

# Principal Component Analysis in Gas Transport Simulation

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Abstract: In this paper, an analysis of the error ellipsoid in the space of solutions of stationary gas transport problems is carried out. For this purpose, a Principal Component Analysis of the solution set has been performed. The presence of unstable directions is shown associated with the marginal fulfillment of the resistivity conditions for the equations of compressors and other control elements in gas networks. Practically, the instabilities occur when multiple compressors or regulators try to control pressures or flows in the same part of the network. Such problems can occur, in particular, when the compressors or regulators reach their working limits. Possible ways of resolving instabilities are considered.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This work continues the study of globally convergent methods for solving stationary network problems in the particular case of gas transport networks, which was initiated in our earlier works (Clees et al., 2018a; Clees et al., 2018b; Baldin et al., 2020; Baldin et al., 2021; Clees et al., 2016). In these works, it was shown that stationary network problems, whose elements satisfy a generalized resistivity condition, have a unique solution that can be found by the standard stabilized Newton method with an arbitrary choice of starting point. In this paper, we will analyze the errors in the solution space of the problem using Principal Component Analysis (PCA).

A globally convergent method for network problems in the special case of electrical networks was formulated in (Katzenelson, 1965), its generalizations for piecewise linear systems were made in (Chien and Kuh, 1976; Griewank et al., 2015). For smooth systems, a practical implementation of the globally convergent Newtonian method can be found in (Press et al., 1992), and the corresponding convergence theory in (Kelley, 1995). More general globally convergent homotopic methods are described in (Allgower and Georg, 2003).

Modeling of gas transport networks is based on a number of empirical approximations (Mischner et al., 2011; Schmidt et al., 2015). For the law of fric-

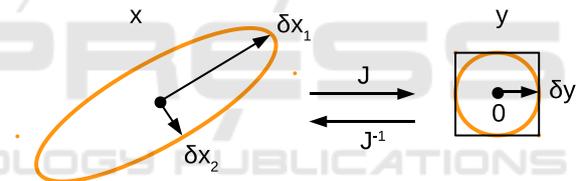


Figure 1: The error ellipsoid in the space of solutions  $x$  is the pre-image of the error ball in the space of equations  $y$  under the linearized mapping  $J$ .

tion in pipes, the formulas by Nikuradse, Hofer and Colebrook-White (Nikuradse, 1950; Colebrook and White, 1937) are used. For the real gas equation of state, the formulas by Papay, DIN standard AGA8-DC92 and improved GERG-2008 (Saleh, 2002; CES, 2010; Kunz and Wagner, 2012) are used. Modeling of other elements was also described in the works (Clees et al., 2018a; Clees et al., 2018b; Baldin et al., 2020; Baldin et al., 2021; Clees et al., 2016) cited above. This simulation and numerical methods form the basis of our multi-physics network simulator *MYNTS*.

First, we will briefly present a problem that occurs in almost all gas transport applications, since they all contain elements that increase and decrease pressure, compressors and regulators correspondingly. If these elements try to control the pressure at one point, or in one section of the network, then the corresponding system of equations turns out to be degenerate. Uncertain values of some variables are a consequence

of this degeneracy; in pressure control, such unstable variables are flows. To identify such situations in real problems, we use classical PCA methods. Of course, these methods are well known and described in the literature, but the interpretation of their application in gas transport problems is very non-trivial and requires special consideration. Similar methods have been used in (Chen, 2016) to quantify gas transport in shales. There are also more complex methods of dimensional reduction available (Hyvärinen, 2013; Demartines and Hérault, 1997; Lee and Verleysen, 2007).

This paper has the following structure. Section 2 presents the methodology used for the evaluation of the error of the simulation result in the solution space of a stationary network problem. In Section 3, the results of numerical experiments will be presented, PCA of solutions of a realistic gas transport problem will be carried out and conclusions will be drawn about the presence of unstable directions in the solution space. Section 4 will discuss the obtained instabilities and suggest ways to resolve them.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

Stationary network simulations belong to a wide class of problems in which a system of algebraic equations of the form  $y(x) = 0$ , usually large and non-linear, is solved, where the dimensions of the space of variables and equations are the same:  $\dim x = \dim y = n$ . Mathematically, the solution in  $x$ -space is the pre-image of the point 0 in  $y$ -space. The equations are solved numerically, with a given accuracy  $|\delta y| \leq tol_y$ , and around the point 0 in the  $y$ -space, a neighborhood of admissible solutions arises. This situation is depicted in Fig.1 on the right. If  $L_2$ -norm is used to estimate the accuracy, then the neighborhood is spherical, but if  $L_\infty$ -norm is used, that is,  $\max |y|$ , then the neighborhood is cubic. In the analysis carried out in this paper, it is more convenient to use the spherical neighborhood and  $L_2$ -norms. To estimate the error in  $x$ -space, the mapping  $y(x)$  must be linearized by introducing the Jacobi matrix  $J_{ij} = \partial y_i / \partial x_j$ . The inverse image of a spherical neighborhood in  $y$ -space under a linearized mapping is an ellipsoid in  $x$ -space. The values of the principal semi-axes of the ellipsoid determine the amplitudes of the  $\delta x$  errors, and their orientation determines the distribution of the errors over the  $x$ -variables.

Technically, to determine the semi-axes of the ellipsoid, it is necessary to perform a Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) of the  $J$  matrix:

$$J = u\lambda v^T, \quad u^T u = 1, \quad v^T v = 1, \quad \delta x_i = tol_y / \lambda_i, \quad (1)$$

where  $\lambda$  is a diagonal matrix,  $u$  and  $v$  are orthogonal matrices,  $\delta x_i$  is the semi-axis corresponding to eigenvalue  $\lambda_i$ . For nonzero  $\lambda_i$ , the columns of the  $v$ -matrix determine the position of the semi-axes in the  $x$ -space, the columns of the  $u$ -matrix determine the position of the image of these semi-axes in the  $y$ -space. When  $\lambda_i$  is zero, the corresponding columns determine the right and left annihilators of the matrix  $J$ .

The described procedure is a part of PCA method, whose purpose is to identify directions in the space of solutions of the considered problem, which can be interpreted as the main or most important from the applied point of view. Such an analysis is easy to carry out with the help of modern systems of analytical computations, for example, *Mathematica*. We will describe the details of the implementation below, now we will note some features of the gas transport problems.

Transport network problems are given by a system of equations that includes linear Kirchhoff equations of the form  $\sum Q_i = 0$  in each node of the network, describing the conservation of the flow, and nonlinear equations of elements of the form  $f(P_{in}, P_{out}, Q) = 0$  in each edge of the network graph. Here we use the transport variables  $P_{in/out}$  assigned to the input and output nodes, for gas networks – pressures;  $Q$  is the edge-assigned flow. In gas problems, flows are considered in different normalizations:  $Q_m$  – mass flow,  $Q_v$  – molar flow,  $Q_N$  – volumetric flow under normal conditions, etc. The general formulations do not depend on the type of flow normalization.

It was shown in (Clees et al., 2018a) that if all network elements satisfy the generalized resistivity condition:

$$\partial f / \partial P_{in} > 0, \quad \partial f / \partial P_{out} < 0, \quad \partial f / \partial Q < 0, \quad (2)$$

then the Jacobian of the system is nondegenerate and the problem under consideration has a unique solution. This solution can be found numerically using the Newtonian algorithm stabilized by the Armijo line search rule, with an arbitrary choice of starting point. Additionally, it is required to have a supply with a given pressure  $P_{set}$  in each disconnected graph component and a proper condition on the behavior of functions at infinity, which can be satisfied by choosing linear continuations of functions outside the working region.

The problem faced by practical simulation is the marginal fulfillment of the rule (2) for some elements. In particular, the compressor equations are:

$$\max(\min(P_{in} - P_L, -P_{out} + P_H, -Q + Q_H), \quad (3)$$

$$P_{in} - P_{out}, -Q) + \varepsilon(P_{in} - P_{out} - Q) = 0, \quad (4)$$

with given constants  $P_L, P_H, Q_H$ . This equation describes a polyhedral surface in the space of transport variables, whose faces  $P_{in} = P_L, P_{out} = P_H, Q = Q_H$ , etc., are associated with the target values, for example,  $P_H = SPO$ , specified output pressure,  $Q_H = SM$ , specified mass flow, or with technical limits:  $P_L = P_{MIN}$ , minimal input pressure,  $P_{in} = P_{out}$ , bypass mode,  $Q = 0$ , OFF mode, etc.

An additional term with a positive small  $\varepsilon$  serves as a regularization and was introduced for the following reason. Without this term, some derivatives with respect to transport variables would vanish: for the face  $P_{in} = P_L$  the derivatives with respect to  $(P_{out}, Q)$  vanish, for the face  $P_{out} = P_H$  - w.r.t.  $(P_{in}, Q)$ , etc. The geometric interpretation of this property is the direction of the normals to the faces of the polyhedron along the axes, while the condition (2) requires that the normals be directed strictly inside the corresponding octant. The presence of such zero derivatives in certain situations leads to the degeneration of the Jacobi matrix, the disappearance or non-uniqueness of solutions, and the failure of numerical procedures. The introduced purely resistive  $\varepsilon$ -term formally corrects the problem, the condition (2) is satisfied, and the numerical procedure finds a solution. At the same time, the  $\varepsilon$ -term deforms the solution, violates the exact fulfillment of the target equalities  $P_{out} = SPO$ , etc. This term must be small enough for the solution to be physically acceptable. In this case, problems with numerical procedures start to return. The range of values  $\varepsilon = 10^{-6} \dots 10^{-3}$  is acceptable for the most of applications.

In this paper, in the context of the performed PCA, we will discuss the following aspect. We will see that small values of the  $\varepsilon$ -parameter in certain situations are associated with eigenvalues close to zero, which correspond to an almost degenerate Jacobi matrix and large error values in the space of the problem variables. Thus, as the solution begins to fulfill the target equalities more and more accurately, some variables become less and less precisely defined. This peculiar uncertainty principle will be discussed in more detail in Section 4.

The work (Chen, 2016) used the PCA method for the analysis of gas transport in shales. In general, this is the same technique that we use to analyze instabilities in the distribution of pressures and flows in gas networks. In detail, (Chen, 2016) analyzes the dependence of a single curve of pressure decline vs time, discretized at 5 points, on the variation of a single input parameter, discretized at 100 points, in order to highlight the main trends in this relationship. In our

case, the PCA is applied to the 200x200 Jacobi matrix in order to detect and classify its degenerate directions.

There are also other factorization techniques, e.g., Independent Component Analysis (ICA) (Hyvärinen, 2013), Curvilinear Component Analysis (CCA) (Demartines and Herault, 1997), Nonlinear Dimensionality Reduction (Lee and Verleysen, 2007), etc. They are generalizations of the PCA method for nonlinear problems, signal processing and other particular applications, many of them also rely on PCA at their core. For our purpose of identifying unstable directions in Jacobi matrix, the basic linear PCA method is sufficient.

### 3 RESULTS

We will now apply the PCA algorithm to the gas network problem N1 depicted in Fig.2. The network has 100 nodes and 111 edges, which include 4 compressors c1-4. The compressors are organized into two stations c1|2 and c3|4, in each station the compressors are connected in parallel, as shown in the lower part of the figure. The station also includes other elements, but they have trivial equations and are eliminated by the topological cleaning filter used in the solution procedure. In this scenario, all compressors are set to  $P_H = SPO$  mode with the same  $SPO$  value. More technical data on the network used: pipe diameters 0.4-1.2m, pipe lengths 0.1-57km, incoming pressure  $P_{set}=50$ bar, compressors setting:  $SPO=80$ bar, outgoing flows  $Q_{set}(n76) = 300 \cdot 10^3 Nm^3/h$ ,  $Q_{set}(n80) = 700 \cdot 10^3 Nm^3/h$ ,  $Q_{set}(n91) = 1000 \cdot 10^3 Nm^3/h$ .

As the most important values in this study, the compressor parameters  $\varepsilon_{c12} = 10^{-5}$ ,  $\varepsilon_{c34} = 10^{-6}$  are used. The values are deliberately chosen to be different to avoid mixing up the corresponding eigenvectors. The simulation is done with the choice  $tol_y = 10^{-5}$ . The PCA result is shown in the tables.

Table 1 shows the lowest eigenvalue associated with  $\varepsilon_{c34}$ . The error in the solution space  $\delta x = 513$  turns out to be enormously large. Note that the characteristic pressures in the system are on the order of 10-100 bar, the characteristic flows in different normalizations have values of the order of 100-1000, the equations are also normalized so as to provide an  $y$ -variation of about 100 units in the working region. Further, the  $v$ -column is given in Table 1, the corresponding  $x$ -error is localized in station c3|4, and corresponds to the disbalance of flows through individual compressors, when a flow through one compressor is by  $\delta Q$  larger, through the other – by  $\delta Q$  smaller, and

Table 1: The lowest eigenvalue and associated principal components.

$\lambda_1$	$ \delta x_1 $	$\delta Q_{N,c3}$	$\delta Q_{N,c4}$	$\delta Q_{m,c3}$	$\delta Q_{m,c4}$	$eq_{c3}$	$eq_{c4}$
$1.95 \cdot 10^{-8}$	513	-0.694	0.694	-0.138	0.138	0.707	-0.707

Table 2: The second lowest eigenvalue and associated principal components.

$\lambda_2$	$ \delta x_2 $	$\delta Q_{N,c1}$	$\delta Q_{N,c2}$	$\delta Q_{m,c1}$	$\delta Q_{m,c2}$	$eq_{c1}$	$eq_{c2}$
$1.95 \cdot 10^{-7}$	51.3	-0.694	0.694	-0.138	0.138	0.707	-0.707

the total flow through the station does not change. In the problem, flows are introduced in two normalizations  $Q_N$  and  $Q_m$ , they are also involved in the eigenvector with the corresponding coefficients. Next, we give an  $u$ -column that, due to the small eigenvalue, approximates the left annihilator of the matrix  $J$ . It is also localized in the station c3|4 and, in fact, means that the difference in the control equations is constant. Indeed, the  $P_{out} = SPO$  face turns out to be locally active in these equations, the equations are identical, and their difference is zero.

Table 2 shows the second lowest eigenvalue that happens to be associated with the  $\epsilon_{c12}$  parameter. In this case, as expected, the eigenvalue is 10 times larger, while the error in the solution space  $\delta x = 51.3$  is 10 times smaller and is still large. The rest of the table literally repeats the previous one, only the corresponding vectors are localized in the station c1|2. When the  $\epsilon$ -parameters change in the range of small values, eigenvalues change proportionally, while the eigenvectors do not change.

Table 3 shows the next lowest eigenvalues. Here the corresponding  $x$ -errors turn out to be small. In addition, the  $u$ - and  $v$ -vectors are distributed over a large number of elements, and the error in each element is even smaller. The intermediate case is  $\lambda_3 = 2.93 \cdot 10^{-4}$  with the corresponding  $|\delta x_3| = 3.42 \cdot 10^{-2}$ . This component is distributed over the pipes connecting the two stations c1|2 and c3|4, suggesting a conflict between SPO stations due to the low resistance of the connecting pipes. This hypothesis is experimentally confirmed, if one artificially increases the length and/or decreases the diameter of one of the pipes, say, p24. As a result, the corresponding eigenvalue moves up and the  $x$ -error decreases.

The main result, that  $\epsilon$  value has the major influence to the convergence, has been validated by the tests on a large network dataset from (Baldin et al., 2021). It contains 85 real-life networks of complexity up to 4000 nodes and up to 42 compressors. Setting  $\epsilon$

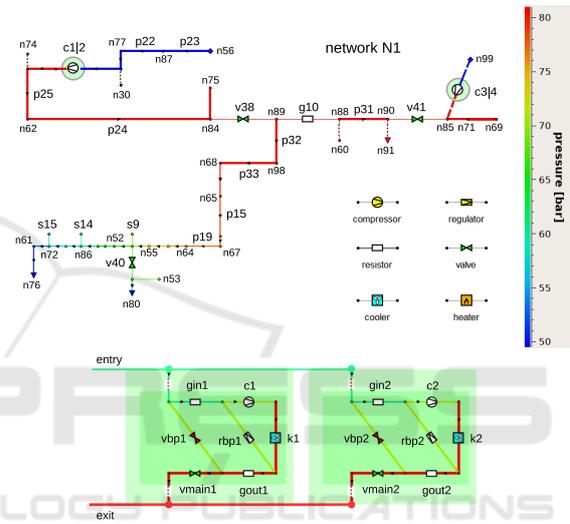


Figure 2: On the top: test network N1; at the bottom: an example of parallel compressor station. Images from (Clees et al., 2018a).

in compressors and regulators to small values leads to significant degradation of convergence. It should be emphasized that the  $\epsilon$ -singularity is the only problem for convergence and for slowing down of the solution process. All other equations were specially processed (unfolded) by the methods described in (Clees et al., 2018a; Clees et al., 2018b; Baldin et al., 2020; Baldin et al., 2021; Clees et al., 2016), in order to ensure stable non-degeneracy of the Jacobi matrix both inside and outside the working region. Table 4 gives characteristics of convergence for different values of the  $\epsilon$ -parameter. This test was carried out on one network N85.1 from the (Baldin et al., 2021) set, which has  $\sim 2000$  nodes,  $\sim 2000$  edges,  $\sim 200$  of which have potentially singular equations. The timing is given for a part of the general procedure described in (Clees et al., 2016), including only the free phase, numerical solution, without the translation procedure. It can be seen that for  $\epsilon \sim 1$  the method requires a moderate number of iterations and is performing fast. How-

Table 3: The next lowest eigenvalues.

$\lambda_3$	$ \delta x_3 $	$\lambda_4$	$ \delta x_4 $	$\lambda_5$	$ \delta x_5 $	$\lambda_6$	$ \delta x_6 $
$2.93 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$3.42 \cdot 10^{-2}$	$3.45 \cdot 10^{-2}$	$2.89 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$4.79 \cdot 10^{-2}$	$2.09 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$6.95 \cdot 10^{-2}$	$1.44 \cdot 10^{-4}$

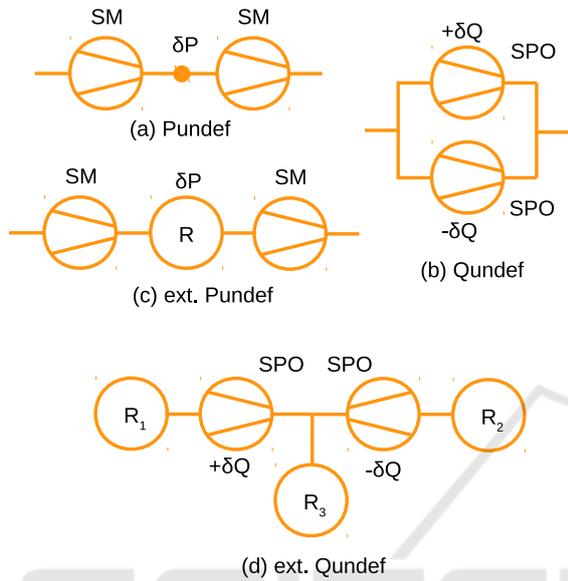


Figure 3: Examples of local and extended conflicts in the formulation of gas transport tasks. See text for the details.

ever, the target values of the obtained solution turn out to be strongly violated, and the solution is physically unacceptable. Target values get better as  $\epsilon$  decreases, but the number of Newton iterations and Armijo line search iterations increases. For the values  $\epsilon \sim 10^{-6}$ , the number of iterations exceeds the established limits, practically meaning the divergence of the method. Approximately the same trend is shown by other networks from the N85 set, with possible statistical outliers. Table 5 shows the dependence on  $\epsilon$  of the number of diverged scenarios (out of total 85), as well as the time to solve all scenarios. Here, timing covers all phases of the solution, including translation and initialization; the solution was restricted to free modeling of compressors. These indicators are more stable to statistical outliers and show an increase in the number of diverging scenarios and total time, with the decrease in  $\epsilon$ -parameter.

#### 4 DISCUSSION

Problems that may arise in practical scenarios are illustrated in Fig.3. In the  $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$  limit, a number of conflicts can occur when compressors are connected

Table 4: Dependence of convergence rate on parameter  $\epsilon$  for network N85.1.

$\epsilon$	Newton iter.	line search iter.	time*
1	76	404	3
$10^{-2}$	152	920	6
$10^{-4}$	222	2218	14
$10^{-6}$	> 500	23079	div.

\* in seconds, for 2.6 GHz Intel i7 CPU 16 GB RAM computer.

Table 5: Convergence characteristics for all N85 networks.

$\epsilon$	total div.	total time*
$10^{-3}$	0	8
$10^{-6}$	11	15
$10^{-9}$	58	53

\*in minutes, for 2.6 GHz Intel i7 CPU 16 GB RAM computer.

in series and in parallel. When compressors are connected in series, with working points located on their  $Q_H$ -faces, with equal values of  $Q_H = SM$ , after taking into account the conservation of the flow, each of the compressors gives the same equation for the flow:  $Q = SM$ . Thus, the equation is repeated twice and makes the system degenerate. When one equation is excluded from the system, it turns out to be underdetermined, that is, the solution has one continuous degree of freedom. A simple check shows that the pressure in the intermediate node disappears from the system and is therefore arbitrary. This situation is depicted in Fig.3a and can be classified as a local *Pundef*-conflict.

In the case of parallel connection of compressors located on their  $P_{out} = P_H$  faces, with equal values of  $P_H = SPO$ , the same equation  $P_{out} = SPO$  appears twice in the system. Here, the system also degenerates.

ates and a continuous degree of freedom appears in the solution. This degree of freedom corresponds to the disbalance of the flows in the compressors, that is, the addition of  $\pm\delta Q$  to the flows canceling each other in the total flow through the station. In this situation, shown in Fig.3b, there is a local *Qundef*-conflict between the compressors.

The ambiguity is not necessarily limited to the compressor station, it can also go beyond it. Fig.3c shows an extended *Pundef*-conflict. Here two *SM*-compressors are connected by an intermediate subgraph  $R$ , which in a particular case can be a pipeline. Since there are no equations in the subgraph that could fix the pressure, it turns out to be undefined along the pipeline. In a more general case, one can choose for  $R$  any connected subgraph that satisfies the generalized resistivity conditions and does not include supplies with a given pressure  $Pset$ . Let there be a solution in which both compressors are stably located inside their *SM*-faces. In this case, they can be replaced by supplies or exits with given flows  $Qset$ . The solution exists only if these  $Qsets$  are balanced with the  $Qsets$  in the subgraph  $R$ , that is, their total sum is zero. Further, by choosing an arbitrary node of the subgraph  $R$ , one can discard the Kirchhoff condition written in it, since it follows from the conservation conditions and is fulfilled automatically. This condition can be replaced by the  $P = Pset$  condition, with the pressure value taken from the chosen solution. The result of these manipulations is a connected generalized resistive graph with a given  $Pset$ , for which the system has a unique solution. Now  $Pset$  can be shifted by an arbitrary small value  $\delta P$ , and the solution will also exist and be unique. In this case, by continuity, the shift of the solution will be arbitrarily small and still be inside the *SM*-faces, that is, it will be a solution to the originally posed problem. As a result, we have demonstrated the presence of continuous arbitrariness in the solution associated with a change in pressure, *Pundef*-conflict. It is also noteworthy that this consideration can be applied to any node of the  $R$  subgraph, including those with  $Qset = 0$ . Therefore, the arbitrariness affects the pressure at all nodes of the subgraph.

Similarly, one can get an extended *Qundef*-conflict, see Fig.3d. Here, two *SPO* compressors control the pressure in one node. The equations repeat, the system is degenerate, and the solution has a continuous degree of freedom associated with the  $\pm\delta Q$  disbalance of flows through the compressors. Now this disbalance extends to the outer subgraphs  $R_{1,2}$ , which in a particular case can be pipelines with  $Psets$  at the free ends, and for subgraph  $R_3$  – a pipeline with  $Qset$  at the free end. In a more general case, one can

choose for  $R_{1-3}$  connected generalized resistive subgraphs, for  $R_{1,2}$  – with  $Psets$ , and for  $R_3$  – with  $Pset$  or without it. Next, consider a solution where the compressors are stably inside their *SPO*-faces. The network can be dissected at compressors into three disconnected parts, while for  $R_{1,2}$  the compressors can be replaced by  $Qsets$ , and for  $R_3$  by  $Pset = SPO$ . The solution exists and is unique in each of these three subgraphs, while in  $R_3$  the solution does not change and in  $R_{1,2}$  it is deformed when  $\pm\delta Q$ -flows change. Thus, we have shown the presence of *Qundef*-conflict in the considered scenario.

While the problems of a local type can be noted and ignored, for extended conflicts, entire network regions may have undefined characteristics, which requires additional analysis. At first glance, the described conflicts can be recognized and eliminated, by an automatic algorithm or manually, for example, not allowing *SPO* conditions to collide in the same node. However, the conflict may arise not between the main target faces, but between the auxiliary ones, that is, *PIMIN*, *QMAX* and all other conditions in the equation can enter into conflict. Some of these conflicts do not occur directly, but persist through subgraphs. It is impossible to predict in advance which faces will be activated, and consideration of all potentially emerging possibilities for large networks turns out to be combinatorially unacceptable. Conflict can also arise at intermediate iterations, on the path from the starting point to the solution. This will lead to the degeneration of the Jacobi matrix and to the immediate divergence of the solution algorithm.

Compressors also have a refined, so-called *advanced* model (Clees et al., 2018b; Baldin et al., 2021) that includes additional conditions in the control equation. These conditions do not fix the problem, as they only add new faces that are curved and with the correct signature, but the old faces still remain in the equation and continue to generate conflicts. In practice, if the compressor can fulfill its target conditions, then it is right on those potentially conflicting faces.

In gas transport problems, not only the compressors bring the described difficulties. Other elements, in particular, regulators, flaptraps, REPD-resistors, are also modeled by piecewise linear conditions of the marginal signature (Clees et al., 2018a). A conflict can arise in any combination of these elements, and also as a result of direct connection of conflicting faces with  $Pset$  or  $Qset$  conditions.

It follows from the above formulas that due to the  $\epsilon$ -regularization, the polyhedron faces corresponding to the control equation are deformed, and the deviations from the target values on the solution turn out to

be proportional to  $\varepsilon$ . At the same time, the errors of the variables described by the semi-axes of the ellipsoid are inversely proportional to  $\varepsilon$ , because of this, the above mentioned uncertainty principle is fulfilled – an increase in the accuracy of fulfillment of the target values for some variables leads to a decrease in the accuracy of the result for the other variables,  $\delta P \cdot \delta Q = Const$  for the *Pundef/Qundef*-conflicts considered here.

Theoretically, the slowdown of the solution algorithm with decreasing  $\varepsilon$  is understandable. Small  $\varepsilon$  make the Jacobi matrix almost degenerate, the corresponding condition number is large, algorithms for solving linear systems in Newtonian iterations are less stable. The size of the Newtonian step  $dx_N = -J^{-1}y$  then becomes very large,  $h = |dx_N| \gg 1$ . Line search stabilization in this case subdivides the Newtonian step to reduce the residual  $|y|$  while taking many steps to achieve moderate  $h = |dx_{LS}| \sim 1$ . In addition, the direction of the Newtonian step becomes close to the right annihilator  $J$ , which leads to the fact that along the Newtonian direction for small  $h$  the residual changes little and becomes sensitive to nonlinear effects. Indeed, the function  $|y| = c_0 + c_1h + c_2h^2$  for small negative  $c_1$  and moderate positive  $c_2$  has a minimum for small positive  $h = -c_1/(2c_2)$ . It forces the line search algorithm to produce additional subdivisions  $h \ll 1$ . In this case, the change in the residual  $\delta|y| = -c_1^2/(4c_2)$  also turns out to be small, and as a result, the Newton algorithm is forced to perform many steps until convergence.

Errors in  $x$ -space can be reduced if, in addition to controlling  $y$ -convergence  $|y| \leq tol_y$ ,  $x$ -convergence is controlled:  $|dx_N| \leq tol_x$ . Indeed, linearization near the solution  $x_0$  gives  $y = Jdx$ , where  $dx = x - x_0$ , whence  $|J^{-1}y| = |dx| \leq tol_x$ , the solution in  $x$ -space belongs to the intersection of the error ellipsoid and the ball of radius  $tol_x$ . Such additional conditions are sometimes introduced into the stop criterion of the solution algorithms, but in detail this question is extremely complicated. In (Kelley, 1995) the stabilized Newtonian algorithm 8.2.1 *nsola* does not contain  $x$ -conditions, but namely for it the global convergence has been proved. In (Press et al., 1992) Chap.9.7, the *newt* algorithm contains the  $x$ -condition, in the form of  $L_\infty$ -norm of the combined relative and absolute value of the  $x$ -step. However, this condition is imposed with the  $y$ -condition not as AND, but as OR, thus, in the  $x$ -space, not the intersection, but the union of the vicinities is accepted. In this case, situations are possible when, on the accepted solution, some equations will not fulfill their  $y$ -tolerances. Moreover, the  $x$ -condition in (Press et al., 1992) *newt* is not imposed on Newtons  $|dx_N|$ , but on the line search step  $|dx_{LS}|$ .

As a result, solutions can be accepted with large Newtonian steps and thus large  $x$ -errors. Indeed, we have already seen that in the case of degenerations large  $|dx_N|$  and small  $|dx_{LS}|$  can be obtained. In general, if the stop criterion is provided with a condition on the  $|dx_N|$ -step, imposed together with the  $y$ -condition as AND, then in degenerate cases the Newtonian method will be forced to perform even more iterations, leading to an additional deterioration in convergence.

From all that has been said, it becomes clear that the problem under consideration belongs to the *ill-defined* class, in the mathematical sense. This does not mean that it is impossible to solve it, but only that standard well-tested algorithms do not work for it, and more sophisticated methods are required. The ideas for constructing such methods are listed below. Note that none of them can eliminate the ambiguity in the solution; this property is determined by the structure of the considered equations. These methods aim to find a particular solution in the equivalence class, avoiding divergences as much as possible and making a moderate number of iterations.

**Methods that can help:** relaxed Armijo rule (Kelley, 1995; Baldin et al., 2020); topological reduction (Baldin et al., 2020); dynamical problem statement; homotopic methods (Allgower and Georg, 2003); solvers for piecewise linear systems (Katzenelson, 1965; Chien and Kuh, 1976; Griewank et al., 2015), also (Allgower and Georg, 2003) Chap.12-15; pseudo-inverse (Press et al., 1992) Chap.2.6. Consideration of these methods is a topic for our further work.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

In this work, an analysis of the error ellipsoid in the space of solutions of stationary gas transport problems was carried out. For this purpose, a Principal Component Analysis of a solution set was performed, based on the Singular Value Decomposition of the Jacobi matrix of the corresponding nonlinear system. On the basis of numerical solution of realistic network examples, as well as theoretically, the presence of unstable directions is shown associated with the marginal fulfillment of the resistivity conditions for the equations of compressors and other control elements in gas networks. These directions correspond to conflicts in serial and parallel connections of compressors, leading to uncertain pressure and flow values in the solutions. Conflicts can also extend beyond the compressor stations and spread to wide regions of the network.

When using  $\varepsilon$ -regularization of the equations, the resistivity condition can be enforced and one solution from the equivalence class can be selected. In this case, conflicts manifest themselves as  $\sim \varepsilon$  deviations of the controlled variables from the target values and  $\sim \varepsilon^{-1}$  solution errors in other variables, so that the deviations satisfy the uncertainty principle of a form  $\delta P \cdot \delta Q = \text{Const}$ . As  $\varepsilon$  decreases, the numerical procedures begin to increase the number of iterations and finally diverge.

We have briefly listed the algorithms that can help resolving this problem. Further exploration of these algorithms is in our future plans.

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