

# Correspondence

## Periodic Descriptor Systems: Solvability and Conditionability

J. Sreedhar and Paul Van Dooren

**Abstract**—The authors consider discrete-time linear periodic descriptor systems and study the concepts of *solvability* and *conditionability*, introduced by Luenberger. They prove that solvability is equivalent to conditionability, just as in the time-invariant case. We give a characterization of solvability/conditionability in terms of a cyclic matrix pencil and, furthermore, propose a simple test via the periodic Schur decomposition to check for either property. This could lead to further systematic study of these systems.

**Index Terms**—Descriptor systems, periodic systems.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Linear descriptor systems represent a broad class of time evolutionary phenomena and are often the product of problem formulation in system theory, especially when the variables used are the natural describing variables of the underlying process. This topic has received a lot of attention over the last 20 years; see, in particular, [5] and [6]. Within the general class of linear descriptor systems, periodic systems form an important subclass—they are suitable models for many natural and man-made phenomena and are finding increasing use in control theory as well [1]. In this paper, we restrict attention to *solvability* and *conditionability* of periodic linear descriptor systems. Throughout, we adopt the basic framework and concepts defined by Luenberger [5], [6] and present new results which extend those obtained by him for the time-invariant (TI) case.

We begin by briefly recalling some definitions and prior work (see [5] for details). A linear discrete-time descriptor variable system defined on the time interval  $[0, N]$  has the form

$$E_k x_{k+1} = A_k x_k + u_k, \quad k = 0, 1, \dots, N-1. \quad (1)$$

For each  $k$ ,  $x_k$  is an  $n$ -dimensional vector of descriptor variables and  $u_k$  is an  $m$ -dimensional vector of input variables. The matrices  $E_k$  and  $A_k$  are  $n \times n$  with complex entries, and possibly singular. The length of the time interval is  $N$ ; likewise there are  $N$  equations in

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(1), and these can be written out in block matrix form as

$$\begin{bmatrix} -A_0 & \left[ \begin{array}{c|c} E_0 & \\ \hline -A_1 & E_1 \\ & \ddots \\ & -A_{N-2} & E_{N-2} \\ \hline & & -A_{N-1} & E_{N-1} \end{array} \right] \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_0 \\ x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_{N-1} \\ x_N \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} u_0 \\ u_1 \\ \vdots \\ u_{N-1} \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

showing that the dynamic system can be regarded as one (large) system of linear equations. Two fundamental concepts associated with such systems, which characterize their “well behavedness,” are solvability and conditionability. The *solvability matrix* of (1), which we shall denote by  $S(0; N)$ , is the coefficient matrix in (2). It can be regarded as an  $N \times (N+1)$  block matrix or, in ordinary terms, as an  $nN \times n(N+1)$  matrix. System (1) is said to be *solvable* if  $S(0; N)$  is of full rank. Notice that solvability is the standard nondegeneracy condition for (2); it means that (1) possesses an  $n$ -dimensional linear variety of solutions for any input sequence. The *conditionability matrix* of (1), denoted by  $C(0; N)$ , is the submatrix of  $S(0; N)$  obtained by deleting the first and last block columns. It is shown enclosed by vertical lines in (2) and is an  $N \times (N-1)$  block matrix. System (1) is said to be *conditionable* if  $C(0; N)$  is of full rank. Conditionability is equivalent to the property that any two distinct solutions to (2) must differ at (at least) one end-point, zero or  $N$ . If the system is solvable, then conditionability implies that a unique solution (within the  $n$ -dimensional linear variety) can be specified by appending a total of  $n$  boundary conditions involving the values  $x_0$  and  $x_N$  only. In general, these boundary conditions cannot all be specified at one end.

It is clear that solvability and conditionability of (1) depend only on the homogeneous system  $E_k x_{k+1} = A_k x_k$ ,  $k = 0, 1, \dots, N-1$ . Later in the paper, we shall look at descriptor systems defined over  $[0, N]$ , where  $N$  is an arbitrary positive integer. Furthermore, even if  $N$  is fixed, while studying the set of equations in (2) it is often convenient to consider a subset obtained by dropping some of the first and/or last (block) equations. This corresponds to restricting to a subinterval the full time interval over which the original system is defined. Of course, solvability and conditionability are preserved under such a time restriction. In other words, if either of these properties holds for the interval  $[0, N]$ , then it also holds for any subinterval  $[k, l]$ ,  $0 \leq k < l \leq N$ ; we term this the *inheritance* property. In our notation for solvability and conditionability matrices, the first argument denotes the left end-point, and the second argument the length of the time interval under consideration. For instance, the “boxed” submatrix in (2) is  $S(1; N-2)$ , the solvability matrix over the interval  $[1, N-1]$ .

Solvability and conditionability are in a very natural sense dual concepts. Corresponding to a *primal* set of dynamic equations (1), there exists the *subdual* set

$$E_{k-1}^H \lambda_{k-1} = A_k^H \lambda_k + v_k, \quad k = 1, 2, \dots, N-1. \quad (3)$$



invoking duality. Thus

- $\Sigma$  is conditionable
- $\implies \Sigma_D$  is solvable, by Lemma 1,
- $\implies \Sigma_D$  is conditionable, just proved,
- $\implies \Sigma$  is solvable, by Lemma 1 again.  $\square$

*Remark 1:* For  $K = 1$ , our proof of Theorem 1 reduces essentially to Luenberger's proof for the TI case [5]. The only subtlety for the  $K > 1$  case is that  $\tilde{N} - 1$  must be chosen to be a multiple of  $K$ , so as to get a repeatable block.

Since the length  $N$  of the time interval in question is irrelevant for solvability (or conditionability) of  $\Sigma$ , it is to be expected that this property depends only on the periodic matrix sequence  $\{E_k, A_k\}$ . We will see that a useful characterization of solvability/conditionability is that a particular cyclic matrix pencil be *regular*. Furthermore, this condition can be recast in terms of the periodic Schur decomposition of  $\{E_k, A_k\}$ . We state our findings as Theorem 2. First, we recall a couple of facts.

*Regular Matrix Pencils:* A matrix pencil is a polynomial matrix of the form  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$ , where  $z$  is a complex variable. It is said to be regular if  $\mathcal{E}$  and  $\mathcal{A}$  are square and  $\det(z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A})$  does not vanish identically [3]. In other words, a square pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  is regular iff it is of full rank with respect to all polynomial combinations of its rows (or columns). Let  $\rho(z) := \rho_0 + \rho_1 z + \dots + \rho_{\ell-1} z^{\ell-1}$  be a row vector of dimension  $n$ . By equating coefficients of powers of  $z$ , we can check that

$$\rho(z) \cdot [z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}] = 0 \iff [\rho_0 \quad \rho_1 \quad \dots \quad \rho_{\ell-1}] \cdot \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} & & & \\ & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} & & \\ & & \ddots & \ddots & \\ & & & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} \\ & & & & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} \end{bmatrix}}_{\ell \text{ block rows, } \ell+1 \text{ block columns}} = 0. \tag{9}$$

Therefore, a square pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  is regular iff the block matrix in (9) is of full row rank for any  $\ell > 0$ . It is appropriate to remark here that these full-rank conditions are equivalent to absence of left Kronecker indexes of  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$ . In exactly the same way, by considering the column vector  $\nu(z) := \nu_0 + \nu_1 z + \dots + \nu_{\ell-1} z^{\ell-1}$  of dimension  $n$ , we can verify that

$$(z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}) \cdot \nu(s) = 0 \iff \underbrace{\begin{bmatrix} \mathcal{E} & & & \\ -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} & & \\ & \ddots & \ddots & \\ & & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} \\ & & & -\mathcal{A} \end{bmatrix}}_{\ell+1 \text{ block rows, } \ell \text{ block columns}} \cdot \begin{bmatrix} \nu_{\ell-1} \\ \nu_{\ell-2} \\ \vdots \\ \nu_1 \\ \nu_0 \end{bmatrix} = 0. \tag{10}$$

Therefore a square pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  is regular iff the block matrix in (10) is of full column rank for any  $\ell > 0$ , the full-rank conditions being equivalent to absence of right Kronecker indices of  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$ . These observations are well known and can be found, for instance,

in [3]. Luenberger [6] was the first to relate regularity of  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  to solvability and conditionability of the TI matrix pair  $\{\mathcal{E}, \mathcal{A}\}$ , a connection made clear by (9) and (10).

*Periodic Schur Decomposition:* We quote a well-known result [2], [4]. For a proof, and an  $O(Kn^3)$ -algorithm implementation, please refer to [2].

*Proposition 1:* Let  $H_i, G_i, i = 0, 1, \dots, K-1$ , be  $n \times n$  complex matrices. Then there exist  $n \times n$  unitary matrices  $Q_i, Z_i, i = 0, 1, \dots, K-1$ , such that

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{G}_0 &= Z_0^H \cdot G_0 \cdot Q_1 & \hat{H}_0 &= Z_0^H \cdot H_0 \cdot Q_0 \\ \hat{G}_1 &= Z_1^H \cdot G_1 \cdot Q_2 & \hat{H}_1 &= Z_1^H \cdot H_1 \cdot Q_1 \\ \hat{G}_2 &= Z_2^H \cdot G_2 \cdot Q_3 & \hat{H}_2 &= Z_2^H \cdot H_2 \cdot Q_2 \\ &\vdots & &\vdots \\ \hat{G}_{K-1} &= Z_{K-1}^H \cdot G_{K-1} \cdot Q_0 & \hat{H}_{K-1} &= Z_{K-1}^H \cdot H_{K-1} \cdot Q_{K-1} \end{aligned}$$

all are upper-triangular.  $\square$

Now we come to the main result of this paper.

*Theorem 2:* The following statements are equivalent.

- 1) The PTV descriptor system  $\Sigma$  given by (5) is solvable (or conditionable).
- 2) The TI descriptor system

$$\Sigma^E: \mathcal{E}y_{k+1} = \mathcal{A}y_k, \quad k = 0, 1, 2, \dots, \tag{11a}$$

is solvable (or conditionable), where

$$\mathcal{E} := \begin{bmatrix} E_0 & 0 & \dots & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & E_1 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & 0 & \ddots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & E_{K-2} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & E_{K-1} \end{bmatrix}, \tag{11b}$$

$$\mathcal{A} := \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & A_0 \\ A_1 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & A_2 & \ddots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & A_{K-1} & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

- 3) The cyclic matrix pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  defined by (11b) is regular.
- 4) There are no "zero by zero divides on the diagonal" in the periodic Schur decomposition of  $\{E_k, A_k\}$ . More precisely, if  $e_{j,j}^{(i)}$  and  $a_{j,j}^{(i)}$  denote the  $j$ th diagonal elements of the triangular matrices  $\hat{E}_i$  and  $\hat{A}_i$ , respectively, in Proposition 1 applied to  $\{E_k, A_k\}$ , then

$$\frac{a_{j,j}^{(K-1)} \dots a_{j,j}^{(1)} a_{j,j}^{(0)}}{e_{j,j}^{(K-1)} \dots e_{j,j}^{(1)} e_{j,j}^{(0)}}, \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n \tag{12}$$

is well defined (can be zero or  $\pm\infty$ , but not indeterminate).

*Proof 1)  $\Leftrightarrow$  2):* Over an interval of length  $\ell$ , the solvability matrix of  $\Sigma^E$  is

$$\left[ \begin{array}{c|ccc|c} -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} & & & \\ & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} & & \\ & & \ddots & \ddots & \\ & & & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} \\ & & & & -\mathcal{A} & \mathcal{E} \end{array} \right] \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{c|ccc|c} \right\} \ell \text{ block rows.} \tag{13}$$

Modulo row and column permutations, it is identical to

$$\text{diag}\{S(0; \ell), S(1; \ell), \dots, S(K-1; \ell)\} \tag{14}$$

where the  $S(i; \ell)$  refer to solvability matrices of the PTV system  $\Sigma$ . To convince ourselves that this is indeed the case, we need only

to look at the arrangement, relative to one another, of the periodic matrices  $E_k, A_k$  in (13) and (14). In each block row,  $-A_k$  is followed by  $E_k$  (same index), while in each block column,  $E_k$  is followed by  $-A_{k+1}$  (one index higher). By beginning at the top of (13) with one of  $-A_0, -A_1, \dots, -A_{K-1}$  and descending the "steps," we can form  $K$  chains each of length  $\ell + 1$ ; these are precisely the diagonal blocks in (14). This shows that (13) is of full row rank iff (14) is. Since this holds for all  $\ell > 0$ , we conclude that  $\Sigma^E$  is solvable iff  $\Sigma$  is.

Similar reasoning can be used to prove that  $\Sigma^E$  is conditionable iff  $\Sigma$  is. As a matter of fact, solvability and conditionability are one and the same concept for both PTV and TI systems; therefore, we do not actually need to repeat the argument here. We do so only to illustrate how the conditionability matrices of  $\Sigma$  and  $\Sigma^E$  are related. Over an interval of length  $\ell$ , the conditionability matrix of  $\Sigma^E$  is the submatrix of (13) enclosed by vertical lines, which on rearranging rows and columns as before becomes  $\text{diag}\{C(0; \ell), C(1; \ell), \dots, C(K-1; \ell)\}$ , where the  $C(i; \ell)$  refer to conditionability matrices of  $\Sigma$ . One is of full column rank iff the other is, for all  $\ell > 0$ .

2)  $\Leftrightarrow$  3): This follows from the facts about regular matrix pencils mentioned earlier; see (9) and (10) and also [6].

3)  $\Leftrightarrow$  4): Perform a periodic Schur decomposition on, i.e., apply Proposition 1 to,  $\{E_k, A_k\}$ . Using the unitary matrices  $Q_i, Z_i$  so obtained, define  $\mathcal{Z} := \text{diag}\{Z_0, Z_1, \dots, Z_{K-2}, Z_{K-1}\}$ ,  $\mathcal{Q} := \text{diag}\{Q_1, Q_2, \dots, Q_{K-1}, Q_0\}$ . Update the cyclic matrix pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  given by (11b) as follows:  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A} \leftarrow \mathcal{Z}^H(z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A})\mathcal{Q}$ , so that it has the following block structure:

$$z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A} = z \left[ \begin{array}{cccc} U & & & \\ & U & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & U \end{array} \right] - \left[ \begin{array}{cccc} U & & & \\ & U & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & U \end{array} \right] \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{c} z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A} \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array}} \right\} K \text{ block rows and columns} \quad (15)$$

where  $U$  is an upper triangular matrix. Since this updating involves unitary transformations only, it does not change  $\det(z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A})$  except by a factor of modulus one. Hence regularity of  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  is not affected. Next, do a *perfect shuffle* on (15) with the permutation vector

$$p = [1 : n : 1 + (K-1)n, 2 : n : 2 + (K-1)n, \dots, n : n : nK]$$

to get (using Matlab notation)

$$z\mathcal{E}[p, p] - \mathcal{A}[p, p] = z \left[ \begin{array}{cccc} D & D & \cdots & D \\ & D & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & D \end{array} \right] - \left[ \begin{array}{cccc} C & C & \cdots & C \\ & C & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & C \end{array} \right] \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{c} z\mathcal{E}[p, p] - \mathcal{A}[p, p] \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array}} \right\} n \text{ block rows and columns} \quad (16)$$

where  $D$  is diagonal and  $C$  is circulant, and where the  $(i, j)$ th element of (16) is the  $(p(i), p(j))$ th element of (15). Again, this does not affect regularity. Now, (16) is block upper-triangular, and

its  $j$ th diagonal block

$$\begin{bmatrix} ze_{j,j}^{(0)} & & & -a_{j,j}^{(0)} \\ -a_{j,j}^{(1)} & ze_{j,j}^{(1)} & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & -a_{j,j}^{(K-1)} & ze_{j,j}^{(K-1)} \end{bmatrix}$$

has determinant

$$(e_{j,j}^{(K-1)} \cdots e_{j,j}^{(1)} e_{j,j}^{(0)}) z^K - (a_{j,j}^{(K-1)} \cdots a_{j,j}^{(1)} a_{j,j}^{(0)}). \quad (17)$$

Clearly, (17) must not vanish identically for the pencil in (16), and hence  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$ , to be regular. Thus  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  is regular iff  $\prod_{i=0}^{K-1} e_{j,j}^{(i)}$  and  $\prod_{i=0}^{K-1} a_{j,j}^{(i)}$  are not simultaneously zero for  $j = 1, 2, \dots, n$ ; in other words, iff (12) is determinate.

*Remark 2:* Theorem 2 shows that solvability and conditionability of the PTV system  $\Sigma$  can be directly linked to the corresponding properties of a particular TI system, namely  $\Sigma^E$  given by (11). This TI system is the so-called *extended form*; it arises naturally in a variety of contexts in periodic systems and control theory. Other important properties of  $\Sigma$  such as stability and  $l_2$ -induced norm are intimately related to those of  $\Sigma^E$  as well [2], [8].

*Remark 3:* For  $K = 1$ , i.e., when  $E_i \equiv E$ ,  $A_i \equiv A$ , the extended form  $\Sigma^E$  is identical to  $\Sigma$ , and Theorem 2 states that  $\Sigma$  is solvable (or conditionable) iff  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A} = zE - A$  is regular. Thus we recover Luenberger's result [6] for the TI case. Furthermore, since a TI system can be thought of as being PTV with period equal to any integer  $K > 1$ , Theorem 2 shows that  $zE - A$  is regular iff the  $K$ -cyclic matrix pencil

$$z \begin{bmatrix} E & & & \\ & E & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & E \end{bmatrix} - \begin{bmatrix} A & & & \\ & A & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & A \end{bmatrix}$$

is regular (for arbitrary  $K$ ).

*Remark 4:* Statements 3) and 4) of Theorem 2 generalize, for  $K > 1$ , the corresponding statements in the classical  $QZ$ -algorithm theory [7]. Also notice that the generalized eigenvalues of the cyclic matrix pencil  $z\mathcal{E} - \mathcal{A}$  in (11b), which are given by the zeros of (17), are the  $K$ th roots of (12). Of course, (12) gives the eigenvalues of the *monodromy matrix* [1]  $(E_K^{-1}A_K) \cdots (E_2^{-1}A_2)(E_1^{-1}A_1)$  when it exists, i.e., when the  $E_i$  matrices are invertible [2].

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