Experimental and Finite-Element Analysis of an Electronic Pole-Change Drive
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Abstract—The theory and modeling of an electronic pole-change drive for the purpose of extending the constant power speed range of a four-pole induction machine have been previously reported. This paper presents verification of the power capability characteristics of the proposed drive through experimental implementation. An indirect field-oriented controller is developed for the pole-change drive with the estimated rotor open-circuit time constant and d-axis current commands dependent on the mode of operation. It is demonstrated that, for a constant power load, the drive can operate at 6340 r/min in two-pole mode without exceeding either the voltage or current limits at 3600 r/min in four-pole mode. A finite-element method is also utilized to examine the influence of magnetic saturation on the pole-change drive performance. The nature of the magnetic flux distribution and saturation progression is investigated in both four-pole and two-pole modes. The saturation-induced inductance variation is also studied and its influence on the d-q inductance matrix is quantified.

Index Terms—Electronic pole changing, induction machine, magnetic flux distribution, power capability.

I. INTRODUCTION

HIGH-INERTIA traction loads (among other applications) require an electric drive capable of high torque at low speeds in addition to a constant output power wide speed range above rated speed. The traditional approaches to meet these requirements involved either oversizing of the machine and/or inverter, or modifying the machine magnetic structure design to decrease its leakage inductance [1]. Space constraints in certain drives make oversizing the machine infeasible, while oversizing the inverter is uneconomical. Modifying the machine magnetic structure to decrease the leakage results in higher motor torque ripple and copper losses due to the increase in motor harmonic current components.

The induction machine equivalent phase impedance (at a given speed) can be reduced by various stator winding change techniques, including Y–Δ changeover, winding tapping, series-to-parallel reconnection, and reducing the pole number of a pole-change winding. Recently, several of these methods have been reintroduced in adjustable-speed drives for the purpose of extending the constant power speed range during field weakening for a field-oriented drive [2], [3]. This is achieved by operating at a large motor impedance until the maximum speed for constant power operation (about twice base speed). Switching to a lower motor impedance (using contactors) facilitates extending the constant power range without increasing the required motor voltage by readjusting the flux level. In [4], the authors proposed a four-/two-pole induction machine drive that achieves the desired torque–speed capability based on electronic pole changing [5], [6]. In electronic pole changing, the desired MMF distribution is attained by reversing the necessary coil groups currents instead of reversing their connections. Based on the same principle, an eight-/four-pole induction motor drive is currently being developed for an electric vehicle application by Meidensha Corporation, Nishikasugai-gun, Japan [7]. An electronic pole-changing drive avoids using any winding connection switching devices such as contactors. The total inverter rating is not increased while the motor is marginally oversized [8]. No change in the motor magnetic structure is required. On the other hand, the main limitations of such a drive are the need to access the individual machine coil groups, the additional control complexity, and doubling of the number of inverter switches. This paper presents verification of the power capability characteristics of the four-/two-pole drive through experimental implementation. An indirect field-oriented controller is also developed based on a six-dimensional reference frame model. In addition, the influence of magnetic saturation on the pole-change drive performance is investigated via finite-element analysis (FEA).

II. INDIRECT FIELD-ORIENTATION CONTROL FOR POLE-CHANGE DRIVE

Fig. 1(a) shows the four-/two-pole drive stator winding distribution which is a full-pitch double-layer 120° phase belt. The two coil groups per phase are connected separately, resulting in a six-terminal stator (1–6). As illustrated by Fig. 1(b), a six-leg inverter is needed to supply this machine. The proposed drive operates as a four-pole machine from zero speed until the end of its constant power range (3600 r/min for 2-p.u. overload torque capability). The constant power speed range is extended by employing “electronic” pole changing to obtain two-pole operation.

In order to compare the capability characteristics of the proposed drive in four-pole and two-pole operation, an indirect field-orientation controller with an outside speed loop is implemented. As is illustrated in Fig. 2, several features distinguish this controller from those used in conventional three-phase induction motor drives. The rotor open-circuit time constant and
A. Relationship Between $d$-Axis Currents and Rotor Flux

The principle of rotor-flux orientation is to orient the $d$ axis of the synchronous reference frame to the rotor flux (resulting in $\lambda_{qr} = 0$ all the time). For a tuned system, instantaneous torque control is achieved via $i_{qs}$ (if $i_{ds}$ is kept constant), while $i_{ds}$ determines the steady-state rotor flux level [9]

\[
T_e = \left( \frac{3}{2} \cdot \frac{P}{L_c} \right) \lambda_{dr} i_{qs}
\]

(1)

\[
\lambda_r = \lambda_{dr} = \frac{L_m}{1 + T_p s} i_{ds}
\]

(2)

Thus, the ratio between the $d$-axis current levels ($i_{dls}$ and $i_{dls}$) and rotor flux densities ($B_{r1}$ and $B_{r2}$) in four-pole and two-pole operation has to be known. In an induction machine, the magnetizing current is related to the air-gap flux density by

\[
i_m = \frac{1}{L_m k_{w} N_{set}} \frac{A_{tot}}{P} B_g
\]

(4)

where

- $L_m$: magnetizing inductance;
- $k_{w}$: winding factor;
- $N_{set}$: total number of series turns per phase;
- $A_{tot}$: total air-gap surface area;
- $P$: number of poles.

Since $k_{w,2} \approx 0.8 k_{w,1}$ [4] for this stator winding,

\[
\frac{i_{m2}}{i_{m1}} = \frac{1.6 \frac{L_{m1}}{L_{m2}} \frac{B_{g2}}{B_{g1}}}{1 + \left(1 + T_{r2} \delta \right) \frac{B_{r2}}{B_{r1}}}
\]

(5)

For a field-oriented machine, the ratio between the $d$-axis stator currents can be deduced from (3) and (5) as

\[
\frac{i_{dls}}{i_{dls}} = \frac{1.6 \frac{L_{m1}}{L_{m2}} \frac{B_{r2}}{B_{r1}}}{1 + \left(1 + T_{r1} \delta \right) \frac{B_{r1}}{B_{r2}}}
\]

(6)

In steady state, (6) reduces to

\[
\frac{i_{dls}}{i_{dls}} = \frac{1.6 \frac{L_{m1}}{L_{m2}} \frac{B_{r2}}{B_{r1}}}{1 + \left(1 + T_{r2} \delta \right) \frac{B_{r1}}{B_{r2}}}
\]

(7)

As depicted in Fig. 2, above rated speed the $d$-axis current command ($i_{ds}$) varies inversely with speed, leading to the steady-state rotor flux density also varying inversely with speed (for tuned conditions). The $q$-axis current command ($i_{qs}$) is determined by the output of a proportional–integral (PI) speed regulator that is tuned to a 5-Hz bandwidth. The mode of operation determines the slip frequency calculator estimate of the rotor time constant ($T_{r1}$ or $T_{r2}$) and, also, the $d$-axis current command level ($i_{dls}$ or $i_{dls}$) as decided by (7). The digital implementation of the slip frequency calculator can be expressed in the $Z$ domain as

\[
s_{\omega_e}(z) = \frac{1}{\frac{T_{p,2}}{T_{r,2}} - z^{-1}} \left[ 1 - e^{-T_{r,2}/T_{p,2}} \right]^{-1} i_{dls}(z)
\]

(8)

\[x:\text{stands for four or two depending on mode of operation. The slip calculator tuning in both four-pole and two-pole operation is verified by ensuring a ramp speed response to a step change in } i_{dls}^{*} \text{.}

B. Pole-Changing Transition

The pole-changing transition is implemented for the indirect field-oriented control drive with a ramp change in the reference frame current commands in order to minimize the resulting torque transient. Since the overlap time (0.6 s) is longer than either $T_{r1}$ or $T_{r2}$, the four-pole plane and two-pole plane rotor flux linkages have almost the same rise and decay rates as demonstrated by the simulation results of Fig. 3. Due to the pole
changing occurring at one-half rated flux (at a speed of 3650 r/min), the resultant radial force transient is one-fourth that in the case of a slip frequency control drive [8]. The experimental results of Fig. 4 substantiate the reference-frame-model-based simulation results.

III. STEADY-STATE CAPABILITY CURVES

Two different loads are used to examine the performance of the proposed induction motor drive with indirect field-orientation control. The first load is a hysteresis brake with a kinetic power rating of 1.3 kW, making it a “limited” or constant-power load. Due to a rotor peripheral speed limit of 7500 ft/min [10], the test motor has a mechanical speed limit of 6600 r/min.

A. Constant-Power Load

Fig. 5 shows the steady-state experimental test results for the proposed drive with the hysteresis brake load. The torque is almost constant (6.4 N·m) below 1730 r/min, while the output power is constant (1.6 hp) above 1730 r/min due to the load limitations.

From Fig. 5(a), it is clear that the voltage of the power supply must continue to increase during the constant power region to counteract the increased voltage drop across the stator leakage inductance. For four-pole operation, the voltage increase at 3650 r/min is 6.6% of the rated voltage (at 1730 r/min) while the rate of voltage increase is higher above this speed to reach 29% of rated voltage at 6340 r/min. During field weakening, the average magnetizing inductance ratio is \( L_{mv2}/L_{mv4} = 1.6 \); thus, if the \( d \)-axis current for two-pole operation is kept the same as four-pole operation, the rotor flux density would be the same in both modes [from (7)]. This would mean approximately the same air-gap flux density and, hence, the two-pole air-gap voltage would be about 80% of that of four-pole. Although the power factor for two-pole operation is higher than four-pole...
[Fig. 5(c)], a 10%–15% increase in input current is required for the same output power. From Fig. 5(e), the input kVA is lower for two-pole while the slip frequency is about 60% of that of four-pole [Fig. 5(f)]. The motor has higher efficiency in four-pole operation below a speed of about 3500 r/min, while at higher speeds the losses (and, hence, efficiency) are approximately the same in both operation modes.

The maximum output torque and current developed by the machine is ultimately dependent on the allowable inverter current rating and the maximum voltage that the inverter can apply to the machine. Thus, for two-pole operation above 3600 r/min, increasing $I_{d2}$ by 25% would result in the same back electromotive force (EMF) as four-pole operation (neglecting saturation) and, thus, better utilization of the converter dc-bus voltage. Fig. 5(b) shows that the current in this case does not exceed the rated current of four-pole operation. At the same time, the dc-bus voltage capability is not exceeded, since the stator voltage required at 6340 r/min is still less than the four-pole stator voltage at 3650 r/min, as illustrated in Fig. 5(a). This is due to the fact that the voltage drop across the leakage inductance in two-pole operation is approximately one-half of that in four-pole operation at the same current level and speed. The increase in flux level for two-pole operation has negligible effect on the power factor [Fig. 5(c)] or input kVA [Fig. 5(e)]. Meanwhile, due to the reduction of the ratio $i_{q2}/i_{q4}$, the slip frequency is further reduced to become about 40% of that of four-pole operation for the same output power. The 25% increase in $I_{d2}$ results in a reduction in copper losses balanced by an increase in iron losses, resulting in approximately the same efficiency above 3600 r/min. Hence, it can be concluded that by increasing $I_{d2}$ by 25%, field-weakening operation can be extended by electronic pole changing at 3600 r/min without exceeding the converter voltage/current rating or decreasing the output power.

**B. Constant-Torque Load**

The second load used to evaluate the proposed drive performance is a separately excited dc. The induction motor current level is limited to its rated value (8-A rms/ coil group) and the $d$-axis current component (and, hence, rotor flux) is held constant throughout the operating range. The experimental test results for constant-torque load are depicted in Fig. 6. Four-pole operation is at rated magnetizing current (3.1-A rms/ coil group) which would correspond to a rated $d$-axis current of $i_{d4s} = \sqrt{3}(400) A$ (in the case of a power invariant transformation). This leads to an almost constant-torque profile (12.3 N·m) as the speed is increased until rated speed (1730 r/min) at rated output power (3 hp). In the case of two-pole operation, if $i_{d2s} = i_{d4s}$, then $L_{m2}/L_{m4} = 1.2$, which would correspond to a rotor flux density (in the radial direction) in two-pole operation of $B_{r2} = 0.75B_{r4}$ [from (7)]. The rotor core flux density would be $B_{c2} = 1.5B_{c4}$, resulting in core saturation.

On the other hand, if $i_{d2s} = 0.5i_{d4s}$, then $L_{m2}/L_{m4} = 1.9$, which would correspond to a rotor flux density in two-pole operation of $B_{r2} = 0.6B_{r4}$. In this case, the rotor core flux density is $B_{c2} = 1.2B_{c4}$, which is not enough to saturate the core. Fig. 6(a) illustrates this result with the stator voltage in two-pole operation being approximately 75% and 60% of the four-pole stator voltage. At low speeds, the stator resistance voltage drop (which is the same for all three cases) becomes preeminent, resulting in an increase of the ratio between two-pole and four-pole stator voltages. The decrease in $d$-axis current increases the power factor as expected, but the output torque (and power) is 75% and 50% of the four-pole for $i_{d2s} = i_{d4s}$ and $i_{d2s} = 0.5i_{d4s}$, respectively. Due to the same copper losses in all three cases but different output power, the efficiency is highest for four-pole operation and lowest for two-pole operation with $i_{d2s} = 0.5i_{d4s}$.

**IV. NONLINEAR MAGNETIC ANALYSIS**

The effects of main flux saturation on the machine inductances (and, hence, performance) are studied with the aid of FEA. The nature of the magnetic flux distribution and saturation progression is investigated in both four-pole and two-pole modes.

**A. Flux Distribution and Average Self-Inductance**

An FEA magnetostatic solution is used to model the no-load condition. Fig. 7 shows the maximum flux density as a function of magnetizing current for both four-pole and two-pole operation. At lower excitation levels, the maximum flux density is higher for two-pole operation, and this trend reverses at higher
excitation levels. These phenomena can be explained by the fact that saturation for four-pole operation starts in certain teeth and, as the current level is increased, more teeth would get saturated, but saturation remains in the teeth occupying approximately the same length of the flux path (except for very deep saturation where the core would start to saturate). Therefore, the only increase in the total iron saturated area is due to the increase in the cross section area of the saturated flux path. For two-pole operation, at low current levels a very small area of the stator back iron starts to saturate and, as the excitation level is increased, the saturated area starts to expand throughout the whole core. This means that, in this case, there is an increase in both the cross-sectional area and the length of the saturated flux path. Thus, as the excitation level increases, the total saturated area of the magnetic circuit increases at a much higher rate for two-pole operation than for four-pole operation, leading to the maximum flux density increasing at a lower rate.

The finite-element field simulator was employed to calculate the no-load inductance matrix based on the stored magnetic energy. The stator phase inductances obtained from the finite-element results can be used to obtain the average stator self-inductance as

$$L_{\text{avg}} = \frac{3}{2} \left( L_{aa} + L_{bb} + L_{cc} \right) .$$

Fig. 8 shows the average stator self-inductance as a function of magnetizing current for both modes of operation. The self-inductance ratio starts at around 2.5 for the unsaturated case and drops to about 1.5 at high saturation. The experimental results from the no-load test show a similar trend for the self-inductance, but the ratio starts at around 2 for the unsaturated case and drops to about 1 at high saturation, as illustrated in Fig. 8. A main difference between the finite-element and experimental results is the drop of inductance value at very low voltage (current) levels for the no-load test, especially for two-pole operation. This is due to the mechanical loss becoming relatively significant at this operating point, requiring an “active” current component and, thus, an increase in the slip.

**B. Saturation-Induced Inductance Variation**

Another phenomenon that usually accompanies saturation is the dependence of each phase inductance value on the resultant instantaneous air-gap flux-vector direction. Previous work incorporating teeth saturation only [14] or based on B–H saturation curves [15], [16] suggest that the $d$-axis inductance becomes smaller than the $q$-axis inductance (opposite to the saliency effect of salient-pole synchronous machines). To investigate the dependence of this phenomenon on the mode of operation, a balanced three-phase sinusoidal no-load current is assumed

$$i_a = I_m \cos(\theta_f)$$
$$i_b = I_m \cos \left( \theta_f - \frac{2\pi}{3} \right)$$
$$i_c = I_m \cos \left( \theta_f + \frac{2\pi}{3} \right).$$

Fig. 9 shows the stator phase inductances as $\theta_f$ is varied from 0 to $\pi/2$ for both modes of operation at rated magnetizing current. It is clear that there is a second harmonic superimposed on each of the phase inductances. The phase inductances can be approximated from Fig. 9 as

$$L_{aa} = \frac{2}{3} L_{\text{avg}} - L_{\text{sat}1} \cos(2\theta_f)$$
$$L_{bb} = \frac{2}{3} L_{\text{avg}} - L_{\text{sat}1} \cos \left( 2\theta_f + \frac{2\pi}{3} \right)$$
$$L_{cc} = \frac{2}{3} L_{\text{avg}} - L_{\text{sat}1} \cos \left( 2\theta_f - \frac{2\pi}{3} \right)$$

where $L_{\text{sat}1}$ is the magnitude of the phase inductance second harmonic.

Similarly, for the stator mutual inductances

$$L_{ab} = -\frac{L_{\text{ms}}}{2} - L_{\text{sat}2} \cos \left( 2\theta_f - \frac{2\pi}{3} \right)$$
$$L_{ac} = -\frac{L_{\text{ms}}}{2} - L_{\text{sat}2} \cos \left( 2\theta_f + \frac{2\pi}{3} \right)$$
$$L_{bc} = -\frac{L_{\text{ms}}}{2} - L_{\text{sat}2} \cos(2\theta_f).$$
The dependence of $L_{\text{sat}1}$ value on the saturation level for both operation modes can be obtained by varying the magnetizing current as shown in Fig. 10. For very low flux levels, $L_{\text{sat}1}$ acquires a small negative value ($<0,02L_{\text{avg}}$) that is within the finite-element error tolerance. As the magnetizing current level increases, $L_{\text{sat}1}$ increases with the two-pole-mode case being at a higher initial rate that corresponds to the higher decay rate of $L_{\text{avg}}$ (Fig. 8).

For a balanced three-phase stator supply and winding distribution, the resulting rotating field coincides with the magnetic axis of each phase at the instant when the current in that phase is maximum. Thus, at $\theta_f = 0$, the air-gap flux density vector coincides with the phase-$\alpha$ magnetic axis.

Since the point where the flux in the core reaches a maximum is 90 electrical degrees from the point where the air-gap flux density is a maximum, then teeth and core saturation occur spatially at 90° electrical apart, which would suggest that maximum phase-$\alpha$ inductance for two-pole mode would occur at $\theta_f = 0$. On the contrary, from (11) and Fig. 10, phase-\(\alpha\) inductance is minimum at that instant, for either two-pole or four-pole operation. The portion of the magnetic circuit belonging to phase $\alpha$ is most saturated (regardless of saturation location) when the current in it is maximum.

The inductance matrix $[L_{\text{avg}}]$ whose elements are defined by (11) and (12) can be transformed to a rotating reference frame attached to the magnetizing current vector by (13), shown at the bottom of the page [11]. From (13), it is clear that the $\delta$-axis inductance is smaller than the $\gamma$-axis inductance in either four-pole or two-pole mode with the “saturation induced saliency” effect being more evident in the two-pole mode.

### C. Saturation Influence on Drive Capability

Experimental results of Section III-B show that two-pole operation at rated stator and magnetizing current levels results in about 75% of the rated torque at four-pole operation. This conclusion can be verified by the finite-element results. The same rated magnetizing current (6.2-A rms) leads to saturation of most of the stator back-iron core in two-pole operation which reflects in a decrease in the relative ratios of the two-pole and four-pole magnetizing inductances (Fig. 8) from 2 at no saturation to 1.5 (in FEA) or 1.2 (in experiment) at rated excitation. Consequently, the ratios of the induced air-gap voltages and, hence, the output torque and power decrease.

The proposed pole-changing drive experimental results of Section III-A can be explained with the aid of the finite-element results of Fig. 7. Four-pole operation is at rated flux until 1800 r/min with the maximum flux density in the teeth being $B_{\text{max}} = 1.94$ T. Above rated speed, four-pole constant power operation continues until 3600 r/min with the excitation level reducing to one-half the rated value, resulting in the maximum tooth flux density dropping to $B_{\text{max}} = 1.25$ T. Switching to two-pole operation while maintaining the same magnetizing current level results in the maximum flux density occurring in the core: $B_{\text{max}} = 1.68$ T. Due to the poorer winding factor,
a 20% reduction in power capability would result. A 25% increase in magnetizing current results in retaining rated power without oversaturating the core, since the maximum core flux density would be $B_{\text{max}} = 1.77$ T.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The steady-state capability characteristics of the proposed pole-change drive have been verified experimentally for both four-pole and two-pole operation. It was proven that, for a constant-power load, the drive can operate at 6340 r/min in two-pole mode without exceeding either the voltage or current limits at 3600 r/min in four-pole mode. This is accomplished due to the better power factor in two-pole mode, resulting in lower input kVA for the same output power. Moreover, by the proper choice of flux level to slightly saturate the core, the dip in the power capability characteristics (expected in [8]) can be avoided. A constant-torque load is also employed to demonstrate the superiority of four-pole operation at lower speeds. Due to core deep saturation, a rated flux component current command results in only 75% output torque in two-pole operation.

In the latter part of the paper, the effects of main flux saturation on the machine inductances (and, hence, performance) were studied with the aid of FEA. The nature of the magnetic flux distribution and saturation progression was investigated in both four-pole and two-pole modes. It is concluded that, as the excitation level is increased, the total saturated area of the magnetic circuit increases at a much higher rate for two-pole operation than for four-pole operation, while the maximum flux density increasing at a lower rate. The self-inductance operation than for four-pole operation, while the maximum magnetic circuit increases at a much higher rate for two-pole mode. It is concluded that, as flux distribution and saturation progression was investigated with the aid of FEA. The nature of the magnetic circuit when changing from four- to two-pole operation, the same power capability can be maintained due to appropriate adjustment of the flux level.

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<td>MACHINE PARAMETERS USED IN EXPERIMENT AND SIMULATION STUDIES</td>
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<tr>
<th>Per phase parameter</th>
<th>Four Pole Connection</th>
<th>Two Pole Connection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stator resistance</td>
<td>0.453 $\Omega$</td>
<td>0.422 $\Omega$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotor resistance</td>
<td>0.281 $\Omega$</td>
<td>0.277 $\Omega$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stator leakage inductance</td>
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<td>1.15 mH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotor leakage inductance</td>
<td>1.31 mH</td>
<td>1.15 mH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsat. magnetizing induct.</td>
<td>40 mH</td>
<td>79 mH</td>
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APPENDIX

For the machine parameters used in the experiment and simulation studies, see Table I.

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REFERENCES


Mohamed Osama (S’95–M’97) received the B.S. degree in electrical power engineering from Cairo University, Giza, Egypt, and the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1991, 1994, and 1997, respectively.

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