Degradation indicators for power electronic converters

Indicadores de degradación para convertidores electrónicos de potencia

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https://doi.org/10.18845/tm.v36i6.6751

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Keywords
Fault; power converter; indicator; capacitor; switching transistor.

Abstract
Power electronic converters are an important element in the interaction between source and load. In fact, failures in this system often lead to bigger problems. Therefore, it is necessary to monitor the converter components that have the most failures. In this work, we present the estimation of three parameters, which are, in turn, degradation indicators of components in the power electronic converters: equivalent series resistance, capacitance and on-state resistance. Using current and voltage measurements of the Boost converter.

Introduction
Given the importance of continuous and correct operation of power electronic converters (PECs), which are an essential part of more complex systems [1] In fact, PECs have the function of direct interaction between generation and load, besides, the control strategies or maximum power point tracking (MPPT), as with microgrids or PV systems [2].

According to [3], static PECs have component failures of 60% in capacitors, 30% in switching transistor, and 10% in inductors and diodes. Therefore, it is necessary to know the state-of-health (SOH) of the PEC main components for the correct operation of the system. Indeed, some component parameters, such as capacitance ($C$), equivalent series resistance ($ESR$) of a capacitor, and on-state resistance ($R_{ds,on}$) in MOSFETs, are indicators of degradation. This article seeks to contribute to establishing the main degradation indicators of electrolytic capacitor and switching transistor in a PEC. In section II, electronic component parameters that can be used as indicators of degradation are shown. Estimation of degradation indicators of the PECs is presented in section III. Finally, the expected results are shown.

Indicators of degradation
Since the capacitor and switching transistor of static PECs have the highest failure rate, some degradation indicators used will be shown. Electrical parameters, such as $C$, $ESR$, and physical parameters, such as volume, can show degradation [4]. In the case of MOSFETs, ($R_{ds,on}$), drain-source voltage ($V_{ds,on}$), and junction temperature are some indicators of degradation.
[5]. However, the measurement of electrical parameters has the advantage of using sensors already available in the systems. Table 1 summary shows some degradation fault limits for the electrolytic capacitor and MOSFET.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESR</td>
<td>Increase of twice the nominal value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Decrease to 80% the nominal value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R_{ds,on})</td>
<td>Increase to 25% of the nominal value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1 Degradation fault limits.**

**Estimation of degradation indicators of the PECs**

To establish the degradation indicators of \(ESR\), \(C\), and \(R_{ds,on}\), a Boost converter is used, as shown in Figure 1.

![Boost converter](image)

Figure 1. Boost converter.

Table 2 lists Boost converter parameters [6], which corresponds to the experimental setup available in the test microgrid developed at Laboratorio de Accionamientos Eléctricos y Electrónica de Potencia at Universidad del Valle-Colombia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switching frequency of Boost</td>
<td>(F_{sw})</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductor</td>
<td>(L)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>mH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output capacitor</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>mF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalent series resistance</td>
<td>(ESR)</td>
<td>114.5</td>
<td>mΩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-state Resistance</td>
<td>(R_{ds,on})</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>mΩ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Table 2 Boost converter parameters.**

**Capacitor**

There are two classical representations of capacitor degradation estimation using \(ESR\) in PECs: ohmic frequency range and power losses of the capacitor.
The first technique, developed by [7], evaluates voltage/current signals within the ohmic frequency range of capacitors. It requires a band-pass filter (see Figure 2). Where \( V \) and \( I_C \) are capacitor voltage and current values (RMS), respectively. It is also necessary to adjust the gain for the input signal range in the processor that is calculating the ESR.

![Figure 2](image2.png)

**Figure 2.** Technique of ohmic frequency range.

The second technique is proposed by [8], which avoids extensive filtering by calculating the AC power losses of the capacitor. Therefore, the ESR can be estimated as shown in the Figure 3. It also used the Rogowski coil to measure the capacitor current.

![Figure 3](image3.png)

**Figure 3.** Technique for AC power losses.

However, it is necessary the estimation of both parameters of the capacitor for establishing its degradation. For example, in previous work [2], a grid-connected photovoltaic system, both parameters, \( C \) and ESR, of a DC-link capacitor were estimated using an electrochemical impedance spectroscopy (EIS) method.

Estimation errors in Matlab/Simulink using three techniques present, are 0.087%, 0.026% only ESR. In addition, the last technique for the parameters ESR and \( C \) are 0.53% and 0.37%, respectively.

**Switching transistor: MOSFET**

In this approach, it needs to measure the drain-source voltage \( (V_{ds,PWM-on}) \) and drain current \( (I_{d,PWM-on}) \), then \( R_{ds,on} \) is calculated, as shown in Figure 4. However, a disadvantage of this method is that it requires high sampling, since the measurement values of interest are when the MOSFET is active. Estimation error of \( R_{ds,on} \) in Matlab/Simulink using the procedure shown above, is 4.28%.

![Figure 4](image4.png)

**Figure 4.** Estimation of on-state resistance of the switching transistor.
The next steps for this research are described below. Initially, in the setup experimental, measure the capacitor current and output voltage to get and compare the $ESR$ with the methods presented. Likewise, a control strategy will be implemented. Then, the estimated values will be used in fault diagnosis. With MOSFETs, other degradation indicators will be evaluated using available measurements in the PECs.

**Conclusions**

This study shows some different methods to establish PEC parameters, which in turn are indicators of degradation. For $ESR$ and $C$, the estimation errors are less than 1%, and for $R_{ds,on}$ the estimation is less than 5%. Besides, this research seeks faults-diagnosis in PECs through measure-based techniques of voltage and current for capacitors, and MOSFET. In addition, fault detection and diagnosis methods for PEC must be able to operate in real conditions, i.e., with regulation control or even maximum power point tracking (MPPT) function in photovoltaic systems.

**Acknowledgement**

This work has been financed by a Doctoral Scholarship: *Formación del capital humano de alto nivel para el Departamento de Boyacá-Minciencias* 733-2015, and project CT-193-2017 with CI.21061. And, it has been supported by *Minciencias, Gobernación de Boyacá y Universidad del Valle* (Colombia).

**References**


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Introduction

Given the importance of continuous and correct operation of power electronic converters (PECs), which are an essential part of more complex systems [1], it is important to have the function of direct interaction between generation and load, besides, the control strategies or maximum power point tracking (MPPT), as well as microgrids or PV systems [2]. According to [3], state PECs have component failures of 60% in capacitors, 30% in switching transistors, and 10% in inductors and diodes. Therefore, it is necessary to know the state of health (SOH) of the PEC main components for the correct operation of the system. Indeed, some component parameters, such as capacitance (C), equivalent series resistance (ESR) of a capacitor, and on-state resistance $R_{on}$ in MOSFETs, are indicators of degradation. This poster seeks to contribute to establishing the main degradation indicators of electronic components and switching transistors in a PEC. In section II, electronic component parameters that can be used as indicators of degradation are shown. Estimation of degradation indicators of the PECs is presented in section III. Finally, the expected results are shown.

Indicators of degradation

Since the capacitor and switching transistor of static PECs have the highest failure rate, some degradation indicators used will be shown. Electrical parameters, such as $C$, ESR, and physical parameters, such as volume, can show degradation [4]. In the case of MOSFETs, $R_{on}$ drain-source voltage ($V_{DS(on)}$), and junction temperature are some indicators of degradation [5]. However, the measurement of electrical parameters has the advantage of using sensors already available in the system. A summary of some degradation fault limits for the electrolytic capacitor and MOSFETs are: ESR increases to twice the nominal value, $C$, decreases to 80% of the nominal value, and $R_{on}$ increases to 25% of the nominal value.

Estimation of degradation indicators

To establish the degradation indicators of ESR, $C$, and $R_{on}$, a Boost converter is used, as shown in Fig. 1.

![Fig. 1. Boost converter](image)

Table 1 lists Boost converter parameters, which correspond to the experimental setup available in the test microgrid developed at Laboratorio de Accionamientos Electricos y Electronica de Potencia at Universidad del Valle, Colombia.

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Table 1. Boost converter parameters

Capacitor

There are two classical representations of capacitor degradation estimation using ESR in PECs: ohmic frequency range and power losses of the capacitor. The first technique, developed by [6], evaluates voltage/current signals within the ohmic frequency range of capacitor. It requires a band-pass filter (see Fig. 2a). Where $V$ and $I$ are capacitor voltage and current values (RMS), respectively. It is also necessary to adjust the gain for the input signal range in the processor that is calculating the ESR. The second technique is proposed by [7], which avoids extensive filtering by calculating the AC power losses of the capacitor. Therefore, the ESR can be estimated as shown in Fig. 2b. It also used the Rogowski coil to measure the capacitor current.

![Fig. 2. Techniques of ohmic frequency range & Technique for AC power losses](image)

Switching transistor MOSFET

In this approach, it needs to measure the drain-source voltage ($V_{DS(on)}$) and drain current ($I_{DS(on)}$), then $R_{on}$ is calculated. However, a disadvantage of this method is that it requires high sampling, since the measurement values of interest are when the MOSFET is active. Estimation error of $R_{on}$ in Matsab/Smulink using the procedure shown above, is 4.28%.

Conclusions / Next Steps

This study shows some different methods to establish PEC parameters, which in turn are indicators of degradation. For ESR and $C$, the estimation errors are less than 1%, and for $R_{on}$, the estimation is less than 5%. Besides, this research seeks to fill the diagnostic needs in PECs through measured techniques of voltage and current for capacitors and MOSFET. In addition, fault detection and diagnosis methods for PEC must be able to operate in real conditions, i.e., with regulation control or even MPPT functionality in photovoltaic systems.

The next steps for this research are described below. Initially, in the setup experimental, measure the capacitor current and output voltage to get and compare the ESR with the methods presented. Likewise, a control strategy will be implemented. Then, the estimated values will be used in fault diagnosis. With MOSFETs, other degradation indicators will be evaluated using available measurements in the PECs.

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