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Joint active user detection and channel estimation for massive machine-type communications: a difference-of-convex optimization perspective

Key words: Joint active user detection and channel estimation; Massive machine-type communications; Difference-of-convex function algorithm; Alternating direction multiplier method

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Motivation

- Sparsity-based joint active user detection and channel estimation (JADCE) algorithms are crucial in grant-free massive machine-type communication (mMTC) systems.
- The conventional compressed sensing algorithms are tailored for noncoherent communication systems, where the correlation between any two measurements is as minimal as possible. However, existing sparsity-based JADCE approaches may not achieve optimal performance in strongly coherent systems, especially with a small number of pilot subcarriers.

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Main idea

- To tackle this challenge, we formulate JADCE as a joint sparse signal recovery problem, leveraging the block-type row-sparse structure of millimeter-wave (mmWave) channels in massive multiple-input multiple-output orthogonal frequency division multiplexing (MIMO-OFDM) systems.
- We propose an efficient difference-of-convex function algorithm (DCA)-based JADCE algorithm with multiple measurement vector (MMV) frameworks.
- To mitigate the computational complexity further, we introduce a fast DCA-based JADCE algorithm via a proximal operator, which allows a low-complexity alternating direction multiplier method (ADMM) to resolve the optimization problem directly.

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System model

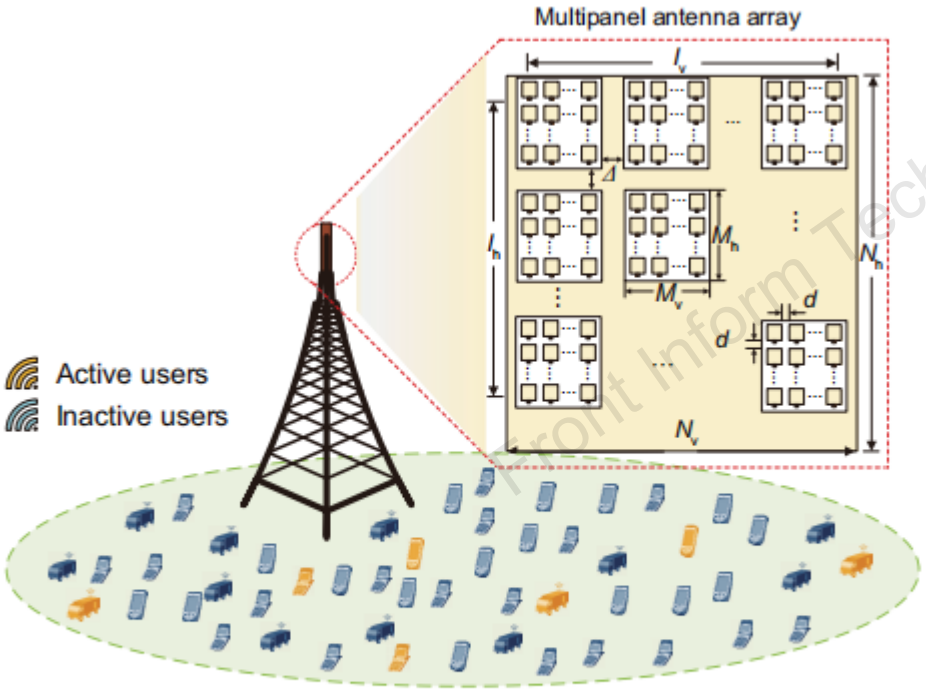


Fig. 1 In the mMTC scenarios, the massive multi-panel MIMO systems employ the mmWave channel model

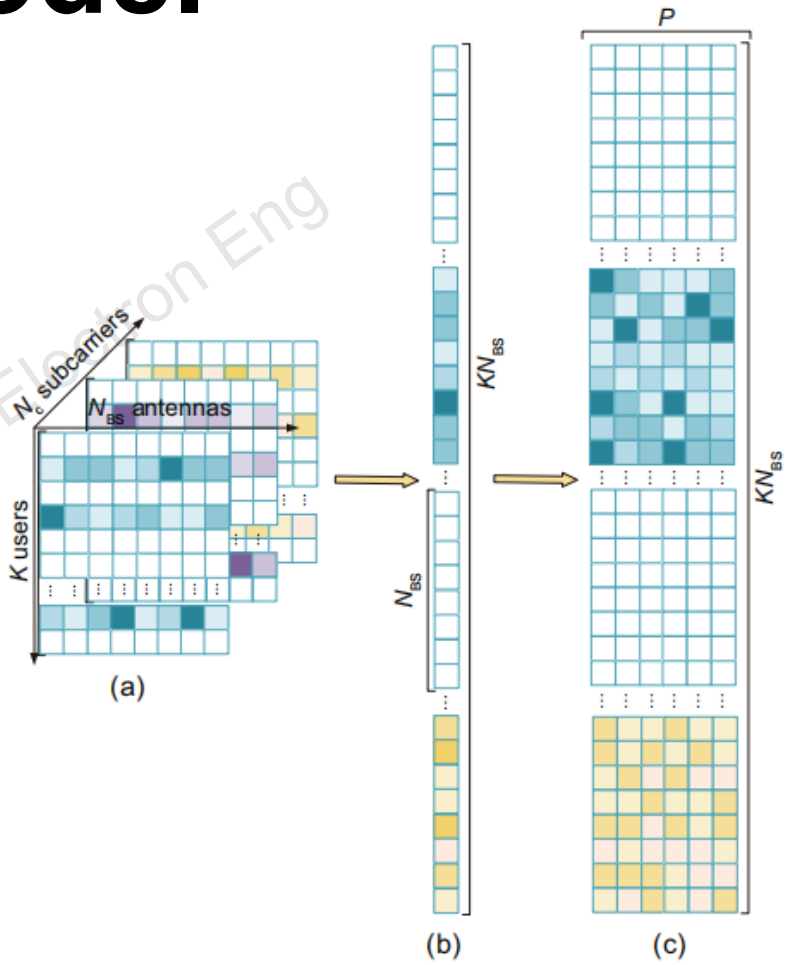


Fig. 2 Due to the spatial-frequency-domain structure, $\widetilde{H}_p$ exhibits a row-sparse structure in (a); by vectorization of $\widetilde{H}_p$, h_p^t shows a block-type sparse structure in (b); after aggregating P pilot subcarriers, $\widetilde{H}$ has the property of block-type row sparsity in (c)

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Method

The existing sparsity-based JADCE methods do not perform well in the presence of strong coherence, resulting in performance degradation as the number of pilot subcarriers declines. We introduce a modified DCA based $\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathrm{F}}$ minimization algorithm for the JADCE problem in the MMV case. Moreover, we adopt a low-complexity ADMM solver to address the convex subproblems decomposed by DCA.

Lemma 1 Consider the optimization problem as follows:

$$\boldsymbol{X}^* = \arg\min_{\boldsymbol{X}} \left(\lambda\left(\|\boldsymbol{X}\|_{2,1} - \beta\|\boldsymbol{X}\|_{\mathrm{F}}\right) + \frac{1}{2}\|\boldsymbol{X}-\boldsymbol{E}\|_{\mathrm{F}}^2\right), \tag{28}$$

where $\boldsymbol{X}^* \in \mathbb{R}^{m\times n}$ is the optimal solution with respect to $\boldsymbol{X} \in \mathbb{R}^{m\times n}$, $\boldsymbol{E} \in \mathbb{R}^{m\times n}$ is a constant matrix, and $\lambda > 0$. The minimum value of $\boldsymbol{X}^*$ is expressed by

$$\boldsymbol{X}^* = \mathrm{Row_Shrink}_{\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathrm{F}}}\left(\boldsymbol{E}, \lambda\right), \tag{29}$$

where $\mathrm{Row_Shrink}_{\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathrm{F}}}$ is defined as follows:

$$\left(\boldsymbol{x}^*\right)_m = \begin{cases} \frac{\|\boldsymbol{e}_m\|_2 - (1-\beta)\lambda}{\|\boldsymbol{c}_m\|_2}\boldsymbol{c}_m, & \text{if } \|\boldsymbol{e}_m\|_2 > \lambda, \\ \boldsymbol{0}, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \tag{30}$$

To further reduce the computational complexity of the DCA-based JADCE algorithm, we derive the analytical solution of the $\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathrm{F}}$ metric proximal operator, enabling the ADMM algorithm to solve the optimization problem directly.

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Metrics and parameters

$$\mathrm{ADEP} = \frac{1}{K}\sum_{k=1}^{K}|\hat{\alpha}_k - \alpha_k|,$$

$$\mathrm{MSE} = \frac{1}{KN_{\mathrm{BS}}P}\left\|\widehat{\boldsymbol{H}} - \boldsymbol{H}\right\|_{\mathrm{F}}^{2}.$$

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Table 2 Parameters used for analysis and simulation

Parameter	Symbol	Value
Number of subarray panels in the horizontal dimension of the multipanel antenna array	I_{h}	4
Number of subarray panels in the vertical dimension of the multipanel antenna array	I_{v}	4
Number of antenna array panels	N_{p}	16
Number of antennas in the horizontal dimension of each subarray panel	M_{h}	2
Number of antennas in the vertical dimension of each subarray panel	M_{v}	2
Time delay of the l^{th} path for the k^{th} user in the t^{th} OFDM symbol	$\tau_{k,l}^{t}$	$\mathcal{U}[0, 32/B_{\mathrm{s}}]$
Number of antennas of each subarray panel	N_{BS}	64
Interval of adjacent panels	Δ	30
Number of users	K	500
Number of active users	K_{α}	50
Number of pilot subcarriers	P	16
Number of channel paths	L	4
Number of subcarriers	N_{c}	256
Active factor	P_{α}	0.1
Carrier frequency	f_c	30 GHz
System bandwidth	B_{s}	1 GHz

Results

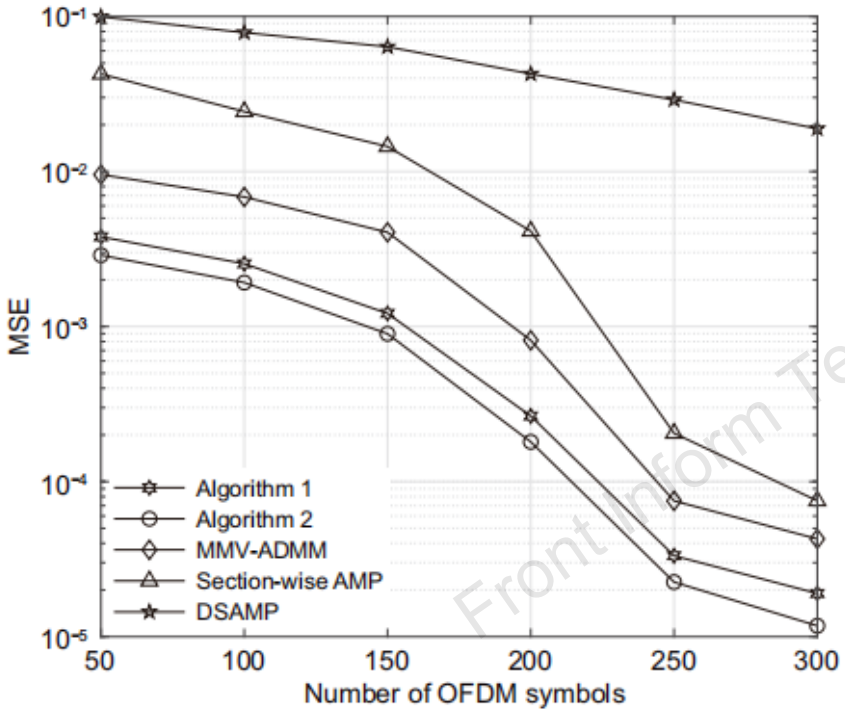


Fig. 3 Channel estimation performance of MSE versus the number of OFDM symbols. The parameter settings are $K = 500$, $K_\alpha = 50$, SNR=30 dB, and $P = 16$

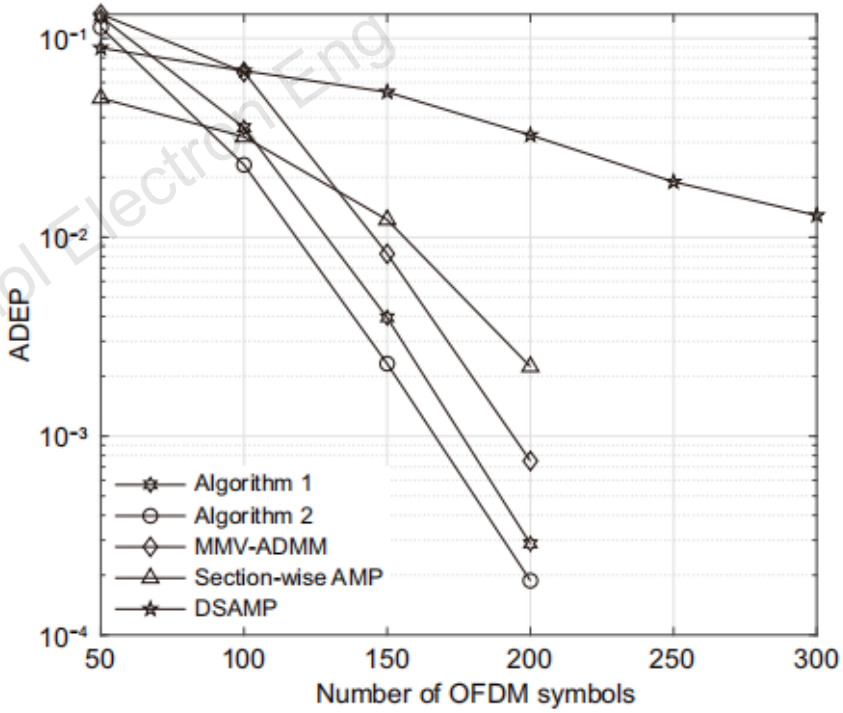


Fig. 4 Active user detection performance of ADEP versus the number of OFDM symbols. The parameter settings are $K = 500$, $K_\alpha = 50$, SNR=30 dB, and $P = 16$

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Results

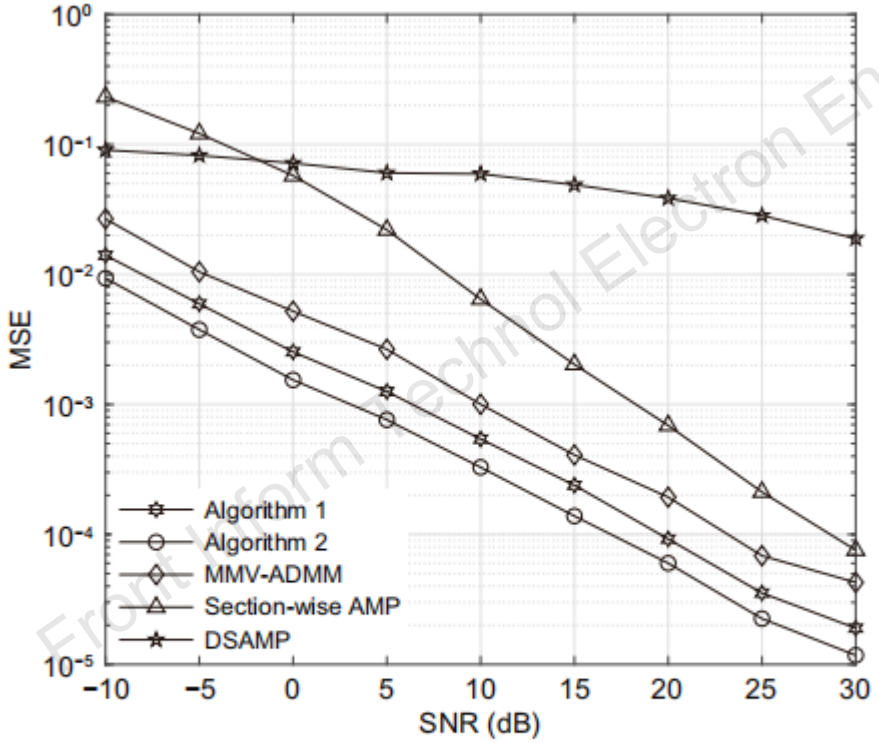


Fig. 5 Channel estimation performance of MSE versus SNR. The parameter settings are $K = 500$, $K_\alpha = 50$, $T = 300$, and $P = 16$

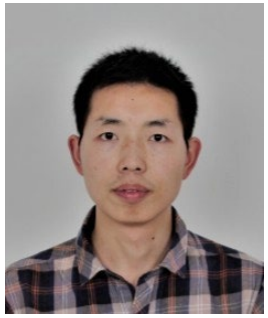
Conclusions

We have investigated the JADCE problem in strongly coherent mMTC scenarios based on the grant-free scenario. Due to the strongly coherent communication systems, the performance of existing compressed sensing algorithms degrades as the number of pilot subcarriers declines. Therefore, we introduced a novel DCA-based $\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathbf{F}}$ algorithm with the MMV framework to solve the JADCE problem. To further reduce the computational complexity of the DCA-based JADCE algorithm, a fast DCA-based JADCE algorithm was provided, from which the analytical solution based on the $\mathcal{L}_{2,1-\mathbf{F}}$ metric proximal operator was derived, and hence the ADMM solver can directly address the optimization problem.

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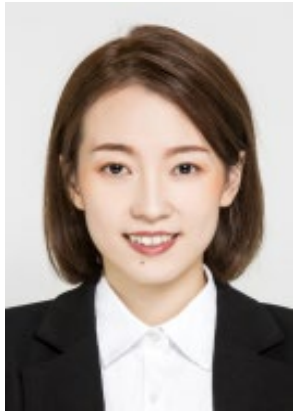


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