Hybrid Z-Source DC-DC Converter with ZVZCS and Power Transformer Resetting: Design, Modeling, and Fabrication

H. Torkaman* and T. Hemmati*

Abstract: This paper introduces a novel two transistors forward topology employing a z-source to achieve ZVZCS and power transformer resetting for various applications. Comparing with the forward converter, this topology has the advantage of displaying ZCS condition with an added Z-Source and no additional switches when the switches turn on, and that ZVS condition happens when the switches turn off. Duty cycle of the topology can exceed 50 percent. As a result, these converters are suitable for applications with high efficiency. In this paper, structure and properties of the topology will be discussed in details. Then the design principles will be presented. Finally, the benefits aforementioned will be approved in practice through a simple forward converter.

Keywords: Zero Voltage Switching (ZVS), Zero Current Switching (ZCS), Z-Source Converters, Forward DC-DC Converter.

1 Introduction

Forward converters are known as low-power devices throughout the industry [1,2]. With the creation of the resonant transformer core reset, duty cycle may increase to higher than 50 percent and this has led to various applications of the forward converters [3-6]. Comparing the single-transistor forward converter, the two transistor forward converter has wider range of applications due to the low stress of the switches [7,8]. This is the first advantage of two-transistor forward converter. To reduce the stress of the switches in two transistors forward converter, some methods in [9-11] are suggested.

In forward converter, the transformer leakage inductance makes a great impact when the switches are shut down. Therefore, protective auxiliary circuits are needed in practical implementation. Resistors, capacitors and diodes can reduce switching losses and store the impulse voltages. But protective losses will reduce the efficiency. For reducing the switching losses and store impulse voltages, active protective auxiliary circuits are used [12,13]. Active protective and auxiliary circuits, lead to higher complexity and cost of the converter.

A topology in [13] has been suggested in which the ZCS condition is created for the main switch and the auxiliary switch has increased the efficiency of the converter. The topology presented in [12] has created the ZVS conditions for main switches and auxiliary switches so that the efficiency has increased. It is also possible to increase the duty cycle to exceed 50 percent.

The Z-source converter employs a unique impedance network (or circuit) to couple the converter main circuit to the power source, thus providing unique features that cannot be obtained in the traditional voltage-source (or voltage-fed) and current-source (or current-fed) converters [14,15]. Now days, the technical knowledge of the Z-sources has changed significantly. As an example, Peng has introduced some circuits of Z-sources in [16] and has brought the corresponding control solutions in [17]. The Γ-Z-source has modeled and controlled in [18,19]. The Z-sources applications have been extended through out the different bases including fuel cells [20-22], motor drives [23], power distribution systems [24-27], photovoltaic systems [28] and electrical vehicles [29].

This paper presents a new topology named novel two transistors forward topology. It employs a z-source to achieve ZVZCS and power transformer resetting that
creates ZCS and ZVS conditions when respectively, the switches are turned on and off. By making ZVZCS condition, a higher efficiency is created. It is also possible to increase the duty cycle to more than 50 percent. In this regard, in Section 2 the new structure will be described with different working range of the converter. The design considerations will be presented in Section 3 and converter characteristics are achieved compared to conventional converters. The practical features of the converter are discussed in the Section 4. Finally, a summary of the salient results is presented in Section 5.

2 Operation Principle

The circuit of the combined two transistors forward converter and Z-source is shown in Fig. 1. $C_1$ and $C_2$ are capacitors and $L_1$ and $L_2$ are inductors of the impedance source. Diode $D_1$ prevents the return of the power to the input source. Capacitors $C_3$ and $C_4$ are respectively parallel to diodes $D_2$ and $D_3$ which have been placed so as to create better conditions for ZVS and transformer core reset. Switches $S_1$ and $S_2$ are converter switches. Inductor $L_m$ is transformer magnetizing inductance and $L_S$ is leakage inductance. To analyze the converter, the steady-state operating conditions are pre-assumed. Since the output capacitor has a high capacity, the output voltage is constant. The converter overall performance is divided into six intervals. The current and the voltage waveforms of circuit elements are illustrated in Fig. 2 and Fig. 3. The behavior of the converter is shown in Fig. 4 in separate working intervals.

![Fig. 1 Novel Z-Source two transistors forward ZVZCS, DC-DC converter.](image1)

![Fig. 2 Waveforms of the proposed converter.](image2)
Stage 2 \([t_1, t_2]\): As it is shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3 and Fig. 4(b). The energy of the inductors \(L_1, L_2\) and of the capacitors \(C_1, C_2\) are being transferred to the load. Part of their energy is spent charging capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) which are selected in much smaller capacities when compared to the source impedance capacitors. Capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) are fully charged in this stage and then begin to transfer their energy to the load through the transformer. Rectifier diode \(D_4\) is conducting the current. Free-wheeling diode \(D_5\) is in the reverse bias. This state is different from the previous step because in this stage, Inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are discharging. At the end of this stage source impedance inductors are discharged while the capacitors are still being charged.

Stage 3 \([t_3, t_4]\): As it is shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3 and Fig. 4(c) Inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are charged, in addition, the capacitors \(C_1, C_2\) are discharging. The capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) are discharging. As a result, the gradient current of the switches \(S_1\) and \(S_2\) increases. Rectifier diode \(D_5\) is conducting the current. Free-wheeling \(D_3\) is in the reverse bias. At the end of this stage, inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are discharging. The energy of the capacitors \(C_1, C_2, C_3\) and \(C_4\) is in the minimum value over the entire period.

Stage 4 \([t_5, t_6]\): As it is shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3 and Fig. 4(d). The energy of the capacitors \(C_3, C_4\) which is already reached the minimum value in stage 3, sharply arrived to zero at the moment of the switches’ turn off \(S_1\) and \(S_2\) and its energy is transferred to the source impedance. The voltage of the switches becomes zero in the moment of turn off of the Switches and the switches are turned off under ZVS conditions. The selection of the capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) is of importance in creating ZVS conditions and they should be smaller than the capacitors \(C_1\) and \(C_2\) to either transfer their energy completely and do not create a strong current. If their value is smaller than a specific amount, ZVS condition does not happen and if their value is higher, a strong current is created which leads to a damage to the switches. Capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) charge the capacitors \(C_1\) and \(C_2\) while inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are also being charged. In this stage, the freewheeling diode \(D_5\) is turned on and rectifier diode \(D_4\) is turned off.

Stage 5 \([t_4, t_5]\): As it is shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3, Fig. 4(e), transformer magnetizing inductance and inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are discharging. The freewheeling diodes \(D_2\) and \(D_3\) start conducting current in the beginning of the stage. Capacitors \(C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4\) are charging. The freewheeling diode \(D_3\) conducts the current of \(L_2\) to the load and rectifier diode \(D_4\) is turned off. Impedance source inductors have been fully discharged at the end of this phase and also impedance source capacitors have been fully charged in the end of this stage.

Stage 6 \([t_5, t_6]\): As it is shown in Fig. 2, Fig. 3 and Fig. 4(f), inductors \(L_1, L_2\) are discharged and capacitors \(C_1, C_2\) are fully charged. Freewheeling diodes \(D_2\) and \(D_3\) are in reverse bias because the current of the transformer magnetic inductance is zero. Since the capacitors \(C_3\) and \(C_4\) are fully discharged, they start to charge by source impedance. Subsequently, the charging current passes through the transformer in the reverse direction of the transformer magnetizing current. At this moment, Transformer magnetizing current will become negative and the transformer core will reset. The freewheeling diode \(D_5\) conducts the current of \(L_3\) to the load and rectifier diode \(D_4\) is turned off.
Design Consideration

In order to reset the transformer core, the maximum duty cycle will be 50 percent in the forward converters. For increasing duty cycle to over 50%, the effective voltage of the transformer should be increased when the switches are turned off. To reduce the switching losses, soft switching is needed. To achieve these goals, the two transistor forward converter will be combined with a source-impedance that is shown in Fig. 1.

3.1 ZCS at the Moment of Switches Turn-on

In the proposed converter, the equivalent circuit is shown in Fig. 4(a) at the time when the switches are on. For creating ZCS condition, inductors $L_1$ and $L_2$ should be discharged, i.e. $i_{L1}(0) = i_{L2}(0) = 0$. With these conditions, the currents $i_{L1}$, $i_{C3}$ and $i_{C1}$ are obtained. In the impedance source $L_1 = L_2$ and $C_1 = C_2$. As a result, $i_{L1} = i_{L2}$, $V_{L1} = V_{L2}$, $i_{C1} = i_{C2}$ and $V_{C1} = V_{C2}$. The load amount referred to the transformer primary was calculated based on the equivalent circuit of the transformer turns ratio, as follows:

$$R'_L = \left( \frac{N_1}{N_2} \right)^2 R_0$$

(1)

The equation is related to the frequency domain. Symbols $V_{C1}(0) = V_{C2}(0)$ and $V_{C3}(0)$ are the capacitors $C_1$, $C_2$, $C_3$ primary voltages. The current values of the capacitors $C_1$, $C_3$ and of the inductor $L_1$ are obtained according to the equations (2), (3). The load is assumed to be resistive.

According to the outlet current equations, for all values of the inductors and capacitors, equations are
stable. Only if the values of the elements $C_1$, $C_2$, $C_3$, $C_4$, $L_1$, $L_2$, $L_2$, $R_s^*$ are equal to zero, equations (2) and (3) are unstable. According to the equation (3), the amounts of $C_3$ and $C_4$ are very effective in the currents gain of $i_{c_3}$ and $i_{c_4}$. Since $i_{c_3}$ and $i_{c_4}$ create current stress at the moment of switches turn-on, the capacitors $C_3$ and $C_4$ are selected in very small values.

\[
i_{c_3}(s) = i_{c_1}(s) + \frac{C_1}{C_5} \left[ V_{c_1}(t = t_0) - V_{c_3}(t = t_0) \right] + V_{c_1}(t = t_0)
\]

\[
i_{c_3}(s) = \frac{C_1}{2} \left( \frac{C_1}{C_5} \right) \left[ V_{c_1}(t = t_0) - V_{c_3}(t = t_0) \right] + V_{c_1}(t = t_0)
\]

The equations (2) and (3) are always stable for the values of the non-zero elements at the moment of switches turn-on where a current shot will not be created. According to the initial value theorem that is expressed in (4), the initial Z-source inductors’ currents are zero. As a result, switches S1and S2 turn on under ZCS condition.

\[
\lim_{s \to \infty} s \times i_{c_3}(s) = 0
\]

In order to achieve the soft switching conditions, the switching frequency of the proposed converter must be lower than the resonant frequency. The equation (5) expresses the occurrence of the ZCS condition.

\[
f_s < f_{rcs} = \frac{1}{2\pi \sqrt{C_1 L_1}}
\]

The equations (6) and (7) are obtained, if the short circuit occurs in the output i.e. $R_o = 0$. Diode $D_1$ turns-on at the time of $t_2$. Practically, there would be a small impedance in the case of the output short-circuit. To rescue of impact function, the amounts of the capacitors $C_3$ and $C_4$ are select in very small values,

\[
i_{c_1}(t_0 < t < t_2) = i_{c_3}(t_0 < t < t_2)
\]

\[
i_{c_1}(t_0 < t < t_2) = \frac{C_1}{L_1} V_{c_1}(0) \sin \left( \frac{t}{\sqrt{C_1 L_1}} \right)
\]

\[
i_{c_3}(t_0 < t < t_2) = -\frac{C_3}{2} \left[ V_{c_3}(0) \delta(t) \right]
\]

If the open-circuit condition occurs in the output, the equation (8) is obtains, that is $R_o = \infty$.
voltage of the capacitors $C_3$, $C_4$ will decrease to zero at the moment of switches-off. As a result, switches will turn off under ZVS condition.

\[
i_m(s) = C_3 \frac{A}{S^2 B}
\]

where

\[
A = A_0 S^3 + A_2 S^2 + A_4 S + A_4
\]

\[
B = B_0 S^2 + B_2
\]

\[
A_1 = \left[ i_m(t_1) L_m (C_1 L_1 + 1) - L_i L_i (t_1) \right]
\]

\[
A_2 = [2C_3 L_i (V_{c3}(t_1) - V_{c1}(t_1)) + V_{c3}(t_1) - V_{c1}(t_1)]
\]

\[
A_3 = -[L_i L_i (t_1)]
\]

\[
A_4 = V_{c1}(t_1) - V_{c3}
\]

\[
B_1 = [C C_1 L_i (L_m - L_i) + C_3 L_m]
\]

\[
B_2 = 2C_3 L_i + C_3 L_i + 2
\]

\[
i_m(t_3 < t < t_4) = \frac{A C_3}{B_1} \left( \cos \left( \frac{B_2}{B_1} \right) \right)
\]

\[
+ \frac{A C_3}{B_2} \frac{A \sqrt{B_2 C_3}}{B_2} \sin \left( \frac{B_2}{B_1} \right)
\]

\[+ \frac{A_4}{B_1} u(t) + \frac{A_2}{B_2} r(t) \quad (14)
\]

\[
f_s < f_{\text{on}} = \frac{\sqrt{2 + C_1 L_1 + 2C_1 L_1}}{2 \pi \sqrt{C_3 L_m (C_1 L_1 + 1)}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2 \pi \sqrt{C_3 L_m}}
\]

3.3 Possibility to Increase the Working Period to Over 50%

According to Fig. 5, Fig. 4(d), Fig 4(e), as the voltages of the capacitors $C_3$ and $C_4$ reach the zero amount, the freewheeling diodes $D_2$ and $D_3$ start to conduct the current and transfer the transformer magnetizing inductance current to Z-source. In this case, diode $D_1$ is conducting the current. In the following, by charging the capacitors $C_3$ and $C_4$ by the source impedance, the freewheeling diodes $D_2$ and $D_3$ are in reverse bias and capacitors $C_1$ and $C_2$ start to charge. Besides, the transformer magnetizing current direction is reversed after the time $t_5$, according to Fig. (2).

As a result, the transformer magnetizing current increases in the negative direction, i.e. the transformer core resets without the switching period is completed. Therefore, the increasing of the duty cycle to over 50% is possible. At the end of the switching period, transformer magnetizing current is increasing in the negative direction. The important point is the current value because at the beginning of the next cycle, it will pass through the switches $S_1$ and $S_2$ and ZCS. As a result, the current value must be reduced as much as possible. It is depend on choosing the values of the capacitors $C_1$, $C_2$ and capacitors $C_3$, $C_4$ and inductors $L_1$ and $L_2$.

Fig. 5 Waveforms of the proposed converter in the maximum duty cycle.
The maximum duty cycle of efficiency curve occurs when the transformer magnetizing current is zero at the end of the switching period. According to Fig. 5, freewheeling diodes D2 and D3 start conducting the current and continue conducting until the end of the period after the moment t1. So Fig. 4(e) is the equivalent circuit until the end of the period. The transformer magnetizing current is obtained by the equation (16) after the moment t1. The equation (16) is expressed in the frequency domain and the equation (17) is expressed in the time domain.

\[
i_m(t) = \frac{2C_{\text{m}}}{2L_mC_s^2 + 1}\left(\frac{L_m i_m(t) - L_L i_L(t) + f_L\pi}{2L_mC_s^2 + 1}\right)
\]

(16)

\[
i_m(t) = \frac{L_m i_m(t) - L_L i_L(t)}{L_m} \cos \left(\frac{t}{2L_mC_s}\right) + \frac{V_{C_1}(t_1)}{L_m} \sin \left(\frac{t}{2L_mC_s}\right)
\]

(17)

The amount of the transformer magnetizing current reaches zero at the moment t0. The period of the moment t1 to the moment t0 makes up almost the two-thirds of being cut of the switches. The maximum duty cycle is expressed in the equation (18).

\[
i_m(t = t_0) = 0 \rightarrow D_{\text{max}} = \left[1 - \frac{3\sqrt{2}L_mC_s^2}{2f_L}\tan^{-1}\left(\frac{L_m i_m(t_1) - L_L i_L(t_1)}{V_{C_1}(t_1)\sqrt{2L_mC_s}}\right)\right]
\]

(18)

In order to improve the design, it is important to consider the range of selected z-sources elements. The equations (19), (20) and (21) are derived from the equations (5), (11), (12) and (15).

\[
C_s < \frac{1}{2\pi f_s L_m}
\]

(19)

\[
L_i < \frac{1}{C_s\pi f_s} = 2L_m
\]

(20)

\[
C_i < \frac{1}{4\pi f_s^2 L_i}
\]

(21)

Diode D1 is turning off at the moment of t1. The maximum voltage stresses of the switches occur at the moment of t1. According to the simulation results, the moment of t1 can approximately be calculated by equation (22). According to equation (23), the voltage of the Switches can be calculated.

\[
t_1 = \frac{D + \frac{1}{2}D(1-D)}{f_s}
\]

(22)

\[
V_{s1} \left(0^\circ \leq \alpha_1 \right) = V_{s2} \left(0^\circ \leq \alpha_2 \right)
\]

\[
= \frac{L_m i_m(t = t_1) - 2L_L i_{LW}}{\sqrt{L_mC_s}} \sin \left(\frac{t}{\sqrt{L_mC_s}}\right)
\]

(23)

The voltage gain can be expressed by equation (24) when the duty cycle is in the maximum amount.

\[
G = \frac{V_{s1}}{V_{s2}} = \frac{D_{\text{max}}(1-D_{\text{max}})}{2D_{\text{max}} - D_{\text{max}}(1-D_{\text{max}}) - 1}
\]

(24)

4 Experimental Results

A 2700-watt converter is built according to the values in Table 1. The model has two working modes, first, variable power supply mode and second, welding mode. The output capacitor is removed by a simple relay in the welding mode. As a result the output voltage ripple increases. Increased voltage ripple is very effective in creating a better welding arc. In order to increase the magnetizing inductance of the transformer, the number of the windings is slightly higher when compared with the two-transistor forward converter. In order not to saturate, a too small air gap is mounted on the transformer.

The experimental prototype is built and shown in Fig. 6 to verify the correctness of the theories and the effectiveness of the proposed approach. Wave forms practical sample is given in Fig. 7. Selecting the smaller possible capacitors C1 and C2 decreases their discharge current but at the moment of shutting down the switches, it affects the ZVS condition. The selection of the capacitors C1 and C2 is the best choice as it is shown in Table 1. The duty cycle of the experimental converter is slightly more than 50 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 The experimental sample values of the design.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Converter Elements</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switches S1 and S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductors L1 and L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output filter capacitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output filter inductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacitors C1 and C2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacitors C3and C4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diodes D1 and D2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diodes D3 and D5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input voltage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output voltage Mode 1 (Variable power supply)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output voltage Mode 2 (Welding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformer turn ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diodes D2 and D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformer magnetizing inductance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 10 shows the proposed converter control method. The control method is cycle by cycle. In this way, the transistors gate pulses are depend on the output load. The current and voltage feedback are harmoniously together and the final drive pulse is created from comparing the two voltages and currents feedback. The output voltage and the output current are adjusted by two potentiometers by the user. Fig. 11 shows the gate source waveforms in different conditions and the cycle by cycle control method is visible.

5 Conclusion

This paper presents a new topology named novel two transistors forward topology employing a z-source to achieve ZVZCS and power transformer resetting with ability to increase the duty cycle to over 50%. A practical 2700 watt and 12-30 volt sample of the proposed model was constructed. The proposed model, can supply a current up to 100A for welding applications. The switching losses have decreased to a great extent at the moments of the switching. The efficiency of the proposed converter exceeds 94.5% in a full load. The efficiency can reach the maximum of 96%. With regarding the characteristics of the proposed converter, this converter is suitable for multifunction applications with high efficiency such as welding, charging types of batteries etc.

Fig. 7 Experimental waveforms: a) ZVS and ZCS of S1, S2 (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), b) VC1 (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), c) VL (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), d) VT (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), e) VC1 (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), f) ZVS and ZCS of D1 (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 90 A, Vo = 30 VDC), g) ZVS and ZCS of S1, S2 in welding mode (Vin = 310 VDC, Io = 100 A, Vo = 28 VDC).
Fig. 8 The proposed conversion peak voltage stress.

Fig. 9 The proposed conversion efficiency curve.

Fig. 10 Cycle by cycle control method.

Fig. 11 Gate source waveforms (cycle by cycle control method).

References


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