Research on AGC Performance During Wind Power Ramping Based on Deep Reinforcement Learning

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ABSTRACT With the increase in wind power penetration, wind power ramping events have increasingly influenced tie line power control in the power grid. Large power changes during ramping events make it difficult to accurately track the scheduling plans of tie lines and can even lead to overrun. Determining how to evaluate the control performance of automatic generation control (AGC) for wind power ramping has become an urgent problem. In this context, this paper studies the control performance of AGC for wind power ramping based on deep reinforcement learning. First, a tie line power control model of a power system with an AGC module is established. Then, measured data, which include thermal power, wind power, hydropower output and tie line power data, and a deep reinforcement learning method are combined for AGC parameter estimation based on the deep Q-network (DQN) algorithm. Next, the AGC parameter in different scenarios are fit by using measured phasor measurement unit (PMU) data, and on the basis of the fitted model, AGC performance evaluation is performed for wind power ramping events. Finally, the simulation results verify the feasibility and effectiveness of analysing the relationship between wind power ramping and AGC performance based on the AGC parameter fitting model.

INDEX TERMS Wind power ramping, tie line, AGC, measured data, deep reinforcement learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, renewable energy resources such as wind power have begun to connect to the power grid on a large scale. However, due to the randomness and uncertainty of wind power, the stability of power system operations will be tested as wind power penetration increases [1]. Notably, the occurrence of wind ramp events [2]–[6] will adversely affect the power balance of the system, resulting in the tie lines of interconnected power systems having difficulty in accurately tracking the scheduling plan, thus increasing the difficulty of tie line power control. In this context, it must be determined whether automatic generation control (AGC) [7]–[9] can reduce the impact of wind ramp events on the power of tie lines, and evaluations of the control performance of AGC for wind power ramping are important.

The problems related to AGC can be solved by digital simulation technology. In terms of AGC simulation model research, reference [10] successively introduced an AGC model built with the power system simulation programs PSS/E, Eurostag and PSD-FDS. Reference [11] proposed a dynamic AGC simulation method based on a smart grid for AGC performance quantification. Reference [12] used a hybrid system modelling method to establish an AGC model that can be applied to the entire dynamic process simulation of a power system. However, the parameters of the AGC models in the above references are all fixed; therefore, these methods can only be used in the simulation of simple scenes. When AGC is implemented, complex nonlinear characteristics are observed at long time scales, and the above modelling methods cannot effectively reflect these characteristics.
AGC simulation models based on data-driven methods can encompass the complex characteristics of AGC. Such an approach is suitable for the simulation of complex scenes and can effectively evaluate the control performance of AGC for ramping events. However, the effect of AGC based on data-driven methods must be evaluated; that is, the AGC parameters must be fit so that the relationships among the model output variables are consistent with those in an actual situation. At present, large-scale plants and stations are generally equipped with phasor measurement units (PMU) [13], which can obtain real-time operation data for a power system. Therefore, the AGC parameters can be fitted by using the measured PMU data, and the control effect of AGC for tie lines under different wind power penetration rates and ramp rates can be further evaluated. AGC parameter fitting is essentially a decision-making problem, and deep reinforcement learning [14]–[16] can be used to analyse data characteristics and make decisions to solve this problem. Deep reinforcement learning combines the powerful perceptual comprehension ability of deep learning and decision-making ability of reinforcement learning to achieve one-to-one correspondence from perception to action [17]–[19]. Deep learning uses information from the environment to extract features and generate state representations of the current environment. Reinforcement learning selects actions based on the current state to achieve the expected goal. At present, deep reinforcement learning has yielded remarkable achievements related to many aspects of power systems, such as the coordinated control of the hybrid energy storage in microgrids [20], the generation unit tripping strategy under emergency circumstances [21] and AGC strategy research [22], thereby displaying its effectiveness in solving decision-making problems.

This paper proposes a data-driven method for AGC parameter fitting based on deep reinforcement learning to evaluate the control performance of AGC for wind power ramping. First, by analysing the operation data from a regional power grid, a data-driven power grid model with AGC is established. Second, based on the deep Q-network (DQN) algorithm, the model framework for AGC performance simulation is established, and the AGC parameters are established. Then, the AGC performance under different wind power penetration rates and ramp rates is evaluated based on measured data. Finally, the simulation study shows the effectiveness and accuracy of the proposed method.

II. AGC MODEL BASED ON DATA DRIVE

A. DATA CHARACTERISTICS

This paper analyses thermal power output, hydropower output, wind power output and tie line power data from a certain area after AGC is put into operation. As shown in Figure 1, the wind power output in this area, which accounts for a relatively high proportion of the power output, is characterized by strong random fluctuations, and some wind ramping events occur. The proportion of hydropower output is low, and the output change is stable. When the wind power output suddenly changes, the trend of the thermal power output is approximately opposite to that of wind power. It can be seen that under the control of AGC, the output power of the thermal power unit is mainly adjusted to balance the active power of the system, and thus, the tie line power maintains a relatively stable state.

In the above figure, due to the large amount of data and the different magnitudes of each group of data, it is impossible to analyse the relationship between variables accurately from the graph. Therefore, in order to further understand the regulation of tie lines with AGC, the relationship between the wind power output and tie line power is analysed by using a scatter density diagram, as shown in Figure 2. The trend reflected by scatter is the relationship between wind power output and tie line power, and the colour depth reflects the data density to observe the data distribution characteristics. In Figure 2, the highlighted part of the figure represents the
concentrated distribution area of data, and 0.05-0.25 on the colour bar represents the data density. The distributions of the wind power output and tie line power are not uniform. The tie line power is mostly distributed between 160 MW and 3000 MW, and the wind power output is concentrated between 2000 MW and 15000 MW. In this range, there are many highlighted areas, and the relationship between wind power output and tie line power in different areas is different. Overall, the relationship between the two is complex and has strong nonlinear characteristics. It is difficult to accurately use a mathematical model to express the regulation effect of AGC on the tie line when wind power output changes in multiple scenarios, and this needs to be analysed in combination with the nonlinear characteristic fitting ability of deep learning.

**B. DATA-DRIVEN AGC MODELLING**

Data-driven AGC modelling should reflect the mapping relationship for each group of data, that is, the relationships among the thermal power, hydropower, wind power output, and tie line power. The key step in AGC modelling is simplifying the internal structure of the power grid, with a focus on the output of each unit and the tie line power changes in the AGC model. In this paper, the internal structure of the power grid is regarded as a “black box”, and the AGC model, various types of units, grid load and tie lines are retained. The basic framework of the power system model with AGC is shown in Figure 3. In Figure 3, the “Grid” is the regional power grid that provides wind power output, hydropower output, thermal power output and tie line power. The “External grid” is the other regional power grid that has power exchange with the “Grid”. The “Grid”, “Tie line” and “External grid” together constitute the two regional interconnection power systems.

**FIGURE 3. Framework diagram of the power system model with AGC.**

AGC takes the frequency deviation and tie line power deviation as the inputs, and outputs unit regulation power through the controller to balance the active power of the system, thereby reducing the frequency deviation and tie line power deviation. A typical AGC model is shown in Figure 4.

In Figure 4, \( \Delta f \) is the frequency deviation within the region, \( \Delta P_{\text{tie}} \) is tie line power deviation, \( B \) is the frequency deviation coefficient, and \( g_i \) is the distribution coefficient of the i-th unit. The AGC controller is a PI controller, and \( K_P \) and \( K_i \) are the proportionality coefficient and integral coefficient, respectively. The input signal of the controller is the area control error (ACE), which includes the area frequency deviation and tie line exchange power deviation.

\[
ACE = B \Delta f + \Delta P_{\text{tie}}
\]  

(1)

The basic objective of AGC is to control tie line power by inputting the ACE into the PI controller and outputting the power setting value \( \Delta P_{\text{AGC}} \). Then, the power distribution module assigns \( \Delta P_{\text{AGC}} \) to each AGC unit. The unit will adjust the power according to the instructions issued by the AGC for the power control of tie lines. Therefore, the parameters of the AGC controller and power distribution module play an important role in the tie line power control of power grids and affect the control performance of AGC. To develop an accurate AGC model, it is necessary to fit parameters such as the proportionality coefficient \( K_P \), integral coefficient \( K_i \) and unit regulation power distribution coefficient \( g \) with deep reinforcement learning.

**FIGURE 5. Markov decision process.**

**III. DEEP REINFORCEMENT LEARNING**

**A. REINFORCEMENT LEARNING**

Reinforcement learning is a process of interaction between agents and their environment. Agents continuously try to make mistakes by executing various behaviours that yield the maximum cumulative reward. This learning process can be transformed into a Markov decision process (MDP). A MDP can be represented by four tuples \((s, a, p, r)\) composed of state \(s\), action \(a\), state transition probability \(p\), and return \(r\), and the corresponding decision-making process is shown in Figure 5. At the end of the process, the agent will receive an action sequence, called a strategy, which will be recorded. Then, the cumulative reward of the strategy will be returned,
as shown in Equation (2).

$$R_t = r_{t+1} + \gamma r_{t+2} + \gamma^2 r_{t+3} + \gamma^3 r_{t+4} + \ldots = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \gamma^k r_{t+k+1} \tag{2}$$

In Equation (2), $\gamma$ is the discount factor, indicating the weight of future awards in the cumulative award.

To maximize the reward value of the strategy $\pi$, it is necessary to evaluate the value of action $a$ under a specific state $s$. The state action value function $Q_\pi(s, a)$ can be used to evaluate the action behaviour:

$$Q_\pi(s, a) = E[r_t | s_t = s, a_t = a] \tag{3}$$

In this case, $Q_\pi(s, a)$, or Behrman’s equation, can be expressed as follows:

$$Q_\pi(s, a) = E[r_t + \gamma Q_\pi(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}) | s_t, a_t] \tag{4}$$

The above formula indicates that the state action value function can be obtained by continuous iterative calculations, and thus, the iterative Bellman equation can be used to solve the $Q$ value function. The strategy with the largest value function is called the optimal strategy.

**B. DQN ALGORITHM**

When the state space is large, it is unrealistic to use the iterative method to solve for the optimal strategy. At this time, it is necessary to use a function approximation method to express the value function. The DQN algorithm uses a deep neural network with weight $\theta$ as an approximate representation of the current value function. Then, the loss function according to the correct $Q$ value provided by reinforcement learning is obtained. By minimizing the loss function, the network weight $\theta$ is continuously updated. The loss function $L(\theta)$ and the weight $\theta$ are updated as follows:

$$L(\theta) = E[(Y_i - Q(s_i, a_i; \theta))^2] = E[(r_{t+1} + \gamma \max_a Q(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}; \theta) - Q(s_t, a_t; \theta))^2] \tag{5}$$

$$\theta_{t+1} = \theta_t + \alpha(r_{t+1} + \gamma \max_a Q(s_{t+1}, a; \theta) - Q(s_t, a_t; \theta)) \nabla_\theta Q(s_t, a_t; \theta) \tag{6}$$

where $Y_i$ is the optimization objective of the value function, which is the objective $Q$ value; $Q(s_i, a_i; \theta)$ is the evaluation of $Q(s_i, a_i)$; and $\alpha$ is the learning rate. To reduce the correlation between the current network $Q$ value and the target $Y_i$ and improve the stability of the algorithm, the DQN algorithm uses a separate network, that is, a target network, to generate the target $Q$ value in the training process. During the training process, the parameters of the current network $\theta$ are updated in real time, and the parameters of the target network $\theta'$ are unchanged. Only after the $c$-step iteration are the parameters of the current network copied to the target network, and the loss function is:

$$L(\theta_i) = E[(r_{t+1} + \gamma \max_a Q(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}; \theta'_i) - Q(s_t, a_t; \theta_i))^2] \tag{7}$$

where $\theta_i$ is the parameter of the current network at the $i$-th iteration and $\theta'_i$ is the parameter of the target network.

The current network parameters $\theta$ and target network parameters $\theta'$ by random gradient descent are updated as follows:

$$\nabla_\theta L(\theta) = E(r + \gamma \max Q(s_{t+1}, a_{t+1}; \theta')) - Q(s_t, a_t; \theta)) \nabla_\theta Q(s_t, a_t; \theta) \tag{8}$$

$$\theta_{t+1} = \theta_t + \alpha \nabla_\theta L(\theta_t) \tag{9}$$

$$\theta'_{t+1} = \theta'_{t+C} \tag{10}$$

In addition, in the DQN algorithm, agents typically use $\varepsilon$-greedy strategies to select actions in each step; that is, actions are randomly selected under the probability of $\varepsilon$, and the actions with the highest Q values in the current state are selected at the probability of $1 - \varepsilon$, as shown in the following formula:

$$\pi(a | s) = \begin{cases} \frac{\varepsilon}{m} & \text{if } a = \arg \max Q(s, a) \\ \frac{1 - \varepsilon}{m} & \text{others} \end{cases} \tag{11}$$

where $m$ is the total number of all optional actions.

**IV. AGC PARAMETER FITTING BASED ON THE DQN ALGORITHM**

This paper uses the DQN algorithm in deep reinforcement learning to fit the AGC parameters. The fitting process can be represented by the reinforcement learning process, as shown in Figure 6. The AGC simulation model and measured data are used as the environment, the DQN algorithm is used as the agent, and parameter fitting is achieved based on the interactions between the agent and environment. In this process, the agent obtains the current state of the power grid from the environment, determines the AGC parameter values according to a certain strategy, and acts on the AGC module to obtain the next power grid state. Then, according to the comparison between the state and the measured data,
the environment will return rewards to the agent. This process is repeated until the desired goal is achieved.

A. DESIGN OF THE STATE SPACE, ACTION SPACE AND REWARD FUNCTION

The state space is composed of the outputs of various types of units in the power system model at each time step, including the thermal power output, hydropower output, wind power output and tie line power, namely:

\[
S_t = \left\{ P^\mathrm{fire}, P^\mathrm{water}, P^\mathrm{wind}, P^\mathrm{tie} \right\}
\] (12)

The action space parameters include the following AGC model parameters: the proportionality coefficient, integral coefficient and power distribution coefficient of each unit; these parameters can be expressed as follows:

\[
A = [a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_{m+2}] = [K_p, K_i, g_1, g_2, \ldots, g_m]
\] (13)

where \(g\) is the power distribution coefficient of the unit and \(m\) is the number of units.

The reward function involves reward and punishment processing based on whether the output power of the model after an action is close to the measured value. By comparing the output of each unit and the tie line power with the actual data, we can calculate the average error and use it as the basis for evaluating the action strategy. The average error is calculated as follows:

\[
\text{error}_1 = \frac{1}{n_{\text{fire}}} \sum_{i=1}^{n} |P^\mathrm{fire} - P^\mathrm{fire-true}| \quad (14)
\]

\[
\text{error}_2 = \frac{1}{n_{\text{water}}} \sum_{i=1}^{n} |P^\mathrm{water} - P^\mathrm{water-true}| \quad (15)
\]

\[
\text{error}_3 = \frac{1}{n_{\text{wind}}} \sum_{i=1}^{n} |P^\mathrm{wind} - P^\mathrm{wind-true}| \quad (16)
\]

\[
\text{error}_4 = \frac{1}{n_{\text{line}}} \sum_{i=1}^{n} |P^\text{line} - P^\text{line-true}| \quad (17)
\]

In the formula, \(P^\text{fire}, P^\text{water}, P^\text{wind}\) and \(P^\text{line}\) are the outputs of the thermal power unit, hydropower unit, wind power unit and tie line, respectively. \(P^\text{fire-true}, P^\text{water-true}, P^\text{wind-true}\) and \(P^\text{line-true}\) are the actual outputs and tie line power of the corresponding units. According to the error obtained from Equations (14)-(17), set the reward function as follows:

\[
r(s_t, a_t) = \begin{cases} 
-1; & \text{error}_1 \text{ and error}_2, \text{and} \text{error}_3, \text{and error}_4 > 0.2 \\
1; & 0.04 < \text{error}_1 \text{ and error}_2 \text{, and} \text{error}_3 \text{, and error}_4 \text{, < 0.1} \\
2; & \text{error}_1 \text{, and error}_2 \text{, and error}_4 \text{, < 0.04} \\
0; & \text{others}
\end{cases}
\] (18)

B. LEARNING PROCESS

In the DQN algorithm, both the current network and the target network use a deep convolution neural network structure. The two networks have the same structure, and only the parameters are different. To ensure the integrity of data, the pooling process is omitted in the convolutional neural network, and only two convolutional layers are used for feature extraction. Among them, the first layer selects \((4 \times 2 \times 1)\) convolution kernels, and the second layer selects \((8 \times 4 \times 1)\) convolution kernels. The fully connected layer consists of two hidden layers, in which the numbers of hidden neurons are 30 and 60. The activation function is the ReLU (rectified linear unit) function, and the number of neurons in the output layer is the number of action values needed to output Q under different actions.

C. PARAMETER SETTING

As shown in Figure 6, the DQN algorithm model needs to match the AGC parameters in combination with the power grid model. Therefore, the initial parameter values should be set for the AGC model, as shown in Table 1. These values are randomly set within the setting range of actual unit parameters and AGC parameters.

To make the training process of the algorithm stable and accelerate the learning and convergence speeds of the algorithm, through simulation verification, the values of
TABLE 1. AGC initial operation parameters.

| Symbol | Parameter                        | Value |
|--------|----------------------------------|-------|
| Kp     | proportionality coefficient      | 5     |
| Ki     | integral coefficient             | 1     |
| g1     | G1 power distribution coefficient| 0.26  |
| g2     | G2 power distribution coefficient| 0.21  |
| g3     | G3 power distribution coefficient| 0.23  |
| g4     | G4 power distribution coefficient| 0     |
| g5     | G5 power distribution coefficient| 0     |
| g6     | G6 power distribution coefficient| 0.22  |
| g7     | G7 power distribution coefficient| 0.08  |
| g8     | G8 power distribution coefficient| 0     |

TABLE 2. DQN algorithm parameter setting.

| Symbol       | Parameter          | Value |
|--------------|--------------------|-------|
| α            | learning rate      | 0.5   |
| γ            | discount factor     | 0.9   |
| ε            | strategy selection probability | 0.9 |
| memory_size  | memory capacity    | 1000  |
| replace_target_iter | target network | 50 |

each parameter in the DQN algorithm are set as shown in Table 2.

D. ALGORITHM FLOW

The AGC simulation flow chart based on the DQN algorithm is shown in Figure 8.

V. EXAMPLE ANALYSIS

A. SIMULATION MODEL

Referring to the AGC model framework shown in Figure 4, this paper builds the power system model with AGC shown in the following figure based on the PowerFactory/DIGSILENT simulation platform to obtain operation data using different AGC parameters. The rated active power value of each generator in the model is set according to the actual unit nameplate parameters. See Table 3 for the specific unit information.

B. SAMPLE DATA

In this paper, the wind power, hydropower, thermal power output and tie line power recorded in seconds of a certain region in May 2019 are used as sample data to analyse tie line power fluctuations in the case of wind power ramping up, ramping down and no ramping.

According to [2], during the time period \((t, t + \Delta t)\), when the absolute value of the difference between wind power at the first and last moments exceeds a given threshold, the wind power ramping event occurs. If the power increases, it is a ramp-up event, and if the power decreases, it is a ramp-down event. In general, \(\Delta t\) is taken as 30 minutes, and the threshold values of ramp-up events and ramp-down events are 20% and 15% of the installed capacity of wind power respectively. However, the control cycle of the AGC system is generally 6-10 minutes, and thus, this paper selects 10 minutes as the control cycle length, 7% and 5% of the installed capacity of wind power as the threshold values, and slices the data containing the ramping events in 10-minute intervals to obtain one-way continuous wind power ramping events. At last, three conditions are obtained: ramping up, ramping down and no ramping of wind power. See Table 4 for details.
It can be seen from the above table that the probability of occurrence of ramp-up events is greater than that of ramp-down events. When the wind power ramping amplitude reaches a certain critical value, the control performance of the AGC on the tie line will be affected. To fit the control performance of AGC under wind power ramping, the data for condition 1 and condition 2 are selected as the sample data input into the algorithm. The relationship between the output of each unit and tie line power for condition 1 and condition 2 is shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11, respectively.

In Figure 10 and Figure 11, the output data for the tie line, wind power, hydropower and thermal power are normalized by the method of deviation standardization (min-max); that is, the output is mapped to the range of [0,1] based on the minimum value of each data set, and the curve in the figure reflects the wave motion of each output. The two figures show that when the wind power ramps up or down, the thermal power output increases or decreases accordingly, which makes the tie line power relatively stable.

### C. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

According to the algorithm flow chart shown in Figure 8, the sample data are input into the algorithm. The training model includes 1000 episodes, and the training of an episode includes multiple training steps. Each step returns a reward value, which is summed to obtain the overall value for an episode. Figure 12 and Figure 13 show the number of steps and the average reward value of each episode in the training process. The number of training steps in the first 50 episodes is large, and the number of training steps after 100 episodes is greatly reduced and tends to be stable. Correspondingly, the average reward value initially increases rapidly and then slowly increases. After approximately 200 episodes,
the reward value is stable at the maximum expected value, with good convergence ability.

After the AGC model is fully trained with the DQN algorithm, the action strategy with the maximum return value is obtained. Based on this strategy, the model is run to obtain the real-time unit output and tie line power. To verify the fitting effect of the DQN algorithm on AGC parameters, the particle swarm optimization algorithm (PSO) is introduced for test comparison. The comparison of the wind power output, tie line power and actual data of the working condition 1 with different algorithms is shown in Figure 14 and Figure 15. It can be seen that the wind power output and tie line power using the DQN algorithm are closer to the actual data, indicating that the fitting effect of the AGC parameters fitted by the DQN algorithm is similar to the actual system, which verifies the effectiveness of the proposed method.

D. AGC PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

In most current simulation models, the setting of AGC parameters is not based on the actual situation. Therefore, the AGC action behaviour is not consistent with the actual situation and cannot accurately reflect the process of secondary frequency modulation, which in turn affects the accuracy of the scene analysis in which AGC participates. In the above, we used the actual data to fit the parameters that reflect the actual AGC adjustment characteristics through the DQN algorithm. On this basis, we can analyse the actual AGC adjustment performance in various scenarios, such as wind power ramping. Wind power ramping events have a considerable impact on AGC performance. To evaluate the AGC performance after parameter fitting, this paper explores wind power ramping events with different wind power penetration rates based on the power system model shown in Figure 9 and assesses the corresponding regulation ability according to the changes in the tie line power. Figure 16 and Figure 17 show the changes in the tie line power at different ramp rates for 20% and 50% wind power penetration, respectively.

In Figure 16 and Figure 17, when the wind power penetration rate is 20%, the tie line power at different ramp...
AGC parameter fitting method based on deep reinforcement learning is proposed. The main work can be summarized as follows:

1) A power control model of the tie lines with an AGC module is established. Based on the model, the relationship between wind power ramping and the tie line is analyzed.

2) In this paper, deep reinforcement learning is introduced into AGC parameter fitting, and the DQN algorithm is used to fit the AGC parameters in various scenarios combined with the measured data of the power grid.

3) Based on the model of the measured data fitting and data-driven tie line, the control performance of AGC for wind power ramp events is evaluated, and the effectiveness of the proposed method is verified.

The research focus of this paper is AGC parameter fitting, which is the basis for evaluating the control performance of AGC. From this approach, we can assess the influence of wind power ramping on the control of tie lines, which plays an important role in preventing tie line limits from being exceeded and in developing new control strategies.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, a data-driven concept is used to apply deep reinforcement learning to AGC parameter fitting. A data-driven

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