### Degradation - Conscious Model predictive Control For Marine Solid Oxide Fuel Cells

**Seminar 2024** Health Aware and Safe Control Learning & Design for Dynamic Systems

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### **Contents**

- Introduction
- Solid Oxide Fuel Cells
- Proposed method
- Results
- Conclusions
- Annex



### **Contents**

- Introduction
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



### Shaping the Future of Maritime Systems: Autonomy and Sustainability





#### **Goals**

**Challenges**

#### **Transition to Autonomy**

**Achieving Zero Emissions**

- Nonlinear vessel dynamics and interconnections.
- Evolving conditions: obstacles, weather, human behavior.
- Faults in sensors, actuators, and systems.
- Adhering to international regulations (e.g., COLREGS).
- Reducing environmental impact
- Managing diverse vessel types, traffic, and logistics.
- Integrating sustainable energy solutions



### Safe-NET

TUDelft

Safe AutoNomous MaritimE Transport Group

*"Enhance the autonomy of the maritime transport aiming to ensure safety against significant uncertainties and unexpected events"*

- **1. Advancing Safe Autonomy**: Driving digitalization and automation across all maritime systems while prioritizing safety.
- **2. Sustainability and Efficiency**: Enabling greener, more efficient, and reliable maritime transport systems.
- **3. Research Methodology**: Integrating modeling, control, monitoring, and cyber-physical-human frameworks, validated through real-world applications.





## AmmoniaDrive project

The AmmoniaDrive project aims to reduce shipping industry carbon emissions by developing a new ship paradigm that will be fueled by ammonia.

- Who? AmmoniaDrive consortium: 6 **universities**, 3 **research centers** and 10+ **private companies**
- What? **Design** a new **ship concept** fueled by ammonia
- Why? **Decarbonize** shipping industry
- How? Development of a **hybrid powerplant** based on **SOFC-ICE** technologies





### Maintenance-aware multi-level control for ammonia-powered ships

**Promoter** Prof. dr. R.R. Negenborn, TU Delft **Daily supervisor**  dr. Vasso Reppa, TU Delft

 $\widetilde{T}$ UDelft

The main goal is to develop smart strategies to **control** and to **monitor** the **operation** of the Ammoniadrive novel ship, which includes many **non-proven subsystems** in new configurations.

**Subsystem Level** 

SOFC.



Electric Current

e

Air In

Fuel In

 $\Rightarrow$ 

### **Contents**

- 
- Solid Oxide Fuel Cells
- 
- 
- 
- 



### Solid Oxide Fuel Cells

SOFCs are **electrochemical conversion devices** that generate **electricity** by **oxidizing** a **fuel**, such as hydrogen.

Unlike PEM fuel cells, they do not require pure hydrogen and can use **fuels** like **H₂, CH₄, NH₃, and hydrocarbons**.

They operate at **high temperatures** and achieve **efficiencies up to 60%**, or higher in combined systems.

Applications:

- **Power Plants**
- **Vehicles**
- **Ships**





## Challenges\*



#### **Nonlinear Behavior**

The mismatch between fast electrochemical reactions and slow thermal dynamics in SOFCs leads to nonlinear behavior, with vast dynamics and limited adaptability to rapid load changes.



#### **Dynamic tracking**

The system's complexity and operational constraints result in slow dynamic performance, making efficient tracking of both temperature and power generation highly challenging for SOFCs.



#### **Longevity and degradation**

Thermal cycling, material fatigue, chemical reactions, and the buildup of impurities in the fuel and oxidant contribute to cell degradation over time, reducing their longevity.

**\***Associated Literature review in annex

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# Dynamical model

SOFC dynamics is governed by two main processes: the **energy balance**, which determines cell temperature, and the **electrochemical reactions**, which dictate **voltage output**.

Various models exist in literature, for our study, we utilized a reduced-order model (ROM)\*. Key features:

- **Constant temperature** throughout the cell  $\blacksquare$
- Accurate **chemical process representation** while  $\mathbf{r}$ maintaining model efficiency.



**\*A reduced-order model of a solid oxide fuel cell stack for model predictive control** L. van Biert et al., 2022



### Dynamical model





### Dynamical model

**Electrochemistry** Ohmic losses Nernst Voltage Reaction Quotient fuel air

**Physical constraints** 

$$
\mu_f = \frac{I}{2\overline{F}\left(4n_{\text{CH}_4} + n_{\text{CO}} + n_{\text{H}_2}\right)}, \quad 0 \le \mu_f \le 1 \qquad \text{Fullization}
$$
\n
$$
\mu_a = \frac{I}{4\overline{F}n_{\text{O}_2}}, \quad 0 \le \mu_a \le 1 \qquad \text{Air utilization}
$$



# Degradation model

**SOFC degradation** is influenced by **operational factors** such as **temperature cycles** and **current** demand, which affect long-term performance and **lead to failure**.

**Voltage degradation** represents the **increase in voltage losses** due to cell ageing and suboptimal operation.

The selected experimental model\* relates the rate of increase in the Ohmic resistance of the cell with its current state of operation, namely:

- Cell internal temperature  $\mathbf{r}$
- Current ٠
- Fuel utilization ٠





**\*A distributed real-time model of degradation in a solid oxide fuel cell, part I: Model characterization** V. Zaccaria et al., 2016

### **Contents**

- 
- 
- Proposed method
- 
- 
- 



# Control Objective



#### **Nonlinear Behavior**

Addresses the inherent nonlinear behavior and complexity of SOFCs by accounting for the interaction between fast electrochemical reactions and slow thermal dynamics



#### **Dynamic tracking**

Efficient electrical power load tracking and precise cell internal temperature management, while ensuring that operational constraints are met throughout varying conditions.



#### **Longevity and degradation**

Incorporate the degradation model to optimize system operation at specific working points, reducing degradation and enhancing the SOFC's lifespan.



## Degradation-Conscious nMPC



### Extended State space representation

$$
x = \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} T \\ R_a \\ n_f \\ n_a \\ I \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^5
$$

$$
u = \begin{bmatrix} u_1 \\ u_2 \\ u_3 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} u_f \\ u_a \\ u_I \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^3
$$



Physical system



### Extended State space representation Enthapy Balance + Heat losses  $\sum_{\substack{i\in\mathcal{S}_i\j \in \mathcal{F}_x}} \left( x_j\overline{K}_ih_i(\overline{T}_i) - \left(x_j\overline{K}_i + \sum_m \overline{\nu}_{i,m}r_m \right)h_i(x_1) \right) + \overline{\lambda}(x_1 - \overline{T}_a)$  $x = \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \\ x_3 \\ x_4 \\ x_5 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} T \\ R_a \\ n_f \\ n_d \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^5$ <br> $\dot{x} = \mathcal{F}(x, u) = \begin{cases} \dot{x}_1 = \frac{1}{\bar{c}_p} \left( \underbrace{\hat{w} - \mathbb{Q}(x)x_5}_{\bar{c}_p} \right) & \xrightarrow{\text{Electrochemistry}} \frac{\sum\limits_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \sum\limits_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \sum\limits_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \sum\limits_{i \in \mathcal{I}} \sum\limits_{i \$  $-\frac{\Delta g}{2\overline{F}} + \frac{\overline{R}x_1}{2\overline{F}}\ln(Q) - \frac{x_5x_2}{\overline{A}}.$ Voltage degradation  $\frac{k(\mu_f)+k_2}{\frac{x_1-\bar{k}_3}{\bar{k}_3}}\bigg(e^{\frac{\bar{k}_5x_5}{\bar{A}}}-1\bigg)\,\frac{1}{\bar{k}_0}\,.$  $u = \begin{bmatrix} u_1 \\ u_2 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} u_f \\ u_a \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^3$ Low pass filters accounting for actuators dynamics

- Fuel valve
- Air valve
- DC/DC converter

#### **Discretization**

The continuous time state space model is discretized to be used by the MPC



# Optimization problem

Cost Function



# Optimization problem

**Constraints** 



### **Contents**

- 
- 
- 
- Results
- 
- 



# Simulation setup





\*Of the Δmax flow rate, meaning that it takes 10 minutes to fully open, or fully close fuel and air valves

# Simulation setup







# Reference Tracking

#### **Temperature**

• slightly higher value than the reference within the bounds

#### **Power**

- Precise power tracking
- Slower HI-LOW transitionc





# Degradation minimization

#### **Rate of degradation**

- After the warm-up o the system the degradation rate is always lower than the nMPC case
- Conservative bound

#### **Cumulated effect**

• 1% reduction at the end of simulation





## Long term effect





### **Contents**

- 
- 
- 
- 
- Conclusions
- 



### **Conclusions**



#### We developed a **degradation-conscious controller** using **nonlinear Model Predictive Control** (nMPC) for SOFCs, addressing:

- **Nonlinearities and Constraints**: Effectively managing the intrinsic nonlinearities and operational limits of SOFCs.
- **Integrated Modeling**: Incorporating both dynamic and degradation models.
- **Operational Reliability**: Ensuring accurate reference tracking for cell temperature and power output.
- **Degradation Mitigation**: Actively reducing long-term degradation by bounding its maximum admissible value and incorporating its minimization into the cost function in real time.



#### **Open Points**

- Accounting for **model uncertainties**, particularly in the **degradation model.**
- **Extending** the approach to **ammonia-powered SOFCs** in the AmmoniaDrive project.
- Developing **fault-tolerant strategies** for enhanced reliability.

#### **Acknowledgements**

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### Technologies Solid Oxide Fuel Cell





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### Combination of control and monitoring

Combining **fault mitigation** with **real-time health assessments** can **enhance reliability**  and **performance** across various engineering applications.

#### Key findings

- **Predominantly model-based techniques** with some hybrid approaches integrating data-driven processes
- **EXECUTE:** These strategies are **implemented** across a **diverse range** of engineering systems. Most of them are **application specific**.



**FD**: Fault Detection, **FTC**: Fault Tolerant Control, **HAC**: Health Aware Control, **HAEM**: Health Aware Energy Management, **PM**: Predictive Maintenance, **FTHAC**: Fault tolerant Health Aware Control.



### Combination of control and monitoring

Connection of the selected studies with the control decision levels of the Ammoniadrive ship.

### Key findings

- **Studies typically address component-level**   $\mathbf{r}$ **complexities**, with several methods extending to the subsystem level.
- Few works extend their strategies to the **system**   $\blacksquare$ **level**, often applied to **simplified networked systems**



**Decision level in the selected control and monitoring studies**





### Integration of maintenance planning

Smart control enhances system operation and can reduce component wear and operative costs, but **maintenance remains essential**.

#### Key findings

- The topic spans from **maintenance tasks** to smart  $\mathbf{r}$ **algorithms** and **strategies** that
	- **Assess the necessity** of maintenance
	- **Optimize the timing** and level of **proactivity** in scheduling maintenance activities
- **The concept of Remaining Useful Life (RUL)**   $\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{A}}$ **connects maintenance and control**, guiding decisions to maximize system lifespan.



**Combining monitoring strategies and control algorithms**







**Technologies SOFC (and ICE)** 

- Models for **ammonia fuelled SOFCs\*** are not yet well-developed  $\mathbf{r}$
- Significant gap in **integrating control and monitoring** activities on SOFCs  $\mathbf{r}$



- Existing strategies for combining control and monitoring are **largely application-dependent**
- **Strategies exist for individual components**, comprehensive solutions for **large-scale, interconnected systems**, are **lacking**





Current approaches do not integrate maintenance planning with real-time control strategies that **consider the system's**   $\mathbf{r}$ **RUL as a dynamic state influenced by operational profiles and conditions**





## Reference Tracking



#### **Temperature**

• nMPC temperature reference at 1120K



# Degradation minimization

#### **Rate of degradation**

• Working at higher temperature reduces the rate of degradation of the nMPC case

#### **Cumulated effect**

• 0.5% reduction at the end of simulation



