k \geq 1}$ be the times at which the DSO receives field data. Precisely, at time t_k , the DSO gathers measurements from a subset of buses, collected in the set $\mathcal{S}(k)$. Without loss of generality, we assume that, at each time t_k , measurements from S buses are retrieved and stacked in the vector $\mathbf{y}(k)$, i.e., $\mathcal{S}(k) = \{s_1(k), \dots, s_S(k)\}$. Then,

$$\mathbf{y}(k) = \mathbf{S}(k) [\tilde{\mathbf{v}}^\top(k) \ \boldsymbol{\theta}^\top(k) \ \mathbf{p}^\top(k) \ \mathbf{q}^\top(k)]^\top + \mathbf{n}(k) \quad (3)$$

where $\mathbf{n}(k)$ represents measurement noise and where $\mathbf{S}(k)$ is a selection matrix that picks from the vector

$[\tilde{\mathbf{v}}^\top(k) \ \boldsymbol{\theta}^\top(k) \ \mathbf{p}^\top(k) \ \mathbf{q}^\top(k)]^\top$ the quantities measured at time t_k . Matrix $\mathbf{S}(k)$ can be written as

$$\mathbf{S}(k) = [\mathbf{S}_{s_1}^\top \ \dots \ \mathbf{S}_{s_S}^\top]^\top$$

where every \mathbf{S}_{s_n} can be defined in two ways:

- if $s_n \in \mathcal{M}_{SM}$, then $\mathbf{S}_{s_n} \in \{0, 1\}^{3 \times 4N}$

$$\mathbf{S}_{s_n} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top \\ \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top \\ \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top \end{bmatrix} \quad (4)$$

- if $s_n \in \mathcal{M}_{PMU}$, then $\mathbf{S}_{s_n} \in \{0, 1\}^{4 \times 4N}$

$$\mathbf{S}_{s_n} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top \\ \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top \\ \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top \\ \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{0}^\top & \mathbf{e}_{s_n}^\top \end{bmatrix} \quad (5)$$

Denote the size of $\mathbf{y}(k)$, i.e., the number of measurements that arrive at every time, as M_k . The value of M_k varies as a function of the type of reporting metering devices. For instance, if at time t_k the DSO gathers measurements from C buses in \mathcal{M}_{SM} and from $S - C$ buses in \mathcal{M}_{PMU} , then $M_k = 3C + 4(S - C)$. In a synchronous setting, $\mathbf{S}(k)$ would be constant over time. Finally, the measurement noise $\mathbf{n}(k)$ is assumed to be zero-mean with diagonal covariance \mathbf{N}_k .

III. A DSSE ALGORITHM

In this section, we devise an algorithm aiming at estimate the state of the grid exploiting the measurements gathered from S buses. Nodal power injections constitute the state of the grid, described by the vector $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^{2N}$, $\mathbf{x} := [\mathbf{p}^\top \ \mathbf{q}^\top]^\top$. Let the state of the network at time t_k be denoted as $\mathbf{x}(k)$. By combining (2) with (3), we obtain the following linear measurement model

$$\mathbf{y}(k) = \mathbf{S}(k) \boldsymbol{\Phi} \mathbf{x}(k) + \mathbf{n}(k). \quad (6)$$

Recall that measurements are processed as they come in, and that $\mathbf{y}(k)$ carries information of a limited number of buses. We make the following assumption on measurements acquisition.

Assumption 1. *There exists a constant $\tau > 0$ such that the DSO gathers measurements from every bus n at least once in the interval $[t_k, t_{k+1}, \dots, t_{k+\tau}]$, for every $k = 1, 2, \dots$*

Denote by $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)$ the estimate of the grid state at time t_k . The DSO update the state estimate after the new set of measurement $\mathbf{y}(k)$ arrives. Precisely, the new estimate is chosen as the solution of the optimization problem

$$\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k) = \arg \min_{\mathbf{w}} \|\mathbf{y}(k) - \mathbf{S}(k) \boldsymbol{\Phi} \mathbf{w}\|_{\mathbf{N}_k}^2 + \gamma \|\mathbf{w} - \hat{\mathbf{x}}(k-1)\|^2 \quad (7)$$

where $\gamma > 0$ is the *inertia parameter*. Note that

- the first term of the cost in (7) is a classical weighted linear least square term. However, it is not necessarily strictly convex, e.g., consider the targeted case when the number of measurements M_k is smaller than the state size $2N$. Hence, if $\gamma = 0$, i.e., if we neglect the second term, problem (7) may have infinite solutions.

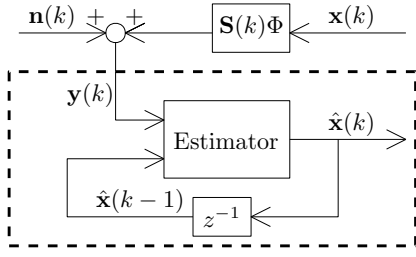


Fig. 1. Block scheme of the dynamical system described by equation (6) and equation (8).

- The second term of the cost in (7) acts as a regularizer which penalizes the Euclidean distance of the new estimate from the older one. The regularizer makes (7) a strictly convex problem and hence $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)$ well defined.
- The smaller the inertia parameter γ is, the further the new estimate $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)$ is allowed to be from $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k-1)$.
- Task (7) is an unconstrained optimization problem. In some cases, prior information can be leveraged to restrict the state space, e.g., by adding constraints, and improve the estimation accuracy. This is left for our future works.

Note that the new estimate can be explicitly written as

$$\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k) = \mathbf{\Lambda}(k)\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k-1) + \frac{1}{\gamma}\mathbf{\Lambda}(k)\mathbf{\Phi}^\top\mathbf{S}(k)^\top\mathbf{N}_k^{-1}\mathbf{y}(k) \quad (8)$$

where

$$\mathbf{\Lambda}(k) = \gamma(\mathbf{\Phi}^\top\mathbf{S}(k)^\top\mathbf{N}_k^{-1}\mathbf{S}(k)\mathbf{\Phi} + \gamma\mathbf{I})^{-1}. \quad (9)$$

Matrix $\mathbf{\Lambda}(k)$ is always symmetric and positive definite. Equations (6) and (8) represent a linear dynamical system, whose block scheme is reported in Figure 1. Furthermore, heed that equation (8) is essentially a classic closed-loop system, see the dashed area in Figure 1. Such system features the ensuing stability property, proved in the Appendix.

Proposition 1. *Let Assumption 1 hold. Define the state variation $\mathbf{\Delta}(k) = \mathbf{x}(k) - \mathbf{x}(k-1)$, the estimation error $\boldsymbol{\xi}(k) = \hat{\mathbf{x}}(k) - \mathbf{x}(k)$, and the scalar values $\sigma = \max_k \{\lambda \in \text{eig}(\mathbf{\Lambda}(k)), \lambda \neq 1\}$. Then,*

- 1) *the system (8) is asymptotically stable. In particular, $\sigma < 1$ and, for $k \geq 1$,*

$$\|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k+\tau)\| \leq \sigma\|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)\| \quad (10)$$

- 2) *the system (8) is bounded input - bounded output (BIBO) stable*
- 3) *if the state variation norm and the measurement noise norm are upper-bounded, i.e., $\|\mathbf{\Delta}(k)\| \leq \delta_x, \|\mathbf{n}(k)\| \leq \delta_n, \forall k$, the estimation error satisfies*

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} \|\boldsymbol{\xi}(k)\| \leq \tau \left(\delta_x + \frac{c}{\gamma} \delta_n \right) \left(1 + \frac{\gamma}{\sigma} \right). \quad (11)$$

Proposition 1-2) implies that if the sequence of measurements $\{\mathbf{y}(k)\}_k$ is bounded, then the sequence of estimates $\{\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)\}_k$ does not diverge. On the other hand, Proposition 1-3) upper bounds the estimation error when state variation and measurement norm are bounded. Note that the latter scenario

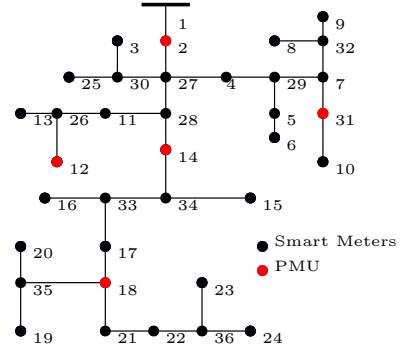


Fig. 2. Schematic representation of the IEEE 37-bus test feeder.

includes the case in which \mathbf{n} is stochastic with limited support, e.g., \mathbf{n} is a random vector drawn from a uniform distribution or drawn from a truncated Gaussian distribution.

IV. NUMERICAL TESTS

Our estimation algorithm was validated on the IEEE 37-bus feeder converted to its single-phase equivalent, depicted in Figure 2. Measurements are taken from the devices and gathered from the system operator once every 10 seconds. Loads were generated by adding a zero-mean Gaussian variation to the benchmark data, with standard deviation 0.22 times the nominal loads [13]. Voltages were obtained via a power flow solver and then corrupted by a truncated zero-mean Gaussian noise with 3σ deviation of 1% per unit (pu) [14]. Every bus in the network is endowed either with a smart meter or with a PMU, see their location in Figure 2. The algorithm was tested for different values of the inertia parameter γ and for different numbers of reporting metering devices S . Each scenario has been studied through 200 Monte Carlo simulations. The state estimate was always initialized at $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(0) = \mathbf{0}$. The S reporting devices were randomly chosen at each algorithm iteration. However, every device was forced to report data at least once every 100 iterations. Define the average relative estimation error $e(k)$ as the average computed over the Monte Carlo simulations of the relative estimation error, i.e., $e(k) = \log \left(\mathbb{E} \left[\frac{\|\boldsymbol{\xi}(k)\|}{\|\mathbf{x}(k)\|} \right] \right)$.

Figure 3 reports $e(k)$ for different values of the inertia parameter γ , when $S = 4$. In general, the smaller is γ , the faster the algorithm error reaches its asymptotic value. For what concerns the asymptotic error, the best performance are obtained when $\gamma = 1$. This can be understood by looking at Figure 4, which compares the active power absorbed by bus 23 (denoted as p_{23}) with its estimates (denoted by \hat{x}_{23}) in one of the Monte Carlo runs for different values of γ . When $\gamma > 1$, the regularizer term in (6) is dominant. Hence, $\hat{x}_{23}(k)$ is forced to be close to the old estimate $\hat{x}_{23}(k-1)$ and is slowly chasing the state p_{23} . On the other hand, when $\gamma < 1$, Figure 4 shows high fluctuations of $\hat{x}_{23}(k)$. In fact, the estimate becomes more sensitive to measurement noise.

Finally, Figure 5 shows how the estimator performs for different numbers of reporting meters S , when $\gamma = 1$. Not surprisingly, the bigger S is, the better is the performance.

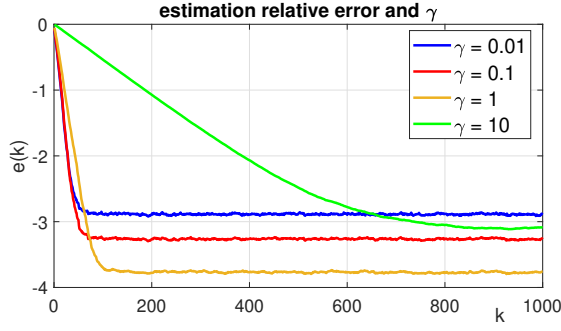


Fig. 3. Average estimation error for different values of γ , with $S = 4$.

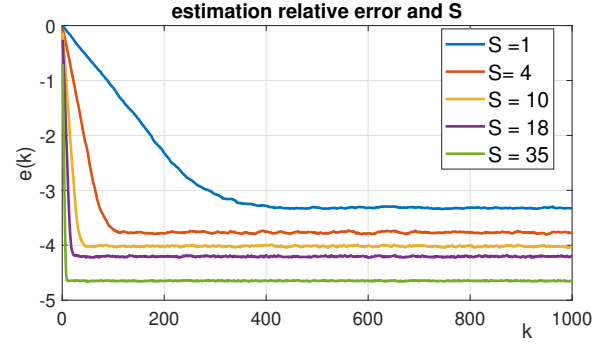


Fig. 5. Average estimation error for different values of S , with $\gamma = 1$.

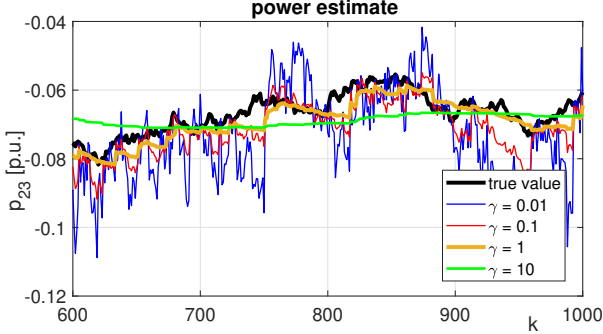


Fig. 4. Estimation error for a particular algorithm run, with $S = 4$.

V. CONCLUSION

We have proposed a state estimation algorithm for power distribution grids able to deal with asynchronous measurements. Simulations on the standard IEEE-37 bus testbed have shown the effectiveness of the proposed strategy. Generalizations to non-linear measurements-state relation and considering a constrained optimization problem rather than (6) constitute interesting research directions.

APPENDIX

The proof of Proposition 1 will use the next Lemma and, due to space constraints, it is only sketched.

Lemma 1. *Let Assumption 1 holds. Then,*

$$\bigcap_{j=0}^{\tau} \ker(\mathbf{S}(k+j)\Phi) = \mathbf{0}. \quad (12)$$

Proof of Proposition 1: Firstly, heed that, being $\Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(k)^\top \mathbf{N}_k^{-1} \mathbf{S}(k) \Phi$ a symmetric positive-semidefinite matrix, it can be written as

$$\Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(k)^\top \mathbf{N}_k^{-1} \mathbf{S}(k) \Phi = [\mathbf{U}(k) \mathbf{V}(k)] \text{bdg}(\Sigma(k), \mathbf{0}_{N-M}) [\mathbf{U}(k) \mathbf{V}(k)]^\top$$

where $\Sigma(k)$ is the diagonal matrix collecting the eigenvalues of $\Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(k)^\top \mathbf{N}_k^{-1} \mathbf{S}(k) \Phi$. Columns of $\mathbf{V}(k)$ are eigenvectors spanning $\ker(\Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(k)^\top \mathbf{N}_k^{-1} \mathbf{S}(k) \Phi) = \ker(\mathbf{S}(k) \Phi)$. Then, it follows that

$$\Lambda(k) = [\mathbf{U}(k) \mathbf{V}(k)] \text{bdg}(\tilde{\Sigma}(k), \mathbf{I}_{N-M}) [\mathbf{U}(k) \mathbf{V}(k)]^\top. \quad (13)$$

where

$$\tilde{\Sigma}(k) = \gamma(\gamma \mathbf{I} + \Sigma(k))^{-1}. \quad (14)$$

Note that $\tilde{\Sigma}(k)$ is a diagonal matrix whose entries are positive and strictly lower than 1, and $\sigma = \max_k \text{eig}(\tilde{\Sigma}(k))$. Matrix $\mathbf{V}(k)$ collects all the eigenvectors of $\Lambda(k)$ associated with the eigenvalue 1. Given any $\hat{\mathbf{x}}(k)$

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{\mathbf{x}}(k+\tau) &= \prod_{j=k}^{k+\tau} \Lambda(j) \hat{\mathbf{x}}(k) \\ &= \prod_{j=k}^{k+\tau} [\mathbf{U}(j) \mathbf{V}(j)] \text{bdg}(\tilde{\Sigma}(j), \mathbf{I}_{N-M}) [\mathbf{U}(j) \mathbf{V}(j)]^\top \hat{\mathbf{x}}(k). \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

Since Assumption 1 and Lemma 1 implies that

$$\prod_{j=k}^{k+\tau} \mathbf{V}(j) \mathbf{V}(j)^\top = \mathbf{0}_{N-M}, \quad (16)$$

by combining equations (15) and (16), and by exploiting the properties of norms, we obtain

$$\left\| \prod_{j=k}^{k+\tau} \Lambda(j) \right\| \leq \sigma \quad (17)$$

from which equation (10) follows.

Concerning the BIBO stability, note that, iterating equation (8) yields

$$\hat{\mathbf{x}}(T) = \prod_{k=1}^T \Lambda(k) \hat{\mathbf{x}}(0) + \gamma^{-1} \sum_{k=1}^T \prod_{j=k}^T \Lambda(j) \Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(j)^\top \mathbf{N}_j^{-1} \mathbf{y}(j) \quad (18)$$

Let $y_{\max} = \max_k \{\gamma^{-1} \|\mathbf{y}(k)\|\}$. The triangle inequality applied to (18) yields

$$\begin{aligned} \|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(T)\| &\leq \left\| \prod_{k=1}^T \Lambda(k) \right\| \|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(0)\| + y_{\max} \sum_{k=1}^T \left\| \prod_{j=k}^T \Lambda(j) \right\| \\ &\leq \|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(0)\| + y_{\max} \rho \tau \sum_{i=0}^{\mu} \sigma^i \\ &\leq \|\hat{\mathbf{x}}(0)\| + y_{\max} \rho \tau \frac{1}{1-\sigma} \end{aligned} \quad (19)$$

where $\mu = \text{mod}(T/\tau)$ and $\rho = \max_k \|\Phi^\top \mathbf{S}(k)^\top \mathbf{N}_k^{-1}\|$.

Finally, equation (11) can be obtained by making T in (19) tending to infinity and by using (6) and (10). ■

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