Improvement of Microgrid (MG) Systems Using Synchronverters (SVs)

Mohammad A. elsayad¹, Amr M. Abdin¹, Mohamed M. Shaalan²
¹Elect. Power &Machine Dept., Faculty of Eng. Ain-Shames University, Cairo, Egypt
²Elect. Eng. Dept, Benha Faculty of Engineering, Benha University, Qalubiya, Egypt

Abstract- In this paper, the synchronverter (SV) model is revised and thoroughly examined. Detailed simulation blocks are clarified and presented using Matlab/Simulink. The aim is to enhance inertia contribution to approach equivalent real synchronous generator (SG) and by another meaning grid-friendly inverter that mimic the operation of conventional SG. Improvements in the two modes of operation grid-connected mode and stand-alone mode are obtained. SV is able to transfer over, no magnetic saturation and no eddy current. Simulink. The aim is to model virtual synchronous generator (VSG), voltage drooping.

Index Terms- Distributed generation (DG), frequency drooping, load sharing, microgrid (MG), parallel inverters, pulse width modulation (PWM) inverter, renewable energy (RE), smart grid, synchronous generator (SG), static synchronous generator (SSG), synchronverter (SV), virtual synchronous generator (VSG), voltage drooping.

I. INTRODUCTION

The share of electrical energy produced by renewable-energy sources (RESs), such as wind power and solar power... etc., is gradually increasing. Comparing with conventional power stations RESs are distributed in nature, so they are usually called distributed generators (DG). The electrical authority in Egypt planned to cover 20% of bulk energy generation by RESs by 2020 as an attempt to solve the electricity crisis. And in European countries, the USA, China, and India significant targets are also aimed for using the DGs and RESs in their power systems up to next two decades. Worldwide, the electrical power system is currently undergoing a dramatic change from centralized generation to distributed generation. Most of this DG needs dc-ac conversion, to interface with the public-utility grid. For example, wind turbines are most effective if free to generate at variable frequency, so they require double conversion ac–dc–ac while photovoltaic arrays require a single dc–ac conversion. This means that more and more inverters will be connected to the grid and will eventually dominate power generation.

The current paradigm in the control of RESs is to extract the maximum power from the power source and inject them all into the power grid [1] Advanced algorithms have been developed to ensure that the current injected into the grid is clean sinusoidal [2], [3]. The policy of injecting all available power to the grid is a good one as long as renewable power sources constitute a small part of the grid power capacity. Indeed, any random power fluctuation of the renewable power generators will be compensated by the controllers associated with the large conventional generators, and some of these generators will also take care of the overall power balance, system stability, and fault ride through [4],[5].

When renewable power generators will provide the majority of the grid power, the need will arise to operate them in the same way as conventional power generators or at least to imitate certain aspects of the operation of conventional generators using novel techniques [6]. This will require high-efficiency energy-storage units so that the random fluctuations of the prime power source can be filtered out [7]–[14]. The key problem here is how to control the inverters in DGs so that these inverters can be integrated into the existing system and behave in the same way as conventional SG does. This assures a smooth transition from the existing conventional power grid to a grid dominated by inverters.

In paper [4], a method by which an inverter can be operated to mimic the behavior of an SG is proposed. The dynamic equations are the same; only the mechanical power exchanged with the prime mover is replaced with the power exchanged with the dc bus. The inverter including the filter inductors, capacitors and the associated controller is called a SV. A SV will have all the properties of a SG, which is a complex nonlinear system. The parameters, such as inertia, friction coefficient, field inductance, and mutual inductances can be selected without criteria of real material limitations present in SGs. The energy that would be lost in the virtual mechanical friction is not lost in reality; it is directed back to the dc bus. Moreover, no magnetic saturation and no eddy currents are present in this case. Parameter values that are impossible in a real SG and variation of parameters while the system is operating are benefits in this case.

If a SV is connected to the utility grid and is operated as a generator, no difference would be felt from the grid side between this system and an SG. Thus, the conventional control algorithms and equipment that have been developed for SGs driven by prime movers can be applied to SVs [4].

IEEE has defined a term, called static synchronous generator (SSG) [15], to designate a static switching power converter supplied from an appropriate electric energy source and operated to produce a set of adjustable multiphase output voltages, which may be coupled to an ac power system for the purpose of exchanging independently controllable real and reactive power in flexible ac transmission system. Clearly, SVs is a particular type of SSGs.

The concept of a virtual synchronous machine (VISMA) was proposed in [10], [11], [14]-[19], where the voltages at the point of common coupling with the grid are measured to calculate the phase currents of the VISMA in real time. These currents are then used as reference currents for the inverter, and hence, the inverter behaves as a current source connected to the grid. If the current tracking error is small, then the inverter behaves like a synchronous machine, justifying the term VISMA. If the current tracking error is large, then the inverter behaviors change. As a key difference to the SV, it is...
worth mentioning that the SV does not depend on the tracking of reference currents or voltages. In [16], a short-term energy-storage system is added to the inverter in order to provide virtual inertia to the system. The power flow to the storage is proportional to the derivative of the grid frequency (as it would be with real inertia). This kind of inverter with added virtual inertia, called virtual synchronous generators (VSGs), can contribute to the short-term stabilization of the grid frequency. However, the system dynamics seen from the grid side will be different from those of a SG.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In Section II, a dynamic model of SGs is established. The way to simulate performance of a SV is described in Section III, and issues related to its operation, e.g., frequency- and voltage-dropping mechanisms for load sharing, are described in Section IV. Simulation results are given in Section V with conclusions in Section VI.

II. MODELING SYNCHRONOUS MACHINES

The model of synchronous machines can be found in many sources such as [3], [4], [20]–[27]. Here, the model established in [4] is used. It considers the following assumptions:

- Rotor type: round rotor machine so that all stator inductances are constant.
- The effect of damper windings in the rotor is neglected.
- There is one pair of poles.
- There are no magnetic-saturation effects in the iron core and no eddy currents.

That paper uses relatively very small inertia so simulation and experimental results seem to have negligible hunting (oscillations around the synchronous frequency), and shows exceptionally fast synchronization. In present work trying to have similar response at practical values of inertia necessitates using high values of drooping frequency coefficient as will be shown in IV.

A. Electrical Part

The field and the three identical stator windings are distributed in slots around the periphery of the uniform air gap. The stator windings can be regarded as concentrated coils having self-inductance L and mutual inductance −M (M > 0 with a typical value 1/2L, the negative sign is due to the 2π/3 phase angle), as shown in Fig. 1. The field (or rotor) winding can be regarded as a concentrated coil having self-inductance Lf. The mutual inductance between the field coil and each of the three stator coils varies with the rotor angle θ, i.e.,

\[ M_{af} = M_f \cos(\theta) \]
\[ M_{bf} = M_f \cos(\theta - \frac{2\pi}{3}) \]
\[ M_{cf} = M_f \cos(\theta - \frac{4\pi}{3}) \]

Where \( M_f > 0 \), the flux linkages of the windings are

\[ \Phi_a = L_i_a - M_i_b - M_i_c + M_{af} i_f \]

\[ \Phi_b = -M_i_a + L_i_b - M_i_c + M_{bf} i_f \]

\[ \Phi_c = -M_i_a - M_i_b + L_i_c + M_{cf} i_f \]

\[ \Phi_f = M_{af} i_a + M_{bf} i_b + M_{cf} i_c + L_f i_f \]

Where \( i_a, i_b \) and \( i_c \) are the stator phase currents and \( i_f \) is the rotor excitation current. Denote

\[ \Phi = \begin{bmatrix} \Phi_a \\ \Phi_b \\ \Phi_c \end{bmatrix}, \quad i = \begin{bmatrix} i_a \\ i_b \\ i_c \end{bmatrix} \]

\[ \cos \theta = \begin{bmatrix} \cos(\theta - \frac{2\pi}{3}) \\ \cos(\theta - \frac{4\pi}{3}) \end{bmatrix}, \quad \sin \theta = \begin{bmatrix} \sin(\theta - \frac{2\pi}{3}) \\ \sin(\theta - \frac{4\pi}{3}) \end{bmatrix} \]

Assume for the moment that the neutral line is not connected, then

\[ i_a + i_b + i_c = 0 \]

It follows that the stator flux linkages can be rewritten as

\[ \Phi = L_i i + M_f i_f \cos \theta \]

Where \( L_i = L + M \), and the field flux linkage can be rewritten as

\[ \Phi_f = L_f i_f + M_f \cos \theta \]

Where \( \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \) denotes the conventional inner product in \( \mathbb{R}^3 \). The second term \( M_f \langle i, \cos \theta \rangle \) (called armature reaction) is constant if the three phase currents are sinusoidal (as functions of \( \theta \)) and balanced. Also \( \sqrt{2/3} \langle i, \cos \theta \rangle \) is called the d-axis component of the current.

Assume that the resistance of the stator windings is \( R_s \); then, the phase terminal voltages \( v = [v_a v_b v_c]^T \) can be obtained from Eq. 1 as

\[ v = -R_s i - d\Phi/ dt = -R_s i - L_i i + i_f/dt + e \]

(3)
Where \( e = [e_\alpha, e_\beta, e_\gamma]^T \) is the back electromotive force (EMF) due to the rotor movement given by

\[
e = M_f i_f \theta \sin \theta - M_f d_i_f /dt \cos \theta \tag{4}
\]

The voltage vector \( e \) is also called no-load voltage or synchronous internal voltage.

The field terminal voltage is

\[
v_f = -R_f i_f - d\Phi_f /dt \tag{5}
\]

Where \( R_f \) is the resistance of the rotor winding. This completes the modeling of the electrical part of the machine.

### B. Mechanical Part

The mechanical part of the machine is governed by

\[
J \ddot{\theta} = T_m - T_p - D_p \dot{\theta} \tag{6}
\]

Where \( J \) is the moment of inertia of all the parts rotating with the rotor, \( T_m \) is the mechanical torque, \( T_p \) is the electromagnetic torque, and \( D_p \) is a damping factor. \( T_p \) can be found from the energy \( E \) stored in the magnetic machine field, i.e.,

\[
E = \frac{1}{2} (i, \Phi) + \frac{1}{2} i_f \Phi_f = 1/2(i, L_i s_i + M_f i_f \cos \theta) + 1/2 i_f (L_f i_f + M_f (i, \cos \theta)) = 1/2 (i, L_i s_i) + M_f i_f (i, \cos \theta) + 1/2 L_f i_f^2 \tag{7}
\]

From simple energy considerations [20] we have

\[
T_p = \partial E / \partial \theta \bigg|_{\phi, \theta \text{ constant}}
\]

Because constant flux linkages mean no back EMF, all the power flow is mechanical. It is not difficult to verify (using the formula for the derivative of the inverse of a matrix function) that this is equivalent to

\[
T_p = - \partial E / \partial \theta \bigg|_{\phi, \theta \text{ constant}}
\]

Thus

\[
T_p = - M_f i_f (i, \partial / \partial \theta \cos \theta) = M_f i_f (i, \sin \theta) \tag{8}
\]

We mention that \( \sqrt{2/3} (i, \sin \theta) \) is called the \( \gamma \)-axis component of the current. Note that if \( i = i_0 \sin \phi \) for some arbitrary angle \( \phi \), then

\[
T_p = M_f i_f i_0 \sin \theta \sin \phi = 3/2 M_f i_f i_0 \cos (\theta - \phi)
\]

Note also that if \( i_f \) is constant (as is usually the case), then Eq. 7 with Eq. 4 yields

\[
T_p \theta = (i, e)
\]

### III. IMPLEMENTATION OF SYNCHRONVERTER

In this section, the details on how to implement a \( \text{SV} \) will be described. A simple dc/ac converter (inverter) used to convert dc power into three-phase ac is shown in Fig. 2. It includes three inverter legs operated using pulse width modulation (PWM) and \( LC \) filters to reduce the voltage ripple (and hence, the current ripple) caused by the switching.

In grid-connected operation, the impedance of the grid should be included in the impedance of the inductors \( L_g \) (with series resistance \( R_g \)), and then we may consider that after the circuit breaker, we have an infinite bus.

The power part of the \( \text{SV} \) is the circuit to the left of the three capacitors, together with the capacitors. If we disregard the ripple, then this part of the circuit will behave like an SG connected in parallel with the same capacitors. The inductors, denoted as \( L_g \), are not part of the \( \text{SV} \), but it is useful to have them (for synchronization and power control). It is important to have some energy storage (not shown) on the dc bus (at the left end of the figure) since the power absorbed from the dc bus represents not only the power taken from the imaginary prime mover but also from the inertia of the rotating part of the imaginary SG. This latter component of the power may come in strong bursts, which is proportional to the derivative of the grid frequency.

Block diagram in Fig. 3. These two parts interact via the signals \( e \) and \( v \) (and \( v_f \) will be used for controlling the \( \text{SV} \)).

#### A. Power Part

The terminal voltages \( v = [v_\alpha, v_\beta, v_\gamma]^T \) of the imaginary SG, as given in Eq. 3, are present across the filtering capacitors shown in Fig. 2. The impedance of the stator windings of the imaginary SG is represented by the inductance \( L_s \) and the resistance \( R_s \) of the left inductors shown in Fig. 2. Then \( e_s, e_c \), and \( e_r \) represent the back EMF due to the movement of the imaginary rotor. The PWM techniques make \( e_s, e_c \), and \( e_r \) closely approximate the 3-phase voltages of a real SG. It is assumed that the imaginary field (rotor) winding of the \( \text{SV} \) is fed by an adjustable dc current source \( i_f \). As long as \( i_f \) is constant, the generated voltage from Eq. 4 reduces to

\[
e = \theta M_f i_f \sin \theta \tag{9}
\]

The filtering capacitors \( C \) should be chosen such that the resonant frequency \( 1/\sqrt{L_s C} \) is approximately \( \omega_s / \omega_1 \), where \( \omega_1 \) is the nominal angular frequency of the grid voltage and \( \omega_s \) is the angular switching frequency used to turn on/off the switches.

#### B. Electronic Part

Define the generated real power \( P \) and reactive power \( Q \) (as seen from the inverter legs) as

\[
P = (i, e) \quad Q = (i, e_c)
\]

Where \( e_c \) has the same amplitude as \( e \) but with a phase delayed from that of \( e \) by \( \pi/2 \), i.e.,

\[
e_c = \theta M_f i_f \sin (\theta - \pi/2) = -\theta M_f i_f \cos \theta
\]

Then, the real power and reactive power are, respectively
from the load is to vary the real power delivered to the load. This is achieved by sharing the load variations with other synchronous generators connected in parallel. This is called frequency droop control and is used to maintain the grid frequency while the active load share is adjusted by the mechanical power input (\( P_{\text{set}} \)) from the prime-mover.

An important mechanism for SGs operating in parallel to share load evenly is to vary the real power delivered to the grid according to the SGs individual ratings. This is made by matching the droop characteristics of generators operating in parallel. This is called frequency droop control and is implemented in a SV as shown in Fig. 4 with switch S1 in the upper position. In this case the input \((i_{\text{ref}})\) has the dominant effect, and the closed loop control adjust actual power share to be equals to \( P_{\text{set}} \).

Because of this built-in frequency-drooping mechanism, a SV automatically shares the load variations with other inverters of the same type and with SGs on the same power grid. The real power regulation loop is very simple because no mechanical devices are involved, and no measurements other than \( i \) are needed.

The regulation of the real power shown in the upper part of Fig. 4 has an inner frequency-droop loop (with feedback gain \( D_p \)) and the outer real power loop (with the feedback coming from the current \( i \) via the torque \( T_e \)). The time constant of the frequency-droop loop is \( \tau_f = J/D_p \). Hence, if we have decided upon \( \tau_f \), then \( J \) should be chosen as \( J = D_p\tau_f \).

In paper [4] the author used very small \( J \) (much smaller than for a real SG) to have fast response in the frequency-droop loop. In our work aiming to make SV having good contribution to power system stored kinetic energy we use value of \( J \) very large than that used in [4]. Specifically we used \( J \) equals to that of SG with the same power rating. The increased value of time delay \( \tau_f \) introduced is partially compensated by applying relatively larger value of \( D_p \) just to obtain satisfactory transient response. One must make a
compromise between enough inertia contribution and fast dynamic response. However, as will be seen in simulation results the transient response is still faster than a conventional SG.

B. Voltage Drooping and Regulation of Reactive Power

1) Case of Standalone (island) mode: In this mode the terminal voltage is adjusted by excitation field current of SG while the reactive power $Q$ flowing out of the SG equals that of the load. When the load increases the terminal voltage decreases and requires more field current to bring it back to original value.

In this mode there must be a control loop to adjust the terminal voltage to be fixed against load variations. This control loop is known practically as Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) and it is very important in SG operation due to the large voltage regulation of this type of generators.

In SV this is realized as shown in the lower part of Fig.4 with switch S2 in the lower position. The difference between the reference voltage $V_r$ and the amplitude $V_{am}$ of the feedback voltage $V_f$ from Fig. 2 is the voltage amplitude tracking error. This error is multiplied by a gain and used to generate $M_f i_f$ similar to main flux in real SG. The reference input $Q_{ref}$ in this mode is set to zero.

2) Case of Grid connected mode: In this mode the terminal voltage is fixed by grid. The regulation of reactive power share $Q$ flowing of the SG is adjusted by the field excitation current or excitation emf ($E_{max}$). Define the voltage drooping coefficient $D_q$ as the ratio of the change of reactive power $\Delta Q$ to the change of voltage $\Delta V = E_{max} - V_g$, i.e. $D_q = -\frac{\Delta Q}{\Delta V}$.

The AVR in this case regulates only the reactive power share of SG; it has no effect on terminal voltage since it is fixed by the grid.

In SV the control loop for the reactive power is realized as shown in the lower part of Fig.4. With the two switches S2 in the upper positions, the difference between the reference value of the reactive power sharing $Q_{ref}$ and the actual $Q$ multiplied by the voltage drooping coefficient $D_q$ and is fed into an integrator with a gain $1/K$ to generate $M_f i_f$. The reactive power $Q$ is given by Eq. 9.

Fig.5 Complete Simulink model of one SV operated in the two modes (Island / Grid)

Fig.6 Complete Simulink model of two SVs simulating MG in the two modes (Island / Grid)
The time constant $\tau_v$ of the voltage loop can be estimated as: $\tau_v \approx K / \theta^r D_q \approx K / \theta^r D_0$.

The variation of $\theta^r$ is very small. Hence, $K$ follows if $\tau_v$ and $D_q$ has been chosen. $V_{in}$, can be computed as $V_{in} \approx \theta^r M_T \tau_r$.

V. SIMULATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

We use the MATLAB-SIMULINK toolboxes to simulate the complete dynamic model of the SV, with each subsystem model is constructed individually, and then the whole dynamic model is formed by linking the different subsystems together. Important results of some subsystems are presented also in this section. The benefits of simulating the established models are:

- Tuning $D_p$ and $\tau_f$ for the selected value of inertia equated to that of the corresponding SG.
- Examining voltage drooping loop in the two modes of operation.
- Studying the conditions of the DC bus under in different conditions.
- Testing the automatic synchronization unit.
- Proving the seamlessly transition between island and grid modes.
- Testing the active and reactive power sharing in MG based on SVs.

<table>
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<th>Parameters of the Synchronverter and Controller</th>
<th>Values</th>
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<td>$L_s$</td>
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<tr>
<td>$R_s$</td>
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<td>$C$</td>
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<td>$R(parallel to C)$</td>
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<td>$\tau_v$</td>
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Table I: Parameters of the Synchronverter and Controller
For the sake of illustration, Fig.5 shows the complete SIMULINK model of one SV operated in the two modes (Island / Grid) and Fig.6 shows the complete SIMULINK model of two SVs simulating MG in the two modes (Island / Grid).

The parameters of the SV and controller used in the simulations are given in Table I. In the following we explain each separate building block and its functions and how it is connected to overall system. Description of building blocks

The **SV unit**: As shown in Fig.7 containing the SV control unit, PWM inverter unit and low pass filter unit.

1) **The SV control unit**: Fig.8 gives out the model of the SV in the time domain. It figures out the relationship of the electrical part and the mechanical part. The controller is shown in Fig.8. There are an active power channel and a reactive power channel. The active power channel follows the frequency droop control loop with coefficient $P_f$ as the feedback gain. The reactive power channel uses voltage-droop control loop with the voltage droop coefficient $Q_o$ and integral coefficient $K$. With the controller as core, the SV can regulate the active power and the reactive power independently.

2) **PWM Inverter**: It is a part of SV control unit applying the Space vector modulation (SVM) technique to generate the switching pulses for the 3-phase inverter bridge according to the required voltage magnitude and phase angle. These are the two outputs of SV control unit.

3) **LC filter unit**: As shown in Fig.7 the power part of the SV connected to the grid through an LC filter to reduce the voltage and current ripples caused by the high frequency switching of the power devices. The LC filter design is given in section III.

4) **Automatic synchronization unit**: This unit tests the realization of ideal conditions of synchronization. At the correct instant this unit gives control logic signals to circuit breaker and changeover switches S1 and S2 to select the appropriate configuration of active and reactive power controllers.

Fig.9. Simulation results of one SV operated in the two modes (Island / Grid)

(a) (b)

Fig.10 Simulation results of two SV operating in parallel to simulating MG in the two modes (Island / Grid)
5) The Grid unit: As shown in Fig.5 and Fig.6 is simulated by an ideal 3-phase supply standing for infinite bus of fixed voltage and fixed frequency and unlimited capacity.

6) The Loads: As shown in Fig.5 and Fig.6 using three phase series loads by two step.

B. The Simulation Results and Discussions

The SV can feed pre-set real power and reactive power to the grid and can automatically change the real power and reactive power fed to the grid according to the SV input power $P_{net}$ and $Q_{net}$.

1) One SV operated in the two modes (Island / Grid): As shown in Fig.9 one SV is operated in island mode from $t=0$ to $t=2.65$ s, the no-load frequency is set to 50.5 Hz, and a 10kW+4kVAR load is switched on in two steps; at $t=1$ s and at $t=1.5$ s. the frequency drops to decreases in proportion to active power loading and the voltage drops in proportion to reactive loading. At $t=2.65$ s the synchronization unit detects the correct synchronization instant and takes actions to connect SV to grid. In grid mode the active power controller dictates active power share $P_{act}=15$ kW and $Q_{act}=9$ kVAR the SV frequency and voltage drops to their grid values. At $t=7$ s an intentional islanding is made; circuit breaker is tripped, the $P$ and $Q$ controllers are reconfigured to island operation. The previously connected loads are switched off and finally SV frequency and voltage returns to its no-load value. It worse noticing that the synchronization instant was very accurate. There was no noticeable disturbance caused by this event. The SV responded quickly both to the step change in active and reactive power demand. Concerning the dc link where the voltage is fixed by the battery while the dc current tracks the active power load of SV to satisfy power balance, $V_{dc} \times I_{dc} = \text{active power of SV}$.

2) Two SV operating in parallel to simulate a MG in the two modes (Island / Grid): The MG is operated in sequence of events similar to the previous case. The simulation results are shown in Fig. 10. Generally the results are similar to the previous case with only difference in lies in division of load equally between the two SVs.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the mathematical model of SV is simulated using Matlab 8.5/Simulink. Detailed simulation blocks are clarified and presented. The model used covers all the dynamics and steady state conditions without the restrictive assumptions normally imposed in such cases. The implementation and operation of SV, including active and reactive load sharing, have been described in detail. The mathematical model used here can be applied to investigate different problems of related to power systems dominated by parallel-operated inverters. In DG the SV is able to transfer seamlessly between the two modes and hence, they provide a solution for smart grid and MGs. An automatic synchronization unit is used to minimize disturbances at instant of connection to grid. Response in different modes of operation is thoroughly examined.

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