

Colin Gillmor (APP, HPC)





1. Concepts

- 2. Transfer Functions
- 3. Control Systems
- 4. Loop Transfer Functions Control to Output: G(s) Output to Control: H(s)
- 5. Loop Compensation
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- 7. Measuring the Control Loop
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- 9. References

Power Stage (Plant) Feedback (Control)





Controllability:

- What variables can we use to control the system's state
- Eg: Switching Frequency, Duty Cycle, Handlebars Observability:
- How can we determine the system's state
- Eg: Measure Vout, Vin, Iout, Inductor Current, Eyes Reachability:
- Does the control system have enough authority to do what we want it to do?
- Eg: Transient response, Trim range, Current limit Start-up time, Lean limits (aka, training wheels)

Control:

- Measure the system
- Compare to reference
- Adjust appropriately





Concepts: LTI, Linear Time-Invariant

Linearity f(a+b) = f(a) + f(b), $f(k^*a) = k^*f(a)$

- System response doesn't depend on the load power or current
- Non-Linear at OCP, OVP, Enhanced Dynamic Response etc

Time Invariance

- System does not change with time
- Exceptions at power up, power down, OCP etc
- Switching action in power stage must be averaged
 Continuous time assumed
- Time variable is continuous and can take up any value
- Assumption is valid up to about 20% of switching frequency

SMPS are not linear and are not time invariant !



So we 'cheat' and build a model which is LTI $\textcircled{\mbox{\sc only}}$

Linearisation



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Switching frequency does not appear in the transfer function ! /Typical Buck Converter model

Concepts: Complex Frequency (s)

Complex Frequency: $s = \sigma + j\omega$

 $\boldsymbol{\sigma}$ sets decay rate,

- σ > 0, increasing: σ < 0, decaying: σ = 0, steady state
- We set σ to 0 and so that s = j ω
- $\boldsymbol{\omega}$ is the frequency of the underlying sine wave

$$V_{i}(t) = \operatorname{Re}\left(V_{m} \cdot e^{\sigma \cdot t} \cdot \cos(\omega \cdot t + \phi)\right)$$

y(s) contains Magnitude and Phase information. Really useful property – a single calculation gives

- Magnitude = Mag[y(s)],
- Phase = arg[y(s)] (radians !)



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Transfer Functions: Bode Plots

The transfer function is basically $V_o(s) / V_I(s)$

- H(s), G(s), Y(s) etc, etc,
- Calculated or Measured
- A function frequency
- Complex frequency gives Magnitude and Phase

Bode Plot, Magnitude and Phase versus frequency

- Frequency is on a Log scale
- Magnitude in dB: 20 log (V₀/V₁)
- Phase in deg: $\theta_{IN} \theta_{O}$
- Can use straight line approximations (dotted)

V,

Note

• Magnitude, Amplitude, Gain are equivalent







Transfer Functions: Zeros





Transfer Functions: Complex Conjugate Poles

Complex Conjugate Poles: Resonance, Phase decreasing to -180° Q determines peak response

Gain rolls off at -40dB per decade above ω_0 Phase is:

- 0° at LF
- -90° at ω₀
- -180° at HF



$$G(s) = \frac{1}{1 + \frac{s}{Q \cdot \omega_0} + \frac{s^2}{\omega_0^2}} \qquad \qquad Q = \frac{R}{\sqrt{\frac{L}{C}}} \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad V_1 \qquad \qquad V_2 \qquad \qquad$$



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Transfer Functions: Right Half Plane Zero

G(s)

RHPZ:

• A characteristic of topologies which deliver energy to the output 180° out of phase with the energy taken from the input Flyback, Boost, Cuk, (CCM only).

RHPZ: (Right Half Plane Zero)

- Gain increasing Phase decreasing
- Almost impossible to compensate for this
- Must close the loop at frequencies $<< \omega_z$

RHPZ is not an issue in Boost PFC

- They must close the loop at very low frequencies for other reasons, typ < 10 Hz.
- Controlled quantity is input current, not output current





Ref 1

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$V_{OUT} = \frac{1}{1 - D} \cdot V_{IN}$ $V_{OUT} = \frac{D}{1 - D} \cdot V_{IN}$ Conversion factor is a function of D, not of F_{SW} $\left| \frac{L_N \cdot f^2}{L_N \cdot f^2 + \left(f^2 - 1\right) \left(1 + j \cdot f \cdot L_N \cdot Q\right)} \right|$ \rightarrow Gain(f,Q) = Conversion factor is a function of F_{SW} not of D Texas Instruments

Control Systems: Variables

Many SMPS use Duty Cycle (D) as the control variable $V_{OUT} = D \cdot V_{IN}$

CCM, PSFB, Push-Pull

Sometimes D and F_{SW} are both used

- Mainly to improve efficiency
- Quasi Resonant, DCM converters
- Conversion ratios are unchanged

LLC uses Fsw as the control variable

One of a large class of resonant converters

Hysteretic SMPS use Upper and Lower limits on VOUT

Buck Converter

Boost Converter

Flyback Converter

A Typical Control System:

A typical analog SMPS control system looks something like this Ref 2: Ch6

- K_{EA}(s)* Error Amplifier (transfer function as function of complex frequency)
- K_{PWM} Pulse Width Modulator (A Constant)
- K_{LC}(s) Output Filter
- K_{FB} Feedback Potential Divider
- $G(s) = K_{PWM} * K_{LC}(s) = Control to Output gain$
- $H(s) = K_{FB} * K_{EA}(s) = Output to Control gain$
- Total loop response T(s) = G(s) * H(s)



System measures the output, compares to the reference, makes an adjustment



Two Control Systems: VMC and CMC

VMC:

• Error Amplifier controls Duty Cycle (D) directly

CMC:

- PCM (Peak Current Mode)
- ACM (Average Current Mode)
- Error Amplifier sets I_{DEM} (Current Demand) for inner loop. sometimes called 'COMP'
- Inner loop regulates the output current

Other control methods do exist - not covered here



Control Systems: Voltage Mode Control

 V_{REF}

Error amplifier output V_C controls D directly

 $V_{OUT} \, drops \rightarrow V_C \, increases \rightarrow D \, increases \rightarrow V_{OUT} \, increases$

Less noise sensitive than PCM – larger ramp Easy to implement Voltage Feed Forward Output Filter appears in the transfer function so

- Control loop bandwidth is lower than with CMC
- More difficult to stabilise than CMC
- Type 3 Compensation (more on this later)

Just because it's more difficult to stabilise doesn't mean that it is impossible to stabilise.



Control Systems: Current Mode Control

Peak Current Mode – most common

Average Current Mode – used in some PFC stages

Error amplifier output V_C sets a current demand

Inner current loop forces the output current to equal the current demand.

 $V_{OUT}~drops \rightarrow V_{C}~(I_{DEM})$ increases, $~I_{OUT}~increases \rightarrow V_{OUT}$ increases

Wider loop bandwidth and easier to stabilise than VMC

Cycle-by-Cycle over current protection

Sub-Harmonic instability, (PCM in CCM)

- Slope Compensation (added to V_{EAO})
- Peak-to-Average ratio not constant distortion in PFC

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Control Systems: PCM Half Bridge instability

Peak Current Mode control of half bridge is unstable Described in Ref 13

Voltage at centre point of C_1 and C_2 diverges from $V_{IN}/2$

• This is an inherent instability

Solutions

- Use VMC any half bridge controller
- Use duty cycle copy UCC28251
- Use Average current limit LM5039
- Modified CT circuit see article above



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End of Part 1

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Control to Output Transfer Function: G(s)

•
$$G(s) = \frac{V_{OUT}}{V_C} = K_{PWM} * K_{LC}(s)$$

- Buck Converter in Voltage Mode Control
- Output Inductor/Capacitor resonance
- Phase boost, zero of ESR and Cout
- Type 3 compensation needed (more later)
- Buck Converter in Peak Current Mode
- First order characteristic
- Phase boost, zero of ESR and Cout
- Type 2 compensation (more later)

• Ref 3



Control to Output Transfer Function: G(s)



Output to Control Transfer Function: H(s)

This is the feedback system used to close the control loop We need

- 180deg phase shift at DC for negative feedback
- High gain at DC, for good regulation
- High loop bandwidth, for good transient response (except PFC)
- Adequate gain and phase margins, for stability PM > 45° at 0dB gain

Need to reduce gain to less than 1 before \approx fsw/10

- Prevent the control loop from 'seeing' the switching action
- Ideally gain dropping at -20dB per decade at the cross over
- Makes system less sensitive to component variations

Error Amplifier





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The Feedback Network: H(s)

Three generic types of Compensation network

- Type 1, 1 pole at origin, no phase boost
- Type 2, 1 pole at origin, 1 zero, 1 HF pole,
- phase boost up to 90°
- Type 3, 1 pole at origin, 1 zero pair, 1 HF pole pair,
- phase boost up to 180°

The terms PI, PID are used in digital control systems

Similar but no direct correlation to the Type 1, 2, 3 classification used here.

Ref 3 VERY Highly Recommended

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Error Amplifier







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Loop Response: Requirements for Stability

Loop Stability: Remember: 0dB = gain of 1

- There is a 180deg phase shift at DC
- System will oscillate (at the crossover frequency) if there is an ADDITIONAL 180° around the loop at the crossover frequency. Ref 4

For Stability

- Phase must be < 180° when the gain goes through 0dB
- Gain must be < 0dB when the phase goes through 180°

Compensation network must be designed for

- Adequate gain and phase margins, for stability
- PM > 45° at 0dB gain

Need to reduce gain to less than 0dB before \approx fsw/10

Metastable condition if gain pops up above 0dB To be avoided !



0dB crossover at 1kHz Phase Margin ≈ 76°



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Loop Response: T(s) = H(s)G(s), Buck PCM

=



Loop Response: T(s) = H(s)G(s), Buck VMC





- Loop crossover at 10kHz.
- Approx. 90° phase margin.
- Inverting input is virtual ground
- R_B attenuates Vout only
 Ref 3







Reference + Error Amplifier in one IC Type 2 compensator shown here,

- 1 pole at origin,
- 1 zero,
- 1 HF pole, phase boost up to 90°

Ref 5

Ref 6 (VERY highly Recommended)

 Optocoupler has pole due to parasitic output capacitance C_O





High V_{OUT} (> \approx 36V) or Low V_{OUT} (< \approx 3V)

• Connect LED to a fixed bias rail.

Optocoupler CTR has a wide part to part variation and is also a function of -

- LED current,
- Temperature,
- Age.

Perceived to be unreliable, but main issue is lifetime

Very useful for crossing an isolation barrier



Current Loop Stability:

Measuring gain and phase of the current loop is difficult.

Fix an operating point (Constant I_{DEM}), inject the signal in series with the CS resistor, measure the gain and phase vs frequency

However: Current loop stability is not normally a problem except

In CCM a fixed frequency current loop is unstable for D > 50%, Sub Harmonic Oscillations

Operation at D slightly below 50% can be underdamped

Slope Compensation Ramp needed



Ref 9

Sub-Harmonic Oscillations: Instability

D < 50%, perturbation in inductor current (dotted) dies away.

System becomes increasingly underdamped as D increases past 40%

D>50%, perturbation in inductor current does not die away. Current diverges. System is unstable

Characterised by large cycle to cycle variations

Green = Current Demand Signal Blue = steady state inductor current Red = perturbed inductor current

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Sub-Harmonic Oscillations: Slope Compensation



Green = Current Demand Signal + Slope Compensation Ramp Blue = steady state inductor current Red = perturbed inductor current



Ref 8

approaches 50%

Response becomes increasingly underdamped as D

References

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End of Part 2

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Measuring the control loop:



Measuring the control loop: Bode Plot

Signal injection: Isolation transformer couples test signal into circuit

Wide bandwidth – typ 100Hz to 100kHz

Signal injection location must be chosen carefully

- Low Z looking 'back' into the loop, $Z_2(s)$
- High Z looking 'forward' around the loop, $Z_1(s)$

$$T(s) = M(s) * \frac{Z_1(s)}{Z_1(s) + Z_2(s)}$$

Where T(s) is the true loop gain, M(s) is the measured loop gain $Z_1(s)$ and $Z_2(s)$ are difficult to quantify but if $Z_1(s) >> Z_2(s)$ then

 $T(s) \approx M(s)$

Ref 10, Ref 14





Measuring the control loop: Transient Response



Fourier transform of a step waveform contains components at all frequencies.

Large amplitude Load change

- Typically 25% to 75% to 25% load steps
- 0% to 100% to 0% load steps are also used

Load di/dt must be significantly faster than the loop response.

- Electronic Load step function
- Resistor with MOSFET switch

Signal amplitude can be 'buried' in noise

 Apply repeated transients and average the result



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Measuring the control loop

Formal relationship between Gain/Phase plot and Transient Response (LTI system)

Phase Margin can be estimated from the shape of the transient response

Plots here are normalised to a crossover at 1Hz

Underdamped transient response implies small phase margin

Loop stability can be estimated from a load transient test

Oscillation at crossover frequency of the loop (approx.)





Ref 11, PP342

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The Iceberg Analogy

Most instability problems have nothing to do with classical control theory !

Noise Pickup Non Linearity – insufficient control range/authority Over Current protections Input Filter Oscillations Problems with Remote Sensing Source Instability Load Instability Etc. etc

Etc.



Control of SMPS: Summary

Control theory is sometimes thought to be difficult to understand

- Complex Mathematics, Complex Frequency, Laplace Transform, Poles, Zeros etc etc
- An intuitive overview is possible without too much complexity

SMPS control

- Voltage Mode:
- Current Mode: Peak Current Mode, Average Current Mode

Loop Transfer Functions

- Control to Output: G(s), Output to Control: H(s), Complete Loop
- Loop Compensation: Type 1, Type 2, Type 3

Testing

• Gain Phase Measurements (Bode Plot), Transient Tests, Evaluation of results.

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