

Normalised quadratic controls for a class of bilinear systems

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Abstract: Normalised quadratic control, a modification of the conventional quadratic control method, has recently been proposed to exponentially stabilise a homogeneous bilinear system whose open-loop eigenvalues all fall on the imaginary axis. The normalised quadratic control method is now extended to a broader class of bilinear systems whose open-loop eigenvalues may fall to the left or right of the imaginary axis. It is shown that for bilinear systems that are already open-loop stable, the normalised quadratic control can add to the system an extra exponential decay rate. For open-loop unstable bilinear systems, the normalised quadratic control can stabilise the system if the extra exponential decay rate provided by the control is larger than the open-loop system's growth rate.

1 Introduction

Consider a homogeneous bilinear system:

$$\dot{x}(t) = Ax(t) + u(t)Nx(t), \quad x(0) = x_0 \quad (1)$$

where $x(t) \in \mathbf{R}^n$ is the system state vector, $u(t)$ is a scalar control input, and $A \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ and $N \in \mathbf{R}^{n \times n}$ are constant square matrices. It is assumed that the open-loop system matrix A has only pure imaginary eigenvalues. In this case [1], there exists a positive definite matrix P such that:

$$A^T P + PA = 0 \quad (2)$$

Under this neutrally stable assumption, the pair (A, N) satisfies the following controllability rank condition [2, 3]: for some positive integer m :

$$\text{rank}[ad^0(A, N)x_0, ad^1(A, N)x_0, \dots, ad^m(A, N)x_0] = n \quad (3)$$

for any nonzero x_0 in $\mathbf{R}^n$, where:

$$\begin{aligned} ad^0(A, N) &= N \\ ad^{k+1}(A, N) &= A \times ad^k(A, N) \\ &\quad - ad^k(A, N) \times A, \quad k = 0, 1, 2, \dots \end{aligned}$$

In the literature, two different control methods have been proposed for an open-loop neutrally stable system (1). The first control method is quadratic feedback control [4–6]:

$$u(t) = -\gamma x^T(t)PNx(t) \quad \gamma > 0$$

which ensures global asymptotic stability of the closed-loop system. The second control method is a modification of the first one, called normalised quadratic feedback control:

$$u(t) = -\gamma e_x^T(t)PN e_x(t) \quad e_x(t) \triangleq \frac{x(t)}{\|x(t)\|}$$

which ensures global exponential stability, and hence better performance of the closed-loop system [7].

The objective of this paper is to study whether or not normalised quadratic feedback control can be extended to a broader class of systems which have left-half-plane or right-half-plane open-loop eigenvalues, and to examine under what conditions, the normalised control can provide an exponential stabilising effect for these systems.

2 Continuous Normalised Quadratic Control

When the open-loop system matrix A in (1) has eigenvalues that are not pure imaginary, the normalised quadratic feedback control is still of the form:

$$u(t) = -\gamma e_x^T(t)PN e_x(t) \quad e_x(t) = \frac{x(t)}{\|x(t)\|} \quad (4)$$

however, the matrix P is now obtained from the following modified Lyapunov equation instead of (2):

$$(A \pm \rho I)^T P + P(A \pm \rho I) = -Q \quad (5)$$

where the plus sign is for a stable A , the minus sign is for neutrally stable and unstable A , P and Q are two positive definite matrices, and $\rho > 0$ is defined by:

$$\rho = \begin{cases} -\max\{\text{Re}(\lambda_i(A))\} - \varepsilon & \text{for stable } A \\ \varepsilon & \text{for neutrally stable } A \\ \max\{\text{Re}(\lambda_i(A))\} + \varepsilon & \text{for unstable } A \end{cases} \quad (6)$$

in which $\varepsilon > 0$ is an arbitrarily small number. When ε is sufficiently small and for the case with stable A , ρ characterises the decay rate of the open-loop system. For the case with unstable A , ρ characterises the growth rate of the open-loop system.

Before analysing the normalised control (4), one needs the following assumption: for some positive integer m :

$$\text{rank}[R_0 x_0 \quad R_1 x_0 \quad \cdots \quad R_m x_0] = n \quad (7)$$

for any nonzero x_0 in $\mathbf{R}^n$, where R_k is defined recursively as

$$R_0 = PN, R_k = A^T R_{k-1} + R_{k-1} A, \quad k = 1, 2, 3, \dots$$

It is speculated that the rank condition (7) may be deduced from the rank condition (3) for any stable or unstable A matrix. Further research will be required to verify this speculation.

Lemma 1: Consider the closed-loop system (1) and (4). If the rank condition (7) is satisfied, and the system state $x(t)$ satisfies:

$$x^T(t)PNx(t) \equiv 0 \quad \forall t \in [kT, kT + T] \quad (8)$$

for some $T > 0$, then $x(kT) = 0$.

Proof: If $x^T(t)PNx(t)$ is identically zero over the time span $[kT, kT + T]$, so is the control input (4). The system (1) then becomes open-loop; therefore:

$$x(t) = e^{A(t-kT)}x(kT) \quad \forall t \in [kT, kT + T]$$

Substituting the above equation into (8), and taking consecutively the time derivatives of the equation, one obtains $x^T(kT)R_i x(kT) = 0$, $i = 1, 2, 3, \dots, m$, or in matrix form,

$$x^T(kT)[R_0 x(kT) \quad R_1 x(kT) \quad \cdots \quad R_m x(kT)] = 0$$

The above equation shows that $x(kT)$ is orthogonal to all vectors $R_i x(kT)$. Since $R_i x(kT)$, $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$, span the whole space according to assumption (7), $x(kT)$ must be the null vector. $\square$

Further, to quantify the stabilising effect of the normalised control (4), one needs the following definition. Given a time interval length $T > 0$, define a function $\beta(\cdot): S \rightarrow \mathbf{R}^+ \cup \{0\}$ for the controlled system (1) and (4), where S is the unit sphere in $\mathbf{R}^n$:

$$\beta(e_x(kT)) \triangleq \frac{\gamma}{\bar{\sigma}_p} \frac{1}{T} \int_{kT}^{kT+T} [e_x^T(t)PNe_x(t)]^2 dt \quad e_x(kT) \in S \quad (9)$$

in which γ is the control gain in (4), and $\bar{\sigma}_p$ the maximum singular value of P in (5). The following lemma shows that the rank condition (7) guarantees that $\beta(e_x(kT))$, which is a measure of the exponential stabilising effect of the normalised control (4) over a time span T (see remark 3 after theorem 2), is always nonzero for all $e_x(kT)$ on the unit sphere S .

Lemma 2: If the system (1) satisfies the rank condition (7), there exists some positive constant β^* such that for all integer k :

$$\inf_{e_x(kT) \in S} [\beta(e_x(kT))] = \beta^* > 0 \quad (10)$$

Proof: Since the integrand in (9) is non-negative, $\beta(\cdot)$ must also be non-negative. To show that $\beta(\cdot)$ is nonzero (hence, positive) for all $e_x(kT) \in S$, one can use the following contradiction argument. Assume that $\beta(e_x(kT))$ is zero for some $e_x(kT) \in S$. Based on the definition of $\beta(\cdot)$ in (9), one has $e_x^T(t)PNe_x(t) \equiv 0$, for all $t \in [kT, kT + T]$; in other words:

$$x^T(t)PNx(t) \equiv 0 \quad \forall t \in [kT, kT + T]$$

Invoking lemma 1, the above equation implies $x(kT) = 0$, which contradicts the fact that $e_x(kT) \in S$. Therefore, $\beta(e_x(kT))$ must be positive for all $e_x(kT) \in S$. Furthermore,

since the unit sphere S is compact, the infimum of $\beta(e_x(kT))$ over S , denoted by β^* , must also be positive according to theorem 4.4.1 in [8]. Finally, since the dynamics of the closed-loop system (1) and (4) are the same on all different time intervals $[kT, kT + T]$, the lower bound β^* must be uniform with respect to k . This finished the proof of (10). $\square$

One can now present the stability results for the normalised control (4), first for the open-loop stable system (1), and then for the open-loop unstable system.

Theorem 1: Consider an open-loop stable bilinear system (1). With the continuous normalised quadratic control (4), the closed-loop system is exponentially stable with the following decay rate:

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \frac{\sigma_p}{\bar{\sigma}_p} \times \exp\left(-\beta^* + \frac{\sigma_Q}{2\bar{\sigma}_p} + \rho\right) T \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (11)$$

Proof: Define a Lyapunov function candidate $V(t) = x^T(t)Px(t)$, where P is from the Lyapunov equation (5) with stable A . Take the time derivative of the Lyapunov function along the closed-loop trajectory (1), (4) and (5):

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{V}(t) &= -x^T(t)Qx(t) - 2\rho x^T(t)Px(t) \\ &\quad - 2\gamma[e_x^T(t)PNe_x(t)]^2 \|x(t)\|^2 \\ &\leq -\left\{\frac{\sigma_Q}{\bar{\sigma}_p} + 2\rho + \frac{2\gamma[e_x^T(t)PNe_x(t)]^2}{\bar{\sigma}_p}\right\} V(t) \end{aligned}$$

Integrating the inequality over the time span $[kT, kT + T]$ leads to:

$$\begin{aligned} \ln\left(\frac{V(kT + T)}{V(kT)}\right) &\leq -\frac{\sigma_Q}{\bar{\sigma}_p} \times T - 2\rho \times T \\ &\quad - \frac{\gamma}{\bar{\sigma}_p} \int_{kT}^{kT+T} [e_x^T(\tau)PNe_x(\tau)]^2 d\tau \\ &\leq -\left(\frac{\sigma_Q}{\bar{\sigma}_p} + 2\rho + 2\beta^*\right) T \end{aligned}$$

where the last inequality results from (10) of lemma 2. Equation (11) can then be concluded from the last inequality and from the definition of $V(kT)$. $\square$

Remark 1: Before interpreting the result (11) of theorem 1, note that $A \pm \rho I$ in the Lyapunov equation (4) is stable but close to neutrally stable for small ϵ (it is neutrally stable if $\epsilon = 0$). According to lemma 5 in the Appendix, one has:

$$\lim_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sigma_Q}{\bar{\sigma}_p} = 0$$

and hence for small ϵ in (6), one can neglect the term $\sigma_Q/2\bar{\sigma}_p$ in the exponent of (11). Therefore, for an open-loop stable bilinear system (1), the decay rate resulting from the normalised quadratic control is given by:

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \frac{\sigma_p}{\bar{\sigma}_p} \times e^{-(\beta^* + \rho)T} \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (12)$$

Recall from the statement below (6) that ρ characterises the decay rate of the open-loop stable bilinear system. Equation (12) then shows that the normalised control has the effect of providing an extra exponential decay rate by an exponent of β^* for an open-loop stable bilinear system.

The second stability theorem is for open-loop unstable systems, whose proof parallels that of theorem 1, and hence is omitted.

Theorem 2: Consider an open-loop-unstable bilinear system (1). The continuous normalised quadratic control (4) can exponentially stabilise the closed-loop system if:

$$\beta^* + \underline{\sigma}_Q / (2\bar{\sigma}_P) > \rho$$

Furthermore, the closed-loop decay rate is given by:

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \frac{\bar{\sigma}_P}{\bar{\sigma}_P} \times e^{-\left(\beta^* + \frac{\underline{\sigma}_Q}{2\bar{\sigma}_P} - \rho\right)T} \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (13)$$

Remark 2: As stated in remark 1, for small ϵ in (6), one can neglect the term $\underline{\sigma}_Q / 2\bar{\sigma}_P$ in the exponent of (13), which then becomes:

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \frac{\bar{\sigma}_P}{\bar{\sigma}_P} \times e^{-[\beta^* - \rho]T} \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (14)$$

Recall again that ρ in (4) characterises the exponential growth rate of the open-loop unstable bilinear system. Hence, (14) states that an open-loop unstable bilinear system can be stabilised if the exponential decay rate β^* provided by the normalised control is larger than the growth rate ρ of the open-loop system.

Remark 3: Based on the observations in remarks 1 and 2, one concludes that β^* is actually a measure of the strength of the normalised control (4). Metaphorically speaking, the normalised control has an equivalent effect of, as in linear system control, shifting the open-loop eigenvalues to the left by a distance of β^* . Note that β^* is a function of the control gain γ . In practical use of the normalised control, one needs to simulate control with various control gains in order to find out the optimal gain γ to maximise β^* .

3 Discontinuous Normalised Quadratic Control

In the preceding Section, it was shown that the normalised control has a stabilising effect if the bilinear system satisfies the rank condition (7). However, this rank condition depends on the matrix P in (5) and hence the matrix Q , where the latter is chosen by the control designer. This suggests that the designer's choice of controller parameters may affect whether or not the specific control design has a stabilising effect. To avoid such complexity, a different normalised control design will be developed in this Section, and the new normalised control is guaranteed to have an exponential stabilising effect under the original rank condition (3) in [7], which is independent of controller parameters.

For the second normalised control design, apply the following coordinate transformation to the bilinear system (1):

$$x(t) = e^{A(t-kT)} z_k(t) \quad t \in [kT, kT + T) \quad (15)$$

where $z_k(t)$ is the transformed state, and the transformation matrix is the fundamental matrix [9] of the open-loop system (1). Note that the transformed state $z_k(t)$ is defined only on a finite time interval $[kT, (k+1)T)$; nevertheless, this will not affect the asymptotic stability analysis presented below.

With the transformation (15), the governing equation of the transformed state becomes:

$$\dot{z}_k(t) = u(t)G_k(t)z_k(t) \quad G_k(t) = e^{-A(t-kT)}Ne^{A(t-kT)} \quad t \in [kT, kT + T) \quad (16)$$

The above transformed system becomes open-loop neutrally stable, similar to the case treated in [7] except

that now the neutrally stable system (16) contains time-varying parameters. However, one can still follow the control design principle in [7] to construct the following normalised quadratic feedback control:

$$u(t) = -\gamma e_z^T(t)G_k(t)e_z(t) \quad e_z(t) = \frac{z_k(t)}{\|z_k(t)\|} \quad t \in [kT, kT + T) \quad (17)$$

where γ is a positive control gain. Note that this second normalised control is discontinuous at the time instants $t = kT$ because of the reset of the transformed state at those instants.

The stability analysis of the second normalised control (17) parallels that of the first normalised control (4); therefore, proofs of the following lemmas are omitted for brevity.

Lemma 3: If the system (1) satisfies the rank condition (3), and there exists a constant vector z_0 such that $z_0^T G_k(t)z_0 \equiv 0$ for all $t \in [kT, kT + T)$, then z_0 must be the null vector.

To quantify the stabilising effect of the new normalised control (17), define a function $\alpha(\cdot): S \rightarrow R^+ \cup \{0\}$, where S is the unit sphere in R^n , for the transformed closed-loop system (16) and (17):

$$\alpha(e_z(kT)) \triangleq \frac{\gamma}{T} \int_{kT}^{(k+1)T} [e_z^T(t)G_k(t)e_z(t)]^2 dt \quad e_z(kT) \in S \quad (18)$$

Lemma 4: If the bilinear system (16) satisfies the rank condition (3), there exists some positive constant α^* such that for all positive integer k :

$$\inf_{e_z(kT) \in S} [\alpha(e_z(kT))] = \alpha^* > 0 \quad (19)$$

One can now prove the global exponential stability of the bilinear system (1) under the second normalised control (17).

Theorem 3: Consider the bilinear system (1) and the normalised control (17). If:

$$e^{\alpha^* T} > \|e^{AT}\| \quad (20)$$

the closed-loop system is exponentially stable with the following decay rate

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \pi \|x(kT)\| \quad \text{where} \quad \pi = \frac{\|e^{AT}\|}{e^{\alpha^* T}} < 1 \quad (21)$$

Proof: In this proof, one will first estimate the variation of the transformed state $\|z_k(t)\|$ over the time interval $[kT, kT + T)$, and then utilises the obtained result to estimate the variation of the original state $\|x(t)\|$. To do so, first define:

$$V_k(t) = \frac{1}{2} \|z_k(t)\|^2 \quad t \in [kT, (k+1)T)$$

and take the time derivative of $V_k(t)$ along (16) and (17):

$$\dot{V}_k(t) = z_k^T(t)G_k(t)z_k(t)u(t) = -2\gamma [e_z^T(t)G_k(t)e_z(t)]^2 V_k(t).$$

Integrating the above equation from kT to $(k+1)T$ gives:

$$\ln \frac{V_k(kT + T)}{V_k(kT)} = -2\gamma \int_{kT}^{(k+1)T} [e_z^T(t)G_k(t)e_z(t)]^2 dt \leq -2\alpha^* T$$

where the last inequality is obtained via lemma 4. Re-arranging the equation gives $V_k(kT + T) \leq e^{-2\alpha^* T} V_k(kT)$, or equivalently:

$$\|z_k(kT + T)\| \leq e^{-\alpha^* T} \|z_k(kT)\| \quad (22)$$

Next, to find out how the original system state $\|x(kT)\|$ varies, recall from (15) that:

$$x(kT) = z_k(kT) \quad \text{and} \quad x(kT + T) = e^{AT} z_k(kT + T) \quad (23)$$

Taking the norm of $x(kT + T)$ in (23), and using (22), one can then prove (21):

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq \frac{\|e^{AT}\|}{e^{\alpha^* T}} \times \|z_k(kT)\| = \frac{\|e^{AT}\|}{e^{\alpha^* T}} \times \|x(kT)\|$$

where the last equality results from the first identity in (23). Finally, the assumption (20) guarantees that the closed-loop system is exponentially stable. $\square$

Remark 4: Given any system matrix A , there exists a positive constant m such that:

$$\|e^{AT}\| \leq m e^{\pm \rho T} \quad (24)$$

where the minus sign is for stable A , and the plus sign is for unstable A , and ρ as defined in (6). With (24), (21) becomes, for stable A :

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq m e^{-(\alpha^* + \rho)T} \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (25)$$

and for unstable A :

$$\|x(kT + T)\| \leq m e^{-(\alpha^* - \rho)T} \times \|x(kT)\| \quad (26)$$

Equation (25), which is similar to (12) in the preceding Section, suggests that when the system (1) is open-loop stable, the second normalised control (17) can add to the open-loop decay rate ρ an extra decay rate α^* . Equation (26), which is similar to (14) in the preceding Section, suggests that when the system (1) is open-loop unstable, the second normalised control (17) can still stabilise the closed-loop system if the decay rate α^* provided by the control is larger than the open-loop growth rate ρ . In conclusion, α^* defined in (19) plays the same role as β^* in the preceding Section; that is, α^* is a measure of the exponentially stabilising effect for the second normalised control (17).

Example 1: Consider an open-loop stable bilinear system (1) with:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & -5 \\ 4 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \quad N = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

and the initial condition $x^T(0) = [5, -4]$. Fig. 1 shows the open-loop response (the dash line) and the closed-loop response (the solid line) of the system under the second normalised quadratic control (17) with $\gamma = 11$ and $T = 1$. It is seen that the normalised quadratic control makes the decay rate three times faster than the open-loop. Fig. 2 depicts the normalised control signal.

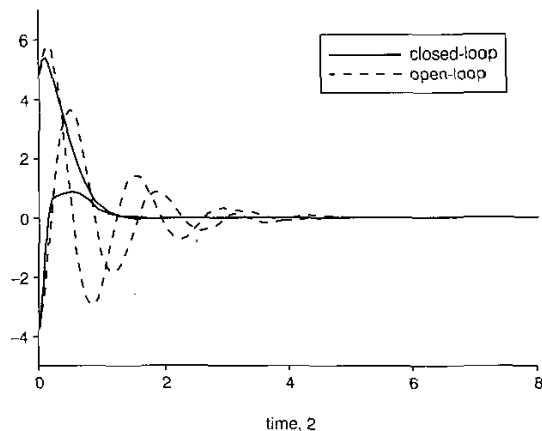


Fig. 1 Controlled state of open-loop stable system

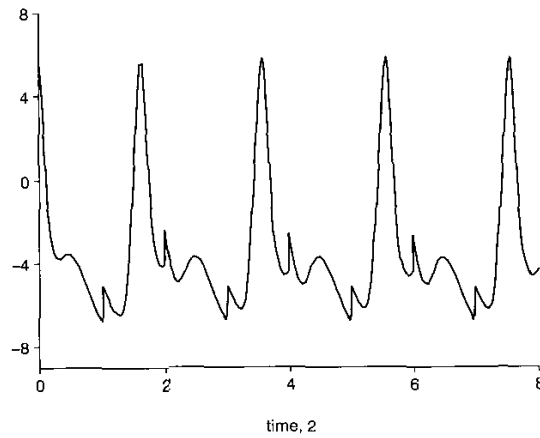


Fig. 2 Control signal for open-loop system

Example 2: Consider an open-loop unstable bilinear system (1) with:

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0.5 & 1 \\ -1 & 0.5 \end{bmatrix} \quad N = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

and $x^T(0) = [5, -4]$. Fig. 3 shows that the normalised quadratic control (17) with $\gamma = 2$ and $T = 1$ effectively stabilises the closed-loop system. Fig. 4 shows the control

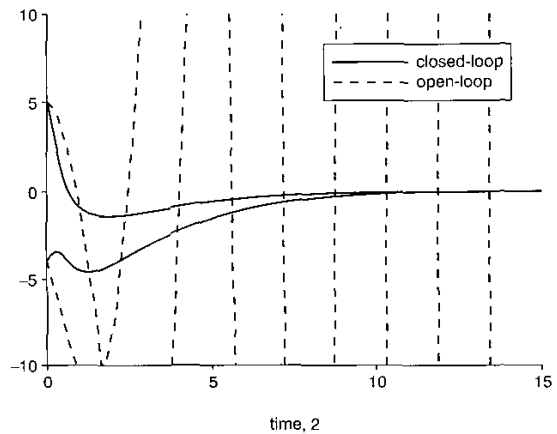


Fig. 3 Controlled state of open-loop unstable system

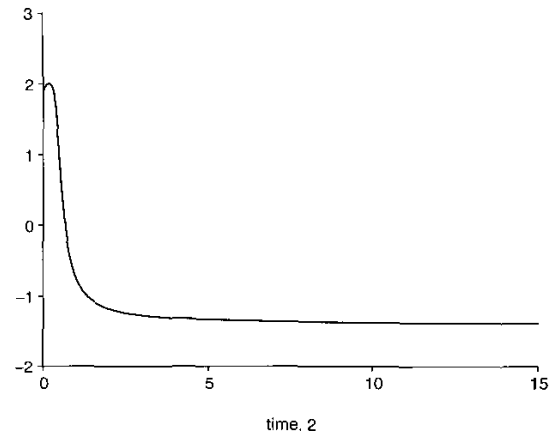


Fig. 4 Control signal for open-loop unstable system

signal, which seems to asymptotically approach a constant $u^* = -1.39$. However, one can verify that a constant control design $u(t) = u^*$ will not stabilise the bilinear system.

4 Conclusions

This paper studies two normalised quadratic controls (NQC) for a homogeneous bilinear system which satisfies the controllability rank condition. It is shown that the NQC can provide an extra exponential decay rate if the open-loop system is already stable, and can stabilise an open-loop unstable system if the extra exponential decay rate provided by the control is larger than the growth rate of the open-loop system. However, the theoretical analysis in this paper is more qualitative than quantitative in the sense that the extra decay rate provided by NQC, namely β^* in (10) or α^* in (19), is difficult to calculate. In practical use of NQC, one must simulate control with different control gains γ to find out if the NQC can stabilise a particular open-loop unstable system, and, if it can, what is the optimal control gain γ for achieving the fastest decay rate.

5 Acknowledgment

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6 References

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7 Appendix

Lemma 5: Given the Lyapunov equation (5), one has

$$\lim_{\varepsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sigma_Q}{\bar{\sigma}_P} = 0$$

where $\bar{\sigma}_P$ denotes the maximum singular value of the matrix P , and σ_Q the minimum singular value of Q .

Proof: Without loss of generality, consider the case where $Q = I$ in (5). Therefore:

$$\sigma_Q = 1 \quad (27)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{\sigma}_P &= \max_{\|y_0\|=1} \int_0^\infty y_0^T e^{(A \pm \rho I)^T t} e^{(A \pm \rho I)t} y_0 dt \\ &= \max_{\|y_0\|=1} \int_0^\infty \|y(t)\|^2 dt \end{aligned} \quad (28)$$

where $y(t) = e^{(A \pm \rho I)t} y_0$ denotes the solution of the differential equation $\dot{y} = (A \pm \rho I)y$ subject to the initial condition $y(0) = y_0$. By the definition of ρ in (6), the matrix $A \pm \rho I$ is stable. Denote its eigenvalues by $\lambda_i = -\sigma_i + j\omega_i$ with $\sigma_{i+1} \geq \sigma_i$, $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$. Then, according to (6):

$$\sigma_1 = \varepsilon \quad (29)$$

Asymptotically, the time history of $y(t)$ is determined by the dominant mode $i = 1$; hence, $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} y(t) = c_1 e^{-\sigma_1 t} \sin(\omega_1 t + \phi_1)$ for some constants c_1 and ϕ_1 . Substituting $y(t)$ into (28), and using (29), one can show that:

$$\bar{\sigma}_P = O\left(\frac{1}{\varepsilon}\right) \quad (30)$$

The lemma is then proved by combining (27) and (30).