Dynamic Performance Comparison of Conventional and Capacitor Commutated Converter (CCC) for HVDC Transmission System in Simulink Environment

Khatir M, Zidi S A, Fellah M K and Hadjeri S

Electrical Engineering Department
Intelligent Control & Electrical Power Systems Laboratory (ICEPS)
University of Djillali Liabès, Sidi Bel-Abbès, 22000. Algeria
E-mail: **med_khatir@yahoo.fr**

Abstract. Most of HVDC systems consist of line commutated converters. The demand of reactive power is supplied by filter or capacitor banks which are connected on the primary side of the converter transformer. This conventional design is well known and proven during last decades. However, such conventional converters suffer commutation failures when they operate as inverter at a weak AC system. A series capacitor between converter transformer and thyristor valves (CCC: Capacitor Commutated Converter) can improve the immunity of inverter against commutation failure. Two concepts for the transmission with a high power capacity using HVDC technology are compared in this paper. These include the conventional and the CCC-inverters, connected to weak AC systems. The simulation results are presented using MATLAB/SIMULINK.

Key words

HVDC Transmission, Capacitor Commutated Converter, Commutation Failure, Weak AC Networks.

1. Introduction

The conventional HVDC converters have a serious limitation in that they rely on the AC network voltage for the turn-off of the thyristor valves. This imposes a serious limitation particularly when the converter is applied in extremely long dc cable transmission or feeds a weak AC network.

The Capacitor Commutated Converter (CCC) has similar circuit topology to the conventional line commutated converter which is consisted of thyristor bridges. The difference between them is whether converter has series capacitor per phase, which is named commutation capacitor (CC) between converter transformer and thyristor bridge [1], [2]. These capacitors give a voltage contribution to the valves allowing the use of smaller firing angles. The reactive power requirements of the CCC are therefore reduced, eliminating the need for switched shunt capacitor banks. This converter type appears less dependent on the AC network strength and more robust against network disturbances for successful valve commutation.

Fig,1 shows a schematic diagram of a basic six pulse CCC valve group, which is designed as a conventional converter equipped with series capacitors between the transformer and the valve in each phase. One important benefit is that the series capacitors are charged in a polarity that assists in the commutation process.

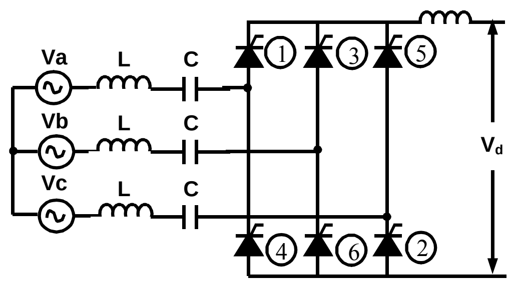


Fig. 1: Capacitor commutated converter (CCC)

Two concepts for the transmission with a high power capacity using HVDC technology are compared in this paper. An evaluation of the transient performance using MATLAB/SIMULINK is then conducted in order to examine the dynamic performance of these models with lower SCR. Results obtained confirms the superior performance of the CCC in applications involving weak AC systems.

2. The Capacitor Commutated Converter

CCC is a conventional HVDC converter provided with commutation capacitors between the transformer and valves. The basic function of this concept is that the capacitors contribute to the valve commutation voltage. This contribution makes it possible to operate the CCC with much lower reactive power consumption compared to the conventional converter. Further, CCC gives a more robust and stable dynamic performance of the inverter station, especially when inverters are connected to weak AC systems and/or long DC cables. Increased commutation margins can be achieved, without increasing the reactive power consumption of the converter station, by reducing the capacitance of the commutating capacitors in order to increase their contribution to the commutation voltage.

Fig. 2 shows the AC bus line-to-line voltage waveform and a-phase valve voltage waveform for the conventional and the CCC inverters respectively. The extinction angle γ in Fig. 2 (a) is defined as the angle between the end of the commutation interval and the AC bus line-to-line voltage positive zero crossing, and is given by:

$$\gamma = \pi - (\alpha + \mu) \tag{1}$$

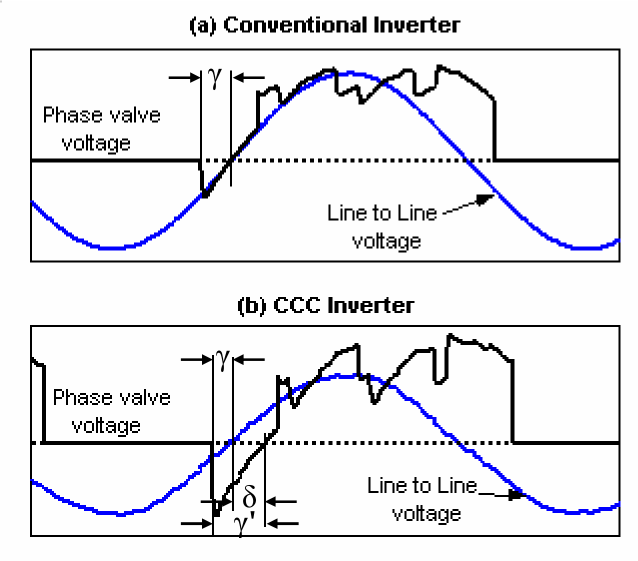


Fig. 2: AC bus voltage and valve voltage waveforms

where α is the inverter firing angle, and μ is the overlap angle. However, after adding a series capacitor, the extinction angle becomes:

$$y' = \pi - (\alpha + \mu) + \delta \tag{2}$$

The commutation margin-angle γ' in the CCC inverter is the angle between the end of commutation and the valve voltage positive zero crossing. Where δ is the phase-lag angle between the AC bus voltage and thyristor valve voltage fig 2 (b). The increased commutation margin angle provides insensitivity to commutation failures. Successful commutation is possible even when the AC bus voltage drops.

3. Systems Modeling

Using the conventional and the CCC-inverter technology, design and modelling of a transmission system with a rated power capacity of 1000 MW (500 kV, 2 kA) over a distance of 300 km (overhead line) is described in this chapter. The two models should meet transient performance of both systems.

A. Conventional HVDC system

The conventional rectifier is connected to a very strong sending end (SCR = 5), whereas the inverter is connected to a relatively weak receiving AC network (SCR=2.3). The converter transformers (YY and YD) have a leakage reactance of 0.15 pu. The tap position is rather at a fixed position determined by a multiplication factor applied on the primary nominal voltage of the converter transformers (0.9 on rectifier side; 0.96 on inverter side). The AC networks, both at the rectifier and inverter end, are modelled as infinite sources separated from their respective commutating buses by system impedances.

The impedances are represented as L-R/L networks having the same damping at the fundamental and the third harmonic frequencies. The impedance angles of the receiving end and the sending end systems are selected to be 80 degrees. This is likely to be more representative in the case of resonance at low frequencies [3].

B. CCC system

The CCC-inverter scheme is similar in its design, but differs in reactive compensation and control parameter settings. The configuration of this system is given in fig. 3. In contrast to the conventional HVDC transmission system the reduced extinction angle, due to the additional commutation voltage supported by the CC, leads to a decreased consumption of reactive power. So the AC filter capacitors can be smaller and the quality of the filters can be improved. It is practical to limit the size of the capacitors to a value allowing extending the firing angle range at the inverter up to 180° [4]. The capacitance of the CC used in this model is determined to C = 72 μF [5]. The values for the rated DC voltage and current are equal to the design of the conventional HVDC. The two concepts (conventional and CCC) have the same Short Circuit Ratio (SCR), which is defined as:

$$SCR = \frac{S_{MVA}}{P_{dc}} \tag{3}$$

where S_{MVA} is the short circuit capacity of the connected AC system, and P_{dc} is the rating of the converter terminal in MW. Each concept has, however, different Effective Short Circuit Ratio (ESCR) since the total reactive power generated in the filters and shunt capacitors at the inverter bus Q_C, is different in each concept. The relationship between SCR and ESCR is given in (4):

$$ESCR = SCR - \frac{Q_C}{p_{dc}} \tag{4}$$

where Q_C is the Mvar generation.

HVDC System	P_{dc} (MW)	Generation Q_C (MVAR)	SCR	ESCR
Conventional	1000	600	2.3	1.7
CCC	1000	150	2.3	2.15

Table 1: SCR and ESCR in each HVDC system model

As may be seen from Table 1, the ESCR for the CCC-inverter is significantly larger compared to the conventional, due to the fact that the CCC has a lower reactive power installation at its inverter bus. This indicates that the CCC ought to have a superior performance over the conventional option. However, the additional dynamics associated with the series capacitors could compromise this expected improvement.

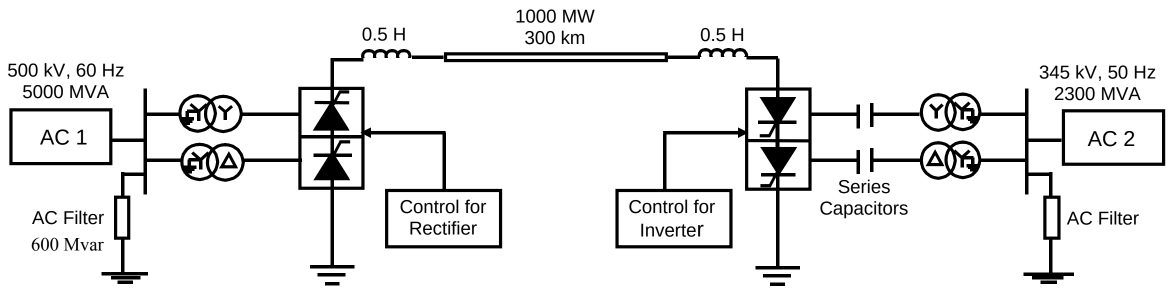


Fig. 3: HVDC system model (shown with CCC option)

C. *Control systems*

In the conventional HVDC scheme, the rectifier and the inverter control both have a voltage and a current regulator operating in parallel calculating firing angle α_v and α_i. Both regulators are of the proportional and integral type (PI).
In normal operation, the rectifier controls the current at the Id_ref reference value whereas the inverter controls the voltage at the Vd_ref reference value. The I_margin and Vd_margin parameters are respectively 0.1 pu. and 0.05 pu.
Another important control function is implemented to change the reference current according to the value of the DC voltage. This control named Voltage Dependent Current Order Limits (VDCOL) automatically reduces the reference current (Id_ref) set point when VdL (Vd line) decreases (as for example, during a DC line fault or a severe AC fault). Reducing the Id reference currents also reduces the reactive power demand on AC network, helping to recover from fault [6],[7]. The CCC-HVDC scheme can work with conventional control system, with minimum modification [8]

4. Simulation Results

Conventional HVDC and CCC inverter are compared with respect to their transient behaviour. The frequency response of the AC system (inverter side), and the following types of disturbances are investigated in this paper:

1. Single phase-to-ground fault at inverter side of the conventional and the CCC-inverter system.
2. Remote single phase-to-ground fault at inverter side of the conventional and the CCC-inverter system.

For each of the transient case considered above, plots of inverter DC voltage, inverter DC current, inverter firing angle, and inverter valves current of two Graetz Bridges connected in series (YY and YΔ), are given.

A. *Frequency response of the AC systems*

Figure 4 shows the magnitude, seen from the busbar where the filter is connected, of the combined filter and AC network impedance as a function of frequency. Notice the two minimum impedances on the Z magnitudes of the AC systems, these series resonances are created by the 11th and 13th harmonic filters. They occur at 550 Hz and 650 Hz on the 50 Hz. It is clearly evident a parallel resonance very closes to the 2nd harmonic at 103 Hz on the conventional inverter side. This could cause high stresses in converter equipment and AC harmonic filters, for some types of disturbances. The use of CCC concept has, in general, the effect of increasing the range of the resonance frequencies at the AC system side. The low principal natural frequency, coinciding whit the parallel resonance at 207 Hz on the CCC-inverter side, is a determining factor in the development of overvoltages and interaction with the DC system.

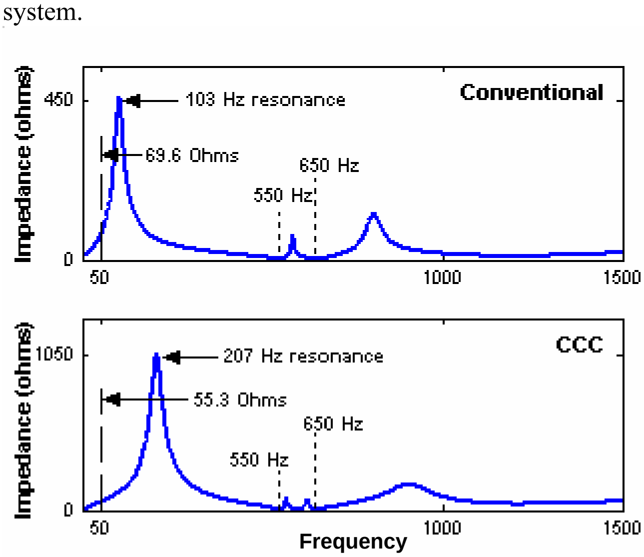


Fig.4: Positive-sequence impedances of the two AC networks (Conventional and CCC-inverter respectively)

B. *Single phase-to-ground fault at inverter.*

A single phase-to-ground fault was applied to the A-phase of the inverter bus, and the duration of the fault was 5 cycles. Figure 5 shows the recovery performance following the single-phase fault of both the conventional and the CCC inverter based scheme. When this fault is applied at the conventional inverter at t = 0.8 s, due to a reduction in AC voltage of the inverter bus, commutation failures will accrue. The DC current therefore shoots up, and the DC voltage decreases. The VDCOL operates and reduces the reference current to 0.3 pu. The conventional inverter valves current plots indicate a number of commutation failures of the corresponding valve groups, which translates by an increase in the DC current because the valves 2-5 in the YY and YΔ bridges are conducting current at the same time, and that the two Graetz bridges are short-circuited on the DC side.

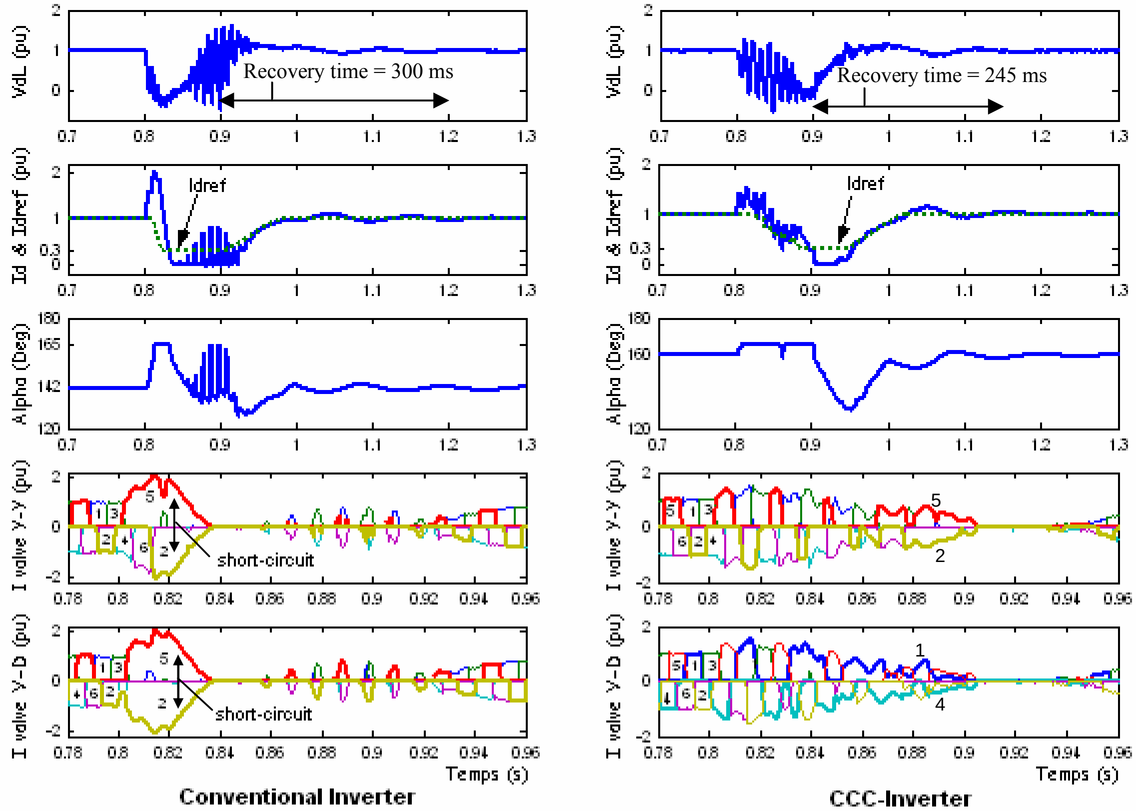


Fig. 5 Single phase-to-ground fault at inverter

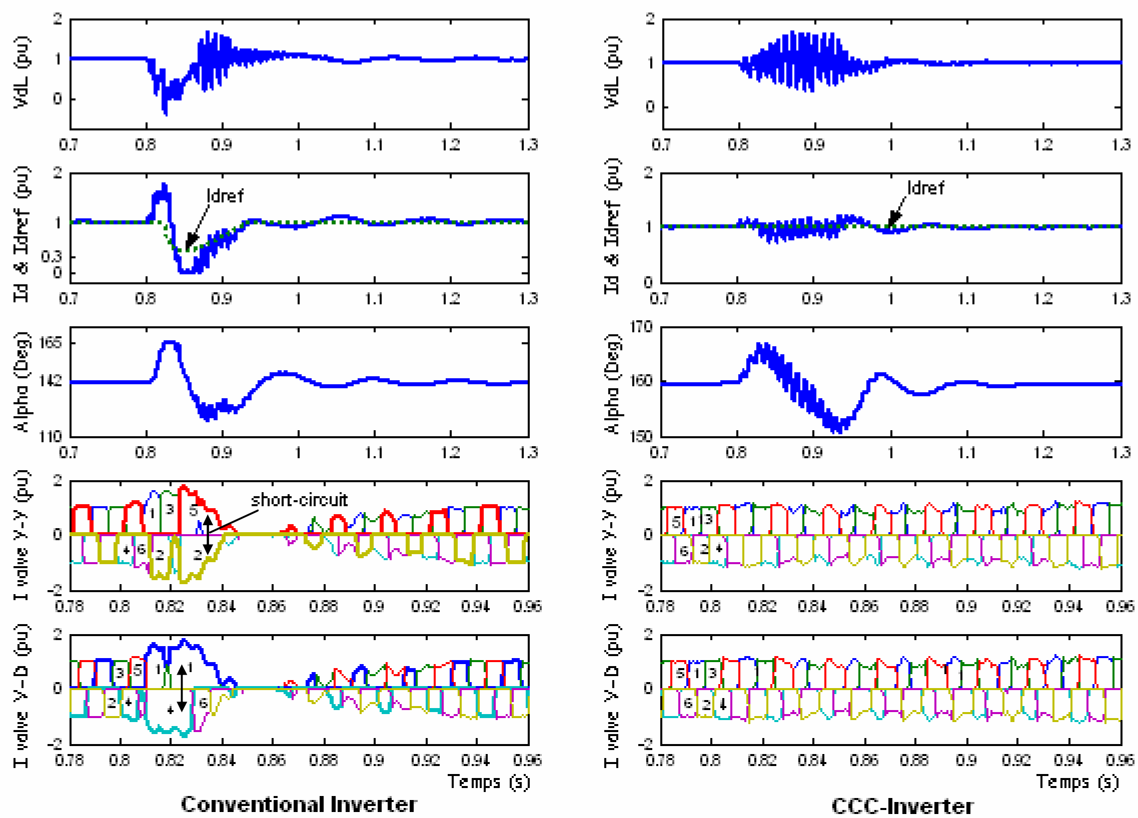


Fig. 6 Remote single phase-to-ground fault at inverter

For the CCC-inverter, commutation failures will accrue during the recovery in the two bridges (YY and YΔ). The results show that the conventional has a slower recovery (300 ms) than the CCC type (245 ms) after fault clearing.

C. Remote single phase-to-ground fault at inverter

A remote single phase-to-ground fault was simulated by grounding the A-phase of the inverter bus through (80 Ohm) resistance. The duration of the fault was 5 cycles. Results of this transient study are shown in fig. 6. The fault is applied at t = 0.8s.

This is the most typical type of fault that occurs in overhead lines and is by Thio [9] considered more severe than a three phase-fault in terms of commutation failure. The reason for this is due to the fact that the single-phase faults result, contrary to the balanced three-phase fault, in phase-shifts in the zero-crossings of the commutation voltages. These phase-shifts decrease the commutation margin for some of the thyristor valves and increase it for other valves.

The results for the single-phase remote fault show that the conventional inverter valves current plots indicate a number of commutation failures of the corresponding valve groups, which translates by an increase in the DC current because the valves 5-2 in the (YY) bridge, and 1-4 in the (YΔ) bridge are conducting current at the same time, and that the two bridges are short-circuited on the DC side. However for to the CCC-inverter, we can see that the nominal operation of the DC transmission is not affected by this fault.

5. Conclusion

The transient behaviours of the CCC and conventional inverter feeding weak AC systems were compared by modelling these schemes using PSB/Simulink.

The transient performance was investigated following the occurrence of various faults. The results indicate that the presence of the CCC-inverter in overhead HVDC transmission lines schemes has a favourable impact on the performance when being subjected to inverter single phase to ground and single phase remote faults (fast recovery, less commutation failures). However, the presence of the CCC-inverter in long cable HVDC-schemes demonstrates [1] a lesser degree of robustness against single phase to ground fault. The reason is the additional dynamics due to the energy storage in the CCC series capacitors.

The increased commutation margin-angle provides insensitivity to commutation failures. Successful commutation is possible even when the ac bus voltage is close to zero. However, commutation failure occurs when the AC bus voltage is recovered.

Appendix

Data for the system model:

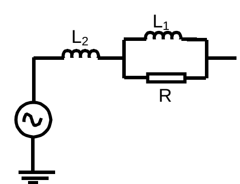
<u>1- Rectifier end:</u>
The rectifier end AC system representing a strong system (SCR = 5), consists of one source with an equivalent impedance of: $R = 26.07\,\Omega$, $L_1 = 48.86$ mH, $L_2 = 98.03$ mH.

<u>2- Conventional Inverter:</u>
The conventional inverter end AC system representing a weak system (SCR = 2.3), consists of one source with an equivalent impedance of: $R = 26.978\,\Omega$, $L_1 = 60.695$ mH, $L_2 = 121.739$ mH. $V_{dL} = 500$ kV, $I_d = 2$ kA, $\alpha = 142^o$. Transformer (each): 600 MVA, leakage =15%.

<u>3- CCC Inverter:</u>
The CCC-inverter end AC system representing a weak system (SCR = 2.3), consists of one source with an equivalent impedance of: $R = 26.978\,\Omega$, $L_1 = 60.695$ mH, $L_2 = 121.739$ mH. $V_{dL} = 500$ kV, $I_d = 2$ kA, $\alpha = 160^o$, leakage =15%. C= 72 µF/phase.

<u>4- DC line parameters:</u>
$R_{dc} = 0.015\ \Omega$ /km, L = 0.792 mH/km, C = 14.4 nF/km

<u>5- Details of AC system representation:</u>



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Biographies

KHATIR Mohamed was born in Ain Témouchent, Algeria, in 1977. He received the Eng. degree in electro technical engineering, and the Master's degrees from the University of Djillali Liabès of Sidi Bel-Abbes (Algeria), in 2002 and 2006 respectively. His research there focused on high voltage direct current transmission (HVDC).

ZIDI Sid-Ahmed was born in Sidi Bel-Abbes, Algeria. He received the diploma of Electro technical Engineering degree from the University of Science and Technology of Oran, Algeria. The Master degree, from the University of Djillali Liabes of Sidi Bel-Abbes, Algeria in 1994. The PhD degrees from the University of Sidi Bel-Abbes, Algeria, in 2005. He is currently interested by the HVDC link and transient in power systems.

FELLAH Mohammed-Karim was born in Oran, Algeria, in 1963. He received the Eng. degree in Electrical Engineering from University of Sciences and Technology, Oran, Algeria, in 1986, and The Ph.D. degree from National Polytechnic Institute of Lorraine (Nancy, France) in 1991. Since 1992, he is Professor at the University of Sidi Bel-Abbes (Algeria) and Director of the Intelligent Control and Electrical Power Systems Laboratory at this University. His current research interest includes power electronics, HVDC links, and drives.

HADJERI Samir received the Master's degrees in Electrical Engineering from the University of Laval, Quebec, Canada, in 1990. The PhD degrees from the University of Sidi Bel-Abbes, Algeria, in 2003. From 1991 to 2004 he was at the Faculty of Science Engineering, Department of Electrical Engineering, Sidi-Bel-Abbes, Algeria, where he was a teaching member. His research there focused on high voltage direct current and power system analysis.