



An Overview of Islanding Detection using Intelligent and signal processing Techniques

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Abstract. The integration of DGs with utility grids via the micro grid concept presents numerous obstacles. Power islanding is a severe technical issue associated with the interconnection of DGs. An island is a scenario in which DG disconnects from the grid and satisfies local electric loads autonomously. This causes security and voltage stability challenges for the service, as well as a failure to maintain voltage and frequency within appropriate operational parameters. As a result, detecting instances of islanding and protecting the DG become critical issues. Islanding is classified into two types: purposeful and inadvertent. During purposeful islanding, DG unit acts as a backup to a network failure in order to boost reliability similar to a UPS. However, unintended islanding happens when a portion of the load is sent through a DG or set of DGs when the network is down. This paper presents the overview of various active, passive, hybrid, intelligent and signal processing islanding detection techniques used for speedy detection of islanding.

Keywords: Islanding, NDZ, DER'S, Active, Passive, Hybrid, Intelligent, Signal Processing.

1. Introduction

Recently, energy generation systems are witnessing a significant transformation in the form of implementing distributed sources of generation (DG) such as wind energy, solar energy and fuel cells for power generation (Li et al., 2019) [1]. In the past decades, fossil fuels contribute as main source of electrical power generation. However, the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted by fossil fuels leads to global warming. In the context of environmental issues such as reduction of greenhouse gas, the utilization of DG sources has increased remarkably and is being accepted comprehensively as one of the major alternatives to conventional fuel-based energy generation. Distributed generation (DG) is a decentralized form of energy generation which has low power loss, improved voltage profile and proper load balance among feeders (Çelik&Meral, 2019) [2]. To meet the fast growing electrical power demand and to provide better power quality to the users, DG systems are being employed widely in power generation systems. Integrating DGS modules with power distribution grids has an eminent significance due to the increase in energy demand which imposes an efficient power generation technique to meet the energy demand (Gonzales-Zurita et al., 2020) [3]. However, integration of distributed generation systems into electrical grid systems introduces various challenges with respect to power control, protection against disturbances, reduction in voltage fluctuation, power quality and reliability (Bajaj & Singh, 2020) [4].

Among different issues, unintentional islanding detection is considered as the major challenge that influences the performance of the DG systems (Subramanian & Loganathan, 2020) [5]. Despite the advantages, implementation of DGs can introduce an islanding phenomenon in which power is continuously supplied by DG even when the loads are no longer present (Raza et al., 2015) [6] (Nale et al., 2018) [7]. In this case, a section of the

transmission line which consists of distributed energy resources are electrically separated from the main grid but are still energized. In general, there are two types of islanding, one is intentional (planned) islanding and other one is unintentional islanding (Deshbhratar et al., 2016) [8]. Intentional islanding allows the DG to power the load under specific conditions such as maintenance or servicing of the system. Consequently, unintentional islanding occurs when the grid loses control over the voltage due to malfunctioning of load or fault in the grid systems.

Unintentional islanding is a crucial problem and can be lethal compared to intentional islanding. Unintentional islanding can be dangerous for workers working on the site and can have an adverse effect on the operation, maintenance and reliability of DGs (Elshrief et al., 2021a) [9]. In addition, unintentional islanding negatively impacts the voltage stability and restoration capacity of the grid system. It is highly difficult for controlling of voltage and frequency as they get imbalanced in the islanded area during this condition and hence, it is recommended to isolate all DERs connected with the main grid system within a short span of time (lesser than 2 seconds) after the islanding has occurred (Elshrief et al., 2021b) [10]. Most commonly, unintentional islanding is detected using two techniques namely local techniques and remote techniques. Techniques used in remote are not economical since they require larger number of resources, sophisticated system infrastructure with swift and reliable communication compared to local techniques (Elshrief et al., 2019) [11].

Besides, the high implementation cost and its non-feasibility for small scale application makes remote techniques an unpopular choice for unintentional islanding detection. The local techniques are broadly classified into three types such as active, passive (Panacha et al., 2019) [12] and artificial intelligence (AI) based techniques (Mohapatra et al., 2022) [13]. Passive techniques analyze system electrical parameters at the point of common coupling (PCC) such as current, frequency, voltage and harmonic distortion to identify the event of islanding. Active techniques rely on the disturbance of the signal, injecting external disturbance signals into the system. These techniques also incorporate signal processing methods (Fourier transform (FT) and Fast Fourier transform (FFT)) and AI techniques for analyzing the system disturbances. However, FT and FFT techniques can identify islanding based only on frequency spectrums and they fail to identify islanding caused due to the variations in the voltage, current, and power spectrums (Hashemi et al., 2017) [14]. In addition, passive techniques fail to identify islanding in Non-Detection Zone (NDZ). AI based machine learning techniques such as ensemble classifiers (Hussain et al., 2021) [15], support vector machines (SVM) (Fatama et al., 2019) [16], neural networks (Admasie et al., 2020) [17] and neuro fuzzy logic (Kazeem et al., 2021) [18] are used to monitor the islanding occurrences. Hence, there is a great demand for an effective islanding detection technique which can obtain high detection accuracy and zero NDZ without affecting the quality of the power supplied to the utility.

2. Problem statement and challenges

Microgrids are small-scale, localized distributed generators (DGs) that are positioned near the load and have their own power and resources, production, and storing. Wind farms, solar farms, small-scale hydro plants, fuel cells, and micro-turbines are examples of DGs encompassing renewable sources of energy. The addition of DGs with utility grids via the microgrid concept presents numerous obstacles. Power islanding is a severe technical difficulty associated with the interconnection of DGs.

An island is a scenario in which DG disconnects from the grid and satisfies local electric loads autonomously. This causes security and voltage stability challenges for the service, as well as a failure to maintain voltage and frequency within appropriate operational parameters. As a result, detecting instances of islanding and protecting the DG become critical issues. Nobody has previously used the combination of active and passive with a fuzzy classifier in order to solve the problem of NDZ. The work presented in the base paper (Elshrief et al., 2022) [27] to achieve accurate islanding detection without reducing power

quality, a novel anti-islanding detection technique to achieve zero NDZ was implemented. However, the study is limited to the analysis of a single DG system. In addition, there are certain problems which need to be alleviated. These problems can be summarized as follows:

- The anti-islanding detection technique proposed in (Elshrief et al., 2022) [27] suffers from drawbacks such as longer detection time with moderate accuracy and high computational burden
- Passive detection techniques fail to identify islanding in NDZ when the source and connected load gets balanced (Fan et al., 2020) [28].
- Passive methods have large NDZ and they fail to detect certain types of non-islanding situations like transient faults due to variations in the system parameters (Seyedi et al., 2021) [29].

Hence, there is a need to develop an efficient island detection technique which can lower the computation burden and improve the accuracy and detection time.

3. Related work

To detect the islanding according to IEEE standard 1547-2018, there are several methods of islanding detection within 2 s of occurrence. Several research works have discussed the problem of islanding detection using different techniques. This section reviews some of the existing works done on islanding detection with an emphasis on detecting islanding occurrences in NDZ. An effective technique incorporating a decision tree based intelligent relay is proposed by (Cui et al., 2017) [19]. The method proposed employs the NDZ constraints of the conventional relays and designs an effective testing strategy to minimize the NDZ. The method was validated through the simulation analysis and results show that the generated intelligent relay based logic exhibits superior performance. However, the logic is not suitable for real time scenarios. To overcome this problem, several passive techniques such as rate of change of voltage (ROCOV), voltage imbalance, voltage phase jumping (PJD), rate of change of frequency (ROCOF), rate of change of active and reactive power techniques based on current and voltage harmonics are implemented (Bakhshi et al., 2017) [20] (Pouryekta et al., 2017) [21] (Seyedi et al., 2019) [22] (Reddy et al., 2020) [23]. These techniques analyze total harmonic distortion (THD) and observe the fluctuations in the harmonics of the output voltage. To overcome the drawbacks of the passive islanding detection techniques, in the paper presented (Murugesan & Murali, 2020) [24] implemented an active method which adds small disturbances in the system and observe parameters from Point of common coupling. A controlled disturbance is added in active techniques into the grid which can reduce NDZ (Wang et al., 2020) [25]. In grid integrated systems, the system parameters are not perturbed by the disturbances and this is due to the ability of the grid to maintain the system parameters. System electrical parameters in the islanding operating mode get majorly affected by these disturbances. In this case, the system parameters will exceed the threshold level because of the externally added disturbances (Nikolovski et al., 2019) [26]. As discussed previously, both passive and active techniques have their advantages and disadvantages respectively. Combining the two techniques results in the design of a hybrid technique which eliminates the counteraction between inverters. Besides, hybrid methods can optimize the disturbances and the NDZ.

3.1 Active detection techniques

Active detection technique uses the disturbance signal injection into the system to detect islanding. They inject the harmonics like low frequency signals, high frequency signals, negative sequence signals, and pulse signals etc., which degrade the power quality. The active technique based islanding detection proved to be better than passive technique due to its small NDZ and better reliability. Many active methods were proposed for fast islanding detection, including slide-mode frequency shift (SMS), active frequency drift (AFD), Sandia frequency shift (SFS) etc., but lesser recommended due to degradation in power quality.

3.2 Passive detection techniques

Conventional passive detection techniques observe the change in system electrical parameters at the Point of common coupling which are simple and easy for implementation.

But they are less reliable, with large NDZ and detection speed is low where as modified techniques are accurate fast and simple with small NDZ but it is hard to select a preset threshold value. One of the methods is OVP/UVP or OFP/UFM method in which during various modes of grid operation, abnormal conditions can be determined by placing protection relays on distribution feeder. The Total harmonic distortion (THD) is measured in Voltage and current harmonics detection method at Point of common coupling for islanding detection. When this THD exceeds certain preset threshold limit islanding is detected. The ROCOP/ROCOF method monitors the changes in the frequency. There will be change in frequency, when the DG gets separated from the main grid due to power mismatch. With the easure of rate of change of frequency, if it exceeds preset threshold the islanding can be detected. The phase difference between the current and voltage at DER terminals will be monitored in phase jump detection (PJD) method. If change in phase angle occurs with the threshold value islanding will be detected.

3.3 Hybrid detection techniques

The hybrid technique works with both passive and active techniques for islanding detection. The passive technique detects the islanding situation then active technique is applied. Some of the hybrid techniques are the total harmonic distortion and voltage unbalance (THD/VU), frequency set point and Voltage unbalance method based on the positive feedback techniques. VU is calculated for each DG as it is more sensitive to the disturbance than THD. A spike in voltage unbalance is produced if any disturbance is applied to DGs. This technique is capable of effectively differentiating the load switching condition and islanding event. Another technique is based on real power and voltage shift. In this technique an active technique called real power shift and a passive technique called average rate of voltage change are combined together. This technique is also much capable to detect the islanding condition at unity power factor in case of multiple DG systems. In voltage fluctuation injection method detection of islanding will be on the basis of injection of voltage fluctuation, which is attained by a high impedance load. Another method is based on the two-stage, with the combination of passive technique ((rate of change of voltage (ROCOV)/ (rate of change of frequency (ROCOF)) and the active technique correlation factor (CF) can be applied as backup for effective operation. The NDZ can be reduced effectively when rate of change of frequency is used with a subsequent variation in active technique for islanding detection effectively. Q-f islanding technique and hybrid SFS and is used to reduce the NDZ by SFS and Q-f curve based islanding detection to improve the SFS.

3.4 Intelligent islanding detection techniques

The phenomenon of islanding must be identified and tripped as accurately and quickly as possible. Therefore methods like intelligent detection have been developed in addition with Signal processing techniques and the control may be local or central.

3.4.1 ANN-Based Method

The artificial neural network (ANN) is a signal processing computational model structure which is analogous to biological brain process. It consists of all data in memory and all useful information in brain for implementation of the mathematical model of the neural network of brain. This model is widely used in islanding detection as it can identify any changes in network [30-37]. The ANN in a hybrid technique can be used with signal processing techniques such as WT. The signal processing techniques with the ANN can be used in combination for islanding detection effectively [38]. The signal frequency domain is obtained by FFT when the inverter output voltages are sampled.

Another hybrid technique using ANNs was designed for detection of the islanding state [39]. This ANN process and analyze large set of data in simulation process similar to machine learning topology. This method proved to be highly accurate and high load quality factor in detection of islanding conditions. Along with single DG, it also well suits for multiple DGs operation. ANN can also be combined with the wavelet for islanding detection. ANN-based islanding detection schemes are able to perform efficient

islanding detection, but it requires feature selection with multiple DG systems and requires large processing time which still needs to be taken care.

3.4.2 DT-Based Method

Decision Tree (DT) is the technique which is based on classification that can be effectively used for islanding detection. An Islanding strategy in a controlled environment is required to train the DT and for evaluation of performance [42,43]. On a pre determined pre-fault operating point in simulation this DT is trained. From the previous research and analysis this method was able to achieve three targets in major which are correctly classified under all the cases of training. However there is a disadvantage that for the corresponding DT, threshold is dependent on the criteria of splitting. The DT technique is much affected for classification problems as splitting criterion is the complex task. This method leads to 83.3% accuracy based on the previous researches in islanding detection [44-45].

3.4.3. PNN-Based Method

Probabilistic neural network (PNN) works with Bayesian classifier, compute the boundaries of non-linear decision. PNN is a classification technique applied using ANN hardware in pattern recognition applications. PNN consists of four layers: the input layer, pattern layer, summation layer, and output layer [46]. Any learning technique is not required by the layers above to perform their operations for feature classifications. PNN-based methods proved to be most reliable in detection of islanding [47].

3.4.4 SVM-Based Method

Support vector machine (SVM) method is used for system and signal analysis. It is a classification tool to divide the data that the training is needed to construct a decision boundary [48]. The SVM classifier measures the respective current as well as voltage signals at the point of common coupling to gain significant features with autoregressive modeling [49]. The SVM-based methods give good accuracy and speedy detection of islanding. But it has complex algorithm and data training involves large computational burden. So they are proved to be impractical for the practical system implementations in real time.

3.4.5. FL-Based Method

The Fuzzy logic techniques are used for fast islanding detection. It is applied as fuzzy rule based classifier. FL is used in combination with DT method, in which the combination of rule-based formulations and fuzzy membership functions were used to improvise the fuzzy systems [50]. These methods can be widely used in islanding detection because of their good performance. The FL based method also has disadvantages that due to more minimum and maximum class combinations this became highly abstract. However, FL-based methods due to repeated generation of membership classifications and membership functions rules, proved to be more sensitive to noise [51].

3.4.6 Wavelet-transform (WT) Method

The wavelet transform consists of wavelets which are small waves as set of components. It is the mathematical model in which the wavelet (original) gets generated from the mother wavelet. This original wavelet is further extended in frequency band to the nonstationary signals to be analyzed. WT can either be discrete or continuous based on the application. The wavelet has short windows in high frequencies as well as long windows at low frequencies and there is no need of assuming the periodicity or stationarity of the signal. So, it is able to find the frequency and time information simultaneously. Therefore, WT is used in islanding detection as it can observe the transients and discontinuities in the time-varying signals. [40-41].

3.5 Signal processing detection techniques

The communication based advanced signal processing techniques can also be used for efficient detection of islanding. These schemes have almost zero NDZ, proved to have high reliability but involve high cost, complexity, and implementation problems.

3.5.1 PLCC Method

The PLCC method uses power lines for communication to detect the islanding situation. This method has a device called transmitter which sends a communication signal to receiver device installed most probably at DG. This communication is carried out using power line carriers. The sending signal from the transmitter has four cycles consecutively. This islanding event can be identified in the case if signal disappears for two or three cycles. Due to complex construction and high cost this method is well suited only for large scale integrated power systems [52].

3.5.2 SCADA Method

In the islanding case the corresponding DG will be sent signals by monitoring switching and control devices like breakers continuously in SCADA-based method. The SCADA system will be communicated with the position of circuit breakers time to time. The electrical parameters like power, current, voltage, and frequency will be continuously controlled by the devices in SCADA system. When islanding situation occurs, the electrical parameters of grid are changed suddenly to operate the relays and alarms sound to disconnect the DER's [53].

3.5.3 Signal produced by disconnect (SPD)

Signal produced by disconnect (SPD) operation is same as the operation in Power line carrier communication which detects islanding based on signal communication between the DG and the main grid. But the signal transmission will be with the telephone line, microwave etc. This communication method is capable of fast detection of islanding and has negligible NDZ. But the disadvantage of this method is communication failure problem, has hardware limitations which also involves high cost [54] [55].

4. Performance analysis

The performance of different Islanding detection techniques proposed is compared in the table 1.

Table.1. Comparison of various Islanding detection techniques

| Detection Type | Islanding detection methods | Advantages | Disadvantages | Detection speed |
|----------------|--|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Active | Inverter-based Injecting method | Accurate & easy for implementation | complex control loop & switching transients | Medium |
| | external frequency signal based method | Accurate & easy for implementation | complex control loop & switching transients | Medium |
| | Impedance measurement based method | Easy for implementation | Large NDZ for high Q load | Fast |
| | Slip-mode frequency shift | medium | Ineffective for certain load | Slow |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|--|--|-----------------|
| | method | | | |
| | Active frequency drift method | Easy | Large NDZ under high Q load | Medium |
| | Sandia frequency shift method | Fast detection | Problem with power quality and stability of system Difficult in implementation and NDZ Exist for high Q load | Relatively fast |
| | Sandia voltage shift method | Lower NDZ | Increased harmonic distortion | Fast |
| Passive | under/over frequency (UFP/OFP) and Under/over voltage (UVP/OVP) methods | Easy for implementation and no power quality issues | Large NDZ, Detection time is unpredictable and variable | Medium |
| | Voltage phase jump detection method | No power quality issues and fast detection | Large NDZ and difficult in implementation and difficult to choose threshold. Islanding detection is failed when power generation in DER is equal to power demand by the local load | Fast |
| | Harmonics measurement method | Easy for implementation | Large NDZ and difficult to choose threshold. Islanding detection failed in the case of output of current and voltage distortion of inverter is low or high quality load | Fast |
| | Voltage unbalance method | Fast detection | Large NDZ, Not suitable to signal phase system | Fast |
| Hybrid | Frequency set point and Voltage unbalance method | Low NDZ, efficiently differentiates the load switching and islanding | Complex in construction | Medium |
| | Real power shift and voltage change method | Low NDZ, can identify the event of islanding even in case of multiple DG units | Complex in construction | Medium |
| | rate of change of voltage (ROCOV) or rate of change | Effective operation and low NDZ | Complex in construction | Medium |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|---|-----------------|
| | of frequency (ROCOF) and the active technique correlation factor (CF) | | | |
| | Combination of Wavelet transform and decision tree classifier | Low NDZ | Did not identify the difference between grid faults and normal islanding | Fast |
| | A hybrid technique of wavelet transform with fuzzy | Low NDZ | Challenge with threshold of the signal | Fast |
| | Neuro- fuzzy algorithm method | Low NDZ | Disadvantage in the case of of single DG disconnection | Fast |
| | Artificial neural network method and fourier transform method | Low NDZ | Complex in construction | Fast |
| | Hybrid method using fuzzy classifier | Low NDZ | Limited application to single DG source | Relatively Fast |
| Signal processing | PLCC | Low NDZ, Suitable only for large-scale integrated power networks | high cost and complex in construction. | Fast |
| | SCADA | Low NDZ | Complex in construction | Fast |
| | SPD | negligible NDZ | It has limitations in hardware, involves high cost also has risk of communication failure. | Fast |
| Intelligent | ANN based method | Efficient islanding detection | Requires large time for processing and selection of feature in case of multiple DG configurations still needs to be taken care. | Fast |
| | DT-Based Method | Accurate detection | Dependence of the threshold | Fast |
| | PNN-Based Method | Not need any learning technique, Reliable | Little complex | Fast |
| | SVM-Based Method | High accuracy and fast | Computation burden | Fast |

| | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------|
| | | detection speed | | |
| | FL based method | Efficient performance | highly abstract | Fast |
| | WT based method | Good in islanding detection | Complex | Fast |

Unintentional islanding causes security and voltage stability challenges for the service, as well as a failure to maintain voltage and frequency within appropriate operational parameters. As a result, detecting instances of islanding and protecting the DG become critical issues. Hence, there is a need to develop an efficient island detection technique which can lower the computation burden and improve the accuracy and detection time.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, an overview of different techniques of islanding detection in power systems proposed by various authors has been presented. Islanding detection techniques like local techniques of detection and remote techniques of islanding detection used in the system are compared. A broad classification, advantages and disadvantages of IDMs were analyzed. Several methods have been studied and a comparison based on important parameters such as speed, reliability and computational efficiency is made. Over the literature, Passive islanding techniques are of less cost, no power quality issues but have larger NDZ comparatively. Active detection techniques can efficiently detect islanding and has lower NDZ, but have power quality issues due to disturbance signal injection. Communication based techniques are efficient in islanding detection but require larger and complex infrastructure which involves high cost. Signal processing methods on the other hand can be used for fast detection but it is complex in construction and hard to select threshold value. However hybrid methods can eliminate the problem of NDZ and power quality degradation. Accurate and efficient detection of islanding without reducing quality of power is much essential. Islanding detection technique to be implemented must be capable of performing effective and speedy detection of islanding in any conditions for the selected system model without decreasing power quality. It should be accurate, resilient, rapid, and simple to implement. It should distinguish between grid faults and islanding and solve the challenge of choosing appropriate thresholds and can be used for multi DG environment.

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