



**IEEE POWER  
ELECTRONICS SOCIETY**  
Powering a Sustainable Future

# Distinguished Lecturer Seminar

## Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics: A Critical Review and Recent Industrial Products



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20 October 2020

# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics

## Outline

### Introduction

- Control and modulation
  - *The classic approach in power electronics*
- Vision for power conversion control
  - *And the case for model predictive control*

### Control concepts

- Finite control set model predictive control (FCS-MPC)
  - *Direct model predictive control*
- Model predictive pulse pattern control (MP<sup>3</sup>C)
  - *Fast control of optimized pulse patterns (OPPs)*
- Model predictive control of load commutated inverters (LCI)
  - *Coordinated control with constraints*

### Assessment and conclusions

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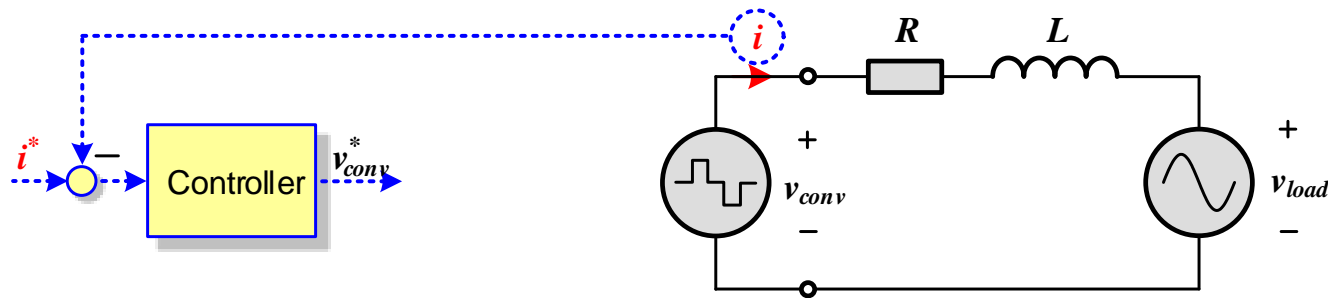
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# Introduction to Control and Modulation

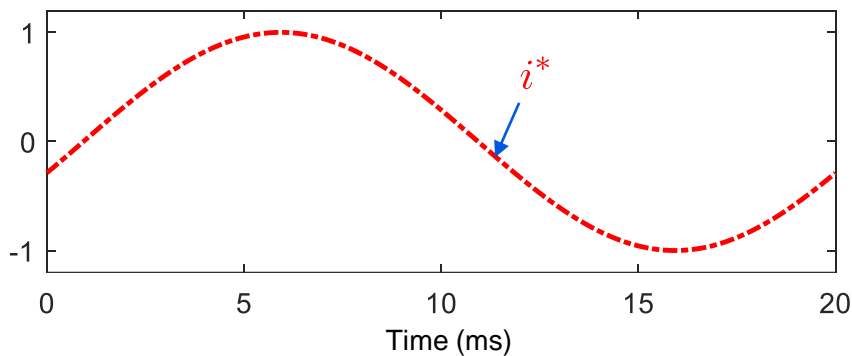
## A Simple Control Problem

Single-phase converter with active  $RL$  load

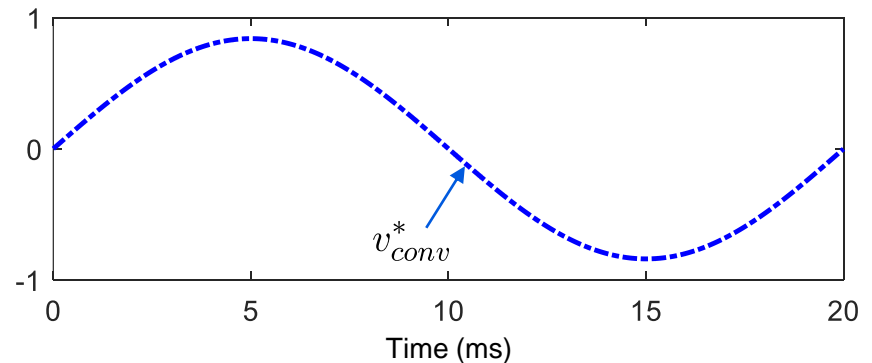


Control objective:

Regulate the load current  $i$  along its reference  $i^*$



by manipulating the reference converter voltage  $v_{conv}^*$

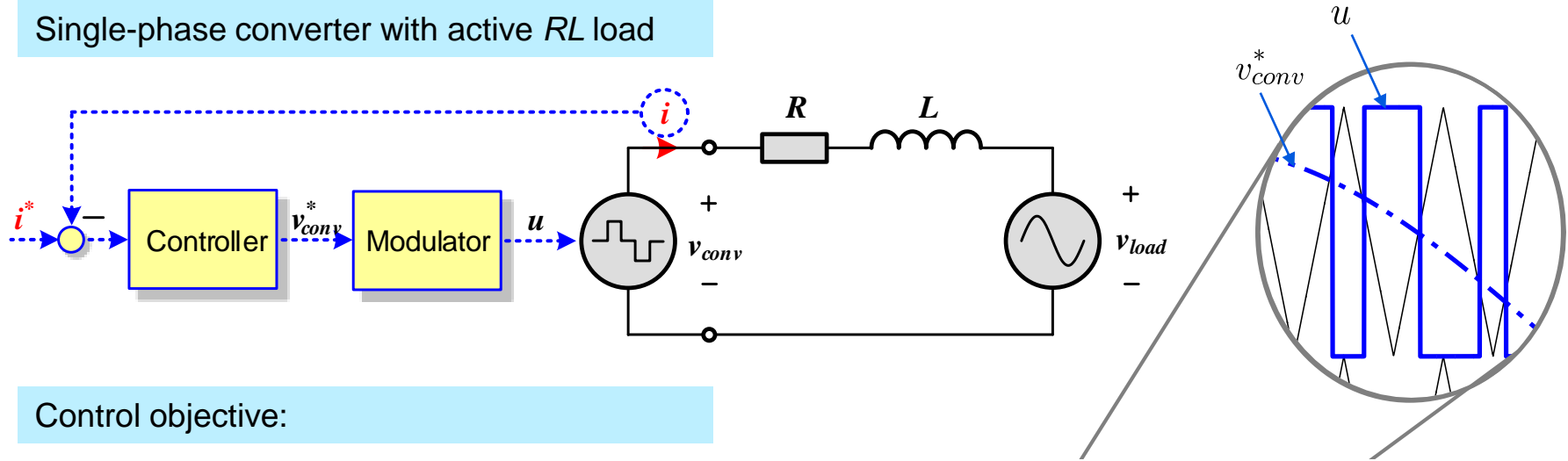


**Control problem:** manipulate the plant input such that the output **follows its reference**, the plant is **stabilized** and an acceptable **performance** is achieved (despite **disturbances**)

# Introduction to Control and Modulation

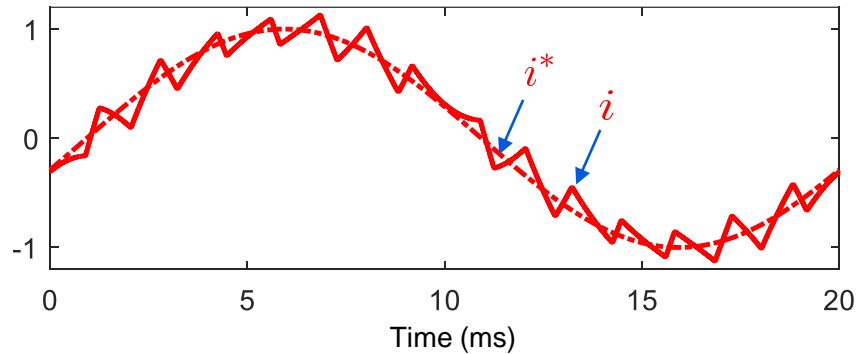
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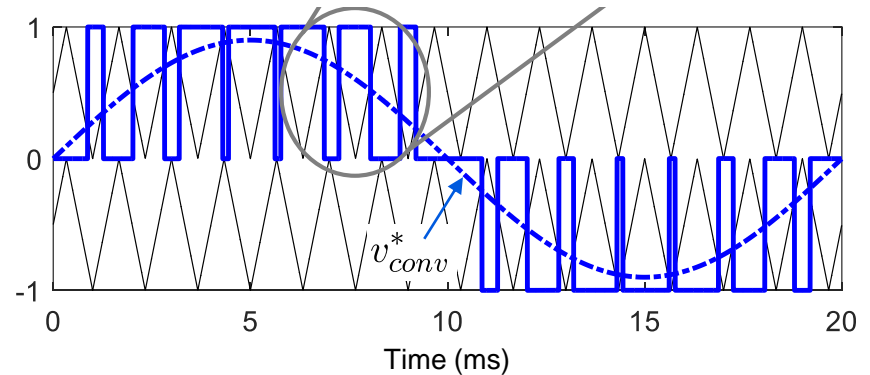


Control objective:

Regulate the load current  $i$  along its reference  $i^*$



by manipulating the switch position  $u \in \mathbb{Z}$



... using carrier-based pulse width modulation

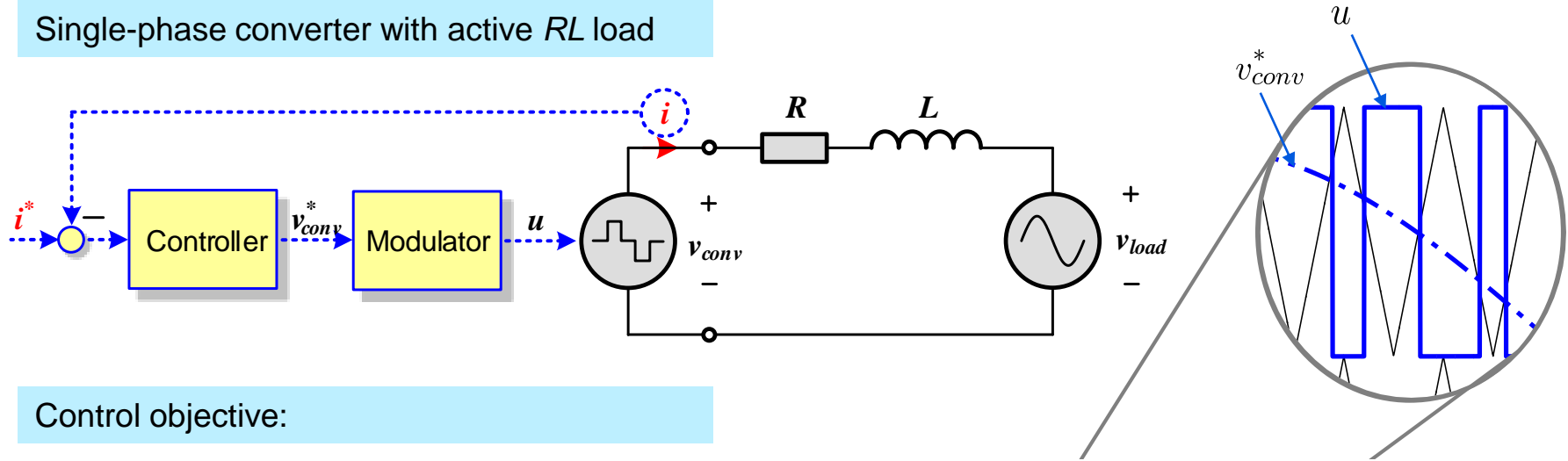
A pulse width modulator translates the real-valued input reference  $v_{conv}^*$  into switching commands  $u$



# Introduction to Control and Modulation

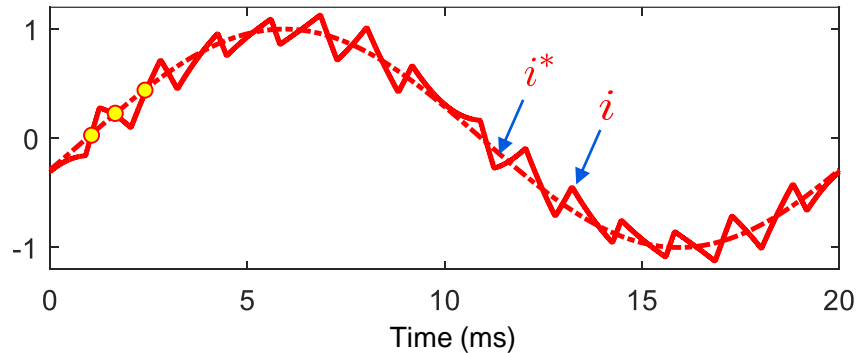
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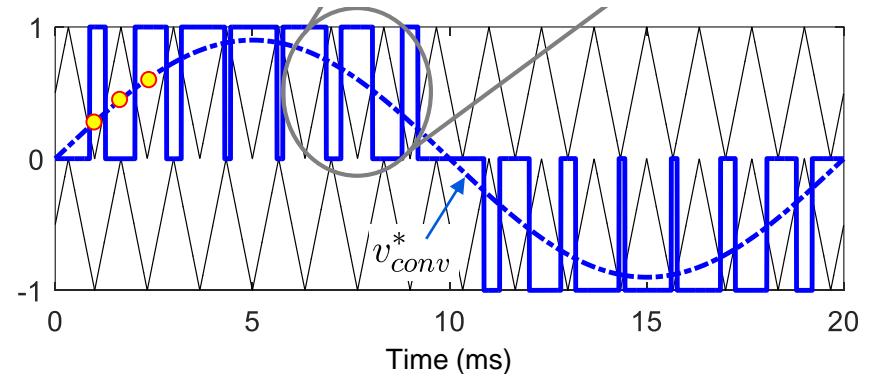


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Carrier-based PWM and appropriate sampling **hides the switching behavior**

# Introduction to Control and Modulation

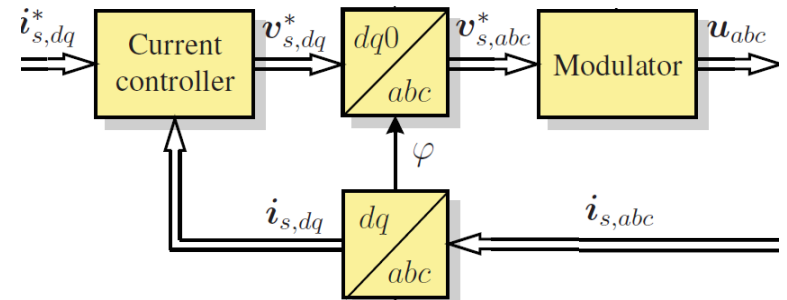
## Inner (Current) Control – The Commonly Used Approach

- Split the inner control problem into a **current controller** and a **modulator**

=> Hides the switching characteristic from the controller (assuming zero current ripple at the sampling instants)

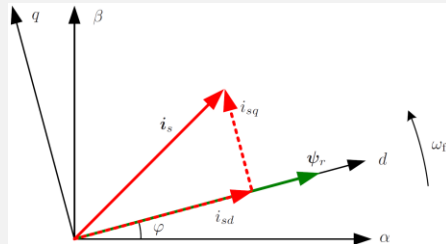
- Work in a **rotating** coordinate system

=> Turns ac quantities into dc quantities (at steady-state operation)



### Current controller:

- Field-oriented or voltage-oriented control (FOC / VOC):
  - PI control**
  - Deadbeat control



### Modulator:


- Classic modulation
  - Carrier-based PWM**
  - Space vector modulation (SVM)
  - Discontinuous PWM
- “Programmed” modulation
  - Optimized pulse pattern (OPP)
  - Selective harmonic elimination (SHE)

### Current controller and modulator combined:

- Direct torque control (DTC) or direct power control (DPC)

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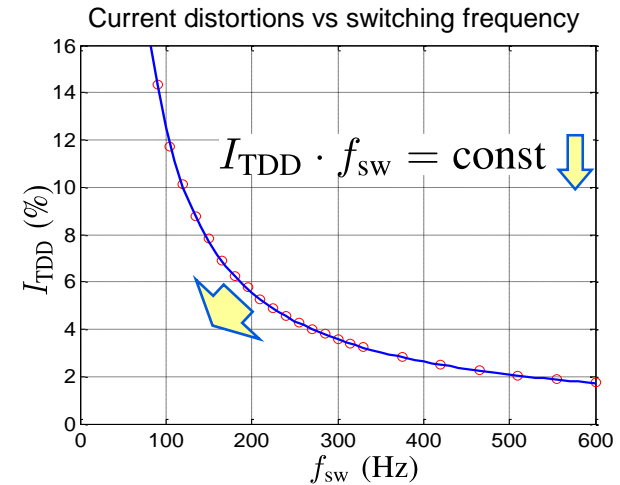
## Assessment and conclusions



# Vision for Power Conversion Control Objectives

Develop **control** methods that **fully utilize** the hardware **capability** of the power electronic system

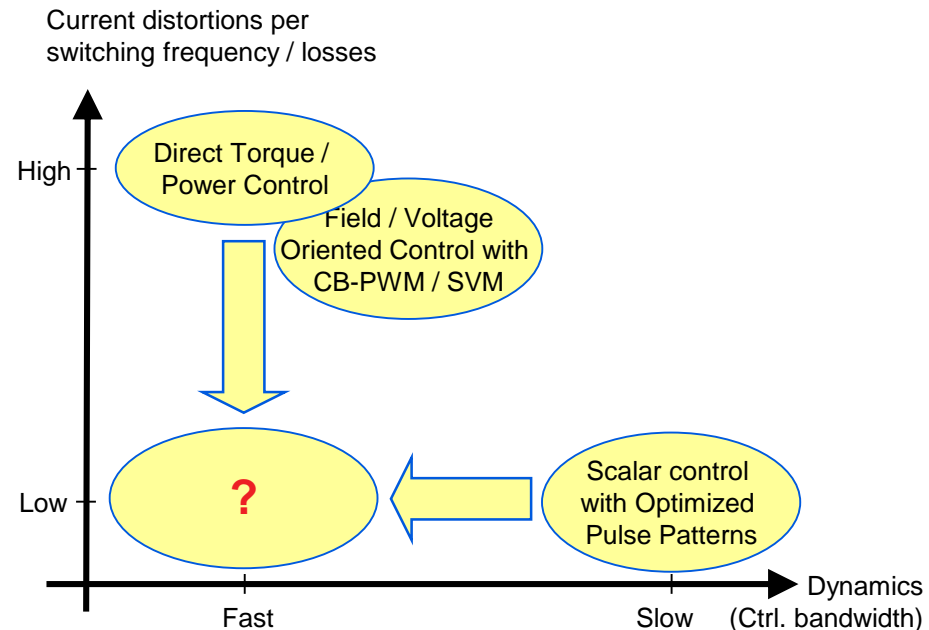
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=> **Load-friendly** operation
- Minimize **switching effort** (switching frequency / losses)  
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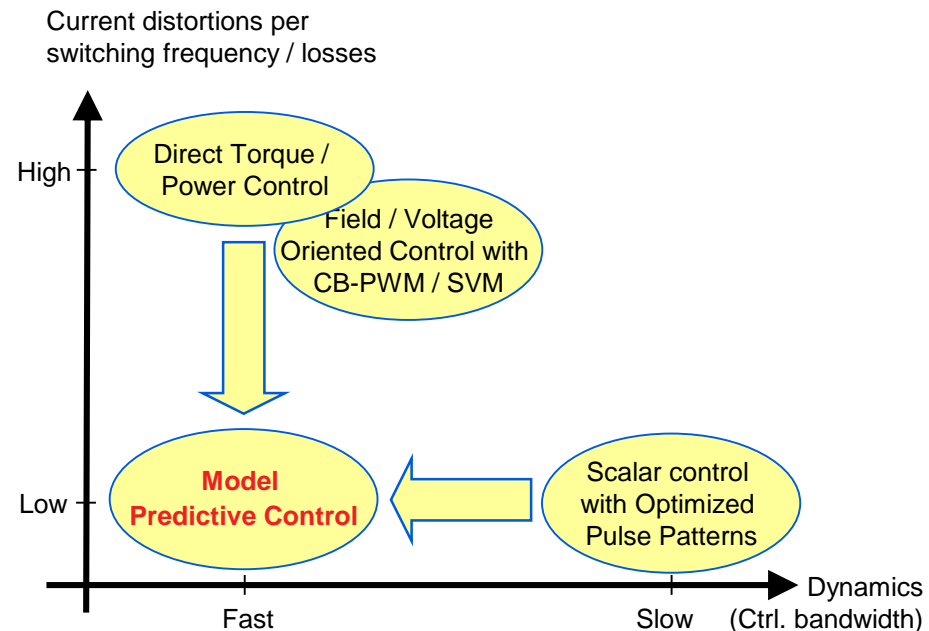
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- Maximize the **dynamic performance**  
=> **Fast power steps** and **disturbance rejection**
- Ensure operation within safe operating limits  
=> **High availability**



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# Vision for Power Conversion Control

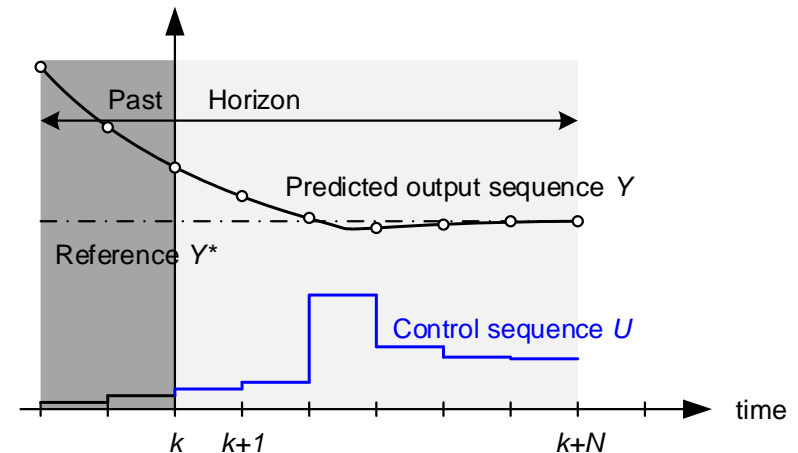
## Model Predictive Control

**Concept:** Use a mathematical **model** of the system to **predict** its future evolution over a horizon (taking into account **constraints**) and choose the “best” control **input** by solving a numerical **optimization problem**. At the next step, obtain new measurements and re-plan over a **shifted horizon**.

### Key Features:

- **Internal model:** describes the dynamic **system** behaviour  
=> *basis for predictions, makes the controller ‘smart’*

$$\mathbf{x}(k+1) = f(\mathbf{x}(k), \mathbf{u}(k))$$
$$\mathbf{y}(k) = g(\mathbf{x}(k))$$



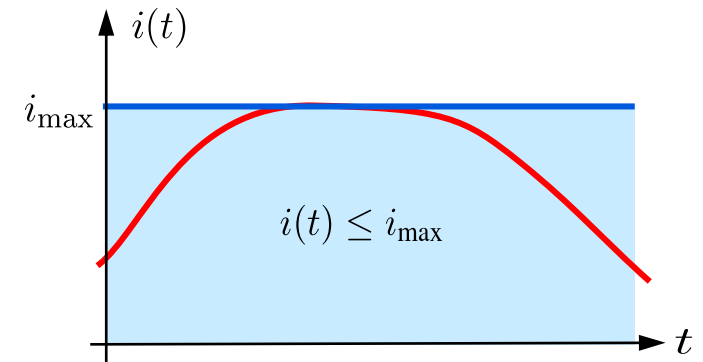
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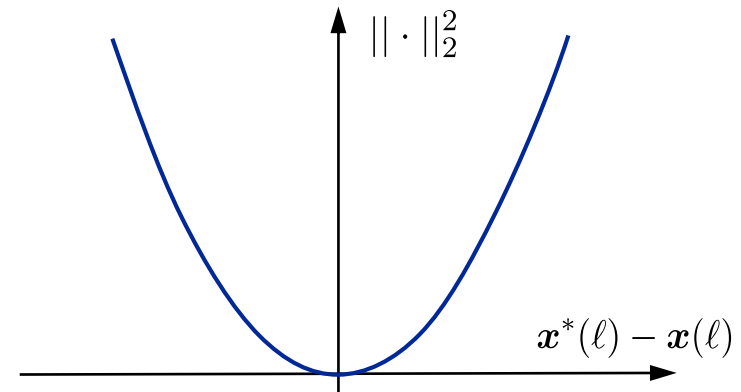
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$$J = \sum_{\ell=k}^{k+N-1} \|\mathbf{i}^*(\ell+1) - \mathbf{i}(\ell+1)\|_2^2 + \lambda_u \|\Delta \mathbf{u}(\ell)\|_2^2$$

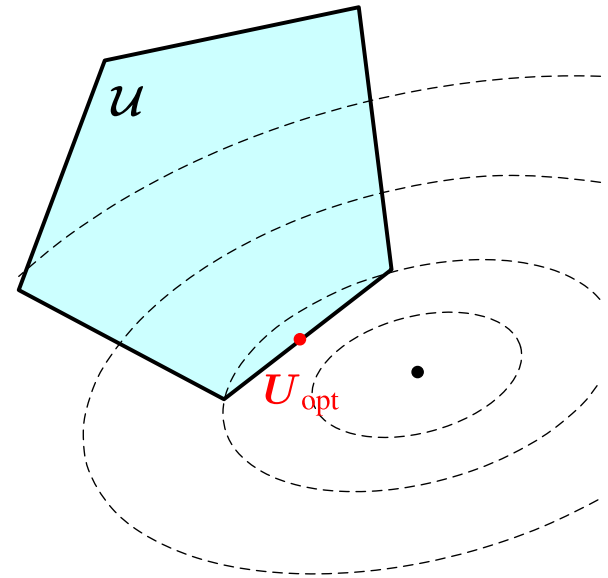
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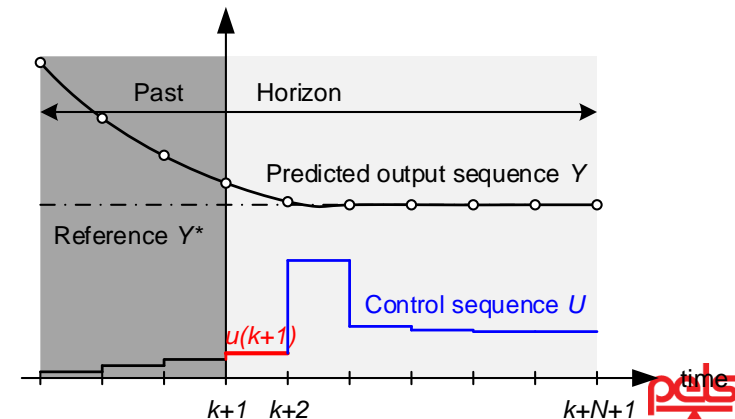
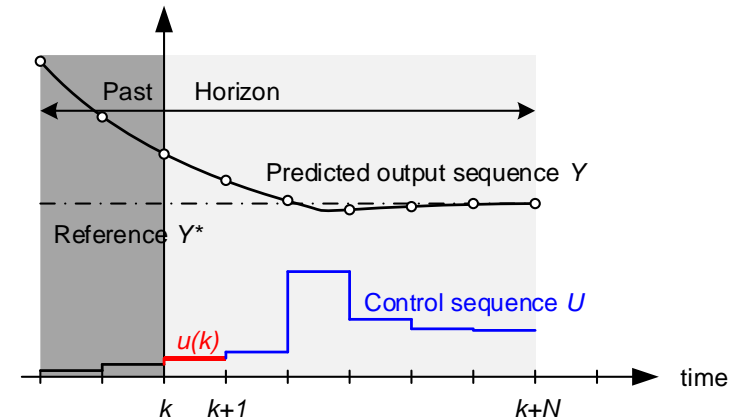
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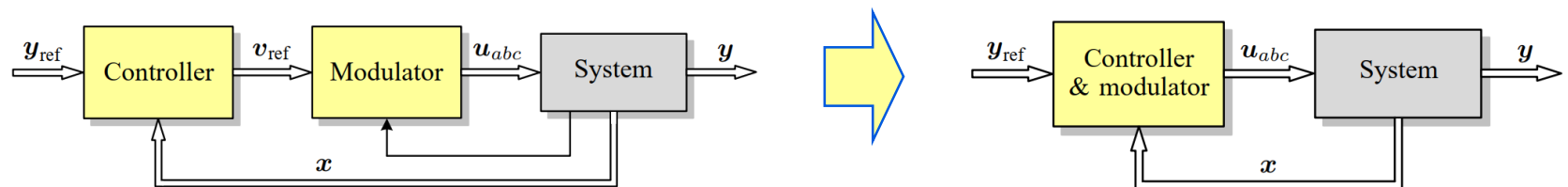
# Vision for Power Conversion Control Challenges and Solution Approaches

To make the model predictive control concept **applicable** to power electronics, it must be **tailored** to the problem at hand:

- **Sampling intervals** are very short => Little time to solve the optimization problem
- System inputs are the converter **switch positions** => Integer manipulated variables
- Optimal **switching patterns** can be pre-computed => Use them in the controller design

**Combine control and modulation in one computational stage with model predictive control:**

- Avoid the **delay** of the modulator stage
- Consider the **switching** characteristic in the controller




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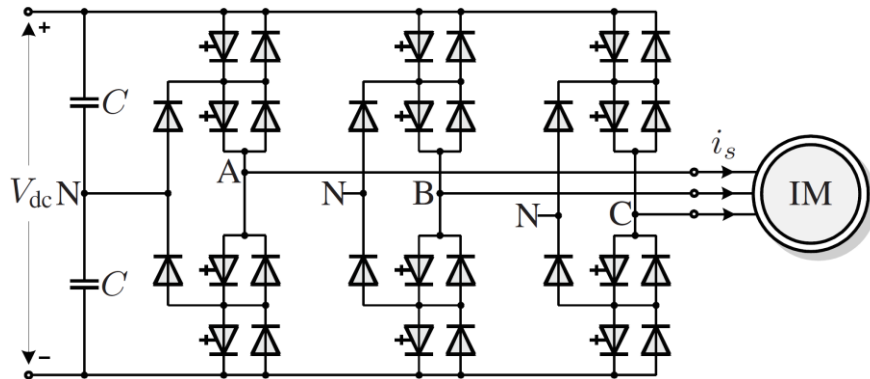
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# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Case Study and Control Problem

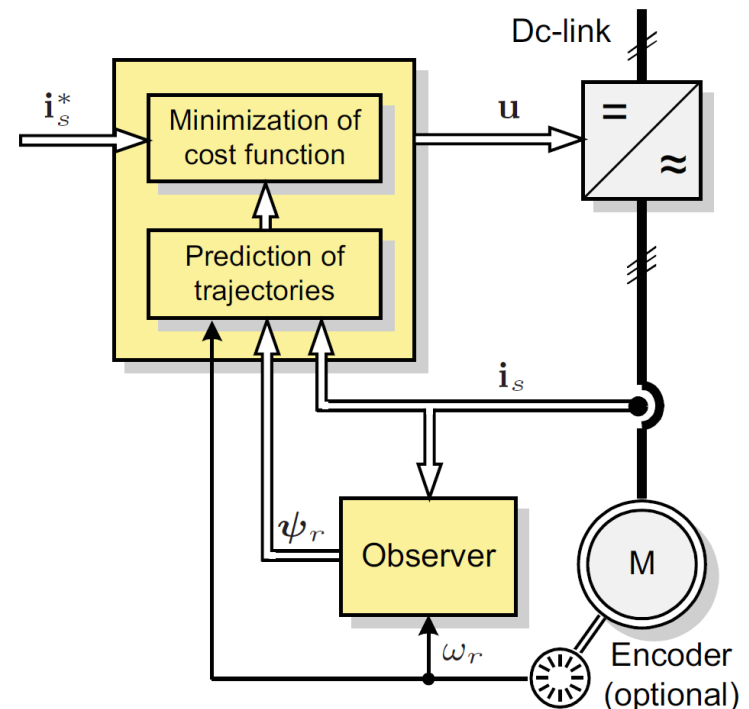
## Case Study

- Medium-voltage drive
- Three-level NPC inverter with 5.2kV dc-link voltage
- Induction machine with 3.3 kV, 2 MVA and 50 Hz



## Control Problem

- Regulate the stator current  $i_s$  along its reference  $i_s^*$  by manipulating the three-phase switch position  $u$
- Minimize the switching frequency



# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Control Problem Formulation

## Cost function:

$$J = \sum_{\ell=k}^{k+N-1} \underbrace{\|\mathbf{i}^*(\ell+1) - \mathbf{i}(\ell+1)\|_2^2}_{\text{Tracking error (deviation from reference)}} + \lambda_u \underbrace{\|\Delta \mathbf{u}(\ell)\|_2^2}_{\text{Penalty on switching effort}}$$

$$\Delta \mathbf{u}(\ell) = \mathbf{u}(\ell) - \mathbf{u}(\ell-1)$$

## System model:

$$\mathbf{x}(\ell+1) = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}(\ell) + \mathbf{B}\mathbf{u}(\ell) \quad \text{with } \mathbf{x} = [\mathbf{i}^T \ \psi^T \ \dots]^T$$
$$\mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{Z}^3$$

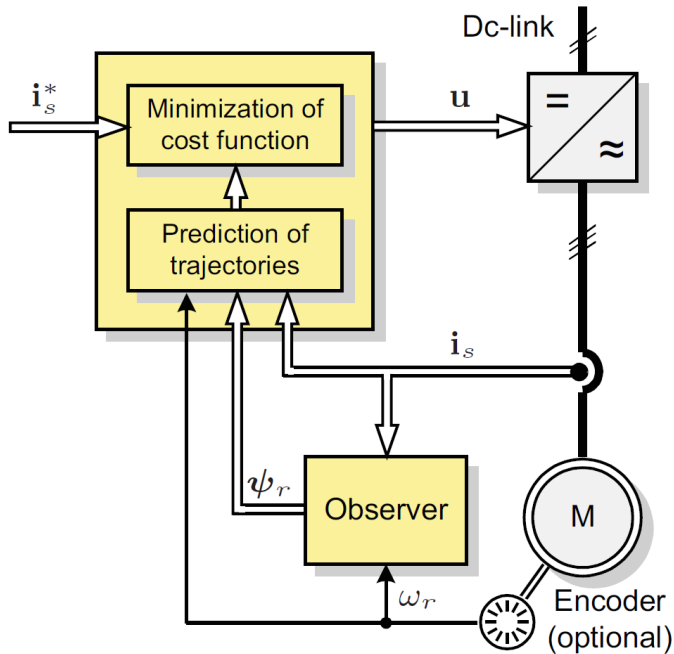
## Input constraints:

$$\mathbf{u}(\ell) \in \{-1, 0, 1\}^3$$
$$\|\Delta \mathbf{u}(\ell)\|_\infty \leq 1$$

Minimize the cost function  
subject to the evolution of the system model and the input constraints

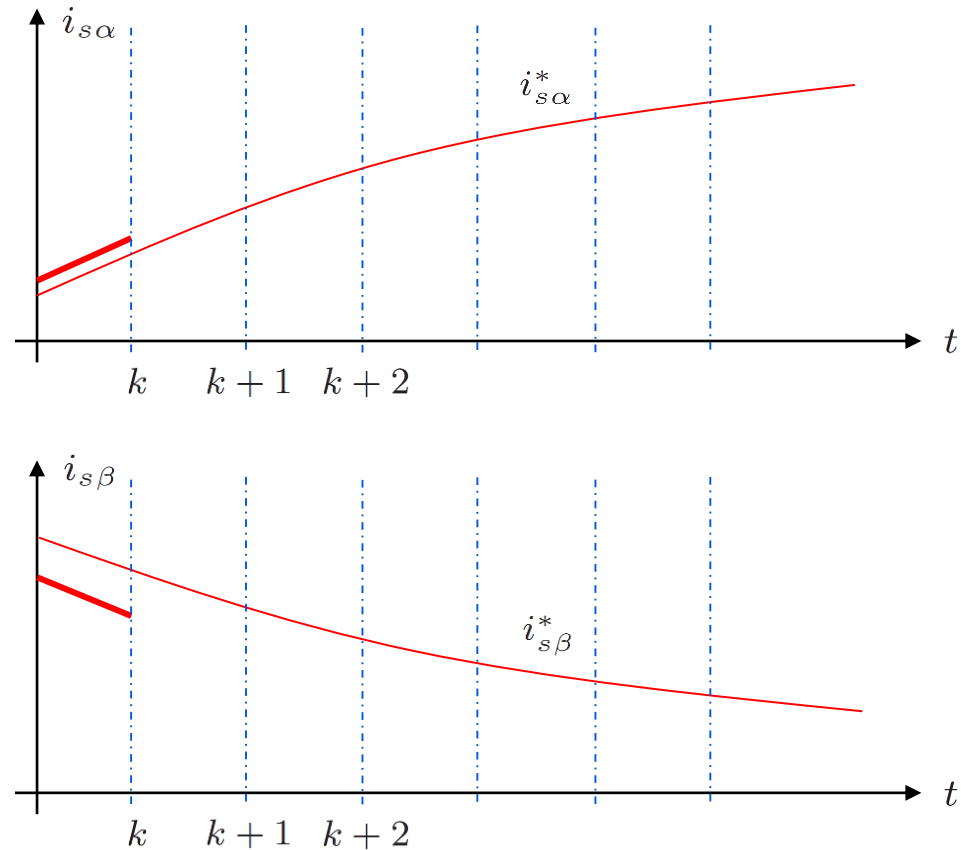
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Enumeration

## Control scheme



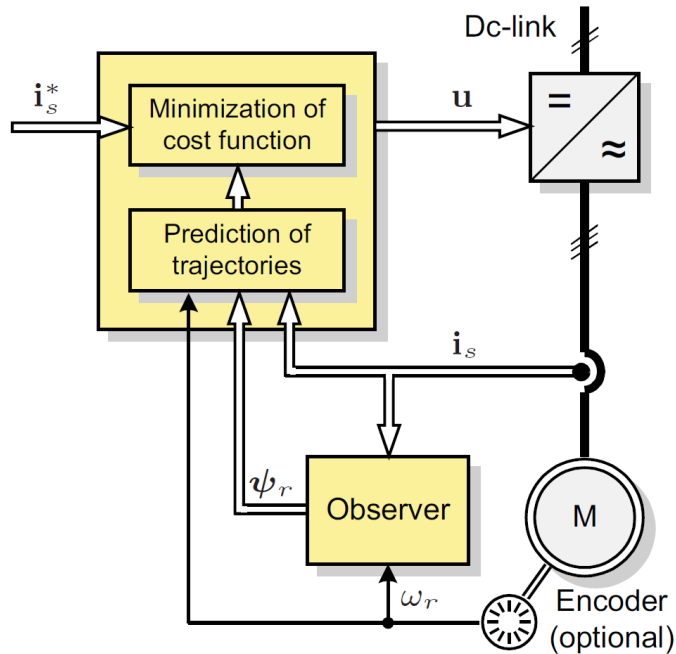
The controller directly manipulates the switch position  $u$  (without a modulator)

## Tracking of current references



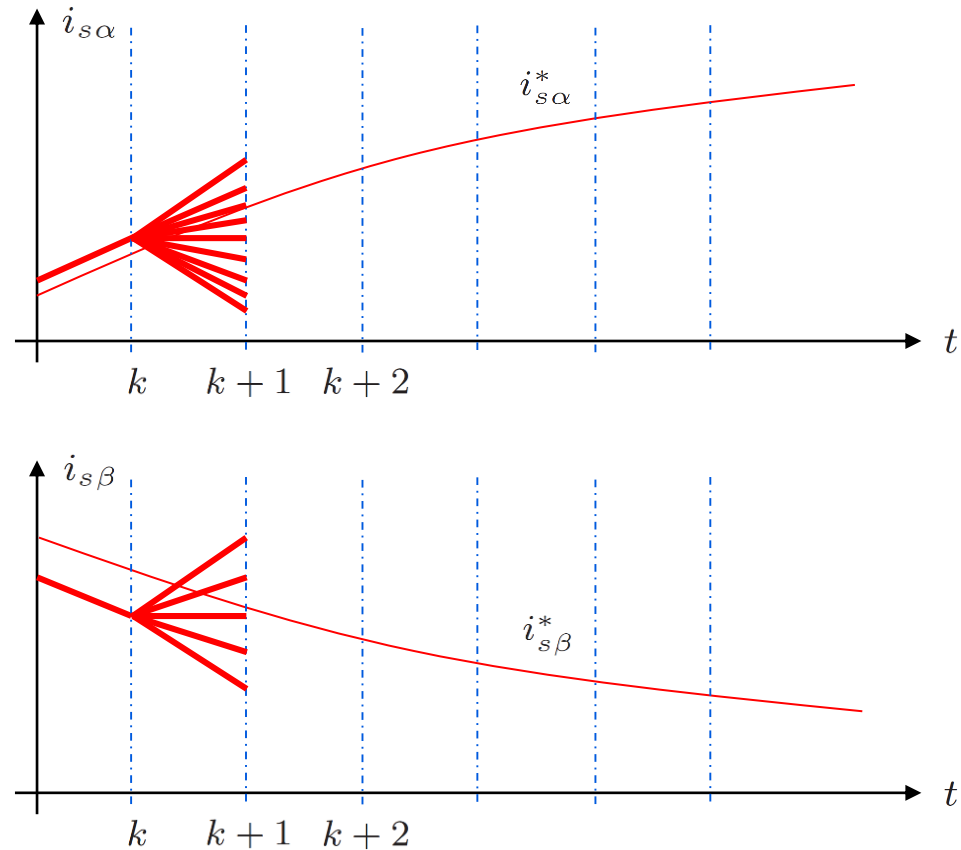
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Enumeration with $N = 1$

Control scheme



The controller directly manipulates the switch position  $u$  (without a modulator)

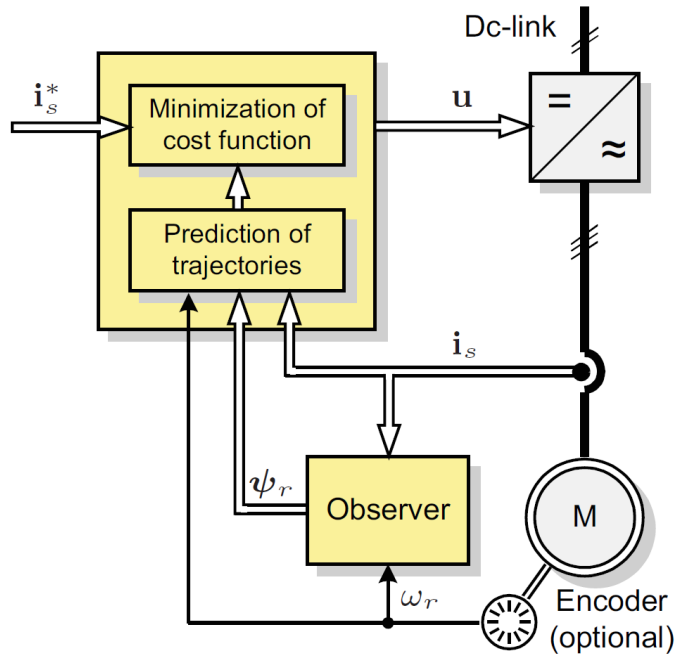
Tracking of current references



27 combinations

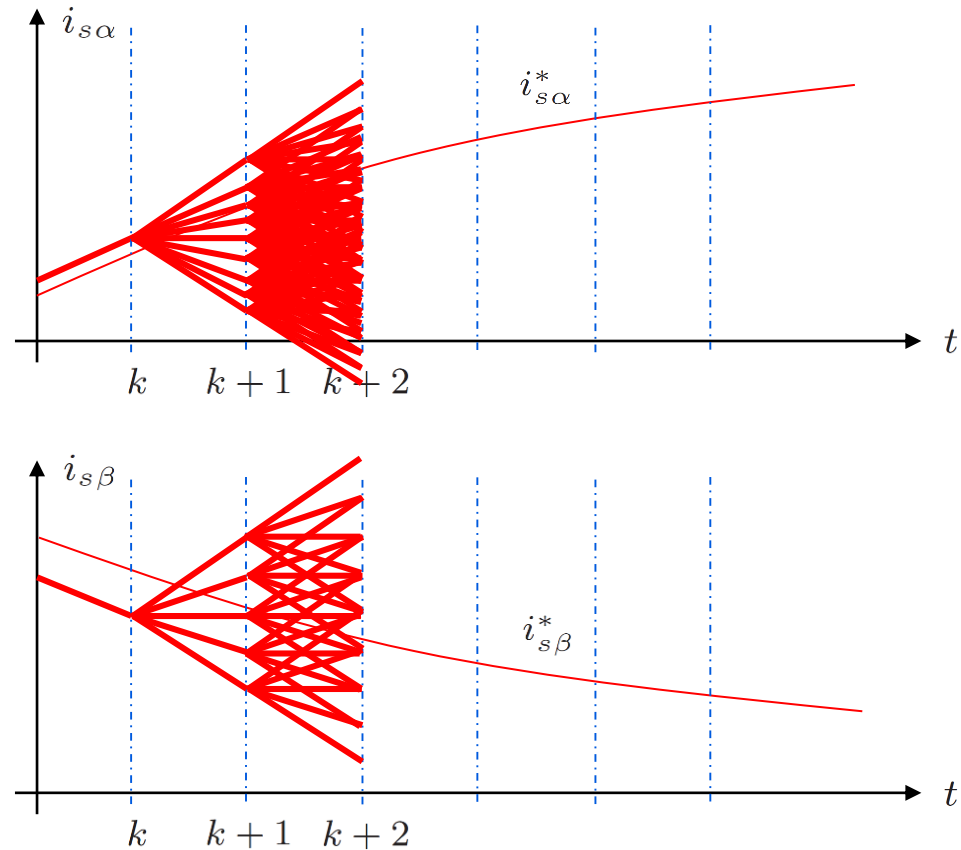
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Enumeration with $N = 2$

Control scheme



The controller directly manipulates the switch position  $u$  (without a modulator)

Tracking of current references

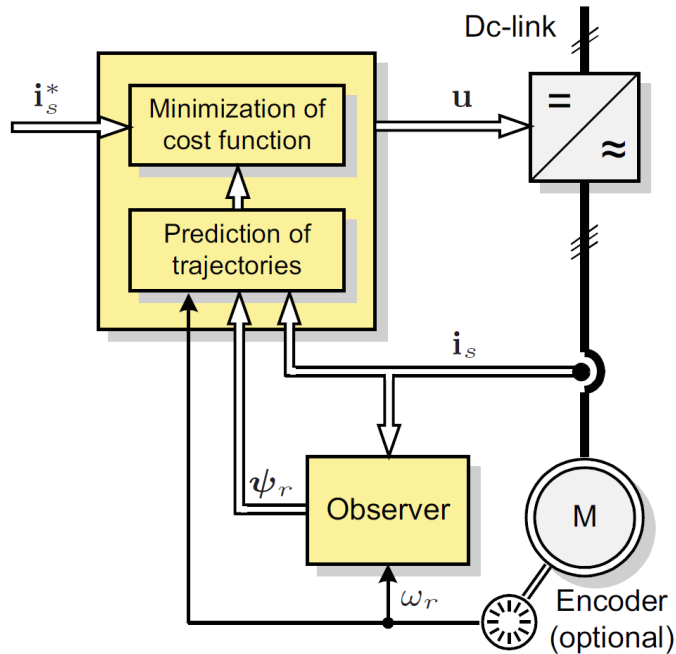


$27^2 = 729$  combinations



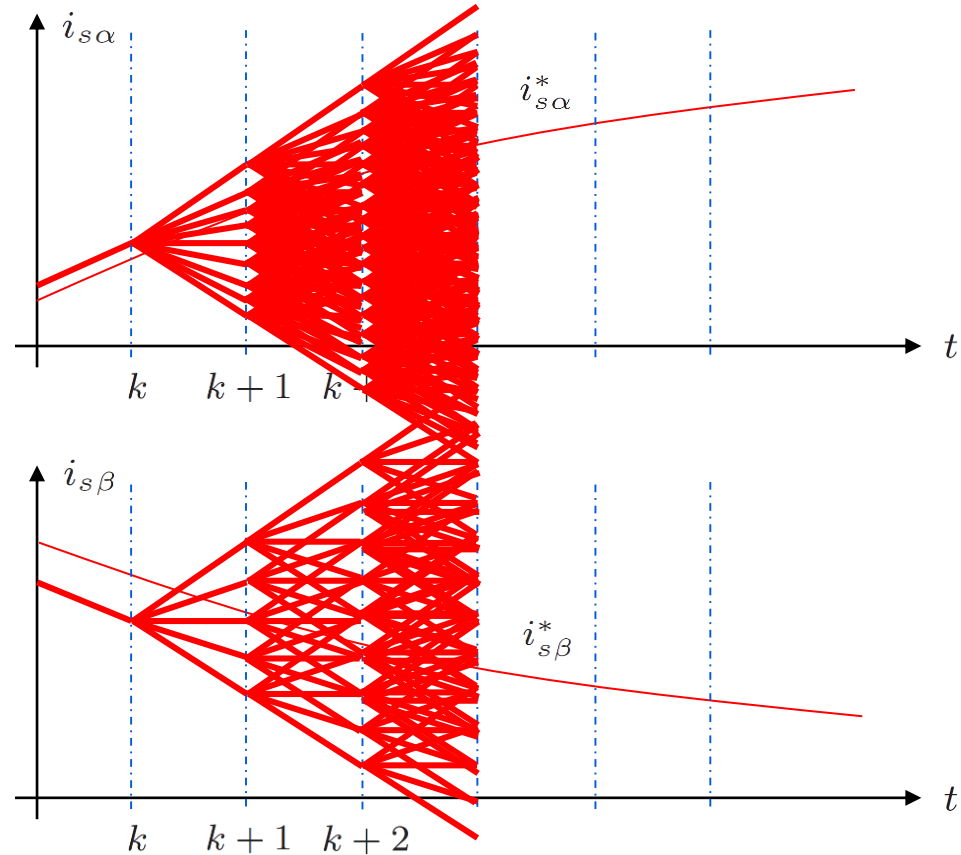
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Enumeration with $N = 3$

Control scheme



The controller directly manipulates the switch position  $u$  (without a modulator)

Tracking of current references



$27^3 = 19'700$  combinations

# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Sphere Decoder

## Branch and bound algorithm

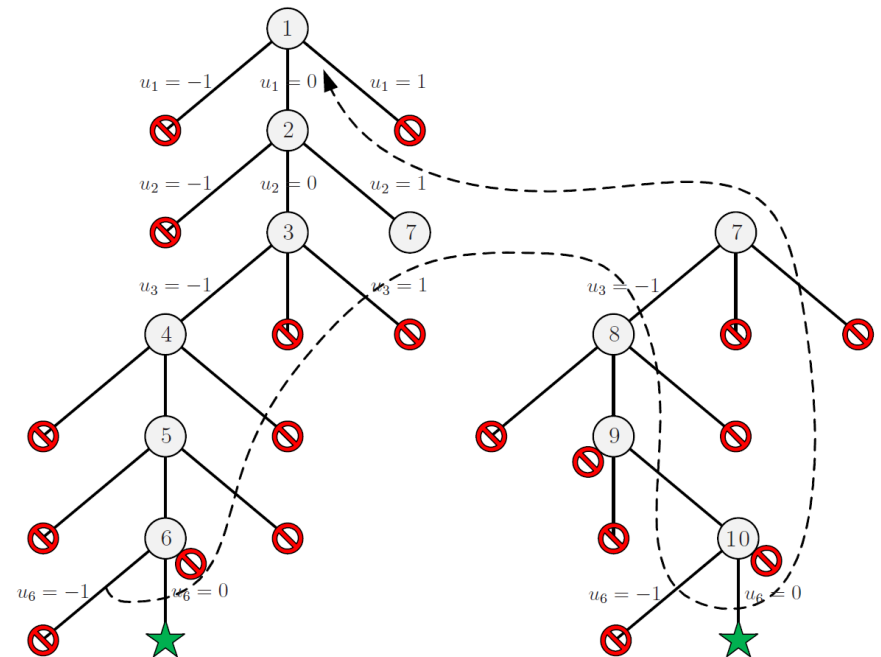
- Branching over the set of single-phase switch positions  $\mathcal{U} = \{-1, 0, 1\}$  that meet the switching constraint  $\|\Delta \mathbf{u}(\ell)\|_{\infty} \leq 1$
- Bounding: consider solutions only within the sphere of radius  $\rho(k)$ :  

$$\|\mathbf{V}\mathbf{U}(k) - \mathbf{V}\mathbf{U}_{\text{unc}}(k)\|_2 \leq \rho(k)$$

If the radius is exceeded  $\Rightarrow$  certificate has been found that the branch is suboptimal

- The sphere is tightened whenever a better solution is found

## Example: search tree for horizon $N=2$

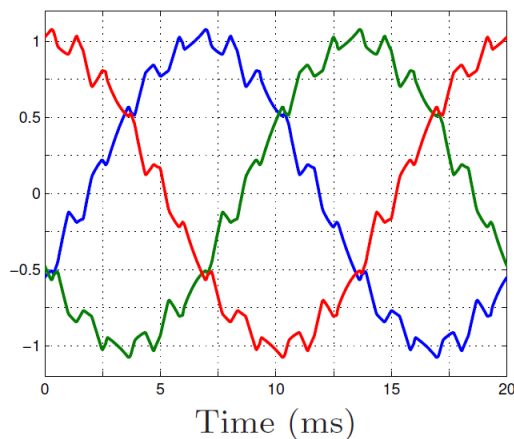


Modified **sphere decoder** solves the integer optimization problem quickly

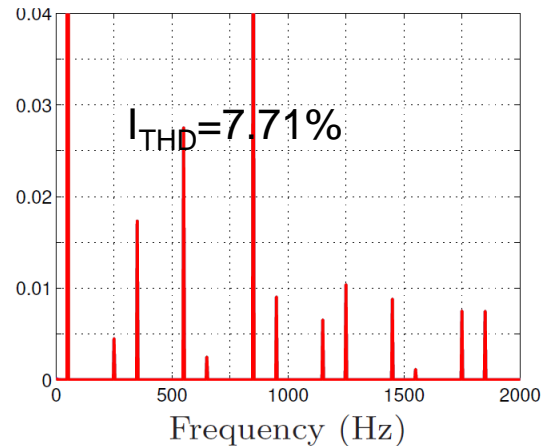
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control

## Steady-State Performance at $w=1\text{ pu}$ , $T=1\text{ pu}$ and $f_{\text{sw}}=250\text{ Hz}$

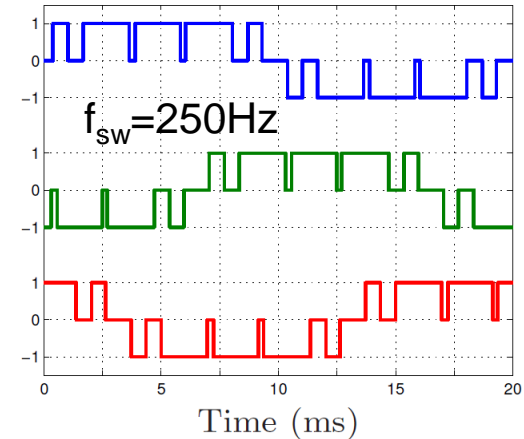
Space  
vector  
modulation



(a) Stator currents  $i_s$

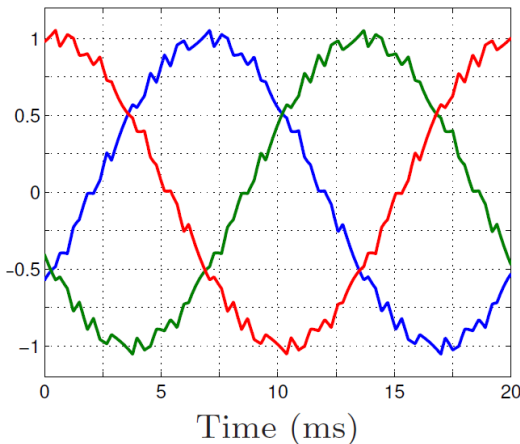


(b) Stator current spectrum

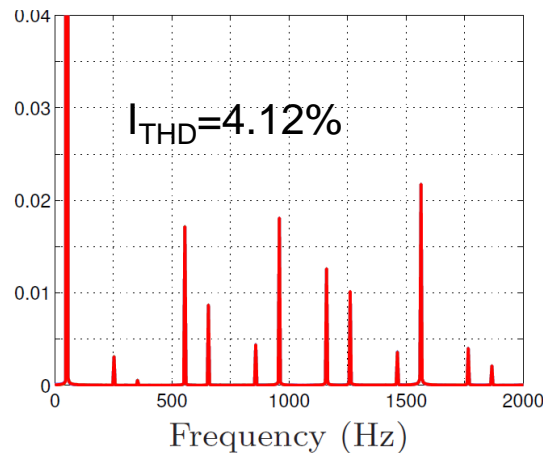


(c) Switch positions  $u$

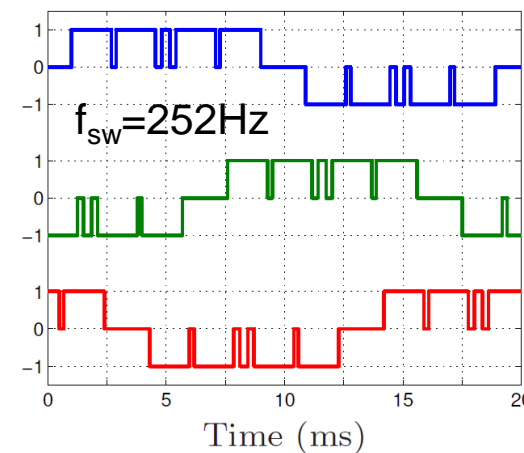
Optimized  
pulse  
pattern



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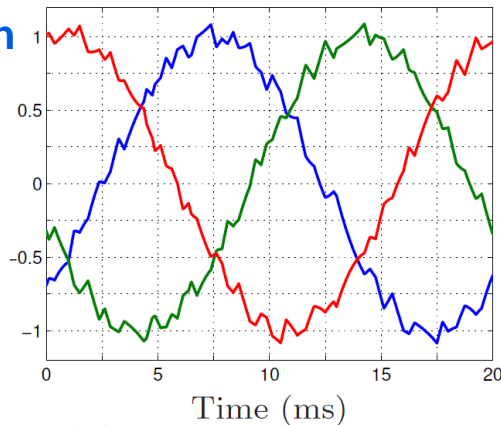


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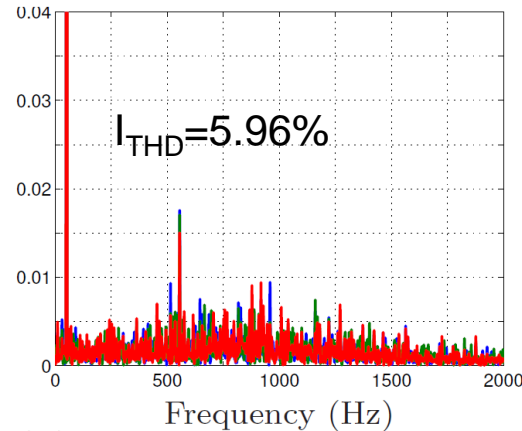
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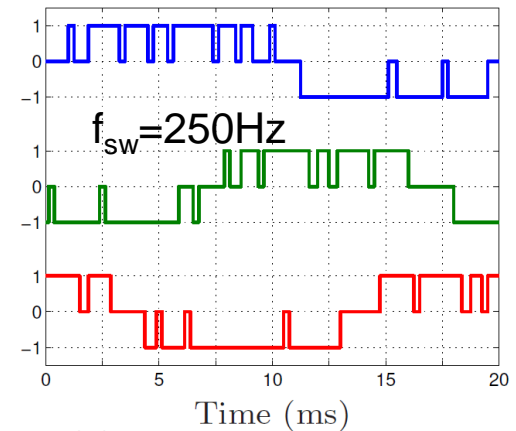
FCS-MPC with horizon  $N=1$ :



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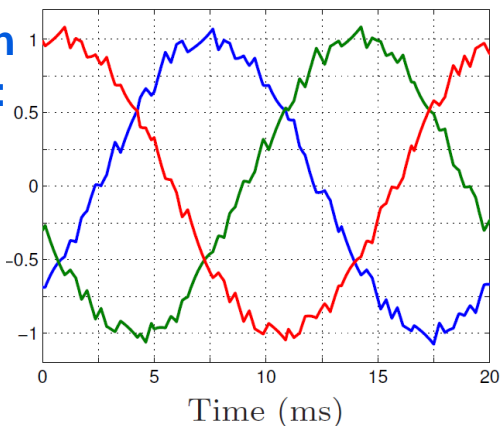


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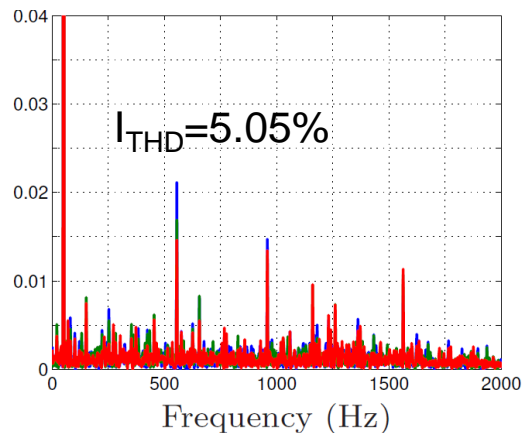


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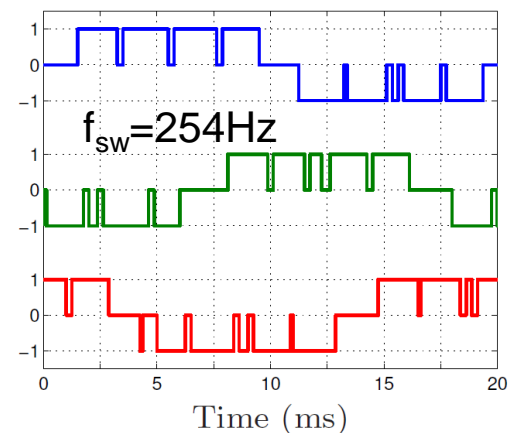
FCS-MPC with horizon  $N=10$ :



(a) Stator currents  $\mathbf{i}_s$



(b) Stator current spectrum



(c) Switch positions  $u$

Long horizons concentrate the **spectral content** (particularly in the common-mode harmonics)

# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Animation

## Drive System:

- 3-level NPC inverter with dc-link voltage  $V_{dc} = 5.2\text{kV}$
- 3.3kV induction machine rated at 2MVA

## Operating point:

- Nominal speed  $w=1\text{pu}$  with rated torque  $T=1\text{pu}$

## Controller parameters:

- Prediction horizon  **$N = 40$**
- Penalty on switching  $\lambda_u = 0.075$
- Sampling interval  $T_s = 25\mu\text{s}$

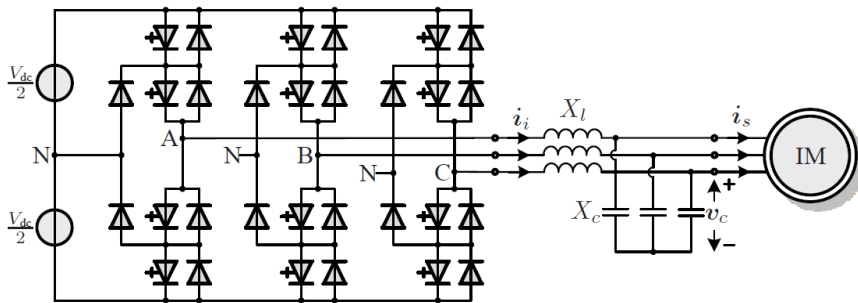
## Performance metrics:

- Switching frequency  $f_{sw} = 202\text{Hz}$
- Current distortions  $i\text{THD} = 5.27\%$

[PredCtrl\\_N40\\_w1\\_3L\\_steadyState.mp4](#)

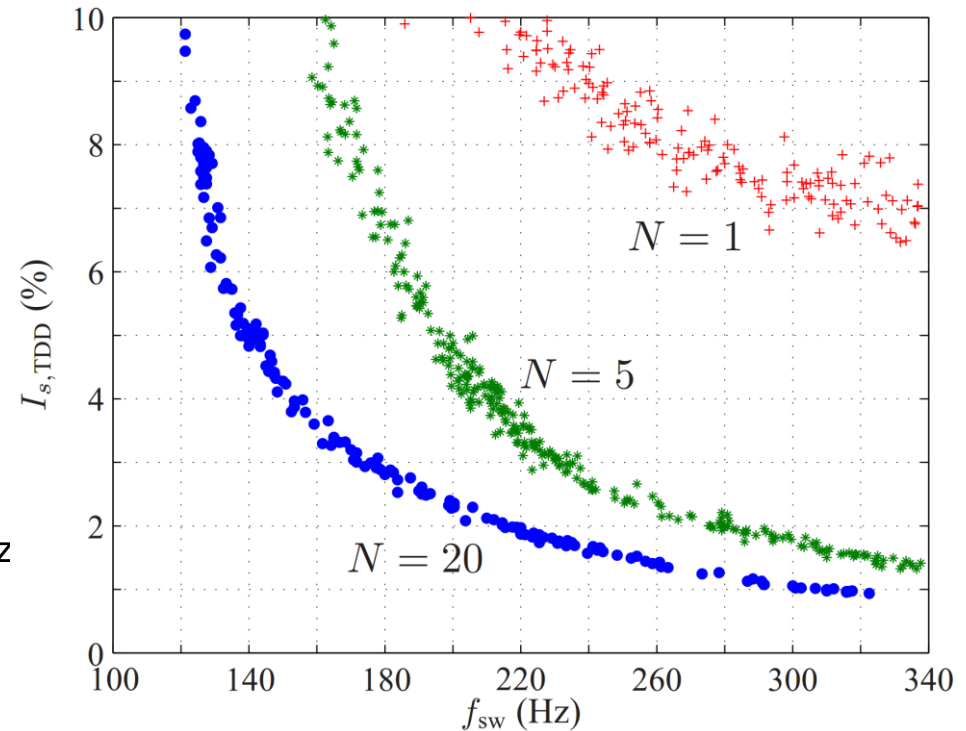
# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control Drive System with LC Filter

## System parameters



- MV induction **machine**: 3.3kV, 2MVA, 50Hz,  $X_\sigma = 0.25\text{pu}$
- **LC Filter**:  $X_L = 0.117\text{pu}$ ,  $X_C = 0.336\text{pu}$ ,  $f_{res} = 304\text{Hz}$
- Sampling **interval**:  $T_s = 125\mu\text{s}$

## Current TDD vs switching frequency

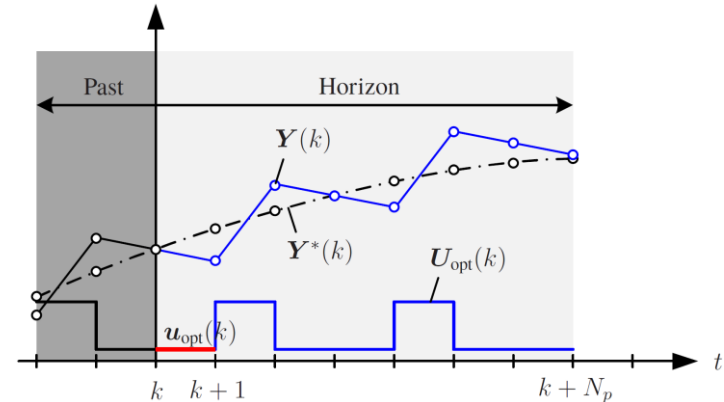


Long prediction horizons enable operation at switching frequencies  $f_{sw}$  **below** 50% of the **resonance frequency**  $f_{res}$

# Finite Control Set Model Predictive Control An Assessment

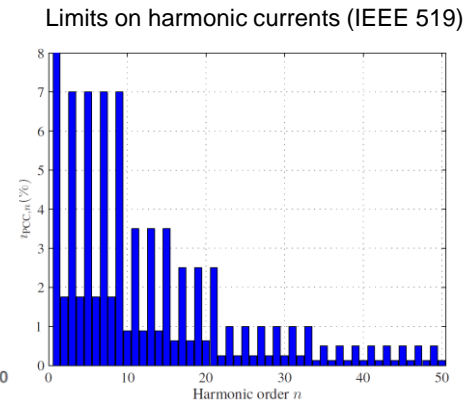
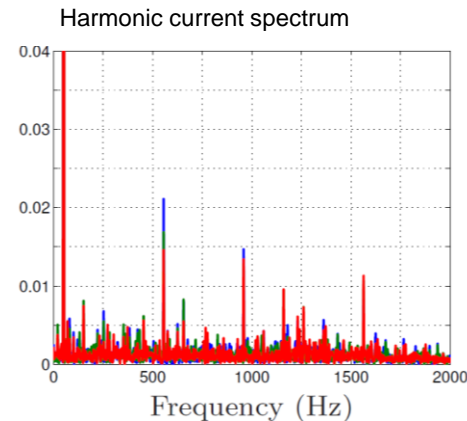
## Benefits:

- Conceptually **simple**
- Applicable to almost **any control** problem
- Achieves very **fast** dynamic response
- Adapts well to “**complicated systems**”, such as *LC* filters, saliency in machines, etc



## Limitations:

- Sphere decoding is restricted to **linear** systems with **integer** inputs
- A high **sampling frequency** is required
- A non-deterministic **harmonic spectrum** results with **even-order** harmonics  
=> Not suitable for grid-side converters?




# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics

## Outline

### Introduction

- Control and modulation
  - *The classic approach in power electronics*
- Vision for power conversion control
  - *And the case for model predictive control*

### Control concepts

- Finite control set model predictive control (FCS-MPC)
  - *Direct model predictive control*
-  ▪ Model predictive pulse pattern control (MP<sup>3</sup>C)
  - *Fast control of optimized pulse patterns (OPPs)*
- Model predictive control of load commutated inverters (LCI)
  - *Coordinated control with constraints*

### Assessment and conclusions



# Optimized Pulse Patterns Optimization Problem and Example

## Computation of **optimal** pulse patterns

- Given:**
- The desired voltage amplitude  
=> *modulation index m*
  - The desired switching frequency  
=> *number of switching angles d*

**Compute** the optimal switching angles  $\alpha_i$  that minimize the current distortions (for an inductive load)

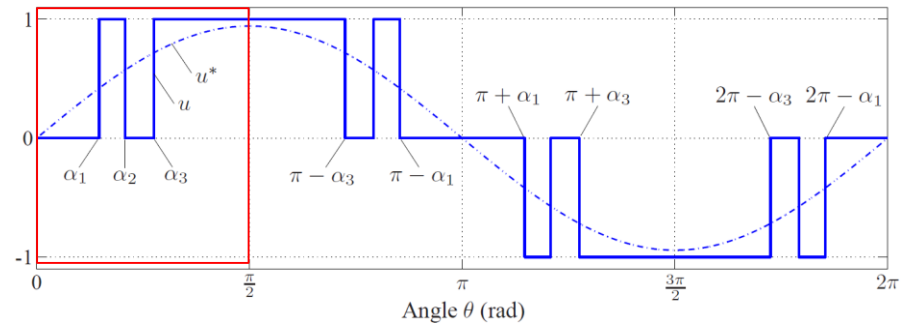
$$\begin{aligned} & \underset{\alpha_i}{\text{minimize}} \quad \sum_{n=5,7,\dots} \left( \frac{1}{n^2} \sum_{i=1}^d \Delta u_i \cos(n\alpha_i) \right)^2 \\ & \text{subject to} \quad \frac{4}{\pi} \sum_{i=1}^d \Delta u_i \cos(\alpha_i) = m \\ & \quad \quad \quad 0 \leq \alpha_1 \leq \alpha_2 \leq \dots \leq \alpha_d \leq \frac{\pi}{2} \end{aligned}$$

=> *Nonlinear optimization problem*

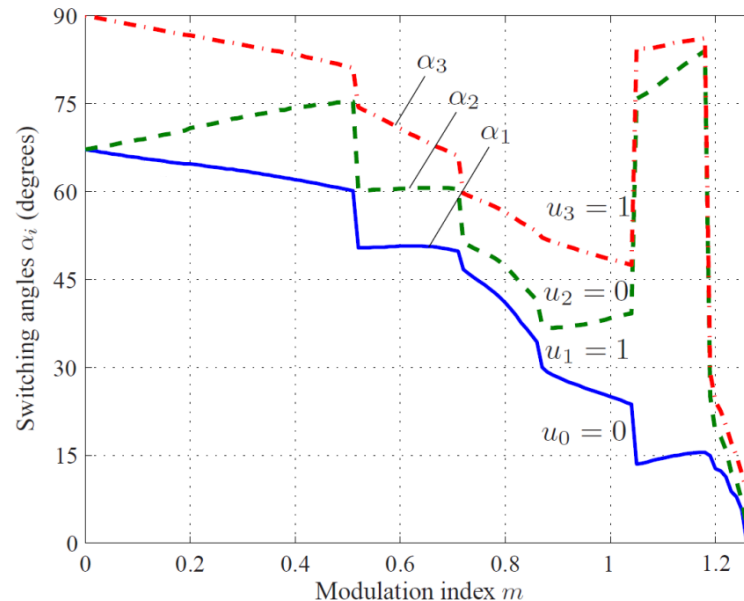
G. S. Buja: "Optimum output waveforms in PWM inverters," IEEE Trans. Ind. Appl., Nov./Dec. 1980

## Example for 3-level converter

Switching pattern (with  $d=3$ , quarter- and half-wave sym.):



Set of witching angles:

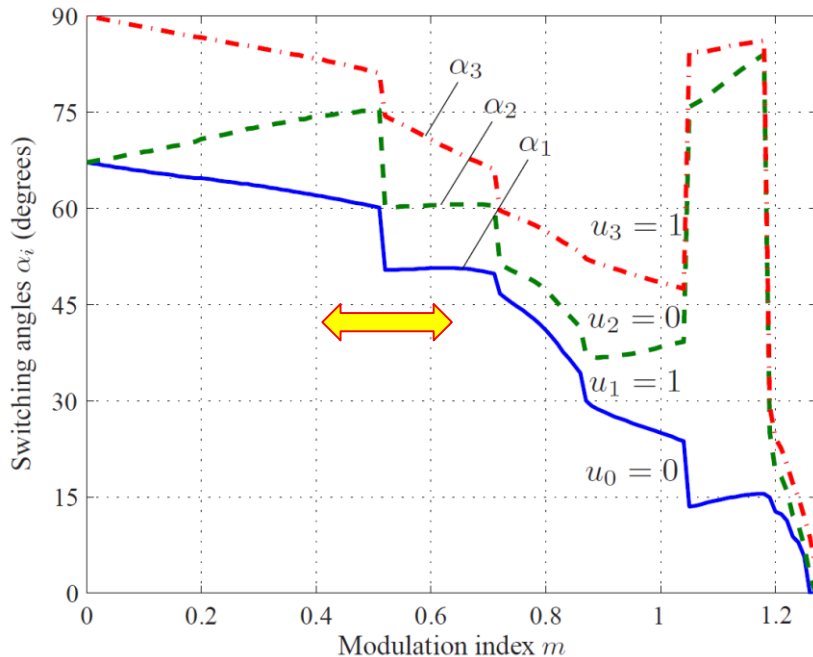


# Optimized Pulse Patterns

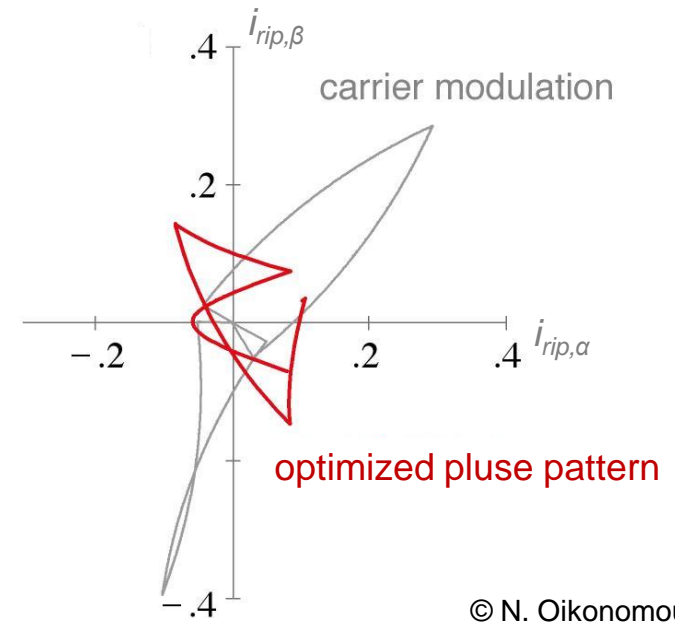
## Difficulties Arising for Linear Controllers

Linear controllers sample the converter current at **regular** sampling instants and manipulate the **modulation index  $m$**

The switching angles are discontinuous in  $m$



The current ripple is (in general) never zero



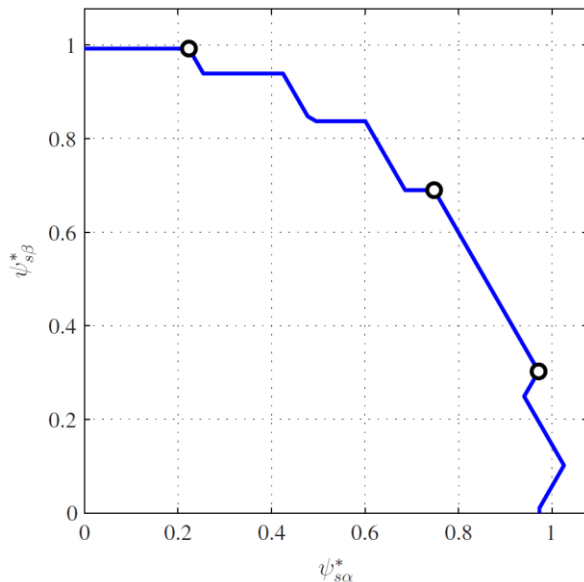
Enforce **smooth** switching angles  
=> Suboptimal pulse pattern

Use **slow** controllers  
=> Poor disturbance rejection / response in transients

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Control Principle

## Stator flux trajectory

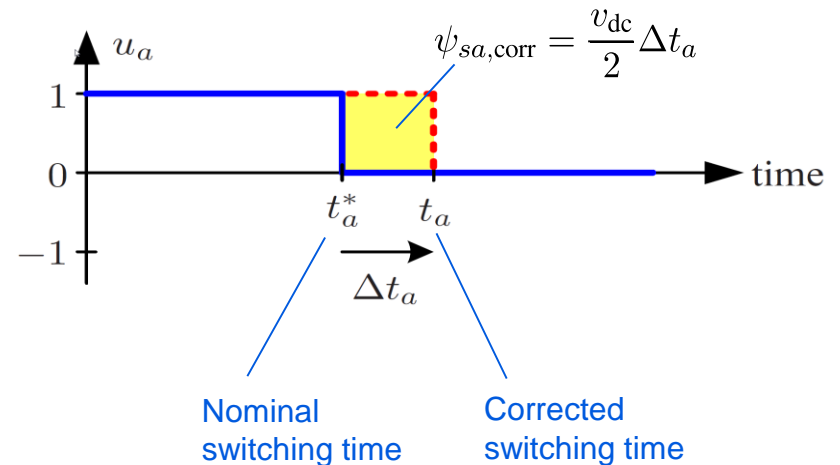
Stator flux:  $\psi_s(t) = \psi_s(0) + \frac{v_{dc}}{2} \int_0^t \mathbf{u}_{OPP}(\tau) d\tau$   
 => Integrate the optimal pulse pattern to derive the optimal stator flux trajectory



Stator flux reference trajectory is **optimal**  
 (minimizes the current distortions) => **Tracking**

## Stator flux correction

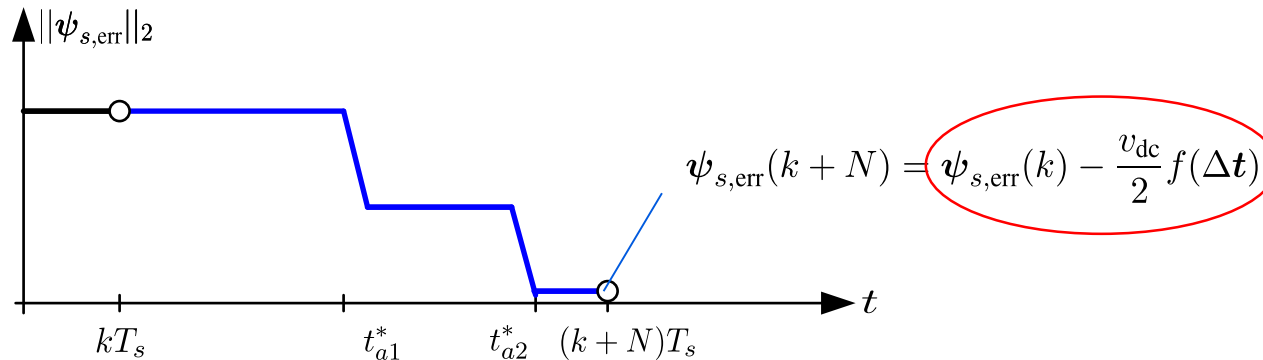
- Manipulate the time-instants of the switching transitions to correct the stator flux
- Example: switching transition in phase a



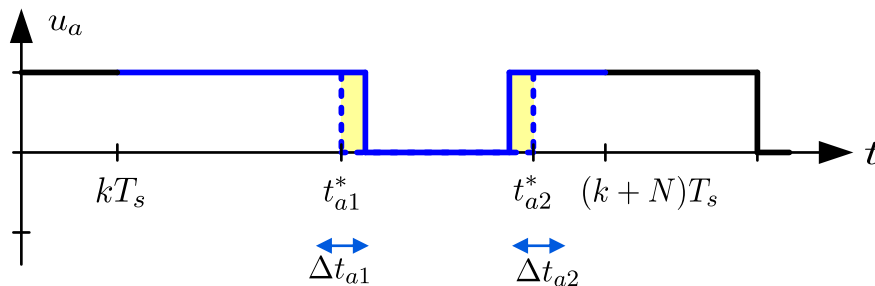
Formulate and solve a  
**model predictive control** problem in real time

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Control Problem Formulation

Stator flux error (controlled var.):  $\psi_{s, \text{err}} = \psi_s^* - \psi_s$  (in  $\alpha\beta$ )



Switching time modifications (manipulated var.):  $\Delta t$



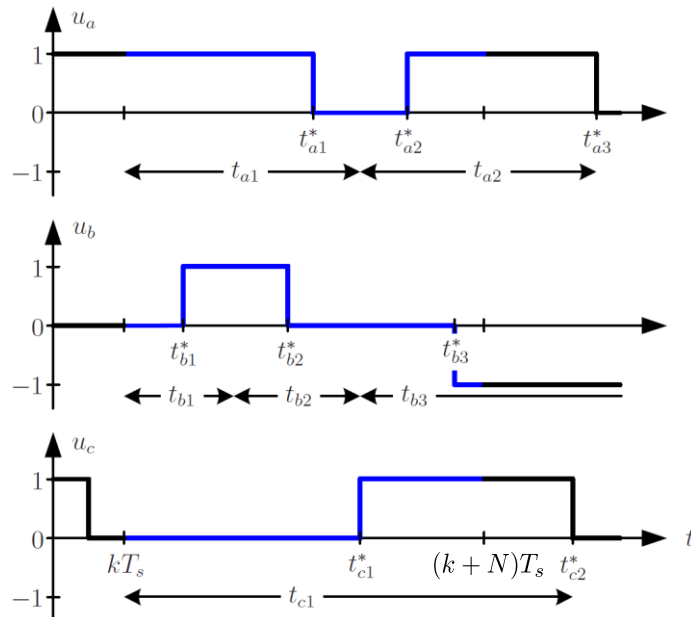
=> Model predictive pulse pattern control (**MP<sup>3</sup>C**) of the switching time modifications  $\Delta t \in \mathbb{R}^n$

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Optimization Problem

## Optimization problem

$$\begin{aligned} & \underset{\Delta t}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\psi_{s,\text{err}} - \psi_{s,\text{corr}}(\Delta t)\|_2^2 + \Delta t^T Q \Delta t \\ & \text{subject to} \quad kT_s \leq t_{a1} \leq t_{a2} \leq \dots \leq t_{an_a} \leq t_{a(n_a+1)}^* \\ & \quad \quad \quad kT_s \leq t_{b1} \leq t_{b2} \leq \dots \leq t_{bn_b} \leq t_{b(n_b+1)}^* \\ & \quad \quad \quad kT_s \leq t_{c1} \leq t_{c2} \leq \dots \leq t_{cn_c} \leq t_{c(n_c+1)}^* \end{aligned}$$

Example:



## Solution approaches

- This is a quadratic program (**QP**) in  $\Delta t \in \mathbb{R}^n$   
 $\Rightarrow$  Solve with an active set or a gradient method
- Or simplify the QP to a **deadbeat** control problem
  - by setting  $Q = 0$  and
  - by choosing the minimal horizon  $N$  (such that the prediction interval includes at least one switching transition per phase)
- In case of very large flux error: **insert** additional switching transitions

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Medium-Voltage Lab

2 MVA induction machine:



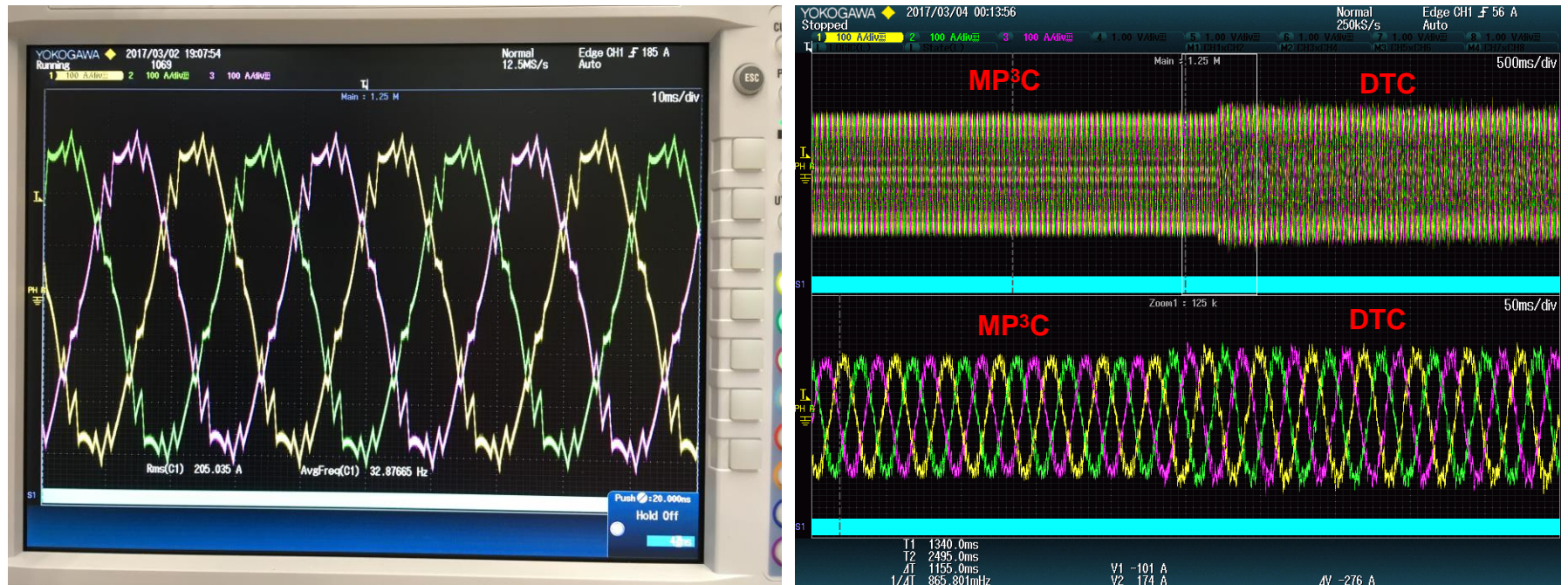
3-level neutral point clamped converter:



# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Experimental Results (MV Lab)

Steady-state operation:

55% speed, 60% torque

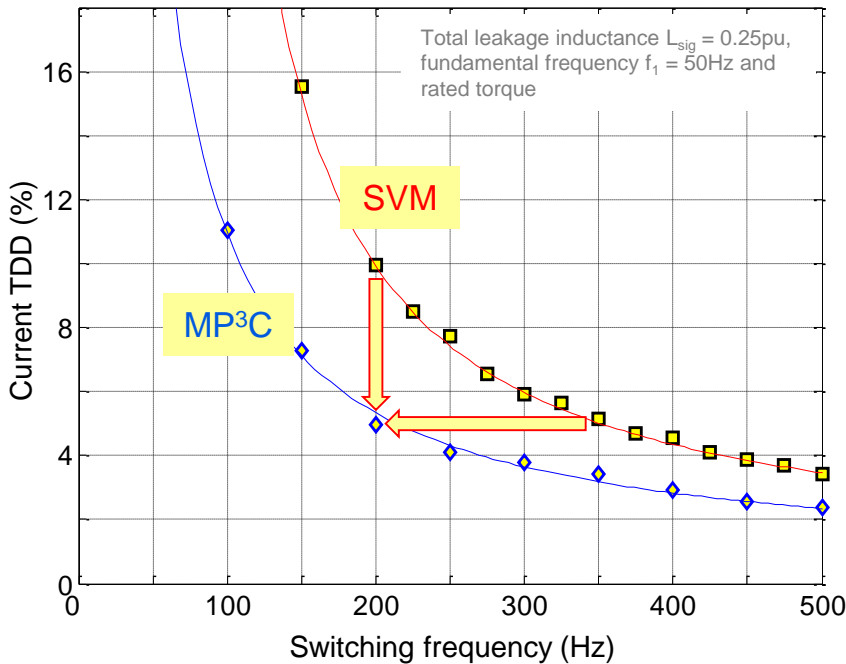


Results obtained by Vedrana Spudic

Up to **50% lower** current distortions for the same switching frequency (or vice versa)  
=> Machine-friendly operation, lower switching frequencies, higher power

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Commercial Benefits

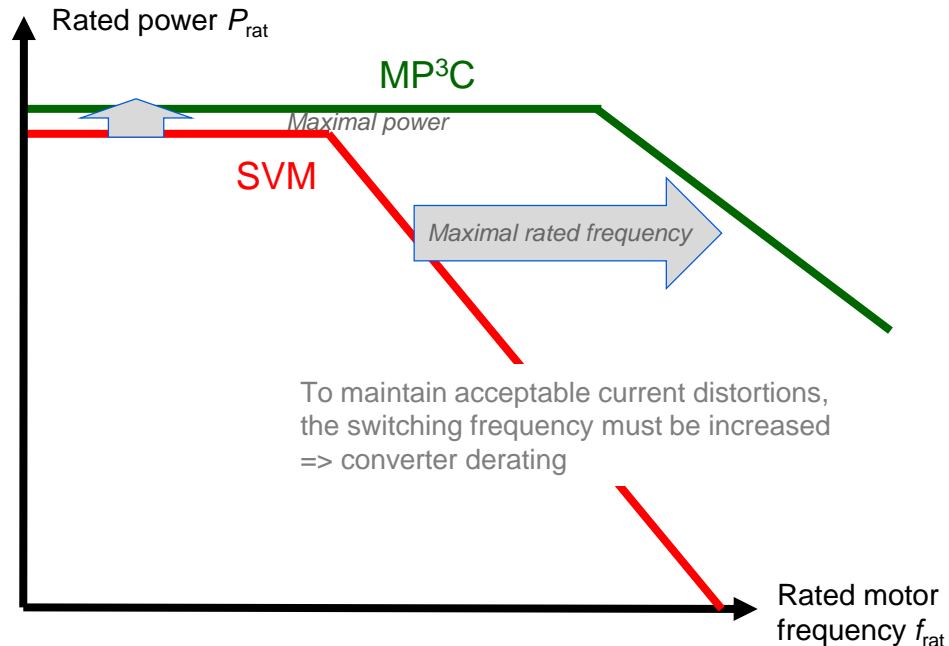
## Current TDD vs Switching frequency:



At low pulse numbers:

- Up to 50% lower **current distortions** or
- Up to 40% lower **switching frequency**

## Additional Benefit of Low Current TDD:



=> Lower switching frequencies for the same  
harmonic distortions

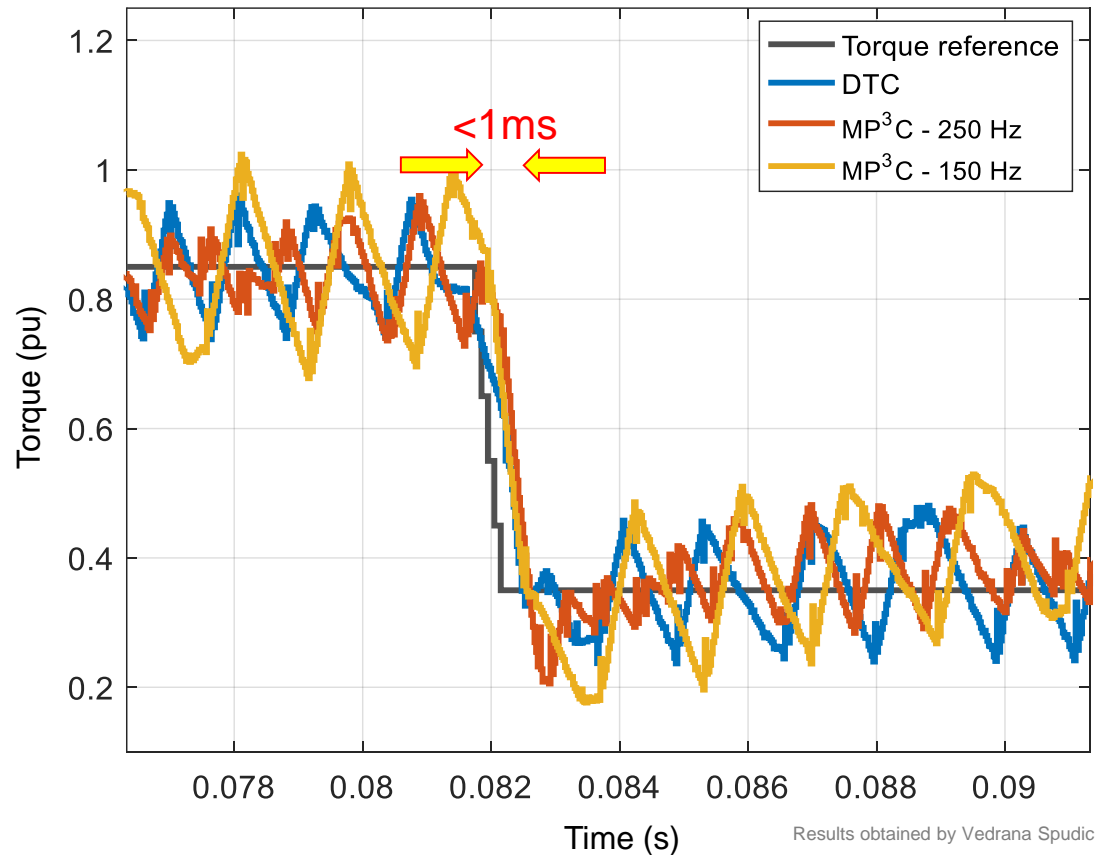
=> Higher fundamental frequencies at rated power

Higher maximal **power** and extended **market reach** => **Cost reduction**



# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Torque Steps (MV Lab)

Three-level converter at  $f_1 = 20\text{Hz}$



Dynamic performance similar to Direct Torque Control (DTC)

# Model Predictive Pulse Pattern Control (MP<sup>3</sup>C) Press Release (March 2019)

MEDIUM VOLTAGE AC DRIVES

## ABB industrial drives ACS6080, 5 to 36 MW



ACS6080 medium voltage drives offer high dynamic performance, reliability and safety for demanding applications. On top of ABB's new MP<sup>3</sup>C control technology, the drive provides easy-to-use interfaces to simplify operation and ABB Ability™ remote condition monitoring.

<https://new.abb.com/drives/medium-voltage-ac-drives/acs6080>


# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics

## Outline

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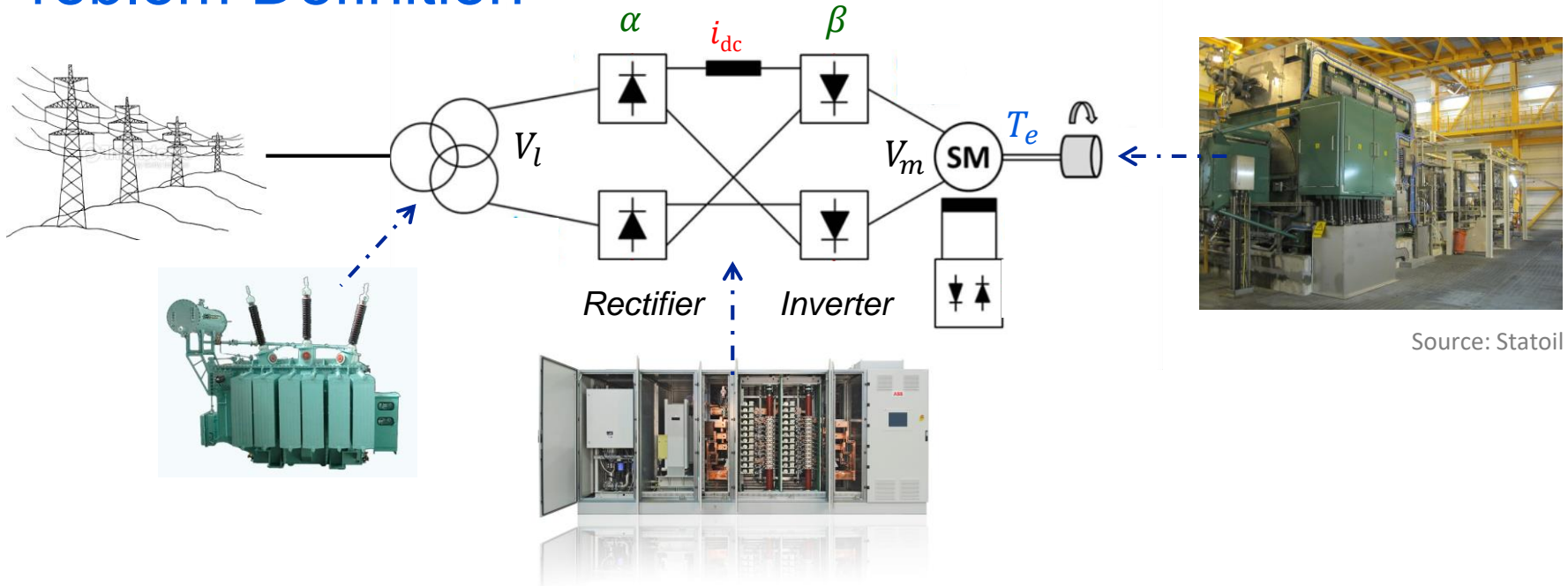
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### Assessment and conclusions

# Coordinated Control: Load Commutated Inverter Drive Problem Definition



Source: Statoil

## System:

- Load commutated inverter (LCI) with synchronous machine

## Model:

- Dc-link dynamic:  $L_{dc} \frac{d}{dt} i_{dc} = V_l \cos(\alpha) - V_m \cos(\beta)$
- Electromagnetic torque:  $T_e = -i_{dc} \cos(\beta)$

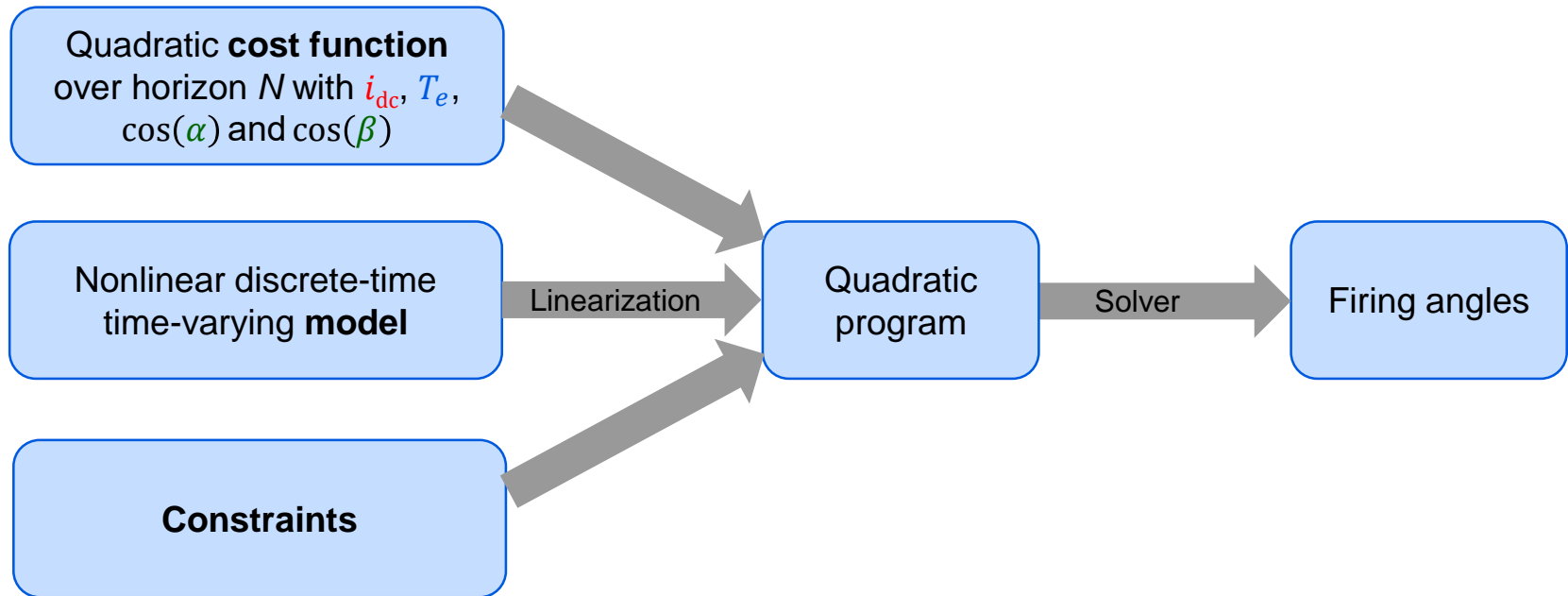
## Control objective:

- Regulate the torque  $T_e$  and the dc-link current  $i_{dc}$  to their references by manipulating the firing angles  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  while respecting constraints

## Constraints:

- $0 \leq i_{dc} \leq i_{dc \max}$
- $\alpha_{\min} \leq \alpha \leq \alpha_{\max} \quad \beta_{\min} \leq \beta \leq \beta_{\max}$

# Coordinated Control: Load Commutated Inverter Drive Model Predictive Control Formulation

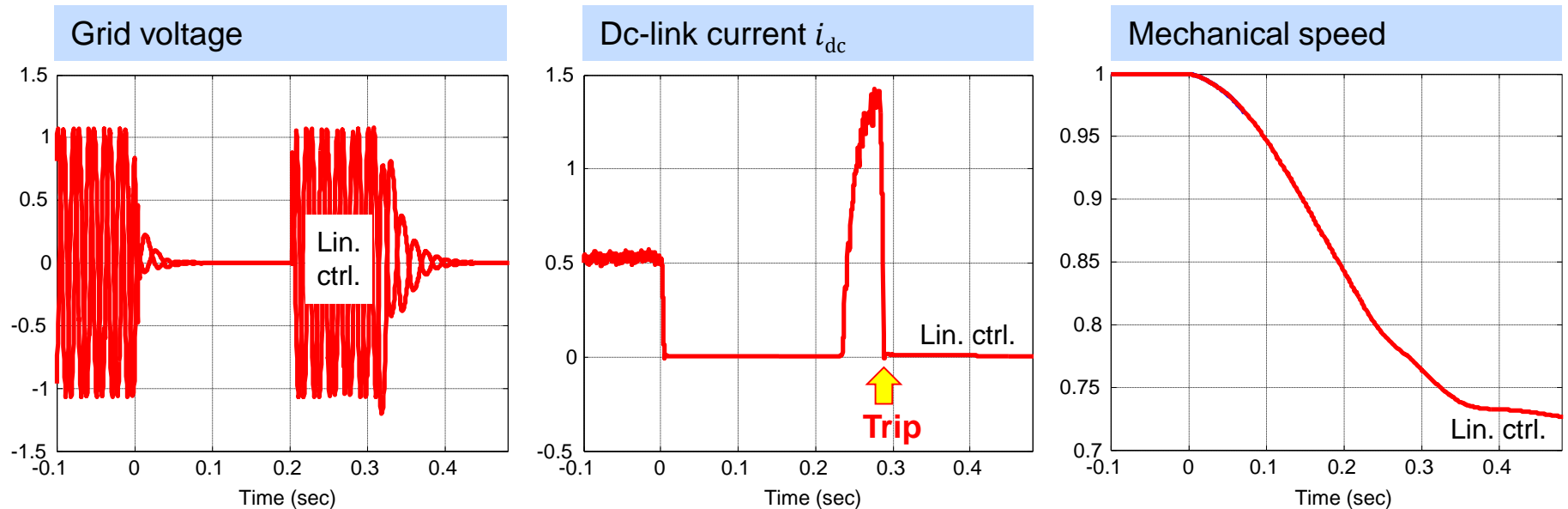


**Control platform:** PEC 3 (dual core PowerPC with 1.2 GHz)

**Sampling interval:** 1ms



# Coordinated Control: Load Commutated Inverter Drive Experimental Results on LV drive

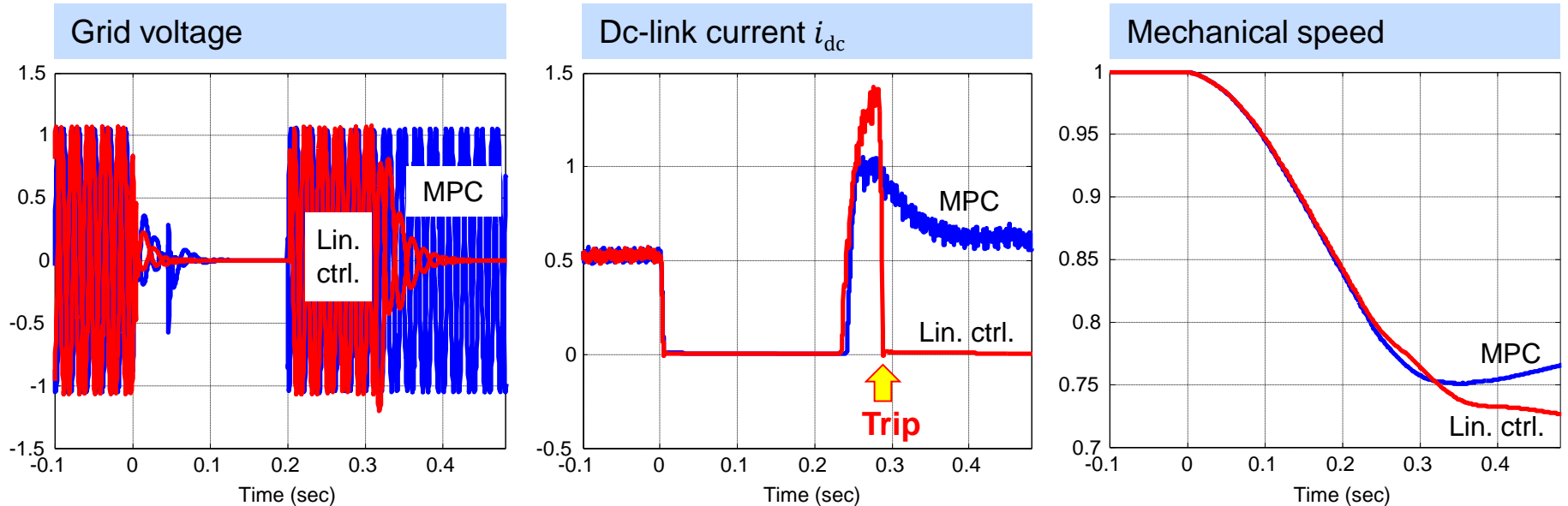


Results obtained by Thomas Besselmann

Low-voltage ride through:

- **Linear** controller (separate PI control loops for rectifier and inverter) **trips** when restoring power ( $i_{dc}$  too high)

# Coordinated Control: Load Commutated Inverter Drive Experimental Results on LV drive



Results obtained by Thomas Besselmann

Low-voltage ride through:

- **Linear** controller (separate PI control loops for rectifier and inverter) **trips** when restoring power ( $i_{dc}$  too high)
- **MPC** rides through and respects the constraints

# Coordinated Control: Load Commutated Inverter Drive Pilot Installations (since Mid 2015)

## Kollsnes, Norway



- Processes about **40%** of Norway's gas export
- Grid voltage disturbances
- Trips very costly (0.5M\$ per hour)
- Six compressor strings with 41.2 MW LCIs
- All are now controlled by MPC

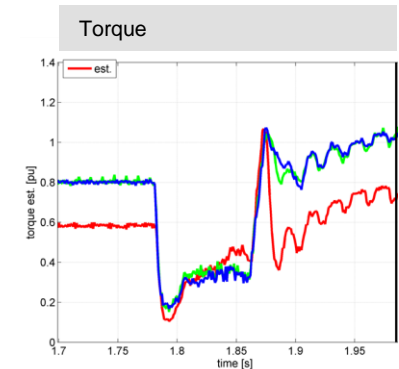
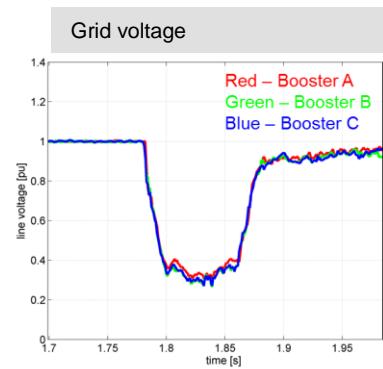
## Kårstø, Norway



- Europe's biggest export port for natural gas liquids
- Three 7.5 MW LCIs in booster compressors are controlled by MPC
- Low-voltage ride through

## Commercial benefits

- Improved low-voltage **ride through** => higher **availability**
- Lower **reactive power** => Increased **efficiency**



Results obtained by Thomas Besselmann

Service note

Drive System Consulting service  
Advanced Control Performance Optimization  
for MEGADRIVE-LCI



# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics

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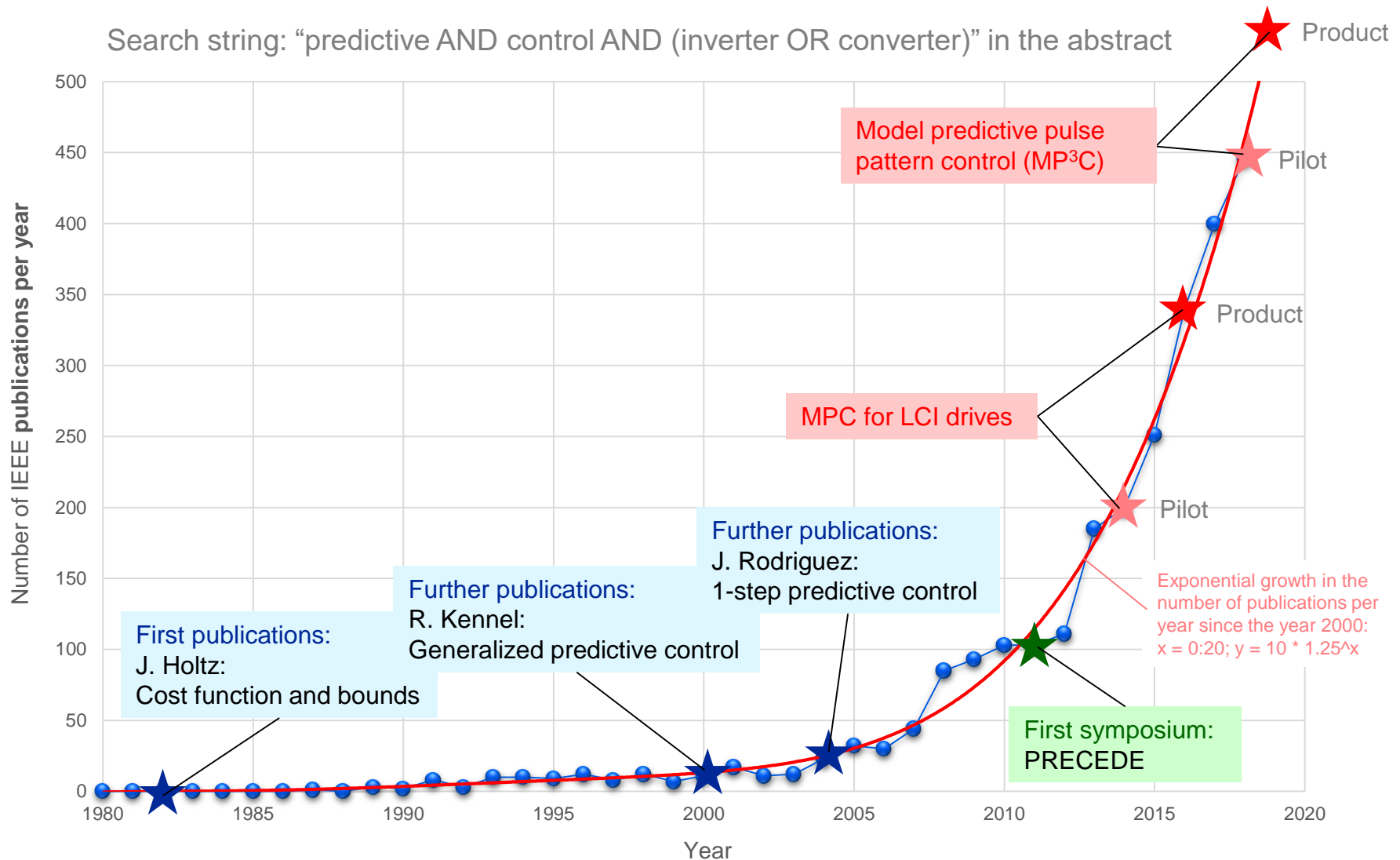
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### Assessment and conclusions

# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics Milestones



The number of annual publications **doubles every three years**

# Model Predictive Control in Power Electronics

## Conclusions

### Commercial benefits of MPC:

- Minimization of the **cost per MVA** of the power electronic system
- Superior performance during **transients** and faults
- Operation within the **safe operating area**
- Reduced effort to **design** and **adapt** the controller

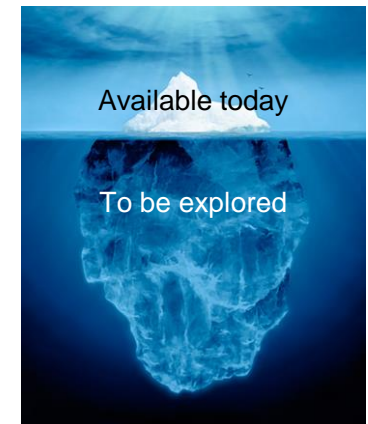
=> *Cost savings and boost of competitiveness*

### Challenges:

- Built-up of **know-how** and productization is time consuming
- Conceptual **simplicity** is mandatory
- Applicability to the whole **product range** is a must

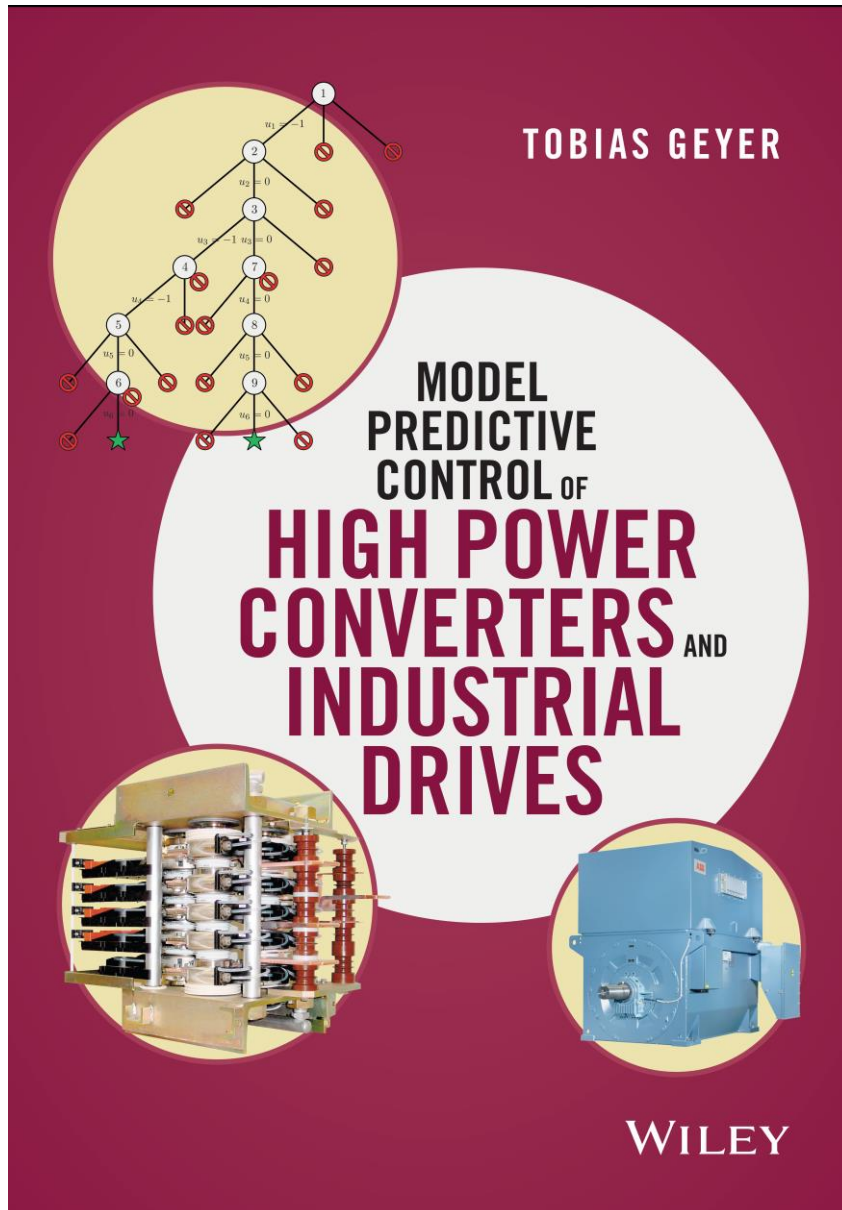
### An assessment:

- **Model predictive control** in power electronics has rapidly expanded with significant interest in the **academic** community
- Control is a potential **differentiator** and **cost saver** for industry, so interest in **industry** is ramping up
- A significant **monetary benefit** is required to ensure adoption by industry – this is often neglected  
=> Look beyond overly simplistic approaches
- Lack of **computational power** is typically not the limiting factor



**Model predictive control** for power electronics is still at an **early stage** despite some success stories

# MPC of High Power Electronics and Industrial Drives



Five main parts:

- **Introduction:** MPC, machines, semiconductors, topologies, MV inverters, requirements, CB-PWM, OPPs, field oriented control, direct torque control
- **Direct MPC with reference tracking (FCS-MPC):** predictive current control, predictive torque control, integer quadratic programming formulation, sphere decoding, performance evaluation for NPC inverter drive system without and with LC filter
- **Direct MPC with bounds:** model predictive direct torque control, extension methods, performance evaluation for 3L and 5L inverter drive systems, state-feedback control law, deadlocks, branch and bound methods, model predictive direct current control, model predictive direct power control
- **MPC based on PWM:** model predictive pulse pattern control, pulse insertion, performance evaluation for NPC inverter drive system, experimental results for 5L inverter drive system, MPC of an MMC using CB-PWM
- **Summary and conclusions:** performance comparison of direct MPC schemes, assessment, summary and discussion, outlook

576 pages, available on <http://eu.wiley.com>

