

# Non Intrusive load monitoring

RUNE A. HEICK 11061

Aarhus University, Department of Engineering

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## Abstract

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# Introduction

# 1

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## 1.1 SmartHG Dataset

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# Data Quality 2

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Various projects today is focused on gathering data and analysing it. The gathered data is used for obtaining behaviours, habits and properties of the observed objects. This is done by using powerful statistical leaning algorithms, that are able to deduce these properties from the data. This approach is called data driven development, since the success is mainly determined by the data and not the algorithm.

When data is the central role of the system, the quality of the data are very important. Poor data can lead to wrong assumptions, and have a negative effect on the application. Choosing the correct dataset is therefore a key factor [1]. Looking at the quality of the data can help you chose what dataset to use. Data quality can be described many ways, one of the more formal is from the ISO 8402 standard that describes quality as:

*"The totality of characteristics of an entity that bear upon its ability of satisfy stated and implied needs" [2].*

This indicate that data quality is something that is very depended on the intended application, and is therefore hard to generalize.

Quality of data is a subject that is gaining more and more attention due to the fact that the quantity of data available is larger than ever before. This forces researchers to choose between datasets, and a notion of quality in the dataset can help them choose. The heavy growth in available data is a result of projects that are moving data gathering from controlled labs, to the public. Many of these projects is citizen science projects, where it is the citizens who collect the data, and not the researchers [3]. This enables researchers to gather enormous amount of data, but they are no longer in control of the conditions the data is collected in, which introduces errors and other quality decreasing factors.

Non intrusive load monitoring is a topic that have been in focus in the past years. This is due to the rise of the smart meters, that makes it possible to measure at faster intervals, and collect the data on online services form real environments. But the smart meters architecture is designed after billing and regulation purposes, and not load monitoring. The network architecture is therefore often based on the unreliable UDP protocol, since it is more important to get the current information fast, than get all information. This courses a lot of packets to be lost in transition, which can degrade the completeness quality of the signal. The missing data can be a problem for load monitoring, since many methods of load disaggregation is based on learning techniques. The quality of the signal can also help identify if the collected data is suitable as a training set.

## 2.1 Quality Criteria

It is not uncommon that different areas of research has its own quality criteria. This is due to the fact that quality is a very domain specific subject. One of the areas that have been dealing with citizen data for many years is the Geographic information area, that are used for maps, weather prediction and climate research. They have come up with several ways of describing quality in spatial data [4]. Method for defining quality in time series data have also been developed [5]. To better define quality criteria in the smart meter data inspiration from related work is used.

### 2.1.1 Related Work

Data Quality is an area that recently have become a hot topic, due to the vast quantity of data. Many researchers strive to make tools that better can analyse data quality in different areas. In the area of spatial data is a "*Quality and Workflow tool*" being developed by the University of Wageningen [6]. The objective is to help researchers select the best suited data for a given data driven project. It does this by looking at different quality criteria, given by the user or found in standards for spatial data.

In bioinformatics is a tool named QCScreen developed to help create better dataset to metabolomics studies. In metabolomics studies is dataset often created by joining information from several different experiments of various quality. By using tools that can check the data quality and consistency to determine if a dataset is suitable for further processing, they are able to greatly improve the test results [7].

In the article *Taking a big Data approach to data quality in a citizen science project*[3] they talk about how quality assessment can be used to rate the believe on your data, and how to improve data collected in citizen science. The project focuses on bird observations, done by users on their smartphones. They improve the quality by disallowing the user to send incomplete datasets to the database, and in this way forcing the user to only deliver high quality information. They then cross check the information with information from people in the same area, to see if it varies greatly.

One of the things all the methods have in common is trying to look at the completeness of the data. Some of the most low level criteria is the sample availability. The sample availability describes how many samples there is collected in relation to the expected collection amount, and look at how the samples are distributed in the measurement period. It is also seen that the activity is a good quality metric since a good data set must contain both areas with activity and areas without.

## 2.2 Quality In SmartHG Citizen Data

As a part of the SmartHG project 25 households have been equipped with meters on selected appliances and the main meter. The data collected from this experiment are prone with errors due to malfunctioning test equipment or unexpected interference from the resident which have resulted in offline measurement equipment for periods of time. Examples on unexpected interference could be if the resident is unplugging the measurable equipment, or turning off the power socket that supply's it. Unstable network does further degrade the signal, since the measurement equipment uses a lossy network.

The SmartHG data is intended for appliance recognition, and the quality must be assessed with this in mind. The completeness and the activity in the data is therefore important.

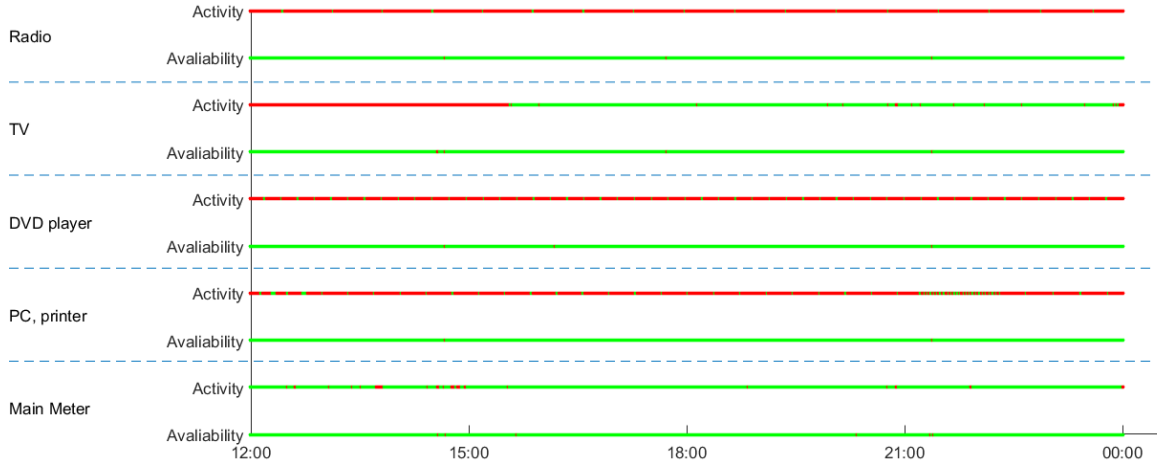


Figure 2.1: 12 hour overview of house 10

On figure 2.1 is a 12 hour overview of the data in house 10 from the 16/8/2015. Here we see the sample availability and Activity of the five different meters in the house. The availability is shown as a line where green is indicating that a sample is received as expected, and red shows a missing sample. On the figure it is shown that there is a few samples missing, which is to be expected due to the lossy network architecture. The Activity is also shown as a line, where green indicates activity and red indicates no activity. Activity is defined as a change in the signal, from prior values. From this we can see that the resident have a lot on activity on the TV from around 16:00 to 00:00, which we can presume means that the television is turned on in this period.

First the availability quality of the data is assessed. The availability quality for a specific period of time  $T_n$  for a specific meter  $m$ , is defined as the amount of samples observed in that timeslot over the expected sample amount. The resolution period  $T_P$  for each time period in  $T$  is chosen to be one hour.

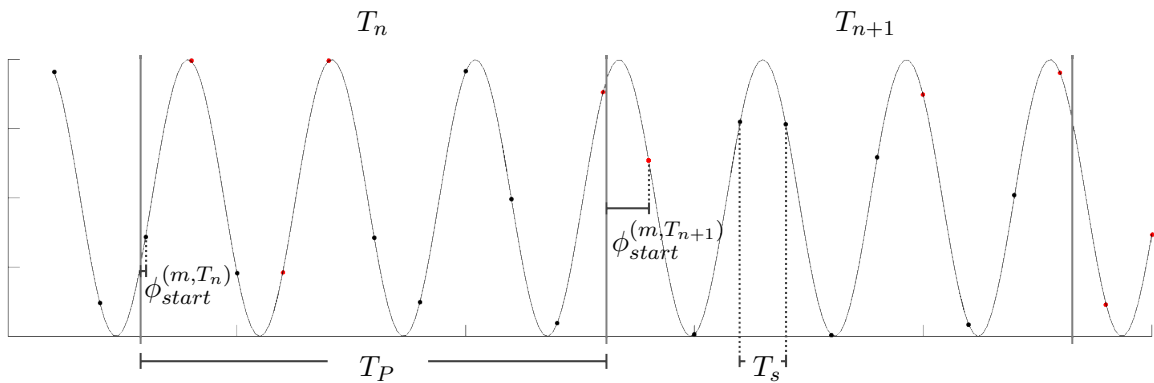


Figure 2.2: Illustration of availability analysis



To calculate the amount of samples expected to be in a specific period of time  $N_{max}^{(m,T_n)}$  does the sample phase  $\phi_{start}^{(m,T_n)}$  for the given period need to be known. On figure 2.2 a illustration of a signal, the black dots are the samples and the red dots are the ones that are missing. The sample phase is the time from the beginning of the period  $T_n$  and to the first expected sample. This is needed since for a timeslot  $T_n$  of a length of  $T_P$  the maximum expected sample amount can vary with 1. This is shown in figure 2.2 where the period  $T_n$  has a potential of having 11 samples, where as period  $T_{n+1}$  only can have 10.

$$N_{max}^{(m,T_n)} = \lfloor \frac{(T_P - \phi_{start}^{(m,T_n)})}{T_s^{(m)}} \rfloor + 1 \quad (2.1)$$

$$q^{(m,T_n)} = \frac{N_{observed}^{(m,T_n)}}{N_{max}^{(m,T_n)}} \quad (2.2)$$

As shown on equation 2.1 is the maximum number of samples for a meter  $m$  in the period  $T_n$  calculated by taking the period time  $T_P$ , corrected with the sample phase  $\phi_{start}^{(m,T_n)}$  for the given period, and dividing it with the sample time  $T_s$ . The quality of the meter is calculated as the ratio of observed samples in the timeslot  $T_n$  to the maximum samples, shown in equation 2.2.

To find the quality of a house in a given period  $T_n$ , that have a set of meters  $\mathbf{M}$  with a cardinality of  $M$ , we take the mean value of all the meter quality's, as shown in equation 2.3.

$$\mu_{q(\mathbf{M},T_n)} = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{m \in \mathbf{M}} q^{(m,T_n)} \quad (2.3)$$

A quality vector  $Q$  is constructed for each house. The quality vector contains the house quality found with a period  $T_P$  on one hour. This have been done from March  $T_1$  to October  $T_N$ .

$$Q^{(\mathbf{M})} = \{\mu_{q(\mathbf{M},T)} | T \in \{T_1, T_2, \dots, T_n, \dots, T_N\}\} \quad (2.4)$$

This is shown in equation 2.4 where  $\mathbf{M}$  is a set of meters in a given house. This can be graphically shown in figure 2.3 where all the houses  $Q$  vectors is shown. The color is a gradient running from light green for the best quality to red for bad quality.

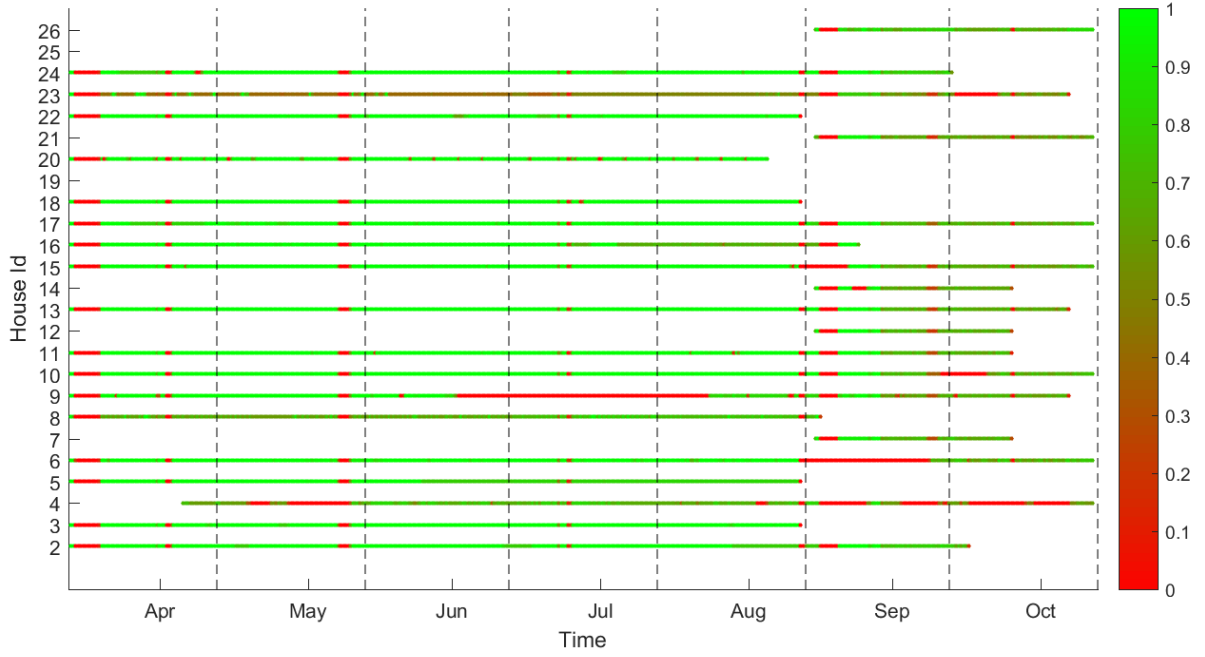


Figure 2.3: Quality of houses in SmartHG project

On figure 2.3 is the availability quality shown for the 25 houses in the SmartHG project. When seen on this scale with a analysis resolution on one hour it is hard to see degradation caused by single sample missing here and there, but meters that have malfunctioned over a longer times shows itself. Since the quality of a house is the mean of several meter quality's, will this most likely appear as darker green spots, since not all meters are malfunctioning at the same time. But there still are some red areas indicating that all the meters in a house is not working.

There are the red spots that goes through all houses on the exact same time. This indicates that the server receiving the data for all the houses have been down, since it is unlikely that all meters in every house is down at the same time. The conclusion being that red dots most commonly are caused by the network being unavailable so the client can not sent to the server, or the server is unable to receive.

It is assumed that the first sample received from a meter happen at the time of meter installation, and the last sample received is the time of meter removal. The meter is assumed to be operating in between these two points in time. On the figure does the coloured  $Q$  vector starts at installation time, and ends at removal time. This illustrates how some houses have been operational longer than others.

Since the data is intended for appliance recognition it is of interest where in the data there is activity, and where there is nothing happening. Both areas are impotent for the NILM application in training scenarios. We define activity as area in the data where there is change as described

in equation 2.5.

$$f(x) + \epsilon < f(x+1) \vee f(x) - \epsilon > f(x+1) \quad (2.5)$$

Where  $\epsilon$  describes a threshold to filter out changes caused by noise. This can also be described as the standard deviation over a area is greater than the threshold. The activity is analysed in the available data, and is shown on figure 2.4 where green is high activity and red is non activity.

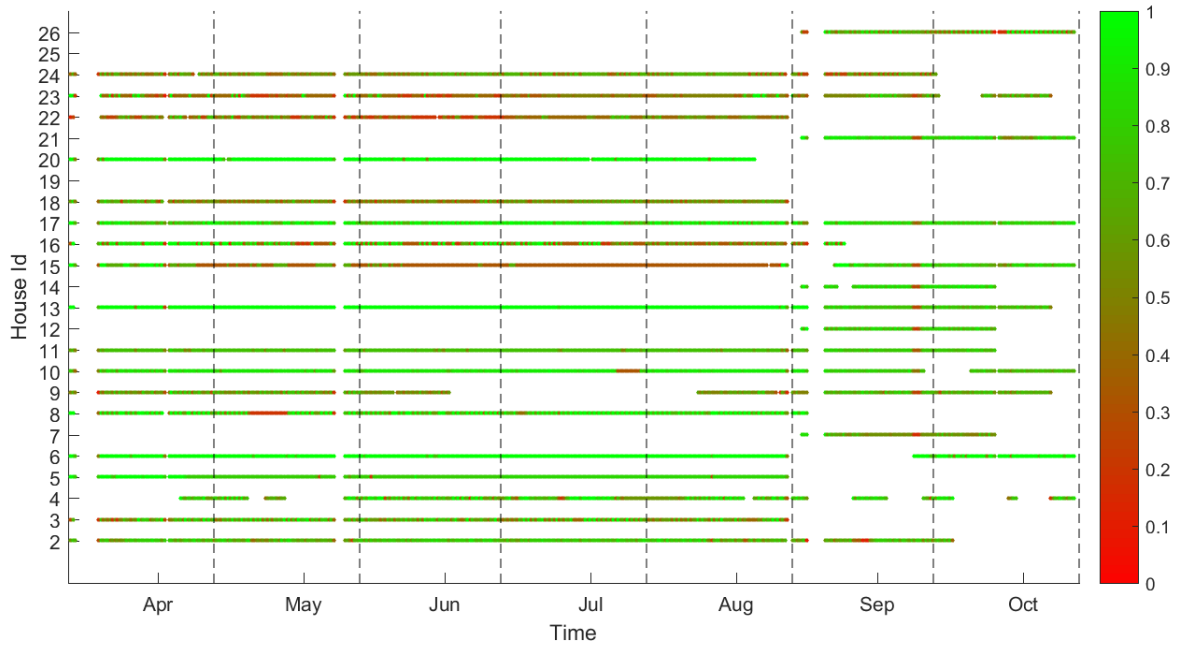


Figure 2.4: Activity of houses in SmartHG project

The activity shown on figure 2.4 is the average of the activity of the meters in the house. There is almost never a meter that does not have at least a little activity in a house, so a complete read area is fairly rare. The most interesting areas in the activity map, is often the places where there is a lot of change in the amount of activity like for house 16.

# Gap Reconstruction 3

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One of the more common problems in citizen science projects is gaps in data. This can happen either if the network connection is unstable or the test equipment gets prematurely turn off, as discussed in chapter 2. This can greatly degrade the data quality, and lead to errors in the application. One way to deal with this problem is to use mathematical gap filling techniques to come with a qualified guess on how the data would look like in the gap.

In order to use this methods we must assume that the missing data in the gap follows the same behaviour as the data on each side off the gap. If the signal is so stochastic that this is not the case then gap filling is not recommended[8].

In the case of the SmartHG project the data can be seen to have a part that is depended on the previous and future data plus a stochastic part that are determined by the user and the appliance. Due to the stochastic part a perfect reconstruction is not possible, but it is the hypotheses that the non stochastic part is still so dominant that a decent reconstruction is possible.

## 3.1 Gap Filling Methods

Various methods exists for gap filling. Five popular algorithms are selected for this project, and is validated on the SmartHG project data. These methods have been chosen since they all have a different approach on the gap filling process. For some of the algorithms it is important to keep the frequency spectra as intact as possible, for other it is the jitter power or the exact sample value they are trying to estimate. Some algorithms have also been designed for small gaps, while others have been designed for larger.

In the following sections it will be briefly described what makes the five algorithms unique, and how they work.

### 3.1.1 Papoulis-Gerchberg Algorithm

The Papoulis-Gerchberg algorithm is a multi gap filling algorithm, meaning it is capable of correcting more than one gap at the time. This makes the algorithm preform good in conditions with many gaps and few available data points between gaps. This is due to its ability to collect information about the signal across multiple gaps[9]. The Papoulis-Gerchberg algorithm works under the assumption that the signal is a periodic stationary signal with a known bandwidth. The signal will therefore consist of  $M$  frequency components, and everything outside the band is assumed to be noise. The signals in the SmartHG is not stationary, but for small snippets can approximately stationariness be assumed.

The true bandwidth is also unknown in the signal. The Papoulis-Gerchberg algorithm is very

depended on the bandwidth for a correct reconstruction. A modified version of the algorithm that estimates the bandwidth, by varying the frequency components  $M$  and analysing the mean square error on the known signal is therefore used [10]. This approach is fairly good at estimating the true value of  $M$ , but it is time-consuming.

### 3.1.2 Wiener Filling Algorithm

The Wiener filling algorithm is an extension of a Wiener predictor, the Wiener predictor assumes that there exist a linear relationship between the next sample and the previous samples. By trying to predict the missing samples from both sides of the gap, and combining the knowledge, it estimates the missing samples [11]. For larger gaps does this methods rely on earlier predictions to close the gaps. This result in errors being accumulated over the gaps. The method is fast, and is therefore suited for large data with small gaps.

### 3.1.3 Spatio-Temporal Filling Algorithm

The Spatio-Temporal filling algorithm uses singular spectrum analysis to split the signal into a series of sub-signals. The sum of the sub-signals is the original signal, and the sub-signals are ordered so the most dominant is first, and the least dominant is last.

The reconstruction philosophy is that the gap has introduced noise in the signal, but a sum of only the most dominant sub-signals must be close to the original signal without noise. But in order to know how many sub-signals to include in this sum, we introduce an other artificial gap. While the sub-signals are being accumulated the mean square error of the artificial gap is observed. When this mean square error hits its minimum peek, it is assumed that the reconstruction is as good as possible [12].

This method is very popular for gap filling. It has shown to be very noise resistant since it finds the overall trends in the data. It does require quite a lot of data to be known post and prior to the gap since an artificial gap must be introduced. It is based on singular spectrum analysis which assumes that the signal consist of stationary processes. This is a similar constraint to the Papoulis-Gerchberg Algorithm in section 3.1.1.

### 3.1.4 Envelope Filling Algorithm

Unlike the previous described methods does the Envelope filling algorithm not depend on frequency analyses, but rather on the expected power of the signal. Looking at the envelope of the signal it assumes that all local maxima and minima must lie on the upper and lower envelope. It then looks at the data prior and post the gap and try to estimate the number of local maxima and minima in the gap, and their locations. It does this by looking for patterns in the time series data [5]. When the new maxima and minima are found the points is connected by using spline [13].

The methods do not make any assumptions about the signals stationariness or bandwidth. The method can also be used on none equally spaced time series.

### 3.1.5 Empirical Mode Decomposition Filling Algorithm

The empirical mode decomposition filling algorithm uses empirical mode decomposition, to break the signal into intrinsic mode functions (IMF). The sum of all IMF's is the original signal. The IMF's is all more low frequent and simpler in structure than the original signal. The hypothesis is that it is easier fixing a gap in a simple signal than a complex one.

The envelope filling algorithm in section 3.1.4 is used to fix the gaps in the IMF's. The IMF's can now be accumulated to get the original fixed signal. Like the envelope filling algorithm does it not make any assumptions about the signals stationariness, bandwidth and can be used on none equally spaced time series. But making a empirical mode decomposition on a signal with a gap in is a non trivial process and can introduce errors [13].

## 3.2 Gaps In SmartHG Dataset

The gaps in the SmartHG project dataset is caused by a lot of different sources such as bad network connection, unplugged measurement equipment or server breakdown. This makes the type of gaps different from case to case. Three aspects of a gap is important for the gap filling: The size of the gap, the data known before the gap, and the data known after the gap.

### 3.2.1 Gap Size

On figure 3.1 is the quantity of different gaps shown. The different gap size is measured as samples missing, e.g. a gap size on 3 means that there is 3 samples missing in a row, between two received samples. Looking at the different gaps in the dataset we see that the normal gap is relatively small. Most of the gaps are between 1-5 samples as seen figure 3.1.

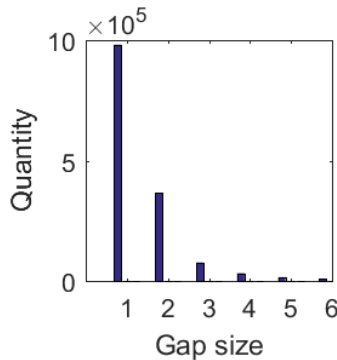


Figure 3.1: Gap quantity

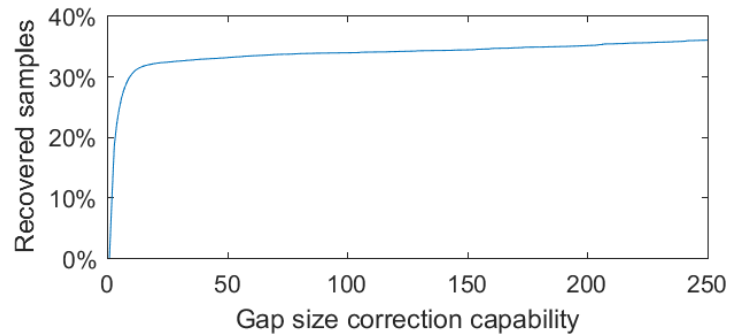


Figure 3.2: Error recovery capability

The aim of data reconstruction is to recover the missing samples. The gap size correction capability is a metric telling how big gaps it is possible to correct. If a application has a gap size correction capability on 5 it means that is is capable of correcting gaps that have the gap size of 5 samples or smaller.

On figure 3.2 is shown how much of the missing signal that can be reconstructed with different gap size correction capability. It is shown that a if a gap size correction capability of approximately 20 samples can be achieved, it is possible to recover 30% of the missing data in the SmartHG

dataset. Since the signal is partly stochastic, and it is not possible to recover the stochastic part, the complete signal can never be reconstructed. The greater the gap, the greater influence does the stochastic part have on the signal. Smaller gaps can therefore be fixed with greater success. It is therefore unlikely that recovery of more than 30% will be possible.

### 3.2.2 Post And Prior Knowledge

The reconstruction process works by looking at the samples available prior and post of the gap. Common for all reconstruction methods is that they assume that the signal in the gap must have behaved in relation to the samples prior and post for the gap. Therefore is the samples prior and post for the gap called knowledges, since it grants the knowledges used for reconstructing the gap.

But in a signal with lots of gaps it can be interesting to see how much knowledge is available for reconstructing a gap. This is done by seeing how many samples that are available prior and post to the gap. This is important since much data allows for detailed models, that can improve gap reconstruction and little knowledge gives the stochastic part dominance which will lead to error prone reconstruction.

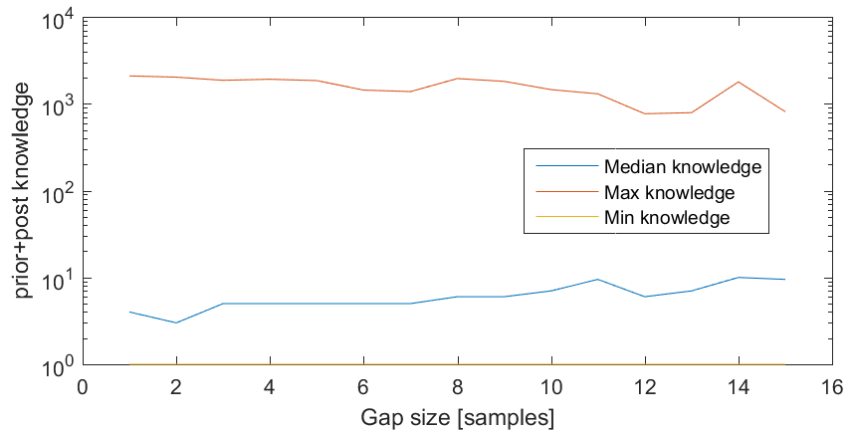


Figure 3.3: Available samples for recovery

In the case of the SmartHG project dataset the data available prior and post to a gap varies greatly but is around the same max and min values for every gap size. The median samples available to fix a gap is around 6 samples as shown in figure 3.3. On the figure is shown that no matter the gap size is the expected knowledge about the same. This can be problematic since larger gaps offend needs more knowledge than smaller gaps. This further indicates that complete recovery of all gaps is impossible.

## 3.3 SmartHG Dataset Reconstruction

The data reconstruction algorithms mentioned on section 3.1 have been tied on the SmartHG dataset. First have 6 unique error free areas in the data been found, and a artificial gap have been introduced in the 6 scenarios. The gaps have now been reconstructed, and a comparison to the true value is made.

The 6 scenarios have been randomly chosen under the constraints that there where no missing data in them, and they all are different in activity level from the other chosen scenarios. Both accumulative scenarios and non accumulative scenarios have been chosen.

There are several ways of comparing the different algorithms, in this report 3 have been selected based on the likelihood of the importance in a learning algorithm, which is the target application for the data. The first is a simple sample by sample comparison, where it is seen how much each sample differs from the true value. The other is the frequency, where it is analysed how much the frequency response is different. The last is a method called jitter compression, where we see that the power of the jitter is the same, more on this in section 3.3.3.

### 3.3.1 Sample Comparison

The sample by sample comparison is created by finding the mean square error of the samples compared to there true values.

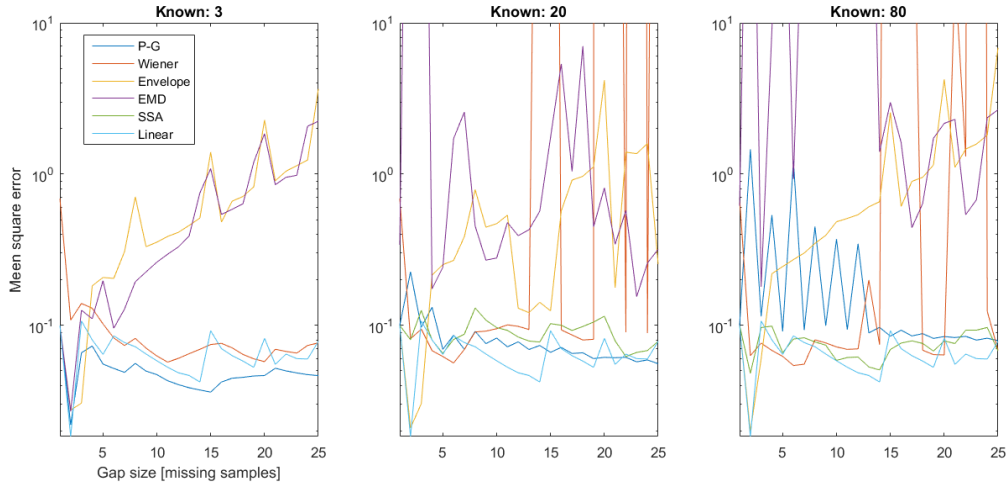


Figure 3.4: Sample comparison of the reconstruction methods

On figure 3.4 is the result shown for 3 different cases. The Known attribute indicates how much prior and post knowledge in samples is used to reconstruct the gap. On the x axis is shown the gap size, as expected does the prediction grow worse the greater the gap size. As a baseline is a linear predictor also added. The linear predictor makes a simple line between the two samples at each edge of the gap, and places all missing samples on the line.

As seen on the figure the best reconstruction is made by the Papoulis-Gerchberg algorithm, with relatively few samples as knowledge. The wiener algorithm is also close to the linear base line. The logical statement is the more information or knowledge we have the better should the prediction become. This does not seems to be the case, since a lot of the algorithms ampers to preform better at lower knowledge rate. This can be explained by the stochastic part of a signal, when the knowledge is small it is more likely that the information around the gap is relevant, the more knowledge grows the more likely is it the a stochastic event will bring false information to the model. This can be illustrated as on figure 3.5.



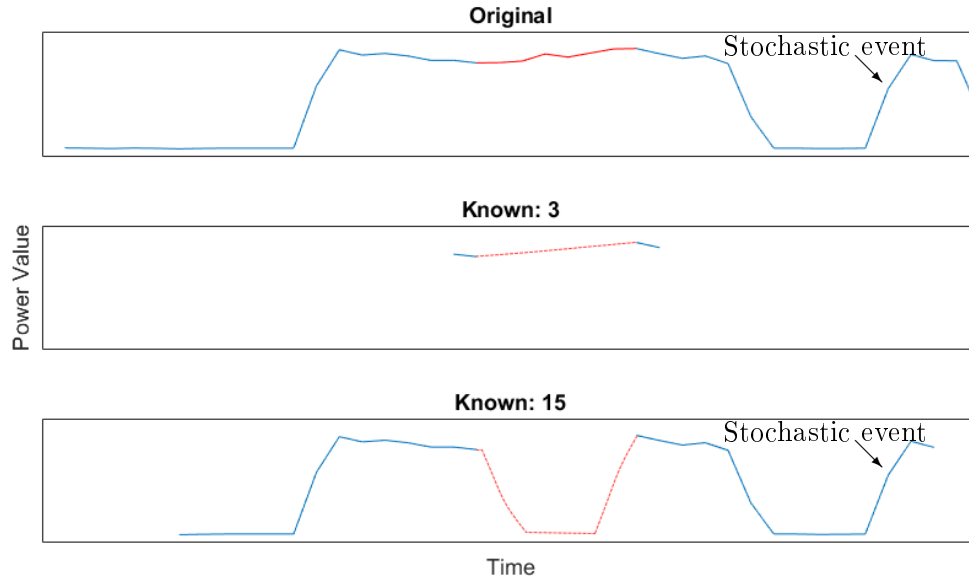


Figure 3.5: Stochastic effect on prediction.

On the figure 3.5 is shown a original signal with a gap, indicated by the red area. The true value is illustrated by the full red line in the original signal. The two subsequent graphs is the reconstruction, the blue area is the known area and the dotted red line is the predicted values. When the known area is small there is not enough frequency information to make any grant changes, so the prediction will look more or less like a linear interpolation. This is compared to the true value not a bad guess. When there is more samples known we are able to make more complex estimates of the signal. On the figure it is shown how when we have a knowledge of 15 we also see the stochastic event. Taking this in to the model, changes the prediction to a less correct value, due to the frequency's added by the stochastic event.

Since the results shown in figure 3.4 at higher knowledge shows that the reconstruction methods for the most part preforms worse than the linear basecase, we can conclude that the signal is quite stochastic and not as periodic as one would hope.

### 3.3.2 Frequency Comparison

An other metric to compare is how well the frequency response is preserved in the reconstruction, since this is often more important that the true value itself for smaller devices whit many states like computers. Such devices is often recognised by there usage pattern and not the true power draw. By looking at the Fourier transform of the original signal and the reconstructed power of the different frequencies was compared.

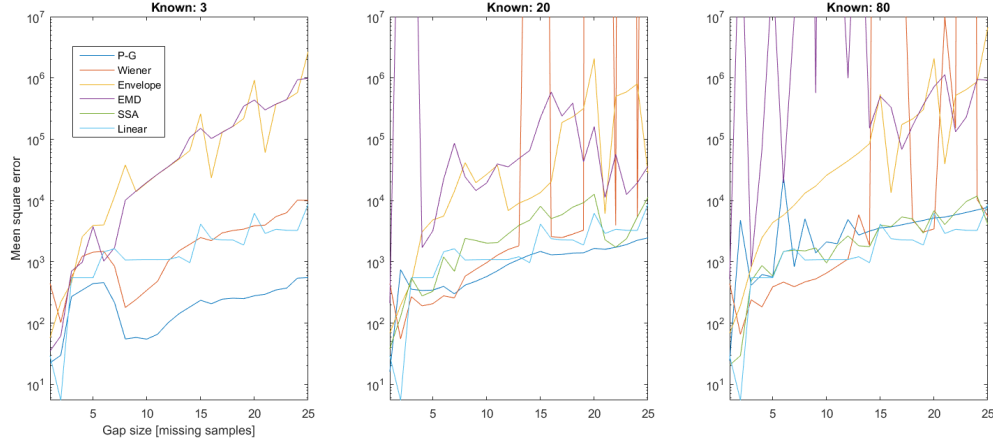


Figure 3.6: Frequency comparison of the reconstruction methods

As shown on figure 3.6 both the Wiener and the Papoulis-Gerchberg Algorithm seems to preform well. Like for the sample comparison the most successful reconstruction seems to be at low knowledge.

### 3.3.3 Jitter Comparison

The jitter is a different metric as it tells how well we have modelled the "noise" of the signal. In a jitter analysis the signal is thought of as a slowly changing signal with a faster noise signal embedded in it.

The slow signal is assumed to be found by taking a low pass filter over the signal to filter out the noise. The jitter analysis measures the power in the jitter from this signal as illustrated on figure 3.7.

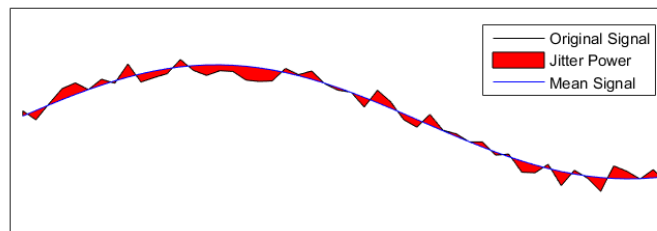


Figure 3.7: Jitter Power Illustration

It the estimated jitter power have been compared with the real jitter power for all the reconstruction methods.

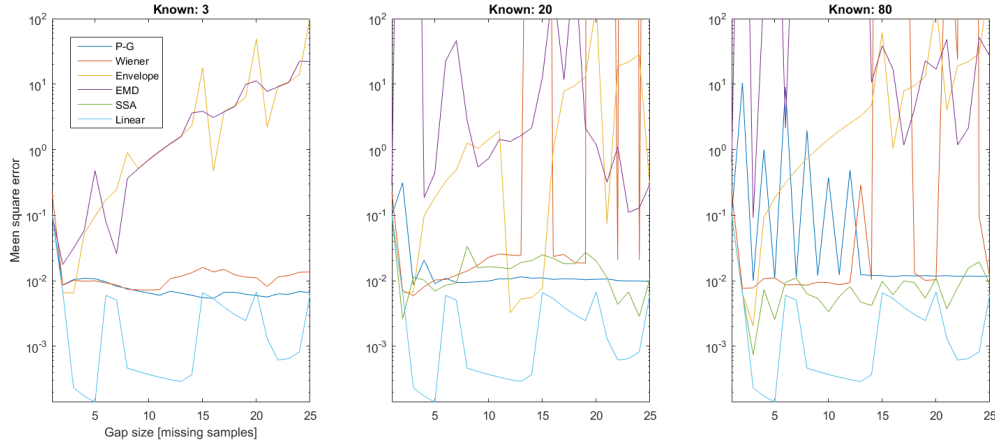


Figure 3.8: Jitter Power comparison of the reconstruction methods

As seen on figure 3.8 does non of the methods model the noise very well, as is to be expected due to the nature of the selected methods. This is will probably not be a problem for the SmartHG data, since it is sampled at a very low sample rate, and noise therefore is not likely to be used as a parameter. For data there have been sampled with high frequency it have shown that the noise created by the different appliances can be used to detect them [14].

# Appliance Recognition 4

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Appliance recognition and load disaggregation is some of the key aspects in non intrusive load monitoring (NILM). The main purpose of the NILM approach is to better understand the power usage in home, and help the different household to more optimal power savings. This is done by informing the residents about the power consumption of individual appliances. It is shown that informing a household about its usages pattern can lead to savings [find a ref for this](#). This makes the basis for load disaggregation, where appliance specific load is guessed based on the main meter load. This enables the user to know what uses the energy and when.

One other aspect of NILM is event detection. Sometime the actual consumption of an appliance is not as important as when it was used, and for how long. This is a simpler task than guessing the true consumption, and is for some applications a better approach. As an example is this kind of information sufficient if we want to track the activity of a elderly person in a assisted living situation [find a ref for this](#).

## 4.1 NILM Concepts And Challenges

The aim of NILM is to partition the hole house consumption data in to appliance specific consumption.

$$P(t) = p_1(t) + p_2(t) + \dots + p_n(t) \quad (4.1)$$

This can be seen as in equation 4.1 where  $P(t)$  is the total consumption at time  $t$ , and  $p_n(t)$  is the consumption of appliance  $n$  at time  $t$ . The aim is to partition  $P(t)$  back to the different appliance specific consumptions. In order to structure the problem we categorise the appliances in 3 groups [ref her til a](#):

Type-I: Appliances that only have 2 states corresponding to on/off. This could be a lamp or a water boiler.

Type-II: These are appliances with multiple states, and can be modelled as a finite state machine. Many modern devices such as TV's, computers and washing machines fall in this category.

**Type-III:** These are appliances is referred to as Continuously Variable Devices. These devices have a variable power draw and is impossible to model as a finite state machine. This could be appliances like power drills, and dimmer lights. These are by far the hardest for the NILM algorithms to detect.

**Type-IV:** These are a special kind of appliances that are always on and consume energy at a constant rate. Such devices could be smoke detectors and TV receivers.

Some of the different appliance types is illustrated on figure 4.1.

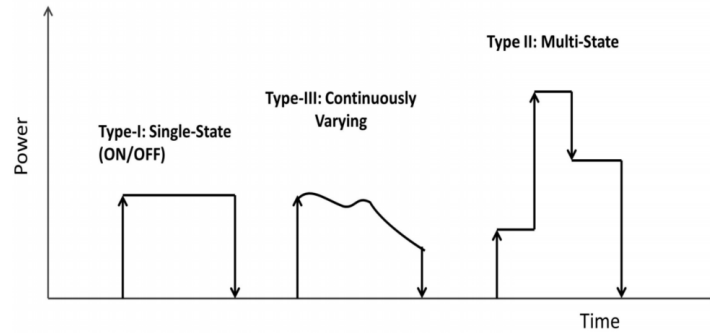


Figure 4.1: Appliance types. Source [14]

The appliances in Type-IV is not a particular researched area, since it does not give the user much information to calculate savings from. These appliances is often using very little energy, and must not be turn off at will.

Type-I and Type-II are very used, and can cover all most any appliance. In the area of event detection are the most common approach to see all appliances as Type-I appliances and detecting on/off events. Most appliances today is Type-II appliances due to growing amount of complicated electronics that are embedded in them. Then there are devices that are Type-II but most of the time act like Type-I appliances. An example of this is the vacuum cleaner. On most vacuum cleaners you are able to change the suction intensity, which makes it type two. But most people don't change this very often, so the energy usage looks more like a Type-I appliance.

#### 4.1.1 NILM Features

For data disaggregation it is common to use method based in machine learning and optimization. The approach is to first extract features from the dataset, and then train or validate by using this features.

In NILM the features can be sub categorised in steady state, transient state and non-Traditional features. These categories can be further expanded as shown on figure 4.2.

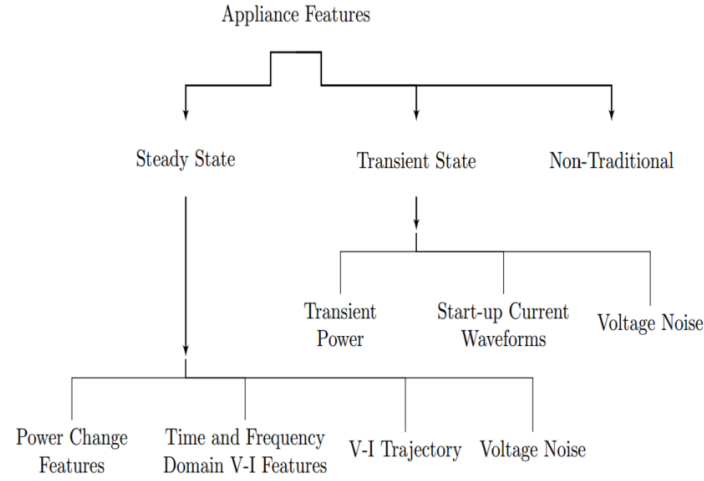


Figure 4.2: Feature types. Source [14]

Steady state features are features that can be extracted when the signal is in the stable state. Features that are often extracted in this state are "Power Change" which is the jump in power or reactive power usage. Time and frequency analysis is often used on the voltage and power signals of the meters. It is shown that analysing the harmonics in signals is a powerful way of making appliance detection [15]. The trajectory between voltage and power usage is a good feature. This can be used to detect the reactive power of a signal, which is a give-away for inductive loads. Some researchers have shown that different appliances make different noise profiles on the main line. Unfortunately, does this kind of recognition require an extremely high sampling rate [16].

The transient state of an appliance is a short state that comes when an appliance switches between steady states. In this state there often are appliance semi-unique waveforms in the current and voltage domain. The noise generated on the mainline in this state is also a good indication of the appliance type.

There also exists a series of non-traditional features, that is used in special types of algorithms. One of them is based on matching the power usage profile to geometrical figures, and using the series of figures to recognize an appliance [14].

Many of the above features require a high sample rate in kHz or MHz span in order to be effective. This is often not the case, since it is normal smart meters that are providing the data. For a smart meter a sample rate at 1 Hz would be considered fast, and for many applications this is down to 0.03 Hz or slower. It is therefore common only to use the steady state features, and most of the time only the power change feature, which looks at changes in power, reactive power, current or voltage.

#### 4.1.2 Learning Strategy

When you have extracted features from the signal there are several algorithms that can be selected for the training. They can roughly be split up in two categories: optimization algorithms and machine learning algorithms. The optimization algorithms rely on a database of appliance

info, and tries to find the subset of the database that are most likely to be in use.

$$M = \underset{x \in \mathbb{P}(D)}{\operatorname{argmin}} \left( \left| \sum_{i=0}^I x_i - \hat{y} \right| \right) \quad (4.2)$$

This is illustrated in equation 4.2 were a set of appliances  $M$  that correspond to the measured signal  $\hat{y}$  needed to be found. This is achieved by searching the known database of all appliances  $D$ . This is done by taking the powerset of the database and finding the subset that minimises the error. This approach is fine for a small amounts of appliances, but for large databases and many appliances in use at the same time, does this take far to long to be practical.

Due to this, most researchers use pattern recognition techniques instead. These have the benefits of being more scalable, and be usable even if only parts of the device database is known. There are generality two approaches to pattern recognition: supervised and non-supervised. In supervised training it is assumed that the ground truth of your system is known. For a NILM application this means that the true consumption of the appliance need to be available for the training process. This means that a sub meter must be placed to measure the appliances individually, which often is costly and time consuming. In non-supervised methods, is only the main meter readings available, and no information about the appliances are known. This type of algorithms will usually try to cluster the readings in distinct groups cosponsoring to a guess of what appliances that correspond to the reading. Fore this kind of training it is easy to collect a big training set, but it requires the groups to be manually labelled afterwards.

Most algorithms are based on clustering techniques and hidden Markov models. Hidden Markov models have proven very effective when classifying Type-I and Type-II appliances. This is due to its ability to model state changes as a imported part of the classification. It is shown that using clustering techniques can greatly improve the classification, and reduce the training time. Artificial neural networks is also showing great promise, and is a topic that is currently in focus by many NILM researchers. More on this in section 4.2.

### 4.1.3 NILM Challenges

There are many challenges in NILM. One is the Type-III appliances. Due to there varying, and at time random, energy consumption it is hard to fit them to a behavioural model. This is made further harder by the low sample rate. Many great features of the appliances is hidden due to the low sample rate most data is collected with[14].

A other problem is the "heavy consumer problem". In a house there are some appliances that require a lot of energy when they are on, such as stoves, air conditioners and refrigerators. These is often refereed to as the heavy consumers. Then there is the appliances that consumes very little energy like laptops, DVD players and routers. The heavy consumer problem is that the heavy consumers is so dominant that they make it hard to track the power signature of little consumers. This is why many researchers only focus on the top 10 heavy consumers when during NILM applications [17].

## 4.2 Related Work

There are several interesting problems and approaches being researched in the NILM community in the moment. One is the lag of a good bases of comparison, both to compare the performance and the training time of a solution. It was a common practise that each researcher uses his own dataset, or an artificial lab setting to validate the results. This made it hard to compare the algorithm to others, and raised questions about the correctness of the findings.

To accommodate this problem the NILM-Toolkit was created. This is a collection of python library's, that create a framework to evaluate NILM solutions. It supports a wide range of known datasets that can be used to train or validate an algorithm. It also comes with two benchmark algorithms to be used to compare a new algorithm against. The NILM-Toolkit will help researchers to easier share and compare algorithms in the future[17].

Another framework to accomplish better comparison and sharing is the NILM-eval framework. This is based on Matlab and supports algorithms to be written in either Matlab or in python. The NILM-eval and the NILM-Toolkit is created to solve the same problem, and is compatible with each other in the sense that the interface for algorithms are the same[18].

Deep neural networks have last yeas improved the are of computer vision and speech recognition remarkably. NILM researchers are starting to look in to if similar techniques can be used to improve data disaggregation. Neural nets have like hidden Markov models the ability to model state changes. Furthermore they are capable of automatically finding important features in the data. Preliminary tests shows that a deep neural net can out preform the classic hidden Markov model approaches. The downside with the deep neural network is that it takes weeks to train, and there are thousands of parameters there can be changed. This makes the task of finding the global minimum hard, and the method is very prone to be stuck in a local minimum. The method is currently being used on heavy consumers[19]. Current research is looking that its potential in solving the heavy consumer problem, but no definite conclusions is yet to be reached.

Many approaches is supervised, since this kind of approach is better at separating the appliances. But this require that you first build a database with information about all the appliances. To have this prior knowledge of the system seems unrealistic in a application setting, where it is most likely you do not know anything about the house. To combat this various unsupervised methods have been developed. The focus in this kind of studies have been load separation for the sake of making power savings, or to inform the electric companies to help them create a more stable electric grid. There are several good algorithms for this today that support this purpose. For event detection and user habits analysis it is still most common to use the supervised approaches [20]. This paper will therefore focus on the supervised approaches.



### 4.3 Recognition Methods

Methods based on Hidden Markov models is currently the most popular method for NILM. Three method is selected to be validated in this paper. The methods are selected since they are often refereed to in literature, and is often used as benchmark algorithms. All of the algorithms is based on hidden Markov models in different configurations. In the following subsections will the algorithm be briefly explained.

#### 4.3.1 Factorial Hidden Markov Models

The hidden Markov models has proven to be one of the most used tools to create probabilistic models based on time series data. This is done by seeing the system as a series of observable states  $Y_t$ , and a series of hidden states  $S_t$  [21]. It is assumed that there excites a probabilistic relation between the observations  $Y_t$  and a sequence of hidden states  $S_t$ . This is implemented as a first order model, which implies that the current hidden state  $S_t$  is only depended on the previously state  $S_{t-1}$  and the current observed state  $Y_t$ . It is the dependency to previously states that makes it grate for time series.

$$P(\{S_t, Y_t\}) = P(S_1)P(Y_1|S_1) \prod_{t=2}^T P(S_t|S_{t-1})P(Y_t|S_t) \quad (4.3)$$

The joint probability for a specific hidden state  $S_t$  have caused the output  $Y_t$  can be seen in equation 4.3.  $P(Y_t|S_t)$  is the observation probability, which shows that conditional probability for  $Y_t$  is outputted given the hidden state  $S_t$ . The probability for a state change is given by the transition property  $P(S_t|S_{t-1})$ .

Factorial hidden Markov models is an extension of this classic hidden Markov model where there exists several hidden state chains that all contribute to the observed output. This can be seen as an extension to equation 4.3 where the hidden states  $S_t$  can be seen as a series of states as shown on equation 4.4 where  $M$  is the number of chains.

$$S_t = \{S_t^{(1)}, ..., S_t^{(m)}, ..., S_t^{(M)}\} \quad (4.4)$$

This can also be shown graphically on figure 4.3. Here we see how three chains all contribute to one output.

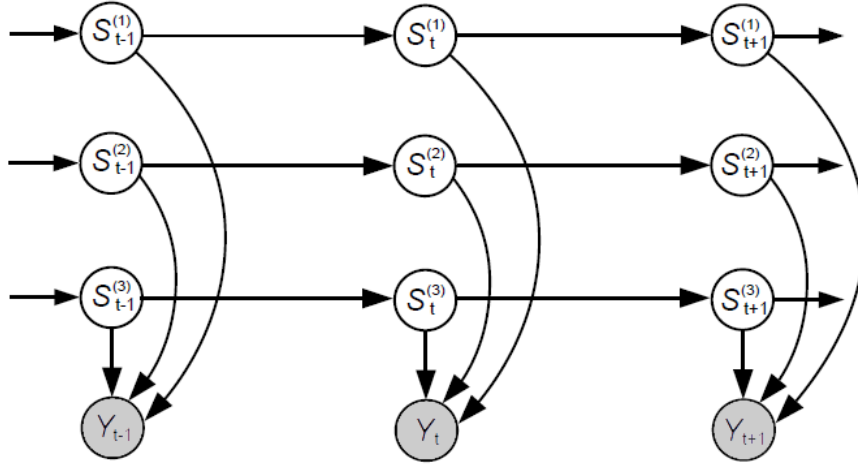


Figure 4.3: Factorial hidden Markov model illustration. Source [21]

As a extra constrain must each hidden state in in each chain only is depended on the previously state in the chain, and do not depend on the hidden state of other chains. This makes the state transition probability to be defined as in equation 4.5.

$$P(S_t|S_{t-1}) = \prod_{m=1}^M P\left(S_t^{(m)}|S_{t-1}^{(m)}\right) \quad (4.5)$$

The observed stated can therefore be seen as the sum of fractions of the different chains.

In this implementation there is normally used only two or three states, since most appliances is seen as Type-I or Type-II appliances. There is trained one chain for each of the appliances plus one that is called the other chain. This chain is to allow for the other appliances that are not taken in to the model and noise. The model can therefore be used to validate for a given output what is the probability that a given appliance is contributing to the output. The concrete implementation for this algorithm has been borrowed from the NILM-Toolkit [17].

### 4.3.2 Parson

The Parson algorithm is a variant of the Kolter and Jaakkola algorithm[22]. The algorithm is designed to be a semi-supervised learning algorithms. This means that the algorithm does not need to train on the data from the concrete house prior to deployment, but it still requires some prior knowledge. The idea is to have a database of general appliance models, that tells how specific appliances most likely will behave. This model will be able to detect the device, and do some unsupervised special training to better fit the concrete appliance.

The algorithm is based on a kind of HMM called "difference HMM" since they take the step difference in the aggregated data and use as the observed output  $Y_t$ . In a normal hidden Markov

model there is only emitted one output for each hidden state in a chain. In the Parson algorithm the model is changed to output two states from the hidden states  $X_t$  and  $Y$ . This creates a model structure that can be graphically illustrated as on figure 4.4[23].

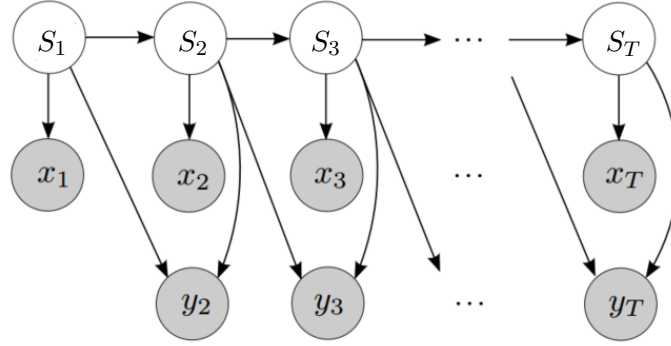


Figure 4.4: Parson hidden Markov model structure. Source [23]

The  $Y_t$  is corresponding to the step in power that is observed since the last sample. It is assumed that the only thing that can cause a step in power if is an appliance changes states from one to another. The  $X_t$  is the mean constant power draw of the state. This is used to filter out the appliance if the power draw observed is smaller than this threshold.

It is assumed that the power consumption of a state in the general model of an appliance can be modelled as a Gaussian. This can be illustrated as in equation 4.6.

$$P(X_t|S_t) \rightarrow \mathcal{N}(\mu_{S_t}, \sigma_{S_t}^2) \quad (4.6)$$

This shows how the power draw of a appliance is modelled as Gaussians. The step change emission probability  $Y_t$ , can be seen as a Gaussian that is created from the change between two states as shown in equation 4.7.

$$P(Y_t|S_t, S_{t-1}) \rightarrow \mathcal{N}(\mu_{S_t} - \mu_{S_{t-1}}, \sigma_{S_t}^2 + \sigma_{S_{t-1}}^2) \quad (4.7)$$

To model the constraint that the meter only can be on if the mean power draw is present in the signal is a additional constraint added to the emission probability. This constrain is

mathematically described in equation 4.8.

$$P(w_{S_t} \leq x_t | S_t) = \int_{-\infty}^{x_t} \mathcal{N}(\mu_{S_t}, \sigma_{S_t}^2) dw \quad (4.8)$$

Where  $x_t$  is the measured power consumption and  $w_{S_t}$  is the appliance power draw constraint. This makes the probability going towards zero if the total power draw is too little and towards 1 if there is more than enough power. This is a loose constraint since too high power draw also could be created by other appliances. To minimise the impact this has for the algorithm the mean power draw subtracted from the data before other appliances is searched for.

In the implementation validated in this paper all appliances are modelled as Type-I. The algorithm is allowed to train on the house data, to better fit the general models to the appliances.

### 4.3.3 Weiss

The algorithm proposed by Weiss called "AppliSense" is another approach that does not use Markov models[24]. The philosophy is that some appliances like lamps and kettles are purely resistive, where others like washing machines and air conditions are more inductive and some appliances like laptops are more capacitive. By measuring not only the power consumption, but also the amount of reactive power it is revealed if there are inductive or capacitive appliances.

The algorithm is supervised since it requires a signature database to be created prior to usage. The signature database consists of how the changes will be in reactive and real power for a specific device when it is turned on and off. In their paper the authors show a method where this database can be created of a user, by using a smart-phone application and turning on and off appliances in the house, and inputting the information in the mobile application[24]. In this paper the database is created by data collected from the sub-meters measuring only the devices.

The algorithm looks for significant power changes in the data. If a change is found it is assumed to be an on or off event. The change is now compared to all the values in the database. If a close match is found it is assumed to be this device, if not it is a unknown device. This limits the approach to Type-I appliances, and the algorithm requires the reactive power to be measured.

## 4.4 The ECO Dataset

The experiments in this section will be done on the "Electricity Consumption and Occupancy" (ECO) dataset [18][25]. The dataset consists of six houses that have been equipped with sub-meters on selected meters and the main meter. The data is collected in Switzerland in the period June 2012 to January 2012.

The data is sampled with a resolution of 1 Hz on both the sub-meters and the main meter. On the main meter both real and reactive power are measured, where on the sub-meter it is only the real power.

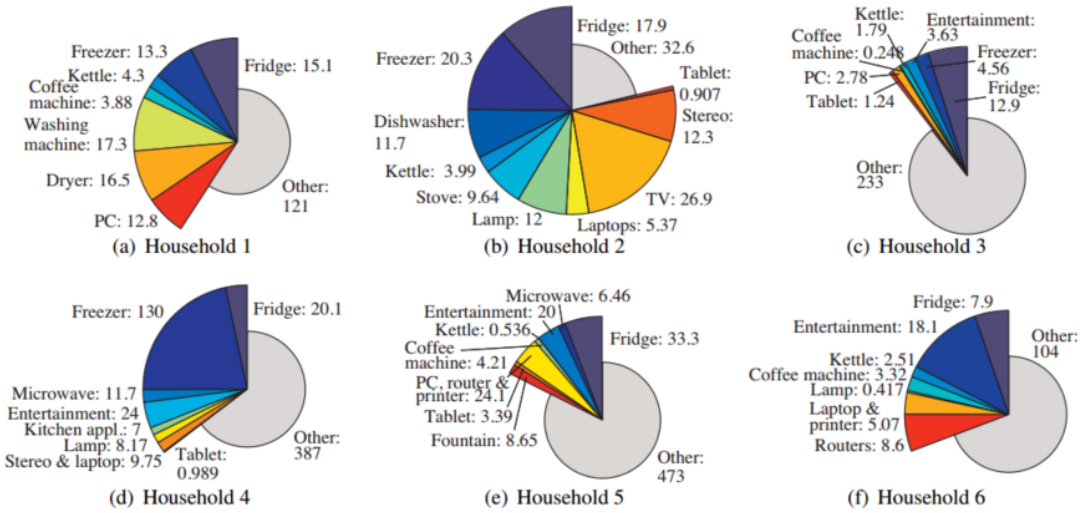


Figure 4.5: House energy distribution. Source [18]

On figure 4.5 is shown how different appliances are responsible for the energy consumption in the different houses, in the ECO dataset. Here we see that for house two is more than 75% of the energy usages accounted for by the sub-meters. This makes house two a preferred candidate for experiments, since we know who is the heavy consumers and who is the little consumers.

## 4.5 Validation of Methods

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### 4.5.1 Sample rate experiment

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### 4.5.2 Gap filling experiment

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# SmartHG Data Recognition 5

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5.1 Non Reconstructed Recognition

5.2 Reconstructed Recognition

5.3 Results

# **NILM As an Application** 6

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# Discussion 7

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# Conclusion 8

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