Microwave Imaging of Buried Targets through a Multi-Zooming Approach: Reconstruction Capabilities for Different Object Conductivities

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Abstract

In this work, the performance of an innovative microwave imaging methodology for buried object detection are analyzed. More precisely, the developed inverse scattering (*IS*) approach is based on a Multi-Frequency (*MF*) formulation of the buried *IS* equations in order to exploit the frequency diversity coming from wideband ground penetrating radar (*GPR*) measurements. The arising *MF* cost function is minimized through a customized deterministic solver based on a conjugate gradient (*CG*) minimizer nested within the iterative multi-scaling approach (*IMSA*) for achieving higher resolutions in the identified regions of interest (*RoI*s). Some illustrative numerical results are shown, in order to verify the effectiveness of the developed *MF-IMSA-CG* methodology when dealing with the retrieval of buried objects having different values of electric conductivity. For completeness, as well as for the sake of comparison, the reconstructions yielded by a competitive state-of-the-art approach based on a frequency hopping (*FH*) processing of the *GPR* spectrum are also shown, by considering several noise conditions.

1 Definitions

1.1 Glossary

- D_{inv}: investigation domain;
- D_{obs}: observation domain;
- N: number of discretization cells in D_{ind};
- V: number of views;
- M: number of measurement points;
- F: number of frequencies considered for the inversion;
- (x_v, y_v): coordinates of the v-th source $(v = 1, \dots, V)$.
- (x_m^v, y_m^v): coordinates of the m-th measurement point for the v-th view v, $(m = 1, \dots, M)$;
- $\varepsilon_{ra} = \frac{\varepsilon_a}{\varepsilon_0}$: relative electric permittivity for the upper half-space $(y > 0)$;
- σ_a: conductivity for the upper half-space $(y > 0)$;
- $\varepsilon_{rb} = \frac{\varepsilon_b}{\varepsilon_0}$: background relative electric permittivity;
- σ_b: background conductivity;

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2 Variation of the object conductivity

2.1 Square object ($\varepsilon_{r,obj} = 6.0$)

2.1.1 Parameters

Background

Inhomogeneous and nonmagnetic background composed by two half spaces

- Upper half space ($y > 0$ - air): $\varepsilon_{ra} = 1.0$, $\sigma_a = 0.0$;
- Lower half space ($y < 0$ - soil): $\varepsilon_{rb} = 4.0$, $\sigma_b = 10^{-3}$[S/m];

Investigation domain (D_{inv})

- Side: $L_{D_{inv}} = 0.8$ [m];
- Barycenter: $\left(x_{bar}^{D_{inv}}, y_{bar}^{D_{inv}}\right) = (0.00, -0.4)$ [m];

Time-Domain forward solver ($FDTD$ - $GPRMax2D$)

- Side of the simulated domain: $L = 6$ [m];
- Number of cells: $N^{FDTD} = 750 \times 750 = 5.625 \times 10^5$;
- Side of the $FDTD$ cells $l^{FDTD} = 0.008$ [m];
- Simulation time window: $T^{FDTD} = 20 \times 10^{-9}$ [sec];
- Time step: $\Delta t^{FDTD} = 1.89 \times 10^{-11}$ [sec];
- Number of time samples: $N_t^{FDTD} = 1060$;
- Boundary conditions: perfectly matched layer (PML);
- Source type: Gaussian mono-cycle (first Gaussian pulse derivative, called "Ricker" in $GPRMax2D$)
  - Central frequency: $f_0 = 300$ [MHz];
  - Source amplitude: $A = 1.0$ [A];

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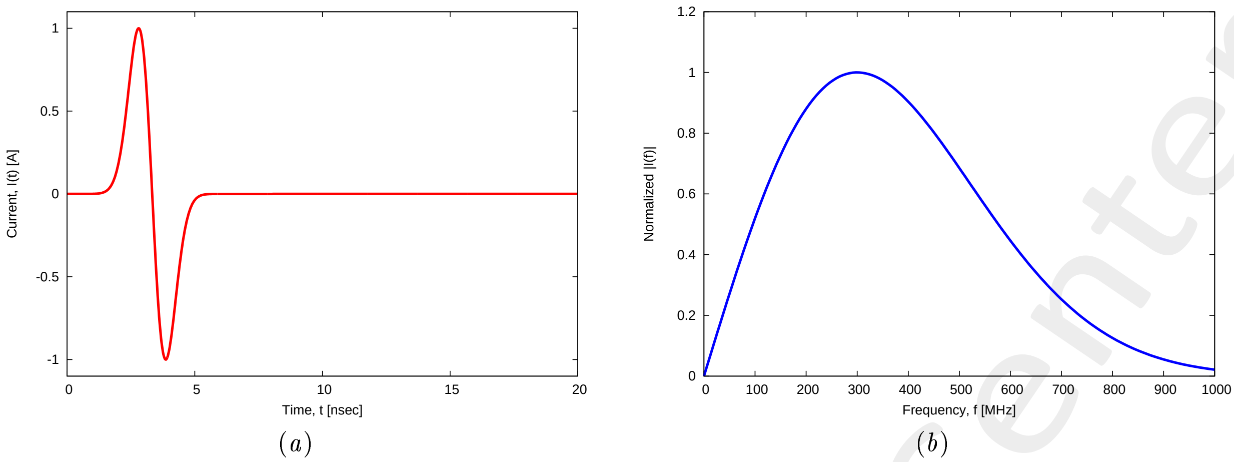

Figure 1: *GPRMax2D* excitation signal. (a) Time pulse, (b) normalized frequency spectrum.

Frequency parameters

- Frequency range: $f \in [f_{min}, f_{max}] = [200.0, 600.0]$ [MHz] [?] (-3 [dB] bandwidth of the Gaussian Monocycle excitation centered at $f_0 = 300$ [MHz]);
- Frequency step: $\Delta f = 100$ [MHz] ($F = 5$ frequency steps in $[f_{min}, f_{max}]$);

f [MHz]	λ_a [m]	λ_b [m]	f^* [MHz]
200.0	1.50	0.75	200.5
300.0	1.00	0.50	297.6
400.0	0.75	0.37	401.1
500.0	0.60	0.30	498.1
600.0	0.50	0.25	601.6

Table 1: Considered frequencies and corresponding wavelength in the upper medium (λ_a, free space) and in the lower medium (λ_b, soil). f^* is the nearest frequency sample available from transformed time-domain data, and represents the real frequency considered by the inversion algorithm.

Scatterer

- Type: Square;
- Side: 0.16 [m];
- Electromagnetic properties: $\varepsilon_{r,obj} = 6.0$, $\sigma_{obj} = \left\{10^{-4}; 5\times10^{-4}; 10^{-3}; 5\times10^{-3}; 10^{-2}\right\}$ [S/m];

$\varepsilon_{r,obj}$	σ_{obj} [S/m]	$\Re\{\tau\}$	$\Im\{\tau\}$
6.0	10^{-4}	2.0	2.69×10^{-2}
6.0	5×10^{-4}	2.0	1.49×10^{-2}
6.0	10^{-3}	2.0	0.0
6.0	5×10^{-3}	2.0	-1.19×10^{-1}
6.0	10^{-2}	2.0	-2.69×10^{-1}

Table 2: Real and imaginary parts of the contrast function vs. different values of object conductivity. The imaginary part is computed as $\Im\{\tau\} = \left[\frac{\sigma_b-\sigma_{obj}}{2\pi f\varepsilon_0}\right]$ at the highest frequency ($f_{max} = 600$ [MHz]).

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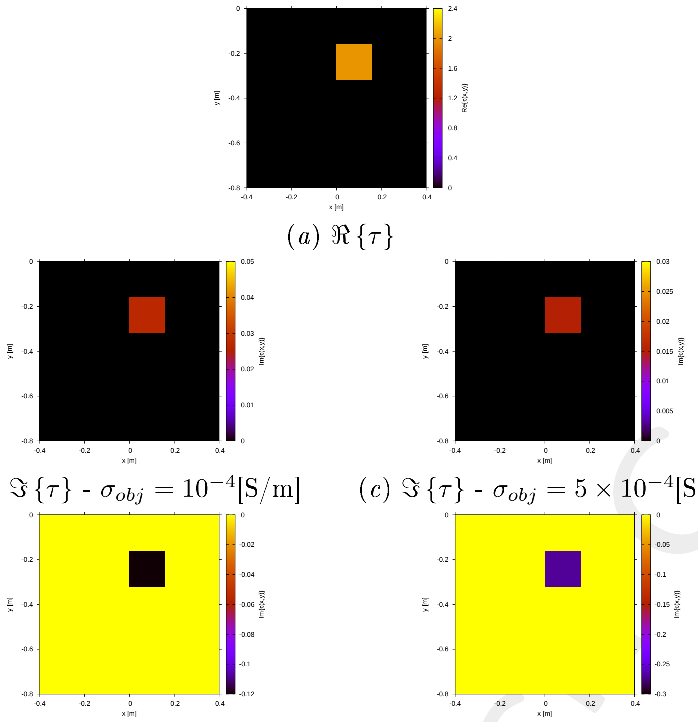

(a) $\Re\{\tau\}$

(b) $\Im\{\tau\}$ - $\sigma_{obj} = 10^{-4}$[S/m] (c) $\Im\{\tau\}$ - $\sigma_{obj} = 5 \times 10^{-4}$[S/m]

(d) $\Im\{\tau\}$ - $\sigma_{obj} = 5 \times 10^{-3}$[S/m] (e) $\Im\{\tau\}$ - $\sigma_{obj} = 10^{-2}$[S/m]

Figure 2: Actual object. The imaginary parts are plotted at $f_{max} = 600$ [MHz].

Measurement setup

- Considered frequency: $f_{min} = 200$ [MHz], $\lambda_b = 0.75$ [m].
- $\#DoFs = 2ka = \frac{2\pi}{\lambda_b} L\sqrt{2} = \frac{2\pi}{0.75} 0.8\sqrt{2} \simeq 9.5$;
- Number of views (sources): $V = 10$;
  - $\min\{x_v\} = -0.5$ [m], $\max\{x_v\} = 0.5$ [m];
  - height: $y_v = 0.1$ [m], $\forall v = 1, \dots, V$;
- Number of measurement points: $M = 9$;
  - $\min\{x_m\} = -0.5$ [m], $\max\{x_m\} = 0.5$ [m];
  - height: $y_m = 0.1$ [m], $\forall m = 1, \dots, M$;

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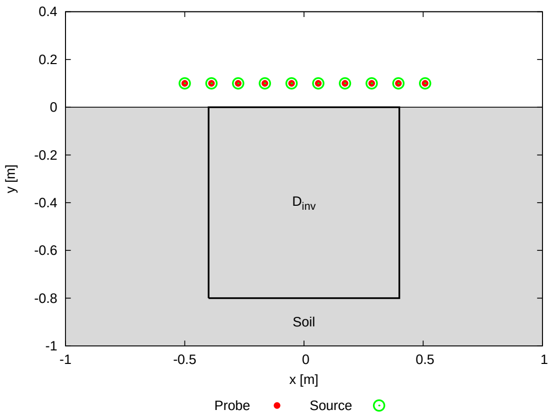

Figure 3: Location of the measurement points ($M = 9$) and of the sources ($V = 10$). Only one source is active for each view.

Inverse solver parameters

- **Shared parameters**
  - Weight of the state term of the functional: 1.0;
  - Weight of the data term of the functional: 1.0;
  - Convergence threshold: 10^{-10};
  - Variable ranges:
    * $\varepsilon_r \in [4.0, 6.2]$;
    * $\Re\left\{E_{tot}^{int}\right\} \in [-8, 8]$, $\Im\left\{E_{tot}^{int}\right\} \in [-8, 8]$;
  - Degrees of freedom:
    * Considered frequency: $f_{min} = 200$ [MHz], $\lambda_b = 0.75$ [m];
    * $\frac{(2ka)^2}{2} = \frac{\left(2\times\frac{2\pi}{\lambda_b}\times\frac{L\sqrt{2}}{2}\right)^2}{2} = 4\pi^2\left(\frac{L}{\lambda_b}\right)^2 = 4\pi^2\left(\frac{0.8}{0.75}\right)^2 \simeq 44.87$;
  - Number of cells: $N = 49 = 7 \times 7$;
  - Maximum number of $IMSA$ steps: $S = 4$;
  - Side ratio threshold: $\eta_{th} = 0.2$;
- $MF - IMSA - CG$ **parameters**
  - Maximum number of iterations: $I = 200$;
- $FH - IMSA - CG$ **parameters**
  - Maximum number of iterations: $I = 400$;

Signal to noise ratio (on $E_{tot}(t)$)

- $SNR = \{50, 40, 30, 20\}$ [dB] + Noiseless data.

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2.1.2 $\sigma_{obj} = 10^{-4}$ [S/m] ($\Im\{\tau\} = 2.69 \times 10^{-2}$): Final reconstructions (@ $f_{max} = 600$ [MHz])

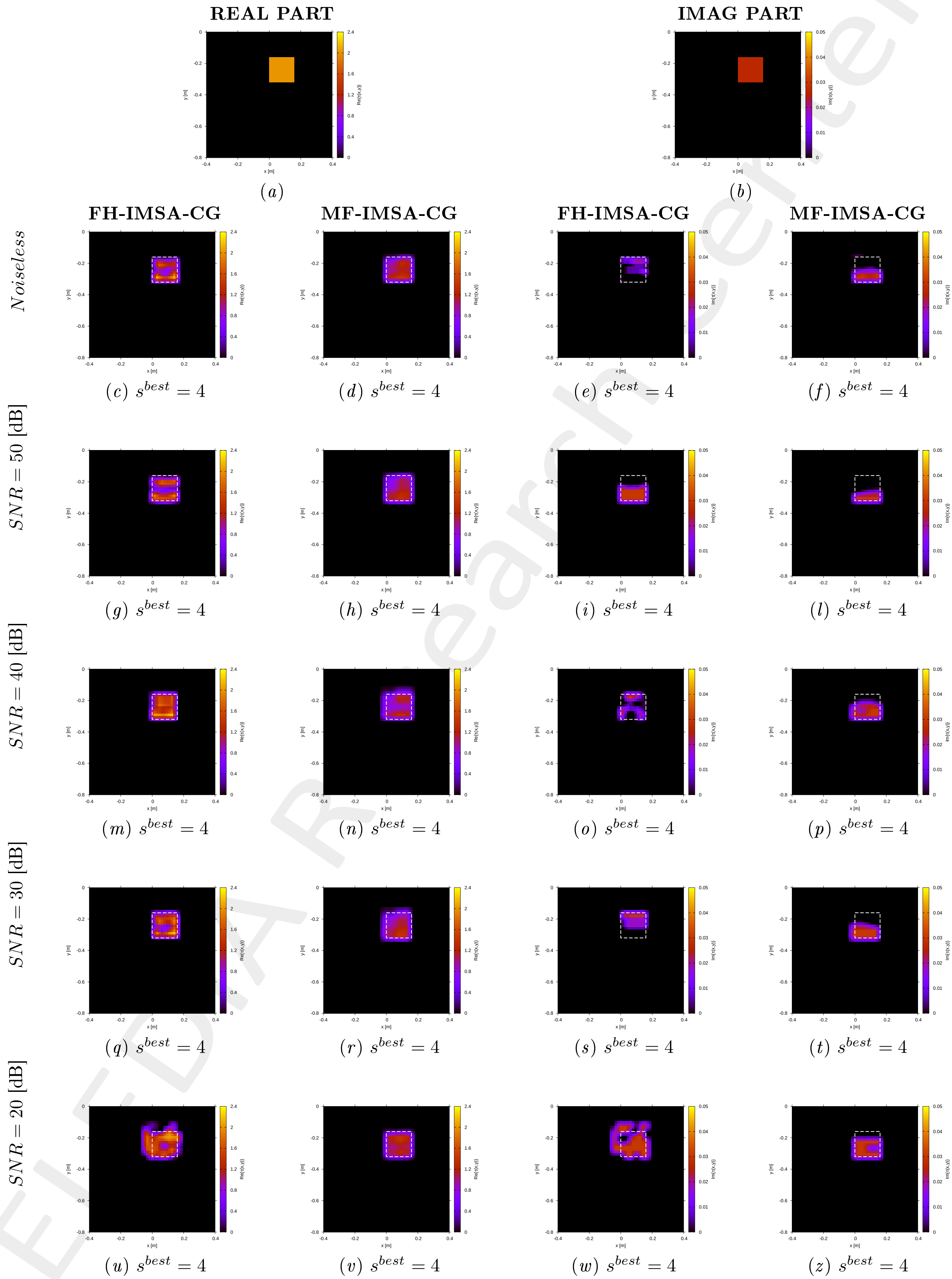

Figure 4: $FH-IMSA-CG$ vs. $MF-IMSA-CG$: Retrieved dielectric profiles at the $IMSA$ convergence step (s^{best}).

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2.1.3 $\sigma_{obj} = 5 \times 10^{-4}$ [S/m] ($\Im\{\tau\} = 1.49 \times 10^{-2}$): Final reconstructions (@ $f_{max} = 600$ [MHz])

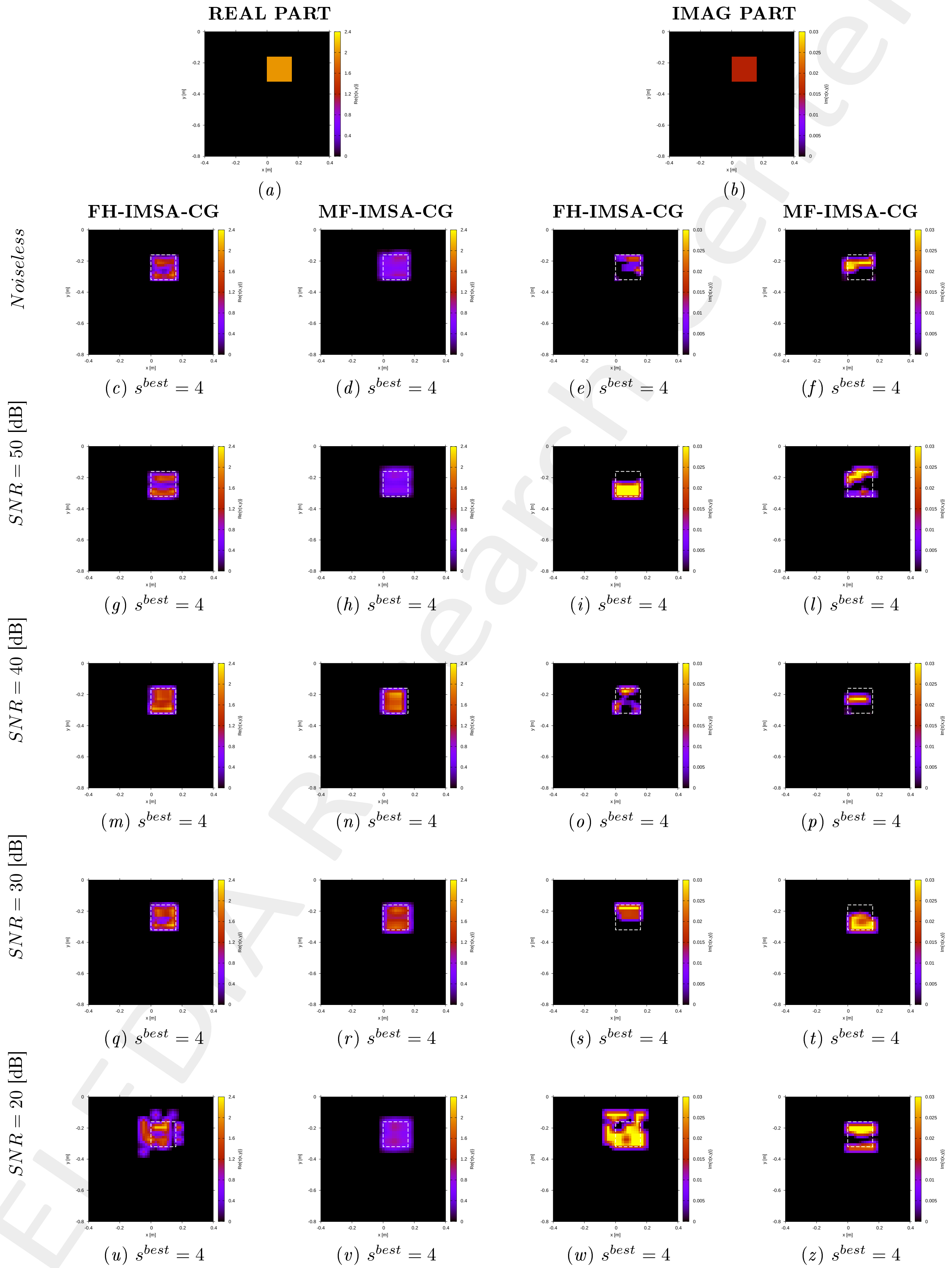

Figure 5: $FH-IMSA-CG$ vs. $MF-IMSA-CG$: Retrieved dielectric profiles at the $IMSA$ convergence step (s^{best}).

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2.1.4 $\sigma_{obj} = 10^{-3}$ [S/m] ($\Im\{\tau\} = 0.0$): Final reconstructions (@ $f_{max} = 600$ [MHz])

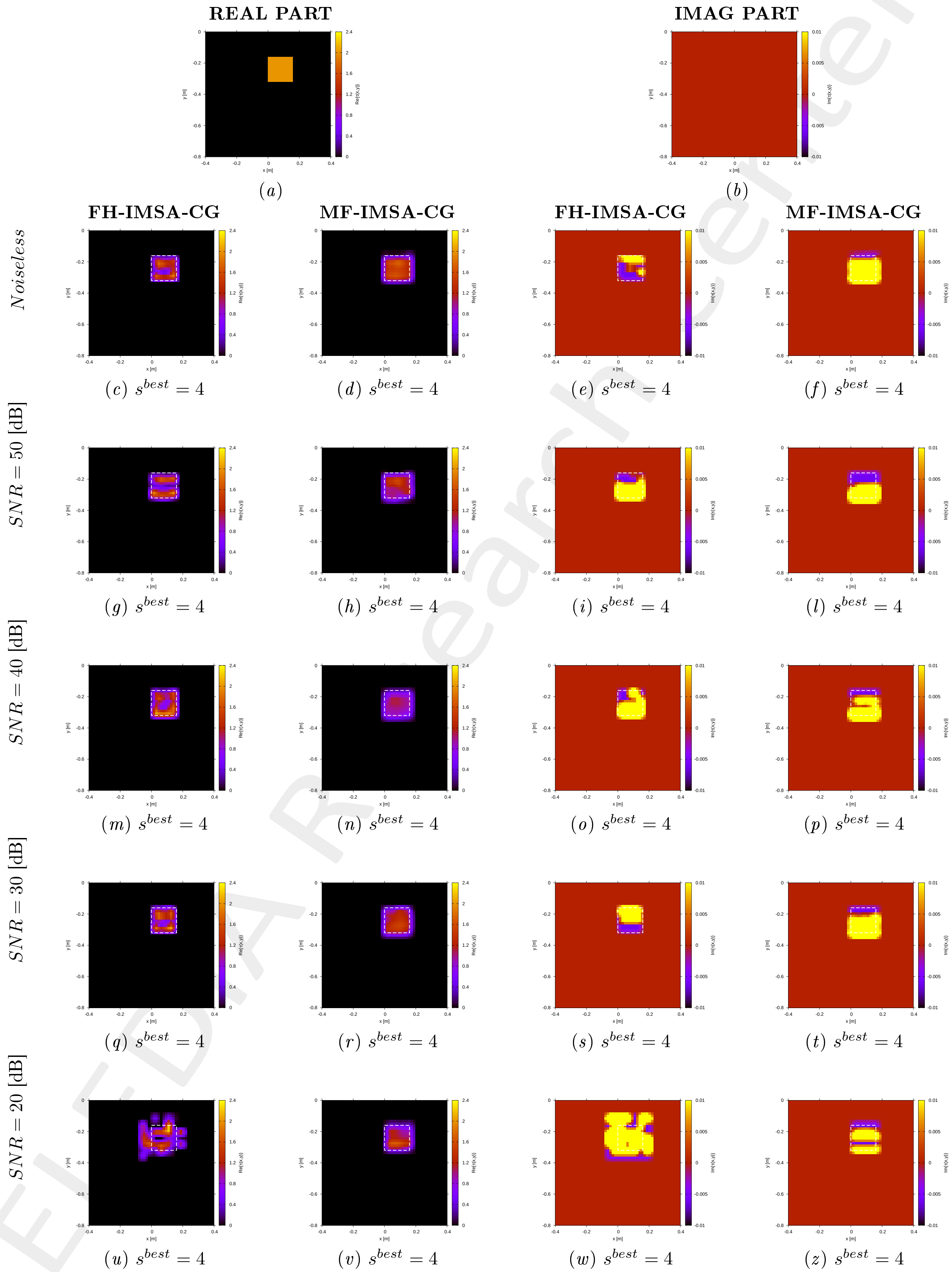

Figure 6: $FH-IMSA-CG$ vs. $MF-IMSA-CG$: Retrieved dielectric profiles at the $IMSA$ convergence step (s^{best}).

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2.1.5 $\sigma_{obj} = 5 \times 10^{-3}$ [S/m] ($\Im\{\tau\} = -1.19 \times 10^{-1}$): Final reconstructions (@ $f_{max} = 600$ [MHz])

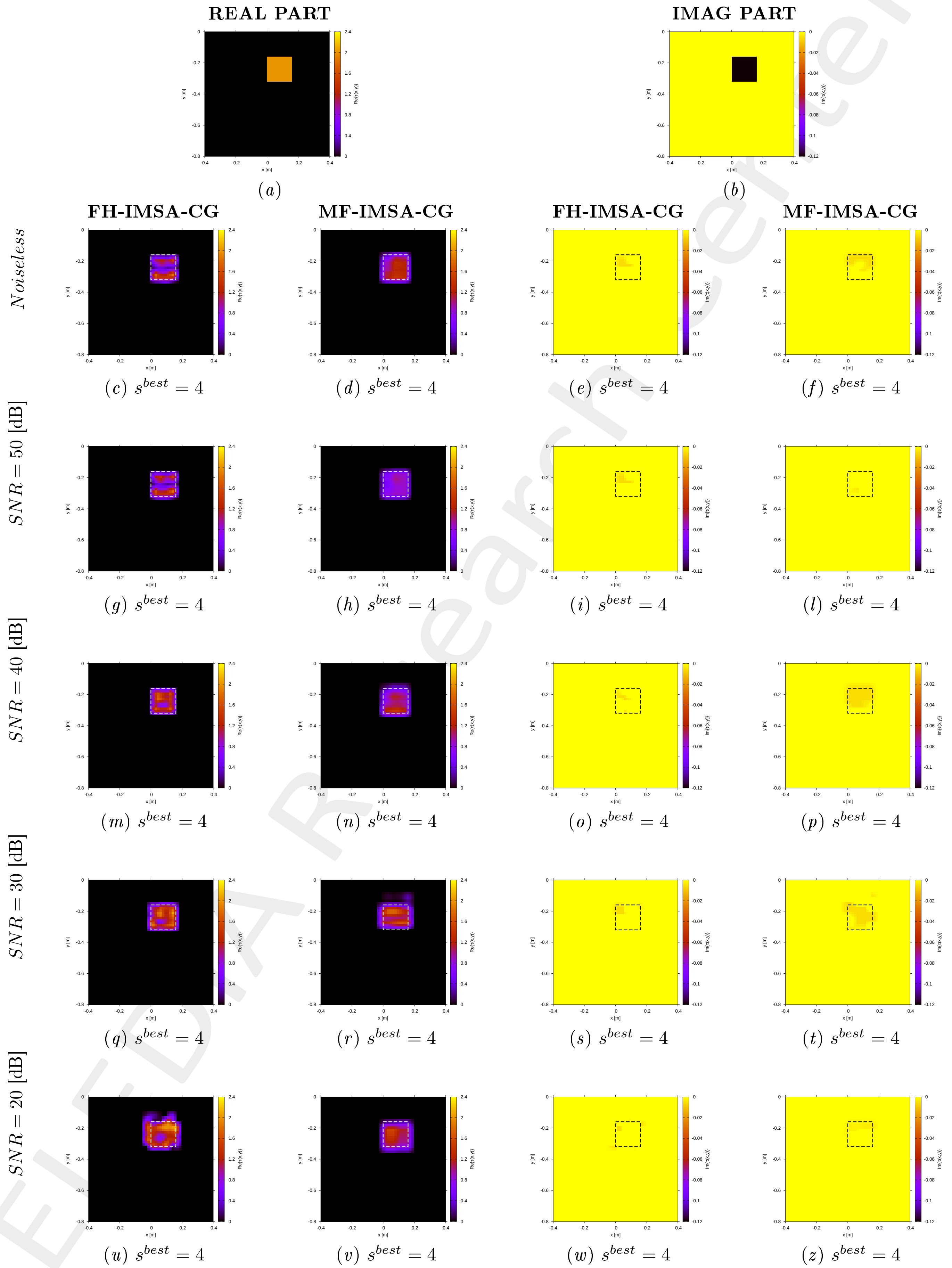

Figure 7: $FH-IMSA-CG$ vs. $MF-IMSA-CG$: Retrieved dielectric profiles at the $IMSA$ convergence step (s^{best}).

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2.1.6 Errors vs. σ_{obj}

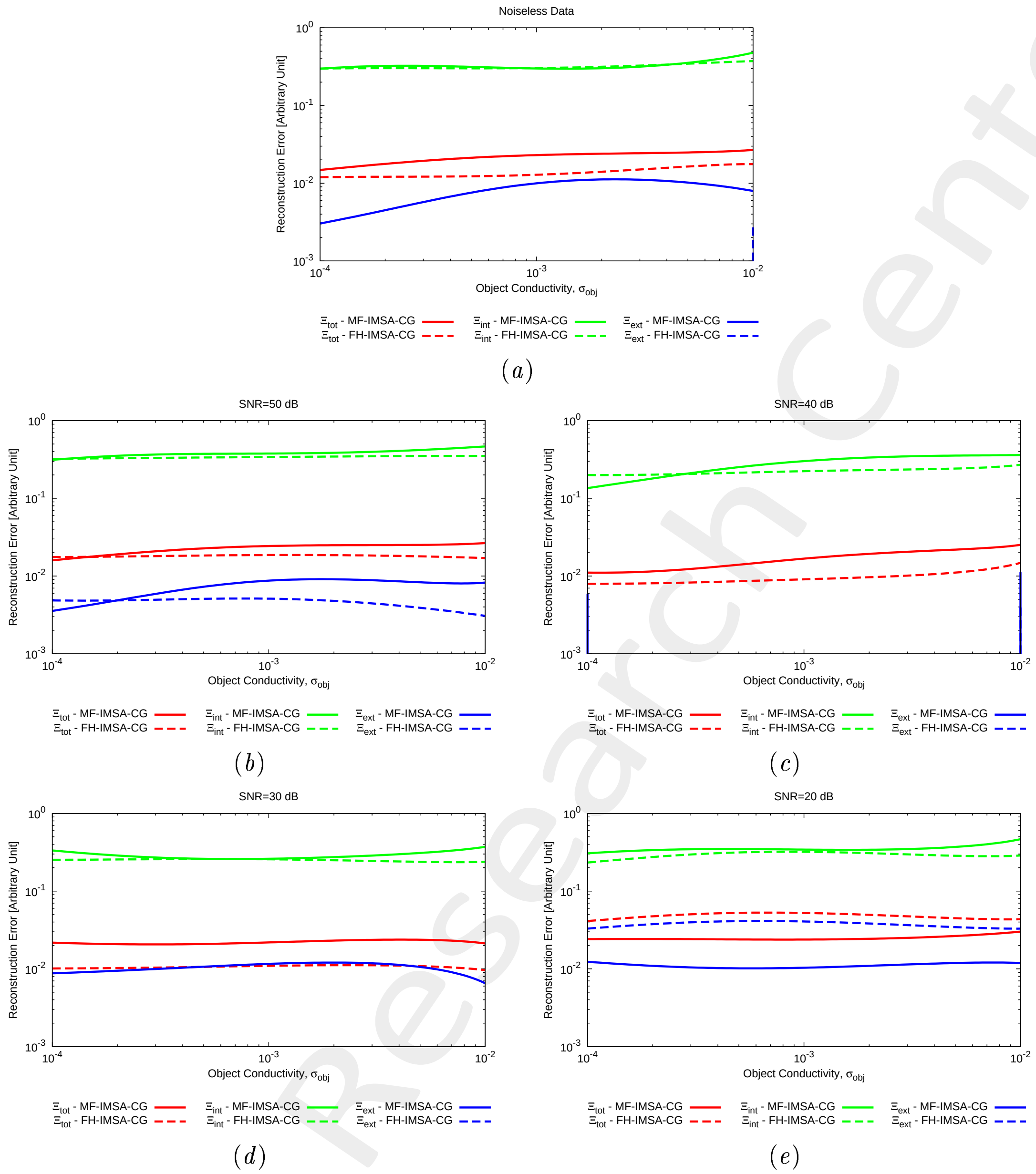

Figure 8: $FH-IMSA-CG$ vs. $MF-IMSA-CG$: Reconstruction errors vs. the object conductivity (σ_{obj}).

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