# TRANSFORMERLESS RESONANT CONVERTER DRIVING MULTIPLE OZONE CHAMBERS FOR HIGH FLOW RATES

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# TRANSFORMERLESS RESONANT CONVERTER DRIVING MULTIPLE OZONE CHAMBERS FOR HIGH FLOW RATES

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### **ABSTRACT**

Ozone gas (O<sub>3</sub>) is increasingly used as a bleaching agent due to its strong oxidising properties and less harmful to the environment. The most feasible method to generate O<sub>3</sub> is to connect high-voltage of several kV, high-frequency of about tens of kHz power supply across a Dielectric Barrier Discharge (DBD) chamber. Commonly, a resonant power supply with the ferrite transformer is used. However, the presence of the transformer increases the cost and footprint, while reduces the efficiency of the ozone generator. To overcome these deficiencies, this work proposes a design and implementation of an ozone power supply based on transformerless resonant converter. A standard full-bridge inverter is coupled to a resonant tank circuit, i.e. LC and LCL to achieve the required high voltage. The LCL exhibits a double resonance phenomenon resulting in very high voltage gain (above 150). Consequently, the power supply is capable of delivering sufficient potential to the chamber, even if the source voltage is below 20 V. Experimental measurements show that the efficiency of the proposed generator is 92%, while the maximum ozone concentration achieved 8.0 g/m<sup>3</sup> at a flow rate of 1.0 L/min. This performance is much higher than the existing transformer based resonant converters. This thesis also introduces the concept of ozone generation using multiple chambers. The objective is to maintain a high O<sub>3</sub> concentration at high flow rates. To realise the idea, the same LCL transformerless ozone generator is used to drive three ozone chambers in parallel. The results indicate that the achieved ozone concentration is three times higher than the output of a single chamber. Furthermore, a closed loop regulation to maintain a stable and constant chamber's output voltage is designed. Another contribution of this work is the introduction of a simple and effective method to characterise the DBD chamber parameters. Traditionally, Lissajous figures are employed to estimate the values of the chamber's resistor and capacitor. However, this method proves unsatisfactory at high frequencies. Using the proposed method, the chamber parameters can be determined accurately at various frequencies.

### **ABSTRAK**

Gas Ozon (O<sub>3</sub>) semakin digunakan sebagai agen peluntur disebabkan ciri-ciri pengoksidaannya yang kuat dan kurang memberi kesan merbahaya kepada persekitaran. Kaedah yang paling sesuai bagi menghasilkan O<sub>3</sub> ialah dengan menghubungkan beberapa kV voltan tinggi, frekuensi tinggi dengan berpuluh-puluh kuasa kHz melalui ruang yang tertutup Dielectric Barrier Discharge (DBD). Kebiasaannya, satu perbekalan kuasa resonan dengan transformer ferit digunakan. Tetapi, penggunaan transformer ini meningkatkan kos dan kesan tapak kaki serta mengurangkan keberkesanan janakuasa ozon. Untuk mengatasi kelemahankelemahan tersebut, kajian ini mencadangkan satu reka bentuk dan pelaksanaan perbekalan kuasa ozon berdasarkan penukar resonan tanpa transformer. Penyongsangan full-bridge standard dipasangkan kepada satu litar tangki resonan, i.e. LC dan LCL bagi mendapatkan voltan tinggi yang diperlukan. LCL menunjukkan fenomena resonan berpasangan yang menghasilkan voltan tinggi (melebihi 150). Maka, bekalan kuasa mampu memberi potensi yang cukup kepada ruang yang tertutup walaupun punca voltan kurang daripada 20 V. Pengukuran eksperimen menunjukkan keberkesanan janakuasa yang dicadangkan sebanyak 92%, sementara penumpuan ozon maksima mencapai 8.0 g/m<sup>3</sup> pada kadar pengaliran 1.0 L/min. Prestasi ini lebih tinggi berbanding penukar-penukar transformer berasaskan resonan sedia ada. Tesis juga memperkenalkan konsep penjanaan ozon menggunakan ruangruang tertutup pelbagai. Tujuannya ialah mengekalkan penumpuan O<sub>3</sub> yang tinggi pada kadar pengaliran yang tinggi. Bagi merialisasikan idea ini, penjanakuasa ozon LCL tanpa transformer diguna untuk menjadikan tiga ruang tertutup ozon selari. Keputusan telah membuktikan penumpuan ozon adalah tiga kali lebih tinggi berbanding keluaran satu ruang tertutup. Disamping itu satu peraturan gegelung direka bentuk bagi mengekalkan kestabilan pengeluaran voltan daripada ruang tertutup. Kajian turut memperkenalkan satu cara yang mudah dan efektif untuk menyifatkan had ruang tertutup DBD. Secara tradisinya, rajah Lissajous digunakan bagi menganggar nilai-nilai penahan dan pemuatan ruang tertutup. Namun, kaedah ini ternyata kurang berkesan pada frekuensi tinggi. Had-had ruang tertutup boleh ditentukan dengan tepat pada frekuensi berlainan dengan kaedah yang disyorkan.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC - Alternating Current

AWG - American Wire Guage

DBD - Dielectric Barrier Discharge

DC - Direct Current

ESR - Equivalent Series Resistance

IGBT - Insulated Gate Bipolar Transistor

MOSFET - Metal Oxide Semiconductor Field Effect Transistor

MPC - Magnetic Pulse Compressor

PLR - Parallel Loaded Resonant

PSD - Pulse Streamer Discharge

PT - Piezoelectric Transformer

PTFE - Polytetrafluoroethylene

PV - Photovoltaic

PWM - Pulse Width Modulation

RF - Radio Frequency

RMS - Root mean square

SLR - Series Loaded Resonant

SPLR - Series Parallel Loaded Resonant

VCO - Voltage Controlled Oscillator

V-Q - Voltage-Charge

V-I - Voltage-Current

ZVS - Zero Voltage Switching

ZCD - Zero crossing Detector

ZVZCS - Zero Voltage Zero Current Switching

# LIST OF SYMBOLS

 $A_P$  - Area Product

 $A_V$  - Voltage gain

 $A_{Vm}$  - Maximum voltage gain

 $A_{V1}$  - Voltage gain due to  $L_1C_1$ 

 $A_{V2}$  - Voltage gain due to  $L_2C_g$ 

 $A_{w}(B)$  - Bare wire area

 $\beta_m$  - Flux density

 $C_a$  - Capacitor due to discharge gap

- Capacitor due to dielectric material

 $C_g$  - Chamber capacitance

 $C_{gn}$  - Equivalent capacitence of N Parallel Chambers

*C<sub>m</sub>* - Measurement Capacitor

 $C_o$  - Output capacitance of piezoelectric transformer

 $C_p$  - Parallel capacitor

 $C_s$  - Series capacitor

 $C_t$  - Fixed capacitor

*f* - Frequency

 $f_{osc}$  - Oscillator frequency

 $f_s$  - Switching frequency

 $f_r$  - Resonant frequency

 $\Delta f$  - Frequency variation

 $I_{C_p}$  - Maximum current flowing through  $C_p$ 

 $I_{pk}$  - Peak Current

 $I_D$  - Drain to source current of the switches

 $i_g$  - Current flowing into chamber

 $i_{gn}$  - Current flowing into N chambers

 $i_{M1}$ ,  $i_{M2}$ , - Current flowing through switches  $M_1$ ,  $M_2$ ,  $M_3$  and

 $i_{M3}, i_{M4}$  M<sub>4</sub>

 $I_{C1}$ ,  $i_{C2}$ , - Current flowing through capacitors  $C_1$ ,  $C_2$ ,  $C_3$  and

 $i_{C3}, i_{C4}$  C<sub>4</sub>

 $i_{in}$  - Input Current

J - Current Density

 $K_u$  - Window utilization factor

<sup>k</sup>P, <sup>k</sup>D - Sub shell level of an atom

 $L_D$  - Leakage inductance

 $L_M$  - Magnetizing inductance

 $L_S$  - Series Inductor

M - Third collision partner

M<sub>1</sub>, M<sub>2</sub>, - Switching devices (MOSFETs)

 $M_3$ ,  $M_4$ 

*N* - Number of chambers

O<sub>2</sub> - Oxygen molecule

O<sub>3</sub> - Ozone molecule

 $P_g$  - Power consumed in the chamber

 $P_{gn}$  - Power consumed in the *N* chambers

 $P_{in}$  - Accumulative input power

 $P_{r_{I,S}}$  - Power losses in inductor  $L_S$ 

 $P_{r_{L_{s1}}}$  - Power losses in inductor  $L_{S1}$ 

 $P_{r_{Ls2}}$  - Power losses in inductor  $L_{S2}$ 

 $P_{-}$  - Power losses in inductor  $C_P$ 

P - Power losses in the switching device

Q - Quality factor

 $Q_P$  - Loaded quality factor

 $R_g$  - Chamber resistance

 $R_{gn}$  - Equivalent resistance of N Parallel Chambers

 $R_t$  - Multi-turn Potentiometer

S - Chamber electrode area

V - Voltage

V<sub>DS</sub> - Drain to source voltage of switching device

 $v_g$  - Voltage across chamber

 $v_{gn}$  - Voltage across N chambers

 $V_{in}$  - Input voltage  $V_{out}$  - Output voltage

 $V_Z$  - Chamber initiation voltage

W - Energy per cycle

 $W_a$  - Window area

 $W_{a(eff)} \qquad \quad \text{-} \qquad Window \ effective \ area$ 

 $\omega_{\scriptscriptstyle p}$  - Undamped natural frequency

 $Z_{in}$  - Input Impedance

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#### CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The use of ozone gas (O<sub>3</sub>) has increased due to its excellent oxidizing properties. It exhibits strong anti-germicidal properties, a characteristic that is useful for air and water purification [1, 2]. Unlike other oxidizing chemicals such as chlorine, ozone leaves no harmful residue because its primary by-product is oxygen. It is used in many diverse fields such as the agricultural, pharmaceutical and solid waste treatment industries. In the semiconductor industry, dissolved ozone in water is used for the surface cleaning of device fabrication, as an alternative to sulphuric acid and ammonia-based mixtures [3]. It has been used in the food processing industry as a sanitizer. In hospitals, ozone is mainly used as a disinfectant for surgical equipment, clothes and linen. In agriculture, ozone is used for postharvest treatment to increase the shelf-life and freshness of fruits, flowers and vegetables [4, 5]. Moreover, ozone-enriched water is used for hydroponic applications and for the removal of pesticide residues from fruits. In waste treatment plants, solid waste is oxidized and the water is recycled for cooling tower requirements [6]. Although the application of ozone is widely recognised, its production is somewhat hindered due to the insufficient efficiency and high cost of equipment for ozone generation systems.

The best and most common economic method to generate ozone in normal atmospheric environments is by using the concept of electrical discharge.

Electrically, different types of discharge, such as corona, pulsed streamer and dielectric barrier discharge (DBD), have been applied for ozone generation [3, 7, 8]. The most viable method to generate ozone under atmospheric conditions and at ambient temperature is DBD [9, 10]. An important property of DBD is the creation of cold non-equilibrium plasma at atmospheric pressure. The DBD chamber typically consists of two electrodes; one is connected to a high voltage AC power supply, while the ground electrode is usually covered with dielectric [11]. Due to the presence of dielectric inside the chamber, this method is known as DBD or silent discharge. Air or oxygen is forced to flow between the electrodes, in a space known as the discharge gap. If the voltage applied to the electrodes creates a sufficiently high electric field, the oxygen molecules will be broken into oxygen atoms. The latter combines with other oxygen molecules to form ozone.

Commonly, glass or alumina ceramic are used as dielectrics for the DBD chambers. These materials are by nature fragile, and hence the chamber is constructed with a typical thickness between one to four millimetres. For one millimetre of thickness, the initiation voltage (the voltage required to initiate ozone formation) is approximately 10–20 kV [12, 13]. Consequently, with these materials a high voltage power supply is required. Recently, the use of mica as the dielectric has been demonstrated. Mica is flexible and non-fragile; by using this material a chamber can be readily constructed with a thickness of less than 0.5 mm. It has been shown that for the same discharge gap, mica exhibits a much lower initiation voltage – about one order of magnitude lower than glass or ceramic [14]. The lower voltage offers several advantages, namely lower power consumption and reduced stress on the dielectric. Subsequently the ozone power supply can be built at lower cost, of smaller volume and with none of the special safety precautions generally associated with high voltage equipment.

Traditionally, a low-frequency (50–60Hz) AC source, coupled with a high transformer turns ratio, is used as the power supply for the ozone generator [15-17]. This approach requires a high voltage to be present across the chamber, since it must operate close to the discharge potential. The high voltage limits ozone production in several ways. First it restricts the use of different dielectric materials due to the

inability of these materials to withstand high voltage stresses. Secondly, the high voltage limits the discharge gap size, which in turn limits the amount of ozone gas that can be produced in the ozone chamber. Thirdly, a low-frequency system is also associated with lower power conversion efficiency and larger power converter size [18].

To increase the ozone quantity, the chamber is fed by a high-frequency power supply. The high-frequency operation increases the power density applied to the electrode surface. This increases the ozone production for a given surface area, while decreasing the necessary peak voltage. Furthermore, at lower voltages it is possible to experiment with various types of dielectric materials with much lower voltage stress levels. Subsequently, the power supply can be built at lower cost, with smaller volume, low power consumption and no special safety precautions that are generally associated with high voltage equipment [19].

Although high-frequency resonant power converters are widely utilised for generating ozone, it has always been a challenge to increase ozone production. Typically, high-frequency resonant converters of various topologies are employed for ozone power supply. A step-up transformer is required to achieve high voltage across the chamber [20, 21]. Since these power supplies utilise high transformer turn ratios, the associated leakage inductance results in high voltage spikes across the switch during commutation. Hence, the switch utilisation factor is low and a protection circuit is necessary to avoid the destruction of the switch, which will increase the cost and complexity of the circuit. Another disadvantage of the transformer is electromagnetic interference and core saturation, particularly at high frequency operation. Moreover, the power supplies are fed by single or three-phase utility supplies. While a piezoelectric transformer (PT) is introduced to alleviate some of these problems, its bandwidth at resonance is extremely narrow; and as a result a closed loop control is mandatory [22]. Furthermore, a high step-up ratio PT with a reasonably high power rating is not readily available on the market.

In view of these drawbacks of resonant converters utilising transformers, this work introduces the transformerless power converter to improve the efficiency of

conventional ozone generation systems. The main idea is to remove the transformer from the converter and utilise a resonant circuit to achieve high voltage. The proposed approach offers several advantages: (1) with the absence of a transformer there will be no high voltage spikes in the power switches, resulting in increased efficiency, (2) the use of a protection circuit for switches is not necessary, (3) due to high-voltage gain, the power converter can be fed with a low-voltage source, and (4) the power converter cost and footprint are reduced and its efficiency is increased.

## 1.2 Objective, Scope and Importance of Research

## 1.2.1 Objective of Research

The objective of this research is to analyse, design and implement a power supply to drive multiple ozone chambers for high flow rates. The work focuses on the resonant converter design procedures, the effects of resonant circuit parameters variation and the control circuit to regulate the output voltage of the chambers. The expected outcome of this work is an efficient transformerless converter that is capable of driving multiple chambers, which can be fed by low voltage sources such as photovoltaic modules or batteries.

## 1.2.2 Scope of Research

Based on the objectives, the research of this thesis works towards the following:

(i) A strategic and critical and literature review of power supplies for

ozone generation is carried out. In this review, the basics principles of chambers and previous work on power supplies used for ozone generation are discussed. Their strengths and limitations are highlighted. Besides giving a comprehensive overview of existing power supplies, the objective of the review is to look for a gap in the literature, particularly on the issue of power supplies for ozone generation.

- (ii) In order to design an efficient high-voltage high-frequency power supply it is necessary to accurately comprehend the parameters of the chamber. Thus a simple and effective method to calculate the model parameters of a chamber is proposed. The correctness of the calculated chamber parameters are validated by designing resonant converters for ozone generation.
- (iii) The study on the selection of practicable resonant circuit topology to achieve a high voltage across the ozone chamber is conducted. Prototypes of two power converters with *LC* and *LCL* resonant circuits based on a full-bridge inverter are constructed. The efficiency analysis of both power converters is carried out by theoretical calculation, simulation and direct measurement. The ozone production is presented in terms of ozone concentration and ozone yield as a function of chamber voltage. An efficiency comparison of the transformerless power converter is made with previous transformer-based resonant power converters.
- (iv) An ozone generation system to maintain ozone concentrations at high flow rates is developed. This is achieved by connecting three chambers in parallel and is driven by single *LCL* resonant power converter. The chambers are fed at optimum flow rate to achieve high ozone concentration at higher flow rates. Moreover, a closed loop feedback controller is proposed to regulate the output voltage of the ozone chamber. This control system is able to accommodate changes in *LCL* component values and the adding/removal of ozone chambers.

## 1.2.3 Importance of Research

Due to the steadily increasing demand for ozone in various applications, its production at high flow rates is a challenging task. Since ozone is an unstable gas, it must be generated and consumed on site. In places where a utility supply is inaccessible, there is a demand for ozone generators powered by photovoltaic modules or batteries. Although, high frequency resonant power converters are widely employed in ozone generation systems. The drawback with the conventional power converters is its low efficiency due to the use of a step-up transformer.

The problem can be overcome by employing a transformerless resonant power converter for ozone generation. With the introduction of a resonant circuit to achieve high voltage-gain, the power converter can be fed by a low-voltage source such as a photovoltaic module or battery. Hence it can be used in places that lack electricity. Moreover, ozone production can be increased by driving multiple parallel ozone chambers.

## 1.3 Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is composed of seven chapters. Their contents are outlined as follows:

(i) Chapter 2 briefly reviews ozone generation techniques and their corresponding power supplies. The fundamentals of ozone formation are introduced. The power supplies are categorised into various groups, namely DC, pulse, line frequency and high frequency resonant circuit. The merits and drawbacks of each power supply are highlighted. The benefits of transformerless resonant power supplies over transformer-based power supplies are stressed.

- (ii) Chapter 3 introduces a method to determine the ozone chamber parameters in considerable detail. The limitations of linear and nonlinear models of chambers using the conventional Lissajous plot method are outlined. The proposed parameter determination approach is simple and accurate.
- (iii) Chapter 4 describes the operation of the *LC* resonant circuit power converter based on a full-bridge inverter. The overall operating modes are explained. The design procedure for *LC* circuit parameter values is outlined. A comparison of simulation and experimental results is carried out to validate the accuracy of the chamber model parameters.
- (iv) Chapter 5 covers the analysis, design and implementation of a transformerless LCL resonant circuit power converter. The benefits of the proposed LCL resonant circuit over normal LC circuits are elaborated. The experimental results of ozone production and efficiency of the power converter are provided.
- (v) Chapter 6 provides the analysis, design and implementation of multiple parallel ozone chambers for high flow rates. The closed loop feedback control circuit used to regulate the chamber's voltage is described. The laboratory prototype based on the *LCL* resonant circuit is capable of simultaneously driving three ozone chambers.
- (vi) Chapter 7 concludes the work and highlights the contribution of this research. Several ideas for future work are also proposed.

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