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Review of Single Phase Grid-Connected PV System with Unfolding Flyback Microinverter for Residential Applications

[1]Raushan Patel, [2]Dr. P. Yadav
[1]*Research Scholar, Dept of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Millennium Institute of Technology and Science, India*
[2]*Professor, Dept of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Millennium Institute of Technology and Science, India*

***Abstract*— The increasing global demand for renewable energy has driven significant advancements in photovoltaic (PV) technology, particularly in residential applications. Single-phase grid-connected PV systems have gained popularity due to their cost-effectiveness, ease of integration, and compatibility with household electricity needs. Among various inverter topologies, the unfolding flyback microinverter has emerged as a promising solution for improving efficiency, reliability, and affordability in residential solar power systems. This paper presents a comprehensive review of single-phase grid-connected PV systems with a focus on the unfolding flyback microinverter topology. The study explores the operational principles, circuit configurations, control strategies, and performance characteristics of the unfolding flyback microinverter.**

Keywords*— Solar, Pulse, Renewable, Fault, Panel, Microgrid, Line, Ground, Cable, Photovoltaic Cable.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid depletion of fossil fuel reserves and the environmental concerns associated with conventional energy sources have accelerated the adoption of renewable energy technologies. Among various renewable energy sources, solar photovoltaic (PV) technology has witnessed significant growth due to its abundant availability, scalability, and declining costs. Residential PV systems have gained immense popularity as they allow homeowners to generate electricity, reduce reliance on the grid, and contribute to a sustainable energy future. One of the critical components of a residential PV system is the inverter, which converts the direct current (DC) generated by solar panels into alternating current (AC) suitable for grid connection and household consumption.

Traditional PV inverters are categorized into centralized, string, and microinverters. While centralized and string inverters have been widely used, they suffer from issues such as module mismatch, shading losses, and limited flexibility in system expansion. Microinverters, on the other hand, offer significant advantages by operating on a module-level basis, thus enhancing energy harvesting, reliability, and system scalability. Among various microinverter topologies, the unfolding flyback microinverter has attracted substantial attention due to its simplified circuit design, low cost, and improved efficiency in single-phase grid-connected PV systems.

The unfolding flyback microinverter operates on the principle of flyback conversion, where energy is stored in a transformer during the primary switching phase and released to the grid during the secondary phase. Unlike conventional full-bridge or half-bridge inverters, the unfolding flyback microinverter utilizes a simplified unfolding circuit to achieve AC output, thereby reducing the complexity and cost of implementation. This topology offers several advantages, including galvanic isolation, compact design, and high reliability, making it an ideal choice for residential PV applications.

Despite its benefits, the unfolding flyback microinverter faces challenges such as limited power handling capability, switching losses, and grid synchronization issues. Recent advancements in power semiconductor devices, control strategies, and circuit design have addressed some of these challenges, leading to improved performance and efficiency.

Researchers have explored various techniques such as zero-voltage switching (ZVS), zero-current switching (ZCS), and advanced digital control methods to enhance the operational characteristics of unfolding flyback microinverters.

In this review, we provide an in-depth analysis of single-phase grid-connected PV systems with unfolding flyback microinverters. We examine the fundamental working principles, design considerations, and control methodologies associated with this topology. Additionally, we discuss grid integration challenges, power quality issues, and emerging trends in microinverter development. The objective of this review is to offer a comprehensive understanding of unfolding flyback microinverters in residential PV applications and to highlight potential research directions for further innovation.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

J. A. Flores [1] introduces a PV system that is linked to the grid and uses an unfolding flyback microinverter in the dq0 reference frame. It operates on a single phase. In order to get the most out of the PV module, the Incremental Conductance maximum power point tracking technique is used with a PI controller to get the d-axis reference current. An equal power factor at the shared coupling point is ensured by setting the q-axis reference current to zero. Under shaded circumstances, a network of microinverters linked in parallel to the grid is examined.

S. Pal [2] This research delves into the creation of a prototype for a series-connected, low-Voltage microinverter that can handle rooftop solar applications. The converter is a single-stage, high-frequency isolated DC-AC converter. Instead of using a high boost stage, which is necessary for traditional microinverters, series-connected topologies allow each module to contribute to the grid voltage. The converter's efficiency is enhanced as a result. One module in the string controls the current, while the others control the voltage, since the outputs of the modules are linked in series. Creating and verifying an appropriate method for controlling the current and voltage in the various modules is the main focus of this article. We put the control technique through its paces in both static and dynamic grid environments. To test the MPPT logic of the module, a PV emulator is attached to the input and turned on. Another topic covered in the study is a control and topological modification technique that can fix secondary side devices for phase-shift modulation topologies that have voltage overshoot issues.

A. A. Ismail [3] Zero net energy PV building integrated systems increasingly include photovoltaic (PV) systems. A significant difficulty with PV grid linked systems is extracting the greatest electricity with the best system efficiency. A two-stage photovoltaic (PV) grid-connected microinverter has been developed and is presented in this study. A DC-DC converter with a high-frequency transformer forms the basis of the microinverter topology's maximum power point tracking stage. Two topologies—the two-switch flyback and the boost flyback—were evaluated with respect to duty operating range, transformer turns ratio, and component size. Effective monitoring of the maximum power output from PV and the DC link voltage set point has been shown in simulations.

A. A. Mamun [4] In addition to fulfilling all technical specifications for grid-connected operation, grid-tie microinverters must also satisfy stringent cost criteria. This article presents the design and analysis of a grid-tie microinverter that is isolated and based on a dual-switch flyback DC-DC converter stage. Because of its versatility and few moving components, the DC-DC flyback stage is chosen. The dual-switch flyback stage not only isolates the circuit for regulatory compliance, but it also helps the microinverter work from a broad variety of input voltages by providing high step-up voltage gain. When contrasted with traditional flyback, it offers the benefits of less voltage stress on power switches and greater efficiency. Grid synchronization and DC-AC conversion are accomplished by use of an HFH-bridge inverter.

A. Abu-Humaid [5] A number of benefits, including reduced total power loss, reduced cost, and system compactness, are offered by transformerless inverters. The transformerless inverter cannot be used as a grid-tied micro-inverter (μ-inverter) without a frontal high-gain step-up DC-DC converter, which is necessary for PV applications. This study presents the realization of a transformerless μ-inverter via the usage of a single switching device high gain boost DC-DC converter based on a Quadratic Boost Converter (QBC) in conjunction with a 7-level packed-U-cells (PUC) inverter. To maximize power extraction from the PV array, the MPPT controls the front-end QBC using the Perturbs & Observes (P&O) algorithm. The grid-tied single-phase seven-level PUC inverter is controlled using a finite-set model predictive control (FS-MPC) approach that takes into account a weighted cost function. Distributing the harvested PV electricity to the grid is the holy grail of PUC inverters.

J. Roy [6] In order to operate in partial shade, a standard non-isolated PV microinverter needs a high dc-dc conversion ratio and can handle a broad variety of input-output voltages. For this kind of application, an EDR boost converter—a high-efficiency hybrid of an interleaved inductor and a switched capacitor—is a great choice because it reduces switching losses, equalizes current sharing among the input phases, and the stress on the switch voltage. The benefits of an EDR boost converter operating in continuous conduction mode (CCM) are, however, duty ratio dependent. Discontinuous conduction mode (DCM) allows for a more flexible duty ratio operation, which in turn reduces device voltage stress and guarantees boost inductors share current equally. However, even with the DCM, the functioning in the area with the least voltage gain is exceptionally complicated and demands an in-depth comprehension.

Mr. Bhattacharya [7] At unity power factor (UPF), this work proposes a single-phase, single-stage current-source microinverter system that may maximize power extraction from low-voltage photovoltaic (PV) panels and feed it into a single-phase utility grid ranging from 220 to 230 V. Using a Coupled inductor based Cuk architecture at the inverter's input stage allows for high voltage gain at the output stage. Using a coupling capacitor, the energy stored in the coupled inductor's leakage inductance is put to use on the grid side. A passive snubber is used to regulate the voltage spikes that arise across the power switch while turning it off. In order to keep the controller's design simple, we use the discontinuous mode of conduction (DCM) for the magnetizing current. Utilizing the occurrence of resonance between the snubber capacitor and the magnetizing inductance during the high frequency turn on period allows for a soft power switch on, which improves the system's overall efficiency.

A. Tomar [8] There is a clear need for the complete development of a micro-inverter interface based on photovoltaic (PV) technology for use in a variety of rural applications. An energy-efficient, PV-based single-phase micro-inverter for distant and rural applications is designed, developed, and tested in real-time in this work. By utilizing an interleaved DC/DC boost converter to cancel out 180 ° phase-shifted harmonics and a voltage doubler circuit to reduce the transformer turns ratio with low flux leakage, the proposed dual-stage single-phase inverter aims for better conversion efficiency with smaller magnetics.

Y. Shen [9] In order to compensate for the difference between the constant DC power and the variable AC power, auxiliary active power decouplers (APDs) are often used in single-phase inverter or rectifier systems. A parallel boost-type APD circuit optimized for size and efficiency in PV microinverter applications is the focus of this article. Design of a 400 W APD circuit based on eGaNFETs, using a planar inductor and capable of operating in critical conduction mode (CRM) or continuous conduction mode (CCM) is studied in particular. Finding Pareto-optimal configurations that reduce the inductor's footprint area and achieve low California Energy Commission (CEC) efficiency drops requires exploring available design variables such as inductance value, inductor core geometry, capacitor voltage, switching frequency, and modulation scheme (CCM vs. CRM).

M. D'Antonio [10] provide a frequency-domain method based on harmonic superposition for the study and optimum design of a single-stage direct current (DC)-to-alternating current (AC) converter that converts low-voltage DC to high-voltage AC, such a PV microinverter. The analysis focuses on two distinct topologies and their respective modulation schemes that make use of a maximum of four control variables, namely three phase shifts and switching frequency. We find the best possible paths for the control variables that reduce the RMS current in the transformer at a given average power and enforce a nearly uniform ZVS. The design process is made more comprehensive by utilizing an outer optimization loop to find the best values for the power transfer inductance and turns ratio.

III. CHALLENGES

Limited Power Handling Capability- The unfolding flyback microinverter is designed for low-power applications, typically suitable for single PV modules or small residential setups. Due to the inherent energy storage requirement in the flyback transformer, the power-handling capability is restricted. Scaling up the power output requires either multiple microinverters or alternative topologies, increasing system complexity and cost. This limitation makes it less competitive compared to traditional string or centralized inverters for larger solar PV installations.

Switching Losses and Efficiency Constraints- High-frequency switching is a key characteristic of the flyback topology, but it leads to substantial switching losses, which directly affect the efficiency of the system. In particular, turn-on and turn-off losses in MOSFETs or IGBTs increase at higher frequencies, resulting in thermal stress and reduced performance. These losses make it challenging to achieve high efficiency, especially when compared to transformerless inverter topologies that avoid energy storage losses. Techniques such as soft-switching (zero-voltage switching and zero-current switching) can mitigate these losses but add complexity to the control mechanism.

Thermal Management Issues- The compact size of flyback microinverters leads to heat concentration in power electronic components, including the transformer, switching devices, and passive components. Effective thermal management is crucial to prevent overheating, which can degrade component lifespan and overall reliability. However, adding heat sinks or active cooling mechanisms increases system cost and footprint, making it challenging to maintain the balance between performance and affordability.

Grid Synchronization Complexity- Maintaining precise synchronization with the utility grid is a fundamental requirement for grid-connected PV systems. The unfolding flyback microinverter must ensure that the AC output waveform aligns with the grid frequency and phase to prevent power quality issues. Grid disturbances, such as voltage sags, frequency variations, and phase imbalances, can make synchronization challenging. Advanced control techniques, including phase-locked loops (PLLs) and adaptive algorithms, are necessary to maintain stable grid connection, adding to the system complexity.

Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) and Noise- The high-frequency switching operation of the flyback converter generates electromagnetic interference (EMI), which can affect nearby electronic devices and even disrupt grid operation. EMI issues necessitate careful PCB layout design, shielding, and filtering techniques, such as common-mode and differential-mode filters. Implementing these countermeasures increases component count and system cost, making it difficult to optimize for low-cost residential applications.

Component Stress and Reliability- The flyback microinverter topology subjects components such as the transformer windings, diodes, and switching devices to high voltage and current stresses. Transformer core saturation, leakage inductance, and parasitic capacitances can lead to excessive voltage spikes, causing premature component failure. Ensuring long-term reliability requires high-quality materials, improved winding techniques, and robust snubber circuits, all of which add to the design and manufacturing challenges.

IV. CONCLUSION

The unfolding flyback microinverter presents a promising solution for single-phase grid-connected PV systems in residential applications due to its compact size, galvanic isolation, and module-level power optimization. However, challenges such as limited power handling, switching losses, thermal management, grid synchronization, EMI issues, and compliance with regulatory standards hinder its widespread adoption. Achieving high efficiency, reliability, and power quality requires advanced control techniques, optimized transformer design, and innovative cooling mechanisms. Future research should focus on improving component durability, reducing switching losses through soft-switching techniques, and integrating AI-based control strategies to enhance system performance and grid stability.

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