

# Phase Retrieval via Model-Free Power Flow Jacobian Recovery

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What is the problem?

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Problem 1:

The case of the missing power network model

# The case of the missing power network model

An electric power network is a graph

$$\mathcal{G} = (\mathcal{N}, \mathcal{V}).$$

# The case of the missing power network model

Every node  $i \in \mathcal{N}$  has a complex **voltage phasor** and **power injection**:

$$v_i \angle \theta_i \in \mathbb{C}, \quad p_i + jq_i \in \mathbb{C}.$$

# The case of the missing power network model

The network topology is encoded in the *admittance* matrix:

$$Y = G + jB \in \mathbb{C}^{n \times n}.$$

It is **hard to find** in the real world.

# The case of the missing power network model

The non-linear power flow equations govern the power injections at every node  $i \in \mathcal{N}$ :

$$p_i = v_i \sum_{k=1}^n v_k (G_{ik} \cos \theta_{ik} + B_{ik} \sin \theta_{ik}), \quad (1a)$$

$$q_i = v_i \sum_{k=1}^n v_k (G_{ik} \sin \theta_{ik} - B_{ik} \cos \theta_{ik}). \quad (1b)$$



# The case of the missing power network model

The non-linear power flow equations govern the power injections at every node  $i \in \mathcal{N}$ :

$$p_i = v_i \sum_{k=1}^n v_k (G_{ik} \cos \theta_{ik} + B_{ik} \sin \theta_{ik}), \quad (2a)$$

$$q_i = v_i \sum_{k=1}^n v_k (G_{ik} \sin \theta_{ik} - B_{ik} \cos \theta_{ik}). \quad (2b)$$

They are functions of the network topology.

Problem 2:  
The case of the missing voltage phasor

## The case of the missing voltage phasor

Every node  $i \in \mathcal{N}$  has a complex **voltage phasor** and **power injection**:

$$v_i \angle \theta_i \in \mathbb{C}, \quad p_i + jq_i \in \mathbb{C}.$$

It's hard to find the **voltage phase angles** in the real world.

# The case of the missing voltage phasor

Only  $\approx 3000$  phasor measurement units (PMUs) in North America [8].

Rare in:

1. Distribution systems
2. Transmission system boundaries
3. Rural transmission systems
4. Underserved areas

# The case of the missing voltage phasor

Example: PJM, circa 2022

1. 400 PMUs throughout PJM territory<sup>1</sup>
2. Only required on substations

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<sup>1</sup>PJM, “Synchrophasor Technology Roadmap”, 2022.

# The case of the missing voltage phasor

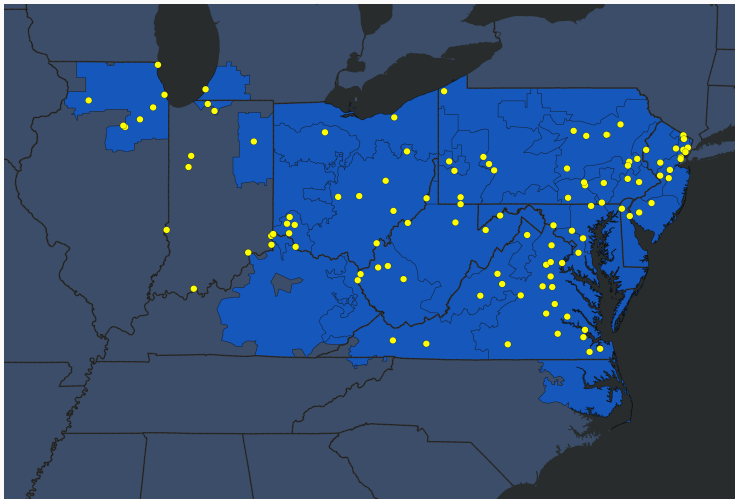


Figure 1: circa 2022 PMU deployment in PJM<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Credit PJM, "Synchrophasor Technology Roadmap", 2022. Source: <https://www.pjm.com/markets-and-operations/ops-analysis/synchrophasor-technology>

OK, so who cares?

It's pretty hard to be a power engineer without  
this information!



# Case study: Newton-Raphson Power Flow model

How to solve the non-linear power flow equations?

Classic approach: *Newton-Raphson power flow*.

Iteratively solve a linear system of equations of the form

$$\begin{bmatrix} \Delta p \\ \Delta q \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{x}) & \frac{\partial p}{\partial \mathbf{v}}(\mathbf{x}) \\ \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{x}) & \frac{\partial q}{\partial \mathbf{v}}(\mathbf{x}) \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \Delta \theta \\ \Delta \mathbf{v} \end{bmatrix} = J(\mathbf{x})\Delta \mathbf{x}. \quad (3)$$

1.  $\Delta p, \Delta q \in \mathbb{R}^n$  are small perturbations in the active and reactive power injections
2.  $\Delta \theta, \Delta \mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{R}^n$  are small perturbations in the voltage phase angles and magnitudes

$$\begin{bmatrix} \Delta p \\ \Delta q \end{bmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(x) & \frac{\partial p}{\partial v}(x) \\ \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}(x) & \frac{\partial q}{\partial v}(x) \end{bmatrix}}_{:=J(x)} \begin{bmatrix} \Delta \theta \\ \Delta v \end{bmatrix} = J(x)\Delta x, \quad (4)$$

1. The matrix  $J(x) \in \mathbb{R}^{2n \times 2n}$  is the **power flow Jacobian matrix**.
2. Derivatives of the power flow equations (2) with respect to the voltage magnitudes  $\mathbf{v}$  and phase angles  $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ .

## Case study: Newton-Raphson Power Flow model

$$\begin{bmatrix} \Delta p \\ \Delta q \end{bmatrix} = \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(x) & \frac{\partial p}{\partial v}(x) \\ \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}(x) & \frac{\partial q}{\partial v}(x) \end{bmatrix}}_{:=J(x)} \begin{bmatrix} \Delta \theta \\ \Delta v \end{bmatrix} = J(x)\Delta x, \quad (5)$$

1. Can we learn **this matrix** as a proxy model?
2. Can we exploit the **structure of this matrix**?

# What is the problem?

What do we **actually** know in practice?

Commonly, we receive measurements of the form [9]

$$v_i \in \mathbb{R}, \quad p_i + jq_i \in \mathbb{C}.$$

1.  $v_i$  —voltage *magnitude*
2.  $p_i$  —active (real) power
3.  $q_i$  —reactive (imaginary) power<sup>3</sup>

**No network model, either!**

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<sup>3</sup>e.g., from a historical or chosen power factor [9]

# What is the problem?

1. How can we recover voltage phasors from their magnitudes?
2. How can we recover a *phaseless model* of the voltage phasors?
3. How can we do this provably?

# Contributions

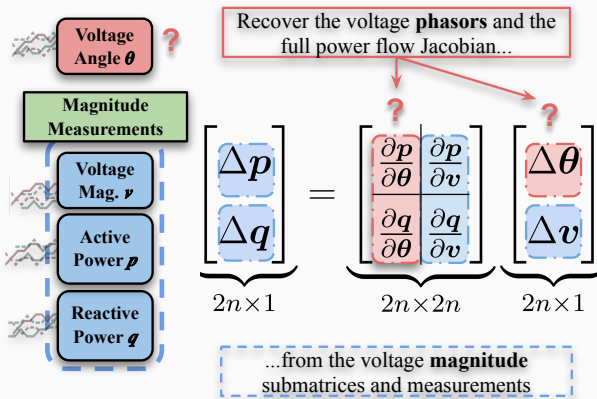


Figure 2: Voltage phasor recovery via power flow Jacobian recovery

How can we solve it?

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Given a matrix  $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{C}^{m \times n}$ , we want to

$$\text{find } \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{C}^n \quad \text{s. t.} \quad |\mathbf{Ax}| = \mathbf{b}.$$

where  $\mathbf{b} \in \mathbb{R}^m$  are real-valued magnitude measurements.



Example applications:

1. X-ray crystallography [5]
2. Electron microscopy [4]
3. Optical and medical imaging [2]
4. Numerous tasks in experimental physics [10, 7]
5. ... Power systems?

# Connecting phase retrieval and electric power systems

For any voltage magnitudes  $\mathbf{v}$ , we can represent the **phasor voltages**  $\bar{\mathbf{v}} \in \mathbb{C}^n$  using a **phase vector**  $\mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{C}^n$  in the **unit complex ball**

$$|u_i| = 1, \quad \text{atan2}(\text{Im}\{u_i\}, \text{Re}\{u_i\}) = \theta_i, \quad (6)$$

where we require

$$\bar{\mathbf{v}} = \text{diag}(\mathbf{v})\mathbf{u} = \begin{bmatrix} v_1 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & \dots & v_n \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{u}. \quad (7)$$

Apply the phase retrieval framework to recover the voltage phase

$$\text{find } \boldsymbol{\theta} \in (-\pi, \pi]^n \quad \text{st:} \quad |\text{diag}(\mathbf{v})\mathbf{u}(\boldsymbol{\theta})| = \mathbf{v}. \quad (8a)$$

# Analytical Results

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# Overview of power flow Jacobian structure

**Classical power network physics:** well known structural symmetries in the power flow Jacobian matrix.

$$\frac{\partial p_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} v_k \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k, \\ -v_i \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_i} - 2v_i^2 B_{ii} & i = k. \end{cases} \quad (9a)$$

$$\frac{\partial q_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} -v_k \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k, \\ v_i \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_i} - 2v_i^2 G_{ii} & i = k \end{cases} \quad (9b)$$

Relates the Power Flow Jacobian Blocks! 😊

# Overview of power flow Jacobian structure

Classical power network physics: well known structural symmetries in the power flow Jacobian matrix [6].

$$\frac{\partial p_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} v_k \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k, \\ -v_i \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_i} - 2v_i^2 B_{ii} & i = k. \end{cases} \quad (10a)$$

$$\frac{\partial q_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} -v_k \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k, \\ v_i \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_i} - 2v_i^2 G_{ii} & i = k \end{cases} \quad (10b)$$

Need the network model and parameters 😞

Solution 1:

A phaseless representation of the Power Flow  
Jacobian matrix.

# New characterization of Power Flow Jacobian structure

## Lemma 1: Phaseless power flow Jacobian structure

We can write the partial derivatives of power injections with respect to phase angles without the phase angles and without the grid model.

$$\frac{\partial p_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} v_k \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k \\ v_i \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_i} - 2q_i & i = k, \end{cases} \quad (11a)$$

$$\frac{\partial q_i}{\partial \theta_k} = \begin{cases} -v_k \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_k} & i \neq k \\ -v_i \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_i} + 2p_i & i = k. \end{cases} \quad (11b)$$

These are functions of the **power injection measurements!**



# New characterization of the structure of the Power Flow Jacobian

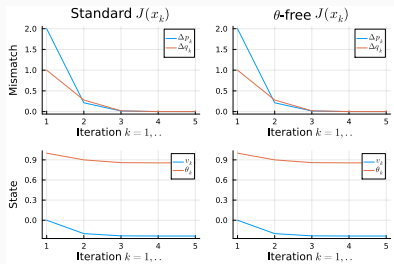
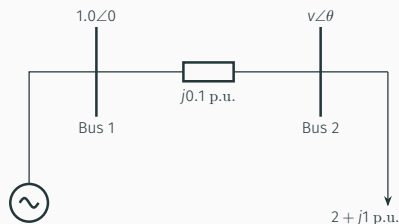
The power-voltage phase angle sensitivity matrices can be expressed as functions  $\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}, \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta} : \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n \mapsto \mathbb{R}^{n \times n}$  of the form

$$\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{q}) = \text{diag}(\mathbf{v}) \frac{\partial \mathbf{q}}{\partial \mathbf{v}} - 2 \text{diag}(\mathbf{q}), \quad (12a)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{q}}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{p}) = -\text{diag}(\mathbf{v}) \frac{\partial \mathbf{p}}{\partial \mathbf{v}} + 2 \text{diag}(\mathbf{p}), \quad (12b)$$

which are implicitly parameterized by  $\frac{\partial \mathbf{q}}{\partial \mathbf{v}}$  and  $\frac{\partial \mathbf{p}}{\partial \mathbf{v}}$ .

# New characterization of the structure of the Power Flow Jacobian



**Figure 3:** Equivalence of the Newton-Raphson iterations using the  $\theta$ -free expressions and standard expressions for  $\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}$ ,  $\frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}$  (right) for a simple two bus test case (left).

Solution 2:  
Use the power flow Jacobian structure for  
voltage phase retrieval

# Phase retrieval by the power flow Jacobian

Apply a classic phase retrieval algorithm [11] to solve the power flow equations using **learned** voltage magnitude blocks

$$\underset{\Delta\theta_t}{\text{minimize}} \quad \left\| \begin{bmatrix} \Delta p_t \\ \Delta q_t \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} (?) & \frac{\partial p}{\partial v} \\ (?) & \frac{\partial q}{\partial v} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \Delta\theta_t \\ \Delta v_t \end{bmatrix} \right\|_2^2$$

Learning the Jacobian blocks is well studied [3].

**Problem!** we do not know  $\frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}$ ,  $\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}$

We have to add them as decision variables.

# Phase retrieval by the power flow Jacobian

The phase retrieval program for samples  $t = 1, \dots$ , can then be written as

$$\begin{aligned} & \underset{\Delta \theta_t, \frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}, \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}}{\text{minimize}} \quad \left\| \begin{bmatrix} \Delta p_t \\ \Delta q_t \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(v_t, q_t) & \frac{\partial p}{\partial v} \\ \frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}(v_t, p_t) & \frac{\partial q}{\partial v} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \Delta \theta_t \\ \Delta v_t \end{bmatrix} \right\|_2^2 \\ & \text{subject to: } \quad \text{power flow Jacobian structure!} \end{aligned}$$

Solution 3:

Use the power flow Jacobian structure to  
guarantee voltage phase retrieval

# Guaranteed phase retrieval via spectral theory

## Long story short:

1. Use the Jacobian structure to show when the voltage phase can be uniquely recovered.
2. Do some linear algebra
3. ???
4. Profit!

Take a look at the paper for more details



# Guaranteed phase retrieval via spectral theory

## Theorem (Phase retrieval from active power injections)

For a set of buses in a network  $\mathcal{B} \subset \{1, \dots, n\}$ , if for every bus  $i \in \mathcal{B}$ , the reactive power differential inequality

$$|q_i| > \frac{1}{2}v_i \left( \sum_{k \in \mathcal{B} \setminus \{i\}} \left| \frac{\partial q_k}{\partial v_i} \right| - \left| \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_i} \right| \right) \quad (13a)$$

$$\text{or } |q_i| > \frac{1}{2} \left( \sum_{k \in \mathcal{B} \setminus \{i\}} v_k \left| \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_k} \right| - v_i \left| \frac{\partial q_i}{\partial v_i} \right| \right), \quad (13b)$$

holds, then the voltage phase angles can be uniquely recovered from solely the active power (real) injections  $\mathbf{p}$ .

# Guaranteed phase retrieval via spectral theory

## Theorem (Phase retrieval from reactive power injections)

Analogously, if for every bus  $i \in \mathcal{B}$ , the active power differential inequality

$$|p_i| > \frac{1}{2} v_i \left( \sum_{k \in \mathcal{B} \setminus \{i\}} \left| \frac{\partial p_k}{\partial v_i} \right| - \left| \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_i} \right| \right) \quad (14a)$$

$$\text{or } |p_i| > \frac{1}{2} \left( \sum_{k \in \mathcal{B} \setminus \{i\}} v_k \left| \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_k} \right| - v_i \left| \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial v_i} \right| \right), \quad (14b)$$

holds, then the voltage phase angles can be uniquely recovered from solely the reactive power (imaginary) injections  $\mathbf{q}$ .

# Jacobian invertibility guarantees

Side note: can also guarantee Jacobian invertibility

Jacobian invertibility  $\iff$  No voltage collapse  $\implies$  Phase retrieval

Take a look at the paper for more details

# Computational Results

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1. RTS-GMLC network model [1]
2. Open-source
3. Real-world data

How does this compare to classical  
model-based state estimation?

# Comparison with classical state estimation

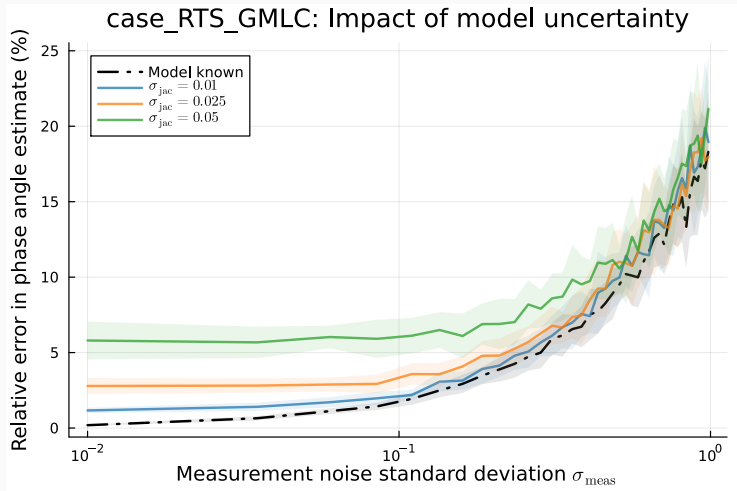


Figure 4: Impact of (*RTS\_GMLC*) model uncertainty on recovered phase angle relative error vs. measurement noise level. Shaded regions indicate  $\pm 1$  standard deviation of the relative errors computed over 20 bootstraps.

Voltage phasor recovery performance



# Voltage phasor recovery performance

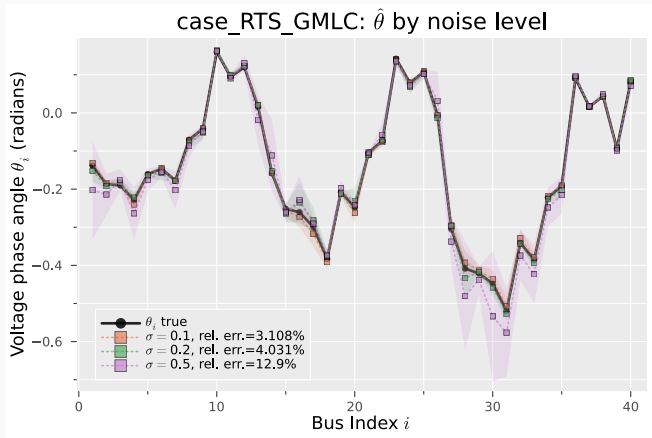


Figure 5: Voltage phasor recovery by measurement noise level.

How about the matrices?

# Power flow Jacobian recovery

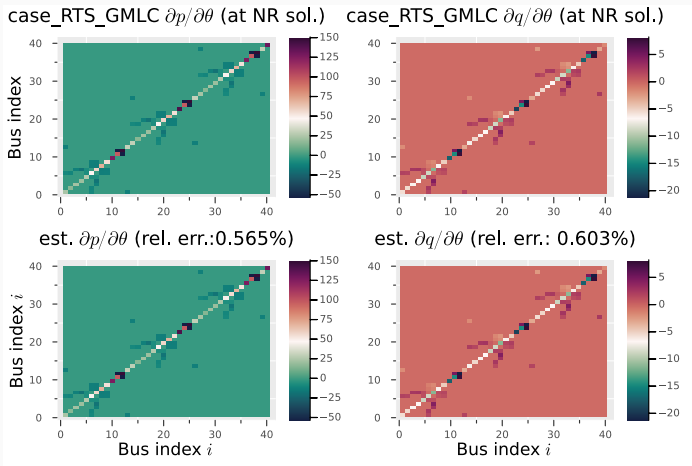


Figure 6: Recovery of the power-phase angle submatrices  $\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}$ ,  $\frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}$  of the power flow Jacobian for the *RTS\_GMLC* network via the phase retrieval program.

How about real-time performance?

# Real-time voltage phasor recovery performance

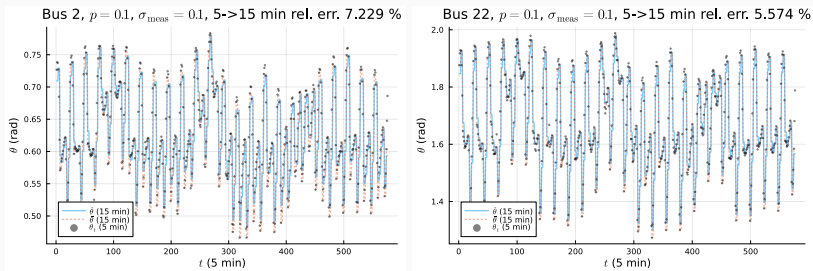


Figure 7: Ground truth (blue) and estimated (orange dashed) voltage phase angles at 15 min. granularity, juxtaposed with ground truth 5 min. granularity voltage phase angles (black dots).

# Outlook

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# What do we have?

1. We can recover voltage phasors from their magnitudes
2. We can recover models of voltage phase angles from their magnitudes
3. This can save a lot of money<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>A PMU installation costs \$40,000-\$180,000 each.

“Factors affecting PMU installation costs”, US Department of Energy, 2014.

# What are the limitations?

1. Bottle necked by measurement frequency (PMUs, milliseconds, other devices, minutes-hours)
2. Bottle necked by measurement type (Reactive power assumptions needed)



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Thanks for listening



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Backup slides

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# Background: Gershgorin Circle Theorem

## Where are the eigenvalues of a square matrix?

For any matrix  $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{C}^{n \times n}$ , by the *Gershgorin Circle Theorem* the eigenvalues of  $\mathbf{A}$  are guaranteed to lie in the union of the  $i = 1, \dots, n$  Gershgorin discs  $\mathcal{G}_i(\mathbf{A})$  of the matrix, i.e.,

$$\lambda_i(\mathbf{A}) \in \bigcup_{i=1}^n \mathcal{G}_i(\mathbf{A}), \quad i = 1, \dots, n, \quad (15)$$

where

$$\mathcal{G}_i(\mathbf{A}) \triangleq \{w \in \mathbb{C} : |w - A_{ii}| \leq \sum_{k:k \neq i} |A_{ik}|\} \subseteq \mathbb{C}. \quad (16)$$

# Classical phase retrieval

Given:  $|Ax| = b$ ,  $b \in \mathbb{R}^m$ , what is  $x \in \mathbb{C}^n$ ?

Classical phase retrieval problem:

$$\min_{x \in \mathbb{C}^n, y \in \mathbb{C}^m} \|Ax - y\|_2^2 \quad \text{s.t.} \quad |y| = b, \quad (17a)$$

$$\iff \min_{x \in \mathbb{C}^n, u \in \mathbb{C}^m} \|Ax - \text{diag}(b)u\| \quad \text{s.t.} \quad |u| = \mathbf{1}, \quad (17b)$$

$$\iff \min_{u \in \mathbb{C}^m: |u_j|=1 \forall j \in [1, m]} u^* M u, \quad \text{s.t.} \quad M = \text{diag}(b - AA^\dagger) \succ 0. \quad (17c)$$

for any candidate phase  $u'$ , note that

$$\hat{x} = A^\dagger \text{diag}(b)u' = (A^*A)^{-1}A^* \text{diag}(b)u', \quad (18)$$

## Theorem accuracy

Case	# PQ Buses	% Satisfying Thm. 1	$r_{\text{worst}}$
14	9	100.0%	—
24_ieee_rts	13	100.0%	—
ieee30	24	95.83%	$1.4 \times 10^{-14}$
RTS_GMLC	40	100.0%	—
118	64	100.0%	—
89pegase	77	94.81%	8.32
ACTIVSg200	162	96.91%	0.088
ACTIVSg500	444	94.37%	3.014
ACTIVSg2000	1608	84.83%	28.31

Table 1: Analysis of Theorem 1 for PQ buses of various test cases

## Theorem accuracy

Case	# PQ Buses	% Satisfying Thm. ??	$\sigma_{\max}$
14	9	100.0%	0.876
24_ieee_rts	13	100.0%	0.401
ieee30	24	95.83%	1.437
RTS_GMLC	40	100.0%	0.444
118	64	100.0%	0.473
89pegase	77	100%	0.954
ACTIVSg200	162	100%	0.698
ACTIVSg500	444	99.77%	1.090
ACTIVSg2000	1608	99.69%	1.180

Table 2: Analysis of Theorem ?? for PQ buses of various test cases

Quantity				Value
$\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}$	$-$	$\frac{\partial p}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{q})$	$\Big _F / \Big _F$	$2.510 \times 10^{-8}$
$\frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}$	$-$	$\frac{\partial q}{\partial \theta}(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{p})$	$\Big _F / \Big _F$	$1.725 \times 10^{-7}$

**Table 3:** Verification that the structure expressions of the Lemma hold for multiphase unbalanced networks.