Variable Carrier Phase Shift Method for Integrated Contactless Field Excitation System of Electrically Excited Synchronous Motors

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October 30, 2023

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***Index Terms*—Contactless field excitation, wireless power transfer, motor drive, SPWM, carrier phase shift**

I. Introduction

The interest of the automotive industry is continuously increasing in electric vehicles (EVs) or hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) rather than internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEVs) [1]. One of the critical parts of EVs and HEVs is the traction system, where permanent magnet synchronous motors (PMSMs) are commonly preferred due to their high torque density [2]. However, high cost and limited supply of rare-earth magnets such as Neodymium (Nd) and Samarium (Sm) encourage less-PM or no-PM motors such as electrically excited synchronous motors (EESMs) [3]–[6]. EESMs can decrease the total cost and have flexible control thanks to their externally excited field windings [7], [8]. Moreover, they are more reliable as the demagnetization of PMs due to high temperature is not an issue in EESMs. However, power transfer to their rotating field windings is challenging.

The most common method to excite field windings is to use slip rings with conductor rings and carbon brushes. Although slip rings are a mature and cost-effective technology, they require periodic maintenance due to the wear of the brushes [9]. Another method is to use brushless exciters that are, in fact, synchronous generators (SGs) with rotating rectifiers. However, this method is not applicable for variable speed drives such as in EVs [10]. Alternative to these methods, contactless field excitation (CFE) systems based on wireless power transfer (WPT) are proposed as shown in Fig. 1.a [11]–[15]. They have no physical contact between the rotating and stationary frames, eliminating the maintenance issue. However, extra high-frequency converter increases the cost and complexity.

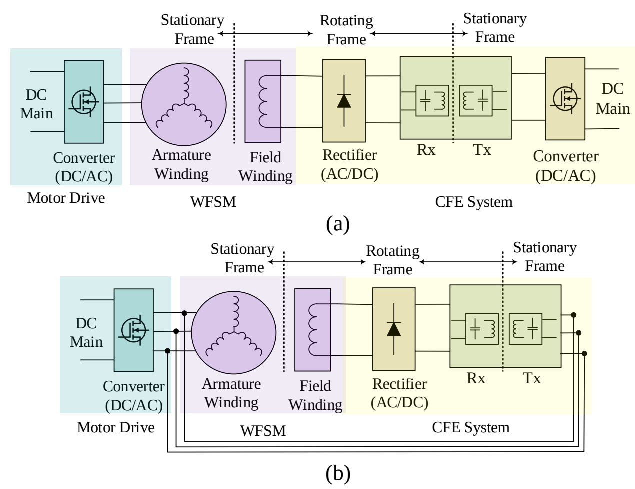

Fig. 1. The circuit diagram of a conventional and the proposed CFE based on a WPT system for EESMs. a) The conventional system. b) The proposed system.

The VSI of the motor drive generates a low-frequency modulated voltage with high-frequency switching harmonics. This low-frequency modulated voltage controls the speed and torque of the motor, whereas the motor windings filter out the high-frequency voltage harmonics thanks to high phase inductances. In this paper, it is proposed that these high-frequency harmonics of the existing converter of the motor drive can be used to energize the field winding while the low-frequency modulated voltage can still be used to drive the motor. The proposed system is shown in Fig. 1.b.

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Motor drives use modulation techniques such as sinusoidal pulse width modulation (SPWM) or space-vector pulse width modulation (SVPWM). Yet, these modulation techniques affect the content of the high-frequency switching harmonics in addition to controlling the low-frequency modulated voltage. Therefore, an independent control algorithm for the high-frequency switching harmonic components is required. In this study, a novel variable carrier phase-shift method (VCPSM) is proposed to achieve independent field current control while driving the motor. The main advantage of the proposed method is that it can be applied in conventional motor drives by just updating the software, so the system can be easily implemented without extra cost.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section II presents the system structure and defines the problem. Section III proposes the variable carrier phase shift method and control strategy of the field current. Section IV gives the WPT system's design stage regarding the proposed method's restriction. Section V presents the experimental results.

II. System Structure and Problem Definition

The proposed system aims for an integrated contactless field excitation system for electrically excited synchronous motors of EVs. A 2-level voltage source inverter (VSI) is the most common topology in commercial EV drives [16]. In the past, discrete IGBTs or module IGBTs have been used with their switching frequencies around 20 kHz [17]. Since the wireless power transfer systems become bulky in this frequency range, the proposed integrated CFE system is not feasible. However, in recent years, wide band-gap semiconductors such as SiC MOSFETs or GaN HEMTs are becoming more popular in the automotive industry [18]. Thanks to their high switching frequencies up to 100 kHz, the passive components can be shrunk [19]. Similarly, a higher switching frequency reduces the size of the transmitter and receiver coils of the WPT system and makes the proposed integrated CFE system more feasible.

Several topologies, such as capacitive power transfer (CPT) and inductive power transfer (IPT), can be used in CFE systems [20]–[28]. Reducing the size of the system is essential as the system should fit inside the motor. Therefore, the IPT system is chosen thanks to its wide range of frequency, power, and smaller size. In IPT systems, Tx and Rx coils are loosely coupled, resulting in inherently low power factors. Therefore, compensation circuits are generally used [29]–[31]. Series compensation is preferred in the Tx coil as a VSI is used in motor drives. Besides, the Rx side compensation is not used since achieving a lightweight and small volume on the rotating side is desired in the proposed system.

In the remaining parts of the paper, a series-none (SN) topology is selected, and a 2-level 3-phase 3-wire (3Φ-3W) VSI (driven by SPWM) is used, although the proposed system can be adapted to different converters, modulation techniques, or WPT systems.

A. Problem Definition

Conventional WPT systems have two wire inputs, and motor drives have 3-wire outputs so that the WPT system can be connected between any two of three phases, as given in Fig. 2. In this configuration (the WPT system will be connected

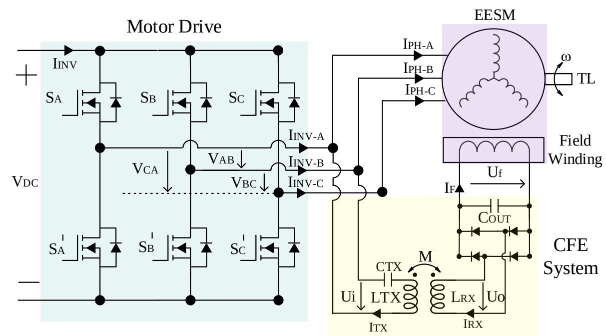

Fig. 2. The circuit diagram of the proposed system.

between legs A and B), the excitation voltage of the WPT system (U_i) can be calculated as in (1)

$$U_i = V_{DC} S_{AB} = V_{DC}\left(S_A - S_B\right) \tag{1}$$

where the switching function is calculated by double Fourier series as in (2) for SPWM.

$$\begin{aligned} S = &\frac{1}{2} + \frac{m_a}{2}\cos\left(\omega_o t + \theta_o\right) \\ &+ \frac{2}{\pi}\sum_{i=1}^{i=\infty} J_o\left(i\frac{\pi}{2}m_a\right)\sin\left(i\frac{\pi}{2}\right)\cos\left(i(\omega_c t + \phi_c)\right) \\ &+ \frac{2}{\pi}\sum_{i=1}^{i=\infty}\sum_{k=-\infty}^{k=\infty}\left(\begin{array}{c} \frac{1}{i}J_k\left(i\frac{\pi}{2}m_a\right)\sin\left((i+k)\frac{pi}{2}\right) \\ \cos\left(i(w_c t + \phi_c) + k(w_o t + \theta_o)\right)\end{array}\right) \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

There are four main components in SPWM for each leg: DC, fundamental, switching, and sideband harmonics. However, only the first switching harmonic and its sideband components (denoted by U_i^f) dominate in the WPT system since the WPT system behaves like a bandpass filter characteristic, and its resonant is tuned to near the switching frequency. Therefore, only U_i^f can be used in the mathematical model. U_i^f is given in (3), which is calculated by taking $(i = 1)$, $(i = 1, k = -2)$, and $(i = 1, k = 2)$ in (2).

In conventional SPWM, each phase uses the same carrier signals. Hence, according to (3), the switching frequency disappears in U_i^f, and just only its sidebands exist. U_i and U_i^f are plotted in Fig. 3 for different modulation indices. It is observed that U_i^f increases with the modulation index, and zero voltage (zero excitation) occurs at some moments.

Therefore, a control method is required to achieve a continuous/constant power transfer at the switching harmonic for the WPT system without disturbing the fundamental component. However, conventional control methods of the WPT system are not suitable for this. A conventional method is to control the duty cycle, but this also affects the fundamental component. Another method is frequency detuning control, but it cannot guarantee continuous power transfer since zero voltage moments exist, indicated via red arrows in Fig. 3. The last method is to add a post-regulation converter or use an active rectifier

$$\frac{U_i^f(m_a)}{V_{DC}} = \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s-2f_o)t+\phi_A-2\theta_A) - \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s-2f_o)t+\phi_B-2\theta_B) + \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s)t+\phi_A)$$
$$- \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s)t+\phi_B) + \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s+2f_o)t+\phi_A+2\theta_A) - \frac{2}{\pi}J_2\left(m_a\frac{\pi}{2}\right)cos(2\pi(f_s+2f_o)t+\phi_B+2\theta_B) \quad (3)$$

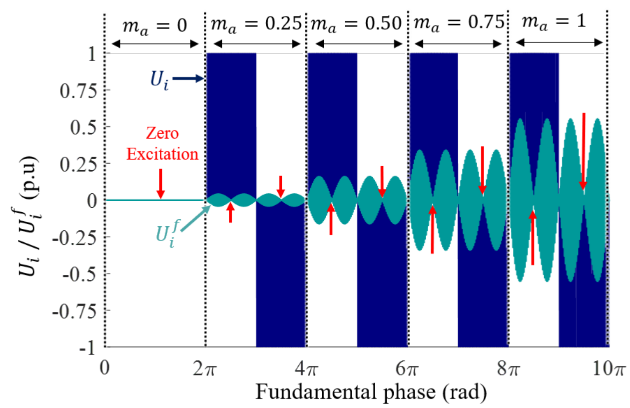

Fig. 3. The normalized input excitation voltage waveforms of the WPT system. Zero voltage points at input excitation voltage are indicated by red arrows.

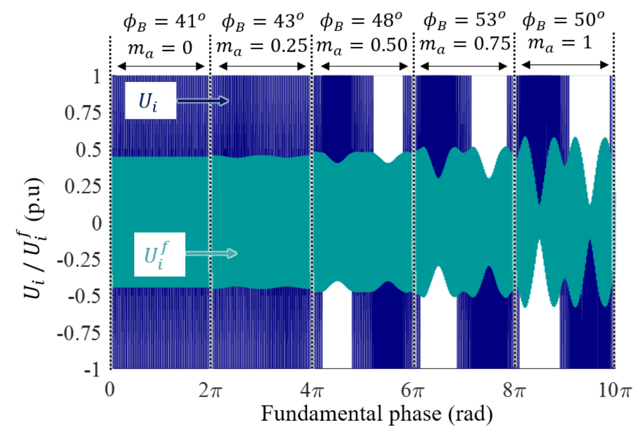

Fig. 4. The normalized input excitation voltage waveforms of the WPT system.

at the output of the WPT system. However, this increases the system's cost and complexity, and the problem of zero voltage moments still exists. In this paper, a new control method, introducing variable carrier phase shift, is proposed to avoid zero voltage moments and achieve continuous power transfer for changing modulation indices.

The proposed method is similar to a dual-frequency power transfer system with a single converter [32]–[36]. In [33], a single-inverter-based dual-frequency WPT system is proposed using the programmed PWM method. However, the programmed PWM method is computationally complex and requires switching angle calculations using offline algorithms, which is not feasible in dynamic systems such as our cases. In [34], [35], multi-frequencies are achieved by comparing superimposed sinusoidal reference signals with a high-frequency triangular carrier signal. However, in these methods, the switching frequency is higher than the operating frequencies of the WPT system, which increases the switching losses. In [36], multi-frequency components are achieved by a multi-level inverter (MLI) with a switching frequency lower than its two-level alternatives. However, this system uses a higher number of switching components, which is actually the opposite of the main proposal. In [37], a carrier-phase shift (CPS) method is proposed to control the switching harmonic independently. The amount of the CPS is determined according to the modulation index. Since a constant CPS is applied until the modulation index changes, a low-frequency ripple exist there.

The low-frequency fluctuation is seen in Fig. 3. Although the low-frequency fluctuation may be acceptable in rotating loads and can be reduced by increasing the output capacitance, it should be mitigated in the application of the field excitation system since it also creates a torque and speed ripple in the motor. In order to solve this problem, the variable carrier phase shift method (VCPSM) is proposed. This method calculates and updates the carrier phase shift for each duty cycle change rather than updating the modulation.

III. The Proposed Variable Carrier Phase Shift Method (VCPSM) and Field Current Regulation

The variable carrier phase shift method aims to achieve a constant switching harmonic during each switching interval. In this section, firstly, a mathematical model is developed for SPWM. Then, the selection of the magnitude of the switching component is discussed. Finally, the regulation strategy of the field current is presented.

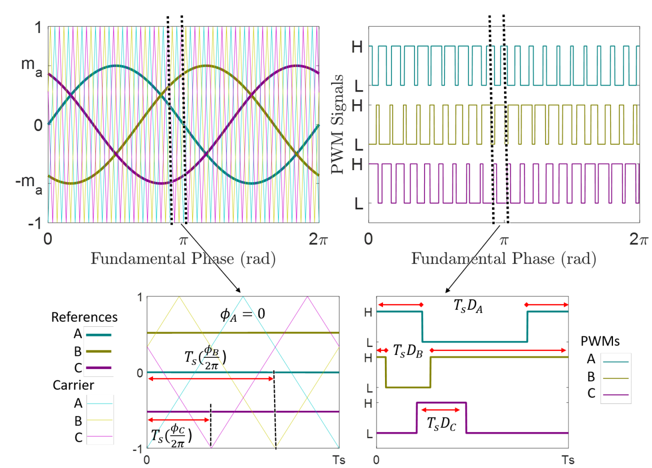

Fig. 5. The key waveforms of SPWM. For visual clarity, the switching frequency is decreased.

A. Mathematical Modelling

An example of SPWM with reference, carrier, and PWM signals is shown in Fig. 5 where different carrier signals are used for each phase. Here, the switching harmonic can be calculated as presented in (4) where ϕ_A, ϕ_B, and ϕ_C are the carrier phase angles.

$$\begin{aligned} S_A(t)^{f_s} &= \frac{2}{\pi} sin(\pi D_A) cos(2\pi f_s t + \phi_A) \\ S_B(t)^{f_s} &= \frac{2}{\pi} sin(\pi D_B) cos(2\pi f_s t + \phi_B) \\ S_C(t)^{f_s} &= \frac{2}{\pi} sin(\pi D_C) cos(2\pi f_s t + \phi_C) \end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

The normalized magnitude of the switching component for the phase-to-phase connection is calculated as in (5).

$$\begin{aligned} S_{AB}(t)^{f_s} &= S_A(t)^{f_s} - S_B(t)^{f_s} \\ &= \frac{2}{\pi} sin(\pi D_A) cos(2\pi f_s t + \phi_A) \\ &\quad - \frac{2}{\pi} sin(\pi D_B) cos(2\pi f_s t + \phi_B) \end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

A phasor operation is required to calculate the peak value of the switching harmonic. Utilizing (5), it can be calculated as in (6).

$$\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}} = \frac{2}{\pi} \sqrt{\begin{matrix} sin(\pi D_A)^2 + sin(\pi D_B)^2 \\ -2(sin(\pi D_A)(sin(\pi D_B) cos(\phi_A - \phi_B) \end{matrix}} \tag{6}$$

Thus, the magnitude of the switching component can be adjusted by introducing a phase shift between the carrier signals. The required carrier-phase-shift value to keep $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ constant at the desired value can be calculated using (5), and found as given in (7).

$$\begin{aligned} \phi_{CPS} &= \phi_A - \phi_B = \\ & cos^{-1}\left[\frac{sin(\pi D_A)^2 + sin(\pi D_B)^2 - (\frac{\pi}{2}\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}})^2}{2 sin(\pi D_A) sin(\pi D_B)}\right] \end{aligned} \tag{7}$$

The amount of carrier phase shift is restricted between 0^o and 180^o, which gives minimum and maximum $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$. Besides, D_A and D_B are not independent variables, and they follow the reference signals. Therefore, the reachable $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ is restricted and changes regarding D_A, D_B, and ϕ_{CPS}. For these reasons, the selection of $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ that is independent of the modulation index is challenging.

B. Selection of $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$

The maximum and minimum values of $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ should be complied by triangle inequality, as given in (8).

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{2}{\pi}|sin(\pi D_A) - sin(\pi D_B)| &< \hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}} \\ &< \frac{2}{\pi}|sin(\pi D_A) + sin(\pi D_B)| \end{aligned} \tag{8}$$

Hence, these maximum and minimum values change according to modulation indices, as shown in Fig. 6. The aim is to achieve a constant $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ for any motor operation. However, it is observed that the range of the allowed $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ is reduced by increasing the modulation index, and it may not guarantee

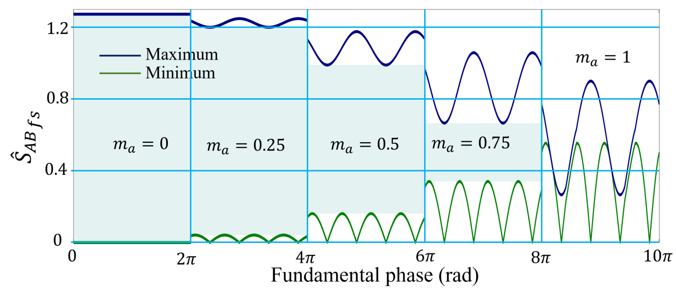

Fig. 6. The minimum and maximum normalized input excitation voltage limits for the proposed method under several modulation indices. The reachable excitation voltages are indicated by turquoise.

a constant value for a higher modulation index. The allowed $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ values are plotted along modulation indices in Fig.7. The allowed range of the WPT system is inversely proportional

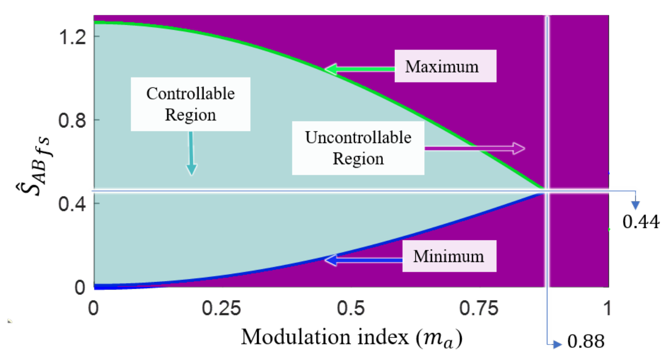

Fig. 7. Controllable and uncontrollable regions of the proposed method regarding modulation index.

to the range of the motor drive control. For example, $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ can be controlled between 0.30 and 0.60 for the modulation index below 0.6. Therefore, if a higher $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ is desired, the modulation index of the motor drive should be restricted to a lower value, which also decreases the DC-link utilization. However, the selection of $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$, DC-link voltage, and modulation index are related to the system requirements. In this study, as a proof of concept, the $\hat{S}_{AB_{f_s}}$ limit is selected at 0.44, where the motor operation should be restricted to a maximum modulation index of 0.8.

C. Field Current Regulation

In the proposed method, the power of the WPT system is not directly controlled, but it only guarantees to keep the input excitation voltage at a constant value. Therefore, a control strategy for the field current should be developed. Several conventional methods are used in WPT systems, such as duty cycle control and post-regulation converter (or active rectifier). The duty cycle control is unsuitable for cooperating with the proposed method since it also changes the fundamental component. A post-regulation converter could be used, but it is not preferred as it increases the cost and complexity of the system. Alternatively, the frequency detuning method that controls the gain of the WPT system can be used, which does not require extra hardware and is simple to implement, so it is preferred in the proposed system. Accordingly, the overall control block diagram of the hybrid control strategy consisting of frequency detuning and variable carrier phase shift methods is presented in Fig. 8.

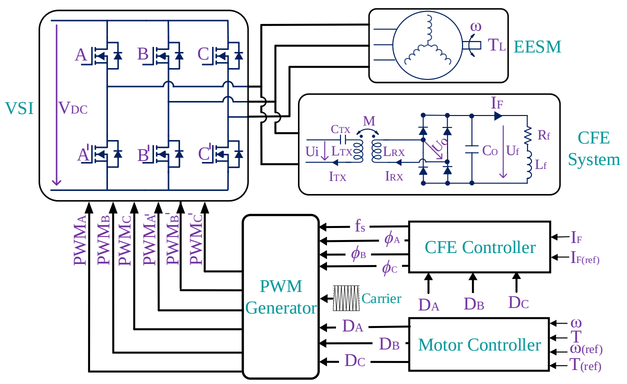

Fig. 8. The control schemes of the proposed CFE system.

Firstly, the motor controller decides the duty cycle according to the speed and torque references. Then, the CFE controller calculates the amount of carrier phase shifts by using these duty cycles; hence it keeps the input excitation to the desired value. Lastly, the CFE controller determines the switching frequency, which controls the gain of the WPT system, so the field current can be controlled accordingly.

IV. The Design of the WPT System

In this section, the design steps of the series-none (SN) compensated WPT system will be presented. SN topology can be modeled by ideal transformer, leakage, and magnetizing inductances using the first harmonic approximation (FHA) as shown in Fig. 9.

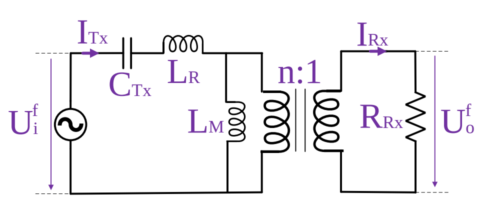

Fig. 9. The first harmonic approximation circuit diagram of the WPT system.

The load of the WPT system is the field winding of the EESM, and due to the field winding having high inductance, the high-frequency components of the field current are filtered out inherently. In the FHA model, to refer to the resistance of the input of the rectifier, only field resistance can be considered; in other words, the field inductance can be ignored, In this case, the resistance (R_{Rx}) and its voltage (U_o) can be found as in (9) and (10) where R_F is the resistance of the field winding and U_F is the applied voltage of the field winding.

$$U_o = \frac{2\sqrt{2}}{\pi} U_F \tag{9}$$

$$R_{RX} = \frac{8}{\pi^2} R_F \tag{10}$$

Then, the transformer turns ratio can be calculated using the voltage gain as in (11) where $U_i = \hat{S}_{AB_{fs}} V_{DC}$.

$$n = \frac{U_i}{U_o} \tag{11}$$

The turns ratio depends on the Tx/Rx inductances and coupling factor (k) between them, presented in (12) where $L_{Tx} = \frac{L_R}{1-k^2}$.

$$n = k\sqrt{\frac{L_{Tx}}{L_{Rx}}} \tag{12}$$

The Rx inductance (L_{Rx}) is selected using the quality factor (Q), R_{Rx} and resonant angular frequency (ω_r), as given in (13).

$$L_{Rx} = Q\frac{R_{Rx}}{\omega_r} \tag{13}$$

ω_r is selected considering the switching frequency of the motor drive, as given in (14).

$$\omega_r = 2\pi f_s \tag{14}$$

Then, the Tx inductance is calculated using the required n, selected k, and L_{Rx}, as presented in (15).

$$L_{Tx} = \frac{n^2}{k^2} L_{Rx} \tag{15}$$

After that, the Tx compensation capacitance (C_{Tx}) is tuned as given in (16).

$$C_{Tx} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\omega_r^2 L_R}} \tag{16}$$

V. Experimental Validation

An experimental setup consisting of a 3-phase 3-wire GaN-based inverter and an SN-compensated WPT-based contactless field excitation system is established, as shown in Fig. 10.

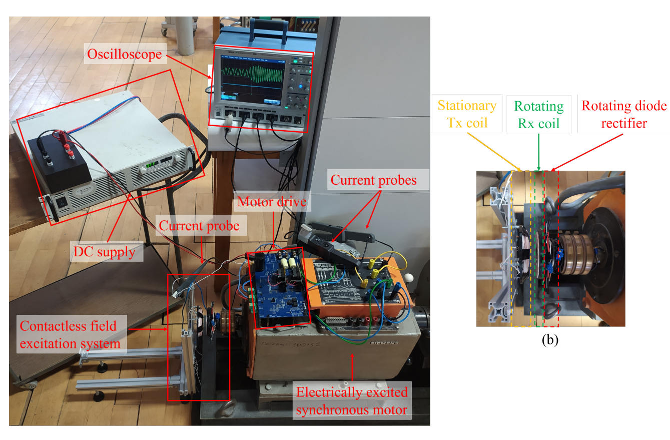

Fig. 10. Experimental setup. a) Overall view. b) Close view of the CFE system.

TABLE I
THE MOTOR DRIVE SPECIFICATIONS, FIELD WINDING SPECIFICATIONS AND THE WPT SYSTEM PARAMETERS

Motor Drive Specifications	
DC-link Voltage (V_{DC})	100 V
Modulation Index (m_a)	$0-0.8$
Normalized input voltage ($\hat{S}_{AB_{fs}}$)	0.44
Switching frequency (f_s)	60 kHz
Field Winding Specifications	
Field Inductance (L_F)	5 mH
Field Resistance (R_F)	1.2 Ω
Field Current (I_F)	5 A
Field Voltage (U_F)	6 V
WPT System Parameters	**Experimental**
Tx Inductance (L_{Tx})	1510 μH
Rx Inductance (L_{Rx})	7.3 μH
Mutual Inductance (M)	55.4 μH
Tx Capacitance (C_{Tx})	5.2 nF

Table I presents the motor drive specifications, field winding specifications, and WPT system parameters. Firstly, the proposed method is tested to validate the mathematical model. Secondly, the field excitation system is tested under several operating conditions of the fundamental frequency, modulation index, and switching frequency. Finally, the proposed CFE system is concurrently operated with the EESM.

A. Input Excitation Voltage of the VSI

The voltage waveform between phase A and phase B is measured while SPWM is applied in different modulation indices. The normalized voltage waveform and its decomposition of the switching harmonic are shown in Fig. 11 for different modulation indices.

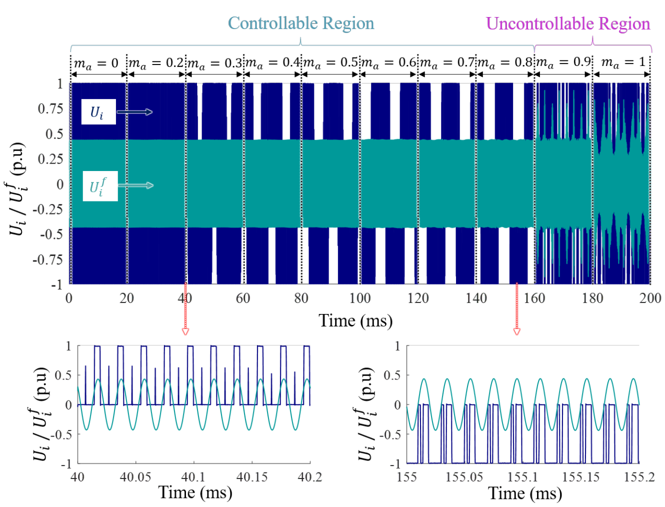

Fig. 11. The normalized voltage waveform of U_i and its decomposition of the switching frequency components U_i^f for different modulation indices.

It is observed that a constant input excitation at 0.44 normalized gain is achieved until the modulation index of 0.8. The value starts fluctuating in higher modulation indices, after which is named the uncontrollable region. However, there is also a small fluctuation in the controllable region, and it can be ignored since it is under 5% of 0.44.

B. The Wireless Power Transfer System

The WPT system is connected between phase A and phase B, like the previous test. The output of the WPT system is connected to the field of the EESM, but the phases of the EESM are not excited, which is equivalent to a stationary machine. Firstly, the DC-link voltage and fundamental frequency are adjusted to 100 V and 100 Hz. The field current, Tx current, and input excitation voltage are measured for several modulation indices in the controllable region, as presented in Fig. 12. The mean currents of the field winding for the modulation index of 0, 0.25, 0.5, and 0.75 were measured at 4.83 A, 4.72 A, 4.95 A, and 4.93 A, respectively. Therefore, it is concluded that an almost constant field current can be achieved while changing the modulation index. These minor differences (maximum 5%) can be compensated by detuning the switching frequency, which will be discussed.

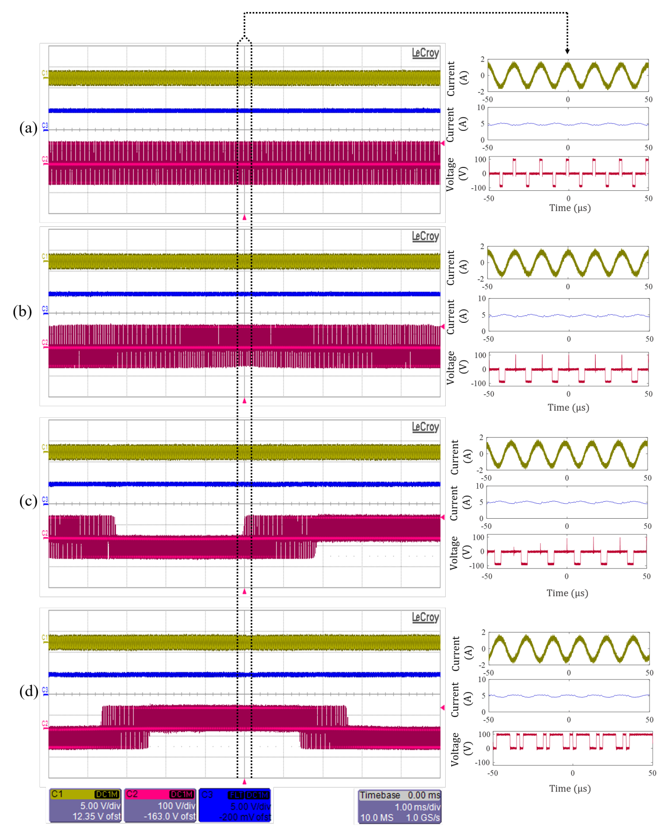

Fig. 12. The field current, Tx current, and input excitation voltage along several modulation indices under constant fundamental and switching frequency. a) $m_a = 0$. b) $m_a = 0.25$. c) $m_a = 0.5$. d) $m_a = 0.75$.

Secondly, the modulation index is kept at 0.6, and the fundamental frequency alters to 100 Hz from 200 Hz. The field current, Tx current, and input excitation voltage are given in Fig 13. Accordingly, it is monitored that the field current is not affected by the fundamental frequency. Lastly, the modulation index and fundamental frequency are kept at 0.6 and 100 Hz. As presented in Fig. 14, the switching frequency is altered to 60 kHz from 62 kHz. In this case, the field current decreases from 5 A to 2.5 A. Hence, it is achieved that the field current could be regulated by the hybrid frequency detuning method.

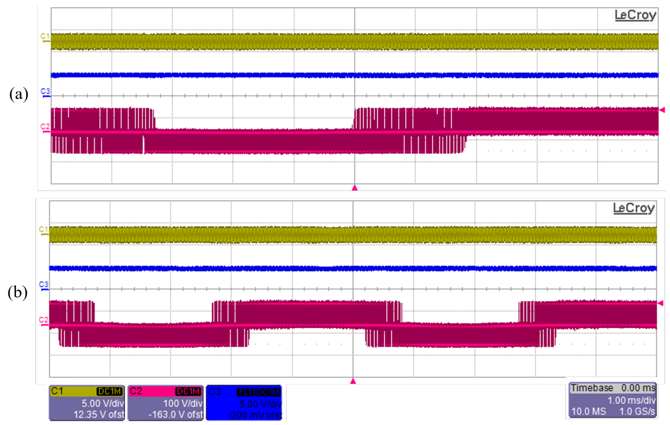

Fig. 13. The field current, Tx current, and input excitation voltage for fundamental frequencies of 100 Hz and 200 Hz under constant switching frequency and modulation index. a) 100 Hz. b) 200 Hz.

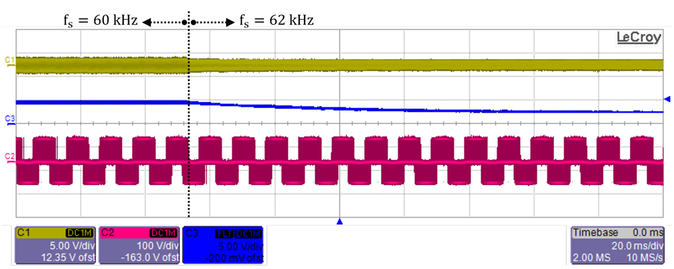

Fig. 14. The field current, Tx current, and input excitation voltage for switching frequencies of 60 kHz and 62 kHz under constant fundamental frequency and modulation index.

C. Concurrent Operation of the CFE System and EESM

In this test, the phases of the EESM are also excited in addition to the field winding. The speed of EESM is increased from 52 RPM to 101 RPM. The phase A current of the EESM and the field current are given in Fig. 15. Accordingly, it is observed that the change in the motor speed minorly affects the field current. The minor changes can be compensated by detuning the switching frequency, as discussed before.

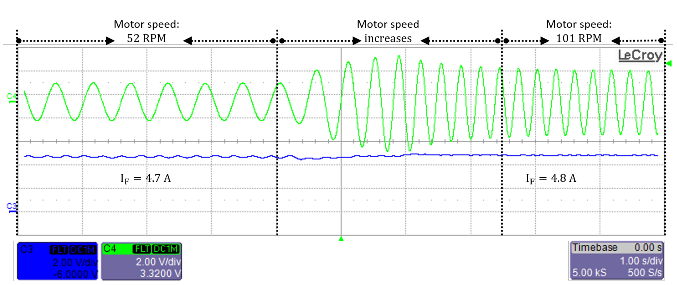

Fig. 15. The field and phase currents while motor speed increases from 52 RPM to 101 RPM.

VI. Conclusion

This article proposes a novel wireless power transfer-based contactless field excitation system that can be integrated into conventional electrically excited synchronous motors. Unlike traditional systems, the proposed method utilizes the existing motor drives and does not require extra converters on both the Tx and Rx sides, reducing the cost and complexity. This study also presents a novel variable carrier phase shift method for independent control of the field and phase current while using conventional PWM methods. However, the proposed method does not control the field current to the full range. It only guarantees a constant excitation voltage for different modulation indices. Therefore, a hybrid control strategy consisting of the VCPSM and frequency detuning methods is also presented to regulate field current. A prototype with a 3-phase GaN-based motor drive with 100 V DC-link and 60 kHz switching frequency was established to validate the proposed system. It is observed that the input excitation of the WPT system is kept constant at 44 V peak, which also means that the field current is kept almost constant at 5 A while changing the modulation index. Also, it was achieved that the field current was reduced from 5 A to 2.5 A by detuning the switching frequency. Consequently, a cost-reduced CFE system for EESMs is achieved by only updating the control algorithm without using active converters.

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