

PHYSICALLY CONSISTENT WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS WITH STATISTICAL CHANNEL STATE INFORMATION

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Barcelona, June 2026

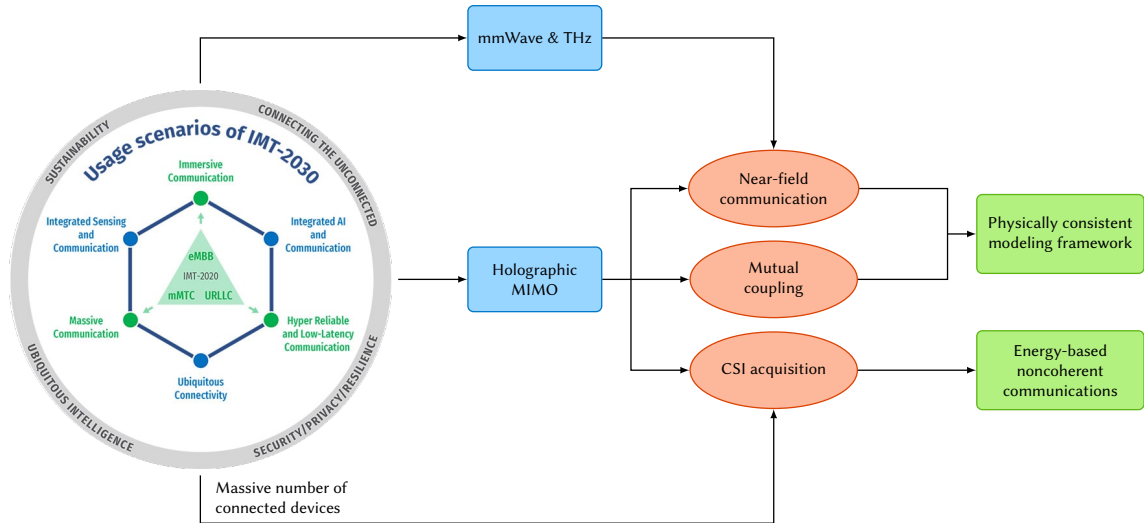


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Motivation



ITU-R, "Framework and overall objectives of the future development of IMT for 2030 and beyond"

Outline

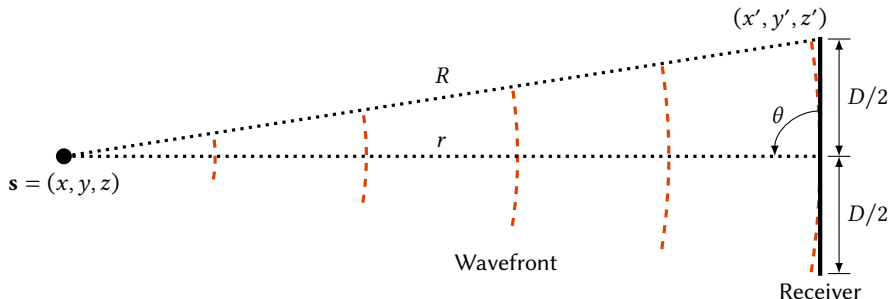
- 1 Physically consistent channel modeling
- 2 Energy-based noncoherent communications
- 3 Symbol detection with model-based receivers
- 4 Conclusions

Outline

- 1 Physically consistent channel modeling
 - Wavefront curvature
 - Mutual coupling
- 2 Energy-based noncoherent communications
- 3 Symbol detection with model-based receivers
- 4 Conclusions

Wavefront curvature

Traditional models relying on far-field and planar-wave assumptions become physically inconsistent as we move toward sub-THz frequencies and extremely large antenna arrays.



Array response

Near field: $\mathbf{a}(r, \theta, \phi)$ $\longleftrightarrow$ Spherical wavefront

$$d_F = 2D^2/\lambda$$

Far field: $\bar{\mathbf{c}}(\theta, \phi)$ $\longleftrightarrow$ Planar wavefront

Spatial correlation

The multipath channel is given by the combination of L paths:

$$\mathbf{h}^{\text{NLoS}} = \sum_{l=1}^L \alpha_l \cdot \underbrace{\mathbf{a}(\boldsymbol{\eta}_l, \theta_l, \phi_l)}_{\text{Array response}}, \quad \alpha_l \in \mathbb{C}$$

Under rich scattering, the channel follows a correlated Rayleigh fading model:

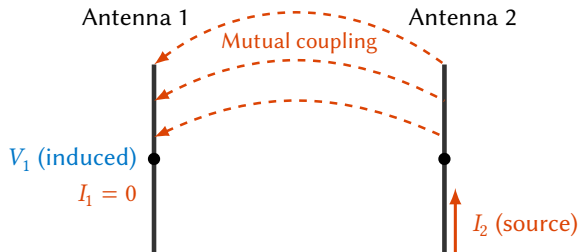
$$\mathbf{h} \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}_N, \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{h}})$$

Covariance matrix

$$\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{h}} = \mathbb{E}[\mathbf{h}\mathbf{h}^H] = \sum_{l=1}^L \beta_l \mathbf{a}(\boldsymbol{\eta}_l, \theta_l, \phi_l) \mathbf{a}(\boldsymbol{\eta}_l, \theta_l, \phi_l)^H$$

Mutual coupling

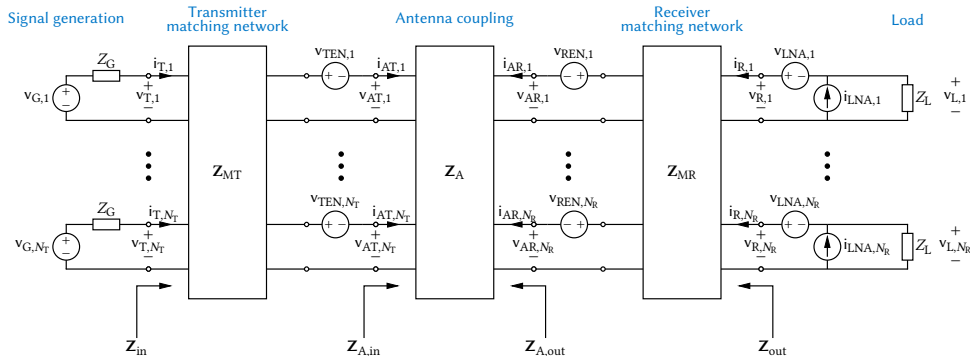
Mutual coupling is the electromagnetic interaction between nearby antenna elements, where the current from one source induces a voltage in another.



Mutual impedance

$$Z_{12} = \frac{V_1}{I_2} \Big|_{I_1=0}$$

Multiport communication theory



Matching networks

- Power/noise matching at the Tx/Rx.
- Difficult to implement in massive MIMO.
- No closed-form solution in the general case.

Information-theoretic and physical models

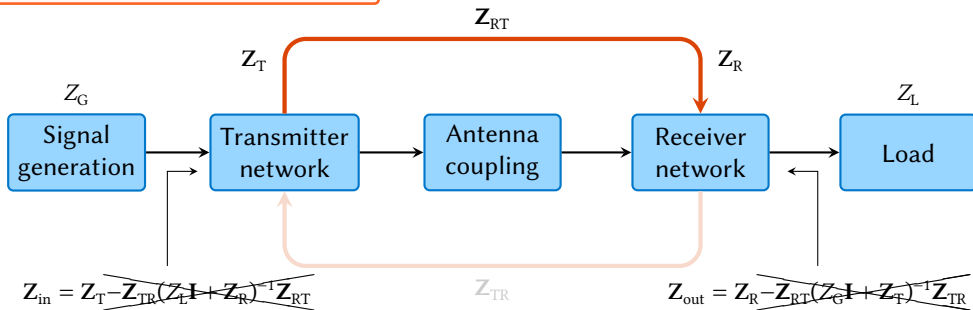
$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{H}\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}, \quad \mathbf{z} \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}_{N_R}, \mathbf{C}_z)$$

$$\mathbf{v}_L = \mathbf{D}\mathbf{v}_G + \mathbf{n}, \quad \mathbf{n} \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}_{N_R}, \mathbf{C}_n)$$

Input-output relation

Unilateral approximation

$$\mathbf{Z}_{\text{TR}} \approx 0 \implies \mathbf{Z}_{\text{in}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Z}_{\text{T}}, \mathbf{Z}_{\text{out}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Z}_{\text{R}}$$



Physical channel

$$\mathbf{D} = \underbrace{\mathbf{Z}_{\text{L}} (\mathbf{Z}_{\text{L}} \mathbf{I}_{N_{\text{R}}} + \mathbf{Z}_{\text{R}})^{-1}}_{\mathbf{Q}} \mathbf{Z}_{\text{RT}} (\mathbf{Z}_{\text{G}} \mathbf{I}_{N_{\text{T}}} + \mathbf{Z}_{\text{T}})^{-1}$$

Information-theoretic and physical models

Transmit power is the average active power delivered to the transmitting antennas:

$$P_T = E[\Re(\mathbf{v}_T^H \mathbf{i}_T)] = \frac{E[\mathbf{v}_G^H \mathbf{B} \mathbf{v}_G]}{R_G}, \quad \mathbf{B} = f(\mathbf{Z}_T)$$

Physical model

$$\mathbf{v}_L = \mathbf{D} \mathbf{v}_G + \mathbf{n}$$

Transmit power and noise must be equal in both models:

$$P_T = \frac{E[\mathbf{v}_G^H \mathbf{B} \mathbf{v}_G]}{R_G} = E[\mathbf{x}^H \mathbf{x}]$$

Information-theoretic model

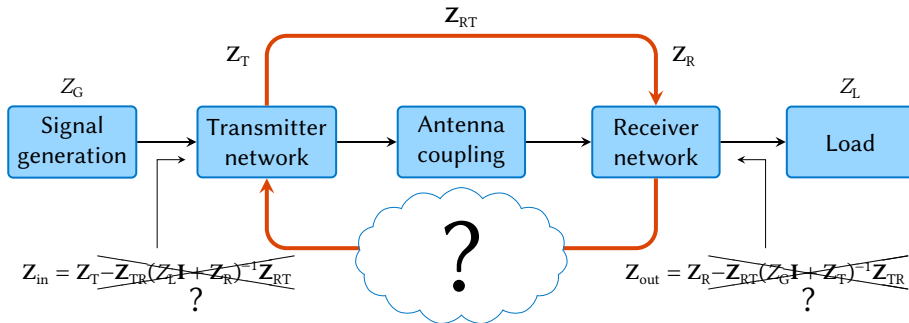
$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{H} \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}$$

Physically consistent model

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{x} &= \mathbf{B}^{1/2} \mathbf{v}_G / \sqrt{R_G} \\ \mathbf{y} &= \mathbf{v}_L \\ \mathbf{z} &= \mathbf{n} \end{aligned} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \mathbf{H} = \sqrt{R_G} \underbrace{(\mathbf{Q} \mathbf{Z}_{RT} (\mathbf{Z}_G \mathbf{I}_{N_T} + \mathbf{Z}_T)^{-1})}_{\mathbf{D}} \mathbf{B}^{-1/2}$$

Unilateral approximation: $\mathbf{x} \sim \mathbf{v}_G$, $\mathbf{H} \sim \mathbf{Z}_{RT} \rightarrow$ Correlated Rayleigh

Analysis of receiver to transmitter coupling



Unilateral condition

$$\|Z_{TR}(Z_L I_{N_R} + Z_R)^{-1} Z_{RT}\|_F \ll \|Z_T\|_F \quad \xRightarrow{\text{MISO}} \quad \frac{\|z_{TR}\|_2^2}{|Z_L + R_r|} \ll \|Z_T\|_F$$

$$\|Z_{RT}(Z_G I_{N_T} + Z_T)^{-1} Z_{TR}\|_F \ll \|Z_R\|_F \quad \xRightarrow{\text{SIMO}} \quad \frac{\|z_{RT}\|_2^2}{|Z_G + R_r|} \ll \|Z_R\|_F$$

Analysis of receiver to transmitter coupling

Hypotheses:

- LoS propagation.
- Single-user MISO/SIMO.
- ULA with aperture D and N elements.
- Inter-element spacing is d .
- Hertzian dipoles of length l .

Mutual coupling norms

Intra-array coupling admits the lower bound

$$\|\mathbf{Z}_T\|_F \geq \sqrt{N} \cdot \min_m \|\mathbf{Z}_T\|_{m,*} = \sqrt{N} \cdot \|\mathbf{Z}_T\|_{1,*}$$

The squared norm of the inter-array coupling vector is

$$\|\mathbf{z}_{TR}\|_2^2 = \frac{R_r^2}{k^2} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} \frac{1}{r_n^2} = \frac{R_r^2}{k^2} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} \frac{1}{r^2 + \left(\frac{nD}{N-1}\right)^2}$$

Fixed inter-element spacing

$$\|\mathbf{Z}_T\|_F \sim O(\sqrt{N})$$

$$\|\mathbf{z}_{TR}\|_2^2 \sim O(1)$$

Fixed array size

$$\|\mathbf{Z}_T\|_F \sim O(N^{3.5})$$

$$\|\mathbf{z}_{TR}\|_2^2 \sim O(N)$$

Unilateral approximation is fulfilled

Key takeaways

- **Wavefront curvature:** Near-field communications require spherical wavefront propagation models.
- **Mutual coupling:** Introduces structural channel correlation independent of spatial correlation.
- **Unilateral approximation:** Simplifies the analysis and yields correlated Rayleigh fading models. It remains valid throughout the radiative near field.

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- 1 Physically consistent channel modeling
- 2 Energy-based noncoherent communications
 - Asymptotic performance limits
 - Quadratic detection framework
 - Constellation design
 - Permutational index modulation
- 3 Symbol detection with model-based receivers
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Energy-based noncoherent communications

Acquiring instantaneous CSI in massive MIMO systems creates significant overhead, especially in high-mobility or sub-THz scenarios with short coherence times.

System model

Massive receiver array with N antennas:

$$\mathbf{y} = \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{Unknown}}}{\mathbf{h}}\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}, \quad \mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{X} = \{0, \dots, \sqrt{\varepsilon_M}\}$$

- Fading is correlated Rayleigh.
- Noise is correlated Gaussian.
- Communication is one-shot.

By noise whitening and subsequent decorrelation of $\mathbf{y}$ we define

$$\mathbf{r}|\mathbf{x} \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}_N, |\mathbf{x}|^2\mathbf{\Gamma} + \mathbf{I}_N) \leftarrow \text{Diagonal}$$

ML detection

General ML detector:

$$\hat{x}_{\text{ML}} = \arg \min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} \mathbf{r}^H (|x|^2\mathbf{\Gamma} + \mathbf{I}_N)^{-1} \mathbf{r} + \ln |x|^2\mathbf{\Gamma} + \mathbf{I}_N|$$

Uncorrelated fading:

$$\hat{x}_{\text{ML}} = \arg \min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} \frac{\mathbf{r}^H \mathbf{r}}{|x|^2 + 1} + N \cdot \ln(|x|^2 + 1) \equiv \frac{\|\mathbf{r}\|^2}{N}$$

Energy estimation
↓

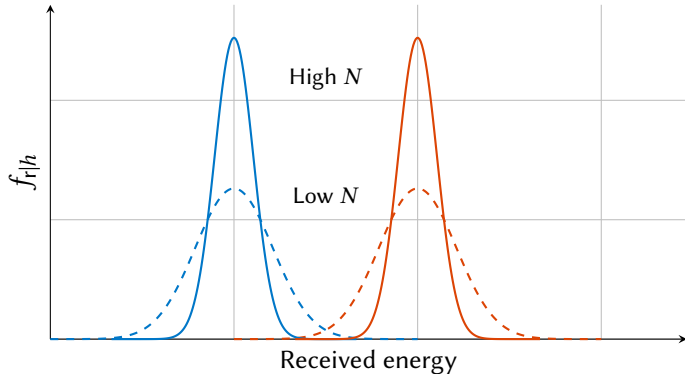
Asymptotic performance limits

Uniquely identifiable constellation (UIC)

$$|x_a|^2 \neq |x_b|^2 \iff x_a \neq x_b, \quad \forall x_a, x_b \in \mathcal{X}$$

Theorem 1 (channel hardening)

UICs are error-free as $N \rightarrow \infty$ and $\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \text{tr}(\Gamma^2) = \infty$.



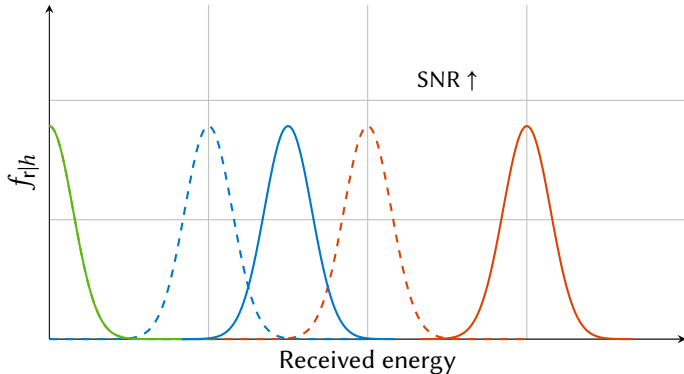
Asymptotic performance limits

Uniquely identifiable constellation (UIC)

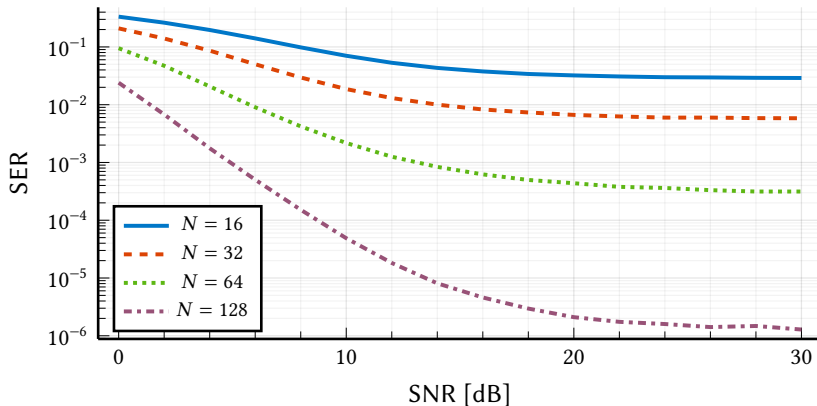
$$|x_a|^2 \neq |x_b|^2 \iff x_a \neq x_b, \quad \forall x_a, x_b \in \mathcal{X}$$

Theorem 2

UICs have an error floor at high SNR for $M > 2$.



Asymptotic performance limits



SER in terms of SNR under an exponentially correlated Rayleigh channel with $\rho = 0.8$ and a uniform unipolar 4-ASK constellation.

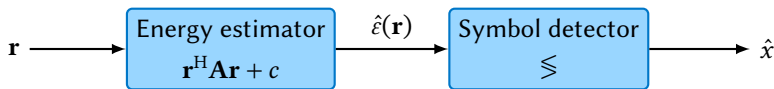
Energy statistic

Under uncorrelated Rayleigh fading and noise, the ML detector can be decomposed as:

1. Computation of a quadratic statistic in data: $\hat{\varepsilon}(\mathbf{r})$.
2. One-dimensional decision problem: $\hat{x}(\hat{\varepsilon})$.

Quadratic framework

$$\hat{\varepsilon}(\mathbf{r}) = \mathbf{r}^H \mathbf{A} \mathbf{r} + c$$



Design coefficients $\mathbf{A}$ and c to maximize the mutual information between the transmitted symbol and the estimator output:

$$I(\varepsilon; \hat{\varepsilon}) \geq h(\varepsilon) - h(\varepsilon - \hat{\varepsilon}) \geq h(\varepsilon) - \frac{1}{2}(1 + \ln(2\pi \text{var}(\xi))) = I_{\text{LOW}},$$
$$\hat{\varepsilon} = \arg \max_{\hat{\varepsilon}} I_{\text{LOW}} \equiv \arg \min_{\hat{\varepsilon}} \text{var}(\xi), \quad \xi = \varepsilon - \hat{\varepsilon}$$

Quadratic estimation and detection

Best quadratic unbiased estimator (BQUE)

- Obtained by minimizing $\text{var}(\hat{\epsilon}|\epsilon)$.
- Achieves the CRB.
- Genie-aided (unrealizable).

Quadratic minimum MSE (QMMSE)

- Obtained by minimizing $E_{\epsilon}[\text{MSE}(\hat{\epsilon}|\epsilon)]$.
- Follows from the information-theoretic criterion.

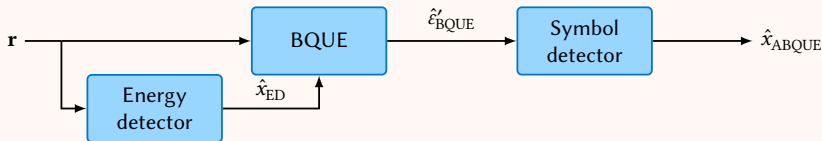
High SNR (HSNR)

- Derived as a high SNR approximation of the ML detector.

Energy detector (ED)

- Low-complexity technique that is well-known in the literature.

Assisted BQUE (ABQUE)



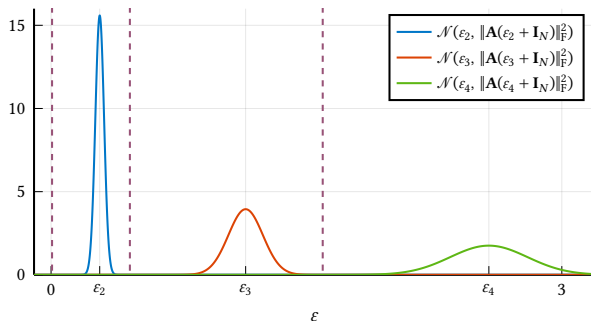
Detection regions

Central limit theorem

$\hat{\varepsilon}(\mathbf{r}|\varepsilon)$ follows a generalized chi-squared distribution, but as $N \rightarrow \infty$,

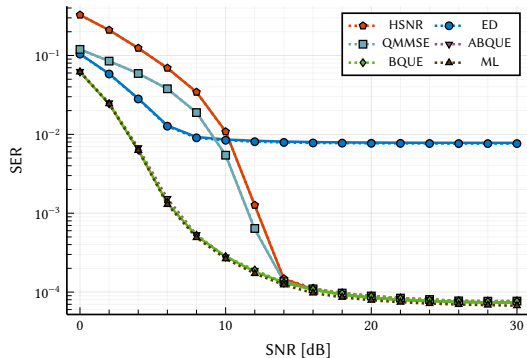
$$\hat{\varepsilon}(\mathbf{r}|\varepsilon) \stackrel{d}{\rightarrow} \mathcal{N}\left(1 - (1 - \varepsilon)\text{tr}(\mathbf{A}\mathbf{\Gamma}), \|\mathbf{A}(\varepsilon\mathbf{\Gamma} + \mathbf{I}_N)\|_{\text{F}}^2\right) \quad \textit{Proof: Lyapunov condition}$$

Error probability can be written in closed-form in terms of Q-functions.

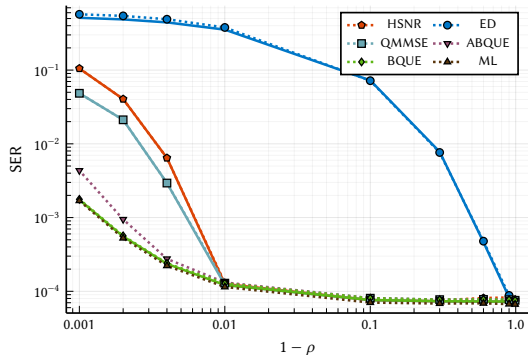


Detection regions of the BQUE for a 4-ASK with $N = 128$. Gaussian densities with different means but equal variance have a single intersection point.

Numerical results



SER of the presented detectors in terms of SNR for $N = 512$ and $\rho = 0.7$.



Floor level of the presented detectors in terms of ρ for $N = 512$.

Error probability optimization

Deriving a closed-form expression for the error probability enables the design of constellations that minimize it, assuming statistical CSIT.

Optimization problem

$$\min_{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}, \boldsymbol{\tau}} P_e(\mathbf{A}, \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}, \boldsymbol{\tau})$$

$$\text{s.t. } \boldsymbol{\varepsilon}, \boldsymbol{\tau} \geq 0,$$

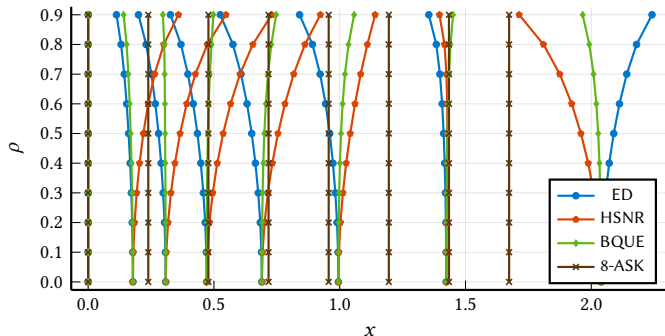
$$\varepsilon_1 = 0,$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^M \varepsilon_i = M,$$

$$\varepsilon_i \leq \tau_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, M-1,$$

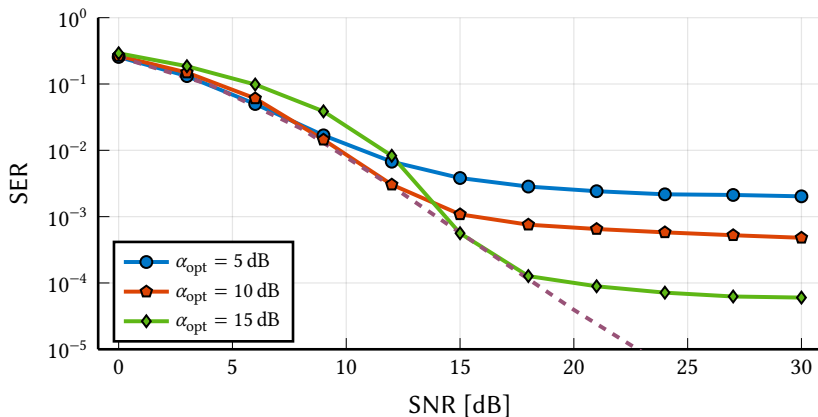
$$\tau_i \leq \varepsilon_{i+1}, \quad i = 1, \dots, M-1,$$

where $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon} = (\varepsilon_1, \dots, \varepsilon_M)$ and $\boldsymbol{\tau} = (\tau_1, \dots, \tau_{M-1})$.



Comparison of optimized constellations at 15 dB and $N = 256$ for different exponential channel correlations.

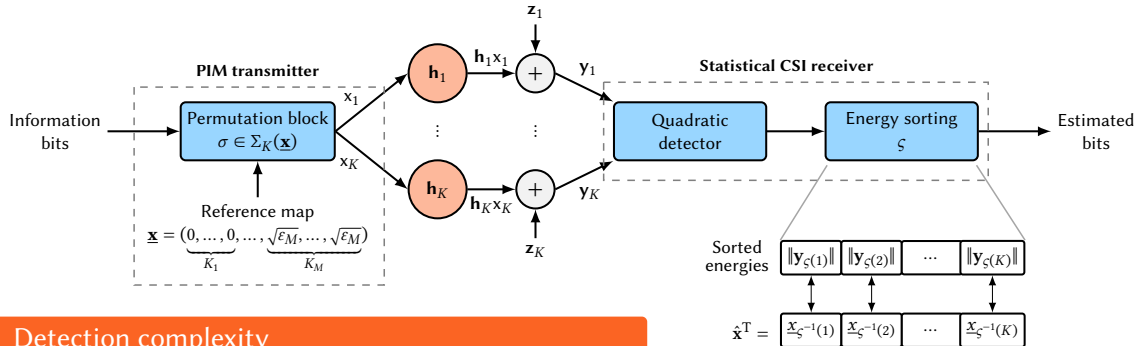
Numerical results



Error probability of BQUE when the constellation is optimized for a particular SNR.

Permutational index modulation

Transmitted energy can be reliably detected, so it becomes possible to convey information in the energy of each subcarrier of an OFDM system with K subcarriers.



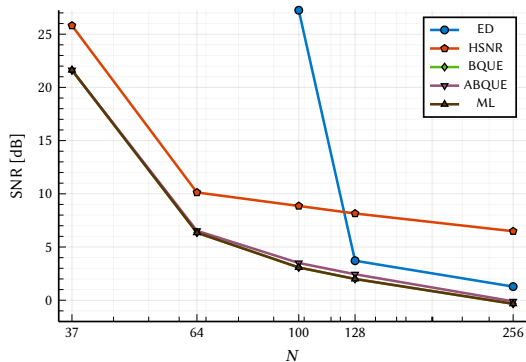
Detection complexity

Alphabet cardinality: $|\mathcal{A}| = K! / \prod_{m=1}^M K_m!$

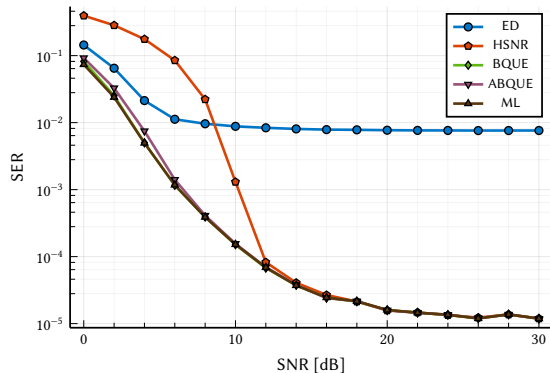
Maximum likelihood: $O(KN^2) + O(|\mathcal{A}|KN)$

Proposed scheme: $O(KN^2) + O(KN) + O(K \ln K)$

Numerical results



Required SNR to achieve $\text{SER} = 10^{-3}$ in terms of N , for $\rho = 0.7$. A PIM with $K = 32$ and $M = 4$ is employed.



SER in terms of SNR for $N = 64$ and $\rho = 0.7$.

Key takeaways

- **Fundamental error floor:** In the absence of CSIT, constellations with more than two energy levels exhibit an error floor at high SNR.
- **Channel hardening:** Despite the SNR floor, the probability of error vanishes as the number of receiver antennas increases ($N \rightarrow \infty$).
- **Quadratic detection framework:** A novel class of quadratic detectors that leverage statistical CSI.
- **Optimized constellations:** By directly minimizing the analytical expression for the SER, it is possible to design constellations that eliminate the error floor.
- **Permutational index modulation (PIM):** Introduces coding gain in multicarrier systems by encoding information in the specific ordering of subcarrier energy levels.

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 - Mutual coupling and detection performance
 - Wavefront curvature in noncoherent detection
- 4 Conclusions

Symbol detection with model-based receivers

Motivation

- **Model-based CSI:** High frequency systems estimate physical parameters ($\alpha_l, r_l, \theta_l, \phi_l$) instead of full channel vectors.
- **The mismatch question:** Although precise models improve quality (especially at low SNR), oversimplification causes performance degradation.

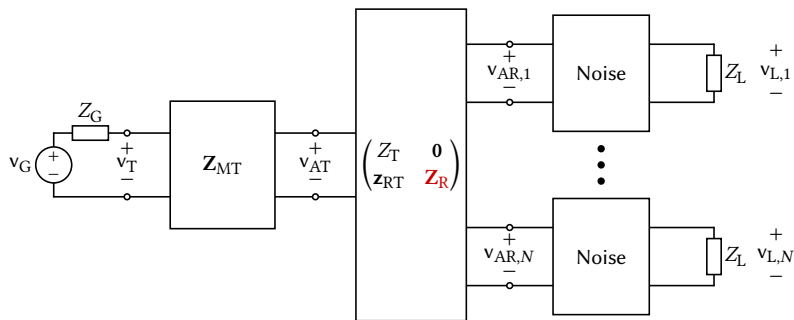
Scenario 1: Mutual coupling

- BS with densely deployed antennas.
- Affected by mutual coupling but operating completely unaware of it.
- Energy-based systems offer robustness to mutual coupling.

Scenario 2: Near-field curvature

- Exploits spherical wavefront curvature beyond the Fraunhofer limit.
- Avoids underestimating system capacity (unlike far-field approximations).
- Enables near-optimal detection with low complexity.

Mutual coupling and detection performance



Circuit model of a SIMO communication system with power matching at the transmitter.

Receiver array

N half-wavelength dipoles	$\Rightarrow$	Mutual coupling for $d \neq n \frac{\lambda}{2}$	$\Rightarrow$	$\mathbf{Z}_R \not\propto \mathbf{I}_N$
Mismatched model	$\Rightarrow$	Assumes no coupling	$\Rightarrow$	$\mathbf{Z}_R \propto \mathbf{I}_N$

Receiver structure

Signal model

Received signal: $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{h}\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}$

From the multiport communication framework:

$$\mathbf{C}_h = \mathbf{R}_r^{-1} \mathbf{Q} \mathbf{C}_{RT} \mathbf{Q}^H,$$

$$\mathbf{Q} = \mathbf{Z}_L (\mathbf{Z}_L \mathbf{I}_N + \mathbf{Z}_R)^{-1},$$

$$\mathbf{C}_z = \mathbf{Q} \mathbf{U}_n \mathbf{Q}^H \leftarrow \text{Depend on } \mathbf{Z}_R$$

Coherent detector

$$\text{MRC: } \hat{x}_C = \arg \min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} \left| \frac{\Re[\mathbf{h}^H \mathbf{C}_z^{-1} \mathbf{y}]}{\mathbf{h}^H \mathbf{C}_z^{-1} \mathbf{h}} - x \right|$$

Matched receiver

$$\mathbf{h} = -j \mathbf{R}_r^{-1/2} \mathbf{Q} \mathbf{z}_{RT}$$

Mismatched receiver

$$\hat{\mathbf{h}} = \sqrt{\gamma_1} \mathbf{z}_{RT}, \quad \hat{\mathbf{C}}_z = \gamma_2 \mathbf{I}_N$$

Noncoherent detector

ML detector:

$$\hat{x}_{NC} = \arg \min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} \mathbf{y}^H \mathbf{C}_{y|x}^{-1} \mathbf{y} + \ln |\mathbf{C}_{y|x}|$$

Matched receiver

$$\mathbf{C}_{y|x} = |x|^2 \mathbf{C}_h + \mathbf{C}_z$$

Mismatched receiver

$$\hat{\mathbf{C}}_{y|x} = \gamma_1 |x|^2 \mathbf{C}_{RT} + \gamma_2 \mathbf{I}_N$$

Robustness to mutual coupling at high SNR:

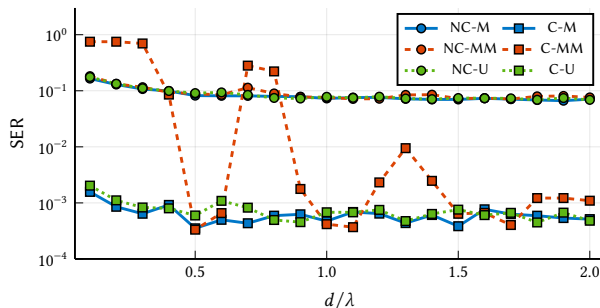
$$\mathbf{y}|x = \mathbf{h}x = \mathbf{Q} \underbrace{\alpha x \mathbf{z}_{RT}}_{\text{Uncoupled signal}} = \mathbf{Q} \mathbf{r}|x,$$

ML detection:

$$\mathbf{y}^H \mathbf{C}_{y|x}^{-1} \mathbf{y} = \frac{\mathbf{r}^H \mathbf{Q}^H \overbrace{(\mathbf{Q} \mathbf{C}_{RT} \mathbf{Q}^H)^{-1}}^{\mathbf{C}_h} \mathbf{Q} \mathbf{r}}{|x|^2 \beta} = \mathbf{r}^H \mathbf{C}_{r|x}^{-1} \mathbf{r}$$

Numerical results

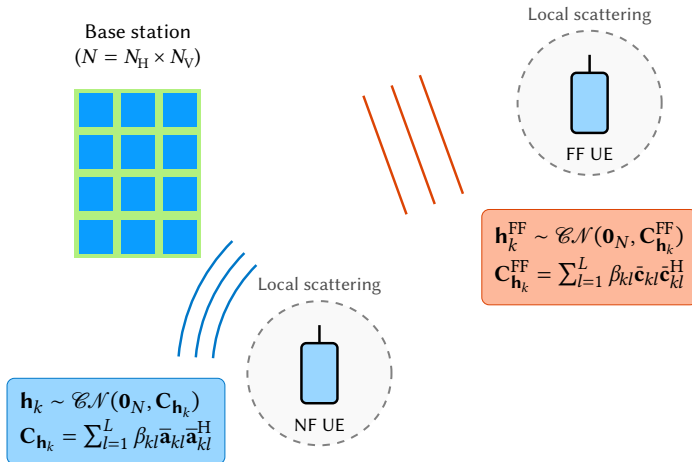
Parameter	Value	Parameter	Value
Carrier frequency	$f = 30$ GHz	Variance of the current noise source	$\sigma_i^2 = 2k_B B_W T_A / R_N$
Bandwidth	$B_W = 20$ MHz	Antenna impedance	$Z_A = 73 + j42.5 \Omega$
Amplifier and load impedance	$Z_G = Z_L = 186 - j31.6 \Omega$	Complex correlation coefficient	$\rho_N = 0.2730 + j0.1793$
Noise temperature of antennas	$T_A = 290$ K	LNA resistance	$R_N = 5 \Omega$



Error probability of the detectors as a function of element separation for $N = 128$ and $\text{SNR} = 5$ dB.

Wavefront curvature in noncoherent detection

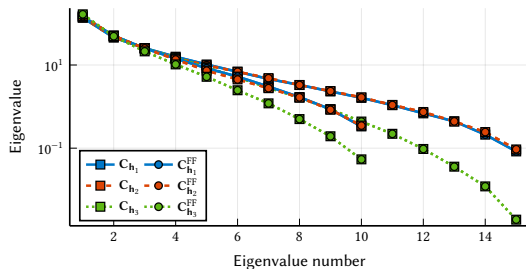
We consider the uplink of a noncoherent MIMO system with K users and a BS equipped with a $N = N_H N_V$ element UPA. The system operates under NLoS conditions with only statistical CSI.



Channel statistics discussion

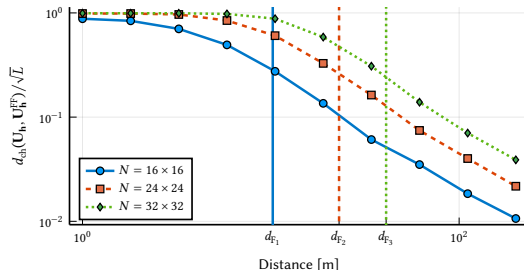
Spatial correlation spectrum

- Both far-field and near-field models exhibit the same correlation spectrum.
- If two users are in the same scattering cluster, their eigenvalues coincide.

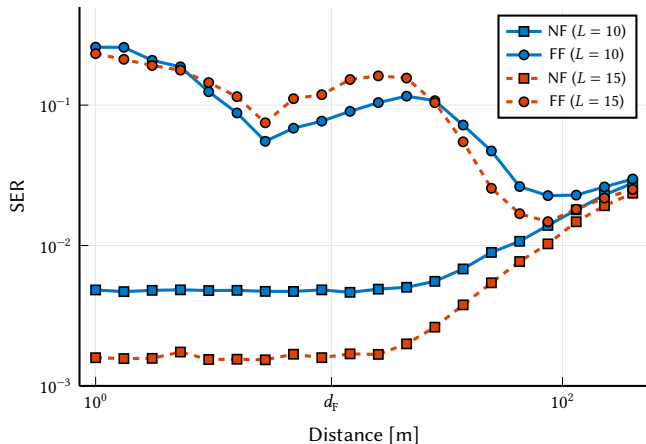


Distance between column spaces

- The chordal distance at the Fraunhofer limit is significant (30 % of its maximum value).
- When $N \rightarrow \infty$, $\text{col}(\mathbf{C}_h) \perp \text{col}(\mathbf{C}_h^{\text{FF}})$, allowing large arrays to multiplex multiple users.



Numerical results



Error probability of a ML detector at different distances with
SNR = 20 dB.

Single-user mismatched mode

- Far-field model severely underestimates performance up to $10d_F$.
- Higher SER at range due to lost spatial resolution between scatterers.

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Conclusions

1. Shown that physically consistent models can be encapsulated into a **correlated Rayleigh fading** model.
2. Characterized the **asymptotic performance** of energy-based receivers.
3. Developed a framework of **quadratic detectors** for one-shot communications.
4. Implemented a **constellation optimization** algorithm to improve energy-based systems performance.
5. Proposed a **PIM scheme** for multicarrier energy-based systems to enhance performance.
6. Shown that noncoherent receivers are **robust to mutual coupling**, but accurate **near-field modeling** is crucial for detection.

Publications

- [1] **A. Martí**, L. Sanguinetti, M. Lamarca, and X. Gràcia, “On the unilateral approximation condition with linear arrays in near-field NLoS propagation,” (submitted to WSA 2026).
- [2] **A. Martí**, L. Sanguinetti, J. Riba, and M. Lamarca, “Coherent and noncoherent detection in dense arrays: Can we ignore mutual coupling?” In *2025 33rd European Signal Processing Conference (EUSIPCO)*, Palermo, Italy, 2025, pp. 2027–2031.
- [3] M. Vilà-Insa, **A. Martí**, M. Lamarca, and J. Riba, “Low-complexity detection of permutational index modulation for noncoherent communications,” *IEEE Wireless Communications Letters*, vol. 14, no. 10, pp. 3059–3063, 2025.
- [4] **A. Martí**, L. Sanguinetti, M. Lamarca, and J. Riba, “Harnessing wavefront curvature and spatial correlation in noncoherent MIMO communications,” *IEEE Wireless Communications Letters*, vol. 14, no. 8, pp. 2461–2465, 2025.
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This thesis has been supported by:

- Grant 2023 FI “Joan Oró” 00050 by Departament de Recerca i Universitats de la Generalitat de Catalunya and the ESF+.
- Project MAYTE (PID2022-136512OB-C21) by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and ERDF/EU.
- Grant 2021 SGR 01033 by Departament de Recerca i Universitats de la Generalitat de Catalunya.

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