

Understanding the problem



**University of  
Sheffield**

**Implamenting multistage constant-current charging  
methods in lithium based batterys to reduce  
degradation**

George W. Kirby

*200328186*

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**Supervisor:** Dr. Ross Drummond

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# 1 Introduction

There are currently over 7 billion people with access to electricity [1], the global consumption of energy is rising by  $4.5 \times 10^{16}$  Joules every year; 77% of which is from utilising non-renewable sources. With the affects of non-renewables on the environment still not fully realised, coupled with the concern of their finite-life nature, poses a constant need to increase usage of renewable sources. However, a large set of renewable generation methods fall under the category of variable renewable energy (VRE) sources [2], thus requiring a robust form of energy storage to solve the intermittent availability - methods of storage do exist and suitable solutions depend on the specifics and locations; as battery technology increases, the use of battery as a storage medium for the energy sector are ever more increasing. There is also the rapid increase in electric vehicle production, with a push to increase the adoption of EV's, 17.3 million cars were produced in 2024 [3] alone with a recent 20% average year-on increase. Lithium Ion batteries (LIB's) are the most common currently used batteries due to their desirable characteristics in energy density, aging properties, cost and more.

EV's and the energy sector account now account for 90% of the total lithium ion battery demand since 2016, the total lithium-ion battery demand is 10-times larger [4] since 2016. Different resources predict different forecasts of total battery growth [5, 6], regardless, it appears the rate of demand will not be decreasing in the near future.

LIB's, like all batteries and decrease in performance and capacity [7] until they are deemed unsuitable for their current use. This means eventually, all current batteries in use today will need to be disposed of, given that over 660,000 tonnes of earth metals were mined in 2023 alone, a strong case for slowing down the need for mining new materials is made, whilst keeping up with the demand (cite the iea thing). It's noted that battery chemistry is still a developing field, thus newer batteries may use less scarce materials, thus hard to truly predict the sustainability of mining these materials, for example, some reports (cite faraday) say cobalt supplies could be used entirely by 2040. Solutions do exist, recycling methods have been developed in order to extract the materials, termed battery metal recycling (BMR), however there are wildly different sources suggesting how much of current batteries actually are recycled (one showing 5%), (other showing 90%), and the technology to do so is still a developing field, there are many different methods (cite issues), since most of the rare earth elements are within the battery's cathode, methods such as hydrometallurgical process can extract these, but at the cost of severe reduction in lithium yield (cite enji) - although there are

promising methods with some proposing a lithium recovery needing less than 40% the energy compared to mining the virgin material (cite enji yoo) whilst still recovering nickle and cobalt. There is also the rising interest in reusing the batterys before recyling, these batterys are ferrerred to as second-life batteries (SLB's); in the EV use-case, the majority of the batteries are deemed finished once their usable capacity drops below 80% (cite), but often, due to the other parameters of the batteries needing to be of high standards for EV use, the 'dead' batteries can still provide a very usefull serivce in less demanding applications, a common one being energy storage systems (ESS) [8], with claims resuing can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emmisions by 56% as apposed to using natural fuel gas in situue. However there are again challanges associated, for saftey there is the need for robust testing, asorting the batteries based on their current health states, non automised methods of extracting cells from their original pack. These additional steps mean the price of SLB's could become at a point where they are not much cheaper than new batteries, making the solution less attractive to many sectors [8].

In summary, there are methods that are devloping to reduce the need for mining new materials and decreasing recycling emrgy, but ultimately, providing methods to increase the usable life of the current batteries serves as a direct way reduce the impacts of batteries themselves and to meet their growing demand. If just 1 extra life cycle could be added to all EV's currently on the road ( 60 million (citr)), this could power all of the UK's energy needs for one day (cite govengy); as most batterys cycle life are well over 1000, any incament in cycle life can be greatly beneficial.

Much research has been done into both modeling LIB's and optimising their usage from both an energy and aging perspective.

What is this project? the general approach

## 1.1 Project Aims

Its would be good to see how the ecm parts change over degredation to see future behaviour

### 1.1.1 Objectives

- Attempt optimal controll methods to parametrise lithium batteries
- Apply different controll objectives to battery charging to see degredation effects

- See how affective adaptive methods are in the charging process as the battery ages
- Feed results to nerual network ...

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Lithium based battery degredation modes

#### Basic Background of Lithium Ion Batteries

Lithium-ion based batteries are favorable largely due to the highly reducitve nature of Lithium, taking the potential relative to hydorgens reduction, lithiums half-reaction is -3.01V (cite gregg), meaning lithium can release its outershell electron relativley easy. Any cells potential difference is the difference in potentials of the negative and posoitve electrodes, so having a very negative potnetial like the lithium reduction, allows a varierty of postive electordes (where the oxidation occurs), to yeild a high battery voltage. Coupled with Lithiums low molecular weight, a high energy density cell can be achived to. The force produced by the potential difference between the electrodes drives the elctrons via the external circuit, providing useful work, allowing lithium batteries to act as an energy storage medium.

Lithium batteries all follow the the same basic priciple of operation, as show in .... They consist of a posotive and negative elctrode, eleocrtolite a seperator and current collectors. Unlike many other battery chemistries, where the metal ions undergo chemical reactions at the electrodes which change the composition of the electrodes, lithium ions intercalate and deintercalate within the electrodes - they are in essance absorbed to and from the electrode structures (cite greg p), forming as loosley bonded lithium atoms within the electrodes. The electrodes for the negative side is usually a grpahine based structure, allowing up to 1 lithium atom to be stored per 6 carbon atoms, whilst the posotive electrode can vary greatly between different lithium batteries; the most common posotive electrodes are often composed of transitional metal oxides such as LCO, LMO, NMC, NCA (cite Alex K Hoech et al). The lithium state in the graphine is similar to that of idividual lithium atoms, thus the electrode potention of the negative electoride is very similar to that of pure lithium ( -3V) (cite liquin), although its lithium storage abilities are usually lower than the posortive electrodes. The lithium ions within the posotive electrodes are in a much lower energy state, thus their reaction

potential ranges from -1 – 2V, therefore, overall there is a large potential difference created by the want of the positive electrode gaining electrons and the lithium ions, and the want of the lithium within the carbon of the negative electrode to give the lithium ion and electrons. In general, the negative electrodes used currently are carbon based, there capacity to hold the lithium (per unit volume) is greater than the positive electrodes used today as shown in figurexx (cite Alex), but as discussed later in this section the negative electrode is often the key limiting factor in degradation. The positive electrode materials vary greatly in material, but since this electrode has the biggest electrode potential, it has a largest impact on the overall cell voltage, and thus energy density of the cell, in addition since per volume it holds less lithium, electrode material with higher lithium capacity will be of greater affect than improving the negative electrodes capacity.

The electrolyte is a medium in which the lithium ions can be transported via diffusion to the electrodes, the electrolyte does not however allow electrons to flow, only via an external circuit can they flow. The separator acts as a structural barrier to prevent the opposite electrodes from touching, which would allow both electrons and ions to flow, causing major fire risks from the uncontrollable reactions. During the discharging process, a path is provided externally across the current collectors, (these collectors are not part of the reactions and are just a means to electrically connect the electrolytes to a useful surface for soldering) the lithium stored within the negative electrode deintercalates, released as the positive lithium ion, whilst the electron leaves the electrode, traveling across the external circuit to the positive electrode.

## **Discharging Degradation**

## **Charging Degradation**

Since the applied voltage is above the electrode potential, the lithium ions within the positive electrode deintercalate, as the lith. Mention diffusion differences between charge and discharge (cite Michael J Lain) Whiney well <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yep soooo

**2.2 Charging methods**

**2.3 Optimal controll**

**2.4 Neural networking**

### **3 Plans for Remaining Work**

### **4 Self Review**

### **5 Project progress**

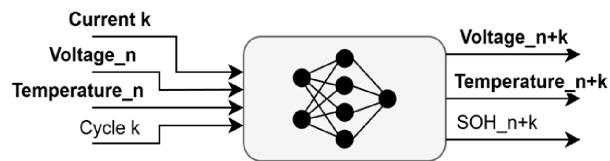


Figure 1: Initial end objective: Black Box Battery

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