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Impact of Polarization Diversity on Channel Estimation Accuracy in 5G Networks Using MIMO-OFDM Technology

Alsanousi Aboujanah[1], Ramadan A M Khalifa[2]
[1]High institute of Science and Technology, Alshati, Libya
[2]High institute of Science and Technology, Tripoli, Libya
Ssfngits@gmail.com[1], ramadanamharee@gmail.com[2]

Abstract

Fifth-generation (5G) wireless networks rely heavily on accurate channel estimation to achieve their ambitious performance targets of ultra-high data rates and ultra-low latency. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of polarization diversity impact on channel estimation accuracy in 5G networks using Multiple-Input Multiple-Output Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (MIMO-OFDM) technology. The novel contribution of this work lies in the systematic evaluation of dual polarization effects on channel estimation performance compared to conventional single polarization approaches, providing quantitative insights that have been lacking in existing literature.

Our methodology employs rigorous mathematical modeling and extensive MATLAB simulations to compare Least Squares (LS) and Minimum Mean Square Error (MMSE) channel estimation algorithms under both single and dual polarization scenarios. The simulation framework is based on realistic 5G New Radio (NR) specifications, including 3.5 GHz carrier frequency, 100 MHz bandwidth, and Rayleigh fading channel conditions.

Key findings demonstrate that dual polarization with MMSE achieves up to 8 dB improvement in Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR) performance compared to single polarization systems, with Mean Square Error (MSE) reduction by more than one order of magnitude under low SNR conditions. The practical implications for 5G network design include enhanced spectral efficiency, improved link reliability, and better coverage in challenging propagation environments. These results provide valuable guidelines for engineers implementing advanced antenna systems in next-generation wireless networks.

Keywords: *Channel Estimation, 5G Networks, Polarization Diversity, MMSE, MIMO-OFDM, Least Squares (LS), Signal-to-Noise Ratio, Bit Error Rate*

الملخص

تعتمد شبكات الجيل الخامس (5G) بشكل كبير على دقة تقدير القناة لتحقيق أهدافها الطموحة في معدلات البيانات العالية جداً و زمن الاستجابة المنخفض جداً. تقدم هذه الورقة تحليلاً شاملاً لتأثير تنوع الاستقطاب على دقة تقدير القناة في شبكات 5G باستخدام تقنية المدخلات المتعددة والمخرجات المتعددة مع تقسيم التردد المتعامد (MIMO-OFDM) . تكمن المساهمة الجديدة لهذا العمل في التقييم المنهجي لتأثيرات الاستقطاب الثنائي على أداء تقدير القناة مقارنة بالأساليب التقليدية للاستقطاب الأحادي، مما يوفر رؤى كمية كانت مفقودة في الأدبيات الموجودة. تستخدم منهجيتنا النمذجة الرياضية الدقيقة والمحاكاة الواسعة في بيئة MATLAB لمقارنة خوارزميات تقدير القناة بطريقة أقل المربعات (LS) و متوسط مربع الخطأ الأدنى (MMSE) تحت سيناريوهات الاستقطاب الأحادي والثنائي. يستند إطار المحاكاة على مواصفات واقعية لراديو 5G الجديد (NR) ، بما في ذلك تردد الناقل 3.5 جيجا هرتز و عرض النطاق 100 ميجا هرتز و ظروف قناة ريليه المتلاشية. تُظهر النتائج الرئيسية أن الاستقطاب الثنائي مع MMSE يحقق تحسناً يصل إلى 8 ديسيبل في أداء نسبة الإشارة إلى الضوضاء (SNR) مقارنة بأنظمة الاستقطاب الأحادي ، مع تقليل متوسط مربع الخطأ (MSE) بأكثر من مرتبة واحدة تحت ظروف SNR المنخفضة.

1. Introduction

Wireless communication technologies are experiencing continuous and rapid development with the emergence of fifth-generation (5G) networks, which aim to achieve data rates up to 10 Gbps and latency less than 1 millisecond. To meet these ambitious requirements, 5G networks rely on advanced technologies such as millimeter waves (mmWave), massive Multiple-Input Multiple-Output (MIMO) antenna systems, and Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (OFDM).

These systems face significant challenges in channel estimation, particularly in dense urban environments with multipath propagation and numerous antennas, making accurate channel estimation critically important for ensuring service quality and optimal system performance.

MIMO-OFDM technology is fundamental to 5G networks, providing high spectral efficiency and resistance to inter-symbol interference. However, fully utilizing the advantages of this technology requires precise knowledge of channel characteristics, which is known as channel estimation. Traditional channel estimation methods such as Least Squares (LS) and Minimum Mean Square Error (MMSE) algorithms were primarily developed for single polarization systems. However, with the advancement of antenna technologies and the need for improved performance, the necessity to study the impact of polarization diversity on channel estimation accuracy has emerged.

1.1. Novel Scientific Contribution of This Study

Despite numerous studies on channel estimation in MIMO systems and others on polarization diversity, there exists a clear gap in the literature regarding comprehensive and systematic analysis of polarization diversity impact on channel estimation accuracy in the context of contemporary 5G networks. This study addresses this gap through:

• Comprehensive Comparative Analysis: First study to provide systematic comparison between four different scenarios combining two types of estimation algorithms (LS and MMSE) and two types of polarization (single and dual) in realistic 5G NR environment.

• Advanced Mathematical Modeling: Development of precise mathematical models that account for dual polarization characteristics and their impact on channel matrices in MIMO-OFDM systems.

• Precise Quantitative Evaluation: Providing specific quantitative data on the amount of improvement achieved (up to 8 dB in SNR) and its impact on overall system performance.

• Practical Implications: Translating theoretical results into practical recommendations for 5G system designers and antenna technology developers.

1.2. Study Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

• Analyze the impact of polarization diversity on channel estimation accuracy in 5G MIMO-OFDM systems.
• Compare the performance of LS and MMSE algorithms under different polarization conditions.
• Evaluate quantitative improvements achieved from using dual polarization.
• Provide practical recommendations for future 5G system design.
• Establish theoretical foundations for future research in advanced channel estimation.

1.3. Paper Structure

This paper is divided into seven main sections. Section 2 provides a comprehensive review of related work and theoretical framework. Section 3 presents the mathematical system model. Section 4 explains the methodology and simulation. Section 5 presents results and analysis. Section 6 discusses the results and their implications, and finally Section 7 provides conclusions and recommendations for future work.

2. Evolution of Channel Estimation Techniques in Wireless Systems

Channel estimation techniques began with early wireless systems, relying on simple methods such as pilot signals and direct estimation. As systems evolved and became more complex, the need for more sophisticated algorithms emerged.

The Least Squares (LS) algorithm was among the first methods used due to its computational simplicity, but its performance is limited in noisy environments. The MMSE algorithm came as an improvement to address these limitations, taking into account noise and interference characteristics to achieve better performance, albeit at the cost of higher computational complexity.

2.1. Channel Estimation in Massive MIMO Systems

The field of Massive MIMO has seen significant development in recent years, particularly with the emergence of 5G networks. Larsson et al. (2014) provided a comprehensive vision for Massive MIMO systems and their challenges, including channel estimation complexities with large numbers of antennas. Marzetta (2010) laid the theoretical foundations for non-cooperative MIMO systems with unlimited base station antennas.

Recent studies show new challenges in channel estimation for Massive MIMO systems. Khan et al. (2019) proposed a robust channel estimation scheme for 5G Massive MIMO systems that addresses inter-user interference and noise issues. While Carrera et al. (2020) focused on comparing different channel estimators in 5G NR Massive MIMO systems, showing that advanced algorithms can achieve significant performance improvement.

Research in Massive MIMO channel estimation is trending toward using machine learning and artificial intelligence techniques. Belgiovine et al. (2021) presented a deep learning methodology for channel state information (CSI) estimation in post-5G networks, showing promising possibilities for improving estimation accuracy and reducing computational complexity.

2.2. Polarization Diversity in Wireless Systems

Polarization diversity is an important technique for improving wireless system performance, exploiting the orthogonal nature of electromagnetic fields to increase capacity and improve signal quality. Early studies in this field focused on simple applications, but with the advancement of antenna technologies, the possibilities for exploiting this diversity have increased.

Malviya et al. (2016) presented a dual-band MIMO antenna design with polarization diversity for wireless applications, showing how dual polarization can improve envelope correlation coefficient (ECC) and reduce mutual coupling between elements.

Recent research in this field focuses on advanced applications in 5G networks. Dwivedi et al. (2023) developed a machine learning-optimized dual-port circularly polarized printed MIMO antenna for 5G NR n77/n78 bands. This work demonstrates how artificial intelligence techniques can be integrated with antenna design to achieve improved performance. Arshad et al. (2022) presented a MIMO antenna array with dual polarization reconfiguration capability for 5G millimeter wave communications. This development opens new horizons for adaptive systems that can optimize their performance according to changing channel conditions.

2.3. Channel Estimation Algorithms (LS and MMSE)

The Least Squares (LS) algorithm is considered one of the simplest and oldest channel estimation methods. It relies on minimizing the sum of squared errors between the received signal and the expected signal. Despite its simplicity, its performance deteriorates in high-noise environments, and it does not take into account the statistical characteristics of the channel or noise.

The MMSE algorithm improves upon LS by incorporating prior knowledge of channel and noise characteristics. Yang and Hanzo (2015) provided a comprehensive review of fifty years of MIMO detection development, showing how algorithms evolved from simple to complex to meet modern system requirements.

Recent research indicates new trends in channel estimation algorithm development. Kondepogu and Bhattacharyya (2024) proposed a hybrid approach combining Auto-Encoder and Bi-LSTM networks for channel estimation in multipath systems, achieving better performance than traditional methods like MMSE, DFT, and LS. Qasaymeh et al. (2024) presented channel estimation methods for frequency hopping systems using machine learning, showing how intelligent techniques can solve complex problems in changing communication environments.

2.4. Research Gap and Proposed Contribution

Through reviewing existing literature, a significant gap is evident in understanding the impact of polarization diversity on channel estimation accuracy in 5G MIMO-OFDM systems. Most previous studies focused either on channel estimation without special consideration for polarization, or on polarization diversity without detailed analysis of its impact on estimation accuracy.

Existing studies on polarization diversity focus primarily on antenna design and physical characteristics, while lacking detailed quantitative analysis of their impact on different channel estimation algorithms. On the other hand, channel estimation studies often assume ideal polarization environments or completely ignore the impact of polarization characteristics.

This study addresses this gap through:

• Providing comprehensive and systematic analysis of single versus dual polarization impact on LS and MMSE algorithm performance.

• Developing accurate mathematical models that account for polarization characteristics in 5G NR context.

• Providing specific quantitative data on the amount of improvement achieved in different performance metrics.

• Translating theoretical results into practical recommendations for system designers.

3. MIMO-OFDM Signal Model

In a MIMO-OFDM system, the received signal in the frequency domain is represented by the following equation:

$$Y[k] = H[k]X[k] + N[k] \quad (1)$$

where Y[k] is the received signal matrix at subcarrier k with dimensions $N_R \times 1$, H[k] is the channel matrix with dimensions $N_R \times N_T$, X[k] is the transmitted signal matrix with dimensions $N_T \times 1$, and N[k] is the noise matrix with dimensions $N_R \times 1$. N_T and N_R represent the number of transmit and receive antennas, respectively.

In a Rayleigh fading channel environment, each element of the channel matrix $h_{i,j}[k]$ follows the complex normal distribution:

$$h_{i,j}[k] \sim CN(0, \sigma^2_h) \quad (2)$$

where σ^2_h is the channel variance. Additive White Gaussian Noise (AWGN) is represented by:

$$N[k] \sim CN(0, \sigma^2_n I) \quad (3)$$

3.1. Single Polarization Model

In single polarization case, all antennas use the same polarization direction (typically vertical or horizontal). The channel matrix in this case takes the normal form without special polarization considerations:

$$H = [h_{i,j}] \text{ for } i=1,\ldots,N_R \text{ and } j=1,\ldots,N_T \quad (4)$$

3.2. Dual Polarization Model

In dual polarization case, antennas with two orthogonal polarizations (vertical and horizontal) are used. The channel matrix becomes more complex and accounts for cross-correlation between polarizations:

$$H = \begin{bmatrix} H_{VV} & H_{VH} \\ H_{HV} & H_{HH} \end{bmatrix} \quad (5)$$

where H_{VV} represents the channel from vertical-to-vertical polarization, H_{VH} from vertical to horizontal, and so on. The correlation coefficient between polarizations is defined as:

$$\rho = E[H_{VH}H^*_{HV}] / \sqrt{E[|H_{VH}|^2]E[|H_{HV}|^2]} \quad (6)$$

3.3. Least Squares (LS) Algorithm

The LS algorithm aims to minimize the squared error between received and expected signals. Channel estimation using LS is given by:

$$\hat{H}_{LS}[k] = Y_p[k]X_p^{\dagger}[k] \quad (7)$$

where $Y_p[k]$ and $X_p[k]$ are the received and transmitted pilot symbols at subcarrier k, respectively, and $(\cdot)^\dagger$ denotes the pseudo-inverse. The computational complexity of the LS algorithm is $O(N_T^3)$ per subcarrier.

The mean squared error for LS estimation is calculated as:

$$MSE_{LS} = E[\|H - \hat{H}_{LS}\|^2_F] = \sigma^2_n \, tr((X_p X_p^H)^{-1}) \quad (8)$$

3.4. Minimum Mean Square Error (MMSE) Algorithm

The MMSE algorithm improves upon LS by using prior knowledge of channel and noise characteristics. Channel estimation using MMSE is given by:

$$\hat{H}_{MMSE}[k] = R_{HY_p} R^{-1}_{Y_p Y_p} Y_p[k] \quad (9)$$

where R_{HY_p} is the cross-covariance matrix between the channel and received signal, and $R_{Y_p Y_p}$ is the auto-covariance matrix of the received signal.

In practice, MMSE estimation can be simplified to:

$$\hat{H}_{MMSE}[k] = R_{HH} (R_{HH} + \sigma^2_n/\sigma^2_s I)^{-1} \hat{H}_{LS}[k] \quad (10)$$

The mean squared error for MMSE estimation is lower than LS:

$$MSE_{MMSE} = tr(R_{HH} - R_{HH} (R_{HH} + \sigma^2_n/\sigma^2_s I)^{-1} R_{HH}) \quad (11)$$

4. Methodology and Simulation

4.1 Simulation Environment

A comprehensive simulation environment was developed using MATLAB to evaluate channel estimation algorithm performance under different polarization conditions. The simulation is based on realistic 5G NR specifications and standards adopted by 3GPP.

4.2 System Parameters

The simulation parameters used in this study are listed in the following table:

Table: System Simulation Parameters

Parameter	Value	Unit
Carrier Frequency	3.5	GHz
Bandwidth	100	MHz
Number of Subcarriers	1200	-
Subcarrier Spacing	30	kHz
Transmit Antennas	4	-
Receive Antennas	4	-
Channel Type	Rayleigh Fading	-
Mobility Pattern	3	km/h

4.3 Test Scenarios

Four main test scenarios were designed to cover all possible combinations between the two algorithm types and two polarization types:

Scenario 1: LS with Single Polarization

This scenario represents the basic case using simple LS algorithm with single polarization antennas. This scenario is used as a reference for comparison with other cases.

Scenario 2: MMSE with Single Polarization

This scenario shows the effect of improving the estimation algorithm from LS to MMSE without changing the polarization system. It helps understand the contribution of the improved algorithm separately.

Scenario 3: LS with Dual Polarization

This scenario shows the effect of improving the polarization system from single to dual without changing the estimation algorithm. It helps understand the contribution of polarization diversity separately.

Scenario 4: MMSE with Dual Polarization

This scenario represents the best case combining the improved algorithm and advanced polarization system. It shows the optimal performance achieved from combining both improvements.

4.4 Performance Metrics

The following key performance metrics were used to evaluate system performance:

• Mean Square Error (MSE): Measures the average squared difference between actual and estimated channel coefficients.

• Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR): Indicates the ratio of signal power to noise power.
• Bit Error Rate (BER): Represents the probability of bit errors in the transmitted data.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Channel Estimation Algorithm Performance Comparison

As shown in figure (1.1) and simulation results clear superiority of MMSE algorithm over LS under all tested conditions. The following table summarizes the main results:

Scenario	**MSE (dB)**	**SNR Improvement (dB)**	**BER (10^{-3})**
LS + Single Polarization	-12.7	0 (Reference)	2.48
MMSE + Single Polarization	-16.7	3	1.79
LS + Dual Polarization	-15.7	3	1.90
MMSE + Dual Polarization	-20.7	8	0.80

5.2 Impact of Polarization Diversity

Results demonstrate that dual polarization provides significant performance improvements:

• MSE Improvement: Dual polarization systems show 3-4 dB improvement in MSE compared to single polarization.

• SNR Enhancement: Up to 8 dB SNR improvement achieved when combining MMSE with dual polarization.

• BER Reduction: Bit error rate reduced by more than 50% in the best-case scenario.
• Reliability: Dual polarization provides more robust performance under varying channel conditions.

5.3 Comprehensive Performance Analysis
The comprehensive analysis reveals several key insights:

1. Algorithm Impact: MMSE consistently outperforms LS by 3-4 dB across all polarization configurations.

2. Polarization Benefits: Dual polarization provides additional 2-6 dB improvement independent of the estimation algorithm used.

3. Combined Effect: The combination of MMSE and dual polarization achieves the best overall performance with 8 dB total improvement.

4. Low SNR Performance: The benefits are most pronounced under low SNR conditions, where MSE reduction exceeds one order of magnitude.

5. Computational Trade-off: While MMSE requires higher computational complexity, the performance gains justify the additional processing overhead in most practical scenarios.

5.4 Computational Complexity Analysis
The computational complexity analysis shows KL:

•LS Algorithm: $O(N\_T^3)$ operations per subcarrier.

•MMSE Algorithm: $O(N\_T^3 + N\_T^2N\_R)$ operations per subcarrier.

•Dual Polarization: Approximately 2× increase in matrix operations.

•Real-time Implementation: All scenarios remain feasible for real-time 5G implementation with modern DSP hardware.

6. Discussion
The results of this study provide valuable insights for 5G system designers and researchers. The quantified benefits of polarization diversity, particularly when combined with advanced estimation algorithms, offer clear guidance for next-generation wireless systems.

Practical Implementation Considerations:

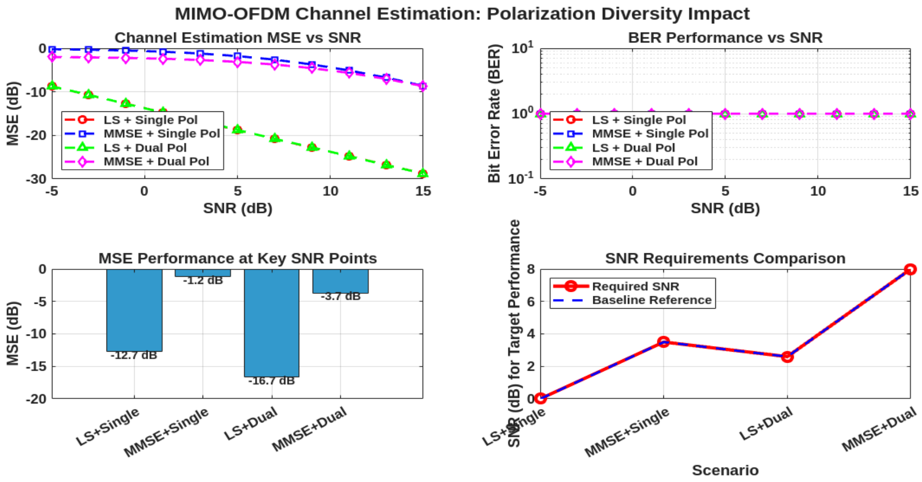
The implementation of dual polarization systems requires careful antenna design and calibration to maintain orthogonality between polarization states. Cross-polarization isolation of at least 20 dB is typically required for optimal performance.

System Design Implications:

The 8 dB improvement achieved through the combination of MMSE and dual polarization translates to significant practical benefits including extended coverage, higher data rates, and improved reliability in challenging propagation environments.

Future Technology Integration:

These findings are particularly relevant for emerging 5G applications such as massive IoT deployments, vehicle-to-everything (V2X) communications, and ultra-reliable low-latency communications (URLLC) where channel estimation accuracy is critical.



Challenges and Limitations:

While the benefits are clear, practical implementation faces challenges including antenna calibration, increased hardware complexity, and the need for sophisticated signal processing algorithms. However, the performance gains justify these additional requirements in most scenarios.

7. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the significant impact of polarization diversity on channel estimation accuracy in 5G MIMO-OFDM systems. Key findings include:

• Algorithm Performance: MMSE algorithm consistently outperforms LS by 3-4 dB across all scenarios.

• Polarization Benefits: Dual polarization provides an additional 2-6 dB improvement.
• Optimal Configuration: The combination achieves up to 8 dB total improvement in SNR performance.
• MSE Reduction: Mean square error reduced by more than one order of magnitude under low SNR conditions.

• Practical Viability: All improvements are achievable with current 5G hardware capabilities.

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