

# Sensorless control strategy for brushless doubly fed reluctance generator under voltage flickering at point of common coupling

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## ABSTRACT

The brushless doubly-fed reluctance generator (BDFRG) is widely used in grid-connected wind energy conversion systems (WECS). It has been observed that there is a continuous voltage flickering at the point of common coupling (PCC) between the BDFRG power terminals and the alternating current (AC) microgrids due to either the load variations or wind turbine output variations. Under such circumstances, sensorless control of BDFRG using the existing model reference adaptive system (MRAS) models exhibits erroneous active power output. This is because the variables selected in these models are directly or indirectly dependent on the voltage at the PCC. In this paper, a sensorless control mechanism for the BDFRG is proposed, which provides better performance in terms of control accuracy. Moreover, the planned scheme is insensitive to the parameter variations of the BDFRG. The performance of the planned system has been tested with a voltage flickering of 50% for 1 ms at the PCC. The stability test presented in this paper reveals that the model is robust and error-free against the noise disturbances. The planned system is implemented using proper simulations and a hardware platform with a practical BDFRG of 2.5 kW, and a dSPACE CP1104 module.

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## NOMENCLATURE

$\omega_r$	: Speed of the rotor	$R_p, R_s$	: Primary, secondary winding resistances
$\omega_p$	: Speed of primary winding flux	$L_p$	: Primary winding self-inductance
$\omega_s$	: Speed of secondary winding flux	$L_s$	: Secondary winding self-inductance
$V_{pd}, V_{pq}$	: Two-axis primary winding voltages	$i_{sd}, i_{sq}$	: Dq-axis secondary winding currents
$V_{sd}, V_{sq}$	: Two-axis secondary winding voltages	$P_p, P_s$	: Primary, secondary winding active power
$i_{pd}, i_{pq}$	: Two-axis primary winding currents	$\lambda_p, \lambda_s$	: Primary, secondary flux
$L_m$	: Mutual inductance between the primary and secondary winding	Superscript	: $E, s, p$ ; synchronous, secondary, and primary reference frames

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The wind energy conversion system using a doubly-fed induction generator (DFIG) is a time-tested practice. However, the limitations like higher maintenance costs and power loss due to slip-rings are the major issues. Moreover, the brushless doubly-fed reluctance generator (BDFRG) is simple in construction, robust in

terms of control, and exhibits improved efficiency [1]-[3] in comparison to DFIG. In terms of power delivery, the primary winding of the BDFRG is directly coupled with the grid at the point of common coupling (PCC), and the control winding is coupled with the utility through a back-to-back converter [4], [5]. For the active and reactive powers of the BDFRG, two flux-oriented vector control technique for BDFRG is suggested in [6], [7]. Appropriate scalar control techniques are suggested in [8] and [9]. Also, various vector control mechanisms are presented in [10]-[15]. However, the techniques presented in [6]-[15], including the other non-referenced papers, do not consider sensorless controls even though a large number of sensorless control methods of DFIG are available as presented in [16]-[24].

The sensorless model reference adaptive system (MRAS) technique presented in [25] for BDFRG control uses stator flux as the variable, and the terminal voltage is associated with the reference variable only. Similarly, the model reference adaptive system (MRAS) technique used for the same purpose in [26] uses active power as the variable, and the terminal voltage is associated with an adjustable variable only. Therefore, the voltage flickering at the point of common coupling (PCC) will severely introduce errors in the rotor speed estimation process. The sensorless control mechanism presented in this paper uses a MRAS technique for the estimation of BDFRG rotor speed and position, considering the real power of the machine as the adaptable variable. However, the terminal voltage is associated with both the reference and the adjustable variable. Therefore, the effect due to voltage flickering at PCC will be nullified, and the estimation process is found to be error-free. Moreover, the planned model is not sensitive to the machine parameter variations. The highlighted contributions of the planned sensorless control technique are summarized as follows:

- i) The uniqueness of the proposed sensorless control technique for the BDFRG is that it effectively performs under voltage flickering at the PCC between power terminals and the microgrids.
- ii) The proposed sensorless technique is insensitive to the parameter variations of the BDFRG.
- iii) The proposed MRAS model is stable against any noise disturbances.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND THE PROPOSED CONTROLLER

The planned controller in this paper has been presented through sensorless rotor position estimation of the BDFRG. The accuracy of the controller for machine parameter variations and flickering at PCC has also been tested. The robustness of the planned controller towards noise disturbances has been tested and appropriately presented. The overall structure of the BDFRG-based wind energy generation system is as shown in Figure 1, where the primary winding of BDFRG handles power at utility frequency, and the control winding operates at the rotor frequency. The two-axis primary winding voltage equation is presented in (1) and that of the control winding in (2) in the e-reference frame, and Figure 2 as follows:

$$V_{pd}^e = -\omega_p \lambda_{pq}^e; V_{pq}^e = \omega_p \lambda_{pd}^e \quad (1)$$

$$V_{sd}^e = R_s i_{sd}^e + \frac{d\lambda_{sd}^e}{dt} - (\omega_p - \omega_s) \lambda_{sq}^e; V_{sq}^e = R_s i_{sq}^e + \frac{d\lambda_{sq}^e}{dt} + (\omega_p - \omega_s) \lambda_{sd}^e \quad (2)$$

the two-axis primary winding currents are expressed as (3).

$$i_{pd}^e = \frac{(\lambda_{pd}^e - L_m i_{sd}^e)}{L_p}; i_{pq}^e = \frac{(\lambda_{pq}^e + L_m i_{sq}^e)}{L_p} \quad (3)$$

The control winding current can be expressed as (4).

$$i_{sd}^e = \frac{(\lambda_{sd}^e - L_m i_{pd}^e)}{L_s}; i_{sq}^e = \frac{(\lambda_{sq}^e + L_m i_{pq}^e)}{L_s} \quad (4)$$

The energy conversion between the control winding and the utility needs the information regarding rotor speed and position to control the stator side converter (SSC) and grid side converter (GSC). The quantity and the direction of active power flow accuracy depend on the accurate computation of the brushless doubly-fed reluctance generator (BDFRG) rotor speed and the position. Moreover, measurement of the above quantities using sensors is always erroneous and not cost effective. Therefore, in this paper, an attempt has been made to compute these quantities through an effective sensorless mechanism that is sustainable to machine parameter variations and voltage flicker at the PCC.

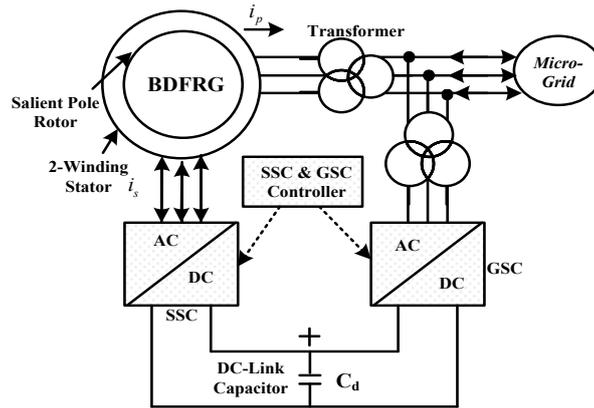


Figure 1. Basic structure

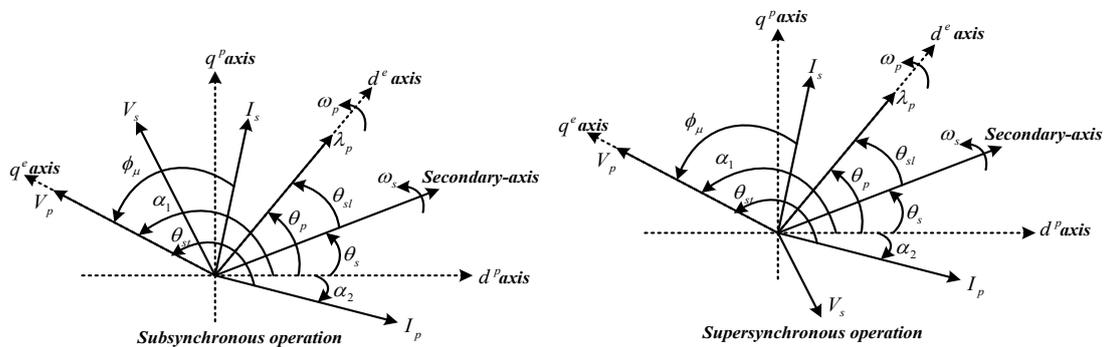


Figure 2. Primary and control winding phasor of the BDFRG

**2.1. Algorithms for sensorless computation of rotor position**

When the wind generator is synchronized with the microgrid, voltage flickers at the PCC are inherently reflected in the output of the voltage sensors used in almost all types of available sensorless schemes. In this paper, a modest MRAS-based model has been proposed for the computation of the rotor position of the BDFRG, which is unbiased to the voltage flickers at the PCC. To develop the planned MRAS model, the real power of the BDFRG is considered as the adaptable variable. The BDFRG active power can be expressed as (5).

$$P_p = \frac{3}{2} [V_{pd}^e i_{pd}^e + V_{pq}^e i_{pq}^e] \tag{5}$$

Substituting from (3) in (5), the BDFRG real power, and substituting  $V_{pd}^e = -\omega_p \lambda_{pq}^e$ ;  $V_{pq}^e = \omega_p \lambda_{pd}^e$  at steady state can be expressed as (6).

$$P_p = \frac{3}{2} (1 - \chi_s) [V_{pq}^e i_{sq}^e - V_{pd}^e i_{sd}^e] \tag{6}$$

Where  $\chi_s$  is the primary winding leakage factor, and its value is almost 0.

Therefore, signifying the reference and adjustable variable for the proposed MRAS model as  $P_p^{ref}$   $\hat{P}_p$ , from (5) and (6).

$$\begin{aligned} P_p^{ref} &= \frac{3}{2} [V_{pd}^e i_{pd}^e + V_{pq}^e i_{pq}^e] \\ \hat{P}_p &= \frac{3}{2} [V_{pq}^e i_{sq}^e - V_{pd}^e i_{sd}^e] \end{aligned} \tag{7}$$

Since the primary winding is directly coupled with PCC, for any voltage variation at PCC, the stator voltage of the BDFRG will vary. However, it can be observed from (7) that in the planned MRAS model, both the reference as well as the adaptable variables are associated with the primary winding voltage. Therefore, the voltage flicker at the PCC is ineffective in the case of the planned scheme. Hence, the computation of the BDFRG rotor position and the speed is error-free. The planned model can be observed from Figure 3, and the output can be observed from Figure 4.

The performance of the presented scheme under variable wind speed conditions can be observed from Figure 4(a), where BDFRG rotor speed was computed using the presented MRAS model and compared with the measured value with almost zero computational error. Similarly, from Figure 4(b), it can be observed that the planned MRAS model effectively computes the rotor position, and the same has been compared with its measured value. It has been observed that the planned model accurately computes the BDFRG rotor position. From (7), it can be observed that the adjustable variable  $\hat{P}_p$  is free from any machine parameter dependencies. It has been observed that if the adjustable variable is coupled with  $L_m$  of the BDFRG, the performance of the MRAS model will be erroneous. Because  $L_m$  is a continuously varying parameter in case of BDFRG. If the  $L_m$  value is fixed without updating the mechanism, the computation of the BDFRG rotor position will be erroneous. However, the planned scheme is free from any parameter dependencies and hence more accurate. The effectiveness of the planned scheme has been tested for the  $L_m$  variation between -50% to +50% as shown in Figures 5(a) and 5(b), respectively. It can be seen in Figures 5(a) and 5(b) that the planned model computes the rotor speed and position very accurately with very insignificant errors. Similarly, the primary winding resistance  $R_p$  has been varied by 50% as shown in Figures 5(c) and 5(d). It can be observed from Figure 5(c) that BDFRG rotor position computation using the is very accurate when  $R_p$  the value is increased by 50%. In Figure 5(d), the performance of the planned MRAS model is satisfactory, where the  $R_p$  value decreased by 50%.

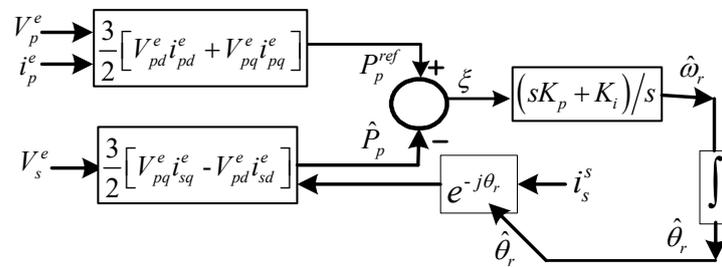


Figure 3. Proposed MRAS model

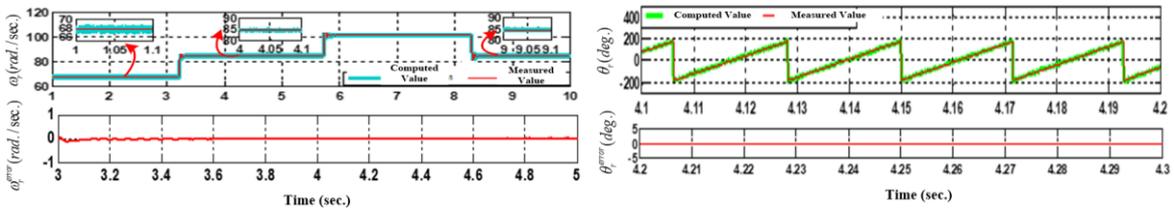


Figure 4. Performance of the proposed MRAS model: (a) computation of BDFRG rotor speed and (b) computation of BDFRG rotor position

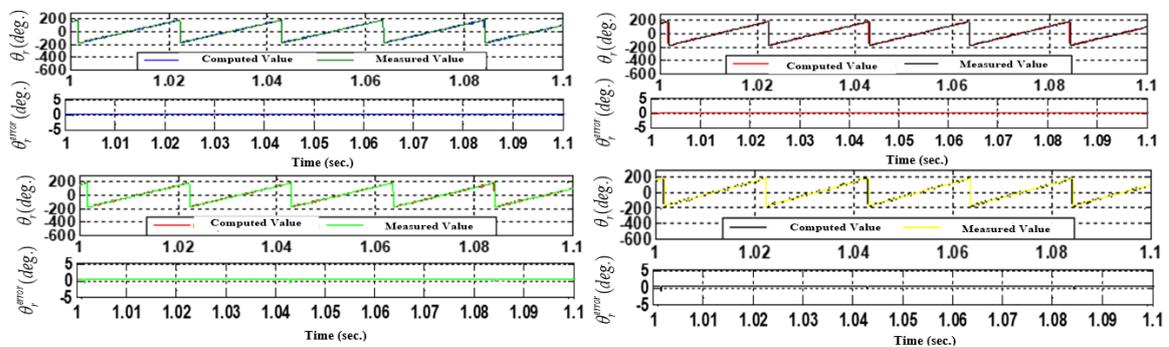


Figure 5. BDFRG rotor position computation by the proposed MRAS model with (a)  $L_m$  variation by -50%, (b)  $L_m$  variation by +50%, (c)  $R_p$  variation by +50%, and (d)  $R_p$  variation by -50%

## 2.2. Stability test of the proposed MRAS model

The stability of the proposed algorithm has been tested through a small signal model as shown in Figure 6 [27]. From (7), the error  $\xi$  can be expressed in a synchronous reference frame as (8).

$$\xi = P_p^{ref} - \hat{P}_p = \frac{3}{2} [(V_{pd}^e i_{pd}^e + V_{pq}^e i_{pq}^e) - (V_{pq}^e i_{sq}^e - V_{pd}^e i_{sd}^e)] \quad (8)$$

Aligning primary stator voltage along  $d^e$ -axis,  $V_{pq}^e = 0$ , the torque error signal can be expressed as (9).

$$\xi = \frac{3}{2} [(V_{pd}^e i_{pd}^e) + (V_{pd}^e i_{sd}^e)] \quad (9)$$

Therefore, change in error  $\Delta\xi$  can be expressed as (10).

$$\Delta\xi = \frac{3}{2} [(V_{pd0}^e \Delta i_{pd}^e + \Delta V_{pd}^e i_{pd0}^e) + (V_{pd0}^e \Delta i_{sd}^e + \Delta V_{pd}^e i_{sd0}^e)] \quad (10)$$

From (1), for constant flux operation,  $\Delta V_{pd}^e = 0$  and  $\Delta i_{pd}^e = 0$  for constant torque operation. Thus, from (10):

$$\Delta\xi = \frac{3}{2} V_{pd0}^e \Delta i_{sd}^e \quad (11)$$

if  $\hat{\omega}r$  is the estimated speed in transient condition and  $\omega r$  is the actual rotor speed, the position error can be derived from speed error as (12).

$$\theta_{error} = (\hat{\omega}r - \omega r)t \quad (12)$$

Now,

$$i_{sd}^e = i_{sd}^e \sin \theta_{error} + i_{sq}^e \cos \theta_{error} \Rightarrow \Delta i_{sd}^e = \left( \frac{\partial i_{sd}^e}{\partial \theta_{error}} \right) \Delta \theta_{error} \quad (13)$$

at steady state, when  $\theta_{error} = 0$  and  $\hat{\omega}r = \omega_r$ , from (7) and (8).

$$\Delta i_{sd}^e = i_{sd0}^e \Delta \theta_{error} \quad (14)$$

Substituting (14) in (11),

$$\Delta\xi = \frac{3}{2} V_{pd0}^e i_{sd0}^e \Delta \theta_{error} \quad (15)$$

now,  $\theta_{error} = \int (\hat{\omega}r - \omega r) dt$ . Therefore,

$$\Delta \theta_{error}(s) = \frac{(\Delta \hat{\omega}r(s) - \Delta \omega_r(s))}{s} \quad (16)$$

Substituting from (12) in (10),

$$\Delta\xi = \frac{3}{2} \left[ \frac{(\Delta \hat{\omega}r(s) - \Delta \omega_r(s)) V_{pd0}^e i_{sd0}^e}{s} \right] \quad (17)$$

considering,  $K_p$  and  $K_i$  are the proportional and integral constants of PI-controller respectively. The open loop transfer function of the presented small signal model can be written as,  $G(s)H(s) = \frac{3}{2} \frac{V_{pd0}^e i_{sd0}^e}{s} [K_p + K_i/s]$ , and  $G(s)H(s) = \frac{K_1}{s} [K_p + K_i/s]$ . Where,

$$K_1 = \frac{3}{2} V_{pd0}^e i_{sd0}^e \quad (18)$$

using expression in (18), a root-locus has been drawn as shown in Figure 7. It can be observed that a double pole exists at origin and single zero exists at  $-K_i/K_p$ . Since the root-locus remains in left half of the S-plane, the proposed MRAS model is highly stable against any noise disturbances.

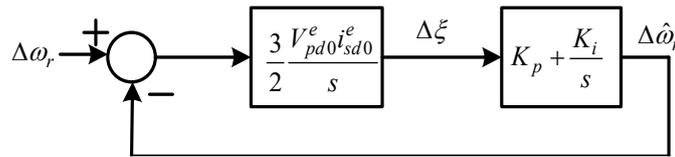


Figure 6. The small signal model of the proposed estimator with PI controller

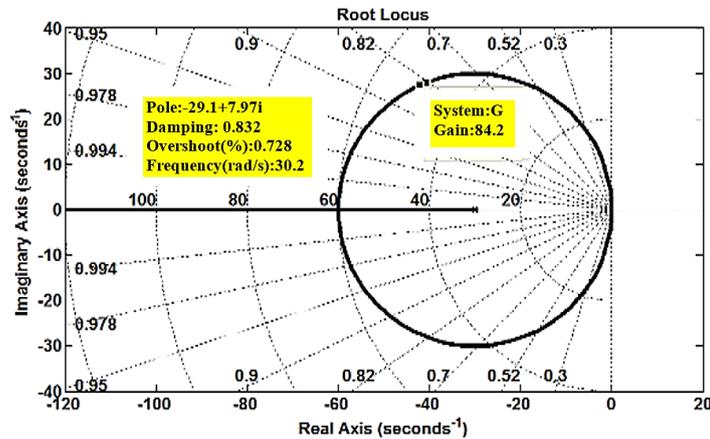


Figure 7. Root-locus of the small signal model

### 3. EXPERIMENT AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The proposed sensorless control scheme for the BDFRG has been initially designed using the MATLAB-Simulink platform to test the performance. The output has already been presented in the previous sections of this paper. To validate the MATLAB platform results and to test performance further, the proposed scheme has been implemented using hardware, as shown in Figure 8. For testing purposes, to create voltage flickers at PCC, both load and torque output of the wind turbine emulator have been quickly and systematically varied. The test results of the scaled prototype of the proposed scheme are shown in Figures 9(a)-9(h). The proposed sensorless control scheme is implemented using a PC-interfaced dSPACE CP1104 module and a 2.5 kW BDFRG. A two-channel DSO (100 kHz) has been used to capture the feasible significant test results. A 5 kW AC source has been used to represent the microgrids along with the necessary loading (R-L) arrangement. The effect of wind speed fluctuation has been emulated with the help of a prime mover (5 kW, torque-controlled, separately excited DC motor).

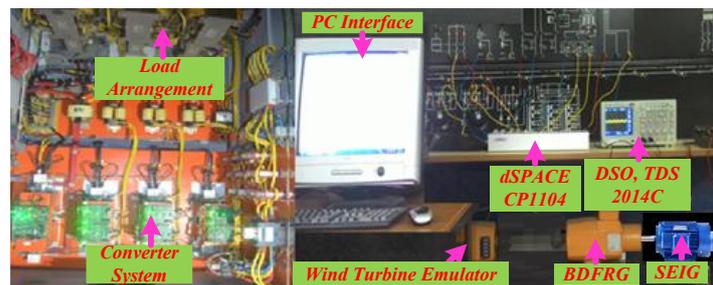


Figure 8. Outline of the experiment

As it has already been shown that the proposed sensorless control technique is stable against the noise disturbances, robust against machine parameter variations, and unbiased to voltage flickering at the PCC. The same can be observed from the test results shown in Figures 9(a) and 9(b). The voltage at the PCC has been varied by 50% for 1 ms through an overloading approach at the microgrids, and the recorded rotor position and the speed of the machine are presented in Figures 9(a) and 9(b), respectively. It can be observed that the proposed sensorless control scheme very accurately computes the BDFRG rotor position and the speed. As it has already been said, the accuracy of the active power generation is highly dependent on the accuracy of the

controller. The active power generation from the BDFRG under voltage flickering at the PCC can be observed from Figure 9(c). It can be observed that the proposed sensorless controller provides robust performance under voltage flickering at the PCC. However, to test the DC-link performance, some more test results are presented here for the readers reference and understanding. To maintain 1 p.u. of active power at the primary winding terminals, the secondary winding active power fluctuates in synchronous with the wind turbine output power variations. Thus, the net active power exchange between the WECS and microgrids will vary according to the wind speed and, hence, the BDFRG rotor speed. The same can be observed in Figures 9(d) and 9(e).

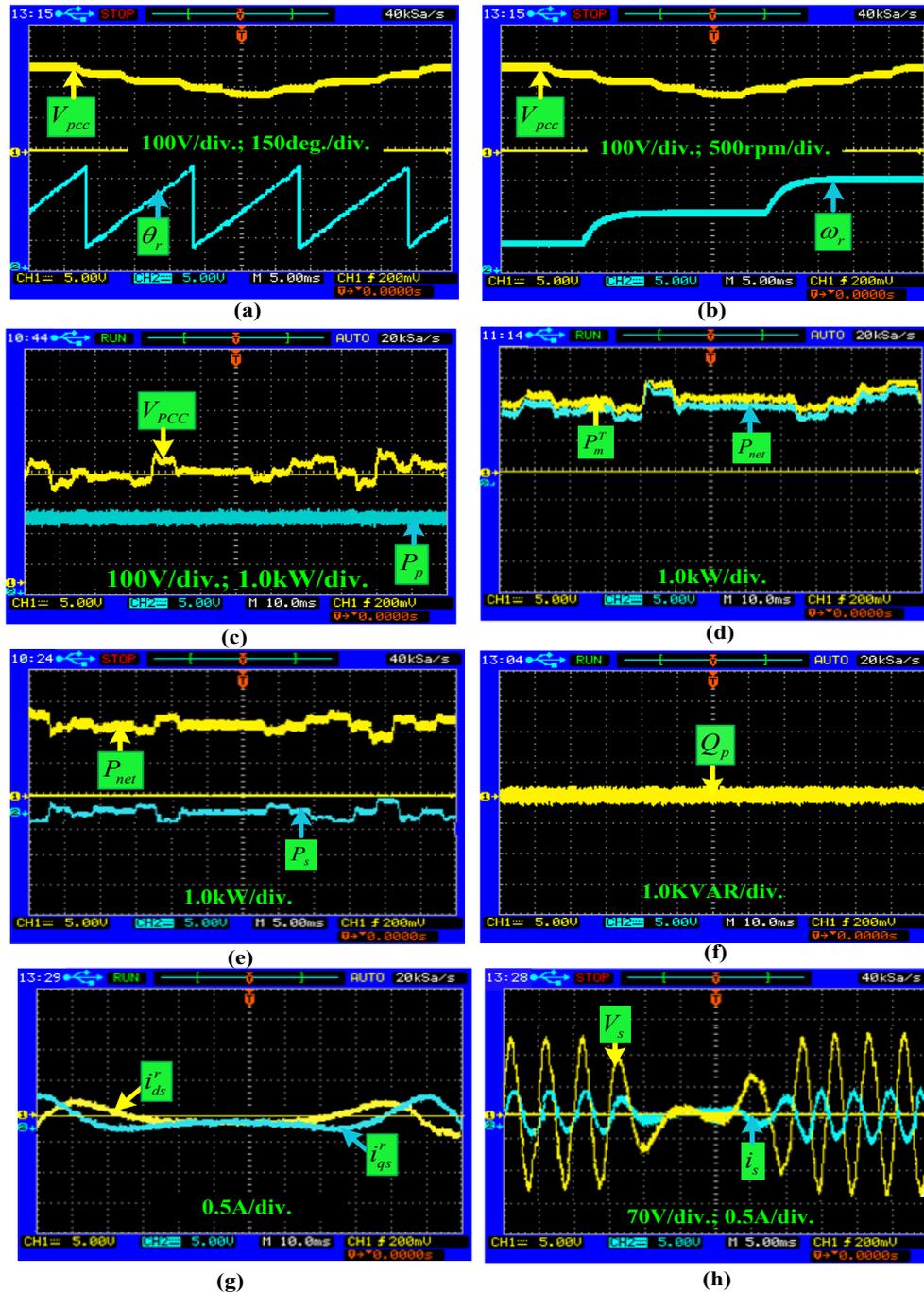


Figure 9. Performance of the planned MRAS embedded controller: (a) estimation of BDFRG rotor position, (b) estimation of BDFRG rotor speed, (c) accuracy of active power generation under voltage flickering at PCC, (d) control winding real power versus net active power generation, (e) DBDFRG rotor speed versus the primary winding active power, (f) reactive power loading, (g) dq control wing current, and (h) voltage and currents of control winding

Grid-side converter, as shown in Figure 1, plays a very important role in the above power exchange process. Though the controller part of the GSC is hidden in the literature, practically it has been implemented through two control loops, considering the DC-link voltage and the unit power factor ( $Q_p = 0$ ) as the reference variables. The mentioned control loop for the GSC helps to maintain a constant voltage at the DC-link and operate the WECS at the unit power factor, as observed in Figure 9(f).

During the BDFRG speed transition from subsynchronous to supersynchronous operation, the controller is required to perform effectively, particularly near synchronous speed. At this operating point, the slip becomes zero, resulting in an almost zero frequency of the control winding voltage and current. Consequently, the d-q axis currents of the control winding exhibit nearly DC behavior, as shown in Figure 9(g) indicates the effective performance of the controller during the speed transition.

In the subsynchronous operating region, the active power generation capability of the BDFRG is lower than the rated value. To maintain rated power generation at the primary winding terminals, the deficit power is injected through the control winding via the DC-link, leading to an almost zero phase angle between the control winding voltage and current. Conversely, in the supersynchronous operating region, both windings deliver power to the microgrids, resulting in  $P_{net} > 1.0 p.u.$  In this case, active power reversal occurs through the control winding, and the phase angle between the control winding voltage and current becomes approximately  $180^\circ$ , as illustrated in Figure 9(h).

A comparative analysis of the proposed sensorless scheme through test results as per IEEE Std 1453-2015 has been presented in Table 1. A standard voltage flickering at the PCC with  $\frac{\Delta V}{V} \leq 0.5$  for 1 ms has been considered for testing purposes. It can be observed that the accuracy associated with the proposed sensorless scheme is comparatively high.

Table 1. BDFRG rotor position computation error against voltage flickering at PCC

$\frac{\Delta V}{V}$ at PCC For 1ms	$\hat{\theta}_r$ error for proposed model (rad.)	% of $P_p$ deviation for the proposed scheme	$\hat{\theta}_r$ error for primary winding flux based MRAS (rad.) [25]	% of $P_p$ deviation for the scheme in [25]	$\hat{\theta}_r$ error for active power based MRAS (rad.) [26]	% of $P_p$ deviation for the scheme in [26]
-50%	-0.008	-0.016	0.109	-1.500	0.160	-1.600
-40%	-0.007	-0.015	0.088	-1.300	0.150	-1.500
-30%	-0.005	-0.013	0.070	-1.200	0.120	-1.400
-20%	-0.003	-0.012	0.054	-1.000	0.094	-1.300
-10%	-0.001	-0.010	0.032	-0.900	0.049	-1.200
0%	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
+10%	0.001	0.010	-0.034	0.900	-0.064	1.200
+20%	0.002	0.012	-0.054	1.000	-0.089	1.300
+30%	0.002	0.013	-0.076	1.200	-0.138	1.400
+40%	0.003	0.015	-0.094	1.300	-0.138	1.500
+50%	0.004	0.016	-0.117	1.500	-0.168	1.600

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The proposed sensorless control mechanism for the brushless doubly fed reluctance generator, sustainable to the voltage flickers at the PCC, has been successfully implemented, and feasible test results have been presented in this paper. It has been observed that the proposed sensorless control scheme is not sensitive to the machine parameter variations. The performance of the model has been tested for a 50% variation in magnetizing inductance of the brushless doubly-fed reluctance generator (BDFRG) and found that the proposed MRAS model computes rotor position and rotor speed with insignificant errors. The test result reveals that the MRAS model is sustainable to the voltage flickers  $\frac{\Delta V}{V} \leq 0.5$  for 1 ms at PCC. The active power variation due to the error associated with the proposed BDFRG rotor position computation is found to be 0.016%, which is negligible in comparison to the 1.6% for the other similar schemes. The stability of the model against noise disturbance has been analyzed, and found that the model exhibits robust performance against the noise disturbances. The performance of the proposed controller for SSG has been recorded and successfully presented in this paper.

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### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

This journal uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT) to recognize individual author contributions, reduce authorship disputes, and facilitate collaboration.

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Adikanda Parida	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
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C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

### DATA AVAILABILITY

Data availability is not applicable to this paper as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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