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Research on the Application of Three-Phase VIENNA Topology in High-Power Switching Power Supplies

Bai Fusheng

Shenzhen Neda Zhongyuantong Power Technology Co., Ltd., Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, 51800, China,

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

Abstract: The growing demand for efficient high-power switching power supplies has spurred interest in advanced topologies. The three-phase VIENNA converter stands out for its high power factor, simplified structure, and robust performance. Current research focuses on its operational principles, control strategies, and behavior under various load conditions. Key considerations include component selection, thermal management, and EMI/EMC optimization. This topology finds applications across renewable energy systems, industrial equipment, telecommunications, and electric vehicle charging infrastructures. Comparative analyses with alternative topologies and cost-benefit evaluations are also addressed. Future developments are expected to emphasize the integration of wide-bandgap devices and advancements in digital control techniques to further enhance efficiency and system performance.

Keywords: Three-phase VIENNA topology; High-power switching power supplies; Component selection

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1. Introduction

In the field of high-power switching power supplies, growing demands from sectors such as industrial automation, renewable energy, and data centers have driven the need for more efficient, compact, and reliable topologies. Traditional topologies often face limitations in meeting the requirements of high-power applications. The three-phase VIENNA topology has emerged as a promising solution, offering advantages such as high power factor correction and a simplified structure [1]. Research on its use in high-power switching power supplies focuses on optimizing performance and enhancing operational reliability. According to the "Renewable Energy Medium- and Long-Term Development Plan" (2007), the large-scale integration of renewable energy necessitates high-performance power supply topologies. With its strengths in grid-tied inverter applications and bidirectional power flow control in renewable energy systems, the VIENNA topology aligns with this policy and represents a critical area of study for advancing high-power switching power supply technology.

1.1. Structural analysis of three-phase VIENNA topology

1.1.1. Operational principles

The three-phase VIENNA topology in high-power switching power supplies operates according to specific principles. It typically comprises three-phase input rectifier circuits, with each phase containing a set of power-semiconductor devices. During operation, the conduction and cutoff states of these devices are precisely controlled over different time intervals.

In the positive half-cycle of a given phase's input voltage, certain power-semiconductor devices conduct, allowing the input current to flow through the circuit's inductor and capacitor. The inductor stores energy during this process, while the capacitor filters the voltage and maintains voltage stability. As the input voltage varies, the conduction states of the devices are adjusted accordingly. For instance, when the input voltage reaches its peak, the current begins to decrease, and the inductor releases stored energy to ensure continuity of the output current.

Coordinated operation across the three phases is essential in the VIENNA topology. By implementing appropriate control strategies, the input current can be shaped to approximate a sinusoidal waveform, thereby reducing harmonic distortion. This enhances the power factor of the supply and meets the power quality requirements of high-power applications. The primary energy conversion in this topology occurs from three-phase AC input to DC output, and the efficiency of this conversion process is central to the performance of three-phase VIENNA topologies in high-power switching power supplies [2].

1.1.2. Mode comparison

In VIENNA circuits, comparing discontinuous conduction mode (DCM) and continuous conduction mode (CCM) is essential, as these modes exhibit distinct characteristics that significantly impact the performance of three-phase VIENNA topologies in high-power switching power supplies.

In DCM, the inductor current falls to zero during each switching cycle. This typically results in higher peak currents, which can increase conduction losses. However, DCM can naturally achieve zero-current switching (ZCS) in some cases, thereby reducing switching losses. Due to its discontinuous nature, DCM may introduce higher current harmonics, potentially degrading the system's power quality.

Conversely, in CCM, the inductor current never reaches zero during the switching cycle. This leads to lower peak currents compared to DCM, reducing conduction losses. CCM generally provides better efficiency in high-power applications, where minimizing power losses is critical. Additionally, CCM supports a more sinusoidal input current, resulting in lower total harmonic distortion (THD) and improved power factor correction.

Ultimately, the selection between DCM and CCM in three-phase VIENNA topologies depends on factors such as efficiency targets, harmonic constraints, and operating power levels. Careful evaluation of these parameters is necessary to optimize the performance of high-power switching power supplies [3].

2. Key design considerations

2.1. Component selection strategies

For high-power switching power supplies based on the three-phase VIENNA topology, careful component selection is critical for ensuring system performance and reliability. In high-voltage and high-current applications, IGBT modules are often the primary power-handling components [4]. When selecting IGBT modules, parameters such as rated voltage, rated current, and switching frequency must be thoroughly evaluated. The rated voltage should be sufficient to withstand the peak circuit voltage under worst-case conditions, preventing voltage breakdown that could lead to component failure and system malfunction. Likewise, the rated current must accommodate the maximum current demand during both normal operation and transient conditions, ensuring reliable operation without overheating.

Electrolytic capacitors also play a vital role, serving as energy storage and filtering elements. In high-power applications, capacitance value and equivalent series resistance (ESR) are key considerations. Adequate capacitance is necessary to meet the energy storage requirements of the circuit, maintaining stable voltage output, while low ESR minimizes power losses and heat generation. Additionally, the capacitor's voltage rating should exceed the maximum voltage encountered in the circuit to ensure long-term reliability. Overall, a careful and comprehensive evaluation of both IGBT modules and electrolytic capacitors is essential to optimize the performance of three-phase VIENNA topologies in high-power switching power supplies.

2.2. Thermal management solutions

Under power conditions exceeding 10 kW for the three-phase VIENNA topology in high-power switching power supplies, effective thermal management is critical. Heat is primarily generated by power semiconductor devices, such as diodes and switches, during operation, and high power levels impose significant heat dissipation requirements.

Selection of appropriate heat-sink materials is essential. Materials with high thermal conductivity, such as aluminum or copper, are commonly employed. Aluminum provides a cost-effective and lightweight solution, whereas copper offers superior thermal conductivity at a higher cost. The choice depends on the overall cost-performance balance of the power supply system.

Optimization of the heat-sink structure is also crucial. Fin-type heat sinks are widely used, with fin height, thickness, and spacing being key design parameters. Increasing fin height can expand the heat dissipation surface area, although excessive height may impede airflow. Fin thickness must balance mechanical strength with thermal conduction efficiency, and proper fin spacing ensures effective convective heat transfer.

Thermal simulation verification plays a vital role [5]. Simulation software enables accurate prediction of temperature distributions in power components and heat sinks, helping to identify potential hot spots and allowing timely adjustments to the thermal design. By optimizing heat-sink configuration and ensuring adequate airflow, temperature rises in power devices can be effectively controlled, ensuring reliable and efficient operation of high-power switching power supplies employing the VIENNA topology.

3. Application scenarios in power supplies

3.1. Renewable energy systems

3.1.1. Grid-tied inverter applications

In grid-tied inverter applications within renewable energy systems, the three-phase VIENNA topology plays a critical role. Solar and wind energy conversion systems often require suppression of THD, and the VIENNA topology can effectively meet these requirements.

Grid-tied inverters convert the DC power generated by renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or wind turbines, into AC power compatible with the electrical grid. Maintaining high power quality in the injected AC power is essential, as elevated THD can cause grid instability, interfere with other electrical equipment, and reduce transmission and distribution efficiency.

The three-phase VIENNA topology provides inherent advantages in this context. Its unique circuit configuration enables high-performance power factor correction and low-THD output. Proper control of the VIENNA switches can significantly reduce harmonics in both input and output currents. For instance, in solar power systems, a VIENNA-based grid-tied inverter ensures that the harmonics of the injected power comply with regulatory standards, enhancing grid reliability and stability and facilitating large-scale integration of renewable energy sources [6]. Similarly, in wind energy applications, the VIENNA topology adapts to the variable characteristics of wind power, delivering high-quality output and supporting efficient operation of grid-tied systems.

3.1.2. Bidirectional power flow implementation

In renewable energy power supplies, the implementation of bidirectional power flow using the three-phase VIENNA topology is highly significant, enabling efficient integration of energy storage systems.

In solar and wind power plants, energy generation is often intermittent. During periods of peak generation, excess power can be directed from the renewable energy source through the VIENNA converter to energy storage devices such as batteries. The precise control capabilities of the VIENNA topology optimize the charging process, minimizing losses and preventing overcharging of the storage system [7].

Conversely, when renewable energy generation is insufficient, such as at night for solar power or during low-wind periods, stored energy can flow back to the grid or local loads via the VIENNA converter. This bidirectional power flow enhances system stability and reliability while maximizing renewable energy utilization. The three-phase VIENNA topology supports high-power applications, making it suitable for large-scale renewable energy systems. By accurately regulating voltage and current during the bidirectional transfer, it maintains power quality, reduces harmonics and voltage fluctuations, and provides a stable power supply for connected electrical equipment.

3.2. Industrial power supplies

3.2.1. High-power density design

In industrial power supplies, achieving high power density using the three-phase VIENNA topology is of significant importance. With the continuous advancement of industrial applications, there is growing demand for power supplies that combine compact size with high power output. The three-phase VIENNA topology provides distinct advantages in meeting these requirements.

This topology enables more compact designs for industrial power modules rated above 20 kW. By optimizing the circuit structure and component layout of VIENNA-based industrial power modules, the overall volume can be substantially reduced. For instance, employing advanced semiconductor devices with higher power-handling capability and lower on-resistance allows heat dissipation to be managed effectively within a smaller space, contributing directly to high power density.

Additionally, the VIENNA topology’s inherent features, such as high power factor correction and efficient power conversion, support high-power-density designs. It maintains high efficiency across a wide range of input voltages and load conditions, minimizing wasted energy as heat. This efficient operation permits closer component placement, further increasing power density.

Advances in magnetic component design, including the use of high-permeability magnetic materials and optimized winding techniques, also enhance the power density of VIENNA-based industrial power supplies. These improvements reduce the size and weight of magnetic components while preserving or improving performance, which is essential for high-power-density applications in industrial power systems [8].

3.2.2. EMI/EMC optimization

In industrial power supplies, EMI/EMC optimization is critical when implementing the three-phase VIENNA topology. Due to its unique structure, this topology can generate electromagnetic interference during operation, necessitating strategies to enhance electromagnetic compatibility.

Proper layout design is essential. Components should be arranged to minimize the length of high-frequency current loops. For instance, positioning power-switching devices close to energy-storage components can reduce the radiation of high-frequency electromagnetic fields.

Filtering techniques also play a vital role. Electromagnetic interference filters installed at the input and output of the power supply can suppress high-frequency interference signals while allowing normal power-frequency operation [9].

Material selection significantly impacts EMI/EMC performance. High-quality magnetic materials with low core losses and effective magnetic shielding properties, used in inductors and transformers, help reduce magnetic field leakage and minimize electromagnetic interference.

Advanced control algorithms contribute further to EMI/EMC enhancement. By optimizing the switching frequency and duty cycle of power-switching devices, high-frequency harmonics can be reduced, improving overall electromagnetic compatibility. Together, these strategies effectively enhance the EMI/EMC performance of three-phase VIENNA topologies in industrial power supply applications.

4. Case studies and comparative analysis

4.1. Industrial implementation cases

4.1.1. Telecommunication power system upgrade

In telecommunication power system upgrades, a 50 kW VIENNA-based power supply deployment exemplifies the advantages of the three-phase VIENNA topology in meeting high-power demands.

Key efficiency metrics were closely monitored during implementation. The power factor of the system was significantly improved, as the VIENNA topology enabled the input current waveform to closely follow the input voltage waveform, achieving a power factor near unity. This reduction in reactive power alleviates the burden on the upstream power grid [10].

Conversion efficiency also showed notable improvements. Optimized circuit design and careful component selection minimized AC-to-DC conversion losses. High-quality power semiconductor devices with low on-resistance reduced conduction losses, while advanced control strategies ensured operation at optimal switching frequencies, lowering switching losses. Consequently, the overall conversion efficiency reached a high level, supporting energy-efficient operation of the telecommunication power system.

This deployment demonstrates the practical effectiveness and superiority of the three-phase VIENNA topology for high-power switching power supplies in modern telecommunication infrastructure.

4.1.2. Electric vehicle charging station application

In electric vehicle charging station applications, performance data from a 150 kW DC fast charger prototype highlights the advantages of the three-phase VIENNA topology. This prototype demonstrates a high power factor, which is essential for efficient power utilization within the charging station environment. The topology also achieves low THD in the input current, minimizing its impact on the power grid and reducing the need for additional harmonic filtering equipment [11].

Efficiency is maintained across a wide load range, saving energy and lowering heat dissipation requirements, which in turn reduces overall operational costs related to both energy consumption and cooling system design. Furthermore, the compact and lightweight design enabled by the three-phase VIENNA topology supports installations in space-constrained charging station environments.

These performance features establish the three-phase VIENNA topology as a highly suitable solution for high-power electric vehicle charging, providing efficient, grid-friendly, and reliable operation in modern charging infrastructure.

4.2. Topology comparison

4.2.1. VIENNA vs. LLC topology

In high-power switching power supply applications, comparing the VIENNA and LLC topologies provides important design insights. The VIENNA topology, as a three-phase rectifier, typically achieves high efficiency in the rectification stage under high-power conditions. Its ability to reduce harmonic distortion and maintain low switching losses enables effective high-power factor correction.

The LLC topology, primarily used in the DC-DC conversion stage, exhibits efficiency influenced by resonant frequency and load conditions. In high-power scenarios, it can maintain soft-switching operation across a wide load range, supporting high overall efficiency. However, unlike the VIENNA topology, the LLC topology's main function is voltage conversion rather than front-end rectification.

Regarding component stress, VIENNA topology power devices, such as diodes and transistors, are subjected to high-voltage and high-current stress during three-phase rectification, requiring careful selection of voltage and current ratings to ensure reliable operation. In the LLC topology, components like resonant inductors and capacitors experience stresses associated with resonant operation, necessitating precise control of resonant currents and voltages. Understanding these distinctions in efficiency behavior and component stress is critical for optimizing high-power switching power supply designs [12].

4.2.2. Cost-benefit analysis

In studies of three-phase VIENNA topology applied to high-power switching power supplies, evaluating the cost-benefit compared to other topologies is essential. Regarding the Bill of Materials (BOM) costs, the VIENNA topology includes components such as specific power semiconductor devices, inductors, and capacitors, which contribute to the overall cost. Compared with some traditional topologies that require a larger number of components, the VIENNA topology's optimized circuit structure can reduce component count in certain areas, potentially lowering the BOM cost [13].

Maintenance requirements also differ among topologies. The relatively simple structure of the VIENNA topology in certain sections facilitates fault diagnosis and repair. Reduced complexity in circuit interconnections allows technicians to more easily identify and replace faulty components. In contrast, more complex topologies may involve intricate circuit paths, increasing maintenance difficulty and time. These differences impact not only system downtime but also additional costs related to labor and spare parts. A comprehensive assessment of BOM costs and maintenance requirements provides a clearer understanding of the overall cost-benefit of the three-phase VIENNA topology in high-power switching power supply applications.

4.3. Future development trends

4.3.1. Wide-bandgap device integration

In the field of high-power switching power supplies utilizing the three-phase VIENNA topology, exploring the integration of SiC (Silicon Carbide) and GaN (Gallium Nitride) devices in next-generation VIENNA circuits holds significant potential [14]. SiC and GaN are wide-bandgap semiconductors that provide substantial advantages over traditional silicon-based devices.

SiC devices offer higher breakdown voltages, allowing them to withstand larger electrical stresses. This capability is particularly valuable in high-power applications, where elevated voltage levels are common, enabling more reliable operation and potentially higher power density in three-phase VIENNA circuits. GaN devices, in contrast, feature extremely fast switching speeds, which reduce switching losses and improve the overall efficiency of the power supply.

Case studies on the integration of these wide-bandgap devices into VIENNA circuits have demonstrated promising outcomes. In high-power industrial applications, SiC-based VIENNA circuits have achieved significant reductions in size and weight due to enhanced power density. Comparative analyses indicate that GaN-integrated VIENNA circuits can maintain higher efficiency across a broader range of operating frequencies compared with traditional silicon-based designs. Despite these advantages, challenges such as cost-effectiveness and thermal management remain critical considerations for the widespread adoption of SiC and GaN devices in high-power three-phase VIENNA switching power supplies.

4.3.2. Digital control advancements

In the future development of three-phase VIENNA topology for high-power switching power supplies, digital control advancements are expected to play a critical role [15]. Digital control provides several advantages over traditional analog methods, including more precise regulation of power supply parameters. With ongoing improvements in digital signal processing (DSP) technology, control systems can achieve faster sampling and computation speeds, enabling better adaptation to dynamic changes in high-power loads.

Digital control also allows the implementation of complex algorithms, such as adaptive control strategies for intelligent power supply applications, facilitating output adjustments according to varying load conditions and improving efficiency and stability. Additionally, it enhances system flexibility, making it easier to modify control parameters and update strategies through software, a key factor in meeting diverse application requirements.

Integration and networking of power supply systems are further supported by digital control, enabling communication with other devices in the grid or industrial control systems for smarter power management. Challenges remain, including the impact of quantization errors and the demand for high-performance hardware. Overall, advancements in digital control are poised to drive innovation and enhance the capabilities of three-phase VIENNA topology in high-power switching power supply applications.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the three-phase VIENNA topology exhibits significant technical advantages in high-power switching power supplies. Its characteristics, including high power factor, low harmonic distortion, and relatively simple structure, make it a compelling choice for high-power applications. This topology enhances the efficiency and power quality of power supplies while reducing overall cost and size, offering considerable practical value in modern high-demand systems. Opportunities for further improvement remain. Future research should focus on topology optimization, such as exploring novel circuit configurations or adjusting component parameters to reduce losses and improve dynamic response. The development of intelligent control systems is also essential. By integrating advanced control algorithms, including artificial intelligence-based techniques, the three-phase VIENNA topology can achieve more precise and adaptive control, effectively managing complex and variable load conditions. Pursuing these directions will deepen the understanding of three-phase VIENNA topology, expand its applications, and drive continuous development in high-power switching power supplies, ultimately advancing power electronics technology in high-power domains.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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