



Resiliency improvement through grid forming inverter

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Abstract

Natural disasters may result in grid outages, which can impact critical loads. Thus, a resilience enhancement-oriented critical load restoration strategy is required. As transmission lines are exposed to these events, critical loads cannot rely on the grid. The microgrid must be able to deliver power to these critical loads during such events. In this scenario, the restoration of critical loads is facilitated by a microgrid, which monitors voltage level disruptions at the point of common coupling (PCC). These disruptions, such as a voltage drop of up to 60%, may occur due to faults or disturbances elsewhere in the network. When the voltage at the PCC drops drastically, an islanding condition arises, during which the inverters should ride through the low voltage (LVRT) condition for up to 0.4 s. A detailed model encompassing both grid-forming and grid-following inverters has been created and simulated using MATLAB. The model accurately replicates the dynamic behavior of active and reactive power supplied to critical loads during grid disturbances. For instance, in the event of a grid fault, the active power delivered to critical loads recovers from 3.26 to 9.05 kW, while reactive power recovers from 1.07 to 2.96 kVAR, ensuring a robust and resilient critical load restoration. The proposed approach is validated by controlling inverters in the microgrid to enhance overall system resilience during disturbances.

1 Introduction

The rapid incorporation of renewable energy sources into the power grid is enhancing the significance of power electronics (Khan et al. 2020; Lin et al. 2020), which presents difficulties for grid operators in maintaining system frequency and rotational inertia. These may cause voltage imbalances as well as frequency imbalances which may lead to a complete blackout (Bose et al. 2020). Therefore the improvement of the resilience (Chanda and Srivastava 2016; Mandal et al. 2021) of the system and

restoration of critical loads (Gope et al. 2022) after any operational failure is the biggest challenge. Two inverters are specifically designed for the microgrid. When connected to the grid, Inverter 1 operates in grid-following mode (GFL) and transitions to grid-forming mode (GFM) when operating in islanded mode. Conversely, Inverter 2 is set up to operate in grid-following mode (GFL) whether it is linked to the grid and operating in islanded conditions (D'silva et al. 2023). Inverter 1 is able to sense the islanded condition, and immediately the mode of control is changed from GFL to GFM.

D Bose et al. (Bose et al. 2022) examined the use of blockchain in distributed energy markets, highlighting its ability to facilitate peer-to-peer (P2P) trading without intermediaries, thus reducing transaction costs and increasing efficiency. A case study conducted within this framework demonstrates a tangible improvement in local power system resilience (Bose et al. 2024). This approach highlights the importance of real-time monitoring and adaptive battery operation in ensuring reliable power supply in the face of growing external threats (Ungerland et al. 2023). D. Bose et al. (Bose et al. 2023) partition the grid into manageable sections or voltage control areas to enable more flexible and effective control. A. Selim et al. (Selim et al. 2024) explores the use of grid-forming inverters (GFMs) as a solution for enhancing the stability of low-

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inertia distribution systems. F. Sadeque et al. (Sadeque et al. 2024) proposed a novel method that allows inverters to autonomously detect when the utility grid is available for reconnection without relying on external communication.

1.1 Grid connection of inverter

A two-level voltage source inverter has been used here, as the AC side of the voltage source converter provides two levels of outputs $+\frac{V_{DC}}{2}$ and $-\frac{V_{DC}}{2}$. The Voltage Source Converter (VSC) has the ability to transmit power in both directions. The realization of a two-level voltage source inverter can be done by the average modeling of the inverter. Figure 1 depicts the DC-AC half-bridge converter. It consists of two switches, one upper switch (T^+) and one lower switch (T^-). The converter is connected to two ideal voltage sources with a magnitude of $+\frac{V_{DC}}{2}$. The DC midpoint is chosen as the reference node for the measurement of voltage. The AC side of the converter is then linked to the grid via a reactor, which is symbolized by the series RL branch. This reactor will also act as a filter for the AC side of the inverter since it contains harmonics. The power flow direction from the converter to the grid is assumed to be positive.

1.2 Pulse-width modulation

The average output of the AC side of the converter relies upon the duty ratio of the switches. It is mandatory that two switches in a leg should not be in the ON position simultaneously in order to prevent a short circuit of the DC source. Since $f_{sw} \gg f_{grid}$, assuming a constant value, V_{grid} remains unchanged throughout a period of T_{sw} . Here, f_{sw} represents the converter's switching frequency, f_{grid} denotes the fundamental frequency of the grid, and V_{grid}

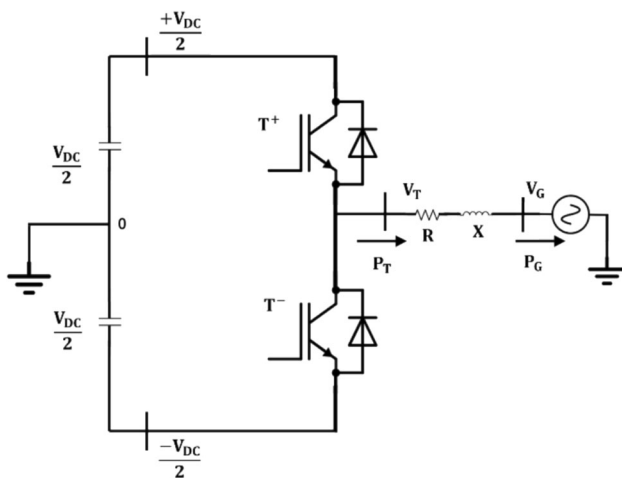


Fig. 1 Average model of the converter

represents the instantaneous value of the grid voltage. From the Fig. 2, the average terminal voltage of VSC is derived as

$$V_{T_{avg}} = m(t) \frac{V_{DC}}{2}; 0 \leq m(t) \leq 1 \quad (1)$$

where m is the three-phase balanced modulating signal.

Therefore, the average terminal voltage of the VSC in three phases can be written as:

$$\begin{aligned} V_{T_a} &= m_a(t) \frac{V_{DC}}{2} \\ V_{T_b} &= m_b(t) \frac{V_{DC}}{2} \\ V_{T_c} &= m_c(t) \frac{V_{DC}}{2} \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

2 Power transfer control across two AC systems

The active power flow between two sinusoidal AC sources that have the same fundamental frequencies interconnected with inductance is given by the equation:

$$P = V_{grid} I_{S1} \cos(\theta) = \frac{V_{inv} V_{grid}}{X_S} \sin \delta \quad (3)$$

The reactive power flow is given by the equation

$$Q = V_{grid} I_{S1} \sin(\theta) = \frac{V_{grid}^2}{X_S} \left[1 - \frac{V_{inv}}{V_{grid}} \cos \delta \right] \quad (4)$$

V_{inv} represents the root mean square (RMS) value of the converter output voltage when it operates as an inverter. V_{grid} represents the RMS value of the grid voltage. X_S represents the reactance at the fundamental frequency of the power supply. δ represents the phase difference between the inverter output and the grid voltage phasors, shown in Fig. 3.

The preceding two equations demonstrate that the necessary active power and reactive power flow can be attained by regulating the phase difference and magnitudes of two voltage phasors. From Fig. 3,

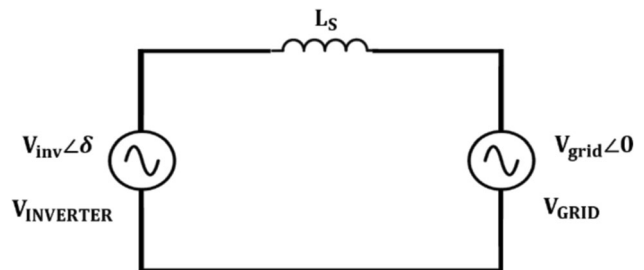


Fig. 2 Inverter interfaced with the grid through reactance

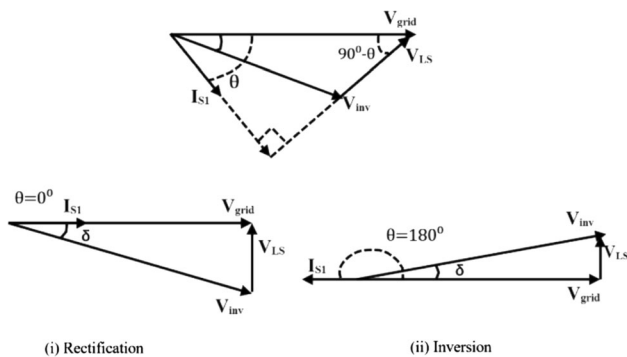


Fig. 3 Phasor diagram showing (i) Rectification and (ii) inversion at UPF

$$V_{grid} = V_{inv} + V_{LS}$$

and

$$V_{LS} = j\omega L_s I_1 \quad (5)$$

V_{LS} represents the voltage decrease across the reactor X_s , while I_1 represents the basic component of the current.

According to Fig. 4, the flow of reactive power is determined by the respective magnitudes of the two voltages, whereas the flow of active power is determined by the relative phase difference between them.

PWM is used to regulate the terminal fundamental voltage of the converter, assuming that the DC bus voltage remains constant. By altering the modulation signal, one may effectively regulate both the active and reactive power, as indicated in (1).

3 Control of converter

The dynamical equations of the AC side of the converter (Harnefors et al. 2021) can be obtained from the average model of the converter, as shown in Fig. 1.

$$V_{T_{avg}} - V_{grid} = L \frac{di}{dt} + Ri \quad (6)$$

From (6), i is the state variable, $V_{T_{avg}}$ is the control variable, and V_{grid} is the disturbance input. Power transferred to the grid is the output which is given by

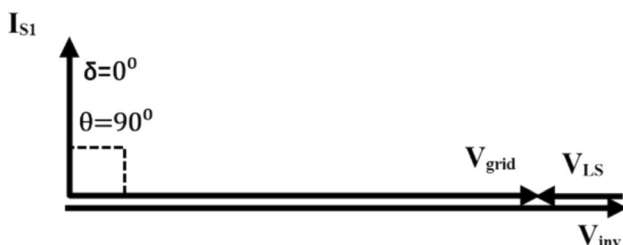


Fig. 4 Phasor diagram of reactive power transfer

$P_S = V_{grid} * i$. From Eq. (1), control variable $V_{T_{avg}}$ is proportional to the modulating signal. So, the control objective is to regulate i at a desired reference value. Figure 5 represents the closed-loop structure to control the value of i at the reference value.

The error signal e is compensated by the compensator $K(s)$ and provides the control signal u . For simplicity, $V_{T_{avg}}$ is written as V_T and V_{grid} is written as V_g from now onwards. In a balanced three-phase system, (6) can be written as (Fig. 6):

$$\begin{aligned} V_{T(a)} - V_{(a)} &= L \frac{di(a)}{dt} + Ri(a) \\ V_{T(b)} - V_{(b)} &= L \frac{di(b)}{dt} + Ri(b) \\ V_{T(c)} - V_{(c)} &= L \frac{di(c)}{dt} + Ri(c) \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

From (7), in order to have a closed loop control the instantaneous AC voltage and the current flow need to be monitored. In order to reduce the complexity, control is performed in dq-frame.

In dq-frame,

$$\begin{aligned} P(t) &= \frac{3}{2} [v_d(t)i_d(t) + v_q(t)i_q(t)] \\ Q(t) &= \frac{3}{2} [-v_d(t)i_q(t) + v_q(t)i_d(t)] \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

If $v_q = 0$, active power and reactive power will be directly proportional to i_d and i_q respectively. This allows simpler control for the P/Q control of a three-phase Voltage source converter.

4 Grid following control

In (Rocabert et al. 2012), different types of converter control were discussed. It reveals the detailed analysis of control parameters during the steady state and transient state for the application of microgrids. From (7) and selection of $\rho(t)$ at $(\omega t + \theta_0)$, following equations can be deduced,

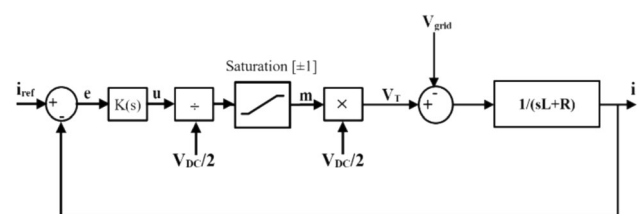


Fig. 5 Closed loop current control of VSC

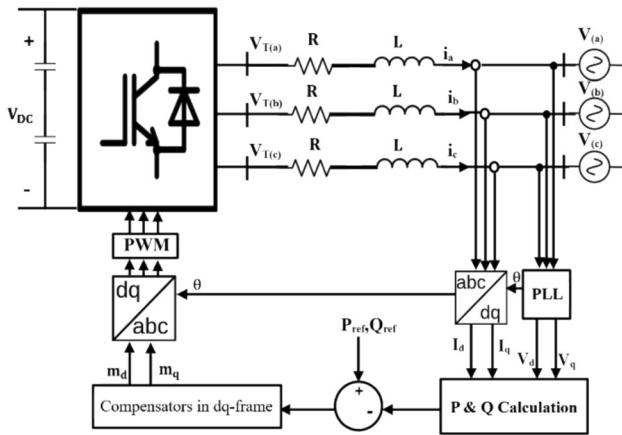


Fig. 6 Current controlled P/Q controller in dq-frame

$$\begin{aligned} L \frac{di_d}{dt} &= L\omega_0(t)i_q - Ri_d + V_{Td} - V_{gd} \\ L \frac{di_q}{dt} &= -L\omega_0(t)i_d - Ri_q + V_{Tq} - V_{gq} \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

Due to the term $L\omega_0$, i_d and i_q are coupled. It can be decoupled by, determining modulating signals m_d and m_q .

$$\begin{aligned} m_d(t) &= \frac{2}{V_{DC}} [u_d - L\omega_0(t)i_q + V_{gd}] \\ m_q(t) &= \frac{2}{V_{DC}} [u_q - L\omega_0(t)i_d + V_{gq}] \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

where u_d and u_q are two new control inputs. Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} V_{Td}(t) &= [u_d - L\omega_0(t)i_q + V_{gd}] \\ V_{Tq}(t) &= [u_q - L\omega_0(t)i_d + V_{gq}] \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

where,

$$\begin{aligned} u_d &= L \frac{di_d}{dt} + Ri_d \\ u_q &= L \frac{di_q}{dt} + Ri_q \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

A grid-following inverter operates as a current source that runs in parallel with a high impedance, which is subsequently linked to the grid. Therefore, it requires a generator that can create a grid voltage. Any fault or disturbances in the system which may require the isolation of the converter from the grid, results in the maloperation of the inverter. During the islanded condition, if the grid-following converter is supported by another grid-forming converter.

5 Grid forming control

The control of the converter during islanded conditions is depicted in Moubarek Bouzid et al. (2016). Grid forming control is used for maintaining the amplitude and frequency of the load voltage even if some disturbances are present in the load current. Since the VSC is interfaced with the load through an RLC filter which consists of a series RL branch and a shunt capacitor. The capacitance can also provide an impedance to the high-frequency current harmonics.

Dynamic equations of the load voltage are given by the following equations:

$$\begin{aligned} C \frac{dV_{ga}}{dt} &= i_a - i_{La} \\ C \frac{dV_{gb}}{dt} &= i_b - i_{Lb} \\ C \frac{dV_{gc}}{dt} &= i_c - i_{Lc} \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

In dq-frame, Eq. (13) can be written as:

$$\begin{aligned} C \frac{dV_{gd}}{dt} &= C\omega_0 V_{gq} + i_d - i_{Ld} \\ C \frac{dV_{gq}}{dt} &= -C\omega_0 V_{gd} + i_q - i_{Lq} \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

The coupling due to V_{gd} and V_{gq} are decoupled with feed forward compensation, thus V_{gd} and V_{gq} are controlled by i_{dref} and i_{qref} respectively. From Eq. (14),

$$\begin{aligned} u_d &= C \frac{dV_{gd}}{dt} \\ u_q &= C \frac{dV_{gq}}{dt} \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

where u_d and u_q are two new control inputs. Therefore, Eq. (14) can be written as:

$$\begin{aligned} i_{dref} &= u_d - C\omega V_{gq} + i_{Ld} \\ i_{qref} &= u_q - C\omega V_{gd} + i_{Lq} \end{aligned} \quad (16)$$

These dq-frame current reference values are now acting as the reference values of the current control loop. The grid-forming inverters operate in a closed loop with desired AC output voltage V^* and frequency f^* . They function as a perfect voltage source connected in series with an impedance.

6 LCL filters in grid-tied inverters

Passive filters play a vital role in ensuring that grid-connected inverters comply with grid rules. The inverter output voltage and current are going to have ripple components

(Kim and Kim 2019). This ripple needs to be attenuated or eliminated. These waveforms need to be nearby sinusoidal. The L filter can attenuate the harmonics but cannot eliminate higher-order harmonics. LC filter will eliminate higher-order harmonics to a further extent. However, the LCL filter is more cost-efficient as it reduces the size of the inductor. However, the design of an LCL filter is far more intricate than that of a L filter (Tang et al. 2015; Liserre et al. 2005; Guzman et al. 2019).

The suggested control of the voltage source converter utilizes the pulse width modulation approach. The harmonics from the VSC need to be within the standards for maintaining the power quality of the grid. LCL filter is a third-order LPF that consists of an LC filter and an L filter. The presence of resonance creates problems that impact both the power quality and the stability of the inverter. The resonant frequency needs to be calculated for designing the LCL filter.

The LCL filter comprises three components. The inverter side inductor was assigned to reducing the amplitude of inverter current harmonics, while the grid side inductor is responsible for mitigating grid side current harmonics. Additionally, a capacitive filter is employed to eliminate higher-order harmonics. The ideal selection of the grid side inductor and inverter side inductor is made. It's a general practice to design the inverter side inductor to be slightly greater than the grid side inductor.

The goal of the filter design is to have an optimal filter inductance ratio, current ripple within acceptable limits, resonance frequency, and reactive power absorbed by the filter.

6.1 LCL filter design

Considering the converter and the grid have symmetrical phase voltages in each phase, the three-phase system can be analyzed as a single-phase system.

Figure 7 describes the LCL filter configuration considering the internal resistance of inductors of the filter in a single-phase system.

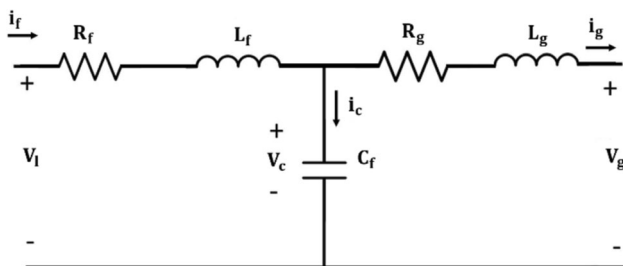


Fig. 7 LCL filter configuration

$$\begin{aligned} i_f &= \frac{V_I - V_c}{sL_f + R_f} \\ i_g &= \frac{V_c - V_g}{sL_g + R_g} \\ i_c &= sC_f V_c \\ i_c &= i_f - i_g \end{aligned} \quad (17)$$

The above equations can be derived from Fig. 7 to create a block diagram for the LCL filter shown in Fig. 8.

The transfer function of the LCL filter can be expressed as the quotient of the grid side current (i_g) and the output voltage of the inverter (V_I). The equation for this transfer function is as follows:

$$G(s)_{LCL} = \frac{i_g(s)}{V_I(s)} \quad (18)$$

Let $\tau_f = L_f/R_f$, and $\tau_g = L_g/R_g$ be the time constants of the inductors from grid side and inverter. If $\tau_f = \tau_g = \tau$, then G_{LCL} is

$$G(s)_{LCL} = \frac{1/r(1-r)L^2C_f}{(s + \frac{1}{\tau})(s^2 + 2\xi\omega_{res}s + \omega_{res}^2)} \quad (19)$$

where,

$$\omega_{res} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{r(1-r)LC_f}} \quad (20)$$

$$\xi = \frac{1}{2\omega_{res}\tau} \quad (21)$$

Here, $L = L_f + L_g$, and $r = L_f/L$.

The selection of the LCL filter parameters is determined by the converter's power rating, switching frequency, and basic grid frequency. The filter impedances must be represented in terms of the base values.

$$G(s)_{LCL} = \frac{\frac{1}{L_f L_g C_f}}{s^3 + \left[\left(\frac{1}{\tau_f} + \frac{1}{\tau_g}\right)\right]s^2 + \left[\left(\frac{1}{\tau_f \tau_g}\right) + \left(\frac{L_f + L_g}{L_f L_g C_f}\right)\right]s + \left[\left(\frac{1}{\tau_f L_g C_f}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{\tau_g L_f C_f}\right)\right]} \quad (22)$$

Figure 9 depicts the design for the LCL filter and bode diagram.

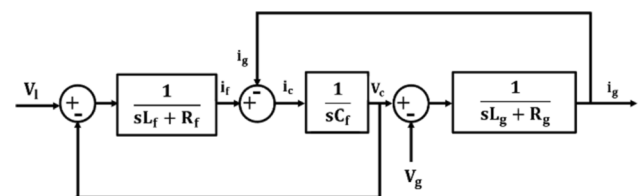


Fig. 8 Block diagram for LCL filter

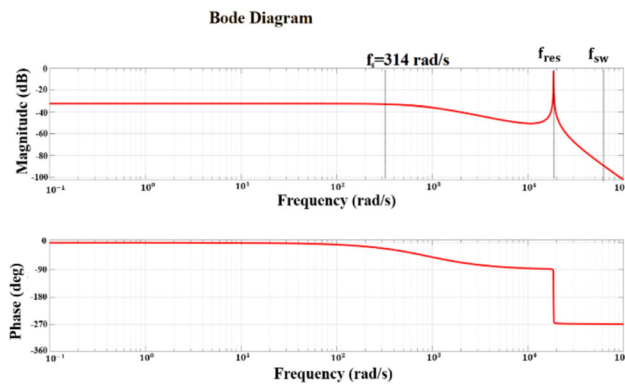


Fig. 9 Bode diagram of $G(s)$

$$Z_b = \frac{(V_n)^2}{P_n} \quad (23)$$

$$C_b = \frac{1}{\omega_n Z_b} \quad (24)$$

V_n represents the nominal rms line voltage, ω_n represents the fundamental grid frequency, and P_n represents the active power rating of the converter. The filter inductance ratio is selected to be 0.6. The overall inductance of the filter can be determined by design as shown below:

$$L > \frac{V_{DC}}{12f_{sw}\Delta i_{LP}P_{max}} \quad (25)$$

Additionally, it is necessary for the total inductance to be below 0.1 pu in order to minimise the voltage drop across the inductors.

$$2\pi f_g(L_1 + L_2) < 0.1 \frac{V_g^2}{S_{rated}} \quad (26)$$

To avoid excessive consumption of reactive power, the capacitor filter should draw a reactive power that is less than 5% of the rated power.

$$2\pi f_g C V^2 < 0.05 S_{rated} \quad (27)$$

To avoid passive damping, inductance values are chosen such that the resonant frequency lies in the region:

$$\frac{f_s}{6} < f_{res} < \frac{f_s}{2} \quad (28)$$

where f_s is the switching frequency and f_{res} is the resonant frequency.

Different parameters of the designed LCL filter have been shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Parameters of LCL filter

Sl no	Parameter	Value
1	Power at rated supply	5 kW
2	Voltage at the Grid	400 V
3	Voltage at DC Link	800 V
4	Frequency for Switching	10 kHz
5	Fundamental Frequency at Grid	50 Hz
6	L_f	1.5 mH
7	L_g	1 mH
8	C_f	2 μ F

7 Simulations and results

The controllers designed for the operation of microgrids in both grid-connected and islanded modes of operation with the help of synchronization algorithms were tested under various situations. The complete block diagram of the Simulink model is shown in Fig. 10.

The inverters DG_1 and DG_2 were initially not connected to the grid. Let the DG_1 operate as grid forming initially and waited till $t = 0.15$ s for settling the transients. DG_2 is connected to DG_1 only at $t = 0.15$ s to avoid any oscillation problems when grid forming on DG_1 . At this instant, DG_2 takes DG_1 as the reference to operate. The circuit breaker is closed only at $t = 0.3$ s, for settling the transients produced by DG_2 , and now it is operating in grid-connected mode as depicted in Fig. 11 and 12.

Each inverter has a power rating of 5KW with a tolerance of $\pm 10\%$ for active power and $\pm 10\%$ for reactive power in KVAR at the filter output under steady-state conditions. The inverter converts the DC bus voltage to the nominal three-phase AC grid voltage of amplitude 400 V, V_{rms} and fundamental frequency 50 Hz. The inverter is capable of detecting and switching between grid-connected mode and islanded mode.

Figure 13 depicts the electrical current passing through the circuit breaker under normal operating conditions. Figure 14 displays the active and reactive power flow during typical operation.

The local load at the inverter terminals is rated for operating at 10 KW at 0.95 power factor lagging.

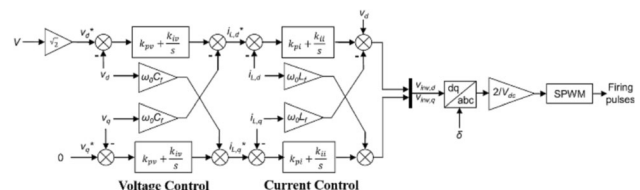


Fig. 10 Complete block diagram of the Simulink model

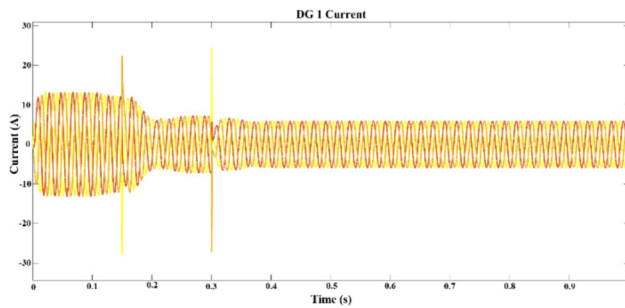


Fig. 11 Output current from DG₁

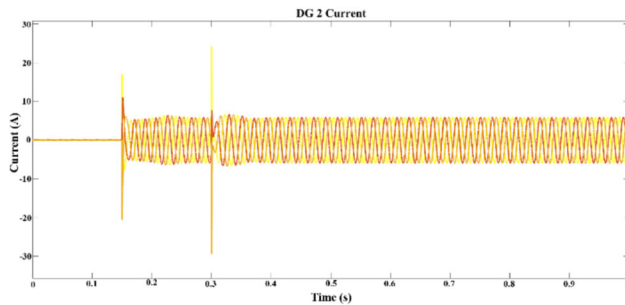


Fig. 12 Output current from DG₂

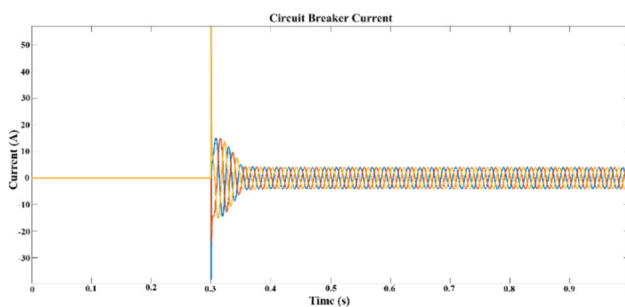


Fig. 13 Current through circuit breaker

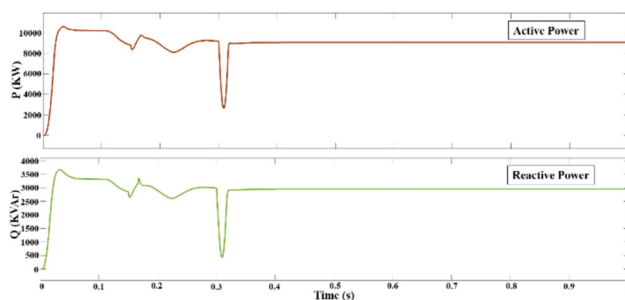


Fig. 14 Active and reactive power drawn by the local load

7.1 Case study

The grid disturbance needs to be simulated for the response of the inverters during the event. At $t = 0.8$ s, a three-phase fault occurs at any part of the network. The high short circuit current result in a large voltage dip as shown in

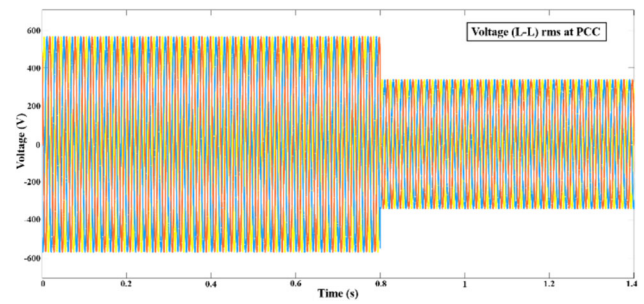


Fig. 15 Three phase Voltage (V_{LL-rms}) at PCC

Fig. 15. Eventually, the RMS voltage at PCC was reduced to 60%. As per IEEE 2800, if any fault in the system occurred, DERs should not be tripped immediately. It should have the Low Voltage-Ride Through (LVRT) capability. It should stay connected to the network, providing some voltage support by injecting reactive power at PCC. If the low voltage condition at PCC prevails greater than a certain time, it should then be tripped.

The inverters waited for 0.4 s to check whether the voltage level at PCC is improved. At $t = 1.2$ s, CB was open and the inverter turned to islanded mode operation/grid forming control.

From Fig. 16, it is clear that the voltage dip at PCC causes a huge current to draw from PCC to meet the load demand. The islanding detection is done, and then the inverter turns to grid-forming mode at $t = 1.2$ s.

From Fig. 17, a severe dip in the voltage at PCC causes a huge depression in the power fed to the local critical load. Figure 17 is the graph that plots the active power and reactive power fed to the critical loads during the grid disturbances as a function of time, which is nothing but the resilience curve. It is evident from the figure that the resilience has been improved by the microgrid.

The entire event can be described as follows:

- At $t = 0.15$ s, DG₂ is connected to DG₁.
- At $t = 0.30$ s, the microgrid is in grid-connected mode/grid following mode.
- At $t = 0.8$ s, a large voltage dip at PCC occurred due to a fault at any other part of the network.

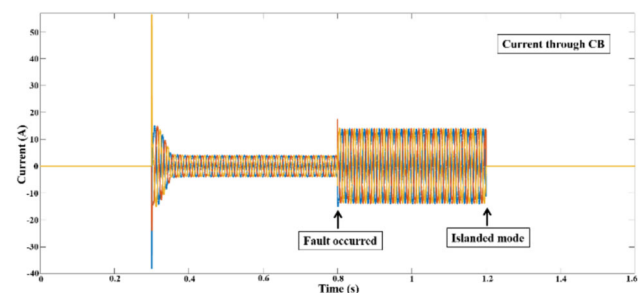


Fig. 16 Current flow through CB during grid disturbance

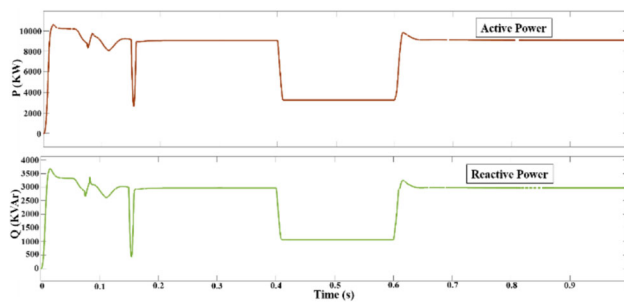


Fig. 17 Active and reactive power drawn by the local load during grid disturbances

- From $t = 0.8$ s to $t = 1.2$ s, the inverter still operated in the grid following mode to check whether the voltage profile at PCC will improve.
- At $t = 1.2$ s, inverter operated in islanded mode/ grid forming mode.

The voltage dip at PCC causes the active power fed to the critical load drastically drops from 9.05 KW to 3.26 KW and the reactive power drop from 2.96 KVar to 1.07 KVar. The active power which is not served is thus 5.79 KW and the reactive power not served is 1.89 KVar.

8 Conclusion

A detailed model of grid-forming and grid-following inverters has been developed using MATLAB to precisely simulate the dynamic response of active and reactive electricity delivered to the essential load during grid disruptions. The model includes a current control loop for following the grid and an inner voltage loop for creating the grid. Both loops are implemented using PI control.

The suggested technique prioritizes the restoration of critical loads in a microgrid by utilizing control over the inverters, with a specific emphasis on resilience. The inverter control was rapidly switched from grid following to grid forming mode, resulting in the restoration of critical load in an impressive timeframe of only 0.4 s. The quick response time guarantees uninterrupted support for critical loads, even during grid outages, hence improving the overall reliability and resilience of the microgrid system.

Moreover, the effectiveness of the suggested control method exhibits its capability for implementation in practical situations, where ensuring continuous power delivery to critical loads is of utmost significance. This research contributes to the advancement of microgrid control and resilience, which in turn leads to the development of more dependable and reliable power systems in response to changing grid problems and uncertainties.

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Author contribution Dipanjan Bose developed the research study, while Abhiram Alayil designed the technique, carried out the investigation, and did the formal analysis. Sandeep Kumar Chawrasia and Abhiram Alayil were involved in the process of organising and managing the data, and creating visual representations of the findings. Dipanjan Bose and Abhiram Alayil were responsible for composing the initial document, as well as reviewing, editing, and preparing it for submission. Dr. Debabrata Roy and Dr. Chandan Kumar Chanda oversaw the project, and allocated resources for the research. All authors have reviewed and consented to the final version of the manuscript.

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Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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